

Birds

‘...let BIRDS
fly above
the earth...’

Genesis 1:20

When we look at Creation, (all the things God made), we can see the most amazing variety and plan. God made lots of marvellous flying creatures, but birds were the first ones. Some of them are really beautiful. Birds are written about all through the Bible—and this shows us what a great Creator we have. Today, some people think birds have happened by chance or changed from dinosaurs! But the Bible clearly tells us that birds were made before dinosaurs! The special way that birds have been made, and the way they fly show us that they were made by a Creator. They could never have come about by accident. Fossils show us that the earliest flying creatures had perfect flight.

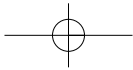
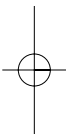
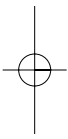
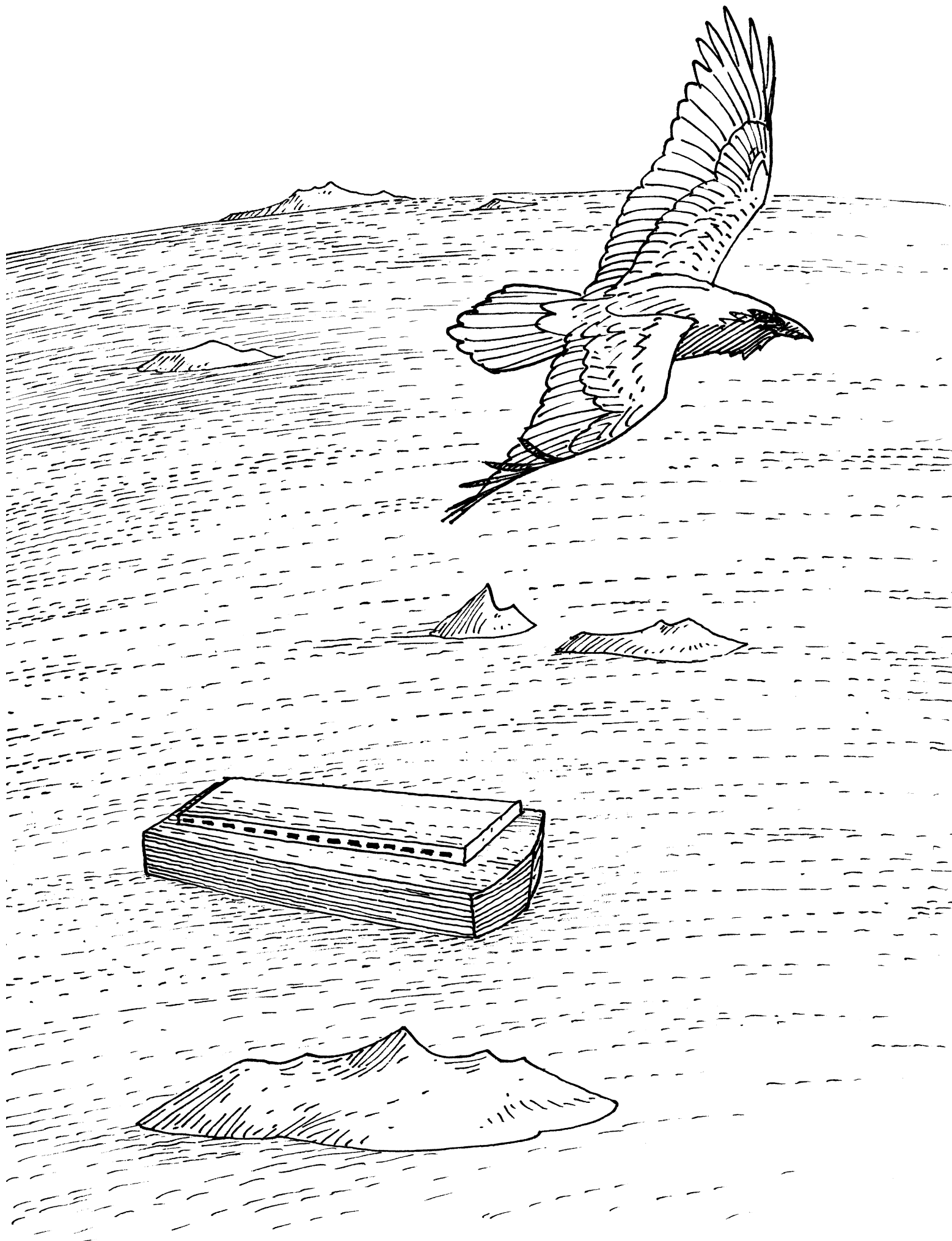
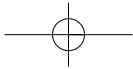


Raven

‘Then he [Noah] sent out a RAVEN, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth’

Genesis 8:7

In Genesis chapter 7 we are told about a great flood. God sent it as a great judgement because of all the evil and sin in the world. The very first creature to leave the Ark was a raven. This massive bird went out far and wide looking for a dry place on the earth. When God gave Moses the law he was told that the raven was ‘unclean’ and therefore could not be eaten. In another story in the bible, God also commanded ravens to help Elijah the prophet by bringing him food when he was in the wilderness.

