



# A Shepherd's Childhood Memory

A One Act Children's Nativity Play

By Lynne Modranski  
[www.LynneModranski.com](http://www.LynneModranski.com)  
[Lynne@LynneModranski.com](mailto:Lynne@LynneModranski.com)  
740-632-0588

# A SHEPHERD'S CHILDHOOD MEMORY

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## STAGING:

STAGE CENTER: Stable with a manger – can be simple or have hay, animals (even 2 dimensional) might want a light on the back to help light the angels

STAGE RIGHT: Shepherd's field – a few bales of hay with a makeshift fire in the middle

STAGE REAR: On risers – if possible have something in front of the risers to hide your angels, then they can move to the top row when they need to do their part

STAGE RIGHT: Fake wall with door. Above the door is a sign "Bethlehem Inn" Perhaps "NO VACANCY" on the sign somewhere as if it's added.

SCREEN: *(optional)* If power point is available, there are a few suggestions to add to the production

LIGHTS: *(optional)* one or two spots fixed on the aisle or aisles – flood lights - one to illuminate the manger and another to light up the angels

## CHARACTERS: 1 Adult and 7-9 children's speaking parts – unlimited extras

LEVI – The only adult in the production. A 40 something shepherd

AARON – One of three 8-12 year old shepherds – about 6 lines

ISAIAH – One of three 8-12 year old shepherds – about 5 lines

ELI (optional – you can have just 2 shepherds) - One of three 8-12 year old shepherds – about 4 lines

JOSEPH – Mary's husband – about 7 lines

MARY – Jesus' Mother – 1 line

INNKEEPER – Boy or Girl – 6 lines (Optionally written for 2 children – combine INNKEEPER 1 & INNKEEPER 2 if you're only using one innkeeper) *(Optional: INNKEEPER(S) may also be in the Choir of Angels)*

ANGEL – Any boy or girl – 2 lines

CHOIR OF ANGELS – the rest of your younger girls (could be boys) – 1 line repeated all together

SHEPHERDS – the rest of your younger boys – no lines, but some pantomime to go along with the narration

WISE MEN – (optional) – if you have a lot of extra kids, several of them can be wise men – there is an optional part to Scene V for them. CAN BE MORE OR LESS THAN THREE!!! We don't know how many wise men there were, only that there were 3 gifts. (If you have a very small cast, the shepherds can also be Wise Men)

## SCENE I

1 **SCREEN:** *starry night*

2 **LIGHTS:** *spot on Shepherd's Field*

3 **LEVI:** *(entering from the audience aisle speaking with excitement to the younger shepherds)*

4 Aaron, Eli, Isaiah, come here. I have news.

5 **AARON:** *(entering stage left with Isaiah)* What is it Levi? Did something happen while you  
6 were in Bethlehem today?

7 *All three sit down on bales of hay near the "fire"*

8 **LEVI:** Nothing happened, but I heard some news about some excitement that happened in  
9 Jerusalem last spring.

10 **ISAIAH:** Excitement in Jerusalem? What happened in Jerusalem that would make any  
11 difference to shepherds in Bethlehem?

12 **LEVI:** To be perfectly honest, I'd heard some rumors the last couple of times I went into town,  
13 but I didn't think it could be true. *(Beginning to digress into his own little world)* I  
14 mean even if everything I'd heard was true, the chances of it being . . . It was just a baby,  
15 who'd have thought

16 **ISAIAH, ELI and AARON:** *(look at each other and shrug)*

17 **LEVI:** *(continuing)* It's been . . . wow . . . how long . . . *(thinking and completely forgetting*  
18 *there is anyone else around)* . . . must have been . . . let's see . . . Quirinius was governor  
19 . . . so . . .

20 **ELI** <sup>(or AARON)</sup>: *(clears his throat)* Levi, what ARE you talking about?

21 **ISAIAH:** Yeah, you aren't making any sense.

22 **LEVI:** *(kind of waking up)* What? Oh! Sorry! Let's see . . . before I tell you the exciting news I  
23 heard today, I guess I better start at the beginning so you'll see why it's so amazing. Like

1 I said Quirinius was governor and (*digressing again . . . thoughts keep wandering*) . . .  
2 let's see . . . Augustus was Caesar, so it must have been more than 30 years ago. I wasn't  
3 much more than your age when it happened.

4 **AARON:** (*beginning to get frustrated*) When WHAT happened?

5 **LEVI:** I keep doing that. It's just all so amazing! And it was so long ago, I haven't thought  
6 about it in a long time . . .

