



Hearing, Going, Seeing, Telling

Luke 2:8-20

Birth of Jesus

📖 “While [Mary and Joseph] were [in Bethlehem], the time came for the baby to be born, and [Mary] gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them”¹ (Luke 2:6-7).



Hearing

❑ Read Luke 2:8-20. There were “shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.² An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified (filled with fear)” (2:8-9, NIV).

1. What message did the angel give to the shepherds? What kind of message was it?³

❑ The baby, born in “the town of David” (Bethlehem), was identified as Savior, Christ (Messiah), and Lord (2:11).⁴

❑ After the angel told the shepherds what to look for, a great host of angels appeared to them giving glory to God (2:12-14). “Heaven addressed earth about Jesus’ significance.”⁵

2. What desirable benefit is mentioned in verse 14? How is this benefit achieved and realized?⁶

📖 “...he (referring to Jesus) was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us *peace* was on him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5, NIV, *emphasis added*).

📖 “...since we have been justified (made right with God) through faith, we have *peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ ... For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled⁷ to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!” (Romans 5:1, 10, NIV)



¹ ‘manger’ (*phatnē*) – feeding trough, normally used for animals; ESV ‘inn’ (*katalymati*) – probably not a formal ‘inn’, but a public shelter or guest room (22:11). Thus the birth apparently took place in an animal room (stable or cave). In any case, Jesus’ birth took place in lowly circumstances, which seems unfitting for a king (especially the Son of God!).

² ‘shepherds’ – persons responsible for herding, guarding and tending sheep, requiring them to ‘live out in the fields’ so they could watch over the sheep. ‘fields nearby’ (*chōra autos* – same region) – just outside Bethlehem.

³ As usual, the angel began by saying, ‘Do not be afraid’ (2:10; cp. 1:13, 30). Why? Because the angel was bringing ‘good news of great joy for all the people’ (2:10). The news concerned an event that was very relevant to them (2:11).

⁴ Savior (*sōtēr*) – rescuer, deliverer from peril, both in its physical and spiritual senses. Christ (*christos* – ‘anointed one’); Lord (*kyrios*) – though not explicit here, this title would later clearly communicate his sovereignty and divinity.

⁵ Darrell Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), p. 220.

⁶ Peace is given to ‘those on whom [God’s] favor rests’ (2:14). This refers to those who respond to the good news according to God’s grace. True peace is peace with God, and peace with God is achieved and realized in Jesus Christ. The Messiah (Jesus) was called the ‘Prince of Peace’ (Isaiah 9:6-7). In our natural condition, we (as fallen humans) are hostile to God. Thus we deserve God’s judgment. However, Jesus took our sin upon himself and died in our place so that we could be forgiven of our sins and restored to a relationship with God (see Isaiah 53:5; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21; Romans 5: 1, 10). We receive these benefits by receiving Jesus as the risen Lord and Savior.

⁷ ‘reconcile’ – to bring together again; to change from enmity to friendship; to mend a broken relationship.

Going (Searching)

3. How did the shepherds respond to the angel's message? Why do you think they responded in that way?
- ❑ Like Mary hurried off to see Elizabeth after the angel's message, the shepherds "hurried off" to Bethlehem to find Mary, Joseph and the baby (2:15-16). They said, "Let's go...and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about" (2:15).
 - ✎ Though the message was delivered by an angel, the shepherds knew it came from "the Lord" (God). God's message to *us* is found in the Bible. Are you responding to His message? Are you "going and searching" for a greater understanding and realization of the Truth?⁸

Seeing (Finding)

- ❑ The shepherds hurried off and found the baby who was lying in the manger (2:16).
 4. Why do you think Jesus Christ (the King of kings) was born in such a humble setting and common shepherds were the first people to visit him?



📖 "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (*Jeremiah 29:13*).

Telling

- 📖 "When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them" (2:17-18, *NIV*).
- ❑ Those who heard the shepherds' testimony were "amazed,"⁹ but Mary "treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart"¹⁰ (2:19). Mary reflected on these events in a way the other hearers did not. She continued to think deeply about them, and she treasured them.
 5. Besides "spreading the word," what else did the shepherds do and say? (2:20). Why? How can the shepherds' example apply to us?

Reflection/Application

- Have you believed the message concerning Jesus? Have you responded to the message and "found" him? If you have believed in him, and received him as your Lord and Savior, are you telling others about him? Are you "glorifying and praising God?"
- Mary treasured up and thought deeply about "these things." How much, and how deeply, do *you* think about what *you* have heard and experienced concerning Jesus Christ?



Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"



⁸ We do this by 'searching' the truth of the Bible, praying, trusting, and following Jesus in our daily lives.

⁹ 'were amazed' (*ethaumasas* – marveled) – 'wondered' (ESV, NASB)

¹⁰ 'treasured up' (*syneterei* – keeping in the mind, continuing to think about) - indicates an ongoing contemplation. 'pondered' (*syballousa* – thought deeply about, thought seriously about).