

Angels

#2 Angels Doing Their Announcing

I. Angelic announcement to John the Baptist's parents (Luke 1:5-25)

- A. Gabriel is one of the "chief princes" (a hierarchy of angelic leadership – see Dan. 8:16, 9:21 and 10:13)
- B. He appears before God (see Job. 1:6, 2:1, Luke 1:19)
- C. He is a messenger who interprets visions (Dan. 8:16, 9:21)
- D. He is a messenger who makes announcements

Some background on the birth of John the Baptist

1. John's Parents:

Zacharias: A priest of the course of Abijah. His name means "Jehovah has remembered."

Elizabeth: A kinsman (probably cousin) of Mary. Belonged to the family of Aaron. Her name means "God is my oath."

- a. Both are priestly in their heritage and are described as "being righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1:6)
 - b. They are both old...beyond childbearing years and Elizabeth is barren. Zacharias was a "day-class" type of priest. Each class (24 of them – see 1 Chron. 24:7-18 and 2 Chron. 8:14) would serve several times a week in the temple – each individual would serve twice a year. The whole class served on the Sabbath and the Feast of Tabernacles.
- #### 2. The Angel's Announcement: Luke 1:8-14
- a. The incense was kindled twice a day (dawn and late afternoon) by a priest chosen by lot (a white stone – see Rev. 2:17). They could only do it once in a lifetime. It was a special day for Zacharias.
 - b. The altar of incense – inside the holy place, not the Holy of Holies. He put frankincense on the coals.
 - c. Gabriel appeared to announce John's name..."Jehovah has been gracious."

II. Angelic announcement to Mary regarding the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38)

A. Gabriel greets Mary (1:28)

“Greeting, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you”

B. His message

“Do not be afraid” (You have found favor)

“Name him Jesus”

“He will reign over the House of Jacob”

He explains how He is conceived through the Holy Spirit

“Nothing is impossible with God...”

C. Notice the obedient response (1:38)

III. Warnings by an angel of the Lord (who specializes in dreams) – Matt. 1:18-24, 2:13, 2:19, 2:22

A. Predicted the birth of Jesus to Joseph (Matt. 1:18-24)

1. In a dream (Joseph is asleep – Matt. 1:24)

2. His message

“Do not be afraid” (to take Mary as your wife)

“You are going to have a son”

“Name him Jesus”

3. Old Testament prophecy: Isa. 7:14

4. “Immanuel” – God with us

B. Warned Joseph to flee to Egypt (Matt. 2:13)

1. Timing of this dream: after the Magi have come and gone (see Matt. 2:11) they too were warned in a dream (see Matt. 2:12)

2. Joseph obediently “got up” and escaped into Egypt.

a. Egypt was a Roman Province outside of Herod’s jurisdiction.

b. Earlier generations of Israelites fled to Egypt – Gen. 42-50, 1 Kings 11:40, Jer. 26:21-23, 43:7

c. There is no biblical material to reference regarding Jesus’ time in Egypt. There are however many stories and traditions associated with their journey through Egypt. Sources for those stories include the non

