

Episode: Christmas Series No. 9

Narrator: A Shepherd

Primary Scriptures: Luke 2:1-20

Story Summary: A shepherd tells about the angels appearing over the fields

Location: Bethlehem

Time: Circa 4 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Luke 2:20

The Bible gives few details surrounding the actual birth of Jesus. Matthew writes about Joseph taking Mary as his wife, but skips from there until after Jesus has arrived. He writes of the Magi, but indicates that whole story takes place after Jesus's birth.

Luke tells the reasons why Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem, and that there was no guest room available for them. When the baby was born, Mary wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger.

Many assume Mary wrapped Jesus tightly in cloth because that was probably the custom at the time. The manger was a small feeding trough, likely filled with fresh straw. It might have looked like a modern baby bed in size. It isn't known whether they were staying in a cave or a barn-like room.

Luke 2:8-20 tells the story of the shepherds, angels, and the shepherds' trip to Bethlehem to see the child who had just been born that day. Some speculate the shepherds were awake because it was lambing season in the spring, while others guess the shepherds were in charge of the sacrificial lambs owned by the Temple and priests. Most see a parallel of the birth of Jesus taking place in the city of David, who was famously a shepherd himself.

One of the most interesting statements of the angel is that Jesus is the Messiah, the Lord, the first time that statement is made. It is also apparent that Jesus' birth and the circumstances around it resulted in God being glorified. For the entire life of Jesus, God being glorified was the result that happened when Jesus was around.

Luke 2:17-18 says the shepherds spread the word about the angel's proclamation and the story of the baby Jesus. It is likely the shepherds were low on the social register, so the people they told were likely of their own humble social status. God did not concern himself with the popular earthly rulers, but the common people who would accept the truth and praise Him.

Perhaps that is a good lesson for us today. We are to tell the people around us about the wonderful news of Jesus. If we do so, they will glorify God and thank him for the Good News.