

CHRISTMAS SERIES
“THE UNFOLDING TESTAMENT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST”
PART TWO
“THE TESTAMENT OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS”
LUKE 2:8-14

INTRO: For most Christians, the narrative of the birth of Jesus Christ as revealed in the scriptures is a precious text that never tires. We love to read it, we love to hear it read, we love to sing the songs regarding the birth of Christ, and we even like to share the message of the birth of Christ with others. But unfortunately, we have become so familiar with the scriptural teaching about the birth of Christ that we either overlook or forget some of the significant details which reveal the Divine depths of the incarnation. Thus, in our Christmas Series we are taking time to study a very familiar text of the Word of God so as to look into some of the finer specifics of the account of Christ’s birth that we may have overlooked or have forgotten. The text is Luke chapter 2, and the series title is: **“THE UNFOLDING TESTAMENT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.”** Last week we studied verses 1-7 of Luke 2 and noted **“THE TESTAMENT OF THE LORD’S BIRTH.”** Today for a few minutes we are going to observe Luke 2:8-14 and study **“THE TESTAMENT OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS.”** **Let’s approach this text like we have never read it before and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to us some precious golden nuggets about the ministry of the Heavenly Hosts to the Shepherds on the night that Christ was born which will give us a greater appreciation of what God the Father did through God the Son in His incarnation.**

I. THE APPEARANCE OF THE ANGEL – VSS. 8,9

A. The Angel’s Personage – “Lo, the Angel of the Lord”

1. The word **“ANGEL”** means **“MESSENGER, GUARDIAN, OR REPRESENTATIVE.”** Angels are found throughout the pages of scripture and are actually **AN ORDER OF GOD’S CREATED SPIRITUAL BEINGS, WHO ARE MESSENGERS OF GOD THAT ARE SUPERIOR TO MANKIND THAT CAN ASSUME HUMAN FORM.**

- a. Genesis 19:1- An Angel appeared to Lot in Human form.
- b. Daniel 9:21 – An Angel appeared to Daniel in Human form.
- c. Matthew 28:3 – Angels appeared at Christ’s tomb in human form.
- d. Acts 12:7 – An Angel appeared to Peter in human form.

2. The Angel in verse 9 is unidentified but could be Gabriel – Cp. Luke 1:26

B. The Angel’s Presence – “Came upon them”

- 1. This is a familiar phrase used by Luke 18 times
- 2. The phrase means **“TO SUDDENLY APPEAR AND TO STAND BY.”**

C. The Angel’s Presentation – “The Glory of the Lord shone round about them”

1. This is the **“SHEKINAH” GLORY** which is **THE VISIBLE MANIFESTATION OF GOD AMONG HUMANITY THAT APPEARED AS A WHITE SHINING CLOUD OF INTOLERABLE BRIGHTNESS.**

- a. As seen by Moses at the Burning Bush – Exodus 3:2-5
- b. As seen leading Israel through the wilderness – Exodus 13:21
- c. As seen in the Mount of Transfiguration – Matthew 17:1-8
- d. As seen by Saul at his salvation – Acts 9:3

2. This is the first time the **SHEKINAH GLORY OF GOD** appeared on earth according to the record in over 500 years, the last being its departure from earth in Ezekiel 10 because of Israel’s idolatry and disobedience to God.

D. The Angel’s Purpose – To Announce the Birth of Christ to the Shepherds

- 1. The birth of Christ was a long-awaited event of which 324 prophecies in the OT addressed.
- 2. Humanly speaking the chances that ONE of the prophecies would be fulfilled was 1 in 100 plus 17 zeros – 400 QUADRILLION. **BUT IT HAPPENED!**

II. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ANGEL – VSS. 10-12

- A. It was Comforting – Vs. 10a “**FEAR NOT**”
- B. It was Convincing – Vs. 10b “**GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY TO ALL PEOPLE**”
- C. It was Consoling – Vs. 11
 - 1. Because of the Presence of Jesus – **HE WAS BORN.**
 - 2. Because of the Person of Jesus
 - a. Savior – The One who confronted the sin of the world authoritatively.
 - b. Christ – The Messiah Who will establish a perfect kingdom.
 - c. Lord – The Master of All Ages and Eternity
- D. It was Certain – Vs. 12
 - 1. Wrapped in Swaddling Clothes – Cp Vs. 7
 - 2. Lying in a Manger – Cp. Vs. 7

III. THE ARRIVAL OF THE ANGELIC HOST – VSS. 13,14

- A. The Multitude of the Heavenly Host – Vs. 13
 - A greater number than can be counted
- B. The Message of the Heavenly Host – Vs. 14
 - 1. “Peace on Earth” – Not a universal declaration of peace toward humanity, but **peace with God through the work of Jesus Christ – Col.1:20-22**
 - 2. “Good Will Toward Men” – Speaks of God’s **SOVEREIGN GOOD PLEASURE OF HIS GRACE UPON ALL OF MANKIND. SALVATION TO ALL!**

LESSON AND APPLICATION

THE APPEARING OF THE HEAVENLY HOST WAS A LARGE ANGELIC CHOIR SINGING GLORY TO GOD FOR HIS GOOD WILL TOWARD MANKIND IN PROVIDING PEACE WITH HIM THROUGH THE REDEPTIVE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST. AT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST THE REDEPTIVE WORK OF CHRIST WAS ANNOUNCED...THE MANGER OF CHRIST POINTS TO THE CROSS OF CHRIST.