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THE ANOINTED

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THE ANOINTED

A musical drama in two acts based on the life and career of
David, son of Jesse

BOOK BY
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MUSIC BY
C. Michael Perry

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THE CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in order of their appearance)

CHORUS AND SOLOIST

SAUL **

MICHAL

SAMUEL

DAVID

JONATHAN*

JOAB

RECHAB

BAANAH

ABNERURIAH

BATHSHEBA

NATHAN+

ABSALOM*

HUSHAI

AHITHOPHEL

PRIEST

ZADOK

AHIMAAZ

AMASA

OLDER DAVID'S SPIRIT**

SOLOMON*

ABISHAG

ADONIJAH

VOICE OF JEHOVAH+

ABIATHAR

VARIOUS COURTIERS, SOLDIERS, RUNNERS AND SERVANTS

** Saul and Older David'S Spirit played by the same actor

+ Nathan and Voice of Jehovah played by the same actor

* Jonathan, Absalom and Solomon played by the same actor

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets:
I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.
-- Matthew 5:17

For Ahimaaz, the world's first known
narrator of artistic genius, whose chronicles
are the material of this drama.

For Robert K. Thomas, who, with eloquence and passion, brought these scriptures to our attention, suggesting their provocative psychology, their profound realism, their religious message and tragic dimension.

For Orson Scott Card, whose *STONE TABLES* inspired the following treatment of an Old Testament subject, and Charles Whitman, under whose direction that work was brought so vividly to life.

MUSICAL SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE

#1	PROLOGUE	ORCHESTRA
#2	NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY	CHORUS & SOLOIST
#3	SAUL WAS -- DAVID IS	SAUL, MICHAL & CHORUS
#4	A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE!	SAUL & CHORUS
#5	THAT MAN WILL BE REWARDED	SAUL, DAVID AND CHORUS
#6	MINE	MICHAL
#7	DAVID'S SOLILOQUY	DAVID
#8	DAVID LIVES, MY SIRE	JONATHAN
#9	MINE (reprise)	MICHAL
#10	DAVID'S SOLILOQUY (reprise)	DAVID
#11	NOW IS THE DAY (reprise)	CHORUS
#12	DAVID'S LAMENT	DAVID
#13	A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE! (reprise)	CHORUS
#14	MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS	SAUL & CHORUS
#15	THOU SHALT	SOLOIST & CHORUS
#16A	I MADE YOU MINE	DAVID
#16B	THEY ENVY ME	BATHSHEBA
#17	SHALL DIE	CHORUS
#18	THEY ENVY ME (reprise)	BATHSHEBA:
#19	A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE! (reprise)	CHORUS
#20	HE MOURNS	CHORUS
#21	O PRINCE OF ISRAEL	CHORUS

ACT TWO

#22	NOW IS THE DAY (reprise)	CHORUS:
#23	DAVID LIVES (reprise)	DAVID
#24	ABSALOM! ABSALOM!	SOLOIST & CHORUS
#25	HOW CONSTANT, MY JUSTICE	DAVID
#26	THEY ENVY ME (reprise)	BATHSHEBA
#27	LONG LIVE KING SOLOMON	CHORUS
#28	SALVATION & HOW CONSTANT, MY JUSTICE (reprise)	DAVID & SOLOMON
#29	A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE! (reprise)	CHORUS:
#30	FINALE	ENTIRE COMPANY

“The Anointed” is a very presentational account of the events from the Bible. The Chorus and Soloist are used much as the Greek chorus were used, to comment on the action, to set up situations and make the characters confront their individual crises. It will need a large cast of singer-actors. Dance is only an element for those members of the ensemble not given lines or placed in the Chorus.

THE ANOINTED (SYNOPSIS)

- I-1: Saul, who views David as a dangerous, opportunistic rival, has sent him on a military assignment from which he is not expected to return alive. Saul advises Michal, David's betrothed, to consider other suitors instead. Saul's son Jonathan then arrives and announces that David has nevertheless returned from his assignment, alive and victorious. Michal rejoices, while Saul considers further vengeance. (pp. 1-10)
- I-2: David, now king, spurns his wife Michal, because of her father's subsequent attempts to undermine him. With Joab, his commander-in-chief, David recounts his many altercations with Saul, which culminated in the latter's defeat and demise. David nonetheless summarily condemns Rechab and Baanah, the assassins of one of Saul's heirs, as he has all who have in any way opposed "the Lord's Anointed." Michal taunts him for sparing Joab, however, who unrighteously slew Ahab, Saul's commander-in-chief. David then forces Joab to recall the terrible oath which David had consequently required of him--which satisfies Michal. However, she next raises his affair with Bathsheba. To assert his fair-mindedness and prevent Michal's - bringing charges against them, David thereupon promises to renounce Bathsheba and renew his affection for Michal, should Bathsheba's husband Uriah return alive from battle. In Michal's absence David then plots with Joab to assure Uriah's death.(pp. 11-32)
- I-3: With a parable the prophet Nathan denounces David's crime and predicts the death of his and Bathsheba's child. (pp. 33-35)
- I-4: David mourns his child's fate, but ceases doing so when the child's death becomes known. (pp. 36-37)
- II-1: Years later Joab prevails on David to forgive his own rebellious son Absalom. (pp. 38-43)
- II-2: As David leaves Absalom to govern, the latter plots against him.(pp. 44-46)
- II-3: David and his court flee as Absalom's forces descend upon Jerusalem.(pp. 47--48) II-4: David and his court, fleeing in the wilderness, are taunted by a member of Saul's household. David does not retaliate, however, conscious of his unrighteousness. In his despair, he becomes increasingly dependent upon Joab's counsel. (pp. 49-51)
- II-5: Absalom accepts counsel from the double agent, Hushai, which gives David time to consolidate his forces before clashing with his son.(pp. 52-53)
- II-6: David's forces conquer Absalom's, while, unbeknown to David, Joab plots Absalom's death.(pp. 54-55)
- II-7: David is stricken with grief by the news of Absalom's death.(pp. 56-57)
- II-8: Joab orders David to cease mourning and recognize those who have loyally supported him. Joab then murders Amasa, whom David, suspecting Joab's hand in Absalom's death, had appointed in his place.(pp. 58-59)
- II-9: Bathsheba prevails upon David, now an effete old man, to appoint her son Solomon his successor.(pp. 60-61)
- II-10: David requires that Solomon take vengeance upon those who have in various ways betrayed him in the past, among them Joab. Solomon thereupon orders the deaths of both his rival half-brother Adonijah and Joab. Dissatisfied, however, with his father's vengeance and the capriciousness of human justice, Solomon pleads with the Lord for superhuman wisdom. He also asks for permission to build the temple which the Israelites have long anticipated. Because of his righteousness he is also granted this privilege. He then goes to deliberate the case of the two rival mothers who had both claimed the same son. As he does so, the chorus--which has all along commented on the action, mostly taking the part of the Israelite nation--rejoices and shouts praises to the Lord for granting them a temple in which they might come to Him.(pp. 62-69)

THE ANOINTED
ACT I

Scene 1

#1 PROLOGUE

Segue to

#2 NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY

CHORUS:

NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY. ISRAEL PROSPERS! ISRAEL HAS A KING!
NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY.
NO MORE DESTRUCTION, NO MORE CAPTIVITY!
NO MORE WANDERING, NO MORE DESERTS, NO MORE RED SEAS TO CROSS.
NO MORE CHASTISEMENT AND MUCH LESS PREACHING. ISRAEL HAS A KING, A KING!
EGYPTIAN, PHOENICIAN AND PHILISTINE, ASSYRIAN, HITTITE, AMALAKITE --
NO-ONE IS OUR BETTER!
ISRAEL HAS A KING!
THAT KING IS SAUL ANOINTED BY A PROPHET, AND HE WILL LEAD US.
ISRAEL HAS A KING!
AND THAT KING WILL LEAD US TO WEALTH AND CONQUEST THROUGHOUT THIS CHOSEN
OF LANDS NOW, ISRAEL HAS A KING!
FOR SAUL IS MIGHTY!
BUT SAUL IS ALSO WARY.
SAUL WILL OUTMANEUVER, SAUL WILL BE VICTORIOUS. MAKE ISRAEL MORE GLORIOUS,
FOR ISRAEL HAS A KING!
NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S FAME AND PROMINENCE. ISRAEL HAS A KING!
NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY! ISRAEL PROSPERS! ISRAEL HAS A KING!
ISRAEL HAS A KING!
ISRAEL HAS A KING!

