

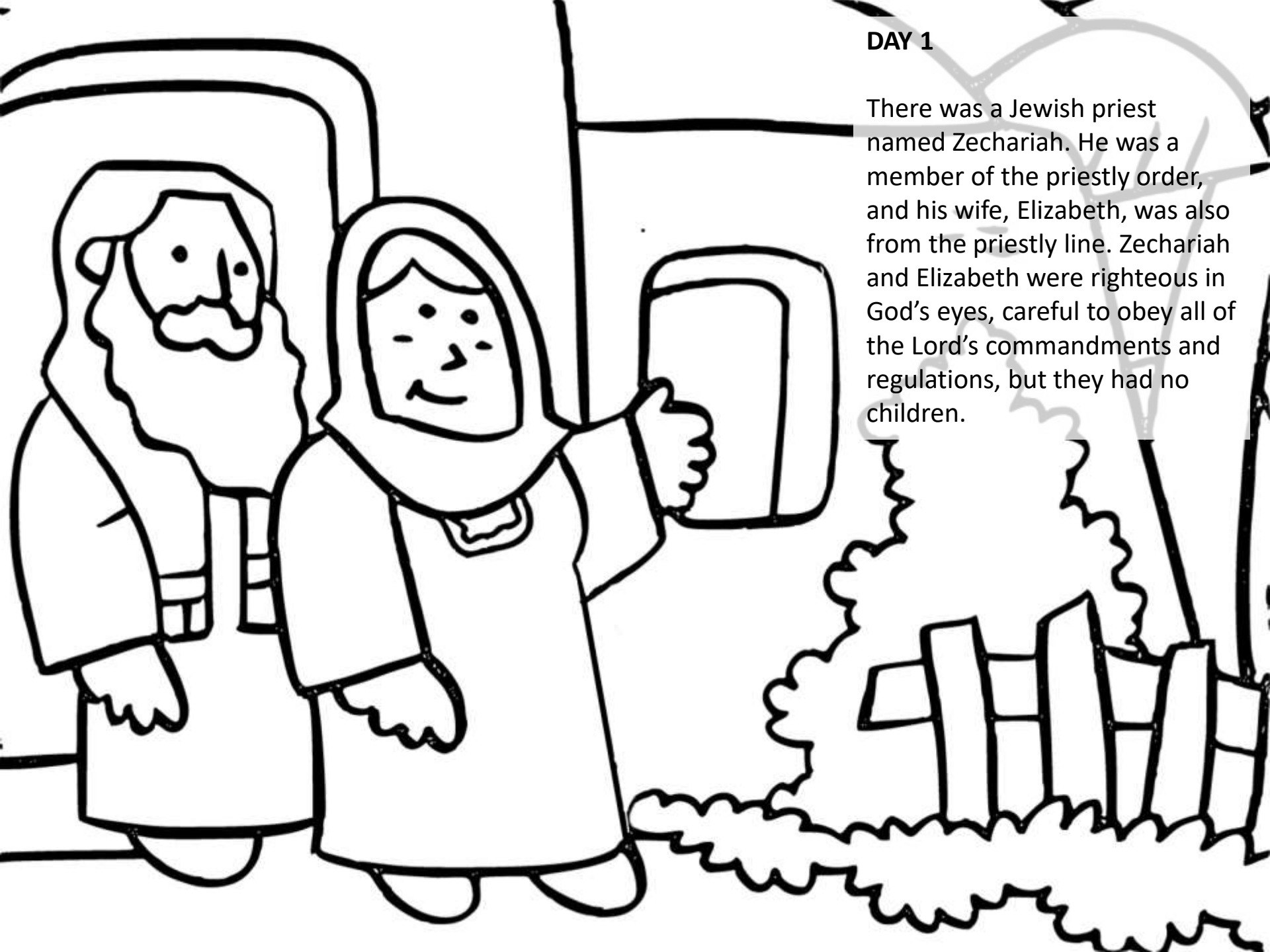
The Story of the First Christmas

Coloring Book



DAY 1

There was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He was a member of the priestly order, and his wife, Elizabeth, was also from the priestly line. Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous in God's eyes, careful to obey all of the Lord's commandments and regulations, but they had no children.



