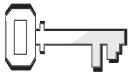


Angel Heralds



References

Luke 2:8-15; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 43–49



Memory Verse

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (Luke 2:10, NIV).



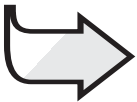
Objectives

The children will:

Know that because He loves us, God sent Jesus to be our Saviour.

Feel the joy of worshipping Jesus and sharing His love as the angels did.

Respond by finding new ways to “sing” the angels’ song.



The Message

We worship God when we sing joyful songs of praise.

Monthly Theme

We praise God for the gift of Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The familiar story of the angels’ visit to the shepherds is told from the angels’ point of view. The angel Gabriel comes to the shepherds who are watching their sheep on the hills around Bethlehem. The shepherds are frightened at the sight. The angel calms their fears and tells them of Jesus’ birth and where to find Him. Then a multitude of angels join Gabriel in singing “Glory to God in the highest.” The shepherds decide to go to find the baby.

This is a lesson about worship.

The angels have experienced the joy of worshipping God in heaven. Now they have the joy of inviting humans to join in the worship, to praise God for the gift of His Son. They describe the good news that makes us want to worship: Our Saviour has come to earth to save us.

Teacher Enrichment

“With amazement the heavenly messengers beheld the indifference of that people whom God had called to communicate to the world the light of sacred truth. . . . The priests and teachers of the nation knew not that the greatest event of the ages was about to take place. . . . Only a few were longing to behold the Unseen. To these heaven’s embassy was sent” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 44).

“Above the hills of Bethlehem are gathered an innumerable throng of angels. They wait the signal to declare the glad news to the world. Had the leaders in Israel been true to their trust, they might have shared the joy of heralding the birth of Jesus. . . .

“In the fields where the boy David had led his flock, shepherds were still keeping watch by night. Through the silent hours they talked together of the promised Saviour, and prayed for the coming of the King” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 47).

“This messenger is he who fills the position from which Satan fell. It is he who on the hills of Bethlehem proclaimed Christ’s birth” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 780).

Room Decorations

Continue to use outdoor scenery. Have a manger scene with straw, and a doll wrapped in a blanket lying in a box. Add stuffed toy animals (sheep, cow, donkey, etc.). Hang a large star shape outlined with white lights to represent the “angel” star. If possible,

set up a plain tree on which the children may place handmade ornaments from Lessons 10-12 (Readiness activities).

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Angel Ornament</i> B. <i>Gloria in Excelsis Deo</i> C. <i>Be a Herald</i>	angel pattern (see p. 141); paper; scissors; glue sticks or tape; art supplies; hole punch; thread, yarn, string or ribbon <i>The SDA Hymnal</i> (optional) <i>The SDA Hymnal</i> , picture of a herald (optional)
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> Christmas-theme offering container
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times and angel costumes, blanket, sticks, crumpled colored paper paper, scissors, marker chalkboard or whiteboard or poster board, chalk or marker, Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Guess the Title</i>	paper, pencils or markers
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Share an Angel</i> B. <i>Doorknob Hanger</i> C. <i>Special Project</i>	angel pattern (see p. 141), scissors, art supplies doorknob hanger pattern (see p. 142), heavy paper, scissors, art supplies, colored pencils or pens note to send home (see activity)

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- angel pattern (see p. 141)
- paper
- scissors
- glue sticks or tape
- art supplies
- hole punch
- thread, yarn, string, or ribbon

A. Angel Ornament

In advance, copy an angel pattern for each child (see page 141) and punch a hole at the top.

Distribute the supplies. Have the children decorate the angels and cut them out. The pocket can be cut out and either glued or taped to the front of the angel. Invite the children to place an offering in them. When finished, loop thread, yarn, string, or ribbon through the hole and hang the angels on the tree (or other appropriate place).

