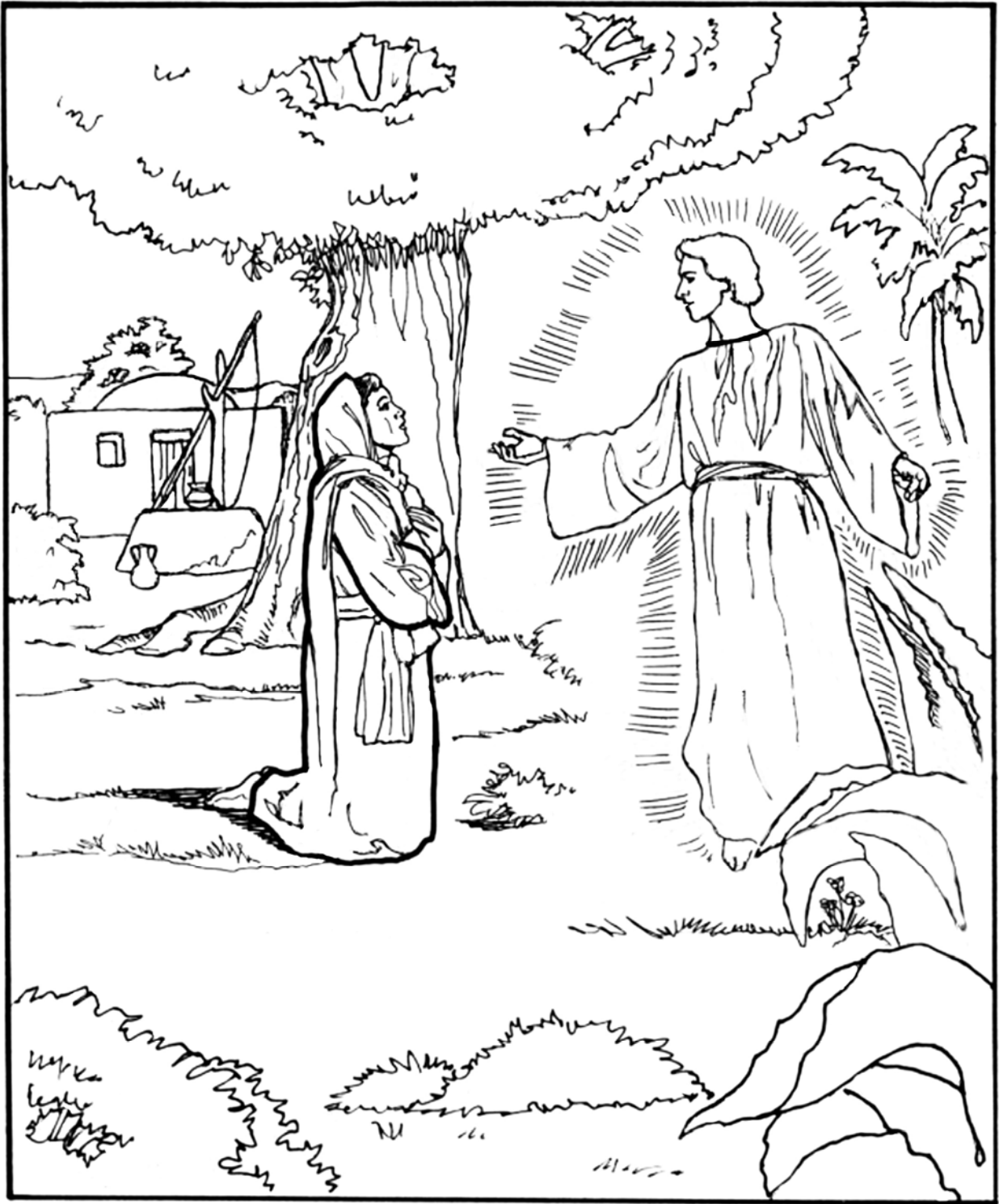




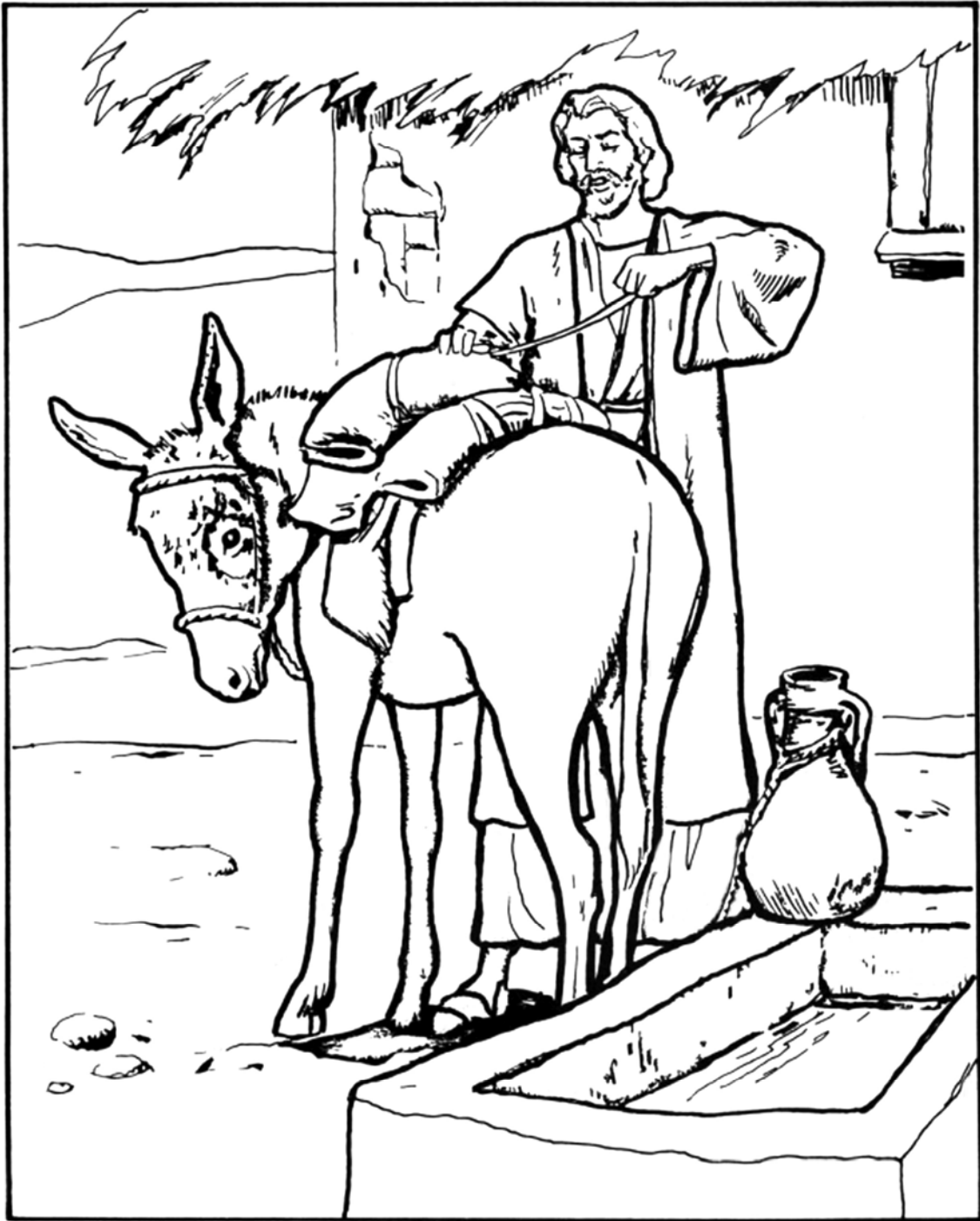
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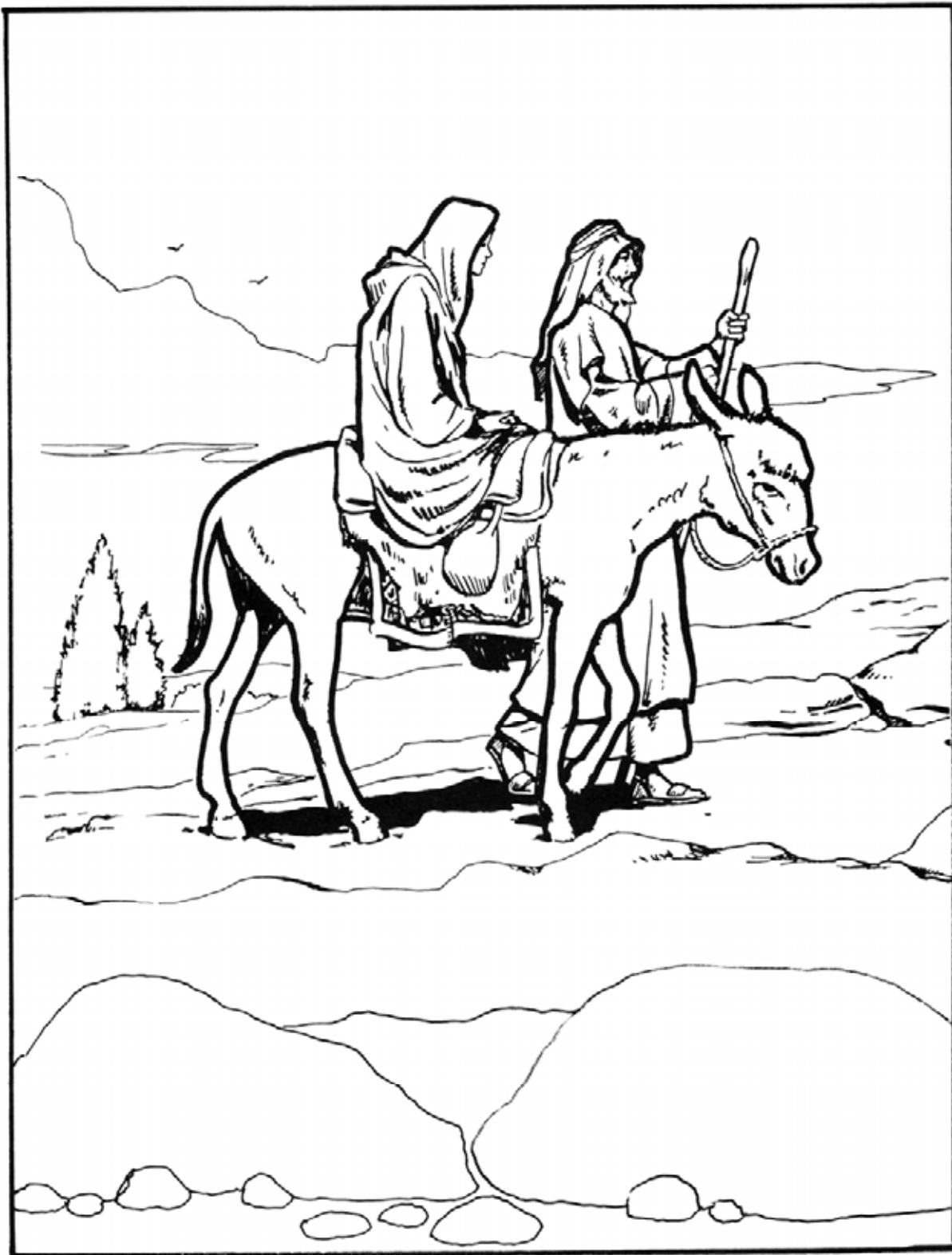
God sent the mighty angel Gabriel from His throne in heaven to a small city of Galilee named Nazareth. It was in this city that the angel appeared to the virgin Mary. "And the angel came to Mary and said, Hail thou that are highly favored, the Lord is with thee blessed art thou among women. And the angel said unto her, fear not Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS." Luke 1: 28, 30,



