

Here is the news

Scene 1 A Network TV Newsroom – voice over theme music

[Theme music]

This is the early evening news. Here are tonight's news headlines.

[Theme music]

The main story tonight is that groups of soldiers have been searching the little town of Bethlehem looking for terrorists. We speak to a local resident

[Theme music]

We talk to some of those involved in the lead up to these events and look at some of the background to what could be the greatest event in history

[Theme music]

Later in the programme, we talk to a group of shepherds on a hill above Bethlehem who apparently were some of the first witnesses at the scene. We get their reaction to what has happened.

We also talk to the archangel Gabriel, God's official spokesperson, to get the background to all of this and also the official view from heaven

We catch up with some remarkable visitors from the east who seem to know more about all this than anyone else.

Here, with this and the rest of today's stories is your newsreader Donna McTrevor*

[fade]

[* There is a famous UK news anchor Trevor MacDonnald – use your own made up name. Similarly use your own name for Hattie Kaid the roving reporter, who bears only a superficial resemblance to the famous UK reporter Kate Aidi]

Scene 2 - Innkeeper Interview

Donna Welcome to the evening News. In tonight's main story we hear how soldiers
McTrevor loyal to king Herod have been scouring the little town of Bethlehem,
In the studio apparently looking for terrorists. Our middle East correspondent, Hattie
Kaid*, has been talking to witnesses and joins us now by satellite. Hattie,
can you hear me? (*Hattie stands still, obviously unable to hear her*) Hattie,
are you there? Hattie?
Hattie (*fiddling with earpiece, hears her*) Good evening Donna
Donna I gather you are in the little town of Bethlehem. What has been happening?
Hattie Things are a bit confused, Donna. I am speaking to the manager of a local
inn to get more details. (*Turns to innkeeper*) Good evening, can you tell us
what has been happening here today.
Innkeeper About 9 this morning a group of Herod's soldiers arrived and started going
from house to house. We thought they were looking for terrorists, but it
turned out they were looking for a young couple and their new-born child.
Hattie You spoke to the soldiers?
Innkeeper Yes. I told them a couple answering their description had been here but they
left yesterday. I told the soldiers all the everything that happened while they
were here

Hattie What things?
Innkeeper They arrived late one night just before the census. I had to put them in the stable - the whole place was full. It's a good job I let them stay because the wife was heavily pregnant and the baby came in the middle of the night.

Hattie Then what?
Innkeeper About 5 in the morning a group of shepherds turned up. Said a whole army of angels had appeared to them and told them to come and see the baby. I thought they must have been drinking

Hattie And after that?
Innkeeper Then a few days ago three scholars arrived by camel. Obviously travelled for months to get here. Come from the east they said. I told the soldiers, how they brought fabulous gifts for the child.

Hattie Do you think these were the same visitors who turned up in Jerusalem last week looking for a new king?
Innkeeper Could be. I told the soldiers the child was obviously going to be really important. Perhaps even become king

Hattie What happened then?
Innkeeper Then they got really angry. Then they ran off to tell king Herod. Said they'd be back though

Hattie The couple left just before this, you say?
Innkeeper Yes. Yesterday morning the husband comes in and says they need to leave straight away. He seemed to know something was going to happen. He paid up and they left. I let them take one of my donkeys. The one they arrived on was obviously past it.

Hattie Thank you. *(turning to camera)* So, a dramatic day here in the little town of Bethlehem. All is quiet now but the soldiers' threat that they would be back has left residents very tense. This is Hattie Kaid in the little town of Bethlehem.

Donna Thank you, Hattie. More on this story after this...

Scene 3 - Shepherds interview

Donna McTrevor in the studio Welcome back. Before the break we heard about a baby born in a stable in the little town of Bethlehem and how Herod's soldiers turned up looking for him after he and his parents had left town. It now appears that there is a lot more to this remarkable story. Apparently, The first people to see the new baby were some shepherds from the hills above Bethlehem. We sent Hattie Kaid to find out more. Hattie, can you hear me?

Hattie *(taking very quietly)* Yes, Donna

Donna Where are you?

Hattie *(taking very quietly)* I am on a hill above Bethlehem

Donna Can you see the shepherds?

Hattie *(taking very quietly)* Yes, there is a small group over there sitting round a fire. I'll go over and talk to them. *(walks over and addresses the shepherds in a loudish voice)* Good evening *(shepherds jump out of their skins with surprise and fear)*

Shepherd I wish people would stop doing that!

