

SEARCHING FOR THE LIGHT

Written by Flávio Colombini

Illustrated by Nailê Rabelo



ideias
brilhantes

My name is Deborah, I'm 9 years old
and I live in Jericho, a city in Israel.

I love life!



I like smelling the perfume of flowers, feeling the
refreshing breeze, listening to nature's music and,
above all, receiving the affection of my family.

Too bad I can't see any of it. I see everything dark. I was born blind.



I try to be an independent girl who does things on her own.

But if I'm having trouble, I'm grateful when someone offers to help me.

My life isn't easy at all. Sometimes I trip and fall, or knock things over. Once I tried to venture out on my own and bumped facefirst into a tree.



Some children make fun of me and don't want to play with me.

I can perceive the world through my four senses:
hearing, touch, smell and taste. I feel and hear the
wind blowing. I inhale the scents of the air, plants
and perfumes. I can smell and taste foods and drinks.
Yummy, there are so many delicious things!





I listen to the birds singing and I'm very curious to know how they look. I touch everything to feel how each thing is like.

Every Saturday I go to synagogue, where I love to listen to the readings from the Book of the Law. It tells the story of the creation of the world, of Noah's ark, of Joseph in Egypt, and of Moses freeing our people from slavery. I marvel at God's power and love!



Some people say He doesn't love me, or even that I'm cursed for being blind. But I don't agree. Despite the difficulties, I feel God's love for me in countless ways.



One day, we heard the news that a prophet was visiting our town. My mum and I went to the place where he was teaching. From the buzz, I realised that there were a lot of people there. As

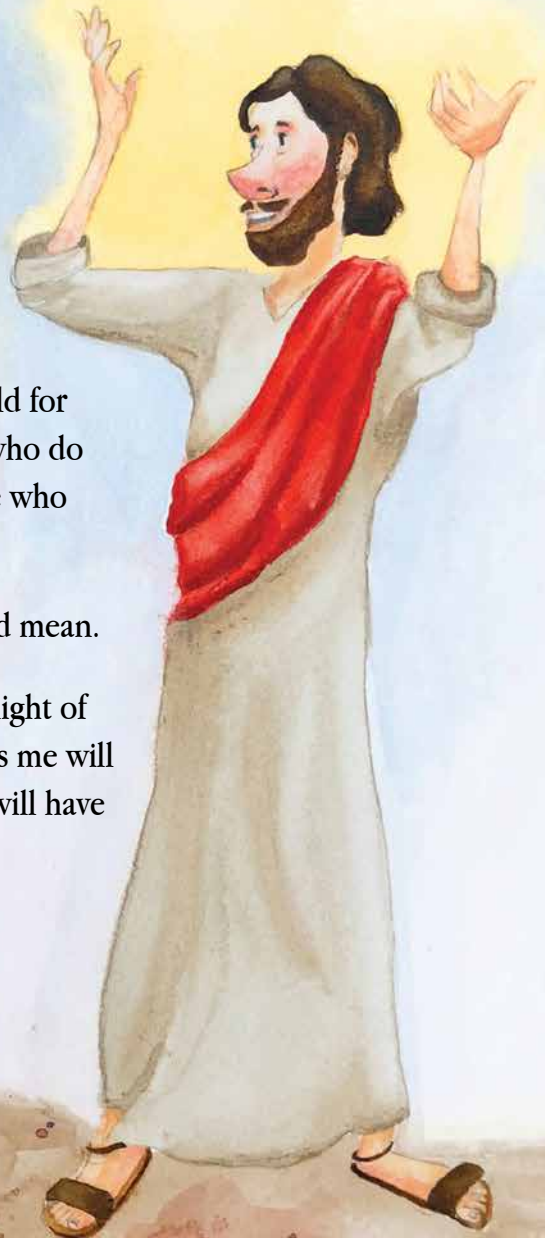


we got closer, I was able to hear the master's teachings more and more clearly. To my surprise, he said some splendid things:

