The image features a blue sky background with a white dashed border. On the right side, there is a large, stylized orange sun with a white number '3' in the center. At the bottom, there is a silhouette of a city with buildings and palm trees. On the left side, there is a scroll with text. The scroll is a light beige color with a darker beige border. It has two circular fasteners at the top and bottom. The text on the scroll is written in a cursive font.

But you, O
Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to
be among the clans of
Judah, from you shall
come forth for me one
who is to be ruler in
Israel, whose coming
forth is from of old,
from ancient days.

And he shall stand
and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the
Lord, in the majesty
of the name of the
Lord his God. And
they shall dwell
secure, for now he
shall be great to the
ends of the earth.

Micah 5:2,4



FUN FACTS:

Before it was called Bethlehem, it was called “Ephrath” which means “fruitful.” Bethlehem means “House of Bread”. It is also known as “The City of David”



On this third day of Advent, we learn that Jesus was prophesied to be born in the little town of Bethlehem! This part of the prophecy was fulfilled with his birth, but what about the second part of this prophecy? Is Jesus ruling in Israel, shepherding his flock while they dwell securely?

Jesus may be ruling in your heart today, but sadly most of the people in Israel do not believe in Jesus yet. But God has a plan for His people, and until Jesus returns, we have an important job to do. Let's read together from Psalm 122:6:

**“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
May they be secure who love you!”**

The nation of Israel has experienced a lot of war in the last 75 years since it was reborn on May 14, 1948. The surrounding nations continually attack Israel because they don't know and love the Lord. Jerusalem in particular experiences a lot of fighting. So what does it mean to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem?”

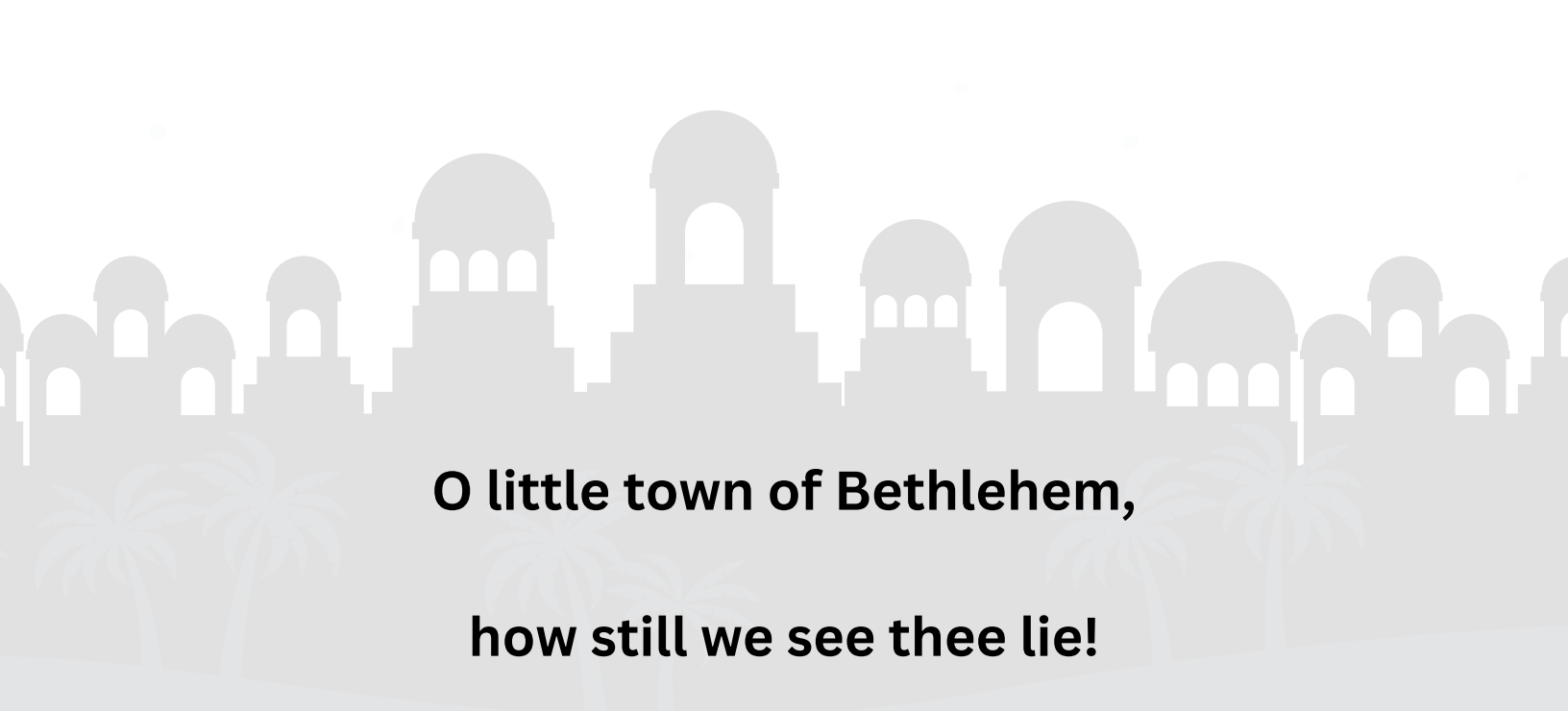
First let's ask, what is peace? There are different kinds of peace. There's the kind of peace that happens when people who usually fight stop fighting. But there's another kind of peace, one that you feel on the inside even when you're in the middle of something really difficult. Have you ever experienced something really difficult? What did it feel like on the inside? Did you feel at peace or did you feel stressed?

Do you know where true peace comes from? Let's read from Philippians 4:7:

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

You see, Jesus is our Prince of Peace. When He is our Lord and Savior, we experience peace inside of us even when it doesn't make sense with what's happening to us or around us. So for Jerusalem to experience God's peace, they don't just need the wars and difficulties around them to stop, do they? Who do they really need to have peace? Jesus! Let's take a moment and pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Father God in Heaven, You are Holy! We praise you for who you are all you have done and for Jesus Your Son! Lord, we lift up Jerusalem to You and ask that the people of Jerusalem would open their hearts to You O Lord. We pray they would believe in your Son Jesus and experience your Peace! We are so excited for Jesus to come back. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.



**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!**

**Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.**

**Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

