

F/X:

NEWS SHOW THEME



NEWSREADER:

Good morning. Here is the news on the 25th December 4 B.C. I'm <name>. The headlines today...

Caesar Augustus insists the invasion of Germania was justified as the Barbarian tribes there were developing weapons of mass destruction. He's quoted as saying that once the dictator Arminius has been toppled and Imperial rule established Roman troops will be withdrawn.

Governor Quirinius is still refusing to set a date for his resignation while the leadership campaign of his deputy, Godonus Brownus, seems to be gaining momentum.

More on those stories later...

But first some local news...

The strange light in the sky is NOT an omen of the end-of-the-world! An official government soothsayer says "It's probably just a new star, and all that means is; that your horoscope for this month is wrong".

A mystery choir chooses lonely mountainside for practice, sadly an audience of shepherds is not impressed and abandon their flock to escape into town.

Visiting Royal's snub the Palace and make their own arrangements for accommodation – is Herod's hospitality really that bad?

And finally, disturbances overnight at a Pub in Bethlehem, it is alleged that legionnaires made four arrests.

NEWSREADER:

I think we're able to talk to an eyewitness of the 'mystery choir'. A local shepherd, a Mr. Rodney Teatowel who's out

on the hillside where the incident took place. Hello? Mr. Teatowel?

TEATOWEL: It's just a shame I didn't have my easel and pastels with me. I could have dashed off a quick sketch of them you see. No one believes you unless you've got a picture do they?

NEWSREADER: Can you hear me Mr. Teatowel?

TEATOWEL: I'm freezing here. Will we be long? It's just the missus doesn't like me staying out early – I need to get home and give the kids their breakfast you see.

NEWSREADER: Mr. Teatowel...we're live on the air. We can hear you...can you hear me?

TEATOWEL: What? Oh. Yes! I can hear you!

NEWSREADER: We've been hearing reports about this 'mystery choir' who sneak out into the hills at night to practice and apparently you've seen them.

TEATOWEL: Yes well I am a shepherd you see and while I and my fellow shepherds were watching our flocks last night, seated on the ground, by the way, as is our tradition, we saw something quite remarkable. I can tell you that this was no 'mystery choir' as you put it. It was the angelic hosts of heaven!

NEWSREADER: The angelic hosts of heaven you say?

TEATOWEL: They didn't sneak up from out of the bushes either – they appeared in the sky. Well one did and he told us to leg it into

Bethlehem to greet the Messiah who had just been born and I think 'cos we didn't quite know what to make of it all and hadn't moved several hundred others suddenly appeared and started singing to re-enforce the message, as it were. Anyway I drew the short straw and had to stay behind. While the rest hot-footed it as per.

NEWSREADER: (Off microphone) Has he been drinking?
Are you seriously expecting me to believe *angels* visited a bunch of, with all due respect, smelly thieving dirty illiterate layabout shepherds?

TEATOWEL: Eh? Now there's no need for name-calling you jumped up self-important botoxed media tart! I know what I saw and they were angels, great big ones with swords not silly little cherubs with a halo....

NEWSREADER: Sorry about the loss of the outside broadcast there. Moving on...
Our reporter Joshua Rovingburp is at the Palace with news on the deepening diplomatic crisis there.

ROVINGBURP: Good morning Rachel.

NEWSREADER: Good morning Joshua. What is the Palace saying at the moment?

ROVINGBURP: Well Rachel, at the risk of being pedantic the Palace itself isn't saying anything at all. It's a large stone building not given to audible utterances on matters of a diplomatic nature. Herod's spokesman did however have a statement.

(PAUSE)

NEWSREADER: Are you going to tell us what it was?

ROVINGBURP: What what was?

NEWSREADER: The statement!

ROVINGBURP: Yes I will tell you. The statement from the spokesman for the Palace said "The Three Kings held high level talks with King Herod and his advisors and exchanged their views in a free and frank manner. King Herod holds the Kings in very high regard and is in full agreement with their stated aims of locating the Messiah and wishes them well on their search and wants to be kept fully informed of their progress so he too can pay tribute to the new born King".

NEWSREADER: I see. In other words they had a blazing row, Herod thinks they're all mad, couldn't wait for them to leave but just to be sure he wants to check the kid out and bump him off if he's a threat?

ROVINGBURP: I think that about sums it up yes.

NEWSREADER: Joshua Rovingburp there, reporting for us outside the Palace, where it seems that it's not only smelly shepherds who are getting a little obsessive about Messiahs.

Now on to our final item of local news, a disturbance last night at a Pub in downtown Bethlehem resulted in a brawl, destruction of property, three people being made homeless

and eventually the local Roman legionnaires arresting four people. Over to our reporter Daniel Spaniel for the latest...

SPANIEL: Good morning Rachel.

NEWSREADER: Good morning Daniel. What can you tell us?

SPANIEL: Well it's a scene of devastation here. I can't really add much to what you've already said except that "The Star Inn" is not actually a Pub as such – it's more a sort of rustic Travel Lodge with accommodation and stabling facilities. There wasn't actually a brawl – just a lot of people turning up quietly and respectfully. No property was destroyed, just some hay and straw was moved out of a manger to make room for a baby. The homeless people are actually the baby's parents and are only visiting Bethlehem for the census. Due to the overcrowding in the town they've ended up being bedded down, quite comfortably by all accounts, in the stables.

NEWSREADER: So early reports were largely right then. How many arrests were there and can we expect some un-seasonal crucifixions?

SPANIEL: The local legionnaire's office here has denied the reports of arrests and states that their officers found nothing out of the ordinary going on other than... "a very bright star shining directly onto a stable which was surrounded by a well behaved crowd of shepherds, foreign Kings bearing valuable gifts and occupied by a young woman who'd recently given birth, her fiancé and a baby boy who apparently is the Messiah."
Back to you in the studio, Rachel.

NEWSREADER:

Daniel Spaniel there with a frankly astonishing report from Bethlehem.

What is *UP* with everyone? Why is everyone obsessed with a Messiah? Anyone would think he was the saviour of the whole world or something!

(Listens to earpiece)

Oh I've just been informed that that is *exactly* what the Messiah is.

And now the weather with Michael the Fisherman...

END