



Big Picture
BIBLE
CRAFTS

101 Simple and Amazing Crafts to
Help Teach Children the Bible

Gail Schoonmaker



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Big Picture Bible Crafts: 101 Simple and Amazing Crafts to Help Teach Children the Bible

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*For all of my students
who have taught me so much,*

*And for Sarah
who inspires and delights me*

*And for Keith
who encourages and loves me*

INTRODUCTION

There are few things I love more than watching my children or students on the edges of their seats, listening to Bible stories with wide-eyed excitement. God's Word is powerful and active for an audience of any age! Creating a craft that depicts a scene, character, or object from a Bible passage reinforces that story by prompting kids to retain and retell it as they show off their craft.

MAKE IT SIMPLE

Each craft has a "Make It Simple" section that is written especially for teachers of preschoolers. It contains instructions, based on my own teaching experience, on what steps you need to complete before class in order to ensure that projects can be finished during craft time. It leaves the coloring, drawing, some folding, and pasting to the students, but requires *you* to gather materials—copying, folding, and cutting as needed ahead of time.

For some crafts, depending on your class size, this can be a good bit of work. Copy early in the week and keep your bag of images to be cut out, together with several pairs of adult scissors, ready to go during moments of down time (while watching a show or a sports event or waiting for carpool kids to show up). Better yet, pass out scissors and materials to your friends at a mid-week Bible study or youth group and watch them complete the cutting in a fraction of the time it would take you alone. The work is all worth it when you see your students adore their crafts.

I highly recommend you complete one sample ahead of time so your students can see where their work is headed. Also, be sure to show individual interest and make positive comments as students' work progresses.

MAKE IT AMAZING

The "Make It Amazing" sections are for the "big kids." They can already read and complete all the directions to make the basic crafts themselves. This section has ideas for adding detail to their crafts with special materials, personal drawing skills, and creative imaginations. Materials for these ideas are not listed in the supply sections for the basic versions of the crafts, so plan ahead to get everything they might need, including copies.

Read the Bible passage(s) listed so the kids have some context for the craft, then let them use their skills to make the craft fully theirs.

STAR COMPLEXITY SCALE

Each craft bears a number of stars to indicate its level of complexity. The basic instructions for one-star crafts ★☆☆ require little preparation and are easy to complete, three-star crafts ★★★ require the greatest skill and time commitment. If you want to make three-star crafts but have limited time, check out "Make It Simple" for ways to simplify them significantly.

MATERIALS

It is well worth the cost to purchase a package of cardstock, because the extra thickness and weight of the paper will help the crafts hold their shapes, especially while being colored and glued. The three-dimensional crafts will be less likely to collapse or be crushed, and all of them will last longer than those made from regular paper. White cardstock is great for almost every craft in this book, and dozens of additional colors are available for purchase when you want them.

Glue Tips

I generally let my preschoolers do their own pasting, so they each get a glue stick. But when paste isn't strong enough and liquid glue is necessary, I carry around the bottle and ask the children to show me where they want their, say googly eyes, and I put a dot of glue there myself. I have learned the hard way that handing a bottle of glue to a little one can lead to disaster.

Hot glue is fantastic when you want a strong hold that dries immediately, and it can fasten heavy materials that would fall apart with regular glue. Teachers of young students might need to complete hot gluing before class for safety reasons, and big kids should have adult help (or at least permission) to use a glue gun. If you need to use regular glue instead, the craft instructions indicate when you will need to let it dry overnight before continuing with the next steps.

Sometimes, if there is an especially messy element, I send two students at a time to a different table where my co-teacher helps them complete the messy part, then they return to the main table and two other students go over.

GOD CREATES THE WORLD

Genesis 1-2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
(Gen. 1:1)

God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. (Gen. 1:31)

SUPPLIES:

(to make one craft)

- 2 sheets of white copy paper
- templates of creation (see pages 8-9)
- optional: glue
- scissors
- crayons or markers
- optional: silver metallic paint pen
- optional: 1 cotton ball
- optional: foil star stickers
- optional: fish-shaped crackers

INSTRUCTIONS:

Unlike most crafts in this book (which should be assembled after the corresponding story is read), class time limits may dictate that this craft be colored as the creation story is taught.

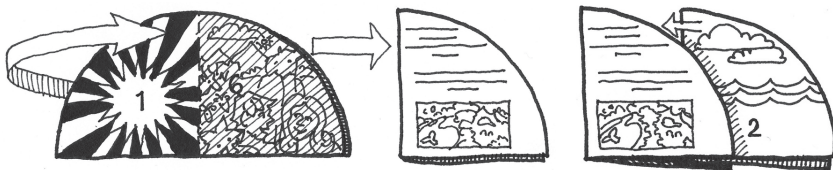
PREP STEP: Copy the creation templates onto copy paper.

1. Cut the pictures out. Fold them in half so that 1 and 6 are visible on one semicircle, and 3 and 4 are visible on the other semicircle. If you wish, make this fold permanent by pasting the halves of each circle together. (The back of 6 should be pasted to the back of 7, and the back of 2 should be pasted to the back of 3.)



Step 1

2. Now fold each semicircle in half again, bringing the left half over the right as if closing a book, so the Bible verses are on the cover of one little book, and 2 is on the cover of the other. Slide the 2 book inside the "verses" book to make one eight-page book that progresses sequentially through the seven days of the creation story.



Step 2

3. *Optional* additions include lining the “light” in day one with metallic paint marker, gluing a bit of thinned cotton ball to the cloud(s) in day two, adding star sticker(s) to day four, and gluing fish-shaped cracker(s) to day five.
4. If you temporarily turn the 2 book inside out so that 4 is on its cover, and slide it back inside the other book, the parallels are illustrated between days one and four (light and heavenly bodies), days two and five (water/sky and fish/birds), and days three and six (land and animals/people). The symmetry of God’s work “forming” and “filling” in the creation account can then be seen.