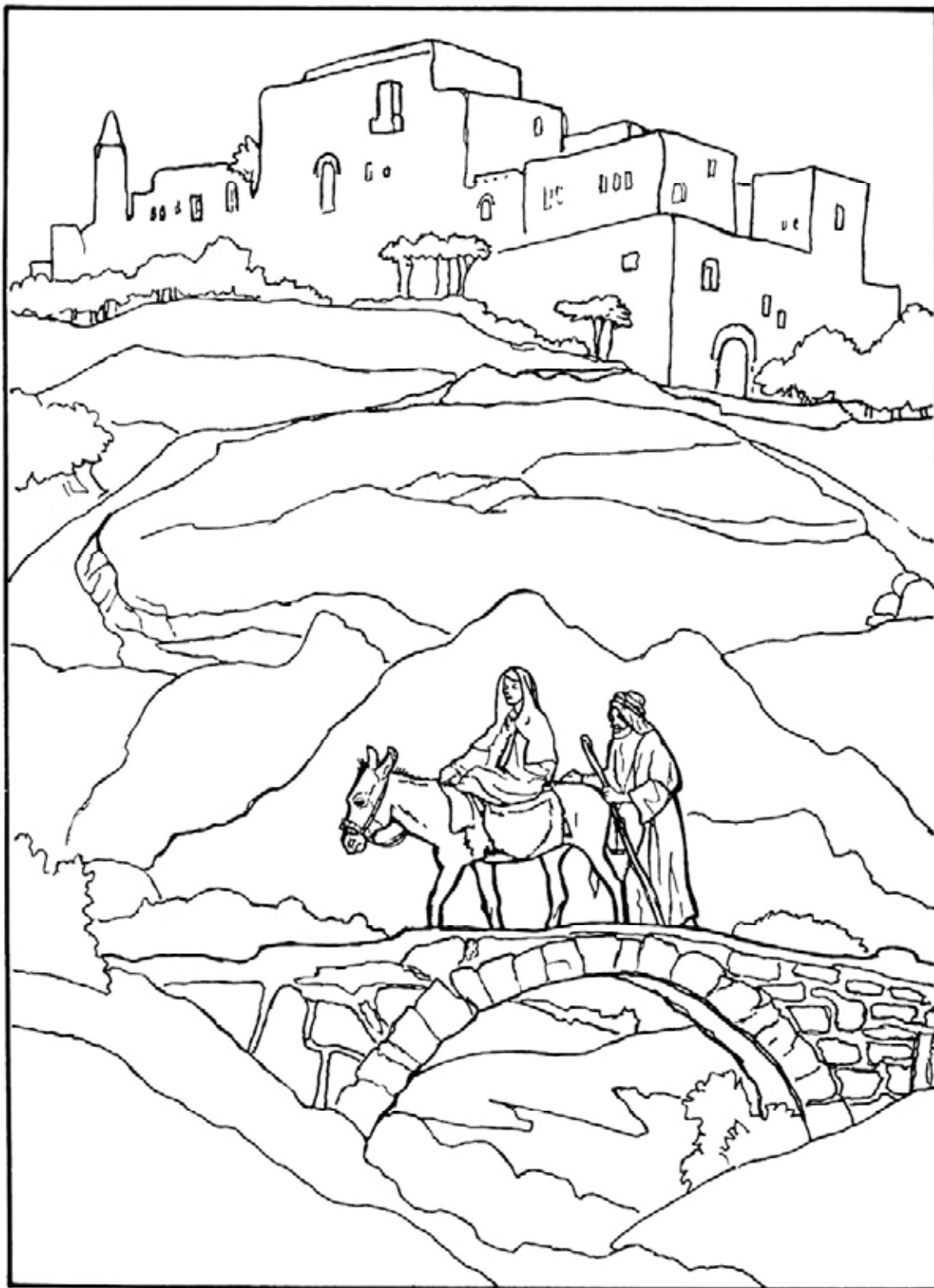
And it came to pass in those days, that there went a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed... And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. Luke 2:1,3



The Bible tells us that Joseph was visited by an angel in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Matt.1:20. Because of the decree of Caesar Augustus, Joseph prepared for the journey to Bethlehem.



Joseph and Mary left their home in Nazareth and traveled toward Bethlehem. The Bible says, "And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth unto Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David; to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife being great with child." Luke 2:4,5



Bethlehem was a town in the hill country of Judah. At one time the house of David was in Bethlehem. In the old testament the prophet Micah wrote that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be the ruler of Israel; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting."

