

A boy's story of how Africa was created

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Theme: *Celebrating the beauty and diversity of the African continent and her people*

Appropriate age group: *All age groups*



There are many, many stories about how God created Africa. This is an imaginary story of the creation of Africa, as seen through the eyes of a little boy.

One fine day the Father gave his son a wonderful present – a set of strong construction toys. There were bulldozers, graders and front-end loaders, forklift trucks, everything! The Father also gave his son bags of fertile soil, bags of sand, a bag of small rocks and a big space to play.

The boy was so excited he wanted to start work right away. He emptied the bags of dark fertile soil and used his bulldozers and graders to spread the soil into an interesting shape. It was big and flat, wide at the top, with curving edges, and it came down, down, down, to a point at the bottom.

(Did you guess it was the shape of the African continent as we know it today? Yes, the boy was making the shape of Africa but he didn't know that yet.)

Next, the boy took some soil and mixed it with water to make lovely thick mud. He used his hands to shape the mud into steep high mountains in the middle of the continent. He used the forklift truck to move the rocks and he made cliffs and valleys in the mountains. With the leftover mud, he made lots of small hills and koppies.

When the boy stood back to admire his creation, he saw it all looked the same. It was all one colour and looked a bit boring. So he slipped into his Mother's kitchen to get some sparkly sugar and sprinkled it on the highest mountain peak. The sugar looked like snow on top of the mud mountain. He named the mountain Kilimanjaro because of the shimmering snow on its peak.

Then the boy remembered the bags of sand. The first bags he opened were full of reddish-gold sand. He emptied this sand onto the top part of his creation and named it the Sahara Desert. The other bags were full of fine flowing sand and so he carefully made soft sandy beaches along the coastline. Down south, right at the bottom of Africa, he made a mountain with a flat top and called it Table Mountain. He didn't put any sugar-snow on that mountain.

The boy wanted to make rivers in this beautiful land so he ran to fetch a watering can and filled it with water. As he bent over with his watering can, he stumbled and fell. His hand made a dent in the middle of Africa near Kilimanjaro and his fingers poked smaller holes in the soil. He filled the holes with water to make beautiful shimmering lakes. The water ran out of one lake and flowed all the way to the far north – the top right. That's how he made the longest river in the world, the River Nile. He felt very proud of his creation.

At that moment the Father came to see his son's handiwork. He smiled to see his son so happy and proud. The Father was carrying a few small bags and he had a can under his arm.

"What have you got there, Father?" the boy asked. His Father answered, "These bags are full of precious stones and minerals and the can is full of oil. You can use them in your creation if you like."

When the boy opened the bags he couldn't believe his eyes – he found gold, platinum and silver, diamonds and other precious stones, coal and iron, and much, much more. He wondered what to do with all this treasure. Then he began poking deep holes in the soil. One by one, he took the diamonds and other precious stones and dropped them into holes. He put the gold and silver and platinum into different holes. The oil he poured into quite a few holes in different parts of the continent. Then he covered all the holes with soil, thinking how exciting it would be for people to find these hidden treasures.

The boy went back to making rivers flow in all directions. He spilt water where the diamonds were buried and some of the diamonds washed into a river and flowed down to the sea. He also had fun making waterfalls. One waterfall was so big that it sounded like thunder and created a mist that looked like smoke. One day people would call this waterfall "the smoke that thunders".

