

The Samaritan Woman

Introduction

As we start the month of May, we continue to be in the season of Easter. However, pay attention because you will notice a change in our season & liturgical color later this month! During this month we will hear amazing stories that show us yet again how much Jesus loves ALL people! Later in the month we will hear the story of Ascension and Pentecost. Please note that we will not have a Good Shepherd lesson or Sunday school on Sunday, May 30th – enjoy Memorial Day weekend with your family and join us for in-person or virtual church – 9:00 & 11:00 am services available!

This curriculum helps our children continue to grow cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually in their relationship with God. Your job as the parent/guardian is to facilitate your child(ren) through this lesson. Enjoy watching & listening to the story all together, talk through the wondering questions (try your best to not answer these questions - let your child(ren) truly wonder), and help guide them through the activity they choose for the day. Not answering the wondering questions might be the most challenging part of this curriculum, but that is how we help them grow. Here is what's included in this lesson:

- **What's Going On** – background information for the daily Bible story.
- **The Bible Story** – time to watch and read the Bible story lesson.
- **Wondering Questions** – available for both our younger and older friends.
- **Daily Activities** – interactive ways to help your child dive deeper into our weekly lesson.
- **Prayer**

What's Going On

The Good Shepherd children's curriculum has a section called "Teacher Helps". This section will help give you our parent/guardians a deeper background to today's story.

Teacher Helps (written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe)

What do you know about the Samaritan woman? Ask any Biblically literate person that question and the response is usually, "Well, she was divorced five times and was living in sin with a man who wasn't her husband." That is the most common interpretation of this story. But I would like to step outside of that common interpretation and take a good look at the text, and the practices of Jesus day.

First, nowhere in the text does it say the woman has been divorced. It says she has had five husbands. Our assumption is that she has been divorced from those five men. It is equally possible that she has been widowed five times. Remember that Levitical law required the woman to marry her husband's brother if he died. The woman's first husband could have had brothers close to him in age, or older who took the woman as another wife. The Samaritans only accepted the first five books of the Old Testament as their scriptures. And there is very little opportunity in those texts for a woman to initiate a divorce. Levitical law also said the next brother had the option to say "no" to the marriage. He still could have allowed the woman to live in his home, providing food and shelter for someone who would have no other means of support.

Some scholars have made a case that the woman came to the well at noon, an odd time for water drawing. Most of the woman came early in the morning or in the evening when it was cooler.

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Those scholars believe she came at noon because she would have been the object of gossip by the other woman. It is equally possible that she had to remain in the home to care for many children or an elderly parent. Because of her lack of status, since she was not an official wife, she may have been the "servant" filled the role of servant.

Read the story again, as I have written it and in the Bible. Notice how little attention either Jesus or the woman gave to the fact that the man she is living with is not her husband. Obviously it wasn't important to either of them. What was important is that the woman recognized that Jesus must be a prophet and Jesus entered in dialog with her. It would have been almost unheard of for a woman to have a prolonged conversation with Jesus, to say nothing of a Samaritan woman. That's why the disciples were so amazed when they came back from town. They never expected to see Jesus having a conversation with this woman who had come to draw water. But they also knew Jesus well enough now not to question him.

The conversation Jesus had with the Samaritan woman is the important part of the story. For generations there had been a disagreement between the Jews and the Samaritans. The Samaritans had established their own place of worship, a temple built on Mount Gerizim in about 300 BCE. It competed with the temple in Jerusalem, the only true place for worship according to the Jews. Jewish troops destroyed the Samaritan temple in 128 BCE. (The Women's Bible Commentary, Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe, editors, p.295) The question the woman posed to Jesus was an honest, searching one that was no doubt the hinge of controversy between the two nations. The woman is the first person to enter into serious theological conversation with Jesus and he encouraged that conversation by his response to her. (Ibid., p. 296) As we watch the woman's faith grow, she begins to talk of the Messiah. Perhaps she was wondering even then, what she asked the people in her town later, "Could this be the Messiah?"

A final testament to the stature of this woman in the community may be found in the response from those to whom she spoke. She left her water jar and ran to tell others about the man she had met. The text tells us that because of her testimony many believed her. Had she been a person of ill repute most likely they would not have even listened to her, much less given her testimony any credibility. Finally the people believe because of Jesus, telling her at the end "Now we believe, not just because of what you said, but because we have heard it ourselves. He is the Savior."

Again, it is so important to peel away generations of sexual overtones to this story to really get at the meat of it. Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman, not because she was "living in sin", but because he chose the "unchosen", the Samaritan, to demonstrate that his great gift of love and life was for everyone.

Our first wondering question asks how the woman felt when Jesus asked her for a drink of water. The primary response will be surprised, because that's the impression we give in the story. But there will also probably be responses that she was scared or worried. Ask the children to say more about their responses and try to get at why they feel a certain emotion would have been valid.

