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ABOUT THIS BOOK

The Bible is a BIG book. So it's only natural to consume it in bite-sized pieces. There's nothing wrong with taking things one piece at a time. But when all of those different parts come at us at random and aren't connected to the broader story of the Bible, we can feel as if we're holding a bunch of puzzle pieces without any sense of the picture they were designed to create. Certainly, many small bits of the Bible are cherished and super helpful and inspiring to many. We frame single verses on our walls and tattoo them on our skin. But anyone can benefit from understanding the big picture.

This book is designed to help with that. Grasping the Bible's "big story" can enrich every experience with its individual parts. Smaller details can be seen in light of the larger movement of God's story and, thus, better understood.

Plus, everyone likes a good story, and the Bible's story needs to be told and told well! It has the ability to inspire and give life and invite people into the most exhilarating journey and meaningful relationships anyone could ever experience. Let's get IN the story! Let's meet the God behind it! And maybe this book can prompt all of us to get more of the Bible IN us.

Of course the Bible contains more than just what these 10 frames depict. But these snapshots try to faithfully communicate God's story from beginning to end in a memorable, helpful, and succinct manner simple enough for a child to grasp and compelling enough to draw anyone in. A 3-year-old could enjoy just the pictures and first and last summary statements of each frame, while an adult could read through the entire book alone or with a group in 20 minutes. Additional notes, summaries, and resources are included at the end to provide help along the way.

PICTURES

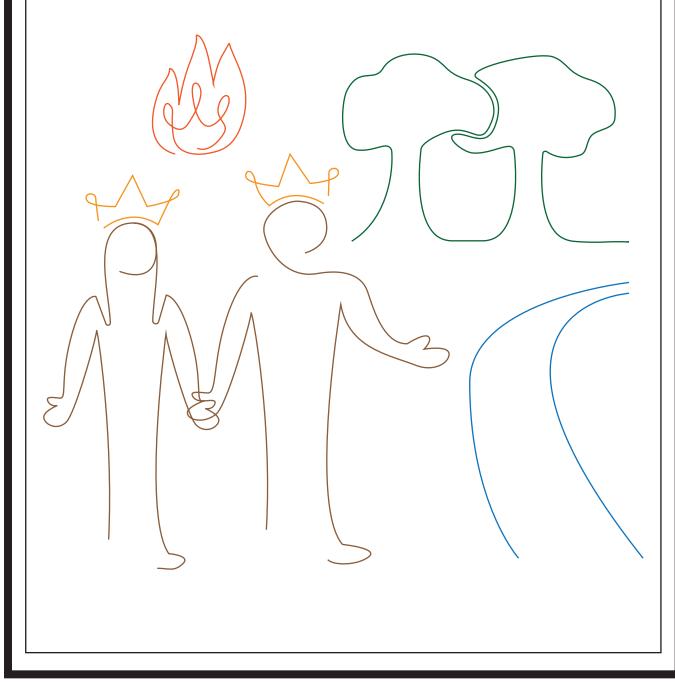
The drawings in this book are intentionally simple. They attempt to make some of the key features of the story memorable and even reproducible, as those who hear the story are invited to tell it and live it themselves.

TRANSLATIONS

Having the Bible translated into one's own heart language is such a gift. This book relies on translations that aim to give young readers the best chance to follow along, with the belief that adults will also benefit from the simplicity and clarity they provide. Multiple translations are used: CEV (Contemporary English Version), ICB (International Children's Bible), NIRV (New International Reader's Version), and NLT (New Living Translation).

CREATION

In the beginning God made everything good. God made men and women as the image of God. God blessed them in a good land and told them to rule and multiply on the earth.



Genesis 1:1, 26-31 (NLT)

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... ²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

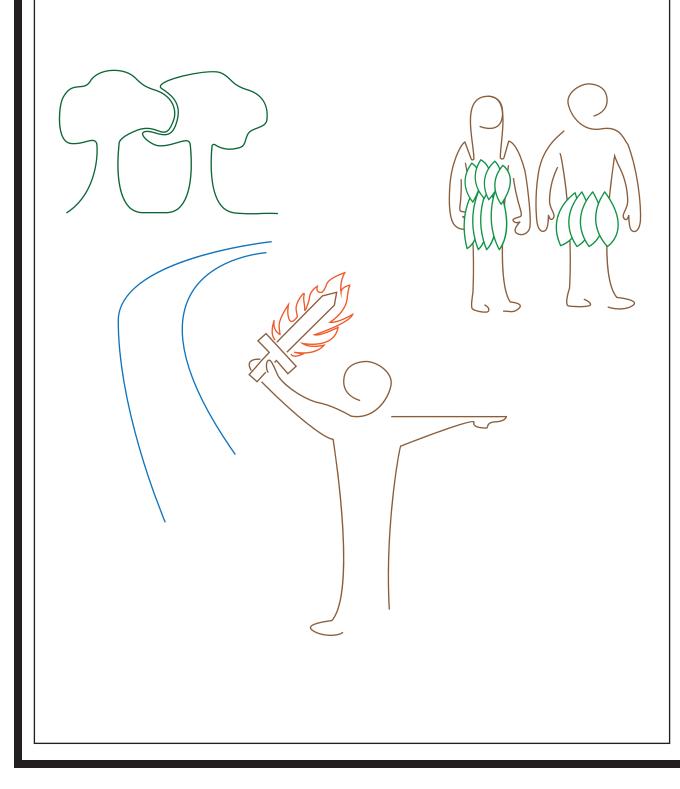
²⁹ Then God said, "Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. ³⁰ And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life." And that is what happened.

