

Reflections by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein
Introduction by Yael Eckstein

Holy Land Moments

COLORING BOOK

12 Inspirational Illustrations and Reflections



International Fellowship
of Christians and Jews®

The Holy Land Moments Coloring Book — 12 Inspirational Illustrations and Reflections

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Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein

Introduction by Yael Eckstein



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Psalm 65:8

*The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders;
where morning dawns, where evening fades,
you call forth songs of joy.*

Shalom, Friends,

I am a wife, busy mother of four, and senior vice president at *The Fellowship*. So, needless to say, life can get stressful at times! Is it precisely at those times that I turn to things that keep me grounded — my beloved land of Israel, my faith, my God, and His Word to us, the Bible.

The truth is, daily life can be overwhelming for all of us. But remembering God's promises, the richness of my faith, that I'm blessed to live in the holiest land on earth, and that I can always turn to the Bible for encouragement, all help me to cope.

I'm sure that many of you can relate!

There's a popular, stress-relieving trend that helps me as well. Coloring books for adults offer a wonderful way to relax — and I think you'll find that our new *Holy Land Moments Coloring Book* will not just help you relax, but also help you to focus on the beauty and wonder of God's Creation and His Word.

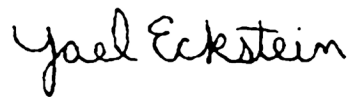
We've gathered a selection of my father's inspirational devotions from *Holy Land Moments* and paired them with an illustration specially designed for you to color as you reflect on God's scriptures. So, we invite you to pick up your crayons, markers, or colored pencils to create your own unique masterpiece — and also be encouraged spiritually!

As you color and reflect upon the devotions, you will imbue the very simple task of coloring with holiness, and I hope rediscover the peace that only God can provide.

Once you have completed your design, please share it with us on Facebook. You can post it on my Facebook page, facebook.com/YaelEckstein, or on the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews*' Facebook page, facebook.com/FellowshipFan. We would love to see what you have created!

Let these words from the Psalms serve as an inspiration for you: "*The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy*" (Psalm 65:8).

With blessings from the Holy Land,



Yael Eckstein

The Crown of Creation

Genesis 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Jewish philosopher Ernest Becker once said: “Man is literally split in two: he has an awareness of his own splendid uniqueness in that he sticks out of nature with a towering majesty, and yet he goes back into the ground a few feet in order blindly and dumbly to rot and disappear forever.”

On one hand, God blessed human beings and commanded them to rule over creation. On the other hand, a few chapters later, Adam and Eve sinned by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge which thrust them out of their lofty position.

In Psalm 8:4 King David asked: “*What is mankind that you are mindful of them?*”

In some ways, human beings are only a little greater than animals. We eat, breathe, and seek out pleasures just like any other creature. We come from a tiny speck, and our ultimate destiny is to become the dirt of the ground, just like every other being.

Yet, David also described the greatness of man in the very next verse: “*You [God] have made them [mankind] a little lower than the angels . . .*” (Psalm 8:5). Instead of just one step above animals, David described humans as just a step below angels. Created in the image of God, with the capacity to think and speak, humanity has the capacity to achieve so much — to literally transform the world and ourselves for the better.

So which is it? Are we just slightly more evolved animals or nearly angels?

The Jewish sages answer this question when they explain why Adam and Eve were created last. They teach that if mankind is worthy, we say, “The whole world was created for you. You were brought to the world like a King and Queen are brought to a banquet — with everything prepared and ready.” However, if we are not worthy, we say, “You are the last, least, and lowest of all creations. Even a tiny insect is greater than you.”

Whether we are majestic like royalty or lower than a bug depends entirely upon us. We get to determine what we are worth by how we choose to live our lives.

If we deny our godly nature and live a life filled with physicality, solely focused on gaining pleasure and power, then we are no greater than animals. But if we live lives driven by service, godliness, and contribution, then we can become nearly as great as the angels, who exist to do God’s bidding. Every day that we live, we are torn between our animalistic drives and the divine soul that God placed within us. We get to choose which drive will dominate our lives, and that choice, in turn, defines our identity.

Today, let us choose God and be crowned with His glory!



Genesis 1:28

Step Up in Faith

Exodus 19:4

“‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.’”

I don’t know what your next step is in life, but I do know that you have to be willing to take it if you are going to progress on your walk with the Lord. God will help us in all our well-intentioned endeavors, but we need to be willing to take the first step. Faith is more than just believing. Faith is putting belief into action by making decisions, taking risks, and doing what God has laid on our hearts to do.

We find this idea expressed in the book of Exodus. First, in Exodus 19:4, Moses described how God took His people out of Egypt. We read: *“You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings . . .”* All other birds carry their young in their claws because they are afraid of high-flying predators that soar above them. But no bird flies higher than the eagle so it puts its young on its wings, safe from anything below. Like an eagle, no one is higher than God. And like an eagle, He protects His children with love.

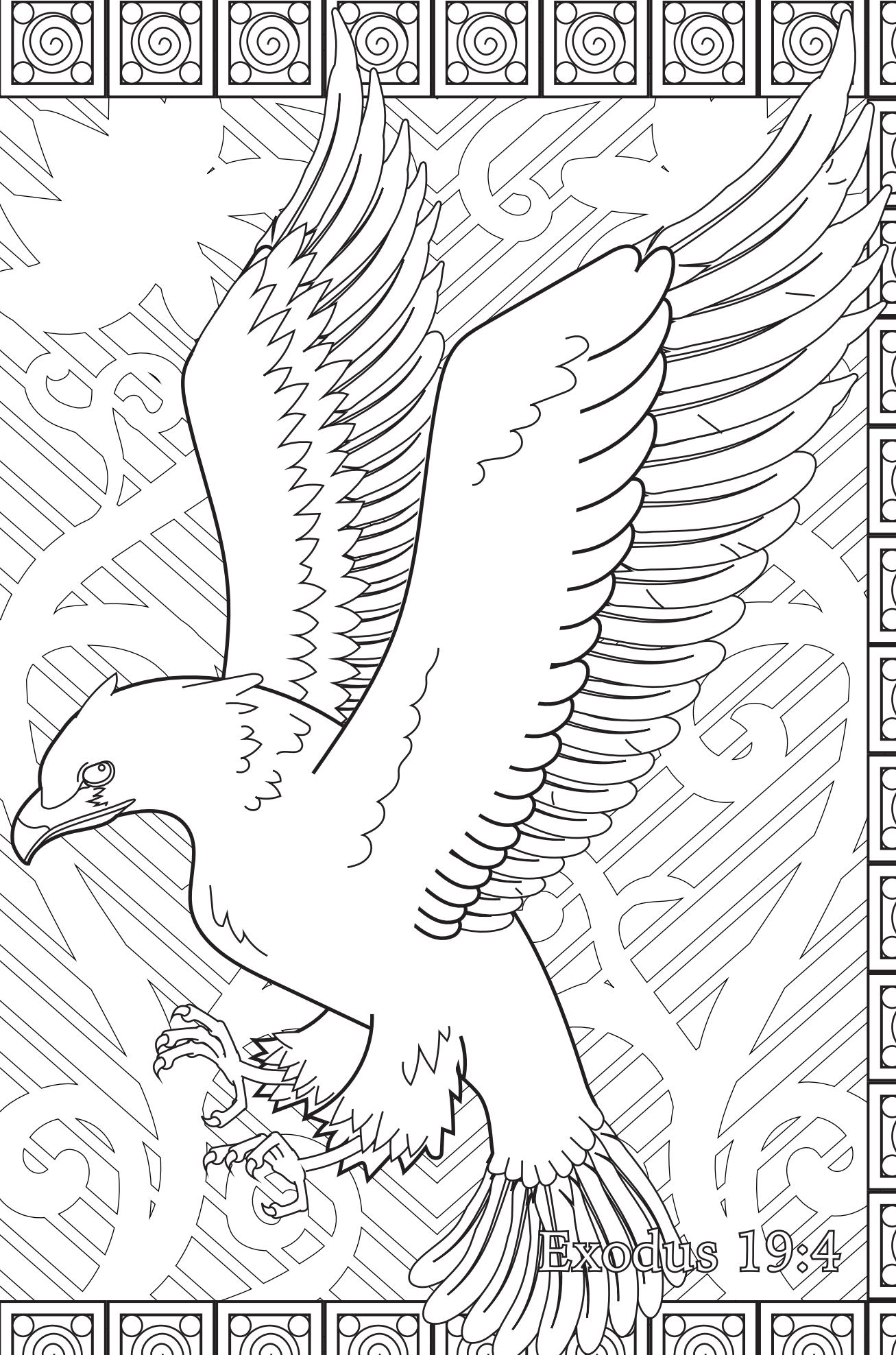
However, in Deuteronomy 32:11, we also read: *“like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them aloft.”* Here, too, Moses was referring to how God carried the Israelites through the desert. However, looking at the detailed description, the Jewish sages teach the following: God spread out His wings so that the children of Israel might climb aboard, but it was up to the Israelites to take that first step.

