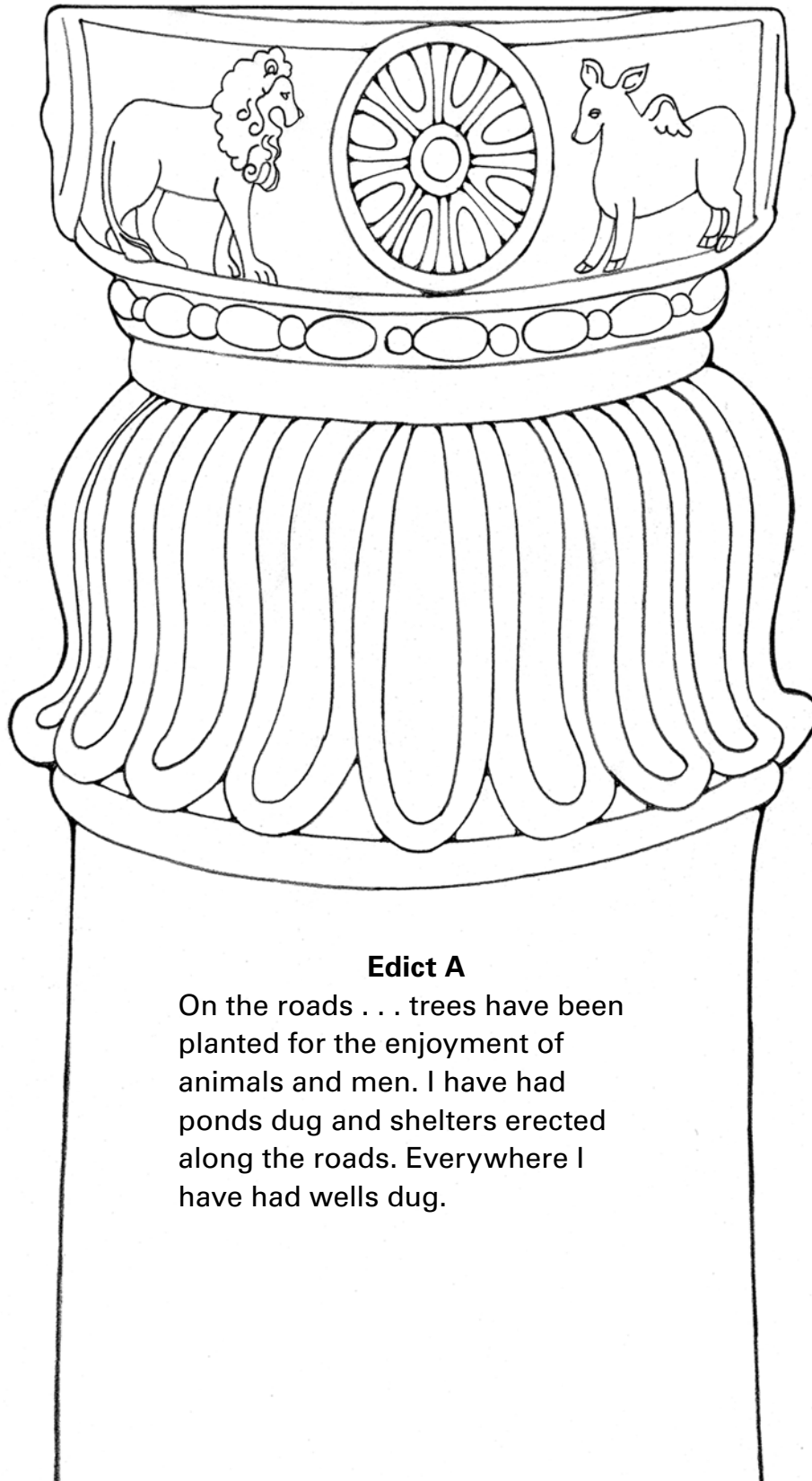
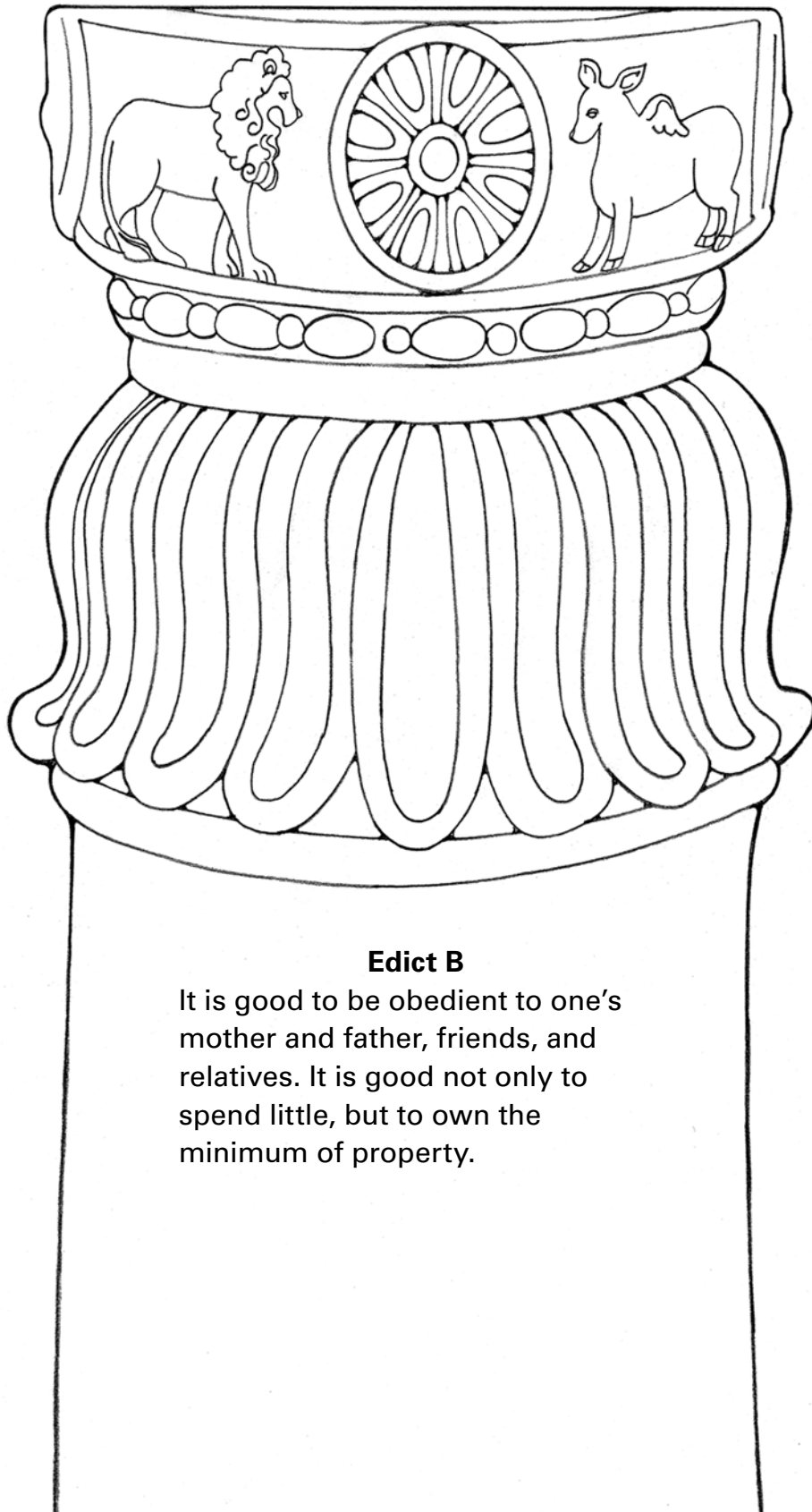