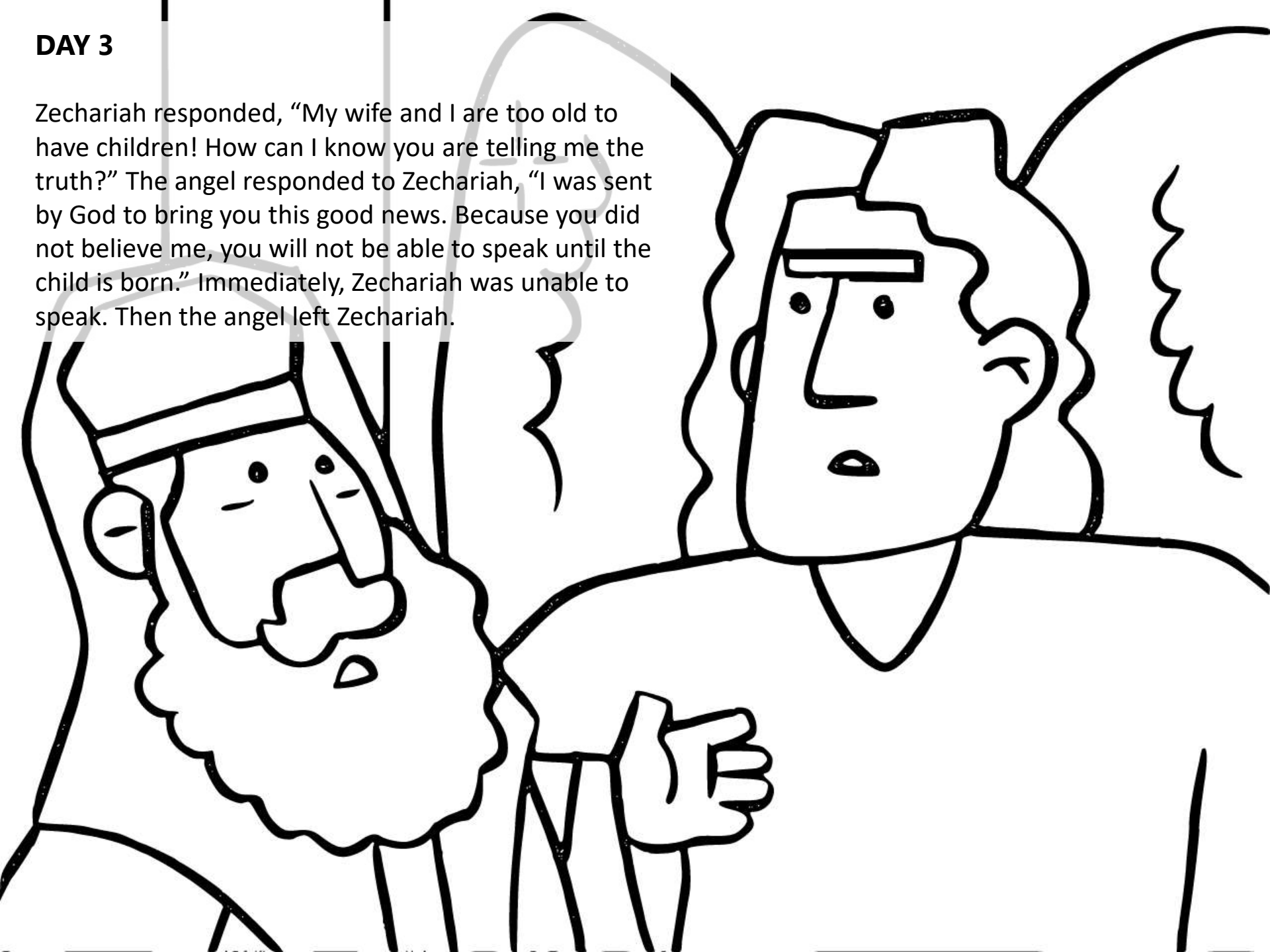


DAY 2

Then God sent an angel to Zechariah. The angel said to Zechariah, “Your wife will have a son. You will name him John. God will fill him with the Holy Spirit, and John will get the people ready to accept the Messiah!”

DAY 3

Zechariah responded, "My wife and I are too old to have children! How can I know you are telling me the truth?" The angel responded to Zechariah, "I was sent by God to bring you this good news. Because you did not believe me, you will not be able to speak until the child is born." Immediately, Zechariah was unable to speak. Then the angel left Zechariah.



DAY 4

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, the same angel appeared to Elizabeth's relative, whose name was Mary. She was a virgin and was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. The angel said, "You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You are to name him Jesus. He will be the Son of God and will rule forever."





