Missionary Baptist
Vacation Bible School Literature
Presents:

Children Of Promise

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

Galatians 4:28

AGES 7 - 9

The Missionary Baptist
Vacation Bible School Literature Committee presents

"Children Of Promise"

Vacation Bible School Lessons for Ages 7-9
Written by Sister Susan Collins and Sister Pat Moore

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ISAAC

GENESIS 17:19 ***"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."***

This week we will be studying about children promised by God. All the men we will talk about were born to their mothers late in their lives, after it was thought no child would come. The exception to this is Jesus who was born to the young woman Mary – promised before she was even married! Jesus is not only the exception: He was the ultimate child of promise born to save mankind.
The first child we will discuss is Isaac, born to Abraham and Sarah when they were elderly. Sarah was 90 years old. She laughed when she heard she would have a child. In fact that is what Isaac means – laughter!

God appeared to Abraham when he was 99 years old and told Abraham He would establish an everlasting covenant with him through his son, to be named Isaac, and his descendants. God told Abraham to walk before Him and be blameless and He would make Abraham a father of many nations. God also promised the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. In return, Abraham was to be obedient to God. He was to teach his son Isaac to follow the Lord also.

As Isaac grew up he was a very obedient son. He followed God as his father taught him. Isaac was even willing to be sacrificed to the Lord by his father, Abraham, but God mercifully intervened and sent a ram instead. Isaac was also obedient in the choice of a wife. Abraham wanted Isaac to marry someone from his own people so he sent a servant to his brother's land to choose the bride. Abraham's brother had a beautiful granddaughter named Rebekah. When the servant asked her for a drink of water, she not only gave him a drink but watered his camels, too. Then she invited the servant to her home. This hospitality was the sign that the servant had prayed for to help him make the right choice.

By this time Isaac's mother Sarah had died. The Bible says in Genesis 24:67, "And Isaac brought her (Rebekah) into his mother Sarah's tent, ...and she became his wife; and he loved her...."

Later, after Abraham's death, we continue to see Isaac obedient to the teachings of his father. There was a famine in Canaan, so Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech the Philistine king. God told Isaac not to go to Egypt for help but to stay in this land and He would make the same covenant with Isaac that God had made with Abraham.

In spite of difficulties with Abimelech, the King of Gerar, Isaac continued to stay there and God prospered him. Eventually Abimelech saw that God was on Isaac's side and let him live in the land in peace.

Not only was Isaac a child of promise in leading God's people to safety after the famine, it was through Isaac that great leaders would come, the final one our King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: ***"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."*** ***Galatians 4:28***

Questions:

1. To whom did God promise a great nation?
2. Who is the only One who can always keep a promise?
3. Why was Isaac's birth a miracle?
4. How old were Isaac's parents when he was promised to them?
5. Who named Isaac and what does the name mean?

Joseph

Genesis 45:7 - *"And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."*

Isaac's wife Rebekah bore him twin sons, Esau and Jacob. It was through the younger twin Jacob that God chose to continue His covenant with Abraham. Jacob had many sons by his wives but only one by Rachel, the wife he loved. Rachel could not have children for many years so when Joseph was finally born to her, he was very precious to Jacob. He loved Joseph more than all his other sons. Because of this Joseph's brothers were jealous of him.

One day Joseph told his brothers of a dream he had in the night. In the dream Joseph and his brothers were binding sheaves in the field. Joseph's sheaf stood up and the sheaves of his brothers bowed down to his sheaf. Joseph's brothers were offended at the thought of bowing down to their younger brother. They began to hate him.

The day came when Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers who were out tending the sheep. When his brothers saw Joseph coming they plotted to kill him. Reuben alone sought to save him. He asked the brothers to put him in an empty pit nearby. Reuben intended to get him out later and take him back to Jacob. In the meantime, some merchants came by on the way to Egypt to sell their goods. Judah had the idea to sell Joseph to them.

