

# THANK YOU, JESUS

This month we are learning about why God sent Jesus to us. As God's Son, Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice so that we can have a relationship with God, and because of Jesus' death on the cross, we don't need someone to communicate with God for us. When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we can pray to God directly, receive his wisdom from the Holy Spirit, and spend eternity with him in heaven.



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Read this story from Genesis about how Adam and Eve disobeyed God.

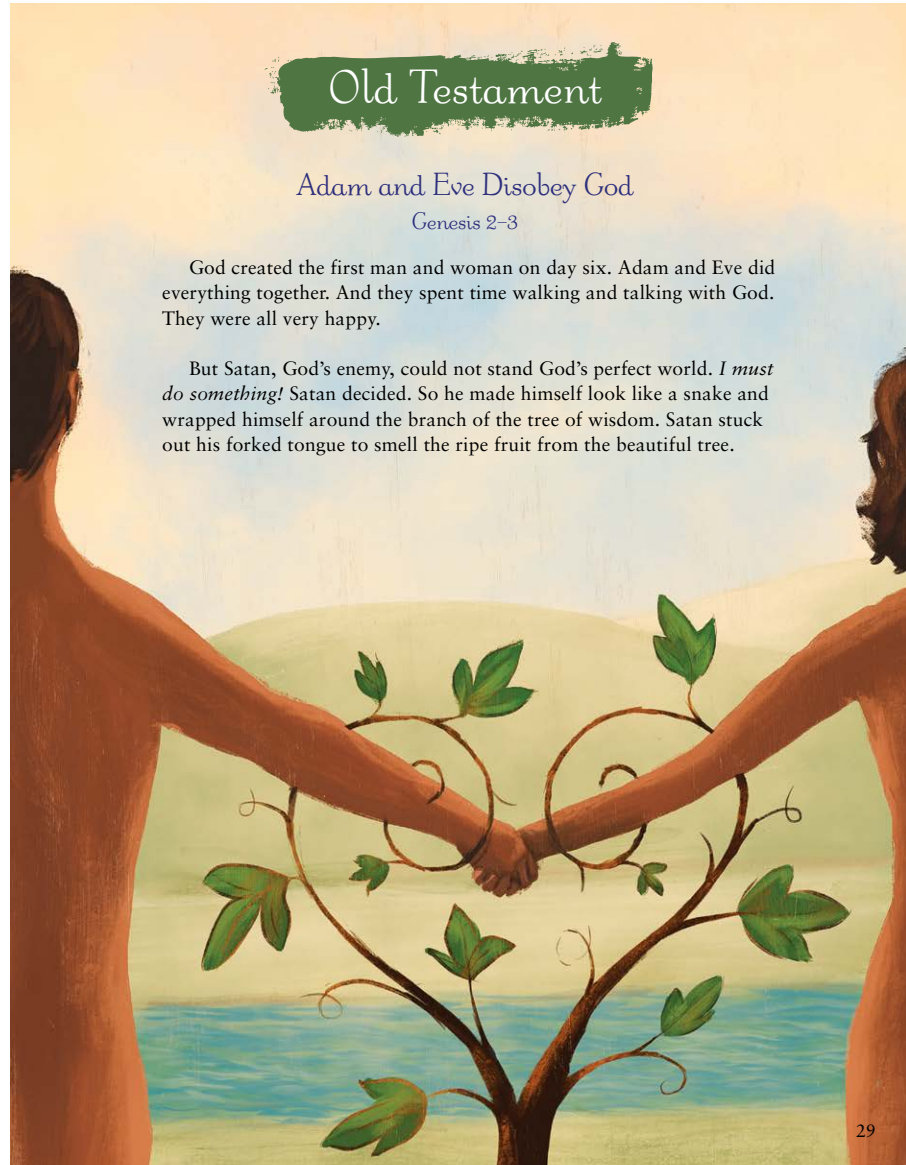
## Old Testament

### Adam and Eve Disobey God

Genesis 2-3

God created the first man and woman on day six. Adam and Eve did everything together. And they spent time walking and talking with God. They were all very happy.

But Satan, God's enemy, could not stand God's perfect world. *I must do something!* Satan decided. So he made himself look like a snake and wrapped himself around the branch of the tree of wisdom. Satan stuck out his forked tongue to smell the ripe fruit from the beautiful tree.



“Simply scrumptious!” the snake hissed.

Eve heard the snake and asked, “What is scrumptious?”

The snake answered, “This fruit.”

“That is the fruit from the tree of wisdom,” said Eve. “God has said we can’t eat from that tree. If we do, we will die.”

“No! You won’t die,” said the snake. “God is afraid you will gain the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat the fruit you will be like God.”

Eve wanted to eat some fruit, even though God had told her and Adam not to. So she took a bite. “Mmm,” she said.

Adam saw that Eve didn’t die when she ate the fruit. She offered him some, and Adam took a bite. Suddenly, Adam and Eve realized they were naked. They ran and hid in the bushes.

Then God called to Adam and Eve. They did not answer. But God knew where they were. “Why are you hiding from me?” he asked.

“We didn’t want you to see us naked,” Adam answered.

“You have eaten from the forbidden tree!” God said. “I love you both, but you may not live in my garden anymore.”

It was a very sad day for everyone.





## The Jump to Jesus

*When Adam and Eve sinned, they had to leave the garden. They had to be separated from God. It looked like God's perfect relationship with his children was destroyed. But it wasn't.*