³¹ Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

...Why isn't everything good right now?

REBELLION

Humans choose their own way and multiply violence and evil on the earth. They're sent out of the good land.



GENESIS 3:1-6; 23-24 (ICB)

Now the snake was the most clever of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day the snake spoke to the woman. He said, "Did God really say that you must not eat fruit from any tree in the garden?"

² The woman answered the snake, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden. ³ But God told us, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden. You must not even touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ But the snake said to the woman, "You will not die. ⁵ God knows that if you eat the fruit from that tree, you will learn about good and evil. Then you will be like God!"

⁶ The woman saw that the tree was beautiful. She saw that its fruit was good to eat and that it would make her wise. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of the fruit to her husband who was with her, and he ate it...

...²³ So the Lord God forced the man out of the garden of Eden. He had to work the ground he was taken from. ...Then God put angels on the east side of the garden. He also put a sword of fire there. It flashed around in every direction. This kept people from getting to the tree of life.

GENESIS 6:5, 11-12 (ICB)

⁵ The Lord saw that the human beings on the earth were very wicked. He also saw that their thoughts were only about evil all the time...

¹¹ People on earth did what God said was evil. Violence was everywhere. ¹² And God saw this evil. All people on the earth did only evil.

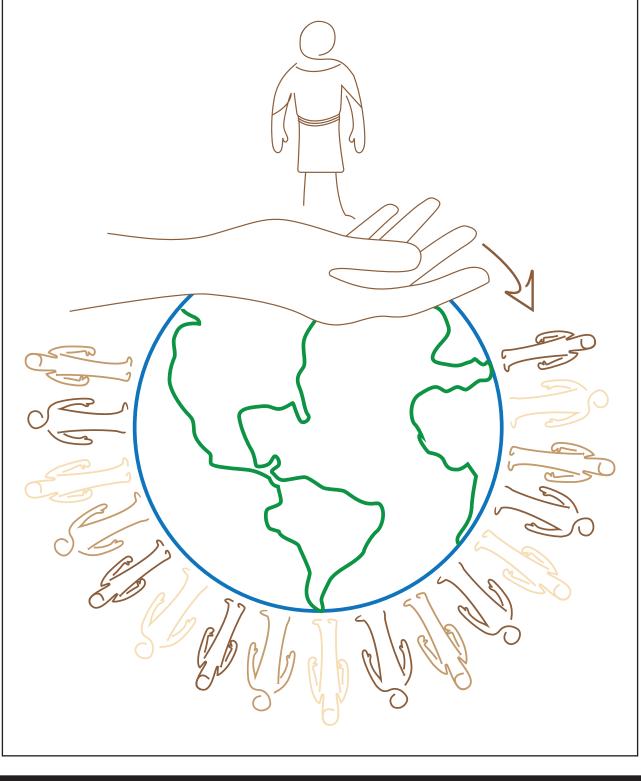
ECCLESIASTES 7:29 (ICB)

²⁹ One thing I have learned: God made people good. But people have found all kinds of ways to be bad.

...Will God abandon the world?

ABRAHAM (PROMISE)

God blesses Abraham's family in order to bless the whole world through them.



GENESIS 12:1-3 (NIRV)

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's family. Go to the land I will show you.

² "I will make you into a great nation. And I will bless you.
I will make your name great. You will be a blessing to others.
³ I will bless those who bless you. I will put a curse on anyone who puts a curse on you.
All nations on earth will be blessed because of you."

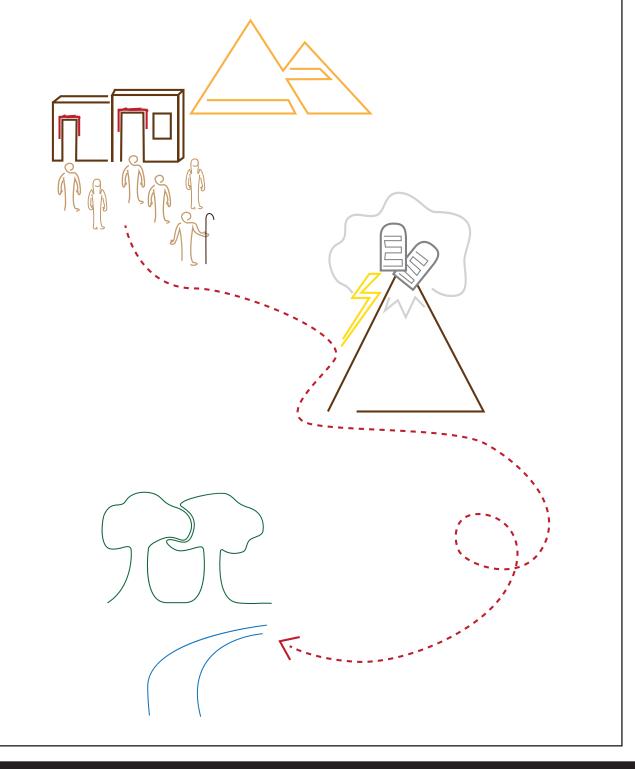
GENESIS 17:4-5 (NIRV)

