

The Boy at the Temple

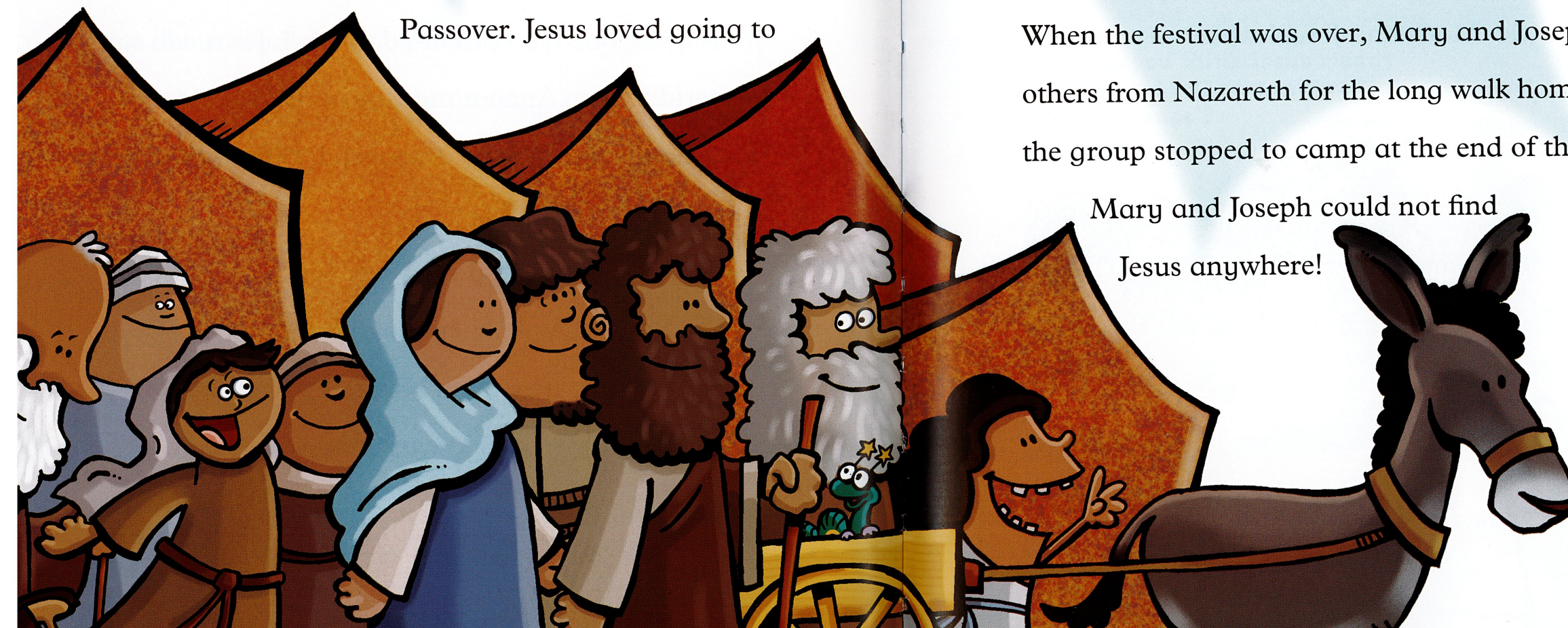
Every year Jesus' family traveled from their home in Nazareth to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of

Passover. Jesus loved going to

the festival. He loved the crowds of people. He loved the noise and bustle of activity. And he loved spending time in the temple.

One year, when Jesus was 12, the festival began like any other. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus enjoyed the sights, sounds, and activities of the festival together. When the festival was over, Mary and Joseph joined others from Nazareth for the long walk home. But when the group stopped to camp at the end of the first day,

Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus anywhere!



Everyone thought he had been walking with someone else in the group. "Jeeeeeesuuuuusss!" yelled his parents. "Jesus, where are you?"

Mary and Joseph were frantic! They quickly walked back to Jerusalem looking for him. They searched the city high and low for three whole days until they found Jesus in the temple. Mary and Joseph were surprised at what they saw. Jesus was in the temple, talking with teachers more than twice his age! He was just a boy, but he could talk about God with a room full of grown-ups! The teachers in the temple were impressed with what Jesus knew. Mary and Joseph were proud, but they were

still a bit angry with Jesus. "Jesus, why weren't you with us? We have been looking all over for you," Mary and Joseph exclaimed.

Jesus replied, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you understand that I was in my Father's house?"

Mary and Joseph didn't understand, but with that, they gathered their belongings and began the long walk back home.

★ What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "I was in my Father's house"?

