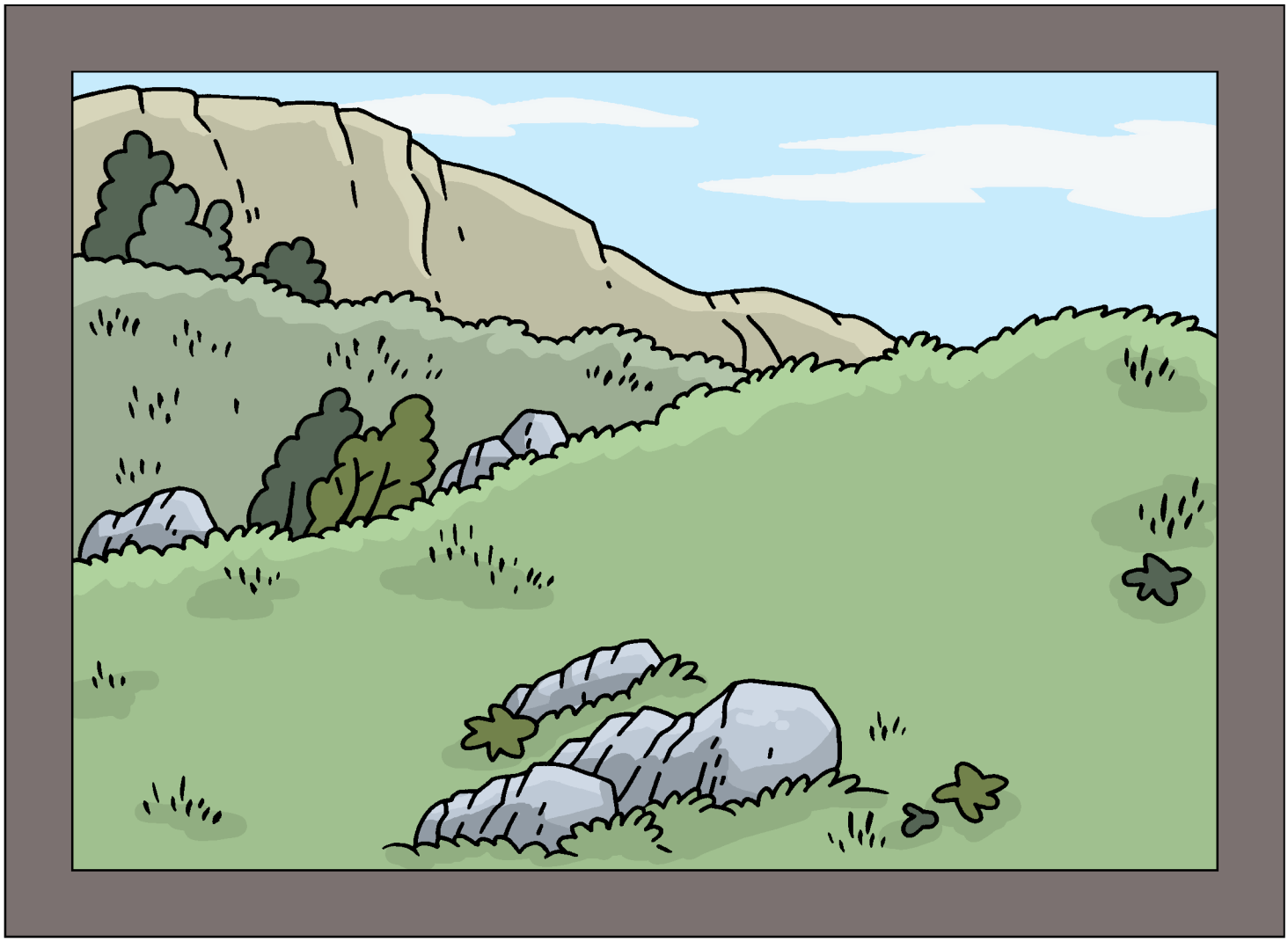

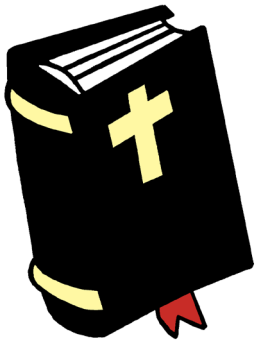

Animals in the Bible – Bears

Bears lived in Israel during the Old Testament period. People feared the bears because of their strength and dangerous claws. Normally bears avoid contact with humans; but, if a bear is disturbed or hungry or robbed of its cubs, it can become extremely dangerous.

