

Title: Glory to God In The Highest

Text: Luke 2:8-20

Take your Bibles, please, and turn to the Gospel of Luke. The Gospel of Luke chapter 2 beginning with Vs 8... Today, we come to the third Sunday in Advent. The third candle is the Shepherds candle. And in this candle we see the angels calling the shepherds from the hills to see God's promise fulfilled. (STAND Together)

Luke chapter 2 verse 8 ... (Read Vs 8-20)

Prayer

I just love this story. It is so wonderful. GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST. What a tremendous proclamation. And I believe this is a wonderful story because we see the PRAISE OF GOD BEING PROCLAIMED BY THOSE ANGELS. They were glorifying God. It reminds us of what we should be doing during this Christmas season. And that is PRAISING GOD. Did you know, dear fiends, that praise can change your life? One of the greatest ways to get out of discouragement is to PRAISE AND THANK THE LORD. THAT IS RIGHT! Just thank God for all that He has done and all that He is doing in your life.

New As we look at this story, I want you to see two things.

(1B) Number one, THE PRAISE OF GOD BEING PROCLAIMED BY THOSE ANGELS. Vs 13 says:

"And suddenly there appeared with the angel". That is the angel that first appeared to the shepherds. "And suddenly there appeared with ^{the} angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased." Three things here *about the praise of these angels*

(1C) First of all, the Praise of God was being proclaimed by the multitude of angels. In

Greek you have two words for multitude. ONE, REFERS TO A CROWD OF PEOPLE.

The second word is rooted in the idea of "FULLNESS." We would say in English:
"EVERYONE WAS THERE." And that is the word that is used here *in our Text.*

Man, I love it. A MULTITUDE. All the angels were there. *Everyone was There,*

(2)

People often ask: "HOW MANY ANGELS WERE THERE IN THAT MULTITUDE?" Well, we don't know the number. But, by the meaning of the word, every last angel in all of Heaven was there. It is mind boggling. A multitude. Thousands of thousands of angels. And they are all there.

Now, what were they doing? Vs 12 and 13 says that they were "praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace among men." And dear friends, that is really what Christmas is all about. Praising God.

Vs 13, also, says: "the heavenly host." Now, I don't know about all of you. Maybe these are just little details and you are not interested in them. But, as you know, I get excited about details like this. That is why I am wired. But, anyway, a "host" is an army.

And I think that is kind of interesting. Think about it. An army is proclaiming PEACE. THE LORD OF HOST. The Lord of armies is also the Prince of Peace. It is kind of an interesting way to look at God's plan. An army of angels is proclaiming PEACE ON EARTH. O.K., where? IN THAT BABY! WOW! That is just ^{just amazing} ~~fantastic~~ to me.

Dear friends, God is doing a marvelous thing here. He is demonstrating His Praise. This is an example of how we ought to Praise God by the very appearance of this heavenly host.

(2C) Secondly, notice the reason why God gave his message to shepherds. This, also, amazes me. Why did God choose () shepherds? The announcement of the great shepherd, which Hebrews 13:20 calls Jesus, was given to humble shepherds. Who, by the way, have a bad reputation. I hope you know that. In those days shepherds were not treated very well. They tell us that because of their job they could never really fulfill

the law. They were always out taking care of he sheep or providing them for others to use. And people looked down upon them because they never participated in the Jewish ceremonies. They were unreliable. In fact they were so unreliable that they never allowed a shepherd to testify in court. Can you imagine the attitudes of people towards shepherds? And who did God choose as He filled the sky with angels? Some low class shepherds. It is very, very interesting.

O.K. the stage is set. The shepherds in the fields. And the sky is filled with angels Singing: GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST It must have been beautiful.

I believe God just wanted the angels to give those shepherds a little tast of heaven. So, they are doing this little number on those poor shepherds.

Dear friends, that is what Heaven is all about. And we have this little remainder, here, about what is going on in heaven. GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST.

Now, can imagine being a shepherd in those days? Men with very little education. Men who didn't have mush respect. Yet, there was something wonderful about those shepherds. And I don't want you to leave, today, without understanding this.

So, Turn in your Bibles to the book of Micah. The book of Micah chapter 4. Right before that prophecy about Bethlehem, there is another prophecy that tells me why the Lord allowed his message to be given to shepherds.

The shepherds at Bethlehem, we are told, took care of the flocks of sheep that were to be used in sacrifice in the Temple.

The question is often ask: where were all the animals kept that were used in the daily sacrifice and special feast? Where were they kept? They had to be kept near Jerusalem so that you could get one quickly when you need it. So, where were they kept?

(4)

Called the
Shepherds
Flock

Answer: They were kept in the fields between Jerusalem and Bethlehem! In fact, according to Rabbinic records, the so called headquarters for looking after the animals was in Bethlehem. Now, I find that very interesting.

WHY? Look at Micah chapter 4 verse 8. It says: "and as for you, tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it will come."

WHAT WILL COME? Look at the rest of the verse. "Even the former dominion will come, the Kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem." This promised Kingdom, this dominion, this promise to us is going to come where? TO THE TOWER OF THE FLOCK.

Now, if you keep reading you come down to that familiar prophecy in Micah 5:2, which says, "But as for you." You see, that goes back to 4:8. It is in the same context. BUT AS FOR YOU BETHLEHEM." Dear friends, the tower of the flock is Bethlehem. "AND TO YOU, TOWER OF THE FLOCK, WILL COME THE FORMER DOMINION."

