

*An American
Family Bible*



Miller Jones

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ISBN: 978-1-63263-687-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018902866

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2018

First Edition

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Beginnings (1585-1660)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1)

Chapter 1: Before Time, the Land

They told this story around our campfires before the pale-skinned ones came:

2 The great waters covered the surface of the earth. As our brothers and sisters looked out over the waters from their home above, they longed for more room to move around in and live. "I wonder what is below all of that water," the Great Horned Owl said. "I will go and see," Water Beetle volunteered.

3 Then he dove down into the water, but Water Beetle could not see anything at first. He tried again and dove even deeper into the water. This time, he scraped along the muddy bottom. "I will carry some of this mud on my back to show the others," he thought. So, he scooped up some of the mud onto his back and headed for the surface.

4 When he reached the surface, the mud began to fall off of his back and spread out around him. As the mud grew beneath him, it began to dry just enough for him to stand on top of it without sinking. Before long, Water Beetle was standing in the middle of a great island floating on the waters.

5 "Hurry!" Owl shouted to the Eagle. "Take these cords and attach them to the corners of the island and secure them to the sky, so that it doesn't slip back below the waters!" So, the eagle took the cords in its beak and did as the owl had instructed; but she only tied them with a single knot, because she resented the owl telling her what to do. "Those cords will come loose one day, and the island will sink back below the waters," Owl warned.

6 The other animals were so happy, however, that they ignored Owl's warning. At first, they sent Dove down to see if there was any place firm enough to support them, but she returned without finding any place to rest. Crow swooped down over the surface of the island next, but he also could not find any place to land. "I will go," the Great Buzzard volunteered.

7 So Buzzard flew over the entire surface of the earth, from one end of the island to the other. Now he flew very low to the ground so that he could study the land in detail. In fact, he flew so low that his great wings struck the soft ground in several places and caused valleys and mountains to form on the surface of the island. The wind that his wings created also helped to dry the ground further and make it more stable.

8 "That's enough!" the other animals shouted. They were afraid that Buzzard would fill up the whole surface of the island with valleys and mountains. Then buzzard landed atop one of the mountains and waited for the other animals to come down to the earth.

9 Nevertheless, when the other animals arrived on the earth, they were dismayed at how dark everything was. "We need some light to see what we are doing," Bear said. "Yes, some light would be nice," said the trees as they poked along the ground with their toes.

10 So the conjurers set the sun in the sky; but they placed it too low, and it scorched the Crawfish and made him red. Then they moved it a handbreadth higher in the sky, but the sun was still too hot. Thus, the conjurers continued to move the sun up one handbreadth at a time until it stood seven handbreadths in the sky. "That is just right," said Rabbit. Thereafter, the sun stayed on that course and sank into the west each evening and reappeared again in the east the following morning.

11 Then the Great Spirit told the animals that they must stay awake for seven nights. On the first night, most of the animals and trees

were able to stay awake. Nevertheless, on each of the succeeding nights more of the animals and trees succumbed to sleep. By the seventh night, only Owl, Panther, Raccoon, Cedar, Pine, Spruce and a few others managed to remain awake. Thus, as a consequence of their having endured the test, the Great Spirit gave those animals the ability to see in the dark and allowed those trees to keep their hair during the winter.

12 After that, a woman fell through a hole in the sky and landed on the earth. Later still, her brother left the land above and joined her on the earth. At first, he scolded her for leaving their home beyond the sky. "There are no other people here!" he shouted.

13 Then he took one of the trout that he had just caught in the stream and struck his sister with the fish. Seven days later, she had a baby; and she continued to have a baby every seventh day for many years thereafter.

14 The Great Spirit, however, saw that the earth would soon be filled with people. As a consequence, he intervened and told the woman that she would only be allowed to have one child each year. Her very next child was the mother of our people.

Chapter 2: Before Time, the Principal People

No one remembers the first time our people saw these mountains and rivers, but we know that it was many years ago. They came from the direction of the setting sun, and they walked a great distance to get here. One thing we know for certain, however, we were here before the pale-skinned ones.

2 Each one of our people belonged to one of seven clans. The Long Hairs were the peaceful ones. Many of the people from the Blue Clan were gifted in caring for children. Most of our leading warriors came from the Wolf Clan. Likewise, much of our cultivation and gathering was done by the Wild Potato Clan. Our runners and