

THE DESERT TEMPTATION

After Jesus was baptized, He did something unusual.

The crowd around John the Baptist was very excited. They had seen the Holy Spirit appear like a dove and had heard the voice of God calling Jesus His **SON**! Maybe the Messiah—the One who would save Israel and bless the whole world—was finally here!

It was the perfect time for Jesus to say, “Okay, everybody, follow Me! I’m the Messiah!”

But He didn’t. Instead, Jesus walked off into the wilderness, all by Himself. He left the crowds behind and went out into the wildest parts of Israel to be **ALONE**.

You see, Jesus knew what was coming. He knew that being the Messiah—that saving Israel and blessing the world—was going to be very, very hard. He knew He couldn’t do it unless He was very close to God, His Father.

So Jesus went off to spend time with His **DAD**.



For forty days, Jesus stayed in the wilderness. He didn't eat any food. He spent all of His time talking with God, His Father.

At the end of forty days, Jesus and His Dad were very, very close. But He was also very, **VERY** hungry.

And then Jesus had a visitor.

Do you know who it was? It was that sneaky **SNAKE**, God's enemy, the one who had lied to Adam and Eve way back at the beginning so sin would ruin God's world.

God's enemy knew Jesus was hungry. He knew the big things Jesus had to do would be hard. God's enemy showed up to **TEMPT** Jesus with ways to make things easier.

"If You really are God's Son," the enemy said, "why don't You just turn these rocks into bread? Then You can eat!"

"No," Jesus said. "I don't live by bread. I live by the words that come from My Father."

Then the enemy took Jesus to the **HIGHEST** place in Jerusalem—the very top of the temple.

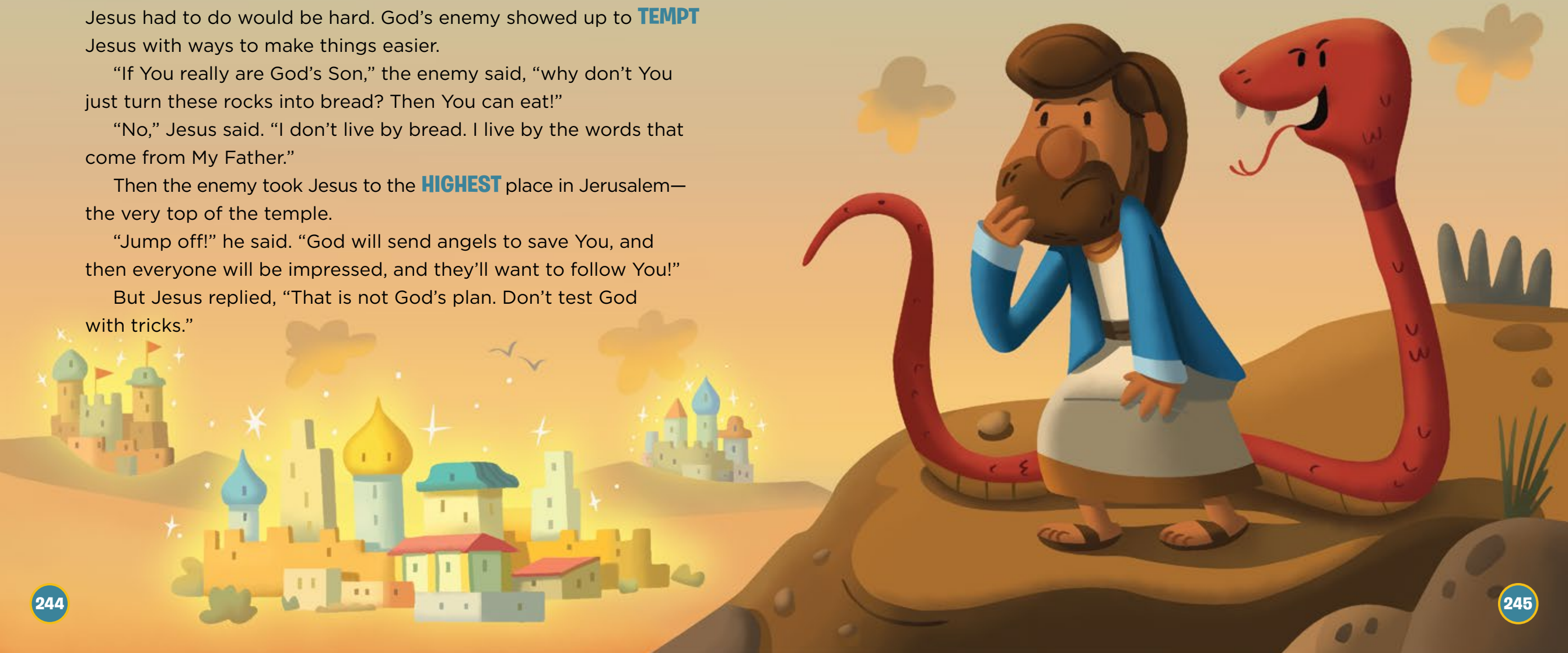
"Jump off!" he said. "God will send angels to save You, and then everyone will be impressed, and they'll want to follow You!"

