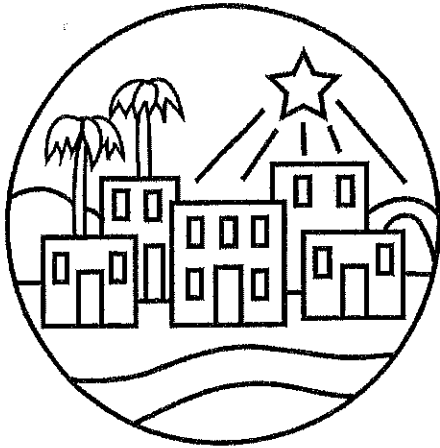


December 22: Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus



The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ was born in the town of Bethlehem. A long time before Jesus was born the prophets had foretold that the Messiah would be born there. At that time Caesar Augustus, the Roman ruler in those days, wanted everyone to report for a census in their own city. Joseph in obedience to the law took Mary to Bethlehem, which was the City of David where their ancestors were from. It is while they were

there that Jesus was born. There was also a special star in the sky over Bethlehem. Wise men from the east saw this star and travelled from a far away country in hopes of seeing the newborn King.



View of Bethlehem, 1898, (with star added)



Luke 2:1-5. ¹Now in those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. ²This was the first enrollment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to enroll themselves, everyone to his own city. ⁴Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to David's city, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David; ⁵to enroll himself with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him as wife, being pregnant.

Matthew 2:1-6, 11. ¹Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, ²"Where is he who is born King of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east, and have come to worship him."

³When King Herod heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he asked them where the Christ would be born.

⁵They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is written through the prophet, ⁶'You Bethlehem, land of Judah, are in no way least among the princes of Judah: for out of you shall come a governor, who shall shepherd my people, Israel.'" ...

¹¹They came into the house and saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.