

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S3E18 Christmas Bonus #1

Title – What Do Bread, Shepherds & Swaddling Cloths Have In Common? Part 1 - (Luke 2:1-7)

Description – Merry Christmas! Today we will begin a two-part look at the Birth narrative of Luke and ask what Bread, Shepherds and swaddling cloth have in common.

Today we're talking about Christmas!

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. ²This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town.

⁴Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, ⁵to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

They would have been traveling to Bethlehem not for an income tax, but for a property tax.

“Guest Room” - an Inn, not a Motel 6, but a free place to stay for travelers. Remember, people were always traveling for the feasts, for celebrations, for holidays.

So because of the census there were no rooms available for Joseph & Mary. What did they do? They went to a stable, but don't think of an American barn from the hallmark channel. This would have been a rock pile stacked up on three sides with an open side for animals to come in and out; or it would have been a cave.

Why Bethlehem? Micah 5:2 - ²Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are small among the clans of Judah; one will come from you to be ruler over Israel for me. His origin is from antiquity, from ancient times.

If you went to an American Seminary today and asked people to describe God in one word; you might get answers like this: Holy, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Sovereign, Love, etc.

But if you go to an eastern, Jewish yeshiva, and asked the same question, you'd get answers like: Rock, Living Water, Eagle's wing, fresh baked bread, etc.

Jesus always talked like this; “I am the good shepherd, I am the bread of life”

You can't grow as a christian if you don't have a regular diet of God's Word. Bread was important, but not as important as God's Word.

Jesus says that bread is good, but that He is the bread of life. That if anyone eats of him, he will never hunger again.

Of all the cities Jesus could have been born into, he was born into Bethlehem. Why? Because of what Bethlehem was known for: Bread.

“Beit” - “House of..” and “lehem” - “bread”

Of all the towns that Jesus could have been born into, The “bread of life” was born into the “House of Bread”

Just like bread satisfies your hunger, Jesus Christ will satisfy your soul.

Luke 2:8-12

⁸ In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: ¹¹ Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger.”

If you’re having a child, you’re going to send out birth announcements to friends and family.

Think about the Royal family in England when they had a birth announcement. They were blasting it out to other royal families, to political leaders, to dignitaries. They didn’t send out announcements to the cabbies in London, or the dockworkers.

In the 1st century, if the son of the King of the universe was going to come, you’d think the announcement would have been to kings and princes, to queens, to leaders, to the religious priests, the pharisees, the sadducees, but it didn’t.

God sent the first birth announcement to shepherds.

Question for next time: Why were shepherds detestable in the 1st century? What was the significance of the cloths baby Jesus was wrapped in when the shepherds found him?