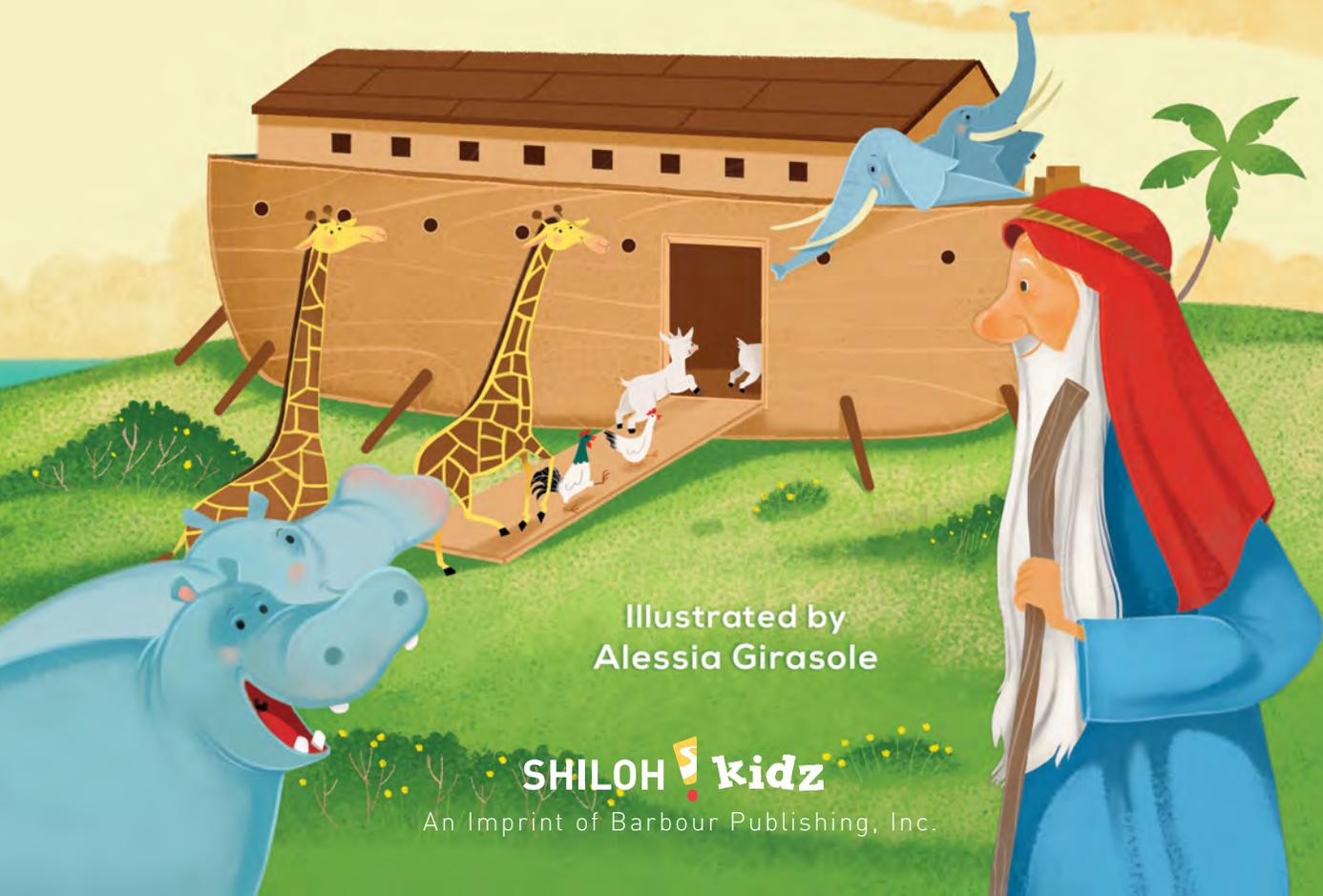


365 Classic Bedtime BIBLE STORIES

Inspired by Jesse Lyman Hurlbut's *Story of the Bible*



Illustrated by
Alessia Girasole

SHILOH  kidz

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God Creates the Earth

Genesis 1:1-19

The earth is very old. No one knows when it was made. But God has always been alive. He created the heavens and the earth. The earth was empty and very dark and covered with water. Nothing lived on the earth.

God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good. He called the light day and the darkness night. This was the first day. On the second day, God spoke and made the sky.

Next God said, "I want the dry land to come out of the water." So it did. God named the land earth and the waters sea. God saw that this was good. Then God said, "Let all the green plants grow out of the earth." All this happened on the third day, and it was good.

Then on the fourth day, God spoke again. He said, "Let the sun and moon and stars come into the sky." So this happened. God put them in the sky to give light to the earth. The sun shines in the day. The moon and stars shine at night. God saw that this was good, too.



God Creates the Earth

Genesis 1:20-2:3



On the fifth day, God spoke again. He said, "I want the seas to be filled with living things. I want birds to fly in the sky." So God created everything that lives in the sea and flies in the sky. And God blessed them.

Then God said, "Let the animals live on earth." So he created big animals and little things that creep on the ground. God saw that all this was good.

Finally, God said, "Now I am going to make human beings. Unlike the animals, they will stand up tall and have a soul. They will be like me, rule the earth, and care for it." So God took some dust from the ground and formed man. He breathed the breath of life into him. Man became alive.

God blessed them, saying, "I want you to live all over the earth." God saw that everything he had made was very good. This ended the sixth day.

On the seventh day God rested. His work was done. So he blessed that day and made it holy.



Adam Lives in the Garden

Genesis 2:8–24

The man God created was named Adam. God planted a garden in Eden to be Adam's home. This garden was big. Four rivers ran through it. Beautiful plants and trees grew there. They were good for food. God told Adam to take care of the garden.

Next God created the animals and birds out of the dust. He brought them to the man and Adam named them all. But Adam was alone. "This is not good," God said. "I will make someone to be with Adam and to help him." So God made Eve.