In other words, God is ready to carry us and be with us in our challenges and spiritual pursuits, but we are the ones that have to get the ball rolling.

Consider the following: according to Jewish tradition, four-fifths of the Israelites did not leave Egypt. Only one-fifth had enough faith to follow God out of Egypt and into the unknown. After the destruction of the first Temple when the Persian emperor, Cyrus the Great, announced that the Jewish people could return to Israel, only a small minority of Jews returned to their homeland. Most Jews chose to stay in the comfortable life they had built abroad.

Today, once again, the Jewish people have the opportunity to return to Israel. Many have taken this step of faith, but there are still millions more who have not yet returned home.

Friends, whatever your next step may be, I hope that you take it. No matter how uncomfortable or worrisome it may seem, know that when you step out in faith, you step into God’s protection. God will carry you and



Exodus 19:4

Receiving God's Favor

Numbers 6:24-26

““The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.””

In Israel, one of the highlights of our major festivals is the priestly blessing at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Even today, thousands of years after God designated a segment of the population of Israel to be the priests of Israel, there are those who have a family tradition of belonging to the priestly lineage. On the holidays, thousands of Jews crowd the Western Wall plaza and stand on the rooftops on adjacent buildings in order to receive the blessing uttered by these descendants of God's priests.

As first commanded by Moses to Aaron, the High Priest, and his sons, these are the words they say: *“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”* Essentially, this is a blessing for divine favor. We ask that God turn toward us and bless us. However, is favoritism really fair? What right do we have to ask for God's preferential treatment?

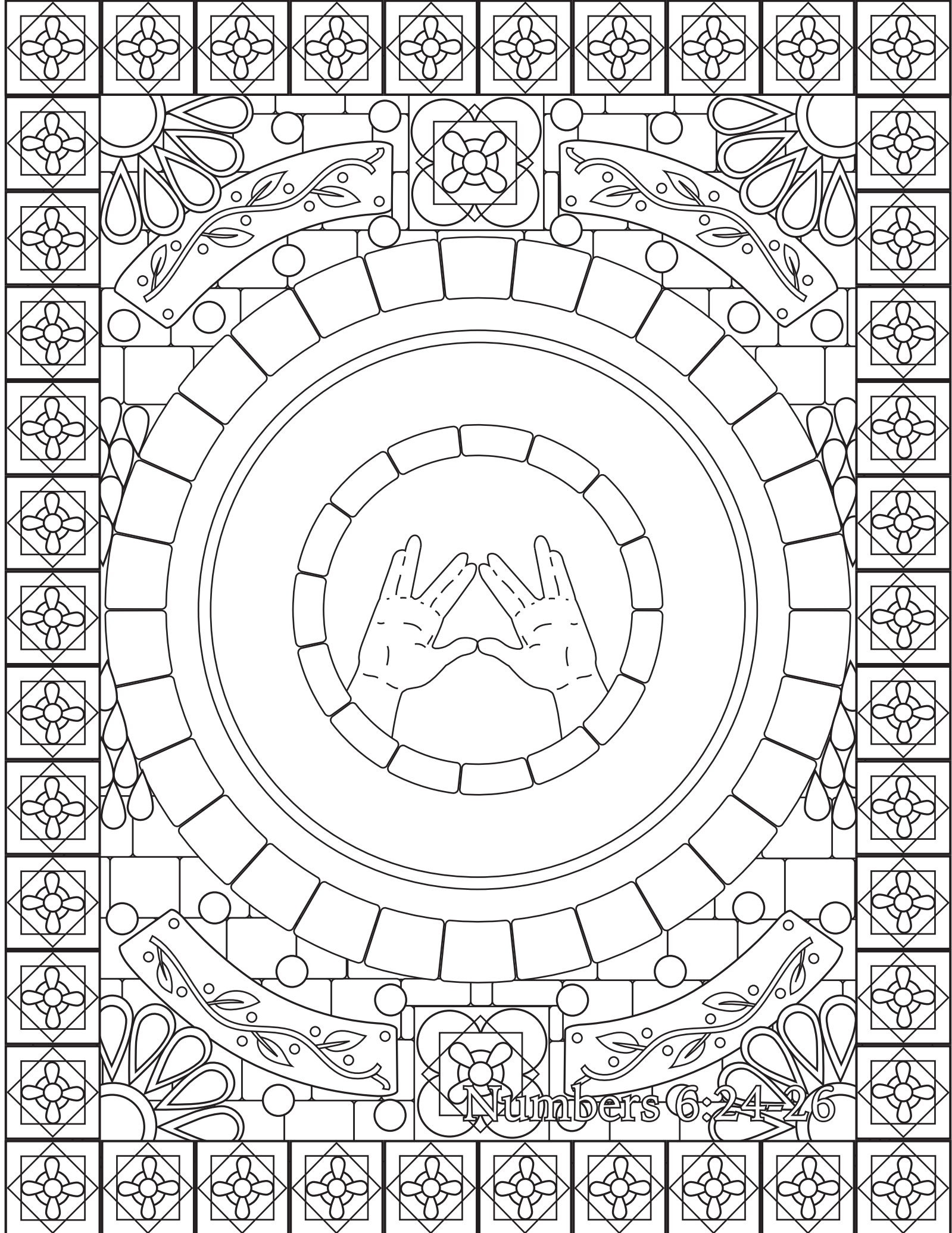
The Jewish sages provide an answer with this strange comment: “Because the Jewish people are careful to say the ‘Grace After Meals,’ even after eating a small amount of food and do not wait for the biblical obligation which is when you are totally satiated. So, too, God is favorably disposed toward them.” It's nice to say grace, essentially blessing the food, even when we aren't full, but what does it have to do with deserving God's favor?

The rabbis explain that saying grace after eating a little is symbolic of being grateful for all that we have, even if we don't have a lot. Imagine that you are given a gift from a great king. It doesn't matter what the gift is or how much it costs. What gives it value is that it came from the king. What an honor! What a privilege! It's not about what you received, it's about who gave it to you.

Similarly, when we are grateful for what we have, even when it's not as much as we might like, we are saying that it's not about our gifts, it's about the giver — God. We *“turn our face to God,”* not our things, and then *“the LORD turn his face toward you . . .”* God turns toward us, not toward our misdeeds, and He blesses us in return.

Wouldn't it be nice to have God's favor upon us all the time? How great would it be to have VIP treatment from the Master of the World? No wonder all those people cram into the Western Wall plaza to receive such a blessing!

However, we, too, can draw God's favor toward us today as we turn toward Him in gratitude for what we have, no matter how much or little. As we bless Him with our love, thanksgiving, and praise, He will bless us, too, with His favor, His grace, His protection, and His peace.



