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# Easter Vigil

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God's Story of  
Salvation

COLORING BOOK

by Jessie Bell

illustrated by Edward Riojas

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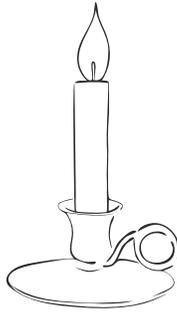
illustrated by Edward Riojas



THE  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
MISSOURI SYNOD  
Worship

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**C**HURCH IN A DARK SANCTUARY LATE INTO THE NIGHT, twelve Old Testament readings, extra hymns, the Holy Communion and, of course, open flame (all a few hours before early morning on Easter Sunday, mind you) — these are all the elements pious pastors and parishioners love in a service. They are also what make mothers of young children panic, even the pious ones. When our family at last had the chance to attend the Vigil together in the same pew, we braced ourselves for a two-hour slugfest with toddlers and infants that started (!) an hour after bedtime.

Our kids, of course, surprised us. The baby was glad to snuggle with mommy. The oldest child followed along with more than we expected and whispered lots of questions. The toddler held her candle very straight and still. Everyone resolved to learn to play the trigon. Not one fell asleep until the car ride home. How could they? “This is the night...”

Be of good courage, mom and dad! You have dared to brave the witching hour for fireworks and plays and gatherings with friends and family before. Holy Week is the ultimate family gathering for Christians, at which even little ones belong. This is the week when our Divine Services deviate most from their normal patterns as we observe the three days which lie at the heart of our most holy faith: the death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. These events, these truths, and this Lord’s promises are worth the risks that come with deviating from normal bedtime.

To help you and your family keep your lamps trimmed and burning, LCMS Worship is pleased to offer these coloring pages. Edward Riojas (father and artist) has brought each prophecy and liturgical element to life in elegant line art, rich in references to common symbolism in the Lutheran tradition. Jessie Bell (mom and homeschool teacher) has provided commentary and a guide for each picture to help you talk together with your family about the Scriptures and the service. We hereby authorize you to bring the crayons, whisper softly in your pew, (maybe allow them pajamas in church, just this once) and come prepared to watch and revel together as a family in our Lord’s great history of salvation, culminating in this most holy night, in which Christ passed over from death to life. May He bring you and yours with Him also, now and forever. Amen.

**Rev. Sean Daenzer**  
*Director, Worship*  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

# Preparing for the Easter Vigil

We are going to attend an Easter Vigil service. How do we participate as a family, and how do I engage my children?

The Easter Vigil is a Divine Service. God gives His gifts of Word and Sacrament, even without our intentional engagement. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (ROM. 10:17). From an educational perspective, however, the Easter Vigil is an ideal learning environment. Children learn by seeing, hearing, touching and doing. The Easter Vigil includes fire (!), movement, dynamic lighting, beautiful decorations, meaningful music and stories. These beautiful coloring pages will also engage your child in the service both physically and visually. May the time you and your children spend contemplating Christ during the Easter Vigil spark a lifetime of growing in the Word and a joyful habit of looking forward to Holy Week and Easter.

## Before the Service

If you have time, prep your child on what to expect at the service. Review this introduction with your child. Walk through the summary below of each of the parts of the service. Then, let your child peek at the coloring pages. Do your best to create an air of excitement and anticipation. Finally, feel free to choose one of the coloring pages to complete ahead of time. Like any celebration, the anticipation and preparation are often half the fun.

## During the Service

Encourage your child to color one or more coloring pages. Look through the prompts on the opposite side for questions to ask, things to look for and connections to discuss. It is not irreverent when parents whisper quietly with their children during the service to instruct them in the faith.

## After the Service

If they haven't finished coloring, give them time to finish whatever they were working on during the service. Look through their completed coloring page(s). Praise their efforts. If you didn't get to its opposite page, look through the information and do the prompts. Let them color a few more pages if they show interest. Finally, give them plenty of time to ask questions or explain what they found interesting about the service.

Understand that the following pages are tools to point you and your children to Jesus, not homework to be judged or graded. Take what is helpful and leave the rest. If your child only colors one page during the service and you don't have time to do anything else, you, as a Christian parent, have still successfully engaged your child with the Word and worship of Christ in a meaningful way.

# What is the Easter Vigil?

The Easter Vigil service is held after sunset on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. The word vigil means “to keep watch.” The Easter Vigil is a time set aside for attentive waiting and prayer. The disciples, who just witnessed their Lord's death on the very first Holy Saturday, would have been in a state of shock, unbelief and grief. We, however, know and believe the end of the story, so we can watch and wait on Saturday knowing that the Resurrection is just hours away. Tonight we celebrate our Lord's passing over from death to life, and ours with Him. This service acts as the bridge between the reflective season of Lent and the joyful season of Easter, connecting Good Friday to Easter Sunday. The Easter Vigil also completes the Triduum.

## What is the Triduum?

The Triduum is the three-day observance that includes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil. If you attend the Maundy Thursday or Good Friday services, you may notice that they do not end with the Benediction, the final blessing. Instead, these services end in silence. At last, we hear the Benediction again at the end of the Easter Vigil.

## What can I expect?

The Easter Vigil narrates the story of salvation from creation to the cross. The service is full of contrasts between darkness and light, punishment and mercy, all the while remaining focused on baptism. The readings and songs, as well as the lighting and decoration of the chancel, mark the transition from Lent to Easter.

## Is it a regular Divine Service?

The traditional Divine Service has two parts: the Service of the Word and the Service of the Sacrament. The Easter Vigil tends to be longer than a standard service and typically has six parts: the Service of Light, the Service of Readings, the Service of Holy Baptism, the Service of Prayer, the Service of the Word and the Service of the Sacrament.

## What can we expect during each part of the service?

The following is a very general summary of the Vigil as it appears in the *Lutheran Service Book: Altar Book*. Keep in mind each congregation will have its own traditions. \*The asterisk denotes a coordinating coloring page.

### 1. Service of Light

- The new paschal candle is dedicated, lit, and processed into the church. (\*Paschal Candle and Lumen Christi)
- Many churches will start the Vigil outside with a bonfire.

### 2. Service of Readings

- Twelve Old Testament readings are appointed for the Vigil. A coloring page is provided for each of these readings.
- The entire packet may be printed as a booklet, especially for a full Easter Vigil.
- Not all congregations will read all twelve readings. You could ask your pastor in advance for the lessons that will be used at your congregation. Then, hand out the specific page as it appears in the bulletin.

\*The Creation (GEN. 1)

\*The Flood (GEN. 7, 8, 9)

\*The Testing of Abraham (GEN. 22)

\*Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea (EX. 14)

\*Salvation Offered Freely to All (IS. 55)

\*A New Heart and a New Spirit (EZEK. 36)

\*God's Faithfulness to Israel (DEUT. 31)

\*The Valley of Dry Bones (EZEK. 37)

\*Job Confesses the Redeemer (JOB 19)

\*Jonah Preaches to Nineveh (JONAH 3)

\*The Gathering of God's People (ZEPH. 3)

\*The Fiery Furnace (DAN. 3)

- These stories are full of contrasts: light and dark, good and evil, punishment and mercy. These contrasts are excellent talking points for your family. They tell the stories of the Lord's

salvation for His people in the past and point ahead to what Jesus has done for us and all the world now in His death and resurrection.

### 3. Service of Holy Baptism

- In the early church, Lent was often used as a time to catechize, or teach the faith to, new members. The Easter Vigil concluded their catechesis, culminating in the catechumens' baptisms.
- Some congregations also use this service to confirm new confirmands.
- If there are no baptisms or confirmations to perform, the congregation will renew their baptismal vows. (\*A New Heart and Spirit)

### 4. Service of Prayer

- Your child may be able to participate in the repeated or familiar responses with your help.

