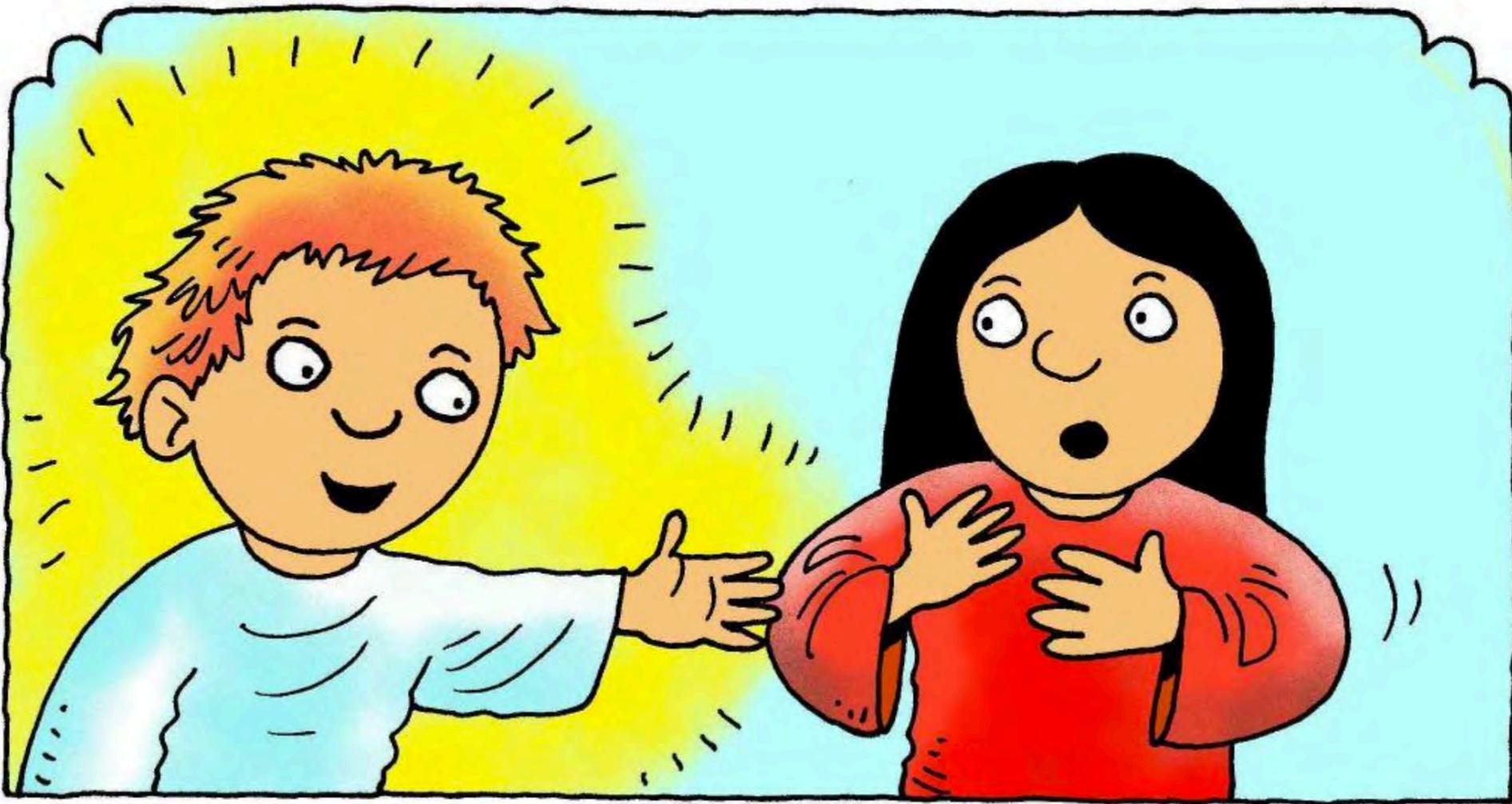


Long ago, about 2,000 years ago, an angel was sent by God to a young woman who lived in the town of Nazareth. The girl's name was Mary and she was engaged to marry a man named Joseph.



The angel told her that she would have a baby and it would be from the Holy Spirit and she would name Him "Jesus". He would be known as "Emmanuel", which means "God with us". He would save His people.



