


In the beginning, God made the world – a perfect, sinless world.
However, sin entered that world and it had to be punished with death.

Thankfully, God made a promise. One day, he would send a
Saviour from heaven to earth to defeat death and crush evil.
Alongside this, another journey had to happen.



A young woman called Mary was chosen by God. An angel gave her startling news:
'You are going to have a baby boy. You will call his name Jesus. He will be great
and will be called the Son of the Most High.'

'How can this happen,' said Mary, 'since I am a virgin?'
The angel replied, 'The baby is the Son of God. You will have this child
by the power of God, the Holy Spirit.'



So Mary went on her first journey to visit her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country of Judea. Elizabeth was also expecting a baby even though she was quite old.

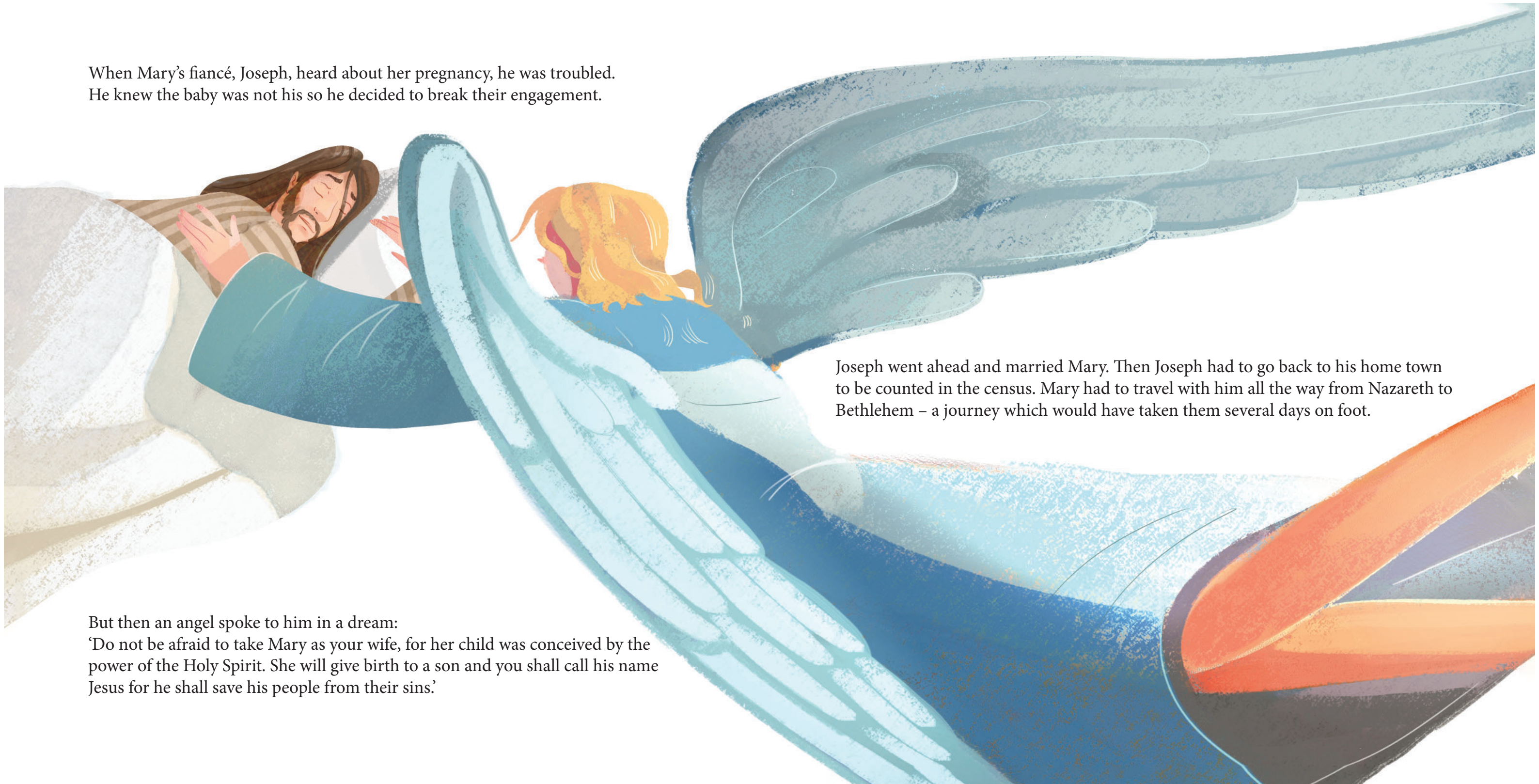
As soon as Mary entered the house, the baby inside Elizabeth jumped for joy. Elizabeth called out, 'Blessed are you among women and blessed is the baby you are bearing!'

