

The Parables of Jesus for Children



The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

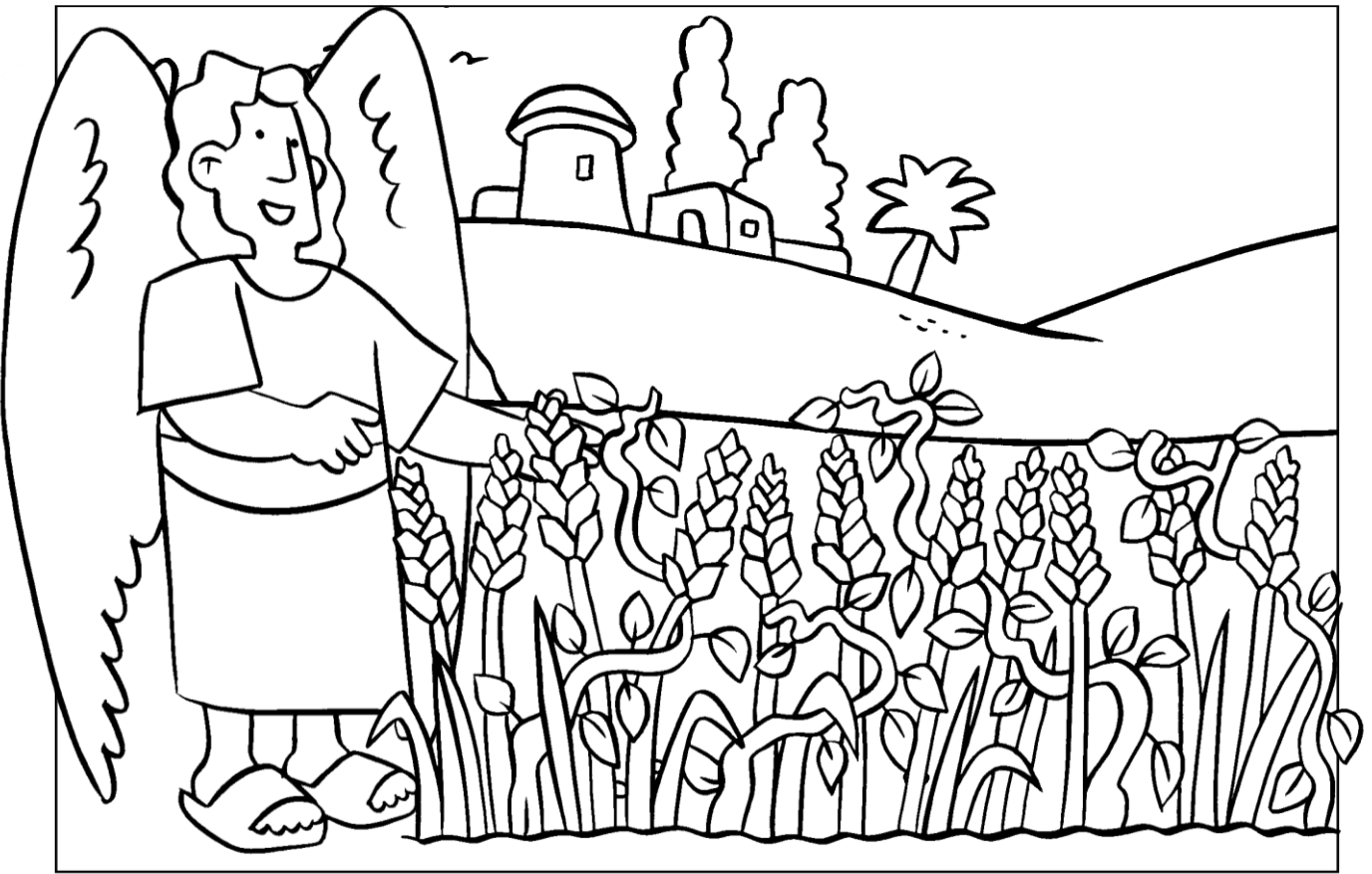
Jesus said, “God’s kingdom is like a man who planted good seed in his field. That night, while everyone was asleep, the man’s enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat and then left.

Later, the wheat grew, and heads of grain grew on the plants. But at the same time the weeds also grew. Then the man’s servants came to him and said, ‘You planted good seed in your field. Where did the weeds come from?’

“The man answered, ‘An enemy planted weeds.’

“The servants asked, ‘Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?’

