

Teaching Tobí

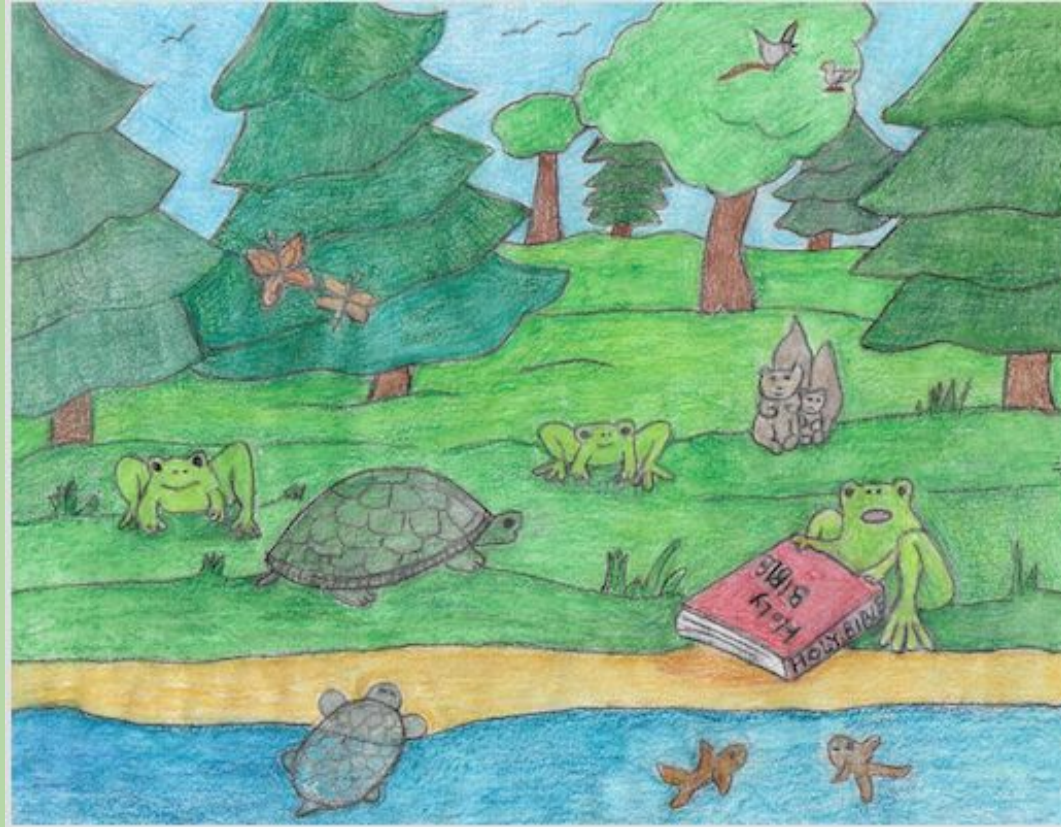


Written and illustrated by Debra Johnson

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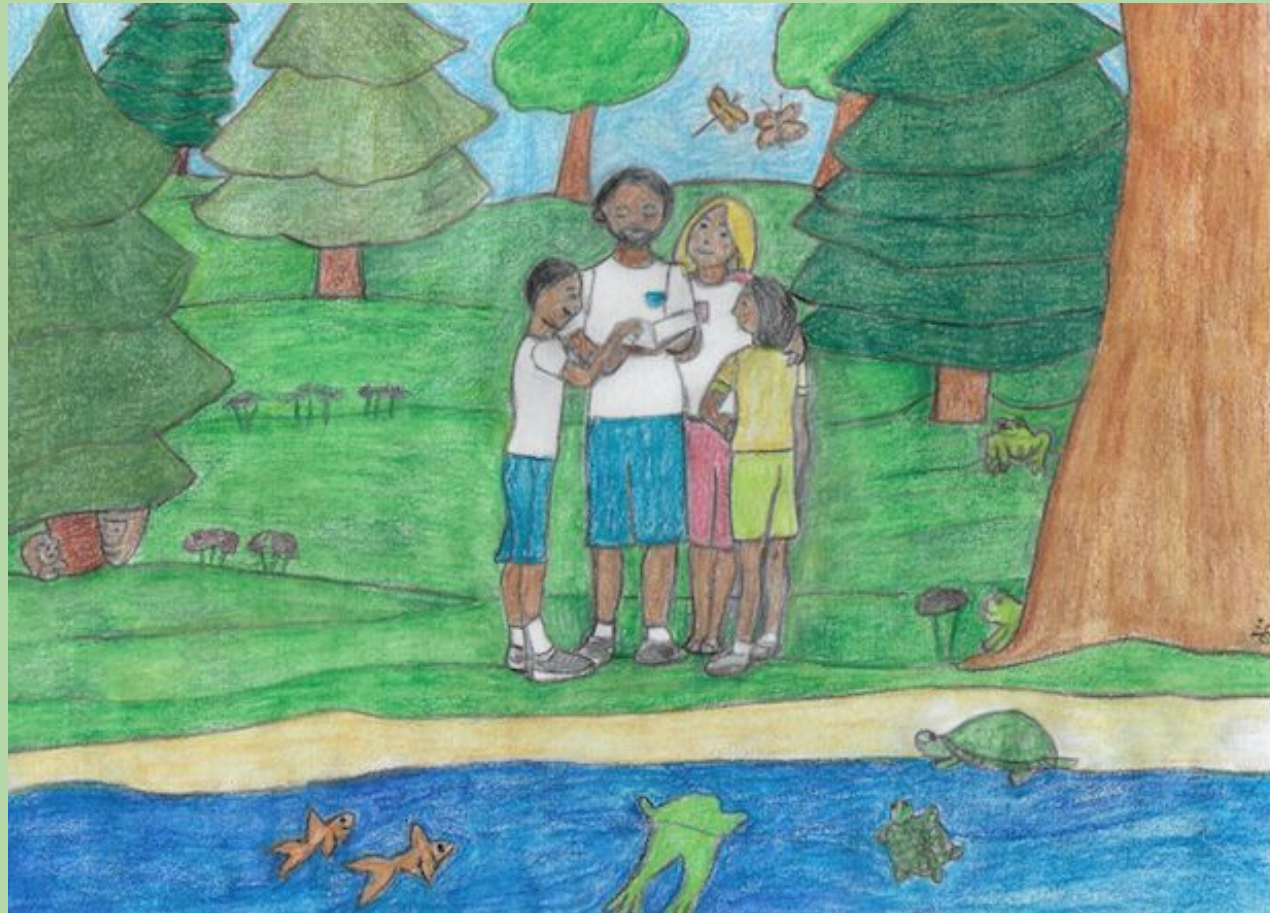
Tobi the frog was trying to hold a very large Bible and Herman the turtle was sitting nearby. Herman's cousin Fred and the fish twins, Merlin and Marlin swam over. Tess the squirrel popped up with one of her two babies, her son, Buford. Tess's other baby Bonnie, was asleep in a nearby tree. Tobi asked Herman, "Are all the words in this Bible true?" Herman replied, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.." which is found in the second book of Timothy, chapter 3, verse 16. There are 66 books in the Bible, Tobi."



