

# NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

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LIBRETTO

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# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Narrator 4

Gabriel

Mary

Angel

Isaiah - a prophet

Joseph

Shepherd 1

Shepherd 2

Shepherd 3

Shepherd 4

Simeon

Wiseman 1

Wiseman 2

Wiseman 3

Herod

Priest

Teacher

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## **Scene One - The Promise**

- Narrator: Welcome to our Christmas concert. Today (tonight) we listen to the story of the journey to Bethlehem, the song of the angels and the birth of Jesus.
- Narrator 2: Our story starts long before then - back in the days of the old Testament. Lots of men saw the future of God's plans and told others about them. They were called Prophets.
- Narrator 3: One prophet, called Isaiah prophesied the birth of Jesus the Saviour. He told the people that the Lord God was to give a sign.
- Narrator 4: The sign was that a virgin was to have a baby boy and He would be called Immanuel.
- Narrator 1: Many prophets saw visions of the birth of Jesus. The prophet Jeremiah said that the child would be born from the family tree of King David.
- Narrator 2: He said that the baby would grow up to be a King and rule wisely and be kind. He said that the King would be called The Lord Our Righteousness.
- Narrator 3: Another prophet called Micah, predicted where the baby would be born. He said that Bethlehem, despite being small would be the birthplace of the one who would rule over Israel.
- Narrator 4: Isaiah also said - "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God and Prince of Peace.

## **Song One - O Little Town of Bethlehem**

O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see you lie!  
Above your deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by:  
Yet in your dark streets shining  
Is everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in you tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary  
And gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love:  
O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the king  
And peace to all on earth.

*Bridge*

How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of his heaven:  
No ear may hear his coming,  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still  
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,  
Descend on us we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in,  
Be born in us today!  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell  
O come with us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel.

O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see you lie!  
Above your deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by:  
The silent stars go by

## **Scene Two - The Good News**

Narrator 1: In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary at her home in Nazareth. Mary was engaged to Joseph a carpenter.

***(The lights come up on Mary at her home. She is seen sweeping the floor. There is a simple table and chair on the set.)***

Gabriel: ***(Appearing suddenly)*** Greetings, Mary. You are highly favoured by God! The Lord is with you.

Mary: Who are you? What do you mean - I am favoured by God?

Gabriel: Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favour with God. You are to have a child who will be a boy. You should call him Jesus. He will be great and called the Son of God and His Kingdom will never end.

Mary: But how can this be?

Gabriel: The Holy Spirit will be within you and you will have God's child. The child will be called the Son of God.

Mary: I am the Lord's servant, for Him to do with me as he wishes.

Narrator 2: Then the angel Gabriel left her.

## **Song Two - Mary's Song**

Lord, you've filled my heart with joy,  
Lord, you've done great things for me.  
For, I am just a lowly child,  
I rejoice that God is my redeemer.  
Lord, you've done great things for me,  
And holy is your name.

Lord, your mercy reaches out,  
And cloaks all those who fear your name.  
Great and wondrous works are done,  
No one can compare with you, for - my  
Lord, you've done great things for me,  
And Holy is your name.

Lord, who scatters far and wide,  
Those who lay down great and mighty plans.  
The rich, He has sent empty hands,  
Raises those who're poor and lowly  
The Lord will help my own, dear land,  
And Holy is His name.

### **Scene Three - Joseph Learns The Truth**

- Narrator 3: Mary had promised to marry Joseph, but before they were married, Mary discovered she was carrying the baby that the angel had told her about.
- Narrator 4: Joseph was worried that Mary might be disgraced by the villagers and friends and troubled over her. But then an angel visited him in a dream and spoke to him.
- Angel: Joseph, Son of David, don't be afraid to marry Mary, because the baby that she carries is God's son. You must name the child Jesus, because He will save the people from their sins.
- Narrator 3: All this happened to fulfill what the prophets had said:
- Isaiah: The virgin will have a child and they will call him Immanuel - that is God with us.
- Narrator 4: When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel had told him and married Mary.

### **Song Three - Why Choose You?**

Mary, my beloved,  
How can this be?  
A message from an angel  
That came to visit thee.  
You say he brought glad tidings,  
He brought you joyful news.  
Why you? A humble girl,  
Should God decide to choose.

It makes no sense, to choose a girl,  
Who is so meek and mild,  
He could have chosen royalty,  
So why - this peasant child?  
It isn't clear, His motives here,  
It isn't clear at all.  
To bear this child; the King of Kings.  
Why choose you?

### **Instrumental Break**

It isn't clear, His motives here,  
It isn't clear at all.  
To bear this child; the King of Kings.  
Why choose -

Mary, my beloved,  
How can this be?  
Incarnate of a virgin,  
And born in humility!  
Our God comes down from heaven,  
This is the joyful news.  
But why, you? A humble girl,  
Should God decide to choose?

Mary, my beloved,  
Why choose you?

### **Scene Four - The Announcement**

- Narrator 1: There were shepherds living out on the hills close to Bethlehem, watching over the flocks of sheep at night. Suddenly an angel appeared to them and they were terrified.
- Shepherd 1: What's that?...
- Shepherd 2: The light is so bright....
- Shepherd 3: Who are you?
- Angel: Don't be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy, for everyone to hear. Today, in Bethlehem, a Saviour has been born; he is Christ the Lord.
- Shepherd 1: We must go and see this for ourselves.
- Shepherd 2: But how will we know who he is?
- Angel: You will see a sign. You will find the child wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.
- Narrator 2: Suddenly a great number of angels appeared. They were praising God and singing "Glory to God in the highest and peace to all on earth.

### **Song Four - Glory to the Lord**

Come on and sing glory,  
Glory, glory, Hallelujah!  
Come on and sing glory,  
Glory to the Lord.

He is born in Bethlehem  
Sing praises to his name  
Jesus, Lord and Saviour  
The wond'rous birth proclaim.

Come on and sing glory,  
Glory, glory, Hallelujah!  
Come on and sing glory,  
Glory to the Lord.

Peace to all who live on earth  
Goodwill to all mankind  
Joyful news we bring you  
To ease your troubled minds.

Come on and sing glory,  
Glory, glory, Hallelujah!  
Come on and sing glory,  
Glory to the Lord.