God said to him, ⁴ "This is my covenant with you. You will be the father of many nations. ⁵ You will not be called Abram anymore. Your name will be Abraham, because I have made you a father of many nations.

...But how will God's blessing come when there's so much evil?

EXODUS

God hears the cries of God's people and saves them from evil. God promises to bring them to a good land. God will love them, be with them, and teach them so they can be a light to all nations.



PSALM 105:37-45 (CEV)

³⁷ When God led Israel from Egypt, they took silver and gold, and no one was left behind. ³⁸ The Egyptians were afraid and gladly let them go. ³⁹ God hid them under a cloud and guided them by fire during the night. ⁴⁰ When they asked for food, he sent more birds than they could eat. ⁴¹ God even split open a rock, and streams of water gushed into the desert. ⁴² God never forgot his sacred promise to his servant Abraham. ⁴³ When the Lord rescued his chosen people from Egypt, they celebrated with songs. ⁴⁴ The Lord gave them the land and everything else the nations had worked for. ⁴⁵ He did this so that his people would obey all his laws. Shout praises to the Lord!

EXODUS 19:3-8 (NIRV)

³ Then Moses went up to God. The Lord called out to him from the mountain. He said, "Here is what I want you to say to my people, who belong to Jacob's family. Tell the Israelites, ⁴ 'You have seen for yourselves what I did to Egypt. You saw how I carried you on the wings of eagles and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now obey me completely. Keep my covenant. If you do, then out of all the nations you will be my special treasure. The whole earth is mine. ⁶ But you will be a kingdom of priests to serve me. You will be my holy nation.' That is what you must tell the Israelites."

⁷ So Moses went back. He sent for the elders of the people. He explained to them everything the Lord had commanded him to say. ⁸ All the people answered together. They said, "We will do everything the Lord has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the Lord.

PSALM 19:7-8 (CEV)

⁷ The Law of the Lord is perfect; it gives us new life. His teachings last forever, and they give wisdom to ordinary people. ⁸ The Lord's instruction is right; it makes our hearts glad. His commands shine brightly, and they give us light.

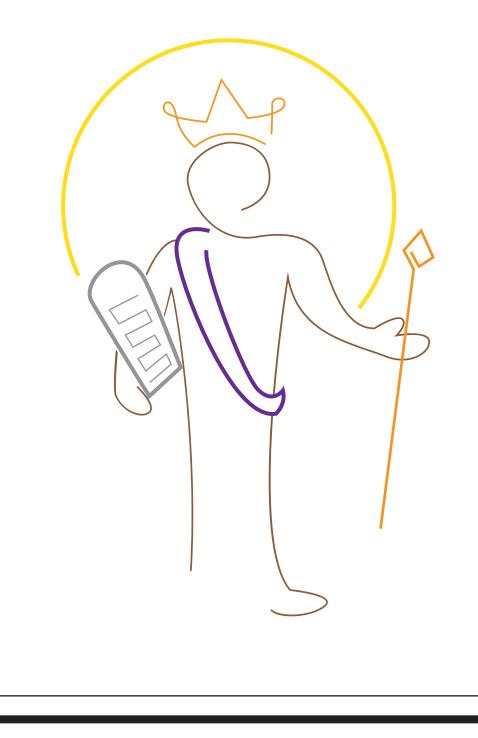
DEUTERONOMY 4:5-6 (CEV)

No other nation has laws that are as fair as the ones the Lord my God told me to give you. If you faithfully obey them when you enter the land, you will show other nations how wise you are. In fact, everyone that hears about your laws will say, "That great nation certainly is wise!" And what makes us greater than other nations? We have a God who is close to us and answers our prayers.

...Who will lead God's people in the right way?

DAVID (KINGDOM)

In the good land, God's people don't always have good leaders. Because God wants to lead his people in the way of life, God promises an everlasting king from the line of David.



PSALM 78:52, 56, 70-72 (CEV)

⁵² Then God led his people out of Egypt and guided them in the desert like a flock of sheep...

⁵⁶ But the people tested God Most High, and they refused to obey his laws...

⁷⁰ The Lord God chose David to be his servant and took him from tending sheep

⁷¹ and from caring for lambs. Then God made him the leader of Israel, his own nation.

⁷² David treated the people fairly and guided them with wisdom.

2 SAMUEL 7:5, 7, 8-16 (CEV)

⁵ David, you are my servant, so listen to what I say... ⁷ I chose leaders and told them to be like shepherds for my people Israel...

