



*Children's
Beautiful
Bible
Treasures*



Children's Beautiful Bible Treasures

--By CQ

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God Creates the Earth

Would you like to know how the world began? God wanted to make a planet—Earth—and place on it some very special creations. You, and other people too!

But it needed to be made just right, so you and others could live on it and enjoy all the amazing things He wanted to fill it with.

God is an amazing guy—and He’s got a lot of love too, more than you can even imagine!

Everything He does comes from His heart of love—for a loving reason.

When He decides to make something, all it takes is for Him to give the word, and things happen.

God said, “Let there be light”, and there was light!

Next He made air and the sky—because we’d need that on our planet to survive.

He divided the water, and put some down below on the Earth and some high up above too.

He then decorated the whole Earth with beautiful and useful plants and trees, grass, flowers, and all sorts of things that grow, and things that you can eat.

Each plant had seeds too, so more and more would grow, and the Earth would be filled with beauty and all that was needed.



God Creates the Universe

Have you ever tried to do a project, but then found out that you had forgotten something important?

You realised there was lots more to it than just gathering a few items and getting to work on your project.

Well, God put lots of thought and care into creating the world. He didn't forget anything.

He spent the fourth day making some other things that, though not exactly part of Earth, did help to add what was needed in order for it to work properly.

God made the Sun to give light, to give warmth, and to help plants grow. The sun also helps with the water cycle that is so important to all things living on Earth.

He made the Moon to shine and give a gentle light at night, and to help us know such things as how long a week or month is, by looking at its size and shape in the sky.

Stars and planets were also made and placed in the space surrounding Earth, in all the right places.

The stars make a beautiful, sparkly sky at night, and there is a reason why each planet orbiting the Sun has been made and placed just where it is.

Maybe one day you'll find out more about them. People are always fascinated about what is going on in space. It is an interesting study.

We only know a small amount, compared to all that there is to know about our universe, but we do know that it's enormous!



Animals Are Made

The world became a lively place, as creatures of all kinds, types, sizes and shapes were created.

God loves life—things that live, move, breathe, explore, enjoy and do what He made them for. He loves creating all sorts of things.

God is the greatest inventor there ever was or ever will be, and His ideas of new things to make are endless.

God had great fun on the fifth and sixth days of His big creation project. At last, after all the preparation of creating a planet where humans and animals could survive, He was finally able to add the creatures to it.

First, God made the sea creatures and fish, as well as the birds of all types.

The next day land creatures were created and began to fill the Earth.

He made many types of all kinds of animals, birds, fish, and insects.

God gave them all their first instruction—to multiply, to have babies and to fill the Earth with as many creatures as possible!

God loved to watch the lively creatures and all their funny ways. Each one was unique and different, and clever in its own way.

God put those clever ideas and instincts within them so they'd know how to live on Earth.

It was now an active, lively, and noisy world, with fun and interesting sights and sounds. Each creature had its own way of communicating and living.



The First Man on Earth

People often wonder what God looks like. We may not have seen Him in all His wonderful splendour and awesome, light-filled glory, but He did make something on Earth to look a lot like Him. You! God made mankind “in His image”, to resemble Him.

As soon as planet Earth was inhabitable, and had all that it needed to support life, God made a man.

So far, the only thing God did to create the different things on Earth was to speak the words and things just came into being. He doesn't need a factory to create things.

This time, however, God did something different. He formed a man out of the dirt, the mud, the clay of the Earth that He had just made.

After man was shaped just right, God breathed life into him.

What a moment of wonder that was, to see the first person alive, thinking, exploring and moving on the planet God had made for him, and many more people were to follow.

Then God gave him a name—Adam—and He gave him a fun job to do, too. Adam was to choose what each animal and creature on Earth was to be called.

One by one they came before him and were given a name. Adam must have had a great time getting to see each and every creature, from huge elephants to the tiniest bugs, and giving each one a name suited to it.

No matter how many fun animals and interesting creatures there were, Adam saw that he was the only person, the only one made just like him, and the only one that resembled God, his only Father.

Adam was lonely and longed for a friend, a companion, someone to talk with, who would understand what it was like to be a person on Earth. He wanted someone to love and who would love him too.



The First Woman on Earth

Everyone needs to know that they are special to someone. Even Adam needed to feel this. He wanted someone to share life's joys with. He wanted someone who would understand his feelings, and who knew what it was like to live on Earth, and who could help him. He needed and wanted a companion.

God has so much love, and He made us to need and want it too. Love is to us like the sunshine and the moisture is to the flowers—it helps them to grow and blossom into beautiful parts of nature.

Love can help to bring beautiful and wonderful things into your life and others' lives. We need it just as much as we need other things in life.

God knew that Adam needed someone to love and to be loved by, in order to make his life complete.

Adam already had a great place to live, and all the food and water he needed. There was no sickness or danger, all creatures were just as God had made them to be—friendly and gentle, and helping the world in their own ways. However, Adam didn't feel complete. God knew just what he needed.

After putting Adam into a very deep sleep, God created that special somebody that Adam was missing.

When Adam woke up, he saw standing beside him a beautiful woman. He was delighted!

Adam named her "Eve", and they became close friends and companions, and could help each other. Now he had someone to love and live with, and be loved by.



God Rests

Do you like playing? Is it fun to have a good run outside, breathing fresh air, exploring a beautiful place? Do you sometimes like just resting and doing nothing at all? Do you like having a chat with a friend? Have you learned to have quiet time, where it's just you and Jesus talking together, getting to know Him, and learning to love Him? Are there some things that are just real fun for you that you can't do all the time, but every week or so it works out to get to do them?

That's what God wanted people to do. He set us an example. Did you know that God even rested, after all His work on creating the marvellous Earth, the sky, and all that fills it?

He took a day to step back and to enjoy the things He had made. He didn't work on that seventh day, after creating the world. People need time to do the same—to rest, to do something recreational, fun, refreshing, relaxing and enjoyable. There's a time for work and a time to relax, and God made people to need both. He set us the first example of taking time to be refreshed after working.

To stay healthy and happy, people need more than just fun things. They need time to be refreshed in all kinds of ways. People need time to exercise, to keep themselves fit and healthy. They need time to sleep and rest, so they don't get weak and sick.

They need time to rest their eyes, and not overuse them on TV and computers. They need time to talk with Jesus and read His Word and hear what He wants to say, for their heart to be inspired and strengthened. They need time with friends and family, to feel loved and cared for.

There are many things that you can do to stay healthy and happy, but the most important is to take time to love and talk with Jesus—and that can be done no matter what else you are doing for fun and relaxation. You can talk with Him any time of day or night. This is what will renew, strengthen, and empower you the most, as you carry on in your life and do your work—whatever you are meant to do.



God's Garden, and His Gardener

Have you ever gone on a fun picnic, but then there were some things that made it not as nice as you would have liked?

Perhaps there were bothersome flies or mosquitoes that would not leave you alone, or it began to rain just when you were starting to eat. Or perhaps there was broken glass and trash carelessly left around the area, and thorn bushes that made things less than ideal.

None of these things were a problem for Adam and Eve, who had the privilege of living and working in God's special garden, called "The Garden of Eden".

The world's first people were placed there to care for it, and to enjoy it as well.

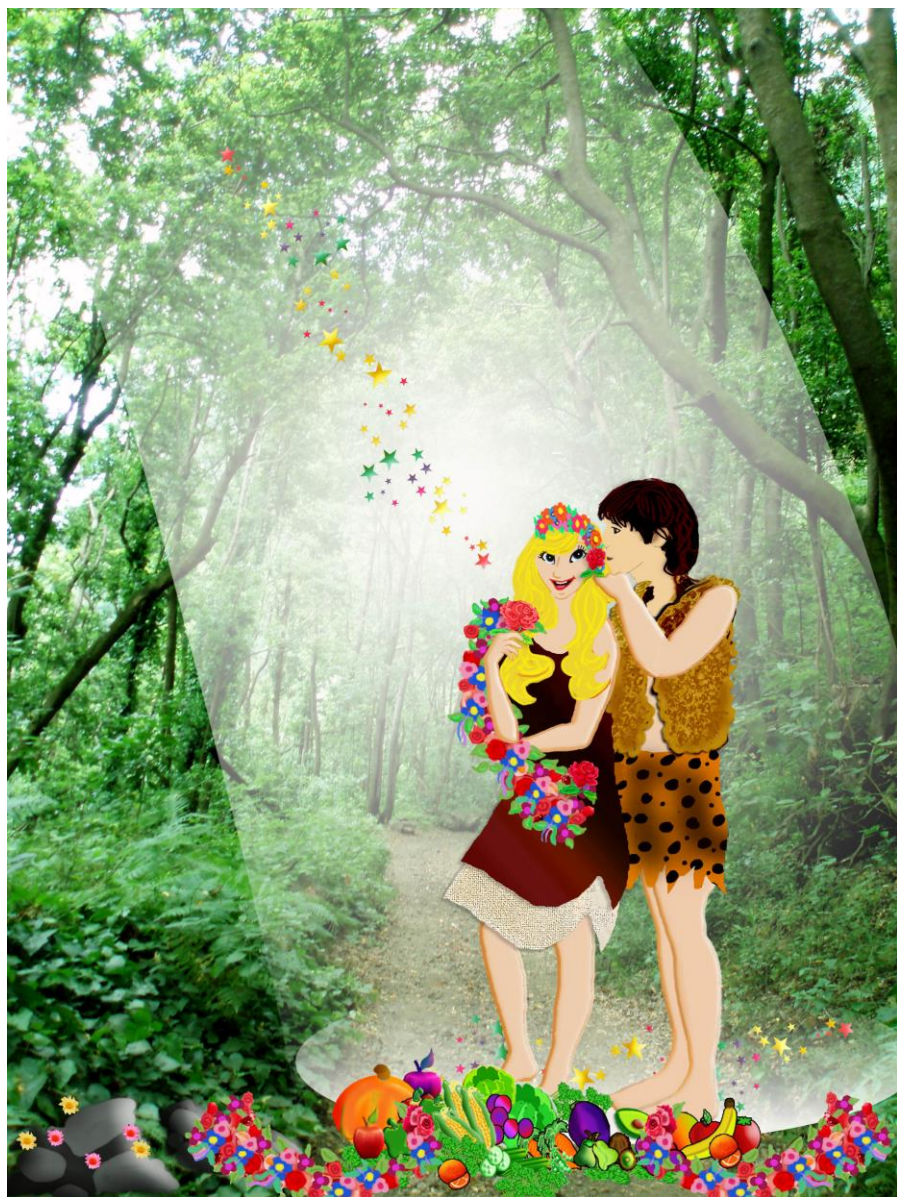
All was perfect. All was beautiful. They could walk without shoes and nothing hurt their feet. There were no thorns or pests, no biting bugs, or sickness.

Adam and Eve ran happily through this garden, picking fruit and berries when they got hungry, or drinking from crystal-clear refreshing waters.

God enjoyed watching these first two people that He'd made having fun in such a beautiful place.