Eve Is Tricked by the Serpent

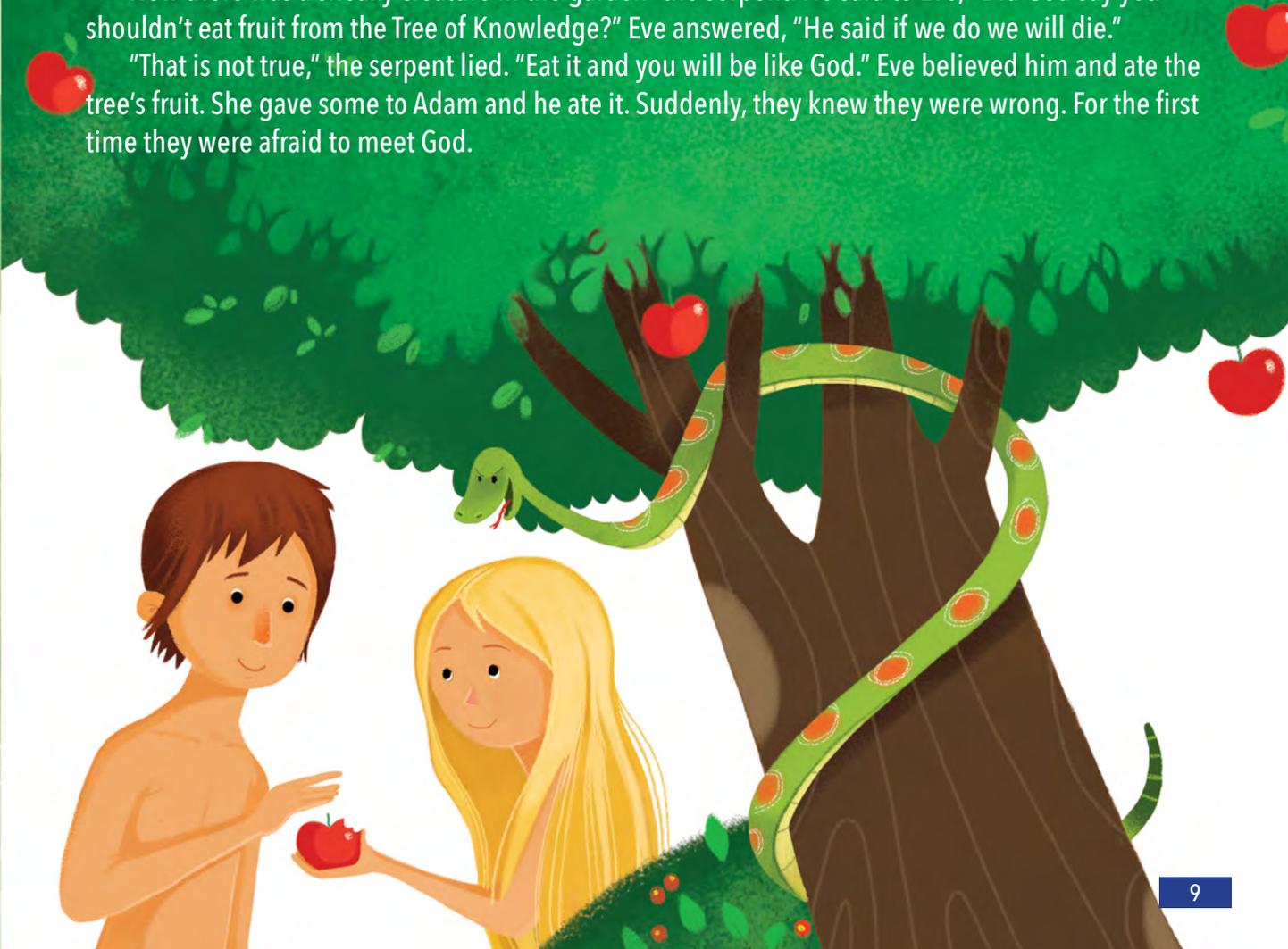
Genesis 2:20–3:7

God made Eve in a wonderful way: When Adam was asleep, God took a rib out of him. God made a woman with that rib and brought her to Adam. They loved each other. Adam named the woman Eve. They lived at peace in their beautiful garden. They cared for it as God asked, and God walked with them there.

Two special trees grew in Eden. One was named the Tree of Life. God warned them about the other tree. It was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. "If you eat of this tree," he said, "you will die."

Now there was a sneaky creature in the garden—the serpent. He said to Eve, "Did God say you shouldn't eat fruit from the Tree of Knowledge?" Eve answered, "He said if we do we will die."

"That is not true," the serpent lied. "Eat it and you will be like God." Eve believed him and ate the tree's fruit. She gave some to Adam and he ate it. Suddenly, they knew they were wrong. For the first time they were afraid to meet God.



Adam and Eve Leave the Garden

Genesis 3:8–24

God walked in the cool garden breeze. But Adam and Eve were hiding among the trees. “Where are you?” called God. “I heard you and was afraid,” the man answered. “So I hid from you.”

“Did you eat from the tree I warned you about?” asked God.

“The woman gave me the fruit. I ate it,” the man said. So God spoke to the woman. “What have you done?”

“The serpent tricked me,” she said, “and I ate.” God turned to the serpent. “You have done this, so you will always crawl on your belly. You will hate the woman. She will also hate you. You and her child will fight. He will crush your head. You will bite him on the heel.”

Then God told the woman, “You will have children. But you will be in pain when you do.”

“Adam,” God said, “you listened to her and ate from the tree. So you must work for all you get from the earth. You will sweat and suffer all your life. I made you out of dust. So you will turn back into dust.”

Then God sent them out of the garden.



Cain Murders His Brother

Genesis 3:23–4:16

Adam and Eve lived outside the garden until they died. A flaming sword guards the path to the Tree of Life. No one has gone back there since they left.

Eve gave birth to a baby boy named Cain. Her second baby was a boy named Abel.

