

VINTAGE ADVENTURE

④ HOME

The Armour of God: Shield of Faith





Dear Vintage Adventure @ Home Friends,

Greetings once again dear Vintage Adventure @ Home readers. It seems scarcely possible that we are already sending out the September booklet. As I write I am surrounded by fields of harvested wheat and other grains and the farmers are busy taking advantage of the long evenings to work until dusk.

Although I am writing on a bright sunny morning with the promise of a fine day ahead, life is not always like that. Sometimes we know we have struggles to face – physical, emotional or spiritual. And God has promised – and provided – help for us.

This month's theme is the Shield of Faith: Dave has created our Worship pages with some thoughtful statements it's worthwhile pondering over. Richard and Ann reflect on what this means to them having been Christians for many years since their teens.

Christian faith is not simply belief that Jesus lived but trust in Him as a living Person. The faith that shields us is the confidence that God is for us and with us and greater than all the forces arrayed against us. In all aspects of our lives, we need the Lord Jesus to help us in whatever faces us each day, and especially if we feel under pressure from our unseen enemy, Satan.

The Roman soldier had two shields, a small round one worn on his forearm for close combat and the shield you see in our illustration used in a phalanx formation, when the outer soldiers in a group held their shields outwards, forming a wall, and those in the middle held them above their heads, like a tortoise, to protect the whole group. Sometimes, like the Roman soldiers with their interlocked shields, we need support from each other too.



So, brew yourself a drink, settle down and enjoy what this issue has to offer. As usual we incorporate a poem, together with information about other topics of interest. Did you know why September has the name it has? Are you aware that this month includes World Gratitude Day? Have you heard about early church harvest celebrations in Cornwall? And what about World Maritime Day?!

Happy reading and we pray that the Lord will bless you moment by moment in whatever situation you find yourself.

With love

Cynthia and your Caraway friends



Worship



Paul is like an oil painter. Perhaps, an Impressionist. You know, like Monet or Renoir.

Paul's sentences are brush strokes. Together these daubs of hue, saturation and brightness become a single vivid image. A beautiful picture of Jesus and us.

One of the 'colours' Paul uses often is a thing we call 'faith.'
Here's an example:

*Take the Shield of **Faith**, with which you will be able
to quench all the flaming arrows of the Evil One.*
Ephesians 6:16



This example arrives in a big paragraph in which Paul uses pieces of Roman armour to describe the types of behaviour which will protect the Jesus-follower from the activity of evil spiritual forces.

So 'faith' is a *behaviour*.
Something we should 'do' daily. Like brushing our teeth.
Or eating. Or breathing.

So what is it?

At first it was a one-off thing. 'Faith' was when God helped you *trust* Him to rescue you. Ephesians 2:8

And 'trust' is a pretty helpful way to think about faith. If you're driving to London on the M3, and your car breaks down you need to be rescued. But what happens if someone arrives to help you but you *don't* trust them?
You stay stuck. Trust is vital.

If you follow Jesus today, then there was a moment when God helped you trust Him. With your whole life. But this God-trust isn't just for the start of the journey, it is for every day.

We don't live with the AA-Recovery man (probably).
But we can live with God.

And that is the point Paul is making:

You can trust God every day.

Faith is an active thing. A behaviour. It helps us to approach God, and **interact** with God now and forever.
Ephesians 3:12. See also Ephesians 2:18.

For example, if I *trust* that God loves *me*, that God wants to spend time *with me*, that God wants a conversation *with me* ('deep to deep') then I will make an effort to turn off the TV / put down the screaming urgent task, and simply *be with God*. In other words, pray.

And what happens when we interact with the God we trust? It is wonderful. Our self finds 'the block from where we were chipped.' And God changes us. Profoundly. (But slowly, I must admit!).

In this line from Ephesians 3:17, Paul describes the situation:

*that Christ may dwell **in your hearts** through **faith**.*



Everyday faith holds the door open for Jesus. It sounds like this:

"Jesus, I trust You."

"Jesus, I'm glad You want to spend time with me."

"Jesus, please help me enjoy You."

"Please help me trust You more."



And as Jesus and I live together, slowly ('in our hearts') I begin to emulate
the thinking, feeling, and wanting of Jesus: bit by bit, day by day,
Jesus rubs off on me.
In this way Jesus reforms us. How?

