

ההשתנות

The Transfiguration

One day Yeshua took three of His talmidim, Peter, James, and John, (who was the brother of James), with Him up to the top of a mountain, most likely to engage in prayer together. When they arrived at the top of the mountain, something astonishing happened. Yeshua Himself was changed or transformed right before their very eyes! His face began to shine with a bright light, just as bright as the sun. And all of His clothes became white like a bright light. Then something else miraculous occurred. Suddenly there appeared two other men who were talking with Yeshua. They were Moses rabbinu (רַבִּינוּ, our teacher) and Eliyahu haNavi (הַנְּבִיא, the prophet). Moses was the one through whom God gave His Torah, and Eliyahu was the great prophet who performed miracles by God's power. In fact, the later prophets taught the people of Israel that Eliyahu would come to proclaim the arrival of Messiah in the last days (Mal 4:5 [Hebrew, 3:23]).



You can just imagine how surprised the three talmidim were. Who were these men? From where did they come? And why had they arrived on the mountain? Furthermore, why had they come at this time, when Yeshua's divine glory was being displayed before their very eyes? Can you imagine being there? What would you have done? Would you have been excited or scared?

Well, we can only imagine that Peter, James, and John began to ask some questions of their own. Maybe they asked the men who they were, because since none of them had ever met Moses or Eliyahu, it's hard to believe that they would have recognized them. Maybe Moses still had his staff in his hand, and maybe they realized that this was the staff that he used to divide the waters of the Red Sea, and to strike the rock out of which came water for the Israelites to drink as they were in the desert.

Peter was the first one to speak up. In his excitement he said, "Master, it is good that we are here! If You want me to, I'll make three sukkahs right here on the mountain, so that each of you can sit in the shade and be recognized as the three greatest men of Israel! These three sukkahs will each be a holy place where people can come to honor all three of you!"

Immediately after Peter had made this suggestion, a bright cloud, just like the one that was on Mt. Sinai at the giving of the Torah appeared, and covered all of them. Then the voice of God came thundering out of the cloud, and He proclaimed: "This is My Son whom I love, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" The talmidim were so terrified by the voice of God that they fell to ground as though they were dead. But Yeshua came over to them, and putting His hand upon them, said, "Get up, and do not be afraid." When they lifted up their heads to look at Him, they saw that the bright, shining light of His face was no longer there, and His clothes looked normal instead of shining with a bright light.

After they stood up and realized that everything had returned to a normal state of things, they began to walk down from the mountain. Then Yeshua told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until after He had risen from the dead. They asked, "But isn't true that Eliyahu is to come to proclaim the Messiah, and if he has come, shouldn't we tell everyone that You are that Messiah?" Then Yeshua explained that John haMatbil (the baptizer) had come in a similar fashion to Eliyahu, and had told the people that He was the Messiah, but that very few had believed him. He explained that it would only be after He had died and risen again that people would understand that He is, indeed, the Messiah of Whom the prophets had spoken.

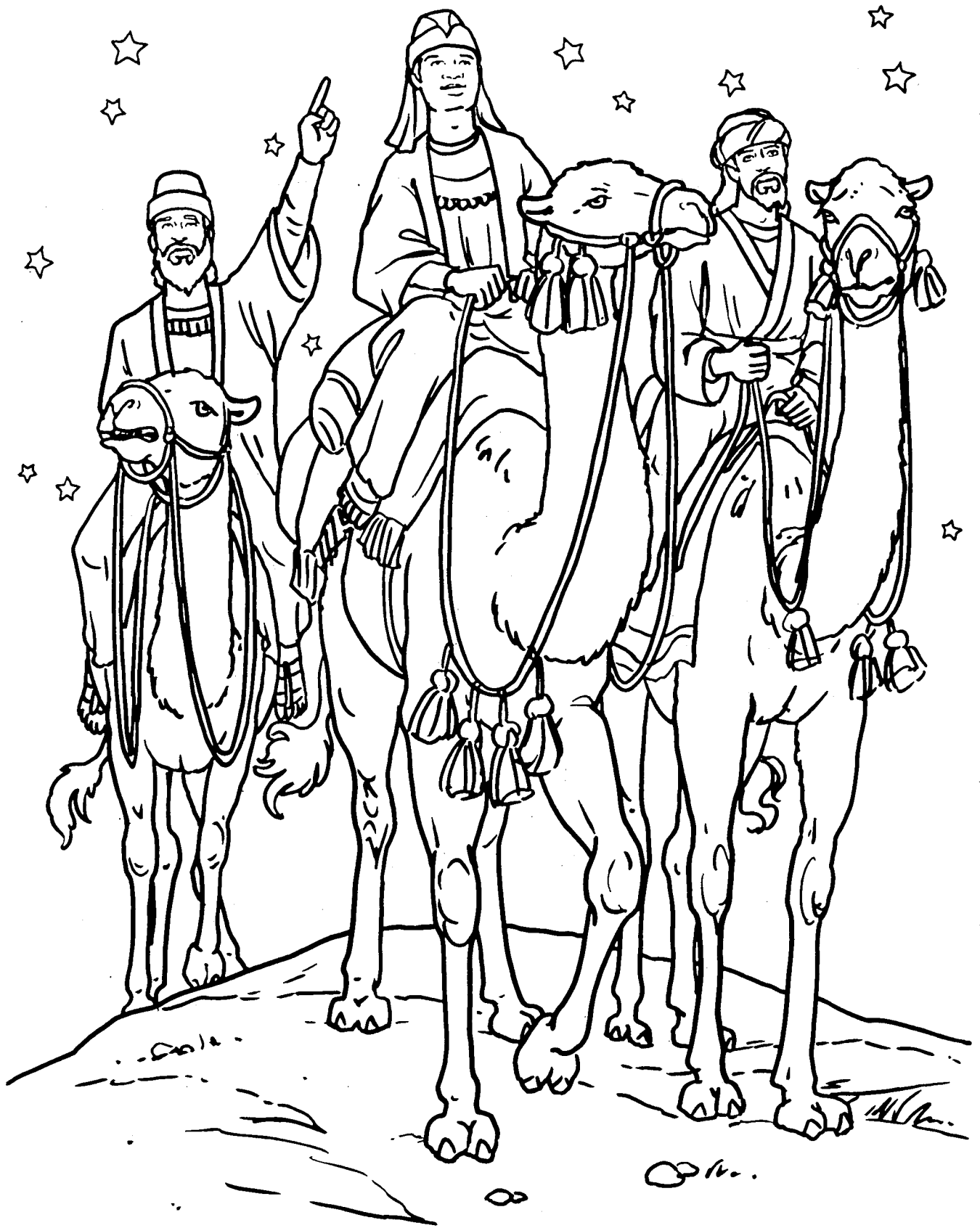
John 7 (ESV)

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WISE MEN VISITED YOUNG JESUS. MATTHEW 2:11