⁸ David, this is what I, the Lord All-Powerful, say to you. I brought you in from the fields where you took care of sheep, and I made you the leader of my people. ⁹ Wherever you went, I helped you and destroyed your enemies right in front of your eyes. I have made you one of the most famous people in the world.

¹⁰ I have given my people Israel a land of their own where they can live in peace, and they won't have to tremble with fear any more. Evil nations won't bother them, as they did ¹¹ when I let judges rule my people. And I have kept your enemies from attacking you.

Now I promise that you and your descendants will be kings. ¹² I'll choose one of your sons to be king when you reach the end of your life and are buried in the tomb of your ancestors. I'll make him a strong ruler, ¹³ and no one will be able to take his kingdom away from him. He will be the one to build a temple for me. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son.

When he does wrong, I'll see that he is corrected, just as children are corrected by their parents. ¹⁵ But I will never put an end to my agreement with him, as I put an end to my agreement with Saul, who was king before you. ¹⁶ I will make sure that one of your descendants will always be king.

...Will God's people trust God's love and follow God's leadership?

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God's people keep choosing their own ways. God keeps being kind and fair. People keep refusing God. Eventually God's people are defeated and taken from the good land because of their sin.

NEHEMIAH 9:23, 26, 30-37 (CEV)

²³ You [God] brought them into the land that you had promised their ancestors, and you blessed their nation with people that outnumbered the stars in the sky...

²⁶ In spite of this, they rebelled and disobeyed your laws...

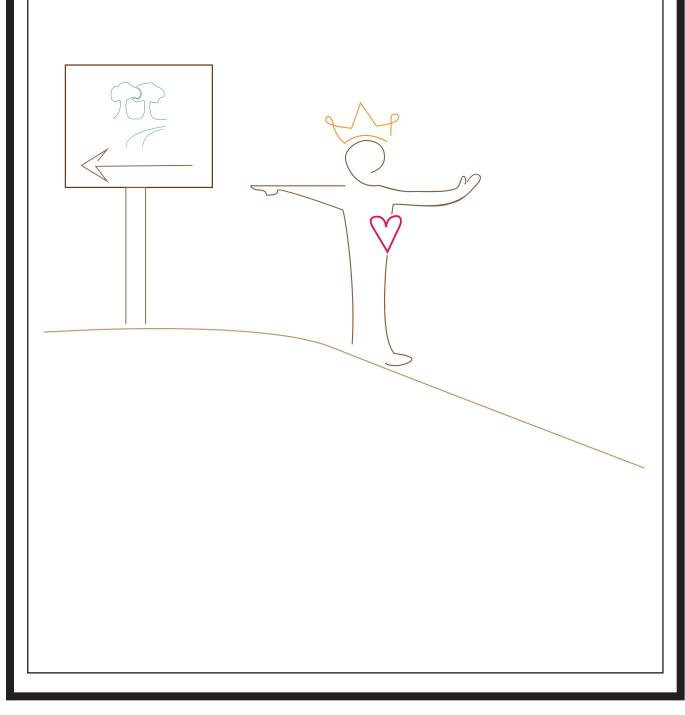
³⁰ For years, you were patient, and your Spirit warned them with messages spoken by your prophets. Still they refused to listen, and you handed them over to their enemies. ³¹ But you are merciful and kind, and so you never forgot them or let them be destroyed. ³² Our God, you are powerful, fearsome, and faithful, always true to your word.

So please keep in mind the terrible sufferings of our people, kings, leaders, priests, and prophets, from the time Assyria ruled until this very day. ³³ You have always been fair when you punished us for our sins. ³⁴ Our kings and leaders, our priests and ancestors have never obeyed your commands or heeded your warnings. ³⁵ You blessed them with a kingdom and with an abundance of rich, fertile land, but they refused to worship you or turn from their evil. ³⁶ Now we are slaves in this fruitful land you gave to our ancestors. ³⁷ Its plentiful harvest is taken by kings you placed over us because of our sins. Our suffering is unbearable, because they do as they wish to us and our livestock.

...Is there still any hope? Can God still shine a light for the whole world when God's chosen people live in darkness?

PROMISE

God loves and keeps his promises even when people don't. God will again rescue his people and still bless all nations.



ISAIAH 49:6-9 (CEV)

⁶ Now the Lord says to me, "It isn't enough for you to be merely my servant. You must do more than lead back survivors from the tribes of Israel. I have placed you here as a light for other nations; you must take my saving power to everyone on earth."

⁷ Israel, I am the holy Lord God, the one who rescues you. You are slaves of rulers and of a nation who despises you. Now this is what I promise: Kings and rulers will honor you by kneeling at your feet. You can trust me! I am your Lord, the holy God of Israel, and you are my chosen ones.

⁸ This is what the Lord says: I will answer your prayers because I have set a time when I will help by coming to save you. I have chosen you to take my promise of hope to other nations. You will rebuild the country from its ruins, then people will come and settle there. ⁹ You will set prisoners free from dark dungeons to see the light of day.