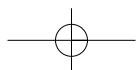
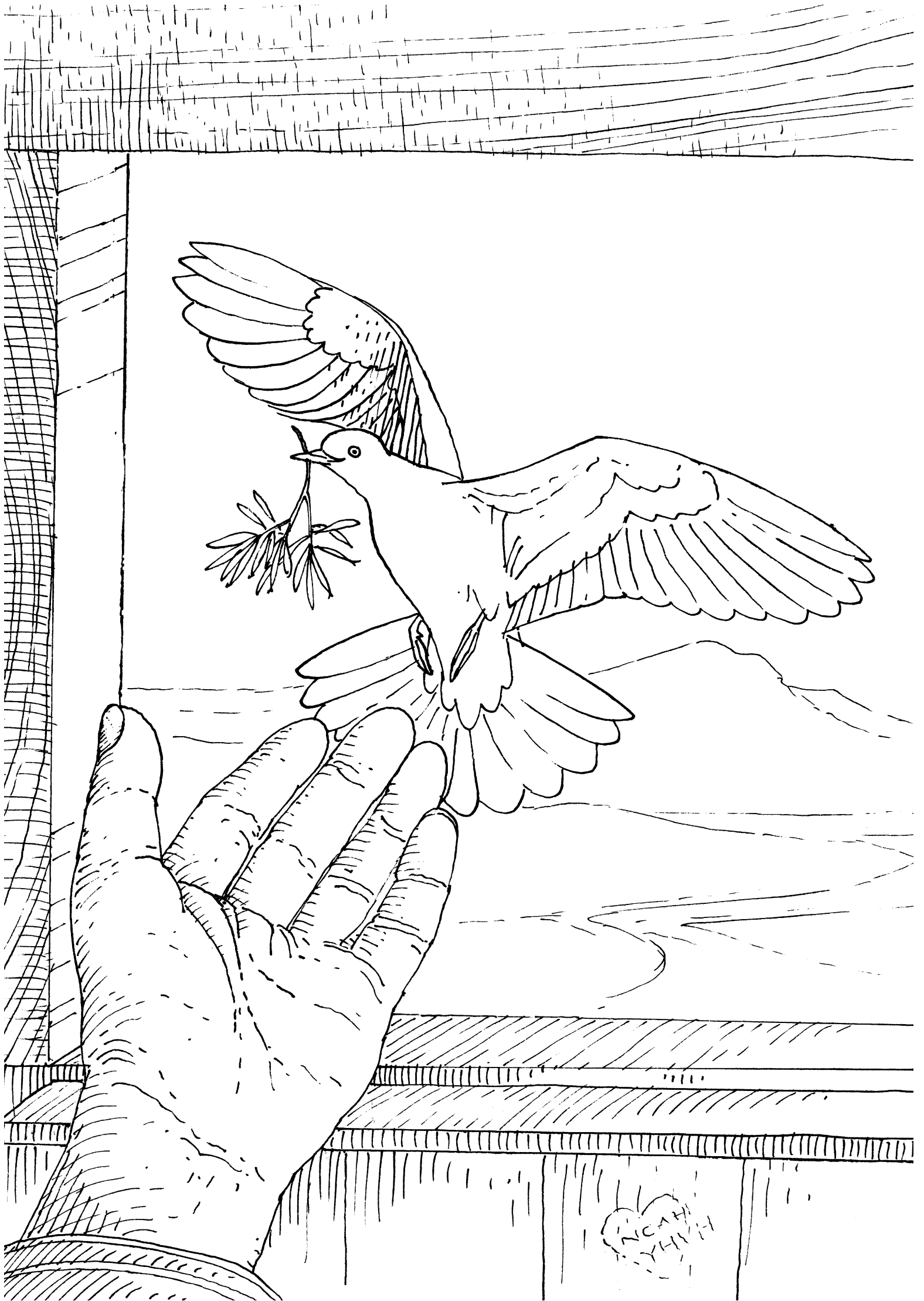
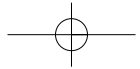


Dove

‘Then the DOVE came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth’

Genesis 8:10

After Noah had let the raven go, he sent out two doves to see how dry the ground had become. The second dove returned with a freshly picked olive branch, and Noah knew that the waters had dried up enough from the earth for plants to start growing again. The dove is often a symbol of goodness and wisdom. Sometimes a dove is used to represent the Holy Spirit in the Bible. A dove came over the water when Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist.

