

Throughout history, the Jewish people eagerly anticipated the arrival of the Messiah – the Anointed One who would redeem Israel. They studied the Scriptures, watched the signs, and hoped for His coming. Yet, when Jesus was finally born, very few recognized the moment. Why? Because God's revelation came only to a select few people whose hearts were pure and whose lives were aligned with God's will.

We see this pattern in Luke chapters 1 and 2. Those who first recognized Jesus' birth were individuals like Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5-6), Simeon (Luke 2:25-32), Joseph (Matthew 1:20-21), and the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36-38). The Bible tells us these were righteous and devout people, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1:6, NKJV). They were spiritually alert and faithfully waiting for the promised Savior. God honored their spiritual diligence by revealing His greatest gift — the birth of Christ.

But God also extended this revelation to two unexpected groups: the wise men from the East (Matthew 2:1-12) and the shepherds in the fields (Luke 2:8-20). These were not priests, scribes, or temple officials. The wise men were Gentiles — likely astrologers or scholars who interpreted celestial signs. The shepherds, on the

other hand, were common laborers, often looked down upon in society. Despite their humble status, God chose to reveal the Messiah's birth to them first. Why?

Let's look at Luke 2:8-12 (NKJV):

*"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 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.'"*

Why shepherds? Theologically, shepherds symbolize leadership, sacrifice, and care – all traits of Jesus Himself, who later called Himself "*the Good Shepherd*" (John 10:11, NKJV). Jesus wasn't born in a palace, but in a manger, surrounded by animals. His humble birth matched the setting of a shepherd – someone used

to the dirt, discomfort, and sacrifice of caring for others.

If God had revealed this news to tax collectors, officials, or royalty, they may have dismissed it or failed to appreciate the significance of a child born in a stable. But the shepherds understood not just practically, but symbolically. They were used to hardship, night watches, and sacrificial service. That night, God entrusted the message of salvation to them.

When the angels left, the shepherds responded immediately:

*Luke 2:15-16 (NKJV):*

*“Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.”*

Their response was obedience. They left their flocks their livelihood to pursue God's revelation. After witnessing the Savior, they became the first evangelists of Christ's birth, spreading the news of what they had seen and heard (Luke 2:17-18).

This story holds deep prophetic meaning. Just as few recognized Jesus' first coming, so too will few be prepared for His second coming. Jesus Himself said in:

*Matthew 24:44 (NKJV):*

*"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

And like in His first coming, His return will not be announced with fanfare to the masses, but perceived first by those spiritually awake those, like the shepherds, who live in watchfulness and obedience.

Furthermore, the shepherds represent faithful ministers and leaders in the Church today pastors, evangelists, teachers those tending God's flock (1 Peter 5:2-4). These spiritual shepherds often work unnoticed, in the background, dealing with the "messiness" of ministry heartaches, struggles, and sacrifices. Yet the Bible promises that when the Chief Shepherd appears, they will "receive the crown of glory that does not fade away" (1 Peter 5:4, NKJV).

If you are serving God in such a way teaching, caring, sacrificing be encouraged. The same glory that shone around the shepherds in the fields will shine on you when Christ returns. It may not be glamorous work now, but heaven takes note.

In conclusion:

- God bypassed the proud and chose the humble.
- He did not reveal His Son in the temple, but in a stable.
- He did not appear first to kings, but to shepherds.
- He honors those who quietly and faithfully serve.

Keep watch, just like those shepherds. Stay faithful to your calling. When the glory of the Lord appears again, you will be among the first to rejoice.

*Revelation 22:12 (NKJV):*

*“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”*

Be encouraged. Stay faithful. The glory is coming.

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