

God's Swaddled Sacrifice

Text: Ephesians 1:11 *In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*

Introduction: Today's study will prove that the birth of Jesus was an exact work of God's timing and prophetic purpose. Know that God has set you likewise on His predestinated course and is working His perfect timing and purpose in your life. He is behind the scene orchestrating everything after the counsel of His own will in your life and family! Consider also you are directly in God's plan of redemption saving the lost!

Luke 2:1 *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. ² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) ³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. ⁴ 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:) ⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. ⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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.** 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. 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. 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.** 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.*

- **Why Bethlehem?**

Micah 5:2 *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.*

David was born in Ephrathah called Bethlehem. As the City of David was the family of Joseph's lineage, a family house would have been in Bethlehem where he was returning due to the taxing. The Greek word Inn is "guest chamber" of a family house. Archeologists have discovered an ancient dwelling about forty yards from the ruins of Migdal Eder which may have been the family house of Joseph.

- Why not be born in the family house, the Inn "guest chamber?" According to Leviticus 15:19-23 a woman with any issue of blood for any reason was deemed unclean. To have had a child in the public area of a family home would have made all of the inhabitants unclean. Then all of the entire family would have had to be washed in the temple mikveh after seven days and sacrifices offered for each person.

The Lamb of God was born in the prophesied location called Migdal Eder.

Micah 4:8 *And thou, "O tower of the flock-Hebrew: **Migdal Eder**", 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.*

- **Why Migdal Eder "Tower of the flock?"**

Was the watchtower for the special shepherds watching over the flocks the region just outside of Bethlehem. It also served two other purposes:

1. The shepherds of Migdal Eder were under strict priestly supervision from Jerusalem and training because all the lambs for the sacrifice came from Bethlehem. The daily sacrifice required two lambs per day one female for the morning sacrifice and one male without spot or blemish for the evening sacrifice that is 730 lambs per year plus the tens of thousands were sacrificed at Passover and the many other holydays.
2. Migdal Eder was the birthing room specifically for the sacrificial lambs that had to be without spot or blemish.

- **Why did Mary swaddle her baby?**

One long piece of cloth about four inches – six inches wide up to several yards long was used identifying the legitimacy of a child. Traditionally the parents would mix salt and olive oil as the covenant of salt and immediately

swaddle the torso, legs, arms and finish wrapping the head with the face showing. This signifying the straight paths of their child the uprightness of character and life.

- **When Israel violated God's covenant through marriages with Gentiles, the Bible clearly states that Israel had become illegitimate:**

Ezekiel 16:3 *And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. ⁴ And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; **thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.***

Mary and Joseph would commence prayer for the first born as Holy unto the Lord. The swaddling would immediately calm the child and as well prevent any injury.

- This same swaddle cloth is used in the ceremony of marriage where the husband and wife cross hands and the swaddle cloth is interwoven binding their hands together. Here is where we get the expression tie the knot.
 - This also was the same cloth used in Isaac being presented bound on the altar with Abraham. Genesis 22:8-10
 - The swaddling cloth was used for the lamb at time of inspection for the sacrifice. So, when the shepherds heard "babe wrapped in swaddling cloth lying in a manger they knew it was Migdal Eder.
- **The shepherds left their flocks by night knowing that the ONE swaddled would end all of the sacrifices of which they lived their life to look after.**
 - **Why born in a manger?**

Is a hewn stone water trough at Migdal Eder and made smooth so that birthing shepherds could wrap the lamb's legs and feet with long strips of cloths immediately after birth. This wrapping was to keep the lamb from injuring itself by kicking and settle it for about a half an hour max to get accustomed to life outside the womb. Then, only after close inspection, the male lamb if found perfect would be offered for the sin sacrifice.

- **Why did the shepherds go in haste?**

Swaddling was not in place long. Only for the time to bind all the limbs, offer prayer to God, and present Him as the sacrifice He was born to be.

John 1:29 *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, **Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.***

Revelation 13:8 *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in **the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.***

Luke 2:21-39 *And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. ²² And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, ... ²⁴ And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. ²⁵ And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. ²⁶ And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, ²⁸ Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, ²⁹ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: ³⁰ For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, ³¹ Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; ³² A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. ... ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; ³⁵ (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. ³⁶ And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; ³⁷ And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. ³⁸ And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. ³⁹ And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.*

Prayer for God's covenant with you and your house!

Worship God with your First-Fruits, Tithes, and sacrifices! Open your heart to God as you liberally give to HIM!

2 Corinthians 9:6 *But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. ⁷ Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: ⁹ (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.*

¹⁰ Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)