When the boys became men, they worked like their father. Cain was a farmer. Abel was a shepherd. One day Cain brought fruit to give to God. He worked to grow the fruit on his farm. Abel had a gift for God, too. He gave a lamb that had been born in the field. God was happy with Abel's gift. But he refused Cain's gift.

Cain became angry, so God asked him, “Why are you angry? Be careful. Sin might catch you.” Later Cain killed Abel while he was walking in the field. God asked Cain, “Where is your brother?”

“I don't know,” Cain answered. “Should I care for my brother?”

“What have you done?” God said. “Listen, Abel's blood is crying to me from the ground. You murdered Abel. You will always live under a curse.”

So Cain went away from God. He lived east of Eden in the land of Nod.





Noah Builds the Ark

Genesis 6:1-7:5

A long time passed after Cain killed Abel. The land was full of people. God looked at the world he had made. The people were wicked. God said, "I am sorry I made these people."

But God saw one good man named Noah. He told Noah, "I am going to wipe out the people I made. They will die with all things on earth. Only you are living right. So you and your family will be saved." Then God told Noah to build a huge boat called an ark. This ark was as big as a three-story building. "I am going to flood the earth with water," God said. "All the people and all the animals will drown."

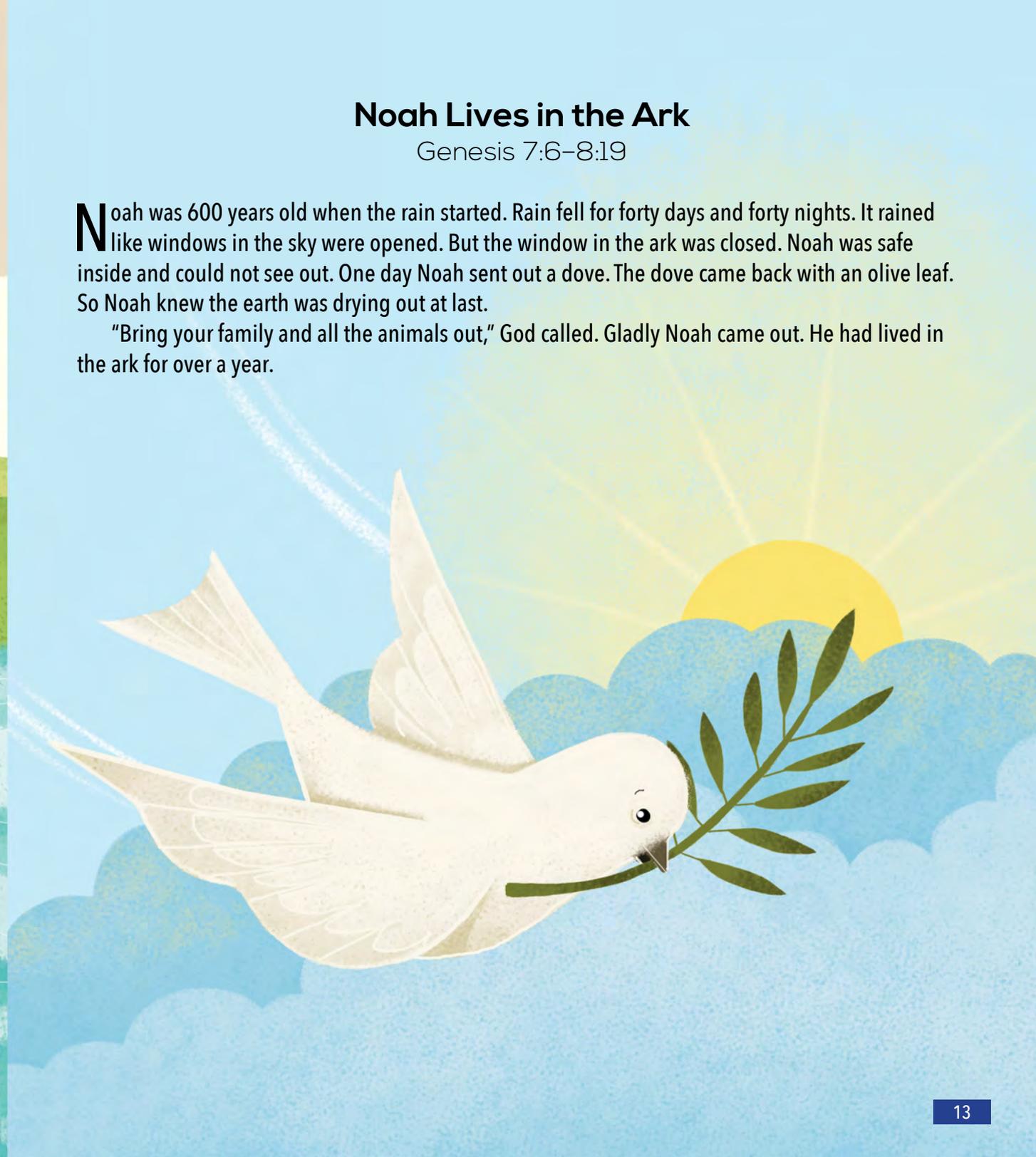
"Noah," God went on, "bring two of every kind of animal into the ark. Gather food for them and for yourself. Then go into the ark with your family. In seven days I will send rain. The rain will fall for forty days. Everything I created will be wiped off the earth." And Noah did all the things God told him to do.

Noah Lives in the Ark

Genesis 7:6-8:19

Noah was 600 years old when the rain started. Rain fell for forty days and forty nights. It rained like windows in the sky were opened. But the window in the ark was closed. Noah was safe inside and could not see out. One day Noah sent out a dove. The dove came back with an olive leaf. So Noah knew the earth was drying out at last.

"Bring your family and all the animals out," God called. Gladly Noah came out. He had lived in the ark for over a year.



The Rainbow of God's Promise

Genesis 8:20–9:17

The flood was over. Every living thing on earth was killed. Only the animals and people in the ark came through alive. Noah knew what he should do first. He built an altar and gave gifts to God. This way Noah thanked God for saving his family.

