

THEN CAME JESUS

Written by Millie Britt
Music by Clinton Rusich

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DEDICATION

THEN CAME JESUS is dedicated to my wonderful husband and three precious grandchildren, Ellie, Dylan and Megan, who are a constant reminder that children everywhere have a right to know who Jesus is!

The Playwright, Millie Britt

SONG LIST

Then Came Jesus ----- *Sung by Children's Choir*
Jehovah ----- *Sung by Rabbi, Children's Choir*
Jingle Jangle ----- *Sung by Children's Choir*
Reprise -- Jingle Jangle ----- *Sung by Children's Choir*
Could It Be True ----- *Sung by Levi, Children's Choir*
Team Work ----- *Sung by Levi, Grandfather, Children's Choir*
Christmas Medley ----- *Sung by Shepherds*
We Worship Him ----- *Sung by Children's Choir and Shepherds*
Finale -- Then Came Jesus ----- *Sung by - Children's Choir, Cast Members*

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 B, 5 G, 3 Flex)

RABBI YARWICH Old man
LEVI Boy who meets the Messiah
GRANDFATHER..... Of Levi
RUTH Friend of Levi
ANNA Another
MIRIAM Another
ABIGAIL..... Another
REUBEN Another
SETH..... Another
SHEPHERD 1 Came to see Jesus
SHEPHERD 2 Another
MARY..... Jesus' mother
JOSEPH..... Mary's husband

SETTING

Streets in Bethlehem during the time of taxation at Jesus' birth. The inn is far SL, and the stable is far SR, with the city streets between them.

SYNOPSIS

Scene 1 - Morning of the day before Jesus' birth.
Scene 2 - Next morning, day of Jesus' birth.
Scene 3 - Evening, same day.
Scene 4 - Stable. The next morning.

PROPS - Book or scroll for Rabbi, pail and basket for Levi

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: It is the morning of the day before Jesus' birth. SONG: "THEN CAME JESUS" sung by the CHILDREN'S CHOIR.)

God in a baby a sight to behold.
People were lost and their hearts had grown cold.
No longer believing the Messiah was near.
Each heart filled with doubt, sorrow and fear.
Then came Jesus and hearts became new.
Then came Jesus, God's love gift to you.
Then came Jesus one star-filled night
Offering hope and offering light.
Children not knowing the God of old.
They doubted His word and what they'd been told.
They could not believe God would send to mankind,
A Savior so great, so loving, so kind.
Then came Jesus and hearts became new.
Then came Jesus, God's love gift to you.
Then came Jesus one star-filled night
Offering hope and offering light.
Though prophets had said the Messiah would come,
They thought Him a king to rule over some.
And the God they believed had not spoken for years,
Though they cried out in pain, sorrow and tears.
Then came Jesus and hearts became new.
Then came Jesus, God's love gift to you.
Then came Jesus one star-filled night
Offering hope and offering light.
Then came Jesus one star-filled night
Offering hope and offering light!

(As song ends RABBI YARVICH, carrying a book or scroll, enters and takes CS.)

RABBI: Shalom! Allow me to introduce myself. I am Rabbi Yarvich and Bethlehem is my home. Right now our little city is very busy. Caesar has decreed that all those born in Bethlehem should return to register and pay taxes. That Caesar! Now, I mean no disrespect, but the whole country is in confusion. It is my privilege to watch over our little town of Bethlehem. So, I walk through the streets and I pray. I read the Holy Book and I walk and I pray. I pray, "Oh, God, deliver your people, send the Messiah!"

(RABBI sits on a rock or bench to pray. As he is praying the CHILDREN enter, running and playing. When they notice the RABBI, they stop to give him respect.)

CHILDREN: Good morning, Rabbi Yarvich! How are you today?

RABBI: Good morning, children. I am quite well...enjoying the presence of the Lord.

(CHILDREN look around, questioningly.)

REUBEN: What are you reading, Rabbi?

RABBI: I am reading the prophets of old. Reuben, they have a great story to tell.

SETH: But their stories are all old.

RUTH: Excuse me, Rabbi Yarvich, but my father says the prophets of old have been dead for over 400 years. Do we not have any prophets alive today?