DAY 5

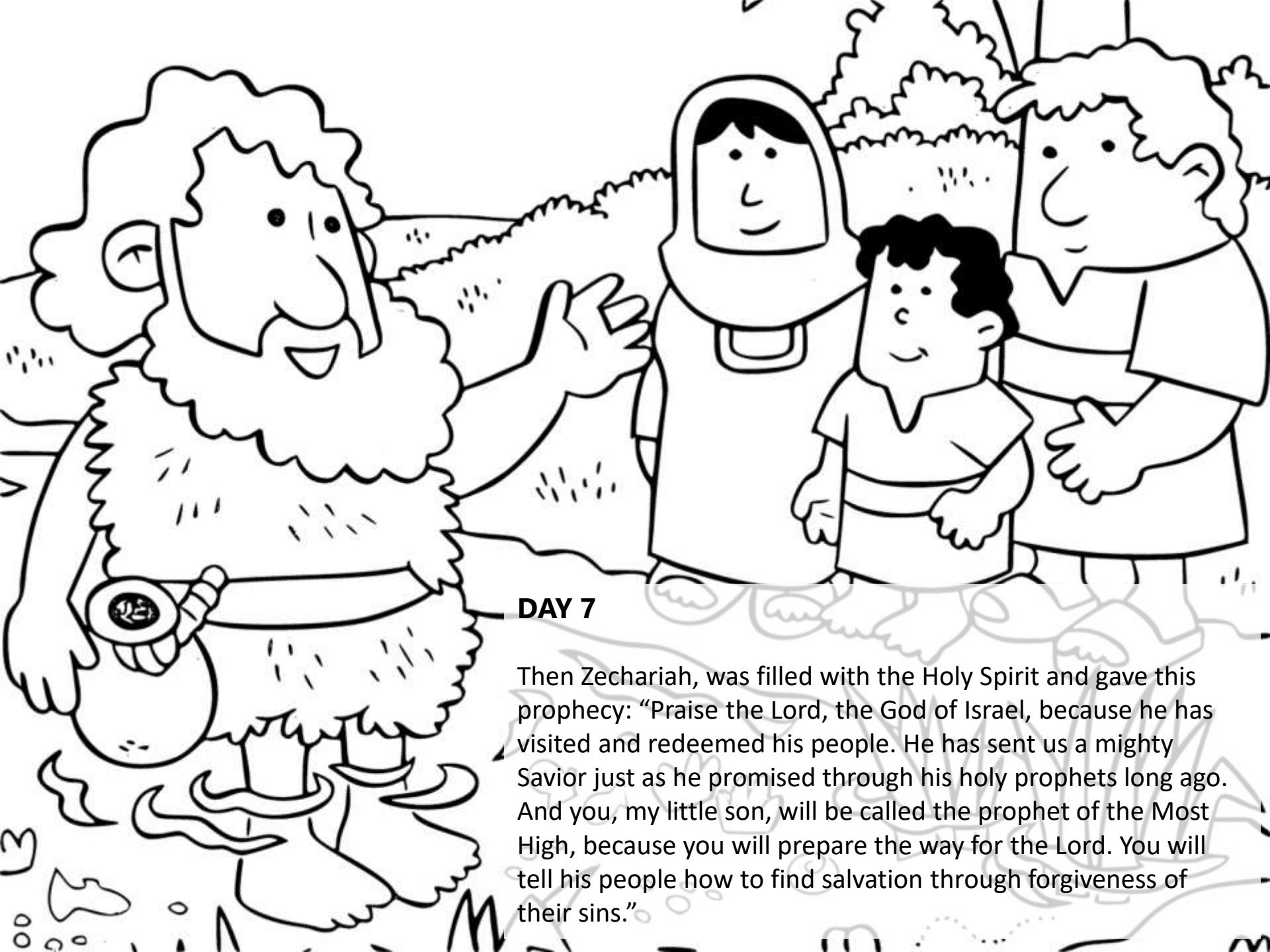
Soon after this happened, Mary went and visited Elizabeth. As soon as Mary greeted her, Elizabeth's baby jumped inside her. The women rejoiced together about what God had done for them.

DAY 6

After this, Elizabeth gave birth to her baby boy. Zechariah and Elizabeth named the baby John, as the angel had commanded.

Then God made Zechariah able to speak again. Zechariah said, "Praise God, because he has remembered to help his people!"





DAY 7

Then Zechariah, was filled with the Holy Spirit and gave this prophecy: “Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited and redeemed his people. He has sent us a mighty Savior just as he promised through his holy prophets long ago. And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord. You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins.”

DAY 8

Joseph heard that Mary was pregnant, he knew it was not his baby. However, he did not want to shame Mary, so he decided to have mercy on her and to divorce her quietly. But before he could do that, an angel came to him in a dream and spoke to him.

The angel said, "Joseph, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The baby that is in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son. Name him Jesus, because he will save the people from their sins."

So Joseph married Mary and took her home as his wife.



DAY 9

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire.

Because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.





DAY 10

Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem, but there was no place for them to stay except for where some animals were kept. It was there that Mary gave birth to her baby. She laid him in a feeding trough since there was no bed for him. They named him Jesus.



DAY 11

That night, there were some shepherds in a nearby field guarding their flocks. Suddenly, a shining angel appeared to them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Do not be afraid, because I have some good news for you. The Messiah has been born in Bethlehem! Go search for the baby, and you will find him wrapped in pieces of cloth and lying in a feeding trough."



DAY 12

Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels. They were praising God. They said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Then the angels left.

