

LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR HAS
COME, WEEK 9

TITLE: GOOD NEWS!

TEXT: LUKE 2:8-14

INTRODUCTION: (1) IF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF **JESUS CHRIST'S BIRTH HAD BEEN HANDLED BY A** PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN OF OUR DAY, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HANDLED VERY DIFFERENTLY.

* FOR EXAMPLE, THE ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD HAVE A TARGET AUDIENCE - THE POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL IN ISRAEL, THE MOVERS AND SHAKERS, THE BIG BOYS, THE UP AND COMERS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT.

** TRANSLATION: **I'M SPEAKING OF THE** SCRIBES, THE PHARISEES, THE SADDUCEES, THE HIGH PRIESTS AND THE MEMBERS OF THE SANHEDRIN.

*** HOWEVER, GOD ALMIGHTY HAD A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PLAN.

**** THE LORD GOD CHOSE TO REVEAL THE **GLORIOUS TRUTH OF HIS SON'S BIRTH AFTER IT** HAPPENED, FIRST OF ALL TO MEMBERS OF A LOWLY, DESPISED GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT WERE NEAR THE BOTTOM RUNG OF THE JEWISH SOCIAL LADDER.

(2) IN FACT, ONLY ONE GROUP OF PEOPLE IN ISRAEL IN THAT DAY WERE LOWER, THE LEPERS.

* NOW WHAT GROUP AM I SPEAKING ABOUT? WELL, THE ANSWER IS SHEPHERDS.

** FOR YOU SEE ON THE WHOLE SHEPHERDS WERE UNEDUCATED, UNSKILLED, INCREASINGLY VIEWED IN THE POST N.T. ERA AS UNRELIABLE, DISHONEST AND UNSAVORY CHARACTERS, SO MUCH SO, THEY WERE NOT ALLOWED TO TESTIFY IN COURT, AS UNRELIABLE WITNESSES.

*** IN ADDITION TO THAT, BECAUSE SHEEP REQUIRED CONTINUAL CARE AND PROTECTION SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, SHEPHERDS WERE UNABLE TO FULLY COMPLY WITH THE MAN MADE BURDENSOME REGULATIONS DEVELOPED BY THE PHARISEES.

**** THEREFORE SHEPHERDS WERE VIEWED AS BEING IN CONTINUAL VIOLATION OF THESE MAN MADE RELIGIOUS LAWS AND HENCE WERE CEREMONIALLY UNCLEAN.

(3) BEYOND THAT THEY WERE DIRTY, SMELLY, UNKEPT PEOPLE IN THE VIEW OF HIGHER UPS.
YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO BE AROUND THEM.

* TO SAY THE LEAST, SHEPHERDS WERE HUMBLE, LOWLY PEOPLE. AND OBVIOUSLY THERE WERE VERY GOOD SHEPHERDS IN THAT DAY AND CERTAINLY THE EXAMPLE OF SHEPHERDS CARING FOR THEIR SHEEP IS ILLUSTRATED IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT, IN THE NEW TESTAMENT EVEN BY OUR LORD IN JOHN 10:11, (QUOTE IT).

** HOWEVER, IN SPITE OF THAT, SHEPHERDS WERE NOT VIEWED IN A HIGH WAY, AND CERTAINLY WERE NOT CULTURALLY THE ONES WHO WOULD BE EXPECTED TO RECEIVE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ANNOUNCEMENT IN HISTORY.

*** AND THAT THE SHEPHERDS IN OUR TEXT TODAY WERE SINGLED OUT TO RECEIVE THIS GREATEST OF ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS FIRST **AFTER OUR SAVIOR'S BIRTH, SUGGESTS** THAT THESE SHEPHERDS WERE DEVOUT HONORABLE MEN WHO BELIEVED IN THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD, LOOKING FOR PROPHECY TO BE FULFILLED THAT THEIR MESSIAH WOULD COME.

(4) AND IT WAS TO THESE SHEPHERDS, THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY WAS GIVEN FIRST ON THE DAY OF OUR **SAVIOR'S BIRTH.**

* AND BELOVED, GOOD NEWS, THE GREATEST NEWS OF ALL TIME WAS GIVEN UNTO THEM FIRST OVER EVERYONE ELSE.

** FOR THE ANGEL WOULD SAY TO THEM IN V. 11 OF OUR TEXT (QUOTE IT). LUKE 2:11

***** THE GOOD NEWS OF THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH,** THE GREAT NEWS THAT SALVATION - JESUS WAS BORN, THAT CHRIST THE LORD WAS BORN WAS GIVEN TO THEM, MEN THAT OBVIOUSLY KNEW THEY WERE SINNERS IN NEED OF A SAVIOR. WHAT GLORIOUS NEWS!