## Ashoka's Edicts



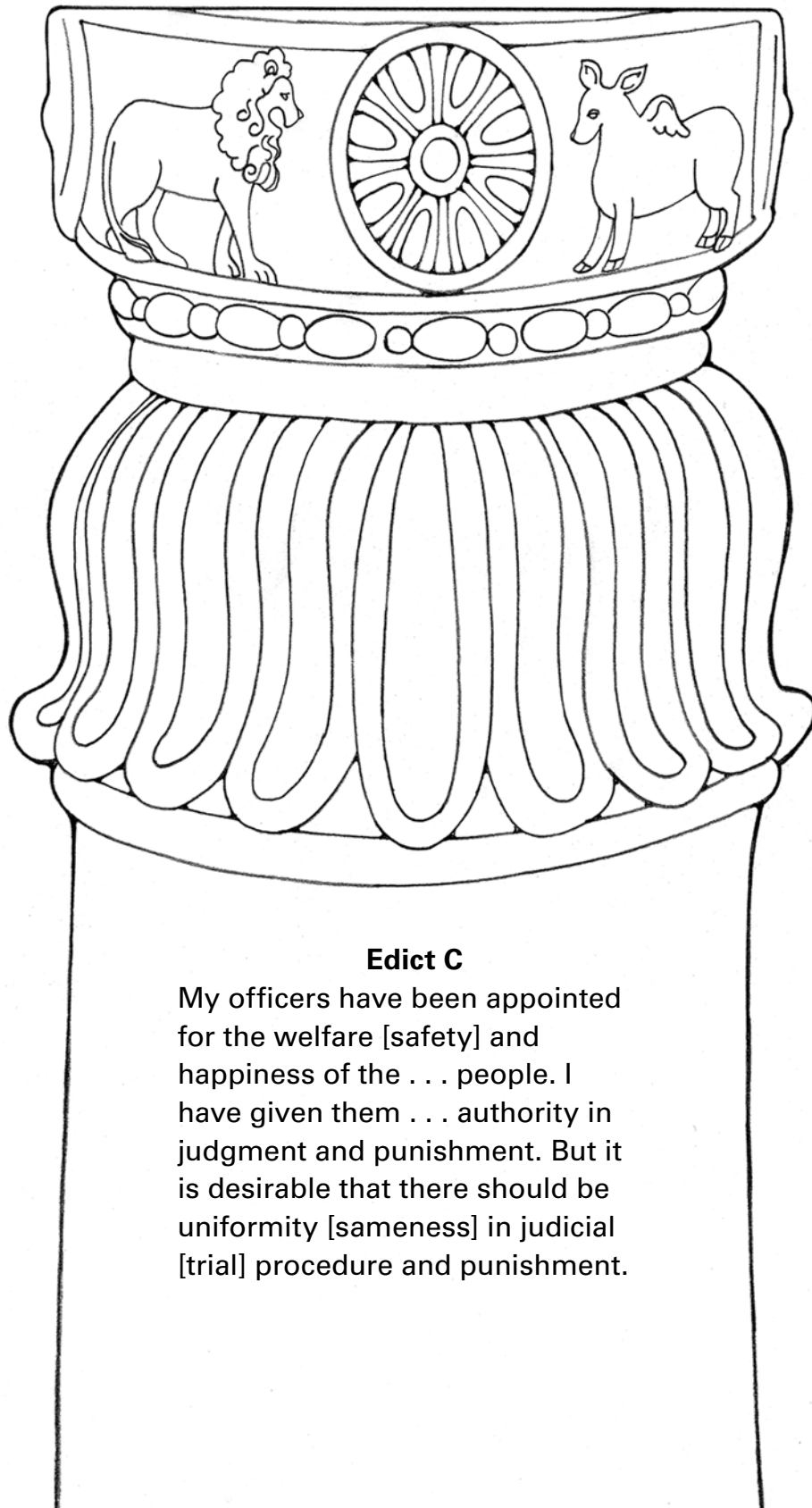
### **Edict A**

On the roads . . . trees have been planted for the enjoyment of animals and men. I have had ponds dug and shelters erected along the roads. Everywhere I have had wells dug.