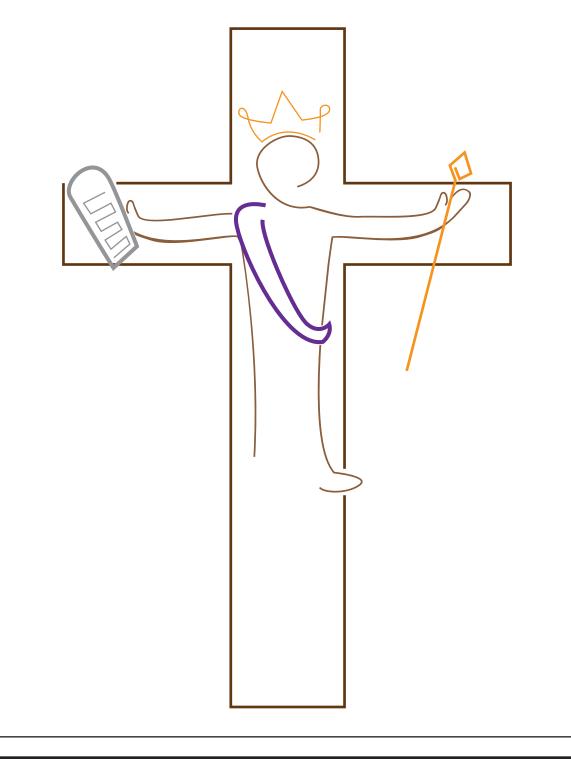
ISAIAH 52:7-10 (CEV)

⁷ What a beautiful sight! On the mountains a messenger announces to Jerusalem, "Good news! You're saved. There will be peace. Your God is now King." ⁸ Everyone on guard duty, sing and celebrate! Look! You can see the Lord returning to Zion. ⁹ Jerusalem, rise from the ruins! Join in the singing. The Lord has given comfort to his people; he comes to your rescue. ¹⁰ The Lord has shown all nations his mighty strength; now everyone will see the saving power of our God.

...When? How? Who will rescue us?

JESUS (KINGDOM)

God comes to love and lead his people through Jesus. Jesus is the one God promised. He calls us to repent from our way of doing things and follow him.



MARK 1:14-15 (NIRV)

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee. He preached the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!"

ACTS 2:22-24 (NIRV)

²² "Fellow Israelites, listen to this! Jesus of Nazareth was a man who had God's approval. God did miracles, wonders and signs among you through Jesus. You yourselves know this. ²³ Long ago God planned that Jesus would be handed over to you. With the help of evil people, you put Jesus to death. You nailed him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead. He set him free from the suffering of death. It wasn't possible for death to keep its hold on Jesus.

ACTS 3:18-26 (NIRV)

¹⁸ But God had given a promise through all the prophets. And this is how he has made his promise come true. He said that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ So turn away from your sins. Turn to God. Then your sins will be wiped away. The time will come when the Lord will make everything new. ²⁰ He will send the Messiah. Jesus has been appointed as the Messiah for you. ²¹ Heaven must receive him until the time when God makes everything new. He promised this long ago through his holy prophets. ²² Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me. He will be one of your own people. You must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.'

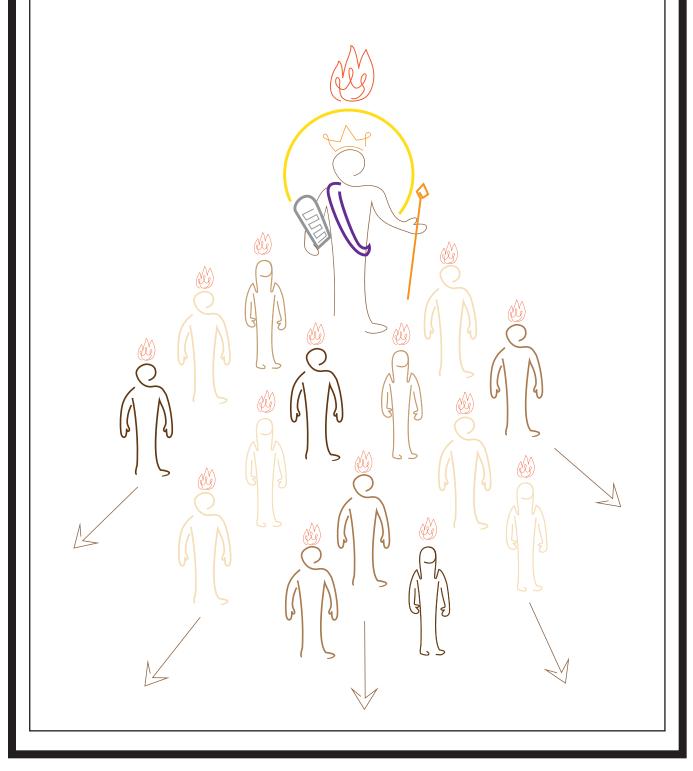
²⁴ "Beginning with Samuel, all the prophets spoke about this. They said these days would come. ²⁵ What the prophets said was meant for you. The covenant God made with your people long ago is yours also. He said to Abraham, 'All nations on earth will be blessed through your children.' ²⁶ God raised up Jesus, who serves him. God sent him first to you. He did it to bless you. He wanted to turn each of you from your evil ways."

