

This book is presented to this child of God

From

On this day





α Note for Readers

Did you know the Bible is one big story about a Parent and children? Since God created everyone, He's like the Parent—and the “kids” He created are all over the Bible. Some of those kids are grown-ups who act like big babies and refuse to look to God as their Parent. Some are grown-ups who humbly know that on the inside, they're just kids who desperately need God to be their true Father.

And some of the kids in the Bible are actual kids!



Kids are a part of God's special plan to bless the whole world.

In this Bible storybook, we'll take a closer look at these real-life kids (adults and actual kids) and how God loves to do His big work through small people. Their little stories will help us see the whole point of God's big story: He is a loving Father who is making a way for His family to be together through the most important Child who was ever born: Jesus. Because of Jesus, anyone God created can become God's true child forever!





Contents

1. The Good Parent and the Good Garden	9
2. The Rescuer Boy (and the Spare)	16
3. Abraham’s Impossible Family	23
4. Two Sons and a Sacrifice	28
5. The Colorful Coat and the Jealous Brothers	34
6. The Brave Sister and the Basket Baby	40
7. The Wilderness Kids	47
8. The Strong Guy	52
9. The Little Priest	59
10. Fearfully and Wonderfully Made	64
11. The Warrior Kid	70
12. The King Who Was Hungry for Wisdom	76
13. Kids Who Grow in Wisdom	81
14. The Twice-Saved Boy	84
15. The Good News Girl	91
16. The Kid King	96
17. The Little King Who Loved God’s Law	100
18. God’s Carefully Planned Prophet	107
19. Brave in the Blaze	112
20. The Brave and Beautiful Queen	119



21. The Promised Child Is Coming!	126
22. The Baby Messenger	132
23. The Change-the-World-Forever Baby	138
24. The Son in the Father’s House	148
25. The Growing Family	155
26. The Miracle Meal	160
27. Jesus Loves Kids	169
28. The Get-Better Boy and the Live-Again Girl	174
29. The Cross: Where God the Father Gave and God the Son Stayed	180
30. He Is Alive!	186
31. Planting Seeds and Growing Kids	193
32. We Are God’s Children	198
33. Good News for God’s Kids	205
The Story of the Child	210
Am I a Child of God?	216
Now What?	219
Your Story of Being God’s Kid	220
I’m God’s Kid!	222



1

The Good Parent and the Good Garden

Genesis 1–3

In the beginning, there was nothing—until God created everything. God said, “Let there be light,” and BOOM! There was light. Whatever God told to “be” would immediately “be.” Pretty amazing, huh?

As a grand finale, God made His most treasured creation: people. Adam and Eve were grown-ups, but they were still God’s children. Everything was new to them in the special garden-home God had made. As a good parent, God helped them live, work, and play. God said people were made in His image, which meant no part of creation was as much like God as they were. This was God’s idea: Adam and Eve would have kids, their kids would have kids, then their kids would have kids—and pretty soon, the world would be full of God’s image-bearing kids! It was a wonderful idea. God loves kids!

Adam and Eve would look like their Father, and He would teach His kids to rely on Him to give them anything they would ever need. Under God’s care, Adam and Eve would learn more about their Father, follow His teaching, and grow on the outside and on the inside! As they walked with God, who is wise, they would become wise. (A wise person is someone who knows God’s ideas and understands how to act on them.)

That's why God made a rule in His new creation: Adam and Eve should not eat from the tree called the tree of knowledge of good and bad. (Adam and Eve didn't need a tree to grow in wisdom and learn about good and bad. God would teach them!)

But one day—*hisssss*—a serpent came. This wasn't an ordinary snake like you might see at the zoo or in your friend's terrarium. Instead, he talked—and Adam and Eve listened! They didn't squeal and run away, the way some of us do when we spot a creepy creature. They talked with him. They didn't know he was an expert at lying, and that his words were a trap door to terribleness.

You see, this serpent hated God. He wanted to destroy God's treasured creation. The Bible gives the serpent a few names you might recognize like Satan, the Accuser, and the Father of Lies.

The serpent asked Eve, "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden?'" That wasn't true! God had given Adam and Eve tons of delicious fruit trees. Their home was a snack factory! Eve corrected the serpent, telling him only one tree was off-limits. Adam had told Eve what God said, so Eve tried to tell the serpent, "God said, 'You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.'"

