



THE NIGHT SHEPHERD

“Yes! Yes! I was there. I thought you knew that.” The old scraggy man who smelled of sheep and the hillside was sitting by a well. He talked to a group who had heard he had been there that night.

“I thought I had told everyone about that. You didn’t know I was there? Then you need to hear an old man tell it again. You need to hear this story from one who was there. Well, let me see. Where shall I begin...” It’s going on about fifty years ago now, yes, about fifty years. I was only seventeen then – oh, I may have been eighteen ... no, I was seventeen. Ah, you should have been there. Cold it was. All of us had to find wrappings it was so cold.

We had never believed that holy man. He, too, was young. He was studying at the temple. (chuckling) He would get in trouble just for being around us. We were night shepherds, don’t you see. We were a strange and scruffy lot. We were not the nicest of men. We would sleep from dawn to mid-afternoon and then we would try to see what mischief we could stir up.

He was an earnest young man, this priest. He was full of desire for God. And believe? This young man believed the Holy Scriptures – with all his heart he believed!

“Something is going to happen,” he would say. “Something, sometime, God is going to do something right here in Judea!” We would laugh at him and mock him. Still, he would recite to us what he had memorized out of the Holy Book.

Many things he said I do not remember. I remember some things only because of what happened that night. The young man had stopped coming long before that night. We never took him seriously.

Then, when what he said did come to pass we wished we could see him again. Let me see, what was that he would recite? ***“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel...”***

He pointed at our mocking eyes asking if we knew what these words meant. We did not know, but we were sure he knew. And he did! He really did!

Scared! Yes, we were scared! You would have been scared too! Most of us were sitting under a tree. One was down the slope always watching to see if the master’s son was spying on us to see if we were sleeping.

The sheep were still that night and a simple laugh would come from us as we talked. I guess for a little while there was a lull in our talk.

Then, suddenly, the night was as bright as day! We fell on our faces as it seemed a thousand suns were shining in our eyes. The light was so bright you could feel it!



Merry Christmas from our Staff

THE NIGHT SHEPHERD cont.



When I peeked up, there he stood. An angel stood right there before us all. I must be dreaming, I thought. I looked again and he was still there. Terror, that's what we felt. We were alive, but we were afraid for our lives!

But then the angel, ah, the angel, he looked at us with kindness. Our eyes were squinting, but he saw our fear. He spoke such simple words. I shall never forget those words.

“Fear not: for behold, I bring to you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.”

Then the sky was ablaze with angels! There were masses of angels and they all spoke at once. ***“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.”***

How did we feel? How did we

feel?! I'll tell you how we felt. We felt special! We felt honored. Why would God send the angels to us? I mean, to night shepherds?

I remember that night like it was yesterday. I'll never forget it. Until

I die I will remember. It has been seared into my soul. I was made different by it. I am **still** different because of it. It was a wonderful night! A special night! A holy night!

To Bethlehem we went. The young priest had often quoted to us from Micah's writings. From this town would come an everlasting person. So, we ran to Bethlehem. We left our sheep because of the angel's message.

Even at dawn we were still not finished waking up everyone we knew. We told all we could find of the angels and their news. But, we told them mostly about the baby. We found him just as the angel had said. In the very place where the sacrificial lambs were born and kept, there he was.

If we had not all told the same story people would have known we were mad. Many thought so anyway. No one, though, who was there that night, has ever needed to exaggerate the story. It remains the same no matter who tells it, because it is true. It's TRUE!

The angel said that the baby we saw was the Savior. He was the long awaited king of Israel, and we knew it was true. God had chosen to tell us of His coming and we believed without any doubts.

I followed the news of the little baby. He grew to be a man. Someone told me about the coming of the wise men and I believed them. They followed the star and they saw the child. And then later I heard the stories coming out of Jerusalem. I believed them too! The baby, now a man, did miraculous things. He did the things of God. He performed the works of Messiah. I knew they were true because I had been told who He was.