SERVANT: Oh, king.

SAUL: Speak.

SERVANT: Your daughter awaits, as you did command.

SAUL: Admit the widow.

SERVANT: Widow?

SAUL: That she would be, had she already married our glorious commander. Admit her.

SERVANT: At once.

(The servant leaves. Michal enters.)

MICHAL: Father?

SAUL: Sit.

(She does so.)

SAUL: I wish to speak to you of your future.

MICHAL: And David's?

SAUL: (*laughing*) No, and not David's. I wish you no early grave.

MICHAL: Father?

SAUL: Your future will be carefree.

MICHAL: But David?

SAUL: Without David.

MICHAL: David is dead. Father!

SAUL: He will not survive this campaign. He was outnumbered ten to one, I saw to that. Ten Philistines to one Israelite, and he knew it. But he still took the bait, the boaster. Still vowed to lead the charge.

MICHAL: Bait?

SAUL: Your hand, of course. Why else would I betroth you?

MICHAL: Sire. Am I only a plaything?!

SAUL: I could not tell you sooner. You'd have lacked heart and failed to entice him.

MICHAL: But why do you hate David? He was always loyal and has served you well. Have you forgotten which Bethlehemite slew Goliath?

SAUL: I remember all too well.

MICHAL: And his many victories against the Philistines?

SAUL: Indeed! "Saul has slain his thousands," they sang.

#3 SAUL WAS--DAVID IS

CHORUS:

SAUL HAS SLAIN HIS THOUSANDS--HIS THOUSANDS.

BUT, DAVID, HIS TENS OF THOUSANDS!

SAUL:

PHILISTINES THREATENED

CHORUS:

SAUL WAS FEARFUL.

SAUL:

DAVID CAME

CHORUS:

LION-SLAYER.

SAUL:

DAVID FOUGHT--

CHORUS:

SO YOUNG AND COMELY,

INNOCENT, FILLED WITH CONFIDENCE, FILLED WITH STRENGTH--

MICHAL:

STRONG AND COURAGEOUS--

ALL:

AND BROUGHT GOLIATH DOWN.

SAUL:

SAUL IS MIGHTY--

CHORUS:

DAVID IS MIGHTIER

SAUL:

SAUL IS SHREWD--

CHORUS:

DAVID IS SHREWDER.

SAUL:

SAUL IS JUST--

CHORUS:

DAVID IS MORE JUST.

SAUL:

SAUL IS KIND--

MICHAL:

DAVID IS KINDER.

SAUL:

SAUL IS GOOD--

CHORUS:

DAVID IS BETTER.

LET DAVID BE OUR KING.

FOR SAUL HAS SLAIN HIS THOUSANDS--HIS THOUSANDS

BUT DAVID HIS TENS OF THOUSANDS.

MICHAL: He slew them for you. He did not wish to be your rival.

SAUL: Are you so sure? Is it not rumored that as a child he was anointed to succeed me?

MICHAL: He never said so himself.

SAUL: He was too clever for that, just as he at first pretended not to desire you as his wife. Don't I, once a lowly Benjamite, understand his kind of cunning--and the people's childish ways? They rejected old Samuel.

MICHAL: The prophet?

SAUL: They wanted no more Abrahams or Moseses. They sought praise, not condemnation. They sought to be like our enemies, with a king to lead them to war and fight their battles.

MICHAL: So Samuel's sons could not succeed him?

SAUL: (*laughing*) Samuel still had the last word. He chose the lowliest Israelite from the smallest and poorest of all twelve tribes.

MICHAL: Samuel or the Lord?

SAUL: Who can say? Besides, did I not seek out Samuel myself.

MICHAL: Did you know then that the Lord had told his prophet to anoint the first Benjamite who would come to him?

(In a tableau on another part of the stage, the silhouette of an old man, portraying Samuel, takes a flask and anoints the silhouetted head of a younger man, then blesses him, as follows, to soft music.)

SAMUEL: The Lord anoints you prince over His people Israel. Thou shalt rule the people of the Lord and deliver them from the enemies round about them. Thou shalt have a sign that the Lord has anointed you prince to govern his inheritance: when you leavest me today, thou wilt meet two men by the tomb of Rachel at Zelzah in the territory of Benjamin. They will tell thee that the asses thou has sought have been found and that thy father is concerned for them no longer. From there go across country as far as Tabor, where three men going up to Bethel will meet thee. One of them will be carrying three kids, the second three loaves, and the third a flagon of wine. they will greet thee and offer thee two loaves. Then when thou reachest the Hill of

God, where the Philistine governor resides, thou wilt meet a company of prophets coming down from the hill-shrine, led by lute, harp, fife and drum, and filled with prophetic rapture. Then the spirit of the Lord will suddenly take possession of thee, and thou too wilt be rapt like a prophet and become another man. When these signs happen, God will be with thee. Thou shalt go down to Gilgal ahead of me. Wait seven days until I join thee; then I will tell thee what to do.

(The tableau fades.)

MICHAL: And did it all happen--as he had predicted?

SAUL: All? Yes, all.

MICHAL: Then it was surely of the Lord, not Samuel...

SAUL: It would seem so, wouldn't it? It was long ago. But I must have had an intimation. Else why would I have gone so out of my way?

MICHAL: Perhaps the Lord led you. They say that Israel's first young king was mighty in battle because the Lord was with him.

SAUL: They say... yes, they say. But if the Lord was with me, why did he never tell me to build a temple?

MICHAL: A temple?

#4 A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE!

SAUL:

A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE!

CHORUS:

WHERE IS THE HOUSE WITH WALLS AND FOOTINGS,
WITH PILLARS AND BEAMS AND A ROOF AND A GATE

SAUL:

TO HOUSE THE ARC OF THE COVENANT OF MY LORD?

CHORUS:

THAT HE MIGHT COME TO US, COME TO US, COME TO US.
THAT HE MIGHT COME TO US, COME TO US, COME TO US.

SAUL:

THE PROPHETS FORETOLD IT

CHORUS:

BUT WE DO NOT SEE IT!
NOW GIVE US A TEMPLE AND COME TO US.
NOW GIVE US A TEMPLE AND COME TO US.

MICHAL: But if the Lord was really not with you, what is said of David may yet be.

SAUL: Exactly. If he was not anointed, how did he alone of all Israel, a young unhardened warrior fresh from Bethlehem, dare defy Goliath? His first day in camp and he, embarrassing his brothers, called out, more than once:

#5 WHAT WILL BE DONE?

SAUL:

WHAT WILL BE DONE?

WHAT WILL BE DONE?

YOUNG DAVID:

FOR THE MAN WHO FIGHTS THE PHILISTINE AND WIPES OUT OUR DISGRACE
FOR THE MAN WHO SLAYS GOLIATH
AND FREES US FROM THIS MENACE?

SAUL:

THAT MAN WILL BE REWARDED!
THAT MAN WILL BE REWARDED!