We trust Him, and He helps us form new mental habits!

And what kind of behaviour does Jesus help form in us?

you are being rooted and grounded in love.
Ephesians 3:17.

LOVE! The jackpot. The mother of all virtues. Love is what God does. And
nothing else. Lovely love.

As we open up frequently to the-One-Who-is-love,
we learn how to love. God's love teaches us what love is
and *how* to do it. And love beats evil all day long.

It works like a circle:
When we first trust God, we find out that God is powerful and kind.
And so we trust God more, and we spend more time with God,
and we find out more about this powerful and kind Person.
And so we trust God more.
Round and round it goes.
And our grin widens.



REFLECTION - THE SHIELD OF FAITH – Ephesians 6:16

Symbol - The shield is the most important defensive piece of armour. It was also used to demonstrate the soldier's allegiance, with symbols representing the army or the ruler whom the soldier served.

As teenagers, we both belonged to Crusader bible groups for which the badge is shown. Based upon Ephesians 6 it shows the shield, which is the foundation on which God's armour is revealed, along with the Cross as the focus of our faith.



Purpose - To do its job of defence effectively, it has to be kept in position facing the enemy. Only when the shield stands in their way will the flaming arrows of the enemy be prevented from striking home. The shield of God's armour will absorb all that the 'powers of this dark world and spiritual forces of evil' throw at us day by day. **It only works when used.**

Armour has to be kept in good condition to be any use. For the shield to be effective we need to exercise our faith. We do this by being grounded in God's Word and faithful in prayer. Our faith grows when we act on God's Word in His service.

In the heat of battle, a tight hold would have to be maintained, otherwise the shield could be ripped from our grasp and we would be defenceless. More than that it needs to be wielded in the right direction to be effective - a static shield would not meet arrows flying from all directions. We need to face the reality of the opposition of spiritual forces. When praying the Lord's Prayer - 'deliver us from evil' - we can hold onto our Shield of Faith.

We use the Shield of Faith by putting our trust in God, confident in the protection that God will provide. And when we experience that protection, we can thank God that our faith in Him has protected us - and will do so again.

Since writing this reflection my prayers have drawn inspiration from the image of our shield of faith.

Shield of Faith

How do we explain the manifold evil throughout human history despite the progress that's been made in other respects? The Bible says there are spiritual forces at work in our world, and the source of this hostility is not an abstract force – not 'evil' but the **Evil One**, who influences the sinful hearts with which each of one of us has been born.



Again, Paul uses an illustration from contemporary warfare. He starts, 'in **all** circumstances' or 'Above **all**' **take up** the Shield of Faith. God provides the shield, which is sufficient defence, no matter what kind of attack we are under - but we **must take hold of it**. Faith is the key to deflecting **all** the Devil's darts before they reach our hearts. It's a priority in the battle against Satan.

Soldiers often covered their arrow tips in poison, so that even if the arrow only grazed the opponent, the poison finished him off. Another strategy was to dip the tips in burning pitch, so that everything touched caught fire. Therefore, the Roman shield was typically covered in hairy skins soaked in water, to quench these fiery darts. And it wasn't a little shield like a frisbee! It was four feet long like a door and carried so that each soldier's shield interlocked with the next.



Paul is pointing out that we can't handle the Devil in our own strength. We must find our spiritual resources in the Lord Jesus. Perhaps you remember the hymn:

*We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender!
We go not forth alone against the foe;
Strong in Thy strength, safe in Thy keeping tender,
We rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go.*

And the final verse....

*We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender!
Thine is the battle, Thine shall be the praise.....*

Do I have faith in religion, in churchgoing, in my good works, may be in my sincerity and commitment? Only Jesus Christ, the resurrected Son of God is worthy of our faith and only He can give us victory over our spiritual enemy.

As Dave writes in our Worship, faith is not just belief but **trust** – in a Person. Satan attacks in many subtle ways, when we find ourselves doubting the existence of God, or questioning whether Jesus has truly forgiven us, as we recall past wrongs.

Do we know what we believe? It's so easy for our faith to be shallow, making us an easy target. This is why it's vital to know the Bible and as we saw last month, hold on to the specific truths we need for each situation as it comes.





**In every battle
you will need
faith as your
shield to stop the
fiery arrows
aimed at you
by Satan.**

Ephesians 6:16
The Living Bible

Down Memory Lane



September is the month bridging the gap between Summer and Autumn and sometimes known as Harvest Month.

