

# Merry Christmas

## *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

*Commemorating the  
Sequence of Holy Events for  
the four weeks of December*

***Prophecy Candle***

***Bethlehem Candle***

***Shepherd's Candle***

***Angels' Candle***

***Christmas Eve -***

***Christ's Candle***





Bethlehem – A little city in the hill country of Judah.

# Bethlehem Ephratah

Birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ

1. Benjamin was born there, and Rachel died there (Ephratah)
2. Bethlehem Ephratah – There is meaning in each name
3. On his way to the throne Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, visited there.
4. David, of the tribe of Judah, was born there, ggson of Boaz n Ruth.
5. David desired its water, despite the garrison of Philistines there.
6. Our Lord Jesus Christ was born there
7. There is still a garrison of Philistines there.

O little town of Bethlehem – A city in the hill country of Judah.

# Bethlehem Birthplace of Messiah

Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish

- For God so loved...he gave his only begotten Son John 3:16, 17, 18, 36, 5:24
  - 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.
  - 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.
- As it is written... All have sinned Rom 3:10, 23
- God commendeth his love... Christ (Messiah) died for us Rom 5:8
- God's substitute for Adam's race... Rom 5:12, 18-19
  - Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: ... Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.
- Wages for your life... OR the gift of God... Rom 6:23
- Your request for pardon... That if thou shalt confess... Rom 10:9-10, 13

Bethlehem – also called Ephratah i.e. Micah 5:2 But thou,  
Bethlehem Ephratah, ...

Ephratah is a curious name... meaning "ash-heap: place of  
fruitfulness"

**How is it that “out of the ashes” comes fruitfulness?**

Gen 48:7 And as for me (Jacob), when I came from Padan,  
Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when  
yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I  
buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is  
Bethlehem.

Genesis 35:18 And it came to pass, as her soul was in  
departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni  
(son of my sorrow): but his father called him Benjamin (son  
of the right hand).

**How is it that “out of the ashes” comes fruitfulness?**

Consider first the failed kingdom of Saul

And the Fruitful kingdom of David

## Two Kings Come From Bethlehem

Visited by Saul of the tribe of Benjamin, on his way to the throne. Recall that Benjamin was born in Bethlehem.

*1 Samuel 10:1 Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?*

*2 When thou art departed from me to day, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre (in Bethlehem) in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?*

There is no coincidence in this.



Bethlehem – the birthplace of David,

*1Sam 16:1 And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.*

Called the City of David in Luke 2:4

The birthplace of Jesus:

*And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)*

## How is it that “out of the ashes” comes fruitfulness?

Consider the story of Ruth, the Moabite

Bethlehem – the birthplace of David's great grandfather, Boaz, the prime example of a Kinsman Redeemer.

*Ruth 3:17 ... There is a son born to Naomi (of Ruth); and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.*

Recall that Naomi went to sojourn in Moab, returned with Ruth the Moabite, and had her estate redeemed by Boaz the Kinsman Redeemer.

*And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.* (Ruth 1:20)

**Out of ashes come fruitfulness!spy**

*18-22 Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.*

And don't forget the Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab the harlot of Jericho (Mat 1:5).

God regularly brings things out of the ashes!



Bethlehem – the name means *house of bread*

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life:** he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 **I am that bread of life.** 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 **This is the bread which cometh down from heaven,** that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 **I am the living bread** which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

**Bethlehem – David desired water from its well,  
despite the garrison of Philistines.**

*2Sam 23:14 And David was then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem.*

*15 And David longed, and said, **Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!***

*16 And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: **nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD.***

*17 And he said, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.*

**Nor are you and I worthy.**

Bethlehem brought us **Jesus, the Christ, the Living Water.**

*John 4:10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have **given thee living water.***

*11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?...*

*13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:*

*14 But **whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.***

*And for you and I: John 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

**So... How is it that for Christ  
“out of the ashes” comes fruitfulness?**

Isa 53:4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

**Ephratah - Out of the ashes comes fruitfulness!**



# Bethlehem Ephratah

Birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ

Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

There is still a garrison of Philistines there!  
In Feb 2009, when Bev and I were in Israel,  
Bethlehem was under hate-filled Palestinian  
control and Jews were not allowed into the city.

Jews not allowed in the  
city of Bethlehem!!!  
It is under Palestinian Control!

Modern Bethlehem - Filled with man  
made religions and troublous times.

