JUNE 2021

FREE

THE EXPLORER

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Elsie & James go to Church

The Miller family were getting ready to go to church. Dad was putting his shirt and tie on, and Mum was laying out clothes for James. Elsie stood by the front door, ready and waiting.

"Why does Elsie always beat me?" frowned James.

"What do you mean?" asked Mum as she laid his shoes out.

"She's always first to get ready. I want to be first!"

"Well, Elsie *is* older than you. But I reckon she's left her Bible in her room. She's always forgetting to take it. I keep telling her," said Mum. "Elsie? Do you have your Bible?"

"Uh…" came the hesitant reply.

"Go and get it. It's on your bedside table," she said. "Told you," winked Mum to James, "she's not *that* ready."

James giggled. Mum helped James into his shirt and trousers and laced together his shoes. She stood up and smiled. "Very smart, James. It's important to go to church well-dressed."

Soon, everyone was ready and climbed into the car. Church was not far away, but the journey was long enough for James to ask Dad a couple of questions.

"Daddy, do we have to go to church every week?"

"Yes James," replied Dad, catching James' eye in the rear-view mirror. "When it is God's Day, we go to God's house."

"Because He said so in the Bible?"

"Spot on, James. God said to, 'remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' And we keep it by going to church."

"And listening to the Minister?"

"That's right," said Dad.

"I find that hard. He speaks for *so* long!"

Dad chuckled. "Mr Roderick isn't long, James. Besides, you like his stories, don't you?"

James nodded. He was fond of their Minister, Mr Roderick. He was an old man, with a deep voice and brilliant white hair and glasses. He always said hello to James and Elsie. On occasions he even gave them sweets and told them how well behaved they had been during the service.

"Do you think Mr Roderick will have more stories, today?" asked James.

"I hope so," replied Dad eagerly. "I always like hearing them."

It wasn't long before they arrived at church and the service began. To James' delight, Mr Roderick was preaching on Noah's ark – one of his favourite Bible stories.

Mr Roderick said lots of things that morning, but what was most memorable was Mr Roderick's story. "Now children," he said in a commanding voice, "Let me tell you of the elephant and the fly. Both were in Noah's ark. What kept them safe? Was it the elephant's size and strength? Was it the fly's wings? No! It was *the ark* that kept them safe. It is not your good behaviour that will save you," he continued. "It matters not if you are rich or poor, educated or not, you can only be saved by the blood of the Lord Jesus!"

At the end, as folk shook Mr Roderick's hand, James summoned the courage to ask the Minister a question.

"Mr Roderick, my daddy said there was only one door to the ark. Why was there only one?"

The old man smiled. His bright blue eyes glinted through his glasses. "Because James, there is only one way to God. Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.' Once in, we are safe from danger. Once in, His blood protects us. Once in, we *stay* in."

"So, if the elephant and fly were safe, I'll be safe too?"

The old man beamed. "Safer. If God valued the animals, how much more He values *you*. If Jesus is your ark, you will never be lost."

As they drove home, Dad asked, "What did you ask Mr Roderick, James?"

"The ark," he replied. "I asked why there was only one door."

"And *why* was there one?" enquired Mum.

"Because there is only one way to God."

"That's right, James," said Dad. "There is only one way to God. See? It's good to go to church. We learn about Jesus. Are you coming tonight?"

"I am!" said Elsie excitedly.

