

Calvary Chapel Portsmouth



*Simply teaching the Bible, simply*

# The Gospel of Luke

*a verse-by-verse study*

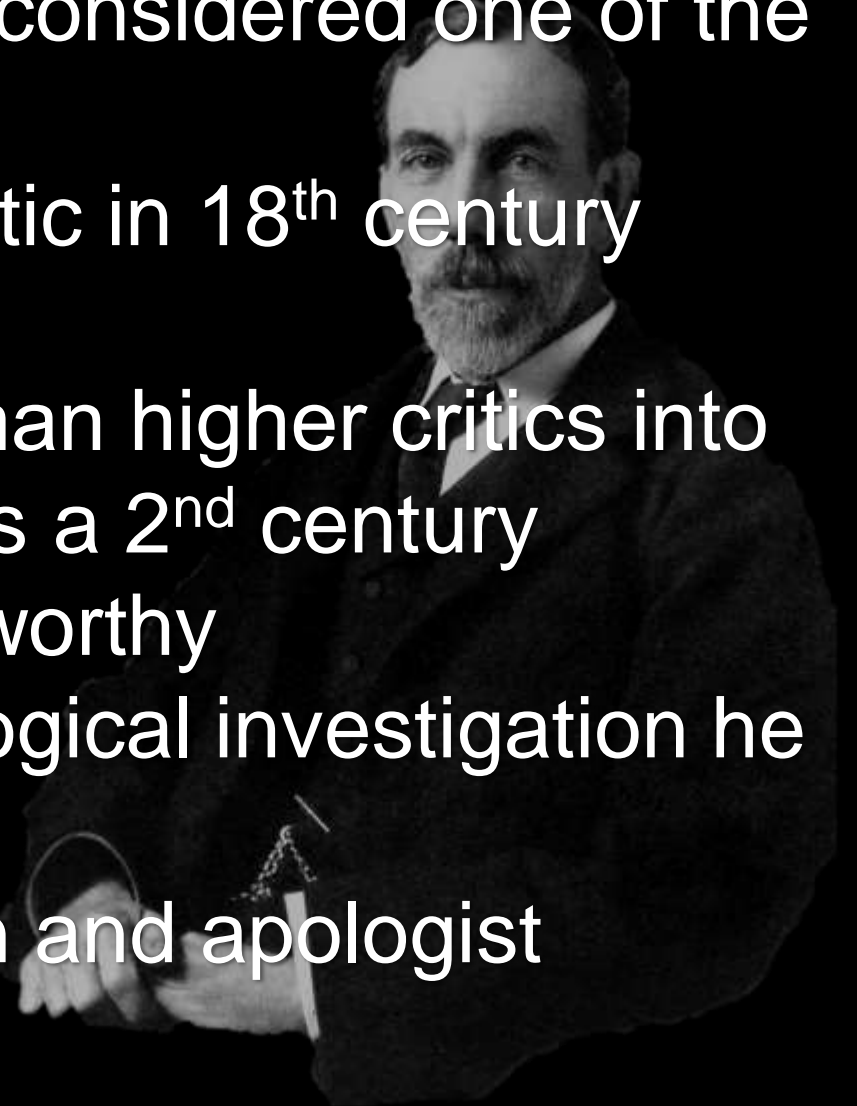
## Session 2

# Introduction

- Born in Antioch
  - According to Jerome
- Medical Doctor by profession
  - Paul calls him “*the beloved Physician*” (Col. 4:14)
- Becomes a friend of Paul
  - He join Paul at Troas (Acts 16:9-10) and then accompanies him on his 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journeys
- Luke penned as much of the NT as Paul!
  - Luke/Acts 50,195 words /
  - Paul’s letters 43,402 words
    - + Hebrews = Paul penned 50,315 words

# Historicity of Luke's Accounts

- Sir William Ramsey is considered one of the greatest of historians
- He was a Biblical sceptic in 18<sup>th</sup> century England...
- ...swayed by the German higher critics into believing that Luke was a 2<sup>nd</sup> century document and untrustworthy
- After diligent archaeological investigation he did a complete U-turn
- He became a Christian and apologist



# Historicity of Luke's Accounts

- *“Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy, this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians”* Sir William Ramsey
- *“Luke’s history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness”* Sir William Ramsey
- *“Luke’s reliability as an historian is unquestionable”* Josh McDowell