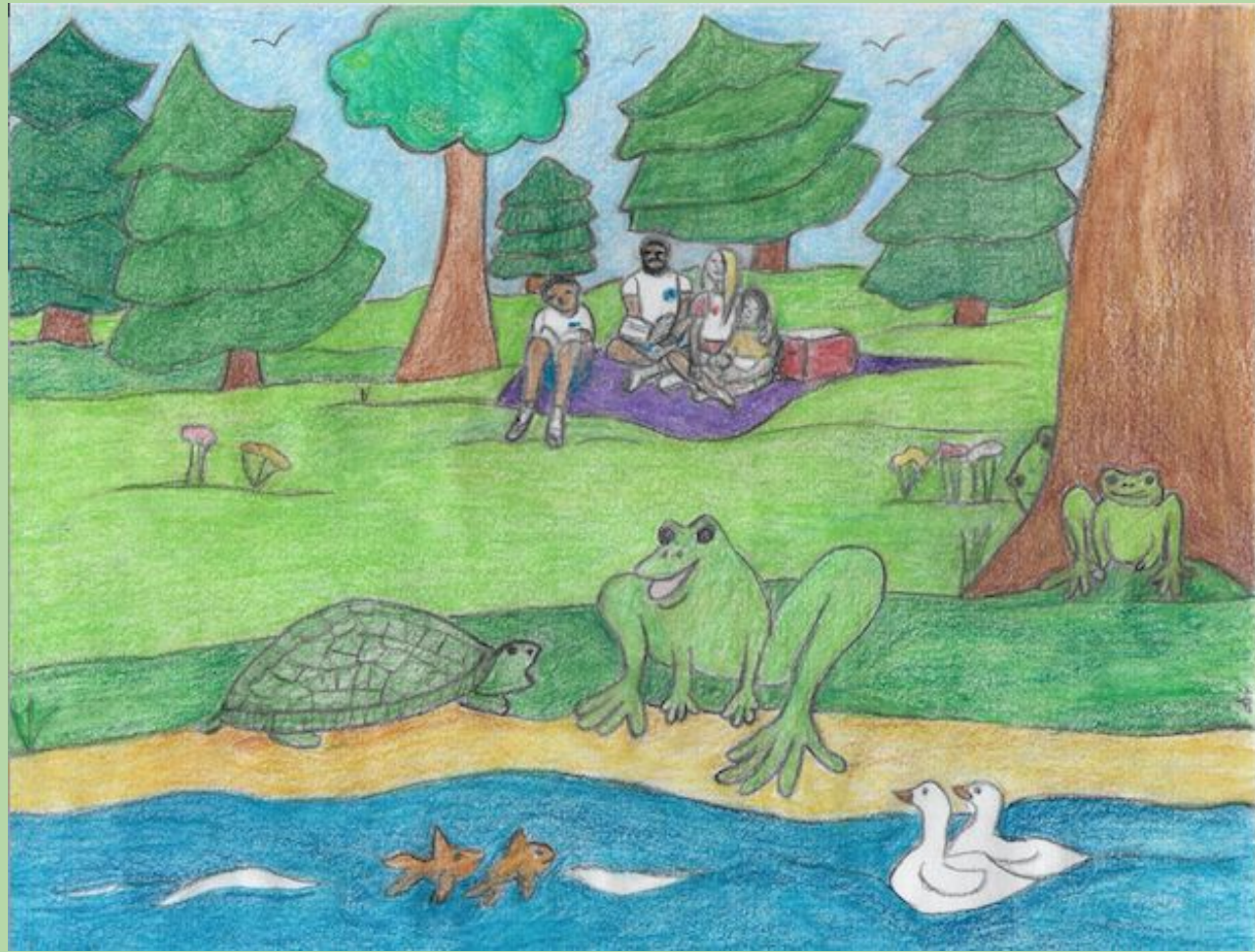
Tess said excitedly, “Herman, I can’t seem to find my husband Leo! Maybe after we hear more about this Bible, you guys could help me find him!” Everyone moved closer to hear Herman including a couple of ducks. Herman announced “Don’t worry about Leo, Tess. Let’s find out some more from the Bible. We’ll wait here for awhile. The humans show up to read from and talk about the Bible. There is so much to learn! How God created everything, not only humans but animals, too. In the book of Genesis 1:25, “God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.”



A human family suddenly appeared and walked toward the pond. The mom was pointing at the Bible on the ground. The turtles, squirrels, frogs, and fish were so surprised. Bella and Dragoon flew closer. The human family was looking at the Bible. The mom, Melody, said to her husband, Daryl, the dad, “We left my Bible behind when we were in a hurry to leave yesterday.” Their daughter, Samantha, excitedly said, “I knew it! I knew we left it here!” Danny, Samantha’s brother, replied, “Don’t act so smart, Samantha!” “I’m just so glad it’s still here,” Melody sighed.



