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Kurt Jarvis holds his B.A. degree from Asbury College and his M.A. degree in Education from Rowan University. He has had over fifty years direct experience in children's ministry at both the national and local level as well as with international with various Christian organizations and missions and has conducted international training activities and children's rallies in over 25 countries worldwide.

In 2008 Kurt founded CBS4Kids, a non profit international training ministry for pastors, teachers and other children's workers under American Ministry Support, www.AMSUSA.org. For other resources on the CBS4Kids approach to teaching and telling the Story of God go to www.CBS4Kids.org

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The Chronological

Story of God Beginning Devotional



12 Stories

For
Parents, Teachers, and Children's Workers

m. k. Jarvis

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The Beginning Bible Storying Devotional

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Many additional thanks to the hundreds of others who have faithfully prayed for me and have contributed from their own storehouses to fund international training activities. These are all part of this story...His story.

A long time ministry colleague once said, "*The urgency of the King's business requires haste.*" There is urgency in telling the story of God that sadly has been lost by many of God's leaders and workers. Many have succumbed to the ever increasing pace of daily life that has crowded out the urgency of taking the Gospel to a lost world. We must never lose sight of the urgency of the King's business; we must all have and maintain a sense of urgency to tell His story.

Special thanks to *The Chronological Bible Storying* leaders, Dr. J.O. Terry and Mr. Blair Faulk, who have developed the approach of telling and teaching the story of God through this unique method and whose work has inspired me to creatively consider an adaptation of that method for children and this volume for families.

And lastly, thank you to Joseph Burchill, Pastor Adult Education at Lancaster Alliance Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Marion Jean Grant, missionary with BCM International, Canada, both very long ministry colleagues and friends who have been a constant encouragement to me as I have pursued following God's call.

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www.net.bible.org

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- **Shadow Story:** Use a white cloth and back light in front of players that act out the story or use silhouette figures and scene props cut out from card stock and glued on thin dowel sticks (available from Wal-Mart or craft stores to make and props.
- **Storytelling line:** In this presentation style the story is told in scripture narrative form. The narrator and all the characters in the story stand in a line with their backs to the audience. They turn and face the audience only while speaking their story parts and when finished turn back around. If two characters are talking to each other, those two turn and face the audience for their parts but then “exit” the stage by turning back around.

Variation: In the story of creation you can have six characters and a narrator. The narrator begins telling and then each person, in turn, turns around to the audience and tells about their assigned day of creation. But – at the end of each day of creation have ALL characters turn and face the audience and say "And God saw all that He had made that day and it was good. And the evening and morning were the ____ day". Then they turn back around.



For more information about becoming part of God’s family or learning more about how to be a follower of Jesus, go to

- www.CBS4Kids.org
- www.bcmintl.ca
- www.cefonline.org
- www.jesus2020.com

Forward

The rise of Biblical illiteracy in America

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., the ninth president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary wrote in 2005 regarding the issue of biblical illiteracy, “ Researchers George Gallup and Jim Castelli put the problem squarely: ‘Americans revere the Bible--but, by and large, they don't read it. And because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates.’ Researchers tell us that it's worse than most could imagine.

- Fewer than half of all adults can name the four gospels.
- Many Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples.
- According to Barna Research Group, 60 percent of Americans can't name even five of the Ten Commandments. ‘No wonder people break the Ten Commandments all the time. They don't know what they are,’ said George Barna, president of the firm.
- 82 percent of Americans believe "God helps those who help themselves" is a Bible verse
- 12 percent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife
- A survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 percent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife
- A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham

Almost four decades ago the American culture was introduced to a revolutionary realm of science fiction as hordes of movie goers sat through the new film Star Wars. Those of us who had that big screen opportunity first hand, or via DVD at home since, can relate to this film phenomena and can hardly forget the special effects and characters that came alive on the cinema screen.

One scene in particular was unforgettable. In the midst of human crisis the R2D2 robot projected a message from a 3 dimensional holograph figure of Princess Leia. Under siege, the Federation was seeking their own type of savior, that infamous Jedi Knight, Obi-Wan Kenobi. Obi-Wan, the warrior who could save the people under attack and annihilation from the forces of evil led by Darth Vader, leader of the dark side.

Princess Leia sent the plea, “Obi-Won Kenobie, you’re our only hope....”

This one line is a vivid reminder of a similar fate our world is facing today, the need of an only hope for a better society, a better world, hope for a better future, and rescue from a dark side of mankind. Those of us who know the message of the Bible, know where that hope lies. But we are living today in a world where the “dark side” would have us forget God, forget His Word and soon forget the principles of living that are embodied in those sacred writings.

Many thousands of years ago a similar scenario was played out. Review with me the words from the book of Judges, chapter 2, verse 10: “*After a whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel. The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord.*”

The struggle between good and evil has been present even before recorded history and the creation of the word. We read that this struggle and conflict existed long before creation in the heavenlies when war broke out between Satan and his angel followers and God Himself. That story alone would be sufficient for a remake of Star Wars with special effects that could also mesmerize audiences.

- **Illustrating the Story:** Consider using paper cutting illustrations as you tell a story.
- **Audience Action:** Have the audience do an action. Split the audience and have one side raise their arms and be the waves in the lake when Jesus was asleep in the boat with His disciples. Have the other half be the waves on the other side of the boat. They all raise their hands and wave them back and forth at the appropriate time as you tell the story.
- **Puppet Story Presentation:** Use puppets to tell the story or have puppets pantomime the story while one person or player tells the story.
- **Freeze Frame Storytelling:** Use team members from your storytelling group. Develop the story into sections and develop a scene for each section. Pre-train the players of each scene. If possible, have a curtain on a pole that is raised from the floor between each “freeze” scene. As the story is told have two people raise the curtain between scenes as players form each “frozen in place” scene. If a curtain is not possible, have the audience close their eyes between scenes as players reset themselves.

Example: The Good Samaritan

Scene 1: Freeze frame – One player - Traveler on road

Scene 2: Freeze frame – Four players -Traveler and three robbers

Scene 3: Freeze frame – One player - Traveler lying along road side

Scene 4: Freeze frame – 2 players - Traveler asks Priest for help

Scene 5: Freeze frame – 2 players - Traveler asks Levite for help

Scene 6: Freeze frame – 2 players - Traveler gets help from Samaritan

Scene 7: Freeze frame – 3 players - Samaritan with traveler at inn

Scene 8: Freeze Frame – 3 players - Priest, Levite, Samaritan

Storytelling Ideas

Telling the scripture stories can be an exciting, interactive involvement with the audience. Consider some of the following techniques to have some creative features to the storytelling or scripture presentation time whether as part of congregational worship or in teaching and telling situations.