# Historicity of Luke's Accounts

- Luke uses more medical terms than Hypocrates
  - considered the father of medicine
- Luke shows himself as an historian in his method
- *“The most beautiful book that exists”*
  - French critic & sceptic, Renan

# The Gospel of Luke

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## CHAPTER 1

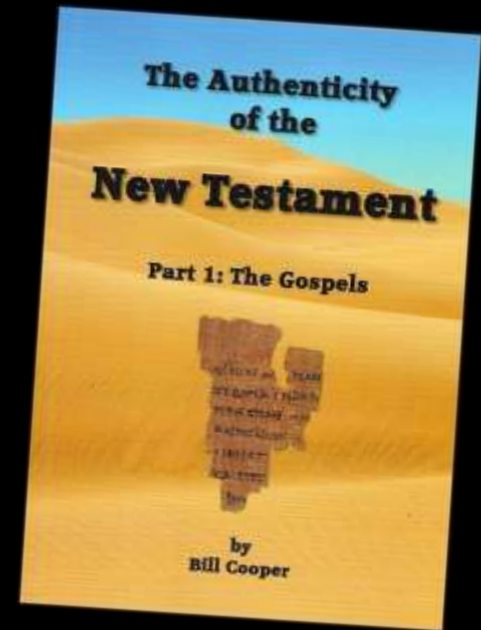
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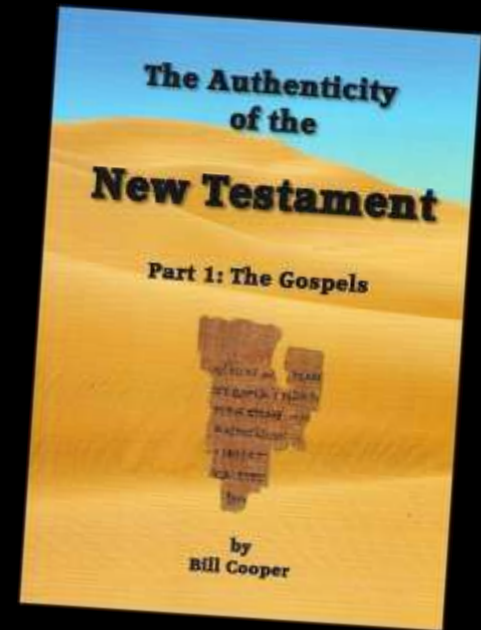
# Theophilus

- *“As for the early writing of Luke's gospel, there is a great deal of evidence which indicates that it belongs firmly to the Eyewitness Period.*
- *Better still, it could be narrowed down to having been written within a window of time that does not exceed four years in breath.*
- *The man to whom Luke addresses his gospel tells us as much, and is someone whom Luke calls “... most excellent Theophilus” (1:3). Clearly this man was alive when Luke wrote his gospel, otherwise there'd be no point in addressing it to him. The questions we need to answer therefore are these: who was he? And when did he live?”*



# Theophilus

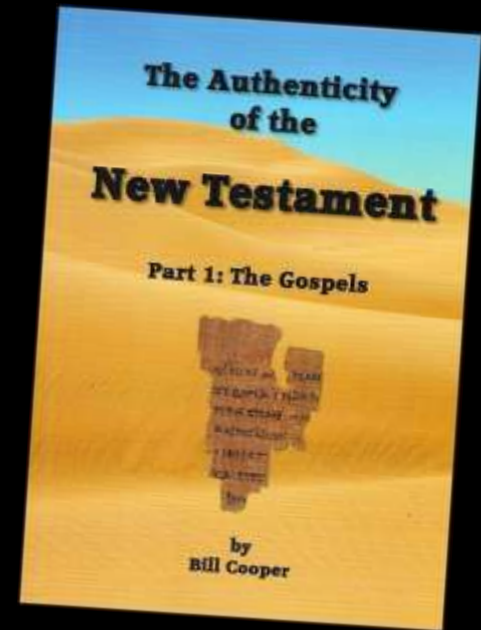
- *“The man was Theophilus Ben Ananus, an erstwhile Sadducee and priest of the temple. He was the son of Annas and brother-in-law of the High Priest Caiaphas at whose instigation our Lord was tried and crucified.*
- *Theophilus was himself to serve as High Priest from the years 37-41 and it is during this time as High Priest that Luke wrote his gospel and addressed it to him.*
- *We know this by the honorific title by which he addresses Theophilus: Most Excellent (Gr kratistos). the Greek word means ‘noble’, and it is used on just one other occasion in the New Testament, namely in Acts 23: 26, when it is applied to the Governor Felix”.*





