



# OPINION

## The Child Of Christmas

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyree-ni-us was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not; for, behold, I bring you, good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning the child. All they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

## Farm Calendar

**Tuesday, December 22**  
Farrowing Short Course, PSU University Park, Rm. 111, Henning Bldg. 11 a.m., through the 23rd.  
PSU Farrowing Short Course, 111 Henning Bldg., University Park, through the 23rd.  
**Wednesday, December 23**  
Farrowing Short Course, PSU, Rm. 111, Henning Bldg., Uni-

versity Park, 11 a.m.  
**Tuesday, January 5**  
Dairy Nutrition School, Eastern Lancaster County, Gap Fire Hall, 9:45 a.m.  
Schuylkill Co. Dairy Day, PSU Schuylkill Campus, 9 a.m.  
**Wednesday, January 6**  
Lancaster Conservation District Dinner meeting, Stock Yard Inn, 6 p.m.

## FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

### Editor:

There are different groups supporting the proposed 23/30 highway corridor that would sweep southeast from Lancaster near Strasburg and east toward Gap. They say this route would skirt south of prime farmland. Actually, this route goes through prime farmland as we have received corn yields as high as 180 bushels per

acre in our area east of Strasburg. This route would cut up many farms, Amish and non-Amish alike.

I feel alternative Route #7 that follows the railroad line would be the least destructive to area farmers.

James C. Landis  
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## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

### To Understand Firewood Volume Terms

Energy costs continue high and many people are using wood burning stoves as a means of reducing oil, electric or gas use. This means buying more firewood.

It is a good idea to know what you are buying. Some firewood sellers may offer such "measurements" as face cord, rack, stack, truckload or "pile" and buyers often believe they are getting a cord.

A "cord" is defined by Pennsylvania law as "the amount of wood which is contained in a space of 128 cubic feet when wood is ranked and well stowed." The means a neatly piled rank of wood 4 feet high, 4 feet wide and 8 feet long. Those selling fuel wood are liable under the law when they use the term "cord" alone.

A "face cord" which is a term widely used is a neatly piled rank of wood 4 feet wide, 8 feet long and as wide as the lengths of the

sticks of wood. If the places of wood are 16 inches long, you have one-third of a cord of wood.

It pays to know the amount you agree to buy.

### To Prepare For Slippery Conditions

Slippery roads, walks and steps will be a common hazard in the next few months. Many people use salt too freely in cutting the ice; it may get the job done but also may injure nearby turf or shrubbery. I'd suggest the use of sand or sawdust. These materials will make the surface safe without possible injury to vegetation. In areas without any vegetation, salt will give good results. Along our main highways there is some evidence that the constant use of salt is inflicting injury to nearby trees and shrubs. Don't let this happen to your favorite tree, shrub or the turf lining your walk.

### To Control Livestock Parasites

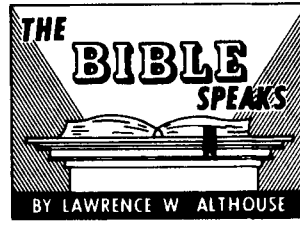
The winter feeding programs are underway and parasite infested livestock are poor money makers. Body lice are often found on nearly all species of livestock. In cold weather the heavy hair coats make it difficult to eradicate these pests.

For best results, use two treatments at 12 to 14 day intervals.

Some cattle operators will have automatic louse control devices filled with an approved insecticide. This is excellent and efficient... if the materials are kept in the equipment. In milder weather cattle can be sprayed with the material using cold water. Stomach worms should also be eradicated in order to make the best use of feeds. Your local veterinarian can check fecal samples to determine the infection. You cannot afford to operate with parasite infection of any kind.

### To Protect Small Pigs

Cold weather is here and many small feeder pigs are not given sufficient protection. In our modern open-fronted finishing houses the small pigs may become too cold and come down with digestive and respiratory problems. We suggest that the pens be covered with boards, or other materials to form a hover over the back part of the pen. This will help maintain body heat and reduce the chance of any drafts over the smaller pigs. When the pigs pile up during cold weather, they are not warm enough. You may want to use heat lamps, or other forms of supplemental heat, on the small pigs during very cold weather.



## HOW FAR TO BETHLEHEM?

December 20, 1987

Background Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12.  
Devotional Reading: Isaiah: 60:1:7.

One of my favorite Christmas carols is an old English piece called the "Children's Song of the Nativity." The words of this carol are the voices of children on their way to Bethlehem, asking "How far is it to Bethlehem?"

In this haunting carol, the answer is: "Not very far." But, of course, your answer depends upon your perspective. Geographically, Bethlehem is but a few miles from Jerusalem, although from your home it is several thousands of miles distant. In terms of time, the birth of Jesus was almost two thousand years ago. Or, looking at it from still another perspective, by the time you read these words, there will be only four more shopping days until Christmas.

If, however, you are thinking in terms of the experience of the Incarnation in your own heart, the answer may be "very close," "far away," or "somewhere in-between." Bethlehem, the coming of Christ anew into our lives, is as close or as far as you want it to be.

**THE WISE MEN**  
That's the way it was when Jesus was born. Geographically

and religiously, King Herod was very close to Bethlehem. Herod's palace the Herodium, lies but four miles from Bethlehem. Furthermore, Herod had been raised in the knowledge of the Jewish religion and was knowledgeable enough to know of its messianic expectations.

The wise men from the East, by way of contrast, were both geographically and religiously distant. Matthew gives us the impression they traveled a considerable distance. (Tradition indicates they came from Persia.) Nor do we know anything about their religion — although tradition and some scholars believe they at least were knowledgeable about astrology — but it is unlikely they were well-informed about Judaism.

There was a third set of characters in Matthew's Bethlehem story: the chief priests and scribes. These were the religious experts whom Herod consulted. Geographically, they were as close to Bethlehem as Herod, and religiously they were much, much closer. They knew the Hebrew scriptures and the messianic prophecies.

### THE OTHERWISE

Yet, for all their "closeness" to Bethlehem, Herod and the scribes and pharisees were still far away from the Incarnation. They had all the right answers, but the wrong responses. The scribes and pharisees knew the scriptures. Herod knew just how threatening this Messiah could be. But it was these sages from an unknown land, professing an obscure "pagan" religion who proved to be closest to the meaning of what was happening in Bethlehem.

Herod knew about the Messiah, but he was not going to let this messenger from God interfere with his own plans and purposes. The scribes and pharisees knew about the Messiah, too, but their knowing was one of the head, not the heart. But the wise men from the East, strangers and ignorant of the Jewish faith, allowed themselves to be led by God's spirit and thus they knew his newborn Son in a way that quite eluded Herod and his experts.

So, how far is it to Bethlehem for you?

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May your joys be many, as are our thanks to you.

