

(Christmas) Shepherds and Angels 3-01-C

There were shepherds out in the fields on a dark night keeping watch over their flocks. It was normal for shepherds to live near their flocks to protect their sheep against wild animals that could harm or kill them. That night the shepherds were in for a very special surprise.

Suddenly an angel appeared surrounding them in the bright light of God's glory. Imagine being a great distance from the village in the darkness of the night without any light and in an instant be almost blinded by heaven's bright light. The Bible says the shepherds were terrified. It was a normal response to a very frightening event that they had never experienced before.

The angel brought those shepherds good news of great joy, that would be for all people. In a few short sentences the angel explained that on that very day in the town of David a Savior was born. Right there in Bethlehem a baby had been born that was Christ, the Lord, the Messiah that all Jews had awaited. The angel described what they would find in the city. The baby would be wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly the angel was joined by a heavenly host or a large group of angels that joined in praising God and delivering this special announcement. The entire chorus said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." They recognized the praise that God is worthy of in the highest place, heaven. And because of God's favor He had sent the world the Prince of Peace, His only Son, who would truly give peace to those who believe in Him.

After the angels left, going back to heaven, the shepherds talked together about going into Bethlehem. They all agreed they needed to go and see what the angels had told them. The Lord had sent them this special message and they knew it was important to go see the baby.

The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem where they found Mary, Joseph, and the baby who was lying in a manger. Everything was exactly the way the angel said it would be. After seeing this, the shepherds began to spread the word about what they had been told. Everyone that heard them was amazed by what the shepherds said. Mary treasured their story in her heart and pondered everything that happened.

The shepherds returned to their fields and flocks. They went back glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen which they found to be just as they had been told. This was the introduction the world received of a tiny baby born in Bethlehem who would be our Savior.

Have you heard the message, met Christ, and returned to your family and work to spread the message of our Savior? We can all learn a lesson from those shepherds long ago.

Teacher's Notes

- I. **In the fields.**
 - A. A shepherd's life.
 - B. A special night.
- II. **An angel appearance.**
 - A. Shining glory.
 - B. Fearful response.
- III. **The announcement.**
 - A. The details.
 - B. More angels.
- IV. **Spread the word.**
 - A. Hurried trip.
 - B. News confirmed.

Activity

Students can create Christmas banners, either individual ones or a large class banner. Decorate the sheet of cloth or paper with cutouts of angels and shepherds, stars and sheep. Use the verse from Luke 2:14 as the message on the banner.

Teacher Growth

The message of the Savior's birth was given to ordinary people, just like your students. Make this aspect of God's gift clear in spite of the commercialism that often surrounds this holiday. Let your class be a place that simply looks at the true Christmas story without the stress of traditions in this world.

Scripture Passages

Luke 2:8-20

Memory Verse

Luke 2:10-11 *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."*