- **Chants:** Make up chants that go along with a story and have the audience repeat the chant.

Example of Audience Chants

The Good Samaritan	The Sower and The Seeds
Help me! Help me! Help me please! I've been beaten and robbed by a bunch of thieves They took my money and they took my clothes, They punched me in the eye and they broke my nose.	Seeds in my pocket, seeds in the air Seeds on the ground Seeds everywhere. Give the seeds some water and give the seeds some sun, Watch them grow, see what God has done.

- **Audience Response:** Find a phrase that is repeated and have the audience repeat the phrase with you.

Example: David and Goliath

When you hear me say "David" section 1 says "He was young but brave" (and places hand over heart)

When you hear me say "Goliath" section 2 says, "He was a fearless warrior and he was strong" (and make a fist in the air)

When you hear me say "Philistines" Section 3 stand up and shouts, "We fear no one."

- **Pantomime:** Let other story team members pantomime the story as you tell it.

The world remains in jeopardy with a generation that will "*know neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel.*" And the result will be similar, "*The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord.*"

Without a moral compass the world indeed is doomed to a falling away from biblical principles of living. Is there any doubt that there is a need and urgency for telling the Biblical Story?

Perhaps we need a beautiful princess created in a 3 dimensional holograph DVD that we can send to every household. As the holograph appears, the princess quietly whispers, "Please someone, go tell and teach the Biblical Story, it is our only hope."

Kurt Jarvis

Knowing and Telling the Story of God

We drastically underestimate our ability to memorize, especially in an age when so much information is readily available at our fingertips via the internet, personal electronic devices or even our cell phones. It is no longer necessary to remember lists as we can recall just about any information that we would desire and that information can also be recorded with ease.

But God's Word reminds us of a truth that has stood the test of time for over 3000 years, "*In my heart I store up your words that I might not sin against you.*" You cannot store up information if you cannot remember it and recall it, plain and simple.

God intended and intends for us to KNOW His Word, the Bible. We become familiar with the Word of God but we can also store up, and "*hide in our hearts*" the Word of God by memorizing key verses.

A further exercise for us can also be to store up more than one or two verses here and there, or even a passage or two like the 23rd Psalm. A good challenge is to consider memorizing passages and stories so they can be retold without being encumbered by needing to read from the text. This enables us to give more emphasis to the story or passage as it is told.

A misnomer is that young children really are not very good at memorizing other than the times tables for math or a few lines in a school play. Not so. A child or teen's mind is often much more receptive to memorization than adults and youth is the time to "*hide the Word of God in their hearts*" so that as they enter adulthood the truths of the Word of God can easily return to their minds as they face their own life challenges and decisions. The parables of Jesus and the many other stories of God all contain truth and life principles that can guide all of us through decision making that takes place every day.

And that is exactly why God said "*Hide my words in your heart...*" Why? He answers that again, "*so that you will not sin*" or fall into disobedience.

clean from all we have ever done to disobey God. It is that easy and it does not matter if we are young or older, God is just waiting for us to ask Him to forgive us and take us into His family.

If you are not part of God's family and would like to be in God's family you can pray that prayer right now. Just talk to God and tell God you are sorry of disobeying and tell God you want Him to forgive you and He does. Once you pray and ask God you are then part of His family.

Questions and discussion:

- What did Jesus tell people they needed to do to be part of God's family?
- How did Zacchaeus become part of God's family?
- How do you become part of God's family?

As part of this beginning devotional book we have included a scripture passage or story for each devotional as a challenge for memorization and presentation.

If the passage is somewhat long, such as Genesis 1-2:1, consider encouraging and challenging children, youth or adults to tag team tell the passage or story. Each person on the team can just take 2-3 verses and commit those to memory and then present the story exactly the same way – tag teaming the presentation. Even this approach gives an added dramatic touch in presenting of the Scripture and enables many to be included in the presenting.

For young children a tag team can tell the passage or story while puppets act out the story in pantomime, or others can act out the story in pantomime as it is told. Another technique is to present the passage with shadow puppetry, easily constructed with white sheeting material, a background floodlight and silhouette figures and props cut from stock card and glued on thin dowel sticks available from Wal-Mart in the craft section or at craft or home supply stores.

Teens can interpret the scripture passage or story using music and stick drama. For information on this technique go to www.saltandlightmin.org

There is no end to the value and excitement of presenting the Word of God in vibrant presentation that makes God's word truly come alive for the listener.

For additional information on creative ways to tell the Story of God go to www.nbsintl.org

Understanding Bible Storying

Bible storying is a way of learning the story of God in a chronological sequence so that the complete story of God is understood from the very youngest child to the adult. CBS4Kids has developed this beginning chronological approach using just 12 basic stories of the Bible to help the reader or listener gain a beginning overview of the story of God. The complete CBS4Kids Story of God story chart provides the sequential layout for all the stories in the devotional beginning in the upper left of the chart with the Bible as a Special Book and moving across to the right and down, left to right, to the bottom right corner with the story of Last Things.

A unique feature of this storying approach is that the first vertical column provides the broadest stories of the Bible (and comprises this beginning Bible Story of God booklet) in a chronological sequence and each subsequent vertical column to the right fill in gaps between the first vertical column and 12 rows. An alternate to using this devotional, especially if children in the family are mostly younger, is to selectively decide how many stories to the right in each column you want to include. By just using selected stories you can use the stories left to right and down and across each row and the chronology remains intact. As you move farther to the right in each horizontal row the stories go deeper into the Story of God. The complete CBS4Kids Story of God is available at www.CBS4Kids.org

With the complete Story of God book, if a parent wants to skip any of the stories, as long as readings are completed left to right and down row by row, the chronology of the Story of God remains in sequence. This chronological devotional has an accompanying fabric symbol panel and several activities that can be used by parents or teachers along with this devotional to learn the story of God in a chronological sequence.

Go to www.CBS4Kids.org for available additional resources.

work their way to God. In some religions they make sacrifices to idols of stone or wood. Other religions have rules that people must follow like praying several times a day. It doesn't matter even if they mean what they pray; they just are required to pray. Still in other religions leaders tell them the only way to heaven is to give money and do good deeds. People work their whole life trying to work their way to heaven but the Bible tells us there is nothing we can do, there are not enough good things we can do to have our sin forgiven.

