One night on a quiet hillside, a little boy sat beside an old tree stump, watching and waiting.

His name was Benjamin, and he was a Watchman.

Being a Watchman was a pretty big job. Benjamin did his best to take it seriously. But the problem was that his main duty was to sit still and stare at a boring old tree stump, which made it kind of hard to stay interested.

Even so, he knew that the people in his village counted on him. Benjamin's father was also a Watchman and taught him all about it.

"You want me to stare at a tree stump?" Benjamin had asked when he first learned of the Watch.

"It's not about staring, son. It's about *waiting*," his father answered. "Every day and every night, one of us is watching. We watch for the sign of the arrival of the King, just like our Maker promised."

Benjamin's father had raised him to know the old, old stories of their people. He told him how once, long ago, their Maker created the world and everything in it. All of it was very good. And the Maker had created people to love him and care for his world.

But something went terribly wrong. The people chose to follow their own plans. They disobeyed their Maker, and in doing so allowed a curse to enter the land—the curse of sin.

The curse brought pain and sorrow into their lives and the lives of all their children. The world was still beautiful, but now, because of the curse, it was broken. Worst of all, the curse separated people from their Maker. Instead of living with him forever, they died.

It all seemed rather hopeless.
But things aren't always as they seem…