

**GOD IS
LORD AND KING
Christmas
Year 8
Term 4**

A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM!

Christmas Play for Youth

Length: 15 minutes

Characters:

Mary: Mother of the baby JESUS

Joseph: Mary's husband and protector

Innkeeper: Innkeeper in Bethlehem

3 Shepherds: Three shepherds who saw the angels in Bethlehem

3 Wise Men: Three wise men who traveled to Bethlehem

Description:

The actors tell the story of Baby JESUS' birth in Bethlehem from the point of view of the characters they portray.

Setting: Ancient Israel.

Costumes: Should resemble costumes from ancient Israel. (Robes, large pieces of fabric tied at waist, sandals or bare feet, and pieces of fabric for head coverings.) Mary may have a pillow for part of the play in order to appear to be expecting a baby. Shepherds may have shepherd's crook. Kings may have crowns and gifts.

Props: Manger

Gifts (representing gold, frankincense, and myrrh)

Baby Doll (to represent Baby Jesus)

Optional: hammer, saw and/or tool belt for Joseph

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A night in Bethlehem

SCENE #1 - INTRODUCTION

MARY

Israel is on the other side of the world. And that's where the baby Jesus was born all those years ago, in a little town called Bethlehem. And you know what? Bethlehem is STILL there today!

Oh, it looks different now, of course. Instead of clothes like I'm wearing, now they wear things like blue jeans and t-shirts. They have smart phones and the Internet just like we do. But tonight we're going to recreate Bethlehem just like it might have been on a special night a long time ago.

The night when Jesus, the Son of God, was born to a virgin... To me, Mary ...

What would it have been like? On that night over 2000 years ago, on the other side of the world, in another country, in a little town called Bethlehem?

Let's find out together as we journey back to.... A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM!!

SCENE #1 (continues) MARY

MARY

About 2000 years ago, I was a young girl in Israel. And I was engaged to be married to a wonderful man, who lived in our hometown of Nazareth. His name was Joseph. Joseph was a carpenter.

One day before Joseph and I were married, an angel of the Lord appeared to me and said... (imitating the angel) "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Well, I had NO IDEA what he was talking about, and I was pretty terrified by seeing this angel. But then he said, "Don't be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God." I felt better after he said that. Somehow I didn't feel afraid anymore.

Then he went on to tell me that I was going to become pregnant and give birth to a son. He said that I was to give the baby the name Jesus. After that he told me that he would be great and be called the Son of the Most High.

The angel also said that "The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

That all sounded so wonderful... I felt really at peace... I just had one question! How?"

And this is what the angel said: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

That sounded wonderful! So I found myself saying to him, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."

And, then, the angel left me. But I never forgot. I always remembered what the angel had said.

SCENE #2 - JOSEPH

JOSEPH

Hi my name is Joseph. I am engaged to be married to Mary.

But she was found to be pregnant BEFORE our wedding day?" That was really serious...

So, not wanting anything bad to happen to Mary, I decided to divorce her quietly. Yes, back then, even if you were just engaged, you had to actually get a DIVORCE to call off a wedding!

Well, one night after I had made up my mind to do this, I had a dream. An angel from God appeared to me in my dream. He said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."

That made me feel a lot better.

Then the angel went on and said, "She will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

When I woke up, I knew that I couldn't divorce Mary - I knew God was doing something wonderful through her.

SCENE #3 - The INNKEEPER

INNKEEPER

Good evening! I am the inn-keeper.

After Mary and Joseph were visited by an angel, a decree was sent out to everyone in Israel that everyone had to return to the town of their ancestors so that they could be counted and TAXED. They didn't have any computers or phones like we do now. So, in order to keep track of everybody, folks had to actually show up somewhere to be counted.

Joseph, Mary's husband, was a descendant of David... KING David. And King David was from Bethlehem. So, Joseph had to come all the way to Bethlehem from Nazareth. Mary came with him, and Mary and Joseph came to my inn looking for a place to stay.

JOSEPH

Excuse me, sir. I am Joseph and this is Mary. We need a place to stay for the night... please.

INNKEEPER

Sorry, but there is no room in the Inn.

JOSEPH

Oh, but sir, please, we have walked over 50 kilometers to get here. And Mary is VERY tired.

INNKEEPER

Sorry, I can't help you. The place is full, with all the visitors from out of town.

JOSEPH

Please, sir...Please. You see, Mary's going to have a baby. We think it may even be tonight. We need shelter somewhere... Anywhere!

INNKEEPER

I see your problem. ... There's a stable out back... I know it's not much... but it's shelter from the wind and the night air. You can have some privacy. And, I'll put in some nice, clean hay there for you. What do you say?!

JOSEPH

We'll take it!! And thank you! You have been most kind. God bless you!

SCENE #4 - The SHEPHERDS

SHEPHERD #1

While Mary and Joseph were in the stable that night, the baby Jesus [the Son of God] was born and Mary wrapped Him in cloths (swaddling cloths) and laid Him in the manger, (a wooden box that held the hay.)

SHEPHERD #2

We were out in the fields watching over our flock of sheep that night.

And all of a sudden... an angel from GOD!!)... appeared to us!

And we were... terrified!!!!!! But the angel said...

Don't be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy, Good News of great joy, that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David... [that's Bethlehem]... Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord! And this will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

SHEPHERD #3

But that's not all. Suddenly a whole lot of angels appeared with the first angel...And they were all praising God and saying...

ALL SHEPHERDS

"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

SHEPHERD # 3

Then the angels left us...

And we went to Bethlehem and we found the stable, and the manger,...and the baby... just like God had told us!

And afterwards we went into the town of Bethlehem, rejoicing and telling anyone who would listen exactly what had happened. And we praised and glorified God for all that we had been told and all we had seen.

ALL SHEPHERDS

What a Night in Bethlehem!!

SCENE #5 - The 3 KINGS

KING #1

About eighteen months later, we arrived in Jerusalem seeking “The One who is born King of the Jews.”

You see, we’d seen his star in the East and knew that he’d been born! So we came to Israel to find him.

We applied in Jerusalem first, knowing that the learned men of the Jews resided there. We believed that the most likely place for their king to be born would be in their capital city.

However, when we asked at the city gate, “Where is he who is born king of the Jews?” their Roman ruler, Herod, was quite upset.

KING # 2

He inquired of the Jewish leaders where their promised Messiah was to be born and they told him that it was to be in the town of Bethlehem, the ancestral home of their beloved King David! The Messiah was prophesied to be of the house and line of David. Of course He would be born there!

Then Herod lied to us and told us that he would like to come and worship the newborn king as well. He asked us to come back and tell him when we found the child.

He had no intention of worshiping the child. He was jealous and did not want Him to live long enough to be king.

We went to Bethlehem... and the star we had seen went on before us and shone down on the place where the young child lived.

KING #3

We found Him there and we fell to our knees and worshipped Him.

We also brought gifts: Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh.

The gifts, I believe, are now represented by your traditional Christmas gifts.

And after we had delivered our gifts we left to go back home to our own countries. But we did NOT go back through Jerusalem. We did not go back to Herod... We were warned in a dream NOT to go back his way again.

Instead we went away in peace, having found the true King of Kings on a Night in Bethlehem.