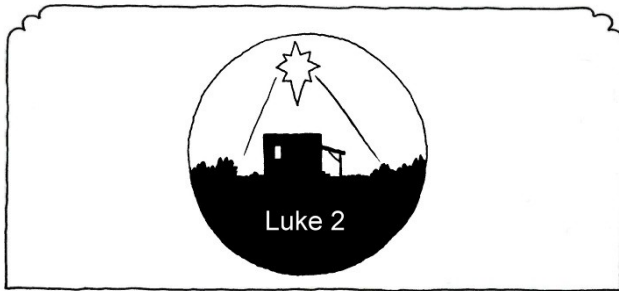


# THE INNKEEPER AT BETHLEHEM

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By Jill Kemp

Illustrated by Richard Gunther



Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, where Joseph had had been born, to write their names in the Tax Book. The little town was crowded with visitors.



Joseph found an inn. He knocked on the door and it opened quickly. "No room," the innkeeper said. Joseph and Mary walked wearily on.



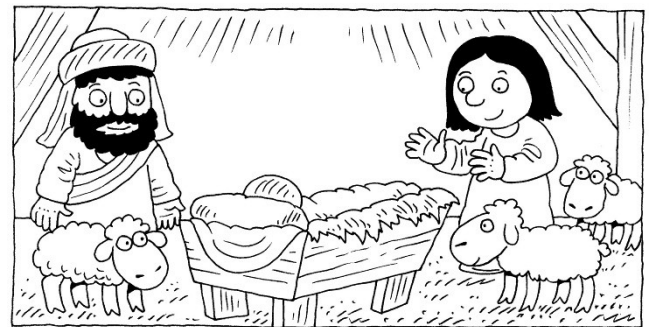
They knocked at the next inn door. "No room," said the innkeeper. "I don't think you will find an empty bed in Bethlehem tonight!"



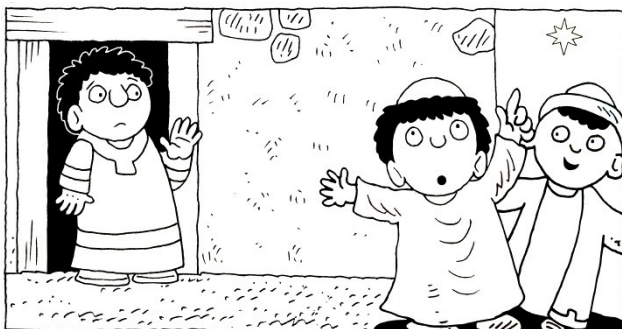
The innkeeper saw Mary and felt sorry for her. "The stable is warm and dry. There is hay and water. It isn't much, but it's all I can give you," he said.



Joseph looked at the animal's shelter. It wasn't where he had ever imagined that God's promised Saviour would be born - in a stable!



That night, baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in soft linen and Joseph made baby Jesus a bed, in manger box of hay.



That night, shepherds knocked on the inn door. "We're looking for a baby in a manger," they said. "The angel said He is the Saviour, Christ the Lord." The innkeeper took the shepherds to the stable.



The shepherds and the innkeeper were the first to see baby Jesus, the promised Saviour. He was wrapped in soft linen and lying a manger, just as the angel had said.