

# A Shepherd Tells What He Saw

Written by Bill Perkins

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"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude  
of the heavenly host praising God."

— Luke 2:13

The sheep were asleep,  
a quilt of white wool across the hillside,  
their soft shifting the only rhythm in the silence.

Above us, the stars burned steady—  
silent heralds aching to break their vow  
and shout the coming dawn.

The night pressed heavy,  
the kind that makes a man wonder  
if morning will ever come.  
The others slept,  
the dog lay near the flock,  
and I pulled my cloak tight,  
listening to the wind comb the grass,  
thinking only of keeping the flock safe  
until dawn.

Nothing warned us.  
No omen.  
Just the ordinary ache of another long night.  
And then the sky tore open.

It ripped like fabric strained too long,  
and light poured through—  
a brilliance so fierce it made shadows cower,  
a brilliance that felt alive.

And in that light they appeared.  
Not a handful.  
Thousands.

An army beyond counting,  
rank upon rank,  
their radiance filling the night above our heads.

They praised God together, saying:  
"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests."

The sound was not song as we sing,  
but harmony too flawless for mortal voices—  
order and fire,  
peace and power,  
all at once.

And then—silence.  
The stars returned.  
The sheep still slept.  
But I melted.

We did not debate.  
The Spirit pressed us forward,  
and our feet obeyed—  
through the night,  
through Bethlehem's narrow streets,  
until we found Him.

I lingered at the doorway,  
the smell of hay thick in the air.  
It felt like a place I had no right to enter.  
Yet something stirred—  
a pull stronger than fear.  
And I stepped inside.

The air was warm,  
softened by the tender scent  
of the child nursing at His mother's breast.

His skin flushed red,  
creased from birth,  
small lips moving softly,  
the faint rhythm of suckling  
the only sound in the room.

I melted again.

The heavens had split open,  
an army of angels had filled the sky,  
and now—this.

No crown.

No radiance.

Only the quiet sound of a child nursing,  
the sound of life beginning.

You may not know this about Jesus:  
after the angels filled the sky, He lay nursing in the quiet.

And that was the wonder.