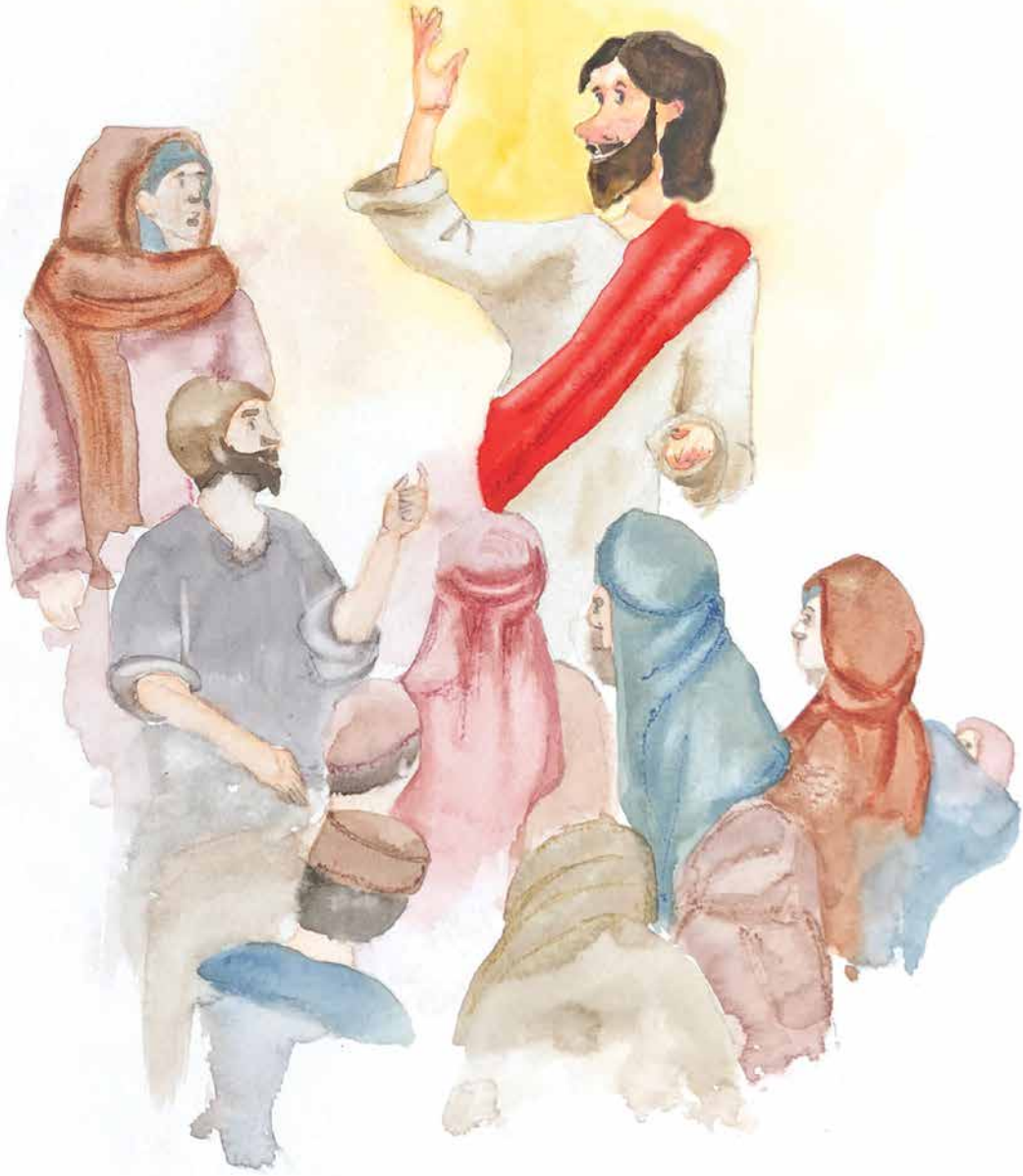
“I have come into this world for judgement, so that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

I wondered what this could mean.

