

JOSHUA: the Man of God

A Reader's theater of the book of Joshua based on the NIV version

Preface

Reader's theater provides an authentic reason to read and reread. This in turn improves fluency and comprehension. Over all FK reading level is 4.7.

The following version of the book of Joshua was written using much of the actual text of the Bible. However, both leaders and readers should understand that it has been changed in the following ways:

- 1) to divide lines among several readers, some lines are ascribed to other, related people
- 2) some text has been omitted
- 3) some words have been changed to the vocabulary typically encountered in elementary grades.

Scene numbers generally reflect the chapters from which they are derived, thus some scene numbers are skipped. Notation is made within the text of each scene if additional chapters have been included in that scene.

The number of characters or readers is given at the start of the scene. Few parts are specifically female, but those that are, are in parenthesis and designated with a numeral followed by "F"

The names of the 12 tribes are used to indicate a member of that tribe is speaking.

ALL indicates choral reading lines done in unison

Recommendations

On the first read through, the leader may wish to model some or even all of the parts while performers (students) follow along. The first read through done by performers should stress accurate decoding of the words in text. Independent or practice in pairs can follow. During the third reading, attention to prosody, or the appropriate use of phrasing and expression to convey meaning, should be stressed. This includes stress, pitch variations, intonation, rate, phrasing, and pausing. The fourth read through is usually the performance or in some cases an additional practice to prepare for oral presentation.

Good readers have automaticity in word decoding which leaves additional cognitive to make sense of the text. When fewer cognitive resources are needed to recognize and pronounce words and respond appropriately to punctuation, more can focus on prosody. Thus the appropriate use of phrasing and expression provides feedback and serves as an informal check of comprehension.

Joshua scene 1 – Joshua becomes the Leader

CHARACTERS: 5 and ALL

JOSHUA: Moses, our leader and my mentor, is dead.

ELEAZAR: You will now lead us.

ALL: Be strong and courageous, because you will lead us to inherit the land.

ELEAZAR: God commands us to cross the Jordan River and settle there.

JOSHUA: That will mean war with the Canaanites.

ELEAZAR: No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life.

ALL: Be strong and very courageous

GOD'S VOICE: Joshua, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

ALL: Be strong and courageous, because you will lead us to inherit the land.

ELEAZAR: Be careful to obey the law Moses gave us.

REUBEN: Do not turn from it to the right or to the left.

MANASSEH: Then you will be successful wherever you go.

ALL: Be strong and courageous.

ELEAZAR: Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

JOSHUA: Tell the people to get ready to cross the Jordan.

GAD: We remember what Moses commanded us.

MANASSEH: Our fighting men, ready for battle, will help the other tribes

JOSHUA: When God has given us the land, you may go back and occupy your own land.

REUBEN: Whatever you have commanded us we will do.

GAD: Wherever you send us we will go.

MANASSEH: Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you.

REUBEN: Only may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses.

ALL: Only be strong and courageous!

Joshua scene 2 – The Spies and Rahab

CHARACTERS: 11 (3 F) and ALL FEMALES *Salmon married Rahab and was the father of Boaz; Othniel was a nephew of Caleb, one of the original 12 spies and one of 2 who faithfully served God.

JOSHUA: I have a secret mission for you.

SALMON: Tell us what it is.

JOSHUA: Go, spy on the land, especially Jericho.

OTHNIEL: Right way.

NARRATOR 1: When they got to Jericho, they went to Rahab's house.

MESSENGER 1: Your highness, King Jericho, some of the Israelites has come here tonight to spy out the land.

KING: Where are they now?

MESSENGER 2: At Rahab's house.

KING: Get them and bring them to me.

MESSENGER 1 & 2: (*in unison*) Yes, sir.

NARRATOR 2: So the messenger ran to Rahab's house and pounded on the door.

RAHAB: What is it?

MESSENGER 1: Bring out the men who entered your house, because they are spies.