CHORUS:

FOR WHO IS THIS, THIS HEATHEN TO DEFY THE ARMY OF THE LIVING GOD?
BUT CAN HE DO IT? CAN HE DO IT?
AN UNPROVED WARRIOR, A LOWLY JUDEAN.
A PITIFUL SHEPHERD?
WILL ISRAEL BE ROBBED AND CAPTURED?
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
GOLIATH IS DEAD!

SOLOIST:

WHAT WILL BE DONE? WHAT WILL BE DONE?
FOR THE MAN WHO FOUGHT THIS PHILISTINE AND WIPED OUT OUR DISGRACE?
FOR THE MAN WHO SLEW GOLIATH
AND FREED US FROM THIS MENACE?

SAUL:

THAT MAN WILL BE REWARDED! THAT MAN WILL BE REWARDED!

CHORUS:

HE HAD BETTER BE!!!

SAUL: It's already legend. Proverbial. Israel's mothers put their children to bed with the telling of it. Perhaps you are right though. Perhaps he didn't mean to be my rival. But he might have become such, even against his will. Had he lived on, the people would have preferred him. And he'd have had no choice but to depose me.

MICHAL: Do you fear David?

SAUL: I have feared not David but his reputation, and with each passing victory I have had more reason. But I fear no longer. He will not return.

MICHAL: Though God may favor him?

SAUL: Not this time. And as for you--we must discuss new suitors.

MICHAL: *(to herself)* Oh father! What you don't put me through: First you command me to slink and sway before a ruddy shepherd boy--His knees and elbows scabbed and scuffed -- his garments coarse and worn--a boy with matted hair and tongue as thick with graceless speech. You make me smile at him and fold him in my arms. And when he's scrubbed and combed and learns the proper phrases, His natural strength and candor overcomes me. Father! What you don't put me through"

#6 MINE

MICHAL:

IS HE NO MORE TO HAVE HIS WAY WITH ME?

HIS GLANCE TO WOUND ME?
HIS WORDS TO DIZZY ME?
HIS LIPS CARESS ME?
HIS HANDS SMOTHER ME?
HIS STRENGTH AND GLORY FILL ME WITH PRIDE AND ECSTASY.
THAT IN ALL ISRAEL THE WARRIOR DAVID IS,
MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE'S, MINE, MINE, MINE, MINE --
MINE.

Please father, let us at least wait until the messengers return from battle that my mourning may not lack heart,
for I did love him. And perchance... perchance--

SAUL: Chance will not help you, I have seen to that, and even if it should he will never meet the condition of
your marriage.

MICHAL: The foreskins?

SAUL: He will never harvest ten or twenty let alone the hundred he agreed to. Sooner would the Philistine
claim his, though his is long absent.

MICHAL: (*fingering a wall-hung lyre*) Will his song never more content you?

(*On another part of the stage David, in silhouette, strums a lyre and sings the following.*)

#7 DAVID'S SONG

DAVID:

AS THE MOUNTAINS ARE ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM,
SO THE LORD IS ROUND ABOUT HIS PEOPLE
FROM HENCEFORTH AND FOREVER MORE.
BLESSED BE THE LORD MY STRENGTH, MY STRENGTH
HE TEACHES MY HANDS TO WAR AND TRAINS MY FINGERS TO FIGHT.
MY FORTRESS, MY SHIELD,
BOW THY HEAVENS, O LORD. CAST FORTH LIGHTNING.
TOUCH THE MOUNTAINS. O, LORD
DELIVER US FROM THE HURTFUL SWORD
THAT OUR GARNERS MAY BE FULL,
THAT OUR SHEEP MAY BRING FORTH THOUSANDS,
THAT OUR OXEN MAY STRONGLY LABOR,
AND I WILL SING UNTO THEE A NEW SONG
UPON AN INSTRUMENT OF TEN STRINGS
AND PRAISE THEE FOREVER, AND PRAISE THEE FOREVER.
WHO GIVES SALVATION UNTO KINGS.

SAUL: No song will ever content me as did his, but all the same I will rest easier.

(*The servant enters.*)

SERVANT: Majesty, your son.

SAUL: Jonathan returned? Admit him.

(*Jonathan enters as the servant withdraws.*)

JONATHAN: (*breathlessly*) Sire!!

SAUL: What impetuosity!

JONATHAN: Sire, great tidings!

SAUL: I dread your tidings.

JONATHAN: Another victory for David!

SAUL: Another victory for Israel! Was his corpse claimed?

#8 DAVID LIVES MY SIRE

JONATHAN:

DAVID LIVES, MY SIRE! AND I LIVE TOO!

A LITTLE LONGER AND THAT MUCH STRONGER BECAUSE HE DOES.

THE CHILD, NOW MAN, WHO CAME TO US.

HE CAME TO US TO EASE MY FATHER'S SLEEPLESS NIGHTS;

HE OPENED UP MY EYES, TAUGHT ME LOVE,

HE WAS MORE THAN KIN TO ME,

MORE THAN A BROTHER COULD BE.

THOSE LONG, LONG DAYS OF YOUTHFUL WAKENING

WHEN WE RAN TOGETHER OR SWAM THE RIVER

OR PLAYED ON IT'S BANKS.

AT WAR WITH STICKS AND STONES--

THE TREES AND BUSHES WERE OUR ENEMIES.

WHEN HE TAUGHT ME TO USE THE SLING

HE COULD HIT MOST ANYTHING LIKE LIONS AND GOLIATH!

WE WOULD CLIMB UP THE PARAPET AND TALK FROM DUSK TILL DAWN

WE'D SING OF GOD AND LIFE AND THE STARS--

I TOLD HIM WHAT IT MEANT FOR ME TO BE HIS FRIEND,

THAT THERE NEVER WAS A PURER, DEEPER LOVE THAN OURS,

THAN THE LOVE BETWEEN DAVID AND I!

AND NOW I LIVE TOO!

A LITTLE LONGER AND THAT MUCH STRONGER BECAUSE HE DOES.

THE CHILD NOW MAN WHO CAME TO US.

HE CAME TO US TO EASE MY FATHER'S SLEEPLESS NIGHTS.

HE OPENED UP MY EYES, TAUGHT ME LOVE.

HE WAS MORE THAN KIND TO ME; MORE THAN A BROTHER COULD BE.

DAVID LIVES MY SIRE.

(Spoken) David lives, my sire!

SAUL: *(Pause)* I somehow knew these would be your tidings.

MICHAL: My suitor lives!!

SAUL: So he does, though no more your suitor.

JONATHAN: He has met the contract of marriage.

SAUL: His life is truly charmed. But that is unimportant. I demanded a hundred... How many...

JONATHAN: He has two hundred.

(Action freezes--except for Michal.)

MICHAL: God delights in David!

#9 MINE (REPRISE)

MICHAL:

HE WILL AGAIN HAVE HIS WAY WITH ME:
HIS GLANCE WILL WOUND ME,
HIS WORDS WILL DIZZY ME,
HIS LIPS CARESS ME.
HIS HANDS SMOTHER ME.
HIS STRENGTH AND GLORY SWELL ME WITH PRIDE AND ECSTASY.
THAT IN ALL ISRAEL, THE WARRIOR DAVID IS,
MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE'S,
MINE, MINE, MINE, MINE, MINE.

And he shall yet sing you to sleep.

(The tableau, with David and the lyre in silhouette, reappears.)

#10 DAVID'S SONG (reprise)

DAVID:

AND I WILL SING UNTO THEE A NEW SONG
UPON AN INSTRUMENT OF TEN STRINGS
AND PRAISE THEE FOREVER, AND PRAISE THEE FOREVER,
WHO GIVES SALVATION UNTO KINGS.

