

## FROM PASTOR KEN'S DESK



### **Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists**

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### *Tale of Two Kings*

#### **Part 4: The Inn**

Mary, heavy with child, can no longer sit on the jolting donkey so she walks laboriously up the terraced road leading to Bethlehem. They pass under the brow of the highest hill in Bethlehem, which is the winter palace of Herod. It is a magnificent structure, a great castle, and a strong fortress which now glows lighted with lavish abandon. Herod is in residence for the census, but the mad king, consumed with paranoia and malaise for life itself, parties on from orgy to orgy pell-mell to perdition unaware of the greatest child-king in history passing outside his fortress walls.\*

Mary waits by the donkey while Joseph approaches an Inn. Known as a Kahn, it is a low structure built into the side of a hill. The Kahn is not a building or a house but an entrance to a series of rock corrals, like small cattle pens. Each room or "*Lewann*" has a small circular retaining wall and a low rock wall between each enclosed space. These enclosures are built around the base of the hill and are designed for a single family. There is a small space in front for cattle, sheep or donkeys to be tied and in the centre of the enclosure, against the wall is a small raised platform about a foot or two above the dirt. The enclosures are all open, for there was no roof or walls, no privacy and no furniture. Each travelling family brings their own rug, or blanket, which they spread out on the platform. There they eat, sleep and provide their own covering from the inclement weather. They bring their own food and draw their own water from the common well in the village.

For those not lucky enough to obtain lodging in the village Inn, there are few options. Outside the Kahn there is a common courtyard and then some distance away, a stable. The stable was really a cave hewed into the side of the hill a short distance from the Kahn. There is a circular stone wall in front of the stable, a rock fence several feet high.

Families usually travel with a personal donkey or animal for sacrifice; these animals are a part of the family and usually stay in the *Leewan* with them. The stable was designed to house camels, horses and other beasts of burden that are caravan pack animals. These stables are dirty and mucky with manure, and usually crowded with milling pack animals and stray dogs.

\*Note: Herod passed away in his 34th year of reign at the age of 69, most probably in the spring of 4 BC. We can ascertain that one of his last acts was the destruction of every male child under the age of two years in order to destroy the holy child.

Next week: The Birth

*Blessings, Ken Crawford*

