



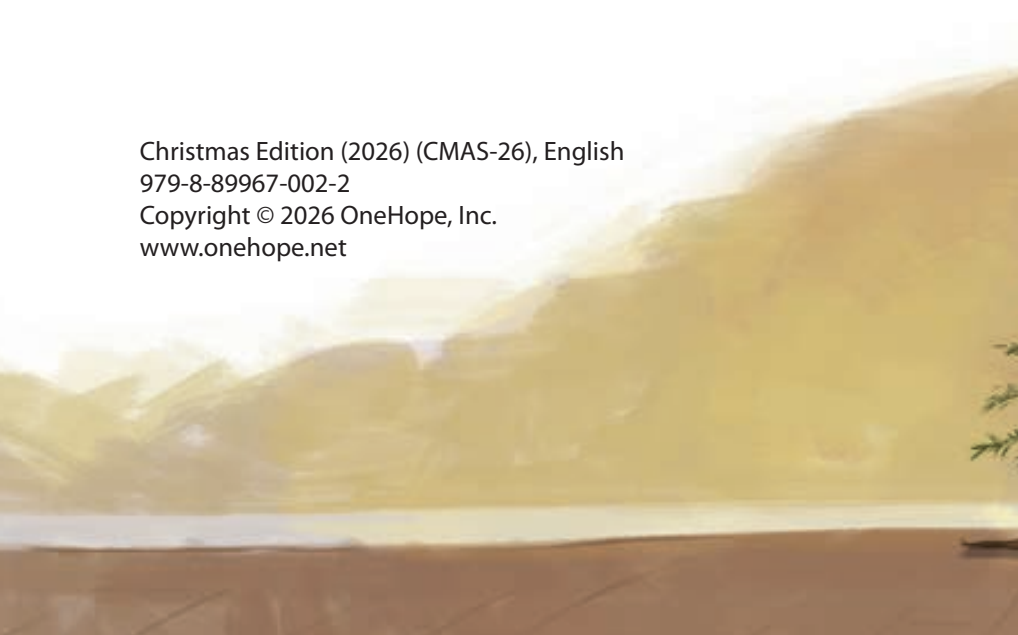
This book belongs to:

The Best Gift Ever



Thank you, God, for
this gift that is too
wonderful to describe.

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It was the night of Christmas Eve. Everyone on the block had already fallen asleep. But not me! I was going to be the very first kid to see my gifts come down the chimney this year.

My eyes were getting heavy.
My yawns were growing louder.

But just as I started to doze off ...



RUSTLE! ... Rustle, rustle!

Then came a huge *CRASH!* I jumped up, but there were no boxes or bows to be found.

ACHOO! A squirrel scurried out of the fireplace and across the floor.

“Sorry about that,” she said, “and Merry Christmas!”

“Merry Christmas to you ... random talking squirrel,” I replied.



After helping her brush out her tail, I decided to share my brilliant plan. She smiled.

“Well, if you need help staying awake, I know a great Christmas story,” she offered.

I thought about it.

“It is a TRUE story about the BEST GIFT EVER!” she added.

I agreed to it—she was a very convincing squirrel.

And so her story began ...



God made the universe and everything in it, including people. The first man and woman God ever made were named Adam and Eve.

God also made a beautiful garden filled with animals, plants, and trees. He placed Adam and Eve in the garden to live there and take care of it. God had only one instruction for them.



God said to eat from every tree except the one at the center of the garden.

Together, Adam and Eve enjoyed the beautiful garden God had given them.

They were happy and felt no shame.



Learn more in
Genesis 1-2.

But sadly, it was not long before God's enemy, Satan, came to the garden, too. He came in the form of a serpent and lied to Eve.

"Are you sure God *really* said you should not eat fruit from *that* tree?" he said.