**** AND TODAY **WE'LL LOOK AT** THE MESSAGE GIVEN TO THE SHEPHERDS BY AN ANGEL OF THE LORD AND THEN THE RESPONSE BY A **MULTITUDE OF ANGELS ABOUT THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH.**

****** AND BECAUSE OF THAT I'VE TITLED THE MESSAGE TODAY, "GOOD NEWS!"**

(5) AND UNDER THAT TITLE, **WE'LL LOOK AT 4** POINTS AS WE STUDY LUKE 2:8-14. NO. 1 THE SHEPHERDS TO WHOM THE GOOD NEWS WAS ANNOUNCED, VV. 8-10; NO. 2 THE SAVIOR THAT THE GOOD NEWS IS ABOUT, V. 11; NO. 3 THE SIGN THAT WOULD IDENTIFY THE SAVIOR, V. 12; AND NO. 4 THE SAYING BY THE ANGELS, WHAT THEY COMMUNICATED IN RESPONSE TO THE GOOD NEWS, VV. 13&14.

*** SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE SHEPHERDS, THE SAVIOR, THE SIGN AND THE SAYING AS WE LOOK AT THE GOOD NEWS COMMUNICATED IN LUKE 2:8-14.**

**** AND WITH THOSE POINTS TO DIRECT US TO TRUE JOY, LOOK AT LUKE 2:8 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT TODAY, THE SHEPHERDS.**

I. THE SHEPHERDS, (READ V. 8)

A. NOW NEAR BETHLEHEM, IN THE SAME REGION OR NEARBY BETHLEHEM IN PROXIMITY WHERE CHRIST WAS BORN, WERE SHEPHERDS LIVING OUT IN THE FIELDS.

* AND THE PLACE OR REGION SPECIFICALLY **THEY WERE AT ON THE DAY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH** WAS PROBABLY OUTSIDE OF JERUSALEM.

** FOR BETHLEHEM WAS NEARBY JERUSALEM, AND MANY OF THE SHEEP USED IN THE TEMPLE SACRIFICES CAME FROM THERE.

*** THE SURROUNDING HILLS OF JERUSALEM WERE PRIME GRAZING LAND AND SHEPHERDS WORKED IN THE AREA.

**** NOW SHEPHERDS AS I SAID EARLIER, WERE AMONG THE LOWEST AND MOST DESPISED SOCIAL GROUPS IN ISRAEL. THE VERY NATURE OF THEIR WORK KEPT THEM FROM ENTERING INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF **ISRAEL'S SOCIETY**.

2. THEY COULDN'T MAINTAIN THE CEREMONIAL WASHINGS AND OBSERVE ALL THE RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS AND FEASTS IN JUDAISM.

* SO ACCORDING TO THE MISHNAH, A COLLECTION OF JEWISH TRADITIONS COMPILED ABOUT A.D. 200, SHEPHERDS WERE UNDER A BAN. THEY WERE REGARDED AS THIEVES.

** YET THESE SHEPHERDS, CLOSE AS THEY WERE TO JERUSALEM, WERE UNDOUBTEDLY CARING FOR SHEEP THAT SOMEDAY WOULD BE USED AS SACRIFICES IN THE TEMPLE.

**** AND HOW FITTING IT IS THAT THEY WERE THE FIRST TO KNOW OF THE LAMB OF GOD, THE ULTIMATE AND FINAL SACRIFICE, THE ONE WHO WOULD BE THE GOOD SHEPHERD, THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND THE CHIEF SHEPHERD.

3. AND THAT THE MESSAGE CAME TO SHEPHERDS FIRST ON THE VERY DAY OF **CHRIST'S BIRTH, AND NOT THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS** RELIGIONISTS OF JERUSALEM REMINDS US THAT OUR GOD COMES TO THE NEEDY, THE POOR IN SPIRIT, NOT THE PROUD.

* GOD COMES ONLY TO THOSE WHO SENSE THEIR NEED, HE DOES NOT COME TO THE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS. SO THE SHEPHERDS ARE THE FIRST TO HEAR OF THE PROCLAMATION **OF THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH ON THE** DAY OF HIS BIRTH.

** NOW THE ONE WHO MADE THIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO THEM IS GIVEN IN V. 9. LOOK AT V. 9 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 9. NOW AN ANGEL OF THE LORD SUDDENLY STOOD BEFORE THEM, ALL OF THIS HAPPENED WITH DRAMATIC SWIFTNES. ONE MOMENT, ALL WAS QUIET.

* THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN IT HAPPENED - SUDDENLY, AN ANGEL OF THE LORD, HOLY, STRONG, BRILLIANT, STOOD BY THEM. THEY HAD NOT SEEN HIM COME.