The second question ask how Jesus knew all about the woman. Most children believe so firmly in the divinity and the omniscience of Jesus that they will say Jesus knew everything. Others may consider that Jesus knew about people in that part of the country because he may have been

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there before.

The final question asks why the people would have believed the woman's words. Be open to all responses here because there could be quite a variety. Some children may say that the woman was so excited they couldn't help but believe her. Still others may say that the people had known the woman for a long time and trusted what she said. Some may say that Jesus caused them to believe through the woman. The main hope of this question is to help the children treat the woman's witness as a valid witness.

The Bible Story

Please watch and read today's story:

- **Watch the Story** (*Biblical adaptations written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe*)
Together, watch the children's story time found on Manchester UMC's website under Children & Families: Sunday Morning: <https://manchesterumc.org/sunday-morning/>
- **Scripture Lesson – John 4:1-42**
Encourage your elementary child(ren) to find & read this story in the Bible. Assist as needed.

Wondering Questions

"Wondering Questions" are open ended discussion questions. Parents/Guardians, try as hard as possible to NOT answer these questions for your child(ren).

Wondering Questions for Children (*written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe*)

1. I wonder how the woman felt when Jesus asked her for a drink?
2. I wonder how Jesus knew all about the woman?
3. I wonder why the people believed what the woman said?

Wondering Questions for Older Children (*written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe*)

1. The woman asked Jesus about the right place to worship God. Where do you think it's OK to worship God? Where is not an OK place? Do you have friends who may not attend your church? Are there houses of worship where you may not attend? Why?
2. When Jesus disciples came back from town they were surprised to see him talking to a woman. But they said nothing. Why do you think they kept quiet?
3. What do you think happened to the woman's five husbands? Why would Jesus have told her that part of her life? What part of your life would you be surprised to have Jesus talk about?

Daily Activities

All Ages

Please find the attached puzzles, activities, and coloring pages. These can be used by all students participating in today's lesson.

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All Ages – Story Word Charades

What you need: index cards and/or pieces of paper, pen/pencil, optional: large piece of paper for drawing.

SAY: In today's story of "The Samaritan Woman," Jesus talked to a woman who was different from him. Even though she was different, Jesus still showed her God's love.

ASK: Why do you think Jesus showed the Samaritan woman love? What are some ways that we can show love and acceptance to our friends, family, and members of our community?

SAY: Let's play a game together that helps us remember our story. The game is called "Story Word Charades!"

- Write the following words on your index cards and/or pieces of paper: bucket, well, water, drink, woman, walk, Jesus.
- Choose one family member to be the charade actor or artist (each participant can choose whether they want to act out the word or draw it).
- Give the artist a card with one of the words on it and have them either draw or act it out.
- Have other family members try to guess what the artist is drawing/acting out. The actor cannot speak or write any letters/words on the paper.
- When someone guesses correctly, ask them to describe how the word relates to the Bible story.
- Then choose a new artist/actor. Continue for as many rounds as you would like!

Well—Jesus stopped at a well in Samaria

Walk—Jesus and his disciples were walking from Judea to Galilee

Woman—A Samaritan woman came to the well

Drink—Jesus asked the woman for a drink

Bucket—The woman pointed out that Jesus didn't have a bucket to draw water from the well

Water—Jesus offered the woman living water

Jesus—Jesus told the Samaritan woman He is the Messiah

Activity adapted from:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57213e5d1d07c08436560db0/t/5ed2db0c2c0f245a2e458b69/1590876955317/Unit+2+Lesson+4+Jesus+and+the+Samaritan+Woman.pdf>

All Ages – Well + Memory Verse Craft

What you need: Printed template page (found at the end of this lesson), colored pencils/crayons, scissors, glue, and 2 craft sticks (or pencils, etc.)

SAY: In Bible times, people did not have water in their homes, like we do. They would go to the town well every day for water. The town well is where Jesus met the Samaritan woman. Today we are going to make a paper well that helps us remember to share God's love with everyone we meet!

- Color the attached template page.
- Cut out the template and glue the base together.
- Glue the craft sticks onto the base and attach the roof.

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SAY: Jesus shared with the Samaritan woman that God loves everyone, even the Samaritan people. The woman was so excited, she ran to tell others what Jesus had said. We can share God's love too.

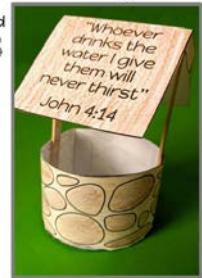
ASK: How do you share God's love?

Activity adapted from: <https://truewaykids.com/samaritan-woman/>

Well with the memory verse

What you need
Template pages, (on paper or cardstock)
Colored pencils,
Scissor,
Glue,
Two craft sticks.