Daryl picked up Melody's Bible and looked it over as Danny turned the pages. Melody and Samantha watched. Tess and Buford ran to a nearby pine tree. Tobi and Fred got into the pond with the fish twins. Herman stayed by the shore. Tabitha hopped a safe distance away and Tanner hid behind the oak tree. Bella and Dragoon flew towards the hill. Daryl said "We should set up our picnic, have lunch and continue our Bible study from yesterday. Come on, let's go back to the car and get our stuff."



The human family left, but quickly returned. They brought a big purple blanket and placed it on the ground. They also brought their Bibles and a big red cooler filled with sandwiches and beverages. Then they sat down on the blanket. Tobi asked Herman “What’s in that big red box?” Herman laughed and told Tobi, “It’s where they keep their food.” Herman then said they could listen as the family read from the Bible and learn from God’s word. Tess and Buford had run away in all the excitement. Tabitha and Tanner stayed with the fish twins and ducks. Merlin, one of the fish twins said “Oh, I hope Tess and Buford return so they can hear from the Bible, too”.



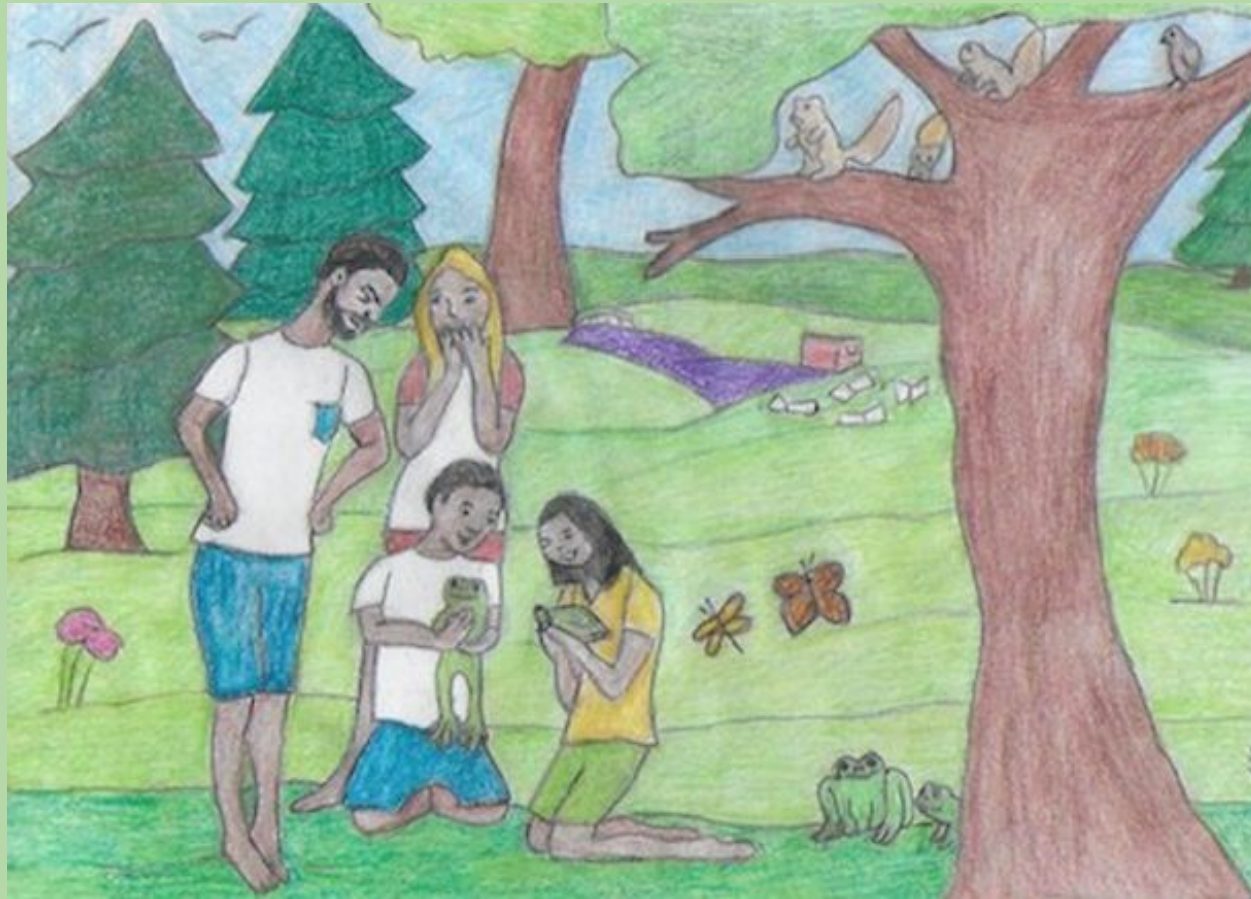
The human family sat down, opened the red “food box” and started eating. Tess had returned and exclaimed “Looks like they got some food, I’m going to get something to eat!” Tanner hopped closer to the family. Herman said “Wait, Tess, the Bible says in John 6:35 “And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst.”” Tess looked confused but Tobi said to Herman “You’ll have to explain that to Tess later.”