### 5. Service of the Word

- This part will be familiar from the Service of the Word in a typical Divine Service.
- The Easter Acclamation (\*Alleluia) is said and sung again after having fallen silent for many weeks.
- The chancel may be adorned and lights brightened for Easter.
- The Holy Gospel is read. (\*The Easter Story)
- The Sermon is preached. (This may be a good time for young children to color on their own as they listen!)

### 6. Service of the Sacrament

- This part is also familiar from a typical Divine Service.
- The Lord's Supper is distributed. (\*Salvation Offered Freely to All)
- The final blessing, or Benediction, is given.

The Easter Vigil is a stunning service that will have you noticing new riches and treasures each year. God's story of salvation is for our families and us. God loves us and sent His Son for us, even while we were still sinners. He reached out as the Light of the World to dispel the darkness of our sin. When we deserved punishment, He showed us mercy. We pray this Easter Vigil is a blessing to you and your children as you celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

# Paschal Candle and Lumen Christi

**L** “The light of Christ.”

**C** “Thanks be to God.”

The first part of the Easter Vigil is called the Service of Light. We will talk about light, sing about light and watch as the paschal candle is dedicated, lit and brought into the church.

The paschal candle is the big candle you often see at the front of the church. It is lit during the season of Easter and sometimes at Baptisms and funerals. Today at the Easter Vigil, it may be in an unusual location — outside!

Some churches start outside with a bonfire, from which the pastor will light the paschal candle. Then, he will go through a series of motions. First, he will trace the cross, the Alpha and Omega (the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet), and the year on the candle. If it is a new candle, he may press five wax nails into the candle. These nails represent Jesus’ five wounds: the crown of thorns, the two nails in his hands, the nail in his feet and the wound from the spear thrust into his side after his death.

Next, there will be a procession. The congregation will follow the paschal candle into the church. In some churches, everyone lights a candle of their own from this candle. The procession will stop three times. Each time, the pastor or an assistant will sing, “The light of Christ,” to which the congregation will respond, “Thanks be to God.” This part of the service is called “Lumen Christi,” Latin for “light of Christ.”

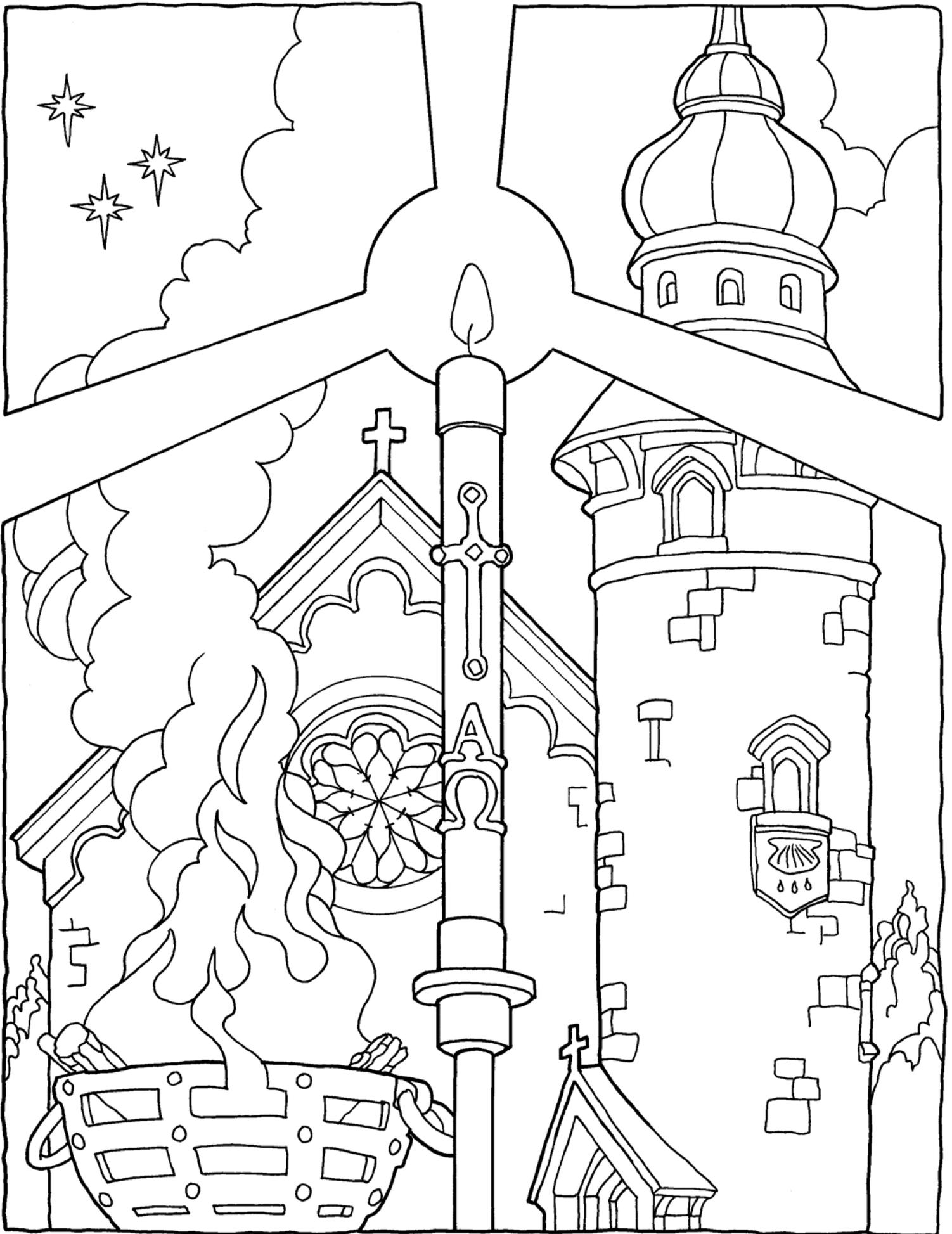
## Seek and Find

- The new fire
- The Alpha and Omega
- Five wax nails (hint: check the cross)
- Three crosses
- A baptismal shell

## Think About It

Why do you think fire and light play such a vital role in our churches, especially at the Easter Vigil?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Creation

## Genesis 1:1-2:3

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

God was first. When nothing else existed in the universe, there was God. He created everything from nothing. With only words, He transformed the empty void into the fullness of creation.

Listen to the Scripture lesson as it describes each day of creation. Each day God adds more to His creation. Each day He calls it “good.” Can you recognize the pattern of each new day?

The first day of creation began with God creating light. Many churches will start their Easter Vigil outside the sanctuary with the light from a bonfire. Then everyone will process into the church.

Later in the service, the chancel (the area around the altar) will transform from Good Friday’s emptiness to Easter’s fullness. Watch for that amazing transformation as the servers or pastors adorn the chancel and light the candles.

