

“Come to the Manger: Wonder of Advent”

by
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What The high priest entered the holy of holies, but once a year, to atone for the sin of Israel. And yet on the first Christmas, there in the stable, Mary and Joseph sat in the presence of the living God, a little baby completely dependent on two new, tired parents. The fifth reading of Advent reminds us to come to the manger with a sense of wonder at how God brought about the redemption of the world.

Themes: Christmas, Advent, Wonder, Miracles, Manger, Reader’s Theatre, Incarnation

Who Reader 1
Reader 2

When Present

Wear (Props) Unless you have the script memorized, Readers should have a black binder to read from.

Why Matthew 1:18-25 and Hebrews 1-7

How If you read this from the script, be familiar enough with your lines so that your head isn’t down in the script the entire time. Embrace the awe and mystery of the scripture.

Time Approximately 3 minutes

Readers enter and address the audience.

Reader 1: Have you ever imagined what it was like for Joseph and Mary to welcome Jesus into the world?

Reader 2: The excruciating pain of giving birth without the help of modern medicine

Reader 1: All the effort and travail as Mary pushed the Savior into the world.

Reader 2: And then there was the shocking location of the delivery,

Reader 1: No medical staff to assist

Reader 2: Just cows lowing,

Reader 1: And sheep bundled together like so many living cotton balls.

Reader 2: The smells and the sounds that accompanied the Incarnation were not the high notes of trumpets and the mystical perfumes of incense.

Reader 1: They were the braying of donkeys accented by the scent of manure and hay.

Reader 2: So many emotions must have filled that small stable meant to house cows, goats and chickens.

Reader 1: From our vantage point it seems almost humorous that this was the birthplace for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Reader 2: And yet in the midst of the anxieties of childbirth and the hopes of the baby's arrival

Reader 1: After the rush of adrenaline,

Reader 2: Amid the flurry of prayers in those intimate moments as Joseph encouraged Mary to deliver the baby,

Reader 1: Don't you think there was also a sense of wonder?

Reader 2: No one can see God and live, the scripture tells us.

Reader 1: And yet there, in Bethlehem, not only did Mary and Joseph suddenly see God,

Reader 2: They held him in their very arms.

Reader 1: The high priest, and he but once a year, entered the holy of holies to atone for the sin of Israel.

Reader 2: And yet there, in the stable, Mary and Joseph sat in the presence of the living God

Reader 1: The God of life who gives all living things breath was suddenly dependent on Mary and Joseph to live.

Reader 2: The very One who created the worlds, he who is the exact imprint of God's very being

Reader 1: Was wrapped in swaddling cloth.

Reader 2: Jesus, who sustains all things by his powerful word, slept in the arms of new, exhausted parents.

Reader 1: A baby who had not yet learned to speak.

Reader 2: As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, let's go to the manger with a sense of wonder.

Reader 1: Like Joseph, let us be amazed that the child is a child of heaven.

Reader 2: Like Mary, may we contemplate the miracle that Christ, the hope of glory, is here.

Reader 1: Like the wise man who gave a gift of incense because he understood that the baby would become a priest,

Reader 2: Let us remember that Jesus is our Great High Priest—

Reader 1: The Great High Priest who once for all takes away the sin of the world

Reader 2: Through the power of his perfect and indestructible life.

Reader 1: This Advent season we take time to ponder the miracle and the mystery of the Christ child.

Reader 2: We take time to remember that the story of Christmas is filled with so much human emotion.

Reader 1: As we light the Candle of Advent we remember the miracles of God.

Reader 2: Today we come to the manger in a sense of awe and wonder.