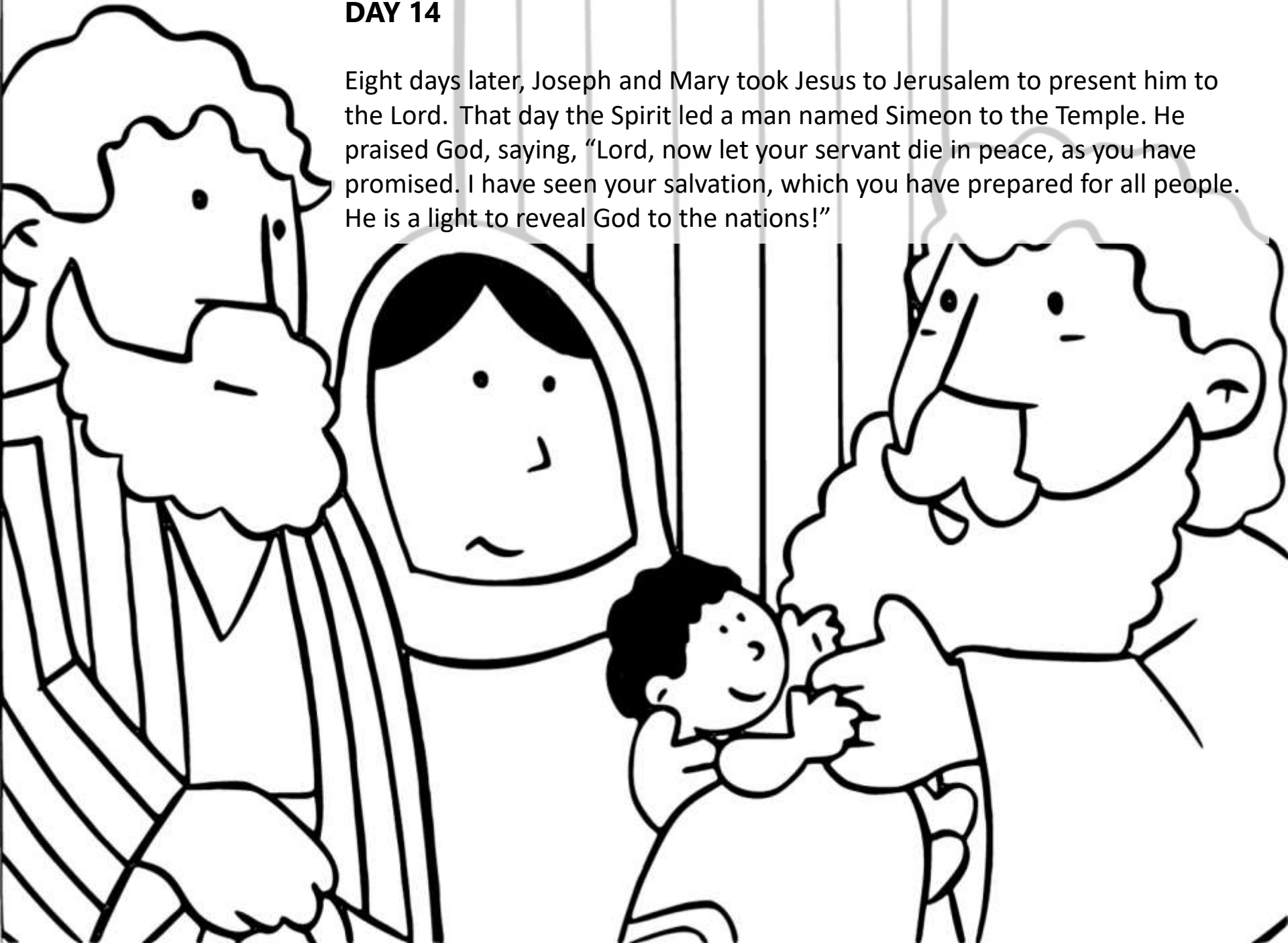


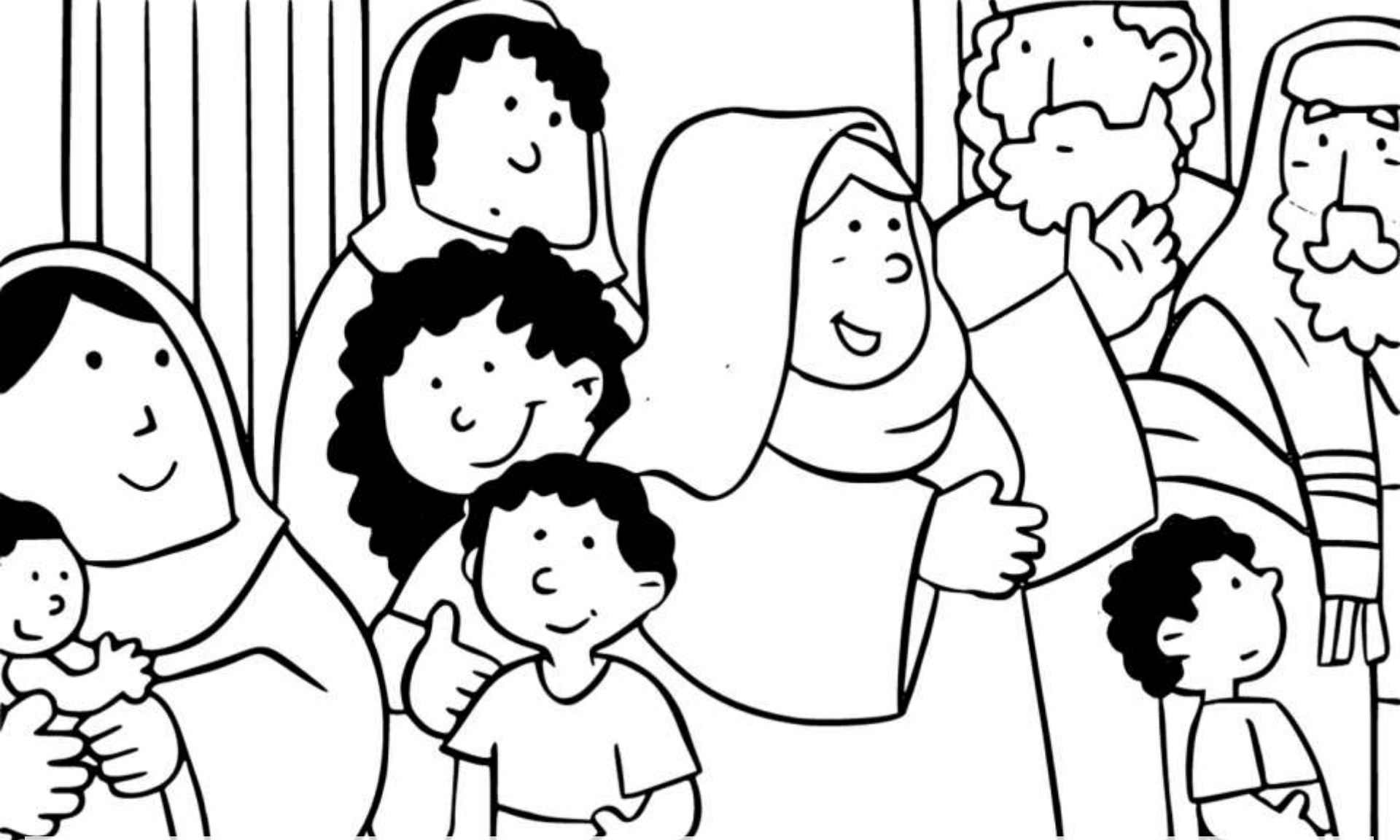
DAY 13

The shepherds left their sheep to look for the baby. They soon arrived at the place where Jesus was and they found him lying in a feeding trough, just as the angel had told them. They were very excited.

