Faith Adventures for Children Together

Committed to URC Children Together: enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus together in the home, church and beyond.

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf

Joshua 2: 1-7 - Rahab's brave decision

Theme: God is with us when we have to make courageous decisions

Contents:

Introduction 1
Together 1
Experience 2
Explore.....3
Express 5
Handouts.....8

Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

The theme for this session is 'God is with us when we make courageous decisions'.

It looks at the story of Rahab – one of the few women who is named in the Bible – and her interaction with two spies who had been sent by Joshua to scout out the city of Jericho.

In every Bible translation we explored, Rahab is described as either a 'prostitute' or a 'harlot'. Your team will need to think carefully about how to respond to questions about what that means if asked.

Rahab had to make a quick, but potentially life-threatening, decision: does she hide the men from the King? Or does she hand them over? Handing them over would probably result in their death, while not handing them over but them being found, would likely result in all three of them being killed.

So in this session we are encouraging children and young people to think about the decisions and choices we have to make that take courage.

We will explore the idea that bravery or courage isn't a lack of fear but, rather, doing something despite being scared.

And we invite the question: is God always with us when we make decisions?

Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend
(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today
(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,
(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,
(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,
(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better,
(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family
(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN
(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.
Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.
Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.
Amen

In-person game - Hide and seek

Play a game of hide and seek. Select one person to be the seeker who must search for the other players in a set time limit. For smaller groups you could try hiding objects around the space which participants must search for.

Online game - Pick up sticks

Follow this link to an online version of pickup sticks.
https://www.kongregate.com/games/cranberrygame/pick-up-sticks

Players try to pick up as many sticks within the 30 second time limit. Sticks at the top of the pile must be selected first before you can remove the lower sticks. Take turns and see who can reach the highest number of sticks. To play this game in person, you could use giant pick-up-sticks if you have them, or simply use cocktail sticks, bamboo skewers or garden

sticks or canes, depending on how big you want them to be and how many players you have.

Experience

For this story we recommend using the New Living Translation
https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=joshua+2%3A+1-7&version=NLT

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Rahab https://youtu.be/IFTpEdvsK1c

Over fives: Rahab and the spies Saddleback kids https://youtu.be/tWkbq50tH5A

Songs to support the story

Under fives: Strong and Courageous https://youtu.be/t34ajxa7TCI

Five to elevens: Doug Horley Be strong and courageous https://youtu.be/tiLSIlDcAVU

Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the text

Stary by playing a game of Would You Rather, encouraging the group to justify their decisions.

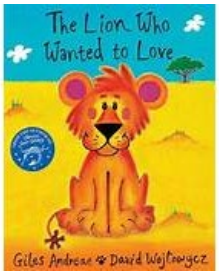
Would you rather:
Give up pizza or give up ice cream for the rest of your life?
Spend the night camping or in a luxury hotel?
Be the most popular person in the room or the richest person in the room?
Live in a castle or in a spaceship?
Have supersonic hearing or x-ray vision?
Be bored or too busy?
Hear good news first then bad news, or bad news then good news?
Spend a week with no toothbrush or no hairbrush?
Travel forward in time or back in time?
Take a risk to keep someone safe or betray someone to keep yourself safe?

Rahab had choices to make and they were not easy decisions, but she had to make them quickly and trust God to keep her safe. Re-read or re-enact the story and then carry the story on, guessing what might happen next and also guessing what might have happened if she had given the two spies up to the king's soldiers. Possibly split the group into two smaller groups and give each one scenario to act out for the others.

You could then read the rest of the story of Rahab in Joshua 2: 11-24

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



'The Lion who Wanted to Love' by Giles Andreae and David Wojtowycz
https://youtu.be/_81RxVe_tXE?t=4

Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

- If you are not scared, can you be brave?
- Have you ever had to make a courageous decision? How did it feel?
- What other decisions might Rahab have made and what might have been the outcome of them?
- Is everybody brave in the same way? Do people react differently to the same situation?

Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- I wonder what sort of things you are frightened of?
- I wonder why God made it so we need to be brave sometimes?
- I wonder how God is with us in these situations?

