

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT FOR THE SON OF MAN

by Jacqueline Hurley



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**GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT FOR
THE SON OF MAN**

An Angelic Pageant on Spiritual Gifts

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SYNOPSIS: The angels are in a tizzy when they learn that Jesus' birth is imminent. They'll miss his holy presence in heaven, and Chuck frets about his interactions with humans on earth. He notes several who preceded Jesus that had a tough time: Adam and Eve. Abraham. Moses. David. Then, since "angels are warriors, not worriers," they equip Jesus with every spiritual gift for his life on earth. Angels approach the ethereal throne room with a flickering light symbolizing their gift as a short description of it is read. Knowledge, encouragement, giving, teaching, mercy, prophecy, healing, faith and ten more gifts are given. The grand finale features a lit star of Bethlehem slowly rising as God's voice intones, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased" (Mt. 3:17). Includes many short parts plus unlimited singers for carols and the song "Precious Gifts." Innovative and informative.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 4 males, 5-24 either, extras)

ANGEL OF TRUTH (m/f) older student, expressive reader.

ANGEL OF LIGHT (m/f)..... older student, expressive reader.

ANGEL GABRIEL (m) role requires some
memorization and effective
delivery.

ANGEL ANGELA (f)..... older student, expressive reader.

ANGEL CHUCK (CHICK) (m/f)..... older student, expressive reader.

ANGEL MICHAEL (m) Less memorization, military-
like delivery.

VOICE OF GOD (m)..... Sunday school teacher or
parishioner (Off-stage voice).

VOICE OF JESUS (m) Sunday school teacher or
parishioner (Off-stage voice).

ANGEL GUARD (m/f): The Angel Guard also doubles as the children's choir. Any number of children may participate as singers. There are short speaking parts for up to twenty-one children of all ages (speaking parts may be doubled or tripled).

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DURATION: 20 minutes

PRODUCTION NOTES

SET: An area at Center Stage suggests the throne room of God. The play assumes Jesus is with his Father in this veiled room prior to his departure for earth on the first Christmas. A small, child-high opening in this cloudy set is needed to receive the Gifts of the Spirit symbolized by flickering electric candles, presented at the end of the play.

One idea for the throne room set is to paint a backdrop light blue (or use light blue fabric) and affix it to the Backstage Center wall. Pin or tape sheer white curtains to the backdrop, gathering each side back with a tie. You may make clouds by gluing Fiberloft polyester stuffing onto various sizes of balloons. Tape these to the light blue backdrop. Finally, place a small table at a height suitable for children to hold the 18 tea lights representing spiritual gifts. Cover it with a white cloth. If desired, you can place stacks of books in varying heights under the cloth so the staggered tea lights will be more visible. White Christmas lights and mirrors may also be used to decorate this area. Anything dreamy and ethereal that hints of space beyond will work for this area.

Two microphones—one at Stage Left and one at Stage Right—are recommended for the Angels of Truth and Light, and one or more microphones are needed to capture sound for GABRIEL and for the heavenly ANGEL GUARD, when they present the gifts and deliver their lines. You will also need a chair or stool for CHUCK.

A large, lit star of Bethlehem rises from behind the throne room at the conclusion of the play. Ensure that you will have ample electric cord to maintain power as it rises. The star could be fastened to a dowel and slowly raised by a person standing behind the throne room area. The sanctuary is darkened as the star rises and actors and audience sing “Silent Night.” The lights on this star mirror the tea lights of the spiritual gifts,

PROPS and COSTUMES: Electric tea lights (18 plus several spares). These little lights may be found with Christmas items in most stores featuring holiday lighting.

Angel costumes for all players. Oversized white T-shirts or white choir robes will work. You may add tinsel halos and/or white cardboard wings if desired.

MUSIC: The ANGEL GUARD sings, as do the other ANGELS (All but CHUCK). The song “Precious Gifts” has new lyrics set to the tune of “Simple Gifts,” the old Shaker hymn which may be readily found online, and a Christmas medley consisting of one verse each of four songs: “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing,” “Angels from the Realms of Glory,” “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night,” and “Angels We Have Heard on High.” They may also join the audience in singing “Silent Night” at the performance’s conclusion.

