a script from

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A Night in Bethlehem: A Narrated Nativity

PURCHASE SCRIPT TO REMOVE WATERMARK AT GODSVERSE.ORG

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A Night in Bethlehem

PURCHASE

A Narrated Nativity is a beautifully simple 15-minute Christmas play designed especially for young children ages 1–5 and small church groups. With one narrator guiding the entire performance, the story of Jesus' birth unfolds clearly and gently while little actors silently reenact each moment. This easy, no-stress format keeps the message accurate, the movements simple, and the children confident.

SCRIPT

Perfect for preschools, early childhood ministries, and churches with limited rehearsal time, the script uses minimal dialogue and relies on narration, soft music, and visual storytelling. Children portray Mary and Joseph, angels, shepherds, sheep, and wise men, all surrounding a warm, traditional manger scene. The play is flexible, allowing anywhere from 8 to 15 children (or more) to participate using only basic costumes and props.

TO

Why Families Love It:

• Easy to understand for little ones

• Calm, Scripture-inspired narration

• Gentle movement, no memorization

REMOVE

• Beautiful moments for photos and recording

• A peaceful, reverent retelling of the Nativity

Why Leaders Love It:

WATERMARK

• Extremely simple to stage

• Works with small or large groups

• One narrator carries the whole play

• Requires very little rehearsal

AT

• Affordable, minimal props and costumes

Ideal For:

• Small churches

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• Preschool Christmas programs

• Family or candlelight services

• Early childhood ministries

• Last-minute Christmas presentations

Length: 15 minutes

Cast: 8–15 children + 1 narrator

Style: Quiet, reverent, flexible, and child-friendly

***A Night in Bethlehem* is one of the easiest Christmas programs you can present—yet its simplicity makes it powerful, tender, and unforgettable for both families and congregations.**

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A Night in Bethlehem: A Narrated Nativity

A Simple Christmas Play for Little Ones

Cast of Characters (8–15 children)

You can adjust the number of children easily.

- **NARRATOR** – older child, youth, or adult (main speaking role)
- **MARY** – young girl, gentle and calm
- **JOSEPH** – young boy, kind and protective
- **ANGEL OF THE LORD** – one main angel (can add more “backup” angels)
- **SHEPHERDS** – 2–5 children
- **SHEEP** – any extra children (or stuffed animals)
- **WISE MEN** (optional) – 1–3 children with crowns
- **STAR HOLDER** – child holding a large star on a stick (or star backdrop)

Extra little ones can be added as more sheep, angels, or townspeople.

Simple Props & Costumes

- **Costumes:**
  - Robes or oversized t-shirts with sashes for Mary, Joseph, shepherds, wise men
  - Simple shawl or veil for Mary
  - Angel wings/halo for the Angel

    - Sheep ears or headbands for sheep
- **Props & Set:**
    - Manger with baby doll
    - A few bales of hay or brown blankets to look like straw
    - Cardboard “stable” backdrop or simple wooden frame
    - Star backdrop or one big star on a stick
    - Walking stick for Joseph or shepherds
    - Small box gifts for wise men
- **Lighting (if possible):**
    - Soft, dim light at start to represent night
    - Slightly brighter when angels appear
    - Warm light on manger at the end

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Overall Style

- **Children act silently** – they move, point, kneel, look surprised, etc.
- **The NARRATOR reads everything** – Scripture-style verses plus simple explanations.
- **Optional music** – you can insert short carols between scenes:
    - “O Little Town of Bethlehem”
    - “Away in a Manger”
    - “Silent Night”
    - “Joy to the World”

The whole program is designed to be easy for **1–5 year olds**: minimal memorization, lots of gentle movement, and full narration.

THE SKIT

Scene 1 – Opening: A Quiet Night

(Lights low. The stage is mostly empty except perhaps a simple backdrop or starry cloth. The NARRATOR stands to the side with an open Bible or storybook.)

NARRATOR:

Tonight, we remember a very special night…

a night long ago in a little town called Bethlehem.

It was a quiet night.

No Christmas trees.

No lights on houses.

No car horns or busy streets.

Just stars in the sky…

and people going about their day,

not knowing that God was about to send

the greatest gift of all.

(Pause. Invite the STAR HOLDER to step forward and hold the star high, but dimly lit for now.)

NARRATOR:

Up in the heavens,

God could see everything.

He saw a world that needed hope,

a world that needed love,

a world that needed a Savior.

And so, He planned…

a night in Bethlehem

that would change everything.

(Optional: short instrumental or hum one verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.")