RAHAB: They are long gone.

MESSENGER 2: Where?

RAHAB: Who knows? Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them.

NARRATOR 1: But Rahab had lied to protect the spies.

NARRATOR 2: She hid them under flax stalks on her roof.

RAHAB: (*to the spies*) I know that the LORD has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us.

OTHNIEL: Did you hear how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea when we came out of Egypt.

ALL FEMALES: We did.

SALMON: Did you hear how the LORD fought for us against Sihon and Og?

OTHNIEL: The two kings east of the Jordan?

ALL FEMALES: We did.

RAHAB: We all heard how you completely destroyed them.

RAHAB'S DAUGHTER 1: When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear.

RAHAB'S DAUGHTER 2: Everyone's courage failed because of you.

ALL: The LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

RAHAB: Promise me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you.

OTHNIEL: We will spare the lives of your family when we conquer Jericho.

SALMON: Our lives for your lives! If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land.

NARRATOR 1: So Rahab let them down by a rope through the window,

NARRATOR 2: For the house she lived in was part of the city wall.

RAHAB: Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way.

SALMON: Tie this scarlet cord in the window and bring your into your house.

OTHNIEL: Don't let any of them go outside or we can't guarantee their safety.

SALMON: If you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the promise.

RAHAB: Agreed. Let it be as you say.

NARRATOR 1: They escaped and Rahab tied the scarlet cord in the window.

NARRATOR 2: They hid in the hills for three days, until the returned without finding them.

OTHNIEL: Joshua, we are back from our spying mission.

SALMON: The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands.

OTHNIEL: All the people are melting in fear because of us.

Joshua scene 3 – Crossing the Jordan

CHARACTERS: 9 (2F)

OFFICER 1: People, get ready to follow the ark.

OFFICER 2: Keep a distance between you and the ark; do not go near it.

JOSHUA: Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things.

ALL: Yes, sir!

JOSHUA: Priests, take up the Ark of the Covenant and pass on ahead of the people.

PRIEST 1: Yes, sir!

VOICE OF GOD: Today all of Israel will know that I am with you as I was with Moses

JOSHUA: Priests, when you reach the edge of the Jordan's waters, go and stand in the river.

PRIESTS: Yes, sir!

NARRATOR 1: As soon as the priests stepped into the Jordan River, the water flowing down stream stopped

NARRATOR 2: It stood up in a huge heap.

NARRATOR 1: A very huge heap because it was the time of year when the river flooded.

GIRL 1: Look, we can cross on dry ground.

GIRL 2: This is like when our grandparents told us about crossing the Red Sea.

GIRL 1: God made the water stop flowing.

GIRL 2: And our grandparents crossed over on dry ground!

NARRATOR 1: The priests who carried the stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground.

NARRATOR 2: The whole nation completed the crossing on dry ground.

Joshua scene 4 – Crossing part 2

CHARACTERS: 15 & ALL (some lines to be done as a rhyme)

JOSHUA: Choose twelve men, one from each tribe.

ALL: Yes, sir!

JOSHUA: Tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan and carry them to where we camp tonight.

REUBEN: I've got a big rock on my shoulder.

GAD: I think I'll carry a boulder

JUDAH: These rocks will be a sign

LEVI: That God was with us all the time.

SIMEON: God cut off the waters

DAN: I crossed with all my daughters

MANASSEH: We all walked on dry land

ALL: Because God gave us a hand!

ASHER: Everyone has crossed over, Joshua.

JOSHUA: Priests, bring the ark out of the river.

PRIESTS: Yes, sir!

ISSACHAR: Look, the river is flowing again.

ZEBULUN: And it is as strong as a flood.

JOSHUA: Pile up the 12 stones to be a reminder forever.

EPHRAIM: What kind of reminder?

JOSHUA: When your children ask their parents,

ZEBULUN: What do these stones mean?

EPHRAIM: We will tell them, Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.

