

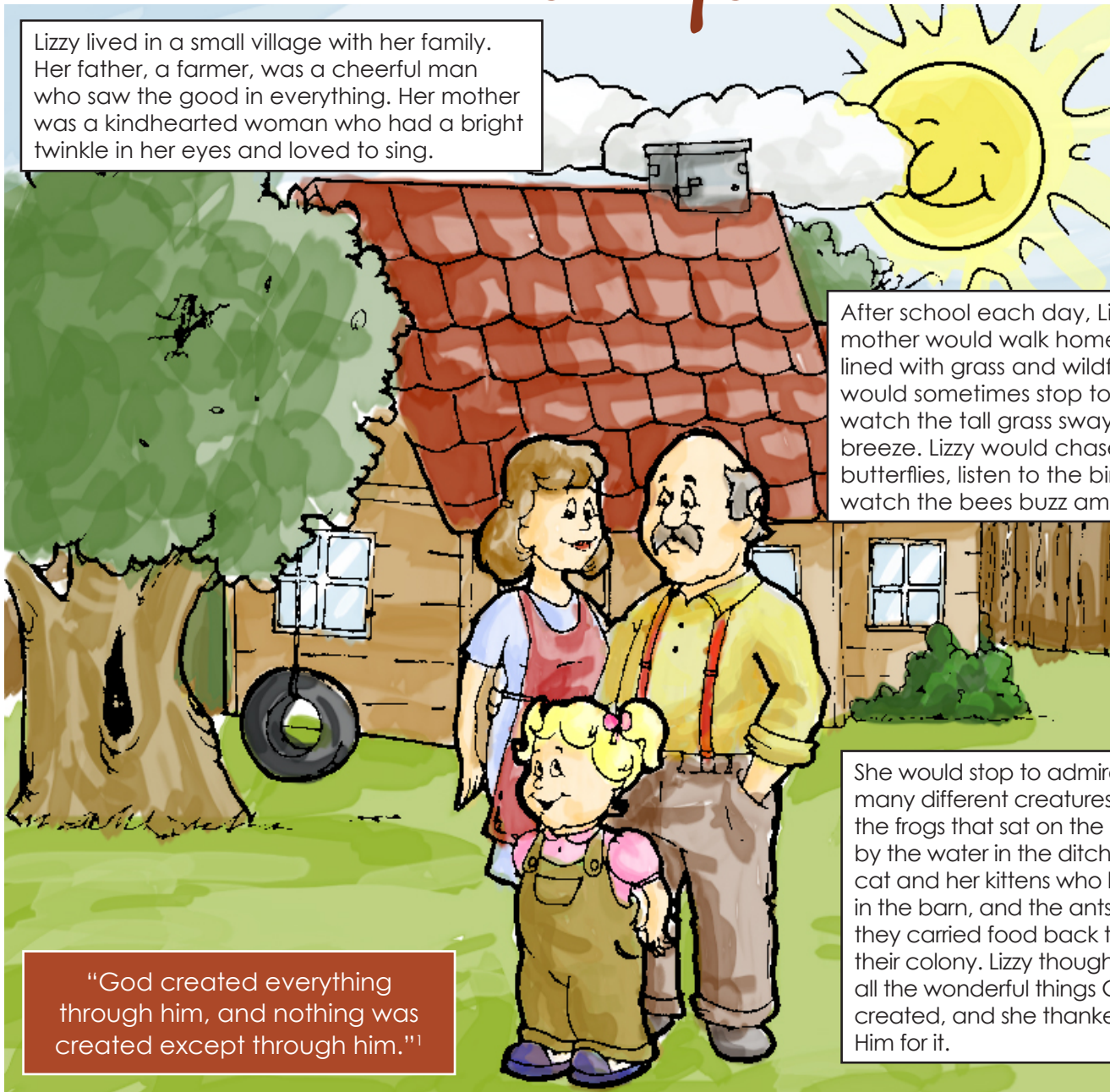
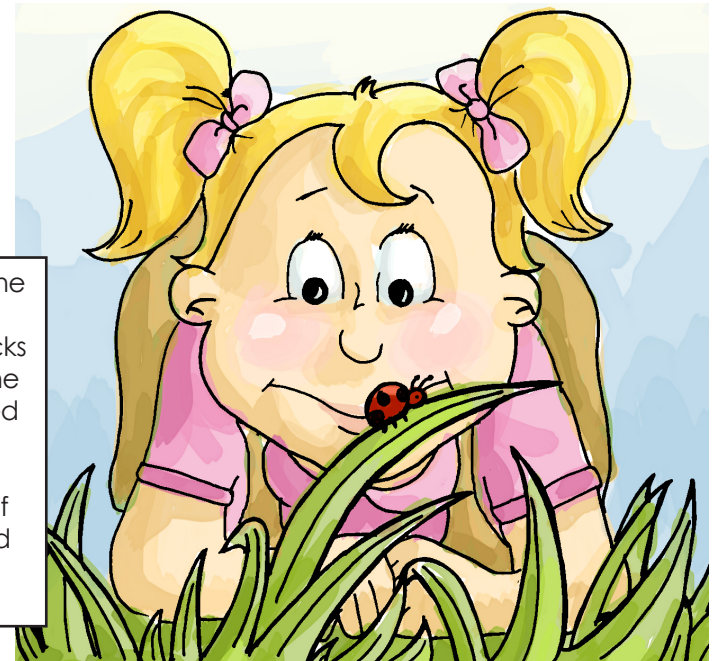
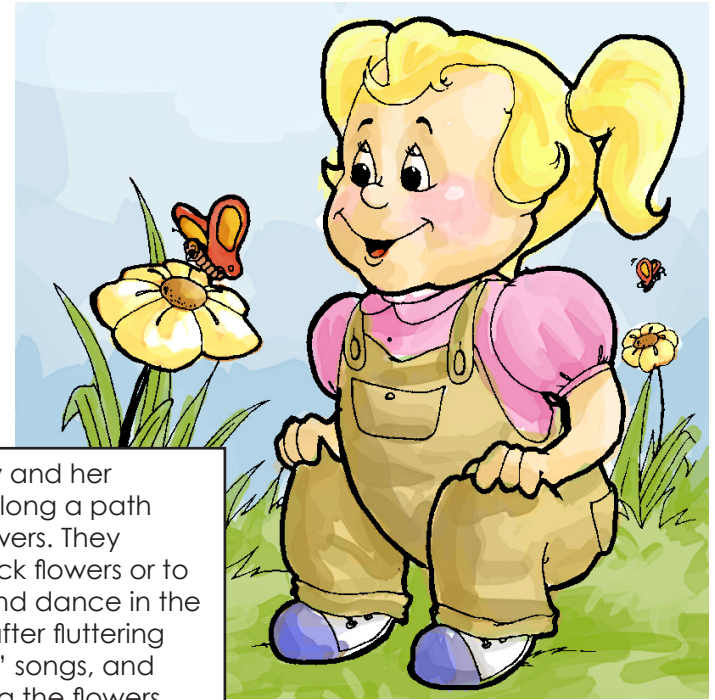
What a Beautiful World!