(See pages 28-29 for more on Jesus)

...What does Jesus' victory over sin and death mean for us?

CHURCH

Jesus is alive, and he forms the church to live by the power of God's Spirit. The church is sent as the Body of Christ on earth to extend God's rule, love, and light to the world.



COLOSSIANS 1:13-14 (NIRV)

¹³ He has saved us from the kingdom of darkness. He has brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. ¹⁴ Because of what the Son has done, we have been set free. Because of him, all our sins have been forgiven.

1 PETER 2:9 (NIRV)

⁹ But God chose you to be his people. You are royal priests. You are a holy nation. You are God's special treasure. You are all these things so that you can give him praise. God brought you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

ROMANS 12:4-8 (CEV)

⁴ A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. ⁵ That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. ⁶ God has also given each of us different gifts to use. If we can prophesy, we should do it according to the amount of faith we have. ⁷ If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. ⁸ If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.

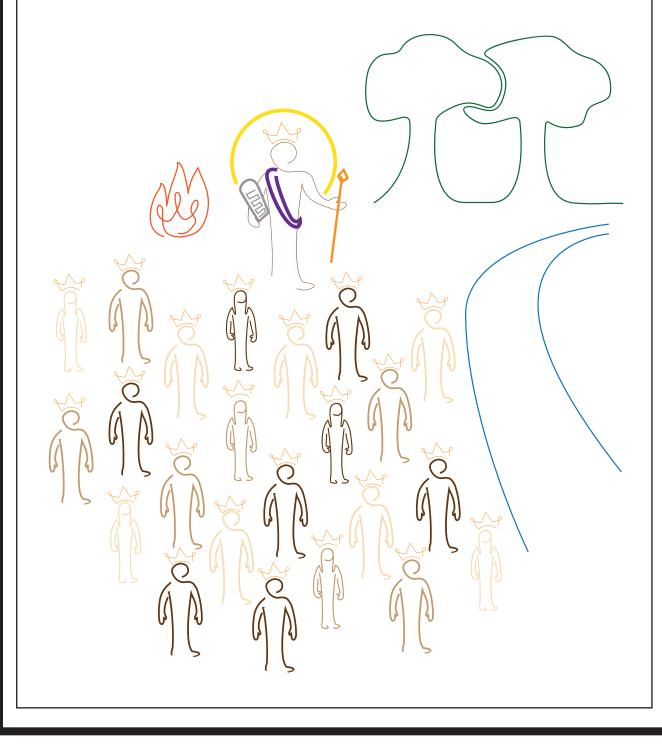
1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-13 (CEV)

¹² The body of Christ has many different parts, just as any other body does. ¹³ Some of us are Jews, and others are Gentiles. Some of us are slaves, and others are free. But God's Spirit baptized each of us and made us part of the body of Christ. Now we each drink from that same Spirit.

...How will our story and God's story be complete?

NEW CREATION

One day God will defeat evil for good and make all things new. Even now everyone who trusts Jesus can be remade as a sign of God's coming new creation. We live now in hope of God's new world and pray God's Kingdom would come on earth as in heaven.



2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (NIRV)

¹⁷ When anyone lives in Christ, the new creation has come. The old is gone! The new is here!

REVELATION 21:1-5,24-27; 22:1-5, 20 (NIRV)

¹⁻³ I saw "a new heaven and a new earth."… "Look! God now makes his home with the people. He will live with them. They will be his people. And God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ 'He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death.' And there will be no more sadness. There will be no more crying or pain…

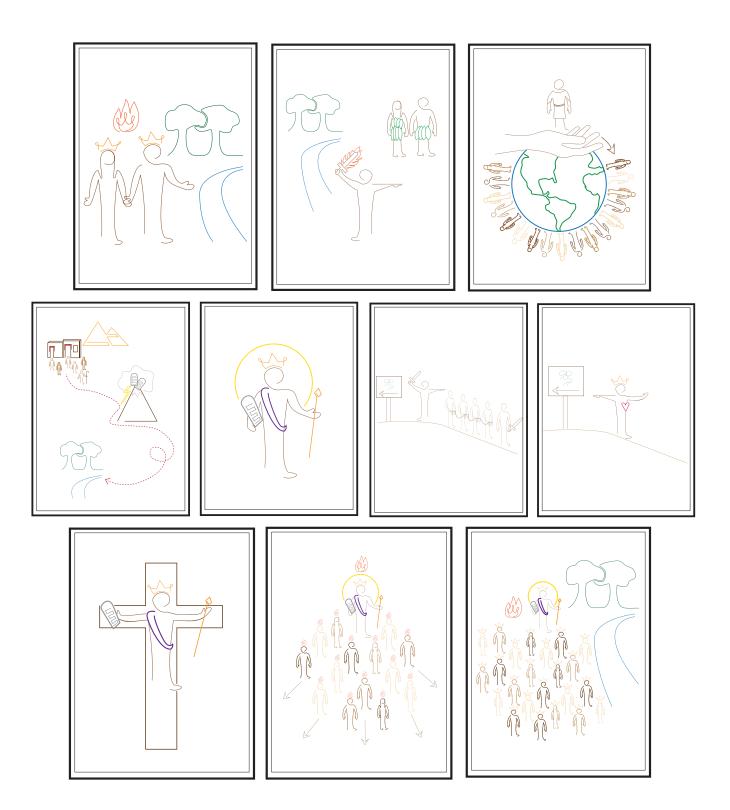
²⁴ The nations will walk by the light of the city. The kings of the world will bring their glory into it... ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Only what is pure will enter the city. No one who causes people to believe lies will enter it. No one who does shameful things will enter it either. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter the city.