DAY 14

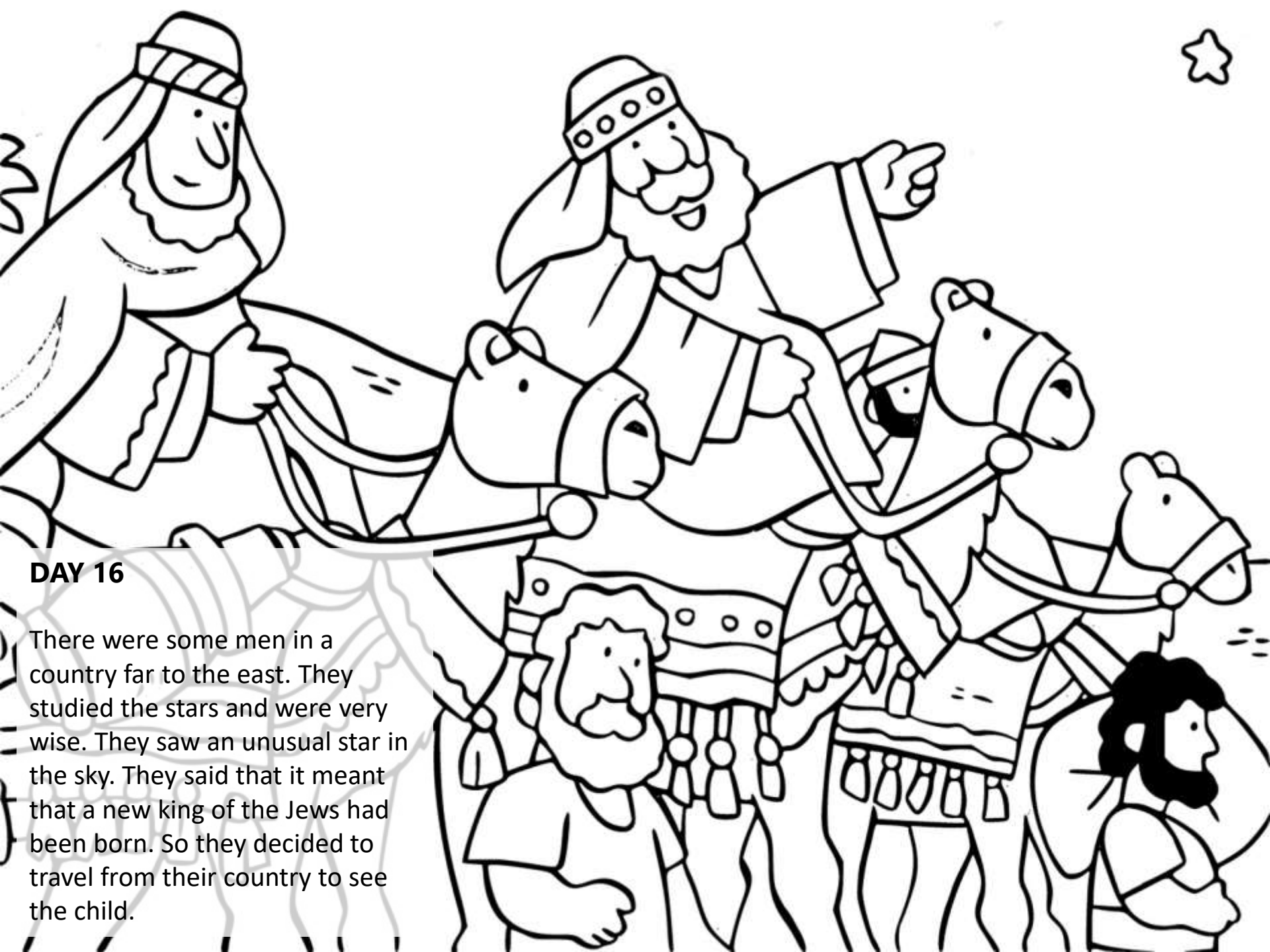
Eight days later, Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. That day the Spirit led a man named Simeon to the Temple. He praised God, saying, "Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations!"