SAUL: So he shall. But not to pleasant dreams. And for how long?

(He tosses a spear at the wall between the strings of the lyre.)

Well, we shall see.

#11 NOW IS THE DAY (reprise #1)

CHORUS:

NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY.
ISRAEL PROSPERS.
ISRAEL HAS A KING!
THAT KING IS SAUL, ANOINTED BY A PROPHET.
AND HE WILL LEAD US!
ISRAEL HAS A KING AND THAT KING WILL
LEAD US TO WEALTH AND CONQUEST THROUGHOUT THIS CHOSEN OF LANDS
NOW, ISRAEL HAS A KING!

(Music continues shortly, then segue to)

Scene 2 -- *The stage is dark, with only the chorus at first visible. As it sings lights slowly rise, revealing the same chambers. It is several years later. David now sits where Saul did earlier.*

CHORUS:

NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S GLORY.
ISRAEL PROSPERS. ISRAEL HAS A KING!
THAT KING IS DAVID, ANOINTED BY A PROPHET.
AND HE WILL LEAD US. ISRAEL HAS A KING!
FOR DAVID IS MIGHTY, COURAGEOUS AND ALSO JUST.
DAVID WILL LEAD US AND MAKE US VICTORIOUS,
MAKE ISRAEL STILL MORE GLORIOUS, FOR ISRAEL HAS A KING!
NOW IS THE DAY OF ISRAEL'S FAME AND PROMINENCE.
ISRAEL HAS A KING!
ISRAEL HAS A KING!
ISRAEL HAS A KING!

(David composes a lament, accompanying himself with the lyre seen earlier.)

#12 DAVID'S LAMENT

DAVID:

O, PRINCE OF ISRAEL, LAID LOW IN DEATH!
HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN?
O, PRINCE OF ISRAEL, TELL IT NOT IN GATH,
PROCLAIM IT NOT IN THE STREETS OF ASHKELON!
LEST THE PHILISTINE WOMEN REJOICE,
LEST THEIR DAUGHTERS EXULT.
HILLS OF GILBOA, LET NO DEW OR RAIN FALL ON YOU.
FOR THERE SAUL'S SHIELD LIES TARNISHED
WITH JONATHAN'S BOW, JONATHAN! OH.
SWIFTER THAN THE EAGLES,
STRONGER THAN THE LIONS,
DEARLY LOVED WERE SAUL AND JONATHAN.
WEEP FOR SAUL, O ISRAEL,
WEEP FOR SAUL AND SON, SON JONATHAN!
O, PRINCE OF ISRAEL,
LAID LOW IN DEATH.
I GRIEVE FOR THEE, MY BROTHER.
DEARLY LOVED COMPANION, BROTHER, TRUSTED FRIEND!
MORE DEAR THAN ANY OTHER!

(The same servant enters, slightly aged.)

SERVANT: Oh, king.

DAVID: Speak.

SERVANT: Michal, would come before you.

DAVID: Michal, eh...? Admit her.

(The servant leaves. Michal enters.)

MICHAL: Majesty, your wife attends you.

DAVID: So the pawn still glitters.

MICHAL: Yours to command.

DAVID: But with none to retrieve it, for all its comeliness.

MICHAL: I have only one master now.

DAVID: And I don't want it. So let it glitter.

MICHAL: Use me as you will.

DAVID: Are you not a little reluctant to offer me your favors, now that I have sons already--all born at Hebron while I fought your father? They would all outrank your sons. You would have to plot against them all before yours could be my heir.

MICHAL: I'll be your concubine. You were patient, most patient with my father and loving, most loving with my brother.

DAVID: There could be no one like Jonathan.

IF SHARING ONE'S PROVISIONS,

IF LOSING SLEEP TO WATCH OVER ONE,

IF TAKING ONE'S PART,

IF RISKING LIFE FOR ONE

IS SOMETIMES TRUE OF BROTHERS--

Then we were more, far more than brothers.

(moaning loudly)

O Jonathan! O Jonathan! Why did you have to die? This should have been your kingdom. I would have gladly passed this crown to you.

MICHAL: You were anointed, not Jonathan.

DAVID: That makes no difference.

MICHAL: Then it makes no difference that I am Saul's daughter.

DAVID: All the difference!

MICHAL: You did ever honor him.

DAVID: I honored not him, but the Lord's anointed. Oh, how many times I spared his life when he would have murdered me. Did he not nearly pin me to this very wall as I sat at this same lyre, soothing his sullen soul?

MICHAL: Did I not warn you that same night to flee for your life? Did I not help you through a window and lead you to an unguarded gate?

CHORUS: Did she not later instruct Jonathan to warn you with arrows, as you hid nearby during the hunt?

(Joab enters, unnoticed.)

DAVID: Did I not spare him as he slept, after seeking my life in the wilderness of En-gedi, but only smote a piece off his cloak because he was the Lord's anointed? And when he woke, did I not then address him--

"Look, my dear lord, look at this piece of your cloak in my hand. I cut it off, but I did not kill you. This will show that I have no thought of violence or treachery against you, and that I have done you no wrong. Yet you are resolved to take my life. May the Lord judge between us! But though he may take vengeance upon

you for my sake I will never lift my hand against you. Who has the king of Israel come out against? What are you pursuing? A dead dog, a mere flea? The Lord will be judge and decide between us; let him look into my cause, he will plead for me and will acquit me."

And how did he then respond?

JOAB: "The right is on your side, not mine. You have treated me so well, I have treated you so badly. Your goodness to me has passed all bounds: the Lord put me at your mercy but you did not kill me. Not often does a man find his enemy and let him go safely on his way; so may the Lord reward you well for what you have done for me today. I know now for certain that you--that will become king, and that the kingdom of Israel will flourish under your rule. Swear to me by the Lord then that you will not exterminate my descendants and blot out my name from my father's house!"

DAVID: I swore such an oath. But again, once more in the wilderness of Ziph--

CHORUS: Another evil spirit came upon Saul.

DAVID: He took three thousand picked men in search of me. Again we entered his camp by night while all were sleeping. Was I not then urged to slay him? Eh, Joab? But did I not instead reply: "Do him no harm! Who has ever lifted a finger against the Lord's anointed and gone unpunished? God forbid that I should lift a finger against the Lord's anointed! But now let us take the spear which is by his head, and the water-jar, and go then, crossing to the other side, did I not taunt his guard: "This was not well done. As the Lord lives, you deserve to die, all of you, because you have not kept watch over your master, the Lord's anointed. Look! Where are the king's spear and the water-jar that were by his head?" By then he had wakened and recognized my voice.

JOAB: "Is that you, David my son?"

DAVID: "Why must you pursue me? What have I done? What mischief am I plotting? Listen, majesty, to what I have to say. If it is the Lord who has set you against me, may an offering be acceptable to him; but if it is men, a curse on them in the Lord's name, for they have ousted me today from my share in the Lord's inheritance and have banished me to serve other gods! Do not let my blood be shed on foreign soil, far from the presence of the Lord, just because the king of Israel came out to look for a flea as one might hunt a partridge over the hills."

JOAB: "I have done wrong. Come back, David my son! You have held my life precious this day and I will never harm you again. I have been a fool, I have been sadly in the wrong."

DAVID: "Here is thy spear. As I held your life precious today, so may the Lord hold mine precious and deliver me from every distress."

JOAB: "A blessing is on you, David my son. You will do great things and be victorious. You might even build the Lord's temple."

#13 A TEMPLE A TEMPLE!(Reprise #1)

CHORUS:

A TEMPLE! A TEMPLE!