This was the beginning of a chain of events which led to the fulfillment of Joseph's life as a child of promise. First, Joseph was sold to an officer of Pharaoh, Potiphar, the captain of the guard. The Lord was with Joseph and prospered him. Potiphar noticed this and his confidence in Joseph grew. For this reason Potiphar made Joseph overseer of his household.

Trouble began to brew, however, when Potiphar's wife saw how handsome Joseph was and longed for him. She desired to be with him instead of her husband, but he refused. In anger she falsely accused Joseph of assaulting her and he was thrown into prison.

In spite of another setback, God prospered Joseph even in prison. The keeper of the prison soon entrusted Joseph with all the prisoners and he was made responsible for all that they did. The butler and the baker were in the prison with Joseph. One morning Joseph noticed they looked sad. When he inquired the reason for this they each said they had dreamed in the night but had no interpreter. Joseph replied, "Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you." (Gen. 40:8)

After hearing the dreams, Joseph was able to successfully interpret them: The dream of the baker indicated he was to be hanged, but the butler's dream revealed he was to be restored to his job. The butler was thankful and promised to remember Joseph to Pharaoh.

After two years, Pharaoh had a dream that troubled him. Then the butler remembered his promise to Joseph. He suggested that Joseph be brought to interpret Pharaoh's dream. Pharaoh explained that in his dream he saw seven fat, healthy cows feeding in a meadow and seven lean cows came up and ate the fat ones but the lean cows were still skinny. Joseph explained that the dream indicated there

was to be seven good years of harvest but then a seven year famine would come when there would be no food. Joseph advised Pharaoh to choose a wise man to be overseer of Egypt and appoint officers to collect one-fifth of the land's crops and store it under Pharaoh's authority in the cities. Then there would be plenty of food to last through the famine.

Pharaoh followed Joseph's advice and even put Joseph in charge of the storehouse. Joseph became a powerful man, second only to Pharaoh. When the famine came there was plenty of food in Egypt.

Now we see the fulfillment of God's purpose for Joseph. As the famine held on, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food. Joseph recognized them but they did not know him. By now Rachel had died giving birth to a second son, Benjamin. After testing their hearts to see if they would leave Benjamin, Joseph revealed himself to them. When Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brothers had come, he told Joseph to bring his entire family to Egypt and give them the best of the land. As Joseph's brothers wept, he told them not to grieve over selling him as a slave to Egypt as God had sent him before them to preserve life. (Gen.45:5)

When we read of Joseph, his trials, rejection and mistreatment by those who should have loved him, we see a picture of Jesus. Just as Joseph endured and God led him to save his family, Jesus endured and gave His life for all mankind.

MEMORY VERSE: ***"And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Genesis 45:7***

Questions:

1. What did Rachel name the son God sent her?

2. Who was Jacob's favorite son? Why?

3. Who did Joseph's jealous brothers sell him to and where was he taken?

4. What happened to Joseph after God helped him interpret Pharaoh's dream?

5. How did Joseph save his family?

Samuel

1 Samuel 11:14: *"Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there."*

There was once a woman named Hannah who greatly desired a son. Many years passed and she and her husband Elkanah still had no son. One day as she was praying in the temple Hannah became so burdened that her lips were moving but no sound came out. The priest, Eli, thought she had been drinking. When he approached Hannah she explained that she was grieving for a son. Hannah promised that if God would grant her heart's desire, she would dedicate the child to God. The priest was very moved by Hannah's distress and so was God! In fact, He led the priest to tell Hannah that her prayer was to be granted.

Shortly after this, Hannah learned she was to have a child. How glad she was! When he was born, Hannah named him Samuel "...Because I have asked him of the Lord." (I Sam. 1:20)

Just as she promised, Hannah took Samuel to the temple when he was still a young boy. There he was to live and serve under the priest, Eli. Every year Hannah and Elkanah would visit Samuel and take him a new coat Hannah had made, but they always left him there when they returned home.

