

INTRODUCTION: WHEN I MET THE LIGHT

How the Darkness Started
and How the Light Stepped in

Hi, I'm John—a close friend of Jesus. I spent time with him while he did many miracles, fed lots of people, and walked on water. There are so many things Jesus did and said that hundreds of thousands of books could not hold them all.

Today, I want to tell you a story about Jesus.

One day when we were together in the Temple (God's house), Jesus told me and my friends, "I am the Light of the World."

To be honest, life before I met Jesus was hard—dark, even. My nation, Israel, was waiting for God to help them, but it seemed like he did not care at all. For centuries, God had been silent. No prophets. No miracles. No voice of God. Not only that, but Rome, a powerful and cruel nation, had taken over and terrified us. We were not free, and we needed a Savior.

When Jesus said he was the Light, I was so happy. Could it be that God was finally going to come to us and do something? The ancient writings from God reminded me that he always cares for his people and would someday visit us to deliver us.

Jesus kept talking. "If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."

What does he mean? I wondered.

On that day in the Temple, I didn't quite know, but now I understand because of another story the Bible tells.



There was a time when darkness was all there was—a time when nothing had been created. Our God, the God of light, created light—and he also made everything we see. He made a beautiful garden, and in that place, he made a man and a woman. God longed for friendship with them, so every day **Adam, Eve, and God walked together in the cool of the day, and all was light.**

Until everything fell apart. **A sneaky snake convinced the couple to disobey God, and all that had once been happy turned to sadness. Light flickered out.**

But God’s great rescue plan was already in motion. He made promises to a new nation, Israel, that he would be their God and they would be his people. He chose people like Noah, Sarah, Moses, Ruth, and David and taught them about himself. This nation would tell the other nations about God’s light and love so that everyone could live in his light.

But Israel couldn’t hold up their part of the agreement. Instead of loving God and sharing his light with others, they chased after the darkness of other nations and suffered for it. Eventually Israel was taken away to another country. All seemed lost until a small band of Israelites returned to their home, rebuilt the Temple, and fixed the wall around the capital city, Jerusalem.

Even in that return, something was missing—God’s presence. Darkness fell like a shadow over God’s people. And they longed for light.

That’s why I was so excited when I heard that Jesus was the light. He was God with skin on, visiting Israel *and* the whole wide world. He came to restore what had been lost when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. He lived a perfect life—can you imagine? And he gave his life willingly for me, for you, and for the whole big world. As God’s Son, he died for us, then sprang to life again. Darkness could not hold Jesus in its grip.

I'm here to help you understand this powerful story of light. God has always been our light, and he loves to walk through the darkness with people who are scared, hurting, or alone. Whether you're reading stories about Jesus from before he was born, while he lived, or after he rose and went to heaven, you'll find all have snippets of light in them.

I'd like to take you on a journey of stories—of darkness and light, of fear and hope, of worry and peace through the Bible. As you read this book, remember that darkness cannot snuff out light. These Bible stories remind us that **God has given us the light that leads to life.**

Come join me. Let's go on a treasure hunt together, looking for the light of God in the darkest places.

Adam, Eve, and God once walked together,
and all was light. But then a sneaky snake
convinced the couple to disobey God, and light
flickered out. Yet God had a rescue plan: He
sent Jesus, the light that leads to life.

STORY ONE

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

God Made Everything and Loves What He Made

(GENESIS 1–2)

Close your eyes for a second or two. What do you see? Is there any light? Where did the light go?

Now flutter your eyes open. Look around. What do you see?