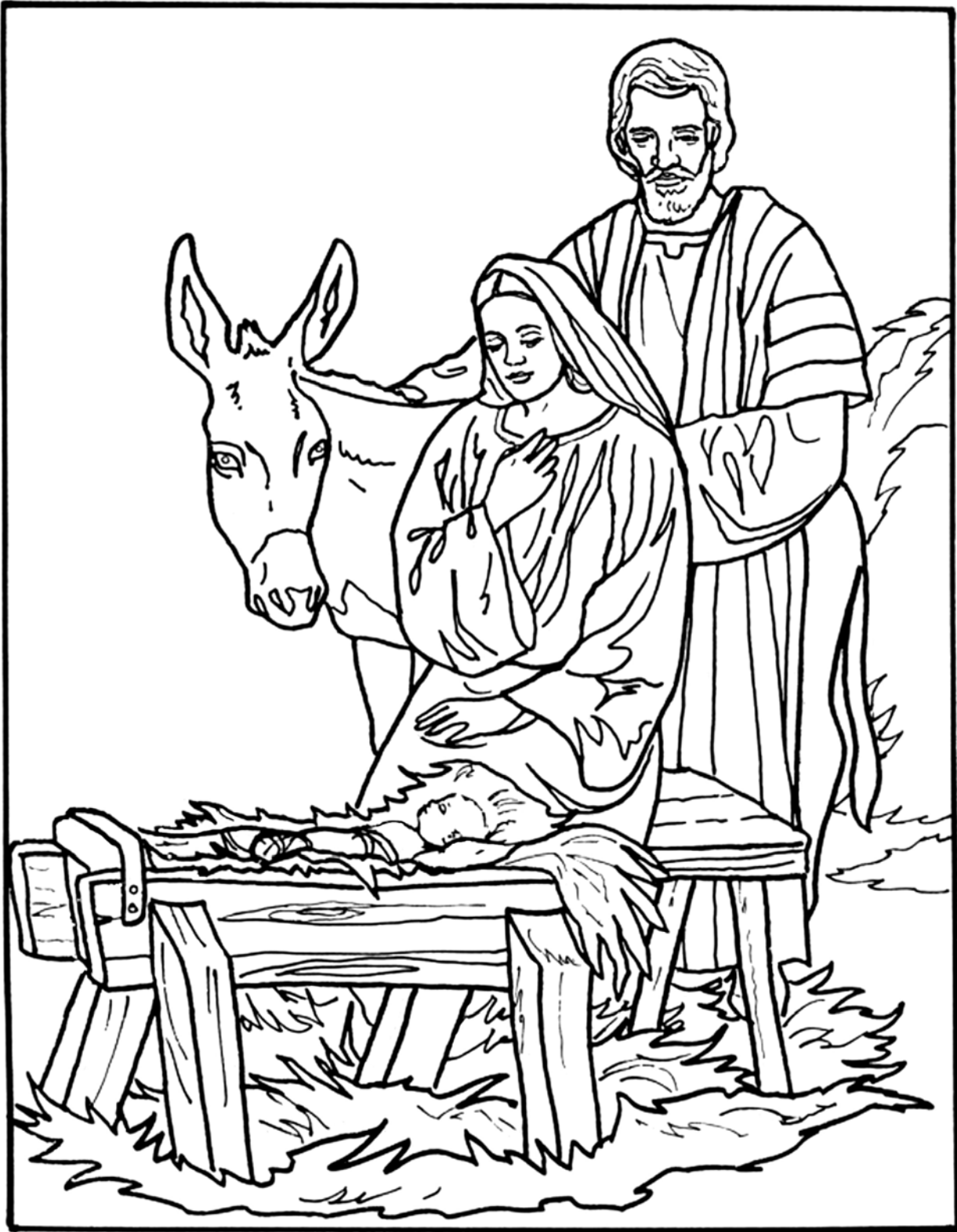
Micah 5:2. At last Mary and Joseph made their way to Bethlehem.



When Mary and Joseph came to Bethlehem, the city of their royal line, they are not recognized and not honored. Weary and homeless, they look for a place to rest for the night. They came to an Inn but it was crowded and there was no room for them.



At the end of their long journey Mary and Joseph enter the town of Bethlehem. They must find a place to rest. Mary was ready to have Baby Jesus.



In a rude building where the beasts are sheltered, they at last find a place to rest. It is here in a humble stable that the Redeemer of the world is born.



In the fields where the boy David had led his flock, shepherds were still keeping watch by night. They talked together of the promised Saviour, and prayed for the coming King to David's throne. "And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:9-11