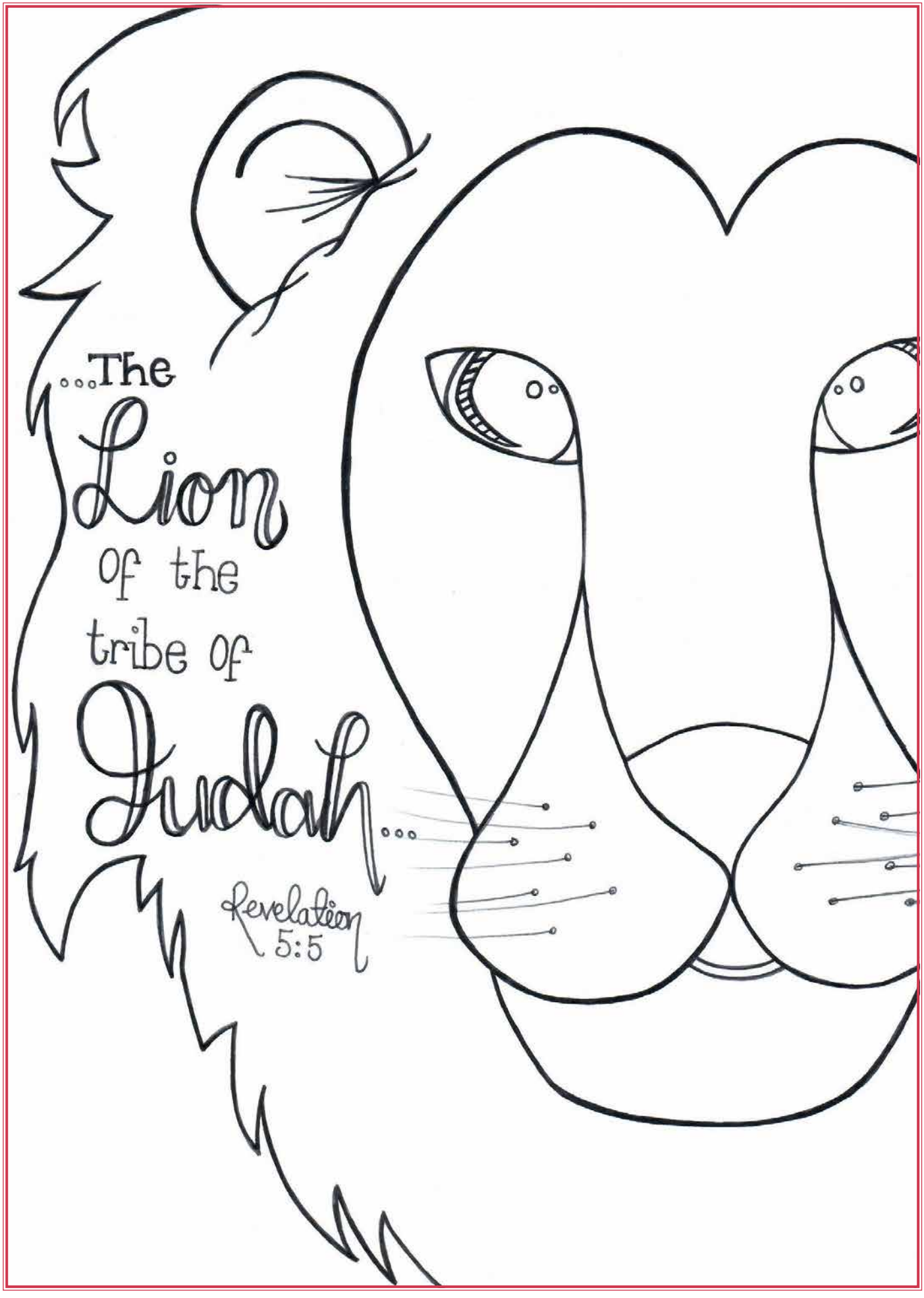
"Me too," grinned James, "especially if Mr Roderick has more stories."

It's good to go to church. There, we learn about Jesus. He loves to see adults and children in His house. Nothing delights Him more than when young people call on Him to be saved. Have you come to Jesus? Is Jesus your 'ark'? Listen out for any stories your Minister may share!

Draw Your Own Pic!

WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO DRAW & SEND IN A PICTURE BASED ON THIS STORY

Colour Me In!



The Christian Armour

5. The Shield of Faith

If you have seen pictures of soldiers from Bible times most of them will be holding a shield. Over the past few months we have been looking at the armour which God gives to His people to assist them in their struggle with Satan and sin. We have thought about shoes for our feet and the breastplate of righteousness and before that we thought about the belt (or girdle) of truth. This month we are going to look at the next item, the shield of faith. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6: 16).

The shield is another reminder to us that the Christian is on a battlefield. In this battle the devil fires arrows at us and often we do not see them coming, but we feel them land! What are these arrows, these "fiery darts"? They can be arrows of temptation or arrows of suffering – anything that the devil can throw at us to knock us down. Do you remember the many arrows he fired at Job? Matthew Henry says that, '*Satan's temptations are called 'darts' because of their swift flight and the deep wounds they give to the soul.*' They are described as "fiery" (or burning) arrows that not only pierce but set on fire what they have pierced. He fires an arrow of temptation to anger or pride and soon we are aflame with sin; this makes these "darts" doubly dangerous. We cannot press on without a shield!

The shield we are given against these "fiery darts" is faith. Faith cannot prevent the arrows coming, but it can blunt the point of the arrow so that they are less sharp. As the arrows of Satan fly, faith reminds us that God is greater than all our enemies and that He has promised to supply all our needs. Faith reminds us that though we are great sinners Christ is a great Saviour who is able to save "to the uttermost" those who trust in Him (Hebrews 7:25). Faith also reminds us that though our sins be as red as scarlet, through the blood of Christ we can be made whiter than snow. Faith directs our eyes to the cross and Christ's victory, to the empty tomb and His resurrection.