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Don’t our angels look pretty? What do these angels make you think of at Christmas time?** (The angels who visited the shepherds when Jesus was born.) **Our Bible story today is about just that, the good news and joy some angels brought to the shepherds. The memory verse today is “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (Luke 2:10, NIV). Do you like to worship by singing? Our message today is:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- *The SDA Hymnal* (optional)

B. Gloria in Excelsis Deo

If possible, have the music for “Angels We Have Heard on High” (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 142). Ask: **Do you know the song “Angels We Have Heard on High”? The chorus of that song says “Gloria in excelsis Deo.”** Write “Gloria in excelsis Deo” where all may see. Then help the children sing the chorus several times until they know the words.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Do you know what “Gloria in excelsis Deo” means? These are Latin words. It sounds like “Gloria-in-egg-shell-sees-day-oh.” Latin is an old language that no one speaks anymore. “Gloria” means glory. “Excelsis” means in the highest. “Deo” means God. So “Gloria in excelsis Deo” means “glory to God in the highest.”**

When Baby Jesus was born, the angels were so happy and full of praise they just had to sing! Today we will learn about the song the angels sang. Do you like to worship by singing?

The memory verse today is “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of

great joy that will be for all the people' " (Luke 2:10, NIV). Our message today is:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.

Say that with me.

C. Be a Herald

If possible, show the students a picture of an ancient herald. Allow response time as you ask: **Do you know what a herald is? A herald is an official messenger. In ancient times, a king's herald would blow a trumpet to announce the arrival of the king when the king entered a special place. Do you know that some heralds announced Jesus' birth? Today we will learn more about those heralds. Maybe this song will give you a clue.**

Sing together "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, No. 122). If they don't know it, help the children learn the first verse.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Who are the heralds in the song we sang? Did you know that you are a herald when you sing Christmas carols? Who do they tell about? What are some ways we can be heralds for Jesus?** (Sing carols; tell others about Him and why we love Him; give away books or magazines about Jesus; invite friends to Sabbath School, etc.) **If you want to be a herald for Jesus, raise your hand.**

Today's memory verse tells about good news the angels shared. It says: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people" (Luke 2:10, NIV). Our message today is:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.

Say that with me.

NOTE: Prayer and Praise appears on page 106.

You Need:

- Christmas song: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" (*The SDA Hymnal*, No. 122)
- picture of a herald (optional)

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times and angel costumes
- blanket
- sticks
- crumpled colored paper

Experiencing the Story

Characters: angels, Gabriel*, shepherds

Setting the scene:

Darken the room and turn on the angel star made for room decorations. Assign parts and dress the children in appropriate costumes. One angel should wear gold on his or her costume as the angel who first appears in the story. Dress some children as shepherds and have them lie on a blanket on the floor as they pretend to be asleep. Crumple colored paper on some sticks to make a campfire and place it in the center of the blanket. Scatter toy sheep nearby or let some children pretend to be the sheep, “baaing” at the appropriate times.

Have the angels “talk” in the dark at first, then when the first angel starts talking, turn on the lights. After the first angel has spoken, have the other angels start singing the chorus to “Angels We Have Heard on High” (*The SDA Hymnal*, No. 142). At the end, have all join in.

*See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 780.

Read or tell the story.

(Three or four angels stand in a group and appear to be talking together.)

“It’s time! We have waited so long! The time has finally come! Jesus is born! Oh, His incredible love for these people is amazing!” one excited angel bubbled with joy.

“But do you see? Hardly anyone is paying attention,” added another.

“The priests in the temple continue to sacrifice the lambs,” said another, “but

they don’t seem to know what that means.”

“Soon we can tell them that Jesus has been born,” added another. “I just want to shout: ‘We have GOOD NEWS for you! Your Saviour has been born!’ ”

The angel choir knew what they would sing. They were ready to tell the world about Jesus. It was almost time for their special concert. Tonight! Tonight they would sing their song of praise. And all the world would remember it for years to come.

