

Junior Soldiers

Unit 14 : Lesson 1



Creative Engagement with the Word

PURPOSE: For the children to explore and experience creative ways to engage with the bible.

‘For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.’

Ephesians 2:10

Each of you is now a new person. You are becoming more and more like your Creator, and you will understand him better.

Colossians 3:10 (CEV)

What God has said isn’t only alive and active! It is sharper than any double-edged sword. His word can cut through our spirits and souls and through our joints and marrow, until it discovers the desires and thoughts of our hearts.

Hebrews 4:12 (CEV)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Jeremiah 1:5

Psalms 139:13-16

All throughout Psalms we find songs that have been inspired by an experience of God. "Rejoice because of your creator"; "Praise him by dancing and playing music"; "Sing him a new song of praise".

Taking our experience of faith and the creative gifts God has given

us, our response is to create works of praise and honour. In this lesson we will be helping children understand that they are created in the image of a creative God and can explore the bible in creative ways.

Using different creative outlets helps us to better understand and communicate the bible. We find that the bible comes alive. We become aware of new perspectives and our interactions with God's word become more memorable.

This lesson will require a little more preparation than usual.

It includes many ideas to inspire you. The expectation is not that you will try all of them, but that you will choose those activities that best match the skills and interests of your group. For example, if your children are tech savvy then use the examples that involve technology. If they are tactile then you might like to try using play dough. If they like hip hop then invite them to write some lyrics. Consider the resources you have and the people you have available.

You do not need to use activities that align with your own strengths. The children will do the creating, as the leader you are there to assist the children to engage in the process. You might also like to invite a special guest such as a drama teacher or someone who is into film and technology etc. Remember to be aware of the child safety requirements in your state.

Aim to include a wide range of learning styles in this lesson. The following list is based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. You can find more information by following the links below or see Appendix A.

Word	Mathematics and logic	Body	Self
Musical	Space and vision	People	Natural

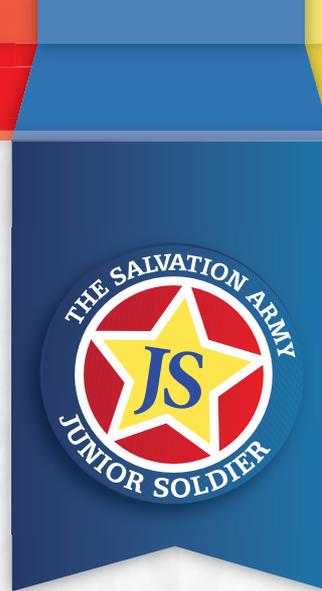
For more information on learning styles:

<http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html>

<https://www.learning-theories.com/gardners-multiple-intelligences-theory.html>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_multiple_intelligences

Appendix A



What you will need

For 'Connecting In'

- Option 1 – large sheet of paper or whiteboard
- Markers

For 'The Main Thing'

Tactile activities

- Play dough - Play Dough, Table, Play Dough Utensils
- Sand - Sand Pit or Sandbag, Sand
- Music, Spoken Word/Poetry
- Pens, Paper, Laptop and internet access if you will show any examples

Music, Spoken Word/Poetry

- Pens and paper
- Device with internet connection to watch examples

Visual Arts

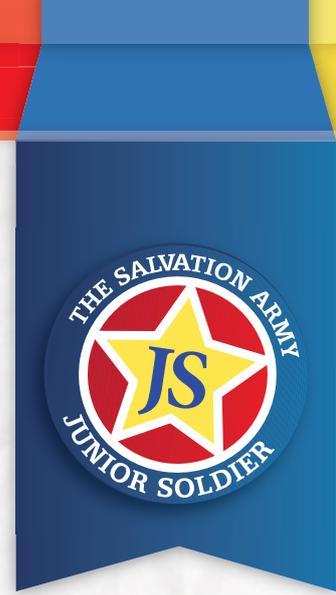
- Cartooning - cartooning sheets printed from Appendix B, pencils, erasers, thin black pens, coloured pencils
- Drawing/colouring - paper, pencils, colouring pencils, markers, pastels, colouring sheet printed from Appendix C
- Painting - paint, paint brushes, canvas/paper, water, smocks, plastic table cloths etc.

