

March 16-22 Jacob 5-7

"THE LORD LABORS WITH US"

- Outstretched/Extended Arm Hugs- Jacob 6:4-5 says that God “stretches forth His hands” to us and “His arm of mercy is extended” towards us. Remind them that Heavenly Father and Jesus love us and want us to come back to them someday. Jacob 6:5 also says, “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you.” Explain what it means to cleave unto God. Take turns stretching out our arms and hands while family members run in for a hug and “cleave unto” you. Remind them of how much Heavenly Father and Jesus love us and would love to give us a hug right now.
- Tree Puzzle – Because Heavenly Father and Jesus love us, they want us to be with them again. Set out the tree puzzle and explain that the pieces to the puzzle represent people. Heavenly Father and Jesus want ALL of us to be close to them.
 - Wording from manual: “Maybe you could mark an area on a table or floor to represent the vineyard (or the world) and depict the tame olive tree (or the house of Israel) with an object, such as a puzzle, that can be divided into pieces (to represent the scattering of Israel) and then brought back together (to represent the gathering of Israel). What does this allegory teach us about the Lord? about His servants?”
 - Print up the tree puzzle pieces (below) and follow instructions from the manual. You could use something like tape or a hula hoop to mark the vineyard/world area. Place a picture of Christ by the tree to help them visualize people being brought close to Christ when they’re “gathered.” There are two puzzle versions below: a one-page puzzle or bigger puzzle pieces for a giant puzzle. A cute lady in our ward recently gave our girls some giant puzzles that they’ve been obsessed with, so we’re going to use the bigger pieces to make it more fun for them, but the smaller pieces would work just as well if your kids aren’t as obsessed with giant puzzles as mine are. 😊
 - This allegory has lots of levels of meaning, but since our kids are so young, we’re going to first focus mainly on how this applies to us as individuals and emphasize the point that Christ and Heavenly Father want us to be “gathered” close to them because they love us. If you have older kids, you might want to spend more time explaining some of the other meanings of this allegory.
 - I LOVE Elder Holland’s explanation of this allegory being about Christ and made a printable page you can use (on page 11 of this lesson plan). Our kids are probably too young to stay focused enough to read through it, but if you have older kids, feel free to use it with them.
- God Invites Me to Help Him Gather His Children - Explain that Jacob 5 says that the Lord of the vineyard (Jesus) worked hard to look after His trees (people). Remind them that Jesus wants ALL people to be close to Him, and he works hard to help others be gathered close to Him, but He needs our help as well. He calls laborers (missionaries) to help take care of the trees (people). Read Jacob 5:71-72 and discuss how we can be missionaries and help bring others close to Christ. Share/discuss this phrase from Jacob 6:3” “And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard.”
 - Read/discuss “Better Than Hopscotch” story from *The Friend*:
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/friend/2016/05/better-than-hopscotch?lang=eng>
- Fruit- Jacob 6:7 says, “For behold, after ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit?” Discuss good things we might do as you place good fruit pieces on the tree. You can use the pieces below (on page 10) or if you have fake plastic fruit at your house, it would be fun to use that too.
 - “God is the Gardener” YouTube video from Hugh B. Brown about pruning a bush to help it grow better. Talk about how Heavenly Father and Jesus help us become better people and have good fruit:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTyvkPpcv_k
- The Story of a Person Who Tried to Pull People Away from Christ (Sherem) – Share “Jacob and Sherem” video/story from the church’s website: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/book-of-mormon-stories/chapter-10-jacob-and-sherem?lang=eng>. After Sherem died, “peace and the love of God was restored

again among the people; and they searched the scriptures, and hearkened no more to the words of this wicked man.” (Jacob 7:23). Remind them that we have more love and peace when we’re close to Christ.

- Song: “Dare to Do Right” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OL1n3L8TdU> . Talk about how we can stand up for what’s right and stay strong to our testimonies of Christ even when others might try to pull us away from Him. Remind them that we’re happier when we stay close to Christ.

6. “Blessed Art Thou” Activity – The manual suggests personalizing Jacob 5:75 by putting their names into the phrase: “Blessed art thou [name]” and then share experiences of when they’ve felt joy while serving the Lord of the vineyard. Take turns saying “Blessed art thou [name]” and choose another family member’s name to say. When someone says your name, say one thing you’ll do to either become closer to Christ yourself or to bring others to Christ and talk about how doing that blesses us and brings us joy.
7. Tree Treat – Make these cute trees using pretzel sticks, crackers (or Golden Oreos if you’re like us and want to add more sugar ☺), green frosting, and M & M’s: <http://teachingheart.net/blog/2013/09/fall-fun-snacks-trees/>



