

A night sky with a bright blue starburst in the center. A beam of light shines down from the starburst onto a tent in the foreground. The background is dark blue with many small stars. The text "OCCUPY BETHLEHEM" is written in white, serif font across the bottom of the image.

OCCUPY BETHLEHEM

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Luke 2:1-20

During the last quarter of this year, much of the news has been about a growing movement in America and around the world--"The Occupy Movement." Crowds of assembled protestors have gathered to object to perceived corporate and government mismanagement. Two millennia ago, a heavenly movement was afoot to occupy the small Judean town of Bethlehem. Today we'll find out why

The Occupy Movement

1. "The Needs of the many outweigh the needs of the one" --Spock, *Wrath of Khan*

2. Timeline

a. Began in September 2011 in New York City -- Occupy Wall Street

b. Spread to 600 cities by October

c. 92 cities in other countries

d. 2720 cities by December 2011

Occupy Bethlehem

Reasons General population (including Joseph and Mary) because of the government edict

Angelic hosts to give announcement to the shepherds

Shepherds search for the Savior

"The needs of the many (salvation of the world) outweigh the need of the One (the temporary comfort of the Savior)."

Classic Christmas Story: Luke 2

1. "Silent Night" inaccurate

a. Population shift

b. Angels speaking to shepherds

c. Shepherds seeking the Savior

d. Census moved Joseph and Mary to
Bethlehem

II. Jesus' Family Occupied It as Strangers (vv. 1-7)

Governmental Intrusion

1. Census

i. Pax Romana (Roman
Peace)

ii. Roman Roads

II. Jesus' Family Occupied It as Strangers (vv. 1-7)

2. Caesar Augustus

I. Formidable ruler

i. Brilliant man

ii. Incredible authority

3. Turned Citizens into
occupiers

Providential Occasion

1. Joseph and Mary
2. Messiah to be born in Bethlehem
(Micah 5:2)
3. No room at the inn
4. Application

Application

- a. King of Kings occupied a manger;
people too busy to notice
- b. Jesus would like **to** occupy a place of
prominence in people's lives; we are
preoccupied
 - i. "He came to His own, and His own
did not receive Him." (John 1:11)

George Barna

"We are overwhelmed by information. We are rocked by innumerable opportunities and a limited number of hours. We are struggling to remain abreast of the sweeping changes that are impacting lifestyles and relationships."

III. Angels Occupied It as Speakers (vv. 8-14)

To Unsuspecting Shepherds

1. Angels

a. Referenced in 34 books of the Bible

i. 17 Old Testament

ii. 17 New Testament

iii. About 300 references

ἄγγελος; angelos: messenger

III. Angels Occupied It as Speakers

(vv. 8-14)

Angel's Activity

i. Worship

ii. Do God's bidding on the earth

a. The angels weren't singing, but saying

b. Angels limited singing

i. "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:7)

III. Angels Occupied It as Speakers

(vv. 8-14)

Activity

ii. Four living creatures

(Revelation 5)

iii. Before the fall and after the curse

(as though during the fall they minister without song)

iv. We are redeemed; Jesus occupies our hearts, we should sing

III. Angels Occupied It as Speakers (vv. 8-14)

Turkish proverb: "As the music is,
so are the people of that country";
People's **songs** reflect where they
are from;

as citizens of heaven

we ought to sound like it.

Shepherds Occupied It as Seekers (vv. 15-20)

They Left Seeking Christ

1. Shepherds were considered outcasts

a. Ceremonially unclean

b. Bedouins; generally overlooked

c. When God told the message that
His Son the Savior was born,

He tells The Bedouin: His Grace

Shepherds Occupied It as Seekers (vv. 15-20)

A.They Returned Finding Hope

1. Jesus occupied a place in their hearts
 2. Their example
 - a.Received the word about Christ by faith
 - b.Responded to the word immediately

Shepherds Occupied It as Seekers (vv. 15-20)

Recounted what they saw to people
around them

3. Some say they were raising the temple
lambs for sacrifice; Looked for the Lamb
who takes away the sin of the world