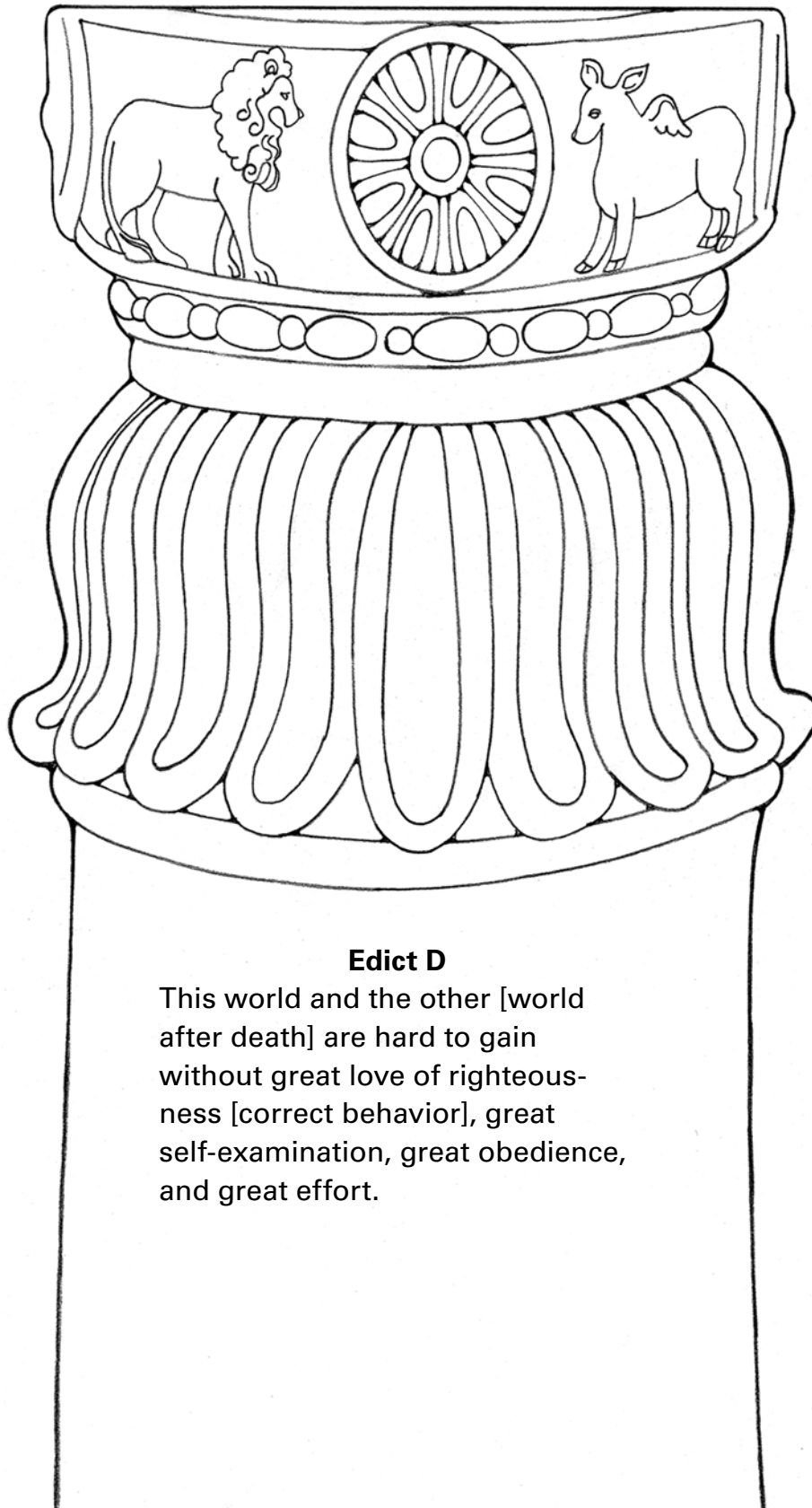
**Edict B**

It is good to be obedient to one's mother and father, friends, and relatives. It is good not only to spend little, but to own the minimum of property.



