

Nathan: Prophet of Courage

CHARACTERS: VOG (Voice of God), David, Nathan, Satan

PROPS: seat for Nathan, David; scroll, optional harp

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 5 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: 2 Samuel 1, 4 & 12

NOTE TO DIRECTORS: During the somewhat lengthy monologues it is imperative NATHAN or DAVID reacts to the words he is hearing. Feel free to change the scripted reaction but be sure to substitute something that compels audience attention.

At rise: NATHAN is seated, studying a scroll. He is interrupted by a voice from above.

VOG: Nathan, go tell David he has sinned. *(NATHAN looks up, and then falls to his knees in reverence, head down, scroll abandoned to fall to the floor as well)* I anointed him king over Israel, and delivered him from the hand of Saul. *(NATHAN raises head, and nods in agreement. He swallows and appears concerned he is hearing God's voice)*

I gave him all Israel and Judah and if all this had been too little, I would have given him even more. But he has despised my word by doing evil. *(NATHAN covers his mouth, eyes widen)* He has murdered Uriah the Hittite with the sword of the Ammonites to take his wife Bathsheba. *(NATHAN is shocked, horrified)* Go tell him the sword will never depart from his house, because he despised me. *(VOG thunders this final word and NATHAN cowers, covering his head with his hands)* Out of his own household I will bring calamity on David! *(NATHAN waits a beat, staggers to his feet, collects the scroll and sits, stunned and horrified at the situation)*

SATAN enters

SATAN: I don't think you want to deliver that news. Remember what happened when Saul died and that Amalekite brought the news?

NATHAN: *(still in shock)* David had the messenger killed; *(Coming out of shock)* But the Amalekite lied.

SATAN: But Baanah and Rekab did not lie when they brought David word of Saul's son Ish-Bosheth's death. What happened to them?

NATHAN: David had them executed *(defending David)* But they were murderers, slipping into his house and stabbing him in the stomach while he was lying on the bed in his bedroom. It was cold blooded murder. They deserved to die.

SATAN: *(seeming to agree but just trying a new tactic)* Murderers. You can never tell what they might do next. Oh! That's right. David is a murderer! He's obviously trying to cover up his sin. He already murdered Uriah. What makes you think he won't kill you to keep it all quiet?

NATHAN: He might. But I must do what the Lord commands, even if it means my own death.

SATAN: Send a letter from out of town.

NATHAN: No. I will obey and trust in God.

LIGHTS DOWN. OPTIONAL SONG: Trust and obey.

OPTIONAL SCENE 2 (If the emphasis is on this incident. Do not use scene 2 if the main thrust is speaking God's word no matter what)

At rise: David is playing his harp. Nathan enters and bows. David stops playing and motions for him to speak. DAVID needs to react facially and with body language throughout.

DAVID: What is it?

NATHAN: There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb he had bought. *(DAVID nods, seems to recall times when he as a shepherd did the same things)* He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him.

DAVID: *(happily reminiscing)* This takes me back to the days of my youth.

NATHAN: Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.

DAVID springs from his seat, burning with anger) As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this must die! *(Slams his hand into his fist)* He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity. *(Points and NATHAN then throws up his hands and turns away)*

NATHAN: You are the man! *(DAVID wheels back around to face NATHAN, still angry but confused as well)* This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives and all Israel and Judah. *(DAVID crosses his arms over his chest. His face is stern)* And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more. Why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? *(DAVID's mouth drops open, he looks about ready to speak, to argue with NATHAN but Nathan takes a step closer to him and continues pointing at DAVID)*

You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. *(DAVID takes a step back in shock)* You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own. *(DAVID sinks in disbelief into his seat)*

This is what the Lord says: ‘Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you, and he will sleep with your wives in broad daylight. (*DAVID bows his head in shame*) You did it in secret, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel. (*David is utterly grief stricken. Raises his face with tears in his eyes*)

DAVID: I have sinned against the Lord. (*DAVID puts his head into his hands*)

NATHAN: (*more gently*) The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. (*NATHAN goes to DAVID and places a hand on his shoulder*) But because by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the Lord, the son born to you will die. (*DAVID is overcome with sorrow and sobs*)