It is the Bible that reminds us that the only way to God and the only way to heaven is to ask God to forgive us, believe that Jesus was the true Son of God and died for us and then we become part of God's family.

In the Bible book of Romans 3:23 it says, "*Everyone has sinned, everyone has disobeyed God.*" We were all born that way since the time of Adam and Eve. We cannot be part of God's family with sin in our lives. But the Bible also tells us all we need to do is tell God that we are sorry for our sin and disobedience and ask God to forgive us. When we do that, we automatically become part of God's family.

A Bible verse in the book of I John 1:9 says, If we confess or tell God we have sinned and disobeyed and ask Him to forgive us, God will do that right away and we are then forgiven and made

The Bible Stories

Beginning
CBS4Kids
Devotional

The Bible is a Special Book	Who is God?	What is God Like?	The Bible Changes Lives King Josiah	The Three Persons of God
Creation	Who is Satan	What are Angels?	False Philosophies	How Everything Began
Adam and Eve	Sin Enters the World	Cain and Abel	A Messiah is Prophesied	God's Plan For Mankind
Noah and God's Promises	The Tower of Babel	Sodom and Gomorrah	Abraham's Faith	Joseph and His Brothers
Baby Moses is Protected by God	Moses is Called	Pharaoh and the Plagues	The Passover	God Provides for His People
Israelites Cross the Red Sea	Joshua leads The Promised Land	David and Goliath	Daniel Trusts God	Jonah Disobeys God
Jesus is Born	The Visit of the Magi	Jesus in the Temple	Jesus is Baptized by John	Jesus begins His ministry
Jesus the Good Shepherd	Jesus is tempted by Satan	Jesus Calls His Disciples	The Parable of the Sower and the Seed	The Parable of the Prodigal Son
The Winds and the Sea Obey Jesus	Jesus Feeds 5000	Jesus Has Power Over Evil	Being Born Again - Nicodemus	The Rich Young Ruler
Zacchaeus Meets Jesus	The Good Samaritan	Jesus Has Power Over Death	The Last Supper	Jesus is Betrayed
Jesus Prepares to Die for Us	Jesus is Crucified	Jesus is Risen	Jesus Ascends & Gives the Great Commission	The Holy Spirit Comes
Becoming Part of Gods Family	The Fruit of the Spirit	Saul Becomes a Believer	Early Christians Tell Others About Jesus	Last things Heaven - Revelation

Becoming Part of God's Family

Scripture: John 3:1-18

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling: John 3:1-18



How many families do you have?

Some children have just one

family. And there are other children that have more than one family because one or both of their parents were divorced and they married someone else. Some adults have a family with just one parent because their father or mother might have died or their parent is divorced. Sometimes children are adopted into a new family. And there are some children who live in a house with many children we call an orphanage because both their parents might have died and there was no one else to take care of them

Families can come in all different ways. But no matter what family we are part of we can be part of a second family at the same time. That is very special and so all of us can have two families. We have the family we were born into or the family we live with and if we believe in Jesus we can also be part of God's family. The Bible says anyone can be part of God's family if they believe that Jesus is real and is God's only Son.

Chronological Bible Storying

Jesus' friends ran and went and told the disciples and others. The friends came to the cave and also saw that Jesus was gone.

Later Jesus' friends had gathered together to have a meal. While they were eating Jesus came to meet with the disciples and He also had a meal with them. When they saw Jesus eating food they knew He was alive and was real. They were not dreaming, their friend Jesus had come back to life just like He said he would and exactly how the scripture prophecies had predicted. This was proof that Jesus really was God.

Story Questions and Discussion:

- Why did children and adults come to the road and wave branches when Jesus came into the town?
- Did everyone love Jesus? Does everyone today love Jesus?
- Why did some people not like Jesus?
- What happened after Jesus died? Where did they put his body?
- What did Jesus' friends do when they came to the cave and found out that Jesus was not there?
- How did the disciples know that Jesus was really alive?

For older children

- Why was it necessary for Jesus to die?
- What was so important about the fact that Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey?
- Why do you think made people welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with palm branches and 5 days later yelling to have Him killed?

"In the beginning..." and so the story of God unfolds. This story, which is all that is contained in the Bible and is displayed in all of creation, is the meaning and essence of all life. It is this story that reveals the meaning of birth, life, death and eternity – all that ever was, is, and will be for all time to come.

The methods of telling this story have evolved over time. From the simple oral traditions and hand written scrolls of the beginning of recorded history through the modern technology of multi media and interactive teaching methods, the story of God is told and retold. The essence, however, is not in the method, but the message. The results or the impact of the communication in the hearts and lives of the listener can only determine effective communication of the story of God. It must be told and taught with the ultimate goal of life change or teachers will have missed the mark.

Education and technology within a culture often determine the methodology. Unless the learner receives and processes the message through creative methodology, the results are uncertain. There must be a clear strategy to tell and preserve the essence of the story using a variety of teaching methods.

As people learn that story, it is important that it is learned in a chronology or sequence so that people of all ages can understand the connections from one biblical event to the next. That chronology or sequence defines God and the evolvement of man's relationship to God through the years. Understanding how all the events are chronologically connected enables the individual to better understand the reason and meaning for the Gospel, which means understanding the importance of knowing and having a personal relationship with God.

Without that chronology the Bible could be viewed as a series of unrelated events that does not give the complete story. While each story in itself has a spiritual lesson and merit, it is through the chronology of the story that the full purposes of God for mankind are revealed.

Chronological storying is a building block process. Each story reveals more and more of God, His nature, His love and His invitation for all people, young and old, to know Him.

Parents and teachers may wish to add additional stories into this storying approach. Always try to add stories within the chronology. Make sure you verify the biblical B.C. / A.D. date of stories and remember that the typical Bible layout does not necessarily follow a chronological sequence of stories and events.

One day Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem where He had been many times before teaching people about God. When people heard that Jesus was coming, they came out on the road to greet Him.

Many people and children even took branches from palm trees and when Jesus came down the road riding on a donkey they called out "*Hosanna*" which means they were thankful to God for sending His Son to earth.

Over 700 years before Jesus was born, a prophet of God said the Messiah, Jesus, would come riding on a donkey. What the prophet said happened that day as Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and this is a reminder to us that Jesus really was the Son of God.

