

Good Tidings of Great Joy – Luke 2.8-14

⁸And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. ⁹And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. ¹⁰And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: ¹¹for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this *is* the sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased (Luke 2.8-14, ASV).¹

Memory Verse – And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people – Luke 2.10

Mary and Joseph are in the stable, with their new born child, Christ, as He lays in the manger with all the animals around Him. They are amazed at this young child, this wonderful gift which has been given to them by God. A question we might ask is, “How much do we think they knew who this Christ child was?”

As Mary, Joseph and Jesus are in the stable, we find the shepherds were out in the fields watching over the sheep. Many of the sheep used in the temple sacrifices came from there. The surrounding hills were prime grazing lands, and shepherds worked in the area day and night, all year round.² Here they are minding their own business, winding down their day, maybe sitting around the fire, and all of a sudden there was a bright light, no it was not the sun, there was no solar eclipse, it was an angel of the Lord.

Let us think about this for a moment, we are out in the field, cutting wood, or working the cattle, or riding horses, and all of sudden the sky gets really bright and an angel appears to us. How would we respond? What would our reaction be? It would not be much different than the shepherds, they were very afraid, some versions say ‘sore afraid.’ Which means ‘to be in a state of fear’ or ‘panic flight’ or ‘state of severe distress.’

We would not fair any better than the shepherds from the appearing of the angel nor from his message. The angel encouraged the shepherds by saying, “be not afraid, I bring you good tidings of great joy...” One thing we need to mention concerning angels is when they appeared they usually brought terrifying news of destruction and disaster; therefore, people feared for their lives anytime an angel appeared.

This time is not any different, than the other three times when the angel appeared to Joseph (Matthew 1.20), or Zacharias (Luke 1.11), or Mary (Luke 1.26-30), and now to the shepherds (Luke 2.9). They were all afraid, but the angel brought each one of them good news or information about a coming event. They could choose to believe it or just ignore it and go on with their lives.

We are called to the same choice, we can read the Christmas story found here in the Book of Luke, and believe what we read, choose to pass this amazing event on to others, sharing the good tidings as the angels did to the shepherds and then the shepherds did to all they came into contact with. Or, we can choose to say it is made up, not true, and disregard it. But what a blessing we will be missing by not sharing this amazing event with others.

The angel came and said, “I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2.10-11, ESV).³

¹ [American Standard Version](#). (1995). (Lk 2:8–14). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

² MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [The MacArthur study Bible: New American Standard Bible](#). (Lk 2:8). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 2:10–11). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

What wonderful news, Christ the Lord is born, a Savior, the One all of Israel has been waiting for. He has arrived and now we can see Him, He will set us free for the rule of the Roman empire. This is the way the people of the times were thinking; however, this is not why Christ came.

The term ‘Savior’ means ‘One who delivers or rescues’ and this term is applied to Christ throughout scripture. The prophet Isaiah gave us great picture of how this Savior would rescue His people:

He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the LORD’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities (Isaiah 53:2-11, NIV).⁴

Application

1. Have you ever been surprised by something? How did it make you feel? Please explain.
2. What have you done with the ‘Glad Tidings’ from the angel? Please Explain
3. Reading Isaiah 53:2-11 explain what this passage says about our Savior, how He will rescue His people and what our outcome in life will be? You can use other scripture to support your explanation.
4. Commit to learning Luke 2:10 and find one person to share the Biblical Christmas Story with.

Prayer

God once again, as I read Your wonderful story of Your Son’s birth I am reminded of how loving and caring You are. You brought the message of Your Son’s birth to lowly shepherds who were in the field doing their work. But, for You, they were the most important people to know about Your Son’s birth. Thank You for caring to bring the Saviors ‘Good Tidings’ to such lowly people, reminding us we can all come to You for the ‘Free Gift of Salvation’ found in Your Son, who was born as Jesus Christ, Savior of the World. Grant me boldness to share this wonderful message today and every day until Christ returns. I pray all this in Jesus Christ’s Name, Amen.

⁴ [The New International Version](#). (2011). (Is 53:2–11). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.