

The Christmas story- Shepherds and angles

I. Introduction –

A. God searches the hearts of men and women-

"I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds. Jer 7:10

The Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For

the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." 1 Sam 16:7

The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. II Chron 16:9

B. The good news of Christmas

In the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" Lk 1:8

C. The angles and shepherds who were part of God's plan for the first Christmas

1. The Shepherds-" just folk", like us-

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. Lk 2:15

2. The angels-

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. Ps 37:4

He shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David. And the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians.

Isa 37:34

The angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. Rev 14:19

D. The shock that the angels experienced at the birth of Jesus

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. Col 1:12

I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"

Rev 5:11

II. The spiritual war between kingdoms, authorities, cosmic powers, the spiritual forces of good and of evil in the heavenly places –

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Eph 6:10

<https://www.gotquestions.org/names-of-angels.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/archangels.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/fallen-angels.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/angels-among-us.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/spiritual-warfare.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/fallen-angels.html>

A. Good angels who worship God and who are His messengers -

My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm. Dan 2:22

Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? Heb 1:13

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Heb 13:1

B. Fallen and evil angels-

1. The spiritual war started with the fall of Satan-

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' Isa 14:12

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Satan-fall.html>

When Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me. And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many. He gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea. Mar 5:2

That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. Mat 8:16

Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Jn 8:42

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. Gen 3:1

2. The spiritual battle today-

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. I Pet 5:8

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds. II Cor 11:13

C. The shepherds-

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. Lk 2:15

C. The end of their story-

1. For the shepherds-

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' Mat 21:21

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. II Tim 4:7

Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. II Cor 4:3

2. For the angels[-

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master. Mat 25:21

The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Rev 12:9