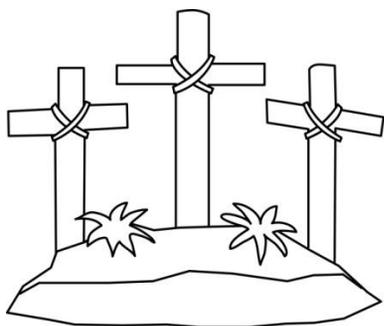
Still there were other people who did not like Jesus and when they saw people waving branches and thanking God, they got angry. There were so many of the religious people telling the Roman leaders to have Jesus killed that the Roman leaders finally agreed and let them put Jesus to death.

After Jesus died His friends put him in a cave and they buried Him and put a large rock in front of the cave. This all happened on a Friday. Jesus was in the cave three days. The Roman leaders put guards at the tomb so that no one could steal Jesus' body and then say He had come back to life on the third day like He said he would.

On Sunday Jesus' friends came to the place where He was buried and found the rock was rolled away from the cave. The Roman guards were also gone. They looked inside and Jesus wasn't there but an angel was inside the cave and told Jesus' friends that Jesus was no longer dead but alive. God had brought Jesus back to life.

Jesus Dies for Us

Notation: This story is a challenging story for 4 and 5 year olds. There is considerable difference of opinion as to how much children this age should be taught regarding the crucifixion as well as how much children this age can understand. Keeping in mind that 4 and 5 year olds are still learning to separate fantasy from reality, have difficulty with time, i.e. 3 days between death and resurrection, let alone the ability of children this age to fully understand death and the resurrection. This story can be simply presented to younger children without a great deal of detail and then re-taught at an older age.



Scripture: John 18, 19; John 12:12-16, Zechariah 9:9

Passages for memorization and Biblical telling:

John 12:12-16 / John 19:1-16 / John 19:16-22

John 19:28-30 / John 19:38-42 / John 20:1-17

Jesus had been teaching people about God and doing many miracles and most people loved Jesus and were so happy that He made many people well who were sick and that He loved people so much. But there were some people who did not like Jesus because He told them they were disobeying and not following God.

The Bible is a Special Book

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16

Passage for memorization and

Biblical telling: II Kings 22: 1-13



Books have been written for a very long time; actually machines have printed them now for over 500 years.

Before that, time books were hand written and hand copied so there were very few books. Today there are millions and millions of books, maybe even trillions. Some books are fiction, which are made up stories. Other stories are true and might be stories about people, places, and history. Some books, like math books, are written for learning.

But one book, the Bible, is such a special book and different from any other book ever written. There are two parts of the Bible, the Old Testament, which is the history of the beginning of the earth and is the story of God's people and the New Testament which is about the life of Jesus, the beginning of the Christian church and a description of heaven, the end of this world and the new world to come.

There are 66 small books in the Bible and those 66 books make up the entire Bible. God used 40 different men to write the books of the entire Bible. These men did not all live at the same time

stopped right at the place where Zacchaeus was. Jesus looked up in the tree and said *"Hi! Zacchaeus. Why don't you climb down out of the tree so we can have lunch and I can visit with you at your house?"*

Zacchaeus was shocked. Jesus actually spoke to him and wanted to stay at his home. He climbed right down and Jesus went with him to his home. When they got to this house Jesus told Zacchaeus about the things of God and how God wanted Zacchaeus to live and to be honest with people.

Zacchaeus told Jesus he was sorry for what he had done and was going to give everyone back the extra money that he had taken from them. In fact, Zacchaeus said he would give each person back four times what he had taken. Jesus said that this day Zacchaeus became part of God's family because he showed that he was sorry for disobeying God.

Questions and discussion:

- Why did no one like Zacchaeus?
- Why did Zacchaeus want to see Jesus?
- How did Jesus know Zacchaeus' name?
- What happened to Zacchaeus after Jesus went to his house?
- How did Zacchaeus become part of God's family

dishonest as Zacchaeus. Even when he asked people to let him through they ignored him and just stood in his way.

Zacchaeus was determined to see Jesus but it was obvious that the people in the village were not going to help him. He figured he would just walk to the end of the crowd and then walk in front of the people. But the news of Jesus coming made everyone so excited that just about everyone in the town and come down to the main road to see Him. It was like the biggest parade you ever saw and the line of people was so long Zacchaeus could not even see the end. There was no used trying to get around the crowd, it was just too large.

Zacchaeus did not give up. He thought and thought about what he could do. Then he saw a Sycamore tree by the road and the crowd. A Sycamore tree is very different because it has all sorts of bumps on the tree trunk and the bumps make an easy place to put your feet so kids loved Sycamore trees because they were easy to climb. Zacchaeus saw some other kids in the Sycamore trees high above the crowd so that gave him an idea. Zacchaeus found a Sycamore with no kids in the tree and he climbed the tree. He thought this way he could see Jesus when Jesus walked by.

Soon Jesus came down the street. The crowd went wild. Everyone was calling to Jesus and waving branches at Him to let them know how glad they were he came to their village. When Jesus came near the tree that Zacchaeus had climbed He

and it took 1,600 years for the entire Bible to be written. Even though some of these writers lived hundreds of years before another writer, in many places in the Bible something a person wrote and said was going to happen in the future, came true hundreds of years later. That was proof of something very special about this book, the Bible, because only God could know that something He said was going to happen, would happen. (2 Peter 1:20, 21)

Of all the books of the trillions of books ever written, they were all written by a person except for one book. That one book is the Bible. God wrote the Bible and was the real author of that book. Before the printing press was invented the Bible was written down by hand and copied over and over. Every word was checked and rechecked to make sure the words never changed.

There are many other religious books, but this book is different. Some men who wrote other religious book had ideas about God and wrote down their ideas, but they were just their ideas and thoughts. But the Bible is God telling us about Himself, about His Son, Jesus, and about the Holy Spirit, which is also part of God. So, God is really the writer of the Bible.

The Bible is how God talks to us today. It tells the story of how God created the entire world, the seas, mountains, tress, birds, animals and most of all, people. And, the Bible tells us how we

are special creations of God, each man, woman and child. God made us different from all other creation because God had a special purpose and plan for us.

And most of all, the Story of God, the Bible, is the story of how much God loves us, each one of us, no matter what country we live in, the color of our skin, the kind of house we live in; God loves each one of us exactly the same. How do we know all this? Because that is exactly what the Bible tells us.

Questions and discussion:

Find in your Bible 2 Timothy 3:16. What does this verse tell you about how the Bible was written?

Find in your Bible 2 Peter 1: 20, 21. What do these verses tell you about prophecy, things that were written hundreds of years before they happened?

