

COLOR YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

FOLLOW THAT STAR!

A JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM



Hello readers,

You are about to go on a Christmas adventure, joining the three wise men on their journey to Bethlehem to meet Jesus. Each step of the way you get to decide how the story goes. Keep an eye out for twists and turns—it all depends on you!

You step inside your home, and see your Uncle Casper talking with your parents. He turns to you. "I'm going on a two month trip from Babylon to Jerusalem and want you to come with me to help care for the animals. Your parents have already said yes. Would you like to come?"

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" you say.

"Splendid," says Uncle Casper. "My friends Melchior and Balthasar are coming along, too. I need you to deliver a note to both of them."

The adventure is about to begin. Do you deliver the message to Melchior first or Balthasar first? The choice is up to you!



If you go to Melchior's house, turn to page 5

If you go to Balthasar's house, turn to page 6



You find Melchior studying a table full of maps. “Hi Melchior, I have a note for you from Uncle Casper.”

Melchior reads it and nods. “Good, we’re leaving soon! By the way, just call me Melk, like the stuff you drink.”

You scratch your head. “Don’t you mean ‘milk?’”

“That’s what I said, youngster,” he replies. “Anyway, for our journey, would you rather ride a horse, a camel or a donkey?”

If you choose a horse, turn to page 10

If you choose a camel, turn to page 13

If you choose a donkey, turn to page 8

You find Balthasar in a courtyard surrounded by supplies for a long journey. “Hi Balthasar, I have a note for you from Uncle Casper.”

Balthasar smiles, “You can call me Bart.” Then he reads the note. “Oh good, we’re leaving soon! So, would you rather ride a horse, a camel or a donkey for our journey?”



If you choose a horse, turn to page 10

If you choose a camel, turn to page 13

If you choose a donkey, turn to page 8

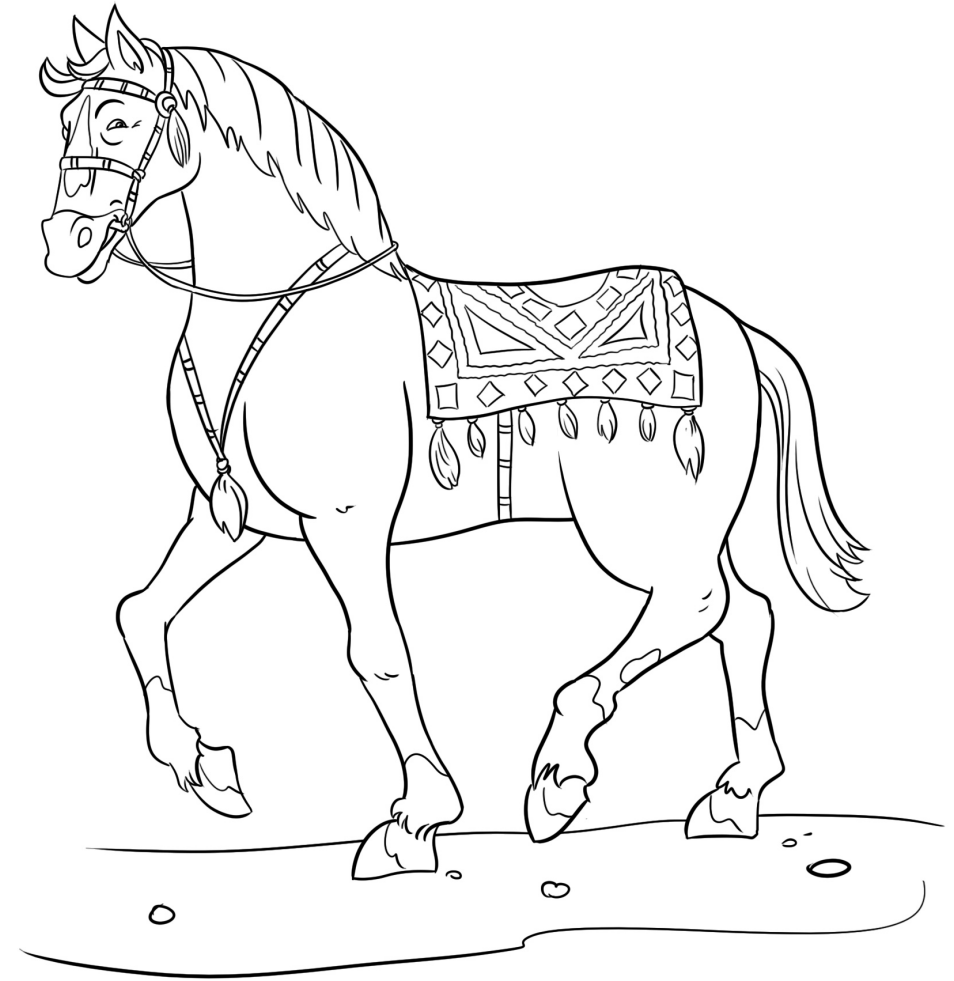
The donkey seems like a good size for your short legs, but the first time you climb on, she pitches you headlong into the street. Better choose a different animal!