They had lots to learn and explore, made discoveries, and had a great time there in this special garden, created and planted by God Himself.

How lovely it was. Wouldn't you have loved to walk in it too? Maybe one day God will re-create it, so we can see just how marvellous it was.



Trees and Choices

Is it hard for you to always make the right decision—especially when you’ve been told not to do something that actually looks like fun or as if it wouldn’t make much of a difference if you did it?

Adam and Eve were given everything they needed, and more. God said they could eat from any tree in the Garden of Eden that they wanted to, as well as a special tree called the “Tree of Life”.

It was a special place to be. There were no “do not enter” construction signs, or roadblocks, or books of rules with many complicated instructions to figure out, but there was one important instruction that God gave them that they had to obey.

There was a tree whose fruit would introduce them to knowing not just the good, but the bad as well. They were never to eat from it or things would get awfully difficult for them.

If they wanted things to stay pleasant and good and beautiful, they needed to do things God’s way.

One sad day they disobeyed and ate the fruit from that tree. It made everyone sad—Adam, Eve, and especially God. Because of their disobedience, God had to take away many of the blessings and extra special things that they had enjoyed on Earth, and they were given new jobs and work to do.

God still loved them very much, and was near them, but for Adam and Eve, things were going to change. The world was to have more troubles, and work would be hard; this would keep people busy and would teach them that doing things God’s way is always best.



Enoch and Methuselah

There was a man called Enoch who lived long ago. He had a most unusual experience—he never died!

Now that doesn't mean that he's still on Earth today, but he was around for more than 300 years, until one day God simply took him up to live with Him. He vanished from one moment to the next. Amazing! And it was just because he loved taking time with God more than doing anything else.

The world in his day had become quite a bad place. It was so sad. It wasn't just Adam and Eve who made one wrong choice in the Garden, eating the forbidden fruit.

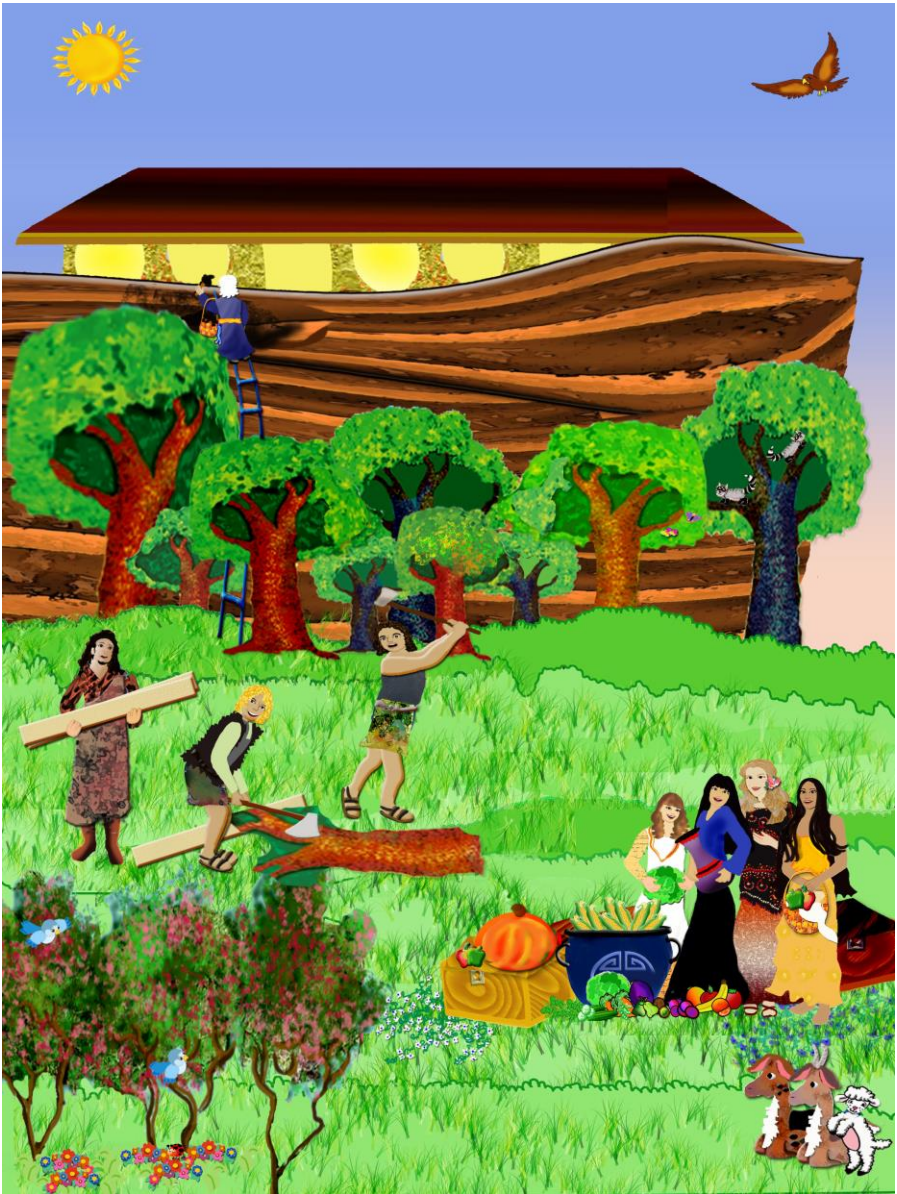
Everyone then on Earth kept choosing things that weren't according to God's way. There was a lot of sorrow and hurting and bad and sad things going on.

Enoch loved to take time away from it all, just to hear God talking. Then one day, God took Enoch to be with Him all the time.

Now it might seem like 300 years is a long time to live anyway, but back then people lived much longer than that! Several people lived to be over 900 years old!

Enoch's own son, Methuselah, lived for 969 years! Pretty amazing! Things have changed now, and because of people's choices to do wrong, God has changed it so that people now live a much shorter time on Earth.

Whether you live a long time or only for a short while, the most important thing to remember is to do as Enoch did—choose God's way, take time to listen to Him, and teach others God's way too. Then one day when it's your time to live with God, you'll be so glad you did your best to live as He wanted you to.



A Good Man for a Great Job

Have you ever been very sad because something you liked broke, or you couldn't have what you were hoping for?

Well, God felt so very sad because the nice world He made got ruined and turned ugly and unpleasant.

God found one man who was following His way—Noah. He listened to God! So God told him what was going to happen to the world.

God would bring a great flood, the biggest one there ever was, that would cover the entire planet!

God told Noah to build a very large boat; an ark. In the ark he and his family—his wife, three sons and their wives—would be safe during the flood.

God told Noah to also bring into the ark two of every type of animal and creature that lived on the land.

It wasn't easy, and it took a lot of perseverance and hard work for many years. People didn't encourage him, but made things difficult for Noah and his family through their unkind and ungodly words and actions.

This didn't stop Noah, though. He just kept on for over one hundred years. That's a long time to do a job and not give up!

Finally, it was all built and they and the chosen animals went safely inside, with all they would need for the journey. God then shut the ark's door tightly, and the watery journey was soon to begin.



Rain and a Rainbow

After obeying all that God had said to do, Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and a whole lot of animals and creatures of all types were safely in the ark.

They waited for the water God said would come—more water than they'd ever seen before. After seven days of waiting in the ark, the rain and flood began.

It was quite a wild ride, being in a boat while water was pouring down from above and gushing up from holes in the ground.

They were safe and dry, however, because they had obeyed, even down to the smallest details, all that God had told them to do. They were glad then that they had been diligent and faithful, and had done a good job of what God had told them to do.

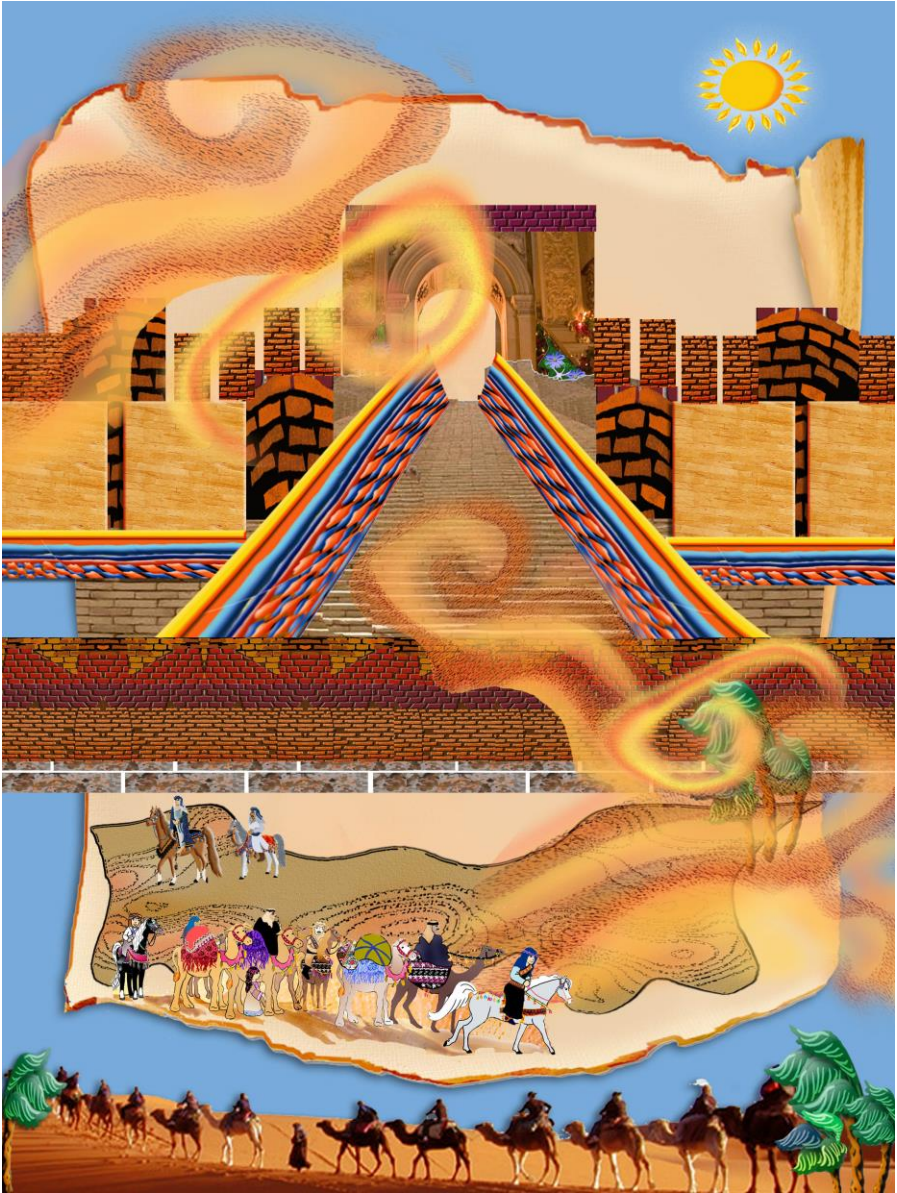
Aren't rainbows beautiful? It's always special and fun to see one. Noah and his family were the first people ever to see a rainbow.

