

## Bethlehem-Judah

Bethlehem-Judah is a town in Palestine, about five miles south of Jerusalem, at an elevation of about 2550 feet above mean sea level. The town overlooks the highway to Hebron and Egypt.

The name Bethlehem probably means house of bread or granary, so it was used of various places. The name draws attention to the fertility of the region.

There are other towns named Bethlehem in Israel, the most notable other one being in the north, toward the coast, in the territory allotted to Zebulun.

The town was also called Bethlehem Ephrath (Micah 5:2), Bethlehem of Judea (Matt. 2:1) and the city of David (Luke 2:4)

Jacob was buried Rachel near Bethlehem. In those

days the town was called Ephrath. See Gen. 35:19; 48:7. The names are sometimes combined in the Bible.

After the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, Bethlehem became part of the land allotted to Judah (Judges 17:7).

David was born in Bethlehem. He was anointed in Bethlehem by Samuel, after God had chosen him as king. David's three heroes (2 Sam. 23:15 ff) brought him water from the well at Bethlehem. The well now existing on the north side of the village is thought to be the same well.

Bethlehem-Judah was the birthplace of Jesus Christ. The male children of this region were slain by Herod, who had ordered that all males under the age of two were to be killed. Matthew 2:13-18