

WISE MEN

Matthew 2: 1-12

Why do we call the wise men wise? It is true that they were experts in their field of study, the study of the stars. And, it is true that these men would be considered learned men even in our day. But, is that really what made them wise men?

The Bible says that a wise person is someone that the fears of the Lord. It says that to leave evil shows understanding, Job 28:28. The wisdom of this world is foolishness, I Corinthians 3:19, but if we want real wisdom, we must ask God. He will gladly give wisdom to us, James 1:5.

So then, how wise were these men? Did they possess God's wisdom? Matthew tells us:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, wise men came from the east to Jerusalem. They were looking for a king, a very special king. They had seen the announcement of this king's birth in the sky. The birth was marked by an special star. Obviously, this was no ordinary king!

The wise men went about Jerusalem asking where the king of the Jews was that had been born. Jerusalem was the capital city of the Jews, and the wise men felt sure that the king of the Jews would be born in a place of splendor in the capital city. They told every one that they had seen the star announcing the king's birth and they had come to worship him. Now king's are not usually worshipped, so again we see that this child born and proclaimed by the star was no ordinary, earthly king.

When Herod, who was acting as king in Jerusalem, though he had no right to the throne, heard about the wise men and their search he was upset, along with all Jerusalem. Herod liked things the way they were and he did not want anyone to challenge him for the throne. In fact, Herod murdered his own family members because he was afraid that one of them might take the power of the kingdom from him.

Herod gathered all the chief priests and scribes, the learned men of Israel, and demanded of them where the Christ should be born. All Israel and including Herod, the usurper king, knew that God had promised them a Messiah, who would rule over Israel. But these leaders were not looking forward to his coming as they should have been. They were men of the world and did not care for God or his promises.

The priests and scribes, those men who by title and profession should have been true followers of God and lookers for the promise, were false. They cared only for their own power and wealth. They knew the prophecies of the coming king, but did not want him to come. They quoted the prophecy from Micah 5:2 for Herod, which said, "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

After Herod gained the information that he needed, he privately called the wise men and asked them carefully what time the star had appeared. After questioning them diligently, Herod sent the wise men off to Bethlehem, saying, "Go, search diligently for the young child; and when you have found him, come and tell me so that I may go and worship him too."

Of course, Herod never had any intention of worshipping the new king. His plan was to get rid of the rightful king, so that he could continue to rule over Jerusalem.

By now Jesus was no longer a little baby. The Bible tells us that he was a young child when the wise men came. Their journey had been long and hard and had taken many months. Even though it had not been easy for these men to find the promised king, they had never given up. They knew that to see this newborn king, no sacrifice was too great, and no difficulty too hard. So they had continued on through the months until they reached their goal.

In the end the wise men were richly rewarded for their perseverance. At last they came to the place where Mary and Joseph now lived, and there they found the young child. The star that God had sent, led them to the exact spot where Jesus was.

When they came into the house, the wise men saw the young king that they had been searching for, with Mary his mother. They fell down and worshipped him. Then they presented gifts to him: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. They rejoiced with exceeding great joy, for their search was ended. They had found the king that the heavens declared.

God warned these men in a dream, that Herod had deceived them. He told them to return home to their own land by a different route. In this they too obeyed the Lord. For they were truly wise men.

These men sought the Lord wholeheartedly. They let no difficulty keep them from their search. They followed God's leading to find the child. They obeyed his warning. They worshipped him, for they knew that he was more than an earthly king.

Each of us has the opportunity to be wise, just as these men were. Will people look at our lives and call us wise?

LEARN: But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast

learned them;

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

II Timothy 3: 14, 15

PROJECTS FOR WISE MEN LESSON

- 3 projects

Wise men and baby fold-overs as shown on other sheet.