After that long and difficult time when the flood washed over the world, things started at last to get dry enough on Earth that Noah's team and the animals could leave the ark and walk once again on the ground.

They thanked God for keeping them safely through it all, and for permitting them to live in a fresh, new world. They celebrated with a special time of praise and prayer.

Then, as a sign of promise that God would never flood the whole world like that again, God put a beautiful rainbow in the sky. Noah and his family had never seen one before. It looked marvellous, magnificent!

They had faith that God would continue to keep them and help them as they started the big job of setting up and rebuilding on the cleaned-up world.



The Tower of Babel

Isn't it fun to watch and hear young children as they are learning to talk? Some of the words they use for things can sound so funny!

Did you know that there are thousands of languages around the world—and babies have the ability to learn whatever language their parents speak, just from hearing it around them? It's truly incredible!

Did you know there was a time when only one language was spoken in the whole world? It was easy to understand things then. It was also easy for everyone to think and say and all do the same things.

One day a big important man got an idea that everyone should work together to build the world's largest tower. He thought they could prove how very powerful and smart they all were.

They thought if they made it high enough, it would reach up to heaven and they would be as great as God.

God had other plans for people on Earth, however. He didn't want them to lift themselves up with their silly, proud ideas.

He wanted them to travel, to explore, to do new things—not to all do the same thing and stay in the same place. So He did something very amazing.

Unexpectedly, each family on Earth began to speak a new language—so new that no one else had ever heard it, and no one but their family could understand it.

That was the end of their proud plans. And it was the beginning of travel, cultures, countries, and new places and things discovered!



A Man on the Move

Abraham was a man who took action and did whatever God told him to do. He had faith that everything would work out well.

His life wasn't easy as he travelled in the hot desert, and stayed in the country of Egypt for a while, and had to deal with troublesome people at times.

But he spent time with God, praying and listening to what He had to say, and this gave him peace and assurance in his heart.

Abraham believed what God said, and it gave him faith and courage through all the difficulties.

First God told him to move from where he was living and to go to a new place.

Then God promised him a child of his own, which he and his wife Sarah did not yet have. They were looking forward to having a child for a very long time.

God promised that not only would they have a son, but that eventually there would be so many great-great grandchildren, that they would be as uncountable as the stars!

Abraham and Sarah had to wait though, until it was the right time, and keep having faith.



Living Peacefully

Abraham wanted to have a peaceful time while living and travelling with his very big team.

Abraham's nephew and his team were also travelling with him.

One time when there wasn't enough grass around for all the animals, it made things quarrelsome between all the herdsmen.

Abraham suggested to Lot, his nephew, that he choose whatever part of the land he would like to go to, and Abraham and his team would then go to another place.

He kindly gave Lot the first choice.

So Lot looked around and took the best place that he could see and moved there with his own team of helpers and animals.

It was a place with plenty of water, grass and trees. Everything they needed was there.

It was good that they stopped quarrelling over the little area of dry land, and looked for other ideas and solutions.

Things were at peace again, and Abraham's journey continued.



Three Special Visitors

Abraham continued to travel, going where God led him to go. It was often hot during the day and cold at night.

Water was a challenge to find, and wells were hard work to dig.

Abraham faithfully and cheerfully did as God told him to do, and went where God led him.

One hot day, when sitting in the doorway of his tent, he was delighted to see a team of visitors approaching.

They looked more like angels than men.

Abraham knew how tired and thirsty travelling people felt.

He wanted to let them rest and be refreshed.

He ran to the three approaching men, and invited them to stay for a while, to eat and to rest.

The angelic visitors agreed to stop for awhile, and Sarah, Abraham's wife, quickly cooked and served a good meal for them.

While Sarah was in the tent she heard one of them say something that brought a smile to her face, and made her laugh a little!

The angelic visiting messenger said that she and Abraham were soon finally going to have a child!

They'd waited and waited for a child to be theirs, as God had promised, and hadn't given up hope.

How happy they were to hear that it was nearly time for it to happen.



Isaac

With great joy at last Abraham and Sarah held their precious baby! God had given them the promised child. They named him Isaac, and he sure made them smile, laugh and feel very loved.

Abraham and Sarah knew that when God says something, it happens. Waiting for so long taught them patience, and that's a good thing to have.

Having patience, and having faith that God would care for them and do just what He promised, were great things that would help them to be very good parents to their new little boy.

They taught Isaac all they could—about God, and about the world around them, about the animals and the skills they'd learned, and how to live and survive.

They had fun together, they laughed, and they climbed mountains, explored the surrounding areas, looked at the stars, and did so many other things.

Abraham told Isaac many stories, many that you have just read about in this book. He told stories about how the world was made, about Noah, and about the big tall tower of Babel.

Abraham told his son Isaac what God had told him, and about God's promises and instructions.

He told his son Isaac, that if he also kept following and obeying what God had said, then God's words and promises would come true for him too.

Would Isaac choose to do things God's way, the way that his father Abraham taught him? I'm glad to say that he did! This made his parents and God very happy! —And Isaac too!



Patience, Faith and Rebekah

Isaac had to learn patience, faith, and trust in God. Faith helps you know that things will work out for the best, because you know God won't fail to keep His word and promises to you. You know that He's in control and is working all things out for the best.

Patience is waiting, no matter how long it takes, with a calm and trusting attitude. You know that eventually you'll get what is good for you, and what God wants you to have.

Patience can be shown by not getting upset easily when things don't turn out as you had hoped, or when people don't act as nicely as they should.

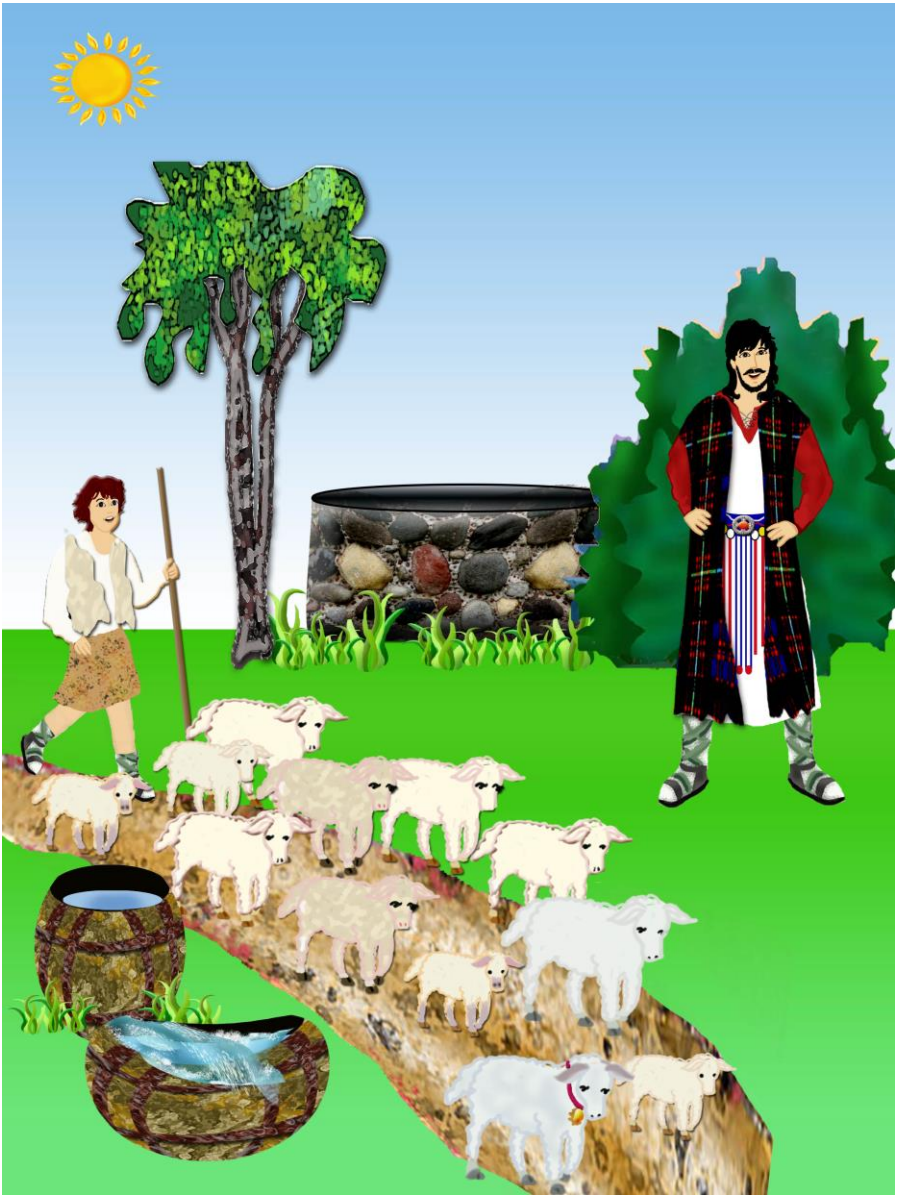
One wish that Isaac had to wait a long time for was to get married and have a family. Abraham wanted to make sure that just the right kind of woman was found. Isaac would need someone who loved God and would obey Him, and who would love and care for Isaac and make a good team together with him.

Eleazar, Abraham's helper, was sent on a mission. He and a group of men travelled by camel to a certain place in the country to see if there was a woman who would like to come and live with them, and marry Isaac.

Eleazar prayed for the right one to come by, as they rested beside the well, needing water. A kind woman called Rebekah came just then, and offered water to them and to their camels. It happened just like Eleazar had prayed.

That night while the travelling men were eating dinner with Rebekah and her family, Eleazar asked her if she would like to come home with them the very next day! —To live in a new place and to become Isaac's wife. Rebekah agreed, and travelled with them.

As soon as the team arrived, and Isaac saw her, and Rebekah saw him, they loved each other right from the start, and got married. Later on they had two children—twins—Jacob and Esau.



Isaac and the Wells

Isaac was Abraham's special son, and he learned from his father the best way to live—showing love and kindness, listening to God and obeying Him, and having patience to sometimes wait a long time for the best things to come.

One time he was very patient, and showed others the best way to be. A deep hole needed to be dug to make a well to get water out of the ground.

There were no other streams or rivers or lakes in that area. Isaac's team needed water for their families and animals. Then some grabby, unkind men decided they wanted to be the only ones using Isaac's well.

Oh dear! That must have been very difficult for Isaac and his family and everyone they travelled with. They'd worked so hard to dig it, and they really needed the water.

Isaac decided to be patient and gentle. He let the other men have the well, and he and his team moved on and dug another one, and God provided plenty of water for them.

Because Isaac made the right choices, and did what God wanted him to do, God blessed him with much more than those selfish people had.

Soon the king of that country was sorry that they hadn't been nice to Isaac.

He apologised and promised to be friends. He could tell that God was helping Isaac, and he wanted to be on the right side, too—on the side of those that followed God's way and were blessed as a result.