MAKE IT SIMPLE: Cut out and crease the circles before class.

MAKE IT AMAZING: Make a similar book about creation from two circles, but make every page entirely your own artwork. Find special colored papers to be the sky, water, and land. Cut shapes and images from foil, magazines, packaging, or photographs. Draw with markers, metallic pens, glitter glue, or puff paint. Let everything dry completely before folding and assembling the book. Don’t forget to number the days! It is fine if the pages don’t close flat because of items that were glued in: let it stand up in a double semicircle.

7

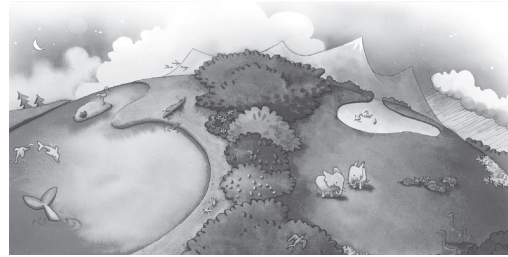


In the beginning,
God created the
heavens and the earth.

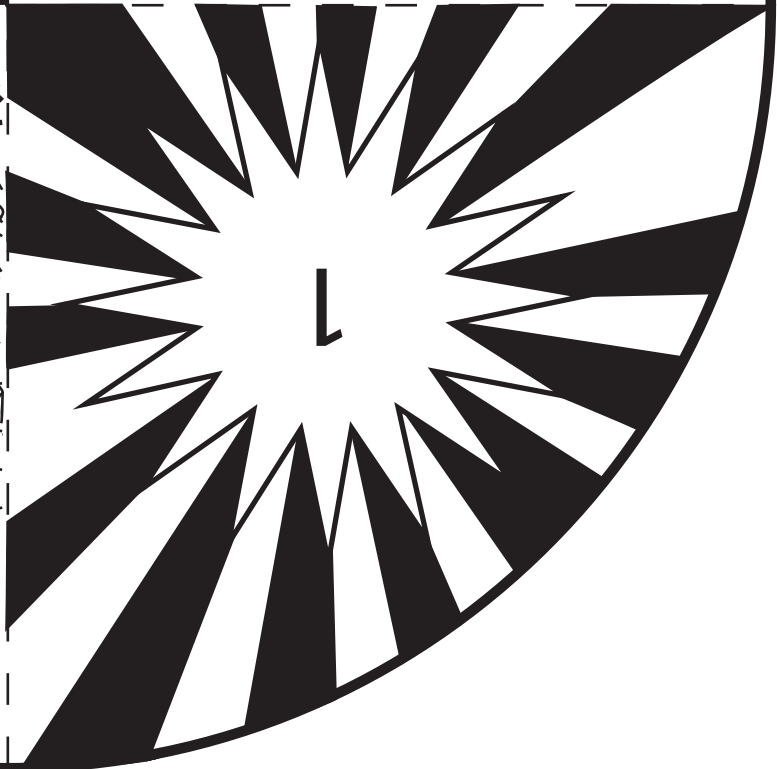
GENESIS 1:1 ESV

God saw everything that he
had made, and behold,
it was very good.

