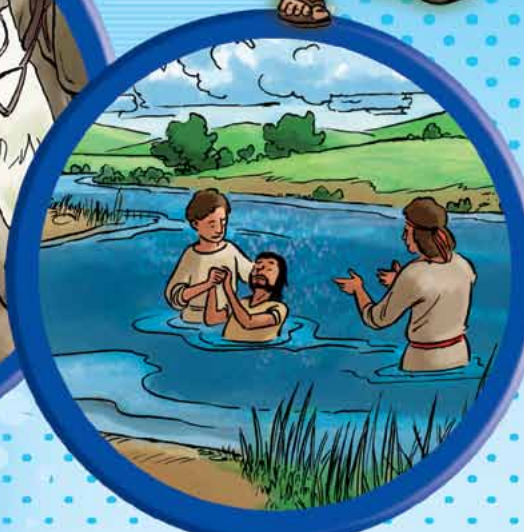


To:

From:

Date:



Stephen M. Miller

Who's
Who & Where's
Where
in the
Bible
for Kids



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Hi there.

I'm **Stephen M. Miller**. My friends and family call me Steve. My children call me Dad. And don't tell anyone, but my Mom still calls me Grasshopper once in a while. That's because I was a skinny kid.

I've written this book for you. I've tried to write it in the way I talked to my kids when they were your age. In fact, I kept pictures of them on my desk as I wrote. Not pictures of how they look now, grown up. But pictures of how they looked back in the days when I could outrun them.

My writing isn't fancy. It's not going to sound like a teacher giving you a lecture. It's going to sound like a friend talking. At least that's what I hope.

You'll see lots of pictures in this book. That's because I remember how I loved looking at pictures in my parents' Bible. Those pictures helped me understand Bible stories better.



So I've given you enough pictures to fill your bedroom wall. But don't go gluing them up there without permission. That would get us both in trouble.

This book is about the 99 most famous people and places in the Bible. Seventy-three

people. Twenty-six places.

I had a blast writing it for you. So I hope you have fun reading it. I was thinking about you and praying for you as I wrote the words.

It took me six months to write this book. After all that time, I feel like I know you. So call me Steve. And feel free to visit me at my Web page: StephenMillerBooks.com.

If you find any mistakes in this book—we all make mistakes—let me know. There's a spot on my Web page to send me a note. I'll get the mistakes fixed.

May God smile on you as you read this book.

And may he smile on all of us as we read his book, the Bible.



Stephen M. Miller

Aaron

How to say it: AIR un

Find him in the Bible: Exodus 4:14



Moses had a big brother.

His name was Aaron. When he was 83 years old, Aaron went on a long walk into the desert to find his brother.

Moses and Aaron grew up in Egypt, beside the Nile River. Aaron and Moses were Jews. And Egypt was not a good place for them because Jews were slaves there.

The mean king forced Jews to make mud bricks and build cities.

Moses ran away from Egypt to another country and became a shepherd. But God wanted Moses to free the Jews. And God wanted Aaron to help him.

After Aaron found his brother, they went back to Egypt and gave the king a message from God: "Let my people go."

The king said nobody could tell him what to do. Not even God. The king said he was the boss of Egypt and he would keep the Jews as his slaves.

“If you don’t let them go,” Aaron warned, “God will make terrible things happen to your people.”

Just as Aaron promised, bad things started to happen. The Nile River turned blood red and the fish died. Bugs and frogs covered the land and ate the food. Egyptian people and their animals got sick.

Finally, the king said the Jews could go. So they all left for the country God promised them.

On the long walk, God made Moses the people’s leader. And he made Aaron their priest. Aaron’s job was to be the minister.

Aaron never got to see the Promised Land. The people disobeyed God so much that God ordered them to stay in the desert 40 years. Aaron stayed with them all that time, until he was 123 years old. When Aaron died, his oldest son became the next priest.

This started a long tradition. For more than 1,000 years, all the priests in Israel were relatives of Aaron.

Long ago and far away

Aaron lived in Egypt about 3,400 years ago.

Why he’s famous

He was the big brother of Moses, and Israel’s first priest.



Abraham

How to say it: A bruh ham

What it means: father of many

Find him in the Bible: Genesis 17:5



Abraham was an old man with no kids. But God promised him a big family—and his own country to live in.

Abraham had grown up in the busy city of Ur. It was the New York City of its day, built beside the Euphrates River in what is now Iraq. People and boats were always coming and going.

Abraham's father, Terah (TAIR uh), decided to leave Ur. The Bible doesn't say why. Maybe he suspected that invaders would soon destroy the city—because that is what happened. Terah and his family moved 600 miles upriver to the city of Haran. That's where Terah died years later.

By then, Abraham was 75 years old. He was married, but he had no children.