# Bethlehem Ephratah

Birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ

Churches NOT Preaching the  
Gospel of Jesus Christ

Church of the Nativity

Church of Saint Catherine

Chapel of the Shepherd's Field

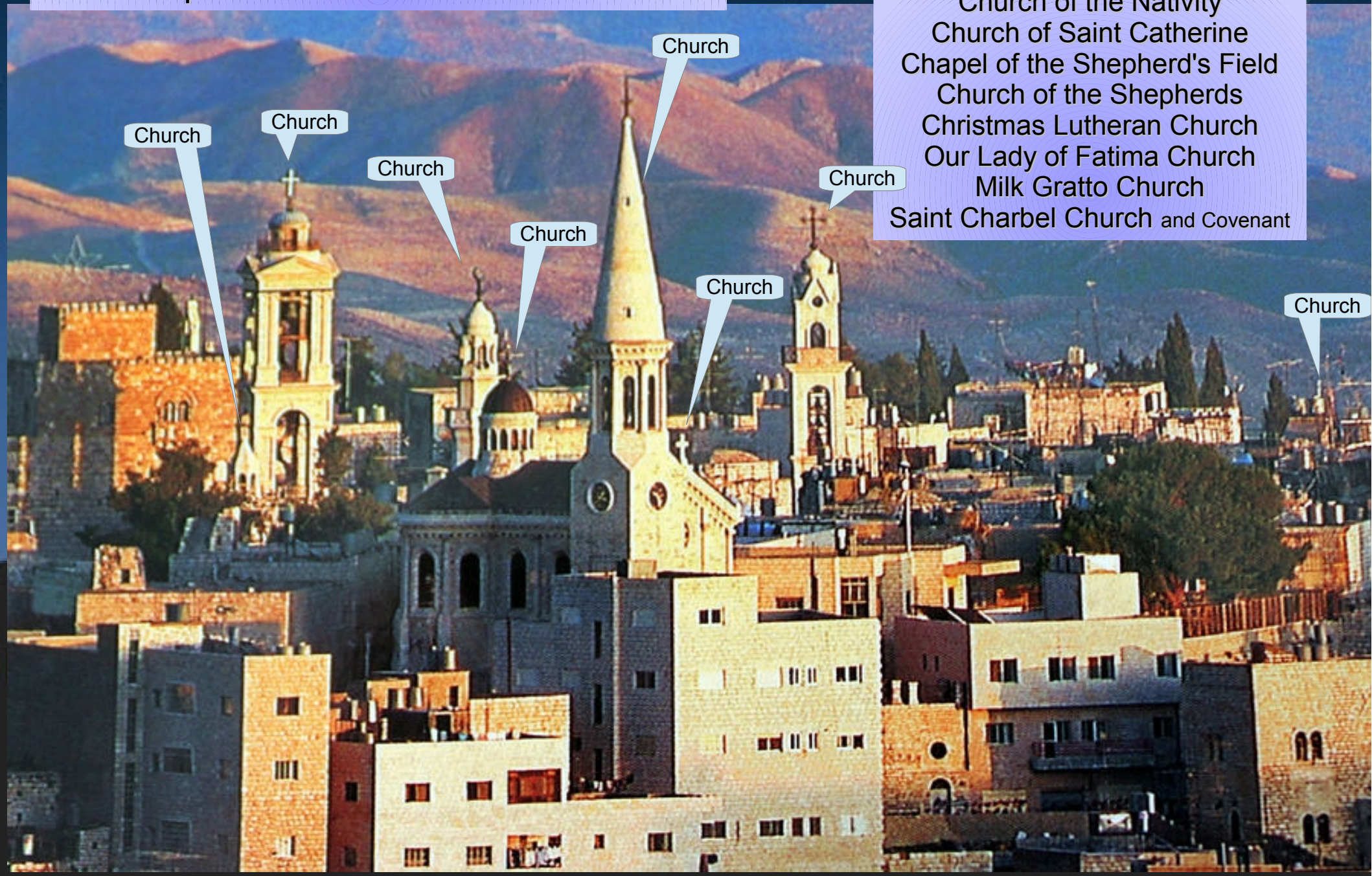
Church of the Shepherds

Christmas Lutheran Church