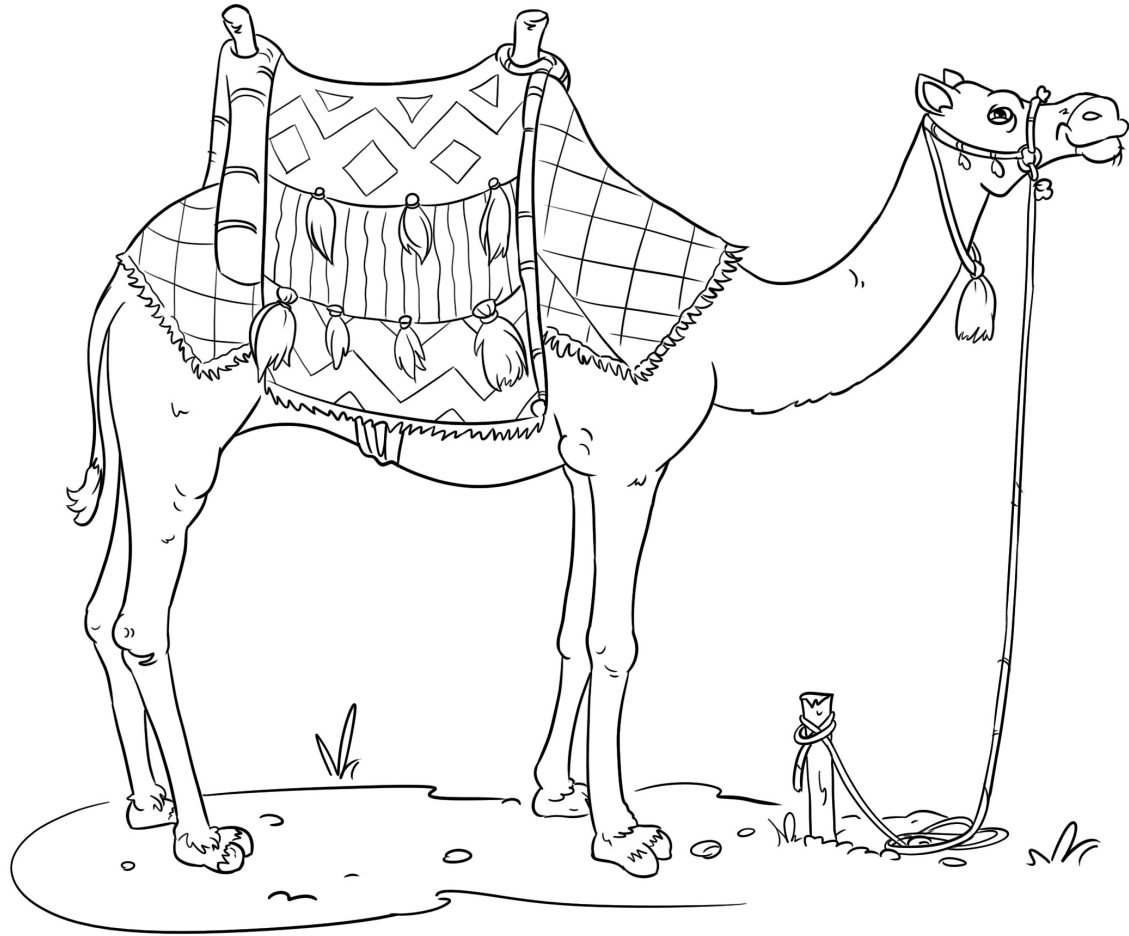
To pick a horse, turn to page 10

To pick a camel, turn to page 13

The horse is beautiful and strong, but she has a bad habit of wandering off. Oh well, the important thing is that you're on your way! But everything happened so fast you didn't get a chance to ask Uncle Casper why you were making this trip.



Turn to page 14



The camel is steady and reliable, but she occasionally spits and it's kind of gross. Oh well, the important thing is that you're on your way! But everything has happened so fast you didn't get a chance to ask Uncle Casper why you were making this trip.