Dream of Angels

Jacob, Isaac's son, wasn't always an honest and trustworthy man. He had to learn the hard way that being dishonest in order to get what you want doesn't bring you the best things.

Jacob wanted things to be easy, and he wanted to get all the best things too. He not only wanted what was his, but he wasn't happy that it seemed his brother Esau would possibly get more things than he would—since Esau was born first.

Jacob did some unkind and selfish things. He convinced Esau to give him some things that were to be for the oldest boy.

At first Esau didn't seem to mind, but then Jacob kept taking even more away from him.

One day Jacob even got their father to unknowingly give the blessing and promise telling of all the good things that would come his way to Jacob, instead of to Esau.

This was too much for Esau to handle, and that's when things started to get tough for Jacob. He had to leave home and move to another place, and live with his uncle.

On his way, when he was feeling very sad about his mistakes and didn't know what would happen next, God gave him a wonderful dream of angels, going up and down a heavenly staircase, with God at the top of it.

Jacob was very encouraged, and promised to follow and obey God's way, even in the new and difficult situation that he was now in.

God promised that many wonderful things would happen to him and to his children, and their children as a result. God took care of Jacob as he obeyed, and he had all that he needed and even extra!



Hard Work and a Family of His Own

Finally after his long trip, Jacob found where his uncle Laban was living. He met Rachel who was bringing the sheep to the well to give them water.

Jacob helped to lift the heavy stone away so water could be drawn out. Laban was glad to have him come and stay with them.

Jacob helped him and his daughters Rachel and Leah with the hard work of caring for the flocks of animals.

Jacob was a willing and diligent worker, and Laban was glad to let him marry both of his grown-up daughters.

Together they had 13 children in their family—12 sons and one daughter.

In return for his work with the animals, Jacob was given some of the animals for his own. God helped Jacob's sheep and cattle to be strong and plentiful.

Even though things weren't easy, and Laban wasn't an honest and trustworthy man, still God took care of Jacob, and gave him so much.

After many years God told him it was time for him and his big family and all their animals to move back to the place where he lived before. God had blessed and cared for Jacob all the time he had been away in a new place.



Being Friends Again

While Jacob travelled back to his home land, he was worried.

“What if Esau doesn’t forgive me? I want to be friends again!”

Jacob did a lot of praying on that trip back home with his big team—his family, all their helpers, and all the animals.

He prayed and prayed some more, and got some good ideas from God on what to do, what would help Esau to feel better and to realise that Jacob was sorry for acting the way he did, many years before.

God sent angels to encourage Jacob as he neared the place where Esau was living, telling him it was going to be all right.

Jacob sent some of the people as well as his family on up ahead to meet Esau first, and to give him a very big gift—many goats, sheep, camels, cows and donkeys!

To Jacob’s great relief, Esau was forgiving and glad to see his brother again!

They hugged and became friends again.

Jacob had learned many lessons over the years since being apart, which helped to make him into the kind of man he needed to be, for the job of being a good father to his sons, who would then have many, many children as well.

He needed to set a good example of doing things God’s way—listening to God, praying, obeying Him, and being trustworthy, kind and generous.



Comparing and Coats

Joseph was a special boy—special to Jacob, because he was one of Rachel’s two sons. He also had a special job to do for God. But when he was young, his older brothers had a problem.

Have you ever been sad because it seemed as if your brother, or sister, or friend, or even someone you just happened to see one day, were getting much better things than you?

It will always seem like others have things you don’t. But you know, you also have things they don’t.

Why? Because each one on Earth has different things happening to them at different times.

Each one learns different lessons and has different jobs to do in this world. But for those that love God and follow His way, in spite of difficult times, He’ll make sure to bring the best things their way.

Maybe not all the time, or just when they want something great, but when the time is right.

Joseph’s father gave him a fancy, colourful new coat—just him. But his brothers didn’t like that, or anything else that they thought Joseph was getting that seemed better than what they had.

They thought it would make things easier for them if Joseph lived in another place, so he was sent to live and work hard in Egypt.

But that only made their father very sad, and the brothers regretted it. God had a plan for Joseph and would bring some good things his way again.

Even when things were hard for Joseph, God took good care of him and helped him to learn many new things.



Joseph in Egypt

Joseph chose to be a good, hard worker, trustworthy, and he listened to God no matter where he was.

God was pleased with this and made things go well for him as he worked as a servant.

Wherever he was, in whatever he was doing, he did his very best to work cheerfully and well, even though Joseph missed his father and family.

People trusted him and could tell that God was helping him. Joseph was kind and thoughtful, and took time to talk with people.

One time some men had interesting dreams, and Joseph prayed and God told him the meaning of the dreams.

Then when Pharaoh had an important dream, Joseph was called to tell Pharaoh the meaning of it too.

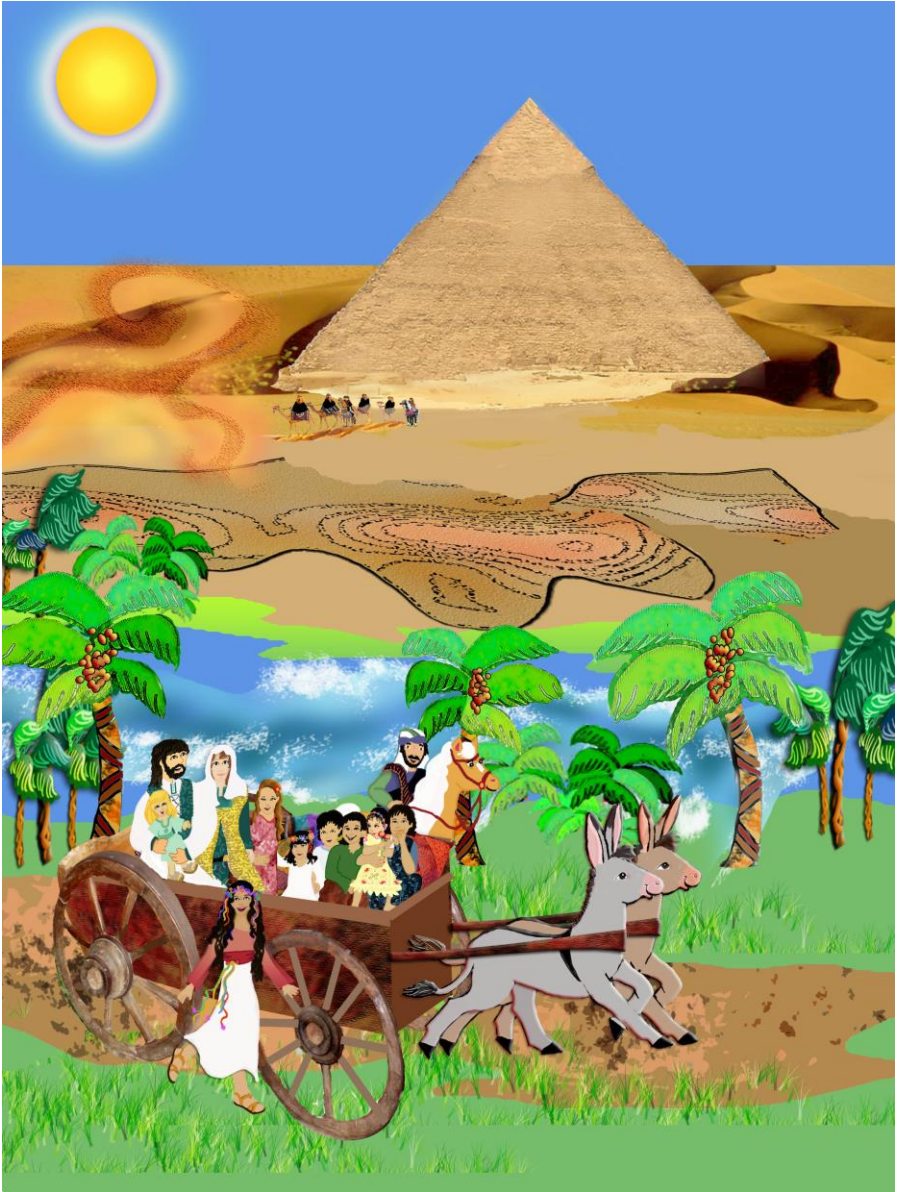
No one knew what it meant, but God knew, and told Joseph.

The dream was about seven years of good harvests, with plenty of food and crops growing, followed by seven years of difficult times and not enough food.

Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of collecting extra food and storing it up, so that later when the crops didn't grow, there would still be the food that was saved.

Pharaoh gave Joseph his golden ring, a necklace, fancy clothes, a chariot, a new name—Zaphnathpaaneah—and a wife!

He told all the people to obey whatever Joseph said to do.



Food in Egypt

Joseph was diligent and worked hard to store up the grain during Egypt's plentiful years. After seven years, just like God had said and told Pharaoh in a dream, there came a time of the crops not growing. But the people in Egypt had food they could buy, from the stored up grain. Good thing they had all obeyed and did what God told them to do.

It would have been easy to be lazy in the time when things were growing well and there was lots of extra food. But later on, when things were difficult, they would have regretted it. It wasn't just in Egypt that crops hardly grew during the seven years of famine. Other places sorely lacked what they needed in the way of food too. Joseph's family—his father and brothers and their families—all started to run out of food as well. When news spread that there was food in Egypt, ten of the brothers went to buy food there.

Joseph noticed that his brothers had come, but they didn't recognize him. He looked very Egyptian in the way he dressed, and he even spoke the Egyptian language. The brothers left to go back home without knowing that the man they bought the grain from was actually Joseph!

While on their way home, they noticed that the money they'd used to buy the food was tucked away in their bags. Joseph had done that secretly. So they got their food for free! The next time his brothers returned to Egypt to buy food again they also brought along Benjamin, and that made Joseph very happy! Finally Joseph told his brothers who he really was. They were shocked! They thought Joseph would be upset with them, but instead he forgave them!

Joseph and Pharaoh then invited them and their families and their father to come and live in Egypt, where there was enough food. Pharaoh sent wagons back with them to make their travel easier. At long last, when they returned, old father Jacob got to see his son Joseph again, and Joseph his father. They were so glad! Joseph saw how all things had worked out well—even better for them all, than if he hadn't been in Egypt. It was difficult missing his family all those years, but now they were together again, and had all the food they needed. Good things came their way in the end. Joseph was glad he chose to keep following God's way, to listen to Him, and to be an honest, diligent worker.



A Palace, a Prince, and Preparation

Many years had passed since Jacob and his 12 sons and their families had moved to Egypt, and things weren't so easy any more. A new Pharaoh had become the ruler, and he disliked all these people, who weren't Egyptians, living in his country.

He could have told them to move, but he had a different idea. He decided to make them his workers, to build and build many things in his country for him.

The people had to work so very hard, and were not treated well at all. They prayed for God to help them—and He did—but it took some time until it all happened.

God needed to prepare someone to be just the one that would be able to do the very big job of helping the Israelites to leave Egypt and find a new country to live in.