At this time, the Roman Emperor wanted everyone to go back to the town their families originally came from and so Mary and Joseph travelled a long way from Nazareth to Bethlehem, back to Joseph's hometown. Joseph and Mary travelled very slowly because Mary's baby was about to be born soon.



When they arrived in Bethlehem, they knocked on every door in the town, looking for a place to stay but everywhere was full of people. They went from inn to inn until they reached the last inn. The owner welcomed them but only the stable, where animals would sleep, had space for them.



At last, they had a place to stay but it was dirty, smelly and unhygienic. It was not suitable for a baby to be born in. Mary gave birth to Jesus right there in the stable.

Baby Jesus was wrapped in strips of cloth and placed in the manger, a trough that is used to feed animals.

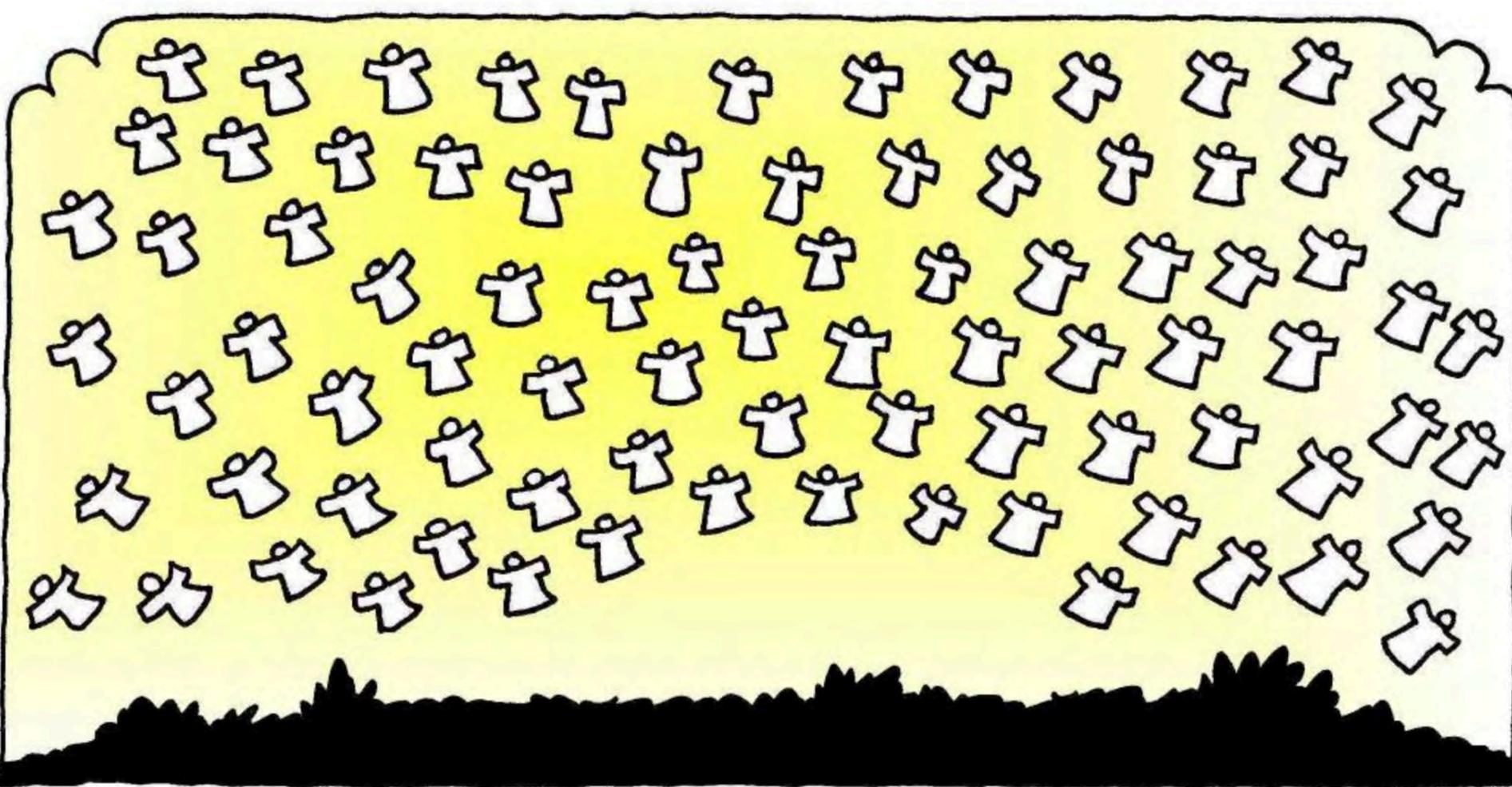


Picture 6

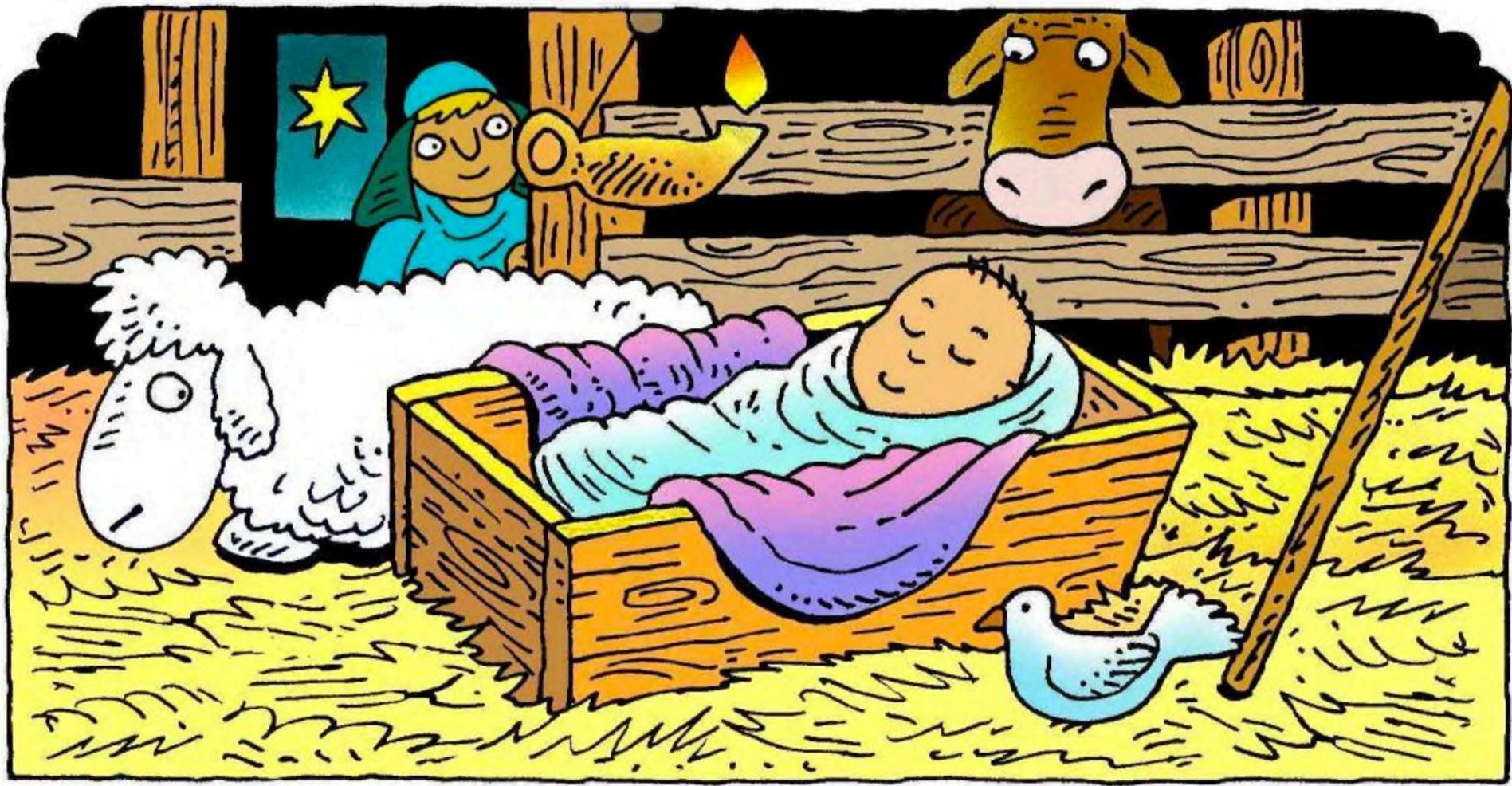
Meanwhile, there were a group of shepherds keeping watch over their flocks in the fields nearby.