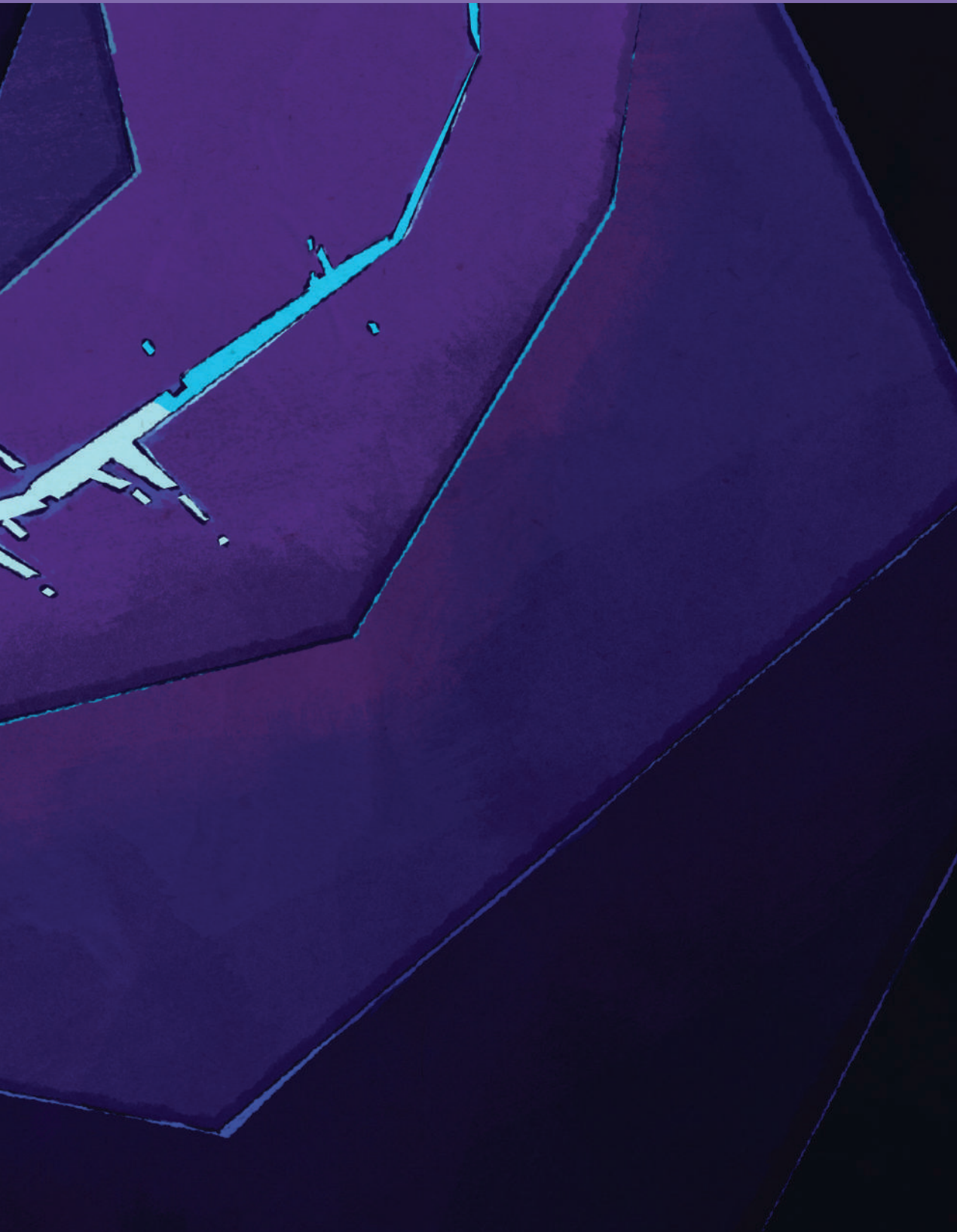
Did you know that everything you touch, see, feel, smell, and experience was made by God? Every ant, mountain, giant oak tree, blade of grass, and even jumping lemurs—God created them all. And he created me—John, the disciple Jesus loved so much. And guess what? He created you and loves you so much too. I am so excited to share the story of how God made the earth and all the people in it. Lean in—it's a great story!



EVERYTHING DARK

Before God created this world, everything was like what you see when you close your eyes—darkness. But even in the inky black, God was there, planning his next move. He hovered over the empty world that was covered in deep, dark waters.







John Reflects

When I look at the stars at night or the mountains behind me or the creatures that creep along the ground, I can't help but thank God for them. Every breath I breathe is a gift from God. The sun shining its light on my face? Gift. The friendship I have with the other disciples? Gift. Isn't it amazing that God created every single thing and person we see?



