### Luke 2:8-20

- Herod died in 4 BC, but Josephus writes Herod left Jerusalem in 5 BC for Jericho where he spent his final year
- Quirinius' census declared in 7 BC
- Jesus was born after the census decree in 7 BC but before Herod died in 4 BC
- Wisemen met Herod in Jerusalem (Mt. 2:7, 16) which must have been 5 BC and Herod had the boys two-year-old and younger killed
- Jesus' birth might have been 6 BC

# Luke 2:8 – And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.



- 1. Shepherds in the field
  - a. Rainy season is mid-October to mid-April.
    - i. During this time the fields become green. Even the Negev
    - ii. Weather is colder
  - b. May, June, July, August, September and early October no rain falls
    - i. By October 1 the fields of Bethlehem are burned dry by sun
- 2. Date of Jesus' birth
  - a. No one knows the date of Jesus' birth
  - b. There is no mention of birth celebrations in the writings of early Christian writers such as Irenaeus (130–200 AD) or Tertullian (160–225 AD).
    - i. Origen of Alexandria (165–264 AD) mocks Roman celebrations of birthdays calling them "pagan" practices
    - ii. Clement of Alexandria (200 AD) writes: Clement writes: "There are those who have determined not only the year of our Lord's birth, but also the day; and they say that it took place in the 28th year of Augustus (2 BC)
      - 1. Origin writes the 25th day of [the Egyptian month] *Pachon* (May 20)
      - 2. Others say that He was born on the 24th or 25th of *Pharmuthi* (April 20 or 21)
  - c. Early church (100-400 AD) was divided on the exact date:

- i. Western Church (Rome, etc.) December 25
- ii. Eastern Church (Egypt, Eastern Orthodox) Jan 6 (or, Wed. Jan. 7, 2026)
- d. Constantine had correlated the birth of Jesus with the Roman festival Saturnalia /sa·tr·**nay**·lee·uh/.
  - i. Saturnalia is an ancient Roman festival and holiday on December 17 honoring the god Saturn. By the time of Augustus (27 BC) the celebration had been extended until 23 December, for a total of seven days of festivities.
  - ii. By 336 AD, the emperor Constantine established December 25<sup>th</sup> because it was the most accepted date for the birth of Jesus among Christians.
- e. Augustine (354-430 AD) in the Western church had agreed to Constantine's date established in 326 AD
  - i. Augustine wrote:
    - "For he (Jesus) is believed to have been conceived on the 25th of March, upon which day also he suffered;
    - so the womb of the Virgin, in which he was conceived, where no one of mortals was begotten, corresponds to the new grave in which he was buried, wherein was never man laid, neither before him nor since.
    - But he was born, according to tradition, upon December the 25<sup>th</sup> (nine months after conception on March 25)."
- f. Eastern Church set the birth date and the arrival of the wisemen on January 6.
  - i. Here, also, the dates of Jesus' conception and death were linked.
    - 1. Instead of working from the 14th of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, the easterners used the 14th of the first spring month (Artemisios) in their local Greek calendar (April )
    - 2. April 6 is, also, exactly nine months before January 6—the eastern date for Christmas.
    - 3. In the East, too, we have evidence that April was associated with Jesus' conception and crucifixion. Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis writes that on April 6,
- g. Messianic Jews try to set the date on a Jewish holiday such as Feast of Tabernacles (Succot)
  - i. Sukkot is celebrated five days after Yom Kippur
  - ii. Monday, Oct 6-Monday Oct 13, 2025
  - iii. The Gospels often record Jewish holy days along with things Jesus did or said
    - 1. The fact that Matthew, who was writing to Jews, and Luke, who may have been writing to the former high priest, makes no mention of a Jewish holy day makes this unlikely.
  - iv. The Gospels make no connection of Jesus birth to a holy day or even a date
- 3. Season of year?
  - a. Some say December is too harsh to graze sheep
  - b. Some say grazing had to be from April -November
  - c. Some say these sheep grazed in Bethlehem year round
  - d. Some say even Passover lambs grazed in February