REUBEN: The LORD our God dried up the Jordan.

GAD: Just like what he did to the Red Sea in the time of Moses.

JUDAH: God did this so everyone will know that the LORD is powerful.

ALL: We will always fear the LORD our God!

Joshua scene 5 – Trouble is coming

CHARACTERS: 9

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: Is true what I hear?

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: What did you hear?

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: Joshua's God dried up the Jordan so the Israelites could cross over.

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: That's what I heard.

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: My heart is melting like wax.

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: I too am afraid.

HOHAM KING OF HEBRON: What will happen to us?

PIRAM KING OF JARMUTH: Their God has promised to give them our land.

JAPHIA KING OF LACHISH: Our beautiful land flowing with milk and honey.

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: I heard they are celebrating their Passover.

HOHAM KING OF HEBRON: What is Passover?

PIRAM KING OF JARMUTH: A celebration that God brought them out of Egypt.

HOHAM: What if he brings them here?

PIRAM: I am afraid that's what's happening.

JAPHIA KING OF LACHISH: Their God cares for them. He has fed them with manna for forty years in the desert.

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: But I heard he does so no longer.

HOHAM KING OF HEBRON: Maybe he's mad at them?

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: No. It's because they are eating the food we have grown.

JAPHIUA: Oh no! Not our food.

HOHAM: What will we eat?

PIRAM KING OF JARMUTH: Their God has promised to give them our land

JAPHIA KING OF LACHISH: Our beautiful land, flowing with milk and honey.

ALL: We're in big trouble now!

NARRATOR 1: Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand.

JOSHUA: You with the sword, are you for us or for our enemies?

ANGEL: Neither. As commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.

NARRATOR 2: Joshua fell to the ground in reverence.

JOSHUA: What message does my Lord have for his servant?

ANGEL: Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy. God has delivered Jericho into your hand. Here's the plan. Share it with your people

NARRATOR 1: Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites.

NARRATOR 2: No one went out and no one came in.

JOSHUA: Here's God's plan.

ALL: We're listening, Joshua.

JOSHUA: March around the city once with all the armed men.

ALL: OK.

JOSHUA: Do this for six days.

ALL: OK.

JOSHUA: Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark

ALL: OK.

JOSHUA: On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets.

ALL: OK.

JOSHUA: When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout;

ALL: OK

JOSHUA: Then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in.

ALL: OK.

Joshua scene 6 – The Walls Come Tumbling Down

CHARACTERS: 5 and ALL

JOSHUA: Priests, bring the Ark of the Covenant.

ALL: Yes, sir!

JOSHUA: Have seven trumpet blowers walk in front.

ALL: Yes, sir!

JOSHUA: Soldiers, advance! March around the city, with an armed guard going ahead of the ark of the LORD.

ALL: Yes, sir!

JOSHUA: Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, and do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!

ALL: Yes, sir!

NARRATOR 1: The ark of the LORD circled the city of Jericho once.

NARRATOR 2: The next morning they did the same thing.

NARRATOR 1: They did the same thing for six mornings.

NARRATOR 2: But the seventh morning Joshua gave new orders.

JOSHUA: Circle the city of Jericho six times. On the seventh trip around the city, listen for the trumpets then shout! For the LORD has given you the city!

SALMON: But spare Rahab and her family.

OTHNIEL: Because she hid us spies.

JOSHUA: Keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them.

OTHNIEL: what are the devoted things?

JOSHUA: All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the LORD and must go into his treasury.

ALL: Yes, sir!

NARRATOR 2: When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and the wall collapsed

NARRATOR 1: The soldiers rushed in and conquered Jericho.

SALMON: Rahab, you and your family, follow me

OTHNIEL: You will be safe outside our camp.

NARRATOR 2: The LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

Joshua scene 7 - Achan's Sin

CHARACTERS: 7

NARRATOR 1: A terrible thing happened at the battle of Jericho.