But Jesus replied, "That is not God's plan. Don't test God with tricks."

Finally, the enemy took Jesus to the top of a high mountain. Jesus could see **ALL** the kingdoms of the world.

"Do You want to rule all these kingdoms?" the enemy asked. "I can make that happen! All You have to do is bow down and worship **ME**."

What should Jesus do? God wanted Jesus to be a new kind of king. A blessing for the whole world! Jesus knew that God's plan was going to be very, very hard. God's enemy said he could make it easy. *Wouldn't that be better?*



But Jesus knew He was talking to a **LIAR**.
“I will only bow to God!” Jesus yelled. “Leave me now!”
And the enemy left. He had tried his best to fool Jesus, the same way he had fooled Adam and Eve many years before. But Jesus was too close to God, His Father. And being close to His Father made Jesus strong.

God took care of Jesus, because He was God’s Son, and God loved Him very much.

NOW it was time to save the world.



THE DESERT TEMPTATION

FAMILY CONNECTION

MATTHEW 4:1-11

TRICKY BITS

If Jesus is God, how could He be tempted?

This is a tricky question, all right! Jesus was God, but Philippians 2:7 (ICB) says He “gave up his place with God and made himself nothing” to carry out God’s rescue plan. God’s enemy wanted to see if Jesus would follow through. He wanted Jesus to act in God’s power and step outside God’s plan. But Jesus passed the test! He resisted the temptation, humbling Himself to become the blessing for the whole world.

TALK

What was Jesus doing when God’s enemy came to tempt Him?

What should we do when we are tempted to do something we know we shouldn’t?

Dear
God...

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for giving us the power to overcome temptation and choose Your way! Amen.