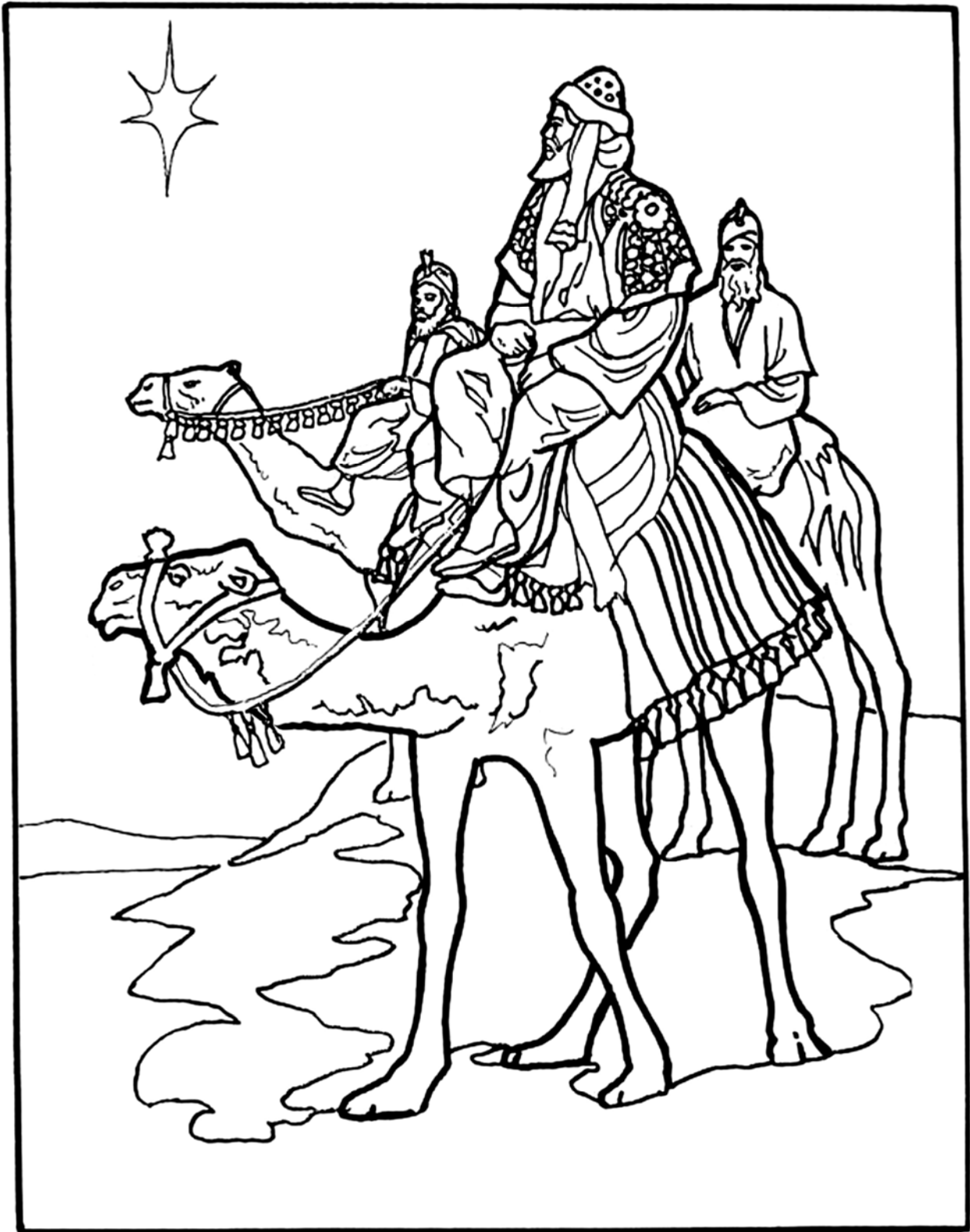


And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see the thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."

Luke 2:15,16.



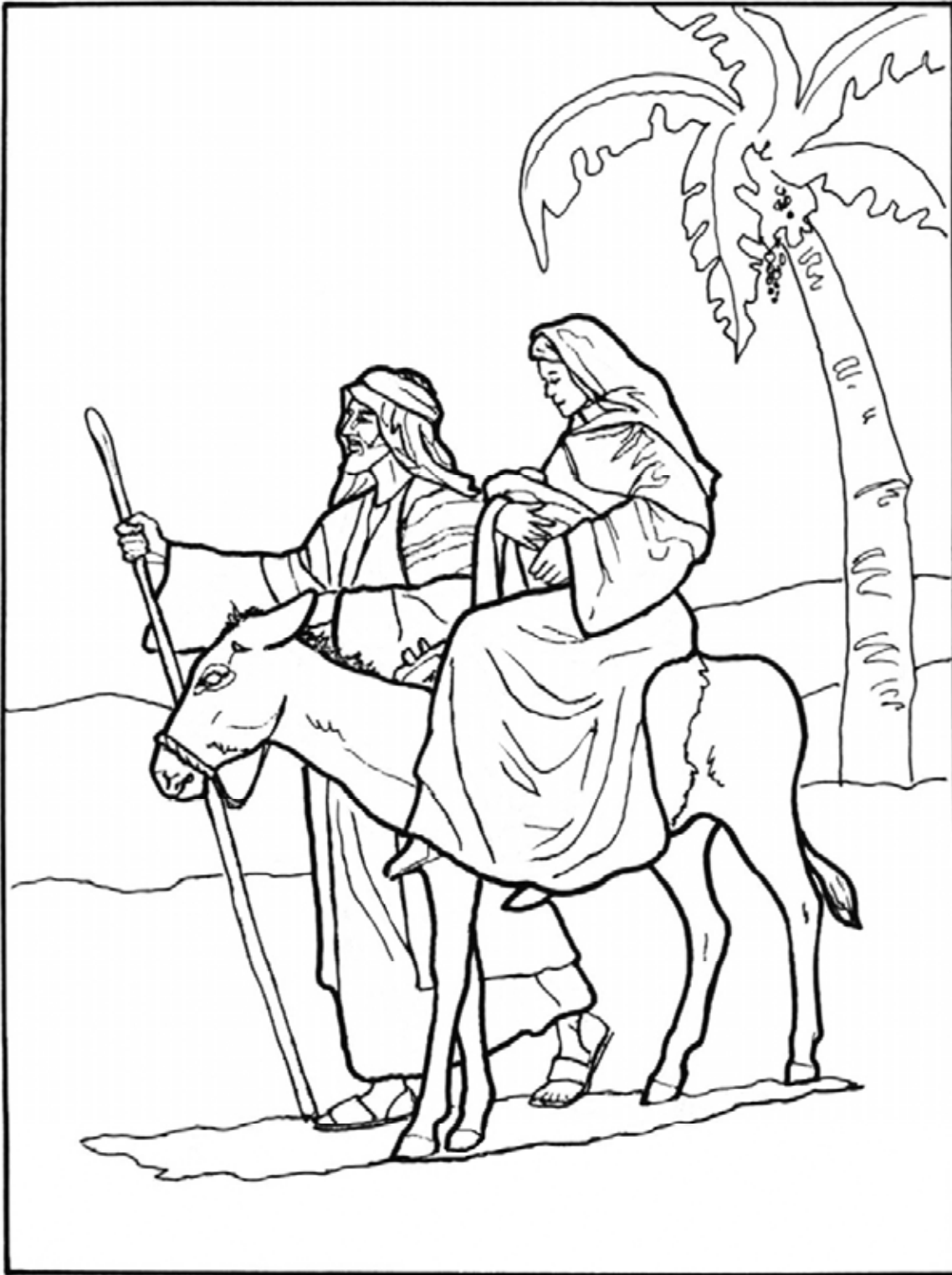
Mary was honored above all other women. She was to be the mother "of the Son of God," "of the Son of the Highest." Luke 1:32,35. As Mary looked at the face of the baby Jesus she must have wondered what the future had in store for Him. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa, 9:5



Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him." Matt. 2:1,3.