** AND AT THE SAME TIME THE GLORY OF THE LORD WHICH IS EQUIVALENT TO BRILLIANT LIGHT, HEAVENLY BRIGHTNESS, RIGHTLY **REGARDED AS THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S** PRESENCE AND POWER LIGHT UP THE PLACE.

*** **FOR THE VISUAL EXPRESSION OF GOD'S** GLORY IN THE O.T. WAS THE SHEKINAH, WHICH IN THE TIME OF MOSES LED ISRAEL TO THE PROMISED LAND, APPEARING AS A PILLAR OF FIRE BY NIGHT.

1. SO THE GLORY OF THE LORD SHINES AROUND THESE SHEPHERDS WHO ARE DOING THE NIGHT WATCH OF THEIR SHEEP, ALONG WITH THE APPEARANCE OF AN ANGEL OF THE LORD, WHO IS UNNAMED, SOME SUGGEST THIS WAS GABRIEL.

* BUT THE ANGEL IS NOT IDENTIFIED. BUT AS ALL OF THIS HAPPENS BY NIGHT, THE RESPONSE OF **THE SHEPHERDS WAS THEY "WERE TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED." AND WOULDN'T YOU? I WOULD BE.** HAVE YOU EVER BEEN STARTLED BY **SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T EXPECT?** (ILLUST. HEARING THE VOICE JOGGING BY THE JAIL AND THAT WAS IN THE MORNING NOT THE NIGHT, I HEARD A LOUD VOICE).

** AND BELOVED THESE SHEPHERDS WERE STARTLED BY THIS UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE, AND **THIS GREEK WORD, TRANSLATED "TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED" OR GREATLY AFRAID, OR TERRIFIED, OR SORE AFRAID** DEPENDING ON THE TRANSLATION YOU HAVE IS THE GREEK WORD FOB-EH-O FROM WHICH WE GET OUR ENGLISH WORD PHOBIA.

*** AND IT CAN MEAN TERRIFIED, TO BE STRUCK WITH FEAR, TO BE STARTLED BY STRANGE SIGHTS OR OCCURRENCES, TO BE STRUCK EVEN WITH AMAZEMENT.

**** AND PROBABLY IT MEANS ALL THESE THINGS IN THIS CONTEXT, AND I THINK WE ALL CAN UNDERSTAND THAT RESPONSE. BUT NOTICE THE RESPONSE BY THE ANGEL OF THE LORD TO THESE SHEPHERDS IN V. 10. LOOK AT V. 10 PLEASE.

C. READ V. 10. NOW THE FIRST THING THE ANGEL SAYS TO THE SHEPHERDS IS **"DO NOT BE AFRAID OR FEAR NOT"**.

*** AND IT'S ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE HOW MANY** TIMES, MESSENGERS OF THE LORD OR THE MESSAGE OF THE LORD, IN THE BIBLE SAYS FEAR NOT.

** IN FACT, IN THE K.J.V. THE PHRASE "FEAR NOT" IS USED 63 TIMES, WHICH COMMUNICATES THAT THE LORD DOES NOT WANT HIS PEOPLE TO BE PARALYZED BY FEARS AND PHOBIAS. QUOTE II TIMOTHY 1:7, MATTHEW 10:28 AND ISAIAH 41:10&13.

*** WELL, THE FIRST WORDS OUT OF THE MOUTH
**OF THIS ANGEL TO THE SHEPHERDS IS “FEAR
NOT, DO NOT BE AFRAID”.**

**** HE SAYS, **GUYS, DON'T FEAR, I'VE GOT GOOD
NEWS!** AND THE WORDS GOOD NEWS OR GOOD
TIDINGS HERE IS THE GREEK WORD
YOU-ANG-GHEL-ID-ZO THAT OUR ENGLISH WORD
GOSPEL IS FROM, THE GLAD TIDINGS OF
SALVATION THROUGH CHRIST, THE GOOD NEWS
OF THE GOSPEL.

1. AND WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS THE GOOD
NEWS OF THE EVANGEL, SALVATION THROUGH
CHRIST TO EVANGELIZE WITH.

* SO THE ANGEL BROUGHT GOOD NEWS, AND **NOTICE THE NEXT PHRASE "OF GREAT JOY"**. AND WHAT GREATER JOY COULD THERE BE THAN THE REALIZATION AND WHOLEHEARTED ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT GOD HIMSELF, THROUGH THE SACRIFICE OF HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, HAD BROUGHT ABOUT THE SOLUTION OF **THE WORLD'S GREATEST PROBLEM, THAT OF SIN. JOY AND SALVATION ARE LINKED, CONNECTED, TIED TOGETHER. THE SHEPHERD'S GREAT FEAR WILL BE OVERCOME BY GREAT JOY. JOY TO THE WORLD!!**

**** AND CHRIST'S INCARNATION WAS THE FIRST** STEP IN THIS SOLUTION THAT WOULD ULTIMATELY LEAD TO CALVARY AND THE CROSS AS CHRIST WOULD BECOME THE SUBSTITUTE, THE SACRIFICE FOR THE SINS OF HIS PEOPLE.

