



BELTESHAZZAR: The Story of Daniel

A Full-length Contemporary Christian Musical

By Randy Doyle Hazlett

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A Contemporary Christian Musical

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CAST:

Belteshazzar	Daniel – God is My Judge
Shadrach	Hannaniah – The Lord is Gracious
Meshach	Mishael- Close to God
Abednego	Azariah – The Lord Has Helped
King Nebuchadnezzar	A wise and foolish king
Giles	Arioch – Royal Servant and Ruse
King Darius	The Mede
Wiseman #1	The Devious
Wiseman #2	The Meticulous
Wiseman #3	The Mischievous
Wiseman #4	The Fourth
New Wiseman #2	The Meticulously Meticulous
New Wiseman #3	The Mischievously Mischievous
New Wiseman #4	The Second Fourth
King Belshazzar	The Blasphemer
Alpherat	Al – The Broken Down
Narrator	The Voice
Ooh Girl	THE Voice
Director	The Director
Make-up artist	The Cameo
Oboist	The Extra Extra
Royal Court	The Chorus
Dancers	The Babes
Guards	The Brawn
Wisemen in Training	The Flabby
Lions	The Carnivores
Jewish Peasants	The Feeble
Round Ladies	The Eye Candy
Kettle Drummers	The Time Fillers

DANIEL – A MAN HIGHLY ESTEEMED BY GOD

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1.....Outskirts of Jerusalem
SCENE 2.....King's Court
SCENE 3.....King's Chamber
SCENE 4.....King's Court
SCENE 5.....King's Chamber
SCENE 6.....King's Court
SCENE 7.....King's Chamber
SCENE 8.....King's Court

ACT TWO

SCENE 1.....King's Chamber
SCENE 2.....King's Chamber
SCENE 3.....Lion's Den
SCENE 4.....King's Chamber
SCENE 5.....Lion's Den
SCENE 6.....King's Chamber
SCENE 7.....Narrator's Stage

ACT I
SCENE ONE

(The curtain slowly rises as the musical prelude, LAMENT FOR A NATION, plays. On the outskirts of Jerusalem, in ruins, smoke billows from the destruction. It is dawn. Before a dimly-lit panoramic view of the soldering city, Babylonian soldiers in their distinctive red military hats, breast shields, leather kilts, and sandals, brandishing spears, are seen milling about. A few civilians in tattered, soiled tunics with various unattended wounds are in sight, but they scurry at the sight of soldiers. The Narrator dressed in traditional Jewish attire of the early twentieth century with knickers, a white puffy-sleeved blouse with dangling corner threads and a cloth belt, a hat, and round-rim glasses takes the stage carrying an old text, noting both the audience and the carnage behind him. A spotlight illumines the illuminated Narrator.)

NARRATOR

(lamenting, with a strong Yiddish accent, enriched with ample gesturing)

Oovey! What a mess! Nothing that a few thousand years can't fix.

(Walking a few paces, surveying the damage)

You see that smoldering ash heap over there? That's my hometown ... Jerusalem. Such destruction. Such sorrow. Who is responsible, you ask?

(Mulling it over)

Who IS responsible? Some may say the Babylonian army -- but not me. I know better. You see, we, my people, have forgotten the song of Moses. What is the song of Moses, you ask?

(Apologetically)

Well, now I am embarrassed, for I too have forgotten, ... but I can tell you it had this blessing or a curse thing going on.

(Turning back to the audience.)

Which do you think we're sampling now?

(Defensively)

Oh! But God disciplines those He loves.

(Pausing, reflectively)



He must love us a lot.

(Defensively)

But we ARE the apple of God's eye: today a horse apple, tomorrow perhaps a Red Delicious. You never know what tomorrow will hold -- or today for that matter.

(motioning boldly)

Just look behind me. What a sight! The Babylonians have taken everything. What they couldn't haul off, they burned. What wouldn't burn, they turned into rubble.

(Solemnly)

Killed most. Left a feeble few to tend the fields and the flocks.

(Brightening)

Ah ... but there is hope. You see that handsome bunch of boys over there?

(Pausing, defensively)

Yes, the ones in chains. They were spared for the king's service.

(Pensively)

King's service ... Uhm! Slaves for the Babylonian elite. Ah ... God HAS provided a remnant! But tell me, would YOU place YOUR future on the backs of such young innocents?

(Expressively)

They're a bunch of teenage boys! Oovey!

(Redemptively)

Ah, but among that group of boys is one who brings such joy to my heart.