God made a promise: "Never again will a flood destroy all life. The four seasons will come and go forever. The earth is yours, Noah. Rule it well."

Suddenly, the first rainbow curved through the sky. Now every time there is a rainbow, people remember God's promise to Noah.



God Appears to Abraham

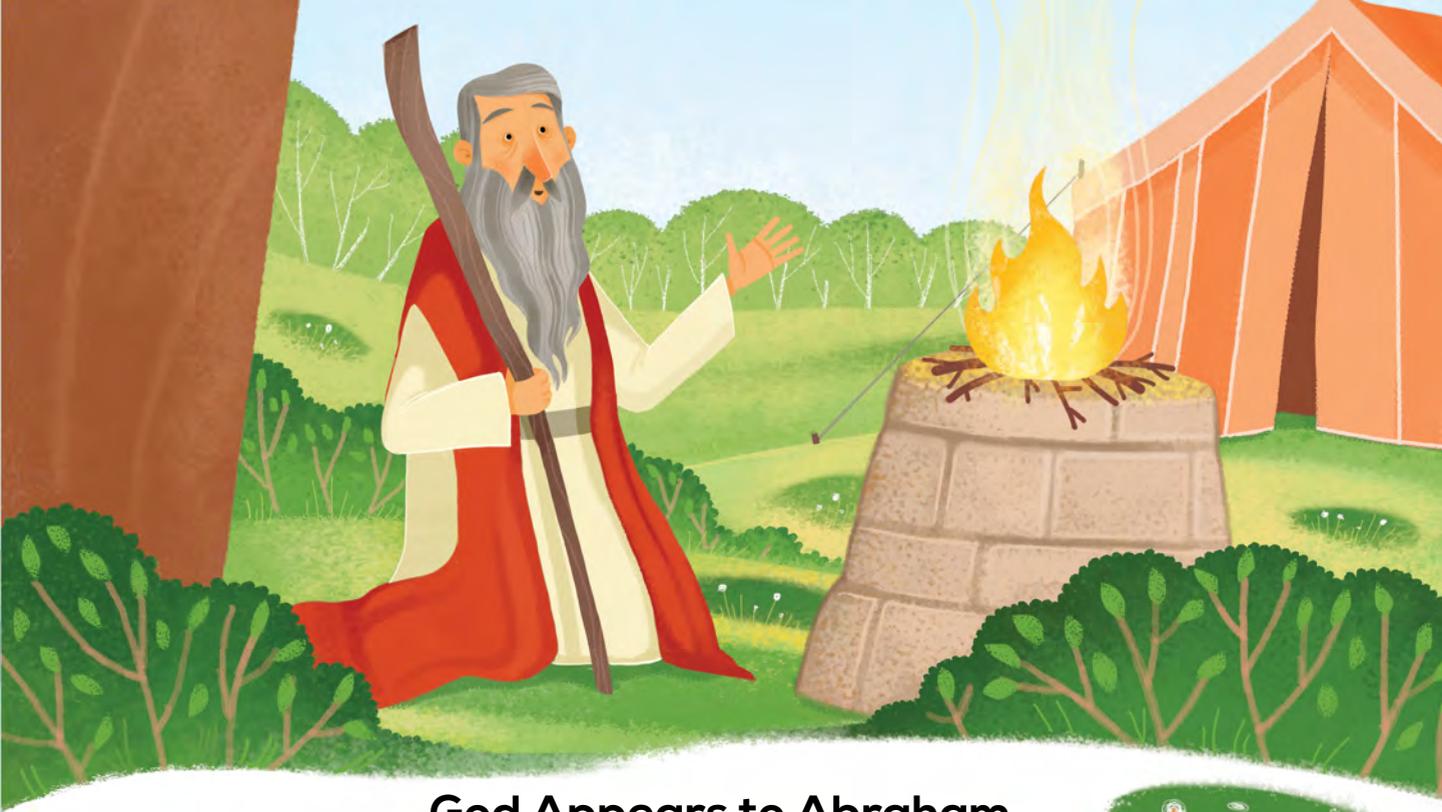
Genesis 12:1–13:18

Once there was a city called Ur. God appeared to a man who lived there named Abraham. "Leave this place," God said. "Go to the land I will show you." And God made a promise to Abraham: "I will make your family a great people. I will bless you and make your name great. Everyone on earth will be blessed because of you."

Abraham left Ur with his family. Together they traveled over hills and rivers to a land called Canaan. They camped by a big oak tree at Moreh. There God appeared to Abraham again. "I will give this land to all your children," he said. Abraham built an altar and worshiped God.

Traveling with Abraham was his nephew, Lot. They went many places together in Canaan. At Bethel, Lot's shepherds and Abraham's shepherds were fighting. So Abraham invited Lot to choose another place to live. Near the Jordan River was a place called Sodom. Lot chose to live there. He thought it looked like the garden of God. But the people in Sodom were wicked and hated God.

Abraham lived in Canaan, the land God had promised to him.



God Makes a Promise

Genesis 15:1-18

God came to Abraham again one night by the oak trees at Hebron. "Don't be afraid Abraham," he said. "I will keep you safe and give you a great reward."

"But, Lord," said Abraham, "I am old and don't have a son. Who will get this reward?" God took Abraham outside. "Look up. Try to count the stars," he said. "I promise that you will have more children than there are stars. This land called Canaan will be theirs."

Abraham believed God. And God said Abraham was right because he believed.



Sarah Laughs at God

Genesis 18:1-15

It was a hot day by the oaks of Mamre. Abraham was sitting in the shade near his tent. Looking up, he saw God and two angels standing nearby. They looked just like men. Abraham and his wife, Sarah, rushed to make lunch for them.

"Where is your wife?" God asked. "She is going to have a child soon." In the tent, Sarah heard this and laughed. She was much too old to have children. "Why does she laugh?" God asked. "Nothing is too difficult for me. At the right time, she will have a baby."