Numbers 6:24-26

More Than We Deserve

Deuteronomy 26:15

“Look down from heaven, your holy dwelling place, and bless your people Israel and the land you have given us as you promised on oath to our ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Simple math will tell us that if we have a certain amount and then deduct a portion from that amount, the remainder will be less than what we started with. But the commandment regarding the giving of firstfruits suggests otherwise. When we give a portion of our best to God, while it may initially seem that we have less, in the long run, we end up with more, due to God’s blessings.

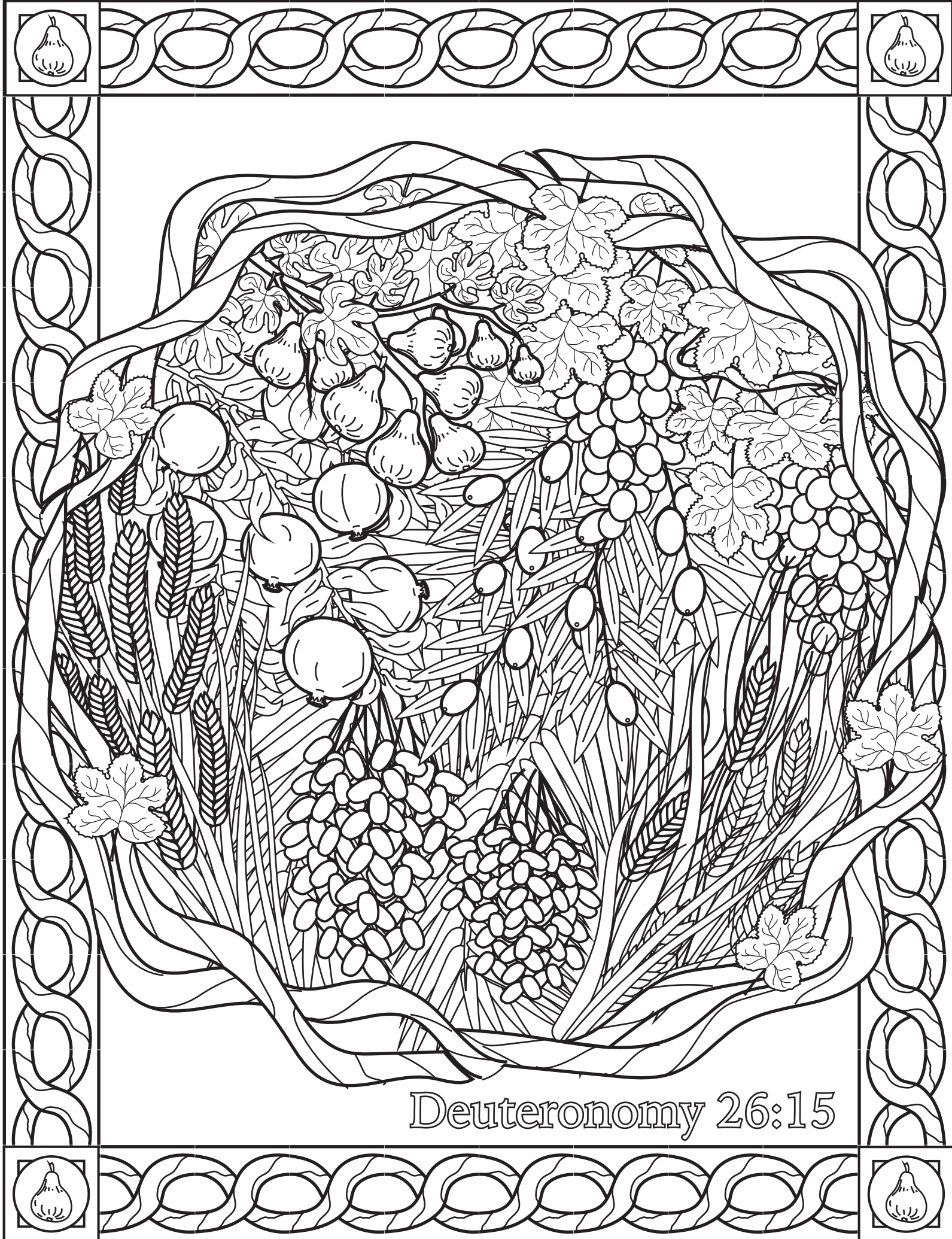
This explains the verse, Deuteronomy 26:15, which the worshiper was required to declare when bringing the firstfruits before God. After reciting a prescribed text recalling the Israelite’s slavery in Egypt, God’s miraculous salvation, and then entering the Promised Land, the worshiper would recite the following prayer: “Look down from heaven, your holy dwelling place, and bless your people Israel . . .”

The person making this declaration was testifying that the children of Israel would serve God in a manner that superseded logic — they would give away their hard-earned produce; they would take away from their much-needed provisions; they would serve God beyond the limits of logic. Therefore, it was entirely fitting that the worshipers ask that God would treat them in kind — beyond the letter of the law, with mercy and undeserved abundance.

It’s interesting that in the verse, the worshipers asked that God look down upon His people from Heaven. In other words, the worshipers didn’t want God to look too closely at their actions. As King David proclaimed in Psalm 130:3, *“If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?”* Truly, if God took an exact accounting, none of us would be worthy of His abundant blessings.

However, the worshipers had just gone beyond their own accounting and had given away what they had against all logic. They had looked from afar and decided that while the numbers might not make sense on paper, God would take care of the final accounting and all would be OK. Similarly, we ask God to bless us from afar — not looking at our sins but at our overall goodness — and bless us abundantly, beyond what we might deserve.

We can take this message today as an encouragement to serve God beyond the limits of logic. When God took the Israelites out of Egypt, it happened so quickly that their bread dough didn’t have time to rise. There, God was teaching us that He wants a relationship that is beyond time. Here, He is teaching us that our service must be beyond the limits of pure logic. When God has laid something on our hearts, we need to serve Him with all we have — and then some. In return, God will bless us above and beyond what we ever imagined.



Deuteronomy 26:15

The Forest of Freedom

Psalm 23:1-2

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters...

Psalm 23 is probably the most well-known psalm. The imagery of God as our shepherd, lovingly taking care of our every need is a welcome vision in a time of need. King David's words — *"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me"* — have served as a soothing balm for difficult times. When we explore the context of this psalm, its message becomes even more powerful.

According to Jewish tradition, this psalm was written by David when he was running away from King Saul and took refuge in the forest of Hereth (1 Samuel 22:5). The Jewish sages teach that in spite of being called a forest, Hereth was more like a desert. It was a dry, arid place where no vegetation could grow. How would David survive? What would sustain him? When the prophet Jeremiah wrote about those who *"dwell in the parched places of the desert,"* he called it a place *"where no one lives"* (Jeremiah 17:6).

And yet, David not only lived; he thrived.

David's faith in God invoked miracles from God. It is in this context, in this dry place, that David described the lush pastures where God, as his shepherd, lovingly led him. This is why David had nothing to fear. He knew that if God could feed him in a desert, He could sustain him in any situation. If God could give him life in a place where no man was able to live, then God could save him from any enemy that came up against him.