THE LIGHT MOMENT

God's voice shook the heavens awake, and light chased away the darkness. God put two lights in the sky: the sun and the moon. Then the God of light made animals and humans. And it was no longer dark all the time.

Questions for Conversation

Why do you think God decided to create light at the very beginning of the creation story?

How does light make your life better?

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for making this big, wide world we live in and creating light so we can see all your gifts clearly. Help me be grateful for everything I see today. Amen.

Natalie Hanemann

Light of the World

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

90 Devotions for Families
Who Want to Be Like Jesus



AGES 4-7

Light of the World
Family Devotional

979-8-4005-1510-1
Softcover
\$16.99

SEE THE GOSPEL STORY IN A NEW LIGHT

Engage with the themes of the *Light of the World* animated film through 90 interactive devotions for the whole family.

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

GENESIS 1:27

As the film begins, little John and James ask their mother Salome to tell them the creation story. Over lamplight, she gathers them close and tells the story they had heard many times in the synagogue. She says, “In the beginning was nothing but darkness. Then God said, let there be *light!* Over six days, he spoke all things into existence, and then he made us in his image. His children, created in his image. We lived with him together in a perfect garden. There was just one rule: Do not eat from the forbidden tree. But we didn’t trust him. We disobeyed, and in our shame, we fled from God’s light, into a dark and dying world. Our world.”

Questions for Discussion

Isn’t it awesome to think that God created the entire world—all the animals, plants, rivers, and stars—simply by speaking? That’s one powerful God! What’s even more amazing is that God decided that we would be his most important creation.

What do you think it means to be made in God’s image? Does it mean that we are supposed to create things, like he does? Or maybe that we were supposed to share his attributes of love, mercy, and compassion?

It likely means many things. However, the most important part is that he made us to be his children, living in a loving, obedient relationship with him. But humans broke that loving, obedient relationship when we sinned. This is why we experience death, because we gave up our purpose and embraced sin instead of God.

What do you think it would be like to live in the garden of Eden with God?

Where everything was perfect, and there was no sin, and people lived forever?