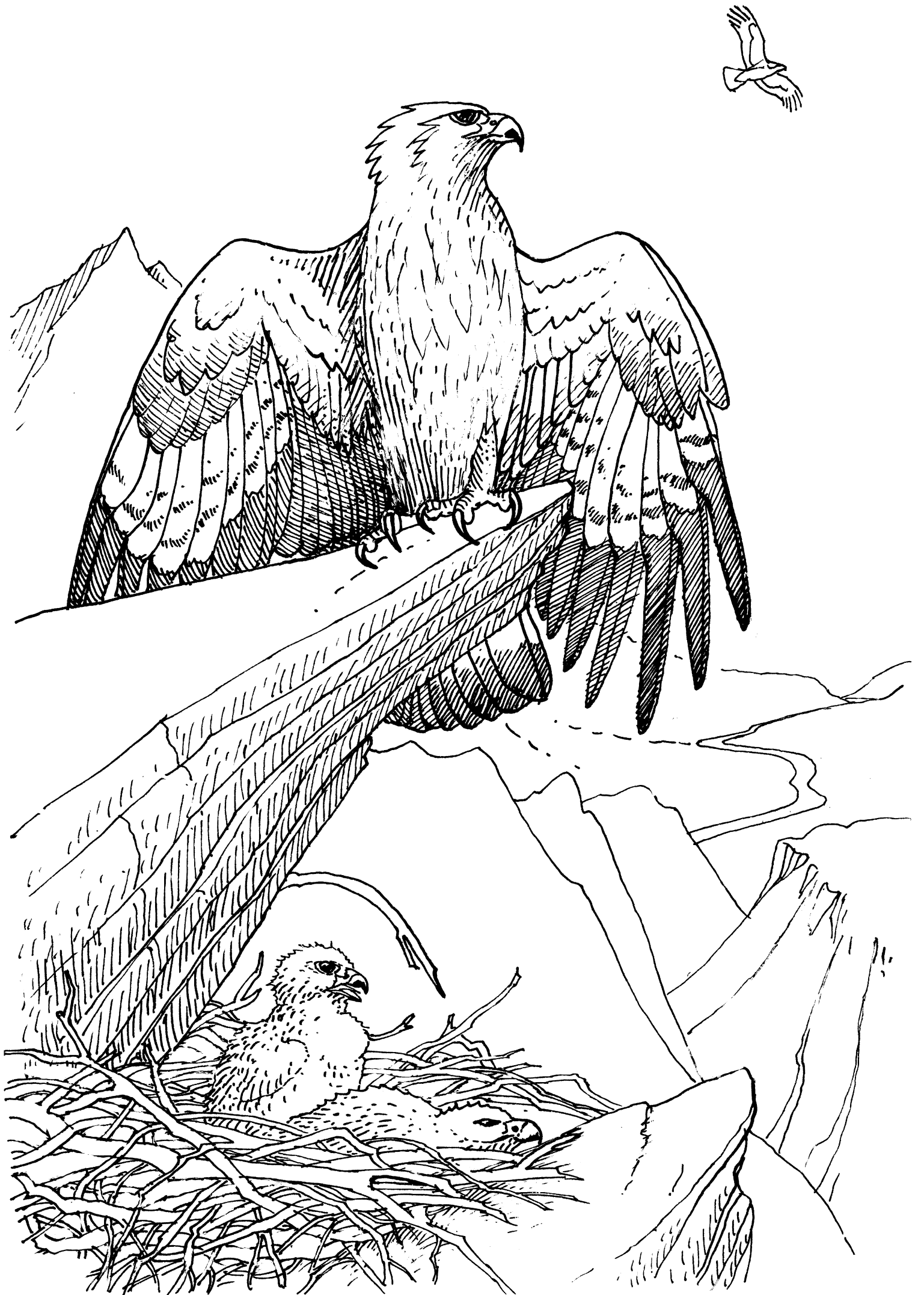


Eagle

‘Does the EAGLE
mount up at your
command, and make
its nest on high?’

Job 39:26

Today there are lots of different eagles that nest and fly through Israel. When Job was suffering he spoke a lot to God and asked him many questions. God reminded Job that he could not command such a mighty bird as an eagle. He asked Job - ‘Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?’. He was reminding Job that he created or made the earth and that he was in control of everything that was happening.



Owl

‘I am like an OWL
of the desert,
I lie awake’

Psalm 102:6,7

Desert Eagle Owls are one of the largest owls. They have very deep calls or hoots. Their cry at night can sometimes sound frightening. They can still be heard in the wadis or dry canyons of countries like Israel today. In this Psalm, David was telling us about feeling lonely, and all his difficulties or problems he was having at that time. While he was being hunted and was alone in the wilderness, he said he was like an owl hooting sadly.

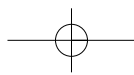
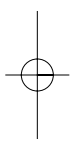
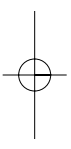
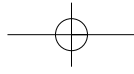


Stork

‘Even the STORK
in the heavens
knows her
appointed times...’

Jeremiah 8:7

In the Near East today you can still see huge flocks of White Storks, Common Cranes, White Pelicans and many birds of prey. The birds only like warm weather so they fly to places where it is summer. This is called migration. The birds migrate twice a year. This means it is always summer wherever they are! Nobody tells the birds when to migrate, God made them in a way that they would always know the right time to fly to other places. In the Bible, Jeremiah was warning us all that we need to be aware of the times God has planned for us. There will be a time when we will be judged for all the things we have done wrong. We cannot wait until then to ask God to forgive us, we need to ask him to forgive us now and to help us live in a way that pleases God.

