

a script from



COLLECTIVE

PURCHASE
SCRIPT
TO

“The One We’re Waiting For: Love”

By

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What Joseph & Mary arrive in Bethlehem and look for a place to stay. In the second scene, the shepherds arrive and tell Joseph & Mary about the visit from the angels.

Themes: Advent, Nativity, Love, Joy, Obedience, Making Room

Who Mary (Parts 1, 3, & 4) - 9 months pregnant
Joseph (Parts 1, 2, & 4)
Leah (Parts 3 & 4)
Malachi - Leah's brother
Josiah - Shepherd
Tirzah - Shepherd
Susannah - Shepherd
Optional additional shepherds

When Biblical Times

Costumes Period clothing

Props Manger with a baby
Pillow or fake belly for Mary

Why Nativity story, Luke 2:1-20, Isaiah 55:8-9.

How This is Part 4 of a 4-part Advent series intended to be performed each Sunday of Advent leading up to Christmas. You could have the same actors play the same characters across the four Sundays. The first half of this script is intended to be performed before the sermon, while the second half after. Or, if there is no natural break, a Christmas carol should be sung while the stage is set for the next scene and a slide or placard that says "Some hours later" should be displayed. You could include your younger Sunday School kids in the Christmas play, you can cast them as shepherds and have them add to the noise and excitement of the shepherd scene. We used choir risers in the back of the "stable" to make sure all our shepherds could be seen.

Time 5 minutes first half, 7 minutes second half. Total 12 minutes.

Joseph and Mary make their way wearily onto the stage.

Mary: *(panting)* I can't... believe... I had to make this trip *again*! So. Many. Dunes! We're almost as far as Amma *(pronounced EE-ma)* Elizabeth's house! She just lives another five miles past Bethlehem.

Joseph: I'm tempted to suggest we keep going so you can have the baby at their house, but *(she glares at him)* I don't think you'd make it.

Mary: I won't make it. Will you send for Amma Elizabeth, though, and let her know we're here? Maybe she can come down and be with me while I have the baby.

Joseph: Good idea. From what Zechariah described, this has got to be Leah's house up here. I'll ask when we get there.

Mary: *(moans)* Leah is not going to want to host us. She doesn't believe me! She thinks I'm a filthy harlot!

Joseph: But you told me she said we'd always have a place at her house.

Mary: That was before she knew I was pregnant.

Joseph: Well... *(he has no other ideas)* let's pray she's had a change of heart and has a cozy room for you to have a baby in. *(he "knocks" on the "door")*

Mary: Jehovah Jireh knows what we need.

Malachi: *(opens the "door")* Shalom. I'm Malachi, can I help you?

Joseph: Yes! My name is Joseph and this is my betrothed, Mary. Mary is the favorite cousin of Leah's Uncle Zechariah's wife Elizabeth... we're practically family. Anyway, we had to come here for the census, but I think Mary's baby will be here any minute and we really need a place to stay...

Malachi: Yes, we have room here. Hold on, I just need to check with my sister. Our parents are out of town for the census.

Leah: *(coming up behind Malachi)* Malachi, who is it? *(sees Mary)* You! What are you doing here?

Mary: Hi, Leah. We were hoping... since you said we'd always have a place to stay in Bethlehem...

Leah: Absolutely not! I had no idea what you were when I made that offer.

Malachi: Leah! What are you saying? They're family! We can put them in the back room...

Leah: No! I won't have these two living in sin in my home! Did you know he got her... *with child*... before they were even married? *(beat)* Didn't you listen to him? And then *she* told Elizabeth she was mysteriously pregnant with the *Messiah* - the MESSIAH! - in order to cover up their sin!

Joseph: Not that it's any of your business, but I *didn't* get her pregnant. The child is not mine.

Malachi: And yet you're going to stay with her anyway?

Joseph: *(confidently)* Yes. I was visited in my dream by an angel who told me that she was telling the truth. The child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit and he will save his people from their sins.

Malachi: *(staring at them like they're crazy)* Huh. I'm with you, Leah. I don't think it's a good idea for this nice couple to stay with us.

Mary: Please! We have nowhere else to go! The baby will be here soon.

