

Radio Jerusalem

Synopsis

Radio Jerusalem (Radio J) transports listeners back to the first Christmas where they listen to events as they might have been reported on a radio station of the day.

With the use of cash-calls, sponsorship announcements, phone-ins, jingles, gossip, news and roving reports, Radio J's announcer, Sammy Amos presents a lively re-enactment of the Christmas story with humor and drama.

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Radio Jerusalem re-tells the Bethlehem story in an affectionate send-up of commercial radio.

The year is 1BC, the year in which Christ was probably born. During this particular night, stories begin to trickle in the station about odd happenings. The roving reporter out in the field (literally) keeps feeding in puzzled news commentaries about inexplicable stellar phenomenon spotted near Bethlehem. He interviews local shepherds and astrologers, and a trio of opulently dressed strangers.

He comes across an innkeeper who is wary about telling too much about what he knows in case the health authorities decided to come around and check out his establishment.

A midwife takes him closer to the solution – but you cannot win 'em all, Herod's press secretary is clearing up rumors that a decree on the nation's first born is in the wind.

But above all, it is Joseph's surprise revelation that captures the essence and ends the show.

The steady beat of the music, the drama of the commercials and the easy, professional style of Jewish personality Sammy Amos, makes Radio J compulsive listening.

In between adverts for the Bank of Jordan (your friend through disaster, famine and plague), the Ali Baba new style carpets, plus sports reports from Anthony Quinnus, the show moves at a fast pace with Radio J's mighty broadcasting team following the Star of Bethlehem.

The simulated news bulletin, the on-the-spot reports from David Bartholemew, plus comments from a few high placed authorities and assorted on-lookers help provide a new twist to the familiar story.

And believe it or not, Radio J's Templeguard money box (a cash call send-up) has 35 and a half sheckles available for a good guesser.

To John Hawkesby, who had the idea and wrote most of the original script, Radio Jerusalem has a couple of goals — to tell the story of Christ's birth in a new way, and to spoof every conceivable radio gimmick in sight.

"It's not a heavy piece at all," he says.

Other information

Radio J was first written and produced by New Zealanders John Hawkesby and Phil Yule in the early 80s. It was first produced by the Auckland based Christian broadcasting Association.

Woodlands Media and Triple Seven Communications expanded, adapted, re-voiced, and re-recorded the show, while seamlessly retaining the original jingles and interviews.

The presentation, produced by Wes Jay, features Chris Elliot (Sammy Amos), newsreader Penny Mulvey (Judith Abigail).

Chris Elliot is a former MMM radio announcer that has worked in every major radio market in Australia. Penny Mulvey is a former EON FM, Channel 10 news newsreader/journalist.

Radio J was “highly commended” at the 2000 CBAA Awards.