# Theophilus

- *“Tellingly, Luke also addresses his Book of Acts to Theophilus, but when he does so it is simply ‘to Theophilus...’.*
- *The honorific title is no longer used, because when Luke wrote his Book of Acts in AD 64, Theophilus’ service as High Priest was long since passed”.*



34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be **born of thee** shall be called the Son of God.

36 And, behold, thy **cousin Elisabeth**, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

**Luke 1:34-37**

- John would have been 6 months older than Jesus

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

**Luke 1:38-41**

- Somewhere near Jerusalem

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that **the mother of my Lord** should come to me?

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, **the babe leaped in my womb for joy.**

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

**Luke 1:42-45**

- It is possible for a child in the womb to know joy!
  - And to be Spirit filled!

46 And Mary said,

My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in **God my Saviour.**

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

**Luke 1:46-50**

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm;  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their  
hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats,  
and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things;  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy;

55 As he spake to our fathers,  
to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

**Luke 1:51-55**

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

**Luke 1:56**

- Mary arrived with Elizabeth 6mts pregnant
- She stayed c.3 months
- Although we are not told, she presumably stayed to celebrate the birth of John

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

**Luke 1:57-58**



59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John

**Luke 1:59-60**

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

**Luke 1:61-64**

**65** And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.

**66** And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him

**Luke 1:65-66**



Other  
The Christmas Story

*...the one that SHOULD BE TOLD!*

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,...

**Luke 1:67**

- All that follows is not merely the rantings of an old priest...
- It is spoken under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit!

# The *Other* Christmas Story

68 Blessed be the Lord **God of Israel;** for he hath visited and **redeemed his people,**

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation **for us** in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That **we should be saved** from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

**Luke 1:68-71**

# The *Other* Christmas Story

72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

**Luke 1:72-75**

# The *Other* Christmas Story

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

**Luke 1:76-77**



78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

**Luke 1:77-80**

# The *Other* Christmas Story

- It had been promised & prophesied...
- Israel were awaiting their Messiah
- He would save & deliver Israel from their enemies
- He would save them from their sins
- He would rule on the throne of David and be their King – ruling all nations from Jerusalem
- His reign would be everlasting!
- The Holy Spirit adds his seal to this.
- John now comes as a herald of His coming

# The Gospel of Luke

*a verse-by-verse study*

## CHAPTER 2

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<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

<sup>2</sup> (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

<sup>3</sup> And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

**Luke 2:1-3**

# Fact or Fiction?

- Luke has been attacked by critics from the outset.
- One of the most popular attacks is in regard to Luke's statement in Luke 2:1-2. regarding the census 'by Quirinius' (Cyrenius)
  - A census *did take place* in 2 B.C., during the final years of Herod the Great...
  - but the critics point out that it was not *Quirinius* but a chap called *Sabinus* who conducted that census.
  - Quirinius' census was not until AD 6
  - Luke, they say, is clearly in error and got his dates wrong!

# Fact or Fiction?

- A little diligent study reveals a lot...
- (I am indebted to the work of Dr Bill Cooper)
- *“Firstly, we need to see who Luke’s Quirinius was, what he was, and when he was active - which is easily achieved. We have his CV. His Latin name was **Publius Sulpicius Quirinus**. He was born c. 45 BC in the Italian off Lanuvium, a fact of immense importance which will become very evident”*
  - Authenticity of the New Testament Part 1

# Fact or Fiction?

- Regarding Luke's census:
- *“according to Josephus it was conducted by Sabinus not by Quirinius.*
- *This is indeed a serious problem until we realise the plain and simple fact that Sabinus and Quirinius were one and the same person! Josephus himself tells us as much, albeit obliquely, though it is Suetonius and Tacitus who give us the real clue by telling us Quirinius' birthplace...”*

