

Luke 2:8-20

Introduction:

**God's glory is on display in the pasture—2:8-14**

- 1) The setting—2:8-9
  - a) The presence of the shepherds—<sup>8</sup> *And there were shepherds in the same region*
  - b) The ongoing activity of the shepherds
    - i) *staying out in the fields* [pres. act. ptc. ἀγρᾱυλέω] (being outdoors)
    - ii) *and standing guard* [pres. act. ptc. φυλάσσω] *over their flocks by night.*
    - iii) Is this spring lambing season?
  - c) The arrival of God's unnamed angel
    - i) <sup>9</sup> *And behold, an angel of the Lord stood in front of them,* (cf. 1:11, 28)
    - ii) *and the glory of the Lord shone around them,* (this is new!)
      - (1) The splendor of God's majestic presence (His Shekinah glory) shines in the darkness of the night out in the pasture. We wait with anticipation the fulfillment of Habakkuk 2:14.
  - d) The understandable response of the shepherds—*and they were terribly frightened* ("feared a great fear").
    - i) Cf. 1:12, 29; 9:34
- 2) The revelation from God through an angel—2:10-12
  - a) A command—"Do not be afraid;" (cf. 1:13, 30; 5:10)
  - b) An explanation—for [γάρ] *behold, I bring you<sup>pl</sup> good news* [εὐαγγελίζω] *of great joy that will be to all the people* (Israel), (cf. 1:68, 72-74)
    - i) Why? <sup>11</sup> *because* [ὅτι] *there was born* (cf. 2:6-7) *for you<sup>pl</sup> today in the city of David a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord.*
    - ii) Here and John 4:42 are the only places in the Gospels Jesus is referred to as Savior
  - c) A sign—<sup>12</sup> *And this will be a sign for you<sup>pl</sup> (shepherds):* (cf. 1:36)
    - i) *you<sup>pl</sup> will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth,*
    - ii) *lying in a feeding trough."*
- 3) The armies of heaven glorify God—2:13-14 (unusual task & words for an army!)
  - a) Praising God—<sup>13</sup> *And suddenly* (unexpectedly) *there was with the angel a multitude of the armies of heaven praising God and saying,*
  - b) Glorifying God—<sup>14</sup> "*Glory* (appropriate honor) *to God in the highest* (heaven),
  - c) Pleasing God—*and on earth peace, goodwill* (God's pleasure) *among people.*

**God's glory is on display in the feeding trough—2:15-20**

- 1) The shepherds respond in obedient faith to God's revelation—2:15-16
  - a) <sup>15</sup> *And it happened when the angels had gone away from them into heaven* (they didn't simply disappear) *that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us travel now to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, that the Lord* (God the Father through these angels) *has made known to us."* (cf. Mary in 1:39)

- b) <sup>16</sup> *And they came hastily and located Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a feeding trough.* (exactly as promised by God the Father through the angels)
- 2) The shepherds accurately report God's revelation—2:17-19 <sup>17</sup> *Now when they had seen it* (things associated with the Messiah), *they reported accurately about the saying that had been told them concerning this Child.*
- This is the Biblical sequence of a vibrant faith: God's Word, faith, and then testimony. What they see and hear, and trust, they report.
- a) Corporate response—2:18 <sup>18</sup> *And all those who heard it were astonished* [θαυμάζω] *concerning those things that had been told them by the shepherds.* (cf. 1:21, 63; 2:33)
- i) This is not, however, the same as genuine faith. Admiration or simply being impressed with the message is not the same as genuine repentance and saving trust in God's revelation.
- b) Individual response: in contrast, Mary quietly meditates on God's revelation concerning her Son—2:19 <sup>19</sup> *But Mary was treasuring* [impf. act. ind. συντηρέω] *all these words,*  
(1) How? *pondering* [pres. act. ptc. συμβάλλω] *them in her heart.*
- 3) The shepherds respond to God's revelation by glorifying and praising Him—2:20 <sup>20</sup> *Then the shepherds returned,*
- a) What did they do? *glorifying* [pres. act. ptc. δοξάζω] *and praising* [pres. act. ptc. αινέω] *God* (cf. 2:13-14)
    - i) The shepherds had witnessed the start of God's work in Jesus and felt honored to share in the event.
  - b) Why? *for all the things they had heard* (God's promise) *and seen* (God's fulfillment of His promise), *just as had been told them* (by God through the angel).

**Take-home truth:** God does what He says He will do. Will we trust this God?