

Rev. Dr. Yugo Suzuki's Sermon

1/2/2011 **"The Word Became Flesh" John 1: 1-6**

In his Gospel John writes, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

What is the Word? It is a medium by which God's intention for our life is made known. That is why God in the Bible speaks to his people. He is a speaking God.

God commands Abraham to leave his father's house for the land God will show him. God tells Moses to lead his people from the land of Egypt to the land of milk and honey. God orders the prophets to prophesy that the dark days of captivity will soon be over.

Now the Gospel of John goes further than the Old Testament. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Flesh is the human body. So what John means is this: God's purpose, intention, and love for us took human form in Jesus. In Jesus, God became as close to us as possible.

What John is saying is this: If you want to understand God's purpose for us, listen to Jesus. If you want to see God, look at Jesus. If you feel God's compassion, follow Jesus. Jesus is the final Word of God.

John goes on to say that Jesus the Word is "the Light that shines in the darkness."

People in Jesus' days used candles made of sheep oil for light. Without candlelight, they had to live in pitch dark. That is why light was used as a symbol for courage, wisdom, and hope that sustain human life.

Here it is good for us to recall afresh the shepherds in the fields and the wise men from the East in the Christmas story.

They chose Jesus over Herod. That is courage. They discerned the difference between the worldly power of Herod and the divine power of the Christ child. That is wisdom. They returned to the world of darkness for the purpose of becoming part of the true Light that was Jesus. That is hope.

Now what does all this have to do with us?

It means that you and I are called to be modern day shepherds and modern day wise men. In daily life, we are to choose the shalom of Jesus over the false peace of Herod.

That is a tall order. But it is not impossible, because "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and the darkness could not overcome it."

Thanks be to God.