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THE BARNABAS CHILDREN'S BIBLE



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CONTENTS

1	In the beginning	12	36	Jacob lets Benjamin go	43	71	Balaam's blessing	70	106	Naomi's grandson	99
2	The perfect world	12	37	Joseph's feast	44	72	A holy nation	71	107	Hannah's sorrow	99
3	Right and wrong	13	38	The silver cup	44	73	God chooses Joshua	72	108	Hannah keeps her promise	100
4	Adam and Eve are sent away	14	39	Jacob's lost son	45	74	Rahab and the spies	72	109	God speaks in the night	101
5	Cain and Abel	15	40	Jacob dies in Egypt	46	75	Crossing the River Jordan	74	110	The death of Eli	102
6	Noah's ark	16	41	Slaves in Egypt	47	76	Victory in Jericho	74	111	The ark in Dagon's temple	103
7	The great flood	17	42	Miriam and the princess	48	77	Stolen silver and gold	75	112	Samuel leads God's people	104
8	The rainbow	17	43	Moses kills a slavedriver	48	78	Victory at Ai	76	113	The people want a king	104
9	The tower of Babel	18	44	The angel in the burning bush	49	79	The peace treaty	77	114	The first king of Israel	105
10	Terah's journey	19	45	Moses is afraid	50	80	The sun stands still	77	115	Saul, the warrior king	106
11	The Promised Land	20	46	Bricks without straw	51	81	The battle for Canaan	78	116	Jonathan fights the Philistines	107
12	Lot's choice	20	47	Plagues in Egypt	52	82	The twelve tribes of Israel	79	117	Jesse's youngest son	108
13	God's promise	21	48	The final plague	53	83	Caleb's reward	79	118	The king's unhappy moods	109
14	Sarai's maidservant	22	49	Pharaoh lets the people go	53	84	Joshua says goodbye	80	119	The shepherd's song	110
15	Abram welcomes strangers	23	50	Crossing the Red Sea	54	85	The people forget God's laws	81	120	The giant's challenge	110
16	Abraham prays for Sodom	24	51	God is great	55	86	Caleb's nephew to the rescue	82	121	Saul, the jealous king	112
17	Rescue by angels	25	52	Wandering in the desert	55	87	Ehud, the left-handed judge	82	122	Jonathan's warning	112
18	Sarah has a son	27	53	Water from the rock	56	88	Deborah and Barak	83	123	David, the outlaw	113
19	God tests Abraham	28	54	The battle with the Amalekites	57	89	Jael's tent peg	84	124	David spares Saul's life	114
20	Water for ten camels	28	55	God speaks from the mountain	57	90	The camel riders	85	125	Abigail's wisdom	115
21	A wife for Isaac	29	56	The ten commandments	58	91	Gideon, the reluctant hero	86	126	David's night raid	116
22	Esau and Jacob	30	57	A special place for God	59	92	Gideon and the sheepskin	86	127	Saul's final defeat	117
23	Isaac's blessing	31	58	The golden calf	59	93	Gideon's small army	88	128	David, king of Judah	118
24	Jacob's dream	32	59	Moses breaks the stone tablets	60	94	Battle by night	88	129	The warring commanders	118
25	Jacob falls in love	33	60	Moses asks for God's mercy	61	95	Abimelech kills his brothers	89	130	Abner changes sides	119
26	Jacob runs away	34	61	The cleft in the rock	62	96	Abimelech's punishment	90	131	The murder of Ishbosheth	120
27	Jacob wrestles with God	35	62	The cloud of God's presence	63	97	Jephthah's rash promise	91	132	The capture of Jerusalem	120
28	Friends and brothers	36	63	Miriam and Aaron grumble	63	98	The birth of Samson	92	133	David dances	121
29	Rachel dies	37	64	Spies in the land	64	99	Samson's riddle	92	134	God's dwelling place	122
30	Jacob's special son	37	65	Forty years in the desert	65	100	Samson's revenge	93	135	The God who knows everything	123
31	Sold to be a slave	38	66	Moses strikes the rock	66	101	Delilah betrays Samson	94	136	David is kind to Jonathan's son	124
32	Prison dreams	39	67	The death of Aaron	67	102	Samson defeats his enemies	95	137	David breaks God's rules	124
33	Pharaoh's strange dreams	40	68	The snake on a pole	67	103	Elimelech's family settles in Moab	96	138	Uriah dies in battle	125
34	Famine in Canaan	41	69	Two victories in battle	68	104	Ruth works in the fields	97	139	Nathan's message	126
35	Simeon is taken hostage	42	70	Balaam's donkey	69	105	Ruth and Boaz	98			



