

Christmas Preparation – Part 3

The Shepherds and the Wisemen

December 19, 2021

Introduction: Where, exactly, was Jesus born; why does it matter? Shepherds in the field knew exactly where to go. Astrologers arrived from the East and inquired, being told specifically where to go. How did the rabbis tell them the location? In Luke chapter 2, we have the account by a careful historian

I. The Birth of Jesus

- A. Scholars, for some time, knew the location of birth of the Messiah:
 - 1. Bethlehem – the house of bread
 - 2. A manger or stall

- B. But where in Bethlehem?
 - 1. Genesis 35: 21 – the burial place of Rachel
 - 2. Micah 4: 8 – Migdal-Eder; tower of the flock
 - 3. Micah 4 & 5 describes the coming King

- C. The details
 - 1. Jesus will be born in Bethlehem: consider how God worked to get Him there
 - 2. The shepherds were unique: they cared for the flock being prepared for temple sacrifice (Passover)
 - 3. By rabbinic tradition they were forbidden to participate in temple worship – but to them the Angel of the Lord announced the birth of Messiah
 - 4. They went with haste straight to the manger where Jesus was – because they knew exactly where it was
 - 5. The logical place for childbirth given – *no room in the inn*

II. Why Does this Matter? The Back Story

- A. Abraham and the offering of Isaac
- B. The Lord Himself will provide
- C. The Lamb Who was slain
 - 1. Revelation 5: 6
 - 2. Revelation 5: 12
 - 3. Revelation 6: 9
 - 4. Revelation 13: 8
- D. Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22
- E. The suffering Messiah and the Lamb of God

III. The Significance of Prophecy and God's Purposes

- A. God does not want us to miss the significance of the Messiah
 - 1. Over **300** specific prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus
 - 2. If only 8 prophecies were fulfilled the probability of that would be 1 in 10^{17}
 - 3. If only 48 prophecies were fulfilled the probability of that would be 1 in 10^{157}
- B. Jesus is the promised One – the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world