

Review: The Innkeeper's Journal

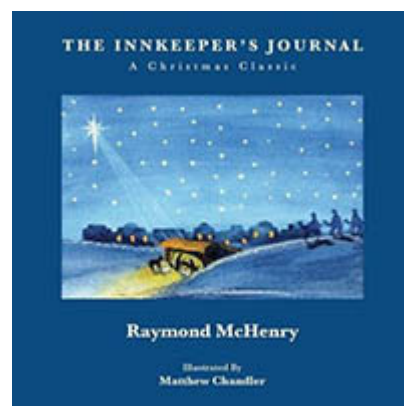
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The Innkeeper's Journal: A Christmas Classic

By Raymond McHenry (In Other Words International)

Raymond McHenry is the pastor of Westgate Memorial Baptist Church in Beaumont and the founder of In Other Words, an online service providing “Christian leaders with humor, facts, quotes and interesting true stories from current events and headline news.” He also is the author of what some have taken to be a children’s book.

The Innkeeper's Journal is an imaginative retelling of the Christmas story from the perspective of the innkeeper. Though this person is not named in the Bible, McHenry gives him the name Jedidiah, which is also the name given to David and Bathsheba’s second son who we know as Solomon.



Intended to be read together as a family during Christmas celebrations, the story progresses a couple of paragraphs at a time, accompanied by illustrations. In addition to the succinctness of the narrative, the size and thickness of the book give it the appearance of a children’s picture book. The substance of the narrative, however, reaches older readers just as easily.

Where *The Innkeeper's Journal* diverges from what one might expect of a Christmas story is in McHenry's imagining past the celebrated night to the days after Herod learned of a rival king's birth.

At this point, the story takes a turn young children may find difficult to hear and parents will struggle to read. As a result, parents and caregivers are encouraged to read themselves before reading it to children.

Thankfully, the narrative doesn't end with Herod's horror but continues through to Easter—resurrection morning—and ties Jedidiah's story to the hope of Jesus Christ's conquering death.

The Innkeeper's Journal is being printed in Spanish with the hope of being given away—through Texas Baptist churches—along the U.S./Mexico border during the 2019 Christmas season.

*Eric Black, executive director/editor/publisher
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