

# *Introduction*

Over two thousand years ago a woman named Mary and a man named Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem. While there, Mary had a baby in a stable made to shelter animals. Shepherds from the field came and witnessed the events following Jesus' birth. Jewish residents of Bethlehem lived each day under Roman rule and longed for God to send their promised Messiah.

*O Come, Emmanuel* sets the Biblical events of the Christmas story in their real time and in their real place in a unique and thought-provoking way. It is designed to give your church a creative way to tell the Christmas story and involve all levels of your Sunday School ministry.

# *Cast List*

## **Leading Characters**

MOSHE (pronounced Mosh-a) is the Bethlehem innkeeper. Role can be played by a senior high student or a young adult man.

SHIMON is a rabbi in Bethlehem. Role can be played by a senior high student or a young adult man.

TALYA is the innkeeper's wife. Role can be played by a senior high student or a young adult woman.

JOSEPH, betrothed to Mary, can be played by a senior high student or a mature junior high student.

MARY, the mother of Jesus, can be played by a junior high or senior high student.

## **Supporting Characters**

AMOS is one of the innkeeper's sons. Role can be played by a middler or junior boy.

MICAH is Amos's brother. Role can be played by a middler or junior boy.

MIRIAM, the wife of rabbi Shimon, can be played by a senior high student.

BENAMMI, a shepherd, can be played by a middler or junior boy.

ELEAZAR, a shepherd, can be played by a middler or junior boy.

GERSHON, a shepherd, can be played by a middler or junior boy.

ANGEL 1 can be played by a junior or junior high student.

ANGEL 2 can be played by a junior or junior high student.

ANGEL 3 can be played by a junior or junior high student.

# Act One

## Scene 1

*CHOIR sings the first two lines of "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," stanza 1. MOSHE and SHIMON are in place, ready to walk down a main aisle as soon as the choir finishes. SHIMON is holding a rolled-up scroll.*

MOSHE: *(Talking to SHIMON as they walk down the aisle toward center stage.)* Rabbi Shimon, it is always good to hear you read from the scrolls. Isaiah 53 is a favorite of mine.

SHIMON: It is difficult to understand who will be the one suffering for our transgressions.

MOSHE: As you always say, my friend, someday when Messiah comes, we will understand everything.

SHIMON: Until then we pray for Emmanuel, the Messiah, to come. When He comes, we *will* be free from Rome. Then we will have a king of Israel, not Caesar's King Herod. Look across the field to that palace he built. How many men slaved to build it . . . and for what? So that Herod can sit and think of new ways to oppress our people?

MOSHE: The only good thing about having Herod's summer palace nearby is the many travelers who pass through Bethlehem. It is good for our merchants and good for me, too, when they look for a place to stay. Our inn can hold quite a few travelers when the need arises.

SHIMON: Speaking of people staying at the inn. I hope you have added extra rooms. Every descendant of King David will be looking for a place to stay, since Caesar ordered the registration.

MOSHE: We've already had several travelers come into town. The extra business will be helpful to my family.

SHIMON: Well, shalom, my friend, until we meet again.

MOSHE: Shalom, Rabbi.

*Lights off center stage for 10–15 seconds.*

## Scene 2

*Lights on center stage. MOSHE, TALYA, AMOS, and MICAH are standing in the room after the evening meal.*

MOSHE: As always, dear Talya, you make my heart sing with your good food! Come, family, let us sit together, as our God wants us to pray to Him before we go to bed.

*"Act One" from O Come Emmanuel by Janet Craigmiles. © 2011 Regular Baptist Press. Used by permission.*