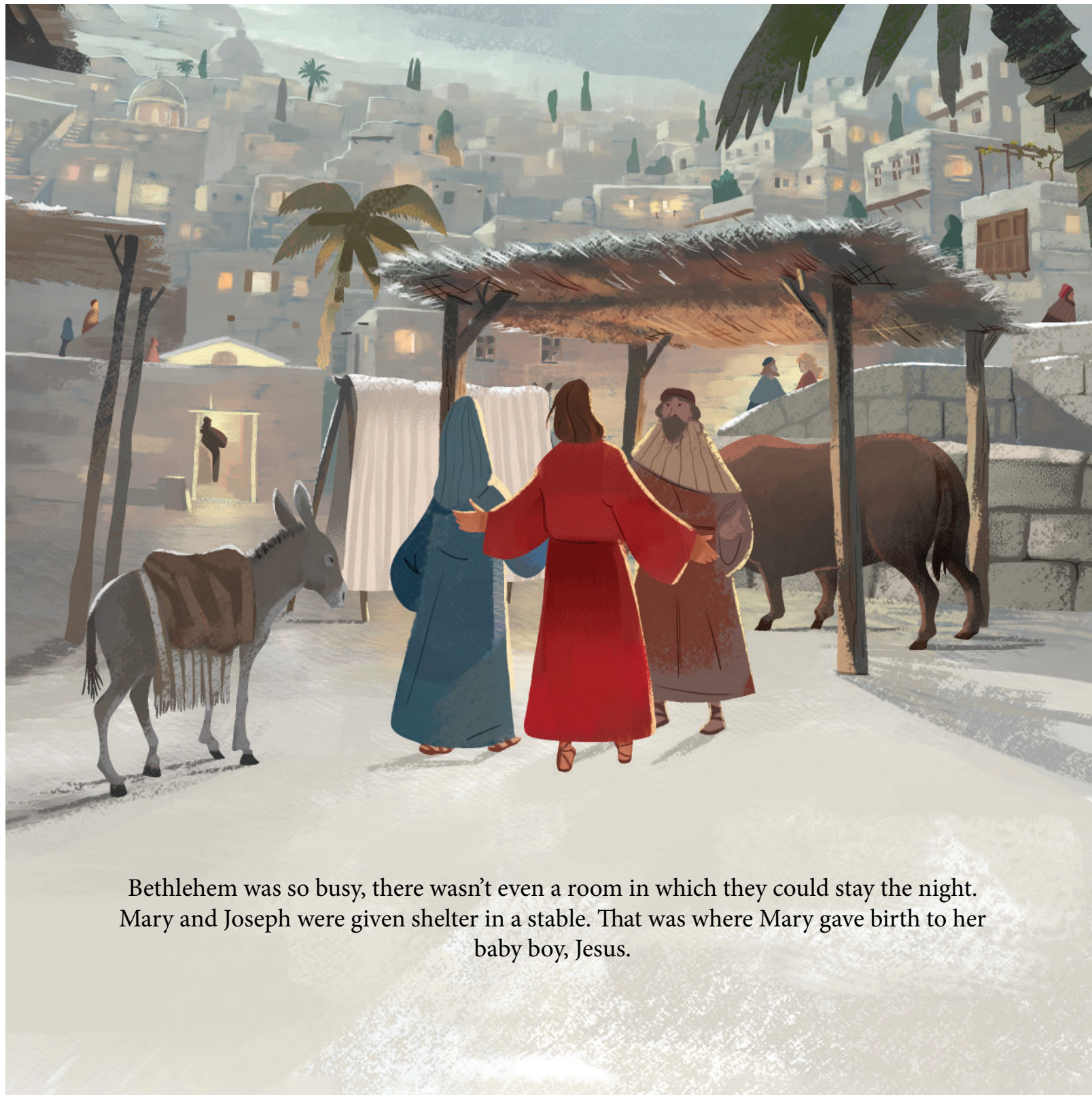
Mary then exclaimed, 'My soul praises the Lord, and rejoices in God my Saviour.'

When Mary's fiancé, Joseph, heard about her pregnancy, he was troubled. He knew the baby was not his so he decided to break their engagement.