One night the Lord called to Samuel. Thinking Eli was speaking, Samuel responded, "Here I am!" Eli told Samuel he had not called for him. This happened twice more, and each time Samuel thought Eli was calling him. Samuel did not know the Lord and did not recognize His voice. Finally, Eli realized it was the Lord speaking to Samuel. Eli advised him to go back to bed and told Samuel the next time he heard the voice to say, "Speak Lord; for thy servant heareth." (I Sam. 3:9)

God then told Samuel that because Eli did not discipline his sons, but instead allowed them to do abominable things in the gate of the tabernacle, his household would be cut off.

It was hard for Samuel to give this news to Eli. He was just a young man and Eli was his elder and teacher. Eli, however, had already been warned by God and said that the Lord knew best. After this time Samuel became God's judge, and Israel listened to him. The Bible teaches that Samuel spent his life traveling on a circuit from Bethel to Gilgal, and on to Mizpeh, judging the people. Then he would return home to Ramah where Samuel had built an altar to the Lord.

As Samuel grew old he made his sons judges over Israel. Samuel's sons were as wicked as Eli's had been. For this reason the people of Israel demanded a king to replace the judges. Samuel warned the people that a king would take away their sons and daughters to serve him. He would

also require payment in cattle and crops to feed his soldiers and family. But the people of Israel still wanted a king. God told Samuel to give the people what they wanted. He led Samuel to a tall, handsome man named Saul. He had all the physical attributes most people expect of a king.

At first Saul seemed to follow the Lord. But soon Saul was disobedient to the Lord's command as given to him by Samuel. For this his kingship was taken away. Samuel was very upset. God instructed Samuel to quit grieving for Saul and go find the king He had picked. Samuel, obedient to God, was led to the household of Jesse. Surprisingly, it was not the oldest son God directed Samuel to pick, but the youngest, David, still small in stature. God had told Samuel that while man looks on the outward appearance, He looks at the heart. In fact, God later said that this king was a man after His own heart. Through David's lineage came Jesus, the King of Kings.

So we come to the conclusion of Samuel's life. He was born a child of promise to Hannah, who in turn lent him to the Lord. As long as Samuel lived he served God, first as a child in the temple under Eli the priest, then as a judge over Israel and finally as a prophet imparting the words of God to the king.

MEMORY VERSE: ***"...as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord..." Samuel 1:28***

Questions:

1. Who was Elkanah's wife that grieved for a child?

2. What did Hannah promise God if He would give her a son?

3. Who did Samuel serve under in the temple?

4. What did Hannah make and take to Samuel every year?

5. Who sent the messages Samuel took to the people of Israel?

John the Baptist

Luke 1:17: *"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*

The last three nights we have been reading from the Old Testament. Let's turn tonight to the New Testament where we find a man born to prepare the way for Jesus. This man's name was John.

In the days of Herod, the king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias. His wife was Elisabeth, of the lineage of Aaron, Moses' brother. The Bible says they walked righteously before God, keeping His commandments. Zacharias and Elisabeth were elderly and had no children.

One day while Zacharias was serving as priest, it was his turn to burn incense in the temple. A multitude of people had gathered outside to pray as was the custom. An angel appeared in the temple to Zacharias and told him that his prayers had been answered. The angel said that Elisabeth would bear him a son to be named John.

The angel went on to describe the type of man John would become. He said that John would be great in the Lord's sight, that he would not drink wine or strong spirits. The angel said John would be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb and would turn many people to the Lord. John was to go before the Lord in spirit and power to prepare the children of Israel for the Lord.

When Zacharias heard all the angel had to say, he questioned how he and Elisabeth could have a son in their old age. The angel then introduced himself as Gabriel, sent from God with these glad tidings. He then told Zacharias that he would not be able to speak until John was born.

When Zacharias came out of the temple and could not speak, the people praying outside realized something momentous had happened! "He has seen a vision!" they cried.