Turn to page 14

“Uncle Casper, why are we doing this?”

Uncle Casper smiles. “The three of us study ancient writings to seek God’s wisdom. We saw a strange new star in the sky that matched a prophecy about a mighty Jewish king. This prophecy says, ‘A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel.’ We believe God wants us to follow this star.”

“Wait,” you say. “What’s a prophecy? What’s a scepter? What’s Jacob and Israel?”

“A prophecy,” Bart says, “is a message that tells us what will happen in the future.”

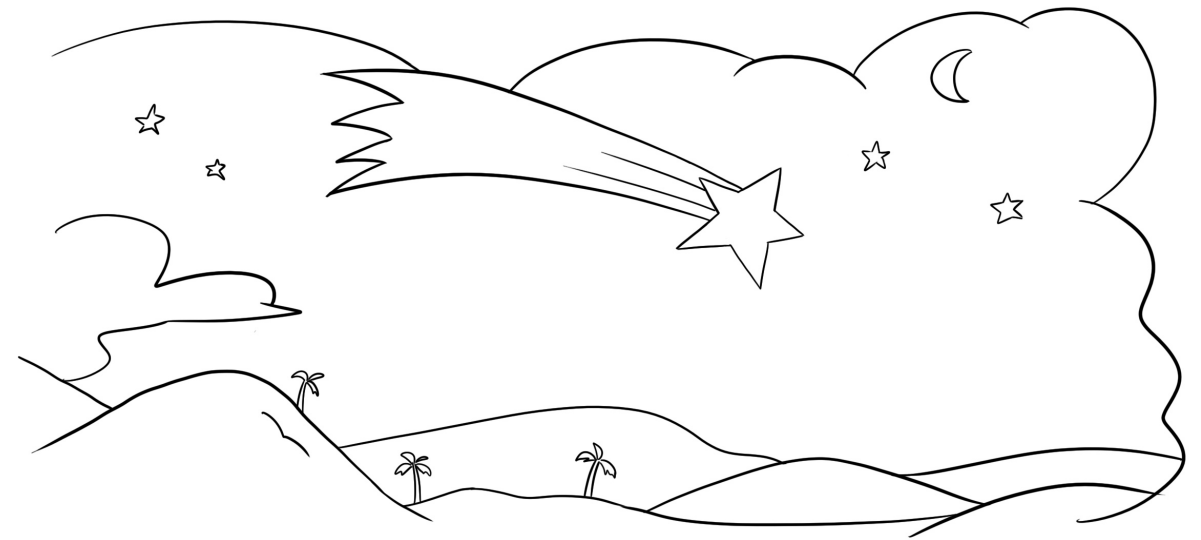
“A scepter,” Melk says, “is a special staff that a king holds in his hand.”

