

Just West of Bethlehem

Shepherds from the West!

This works well as a dramatic vignette or a simple reader's theater piece. Fun to perform with the country accent of your region.

Cast: Josiah, Henry, Jake, Angel Gabriel

Josiah: And before I knew it, that wolf done snuck up behind me and started carryin' the sheep off by the scruff of the neck, one by one.

Henry: That ain't right, and you know it! You were out like a light! How would you know? You were snorin' so loud that I couldn't sleep, and it was your watch that night.

Josiah: I wasn't snorin'—I was clearin' my sinuses.

Henry: For 15 minutes!?

Jake: You got some sinus problem, boy!

Josiah: Well, you sure didn't seem like you were in too much of a hurry to help.

Henry: I woke you up, didn't I?

Josiah: How many times do I have to tell you? I wasn't sleepin'!

Henry: Well, tell Jake about what you did after that.

Jake: Hold it.

(Pause. Light angelic music is heard, and its volume slowly increases.)

Henry: What was that?

Josiah: Sounds like . . .

Jake: Music! And . . .

Josiah: What's that light?

Henry: Angels! Great heavens!

Josiah: "Great heavens" is right!

Henry: Boy! Are we in trouble now!

Jake: Head for cover!

Josiah: Come back here, Jake! This ain't no thunderstorm!

Henry: (*trembling with fear*) Jehovah, forgive me for breakin' the Sabbath two weeks ago. Forgive me for eating that bacon when I went to Samaria! And for yelling at my wife last Thursday, and for—

Jake: Will you cut it out? That angel is trying to say something to us.

Gabriel: Don't be afraid!

Josiah: You ain't gonna kill us?

Gabriel: I bring you the most joyful news ever announced, and it is for everyone! The Savior, yes, the Messiah, the Lord has been born tonight in Bethlehem.

Henry: The Messiah? Our Savior? Well, uh, that's great!

Jake: How're we gonna know who He is?

Gabriel: You will find the baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger.

(*Heavenly music.*)

Josiah: Wow! Listen to all those angels!

Henry: Praise God! The Messiah is here!

Josiah: What's "Messiah" mean?

Henry: I'll tell you later. Would you look at all those angels!

(Sudden silence.)

Jake: Hey! Where'd they go?

Josiah: They plum vanished into thin air!

Henry: Well, what are we waiting for? Let's go see this baby!

Josiah: You never did tell me about who the Messiah is!

Jake: We'll tell you on the way.

Josiah: What about the sheep?

Henry: Forget the sheep! We just saw angels flyin' round in the sky, and you're worried about sheep!