Lizzy lived in a small village with her family. Her father, a farmer, was a cheerful man who saw the good in everything. Her mother was a kindhearted woman who had a bright twinkle in her eyes and loved to sing.

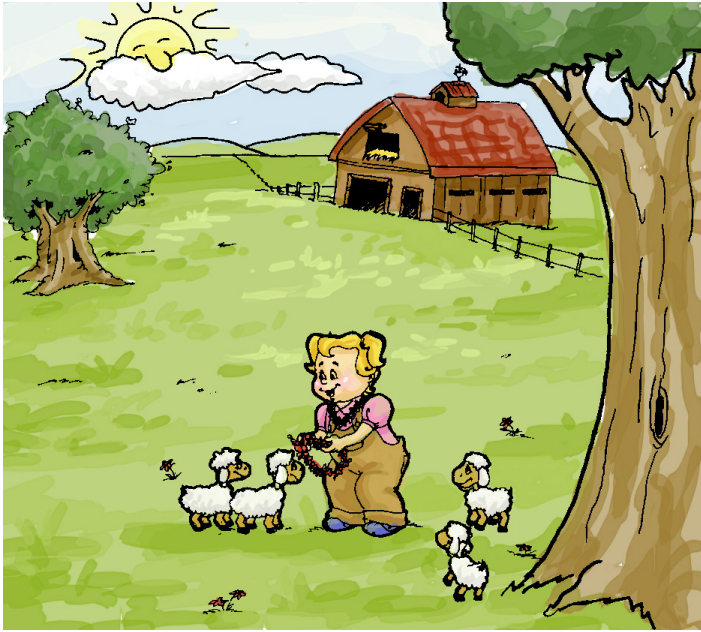
After school each day, Lizzy and her mother would walk home along a path lined with grass and wildflowers. They would sometimes stop to pick flowers or to watch the tall grass sway and dance in the breeze. Lizzy would chase after fluttering butterflies, listen to the birds' songs, and watch the bees buzz among the flowers.

