

A LAMB AMONG THE LAMBS



A decree from Caesar Augustus which was sent out to the entire Roman Empire to have all registered, caused Mary and Joseph to go to their own town. They went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David (Luke 2:4). What seemed a problem to them, supposedly, when there was no room anywhere else for them to lodge, it was providential for them to lodge at a place where sacrificial lambs were cared for. These lambs were without blemish, perfect for the atonement of sin at Passover time. That was the place where only these types of animals were found. Joseph and Mary were not aware of the deep meaning of that place in relationship with their new-born Son- the Lamb of God. Thirty years later, John would shout in the wilderness introducing Him to the world: Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!

Not far away there were shepherds tending their flock by night. That night of October became the most significant night in the history of humankind. No one knew what was happening that night. The world was asleep, while the Son of God came in the form of a baby. That was not just a baby, but no one knew, except His mother and Joseph. That quiet night soon became festive with celebration from angels. They were an army of the troops of heaven praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is well pleased (Luke 2). The shepherds were the first recipients of the hidden message of salvation found in the new-born Baby. "For you is born this day in the town of David a Savior, Who is Messiah the Lord!" God's providential purpose of His Son to have been born in that place served as a sign to the shepherds. The angel told them: This will be a sign for you [by which you will recognize Him]; you will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and **lying in a manger** (Luke 2:13). Sure that any other baby born that night was found wrapped in swaddling clothes. The clue was He was to be found "lying in a manger." This unusual way to find a baby certified the message and sealed the truth the angel had told the shepherds. Identifying Himself with the sacrificial lambs, YAHSHUA took His position of a lamb in a symbolic way and was born among them.

The skies of October were filled with life that night in expectation for the arrival of the Son of God to earth. The celebration started with angels announcing His arrival singing, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men... for today is born the Savior, the Messiah! The stars sparkled brighter dancing with excitement! The heavens declared the glory of God, although there was no speech nor spoken word, as it is described in Psalm 19.

The shepherds went searching for that Baby and found Him exactly as they were told. They went after "this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." The Bible says, when they saw Him, they made known what had been told them concerning this Child (Luke 2:16-17). The message did not stay with the shepherds only, but traveled to whomever they met. They believed them and were astonished and marveled at what the shepherds told them (2:18). The news affected the shepherds greatly. In their return, the shepherds glorified and praised God for what they had seen just as they were told (vs.20). That should have been a memorial to them as long as they lived. The shepherds were witnesses of the veracity of YAHSHUA'S divinity without a doubt. I wonder if in the course of time these shepherds ever met their Messiah and believed in Him.

Three wrong beliefs among others stand in the celebration of Christmas: **(1)** YAHSHUA'S birth date **(2)** scenes of manger with farm animals besides lambs **(3)** Magi riding on camels and visiting YAHSHUA at the time of His birth. First, YAHSHUA was conceived, but not born in December. Check Luke 1:36. Here Cousin Elizabeth was six months pregnant at the time when the angel visited Mary in the month of December. Count forward three months it arrives to March-April for the birth of John; and six months later, YAHSHUA'S birth in mid-September to October. Another clue was the time when the shepherds were on the fields. It was customary for them to send their sheep out to pasture from spring until October. When the weather became cold the flock would be sent to their shelters for warmth. (2) YAHSHUA was not born in a stable where farm animals were raised, but in a special place where only lambs destined for Passover sacrifices were raised. (3) The Magi did not come to the stable, but to Joseph's and Mary's house about two years later. The Magi were people of great importance of those days. They were people possessed with great political power. They had the power to make and to break monarchies.

These Magi were descent from Persia, today Iran. It is believed that generations early the Prophet Daniel was of great influence in their knowledge of Jewish custom and knowledge of their coming Messiah. They were astronomers who watched the skies for signs. They were influenced by Judaism of those days. They wore pure white conical hats and robes. There is a rich background history behind their political and religion standards. They were not just someone one would meet on the street. They were hereditary priests, and were considered as mediators between God and man and even offered blood sacrifices to Him. They traveled for a year and half to arrive at Joseph's and Mary's home when YAHSHUA was about two years old. They traveled mounted upon horses, not camels and were accompanied by armed cavalry, cooks, soldiers and servants. It has been estimated that the delegates of Megistanes included over a hundred men, plus soldiers, attendants, servants, etc. Known for their power to establish and break monarchies, Herod feared the fact that they had come to worship the new-born King. Their presence was notable and presented an amazing spectacle in that part of the world. Their gifts conferred and confirmed the reason why they had come. They had come to confer upon YAHSHUA the title of King, Priest and Savior of Israel, while the nation did not receive Him as their King. Their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, spoke volumes. Gold representing kingship, frankincense

representing priesthood and myrrh representing the anointing for His death and burial as the Lamb of God Who would die for the salvation of the world.

YAHSHUA came in a time when Israel was without a king. They were part of the Roman Empire and without freedom, although in a time of peace. In the plenitude of time God sent His Son. Israel was longing for someone to free them from Rome and some thought YAHSHUA had come for that purpose, including some of His disciples. Yes, He came to set the captives free from their spiritual bondage. He had not come to fight Rome and take over Israel. That is for later. Meanwhile, His purpose continues to be the freedom and salvation of all who will come to Him and embrace the truth to be set free. The Magi offered Him precious gifts honoring Him as King, Priest, and Savior. What do we have to offer Him today besides our vain traditions? We do have our lives to serve and honor Him as our King and Savior. He is not a baby lying hopelessly in a manger. No, neither is he still hung on a cross, nor wrapped in burial cloths. But we do have a King seated at the right hand of the Father, waiting for the time when He will take His position to reign over all. Let's honor with the honor due Him, as the Magi did, not measuring sacrifice and the world will know Who He is in this time in History.