



PREVIEW ONLY

The Angel and the Message

A Christmas Prophecy

by Paul Ellis

What In Bethlehem, two angels are sightseeing. Meanwhile, in Nazareth, a young girl receives life-changing news.

Themes: Christmas, grace, joy, good news

Message God with us

Who Minimum 4 characters with doubling; 8 characters without

NARRATOR (for table readings; otherwise replace with lines for direction)

GABRIEL, an angel

SEREN, an angel

MARY, the mother of Jesus

JOSEPH, betrothed to Mary

ELIZABETH, Mary's relative

ZECHARIAH, Elizabeth's husband (non-speaking part)

SAMUEL, a shepherd

URI, a shepherd

Time 11 minutes

Ages 8+

Source Luke 1:26–56, 2:8–20, Matthew 1:18–24

Bonus Free leader's guide with fun facts, discussion questions, and illustrations.

Narrator It's the middle of the night, and two angels are standing in front of a church in Bethlehem.

Gabriel *(Pointing)* There. That's where it happened.

Seren In a souvenir shop?!

Gabriel Not there. All this used to be an inn with stables and a yard. He was born there, near that street lamp.

Seren touches the street lamp reverently.

Seren Wow. Sacred ground. There should be some kind of altar.

Gabriel There is. They built a church. Right here.

Narrator Gabriel points to church. In front of the church stands a brightly decorated Christmas tree. At the foot of the tree is a Nativity scene complete with animals and a baby in a manger.

Seren Will you tell me the story?

Gabriel You haven't read the Book?

Seren I want to hear it first-hand. You delivered the message. I want to hear the Gospel according to Gabriel.

Gabriel closes his eyes as if recalling distant memories.

Gabriel There had been a shadow over the earth. Then one day, the Lord called me and said "Go." My heart was pounding. The day we'd been waiting for had come. Without delay, I flew from heaven like a comet.

Narrator As Gabriel speaks, a scene unfolds in the air before them. A teenage girl is grinding grain with a handmill.

Gabriel Greetings, favored one.

Mary Whoa! Where did you come from?

Gabriel I bring a message from God.

Mary *(Looks around)* You sure you've got the right house?

As Gabriel gestures toward Mary dazzling light bursts out of him.

Gabriel The Lord is with you!

Mary staggers, dazed by the light.

Gabriel *(Cont'd)* Do not be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God and will bear a son called Jesus.

Mary I better sit down.

Gabriel continues in dramatic form.

Gabriel He will be great and be called Son of the Most High.

Narrator Power radiates from the angel causing the ground to shake and rattling the heavy stones of the handmill. Mary holds on for dear life.

Mary Whew.

Gabriel He will sit on David's throne, and his kingdom will never end!

As the angel finishes his speech, the light dims and the room settles.

Mary Who did you say you were again?

Gabriel I am Gabriel, herald of the Most High, and I have been sent to tell you this good news.

Mary *(Processing)* I'm going to have a baby...

Gabriel switches back into speech mode.

Gabriel And he will be called Son of the Most High!

The room briefly rattles again.

Mary You know I'm not married, right? So, how... you know...

Gabriel The Holy Spirit will overshadow you.

Mary *(Squints)* He will what now?

Gabriel This is why the child will be holy, for he will be born of God...

Gabriel becomes dramatic again.

Gabriel *(Cont'd)* And be called Son of the Most High!

Mary stares, speechless.

Gabriel *(Aside)* This is the part where you start praising God.

Mary puts her hand on her forehead.

Mary It's a lot to take in. A baby. Wow. I'm supposed to be planning a wedding, but now ... Wow.

Mary starts to hyperventilate.

Mary *(Cont'd)* This is really big news. I'm going to be pregnant?! What will my father say? Oh my, I can hardly breathe.

Gabriel The Lord is with you, Mary.

Gabriel places a comforting hand on Mary's shoulder, and she begins to breathe deeply.

Gabriel *(Cont'd)* One more thing: Your relative Elizabeth is also with child.

Mary Aunt Elizabeth? But she is old. It seems impossible.

Gabriel God created the universe with a word. Nothing is impossible for him.

