

Parashat HaShavua for Children

The Parasha



The Parasha
Parashat Hashavua for Children
Bereshit

Maggid Books
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THE ITELD EDITION

PARASHAT HASHAVUA
FOR CHILDREN

THE PARASHA

Emily Amrousi

Illustrations: Menahem Halberstadt

Translation: Ilana Kurshan

Bereshit • בראשית

Maggid Books

The Parasha series is dedicated in loving memory
of our parents and grandparents

Julius and Simone (Maman) Iteld ז"ל

ספר זה מוקדש לזכר נשמות

יהודה בן צבי הלוי וגוטב איטלד ז"ל

נפטר כ' בטבת תש"נ

ושמחה בת יצחק ורבקה ממזן ז"ל

נפטר ח' בחשוון תש"נ

whose belief in the power of Jewish education and community
continues to motivate and teach us every day.

We hope that this series will encourage future generations to learn and
will inspire many Torah conversations within families.

We are so proud to continue their legacy.

**Hershene Elisa (Iteld), Gavin, Sarina, Kira,
Judah, and Simon Ellman**

*With great appreciation to our amazing friend Dr. Rebecca Winter
for her insight and help in making this project a reality.*



Sefer Bereshit is dedicated in honor of

Simone and Julius Iteld ז"ל

This *sefer* embodies the values they held dear, imparting teachings about Hashem's power to create and the unwavering *emuna* of those chosen as the core of *Benei Yisrael*.

Our mother/mother-in-law, mémé, Simone Iteld, was the epitome of an Eishet Chayil – graceful, beautiful, and wise. Her ability to listen with a full heart and without judgment made the advice she gave that much more precious. She was beyond loved, but that was no match for how much she loved. She personified dignity. Her greatest attribute, her unshakable trust in Hashem, enabled her to weather any storm. These values, paired with her pride in her Moroccan heritage will remain her legacy and will always inspire us.

Our father, father-in-law, Zayde J, Julius Iteld was a larger-than-life personality who loved a good joke and made people feel their best. He held on to his beliefs of Judaism and his faith in Hashem even through the worst of times and while escaping the worst of human atrocities. He enjoyed mentoring and was known for being just and fair in both personal and business matters. He believed strongly in the power of Jewish education, a value that was fostered while learning for his bar mitzva under Rav Moshe Feinstein. He led by example in the *mitzvot* of *kibbud av v'em*, *tzedaka* and *tefilla*. These are the values he held dear and that we will continue to impart for generations to come.

May we, as a people, draw inspiration from those who came before us to always hold firm to our belief in Hashem and His teachings.



Dear Parents,

The Torah has been engaging parents and children for generations. From the captivating narratives of Bereshit and Shemot, to the complex laws and instructions of Vayikra and Bemidbar, to the Torah's culmination in Devarim, studying the fifty-four *parashot* of the Torah gives Jews of all ages the chance each week to take part in the world's longest running Torah learning program!

Emily Amrousi's retelling of the *parashat hashavua*, accompanied by Menahem Halberstadt's beautiful illustrations, has brought the weekly Torah portion to life for children across Israel through the Hebrew series, *HaParasha* (published in 2017). We are so excited to finally present this series in English.

It is a particularly challenging task to take a classic narrative written in ancient language and retell it in an accessible and comprehensible way for children, so that a young and contemporary audience can fully appreciate the beauty and drama of the biblical narrative. Emily has done this brilliantly, using rabbinic understandings from midrashim and her own creative storytelling to ensure that the story flows, while staying as loyal as possible to the *peshat*, the core meaning of the text. In this English edition, as in the original Hebrew edition, verses from the Torah are integrated into the text and highlighted in color. We have done the same when direct translation of verses from the Torah have been used as part of the text.

The publication of this English translation of *The Parasha* series would not have been possible without the support and partnership of Elisa and Gavin Ellman and their family, and we are honored that they have chosen to dedicate this series in memory of Elisa's parents, Julius and Simone (Maman) Iteld, ז"ל. Julius and Simone's commitment to Jewish education has continued through to the next generation through Elisa and



Gavin, and this commitment will enliven the eternal words of the Torah in homes across the Jewish world for years to come.

Very few translators could have taken Emily's poetic and beautiful Hebrew text and translated it into equally poetic and beautiful English text, and we are grateful and delighted to have had Ilana Kurshan expertly translate this series.