(Pausing)

Which one, you ask? Why, the one the others are looking up to, even now.

(Anticipating)

Why that one, you ask?

(Pausing)

That one is ... special. Why is he special?

(Posturing)

You surely are an inquisitive group. He is special,

(crescendoing)

because he knows the Song of Moses!

(Surprised)

His name?

(Indignant)

His name? His name will soon be Belteshazzar, but we will forever know him by another. His name is "God is my judge."

(Puzzled)

What do you mean, "What kind of name is that?"

(Boastful)

It is a name of privilege - a great Hebrew name. What's that? Not brushed up on your Hebrew?

(Yielding)

In English, his name is Daniel,
(apologetic)
but then, English has yet to be invented. Just between
you and me, we'll ignore it and continue in a language yet
to be - for your sake.

(reconnecting)
Where were we? Daniel? Yes, that one carries the hopes of
his people in his heart AND on his shoulders. He will be
the very voice of God to his people.

(deep sigh)
He will do the unimaginable. He will be an inspiration to
his brothers ... sisters, too. Yes, that one IS special.
How do I know this to be true, you ask?

(Defensively)
How do I know this to be true?
(Pausing, firmly and loudly,
extending the text with other arm
expressively raised)

Why, ... it's in THE BOOK!

(The spotlight cuts to black, and the
Narrator exits. There is a short kettle
drum riff from dueling drummers flanking
the stage while the scene shifts focus. A
Band of youth is en route from the
smoldering city, chained to one another and
led by a small group of Babylonian
conquerors carrying swords and whips. Stage
lighting has slowly transitioned to
daybreak.)

ABEDNEGO

(Weary and burdened)

Brother Daniel, I fear that I have not strength for the
journey. My world rests back there in charred ruins.
There is no one to carry on my family name but me. I
cannot bear the load.

DANIEL

(Confident)

Love the Lord, and honor the commandments, my dear brother
Azariah, and we all SHALL prosper. Do you not recall the
words of Jeremiah concerning our future? The Lord has
spared us for a greater purpose.

(Warningly)

Oh, it will not be easy. We are but slaves, still the
words of Jeremiah are words of mercy for the remnant.

(Boldly)

We ARE that remnant. You are that remnant, My Dear
Brother. Let not your face show the sorrow we all harbor

in our hearts for those not making the journey. And as for these Babylonian fellows, they know not the one true God. Will God not show us favor over those who do not even call upon His name? The Lord is our strength and banner. He will give us all strength for the journey and beyond.

(Reminiscing)

And one day, we shall return to our homeland. Oh, perhaps not this lowly band of sojourners, but the promise remains. We will thrive and prosper once again as long as we do not fail to honor the One who strengthens our hand. Azariah, your very name is a reminder from which we can all draw strength - Azariah, *the Lord Has Helped*.

(A soldier cracks his whip.)

ALPHERAT

(anxious)

Oh, Daniel, your words bring comfort, but how much comfort is there at the end of a whip?

DANIEL

(Encouraging)

Alpherat ... Al, you shall see. Everything has a purpose. A word. A whip. The prayers of men.

SHADRACH

(Depressed and bewildered)

Daniel, how did we sink so far? We are children of Abraham, Moses, and David, are we not? Where did our blessing flow? We now return to the land of Adam where the Tigris and Euphrates bless the people with abundance. Did our blessing flow to such as these?

DANIEL

(With courage)

Hannaniah, is this the first time we have been separated from the land of promise? Driven from our land by famine, God prepared a deliverer in Joseph to preserve Israel. And yet we became bondservants in a land not our own until another deliverer in Moses was able not only to lead our nation back to our land, but also to lead us back to God. Physical separation from our ancestral home is a direct consequence of the separation that has already transpired in our hearts. But Hannaniah, from your very name we are reminded of God's goodness - Hannaniah, *The Lord is Gracious*.

MESHACH

(With newfound hope)

Daniel, my heart is refreshed by your words. You speak so clearly. Tell us again, Daniel. Tell us again.

(Barefoot female dancers in torn tights, flowing hair, headdresses adorned in earth tones, and tambourines with streamers quickly enter, forming a rotating dance circle centerstage. The entire song is choreographed to entice but not detract from the lyrics, but dancers especially play off the title line.)

DANIEL

(Daniel speaks the following lines as the music of SOMEWHERE 'ROUND JEHOSHAPHAT begins.)

