

## Bethlehem - Aaron Heinly

Luke 228-15

8 That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. 9 Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, 10 but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. 11 The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! 12 And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

15 When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

Why Bethlehem?

The first significant thing is its insignificance. Like the manger. Like Mary. Like the Shepherds. Like the cross. Like you.

1 Cor 1:26-29

26 Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy. 27 Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 28 God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. 29 As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

The next significant thing is that Bethlehem was chosen in ADVANCE and was ALWAYS part of the plan.

Micah 5:2-3

"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
Too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.  
His goings forth are from long ago,  
From the days of eternity."

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the

throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!

POINT 1: God chooses the insignificant and makes them infinitely significant

POINT 2: God has a plan and you are part of it

POINT 3: Jesus will rule the earth and make all things right

And now

POINT 4: Bethlehem means House of Bread Which makes so much sense in light of ...

John 6:35

3 Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Wh

What is bread. Sustenance and satisfaction. Typically produced through our labor.

Which happens to be the result of the curse of the fall of man.

Gen 3:17-19

17 And to the man he said, "Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. 18 It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. 19 By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return."

Here's the story.

Naomi and her husband and two sons move out of Bethlehem.

Anyone here ever strayed from the Promise Land?

Ironically they left because of a famine. They worried for their own sustenance and satisfaction so they left the HOUSE OF BREAD.

Deut 28:1-7

1 "If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully keep all his commands that I am giving you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the world. 2 You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God: 3 Your towns and your fields will be blessed. 4 Your children and your crops will be blessed. The offspring of your herds and flocks will be blessed. 5 Your fruit baskets and breadboards will be blessed. 6 "Wherever you go and whatever you do, you will be blessed. 7 "The Lord will guarantee a blessing on everything you do and will fill your storehouses with grain.

Deut 28.15-17

15 "But if you refuse to listen to the Lord your God and do not obey all the commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come and overwhelm you: 16 Your towns and your fields will be cursed. 17 Your fruit baskets and breadboards will be cursed.

God's covenant with the Israelites concerning the promise land was simple. Give your heart to God and he would bless the land. Turn your heart from God and he would curse your land.

As a result of their distracted hearts, the Israelites of Naomi's day experienced drought.

What was the solution? Turn their hearts to God, right?

But what did Naomi's family do? Seek sustenance and satisfaction elsewhere.

Anyway, Naomi's husband dies. Her sons. both marry. And then they both die.

And then Ruth gets news.

Ruth 3:7-8

7 After Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he lay down at the far end of the pile of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. 8 A round midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet! 9 "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she replied. "Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer."

Ruth lays at his feet — a sign of both subservience and romantic intention. Asks to be covered. Refers to him as family redeemer.

Note about family redeemers.

Ruth 5:9-10

9 Then Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, "You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. 10 And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown. You are all witnesses today."

Her identity is restored. Her sustenance and satisfaction is guaranteed. They marry. Ruth has a baby.

Who becomes the grandfather of David whose throne will never end and from who's line Jesus has come and will come again.