



Come & See What God Has Done

The Populace of Bethlehem

Dec. 23

We will shift gears and look into what the Lord has done. You and I will consider what the populace of Bethlehem experienced when the Christ Child was born. There is no scriptural reference to what was going on beyond people coming to Bethlehem to be counted in the census, and the inns were full. But we can project some things by looking at what was going on due to the birth of Jesus. We will begin with what was shared in Luke 2:3-7, And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Bethlehem was flooded with people from out of town. The census must have been great for innkeepers and places to eat or gather food to be prepared later. I am guessing it was a busy time for the townspeople. Amidst all this, we have an extraordinary event that probably flew in under the radar of most of Bethlehem's inhabitants. That is until a couple of things happened. First, the shepherds arrive, see what the angels told them to be accurate, and then start spreading the word. I grew up in a small town, and news travels fast in that setting. There must have been a buzz about the village after the shepherds started sharing. But wait, there's more.





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The second occurrence was the Wisemen arriving. This group was not traveling light. They traveled in a caravan. That means a large group of people traveled with them. The arrival of a caravan had raised the level of curiosity of the citizens of Bethlehem and the guests. Many of them probably came to see what the excitement was all about. I am projecting what may have happened, but it is a very likely scenario. It ties into people seeing what the Lord has done.

Considering where we worship, how visible is that place to the community around us? Is it a place that is welcoming to others? Is it a place with a community outreach? Is it a place that sponsors events that highlight it as a place where Jesus is celebrated? Or is it a place that is standoffish? We can be a place people want to go to and experience what the Lord is doing, or we can be a place people want to avoid. Can you guess which honors Christ? People need to see Jesus in where we worship and how we share what the Lord has done in our lives. We need to be the place that attracts people just as the people of Bethlehem had the opportunity to come and see what the Lord had done in that humble manger. A church that is involved in the community is what we need.

Leaning on Jesus
Forest Holmes

