

A Night at the Inn

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| Ross Callaghan – Narrator Paul Curwen – Innkeeper Kathy Callaghan – Wife Ian Burt – Aaron |
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Welcome

Notices

Offering. [Video - digital Christmas \(during offering\).](#)

Prayer time.

Introduction to our special Christmas service.

[Video: The Christmas story](#)

Sing: O come all ye faithful
God rest ye merry gentlemen

Luke 2:1,2

1. In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

Explain: Caesar Augustus, Roman Empire, taxation system, Quirinius.

Luke 2:4-5

And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

Explain: distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem, how they travelled, Nazareth, Samaria, Judean desert, Bethlehem, the city of David, Joseph in the lineage of David, age of Mary and Joseph. Town full of people. Tried to stay at inn. What inn was like. Sent to stable.

Sing: Once in Royal David's city.

Narrator

A cold night begins in Bethlehem. The town is teeming with people. Caesar Augustus has decreed that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.... This took place while Quirinius was the governor of Syria.

Sound of fist banging on the door

Innkeeper

Not another one!

Innkeeper opens the door and stands with his wife, wiping his hands on a cloth

I'm sorry but the inn is closed, we have no room, absolutely none, and you won't have any luck at any other place in David's city either. I've turned away three others before you. All the inns are full.

Innkeeper listens for a bit....

All the travellers are just like you – having to return to their cities for the census. Look it is late, and as I've said before everything is full.

Wife jabs innkeeper in the belly, He turns to her and she whispers in his ear. He looks back at the couple...

I see your wife is with child, ahhhhh. Still I'm sorry there is nothing I can do.

Innkeeper listens for a bit....

The child is important you say. I'm sure all parents say that about their child! I'm sorry I wish there was more I can do. Every room is full. We even have people sleeping on the floor in the dining room.

Innkeeper listens for a bit more....

Yes, yes, you told me the child was very important – look even if he was the Son of God, I could not make any room at the Inn. Were completely full. The only empty space I have is the old stable, over there....

What do you mean, you'll take that. You can't put a pregnant woman in a stable!

Wife yanks his arm, and again whispers in his ear.

Go on, take it, Just take it..... I can't even offer you any food, only water. This census has completely depleted all my stock.

Wife turns away, Innkeeper talks secretly to the audience

I had to let them use the stable. She told me, if I didn't let them use it, then I would have been sleeping in there myself! Hmphh I will be glad when this night is over.

Innkeeper turns to go.

Narrator

And so, Mary and Joseph went to the stable

Luke 2:6-7

6. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7. and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Explain: importance of first born male child, swaddling cloths, manger, fulfillment of prophesy: Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, Matthew 1:20,21, Luke 1:26-37.

Sing: When a Child is born?

Luke 2:8-16 (From Ilumina – New Living translation)

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." 15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." 16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

Explain: shepherds in Israel, angels, glory of the Lord, good news leading to great joy, Saviour, Messiah, signs. Gloria

Listen: Gloria (music by Vivaldi)

Narrator

The innkeeper is still up. He is sitting in the dining hall, with a servant...

Innkeeper

I fear the child has been born, did you hear the groans and moans coming from the stable!

Aaron

Yes, master , The first time I heard it I nearly dropped the serving platter.

Innkeeper

I feel shamed that I put them in the stable, but as I've said again and again.....

Together

The inn is full

Innkeeper glares at Aaron – Aaron smiles at the congregation

Innkeeper

Aaron, it's really bright in here, did you put out the torches, as I asked

Aaron

Yes, master, I put them out earlier as you requested.

Innkeeper

I think you may have missed one or two. It's so very bright in here.

Aaron

I missed none master, the light is coming in from the window that overlooks the stable.

Innkeeper

Oh Blessed Jehovah, please don't let there be a fire!

The innkeeper rushes to the window and looks out.

Innkeeper

Thank God, there is no fire, but Aaron, come look at this. There is a star above the stable, and it is shining light on to it and around it.

Narrator

As Aaron and the innkeeper discuss the light and its strange significance, a group of shepherds come out of the fields, and head toward the inn and stable.