When young David was talking with King Saul about confronting the giant Goliath, he said: “I take care of my father’s sheep. Any time a lion or a bear carries off a lamb, I will attack it, and rescue the lamb” (1 Samuel 17: 34-36).

The Bible uses bears to explain a ferocious animal. Someone said to Absalom: “You know that your father, David, and his men are hard fighters and that they are as fierce as a mother bear robbed of her cubs” (2 Samuel 17:8).

Other times, it is used as a symbol for a person or country. “Poor people are helpless against a wicked ruler; he is as dangerous as a growling lion or a prowling bear” (Proverb 28:15). (See also Daniel 7:5.)

There are promises of great peace in the future even amongst wild animals: “The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together” (Isaiah 11:7).

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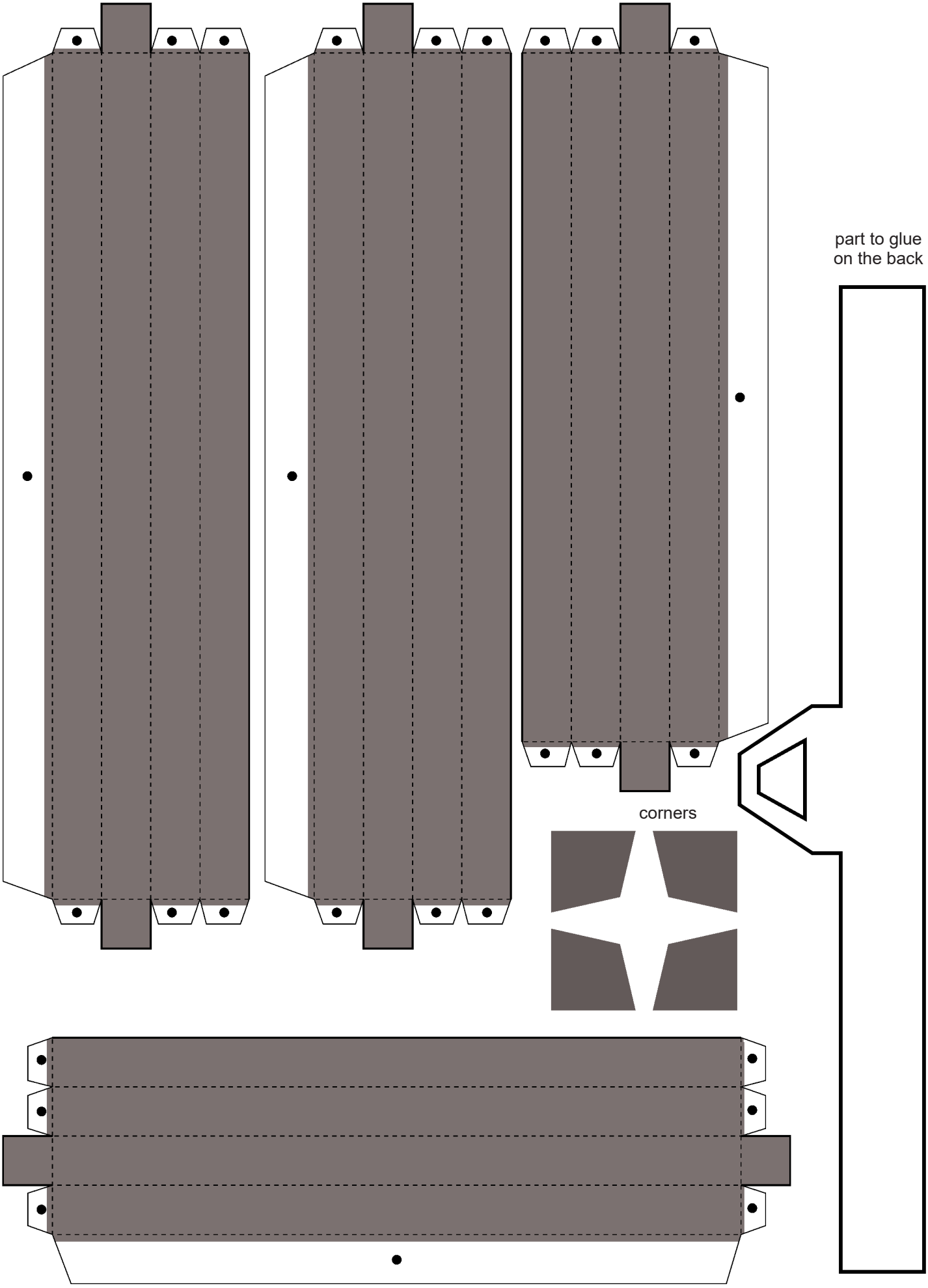
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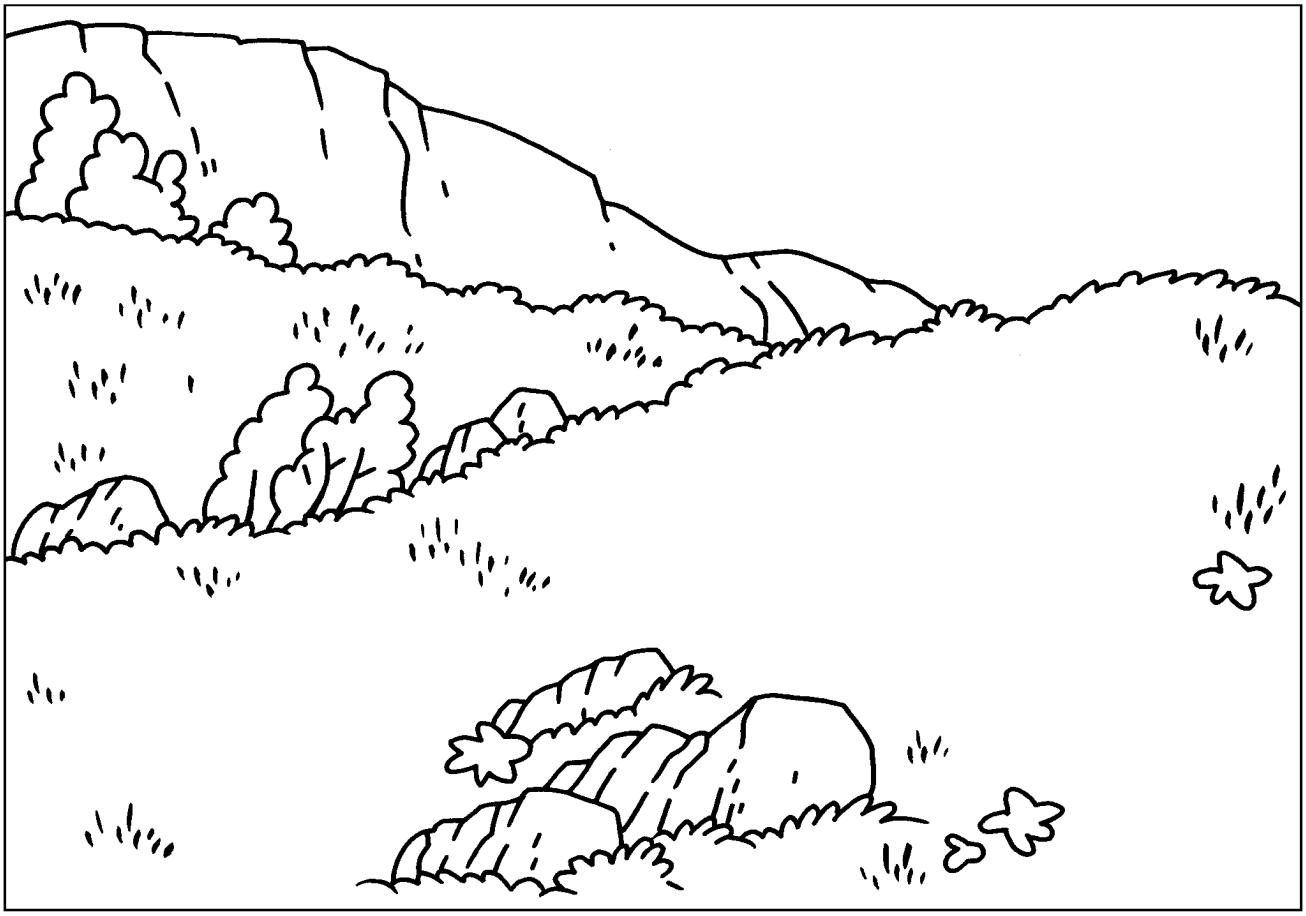