140 David's sorrow	127	163 The oil that didn't run out	147	188 Man overboard!	167	217 The blazing furnace of fire	190
141 David is betrayed	128	164 Elijah saves a little boy	147	189 The God who forgives	167	218 The madness of the king	192
142 Hushai tricks Absalom	128	165 The third year of drought	148	190 Jonah's anger	168	219 The writing on the wall	192
143 The death of Absalom	130	166 The contest on the mountain	149	191 The God of the poor	169	220 A plot against Daniel	194
144 David keeps his promise	131	167 The one true God	150	192 The loving husband	170	221 Daniel and the lions	194
145 David's last days	132	168 Jezebel's death threats	151	193 The promise of peace	170	222 A vision of God	195
146 Adonijah's request	132	169 Earthquake, fire and whisper	151	194 Isaiah's vision	171	223 Ezekiel's obedience	196
147 God's gift to Solomon	133	170 God's new prophet	153	195 The future king	172	224 Dry bones	197
148 Solomon's wisdom	134	171 Queen Jezebel's plot	153	196 Israel falls to the Assyrians	172	225 The exiles return to Jerusalem	198
149 Wisdom about families	135	172 A wicked king's death	154	197 Hezekiah trusts God	173	226 The rebuilding begins	199
150 Wisdom about friends	136	173 A chariot to heaven	155	198 The shadow of the sundial	174	227 Esther is made queen	200
151 Wisdom for life	137	174 God sends water in the desert	156	199 Words of hope	175	228 A plot against King Xerxes	201
152 A temple for God	137	175 The widow's debt	157	200 God's love for his people	176	229 Esther prays for guidance	202
153 Solomon's prayer	138	176 The gift of a child	158	201 God's plan to save his people	177	230 God's answer to prayer	203
154 The visit of the queen of Sheba	139	177 The miracle of the Shunammite's son	159	202 King Manasseh's punishment	177	231 Death on the gallows	204
155 Solomon's power and wealth	140	178 The captive servant girl	159	203 King Josiah's sorrow	178	232 The patience of Job	205
156 The broken promise	141	179 Naaman is cured	160	204 God's chosen messenger	179	233 God answers Job	206
157 The divided kingdom	142	180 Jehu is anointed king	161	205 A rebellious people	180	234 Ezra returns to Jerusalem	207
158 King Jeroboam's disobedience	143	181 The dreadful end of Queen Jezebel	162	206 The potter's clay	181	235 Nehemiah's prayer	208
159 A terrible warning	144	182 Jehu's trick	163	207 Jeremiah buys a field	182	236 Repairing the city walls	209
160 War and defeat	145	183 A wicked grandmother	163	208 The words in the fire	182	237 Nehemiah and the poor	210
161 The wicked King Ahab	145	184 Joash repairs the temple	164	209 The Babylonians take captives	183		
162 Elijah brings bad news	146	185 The death of Elisha	165	210 Jeremiah in prison	184		
		186 Jonah runs away	165	211 At the bottom of the well	186		
		187 The raging storm	166	212 The fall of Jerusalem	186		
				213 Captives in Babylon	187		
				214 Nebuchadnezzar's dream	188		
				215 The mystery revealed	189		
				216 The golden statue	190		