Then he added: “I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

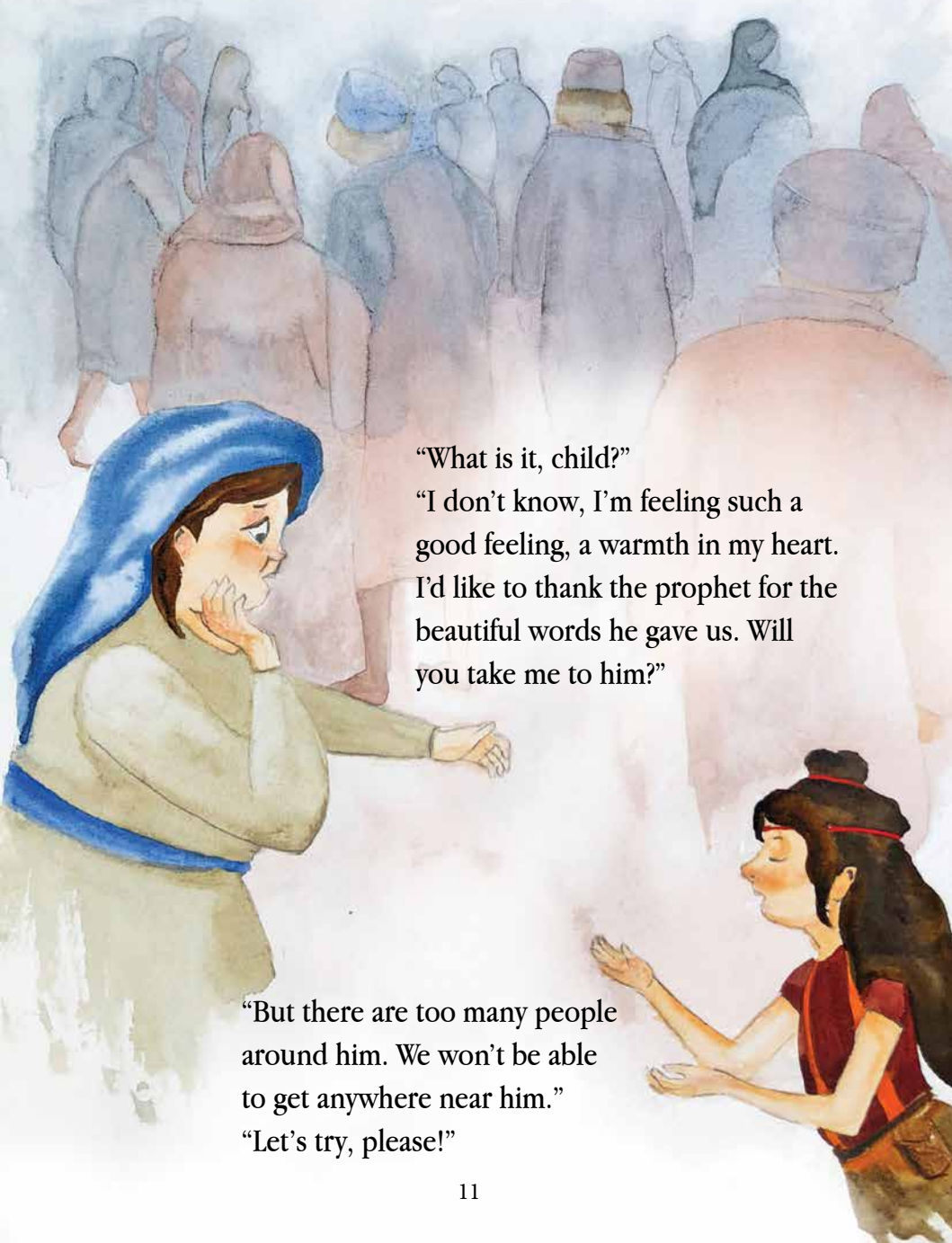


He said that to everyone, but it seemed like he was talking directly to me.



He spoke for over an hour. I loved listening to his teachings. My thoughts were filled with peace, love and joy!

When he finished his sermon, the people began to scatter and leave. Mum grabbed my hand, but I couldn't move.



“What is it, child?”

“I don't know, I'm feeling such a good feeling, a warmth in my heart. I'd like to thank the prophet for the beautiful words he gave us. Will you take me to him?”

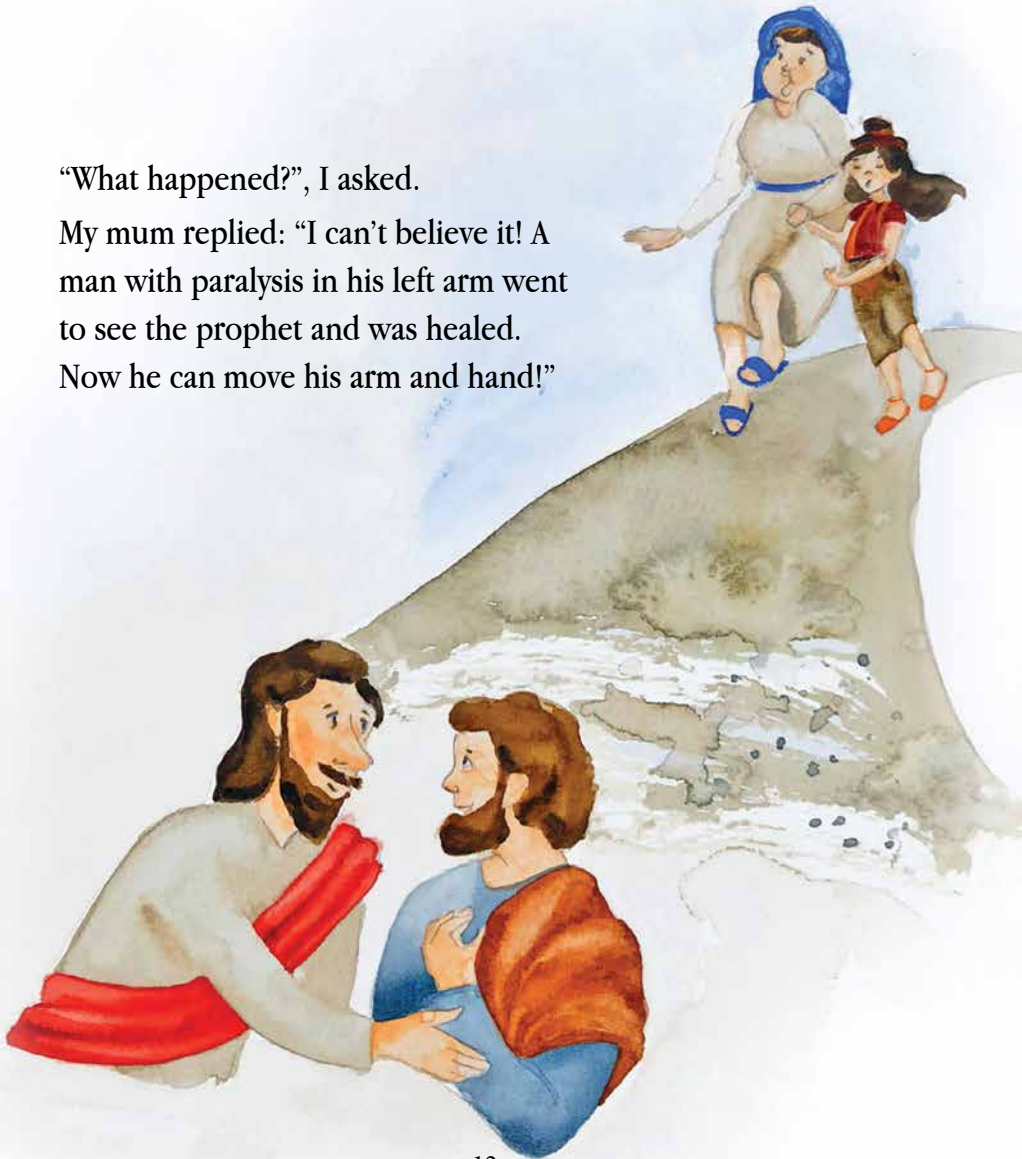
“But there are too many people around him. We won't be able to get anywhere near him.”