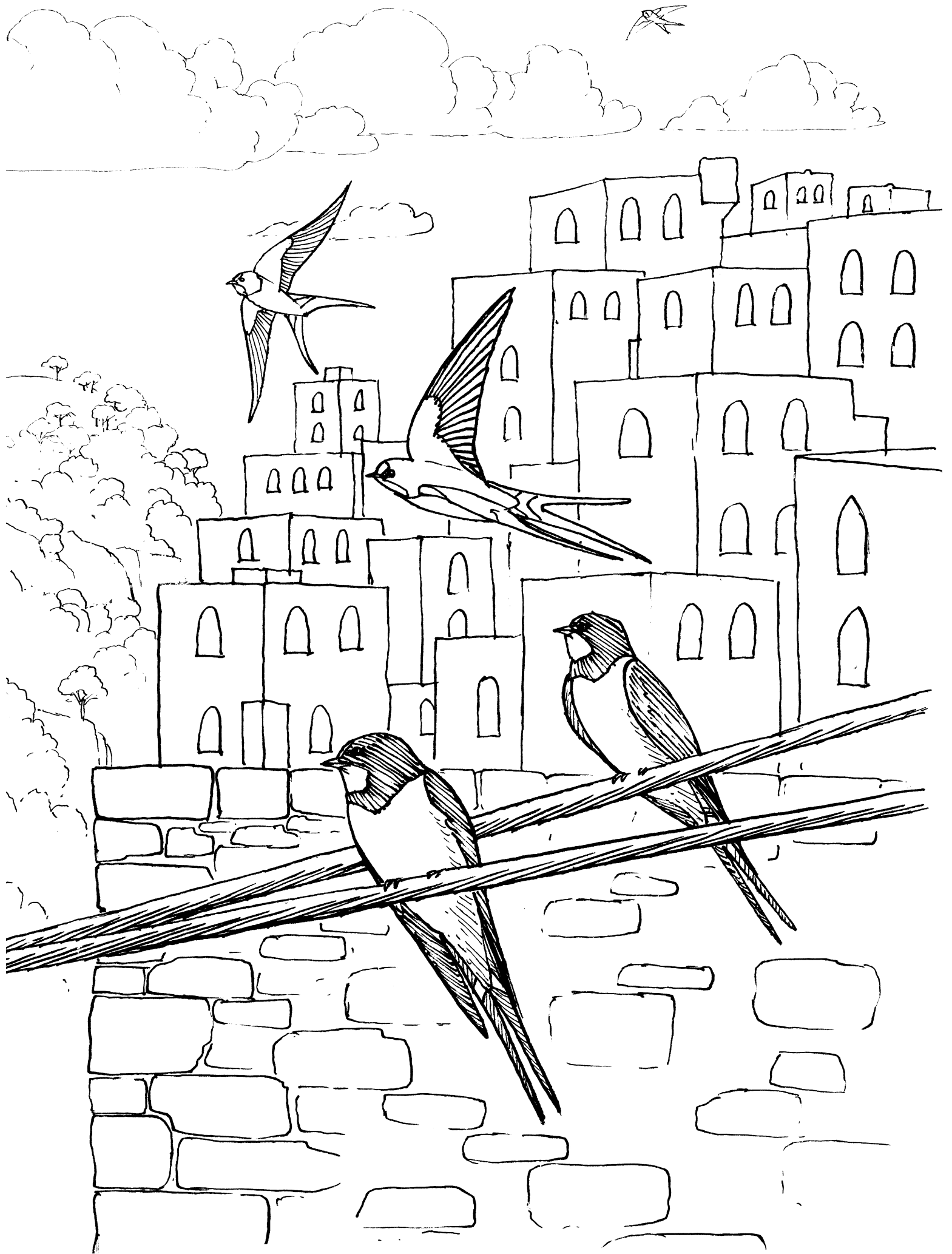


Swallow

‘the swift and
the SWALLOW
observe the time
of their coming’

Jeremiah 8:7

Swallows are one of the most beautiful birds. They have shiny blue, red and cream feathers. They are found almost everywhere on earth. Swallows also migrate or fly to where it will be summer. Each year when we see swallows they remind us that summer is coming. These tiny birds can fly thousands of miles and show us how amazing God’s creation is. The prophet Jeremiah added other birds that migrate to his list, because he wanted to stress or make sure that we knew that there would be a time when God would judge us.

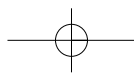
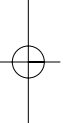
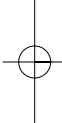
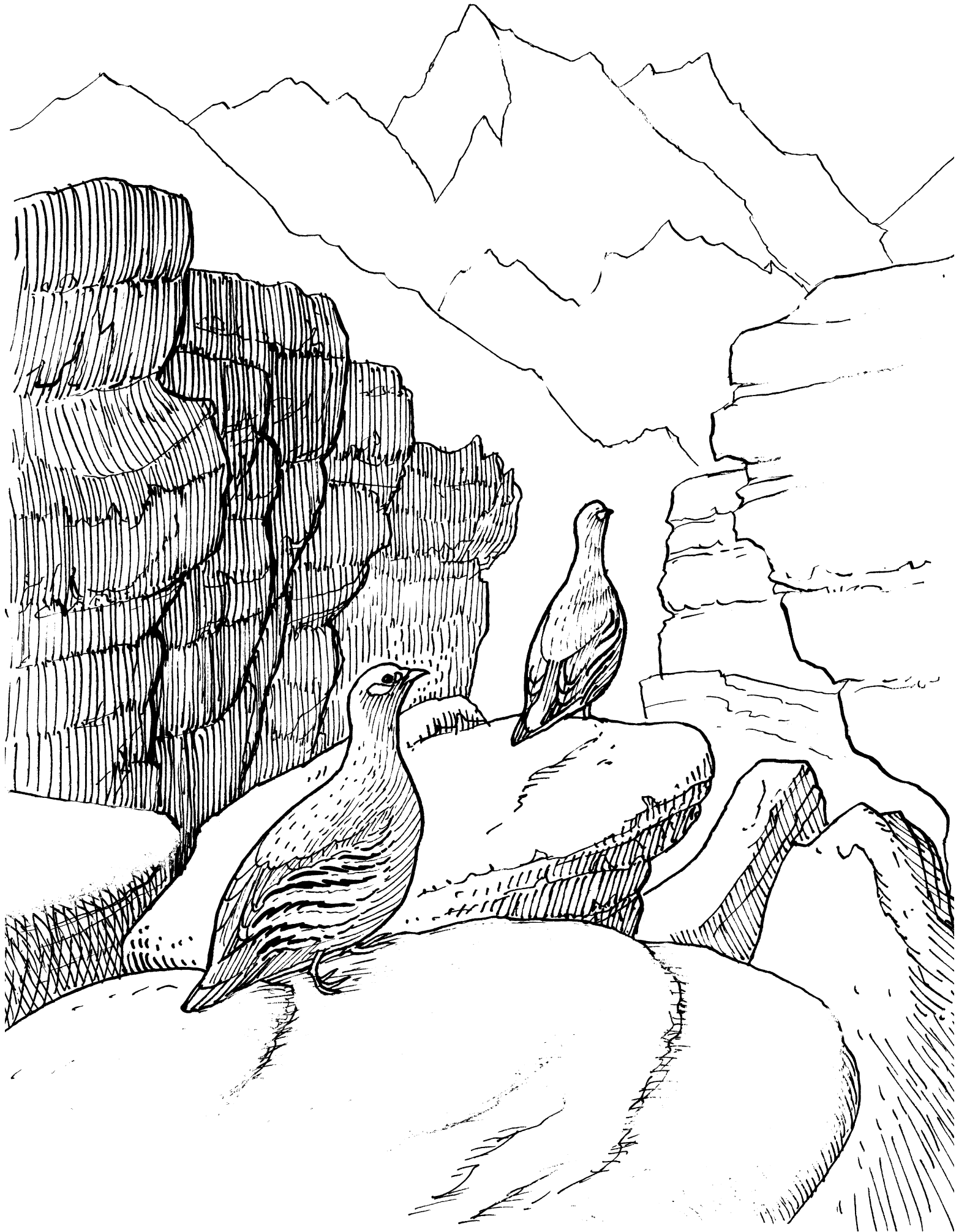
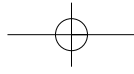


Partridge

‘as one when
one hunts a
PARTRIDGE in
the mountains’

1 Samuel 26:20

These are Sand Partridges. They are still found in the mountains near the Dead Sea and around the great Rift Valley of Israel. Other types such as the Rock Partridge (like the Red-legged Partridge in Britain) also live in these mountains. When King Saul was hunting David near the Cave of Adullam, David said he was like the partridges, scampering around and hiding in the rocks.