We must always carry our shield with us. Satan watches and the moment he sees we have lowered our shield, he will fire his darts. Jesus warned the disciples, Peter in particular, to "watch and pray" (Matt. 26:41). Peter failed to do as the Lord had told him, and when the fiery arrows flew he denied his Lord. Like Peter we sometimes fail to use the shield as we should and end up getting hurt. At these times we discover that Jesus is also a great and merciful healer who is able to heal our wounds, forgive our sins and comfort our hearts. He encourages His people with His promises and His presence and they return, in His strength, to the battlefield of the Christian life. Sometimes they feel so weak that they can hardly lift their shield. What then? Well, then they are reminded that God Himself is their shield and that even when they fail to use their shield as they should, there is a greater shield around them. "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield" (Genesis 15:1).

PUZZLES

Secret Code

Write the letter the picture starts with.

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Philippians 4 v 13

Bible Sudoku

Fill in the answers to the questions and then work out the rest of the grid. Numbers 1 - 9 should appear in every box and row and column only once.

How many persons are there in the Godhead?
_____ Catechism 6

What age was Josiah when he became king?
_____ 2 Kings 22 v1

How many days was Lazarus dead before Jesus came?
_____ John 11 v17

Jesus was crucified between _____ robbers. Mark 15 v27

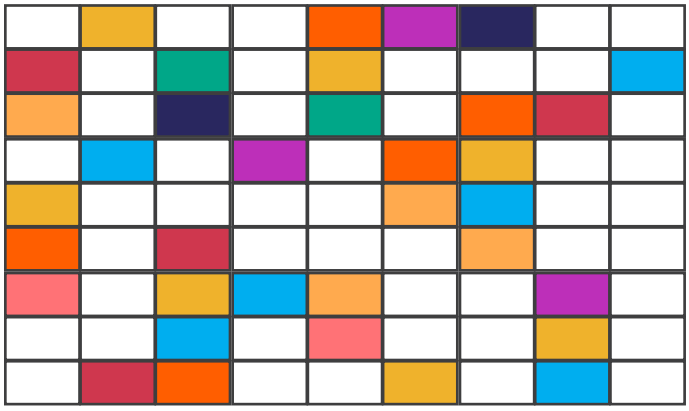
Jesus healed 10 lepers - how many came to say thank you? _____ Luke 17 11-19

The day in which God rested? _____ Genesis 2 v3

How many books did John write? _____ Check list

On what day were the animals created?
_____ Genesis 1 v24 -31

Ninety_____ sheep did not go astray. Matthew 18 v12



Spot the Difference

Can you spot at least 5 differences between these two pictures?

The Lion of Judah

Over the next few months, we will look at some of the different animals mentioned in the Bible. God created the animals (Genesis 1:24 & 25) and He did so for His own glory. There are many animals featured in Scripture. What we will discover is that sometimes they are referred to in such a way by God that they become pictures to help teach a valuable lesson. The lion is usually regarded as the 'king' and 'lord' of the animal kingdom, so it makes sense to begin with him.

Have you ever seen a lion? I've seen them on TV, zoos *and* in their natural habitat. I once went on safari in Africa and saw a young lion up close asleep on the ground. I had to be *extremely* quiet. I dared not wake him!

Lions are legendary for their strength and courage and beauty. Did you know the Bible uses the image of a lion to describe the Lord Jesus Christ? He is called "the Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Rev. 5:5). Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He descended from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10). He is *the* "lion king!" Let's think of some of the ways the picture of the lion helps us to understand who Jesus is and what He does for His people.

Firstly, there is the lion's *appearance*

The lion's mane, eyes, roar, and walk distinguish it from every other animal. You can easily spot a lion. They are magnificent creatures. No wonder we think of them as 'lords' over the animal kingdom! The Lord Jesus is also given a regal appearance; He is described as a king. He wears a crown (Rev. 6:2). Written on it are the words, "The High and Lofty One." It is a divine crown, an eternal crown and a heavenly crown; His Father set it upon His head (Ps. 2:6). He has a sword girt on His thigh (Ps. 45:3) and wields a sceptre (Heb. 1:8). He wears (as it were) a coat of arms, and engraved on it is a picture of a lion, "the lion of the tribe of Judah." What a breath-taking description! What a glorious appearance! This picture broadens our understanding of Jesus not just as a babe lying in a manger (Luke 2:7) but as the conquering King and Lord over all!

