

A One-Act Children's  
Christmas Play

Written by  
**LINDSAY FINLEY**

Produced by  
 **Twelve Stones**  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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# Foreword

*But Mary treasured up all these things,  
pondering them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)*

What must it have been like to be Mary? To know the promises of God—beginning in Genesis—that a Messiah, the Deliverer, was someday coming . . . and then to discover through an angelic visitor that you were to be the mother who would bring the Savior into the world? No wonder Mary pondered these things in her heart!

Discover Christmas through the eyes of Mary in this touching Christmas play. Like all of the resources Answers in Genesis produces, this play is more than just an emotional production to make you laugh or cry. It's designed to enrich your understanding of God's Word and see how the Old Testament connects with the New Testament. Through Mary and Joseph's interactions with each other and their friends and family, you'll discover afresh the promises of God that began in the garden so long ago when God promised:

*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between  
your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15)*

I am thrilled that Twelve Stones Christian Academy is producing these Christmas plays that teach deep truths from God's Word, equipping the children and volunteers participating—including the audience watching—with a deeper understanding of the Bible's history and narratives, as well as the gospel message.

May you and your group be blessed by this production that lifts high the only one worthy of our praise, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came as the humble babe in a manger, died and rose again, and will someday return as our conquering King.

In Christ,



**KEN HAM**

CEO—Answers in Genesis, the Ark Encounter, and the  
Creation Museum

# From the Author

**LINDSAY FINLEY**

*Fine Arts Teacher, Twelve Stones Christian Academy*

I think we can all agree that times are getting tough. Sadly, we as Christians are bombarded with expected social norms that are new and maybe even shocking to us. We need to remember that these “norms,” however new and strange, are not new to the world and God. It is time to prepare our children for the battle before them. We need to focus on the truths of our Lord and Savior and share these truths with our children. In a time where “truths” are being blurred and even mislabeled, our jobs as Christian educators and leaders are more important now than ever before.

*A Pondering Heart* is a play that was written with God’s truth first and foremost in our minds. In our previous play, we looked at the magi and their trust in the prophecies “long foretold.” This year, we chose to present the gospel from the perspective of Mary, the young girl who was chosen by God to carry his promise to his people. This promise, in the form of Jesus Christ, is for all people who choose to follow him. What greater truth can we bestow on our youth in these times of uncertainty and false “truths”?

So . . . who was Mary? There are many answers to this question from a variety of sources. Some people place Mary above all others except Christ himself. Some see her as being sinless like Christ. Some people even pray to Mary. Please know that these beliefs about Mary are simply false! The truth is that Mary was favored by God, chosen by him to carry his son, and most importantly, she was a sinner in need of a Savior. Mary had struggles. Mary had hopes, worries, and fears. Sadly, like all of us, Mary *sinned*. This play recognizes Mary for who she really was and how we can learn from her faithfulness to God.

I hope as you prepare for your performance, you use this script not only as a message to your audience but also a teaching tool for your performers, volunteers, etc. Bodie Hodge has provided excellent historical content to assist you in educating others and possibly yourself. Through this journey of writing, I have found that one of

the greatest joys is in the wealth of knowledge gained throughout the process. I pray you can find this journey rewarding as well.

In addition to the information included with this product, we have supplemental material available online. This material includes printable actor's scripts, editable program templates, and a recording of Twelves Stones' performance on the Ark Encounter stage!

We have included suggestions within the script, but they are merely suggestions, not requirements. Many songs (including hymns) will work within the context of the script. I truly believe that songs can enhance the message of the program, so "sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!" (Psalm 96:1).

Our prayer is that this program will be a blessing to you, the performers, and the audience and that the truth of God's Word will be shared and spread!

# Characters

## **NARRATOR #1**

dressed in modern-day clothing

## **NARRATOR #2**

dressed in modern-day clothing

*All the following characters are dressed in traditional first-century clothing unless otherwise noted.*

## **MOTHER**

mother of Mary

## **YOUNG MARY**

child, dressed in simple gown

## **YOUNG SIMEON**

child

## **SARAH**

young Jewish woman, friend of Mary

## **LILAH**

young Jewish woman, friend of Mary

## **RUTH**

young Jewish woman, friend of Mary

## **MARY**

young Jewish woman

## **OLDER SIMEON**

young Jewish man

## **GABRIEL**

angel of the Lord, dressed in white with gold sash (Revelation 15:5–6)

