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God's Wonderful Creation

Genesis 1-2

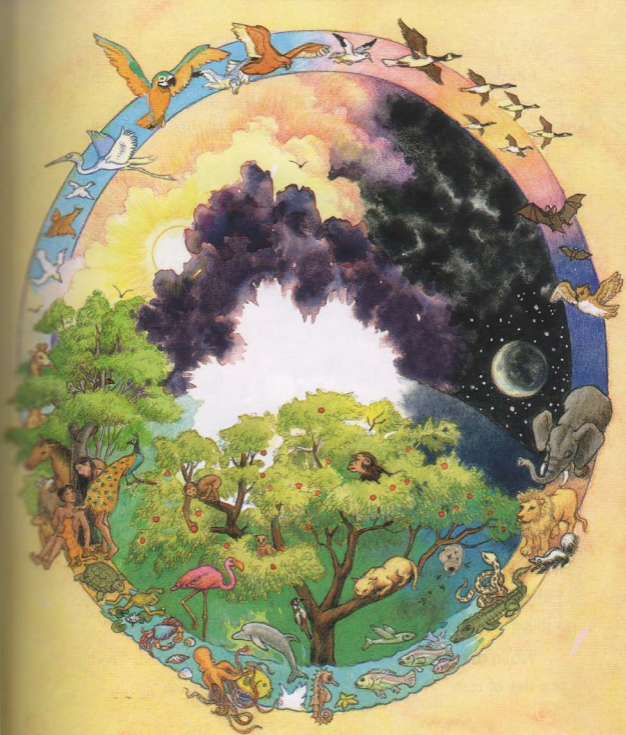
In the very beginning of time, God decided to create the world. On the first day of creation, God separated light from darkness. "I will call the light 'day' and the darkness 'night,'" God said.

On the second day, God said, "I will divide the waters." He separated the sky above from the world below.

On the third day, God saw the earth covered with water. "This earth needs dry land." He rolled back the waters so that some dry ground appeared. God said, "I will make plants and towering trees." Evening came to God's third day.

"I must have a source of light for the day and night," God said. So he rolled up a ball of warm colors and formed a sun. God scattered the night with sparkling stars and a bright moon. This was a beautiful fourth day.

On day five, God sprinkled the seas with colorful, swimming fish. The gentle breeze sang the songs of birds in flight. God loved his creation.





God Watches Over Baby Moses

Exodus 2

Joseph's brothers moved to Egypt, and their families grew larger and larger. They were God's people, the Hebrews. They had many children, and their children had many children. The new pharaoh made the Hebrews work very hard. He was cruel to them. But God was with the Hebrew people, and the families continued to grow.


"There are too many of these Hebrew people!" the mean pharaoh said. "Kill all the baby boys!"

The Hebrew people were frightened and cried out to God.

A Hebrew woman had a baby boy. She loved him very much and hid him from Pharaoh. "Please, God, help me save my son," she prayed.

When the woman couldn't hide her baby anymore, she made a basket and covered it with tar so that it would float. The woman placed her beautiful son in the basket and hid him in the weeds along the river.





David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17

The Israelites were at war with the Philistines. The Philistines didn't want to give up their land, which God had promised to the Israelites.

The Philistines chose their most frightening warrior to challenge the Israelites. Goliath was a giant of a man. He was over nine feet tall!

“Send one of your men to fight me!” Goliath roared. “The one man who wins the fight will win the war.”

There wasn't a single Israelite who had the courage to fight Goliath. Every morning and every night for forty days, Goliath dared God's people to fight him. But the Israelites were scared.

David, a young shepherd boy, came to the Israelites' camp to visit his older brothers. He heard Goliath making fun of the Israelites and their God.

“I will fight Goliath!” cried David.

Everyone said, “You are just a boy. You can't beat Goliath.”





The Birth of Christ

Luke 2:1–20


Mary and Joseph of Nazareth had promised to marry each other. Mary was going to have a baby. Caesar Augustus ordered the Jewish people to go to the town where their ancestors had come from. Caesar wanted to know how many people there were so they could pay him money, called a tax.

Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, the city of Joseph's ancestor, David. When they arrived, they couldn't find a place to stay. An innkeeper felt sorry for Joseph and Mary and offered them his stable. That night, Mary gave birth to her baby son. She wrapped him in cloth and placed him in a manger filled with soft hay.

An angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds in the fields and announced, "We have good news! Today in Bethlehem the Savior has been born. You will find him wrapped in cloth and sleeping in a manger." Then all the angels burst into songs of praise.

The shepherds said, "Let us go see what has happened!" They found Mary and Joseph, and they saw





Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

Matthew 14:13-21

Jesus went to a deserted place to be alone. But as usual, the crowds searched and found him. When Jesus saw the crowds and their needs, his heart was sad for them. He reached out and cured the sick people.