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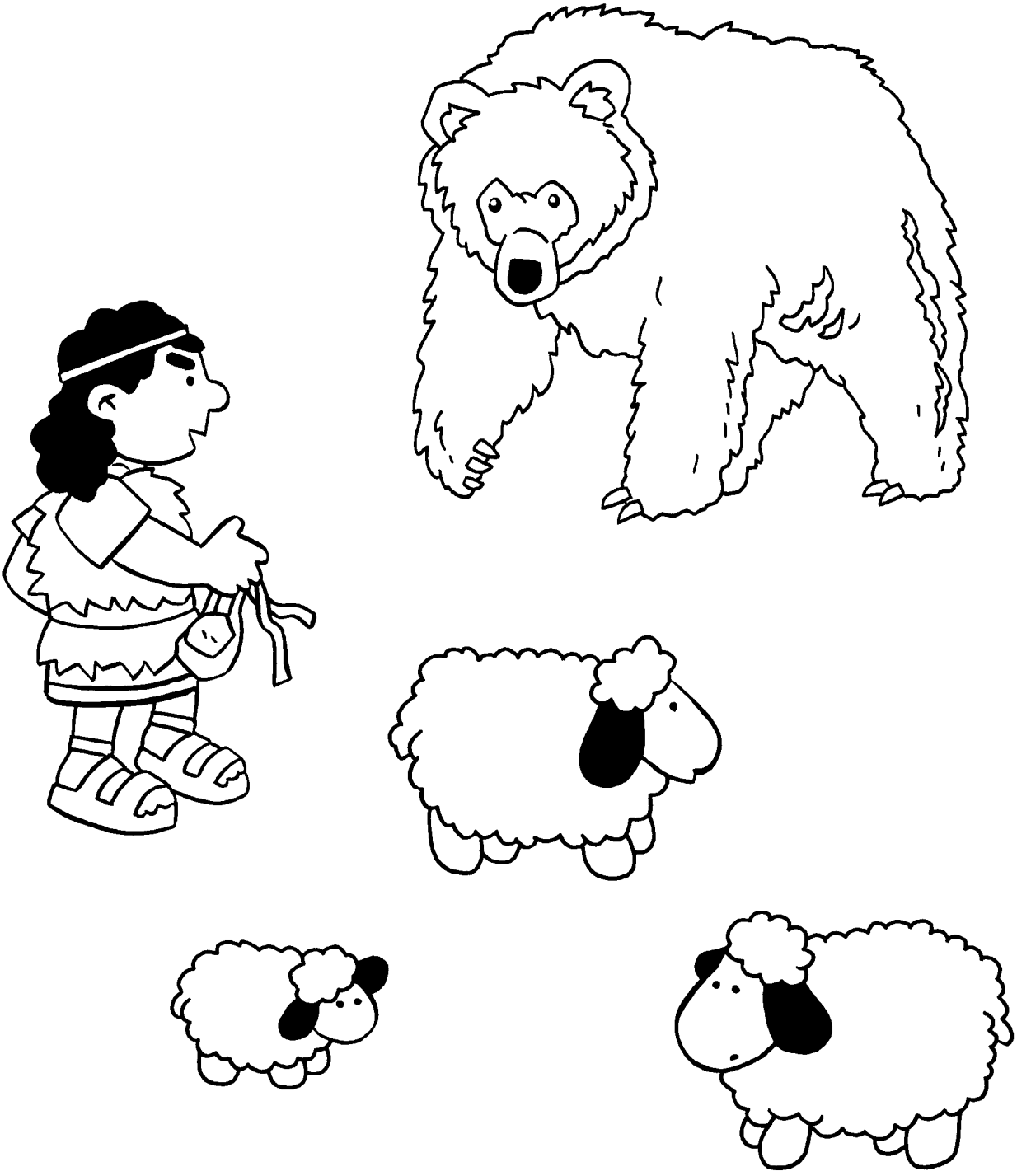

