

THE ILLUSTRATED  
CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S

---

# BIBLE

*Bible Stories retold by Anne de Graaf • Illustrations by José Pérez Montero*

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## Isaac Is Born

*Genesis 21:1-6*

God had promised Sarah and Abraham a child, and Sarah should not have worried. When the three strangers visited Sarah and Abraham, the Lord promised they would have a baby within a year.

Sure enough, in less than a year the impossible happened. Old Sarah, far too old to have children, gave birth to a son. Abraham was a hundred years old when Sarah's baby was born. He and Sarah were so happy, so thankful to God for finally answering their prayers, they cried for joy.

Every time Abraham saw the boy, he smiled. And Sarah smiled all the time. The child made them so happy, they would often laugh together. So they called the baby Isaac, which meant "He Laughs." The boy was a good reason to laugh and be happy.

## Abraham and Isaac

*Genesis 22:1-2*

"Abraham!" The Voice of God called. "Take your son, your only son Isaac. I know how much you love him, and this is why I ask you to do this difficult thing. I want you to give Isaac back to Me."



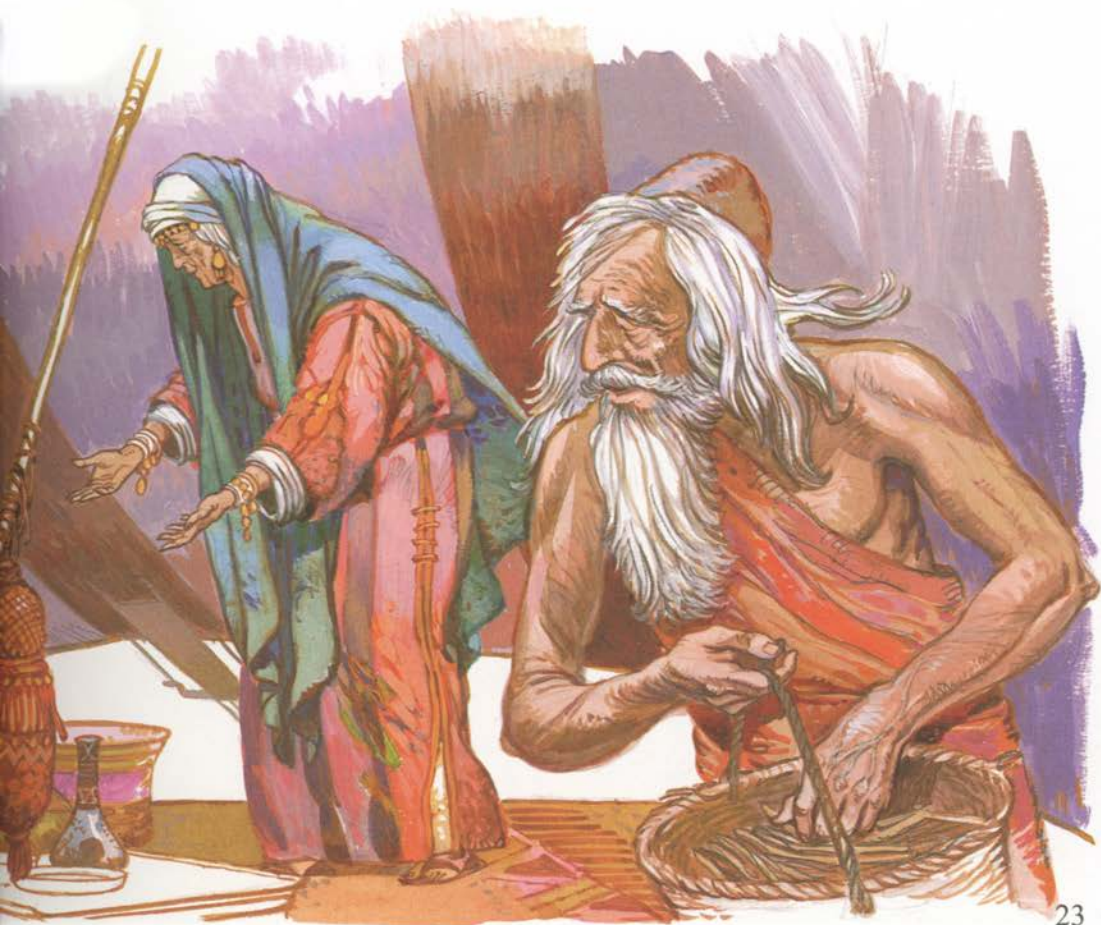


Abraham said nothing. The God he knew would never want him to kill his own son. Abraham knew that. God had promised that Isaac would have many children. How could that happen if Isaac were dead?