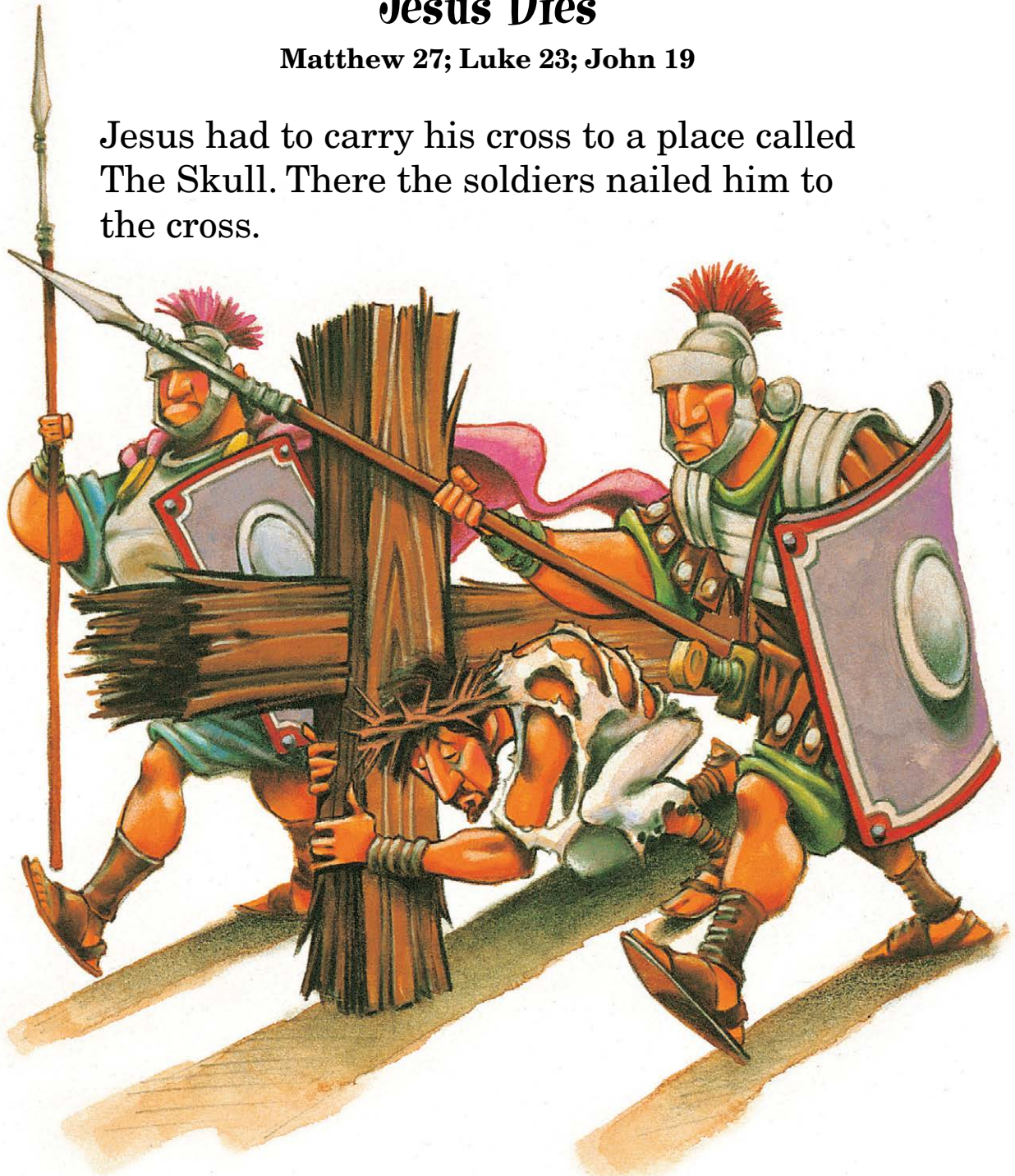
*God had a marvelous plan to put that relationship right again. He would show his people how their sins could be forgiven. God planned to send his only Son, Jesus, to die for our sins, to take all the blame on himself, so that we could be right with God again. And that is just what happened. Jesus died on the cross. And three days later, something amazing and wonderful and quite unbelievable happened ...*

This story tells us about how Jesus died on the cross.

## Jesus Dies

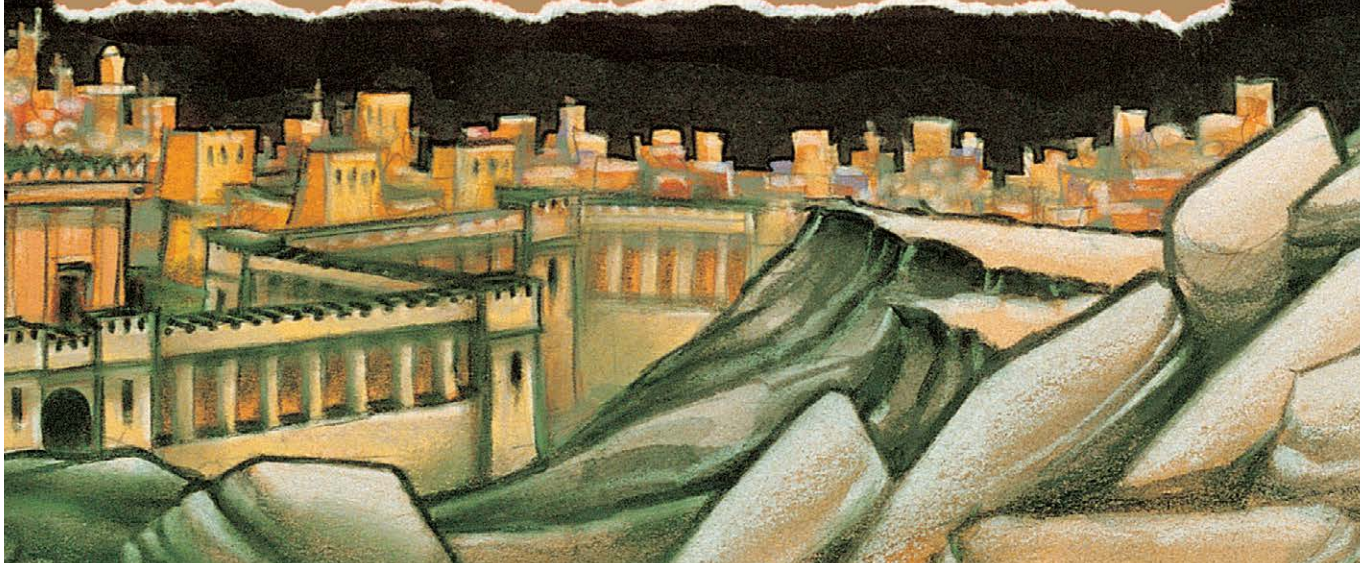
Matthew 27; Luke 23; John 19

Jesus had to carry his cross to a place called The Skull. There the soldiers nailed him to the cross.



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Jesus said, “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.” A written sign above him read: This is Jesus, The King of the Jews. Two robbers were crucified with him. One was on his right and one on his left. For three hours, the land was covered with darkness. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “My God, my God, why have you deserted me?” After Jesus cried out again, he bowed his head and died.



Read Matthew 28:1–10 and the *Life in Bible Times* feature to learn about how Jesus was raised from the dead.

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Matthew 27–28

days I will rise again.’ <sup>64</sup>So give the order to make the tomb secure until the third day. If you don’t, his disciples might come and steal the body. Then they will tell the people that Jesus has been raised from the dead. This last lie will be worse than the first.”

<sup>65</sup>“Take some guards with you,” Pilate answered. “Go. Make the tomb as secure as you can.” <sup>66</sup>So they went and made the tomb secure. They put a seal on the stone and placed some guards on duty.

**Jesus Rises From the Dead**

**28** The Sabbath day was now over. It was dawn on the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

<sup>2</sup>There was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. The angel went to the tomb. He rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His body shone like lightning. His clothes were as white as snow. <sup>4</sup>The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

<sup>5</sup>The angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here! He has risen, just as he said he would! Come and see the place where he was lying. <sup>7</sup>Go quickly! Tell his disciples, ‘He has risen from the dead. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

<sup>8</sup>So the women hurried away from the tomb. They were afraid, but they were filled with joy. They ran to tell the disciples.

<sup>9</sup>Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings!” he said.

