

Something Better Coming

written by Megan Saben and illustrated by Ryan Flanders

A reader's guide to the original edition

THINGS TO LOOK FOR AND THINK ABOUT

The first time you read *Something Better Coming*, JUST READ IT. After that, pick ONE idea to look for throughout the book. The next time, pick another idea to talk about. Understanding will build in many layers far more effectively than in one long, drawn-out sitting.

1. Tell me about the lily. (Make sure you start on the title page!)
2. Who is in this picture? Is he/she happy or sad? What is this person doing with his/her hands?
3. Is Jesus in this picture? What does this part of the story help us remember us about Jesus?

SOMETHING BETTER COMING IS LIKE A SHORT FILM

How does a camera tell a story? By telling you where to look, focusing your attention on individuals or groups of people, choosing which conversations or actions will draw out the reader's heart, where to cut the scene...or turn the page.

Below are the Scriptural accounts which provide further details to each event in *Something Better Coming*.

STORY	SCRIPTURE
The widow's son	Luke 7:11-17
Jairus's daughter	Matthew 9:18-26 Mark 5:21-43 Luke 8:40-56
Mary, Martha, and Lazarus	John 11
Jesus Christ, our Savior	Mathew 27:35-28:10 Mark 15:25-16:11 Luke 23:27-24:10 John 19:17-20:18
Our future hope	The book of Acts

NOTES ON THE ARTWORK FROM THE ILLUSTRATOR

The illustrations of *Something Better Coming* incorporate a limited color palette which serve as the backdrop for expressive lines and symbolic imagery. Each story unfolds with a gradual transition from cool blues of grief to sandy yellows permeated with triumphal light. This leads the reader into a sense of mounting expectation.

Consider the perspective in each scene, whether we are alone or in a crowd, lying in the dust with Jairus, or soaring above the Roman Centurion who gazes upon the face of the dying Savior. Each character is unique, showing real emotion.

Notice the hands: holding, praising, wringing, clasping, spreading, hanging, carrying, inviting, passive, responsive. These expressive lines draw the reader's attention and invite the observer to examine the thoughts and feelings revealed in the characters' faces.

In concert with these expressions the lily motif provides an important symbol. On the title page a single lily is blooming in a pot. At the opening of the first story, the widow's hopelessness is echoed by the wilted lily in the window and the snuffed out lamp in the widow's hands, representing the lost life of her son. At the close of this story, when her son is brought back to life, we find the lily in the ground in the early stages of resurrection.

At the end of each story the lily progressively grows until it is eventually depicted in the glory of full bloom, representing the glorified state of Jesus the Savior and all those who are found in him on the last day.

Finally, the elements of bread and wine are depicted in representation of our Lord's death and our sure hope of his return.

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