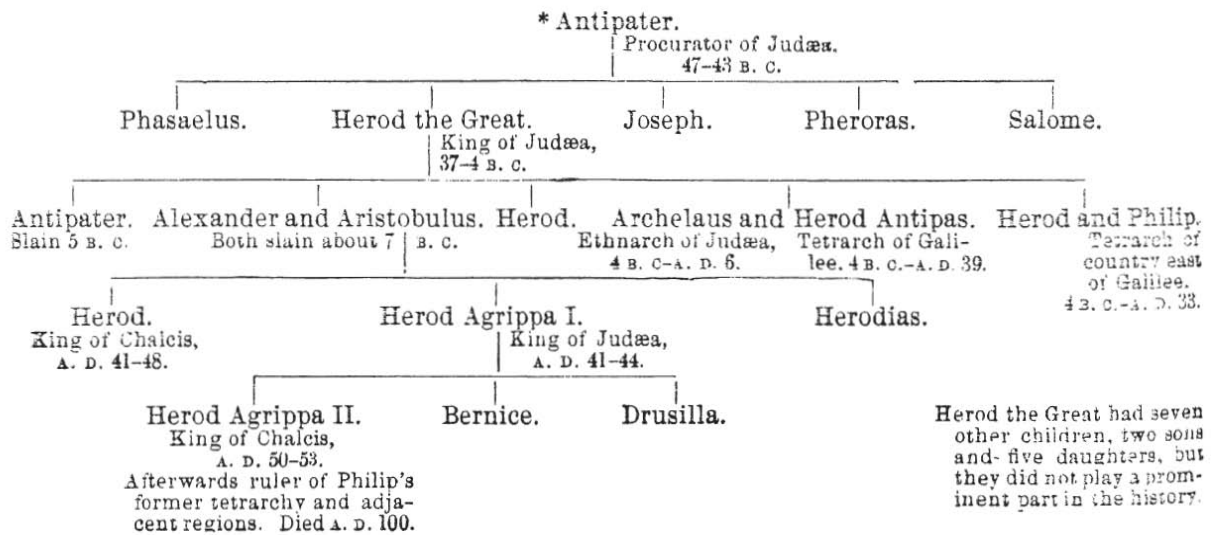
canonical book, the gospel of Thomas and 5th Century accounts by Theophilus and Sozomen.

- d. Coptic Christians believe the journey through Egypt took 3 years. Muslim sources believe it took 7 years.
- e. At some point, Joseph, Mary and Jesus returned from Egypt (Luke 2:39). The next biblical account occurs when He is 12 years old (Luke 2:42)

3. Old Testament prophecy – Hos. 11:1, Isa. 19:1

C. Instructed Joseph to return to Israel (Matt. 2:19-21)

1. Joseph obediently “got up” again
2. Herod had died. Archelaus is in control.



Herod: King of Judea (37-4 BC). For 34 years he ruled the Jews (who hated him) within the framework of Roman Imperial rule. He was both a brilliant and tyrannical leader. To appease the Jews, he addressed the great famine of 25 BC with imported corn from Egypt and he began rebuilding the Temple in 20 BC.

Towards the end of his life, he was mad – the result of hypertension and a diseased brain.

Archelaus: (4BC – 6AD) At Herod’s death, Archelaus obtained the largest portion of his father’s kingdom – but was only give the title of Ethnarch or Ruler, not King.

“Inherited his father’s vices without his ability. Took the title of King and bloodily quelled disorder which broke out in Jerusalem.”

- D. Told specifically go to Galilee (Matt. 2:22-23)
1. Joseph is redirected to the North
 2. Old Testament prophecy: Isa. 11:1
 “Neser:” shoot or branch of the roots of Jesse. The name “Nazareth” comes from the same root.
 3. Nazarene: Loosely referring to someone who comes from Nazareth. (Not to be confused with Nazirites – Judges 13:5).

IV. Angelic announcement to the shepherds (Luke 2:8-20)

- E. Timing of the announcement: Spring (flocks were out at night).
- F. Angel of the Lord (it is the same angel that spoke with Joseph in his dreams - see vs. 21)
1. He was accompanied by “the Glory of the Lord”
 - a. “The cloud” (Ex. 14:19) guided the Israelites during the Exodus, filled the Tabernacle (Ex. 40), filled the Temple (2 Chron. 7), surrounded Christ at the transfiguration (Matt. 17) and hid Jesus at His Ascension (Acts 1:9)
 2. His message
 - a. “Do not be afraid”
 - b. The “Christ” (Messiah – the anointed one) has been born
 - c. Look for the baby wrapped in grave cloths lying in a manger
 3. He was accompanied by a great company of angels (Luke 2:13)
 4. They were all praising God.

V. Notice the response of the shepherds (Luke 2:20). What things have you heard and seen for which you should be glorifying and praising God?

Discussion Questions:

1. There is a lot of angelic activity behind “the veil” (Dan. 10:13). How should you and I react to that reality? How could that knowledge affect you this week? Does it broaden your sense of God’s majesty and the breadth of His reign?
2. Why do you think angels were used in such a significant way in the Christmas story?
3. Which part of the Christmas story, particularly resonates with you this year? How will you share it with your family and friends this Christmas?