Our Lady of Fatima Church

Milk Gratto Church

Saint Charbel Church and Covenant



Church

Church

Church

Church

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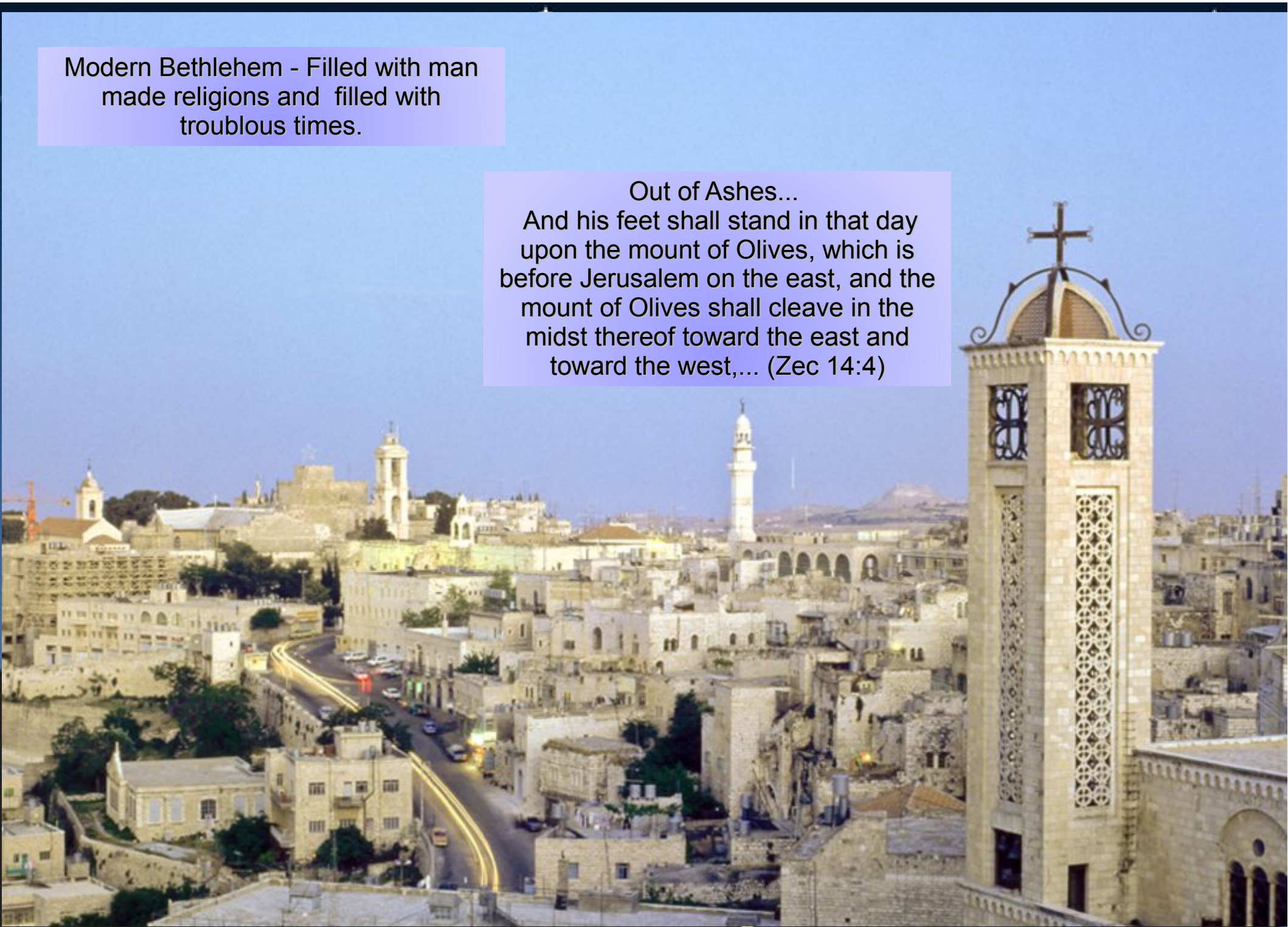
Church

Church

Church

Modern Bethlehem - Filled with man  
made religions and filled with  
troublous times.

