

Market Vendor 1 Audition Sides:

MarketVendor1: Well then! Shalom! Welcome to Bethlehem! We haven't seen this many people in our small, humble town since... since... never. Never have we had this many people visit our town at once. People have been arriving for days and days. Some have traveled in large families, such as yourselves, and some just about to grow their family! Why, I just sold my last linens to a young couple about to welcome their first child to the world. I told the husband it would make for perfect swaddling cloths. Could I interest your family in some blankets? It looks like it might be getting colder!

FL: No, thank you – we still have a bit of a journey ahead of us. We have to register for the Census.

MV1: Oh, yes. All the land must register as decreed by Cesar Augustus. (*Lowers voice and looks around to make sure Romans aren't listening.*) They say it's so the Romans know how many people they need to protect... but I think it's just so they can tax us more than they already do! But ssshhh... don't let any of the Romans hear that kind of talk. They're on patrol everywhere, and I wouldn't want to cross them. Best for us Jews to just do as they say and go about our business.

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Market Vendor 2 Audition Sides:

MV2: This Census is great for business. I've never seen the Bethlehem Market so busy. It almost gives me hope for --- (*cuts him/herself off*) -- oh, never mind.

FL: Hope for what?

MV2: (*Sighs*) Hope that life will get better for us Jews. Living under King Herod has been hard enough, but the Romans... it's as if they enjoy making our lives miserable under their rule. They are cruel and greedy. My family has been praying to God for our promised Messiah to come and rescue His people. Just like Moses led our father's fathers out of Egypt; the coming Messiah will lead the people of Israel into a new promised land, overflowing with milk and honey. Has your family heard the words of the prophet Micah? He seems to think that the Messiah is going to be born in Bethlehem! Can you imagine? A mighty Savior being born here, in this tiny insignificant town? No, the next King of the Jews couldn't be born in a palace like this. I'm sure of it.

FL: Yes, but God's ways are not our own...

MV2: True, I suppose you're right about that. Who knows, maybe the Messiah will be born soon, right here during this Census. Oh, wouldn't that be wonderful!?!
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Shepherds Scene Sides:

Shepherd 1: Yes, we thought it quite strange as well. Why would our Savior be in a manger? Why not a palace? In the finest furnishings? Surrounded by the finest riches in all of Judea? But we didn't have time to think of that... because then, suddenly, the sky came alive with a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Shepherd 2: Their voices were truly heavenly... it felt as though they would shake the earth, their praise was so magnificent!

Shepherd 3: It was like they replaced every star in the sky, there were so many of them! But then, suddenly, as quickly as they came, they left.

FL: What did you do?

Shepherd 2: What would you do? We stood in awe. Bewildered. Did this just happen? Did we really just witness thousands and thousands of angels praising God and delivering us a message that our Savior has been born?

Shepherd 3: We were all very quiet for a long moment.

Shepherd 1: Then we knew. We must see what we've come to know and share this good news! Our excitement has been uncontainable since then! We're now on our way through Bethlehem looking for a baby in a manger in swaddling cloths. We want to see the newborn king, the Savior, so we can worship Him and then tell everyone about Him!

Inn Family Sides:

Inn Keeper: *(As the family enters/walks up to Inn.)* Shalom, weary travelers. Welcome, welcome. Where are you traveling from?

Family Leader: From a town very far from here. We are the _____ Family, of the House of David.

Inn Keeper's Wife (enters): Shalom! Shalom! Welcome to our Inn. Oh dear, you look like you've been through a trying time.

FL: Yes, we were just set upon by Roman Soldiers. We didn't know their rule here was so... so... brutal.

IKW: *(Quickly shushes.)* Shh shh shh... no talk of that. *(Looks around as if Romans might be able to hear.)* It's a hard time for us all. Where are you staying for the night?

FL: We don't have a place to stay tonight...

IK: Oh no, I wish we could offer you a place to stay tonight, but, we have no room.

FL: No room at all?

IK: That's right. The Census has brought so many families here to Bethlehem. All the descendants from the House of David. Just like you. The whole town is full. We've been turning people away for several days. In fact, we had to turn away a young couple tonight.

IKW: Oh yes. The poor things. The young woman was great with child. We were so worried about them. But we had no more room! All my husband could offer them was the stable outside with the animals.

IK: I hope they can manage, sleeping with animals. But what could we do?

IKW: You did the best you could. You offered what we had.

(Inn Keeper's Children enter, excited and full of energy.)

Child 1 (older child): Mother! Father! The baby!

Child 2 (younger child): The baby has been born! And it's the most BEAUTIFUL baby you've ever seen!

Child 1: Father, could this be the baby people are talking about? The one that will be the new king?

Child 2: The Messiah?

IK: (Unbelieving) The new king? Born here, in our stable? It couldn't be!

IKW: (To husband.) The prophets did say the Savior would be of the line of David...

IK: (Still shocked and unconvinced.) No, it just couldn't be. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would certainly not have his SON born in a lowly stable. The thought it ridiculous!

Child 1: But Father, what if it IS the Messiah?

Child 2: Yes, what if?

IK: (Softening to the idea.) Could it be? But, why here? Why now?

FL: (interrupting the Inn Keeper's train of thought.) Sir, we heard from a group of shepherds on the way that the Messiah was born! That an angel of the Lord proclaimed that the Savior is here, and we'd find him wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

IKW: (Surprised) Lying in a manger? *(To husband.)* They must mean the baby in our stable!

IK: (Excited disbelief.) Then you must take your family and worship the new king, the Messiah... in our stable! Go! All of you! *(Points the way.)*