She would stop to admire the many different creatures—the frogs that sat on the rocks by the water in the ditch, the cat and her kittens who lived in the barn, and the ants as they carried food back to their colony. Lizzy thought of all the wonderful things God created, and she thanked Him for it.

"God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him."



Every season brought its own set of colors and wonders of nature. In the spring, when the apple trees were covered with blossoms and the lambs were born, her father would take her with him to check on the lambs and make sure they were growing well. The sun shone brightly, warming up the earth and bringing everything to life.

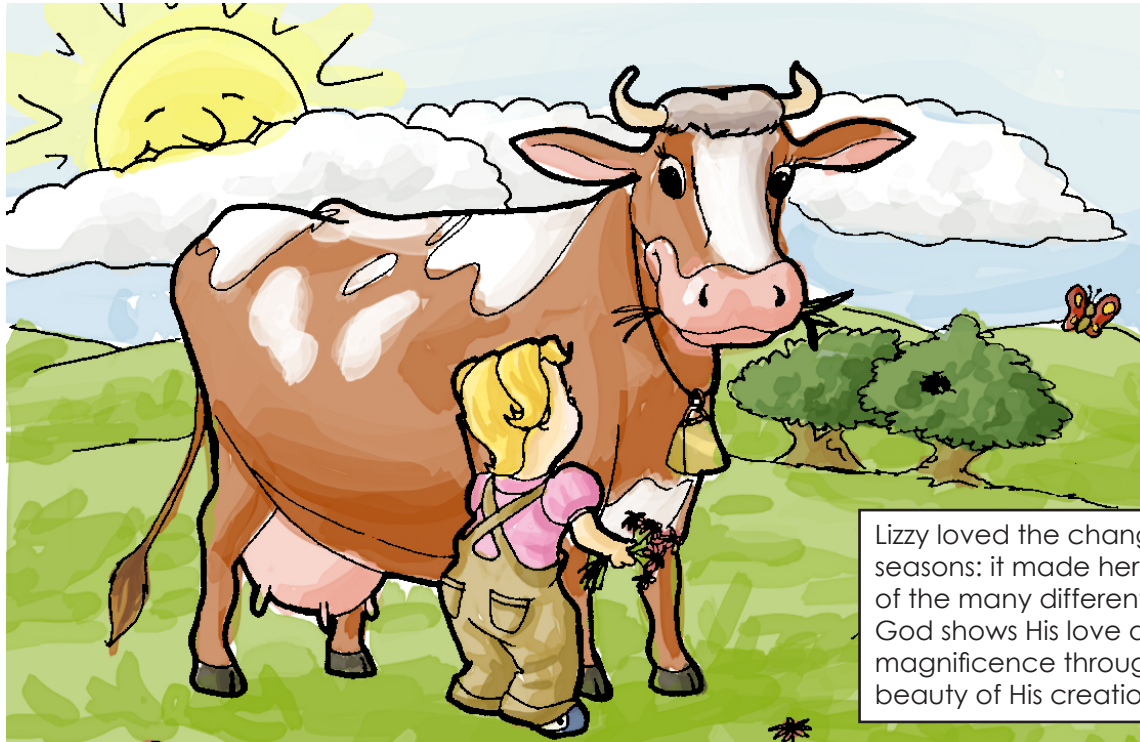


In the autumn, Lizzy would collect the red and gold leaves that had fallen from the trees and make herself a crown to wear. She would chase the leaves that blew in the breeze, and the air was filled with her laughter.