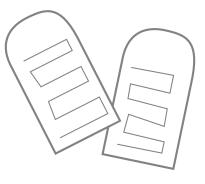
Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life. It was as clear as crystal. It flowed from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ² It flowed down the middle of the city's main street. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing 12 crops of fruit. Its fruit was ripe every month. The leaves of the tree bring healing to the nations. ³ There will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city. God's servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face. His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun. The Lord God will give them light. They will rule for ever and ever....

²⁰ Jesus is a witness about these things. He says, "Yes. I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Let the one who is thirsty take the free gift of the water of life.

ΤΗΕ ΕΠΟ





ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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TEACHING NOTES

CREATION

- God made everything good.
- Humans are God's image to represent God to the world.
- Humans have a RELATIONSHIP with God and RESPONSIBILITY to rule.

REBELLION

- Humans want to decide good and evil for themselves, choosing their own wisdom over God's.
- As a result God's good world is stained with sin.
- Sin is devastating and leads to death.

ABRAHAM (PROMISE)

- God chooses one family for the sake of all people on earth to heal what humans have broken.
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob begin the family line.
- Jacob's name is changed to "Israel," and his descendents are often called "God's people."

EXODUS

- God RESCUES his people.
- They form a special RELATIONSHIP.
- God again gives them RESPONSIBILITY to rule.
- God's instruction gives wisdom and life, and the people will live long in the good land if they choose life.

DAVID (KINGDOM)

- In the good land, God's people don't always have good leaders.
- God wants to lead his people in the way of life, God promises an everlasting king from the line of David.

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- God's people have cheated on their RELATIONSHIP with God.
- They have not carried out their RESPONSIBILITY as a light to the nations.
- They are longing for a RESCUE like the days of old.

PROMISE

- God is not done yet! Good news is on the way!
- God promises to heal and restore and forgive what we have wrecked.
- Even when they resettle in the land, God's people know they're still waiting for God's full deliverance. They're waiting for a "Messiah," an anointed king.

JESUS (KINGDOM)

- Jesus leads in the way God wants. Follow him and LIVE. To be in Jesus' presence is to be in the good land.
- Jesus is the one God promised to send from David's family. His kingdom will never end.
- Though he was killed, Jesus is alive and fulfills the promise to Abraham to bless all people.

NOTE: see pages 25-26 for more on Jesus.

CHURCH

- Jesus is alive, and he forms the church to live by the power of God's Spirit.
- The church is sent as the Body of Christ on earth to extend God's rule, love, and light to the world.

NEW CREATION

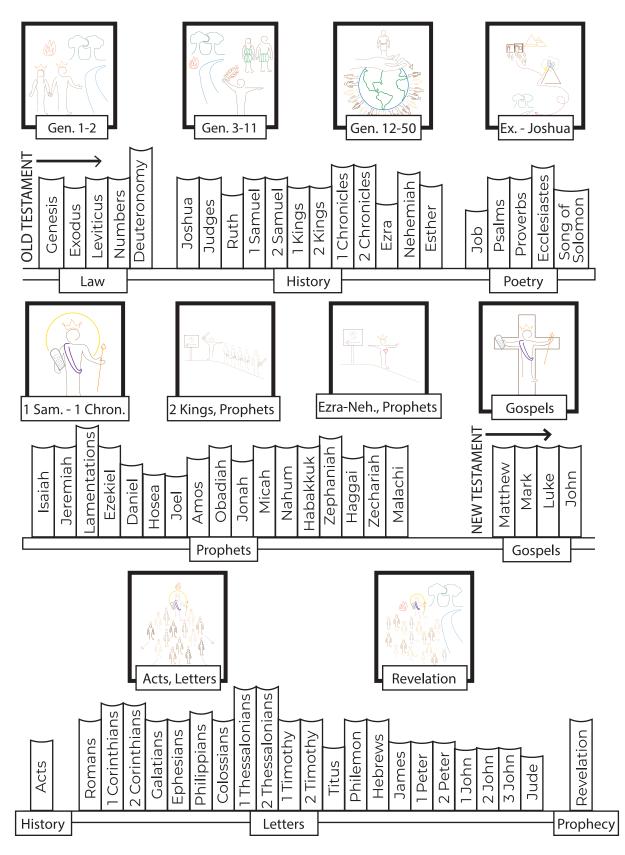
- God promises to remake the whole world into the good land.
- Eternal life starts now.
- We live now as signs of new creation, of heaven joining with earth, of God's kingdom, of Jesus' victory!