Out of Ashes...  
And his feet shall stand in that day  
upon the mount of Olives, which is  
before Jerusalem on the east, and the  
mount of Olives shall cleave in the  
midst thereof toward the east and  
toward the west,... (Zec 14:4)





Modern Bethlehem - Filled with man made religions and filled with troublous times.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good. (Psalm 122:6-9)

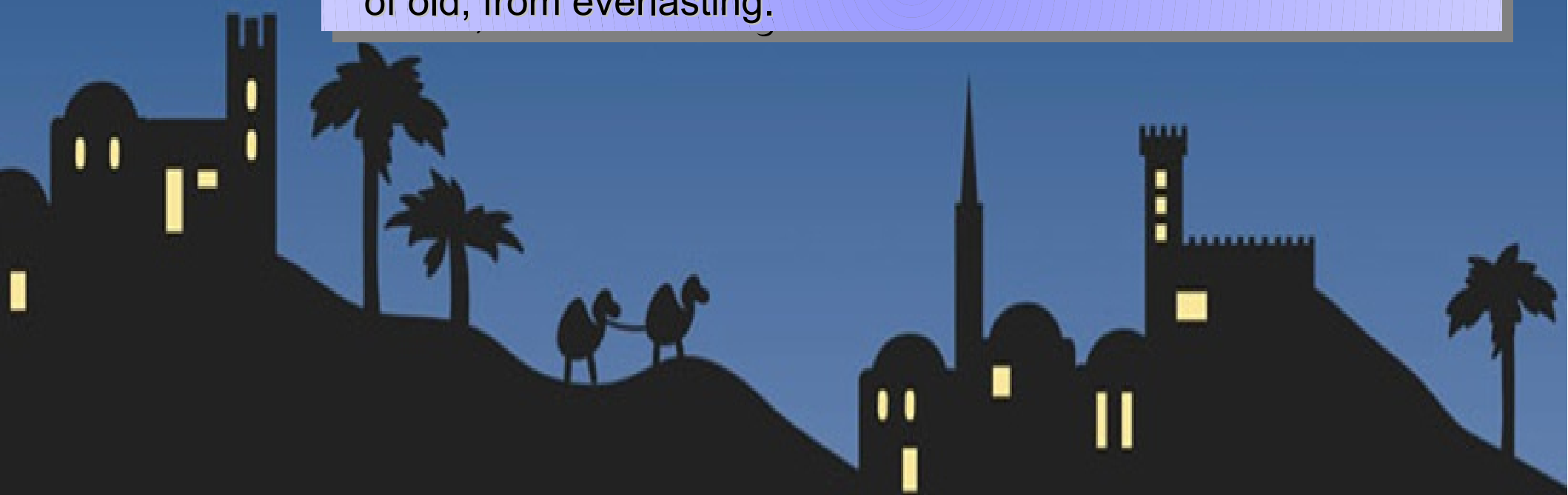




## *Micah 5:2 in context*

Micah 5:1 Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.



## *Micah 5 the timing*

Micah 5:3 Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

- Rev 12:1 ¶ And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:
- 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. ...4... and the (great red) dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.
- 5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

## *Micah 5 the revelation*

Micah 5:4 And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

## *Micah 5 the revelation*

Micah 5:5 And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.

Seven (7) number of completeness.

Eight (8) number of new things (8<sup>th</sup> day of week)

Ezekiel 34:25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

Psalms 4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

• **Msg #1849 Bethlehem Ephratah**

What The Bible Says

Good Samaritan's Penny Pulpit by Pastor Ed Rice

Important things are often overlooked when one thinks of “O little town of Bethlehem,” a tiny town in the hill country of Judah but the birthplace of our Lord Jesus Christ. After Rachel died there in childbirth it came to be called Bethlehem Ephratah; Ephratah meaning both heap of ashes and place of fruitfulness. How is it that out of the ashes comes fruitfulness? Rachel called her child “son of my sorrow” but his father called him “son of the right hand.” So to the Christ was “despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isa 53:3), but in his death and resurrection he was fruitful, bringing everlasting life. A Benjaminite named Saul visited Rachel's tomb on his way to the throne (1Sam 10:2), and out of his failed kingdom rose King David, who was born in Bethlehem (1Sam 16:1). Bethlehem means “house of bread” and out of her comes he who said, “I am the bread of life... He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John 6:35-48). Despite the garrison of Philistines camped in Bethlehem, David desired water from its well (2Sam 23:14-17), and it is no coincidence that Jesus said, “whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst... (it) shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). “O little town of Bethlehem,” there is still a garrison of hate filled Palestinians there, but God in Micah 5 still promises great victories to come from that heap of ashes. God still takes ashes and turns them into fruitfulness. “Come to Bethlehem, and see, Him Whose birth the angels sing. Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.” Merry Christmas.

An Essay for week #49 Dec 9, 2018

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**Next Week Shepherds Candle**