

Bethlehem in the Bible

Meaning of the Name: House of Bread.

There were two Bethlehems: One was in Judah in the south which is the one we will be looking at. The other was in Zebulun's territory in Galilee a short distance from Nazareth; the judge Ibzan was probably from the North.

Genesis 35:19-20 - The death and burial of Rachel.

Genesis 48:7 - The prophetic recounting of the death of Rachel. Jacob remembered what had happened.

1 Chronicles 4:3-4 - The origins of Bethlehem. The early ancestors.

Judges 17-18 - A Levite from Bethlehem heads north. He later joins an idolatrous tribe.

Judges 19-21 - Concubine from Bethlehem runs back home. Her death back north results in much death in Benjamin.

Ruth - This book is mostly set in Bethlehem and recounts how the line of David was attributed to Bethlehem. This excerpt comes from the end of last chapter:

- ¹⁸This, then, is the family line of Perez (Breakthrough): Perez was the father of Hezron,
- ¹⁹Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab,
- ²⁰Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, (Peaceful-One)
- ²¹Salmon the father of Boaz, (in Him-Is-Strength), Boaz the father of Obed, (Servant)
- ²²Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David. (Beloved)

1 Samuel 16 - The search of Samuel for a future king in Bethlehem, based on the Lord's direction.

1 Kings 17 - David from Bethlehem comes into practical leadership by conquering Goliath. A little guy beats a big man on the battlefield.

1 Chronicles 11:15-19 - David asks for water from Bethlehem's well. It is recovered, and spilled. Water from a good well was a sacrifice.

Micah 5:1-7 - A future leader will come from Bethlehem. It was a small city, but the impact of that leader would impact the nations. Cf. prophetic application of this to Saddam Hussein's fall.

Jeremiah 31:15-17 and following - Out of Rachel's cry would come the cry of all the mothers in Bethlehem.

Luke 2:1-20 - Jesus was born in Bethlehem and witnessed to by the shepherds who practiced the same trade as David.

Matthew 2:1ff - Jesus' birth in Bethlehem was indicated by the heavenly body and the Magi came to offer gifts. Jesus was acknowledged Divine King destined to Die by foreign wise men, but the Lord was rejected by the leaders of his own land. Much blood, not Jesus' and not water, was spilled in this small village.

John 7:37-44, especially v. 42 - People knew that the Messiah had to be born in Bethlehem.

Jesus qualified as the Messiah as one from Bethlehem, but he didn't sound like it based on his accent. He sounded like a Nazarene. He was the uprooted Root descended from Ruth.