

## THE STORY OF BETHLEHEM

### *The Neverending Story*

In 1867, Pastor Phillip Brooks put his pen to paper and wrote a very special and very biblical song that we often hear during the Christmas Season.

He wrote these glorious words.....

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears ...of all the years ... are met in thee... tonight.*

**The Story Of Bethlehem is a special story that needs to be told and retold.**

### **1. THE STORY OF BETHLEHEM IS THE STORY OF A PLACE.**

**The name "Bethlehem" means "House of Bread".  
Micah also calls it by another name "Ephratah".  
Which is an older name for the city and means "Place of Fruitfulness".**

Rachel dies in childbirth and as she is dying, she calls her son's name "Benoni", which means "son of my sorrow".

Jacob's wife, Rachel, was buried just outside of Bethlehem.

Jacob changed his son's name from Benoni to "Benjamin", which means the "son of my right hand".

### **2. THE STORY OF BETHLEHEM IS THE STORY OF A PLAN.**

The words from the Old Testament proclaim, "*From you Bethlehem... shall come forth for me one who is to rule Israel.*" (Micah 5:2)

It is a plan designed with **you** and me in mind!

For where two or three are gathered together in His name, He (Jesus) is there in their midst. Matthew 18:20

Jesus is in our midst. He is with us, here this day.

Grace Cairns shared a poem titled "If you look for me at Christmas".

*If you look for Me at Christmas  
you won't need a special star --  
I'm no longer ..... just in Bethlehem,  
I'm right there .....where you are.*

The gift, the treasure from Bethlehem is right here in our midst.

### **3. THE STORY OF BETHLEHEM IS A STORY OF A MIRACLE.**

The story of Bethlehem is the story of God becoming man.

He knew loneliness, He knew grief, He grew weary, slept, wept, was rejected, and He died.

Jesus came to this earth because He loves **you** and He gave His life as a ransom **for you**.

He came to offer **you** salvation.

As the poem clearly stated: "I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,... I'm right there ....where **you** are."

He loves **you** so much that He offered Himself upon the cross for

your sins and for the sins of the whole world.

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;*

*Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.*

*We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;*

*O come to us, abide with us, our Lord ...Emmanuel!*