### Seek and Find

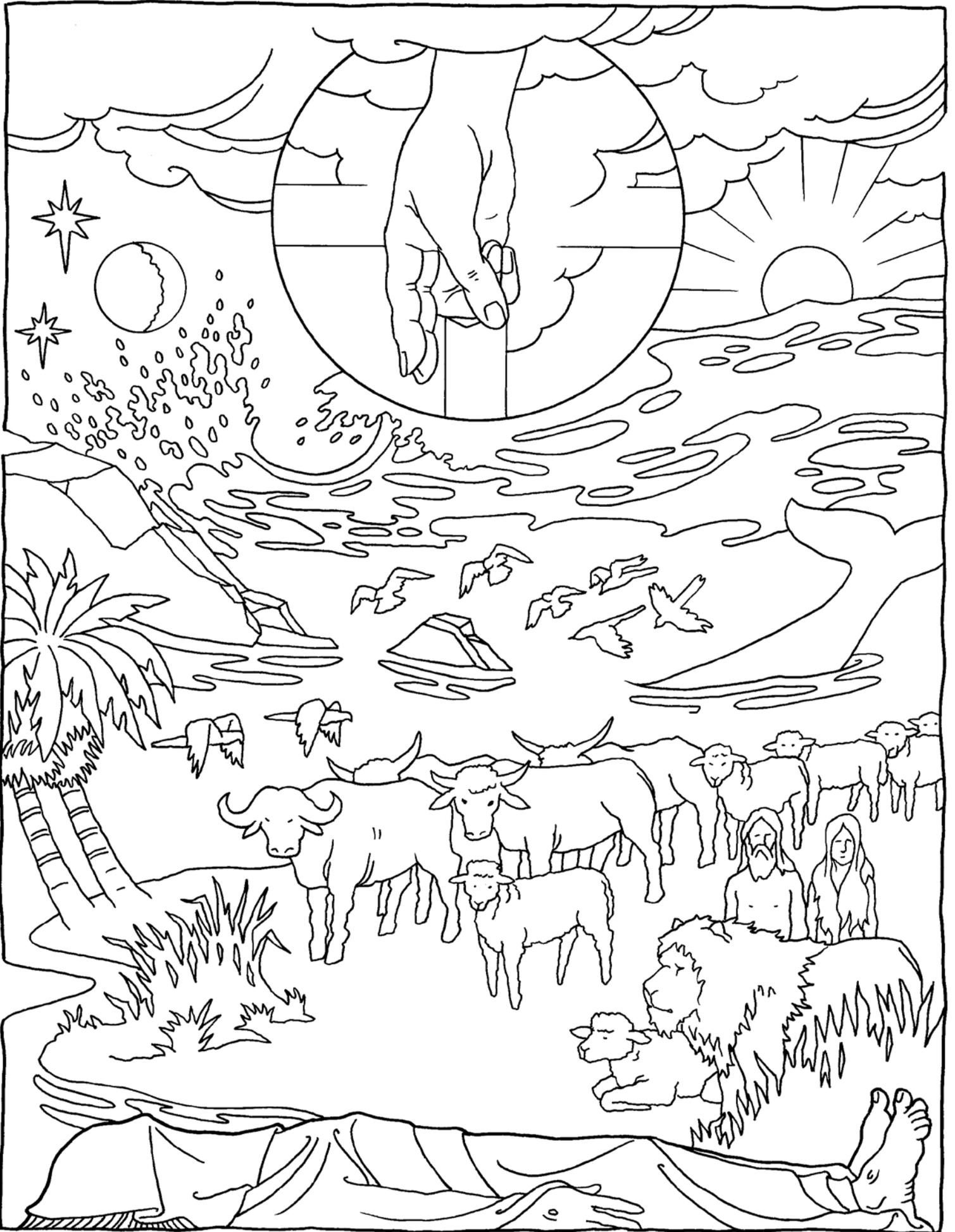
Find each day of creation, beginning at the top of the coloring page and moving down.

- A tri-radiant nimbus (halo with three rays) ☉
- Day 1: Light
- Day 2: Heavens
- Day 3: Earth, seas and plants
- Day 4: Sun, moon and stars
- Day 5: Sea creatures and birds
- Day 6: Land animals and humans
- Day 7: The Sabbath rest

### Think About It

Why do you think the artist decided to use Jesus in the tomb as the symbol for the seventh day?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Flood

Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18, 8:6-18, 9:8-13

“For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground. And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.”

Have you ever heard of a building that was condemned? It is a building that is so damaged, unsafe and beyond repair that it must be destroyed so the owners can build a new building. The world was so sinful that God decided to start again. He saved Noah and his family in the ark and cleansed the world with a flood.

Our reading starts right before the flood, but Noah and his sons had likely been building the ark for many years. Can you imagine building a boat over five hundred feet long? That’s nearly one-and-a-half football fields!

When the time came, God miraculously led the animals into the ark. God then “shut [Noah] in” (GEN. 7:16). Noah was asked to do some very difficult things, but he also witnessed God’s guiding hand perform miracles. After the flood, God promised that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood.

Our sins bring death. Rather than leave us to die, God sent His Son to die for us. Our Baptism is our own personal flood that washes all our wickedness away.

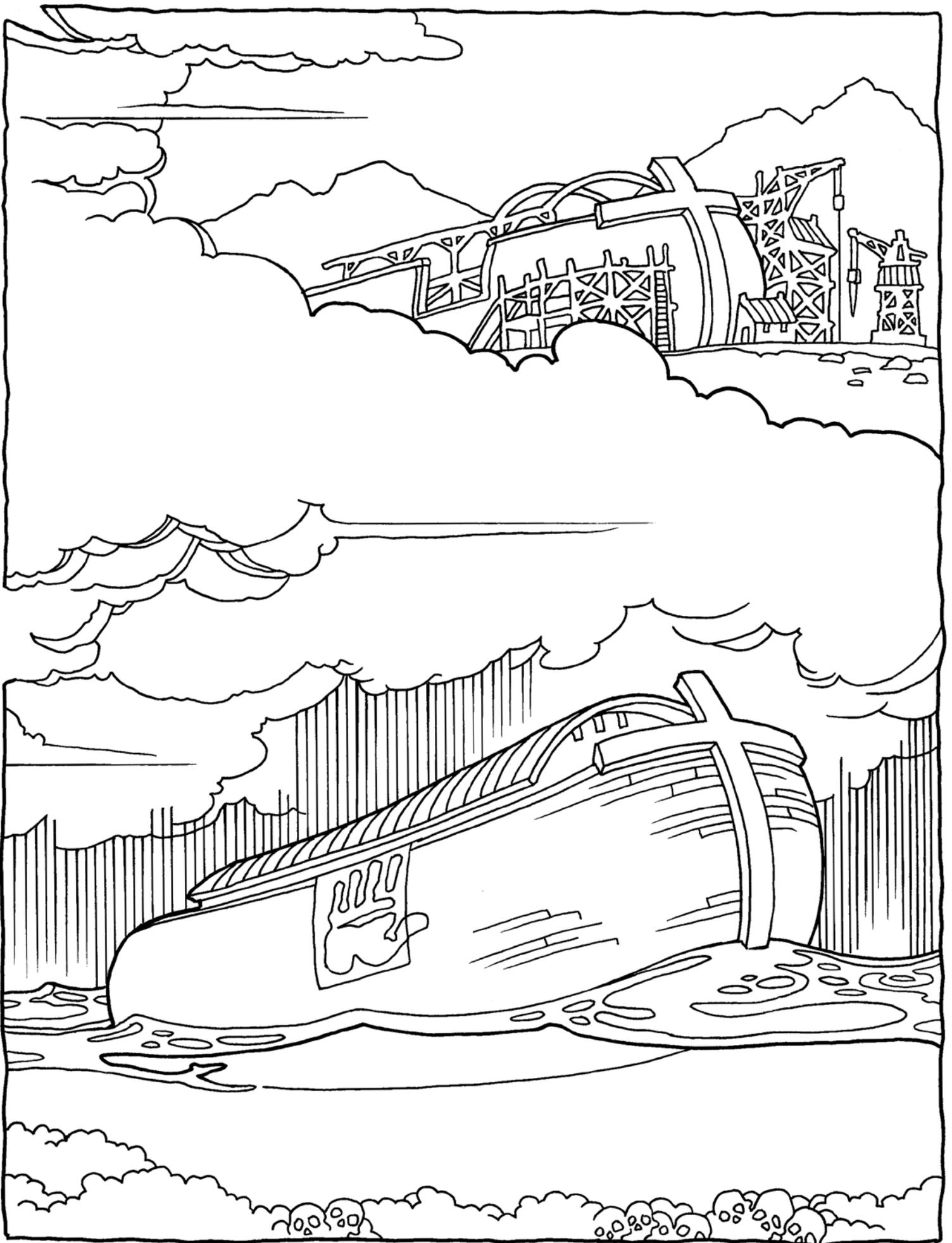
## Seek and Find

- Skulls
- The handprint of God
- A cross

## Think About It

Why do you think the artist drew a handprint on the ark? (GEN. 7:16) Why do you think the church is sometimes referred to as the ark? Why do you think God told Noah to bring seven pairs of each kind of clean animal and one pair of each type of unclean animal? (Look to Gen. 8:20 for a clue.)

