

December 24, 2023  
*Reassuring Messengers of God ~ Part 3*  
**All About Angels Series**

Text: Selected Scripture

*Introduction: Show Video – Who Is the Angel of the Lord*  
*(Episode 5) ~ The Bible Project*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgmf8bHayXw>

What have we learned about angels so far?

- Angels can appear from nowhere.
- Angels can sometimes be seen by people.
- The appearance of angels can be frightening.
- Angels can know about our prayers and concerns.
- Some angels have names.
- Angels can be in the very presence of God.
- Angels do whatever God asks or instructs them to do.
- Angels can bring consequences into people's lives.
- Angels many times convey God's will and plan to man.
- Angels provide protection and offer guidance in this life.
- Angels possess great power.
- Angels can give clarity to confused people.
- Angels are God's ministering spirits.
- Angels are sent by God to people.
- Angels understand who they are visiting ~ their mission.
- Angels have been shown future events.
- Angels acknowledge the reality of the triune God.
- Angels proclaim the vast abilities of God.

Today we consider the angelic visit to a group of shepherds outside the village of Bethlehem.

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I. The Promised Baby Was Born. **Luke 2:1-7**

Dated using the reign of the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus.  
Grand nephew (Octavian) of Julius Caesar, adopted by him.  
Defeated Antony in 31 BC, named Emperor by the Roman Senate in 29 BC, 27 BC honored with new name *Augustus* "exalted one".

Reign 31 BC to AD 14

A census was ordered - every 14 years, usually to locate those men eligible for military service; this time to count households which would be used for taxation in the future.

Luke's census would date prior to Quirinius' most widely known dates of leadership (AD 6-9).

Required to register in the place of one's heritage.

Bethlehem was 6-7 miles S of Jerusalem, 90-100 miles S of Nazareth.

Birthplace of King David (Both Joseph and Mary were of the tribe of Judah).

**Micah 5:2-5a** – Prophetic word concerning the birthplace of Messiah.

Joseph and Mary were probably married at this time, but Joseph had chosen to refrain from sexual relations until this baby was born – this may be why Luke refers to Mary as *his betrothed*.

Jesus was wrapped in bands of cloth, for warmth and a sense of security. Some believed it would keep limbs straight and protect the internal organs.

Manger – the feeding trough for cattle, possibly in a cave under the dwelling.

II. The Shepherds Were Shaken. **Luke 2:8-14**

Shepherds were considered ceremonially unclean although they were probably raising animals for the Passover and other sacrifices.

Some suggest they were a rough bunch with questionable character. Night watch was kept to prevent thefts and attacks by wild animals.

A. The Angel's Appearance.

*An angel and the glory of God* – this angel is unnamed, may have been Gabriel; brightness of God's glory.

*Terrified* – they feared a great fear, intense fear.

B. The Angel's Good News.

Reassurance...positive message...universal.

1. Heaven's message.

- Personal – *to you*.
- Prescriptive – what mankind needed:

Savior...Christ...Lord

**Savior** – One that can save mankind from the  
consequences of sin.

**Christ** – the Anointed One, the promised Messiah.

**Lord** – Ruler of a kingdom

2. Man's Confirmation.

(Everybody else asked for a sign.)

a. A Detailed Description.

You will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling clothes in a feed  
trough.

b. A Heavenly Display.

Thousands of angels appeared in the skies, filling their ears with  
praise.

III. The Savior Was Located. **Luke 1:15-16**

A. Immediate Faith. *Now go...with haste.*

B. God-Given Success. *Found the couple and the baby.*

IV. The Shepherds Spread the Angels Message. **Luke 1:17-20**

They could not be silent but spread news of the night's  
supernatural happenings – and people marveled at the  
news!

***So What?***

- ❖ God's plan has been made known to mankind. It is not hidden.
- ❖ At the Incarnation, God went to extreme measures to bring people into His plan.
- ❖ The Son of God has invaded our world to draw us into God's kingdom plan. Will we respond to His calling?

*Did we learn anything new about angels?*

- The glory of God (brilliance) may accompany angels.
- There are lots of angels.
- Angels join forces to praise the Lord.

Questions to Ponder Through the Week  
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1. What is your biggest frustration during the Christmas holiday? Talk to God about it. Why should a celebration of the coming of God to earth be negatively affected by the stuff of this life? What changes can you make next year to avoid this frustration?

2. Meditate on the meager way Jesus came into this world. No inn. Smelly stable with animal odors. The confines of a human body (for 30+ years). The needs and ailments of the human experience. Way before the modern conveniences of today. Why? Dependent only on His Father. To the Creator, animals don't smell. How else can He know what His children go through? He knew He didn't need the temptations modern conveniences can supply. Just meditate today.

3. Over the past month we have been learning about angels. We have mentioned many instances in Scripture when God sent angels with a task to earth. Do some cautious investigating. Are angels still active in the Church today?

4. The angel's message was clear ~ *For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.* Have you received God's gift of a Savior? Only Jesus can save you from your sins. Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God and the promised Messiah of the Old Testament? Are you anticipating His coming kingdom to this earth? He reigns now from on high but one day we will see Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

5. Check your obedience meter. If an angel appeared to you with a message from God, would your response be more like Joseph and Mary's or the shepherds'? Would you do whatever they told you to do? Be careful, you may be making a commitment right now.

Sermon Topic for December 31:

*Angelic Appearances and Assignments*    Selected Scripture  
We will specifically look at the familiar account of the wise men who came from the East in Matthew 2:1-12. Ponder these questions this week: No angel(s) is mentioned in this account, but is it possible that the star that led them to Judea was an angelic being? Did an angel speak to them in their dream? How did an angel become involved in verse 13? How does God lead His children today?