

SHEPHERDS AND ANGELS

Text: Luke 2:8–20

Introduction:

1. As Christians you know we live in dark times, every day the news proves it
2. We see the lies, indoctrination, violence, corruption and injustice... and we want truth and justice
3. You know that feeling in your heart—hurting for our country and our children...
4. That's a small piece of what the Jews felt like under power & domination of Rome
5. They Knew of the Prophesies of a Messiah who would save them and Longed for time He would finally arrive. But Jesus arrival was not what they expected

I. THE ANGELIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice who this announcement was first given to...

A. THE SHEPHERDS (v.8)

“shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.” (v.9)

1. These Shepherds were laborers who lived in the fields with their sheep
 - a) Shepherds smell like sheep—It was a full time job to protect and care for their sheep
 - b) So Shepherds were often ignored, looked down on or despised by the religious...
 - c) because they were unable to attend services and to keep the ceremonial laws of washing and cleansing. Their flocks just kept them too busy.
2. But the 1st Announcement of Jesus birth was NOT to Priests or Scribes or Pharisees... Kings or Rulers... but to Shepherds in the Fields!
 - a) It was to simple men of the fields that the message was first given
 - b) (James 2:5) *“Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?”*
 - c) God gave the first announcement of Jesus Birth to the common and despised...
—The Gospel Good News is For All People!
3. But There may be more about these Shepherds...
—because they're watching flocks outside of Bethlehem...
 - a) Every Morning and Evening were the Daily Sacrifices at the Temple in Jerusalem
 - b) Temple Authorities had to be sure there was a ready supply of unblemished lambs
 - c) and we know there were special flocks for this service raised outside of Bethlehem specifically for Temple sacrifice in Jerusalem.
4. So it is very likely that the shepherds who cared for the Temple lambs... were the first to see the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Notice who this announcement is from...

B. THE ANGELS (v.9)

1. As the Shepherds are watching their flocks at night there is a sudden appearance by an Angel and they were greatly afraid!

2. Angels are powerful spiritual beings...

- a) In O.T. we know 1 angel killed 185,000 Assyrian Soldiers in 1 night (2 Kg 19:35)
- b) **Hebrews 1:7** *7 And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire."*
- c) So Imagine the power of entire host of angels...
The word host refers to an entire angelic army...
- d) So the sudden appearance of an Angel would be a frightening experience... and the appearance of an army of Angels would be even more frightening!

3. Although They Are Powerful – Angels Are not to be Worshipped...

- a) John was so frightened by the Appearance of an Angel that He Fell Down to Worship
- b) The Angel stopped him and said do not do that only worship God!

4. Angels Are Ministering Spirits Sent by God to Help His People

Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Heb 1:14)

5. These Angels Knew of Jesus Deity, His Majesty and His Glory...

- a) They Were Spiritual Beings who dwelt in Heaven Before the incarnation
- b) They would Know of the Creation and the Fall of the Human Race

6. But How Much Did They Know About God's Plan to Save Man from Sin?

- a) Did They of Know the Sufferings that Jesus would experience?
- b) Did they Know How God Would Save the Human Race,
- c) while at the same time fully maintaining His Own Holy Righteousness?
- d) By Sacrificing Himself for the Sins of the World?

"Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you... things which angels desire to look into." (1 Peter 1:10, 12a)

Notice what this announcement is about...

C. THE GOOD NEWS (v.10–14)

1. As Frightened as they were to see Angels—These Angels Bring Good News

- a) Which is why the angel says: Do not be afraid!

2. This is a Message of JOY — not of FEAR!

- a) of Goodwill and peace—not of judgement and despair
- b) The Long Wait is Over—the Savior is Here!

3. And There is a Sign to Prove it: A Baby Lying in a Manger

- a) There were probably many other children in Bethlehem
- b) But only Jesus was wrapped in swaddling cloths, laying in a manger

D. THE CHILD (v.15–20)

1. Imagine the amazement and excitement these shepherds must've felt...

- a) as they ran through the fields in the night to find this Child in Bethlehem
- b) And They Found Him Just As the Angels Said They Would.

2. Amazed they Told Joseph & Mary of the Angels & their Announcement

- a) Mary Kept these things and pondered them in her heart
- b) The Shepherds Went Glorifying and Praising God!

II. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR US

A. THE GOSPEL IS THE GOOD NEWS

1. **A MESSAGE OF GOOD NEWS (2:10)**

- a) The Greek Word here is εὐαγγέλιον euaggelion;
Translated: *good news*—good news(1), gospel (73)
- b) Christianity is not a revised version of the Old Testament Moral Law...
- c) Christianity is the News of Salvation for All Who Have Broken God's Moral Law

2. **OF GREAT JOY (2:10)**

- a) Because we were under condemnation of sin...
- b) But Now We Are Saved By God's Grace, not by our weak and self-centered works

3. **TO ALL PEOPLE (2:10)**

- a) All Nations, All Languages, All Ethnic Groups
- b) To the RICH and the POOR, to the OLD and the YOUNG
- c) To the WEAK or STRONG, to the PRIVILEGED or the FORGOTTEN

4. **THE CAUSE OF THIS JOY (2:11)**

The Angel said: 'To YOU is Born a Savior!'

- a) Not to Emperors or Kings... or Priests or Pharisees... or Preachers & Elders
To YOU is Born a Savior!

- To the Humble and Meek – To the Poor and Weak.
- To those who mourn over their sins.
- The Broken Hearted who grieve over their Broken Life

To YOU is Born a Savior!

- So YOU can Be Saved by Grace from the Wrath of God
and have the gift of Eternal Life

5. **THE SIGN GIVEN AS PROOF (2:11) A Child laid in a manger!**

- a) The proof of His divinity—the very humility of love;
that He should be found cradled in a manger. (*Abbott; P.H.C.*)
- b) How Amazing that God did this for us!
- c) He Humbled Himself for Us! – He became small for us!

B. THIS IS WHY THE ANGEL SAID: 'DO NOT BE AFRAID...'

1. **Because of Our Sins — We Were Under the Judgement and Wrath of God**

- a) But Through Jesus and the Gift of Grace He Would Pay with His own Blood
we can Finally have Peace with God
- b) This is the Peace and Good will the Angels Spoke of... (*Luke 2:13–14*)

2. **To Have Peace with God—we can finally have peace within ourselves... and to have peace within ourself—we can finally have peace with others**

- a) This inner-peace — a Peace that surpasses all understanding...
- b) Can only Be Found in Christ (Romans 5:1)

C. THIS IS WHY THE SHEPHERDS RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY

1. The Went Immediately To Find the Savior
2. They Found Him and Gave Praise to God
3. Then they Went to Tell Others the Good News!

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus could've arrived in the likeness of an Angel...
...in Strength, not in weakness...
2. But He arrived as a Child... NOT in a Mansion but in a Manger!

There was a European monarch who worried his advisers...

by disappearing and walking incognito among his people.

When he was asked not to do so for his own security, he answered:

'How can I rule my people unless I know who they are and how they live.'

How amazing that we have a God who not only Knows us...

1. But He Became Like Us
2. He experienced the hardship of being human
3. He Even Allowed Himself to be Crucified as a Criminal on a Cross
4. So We Can Become Children of God and Inherit Eternal Life

Thanks *be* to God for His indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15