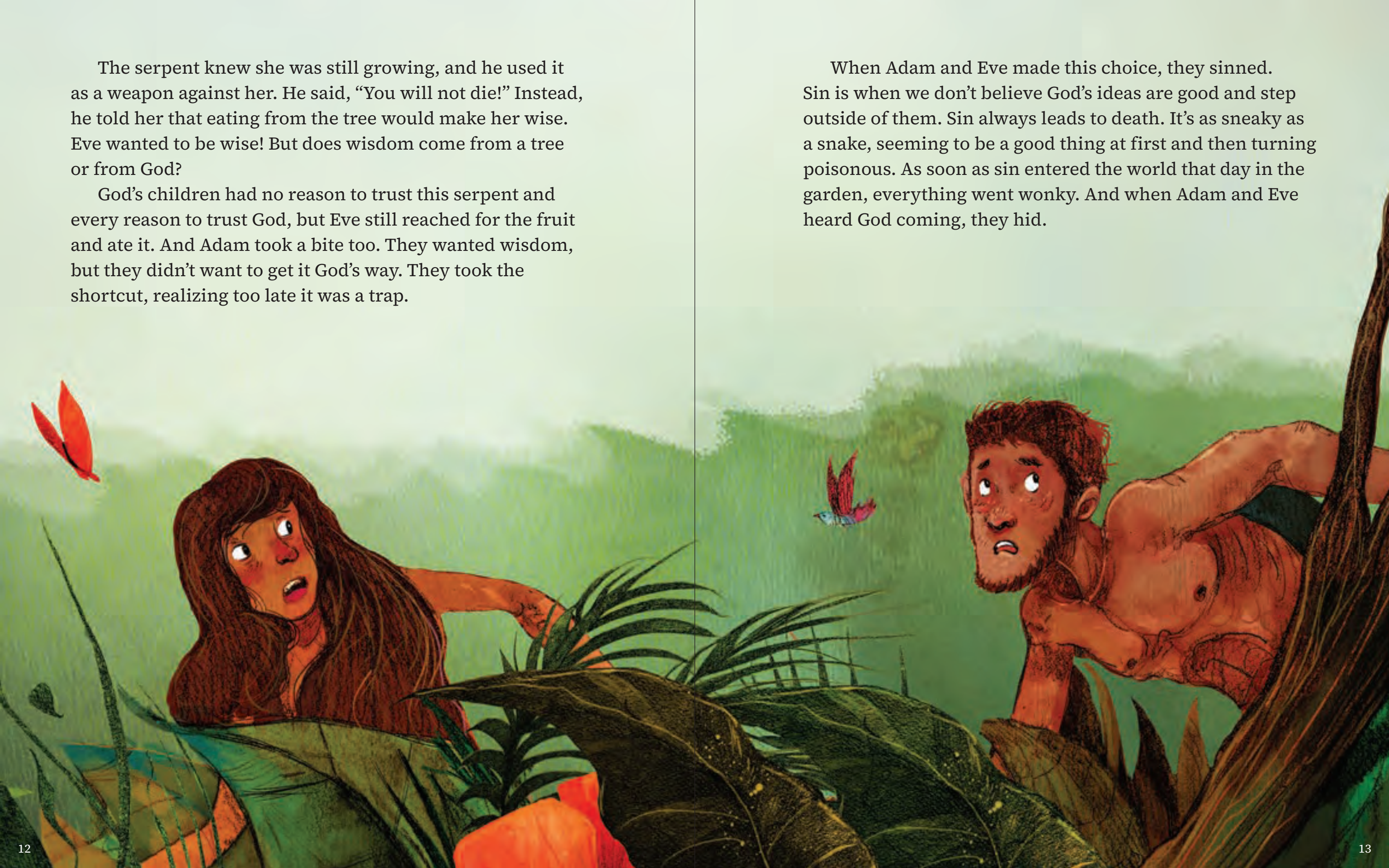
Eve didn't get the rule totally right—God never said anything to Adam about touching the tree—but remember she was kind of like a kid! She was still growing.



The serpent knew she was still growing, and he used it as a weapon against her. He said, “You will not die!” Instead, he told her that eating from the tree would make her wise. Eve wanted to be wise! But does wisdom come from a tree or from God?