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Scene 2 – Mary and Joseph Begin Their Journey

(MARY and JOSEPH enter from the side of the stage, walking slowly as if very tired. JOSEPH may pretend to lead a small "donkey" (another child or a rocking toy), or simply walk beside MARY.)

NARRATOR:

In a town far from Bethlehem,

there lived a young woman named Mary.

Mary loved God with all her heart.

God sent an angel to tell her

that she would have a baby—

not just any baby,

but God's own Son.

(ANGEL OF THE LORD can stand off to the side with hands gently raised as if remembering that moment. No need to speak.)

NARRATOR:

Mary trusted God.

She said "Yes" to His plan.

Mary was engaged to Joseph,

a kind and good man.

Together, they obeyed God

and prepared for the baby.

One day, the ruler of the land said

everyone had to go to their family's town

to be counted.

So Mary and Joseph

had to travel to Bethlehem.

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(MARY and JOSEPH walk slowly across the stage. NARRATOR can gently prompt the audience.)

NARRATOR:

Mary and Joseph walked… and walked… and walked.

Boys and girls,

can you move your feet like you're walking too?

(Kids in the audience or choir wiggle their feet. MARY may put a hand on her "tummy" and look tired. JOSEPH can pretend to help her.)

NARRATOR:

It was a long, hard trip.

But they kept going,

because they trusted God.

Scene 3 – No Room at the Inn

(On the other side of the stage, place a simple "Inn" sign or doorway. An older child or adult can briefly appear as an INNKEEPER, or this can be pantomimed with just gestures.)

NARRATOR:

When Mary and Joseph finally reached Bethlehem,

the town was very, very crowded.

People were everywhere—

filling the streets,

filling the homes,

filling the inns.

(MARY and JOSEPH knock (mime) at the first "door." The INNKEEPER or a HELPER shakes their head and points "no room" with gentle gestures.)

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NARRATOR:

They knocked on the door of an inn.

But there was no room.

(They move and "knock" at a second door. Again, "no room.")

NARRATOR:

They tried again.

Still no room.

(They try a third time. The person at the door points kindly toward the "stable" area.)

NARRATOR:

Finally, someone said,

"I have no room in my house.

But you can stay where the animals stay."

It wasn't fancy.

It wasn't big.

But it was a place.

(MARY and JOSEPH walk to the stable area. The LITTLE ANIMALS or SHEEP can already be there, lying down or munching imaginary hay.)

NARRATOR:

So Mary and Joseph went to a simple stable,

a quiet place,

just right

for a very special baby.

(Optional: short verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" sung softly.)

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Scene 4 – The Birth of Jesus

(Lights warm slightly around the stable. MARY kneels or sits near the manger. JOSEPH stands beside her. A helper hands MARY a baby doll ("Jesus") offstage if not already in the manger.)

NARRATOR:

And there, in that little place,

with straw on the floor

and animals all around,

Mary's baby was born.

She wrapped Him in soft cloths

and laid Him gently

in a manger—

a feeding box for animals.

(MARY carefully places the "baby" in the manger. LITTLE ANIMALS move closer, sitting or lying near the manger.)

NARRATOR:

This baby didn't sleep in a golden bed.

He didn't wear a king's crown.

No trumpets sounded in the palace.

But still, He was a King—

God's own Son.

His name was Jesus.

(Pause for a quiet moment. Invite all children on stage to look at the manger.)

NARRATOR:

In that small, quiet place,

God's big love

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came down to us.

(Optional song: “Away in a Manger,” first verse. Children can hum or sway.)

PURCHASE

Scene 5 – Shepherds in the Fields

SCRIPT

(On the opposite side of the stage, SHEPHERDS and SHEEP move into place, “out in the fields.” They may sit, stand, or lie as if watching sheep at night.)

NARRATOR:

Not far from Bethlehem,

TO

some shepherds were out in the fields,

taking care of their sheep.

They were probably sleepy.

The night was dark.

REMOVE

The stars were shining.

(STAR HOLDER raises the star a little higher, but ANGEL has not appeared yet.)

NARRATOR:

WATERMARK

The shepherds didn’t know

that something amazing

was about to happen.

(SHEPHERDS pretend to watch sheep, point to stars, or yawn.)

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Scene 6 – The Angel of the Lord Appears

(The ANGEL OF THE LORD steps forward on a small platform or center stage. Lights brighten if possible.)

NARRATOR:

Suddenly,

the sky was filled with light.

An angel of the Lord

stood before the shepherds,

and the glory of the Lord

shone all around them.

The shepherds were very afraid.