*** FOR HE WAS BORN TO WHAT? HE WAS BORN TO DIE! BUT ALSO NOTICE HE WOULD BECOME THE SAVIOR OF ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE, FOR ALL THE PEOPLE, THE LAST PART OF V. 10.

**** AND WILLIAM HENRICKSON IN HIS COMMENTARY ON LUKE SAYS AT THIS POINT IN **REFERENCE, "FOR ALL THE PEOPLE:** THAT IS ALL REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY, AGE, WEALTH, FAME, SOCIAL POSITION, SEX, EDUCATION, ETC., LITERALLY ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE - NOT JUST **JEWS, GOD'S ELECT, NOT UNIVERSAL SALVATION.**

2. EVEN THE SHEPHERDS ARE INCLUDED; ALL **GOD'S PEOPLE ARE INCLUDED,** HIS ELECT. THE TERM ALL THE PEOPLE HERE IN V. 10 IS AS WIDE AS IS THE EXPRESSION MEN OF HIS GOOD PLEASURE IN V. 14 OR WITH WHOM HE IS PLEASED" - NOT EVERYONE CONTEXTUALLY, BUT THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE SAVIOR.

* **HENRICKSON WENT ON TO SAY, "THE WELL-MEANT PROMISE OF SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH MUST BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, BUT THOSE WHO REJECT IT CANNOT EXPERIENCE THE "GREAT JOY" HERE MENTIONED."** AGAIN THE JOY IS CONDITIONAL, FOR THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE SAVIOR.

** THAT MARVELOUS BLESSING IS ONLY FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE. IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE SHEPHERDS WERE BELIEVERS, THE **MESSAGE CONTINUES"**. (END QUOTE)

*** AND THESE SHEPHERDS, IT APPEARS, MUST **HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR THE MESSIAH'S** COMING AND WOULD BELIEVE THE MESSAGE, FOR THEY WOULD GO SEE THE CHRIST, BELIEVE ON HIM AND THEN TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT HIM IN VV. 15-**20, WHAT WE'LL LOOK AT LORD** WILLING NEXT SUNDAY.

**** SO THE ANGEL BROUGHT GOOD NEWS TO THE SHEPHERDS WHICH WOULD BRING GREAT JOY FOR ALL THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE, AND THE GOOD NEWS WAS THE SAVIOR WAS BORN **THAT DAY, WHICH LEADS US TO OUR 2'D POINT** TODAY, THE SAVIOR. LOOK AT V. 11 PLEASE.

II. THE SAVIOR, (READ V. 11)

A. NOW CHRIST'S BIRTH WAS ON THE VERY DAY THAT THE ANGEL ANNOUNCED HIS BIRTH TO THE SHEPHERDS, ONLY IT WAS THE EVENING OF THAT DAY AS THE SHEPHERDS WERE WATCHING OVER THEIR FLOCK BY NIGHT.

* **SO THE ANGEL SAID, "FOR TODAY" -** THE WAITING IS OVER, THE BIRTH HAS OCCURRED, **TODAY CONNECTS TO THE YESTERDAY OF GOD'S** PROMISES AND O.T. PROPHECIES, WHICH ARE NOW BEING FULFILLED, FOR TODAY, IN THE CITY OF DAVID, AND THE CITY OF DAVID IN THIS CONTEXT IS BETHLEHEM, THE TOWN WHERE KING DAVID WAS BORN, AND THE TOWN THAT MICAH PROPHECIED THAT THE SAVIOR WOULD BE BORN, WHICH CAME TO PASS IN LUKE 2:1-7, WHICH WE LOOKED AT LAST WEEK. (QUOTE MICAH 5:2).

** NOW BETHLEHEM, WHICH LIT. MEANS HOUSE OF BREAD, LOCATED ABOUT SIX MILES SOUTH OF JERUSALEM, WAS THE PLACE THAT THE BREAD OF LIFE, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN, QUOTE JOHN 6:35.

*** NOW AGAIN THE CITY OF DAVID WAS THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM IN THIS CONTEXT. BUT LET ME SAY THERE ARE SOME REFERENCES IN THE O.T. THAT REFER TO THE CITY OF DAVID AS JERUSALEM.

**** FOR A PORTION OF THE S.W. HILL OF JERUSALEM, INCLUDING MOUNT ZION, WHERE THE FORTRESS OF THE JEBUSITES STOOD WAS REDUCED BY DAVID, WHO BUILT A NEW PALACE AND CITY, NAMED AFTER HIM IN I CHRON. 11:5 - SO THE CITY OF DAVID IS ALSO JERUSALEM IN THE O.T.