Fire Rains on Sodom

Genesis 19:1-24

While God talked with Abraham, the angels left Mamre. That night they found Lot sitting by Sodom's gate. They had come to destroy that sinful place. First the angels warned Lot to leave. But Lot was in no hurry to get away. So the angels grabbed his hand. They rushed him out with his wife and daughters. They warned, "Run for your life into the hills. Don't look back."

God rained fire on Sodom. Smoke covered the valley. But Lot's wife looked back at the city. She turned into a pillar of salt. Her family kept running.



Abraham's Two Sons

Genesis 21:1-14

After Sodom was destroyed, Abraham moved his camp nearer to the sea. There, when Abraham was 100 years old, God kept his promise. Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. They were very happy and had a big feast. They named their son Isaac. His name means "laughing" because Sarah had laughed at God's news. And Sarah said, "God has brought laughter for me. Everyone who hears will laugh with me."

There were now two boys in Abraham's tent. One was Sarah's new baby, Isaac. The other was Ishmael. He was the son of Sarah's maid, Hagar. Ishmael did not like Isaac or treat him well. This made Sarah angry. She told Abraham, "Send away Hagar and her son. I don't want Ishmael to have what belongs to Isaac."

Abraham was very sad about this. Ishmael was his son, too. But God said, "Abraham, don't worry about Hagar and her son. Do what Sarah says. It's better that Isaac lives alone with you. Everything that is yours will belong to him someday. I'll take care of Ishmael. He'll be the father of a great family just like Isaac."

The next morning Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away.



Ishmael's Desert Journey

Genesis 21:14-20

Early in the morning, Hagar and Ishmael left Abraham's tent. He gave them bread and a bottle of water for their trip. But the water ran out. Hagar didn't want Ishmael to die in the desert sun.

There Hagar broke down and cried. But the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven. "Don't be afraid, Hagar. Lift up your son and hold him. He'll have a great family." Then God showed her a well of water, and they drank.

Ishmael grew up, and God was with him. He lived to become a hunter in the desert.



Abraham Offers Isaac to God

Genesis 22:1-19

Meanwhile, God spoke to Abraham: "Take Isaac and go to Mount Moriah." Abraham loved Isaac. "There," God went on, "slay Isaac as a gift to me."

Abraham obeyed. They traveled three days to the mountain. Abraham put Isaac on an altar. Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb for God's gift?"

"God will give us a lamb," Abraham answered. He raised the knife to slay his son. Then God's angel stopped him: "I know you fear God. You'd slay your only son for him." Abraham saw a ram for God's gift stuck in a bush. So Isaac lived.



The Search for Isaac's Wife

Genesis 24:1-27

Isaac grew up and was old enough to be married. It was Abraham's job to find a wife for Isaac. So Abraham sent his servant, Eliezer, back to his homeland. He wanted Isaac to marry a woman from his own family. Abraham knew this was best because they also worshipped God.

Eliezer took ten camels and many gifts. He traveled to the city of Nahor and stopped at the city well. There Eliezer prayed he would find the right woman for Isaac. He looked up and saw a beautiful young woman. Eliezer bowed to her and said, "Will you give me a drink?"

"Yes," the woman said. "I will water your camels, too." Eliezer wondered, *Is this the woman for Isaac?*

"What is your name?" he asked.

"I am Rebekah. My father is Bethuel." Bethuel was Abraham's brother. "Come," she said.

"Stay at our house."

Eliezer thanked God. His prayer was answered. Rebekah was Isaac's cousin and part of Abraham's family. Eliezer gave Rebekah gold earrings and bracelets as gifts. He told her he was from Abraham's house. Rebekah invited Eliezer home to meet her father and family.



Rebekah Marries Isaac

Genesis 24:28-67

Rebekah ran home and told her parents about Eliezer. She showed them his gifts. Her brother, Laban, asked Eliezer to eat with them. But Eliezer said, "First I must tell you why I came here.

"My master is Abraham," Eliezer said. "God has blessed him. He is very rich. Abraham sent me here. I promised to find a wife for his son, Isaac. I prayed that God would show me the right woman." Then he told them what happened at the well.

Rebekah's father and brother agreed that she should marry Isaac. "God wants this to happen," they said.

Then Eliezer gave rich gifts to Rebekah and her family. That night they enjoyed a great feast. The next morning came. Rebekah's father asked her, "Will you go with this man?" She answered, "I will go." Rebekah's family blessed her and she left with Eliezer.

One evening Isaac was walking in the field. He saw Eliezer's camels coming with his bride. Rebekah also saw Isaac. Isaac loved Rebekah, and they were married in Sarah's tent.



Esau Sells His Birthright

Genesis 25:21-34

Like his father, Abraham, Isaac lived in the land of Canaan. His wife, Rebekah, could not have children. So Isaac prayed and God answered his prayer. Rebekah gave birth to twin boys. She named them Esau and Jacob.

Esau was born first. He would get twice as much as Jacob when Isaac died. This was called the birthright.

Jacob grew to be a quiet man, living in tents. Esau became a hunter in the fields. When Esau brought meat from the hunt, he gave some to Isaac. So Isaac loved Esau more than Jacob. But Rebekah liked the wise and careful Jacob.

One day Esau came in from the fields hungry and tired. Since it was time for dinner, Jacob cooked a pot of soup. "Please give me some soup," Esau asked.

"Will you trade your birthright for some soup?" Jacob asked.

"Why not?" answered Esau. "I am about to die of hunger. If I do die, I won't need my birthright." And Esau promised Jacob his birthright.

Jacob was selfish with Esau. This was not right. But Esau was foolish to sell his birthright. This was wrong.



Jacob Steals Esau's Blessing

Genesis 27:1-38

In time, Isaac became very old. One day he said to Esau, "I want to give you my blessing before I die. Hunt an animal and cook the meat for me. You know I love this. Then I will bless you."

But Esau knew he had sold Jacob this blessing for some soup.

Nearby, Rebekah was listening. Quickly she cooked some meat. She gave it to Jacob. "Take this to your father. He is blind. So pretend you are Esau. Then you will get the blessing." Jacob did this. Though it was wrong, he stole Esau's blessing.

