

# The Christmas Quest



## A Note to the Reader:

Short rhyming books like *The Christmas Quest* are delightful to write, but I couldn't pack every wonderful detail about the wise men into just a few words. So I wanted to give you a chance to spend a week discovering how much more there is to the story!

As your family heads into another Christmas season, I challenge you to go on a quest of your own—a mission to notice fresh and exciting details in the parts of the Bible you've probably heard about since you were little but maybe haven't noticed before. I promise you it's an adventure worth taking!

Happy questing!

**Janet**

Color the picture of the wise men. They are on a quest to find the new King of the Jews. Who do you think that is?

# Don't Turn Off Your Brain

DAY 1

## Verse

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable.”  
-2 Timothy 3:16 (CSB)

## Did you know?

Every bit of the Bible is helpful to us. When we read the Bible, some parts tell us what to do, such as, “Love your enemies” or every grown-up’s favorite, “Children obey your parents.” (Wink, wink.) Other parts tell us what happened in history, like when God created the hippopotamus or when Jesus walked on water. The Bible teaches that every part of Scripture helps us learn more about what God is like and do the special things God wants us to do.

So when you read parts of the Bible you’ve seen before, don’t turn off your brain. It’s easy to think, “Oh, I already know this,” but if you think that, you might miss something God wants to teach you this time!

Instead, try this: When you read something in the Bible you’ve already heard, ask yourself, “What does this teach me about God? Or His plan? Or how He cares for people?”

Ready to give it a try? Let’s practice! Carefully read through Matthew 2:1-12 because you’re going to spend the next six days on a Christmas quest of your own, and I don’t want you to miss a thing.

**Read:** Matthew 2:1-12

## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for making sure the authors of Scripture wrote all these important things down. The Bible shows me what You’ve done for me, what You’re going to do, and how You want me to respond. Help me to read and listen carefully, so I don’t miss anything!



## Activity

Start by noticing all the important people and places from this event. See what names you can find.

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

WORD BANK		
JERUSALEM	BETHLEHEM	WISE MEN
PRIESTS	JOSEPH	SCRIBES
HEROD	JESUS	MARY

# For Me?

## DAY 2

### Verse

“For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him.”—Matthew 2:2 (CSB)

### Did you know?

God gave different signs to the wise men and the shepherds. When Jesus was born, God gave the wise men a sparkly sign (the star), smack dab in the middle of where they were looking! But to discover what the sign meant by searching through clues written in scrolls long ago, the wise men needed to be familiar with other languages and religions, and they needed lots of money to afford a long journey.

Imagine if God gave a far-away, tricky written sign like that to the shepherds? They didn’t study the stars, foreign scrolls, or religions like the wise men did. And they certainly didn’t have the money to quit their shepherding jobs to take a long trip.

But God made sure the shepherds weren’t left out. He sent an angel (actually, a loud bunch of angels!) smack dab in the middle of the sky where they were working to tell them a message. The angels then gave them a sign just for them. They said to look for a baby in an animal feeding box in a city that was close by. That baby was Jesus!

What can we learn about God through this? Well, God knows all about us, and when He invites us, He’ll make sure we can find Him!

### Prayer

Dear God, thank You for knowing everything about us so that when You invite us, You make sure we can find You! Please help the special people in my life who don’t know You yet find You soon.

### Activity

Circle the words that describe the sign given to the shepherds.

Put a rectangle around the words that describe the sign given to the wise men.