WHERE IS THE HOUSE WITH WALLS AND FOOTINGS,
WITH PILLARS AND BEAMS, WITH A ROOF AND A GATE
TO HOUSE THE ARC OF THE COVENANT OF MY LORD?
TO HOUSE THE ARC OF THE COVENANT OF MY LORD?

DAVID: But I knew better. I knew that one day he would kill me. And so I and you, cousin Joab, and our six

hundred went for a season among the Philistines.

JOAB: Only so that he would cease pursuing us.

MICHAL: You raided your own people, leaving no one alive, man or woman.

JOAB: Any survivor could have denounced us, blackened David's name in Israel. They'd never have made him king.

MICHAL: But you could kill them. They weren't the Lord's anointed!

DAVID: Be still! And be grateful that I have always honored that mantle and my oath to your father, or you would not now be alive, though once my wife.

MICHAL: Why so? Did you not gladly care for Mephibosheth, Jonathan's crippled son, seat him at your table with your very own, and return to him all my father's possessions?

DAVID: Yes, gladly. For Jonathan's sake, not Saul's or yours. You I have spared because of my oath alone. But that, unlike your father's, you can be sure of.

MICHAL: Why did you ever claim me back? I was already given to another.

DAVID: Because you were due me. I won you with two hundred Philistine foreskins, and my men paid for them dearly.

MICHAL: There were other, more practical reasons, but I thought, I kept hoping that your seeing me would revive your old affection. I was wrong. You do loathe me especially. More than Saul himself. But why?

JOAB: Majesty, the Hittite you have sent for waits without.

DAVID: The warrior Uriah?

MICHAL: The Hittite? At last I think I understand!

#14 MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS

CHORUS:

MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS

BREATH OF THE EAST.

WOMAN OF A STRANGERS' WAYS

FLOWER OR BEAST?

YOU CAME FROM WE KNOW NOT WHERE

SHROUDED IN LONG DARK HAIR.

ARRESTING YOUR FEATURES, ENCHANTING YOUR SMILE,

YOUR WALK, YOUR STANCE, YOUR GESTURES BEGUILE.

MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS--

BREATH OF THE EAST.

WOMAN OF A STRANGERS' WAYS

FLOWER OR BEAST?

SAUL'S SOLDIERS FOUGHT OVER YOU,

GUARDSMEN AND CAPTAINS, TOO.

SO WHY DID YOU SETTLE FOR A MAN OF PLAIN WORDS,

WHO CAME, LIKE DAVID, FROM FIELDS AND HERDS?

MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS--

BREATH OF THE EAST.

WOMAN OF A STRANGERS WAYS

FLOWER OR BEAST?

JOAB: But first special messengers with an unusual gift, the sons of Rimmon of Beeroth, Rachab and Baanah.

DAVID: Admit them.

(Joab exits.)

MICHAL: This Hittite--is his the handsome young wife we often see leaving by the royal gate at mid morning?

DAVID: She is, like you, one of my subjects.

MICHAL: But not Uriah's?

DAVID: I am generous. Uriah, too, can learn to share!

MICHAL: Of course. He is not the Lord's anointed either.

DAVID: No, he is a warrior, and a Hittite.

MICHAL: You are, like your oaths, at least reliable. One knows what to expect if he is not, like you, the anointed one.

DAVID: That is so. I do not deceive with pretensions of love and gratitude, like some who would slay me in an unguarded moment.

(Joab enters with two young men bearing a sack.)

JOAB: Majesty. Rechab and Baanah, two of your bravest and now most loyal warriors, have come, they say, with a most glad message.

DAVID: At whose investigation?

JOAB: ...ah. Let them first tell their tale and show their wares. We shall then see how it pleases you.

DAVID: *(to the young men)* Speak then.

RECHAB: The Lord has this day avenged his majesty on Saul and his family.

MICHAL: What? Have we not suffered enough already? Have you not humiliated me sufficiently? How much vengeance do you require? Or is David's oath as capricious after all as everyone else's?

DAVID: Silence!

(to the young men)

In what manner has the Lord this day avenged the Lord's anointed? Be not afraid. I am most interested....

BAANAH: Here is the head, Sire, of Ishbosheth.

(Michal gasps, audibly.)

Saul's son.

RECHAB: Your enemy, who sought your life.

(Baanah reaches into the sack.)

MICHAL: *(screaming)* No!

DAVID: Halt!...I believe you. No need to frighten this woman, who was also kin to Ishbosheth, his very sister.

MICHAL: *(ironically)* My lord is too kind.

DAVID: But tell us, my brave men, my sons, how came Ishbosheth to this end? And are you not yourselves Benjamites?

JOAB: They were once Ishbosheth's captains, in his father's action against you.

BAANAH: But have long since and most thoroughly repented, sire.

DAVID: Speak on. How came your master to this inglorious end?

RECHAB: We came to the tent of Ishbosheth in the heat of the day and went in.

BAANAH: During his midday rest.

DAVID: And you found him then, already...?

BAANAH: Oh, no! We managed to get there before anyone else.

DAVID: Did you? You were indeed fortunate.

BAANAH: Indeed, sire. We do not wish to boast, but no one else deserves the...

DAVID: Reward?

BAANAH: Why, yes.

RECHAB: That is, as you see fit to reward us, sire. We do not presume...

DAVID: Oh, rewarded you shall be, my sons, do not fear.

MICHAL: I thought so!

DAVID: But pray, speak on. I am anxious to hear you out. You went into the tent of Ishbosheth in the heat of the day, and then?

RECHAB: The door-keeper had been sifting wheat, but she had grown drowsy and fallen asleep.

DAVID: So?

RECHAB: So, we crept in, found our way to where he slept, and...

BAANAH: Struck off his head, sire.

MICHAL: Traitors!

RECHAB: And brought it with us.

MICHAL: Demons!

DAVID: Yes.... And now your reward, my sons.

RECHAB: As you see to bestow, sire.

BAANAH: We quake to please you, sire.

DAVID: I do not doubt it.

RECHAB: We thank you for your confidence.

BAANAH: We thank you.

MICHAL: Vipers!

DAVID: But as the Lord lives, who has rescued me from all my troubles! I seized the man who brought me word that Saul was dead and thought it good news. You may have forgotten that man, or did not know about him.

RECHAB: No, sire.

DAVID: But Michal remembers, don't you, Michal? And Joab?

JOAB: I recall it, sire.

DAVID: It was the third day after Saul's death. A warrior came into our presence, with his clothes rent and dust on his head. He fell to the ground in obeisance, then spoke. What spoke he, Michal? You were there.

MICHAL: "I have escaped from the army of Israel."

DAVID: "What news? Tell me."

MICHAL: "The army has been driven from the field, and many have fallen in battle. Saul and Jonathan his son are dead."

DAVID: "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?"

MICHAL: "It so happened that I was on Mount Gilboa and saw Saul leaning on his spear with the chariots and horsemen closing in upon him. He turned round and, seeing me, called to me. I said, 'What is it, majesty?' He asked who I was, and I said, 'An Amalekite.' Then he said to me, 'Come and stand over me and dispatch me. I still live, but the throes of death have seized me. So I stood over him and gave him the death-blow; for I knew that, broken as he was, he could not live. Then I took the crown from his head and the armlet from his arm, and I have brought them here to you, sire.'"

DAVID: (*seizing Michal*) "How is it that you were not afraid to raise your hand to slay the Lord's anointed?"

CHORUS: (*intoning*) "To slay the Lord's anointed?"

DAVID: "Your blood be on your own head!"

CHORUS: "On your own head!"

DAVID: "For out of your own mouth you condemned yourself."

CHORUS: "You condemned yourself."

DAVID: "When you said, 'I killed the Lord's anointed'".

SOLOIST: "'I killed the Lord's anointed'".

