



Basotho Shepherds keeping watch over their flocks in the high mountains where the summer grazing is good.

The Shepherds of Christmas By Rod Dixon

The story has become almost too familiar to us – God choosing to announce the birth of our Savior to poor shepherds. This year however, I have a renewed appreciation for this story and consider it more carefully after meeting the shepherds of Lesotho.

I imagine those shepherds of long ago have a lot in common with these modern-day keepers of flocks. The tasks of providing good grazing, recovering those lost lambs and protecting the flocks from predators probably have not changed much in the years that have passed.

The New Testament refers to Jesus as both the Lamb of God and the Good Shepherd. He became the sacrificial lamb slain for our sins and now shepherds us, His flock providing for our needs, seeking us out while we were still lost and protecting us from the predator of our souls.

May God richly bless you and your families as you celebrate Jesus' birth this Christmas - and don't forget the shepherds of Lesotho as you retell this familiar story this year.

"And in the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. And the angel said to them, 'do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for today in the city of David there was born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger.'

And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace among men with whom He is pleased.'"

Watch for my announcement of the posting of our Lesotho video projects by early February 2010.



Flocks are gathered into stacked-stone corrals for safety each night.



Filming in the midst of the flock. The angora goats were curious, but the sheep were fearful and kept their distance from us.



Shepherds take shelter in their small round huts and warm themselves by a dung fire.



We are directed to always be prepared to give an account for the hope that is in us. With very short notice, I was asked to bring the message at Sunday morning worship services at the Lesotho Evangelical Church, Molumong Village.

Prayer Requests

Read Matthew 14:22-33

That God would remove barriers.

The wind and waves made the going tough for Peter. Ask God to calm the storm for us.

That we would faithfully discern God's leading.

Peter first asked Jesus to "command me to come". Ask God to make the way clear.

That God would provide us with work in the interim.

Jesus didn't calm the storm till they were both safely back in the boat. For the unseasoned, this may seem like a bad time to get out of the boat to start a ministry, but we will trust and obey the Lord in these uncertain times.

That my gifts and talents would be fully dedicated to God's work.

Even the most gifted among us can accomplish more when depending on God.

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