

Christmas Joy.  
クリスマスの喜び。

Introduction.

はじめに

God does not cause anyone to live in fear. As soon as the shepherds were terrified by the angel's appearance, their fear was turned to peace and joy by the message from God. V10 "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be all people." Jesus' disciples saw many supernatural things and for a moment got scared but at such times He always said "do not be afraid" and brought them peace of heart and mind. You can be sure that any supernatural experience that does not bring peace to your heart and mind is not from God. God wants us always to have peace of heart and mind.

I can imagine a little of how the shepherds felt. Testimony-Bovedy Meteorite, April 25 1969. I was 11 years old and in the dark of night with some badboy friends and a can of spray paint writing gravity on the outside walls of a public toilet in a seashore park near our house. Suddenly, the whole place lit up with light even brighter than the day. At first, for a moment I was scared because in those days political conflict and riots had just started in Northern Ireland and police were going around in army style landrovers with big spotlights on the roof. I thought the police had shone a big spotlight on me while I was writing graffiti. Then I heard a big bang in the sky and looked up and saw a big fireball shooting across the sky. It was a meteorite now known as the Bovedy Meteorite. I was so relieved it was not the police and exited I had seen such a rare thing but I could not tell anyone because my parents would find out where I was and what I was doing and I would be in big trouble.

Today I want to talk about what is the true Christmas joy that the angels first announced to these shepherds.

1. The Joy of Forgiveness & Acceptance. V10-11. "Good tidings of great joy." "A Saviour who is Christ the Lord." Jesus is the only one who can forgive our sins and give us acceptance with God. When anyone believes and receives Jesus personally as their Saviour He gives the assurance of all our sins forgiven and acceptance by God which brings true peace to our heart and mind. This is a peace that we had never experienced before and is not of this world. The things of this world cannot give us true peace. John 6:37. Testimony.
2. The Joy of Fellowship, and a personal relationship with God. Psalm16:11. "In your presence is fullness of joy..." We don't have to wait to go to Heaven to experience the presence of God. An old hymn say "Since Christ my soul from sin set free, this world has been a Heaven to me... in cottage or a mansion fair, where Jesus is tis Heaven there." I experienced this even when in prison and it changed my life and my values completely. Testimony.
3. The Joy of Eternal Life. Luke 10:20. In the Bible when it says your name is written in Heaven, it means you have eternal life, and you are guaranteed to go to Heaven. This book in Heaven where believer's in Jesus have their name written is called "The Lamb's Book Of Life." Jesus in the Bible is also called the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world because He sacrificed Himself for our sins, taking our place and all the punishment. Only those who believe in Jesus as their Saviour have their names written in His book.

Conclusion. True Christmas joy is not just for one day or one season of the year.