Alright, Mishael, but pay close attention. One day you'll need to remind your children.

(He sings.)



THERE'S ABRAHAM, A MAN OF FAITH,
AND JOSEPH, HE WAS COOL.
WE SAT A WHILE AROUND THE NILE
TILL MOSES BROKE THE LABOR POOL,
BUT WITH THE PAGAN WORLD OUT THERE
WE STARTED TO ENTWINE,
AND SOMEWHERE 'ROUND JEHOSHAPHAT
WE SIMPLY CROSSED THE LINE.

IT WASN'T IF WE HAD NO CHOICE,
A BLESSING OR A CURSE.
THE PROPHETS GAVE OUR GOD A VOICE
BUT EVERYTHING GOT WORSE AND WORSE.
AND NEVER SATISFIED WITH GOD,
WE SELDOM CEASED TO WHINE.
AND SOMEWHERE 'ROUND JEHOSHAPHAT
WE FAILED TO TOW THE LINE.

(Dance feature during musical channel.)

OL' DAVID WAS A WORTHY KING,
SEEKING GOD'S OWN HEART.
AND SOLOMON LET WISDOM RING,
AND THEN HIS SON TORE US APART.
THE APPLE OF GOD'S EYE, NO DOUBT,
BUT APPLES, THEY GO BAD,
FOR SOMEWHERE 'ROUND JEHOSHAPHAT

WE SIMPLY MADE GOD SAD.

OOH GIRL

(with an attitude)

Ooh honey, they REALLY lost their way!

ALPHERAT

(Tongue in cheek)

Whoa, Daniel, I know what I'll be missing in Babylon!

(Cymbal splash)

DANIEL

(Scoldingly)

Al, pray rather for the time of our return.

MESHACH

(With admiration)

Daniel, how can we have faith like yours? We are but boys, and I fear that our faith will melt in your absence should we be separated.

SHADRACH

(Fearfully)

Separated from one another? That I had not even considered. Now my mind will turn from nothing else. My thoughts take me captive. It is worse than being a slave to man. Surely, they will not separate us.

DANIEL

(Reassuringly)

Babylon is a big country ... and growing bigger all the time. While it's worthless to make such a petition to our captors, we can petition God, Our Father.

MESHACH

(Imploringly)

Daniel, speak to the Lord on our behalf. He listens to you.

DANIEL

(Authoritatively)

Mishael, place not your faith in any man, unless you crave disappointment. Your very name tells us where we all need to be - Mishael, *Close to God*. Put your faith in God - not in me, these Babylonian soldiers, or the king we must serve. Recall the words of Job in the depths of his calamity, "Even though He slay me, I will place my trust in Him."

(He speaks the following lines as the music

of JUST A SIMPLE FAITH begins.)

I have another song for you, my friends -- A song of faith.

(He sings.)



JUST A SIMPLE FAITH
LASTS FOREVER
OUR GOD WILL SEE YOU THROUGH
JUST A LITTLE FAITH
WHEN THE WALLS ARE FALLIN'
OUR GOD WILL RESCUE YOU.

JUST A SIMPLE FAITH
LASTS FOREVER
OUR GOD WILL SEE YOU THROUGH
JUST A LITTLE FAITH
WHEN THE FIRES ARE RAGIN'
OUR GOD WILL RESCUE YOU.

OL' NOAH
WAS A WISE MAN.
HE SAILED A STORMY SEA.
OL' JOSEPH
WAS A SLAVE, AND
HE RULED THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

JUST A SIMPLE FAITH
LASTS FOREVER
OUR GOD WILL SEE YOU THROUGH
JUST A LITTLE FAITH
WHEN THE FIRES ARE RAGIN'
OUR GOD WILL RESCUE YOU.

ABEDNEGO
(Cautiously)

But Daniel, aren't you afraid to sing songs of deliverance in the hearing of the Babylonians?

DANIEL
(Calmly)

My Brother Azariah, there is freedom in the name of the Lord. And aside from that, these Babylonian fellows do not know our native tongue.

ABEDNEGO
(Accepting)

I forgot. They don't talk much to remind us that they speak only gibberish.

ALPHERAT

(Mockingly)

Yeah, gibberish. And I guess our language is gibberish to them as well.

(Going up to a Babylonian soldier)

My royal buffoon, does your mother know you've stray this far from home?

(Shaking head "no" and gets a similar response)

I bet she loves the family pig more than you?

(Nodding head "yes" gets a similar response)

Wait a minute, I see a family resemblance! Have you always been so pig ugly?