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Testing of Abraham

## Genesis 22:1-18

“And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.”

When walking along the road, you look forward to seeing where you are going. When we walk by faith, we often look backwards to see where we have been. When we look back at the events in the Bible, we see that God has always provided for us. The Bible regularly uses the past to point us to the future.

Isaac was the only son born to Abraham and Sarah after they were both very, very old. When God first promised them a child, Sarah laughed! She had difficulty believing she could have a child at her age. It was this special child that God asked Abraham to sacrifice.

When we read about Abraham and Isaac, we see a foreshadowing of Jesus. Abraham obeys God because he has faith in God. He may not have known how Isaac would be saved, but he trusted God. We trust God not because we are good but because God is good. He keeps His promises.

God provided the ram as the sacrifice for Abraham and He provides for us too. Though we deserve hell for our sins, Jesus took our place as the ultimate sacrifice.

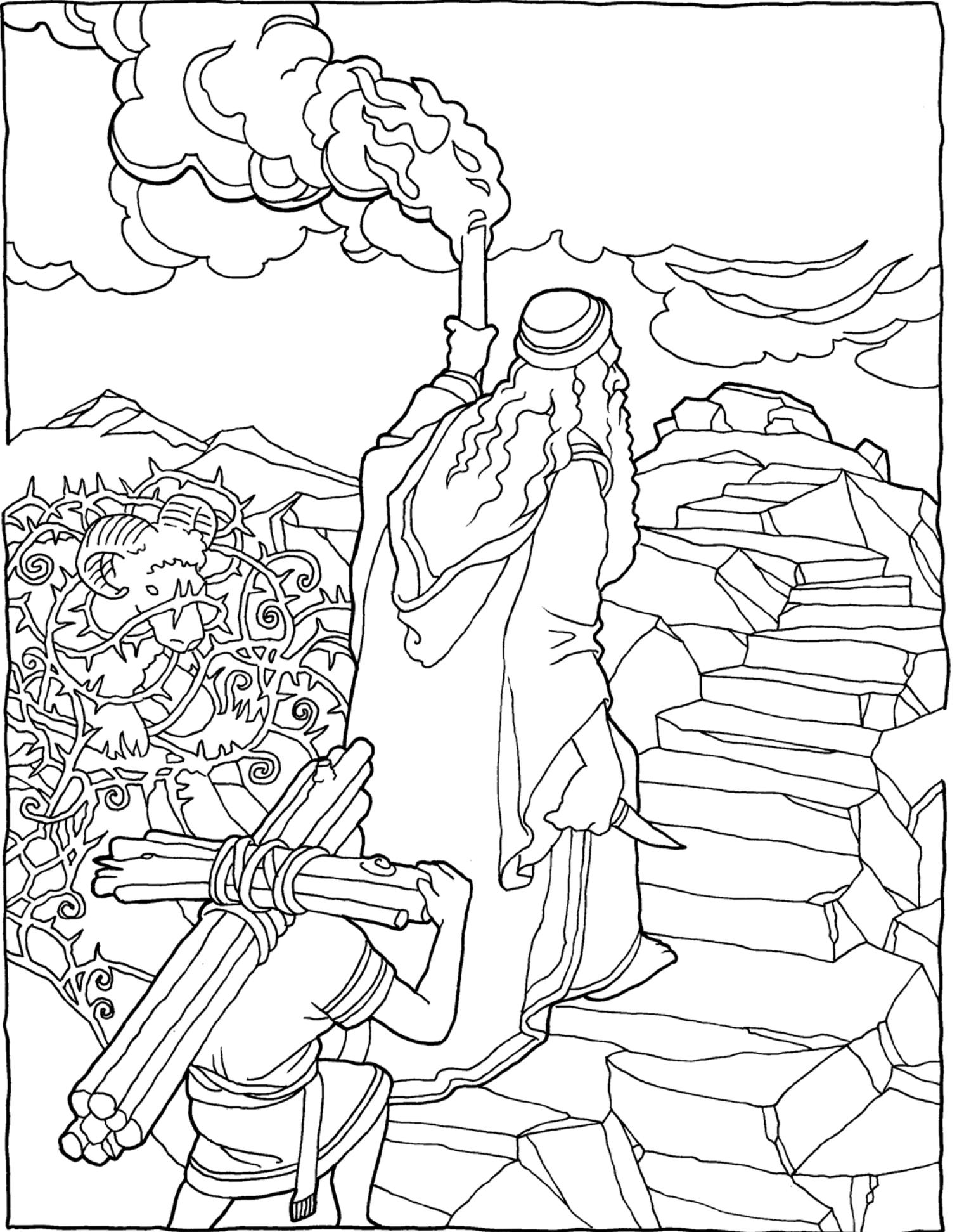
### Seek and Find

- Abraham's knife
- The ram
- The cross

### Think About It

Why do you think the artist drew Isaac's pile of wood in the shape of a cross?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea

Exodus 14:10–15:1

“Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.”

God freed the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. At first, Pharaoh wanted to keep the Israelites as slaves and refused to let them go, but God sent plagues to show His power. After the tenth plague — the death of every firstborn male — Pharaoh finally agreed to let God's people go. Then, he changed his mind again and had his army chase after them. The soldiers pursued them until they had the Israelites trapped against the Red Sea. This is where our reading begins.

After all God had done, the Israelites still doubted God. Yet, God did not fail them. He promised them freedom and He led them to freedom.

God parted the Red Sea and the Israelites walked through on dry ground. Not only did He get them safely through the sea, He also drowned their enemies. No one would chase them anymore.

We were slaves to sin. Rather than see us perish, God gave up His own firstborn for our freedom. We are no longer slaves but heirs with Christ. Even when we struggle, He is faithful (2 TIM. 2:13). He leads us through the waters of baptism to our freedom and eternal life.

## Seek and Find

- The pyramids on the other side of the Red Sea
- God's pillar of fire and cloud
- Moses lifting his staff
- The wheels of the chariots from Pharaoh's army in the sea

## Think About It

Do you think God appeared as a pillar of cloud and fire only for the sake of Pharaoh's army, or might He have done this for the Israelites too?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# Salvation Offered Freely to All

Isaiah 55:1-11

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;  
and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

When we come before God, we come thirsty, hungry and poor. God, out of His love and mercy, provides the feast. This feast is not only free; it is a feast of the finest food. This food will not only satisfy us but will give us eternal life.

Where do we find this feast? We hear God’s voice in Scripture and find Jesus, His true body and blood, in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. God has never spoken a lie or broken a promise. When Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper, He promised that this blood was “given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” What God says is accomplished.

