

## Dark and Fearful Biblical Christmas?

We do not normally think of Christmas as a time of darkness and terror. Instead, we generally think of Christmas with nostalgia, with chestnuts roasting on an open fire, and happy holidays.

However, in the spirit of truth, the whole truth, it is worth pointing out that the first Christmas did indeed begin with darkness and great fear:

Luke 2:9 "And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid."

Terror in the presence of the glory of God is a recurrent biblical theme. Without God's grace, man not only lives in darkness, he loves darkness:

Isaiah 9:2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

John 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

And when the glory/presence/light of God appears to sinful man, it is terrifying. Of course, when man lives in darkness, he is oblivious to and thus dismissive of the holiness of God. However, when the Light comes on, he is absolutely mortified. Sinful man in the presence of the absolute perfection of God is absolutely terrifying.

In darkness, man can pretend nothing is wrong with him--that he is not a lost sinner who needs God's grace and forgiveness. He can ignore, suppress, and reject God--and can have a jolly old good time. All that changes when the Light pierces the darkness.

Thanks be to God that He does not just come to scare the willies out of us. He comes with free grace. Note the answer to the shepherd's fear. He is the only answer to any and all fears because He is Savior, Christ, the Lord:

Luke 2:10 "Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."