Thank you to the team at Koren whose commitment, professionalism, and attention to detail has made this series possible – Matthew Miller, Yehoshua Miller, Rabbi Reuven Ziegler, Aryeh Grossman, Rabbi Dr. Daniel Rose, Caryn Meltz, Ita Olesker, Debbie Ismailoff, Tomi Mager, Tani Bayer, and Atara Suna. We are also thankful to Dr. Rebecca Winter for her invaluable insight and assistance.

A *parasha* is literally “a portion,” and while we usually use the term to refer to the fifty-four *parashot*, or weekly portions, that the Torah is divided into, our learning of the Torah in this way can also give each one of us a chance to find our own portion in the Torah, our own part to play or message that we want to take on or to teach to others. Our collective prayer is that this series will help us all, young and old, to find our portion in the Torah.

The Koren Team
Jerusalem 2024

Dear Kids,

It's fun to read a story with your parents, on Shabbat morning, or before bed. It's nice to feel the presence of someone who loves you at your side, to hear the words and look at the pictures.

The book you are holding in your hands is part of the most well-known and important book in the world.

The Five Books of Moshe, and the stories and ideas they contain, have been the foundation of our culture as human beings for thousands of years. As descendants of the people of Israel, we can be proud: This story was given to our people, who kept it for many generations. It was written in Hebrew, the language spoken by Jews in Israel today.

The Torah is divided into five books: **Bereshit, Shemot, Vayikra, Bemidbar, Devarim**. These books are divided into portions called *parashot*. There are fifty-four *parashot*, and in synagogue, we read one *parasha* every week, known as *Parashat HaShavua* – the portion of the week.

The *parashot* begin with the creation of the world and the creation of human beings. They go on to tell the story of one family, and conclude with stories about a nation that was born and then grew older, until it stood on its own two feet. When we finish the book of Devarim, we return to the beginning, to Bereshit. Each year we come back full circle to the same stories and the same values – except that we have changed, and we are different.

I wrote this book to teach the *parasha* to children. Each time I sat down to write, I prayed that I might remain faithful to the text.



May the words of my mouth and the expressions of my heart be favorable unto you, O God, my rock and my redeemer.

Some of the words in this book are translations from the Torah, and others are my retelling. I tried to tell the story as it appears in the *parasha*, and only occasionally to incorporate midrash or commentary. I want every child to become familiar with the original stories. After that, it is always possible to keep learning more and more.

On the desk where I work sits a pretty ladybug. I decided to include that ladybug in the story. She asks questions that are fun to think about. You can ask your parents how they would answer these questions, too.

You can read this book according to the order of the Jewish calendar, and hear the story of the *parasha* for each week. But you can also read it in a different order, or skip around, or read the whole book from cover to cover. However you read it, I hope you will enjoy the journey.

I'm excited, because the beginning of a story is nothing – it's empty and blank – and then it becomes an entire world.

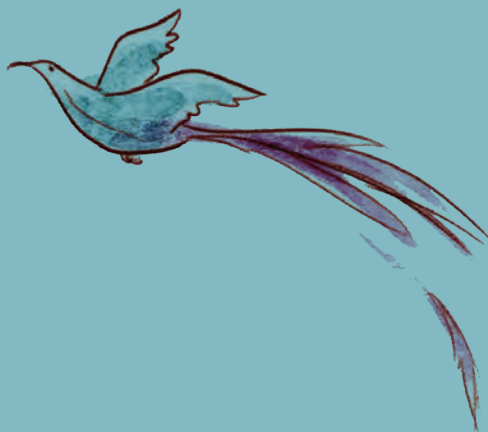
Let us begin in the beginning.
Emily

Parashat Bereshit

In the beginning,
God created heaven and earth.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים
יֵאת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְיֵאת הָאָרֶץ

