

# THE STORY

READ THE STORY. EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE.

## AS YOU READ CHAPTER 22

*Journal your answers to these questions as you read through the chapter this week. You may wish to read one day and journal the next, or spread the questions over the whole week.*

1. These verses in the Gospel of John reveal one of the most important beliefs. How does John 1:1-14, 18 (p. 309), help clarify the relationship between God and Jesus? Why is this so important?
2. What does it mean to you that God came to inhabit human flesh in Jesus?
3. Compare Mary's song with Hannah's praise song in 1 Samuel 2:1-10 (p. 131). How would you describe these women's experiences of God's Upper Story entering their Lower Story?
4. Joseph had a hard choice: to follow the conventional rules of upright religion or trust God's instruction to him, even if it meant scandal. In what ways have you experienced what's "religiously proper" conflict with what God calls you to do?
5. Herod was not the first evil ruler to commit, or attempt, infanticide against Hebrew babies. What other examples can you recall? What does this teach you about God's Upper Story plan of redemption? What does it teach you about God's plan of redemption in your story?
6. The text tells us "everyone who heard [Jesus] was amazed" (p. 315). What do you suppose it was that surprised them? In what ways has Jesus amazed you this week?

## PRAYER

God,  
Thank you for never giving up on having a relationship with your people and for making it possible through your son, Jesus. Thank you, God, that you know I need a God of flesh and bones to redeem me and all the hurts and struggles of this earthly life. Help me to invite you into my life in courageous ways, just as Mary did in Jesus' birth story.