238 Ezra reads God's Law to the people	211	267 The widow's only son	235	301 The upstairs room	264	337 Free to love	294
239 Singing new songs	211	268 The story of the farmer and the seed	236	302 Jesus, the servant	265	338 Paul baptizes Lydia	294
240 Preparing the way	212	269 Secrets of God's kingdom	237	303 The betrayer	266	339 The fortune-teller	295
241 The angel in the temple	214	270 The storm on the lake	238	304 Sleeping friends	267	340 The violent earthquake	296
242 Another visit from Gabriel	214	271 Another visit to Capernaum	239	305 Jesus is arrested	267	341 The unknown God	297
243 Two special babies	215	272 The secret visit	240	306 The next morning	268	342 Tentmakers in Corinth	298
244 Zechariah speaks again	216	273 The woman with five husbands	241	307 A murderer goes free	269	343 Paul goes to Ephesus	299
245 Joseph, the carpenter	217	274 The end of John's work	242	308 The King of the Jews	270	344 Parts of one body	300
246 The Roman census	218	275 Five rolls and two little fish	243	309 The Place of the Skull	270	345 The meaning of love	301
247 The baby born in Bethlehem	218	276 Walking on water	244	310 Secret followers	272	346 Paul's sufferings	301
248 Shepherds hear the news	218	277 The man who could not hear	245	311 The empty tomb	272	347 God's love	302
249 The long-awaited Saviour	220	278 On the mountain	246	312 The road to Emmaus	273	348 A miracle in Troas	303
250 Wise men from the east	220	279 The story of the good Samaritan	247	313 Behind locked doors	274	349 Danger in Jerusalem	303
251 Gold, frankincense and myrrh	221	280 Mary and Martha	247	314 Thomas doubts his friends	275	350 Paul causes a riot	304
252 The journey to Egypt	222	281 The good shepherd	248	315 Fishing on Lake Galilee	275	351 Plots against Paul's life	305
253 Lost in Jerusalem	222	282 The loving father	249	316 Peter's task	276	352 Paul on trial	306
254 John the Baptist	223	283 The man who had everything	250	317 Jesus returns to heaven	277	353 The shipwreck	306
255 Jesus is baptized	224	284 The untouchables	251	318 The new disciple	278	354 Miracles on the island of Malta	308
256 Jesus is tested	224	285 Life after death	252	319 The power of the Holy Spirit	278	355 A prisoner in Rome	309
257 The four fishermen	226	286 Seventy times seven	253	320 The man by the Beautiful Gate	279	356 God's armour	309
258 The best wine of all	226	287 The prayers God hears	254	321 Peter and John in prison	280	357 God's friends	309
259 The good news	228	288 Jesus blesses the children	254	322 Gamaliel's advice	281	358 The runaway slave	310
260 The man on the mat	228	289 The rich young man	255	323 Stephen is killed	282	359 Living like Jesus	310
261 Matthew joins Jesus	230	290 The generous master	256	324 Saul, the enemy	284	360 The end of time	311
262 Living God's way	231	291 Blind Bartimaeus	257	325 An angel sends Philip	284	361 Jesus, the high priest	312
263 Lessons on prayer	231	292 The little tax collector	258	326 Saul, the changed man	285	362 Love one another	312
264 Don't worry	232	293 The end of the world	259	327 A new life	286	363 John's vision	313
265 A story about two houses	233	294 The final judgment	260	328 Escape by night	286	364 The revelation of God	314
266 Jesus and the Roman officer	234	295 The jar of perfume	261	329 Aeneas and Tabitha	287	365 A new heaven and a new earth	314
		296 Jesus goes to Jerusalem	262	330 An angel in Caesarea	288		
		297 A den for thieves and robbers	263	331 The rooftop vision	289		
		298 The greatest commandment	263	332 God's blessing for all people	290		
		299 The greatest gift	264	333 Death and imprisonment	290		
		300 The plot to kill Jesus	264	334 The mission to Cyprus	291		
				335 A brutal attack	292		
				336 The council in Jerusalem	293		



1 IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning there was nothing. It was dark and empty and shapeless.

'Let there be light!' God said. As soon as he had said the words, light came into existence. God saw that the light was good. God divided the light, so that there was day and there was night.

God made the sky and separated it from the waters below.