CONCISE SUMMARIES OF THE BIBLE'S STORY IN THE BIBLE ITSELF

- Nehemiah 9 | From Creation through Exile
- Acts 7 | From Abraham through Jesus
- Acts 13:16-52 | From Exodus through the Church

BIBLE BOOKSHELF

The Bible is not just one book but a library of books telling one story.



10 FRAMES SUMMARY...

In the beginning God made everything good. God made men and women as the image of God. God blessed them in a good land and told them to rule and multiply on the earth.

... Why isn't everything good right now?

2 Humans choose their own way and multiply violence and evil on the earth. They're sent out of the good land.

...Will God abandon the world?

3 God blesses Abraham's family in order to bless the whole world through them. *...But how will God's blessing come when there's so much evil?*

God hears the cries of God's people and saves them from evil. God promises to bring them to a good land. God will love them, be with them, and teach them so they can be a light to all nations.

....Who will lead God's people in the right way?

5 In the good land, God's people don't always have good leaders. Because God wants to lead his people in the way of life, God promises an everlasting king from the line of David.

...Will God's people trust God's love and follow God's leadership?

6 God's people keep choosing their own ways. God keeps being kind and fair. People keep refusing God. Eventually God's people are defeated and taken from the good land because of their sin.

...Is there still hope? Can God still shine a light for the whole world when God's chosen people live in darkness?

7 God loves and keeps his promises even when people don't. God will again rescue his people and still bless all nations.

...When? How? Who will rescue us?

- 8 God comes to love and lead his people through Jesus. Jesus is the one God promised. He calls us to repent from our way of doing things and follow him.
 What does Jesus' victory over sin and death mean for us?
- **9** Jesus is alive, and he forms the church to live by the power of God's Spirit. The church is sent as the Body of Christ on earth to extend God's rule, love, and light to the world.

...How will our story and God's story be complete?

10 One day God will defeat evil for good and make all things new. Even now everyone who trusts Jesus can be remade as a sign of God's coming new creation. We live now in hope of God's new world and pray God's Kingdom would come on earth as in heaven.

Let the one who is thirsty take the free gift of the water of life.

ZOOMING IN ON JESUS

This is a concise way to describe Jesus' role in the story of the world.

JESUS...



CAME

- Merry Christmas!
- A Savior is born!
- The eternal Word of God became human and lived among us.
- He is God with us.

LIVED

- Jesus announced and embodied the Kingdom of God.
- He healed, he cast out evil, he taught with authority.
- In Jesus, God is now fulfilling his promise to set the world right.
- BUT it's going to get ugly and look very wrong.

DIED

- Evil and sin crushed Jesus.
- BUT in death, surprisingly, Jesus was becoming King.
- This king's crown was made of thorns, his throne was a cross.
- The world condemned Jesus, but Jesus condemned sin and freed us from its power by offering his life for our sake.

WAS BURIED

- Jesus was fully dead. It was no trick.
- The work was finished, and Jesus rested in the tomb until the dawn of the new Day.

ROSE

- Happy Easter! Jesus is risen indeed!
- Jesus wins the victory over death.
- New Creation is now breaking into the old world.

ASCENDED

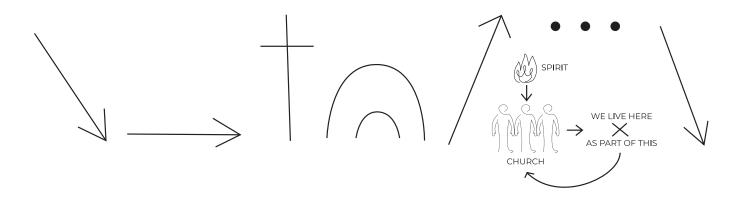
- Jesus ascends to take his place as ruler over heaven and earth.
 - • •

WILL COME AGAIN

- Jesus will return to make all things new.
- His enemies will be defeated forever.
- There will be no more curse.
- Heaven and earth will become one.
- So we say "Come, Lord Jesus!"

But wait! There's more!

JESUS' STORY IS OURS TOO!



GIFT OF THE SPIRIT & BIRTH OF THE CHURCH

- Jesus ascends and God's Spirit descends on Jesus' followers to form the Church.
- The Church is now the Body of Christ on earth, and each of us are members of it.
- Each person has a part to play. No one part is more important than another.
- We are filled with the Spirit—the Spirit who...
 - ...was there at Creation
 - ...raised Jesus from the dead
 - ...makes us new
- Through the Spirit, we live now as signs of New Creation.
- By the power of the Spirit, we are "witnesses." We testify to this whole story through our lives—individually and together as a Body.

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