**Words to Treasure**

Go and make disciples of all nations . . . And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end.

Matthew 28:19–20



They came to him, took hold of his feet and worshiped him.

<sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me.”

**The Guards Report to the Chief Priests**

<sup>11</sup>While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city. They reported to the chief priests all that had happened.

<sup>12</sup>When the chief priests met with the elders, they came up with a plan. They gave the soldiers a large amount of money. <sup>13</sup>They told the soldiers, “We want you to say, ‘His disciples came during the night. They stole his body while we were sleeping.’ <sup>14</sup>If the governor hears this report, we will pay him off. That will keep you out of trouble.”

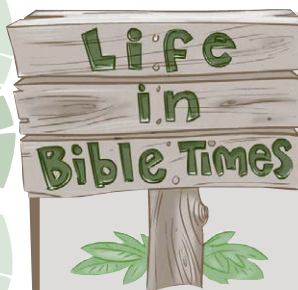
<sup>15</sup>So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. This story has spread all around among the Jews to this very day.

**Jesus’ Final Orders to His Disciples**

<sup>16</sup>Then the 11 disciples went to Galilee. They went to the mountain where Jesus

Start Reading Here

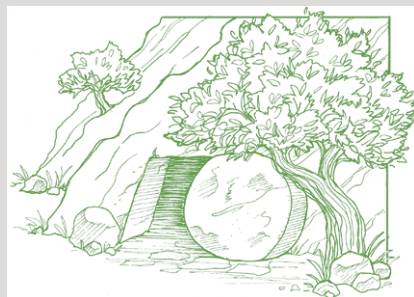
End Reading Here



was put in it. Read Matthew 27:57–61. This is the kind of tomb in which Jesus was buried.

**Jesus’ Tomb**

The tombs of rich people were cut into rocky hillsides. A large round stone was rolled in front of the opening to close it after the dead body



Use this Bible reading plan to learn more about the Easter story.

# THE EASTER STORY

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- DAY 1 Isaiah 52:13-53:12 **Prophecy of Jesus' Suffering and Death**
- DAY 2 John 11:17-44 **Story of Lazarus**
- DAY 3 Matthew 21:1-11 **Palm Sunday**
- DAY 4 Matthew 16:17-30 **Last Supper**
- DAY 5 John 18:1-19:16 **Jesus' Arrest and Trial**
- DAY 6 Luke 23:26-56 **Jesus' Death and Burial**
- DAY 7 John 20:1-22 **The Resurrection**



Who is Jesus, and why is he important? This Q&A helps us understand why God sent Jesus to us and what his sacrifice means for us.

## Getting to Know Jesus

### Who is Jesus?

**Jesus is God's son.** Because sin came into the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, God asked Jesus to come to make things right again. Jesus was born (just about 2,000 years ago), and he lived in a part of the world called the Holy Land. When he was about thirty years old, he began to preach and to heal. Three or four years later he was nailed to the cross to die. When the people who loved him went to his grave three days later, Jesus' body wasn't there. He had come back to life, just as he said he would.

### Where is Jesus now?

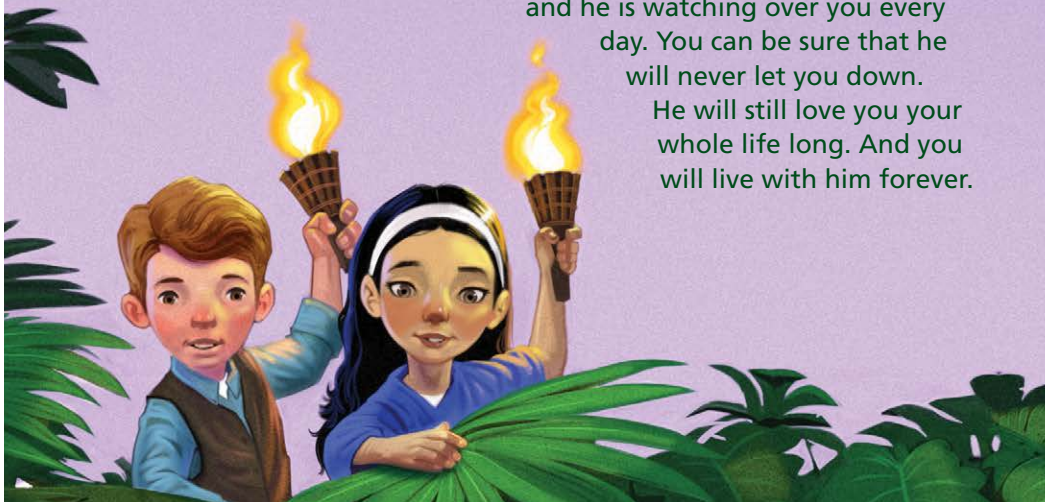
**Jesus is in heaven with his Father.** But he has not left us alone here on earth. He sent the Holy Spirit with us—to make us strong when we feel like giving up, to help us care about other people when we sometimes don't feel like it, to tell us that Jesus will always love us.

### Why did Jesus have to die?

**It was all part of God's great plan.** You see, we all deserve to be punished. God loves us so much he sent Jesus to take our punishment. Because of Jesus we can know for sure that God welcomes us into his loving arms—right now and when we die and go to be with him.

### Does Jesus Love me?

**Jesus loves you more than you can imagine.** He loves you when you cry and when you laugh; when you argue with your brother or when you've had a bad day. He loves you so much that he died for you—but he isn't still dead. He is alive, and he is watching over you every day. You can be sure that he will never let you down. He will still love you your whole life long. And you will live with him forever.



This devotional teaches us about why Jesus needed to die and what his death means for us. Spend time looking up the verses included so you can share this with others.

LUKE 24

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**Jesus Is Taken Up Into Heaven**

<sup>50</sup> Jesus led his disciples out to the area near Bethany. Then he lifted up his hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he left them.

He was taken up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> Then they worshiped him. With great joy, they returned to Jerusalem. <sup>53</sup> Every day they went to the temple, praising God.

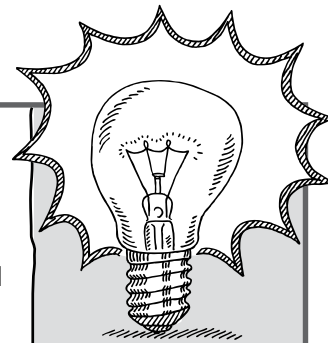
**GOT IT!**

**WHY DID JESUS DIE?**

Do you know why Jesus died? It wasn't because anyone forced him. He had a choice. No one could take his life; he gave it (John 10:18). When soldiers came for him, Jesus said, "Do you think I can't ask my Father for help? He would send an army of more than 70,000 angels right away" (Matthew 26:53).

Why did Jesus need to die? God loves us and wants us to live forever with him, so he gave his only son. That way whoever believed in him wouldn't get the punishment we deserved. Instead, we would live forever with God (John 3:16).