# Fact or Fiction?

- Regarding Luke's census:
- *“Quirinius’ birthplace, which of the critics have always remained silent about, was the Italian town of Lanuvium. It lies about 20 miles or so along the Appian Way to the southeast of Rome, and was inhabited by a Sabine population, the Sabines being an Italian tribe. Hence, Quirinius was himself of Sabine descent.”*



# Fact or Fiction?

- *“..it is the inability of Josephus and the critics to distinguish between his sources and not any chicanery on Luke’s part which has caused all the confusion over the two recorded censuses of Judea. The problems vanish, however, once the identity of Sabinus and Quirinius is realised.*
- *Luke was right after all.*
- *The only strange thing about it all is that the critics so often forget to mention these things.”*

– Authenticity of the New Testament Part 1

<sup>4</sup> 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:)

<sup>5</sup> To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

**Luke 2:4-5**

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

**Luke 2:6**

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no **room** for them in the inn.

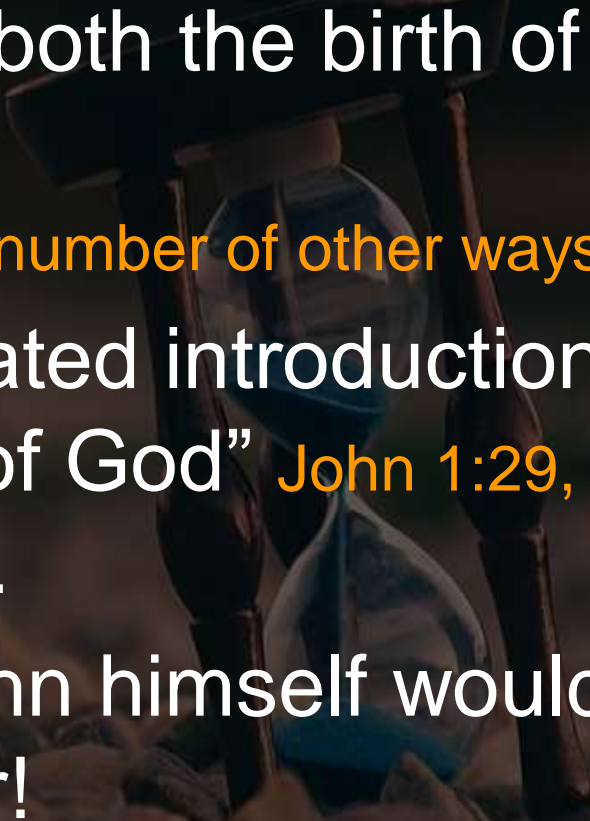
Luke 2:7

- Gr. '*topos*' 80x 'place' 5x 'room'
- 'There was no place for them'
- Lit. 'they were not welcome'
- Why?

# TIMING OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CHRISTMAS

- It is likely John was born on April 19-20, 2 BC,
- That would make his 30th birthday April 19-20, 29 AD, in the 15th year of Tiberius
- That is when we are told he began his ministry
  - Luke 3:1
- 30 was the age Priests would begin to serve
  - Numbers 4:3

# TIMING OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CHRISTMAS

- This places both the birth of John and Jesus in 2 B.C.
    - There are a number of other ways this can be confirmed
  - John's repeated introduction of Jesus as "The Lamb of God" [John 1:29, 36](#) is particularly interesting...
  - Because John himself would have been born on Passover!
- 

# TIMING OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CHRISTMAS

- After Gabriel's announcement to Mary, she went "with haste" to visit Elisabeth, who was then in the 1st week of her 6th month, or the 4th week of December, 3 B.C. **Luke 1:36**
- If Jesus was born 280 days later it would place the date of His birth on September 29, 2 BC

# TIMING OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CHRISTMAS

- The 29<sup>th</sup> September in 2 BC ‘just so happened’ to be the Feast of Trumpets!
  - Trumpets were blown to announce war or proclaim joy!
  - The feast of Trumpets required an offering made by fire to the LORD – Jesus was this!
  - Zacharias specifically links the trumpet (ram’s horn)
    - to the birth of Christ [Lk 1:69](#)
  - The trumpet was linked to the giving of the Word of God at Mt Sinai [Ex 19:19](#)
  - The trumpet was used to proclaim liberty [Lev 25:9](#)



# RULES REGARDING FEAST DAYS

- If it were a feast day, people would be required to keep ceremonially clean
- If a person were defiled, they could not celebrate
- Even if your parent died you were not allowed to touch the body, or you would become defiled
- Similar laws applied to women with ‘an issue of blood’ – Lev Ch12, Ch15
- Anyone who touched a women at this time would also be defiled
- This also applied childbirth!