Bible Journaling

- Photocopies of Bible passages, pencils, pens, watercolours, paintbrushes, water etc.

For 'Home and Beyond'

- Print enough Home and Beyond cards for each child



Word Puzzles

- Scrabble tiles OR pens, printed copies of grid paper from Appendix D.
- Pens, pencils, paper, rulers, erasers

Performing Arts

- Drama - pens, paper
- Dance – music, device to play music

Lego/Constructing

- Lego - Lego, table.
- Construction: recycled materials, boxes, pop sticks, scissors, glue etc.

Technology

- Photography - Cameras, Phones.
- Video/movie maker - Camera, Phone, ipad, iMovie app.

Connecting In

Everybody is different! There are a whole range of activities that people enjoy doing, different things that we are good at and different ways that we like to learn.

Activity

Option 1 - Discussion

- What are some things you like to do?
- How do you like to express yourself?

Write the responses on a large sheet of paper or a whiteboard.

OR

Option 2 - Rhythm game

- Ask the children to stand in a circle
- Begin a simple rhythm with clapping, stomping or clicking (e.g. clap, clap, stomp, click)
- Invite the children to join and maintain the rhythm throughout the game
- Moving around the circle, give each child a turn to say a different way to be creative
- Each answer is spoken on the last action of your rhythm pattern (e.g. clap, clap, stomp, “painting”[click]; clap, clap, stomp, “photography” [click])

Link

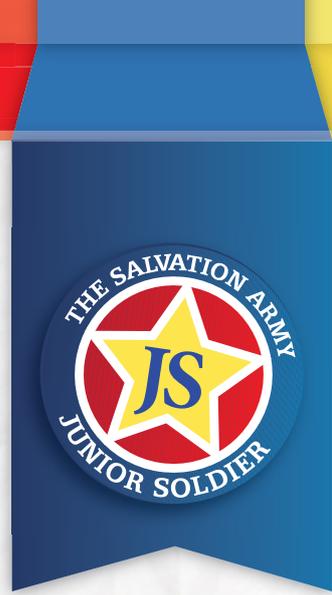
I wonder if you have ever read a book and watched a movie about the same story (e.g. ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’, ‘The Lorax’ or ‘Harry Potter’). Did you find the book or the movie easier to understand?

Do you find it easier to listen to someone explain something or read about it for yourself?

Does background music make it easier or harder for you to concentrate?

Would you rather talk about an idea with someone else or think it through on your own?

Different people learn in different ways. Often, we just read the Bible or listen to someone read it to us. But there are many different ways that we can explore the Bible and communicate it to others. Learning the Bible in different ways can make it easier to understand and remember.



The Main Thing

When we look around the world it is amazing to see the imagination and creativity that God has. Have you ever heard people say that no two snowflakes look alike? God is **constantly creating** new and exciting things for us to enjoy. Every morning there is a different sunrise and every evening a different sunset, every time a baby is born it's another unique personality, every tiger has its own set of stripes and every tree has a different size and shape. What other examples can you think of?

Look around the room... no two people are exactly the same (even if we have twins) because we were made in the image of a creative God. How many different people do you think that you could create? What would be difficult about doing this?

Ask the children to look up Genesis 1:27 (NLT). Read it aloud.

To make us more like him, God gave us all the ability to be creative. We can express creativity in different ways; for example, some people have the creative ability to draw and paint, some can make movies and videos, some can craft/ build things, some can write songs, poems and stories and some can even make plays and dances.

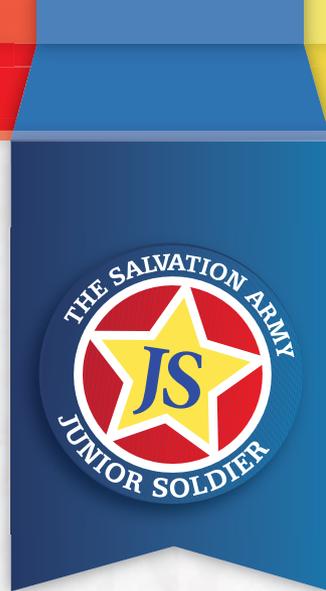
- Can you think of a time when you've heard or seen a re-creation of a section of the bible that helped you better understand it?
- What about it helped you understand?
- What are some of your creative skills?
- Can you think of a time when you did something creative with a Bible story?
- What did you do?
- Did it help you to better understand the story?