That's why the rest of his story is so remarkable. God made Abraham a promise. "Leave your country," God said. "Go to the land that I will show you. I will cause you to become the father of a great nation" (Genesis 12:1–2).

Abraham took his wife, Sarah, and left for the country of Canaan (K nun), which is now called Israel. Abraham had large flocks of sheep, herds of other animals, and many servants. They all went with him. So did his nephew, Lot.

When Abraham reached Israel, God told him to look around. "Everything you see will belong to your children and grandchildren and all your family that comes later." But ten years passed and Abraham still had no children. He was about 85. And Sarah was 76.

Sarah thought it would be impossible for her to have a son. Today if a woman can't have a baby, doctors can help her. But in

ancient times, people didn't know how to do this. Instead, the man would have children with a substitute wife. Sarah told Abraham to use her servant, Hagar (HAY gar), as a substitute. Hagar delivered a son, Ishmael (ISH mail).

But God said Ishmael wasn't the son he had promised to Abraham.

About 15 years later, God came to Abraham. God promised that Sarah would give birth to Abraham's son. Sarah laughed when she heard that. After all, she was 90 years old. And Abraham was 99.

God got the last laugh. Sarah really would have a baby.

God sealed his promise by changing the couple's names. Their names had been Abram and Sarai. But God changed their names to Abraham and Sarah. Kings sometimes did that to remind people who was boss. Maybe this was God's way of reminding Abraham and Sarah that he was powerful enough to keep his promise.

God also wanted to make sure that all the future relatives of Abraham would remember this promise. He told Abraham to circumcise every baby boy born into his family. Today doctors still circumcise many baby boys. The doctor clips off a little extra skin from the penis. It makes it easier to keep that part of the body clean. Jews have been doing this for about 4,000 years.

Sarah gave birth to a son. She named him Isaac. That's the Hebrew word for laughter. It was the perfect name for him. Isaac brought laughter and joy to this old couple.

“Kill Isaac”

Years later, God asked Abraham to do something that seems cruel.

“Sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering,” God said. People back then sometimes gave God a burnt offering to ask forgiveness for sin. These offerings were animals. But for this offering, God asked Abraham to kill his son Isaac and burn him in a fire.

Abraham must have hated the thought of doing this. But he had learned to trust God. Maybe he thought God would bring Isaac back to life.

Abraham and his son traveled to a mountain. Legends say the Jews later built their temple in this same place—on a hilltop in Jerusalem.

Abraham built an altar there. It was a simple pile of stones with wood on top to burn the sacrifice. Then he tied Isaac and laid him on top of the wood. Abraham raised his knife high in the air, preparing to kill his son.

“Abraham!” an angel shouted from the sky. “Lay down the knife” (Genesis 22:11–12).

Bible experts wonder why God asked Abraham to kill his own son and then stopped him at the last second.

Some people say maybe this was a test to see how much Abraham loved God. But God knows everything. He already knew how much Abraham loved him.

Maybe it was to show us how hard it would be for God to send his Son Jesus to die



Abraham

for our sins. What Abraham was willing to do—sacrifice his son—God did.

Sarah died at the age of 127, when Isaac was 37. Abraham lived almost 40 years longer, to the age of 175. He was buried with Sarah in a cave near the city of Hebron. Today a large mosque—a Muslim worship center—sits on top of the cave. Muslims, like Jews and Christians, have great respect for Abraham.

God had promised that both of Abraham's sons would produce great nations. The Bible teaches that Isaac's family became the Jews. And Muslim history says that Ishmael's family became the Arabs.



Long ago and far away

Abraham grew up about 4,100 years ago in Iraq.

Why he's famous

He is the father of the Jewish people.

Absalom

How to say it: AB suh lum

What it means: father is peace

Find him in the Bible: 2 Samuel 3:3



Absalom tried to kill his own father, King David.

When Absalom was a little boy, he probably had lots of fun and loved his father very much. After all, Absalom was a prince in Israel. He lived in a beautiful palace.

But his family started having problems because King David had lots of wives. David treated some of his wives and children better than he treated others. It wasn't fair.

David especially loved his oldest son, Amnon (AM nahn). One day Amnon made his little brother Absalom very mad. Both brothers had the same father, David. But they had different mothers.

Amnon tricked Absalom's sister into coming to his house. Then he hurt her very badly.

David didn't even punish Amnon for this.

"That's not fair," Absalom said.

So he killed Amnon. Then he ran away to live with his grandparents in another country.

Three years later, David let Absalom come home. But David didn't talk to him for two more years. David was still angry with him for killing his favorite son.

During those two years, Absalom got madder and madder at his father. He made a plan. He decided to talk the people in the country into loving him and hating David.

