

**ANGEL 3:** It seems like everyone has heard how the shepherds were told about the baby Jesus early the first Christmas morning. But everyone hears about it from the shepherds' point of view, as if they were the only people visited that night. No one has ever heard the other side of the story, our story, what happened to us angels that night.

**ANGEL 1:** I remember the first Christmas like it was yesterday, how could any of us forget? We had been preparing hundreds of years for that day, half longing to see the day when humanity would meet God and half dreading it, hating the day when we wouldn't be in the presence of Jesus ourselves anymore.

**ANGEL 1:** Even that night I really wasn't sure if it was a good idea or not. But I trust God, so when the call came for volunteers to go share the news that God himself had come to earth, I jumped at the chance. After years of waiting, the day had come when mankind would meet their savior. How could any of us wait to tell people? Angels were flooding Bethlehem that night, spreading out all over town to share our own excitement with the people there.

**ANGEL 1:** I headed straight to the synagogue. What better place to tell people God is among them than where they are already worshiping God? When I got there, people were praying to God, asking for a savior, a miracle, a sign. I was so excited, I took a gentleman by the shoulder to tell him the good news, but he just shook me off and prayed even louder, except now he was praying for peace and silence. No one would listen to me, they just turned up the volume and ignored me. I couldn't reach a single one of them. They were praying so hard, but they wouldn't listen or believe that their prayers had been answered. I couldn't believe it.

**ANGEL 3:** When I first came down I sought out the people on the fringes, those people who were looking for a savior more than anything else in life. Surely those people deserved to hear the news first. I found some hiding in a cave nearby, hiding from the Romans and waiting for their Messiah. I told them about baby Jesus and urged them to come see him, but they laughed at me. They told me that surely I knew God would come to them. If they had to go anywhere it must not really be God. I think I broke a little inside when I heard that. They were so close to the greatest miracle on earth, but didn't want it if it wasn't their way.

**ANGEL 3:** I was so excited I couldn't contain myself, but no one seemed to care about what was happening! Surely the others were having better luck.

**ANGEL 2:** When I came down I went straight to where the most people were, right on the main road, lined with shops. The entire town was packed with people, thanks to the Romans, people who could use a savior. But no one would even look at me. They were walking with the weight of the world on their shoulders, bent over and staring at the ground. Unsmiling, unhappy with life, shrunk inside themselves. They weren't looking at each other, let alone looking for God.

**ANGEL 2:** They wouldn't even look up at me when I spoke to them, but avoided eye contact like it was a plague. The only people who would look at me, who paid any attention to me were the merchants, but they weren't listening, they just wanted to sell me stuff. No wonder the people wouldn't

listen, they didn't trust anyone anymore, not even their God. I remember thinking, have we come too late? After an hour of trying, tears were streaming down my cheeks. Everyone I met was so hurt they wouldn't even go meet the one person who came to save them from it all.

**ANGEL 1:** It was a long and frustrating night. When I started I had only wanted to celebrate but soon I only wanted to give up. I went to where people were celebrating, but they were too busy with their fun to pay any attention to what I was saying. They couldn't spare the time from their wine, their family, their fun, to listen to news about a baby. They didn't want anyone, me included, to get in the way of them enjoying themselves.

**ANGEL 3:** In desperation I went to the people everyone seemed to be afraid of, the Romans in charge of the city. Surely leaders like these people would care about something as important as God coming to earth, and then they could tell everyone else. But they made me wait in line! In line! They were so certain of their own rightness that they wouldn't, they couldn't, believe there was anything more important than themselves., especially a baby.

**ANGEL 2:** I was discouraged, we all were. Would this whole God in flesh idea even work? Would anyone listen or would God himself be ignored by the people who needed Him so badly? We had to find someone who would listen, who would come, who could testify to what was happening that night.

**ANGEL 2:** Other angels were still trying to find someone in town who would listen, but I couldn't take it anymore. I, just sort of wandered around. I felt depressed, confused, worried, and pretty stressed out. We were sent on a mission to tell people that their God was here in the flesh to talk with them, to love them, to save them. But no one was listening. How could God be here and no one care?

**ANGEL 2:** As I stumbled past out of town and past some hills, I noticed something, people. There were a dozen or so teenagers lounging around, chatting and watching the stars while keeping half an eye on some sheep nearby. They looked bored, just waiting for something to happen. Perfect.

**ANGEL 2:** Suddenly I was excited again. Here were people who were waiting, longing for something to happen. I went to them as quickly as I could, but I was so excited I must have been glowing a bit because they panicked. I did my best to calm them down, so excited that they could be the first people on earth to see their God face to face that I could barely get the words out.

**ANGEL 2:** "Don't be afraid", I told them. "I have great news, joyful, wonderful news. And not just for you, but for everyone everywhere. Today, right here in Bethlehem, a savior has been born, your messiah and king. Go see for yourself, go find the baby wrapped in cloth and laying in a feeding trough."

**ANGEL 1:** At that point the rest of us couldn't help ourselves. I know it was overkill, but someone was finally listening, someone was going to understand, someone was going to see their Lord. We all burst in on the scene shouting at the top of our lungs, thanking God for letting someone see His son. "All of creation praise God! And here on earth, may seeing this give you peace!"

**ANGEL 1:** You have never heard anything like it. It seemed like every angel in heaven had come down to join in the praise, to see the first people worshipping their savior in person. The shepherds didn't really understand yet, but they knew it was important and they went to go find the child.

**ANGEL 1:** Most of the other angels left then, but a few of us stayed around to watch. I was still worried that these shepherds wouldn't understand what they were seeing. They heard what we were saying, but they didn't "get it". They were scared, they weren't rejoicing yet.

**ANGEL 3:** We followed the shepherds to the manger, and when they saw little Jesus, their entire lives changed. It's rare you can see an internal change on the outside of someone, but that night we could. That night they understood, they experienced what we had always felt, the presence of God. I had to smile as they began to do exactly what we had spent the night doing. They ran through the town yelling and telling everyone they could meet about the baby. I didn't even dream of trying to stop them. When you meet God, you just have to share it.

**ANGEL 3:** They came back a few hours later, no more able to win people over than we were. But they came back to worship. It was the most wonderful night, the most frustrating night, that I can remember. It isn't easy to see sometimes, but ever since that night there is hope. All the same excuses are still around, and people can ignore that baby just as easily as on the night he arrived. But people can also still hear the message we were shouting if they only want to listen, and people can still meet their savior if they only choose to go look. Don't be like the rest of Bethlehem. Look up, look around, look for Jesus, and you will experience what the angels have always known, God with us... and with you.