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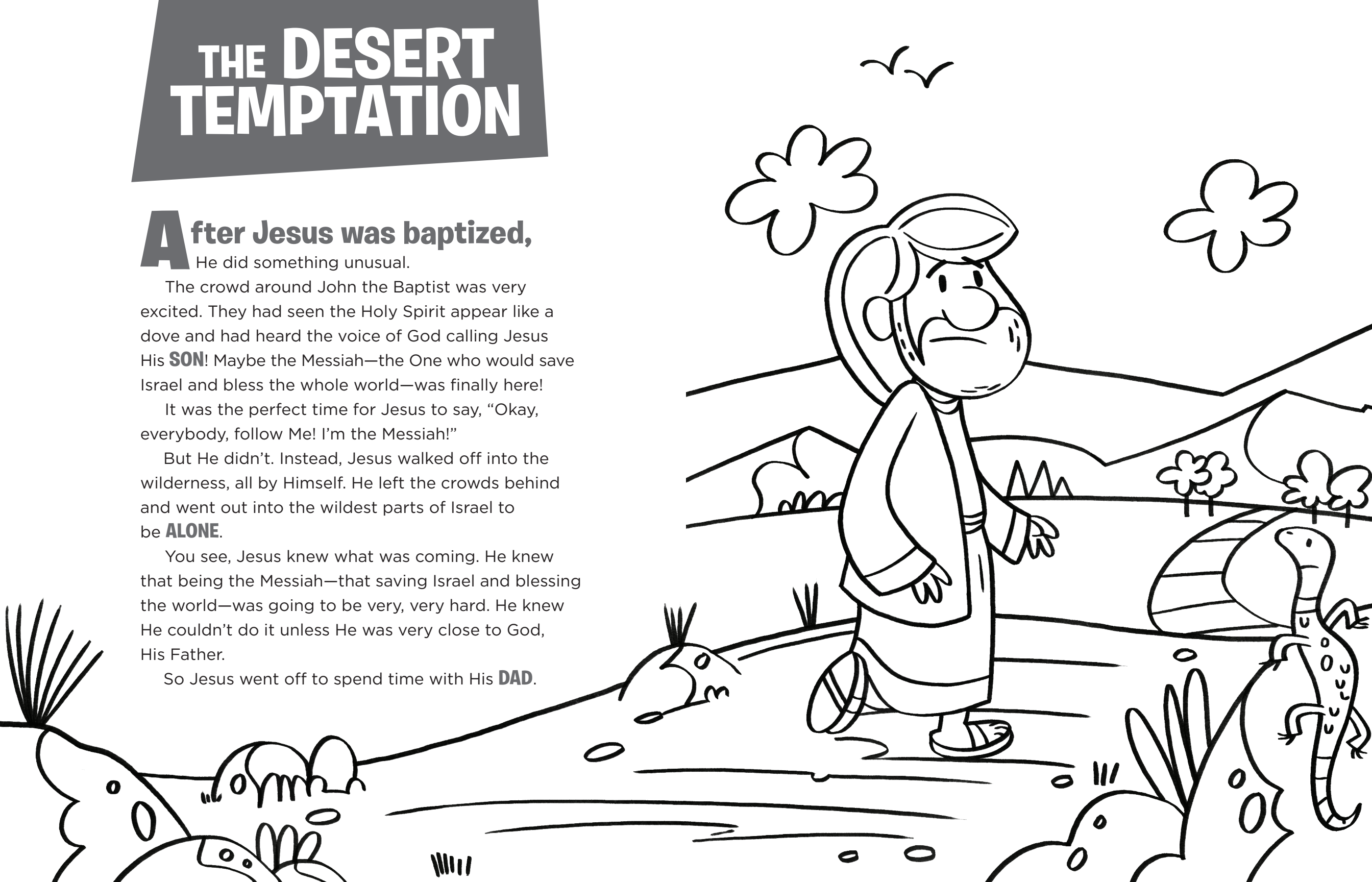
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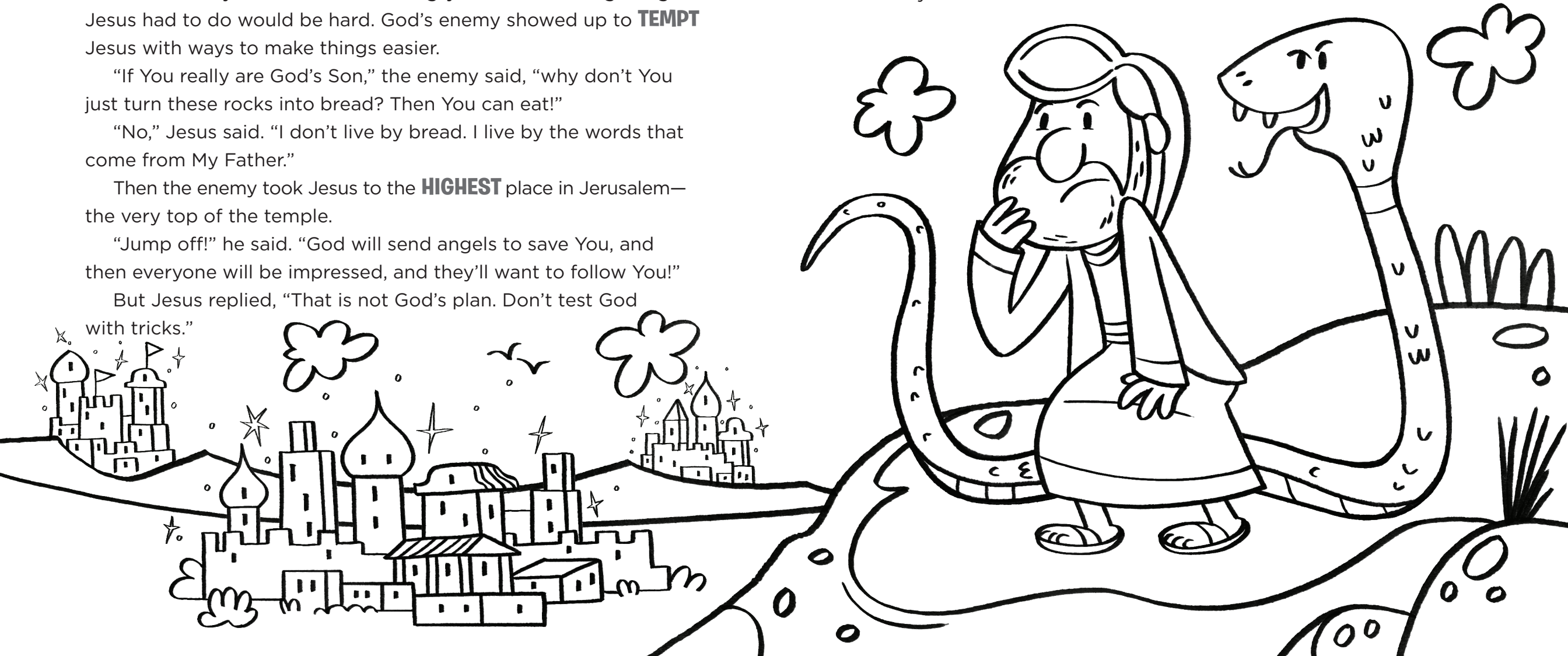