Angels had watched the people who were supposed to know about the Saviour’s birth. The very ones who had been given the good news through their prophets didn’t even seem to care about it. The greatest event that would ever happen on earth had taken place. Yet only a few people were even looking for it. At that very time a few shepherds who were gathered on a hillside were studying the prophecies. They were among the few who knew a Saviour would come soon.

(Have all the “angels” group together and move toward the “shepherds” on the blanket. Only “Gabriel” approaches the blanket at this time.)

The command rang out, and the angels hurried to take their places. In the middle of the night Gabriel led them to the skies above Bethlehem. There they waited while Gabriel spoke to some shepherds who were watching their sheep. Suddenly, God’s glory lit up the night. The shepherds in the field were terrified! *[Turn on the lights.]*

(Gabriel speaks to the shepherds.)

“Don’t be afraid,” Gabriel announced. “I have good news, joyful news. News to gladden the entire world. This very day, your Saviour has been born. You’ll find Him in Bethlehem wrapped in soft cloths and lying in a manger.”

(All the angels gather around the shepherds.) Suddenly, the sky was filled with shining angels. The angel choir joined Gabriel, filling the night with the most glorious music ever heard. "Glory to our God. The highest glory to Him. Peace has come to earth. God has sent His best gift to humanity." [Angels all sing the chorus to "Angels We Have Heard on High" as they move away from the shepherds.]

On and on they sang, as they slowly went back toward the heavens. The astonished shepherds were stunned.

Filled with awe, one shepherd finally found his voice. "What are we waiting for?" he asked. "Let's go to Bethlehem to see this babe the Lord has sent."

Did you know that the angels are still singing the glory song today? Joy, praise, and thankfulness for God's love gift of Jesus still fills the hearts of the angels until they overflow. Our hearts can overflow with that joy of worshiping Jesus too. Like the angels, we can be full of gladness and good news. We can worship God in song.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why were the angels so excited? Why did the angel say to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid"?**

If you had been there, what would you have thought when the angel appeared? What would you have done when the angel choir filled the sky?

How can you make your worship be as joyful as the angels? Remember our message ...

 **WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.**

Memory Verse

In advance, cut out large music notes from the paper and write the memory verse on them, one word per note. Have the children take turns putting them in

order as the whole class says the memory verse together. Repeat until the children know the verse.

The memory verse is: "**Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people**" (Luke 2:10, NIV).

Bible Study

In advance, write the texts below where all may see. Form five groups and assign each one a text. Or give a text to each of five students.

Say: **Let's learn more about angels and the messages they brought to people. As you read the texts, find out who the angel was (if the text mentions a name) and what their special duty was.** Have adults assist as needed. Allow time for reporting to the class.

1. Genesis 28:10-15 (angels going up and down on Jacob's ladder)
2. Numbers 22:21-35 (angel with sword seen by Balaam's donkey)
3. Matthew 1:18-21 (angel that visited Joseph to tell him to marry Mary)
4. Luke 1:8-20 (Gabriel visited Zechariah to tell him his wife would have a son and to name him John.)
5. Luke 1:26-38 (Gabriel visited Mary to tell her about Baby Jesus.)

Debriefing

Allow time for reporting. Then ask: **Which of these angels would you like to have been or seen? Why?**

These angels had important jobs and missions from God. But none sound as if they had as much joy as the angels who sang to the shepherds. What was their good news?

Say the memory verse together. **That reminds me of our message:**

 **WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.**

You Need:

- paper
- scissors
- marker

You Need:

- chalkboard or whiteboard or poster board
- chalk or marker
- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- pencils or markers

Guess the Title

Have each child draw something to represent a sacred Christmas carol. Let the children show their pictures and have the class guess the song title. Large group: form small groups and have each group picture a song title.

Say: **While we work, let's sing some songs that tell the good news of Jesus' birth.** Let the children choose the songs. Sing them as time allows.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Was it easy or hard to guess the Christmas song titles?**

How do you feel when you sing?