1 **ANGEL OF TRUTH:** *(Standing at a microphone Stage Right.)*
2 Welcome! I am the Angel of Truth, and with me is *(Gesturing*
3 *Stage Left.)* the Angel of Light. The truth is, we're not real angels.
4 We're church-story angels. We're not at all like the wondrous
5 angels described over two hundred times in our Bible. Still...

6 **ANGEL OF LIGHT:** *(Standing at a microphone Stage Left.)* ...We've
7 come to shed some *light* on one real truth about our Savior. We
8 can assume that even before Christ was born here on earth, he
9 possessed every spiritual gift.

10 **ANGEL OF TRUTH:** We'll prove that by example, as our children
11 perform a story set in heaven just before the Lord departs for his
12 mission of mercy to our world.

13 **ANGEL OF LIGHT:** We hope you enjoy this mixture of fancy and
14 truth.

15
16 *The angel GABRIEL stands alone at Center Stage. Enter ANGEL*
17 *ANGELA from Stage Left.*

18
19 **ANGEL ANGELA:** *(Grasping GABRIEL by the shoulders or hand*
20 *in a friendly fashion.)* Gabriel! *(Hands clasped.)* With you it's
21 always some big pronouncement. I can hardly wait. Do tell all!

22 **GABRIEL:** *(Ethereal smile.)* A child is to be born.

23 **ANGEL ANGELA:** Wonderful! Who?

24
25 *CHUCK enters rushing forward from Stage Left, butting in.*

26
27 **CHUCK:** Did I hear a child is to be born? I just love children! Yes,
28 Gabriel, tell all!

29 **GABRIEL:** *(With reserve.)* Ahhhh... *(Pause.)* Welcome, Chuck.
30 *(Hesitantly.)* Nice to see you.

31 **ANGEL ANGELA:** *(Confused.)* Chuck? *(Extends his hand to*
32 *CHUCK.)* I don't believe we've met.

33 **GABRIEL:** As I said, a child is to be born! The King of Kings! Lord
34 of Lords!

35 **ANGEL ANGELA:** *(Surprised.)* Do you mean the time has come?
36 The time is here? *(Desperately.)* The hour he will depart from us
37 has truly come? *(Aside.)* Oh, how to be without him ... without
38 his constant holy presence in our midst!

- 1 **CHUCK:** (*Pacing back and forth, left to Center Stage.*) This will
2 never work! It never works!
- 3 **GABRIEL:** Chuck, calm down. We all knew this time would come.
4 We must trust.
- 5 **CHUCK:** Trust! (*Slight pause.*) Trust, you say! Take Adam. Take
6 Eve, for that fact. How long did *that* last?
- 7 **GABRIEL:** Well, actually, for quite some time by earth's standards,
8 Chuck, but—
- 9 **CHUCK:** OK, then Abraham. (*Recites.*) He was told he would be
10 the father of all humankind, but his wife (*Equivocally.*) was a little
11 old... Pretty soon we have Hagar, and then Isaac and Ishmael.
12 (*Decidedly.*) There's been nothing but conflict on earth to this
13 day as the result of *that* little mix-up!
- 14 **GABRIEL:** (*Calmly.*) I'll give you that, Chuck, but—
- 15 **CHUCK:** (*Butting in.*) And Moses! (*Shaking his finger.*) He couldn't
16 keep those Israelites in line for one minute.
- 17 **GABRIEL:** God *already* knew it would be difficult. His plan—
- 18 **CHUCK:** (*Butting in*) David! God's precious (*Pause.*) King (*Pause.*)
19 David. (*Pause.*) He meets Bathsheba, and ooh la la!
- 20 **ANGEL ANGELA:** (*She has been watching CHUCK and*
21 *GABRIEL's dialogue in disturbed confusion. She turns to*
22 *GABRIEL in a very deliberate manner.*) Gabriel! Angels are
23 warriors, not worriers! (*Slowly, curiously, looking to CHUCK.*) I
24 don't exactly understand Chuck's purpose here.
- 25 **GABRIEL:** Comic relief.
- 26 **ANGEL ANGELA:** (*Confused.*) Comic relief?
- 27 **GABRIEL:** (*Looks meaningfully at the audience and back at*
28 *ANGEL ANGELA. Repeats motion.*) Comic relief.
- 29 **ANGEL ANGELA:** (*Confused, imitates GABRIEL's head turn,*
30 *studies the audience, looks back at GABRIEL when the light*
31 *dawns. Nodding.*) Oh! Comic relief!
- 32 **GABRIEL:** (*To CHUCK.*) Chuck, why don't you take a seat? We'll
33 sort this out in a minute.
- 34 **CHUCK:** I just don't see how... (*Palms up to GABRIEL in defeat.*)
35 OK, OK. I'll sit. (*Sits on stool or chair.*)
- 36 **GABRIEL:** (*To ANGEL ANGELA.*) Michael is on his way, and—
- 37 **CHUCK:** (*Bounding out of his seat.*) Michael? The guardian of
38 Israel? Could you pick a worse place? The future of Israel—