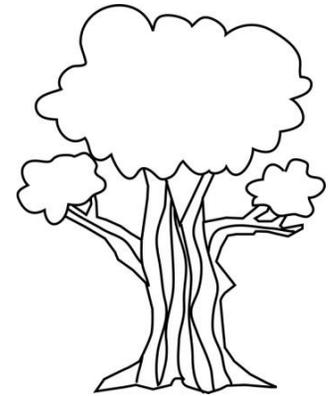
Find in the Old Testament of the Bible Micah 5:2. This was written 750 years before Jesus was born. What does this verse say?

- Who wrote all the books ever written except one book?
- What makes the Bible different from all other books ever written?
- Who wrote the Bible?
- How does God talk to us today?

Zacchaeus Becomes Jesus' Friend

Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling: Luke 19:1-10



A person who does not have even one friend is the loneliest person in the world. God created us to be with other people but in order have friends you must also be a friend to others. To be a friend means you have to take time away from doing what you want to do what your friends want to do. But that is how friendships happen, when you take time to be with others.

In the Bible Jesus met a man who did not even have one friend. His name was Zacchaeus and he was a man that most people did not like, first because he was a tax collector (explain) and also because he was not fair and would take extra money for himself. Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to his village and that He did miracles (explain miracles). Zacchaeus decided to go into the village to see Jesus and when he got there a large crowd had gathered. Because Zacchaeus was a very short man he could not see over the heads of the other people and no one would let him through the crowd to the front where he could see Jesus arriving. As much as he tried, people just stayed in his way and they were not about to give room to someone who was as mean and

through the entire storm. Finally the boat began to break apart and sink and the disciples got so scared they woke Jesus.

The disciples called to Jesus, “*Master, wake up, do you not even care that we are all going to drown?*” Jesus woke up and He was not even scared. Jesus stood up and just said to the wind and the waves, “*Stop...be calm.*” Immediately the winds stopped blowing and the waves stopped beating against the boat. All was calm.

The disciples were amazed. The winds and the waves immediately stopped when Jesus spoke to them. Jesus said to the disciples, “*Why are you so afraid. Where is your faith and trust in Me?*”

Questions and discussion:

- Why were the disciples afraid when Jesus was in the boat with them?
- What can we do when we are afraid?

Creation

Scripture: Genesis 1 Psalm 90:4
2 Peter 3:8

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling: Genesis 1- 2:1



People have different ideas as to how the world began. Some things about creation remain a mystery. We know that dinosaurs lived at one time because we find their bones and you can see their skeletons in museums. Science does not know why the dinosaurs all died. There are many ideas what happened but no one knows for sure. When people do not know for sure what happened in the past or what might happen in the future, they sometimes make up stories and write those ideas in books. But that does not make those ideas true.

Even the Bible does not tell us everything about the past. But there are many things the Bible does tell us and that information is true. We know it is true because over many years the Bible has been proven to be true in everything that is written in it. There is nothing written in the Bible that anyone has been able to prove is not true.

But there are many books where people wrote about things from the past that today we have found were not true. For example, at one time people wrote in books that you could go to the country of China if you just sailed west on the sea from England or Spain. Then a man named Christopher Columbus tried to do that but instead of China he found America and America was only part

way west going toward China. It was a great discovery and that discovery proved that what had been written before was not true.

The Bible tells us many things that are true and one of the things the Bible tells us is about the very beginning of the earth and the universe. It even tells us about the beginning of time and day and night. The Bible also tells us how special we are to God.

The Bible tells us that God was there before He created the world, the moon, the sun and the stars. God was there even before He created time for people on the earth. The Bible also tells us that with God one day is just like 1000 years and 1000 years is just like one day. We live in a world that has day and night and seasons, and time. But God was there before all of this was created. God even created time.

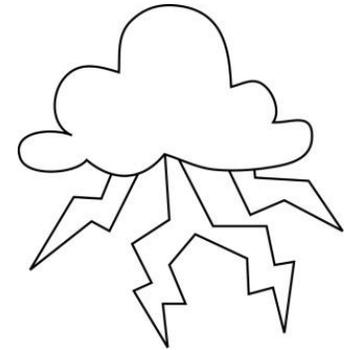
We call the sun, the moon, and planets and stars that we can see part of the universe. Earth is part of the universe too. The universe is so big we have no idea even how big it is because we cannot see the end of the universe. We do know that there are millions and millions of miles between the earth and stars and planets. The entire universe is so large it cannot be measured. Most important, it is wonderful to know that God is even larger than the entire universe.

The Bible tells us God created everything. He created light and darkness. He created the dry ground and the oceans. He created the mountains and the rivers and streams. He created the grass and trees and flowers. God created the birds and animals and even the smallest insect. God created all the fascinating creatures

Jesus is God – the Winds and the Waves Obey Him

Scripture: Mark 4:35-41

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling: Mark 4:35-41



Have you ever been in a really bad thunderstorm? If you have, you know how scared everyone can be. Even adults can be afraid of lighting and thunder. One thing is for sure, if a storm is really bad, even if in the middle of the night, very few people can sleep through the noise and lighting.

The Bible tells a fascinating story of Jesus, His disciples and one of the worst storms you could ever imagine. Jesus had been teaching crowds of people all day while at the beach. When He was done teaching He told the disciples to get into the boat and go to other side of the sea.

Jesus was so tired He went to sleep in the back of the boat on a pillow while the disciples sailed the boat across. Soon a strong windstorm began to develop. The wind got stronger and stronger and the waves got higher and higher.

Jesus kept right on sleeping through the storm. Soon the winds and the waves got so bad the disciples thought the boat would turn over and they would all drown. Jesus was still sleeping

It is good to know that we have a shepherd in Jesus just like sheep have a shepherd. With Jesus as our shepherd we do not have to be afraid.

Questions and discussion:

- What does a shepherd do?
- If someone tried to hurt a shepherd's sheep, what would the shepherd do?
- If a sheep got away and got lost what would the shepherd do?
- Jesus is our shepherd. If we are afraid what will Jesus do for us?

in the sea. There is nothing that you can see that God did not create.

When God created days and nights He created the week, seven days; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. God also said that after He created the entire universe, the earth, days and night and all things He took one day to rest and to look over everything He had created. The Bible tells us God rested on the 7th day and He looked over everything He had made and said to Himself, "*This is good.*" God was very happy with all He had made. God also created one day each week for us to rest and worship too. That day is called the Sabbath or Sunday.