1. BUT IN THE CONTEXT OF LUKE 2, THE CITY OF DAVID IS BETHLEHEM. AND IN BETHLEHEM, BORN FOR HIS PEOPLE INCLUDING THE SHEPHERDS, FOR OBVIOUSLY THE SHEPHERDS WERE OR **BECAME BELIEVERS, "BORN FOR YOU"** IN VERSE 11.

* AND WHO WOULD BE BORN THAT DAY? A **"SAVIOR WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD"**.

** AND THE WORD SAVIOR LIT. MEANS DELIVERER, PRESERVER, SOMEONE WHO RESCUES PEOPLE FROM DEATH AND DESTRUCTION AND IS LIT. WHAT THE WORD JESUS MEANS.

*** FOR THE NAME JESUS, FROM THE HEBREW JOSHUA OR JEHOASHUA, MEANS JEHOVAH WILL SAVE.

**** AND THE NAME ITSELF WAS A TESTIMONY **TO GOD'S SALVATION, SO THE ANGEL TOLD JOSEPH IN MATT. 1:21 THAT MARY'S SON** WOULD BE THE VERY EMBODIMENT OF **JEHOVAH'S SALVATION. HE HIMSELF WOULD** SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS, QUOTE MATT. 1:21.

2. AND IT'S INTERESTING THAT AFTER JESUS' RESURRECTION, PETER, SPEAKING BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN, ALSO EMPHASIZED THE **IMPORTANCE OF JESUS' NAME, SAYING IN ACTS** 4:12 (QUOTE IT).

* SO JESUS IS THE SAVIOR. AND MANKIND DESPERATELY NEEDS A SAVIOR TO SAVE HIM FROM HIS SINS. AND JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO THAT, HE IS THE ONLY WAY, NOT ONE OF MANY WAYS. AND THAT SMACKS HEAD ON TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLURALISM, THAT THERE ARE MANY WAYS, PLURAL WAYS INTO HEAVEN. BUT THE BIBLE IS CLEAR, ONE WAY!

** AND THEN NOTICE AS WE GO BACK TO LUKE 2:11 THAT THE SAVIOR IS IDENTIFIED AS CHRIST THE LORD.

*** AND THE WORD CHRIST LIT. MEANS ANOINTED MEANING THAT CHRIST WAS THE ANOINTED ONE, THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD.

**** AND THEN THE WORD LORD HAS TO DO WITH THE SUPREMACY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF JESUS, THE MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE, THE KING, THE SUPREME ONE, THE OWNER OF EVERYTHING WHO HAS ALL POWER, GOD ALMIGHTY.

- SO HOW DO WE HAVE JESUS PRESENTED HERE? AS SAVIOR, CHRIST, AND LORD – JESUS WAS GIVEN THE HIGHEST TITLE THAT CAN BE GIVEN. PHILIP RYKEN SAYS IN HIS **COMMENTARY ON LUKE AND I QUOTE: "SAVIOR** POINTS TO HIS ROLE AS DELIVERER, MESSIAH POINTS TO HIS OFFICE IN TERMS OF THE PROMISED ANOINTED ONE OF GOD, AND LORD **INDICATES HIS SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY"**

* AND THE GOOD NEWS FOR THE SHEPHERDS WAS THAT THIS CHILD WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM TO BE THEIR SAVIOR AND LORD.

3. AND SAVIOR AND LORD ARE CONNECTED IN LUKE 2:11, FOR YOU SEE, THE ONE WHO IS **SAVIOR IS LORD, AND YOU DON'T SEPARATE HIS SAVING WORK FROM HIS LORDSHIP, YOU DON'T RECEIVE HIM AS SAVIOR THEN LORD WHEN YOU WANT TO.**

* **IT'S A PACKAGE DEAL, IT'S BOWING TO HIS AUTHORITY IN REPENTANCE AND RECEIVING HIM AS SAVIOR AND LORD, QUOTE ROMANS 10:9 AND ii CORINTHIANS 4:5.**

** **NOW I'M NOT GOING TO POUND THAT HERE, BUT THAT'S HOW** JESUS IS PRESENTED, THE SAVIOR, IS CHRIST THE LORD.

*** **WHICH LEADS US TO OUR 3'D POINT TODAY, WHERE I WON'T TAKE A LOT OF TIME ON, THE SIGN. LOOK AT V. 12 PLEASE.**

III. THE SIGN, (READ V. 12)

A. NOW THE WORD SIGN LIT. MEANS MARK, TOKEN, THAT BY WHICH A PERSON OR A THING IS DISTINGUISHED FROM OTHERS AND IS KNOWN.