Eternal life in the resurrection is frequently depicted as a banquet, including this passage. The Lord’s Supper is a foretaste of the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end.

We have faith that, even though we come to God’s table with nothing, God provides everything.

## Seek and Find

- Jesus on the cross
- The Lamb of God
- Chi Rho (the first two letters of “Christ” in Greek: Χριστός)
- The unleavened bread of the Lord’s Supper
- The chalice (cup)

## Think About It

Why do you think the author put the images of Jesus crucified and the sacrificial Lamb on the chalice? What parallel is he illustrating? Why did he choose to put them on the chalice instead of somewhere else on the page?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# A New Heart and a New Spirit

## Ezekiel 36:24-28

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”

During the Service of Holy Baptism, we pray an extraordinary prayer. It is known as Luther’s “Flood Prayer.” Listen for it. It starts, “Almighty and eternal God, according to Your strict judgment You condemned the unbelieving world through the flood...” Listen for all the ways God used water to cleanse and save His people.

Before our Baptism, we were dead in our sins. Our hearts were stone, and we were going to hell. However, God washed us clean and made us alive in Christ. Through the Holy Spirit, He took our heart of stone and gave us a living heart.

Before our Baptisms, we were alone. Our sinful nature divided us from God, our families and our neighbors. The Old Adam is a loner. Jesus brings us together and unites us as God’s family. We have brothers and sisters in Christ that speak different languages, eat different food and sing different songs, but we are one body because of what Jesus did for us on the cross.

God cleanses us. Without this cleansing, we would continue living in our sin. However, we are now God’s people because we are washed clean.

### Seek and Find

- The processional cross
- The baptismal shell
- All the different people brought together by Baptism

### Think About It

Do you know why the shell is a symbol of Baptism? The shell has been used as a symbol for Baptism since the early Christian church for a simple reason: pastors used it to scoop the water onto the head of the person being baptized.

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# God's Faithfulness to Israel

## Deuteronomy 31:19–30

“Now therefore write this song and teach it to the people of Israel.  
Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me  
against the people of Israel.”

Israel wandered the desert for forty years, finally entering the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. However, God knew that Israel would continue to rebel.

Moses would not be entering the Promised Land with the Israelites. Out of pride and anger, Moses disobeyed God in front of the Israelites, so God did not allow him to finish the final part of the journey. In God's final instructions to Moses, He inspired Moses to write a song and teach it to the Israelites, and instructed him to command the Israelites to bring the ark of the covenant and the Book of the Law into their new home. God would not abandon His people, and they were not to leave behind His Word.

This reading is often followed by the congregation singing *LSB 926*, “Song from Deuteronomy.”

“For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (ROM. 15:4). Israel did not heed the warning of Moses' song. They were to learn it so that they could be called to repent and to return to God, who remained faithful in His promises.

### Seek and Find

- The ark of the covenant
- Moses writing the song
- A skull
- The Promised Land

### Think About It

Why do you think there is a skull next to Moses' foot?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Valley of Dry Bones

Ezekiel 37:1-14

“So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.”

Did you know Ezekiel’s name means “God strengthens”? Israel certainly needed strength during this time in history.

After the temple’s destruction, Ezekiel was a prophet to the people of Israel while they lived in exile in Babylon, far from their beloved home. The Israelites probably had little hope and felt that living in a foreign land was like being dead. But God had other plans.

God brings the dead to life. Ezekiel watched as God gave these dry bones new life. He physically gave life to these bones, but also gives spiritual life to all His people. He gathers us up and frees us from sin, death and the power of the devil.

There is nothing outside the power of God. Nothing is too dry or dead for Him to rescue and give life. When we feel the power of sin and death, we know that God has power over death.

God can make dead bones live. He raised Jesus from the dead. He will raise us from the dead too at the Last Day.

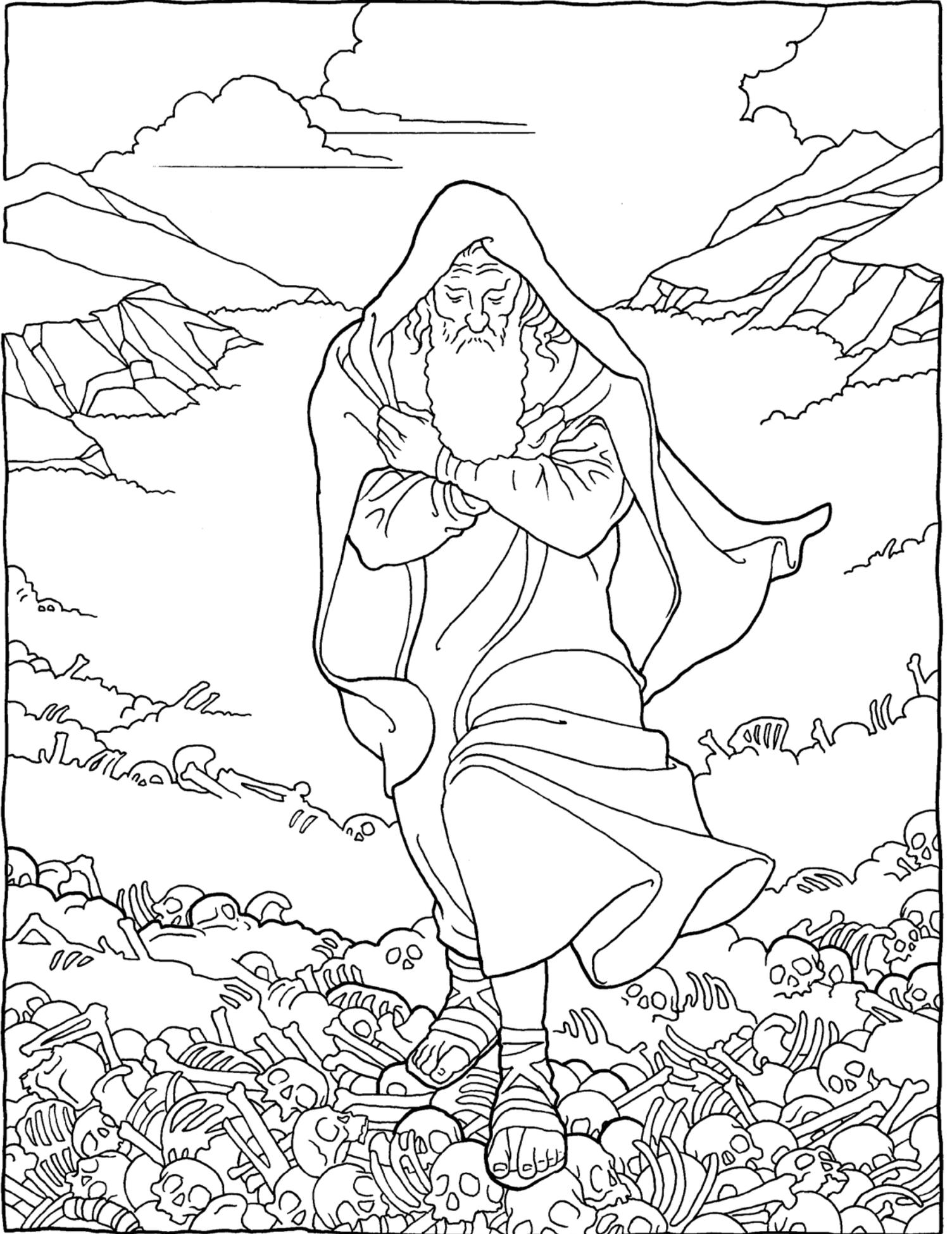
## Seek and Find

- Ezekiel
- Bones

## Think About It

Why do you think the artist chose to draw Ezekiel in this posture with his eyes down and his arms crossed?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# Job Confesses the Redeemer

## Job 19:20-27

“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God...”