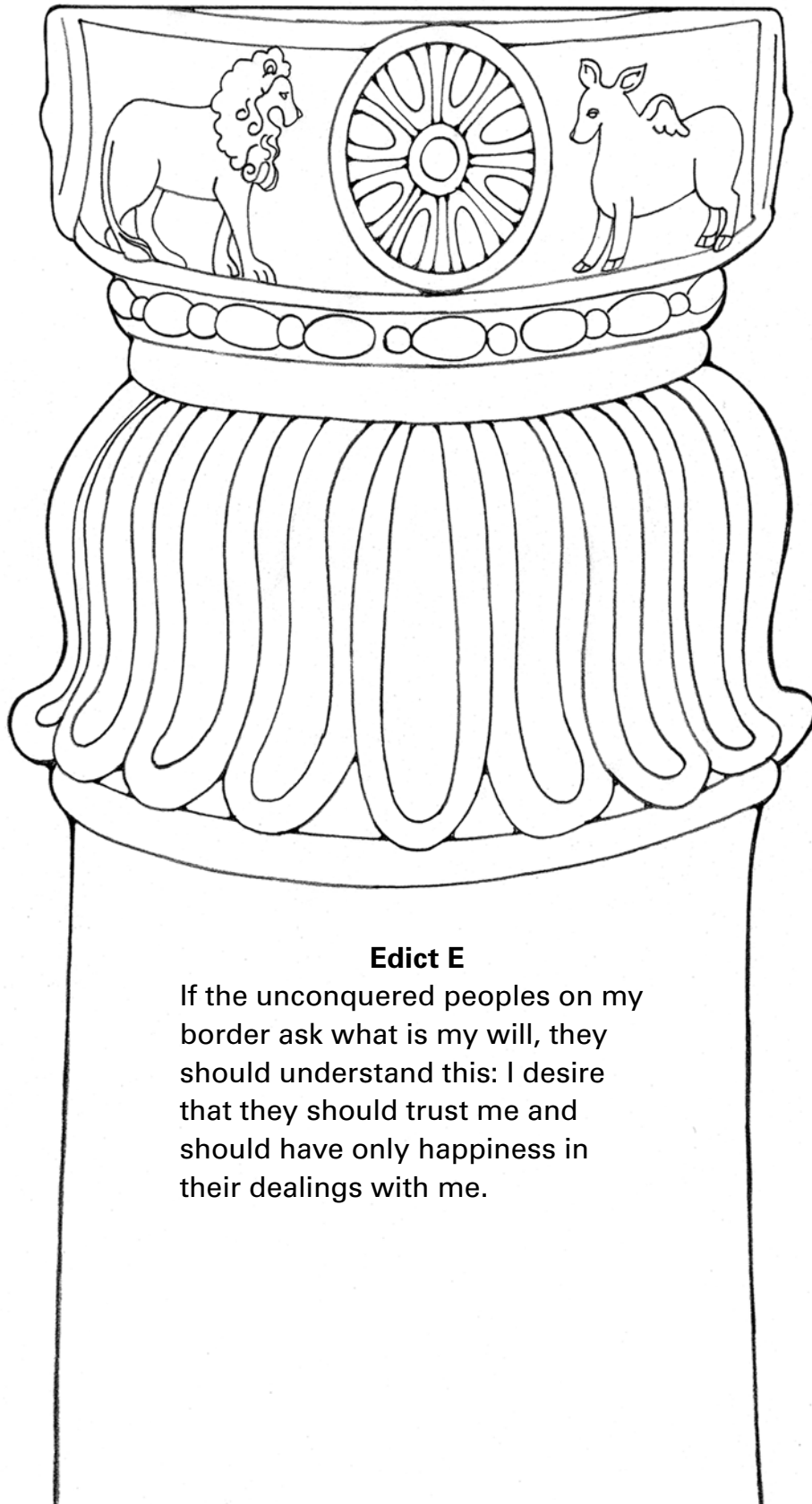
**Edict C**

My officers have been appointed for the welfare [safety] and happiness of the . . . people. I have given them . . . authority in judgment and punishment. But it is desirable that there should be uniformity [sameness] in judicial [trial] procedure and punishment.



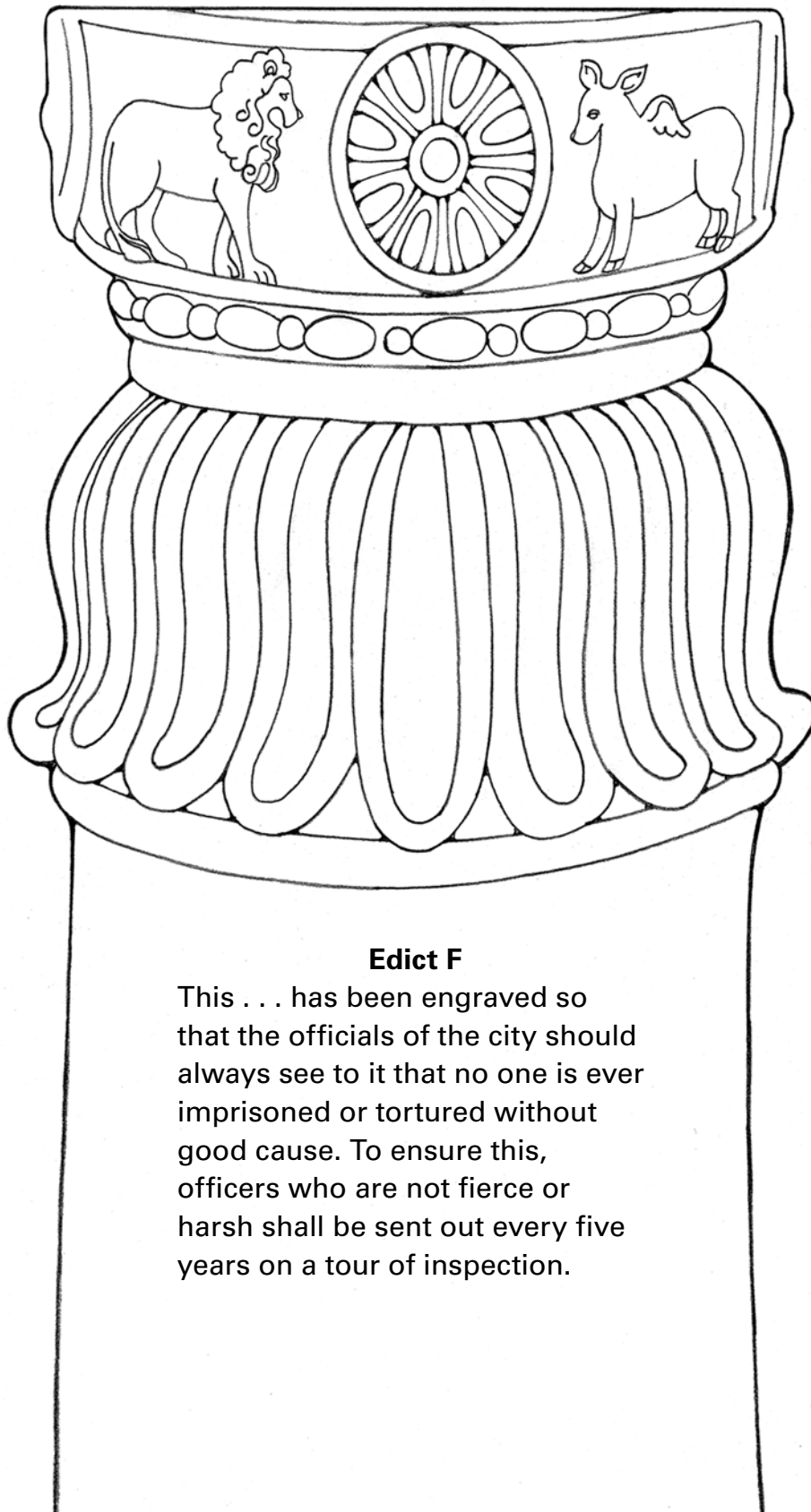
**Edict D**

This world and the other [world after death] are hard to gain without great love of righteousness [correct behavior], great self-examination, great obedience, and great effort.