(SHEPHERDS show "scared" faces—hands on cheeks, hiding behind each other.)

NARRATOR:

But the angel said,

"Do not be afraid.

I bring you good news

of great joy

that will be for all the people.

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."

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(As NARRATOR speaks, ANGEL can slowly raise hands, then point toward the stable.)

NARRATOR:

Then, more angels appeared in the sky,

praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace

to those on whom His favor rests.”

(If you have extra LITTLE ANGELS, they join the main angel, holding hands or lifting arms together.)

(Optional song: short chorus of “Angels We Have Heard on High” – maybe just “Gloria in excelsis Deo.”)

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Scene 7 – The Shepherds Visit the Manger

(ANGELS fade back a little. SHEPHERDS stand up, excited.)

NARRATOR:

When the angels left

and the sky grew quiet again,

the shepherds looked at each other and said,

“Let’s go to Bethlehem

and see this thing that has happened,

which the Lord has told us about.”

(SHEPHERDS and SHEEP walk in a line across the stage toward the stable. Encourage them to move slowly but joyfully.)

NARRATOR:

So they hurried off

and found Mary and Joseph,

and the baby,

who was lying in the manger.

(SHEPHERDS kneel around the manger. Some SHEEP sit or curl up nearby. ANGEL can stand to one side, watching.)

NARRATOR:

When they saw Jesus,

their hearts were full of joy.

They knew this baby

was the Savior

God had promised.

After they saw Him,

they went out and told everyone

the good news:

that God had sent His Son,

and that hope had arrived

in Bethlehem.

(Optional quiet refrain: “Go Tell It on the Mountain” chorus.)

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Scene 8 – The Star and the Wise Men (Optional but Recommended)

(STAR HOLDER walks slowly across the stage in front, holding the star high. WISE MEN follow in a small line, each carrying a gift box.)

NARRATOR:

Far away in another land,

some wise men watched the sky.

They saw a special star

that God had placed there.

They knew it meant

a new King had been born.

So they began a long journey

to find Him.

(WISE MEN continue to follow the star across the stage, eventually arriving near the stable.)

NARRATOR:

They traveled far.

They brought gifts—

precious gifts for a King:

Gold,

frankincense,

and myrrh.

(WISE MEN kneel and set their gift boxes gently near the manger.)

NARRATOR:

When they found Jesus,

they bowed down and worshiped Him.

They knew this child

was no ordinary baby.

He was the King of Kings

and Lord of Lords.

(All children on stage—SHEPHERDS, SHEEP, ANGELS, WISE MEN, ANIMALS—are now gathered around the manger. STAR HOLDER stands where everyone can see the star.)

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Scene 9 – The Meaning of A Night in Bethlehem

(Lights are warm and steady. NARRATOR moves a bit closer to the center but still to the side of the manger so the children remain the focus.)

NARRATOR:

This is our night in Bethlehem.

We see Mary and Joseph,

trusting God's plan.

We see a tiny baby,

sleeping in a manger.

We see shepherds,

ordinary people,

who heard the good news

and hurried to see Jesus.

We see angels,

shining with God's glory,

singing about peace on earth.

We see wise men,

bringing their best gifts

to honor the new King.

And in the center of it all—

we see Jesus.

(Pause. Invite the children to gently point to the manger.)

NARRATOR:

Jesus is God's gift to us.

He came so that we would know

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how much God loves us.

He came to bring hope

to every heart,

peace to every home,

and light to every dark place.

That is why

we still celebrate Christmas today.

(Optional: sing one verse of “Silent Night” with everyone. Let the children simply sway or hold still if they’re very young.)

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Scene 10 – Closing Blessing

(As the song ends, all children remain gathered around the manger. Some may wave at their families.)

NARRATOR:

In a little town,

on a quiet night,

in a simple stable,

God’s love

came down

to us.

Tonight, we remember

that first Christmas night.

We remember

a baby called Jesus,

our Savior and our King.

(To the children, gently.)

Boys and girls,

on the count of three,

let's all say,

"Happy Birthday, Jesus!"

Ready?

One… two… three…

(Encourage them.)

ALL CHILDREN (as loud or soft as they are able):

Happy Birthday, Jesus!

NARRATOR (to audience):

May your Christmas

be filled with His peace,

His joy,

and His love.

From our little Bethlehem

to your hearts—

Merry Christmas.

(Optional final song: "Joy to the World" or "Happy Birthday, Jesus." Children can wave and smile. Lights slowly fade, leaving a soft glow on the manger.)

[END OF PLAY]

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