Bonus
Fill the well with a snack or treat.



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All Ages – Sharing With Other's – Happy Mother's Day

What you need: Print Mother's Day card (attached at end of lesson), colored pencils/markers/crayons, scissors, and a pen/pencil

SAY: Today is Mother's Day! Who in your life is a special mom, grandma, aunt, and/or friend that you would like to thank for all they do? Remember that just because a special woman in your life doesn't necessarily have the title of "mom," doesn't mean they don't help fill a special spot in your heart. Let's celebrate all important women in your life!

- Print out the "Happy Mother's Day" card attached to this lesson. You will need to use scissors to cut-off the edging.
- Have your child(ren) decorate and color the card.
- Make sure they add a special message on the side for the special woman in their lives!
- *Alternate option: If you do not have a printer at home, make your own Mother's Day card by simply folding a piece of printer or construction paper in half. Have your child(ren) add designs and color how they wish. Make sure to add a special message inside too!*

Activity adapted from: <https://sarahrenaec Clark.com/shop/free-mothers-day-coloring-card/> and Deep Blue Kids Older Elementary Leader's Guide – Winter 2016-2017 ©2016 Cokesbury

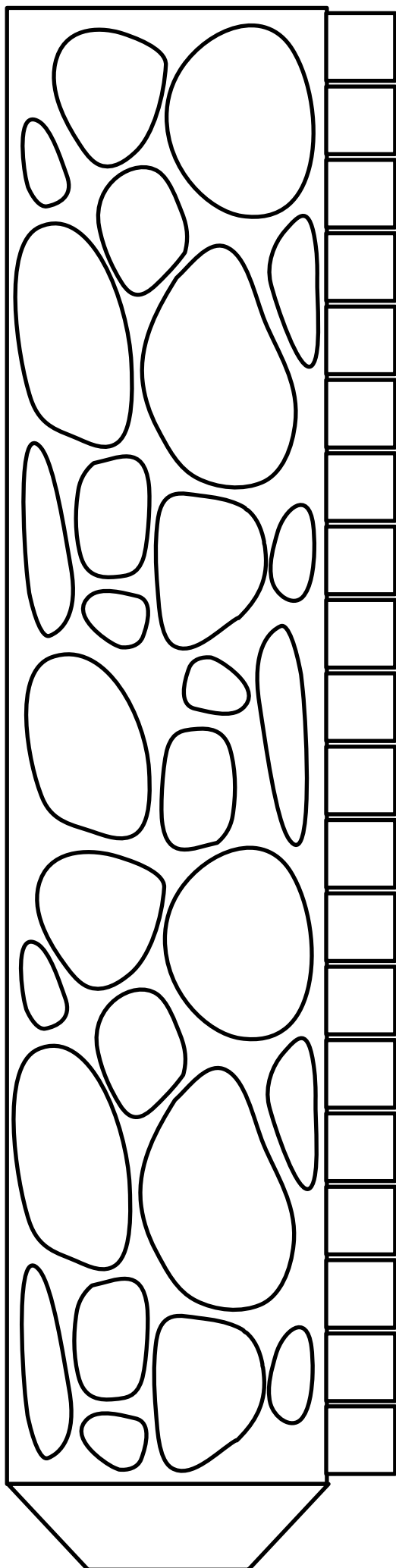
3rd – 5th graders - Diving Deeper

What you need: Your Deep Blue Kids Bible

- Read **John 4:1-42** in your Bible.
- Once you finish reading the scripture lessons, go through the **Life Preserver** on page 1183 titled "Why is the Samaritan woman important?"
- Go back through today's wondering questions for older students.

Prayer

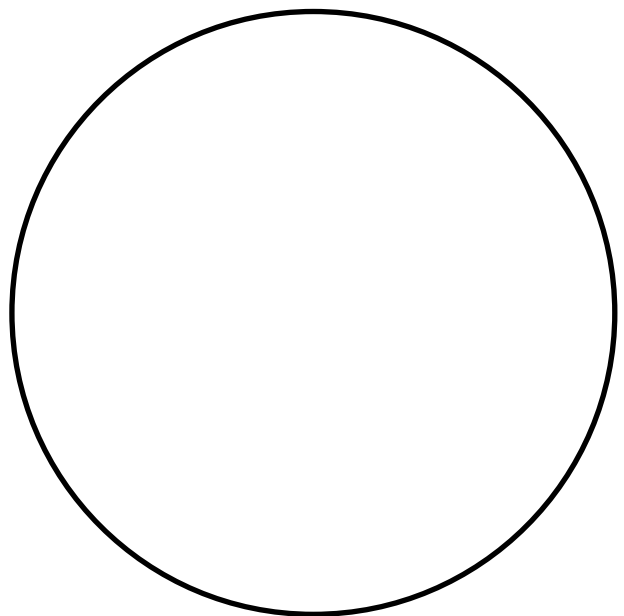
Dear God, help us remember to see ALL of your children as important and special. Remind us to celebrate our differences, and teach us that we are one as the body of Christ.