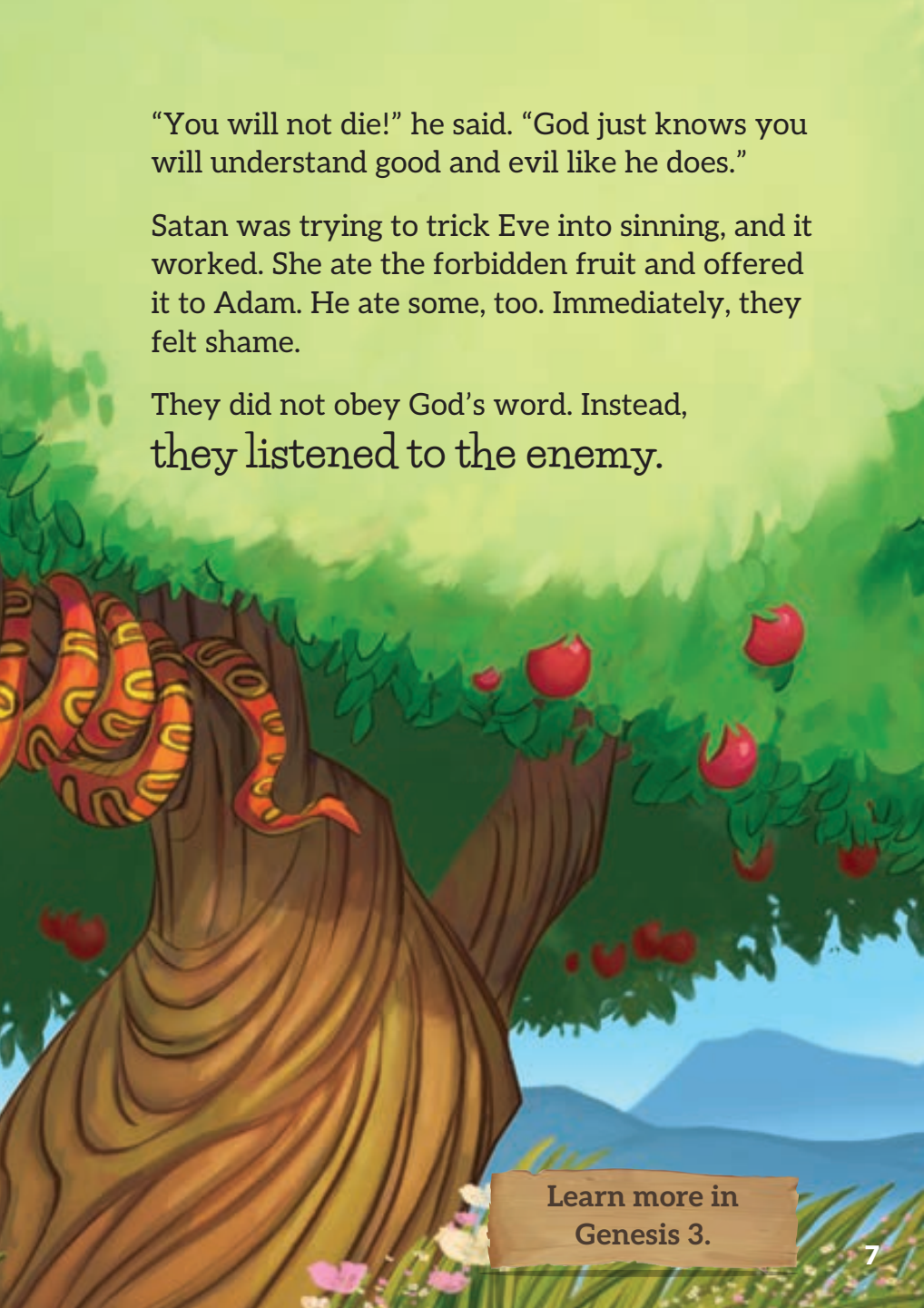
"Yes, I am sure," Eve replied. "God said if we eat from the tree in the center of the garden, we will die."



“You will not die!” he said. “God just knows you will understand good and evil like he does.”

Satan was trying to trick Eve into sinning, and it worked. She ate the forbidden fruit and offered it to Adam. He ate some, too. Immediately, they felt shame.

They did not obey God’s word. Instead, they listened to the enemy.

An illustration of the Tree of Knowledge from the Bible. A large, gnarled tree trunk is on the left, with a colorful serpent (Satan) coiled around it. The tree's branches are filled with green leaves and several bright red apples. In the background, there are blue mountains under a light sky. At the bottom, there are some pink and white flowers.

Learn more in
Genesis 3.

“Wait! Gardens? Serpents?”

I thought this story was about the best Christmas gift ever! And what does ‘sinning’ mean anyway?” I asked.

