

## **The Wednesday Word, December 20, 2017: Songs for Jesus - Luke 2:10**

In keeping with the humble character of God, the first announcement of His arrival on earth came to simple shepherds. In those days, shepherds were usually considered a bad lot. They were despised by the decent people of the day. Because of their occupation, they were quite incapable of keeping the requirements of the ceremonial law. They couldn't keep up with the meticulous hand-washings, rules and regulations; consequently, they were looked down upon.

Of course, it wasn't always like that. In the early pages of the Bible, shepherding was, in fact, considered a noble profession but by the first century, it had lost its sheen. Shepherds made up the lowest class of people, coming in just ahead of the lepers. Yet it was to this rank of people that the Good News first came. However, in spite of being a generally obnoxious lot, shepherds were a necessary part of society. Each morning and evening in the Temple, unblemished lambs were offered as a sacrifice to God.

According to William Barclay, 'To see that the supply of perfect offerings was always available the Temple authorities had their own private sheep flocks; and we know that these flocks were pastured near Bethlehem. It is most likely that these shepherds were in charge of the flocks from which the Temple offerings were chosen.' (Barclay: Daily Study Bible)

Isn't it lovely that the shepherds who looked after the Temple lambs were the first to see the Lamb of God!

Here's another interesting fact. In Jewish culture, when a boy was born, the local musicians congregated at the house to greet him with simple music. But no neighbours showed up to play their songs for the Saviour when He was born. Mary and Joseph were 80 miles from home. They knew no one and no one knew them. But what does that matter? Heaven dispatched its finest musicians who formed the most splendid choir ever heard and they sang songs for Jesus!

And no wonder they sang,

The infinite had become finite.  
The immortal had become mortal.  
The Creator had become the created.  
The omnipotent had lived inside a young girl's womb.  
The Almighty had become a helpless baby.  
The Deity had been wrapped in rags.  
The King of the Universe had been born in a stable.

Sing dear angels, sing with all your hearts!

Those angels were the Hosts of Heaven (Luke 2:13). By the way, the word translated as 'hosts' is the word for 'armies.' Literally, the armies of Heaven appeared and began singing. This army, however, unlike other armies, announced peace and not war. Would that we had more armies like that in our day and age.

The angel's message was Good News, not bad news. It was a message that brought tidings of great joy. 'Fear not' the angel had declared. And no wonder, for the Gospel is neither a threat nor a law, but news of an accomplished salvation, finished by the doing, dying and rising again of the Lord Christ.

Those angels sang songs for Jesus. May we, also do so from the depth of our hearts not only this season but also for the rest of our lives.

'Joy to those who long to see thee,  
Dayspring from on high, appear;  
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse,  
Of thy birth we long to hear!  
O'er the hills the angels singing  
News, glad tidings of a birth:  
"Go to him, your praises bringing;  
Christ the Lord has come to earth."  
'Come to earth to taste our sadness,  
He whose glories knew no end;  
By His life He brings us gladness,  
Our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend,  
Leaving riches without number,  
Born within a cattle stall;  
This the everlasting wonder,  
Christ was born the Lord of all.'

And that's the Gospel Truth!