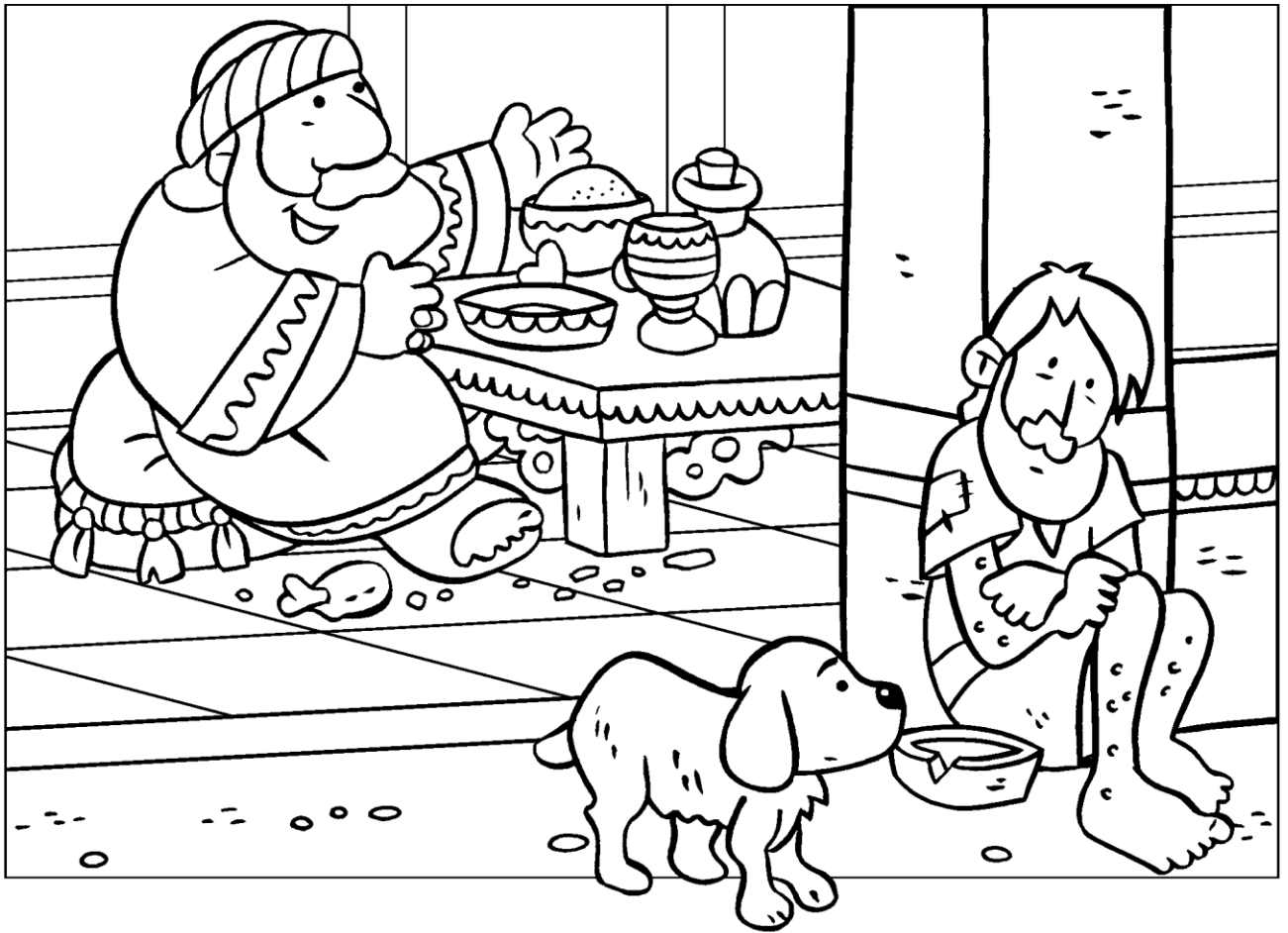
“He answered, ‘No, because when you pull up the weeds, you might also pull up the wheat. Let the weeds and the wheat grow together until the harvest



time. At the harvest time I will tell the workers this: First, gather the weeds and tie them together to be burned. Then gather the wheat and bring it to my barn.”

Then Jesus left the people and went into the house. His followers came to him and said, “Explain to us the meaning of the story about the weeds in the field.”

He answered, “The man who planted the good seed in the field is the Son of Man [Jesus]. The field is the world. The good seed are the people in God’s kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the Evil One. And the enemy who planted the bad seed is the devil. The harvest is the end of time. And the workers who gather are God’s angels. (Matthew 13:24-30)



The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and who lived each day in luxury. At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores.

Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to sit beside Abraham at the heavenly banquet. The rich man also died and was buried, and he went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side. The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.'