(Nodding head "yes" gets a similar response)

(All laugh, including the soldier.)

DANIEL

(Castigating)

Enough of the buffoonery. Prepare to serve rather than mock.



(The scene ends with youth on the move. A kettle drum cadence accompanies the change of scene.)

SCENE TWO

(The captives have arrived in Babylon - a modern city in mud and stone. Merchants with brightly colored awnings fill the background, pawning dates, blankets, trinkets, and spirits. As the lights come up, the chains of the slaves are being removed. They are in the Kings Court.)

ROYAL COURT

(A swirl of local merchants, belly dancers, kettle drummers, and snake charmers take stage demanding conformity. With arms extended, they point to the Hebrews and sing as the music of ORIENT TO THE ORIENT begins.)



ORIENT, ORIENT, ORIENT TO THE ORIENT
ORIENT, ORIENT, ORIENT TO THE ORIENT

HEBREW CAST

(In response, they sing as the music of ALL EYES UPON DANIEL begins without break.)



ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
HE'S THE ANCHOR OF THE FAITH OUR FATHERS KNEW
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
HE'S THE PILLAR OF OUR STRENGTH WE'RE RUNNING TO.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL. (*decrescendo to end*)
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.

SHADRACH

(Concerned)

Daniel, they want us to learn their language. They have even given us new names: Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and you are to be called Belteshazzar. Shall we consent? Is there a word from the Lord concerning such as this?

DANIEL

(Contemplating)

My friend, Hannaniah, ... Shadrach, when Joseph preceded Israel into Egypt, he spoke not his native tongue before his brothers. He learned the language of the land, and God blessed Joseph. Joseph was given a new name by his Egyptian owners, Zaphenath-Paneah, which means "a revealer of hidden things and an opener of things to come". We too will learn the language of this land and prosper. If

those we are to serve want to give us new names, what is that to us? Just do not forget who you are.

HEBREW CAST

(A response team praises as the music of GOD HAS SPOKEN begins.)



GOD HAS SPOKEN
FAITH UNBROKEN
WE WILL NOT BOW
TO A GOD BUT THE GREAT I AM.

ROYAL COURT

(The merchants, belly dancers, kettle drummers, and snake charmers reiterate. They sing as the music of ORIENT TO THE ORIENT begins.)



ORIENT, ORIENT, ORIENT TO THE ORIENT
ORIENT, ORIENT, ORIENT TO THE ORIENT

HEBREW CAST

(In response, they sing as the music of ALL EYES UPON DANIEL begins without break.)



ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
HE'S THE ANCHOR OF THE FAITH OUR FATHERS KNEW
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
HE'S THE PILLAR OF OUR STRENGTH WE'RE RUNNING TO.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL. (*decrescendo to end*)
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.

MESHACH

(Worried)

Daniel, they want us to learn their history and culture. Is there a word from the Lord about this?

DANIEL

(Contemplative)

Mishael, ... Meshach, though born a Hebrew, our forefather Moses was raised in Pharaoh's palace. He learned Egyptian history and culture as one of them, and God blessed Moses and our people through him. The word of the Lord through Jeremiah said it will not be a short stay in this land. Let us learn and also receive God's blessing.

HEBREW CAST

(A response team praises as the music of GOD HAS SPOKEN begins.)



GOD HAS SPOKEN
FAITH UNBROKEN
WE WILL NOT BOW
TO A GOD BUT THE GREAT I AM.

ROYAL COURT

(The merchants, belly dancers, kettle drummers, and snake charmers reiterate. They sing as the music of ORIENT TO THE ORIENT begins.)



ORIENT, ORIENT, ORIENT TO THE ORIENT
ORIENT, ORIENT, ORIENT TO THE ORIENT

HEBREW CAST

(In response, they sing as the music of ALL EYES UPON DANIEL begins without break.)



ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
HE'S THE ANCHOR OF THE FAITH OUR FATHERS KNEW
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
HE'S THE PILLAR OF OUR STRENGTH WE'RE RUNNING TO.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL. (*decrescendo to end*)
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.
ALL EYES UPON DANIEL.

ABEDNEGO

(Anxious)

Daniel, they want us to enter the king's service and eat from the king's table.

DANIEL

(Abruptly)

My dear Abednego, ... Azariah, we ARE slaves. What better than to serve the king ...

(retracting)

but to eat from the king's table is another matter altogether. The Word of the Lord is clear on this. Is the food in question animal or vegetable?