DAVID: (*gesturing violently, throwing Michal to the ground*) I seized that man and struck him down, and that was how I rewarded him for his news.

MICHAL: (*in her own voice*) A fitting reward for such deceit.

JOAB: Deceit?

MICHAL: Saul was no coward. Allow us that much consolation. He fell on his sword when all was lost, fell hard and did the job himself. Of that I am certain.

DAVID: How then ought I to reward ruffians who have killed an innocent man on his own bed in his own house? Am I not to take vengeance on you now for the blood you have shed, and rid the earth of you?!

RECHAB: Sire!

BAANAH: Mercy, sire!

DAVID: Guard!

(*Guards enter.*)

Take the head of Ishbosheth and give it burial in Abner's tomb at Hebron.

(*They take the sack.*)

And these--after you have slain them--cut off their heads and feet and hang them up beside the pool that lies before that same tomb.

(*The guards carry off Rechab and Baanah.*)

Am I still reliable?

MICHAL: I am satisfied, majesty. And it also amuses me that, by your kind decree, my brother and Abner must rest eternally together.

JOAB: Sire, the Hittite!

DAVID: Let the Hittite wait. Let him enjoy his rest, while rest he may.

(*to Michal*)

In whose instance?

MICHAL: In that same Abner's.

DAVID: In Joab's, you mean.

MICHAL: It is commonly known that, toward the end of my father's reign, his commander-in-chief, Abner son of Ner, was accused by my brother Ishbosheth of lying with Saul's concubine Rizpah, which caused Abner to join league with you, majesty, and that to prove his good intent you did require him first to demand that Ishbosheth tear me from my recent husband, the son of Laish, and bring me with him. Abner could never then be reconciled to my father or brother, and for this I was the pawn. My husband followed us as far as Bahurin, weeping the whole day, until Abner ordered him to go back home, and he went. Abner now approached the elders of Israel and said, "For some time past you have wanted David for your king. Now is the time to act, for this is the word of the Lord about David: "By the hand of my servant David I will deliver my people Israel from the Philistines and from all their enemies!"

DAVID: Yes, Abner did well. It could almost be said that I owe my kingship to Saul's concubine Rizpah. I was grateful. I feasted him.

JOAB: Sire, the Hittite.

DAVID: Leave the Hittite!

MICHAL: It is also known that, when David's men and Joab here returned from a raid and learned that Abner son of Ner had been with the king and had departed under safe conduct, Joab sent messengers after Abner, and they brought Abner to him.

DAVID: I knew nothing of this.

MICHAL: And there in the gateway, they say...

JOAB: Yes, in the gateway, in revenge for my brother Asahel!

MICHAL: Who in battle, in pursuit of Abner, had refused to turn aside: "Turn aside to right or left," Abner had called to him. "Tackle one of the young men and win his belt for yourself. Why should I kill you? How could I look Joab your brother in the face?" Abner, who only then--

JOAB: Struck him.

MICHAL: In the belly.

JOAB: No, with a back-thrust.

MICHAL: So that the spear came out behind him.

JOAB: So he fell dead in his tracks. For that I drew him aside in the gateway--

MICHAL: As though to speak privately with him, and there--

JOAB: In revenge for my brother Asahel--

MICHAL: Stabbed Abner, quite unsuspecting, in his belly, and he died.

JOAB: Died.

CHORUS: (*intoning*) Died.

MICHAL: And so will this be David's first exception?

JOAB: Sire, you did assure me.

DAVID: Do not fear, cousin. This temptress cannot change what I have sworn to you.

MICHAL: Then David is no longer constant, no longer just.

DAVID: Joab is too useful; therefore I did spare him. With him, it is true, I have failed to avenge blood with blood, but not without a curse. What is my oath and curse upon you, Joab?

JOAB: Sire, I remember it well: "David and his realm are forever innocent in the sight of the Lord of the blood of Abner son of Ner..."

CHORUS: (*intoning*) "Forever innocent."

DAVID: And the rest--out with it!

JOAB: "May it..."

DAVID: May it recoil...

JOAB: "May it recoil upon the head of Joab and all his family!"

CHORUS: "Upon the head of Joab and all his family!"

JOAB: "May the house of Joab..."

DAVID: "Never be free..."

JOAB: "Never be free from running sore or foul disease."

CHORUS: "From running sore or foul disease..."

DAVID: "Nor lack a son..."

JOAB: "Nor lack a son fit only to ply the distaff or doomed to die by the sword or beg his bread...!"

CHORUS: "Or doomed to die by the sword or beg his bread...!"

DAVID: Now are you satisfied?

MICHAL: David is indeed both constant and thorough.

DAVID: And did David not thereupon order Joab and all the people with him to rend their clothes, don sackcloth and beat their breasts for Abner?

JOAB: That you did, majesty.

DAVID: Did not David himself walk behind the bier and lament aloud at Abner's tomb, while all wept with him?

MICHAL: You did, majesty.

DAVID: Did they not come to persuade David to eat, but while it was still day did he not swear, "So help me God! I will not touch food of any kind before sunset?"

JOAB: You did. And the people took note and approved. Indeed, everything you did pleased them. Everyone throughout Israel knew on that day that the king had had no hand in the murder of Abner son of Ner.

MICHAL: The king is a shrewd statesman.

JOAB: How else would those divisive tribes of Israel, all those elders, have come together at Hebron and declared:

CHORUS: (*intoning*) "We are your own flesh and blood. In the past while Saul was still king over us, you lead the forces of Israel to war and brought them home again. And the Lord said to thee:

#15 THOU SHALT

SOLOIST:

THOU SHALT GOVERN MY INHERITANCE,
SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL,
BE THEIR PRINCE!

DELIVER THEM FROM THEIR ENEMIES
AND I SHALL DELIVER THEE.

THOU SHALT LEAD THEM TO MAKE SACRIFICE
TO HONOR AND REMEMBER ME; HEED MY LAW!
THEN WILL I ARMOR AND STRENGTHEN THEM
THAT THEY MAY VANQUISH THEIR FOES.

CHORUS:

FOR THEY ARE ABRAHAM BROUGHT OUT OF UR:
ISAAC AND NOT ISHMAEL,
JACOB AND NOT ESAU.

SOLOIST:

AND NO CANAANITE SHALL HAVE THEM,
NO CANAANITE OR PHILISTINE,
NO PHILISTINE OR PRIEST OF BAAL!!

CHORUS:

THEY ARE SARAH'S FRUIT NOT HAGAR'S,
RACHEL'S NOT LEAH'S!

SOLOIST:

AND ALL, ALL ARE MINE!
AND AS YOU LEAD THEM IN ALL MY WAYS,
FOLLOW MY WILL THROUGH ALL YOUR DAYS,
I WILL BLESS YOU!
I'LL MAKE YOU MIGHTY AND MAKE YOUR HOUSE
THE FOUNT OF MY GLORIOUS WORD.

CHORUS:

I'LL MAKE YOU MIGHTY AND MAKE YOUR HOUSE
THE FOUNT OF MY GLORIOUS WORD
MY WORD, MY WORD MY SACRED WORD!

JOAB: How else would the elders of Israel have come to David at Hebron to make a covenant with him before the Lord and anoint him king over Israel?

MICHAL: Is this why David always avenges the innocent and mercilessly repays the over-zealous? Is this why the Lord's anointed is so inviolate?

DAVID: I follow the traditions of my fathers.

CHORUS: (*intoning*) The traditions of my fathers.

DAVID: I believe that in violation of the commandments or without unity my people must perish. I believe that they will never unify, except they acknowledge and follow the Lord's anointed.

CHORUS: Except they acknowledge and follow the Lord's anointed.