We've all done wrong things. Because we've sinned, we don't deserve to live forever with God (Romans 3:23, 6:23). But Jesus never sinned (Hebrews 4:15). He died to take our punishment. He is the only way to heaven (John 14:6). We can't get there by trying to be good (Ephesians 2:8). We need to turn away from sin and trust Jesus (Acts 20:21, Romans 10:9).



.....  
**CONNECT  
THE DOTS**  
.....

A jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" What did Paul say?  
(SEE ACTS 16:31)

What is salvation, and why do we need it? This devotion teaches us about what it means for us to accept Jesus as our Savior.

May 21

## Salvation

Pastor Duane prayed with Mark in a corner of the room. All around them was the noise of the youth meeting. Kids were laughing and talking loudly, but for Mark everything was quiet inside. He could feel Jesus' love surround him like a warm glow. Pastor Duane talked softly. "Mark, do you love Jesus?"

"Yeah," Mark prayed, "Jesus, forgive me for being a mess-up and doing wrong things. Tonight I just want to ask you to be with me, and I want to love and believe in you for the rest of my life."

Mark just made a big choice to accept salvation. But what is it? Why do we need it?

God is perfect. He can't ever do anything wrong because he is holy. That makes it hard for God to have a close friendship with us, because he's so holy and we're not. But God's son Jesus came to earth and allowed himself to be killed even though he never did anything wrong. When he came back to life, he took the world's badness away. He made us holy. When we believe in Jesus, God doesn't see the bad things (the sins) we might have done in the past or will do in the future—he just sees somebody he loves. That's salvation! Cool, huh?

### Words to Treasure

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

### Did You Know?

Did you know salvation means "to save"?



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Read Luke 24:1–12 and then color this picture about Jesus' resurrection.



**He is Risen!: Luke 24:1–12**

Key Verse: God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ.

—Ephesians 2:8

Jesus allows us to be connected to God, and we should keep our focus on him. This section includes a devotion and activities that teach us about Jesus' role as our Savior and how we can trust that our lives will be better when we follow him.

**HEBREWS**

Week 53, Day 1

Read About It

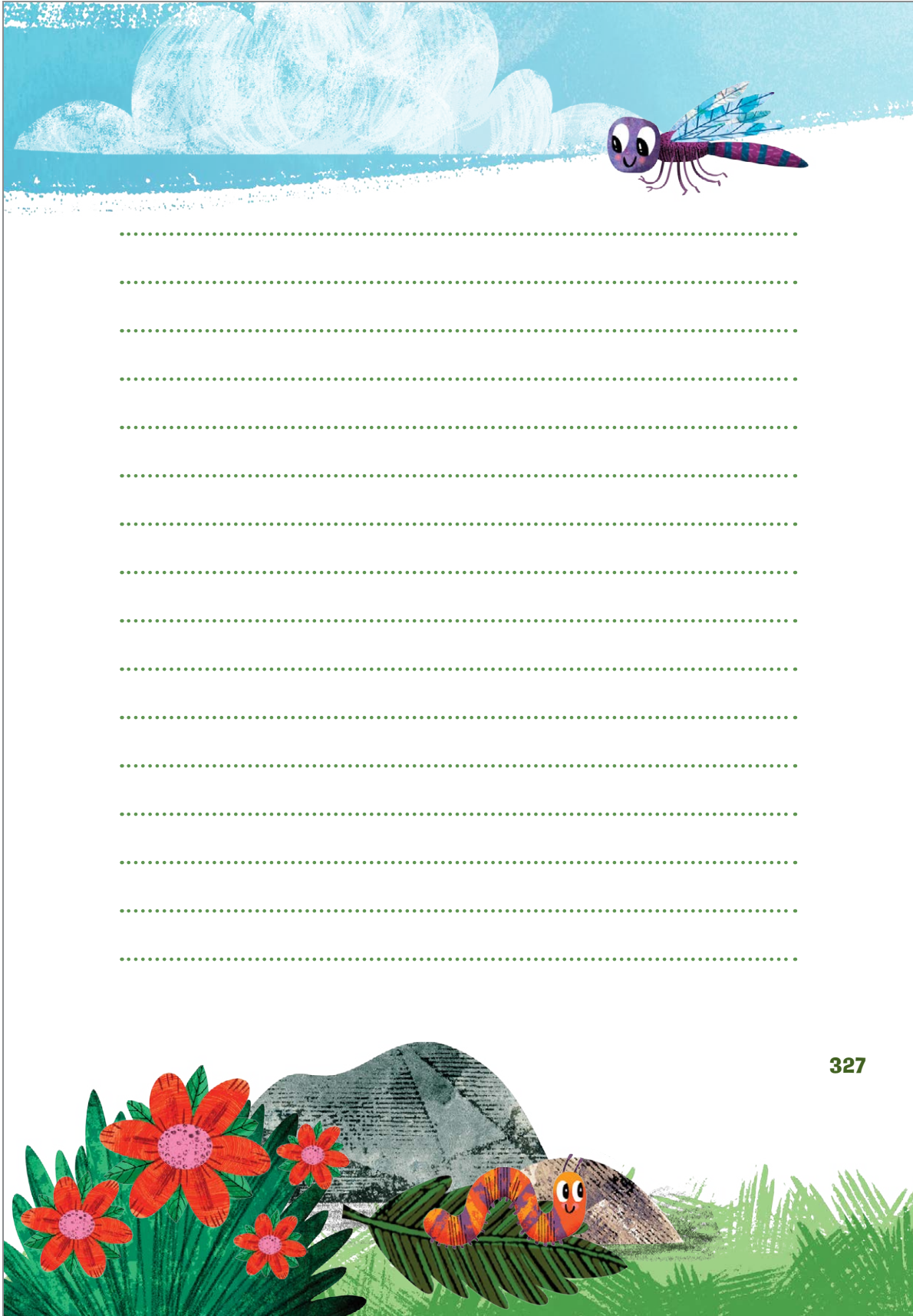
**God wants us to keep our attention fixed on Jesus.**

If you're like almost everyone, you've probably tripped over something at one time or another. You might have been talking or texting on your phone. Maybe someone left some clothes or books on the floor and you didn't see them. You were looking at something else instead of where you were walking and tripped.

The author of Hebrews is writing to believers. He doesn't want them to trip in their faith. He wants them to pay attention to where they are walking. In other words, he wants them to keep their attention on Jesus. There were some people who were trying to get them to look at the old things they trusted in. They trusted in those things before they trusted in Jesus. Those things included angels, the priests, the sacrifice system, and other Jewish practices. The author of this book wants believers to keep their attention on Jesus instead. He knows that Jesus is so much better than all of those other things. Trusting in him gives us a relationship with God forever. So don't trip over other things. Keep your attention on Jesus!