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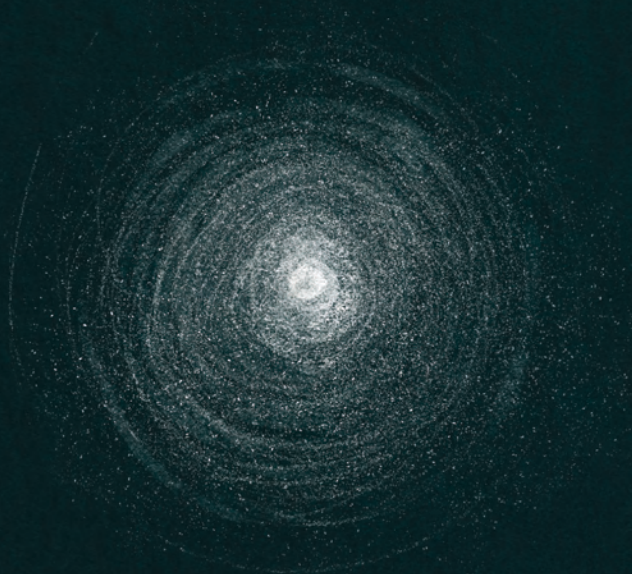
What existed before there was a world?
Emptiness.
Darkness and desolation.
The emptiness was filled with God's presence –
Until God decided to create a world.

God labored for six days and created a colorful, beautiful world.

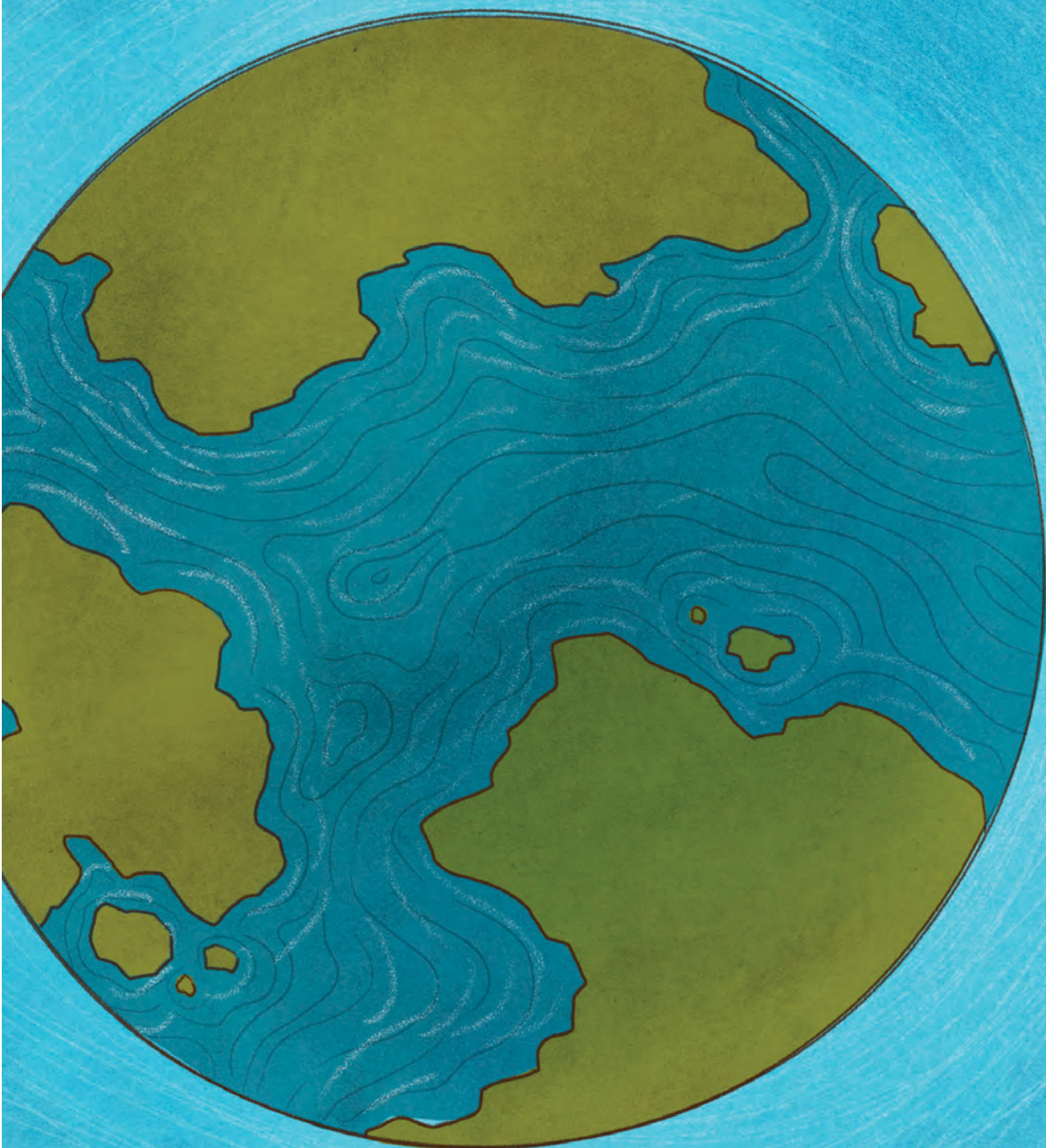
How? With words.