John 4:14
"Whoever
drinks the
water I give
them will
never thirst."

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water I give
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never thirst."

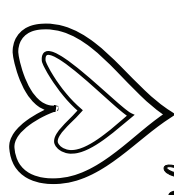
John 4:14



DIY Mother's Day Card

Instructions:

1. Color in the card
2. Cut along the solid line
3. Fold in half along the dotted line

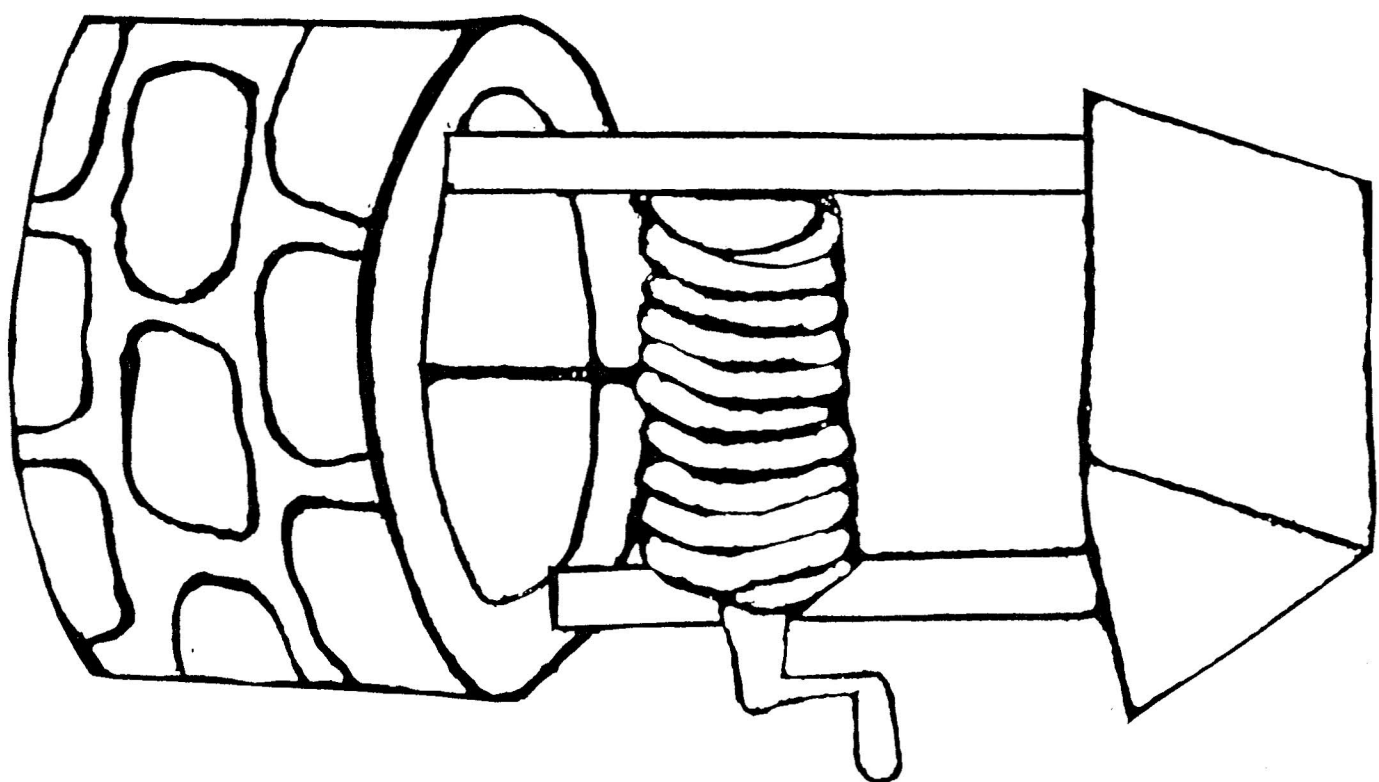
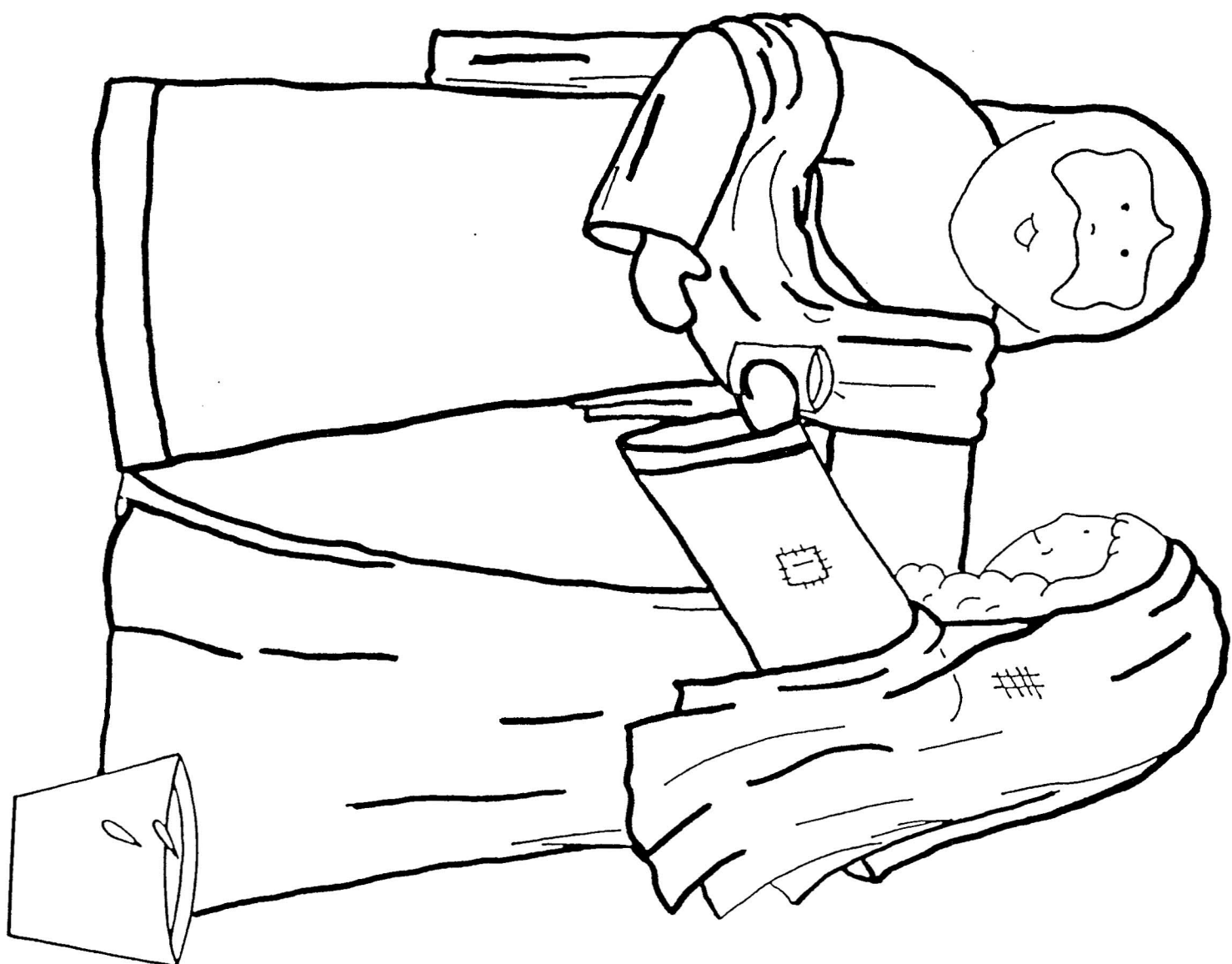