**What things sometimes take your attention away from Jesus?  
How can you help yourself pay better attention to Jesus?**





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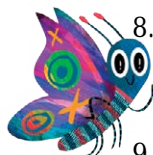
**HEBREWS**

**Week 53, Day 2**

# Think About It

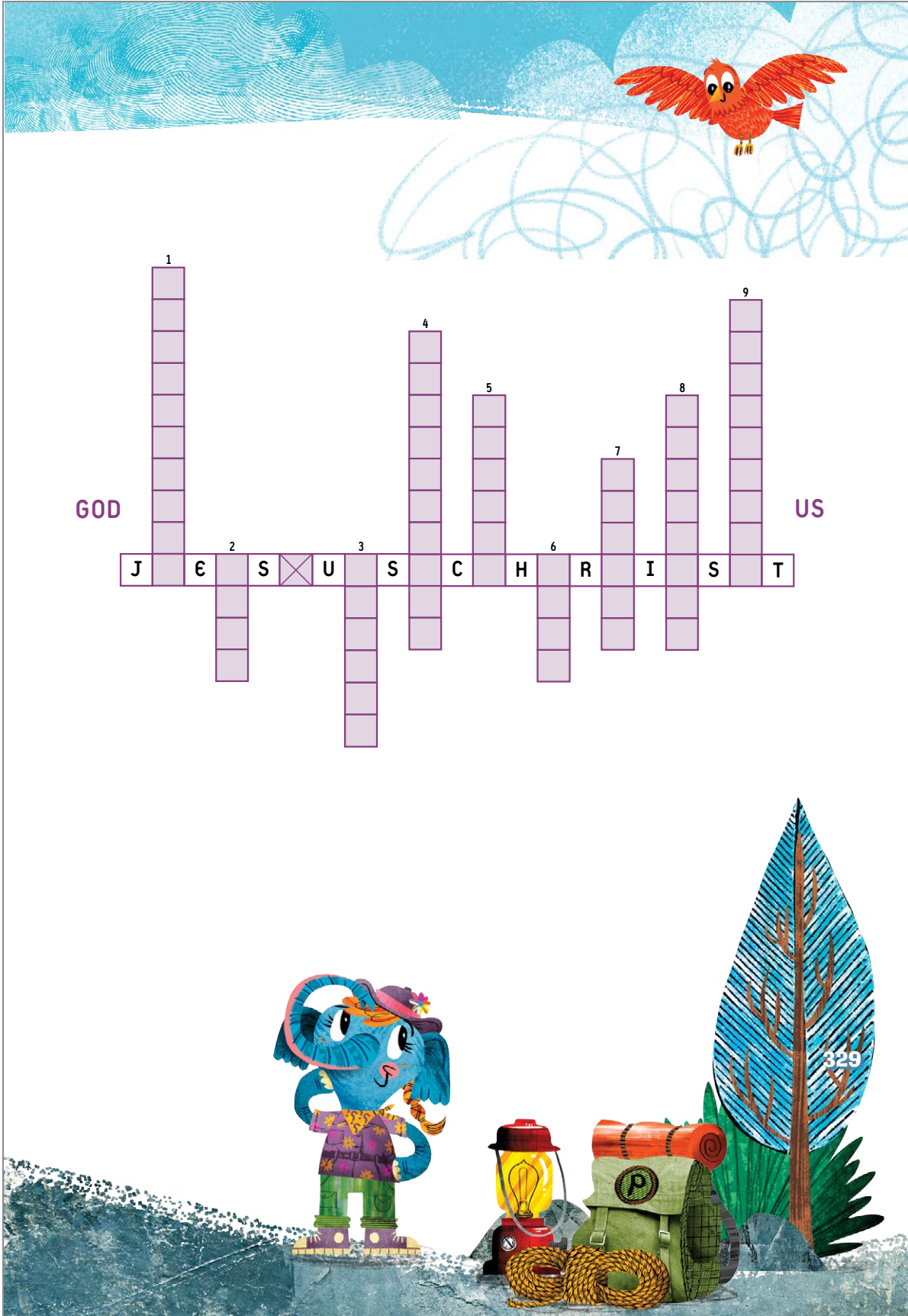
Jesus helps us connect with God. Half the letters in the bridge below are filled in. Read each verse. Answer the questions. Then fill in the boxes below the number with the letters of the word in the question. When you're done, the shaded letters across will spell out what Jesus Christ is for those who trust in him.

1. Hebrews 2:8. God has put \_\_\_\_\_ under his son.
2. Hebrews 1:6. God's first and only Son is \_\_\_\_\_ all things.
3. Hebrews 7:19. Now a \_\_\_\_\_ hope has been given to us.
4. Hebrews 1:3. The Son is the shining \_\_\_\_\_ of God's glory.
5. Hebrews 4:14. We have a great high \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Hebrews 8:6. But Jesus has been given a greater \_\_\_\_\_ to do for God.
7. Hebrews 1:4. So he became higher than the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Hebrews 13:20. Our Lord Jesus is the great \_\_\_\_\_ of the sheep.
9. Hebrews 5:9. Eternal \_\_\_\_\_ comes from him.