Did you see hop pickers from the East End of London arrive with their families?



Do you remember seeing a Combine Harvester for the first time?



What shape of Haystack do you remember seeing?

(Photo shows our editor Cynthia and brother Goff in a Kent cornfield in the early 1950s)



Hidden Treasures

As summer yields to autumn
And autumn hints
Of the winter to come,
I am reminded that the cycles
Of life cannot be halted -
There is nothing that can be done
To stop the progress of time,
And with it, changing
circumstances.

And so it seems to me
That the way forward lies
In embracing the changes,
And asking God to open my eyes
To the less obvious treasures

That darker days can bring,
And in deepest winter,
Not to spoil the offered moments
By always yearning for the spring;
So, whatever circumstance I face,
I should learn, by God's grace,
To view it as an opportunity
To receive from God anew
Whatever it is that He wants to do
In, and through,
Everything.

Isaiah 45:3

Catherine Aldis 2011 Poems of faith and hope.

Hidden treasures p.51

The Story of Church Harvest Festivals

These are typically held at the end of harvest, which varies across the country. Do you recall those big meals called harvest suppers which took place in some churches, chapels and villages when the whole community would celebrate together?

In fact, the tradition of holding harvest festivals in churches appears to have its origins on the desolate clifftop coast in Cornwall's most northerly parish, Morwenstow. From **1835** it became the home of **Rev Robert Hawker**. Although this sepia photo makes him look rather dull, he was quite literally a colourful character, who wore a blue fisherman's jersey, a yellow poncho he'd made from a horse's blanket and big sea boots. Apparently, the only black was his socks!



Life was really tough in this bleak landscape, and Robert struggled to stop his parishioners stripping the wrecks off the wild Cornish coast. Often his congregation consisted of only himself and his wife, but Robert was a compassionate man who tried to improve the lot of local people. At times of poverty, he'd dip into his own pocket to help the needy as well as organising church collections – an unusual thing at the time.

In **1843** he invited parishioners to **bring their own produce** to a **special thanksgiving** service at his church in Morwenstow. Afterwards he made sure that the food was distributed amongst the poor. In fact, the well-known harvest hymn, *We plough the fields and scatter*, helped spread Parson Hawker's idea of **harvest thanksgivings**, decorating churches with home grown fruit, vegetables, bread, and sheaves of corn and **sharing with those less fortunate**.

Today we tend to bring tinned and packet goods for local food charities or the national Trussell Trust. Many supermarkets also have bins for collecting food donations for those less fortunate. Harvest is a particular opportunity to share what we have with those whose needs are greater than our own. And to thank the Creator and Sustainer of our world.

This Day in History.....September.....

1st September 1960 Number 1 hit for Elvis Presley –
It's Now or Never.

4th September 1964 The Forth Road Bridge opens in Scotland and is then the longest suspension bridge in Europe.



8th September 1854 The handle of London's Broad Street water pump is removed during a deadly cholera outbreak.



12th September 1878 Cleopatra's Needle, an ancient Egyptian obelisk is erected on London's Thames Embankment.

22nd September 1976 *Charlie's Angels*, starring Farrah Fawcett, Kate Jackson and Jaclyn Smith, debuts.



28th September 1066 William the Conqueror lands in England, beginning the Norman Conquest.

30th September 1955 Actor, James Dean, is killed in a car crash aged 24. He is remembered best for his film 'Rebel Without a Cause'.



