

# Eyewitness to the Birth of the Messiah

By John D. Freed

*The story of the Nativity Scene will not be portrayed as it has been on Christmas cards. The historical facts surrounding this world-changing event have been interwoven with the best understanding of the culture and times of the first century and what is told here, the events that are not Bible based nor historically accurate are presented as close as possible to the Israeli culture of the times, with the expansion of the imagination of the author.*

My name is Ruth; my husband Jeremiah and I manage the stables, Inn, and café in Bethlehem. We lived most of our lives in Nazareth until he took over the Inn. The owner expected an increase in business because Caesar Augustus ordered an empire-wide census.

Our Inn is popular because Jeremiah is very knowledgeable about the animals, especially camels and I have developed special meals for the caravan masters from foreign countries.

After lunch, Jeremiah went out to hang up our “**NO VACANCY**” sign when a young couple arrived. It was Mary and Joseph of Nazareth.

“Shalom,” Jeremiah greeted Mary as he helped her down from the donkey. “Please come in and Ruth will fix you something to eat to warm you up a bit.

“We’re glad to be here,” Mary told him. “We need a place to stay until my baby is born.”

The look on Jeremiah’s face puzzled her.

“Mary,” he said, “I’m so sorry but we have no room in the Inn. We must help you find suitable accommodations somewhere in our small village. The census of Augustus has turned our whole community upside down.”

Mary quickly replied, “I don’t think I can travel any further, I must rest as soon as I can.”

I realized immediately that Mary’s baby was about to be born.

“Jeremiah, quickly, we must make room for them in the stable,” I exclaimed.

Joseph and Jeremiah cleared an area and put out a lot of fresh straw.

Suddenly the men heard me call out.

“It’s time! The baby is coming soon!”

All that Jeremiah had available was the shelter where some of the smaller animals were kept inside during the wintertime.

Mary had come from a poor family and was familiar with this arrangement, as she would have had to sleep in similar conditions in her home.

During the winter many families depended on the animals to be inside to also provide heat as there were no fireplaces or other means to keep the house warm.

Joseph was not as accepting of the arrangement but was grateful to see that Mary had a warm place to rest.

“It’s time! The baby is coming!” I declared, suddenly.

In a matter of a few moments the cries of a newborn soon filled the air.

“We won’t need any candles tonight,” I said, “Mary is glowing enough to light up the whole village.”

I quickly cleaned up the newborn and gently presented Mary with her precious bundle.

Soon the baby was sound asleep. Mary was holding her baby boy, rejoicing in his birth, and remembering what the Angel Gabriel told her: the baby that she would give birth to would be a son and that He “*shall be called the Son of God*”.<sup>[1]</sup>

Mary placed the sleeping baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes, in the manger.

“What name shall you give this little one?” I asked.

“*Jesus*”,<sup>[2]</sup> Mary declared “*His name shall be Jesus because He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*”<sup>[3]</sup>

Jeremiah gave Joseph a very confused look.

Joseph adamantly agreed; “Yes, Jeremiah, God has blessed you and Ruth with being the first to see His only begotten Son.”

“Joseph,” he declared, “we must talk about this!”

Joseph was explaining what he had just said, when the local shepherds showed up.

“Jeremiah!!!,” one of the shepherds shouted as he approached the stable. “You won’t believe what we just saw!” announced Asaph as he and the other shepherds stepped into the light.

“Oh my,” Jeremiah exclaimed, “you won’t believe what just happened here tonight! Shalom, my friends Asaph, Aviyah, and Abiram, you must see what we have in our stable.”

“We came with great haste to Bethlehem to see what the Lord had made known to us”, Asaph said.

“The Angel Gabriel appeared and the heavenly host of angels, and the glory of the Lord lit up the night sky,” exclaimed Abiriam.

“Come inside,” Jeremiah commanded, “Joseph just explained to me that the baby boy born in our stable is, Emmanuel, the only begotten Son of God.