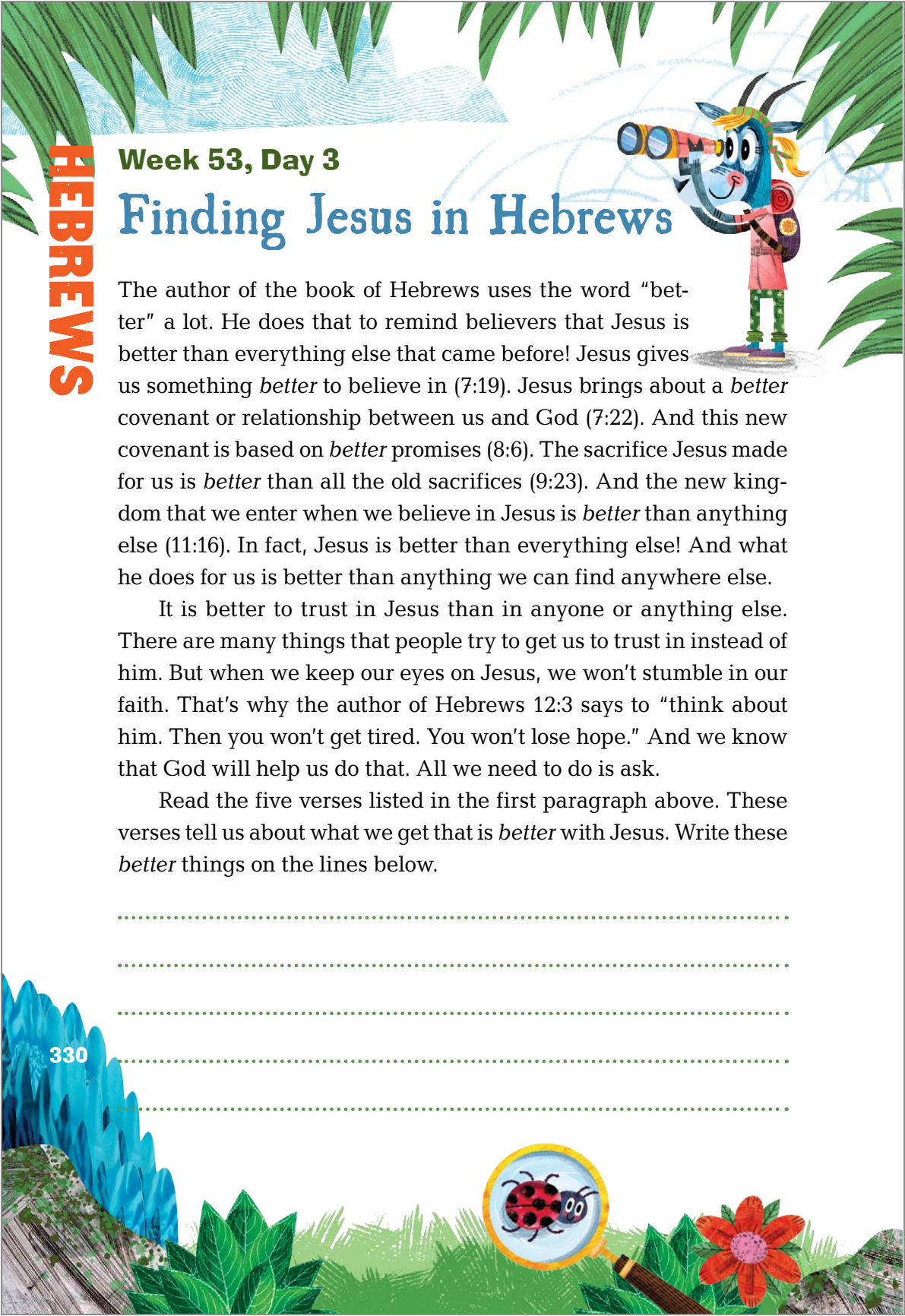


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HEBREWS

Week 53, Day 3

# Finding Jesus in Hebrews

The author of the book of Hebrews uses the word “better” a lot. He does that to remind believers that Jesus is better than everything else that came before! Jesus gives us something *better* to believe in (7:19). Jesus brings about a *better* covenant or relationship between us and God (7:22). And this new covenant is based on *better* promises (8:6). The sacrifice Jesus made for us is *better* than all the old sacrifices (9:23). And the new kingdom that we enter when we believe in Jesus is *better* than anything else (11:16). In fact, Jesus is better than everything else! And what he does for us is better than anything we can find anywhere else.

It is better to trust in Jesus than in anyone or anything else. There are many things that people try to get us to trust in instead of him. But when we keep our eyes on Jesus, we won't stumble in our faith. That's why the author of Hebrews 12:3 says to “think about him. Then you won't get tired. You won't lose hope.” And we know that God will help us do that. All we need to do is ask.

Read the five verses listed in the first paragraph above. These verses tell us about what we get that is *better* with Jesus. Write these *better* things on the lines below.

.....

.....

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.....

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Week 53, Day 4

# Write About It

HEBREWS

The believers had taken their attention off Jesus. They were trying to find other ways to have a relationship with God. But there is no other way! Have you ever forgotten about Jesus? How did you realize you were on the wrong track? Write your thoughts below.

.....  
.....  
.....

The author of Hebrews wanted believers to keep their attention on Jesus. He suggested all sorts of things that could help them with that. What are some ways for you to keep your attention on Jesus? Write your thoughts below.

.....  
.....  
.....



## HEBREWS

Week 53, Day 5

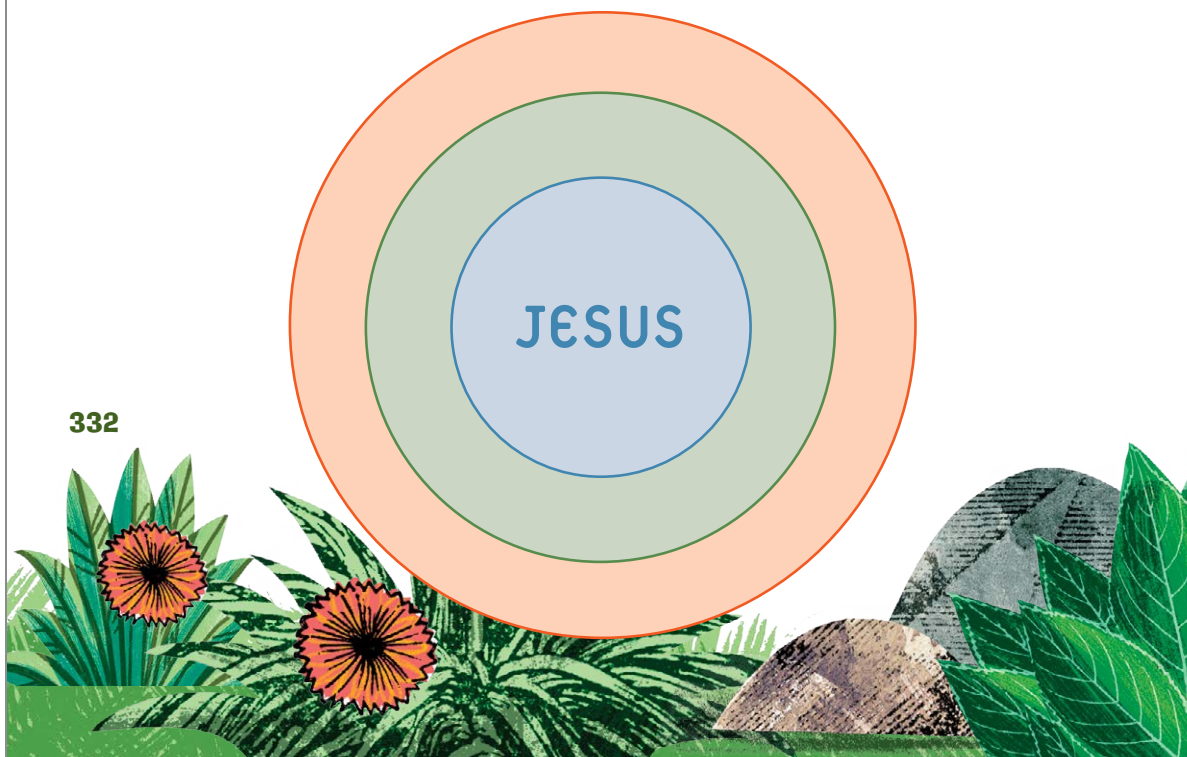
## Pray About It

Dear God,

*Thank you for reminding me of all the good things Jesus does for me. It is so easy for me to forget those things. I start trusting in other things. And then I start getting disappointed. But Jesus is so much better than everything else! Help me to keep my attention on him. Thank you for promising to help me with that! And help me to encourage other people to trust him too! I ask you for these things because I believe in Jesus.*

*Amen.*

Keep your attention on Jesus. Write what you need to pray about in the rings of the target. Imagine hitting the bulls-eye every time you pray.