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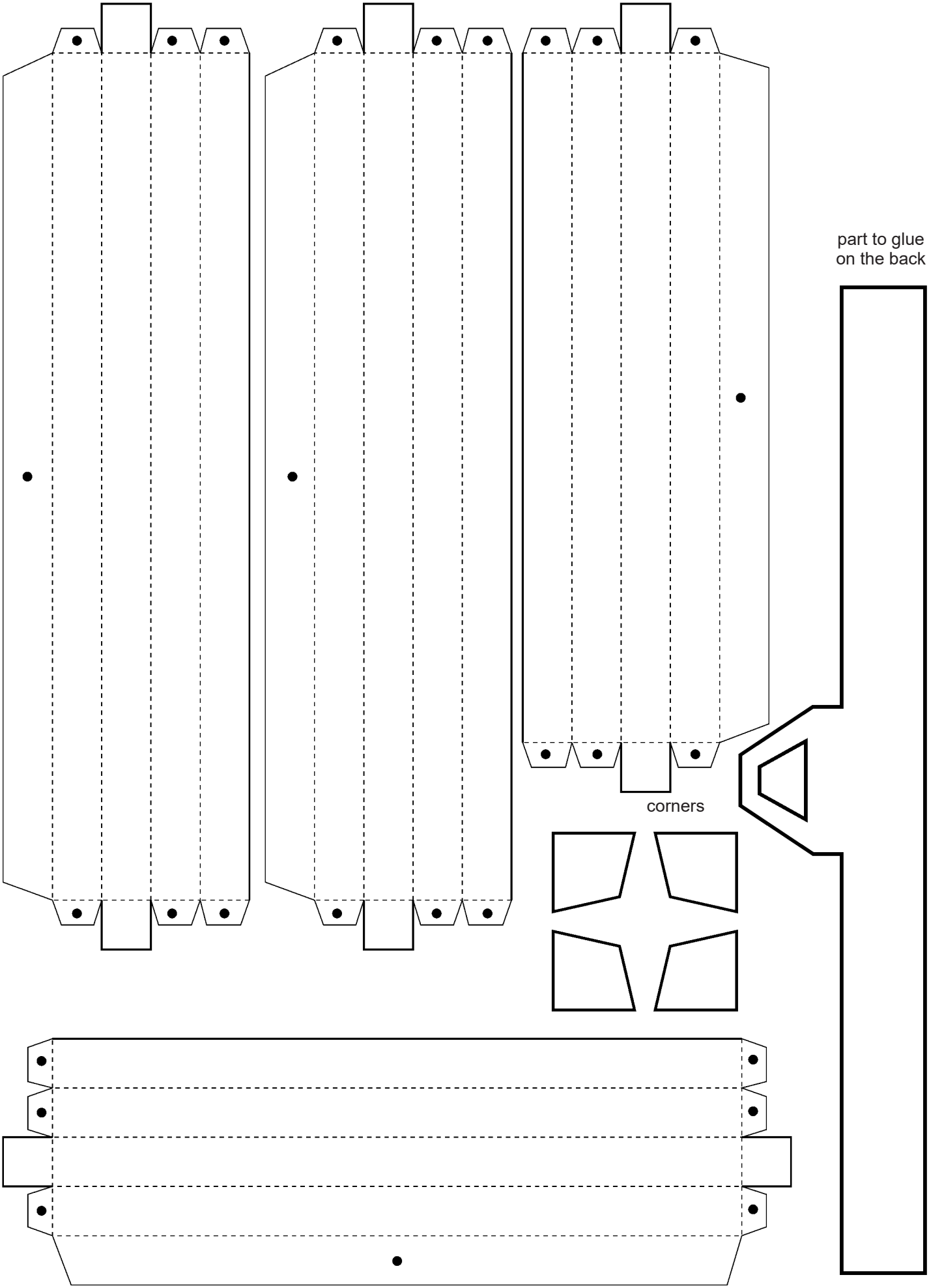

