

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

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It wasn't a fleeting act of spontaneity. A casually thrown together event. It was a night that had been carefully constructed. The moment Eve's lips collided with the apple; the second Adam choose to disregard God's instructions and we went our own way; when sin first entered the scene and scratched out our access to God — there was a

rescue mission in mind; a ball that was set into motion. There was a nation established, a law written, kings put in place, prophets given words... and there was a virgin made to conceive. There might not have been a pine tree or glitzy ornaments; but it certainly wasn't lackluster... there were angels. Tons of them. **This night, this beautiful powerful moment was about to be announced to a handful of shepherds. When all of us were pacing our planet, all of Heaven was gripped with the weight of the moment that would impact all of eternity. God's plan, his mission for us, this very night it was being introduced.**

It was an ordinary night to the shepherds who were about to receive the greatest announcement of all time. Seconds before [an angel of the Lord](#) appeared the greatest concern they likely had was whether or not they might have to chase off a wolf or two during their watch. And then it happened.

"An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.'"

I've mentioned before that my Dad and I are unintentionally famous in our family for our purchase of mine and Brandon's wedding invitations. I can remember the salesperson making timely quips about the elegance of one option over another; and then this: "The announcement of your ceremony and invitation to attend is casting the first impression of the event to the potential attendee. It sets the stage for their expectation of the rest of the experience." So of course we spent half of our budget immediately afterwards.

She had a point. **An announcement casts an impression relating to the grandeur,**

the impact, the relevance, the *glory* of a moment. The angel of the Lord presented himself with glory so rich it permeated the space around the shepherds... and they were terrified. This glory was just the beginning, for immediately after the angel spoke he was joined by a great company of the heavenly host. My guests saw gold writing and felt crisp paper; these shepherds saw a dark night transform to blinding brilliance. I imagine as their hearts pounded and eyes widened the skies were then filled with a number of angels that rivaled the stars. You see, a host of angels often was used to describe an *army*. And on this night there were a "*great company* of the heavenly host." It must have been breathtaking.

I love how [Joy Williams](#) ponders the wonder of the night:

"It's still a mystery to me that the hands of God could be so small. How tiny fingers reaching in the night were the very hands that measured the sky... Hallelujah, hallelujah; Heaven's love reaching down to save the world."

So let's agree to consider the greatness of the day we are all about to celebrate. **Let's revel for a few moments between gifts and goodies that an announcement was made that matters. With the bleating of sheep in the background, Jesus, the lamb of God, was born to take away the sins of the world.** It was the most anticipated, most desperately hoped for, most glorious announcement of all time. And it matters to us all.