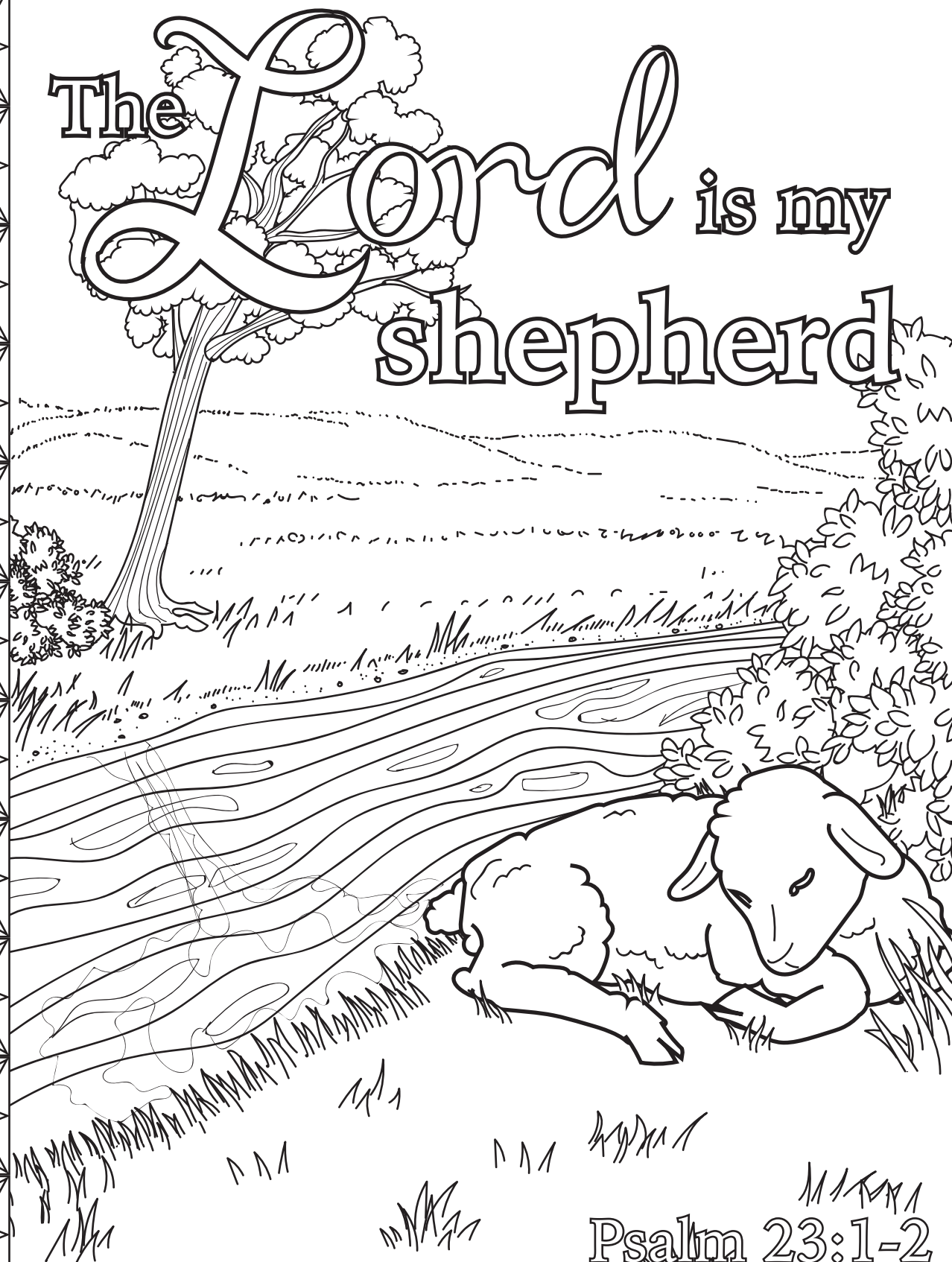
David had faith, and therefore, he enjoyed peace, tranquility, and prosperity.

It's interesting that of all possible names, the forest is called Hereth. Hereth, that harsh place of barrenness, shares the same letters as the word *Heruth*, which means "freedom." In Hebrew, when two words look alike, they are alike and connected in some way. But what could possibly be the connection between the lacking and limited forest of Hereth and the emancipating qualities of freedom?

The answer is that it is through living in a forest of limitations that we find our true freedom — and that happens only if, and when, we find God.

Maybe you are going through a dry time in your life right now. How will I pay the bills? How will I make it through this day? Sometimes it seems that we are living through challenges that most people can't possibly survive. Yet, if we place our faith in God like David did, we, too, will find our freedom as we realize that God can bless us with abundance and health anywhere. In the darkest alley or in the driest desert, God's providence is everywhere!

The Lord is my shepherd



Psalms 23:1-2

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

Psalm 122:6

*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
“May those who love you be secure.”*

“*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*” is one of the most famous lines from all of Psalms. It has been made into songs; it is said as a prayer by millions around the world. Most of us understand how badly Jerusalem — whose very name comes from the word *shalom*, peace — needs our prayers for the peace that has eluded her for over 2,000 years.

However, what many of us don’t realize is that when we pray for Jerusalem, we are essentially praying for ourselves.

It has been said that whatever happens in Israel, will determine the fate of the rest of the world. Israel is a country smaller than the U.S. state of New Jersey and her population is less than 0.2 percent of humanity, yet Israel continues to make headlines across the world daily. That’s because Israel is at the epicenter of the war between good and evil, peace and terror. So whatever happens in Jerusalem is bound to affect the rest of the world.

Once, terror attacks only happened in Israel. Only Israeli cafés, public transportation, and public areas were the targets of suicide bombers and other attacks. But unfortunately, as we have come to know, terror has spread around the globe. As long as Israel is at war, the rest of the world will feel the effects.

Spiritually speaking, this makes perfect sense. Jewish tradition teaches that when God made the world, Creation began in Jerusalem. This is the place where everything began and it is also the place where everything will culminate. Mount Moriah in Jerusalem is the place that Jacob called “*the house of God . . . the gate of heaven*” (Genesis 28:17). Jewish sages describe Jerusalem as the heart of the world — and a body is only as healthy as its heart.

This is why the next words in verse 6 are: “*May those who love you be secure.*” While we may have thought that when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we are doing Israel and her people a favor, the truth is we are helping ourselves. Those who love Jerusalem and pray for her peace, bring peace and security upon themselves. Only when Jerusalem is secure, can we hope to find our own security.

Have you prayed for the peace of Jerusalem today? I cannot think of a more important prayer! Pray for Jerusalem today and every day, because if we can heal the heart of the world, the rest of the body will follow. Heal Jerusalem, and we will heal the world.



Pray for the
Peace of
Jerusalem

Psalm 122:6

How Good and Pleasant

Psalm 133:1

*How good and pleasant it is
when God's people live together in unity!*

In the beloved Peanuts cartoon, older sister Lucy demanded that her younger brother, Linus, change the TV channel. Just to make sure that he didn't disobey her, Lucy threatened Linus with her fist.

"What makes you think that you can walk in here and take over?" Linus asked. "These five fingers," replied Lucy. "Individually they're nothing, but when I curl them together like this into a single unit, they form a weapon that is terrible to behold."

Defeated, Linus replied, "Which channel do you want?" Then he looked at his own fingers and said, "Why can't you guys get organized like that?" Indeed, when things or people come together, they are far more powerful than on their own. Individual snowflakes are powerless, even fragile, but just look at what they can do when they stick together!

Power and strength are not the only positives to come out of unity. When people stick together, we are capable of creating new things and discovering new cures. We can make a better life that all people can enjoy.