Job lived a rich and “successful” life up until he lost nearly everything when God gave Satan permission to test Job.

Job lost his wealth, children and health. Sick, miserable and grieving, Job cried out in pain to God. Though suffering, Job did not curse God.

In this life, we will suffer. We will lose people we love. Life will be difficult.

Job knew that God did not abandon him even through the suffering. Job knew that on the Last Day, God will restore everything. Jesus will call everyone from the grave and will restore every loss.

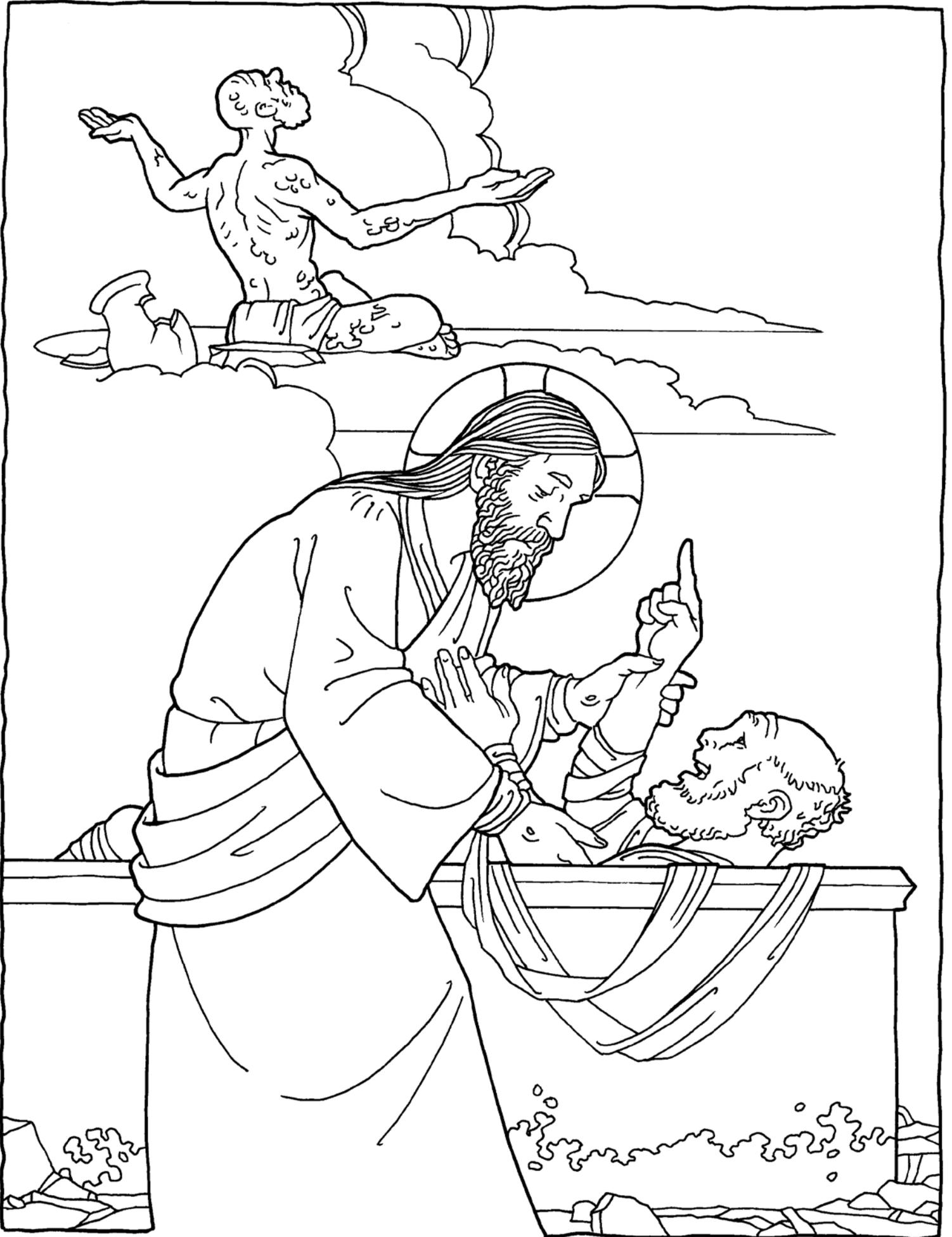
### Seek and Find

- Job suffering from a disease
- Jesus’ tri-radiant nimbus (halo with three rays) ☉
- The holes in Jesus’ hands
- Job rising out of his casket to meet Jesus in the flesh

### Think About It

Why do you think the artist included the detail of the nail marks in Jesus’ hands? Consider WHEN each of these scenes is taking place.

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# Jonah Preaches to Nineveh

## Jonah 3:1-10

“When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.”

Our God is merciful. He takes His people, both Israelite and Gentile, from wickedness and disobedience to repentance and salvation. No sin, no bad reputation, not even the hatred of the messenger (like Jonah) stands in the way of God’s forgiveness.

When God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, Jonah ran away. After God sent a storm to his boat, Jonah was thrown overboard and swallowed by a big fish. When he finally went to Nineveh, he did it with anger in his heart. He cared more about a plant that gave him shade than he did the lives of the people living in Nineveh. But God was merciful.

Sackcloth is a scratchy cloth, only worn when mourning or repenting. The king of Nineveh wore sackcloth and sat in ashes. He ordered that the city fast from food and water.

God had mercy on Nineveh. He also has mercy on us. When we sin, we deserve eternal separation from God in hell, but Jesus died for us. When we confess our sins, we are doing the same thing as Nineveh. We are mourning our own wickedness and asking for God’s mercy. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 JOHN 1:9).

Jonah received mercy from God but did not want God to show mercy to Nineveh. We must not begrudge God’s mercy on others, for He has had mercy on us.