In winter, snow covered the trees, the rooftops, and the ground, making everything white. Crystal necklaces of ice hung from the roofs, and sparkling ice drops that looked like diamonds shone in the trees.



The summer was a time of fun and play. Lizzy would swim in the pond with her friends, watch the cows in the meadow, and climb trees. There was lots of delicious fruit to eat, and Lizzy would go berry picking with her friends, filling her basket to overflowing.



Lizzy loved the changing seasons: it made her think of the many different ways God shows His love and magnificence through the beauty of His creation.

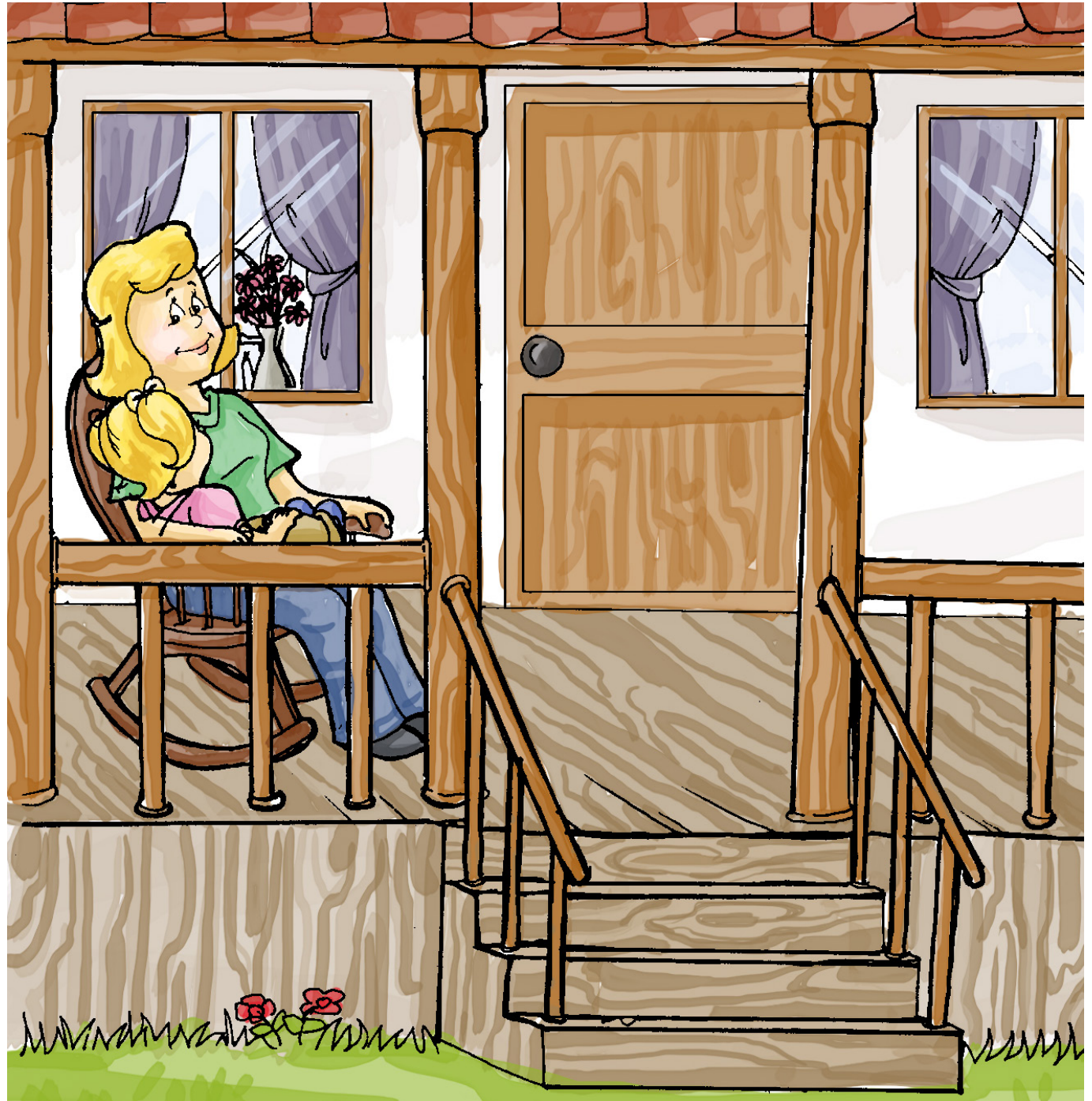


Sometimes at night, Lizzy would sit with her mother on the porch and gaze at the stars twinkling in the clear, dark sky.