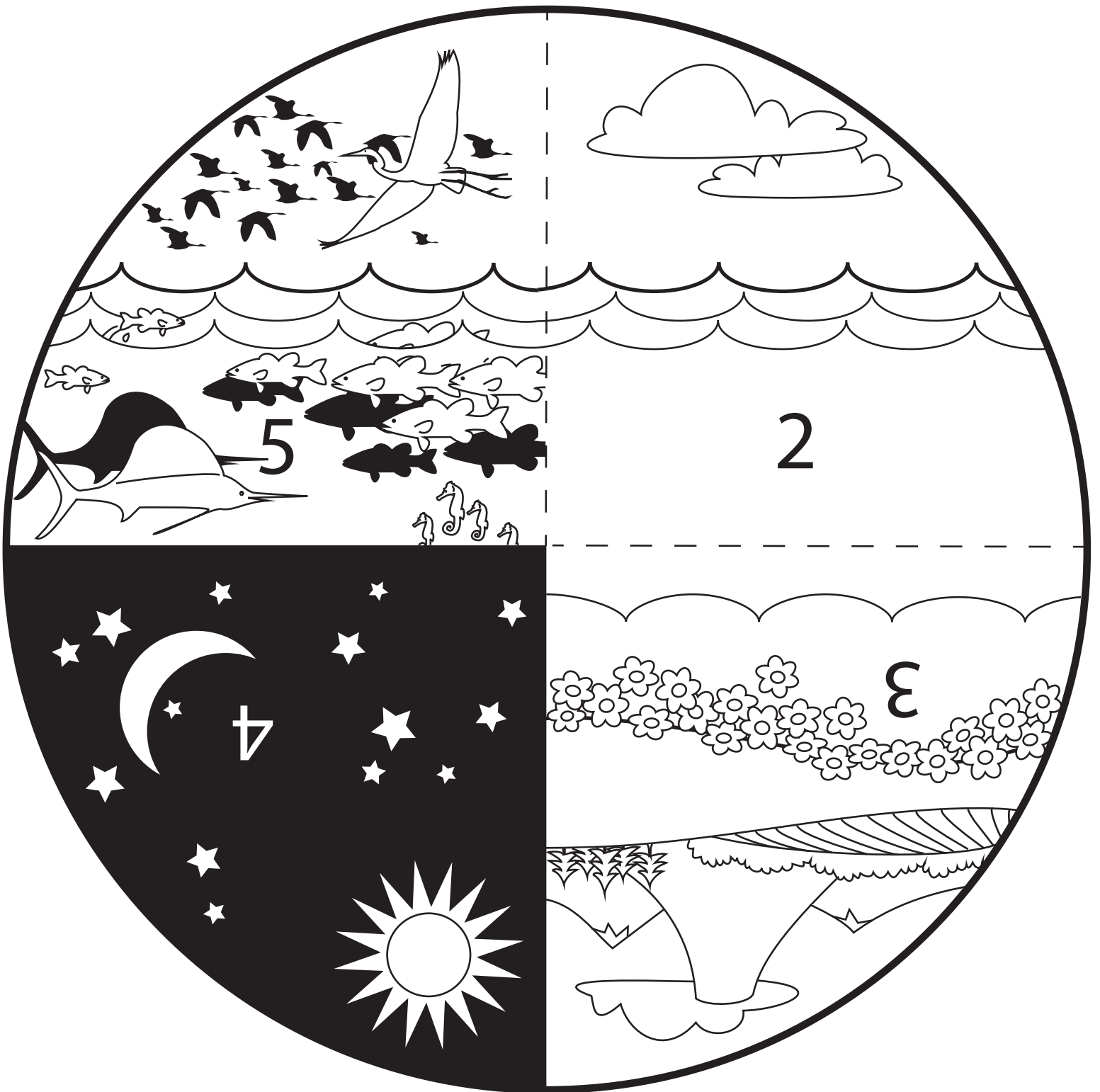
GENESIS 1:31 ESV



9



creation template



creation template

ADAM AND EVE REJECT GOD

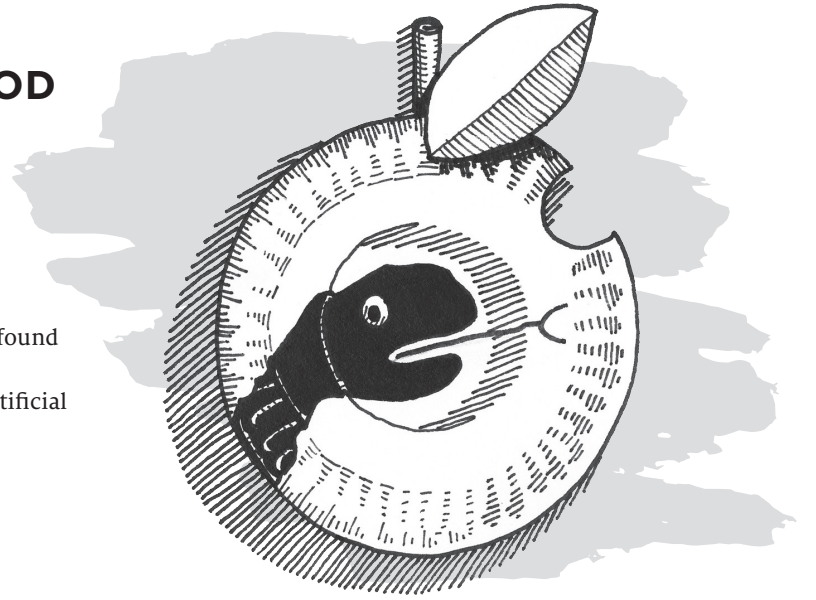
Genesis 3

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
(Rom. 3:23)

SUPPLIES:

(to make one craft)

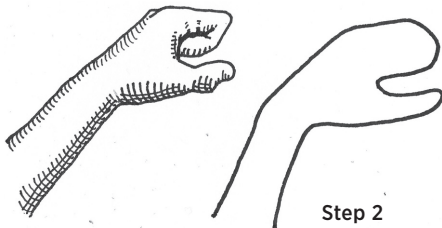
- 1 red paper plate (not plastic), any size (generally found with party supplies)
- 1 piece of green paper or a leaf snipped from an artificial plant
- 1 twig or tightly rolled strip of brown paper
- scissors
- glue, tape, and/or stapler
- 1 black crayon
- optional: 1 large googly eye
- optional: 1 sheet of copy paper



INSTRUCTIONS:

PREP STEP: Optional for **Step 4:** Copy the illustrated verse below.

1. Give your red-plate "apple" a leaf and stem: Cut a leaf shape from green paper and crease it lengthwise, or snip a leaf from an artificial plant. Trim a twig or length of tightly rolled brown paper to desired shape and height. Then glue, tape, or staple the leaf and twig to the top of your apple.
2. Hold a black crayon in one hand and place the side of your other hand, pinkie side down, on the apple. Loosely curl your four fingers in toward your palm like a snake's head, and lower your thumb until it looks like a snake's lower jaw with its mouth open. Use the crayon to trace around the outside of your hand and forearm, creating the outline of a snake. Color the snake black and add a forked tongue if you wish. Glue on a googly eye (or draw an eye before you color the snake).



3. Cut out a bite shape from a side of the apple.
4. *Optional:* Cut out the illustrated verse and paste it to your apple.

MAKE IT SIMPLE: Scissors skills will vary widely among small children, so have a stack of paper leaves ready for students who don't wish to cut their own or who become dissatisfied with their attempts. Prepare stems ahead of time, whether real or paper.

MAKE IT AMAZING: Trace your hand and forearm onto the back of sparkly or other fancy black paper, then cut out the snake shape and glue it to your apple. To more easily see your tracing on the black paper, try using a light-colored colored pencil, crayon, pastel, chalk, or even piece of soap.



