

Theme: Angels are mighty beings who stand in the presence of God and do His will, but they were awestruck at the mystery of the Incarnation and praised God.

I. The Mystery and Awe of Being There

- A. Our trip out west taking Tim to USAFA
- B. Many places I had seen my whole life in photos
- C. But actually seeing it produced a new sense of awe
- D. I think it might have been like that for the angels

II. Angels - God's Mighty Messengers

- A. Angels are particularly God's messengers
But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. **I bring you good news** of great joy that will be for all the people." Luke 2:10
 - 1. The angels come to bring a message of Good News
 - 2. The Hebrew and Greek words we translate as "angel" mean "messenger"
 - 3. Hebrew/Greek words also used of human messenger
 - 4. Virtually every appearance in birth narratives they are bringing a message
- B. Angels are very busy at the coming of Christ!
And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An **angel** of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified...
¹³ Suddenly **a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel**, praising God.. Luke 2:8-9, 13

- 1. A whole group of angels appear to the shepherds!
- 2. We have seen them every single week of the series
 - a. Announce the coming conception of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ
 - b. Announce the coming conception of Jesus to Mary
 - c. Tell Joseph that he should take Mary as His wife and adopt Jesus
 - d. Give the first public announcement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds
 - e. Give Joseph key warnings to protect Jesus
- 3. 'Angel' occurs 19x in Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2 - same as Mary!
- 4. God is clearly speaking - and the angels are busy!

C. Angels are mighty beings!

- An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and **they were terrified**.
¹⁰But the angel said to them, "**Do not be afraid**. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Luke 2:9-10
- 1. The shepherds are terrified - as is every other person we have seen
 - 2. As always the angels have to say "Do not be afraid"
 - 3. Much of this is because the glory of God radiates from them
 - 4. Their continual abiding in the presence of God causes them to radiate and Moses did - and that prompts fear
 - 5. But it is also because they are the army of God - full

of His might!

Suddenly a great company of **the heavenly host** appeared with the angel, praising God and saying...

Luke 2:13

- a. The Word for 'host' is literally 'army'
- b. This is God's army come to announce His rule
- c. This is an announcement they have waited and longed to make

III. Through Their Eyes - Angels At the Incarnation

A. Angels recognize the Lordship of Jesus

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; **he is Christ the Lord.** ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Luke 2:11–12

1. They recognize the babe in the manger is the Lord!
2. Appearances do not deceive them - they know the Lord - even in the manger!
3. These mighty beings know their place - at His feet!

B. The mystery of the Incarnation

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is **Christ the Lord.** ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find **a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.**" Luke 2:11–12

1. Christ the Lord of all - is now a baby in a manger
2. Eternity has stepped into time
3. He who does not sleep now naps in Mary's arms
4. The Creator of all has become a weak creature

5. The owner of all things is the child of poor Jews
6. Friends that is mystery of the highest order

C. Incarnation - The Son of God becomes the Son of Man

1. Jesus is now fully God and fully man at same time
2. The angels now must worship the God-Man
And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Hebrews 1:6
3. Incarnation is so we can be redeemed sons of God
But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." Galatians 4:4–6
 - a. The Son of God became man to redeem us
 - b. Son of God became human so humans might become sons and daughters of God!
 - c. The same Spirit that overshadowed the Virgin to cause her to conceive now dwells in us and causes us to cry to God as our Father!

4. Incarnation so we are restored to our role as God's image ruling over creation

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. ⁶ But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁷ You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor ⁸ and put everything under his feet."

- a. It is not angels to whom God subjected creation
- b. It is humans who will also rule the new creation!
- c. He quotes Psalm 8 - which reflects on Genesis 1
- d. God has not given up on this plan - we rule over all of creation to cause it to radiate with God's glory

In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. Hebrews 2:5–9

- a. Right now this does not seem to be happening!
- b. But it has begun to happen in Jesus - the 2nd Adam
- c. He became one of us, fulfilled our role - and has restored us
- d. The Ruler became human so we might be restored to rule under Him!

5. The angel's awe and praise at the Incarnation

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:13–14

- a. The angels burst out with praise at the Incarnation
- b. They are overwhelmed with awe - they had heard but now they see
- c. O the depth of God's wisdom and ways!
- d. The finite and fallen are united with the Infinite, holy God

- e. The weak and wicked have been restored through unity with the Powerful and Pure Son of God!
- f. Those who see this can't help but fall to their knees in worship - like the angels did!

IV. Applying the Word

A. Through their eyes - awe at the Incarnation

1. The angels - who had known of this plan for millennia - we overwhelmed with awe when it came
2. But familiarity can breed contempt for us - and it is for our benefit, not theirs!
3. Do you see the wildness of what God has done?
4. Have we become so familiar we simply pass by without much of a glance?
5. See the wonder of it all again - through their eyes

B. Through their eyes - praise & worship at the Incarnation

1. The angels - were drawn into fresh praise at this
2. They who behold God daily were still overwhelmed
3. They cried out in worship - but do we?
4. This great news and great event call for worship!
5. God has come down and united with us!
6. And He has come in mercy rather than judgment!
7. Truly this was a Holy Night Divine!

C. Response - O Holy Night!

Angels - Awe and Praise At the Incarnation

Luke 2:8-14

December 21, 2014

O Holy Night!

2 Peter 1:2

Teaching keywords: Advent and Christmas, angels, incarnation, 2nd Adam, humanity of Christ, humanity, praise

May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 2 Peter 1:2

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