



# A JOY UNSPEAKABLE AND FULL OF GLORY!

**DECEMBER 25, 2023**

**READ LUKE 28-20.** One group of people in the Bible illustrates how being **dazed**, at first, can lead to being amazed in the end when it comes to celebrating the birth of the Christ Child: And that would be the shepherds of Bethlehem (**Luke 2:8-20**).

Unless you live far out in the country, away from the sights and sounds of city life, it's hard for most of us to imagine just how dazed the shepherds must have been at what the heavens revealed on the outskirts of Bethlehem. The ink-black sky was punctuated with a billion pinpricks of starlight. The only sounds were the occasional gentle bleating of a sheep or the crackle of wood burning in their campfire.

Suddenly, "an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid" (**Luke 2:9**). In other words, they were totally dazed – totally shocked at what they saw. The dark night was suddenly illuminated by "the glory of the Lord" as an angelic being spoke to them, telling them what was happening in Bethlehem. If that wasn't enough of a shock to their understanding, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God" (**verse 13**).

The angel didn't tell the shepherds to go to Bethlehem to see the newborn Baby – but the angel implied it: "You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (**verse 12**). They swapped out of their dazed conditioned and said: "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger" (**verse 15-16**).

Right there – that's the transition we need to make in our lives this Christmas: moving from being overwhelmed with the season to seeking out **the reason for the season**. The word "marveled" in **verse 18** is often translated "were amazed" in modern Bible versions – the perfect Christmas response to what had happened! The shepherds did what Peter describes in **1 Peter 1:8**: they rejoiced with "**A joy unspeakable and full of glory.**"

**ON BEHALF OF SOHLMEDITATIONS WEEKLY MINISTRIES,**

**"MERRY CHRISTMAS."**