* AND THE MARK WHICH WOULD DISTINGUISH THE BABY JESUS WAS HE WOULD BE WRAPPED IN CLOTHS, AND LYING IN A MANGER.

** NOW UNDERSTAND THAT A BABY WRAPPED IN CLOTHS WAS NO SIGN, FOR AS I SAID LAST WEEK, JEWISH MOTHERS IN THAT DAY WRAPPED THEIR INFANTS IN LONG BANDS, LONG STRIPS OF CLOTH CALLED SWADDLING **CLOTHES, TO GIVE THE CHILD'S LIMBS STRENGTH** AND PROTECTION.

*** AND THIS WAS A COMMON PRACTICE, THIS WAS NOT UNUSUAL. BUT WHAT WAS UNUSUAL WAS, THIS BABY WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD, V. 11, WOULD BE LYING IN A MANGER, A FEEDING TROUGH, A FEEDING CRIB WHERE CATTLE WERE FED.

**** AND THAT TRULY WAS UNUSUAL AND NO DOUBT UNSANITARY, THINK OF THE GERMS AND THE BACTERIA, AS I COMMUNICATED LAST WEEK AND REMEMBER THERE WAS NO PURELL THEN.

1. AND THE ONE WHO WAS CHRIST THE LORD, THE CREATOR, THE KING OF THE UNIVERSE, WOULD HAVE FOR HIS CRIB, A FEEDING TROUGH FOR ANIMALS.

* HE HAD SUCH A HUMBLE BIRTH. AND YOU WOULD THINK THAT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN BORN IN A PALACE, THE RITZ CARLTON, BUT NOT JESUS, HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF IN THE GREATEST CONDESCENSION THAT THE UNIVERSE HAS EVER KNOWN PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8
- THE SOVEREIGN BECAME A SAVIOR.

** SO THE ONE WHO MADE MAN, BECAME MAN, AND WOULD BE PUT IN A MANGER. THAT IS MIND BOGGLING, AND THAT SURE WOULD BE A SIGN TO IDENTIFY THE CHRIST CHILD IN BETHLEHEM TO THE SHEPHERDS, WHICH LEADS US TO OUR LAST POINT TODAY, THE SAYING. LOOK AT V. 13 PLEASE.

IV. THE SAYING, (READ V. 13)

A. NOW THE SURPRISE OF THE FIRST ANGEL APPEARING TO THE SHEPHERD LEADS TO ANOTHER SURPRISE. I MEAN FIRST ONE ANGEL HAD DESCENDED AND HAD TAKEN HIS POSITION WITH THE SHEPHERDS.

* BUT ONCE HE HAS MADE HIS ANNOUNCEMENT, ALL OF A SUDDEN AN ENTIRE ARMY OF ANGELS DESCEND. THERE IS A MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST.

** THERE WAS A TROOP OF ANGELS, A GREAT COMPANY OF ANGELS, COMING FROM HEAVEN THAT NO ONE COULD NUMBER. THE GREEK WORD IS PLETHORA WHICH MEANS AN OVERABUNDANCE, EXCESS.

*** AND ONE COMMENTATOR POINTED OUT THAT THE APPEARANCE OF SO MANY ANGELS AT ONCE IS UNPRECEDENTED IN SCRIPTURE. AND I EMPHASIZE, A SUDDEN APPEARANCE FOR IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION THERE ARE MULTITUDES OF ANGELS AROUND THE THRONE OF GOD.

**** AND HERE IN LUKE 2, THIS GREAT HEAVENLY HOST IS PRAISING GOD, EXTOLLING **GOD AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHRIST'S BIRTH TO THE SHEPHERDS.**

***** **AND NOTICE IT DOESN'T SAY SINGING AT**
THE END OF V. 13 BUT SAYING. AND THE GREEK
WORD FOR SAYING LEG-O LIT. MEANS TO SPEAK,
TO AFFIRM OVER, TO POINT OUT WITH WORDS,
TO SAY, TO SPEAK OUT, TO SPEAK OF.

**** AND IN UNISON THEY ARE THUNDERING
OUT THE WORDS OF V. 14, AND NOTICE WHAT
THEY SAY, LOOK AT V. 14 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 14. NOW WHAT WE HAVE IN V. 14 IS
AN OUTPOURING OF ADORATION. THESE
ANGELS ARE WORSHIPPING THE ALL-MIGHTY
AND ASCRIBING GLORY TO GOD, THE ONLY ONE
WHO IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP, HONOR AND
PRAISE.

* AND WHAT GOD ALMIGHTY WAS DOING THAT
WAS WORTHY OF WORSHIP WAS WORKING OUT
HIS PLAN OF SALVATION, THE PLAN OF
REDEMPTION. GOD'S GLORY HAD COME TO
EARTH IN THE PERSON OF HIS SON.