Jacob's Dream at Bethel

Genesis 27:41-28:19

After Esau lost his blessing, he wanted to kill Jacob. Rebekah heard of this and said, "Jacob, hurry to your uncle Laban's."

Jacob rushed away alone. All he carried was a walking stick. At Bethel he lay down to sleep. A stone was Jacob's pillow. In a dream, he saw a ladder with angels on it. God blessed him, saying, "I'm your father's God. This land is yours and your children's. The world will be blessed because of your family."

When he woke up, Jacob said, "This place is God's house. It's the gate of heaven."



Jacob's Marriage

Genesis 29:1-30:24

Jacob traveled to the city of Haran. There he found the same well where Eliezer met his mother, Rebekah. A young woman herded her sheep to the well for water. This was Rachel, the daughter of Jacob's uncle Laban. Jacob was so happy to meet her that he wept. And he fell in love with Rachel there.

Laban welcomed Jacob into his house. Soon Jacob told Laban, "I'll work seven years to marry Rachel."

Laban replied, "Better that Rachel marry you than a stranger."

Seven years passed. It seemed like only days to Jacob because he loved Rachel so. The day of the wedding came. The bride wore a thick veil. But when Jacob lifted the veil, it wasn't Rachel. Jacob had married Leah, Rachel's older sister. Jacob didn't love her. He'd been cheated because Laban wanted the older sister married first.

Then Jacob worked seven more years for Laban. Finally, he married Rachel. In those times men often had two wives.

Jacob lived with Laban twenty-one years. He had eleven sons there. Only one named Joseph was Rachel's son. Jacob loved him best.



Jacob Travels Home

Genesis 31:17–32:22

While he was with Laban, Jacob became rich. He had been wise and careful in his work. At last, he decided to go back to Canaan. While Laban was away, Jacob packed up his big family. He gathered his great herd of animals and began the journey.

When Laban found out, he was sad. Laban wanted Jacob to stay and work for him. So Laban and his men set out after Jacob. But in a dream, God told Laban, "Don't harm Jacob."

Laban caught up with Jacob in the hills of Gilead. There they made a promise to each other. They ate together by a pile of stones named "Witness." They promised not to harm each other. Both men knew that God was watching. So Jacob set up a big rock and called it "Watchtower."

In the morning, Laban kissed his daughters, blessed his grandchildren, and returned home.

Frightening news came. Esau was coming to meet Jacob with 400 men. Would Esau kill him? In fear Jacob divided everyone into two groups for safety. Shepherds went ahead with many animals as gifts for Esau. Jacob stayed behind alone to pray.



God Wrestles with Jacob

Genesis 32:24–32

While he was alone, a man grabbed Jacob, and they wrestled until dawn. When he could not win, the man broke Jacob's hip.

"Let me go," the man said.

"I won't let you go unless you bless me," replied Jacob.

"What is your name?"

"Jacob."

"Not anymore," the man said. "It's now Israel."

"Why?" asked Jacob.

"You've wrestled with God and have won."

Then Jacob asked him, "What is your name?" The man only answered, "Why do you want to know?" Then he blessed Jacob.

Jacob said, "I've seen God's face and have lived."



Joseph the Dreamer

Genesis 37:1-11

Jacob made peace with Esau and returned to Canaan. Soon another child was born to Rachel named Benjamin. But Jacob mourned because his lovely Rachel died.

Of all his sons, Jacob loved Joseph best. He rewarded Joseph with a beautiful coat of many colors. Joseph's brothers were jealous. They wished they could have such a coat.

One day Joseph said to his brothers, "Listen to the dreams I've had." When Joseph told them the dreams, his brothers knew their meaning: they would someday bow down to Joseph. The brothers hated Joseph because of his dreams.



The Dreamer Is Sold as a Slave

Genesis 37:12-35

The sons of Jacob were tending flocks in the fields. Jacob wondered, *Are my sons safe?* He sent Joseph to find out. The brothers saw Joseph's brightly colored coat far off. "Look, here comes the dreamer," one announced.

"Let's kill him," another said, "and throw his body in a pit. We'll say a wild animal ate him."

"Good idea," said a third. "Then we'll see what happens to his dreams."

But Reuben, the oldest son, said, "No. Let's not kill him. Just throw him in the pit to die."

Reuben planned to rescue Joseph later. So the brothers stole Joseph's pretty coat and dumped him in a pit.

Reuben left and was absent when a caravan of Ishmaelites came. The brothers sold Joseph to them for twenty silver pieces. The caravan carried Joseph to Egypt.

When Reuben returned, he cried, "The boy is gone; what shall I do?" The brothers decided to lie to Jacob. They stained Joseph's coat with animal blood. Jacob thought Joseph was killed.

"I will weep for my son the rest of my life," Jacob cried.



Joseph the Slave

Genesis 39:1–40:22



The caravan carried Joseph south to Egypt, and a man named Potiphar bought Joseph. This man was a leader in Egypt's army.

God was with Joseph, though he was a slave. Potiphar saw his good work and liked him. He put Joseph in charge of his whole house. Potiphar's wife was also friendly to Joseph. But once he wouldn't do a wicked thing for her. So she lied to her husband about Joseph. Potiphar locked Joseph in prison like a criminal.

But God was with Joseph in prison. The jailer soon began to like Joseph. He even put Joseph in charge of the whole prison.

The king's butler and baker were there in prison. Both had dreams while they were sleeping. *What do our dreams mean?* they wondered.

"Maybe my God will tell me what they mean," Joseph said. And God did: The butler would be freed from prison. "When you are free," Joseph said, "Tell the king I'm here. Ask him to set me free."

The meaning of the baker's dream was sad: "You will be hanged for your crime," said Joseph.

And the men's dreams came true.



Pharaoh Sends for Joseph

Genesis 40:23–41:16

Two years passed. The butler forgot about Joseph. Then Pharaoh, Egypt's king, dreamed dreams. *I must know what they mean,* he thought.