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the **inn.**

Luke 2:7

- Gr. '*Katalyma*' 'Guest chamber', annex on a house (Mark 14:14 / Luke 22:11)
- Nowhere is it used to imply 'hotel'

# RULES REGARDING FEAST DAYS

- Anyone who so much as touched Mary – OR EVEN LET HER INTO THEIR HOUSE – would be at risk of being defiled!
- This seems to be why ‘no place’ was found for them in the ‘family home’
- Remember too the fact that Mary and Joseph were not yet married, and the family likely did not want to be part of this scandal!
- So where would Mary and Joseph be able to stay?
- They would need somewhere that was warm and clean

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 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.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people

**Luke 2:8-10**

**11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

**12** And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

**13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

**14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

**Luke 2:11-14**

15 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.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger

**Luke 2:15-16**

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

**Luke 2:17-20**

# WHO WERE THE SHEPHERDS?

- Do we know anything about the shepherds to whom the angels appeared the night of Jesus' birth?
- The traditional view is that they were ordinary shepherds who were the “outcasts of society,”
- It is suggested that this is why the Angels appeared to them:
- *“God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” 1 Cor 1:27*



# WHO WERE THE SHEPHERDS?

- The Mishnah advised against a number of professions, including that of shepherd.
  - *A man should not teach his son to be an [donkey] driver or a camel driver, or a barber or a sailor, or a herdsman or a shopkeeper, for their craft is the craft of robbers (M. Kidd. 4.14).*
- But the Bible described the God of Israel as a Shepherd - **Psalm 23**
- Some of Israel's greatest national heroes—including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David—were shepherds.

# WHO WERE THE SHEPHERDS?

- God promised that He will someday shepherd Israel - **Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:11–15**
- The work of Israel's future Messiah as that of a shepherd - **Micah. 5:2–4**
- Jesus described Himself as the “good Shepherd” who “lays down His life for the sheep” - **John 10:11**

# WHO WERE THE SHEPHERDS?

- So who were the shepherds in Luke 2?
- ...and why did God choose to send His angels to them?
- What significance did they have?
- ...and what does the Bible really say?
- Remember: Tradition makes the Word of no effect! - **Mark 7:13**

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- Alfred Edersheim, was a nineteenth-century Jewish scholar and convert to Christianity
- Edersheim highlighted that the flocks kept around Bethlehem were destined for temple sacrifice - something obfuscated by tradition
- The shepherds keeping watch over these sheep knew very well the intended purpose of the lambs under their care.
- Their job was to guard their sheep from becoming injured or blemished.

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- *“The shepherds of these lambs were the elite shepherds all from the priestly tribe of Levi whose job it was to care for these lambs so they would remain without blemish or spot”.*

- Chaim Bentorah

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- So it was to those watching over animals destined for temple sacrifice that the angels announced Jesus' birth.
- The arrival of the ultimate Lamb of God was revealed to those responsible for watching over the sacrificial lambs that had always pointed toward Jesus.
- Bethlehem was chosen as the place of Christ's birth for precisely this reason!

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- In the Jewish Mishnah: ([Shekelim Ch7: Section 4](#))
- *“The lambs that were raised in this particular place were particularly special in that they were from a unique flock that was made up of sheep that were designated to be sacrificed in Jerusalem, and in particular, the sacrificial lambs for the Passover sacrifices”*
- The men who kept them were specifically trained for this task, and were educated in what an animal to be sacrificed had to be like.

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- Their job was to make sure that none of the animals were hurt, or damaged because they had to be 'without blemish' according to the Torah
- And for that reason, these lambs, when they were born, were wrapped in "swaddling bands" to protect them from injury,
- So, being themselves under rabbinical care, these shepherds would maintain a ceremonially clean 'stable' for a birthing place



# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- According to the Talmud, all sheep found in the area “from Jerusalem as far as Migdal Eder” [Bethlehem] and on both sides were deemed to be holy and consecrated
- They could *only* be used for sacrifices in the temple...
- ...in particular for the Peace offerings and Passover sacrifices.