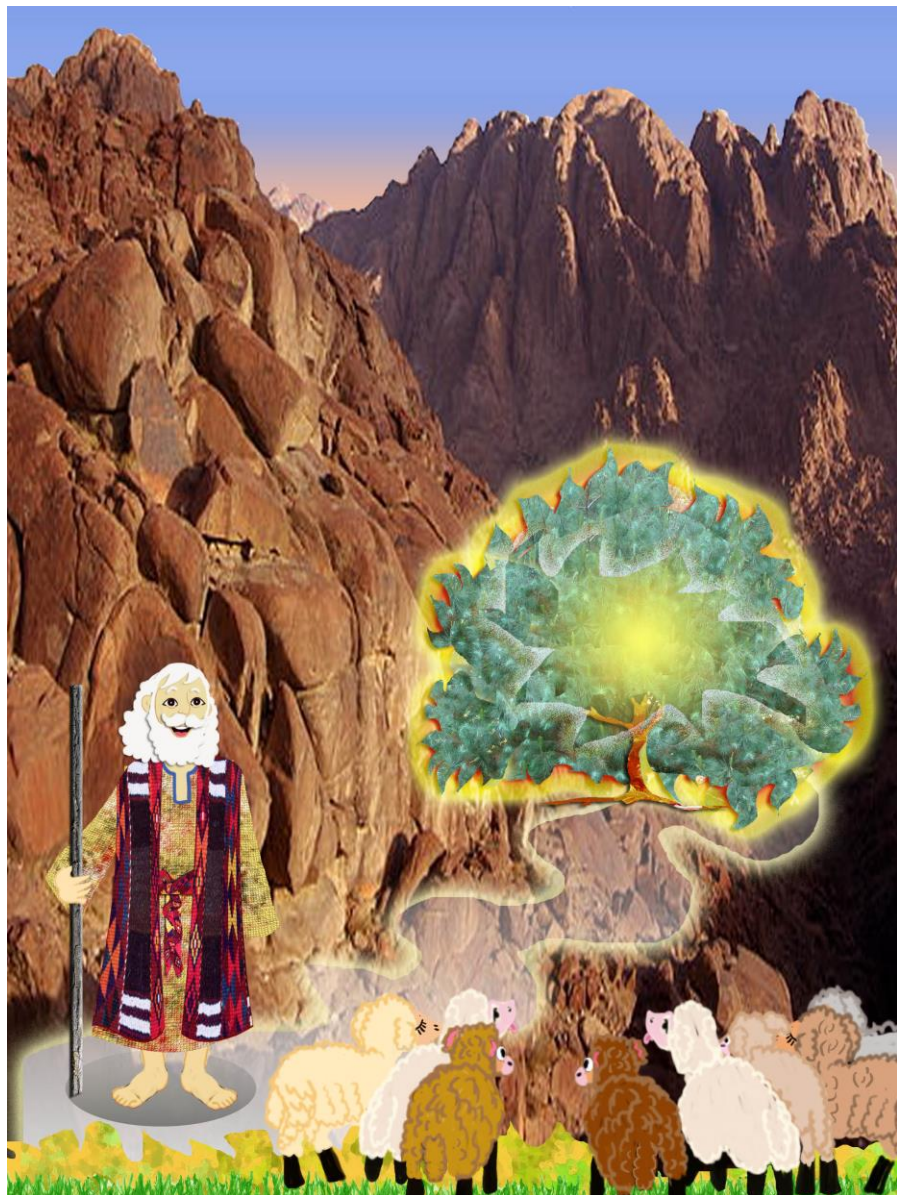
God sent a baby to a good couple, who loved and obeyed Him, and they took good care of their little baby.

Then God had the Princess find him one day, as he slept in a little basket on the river, made like a small boat. His sister Miriam was watching over him.

When the Princess found him, she loved him so much, and wished he could live with her. She gave him to his mother to care for, and said that after he grew a bit older that he could come and live in the palace with her.

Moses grew up as a prince in the palace of Pharaoh, learning many things. He didn't know yet that God was preparing him for a very important job in the future.

It would take a lot of time and training and patience until Moses was ready to do the job of helping the Israelites in the way God knew was best.



The Burning Bush

Moses got to live in the palace of Pharaoh where he had all that he needed. There was something that upset him, however, and that was to see the unkind way that Pharaoh and the Egyptians were treating the Israelites—Jacob’s many descendants.

Moses wanted to stop them from acting that way, but it made Pharaoh not want to have him around there. So Moses went to live far away in a place called Midian.

Moses became a shepherd while living with a man called Jethro, and his family. He helped with the flocks as a patient shepherd, and married Jethro’s grown-up daughter, Zipporah.

God was preparing Moses day-by-day for a big job later on.

Moses was a shepherd for 40 years, learning patience and learning to talk to God and hear from Him.

One day while out with the sheep, Moses was very curious as he saw something he’d never seen or heard of before. There was a bush all brightly lit up! It looked like it was on fire, but for some amazing reason it wasn’t burning up into ashes. It just kept on glowing!

As Moses approached it he heard God speaking to him. Moses then talked with God for a long time, as it was then time for Moses to do the special job that God had been getting him ready for.

God told Moses to go back to Egypt and talk with Pharaoh, telling him to let the people leave Egypt now. God promised to do miracles to show His power to Pharaoh.

Moses knew it would be a very big and difficult job, and would take time, effort, and many miracles too! Moses’ brother Aaron was also called by God to come out and meet with Moses and to help with this job.

Together they’d make a great team, and would do whatever God told them to. God gave Aaron and Moses the courage to obey and return to Egypt to do what God had asked them to do.



Brave Brothers

Moses and his brother Aaron walked to Egypt, bravely doing what God asked them to. They had the job of helping all the Israelites to leave their difficult life behind, and head out on a very long camping trip!

Moses and Aaron talked with the Israelites about God's plan for them, and showed them the signs of God's power. The people believed what the brothers were saying, and were happy to hear that God would help them to leave soon. But did Pharaoh, who wanted them to work for him, like that idea? Not at all!

Moses and Aaron showed signs of God's power to Pharaoh also—like God turning the staff into a snake, and back into a staff again! They told Pharaoh what God wanted him to do—to allow the people to leave Egypt. Just hearing about it made Pharaoh worried and upset. He didn't want all his big building plans for a great, elaborate-looking Egypt to come to a halt. If the people left, what would become of Egypt? So Pharaoh made the wrong choice and said, "No!"

Pharaoh made things even tougher for the people and told them to work even harder. He was acting very unkind, and had lots of ugly pride and selfishness in his heart. It's not a good thing to keep going your own way, when God tells you to do something else. Things were not going to go very well for Pharaoh, as he kept going his own bad way. It was a hard job for Moses and Aaron too. Not only was Pharaoh making things difficult for them, but the people were losing courage and didn't know if it would be possible to leave Egypt.

Some things just take time, and this was something that would take awhile, and there needed to be people with faith and prayer to make it happen. Moses just kept praying and asking God what to do. He and his brother Aaron didn't give up and say the job was too hard. They had God helping them and with God nothing is too hard! Moses gained hope and faith from his time spent with God, that eventually it would all work out. It was God's plan and idea, and God was going to make it all happen, even if it took longer than they all hoped it would.



Woeful and Wonderful

When Pharaoh refused to let the people leave, Moses prayed and asked God what to do next. God said that Pharaoh would have some tough times.

Going your own way instead of God's way doesn't bring good things into your life, as that ruler and all his country found out.

There was one trouble after the other for Pharaoh and all of Egypt too, as a result of his wrong choices. First there was no fresh water to drink or wash with, as God changed the river water and made it unpleasant and stinky. When Pharaoh asked Moses to ask God to make the river nice again, he promised to let the people go.

Pharaoh didn't keep his word, however, and as soon as things were the way he liked them, and the trouble was taken away, he once again said, "No!", and refused to let the people leave Egypt.

There were many other difficult things that came—there was something hard each time Pharaoh would not say "yes" to God's plan.

Bothersome flies, sickness, crops not growing well, strong storms and all kinds of bad things came to the land. If Pharaoh had agreed and done what God had said right at the start, he and his country would not have had all that trouble. Finally he'd had enough, and agreed to let the people leave.

The Israelites were quick to get moving as soon as they heard it was time to go. They gathered up all they could, as fast as possible, loaded it on their carts and wagons, led their animals and got going on their trip out of Egypt right away.

Hurray! At last the moment they'd been hoping for had happened! They were free to follow as God led them.



A Path to Praise About!

Have you ever been stuck somewhere and didn't know what to do or how to get out of the situation? Maybe your family was travelling and the car broke down, and you were somewhere where it was difficult to get help. Or maybe you were working on a project and you were missing one of the most important things you needed to complete it?

There are lots of different problems and difficulties that come our way, and people can cause us trouble too, but no matter how tough things seem, nothing is too hard for God. He can give the help and solutions needed to anyone, anywhere, if they pray and believe that He can.

After the Israelites left Egypt, Pharaoh decided that he wanted the people to come back to work for him again—and not go off taking a trip!

He sent many of his people to get them to return. This seemed to be a problem for the travelling team, because in front of them was the big Red Sea.

They were stuck and couldn't go any further. God had a plan, and told Moses to stretch out his hands and rod over the water.

The amazing miraculous solution began. A strong wind blew and blew, and everyone was in for a surprise.

Can you imagine camping beside a large lake, and after a time of strong wind there is then a pathway right through it, and you can walk, or bike, or drive over to the other side? That's the surprise they all got! God had made a pathway straight across the Red Sea with the water standing up on either side of it. The Israelites walked to the other side on the dry sea bed!

God got them safely across the Red Sea, and then closed up the water again. It was so amazing! It was time to praise God with songs and instruments! They were so happy to see the power of God helping them. They were then able to continue their journey, with a God who could do anything to lead and care for them.



Wilderness, Water and Wells

When you are hungry, tired or thirsty it's hard to be cheerful. It was just the same for the team of travelling Israelites. They were taking a journey through a difficult place. In some ways it was easier than travelling through areas where there were cities and people living, that wouldn't want this huge band of people passing through.

God knew that at the beginning of their trip it would be better and easier for them to travel through places that weren't developed and made into cities. They could stop and camp wherever God led them, and no one was going to bother them.

The only trouble was that there wasn't enough water or food to eat in some places, until God made these things available by miracles. The Israelites were on the move, so they couldn't make a big farm to plant crops, nor was there always enough water around to do so.

When there was a problem—like not enough water or food—the people got upset, rather than praying and having faith that God could give them all they needed. It was something new they had to learn—to have faith in God. Moses would talk to God about their need for food and water, and God always had a solution.

One time, towards the beginning of their travels, they finally found some water but it tasted very bad. God told Moses to throw a certain tree into the water. After he obeyed and did that, the water tasted good and was fit to drink.

Moses then told the people the message and lesson from God. If they wanted to be healthy and happy, they needed to learn to listen to God and to do whatever He told them to do.