ABEDNEGO

Mostly animal.

DANIEL
(Off guard)

Mostly?

(Contemplative)

Uhhh. Beast, fish, fowl, or bug?

ABEDNEGO

Beast.

DANIEL
(Intellectualizing)

Does this mostly animal beast sport a split hoof?

ABEDNEGO
(Surprised)

Why ... yes it does!

DANIEL

Does this split-hoof beast chew the cud?

ABEDNEGO
(Puzzled)

Uh ... it chews only an apple now.

DANIEL
(Impatiently)

I must see this apple-chewing, split-hoof beast of yours.
(Walks over to examine the pig,
then with outrage)

May the Lord deliver us!

(Adamantly)

We cannot eat of this unclean animal. Why he carries the
very remnant of Adam's sin in his jaws. Of this we cannot
partake.

(Prayerfully)

Let the Word of the Lord guide us and protect us in this
matter.

HEBREW CAST

(A response team praises as the music of
GOD HAS SPOKEN begins.)

GOD HAS SPOKEN
FAITH UNBROKEN
WE WILL NOT BOW
TO A GOD BUT THE GREAT I AM.

(Daniel approaches their Babylonian
manager, Arioch.)

DANIEL
(Honestly)

Arioch, if we may speak so boldly, our customs prohibit us from eating certain foods. I am afraid that our health would suffer if we ate ALL from the king's table. I don't think that would be in 'our' best interest. If I may be so bold, let your servants be tested in this matter. Allow us Hebrews to take liberally of your fruits and vegetables, but withhold the meat delicacies of your culture.

GILES
(Calmly indignant)

You insolent child! I am responsible for your health and fitness. The king would have my head if you should deteriorate under my watch. You were chosen for the king's service because of your youth and physical appearance. You must understand my position. You are what you eat!

DANIEL
(Uncompromising)

Indeed, and our diet in our homeland responsible for our healthy appearance is the one we wish to maintain. Test us for 10 days, and see if we are not healthier and stronger than the rest. Test us, and see if our bodies do not prove us out. At the end of the set time, you be our judge. Our God will honor our faithfulness.

GILES
Very well, then. You have 10 days - and not a camel's lip more.

ALPHERAT
Hey, Ar-i-och, your name is so hard to remember, much less pronounce. Can we call you Giles instead? You look like a Giles.

(Justifyingly)
We all got new names.

GILES
(Skeptical)
Giles? What does that mean?

ALPHERAT
(Covertly)
It has no meaning. That name just suits you better -- your handsome features, noble character and all.

GILES

(Passive)

Arioch or Giles, it makes no difference to me. We shall be spending plenty of time together. Anything that makes this relationship less painful is welcome.

(Pensively)

Giles ... it does sound rather noble, doesn't it?

ALPHERAT

(Abruptly)

Giles it is, then.

(Giles exits.)

DANIEL

(Ashamedly)

Al, Al, Al ... I will pray for you on the day Giles finds out his name means "baby goat."

ALPHERAT

(Fearfully)

You won't tell him, will you, Daniel?

DANIEL

(Matter-of-factly)

I have no desire to bring punishment on your head, nor disgrace on his.

ALPHERAT

(Furtively)

But I would like to see his face on the day our "baby goat" does find out.

DANIEL

(Positively)

Comrades, we have 10 days to prove ourselves worthy to our God. Let us get to work!

(Hebrews are seen working out, some in muscle shirts, others shirtless as the music to GET BUFF begins. Non-Hebrews pig out & flaunt their flab, including mock weight lifting with turkey legs, while girls feed them grapes. Á la boxing, card girl beauties display changing of days as "Round 3, 7, & 10.")

ROYAL COURT



GLORY HALLELUJAH.
GLORY HALLELUJAH.
GLORY HALLELUJAH.
MEN, THIS IS IT.

GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
LIFT IT. BEND IT. PUMP IT.
GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
SHIFT IT. BUMP IT. JUMP ON IT.
GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
MOLD THIS JAR OF CLAY
GLORY HALLELUJAH, THERE COMES A JUDGMENT DAY.

MALE CHORUS

PUMPIN' IRON, FEELIN' PAIN.
PUMPIN' IRON, KNOWNIN' WHATS TO GAIN.
PUMPIN' IRON, FEELIN' PAIN.
PUMPIN' IRON NOW, LEAVIN' ALL THE STRAIN TO GOD.

GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
LIFT IT. BEND IT. PUMP IT.
GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
SHIFT IT. BUMP IT. JUMP ON IT.
GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
MOLD THIS JAR OF CLAY
GLORY HALLELUJAH, THERE COMES A JUDGMENT DAY.

GLORY HALLELUJAH.
GLORY HALLELUJAH.
GLORY HALLELUJAH.
MEN, THIS IS IT.

MALE CHORUS

PUMPIN' IRON, FEELIN' PAIN.
PUMPIN' IRON, KNOWNIN' WHATS TO GAIN.
PUMPIN' IRON, FEELIN' PAIN.
PUMPIN' IRON NOW, LEAVIN' ALL THE STRAIN TO GOD.

GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
LIFT IT. BEND IT. PUMP IT.
GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
SHIFT IT. BUMP IT. JUMP ON IT.
GET TOUGH. GET BUFF.
MOLD THIS JAR OF CLAY
GLORY HALLELUJAH, THERE COMES A JUDGMENT DAY.

GLORY HALLELUJAH.
GLORY HALLELUJAH.
GLORY HALLELUJAH, THERE COMES A JUDGMENT DAY.

(A final bell signals 10 days/rounds are up.)

OOH GIRL
(Ecstatic)
Ooh honey, glory Hallelujah! Vive la difference!

(Giles enters to usher an end to the testing period.)

GILES
(Paranoid)
Your 10 days are up.
(Feeling flab on some, then muscles on others)
Interesting ... Hmm ... Well, I believe you've demonstrated your case. Yes, this will do nicely. Forgive me for not showing more enthusiasm, for I am a eunuch, as are most entering the king's service.

ABEDNEGO
(Shocked)
Did he say ...
(gulp)
eunuch?

ALPHERAT
(Desperate)
Oh Daniel, please pray for us.

(Cut to black)

SCENE THREE

(Kettle Drum cadence. The king's quarters. There is a rock wall on one side of the stage with an altered sign posted: "Beware of ~~Dog~~ Cats." The king is in his royal bedchamber tossing and turning. King Nebuchadnezzar lets out a frightful scream. Giles and others in the Kings Court come running.

GILES

(panicked)



O' King, live forever. Are you okay?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(The king says the following lines as music to I HAD A DREAM begins.)

No, I am not okay! Not in the least.

(He sings.)



I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
I HAD A DREAM.

(The king jumps upon his poster bed, and the kings court rolls the bed to the front of the stage.)

I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
I HAD A DREAM.

CALL THE DOCTOR.
DOCTOR CALL THE NURSE.
CALL THE PREACHER.
MY HEADACHE'S GETTING WORSE.
CALL MY MAMA.
I THINK I'M FADING FAST.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.

ROYAL COURT

(They rotate the bed while the king stands

upon it tortured by his dream. They sing.)

HE HAD A DREAM.
HE HAD A DREAM.
HE HAD A DREAM, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
HE HAD A DREAM.

(The bed comes to full stop.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.

(The king leaps off the bed, hands on hips.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(impatient)

Arioch, summon my Wisemen. Surely one of them can interpret the dream that torments me.

GILES

Very well, Sire. I will summon them at once.

(Giles pulls on a royal sash dangling from the bedpost. We hear a royal chime. Giles leaves and returns immediately with a Wisemen entourage dressed in regal clothing with flowing robes, jeweled hats, and Velcro-applied medallions for extraordinary demonstration of valor and wit.)

GILES

King Nebuchadnezzar, may you live forever. Your Wisemen on duty in the Kings Court are here.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(arrogantly)

You must know why you are here. I have had a dream, and you will interpret it for me.

WISEMAN #1

(humbly)

My Lord and King, only tell us the dream, and I'm sure that we will be able to interpret it to your satisfaction.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(resolutely)

No, Number One, I have firmly decided that you must tell

me both the dream and its interpretation. If you are truly wise, this is no barrier. It's about time you Wisemen earn your keep.

WISEMAN #1

(excusingly)

My King, there is not a man in your whole kingdom who can fill this request.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(in anger)

If not, then you will pay with your lives! Arioach, round up all the "Wisemen" for execution.

GILES

What will it be this time, Sire? The lions?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

No, the lions have been fed. Do you not recall that atrocious musician at the evening meal? The tempo was all wrong, and the piece ended badly.

GILES

Yes ,Sire, the note was quite sharp, but then, so was the lion's bite.

(All laugh.)

GILES

Shall I fire up the royal furnace, My Lord? The flames have not yet been fed today.