It's important for us to use our creative skills to help ourselves and others engage with and understand the bible. When we engage with the bible we get involved with it; we become part of the story in some way. Engaging with the Bible gives us a deeper understanding of the stories and the difference that they can make in our lives.

Ask the children to look up I Corinthians 14:19 (CEV). Ask one of the children to read it aloud.

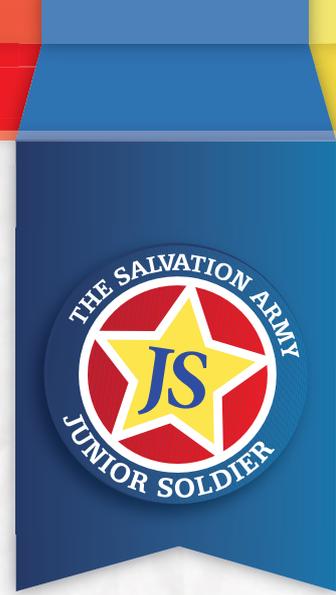
What do you think this verse means?

It's no good speaking to a person in a language that they don't understand! Reading the Bible can sometimes be like reading another language. It can be hard to understand or remember the words we read. Our creative abilities can become like the language we best understand.



We can use the creative skills God gave us to translate the stories of the Bible into a language that helps us to understand and remember and then tell others what we've learnt. By recreating the Bible we bring it to life, see stories from a different perspective and can find new meaning in the verse or story.

It's important that we can understand the Bible because it is one of the ways that God communicates with us. God also wants us to be able to share His word to others and for us to do that we first need to understand it for ourselves.



Activity

- Set up a variety of creative stations using the ideas below.
- Invite the children to choose the activity that they would like to be involved in.
- Assign each group a verse or story from the list below (or ask them to choose one).
- Ask the children to recreate the story.

Bible Verses

- Psalm 18:30
- Psalm 33:6
- Psalm 119:105
- Matthew 7:24
- Isaiah 40:8
- Hebrews 4:12
- 1 John 1:1

Obscure Bible story possibilities: (These could be good for cartoons, dramas or videos.)

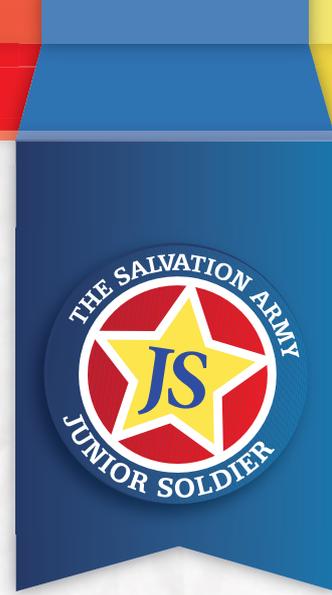
- Balaam's Donkey - Numbers 22:22-35
- Elisha and the bears - 2 Kings 2:23-25
- Bones grow flesh - Ezekiel 37:1-14

Tactile activities

- Play dough - Set up a table with some Play dough and ask the children to mould something that stands out for them in the Bible passage.
- Sand - If you have a sandpit or a sandbag ask the children create a sand sculpture that relates to the Bible passage. If you have a beach nearby you could also do this on a Junior Soldier day out - remember to plan according to the child safety requirements in your state.

Music, Spoken Word/Poetry

- Provide pens and paper for the children to write a story, lyrics to a song or a poem.
- Here are some links to help get the creative juices flowing
 - » Sager Solomon Schechter Day School Bible Raps Bible Raps
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtaYuG-SnOY>
 - » Jojo Rock - Big
<http://www.jojorock.com/big/>



Visual Arts

- Cartooning - Print copies of the cartooning sheets from Appendix B and provide pencils. Challenge the children to create a cartooning sequence that brings the passage alive.
- Drawing/colouring – Provide paper, pencils, markers and pastels. Print copies of the colouring sheet from Appendix C. The children may choose to draw their own picture or colour in the sheet provided. As the children draw and colour ask them to reflect on the passage. They may like to write the verse or a significant word in the centre. As the children draw and colour ask them to reflect on the passage.
- Painting - This can get messy, but that is the fun of the creative process, you can paint on butcher's paper or buy some canvas paper from your local art or discount shop.