God spoke – and the words created each part of the world.

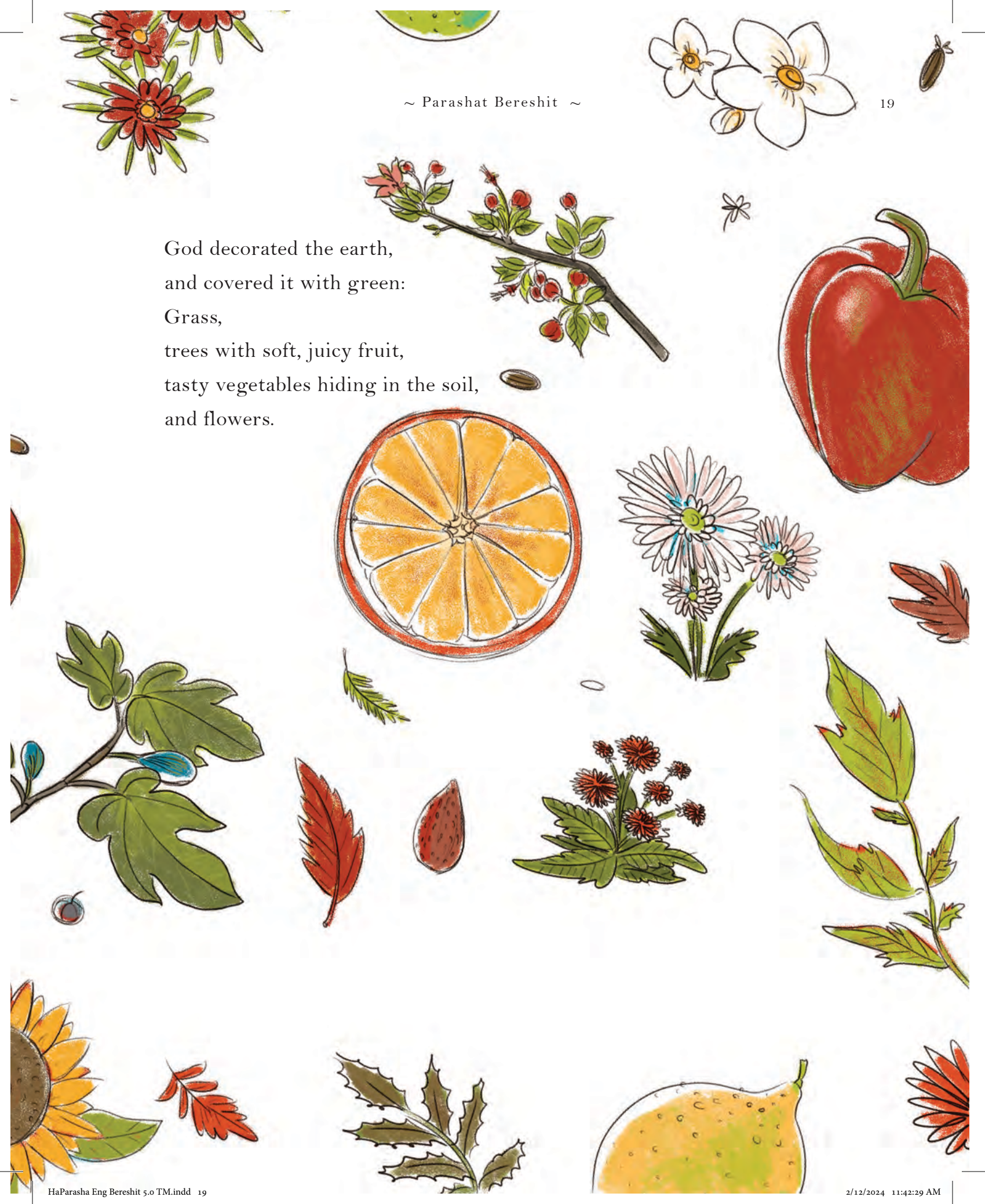
“Let there be light” – and there was light.