It was like holding a friend's hand when you cannot see where you are going. The friend has said you are headed for a deep hole and you may fall into it. You hold onto the friend's

hand anyway because it is the only guidance you can trust. Your friend will not let you down. Step by step, you follow him.

Abraham knew he could choose not to trust God. He could say no, run in fear and try and hide. But who can hide from God? Or he could choose to trust. Perhaps there was more to God's plan than what first seemed to be there.



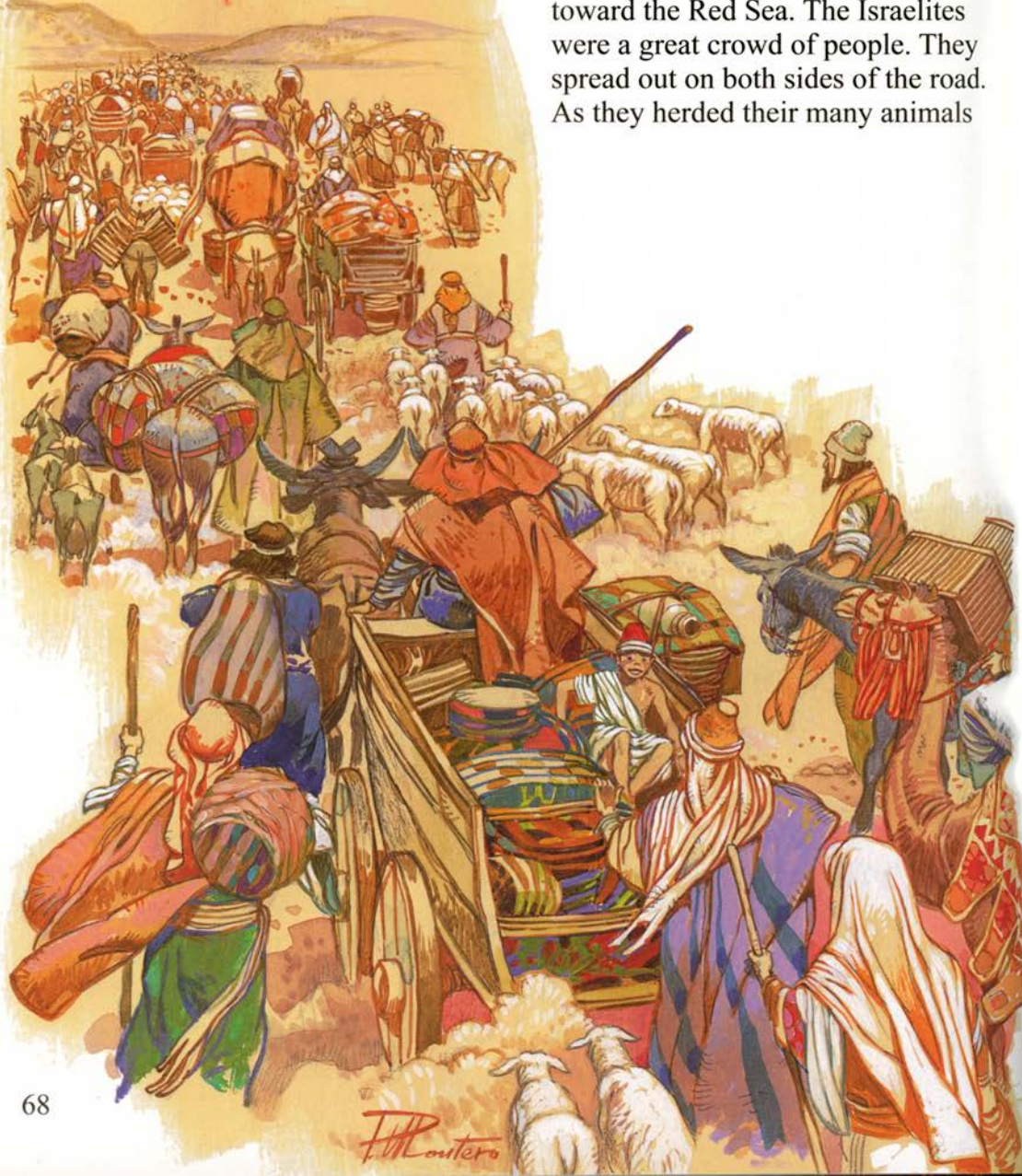


## God Leads the Way

*Exodus 13:17—14:13*

All the people of Israel gathered in one place. God showed the way in the daytime by a pillar of cloud. They left together and followed it. In the nighttime it became a pillar of fire to give them light. This way the people always knew which way to go.

God led them along the desert road, toward the Red Sea. The Israelites were a great crowd of people. They spread out on both sides of the road. As they herded their many animals





before them, dust rose into a big cloud.

Back in Egypt, though, Pharaoh had changed his mind. "Who will do all the building and make all the bricks?" he asked himself.

Then Pharaoh took six hundred of his best chariots and the best men in his army. They charged after the people of Israel.

"Make camp on the shores of the Red Sea," God told Moses. "Pharaoh will think he has you trapped between the water and his army. But this will be another chance for Me to do a mighty work. The Egyptians will know that I am God."

The people of Israel set up camp where Moses told them. But something was wrong. Those on the outskirts of the camp could feel the ground shaking. They looked up and saw a cloud of dust coming closer. A cry went up, Pharaoh was hunting them down! There they were, with nowhere to go but into the water. "We're trapped!" they cried out.

They yelled at Moses, "What have you done to us? You brought us out of Egypt just so we could be killed in the desert? We would rather have stayed as slaves! At least then we would still be alive!"

Moses told them, "No, we're not trapped. God will fight for you. All you have to do is be still. Trust Him."

The people did not believe Moses. They panicked. They ran from one end of the camp to the other. They paced the shore like caged animals. Some of the men tried to come up with plans to get all the people across the water. The children started yelling and running around. The babies cried. The women watched the chariots coming closer and closer. In no time at all Pharaoh and his six hundred chariots would be right on top of them!





