

## **The Setting for Walk Thru Bethlehem**

Bethlehem, a small undistinguished town a few miles south of Jerusalem, normally is a quiet place filled with small houses and shops. However today the town is crowded with people returning to their place of birth in compliance with the Roman census decree.

The presence of Roman soldiers creates additional tension in the town. These troops (comprised of Syrian conscripts) do not like the Judeans, and the Jews have no love for the soldiers. The soldiers have defiled the temple and stolen from the temple treasury.

There has long been anticipation of a King or Messiah among the Jewish population, but that would have been expected to happen in Jerusalem or another more important place. However, there is discussion of a strange star in the sky and the arrival of mysterious visitors from the East.

This is the setting for our Walk Thru Bethlehem. We are villagers, shopkeepers, healers, soldiers, Maji, and a young mother and father. We seek to present our guests with a realistic picture of the village of Bethlehem when Jesus was born.