

IN REMEMBRANCE

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(This is a passion-filled Scripture reading for two adults: Reader one's narration (italicized) is about Jesus' birth, Reader two's narration is regarding Christ's death.) Stephen and I have used this reading with great receptivity during a Christmas Eve service. We suggest a musical background as the message is read. It is also a great lead-in to a Communion service. It should be thoroughly practiced and read with great feeling.

(Adult One) *This is how the birth of Jesus came about.*

(Adult Two) Where is the promise of His coming? Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.

1) *An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife because what is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."*

2) "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can He now say, "I came down from heaven"?"

1) *"She will give birth to a Son and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."*

2) The chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked Him among themselves. "He saved others, but He cannot save himself. Let this Christ, this king of Israel, come down from the cross, that we may see and believe."

1) *The angel Gabriel went to Mary and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you!"*

2) Near the cross of Jesus stood His mother.

1) *"You will be with child and give birth to a boy, and you are to give Him the name Jesus."*

2) When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing near her, He said to His mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."

1) *"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, the Son of God."*

2) The high priest said to Him, "I charge You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God." "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. Then they spit in His face and struck Him with their fists.

1) *And Mary gave birth to her firstborn, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes.*

2) They divided My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing."

1) *And Mary laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.*

2) "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has no place to lay His head."

1) *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

- 2) He shall feed His flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom.
- 1) *And, lo, an angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of Davd a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."*
 "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."
- 1) *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men."*
- 2) But they shouted, "Take Him away! Take Him away! Crucify Him!"
- 1) *And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.*
- 2) Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- 1) *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Wise-men from the East came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the East and have come to worship Him."*
- 2) Pilate summoned Jesus and asked Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"
- 1) *And the star the Wise-men had seen in the East went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the child with His mother Mary, they bowed down and worshiped Him.*
- 2) But as soon as the chief priests and their officials saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"
- 1) *And the child grew and became strong. He was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him.*
- 2) He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. As a sheep before the shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth.
- 1) *For unto us a child is born.*
- 2) Then Pilate's soldiers took Jesus and gathered the whole company of soldiers around Him.
- 1) *Unto us a son is given.*
- 2) They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.
- 1) *And the government shall be upon His shoulders.*
- 2) They wove a crown of thorns and set it on His head.
- 1) *And His name shall be called Wonderful!*
- 2) They put a staff in His right hand and knelt in front of Him and mocked Him.
- 1) *Counselor!*
- 2) They spit on Him.
- 1) *The Mighty God!*
- 2) They took the staff and struck Him on the head again and again.
- 1) *The Everlasting Father!*
- 2) After they had mocked Him, they took off the robe and put His own clothes on Him.