Something to make you smile

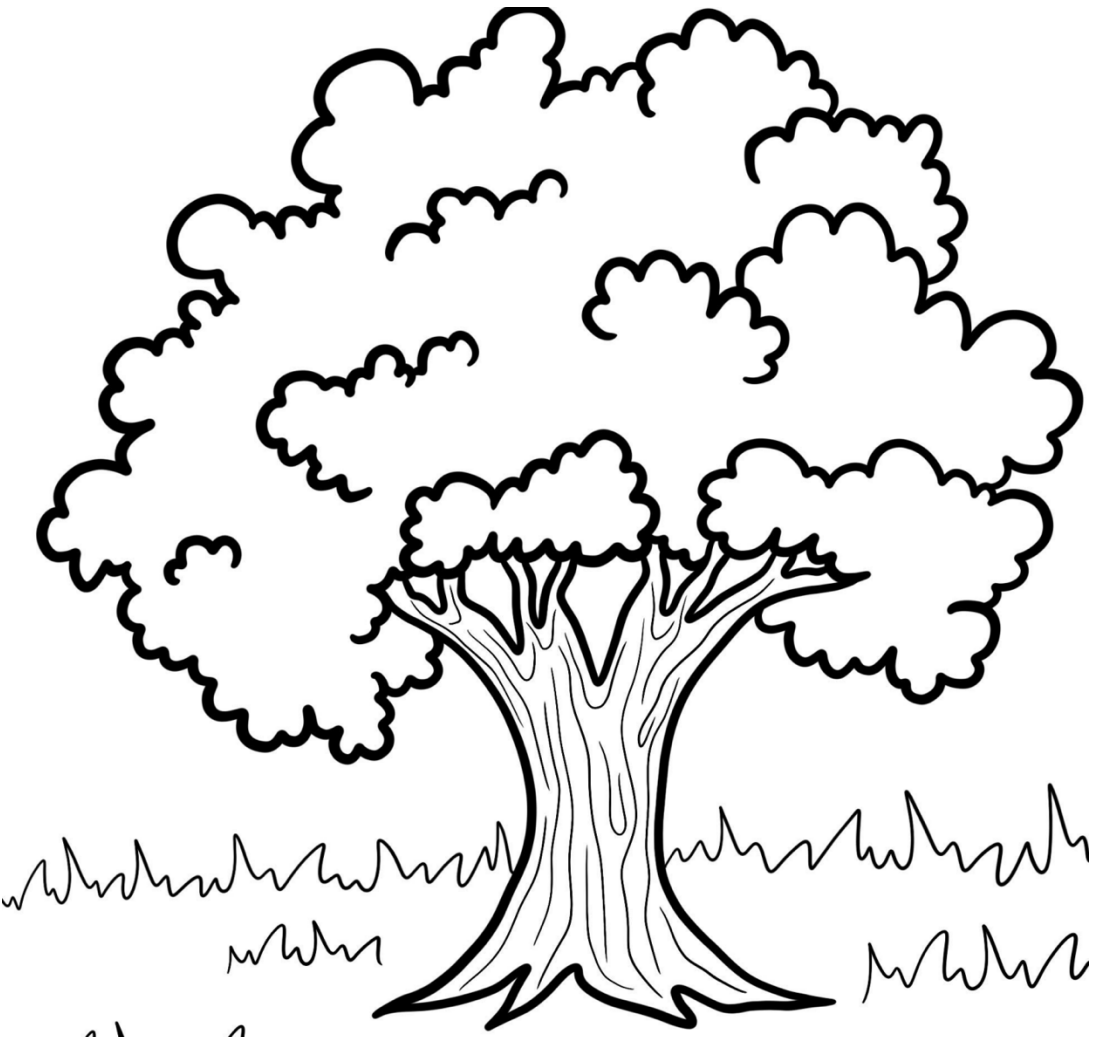
- Have you heard about corduroy pillows? They're making headlines!
- Why don't cats play poker in the jungle?
There are too many cheetahs.
- Why should you stand in the corner if you get cold?
It's always 90 degrees.
- What lies at the bottom of the ocean and twitches?
A nervous wreck!
- What do you call a cow that can play a musical instrument?
A moo-sician.



World Gratitude Day

Celebrated annually on 21st September, it started in 1965 during a Thanksgiving gathering at the United Nations building. It was then officially recognised and supported by international groups in 1977. Its purpose is to encourage people worldwide to reflect on and express thankfulness. It's a simple reminder to appreciate the good in our lives and spread positivity through gratitude.

Make a Gratitude Tree: on the tree below write the names of people, things, experiences, memories, anything for which you are thankful.



World Maritime Day

World Maritime Day is observed on the final Thursday of September to recognise the importance of shipping and maritime safety. It highlights the vital role of the maritime industry in global trade and environmental stewardship. With Southampton being a major port, how much do you know about all things maritime?



