

The New Testament Church
Lessons from the Shepherds
Pastor Paul Jehle – December 11, 2022
Luke 2:8-20

I The Shepherds and Angels – Luke 2:8-10

A. Who were the shepherds in Jesus' day?

1. The bottom rung – like tax collectors; dung sweepers
2. Sheep and goats; thought to bring death to the crops
3. The Rabbis banned pasturing of sheep
4. But... consider this – Abel, Moses, David, Amos, etc. were all shepherds
5. Shepherds were humble and many had great integrity of character

B. Who were the angels?

1. They are spirits, with a mind, will and emotion, but not a body – Psalm 104:4
2. Messengers of God, to aid believers as heirs of the Kingdom – Heb. 1:14
3. They can communicate and appear visibly to people – Ge. 16:7; Heb. 13:2
4. They war in the heavenlies with demons (fallen angels) – Psalm 68:17
5. Atmosphere, honor children, not worshipped – 1st Chr. 21:15-16; Mt. 18:10; Col. 2:18
6. It was probably Michael or Gabriel that appeared to the Shepherds – Lk. 2:9
 - a. Seraphim (bright; fire), Cherubim (guardians – four faces), archangels (authority)
 - b. Ranks are at the *individual, family, church/city, and principality or national level.*

II Why did God choose Shepherds to reveal the birth of His Son?

A. Lineage of Christ – *Servants don't need a genealogy (Mark); God can't have one (John)*

1. Matthew's genealogy descending – **Son of God** – Mt. 1:17; *Word became flesh* (Jn. 1)
 - a. Joseph's - created, called (Abraham), captive (deportation), delivered (Messiah)
 - b. It is a fulfillment of God's prophecy regarding the Messiah being of the Royal Line (with Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba) from Abraham and David
2. Luke's genealogy ascending – **Son of Man** – Lk. 3:23-38; *Great Shepherd* (John 10)
 - a. Mary's – several named after Mattathias (Hannukah), Nahum (the prophet)
 - b. It is a fulfillment of God's prophecy of the Messiah from the line of obscure deliverers who humble the proud and are grafted into the Royal Line

B. Though the King of Kings, the angels announced His arrival to shepherds!

1. They were closest to His heart – Isaiah 57:15 (lowly); Psalm 34:10 (brokenhearted)
 - a. The Kingdom of God operates in a bottom-up fashion – from the heart up
 - b. They were humble, open to God, waiting and hungering for the Messiah
2. Message of the angels – **incarnation** – *monogenesis*, only generated, not created
 - a. *I bring you good tidings... born to you this day... Christ the Lord* – Fully God
 - b. *You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes... in a manger* – Fully Man
 - c. Shepherds birthed lambs on the outskirts of Bethlehem for Jerusalem
 - d. Swaddling clothes were used for birthing the lambs in winter! (Lamb of God)
3. The Shepherds were great **evangelists** – *peace among whom He is pleased...*
 - a. This probably alerted Simeon and Anna in the temple (waiting for Messiah)
 - b. Jesus is the *God-man*; the *great shepherd* who watches over His flock. He is the *tower of safety* where lambs are born. He is the *lamb of God*, and He befriends the *humble of heart*, chooses *obscure deliverers*, and brings the gospel to the *rejected*!