“Patience, little acorn!” answered the squirrel. “We are going to get to the best gift soon. But first, you need to know why the world needs it.

“You see, sin is when we make a choice even though we know it goes against God. Sin causes death, sadness in our hearts, and separation from God to come into the world. And we have all chosen to disobey God.

“But God still loves us even when we choose to sin! That is why he promised to send us a gift that would change everything.



“God made this promise to a prophet named Isaiah,” she continued.

“What is a prophet?” I asked.

“Listen carefully and keep asking great questions! Prophets were people whom God chose to deliver his messages. And this message was a big one. It carried the hope of the world!”

Wow, I wondered. *I hope Isaiah had a big envelope.*



Isaiah said:

“God promised that a young woman would give birth to a baby boy named Jesus. He will be called Immanuel or ‘God with us.’

“He will also be called our Amazing Helper, Powerful God, the One who loves us and lives forever, and the Bringer of Peace.”



God told Isaiah that Jesus would grow up and do many things.

He would never do anything wrong in God's sight. But he would take all the punishment for our sins.

He would be hurt to help us. He would heal us.

He would give his life to pay the price for sin.



Learn more in
Isaiah 7, 9, and 53.

In the years after God made his promises to Isaiah, the world waited with hope for God's help.

Hope is trusting and being excited that something will happen.

Hope is also knowing we can trust God's promises and believing he can save us.

One night, an angel came to a young woman named Mary, who was engaged to a man named Joseph.



“God is with you!” the angel said. “You will have a son and name him Jesus. He will be the Son of God!”

Mary did not understand how this could happen. She was not married yet. But Mary agreed.

“I want to serve God,” she said. “Let it happen just as you have said.”