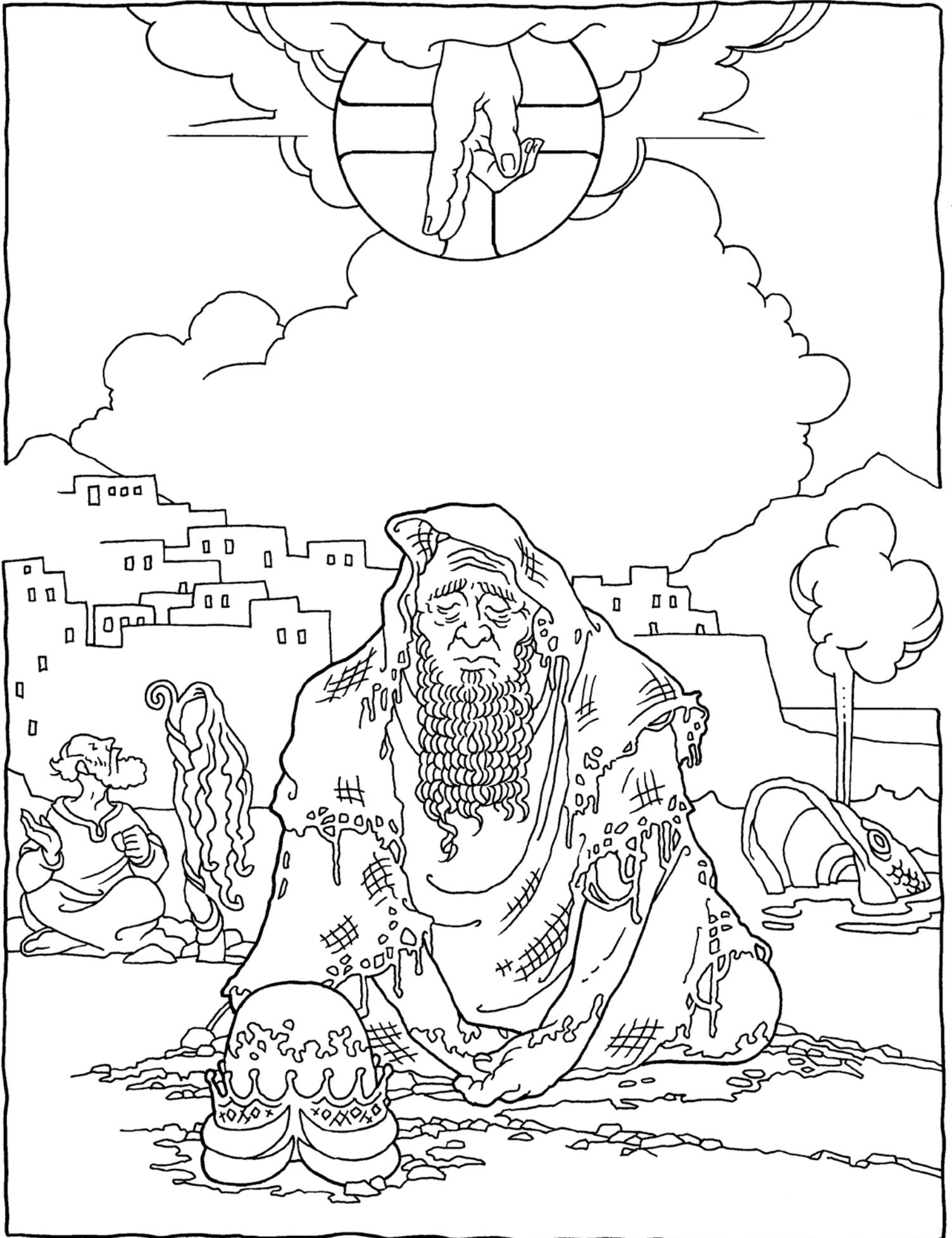
### Seek and Find

- The big fish
- Nineveh
- The repentant king
- Sackcloth
- God’s forgiving hand
- Jonah and the wilting plant
- A tri-radiant nimbus (halo with three rays) ☉

### Think About It

Why do you think the artist focused on the repentant king rather than Jonah?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Gathering of God's People

## Zephaniah 3:12-20

“At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” says the Lord.”

Good Friday left the disciples devastated. This world leaves us broken. The Israelite nation experienced oppression from evil kings and foreign nations. Sin never leads to a happy ending.

Looking for healing, comfort and restoration anywhere other than God will end in disappointment.

Only God provides true joy. Zephaniah offered a message of joy and comfort that only comes from God. Only God has the power to heal the broken, give justice to the wronged and quiet fear.

We are gathered, healed, calmed and loved because of Jesus. He brings us together. His death and resurrection restore us to God and to our neighbor.

### Seek and Find

- Jesus
- The holes in Jesus' hands
- Jesus' tri-radiant nimbus (halo with three rays) ☉
- People of every nation
- Palm branches (a symbol of victory)

### Think About It

Why do you think the artist included palm branches in this coloring page? Where else do palm branches appear in the Bible? (Hint: read Rev. 7:9-14.)

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Fiery Furnace

## Daniel 3:1-30

“But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”

Christians throughout history have faced danger and even death for their faith. In this Old Testament story, three Israelite men refused to bow before a false god and were thrown into a fiery furnace.

Listen for all the different people who knelt. Very important people, like governors, wealthy treasurers and important justices (judges), all submitted to the king’s order to worship a false god, but three kidnapped Israelite men did the right thing and refused.

The catechism’s explanation of the first commandment includes the phrase, “fear, love, and trust in God above all things.” Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego found themselves in a very scary situation. They were in a land that was not their own. They were threatened with death if they did not worship a gold idol, but God protected them. They feared and trusted God more than King Nebuchadnezzar.

Jesus is with us in the midst of everything. Because of Him, though we may experience earthly testing, we will never experience the fires of hell. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we live and die with courage and trust that we are safe with Him.

### Seek and Find

- The musical instruments used to signal the false worship: the horn, the pipe, the bagpipe and the lyre
- The golden idol
- The fire heated seven times
- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
- The fourth man, like “a son of the gods”
- A Tri-radiant nimbus (halo with three rays) ☉

### Think About It

Why do you think the artist drew the tri-radiant nimbus (halo) on the fourth man, the angel of the Lord?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# Alleluia

**L** “Alleluia! Christ is risen.”

**C** “He is risen indeed! Alleluia!”

If you look at Page xxiv of your *Lutheran Service Book*, you will find the definition of the word “Alleluia.” It is a Hebrew word that we leave untranslated as an expression of praise. It means “Praise the Lord!”

Throughout the season of Lent, the church sets aside some of the most celebratory parts of the service. The Gloria in Excelsis and Alleluia are hung up until the Lord brings us out of captivity by His Easter joy (PSALM 137).

During this Easter Vigil service, we “resurrect” the Alleluia. As we welcome the risen Christ, we greet Him with a resounding “Alleluia,” “Praise the Lord!”

Especially after refraining from singing it, you’ll notice that most Easter hymns are full of joyful Alleluias. In the coming Sundays, count how many hymns have Alleluias in them.