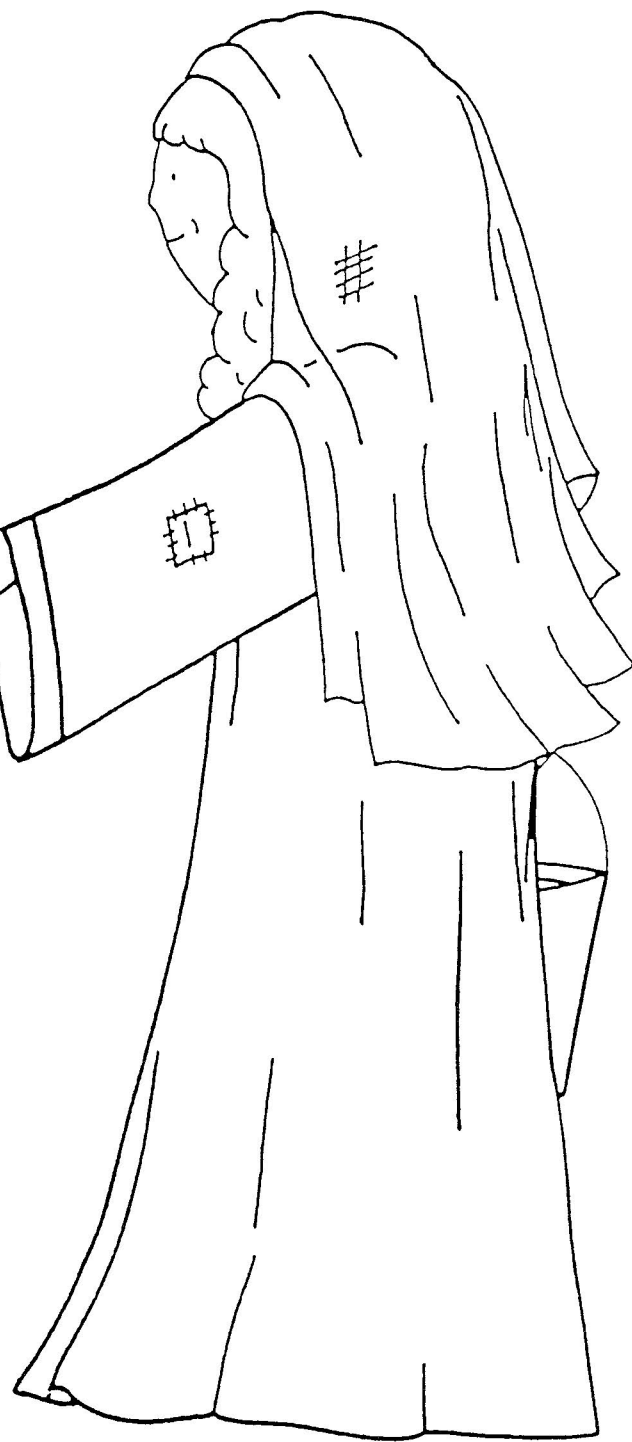
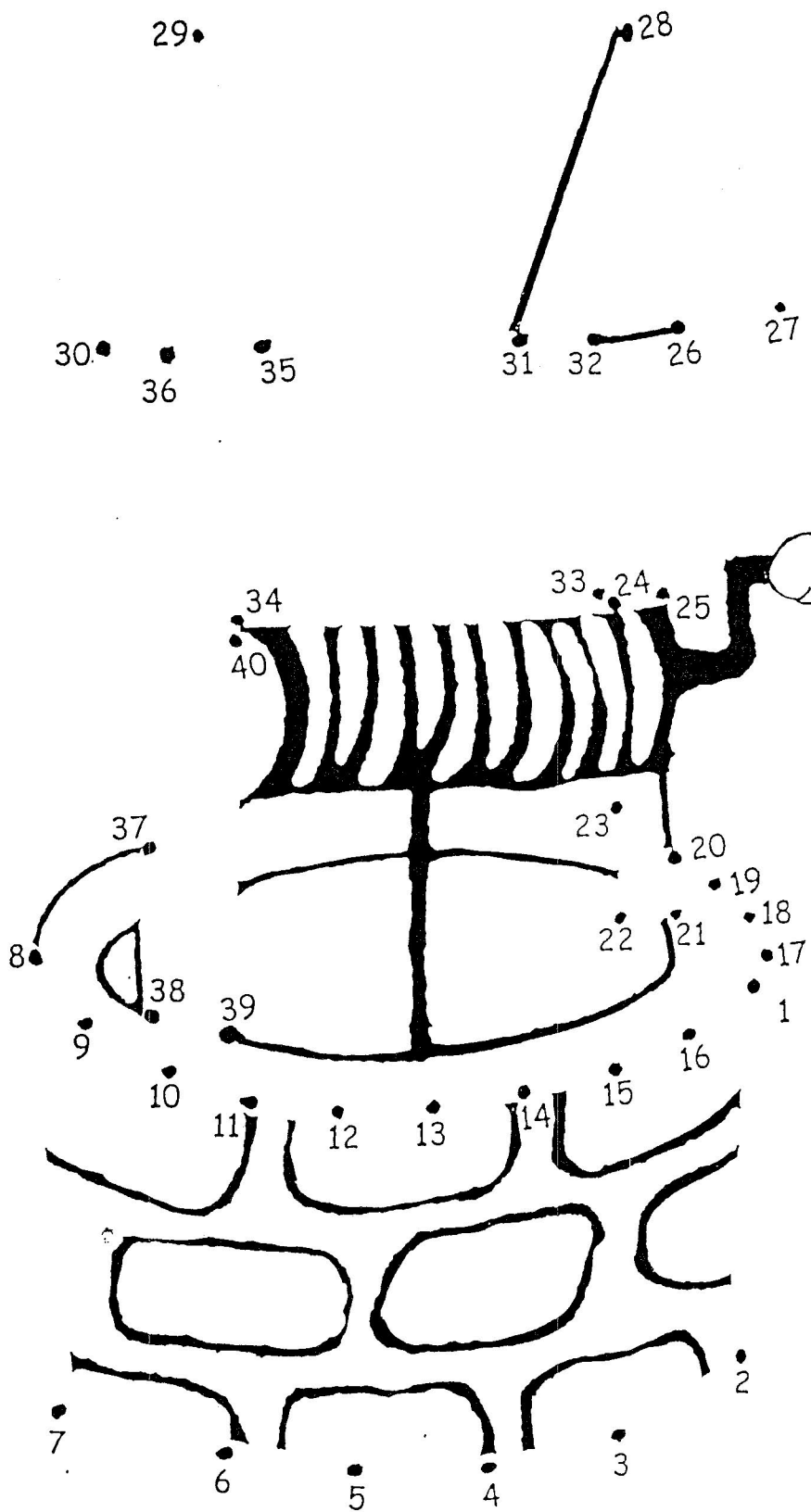
Happy
Mother's
Day