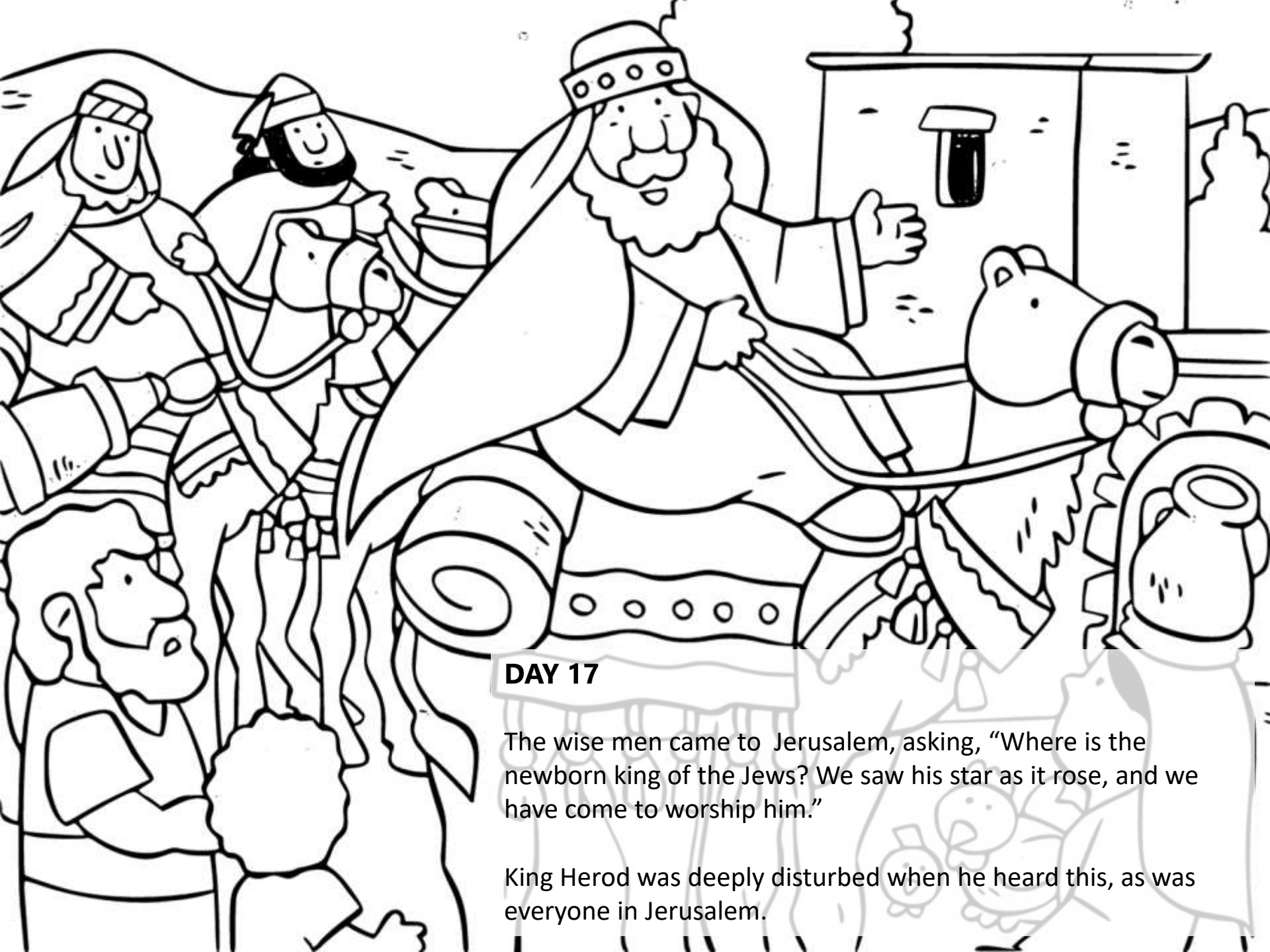
DAY 15

Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.



DAY 16

There were some men in a country far to the east. They studied the stars and were very wise. They saw an unusual star in the sky. They said that it meant that a new king of the Jews had been born. So they decided to travel from their country to see the child.



DAY 17

The wise men came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him."

King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.



DAY 18

King Herod called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote: ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’”



DAY 19

Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!"

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was.

