

A script from



“Our Chaos, His Peace”

by

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What Mr. Johnson helps the Director bring to life this year’s Christmas Pageant as he insists that the stable’s atmosphere wasn’t noiseless and calm.

Themes: Christmas, Jesus, Messiah, Prince of Peace

Who	Director	3 Wiseman
	Mr. Johnson (or Mrs.)	3-4 Shepherds
	Mary	3-4 Barnyard animals
	Joseph	2-3 Offstage voices

When Present; Christmas

Wear Live nativity scene
(Props) Biblical costumes

Why Isaiah 9:6-7

How Keep the pacing and energy up, careful not to drag the dialogue out.

Time Approximately 5 minutes

Lights up. Up Center Stage kneel **Joseph** and **Mary**, flawlessly composed and gazing serenely down at baby Jesus. On one side stand two **shepherds**, and on the other stand three **wise men**. Beside the manger are children dressed as barnyard animals. All appear completely still and calm. Downstage, enter **Director** and **Mr. Johnson**

Director: Thanks so much for coming to watch. Rehearsals are going well, but I need a little help bringing this to life. I just feel like we're missing something.

Mr. Johnson: No problem.

Director: As I mentioned on the phone, we're calling this year's pageant "Prince of Peace." I especially want the nativity scene to highlight this concept.

Mr. Johnson: Prince of Peace. Got it.

Director: (Addressing the pageant actors) Cast, thank you for getting into position so quickly. One announcement: I've invited a colleague of mine, Mr. Johnson, to direct rehearsal tonight. He's going to give us a few pointers, you know, help us spruce things up a little. (Pause) Spruce? You know, like Christmas trees?

Mr. Johnson: (To **Director**) Tough crowd.

Director: Yeah. Let's just start from the top.

Shepherd: Let us see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us. This is—

Mr. Johnson: (Interrupting) CUT.

Everyone relaxes slightly.

Mr. Johnson: (Cont) Can we try that line again? But this time I need you to remember that a host of angels has appeared to you and sent you here.

Shepherd: (Solemn and reverent) Let us see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us. This is—

Mr. Johnson: CUT. Let's try it again. What I want is more...more excitement.

Shepherd: (Louder) Let us see this thing that has happened—

Mr. Johnson: CUT. Ok. I was thinking more along the lines of out of breath.

Shepherd: Out of breath? Why would I be out of breath?

Mr. Johnson: 'Cause you've been running. Think about it, a host of angels has just appeared to you and told you to come here. I'd run if that happened to me. And you shouldn't be the only shepherd talking. Aren't you all excited?

***Shepherds** hesitantly look at each other. Then they slowing begin to start jumping, high-fiving, hands in the air, and shouting "That's him!" "That's the savior!" "YES!" "Hallelujah, Lord!" **Shepherds** pause and look at **Mr. Johnson**.*

Mr. Johnson: (Cont) Better. Dirt and some grass stains would be helpful, too, but we'll work on costumes later. (He turns his attention to the barnyard animals) Animals. You need to be making some noise. There's commotion all around you, and your sleep is being disturbed by a newborn. You're not taking this lying down. (With a quick glance at a cow who is on her belly) Well, some of you might be, but you're not happy about it.

Animals start making their respective noises; one starts moving toward the manger as if to grab some straw from underneath the baby. They pause and look at Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: Good. Good. Now Mary, you look perfect.

Mary: Thank you.

Mr. Johnson: That's not a compliment. You just logged sixty miles uphill on a donkey and then had a baby. I'm thinking you probably aren't too concerned with your hair right now.

***Mary** looks startled. She then tentatively messes up her hair.*

Mr. Johnson: Joseph.

***Joseph** brings a protective hand up toward his well-gelled hair.*

Mr. Johnson: (Cont) You're exhausted. You're caring for your wife, keeping a bunch of animals away from your baby, and probably trying to find other accommodations.

Joseph: Um. Okay. (He picks up the baby Jesus and tries to shield him from the noisy animals)

Mr. Johnson: Wise men. Chronologically, you're not supposed to be here for another couple of years, but we'll go with it. You found the newborn King, but now you're nervous because you know how Herod's going to take it. You've had dreams warning you not to back to him. You're in a huddle, whispering, trying to figure out another plan.

Wise men form a football-style huddle.

Mr. Johnson: (Cont) Now where's everyone else?

Director: (Beginning to get concerned): What do you mean, everyone else? The gospel of Luke doesn't mention anyone else.

Mr. Johnson: Well, we know that the stable is near the inn. And we know that the inn is full, probably full of Jews who have been forced by Rome to travel home to register for a census. And why? So Rome knows how much to tax them next year. How do you think they're feeling that night?

Director: (Flustered) Well, we don't have any more actors.

Mr. Johnson: You don't need actors. You need regular people to make some noise. Grab your stage crew.

OS Voice: What do you want us to say?

Mr. Johnson: You're angry. Improvise.

Offstage, a few people yell "Hey! No fair!" "You can't take my money!" etc.

Mr. Johnson: That's more like it. OK, let's put it all together and see how it looks.

Everyone repeats his or her actions at the same time. It's noisy and not necessarily pretty to look at.

Director: (Yelling over them) This isn't peace. This is chaos!

Mr. Johnson waves his arm and everything stops.

Mr. Johnson: Exactly.

Director: Maybe I wasn't clear. Our Christmas program this year is called "Prince of Peace." This (gesturing toward the stage) is not peaceful.

Mr. Johnson: With all due respect, the Prince of Peace didn't come into a world that was peaceful. He came to *bring* peace to a world that was chaotic. *(Brief pause)* A world that was sinful, violent, and on enemy terms with God. A world that desperately needed—

Director: *(Understanding)* Peace. *(Looking around the stage)* He came to our chaos to *be* our Prince of Peace.

There is a brief moment of silence.

Director: *(Cont)* I like it. *(To Mr. Johnson)* Thank you.

Mr. Johnson: You're welcome.

Director: *(To cast)* Let's take five.

Actors exit up stage. Director and Mr. Johnson start to exit down stage.

Mr. Johnson: Now, if you really wanted it to be authentic, we should talk about the smell.

Director: The smell?

Mr. Johnson: Jesus was born in a stable after all.

Director: I think I might have to draw the line right there.

Lights out.