1. Which ocean is frozen for most of the year?
2. Which ship did Captain Bligh command?
3. The ocean that surrounds Hawaii is called....
4. Which four Cunard ships visit Southampton?
5. Which ocean lies between Australia and Africa?
6. What is the difference between a Hovercraft and a Hydrofoil?
7. Where did the 'Rainbow Warrior' Sink in 1985?
8. To a sailor, what would the terms 'Cat's Paw' and 'Double Diamond' mean?
9. What animal is 'Moby Dick' in Herman Melville's novel of the same name?
10. The Amazon River flows into which ocean?
11. Can you name one part of a ship?
12. Name the largest traditional ocean liner in the world.
13. What is the name of the famous ship that sailed in 1620 to North America to start a new colony?
14. Name the British ocean liner that sank in 1915, hastening the United States' entrance into WWII.

How well do you know your leaves and trees?



See if you can match the leaf with the type of tree that it is from.



1

COPPER BEECH



3

HORSE CHESTNUT



5

HOLLY

ELDER

WILLOW

HAWTHORN



7

BLACKTHORN

YEW

ASH

OAK



2



4



6



8



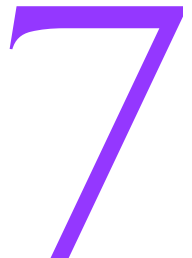
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The Number Seven Quiz



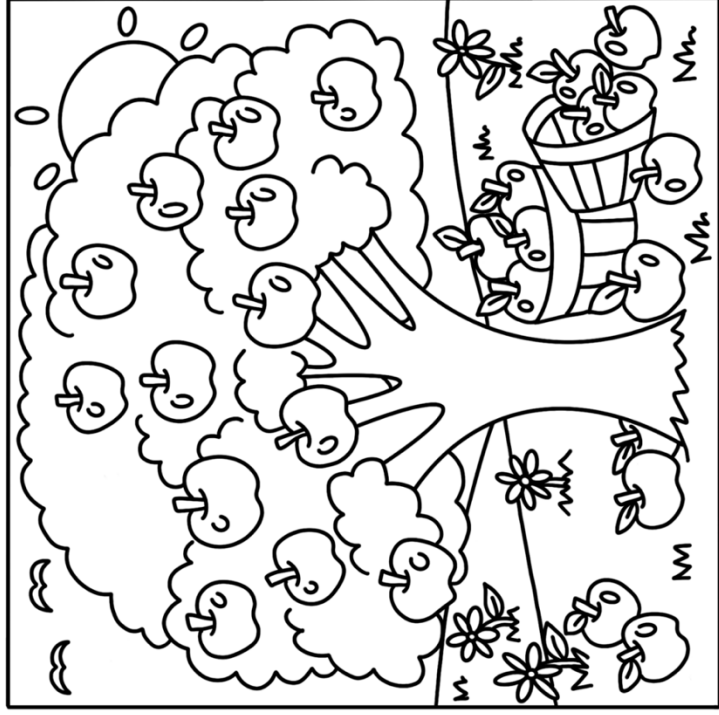
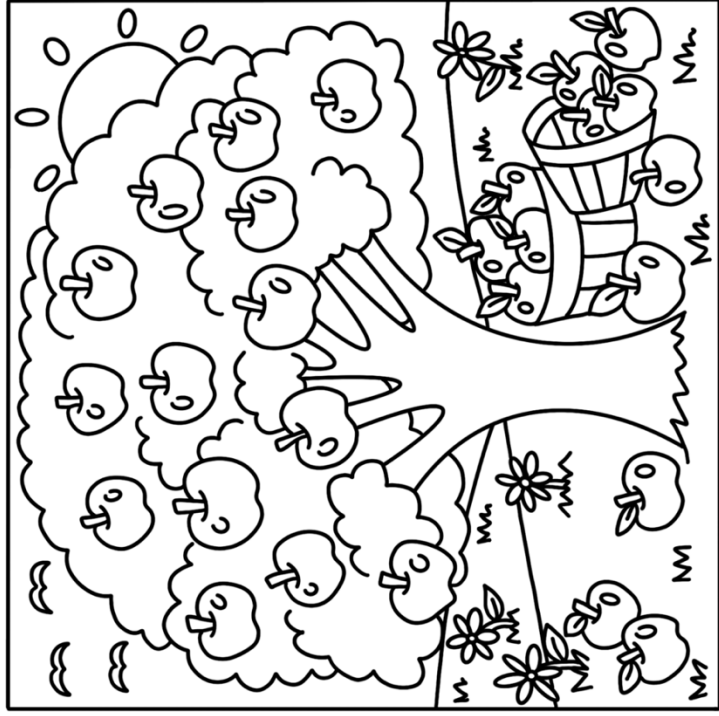
The word September comes from the Latin word 'septem', meaning seven. Although the month of September is the ninth month in our calendar, it used to be the seventh month in the Roman calendar!