1 **GABRIEL:** Ahhhh, I think I see your problem. Have you really
2 studied *all* of your history, Chuck? Are you aware of *all* the
3 preparation for this moment?

4 **CHUCK:** Well, history is not exactly my strong suit...

5 **ANGEL ANGELA:** (*Tiredly.*) Gabriel, perhaps Michael and his
6 guard will explain what he and his angels have been up to all
7 these years... sort of give Chuck the big picture.

8 **GABRIEL:** Ah, yes. Here he comes now. We can ask.

9
10 *MICHAEL and ANGEL GUARD enter. Several assigned*
11 *CHILDREN shake hands with ANGEL ANGELA, CHUCK, and*
12 *GABRIEL.*

13
14 **ANGEL ANGELA:** Chuck, take a seat. (*CHUCK sits.*) Michael,
15 would you and your guard mind giving Chuck a little rundown on
16 the plans? He's kind of out of the loop, and a quick review of
17 your plans might help.

18 **MICHAEL:** Certainly, Angel Angela. Why don't you start with a
19 report on our base of operations?

20 **ANGEL ANGELA:** We have a secured a humble setting in
21 Bethlehem. Micah's prophecy is fulfilled, and the lineage
22 requirement met. Bethlehem is situated near our stronghold of
23 Jerusalem, but lies distant enough to provide sanctuary for this
24 glorious moment. A host of guardian angels surround the site
25 while a second detachment secures the route.

26 **GABRIEL:** Very good, Angel Angela.

27 **MICHAEL:** Angel _____, (*Insert actual name of ANGEL 1.*)
28 discuss our communication strategy.

29 **ANGEL 1:** Our Savior is born under the best of circumstances. The
30 Romans have conquered the lands bordering the
31 Mediterranean, Red, Black, and Caspian Seas, including the
32 lands bordering the Persian Gulf. The Romans have declared
33 Pax Romana and guarantee a free flow of information and trade
34 throughout the Empire. Israel is situated in the middle of that
35 flow.

36 **ANGEL ANGELA:** Excellent, _____! (*Insert actual name of*
37 *ANGEL 1.*)

1 **MICHAEL:** _____, (*Insert actual name of ANGEL 2.*) our
2 training manual?

3 **ANGEL 2:** The manual is complete. The Jewish scribes have
4 distributed copies of all the sacred writings from Genesis to
5 Malachi for over four hundred years, and the troops are aware
6 of every detail.

7 **GABRIEL:** Splendid, _____! (*Insert actual name of ANGEL*
8 *2.*)

9 **MICHAEL:** _____, (*Insert actual name of ANGEL 3.*)
10 supplies?

11 **ANGEL 3:** The land of Israel flows with milk and honey. The Savior
12 will be born in a time when trade thrives. He will grow up in the
13 small town of Nazareth, apart from the notice of many. He and
14 his father will have work as builders. The important city of
15 Sepphoris lies just to the north. There will be a demand for their
16 skills. During his ministry and a short time thereafter, Rome and
17 Israel will be allies, and goods and information will flow freely,
18 allowing all to be accomplished.

19 **ANGEL ANGELA:** Perfect, _____! (*Insert actual name of*
20 *ANGEL 3.*)

21 **MICHAEL:** _____, (*Insert actual name of ANGEL 4.*) what
22 about the leadership available to our Son of Man?