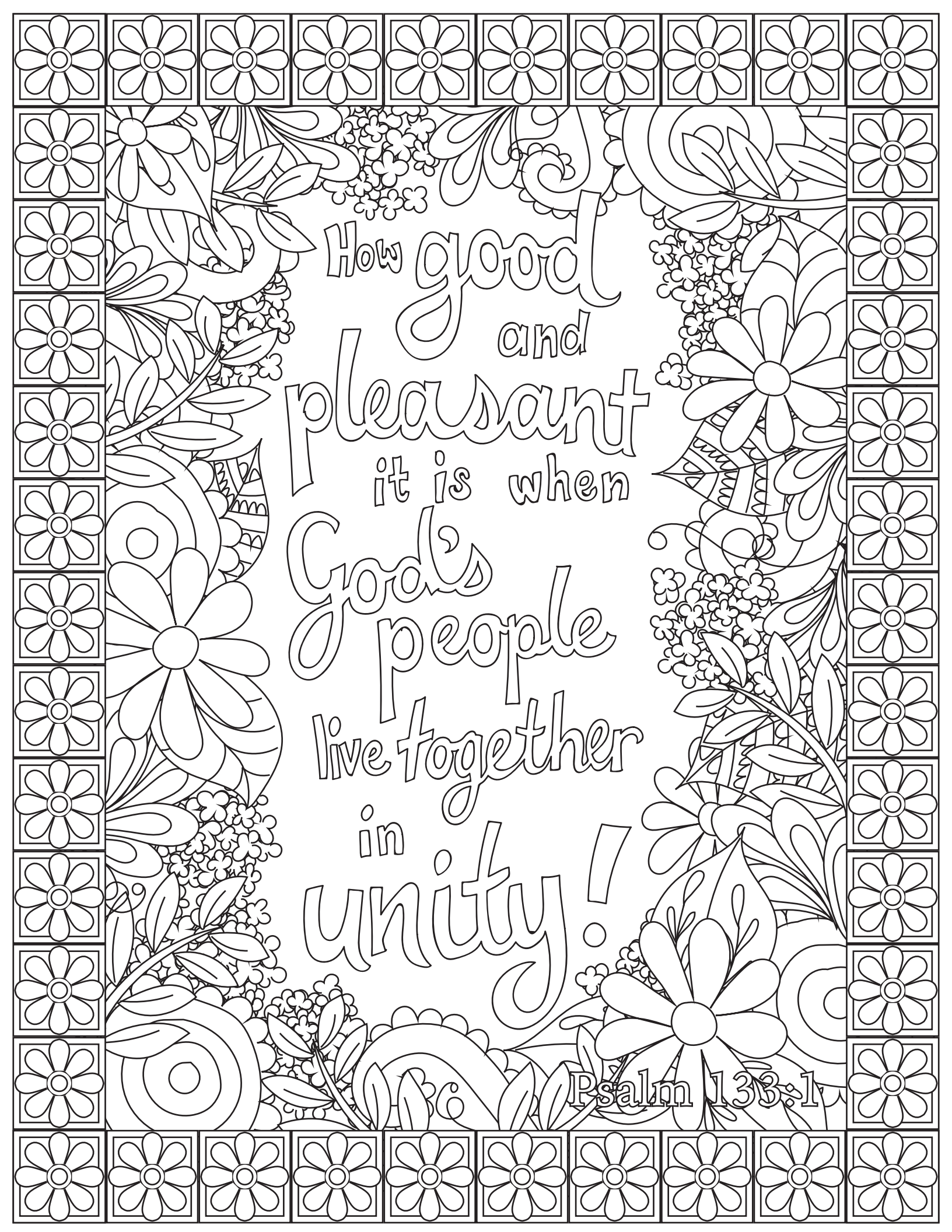
This is what the psalmist means when he wrote, "*How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity.*" It's not just the absence of fighting that makes it "*good and pleasant*" when God's people live together — it's the presence of great innovation and capability that results when people help each other, work and live together, and create a better world.

The Jewish sages point out a very significant change that occurs in the Bible when it describes the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. The verse simply says, "*and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain*" (Exodus 19:2). However, in the original Hebrew, it's easy to recognize that Scripture changes from speaking about the Israelites in the plural tense and instead describes them grammatically as a single unit.

This is because, as the sages explain, when the Israelites were at the foot of Mount Sinai, it was as if they shared "one heart and one soul." They had merged into one unit. It is because of this unity that they were able to merit God's revelation and the giving of the Ten Commandments.

If the unity of the Israelites in ancient times could bring God down to earth, imagine what will happen when God's people come together in our time!

Here at *The Fellowship* we celebrate the unity between Jews and Christians who all share the same love for God, the Bible, and Israel. Together we work tirelessly to fulfill God's purposes. Join us in our holy work, and together we will see with our own eyes, "*How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!*"



How good
and
pleasant
it is when
God's
people
live together
in
unity!

Psalm 133:1

Keep on Shining

Proverbs 4:18

*The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.*

If someone asked us what the difference is between the righteous and the wicked, we would probably answer that the righteous person doesn't ever sin, while the wicked person does. However, a verse in Proverbs provides us with a different explanation. We read: "... *though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes*" (24:16).

It's not that the righteous don't stumble in sin; it's that they get up after the fall. The wicked fall just as the righteous person does, only the wicked give up and don't get up.

I love this other verse in Proverbs as well: "*The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.*" It teaches that we all start off with darkness in our lives. Just as it is hard to see when the sun begins to rise at dawn, we all stumble through the initial darkness of our lives. We are still learning to walk with God. But if we keep going, if we don't get stuck in that place of confusion, we will walk ever more surely, and the light will shine ever more brightly.

The righteous and the wicked all have their share of challenges. The difference is only that the righteous move up and onward, no matter what.

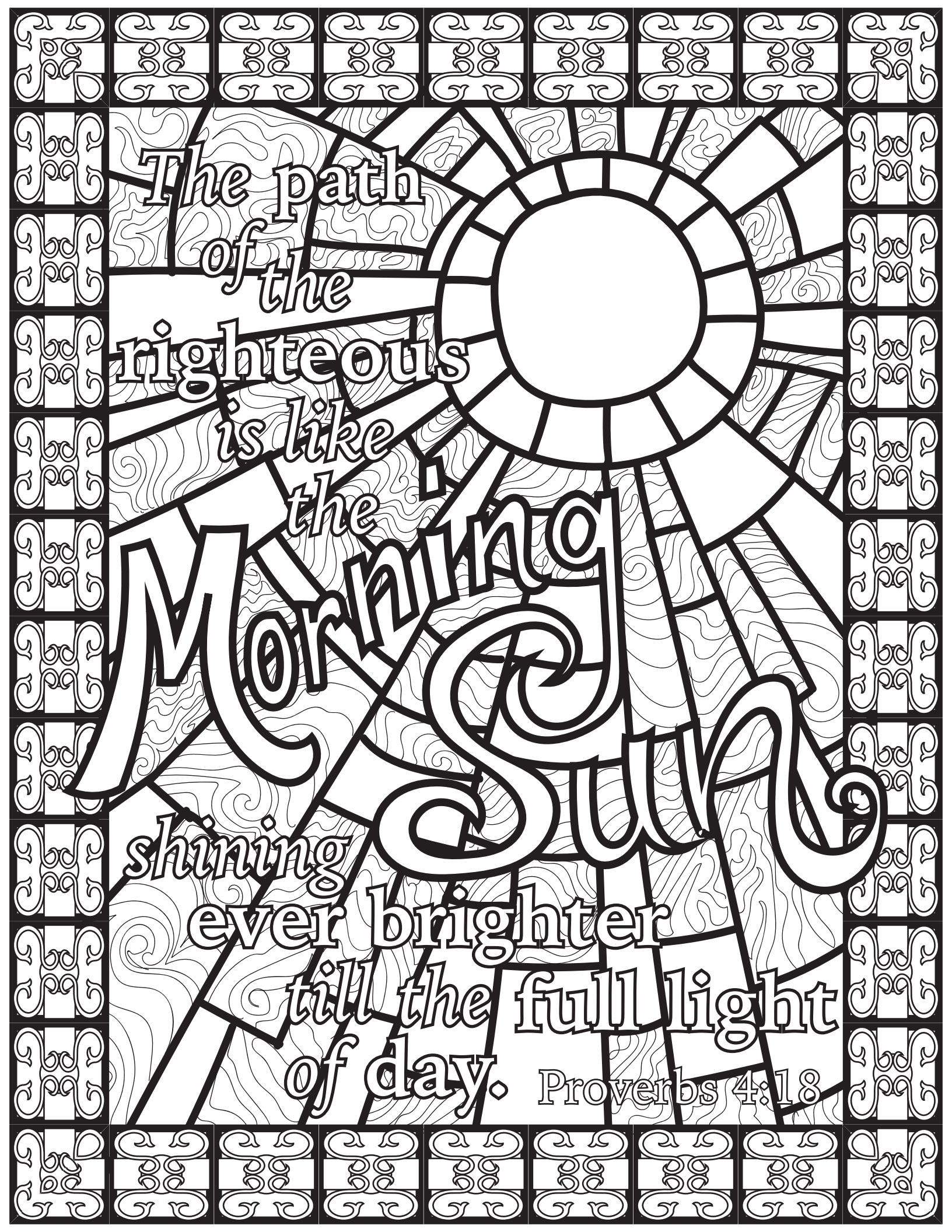
What a radical way to see righteousness. What a wonderful way to define success. It's not about how many times we fail. It's about how much we persevere.

