

Bible Hero's

The Shepherd

Teachers notes



Essential Teachers notes:

The of Christmas is often done in many parts, the birth of John the Baptist, the annunciation, the journey to Bethlehem, the shepherds account, and later the wise men and Anna and Simeon. All these parts are hugely important but this story captures the most pivotal moment. Luke's account of the night centres not on the mother and child as much as on the birth announcement, heaven sent, and those first visitors, the not so great Jewish men, unclean and un-respected.

Main Passage : Luke 2

Today's story is about a man who is a shepherd, we don't even know his name, but we know where he lived. He lived in a little town in the holy lands. This story takes place at night, it was dark and the lights of the town, perhaps even the lights of his house, could be seen from the fields where the shepherd and his friends gathered round a small fire. Bethlehem was busy, lots of visitors had arrived, and they had seen many people travelling in and out of the town along the roads. It wasn't too cold tonight so they had decided they would camp out as a group, their sheep sleeping like a blanket of wool around them.

They were talking about all the visitors, some of the shepherds had family come to stay with them, others had seen their friends leave the town. There was to be a great count of people, everybody had to return to the town they had been born in. They wondered if anybody important had come to stay, and what they would do with the sheep when the big count of people finally happened.

The shepherd looked around at his friends, it was good to have company to talk to, shepherds can get very lonely. but as he looked round he saw something he didn't recognise. A man was standing where before there had been only darkness. He wore the brightest white robes, light seemed to be pouring off him, making the whole group seem brighter. The shepherd was scared, he was terrified. The man was was an angel and the glory of God seemed to surround him, then he spoke:

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

"The town of David", thought the shepherd. That was his town. the messiah, born in his town. he didn't have time to think any more, because suddenly there wasn't one angel but thousands, they seemed to fill the sky. and they weren't just filling the sky, they were singing. The most beautiful song the shepherd ever heard filled the air, glorifying God, and talking of peace on the earth. The shepherds just stood there, listening to heaven declare that the Lord had been born.

When the song finished the shepherd was the first to speak "lets go find him, the baby, lets go see the Messiah". everyone nodded, grabbed their staffs and started to run towards the town. As they got towards the houses they slowed down, and walking as a group started to search building by building to find the new baby. Finally they found a house with the lights shining through the windows, inside a young girl watched over a tiny child, wrapped in strips of cloth and laying in a manger.

They had found the messiah but what should they say, how could they describe the sky filled with angels or the beauty of the song they sung. slowly the shepherds looked at one another until somebody started to hum. Roughly, and hesitantly they started to piece together part of the tune the angels had sung, they voices overlapping. A lullaby for the sleeping child.

The Shepherd is today's hero because he shows us the gift of Witness