

1,2,3 STORY TIME!

WHO WILL BE NOTIFIED FIRST?

Do you remember our last story? The birth of Jesus, the King of kings, in a stable. A royal event that no one knows, neither in Bethlehem, nor in Jerusalem, nor in Rome... anywhere in the world. But God wants men to learn of the happy event: He fulfilled what He promised. So it is He who will share this good news. Who will He tell it to first? How is He going to do it? This is what we will see now with the story that we are going to tell you. You will be able to read it again at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke.

Ah, let's see... the question: Why does God send messengers from heaven?

WHO WILL GOD CHOOSE?

In the small town of Bethlehem everyone sleeps soundly, except in a stable where an extraordinary event has just happened, the birth of Jesus. The baby is there, lying in the manger, under the tender and amazed gaze of Mary, his mother and Joseph. On earth no one has been warned of this royal birth but in heaven it is not the same, the angels rejoice, they sing and glorify God.



In the hills around Bethlehem there are a few men who do not sleep. They are sitting around a fire. They are watching over their flocks of sheep. It is dark, everything is calm.



Suddenly, a very great light like that of the sun illuminates the sky and an angel appears to them. The shepherds are scared, what's going on?

- Do not be afraid! said the angel to them, be reassured because God is sending me to tell you good news and this good news will be great joy for you and for all of God's people!

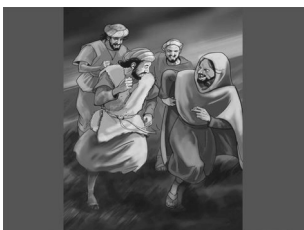
Today in the city of Bethlehem, the Savior, whom God has long promised, was born! Here's how you'll recognize him: you'll find a little baby swaddled up and lying in a manger.

Other angels are coming down from heaven. Thousands of them are singing and praising God, it is a heavenly concert:

- Glory, glory to God in the highest heavens, and peace on earth to all men whom God loves!

Shepherds are amazed by what they see and hear, heavenly messengers, heavenly songs. Heaven is celebrating because Jesus was born.

When the angels leave them, it is silence and dark night again.



The shepherds say to each other:

- Let's go! Let's go to Bethlehem quickly to see what happened and to witness what God has just revealed to us. They leave their herds and quickly set out.

When they see the stable, they enter slowly and there they find

Mary and Joseph with the newborn baby lying in the manger. They are upset and amazed. This baby that they see, is like all babies, but they know they are in the presence of the son of God, the king of kings. They tell Mary and Joseph what they have just experienced, how they've seen the glory of God, how they've heard the songs of the angels. They report everything the angel told them. Mary and Joseph listen to them attentively, they want to keep all these words in their memory, in their heart.



The shepherds return to their flocks while singing the glory and praises of God, for what they saw and heard is exactly what the angel told them. They saw the glory of God and the promised Savior, they are just simple men, often despised by others, yet they were the first that God informed of the birth of Jesus. In our next few stories, we'll see how God will share this good news with so many more.

1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



We can immediately answer the question: Why does God send messengers from heaven? Now, He sends His angels because He wants the shepherds to know that Jesus was born. But these shepherds, who are they? A few men lost there, in the hills in the middle of the night. Who knew them? ... Who knew they were there with their flocks? ... God knew it. These men saw thousands of angels, the sky lit up with the glory of God. They heard the music from heaven; they were the first to know that Jesus was born, the first to see and worship him! Can you imagine all of this? Me, no! This is beyond me! God could have warned the king, the ministers, rich people, but no! He chose people like you, like me, like these shepherds. Do you know what God wants today? He wants everyone to know that Jesus has come. There are still a lot of people who don't know it. You can say it around you; it is good news because Jesus is coming to do us good.

4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



What do our children hear about Jesus? Of his birth? What do they see around Christmas time? What is the message conveyed to them? What remains of this heartbreaking true story? The good news announced to the shepherds is still relevant today. Jesus came to earth to replace the sadness, sin, and evil in our hearts with joy, peace, and freedom. How do we share this good news with our children? We hope that our "1, 2, 3 STORY TIME" programs help you bring this beautiful message of the gospel to them.