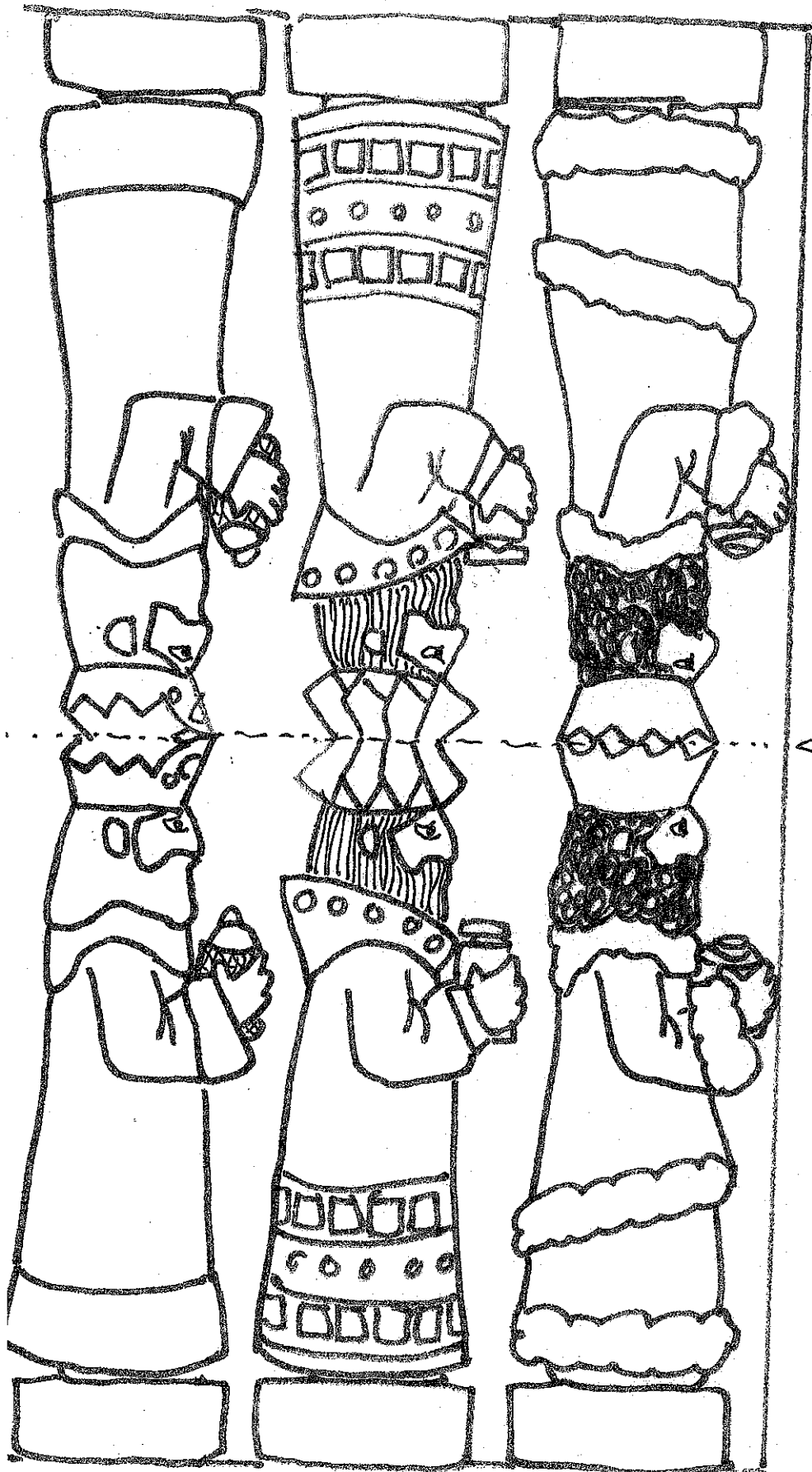
OR

Make a treasure box:

1. Paint your box with metallic acrylic paint.
2. Line the inside with velvet or satin, using glue gun to attach it.
3. Decorate your box with jewels using either tacky glue or glue gun.
4. Give your box as a gift with a small treasure inside, or use it to remind you of the treasure that the wise men brought to the child JESUS.