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I	F

U	P	M	E

N	F

F	W	F	S	Z	U	I	J	O	H

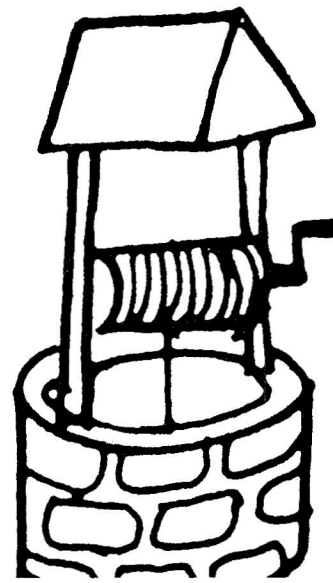
J

I	B	W	F

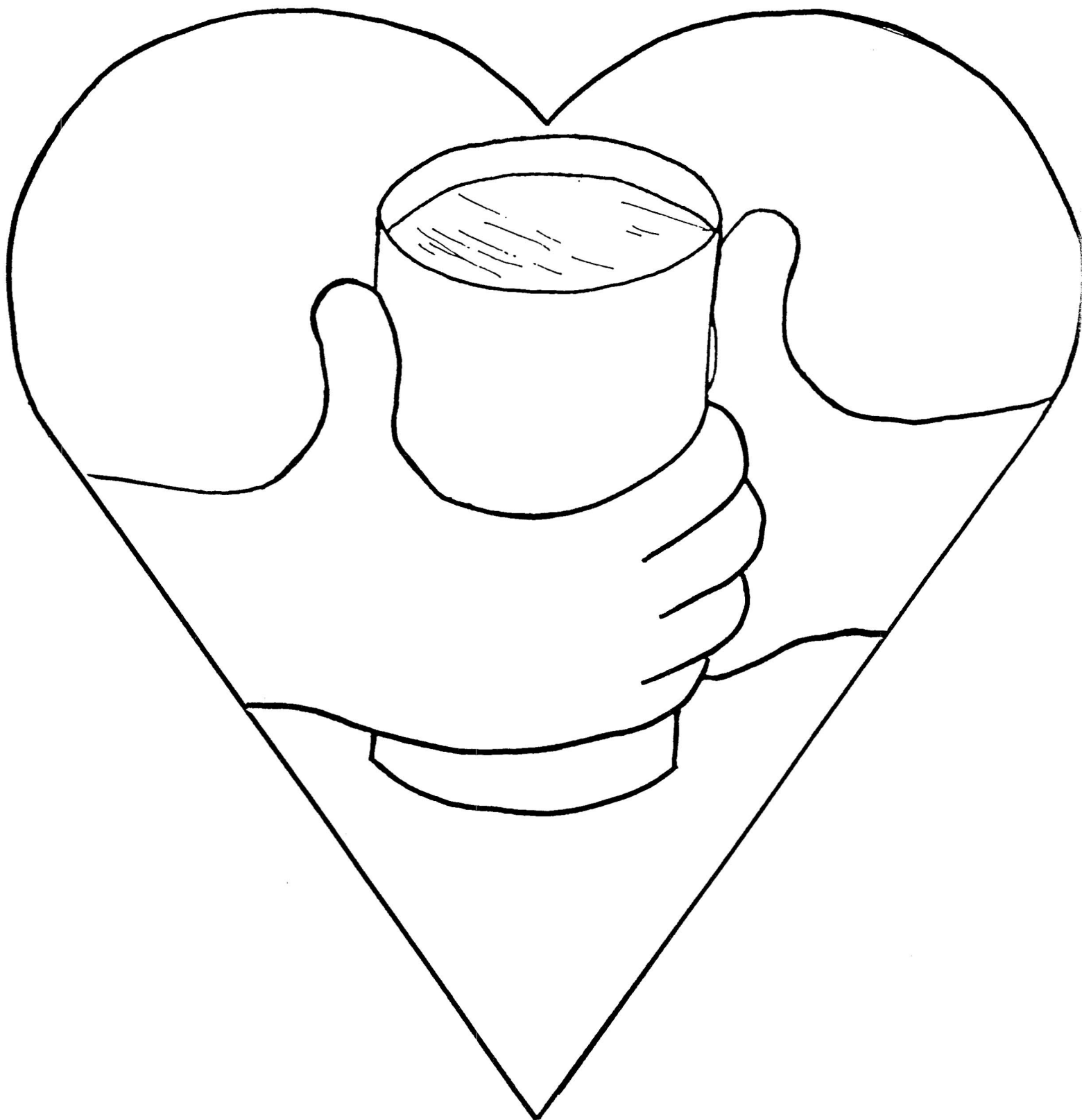
F	W	F	S