All have sinned
and fall short of
the glory of God.
ROMANS 3:23 ESV

GOD TALKS TO CAIN AND ABEL

Genesis 4:1-16

Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe. (Heb. 12:28)

SUPPLIES:

(to make one craft)

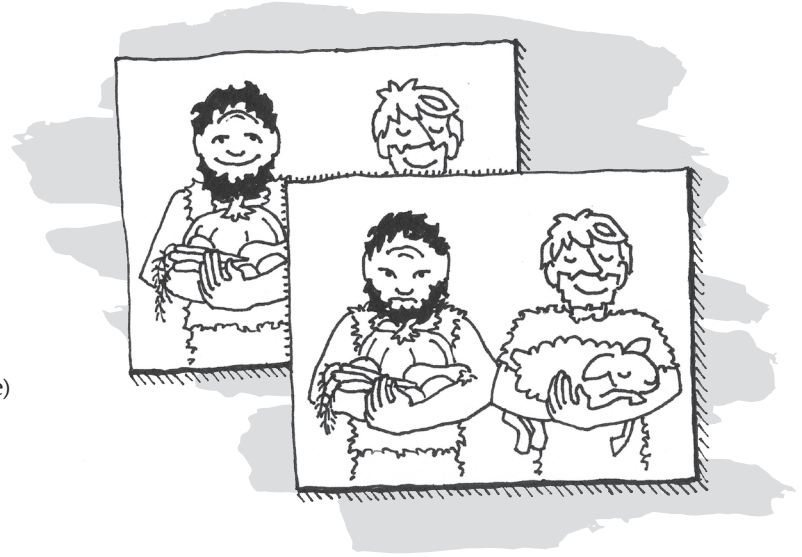
- 2 sheets of white or tan cardstock
- templates of brothers with offerings (the full page) and Cain's face (see pages 11–12)
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- optional: craft knife such as X-Acto™
- 1 brass fastener
- optional: 1 sheet of copy paper

INSTRUCTIONS:

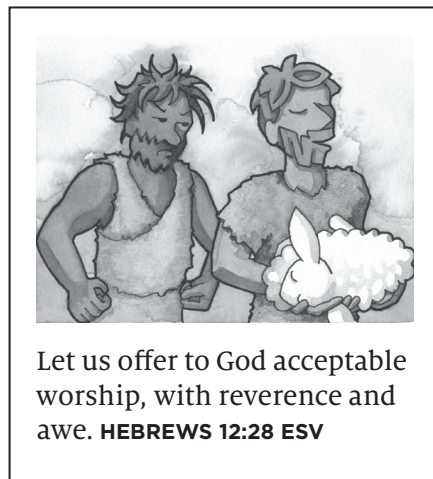
PREP STEP: Copy the face template and the full-page brothers template onto white or tan cardstock.

1. Color the brothers. Then color Cain's face and cut it out.
2. Push the points of a brass fastener through the ⊗ in Cain's face, then through the ⊗ in the picture of the brothers. If Cain is printed on cardstock, the inside of the circle may need to be slit with a craft knife (with adult assistance) before the fastener will go through. Spread the arms of the fastener on the back of the paper. Begin with Cain happy, then swivel 180 degrees to make his face "fall" when God has no regard for his offering.
3. *Optional:* Cut out the illustrated verse and glue it to the craft.

MAKE IT SIMPLE: Cut out the Cain heads before class and, if necessary, score the circles where the fasteners will pass through.



Cain's face template



Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe. **HEBREWS 12:28 ESV**



GOD JUDGES THE WORLD AND SAVES NOAH

Genesis 6:1-9:17

Noah . . . became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (Heb. 11:7)

SUPPLIES:

(to make one craft)

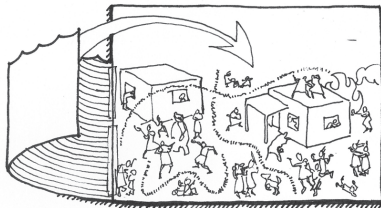
- 1-2 sheets of white cardstock
- template of ark and *optional* template of corrupt earth (see pages 15-16)
- 1 sheet of dark-blue colored paper
- optional*: 1 sheet of light-blue copy paper, cardstock, or construction paper
- optional*: 1 sheet of copy paper
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- glue
- tape
- craft knife such as X-Acto™

INSTRUCTIONS:

While often presented as a happy tale of animals together on a boat, the story of Noah's ark is actually a sober account of God's judgment on wickedness. Should you wish to include the element of judgment in your craft, begin at **Step 1a**. If this element is not desirable or appropriate for your students, begin at **Step 1b**.

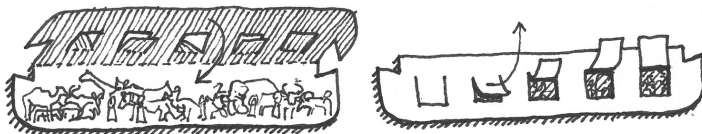
PREP STEP: Copy the ark template onto white cardstock. *Optional for Step 1a:* Copy the corrupt earth template onto white cardstock. *Optional for Steps 4 and 5:* Copy additional animals to be cut out and pasted into the ark—feel free to copy two of each! *Optional for Step 6:* Copy the illustrated verse.

1. a. (With judgment theme) Begin by coloring a copy of the corrupt earth page.
b. (With no judgment theme) Begin with a light-blue or gray-colored paper in the "landscape" position.
2. Make a rectangle of dark blue paper that is 6-inches high and the same width as your backing sheet, and cut shallow wave shapes along one long edge. Glue or tape down only the left edge of the water piece to either the corrupt earth page or the light-blue or gray paper so that the "water" can be lifted to reveal the page below it.

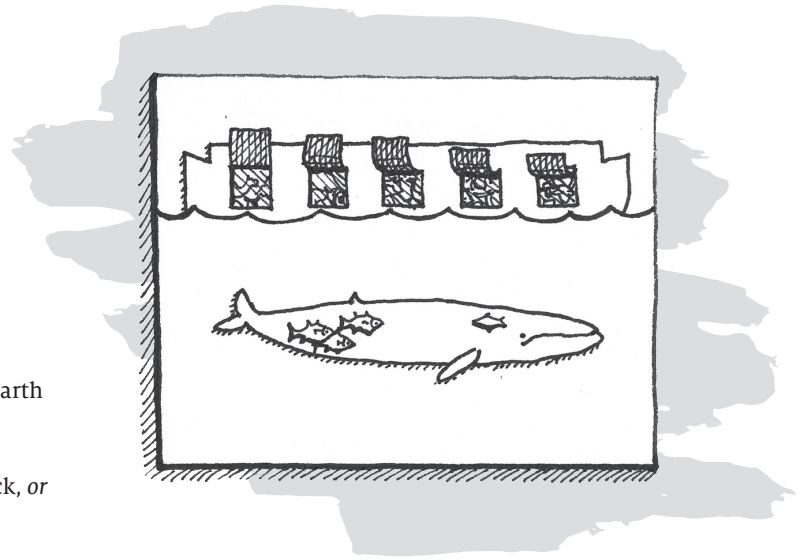


Step 2

3. If you want to use the ark with animals and people already printed inside, color the animals and people within. Cut the image out and use a craft knife or scissors to cut along the three solid-lined edges of each window. Fold on the horizontal dotted line, bringing the window half of the ark down over the animal half. Lift the window flaps to reveal the animals inside and crease on the dotted lines. Color what is now the front of the ark.