“Let's try, please!”

Against her will, my mother led me close to the master. I listened to other people thanking him. Suddenly, I heard several sighs: “Ooohh!”

“What happened?”, I asked.

My mum replied: “I can’t believe it! A man with paralysis in his left arm went to see the prophet and was healed. Now he can move his arm and hand!”

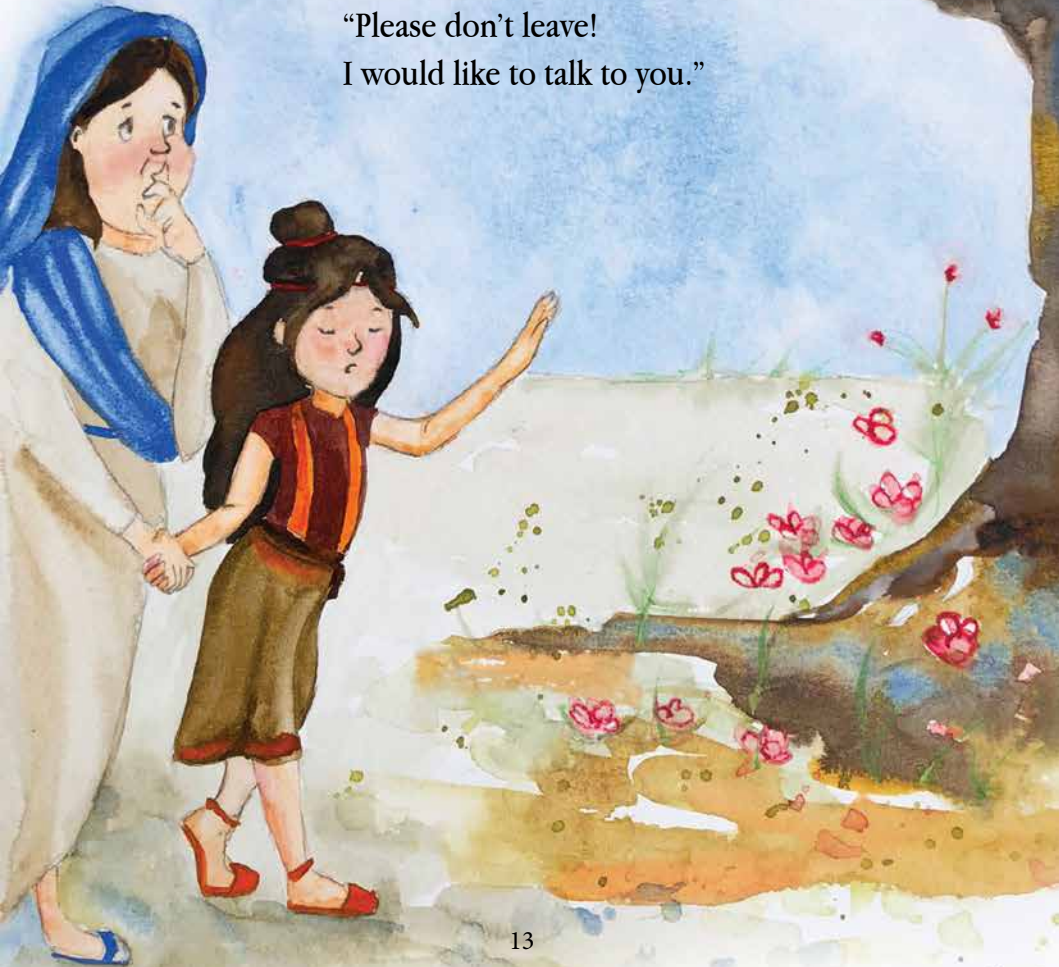


“But how did it happen?”, I wondered.

“I don’t know... Oh, no, the master is leaving!”

