



Ralph Milton's Adult Bible Stories

Yes, adult.

No, there's nothing here to hide from your children or anyone else. These stories are "adult" because they deal with issues and situations that children might not understand. And they are written at the adult level. You will enjoy some and hate others.

These stories are part of an ancient Hebrew tradition called the *Aggada* that tells us that the best way to understand a story is to re-tell it in your own words. Even better, bring your own imagination and experiences into your own retelling.

Stories are not meant to be "understood" in some rational, analytical way. They are not history. They are not "lessons." Stories speak to the heart and soul. They are meant to connect with our life experiences.

The stories in the Bible do that so powerfully.

When we allow those stories lives, we allow the spirit of God to speak to our souls. It is through stories that we can most truly know the mind of God.

Permissions: First the nitty-gritty.

These stories are all intended for use in churches and other non-profit gatherings. Or just to read for the fun of it. There's no charge for their use, and you are free to adapt them to your own situation. Do whatever you need to make them fit. No further permission is needed.

A credit line or announcement is always nice.

But if you want to publish them in some way, in print or on the internet, please get in touch with [Wood Lake Publishing](#).

Stories are for telling: These are Bible stories. (Well, there are a few that are not from the Bible.) Bible stories were originally told and retold and passed on from person to person, group to group, generation to generation.

Even the stories in the Gospels. They were part of an aural tradition. They were meant to be told by one person to another or to a group. They were changed and adapted by many storytellers before they were written down, and even then we often have them in several versions.

I'm part of that ancient biblical story-telling tradition, and so are you. We take the stories from the Bible and we add our own imagination and interpretation. Some of us write those imaginative interpretations into books and on-line resources like this one.

Because I wanted to understand these wonderful Bible stories in the deepest possible way, I brought my own imagination and experience to these stories. So don't expect them to be a straight re-telling of the Bible story. I added my own imaginative interpretations, some of which you will approve of and some you will hate. If you can't stomach some of my interpretations, put in your own.

That's how it is, and that's how it should be. I hope my stories will pry loose some of the stories in your soul.

Power of Stories: Stories are at the very heart of the Gospel. Jesus told stories constantly and so did the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures. Unfortunately, they are often neglected in favour of propositions about our faith, which is a bit like offering a hungry person a recipe for a tasty dish, without giving them anything to eat.

I've gone into some depth on this subject in my book [The Gift of Story](#) which you can order from Wood Lake by clicking on one of these links.

Children's stories: As I said earlier, these are adult stories.

For children, I recommend [Family Story Bible](#), or if you are a church school leader or worship leader, the [Lectionary Story Bible](#) in three volumes for each year of the lectionary cycle. They contain at least one children's Bible story for each Sunday in the Lectionary Cycle. Often two or three.

All are available at [Wood Lake](#) Publishing.

Reader's Theatre: Some of these stories are presented as Reader's Theatre, which is a way of acting out the stories that works particularly well in churches. There are no sets or costumes. The actors stand behind lecterns and carry all the power and emotion through their voices and hand gestures.

Reader's Theatre, like all story-telling, can be a colossal flop if it's not well-rehearsed and well done. Because the actors don't move around, you need to work harder to keep up the pace. Among the ways to pick up the pace is to allow absolutely zero time between one speaker and the next. They should almost be overlapping.

If you'd like to see a good demonstration of Reader's Theatre, look at some of the [StoryFest](#) videos, also available free on the [Wood Lake](#) web site.

Sources: All these stories have been published somewhere before. Some of them appear in some form in one of my books, in which case that's indicated. You can click on the link and order the book from [Wood Lake](#). Please do that.

Many of the stories come from a blog called *Rumours*. Blogs are a lot of work (or at least they should be) and I ran out of steam and out of time, so I stopped doing that several years ago.

Others were published in *Aha!!!* a preacher's sermon writing resource. When the internet came along, the magazine closed down like many print-based periodicals.

So here they are, free of charge. I'm offering them to you because now that I'm nearing the end of my rainbow, I enjoy the satisfaction of knowing my stories are out there, inspiring, provoking, entertaining.

What more could an old man want?

Uses: Use the stories in any way that works for you, as long as it's a church-related non-profit situation. If you want to publish them in some way, get in touch with [Wood Lake](#) Publishing.

Most of them are quite short and could be used as part of a sermon or in a small group setting. A few are sermon length.

Add your own imagination and have fun with them. Don't take them or me or yourself too seriously. Feel free to argue with the story and allow listeners to argue, disagree, and add their own ideas. If people respond creatively, the stories are doing their work.

If you are going to read one of these stories to a group, please rehearse it so that your voice communicates some of the nuances, the drama, the characterization.

Any story badly told or read simply dies.

StoryFest: If you'd like to explore the idea of story-telling more deeply, check out the [StoryFest](#) videos on the Wood Lake Publishing web site.

There are nine programs in the series, all intended to be used by small groups in the church. They are fun, they are free, and don't require any special leadership.

Or you can simply watch them by yourself. Either way, they are fun and informative.

Or, you can order my book, [The Gift of Story](#) from Wood Lake. Any of my books, for that matter. [Click here to see them all.](#)

They're all story-telling, one way or another.

Thanks,
Ralph Milton