(More laughter.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Sternly)

Is that a joke, Giles?

GILES

No, My Lord ...

(timidly)

unless you desire that it be.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Breaking the tension)

Oh, Giles, you make me laugh. Yes, the furnace shall feast today. We shall begin with ...

(turning to Wiseman #2)

you. Number Two, can you interpret my dream?

WISEMAN #2

(timidly)

No, My King. My specialty is trigonometry.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Trigonometry? ... Uhm ... well cosine this!

(The king pulls off his royal badge. The crowd gasps. He is corralled into the royal furnace waiting area - a simple theatre-type corded area.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

And you, Number Three?

WISEMAN #3

(sadly)

No, My Lord.

(King detaches Velcro awards, and adds to the holding pen. Other wisemen line up for subsequent defrocking.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

And you? And you? And you? And you? ... Giles, are these ALL my Wisemen?

GILES

No, My King, we have some off duty, some on paid vacation, and then there is the group in training.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(adamant)

Bring them all to share the same fate as these.

GILES

Yes, My King.

(Giles leaves to retrieve the Wisemen. Cut to black. Kettle Drum cadence.)

SCENE FOUR

(The King's Court where we find the Hebrew wisemen in training.)

GILES

(calmly)

You must report immediately to the king for execution.

SHADRACH

(puzzled)

Execution? Whose execution?

GILES

(plainly)

Yours, of course.

SHADRACH

(defensive)

What have we done to deserve this?

MESHACH

(in disbelief)

Surely you jest! Giles, is this a joke?

GILES

(calmly)

If it is, I assure you, I await the punch line as well.

DANIEL

(inquisitive)

Why should the king issue such a harsh decree?

GILES

The king has ordered the death of all wisemen unless one proves his wisdom by stating and interpreting the king's dream.

DANIEL

(firmly)

Take me to the king so that lives may be spared. I will interpret his dream.

(Turning to his friends)

Please pray for me that the Lord will reveal through me the mysteries buried in the hearts and minds of men. Let God be glorified before kings and kingdoms.

(Fade out.)

SCENE FIVE

(The king is upon his throne in the royal chamber. Giles escorts Daniel and his friends to the king. Wisemen remain in custody awaiting execution.)

DANIEL

Oh King Nebuchadnezzar, may you live forever ... if that be the will of the god of heaven above and earth below.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(caught off guard)

Giles, who is this?

GILES

(calmly)

This is one of the Hebrew wisemen in training. He says he can fulfill your request.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(challenging)

You are but a boy! Wisdom comes with experience. Men two and three times your years have failed.

(Curiously)

You can tell me the dream and its meaning?

DANIEL

(He speaks the following lines as music to HEAD OF GOLD begins.)

No man can know what you ask, but the God I serve will give me what you desire.

(He sings.)



OH MIGHTY KING,
YOU SAW A STATUE STANDING THERE
MAYBE EIGHT, MAKE IT NINE, STORIES TALL.

OH MIGHTY KING,
I SAW YOUR FACE OF SHINING GOLD,
LOOKING OUT, HIGH ABOVE, OVER ALL.

AND I SAW SHOULDERS MADE OF SILVER
AND A CHEST IN BURNISHED BRONZE.
AND I SAW LEGS OF IRON
AND FEET OF IRON AND CLAY.
AND THEN A ROCK FLEW DOWN FROM HEAVEN
AND HOW THE STATUE FELL.

AND THE ROCK GREW TALL TO FILL UP ALL THE EARTH.
AND A ROCK SO SMALL DID FILL UP ALL THE EARTH.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(rising from his throne to be the
center of attention)

(choral response in italics)

I AM ... THE HEAD ... OF GOLD.
I AM ... THE HEAD ... OF GOLD.
I AM ... THE HEAD ... OF GOLD.
I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM ... *YOU ARE ...*
THE HEAD ... *THE HEAD ...*
(together) OF GOLD.

I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM ... *YOU ARE ...*
THE HEAD ... *THE HEAD ...*
(together) OF GOLD.

DANIEL

BUT THEN A ROCK FLEW DOWN FROM HEAVEN
AND HOW THE STATUE FELL.
AND THE ROCK GREW TALL TO FILL UP ALL THE EARTH.
AND A ROCK SO SMALL DID FILL UP ALL THE EARTH.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(choral response in italics)

I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM ... *YOU ARE ...*
THE HEAD ... *THE HEAD ...*
(together) OF GOLD.