Innkeeper

Aaron, look at that, where did all these shepherds come from, oh this is crazy, the yard is full of sheep, wait a minute, they are going to the stable.

He turns to Aaron

What is this, some sort of birthing party?

Aaron looks out the window...

Errr, they are at the stable and they seem to be kneeling and singing?

Innkeeper

What ?

Aaron

They are kneeling and singing!

Innkeeper

I heard you, let me see,Oh the paying guests are not going to appreciate this.

He leans out the window, shouting "Quiet, people are trying to sleep. Its late - No parties".

He sits at the table and Aaron joins him

Innkeeper

Oh will this day never end. Romans who won't pay full price. Food running low. The wine cellar is empty. A pregnant couple out in the cold, Lights shining strangely. Shepherd's singing and my courtyard is full of sheep dung.

What a mess, Aaron. , What a mess - I'm going to bed. Good night Aaron

Aaron

A Good night Master

Aaron and Innkeeper leave the room

Narrator

Luke 2:17-20

17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Interaction: How do you think they felt? The shepherds. Mary. "All who heard it were amazed". What about today? Are you "glorifying and praising God for all the things you have heard and seen?"

Narrator

As the innkeeper was trying to get some rest, from his unfortunate experiences, elsewhere more things were coming into play on this magical night.

Matthew 2:1-9

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. **5** "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: **6** "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. **8** He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

Explain: star, Herod, magi – wise men, fulfillment of Micah 5:2,

Narrator

We return to the Innkeeper's bedroom.

The Innkeeper is standing at the window of his bedroom, whilst his wife sits at the table, looking at him.

Innkeeper

I swear by all that is holy, Aaron and I heard the woman give birth, and now the stable is surrounded by shepherd's singing! The yard is full of sheep that aren't bleating, but they're leaving an unsightly mess, and we have a star hanging in the sky over the stable, pouring light over everything. The guests will be complaining come morning, when the smell from the sheep hits them. It's all because of the mother and her babe. Oh what am I to do. I cannot cast them out.

He turns and points at her

I should have never listened to you – Let them stay, she's pregnant. Why is everything my problem? This whole city is a mess with this census, and all the people.....

Wife

Aleph ! Come and sit down. Fretting over it all can make no difference. So - we have a pregnant woman giving birth in our stable. Be thankful we could offer them even that small respite, and the shepherd's singing has lulled the babe to sleep. Be thankful for that. You know how a crying babe causes you to lie awake all night, and the sheep are quiet. The servants will clean the mess tomorrow, and the light that shines... it is making me feel very peaceful.

Come now Aleph, sit and be with me awhile, maybe you can feel the peace too.

Innkeeper

Maybe you are right.... I'm so tired.

He takes one last look out the window, and gasps in dread and surprise

Innkeeper

I don't believe it! A caravan is pulling up, Camels and sages it looks like, from the far east, and maybe Egypt. They are stopping at the stable....Camels, sheep, the courtyard is a mess, light shining everywhere.

Narrator

Matthew 2: 11-12

11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. **12** And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Explain: gold, frankincense, myrrh, magi

Innkeeper

They're bowing down and worshipping at the manger. They must be worshipping the child! What did the father say? He was a very important child. Hah, gifts as well, oohh that looks like gold. Who can this child be?

Wife

Aleph, can you not feel it, something very precious is happening this night? All the noise, the shepherd's singing, the camels braying, the caravan arriving, the birth, and yet the town of David lies sleeping around us. Peace is on the earth this night. The baby's cry I have not heard.

Sing: Silent night

Come Aleph, sit, Hold me, for I'm sure the dawn will come soon and with it more noise, troubles and tribulations for us.

Innkeeper

You're right dear. It is peaceful. The starlight fills me with hope, and the shepherd's singing has calmed even me. Can you hear it – Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest.

Narrator

As so we leave the town of David, in the city of Bethlehem. A savior born, a ray of hope, peace on earth, goodwill towards all men, The very first Christmas!

God Bless you all

Kathy sings: Come on ring those bells.

Sing: Joy to the world.