

## THE LIGHT THAT PIERCED ETERNAL DARKNESS

Luke 2:8-20

### Introduction:

1. No one knows what the night might bring forth.
2. Biblical, life-changing events transpire often at night.
3. Some examples are as follows:
  - A. The death angel passed thru Egypt at night as the 10<sup>th</sup> plague.
  - B. In the night, Jacob dreamed of the ladder that reached from earth to Heaven.
  - C. Daniel was thrown in the lion's den at night.
  - D. Nicodemus came to Jesus in the night.
  - E. Perhaps the 2 most triumphant nights in Biblical history was the birth night of Jesus and Jesus sweating great drops of blood during the night as He anticipated the cross.
    - 1) When the God of the universe became flesh and dwelled among us.
    - 2) All the other great nights symbolize that there was a God in Heaven Who cared about men, but on Christmas night the God in Heaven came to man (in the fullness of time—Gal. 4:4).
    - 3) Song: "He Came to Me"—when I couldn't go to Him, He came to me.
    - 4) His coming to us was **revealed in the cradle**, but it was **resolved on the cross**.
4. "The fullness of time" was marked by 3 significant happenings.
  - A. The light coming in darkness followed OT prophetic Scriptures.
    - 1) Genesis 22:8 – ***"and Abraham said, my son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering."***
    - 2) Isaiah 7:14 – ***"Therefore, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."***
    - 3) Isa 9:6-7 – ***"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the***

***Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for-ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."***

- 4) Micah 5:2 – ***"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."***
- B. The light coming in darkness followed the preparation of society.
  - 1) The Jews were looking for the Messiah.
  - 2) The Greeks had conquered and modernized the known world.
  - 3) The Romans had improved transportation on land and sea, not realizing the importance of this for missionaries sharing the Gospel with the whole world.
- C. The light coming in darkness followed 400 years of silence.
  - 1) The close of the OT canon and to coming of the Messiah covered 400 years of intertestamental time.
  - 2) The time known as the Silent Years between the Old and New Testaments caused men and women to long and hunger for the God of Heaven.
- I. (vv. 8-14) **THE ANGELS RESOUNDED GOD'S PRAISE.**
  - A. Christ was the featured light to the Jews.
    1. Some Jews believed on Him, but most rejected.
    2. The greatest witness to the Jews was Paul who had to be struck down before he believed.
    3. Jn 1:11 – ***He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.***
    4. Zech. 12:10 – ***And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as on that is in bitterness for his first born.***

B. Christ was the first light to the Gentiles.

1. Isa. 49:6 – ***And he said, it is a light thing that you should be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give you for a light to the nations, that you may be my salvation unto the end of the earth.***
2. The first prophet anointed to go to the Gentiles was Paul.
3. Jesus was ready to be manifested in the flesh, God no doubt called the angels together and said: Get your traveling garb on for you are headed for Bethlehem to sing praises of Him who is born the King of the Jews, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

II. (vv. 15-20) **THE SHEPHERDS RECEIVED GOD’S PROMISE.**

A. The Role of the Shepherds.

1. The shepherds were lowly men, and their testimony wouldn’t even hold up in court.
2. The shepherds had child-like faith & didn’t argue the biological impossibility of the virgin birth, for salvation is only for admitting sinners and those who believe the truth about Jesus.

B. (vv. 15-16) The Risk of the Shepherds.

1. They left their jobs in jeopardy-it was not an excused absence.
2. They left their flocks-sheep produce their food, the wool, and the young lambs, and they stood a chance of losing their livelihoods, but an encounter with a Holy God compelled them to take a risk and walk in faith.

C. (vv. 16-17) The Reward of the Shepherds.

1. They had a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus.
2. They realized that the God of Heaven had reached down to include them in the message of the Good News of Christ’s birth.
3. (v. 20) Their hearts were filled with praise and celebration over the light that pierced their darkness.

**Conclusion:** The angels sang, “On earth, peace, good will toward men” on that dark night. Will you join in celebrating the Prince of Peace?