“‘Jacob and Israel’ are other names for the Jewish people,” Uncle Casper says.

You think for a minute. “Okay, so to sum up, you found a message in Jewish writings that says a king is coming, and a star will be his signal?”

“That’s right,” says Uncle Casper. “This King of the Jews is here and we’re following his star, because it’s time to meet him and honor him with gifts.”

Just then you reach the edge of the city. There are two roads. One is slow but leads through a busy town where you can get extra supplies. The other is a shortcut through the desert that will save you a few days’ travel.



If you decide to travel through the town, turn to Page 17

If you decide to take the desert shortcut, turn to Page 18



The town streets are crowded with merchants and travelers. As you make your way through the crowds you hear two people shouting.

“Thief!” cries someone from a market stall up ahead.

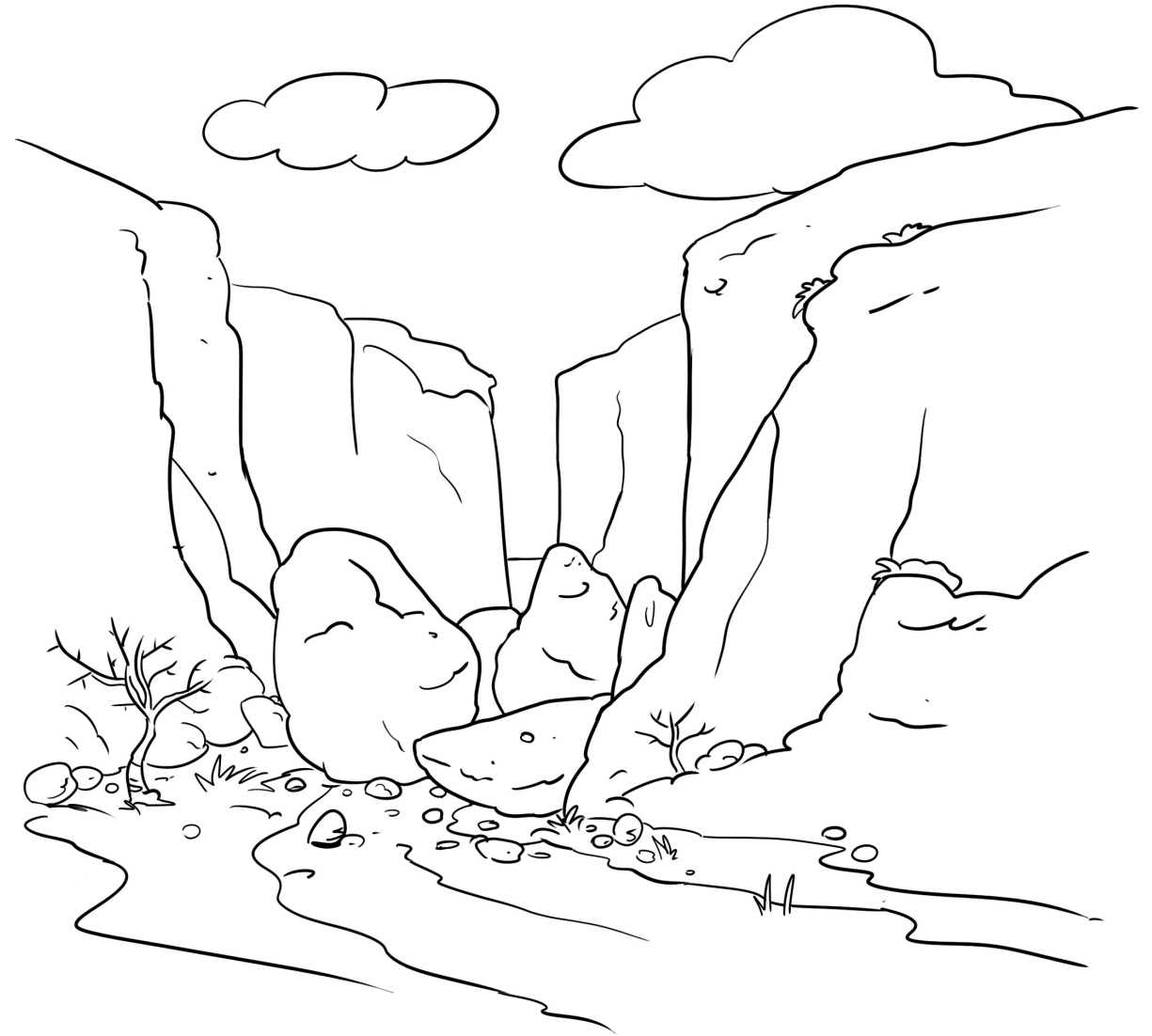
“Help me!” says another from the alley.