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- *“Luke's original audience would have immediately picked up on the religious significance of the Bethlehem shepherds watching their flocks by night”*
- *“Aware of the Tanakh (Old Testament) and the Jewish Temple worship of the day, they would have known that when you said Bethlehem, you said "sacrificial lambs". The hills around Bethlehem were home to the thousands of lambs used in ritual worship in the Temple”. - Harold Smith*

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- *“As a boy from Bethlehem, King David would likely have tended sheep destined for the daily offerings or used in the sacrifices on the high holidays in these very hills”.*
- *“Every day, according to the Torah, two lambs were required for a daily sacrifice in the Temple, meaning that 730 were needed each year plus the tens of thousands more lambs needed for Pesach (Passover) as well as for the other religious rituals”. - Harold Smith*

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- *Everyone in Israel recognised Bethlehem as being synonymous with sacrificial lambs.*  
– Harold Smith

<sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

**Luke 2:19**

# BETHLEHEM'S SHEPHERDS

- For 1<sup>st</sup> Century Christians:
- *Hearing that Yeshua was born in Bethlehem would have automatically triggered an image of the Lamb of YHVH who takes away the sin [of the World].*
- *With that in mind, it's easy for us to imagine one of Luke's listeners saying, 'Of course the Lamb of YHVH would originate in Bethlehem - all the lambs for sacrifice came from there.'*

– Harold Smith

# MICAH'S PROPHECY

<sup>2</sup> But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

**Micah 5:2**

- Do you know what *else* Micah prophesied?

# O HOLY NIGHT

- Upon arriving in Bethlehem 'no place was found' for Mary & Joseph
- Jesus was therefore 'born in a manger'
  - Tradition has told us that the Inn Keeper directed them to his/a stable
- The Shepherd's were in the fields around Bethlehem
- The angels appeared to announce Jesus' birth (the Messiah!)
- The angles gave the Shepherd's a sign
  - But no directions!

# THE SIGN!

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

**Luke 2:1-18**



# THE SIGN!

<sup>12</sup> And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find **A babe** wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in **THE manger.**

Luke 2:1-18

- The Greek text indicates they were to find **A babe** lying in **THE manger** (definite article)
- Thus a babe lying in the manger wrapped in swaddling bands would itself be the sign that would confirm the words of the angel
  - These details were obviously significant to these shepherds.

# A REASON TO CELEBRATE

- The Shepherds were fearful & afraid  
– and no doubt a little bemused!

<sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

**Luke 2:20**

- Why would just seeing a baby in ‘a stable next to an Inn’ cause such overwhelming joy?
- Because they didn’t go to a stable next to an Inn!
- So where did Mary & Joseph stay that night?

# MICAH'S OTHER PROPHECY

8 And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

**Micah 4:8**

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- The Hebrew phrase tower of the flock here, is "migdal edar" [mig-dawl ay-der]
- It refers to a particular tower that was built in ancient times to watch over the valley on the edge of Bethlehem, to protect the city,
- The name means "watch tower of the flock"
- Several of these towers are recorded in scripture
  - We find them in Judges 8:71, 9:46, & 9:51; and in 2 Kings 9:17, 18:8; and in Nehemiah 3:1

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- Rabbi Short states:
- *“This Migdal Eder was not the watchtower for the ordinary flocks that pastured on the barren sheep ground beyond Bethlehem... but it lay close to the town on the road to Jerusalem”*. **Book 2 chapter 6**
- Migdal Eder, is also mentioned in the Jewish Targums and is translated *“The anointed one of the flock of Israel”*

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

21 And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

**Genesis 35:19-21**



Jerusalem: 8 Miles

Migdal Eder

Bethlehem-Judah





# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- It was built as a watch tower...
- ...to be used by shepherds for protection from robbers and wild animals
- Given the significance of the sheep around Bethlehem (destined for Temple sacrifice), it was an important look-out to guard against trouble
- But it served a dual purpose...

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- During lambing season, the sheep were brought to the tower from the fields, as the lower level functioned as the 'birthing room' for these sacrificial lambs.
- Being themselves under special rabbinical care, these shepherds would strictly maintain a ceremonially clean birthing place.