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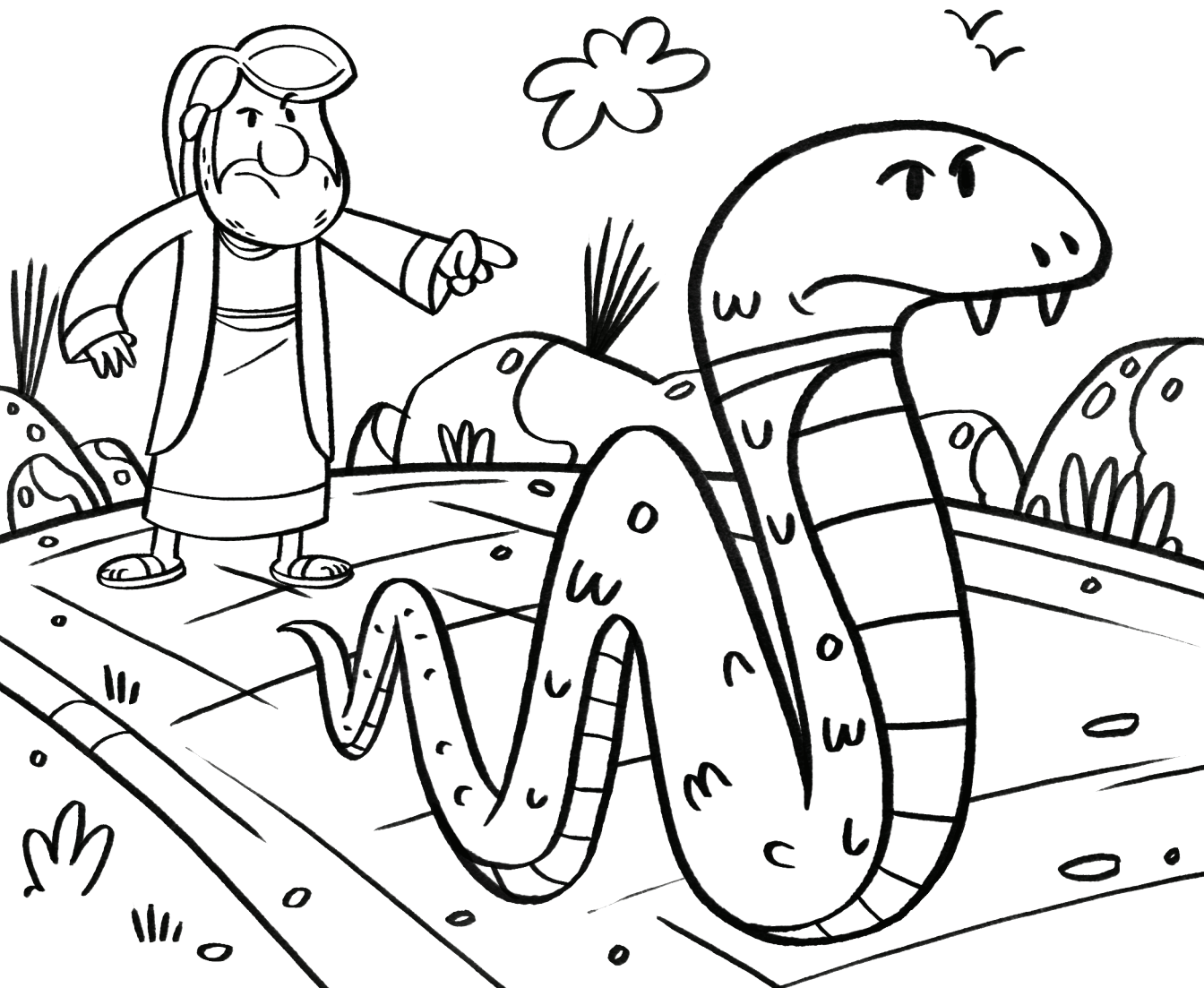
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