

WHEN THE ANGELS WERE GONE

Text: Luke 2:8-20

INTRO: Go back with me almost 2,000 years in time to a pasture site near the town of Bethlehem. We do not know the time of year, but almost certainly not the dead of winter; perhaps about mid-October.

I. THE ANGEL'S APPEARANCE & THE SHEPHERDS' REACTION, vs. 8-9.

A. This reaction to angelic visitations is almost universal.

B. We should feel an awe, a deep & abiding respect & reverential fear as we read God's word & hear it read by others.

1. We have learned to be quiet & respectful when men pray--man speaking to God.

2. How much more we need to learn to be quiet and respectful when God's word is being read and taught--God speaking to man.

II. THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE, vs. 10-12.

A. Do not fear. 15 times in N.T.

1. As already pointed out, there is a need for proper awe, reverence, respect.

2. But there is no place for terror. What the angel had to say to the shepherds was for their good.

B. Good tidings of great joy to all people! vs. 10b

1. Good news because all have sinned, Rom 3:10, 23

2. Good news because of the wages of sin, Rom 6:23

3. Good news because all may be saved, Rev 22:17

C. There is born today in the city of David a Savior, vs. 11.

1. Had power on earth to forgive sins

MK 2:10; LK 23:43.

2. After His ascension, He sent the H.S. to the apostles

to guide them into all truth. Thru them, He made known the conditions of forgiveness that folks must meet today, Acts 2:4, 36-41.

D. You will find the Babe, vs. 12. Jesus has never been that hard to find by those who truly seek Him, MT 7:8-9.

If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine... (John 7:17).

III. THE ANGELIC HYMN, vs. 13-14.

NOTE: The Bible does not say these words were sung, but because of the obvious poetic style, commentators are virtually unanimous in suggesting that such was the case. Also, the word "praise" is most commonly associated with singing.

IV. THE RESULT OF THE ANGELIC MESSAGE, vs. 15-20.

A. The WORD led them to Christ. They returned to their place in society, glorifying & praising God. They were still shepherds, but they would never be quite the same as before. What a story they had to tell their grandchildren.

B. The Ethiopian eunuch met Christ thru the preaching of Philip, then went on his way rejoicing, Acts 8:36-39.

C. The written word, & the word preached orally, still lead folks to Christ today. John 20:30-31

CONCLUSION: Fear not. I have good news for you. A Savior has been born who has the power to take away your sins. Seek & you will find Him--not a Babe in swaddling clothes, but a risen Savior, King of kings & Lord of lords. Submit yourself to His righteous rule by obeying His commands, & go on your way to heaven, rejoicing.

La Porte, TX, October 19, 1975

La Porte, TX, April 4, 1982

Exton, PA, October 15, 1989

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 21, 1996

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, March 10, 2002

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, June 1, 2003