

TABLE TALK CHRISTMAS PLAY

Angels debate who is to tell Mary the “good news”

(Roles: Angels 1, 2 and 3)

Angel 1: God says God wants to come to earth!

Angel 2: What do you mean? Trumpets and clouds and flashes of light? Do we have to plan a performance? I don't think we've had one of those since the days of Isaiah!

Angel 1: No, this time God wants to come as a BABY

Angel 2: You've got to be joking.

Angel 1: No, I'm not! God wants to come as a kid.

Angel 3: So, is someone going to find this Godchild under a gooseberry bush?

Angel 1: No, God says the Godchild is going to have a normal human birth.

Angel 3: Wheeew!

Angel 1: And God's even chosen the mother – a bit of a kid herself – called Mary.

Angel 2: Does she know about this? It's going to be a bit of a shock!

Angel 1: Ummm.....God wants **us** to pass on the good news!

Angel 2: Well, I'm not telling her!

Angel 3: Me neither!

Angel 1: Neither am I! I think this is a job for the hierarchy. Gabriel, Guess what, Gabriel? We've got a great job for you, you being an archangel and all!

Mary receives the good news

(Roles: Mary, Archangel Gabriel)

Gabriel: Hi there. Is your name Mary?

Mary: Yes, that's right.

Gabriel: I believe you love God.

Mary: Yes, I do.

Gabriel: Well, what I have to tell you might be a bit of a shock- and it might test your faith a bit. But you will be pleased to know that God has chosen you for a special job.

Mary: I'm happy to serve God - I think.

Gabriel: Well, this might be a bit of a challenge – but here goes

(Gabriel conveys the news)

Mary: You've got to be kidding!

Gabriel: No, that's what you're going to do! *(Pause)*

Mary: I think I need to sit down. I might be suffering from shock. What's my boyfriend Joseph going to say? I've made sure he's kept his distance – and now this!

Gabriel: God will sort that out for you

Mary: That's fine – but will God sort out the village gossip? What will I tell my Mum and Dad? What about Joseph's reputation because everyone will think the baby's his?

Gabriel: I think it might be a good idea for you to get out of the village for a while. Go and see your old cousin, Elizabeth. She's pregnant too and her husband can't talk right now so she'd be glad of someone to compare notes with. You two can talk up a storm.

Mary: OK. Well, I will then.

Gabriel: So I can tell God you're up for the job.

Mary: I guess so. If this baby might make the world a better place, I guess I can't say no.

Joseph is confused

(Role: Joseph)

- I've behaved so properly with Mary – not that I didn't want to behave badly if you know what I mean, but she has high standards, that girl. That's why I couldn't understand that she could be pregnant. This angel came – flurries of wings and light flashing and all that stuff – and told me the father of Mary's baby was God. Well, I don't know really. It's not something I've ever heard of happening before. But I love Mary and I won't see her disgraced so I'll stand by her. But, God, really.....

Packing to go to Bethlehem

(Roles: Mary, Joseph, Donkey 1, Donkey 2, SPCA(D) inspector)

Mary: Why on earth did your family come from Bethlehem, Joseph? It's such a long way to go!

Joseph: I didn't have much say over it. If you want to grouch at anyone, grouch at the Romans who are making us go on this unnecessary trip.

What on earth have you got there, Mary?

Mary: That's my luggage. We need clothes for you and me, but we also need things in case the baby arrives – cloths, blankets, nappies, wet wipes, talcum powder,

Joseph: But we're going on a donkey. If we have to take all that stuff, then you'll have to walk.

Mary: I'm not sure that's possible. Have you had a good look at me recently? I'm eight and a half months pregnant !

Donkey: Do donkeys get a say in this? I'm quite sure I can't carry all this gear and a pregnant mother all the way to Bethlehem! I'm going to complain to my union!

SPCA(D) Inspector: Good afternoon. I'm Benjamin ben Ahmed from the SPCA (D) that's Society for the Promotion of Care to Animals and especially Donkeys. I have a complaint from one of my members that he is being overloaded on a journey to Bethlehem.

Joseph: For heaven's sake, this is all God's fault! Get it sorted, God! Could I suggest a second donkey, a cart, and a bottle of gin might help too!

Arriving in Bethlehem

(Roles: Donkey 1, Donkey 2, Mary, Joseph, Innkeeper, Innkeeper's wife)

Donkey 1: Are we there yet?

Donkey 2: Are we there yet?

Mary: Are we there yet? I'm really, really hoping we are!

Joseph: This looks like Bethlehem, not that I've been here for a very long time.

Mary: Have we got a booking?

Joseph: No. I thought we'd just pick up a place.

Mary: All the signs say "No vacancies". Look! There's an innkeeper standing in the doorway. Try him. And Joseph, I think you should hurry. I know I haven't done this before but I think my waters just broke so it might be sort of urgent.....

Joseph: God help us! Excuse me, sir, but do you have anywhere we could stay the night?
The thing is, I think my wife's going to have a baby.

Innkeeper: Sorry, no room in this inn. We're full up!

Joseph: But you see it's a bit of a crisis. When I say my wife is going to have a baby, I mean right now!

Innkeeper's wife: For heaven's sake, Levi! Can't you see the poor woman's in labour?
There's a stable out the back, my dear. Go there!

The baby is born

(Roles: Council inspector, Council official, Mary, Joseph, Passerby1, Passerby2, Passerby 3, Passerby 4, Donkey 2)

Council Inspector: Good evening, folks. I'm Bartholomew from Bethlehem Town Council. I am checking this inn to ensure it complies with the high standards demanded by the travellers who visit our town. I'm sorry to say that this stable does not comply! Apart from anything else there is a distinct smell of manure!