Secondly, there is the lion's *position*

The lion is the head of the pride. Lions like to maintain order. As King, the Lord Jesus is the head of His church. He maintains order in His works of creation and providence. The lion also likes to maintain balance in his pride. The Lord Jesus maintains balance by executing His justice in the lives of men. He will reward obedience on the one hand and punish disobedience on the other. The animals fear and respect the lion. Men also fear and respect lions. But how much more should we love and respect the Lord Jesus? Is He not "the Holy One?" Should we not obey *all* His commandments? He made you and He made me. That makes us His creatures. We ought therefore to fear God, for "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). When you look up into the sky and all around you, can you not see the King's power? It is good to feel small and thus be humbled in the presence of such a mighty King as Jesus.

Thirdly, there is the lion's *fearlessness*

The lion has enemies, but he fears none. His worst enemy is the hyena. The Lord Jesus has enemies, too.

The worst is *the devil*. He is also described as a lion but in a negative way (1 Pet. 5:8). Powerful though he is, *this* "roaring lion" is no match for *the* Lion King, the Lord Jesus! It has been said that on the cross, Christ pulled the teeth out of this lion, so all the devil can do is roar; he cannot bite. We must understand that Jesus does not fear the devil, nor any man. Like the lion, He fears *nothing* and *no one* because He is the King of kings. He may have enemies, but He has no victors. Who has ever taken up a sword against King Jesus and won? Many have tried but failed. There was once a pagan emperor who hated King Jesus and His church. In the end, he was killed in battle and used his dying breath to cry out in defiance, "O Galilean, thou hast overcome!" The pagan emperor was forced to acknowledge the power and victory of Christ over him. Our King is fearless. Either He conquers His enemies with the sceptre of the gospel or with the iron rod of justice.

Fourthly, there is the lion's *strength*

Lions need little sleep. This is also true of the lion of the tribe of Judah. He never slumbers nor sleeps, neither is He weary (Ps. 121: 3 & 4). He always watches over His people lovingly and comforts them in difficult times. The lion will defend his pride. Christ defends His Church from the devil's assaults: "I the LORD do keep it: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day" (Isa. 27: 3). Isn't that comforting? Whenever you need strength either to face the day or to get through a difficult situation, learn to lean on this King. He will help you and bless you and give you strength whenever you ask. Just ask in prayer! It may be help with school-work or in the playground. Whatever it is, say, "Lord, I am weak, but you are strong. Give me strength to get through this."

Fifthly, there is the lion's *roar*

Have you ever heard the roar of a lion? What a sound! Lions roar to communicate. Sometimes they roar to defend their home. Sometimes they roar to tell others in the pride where they are. It is a *show of power*. We read in Amos 3:8, "the lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord GOD hath spoken." The prophet linked the LORD's speech to the lion's roar. This 'Lion King' *roars in the gospel*. He 'roared' with authority as He preached. He 'roared' with joy when He told everyone that if they repented and believed in Him, they would be saved from sin. He 'roared' against His enemies, the scribes and Pharisees when they accused Him. He 'roared' a triumphant cry on the cross, and one day – perhaps very soon – He will roar in judgment against all who have refused His offer of mercy in the gospel.

This lion is a conquering lion. He has conquered sin, Satan and death. You wouldn't want to get on the wrong side of a lion, would you? Neither should we dare to anger the Lord Jesus Christ by carrying on in sin and unbelief (Ps. 2:12). King Jesus is a gentle lion to all who love and respect Him, but He is a dreadful lion to all have opposed and rejected Him. Can you think of other ways the lion is like the Lord Jesus? Does your life show your love and respect for Him? How has this picture helped your understanding of who Jesus is?

If you would like to find out more about lions, why not visit the following address? Simply go to www.answersingenesis.org/kids/mammals/cats/lion. "Answers in Genesis" is an excellent resource for finding out more about God's wonderful creation.

PUZZLES

Match up the Pairs

10 commandments

Noah

The Ark

Daniel

The Lions

Goliath

David

Moses

Name: .....

Age: .....

Congregation: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Latest entries

1st prize: Alasdair Morrison - Cross

Runners up:
Timmy Fairns - Brora
Kenny MacKinnon - Partick
Eliana Kok - Smith Falls
Kenny MacLeod, Bethany MacLeod - Cross
Abigail Keddie, Hannah Keddie - Dores
Lauren Cormack - Inverness

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Younger readers who find the questions too hard may like to do a drawing based on one of the articles and send it to the editor.

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