And let's not forget the promise of the verse. When we do persevere, our light keeps getting brighter. Every time we learn from our mistakes and push forward, our light gets brighter. Every moment we choose goodness and godliness, our light shines brighter.

As we grow into kinder, more thoughtful, generous people, our light grows even brighter. As we pursue justice, and live as an example of honesty, we shine ever more brightly. And every time we chose faith no matter what our life circumstances, our light will illuminate the way while sharing our glow with others.

Today, I want to encourage us all to keep moving forward. From the moment we are born, we are on a walk with God through the journey of our lives. From the dark dawn hours through the rising of the sun, God is there to help us along. If we keep on going, even after every setback, God's light will shine ever more brightly in our lives. Whether you are trying to kick a bad habit or establish a new good one, don't ever give up.

One step at a time, we will step into the light until it shines like the fullness of day.



*The path
of the
righteous
is like
the*

**Morning
Sun**

*shining
ever brighter
till the full light
of day.*

Proverbs 4:18

Better Together

Ecclesiastes 4:9

*Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor.*

In Ecclesiastes, King Solomon, the wisest of all men taught, “*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor.*” But is that such a profound idea? Isn’t obvious that two people will accomplish more together than alone?

The truth is that, in practice, we tend to live quite differently. Society has long been based on the notion of competition. It’s the idea that only one of us can succeed, only one of us can have what we all want. However, it’s time to shift from competition to a paradigm of collaboration where we can all benefit by helping each other.

Let’s look at some practical applications to our lives. Solomon mentioned four in Ecclesiastes 4:9–12. The first is that when we work together we get a better return for our labor. This means that we are more productive as part of a team. Whether it be in the workplace or at home, we are more creative and effective when we can bounce ideas off each other and execute our ideas together.

Next Solomon taught that when there are two, if one falls, the other person can pick up the fallen individual. Again, on the surface, that conclusion is obvious. But on a deeper level, Solomon was teaching us that when we have a companion or spiritual guide, we have someone to catch us if we stray.

We would be wise to cultivate such relationships and welcome constructive criticism. It’s not always fun to hear, but when someone points out how we might be falling, they can literally save our spiritual lives.

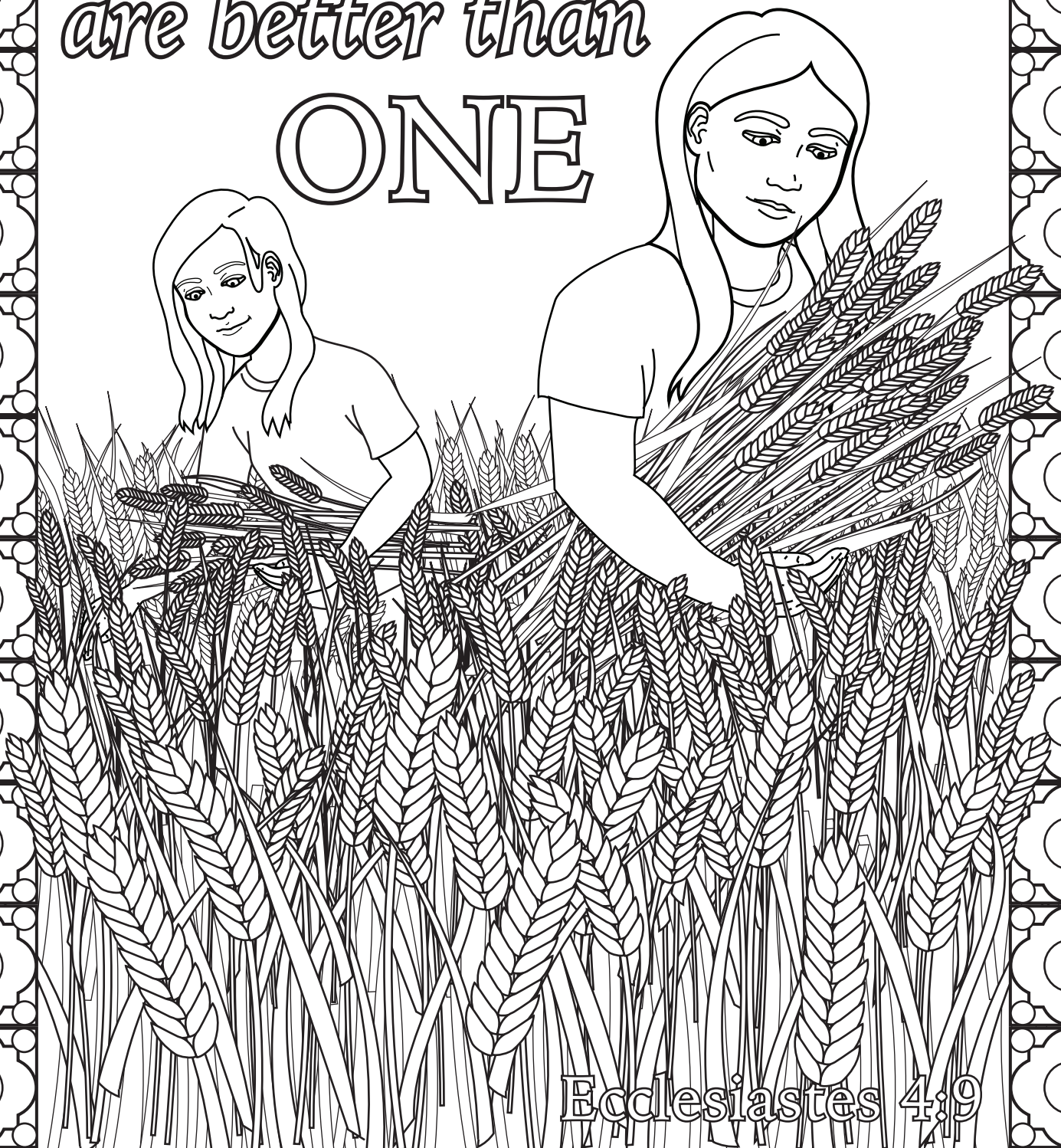
Solomon went on to give yet another example of the benefits of working together — when two lie down together they can keep each other warm. Again, this is obvious on the physical level and instructive on a spiritual level. When going through dark and difficult times, we all need a friend to comfort us and to empathize with us.

Finally, Solomon taught that while one person alone can be easily overpowered, two can work together to fight off attackers. This is true of spiritual assaults as well. Just like we might find a running partner to help ward off laziness, we can also find a buddy to help beat the urge to gossip.

The *Talmud*, the written collection of the Oral Tradition, shares a story about a Jewish sage who fell asleep for 70 years. When he awoke, he headed straight to the study hall. When he realized that all his peers and study partners had already passed away he expressed the famous line, “Give me companionship or give me death!” He recognized that he could not live effectively without at least one good companion.

Let’s make sure to find a partner or multiple partners for the different challenges in life. Indeed, two are better than one, and we are all better together.

TWO
are better than
ONE



Ecclesiastes 4:9

The Return of the Exiles

Isaiah 11:12

He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.

When Fredrick the Great asked his trusted advisor for the single, strongest piece of evidence that proved the existence of God, the advisor answered him: “The Jews, Sir, the Jews.”

How is it that the Jewish people are a living testimony to the existence of God?

The answer is that the Jewish people, according to all reason and logic, should no longer exist. It is statistically impossible for such a small nation, persecuted and kicked out of land after land, to still be around. Even more unbelievable is that fact that the Jews have returned to their homeland. There is no natural explanation for the existence of Israel today, only a supernatural one. There is only one possible explanation for the survival and revival of the Jews: God.

If the Jews exist today, it is only because God exists eternally.

If the Jews were a large and mighty nation, we may have been able to attribute their perseverance to their significant numbers or military prowess. If the Jews had remained safely in their homeland since its inception over 3,000 years ago, we might have been able to credit their existence today with the stability that they enjoyed throughout history.