Step 3



4. If you want to use an empty ark and put your own animals inside, cut out the ark and partial windows as described in Step 3 (from brown paper, if you wish), then turn it “inside out” so that the side with the printed animals is face down. Use animal stickers or cut out the animals you like best from the templates provided, color them, and paste them into the ark. Fold and color the ark.



Step 4

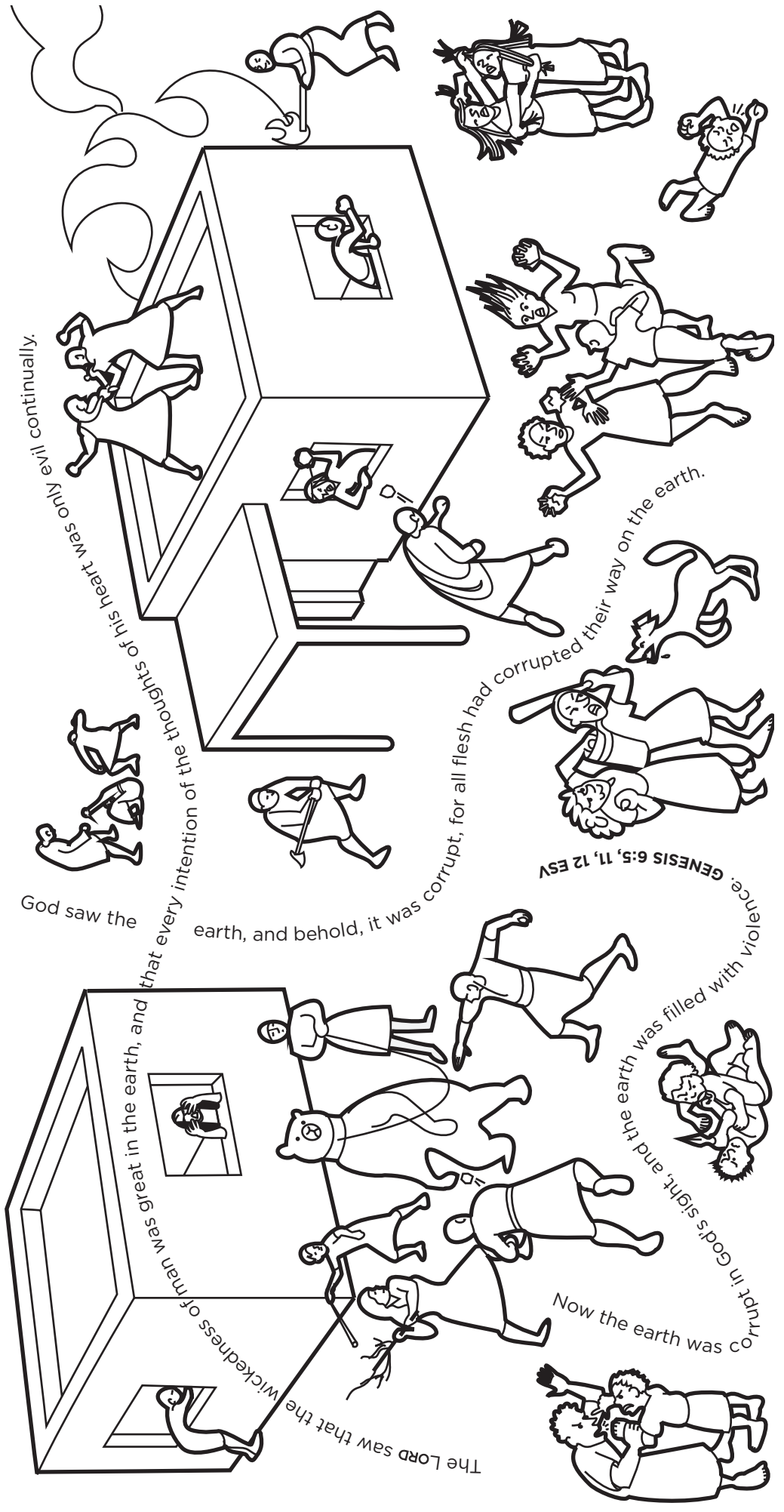
5. Place the ark on the backing sheet so that the “waves” cover its bottom edge but do not reach the windows. Glue it in place. If you wish, color and cut out the whale and/or fish images and paste them on or under the water.
6. *Optional:* Cut out the illustrated verse and paste it to your picture.

MAKE IT SIMPLE: Use the pre-printed animal side; cut and crease everything before class.

MAKE IT AMAZING: Draw additional animals in the ark and in the water.