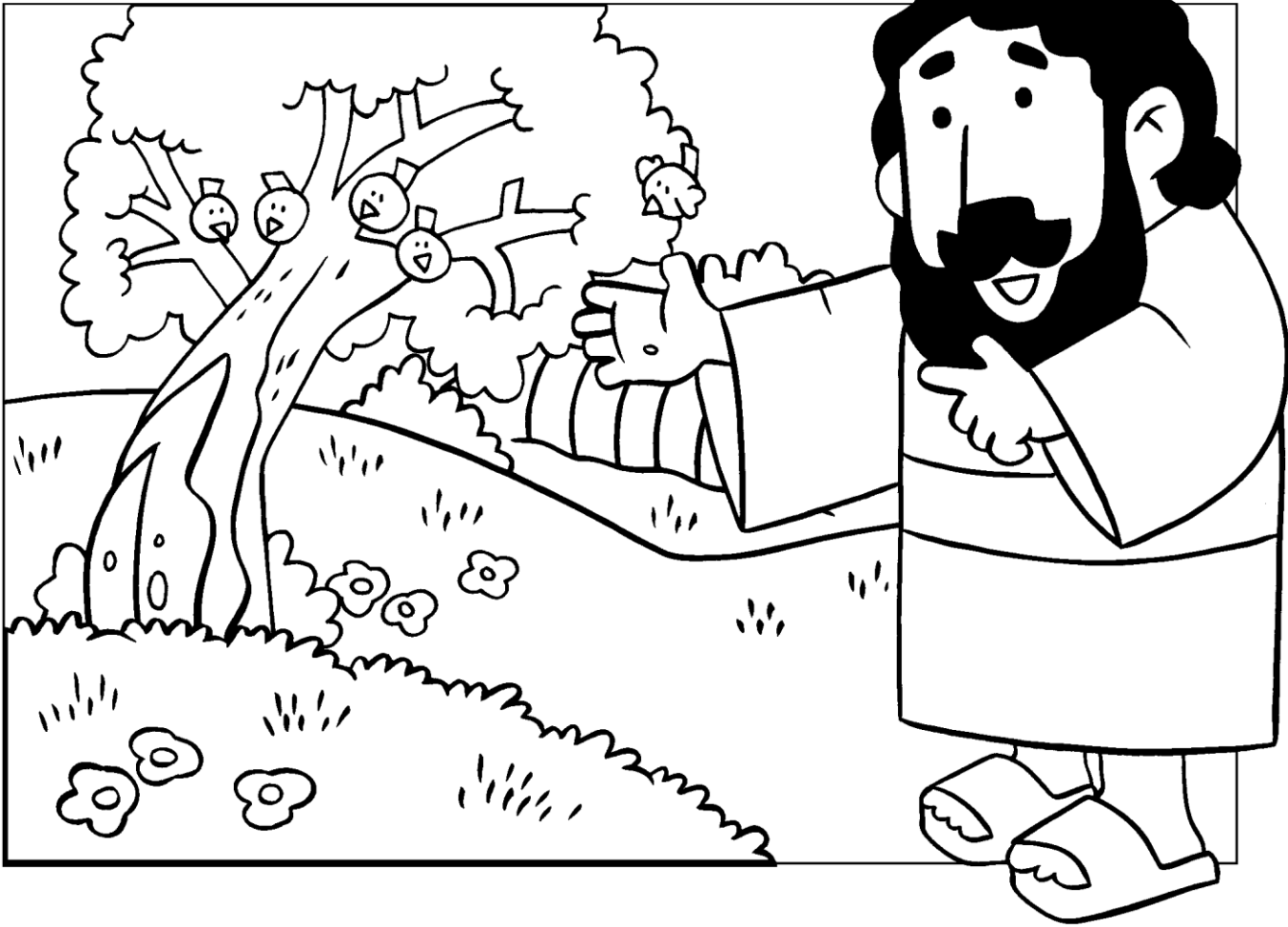
But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being



comforted, and you are in anguish. And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.'

Then the rich man said, 'Please, Father Abraham, at least send him to my father's home. I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them so they don't end up in this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read what they wrote.'

