

Epiphany

The story of the Three Wise Men

Matthew 2





The King of all kings

The story of the three Wise Men, from Matthew 2

FAR AWAY, in the East, three clever men saw the very same star. The star that God had put in the sky when Jesus was born. They knew it was a sign. A baby king had been born.

They had been waiting for this star. They knew it would come.

'He's here!' they shouted. 'He's here!' (And I'm sure if you'd been there, you would have heard them laughing and dancing and singing until the sun came up!)

At dawn, they packed up their camels and wrapped gifts for the baby. They brought their most precious treasures of all: frankincense, gold and myrrh. Special, sparkly, lovely-smelling, gleaming things — just right for a king.

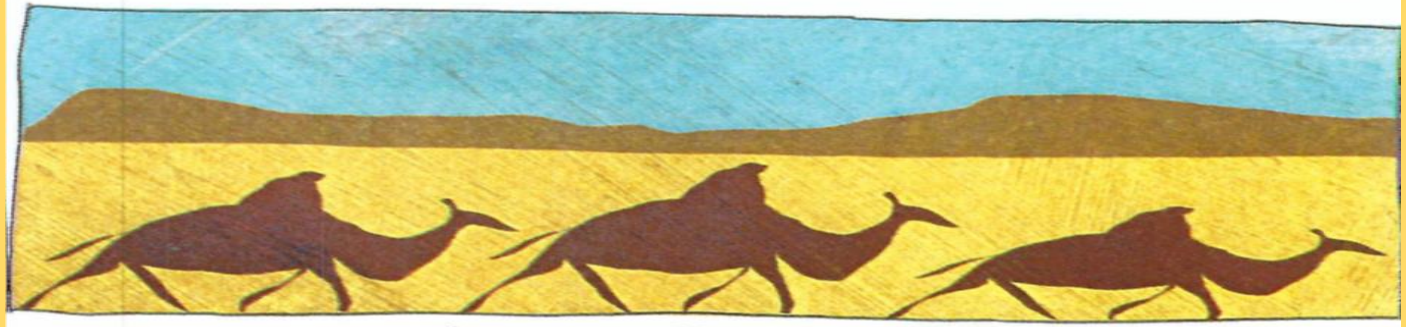




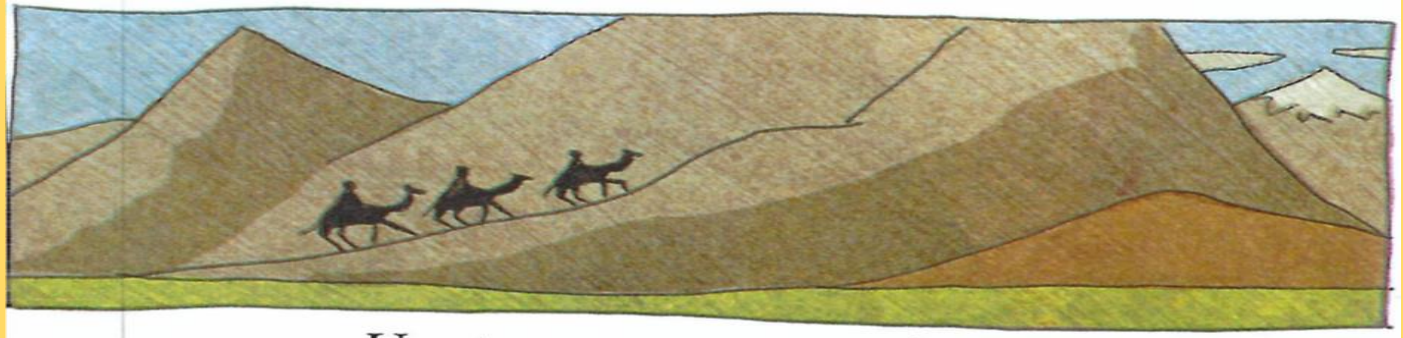
The three Wise Men (actually, if you'd met them, you'd have thought they were kings because they were so rich and clever and important-looking) set off.



They rode their camels ...