What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). You could tap the top of the box twice after the word 'box'. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- Emotion faces, such as brave, scared, happy (Talk about what feelings you might have with each emotion and when you might feel them.)
- Lego to build a house and/or a door
- A kitchen set (Come and have a nice cup of tea? It's nice to see you! Welcome! Talk about who we might be brave for.)
- A couple of feely bags with things inside, one with something soft like wool or cotton wool and another with something like plastic creepy crawlies or water beads (Are they feeling brave enough to put their hand inside?)
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (A cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people and some pots or similar to hide the people inside/ behind (Perhaps the leader could hide them and the children have to find them.)

Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

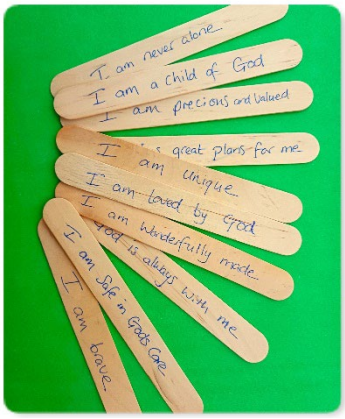
Affirmation Jar prayers

You will need:

- lolly sticks or craft sticks
- a jar
- pens

What you do:
Talk about positive things with the children that remind you about God's love and how God helps us and knows us. List some phrases that are positive affirmations. Here are a few ideas to get you started but it would be good for the group to come up with their own ideas.

- ❖ I am safe in God's care
- ❖ I am wonderfully made
- ❖ God is always with me
- ❖ I am unique
- ❖ I am a child of God
- ❖ I am accepted
- ❖ I am precious and valued
- ❖ I am loved by God
- ❖ I am brave
- ❖ I am strong and courageous
- ❖ God hears me when I talk to him



Write the phrases onto the sticks and then add them to the jar. Gather together in a circle and place the jar in the centre then take it in turns to take out a stick. Play some reflective music in the background and get everyone to spend some time quietly thinking about what is written on the stick they are holding. Ask the children to then give their stick to someone else in the group so that everyone gives an affirmation stick to someone else. You could do this a few times allowing space for quiet each time. When you feel it is time, end with a short prayer.

Thank you God that you know us and love us,
And are with us in the good and the difficult times.
Help us to be brave and courageous.
Amen

Spoken prayer

Strong God

Sometimes, when we have choices to make, one is easy and one needs us to be brave.

Doing the right thing, and making the right choice, can sometimes be very scary.

We know that you are with us and will always help us to do what is right.

Thank you, Strong God.

Amen

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. **https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf.**

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Bravery barbells

Rahab was brave in the story, she took a risk to hide those men even though she knew she would get into trouble if found out. She was brave because she wanted to protect the men. Talk about what sorts of situations might require us to be brave. Use the answers to help with this following activity.

You will need:

paper tube
balloons
stickers
marker pens
tape

What you do:

Decorate the tube with the stickers, consider writing 'Bold and strong with God's help' on it too. Blow up and tie off two balloons. Using the marker pens, write on the balloons times when we need to be brave. Use tape to attach the balloons, one each end of the cardboard tube so that they look like barbells.

These could be hung up somewhere at home as reminder that God is with us whenever we need to make courageous decisions.

Be brave boxes!

Have a collection of boxes with a hand hole in each and challenge the children to put their hand in and see what they can find in each box.
Make one of the boxes more challenging than the others and see who feels brave enough to put their hand inside.
Choose a variety of objects with different shapes and textures to make the activity more challenging : household items work well, along with different textures of food items and, for the more scary items, try a rubber snake or spider.
It is a good idea to put more than one object in each box and encourage the children to guess the items.
To make the activity harder for older children try filling the boxes with packing material like shredded paper or packing chips, making the items harder to find and add a time limit for guessing the items in the box.

Just a note to remember: when choosing items to place in the box to consider the needs of your group. If you have any children who have touch sensitivity or tactile defensiveness, you may need to modify this activity accordingly to give them a greater sense of control.

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- We often have to choose whether or not to do something that needs a bit of courage. This week try to remember Rahab and be a bit brave, tackling something that makes you feel a bit nervous. Make sure it's a wise choice, though, not a foolish or risky one. Maybe standing up for someone or something you think is right, maybe volunteering to do something like reading in church or helping with a task, maybe even rescuing someone who is scared of spiders by catching the spider and taking it outside.
- At the beginning of each day this week, ask God to be in every decision you make, so that you choose wisely.