Pharaoh called his magicians. All they said was, "We don't know what your dreams mean." Then the butler remembered Joseph.

"A young man is locked in your dungeon," he said. "He told me the meaning of my dream." Quickly Pharaoh sent for Joseph. First Joseph washed, then he went to Pharaoh.

"I've heard that you tell the meaning of dreams," said Pharaoh.

"I don't do this," Joseph replied. "God will give you the answer."



The Meaning of Pharaoh's Dreams

Genesis 41:17–36

What is the dream you have dreamed?" Joseph asked Pharaoh.

"I saw seven fat cows eating grass by the river," said Pharaoh. "Then seven skinny cows came. They ate the fat cows. But they were just as skinny as before they ate. Then I woke up.

"I fell asleep and dreamed again," Pharaoh went on. "I saw seven full heads of grain. They were all on one stalk. Another stalk grew next to that one. It had seven poor heads of grain. These thin heads swallowed the good heads of grain. But after this they were just as poor as before."

"The two dreams mean the same thing," Joseph told him. "God is showing you what he will do in Egypt. Seven years of very good crops will come soon. Then there will be seven years with no food. The time of good crops will be forgotten.

"Pharaoh should find a wise and able man to help Egypt," Joseph continued. "This man must save part of the crops from the good years. Then your people will have food when there are no crops. If someone can do this, the people of Egypt will not die."

Pharaoh Honors Joseph

Genesis 41:37–45

Pharaoh asked his servants, "Can we find anyone like this young man? The spirit of God is in him." Then he looked at Joseph. "God has shown you all this. There is no one wiser than you. You shall be in charge of my palace and my country. I'm greater only because I'm king."

Then Pharaoh gave his own ring to Joseph. The best clothes were brought for him. A gold chain was placed on his neck. Joseph rode in his own chariot. Wherever he went the people bowed to him.



Jacob's Sons Visit Joseph—Part One

Genesis 41:46–42:7

Joseph was thirty years old when he began to serve Pharaoh. In the years when the crops were good, Joseph saved food. So much food was saved, it couldn't be counted. During those years, Joseph married and had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Then the good years in Egypt ended. The seven years with no food began and the Egyptians were hungry. They went to Pharaoh for food. He said, "Go to Joseph and do what he says." Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold food to the Egyptians. In fact, the whole world came to Joseph for food.

In Canaan, Jacob heard of the food in Egypt. He told his sons, "Go down and buy food for us. Then we won't starve." So all the brothers but Benjamin went down to Egypt.

Joseph sold food to everyone who came to Egypt to buy. Jacob's sons went to see Joseph like everyone else. They came into the room and bowed down before him. When he saw them, Joseph knew they were his brothers. Twenty-three years before, they had sold him into slavery. The brothers did not know who Joseph was.



Jacob's Sons Visit Joseph—Part Two

Genesis 42:6–24

Now, as in Joseph's boyhood dreams, his brothers bowed before him. "Who are you?" Joseph asked. "Where do you come from?"

"We've come from Canaan to buy food," they answered.

"No, you didn't," Joseph said. "You're spies. You want to see how weak Egypt has become."

"No, sir. We are twelve brothers," they said. The youngest is at home. One has died."

"You must prove you aren't spies," Joseph answered. "Someone must go back and bring your youngest brother here." Then the rest were locked up.

Three days later, Joseph spoke: "One of you must remain. The others may leave with your family's food. But bring your youngest brother back to me. Then I'll know you're not spies." The youngest brother, Benjamin, was Rachel's son, like Joseph.

Joseph chose Simeon to stay in Egypt. Reuben told the others, "This has happened because of what you did to Joseph." They didn't know Joseph overheard them. He went away and wept. He knew his brothers were sorry for what they had done.

Jacob's Food Runs Out

Genesis 42:25–43:15

Reuben and his brothers bought bags filled with food. But Joseph wanted his brothers to have the food for free. He had their money put back in their food bags. Sadly, they left Simeon in Egypt and went home.

On the way home, they found the money. "Look what God has done to us!" they cried. But they couldn't go back to Egypt.

At home they told Jacob what had happened. "First Joseph died, and now Simeon is gone," he cried. "And you want to take Benjamin from me. You've made my hair gray. If I lose Benjamin, I'll die."

With Jacob's large family, the food was soon gone, and the brothers needed to get some more. "We can't go unless Benjamin comes along," they said.

"If he must go, then he must," replied Jacob. "But take special gifts and twice as much money. It was a mistake that the money was in your bags. May God Almighty have mercy on you in Egypt."

So Jacob's sons took Benjamin and returned to Egypt. Soon they were bowing down to Joseph again.



Jacob's Sons Visit Joseph—Part Three

Genesis 43:16–44:17

Joseph saw his little brother, Benjamin, with the others. "Bring them to my house for a feast," he told the servants.

Jacob's sons were afraid to go to Joseph's house. "We brought the money back that was in our bags," they said.

"God gave you that money," a servant told them. Then he brought Simeon out to them. When Joseph came in, the brothers bowed to the ground.

Joseph asked, "Is your father well? Is he alive?" They answered, "Our father is well." Joseph looked with love at Benjamin. This was his little brother, his mother's son. He had to go out and weep. He was so happy.

So they had a big feast together. But the brothers still did not know Joseph's secret.

Then Joseph gave them much food and put money in their bags again. He hid his special silver cup in Benjamin's bag. Joseph did this to make them return.

So Jacob's sons returned to Egypt. Joseph said, "The one who stole my cup will be my slave." This was Benjamin, the brother Joseph loved.



A Joyous Family Reunion

Genesis 44:18–45:16

Judah was one of Jacob's sons. He was afraid, but he spoke to Joseph: "Benjamin's father is old. He'll die if his son doesn't return. His brother has already been killed by beasts. Let me stay. Then the boy can go back to his father."

