



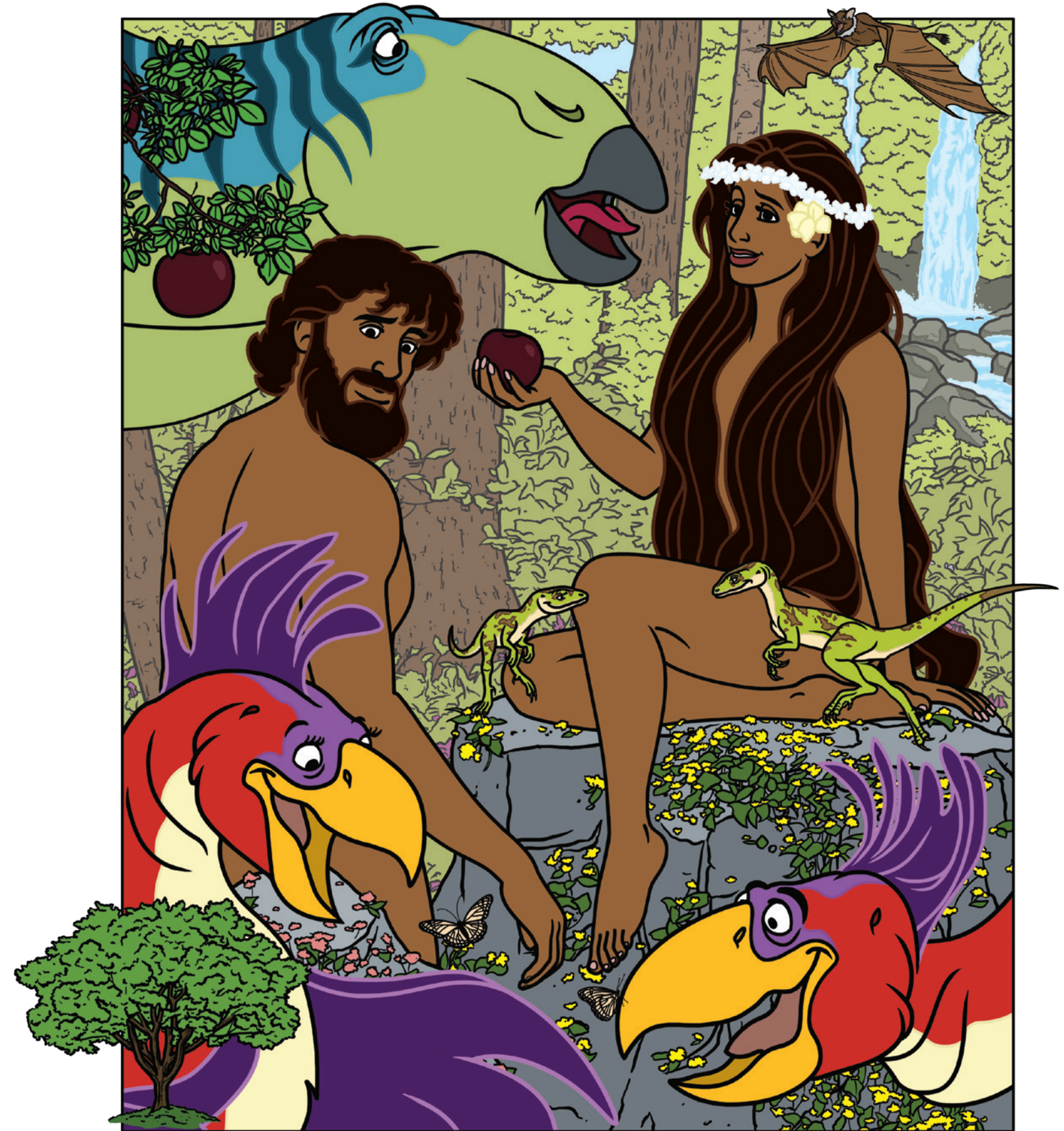
God placed Adam and Eve in a garden within the land of Eden. The word *Eden* means “delight, or pleasure.” This place of natural beauty must have been truly spectacular. What do we know about it?

Originally, God had created a mist to water the ground. That provision would have brought about many varieties of colorful flowers and plants. Rivers also flowed out from the land of Eden to water the garden. It could have been that it flowed into pools of glistening water, teeming with life and fed by wondrous waterfalls.

Now the variety of creatures within the garden would make us stand in awe. The sounds of bird squawks and bat flaps must have been quite an earful. Can you imagine yourself face to face with amazing creatures, like dinosaurs, both large and small?

We’re told that God had made every tree that was pleasant to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden grew a special tree: the tree of life.

From that tree, God told Adam and Eve that they could freely eat its fruit. We aren’t told much about the tree, but it must have been wonderful to have received such a special name.







As far as how long it took to build the ark, we just don't know. Noah's family could have built it themselves or hired help. Sure, God had given a time period of 120 years before he was to bring his judgment. But that doesn't mean it took that long to build the ark, perhaps as few as 50–70 years.

