

# LONG FOR ETOLID

*THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI*

*A One-Act Children's  
Christmas Play*

*Written by*  
**LINDSAY FINLEY**



*Produced by*

**Twelve Stones**  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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## FOREWORD

# Where Does Christmas Begin?

*by Ken Ham*  
*CEO of Answers in Genesis*

**M**ost children in churches or Christian homes would probably point to one starry night in Bethlehem when the newborn Jesus was laid in a manger as the beginning of Christmas. But it actually goes back much farther than that—all the way to Genesis!

Jesus' coming to earth as the Prince of Peace doesn't make sense if you don't understand why we need peace with God—and that begins in Genesis. God created a perfect world, marred by man's sin. Mankind's once-perfect relationship with God was immediately severed in one act of disobedience. But before God even created the heavens and earth, humans, or time itself, God had a plan to redeem his people through his eternal Son, Jesus. That plan is first hinted at in Genesis 3:15, when God told the now-sinful Adam and Eve that one day the Seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head.

All through the Old Testament, that promise of a Savior is further re-

vealed, culminating in the advent of the Savior one night. But that night wasn't the beginning of Christmas—it was simply the arrival of the Savior who was long foretold.

Children—and adults—need to understand that Jesus didn't begin that night in Bethlehem. He is the eternal God, and his arrival was planned by God since before the creation of the world and foretold throughout the history of the universe, beginning in Genesis 3:15.

So many children's Christmas programs are what I call "fluff and stuff" and don't present the complete gospel message. This program roots the advent of Christ—and the plan of redemption—in real history, bringing to life the Christmas account and pointing to the reason Jesus came: to purchase our salvation with his very blood.

I encourage churches around the world to use this program as an outreach to the community and an encouragement to their church congregations.

# Characters

## **NARRATOR**

dressed in modern-day clothing

## **ANGELS (2–4)**

dressed in simple white robes and halos (your typical angel in a nativity)

## **SHEPHERDS (3–4)**

dressed in simple robes, holding staffs and a stuffed sheep

## **MARY**

## **JOSEPH**

## **NATIVITY ANIMALS**

children can be in costume or holding stuffed animals

## **DANIEL**

head of the magi during the time of Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 BC), dressed in a robe with a belt

## **SHADRACH**

Daniel's assistant, dressed in a robe with a belt

## **GASZI**

leader of the magi, dressed in silk robes

## **KAVEH**

member of the magi, very smart, dressed in silk robes

## **ARDASHIR**

young member of the magi, dressed in silk robes

## **MIRZA**

the eldest of the magi, advisor to Gaszi, dressed in silk robes

## **SARGON**

member of the magi and cook, dressed in silk robes

## **KING HEROD**

king of Judea, non-Jew, dressed as royalty with a crown

## **SOLDIERS (2)**

soldiers to King Herod

## **CHILD JESUS**

a young child between 2–3 years old

## **CHORUS CHILD**

dressed in modern-day attire

## **STUDENT CHORUS**

dressed in modern-day attire

# From the Author

Lindsay Finley

*Fine Arts Teacher, Twelve Stones Christian Academy*

I hope you are as excited as we are that you have chosen *Long Foretold* for your program. I am the fine arts teacher at Twelve Stones Christian Academy, a school in Northern Kentucky that is under the umbrella of the Answers in Genesis ministry. When I began at TSCA in 2018, my administrator, Renee Hodge, and I began to realize the great need for Christmas programs that stand firm on biblical truth and advance the apologetic, gospel-centered outreach of Answers in Genesis. Simply put, we wanted programs that not only entertain an audience but educate them as well. It was during these many conversations that the idea for *Long Foretold* came to be.

Working together with Renee and her husband, Bodie Hodge (both long-time staff members of AiG), we dove deep into the biblical and historical accounts surrounding the wise men going all the way back to Daniel in Babylon. We have included much of this historical information in this script to help you teach your children and possibly some audience members! We are so thankful for the editorial team at AiG that ensured that the script stood firm

on the apologetic and biblical principles of Twelve Stones Christian Academy and the AiG ministry.

In addition to the information included in this package, we have supplemental material available online. This material includes printable actor's scripts, an editable program template, and more. It was a joy for me to see how blessed our kids and families were by this presentation; and our prayer is that, in turn, this program will be a blessing to you, the performers, and the audience.

On a final note, as a music teacher, I highly recommend incorporating music selections into your performance. 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 unto the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the Earth" (Psalm 96:1)!

Like the Magi discovered over 2,000 years ago, the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, was an event unlike any other; and like the shepherds that left their fields to see him, we must go and tell! God bless.