Quail

‘QUAILS came
up at evening
and covered
the camp’

Exodus 16:11 – 13

Quail are small and rather shy. They can still be found migrating from Africa to Eurasia. They fly in large flocks, low over the Red Sea. During their journey in the wilderness, the Israelites began to complain to God about their food. Each day God kindly provided them with lots of these tiny birds for food. He also sent them Manna. These birds can remind us how God looks after us and gives us what we need.

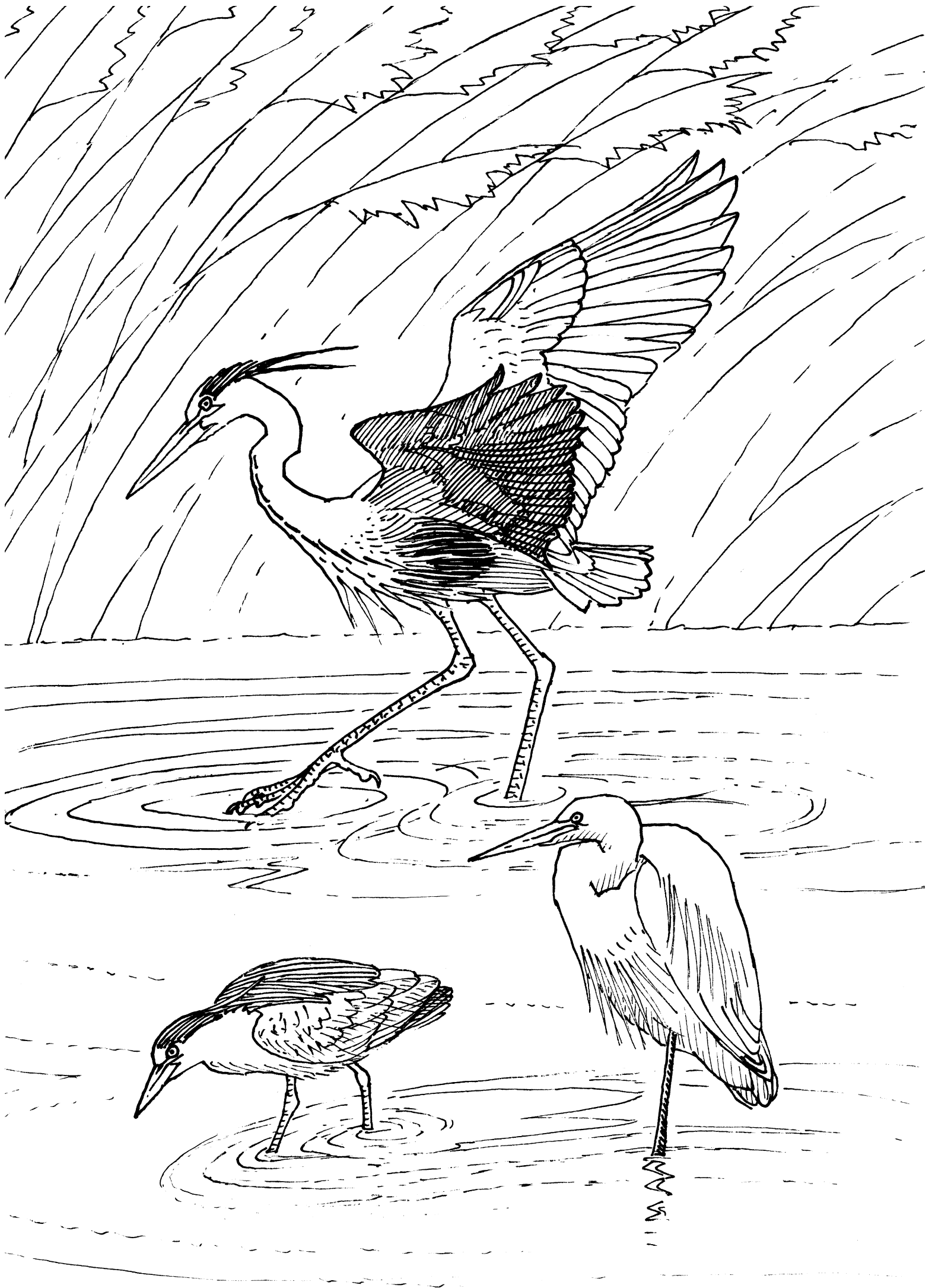


Heron

'the HERON after its kind'

Deuteronomy 14:18

There are many kinds of heron. They are water birds. In this picture we can see the Grey Heron, Little Egret and Night Heron. They can be found in the Near East as well as in Europe. Little Egrets are still spreading around the earth as countries continue to dry up. These birds were amongst the 'unclean' creatures that God told the Israelites they were not allowed to eat.