## **ELIZABETH**

older cousin of Mary who is over child-bearing age

## **ZECHARIAH**

husband of Elizabeth

## **JOSEPH**

young Jewish man, betrothed to Mary

## **JACOB**

older Jewish man, father to Joseph

## **ROMAN SOLDIER**

dressed in traditional Roman soldier attire

## **ANGELS (2–4)**

dressed in simple white robes and halos (your typical “angel” in the nativity)

## **SHEPHERDS (2–4)**

dressed in simple robes, holding staff and/or stuffed sheep

## **NATIVITY ANIMALS**

can vary in number

## **CHORUS MEMBERS**

dressed in modern-day clothing

# A Pondering Heart

## THE ACCOUNT OF MARY

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### PROLOGUE

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*Stage Direction: The CHORUS is positioned to stage right or stage left (depending on director preference) and standing on a platform or risers. The set is center stage. A standing mic for the NARRATORS can be on the opposite side of the stage from the CHORUS.*

***Song Suggestion 1: “Mary, Did You Know?”***

**NARRATOR #1:** A girl. An ordinary girl in an ordinary town . . . in what was to many an ordinary world. What do we know about this girl? What do we know about the woman she became? What do we know about her joy, her pain, her suffering, and most importantly, her firstborn Son?

**NARRATOR #2:** Many religions and cultures have come up with their own mistaken explanations and descriptions of this figure in history. The Bible, God’s Word, reveals the truth about this woman and her Son. The truth of how God used this young lady to fulfill a promise of redemption found in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What an amazing and miraculous event that happened over 2,000 years ago.

This is the account of Mary . . .

*NARRATORS exit.*



## SCENE 1

*Kitchen area. YOUNG MARY walks in and groggily rubs her eyes. Her MOTHER is preparing food in the kitchen.*

**MOTHER:** Child, it's about time you got up! Your sisters and cousins have been up for at least an hour already. Now sit down and eat your breakfast. We've got a long journey ahead of us today.

**YOUNG MARY:** Where is everyone?

**MOTHER:** Your father and cousin Simeon are out in the field getting the lamb ready for the journey to Jerusalem. Your sisters and other cousins are loading up the carts. Now eat!

**YOUNG MARY:** *(not listening, just excited)* I am so excited, Mother! It's my first time going to Jerusalem for Passover.

**MOTHER:** Yes, and it will be a long journey, so you need to eat a good breakfast. Oh, here comes Cousin Simeon now.

*Mary's cousin, YOUNG SIMEON, enters, runs to the table, and sits in a chair that topples over. He gets up and begins eating breakfast from a bowl fast and in a messy way.*

**MOTHER:** Is everything ready?

**YOUNG SIMEON:** *(swallows loudly and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand)* Yes, Aunt. We brushed the lamb and checked him again for any blemishes. I think the priests will approve.

**YOUNG MARY:** *(raises her head in curiosity)* Lamb? Which lamb are we taking?

**MOTHER:** Yes, dear, we must take a lamb for the sacrifice. It's the special lamb that we kept away from the others in the barn. He was the healthiest lamb born last year, remember?

**YOUNG MARY:** (*getting upset*) But . . . but he is our lamb, not the priests'! I'm the one that fed him every day and kept him clean! I made sure he had water and brushed him, and now we're taking him to the priests? But Mother, he is my favorite!

**MOTHER:** He is everyone's favorite, but dear, this is what the Lord asks of us for Passover. Sacrifices have been a part of our people's lives since our ancestors Adam and Eve first sinned against God in the garden of Eden. When they ate of the forbidden fruit, God covered their sin with an animal sacrifice.

The Lord commands that we offer sacrifices to him so that we may be cleansed of our sins and reminded of what the Lord does for us even though we do not deserve it. With this Passover sacrifice, we are reminded that God protected our ancestors and rescued them from slavery by the shedding of blood that was painted over the doorposts in Egypt. Simeon, can you tell your cousin what the Scriptures say? You need to practice for your Passover lesson coming up with the priests.

**YOUNG SIMEON:** (*stands up, clearing throat dramatically*)  
As it is written:

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. . . . Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

" . . . The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt."