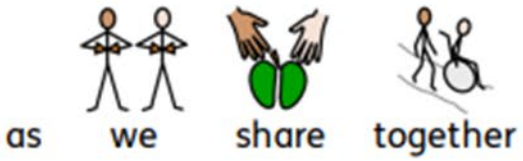
We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of Rahab with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Luke 6**

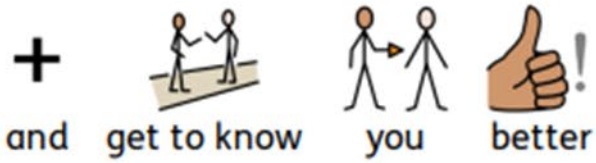
Jesus
our
friend,

be
with
us
today


as
we
share
together

pray
together

play
together


and
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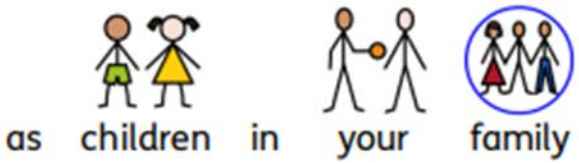
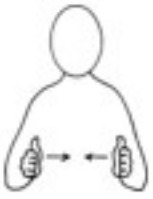
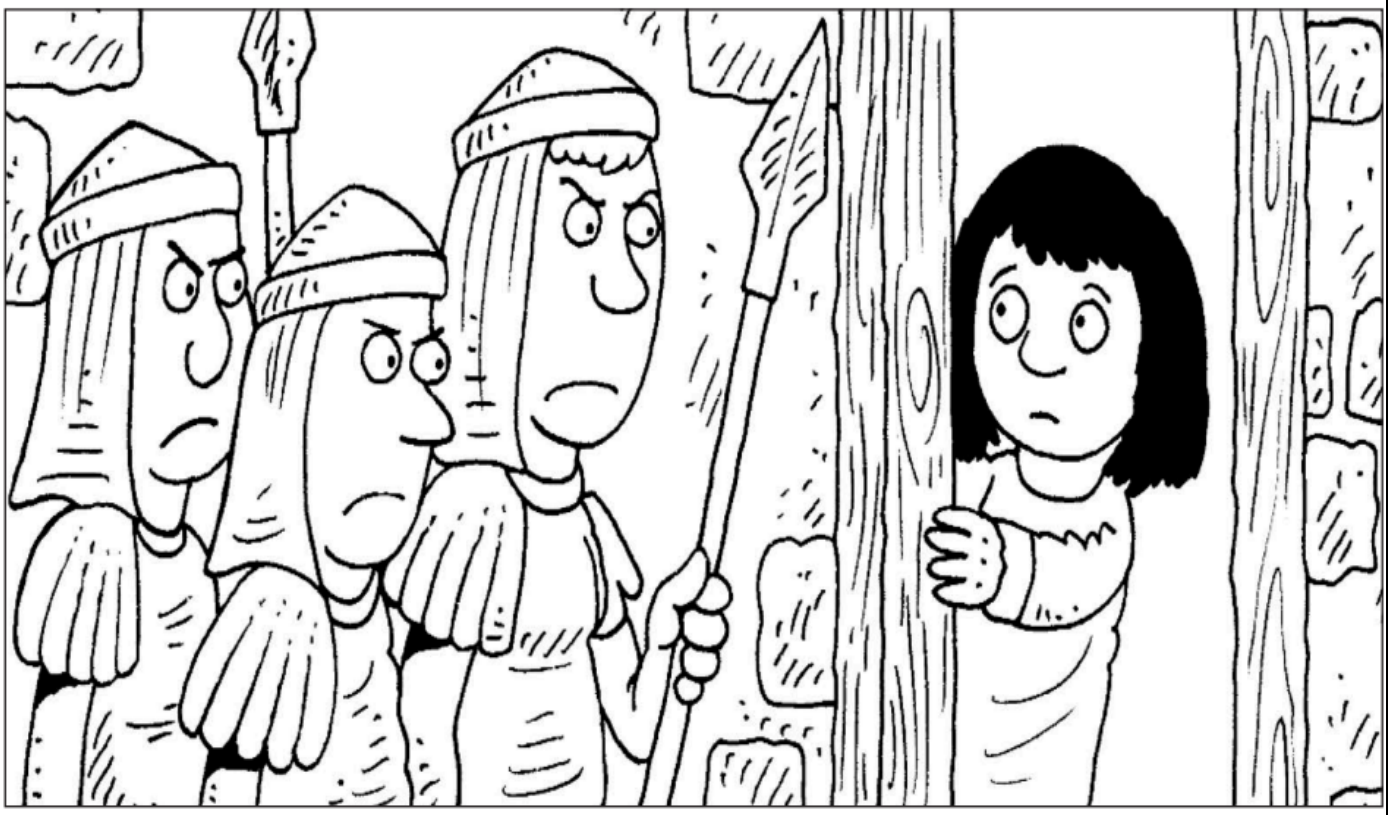