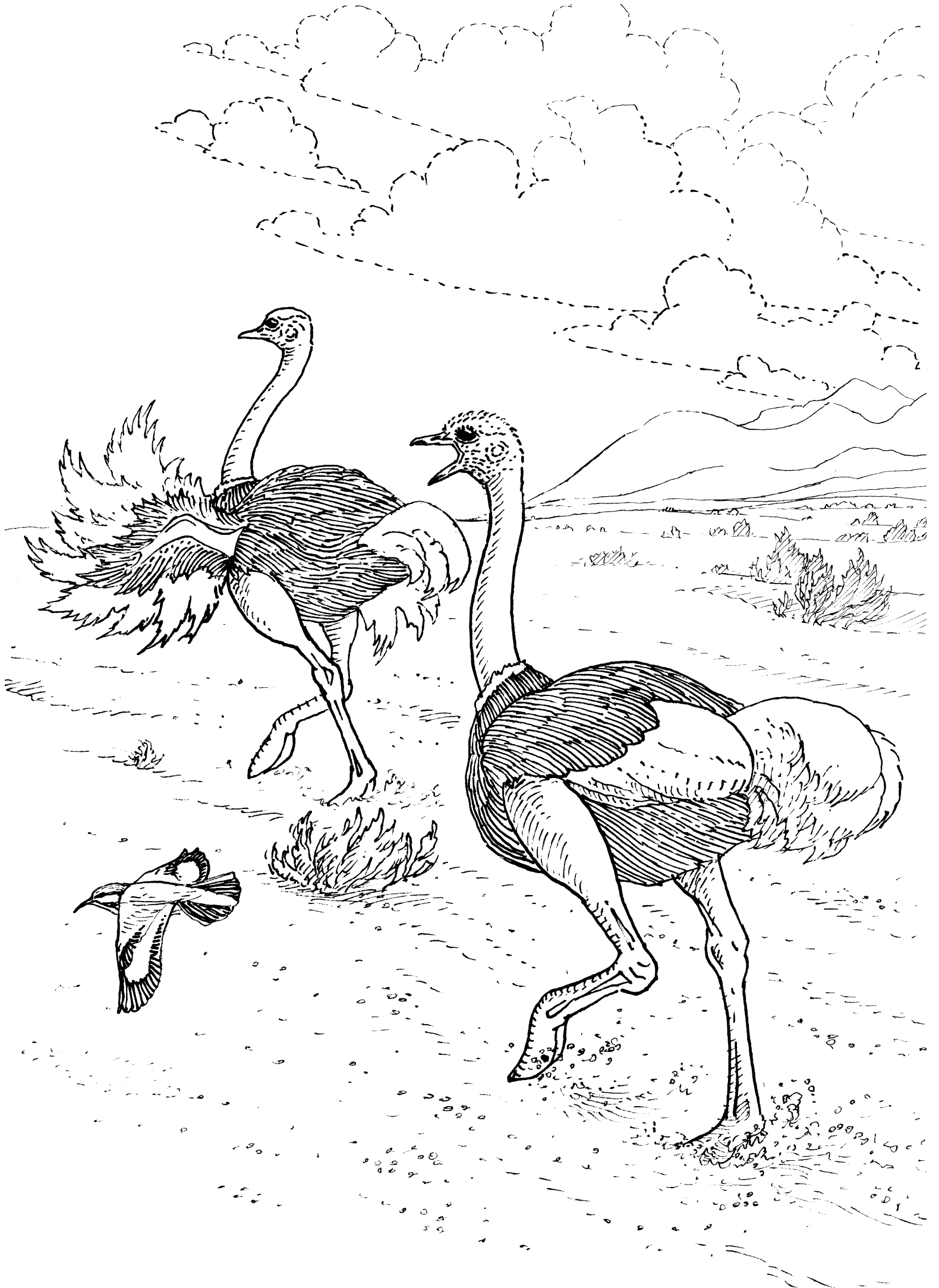


Ostrich

‘when she [the
OSTRICH] lifts
herself on high she
scorns the horse
and its rider’

Job 39:18

God made ostriches very fast. They can run at about 43 miles an hour (or 70 kilometres an hour)! Ostriches do not make very good mothers – lots of them lay their eggs in another bird’s nest! God gave many lessons to Job and his unwise friends, one was about ostriches. An ostrich is wrong in not caring about her babies in their eggs and protecting them from dangers. We are also wrong if we don’t care about our hearts or souls and protect them from dangers like Satan.

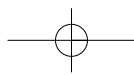
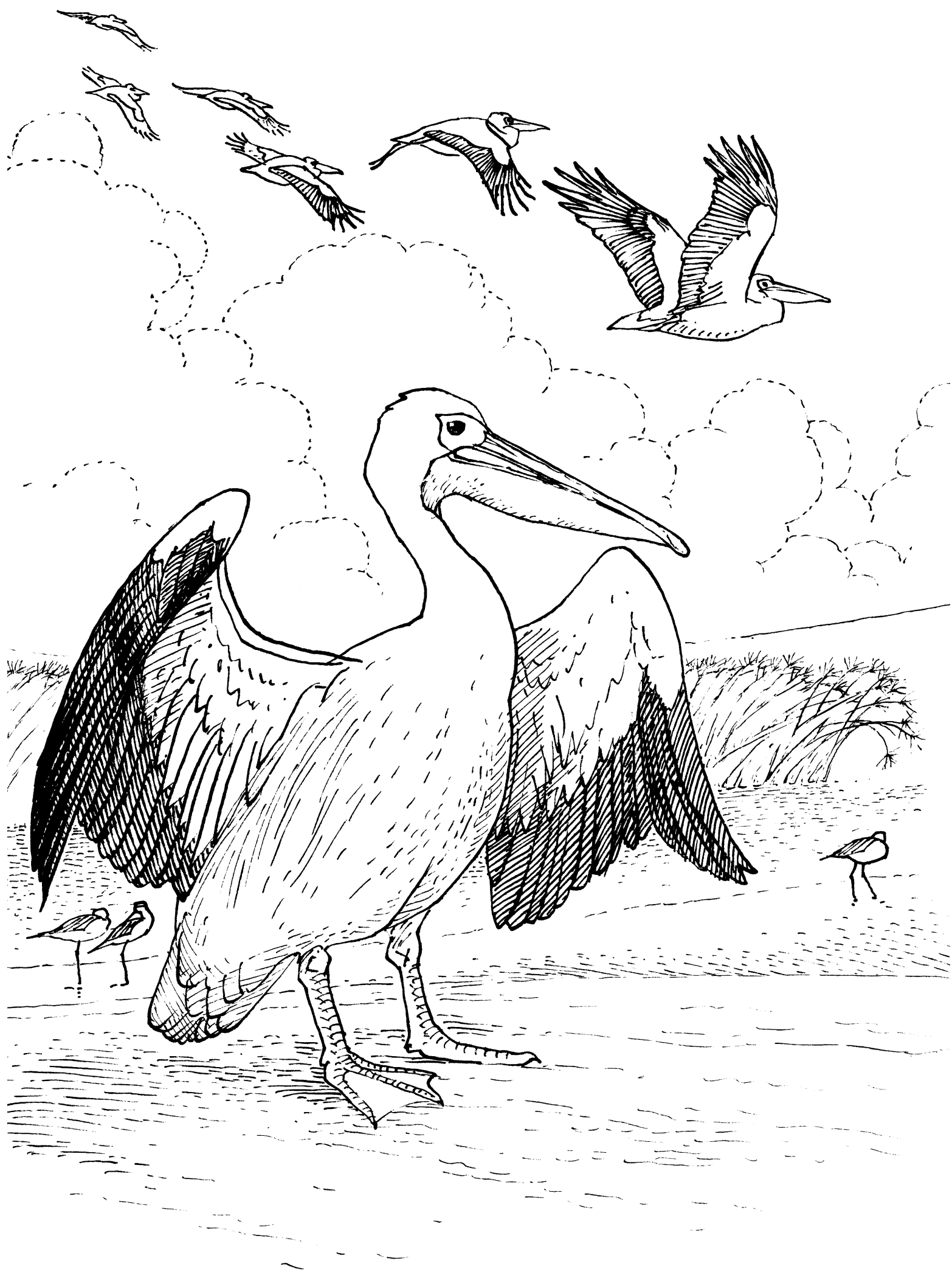
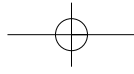