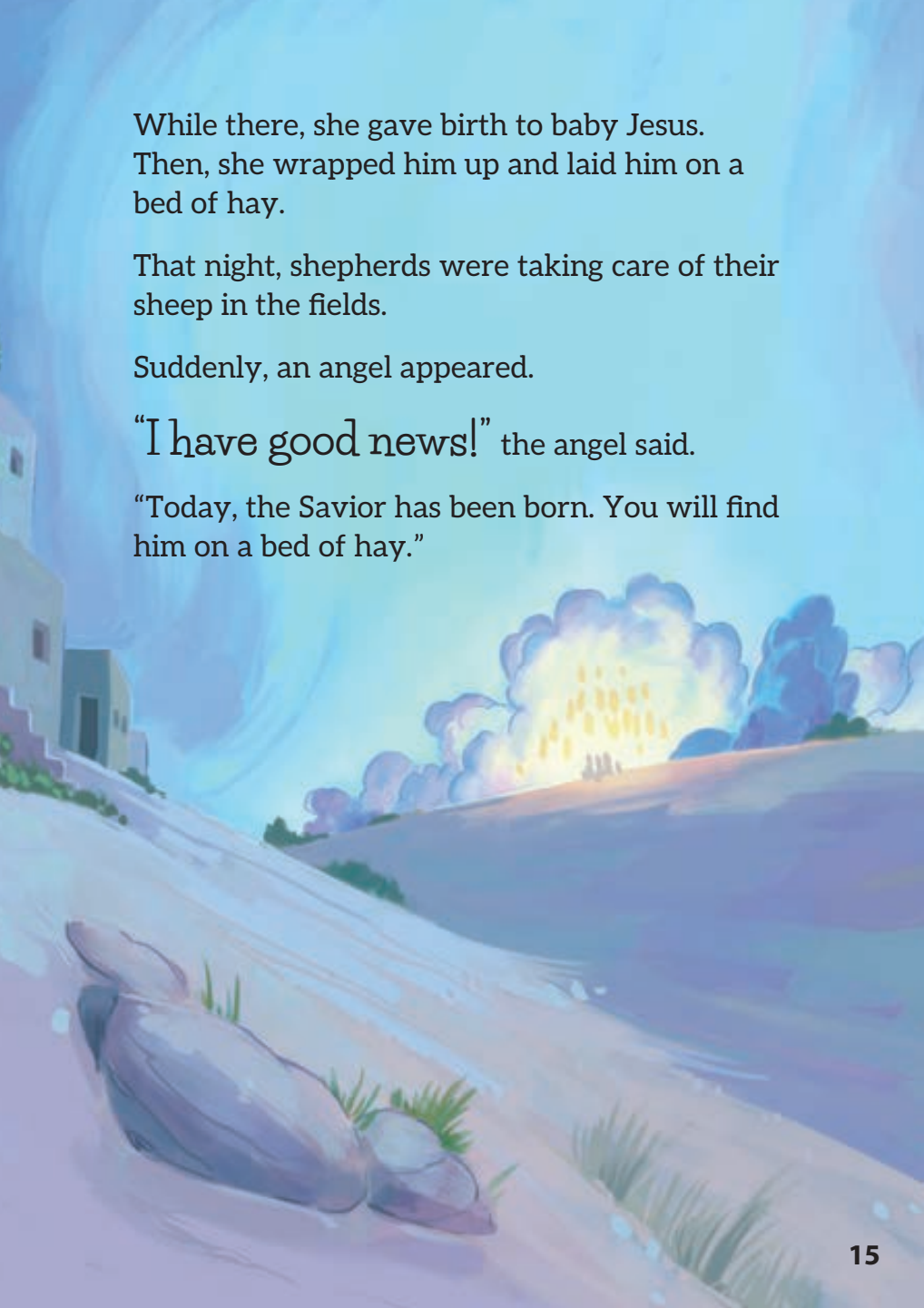




Through God's power, Mary became pregnant with a baby boy.

After this, a government leader decided everyone had to be counted. Everyone had to go to their hometown to do this. And so, Mary and Joseph began their journey to a little village called BETHLEHEM.

They looked for a place to stay. But there was no room available for them. So, they stayed where the animals were kept.



While there, she gave birth to baby Jesus.
Then, she wrapped him up and laid him on a
bed of hay.

That night, shepherds were taking care of their
sheep in the fields.

Suddenly, an angel appeared.

“I have good news!” the angel said.

“Today, the Savior has been born. You will find
him on a bed of hay.”

Just then, many more angels appeared in the sky.

“PRAISE GOD!” they said. “Let there be peace and joy to all people!” The shepherds went to find Jesus, the Savior, just as the angels had said. Then, they told others about him, too.

Everyone who heard was amazed!



Learn more in
Luke 1 and 2.

“Now hold on!” I jumped in. “I thought the baby was the gift God promised. But the angel called him the Savior? What even is a savior, anyway? I am confused.”



“A savior is someone who rescues,” answered the squirrel. “The best gift ever is the Savior, Jesus. He is the answer to all of God’s promises. He is the only One who saves us!”

When Adam disobeyed God, sin entered the world and began breaking everything God had made. But Jesus came to make us right with God again!



As he grew from a baby to a man, Jesus pleased God and gained a good reputation. He traveled all over, teaching people about God and helping them in powerful ways.

Jesus welcomed all people to come to him. He wanted everyone to learn about God's Kingdom, or his rule in and over all the earth. GOD'S KINGDOM is different than what you might think!



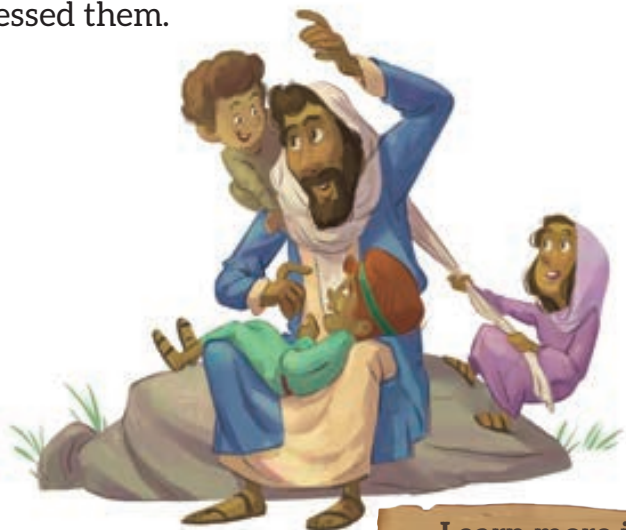
He cares about the rich and poor, popular and unpopular, grown-ups and children. Jesus shows God's love and light to everyone. He cares for the hurting, spends time with the lonely, and seeks those who have lost their way.

One day, people started bringing their children to Jesus. They wanted Jesus to pray for them.

But Jesus' friends saw this. They told the children not to bother Jesus.