The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will repent of their sins and turn to God.' But Abraham said, 'If they won't listen to Moses and the prophets, they won't be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.' (Luke 16:19-31)



The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Then Jesus said, “What is God’s kingdom like? What can I compare it to? God’s kingdom is like the seed of the mustard plant. Someone plants this seed in their garden. The seed grows and becomes a tree, and the birds build nests on its branches.” (Luke 13:18-19)



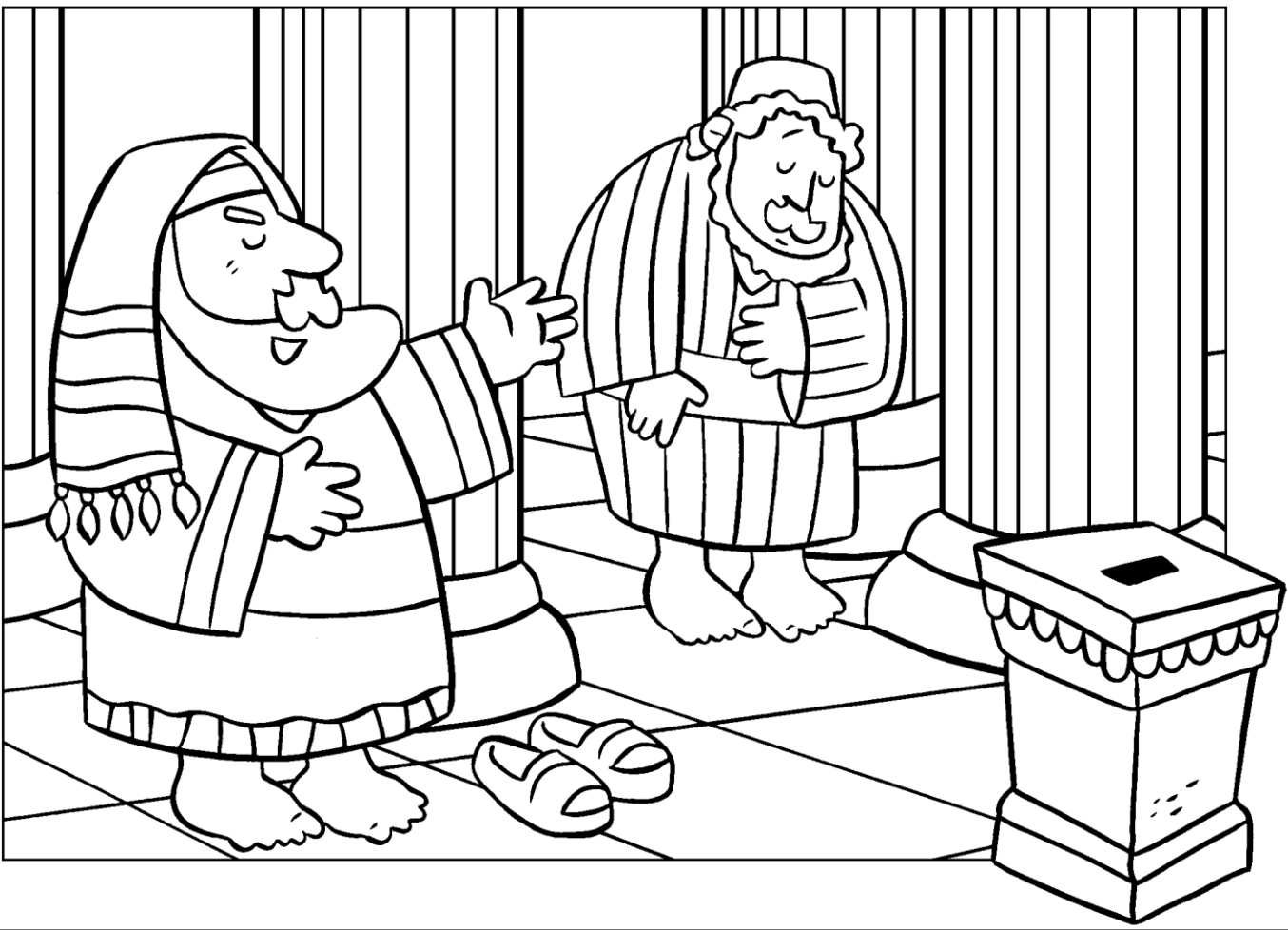
The Parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge

One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.

“There was a judge in a certain city,” he said, “who neither feared God nor cared about people. A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, ‘Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.’ The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, ‘I don’t fear God or care about people, but this woman is driving me crazy. I’m going to see that she gets justice, because she is wearing me out with her constant requests!’”

Then the Lord said, “Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don’t you think God will surely give justice to his children who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly!

(Luke 18:1-8)



The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

One time there was a Pharisee and a tax collector. One day they both went to the Temple to pray. The Pharisee stood alone, away from the tax collector. When the Pharisee prayed, he said, 'O God, I thank you that I am not as bad as other people. I am not like men who steal and cheat. I thank you that I am better than this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I give a tenth of everything I get!'