#### 4. Shepherds

- a. Several opinions about who the shepherds were:
  - i. Honorable servants. Even watching Passover lambs
  - ii. Low life held in contempt by society due to poor character
- b. According to the Mishnah:
  - i. (Mishna is the first written collection of the Jewish oral traditions that are known as the Oral Torah. It is also the first work of rabbinic literature, with the oldest surviving material dating to 500 AD. The Talmud is a commentary on the Mishna.)
  - ii. The Mishah says this:"In respect of all blemishes which might come through the agency of a man, Lary shepherds are trustworthy, but priests' shepherds are not trustworthy."
  - iii. In the Talmud in the section called Sanhedrin in Chapter 25 it says that shepherds were dishonest, robbers, and considered unclean according to the law, (see online here <a href="https://www.chabad.org/torah-texts/5458010/The-Talmud/Sanhedrin/Chapter-3/25b">https://www.chabad.org/torah-texts/5458010/The-Talmud/Sanhedrin/Chapter-3/25b</a>)
  - iv. Shepherds were placed in the same class as tax collectors, thugs, robbers, shady financial dealers.
- c. BUT, these shepherds may have been noble examples:
  - i. They may have been watching sheep set aside for that spring's Passover
  - ii. Some of the sheep may have belonged to the priests themselves
  - iii. These shepherds are working the same fields that David worked
  - iv. Mishnah Shekalim 7:4 says that all animals between Jerusalem and Migdal Eder (near Bethlehem were for Temple sacrivice
  - v. These shepherds were not ordinary shepherds
- d. Migdal Eder means "Tower of the Flock"
  - i. Genesis 35:19-21 ""So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. Israel (Jacob) journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder



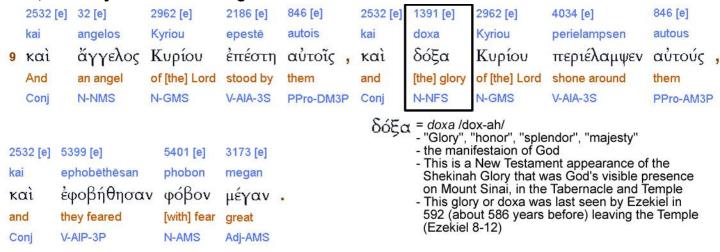
מגדַל־עַדַר = *Migdal-Eder*, from two words *migdal* meaning "tower" and *eder* meaning "flock"

ii. Micah 4:8 – "And you, O **tower of the flock**, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it come, the former dominion shall come, kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem. (Bethlehem is mentioned in Micah 5:1-2)



- e. These sheep may have belonged the sheep of Migdal Eder
- f. Jews were convinced Messiah would be born in Bethlehem
- g. Likewise, the Messiah would be revealed from Migdal Eder
- h. Migdal Eder was close to the road that led into Jerusalem
- i. These shepherds were special shepherds. They could have been priests themselves or those hired by the priests
- j. These sheep were sacrificial animals:
  - i. Males for burnt offerings
  - ii. Females for peace offerings

## 2:9 – 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.



- 1. Two things occur:
  - a. An angel appears and speaks
  - b. The Shechinah Glory appears
    - The Greek word doxa, "glory", refers to the glory of God that appeared on Mt. Sinai, in the tabernacle and Temple
    - ii. This glory left the Temple in 592 according Ezekiel 8-12
    - iii. This glory has not been seen for 586 years now reappears at Jesus' birth

# 2:10 – 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.

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32 [e]
                                                                   3361 [e] 5399 [e]
                                                                                               2400 [e]
    2532 [e]
             2036 [e]
                         846 [e]
                                       3588 [e]
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10 Kai
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    And
              said
                         to them
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                                                  angel
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                         PPro-DM3P Art-NMS
              V-AIA-3S
                                                                   Adv
    Coni
                                                 N-NMS
                                                                             V-PMM/P-2P
                                                                                               V-AMA-2S
                                                                                                           Coni
εὐαγγελίζω - euaggelizo /yoo-ang-ghel-id-zo/ = "to proclaim good news", "to evangelize", "to preach the gospel" - from: > ευ - eu = "good", "well" > \alpha\gamma\gammaελος - angelos = "messenger", "angel"
2097 [e]
                      4771 [e]
                                   5479 [e]
                                              3173 [e]
                                                               3748 [e]
                                                                             1510 [e]
                                                                                         3956 [e]
                                                                                                   3588 [e]
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euangelizomai
                      hymin
                                              megalēn
                                                               hētis
                                                                             estai
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εὐαγγελίζομαι
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I bring good news
                      to you
                                   [of] joy
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                                                                             will be
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                                              great
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                      PPro-D2P
V-PIM-1S
                                   N-AFS
                                              Adj-AFS
                                                               RelPro-NFS V-FIM-3S Adj-DMS Art-DMS N-DMS
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#### 2:11 - For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.