Hattie I believe you were witnesses to some remarkable events a short while ago. Would you like to tell the viewers what happened

Shepherd Well, we were watching our flocks by night, all seated on the ground
Hattie Then what happened?
Shepherd The angel of the Lord appeared and glory shone around
Hattie What did he say?
Shepherd ‘Fear not’
Hattie Why did he say that?
Shepherd Well, mighty dread had seized our troubled mind
Hattie What did he say next?
Shepherd ‘Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind. To you in David’s town this day is born of David’s line a Saviour who is Christ the Lord and this shall be his sign: the heavenly babe you there will find to human view displayed all meanly wrapped in swathing bands and in a manger laid.’
Hattie What happened after that?
Shepherd Well, thus spake the seraph and forthwith appeared a shining throng of angels praising God who thus addressed their joyful song:
‘All glory be to God on high and on the earth be peace. Good will henceforth from heaven to men begin and never cease’
Hattie Well there you have it, Donna – shepherds, angels and a baby laid in a manger. What can this all mean? This is Hattie Kaid on a hill above Bethlehem handing back to the studio.
Donna What indeed? In part three we have a special report on a donkey that answered back when his master tried to make him go where he didn’t want to go! Plus, we have interviews with other witnesses to the remarkable events leading up to today’s main story. Don’t go away.

Scene 4 - Angel Gabriel Interview

Donna McTrevor (in the studio) Welcome to part 3. The angel Gabriel seems to have a lot to do with the events in our main story tonight. Our roving reporter, Hattie Kaid, caught up with him going somewhere or other.
Hattie Ooh! (*in voice of awe/fear having seen Gabriel for the first time*)
Gabriel Fear not!
Hattie You always seem to start by saying that.
Our reports indicate that about a year ago you appeared to the priest Zechariah in the temple and you told him to ‘fear not’.
A couple of months later you appeared to Mary and you told her to ‘fear not’
And we have just spoken to a group of shepherds you appeared to on a hill above Bethlehem and they told us that you told them to ‘fear not’
Why do people always seem to be afraid when you show up?
Gabriel I don’t know (*1 Pet 1:10-12*)
Hattie Let’s go back to your appearance to Mary. Why did you go to her
Gabriel The Lord sent me with a message
Hattie That she was going to have a baby. We know that. But why her?
Gabriel I don’t know
Hattie This baby appears to be very special. Apparently you told her that he would be known as the son of the Most High. What does this mean?
Gabriel I don’t know
Hattie You also said that he would reign on the throne of David and that his kingdom would never end. Why will it never end?

Gabriel I don't know
Hattie And you told her that she would have the baby because the Holy Spirit would come on her and the power of God would overshadow her. What is that all about?

Gabriel I don't know
Hattie Well, let's talk about the shepherds. Why did you appear to them?
Gabriel The Lord sent me with a message
Hattie That they would find a baby wrapped in swathing bands and laid in a manger. We know that. But why them?

Gabriel I don't know
Hattie This baby appears to be very special. Apparently you told them that he was descended from king David and is going to be a saviour. What did you mean by that?

Gabriel I don't know
Hattie Then a lot of other angels came and sang glory to God. You said that from now on good will would come from heaven to men. What does this mean? No, don't tell me, you don't know!

Gabriel Yes
Hattie Yes what?
Gabriel I **don't** know
Hattie Angel Gabriel thank you for your time although you haven't been very informative, I fear

Gabriel Fear not!
Donna Indeed. Still to come our science correspondent looks at new evidence that Donkeys really are the silliest things on four legs and our intrepid reporter Hattie Kaid catches up with some remarkable visitors from the east. Back after this.....

Scene 5 - Wise Men Interview

Donna McTrevor (In the studio) Welcome back. News just in. Our roving reporter Hattie Kaid has managed to track down the mysterious visitors from the east. Hattie, where are you?

Hattie Donna, I'm on the Damascus road.
Donna And you've found these mysterious wise men?
Hattie Yes, I heard a rumour that the wise men that visited Bethlehem earlier in the week had not gone back to Jerusalem as Herod instructed them, but had started back home by a different route. I guessed they might come this way.