Then Joseph could not keep his secret any longer. He cried out, "I'm Joseph, your brother! You sold me into Egypt. But God wanted this. I've given food to all the world." And he wept on Benjamin's shoulder. Then they all kissed and hugged and talked. All of Pharaoh's palace was glad.



Israel Moves to Egypt

Genesis 45:25–47:10

Pharaoh was happy that Joseph had found his family. He said, "Your brothers can move their families to the best land in Egypt." Joseph sent his brothers back to Canaan with money and new clothes. He sent his father donkeys loaded with grain and bread.

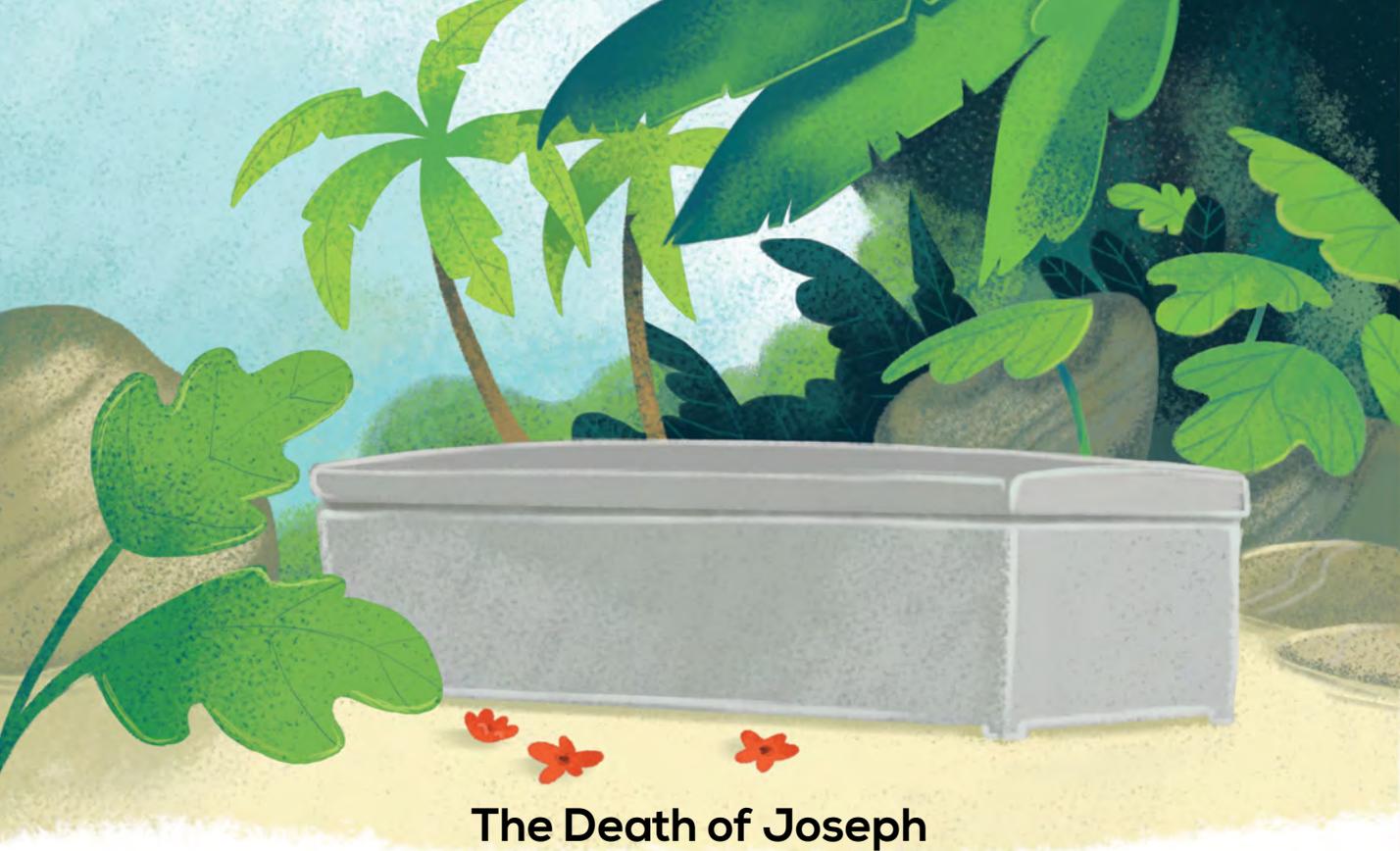
When they came to Canaan, the brothers ran to Jacob. "Joseph lives!" they shouted. "He rules in Egypt." Jacob wouldn't believe them. When they explained, he said, "Enough. I must see Joseph before I die."

Long before this God, had named Jacob "Israel." And Israel gathered his family and set out for Egypt. On the way, he gave gifts to God. God spoke to Israel: "Don't be afraid to go to Egypt. I'll go down with you. Your family will become a great nation there. I'll bring them up to Canaan again." Seventy people in Israel's family moved to Egypt.

Israel came to Joseph. "I've seen that you're alive," he said. "Now I can die in peace." Pharaoh soon met Israel. "How old are you?" he asked.

"My life has been short and hard," said Israel. "I am 130 years old." And he blessed Pharaoh.





The Death of Joseph

Genesis 47:27–50:26

Israel and his children lived in Goshen, which had rich farmland. Israel lived almost 150 years. As he was dying, he blessed his twelve sons, saying, "Don't bury me in Egypt. Bury me in Canaan with my father, Isaac, and grandfather Abraham."

And so there was a great funeral for Jacob. Israel's children carried his body to Canaan. There he was buried in the cave at Machpelah near Mamre.

When Jacob's sons came back to Egypt, they were afraid. "Is Joseph still mad that we sold him?" they worried. They sent him a message: "Please forgive us for our crime."

"What you did was bad," Joseph told them. "But God used it for good. Look at all the children of Israel. Don't worry. I'll always provide for you and your families."

Joseph lived 110 years. Before he died, he said to his brothers, "God will come and take you back to Canaan. When you go, carry my bones back with you." So they kept Joseph's stone coffin. They knew that someday they would carry it back to their own land.