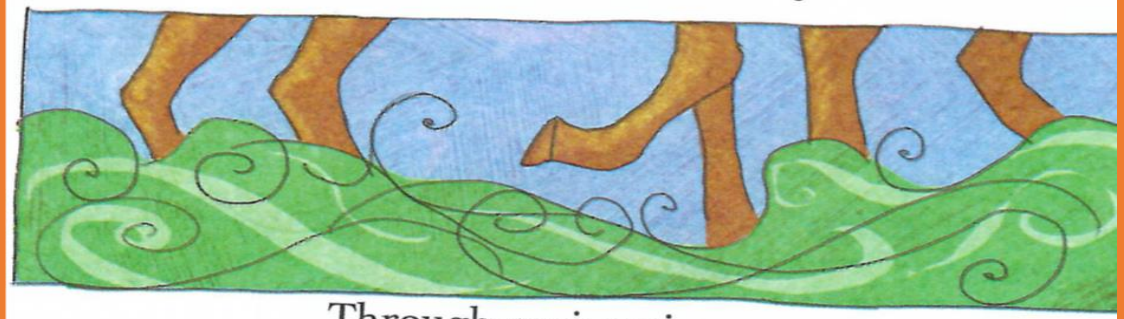
Across endless deserts ...



Up steep, steep mountains ...



Down into deep, deep valleys ...

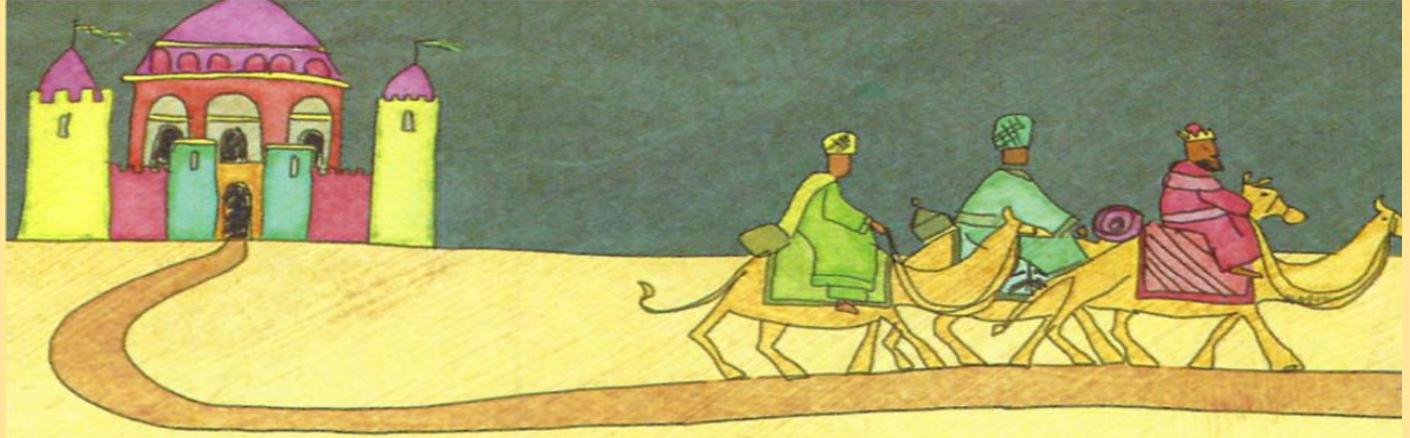


Through raging rivers ...



Over grassy plains ...

ight and day, and day and night, for hours that turned into
ays, that turned into weeks, that turned into months and
onths, until, at last, they reached ...



Jerusalem.

Jerusalem was by far the most important city for miles around and, as anyone can tell you, that's where a palace would be and kings are born in palaces. So that's where they went. But they were in for a surprise.

They went to see King Herod. Surely he'd know where this baby was.

But he didn't. In fact, he didn't like the sound of a new king — it made him cross. He didn't want anyone to be king, except him.

But Herod's advisors told the three Wise Men what was written in their books — what God had said about the baby king: 'Go to Bethlehem. That's where you'll find him.'

Suddenly the star they had seen in the East started moving again, showing them the way. So the three Wise Men followed the star out of the big city, along the road, into the little town of Bethlehem. They followed the star through the streets of Bethlehem, out of the nice part of town, through the not-so-nice part of town, into the



really-not-nice-at-all part of town, down a little dirt track, until it stopped right over ... a little house.

But wait. It wasn't a palace. And there weren't any guards. Or servants. Or flags.
Or red carpets. Or trumpets.
Or anything. Did they get it wrong?

Or was this what God meant?



Sure enough, in that little house — there, sitting on his mother's knee — they found him. The baby King.