When Elisabeth found out she was expecting a child she hid herself. After six months, Mary, having found out she was to give birth to Jesus, visited Elisabeth. When Mary greeted her, the baby leaped in Elisabeth's womb, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Zacharias took his son to the temple when he was eight days old to be circumcised. It was supposed that his name would be Zacharias after his father, but Elisabeth said, "No, his name shall be John." When questioned, Zacharias wrote on a tablet, "His name is John." Immediately, he could speak again.

The Bible teaches that in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Caesar, the word of God came to John in the wilderness. He began to preach in the region around the Jordan River. John's message was "repent, be baptized and prepare for the Lord." Many people from Judea and Jerusalem came and were baptized after confessing their sins. John came to be known as John the Baptist, which means "John the Baptizer." He would quote Isaiah 40: 3-5. Read this scripture and see what it says.

Many Pharisees came to discover what John was doing. John called them vipers and asked them who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come. He then told them they must bring fruits worthy of repentance before they could be baptized. What do you think this means? John was telling the Pharisees they must have a testimony of salvation before they could be baptized.

All the people gathered there began to inquire what they should do. John began to explain how they were to treat people to show their repentance. The tax collectors were to quit cheating people and taking more money than was due. Those with food were to share it and those with two coats were to give one of them to someone who had none. The soldiers were to quit threatening people for monetary gain. All of these are examples of Christian living meant to be a witness to repentance and salvation.

The people soon began to wonder if John was the Christ. But John made it clear that he was not. John said that One was coming whose sandal he was not worthy to un-strap. John said that while he baptized with water, the One coming would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Jesus then came from Galilee to be baptized. John said, "I am the one who needs you to baptize me." But Jesus compelled him saying, "... it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matt. 3: 15) As John raised Jesus from the water the Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove and a voice came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:16-17)

From this time on John said he must decrease and Jesus increase. John knew that his purpose in life had been fulfilled, his life as a child of promise was coming to a close. Eventually John was thrown into prison and beheaded, but he followed Jesus to the end.

Remember the memory verse from the first lesson? How do you think that we are the children of promise? Come back tomorrow when we will study about Jesus, to discover the answer.

MEMORY VERSE: *"Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me:" MALACHI 3: 1*

Questions:

1. What were the names of the couple in this lesson who had no children?

2. What did the angel tell Zacharias his son was to be named?

3. Who was John sent to prepare the way for?

4. What were the three things John preached?

5. Who was the special One John baptized?

Jesus

Genesis 3:15: *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel."*

Tonight we will study the ultimate child of promise, Jesus. Unlike the other mothers in these lessons, Jesus' mother, Mary, was a young woman not yet married. Her fiancé, Joseph, could have broken their engagement when he found out she was to have a child. However, he had been told by an angel of the Lord not to be afraid to marry her for the child was of the Holy Spirit. Joseph was told by this angel that the child would be named Jesus, which means Savior.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, where Mary and Joseph traveled for the census recording. There, as the city was full and no lodging available, he was born and laid in a manger, or feeding trough. Shepherds from the nearby fields and, later, wise men from the east came to worship the newborn king.

Joseph, being warned by an angel of the Lord, fled to Egypt with Jesus to prevent Herod from finding him. After Herod's death, Joseph and Mary returned with Jesus and settled in the region of Galilee, in the city of Nazareth. The Bible says in Luke 2:40 that the child grew, becoming strong in the spirit and in wisdom and God's grace was upon Him.

