



Worship Illustration: Storybook

Bible Barn

God of Wonders Part 2: Genesis - Joshua

Unit 5, Lesson 24

Creating the World: Days 5 & 6

Genesis 1:12-31

The Camp Venture campers piled noisily into the Bible Barn kicking dust and bits of straw into the warm summer air. Some campers gathered in the far corner and loudly sang the Camp Critter song. Other campers squirted each other with water-filled squirt bottles leftover from an earlier relay race. Still others chatted about the letters they had received from home.

Catastrophe Jones waved his arms and whistled for their attention. He shouted over the noise, "Hoo-oo-oo doggy! Howdy, hi there, campers. Ya'll know me, Catastrophe Jones! Now, we done teach'd ya'll 'bout the first four days of creation. Today we gonna' get to days five and six, the days that our great Creator made all the critters of the land, air and sea!"

The campers hurried to settle into their seats. All of the campers loved the outdoors and they were eager to hear more about the critters God had created. As Catastrophe started to take a seat on the edge of a hay bale, the Bible Barn's back door banged open startling him so badly, he fell back onto the dirt floor. "Who in tar nation is that?!" He peered over the hay bale to see a tall figure silhouetted in the back of the barn.

"The name is Spector," voiced the stranger. He stepped into the barn and flashed a badge. "I'm the fish and game inspector."

"You're Inspector Spector?" Catastrophe asked with a smirk as he brushed the dirt from the back of his shirt.

"That's right. I heard you were studying critters. If there are going to be any animals on display, I will need to see your license." Inspector Spector demanded with a flip of his notepad.

"I don't need no license, Inspector!" Catastrophe protested. "These here animals are in the Bible."

"Hmmm. Animals in the Bible?" Inspector Spector said tilting his head in curiosity, "I'd like to see that."

"Well, okay, but first I got to swear you in by saying our camp pledge. Stand to your feet kids!" Inspector Spector put his badge over his heart, squared his shoulders and raised his right hand in an official stance as Catastrophe lead the group, *"I will love God with all my heart, I will love my neighbor as myself, I will be a light wherever I go!"*

"All right, where is the Bible?" the inspector demanded.

"Easy Inspector Spector," Catastrophe said raising his finger to point at a row of rusty tin cans high above. "Before we can open up the Word of God we got to find out today's Bible story." He drew a slingshot from his back pocket, selected a small pebble from the ground and expertly hit one of the cans, knocking it to the ground.

A few of the campers cheered as Inspector Spector bent to retrieve the fallen can. He pulled a small piece of wrinkled paper from the can and read, "Genesis chapter one. Okay, now where is the Bible?"

Catastrophe opened the grain bin. A Bible along with a pile of grain poured out and landed in the bushel basket. The grain filled the basket and overflowed. It covered the inspector's shiny black shoes. Catastrophe smiled a sheepish grin as he retrieved the Bible from the basket. He opened the Bible to Genesis 1:21-23 as Inspector Spector pulled a handkerchief from his pocket to shine his dusty shoes.

"So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind." Catastrophe read. He continued, "And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.' And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day."

"Wow," Inspector Spector remarked. He gave up worrying about his shoes and put the handkerchief back in his pocket. "God created so many different kinds of animals!"

"I know." Catastrophe agreed. "God's got the best imagination! He started by filling the oceans with all kinds of fish and ocean critters."

"My friends and I love fishing!" Inspector Spector interrupted, "And then God made all the birds?"

"You got it!" Catastrophe said with a smile.

"I do love sea creatures and birds, that's why I work with animals," Inspector Spector explained. "But what about all the animals that live in the woods and the mountains?"

"I'm so glad you asked, Inspector Spector." Catastrophe said motioning for the inspector to join him on the hay bale.

"Oh, please, call me Hector." Inspector Spector said as he sat down next to his new-found friend.

"Hector?" Catastrophe said with surprise, "Your name is Inspector Hector Spector?"

"That is right," the inspector confirmed showing his badge once again.

"Wow, well okay Hector, why don't you read the next verse," Catastrophe said handing him the open Bible.

"Me? Gosh...thanks!" said the inspector as he cleared his throat to read. "And God said, 'Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.' And it was so." Inspector Spector closed the Bible and declared, "Well, now we've learned about every animal that God created on day six."

"Not quite every animal," Catastrophe corrected as he took the Bible back from the inspector, reopening it to Genesis 1:26-27a. "God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created Him; male and female He created them."

"So, we people were the very last creatures that God created?" Inspector Spector asked.

"Yup," Catastrophe said snapping the Bible shut, a poof of dust rising into the air. "He saved the best for last."

Inspector Spector rubbed his chin, "Why do you think He did that?"

Catastrophe shrugged his shoulders, "I don't know, but I have a theory. You know how sometimes we like to surprise someone we love?"

"You mean like when we plan a big surprise party?" the inspector offered.

"Yup! Just like that! One time we had a surprise party for my GranMammmy's 80th birthday. We wanted to decorate the cabin and get everything all perfect before she got home." Catastrophe explained.

"Sure," Inspector Spector agreed, "half the fun is seeing that look of joy on her face."

"Exactly," Catastrophe agreed. "Maybe that's why God made us last. Maybe He wanted to decorate the whole earth and get it just perfect before He put us in it."

"I like that theory." Inspector Spector said as he flipped open his notepad to write it down. As he pulled a pencil from his pocket, a long howl wafted through the open barn door.

"What's that?" Catastrophe asked with a startled expression.

"Oops! That's my hound dog, Bocephus. I left him outside," the inspector explained. He whistled a long whistle and a large brown dog bounded into the Bible Barn.

"Howdy, Bocephus!" Catastrophe greeted the four-legged critter. Campers leaned from their seats to run their hands over Bocephus' furry body as he scratched an itch behind one ear. "Hey Hector, we always pick a critter of the day. I think Bocephus just might be today's Critter of the Day!"

"Well, he always makes my day!" Inspector Spector said with a smile, "But why would Bocephus be the Critter of the Day?"

"Well, I have a theory." Catastrophe said with a sly grin.

"You've got another theory?" Inspector Spector reopened his notepad.

"I do." Catastrophe declared, "The dog is often called 'man's best friend.'"

"I know Bocephus is my best friend!" the inspector agreed.

"Right, because hound dogs are pets, and pets keep us company and make us smile! They are a wonderful gift from God." Catastrophe explained, "I think the hound dog is supposed to remind us that the pets, the wild animals, even the fish and the birds are God's good gifts to us."

"I like that theory, Catastrophe. God is always so good to us." Inspector Spector agreed.

"Well then, campers, before we head out for the day, let's sing our Camp Critter song with a special verse for old Bocephus as today's Camp Critter—the hound dog!" Catastrophe clapped his hands and all the campers joined in.

**I spied a HOUND DOG overhead.
Here is what that HOUND DOG said,
 "With God's own hand,
He made creatures and man!"
Whew! I spied a HOUND DOG
who followed a CATFISH
who followed an EAGLE,
And the EAGLE hollered,
 "Yippee-kigh-yay!
At Camp Venture today!"**