Suddenly, I heard myself shouting:

“Please don’t leave!
I would like to talk to you.”



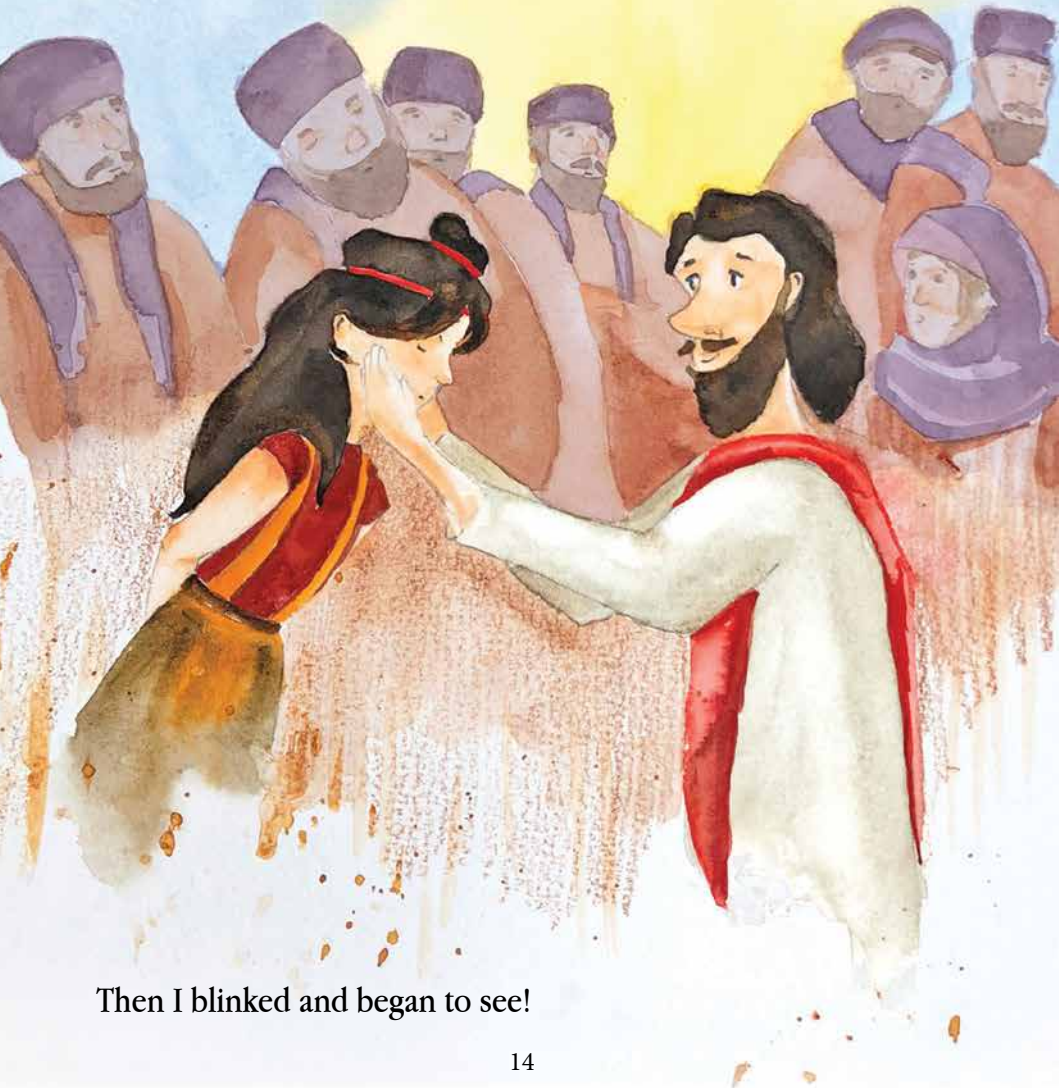
A moment later, I heard his angelic voice
very close to me, asking:

“What did you want to tell me?”

“I wanted to thank you...”