The next event in Jesus' life that is recorded in the Bible occurred when he was twelve years old. After traveling with his family to Jerusalem for the Passover, Jesus lingered there while His parents began the journey home. Assuming Jesus was in company with relatives, Mary and Joseph did not miss Him for one whole day. When they realized He was missing they returned to Jerusalem. After three days they found Him in the temple, listening to and asking questions of the teachers. Luke 2:47 records that all were astonished at His understanding. Mary asked Jesus why He had stayed behind and told Him how anxious she and Joseph had been. Jesus replied with a question, "Did you not know I would be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49)

Jesus then traveled back to Nazareth with His parents where He was obedient to them. Jesus "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and all men." (Luke 2:52)

The Bible does not mention anything about Jesus' life from the time he was at the temple with his parents until He began His ministry. Mark 6:3 does mention that Jesus was a carpenter, so we can infer that He had learned this trade at some point, probably from His earthly father, Joseph. In the meantime, John the Baptist came preaching, "prepare the way of the Lord." He baptized Jesus, as was mentioned in last night's lesson. After this, Jesus was taken by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. There He faced Satan after fasting for forty days. Although Satan put many temptations in His way, Jesus remained strong and faithful to God the Father. Jesus said to Satan, "it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord Your God, and Him only you shall serve'." (Matt. 4:10) Now the time was right for Jesus to begin His ministry.

First Jesus called His disciples. Most of them were fishermen, one was a tax collector, and one was even a thief who would betray Him, as Jesus knew he would.

For the next three years, Jesus and the disciples traveled throughout Israel as Jesus performed miracles, healed the sick, and taught the people in parables. Jesus emphasized that He had come to bring glory to the Father and that He and the Father were one.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) Also, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) What truth was Jesus talking about, and how will it make us free? Jesus is talking about our bondage to sin which brings eternal death. As Adam sinned in the garden of Eden, sin fell upon all mankind. God, however, promised a salvation plan. That plan is the Savior, Jesus Christ. He is the Truth that sets us free from the bondage of sin.

The Bible says that Jesus did many more things that if recorded the world could not contain that many books. (John 21: 25) Read the gospel of Matthew to learn about some of the things Jesus did and taught.

Throughout Jesus' travels, religious men of the day called Pharisees and Sadducees came to spy on Him. They sought to taunt Him into making a mistake. These men were jealous of Jesus' popularity. They were afraid of losing their power in the synagogue and over the people. Each time Jesus exposed them as men seeking their own selfish goals rather than worshippers of God.

As Jesus' time on earth was coming to a close and the time for Him to fulfill God's promise drew near, He called the disciples together to partake of the Passover meal. Just as the Passover represented freedom from bondage in Egypt, Jesus wanted to portray to His disciples their freedom from sin. As Jesus broke the bread and served it to His disciples, He told them it represented His body. Then He served the wine saying it represented His blood which He was going to give for mankind. He instructed His church that each time this meal, the Lord's Supper, was taken, it should be in remembrance of Him. (Judas left at this time on his way to betray Christ.)

Jesus gave His church the example of baptism to show His death, burial, and resurrection. He also instituted the Lord's Supper. These are the two ordinances of the church set up by Christ that we are to observe.

Soon after, the disciples accompanied Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane. There Jesus prayed in anguish and cried over Jerusalem while His disciples slept. Then the Roman soldiers came, along with Judas who betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Jesus was taken away and beaten, questioned by Pilate and eventually crucified. What terrible suffering He endured! Then came the miracle: After the third day Jesus rose from the grave! How His followers rejoiced! Jesus spent the next forty days walking and talking with them before ascending to heaven. Before He left, Jesus promised to send the comforter, the Holy Spirit, to His church. It is the Holy Spirit that comes into every person's heart when he or she repents and trusts Him as Savior.

Jesus fulfilled the promise of God since the beginning of time by His perfect life, His death for our sins, and His resurrection.

How do we become children of promise? By trusting the Lord for salvation and walking in obedience with Him, using the talents He has given us for His service. By following Him we can be a witness to others that they may also come to know Him and become children of promise.