**MOTHER:** Thank you, Simeon. Now finish your breakfast but try not to make such a mess!

*MOTHER turns back to YOUNG MARY, who is crying, and goes to her.*

**YOUNG MARY:** *(crying)* But why does it have to be so hard? Why does this have to hurt so much?

**MOTHER:** That's what we must understand, Mary. Dealing with sin is hard. No one said following our Lord would be easy, but we must obey with a joyful heart. We need to remember that we are the ones that really deserve to be sacrificed because of our sin. It is gracious of God to allow animals to be sacrificed in our place to cover our sin.

*She pauses so MARY can process the information.*

Do you want to hear something really neat, though?

**YOUNG MARY:** *(looking up with interest)* Yes, I would love some good news right now.

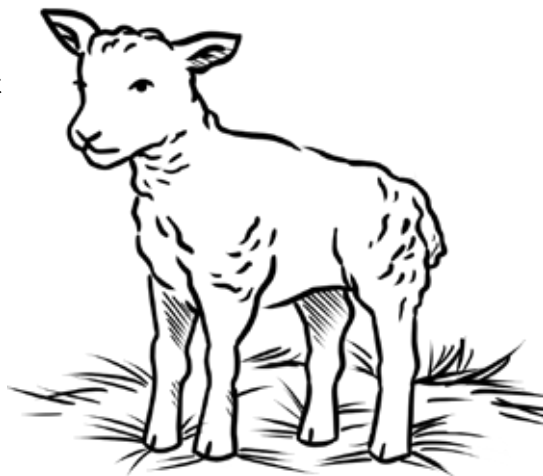
**MOTHER:** God has made a promise to us. One day, he will send a Messiah to save us. The Scriptures talk of him, and when he comes, we will know.

**YOUNG MARY:** When will this happen?

**MOTHER:** Only the Lord knows. *(She goes and puts her arms around Mary.)* Oh Mary, my darling, the Lord is good and just. We must honor him and be willingly obedient to his plan for us. Now let's finish eating and packing up.

*MOTHER, MARY, and YOUNG SIMEON exit.*

*NARRATOR enters.*



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## SCENE 2

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*Several years later . . .*

**NARRATOR #1:** Years passed, and the young girl grew up. Like most girls in a Jewish household, she was raised learning about the roles a woman played in the home and beyond, a lot like Solomon's description of a godly woman in Proverbs 31. Eventually, when the time came, she was betrothed to an honorable and respectable man named Joseph.

**NARRATOR #2:** So what did it mean to be "betrothed"? In ancient Jewish culture, betrothal was the first step of the marriage process, kind of like an engagement or promise of marriage. This step, however, was much more strict in that it was legally binding between the bride and groom as well as their families. In fact, both families would sign a contract called a *kutubah*. To break this contract, the bride or groom would have to obtain an official divorce—therefore this agreement was not taken lightly.

*MARY, SARAH, LILAH, and RUTH enter carrying baskets.*

**SARAH:** I can't believe we found so many berries! We must have gotten there before anyone else today. They will be so good after dinner tonight.

**LILAH:** I know! My, this basket is getting heavy.

**RUTH:** Mary, did you get many berries? (*MARY is staring off into space.*) Mary?

**MARY:** (*turning toward her friends*) I'm sorry, what?

**SARAH:** (*laughing*) The berries . . . did you get many? We got enough to last us days!

**MARY:** Oh . . . I got some, but then I found these beautiful wildflowers where the berries are growing over by the stream and started picking them. I think I'm going to put them on the table tonight for supper. Besides, Joseph isn't a big fan of strawberries, and he's coming for dinner tonight.



*The girls laugh and tease.*

**LILAH:** Ooh . . . Joseph doesn't like strawberries.

*MARY lowers her head, blushing.*

**SARAH:** Now Lilah, don't tease her. You're just jealous you're not betrothed yet.

**LILAH:** I am not! But if I was jealous, which I'm NOT, I rest easy knowing my day is coming. Who knows? Maybe I'll get betrothed to a rich priest and live in Jerusalem. We will host extravagant gatherings and I'll have beautiful silks and scarves. *(She spins as though she is a model.)*

**SARAH:** And this wealthy "priest" will randomly show up in Nazareth knocking on your door? Wishful thinking, Lilah!

**MARY:** You know, I don't care that Joseph is just a simple carpenter. It's honest work. We may never have a lot of money or fancy clothes, but he is a man of God. He fears the Lord and relies on the Lord's strength. That is all I could ever ask for.

**RUTH:** I just want to be married before Mary and Joseph have a bunch of children running around. I want our children to play together!