Noah . . . became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. **HEBREWS 11:7 ESV**



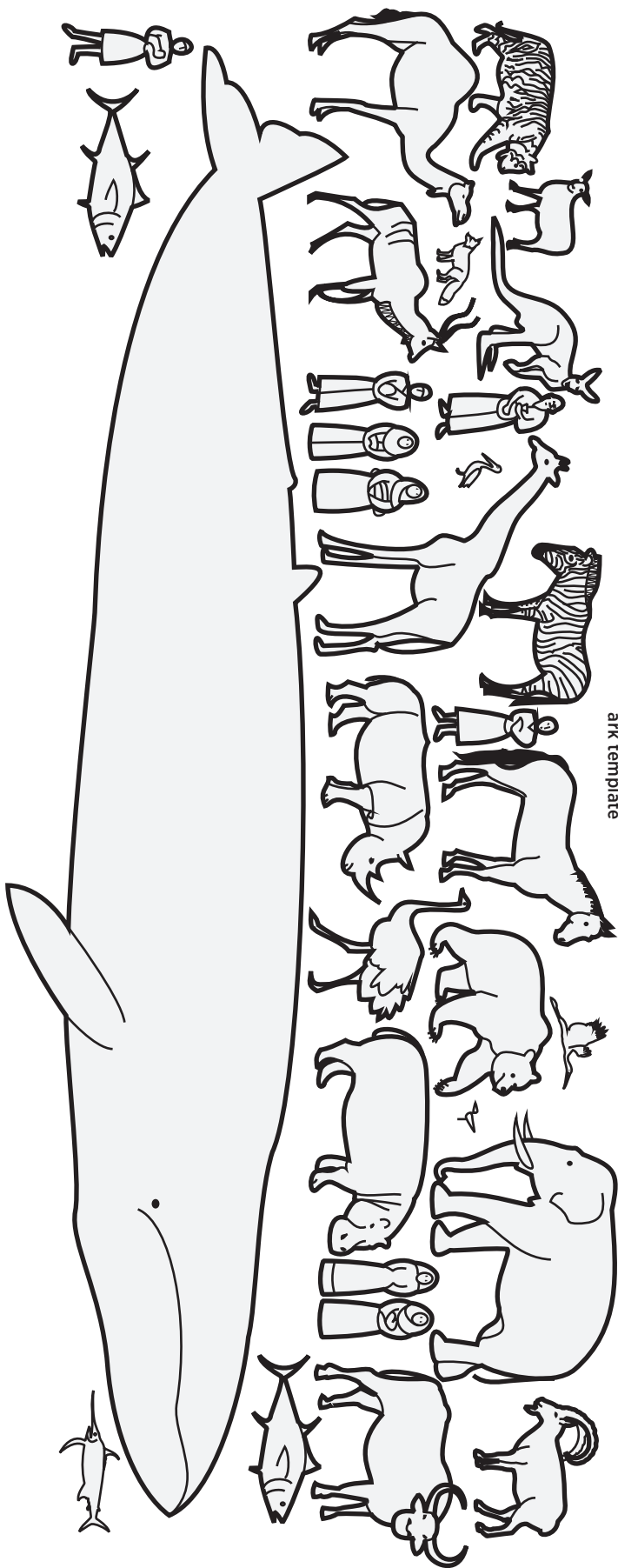
God saw the

earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

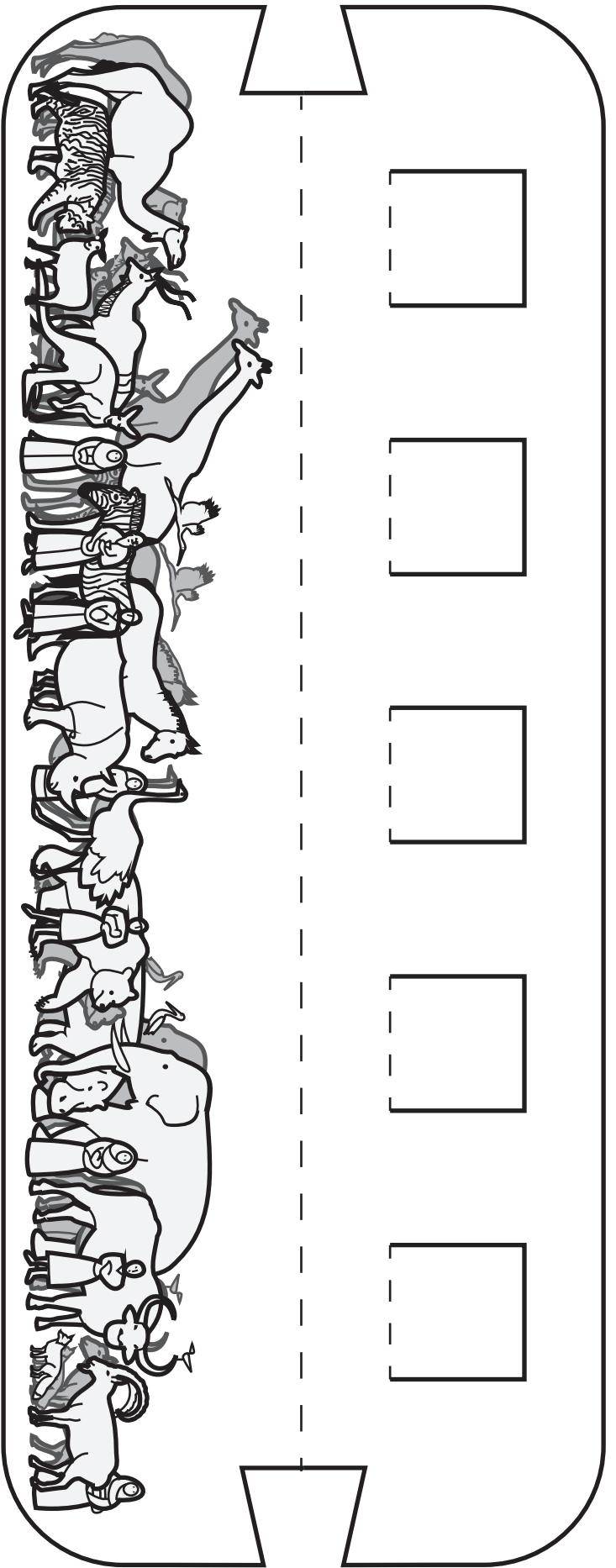
The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

