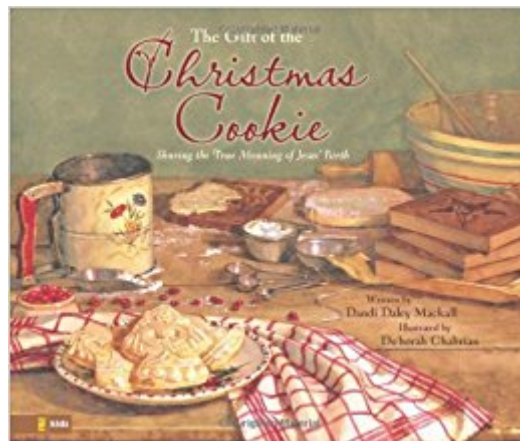




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The Gift Of The Christmas Cookie: Sharing The True Meaning Of Jesus' Birth



Synopsis

It's the Christmas season during a time when people had little money to spend. Cookie jars held pennies, not Christmas cookies. So when Jack smells something delicious coming from the kitchen, he can't believe his nose. Cookies! But his excitement turns to disappointment when he learns the cookies aren't for him. Instead, Mother is baking them for the needy people at their church. While Jack helps roll out the dough, his mother tells him the legend of the Christmas cookie. In a captivating interplay of simple words and beautiful illustrations, *The Legend of the Christmas Cookie* tells a tender story of giving not just cookies, but gifts of the heart that last forever.

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

Customer Reviews

Kindergarten-Grade 2 It's the Depression, and Jack's father is away from the family, in search of work. On Christmas Eve, a wonderful aroma momentarily lifts Jack's spirits until he finds out that the cookies baking in the oven are for the needy. To ease his disappointment, Jack's mother tells him about the origin of Christmas cookies. During the Middle Ages, a woodcarver and his wife made cookie molds to help them tell the story of the Nativity. Jack's mother surprises him with an angel cookie on Christmas morning and, in the spirit of the story he's been told, he gives it to a destitute stranger who comes to the door begging for food. While at times the prose is too

precise in pointing out the parallels between the two eras (e.g., Jack wondered if times in the Middle Ages had been harder than they were right now, and if boys missed their fathers like he missed his) and the appearance of the poor stranger at the door is contrived, the overall lesson of giving prevails. The atmospheric illustrations depict Jack's kitchen as spare but welcoming. The mouthwatering cookies look as if they can satisfy both physical and spiritual hunger. Refreshingly stripped of holiday commercialism, this is an appropriate title for those who wish to introduce a new perspective to the Christmas story.

Joanna K. Fabicon, Los Angeles Public Library

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It's the Christmas season during a time when people had little money to spend. Cookie jars held pennies, not Christmas cookies. So when Jack smells something delicious coming from the kitchen, he can't believe his nose. Cookies! But his excitement turns to disappointment when he learns the cookies aren't for him. Instead, Mother is baking them for the needy people at their church. While Jack helps roll out the dough, his mother tells him the legend of the Christmas cookie. In a captivating interplay of simple words and beautiful illustrations, *The Legend of the Christmas Cookie* tells a tender story of giving---not just cookies, but gifts of the heart that last forever.

We added this book to our Christmas countdown reading this year. I had found it online and it had good reviews. I would have to agree. It is a cute story that shares how sharing cookies during the holidays started. There was in fact a reason for it, to share the story of the birth of Jesus! It was told through the shaped cookies. While I've never seen the wood molds for cookie making before, the concept of what was happening was not lost. A great addition to our Christmas books and will be a part of our countdown each year now. And as a bonus, there is a cookie recipe in the back of the book :)

During a difficult economic time, Jack (the main character) comes home to find his mother making cookies. She hasn't made cookies since Jack's father went west to find work. Seeing Jack's confusion, she tells him the story of the first Christmas cookies. "The story goes back hundreds of years ... to the Middle Ages. In the Old Country -- where [Jack's] father's people lived -- times were hard." The villagers couldn't afford school, so most couldn't read. One family wanted to help their neighbors understand the true meaning of Christmas. The father, a woodcarver, wanted to make figures to tell the story of Christ's birth. His wife knew the people were hungry, so she wanted to bake instead. They decided to work together. The father made wooden molds of all the participants

in the first Christmas. His wife filled them with sweet dough. Their children then decorated the baked cookies with berries and sugars. On Christmas Eve the family took their baked creations to the village where a crowd gathered. As the daughter held up each one, the father told the whole story of Jesus' life. "Ever since that night, generations have passed down the art of making Christmas cookies and of telling the story of the true meaning of Christmas." Jack thinks about this story throughout the Christmas Eve service. The next morning his mother gives him the biggest cookie, the angel, as a gift on Christmas morning. When they hear a knock on the door, both hope it's Jack's father. Instead it's a hungry traveller. They are disappointed, but still share their breakfast with him. Jack thinks of his father and hopes some stranger showed compassion to him, too. Jack follows the stranger out into the snow. As he gives him his angel cookie, his only Christmas gift, he explains: "There's a story that goes with it." Then Jack tells him the wonderful news. "A Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." The last page of the book offers a little more information of the origin of the Christmas cookie, as well as a simple recipe for sugar cookies. Deborah Chabrian did a fantastic job as illustrator. Her watercolor illustrations are surprising bold and filled with detail. They evoke a warm, traditional sentiment. WHAT I LIKE: My daughter loves this book. The story includes tradition, truth, service and evangelism, all in a wonderful harmony of themes. The illustrations are very nice. I love that a recipe is included! WHAT I DISLIKE: It is difficult to tell when the story takes place. I'm guessing it's during the '30s, during the Depression, but this is never really stated in the book. A clear timeframe would have been helpful. Overall Rating: Very Good. Tanya -- Christian Children's Book Review

Hard for a 6 year old to understand: 1/ seems like this is a version that had too much edited out, 2/ doesn't explain the setting was during the the Depression, 3/ regardless, 6 year olds don't know what the Depression was anyway, 4/ story within a story format confused a 6 yr old; 5/ boy's act of sharing the cookie and the story appeared abruptly and wasn't explained.

A great Christmas story.

I love this story. It teaches the Christmas Story and encourages children to share as well. This is a must read book for parents wanting to keep Christ in Christmas!

I purchased three of these books to give as Christmas gifts. It is a beautiful book with a wonderful story and beautiful illustrations.

Books like this helps us to reemphasize what the holidays as well as everyday should be about. Planting seeds like this will steer kids in the right direction right from the start.

This was a gift for my granddaughters and they loved it! I love sending them books and this is one of their favorites!

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