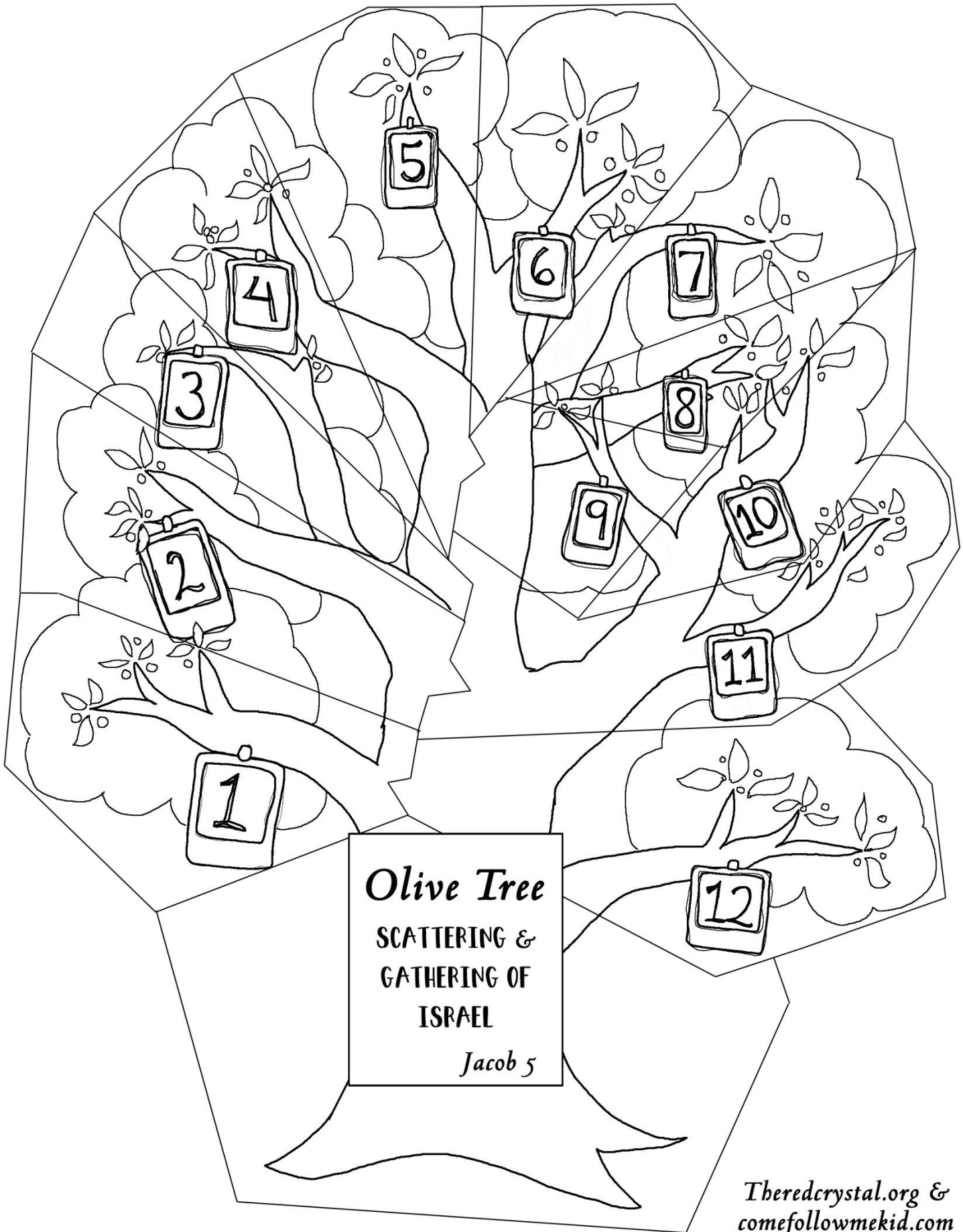
Additional Ideas:

Support Articles and Activities from *The Ensign*: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2020/03/come-follow-me-book-of-mormon-support-articles-and-activities/jacob-5-7?lang=eng>

Book of Mormon Videos: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/come-follow-me/individuals-and-families/book-of-mormon-2020/book-of-mormon-videos?lang=eng>