God’s children had no reason to trust this serpent and every reason to trust God, but Eve still reached for the fruit and ate it. And Adam took a bite too. They wanted wisdom, but they didn’t want to get it God’s way. They took the shortcut, realizing too late it was a trap.

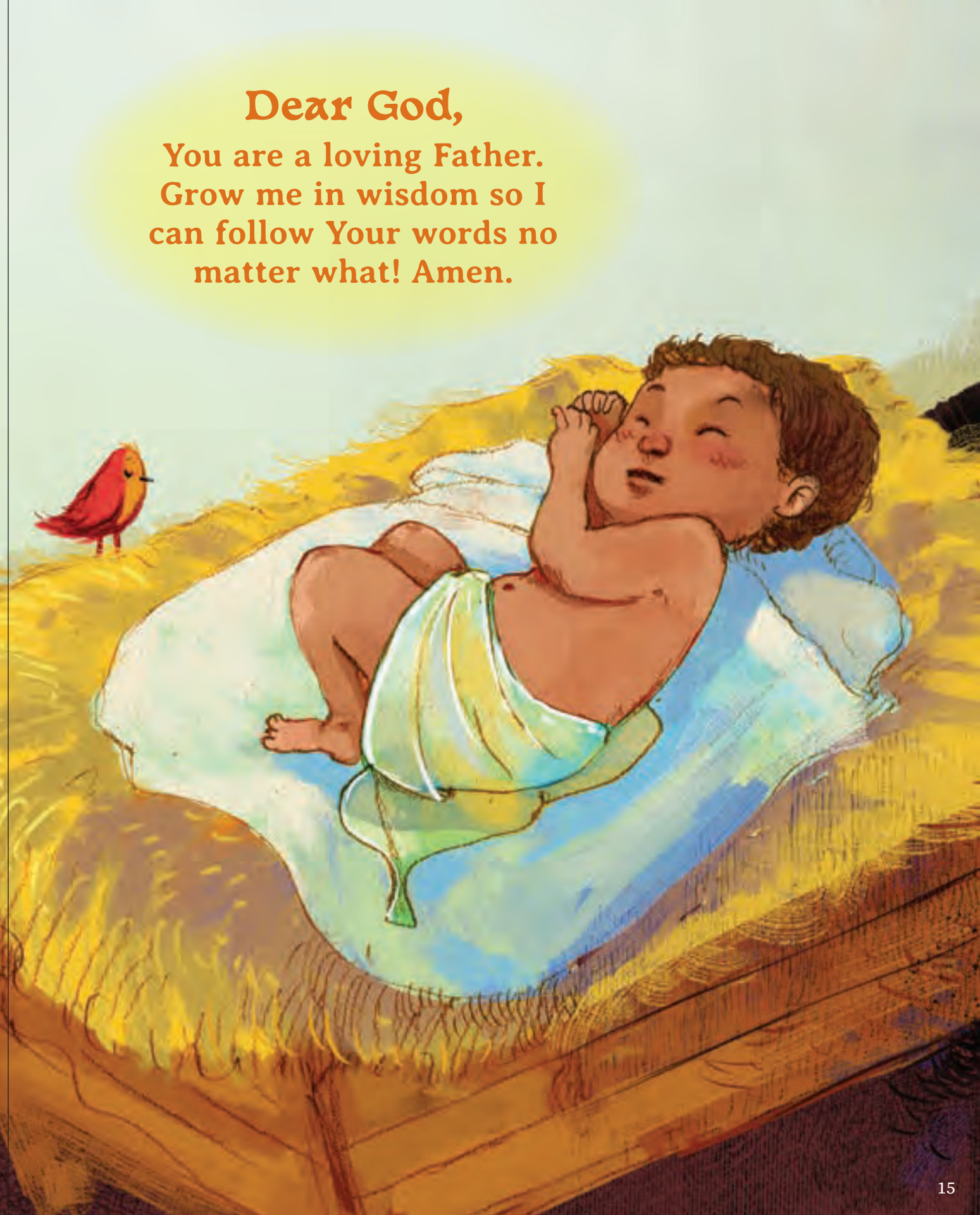
When Adam and Eve made this choice, they sinned. Sin is when we don’t believe God’s ideas are good and step outside of them. Sin always leads to death. It’s as sneaky as a snake, seeming to be a good thing at first and then turning poisonous. As soon as sin entered the world that day in the garden, everything went wonky. And when Adam and Eve heard God coming, they hid.