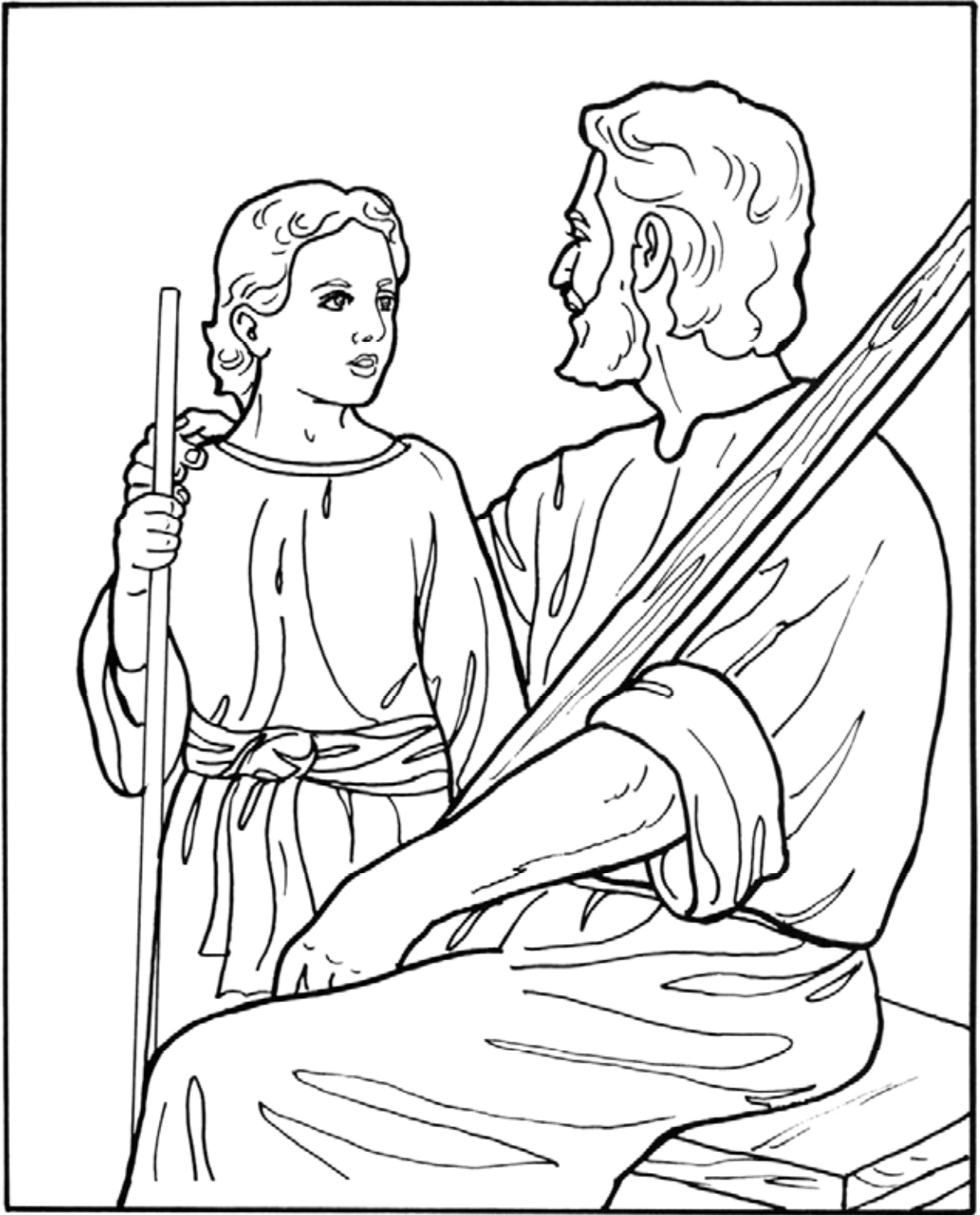
The star which the wise men saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother and fell down and worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Matt. 2:19,11