MEMORY VERSE: ***"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." JOHN 3:16***

Questions:

1. **What was God's promise to Adam and Eve?**
2. **Did God give this promise to all mankind?**
3. **What did God send the angel to tell Mary?**
4. **What was Mary's son to be named?**
5. **Did Jesus fulfill His promise?**
6. **How can we be children of promise?**

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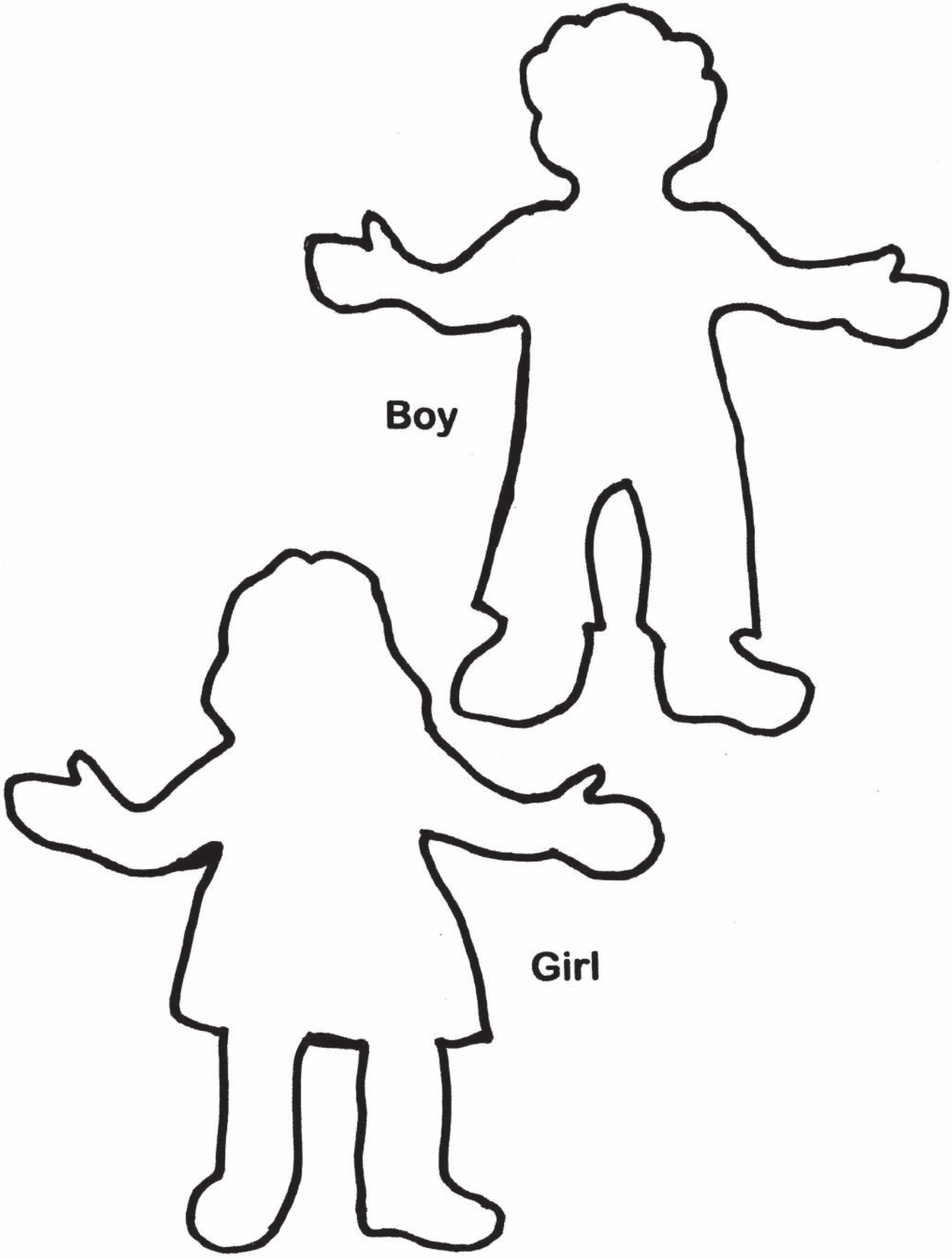
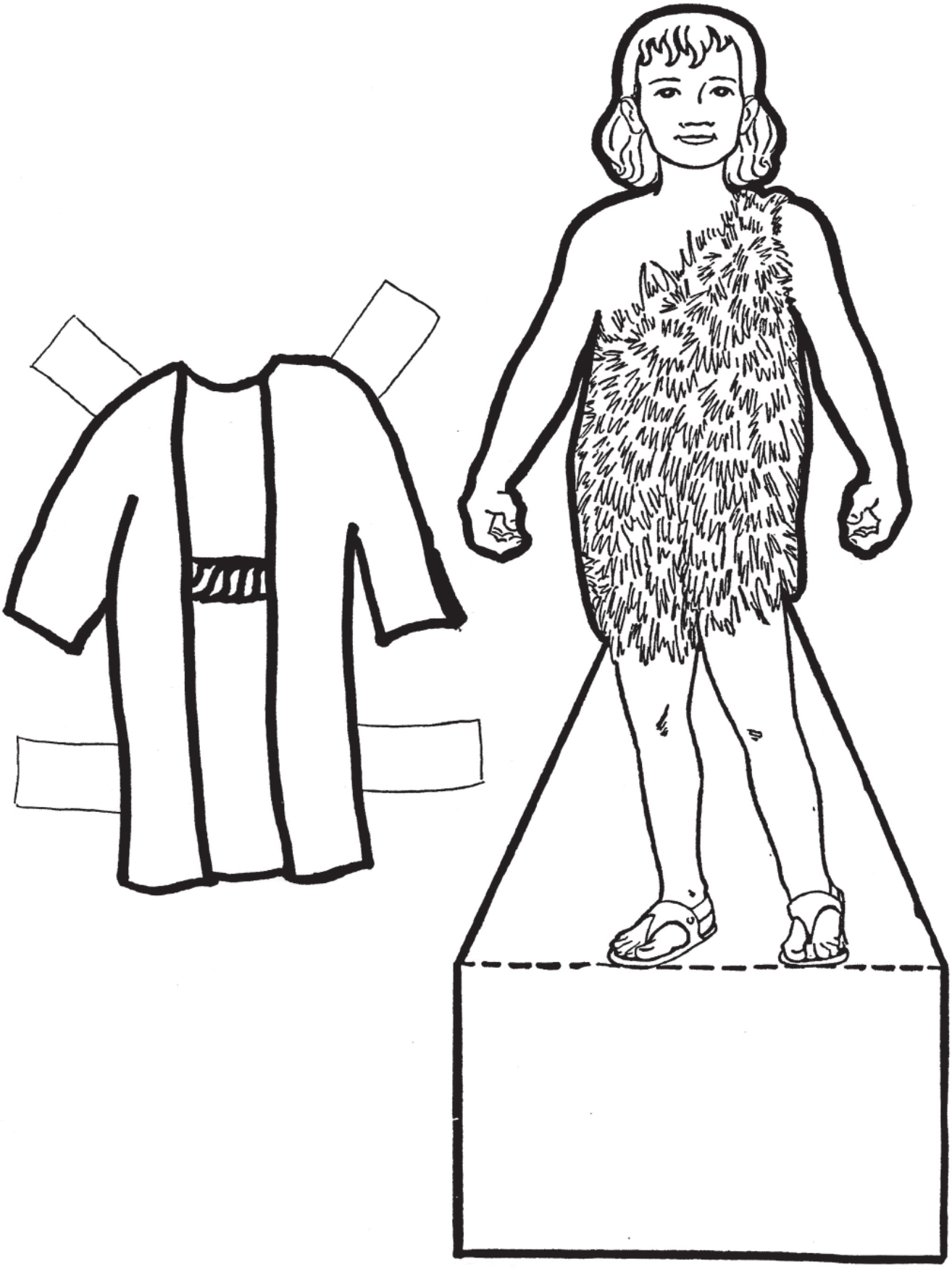
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