Donna So what do they have to say?
Hattie A spokesman confirmed that they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod. Here's one of them now. Excuse me, can you tell the viewers why you are not going to Herod to tell him if you found the new king?

Wise man I had a dream that Herod was not going to worship the new king as he said but was going to try and destroy him
Hattie Why would he want to do that?
Wise man The last thing a tyrant like Herod needs is another king!
Hattie So, did you find the king?
Wise man We found him all right. Wonderful he was, just as we expected
Hattie How did you find out about him?

Wise man About a year ago, we were studying the night sky and we saw a great sign. We realised that this sign meant that the Great King, promised from before time, was about to be born

Hattie Wow. So then what?

Wise man There was only one thing to do. We chose choicest gifts to bring him and set off to join the whole world in worshipping him.

Hattie What happened when you arrived?

Wise man We were really surprised. No one in Jerusalem had heard of him. And when we eventually found him, no one else was there. It was as if no one was expecting him.

Hattie Are you sure you found the right place?

Wise man No doubt about it. This king has been promised for generations. Everything about his birth is foretold in the Sacred writings

Hattie What do the sacred writings say about him?

Wise man That he will reign for ever over a kingdom of love, joy and peace. That he will be a mighty warrior but he will also be a Father who cares for individual children like me and you.

Hattie Like me?

Wise man Yes. He loves you and he wants you to belong to his family

Hattie Does he?

Donna Ask him about their long journey.....

Hattie (*ignoring Donna*) I would really like to know a king like that

Donna Ask him about the gifts they brought

Hattie (*ignoring Donna*) Can I know him too?

Wise man Yes, he says you will find him, if you seek him with all your heart.

Donna Ask him how the camels feel

Hattie Please help me to find him.

Donna Well, we seem to have lost contact with Hattie. Hopefully we will re-establish contact with her before tomorrow morning's bulletin. (*pause*) And finally, it has been reported today that a Donkey has found its way all the way to Galilee from Judea, a distance of 130 miles all by itself. It just goes to show that not all donkeys are as stupid as they look. Good night.

End

Extra scene that can be used if more is needed

Scene A - Interview with soldier

Donald McTrevor
(in the studio) We have just heard that our reporter has managed to find one of the soldiers conducting the house-to-house search in Bethlehem

Reporter Excuse me. I'm a reporter from the early evening news. Can I ask you what's going on here?

Soldier There's nothing to see here. Please move along

Reporter We have heard that you are looking for a small child. Does it really need all these soldiers?

Soldier Look, we are just doing our job. The King says we must find the child who they say will become king

Reporter Do you know where he is?
Soldier No
Reporter Why is the king so afraid of a baby?
Soldier I can't comment on that. But we can't have two kings can we?
Reporter What will you do if you can't find him?
Soldier We are killing all the male children under 3 just to make sure
Reporter What!
Soldier Look, as I said, we are just doing our job
Reporter Well, not much information there – back to the studio

Scene B - Simeon and Anna interview

Donald McTrevor (in the studio) Welcome back. We have just been told that the fugitive couple actually spent a day in Jerusalem to present their new born child in the temple. Our religion correspondent Hattie Kaid is talking to some temple staff.
Hattie Yes, Donald, I am talking to Simeon and Anna. Simeon, you first, I believe you saw the child
Simeon God promised me that I would not die until I had seen this child. And I have.
Hattie What's so special about him?
Simeon He is God's Salvation. A light for the Gentiles and the Glory of Israel as I told his father and mother
Hattie What did they say?
Simeon They didn't say much. We told them that their son would bring them great joy but also great distress
Hattie And what about you, Anna
Anna I've prayed and fasted in this temple for nearly 60 years that the Messiah would come. God showed me that this child is the promised Messiah.
Hattie So what did you do?
Anna When I saw him, I just couldn't stop telling everyone in the temple about him.
Hattie What happened next?
Anna The young couple consecrated the child to the Lord and offered a sacrifice of two doves, as the law commands. And then they left
Hattie Thank you. Nothing particularly remarkable about the day in Jerusalem itself. However, these two temple workers seem pretty convinced that this child is someone special. This is Hattie Kaid in the Temple, Jerusalem
Donald Is the missing child the new king and the Messiah or not? We contacted the king's palace and the palace of the high priest. Both declined to comment although the high priest's office threatened shut us down if we continued to suggest that this child might be the Messiah. More after these messages...