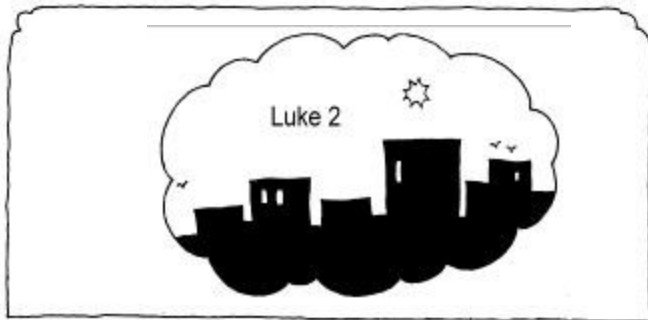


JESUS was born in Bethlehem

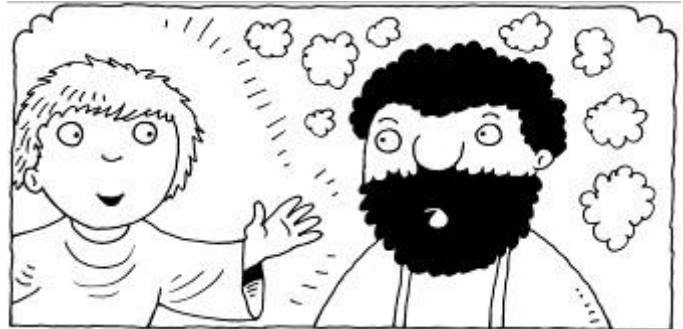
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By Jill Kemp

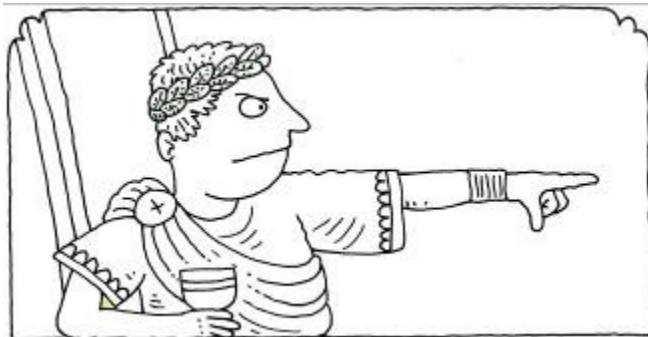
Illustrated by Richard Gunther



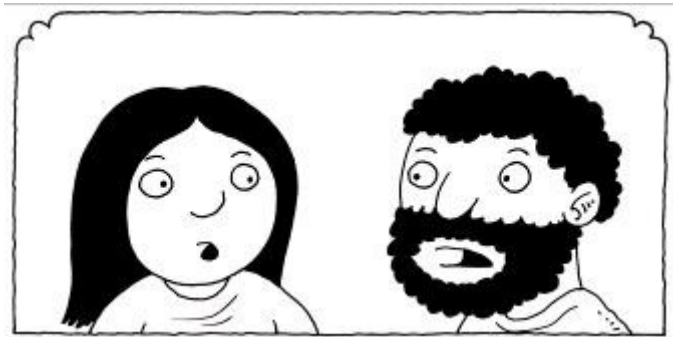
Jesus was not born in a palace, or a big house. He was born in a stable in the small town of Bethlehem and didn't even have his own bed!



Joseph the Carpenter lived in the town of Nazareth. One night God sent the angel Gabriel to tell him that the baby Mary was expecting was the promised Son of God. He was to marry Mary and take care of her and the baby.



The emperor Augustus wanted more tax money. He made a new law. Everyone was to go to the town their ancestors came from to write their names on a list, so Joseph had to go to Bethlehem.



"My ancestor David was from Bethlehem," Joseph told Mary, "so I must go there to put my name down. Your baby will be born soon but you will have to come too, because God wants me to look after you."



It took about three days to get to Bethlehem and Mary rode on the back of the donkey. It was a bumpy ride and Mary would have been very tired and very uncomfortable.



So many people had come to put their name on the list at Bethlehem that there was nowhere for Mary and Joseph to stay, except a smelly stable that animals slept in.



That night baby Jesus, the promised Saviour, was born in a stable in Bethlehem. A very bright star appeared in the sky right above the place where He was born.



Joseph and Mary called the baby Jesus, just like the angel Gabriel had told them. They wrapped him in a soft linen cloth and made him a bed in a manger box of hay.