More Great Ideas: www.theredcrystal.org

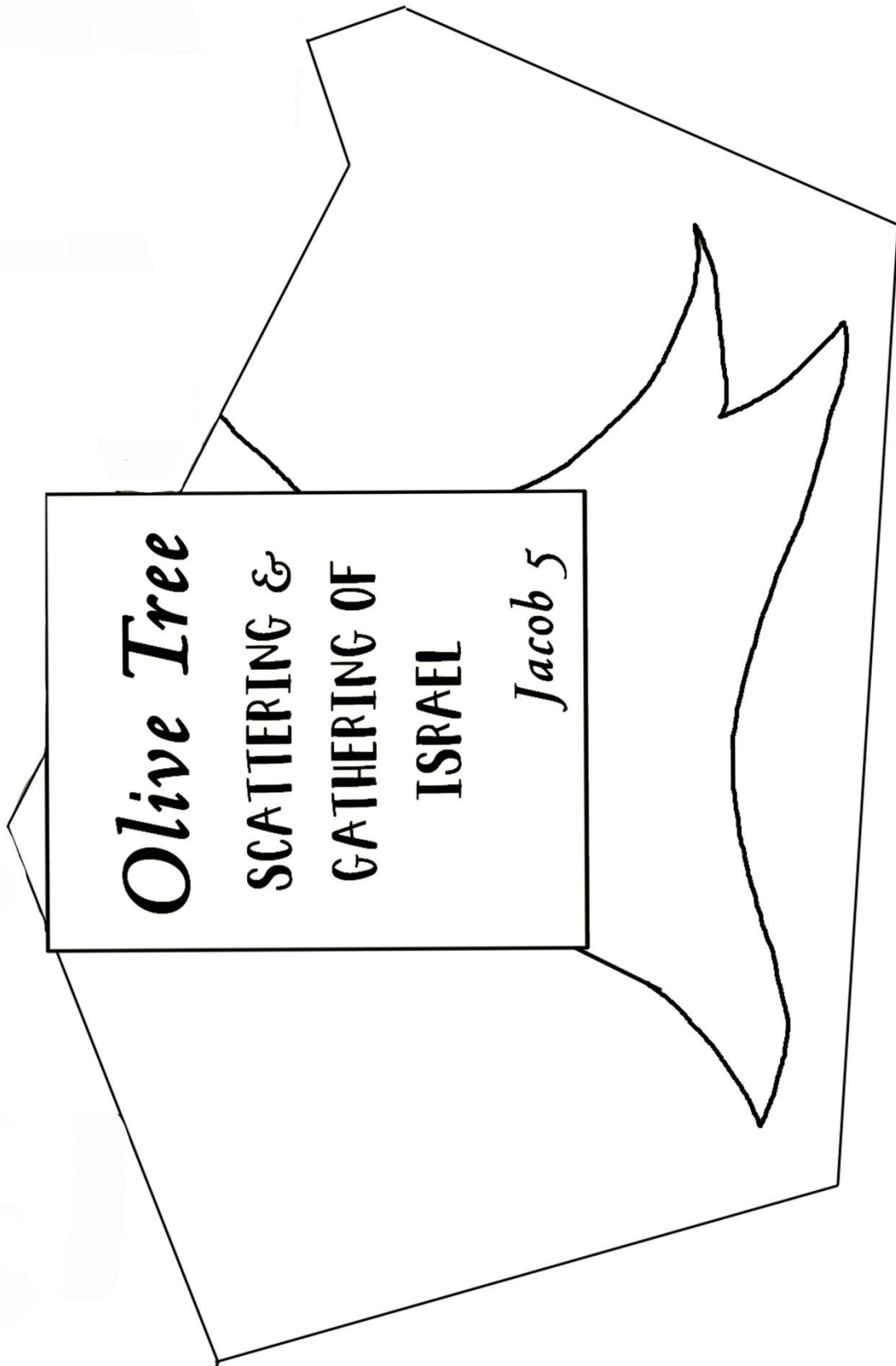
Allegory of the Olive Tree Coloring Page: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/scripture-stories-coloring-book-book-of-mormon/olive-tree-vineyard?lang=eng>