Mary *(Breathes)* Yes, I see it now. This is a miracle.

With tears in her eyes, Mary clasps her hands in prayer.

Mary *(Cont'd)* I am humbled that the Lord has chosen me to bear his Son. May it be to me as you have said.

Narrator After the angel departs, Mary visits her pregnant relative.

Mary Hello, Zechariah. Oh, Elizabeth, look at you!

Radiant with joy, Elizabeth strokes her large tummy.

Elizabeth The Lord has blessed me and taken away the disgrace of my barrenness.

Mary Congratulations, and to you too, Zechariah.

Smiling, Zechariah clasps his hands and bows.

Elizabeth Forgive my husband. For a priest, he doesn't speak much these days.

Zechariah shrugs as if to say, "It's true."

Mary I too, have some news.

Elizabeth Ow, the baby just kicked. Oh my. He's really jumping around there.

Narrator Elizabeth takes Mary's hand and jolts as though shocked. Her eyes widen in revelation.

Elizabeth You are with child too!

Zechariah gasps.

Elizabeth *(Cont'd)* And not just any child. He is the Savior we have been waiting for. Mary, blessed are you among women!

Mary An angel from heaven told me.

There is a loud crash as Zechariah falls off his stool. Before the women can react, the old man leaps to his feet in excitement. He points at heaven, then at Mary.

Mary *(Nodding)* He said his name was Gabriel.

Zechariah raises his hands as if to say, "I knew it."

Mary *(Cont'd)* He said the child would be called Son of the Most High.

Elizabeth I am honored to be visited by the mother of my Lord.

Mary Who am I that God should choose me? My heart is full of praise for the Lord. God is mighty, and he has done great things for me.

Elizabeth and Zechariah embrace Mary.

- Mary** (Cont'd) There's just one problem. How am I going to tell Joseph?
- Narrator** Mary is engaged to Joseph, the carpenter. When Joseph learns that Mary is pregnant, he is not happy.
- Joseph** (Upset) You're what?!
- Narrator** Joseph decides to cancel the wedding.
- Joseph** I'm canceling the wedding!
- Narrator** Being pregnant and unmarried is a big problem. To prevent Mary from being disgraced, Joseph decides to *quietly* break off the engagement.
- Joseph** (Theatrical whispering) I'm canceling the wedding.
- Narrator** While Joseph is thinking about these things, an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream.
- Gabriel** Joseph, son of David, I bring a message from God. Do not be afraid to marry Mary, for the child she carries has been conceived by the Holy Spirit.
- Joseph** By who now?
- Gabriel** Mary will have a son, and you will call him Jesus, which means Savior.
- Joseph** He won't be a carpenter?
- Gabriel** (Dramatic) He will be great and be called Son of the Most High.
- Joseph** Well, this changes everything. May it be to me as you have said.
- Narrator** When Joseph wakes up, he does what the angel told him.
- Joseph** The wedding's back on!
- Narrator** The vision fades. The two angels are back outside the church. Dawn is coming. A street-sweeping truck weaves around cars parked in the cobbled lane. Disturbed by the noise, a homeless man in a doorway raises a sleepy head.
- Seren** Wonderful! Just like being there. But isn't there another part to that story?
- Gabriel** What's that?

Seren points to the fields beyond the town.

Seren What happened there?

Gabriel Ah, I see.

Narrator As the angels gaze into the distance, another vision appears. In a field of sheep, two boys are keeping warm by a fire.

Samuel I still don't see why we can't go to the feast.

Uri You know why.

Samuel My father is going, my brothers are going, but I'm stuck here in the cold and dark praying that a lion doesn't get hungry.

Uri Such is the life of a youngest son.

Samuel It's not fair! Even these sheep are going to the feast.

Uri You smell like sheep. Maybe they would let you in.

Samuel I never wanted to be a shepherd. I wanted to be a priest and tell people about God.

Uri *(Gestures to the rocky landscape.)* You'd leave all this?

Samuel pokes the fire with a stick causing sparks to rise into a starry sky.

Samuel Hey look, a shooting star.

Narrator Suddenly, Gabriel appears before them, blazing with glory. Beams of light shine from him causing the sheep to scatter.

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