Many people liked Absalom because he was handsome. They liked him even more when he started saying nice things to them. He also complained about how David was running the country. This made many people hate their king.

Absalom's plan worked. So he built an army and started a war against his father. But Absalom's army lost the fight. As Absalom tried to run away, he rode his donkey under a tree. Absalom's long hair got stuck in the branches. This yanked him off the donkey. Absalom hung from the branches. His feet couldn't touch the ground.

Absalom couldn't do anything. He hoped that his soldiers would save him. But David's soldiers got there first.

They stabbed him with spears and killed him.

David cried when he heard the news. "Oh, my son, my son. I wish I had died instead of you."



Long ago and far away

Absalom lived in Israel 3,000 years ago.

Why he's famous

He started a war against his father, King David.

Adam

How to say it: **ADD** um

What it means: **human**

Find him in the Bible: **Genesis 2:19**



God gave humans a job.

When God made the universe and everything in it, he saved the best for last. He made humans. First, he created Adam. Then came Eve. And then he gave them a job.

“You’re in charge of everything I made,” God said. “Fish, birds, wild animals—take good care of everything.”

The Bible doesn’t say much about how God created human beings. But it does say that he made people to be like him.

That probably doesn’t mean we look like God. After all, we’re physical and God is a spirit. It probably means that the spirit inside each of us is a lot like God’s spirit. We have the ability to think, create, love, and tell the difference between right and wrong.

Adam and Eve lived in a

paradise called the Garden of Eden. They had only one rule to obey. God allowed them to eat any of the plants in the garden except one. “Don’t eat fruit from the tree in the center of the garden,” God warned. “If you do, you will die.”

The devil talked Eve into eating that fruit anyway. “It’ll make you as smart as God,” he lied. Eve gave some fruit to Adam, and he ate it, too.

That was the first sin—and it changed the world. God ordered Adam and Eve out of the garden. In their new home, Adam had to work hard to grow food to eat. Eve would have children, and giving birth would be bloody and painful. But something even worse happened because of sin. Death came into the world.

A lot of Bible experts say God planned for humans to live forever—a bit like heaven on earth. But sin somehow changed human bodies. People back then lived a long time, according to the Bible. Adam lived for 930 years. But eventually the people died. Just as God said would happen if they ate the forbidden fruit.

Thousands of years later, people writing in the Bible compared Adam to Jesus. They said the two men were opposites. Adam brought sin and death into the world. But Jesus brought forgiveness and eternal life.



Long ago and far away

God created Adam long before anyone started writing 6,000 years ago.

Why he’s famous

He was the first human.

How Long Did It Take God to Make the Universe?

- Six days, the Bible says. He rested on the seventh.
- Some Bible experts say the Bible is talking about 24-hour days.
 - Others say it may not be six days as we measure time today.

We use the sun and moon to measure our days. The sun sets at the end of each day. And the moon rises each night. But God didn't even make the sun and moon until "the fourth day."

- For this reason, many Bible experts say it's a mystery how long God took. They say the Bible may have used the word "day" as a symbol for something humans can't understand—how God measures time. If they're right, each "day" of Creation could have been an instant, or 24 hours, or billions of years.



Other Stories of Humans Made from Dirt

God made the first human out of the dust of the ground. That's what the Bible says.

There are a lot of ancient stories about how the world started. Many of these agree with the Bible—they say that people were made from dirt.

One story comes from Iraq. Many people say humans first started building villages there. This story says that Enki, the god of water, taught other gods how to make humans from clay.

Another story says a goddess “pinched off a piece of clay and threw it into a field.” The clay became a soldier.



But the Bible says those other stories are wrong—God made everything, including people.

Baal

How to say it: BAY ul

What it means: boss (lord, master)

Find him in the Bible: Numbers 25:3

Was this the boss of rain and lightning?

Many people thought so. When farmers wanted rain, some of them prayed to Baal. They thought he was a god.

“Please send us rain,” they asked him. “We need water so our plants will grow and our sheep can drink.”

Some people even thought Baal could give children. They thought Baal could give them more baby animals, too—lambs and calves. So they prayed for these.

But God had a group of people—the Jews—who knew Baal was just a pretend god, like an imaginary person.

God warned the Jews not to let people trick them into believing that Baal was real. God gave the Jews 10 important rules to obey: the Ten Commandments. The first and most important rule was this: “Don’t worship any other gods.”

Many of the Jews obeyed this law. But sometimes there wasn’t enough rain for the Jews. And their plants started to die. They got tired of waiting for God to answer their prayers. So they prayed to Baal. They thought that maybe God was just the god of war, since he helped them win battles. And maybe Baal really was the god in charge of rain.

Some Jews even killed their children for Baal. They thought they were doing something good—giving Baal a gift. But what they were doing was wrong. They were in big trouble with God.