However, the Jews have enjoyed none of these advantages. They have been a small nation, less than 1 percent of all humanity, with neither a military nor a homeland until recent times. Under these circumstances, no nation could possibly survive. They have been exiled from their land not once, but twice!

Even more startling is that the Bible predicted these dire circumstances: “*The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and only a few of you will survive . . .*” (Deuteronomy 4:27). And the Bible also promised the miraculous return of the Jewish people: “*. . . he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth*” (Isaiah 11:12). Who could make such outrageous claims other than the Master of the world? Only God could predict and arrange such events!

In his brilliant work, *My Beloved Knocks*, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik (a 20th-century New York rabbi) lists the six modern miracles regarding the Jews in the current time. Among those, he included the return to the land of Israel, the miracles of the Israeli army, and the establishment of the state of Israel. These supernatural events predicted in the Bible, says the Rabbi, are God knocking on our doors, beckoning us to wake up and let Him into our lives.

We are living in wondrous times. The promises of the Bible are being fulfilled today. Let us be inspired by the miracles unfolding before our very eyes. Let us reaffirm our faith and renew our commitment to God. God is eternally faithful; may we be faithful to Him for all eternity!

*He will raise
a banner
for the
nations*

*and gather
the exiles
of Israel.*

Isaiah 11:12

God Carries Us Through

Isaiah 40:11

*He tends his flock like a shepherd;
he gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.*

In Isaiah 40, the prophet likened God to a shepherd Who lovingly takes care of His flock. There are several meaningful nuances in this verse that emphasize God's love for His people. The first is that God Himself is the shepherd. God could have assigned the job of taking care of His people to one of His ministering angels. But God Himself chooses to be close and personal when it comes to tending to His people.

In addition, the verse stresses that God looks at each one of His "sheep" and attends to them according to their particular needs. If one is too young, too old, or too sick to walk, God carries them. No matter what the difficult circumstance might be, God is attentive to the unique needs of every individual.

When Moses delivered his final address to the people in the book of Deuteronomy, he said: "*The LORD . . . will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt . . . There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son . . .*" (Deuteronomy 1:30-31):

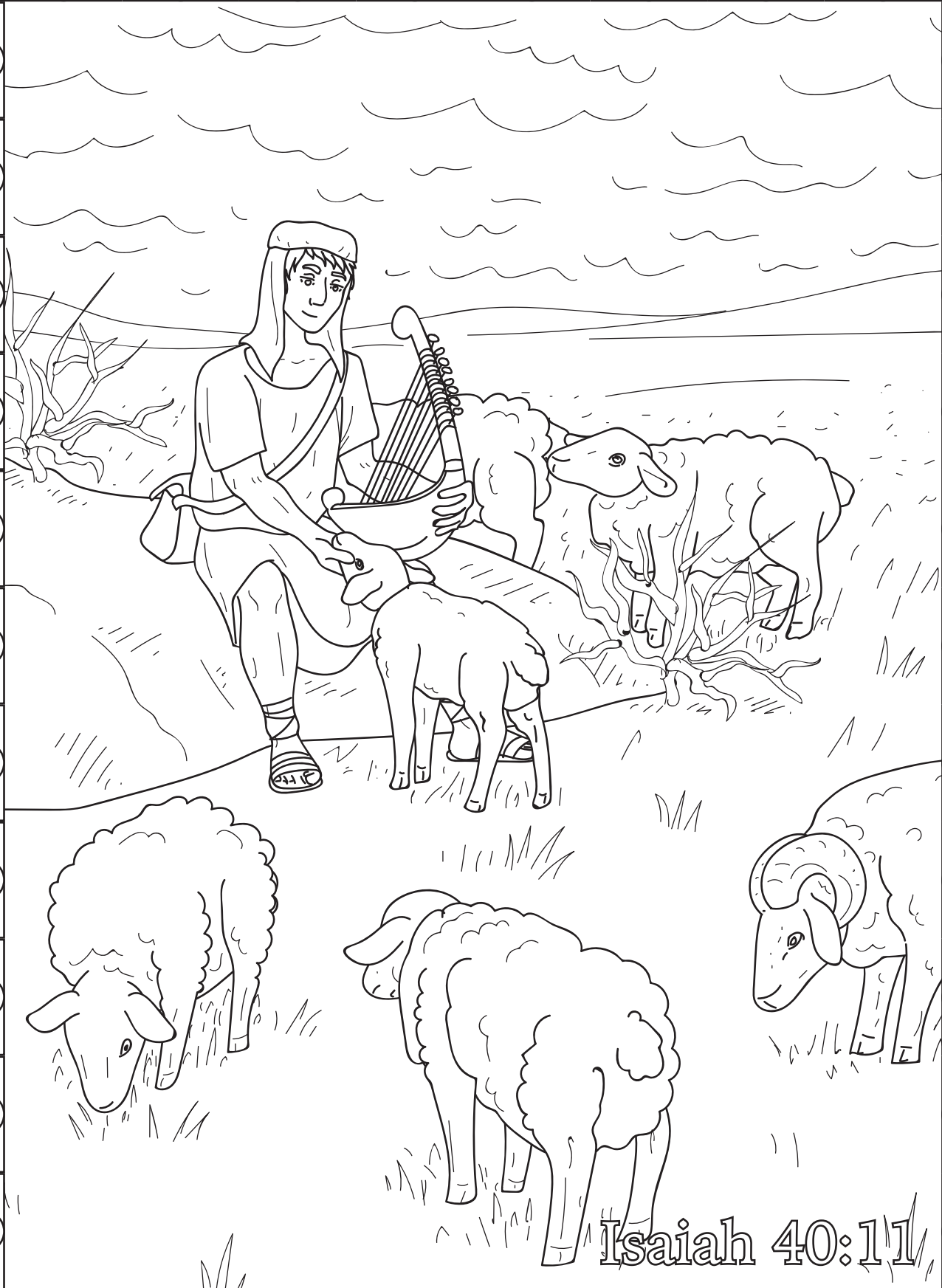
The Jewish sages provide an allegory: There was once a king with a very ill son. He set out with his son toward a faraway land where a great doctor could be found. When the carriage broke down, the king and his son traveled by foot. When the son could no longer walk, the king carried him.

Along the way, the king lovingly tended to his son's every need. He climbed trees to bring him fruit and drew water at every well. Eventually, they made it to the doctor who saved the boy's life. The king nursed his son back to health until at last, he was strong enough to make the journey home.

As they traveled home, the king pointed out all of their past experiences. "Here was our camp, here you had a high fever and had to rest, here you can even see our footprints." The son took great interest in these landmarks. He realized how much his father had cared for him and how much he was loved.

However, as he examined the footprints, there seemed to be something wrong. "Father!" exclaimed the boy, "At this point I see both of our footsteps, but later on I only see yours. Why did you abandon me when I was ill?" With tears streaming down his face, the king explained to his beloved son: "That was when you couldn't walk and so I carried you!"

That is how we go through our journey in life together with our Father, our King, our Shepherd. Although it might feel as though we are abandoned at times, it is precisely at those moments that God is carrying us.



Isaiah 40:11

Roots of Your Faith

Romans 11:17

You, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root . . .

Several years ago a book was published covering a subject near and dear to my heart — bridge-building between Christians and Jews. *The Sistine Secrets — Michelangelo's Forbidden Messages in the Heart of the Vatican* shows how 500 years ago the renowned artist Michelangelo embedded images that appealed for Jewish-Christian understanding in one of his greatest works — the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.

Pope Julius II in 1508 commissioned Michelangelo to paint the crumbling chapel ceiling in a very simple fashion — a demeaning job for such a great artist, particularly one who considered himself primarily a sculptor. Instead, Michelangelo threw his full creative energies into the task. The result, of course, is a renowned masterpiece adorned primarily with images of heroes and heroines of the Hebrew Bible, and full of subtle reminders of the Jewish roots of the Christian faith — a stunning visual appeal for a revolutionary change in the relationship between Christians and Jews.

