

We cannot sanitize this, but we can be sure Joseph did his best to make it as warm and clean as possible. But it was still a dirty place for any baby to be born. With all the agony, pain, blood, and screams that night, we can only hope Joseph found some good women to help him, and some men to cheer him on.

**The Trip** Why she traveled [donkey, wagon, walking] in the ninth month of her pregnancy is a mystery. If she knew the time for taxation was due, or if she knew her Son must be born in Bethlehem to fulfill Micah's prophesy in {2:5} she should have made the trip earlier. Either way, in God's will she was in God's hands and that is the safest place on earth for anyone.

An army doctor, a dedicated Christian, was working to save the life of a dying soldier. Mortar shells began falling close to them and everyone scrambled for safety. He kept on working and they pleaded with him to come with them, but he said, "Right now, right here, I am doing what God wants me to do, and for me this is the safest place on earth."

**The Trough** If we ask why Jesus was born in a barn, Adrian Roger's answer is best: *"That is where Lambs are born."* Mary's little Lamb, who takes away the sin of the world, was born in just the right place (Jn. 1:29).

**The Treatment** With millions in the Jerusalem area for registration, it is not surprising that the inns were full. The selfishness and cruelty of human nature is revealed in the fact that not one person gave them their room.

This is a preview of all the centuries to follow. People are too busy doing their own thing to give any attention or energy to the things of God and noticing those all around us who need our help. Most people do not so much reject Jesus as they ignore Him. When we ignore the needs of others, Jesus says in Matthew 25 that we ignore Him. Have you ever thought about the fact that in

Jesus' parable of the "Good Samaritan" [Lk. 10] it was religious (church) people who walked right on by and did nothing?

Day 26

#### 10. Angels Announce Jesus' Birth to Shepherds [Luke 2:8-20]

**The Singing** When babies are born, family members and friends gather to rejoice. The holy family had none of this, but God saw their loneliness and sent an angel choir to rejoice and to invite some shepherds to visit them. The angel choir "said" the words of this hymn. Angels never are said to "sing". Some say it is because they have never been saved (rescued) from sin like we have.

Christianity is a singing religion. Early in my ministry I was confused about all the different views of Christianity I learned about in seminary. Feeling God did not need another confused preacher I was tempted to leave the ministry. I've done that several times, but God always pulls me back. I visited a Sunday School and a guest teacher from Southern Seminary taught that Jesus was not God. He was a good man filled with the Spirit of God. The next Sunday I spoke in a church and I asked the soloist to sing this song before I spoke:

"I love to tell the story of unseen things above /  
of Jesus and His glory / of Jesus and His love /  
And when in scenes of glory / I sing a new, new  
song / Twill be the old old story that I have known  
so long."

I thought, I may never understand things like predestination but I knew who Jesus was and how we can be saved, so I figured God needed me after all. I also thought, if people in hell can sing, the song would be,

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen / the saddest  
are these / It might have been."

**The Shepherds** We can only guess why God selected shepherds. It could have been the Messiah's association with David, who kept his sheep in these same hills. It could have.....,