What does Christmas music make you think of?

How can we use music to spread the good news about Jesus' birth? Our message says:



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 71 or 72, both verses)

"Silent Night, Holy Night" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 76, verses 1 and 3)

"Joy to the World" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 81)

"There's a Song in the Air" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 82)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **We worship Jesus when we give our offerings so others can know the good news about Him.** If the children made angel ornaments (Readiness A), point them out with their offerings in them. If not, collect the offering in a Christmas-theme offering device.

You Need:

- angel ornaments or Christmas-theme offering device



Prayer

Ask the children to name something for which they are thankful at Christmas time. Then thank God for the privilege of worshiping Him as the angels did.

Sharing the Lesson

A. Share an Angel

In advance, make copies of the angel pattern. (See page 14. Use the angel only.)

You Need:

- angel pattern (see p. 141)
- scissors
- art supplies

Distribute the supplies. Have the children write the memory verse on their angel, then decorate it and cut it out. As they work, say: **Think of someone with whom you would like to share your angel this week. Maybe you would like to sing a Christmas song for them too.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Have you thought of someone you want to share your angel with? Tell us about it. When you give them the angel, tell them about the song the angels sang for the shepherds, and you will be a herald for Jesus.**

When we tell others the good news of Jesus, and we do it with joy, it makes Jesus very happy. Let's say our message together again.



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.

B. Doorknob Hanger

In advance, photocopy a doorknob hanger for each child (see page 142) and write the name and address of your church on the board for the children to copy onto the back of it. Have them decorate the front side and cut it out.

Debriefing

Say: **Take this home with you and give it to someone to hang on their door. When you do that you will be a herald for Jesus. When we tell others the good news of Jesus, and we do it with joy, it makes Jesus very happy. Remember:**



WE WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE SING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE.

C. Special Project

Say: **One way we can bring joy to others is to give them a present. Children usually make a list of things they want for Christmas. But some children don't because they know they won't get anything. Their parents can't work, or don't have jobs.**

Let's make a list of things that children like best. Next week, try to bring a gift for a child your same age, and we will give them to children who otherwise wouldn't get anything for Christmas.

Take all suggestions, then narrow the list down to a few things the children in your class can afford. Send a note home, asking parents to send a wrapped gift next week for a child the same gender and age as theirs. Be sensitive to children who may not be able to purchase gifts. Have some extras for them to give, or take them shopping yourself.

Closing

Close with a simple prayer, thanking God for His Son, Jesus, and that we can worship Him with songs of joy as the angels did. Ask God to help the children tell others the good news of His coming.

You Need:

- doorknob hanger pattern (see p. 142)
- heavy paper
- scissors
- art supplies
- colored pencils or pens

You Need:

- note to send home (see activity)

Angel Heralds

References

Luke 2:8-15; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 43-49

Memory Verse

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (Luke 2:10, NIV).

The Message

We worship God when we sing joyful songs of praise.

Do you know why many people celebrate Christmas? What do you think it was like when Jesus was born? All of heaven was excited! And the angels were eager to share the good news. Maybe they talked together like this . . .

“It’s time! The time has finally come! Jesus is born!” one excited angel bubbled with joy.

“But do you see? Hardly anyone is paying attention,” added another.

“The priests in the temple continue to sacrifice the lambs,” said another. “But I don’t think they know what that means.”

“I wish we could tell them that Jesus has been born,” added another angel. “I just want to shout: ‘We have GOOD NEWS for you! Your Saviour has been born!’”

The angel choir knew what they would sing. They were ready to tell the world about Jesus. It was almost time for their special concert. Tonight! Tonight they would sing. And all the world would remember it for years to come. Jesus, the Son of God, had come to this sin-filled planet to be born as a baby. They would tell the world.

Angels had been watching people on earth. They saw the priests in the temple. Those men were supposed to know about the Saviour’s birth. Prophets had told about it for years. But those who had studied their prophecies weren’t even thinking about it. The greatest event that would ever happen on earth had taken place. Yet only a few people were even looking for it.