NARRATOR 2: A man named Achan disobeyed.

ACHAN: Look at this gold, this silver! This beautiful robe! I think I'll keep them.

NARRATOR 1: Achan hid them in his tent.

NARRATOR 2: But God knew.

JOSHUA: We will march against the town of Ai next.

OTHNIEL: It is a tiny town.

JOSHUA: We'll only need 3000 soldiers.

NARRATOR 1: But the soldiers were beaten by the tiny town

NARRATOR 2: Thirty soldiers died

ACHAN: This is scary – we were beaten by a tiny town.

JOSHUA: Pardon your servant, Lord. What can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies?

CALEB: The Canaanites will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth.

JOSHUA: Lord, what then will you do for your own great name?

GOD'S VOICE: Someone has sinned and took some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied.

JOSHUA: How awful.

GOD'S VOICE: You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove them.

NARRATOR 1: So they found out which tribe they belonged to

NARRATOR 2: And which family.

NARRATOR 1: It was Achan.

JOSHUA: Achan, tell me what you have done.

ACHAN: I have sinned. I hid a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekel of silver and a bar of gold under the dirt inside my tent.

JOSHUA: Why have you brought this trouble on us? The LORD will bring trouble on you today.

NARRATOR 2: Achan died.

NARRATOR 1: They heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day.

Joshua 8 - Ai Destroyed

CHARACTERS: 4 and ALL

GOD'S VOICE: Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Joshua. Take the whole army with you, and I will deliver Ai into your hands.

NARRATOR 1: Joshua chose 30,000 soldiers and attacked.

JOSHUA: Soldiers, ambush the city. The LORD your God will give it into your hand

NARRATOR 2: The soldiers went off but Joshua stayed in the camp.

NARRATOR 1: The next day Joshua led the rest of the army.

JOSHUA: We will attack, then fall back. When they chase us the ambush soldiers can get inside the city.

GOD'S VOICE: Joshua, hold out the javelin that is in your hand, for into your hand I will deliver the city.

NARRATOR 1: God did.

NARRATOR 2: Then Joshua built an altar of uncut stones to the LORD.

JOSHUA: Let us offer sacrifices to God. I will write a copy of the Law of Moses on these stones.

ALL: That is good!

NARRATOR 2: Joshua read all the words of the law to the whole assembly,

NARRATOR 1: including the women and children,

NARRATOR 2: and the foreigners who lived among them.

Joshua scene 9 The Gibeonite Deception

CHARACTERS: 8

GIBEON 1: Did you hear what Joshua has done to Jericho and Ai?

GIBEON 2: Yes! He defeated them in battle.

GIBEON 1: We might be next!

GIBEON 3: We should make a treaty with them.

GIBEON 2: They won't make treaties with us. God forbade it.

GIBEON 3: Then we'll trick them into making a treaty with us.

GIBEON 1: How?

GIBEON 3: Get old clothes and moldy bread.

NARRATOR 1: So they did and set off for Joshua and the Israelites.

GIBEON 1: Greetings, Israelites!

GIBEON 2: We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us.

CALEB: Perhaps you live near us, so how can we make a treaty with you?

OTHNIEL: Let's get Joshua and see what he says.

JOSHUA: Who are you and where do you come from?

GIBEON 2: Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the LORD your God.

GIBEON 1: We have heard reports of all your God did in Egypt.

GIBEON 2: How he defeated Sihon and Og.

GIBEON 3: Our elders commanded us to come and make a treaty with you.

GIBEON 2: This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home come to you.

GIBEON 1: But now see how dry and moldy it is.

GIBEON 3: These wineskins that we filled were new.

GIBEON 1: But see how cracked they are.

GIBEON 3: And our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey.

JOSHUA: We will make a peace treaty with you.

NARRATOR: Unfortunately, the Israelites relied on their eyes and did not inquire of or ask God.

NARRATOR 2: Three days later they found out that they were neighbors, living near them.