“Quick!” says Uncle Casper. “We’ll help one, Bart and Melk, you help the other!”

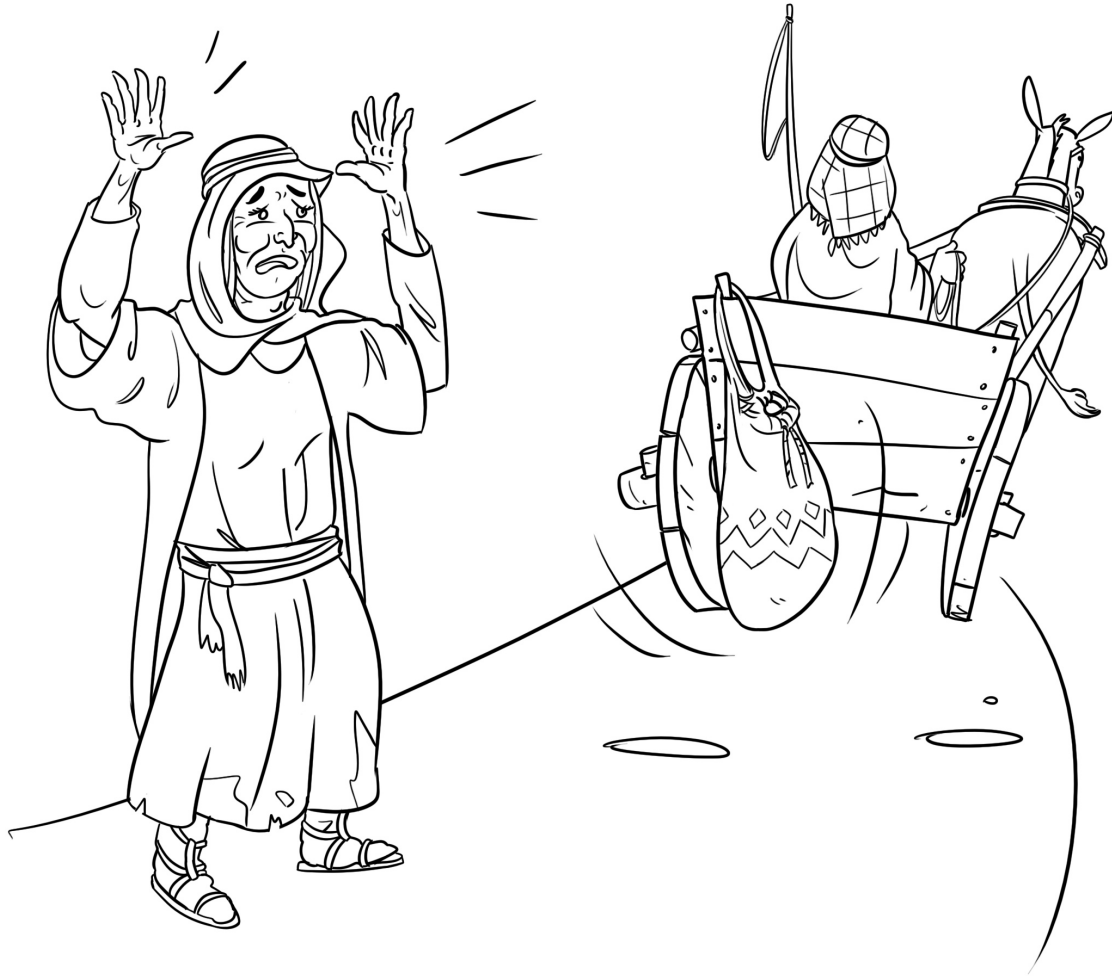
If you go to the market stall, turn to Page 21