"The stars look like sparkling jewels," Lizzy said one night. "Or maybe they are little angels beaming their love to us."

"That's a beautiful thought," Mother said. "King David, in the Bible, once said that we should give thanks to God—the one who made all the heavenly lights—because His love is constant and forever.² Appreciating and showing our gratitude for God's handiwork is one way we can also draw closer to Him. By considering how much care and thought He put into everything, we can be encouraged that His love and care for us is even more wonderful."

"Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice! Let the sea and everything in it shout his praise! Let the fields and their crops burst out with joy! Let the trees of the forest rustle with praise before the Lord."³



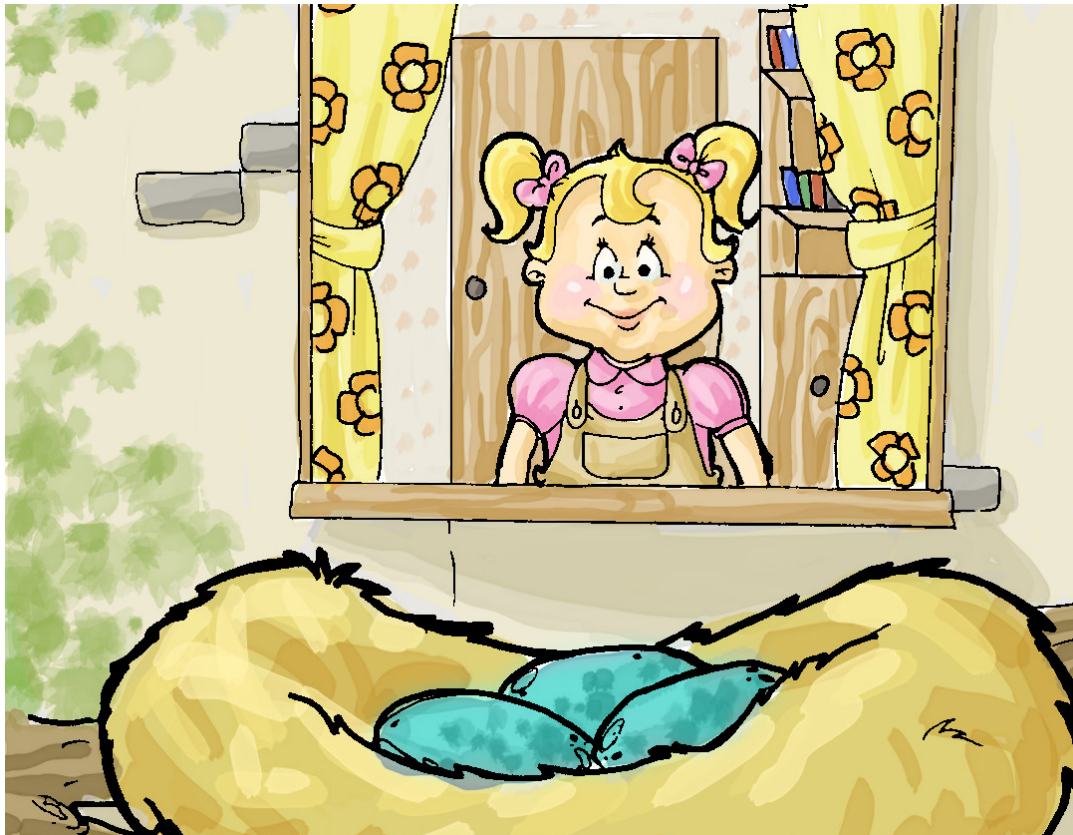


One morning, Lizzy saw a robin perched on her windowsill singing a sweet song. Lizzy watched the little bird hop from the windowsill to a branch of the nearby cherry tree. In the hollow of a large branch, Lizzy saw that there was a small nest, in which, to Lizzy's great delight, lay three small, speckled eggs. Lizzy was excited. She ran to tell her parents about the nest.