NARRATOR 1: They had to keep their word and not attack them.

JOSHUA: Why did you deceive us by saying, 'we live a long way from you,' while actually you live near us?

GIBEON 3: We feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this.

NARRATOR 2: So Joshua made them servants to be woodcutters and water carriers.

Joshua scene 10 The Sun Stands Still

CHARACTERS: 10

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: Joshua has taken Ai and totally destroyed it.

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: Just like he did Jericho.

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: The people of Gibeon have made a treaty of peace with them.

DEBIR KING OF EGLON: Oh no! Gibeon is an important city.

HOHAM KING OF HEBRON: All of them are good fighters.

KING ADONI-ZEDEK: So I say we attack the Gibeonites.

ALL: (*ad lib*) We agree! Attack! This means war.

NARRATOR 1: When the five kings moved up against Gibeon, the Gibeonites sent word to Joshua.

GIBEON 1: Save us!

GIBEON 2: Come up to us quickly.

GIBEON 3: Help us, because all the Amorite kings have joined forces against us.

NARRATOR 2: So Joshua marched up with his entire army.

NARRATOR 1: Joshua took them by surprise.

NARRATOR 2: The LORD threw them into confusion so Joshua defeated them completely.

NARRATOR 1: The LORD hurled large hailstones down on them, and more of them died from the hail than were killed by the Israelites.

JOSHUA: LORD, let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon.

NARRATOR 1: So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the battle was over.

NARRATOR 2: There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a human being.

ALL: Surely the LORD was fighting for Israel!

Joshua scene 11 Northern Kings Defeated (chapters 11 & 12)

CHARACTERS: 5

NARRATOR 1: King Jabin gathered all the northern kings to fight against Israel.

NARRATOR 2: They came out with all their troops and a large number of horses and chariots.

NARRATOR 3: A huge army, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.

JOSHUA: All these kings joined forces to fight against Israel.

GOD'S VOICE: Do not be afraid of them, because by this time tomorrow I will hand all of them, slain, over to Israel.

NARRATOR 1: Joshua did to them as the LORD had directed.

NARRATOR 2: As the LORD commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua,

NARRATOR 3: And Joshua did it.

NARRATOR 2: He left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

NARRATOR 3: So Joshua took the entire land, just as the LORD had directed Moses.

JOSHUA: Thirty-one kings in all.

NARRATOR 1: Then the land had rest from war.

Joshua scene 13 - Dividing the land (chapters 14 - 15)

CHARACTERS: 5 (1F)

NARRATOR 1: Caleb came to see Joshua.

CALEB: You know what the LORD said about you and me.

JOSHUA: After we faithfully spied out the land.

CALEB: I brought back a report according to my convictions.

JOSHUA: But the others made the hearts of the people melt in fear.

CALEB: I, however, followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.

JOSHUA: And Moses swore that the land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance.

CALEB: It would be the inheritance of my children forever, because I followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.

JOSHUA: You were 40 when we spied out the land.

CALEB: As the LORD promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years.

JOSHUA: And here you are eighty-five years old and as strong today as the day Moses sent us out.

CALEB: I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then.

JOSHUA: You know that the Anakites are there and their cities are large and fortified.

CALEB: With the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said.

NARRATOR 1: Caleb marched against the people living in Debir.

CALEB: I will give my daughter Aksah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher.

NARRATOR 2: Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, took it.

NARRATOR 1: So Caleb gave his daughter Aksah to Othniel in marriage.

NARRATOR 2: Akah came to visit her father, Caleb.

CALEB: My daughter, what can I do for you?

AKSAH: Do me a special favor. Since you have given me land in the Negev, give me also springs of water.

CALEB: I will. I give you the upper and lower springs.

Joshua 17 – An Inheritance for the Women

CHARACTERS: 6 (3F)

NARRATOR: Now Zelophehad had no sons but only daughters.