## SCENE II

1   **LEVI:** Anyway, when I was about your age, the most amazing thing I'd ever seen happened.  
2           Caesar Augustus decided he wanted a head count of everyone who lived in Roman  
3           territory. To get everyone counted, every single person had to return to their ancestral  
4           homes. I remember that the older shepherds didn't even try to go into town for weeks. It  
5           was so crowded in Bethlehem.

6   **LIGHTS:** *Dim spot comes up on Mary and Joseph as they enter from audience on the opposite*  
7           *side of Levi*

8   **LEVI:** *(continues)* Families came from all over to be counted. I didn't realize there were so  
9           many descendants of King David. People were sleeping everywhere.

10 **LIGHTS:** *fade on shepherds and come up full on Joseph and Mary and follow them to the inn.*

11 **JOSEPH:** Are you all right, Mary? We're almost there. Do you see these crowds? I wonder if  
12           we'll be able to find a room?

13 **MARY:** I'll be OK, but we really need to find a place soon.

14 *Mary & Joseph stop at the Inn*

15 **JOSEPH:** Let's check this place. *(Knocks on the door)*

16 **INNKEEPER 1:** *(Opens the door)* Hello, may I help you?

17 **JOSEPH:** We're looking for a room.

18 **INNKEEPER 2:** I'm sorry, but we're all filled up

19 **MARY:** But I'm going to have a baby soon. Maybe tonight!

20 **INNKEEPER 1:** *(still very professional)* We really don't have any space available.

21 **JOSEPH:** We don't need anything fancy, but we need to find someplace BEFORE she has this  
22           baby.

1 **INNKEEPER 2:** (*a little annoyed*) Look, everything is full. Even the stable only has one stall  
2 left.

3 **JOSEPH & MARY:** We'll take it.

4 **INNKEEPER 2:** (*very agitated*) What do you mean you'll take it? I didn't mean you could stay  
5 there, I was just hoping you'd get the hint and move on.

6 **JOSEPH:** My wife can't move on. She's going to have a baby anytime now. Can't we have  
7 the open stall?

8 **INNKEEPER 1:** (*exasperated*) Oh, all right! Go ahead and sleep in the stable, but no  
9 complaining about the smell or the noise. *starts closing the door and mumbles from*  
10 *behind the door* – Some people! I can't believe they're staying in the barn

11 *Mary and Joseph move on to the stable as the light fades on them and comes up on the shepherds*

### SCENE III

1 **LEVI:** I felt so bad for that family. They only came to Bethlehem because of the census. They  
2 were so far from home and then had a baby right there with all the animals. I still  
3 remember Joseph telling us that story, but he didn't seem to mind. He was so surprised  
4 that we found them. What a night that was.

5 **ELI** (or **AARON**): So, was it your cousin or something?

6 **LEVI:** On no, no relation. I'd never even met Joseph before, and I never saw him again.

7 **ISAIAH:** Then why did you go see his new baby?

8 **LEVI:** That's the really amazing part of the story! We'd been out in the fields with the sheep  
9 for months. Like I said, town was crazy with people, so no one went in from the fields  
10 unless they had to. It was really late, we'd put out all the torches and only the fire was  
11 left burning. The night was quiet, so peaceful and the sky was clear and full of stars, a lot  
12 like tonight. In fact most of us were asleep. I think only Grandfather was left awake.  
13 And that's when it all started!

14 Grandfather said that the sky began to get very bright

15 **SCREEN:** *brightens gradually until it's very bright when the angel appears*

16 **LEVI:** *(continuing)* by the time I woke up it was brighter than day, but only in the one spot in  
17 the sky. Yep, it was right over there *(pointing toward where the angels will appear and*  
18 *sounding even more excited)* I'll never forget it! It's the most amazing thing I've ever  
19 seen in my life!

20 **AARON:** *(catching the excitement)* What? What was it!?!???

21 **ANGEL:** *(moves into position)*

22 **LIGHTS:** *spotlight begins to come up on the angel and fade on the shepherds*

23 **LEVI:** An angel. It was a real live angel . . . *(laughing)* and we were absolutely terrified.