"Daddy, can we put up a bird feeder in the cherry tree?" Lizzy asked. "That way the mommy bird can have lots of seed to eat and also to feed her chicks when they hatch."

"Good idea, Lizzy," her father said. "Let's check my workshop to see what we have to build a feeder."

Before long, a feeder was hanging from the cherry tree's branches, and Lizzy watched the bird check out the feeder and begin pecking at the seeds. Lizzy watched every day, waiting for that special moment when the new little birds hatch.

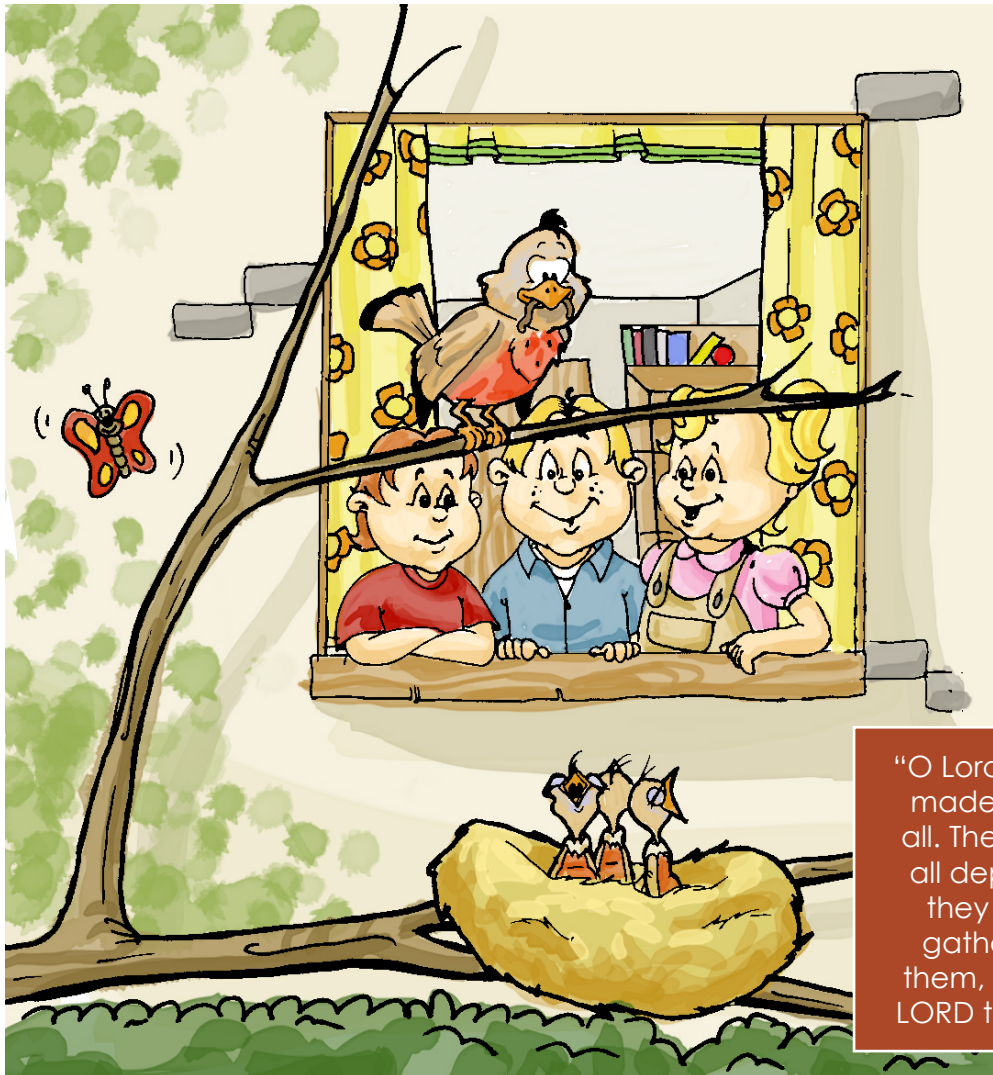


Lizzy told her friends of her special discovery, and in the days that followed, they would come over and watch the mother robin care for her eggs.