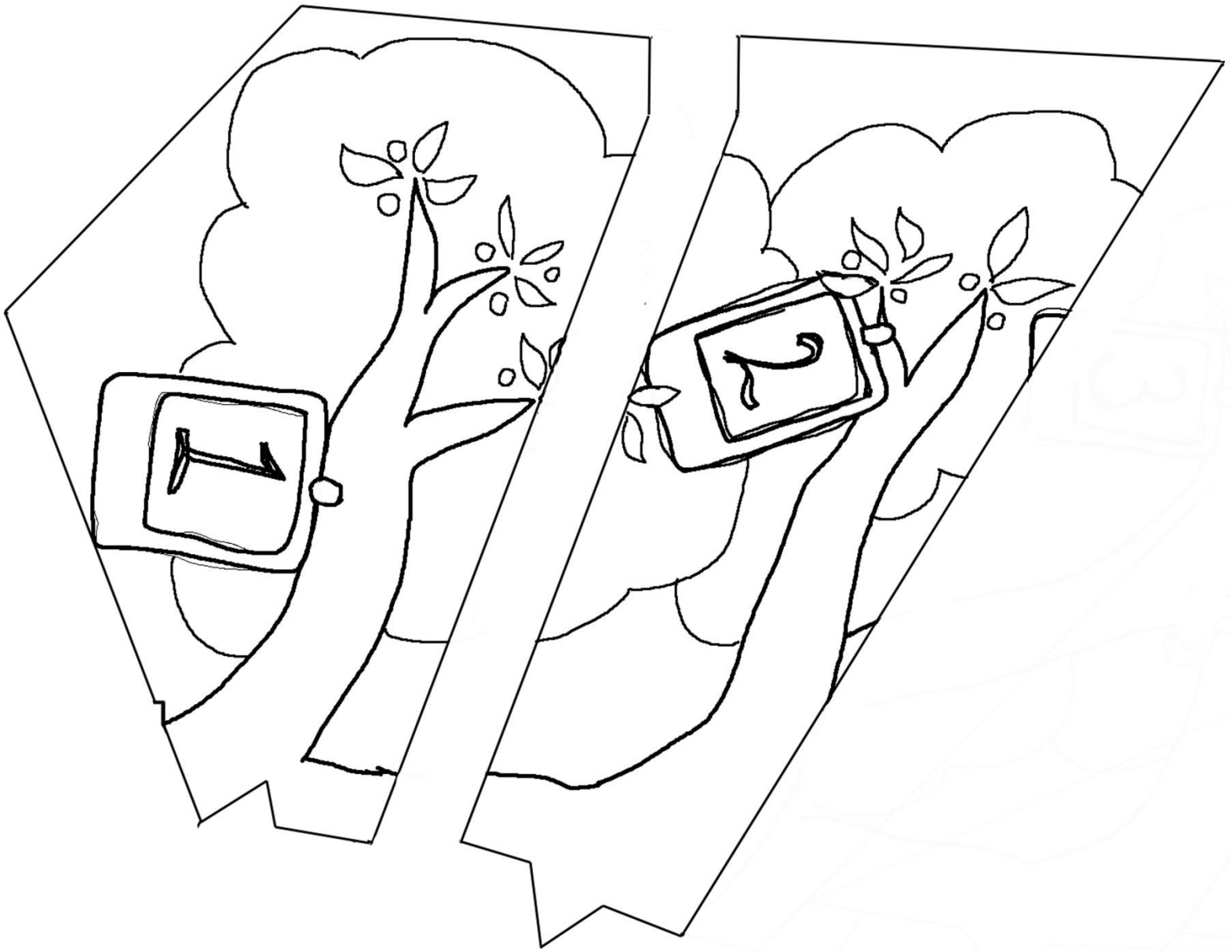


Olive Tree
SCATTERING &
GATHERING OF
ISRAEL
Jacob 5

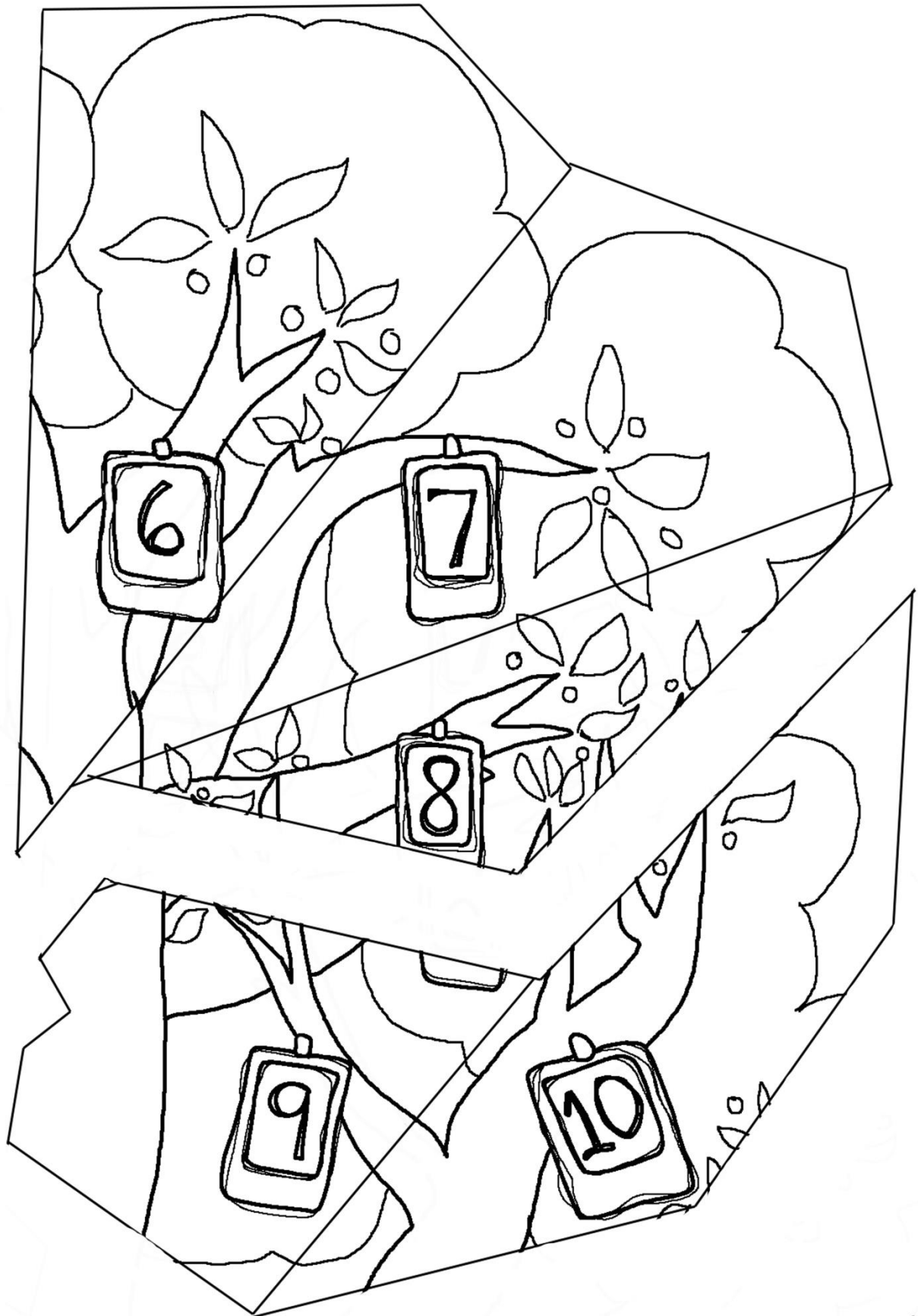
Christ with Outstretched Arms: Place picture by the tree puzzle to help them visualize “gathering” meaning coming closer to Christ and being united with Him.