GENESIS 6:5, 11, 12 ESV

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence.



ark template



GOD CONFUSES LANGUAGES AT BABEL

Genesis 11:1-9

Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. (Ps. 127:1)

SUPPLIES:

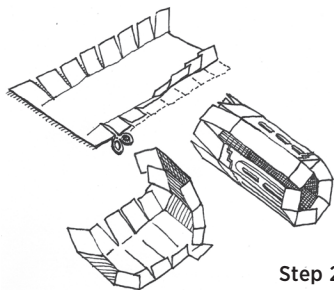
(to make one craft)

- 5 sheets of white cardstock
- template of tower (see page 19)
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- glue
- tape
- optional*: 1 sheet of copy paper

INSTRUCTIONS:

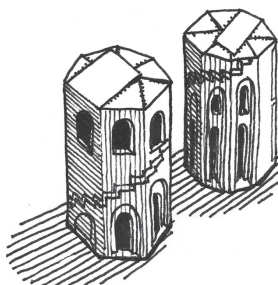
PREP STEP: Copy the tower template onto cardstock twice, then reduce the copy size to 90 percent and copy it again. Place that reduction on the platen and copy it at 90 percent. Place that last reduction on the platen and copy it at 90 percent. You now have five copies in four different sizes. *Optional for Step 5:* Copy the illustrated verse.

1. Color your five tower pieces.
2. Cut out the five tower pieces along the bold lines of their outer rectangle shapes. Fold the top and bottom sections of each rectangle back along the horizontal dotted lines and crease well. Cut along the solid lines from the paper edges to the folds, creating eight long flaps above and eight short flaps below the image on each piece.

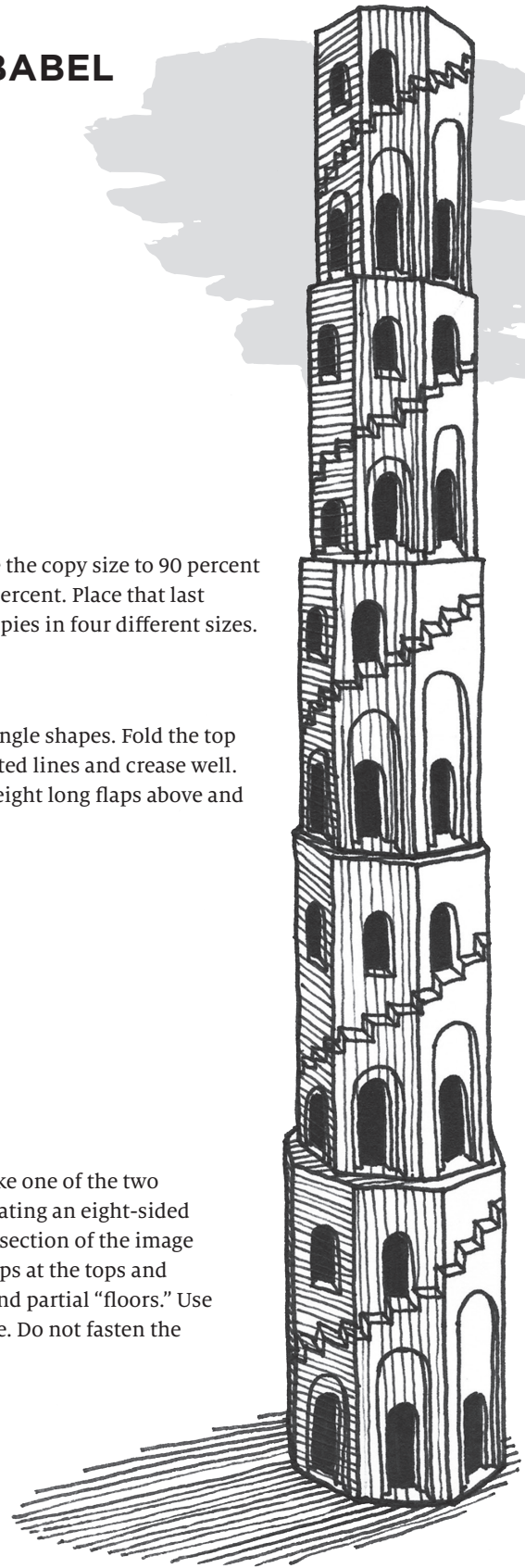


Step 2

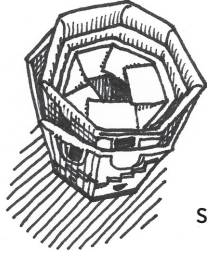
3. Fold the image back along each of the seven vertical dotted lines. Take one of the two largest tower pieces and use tape to join the outer vertical edges, creating an eight-sided cylinder. For the remaining four tower pieces, paste the last vertical section of the image over the first vertical section to create seven-sided cylinders. The flaps at the tops and bottoms of each cylinder should be overlapped to create "ceilings" and partial "floors." Use paste and tape to secure the flat ceilings of each cylinder-tower piece. Do not fasten the floor flaps together until you have decided how to store your tower.



Step 3



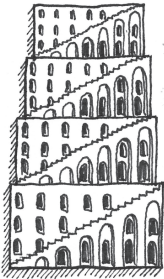
4. Stack and center the tower pieces from largest at the bottom to smallest at the top. If you want to secure your tower in this formation, glue the floor of each tower piece to the ceiling of the tower piece below it. If, instead, you want to store your tower pieces in a smaller space and stack them again later, they can all be nested inside one another, provided the floor flaps are free to fold all the way back.



Step 4

5. *Optional:* Cut out the illustrated verse and paste it to your tower.