1    **LIGHTS:** *full on angel, faded on shepherds*

2    **ANGEL:** Don't be afraid. I'm here to bring you good news of great joy that will be for all

3            people. Today in the city of David a baby has been born and He is Christ the Lord. And

4            this is how you'll find Him: You'll find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

5    **LIGHTS:** *Up on stable as Mary lays the baby in the manger*

6    **LEVI:** *(no light on him, his voice speaks in hushed tones)* We were all stunned. No one said a

7            word and then: *(lights up on all angels)*

8    **ANGEL CHOIR:** *(stands on either side of the lead angel and repeats together)* Glory to God in

9            the highest and peace to men on earth! Glory to God in the highest and peace to men on

10           earth!

11   **Cast sings first verse of "Angels We Have Heard On High"**

12   **LIGHTS:** *fade on angels and stable and back up on shepherds*

13   **SCREEN:** *goes back to starry night*

## SCENE IV

- 1 **AARON:** You've got to be kidding! ANGELS!!! You saw real Angels?!!!
- 2 **LEVI:** Yep! Real angels. For a minute or so we were quiet. We each thought we were the only  
3 ones who saw it, but finally someone asked, "Did you see that?" and everyone began  
4 talking all at once. We knew we had to go into town immediately. At first we didn't  
5 know who to leave with the sheep, but it didn't take long to decide we'd take our chances  
6 and leave them here by themselves. No one wanted to miss out.
- 7 **ISAIAH:** You left the sheep alone?!!! NO WAY!!
- 8 **LEVI:** Yep! I know it's hard to believe, but this was THAT important!
- 9 **LEVI:** (*excited*) I don't think I've ever walked to Bethlehem that fast before. We wondered  
10 what kind of baby this was to have an entire of army of angels announce his birth. We  
11 couldn't stop talking all the way there
- 12 **SHEPHERDS:** *Enter from rear audience opposite LEVI.*
- 13 **LIGHTS:** *fade on shepherds in field and come up on shepherds hurrying toward stable – Levi's*  
14 *voice is still heard telling about their trip*
- 15 **LEVI:** Then we saw the stable.
- 16 **ELI** (or **ISAIAH**): A stable? The Baby was in a Stable?
- 17 **LEVI:** Yep, remember the angel said the baby would be in a manger. (*Levi begins talking with*  
18 *mystery in his voice*) Anyway, it was late and there was only one building that still had a  
19 lamp lit. We stopped before we got there
- 20 **SHEPHERDS:** *STOP – look and point – continue to gesture as Levi talks*
- 21 **LEVI:** We wondered if we should all go in or just one of us go first. We really didn't know  
22 what to do. I was so excited to see this baby, I could hardly breathe.
- 23 **SHEPHERDS:** *whispering to one another, looking confused, etc*

1 **LEVI:** Finally, one of us got the courage to slowly walk over to the stable.

2 **SHEPHERDS:** *one shepherd walks over to the stable – JOSEPH motions for him to come in and*  
3 *this shepherd motions for the others to follow him as LEVI continues and shepherds enter*

4 **LEVI:** He motioned for us to come in. When we entered the stable, we immediately knelt in  
5 front of the manger

6 **SHEPHERDS:** *kneel on either side of the manger, so the audience can still see the manger*

7 **LEVI:** It was almost like we couldn't stand anymore. The minute we walked in we could feel  
8 the peace and the magnificence of this baby. I'd never been part of anything important in  
9 my life. I kept wondering why God picked us to tell about the baby. I figured Kings and  
10 governors would be showing up any minute. *(pausing for a moment – growing quieter*  
11 *and even more reverent – shepherds still bowing)* We just stayed there bowing for quite  
12 some time. This was definitely a different baby. *(very still for a moment)* Finally, we got  
13 up from our knees *(pausing while the miming shepherds rise)*

14 **SHEPHERDS:** *rise very slowly, one at a time*

15 **JOSEPH:** *stands and shakes hands with shepherds – make it a good strong hand shake – look*  
16 *like Joseph is speaking to the shepherds*

17 **LEVI:** We shook Joseph's hand and he told us a bit of their story about how they came from  
18 Nazareth.

19 **LEVI:** *(pauses thoughtfully for a moment to allow shepherds to speak with Joseph – Then very*  
20 *softly, but passionately – staring at the fire)* When we left, we walked much slower back  
21 to the shepherd's field. We didn't even talk, we were so in awe of what we'd just seen.

22 **SHEPHERDS:** *walk back in awe toward the rear of the audience*

23 **LIGHTS:** *fade on shepherds and back up on shepherd's field.*

24 **Allow Children to sing 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> verses of “Angels We Have Heard on High”**

## SCENE V

1 **LEVI:** That day was the most amazing in my whole life. I've never forgotten that night. And  
2 I've always wondered what happened to that family. There was a bit of a stir some time  
3 after the baby was born.