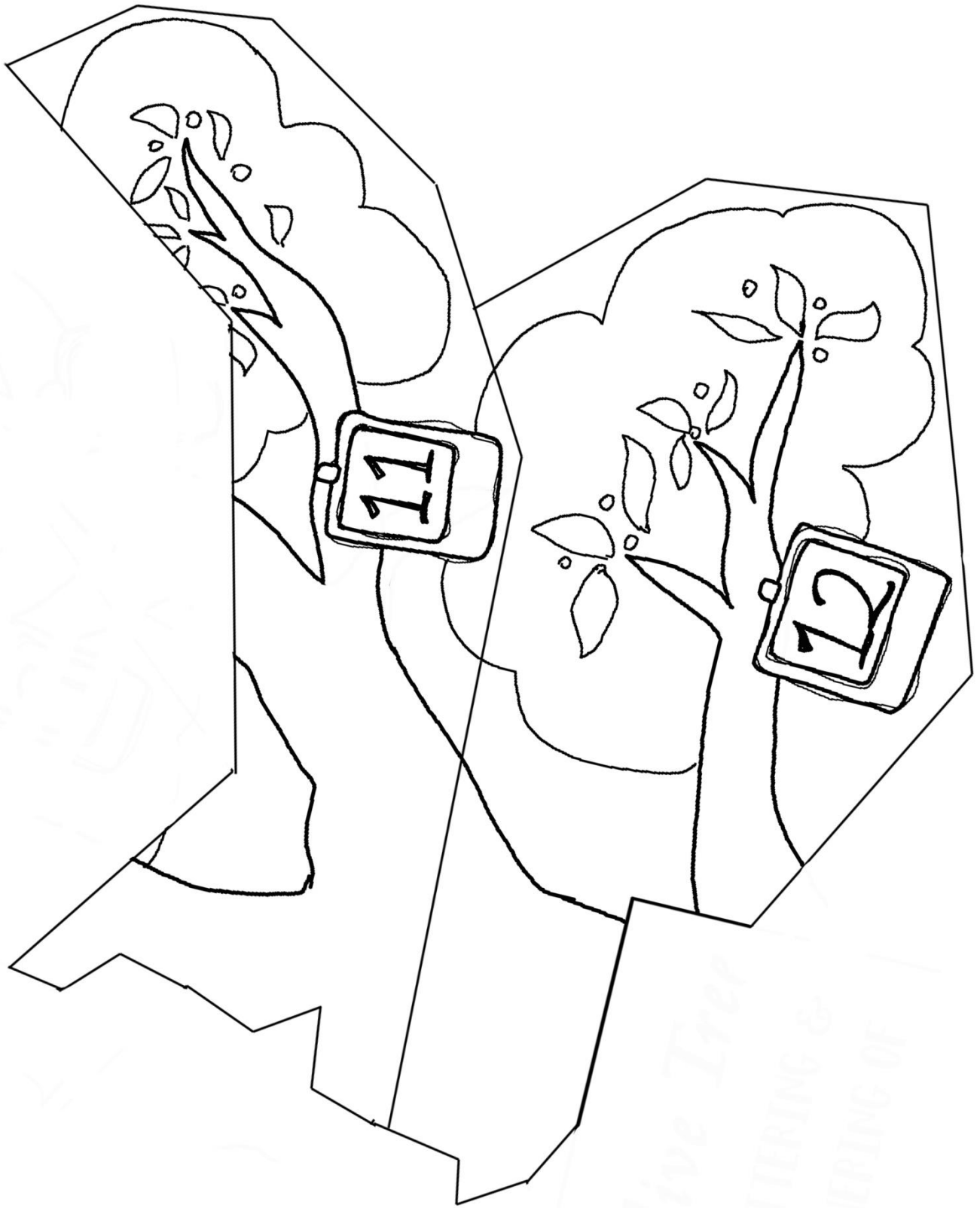






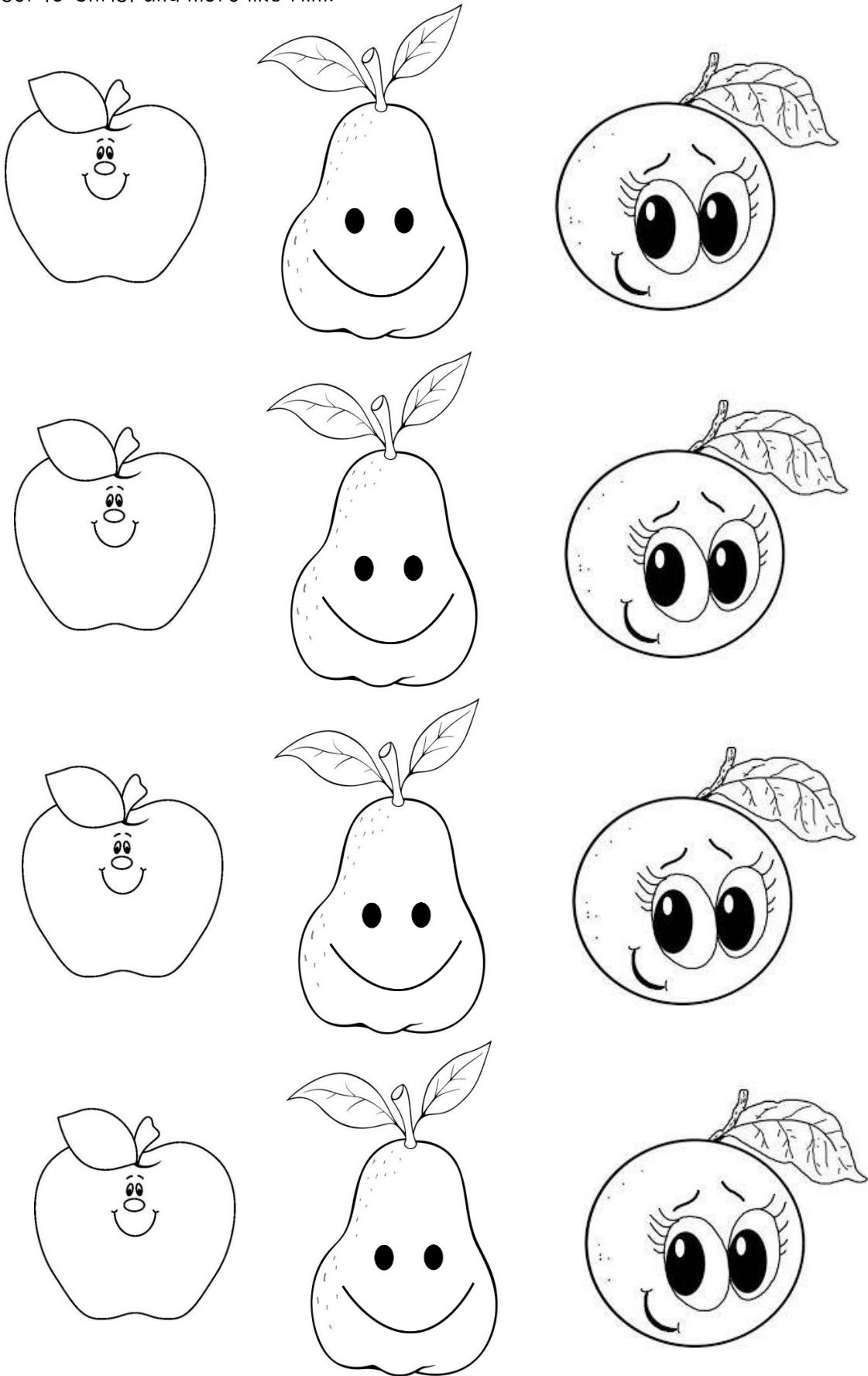






Alive Tree
CATERING &
BATTERING OF

Fruit: Take turns placing pieces of fruit on the tree while discussing good things we might do as we become closer to Christ and more like Him.





Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles presented the principal theme of Zenos's allegory:

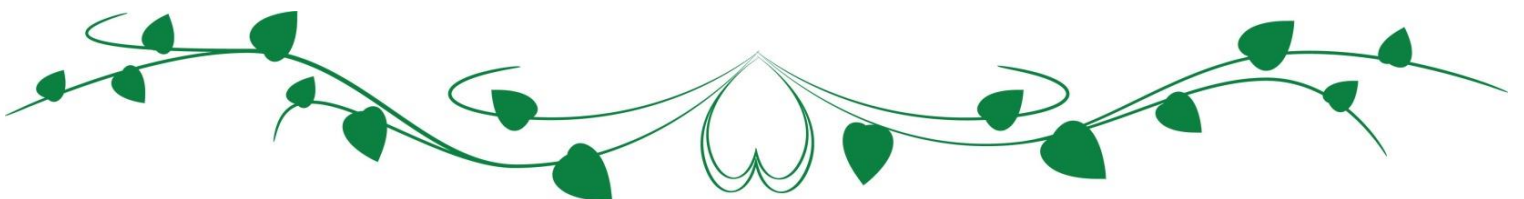
“This allegory as recounted by Jacob is from the outset intended to be about