Bible Journaling

- Provide crayons and pastels. The children may choose to do this activity in their own Bible or photocopy the relevant page from the Bible for them to use. Invite the children to draw pictures and words that are relevant to the passage on the pages of their Bible.
- Google Image search 'Illustrated Faith' for ideas or visit the Illustrated Faith website
<https://www.illustratedfaith.com/>

Word Puzzles

- Scrabble - Provide Scrabble tiles OR print copies of grid paper from Appendix D and provide pens. Instruct the children to choose some keywords out of the passage and link them together like a scrabble board – they may either do this with Scrabble tiles or by writing the letters on the grid paper provided.
- Find-a-Word - Print copies of grid paper from Appendix D and provide pens. The children can create their own Find-a-Word by choosing some keywords out of the passage and writing them into the grid. The remaining squares can be filled with random letters. Remind the children to write a list of the words they have hidden.

Performing Arts:

- Drama - Read the Bible passage and consider these questions:
 - » What is the main message in the story?
 - » Who is telling the story?
 - » Who is the intended audience?
 - » Describe the mood of the story.
 - » How is this story different to other stories?



Create a drama based on your reflection. These questions help create a dramatic re-telling of the story rather than just simply “acting it out”.

- Dancing - Once the children have an understanding of the passage, ask them to choreograph a dance that reflects the emotions and main ideas of the story.

Lego/Constructing

- Lego: place some Lego on a mat and ask the children to recreate a scene from this passage.
- Construction – Provide recycled materials, boxes, pop sticks, scissors, glue etc. on a table and ask the children to build a scene or character from the passage.

Technology

- Photography – Provide the children with a camera or a phone to take photos that represent the story.
- Video/movie maker – Ask the children to write a script (check out the drama script writing questions) and use ‘Movie Maker’ or another program to make a mini film to re-tell the Bible story.

Tying In

Give the children an opportunity to share their creation with the whole group.

Debrief question time:

- How did creativity help you engage with the passage?
- What else did you learn?
- If you chose more than one activity did you find one more helpful than the other?

Print off the ‘Home & Beyond’ cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Choose your own Bible story or verse this week and involve your family in creating something new.

Here are some ideas:

- Make a movie based on the Bible story, using your family members as actors

Home & Beyond

- Create a board game based on the story
- Cook a food that you find in the Bible
- Take a trip to the beach and build a sandcastle that relates to the Bible verse



Learning Styles

- **Word** - In this category we find activities such as reading stories, journal writing, engaging in discussions and recitation
- **Musical** - This learning style encompasses learning truths through songs, song writing, setting the mood with music, looking at the role of music in the Bible, rhythm and chants
- **Math and logic** - Someone with this learning preference might enjoy problem solving, analyzing and interpreting, numerical data, puzzles, sequencing and timelines.
- **Space and vision** - The sort of activities which would most engage someone who connects with this learning style include art, videos, spatial referencing, pictures and drawing
- **Body** - In this category we find activities like athletics, dance, acting, building models, and using hand actions
- **People** - Those who have a preference toward this learning style might enjoy working with others, negotiating, doing service projects, working in small groups and team building exercises
- **Self** - This group tends to be more introspective, self-motivated and meditative. They might prefer time for quiet reflection, independent study time, one-on-one debriefing
- **Natural** - Those who connect best with natural activities might like to see natural spaces used as a springboard for stories, prefer to learn in open spaces, interact with items from nature, both living and inanimate

Appendix A (continued)

LEARNING STYLE	IDEAS	LEARNING STYLE	IDEAS
WORD	Writing stories, scripts or poems, storytelling, word games, reading, lectures	SELF	Reflection, meditation, journals, privacy, time, independent learning
MUSICAL	Singing, playing an instrument, composing, listening, background music, rhythms, chants	NATURAL	Natural materials, outdoor spaces, rocks, shells, sand play, picnics, nature walks, class pets
BODY	Dance, athletics, movement, touching, body language, role playing, using tools	MATH & LOGIC	Reasoning, logic questions, puzzles, riddles, investigations, mysteries,
PEOPLE	Plays, debates, group work, discussions, email,	SPACE & VISION	Posters, visual displays, drawing, painting, illustrating, collages, photography, maps, charts, multimedia

