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 All Scriptures are printed verbatim with translations noted. • Pastor Joe's email is Joe@southreno.com.
 This passage can be found in the Pew Bible, in the New Testament on page 45.

“May your steps jingle with joy, delight and anticipation this time of year!”

- A Christmas Card recently received.

A. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE SHEPHERDS?

In order to understand how unusual it was to have the angels appear to these lowly shepherds, let's learn a bit about them:

- We don't know a lot about them. (Luke used no adjectives to describe them.)
- Throughout the history of Israel, shepherding was a noble profession.
- Abel was the first recorded to have had this job, followed by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and of course, David—*among many others*.
- Psalm 23—God calls Himself a shepherd and we're compared to sheep, which is anything but a compliment.
- By the time we come to the first century however, shepherding has lost its luster. Shepherds made up the lowest class of people, coming in just ahead of the lepers. A change in the application of Levitical law changed their status.
- They were considered *ceremonially unclean*. Because of the nature of their work they were unable to attend any religious services.
- They could not give a witness in a court of law.
- In the Talmud, which is a collection of interpretations and insight from the Jewish rabbis, we read these words:

“No help is to be given to the heathen or the shepherds.”

B. THE SHEPHERD'S STORY

1. They were attentive.

Luke 2:8, NASB -⁸ *In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.*

2. They were awed.

Luke 2:9, NASB -⁹ *And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.*

3. They accepted the message.

Luke 2:15, NASB -¹⁵ *When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, “Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.”*

4. They acted.

Luke 2:16, NASB -¹⁶ *So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.*

5. They adored.

Luke 2:20, NASB -²⁰ *The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.*

C. WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THE SHEPHERDS

We learn what Christmas is all about!

Luke 2:10–11, NASB -¹⁰ *But the angel said to [the shepherds], “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹ for today in the city of David there has been born for you* a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”*

[*NOTE: “You” (Eng.); Greek ὑμῖν (hu-men) and is both singular and plural at the same time.]

Here's what that means?

A. This fallen world will soon be finished.

B. In Heaven, you will be complete.