Sometimes kids hide from their parents to be silly, but this wasn't a game. Adam and Eve were full of shame (that icky, horrible feeling when you know you've messed up), and they were full of blame (that thing we do when we pretend our mistake is someone else's fault). Yes, the serpent tricked Adam and Eve, but the sin was Adam and Eve's fault. They had not trusted their Father.

As a loving Parent, God told Adam and Eve the consequences: He had designed everything to be life-giving, but things would now be different with sin in the world. Work, growing a family, and relationships would all be frustrating and painful. Even so, there was good news: one day a Child would be born, and He would defeat that sneaky serpent forever. **This Child was God's special plan to bless the whole world.**

**Dear God,
You are a loving Father.
Grow me in wisdom so I
can follow Your words no
matter what! Amen.**



The Rescuer Boy (and the Spare)

Genesis 4

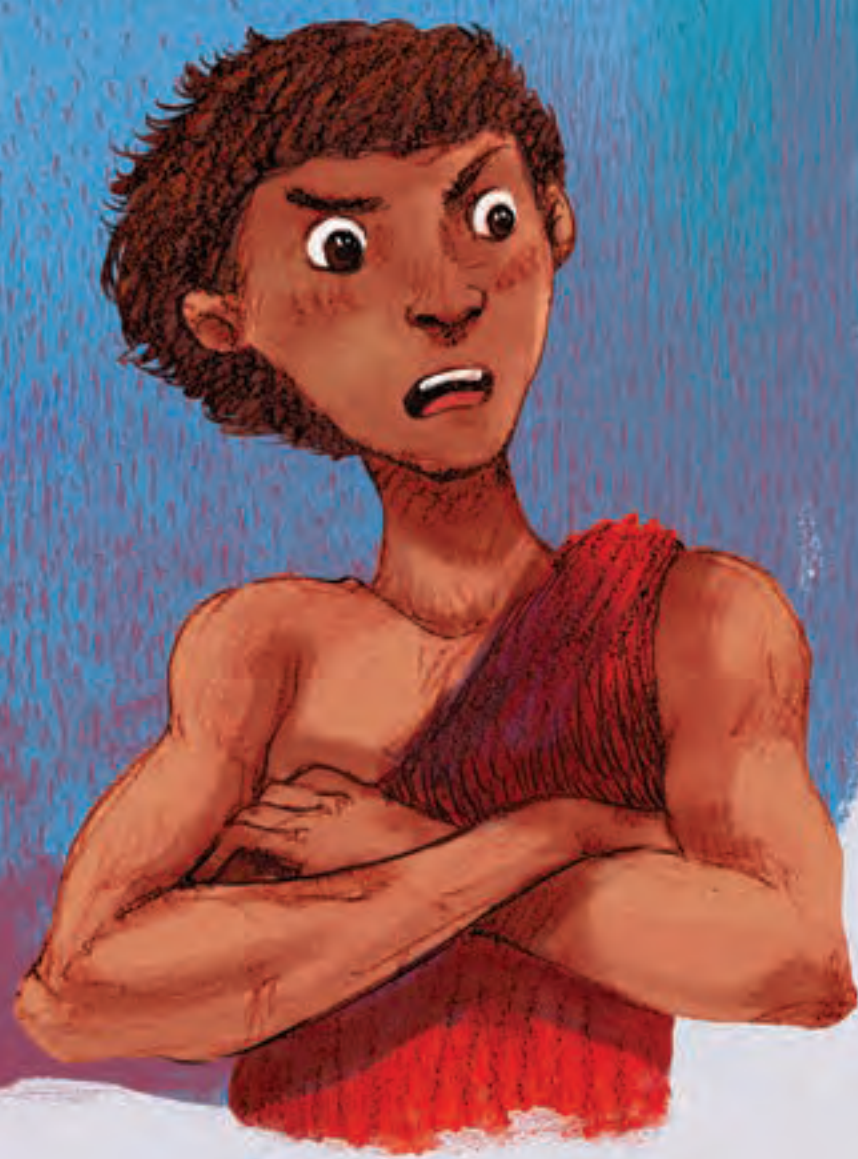
Adam and Eve became parents. With every baby Eve had, maybe she looked for the Child God had promised. Who would be the one to set the world right again? (Maybe you can be looking for that as you read this book!)