Pelican

‘I am like a
PELICAN of
the wilderness’

Psalm 102:6

People often don't like Pelicans because they take fish. They live in the wilderness away from danger and people so they can eat fish undisturbed. Today, they are getting a bit of their own back, as White Pelicans often fly in Israel to the fish farms for a snack while they are migrating! They fish by dipping their great net-like bills or beaks into the water. They are often seen in groups. In this verse David said he felt like a Pelican hiding in the wilderness, because he was also in danger when he was hiding from Saul.

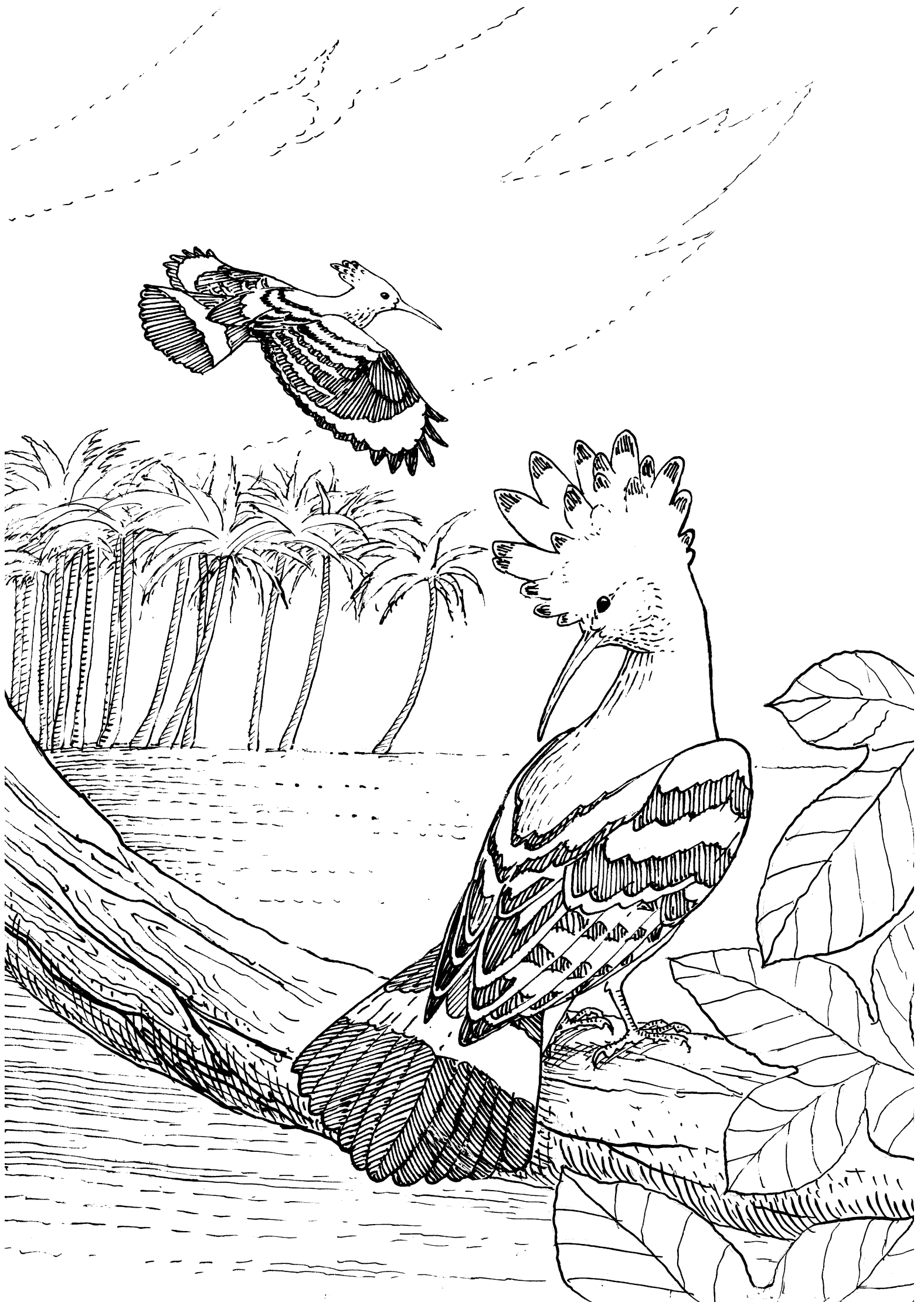


Hoopoe

'the HOOPOE and the bat'

Deut. 14:18

Until recently these birds also lived in Britain. They are very beautiful birds but they have a nasty habit - its nest-hole smells awful! The smell, is probably made to keep other birds and animals away. The smell comes from special glands in its tail. These birds were also described as being unclean in the Bible – maybe it was because of their smell!



