

Tour Guide

Shalom-----have you come to Bethlehem to register to be taxed by Caesar Augustus' decree? I have heard rumors of something out of the ordinary that has happened in Bethlehem, have you heard what it is? Let's go into the village and maybe if we listen very close to what the people are saying we will learn what has happened. Stay close together so that you don't miss anything!

1. Census Taker *(have scrolls ready for several to sign at once)*

-Step over here, please!
-Everyone must register for the census as decreed by Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus.
-Bethlehem- a small town and yet many people have come since they are of the house of King David.

2. Prophet *(reads from scroll):*

"The days are coming" declares the Lord, "when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; He will do what is just and right in the land. In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The Lord of Righteousness.

(Prophet turns in a new direction)

But to you, Bethlehem, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come from me One who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times.

(Street guide moves crowd on as Prophet begins speaking verses again quietly)

3. Food Vendors and Carpenters Together *(as guests approach and when they leave)*

-Benches, tables, stools made and repaired here...
-Food for sale, Buy your food here, the best in all of Bethlehem.....

Food Vendors

-Buy your food here-the best food in all of Bethlehem *(as guests approach and when they leave)*
-Yes, it is amazing the harvest that we brought in this year. The olives and nuts are the best in years.
-It is a good thing that we have much food to sell. There are so many people walking through the streets these days, why are they all here?

Carpenter

-Don't tell me you have not heard of the census decreed by the Roman Emperor? He wants to know how many people live in his kingdom so he can tax them.
-More for him—less for us!

Carpenter

-I've talked to so many folks coming to Bethlehem for the census. I pride myself in what I do, but it still breaks my heart when I think of the young couple settling in the animal shelter over at the inn.
-Being called to repair a manger so a baby could be placed in it.....what a place to stay—what a place to birth a child. I hope all is going well for them.

Food Vendor

-Its back to work for us, maybe we will hear more about them today

4. Copper and Brass/Fabric Weavers Dyers

TOGETHER

-Come, buy fabrics of the most beautiful colors and cloth woven on the best looms in the country. (*as guests approach and when then leave*)

-Copper! Brass! The most beautiful, brightest, shiniest wares you will find in all of Bethlehem (*as guests approach and when they leave*)

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-You have been polishing that piece all day. It shines brighter than any piece in the shop.

Copper and Brass Dealers

-Yes, it is a wonderful piece, isn't it?

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-It shines as much as the light that came into my window last night.

Copper and Brass Dealers

-Did you see that light too?

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-Never, in all my life, have I seen such light coming from the sky. Has that star always been in the sky and I missed it?

Copper and Brass Dealers

-No I believe it only appeared last night.

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-What would make a star shine so brightly in the middle of the night?

Copper and Brass Dealers

-That is the most beautiful color of purple cloth I have ever seen. What did you use to make the dye?

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-I used the same ingredients I always use, but yes, it is exceptionally beautiful, isn't it?

Copper and Brass Dealers

-It is truly a royal color!

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-Strange you should say that. Only yesterday, a young couple walked by the shop as I was drying this piece and the young woman commented on it being such a "royal" color. Then she said to her husband, "Our Son will be a Royal King". Funny because they didn't look like royalty themselves. They looked rather ordinary, even poor.

Copper and Brass Dealers

-How would people like that even dream of having a King?

Soldier (*walks by saying*) "King? The only king is Caesar!"

Fabric Weavers/Dyers

-Romans! Humph! It is all very strange, isn't it? Well back to work for us!

6. Basket Weavers/Potters TOGETHER

- Baskets! The best in all the region! Made from the strongest reeds and rushes you will ever find! *(as guests approach and when they leave)*.
-Come and look at our wares. You may need a water jug or a clay pot. Buy what you may---all are the best quality *(as guests approach and when they leave)*

Basket Weaver

-That is a nice water jug.

Potter 1

-Yes, I sold one like it to my cousin Laban just yesterday.

Soldier *(walks by this booth and doesn't say anything)*

Basket Weavers

-Roman soldiers! Why do they have to be here?

Potter 1

-You know the Emperor does not want his subjects to revolt. He must station soldiers everywhere to keep order and peace. I believe Romans are just suspicious of we Jews. When we talk of our King and Messiah coming that makes them nervous.

