

A Closer Look at the Birth of Jesus

(Luke 2:10-14)

- Introduction:
1. Through the years, I've made mention in a couple sermons, Bible classes, and articles of some of the myths that people have accepted about the birth of Jesus.
 2. The purpose of doing that was not to play a game of "Biblical Gotcha," but to make us aware that it is easy for error to be widely held as truth.
 3. A few examples have been:
 - a. There were three wise men, who were kings from the Orient, came to see Jesus at the manger (Matthew 2:1,11).
 - b. A bright star appeared to the shepherds in the field and led them to the manger (Luke 2:8-20).
 - c. A host of doctrines surrounding Mary, the mother of Jesus.
 1. Perpetual virginity.
 2. She had an immaculate conception.
 3. She was sinless.
 4. She didn't die.
 5. She felt no pain in childbearing.
 4. What I want us to examine tonight are not these myths that are not mentioned in Scripture, but rather truths we may have overlooked that are contained in Scripture.

I. Peace on Earth

- A. (Luke 2:14).
- B. There is a textual variant here.
 1. KJV & NKJV – Peace on Earth, goodwill toward men.
 2. All others – Peace on Earth, to those with whom he is pleased.
- C. In other words, this isn't just a general announcement that God loves everyone but is offering peace to those in whom he is well pleased, or those who will place their faith in Jesus.

II. His Name

- A. (Matthew 1:21,23).
- B. Names often have significance.
- C. Rest assured, when God changes one's name, there is significance to the name.
- D. Immanuel – God with us.
- E. Jesus – Savior.
- F. All the Old Testament passages that cry out for salvation (e.g. Psalm 14:7) were crying out what would be the name of the one who would save them.

III. Bethlehem

- A. (Micah 5:2).
- B. The meaning of the name “Bethlehem” is “House of Bread.”
- C. Could there have been intended significance to this being the birthplace of Jesus, seeing that he called himself the “Bread of Life” (John 6:48-51)?

IV. Swaddling Cloths and In a Manger

- A. (Luke 2:7).
- B. These facts were not incidental to the story of Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:12).
- C. How were these two things a sign.
 - 1. Swaddling was a custom universally practiced, so the significance couldn’t have been in the action itself.
 - a. (Ezekiel 16:4) Could this be a contrast, denoting this child would be cared for, and watched over?
 - 2. In a manger.
 - a. A manger was a feeding trough, usually carved out of stone.
 - b. This certainly would have been out of the ordinary.
 - c. But consider this...where else would a lamb be born (Rev. 13:8; John 1:29).

- Conclusion:
- 1. Do you see the fingerprints of God in momentous event?
 - 2. Things weren’t left to chance...it was all a part of God’s great foreknowledge and plan.
 - 3. While the world gives a little time to think about Jesus at this time of the year, maybe the thoughts we discussed tonight may give you an opening to pique their interest even further.