And in all of creation there was one very special thing God created. He created man, Adam. And when He created Adam, God created man different from all other things He had made. Man was the only creature that could think in a special way, talk, and make decisions and was created so he could love God. Nothing else that God created can love Him like we can. God not only created man and woman, Adam and Eve, God created you. God loves you and loves everything He created.

Questions and Discussion:

- What do people sometimes do when they do not know the answer to something?
- What was the most special thing God created?
- Why do you think God created all the things in the world?
- How are people different for all other things God created?

Adam and Eve

Scripture: Genesis 2:7, 15-24

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling:

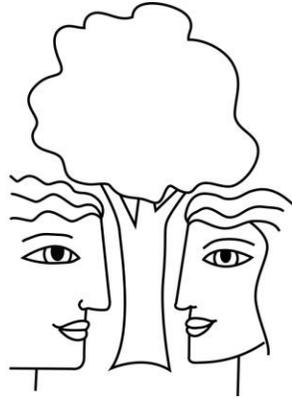
Genesis 3

Press your finger on the table. Did you know that your fingerprint is different from anyone else's? If your fingerprint were compared to one million other fingerprints yours would still be different?

God not only created people special from all other things He created, God created each person different from everyone else that has ever been born or from anyone that ever will be born. Even identical twins have differences. They may look exactly the same, but there still are differences. Identical twins do not have the same brain so each one can think differently from his or her twin. Identical twins even have different fingerprints.

The first people God created were Adam and Eve. They were special from all other things God created because they were created in God's image. In many ways we are like God; we can think, we can talk, and we can love others. We can also make decisions.

We can decide to be kind to someone or we can decide to be mean. We can decide to obey our parents or we can decide to disobey. We can decide to love someone or we can decide not to



us how to do more and more things for ourselves. Then, when children become adults they can cook meals, fix the car, mow the grass and do all sorts of things. But until children become an adult they need someone to help them. Parents are like a shepherd for their children.

Jesus grew and soon became a man and God announced to everyone that Jesus was the Messiah who would take away the sin of all mankind. Jesus was also just like a shepherd because He came to earth to show everyone how much God loved them.

When a shepherd takes the sheep out to the pasture the shepherd leads them and the sheep follow him because they know him and they trust him. The sheep will not follow anyone they do not know.

If the shepherd sees a wolf coming after his sheep he will fight the wolf to protect his sheep. If one of the sheep runs away, the shepherd would make sure the rest of the sheep were safe and he would go and look for the one lost sheep even if it took him a long time until he found it. The shepherd would take the lost sheep back to the pen and make sure the sheep was safe once again.

Jesus is our shepherd and He watches over us and takes care of us. If we are ever afraid, like a sheep that got lost, Jesus will help us not to be afraid and to be safe. If we are lonely, Jesus, our shepherd, will be our friend. If we need help, just like the shepherd, Jesus will help us.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

Scripture: John 10: 1-18

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling:

Psalm 23 / John 10:11-18



What would you do if someone took you far, far out in the country, miles away from where anyone lived, and just set you down in the middle of a field and drove away.

Well, at first you might be really scared and wonder what to do. Then you would realize you were thirsty and you would have to find some water. Then you would have to find some food so maybe you might find some berries on a bush and eat them. The night would come and you would need to find a place to sleep. Then, if the next day was the same, you would start this all over again, looking for water, food and a place to sleep.

Well, if you were there for a long time you might get pretty tired trying to figure out what to do.

Now, if you were a sheep, you could not even figure anything out, so you would really be lost and would have no idea what to do. Sheep are interesting animals. They cannot take care of themselves. They need someone to take care of them just like parents take care of their children. As we grow up parents teach

love someone. People have the ability to make decisions and that makes them very different from all other things that are created.

First God made all the animals and other living creatures. After God made the birds and the animals and the living creatures in the sea, God saw what He had made and said it was good. God even made the insects and snakes and crocodiles and also said that was good too. What God did when He created the world was just amazing. No one could ever create what God made.

Then God created the first man, Adam, out of the dust of the ground and God put His own breath into Adam. Adam was different from all of the other things God had created. God did not put His own breath into animals or fish or birds, but God did put His own breath into man.

After God created Adam, God saw that Adam was still lonely. God knew that Adam needed someone like himself to talk to and be with. So God put Adam into a deep sleep and took one of Adam's bones and from that bone God created a woman, Eve, to be his companion. I am sure they also both had fingerprints that were different from each other even though Eve was made from one of Adam's bones.

The garden where Adam and Eve lived was a perfect place. Adam and Eve did not even have to work. God gave them all the food they would ever wanted. In the center of that garden was one tree that God said they could not eat from. That tree was called the tree of knowing the difference between good and evil. God told them if they did eat from that tree, they would die.

But there was also something else in that garden that was not so perfect and that was Satan. Satan is the enemy of God and Satan had a plan to trick Adam and Eve into disobeying God.

One day Eve was walking by herself past that tree that had fruit and God said they should not eat the fruit. The serpent called to Eve and started talking to her about the beautiful garden. As the serpent Satan kept talking to Eve he pretended to notice the fruit tree and told Eve how delicious that fruit looked. Then he suggested that maybe Eve should try some of that fruit because it looked so good. Eve said she and Adam were not allowed to eat the fruit from that tree or they would die.

Then the serpent told Eve the biggest lie ever told. He told Eve what God said was not true. He told Eve if she ate that fruit she would not die but they would be just like God and that she would know wonderful things that she never knew before.

Eve thought about what the serpent said and believed what he told her. So Eve picked some of the fruit and she ate it. When she did, she now understood new things so she quickly took some of the fruit and ran and found Adam. She told Adam about what the serpent told her and gave some of the fruit to Adam and he took the fruit and he also ate it. Once they both ate the fruit, they knew they had disobeyed God.

When God came to the garden, like He did almost every day to walk and talk with Adam and Eve, He could not find them where they usually met. So God called to them. Adam and Eve were hiding in the shrubs because now they knew they had disobeyed God. They finally came out from where they were and God asked

An angel came to shepherds who were taking care of sheep outside of town. The heavens lit up with bright lights and there was singing coming from heaven. The shepherds fell down on the ground because they were so afraid. The angels told them not to be afraid and then told them great news. They told the shepherds that a Savior, Jesus, had just been born and if they went into town to the inn they would find the new King there.

The shepherds hurried into town and found Jesus just as the angel had told them. Soon many others had heard that Jesus had been born and they were happy to hear the wonderful news.