Joseph: Listen, I know all of this sounds crazy. It sounds crazy to us too, and we've had a lot of conversations trying to figure it all out. All we can come up with is what God told us about himself in the prophet Isaiah: "My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the LORD, "And my

ways are far beyond anything you could imagine." So he is doing something that we don't understand. So what? We are still his servants. Remember when God had the prophet Hosea marry a prostitute to demonstrate His love for Israel when she had turned away from him? I bet Hosea's family got just as upset about that as you are now. It didn't make any sense! But God uses unexpected people and unexpected ways to show his love to us. Please. I know it doesn't make sense, but I love Mary, and I cannot let her have this child in the street. Isn't there *anything* you can do to help us?

Malachi: *(moved)* Well...

Leah: *(unmoved)* No! People will talk!

Malachi: They don't have to know. *(trying to find a compromise)* What if we just put them in the stable?

Joseph: The stable?!

Leah: *(is satisfied with this level of humiliation for Mary)* Fine. They can stay in the stable. But I won't have anything else to do with them. I wash my hands of all of this. *(she leaves)*

Joseph: But she's going to have a baby! She can't have a baby in a stable! Stables are filthy!

Malachi: I just cleaned it yesterday. I will send out a clean blanket. It will be fine.

Joseph: But...

Malachi: Listen, do you want it or not? My father is an upstanding citizen and I don't want people talking or thinking we ran a brothel while our parents were out of town. I am doing this out of the goodness of my heart because you gave a good speech just now, but I also think you are crazy and I don't want any part of all the trouble you are going to have as father of a fatherless son. Now do you want to stay in our stable or are you going to move along?

Mary: *(having another contraction)* Joseph...

Joseph: Yes, we'd like to stay in your stable.

Malachi: Fine then. Follow me.

****The sermon should be given here. Or, if there is no other natural break, a Christmas carol should be sung while the stage is set for the next scene and a slide or placard that says "Some hours later" should be displayed.*

Joseph and **Mary** are resting in the "stable" with the baby in the manger.

Josiah: *(from the back of the room)* Is that them?

Tirzah: Yes! I see the baby in the manger!

Susanna: There they are! Let's GO!

*The crowd of shepherds (the more the merrier- this is a great way to include your elementary students) all run in noisily and enthusiastically. **Josiah** is in the lead. Just as he gets to the "door" of the stable, he realizes he's about to run into someone's "home" and stops abruptly. There is a pile-up as everyone stops behind him. The noise also dies down and leaves **Susanna** saying her line too loudly in the now-silence.*

Susanna: A baby in a manger! That's such a classic shepherd trick! My siblings and I all slept in a manger at one point or another.

Josiah: *(knocks timidly)* Hello? Uh... may we come in? Some angels told us you'd be here and - oh man, I didn't really think about how crazy this sounds - we're here to see your baby.

Joseph stands protectively to block their way.

Mary: *(craning around **Joseph** from her spot on the floor)* What did the angels look like?

Tirzah: Like men... but only sort of...

Mary: It's ok, Joseph. They can come in. *(the **shepherds** pile awkwardly in and all try to see over each other to the baby in the manger.)* Why don't you all have a seat where you can see the baby and get comfortable.

Joseph: Mary, I don't know if this is a good idea...

Mary: *(chuckles a little)* If they've been sent by angels, I don't think it's a good idea to stop them. *(to the **shepherds**)* Tell us what happened! How did you know we'd be here?

The shepherds immediately all start telling the story at once. It is an explosion of noise.

Joseph: Hey! There's a baby here! Bring it down. One at a time! *(points at **Josiah**)* You – what's your name?

Josiah: Josiah.

Joseph: Ok, Josiah, tell us what happened.

Josiah: Ok! So we were staying the night out in the fields watching our flocks. It's always a little creepy because it's so dark and, you know, we're guarding our sheep from lions and stuff, so we were all kind of huddled around our fire...

Tirzah: Then BANG! There's a man – but only sort of a man – standing in the middle of our fire!

Susannah: And it's like *day time*. Like, *so bright*!

Tirzah: And we all freaked out! We were like AAAAGGGHHHH!!! *(everyone shushes her)* Sorry, we were like *(whisper yelling)* aaaggh! And shepherds and sheep were running and falling...

Susannah: Not me. I completely froze where I was sitting. I couldn't move a muscle. If it had been a lion, I'd be lunch.

Josiah: But then the guy, the angel guy, was like *(he imitates him)* "Don't be afraid!"

Tirzah: And we were still all like *(she remembers to keep it quiet)* Aaagh!

Susannah: And then he came right at me while I was still totally frozen...

Tirzah: And that got our attention because we were like, "Oh no! What's he going to do to her?!"