SILENT

SPOKEN

TRICKY

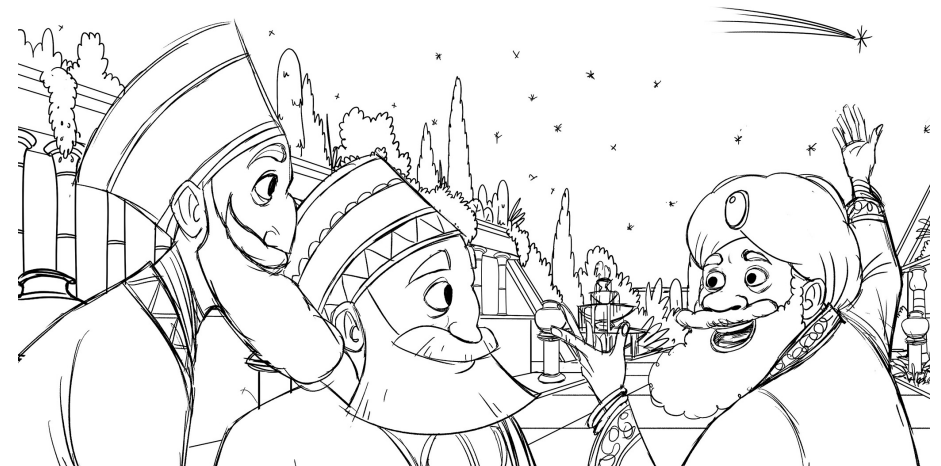
LOUD

WRITTEN

EASY

FAR

NEAR





# This Way Please

## DAY 3

### Verse

“I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.”

—Numbers 24:17 (ESV)

### Did you know?

The star that directed the wise men didn’t move in the sky until the last little bit of their trip. If it were moving in front of them the whole time, they probably wouldn’t have ever gone to Jerusalem, right? After all, the star wouldn’t have led them to the incorrect city.

So what made the wise men head to Jerusalem?

Well, about 600 years earlier, some Hebrew people were captured and taken to Babylon, which is the area the wise men were from. One of those young Hebrew men named Daniel became second in command over the whole kingdom and was master over all the wise men. Isn’t that awesome?

It was likely from the Hebrew Scriptures that the wise men in Daniel’s time and Jesus’ time knew about a star and a king who would appear in Israel. So, with that information and a logical plan, the wise men in Jesus’ time journeyed to the capital city of Israel, Jerusalem. It was not exactly the right place, but close! Thankfully, God did some special things to make sure the wise men made it the rest of the way to Jesus. (You have to come back tomorrow to find out what!)

### Prayer

Dear God, thank You that Daniel told other people about You so that the wise men 600 years later could find Jesus. Please help me tell others about You too, so that if they’re trying to find You, they’ll know the way.

### Activity

After he was captured and taken away to a foreign land, which Hebrew young man became the master over all the wise men in his region about 600 years before Jesus was born?

Unscramble the letters to find out: L E A D N I

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the name of the land where this young man was taken and where the wise men were from?

Unscramble the letters to find out: O A N L B B Y

\_\_\_\_\_





# God Uses Everything

## DAY 4

### Verses

“Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him.’” – Matthew 2:7-8 (CSB)

### Did you know?

It wasn’t only a star and ancient scrolls that God used to help the wise men find Jesus. Do you know what else He used, or rather, *who* else? To send the wise men in the right direction for the final bit of their trip, God used a wicked king. It’s true!

After coming to Jerusalem, the wise men didn’t know where to go. “There is no new king,” everyone told them, confused about the wise men’s journey. At first, it must have looked like a dead end. Can you imagine how disappointed the wise men would have been?

But King Herod heard that they were asking around, and he was jealous to hear of a new king! He rounded up the priests and scribes and learned that the wise men were right—this new king was supposed to be born in Bethlehem.