Tess asked Tobi and Herman a lot of questions, like “Who is this Jesus? And how can He give me food? Why can’t I just eat food from the humans? What’s wrong with that? Look guys, you will have to tell me about Jesus later, right now, I’m going to go over to that human family to get some food. It looks like they’re giving some to my baby Buford.”



The human family gave Tess some bread pieces from the sandwiches they were eating. Then she ran over to where Herman, Tobi, Tanner, and Tabitha were waiting. Buford sat nearby and munched on his bread pieces, too. Then the human family started singing “Jesus Loves Me” very loudly. “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong, they are weak but He is Strong, Yes, Jesus Loves me.” Tess whispered, “I want to know more about this Jesus who loves me.”



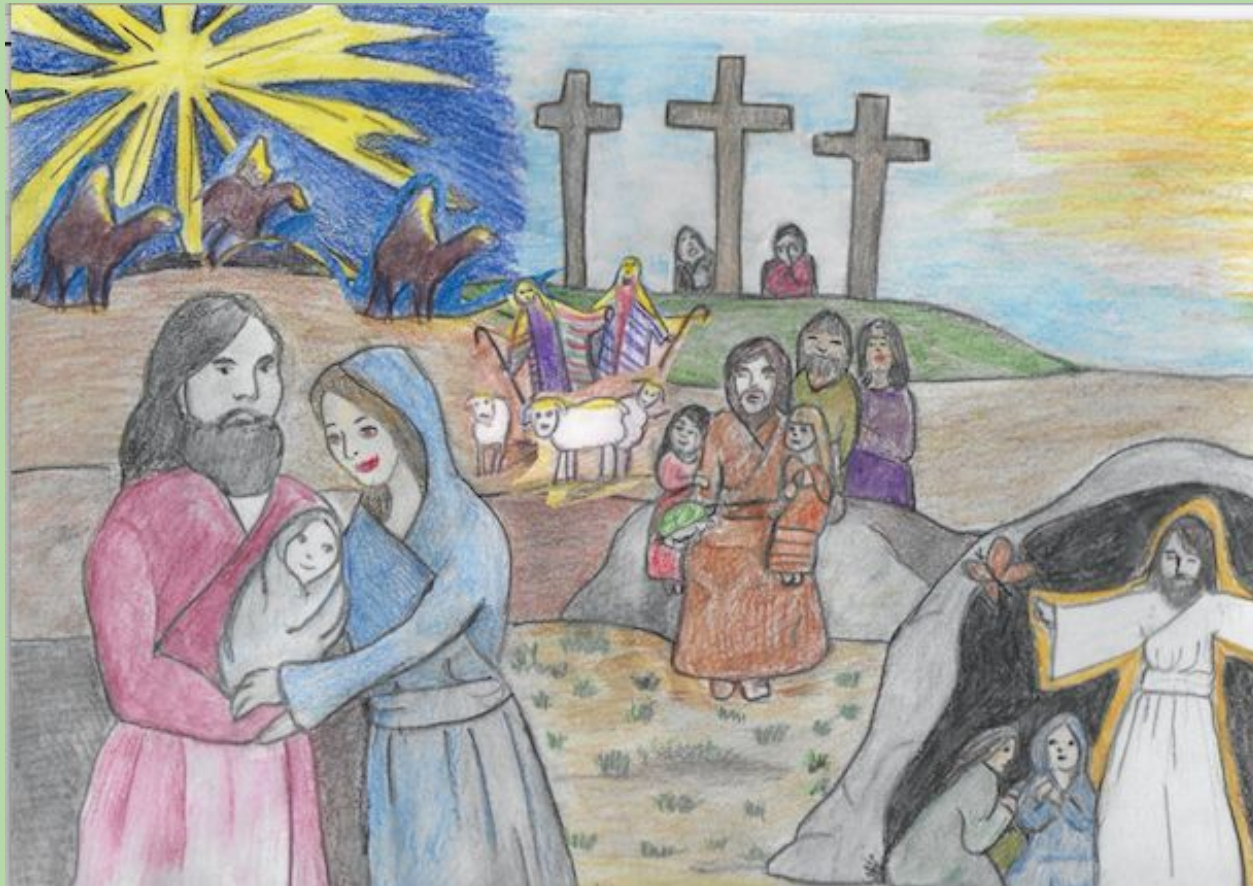
Danny and Samantha saw Tobi and Herman, got up, ran over and picked them up. Tess and Buford climbed on a tree to where Bonnie was sitting wide awake. Herman told Tobi “Don’t be afraid, God will protect you. It says in the Bible in Psalm 46:10 “Be still and know that I am God!” Tobi sighed, “I know, this happened to me before.” Daryl said, “The book of Job 12: 7-10, says. “But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? In His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.”