MAKE IT SIMPLE: Even if you do all the cutting and folding ahead of time, this craft is tricky and time-consuming. As an alternative, have little ones make a two-dimensional tower: Copy the template in descending sizes as above, but eliminate one of the full-sized copies. Cut off all the flaps and the unprinted vertical section of each image and fold nothing. Then, with the children, lay out the four tower pieces, centered atop one another in ascending-size order as pictured, color them, and tape them together on the back side.



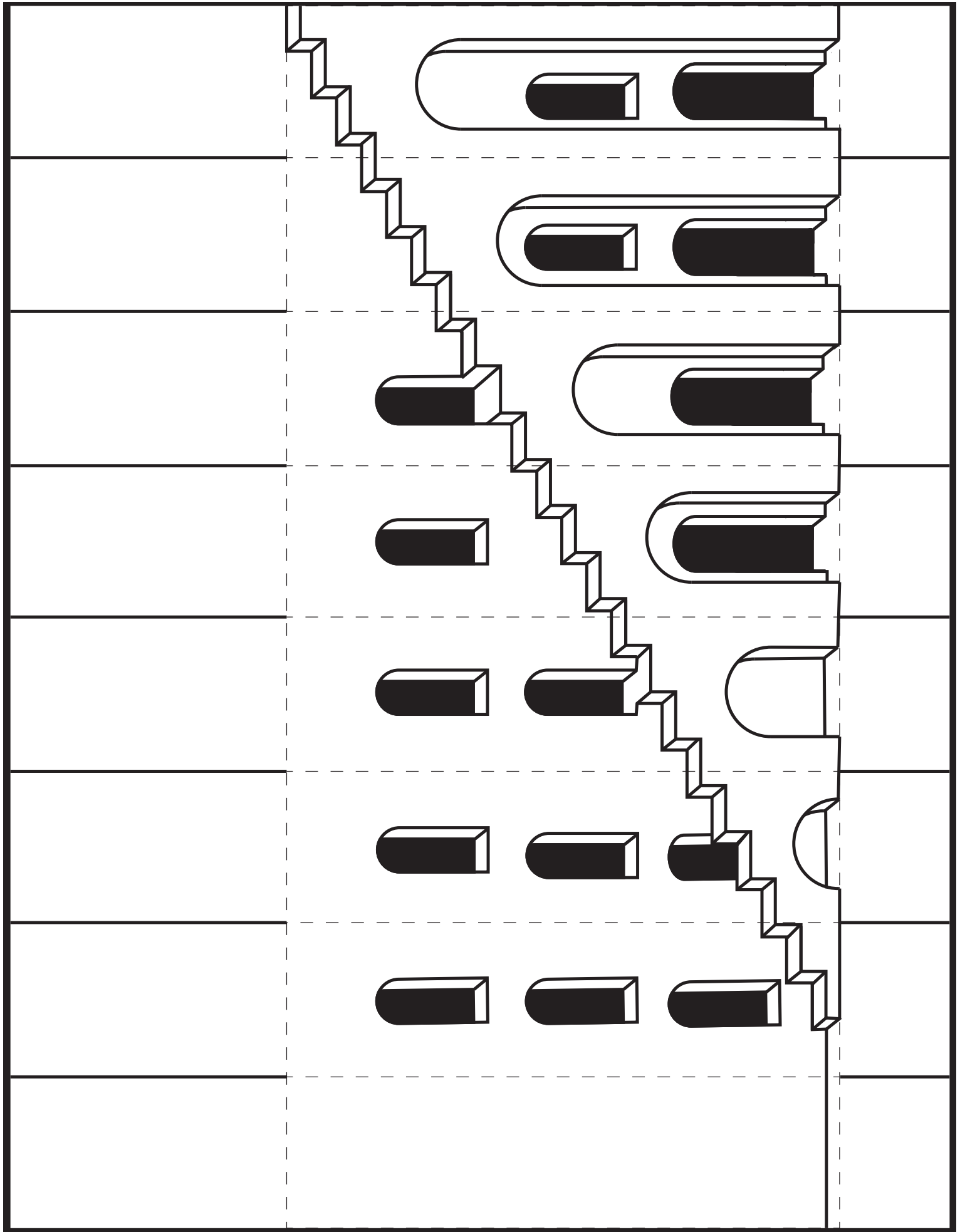
Make It Simple

MAKE IT AMAZING: Make an even taller tower by continuing to reduce and copy the template. Or enlarge the template in sections and join the sections to make larger tower pieces.



Unless the LORD builds
the house, those who
build it labor in vain.

PSALM 127:1 ESV



EASY-TO-MAKE CRAFTS

to help children see the *Big Picture* of the Bible

This book is filled with 101 reproducible crafts suitable for children ages 3–10, each depicting a character, event, or object connected directly to a story in the Bible. Created by the illustrator of the best-selling children’s book *The Big Picture Story Bible*, this easy-to-use resource is perfect for reinforcing Bible lessons at church, at school, or at home.

Each craft includes:

- a detailed supply list
- instructions and suggestions for different age groups
- an illustrated memory verse
- a corresponding Bible passage

“Big Picture Bible Crafts invites children to enter into the story of redemption, experiencing the majesty of God and the beauty of the gospel in a tactile way.”

JOEY COCHRAN, Pastor of Middle School Discipleship and Communication, Calvary Memorial Church, Oak Park, Illinois

“I love this resource. It takes the biblical stories and makes them come alive in a kaleidoscope of activities designed to engage and stimulate the youngest members of the church community.”

IAIN DUGUID, Professor of Old Testament, Westminster Theological Seminary

“Big Picture Bible Crafts provides fun and creative crafts to accompany 101 stories from the Bible! Crafts are an easy way for kids to connect with what is taught during a lesson.”

HALEY HATAI, Former Kids’ Director, Garden City Church, Santa Clara, California



Gail Schoonmaker (BA, Wheaton College) is an illustrator and makes her home in Chicago’s Hyde Park neighborhood with her husband, Keith, and their four children.

AGES 3–10
CRAFTS / EDUCATION

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