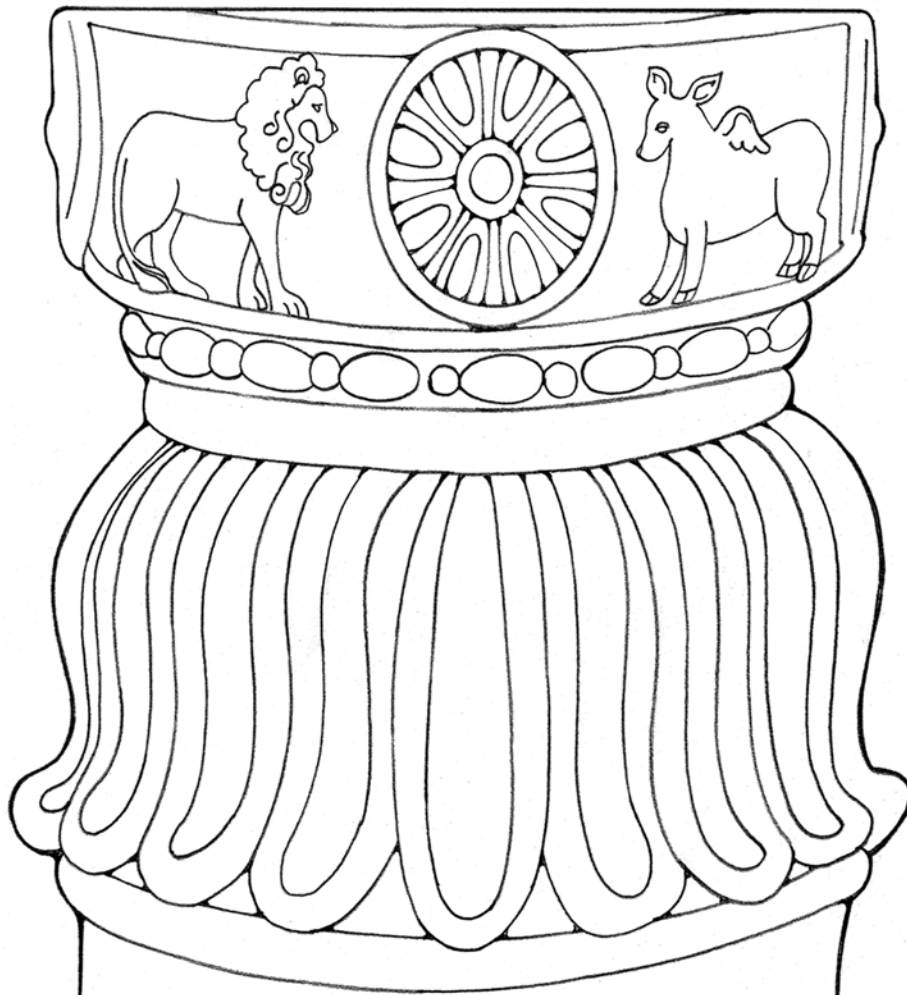


**Edict E**

If the unconquered peoples on my border ask what is my will, they should understand this: I desire that they should trust me and should have only happiness in their dealings with me.