1. What is the Roman numeral for the number seven?
2. Can you name the Seven Deadly Sins?
3. Who starred in the 1961 movie Come September?
4. What is the September birthstone?
5. Which World War started in September?
6. Which Asian country is the seventh largest country in the world?
7. The number 1 followed by seven zeros.
8. Which planet is seventh from the Sun?
9. A seven-sided shape.
10. Vinyl records seven inches in diameter were played at what speed?
11. Can you name the Seven Virtues?
12. Which 1960 movie with Yul Brynner and Steve McQueen has Seven in the title?
13. Name the seven basic solfege musical notes...
14. Continue the song: Try to remember the kind of September...
15. Name the seven colours of the rainbow.
16. Who is known as 007?
17. Is the number seven a prime number?
18. How many days in September?
19. Can you name the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World?



Apple Tree Spot the Difference

Can you spot the 10 differences?



WORDSEARCH

Ephesians 6: 10-18

F	U	L	L	Y	A	R	M	O	U	R	V	O	L	S
L	T	S	N	W	J	Q	K	T	H	G	Z	M	B	A
K	H	E	L	M	E	T	L	B	P	E	A	C	E	L
S	S	U	T	E	Q	E	U	V	R	W	K	F	H	V
I	L	Y	C	S	B	U	T	I	R	I	P	S	H	A
O	L	E	F	Y	R	K	H	R	W	O	B	T	M	T
J	A	U	I	T	E	G	G	O	D	K	D	R	N	I
Y	U	T	R	H	A	D	L	U	G	N	J	U	O	O
T	T	G	M	E	S	A	N	D	A	L	S	G	Y	N
H	I	H	S	W	T	V	C	T	L	F	H	G	R	X
G	R	E	W	O	P	Y	S	C	H	J	L	L	L	W
I	I	H	O	P	L	R	T	R	U	T	G	E	D	F
M	P	K	R	Q	A	X	L	Z	U	F	A	I	T	H
Y	S	N	D	Y	T	K	O	U	E	W	F	G	B	N
R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S	N	E	S	S	L	R

