# You Are Not Alone

*Based on Isaiah 43:1–7*

Have you ever been afraid? Everyone is afraid sometimes. That's okay. The people who heard the words God gave Isaiah knew what it was like to be afraid. They were living in a very scary time. They were forced to leave their homes, and they weren't allowed to go back.

Some people felt as if their whole world was ending. What was going to happen? Would they ever be able to go home? Did God even love them anymore?

Isaiah wanted to give God's people hope and encouragement. God had this message for them: "Do not be afraid. I am with you. I know your name, and you are special to me. When you get into the water, I will be with you. I will not let the water get too high. When you walk through fire, you won't be burned because I will be with you. I am God. You are so special. And I love you. I will bring you home again and make sure that you stay safe."

God knew that their lives were hard. Isaiah's job as a prophet was to bring these words to God's people. One day they were written down so that everyone would







know that God is with them no matter what. Even when bad things happen, God is there with us. We don't have to do anything alone. God is with us even during the scariest times.

**Hear:** What words help you when you are afraid? What would you want to hear God say to you when you are afraid?

**See:** God's words bring comfort. Which of God's messages would you like to see when you wake up each morning?

**Act:** Choose a sentence from God's words to the people. Write them on a sheet of paper and decorate it. Display it where your family will see it.

# God Is with Us

**Read Isaiah 7:10-16; 9:2-7; 43:1-7**
**Or "You Are Not Alone" (*Story Bible*, pp. 146-47)**

Think about a time when you were really scared. Did you feel alone? Did it help to have someone with you when you were scared, to let you know you weren't alone in facing your fears?

The prophet Isaiah spoke and wrote to people who were really scared. Their world seemed to be falling apart. The kingdom of Israel that David and Solomon had ruled over had split, dividing into the Northern Kingdom still called Israel and the Southern Kingdom called Judah. Armies were threatening to attack both kingdoms. Israel was defeated and then Judah. The Babylonian army destroyed the beautiful temple in Jerusalem and took many people back to Babylon with them, to keep them from rebuilding their city.

Amid all that terror, Isaiah gave warnings (as prophets do) but also gave the people hope, telling them that God was with them.

To a king afraid of invaders, Isaiah used the image of a baby named Immanuel, meaning "God with us." Before that baby is even old enough to know right from wrong, Isaiah said, the armies threatening Judah will fall apart. So don't be afraid—God is with us.

To the people who were afraid that war would soon come to their land, Isaiah said that one day there would be peace—peace so complete that they could get rid of their soldiers' boots and uniforms—and a king would reign who was more wonderful,





just, and righteous than any who came before. He would be a prince of peace! So don't be afraid—God is with us.

To the people exiled in Babylon, held captive, and afraid they would never see their homeland again, Isaiah gave a message direct from God: "I created you, I know you, and I love you. Don't be afraid—I am with you."

You might have scary times in your life. You might be really, really afraid. No matter what, God is with you.