HOGLAH: Eleazar, Joshua, and all you leaders: you know the LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our relatives.

JOSHUA: Yes, I remember. Your father had no sons.

TIRZAH: Correct. So we receive the ten tracts of land besides Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan.

MILKAH: We did as Moses instructed and married within our father's tribal clan.

JOSHUA: That law shall stand for all time since no inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another.

ELEAZAR: Every daughter who inherits land in any Israelite tribe must marry someone in her father's tribal clan.

HOGLAH: That way every Israelite will possess the inheritance of their ancestors.

Joshua scene 20 - Cities of Refuge and towns for the Levites (Ch. 20 & 21)

CHARACTERS: 7 and ALL

GOD'S VOICE: Designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed you through Moses.

NARRATOR 1: So Joshua set them up, so that anyone who killed a person accidentally and unintentionally could find protection.

JOSHUA: If someone kills another accidentally, they are to flee to a city of refuge.

ELEAZAR: They state their case before the elders of that city.

JOSHUA: Then the elders are to admit the fugitive into their city and provide a place to live among them.

ELEAZAR: They must not surrender the fugitive to an angry family member of the person killed.

JOSHUA: They are to stay in that city until they have stood trial and until the death of the high priest who is serving at that time.

ELEAZAR: Then they may go back to their own home in the town from which they fled.

LEVITE 1: The LORD commanded through Moses that you give us Levites towns to live in.

LEVITE 2: Land with pasturelands for our livestock.

JOSHUA: I will do as the Lord commanded.

NARRATOR 1: Joshua followed the Lord's commands.

NARRATOR 2: The LORD gave Israel all the land he had promised.

JOSHUA: He gave us rest on every side, just as he had promised.

ELEAZAR: Not one of all the LORD's good promises to Israel failed.

ALL: Every one was fulfilled.

Joshua scene 22 – The Eastern Tribes Return Home

CHARACTERS: 10 and ALL

JOSHUA: Summon the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

REUBEN: Yes, Joshua. What do you want?

JOSHUA: You have done all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and you have obeyed me in everything I commanded.

ELEAZAR: You have not deserted your fellow Israelites.

GAD: We have carried out the mission the LORD our God gave us.

JOSHUA: Now that the LORD your God has given them rest as he promised, return to your homes on the other side of the Jordan.

ELEAZAR: But be very careful to keep the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you.

ALL: We will love the Lord our God!

JOSHUA: Love the LORD your God.

ELEAZAR: Walk in obedience to him.

ALL: We will keep his commands.

GAD: We will hold fast to him.

MANASSEH: We will serve him with all our hearts and with all our souls.

NARRATOR 1: Joshua blessed them and they went to their homes.

NARRATOR 2: Near the Jordan River they built an imposing altar.

LEVI: Joshua, the three tribes built an altar on the border of Canaan.

DAN: It is near the Jordan River on the Israelite side.

LEVI: Have they rebelled against God?

JOSHUA: Gather all of Israel to go to war against them.

ELEAZAR: Phineas, take ten of the chief men, one from each of the tribes of Israel, and ask them why they have done this.

PHINEAS: How could you break faith with the God of Israel like this?

LEVI: How could you turn away from the LORD and build yourselves an altar in rebellion against him now?

DAN: Was not the sin of Peor enough?

PHINEAS: Up to this very day we have not cleansed ourselves from that sin.

DAN: Even though a plague fell on the community of the LORD!

LEVI: Are you now turning away from the LORD?

PHINEAS: Do not rebel against the LORD or against us by building an altar for yourselves, other than the altar of the LORD our God.

ALL: We have not rebelled!

REUBEN: The Mighty One, God, the LORD!

ALL: The Mighty One, God, the LORD!

GAD: He knows!

ALL: And let Israel know!

MANASSEH: If this has been in rebellion or disobedience to the LORD, do not spare us this day.

GAD: If we have built our own altar to turn away from the LORD

MANASSEH: May the LORD himself call us to account.

