



December 13

Shalom...Raah...

(Continuation of Dec 12)

Reading: Luke 1:67-80

*"Having delivered us from the hold of our enemies,
He has enabled us to serve before Him without fear" (Lk 1:74)*

Man has no peace in heart or home, within or without. His unfulfilled longings and uncertainty about the future have pushed him into the pit of fear. Jesus was born to lift him up from this pit. Let's see how.

Jehovah-Shalom

While preparing him for his mission, the Lord appeared to Gideon and said, "Peace be with you; do not fear!" Gideon built an altar there and called it Jehovah-Shalom. Shalom means, The Lord is Peace (Judg 6:23,24).

Isaiah called the Babe of Bethlehem the "Prince of Peace" (Isa 9:6). Zacharias prophetically sang, "The Dayspring from on High has visited us... to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk 1:78,79). Announcing the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, the heavenly host said, "On earth peace" (Lk 2:14).

Fear destroys peace. Worry and anxiety are useless. They cannot improve the situation a bit (Mt 6:27). But if we turn to God, His understandable peace will flood our hearts and minds (Phil 4:6,7).

Jehovah-Raah

Interestingly the first announcement of the birth of Jesus was to the shepherds! They got the news at once (Lk 2:7-11). The angel referred to the place of Christ's birth as "The City of David." Of all the portraits of Christ in the Psalms of David, the best and most loved is in Psalm 23. Jehovah-Raah! "The Lord is my Shepherd!" As a Shepherd most fittingly, Jesus began His earthly life in a manger, not in a mansion.

"I will fear no evil; for You are with me," sang David about the greatest effect of the Lord's shepherding care (Psa 23:4). No fear because Immanuel! Loneliness, lack of loving guidance and leadership are among our most spelt-out problems in this age. These problems end when we acquaint with Christ as our Shepherd. The blessings spoken of in

that beautiful twentythird Psalm become real. A Sunday School child's version of Psalm 23:1 is, "The Lord is my Shepherd; that's all I want!"

*"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind;
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind!"
(Nahum Tate, 1652-1715)*