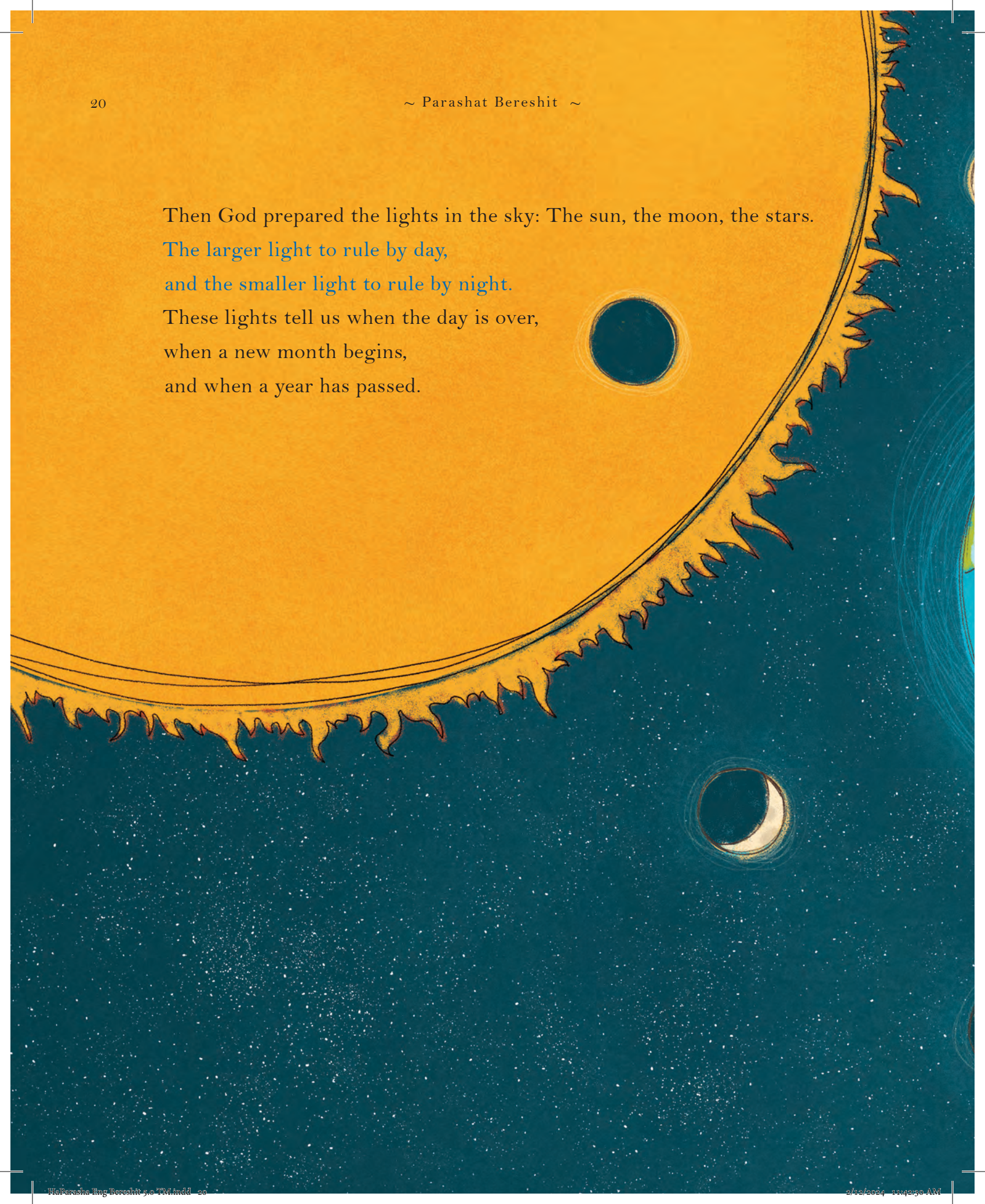


God divided light from darkness and created skies and clouds.
God created water,
and called to the water to collect in one place, the sea,
making space for dry land.