For a while there was no news. I did my duties as a shepherd. But, then the word came to us. They had killed the baby! **KILLED THE BABY!**

Was it not bad enough that there was no room for the child in the inns of Bethlehem? Was it not inexcusable enough that people mocked Him, even in the face of all His works? Did they have to be so hideous as to crucify the Lord of Glory!? They killed the Savior!

But, when I heard He arose from the dead, I believed that too. Oh, I laughed out loud for joy. How **could** He stay dead? The Eternal One cannot stay dead.

I believed the story. I knew who He was. He was the Savior, the Christ, the Great Shepherd! And I will see Him again. Why, you ask? Because the Great Shepherd is my Shepherd.

(Adapted from a monologue, the author of which is unknown.)

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Letters that warm our hearts!



“On your broadcast you asked if anyone had been saved by reading a tract. That isn’t my testimony but I did receive a tract that turned my life around! There was a church that gave out home cooked meals along with a tract. ... I knew that I was saved but the Holy Spirit said ‘who is on the throne?’ I realized then that I needed to ‘abdicate’ and let Jesus reign in my life. So I told the Lord that since I had lived 30 years on my own, I would let Him live it for the next 30 years and then we would compare who did better. I knew within 6 months of that decision that I would never go back....” Missouri

“Today, I have received your two boxes of tracts. God has a plan and I obey Him. On behalf of CBC, India, I thank you very much for your kindness in sending the scripture materials for free cost.” India

“Thank you so much for the box of 5000 tracts you send every quarter. We use these tracts door to door, on the street, in businesses, church planting and in many other ways in which people can give out tracts. We have four churches we have started and we share the tracts with them. Thank you once again and may God bless your fruitful work and investment with us.” Guyana

“The other day while shopping, a very nice man had a little talk with me about religion and gave me a Bible tract. This has made me think more seriously about my relationship with God and our Lord Jesus. So immediately while coming back home, I went on my knees and prayed the “sinner’s prayer” and asked the Lord to answer my prayer and help me to worship Him correctly and devoutly. I know that man was a Godsend for me.” Illinois

EVANGELISTIC BIBLE STUDY

Jesus – The Divine Messiah

Christmas time can open unique evangelism times by simply letting the Bible speak for itself. Parents and grandparents can use this with their children. Workers can do this at lunch with their co-workers.

TRUTH: Jesus is the promised OT Messiah and He is God.

PLAN: Let everyone who can read participate. Do not tell them answers. Let the readers discover truth by answering questions.

1. What would Messiah be called? (Is. 7:14) _____
2. At His birth, what names would Messiah be given? (Is. 9:6) _____
3. Where would Messiah be born? (Micah 5:2) _____
What is Messiah’s actual starting point? _____
4. What name would this child be given? (Mt. 1:23) _____
What does this name mean? _____
5. What do we know about the origin of Jesus? (Jn. 1:1) _____
6. Whose glory would Jesus have? (Jn. 1:14) _____

COMPARE: After comparing the promises in questions 1-3 with the statements of questions 4-6, what must we conclude about Jesus? _____

7. What did Jesus promise to give to those who believe on Him? (Jn. 6:27,33,40,54) _____



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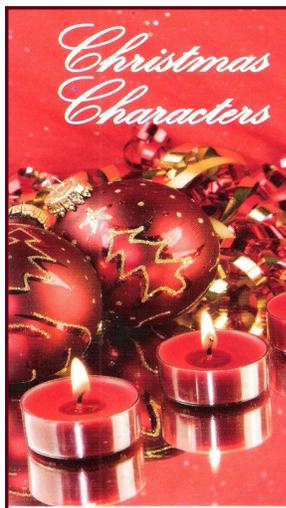
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OUR NEW CHRISTMAS TRACT

This tract was created from a Bulletin article and made into a tract. It highlights some of the main people in the story of our Savior's birth. From man's perspective they should not have been used by God, but God loves using unfit lives to bring Him glory.

An excerpt from the tract—

“Joy to the world, the Lord has come!’ He still uses unfit people to repeat His story today. Open God’s gift of usefulness by trusting Him to save you and be a part of the gospel story this Christmas”