** IMMANUEL GOD WITH US HAD BEEN BORN. THE SAVIOR WAS BORN, AND THE SAVIOR THROUGH HIS ATONING DEATH AND GLORIOUS RESURRECTION WOULD SAVE PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.

*** AND THE ANGELS ARE IN AWE OF THIS, THEY DO NOT NEED REDEEMED, NOR COULD THEY EXPERIENCE THE GLORY OF REDEMPTION. BUT THEY WORSHIP THEIR CREATOR AS THEIR CREATOR BECAME MAN TO SAVE MAN. THE CREATOR BECAME A PART OF HIS CREATION.

**** AND NOTICE THEY WOULD NOT ONLY SAY GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST IN THE HEAVEN, **BUT WOULD ALSO SAY, "AND ON EARTH PEACE** AMONG MEN WITH WHOM HE IS PLEASED IN THE NAS AND ESV OR TO MEN ON WHOM HIS FAVOR RESTS IN THE NIV, WHICH CONTEXTUALLY THESE ARE BETTER TRANSLATIONS.

1. FOR THE PEACE THAT JESUS GAVE BY COMING TO EARTH WAS NOT WORLD-PEACE, BUT A RESULT OF WHAT JESUS WOULD ACCOMPLISH FOR HIS PEOPLE, PEACE INTERNALLY AS A RESULT OF JUSTIFICATION, QUOTE ROM. 5:1.

* AND THIS PEACE COMES TO THOSE WHOM THE FATHER IS PLEASED TO GIVE IT TO, ON WHOM HIS FAVOR OR GRACE RESTS.

**** GOD'S PEACE IS NOT A REWARD FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GOOD WILL, BUT A GRACIOUS GIFT TO THOSE WHO ARE THE OBJECTS OF HIS GOOD WILL.**

*** JOHN MACARTHUR IN HIS COMMENTARY ON LUKE 1-5 SAID AT THIS POINT AND I QUOTE: **"THE PEACE OF WHICH THE ANGELS SPOKE IS ONLY FOR MEN WITH WHOM GOD IS PLEASED. THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE GIVES SALVATION TO THOSE WHO PLEASE HIM BY THEIR GOOD WORKS, SINCE SALVATION IS "NOT AS A RESULT OF WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST" (EPHESIANS 2:9). AS MARSHALL EXPLAINS, (JOHN IS QUOTING ANOTHER COMMENTATOR) "THE PHRASE MEANS THOSE UPON WHOM GOD'S WILL/FAVOUR RESTS; AND EXPRESSES THE THOUGHT OF GOD'S FREE CHOICE OF THOSE WHOM HE WILLS TO FAVOUR AND SAVE."** (END QUOTE OF MARSHALL)

*** **MACARTHUR FINALLY SAYS:** "SALVATION PEACE BELONGS TO THOSE TO WHOM GOD IS PLEASED TO GIVE IT; IT IS NOT A REWARD FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GOOD WILL, BUT A GRACIOUS **GIFT TO THOSE WHO ARE THE OBJECTS OF GOD'S GOOD WILL."** (END QUOTE)

- SO PEACE IS A SYNONYM FOR SALVATION, AND GOD SOVEREIGNLY CHOOSES THOSE WHOM HE BESTOWS HIS GOOD FAVOR OR GRACE UPON, HIS ELECT.

- DARRELL BOCK IN HIS COMMENTARY ON LUKE **SAID AND I QUOTE: "WITH WHOM HE IS PLEASED" IS ALMOST A TECHNICAL PHRASE IN FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM FOR GOD'S ELECT, THOSE ON WHOM GOD HAS Poured OUT HIS DIVINE FAVOR." (END QUOTE)**

- THEN PHILIP RYKEN ADDS AND THIS IS GOOD: **"THE PEACE OF GOD (SALVATION) COMES ACCORDING TO HIS (GOD'S) SOVEREIGN PLEASURE, THE SHEPHERDS ARE A PERFECT EXAMPLE. THEY DID NOT CHOOSE GOD, GOD CHOSE THEM. THEY HAD TO RESPOND IN FAITH, OF COURSE, BUT IT WAS BY THE SOVEREIGN GRACE OF GOD THAT THEY HEARD THE GOOD NEWS." (END QUOTE)**

- AND BELOVED, THE PICTURE OF BEING A **PERSON OF GOD'S FAVOR WAS A JEWISH WAY** OF SAYING THAT SOMEONE WAS NUMBERED **AMONG GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.**

- AND MY RESPONSE IS GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST FOR HIS SOVEREIGN GRACE, FOR HE RECEIVES GREATER GLORY WHEN HE IS SEEN AS THE FIRST AND PRIMARY CAUSE OF SO GREAT A SALVATION.