4172 [e] 1138 [e] polei Dauid πόλει Δαυίδ . [the] City of David N-DFS N-GMS

# 2:12 – And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

	2532 [e]	3778 [e]	4771 [e]	3588 [e]	4592 [e]	1	2147 [e]	1025 [e]	4683 [e]	2532 [e]
	kai	touto	hymin	to	sēmeion		heurësete	brephos	esparganōmenon	kai
12	καὶ	τοῦτο	ὑμῖν	⟨τò⟩	σημεῖον	:	εὑρήσετε	State of the state	έσπαργανωμένον,	καὶ
	And	this [is]	to you	the	sign		You will find	a baby	wrapped in swaddling cloths	and
	Conj	DPro-NNS	PPro-D2P	Art-NNS	N-NNS		V-FIA-2P	N-ANS	V-RPM/P-ANS	Conj
				σημε	εῖον					
2749	9 [e]	1722 [e]	5336 [e]		neion /say-M		on/ oken", "indicati	on" "mark"		
kein	nenon	en	phatnē				eans "a sign" o			
κεί	μενον	ἐν	φάτνη .	•						
lying	3	in	a manger							
V-PF	M/P-ANS	Prep	N-DFS							

## 2:13 – And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

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2532 [e] 1810 [e]
                        1096 [e]
                                   4862 [e] 3588 [e] 32 [e]
                                                               4128 [e]
                                                                           4756 [e]
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            exaiphnēs
                        egeneto
                                                                plēthos
   Kai
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134 [e]
             3588 [e] 2316 [e] 2532 [e] 3004 [e]
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                              and
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                              Conj
                                      V-PPA-GMP
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### 2:14 - "Glory to God in the highest,

### and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

	N-NFS	Prep	Adj-DNP-S	N-DMS	Conj	Prep	N-GFS	N-NFS	Prep	N-DMP	N-GFS
	Glory	in	[the] highest	to God	and	on	earth	peace	among	men	with whom He is pleased
14	Δόξα	έν	ὑψίστοις	Θεῷ ,	καὶ	ἐπὶ	γῆς	εἰρήνη	έν	ἀνθρώποις	εὐδοκίας !
	Doxa	en	hypsistois	Theō	kai	epi	gēs	eirēnē	en	anthrōpois	eudokias
	1391 [e]	1722 [e]	5310 [e]	2316 [e]	2532 [e]	1909 [e]	1093 [e]	1515 [e]	1722 [e]	444 [e]	2107 [e]

2:15 – 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."

15	2532 [e] Kai Καὶ And Conj	egene ἐγένε	to , e to pass	5613 [e] hōs ὡς as Adv	565 [e] apēlthon ἀπῆλθο were dep V-AIA-3P		575 [e] ap' ἀπ' from Prep	846 [e] autōn αὖτὧ them PPro-G	eis ν εἰς into	)	3588 [e ton TÒV the Art-AMS	ourand oùpo heaver	on (vòv	3588 [e hoi oi the Art-NMF	angeloi ἄγγελ angels	.01 ,	3588 [e] hoi oi the Art-NMP
416	A surface	2980 [6	-		0 [e]		330 [e]		1211 [e]		T-12-1	65 [e]		N NO PERM	3708 [e]	3588	[e]
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- "V	Vord", "s	saying"	, "uttera	nce", "m	atter"					als	o in Lu	ke 2:17					
448	7 [e] 37	78 [e]	3588 [e]	1096 [e]		3739	[e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]	11	07 [e]	1	473 [	e]			
rhēr	na tou	ito	to	gegonos	5	ho		ho	Kyrios	eg	nōrisen	h	ēmin				
`ρῆι	μα το	ῦτο	τò	γεγον	ὸς ,	ő		ó	Κύριο	ς έγ	νώριο	σεν τ	μῖν				
wor	60 0000	S	that	A SECTION ASSESSMENT	e to pass	which	1	the	Lord	200	s made	200	o us				
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#### 2:16 - And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