If you go down the alley, turn to Page 22

The shortcut leads you to a narrow canyon. However, a huge boulder has fallen down and is blocking the path. You must turn around and take the road to the town.



Turn to page 17



An elderly woman says, “My bag is on the back of that cart, but the driver didn’t stop! Get that thief!”

You and Uncle Casper chase after the cart. When you catch up, Uncle Casper yells, “Stop!” and grabs the bag. The driver is startled, he didn’t even know he had the bag!

You bring it back and the woman thanks you. She reaches inside and hands you a carved wooden donkey. “It was a little toy for my grandchild, but I want you to have it. A gift for helping me,” she says.

You and Uncle Casper say goodbye and find your way back to Bart and Melk.

In the alley you find a young girl in tears. “I chased my ball down here and got lost,” she says. “Can you help me find my mama and papa?”

You and Uncle Casper each take one of her hands and start walking around the marketplace calling her parents’ names. They come running over and give her a big hug. The family has a market stall that sells toys, and the mother hands you a carved wooden donkey. “A gift,” she says. “Thank you for helping.”

You and Uncle Casper say goodbye and find your way back to Bart and Melk.



The rest of the journey passes uneventfully and, before you know it, you've reached Jerusalem. "Now what?" you ask. "Where's the king?"

"Hmm," Uncle Casper says. "We either need to talk to the priests at the temple or King Herod at the palace."



