

CHRISTMAS OUTTAKES - Part 4

Shepherds

Randy Hageman

Part of Christmas Outtakes

December 19, 2021

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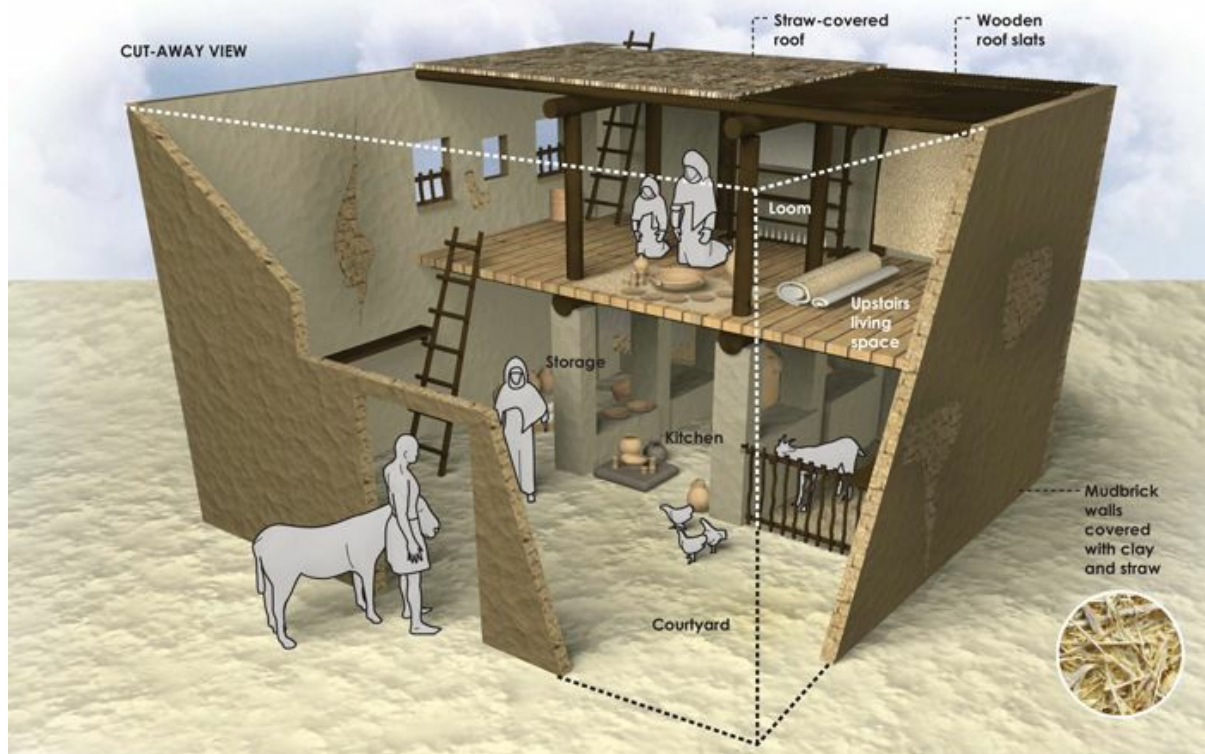


Many well-known biblical characters were depicted as shepherds, and yet, by the time of Jesus' birth, the shepherd role was not in great standing in ___ culture.

And while they were [in Bethlehem], the time came for [Mary] 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. And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

—Luke 2:6-8 (ESV)





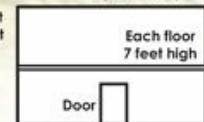
First-Century Israelite House

The homes of poor families were small and plain. They were built of rough stone (or mud-brick) walls and roofs of woven branches covered with clay. Living spaces were used for household work—cooking and weaving. At night, the family's domestic animals were housed in the lower level.

Size comparison:

First-century houses were smaller than double-wide trailers and accommodated an entire family.

Height
15 feet



Width 24 feet, Length 24 feet

Double
wide
mobile
home
(front
view)



Width 24 feet, Length 60 feet

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Because we know baby Jesus was found lying in a manger or animal feed trough, we could be talking about a shed or cave or even the ___ floor of a home.



The fact that baby Jesus was swaddled, though also typical, carried ____ for Jewish families.

Swaddling also showed that the infant was being ____ cared for.

The LORD, speaking to the Jews in Jerusalem: ‘And as for your birth, on the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped in swaddling cloths.’

—Ezekiel 16:4 (ESV)

The text doesn’t specifically tell us, but because they were so close to Jerusalem and the Temple, it’s likely that these shepherds were watching over flocks of sheep that were bred specifically for Temple ____ at the Passover and other times.

And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of

David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'

—Luke 2:9-11 (ESV)

The angel's "good news" is for ____!

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

—Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV)

This Messiah, the Christ, didn't come to defeat the Romans but came to take on bigger enemies - sin and death - and save people not into a new, *earthly* kingdom but into the ____ Kingdom of God for all time!

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

—Romans 5:1 (ESV)

... God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

—Philippians 2:9-11 (ESV)

Though much of what was happening the shepherds didn't understand, they still knew this was a ____ in history, and they felt compelled to go and see.

And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.'

—Luke 2:12 (ESV)

Jewish Law said first-born lambs were to be used as sacrifices for Passover at the Temple, but they must also be

_____ lambs to ensure that God received the first *and best* from His people.

Jewish tradition tells us that when those first lambs were born, they were also cleaned, like infants, and then wrapped in _____ cloths and placed in a manger until they could be examined to see if they were without blemish.

... [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'

—John 1:29 (ESV)

No one envisioned a Messiah who would have to _____ - that his death would pay the price for our sins and the sins of the world.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!'

—Luke 2:13-14 (ESV)

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.' And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

—Luke 2:15-16 (ESV)

The shepherds grasp that something truly _____ and life-altering has happened, and they go into Bethlehem to find this baby lying in a manger.

And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

—Luke 2:17-18 (ESV)

They didn't just tell Mary and Joseph but told probably _____ they encountered, for some time.

God counts you as so valuable to Him that He's offered *you* this "good news"; yet not just for you but for "____" people!

But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

—Luke 2:19 (ESV)

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

—Luke 2:20 (ESV)

'For unto you is born... a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'

—Luke 2:11 (ESV)

Christmas Eve: Jesus

Next Week (services online only): Wise Men