Soon, one by one, the eggs hatched. Lizzy watched as the chicks raised their little heads and began to chirp for food. The mother robin

flew to and from the nest and feeder with food for her chicks. The birds grew bigger, fatter, and full of feathers. Soon they would learn to fly.

Lizzy felt a twinge of sadness. She had enjoyed watching the little birds' develop and grow, but soon they would be gone. It wasn't long before the little robins were flying briefly around the garden before returning to their nest.



"O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures. They all depend on you to give them food as they need it. When you supply it, they gather it. You open your hand to feed them, and they are richly satisfied. ... The LORD takes pleasure in all he has made!"⁴

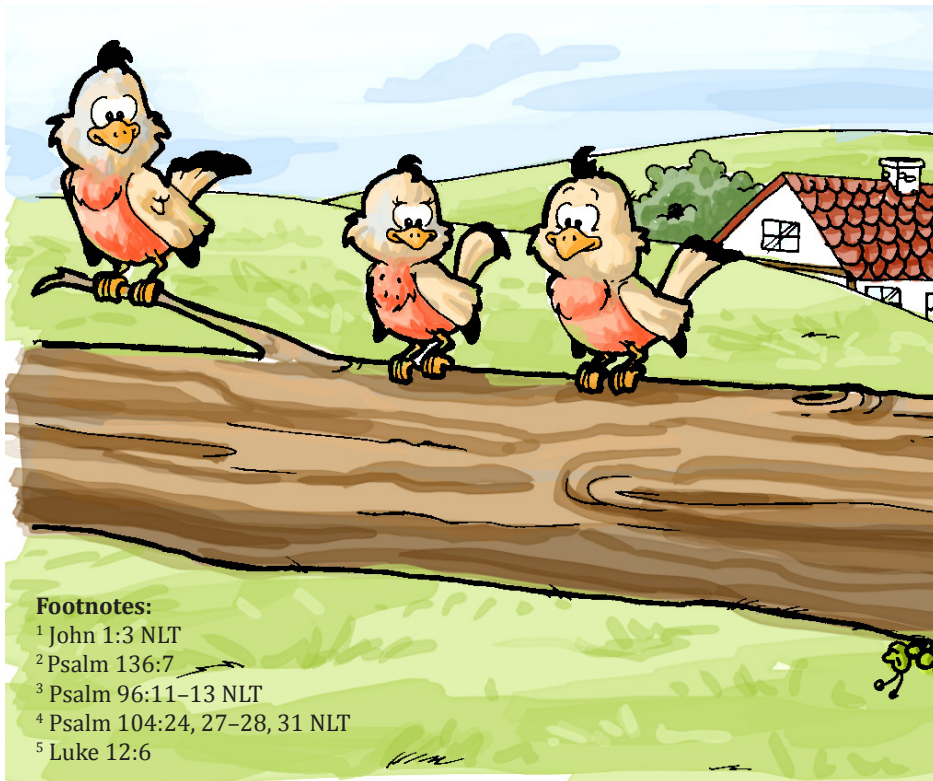
Then one day, Lizzy noticed that the robin's nest was empty, and there were no robins nearby.

"The robins are gone!" Lizzy told her father. "I am going to miss them. I wish they would stay."

"Wasn't it special to watch the process of the eggs hatching and the chicks growing into full-fledged birds?" her father asked.

"But if they leave our farm, we can't help take care of them," Lizzy said.

"Ah, Lizzy, you are so caring," said her father. "But you must remember that God looks after all His creatures. We can do our part to help—like putting up a feeder for them, caring well for the nature around us—but God is the one who ultimately looks after them, and He's promised to not forget the little birds.⁵ We can pray for the robins, and then trust that God will look after them. And who knows, maybe they will return to your bird feeder and chirp their gratitude to you for your care."



