

## The Four Gospels of the Bible, Visit of Shepherds

### Luke 2:8-20

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen which were just as they had been told. (NIV)

*There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "**Don't be afraid.** I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger." At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises:*

*Glory to God in the heavenly heights,  
Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.*

*As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. (**The Message**)*

### Analogy to a Shepherd

The analogy to a shepherd is used to describe Christ: the flock being the *body of believers*, of course; and Christ being the shepherd or protector and guide... Given the role and experience of a shepherd, fear would require something quite extraordinary – like the appearance of angels, for example. Calming the shepherds was an understood necessity; after all, who wouldn't be afraid as such a miracle?

### Shepherd and Savior

The pronouncement was not of a political leader or strictly a healer – but of the Savior of sins...the Messiah, as prophesied, and Master as the manifestation of God. Again, a shepherd leads and protects, but the Savior came to set men free...from death, the penalty of sin.

### Savior and Sword

Though Christ is the *prince of peace*, he is also the bearer of truth; and in a world where the truth is often spurned or subordinated, the reception of Christ brought did not render peace. Many rejected Christ (as Savior) and, still, many continue to reject Christ; but others have received Christ as Lord and, as witnessed, have experienced peace in the most difficult of times. The *sword of truth* was brought to bear; and, with truth, comes peace to those who know the truth...and are free.

H. Kirk Rainer