Bible Cartoon

Title _____

Reference _____

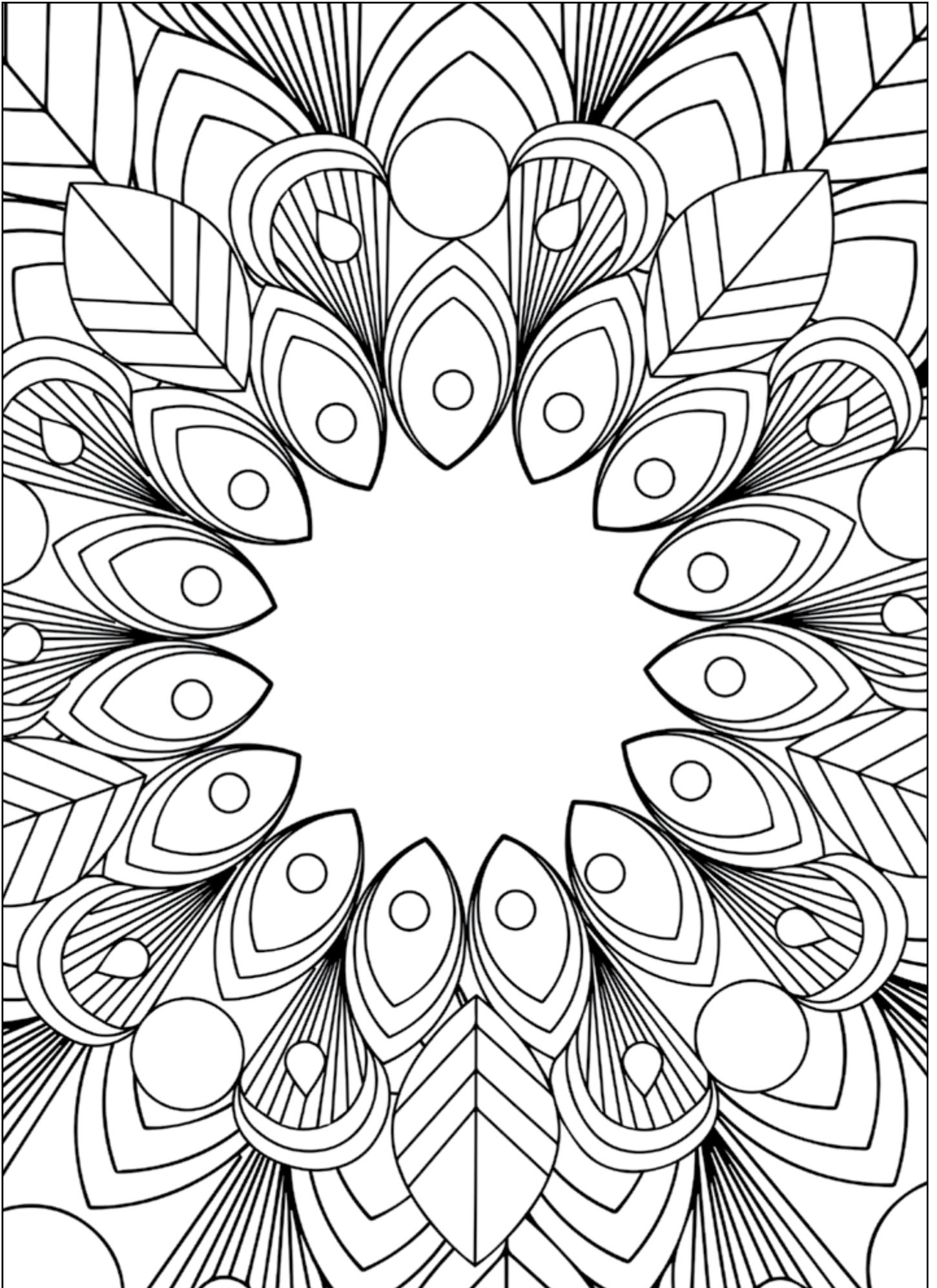
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Bible Cartoon

Title _____

Reference _____

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Home & Beyond

Choose your own Bible story or verse this week and involve your family in creating something new.

Here are some ideas:

- Make a movie based on the Bible story using your family members as actors
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