REUBEN: No! We did it for fear that someday your descendants might say to ours, ‘What do you have to do with the LORD, the God of Israel?’

GAD: Your children might say ‘The LORD has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you’.

MANASSEH: They might say that we have no share in the LORD.

GAD: So your descendants might cause ours to stop fearing the LORD.

REUBEN: This altar is to be a witness between us and you and the generations that follow,

ALL: That we will worship the LORD.

GAD: In the future your descendants will not be able to say to ours, ‘You have no share in the LORD.’

PHINEAS: Today we know that the LORD is with us, because you have not been unfaithful to the LORD in this matter.

ALL: We will serve the Lord.

REUBEN: We name the altar ‘A Witness between Us—that the LORD is God’.

ALL: The Lord is God!

PHINEAS: Very well. There will be no more talk about going to war against you.

Joshua scene 23 - Joshua's Farewell to the Leaders

CHARACTERS: 8

NARRATOR 1: After the LORD had given Israel rest from all their enemies around them, Joshua,

NARRATOR 2: by then a very old man,

NARRATOR 1: Joshua summoned all Israel.

JOSHUA: I am very old. You yourselves have seen everything the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake.

REUBEN: Yes, we have. The LORD our God fought for us.

JOSHUA: Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left.

ELEAZAR: Do not associate with these nations around you.

PHINEAS: Do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them.

JOSHUA: You must not serve them or bow down to them.

ELEAZAR: Hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have until now.

LEVI: The LORD has driven out great and powerful nations

JOSHUA: No one is able to withstand you.

GAD: One of us routs a thousand, because the LORD your God fights for us, just as he promised.

ELEAZAR: Be very careful to love the LORD your God.

PHINEAS: Do not ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you.

JOSHUA: Do not intermarry with them and associate with them.

ELEAZAR: They may become snares and traps for you.

JOSHUA: Whips on your backs.

PHINEAS: Thorns in your eyes.

JOSHUA: You will perish from this good land.

ELEAZAR: The land the LORD your God has given you.

REUBEN: We know with all our hearts and souls that not one of all the good promises the LORD our God gave us has failed.

LEVI: Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.

GAD: All the good things the LORD has promised have happened.

JOSHUA: Do not serve other gods and bow down to them.

PHINEAS: Or, the LORD's anger will burn against you.

ELEAZAR: You will quickly perish from the good land he has given you.

Joshua scene 24 - Choices

CHARACTERS: 6 and ALL *Note: This portion incorporates some New Testament scripture.

JOSHUA: Fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness.

ELEAZAR: Throw away the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

ELEAZAR: Friendship with the world means enmity against God.

JOSHUA: If you choose to be a friend of the world you become an enemy of God.

ALL: We will serve the Lord.

JOSHUA: No one can serve two masters.

ELEAZAR: Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

JOSHUA: You cannot serve both God and money.

ALL: We will serve the Lord.

JOSHUA: But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.

ALL: Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods!

A: It was the LORD our God himself who brought us and our parents up out of Egypt, from that land of slavery.

B: It was God who performed those great signs before our eyes.

C: He protected us on our entire journey.

D: The LORD drove out before us all the nations.

ALL: We too will serve the LORD, because he is our God.

JOSHUA: You are not able to serve the LORD.

ELEAZAR: He is a holy God; he is a jealous God.

JOSHUA: He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins.

ELEAZAR: If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, he will bring disaster on you

JOSHUA: He will make an end of you, after he has been good to you.

ALL: No! We will serve the LORD.

JOSHUA: You are witnesses that you have chosen to serve the LORD.

ALL: Yes, we are witnesses.

JOSHUA: Throw away the foreign gods and yield your hearts to the LORD.

ALL: We will. We will serve the Lord.

JOSHUA: But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.

ALL: Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods!

JOSHUA: But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

ALL: We too will serve the LORD our God and obey him.

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