Footnotes:

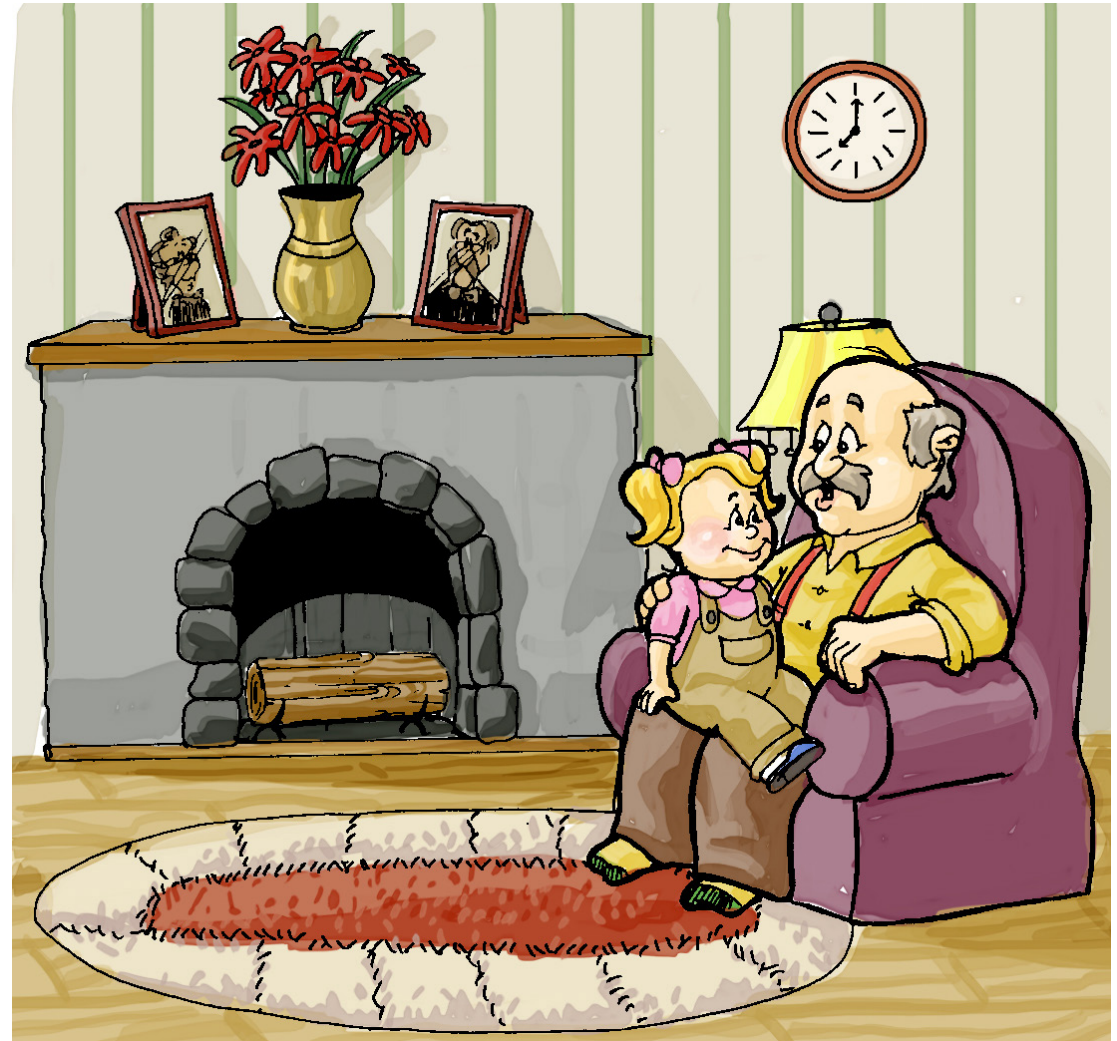
¹ John 1:3 NLT

² Psalm 136:7

³ Psalm 96:11-13 NLT

⁴ Psalm 104:24, 27-28, 31 NLT

⁵ Luke 12:6



Together they talked about the little birds and their new life. Lizzy prayed for the little birds and asked God to care for them. She praised God for the beauty of His creation and for His loving care.

*Adapted by Shanna Landon, original author unknown.
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