If you choose to go to the temple, turn to page 27

If you choose to go to the palace, turn to page 28



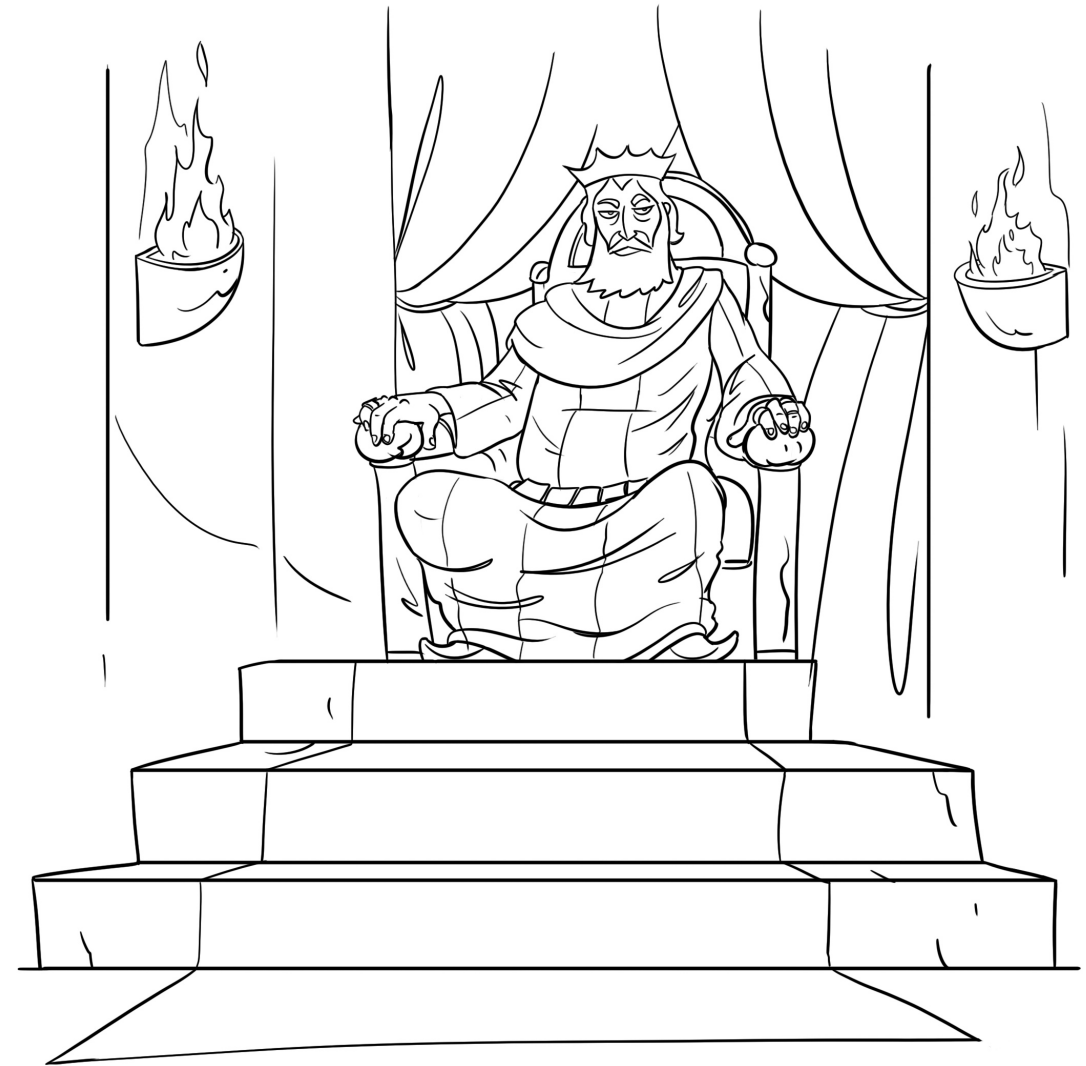
The priests in the temple look nervous when you explain why you've come. "We cannot talk about this here. You must go to King Herod," they say.

