

Episode #549 Christmas 2019 2: Christ and the Shepherds

I. The birth of Christ was a miraculous event that prepared the way for all that He would accomplish in His death, burial, and resurrection. At this time of year we remember that birth and the glorious salvation that God gave us as a result.

II. Luke 2:8-14. The visit of the angels to the shepherds in the field.

- A. Verse 8. The shepherds would not have been in the field in the cold, rainy winter months. This birth probably took place in the fall, not the winter.
- B. Verse 9. The first announcement of the Lord's birth was made to humble shepherds, not to kings, princes, nobles, or even rich men. This was an appropriate start for God's government, a very different kind of kingdom.
- C. Verse 10. Fear often followed the appearance of angels, but this angel has come with glad tidings, not fearful ones. All the people. Glad for all, even us today!
- D. Verse 11. The angel's words describe a world-changing event, the birth of the Savior!
- E. Verse 12. The unusual sign lets them know the Child. A manger was an animal feeding trough. Not the place you would expect to find a newborn King!
- F. Verse 13. An angelic multitude appears and speaks these great words (not singing, as it is often portrayed).
- G. Verse 14. Glory is esteem or honor. Peace is not just a cessation of violence, but a true union. God's goodwill toward men has never been illustrated more clearly than it was when He sent His Own Son to save us!

III. Luke 2:15-19. The visit of the shepherds.

- A. Verse 15. They couldn't stay still at this news!
- B. Verse 16. Imagine these rough men of the fields coming to Mary and Joseph!
- C. Verse 17. Having seen this great sight, they could not keep it quiet. What good-hearted person who longed for God's salvation could?
- D. Verse 18. Many marveled at the shepherd's report, but little memory of this seems to have been left at the time of Christ's ministry 30 years later.
- E. Verse 19. Mary stores up these things, but even she seemed to lose the wonder of this event later (Mark 3:20-21). Yet she was among the believers after His resurrection (Acts 1:13-14).

IV. Luke 2:20. The shepherds return.

- A. They had to go back to work.
- B. Their praise continued even back with the sheep.

V. The first announcement of the Lord's birth was not made to the great and powerful, but to certainly, lowly shepherds of Bethlehem. This shows us the truth: that the birth of God's Son was not just for the high and mighty, but for all. What a very different kind of King He is than all other rulers of this world! He came, not to be served, but to save His people from their sins. God's goodwill toward fallen mankind was shown forth in this event to the fullest. May we rest in the knowledge that God has provided a Savior for all, even for every one of us.