## The Star That Led to the Baby's Cradle

*Matthew 2:1-10*

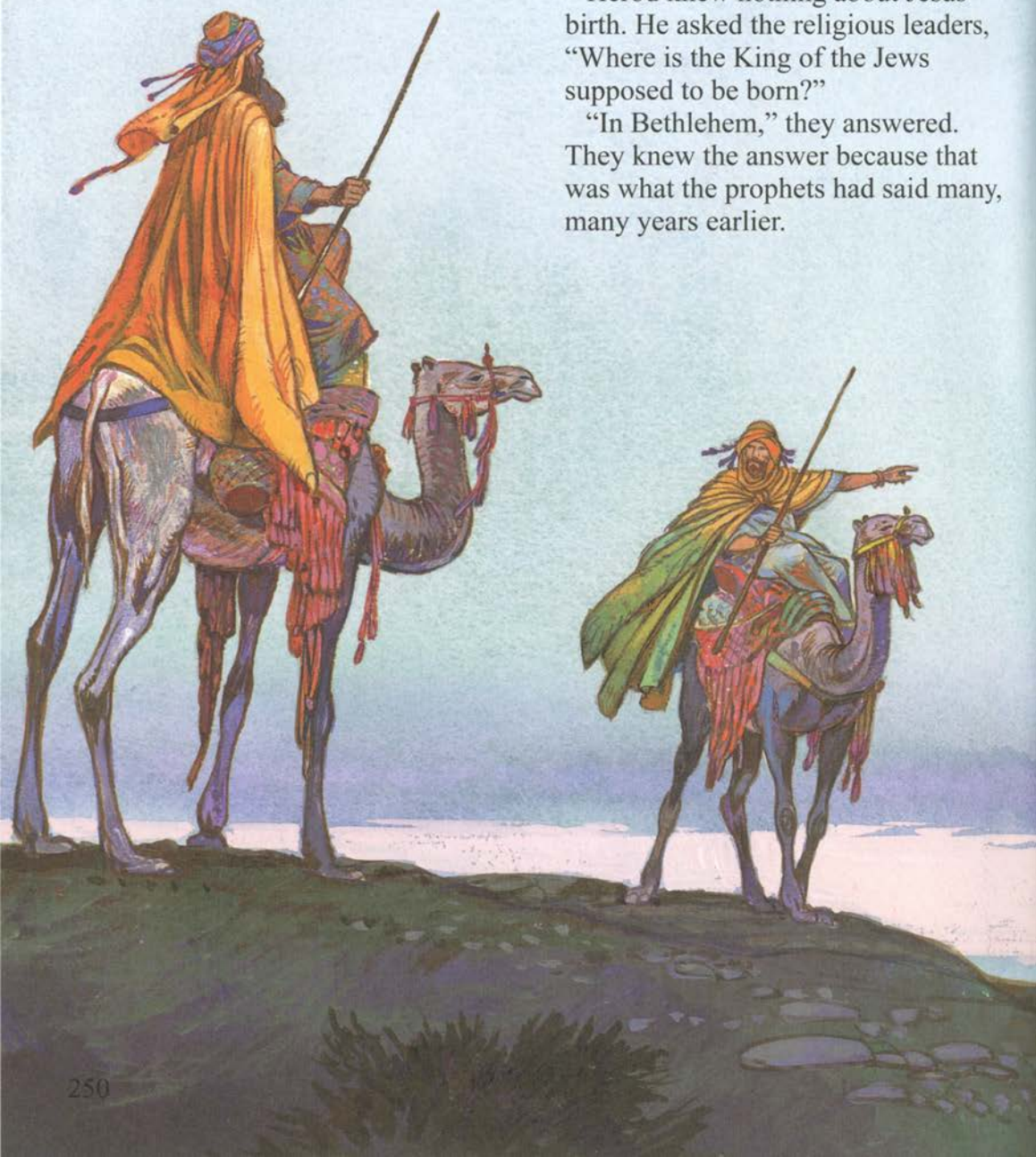
A while later, Mary and Joseph had some very important visitors. They were wise men from faraway lands

in the east. They had seen the bright star in the night skies. They believed something great had happened. So they traveled a long distance. They went to King Herod in Jerusalem.

"We believe a King of the Jews has been born. We saw His star in the east. We have come to worship Him," they said to Herod.

Herod knew nothing about Jesus' birth. He asked the religious leaders, "Where is the King of the Jews supposed to be born?"

"In Bethlehem," they answered. They knew the answer because that was what the prophets had said many, many years earlier.





"When did the star appear?" Herod asked the visitors. Herod wanted to find out as much as possible about this new king. He did not want anyone taking away his throne. Herod was very cruel and thought of a plan. He ordered the wise men, "Go and honor Him. When you have found Him, come tell me. I want to do the same."

The wise men went to Bethlehem. They followed the star until it stopped. When they went into the house, they saw Baby Jesus in Mary's arms. They smiled and laughed. Their long journey had been worth it. They had found the King!

## Gifts for a King

*Matthew 2:11-12*

The wise men unloaded their camels. They had brought rare and beautiful gifts to the little family. Mary and Joseph's eyes grew round. "Why, these are gifts fit for a king," Mary

whispered to Joseph. He nodded.

One of the wise men bowed before her. "We've traveled a long way. The star showed us where to go. Here is gold for a great King."

The second wise man came up to Mary. "It doesn't happen often that such a large star suddenly appears. That baby will be the greatest of all men." He laid a jar of myrrh at Mary's feet. Myrrh is very special perfume, which could only be worn by very important men.

The third wise man smiled at Mary and Joseph. "This is incense for burning. It will make the air sweet. Incense is pleasing to God."