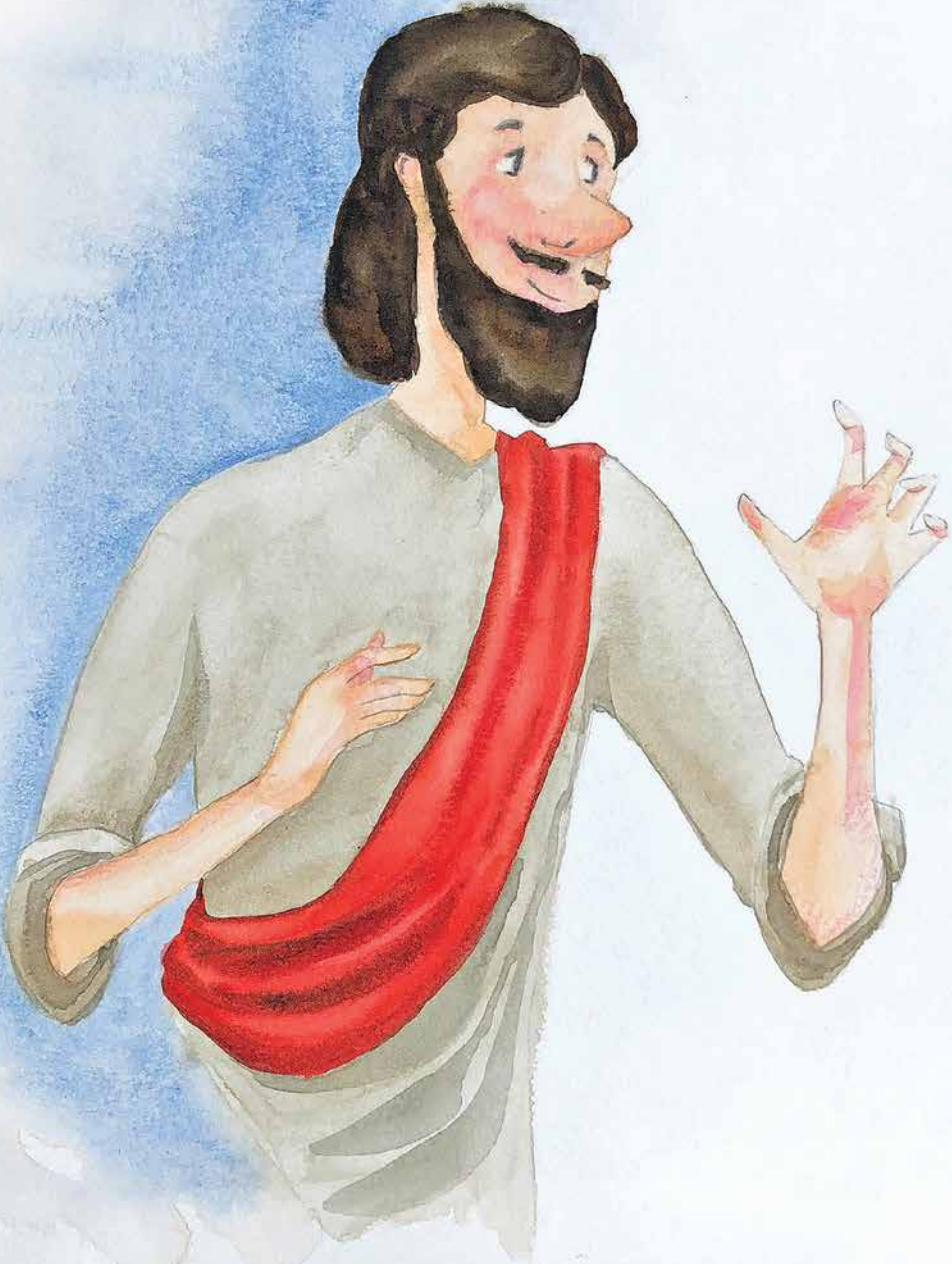
Suddenly, I felt a soft hand rest upon my eyes.

It felt like divine love touching me, filling me
with energy, vitality and light!



Then I blinked and began to see!

I saw the man who had touched me, with his long hair and bearded face, with a glowing look of love and peace.



I could hardly believe it, I could see! I was seeing everything!



I looked to the side and saw my mum's face. I saw the light, the clouds, the trees... I saw the world for the first time!

My mum started crying with emotion.
I wanted to leap and dance for joy!



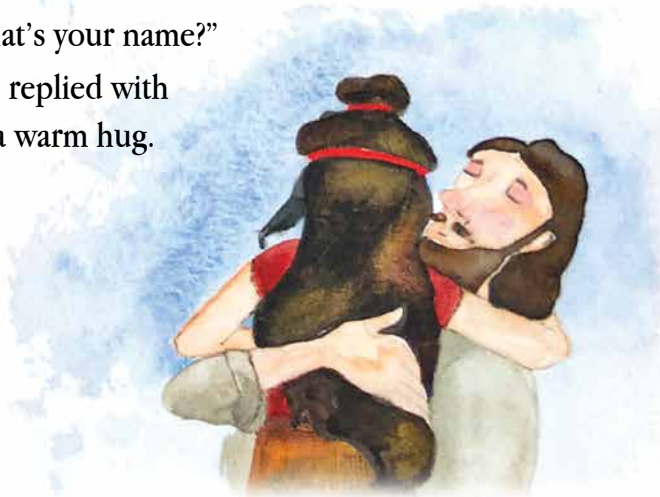
I was incredibly happy!

“Thank you so much!”, I said to the prophet.