You probably know that the names mothers and fathers give their children are important and special. (Does your name have a special meaning?)

First, Eve had a baby named Cain. When she chose this name, she said, “I have had a boy with the Lord’s help.” Maybe the name was a way for Eve to praise God, or maybe Eve hoped Cain was the promised Child who would rescue her family.

Soon, Eve gave birth to a second son, Abel. Abel’s name is kind of like the Hebrew word for “worthless.” If Adam and Eve were counting on Cain to be the rescuer boy, maybe they felt that Abel was like a spare tire. When the main tires are doing great, a spare tire is not very important.





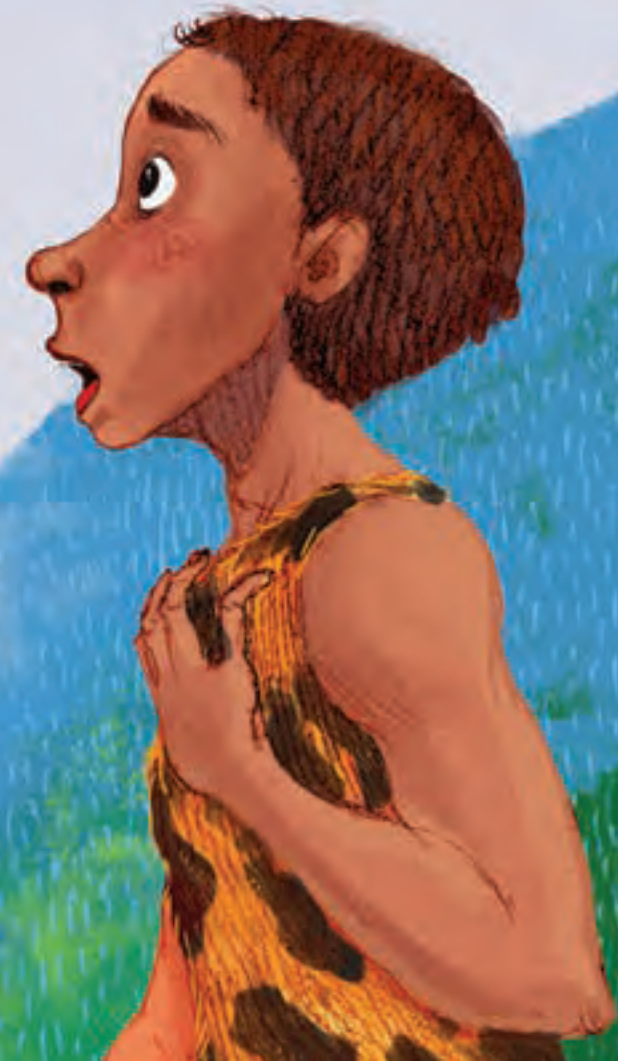
Maybe it was hard for Cain and Abel to grow up with these names. Cain might've believed that rescuing the world was on his shoulders, and Abel might've been unsure he had any purpose at all. Whatever life was like for these kids, we know it wasn't perfect like it was in Eden. We know they were in need of God's rescue through the Child promised by God.

One day when they were grown, Cain and Abel both gave offerings, which are gifts given to worship God. But God wasn't okay with Cain's offering because Cain offered it with a mean and selfish heart.

Abel's offering, though, made God so happy! That must have made Abel's heart soar. Even though other people might have thought he was unimportant, God loved him. Maybe Abel did a cartwheel or twirled around until he got so dizzy that he fell down. Being loved by God is the best thing ever!

But Cain was angry. Maybe he thought, *I'm the better brother! Why doesn't God know that?*

Cain wasn't just angry with God—he was angry toward his brother. After all, Abel had something Cain didn't have: God's favor. This kind of anger is called envy, and envy is a sin. Sin is when we think, *My ideas are better than God's ideas. I'm going to do what I want instead of what He wants.* Sin always leads to death.