No, people in the temple didn’t remember. Or maybe they just didn’t care. But a few people who lived near Bethlehem cared. At that very time a few shepherds who were gathered on a hillside were studying the prophecies. They were among the few who knew it was time for the Saviour to come.

Soon the command rang out, and the angels hurried to take their places. In the middle of the night, Gabriel* led them to the skies above Bethlehem. There they waited while Gabriel spoke to the shepherds. Then the angel choir would sing.

Suddenly, God’s glory lit up the night. The shepherds in the field were terrified!

“Don’t be afraid,” Gabriel announced. “I have good news. This very day, your Saviour has been born. You’ll find Him in Bethlehem wrapped in soft cloths and lying in a manger.”

Immediately, the sky was filled with shining angels. The angel choir joined Gabriel, filling the night with the most glorious music ever heard. “Glory to our God. The highest glory to Him. Peace has come to earth. God has sent His best gift to humanity.” On and on they sang, as they



slowly went back toward the heavens. Still stunned, the astonished shepherds watched.

Filled with awe, one shepherd finally found his voice. "What are we waiting for?" he asked. "Let's go to Bethlehem to see this babe the Lord has sent."

And they soon left that hillside to go in search of the Saviour of the world—a baby, lying in a manger.

Did you know that the angels are still singing the glory song today? Our hearts can overflow with that joy of worshiping Jesus too. Like the angels, we can worship God in song.

*See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 780.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Sit with your family and read your lesson story together. Talk about the meaning of Christmas. Tell about your Sabbath School class project to give gifts to children. Make plans to get a gift.
- Sing some Christmas carols. Talk about ways you can share them with others. If possible, make plans to go caroling around your neighborhood sometime soon.

Sunday

- For worship today, sing "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." Ask someone to help you find the word *herald* in a dictionary. What does it mean? Ask: How can we be heralds for Jesus?
- Teach the memory verse to your family. Ask: What was the good news for the shepherds? What is the good news for us today? Thank God for His promises.
- Put the doorknob hanger you made in Sabbath School on someone's doorknob this afternoon. Or cut one out of heavy paper and write "Hark! the herald angels sing" and "Jesus is coming again!" on the front and color it. On the back write your church's name and address.

Monday

- During worship today read Luke 2:8-15 together. Ask: Why were the shepherds afraid? What were the angels singing? What do angels do today?
- Ask each person to draw a picture of an angel and cut it out. If you have a Christmas tree, hang your angels on it. If not, put yours where you will see it often to remind you of the memory verse.
- Listen to some Christmas music before prayer. Thank Jesus for angels.

Tuesday

- Ask someone to help you find a book about sheep and shepherds in the library. During worship today, share what you learned with your family. Say your memory verse together. Ask each person to tell about the best "good news" they have ever heard. Then thank God for good news and happy times.

Wednesday

- For worship today, act out or draw the title of a sacred Christmas song. Have your family guess what it is. How many songs about angels can you think of?
- Let each person pick a song to sing before prayer. Thank Jesus for beautiful Christmas music.
- Go outside after dark and look at the night sky. Find the brightest star. Is it as bright as the star over the place where Jesus was born?

Thursday

- For worship, act out the Bible story with your family. Sing the chorus of "Angels We Have Heard on High" when you come to the part about the angels singing.
- Ask if you can help make angel- and sheep-shaped cookies. Sing or listen to your favorite Christmas songs while you work. Save some cookies for tomorrow night.
- Invite some friends to your house to sing Christmas carols Friday night.

Friday

- Before your guests arrive, plan the Christmas carols you will sing together.
- Be a good herald. Be ready to share your lesson story with them. After singing, serve your cookies and a drink. Invite your guests to be heralds too. Plan to go caroling together sometime soon. Thank Jesus for friends.