

THE ANGELS REJOICE

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Lesson: Luke 2:1-25

All over the world at this time, people are rejoicing because the Lord was born on Christmas day, so long ago. In each country of the world, people gather together in churches, and they give thanks to the Lord for coming down to earth, and saving us all.

But I want you to think, not of the rejoicing of the people of today, nor of the people of earth. I want you to think of how happy the angels were at the time of the Lord's birth, and why it was that they were so very happy. We know a little bit about how they felt, because of the host of angels who sang to the shepherds; but perhaps we don't stop to think that the angels in every place in all the heavens were rejoicing that night, feeling a happiness in their hearts such as they had never had before.

You know, of course, that angels live forever. Now some of those angels had been looking forward to the Lord's being born on earth for thousands of years. They had known that it was very important for the Lord to come to earth. They knew that the people in the world very badly needed the Lord to be born among them, and to fight against the hells, and to make it easy for them to walk the path that will make them angels too. They knew how strong the hells were getting, and how evil men were teaching the good ones wrong things, and lead them, if they could, towards hell. The angels felt very sad when they looked down on earth, and saw all the bad things that were being done; most especially when they saw good people being hurt by bad people.

These angels knew that the only thing that would help the people of earth was the Lord's coming on earth. And so they waited and longed for the Lord to be born. They knew—as you will understand when you grow up—that the Lord could not be born until a certain time; but they were sad that people should be unhappy when they didn't deserve it.

And then at last the time came. A special angel, Gabriel by name, was sent by the Lord to Zacharias, to tell him that he would have a son who would be the prophet of the Lord—John the Baptist. Then that same angel, six months later, went to Nazareth, to Mary, and told her the great favor which the Lord was to give her—she was to be the mother of the Lord. He afterwards appeared to Joseph, and told him too that Mary would be the mother of the Lord.

And finally the wonderful night came when the Lord God of all the earth was born, and wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. Think of the joy in heaven. Think how the angels all over the heavens felt. For they knew that this meant that all the people in the world who wanted to could be saved, and led to heaven. They knew that this was the most holy thing that had ever happened. Their hearts must have been overflowing with love for the Lord, and thankfulness for His great mercy to all men.

The people on earth couldn't see them, but they were all around Bethlehem that night. And one group of them was seen, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men."

We have hearts full of joy when we think of Christmas time, and the angels are rejoicing too. For they love to think that people on earth worship the Lord and are happy that He was born, and they are close by us, and make our happiness greater, and make us want to be a part of His heavenly kingdom. Our spiritual eyes are not opened, but if they were, I am sure if we could see into heaven, we too, like the shepherds, would see hosts of angels praising God, and say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men." Let us join with them, then, and praise the Lord with all our hearts, and pray that each one of us may do their little part to make sure that there is peace on earth, by living in goodwill, and kindness with the people around us. For the Lord came into the world so that we could live this way, and it is the hope of all the heavens, who rejoice with us tonight, that we shall have peace and goodwill in our hearts. *Amen.*