Think about it: God has designed brothers (and sisters) to love and serve one another, but how can they do that when one brother is full of anger toward the other and wants what his brother has? Envy might seem like a “no big deal” sin, but all sin is a big deal! All sin is dangerous.

God knew the danger and warned Cain. God said, “Your sin is like a hungry tiger, and it is going to gobble you up. You need to destroy it!”


But instead of listening to God’s wisdom and attacking the sin of envy, Cain fed his envy and let it grow. One terrible day, Cain attacked his brother, Abel.

God said, “Cain, what have you done?!” This is not what brothers should do. Brothers should keep one another safe, but now Abel was dead.

All hope seemed to be dead too! After all, Cain wasn’t a rescuer—he was a destroyer. What hope was there for rescue?

But God always keeps His promises. Terribleness can seem like the end of the story, but it never is. It means God is not done working.

Soon Eve had another son, Seth, and she felt hope again. **Seth was just a kid—but he was part of God’s special plan to bless the whole world.** One day, the promised Child would come through Seth’s family, and the true Rescuer Boy would make a way for enemies to become family.



Dear God,
I can see that even “little” sins are a big deal. I need Your rescue! Help me to love Your wisdom rather than trusting in my own. Amen.

Abraham's Impossible Family

Genesis 12; 16-18; 21:1-7

The whole world seemed cursed, so it was a big deal when God chose a man named Abraham and gave him a promise: “I am going to give you a big family, and I will bless the whole world through this family!” Abraham was surprised to hear this promise. He didn’t have any kids, and he was already the age of a grandpa: seventy-five years old! It might have seemed crazy, but Abraham knew God could do anything. So Abraham trusted Him.

Ten years went by, and there was still no baby. Abraham’s wife, Sarah, had an idea: Abraham should have a baby with another woman, Hagar. Hagar was younger and able to have children. Plus, she worked for Abraham and Sarah and had to do whatever they said. This was a terrible idea for lots of reasons. For one, Abraham and Sarah didn’t seem to care what Hagar thought. They treated her like a thing instead of a person! Two, Abraham was supposed to have a baby only with his wife, Sarah. And three, Abraham and Sarah must’ve forgotten that God can do anything. They were following their own ideas instead of God’s ideas.

But Abraham and Sarah thought they could create God’s promised family themselves, so they put Sarah’s plan into action. When Hagar became pregnant, she looked at Sarah with hate, so Sarah mistreated her. When the mistreatment became too much, Hagar ran away into the desert.