God brought the waters together into seas and created dry land.

'Let the land produce plants and trees full of seeds and fruits,' God said. Then all varieties of green and leafy vegetation filled the land, from tall redwood trees to trees bearing olives and oranges, acorns and chestnuts. God saw that all he had made was good.

'Let there be lights in the sky for the night and the day,' God said. 'Let them mark times and seasons, days, months and years.' So the golden sun became the light that shone in the day and the silvery moon the light that beamed in the night sky. God also filled the darkness with stars, and saw that all he had made was good.

'Let the waters be filled with living creatures and the skies with every kind of winged bird. Let them multiply and increase in number.' Then every kind of fish and sea creature swam and splashed in the seas and the air above became filled with colour and shape and sound. There were dolphins and sea horses, eagles, owls, robins and wrens, buzzing bees and beautiful butterflies.

'Let there be all sorts of creatures to move on the land,' God said. So there were sheep and goats, elephants and giraffe, lions, tigers and graceful gazelles.

God looked at everything that he had made and saw that it was good.

Then God made man and woman. He put them in charge of his creation, to care for it and cultivate it for food. God loved the people he had made and he saw that everything he had made was very good. Then God rested.

2 THE PERFECT WORLD

God gave Adam and Eve a beautiful garden to live in. It was full of plants and trees with fruit they could eat. The garden was watered by a river that ran through it and Adam and Eve tended the garden and worked in it.

GENESIS 1:1—2:3

*In the beginning
God created the
heavens and the
earth.*

Genesis 1:1



Adam and Eve were good company for each other. They shared the work and they lived happily together. Adam gave names to all the creatures that God had made.

God told them that they could eat anything that grew in the garden except the fruit of one tree in the middle of the garden, that has the power to let you know the difference between right and wrong.

GENESIS 2:4-25

*You may eat fruit
from any tree in the
garden, except the
one that has the
power to let you
know the difference
between right and
wrong.*

Genesis 2:16b-17a

3 RIGHT AND WRONG

One of the creatures in the garden was a snake.

He came to Eve and tempted her.

'Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' he asked.

'God told us we can eat from every tree, except the tree in the middle of the garden,' said Eve. 'If we eat from that tree, we will die.'

'You will not die...' said the snake. 'God does not want you to eat from that tree because if you do, you will know right and wrong just as God does.'

Eve looked at the tree. She saw how lovely its fruit looked and thought about what the snake had said. She took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave it to Adam and he ate some too.

As soon as they had eaten, Adam and Eve knew what they had done. They realized why God had told them not to eat the fruit. Now they had

GENESIS 3:1-7

The woman stared at the fruit. It looked beautiful and tasty. She wanted the wisdom that it would give her, and she ate some of the fruit. Her husband was there with her, so she gave some to him, and he ate it too.

Genesis 3:6



disobeyed God and it was too late to put things right. They felt guilty and ashamed and when they heard God coming in the garden, they found trees to hide among so he would not see them.

4 ADAM AND EVE ARE SENT AWAY

God called out to Adam.

‘Where are you?’

‘I was afraid, so I hid,’ replied Adam.

‘Have you then eaten from the tree in the middle of the garden?’ God asked.

‘It wasn’t me,’ said Adam. ‘The woman gave me the fruit, and I ate it.’

‘What have you done?’ God asked Eve.

GENESIS 3:8-24

Then God put winged creatures at the entrance to the garden and a flaming, flashing sword to guard the way to the life-giving tree.

Genesis 3:24

‘It wasn’t my fault,’ said Eve. ‘The snake tricked me and I ate the fruit.’

God was very sad. He turned to the snake and told him that he would crawl on his belly from that time on. He turned to Eve and told her that she would have pain as she gave birth to her children. He told Adam that thorns and thistles would choke the plants he grew.

Then God banished Adam and Eve from the garden he had given them. They had chosen to disobey him. They now knew the difference between what was right and what was wrong. They would know suffering and death; they could not be God’s friends any more.