But Jesus told his friends to stop. He said to let the children come. He said the Kingdom of heaven belongs to people who are like children.

Then, Jesus touched the children's heads and blessed them.



Learn more in
Matthew 19.

Sin blocks us from having a close relationship with God.

But Jesus came to fix what sin had broken. This is how Jesus helps us.

He is the only One who saves us. He is bringing the world back to how God created it.

This is why Jesus is our hope!



One day, Jesus healed a man who could not walk.
This is how it happened:

After traveling, Jesus went home. People found out he was back. Many came to see him, and the house became so crowded that there was no room left!

As Jesus was teaching, four men showed up. Their friend could not walk, so they were carrying him on a mat. But there was no way for them to get to Jesus.



So the men made a hole in the roof. Then, they lowered the man on the mat right in front of Jesus.

Seeing their faith, Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven.”

But the religious leaders started to argue.

“Who does this man think he is?” they said.
“Only God can forgive sins!”



Jesus said, "Is it easier for me to tell this man that his sins are forgiven or to tell him to get up and walk? Now you will see that I have the power to forgive sins."

Then, Jesus told the man to get up, pick up his mat, and walk home.

Immediately, the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and walked home.

EVERYONE WAS AMAZED, AND THEY ALL PRAISED GOD!



Learn more in
Mark 2.



Jesus did many wonderful things.
He also never sinned.

Jesus came to the world as a gift from God, the
best gift ever.

But the world did not want him. Jesus did not
look or act the way people thought the promised
Savior would.

Some people hated Jesus. They wanted nothing to do with him.

They made up lies to get him killed. But Jesus still helped them.

He was hurt and insulted.

He was UNFAIRLY PUNISHED. He did not do anything wrong in God's sight.

But Jesus knew this was God's plan.





Jesus was broken to heal how sin hurt us.

He gave up his life to take the punishment
for our sin.

Jesus died on the cross and was placed in a
grave.

But thankfully, this is not the end
of the story.

Learn more in
Isaiah 53.

After three days, some women went to visit Jesus' grave. But when they arrived, they saw that it was empty. Jesus' body was gone!

Then, angels appeared.

"Why are you looking for someone alive inside a grave?" the angels said. "Jesus is not here. He has come back to life just as he said he would!"

The women ran to go and tell Jesus' friends the wonderful news.



Learn more in
Luke 24.

When Jesus came back to life, he proved that sin and death have no power over him.

Sin separates us from God. But God still loves us. So, he made a way for us to come back to him.

That way is Jesus! Jesus made a way for us to know and become friends with God again.

This is why Jesus is our Savior. He rescues us.

Jesus does for us what we cannot do on our own.



Jesus is our true hope. When we trust and follow him, we can know that we are part of God's family.

We can have the hope of a brand-new life in him!

We can know that we are never alone. No matter what mess you are in, Jesus said he will always be with you.