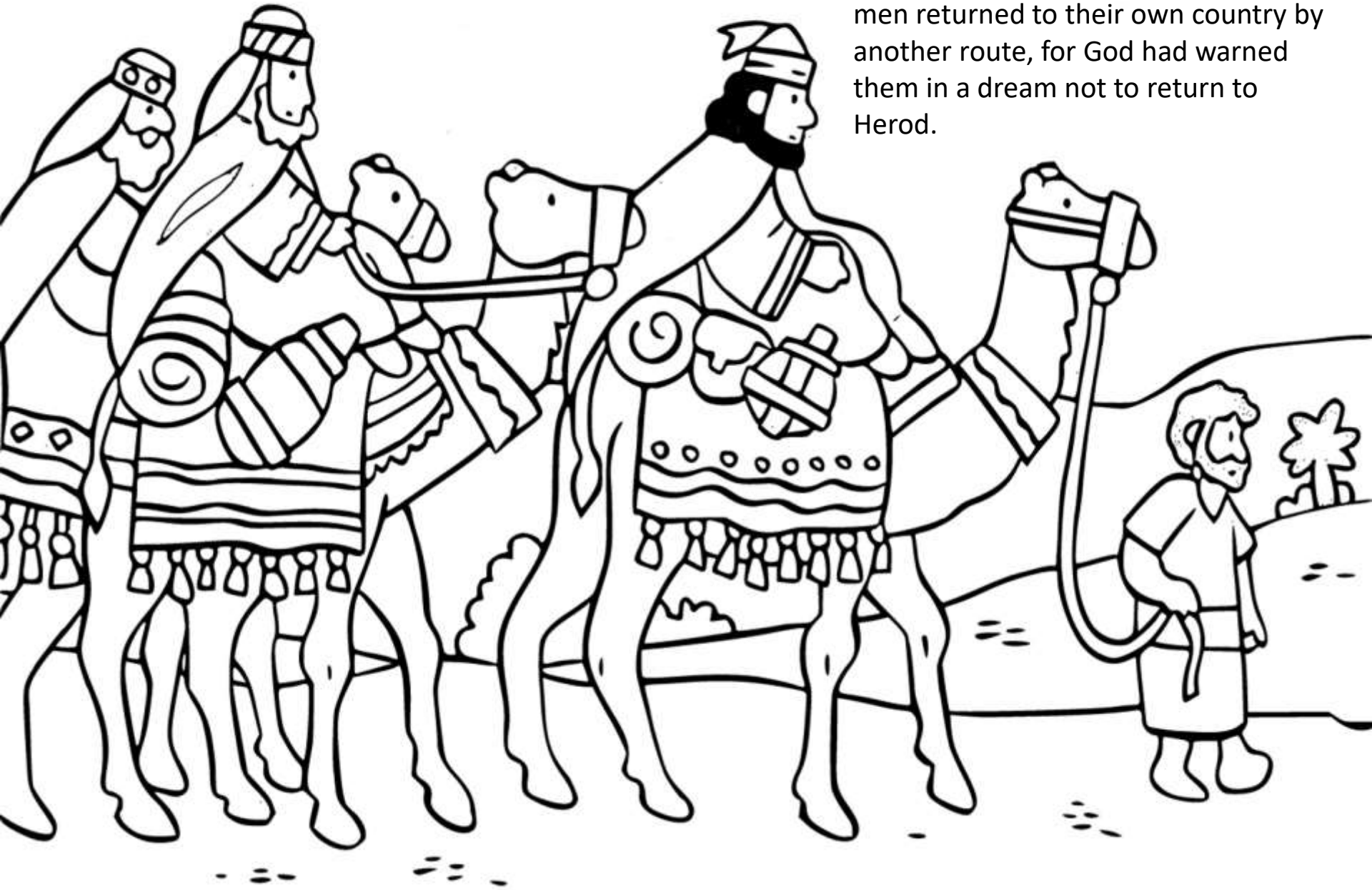


DAY 20

The wise men saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

DAY 21

When it was time to leave, the wise men returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.



