

Day 17

The three wise men were in festive good cheer. They finally had all the presents on their shopping list, and, unusually, were feeling a great deal of goodwill towards their camels. Kevin, Gary and Wayne had greatly impressed the myrrh-seller with their dance routine, and he had sent the magi off with a big bag of top-quality myrrh.

“Dear old camels,” said Melchior fondly. “And to think how annoyed we got with them for holding us up at the oasis, learning that dance.”

“They are cleverer than they let on!” said Balthazar, loading up the myrrh into Wayne’s saddle bag. “Now, we have a pretty tight schedule from here onto Bethlehem, but we are going past a market tomorrow, if anyone wants to go?”

Melchior politely declined. He had run out of camel treats, but was feeling so fantastically proud of Kevin, Gary and Wayne that he had resolved to spend the afternoon searching the landscape for the tastiest flowers and weeds to feed them.

Caspar likewise declined, but rather more sniffily. He had been the one to remember the camels’ dance routine just in time, and so he felt rather justified in his opinion of himself as the wisest of the wise men.

“No no, it would be terribly busy. It would be awful for my focus, being around all that hustle and bustle. I shall remain here, and write another note to the Apprentices, detailing which manuscripts I should like them to prepare for my return. Then, if I have time, I shall read something instructive to the camels- I fear we have neglected their education on this journey...”

“Very well”, said Balthazar. “I’ll go on my own, and take Wayne the camel to carry everything. You can catch me up at the end of the day, and we’ll travel on together!”

Wayne privately thought that he had got rather the better end of this deal, and so was happy to leave Kevin and Gary sitting where the magi had made camp while he trotted off to the market the next morning.

“...we need some smart wrapping paper- the foil sort, of course...” Balthazar mused to Wayne as they took the road towards the market. “...and perhaps I should get a gift bag to put the presents in once they have been wrapped up in the paper? We’ll have to get some nice big gift tags in any case... and a smart gel pen to write the labels with...”

Wayne thought this sounded a little much and, mindful that he would have to carry all the items, groaned and spat at the floor in an attempt to make his feelings clear.

“You are quite right Wayne,” said Balthazar, absent-mindedly. “We can only buy the best gift wrapping supplies... seems silly not to, having bought such precious gifts...”

They reached the market, and Balthazar was faced with a bewildering array of gift-wrapping supplies. There was just too much choice, and everything was priced in different coins to the ones Balthazar was used to. But, he wasn't a wise man for nothing, and so he whipped out a spare bit of parchment and a quill, and collared a passing merchant. Together, they knocked up a rough conversion guide:

	Eastern Silver Coin	Denarii
1	0.43	2.30
2	0.87	4.60
3	1.30	6.90
4	1.74	9.20
5	2.17	11.50

"It means that one Denarii = 0.43 Eastern Silver Coins, and one Eastern Silver Coin = 2.3 Denarii" explained the merchant rather helpfully.

$$1 \text{ Denarii} = 0.43 \text{ Eastern Silver Coins}$$

$$1 \text{ Eastern Silver Coin} = 2.3 \text{ Denarii}$$

Armed with this information, Balthazar went skipping off into the market, determined to buy the most expensive wrapping paper, gift bags and ribbons the market could provide.

A little while later, he had finally found all the items he wanted, and a few extra things for good measure.

In total, all his shopping came to 18.4 Denarii.

How many Eastern Silver Coins is that equal to?

Answer: _____