This phrase, "tower of the flock," in Hebrew is the word MICK'DOLL'A'DARE." If you were to go to Bethlehem, today, you would discovery that right on the north side of Bethlehem is a little spot called MICK'DOLLL'A'DARE". TOWER OF THE FLOCK.

Do you understand? The point of this story is that our Lord Jesus was born where all sacrificial lambs were born. And our Lord Jesus died where all sacrificial lambs are killed on Mt. Mur'ra. I think it is fantastic.

John the Baptist said, "behold, the lamb of God, the one who will take away the sin of the world."

And our wonderful Lord fulfilled the details of that prophecy to the letter as ~~set~~

Jesus was
~~had his son~~ born in he very place where the sacrificial lambs were born and raised. And

Jesus died in the very place where those lambs were sacrificed.

Do you understand why the angels are singing GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST? *Wow!*

Now, let's come back to Luke chapter 2.

(3C) The third thing that I want you to see is the message given to those shepherds.

Now, let's look at verses 13 and 14. And please notice the three nouns: GOD, EARTH, AND MAN. It says: TO GOD - GLORY. TO EARTH - PEACE. ON MAN - HIS GOOD PLEASURE.

Now, please follow this carefully. Those three nouns: GOD - EARTH - PEACE, each have something addressed to them. And it deals with the baby being born. "For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord."

Now, what do we do toward God? In the highest, - up in the heavens, - WHAT IS GOING ON THERE? GLORY TO GOD. GLORY! That is why God made us in the first place. That is why he brought Jesus into the world. That is why he saved sinners. That is why Jesus is coming back. That is why he is going to set up his kingdom on earth. That is why we worship Him. That is why we do all the things we do for Him. WHY? TO GIVE GLORY TO GOD. "Whether we eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." So, glory and praise and honor and blessing to Him. In the highest place - there is glory.

Now, what is on earth? Now that baby Jesus is here. what is on earth? - PEACE! Dear friends, peace isn't through the Roman government. Peace on earth never comes by means of human agencies. Peace is in that baby. JESUS IS THE PRINCE OF PEACE. He is the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6-7, "For unto us a child is born, a son is given. And the government will rest on his shoulders. And his name will be called - wonderful counselor, mighty God, eternal Father, PRINCE OF PEACE."

7

but you have never made a personal commitment yourself. I hope these shepherds get through to you. All that they see and hear just doesn't go in one ear and out the other. NO WAY! They are going to prove it to themselves. Vs 15 says: "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened." In other words, Let's make sure.

And so I ask you. Have you searched the scripture to see if these things are so? Do you realize that the things ~~we~~ say Sunday after Sunday have eternal consequences for your life? Have you sought the truth? Do you know the Lord? Do you have confidence and faith in what the Bible says about Jesus. If you were to die, today, do you know where you would spend eternity?

Oh, my friends, if your answer NO to any of those questions, I pray that today you will turn your heart and life over to Jesus. Today, you would ask the Lord to come into your heart. They proved it for themselves.

They shared the message
(28) Second, notice what the shepherds did. Vs 17 says: "And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this child." Man, they went out and told ^{the} world. They shared the message of Christmas with others.

Are you doing that? Are you sharing the Christmas story with others. Oh, how we need to invite others to come to Christ and His church. Especially ~~the~~ ^{the} church. After all, that is the only place they are going to hear about Jesus. They certainly aren't going to receive the true message of Christmas down at the shopping mall.

(35) And third, they praised the lord for all they had seen and heard. I hope that characterizes your attitude today. I certainly hope so. Vs 20: "the shepherds went back,. glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen."

(6)

So, on earth what? PEACE - WHERE? In the baby, Jesus. If you want to experience God's peace, ^{on Earth} then turn your eyes to Jesus. Peace in the midst of a storm. Peace in the midst of difficult. Peace in your life even though the world is falling apart

Peace - Peace - God's peace. Coming down from the heavens above. PEACE IS FOUND IN THE BABY, JESUS.

(3)) Then, it says: "the good pleasure on men." What this is saying is that the only way to have PEACE among men is by God extending his favor to ^{men} ~~him~~.

Vs 14 says: "Peace among men with whom He is pleased."

The question is: has God found pleasure in you? Because of your faith in the son, the Savior, Christ the Lord? God will bring peace among men on whom His pleasure rest. The emphases is on God. Not man. It is those whom God favors, rather than those who favor God. This is a fantastic principle. How will ^{God} ~~god~~ bring his good pleasure on man? Through the baby. Jesus is the good pleasure of God bringing salvation to man.

In the heavens: Glory comes to God because of the baby.

On earth: peace will be established in man's heart because of the baby.

And on individual people will come the good pleasure of God because of the baby.

God will give us his grace - provide his salvation - give his love - to "WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH" because of the Baby, Jesus. *Remember God!*

(2B) ^{Remember} Now, let's look at how these shepherds responded in verses 15 thru. 20 . They did three wonderful things.

(1C) Number one, and I like this. They proved it for themselves. You know, a lot of people hear the Christmas story, a lot of people hear the preaching of Christ, but they do nothing about it. Maybe you are here and you have heard the message of Christmas,

(8)

Are you praising God? Are you glorifying God for all that you have seen and heard?

Oh, listen, dear friends, if you don't know the savior, then receive Him today. That is the greatest thing you could do this Christmas. Your whole Christmas would be different.

And Christians - use your time, wisely, to invite - to tell - and to share the true message of Christmas.

↳ Children, Music, Tonight

Let Us Close In Prayer