The next place they travelled to had 12 wells of water, and lots of nice trees for shade. It felt great! There was one more thing though: They needed food too. The food they'd brought from Egypt had run out. Where could that come from? Moses once again prayed, and God said He would send food from heaven for them in the morning.



Amazing Food

God sent the Israelites food, just as He said He would! The food from Heaven was called “manna” by those who noticed it in the morning. They’d never seen anything like it!

Every day this amazing food was all over the ground, and families could collect what they needed for the day. God gave one instruction to them, and that was to not worry about food for the next day.

God wanted them to have faith that He would send more again, and He wanted them to learn to obey what He said to do. They were not to save any for the next day.

Some people didn’t obey the instructions God gave them, and found out the next day why they shouldn’t have disobeyed. The delicious manna that smelled good and tasted like honey when they collected it, the next day after being saved, had a very bad smell to it and was filled with bugs. Oh dear!

It would have been better to trust that God would send more food for them each new morning. God wanted them to have a day to rest each week, a day where they didn’t have to work. To make this day relaxing for them God gave them permission to gather extra manna the day before, and to save it for the next day.

They wouldn’t have to work even to gather food for one day each week. For some amazing reason, that is the only day that it didn’t go bad when it was saved overnight.

When the Israelites followed God’s instructions, things worked out well and they had all they needed. God even told Moses to save some of that amazing manna in a special box, and to keep it for years to come. It didn’t go bad for so very long!

This little saved sample of the manna reminded them of the miracles that God did for them, and how He cared for them and provided food for them during the many years they were travelling.



Water Out of a Rock

God liked to show His love and care for the travelling Israelites. When they needed fresh drinking water all they needed to do was to ask Him for it. It was hard for the people to be thirsty and to not have water for drinking, cooking and washing, as well as water for their animals to drink. They often forgot to just pray and ask God in faith for what they needed, as they were just starting to learn about God's amazing power to do anything to help them. They often asked Moses in grumbling ways for what they needed. Moses was patient and humble, and had faith in God's care. Moses knew the best thing to do was to pray and ask God for help.

One time when there was no water anywhere, Moses prayed and God told him to hit a rock with the rod, and water would come out of it. Moses did as God said, and water came pouring out, and everyone had the water they needed.

Another time God wanted to give water out of a rock, but in a new way. He wanted Moses to speak to the rock and the water would come flowing out. The people were acting very unkind and complaining. That time Moses had a hard time staying patient with the people's unkind words, and lack of faith in God. He got upset and spoke angrily to the people, and hit the rock this time as well, instead of only speaking to it.

God wasn't glad that Moses got angry and had disobeyed what He said to do. God still sent the water, but it was a lesson to everyone that patience, obedience, and knowing God's love and care were important. There were many lessons of faith and prayer along the way as they journeyed. There was another time when the people needed water again, and they made the right decision to have faith and obey God's instructions. God said for some of the important men, the princes, to use their sticks and to dig in the dirt, and He would make water spring up out of the ground. As the people watched they sang a song, and God sent the water they needed. That was a great way to react. Singing songs of praise and prayer when in a difficult situation, or when there are things that you need, helps bring faith to your heart. It brings the answers from the Lord too!



A Blazing Mountain, a Blasting Trumpet, and Tablets of Stone

God wanted to show those that He had chosen to follow Him just how real and powerful He was. God loved them and wanted each one to love Him, and obey Him too! One day He decided to show the Israelites, who were travelling with Moses, something special. It would be like God coming for a visit, in an amazing way. All the people were to prepare for the event by washing up and putting on clean clothes. It was going to be a very special day.

When the time was right God filled the mountain near them with all sorts of sounds and sights! There were flashes of lightning and booming sounds of thunder. A thick cloud was also on the mountain. Then there was a very loud sound of a trumpet announcing God's visit. It was so loud that everyone in the area could hear it blasting! The mountain looked like it was on fire and smoke was billowing up. The ground also shook like it would in an earthquake. It was a very powerful show God put on for them. The people knew that God was real, and that He was very close to them. God called Moses to come up on the mountain—but said that everyone else, including the animals, shouldn't come up on the mountain. It was just too powerful!

God talked with Moses. When Moses came down from the mountain he told the people the things God had said—important instructions and rules for them to follow. On another trip up the mountain to talk with God, when the mountain had the bright fiery cloud of God's presence on it, Moses received something very special from Him. He was with God for 40 days and nights, and it was then that God wrote with His finger onto tablets of stone. Ten of the most important rules for the people to learn and remember and obey were written in stone. It was hearing God's words and obeying what He said that would make them prosper and do well. We can also listen to the Lord's words and do what He wants us to do today! We need to believe and obey what Jesus says to do. He said the most important rules for us to follow today are to love God and to love others. These are the most important things to remember. When we do these two things, we will please God and live happily.



The Mercy and Light of God

Moses had been on the mountain for a long time with the Lord, but when he came down it upset him to see the disobedience of those in the camp. He was surprised and saddened to find that the people, who he had given God's instructions to, had not followed them.

Moses didn't react in the right way, so rather than first praying and asking God what to do, he felt it was no use trying to teach the people the right way. He angrily threw the tablets of stone down and they broke. Moses was sorry that he acted in anger. It was a mistake that he regretted.

No matter how difficult things seem, or how wrong people are acting, stopping to pray first instead of acting roughly will bring better results.

God was also sad that the people had so quickly forgotten His words, just because Moses had been on the mountain. Everyone had lessons to learn.

God said that everyone needed to choose whose side they were on. Did they want to be a part of God's team or not?

The people who were sorry for doing wrong and who chose to follow God's words were forgiven. God was merciful and forgiving and gave those people another chance.

The mountain was all ablaze with a fiery cloud of God's presence, and He called Moses to come again up on the mountain, bringing new slabs of stone.

Moses talked with God and stayed on the mountain with Him for another 40 days, receiving the instructions again, having them written on the tablets of stone. Moses got to be very close to God and speak to Him as a friend. God even gave Moses a little peek at what He looked like. It was very special!

When Moses came down from the mountain that time, he saw that the people had behaved well. The new stone Ten Commandments were shown to all, and well cared for. God had told Moses to prepare a special wooden box for them, so they could be safely kept for many years.

Everyone who looked at Moses after he had come down from the mountain knew that he had been with God, as Moses' face was so very bright. Moses didn't realise it, but he was shining! His time alone with God, listening and talking with Him, had filled Moses with God's beautiful light!



The

Cloud of the Lord

The way God chose to show the Israelites where to go, and when to move, was by a special cloud in the shape of a pillar which He created as a sign of His presence being there with the people. It was easy for everyone to see and to follow it.

When God wanted the people to move on and travel to a new place, this cloud would begin to move. It was a reminder to all the people that God was with them, and He was the one in charge, and would help them. At night this cloud was as a pillar of fire, giving light, and everyone could see it.

Whether it was day or night the travellers could tell what they were supposed to do—whether to camp or to move on. God knew what was best, and He knew what was going on in all the surrounding lands. He led them to the best places for them at the time.

God had a special project for Moses and others to work on. He wanted to keep reminding the people how He was real and near to them, and they could trust in His care. God gave Moses instructions on how to have some faithful workers build and put up a beautiful, large tent—a tabernacle. It was to be a special place of worship and prayer.

They were to also make a special box too, nicely decorated and shaped. This box was called, the “Ark of the Covenant”. It would be kept safely, and would hold things like a sampling of the manna, Aaron’s rod when God said to place it there, the tablets of stone, and other things that were added later on.

When the people finally made it to their new land, Joshua, Caleb and others were sent to check it out. Joshua and Caleb saw it was a good place, and were eager to move there. The others that had also explored the place weren’t sure it was safe. They said that some very tall people were living there already, and it seemed impossible for them to move there. They said things that discouraged everyone from entering it.

Because the people didn’t have the faith to go into the new land that God had promised them, they weren’t ready to live there, and had to keep travelling for many more years. Forty years passed, and many lessons were learned. At last they were allowed another chance to enter and live in their new land. This time they had faith and courage, and were ready and eager to obediently do what God told them to in order to move in to the new country.



Aaron's Almonds and Moses' Song

God likes to surprise people with little signs of His power. One time God did something very different, as a sign to the people that He was the one who had picked Moses and Aaron to be the leaders. He told Moses to tell the 12 princes—the heads of each of the 12 tribes—to bring their rods, their walking sticks, and for each one to write their name on

their own rod. Aaron's rod would be the one for the tribe of Levi. They obeyed what God said, and put their rods in the special tabernacle, just for one night. God said that whoever's rod began to grow leaves and blossom, would be the leader He'd chosen to do that important job of leading the people.

The next morning when Moses went into the tabernacle to look at the rods, he saw something very amazing. Aaron's rod, the one that Moses and Aaron had used to obey God and perform so many miracles and was very old, had buds on it!

The buds blossomed into flowers, and then almonds grew—right from that old walking stick! Can you imagine that? It was a clear sign to everyone that God had chosen Moses and Aaron to be the leaders to point them in God's way.

When the time was right for Moses and Aaron to receive their reward for a job well done and to live with God in Heaven, He called them to Him. Peacefully and instantly each of them went to be with God in the place He told them to be, and at just the right time—first Aaron, and then some time later, Moses.

Before Moses left, God asked him to write a song for the children of Israel to learn and sing. It was to remind them of what God wanted them to remember. God wanted to make things as easy as He could to help the Israelites follow in His ways. A song is a great way to remember things. Moses wrote down the words to the song in one day and taught it to the people.

God called Moses to go up to a certain mountain to get a look at the land that the Israelites were going to move to soon—the place they had been preparing to go to for so long. Joshua was called by God to be the new man in charge, helping to lead the people into the new land.

He was a man who wanted to listen to God's words and do whatever He said to do. He had also helped Moses faithfully for many years. Joshua had lots of faith in God, and this made him just right for the job.



Joshua, Jordan and Jericho

Joshua had helped Moses for many years, and was a man full of faith. He was quick to obey and follow whatever God said to do. When it was time for Moses to return to God and live with Him, God gave Joshua the job of being the new leader of the Israelites. He was to lead them into the new land that God had promised would be theirs.

It was a very big job and an important responsibility. Joshua knew that the only way to succeed, and to have things go well, was to pray and ask God what to do. One day when Joshua was praying, before entering the new country, a man was sent from God to talk with him. He was a powerful Captain in charge of God's angels. God sent him to help and encourage Joshua.

God told Joshua the plan, and gave the instructions on what to do next. It didn't look possible, or easy, to just walk into their new land and to start building their houses, and to live there peacefully. First of all, there was the Jordan River that would need to be crossed. Also, the city of Jericho was inhabited by ungodly people, and surrounded by a very big, strong and high wall.

It would take many miracles to even be able to enter their new country at last, but that is what God is good at doing. These things that seemed impossible, or very difficult, were not a problem to Him.

Everyone obeyed the new and amazing instructions given to them by the Lord. The priests carried the special Ark of the Covenant box to the river's edge, and as soon as their feet touched the water, it began to part!

There was a big pathway right through the Jordan River to the other side, and everyone could easily cross it.