DAVID: If that requires the life of one or two impetuous souls, then we must pay that price.

CHORUS: Then we must pay that price.

DAVID: I do not and have not ever violated God's law--or tempted, teased or mocked the Lord and His anointed.

CHORUS: Or tempted, teased or mocked the Lord or His anointed.

MICHAL: "What will be done for the man who fights this Philistine and wipes out our disgrace?"!

DAVID: Even then. As for others--when they have fought and sacrificed as well as I, then let them plead for my privileges, and I will listen.

MICHAL: Even Hittites?

DAVID: Even Hittites, but let them first prove themselves.

MICHAL: To keep their wives?

DAVID: If need be.

MICHAL: Who offered my husband even that much choice?

DAVID: David has since learned prudence, perhaps from your example.

MICHAL: Show me.

DAVID: Then watch and listen... Joab.

JOAB: Majesty?

DAVID: How stand we with the Ammonites?

JOAB: We launch a new siege on the morrow.

DAVID: Their fortifications?

JOAB: Still sound.

DAVID: Their resistance?

JOAB: Still strong and dangerous.

DAVID: Are new lieutenants needed?

JOAB: Several.

DAVID: Must they lead bravely?

JOAB: Especially on the morrow.

DAVID: Then call in the Hittite.

JOAB: Uriah?

DAVID: The same. Add this to my oath, and let this Benjamite daughter be my witness.

JOAB: (*calling*) The Hittite!

(*Uriah enters.*)

URIAH: Majesty.

DAVID: Uriah, you will go tomorrow with a team of breachers toward the Amonites, as their lieutenant.

URIAH: Yes, sire. Gladly.

DAVID: Withstand the day, prove your valor, do not flee, and when you return you will join my staff, a permanent advisor....

URIAH: Yes, Majesty.

DAVID: Now go to your house, unbind your feet and enjoy your helpmeet's favors....

URIAH: Sire, I cannot.

DAVID: Cannot, or will not...? Oh, do not fear to answer, Uriah. In this one action, certainly, no king can compel...

URIAH: Israel and Judah, sire, are under canvas, as is the Arc. My lord Joab and all your majesty's officers are camping this night in the open. How can I go home and eat and drink and sleep with my wife?

DAVID: How? Why, as I have bid it....

URIAH: Allow me only a place with your slaves by the palace gate.

DAVID: Why with my slaves...? Nevertheless, as you will. And on the morrow, may you be victorious.

URIAH: (*bowing out*) My respects to the Lord's anointed.

(*He leaves.*)

MICHAL: Are you finally satisfied? And what of his wife?

DAVID: To continue my oath: Should Uriah withstand the day and return to join my staff, Bathsheba will henceforth be his and his only. The first man to touch her then will join your brother's murderers. And I... I will direct my attentions again to Saul's daughter.

MICHAL: My lord, can it still be?

DAVID: The Hittite will decide.

MICHAL: May the Hittite be brave, and may God spare him. Now I will leave thee.

DAVID: And your disposition?

MICHAL: I am content... for the present.

(*She leaves.*)

DAVID: As for this Hittite, what think you?

JOAB: A brave man. Loyal to Israel. Conscientious. Devoted.

DAVID: Pious Humble. Yes, yes. but how much does he know, do you suppose?

JOAB: Know? Of what... ?

DAVID: Why won't he sleep with his wife?

JOAB: Why? I cannot...that is, it is not for me to say....

DAVID: Of course not. And I needn't ask. Besides,there's that oath I made just now to placate Saul's daughter. You know me well, Joab. Do I keep my oaths?

JOAB: Always, majesty.

DAVID: Well, then, listen carefully to my conditions.

JOAB: Conditions?

DAVID: You know the law that pertains to those who are accused of...of infidelity and then convicted?

JOAB: They are stoned.

JOAB: But only if first accused.... Only if first accused.

DAVID: You see how implicitly I trust you, cousin Joab...?

JOAB: I see, majesty....

DAVID: Tell me, Joab, how well do I judge another man's character?

JOAB: You are a most astute judge....

DAVID: These then are the conditions. They are not unlike those under which Saul sent me forth to claim the hundred Philistine foreskins. And I... Listen and repeat them: tomorrow you will place Uriah's party opposite the enemy where the fighting is fiercest.

JOAB: Where the fighting is fiercest.

DAVID: Then fall back, and leave him to his death.

JOAB: To his death.

DAVID: At day's end, send me a messenger.

JOAB: A messenger....

(The stage darkens, leaving a spot only on David.)

DAVID: Instruct him that when he has finished his report to the king, if he is angry...

(As Joab speaks, the light fades on David and rises on the former, addressing a messenger.)

JOAB: When you have finished your report to the king, if he is angry and asks, "Why did you go so near the city during the fight? You must have known there would be shooting from the wall. Remember who killed Abimelech..."

(The light has faded on Joab, rising again on David, addressing the same messenger.)

DAVID: Remember who killed Abimelech, son of Jerubbesheth. It was a woman who threw down an upper millstone on to him from the wall of Thebex and killed him! Why did you go so near the wall?

JOAB'S VOICE: If he asks this, then tell him--

MESSENGER: *(to David)* We pressed them back as far as the gateway. There the archers shot down at us from the wall and some of your majesty's men fell; and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.

DAVID: Give Joab this message: "Do not let this distress you--there is no knowing where the sword will strike. Press home your attack on the city, and you will take it and raze it to the ground..."

(The messenger begins to leave.)

DAVID: And tell him to take heart.

#16a I MADE YOU MINE

DAVID:

MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS--

BREATH OF THE EAST.

WOMAN OF A STRANGERS' WAYS--

FLOWER OR BEAST?

YOU CAME FROM WE KNOW NOT WHERE,

SHROUDED IN LONG, DARK HAIR.

ARRESTING YOUR FEATURES, ENCHANTING YOUR SMILE.

YOUR WALK, YOUR STANCE, YOUR GESTURES BEGUILE.

SAUL'S SOLDIERS FOUGHT OVER YOU;

GUARDSMEN AND CAPTAINS, TOO.

SO WHY DID YOU SETTLE FOR A MAN OF PLAIN WORDS

WHO CAME LIKE I DID FROM FIELDS AND HERDS.

I MADE YOU MINE!

WHY I'VE BEEN BOTH TO YOU--
BOTH CAPTAIN AND URIAH!
YOU DESERVED ALL THINGS
AND I HAVE BEEN ALL THINGS
TO YOU OR TRIED TO BE TO GAIN YOUR LOVE.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT I LOVED ANOTHER ONCE,
A WOMAN WORTHY OF MY NAME!
BUT THEN A MYSTERY, A FLOWER,
BREATH OF THE EAST,
FILLED EVERY HOUR.
I MADE YOU MINE!
WHY I'VE BEEN BOTH TO YOU--
BOTH CAPTAIN AND URIAH!
YOU DESERVED ALL THINGS
AND I HAVE BEEN ALL THINGS TO YOU,
OR TRIED TO BE TO GAIN YOUR LOVE.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT I LOVED ANOTHER ONCE,
A WOMAN WORTHY OF MY NAME!
BUT THEN, I LEFT HER BEHIND
AND TOOK A WIFE TO FATHER ISRAEL'S MIGHTY THRONE.

