

A Dramatic Reading of the Epiphany

The Shepherds and the Angels (Luke 2:8-20)

Narrator 1: In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

Angel: “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

Narrator 2: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

**People: “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”**

Narrator 1: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

Shepherd: “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”

Narrator 2: So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Jesus Is Named (Luke 2:21)

Narrator 1: After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple (Luke 2:22-38)

Narrator 2: When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Narrator 1: Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

Simeon: “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

Narrator 2: And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary,

Simeon: “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

Narrator 1: There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Visit of the Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12)

Narrator 2: In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking,

Wise man 1: "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

Narrator 1: When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him,

Wise man 2: "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Narrator 2: Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying,

Herod: "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

Narrator 1: When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Escape to Egypt (Matthew 2:1-15)

Narrator 2: Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said,

Angel : "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

Narrator 1: Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

The Massacre of the Infants (Matthew 2:16-18)

Narrator 2: When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

The Return from Egypt (Matthew 2:19-23)

Narrator 1: When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said,

Angel : “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.”

Narrator 2: Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

Lay Readers

8:00 am

Judie Ratcliffe, Cynthia Davis, Barbara Kanto, Bill Tomz, Paxton Watkins, Clark Sizemore, Rick Pearce

10:00 am

Bob Fuchs, Bobbie Fuchs, Rose Dahill, Fraser Crane, Frank Darzano, Aedan Barnes, Barbara Edwards, Steve Russell