ARMOUR

BELT

BREASTPLATE

FAITH

FIRM

FULL

GOD

HELMET

MIGHTY

PEACE

POWER

RIGHTEOUSNESS

SALVATION

SANDALS

SHIELD

SPIRIT

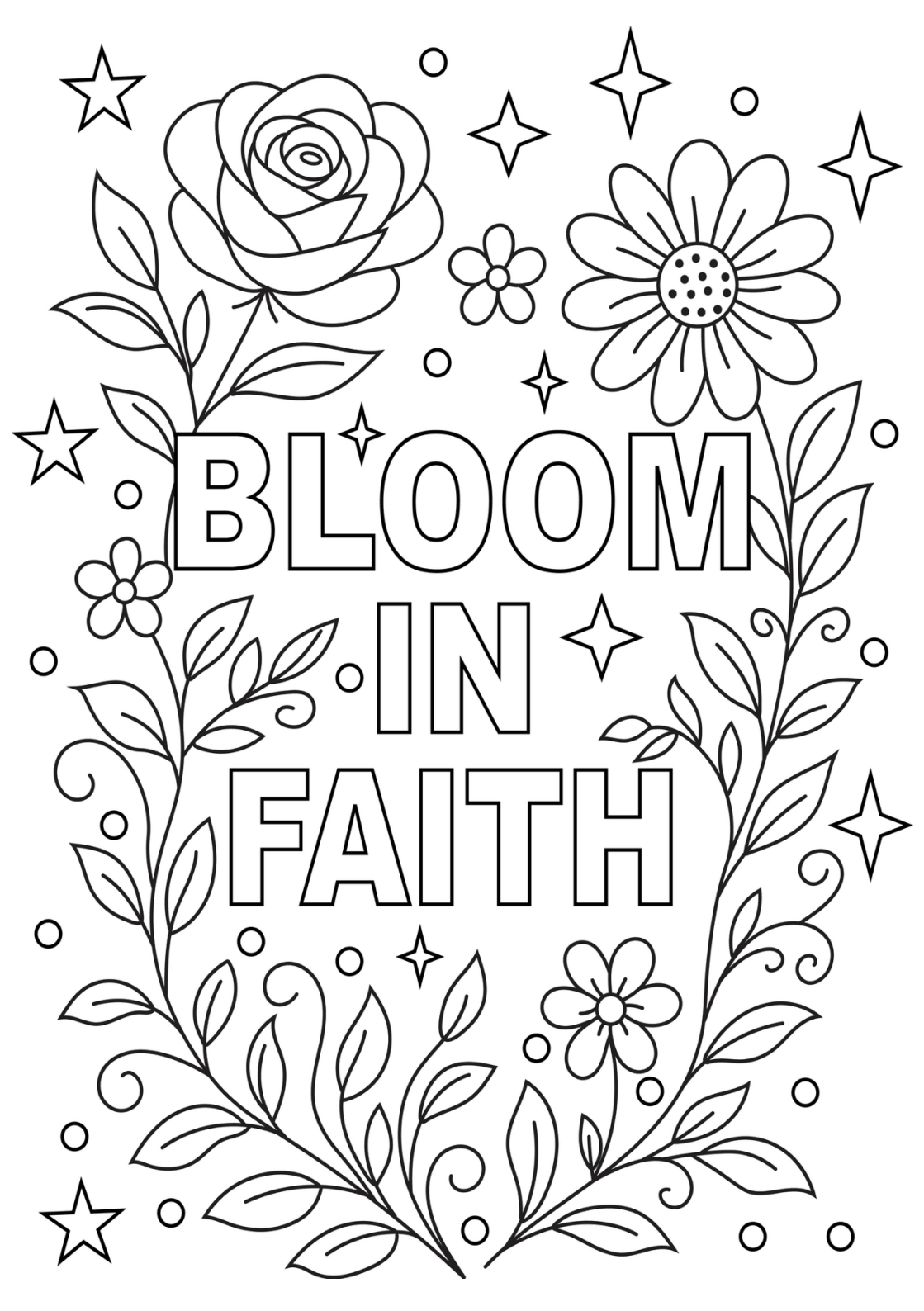
SPIRITUAL

STAND

STRUGGLE

SWORD

TRUTH



A black and white line drawing of a floral wreath. The wreath is composed of two main branches with leaves and flowers. The left branch features a large rose at the top and a small five-petaled flower below it. The right branch features a large daisy-like flower at the top and a small five-petaled flower below it. The center of the wreath contains the text "BLOOM IN FAITH" in a bold, outlined, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "BLOOM" on the top line, "IN" on the middle line, and "FAITH" on the bottom line. The wreath is decorated with several five-pointed stars of varying sizes and small circles scattered throughout. The overall design is symmetrical and decorative.

BLOOM
IN
FAITH

Answers to Leaf Quiz

1. Hawthorn
2. Horse Chestnut
3. Yew
4. Elder
5. Ash
6. Copper Beech
7. Oak
8. Willow
9. Blackthorn
10. Holly

Answers to Maritime Quiz

1. Arctic Ocean
2. The Bounty
3. Pacific Ocean
4. Queen Mary 2, Queen Anne, Queen Victoria, Queen Elizabeth
5. Indian Ocean
6. A Hovercraft is lifted by a cushion of air, the hydrofoil by its wings
7. New Zealand
8. They refer to types of knots
9. A Whale
10. Atlantic Ocean
11. Stern or Hull
12. Queen Anne 2 (the largest passenger ships are Royal Caribbean's Icon of the Seas and Star of the Seas, who dock in Southampton for cruises)
13. The Mayflower
14. Lusitania

Answers to Seven Quiz

1. VII
2. Wrath, lust, envy, gluttony, greed, sloth and pride
3. Rock Hudson and Gina Lollobrigida
4. Sapphire
5. WWII started on 1st September 1939
6. India
7. Ten million = 10,000,000
8. Uranus
9. A heptagon
10. 45rpm
11. Chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, kindness, humility
12. The Magnificent Seven
13. Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti
14. When life was slow and oh so mellow
15. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet
16. James Bond
17. Yes
18. 30 days
19. Great Pyramid of Giza, Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, Statue of Zeus at Olympia, Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, Colossus of Rhodes, Lighthouse of Alexandria

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