**Discuss:** How can remembering that God is with you help when you are afraid? How can we help others be less afraid?

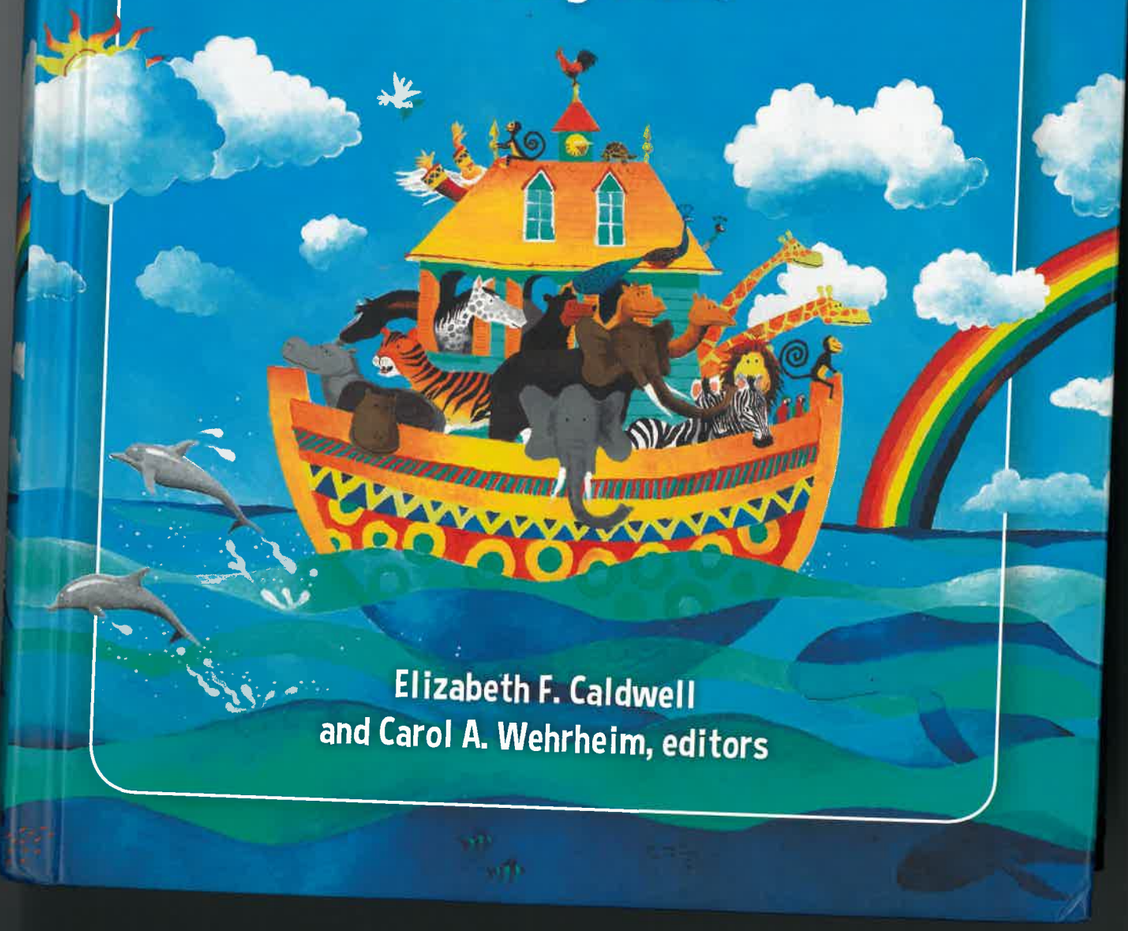
**Discover:** See what you can learn about the Babylonian exile. What would it be like to be forcibly removed from your home?

**Do:** Make a sign using Isaiah's comforting words to remind you that God is always with you.

*Lord, you have created us, formed us, and called us by name. We are yours. Amen.*

# Growing in God's Love

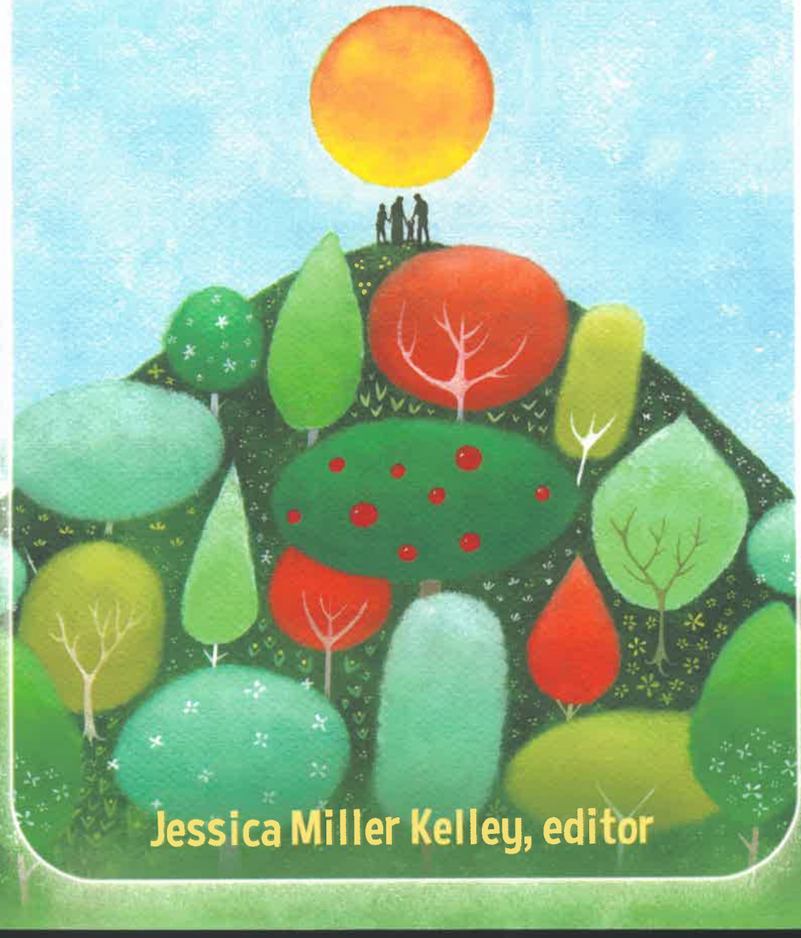
## A Story Bible



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# Growing in God's Love

## A Family Devotional



Jessica Miller Kelley, editor