**MARY:** It will probably be a while before we have a bunch of children, Ruth. We're only betrothed, not married yet!

**LILAH:** *(with a sweet tone)* We are truly happy for you, Mary. We love you and are so excited for you and Joseph.

**SARAH:** We're maybe a little jealous though . . .

*The girls laugh together.*

**SARAH:** Lilah, are you ready to head home? Mother will want us to help with dinner.

**LILAH:** Yes, I think my arm is about to fall off carrying this basket! Mary, we'll see you tomorrow.

**RUTH:** I should be going too. See you tomorrow, Mary!

**MARY:** See you tomorrow.

*Girls exit. MARY comes home and sits down on a bench or at a table. She begins to take the flowers out of her basket to make a floral arrangement. As she is working, the ANGEL GABRIEL appears.*

*A bright light shines on MARY and the angel.*

**GABRIEL:** Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!

*MARY retreats backward and trembles in fear.*

**MARY:** Who are you?

**GABRIEL:** I am Gabriel, a messenger and angel of the Lord God. Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

**MARY:** How will this be since I am not married yet?

**GABRIEL:** The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.

**MARY:** Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to God's word.

***Song Suggestion 2: "Take My Life and Let It Be"***

*Lights return to normal and GABRIEL exits.*

**MARY:** *(in disbelief, to herself)* What just happened?

*OLDER SIMEON enters, walking home carrying scrolls and dropping some as he goes.*

**OLDER SIMEON:** Oh, hi Mary! Wha— Hey, are you ok?

**MARY:** *(visibly shaken and excited)* No. No, I'm not, Simeon. Listen, what can you tell me about the Messiah? The one our people have been waiting for. You are a scribe. Remind me what the Scriptures say. I can't remember it all. You must tell me!

**OLDER SIMEON:** *(sits down next to her)* Calm down, Mary. *(Pulls out some food from his pocket and begins to snack on it.)* There are so many prophecies in Scripture, I don't know where to start, and there are some that we don't understand. We know that he will be a descendant of Abraham, just like us.

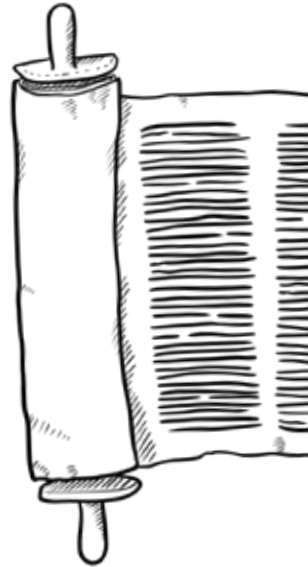
**MARY:** Yes! I remember that now. That's wonderful!

**OLDER SIMEON:** Yes! God promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation and we would be his people. Abraham believed the Lord and was counted as righteous. *(rises and paces as if thinking)* Let's see . . . he is said to come in the form of a baby and of a virgin. Isaiah said, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." That means "God with us." This reflects the "seed of the woman" prophecy given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. Some scriptures say he will be despised and rejected by men. *(saying to himself)* I don't know how that can be if he is the Messiah, though. You see *(pause)* some of this is tough to fully comprehend . . .

**MARY:** Thank you so much, Simeon . . . I need to go now. I must see Joseph. I'll see you later, cousin.

**OLDER SIMEON:** Of course, Mary. *(MARY exits and OLDER SIMEON looks at her and shakes his head in confusion. He then exits in the opposite direction mumbling.)* That girl is crazy in love!

*NARRATORS enter stage.*



**NARRATOR #1:** The Scriptures do not give us a definitive timeline of events that followed the miraculous news that Mary received that day. We do know a few details though. We know that Mary talked to Joseph and told him of the message the angel gave her. We know that this conversation did not go well.

*An excited MARY and a somber JOSEPH appear on stage and silently begin to argue. JOSEPH is clearly distraught as he leaves and MARY is left crying, yet still joyful, as she ponders these things in her heart. She leaves the stage in the opposite direction of JOSEPH.*

**NARRATOR #2:** We also know that Mary left Nazareth shortly after to visit her relative Elizabeth, who was also with child. This child of Zechariah and Elizabeth, also prophesied in Scripture, would become an integral part of God's plan.

**CHORUS MEMBER:** A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

**CHORUS MEMBER:** And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways.





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# A Pondering Heart

Christmas Through the Eyes of Mary

Written by  
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