## **INTRODUCTION**

# THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

*Stage Direction: Chorus is centered upstage on platform or risers. The nativity is placed to the side of the stage. The animals are sitting by the manger. Shepherds are on the opposite side.*

*Mary and Joseph begin to walk toward the manger from another location (e.g., down the aisle or from the side).*

### **CHORUS MEMBER:**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

*Mary and Joseph go to their designated places in the nativity scene. Mary places Baby Doll Jesus into the manger.*

### **CHORUS MEMBER:**

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

*Angels enter and appear to the shepherds.*

**ANGELS:** “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

*Angels exit and return to the Chorus.*

**CHORUS MEMBER:** When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

**SHEPHERDS:** “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

*Shepherds rush across the stage to the manger and gather around Mary and Joseph.*

**CHORUS MEMBER:** And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

**CHORUS (IN UNISON):** Luke 2:1–16

*(Three magi enter from offstage inconspicuously, each holding a gift. They join the nativity scene before the song starts.)*

 **SUGGESTED SONG:** “What a Glorious Night”



**ACTOR'S SCRIPT DOWNLOAD**

A reproducible actor's version of this script is available for download. See page 27 for details.



SCENE ||

*Narrator appears on stage and refers to the nativity.*



**NARRATOR:** The account of Christmas has been told for centuries. Nativities are displayed in a wide array on mantles and coffee tables. Live displays are seen by millions every December. Included in these nativities are the same figures in their usual poses; the shepherds . . .

**SHEPHERDS:** (raise their hands) Here!

**NARRATOR:** the animals . . .

**ANIMALS:** (make animal sounds)

**NARRATOR:** Joseph and Mary . . .

**JOSEPH AND MARY:** Right here!

**NARRATOR:** the three magi . . .

**MAGI:** One, two, three, yep . . . we're here too . . .

**NARRATOR:** And most importantly, the infant Jesus!

*Mary holds up the Baby Doll Jesus.*

**NARRATOR:** But wait. (pause) The magi? Were they really at the manger?

**MAGI:** (shrug, ad-lib) I don't know. Were we? If not, where are we supposed to be? I'm confused!

**NARRATOR:** Were they kings or wise men? Were there only three? We don't know every detail, but the Bible actually gives us a lot more information than you might think. We *do* know that the magi saw something unusual and recognized the sign that was being given by a power greater than anything they could have imagined. This journey led them to discover the king foretold long before in a prophecy over 550 years earlier.



## **BABYLON (500 YEARS BEFORE THE BIRTH OF CHRIST)**

*Daniel is sitting rolling a scroll to seal it. Shadrach is standing by him.*

**SHADRACH:** Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar made you lead prefect of the magi for a reason. Therefore, I think it would be wise to speak with the others about this matter. They look to you as does the king. Only you could interpret what his dreams meant. No one else has that extraordinary gift!

**DANIEL:** (distracted by his task) The Lord chose me to be his messenger to the king. That is all. Do not give me praise, Shadrach.

**SHADRACH:** Of course, but Daniel, it is obvious that you have received another message from the Lord. I have never seen you write so fast! Please share with us what you have learned. It must be important for you to be this way.

**DANIEL:** It is important. It is perhaps one of the greatest visions the Lord has ever given to me or to anyone for that matter. What I have learned will change the world forever, but it is not yet time for it to be told.

**SHADRACH:** Not time yet? But when will that be?

**DANIEL:** I don't know, but I will seal it for now. When the time comes, the Lord will give this to whom he sees fit. They will see and understand what we cannot. For the Lord has said to me, "But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

**SHADRACH:** What does that mean?

**DANIEL:** (shakes his head) I heard, but I did not understand. He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end."

**SHADRACH:** Then may it be what the Lord has said.

*They exit.*  **SUGGESTED SONG:** "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

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## SCENE 2

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*Narrator enters.*

**NARRATOR:** Over the next several hundred years, the magi continued to have a prominent place not only in the Babylon empire but also throughout the Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman empires that followed after. These men of knowledge provided wise counsel to kings and governors and were held in high esteem throughout the land. However, it was on a night, a night a little like this one, when suddenly these men of great knowledge came across something that was beyond anyone's explanation.

*Two magi (Gaszi and Mirza) stand together talking. Ardashir and Kaveh enter obviously excited about something. The two magi turn to them.*

**KAVEH:** Gaszi, sir. I am so sorry to disturb you, but Ardashir and I have found something very unusual that we need to discuss with you. It's something we hope you will be able to explain to us.

**GASZI:** I will certainly try, but isn't it a little late for this?

**ARDASHIR:** No sir, not at all! In fact, this is the perfect time to show you what we have found. It's pretty amazing!

**KAVEH** (nods excitedly): Yes, sir! Look over here toward the eastern sky. See that star right there? See how bright it is? We've never seen a star like this before!

**GASZI:** Yes, it's certainly bright, but that could be caused for a number of reasons. I would say to continue studying it. See where it goes and map it.

**ARDASHIR:** Sir, we *have* been watching it. For several days now in fact. For two weeks this star has not changed position. All the other stars have moved, but not this one. Here are the charts we have made. You can see for yourself. It is quite remarkable!