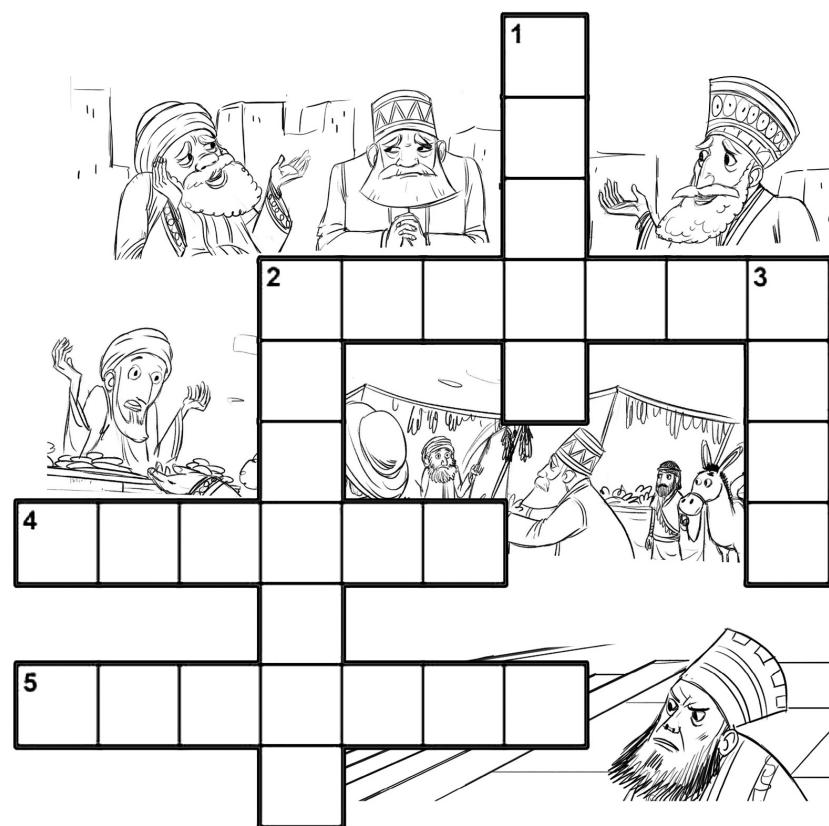
So Herod sent the wise men there to scope it out (although they didn’t know that’s what he was doing). Even though Herod did something very wicked later to try and get rid of Jesus, that didn’t stop God from using even Herod’s jealousy to help the wise men meet Him! God can use everything and doesn’t let anything (even evil things) stand in the way of people finding Him.

### Prayer

Dear God, thank You for turning terrible things like jealousy around. When things don’t go the way I want them to, help me remember that You can use everything in my life for my good, or for the good of people who need to meet You.

### Activity

Find all the different things that God used to get the wise men to Jesus! Ask a grown-up to check your answers.



### Across

- (2) what the wise men and scribes and priests looked in for clues
- (4) the Hebrew wise man who talked about God in Babylon and Persia 600 years earlier
- (5) the religious group that knew the answer to Herod’s question

### Down

- (1) the king who sent the wise men to Bethlehem
- (2) the writing group that knew the answer to Herod’s question
- (3) what the wise men saw that started and finished their journey

# All Part of the Plan

DAY 5

## Verses

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near...” Eph. 2:13a (CSB)

## Did you know?

The wise men finding Jesus was all part of God’s bigger plan. When the wise men left King Herod and started their short trip to Bethlehem, the star that had been way up in the sky started moving in a totally different direction from the other stars! And it did something else—it came close! So close that the wise men could tell exactly where Jesus lived.

Now, if the wise men weren’t part of God’s special people, Israel, why do you think God went to all that trouble to send scrolls, scribes, a jealous king, and a star into their path to be absolutely sure they could find Him? Well, the Bible teaches it was always God’s plan to save people from every nation, tribe, and language around the world. This diverse group of people makes up God’s Church.

So when you read about God making sure that foreign people from far, far away could find Him, smile! It means God was doing something special that He’s still doing today—building His beautiful Church with people from all different colors, languages, and places.

## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for including people from every nation and language in the world as part of Your Church. Please help my words and actions be like a bright light that points people to You so that they can be part of Your beautiful, colorful Church too.

## Activity

Draw a line to match the opposite pairs of what people are like BEFORE finding Jesus and AFTER. Read the Scriptures below to see what the Bible says about our transformation.

LOST	CITIZEN
ENEMY	FOUND
DIRTY	CLEAN
STRANGER	NEAR
FAR	FRIEND

\*Matthew 18:12-13, Romans 5:10-11, Hebrews 10:22, Ephesians 2:13, 19.



# You're Invited—Now What?

DAY 6

## Activity

You may have learned that a verb is an ACTION word. Look at the verses below, and circle all the verbs or actions that the wise men did. Feel free to ask a parent or older brother or sister to help. We need this for our devotional, so get your pen or marker out, and get to work!

## Verses

“After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was—the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.”—Matthew 2:9-12 (CSB)

## Did you know?

The wise men are wonderful examples of what to do with an invitation to find Jesus. If you circled all those actions words, you would have seen that the wise men kept going on their journey until they found Jesus. They celebrated when God showed them the way. They worshipped a toddler, giving Him special treasures because they knew He had come to save people. And when God gave them a warning to help keep little Jesus safe, they obeyed!