Questions and discussion:

- How was sin forgiven in the Old Testament?
- What promise did God give His people in the Old Testament about His Son Jesus?
- What was so special about the baby Jesus?
- Why did Joseph and Mary have to go to the town of Bethlehem?
- Why did Mary and Joseph have to sleep in the barn?
- What was special about the baby Jesus?
- How did the shepherds know about Jesus being born?

Testament way of taking care of sin would not have to be done any longer. This was all part of God's plan.

One day an angel came to a young girl named Mary and told her that she would be the mother of God's Son. An angel also came to Joseph who was going to marry Mary and told him that Mary would have a child and that they should name Him Jesus. Both Mary and Joseph were amazed at what the angel said. Mary soon found out she was going to have a baby just like the angel had told her.

At about that time the ruler of the land, Caesar, made an announcement that everyone should go to their town where they were born and register in their hometown. Caesar wanted to know how many people lived in the land because he wanted everyone to pay a tax.

By this time Mary was very pregnant with her baby and the trip was going to be very hard for them to make. Mary and Joseph went on their journey toward Bethlehem because that was Joseph's hometown where he and Mary had to sign their names in the town book. When they got to Bethlehem Joseph could not find any place to stay overnight. Finally they found a place to keep warm in a barn in back of a small inn (or hotel.)

During the night Mary had her baby. Because they were staying in the barn there was no baby crib. Mary and Joseph wrapped the baby in a small blanket and laid him in a manger where they put hay for the cows and donkeys.

them why they were hiding. Then they told God they were hiding because they had no clothes and were naked and they were afraid.

Then God asked them if they disobeyed and ate the fruit He told them not to eat? Adam blamed Eve. He told God Eve gave him some of the fruit and he ate it. Then God looked at Eve and Eve blamed the serpent Satan. She told God the serpent told her to eat it and she did. Adam and Eve never said to God they were sorry for disobeying Him. God was so unhappy because Adam and Eve had disobeyed.

Because Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God had to put them out of the garden forever. God did this because there was another tree in the garden, which was called the tree of life. Adam and Eve could no longer be allowed to eat from that tree, because now their bodies would get old and someday they would die, just like God said they would.

The perfect world was not perfect any more. And God did not forget about the serpent. He also punished Satan for what he had done but God knew that this was not the last time He would have to punish Satan. God knew that Satan was going to try to make everyone else disobey too. And that is what Satan does today. He tries to make all of us disobey God.

Questions and discussion:

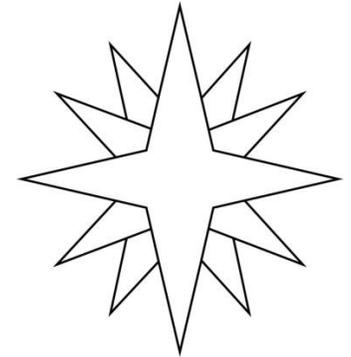
- How do you know that you are different from all other things God has created?
- How are people different from animals and birds?

- Why did God create Eve as a companion for Adam?
- What does it mean when we say that the garden was a perfect place?
- What did Adam and Eve do that made God unhappy?
- How did Satan trick Eve?
- What did God have to do because of Adam and Eve's sin?
- Why did God make Adam and Eve leave the garden, the perfect place?

Jesus is Born

Scripture: Luke 2: 1-19

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling: Luke 2: 1-19



Once the Israelites entered the new land they settled there with their families. Soon those families became thousands and thousands of people and most of them once again forgot about God and began to worship idols.

But many years before Jesus was born God had promised the world that a Messiah, His Son, Jesus, would come to earth. That Messiah was Jesus and He would save the people from their sin once and for all time. During the Old Testament times God had made a way for people to have their sin forgiven by making sacrifices of animals and birds at the temple. The blood from the sacrificed animals was a symbol of the way God would forgive sin. Do you remember in the story of Adam and Eve how God had to kill animals and make clothes for Adam and Eve? God had to kill animals as part of taking care of what happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed and sinned. From that time on the sacrifices of animals was a reminder to God's people of their sin and how much God loved them and was ready to forgive them.

For many years this was how sin was forgiven. But God had promised that one day He would send His Son, Jesus to earth to become the once and for all time sacrifice for sin so that the Old

a huge wall of water on the other side. The water was as tall as a tall building. But right in the middle was a path and the ground was dry. God had made a path through the sea to the other side. The Israelites walked across the dry bottom of the ocean floor to the other side.

When Pharaoh and his army finally reached the beach and saw the Israelites on the other side of the sea they were so mad. Pharaoh and his army came after the Israelites and they also took their chariots and soldiers running on the dry ocean bottom while the high the walls of water stood tall on each side. But all of a sudden the dry bottom began to have water and the wheels of the chariots began to sink in the wet sand. All the chariots got stuck and so did the soldiers. They also began to sink in the wet sand. While they were stuck in the middle of the sea floor, God closed the walls of water and they all drowned. God protected His people from the Egyptians.

Questions and discussion:

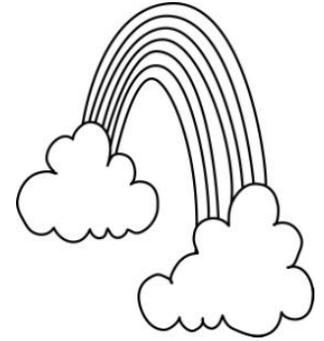
- Why did Pharaoh want the Israelites to stay in Egypt?
- What do you think the Hebrews said to Moses and Aaron when they came to the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army was coming up behind them?
- What did the Hebrews forget about God?

Noah and God's Promise

Scripture: Gen. 6:1- 9:17

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling:

Genesis 6:9-22



Did you ever start to make something and the project turned out to be a really big mess? Maybe you were trying to paint a picture and all the colors ran together and it looked awful. Or maybe someone was trying to bake a cake and it just did not bake right and looked awful and tasted awful.

This is a story about a project that went wrong. And most important, this was Gods' project. It was the world that He had created. That was what had gone wrong.

Many years after Adam and Eve there lived a man named Noah and his family. In the time of Noah most people had forgotten about God. Only Noah and his family remembered about God and obeyed God.

When God looked over all the earth He saw that almost everyone had forgotten about Him. They were disobeying Him and were doing all kinds of things that God had told people not to do. God was very sorry He had made people. His project was not turning out the way he had hoped. God just wanted to love all people and have everyone love Him. But God also created people with the

ability to make choices, and now almost all the people on earth were making really bad choices and were not following God.