Samantha agreed, “We can learn so much from the animals! They get along so well and follow God’s laws, it’s amazing!” Samantha and Danny put Herman and Tobi back on the ground. They went back to the tree where Tanner, Tabitha and Tess were waiting anxiously. Bella and Dragoon flew over to see what all the excitement was about. Then the human family walked back to their purple blanket and sat down. Daryl the dad asked “So what did you think of some of God’s wonderful creatures?” Danny answered, “They certainly are unique.” Samantha laughed and said, “God created some of them to be able to swim in the water or crawl on the land.”



The human family started reading from their Bibles. Tess, her babies, Tobi and Herman went over to some berry bushes with birds sitting on them. Tanner and Tabitha listened to the family. Bella and Dragoon flew over as Tess said, "Those humans aren't so bad, at least they feed us. They did let you go, Herman and Tobi." Herman smiled and said, "I believed God would watch over us. Now let's sit quietly and listen to what the human family can teach us from the Bible."



Daryl started reading Matthew 2: 2-3 , “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” The family then talked awhile about Jesus’s birth, life, death and resurrection. Danny read Matthew 19:14, “ But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Melody read from Mark 16:9 , “Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene,...”



The little group of creatures listened intently to all that the human family had read and said about Jesus. Herman said quietly, “What did you guys learn today?” Tess talked excitedly, “That there’s this Jesus who lived and died and saved people from their sins!” Tobi said “Good job, Tess! You just have to keep coming back to learn more, like we do. But now it looks like it’s time to go back to our pond home. Tess, do you want us to help you find Leo? Maybe we’ll find him on our way back.”



Tess looked around as the sun was starting to set. Her babies ran over to her. Herman said he was going back to the pond home as he slowly crept away. Tess was getting excited again and said “I’ve got to go find Leo, I agree that we could find him along the way to your pond home.” Tobi said “Great! Listen, Tess. In Matthew 6:31, of the Bible, “Jesus said, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?”



Tess said to Tobi, “Look at God’s creation, the sunset.” Tobi responded, “God in all His glory!” Tess replied, “If God can create these beautiful sunsets, He can help us find Leo. He was going to find a few acorns for us to eat. He couldn’t have gone too far.” “That’s a good idea, Tess. Come along and follow us,” Tobi responded.