23 **ANGEL 4:** Though we could find no perfect leaders, a few
24 candidates have potential. There will be twelve chosen. They are
25 not exactly leaders... followers, really... but we must leave the
26 final choice to Jesus.

27 **CHUCK:** (*Fearfully, with no aggression.*) See? That's what I'm
28 talking about!

29 **MICHAEL:** Angel Guard, present arms!

30
31 *ANGEL GUARD holds out small battery-operated votive lights.*
32 *Lights should be turned on and flickering.*
33

34 **GABRIEL:** Chuck, Christ will not be without his weapons. All the
35 spiritual gifts will be his! And they are to be shared with his
36 followers. Only he will possess all of them, but with each of us
37 possessing some, we will be a mighty force for God.

38 **ANGEL ANGELA:** Angels, shall we sing our "Battle Hymn"?

1 **ALL:** *(Together)* Yes! *(CHUCK listens attentively.)*

2
3 **SONG:** "Precious Gifts" *(ANGEL GUARD sings to the tune of"*
4 *Simple Gifts.")*

5 PRECIOUS GIFTS OF THE FATHER, PRECIOUS GIFTS OF THE SON,

6 PRECIOUS GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT COME TO EVERYONE.

7 WHEN WE LIVE IN THE SPIRIT, WHEN WE WALK WITH OUR LORD,

8 WE WILL ALL COME TOGETHER AND HIS GIFTS WILL BE SHARED.

9 GIVE LOVE, GOD WANTS US ALL TO LOVE,

10 HIS SON CAME DOWN FROM HEAV'N ABOVE,

11 TO SHOW US THE WAY TO PEACE ON EARTH,

12 AND IT ALL BEGAN WITH HIS PRECIOUS BIRTH.

13
14 **CHUCK:** *(Sarcastically.)* That was really inspiring. Do you have any
15 more songs prepared to welcome the Lord on this disastrous eve
16 of his birth?

17 **MICHAEL:** It's not a disaster, Chuck—but we do!

18
19 **SONG:** Christmas Medley.

20
21 *ANGEL GUARD sings one verse each of "Hark! the Herald Angels*
22 *Sing," "Angels from the Realms of Glory," "While Shepherds*
23 *Watched Their Flocks by Night," and "Angels We Have Heard on*
24 *High."*

25
26 **GABRIEL:** Ah, wonderful, Michael. Wonderful, troops! Now, what
27 can you tell us about these gifts of the Spirit? Shall we begin?

28 **MICHAEL:** Yes, indeed. _____? *(Insert actual name of*
29 *ANGEL 5, the first in a series of ANGELS to present the 18 gifts*
30 *of the Spirit.)*

31 **ANGEL 5:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at Backstage*
32 *Center.)* The gift of knowledge, Your Majesty! *(After announcing*
33 *gift, ANGEL 5 places his/her electric votive candle on the throne*
34 *room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence, then rejoins*
35 *ANGEL GUARD.)*

ANGEL OF TRUTH: Jesus will use his gift of knowledge when he is tempted by Satan at the very beginning of his ministry. He and Satan will stand on the highest part of the temple wall in Jerusalem, and Satan will dare Jesus to jump. Satan will even quote Scripture by telling Jesus the angels are duty-bound to catch him (*Psalms 91*). Jesus will use his knowledge of Scripture to reply, "It is also written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test' " (*Deuteronomy 6:16*).

ANGEL 6: (*He/she moves to God's throne room area at Backstage Center.*) The gift of wisdom, Your Majesty. (*After announcing gift, ANGEL 6 places his/her electric votive candle on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence, then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.*)

THE ANGEL OF LIGHT: Jesus will use his parable of ten virgins, a bridegroom, lamps, and oil to teach what it is to be wise and what it is to be foolish. He will explain that the wise think ahead, plan for what they need, and make arrangements to secure it. In truth, he will be referring to God's plan that we must be wise and follow him to secure a future in heaven.

ANGEL 7: (*He/she moves to God's throne room area at Backstage Center.*) The gift of discernment, Your Majesty. (*After announcing gift, ANGEL 7 places his/her electric votive candle on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence, then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.*)

THE ANGEL OF TRUTH: Discernment is "distinguishing between spirits." It is the ability to see through to the truth. Matthew, Mark, and Luke will all recount times when the religious leaders of Jesus' day hoped to trick Jesus. Jesus will discern their true motive and respond in a way that asks the religious leaders to examine their own hearts.