But Noah loved God very much and Noah and his family obeyed God even when all the other people did not. That part made God happy.

God finally decided He would destroy everything on the earth except Noah and his family and start the world over again. He told Noah He was going to make rain and that water would cover the entire earth and destroy everything. Up to this time it had never rained, so even the idea of rain was something new for Noah to understand.

God then began to tell Noah about His plan. He told Noah he wanted Noah and his sons to build a large boat, an ark, and when he was finished to take his family and two of every creature, animals, and birds into the ark before the rain came so they could be saved.

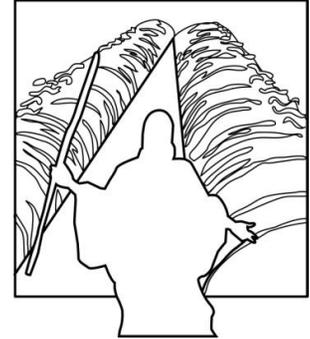
Noah obeyed God even though he did not understand what rain was and began building the ark exactly the way God told him. Soon the people where Noah lived saw him and his sons building something. They all came to ask Noah what he was doing. Noah told them what God had said and he warned them that a flood was coming. But the people only laughed. They just thought that Noah was a silly old man and that he was wasting his time.

So all the people went back to having their parties and disobeying God. But Noah trusted God and knew that God always kept His

The Israelites Cross the Red Sea

Scripture: Exodus 13:17 – 15:21

Passage for memorization and Biblical telling: Exodus 14:15-28



Moses grew and soon became the leader of the Hebrew people. One day God told Moses the Hebrew people were to leave Egypt and go to a new land He would give to them. The Hebrews were special people of God. Today we call this people group the Jews. They were also called the Israelites because all the Hebrew families that began this nation of people came from the family of a special man of God, Abraham.

God warned Moses that Pharaoh would not be happy when they left Egypt and that Pharaoh and his army would chase after them. And what God said happened? Pharaoh was mad when they left and he took his soldiers and chased after the Hebrews to bring them back. The Israelites came to the beach and sea and thought they were trapped and could not escape. They complained to Moses but Moses told them to trust God to take care of them. God was going to do even something more amazing.

When they got to the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army was chasing after them they felt they were trapped. Pharaoh's army was behind them and a sea was in front of them. God told Moses to hold his walking stick out over the water. When Moses did this the sea parted right in half with a huge wall of water on one side and

Moses would one day become the great leader of the Hebrew people who would one day help them get away from Pharaoh, just as God had promised. Moses had been protected by God in a very special way.

She took Moses back to the palace and there Moses was raised in Pharaoh's household and became a very important leader of the people in all of Egypt. She even hired Moses' mother to come and be his caretaker and Pharaoh's daughter never even knew this woman was Moses' real mother. So Moses' real mother still raised him and often reminded Moses how God had protected him for something very special.

Questions and discussion:

- What was happening to the babies being born in Egypt?
- Why was King Pharaoh afraid of the Hebrews?
- What plan did God have for Moses?

word. If God said a flood was coming, Noah knew that there would be a flood coming.

Finally Noah and his sons finished the project. The ark was done. Noah then took two of every kind of creature, animal and birds into the ark with him and his family. Then God closed the door of the ark and caused it to rain for 40 days and 40 nights. The rain and water from the ground caused a flood that covered the entire earth and everything God created was destroyed except for what was in the ark.

After the flood went down, Noah, his family, and all creatures and birds came out and started everything over again. When Noah came out of the ark he made a special thank you offering to God for protecting him and his family.

Then God created the rainbow in the sky and told Noah every time people would see this it would be a sign for all times that He would never destroy the earth again by a flood.

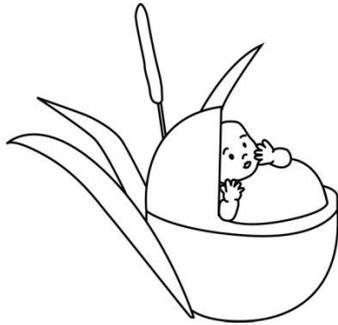
Questions and discussion:

- Why was God sad about the people He had created?
- Why was Noah and his family saved from the destruction of the world?
- How does God remind us He will never destroy the world with a worldwide flood?

Moses is Protected by God

Scripture: Exodus 1:7-2:10;
Matthew 18:10

**Passage for memorization and
Biblical telling:** Exodus 2:1-10



Did you know that kids have special angels that watch over them? If you don't believe this read Matthew 18:10.

Did you ever "almost" get into some sort of accident but something happened so you were not hurt? Maybe you almost ran out into the street and a car was coming and a friend stopped you or shouted a warning for you to watch out. Maybe you did not see anyone there and the accident missed you or something just seemed to make you stop from walking into the street. Or maybe you were at work on our job and a piece of machinery broke and almost injured you really badly but someone pulled you out of the way just in time. Or maybe no one pulled you out of the way but you just moved just at the right time to miss something that would have fallen on you. That could have been God or His angels protecting you.

The Bible tells us that many years after Noah's time people forgot about God again. God had separated many people in the world into a large tribe called the Israelites or Hebrews and many years later the Israelites became captured and were made slaves to the Pharaoh that ruled Egypt where they all lived.

Pharaoh was not kind to God's people. He made them all work very hard. He was cruel to the Hebrews and when the Hebrews complained that the work was too hard Pharaoh even made them work harder. The Hebrews finally remembered God and cried out to Him and felt as though God had forgotten about them. But God promised His people that one day He would give them a leader who would take them out of Egypt into a land of their own.

The Egyptian king, Pharaoh saw that there were so many Hebrew people and he was afraid soon there would be more Hebrews than Egyptian people. So the king said that all boy babies born to the Hebrews should be killed and should be thrown into the river. Pharaoh thought this was a way to get rid of the Israelites because there were so many of them. The Egyptian soldiers went through the camps where the Hebrews lived and were taking all the boy babies and killing them.

One of the Hebrew women had a baby boy and the parents were afraid the Egyptians would find him. The mother made a basket and sealed it with tar so it would float. She wrapped up her son in soft cloth and placed him in the basket and took it to the river and set it by the reeds along the river's edge so it would not float away. Then she had the baby's sister hide in the reeds and watch to see what would happen.

That day Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to take a bath. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the basket floating she opened the blanket and found the baby and felt sorry for him. Pharaoh's daughter adopted the baby and named the baby "Moses," a name which means he was taken out of the water.