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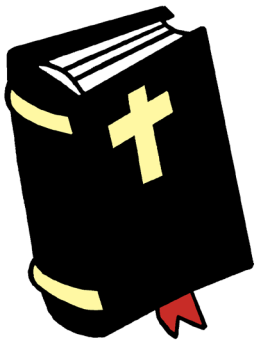

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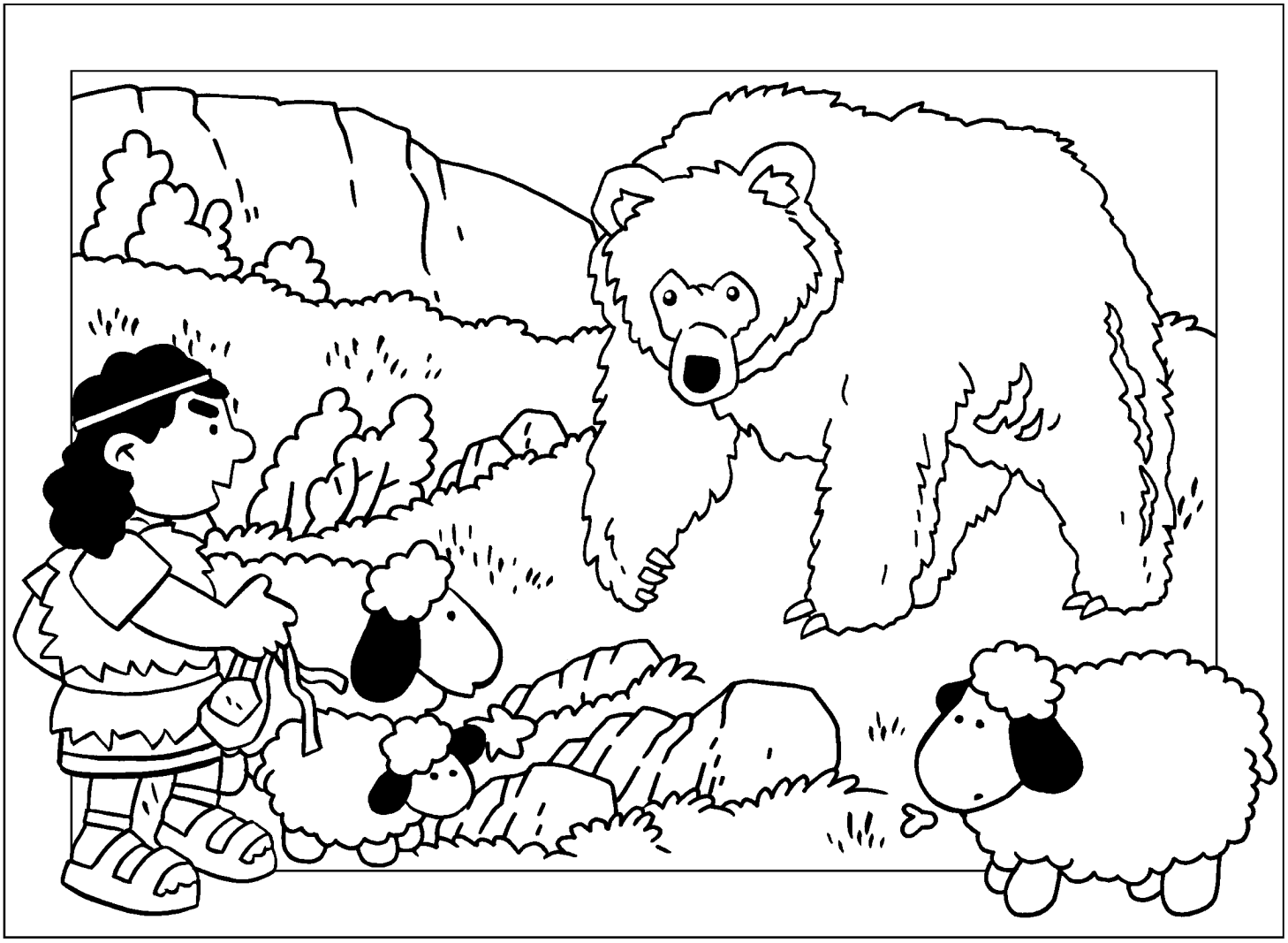

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