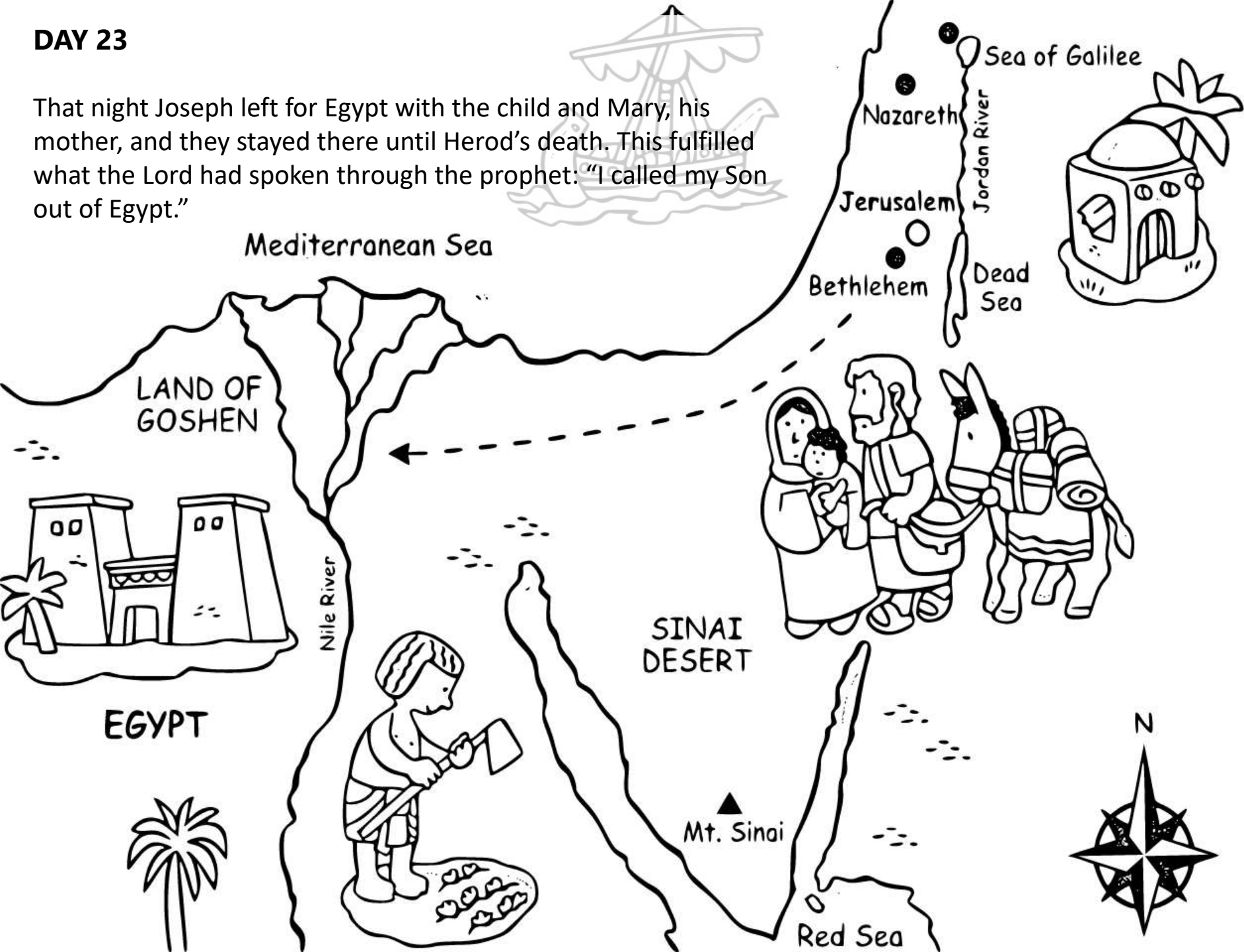
DAY 22

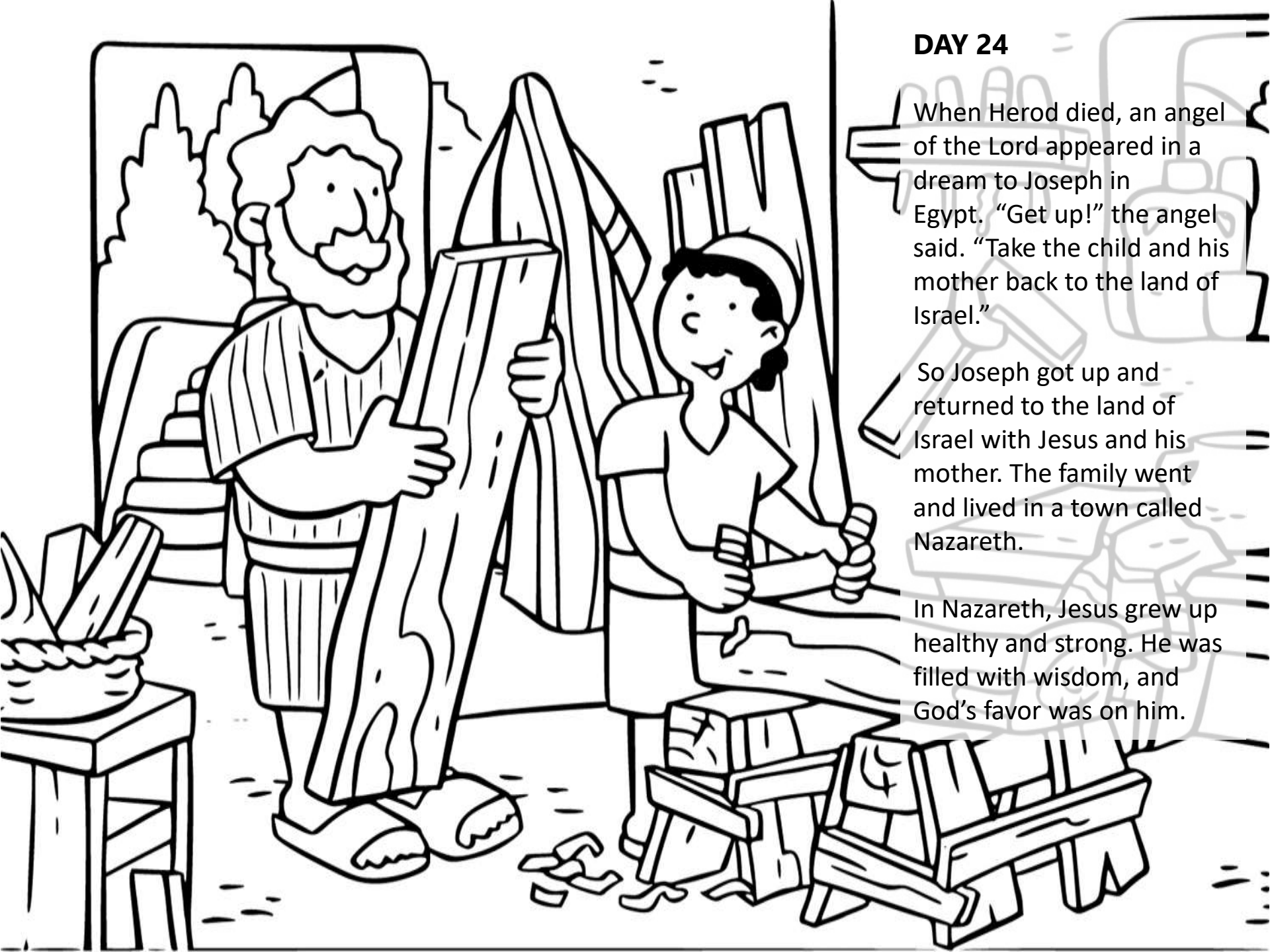
After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."



DAY 23

That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: "I called my Son out of Egypt."





DAY 24

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. “Get up!” the angel said. “Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel.”

So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. The family went and lived in a town called Nazareth.

In Nazareth, Jesus grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God’s favor was on him.

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Art by Didier Martin