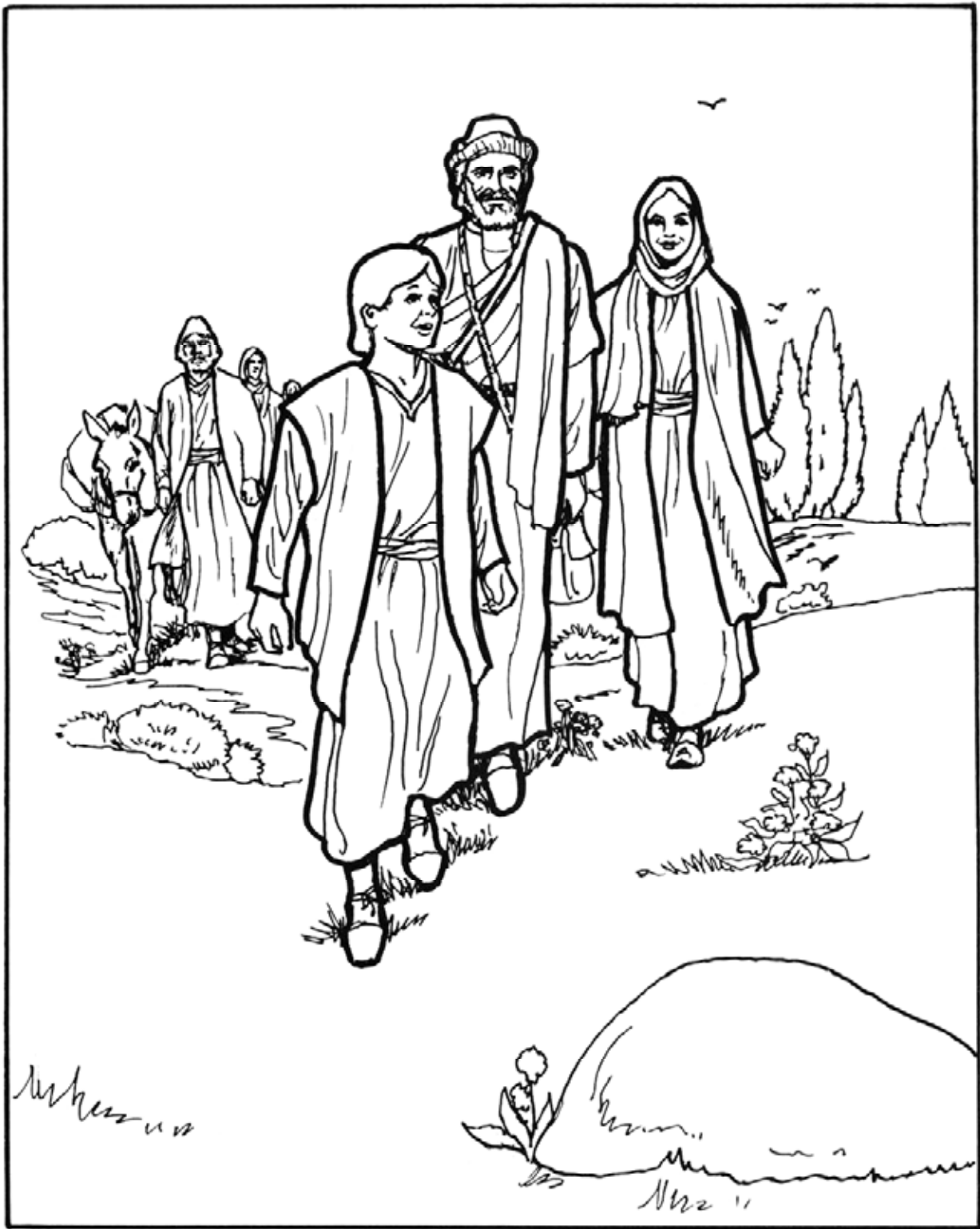
When the wise men departed from Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus, "The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and flee into Egypt; and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him." Matt. 2:13. Joseph followed the instruction of the angel and took Mary and the baby Jesus to the land of Egypt.



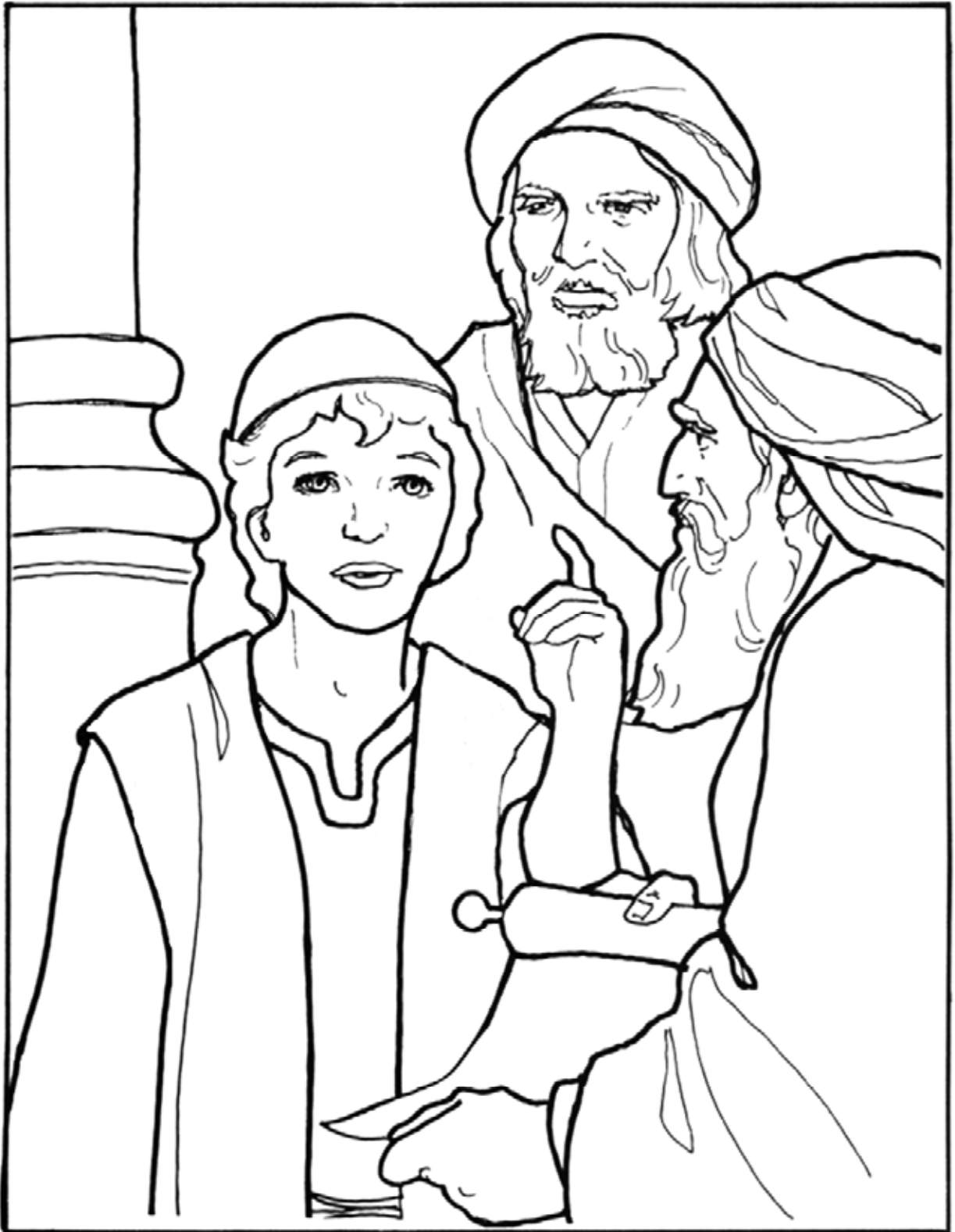
As a child Jesus was always ready to serve others. His mind was bright and through the power of the Holy Spirit He received wisdom and understanding. Mary did not send Jesus to the schools of the rabbis. His mother was His first human teacher. From her lips and from the scrolls of the prophets He learned of heavenly things.