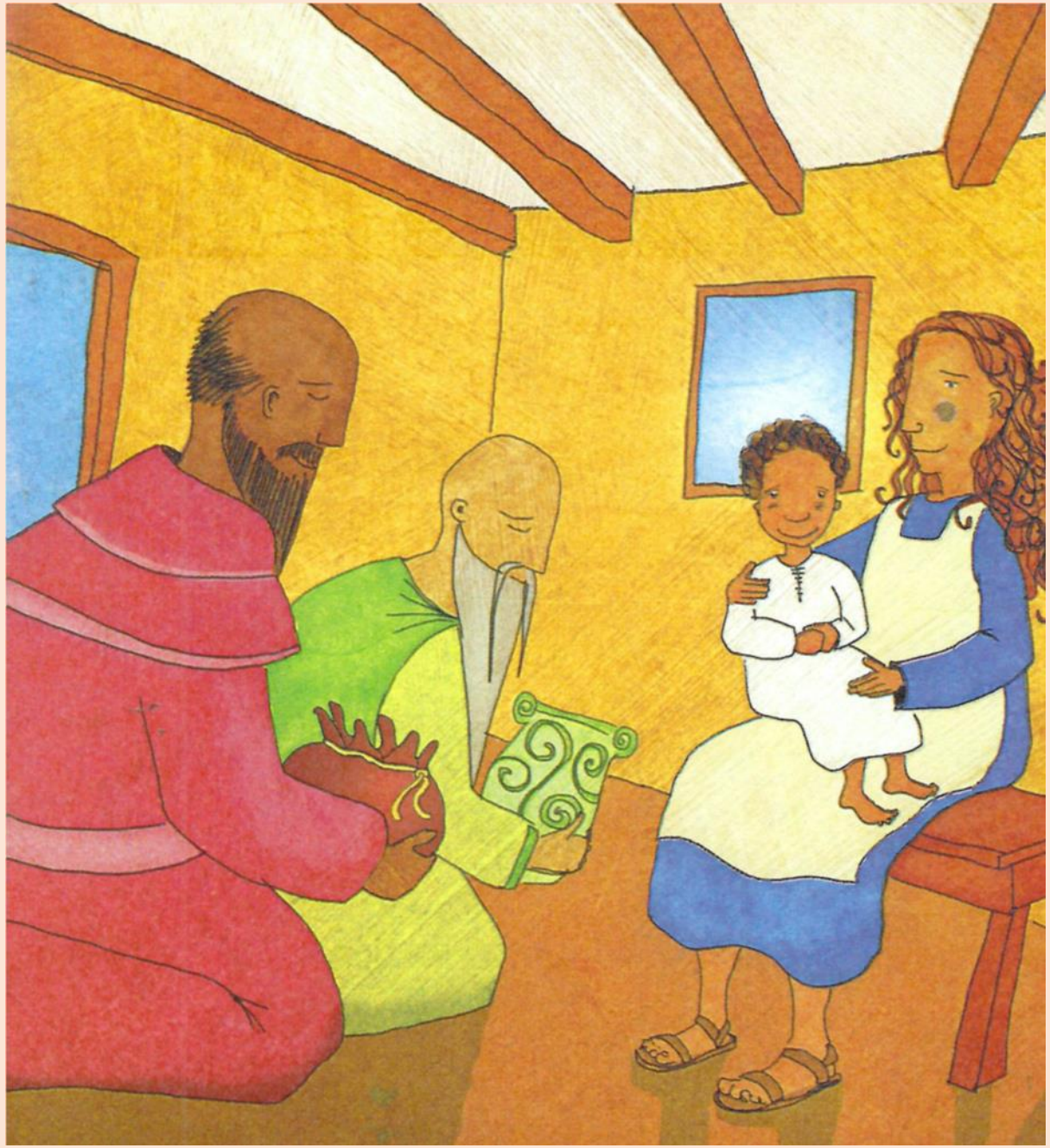
The three men knelt before the little King. They took off their rich royal turbans and gleaming, golden crowns. They bowed their noble heads to the ground and gave him their sparkling treasures.

The journey that had begun so many centuries before had led three Wise Men here. To a little town. To a little house. To a little child.

To the King God had promised David all those years before.

But this child was a new kind of king. Though he was the Prince of Heaven, he had become poor. Though he was the Mighty God, he had become a helpless baby. This King hadn't come to be the boss. He had come to be a servant.





Action prayer for Epiphany

Lord Jesus,
The Wise Men gave you gold;
They knew you were a king.
(Put hands on heads with fingers pointing upwards to make a crown.)
The Wise Men gave you incense;
They knew you were God.
(Raise hands and look up.)
The Wise Men gave you myrrh;
They knew you would die.
(Stretch out arms to make a cross shape.)
We give you ourselves.
We know you love us.
(Cross arms over chest to hug yourself.)
The Wise Men followed the light of a star
to find you in Bethlehem.
Help us to follow your light
so that we can live as children of God.
Amen.