After crossing the river, a team of people and some priests were chosen to walk around the outside of the walled city of Jericho—one time every day, for six days. Then on the seventh day, they walked around it seven times. They blew their trumpets and shouted at just the right time, when God said they should. Then a miracle happened!

Those big strong walls fell down flat, after the people did as God said. The Israelites were able to move into their new country at last.



Gideon and the Angel

Things were pretty tough for the Israelites, as many of them had stopped following God's instructions and rules for them. Things in their country weren't going well, and troublesome people were making things hard for them.

People had to hide their food, so that the unkind folks wouldn't come and take it. God couldn't do great and mighty miracles for them and make things all nice, until they chose to obey Him and do what He asked them to do.

Gideon was a man that loved God and respected Him. He wished people would start following and obeying God again, and he wished things would get better in their country, but it seemed impossible.

One day as he was threshing wheat in a secluded place so that the Midianites, as they were called, wouldn't come and take his family's food, something very surprising happened to him.

An angel of God appeared to Gideon and told him that he was a strong and good man, and that God wanted to use him to be the one to make their country nice and safe again. Gideon was amazed to see an angel, and he wanted to know for sure that it was God who was calling him to do that very big job. Gideon brought some food to the angel and set it on a rock.

When the angel touched it with the top of his staff, all of a sudden, fire came out of the rock and burned up the food and the broth that Gideon had poured on it. It was amazing! Gideon knew then that what the angel had said was true, and he chose to obey God and do what he was called to do.

Gideon prayed and wanted a sign from God to prove that he was the one that God was calling to do this job. Gideon placed some thick wool on the ground outside.

He asked God to make the wool wet in the morning with dew, and to have the ground around the wool still be dry. And that's just what happened! The wool was very wet—wet enough to fill a bowl with water—and the ground surrounding the wool was totally dry.

Then Gideon prayed for the opposite to happen, and it did! God made the ground wet, but the wool that was on top of the wet ground was completely dry. Normally, that would have been impossible. Only God could have done it! It showed Gideon that God was near to him and would do miracles for him, if Gideon would obey whatever God asked him to do.



A Pitcher, a Torch and a Trumpet

Gideon had prayed and proven God’s words of instructions to him to be true. He was ready to go and do whatever job God had for him. There were many people interested in helping him.

A whole lot of people came to be on Gideon’s team—many thousands! However, God wanted to surprise everyone with what He could do, with just a small band of men. He wanted to show His special miracle-working power.

Gideon had faith and acted in obedience when God told him that his team of helpers were too many, and to send many of them home.

God said that if there was anyone who was lacking courage or confidence in His help and strength, that they should be the first to leave—so, many returned to their homes.

Then God told Gideon to observe the men drinking at the river, and told him who to choose and who to send back home.

Finally, only 300 men were left on Gideon’s team.

However, a few faith-filled and obedient people who are following God are enough for Him to do a great job.

A clay pitcher, a torch, and a trumpet, were what each of the 300 men on Gideon’s team were told to get. How would those interesting items do the job of chasing away multitudes of people? Well, God’s plan worked! He did the part that they couldn’t do.

At night, while all the Midianites were asleep in their tents, Gideon and his men crept quietly into the camp.

Then, at just the right time, in the middle of the quiet night, they made BIG, sudden, loud noises! The sound of the clay pots smashing, the blowing of the trumpets, and each one yelling out so loudly was enough to shock those trouble makers!

They ran out of their tents and made a dash for it. They were so startled, surprised and shocked about what was going on, that they ran away as fast as they could!

God’s interesting and new idea worked.



Strong Man

A man named Manoah and his wife had no children. One day an angel of the Lord appeared to the woman, and told her some wonderful news. God was going to give them a child—a very special son. He was to belong to the Lord, to do His will, and was whom God was sending to help the Israelites.

God needed a strong man who loved Him, and would live his life as God's helper for the people.

The woman went and told her husband all that the angel had said, and he wanted to meet the angel too, as he had more questions to ask.

The parents were very eager to obey all that God wanted them to do, and wanted to find out more instructions so they could do the best job possible in raising and training their soon-to-come child. He would need the right childhood preparation and care in order to do his job—the job he was sent to Earth to do.

The Manoah and his wife prayed for another chance to talk with the angel, and God sent him again to them. The angel appeared again to the woman while she was out in the field, and then called her husband to come quickly. They both talked to him and listened carefully to his words.

Then it happened! They had a son, just as God said they would.

They were wise parents and trained him well. They obeyed all that God had wanted them to do.

His name was Samson. He kept long hair, as God had told his parents he needed to. When he was grown and ready to begin his work for the Lord, he began to feel the Lord's spirit leading him in what to do.

Samson loved God, and prayed, and did whatever God told him to do.

It was a very difficult time for the Israelites, as there were some hurtful and unkind people causing them trouble—because they hadn't been following God's instructions and rules. God wanted to help change things for the better, and so had sent Samson.

God gave Samson great and unusual strength. It was a miracle and a gift of God. There was nothing anyone could do to stop him.

With God helping him, he was stronger than anyone else—as long as he obeyed God's instructions, prayed for God's help, and knew it was God who gave him that special gift.

God made Samson the judge of Israel, and he did that job faithfully for 20 years!



Kind Ruth

Naomi was a woman who loved the Lord and trusted Him through all the difficulties in her life. As she was getting older it seemed she wouldn't have anyone left to take care of her. There was a kind woman called Ruth, who was like a daughter to her.

Ruth said she would stay with Naomi always. Together they travelled to Bethlehem, as they heard there was food there, and it was the time of the harvest.

Ruth went out to a field to pick up any grain that the harvesters dropped, so that she and Naomi would have food to eat.

When the man who owned the field found out who Ruth was—that she was the kind lady who was taking care of Naomi, he let her stay in his field and continue to pick up the fallen grain pieces.

Boaz was his name, and he was a relative of Naomi. He wanted to make sure those ladies had enough, and even told the reapers to drop extra handfuls of barley for her to collect.

Boaz let Ruth eat lunch with him and the harvesters and drink their water too, as she worked hard in the hot sun gathering all the barley that she could.

By the end of the day she had plenty to bring back for her and Naomi to eat.

God was taking good care of them, as they followed Him and loved Him.

Ruth was a kind and loving woman and Boaz chose to marry her. Together they had a dear little baby whom they called Obed.

Grandmother Naomi was happy to help care for her new grandson. They were a happy family, and all things had worked out for the best in the end.



Hannah's Prayer and Promise

Hannah was a woman who loved God very much and took time to talk with Him in prayer. She knew God answered prayer even if some prayers took a long time to be answered.

As soon as you pray, God hears what you ask for, but it's not always the best time or way for your request to be answered right then and there. Sometimes you have to wait for awhile, and then it works out for the best in the end.

Hannah had wished for a child for a long time and often talked to God about it. However, it wasn't the right time for her special prayed-for boy to be given. --Until one day, when she and her husband and other relatives were visiting a place called Shiloh.

They took a trip there each year to pray and to praise and worship God. They would enjoy a feast and talk with friends and relatives who were there too.

At the feast Hannah was feeling very sad as she saw others with their families and their children, but she had none. It made her cry and pray with her whole heart for God to give her a son.

She promised then, at that feast, that if God would let her have a child she would let him serve God all his life. Priest Eli saw Hannah praying, and asked her about it.

She then explained to Eli how she was feeling, and he encouraged her and said that he knew God would answer her prayer.

Hannah felt happy inside! She had faith that her prayer would be answered soon.

Hannah then did have a child! --A special little baby boy.

She named him Samuel, and she loved him very much.

He was a special boy who would have a special job when he grew up.



Little Boy Samuel

How would you like to live in a place that only certain special people got to be? Samuel was brought to live with Priest Eli so that he could start to serve the Lord right away and get to hear His words. Samuel didn't have to wait until he was old.

Samuel was the only child that had that privilege of serving God and learning of His ways while living in the tabernacle. He had the rare and special opportunity to get to hear and learn about what was written on the old scrolls—God's words of instruction to everyone.

Samuel helped with the jobs that needed to get done and learned how to pray. Samuel got to wear a special outfit that was made just his size—just like a Priest wears. He had his own matching set, to be the same as Priest Eli, who was caring for him and teaching him.

Hannah and Elkanah praised God for how wonderful He is and for the great things He can do and that He did do! God had answered Hannah's prayer and had given them a son, and now was preparing Samuel for his special future ministry.

Samuel helped with the humble jobs; he respected God's Words, and was obedient too. He grew in faith and wisdom. He was right in the place that was best for him.

It was different than what other children needed to do, but it was just right for him.

Each year Samuel's mother would bring him a new coat to wear for the next year.

Elkanah and Hannah had more children too! God had blessed them and they were a happy family with three more boys and two girls.

They would go up to the feast each year as usual and get to see Samuel, their big brother, there.

Even when he was young he was a good example of believing God's words and following what He said to do.



Listening to God Speak

Samuel stayed with Priest Eli and helped him do the special jobs they did to serve the Lord. Samuel learned about God and learned to pray.

One night he learned to also listen to God's Words that would be spoken to him personally. He was sleeping soundly in his bed that was near the Ark of the Covenant—a place very few were allowed to be.

Eli was getting old and couldn't see very well, so it was a great help to have Samuel around.

One of Samuel's jobs then was to make sure the special lamp that was near the Ark of the Covenant was always lit, and to add more oil to it when it was needed. He kept checking on it during the day and if he woke at night too.

One night as young Samuel slept something woke him up—a voice calling his name.

He was accustomed to helping Eli and was quick to obey when he was called. Samuel ran quickly to Eli's side ready to help and to listen, but Eli said he hadn't called! Who was it?

Samuel went back to bed to try and sleep again, but he was called again and went right away again to Priest Eli.

When this happened a few times Eli realised that it was the Lord calling Samuel; so he instructed him what to do and say.

When Samuel went back to bed for the third time he heard the Lord calling him clearly.

Samuel then sat still and said, "Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening."

Samuel heard God's words and remembered them and told them to Eli the next morning. God had called and chosen Samuel to be a prophet and continued to speak to him as he grew older.

He was a judge as well, and told the people God's Words—for God's Words were what he loved most of all. Praying for the people was also one job he did very faithfully.



A Faithful Judge and Prophet

Samuel loved God so much, and was very respectful and obedient when God talked with Him. Everyone began to respect and appreciate Samuel too.

He was helping things in the country change for the better, by praying and hearing from God and helping to teach everyone what God wanted them to do.

When people were going their own foolish and disobedient ways, then troubles came. But when they listened to and obeyed God's words, and did what Samuel the prophet and judge told them from the Lord, then their situation improved.

One time when things weren't going well at all, and troublesome people were giving the Israelites a hard time, the Israelites decided to do something they shouldn't have done.

Instead of praying and being sorry for not following God's ways, and changing, they tried to do something else to protect themselves.

The special Ark of the Covenant that Priest Eli kept safely was taken away by some of the people.

