



The DAILY JESUS NEWS #016
Jesus' 30 Years of Preparation for Ministry
Jesus' Birth and Growth into Maturity

Angels Announce Jesus' Birth to the World
LK 2.8-14

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8 ^LAnd there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, staying watchful to guard over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone radiantly all around them, and they were completely terrified. 10 But the angel said to them,

"Stop being so afraid. Look! I am proclaiming nothing but good news to you that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born for you; he is Christ (the Messiah) the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a huge gathering of the heavenly army of angels appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth, peace to those on whom his favor rests."

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus.*

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Fields Surrounding Bethlehem
Time	The Night Jesus was Born
Jesus' Life Context	Jesus' 30 Years of Preparation for Ministry
	Jesus' Conception and Nativity from Joseph's Perspective
Title	Angels Announce Jesus' Birth to the World

Today's reading shows us the grace and glory of Jesus' coming. We see grace in the way God's announcement of the birth of his Son was made to shepherds. Our modern image of shepherds is positive, because of all the Biblical imagery using the "shepherd" motif, including Jesus himself as "the good shepherd." This contrasts with the first century image of shepherds as "bad guys."

Living outside was a tough, dangerous thing. Many shepherds doubled as thieves by night. They could easily prey on travelers stranded in the darkness, or sneak into villages and plunder those who were sleeping. So hired shepherds were not generally viewed with favor, but with fear.

Thus we see grace in God's choice of shepherds to receive the heavenly announcement of Messiah's birth. God's love is unconditional; therefore he extends his grace impartially to the most unlikely people, including you and I. (We will see another dimension of this grace in tomorrow's reading.)

Don't miss the uniqueness of Jesus in his birth announcement. There is no other baby in history whose birth caused an angelic pronouncement of blessing and joy for all the people of the world, and worship and praise by a vast host of angels as well. Jesus is like no one else. His birth was a cause for eternal, world-wide joy, because he is the Messiah, the LORD God in human flesh.

Along with the riches of revelation about who Jesus is, and what he does for us as "Christ, the Lord," in verses 10-11, Luke used this passage to contrast the response of heaven and earth to the birth of Jesus.

People on earth were tragically ignorant of the majesty and glory of God in the face of the newborn Jesus. The earth kept on spinning; everything appeared to be "normal"-- he was just another baby-- one among thousands born on that day. Even Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, and Zechariah, who had received revelation from God about Jesus, could not begin to grasp the magnitude of his birth yet.

But in heaven, all the spiritual beings and all the ranks of the angels were in awe. They were beside themselves with wonder. They longed to understand what their eyes were witnessing, yet they could not fully take it in.

They were seeing something greater than the creation of the universe, at which they all sang and worshipped (Job 38.4-7). They could not remain silent at the birth of the universe, and they most certainly could not remain silent at the birth of Jesus. Why?

These angels had been praising, worshipping, and serving Jesus as the Second Person of the Trinity in heaven--ever since they were created by Him. They had known and loved Him as God. But now--somehow--their God and Creator was lying in a manger as a new-born baby.

The humility, love, grace, and mercy of this One they had worshipped for so long, in his willingness to give up all the recognition of His Divine Being and become a person--the miracle of the incarnation--this is what the Angels were in awe of. This was the most unbelievable, shocking yet incomprehensibly wonderful thing they had ever witnessed in an eternity of serving God. So they burst forth into joyful praise! They could only cry "*Glory to God!*"

They were right.

APPLICATION:

It is too easy to become jaded, and insensitive to the glory of God in the face of Christ. The words can become too familiar; the story too common. What a tragedy!

We desperately need the power of the Holy Spirit to open up our eyes to the majesty, glory, and unspeakable greatness of Jesus the Christ, our Savior and Lord. We should ever be singing and shouting for joy at the top of our lungs, with a bursting heart, regarding every aspect of our God.

The angels observe our relationship with Jesus--but we actually *experience Him* as our loving Savior. If they cannot remain silent, how in the world can we?

How much praise bursts out of your heart each day? Is it appropriate to His worth and glory?

How will you specifically praise him today?