Aviya approached the Messiah, “*and kneeleth on his knees ... and spreadeth forth his hands towards the heavens*”<sup>[4]</sup> he praised God in his deep, bass voice: “*All hail the power of Jesus’ name!*”

*Let angels prostrate fall; Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all.”[5]*

*“Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room, And heav’n and nature sing.”[6]*

Quietly, humbly Asaph approached the Messiah; Mary stood watchful by the babe, and ever so softly, Asaph said: *“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. For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.”[7]*

Rising to his feet **“and spreadeth forth his hands towards the heavens** — “[8], he declared: *“Hark! the herald angels sing; Glory to the new-born King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled! Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with the angelic host proclaim. Christ is born in Bethlehem! Glory to the new-born King; Christ is born in Bethlehem!”[9]*

As the shepherds left to go tell all who would listen, I sang to the baby Messiah:

*“While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.” [10]*

Truly, this will be a night I will always remember.

[1] [Luke 1:35](#) i.22.1

[2] [Luke 1:31](#) i.22.1

[3] [Luke 1:32](#) i.22.1

[4] 1 Kings 8:54 I.22.1

[5] All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name, Lyrics ~ Edward Perronet, 1726 – 1792  
Alt. John Rippon, 1751 – 1836; Music ~ Oliver Holden, 1765 – 1844

[6] Joy to the World! Lyrics ~ Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Music ~ adapted from G.F.Handel, 1685-1759 and arranged by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

[7] O Little Town of Bethlehem, Lyrics ~ Philips Brooks, 1835-1893

Music ~ Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908

[8] [2 Chronicles 6:13](#) I.22.1

[9] Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, Lyrics ~ Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music ~ Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

[10] While Shepherds Watched, Lyrics – Nahum Tate, 1652-1715

Music – various arrangers

It is the desired hope of the author that this series will inspire the reader to seek out a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to learn of His desire to show mercy to all who seek Him; go to the Holy Scriptures and read the stories as God has written them, and not only grow closer to the Creator of this world but reach out to others and share the unmerited love of God with them.

More excerpts from the upcoming series:

## “from Bethlehem to Heaven’s Gate”

**INSIGHTS INTO FIRST CENTURY HOLY LAND AND THE STORY OF THE NATIVITY SCENE WILL NOT BE PORTRAYED AS IT HAS BEEN ON CHRISTMAS CARDS.**

### Introduction

This series begins with the unique journey of Micah’s grandparents, Jeremiah, and Ruth to Bethlehem. 18-month-old son, Joel. (Joseph, the divinely chosen guardian and Mary, mother of Jesus, make a similar journey two years later.)

[Introduction](#)

### RECIPIES

Rebecca stayed up to prepare a special bread for their journey, from a new recipe she received from her friend Anna Marie of Sepphoris.<sup>(1)</sup> She mixed up the regular wheat bread dough, rolled it out flat, then added a thin layer of honey, cinnamon, and a very small amount of nutmeg. She prepared her large pottery oven over the hot coals from the evening’s fire. Next, she rolled the flattened dough into a log and with a large sharp knife cut the log into pieces at an angle to make them even larger.



[Video: About “from Bethlehem to Heaven’s Gate”](#)

### BIBLE FACTS!

Here’s a short story, just a few pages, from my book. Please visit our website: [hf5m.com](http://hf5m.com) for additional glimpses of our upcoming book:

“from Bethlehem to Heaven’s Gate”



hf5m.com

JOHN FREED

Praying this will MAKE YOUR DAY

### GOD’S AWESOME VICTORY

“Nearly a thousand years later,” Yaron declared, “Elisha the prophet lived here, and another miracle occurred. Syria’s King sent horses, chariots, and a great host to Dothan to bring Elisha to him. The King believed Elisha could read the minds of other kings. God had other plans.”

“That sounds interesting,” said Abigail, “Please tell us more.”

“Elisha lived up there in Dothan,” Yaron continued as he pointed toward the little village on the hill. His assistant, Nachman, was watching the sunset after Elisha retired from a long day’s walk.

[“God’s Awesome Victory” Full story download](#)

## Contact us

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Bible based stories about Micah, his family, friends and adventures growing up in New Testament times after meeting Jesus

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