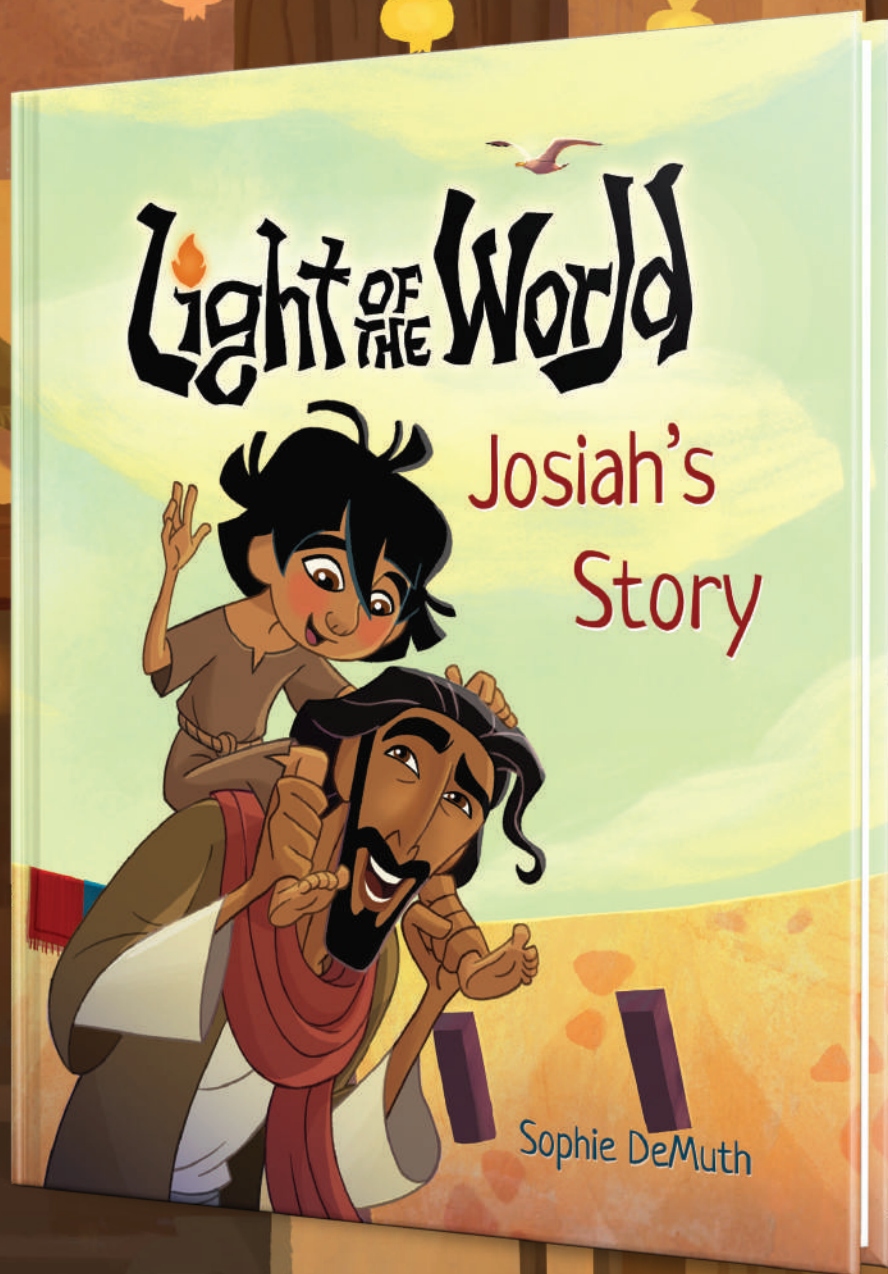
Prayer

Lord, bring us back to living in perfect relationship with you! We want to obey you and to make you proud of us, Father, but we can't obey unless you first change us. So, change us to be like you and give us the strength to do good and to say no to evil. Amen.

Bible Verse

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,
so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21



AGES 4-7

DISCOVER JESUS' LIFE THROUGH THE EYES OF A YOUNG BOY

Journey with Josiah, a friend of Jesus' disciple John, as he learns about discipleship and the gospel story.

*Light of the World:
Josiah's Story*

979-8-4005-1514-9
Hardcover
\$18.99



Josiah looked down at the coin in his hand,
as a sudden idea turned into a plan.
He could be just like John and meet a great need,
and then he'd be loved for his very good deed.

He found John and his friends in a boat on the sea
with a man who seemed different—who could he be?
They called this man Jesus, and they heard what he taught.
“Could *he* have a need?” the lonely boy thought.