Tobi, Tanner, Tabitha and Fred jumped into the pond and started swimming towards their pond home. Tess and her babies climbed into nearby trees following the frogs and turtle. The sun was setting, still blazing in orange and yellow. Tess thought about how God had created everything. There were birds singing in the trees and making chirping sounds. Bella and Dragoon followed along. Some curious chipmunks were watching everyone moving along.



The sun had set and the sky darkened. Very quickly the moon and stars appeared and lightened the sky. Tobi ,Tanner and Fred stopped at the edge of the pond to look at some fireflies as bats were chasing them. The moon and the stars shined so brightly. Tess and her babies sat by Tobi, Tanner and Fred. Tess said, “I’m so amazed at how God has created everything for us and the humans. This is all so beautiful.” “Praise the Lord!” Tobi and Tanner shouted. Fred looked around and asked “Where did Tabitha go?” “She either hopped or swam home,” Tanner replied.



The little creatures arrived at their pond home and Tess and her babies climbed up a tree, “This is where we’re gonna sleep, and I’m praying that Leo is ok.” Tess announced. Some owls hooted loudly. Tobi and Tanner followed Tess, Buford and Bonnie onto a nearby branch. They were so tired that they quickly fell sleep. The owls flew away. Fre found a rock to sleep on, and the fish and ducks fell asleep in the pond. Some raccoons crept by, going to find some food, as a wolf in the distance howled at the moon.



The squirrels and frogs woke to birds chirping. They saw an orange cat sitting on a branch above them. The sun was out and the cat smiled at the group. Fred, the fish and ducks were awake too. "What an interesting variety of creatures this is!" the cat exclaimed. Tess asked "Who are you?" The cat answered, "I'm Maurice the cat and I'm going home, I've been up all night. My owners are worried about me." "What are your owners?" Tess asked. Maurice said, "Follow me."



Bella and Dragoon appeared when the frogs, the turtle and the squirrels were following the orange cat. When he stopped at a place with a lot of houses, Maurice announced, “I live across the street at that house over there.” “That’s a house?” Tobi asked. “Yes,” Maurice added, “I live there with my sister Susie. The humans are my owners and they take care of us.” “Like God takes care of us,” Tobi said, and quoting Philippians 4:19 “You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.” Tess said, “I’m glad to hear that. But we need to get back to the pond and find Leo.”



The little creatures followed Maurice across the street to his house where his sister Susie was sitting by a tree. He waved and said “Goodbye you guys, it was nice meeting you. I’m going inside to get some food.” Tess responded, “OK, bye Maurice. We don’t need any owners because God takes care of us. I get it. But still, the humans feed us, too. This has been an adventure, but I think we need to go back to the pond. I want to know more about Jesus and God who takes care of us and created everything! And we gotta find Leo! Let’s go guys!” Everyone waved goodbye at Maurice and Susie and left.



They were so glad when they arrived at their home pond. Prince Liam and Princess Monique waved as Tabitha was swimming. Herman was there too. Tess asked, “Are those frogs with the crowns your parents?” “Yes, they help to take care of us, too. There’s Herman and Tabitha and I wasn’t worried about either of them.” Tobi answered. Tess looked at Tobi and asked, “But where is Leo?” “I’m sure he will show up soon, Tess, God doesn’t want you to worry about him,” Tobi replied.



Suddenly there was a loud chirping sound that squirrels make. It was Leo running to the pond. Tess was so happy as she waved her little paws in the air. The ducks quacked loudly and the squirrel babies ran to hug their daddy. “I’m so glad I found you guys! I looked so many places,” Leo said excitedly. Tess told Leo that she had learned about God and His son, Jesus. Tobi said he had learned a few things too. Herman was glad he was teaching Tobi as well as Tess. The squirrel family said they were going to go back to their tree home and eat some acorns. Leo said, “We’ll return again soon to learn more from the Bible!”

Greetings!



“Teaching Tobí” is my fifth book in the “Tobí” series. This time, Tobí the frog learns more about the Bible along with his new friend, Tess the squirrel. Herman the turtle adds some wise Biblical advice as they listen in on a human family reading from the Bible at the pond.

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