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- Once birthed, the shepherds would routinely place the lambs in the hewn depression of a limestone rock known as "**the manger**"
- They would "wrap the new-born lambs in **swaddling clothes**," preventing them from thrashing about and harming themselves "until they had calmed down" so they could be inspected for the quality of being "**without spot or blemish**"
  - *Jewish oral tradition & Alfred Edersheim, the Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.*

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- Approaching this subject from the Hebrew perspective will show, that while swaddling "cloths" were used in the handling of newborn babies, swaddling "bands" (as referenced in Job 38:9) were used for subduing animals prior to sacrifice. These "swaddling bands" were strips of gauze-like cloth used to restrain a lamb being prepared for inspection before sacrifice to prevent thrashing that they not "blemish" themselves.

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- A sacrifice had to be "bound" (Hebrew `aqad) in order to be valid. "Binding" an animal for sacrifice is the Hebrew akeida specifically mentioned in Abraham's "binding" of Yitzchak (Isaac) for sacrifice to the Almighty in Genesis 22:9
  - *Jewish oral tradition & Alfred Edersheim, the Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.*
- These swaddling bands were made from old priestly robes!

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- So there was no need for the angels to give these shepherds directions to the birth place, because they already knew it!
- These were the men who raised sacrificial lambs that were sacrificed in the Temple, that were birthed, laid in a manger & wrapped in swaddling bands at Migdal Edar
- When the angelic announcement came, they knew exactly where to go!

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- They would also no doubt be aware of the prophecy from Micah that the Messiah would make His appearance to Israel at their tower!

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- ...as Luke 2 indicates, the sign of the manger could only mean the manger at the base of the Tower of the Flock, as it is found in the original Greek wording of **Luke 2:7,12 and 16!**
- You cannot explain the meaning or direction of the sign they were given or their response unless you have the right manger, the right shepherds and the proper Hebraic perspective.



# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- When there was no room for them in the 'guest chamber' ...
- ...Joseph had to find shelter and a place for Mary to give birth
- On their route into Bethlehem they would travel right passed this Tower of the Flock
- And it was to this place that Joseph takes Mary
- And it was in this special place at Migdal Edar that Christ was born, fulfilling the prophecy of Micah

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- Prophetically, Migdal Edar - (the tower of the flock), is the exact place in Bethlehem for the Christ to be born,
- God was faithful in assuring Israel that he would fulfill his promises to them of the kingdom

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- Prominent Jewish writers concluded in the Midrash,
  - (an early Jewish commentary on the O.T.)
- That of all the places in Israel, it would be the “Migdal Eder”, The tower of the flock in Bethlehem, where the arrival of the Messiah would be declared first!

# MICAH'S OTHER PROPHECY

8 And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

**Micah 4:8**

# MICAH'S OTHER PROPHECY

- Warren Wiersbe, comments:
- *“As the pregnant woman must deliver the child, So Judah must be taken captive to Babylon. It would be a time of pain but it would eventually bring blessing. God promised to deliver them and restore them, and Micah uses the prophecy of the Babylonian captivity of Judah as a pledge to guarantee the birth of Christ at “Migdal Edar” at Bethlehem, which is exactly where it took place!”*

# MICAH'S OTHER PROPHECY

- Warren Wiersbe, comments:
- *“Micah prophesied that as surely as the Babylonians would soon carry away Judah in the north, so the messiah would come and establish his kingdom, & here Micah pledges that as surely as Babylon would carry away Israel, into captivity, so the messiah would arrive at the tower of the flock. And of course Micah goes on with the prophesy in Ch. 5”*

# THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK

- *Migdal Eder, the Tower of the Flock, was the place where lambs destined for the Temple were born and raised. Every firstborn male lamb from the area around Bethlehem was considered holy, set aside for sacrifice in Jerusalem. Generations of hereditary shepherds tended the sacred flocks.*
  - Why A Manger? - Bodie and Brock Thoene

# SO WHY SHEPHERDS?

- These shepherd's role was to inspect the lambs to be used as sacrificial offerings
- They were chosen to inspect and confirm that the baby lying in their manger was indeed without blemish
- This was the purpose of Christ's first coming...
- "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" – [John 1:29](#)



# The Gospel of Luke

*a verse-by-verse study*

## CHAPTER 2

To be continued...

Calvary Chapel Portsmouth



*Simply teaching the Bible, simply*



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