OR

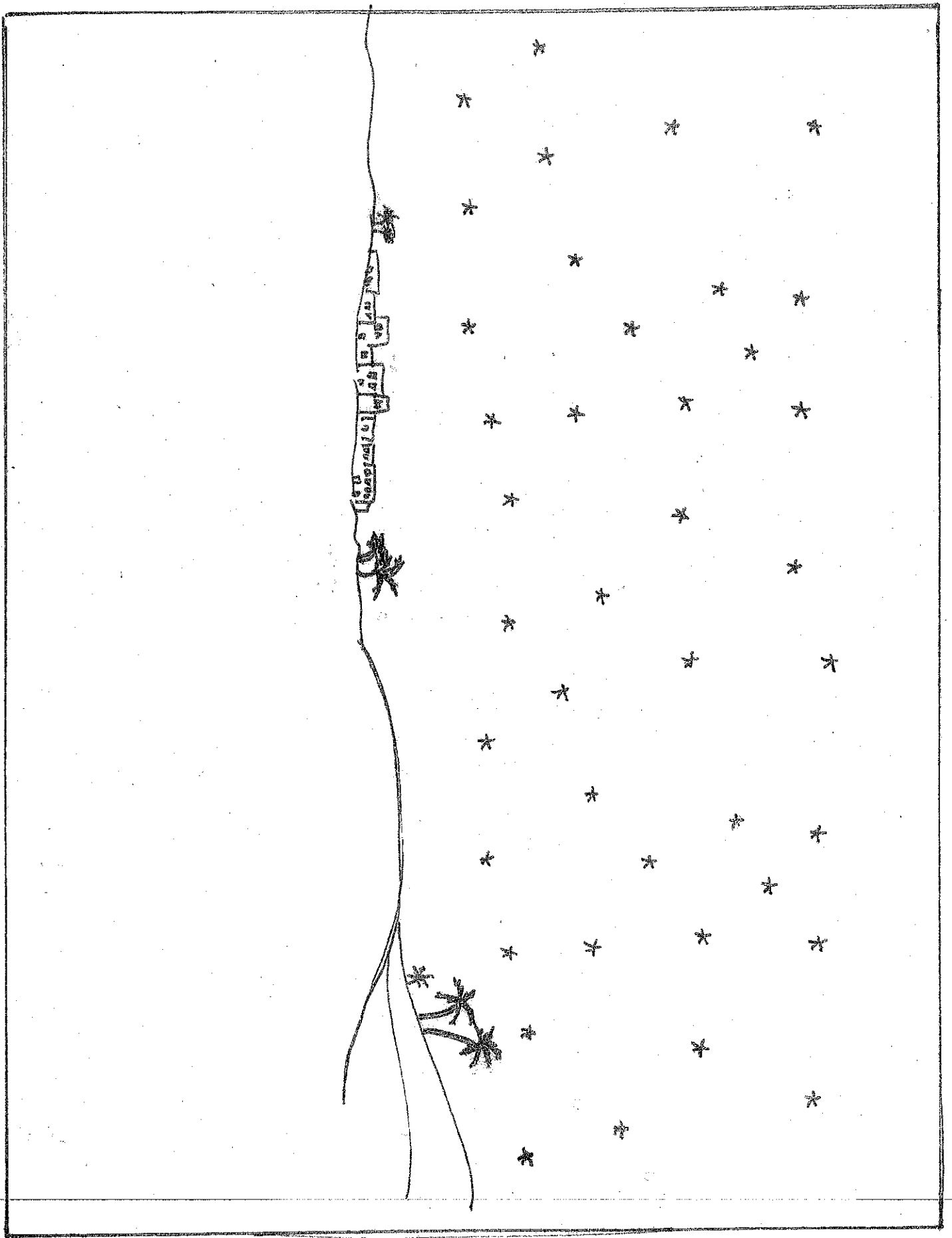
1. Color background sheet - Color wisemen, cutout, and paste on background



1. Color the wise men and baby.
2. Cut them out either singly or in block as shown by outside line.
3. Fold as indicated.
4. Paste on ^{folded} construction paper if desired to make sturdier card to stand up.

1. Color the background - Night picture.
2. Color wise men + star. Cut out.
3. Paste on night scene.







"Known unto God are all his works
from the beginning of the world." Job 15:18