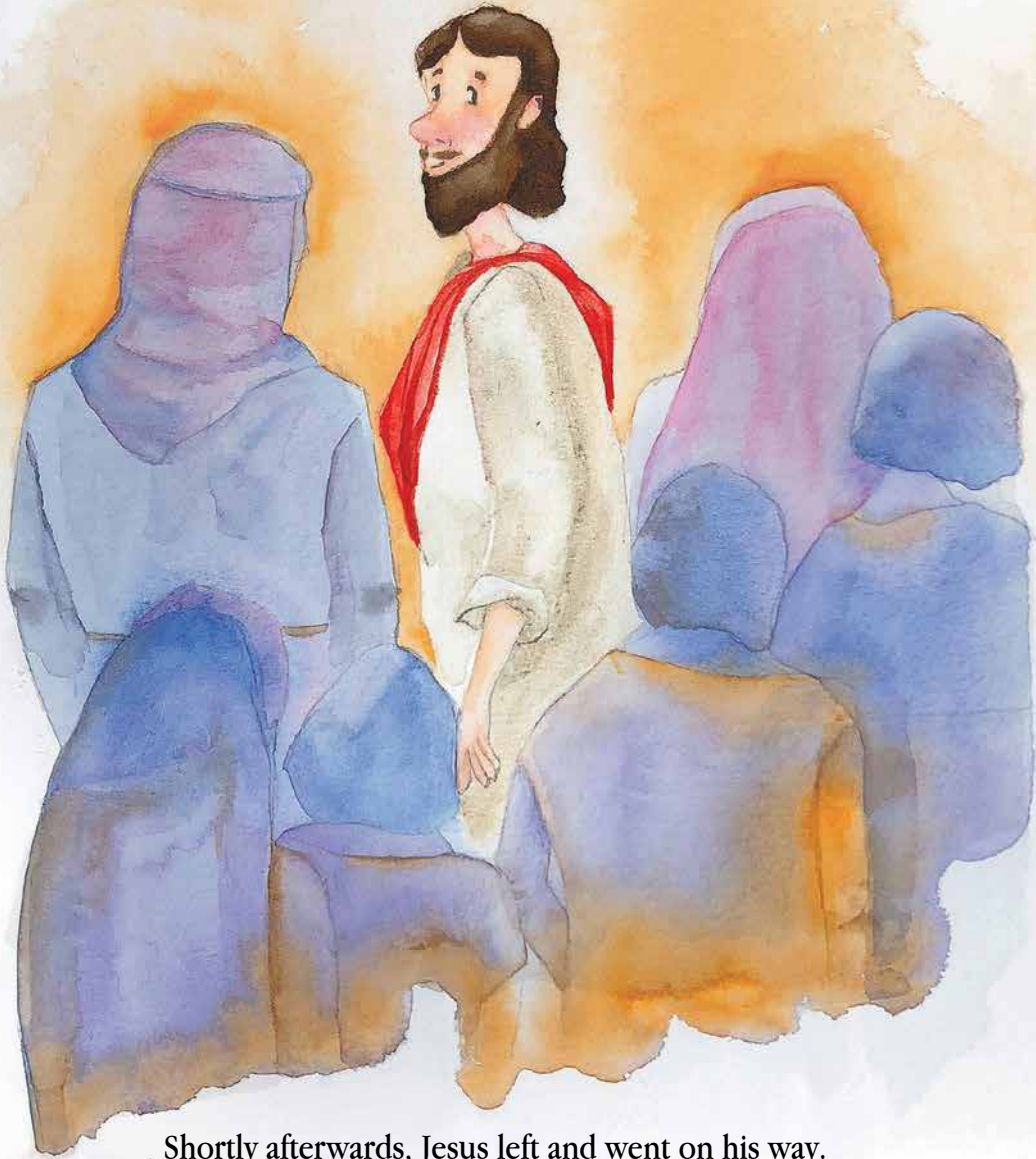


Then I asked him: “What’s your name?”

“Jesus of Nazareth”, he replied with a smile, then gave me a warm hug.



Other people around him began to say: “You are the Messiah, the Saviour who was to come to the world!”



Shortly afterwards, Jesus left and went on his way.

Mum and I returned home. I no longer needed to be led by her. I could see my own way. I took the opportunity to observe everything that I had always been curious about. I watched the birds sing and fly! I saw the blue sky, the orange sun... before I could only feel its warmth, now I can see its brilliance!



When we got home, I ran to hug my father and brothers. The family, the neighbours, the relatives, everyone was very happy with my healing.



I was so grateful to God for having sent his Son into the world to bring us salvation. After that, I became even more certain of God's infinite love for me and for everyone.



Historical references

On page 7, Deborah mentions the Book of the Law, which is also known as the Torah. It is a compilation of the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. On page 9, Jesus' lines can be found in the Gospel of John - 9:39 and 8:12.