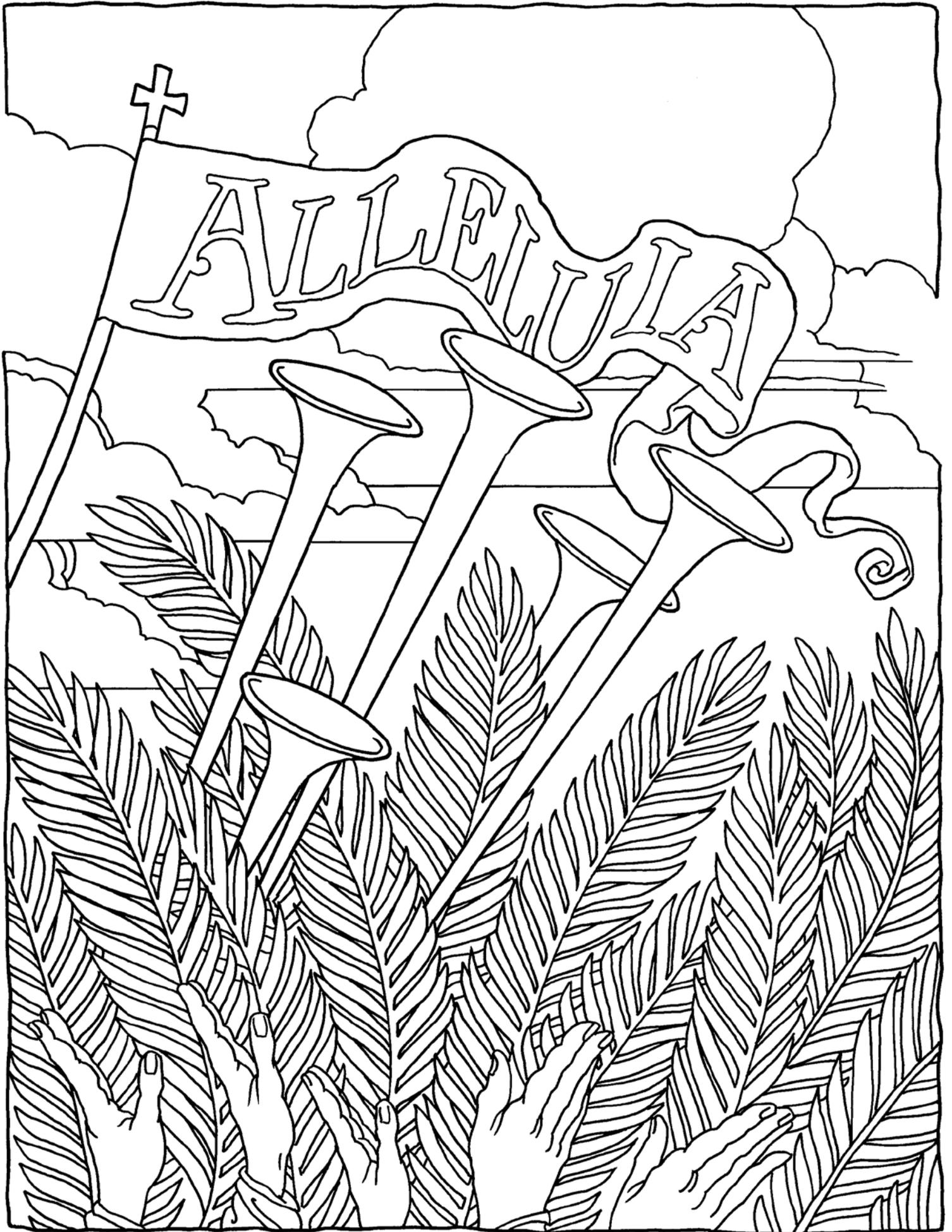
## Seek and Find

- Trumpets
- The Alleluia banner
- Joyful hands raised in celebration
- Palm branches raised for the King

## Think About It

How do you feel singing “Alleluia” again after this long Lenten season?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*



# The Easter Story

Mark 16:1-8 or John 20:1-18

“Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified.  
He has risen; he is not here.”

The Easter Acclamation before the Gospel lesson is “Alleluia! Christ is risen!” We respond, “He is risen indeed! Alleluia!” One Alleluia isn’t enough. Jesus, our Lord, is alive.

The first Easter morning started with sadness and uncertainty, but it ended in a glorious celebration. The grave could not contain Jesus.

Jesus’ promises aren’t what we expect. He surprises us with His grace. Though He was a king, He was born in a stable. Though Israel expected the Messiah to sit on a throne, He came riding on a humble donkey. Instead of coming to rule, He came to serve. Simple wine and bread are His body and blood. And on Easter Sunday, when the women expected a barred tomb and a dead body, they found an empty tomb and a risen Lord, just as Jesus had promised.

Someday, our graves will also be empty because of Jesus’ sacrifice for us. Because He lives, we will live also (JOHN 14:19).

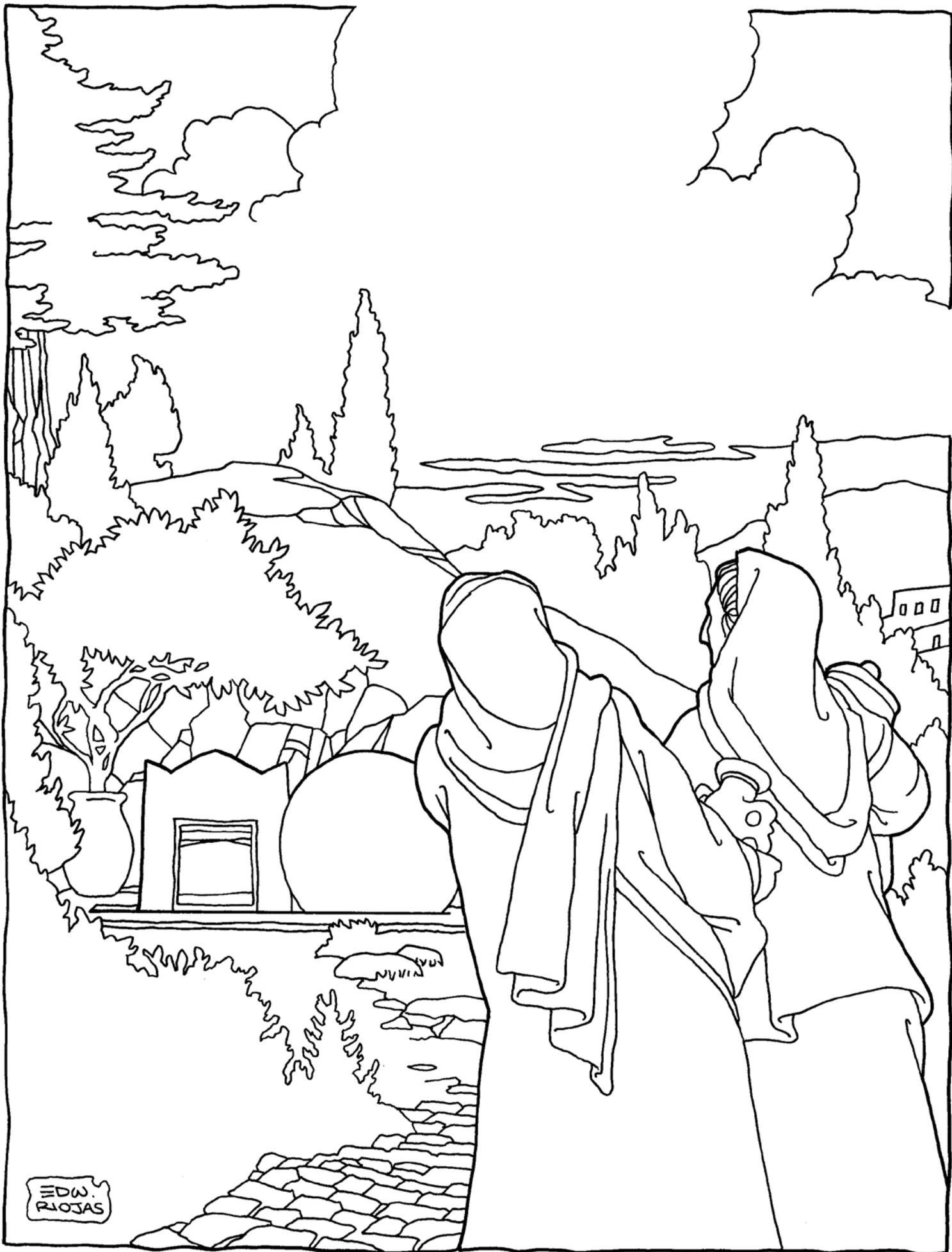
## Seek and Find

- The women going to the tomb
- The spices used for anointing the dead
- The empty tomb

## Think About It

Why could we treat every Sunday as a “little Easter”?

*Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the light, even Jesus Christ, Our Lord.*

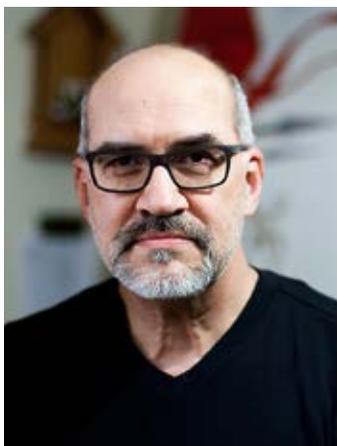




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**Edward Riojas** has been creating artwork professionally for 40 years, including a stint in advertising and nearly 31 years in the newspaper industry. He now creates artwork exclusively within the Lutheran sphere, and his work can be found in sanctuaries, institutions, private collections and markets throughout the U.S. and across the globe. His work may be viewed at *edrijasartist.com* or on his public Facebook page, Edward Riojas - Artist.

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