

THE
GREATEST
STORY
EVER TOLD

A Musical for Christmas

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

by Nan Allen

“FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN”

with “Open the Eyes of My Heart”

Isaiah, a Hebrew prophet, lived about 700 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, and yet Isaiah’s prophecies about the coming of Messiah are stunningly accurate.

Read Isaiah 9:2-6 about the Savior’s birth.

Now read Isaiah 60:1-2, an exciting passage about the expectation of His arrival.

These Scriptures, and many others from this and other prophets, are foreshadowing details of Jesus’ appearance.

Look at these passages again and focus on the promises written regarding Jesus’ purpose. Make a list of the effects Isaiah predicts Christ will have upon His people. Do you see these promises fulfilled in your life?

Read Psalm 146:8. Ask God to open your eyes. Pray that He will lead you out of darkness and into His light.

“HEAVEN SINGS GLORY”

Read Luke 2:8-12. What was shining when the angel appeared to the shepherds?

Now read Luke 2:13-14. What did the multitude of angels say as they spilled into the night sky?

Glory. The same word is used to describe two different things. In the first passage, glory means “splendor” or “breathtaking spectacle.”

In the second passage, glory means giving God the credit and praise for who He is and what He has done.

God still reveals Himself today in splendor and breathtaking spectacles. Can you name some of these?

Now give God credit—the glory and honor that He deserves.

“ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY (EMMANUEL)”

Angels are mentioned throughout the Bible, and yet we know very little about them. We are aware that they are God’s heavenly messengers and servants, but we don’t know how, why, or when they appear on earth. These days we don’t see or hear angels very often.

However, in the Nativity story, angels played a large part in bringing the good news of Christ’s coming. Read Luke 1:5-19. To whom did the angel appear first? What news did the angel bring?

Now read Luke 1:26-38. The angel appears to whom? What was her response?

The presence of angels is very obvious in these accounts, and their messages are met with total obedience.

Use Psalm 119:145 as your prayer.

“A STRANGE WAY TO SAVE THE WORLD”

Joseph had a couple of visits from angels. The account of one of these visits can be found in Matthew 1:18-21. Read this passage.

Joseph has a strange, minor role in the story of Christ’s birth, and yet he was important enough to merit visitations from angels, too, sometimes in his dreams. But unlike the other angelic visitations in the Christmas narrative, the focus of the angels speaking to Joseph was assurance. In spite of life’s surprises, twists, and turns, God assured Joseph that everything was happening according to His divine plan.

Read Deuteronomy 31:6 and Romans 8:28. Claim these promises at all times, especially when life doesn’t go the way you planned.

“ONE KING”

with “We Three Kings of Orient Are”

The visitation of wise men (Far Eastern astronomers) to the Christ child in Bethlehem is a beautiful, yet puzzling, part of the Christmas narrative. Why did God use a star that moved across the sky to guide these men from so far away? How did they know to follow the star, and also what they would find at the end of their journey? There are so many questions.

Read the account of the wise men in Matthew 2:1-12.

This is brief and doesn't really answer the questions above. However, we can find out the purpose of the visit. Find it in verse 2. Look at verse 11. How did they worship?

Today the word “worship” means many things to different people. Right now, let's focus on the quest of the wise men. Does the word “sacrifice” come to mind? Perhaps surrender comes to mind—giving all of your efforts, plans, and treasures to the Lord.

Read Romans 12:1-2. This describes biblical worship. Can you, like the wise men, present yourself a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God?

“IT'S STILL THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD”

Although the account of Christ's birth is not fiction, we treat it as though it is a bedtime story—a sweet tale, a fable. But it is true. The essence of the story can be found in Luke 2:1-7. The Son of God was born in a barn to a virgin named Mary. This Child would grow up and become a man. When He was thirty-three years old, He was falsely accused of crimes and sentenced to death. (We usually retell that story during the Easter season.)

But this story, the story of Jesus' birth, should not be forgotten. It should be read often. Keep telling the story. Pass it on to your children and your grandchildren. Sing about it. Portray it on stage. *Just keep telling it.*

In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, the nation of Israel is given a commandment about who God is. It also admonishes the adults to keep telling God's story. How and where is the story to be told and retold?

In Proverbs 6:20-23, there is a reminder that applies to all of us. Ask God to keep this truth always before you.

“IT’S ABOUT THE CROSS”

What does the cross mean to you? I’m not talking about the expected stock answers or a theological treatise about symbols and mysteries. What does the cross mean to *you*?

Read the following Scriptures that address the significance of Jesus’ death on the cross, and then see if this affects and applies to your life today.

1 Peter 2:24-25

Galatians 3:13

Isaiah 53:5

Galatians 2:20

Romans 6:6,10

With the cross in mind, confess your sins and ask God to make you pure and holy in His sight.

“GO TELL!”

with “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Again, keep telling the story. But don’t just tell the beautiful story of Christmas. Shout from the rooftops, to all who will listen, how God’s Son changed your life. If you aren’t sure how to express this story, ask God to reveal your own *testimony* to you. Begin by writing it down. Use this first draft as a starting point, even if it doesn’t sound perfect right now. To help you get started, read the apostle Paul’s testimony in 1 Corinthians 2. Go tell!