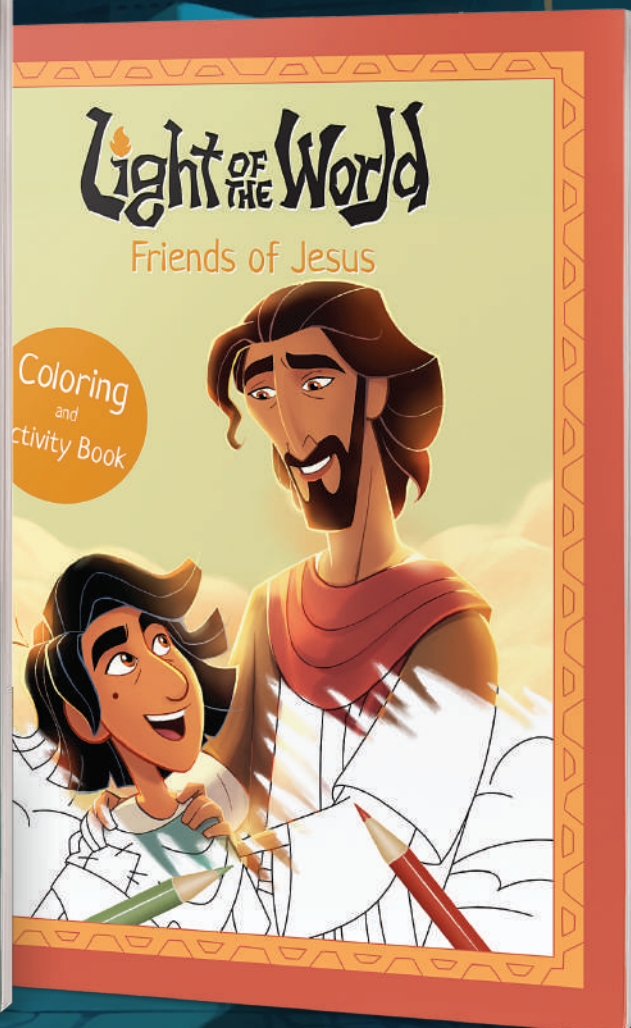
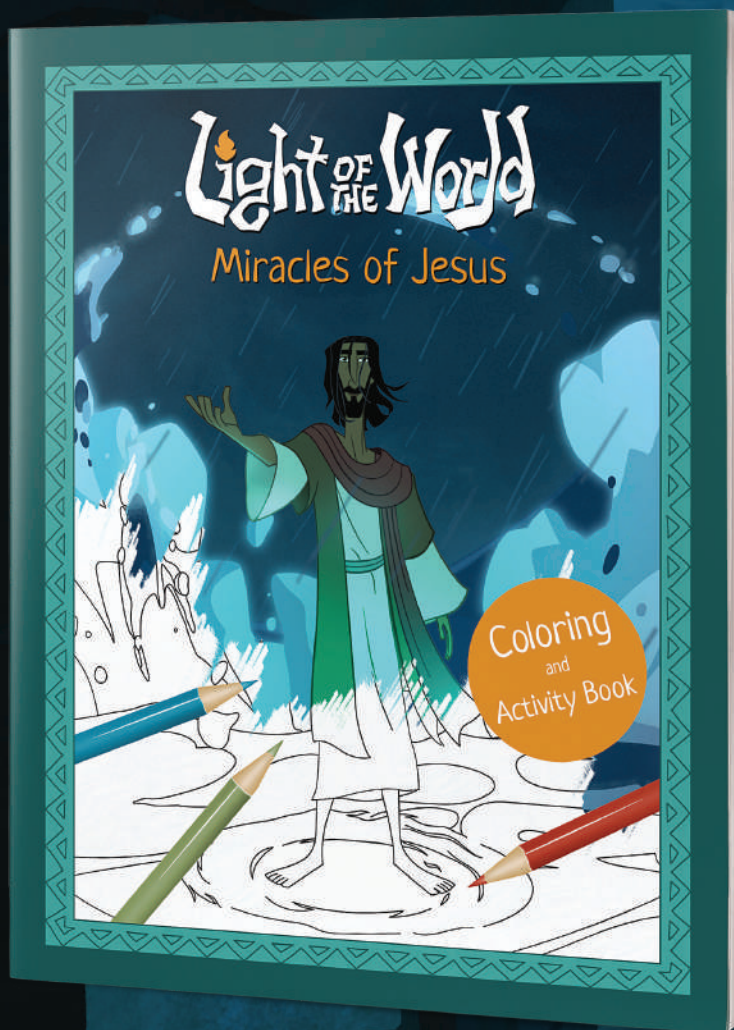


But before he could try to speak to the man,
the teacher turned round and gave a command:



“Throw your nets off the side.” And they all followed through. They caught hundreds of fish, but the nets still held true.





AGES 4-7

*Light of the World:
Miracles of Jesus
Coloring and
Activity Book*

979-8-4005-1518-7
Softcover
\$7.99

*Light of the World:
Friends of Jesus
Coloring and
Activity Book*

979-8-4005-1519-4
Softcover
\$7.99

COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE FILM

Enjoy fun activity and coloring pages with the themes of the miracles and friends of Jesus.



About three o'clock in the morning Jesus
came toward them, walking on the water.

Matthew 14:25