4 **KINGS:** *(optional) enter from rear audience opposite Levi*

5 **LIGHTS:** *(only if wise men are used) up on Kings – fade on shepherds*

6 **LEVI:** We heard some rich guys from the east came in to town following this strange star, and  
7 they were looking for a child.

8 **SCREEN:** *bring large star into the starry night*

9 **KINGS:** *(optional) move to where Mary and Joseph are as a portion of "We Three Kings" play*  
10 *or kids can sing one or two verses – recommended: Go Fish Guys version – toward the*  
11 *end of the second chorus the Kings move back toward rear where they entered*

12 **LEVI:** *(if song is used, this is following the song – If there's no song, Levi should just continue)*  
13 They called him "King of the Jews." The older shepherds were sure it was the same baby  
14 we'd seen that night. *(growing contemplative)* But until today, I never heard another  
15 word about that family. *(Levi stops talking – there are a few seconds where everyone is*  
16 *quiet)*

17 **SCREEN:** *Fade star to starry night*

18

19

## SCENE VI

1 **AARON:** *(waiting a moment or two – then impatiently breaking the silence)* So, what happened  
2 today? What's today got to do with a baby you saw when you were a kid?

3 **LEVI:** oh yeah! *(getting excited again)* That IS how this story started, isn't it? During the last  
4 three years, I've heard rumors of this teacher with a kind of a rag tag following.  
5 According to the stories I've heard, he's done some pretty remarkable things. They're  
6 saying he's healed some people, multiplied some bread, even walked on water. But last  
7 Spring I guess the rulers in Jerusalem didn't like it that he was getting so many followers  
8 because they killed him on a cross.

9 **SCREEN:** *fades to silhouette or shadow of a cross or three crosses*

10 **ISAIAH:** Yeah, we've heard some of those stories, but I still don't understand what they have to  
11 do with that baby?

12 **LEVI:** Well, I never thought too much about those rumors, but they are saying this guy's  
13 followers call him Jesus of Nazareth and three days after he was crucified, they went to  
14 his grave and he was gone.

15 **SCREEN:** *fades to an empty grave*

16 **ELI** <sup>(or AARON)</sup>: What do you mean, "gone"? Someone stole his body? How gross is that?

17 **LEVI:** There are some people who think the body was stolen, but what's really causing a stir all  
18 over Judah is the people are saying He's alive. People have seen Him . . . and I'm pretty  
19 sure *(pausing, digressing . . . reflectively staring at the fire)* . . . it's really amazing . . .

20 **Quiet for a moment**

21 **SCREEN:** *fades back to a starry night*

22 **LEVI:** His followers said they saw Him being lifted to heaven. And they said his name was  
23 Jesus of Nazareth . . . Jesus . . . the same name as the baby. The baby that angels said

1           would be “Christ the Lord.” Our people have been waiting for more than 2000 years for  
2           the Messiah to appear.

3   **LEVI:** *(It’s all sinking in now and he begins to sound angry with himself-Maybe even stands up*  
4           *and begins walking around a bit)* Why didn’t I pay more attention to those angels?! They  
5           told us this was the Christ, the Messiah. And after we saw the baby, even though we  
6           knew when we saw him that there was something different, awe inspiring about this  
7           infant, it still didn’t sink in that this was more than just a baby.

8   **LEVI:** *(tone changing to awe).* . . . I SAW the Messiah . . . I stood in the presence of the Chosen  
9           One of God . . . I was one of the first to kneel and worship Him. WOW! Who would  
10          have imagined that the One God sent to be the Savior of the World would come as a  
11          baby? And will anyone believe that God told shepherds first?

12   **AARON:** So, you really think this baby was the Savior of the World?

13   **LEVI:** *(with passion)* I do . . . I REALLY DO!!! I’m not exactly sure how it works, but I tell  
14          you something. I’m not going to spend anymore time in this field until I do. *(exits*  
15          *toward rear of audience)*

16   **ELI** <sup>(or ISAIAH)</sup>: *(calling out after Levi)* But what about the sheep?

17   **LEVI:** *(yelling back)* You guys keep an eye on them. When I figure out exactly how this baby is  
18          going to save the world, I’ll be back to let you know. I wasted all these years by not  
19          paying attention to those angels. I’m not going to waste anymore.

20   **LIGHTS:** *fade on LEVI and up on manger – end with last verse of “Angels We Have Heard on*  
21          *High”*

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