Guess what? We can do all these things too!

We don't need camels, but we can seek Jesus by reading about Him in our Bibles and learning in church. We can celebrate by letting our thankfulness show. We can worship by singing about how Jesus saved us from our sin. We can give Him gifts, maybe not gold and ointments, but what He loves more than anything—our whole hearts. Finally, we can obey Jesus by living how He wants us to live. You've been invited, and now you know what to do!



## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for inviting me to know You, just like You invited the wise men. Help me think, act, and talk in a way that shows how thankful I am that You came to save me too!



# So Close But So Far

DAY 7

## Verse

“You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.” – Jeremiah 29:13 (CSB)

## Did you know?

The wise men traveled about 800 miles to meet a king from a foreign country and faith tradition that wasn't even their own. Even more surprising is the people from Jesus' own country, who grew up going to the synagogue (that's like our church) and knew the right answer about where He was going to be born, didn't even bother to take a short trip to see Him. Do you know how short? 6 miles. That's way shorter than 800, don't you think?!

In life, we can learn by watching what people do. But do you know sometimes we can learn just as much by watching what people don't do?

It should shock us that it wasn't the religious people in Jerusalem who found Jesus. They totally missed Him! Instead, it was people from far away—people who didn't grow up learning about God—that ended up finding and worshipping Jesus.

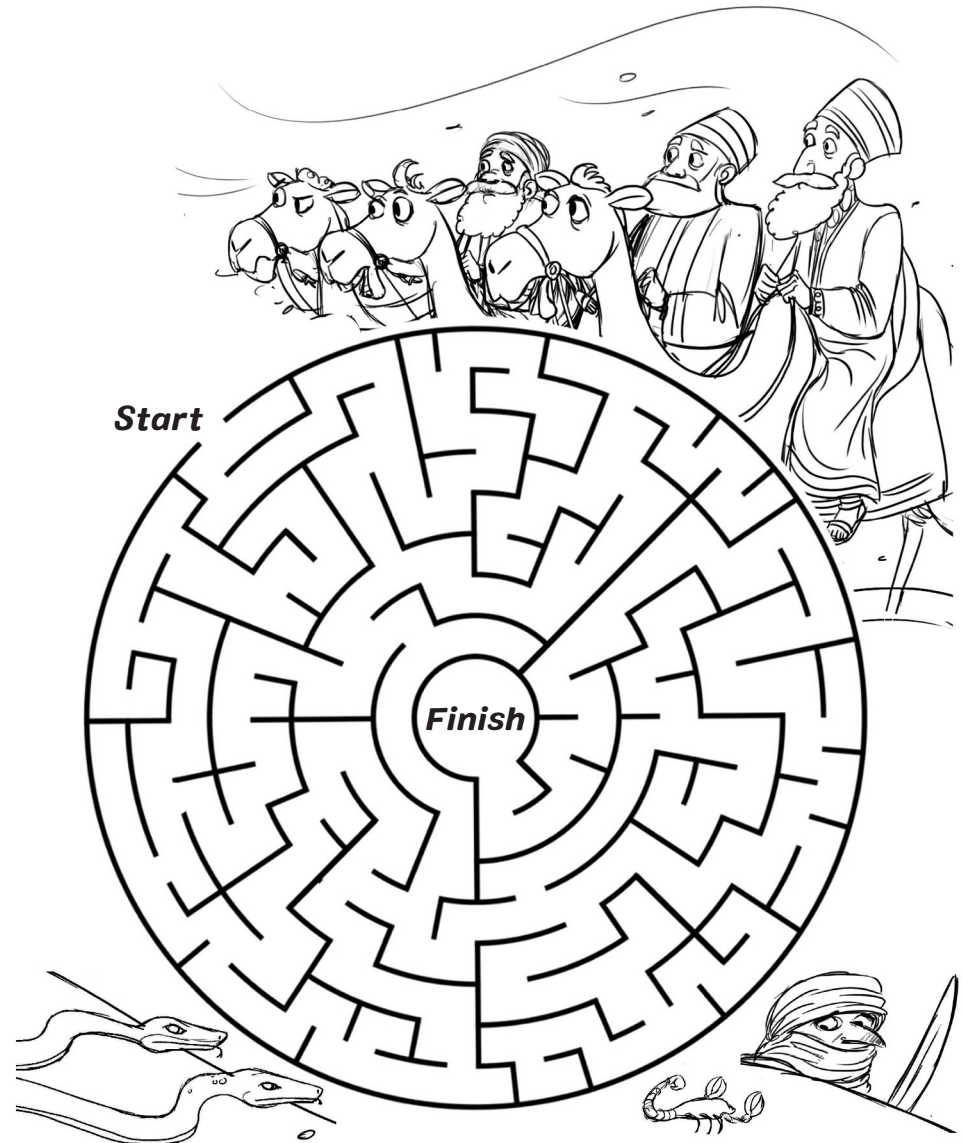
This shows us being a follower of God isn't just about going to church and memorizing truths about the Bible to prove our knowledge. It's about worshipping, loving, and obeying Jesus with our whole hearts.

## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for letting people find You! Help me to not be worried about just knowing things about You with my head. Please help me to know You and follow You with my heart.

## Activity

The wise men encountered many challenges on their way to find Jesus. Start at the beginning of the circle maze and find your way to the center.



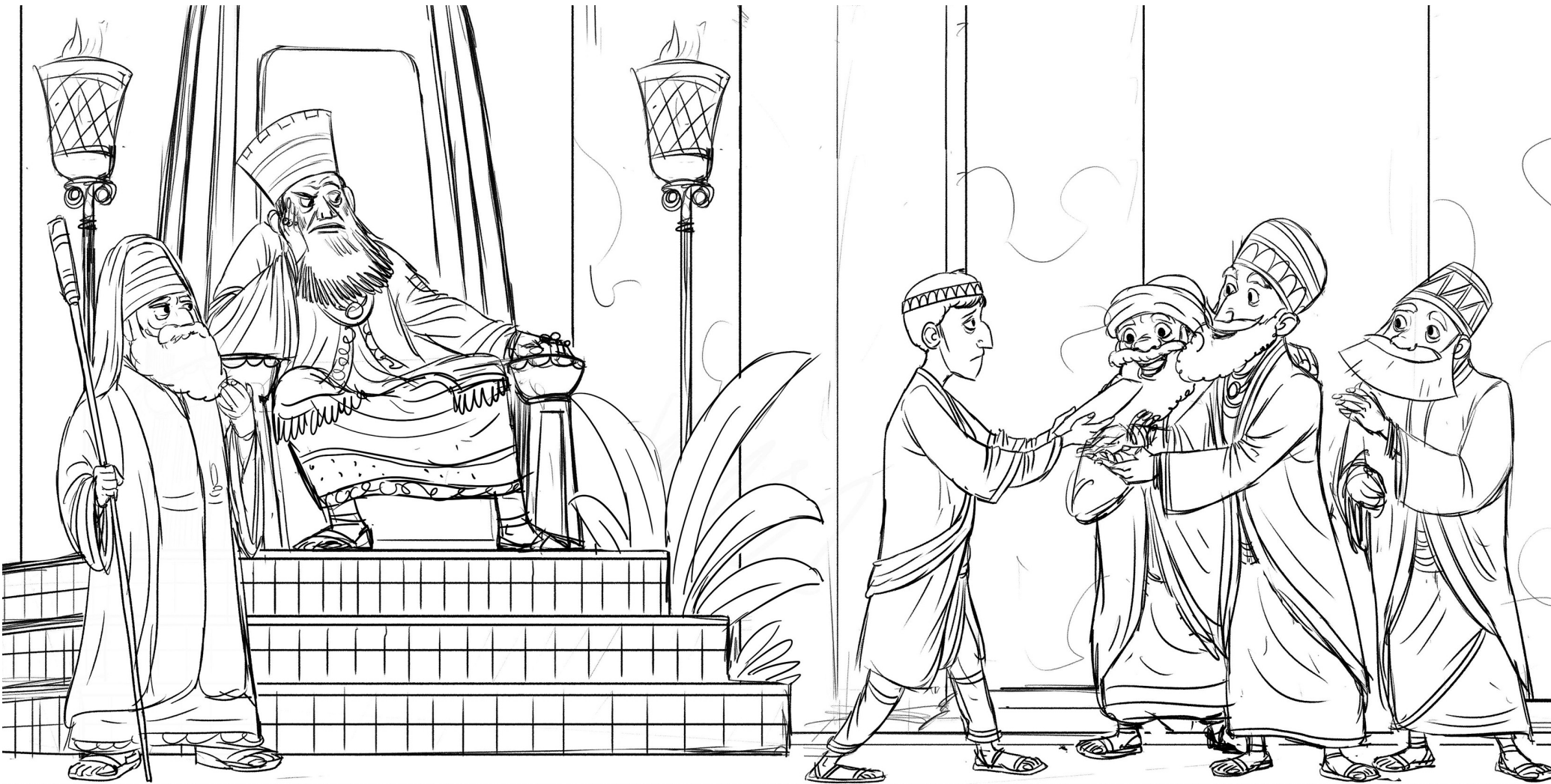
# Matthew 2:1-2

“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him.’”



# Matthew 2:7-8

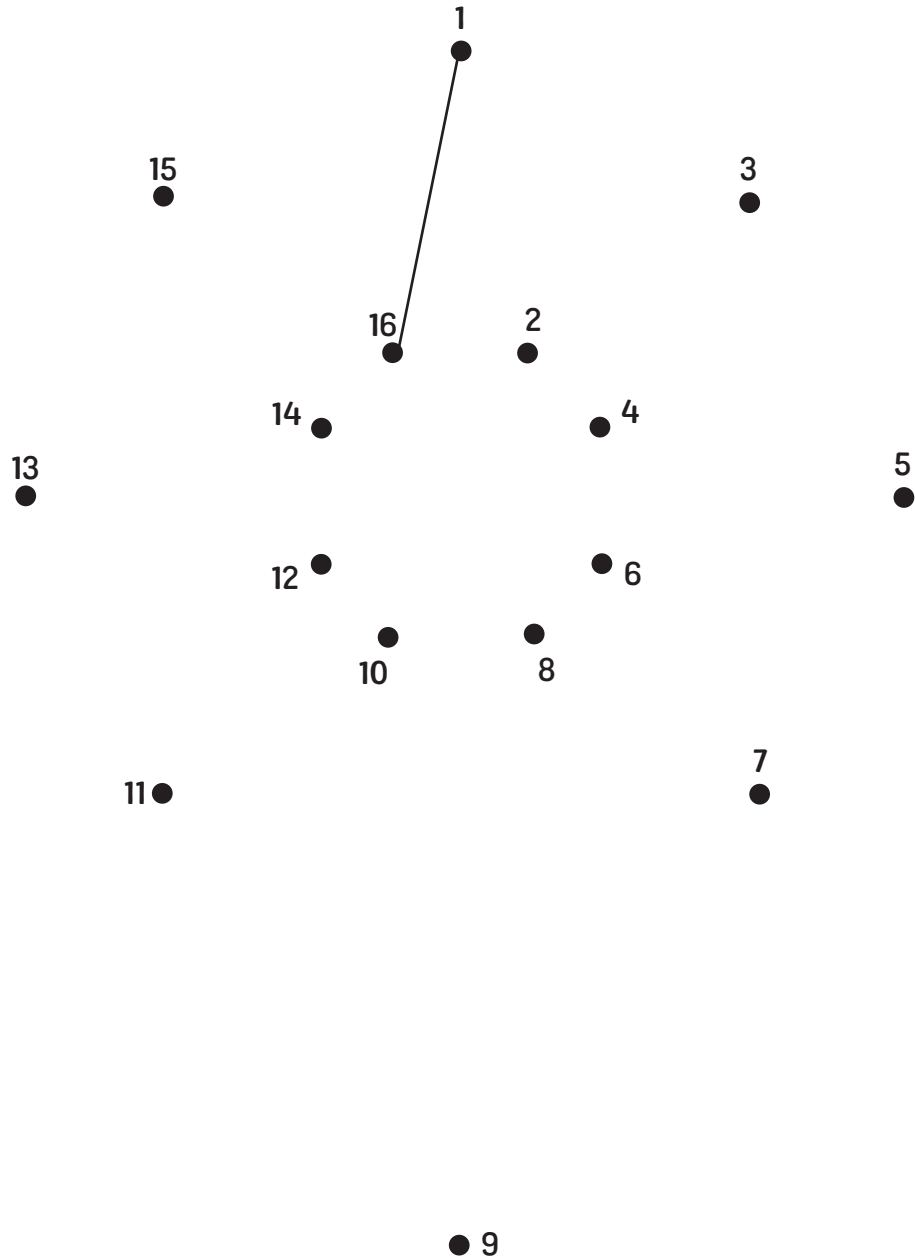
"Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him.'"