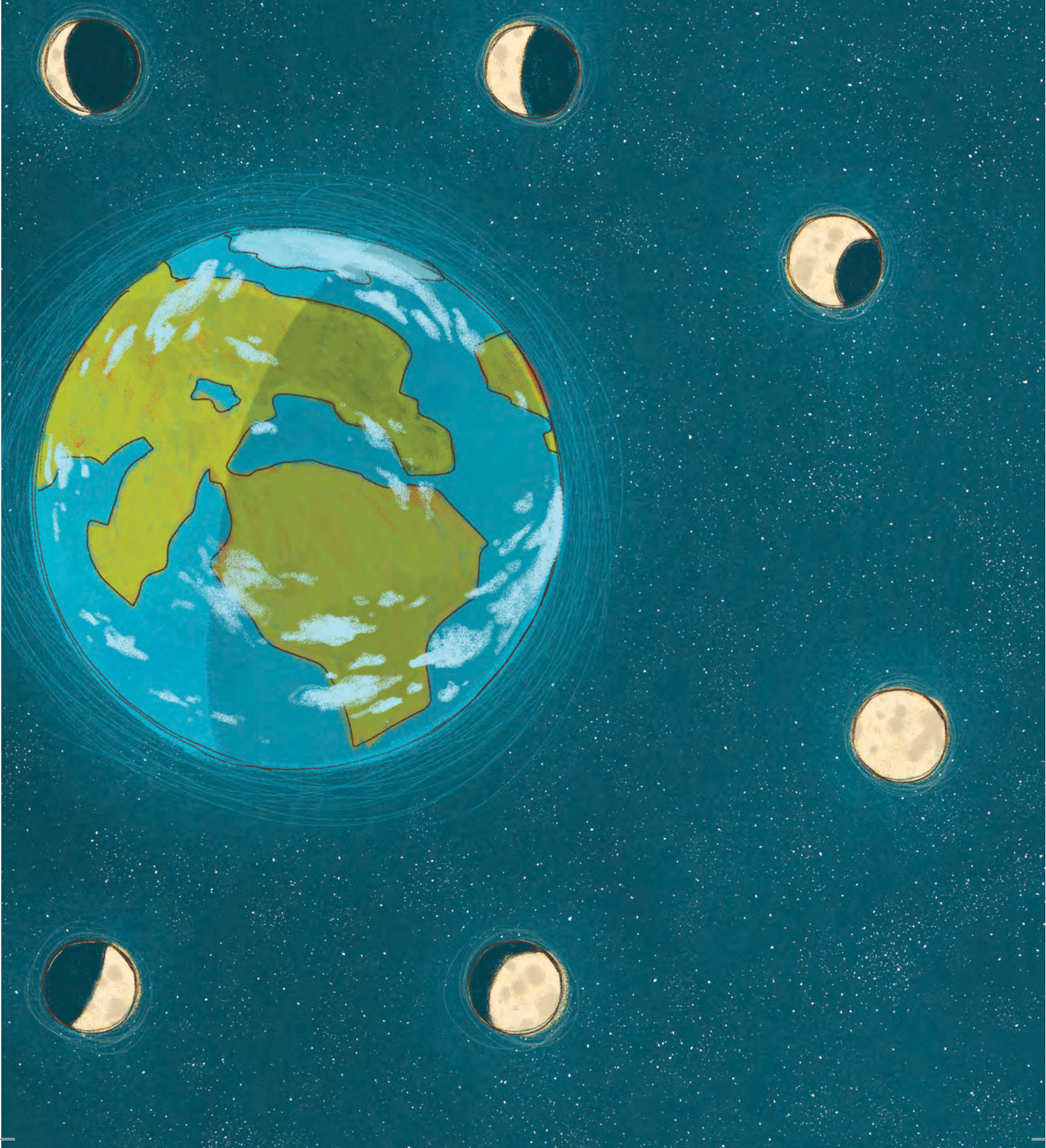


God decorated the earth,
and covered it with green:
Grass,
trees with soft, juicy fruit,
tasty vegetables hiding in the soil,
and flowers.