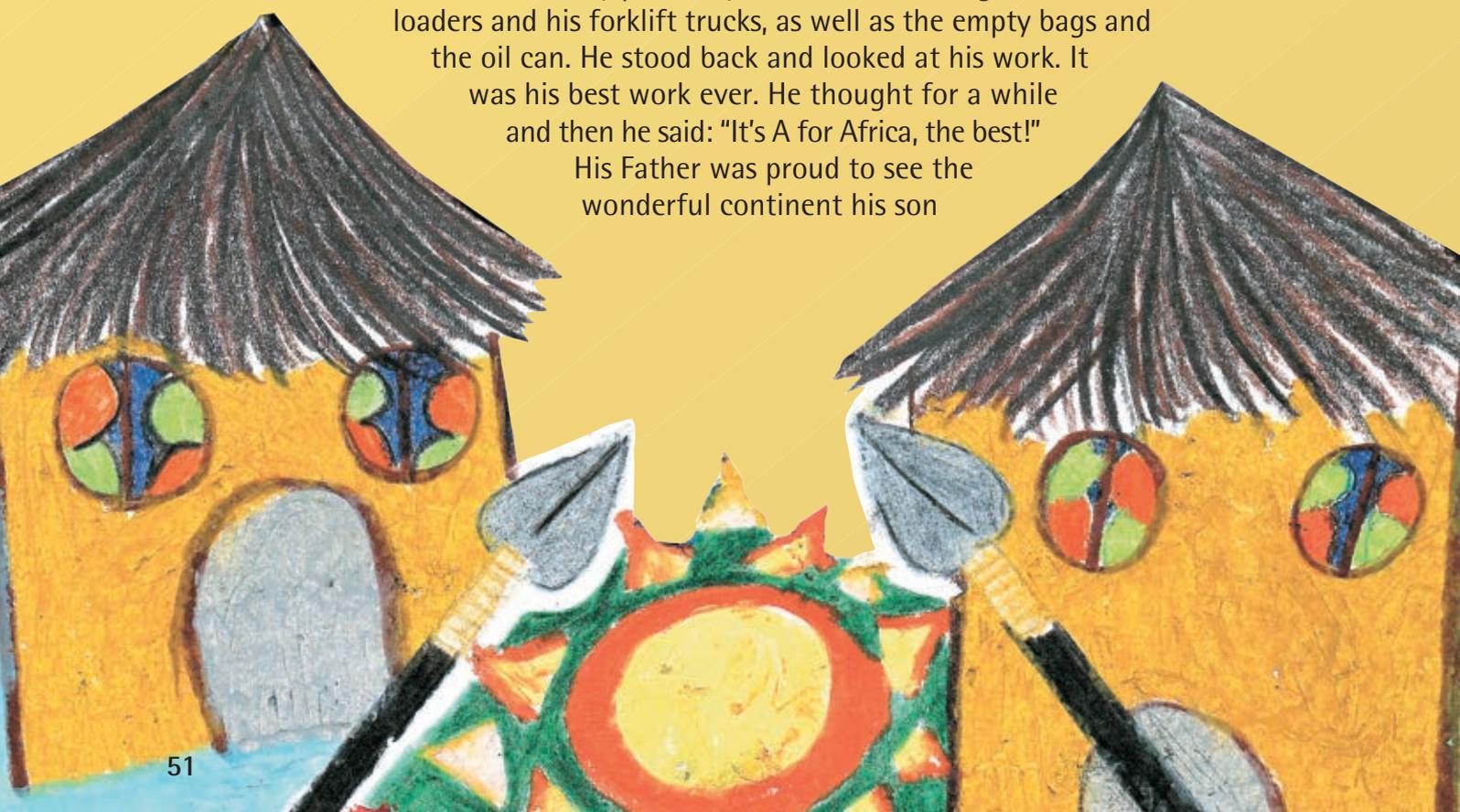
The boy was planning to make lots more rivers in the dry land of North Africa. But the next time he went to fill his watering can his Mother said, "This time you can only have a little – water is very scarce." So he made another plan. He made holes in the Sahara Desert and gave them just a little water. He knew that thirsty animals walking across the Sahara would be grateful for every oasis.

The next morning the boy's Mother gave him plants, trees and seeds. He planted plenty of trees below the bulge on the west side of Africa where there were lots of rivers. In the dry areas he planted just a few special plants and some thorn trees. The seeds he sowed all over, hoping they would grow into fields and flowers.

The boy's next job was to put animals in the right places – gorillas in the forest, camels in the desert, lions to rule the grasslands, buck and buffaloes, hippos and rhinos and elephants, meerkats and tortoises, snakes and crocodiles. He found a place for all of them, even the tiny ants and the dung beetles.

When it was time to rest, the boy put away his bulldozers, his graders and front-end loaders and his forklift trucks, as well as the empty bags and the oil can. He stood back and looked at his work. It was his best work ever. He thought for a while and then he said: "It's A for Africa, the best!"

His Father was proud to see the wonderful continent his son



had created. The Father's task was to create people to live in Africa. He knew Africa needed many different people with different talents and abilities. Above all, Africa needed kind and caring people with a love for life. So the Father created people with beautiful smiles and musical voices, strong bodies, wise minds, powerful imaginations and creative hands.



He gave them respect for one another and the gift of sharing with one another. He knew that living in Africa would sometimes be hard. There would be violence and war. There would be a time of cruel slavery. There would be drought and hunger. There would be times when people would turn their backs on goodness. But the Father knew that the people of Africa had so many talents and so much goodness and so much courage – enough to triumph over the hardships and suffering and come to share in freedom.

And so the Father made people to live in this beautiful Africa that had been made for them. And as he watched them walk off into the African sunrise, he hoped they would be good to one another and take care of all that had been created for them.



Possible discussion points:

What are Africa's strengths, talents and resources?

What challenges are facing the people of Africa?

How can every child in Africa contribute to a positive future?