BATHSHEBA:

THEY ENVY ME.
MOST FAVORED WIFE OF ISRAEL'S KING!
THEY ENVY ME.
THEY TELL ME THERE'S NO GREATER JOY THAN I HAVE KNOWN
IN DAVID'S ARMS OR ON HIS THRONE.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT I LOVED ANOTHER ONCE,
AN UNPRETENTIOUS, SIMPLE MAN.
THEN HE WAS TAKEN FROM ME
AND ALL OF THIS IS ONLY TO APPEASE ME.
THEY ENVY ME,
MOST FAVORED WIFE OF ISRAEL'S KING,
THEY ENVY ME.
THEY TELL ME THERE'S NO GREATER JOY THAN I HAVE KNOWN
IN DAVID'S ARMS OR ON HIS THRONE!
ALL I KNOW IS THAT THE PRICE THAT I HAVE PAID
IS WORTH IT IF I LIVE TO SEE
THE CHILD WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN URIAH'S
FOLLOW DAVID TO THE THRONE
AS ISRAEL'S MIGHTY KING!

DAVID:

I
MADE YOU MINE.
WHY

BATHSHEBA:

THEY ENVY
ME,
MOST

I'VE BEEN
BOTH TO YOU,
BOTH CAPTAIN AND URIAH!
YOU DE-
SERVED ALL THINGS,
AND
I HAVE BEEN
ALL THINGS TO YOU
OR
TRIED TO BE
TO GAIN YOUR LOVE.
ALL I KNOW IS THAT
I LOVED ANOTHER ONCE,
A WOMAN WORTHY OF MY
NAME!
BUT THEN A
MYSTERY A FLOWER,
BREATH OF THE EAST,
FILLED EVERY
HOUR.

BOTH:

THEY ENVY ME.
BUT I WON'T MIND THE ENVY NOW.
AND STILL I'LL KNOW THERE CANNOT BE A GREATER JOY

BATHSHEBA:

THAN BEING WIFE AND MOTHER

DAVID:

TO THOSE WHO RULE ALL ISRAEL

BOTH:

THE WIFE AND MOTHER OF ISRAEL'S MIGHTY

DAVID:

MYSTERY OF ANCIENT DAYS.

FAVORED WIFE OF
ISRAEL'S KING!

THEY ENVY
ME.

THEY TELL ME THERE'S NO GREATER JOY
THAN

I HAVE KNOWN
IN

DAVID'S ARMS
OR

ON HIS THRONE.

ALL I KNOW IS THAT

I LOVED ANOTHER ONCE

AN UNPRETENTIOUS, SIMPLE

MAN.

THEN HE WAS

TAKEN FROM ME, AND

ALL OF THIS IS

ONLY TO APPEASE ME.

(Action blends into the following scene.)

Scene 3 -- Bathsheba's Chambers. Almost a year later.

JOAB: The prophet, majesty.

DAVID: Prophet? Which prophet?

JOAB: The prophet Nathan.

DAVID: Oh, yes. That prophet. Convey him. He has a certain claim on me.

(Joab exits. He then returns with Nathan.)

DAVID: My ancient benefactor. What brings you to David's court?

NATHAN: A tale, my lord.

DAVID: A tale?

(eyeing Bathsheba)

It's been some while since I sought my diversion with the harp or in fables. But speak, old man, and entertain us. It can do no harm.

NATHAN: Sire, there were once two men in the same city, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had large flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing of his own except one little ewe lamb. He reared it himself, and it grew up in his home with his own sons. It ate from his dish, drank from his cup and nestled in his arms; it was like a daughter to him. One day a traveler came to the rich man's house, and he, too mean to take something from his own flocks and herds to serve to his guest, took the poor man's lamb and served up that.

DAVID: As the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die! He shall pay for the lamb four times over, because he has done this and shown no pity.

NATHAN: You are the man. This is the word of the Lord the God of Israel to you: "I anointed you king over Israel. I rescued you from the power of Saul. I gave you your master's daughter and his wives to be your own, I gave you the daughters of Israel and Judah. And, had this not been enough, I would have added other favors as great. Why then have you flouted the word of the Lord by doing what is wrong in my eyes? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword; the man himself you murdered by the sword of the Ammonites, and you have stolen his wife."

CHORUS: "Stolen his wife."

NATHAN: "Now, therefore, since you have despised me and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own wife, your family shall never again have rest from the sword." This is the word of the Lord: "I will bring trouble upon you from within your own family."

CHORUS: "From within your own family."

NATHAN: "I will take your wives and give them to another man before your eyes, and he will lie with them in broad daylight. What you did was done in secret; but I will do this in the light of day for all Israel to see."

CHORUS: "For all Israel to see."

(David moves toward Nathan as if to strike him, then sinks on his knees at the latter's feet.)

DAVID: I have sinned against the Lord.

NATHAN: The Lord has laid on another the consequences of thy sin. You shall not die, but, because of your contempt before the Lord, the boy that will be born to you shall die.

(Bathsheba rushes screaming to join David at Nathan's feet.)

#17 SHALL DIE

CHORUS:

SHALL DIE, SHALL DIE,

THE BOY SHALL DIE.

THE BABE SHALL DIE TO BE BORN TO HIM,

TO BE BORN TO HER.

SHALL DIE, SHALL DIE, THE BOY SHALL DIE

FOR THY SIN, THY RANK SIN,

THY WRETCHED SIN, SIN UNFORGIVABLE AGAINST THE LORD.

O, O, O, O, O, O, O, OH !

Segue to

#18 THEY ENVY ME (reprise)

BATHSHEBA:

ALL I KNOW IS THAT THE PRICE THAT I HAVE PAID
IS WORTH IT IF I LIVE TO SEE
THE CHILD WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN URIAH'S
FOLLOW DAVID TO THE THRONE AS ISRAEL'S MIGHTY KING.

Segue to

#19 A TEMPLE, A TEMPLE! (reprise #2)

CHORUS:

A TEMPLE! A TEMPLE!
WHERE IS THE HOUSE WITH WALLS AND FOOTINGS,
WITH PILLARS AND BEAMS WITH A ROOF AND A GATE?

(Action blends into the following scene.)

Scene 4 -- *A non-descript floor. David lies in the same position as before, robed in sack cloth and begrimed with ashes. Before him, where Nathan previously stood, is a lighted menorah. Two servants whisper together in the background. Meanwhile the chorus, in subdued tones, chants the following.*

#20 HE MOURNS

CHORUS:

HE MOURNS. HE MOURNS. HIS MAJESTY MOURNS.
HE MOURNS THE BABE THAT WAS BORN HIM AND HER,
THE BABE THAT MUST DIE FOR HIS SIN,
HIS SIN ABOMINABLE, SIN UNFORGIVABLE,
HIS SIN AGAINST THE LORD.
HE MOURNS. HE MOURNS. HIS MAJESTY MOURNS.

(Music continues)

FIRST SERVANT: For seven whole days he has fasted there, praying.

SECOND SERVANT: While the manchild was alive we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us. How can we now tell him that the child is dead? He may do something desperate.

DAVID: *(rising to his knees)* Approach... Come, I say!

(The servants go to him.)

DAVID: Is the boy dead...? Well?

SECOND SERVANT: Sire...

FIRST SERVANT: Dead, sire.

(David stares at them, then stands.)

DAVID: Then bring me a bowl, oil for anointing, and fresh clothes. And prepare food....

SECOND SERVANT: What, sire?

FIRST SERVANT: Sire, while the boy was alive, you did fast and weep for him. Now that he is dead, will you rise up and eat?

DAVID: While the boy was still alive I fasted and wept, thinking, "It may be that the Lord will be gracious to me, and the boy may live." But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again?

(David walks off. The servants follow. Behind them the lights reveal Joab, who, expressionless and staff in hand, stares after them. Meanwhile, the chorus sings the following as the lights slowly fade.)

#21-- O PRINCE OF ISRAEL (reprise)

CHORUS:

O PRINCE OF ISRAEL LAID LOW IN DEATH.

HOW ARE THE MIGHTY FALLEN?

I N T E R M I S S I O N

21 pages in ACT TWO