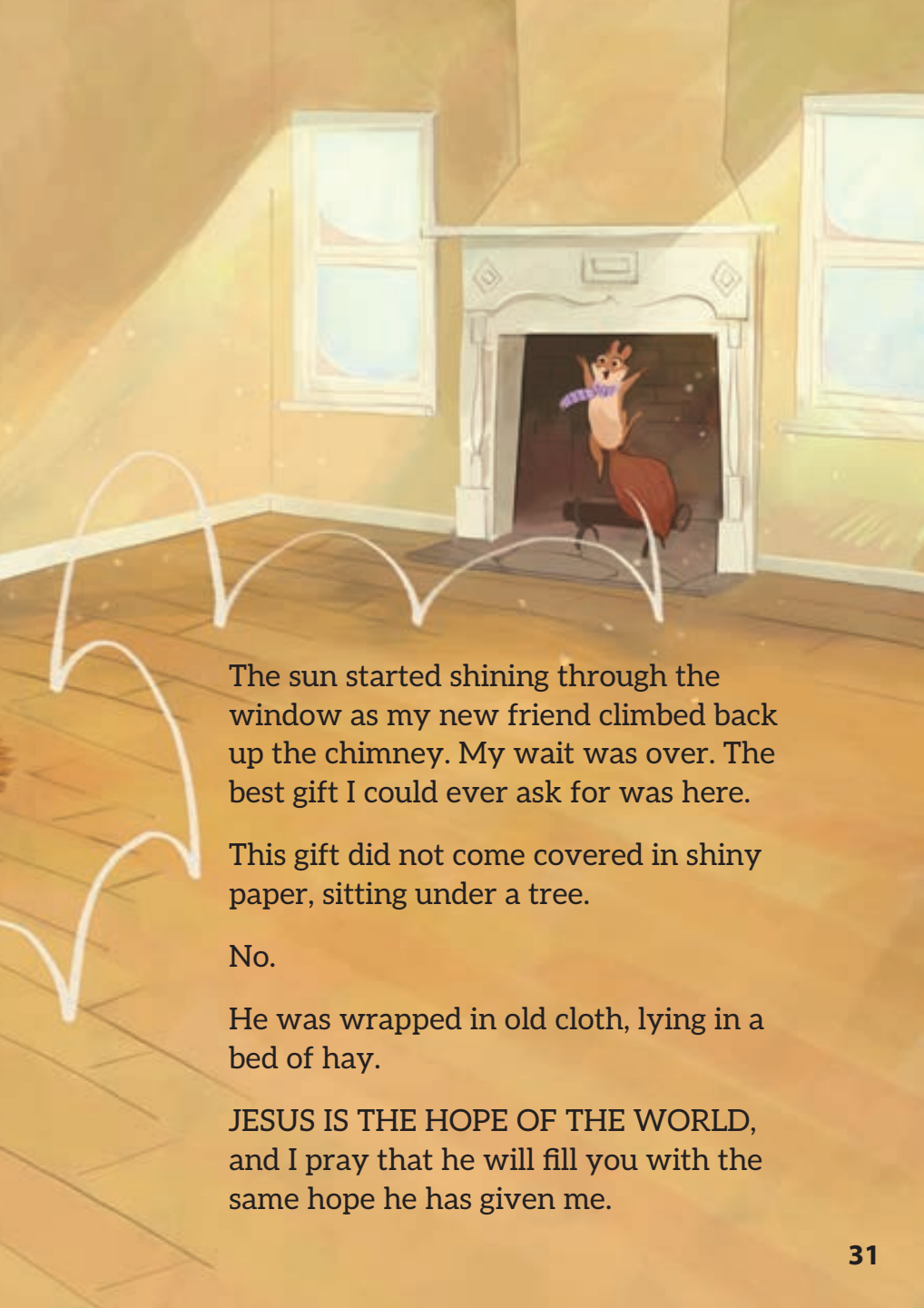


The squirrel finished her story,
“No power in the sky or on
the earth, nothing in all of
creation can take God’s love
away from you.

“God’s love for you is so big
that he sent Jesus to be your
Savior, hope, and friend.

“Jesus is the best
gift ever!”





The sun started shining through the window as my new friend climbed back up the chimney. My wait was over. The best gift I could ever ask for was here.

This gift did not come covered in shiny paper, sitting under a tree.

No.

He was wrapped in old cloth, lying in a bed of hay.

JESUS IS THE HOPE OF THE WORLD,
and I pray that he will fill you with the
same hope he has given me.

Do you want to accept the hope that Jesus gives?
Are you ready to receive the best gift ever?

Say this prayer if you want to trust in and
follow Jesus:

Dear God,
Thank you for sending the best gift ever!
I am sorry for my sins.
Please forgive me.
I am grateful that Jesus died to take the
punishment for my sins.
Help me to trust in Jesus and live your way.
Amen.

If you said the prayer above and you trust in
Jesus, you now have God's Holy Spirit with you.

God sends his Holy Spirit to be our Helper. He
guides us and helps us live God's way. The Holy
Spirit helps us do what we cannot do on our own.
He even helps us pray when we cannot come up
with the words to say.



What Is Next?

- **Read the Bible.**
God's Word is true. We can trust it.
- **Pray to God.**
Talk to God about everything.
- **Learn more about Jesus. Ask questions. Find adults or friends who trust in Jesus, too.**
Spend time with others who love Jesus. Help each other.
- **Share what you have learned.**
Trust in Jesus. Respect him. Let him lead you in life. Tell others about your trust in Jesus. Be ready to talk about him to others.

Learn more in Psalm 33,
1 Thessalonians 5,
Hebrews 10, and 1 Peter 3.





God's Word. Every Child.

Not for Sale