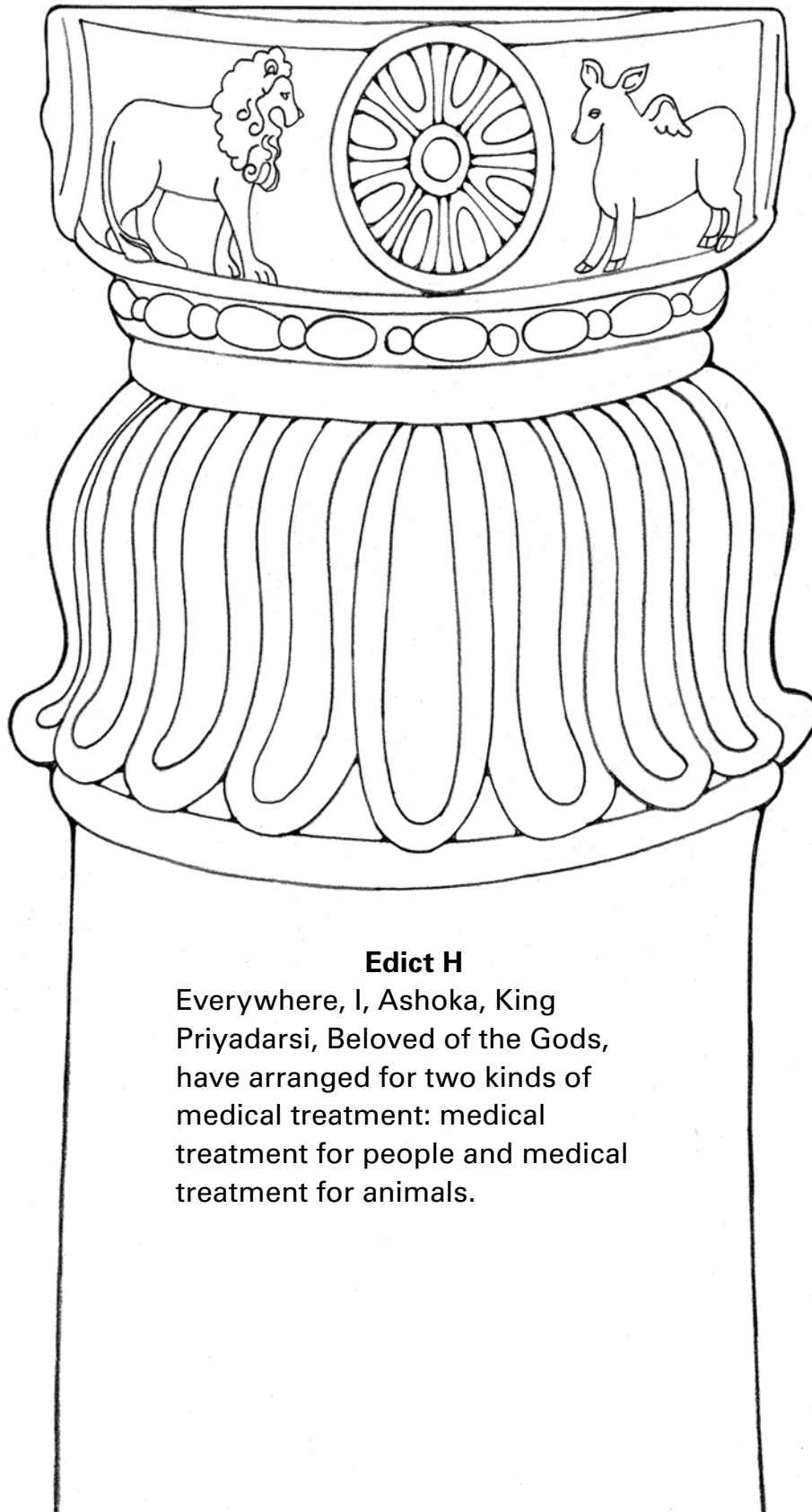
**Edict F**

This . . . has been engraved so that the officials of the city should always see to it that no one is ever imprisoned or tortured without good cause. To ensure this, officers who are not fierce or harsh shall be sent out every five years on a tour of inspection.