IN WRAP UP AND APPLICATION (1) LET ME SAY WHEN THE ANGELS PROCLAIMED PEACE ON EARTH, THEY WERE SPEAKING PRIMARILY OF A VERY PERSONAL, INDIVIDUAL APPLICATION OF **GOD'S PEACE THAT GROWS OUT OF A** FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

*** AND WE CAN DO NOTHING TO EARN GOD'S** FAVOR, BUT HE PROMISES HIS FAVOR, HIS GRACE, HIS SALVATION, HIS PEACE IF WE WILL TURN FROM OUR SINS AND EMBRACE THE ONE WHO IS SAVIOR AND LORD BY FAITH.

** AND FOLKS THE DECLARATION IS CLEAR BY THE ANGELS, THE SAVIOR, CHRIST THE LORD HAS COME. THE QUESTION I ASK IS, IS HE YOUR **LORD AND SAVIOR TODAY? IF HE'S NOT TURN** FROM YOUR SIN IN REPENTANCE AND CRY OUT TO HIM FOR FORGIVENESS AND TRUST HIS FAVOR, HIS WORK FOR YOUR SALVATION. THERE IS GOOD NEWS TODAY!!

*** AND BELIEVER, THE FEAR IS ALL GONE NOW. AND THIS IS ONE OF THE JOYFUL RESULTS OF **OUR SAVIOR'S BIRTH. FOR WHEN WE COME TO** GOD BY GRACE ALONE THROUGH FAITH ALONE IN JESUS CHRIST, WE HAVE REAL PEACE. THE WAR IS OVER. WE THAT WERE AT WAR WITH GOD OVER OUR SIN HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO GOD AND ARE NO LONGER ESTRANGED FROM HIM.

**** NOW WE DO NOT ALWAYS GAIN THE FULL BENEFIT OF THAT PEACE EXPERIENTIALLY **BECAUSE SOMETIMES WE DON'T TRUST GOD** FOR IT.

(2) BUT AS WE WALK WITH HIM AND GROW IN FAITH AND TRUST HIM MORE HE GIVES US A PEACE THAT PASSES UNDERSTANDING.

* SO WE DO NOT NEED TO BE ANXIOUS AND WORRY ABOUT THE FUTURE. WE DO NOT NEED TO BE AFRAID OF WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF US. WE DO NOT NEED TO TRY TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS ON OUR OWN. WE DO NOT NEED TO WORRY HOW GOD WILL PROVIDE FOR US. WE DO NOT NEED TO DESPAIR IF WE LOSE WHAT WE LOVE.

** ALL WE NEED TO DO IS TRUST IN OUR GREAT GOD AND HE PROMISES TO GIVE US EXPERIENTIAL DAILY LIVING PEACE.

** LAST OF ALL IN APPLICATION. THE GOOD NEWS THE SHEPHERDS HEARD ON THE DAY CHRIST WAS BORN HAD TO BE ANNOUNCED TO THEM, PROCLAIMED TO THEM.

**** IT IS TO SAY, THEY WOULD HAVE NEVER COME TO CHRIST IF GOD DID NOT REVEAL THE TRUTH TO THEM.

**** AND THIS IS NOT A STRETCH FOR IN LUKE 2:15, THE SHEPHERDS SAY: **"THIS THING THAT HAS HAPPENED, WHICH THE LORD HAS MADE KNOWN TO US."**

(3) AND MY POINT IS, THIS SHOWS HOW MUCH WE NEED TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS, THE EVANGEL, THE TIDINGS OF THE GOSPEL. WE HAVE TO MAKE THE GOSPEL KNOWN AND GOD OPENS HEARTS.

* TO UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD HAS DONE, WE NEED TO HAVE SOMEONE EXPLAIN IT TO US. AND THAT IS WHAT EVANGELISM IS ALL ABOUT.

** WE ARE HIS WITNESSES TODAY, NOT AN ANGEL, BUT HIS PEOPLE. AND WE HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF COMMUNICATING THE TIDINGS, THE GOOD NEWS OF COMFORT AND JOY.

*** THE SAVIOR HAS COME, AND WE NEED TO TELL PEOPLE ABOUT THAT, WHY HE CAME, WHO HE IS, AND WHAT HE DID.

**** AND BELOVED, MORE AND MORE, MAY WE BE PROCLAIMERS OF THE GOOD NEWS, OF THE GOSPEL, AND THE MESSAGE THAT GOD SAVES SINNERS.

(4) MAY WE DO THAT NOT ONLY OUT OF OBEDIENCE, BUT OUT OF PRIVILEGE AND OUT OF THE JOY DECLARING **GOD'S GLORY AND GOD'S** SO GREAT SALVATION AMONG NEIGHBORS, **FRIENDS, FAMILY AND THE NATIONS. (LET'S PRAY)**