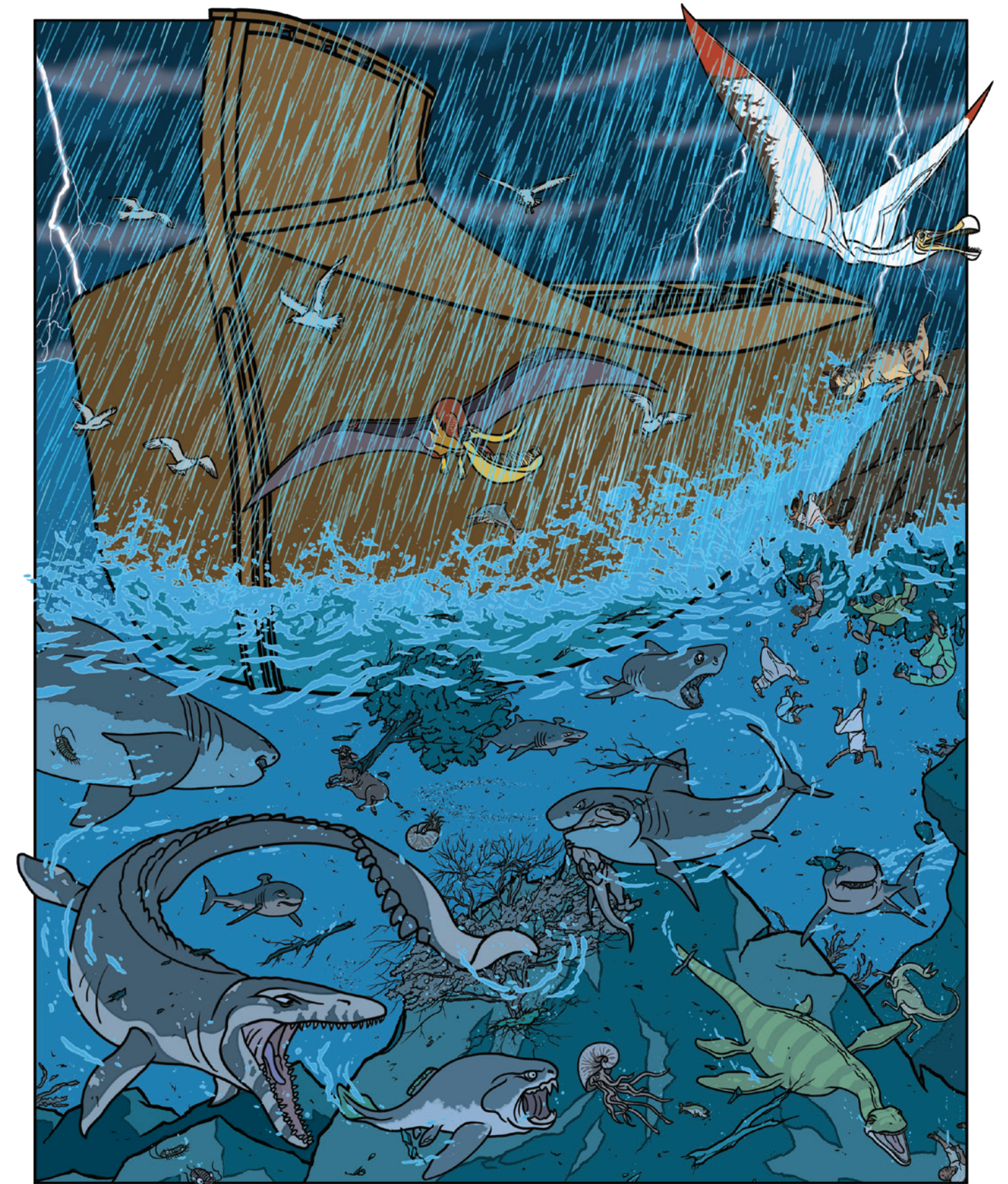
Nevertheless, during that time Noah would have been warning others about God's coming judgment. The Bible tells us that God doesn't delight in the destruction of the wicked. There may have been enough room for more believers, but no one heeded the warning.

When the 120 years had ended, God brought the chosen animals and birds of the earth to Noah. Righteous Noah and his family also entered the ark. God then shut the door! By entering through that door, they were saved from the judgment.

It was in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, that the fountains of the great deep burst open. The windows of the heavens were opened, and rain fell down on the earth.

Rain would have been pouring down from the upward-shooting water from the ocean depths. This could have been the source of water described as the windows of heaven opening up.

For 40 days and nights, the flood continued with rain falling on the earth. The ark was lifted up and rose high above the earth, floating on the waters!







Once King Herod was dead, Joseph brought Mary and Jesus back to their hometown of Nazareth. Joseph was a carpenter by trade and most likely passed those skills on to Jesus.

The Bible doesn't record the childhood years of Jesus. But it does tell us that the promised Seed grew like a tender shoot, like a root out of dry ground. No doubt that young Jesus was known by the townspeople as the carpenter's son. Little did they know that Jesus had a different Father.

We're told that when Jesus was 12 years old, he and his family went to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. When it was over, his parents began to return home. However, they didn't know that Jesus had stayed behind.

Returning to find Jesus, Mary and Joseph found him in the temple courts. There he was sitting with the teachers, amazing them with his understanding. When asked by Mary why he was there, Jesus answered that he had to be in his Father's house.

After this recorded event, the Bible is silent regarding Joseph. We do know, though, that both he and Mary had sons and daughters of their own.

But as Jesus aged, his path was far different than his stepbrothers and stepsisters. He would accomplish what was needed over three short years.