Indeed, the apostle Paul in his letter to the emerging church in Rome made it very clear that Gentiles, “*branches from a wild olive tree*,” had been grafted to Abraham’s tree, and therefore “*now you also receive the blessing God has promised Abraham and his children . . . But you must be careful not to brag about being grafted in to replace the branches that were broken off. Remember, you are just a branch, not the root*” (Romans 11:17–18, NLT).

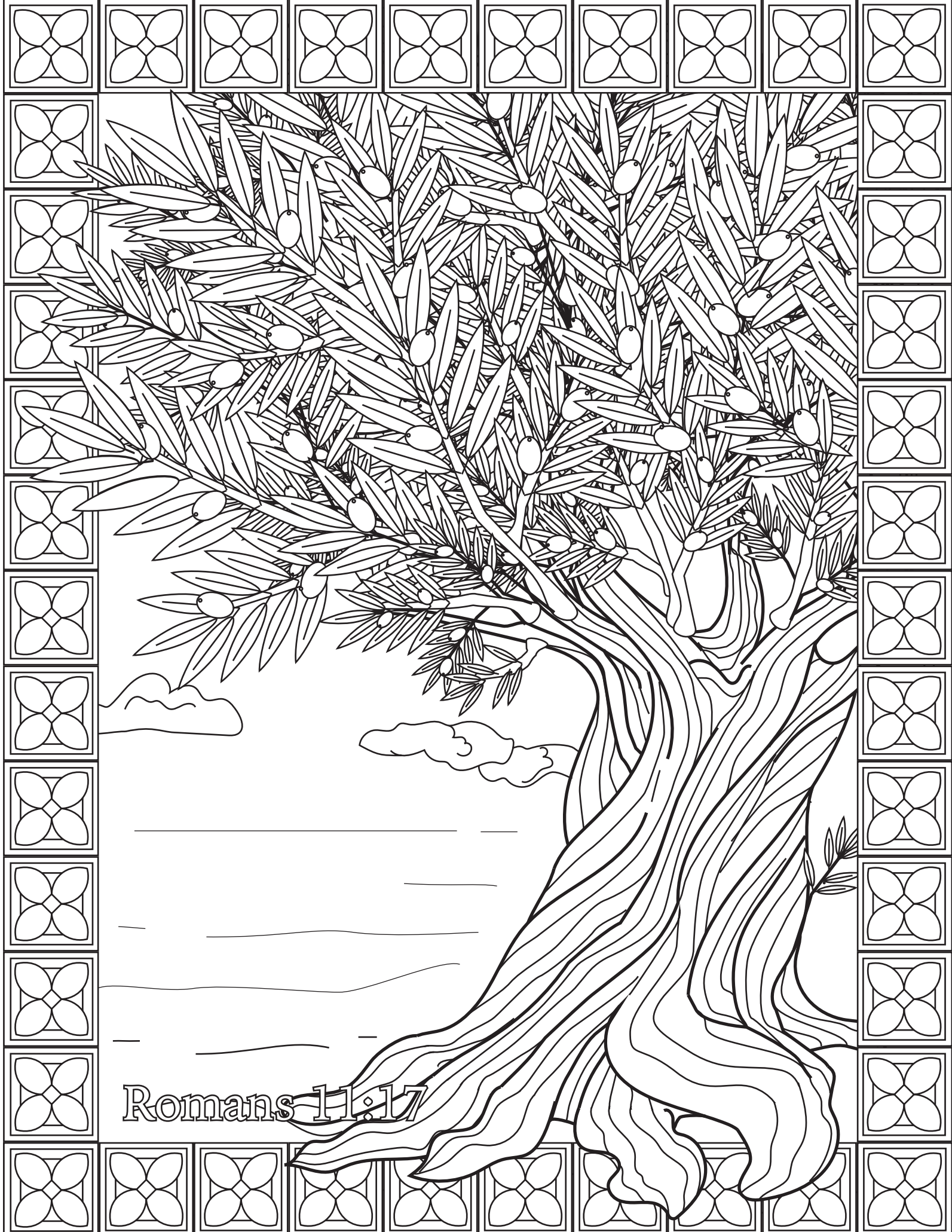
These verses are one of the reasons why I love the imagery of the olive tree so much — it points to the very heart of *The Fellowship*’s mission: to build bridges of understanding between Christians and Jews, and to help Christians understand the very roots of their faith.

Only when we begin to understand each other — what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be a Jew — can we truly love each other as God has intended. God calls us to lead a life of *imitation dei*, imitating Him and loving real people. While it is much harder to love real people than to love the idea, or even ideal, God calls each one of us to do precisely that.

We cannot change what is past. But we can, and must, reverse the history of Christian-Jewish encounters. We can, and must, bridge the deep chasm existing between our faith communities by living out the doctrine that serves as cornerstones of both our faiths: love.

True love is the gift of our faiths to the world; it is both the process through which we achieve the goal of God’s love and the goal itself. Living a life of love is how we can achieve a proper relationship with God.

My prayer for both faith communities, Christians and Jews, is that we nurture that life of love today, enabling it to grow like the olive tree, abundantly and with much fruit.



Romans 11:17

Building Bridges, Saving Lives

The *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews* was founded in 1983 by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein to promote understanding between Christians and Jews, and build broad support for Israel through these following programs:

Blessing Jews in Need Around the World



On Wings of Eagles — Helping bring needy Jews to the Holy Land.

Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58 — Providing lifesaving aid and assistance to impoverished Jews around the world.



Guardians of Israel — Providing security for needy Jews around the world against terrorism and anti-Semitism.

Understanding the Jewish Roots of the Christian faith



Holy Land Moments daily radio program, devotionals, and Hebrew Word of the Day.

Online teaching videos and other resources on Jewish roots of Christianity, Jewish holidays, history, and culture.

Advocating for the Jewish People and the State of Israel



Stand for Israel — Mobilizing support to stand with Israel through advocacy.



Israel in the News — Airing weekly on current events in Israel and the Middle East.

Fellowship Prayer Team — Joining in prayer for Israel.

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The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy. – Psalm 65:8

In the *Holy Land Moments Coloring Book*, we have paired inspirational reflections from Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein on 12 key Scriptures with beautiful illustrations for you to color. Coloring books for adults offer a wonderful way to relieve stress – and *Holy Land Moments Coloring Book* will not just help you relax, but also help you to focus on the beauty and wonder of God's Creation and His Word. As you color and reflect upon Rabbi Eckstein's devotions, you will imbue the very simple task of coloring with holiness, and in doing so, rediscover the peace that only God can provide.



Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein

In 1983, Rabbi Eckstein founded the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (The Fellowship)*, devoting his life to building bridges of understanding between Christians and Jews and cultivating broad support for the state of Israel. He is an internationally respected Bible teacher and acknowledged as the world's leading Jewish authority on evangelical Christians. Under his leadership, *The Fellowship* now raises over \$125 million annually, making it the largest Christian-supported humanitarian nonprofit working in Israel today.

Rabbi Eckstein is the author of 10 highly acclaimed books, including *How Firm a Foundation: A Gift of Jewish Wisdom for Christians and Jews*, and *The One Year Holy Land Moments Devotional*. His authorized biography titled *The Bridge Builder: The Life and Legacy of Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein*, written by respected author and journalist Zev Chafets, was released in August 2015.



Yael Eckstein

As Senior Vice President of the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (The Fellowship)* in the office of the President, Yael Eckstein oversees all ministry programs and serves as the international spokesperson for the \$125 million organization. Prior to her present duties, Yael held the position of director of program development and ministry outreach.

Based in Jerusalem, Yael is recognized as a published writer, a respected social services professional, and an expert on Jewish-Christian relations. Her most recent book, *Spiritual Cooking with Yael*, is a celebration of her love

for cooking healthy, simple, delicious food for her family and dozens of weekly *Shabbat* guests.