"The tax collector stood alone too. But when he prayed, he would not even look up to heaven. He felt very humble before God. He said, 'O God, have mercy on me. I am a sinner!' I tell you, when this man finished his prayer and went home, he was right with God. But the Pharisee, who felt that he was better than others, was not right with God. People who make themselves important will be made humble. But those who make themselves humble will be made important." (Luke 18:10-14)



The Two Builders

Jesus said, “Anyone who listens to Me and obeys Me is like a wise man who built a house on solid rock. The flood came and the river rushed against the house, but it was built so well that it didn’t even shake!

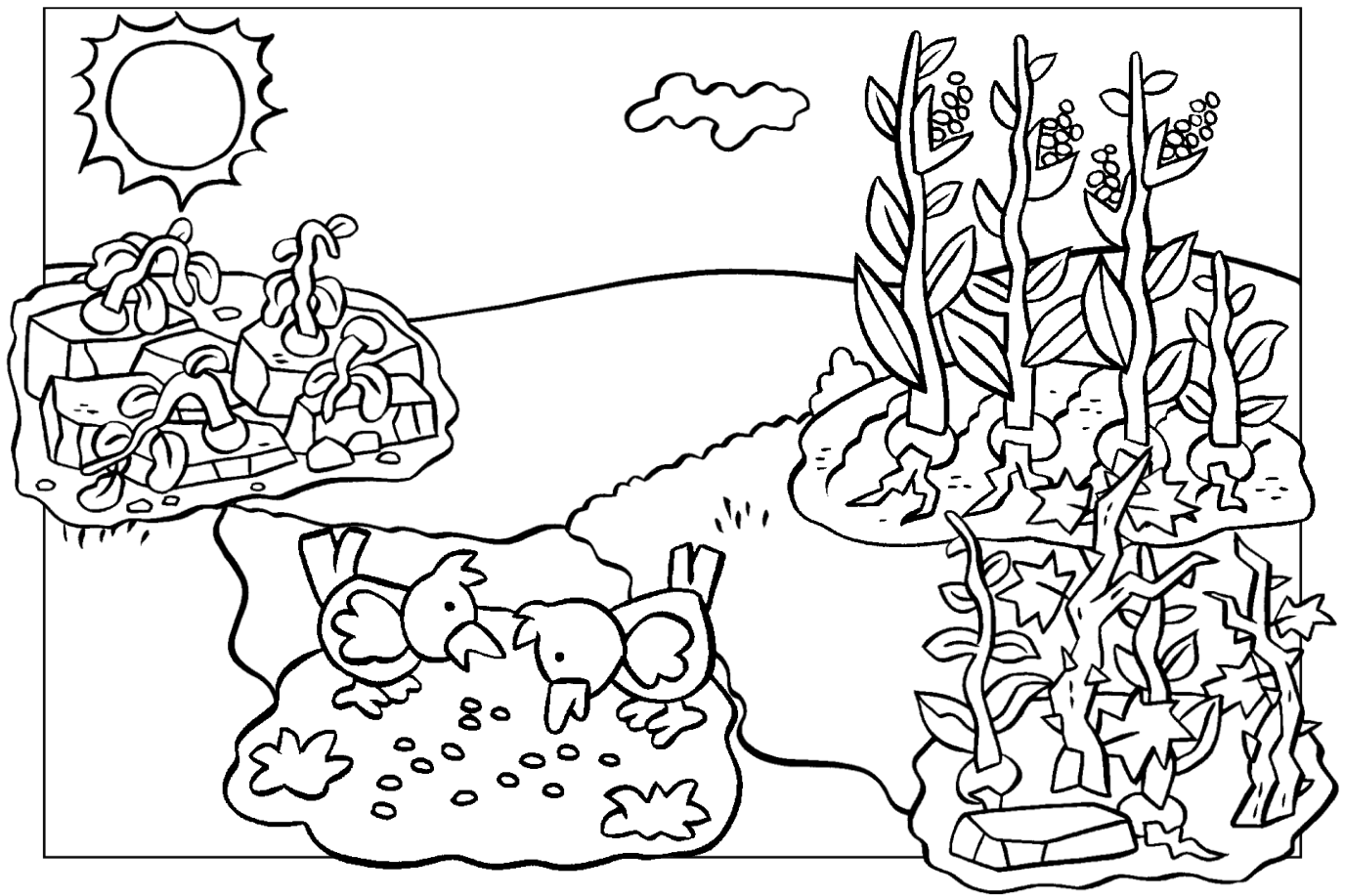
But anyone who hears what I say and doesn’t obey Me is like a foolish man who builds his house on the sand. When the flood came and the river rushed against the house, it was smashed to pieces! (Matthew 7:24-27)



The Parable of the Sower

Jesus told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one:

“Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have deep roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.”



“Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds: The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts.

The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word.

The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God’s word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced.

The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!” (Matthew 13:3-9;18-23)



The Parable of the Rich Fool

A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops.' Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. And I'll sit back and say to myself, "My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!"'

But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?'

This is how it will be with whoever stores up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God." (Luke 12:16-21)

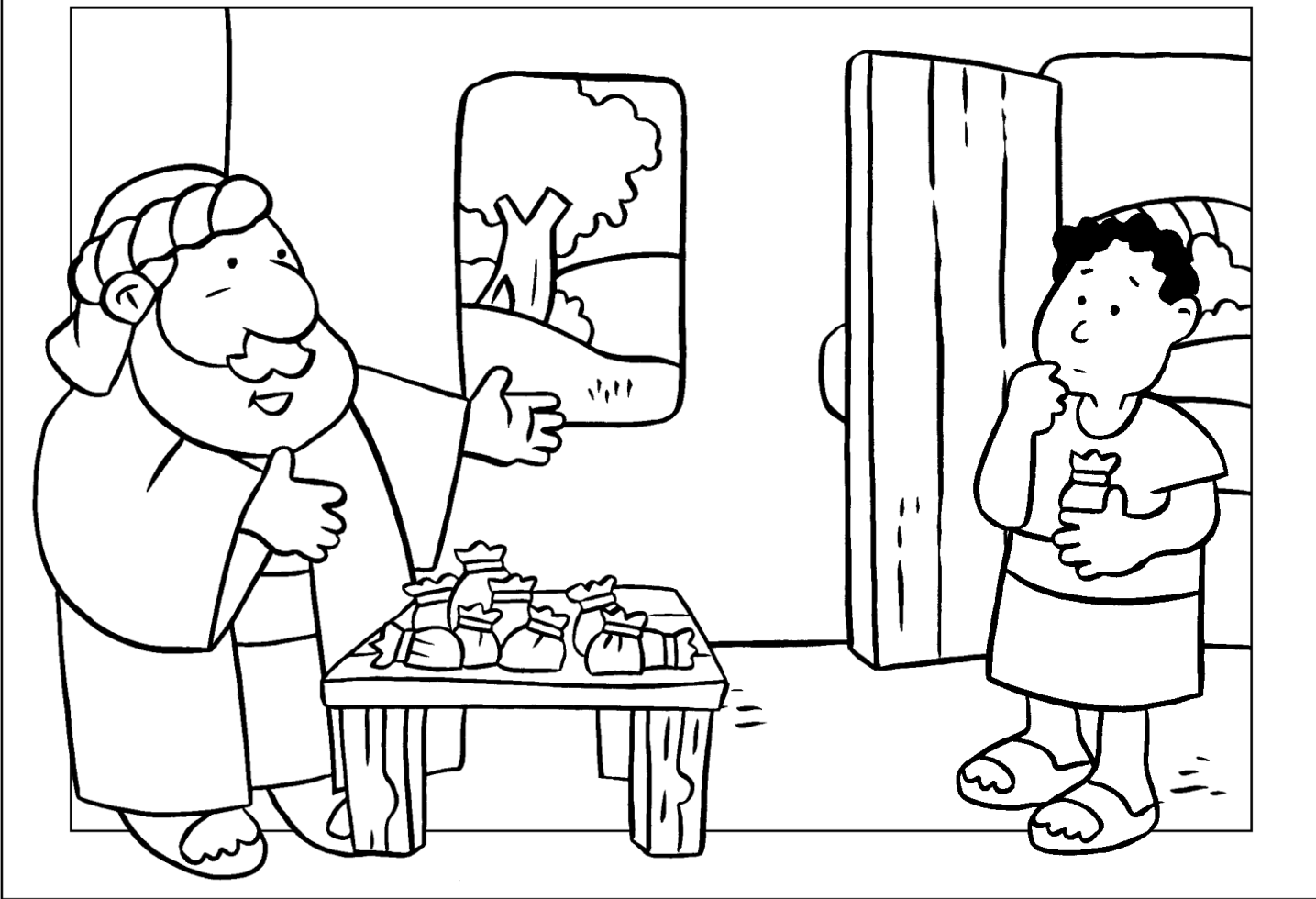


The Parable of the Bags of Gold

Jesus told the people, “The kingdom of Heaven is like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag.