# Connect the Dots

Draw lines to the numbered dots to make the star of Bethlehem. Color the letters of the Scripture verse.



Matthew 2:10

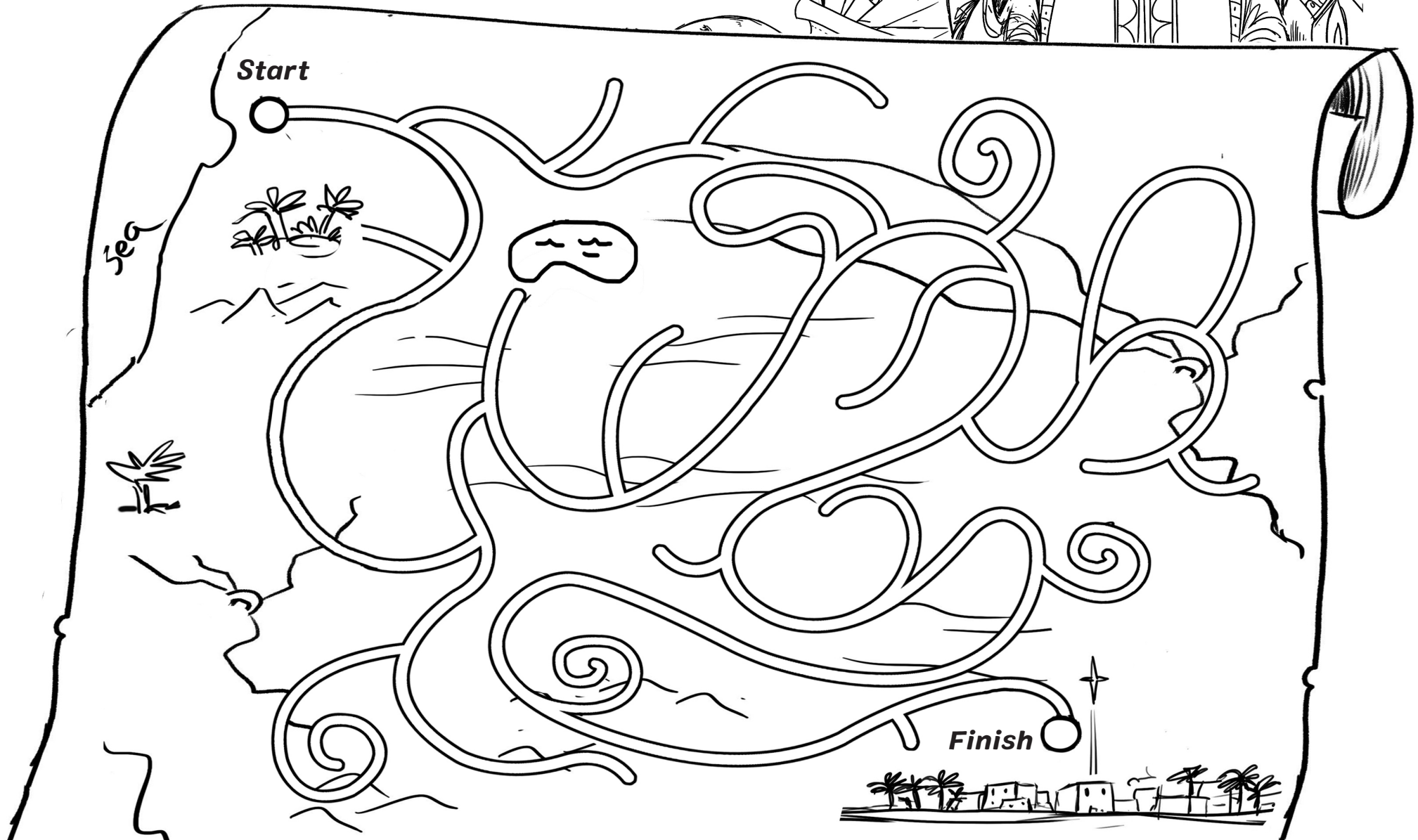
When they  
saw the star,  
they were  
overwhelmed  
with joy.

