

Where were you when?
[Isaiah 9:2-7](#), [Luke 1:26-38](#), [Luke 2:1-7](#), [Luke 2:8-14](#),
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Where were you when? Anytime there's a truly big event in this world, we remember exactly where we were and what we were doing when we heard the news. I remember exactly where I was when I realized Covid-19 wasn't going to be just some passing worry, and I remember exactly where I was when I heard about the attacks on 9/11. But sometimes the moments we remember don't change everyone's world, just our world. I remember the moments when my children were born, the moment when I heard God's call to ministry. The moments that change our lives, the moments that we always remember where you were when.

I'm sure that the people of Bethlehem weren't expecting much that first Christmas night. It would've been a busy night, with travelers coming and going, registering for the census, filling up the rooms in all the inns and guest houses, staying with distant relatives or family friends. Everyone going about their business as quickly and quietly as possible, looking forward to the day when the census would be completed and things would just go back to normal. It was an ordinary night. Nothing anyone would ever remember. Nothing anyone would look back on and ask, where were you when?

Until the angels showed up. The shepherds would remember that moment forever – being blasted awake by a heavenly army standing all around them, shouting and singing at the top of their lungs that there was Good News for them, because a king had been born that day, just down the road in the city of Bethlehem. Those shouts and that music would be something those shepherds would remember and talk about for the rest of their lives. But more even than the angels, they would remember the child. When they went back to their flocks at the end of the night, they were glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, because it was just as the angel had told them. And that means that the thing they were celebrating, the thing they were praising God for, it wasn't the angels themselves, it wasn't that glorious music, the dazzling display of God's power. It was what the angels had told them about. It was the child. That's what they would remember most of all – the king of kings they met in the manger, the child of Bethlehem who would save them all.

And against all odds, against all the expectations of the people who went to bed that night in Bethlehem and woke up the next morning with no idea what had happened, that night changed the world. That night, that child, made everything different. From that moment on, God was part of creation. God was part of this world. From that moment on, the wall between heaven and earth was broken, and for the rest of his life on earth, that child would keep hammering away at that wall until the whole

thing came crashing down. We are all here tonight because that night in Bethlehem changed the world forever, we are here because God was there, there in the manger, there that night in Bethlehem.

But it isn't just that night. The same God who entered creation on that first night in Bethlehem is still here, still part of this world, still with us now. The wall between heaven and earth has never been rebuilt, the song of the angels is still being sung today. There are so many other voices that are calling to us, telling us that our work, our wealth, our status and social standing, that these are the most valuable things in the world, these are the priorities we should put first in our lives, and yet through all that noise and nonsense that the world keeps shouting, the song of the angels keeps coming through. God is still coming after us, still coming to rescue us, still breaking apart everything that might keep his beloved children away from his hope and peace and joy. And that means that that night that changed the world forever doesn't have to stay in the past. It doesn't have to stay in scripture and song. Jesus is alive, Jesus Christ is here with us, and that means that tonight is the night. This is the place. We are the people. I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – he's here. Here with us today, in this city, in this place.

So Where were you when? Where were you when you first heard the angels sing? Where were you when your eyes were opened to see the walls come crashing down and heaven come rolling in? Where were

you when you ran and knelt at the manger and met the King of Kings?
Where were you when your world changed forever? It can be tonight. It
can be right here, right in this place. Jesus is here with us, and nothing
will ever be the same again. Glory to God in the highest heaven. Amen.