Joseph went ahead and married Mary. Then Joseph had to go back to his home town to be counted in the census. Mary had to travel with him all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem – a journey which would have taken them several days on foot.

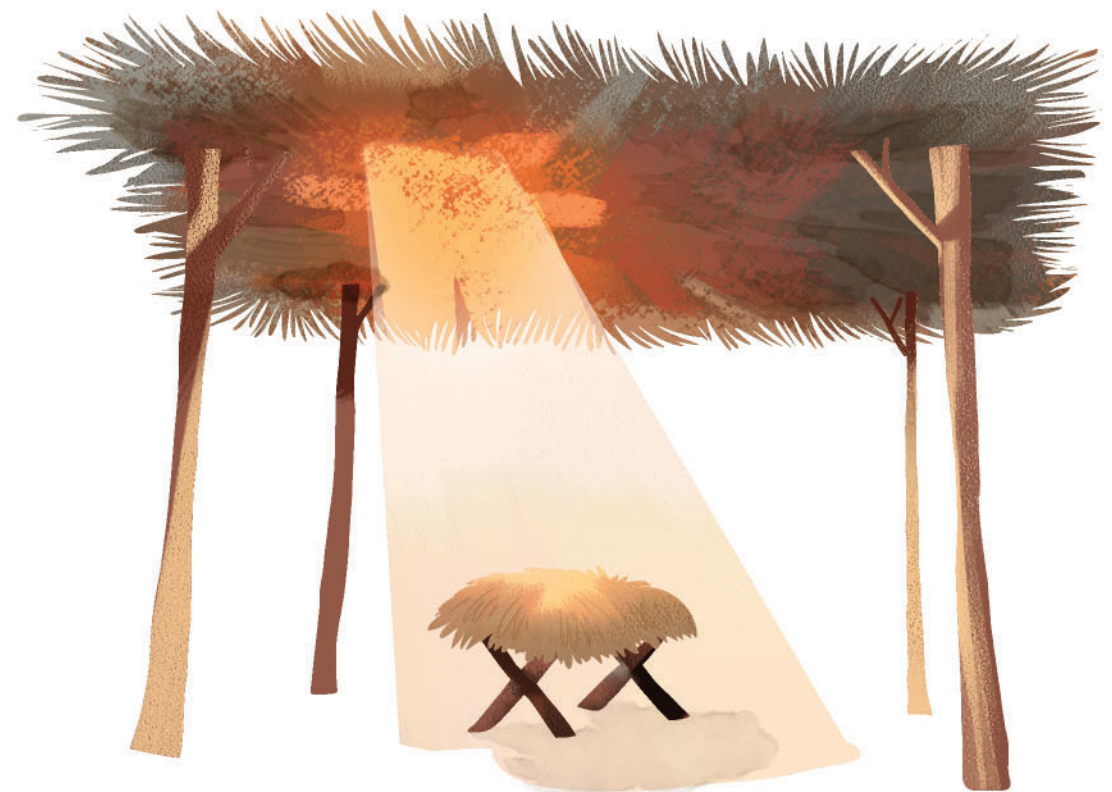
But then an angel spoke to him in a dream:
'Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for her child was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.'






Bethlehem was so busy, there wasn't even a room in which they could stay the night. Mary and Joseph were given shelter in a stable. That was where Mary gave birth to her baby boy, Jesus.

Jesus didn't have a crib. Instead, he was laid in a manger, a wooden box that usually held food for animals. But it didn't matter because he was warm and safe and cared for. He was born just like any other baby, but Jesus was different from every other baby born into the world because he was not a sinner.





In fields near Bethlehem, shepherds were watching over their sheep.
An angel suddenly appeared. 'Don't be afraid,' the angel said. 'I bring good news.
A Saviour has been born in Bethlehem. He is Christ the Lord. You will find the
baby in a manger.'

A choir of angels
praised God saying,
'Glory to God in the highest!
Peace and good will to all!'

The shepherds found the baby Jesus
just as the angel had told them and passed
on the good news to everyone they met.

After that, Mary and Joseph travelled with Jesus to the temple. An old man named Simeon held Jesus in his arms and knew that God's promise had been kept. 'I am ready to die,' he said, 'for I have seen God's salvation.'

He then warned Mary that one day she would be very sad: 'A sword will pierce your own soul too.' Mary thought a lot about these things and kept them close to her heart.