**Edict G**

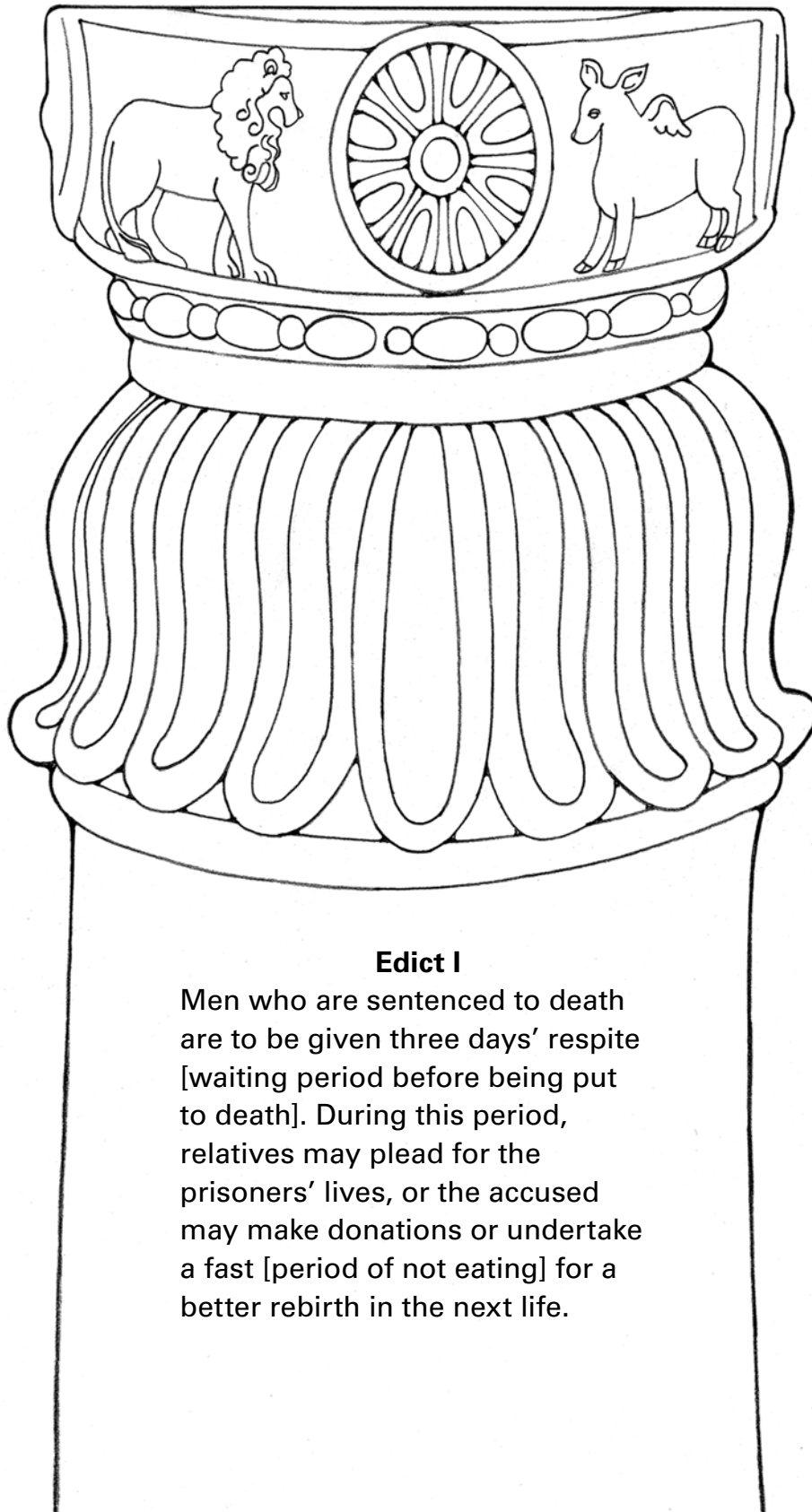
There is no gift comparable to the gift of dharma [righteousness, or correct behavior], which is good behavior toward slaves and servants; obedience to parents; generosity toward friends, acquaintances, and relatives; . . . and abstention [staying away] from killing living beings.