The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. The man with two bags of gold put his money to work and gained two bags more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

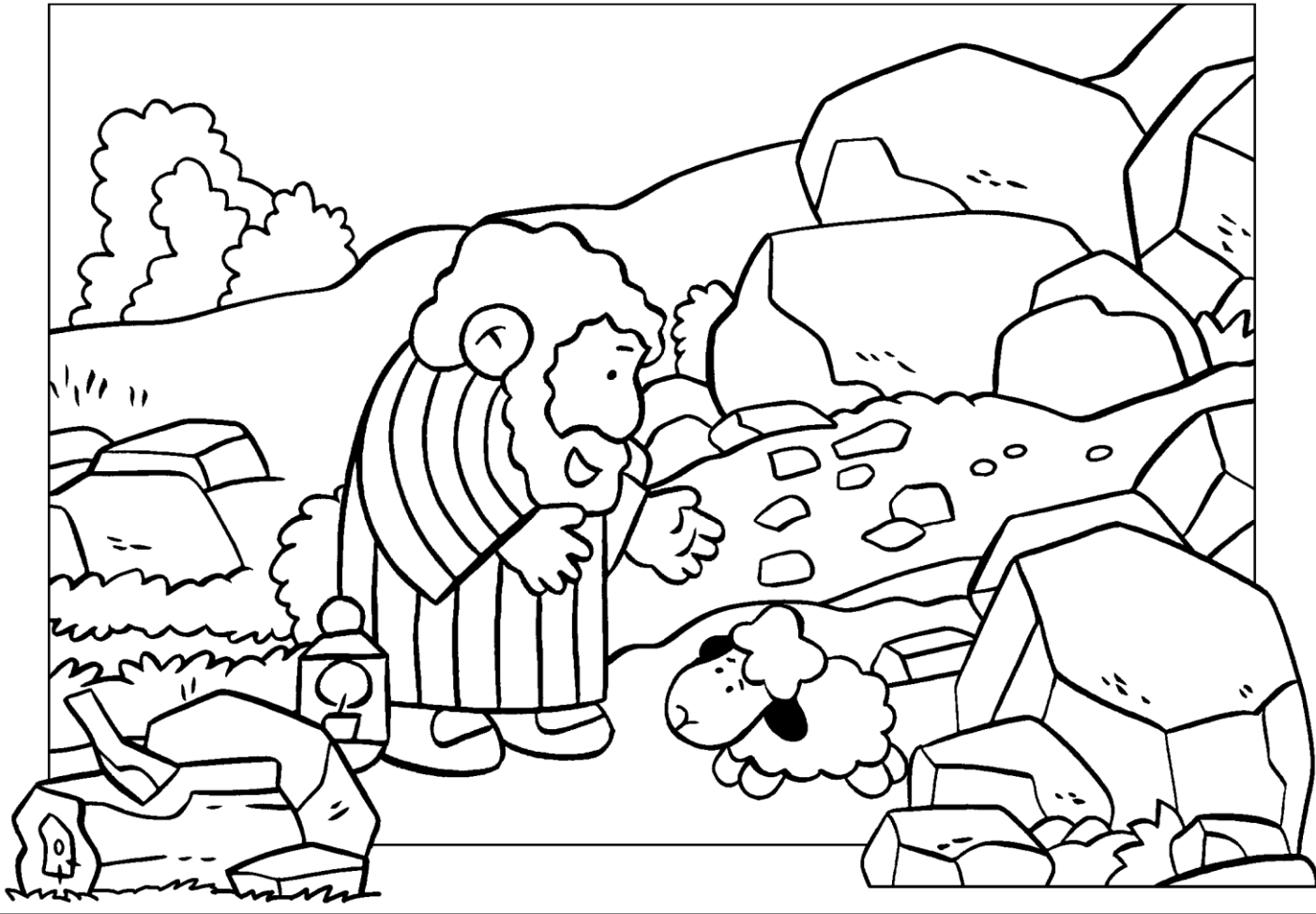
“After a long time the master of those servants returned. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’



“The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

“Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! Take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.’ To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.”
(Matthew 25:14-29)



The Parable of the Lost Sheep

If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.'

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away! (Luke 15:3-7)



The Parable of the Prodigal Son

In one story Jesus told, a young man left home hoping to make his fortune, but ended up wasting his share of the family's wealth on wild living. Finally, penniless and humbled, the young man returned to his father's house.

The father ran out to meet him and hugged and kissed him. He called the servants and said, "Give my son a new robe! Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet! Let's eat and celebrate! My son who was lost has been found!" So they all celebrated together. (Luke 15:11-31)

In this story, Jesus was describing God's kindness toward us. No matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value in God's eyes. To Him, you will always be priceless.