# The Magi's Maze

Help the wise men plan their journey to find the Savior.

Begin at "Start" and work your way to the "Finish."

Write the name of the town where the wise men found Jesus:



# Decode the Message

Match the symbols with their corresponding letters to write out Matthew 2:11.

✓■✎✓✱☞■✱ ✎★✓ ★□◆✱✓, ✎★✓✚ ✱☸☾






























































































☆ \* ✓ \* ✓ ■ ✎ ✓ ☁   ★ ☞ ○   ◐ ☞ ✎ ★   \* ☞ ♦ ✎ \*:   \* □ ● ☞ ,

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## KEY

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

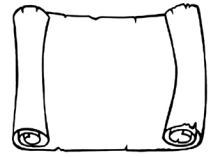


# Treasure Hunt

Parents, use the directions below to set up a fun treasure hunt for kids. Cut out the clues on the right for kids to use as they search.

1. Start with this clue wherever you'd like.
2. Place this clue on a bookshelf or child's book collection.
3. Place this clue in the kitchen.
4. Place this clue in a garage or parking lot.
5. Place this clue on a bed.
6. Place this clue on a front door.
7. Place this clue in a bathroom sink.
8. Place this note and *The Christmas Quest* or some wrapped treats and treasures under the Christmas tree.

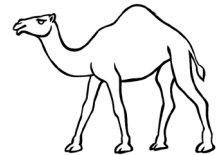
1 We've just seen a star that was not there before.  
How fun! How peculiar! We need to explore!  
We've gathered some scrolls, and we'll have a good look.  
Let's go find our next clue where we'd find a \_\_\_\_\_.



2 Let's visit this new king announced by the star!  
We'll need lots of yummys to get us that far.  
Let's pack our bags well, or for food we'll be itchin'.  
We'd better get started—let's head to the \_\_\_\_\_.



3 To go all that way, we should ride on a mammal.  
To travel through deserts, the wise choice is camel.  
They don't need much water. They walk very far.  
Let's go get our camels where we'd keep a \_\_\_\_\_.



4 We have been travelling, week after week.  
Our bodies are tired. Our bones ache and creak.  
We're thankful for bedtime to lay down our heads.  
Let's find our next clue on a soft, comfy \_\_\_\_\_.



5 On our long journey are darkness and dangers.  
Like animals, snakes, bugs, and unfriendly strangers.  
We keep at the ready our shield and our sword,  
To find our next clue, go and check the front \_\_\_\_\_.



6 We've travelled through deserts, our days hot and long.  
Our camels are tired, their thirst growing strong.  
To give them some rest and a much needed drink,  
Let's find them some water in our bathroom \_\_\_\_\_.



7 Jerusalem seemed like a little delay,  
But God used folks there to send us on our way.  
The star's on the move and will help us to see.  
To finish our journey, peek under the \_\_\_\_\_!



8 The clues God provided have led to the place,  
Where we come to worship and see Jesus' face!  
We're humbled; we're thankful; we're full of great cheer!  
Let's celebrate that Jesus Christ brought us near!



# A Farewell from the Author

Young friend, thank you for journeying with me through these studies! When I first discovered these ideas in my own reading, I was so excited. I sure hope that they made your heart happy too.

This Christmas season, you might enjoy some of the same things the wise men did—stars and bright lights, whether inside or outside, traveling to visit special people, and maybe giving gifts to celebrate that God came to earth for us!

If you do, I hope that every star, trip, and gift will remind you that God knows people, God loves people, and He's still using anything and everything to bring faraway people near.

Have a merry AND meaningful Christmas!

**Janet**