Turn to page 28

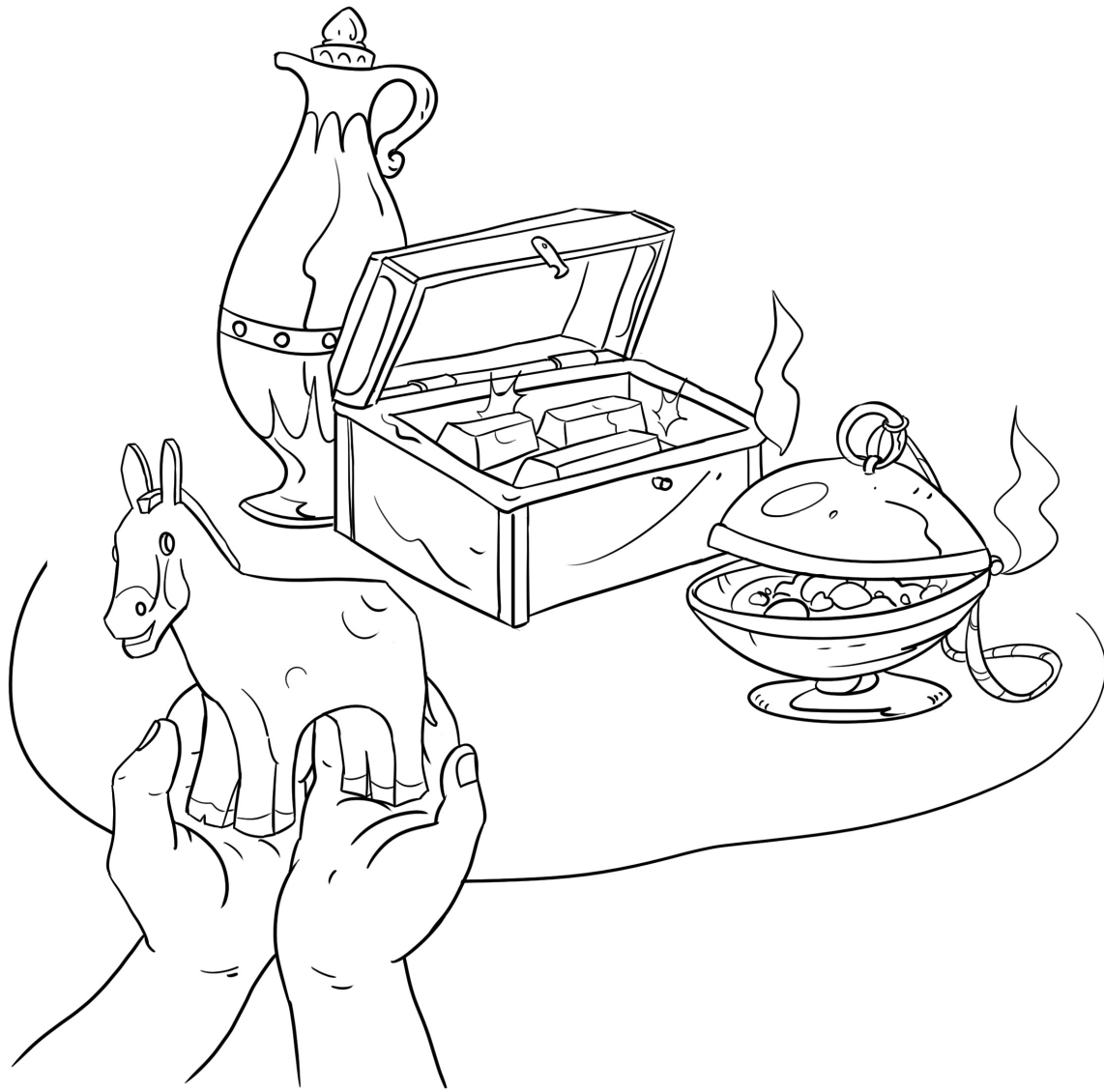
King Herod's palace is very grand, but the king does not seem very happy when he hears about your trip. He asks the priests if there are any prophecies about where a mighty king might be born.

"Yes, sire, 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

"In other words," one of the experts says, "you'll need to go to Bethlehem. But it's not far."



Turn to page 31



As you leave the palace, the great star you have been following on your trip seems to stop over a house. Is this the place where the king is? You see a man hammering a piece of wood outside, and just then a young mother comes out carrying a toddler on her hip. It's strange, but for some reason you know immediately this is the king.

Uncle Casper, Melk and Bart fall to the ground in awe and you bow down, too. The three men set out gifts of gold and two special perfumes called frankincense and myrrh.

You wish you had a gift for the king, too. Then you remember! You reach into your pocket and hand the toddler the wooden donkey. He gives you a big grin and throws his chubby arms around you. "Dank Ooo" he says. "Thank you," his mother laughs.

You can't explain the feeling in your heart but you are overwhelmed by a sense of joy and peace. This was not what you expected—it's even better. Somehow, even now, you know this is no ordinary king.

The End

Thank you for joining us on this Christmas adventure. Indeed, Jesus is no ordinary king! In those days, most kings came riding in on a horse, ready to take over and show how powerful they were by fighting in battle. But Jesus came on a donkey—like the little wooden carving. He came humbly to serve and bring peace. All the other kings from that time are long gone, but Jesus is still King. And like the wise men, all who seek him find him. That means you, too!



**Produced by the
WH Communications Team**

*Story by Emily Morrison
Illustrations by Grzegorz Nita*