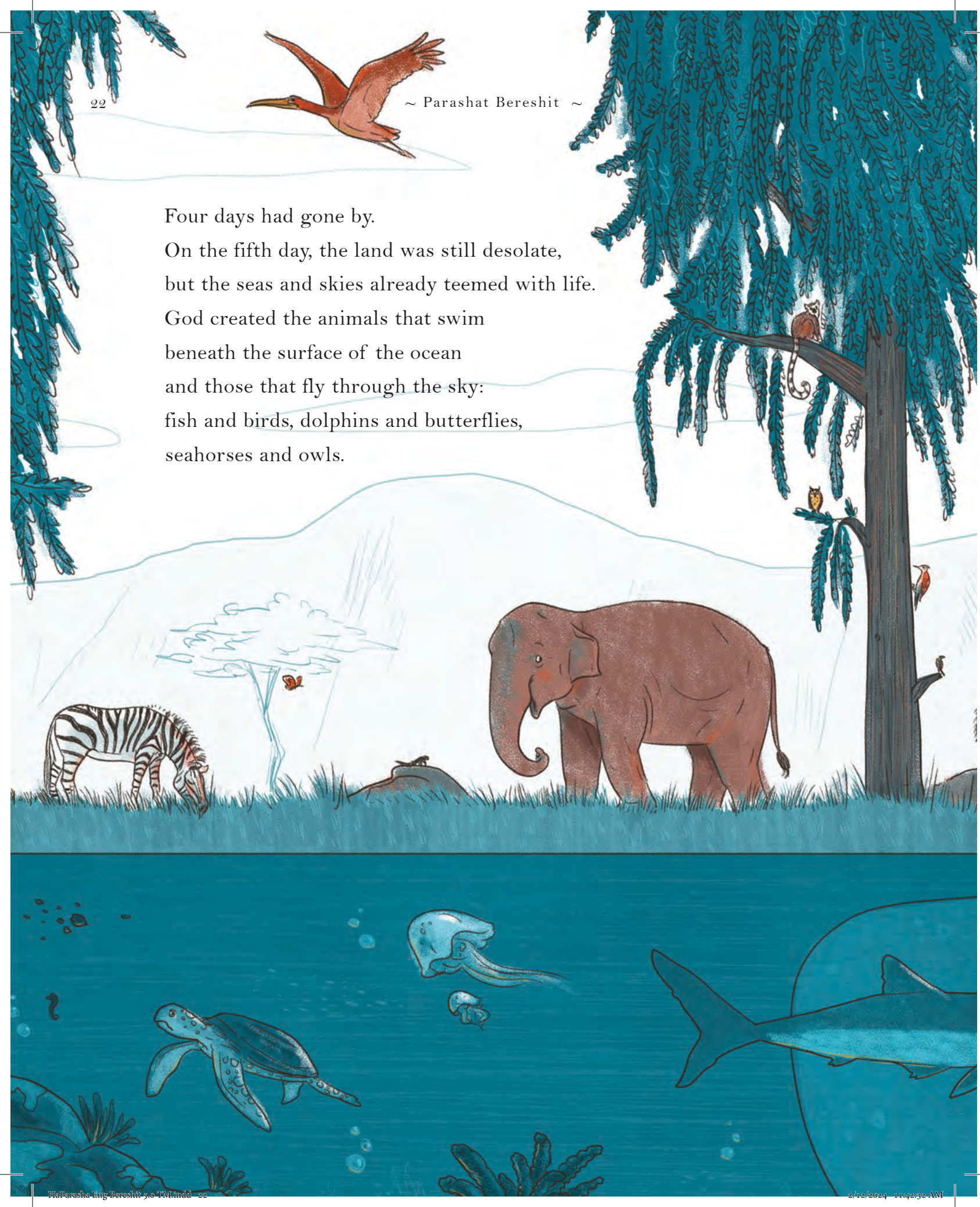




Then God prepared the lights in the sky: The sun, the moon, the stars.
The larger light to rule by day,
and the smaller light to rule by night.
These lights tell us when the day is over,
when a new month begins,
and when a year has passed.



Four days had gone by.
On the fifth day, the land was still desolate,
but the seas and skies already teemed with life.
God created the animals that swim
beneath the surface of the ocean
and those that fly through the sky:
fish and birds, dolphins and butterflies,
seahorses and owls.



On the sixth day, it was time to fill the land with life.
That was when all the other animals were created:
mammals and reptiles, big and small.

But the world was still not complete.



Something was still missing.
Who would enjoy the world? Who would protect it?
Who would fill it with good deeds?

God wanted to create something God-like –
in the image of God.





Someone who could also create –
Someone who could dream, speak, and choose between good and evil.

God created a man from the earth
and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils.