5 CAIN AND ABEL

After a time Eve gave birth to a son. They called him Cain. Then Eve had a second child, a son named Abel.

Both boys grew up to be farmers. They knew how much they depended on God to give them sun and rain for the harvests and to help their animals give birth to healthy lambs and kids. Cain planted seeds and grew crops while Abel kept the sheep and goats.

One day, Cain brought some of his crops as a gift to God, to thank him for the harvest. Abel also brought a gift of the first of his newborn lambs.

God saw not only the gift that was brought but the two brothers. He knew that Abel had brought his gift out of faith, because he loved God and knew that all good things came from him. God also knew that Cain had brought his gift because he thought he had to, not because he cared about God. God was pleased with Abel, but he was disappointed with Cain. And Cain knew it.

Cain was jealous.

‘Why are you angry, Cain?’ asked God. ‘Do what is right and you will be accepted. But beware of your bad temper. You are not in control of it and it may destroy you.’

Cain knew that God was right. But he wouldn’t listen. He could think of nothing except having revenge on his brother.

Cain asked Abel to go out into the field with him; he planned to wait for the right moment—and kill him there.

Later God asked Cain where his brother was.

GENESIS 4:1-16

Afterwards the Lord asked Cain, ‘Where is Abel?’ ‘How should I know?’ he answered. ‘Am I supposed to look after my brother?’

Genesis 4:9

‘How should I know?’ lied Cain. ‘Is it my job to look after him?’

‘I warned you about your anger,’ said God. ‘Now your brother’s death is on your conscience. You will know what it is to feel guilt for your wrongdoing.’

But God was good to Adam and Eve. He gave them another son, Seth, because Cain had killed his brother, and then other sons and daughters.

6 NOAH’S ARK

Many years passed and the land became full of people. But few remembered who God was. They did as they pleased. They took what they wanted from others. They spoiled the world that God had made and thought only of themselves. God knew that the world had become an evil place, full of greed, hatred and violence. He decided to wash it clean and start all over again.

There was one man who remembered God. His name was Noah. Noah had a wife and three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth.

‘Noah!’ God said one day. ‘I am going to end all the evil there is in the world. I want you to build an ark—a huge boat that will float on the flood waters that I will send to wash the earth clean. I will tell you exactly how to build it so that you and your family and two of every kind of creature will be safe inside the ark.’

God told Noah how to build the ark. He told him how long it was to be,

GENESIS 6

‘Bring into the boat with you a male and a female of every kind of animal and bird, as well as a male and a female of every reptile.’

Genesis 6:19



how many decks it should have, and where to put the door. God told Noah to coat the ark with tar to keep the water out, and to fill it with supplies of food.

Noah set about building the ark. He began to make the huge boat miles from any sea. It took him many years of his life, and the people around him watched and thought he was mad.

7 THE GREAT FLOOD

The ark was ready.

God told Noah to collect two of every kind of living creature, seven pairs of every kind of bird, and seven pairs of every animal that would be used for sacrifice. The animals came to Noah as if they too knew what God had planned, and Noah took them all on board the ark. Then God shut the door.

Outside the rain began to fall. The rain fell steadily until the streams and rivers were full and burst their banks; the rain fell until underground springs broke through the earth; the rain fell until no dry land could be seen anywhere around.

Everything that had lived upon the earth was destroyed by the flood. But the ark that God had told Noah to build floated on the waters. God kept Noah, his family and all the animals safe inside the ark.

GENESIS 7—8

Noah was six hundred years old when the water under the earth started gushing out everywhere. The sky opened like windows, and rain poured down for forty days and nights.

Genesis 7:11-12a

8 THE RAINBOW

Inside the ark, Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives worked to care for the animals. Days passed. Weeks passed, and still the rain fell down.

Then one day it stopped. The ark floated gently.

Slowly, very slowly, the waters began to go down. The ark rested on the Ararat mountains. More weeks passed and the tops of the mountains became visible.

Then Noah took hold of a raven and set it free in the air. The bird stretched its wings and flew, but there was nowhere for it to land. It flew back and forth until there was food for it to find on the earth.