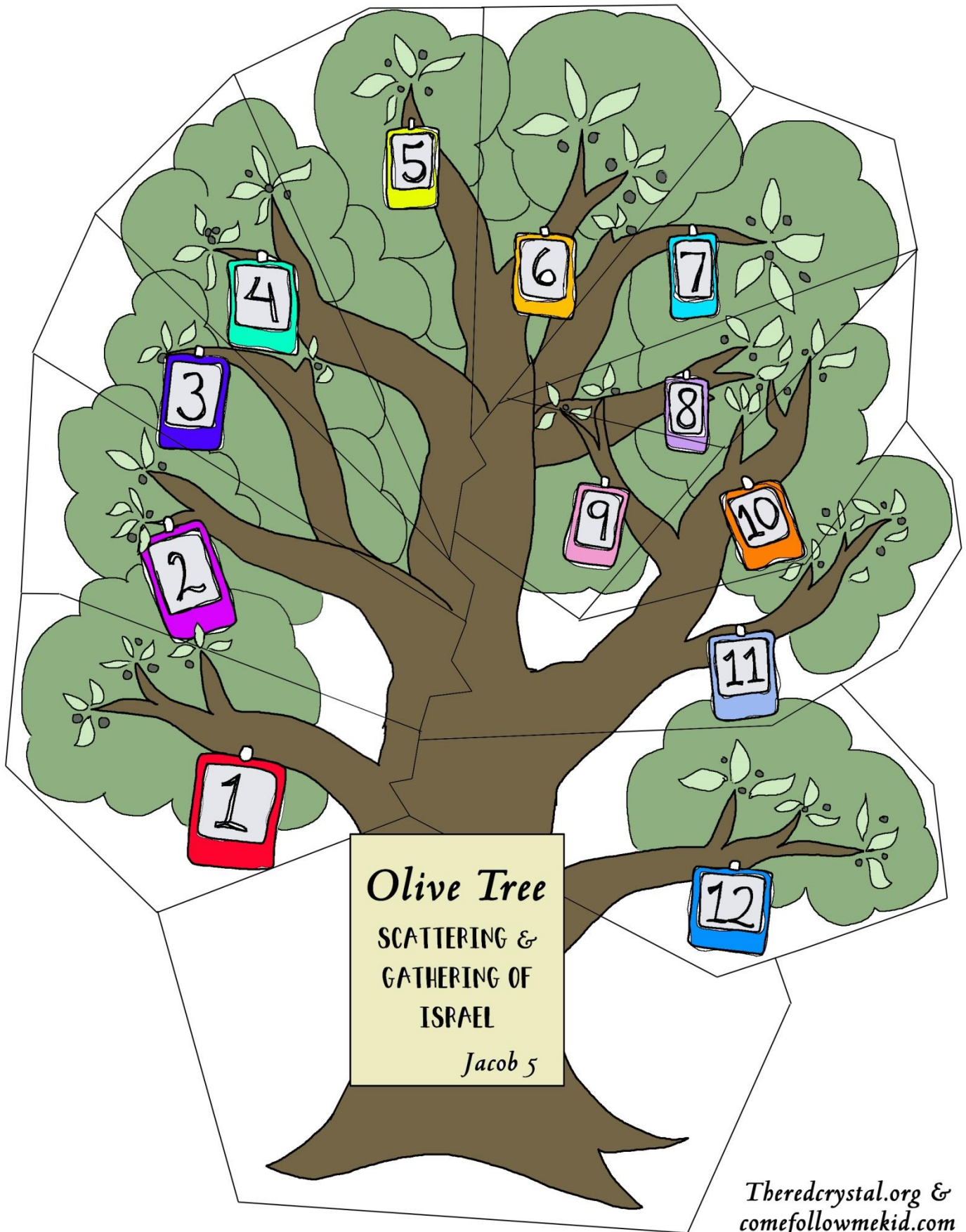
Christ

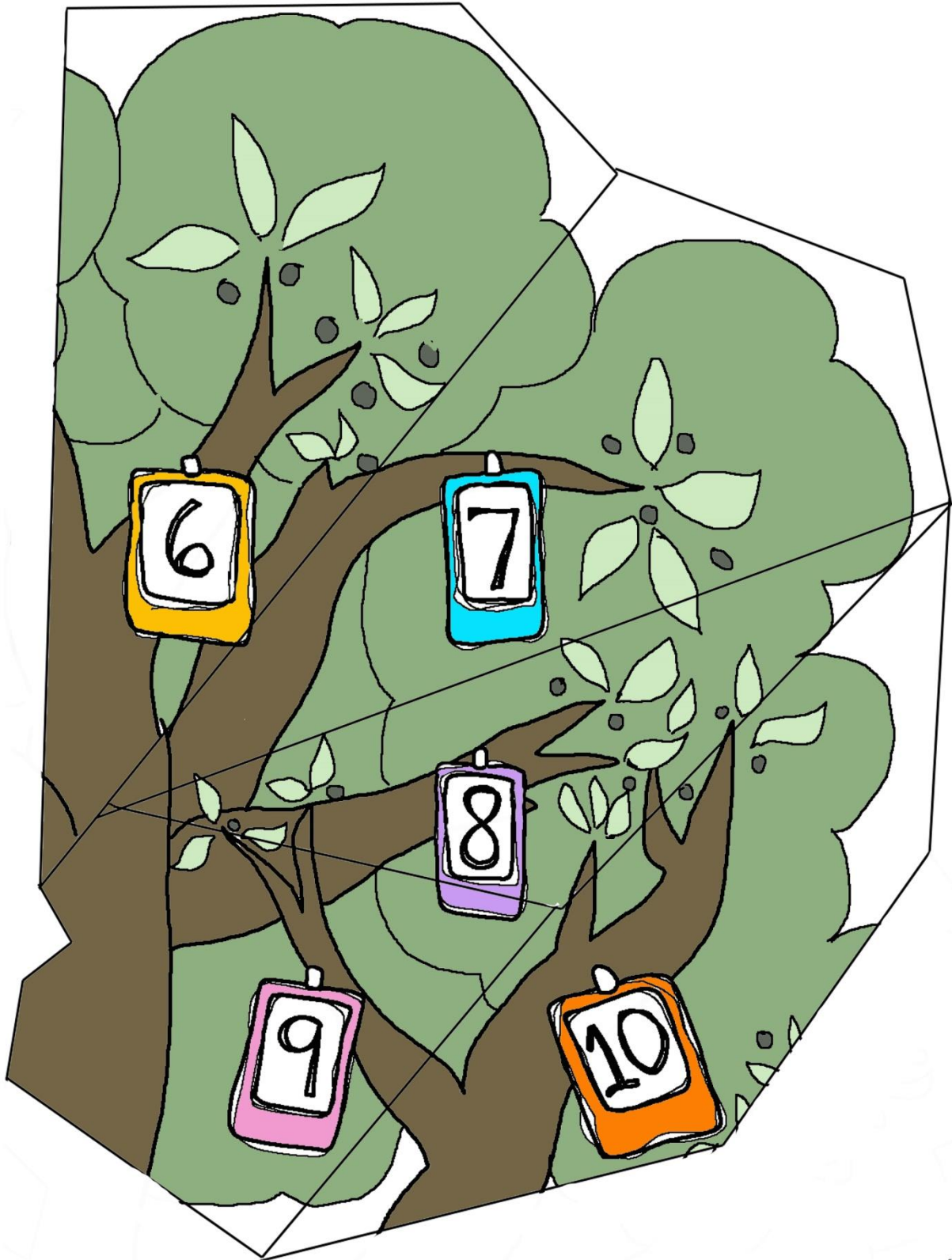
“Even as the Lord of the vineyard and his workers strive to bolster, prune, purify, and otherwise make productive their trees in what amounts to a one-chapter historical sketch of the scattering and gathering of Israel, the deeper meaning of the Atonement undergirds and overarches their labors. In spite of cuttings and graftings and nourishings that mix and mingle trees in virtually all parts of the vineyard, it is bringing them back to their source that is the principal theme of this allegory. Returning, repenting, reuniting—at-one-ment—this is the message throughout.

“... At least fifteen times the Lord of the vineyard expresses a desire to bring the vineyard and its harvest to his ‘own self,’ and he laments no less than eight times, ‘It grieveth me that I should lose this tree.’ One student of the allegory says it should take its place beside the parable of the prodigal son, inasmuch as both stories ‘make the Lord’s mercy so movingly memorable.’

“Clearly this at-one-ment is hard, demanding, and, at times, deeply painful work, as the work of redemption always is. There is digging and dunging. There is watering and nourishing and pruning. And there is always the endless approaches to grafting—all to one saving end, that the trees of the vineyard would ‘thrive exceedingly’ and become ‘one body; ... the fruits [being] equal,’ with the Lord of the vineyard having ‘preserved unto himself the ... fruit.’ From all the distant places of sin and alienation in which the children of the Father find themselves, it has always been the work of Christ (and his disciples) in every dispensation to gather them, heal them, and unite them with their Master” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 165–66).







A graphic of an olive tree with a central text box. The tree is brown and has a thick trunk and a canopy of branches. The text box is yellow and contains the following text:

Olive Tree
SCATTERING &
GATHERING OF
ISRAEL
Jacob 5

Olive Tree

SCATTERING &
GATHERING OF
ISRAEL

Jacob 5