Susannah: And he stopped right in front of me and he kind of crouched down so he was looking right in my eyes, and he goes, "Don't be afraid! For I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people!"

Tirzah: And then he gave this huge smile!

Susannah: HUGE!

Tirzah: And we were all like, this guy's all right!

Josiah: And he stood back up and looked at all of us with that big smile that just makes you know that this is the best news he's ever told ANYBODY and says, "The Savior – yes, the Messiah! Christ the Lord! – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"

Tirzah: And we were all like, "Whaaaaa???"

Josiah: And he said, "You'll recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

Tirzah: And then BOOSH! There were a bajillion angels! *(All the **extra** **shepherds** jump up to stand)*

Susannah: They were everywhere!

Josiah: As far as the eye could see! The armies of heaven!

Tirzah: And they were singing their hearts out in praise to God!

*All the **shepherds** sing – Music at the end of the script.*

Glory to God in the highest, Glory to God in the hi-igh-est
And peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests

*The **extra shepherds** sit back down.*

Tirzah: Only they sounded way better.

Susannah: WAY!

Josiah: It's like their voices had harps in them. It was amazing!

Tirzah: I could have listened to that for a thousand years!

Susannah: A million!

Josiah: But they didn't stay. After their song they just... went up!

Joseph: Went up?

Josiah: Yeah, they just disappeared into the sky, and it was just us and the sheep that were left and our little fire again.

Susannah: And we were like...

Tirzah: Did we just see that? That happened, right?

Josiah: So I thought, well, let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that's happened, which the Lord has told us about!

Tirzah: So we just started running!

Susannah: And then you were here! We found you!

Tirzah: And your baby is in the manger, just like he said! *(they all remember the baby in the manger and look at him)* The Savior!

Susannah: The Messiah!

Josiah: Christ the Lord! *(they all gaze in awe for a while.)*

Tirzah: *(reverently)* I can't believe I'm looking at the Messiah!

Susannah: The promised one!

Josiah: The one who will sit on David's throne...

Tirzah: *(to **Mary** and **Joseph**)* Thank you for letting us visit your son.

Mary: Thank you for telling us your story. What a gift.

Susannah: You know what I just realized?

Tirzah: What?

Susannah: Why did they tell us?

Tirzah: What do you mean? This is *really* good news!

Susannah: I know but why did they tell *us*? We're just shepherds. We're not important. We don't even personally know anyone important. The angel said the good news was for *all* the people. But I'm pretty sure they only told *us*. Otherwise, there would be a bunch more people here.

Josiah: Then how are all the other people going to find out?

Tirzah: *(coming to a realization)* We have to tell them.

Josiah: What do you mean *we* have to tell them? We only know, like, forty people and they're all shepherds. *(to **Joseph** and **Mary**)* We're always out in the fields with the sheep so we don't really have the connections you city folk have.

Joseph: *(chuckling)* I don't think "city" is quite the right term for Nazareth...

Tirzah: No, but you guys, *we* have to tell them! We have to tell *everyone*! We have to tell everyone what they told us and what we saw!

Susannah: You're right! They gave us a message and we have to tell people.

Josiah: But I don't know anyone!

Susannah: It doesn't matter! Tell them anyway! The angel said the Good News was for *all* the people. Not just the people *you* know. Think of that smile he had! We have the Best. News. EVER!! We *have* to share it!

Tirzah: Let's go! We've got to get started! (*Susannah and Tirzah gather the other shepherds*)

Josiah: Thanks again for letting us visit your baby. *(he starts to leave then turns back)* Will you pray for me? I'm not very good at talking to people. But for this little guy... I'd do anything.

Mary: We will. Thank you, Josiah.

Josiah leaves. The shepherds shout the Good News on their way out. "The Messiah has been born tonight in Bethlehem!" "God has sent us a Savior!" "We heard the angel armies of heaven singing praises to God!" "He's here! The Messiah is here!" Some of them even tell specific people in the audience. When they are gone...

Joseph: Wow. What a night.

Mary: Yes. What a night. *(she giggles then starts to laugh)*

Joseph: What is it? What's so funny?

Mary: This is not easy, but I just love being a servant of the Most High God. I can't wait to see what He will do next!

End scene.

Glory to God in the Highest

Nathan Conant

Glo-ry to God in the high-est Glo-ry to God in the hi-igh-est and peace on earth to



those on whom his fa - vor rests



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