Potter 2

-And our Messiah will come and rescue us. Some say he has already arrived as a tiny baby.

Basket Weavers

-A baby? How can a baby bring peace to our land?
-Is that the shepherd Laban?

Potter 1

-Yes, he has been tending sheep for years.

Potter 2

-Did you hear what happened during their watch last night?

Potter 1

-No, tell me!

Potter 2

-As they sat on the hillside outside of the city gate, the sky suddenly shone and they heard voices. Voices like singing. Then an angel said "Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the city of David a Savior has been born. He is Christ the Lord. This will be the sign, you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

Potter 1

-An angel said this to my cousin?

Potter 2

-Yes, the shepherds then came to Bethlehem, like the angel told them to, and they found the baby. Laban believes this is the Savior.

Basket Weaver

-A Savior, in a manger? Let's get back to work!

7. Women at the well

-Have you heard anything about the young couple who entered the city last night?

- I heard the woman was nearing her time to deliver a baby. Some say they had traveled from Nazareth. Imagine riding a donkey in that condition?

-I saw them. They were so weary looking, young, hungry and thirsty. The man humbly asked for water from the well to refresh his wife. He had such a gentle voice. I gave them water.

-Where were they spending the night?

-I don't know, but I can't seem to get them off my mind. I hope everything works out for them.

-We should be heading back now, but let me know if you hear more about the couple.

5. Beggars

-Alms for the poor (*as guests approach and when they leave*)

-Yes, we are poor, aren't we? Will we ever be anything but, poor?

-Be patient. We may be poor in this lifetime, but we will be rich when our King comes. The King will come, one from the house and line of King David. He will deliver us from the sadness of this life.

Tour Guide: You will then be rich in His love and mercy

-Alms for the poor, alms for the poor

8. Tent Makers/Seller and Innkeeper

-Come, buy your tent for the night. We have the best tents in Bethlehem. Don't get caught under the open sky. (*as guests approach and when they leave*).

Tent Makers/Seller and Innkeeper

Son

-Father why are we still here? We only have one small tent left and not enough material to make any more.

Father

-I know son, with all the people coming into Bethlehem and no places to stay, I'm surprised we even have one tent left. I was hoping that young couple who stopped by yesterday would come back and buy the tent, but I haven't seen them.

Son

-You mean the couple who was going to have a baby?

Innkeeper

-I wonder how the young couple is doing? I should go and check on them soon now that things have settled down.

-They came to my inn looking for a room. The man, Joseph I believe was his name, said his wife was ready to have her baby and they really needed a place to stay. All I could offer them was the animal shelter out back. They eagerly took it.

-When I went to check on them, I couldn't believe what I saw. The shelter, not only filled with animals was filled with shepherds praising the baby who was lying in a manger. They said angels had told them to come and find this child. The mother and father looked so proud of their newborn baby.

Father

-Wow, let's sell this last tent and go see!

Innkeeper

-I wish I could have given them a better place to lay their newborn baby. I must finish up my work here and then also check on them in the shelter out back.

9. Animal Traders (2 or more)

-Animals for sale. The best animals in all of Bethlehem and the area (*as guests approach and when they leave*).

-Father or brother, we have the best animals, but why aren't people buying them these days?

-It is the census that brought people here. They have no place to keep them while they are here. There aren't even enough places for the people to stay, let alone room for animals they would buy.

-But don't they need sheep for sacrificing and doves for the temple while they are here?

-Yes, you would think they would want goats for milk and geese for a meal? Maybe later they will come and buy our animals.

-I tried to sell some of our animals to that young man yesterday, but he was mostly interested in finding a place to spend the night. He said his wife was ready to have a baby. I sent him to the Innkeeper hoping he would have a room for them.

- Animals for sale. The best animals in all of Bethlehem and the area (*as guests approach and when they leave*).

10. Joseph (Joseph invites guests into the animal shelter)

-Welcome! Come in!

-I am Joseph, a descendent of King David. This is my wife, Mary.

-And this is Jesus. I was told to name Him Jesus because He will save His people from their sins.

-“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

11. Simeon (*After guests have seen Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus (give them a bit of time)* Looking up, Simeon says:

-Dear God, I, your servant Simeon, have seen your Son. Now, Lord let me depart in peace, according to your Word, for my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for the glory of our people Israel.

-Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

Looks at guests and say

-Go in peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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