Peacock

‘Merchant ships
came bringing
gold, ivory, apes
and PEACOCKS’

1 Kings 10:22

Solomon’s fleets of ships brought lots of riches and treasures from other lands, mainly India. The wonderful tail of the peacock is very beautiful. It reminds us that God made all the beautiful birds and that they did not evolve or develop from other creatures. How could such an amazing, beautifully decorated tail happen by accident?

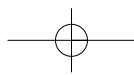
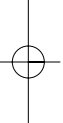
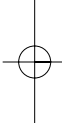
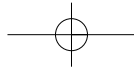


Crane

‘Like a CRANE
or a swallow did
I chatter’

Isaiah 38:14

Cranes are large and beautiful birds, found in many parts of the world. They have the most wonderful calls – they sound a bit like a bugle. Their call is made by special windpipes. Cranes can be heard almost anywhere where there are wildernesses and wetlands. Another unusual feature of this group of birds is that they dance. In the picture, these two Common Cranes are dancing in the Hula Valley, where they are spending winter. When King Hezekiah thought he was dying, he spoke the words in the verse above. He was remembering the days when he was well and could chatter like the birds.



Sparrow

‘...knows when every
SPARROW falls...yet
you are worth more
than many sparrows’

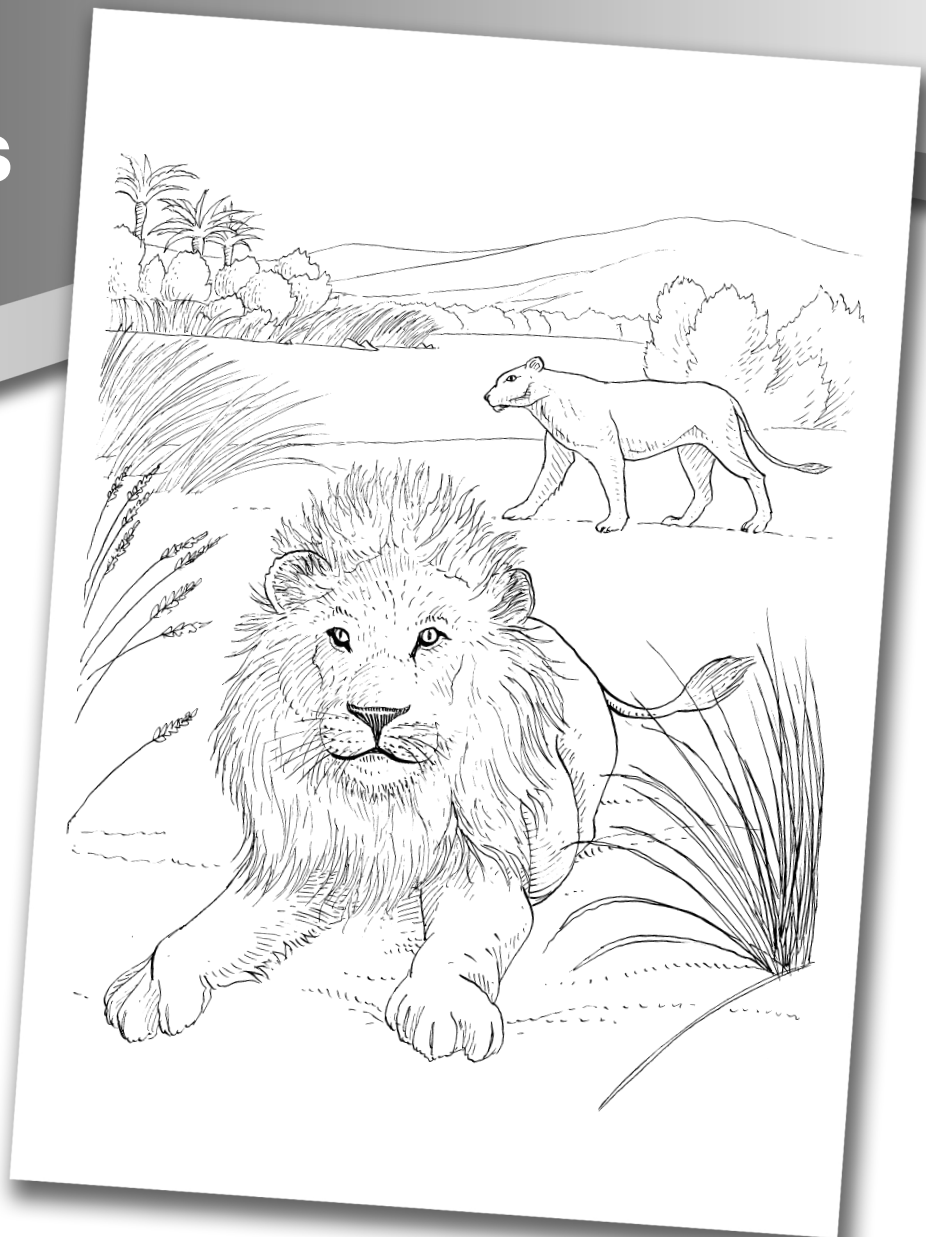
Matt 10:29, 31

The cheery House Sparrow is found almost everywhere in the world - especially in Britain. They enjoy eating crops and seed-bearing plants. Jesus reminded us about sparrows when he wanted to teach about his faithfulness to those who believed in him. He said that just as he cares for the little sparrows, he cares for us. He knows everything about us - he even knows how many hairs we have on our heads!



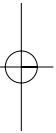
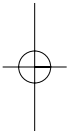
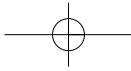
Also in this series

Lion



The lion is often called a king among the beasts or animals. It is mighty and strong and should be feared (they can be very dangerous). This is only since the Fall when Adam and Eve sinned against God. Before that, all Creation was in harmony. This meant that all the creatures lived together happily and did not hunt or kill one another. It will be like this again when the Lord Jesus returns. Until about the twelfth century AD, lions could be found all over the Middle East and Asia, as well as in Africa. They used to like the forests around the River Jordan.

**Find out more in
Bible Discover & Learn – Animals**



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