Week 53, Day 6

## Do Something About It

HEBREWS

This exploration will remind you to keep your attention on Jesus. Play this game with a few of your friends. You'll need to find a tall pole or a tree. It should be in an open place where you can run without getting hurt. Take twenty long steps from the pole or tree. Then put a ball on the ground at that spot.

Now go back to the pole or tree. Each person who plays the game should run around the pole or tree ten times as fast as they can. Then that person must run as fast as they can to pick up the ball. Someone should time how long it takes them to do this. The person who can do it the fastest wins the game.

It's going to be hard to stay on track. You're going to be a little dizzy! Your body won't want to do what your brain is telling it to do! You might have a hard time keeping your eye on the ball. That's how it is sometimes with your Christian life. It's hard for us to keep our attention on Jesus. Getting dizzy and maybe even falling down a time or two will remind you of Hebrews. It will remind you to keep your eyes on Jesus!



Answer key for Think About It scrambled fill-in-the-blank puzzle.

## ANSWER KEY

### PAGE 14

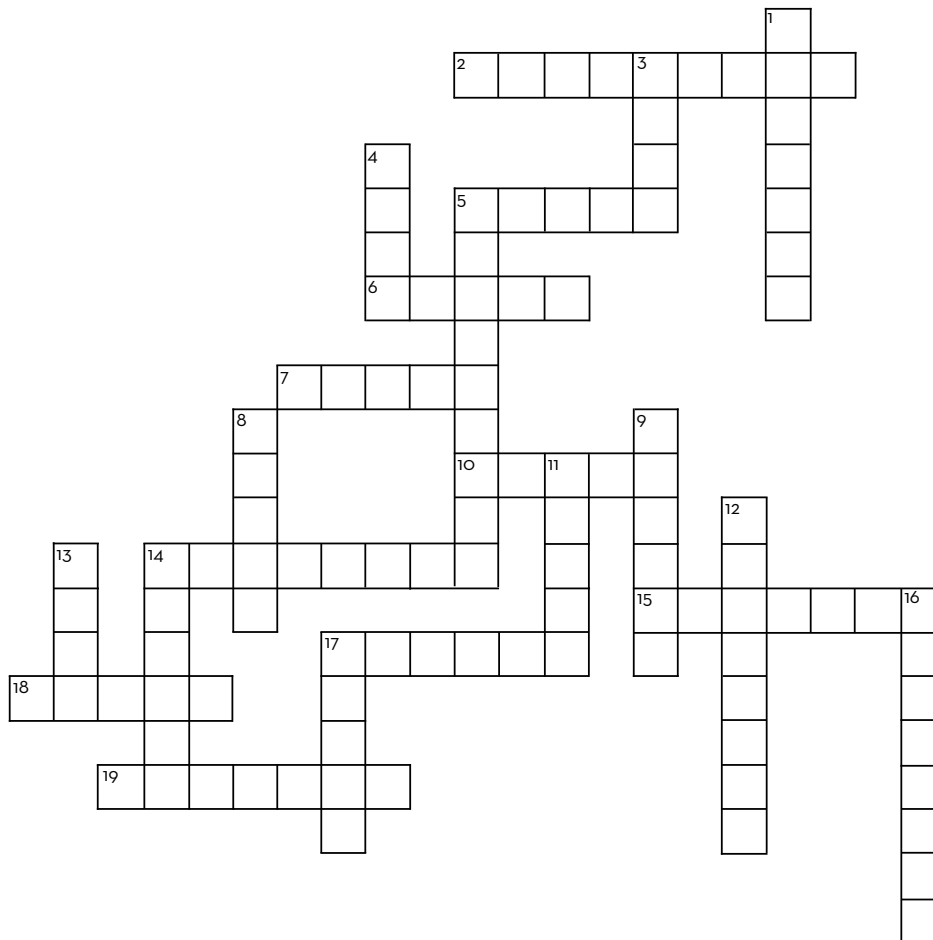
#### Hebrews, Day 2

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. everything | 6. work      |
| 2. over       | 7. angels    |
| 3. better     | 8. shepherd  |
| 4. brightness | 9. salvation |
| 5. priest     |              |

### PAGE 15

#### GO BETWEEN

Solve this crossword puzzle about some of the events in Jesus' life.



## Can you figure out the crossword puzzle?

### ACROSS

2. Jesus was born in the town of \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 2).
5. Forty days after he rose from the dead, Jesus went back up to heaven, and a \_\_\_\_\_ hid him from the disciples' sight (Acts 1).
6. In the desert, Jesus fasted for \_\_\_\_\_ days before the Devil began to tempt him (Matthew 4).
7. When Jesus was transfigured on the mountaintop and some of the disciples saw his glory, his clothes became dazzling \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 9).
10. While Jesus was on trial, Peter disowned him \_\_\_\_\_ times, saying that he didn't know Jesus (Mark 14).
14. At the Last Supper, Jesus and his disciples gathered in an upper room to share a special meal called the \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 22).
15. After his friend \_\_\_\_\_ died, Jesus raised him from the dead (John 11).
17. Jesus was baptized in the \_\_\_\_\_ River by his cousin, John the Baptist (Matthew 3).
18. To escape from King Herod, Jesus's parents took him to \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 2).
19. Peter said that Jesus was the \_\_\_\_\_ (which means "the anointed one") and the Son of God (Matthew 16).

