



25 Days of Advent

Seeing Jesus Through the Eyes of the Christmas Story Characters

ADVENT DAY 1: Dec. 1 – Angel Gabriel, God's Chosen Messenger

Devotional

Have you ever wondered what the angel who carried God's message to the world thought about that task? Gabriel was the angel chosen by God to tell:

- Zechariah that he and his wife would have a son who would prepare the way for God
- Mary that she would mother Christ
- Joseph that he should not be offended by Mary's pregnancy and marry her anyway
- The shepherds that their Savior was born and encourage them to tell the world
- Joseph again, to take his child, the son of God, to Egypt to avoid being slaughtered by a king

Those are challenging circumstances and very difficult messages! How can you convince someone well past their childbearing years that they will soon be a parent? What do you say to a young teenage girl who is cowering in your presence that she will become pregnant and bear a child even though she's never been with a man? How do you convince a man that the woman who was promised to him was pregnant (not by him) and that he should accept her and the child as his own anyway?

Was the task difficult? Did he understand the weight of his message and the historical turning point that he ushered into the world of humans? Did he face battles along the way, spiritual warfare with the enemy who certainly did NOT want to see God's son born to man?

In his book, *An Angel's Story*, author Max Lucado assumes a fierce and ongoing battle in the spiritual realm. In the angel Gabriel's view:

We knew we could not fail. But we had no idea that the battle would come so soon. Suddenly I was entangled in an invisible net. Row after row of angels tumbled in upon me. Even the final flank was moving too fast to avoid the trap. Within moments we were a ball of confusion: wings flapping against wings; angels bumping into angels.

According to the scenario Lucado envisions, that was the first of several spiritual battles between God's army of angels and Satan's cadre of demons before Gabriel even makes it to earth.