**Edict H**

Everywhere, I, Ashoka, King  
Priyadarsi, Beloved of the Gods,  
have arranged for two kinds of  
medical treatment: medical  
treatment for people and medical  
treatment for animals.



**Edict I**

Men who are sentenced to death are to be given three days' respite [waiting period before being put to death]. During this period, relatives may plead for the prisoners' lives, or the accused may make donations or undertake a fast [period of not eating] for a better rebirth in the next life.

## Interpreting Ashoka's Edicts

With your partner, carefully examine *Edicts A–I* and the billboards posted near them. Circle the goal that you think is best emphasized in each edict, and explain your choice.

Edict	Goal	Why We Chose This Goal
<p><b>Edict A:</b> “On the roads, . . . trees have been planted for the enjoyment of animals and men. I have had ponds dug and shelters erected along the roads. Everywhere I have had wells dug.”</p>	Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security	
<p><b>Edict B:</b> “It is good to be obedient to one’s mother and father, friends, and relatives. It is good not only to spend little, but to own the minimum of property.”</p>	Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security	
<p><b>Edict C:</b> “My officers have been appointed for the welfare [safety] and happiness of the . . . people. I have given them . . . authority in judgment and punishment. But it is desirable that there should be uniformity [sameness] in judicial [trial] procedure and punishment.”</p>	Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security	
<p><b>Edict D:</b> “This world and the other [world after death] are hard to gain without great love of righteousness [correct behavior], great self-examination, great obedience, and great effort.”</p>	Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security	

Edict	Goal	Why We Chose This Goal
<p><b>Edict E:</b> “If the unconquered peoples on my border ask what is my will, they should understand this: I desire that they should trust me and should have only happiness in their dealings with me.”</p>	<p>Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security</p>	
<p><b>Edict F:</b> “This . . . has been engraved so that the officials of the city should always see to it that no one is ever imprisoned or tortured without good cause. To ensure this, officers who are not fierce or harsh shall be sent out every five years on a tour of inspection.”</p>	<p>Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security</p>	
<p><b>Edict G:</b> “There is no gift comparable to the gift of dharma [righteousness, or correct behavior], which is good behavior toward slaves and servants; obedience to parents; generosity toward friends, acquaintances, and relatives; . . . and abstention [staying away] from killing living beings.”</p>	<p>Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security</p>	
<p><b>Edict H:</b> “Everywhere, I, Ashoka, King Priyadarsi, Beloved of the Gods, have arranged for two kinds of medical treatment: medical treatment for people and medical treatment for animals.”</p>	<p>Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security</p>	
<p><b>Edict I:</b> “Men who are sentenced to death are to be given three days’ respite [waiting period before being put to death]. During this period, relatives may plead for the prisoners’ lives, or the accused may make donations or undertake a fast [period of not eating] for a better rebirth in the next life.”</p>	<p>Buddhist Values General Welfare Justice Security</p>	