RABBI: I am afraid not, Ruth. God has not spoken to us in a very long time.

LEVI: Then why do we need to read and study the prophets? Why should we learn about men who lived such a long time ago?

RABBI: It is true, young Levi, the prophets did live a long time ago, but their message is still very important.

LEVI: What message...what could someone say who lived 400 years ago that I need to know today?

RABBI: Many things, my young friend, but none more important than the coming of the Messiah!

ANNA: The Messiah?

RABBI: Yes, Anna, the Messiah.

ALL: What do you mean? What Messiah? Is He really coming?

RUTH: My father believes the Messiah will come very soon and save us from our enemies.

LEVI: But they have believed that for many years and He has not come! Should we still believe?

ALL: Yeah!

RABBI: Young Levi, you speak in haste. Of course, we must believe. The Messiah will come soon!

LEVI: But when? When will He come?

RABBI: I do not know. I just believe it will be soon. Micah, the prophet, says He will come from Bethlehem.

SETH: From Bethlehem?

RABBI: Yes, from our little town of Bethlehem. It would be well for you to study the prophets that you might be ready when He comes! Now run along!

ALL: 'Bye...have a good day!

(As the CHILDREN run off, RABBI calls to LEVI, who returns.)

RABBI: Levi, could I have a word with you?

LEVI: Yes, what is it, Rabbi Yarvich?

RABBI: How is your grandfather?

LEVI: He is well, thank you!

RABBI: I have not seen him in temple of late.

LEVI: I'm sure he means to come, but he is very busy. Since Mother and Father have died, he has me to care for and he has the inn to run!

RABBI: But to be too busy for God...it is not good!

LEVI: I am sure he is not too busy for God...but with so many people in Bethlehem because of taxes--

RABBI: *(Interrupting)* Yes, it is a busy time, that is true, but we must be careful that our hearts do not grow cold. Run along, now, with your friends...and tell your grandfather I asked of him.

LEVI: 'Bye...Shalom.

(SONG: "JEHOVAH" sung by the RABBI and the CHILDREN'S CHOIR.)

In the market place, in the still of the night.

In the temple too, they seek your light.

Jehovah, hear the hearts that cry.
Jehovah, hear the people sigh.
Jehovah, come near we pray.
Jehovah, speak to us today.
You are near, so I've been told.
You always hear, say the prophets of old.
You will come as a mighty king.
I would settle just to hear the angels sing.
Jehovah, hear the hearts that cry.
Jehovah, hear the people sigh.
Jehovah, come near we pray.
Jehovah, speak to us today.
Jehovah, hear the hearts that cry.
Jehovah, hear the people sigh.
Jehovah, come near we pray.
Jehovah, speak to us, "to me" today.

(LIGHTS fade on CS as the song ends.)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: The next morning. LIGHTS come up on the CHILDREN playing.)

SETH: Did you see all the people in the streets last night?

RUTH: My father says this town will never be this busy again.

ABIGAIL: And they don't seem very happy.

ANNA: Paying taxes must not be very much fun.

LEVI: Grandfather says it is a curse!

REUBEN: I do not believe that I would want to give my money to Caesar.

MIRIAM: And I would not want to leave my home to do it.

ANNA: No wonder they are unhappy!

RUTH: Well, my father does not believe it is fair...but he says...

ALL: Yes...what does he say...tell us...please tell...

RUTH: Well, he says it is still a blessing. Because the people are spending lots of money. My father's bakery has never been so busy.

LEVI: My grandfather's inn is also very busy!

RUTH: In fact, Father says that we could also make some money.

SETH: Make some money, how?

ALL: Yeah, tell us! This I have to hear! I love money!

RUTH: Well, he said we should watch for opportunities to help the new people in town...you know, like carrying their bags, taking care of their animals...things like that! He said he is sure they would be happy to reward us.

LEVI: I don't know...Grandfather has often told me that money can be evil...but...I would not mind having just a little.

REUBEN: Yeah, Levi, just think how nice it would feel to have a few coins in the pocket!

(ALL CHILDREN begin to get very excited and chatter.)

End of Freeview

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