ANGEL 8: (*He/she moves to God's throne room area at Backstage Center.*) The gift of helps, Your Majesty. (*After announcing gift, ANGEL 8 places his/her electric votive candle on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence, then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.*)

THE ANGEL OF LIGHT: Jesus will help many people through healing, forgiving, loving, and pointing out a better way.

1 **ANGEL 9:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at Backstage*
2 *Center.)* The gift of encouragement, Your Majesty. *(After*
3 *announcing gift, ANGEL 9 places his/her electric votive candle*
4 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
5 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

6 **THE ANGEL OF TRUTH:** Jesus will be very encouraging to many.
7 His disciples and the teachers of the law will sometimes criticize
8 him because he even speaks to children, sinners, and people
9 who are not Jewish.

10 **ANGEL 10:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at*
11 *Backstage Center.)* The gift of giving, Your Majesty. *(After*
12 *announcing gift, ANGEL 10 places his/her electric votive candle*
13 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
14 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

15 **THE ANGEL OF LIGHT:** During Jesus' time, Jewish people will
16 give many offerings. Like today, they will give offerings to
17 support their priests and the work of the Temple. Jesus will give
18 the most important offering of all. He will sacrifice his life as an
19 offering to God for the forgiveness of our sin. In the Upper Room
20 while eating with his disciples, he will say, "This is my body given
21 for you" *(Luke 22:19).*

22 **ANGEL 11:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at*
23 *Backstage Center.)* The gift of government, Your Majesty. *(After*
24 *announcing gift, ANGEL 11 places his/her electric votive candle*
25 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
26 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

27 **THE ANGEL OF TRUTH:** Jesus will rebuke money changers in the
28 temple because they cheat people who come to worship and
29 study. The priests and other leaders will want to kill Jesus for
30 disrupting business, but they won't be able to. It is not time for
31 Jesus to die. *(To the GUARD.)* Angel Guard, you will be with
32 him as the people crowd near to hear him teach.

33 **CHUCK:** The Angel Guard will be there? With him?

34 **MICHAEL:** Every moment, Chuck. That's the plan.

1 **ANGEL 12:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at*
2 *Backstage Center.)* The gift of teaching, Your Majesty. *(After*
3 *announcing gift, ANGEL 12 places his/her electric votive candle*
4 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
5 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

6 **ANGEL OF LIGHT:** Jesus will teach through example and sermons.
7 He will also teach through the parables, approximately 40 stories
8 using common situations and objects to teach truths about how
9 Jesus wants us to behave.

10 **ANGEL 13:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at*
11 *Backstage Center.)* The gift of apostle, Your Majesty. *(After*
12 *announcing gift, ANGEL 13 places his/her electric votive candle*
13 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
14 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

15 **ANGEL OF TRUTH:** An apostle is one who is sent. Jesus will speak
16 of being sent by the Father. John will describe him as being "the
17 Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (*John 1:29*).
18 Jesus, in turn, will send out his apostles to spread the good news
19 of salvation.

20 **ANGEL 14:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at*
21 *Backstage Center.)* The gift of preaching, Your Majesty. *(After*
22 *announcing gift, ANGEL 14 places his/her electric votive candle*
23 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
24 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

25 **ANGEL OF LIGHT:** Jesus will be baptized, tempted by the devil,
26 and begin teaching. He will give his famous sermon on the
27 mountain top.

28 **ANGEL 15:** *(He/she moves to God's throne room area at*
29 *Backstage Center.)* The gift of mercy, Your Majesty. *(After*
30 *announcing gift, ANGEL 15 places his/her electric votive candle*
31 *on the throne room table, kneels or bows to suggest reverence,*
32 *then rejoins ANGEL GUARD.)*

33 **ANGEL OF TRUTH:** Jesus will look down from his cross to see
34 Roman soldiers casting lots for his clothes. He will pray, "Father,
35 forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (*Luke*
36 *23:34*). If we had no other example of Christ's mercy, that would
37 be enough. But the Bible will have many other examples.



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