

Shepherd

I am a shepherd, like my father and grandfather before me. I think I'm a pretty good one. At least I was among those chosen to care for the ceremonial sheep... you know, the ones sacrificed at the Temple? Not just your average Joseph gets to do that! And by the way, our great King David was a shepherd. That's his city where I live -- Bethlehem.

I know I'm going on and on, but you see, some people look down on shepherds. They say we smell funny -- almost as bad as fishermen. And they say we are barely as intelligent as our sheep, probably from long association.

Well, let me tell you! If shepherds ever needed a boost, we got it that night. No sir, it wasn't scribes or Levites or princes or priests that got to see that show... it was shepherds.

But you don't know what I'm talking about do you? I guess maybe I am too much used to talking to sheep. Let me try to explain.

We were out on the hillside, the sheep were quiet and no sound of wild beasts to make us wary, you know, the kind of night when you say to yourself, "It's just too quiet!"

Then suddenly, there was a light. Not just a little light in the distance or the slow breaking of the dawn. No, sir, it was like the light of ten suns broke into the sky without a warning.

We were terrified. I mean, in all my years, I had never seen anything like this. And in all the stories I ever heard from the old timers, there was never anything like this.

It's funny how you can have so many thoughts in such a short time, but I remembered when they read from the scroll of Moses about the beginning when the Lord said, "Let there be light!"

But there wasn't time for any more thoughts because in the midst of the light, there was a sound, and it turned into a voice, like music, but not with notes. And then I could see a man, well, an angel it had to be.

And I remember what he said, every word, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Then there was a great company of them all saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace among those with whom He is pleased."

Well, we didn't waste any time getting down into the village, so excited that I cannot tell you the way we went or whether our feet touched the ground. Quickly we found the place where the newborn baby lay, in the stable of the Inn at the edge of town.

We had more feelings at that moment than we had ever felt in a lifetime. We had seen angels. They had announced the birth of the Savior, Christ the Lord! They told us first! Then we actually saw him! And the family he was born to were common people like us!

Joel had agreed to stay with the sheep because he was the youngest, but then I saw him peeking into the stable. "Who's watching the sheep?" I asked. "The angels," he said. After we all stopped laughing, I said, "Well, I guess nothing could happen to the sheep on a night like this!"

Luke 2:8 - 20