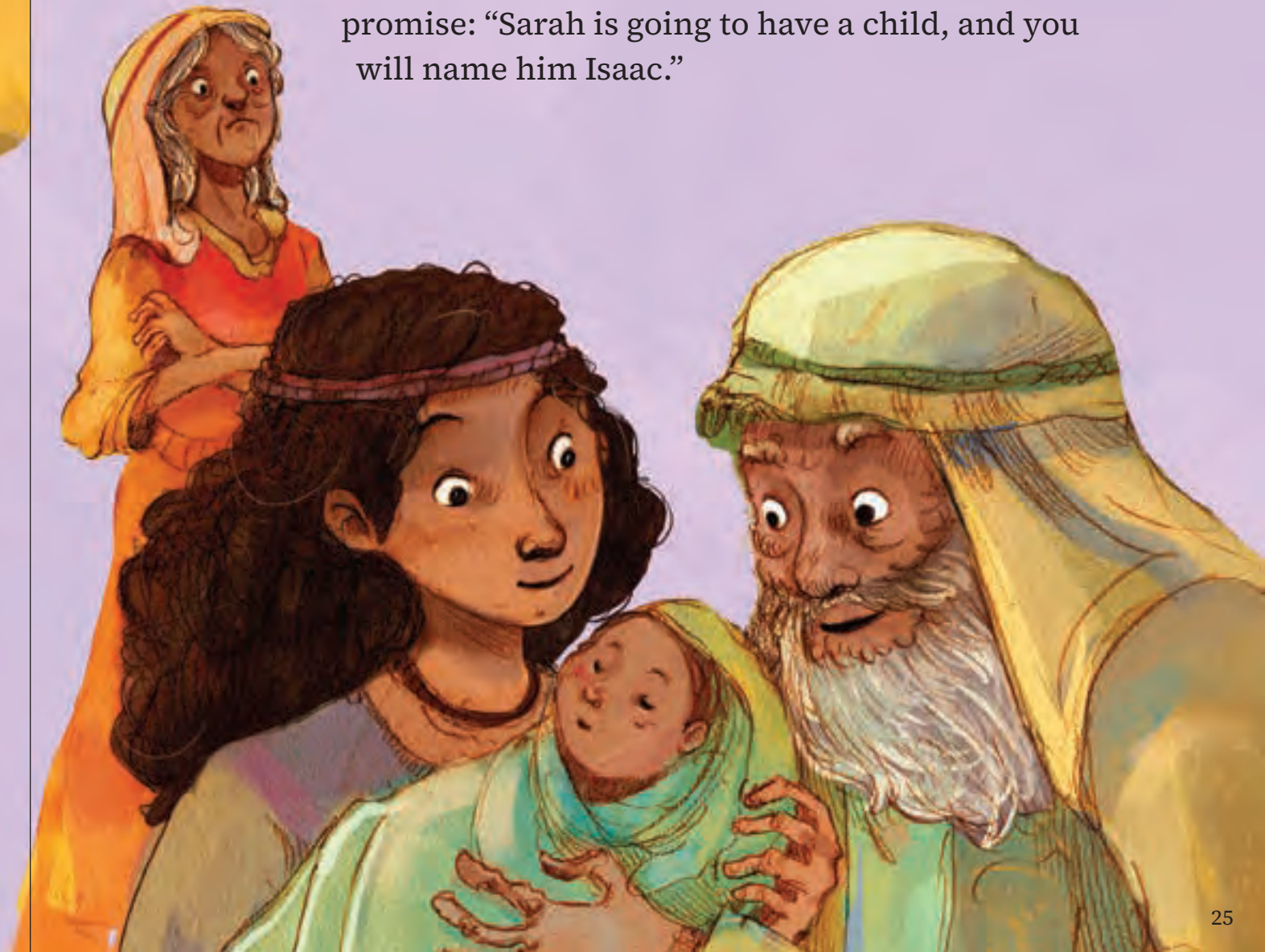
In this impossible place, something amazing happened! God met Hagar and told her about the plans He had for her baby. You see, God sees a child and knows everything about him or her even before the child's parents have seen his or her face! (After all, God is the one who makes all children.) God even told Hagar to name her son Ishmael, which means "God hears."

Comfort filled Hagar's heart. Although Abraham and Sarah didn't see Hagar as a person, God saw her and her child. They mattered to God! Worshiping God, Hagar called Him "El-roi," which means, "You are the God who sees me." God's love for her and her son gave Hagar the courage to listen to God when He asked her to return to Abraham and Sarah.

Soon, Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. His father, Abraham, was . . . wait for it . . . eighty-six years old. Every time Hagar held Ishmael or called his name, it was a reminder: God hears. God sees.

Even though God created, saw, and knew Ishmael, this child was not the way God would fulfill His promise to Abraham. God wanted to fulfill His promise in an impossible way so that when people saw it, they would say, "Whoa! Only God could do that!"

When Abraham was almost one hundred years old and Sarah was ninety, God reminded Abraham of His promise: "Sarah is going to have a child, and you will name him Isaac."



Isaac means “he laughs,” probably because the whole thing was pretty funny! Who ever heard of a nearly hundred-year-old couple having a baby? Sarah laughed when she heard the news, but not in a happy way. She laughed with a mean spirit, like, “Yeah, right! God can’t do that. We are the wrinkly-est, oldest people in the world. What nonsense.”

It did seem like nonsense because it made no sense! But God loves to do what makes no sense to us. (That’s how we know He did it and not us. And it’s really fun when the things that made no sense start to make perfect sense, and we jump up and down and say, “Look what God did! He is amazing!”)



The next year, even though it seemed impossible, Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Sarah laughed again, but this time with joy. As she rocked this impossible little boy in her old-lady arms, she bubbled over with delight, knowing that nothing is impossible for God! **Isaac was just a kid, but he was part of God’s special plan to bless the whole world.**

**Dear God,
I am so glad that
You can do the
impossible! Thank
You for being
awesome.
Amen.**

