



*For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find
a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.*

Luke 2:11-12

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GOD'S SACRIFICE LAMB

1. Joseph and Mary lived in the town of Nazareth, 90 miles from Jerusalem. God used the Roman Emperor to decree a census so that Christ would be born in Bethlehem at just the right place and time. (Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2)
 - Augustus, a Roman military leader, was the first Emperor of the Roman Empire, controlling Imperial Rome from 27 BC until his death in AD 14.
2. **Luke 2:8-20** — Who were these shepherds, and why were they so important as to have a host of Angels declare to them the birth of Christ? How did they know exactly where to find this Baby? Following are a few insights...
3. **When Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem, God did not forget to get them a place to stay.** By closing the inn, God was leading them to the exact location He had chosen for the birth of His Son.
4. **Historical facts reveal that Jesus was *not* born behind an inn, in a smelly, unsanitary stable where the donkeys of travelers and other animals were kept.** Instead, He was born just outside of Bethlehem, at a place the prophet Micah calls the Tower of the Flock or Migdal Eder. This was originally the location of the tomb of Rachel, one of Jacob's wives. (Picture on the next page shows how it might have looked)

- Genesis 35:19-21 *So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (Bethlehem). Jacob set a pillar (memorial) on her grave;... Then Israel (Jacob) journeyed on and pitched his tent on the other side of the tower of Eder, the lookout point used by shepherds.*
- Micah 4:8 *And you, O tower of the flock (Migdal Eder), the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it come, even the former dominion shall come, the Kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.*



5. **Christ's birth in Migdal Eder** (Tower of the Flock just outside Bethlehem) **was the place where lambs were born that were destined for Temple sacrifice in Jerusalem.**

- The shepherds were elite shepherds from the priestly tribe of Levi whose responsibility included the care of lambs that were born so they would remain without spot, blemishes, or injuries. (Exodus 12:5; 1 Peter 1:19)
- These lambs were carefully protected and wrapped in "swaddling cloths" made from the priests' garments stained with blood from Temple sacrifices. The shepherds were specifically trained to watch over temple sheep and knew exactly where to look when the angel declared the message. For more read "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," by Alfred Edersheim (Ch. 6, "From the Manger in Bethlehem...").
- Christ was born in the very place where tens of thousands of lambs had foreshadowed Him as the "Lamb of God!" (John 1:36)

6. **This is a glorious example of God's pre-planning and exact timing so that His Word will be fulfilled!** From the very beginning God used every circumstance to point to His Son as the true Sacrifice Lamb for our sins! (John 1:35-36)

7. **Thoughts...**

- **God always has a Divine plan in mind.** This plan, which is greater than our understanding, may not develop the way we anticipate. However, if we remain faith filled, we will ultimately see His plan unfold.
- **Apparent closed doors are one of the ways God leads us by His Holy Spirit.** Even the Apostle Paul wanted to go into Asia but God closed the door twice, only to open a glorious opportunity in Macedonia. (Acts 16:6-10)
- **In time, every piece of God's "puzzle" fits perfectly.** God's purpose was to have the birth of His Son be in THE most obvious place, the Tower of the Flock that had been consecrated for the birthing of sacrificial lambs. These lambs were wrapped in the cloths from the priest's garments stained with blood. The shepherds, therefore, didn't need any more direction than "...this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger. "