Writer



Flávio Colombini

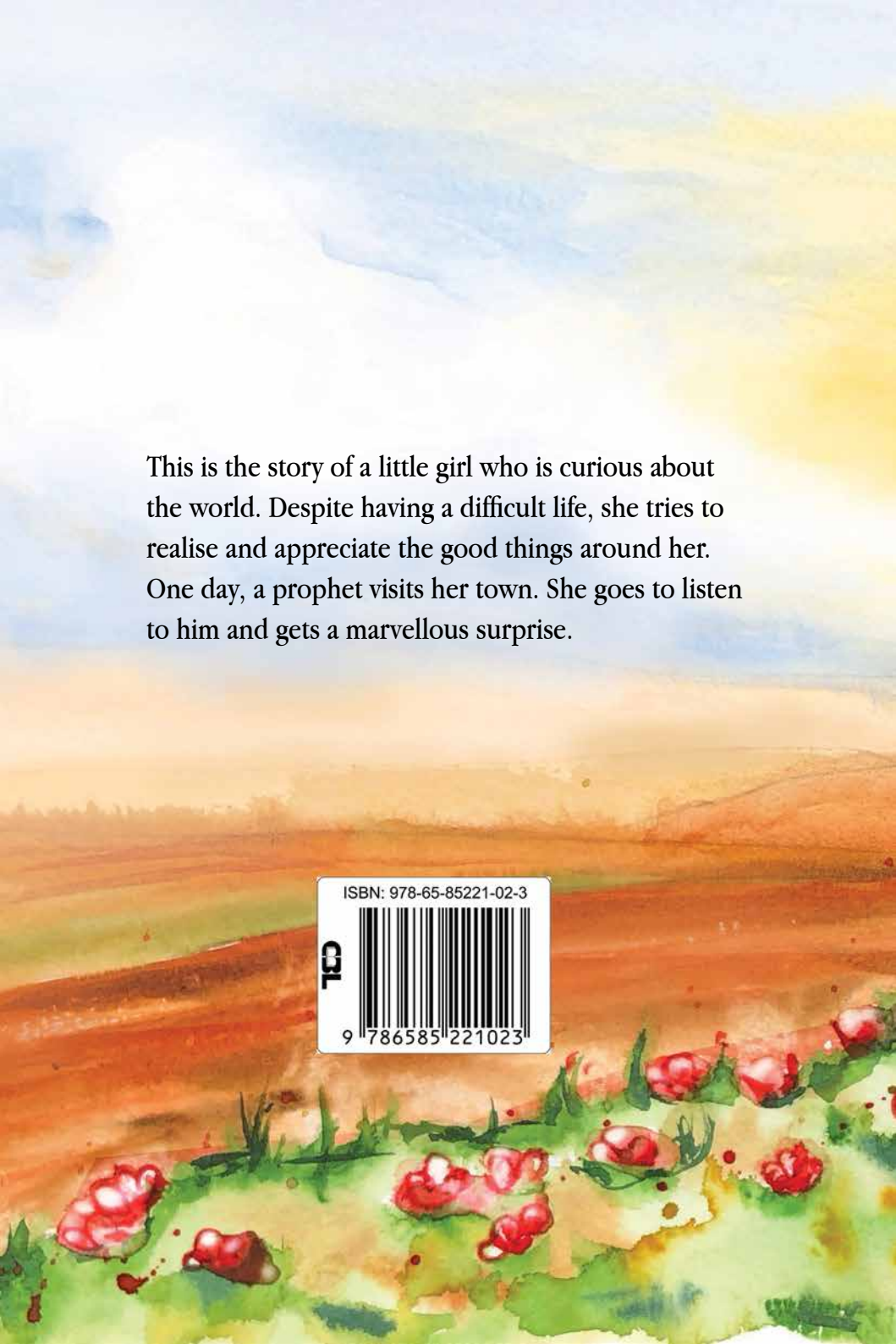
I've been reading the Bible since I was little. Some passages tell us that on certain occasions Jesus healed many sick people, but they don't tell the specific stories of the people who were healed. So I decided to imagine in detail what one of these beautiful healings might have been like. Many people would love to have lived at the time of Jesus and to have known him personally. The idea of this book is to fulfil that wish through the character Deborah, who has the privilege of meeting him. I believe that, at that time, people with any kind of disability were undervalued and even despised. Nowadays, fortunately, people with disabilities are increasingly included, valued and enabled to live happy and useful lives, contributing to a better society. As a writer, I try to tell stories of characters who overcome all kinds of difficulties. If you want to get to know more of my work, visit my website: www.flaviocolombini.com/english

Illustrator



Nailê Rabelo

I was delighted when I received the invitation to take part in this project. Imagining such a young and courageous girl overcoming difficulties inspired me to take on the great challenge of illustrating this book. I loved the story from the start, it reminds me a little of myself, and I think also of each of us, living in ignorance of God and the whole Truth, until an act of bravery on our part encourages us to seek Christ and the liberation from all that we were unable to see before. I hope I have achieved, with the paintings, the greatness and beauty of the story and the teachings that this great little book brings. It is with great tenderness that I present these illustrations to you. If you would like to see more of my work, please visit my Instagram @cheznaile.

A watercolor illustration of a landscape. The foreground is a green field with several red, multi-petaled flowers. The middle ground shows rolling hills in shades of orange, brown, and green. The background is a bright, hazy sky with soft blue and yellow tones.

This is the story of a little girl who is curious about the world. Despite having a difficult life, she tries to realise and appreciate the good things around her. One day, a prophet visits her town. She goes to listen to him and gets a marvellous surprise.

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