The Parable of the Good Samaritan

One day a lawyer asked Jesus, "Master, the law says 'love your neighbor as yourself,' but who is my neighbor?" Jesus told him this story:

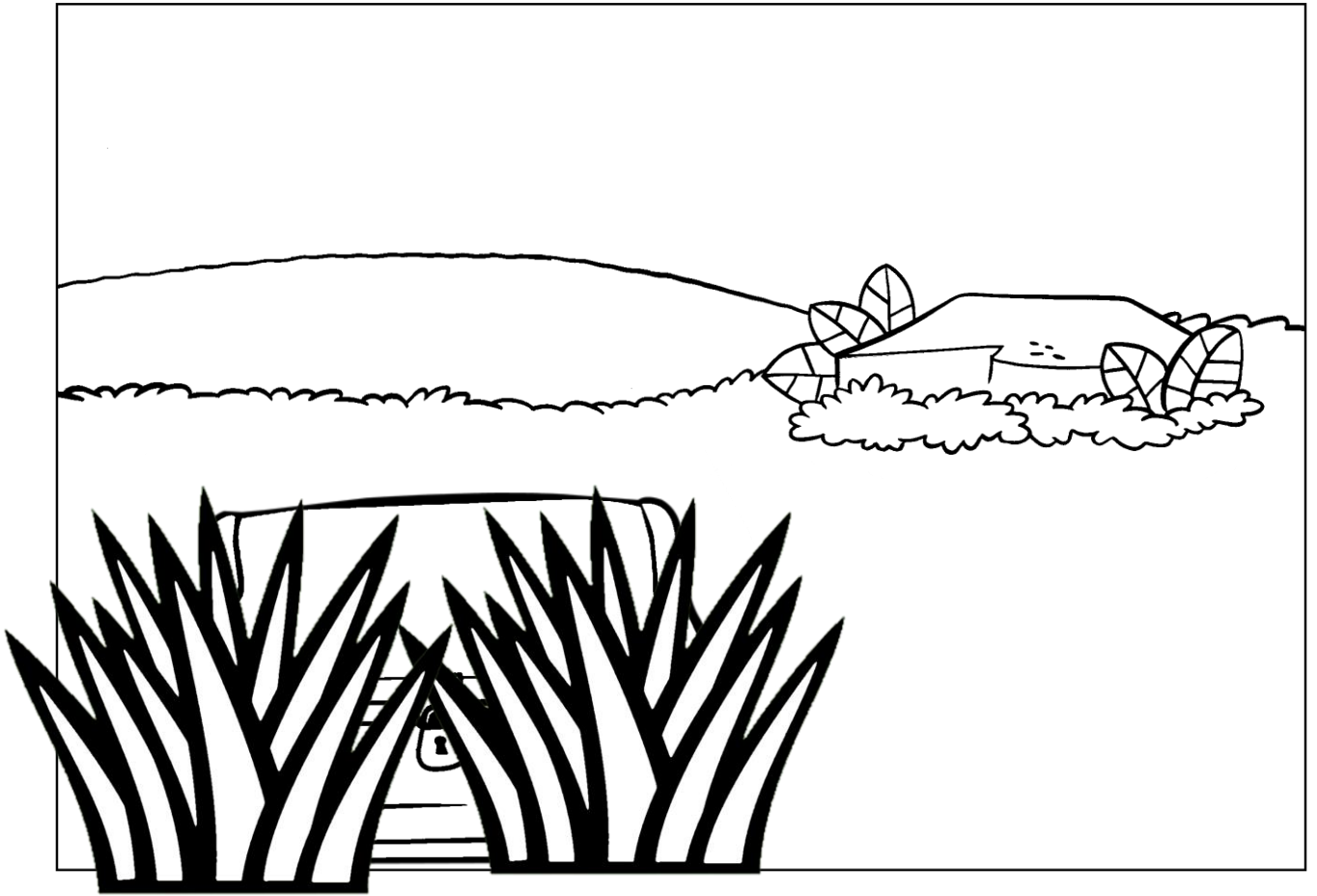
A man was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers. They stole everything he had and left him half dead.

A priest went down the same road. But when he saw the man, he walked by on the other side. Later a temple helper passed by and did the same, leaving the poor man on the side of the road.

Then a man from Samaria came traveling along that road. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him. He put him on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

The next morning the Samaritan gave the innkeeper two silver coins and said, "Please take care of the man. If you spend more than this on him, I will repay you when I return." (Luke 10:30-33)

Your neighbor is anyone that needs your love. Jesus says, "Treat others as you want them to treat you."



The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field. (Matthew 13:44)

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