as
children
in
your
family

Amen

Right middle finger touches centre of other palm, repeat with left hand

Alternate hands back and forth





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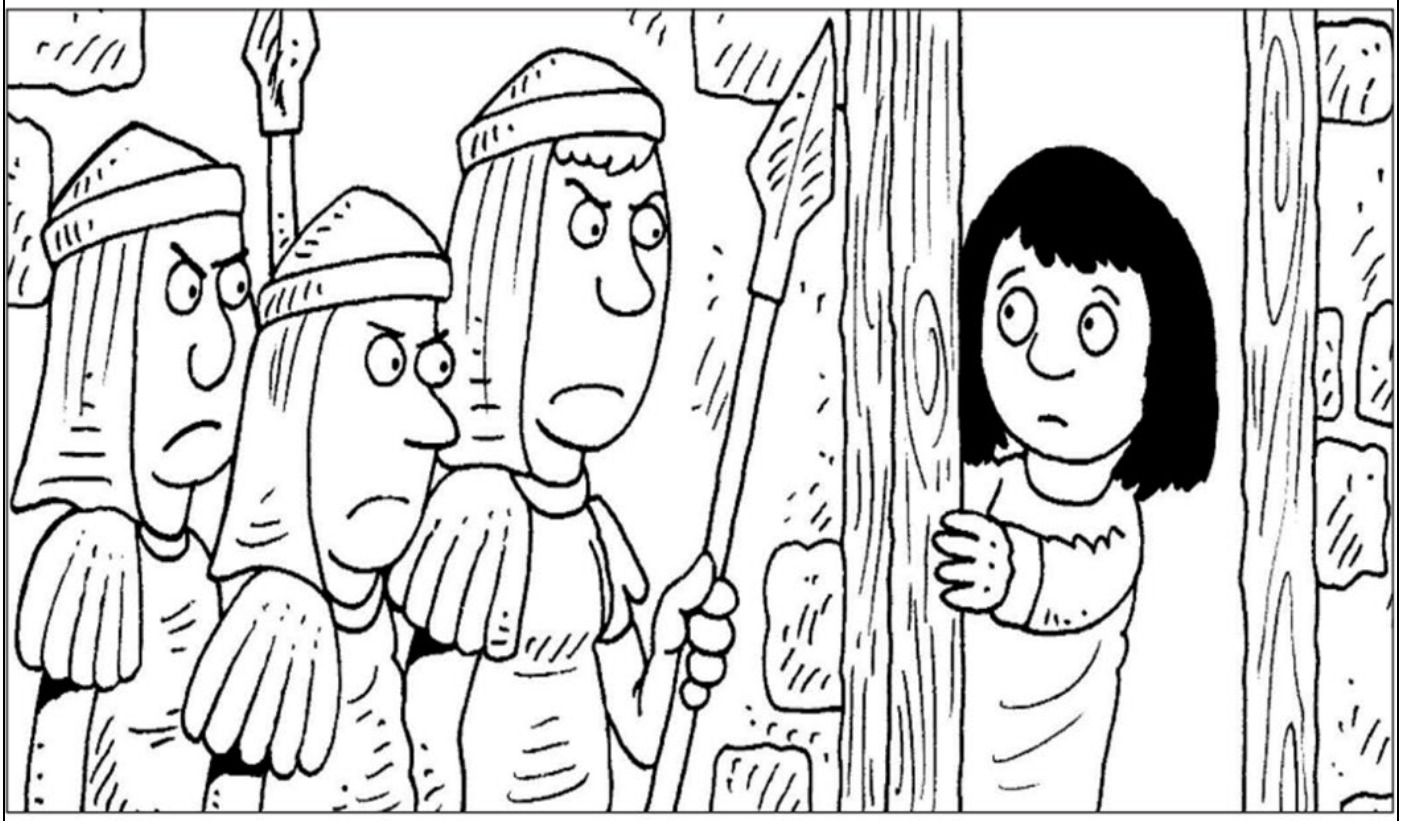
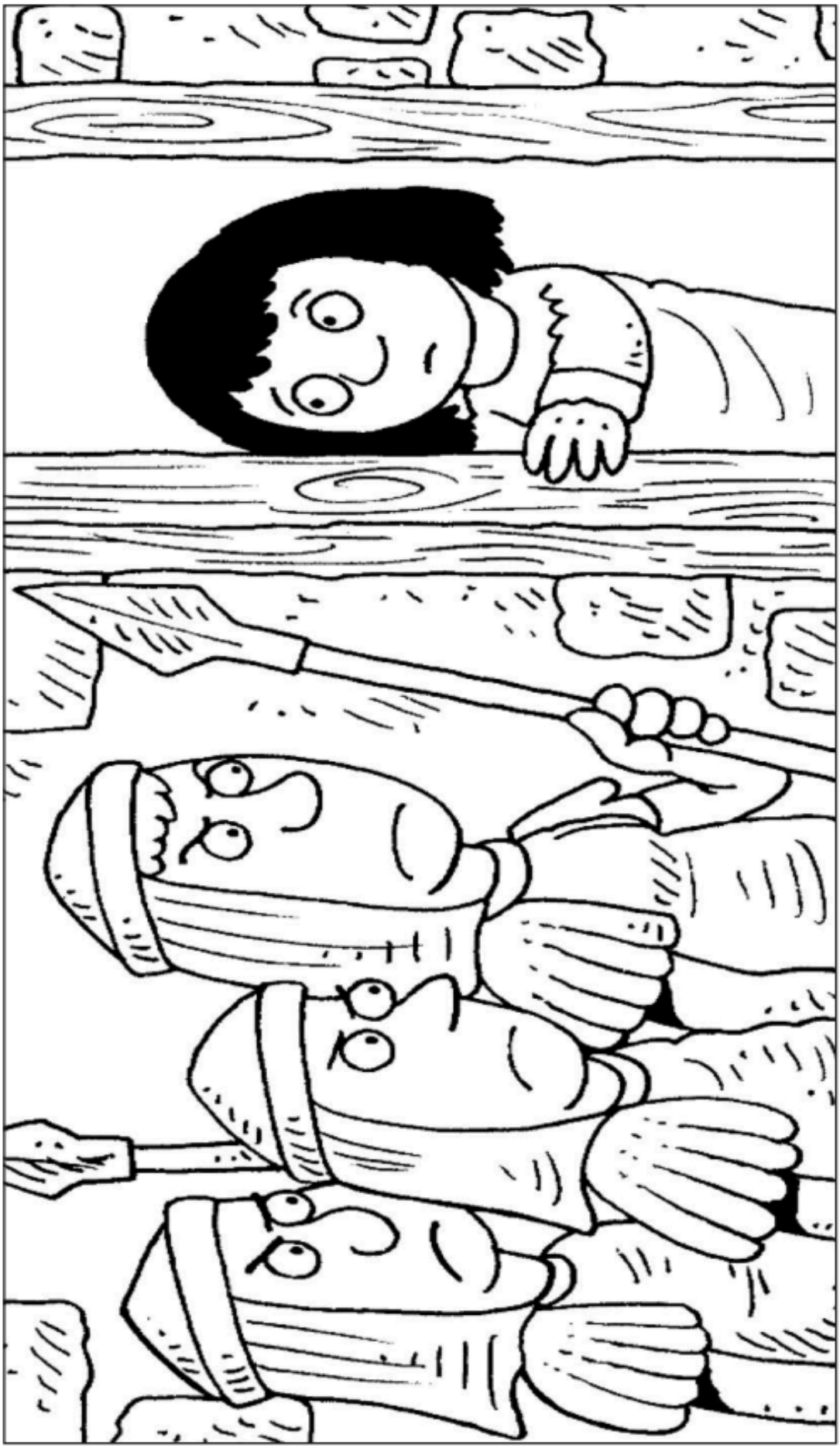
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