### DOWN

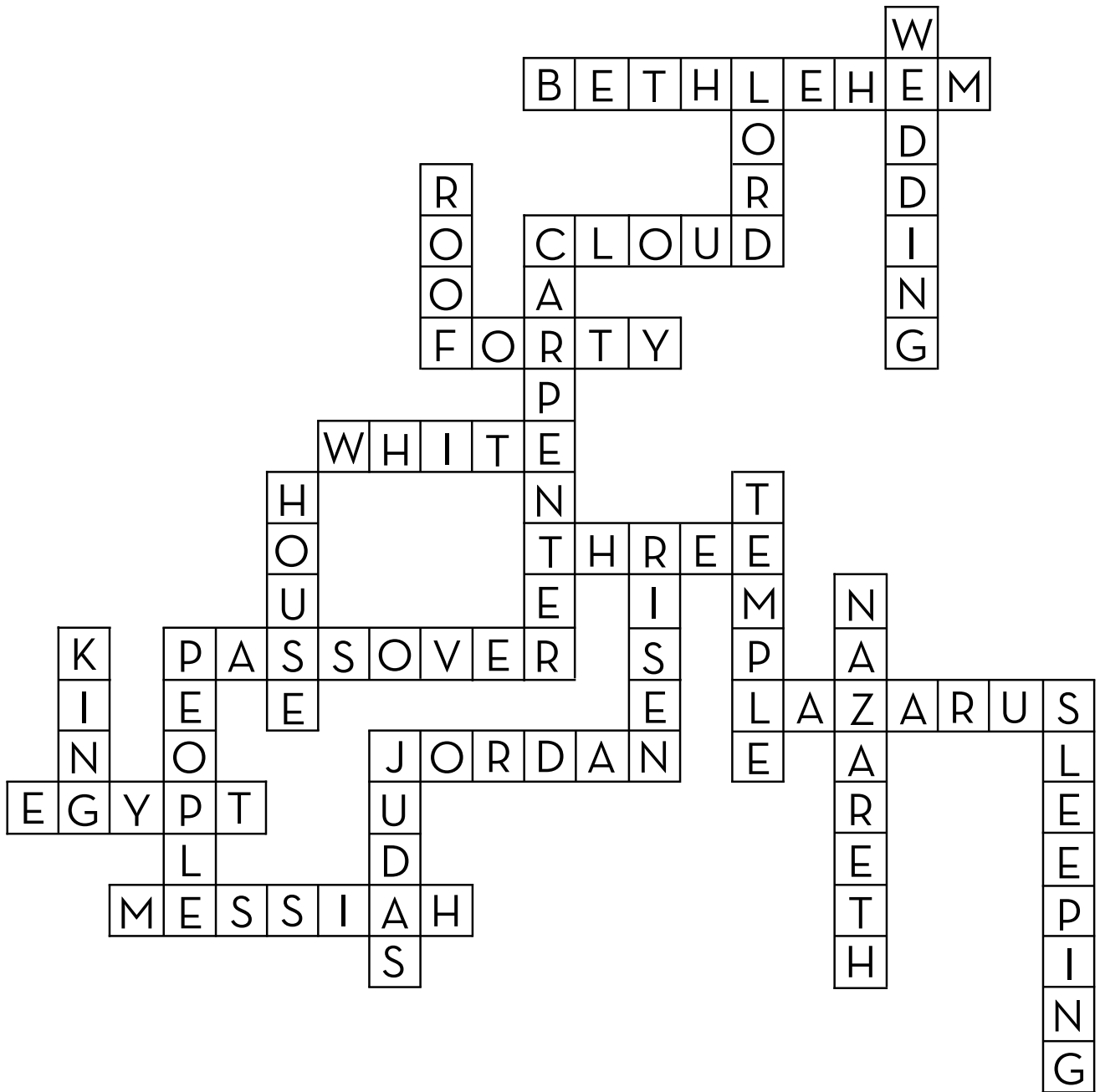
1. Jesus performed his first miracle at a \_\_\_\_\_ in the town of Cana, where he turned water into wine (John 2).

3. Jesus taught that the most important command is to love the \_\_\_\_\_, and the second most important one is to love your neighbor (Mark 12).
4. When some men with a paralyzed friend could not get into a crowded house to see Jesus, they dug a hole through the \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 2).
5. Joseph, who raised Jesus as his son, was a \_\_\_\_\_, and Jesus became one too (Matthew 13; Mark 6).
8. Jesus told his disciples that he was going away to prepare a place for them in his Father's \_\_\_\_\_ (John 14).
9. When Jesus was twelve years old and his parents were looking all over for him, they found him in the courts of the \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 2).
11. When the women went to Jesus's tomb on Sunday morning, an angel told them, "He is not here; he has \_\_\_\_\_" (Matthew 28).
12. After King Herod died, Jesus's parents took him home to \_\_\_\_\_, and he grew up there (Matthew 2).
13. As Jesus was crucified, the sign above him read, "This is Jesus, the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Jews" (Matthew 27).
14. When Jesus called some fishermen to be his disciples, he told them, "From now on you will fish for \_\_\_\_\_" (Luke 5).
16. During a terrible storm, Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_ in the back of the boat; then he calmed the wind and the waves (Mark 4).
17. One of Jesus's disciples, named \_\_\_\_\_, betrayed him by guiding soldiers and officials to a garden so they could arrest him (John 18).

Answer key for Jesus' Life Crossword

**JESUS' LIFE**

*Answer Key*



When we look at the cross, we are reminded of Jesus's sacrifice. He loved us so much that he died for us.

## BEAN MOSAIC

### STUFF YOU NEED:

- Several varieties of dried beans in different colors and sizes
- Cardboard
- White glue
- Markers
- Scissors

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Share that the cross reminds us of what Jesus did for us—that he died for our sins so we can be with him forever.
2. Have the children cut cross shapes out of cardboard.
3. Then use the beans and glue to create a mosaic effect by arranging them in pleasing artistic patterns.
4. As the children work, talk about:
  - Why would someone volunteer to take another person's punishment?
  - What does the cross mean to you?
5. Share that Jesus died for our sins so we can be with him forever. He wants us to accept the love God gives us.



Jesus loves you so much that he died so that you can be forgiven for your sins for all eternity. Read Luke 22:1-71 to help you as you complete this crossword puzzle about Jesus' love for you.

# YES, JESUS LOVES ME TOO

Solve the puzzle. Look for words that are a part of the lesson this week. Remember that Jesus loves us all.

C H O I C E S A R T S D U H A Y B P P X  
 G Q Q S C K M E A S E A N O U V U T H P  
 S N G D B V V F F U R U D Z T N X T G T  
 N B Y V B E G O Y R I E G U I W X L J M  
 S H R R R Z Y R S T V W V S J N O S B N  
 R J V O K X K G E N G Y H O L O X V K X  
 E E F L S I Q I D G J M Y A S R E T E P  
 I S J Q M P E V A J E M E L A S U R E J  
 D U H P Q X M E S N M D U Z C D A M A T  
 L S X D L U J N T O Y B O F T Y G P H G  
 O I Q U X X K E H K V X E W M V Z V O V  
 S I V M P T R S I N S V C W W H D U C R  
 C B I G W I T S J J S K F R G N Z F M R  
 C J P T X C L M I F B E Y E C G L N H L  
 L C F A X I Z S F J V D N R H Z T H S Z  
 L J B I K S M Z C O A Q O K K E T B O S  
 P L C M K Z U R L G J S F V R Q A V A K  
 O Y L C Z L W K U H S Q G V P V Q V C T  
 O E M W S K F Q R Y F A U F B R I E E T  
 J M K G N B L S L T M P E K Y G J S U N

## WORD BANK

- CHOICES
- CROSS
- FOREVER
- FORGIVENESS
- HEAVEN
- JERUSALEM
- JESUS
- JUDAS
- LOVE
- PASSOVER
- PETER
- PUNISHMENT
- SINS
- SOLDIERS
- TRUST

Answer key to Yes, Jesus Loves Me Too word search.

# YES, JESUS LOVES ME TOO

Solve the puzzle. Look for words that are a part of the lesson this week. Remember that Jesus loves us all.



## WORD BANK

- CHOICES
- CROSS
- FOREVER
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- HEAVEN
- JERUSALEM
- JESUS
- JUDAS
- LOVE
- PASSOVER
- PETER
- PUNISHMENT
- SINS
- SOLDIERS
- TRUST