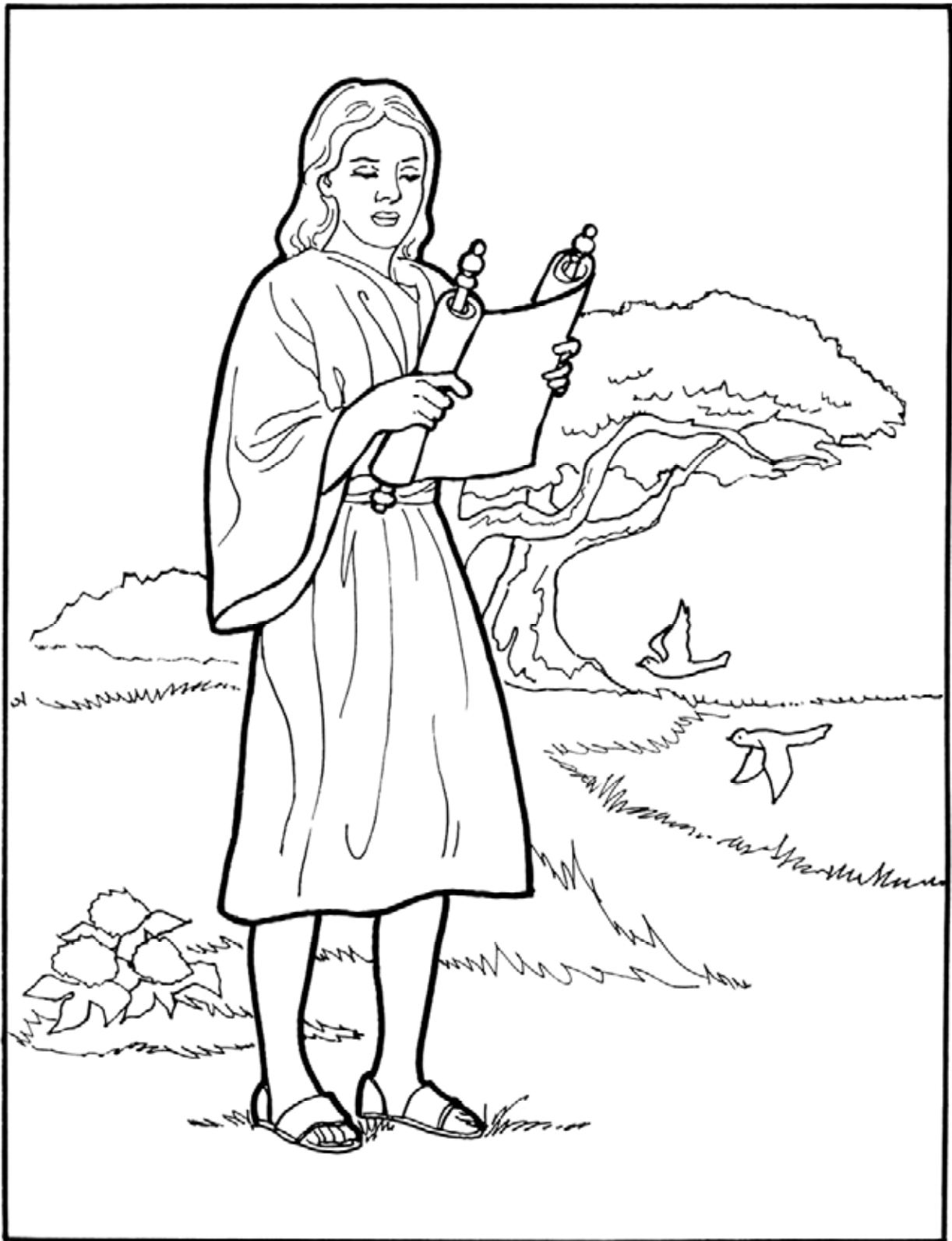
The childhood and youth of Jesus was spent in a little mountain village. There was no place on earth that would not have been honored by his presence. God did not choose the palaces of kings or the homes of royalty, but in the little mountain village of Nazareth. Joseph was a carpenter and Jesus worked with him in his carpenter shop.



Among the Jews when a boy was twelve years old he was no longer considered to be a child. Now he was a youth. On completing this year a Hebrew boy was called a son of the law, and also a son of God. Every year Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem to attend the passover. Now that Jesus was twelve years old they took him with them. The journey to Jerusalem took several days. It was Springtime and the whole land was bright with flowers and glad with the song of birds.



When Jesus was in the temple at Jerusalem he went to a special room where the leading rabbis taught their pupils. Jesus listened to their instructions. He questioned these teachers in regard to the prophecies and to the events that pointed to the coming Messiah. Through Jesus, the minds of the rabbis were opened to the Word of God.



The Bible says very little about the early life of Jesus. In Luke 2:40 we read, "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him." It would be well for children today to follow the example of Jesus when He was a child. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Luke 2:52



Jesus loves the children of the world. The Bible tells us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. The best gift we can give to Jesus is ourselves.