Suddenly, an angel appeared in front of them and they were taken aback by it! The brightness of the Lord's glory flashed upon them but the angel said, "Don't be afraid, I have good news for you which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown, a Saviour is born for you, He is Christ the Lord. You will know who He is because He will be dressed in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

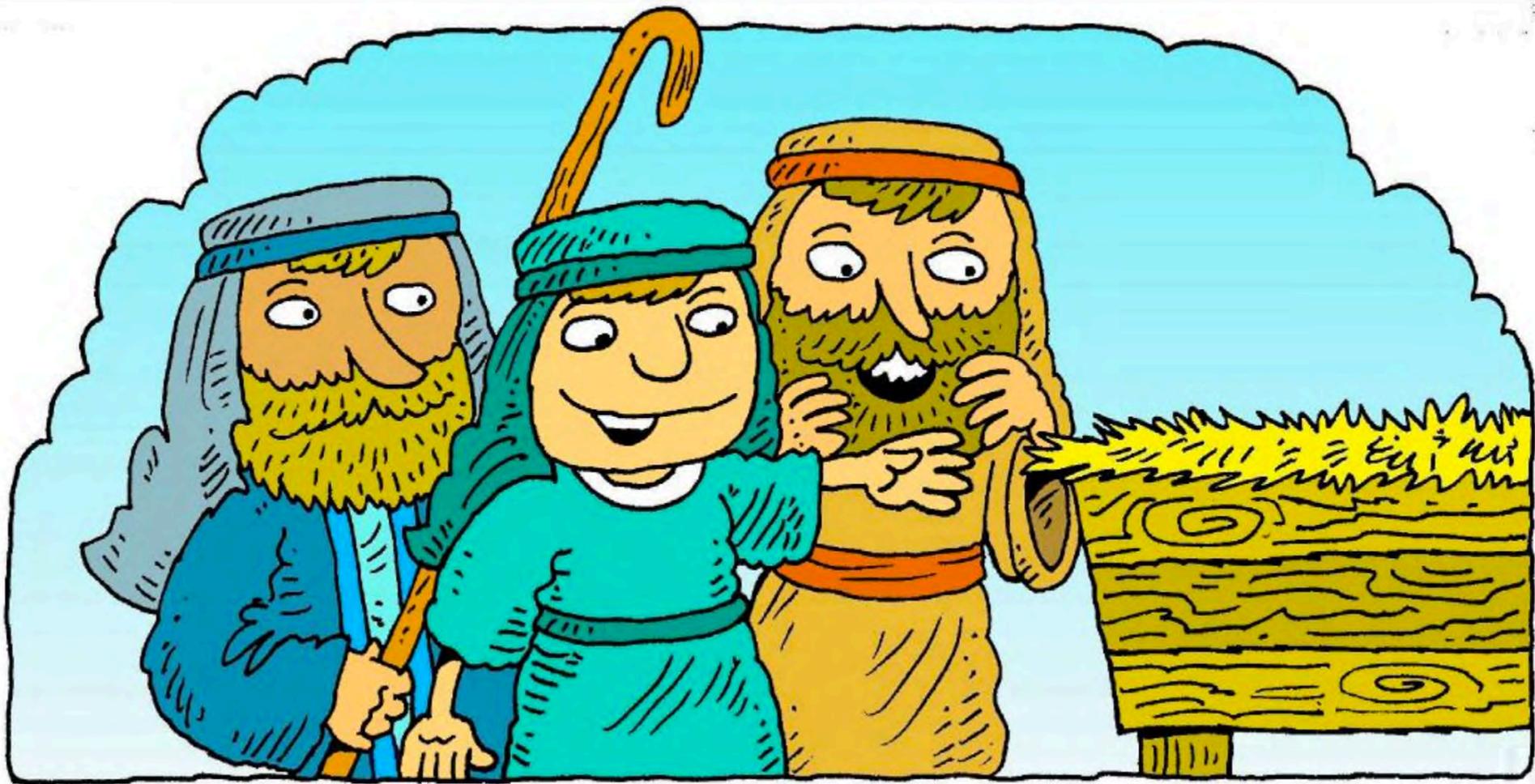


Suddenly, many other angels came down from heaven and joined in praising God. They said "May glory be given to God in the highest heaven! And may peace be given to those He is pleased with on earth!"