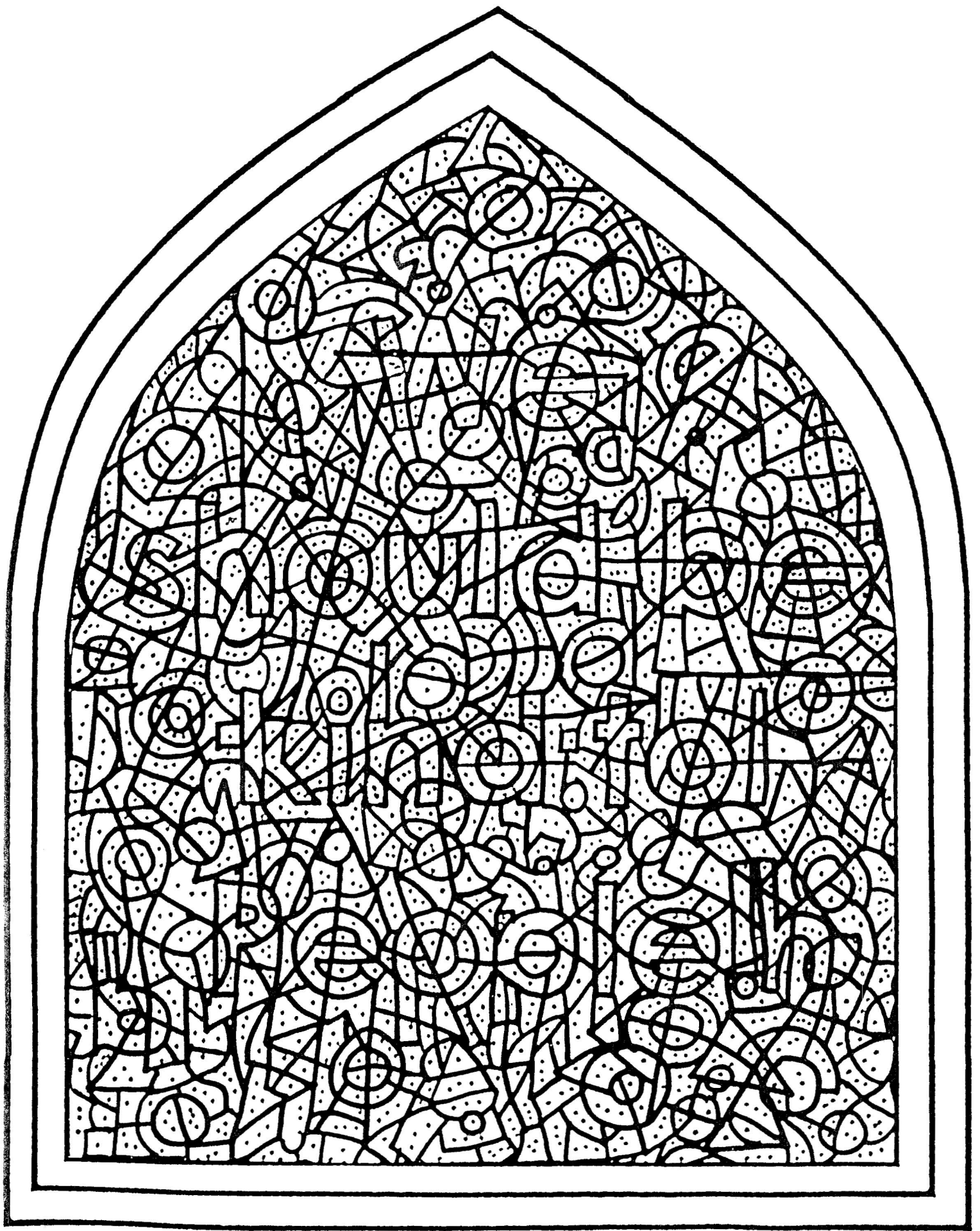
E	P	O	F

Change each letter to the one that comes before it in the alphabet.



“...You don’t know who is asking you for a drink...”





Color each space that contains two dots.