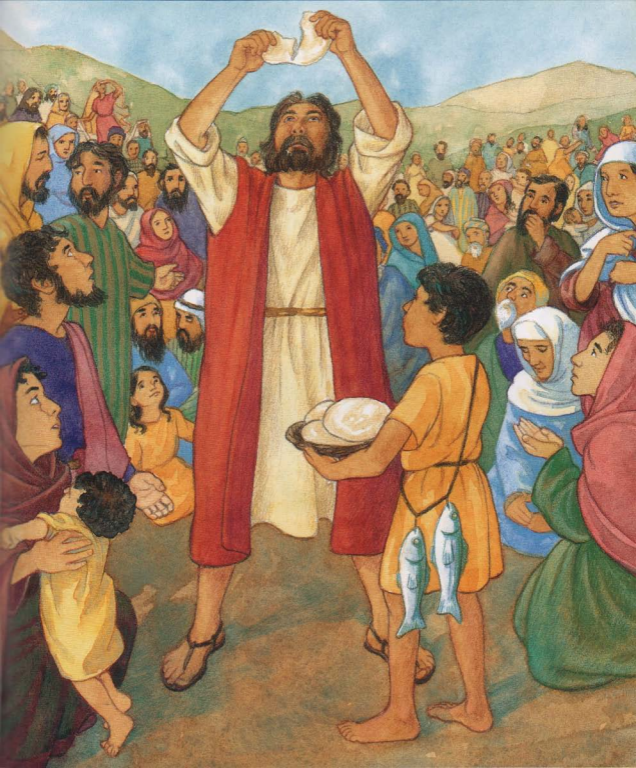
It was getting late in the day, and still the people did not want to go home. The disciples said to Jesus, “Tell the crowds to leave so they can return to the villages and get food to eat.”

But Jesus said, “You feed the people.”

The disciples said, “We only have five loaves of bread and two fish.”

Jesus said, “Bring the food to me.” The disciples did as they were told. Jesus told all the people to sit down on the grass.

Jesus took the five loaves and two fish and looked up to the heavens. He blessed the bread and broke it into pieces. He gave the pieces to the disciples. The disciples gave the food to the crowd.





Jesus Is Crucified

Luke 23:1–46

Jesus was brought before the Roman governor Pilate. He was charged with misleading the people, not paying taxes to Caesar, and calling himself the Messiah.

Pilate asked, “Are you king of the Jews?”

Jesus said, “You say so.”

Pilate continued to question Jesus. Finally, Pilate said, “I find this man not guilty.”

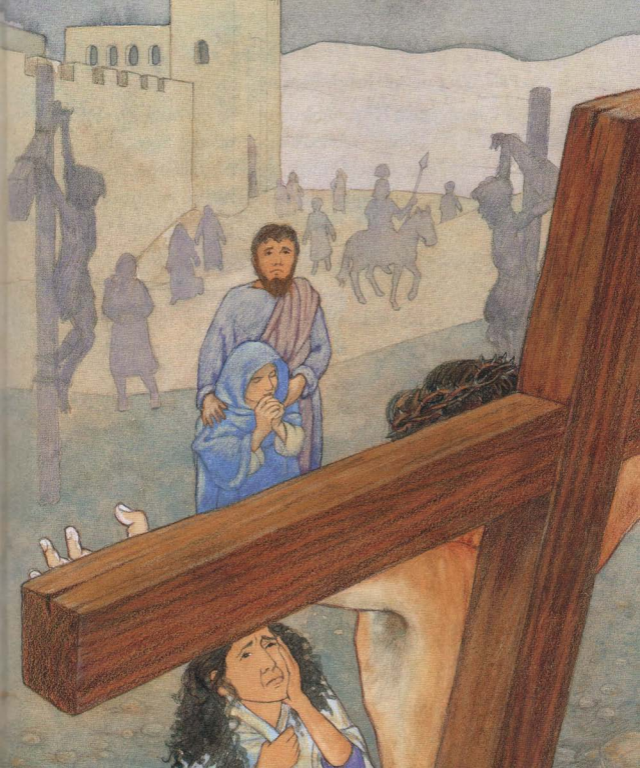
The chief priest said, “This Galilean stirs up the people.”

Pilate said, “Take him to Herod then. He reigns over the Galileans.”

Jesus was taken to Herod. Herod was glad to see Jesus. He hoped Jesus would perform a miracle for him. But Jesus would not answer Herod’s questions. Herod grew angry and sent Jesus back to Pilate.

Again Pilate found Jesus innocent and wanted to let him go. But the crowds yelled and complained. So Pilate said, “I will have him whipped.”

Still the crowds yelled, “Crucify him!”



So Pilate gave up and handed Jesus over to be crucified.

Jesus was whipped. He stumbled, carrying the heavy cross on his shoulder. A soldier grabbed a man from the crowd and made him carry Jesus' cross. Crowds of people followed. Some made fun of Jesus, while others wept for him. Two criminals followed behind, carrying their crosses.

When they reached the top of the hill, Jesus was nailed to his cross.

The sky turned black. The veil of the Temple was torn down the middle, and Jesus cried out, "Father, I give you my spirit." Then Jesus died.