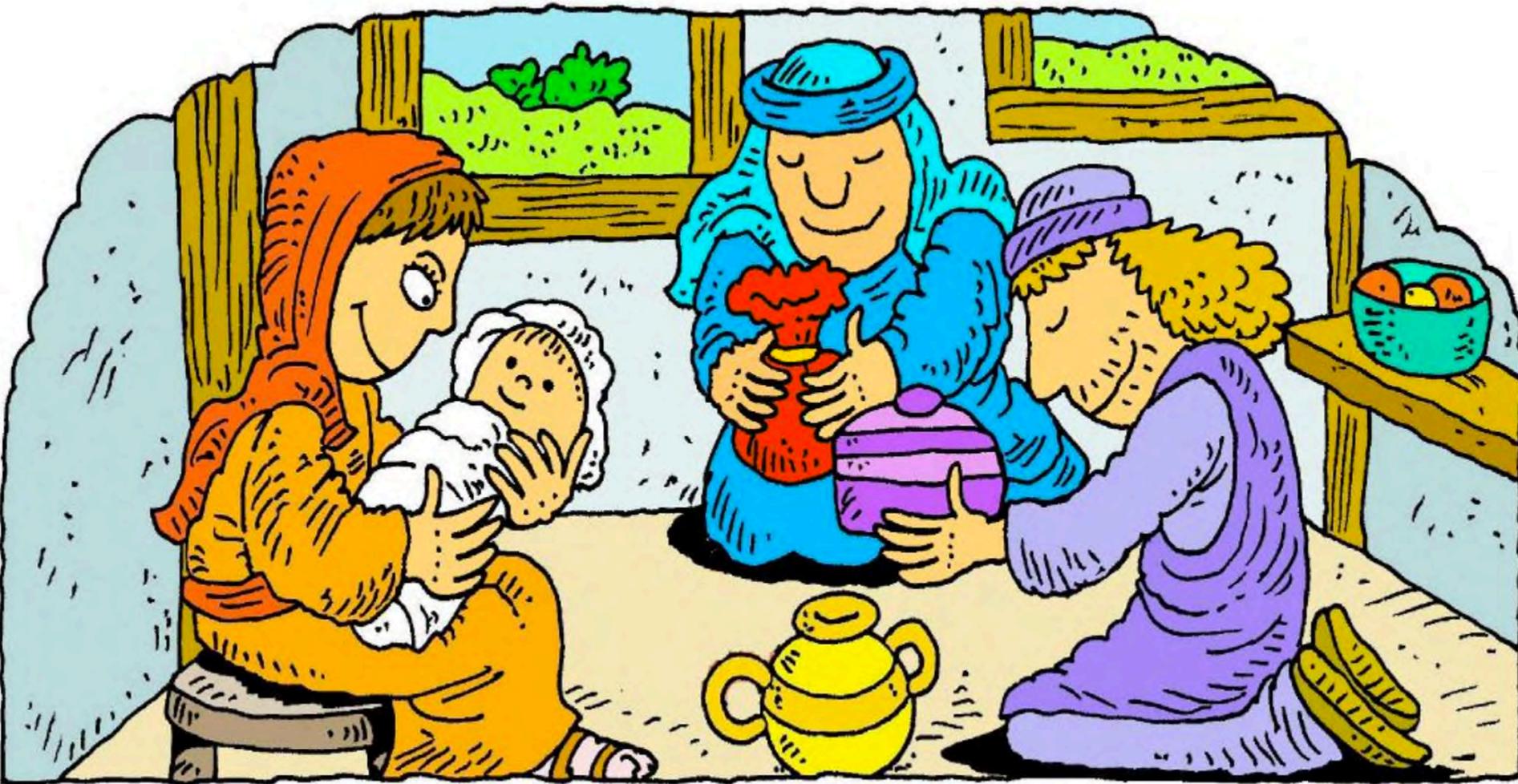
After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph. They saw the baby lying in the manger.

The shepherds told everyone about the baby and people were amazed at the story that the Son of God was actually born in a stable.



When Jesus was born in the village of Bethlehem, three wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. They had followed a star in the sky and wanted to find Jesus to worship Him.

The star they had seen in the east went on ahead of them till it stopped at the place where Jesus was.



When the men went into the house and saw the child with Mary, they knelt down and worshipped him. They took out their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and gave it to Him.



This happened over 2,000 years ago. An angel told Mary that she would have a baby who would be very important. He was so important that angels appeared to announce His birth, and shepherds and wise men from a faraway country came to meet and worship Him. Why was this baby so important?

Well, that's because He is God's Son, Jesus, and He came to be the Saviour of the whole world. He grew up to save many people and healed the sick.