

Levi Pennington

People

1965

Christmas, 1965

Levi T. Pennington
George Fox University

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CHRISTMAS, 1965

ONE OF THE SHEPHERDS
Speaks to another Christian when they meet

I was just an urchin when it happened.
We were caring for our sheep one moon-lit night;
An angel of the Lord stood there before us
Filling our hearts with wonder and affright.
"Fear not" he said, "I bring you blessed tidings.
Today in David's city He has come
Who is the Lord and Savior, God's Anointed,
To dwell on earth; with men to make his home.
A sign -- you'll find the baby in a manger,
Wrapped in a swaddling bandage. Go and find Him."
We stood aghast, still looking at the angel
When suddenly an angel host behind him
Appeared -- they did not come, they just were there.
I think they sang -- at least 'twas heavenly music
That filled from earth to sky that moonlit air.
Glory to God ^{and glory} ~~in the highest,~~
And on earth peace to men of gentle will."
(Eighty long years have passed since that blest midnight,
Eighty long years, and yet I hear it still.)

The angels did not go, just were not there;
They vanished in the twinkling of an eye.
My father and the other humble shepherds
Hastened to Bethlehem, and so did I.
We found the babe, we found His gentle mother.
A king there in a manger, in a stable --
Why should the Lord's Anointed, the Messiah,
Come thus? To understand I was not able.
thirty
'Twas ~~thirty~~ years before again I saw Him,
A mighty man, miracle worker, teacher,
Healer of broken bodies, broken spirits,
Prophet of God, the world's best heaven-sent preacher.

You know about His death as well as I do.
You know, too, how His followers are oppressed.
You know how mighty Rome exerts her power
To stamp out all these followers distressed.
And yet you know His kingdom is advancing.
The ^{power} of love is greater than the sword,
And some glad day all kingdoms of the earth
Shall be the kingdoms of our blessed Lord.

Some happy day shall come the blessed triumph;
Some day the whole wide earth shall hear again,
"Glory to God, ^{and glory} ~~in the highest,~~
Glory to God, and peace on earth to men."