*Gaszi looks at the scrolls and studies them for a moment.*

**GASZI** (looks at Mirza—who is very old) Mirza, you are the eldest of the magi. Have you ever seen such a star as this? Mirza? *Mirza!*

**MIRZA** (staring off into space—obviously can't hear him): Eh?

**GASZI:** *The star! Do you see the star?*

**MIRZA:** Of course, I've seen a star! They're everywhere. Just look up at the night sky . . . (jumps in shock) Wow! Look at that star! It's so bright!

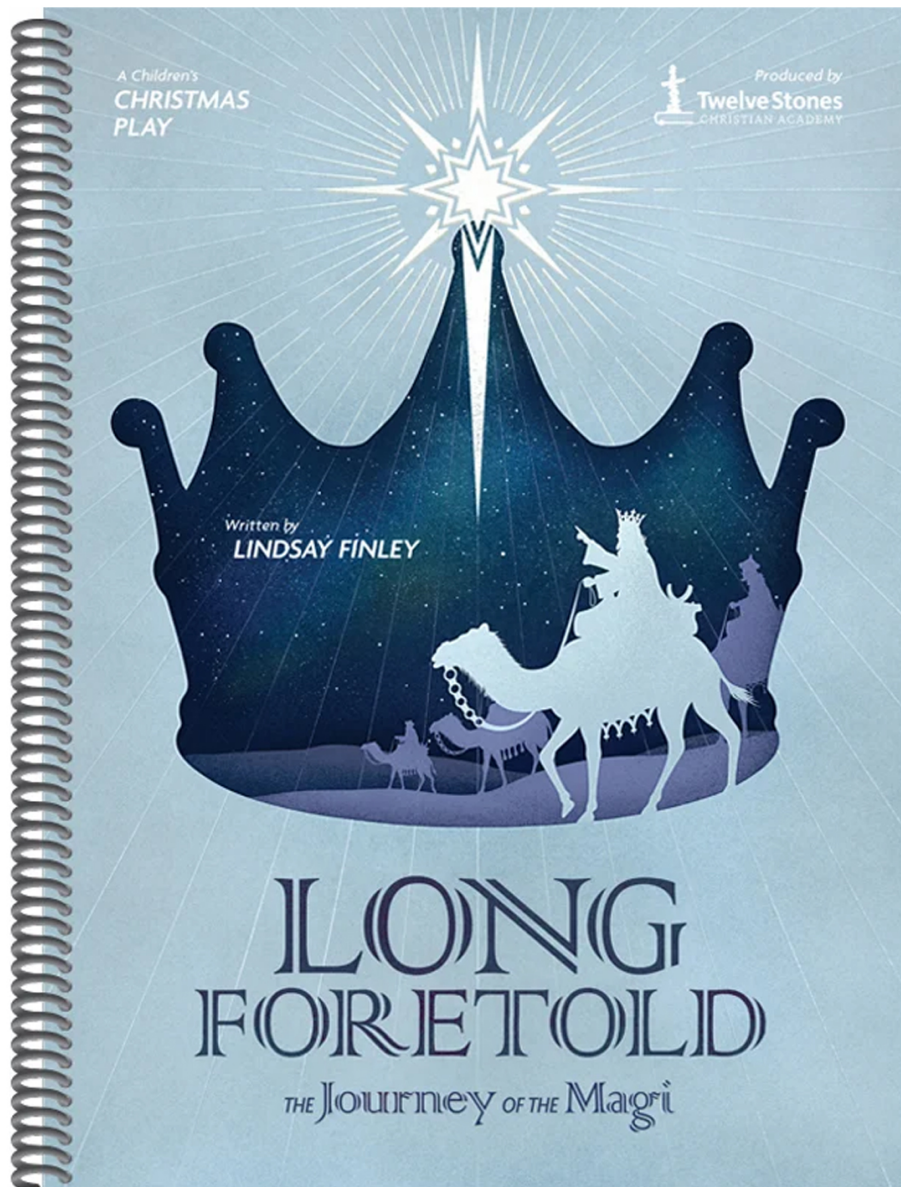
**GASZI:** Yes, Mirza, and it is not moving like the rest of the stars. Any thoughts on what this could be?

**MIRZA** (still can't hear) Do you see that star, boys? It's so bright. You know, I heard about a light like that a long time ago from my grandfather. I think there is something very significant about it . . . I can't put my finger on it . . . Oh there must be a scroll about it somewhere . . . (yawns) . . . Well I think I'm going to head to bed . . . (walks off)

**GASZI:** We must find this scroll that Mirza mentioned. I think it will hold the answers we are searching for.

*They exit.*

**NARRATOR:** After an unknown amount of time, the magi found the information they needed and were astounded by what they found. Not only was the star an unexplained phenomenon but it was a message, a message that a child had been born who would be a king. This child was worthy of worship and gifts. The magi knew that they must find this child and worship him.



# Long Foretold

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