This Ark of the Covenant reminded people that God was near and would care for them just as He had when the Israelites travelled in the wilderness. The people thought that if they had that special Ark with them, rather than leaving it in the tabernacle, it would protect them and chase away the trouble makers. However, that didn't work.

Samuel reminded them what needed to be done. If they began to obey God and follow His words then He would do the miracles and make the country a nice place to be again. Everyone wanted to change and to do things God's way. This was a good decision and brought wonderful results.

Then Samuel prayed for them and God answered their prayers and made things pleasant again. The Ark of the Covenant was put in a safe place, and for many years the people chose to listen to God's words that were spoken through Samuel, and to love and obey God.



Samuel and Saul

Samuel had done his best to lead and teach the people of Israel God's ways. However, after many years they wanted to have a king to be their ruler, instead of a prophet leading them to follow God as their Heavenly King.

When Samuel prayed and asked God what He wanted to do about it, God said that they could have an earthly king, but it wouldn't always be easy for them.

Hearing God's Words through His prophet and obeying God would be much easier than having a ruler telling them what to do. If the king wasn't following God's ways then it would make things very difficult for them.

Even when Samuel explained what God said, the people still wanted to have a king as a ruler. God knew this would happen, and many years before had been preparing someone to do the job.

One day when Samuel was praying, God told him that a man would visit him the next day, and that he was the right man to be the king. Samuel got prepared, as God had said, and told the cook to make sure to set aside a good portion of the food that was to be served the next day, for a special guest that was coming.

A man called Saul, along with a servant, was looking for his father's missing donkeys. They decided to find the prophet Samuel and ask for his help. They knew that if Samuel prayed, God could tell them where the donkeys were.

When Samuel saw Saul coming, God told him that he was the one that was to be the king. Samuel told Saul some surprising things. He invited him to a special dinner that day and also said not to worry about the donkeys, because they had already been found.

Then Samuel told Saul that he was an important man and he was just the person that the people were wanting.

Saul didn't understand that. He didn't think of himself as being anyone extra special. Even though he was tall and strong and could do lots of things, he was humble and thought of others as better than himself. But a humble man who prays and knows that he needs God's help is the best kind of man for the job of being a king.

Samuel poured some special oil on Saul's head, as a demonstration of God's spirit and power helping him to do the job of soon becoming the king of the country. Saul went home then to help his father until it was the time to be crowned as king later on.



King Saul

The prophet Samuel talked with Saul, after he had poured oil on his head to show that he was to be the king of the land of Israel. The Lord told Samuel just what was going to happen next on Saul's journey back home to his father.

Each of the events happened, just as Samuel said they would! Saul was amazed. It was a sign to him that God was leading him to do that new and special job.

On his way home Saul met a group of prophets who were making music and were prophesying. The Lord's Spirit was on Saul and he began to prophesy as well. People who knew him from before were surprised!

Saul was like a new man, with new thoughts and feelings and reactions. God had changed his heart and given him the ability to do the job of being the future king.

Prophet Samuel called all the people together to let them know who was to be their king.

People from all the tribes of Israel were there. This was a very important event for them.

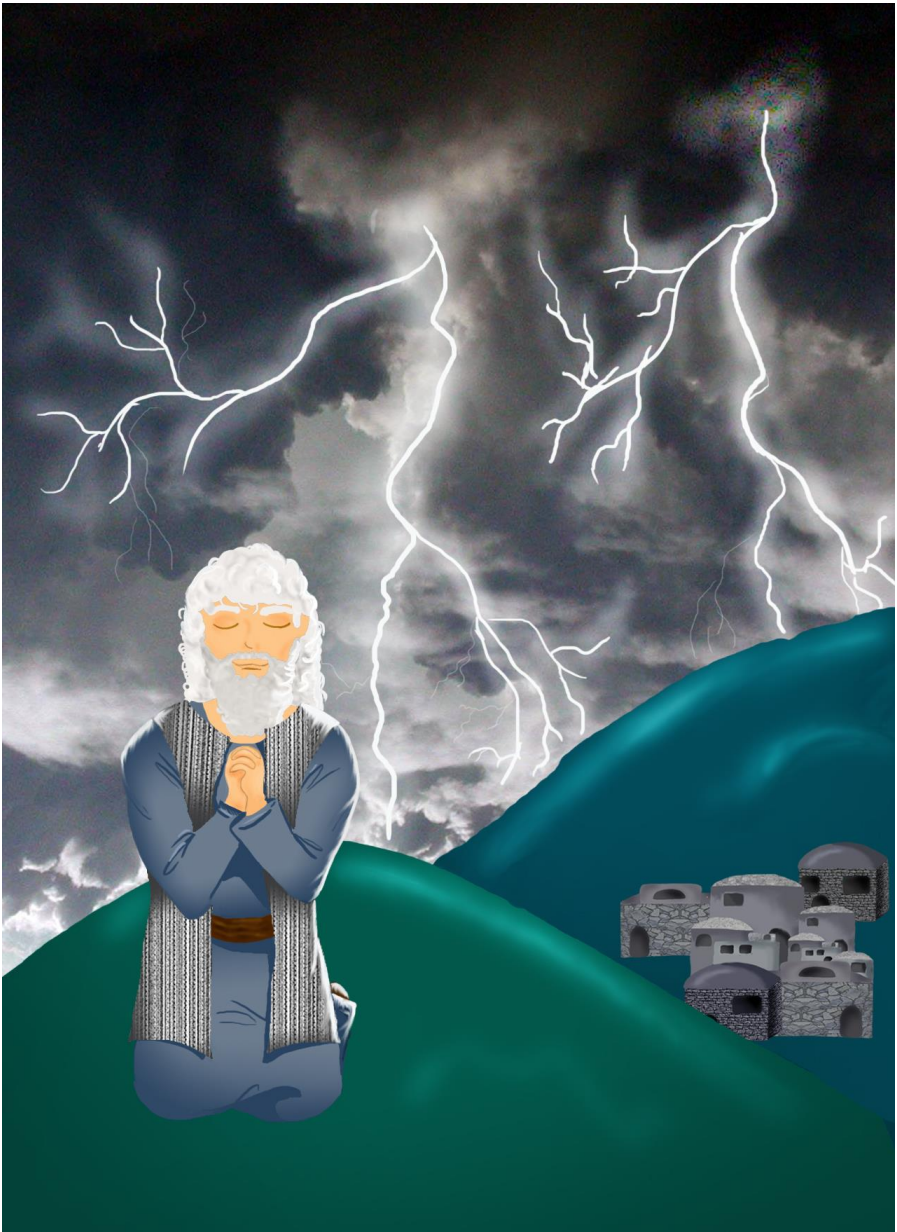
First, God let them know what tribe the king would come from, and then He revealed what family the king was to be from. And last of all God showed who from that family was to be the king.

It was clear to all, after finding out step-by-step who God wanted it to be, that Saul was the one that God had chosen to be the king.

Saul was feeling nervous and shy about being a king when he saw all those people together, so he hid.

But God told Samuel where Saul was—he was hiding by all the stuff that was in a pile.

When Saul stood up he was a very tall man and everyone shouted, "God save the King!"



A Thundery Demonstration

It was very important that King Saul and all the people follow God's Words and instructions and not choose to go their own wrong way.

Samuel told everyone the Lord's Words and reminded them that God was in charge and the wise thing to do would be to listen to Him and obey Him.

Everyone had pushed to have their own way—to have a king as a ruler—even though God had told them that it wouldn't make things easier.

In fact it could make things very difficult for them, if the king wasn't behaving in ways that pleased the Lord, and was instead full of his own ideas, and was selfish, and disobedient to God's ways.

Yet, everyone said they still wanted a king—since most of the other countries around had one.

However, when God granted their request, somehow they felt sad in heart, because they knew it wasn't the best choice—but it was too late to change.

They were sorry for not listening to God better and not choosing to have things His way, even though it was different than what other countries had.

But then Samuel encouraged them with God's Words, that even if they had demanded to be given something that was not God's best choice for them, it was still possible to have things go well in the country if they all—including the king—were faithful to follow in God's ways.

Then Samuel prayed and God showed everyone a sign to let them know that He was right there. Even though it was a sunny day, Samuel prayed and God sent thunder and rain right then!

God was so powerful and near to them all and He knew everything that was going on. Everyone realised that following and respecting God was the best thing to do.



A Good Heart

It was a big job for Saul to be the king, and one thing you really need if you are the king is faith. However, instead of having the faith to obey the Lord's instructions, Saul chose rather to do the things that others thought were best.

He disobeyed what God, through Samuel the prophet, said for him to do. If he'd had more faith and trust in God's plan and care, then he would have been more obedient to God's words.

Because Saul did what others said to do, out of fear or worry, rather than what God asked him to, it displeased God and showed a lack of faith in Him. Samuel needed to find someone else to be the king; someone who would do what God asked them to do.

God told Samuel that one of Jesse's sons in Bethlehem was to eventually be the new king. Samuel invited Jesse and all his grown sons to a feast.

One-by-one the men stood in front of Samuel to see which one was to be chosen. God said that being tall and strong and good-looking wasn't going to make them a good king.

God looks on the heart and what people are feeling and thinking and what they are motivated to do.

None of Jesse's seven sons that stood there for Samuel to choose from received God's approval for being the king.

Samuel asked if Jesse had any more sons, and he said "Yes". His youngest, David, was watching over the sheep.

When he came and stood before Samuel, God said that he, this young man David, was to be the next king after Saul.

Samuel poured the special oil on David's head, and God's Spirit came on him.

It would be years before David was the king, but with God's Spirit he could make wise decisions while preparing to be the king, and learning just what he needed to know before it was time to rule the country.



David's Harp

Do you like to play music? David did, and he could play so beautifully. People all around where he lived, knew he could play songs to God on his harp very skillfully. He had lots of time to practice while watching over the sheep. He used his time well, singing and talking with the Lord.

One time, when King Saul was feeling very grumpy, some people suggested that songs and music might cheer him up. "Who could we bring to sing and play music for the king?" they wondered. God had them think of David the shepherd, who they had heard was good at playing the harp.

Now David's times of practice came in handy, as he was able to play music and sing songs to the king, and it made King Saul feel so much better. Music can really have an effect on you. If you are listening and playing nice songs, songs that fill your heart and mind with good thoughts and feelings, then music can be a good thing. It's a wonderful way to praise and pray and cheer people up.

David was invited to live and work with the king. David loved God and had God's spirit helping him. He was wise and acted humbly, and he obeyed what the king asked him to do. He prayed for God to help him do what was good and right and what would be a help to others. Jonathan, King Saul's son, was a good friend to David. They talked together and encouraged each other through difficult times.

After Saul had been the king for quite awhile, sadly he stopped doing things in God's way; and he no longer was empowered with God's spirit. King Saul was often upset and making unwise decisions, and saying things that weren't good. David was very patient and calm even when King Saul said unkind things about him. David had faith that God would work things out. He trusted in God and was able to do a good job because he prayed and took time talking with the Lord.

(Continued in Book 2)