Council official: Excuse me, madam, but you seem somewhat distressed. Is there anything I can do for you?

Mary: A bit late for that.

Joseph: Look you guys, could we have a bit of privacy here? My wife is going to have a baby.

Passerby 1: Did someone say "baby"?

Passerby 2: I love babies.

Passerby 3: Are you going to have the baby now?

Passerby 4: How exciting!

Joseph: Just clear out will you! If you don't, I'm going to set my donkey on you!

Donkey 2: Fat chance!

Bartholomew: OK, we'll go – but this stable is not hygienic, and it's overcrowded! Come on you lot! Out!

Mary: Joseph, I think the baby's coming!

Mary: What are you doing, Joseph? Have you fainted? Oh my God, what have you got me into?!!

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Mary: How are you feeling, Joseph?

Joseph: OK. I've got a bit of a bump on my head where I hit it on the manger.
Are you ok?

Mary: Yes, I'm fine. I'm glad the inn keeper's wife came in though. She was a big help.

Joseph: Where's the baby?

Mary: In the manger. I've given him a feed and hopefully he'll go to sleep now.

Joseph: I thought the Christmas carol said he didn't cry. "Little Lord Jesus no crying he makes".

Mary: Dream on! They sure got that one wrong – but if it stays quiet round here, maybe he'll sleep.

Joseph: Somehow I don't think it's going to stay quiet!

Shepherds , angels and sheep

Roles: Shepherd 1, Shepherd 2, Shepherd 3- Peter, Archangel Gabriel, Sheep, Mary, Joseph)

Shepherd 1: 28, 29, 30. That's all the sheep in the fold.

Shepherd 2: Now for a quiet drink and a good night's sleep!

Shepherd 3: Is that a fire over on the hill?

Shepherd 2: No, I can see a figure.

Shepherd 3: It could be an angel!

Shepherd 1: Dream on! Peter, did you brew this beer properly?

Archangel Gabriel: "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy".

Shepherd 1: Doesn't he speak posh!

Shepherd 2: Pretty weird all round.

Shepherd 3: What are you trying to say, man?

Archangel Gabriel: A baby's been born in Bethlehem – a Saviour.

Shepherd 1: Saving us from what? Getting enough sleep?

Archangel Gabriel: No, the Saviour of the world. God's son.

Shepherd 2: Born as a baby?

Shepherd 3: Is this a joke?

Archangel Gabriel: No, go and see for yourselves. And take the sheep with you! Otherwise, the wolf might get them.

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Sheep: Baa! Baa! We've come to see the baby!

Mary: Shush!

Sheep: Baa! Isn't he beautiful!

Shepherd 1, 2 and 3: Hello, we're shepherds and we've come to see

Joseph: Shush! We've just got him to sleep!

Mary: Who told you about our baby?

Shepherds 1, 2 and 3: Angels came. Gave us the fright of our lives – but we had to come!

Mary: Well, you're welcome, but please be very quiet.

Sheep: Baa!

Joseph: Shhh!

Archangel Gabriel: Glory to God in

Joseph and Mary: Shush! The baby's sleeping!

Wise people and camels

(Wise men 1, 2 and 3, Wise wives 1, 2 and 3, Wise children 1,2 and 3)

Wise men 1, 2, 3: We're going off on a journey. We've been looking at the stars and they tell us that a baby king has been born

Wise wives 1, 2,3: You're not going by yourselves.

Wise wife 1: Remember last time you went off on a journey and met all those dancing girls from India....

Wise wives 1, 2, 3: We're coming too.

Wise children 1, 2, 3: You're not leaving us behind. Children have rights too.

Wise man 1: That's going to mean a lot of camels.

Wise wife 2: That's fine. We have plenty.

Wise man 2: Remember the time we went looking for that tower and we got lost.

Wise wife 3: I remember very well. How are we going to know where to go?

Wise man 3: We're following a star!

Wise wives 1, 2, 3: You've got to be kidding.

Wise man 3: No, we're not. We'll travel at night.

Wise wife 3: That's fine, but I think GPS would be better.

Wise children 1, 2, 3: Are you taking gifts for the baby?

Wise man 1: Yes, we went out and got those this morning – Gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Wise wife 2: That's just ridiculous. Babies need practical things -nappies, clothes, meals for the parents.

Wise men 1, 2, 3: It would be a lot easier if you would just stay at home.

Wise wives 1, 2, 3: No way! Why should you have all the excitement? Let's get packed.

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Wise man 1: Look! The star has stopped over that inn.

Wise man 2: No, it's not the inn. It's the stable round the back.

Wise child 1: Can we go in?

Wise man 3: Where can we park the camels?

Wise child 2: Oh, look!

Wise child 3: It's the loveliest little baby.

Wise wife 1: Is he a good feeder?

Wise wife 2: Does he sleep well?

Wise wife 3: Have you got all the things you need for him?

Wise men 1, 2, 3: We've brought him some gifts

Wise child 1: Can he come out and play with us?

Wise child 2: Is that a real angel?

Wise child 3: Is it actually true that this baby is God's son?

Mary pondered....

Mary: Well, God, I wonder if this is how you thought it would be... A very down to earth start for the Saviour of the world. In the meantime, he needs to be fed and changed and cuddled – and Joseph needs sorted too. It was great to see the shepherds and those foreign visitors but I'm glad they've gone home. Now it's just us – but Joseph says we need to saddle the donkeys again. It seems this time it's Herod that's behaving badly ...