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	2532 [e]	2064 [e]	4692 [e]	2532 [e]	429 [e]	3588 [e]	5037 [e]	3137 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	2501 [e]	2532 [e]
	Kai	ēlthan	speusantes	kai	aneuran	tēn	te	Mariam	kai	ton	lösēph	kai
16	Καὶ	ἦλθαν	σπεύσαντες ,	καὶ	ἀνεῦραν	τήν	τε	Μαριὰμ	καὶ	τὸν	Ίωσὴφ ,	καὶ
	And	they came	having hurried	and	found	-	both	Mary	and	-	Joseph	and
	Conj	V-AIA-3P	V-APA-NMP	Conj	V-AIA-3P	Art-AFS	Conj	N-AFS	Conj	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Conj

3588 [e]	1025 [e]	2749 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	5336 [e]	
to	brephos	keimenon	en	tē	phatnē	
τò	βρέφος ,	κείμενον	ἐν	τῆ	φάτνη	
the	baby	lying	in	the	manger	
Art-ANS	N-ANS	V-PPM/P-ANS	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS	

## 2:17 – And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.



3588 [e]	3813 [e]	3778 [e]	γνωρίζω
tou	paidiou	toutou	<ul> <li>gnorizo /gno-rid-zo</li> <li>"to make known", "to declare", "to reveal", "to inform"</li> </ul>
τοῦ	παιδίου	τούτου .	<ul> <li>it refers to the act of making something known or revealing</li> </ul>
the	Child	this	information. The word is used of God, individuals or apostles revealing divine truths, intentions or information.
Art-GNS	N-GNS	DPro-GNS	- also used in Luke 2:15

### 2:18 – And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

18	2532 [e] kai καὶ And Conj	3956 [e] pantes πάντες all Adj-NMP	3588 [e] hoi oi those Art-NMP	191 [e] akousantes ἀκούσαντες having heard V-APA-NMP	2296 [e] ethaumasan ἐθαύμασαν marveled V-AIA-3P	4012 [e] peri περὶ concerning Prep	3588 [e] ton $\tau \widetilde{\omega} \nu$ the things Art-GNP	2980 [e] Ialethenton λαληθέντων having been spoken V-APP-GNP	5259 [e] hypo ὑπὸ by Prep	3588 [e] tōn τὧν the Art-GMP	
				θαυ	μάζω						
416	6 [e]	4314 [e]	846 [e]	<ul><li>- thaumazo /thou-mad-zo/</li><li>- "to marvel", "to wonder", "to be amazed"</li></ul>							
poi	menōn	pros	autous	- use	d to express a se	ense of won	der, amaze	ement, astonishment			
πο	ιμένων	πρὸς	αὐτούς	- ofte	n the reaction to	a miracue o	or a teachir	ng of Jesus			
she	pherds	to	them								
N-G	MP	Prep	PPro-AM3	<b>5</b>							

### 2:19 – But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.



## 2:20 – And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

2	2532 Kai Kαὶ And	hypestre		3588 [e] hoi oi the Art-NMP	4166 [e] poimen ποιμέ shephe	es νες ,	do: δc glo	32 [e] xazontes δξάζοντε rifying PPA-NMP	and	134 [e] ainountes αἰνοῦντ praising V-PPA-NM	τες	3588 [e] ton TÒV - Art-AMS	2316 [e] Theon Θεὸν God N-AMS	1909 [e] epi ἐπὶ for Prep
p Ti	Conj 956 [e] asin ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~	3739 [e] hois oἷς which RelPro-DNP	191 [e] ēkousa ἥκου they ha V-AIA-3	ın σαν ıd heard	2532 [e] kai καὶ and Conj	3708 [e] eidon εἶδον seen V-AIA-3F	,	2531 [e] kathōs καθὼς	Conj  2980 [e] elalēthē ἐλαλήθη it was said V-AIP-3S	4314 [e] pros	846 auto	[e] ous τούς .	T-AND	Tiep