Mary and Joseph thanked the men. They all bowed their heads in prayer. They thanked God for bringing Jesus into the world.

The night before the visitors were due to go back home, they had a strange dream. In the dream God warned them not to go back and see King Herod. The wise men believed the dream. They went home a different way.



## Mary Magdalene Sees Jesus

*Mark 16:9–11; Luke 24:12; John 20:3–18*

Mary Magdalene ran back to tell Peter and the rest of Jesus' followers the good news. He and John went back with her to the tomb. It was empty, just as she had said.

Mary Magdalene had watched as they went inside. She had seen them enter the tomb with looks of fear on their faces. And she had seen them come out with looks of excitement and confusion.

When the men went home to wait, she stayed by the tomb. She stood outside and cried. She felt so afraid. Was the message from the angel for real? She thought that someone might have stolen the body. Mary Magdalene did not at all understand what was happening.

Jesus had died. But now His body was gone from the tomb. What did it all mean?

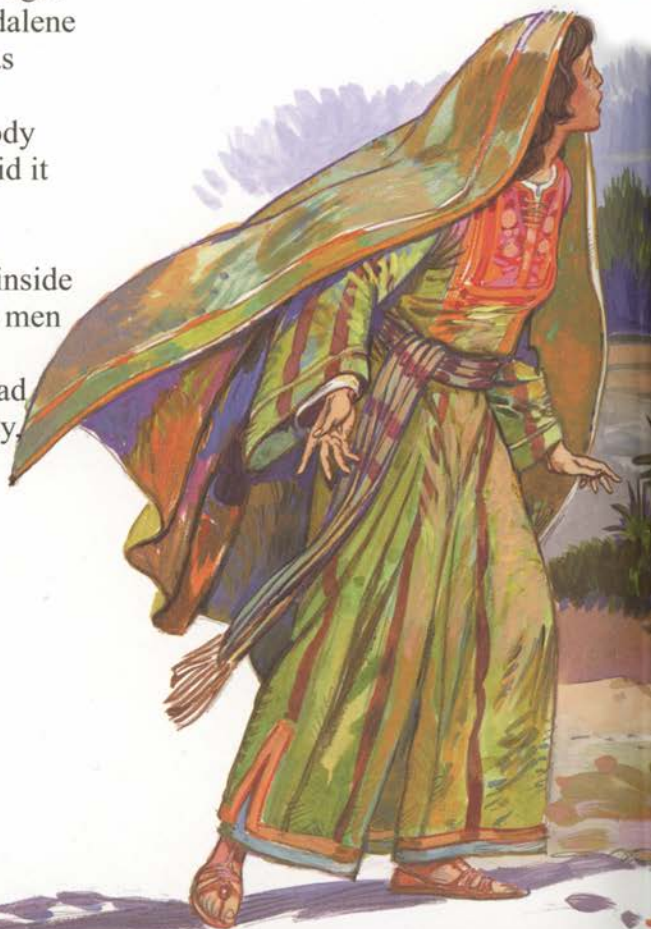
As she cried, Mary Magdalene happened to bend over and look inside the tomb. Suddenly, she saw two men dressed in shining white clothes sitting where the body of Jesus had been! They said to her, "Dear lady, why are you crying?"

She said, "I'm crying because they've taken away my Lord. I don't know where they've put Him."

Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing behind her in the garden. But she did not know it was Jesus. He was somehow different. He said to her, "Dear woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Mary Magdalene thought the man standing in front of her was the gardener. She said, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have put the body. I will take Him away."

In that soft but strong voice of His,





Jesus said to her, "Mary!" At the sound of her name she quickly turned around. Then Mary saw who He was. Only Jesus could say her name like that.

"Oh Teacher!" she cried and fell at His feet.

Jesus said to her, "Don't touch Me yet. I still need to go up to the Father. Instead, go to My brothers. Tell them I said, 'I am going back to My Father and your Father, My God and your God.'"

Mary ran back to the disciples. This

news she shared with them was even more exciting than what she had told them before. "I've seen the Lord!" She told them all that He had said.