I AM. *YOU ARE.*
YES, I AM. *YOU ARE.*
I AM. *YOU ARE.*

YES, I AM. YOU ARE.
I AM ... YOU ARE ...
THE HEAD ... THE HEAD ...
(together) OF GOLD.

OOH GIRL
Ooh honey, that's one BIG head of gold!

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
Giles, can we build it?

GILES
Yes, My King, and I assure you -- if you build it, they
WILL come.

(Pointing to the other wisemen)
What about these?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
Oh, release them, I guess. And turn down the furnace. We
should do our part to conserve energy and protect the
ozone layer.

(Pondering)
Ozone ... I wonder what that is.

(Nebuchadnezzar lets Wisemen out one at a
time. Strips each of another Velcro badge
and sticks them on Daniel and his friends.
The King goes out with Daniel and friends
dancing and singing, "I am ... the head ... of
gold." The wisemen congregate.)

WISEMAN #1
(Conniving)
Gentlemen, and I use that term loosely, we have a problem,
... but I think I have a solution. Come listen to my plan.

(They huddle. Lots of whispering. As they
break huddle, music to WE'RE BAD begins.)

WISEMAN ENSEMBLE

WE'RE BAD.
WE'RE BAD.
A RUNNING SORE, A HANGING CHAD.
WE'RE BAD.
WE'RE BAD.
AS IF THERE WERE EVER A DOUBT, WE'RE BAD!



OOH GIRL
(Singing)

Ooh Honey, they's bad!

SCENE SIX

(Kettle Drum cadence. Daniel and friends have returned to the Kings Court.)

SHADRACH

(eager)

Okay, Daniel, what does it really mean?

DANIEL

(frankly)

I gave the proper interpretation.

MESHACH

(jovially)

Gave the king a BIG HEAD, I think.

ABEDNEGO

(unsure)

Daniel, where do we fit in? Where should we place OUR hope?

DANIEL

Were you not paying attention? Our hope is not in riches or kingdoms or statues or dreams. The head of gold represents the present age and our king. The shoulders, chest, legs, and feet are kingdoms yet to come. Then God will intervene in the affairs of men in such a way that nothing will ever be the same. The great kingdoms of the past will be forgotten. It is a word of redemption. My friends, our Hope is in the Rock ... but let me remind you once again.

(Music to HOPE IS IN THE ROCK begins.)

DANIEL

HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

(Daniel motions for others to join the chant.)

HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.

(Choral response in italics)

WELL, HOW 'BOUT GOLD? NO!

WELL, HOW 'BOUT SILVER? NO!
HOW 'BOUT BRONZE? NO!
IRON? NO!
IRON AND PARTLY CLAY? NO!
WELL, HOW 'BOUT GOLD? NO!
WELL, HOW 'BOUT SILVER? NO!
HOW 'BOUT BRONZE? NO!
IRON? NO!
IRON AND PARTLY CLAY? NO!
HOW 'BOUT THE ROCK? OH, YEAH!
HOW 'BOUT THE ROCK? OH, YEAH!
HOW 'BOUT THE ROCK THAT MAKES MEN STUMBLE
AND THE ROCK THAT MAKES MEN FALL?
WELL, HOW 'BOUT THE ROCK? OH, YEAH!
HOW 'BOUT THE ROCK? OH, YEAH!
HOW 'BOUT THE ROCK OF OUR SALVATION?
PUT YOUR HOPE WITHIN THE ROCK!

(REPEAT from the beginning, then conclude
with chorus.)

HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK.
HOPE IS IN THE ... HOPE IS IN THE ROCK!

(cut to black)

SCENE SEVEN

(The king's chamber. The king is on his throne. He extends his scepter. The wisemen approach with a startling announcement.)

WISEMAN #1

(alarmed)

Oh Mighty King, may you live forever. But I fear the kingdom is in jeopardy.

WISEMAN #2

(substantiating)

Yes, O' King, and the probability of your kingdom standing is proportional to your willingness to act.



NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Annoyed with #2)

Proportional or not, I must hear of this threat.

(The music begins to WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT.)

WISEMAN #1



OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER,
BUT THERE ARE THOSE WHO'D RATHER SEE YOU NOT!
OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER,
WE HAVE A PLAN TO CLEANSE THE LAND.
YES, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
BUT THERE ARE THOSE WHO'D RATHER SEE YOU ROT!
OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
JUST SIGN RIGHT HERE. IT'S CRYSTAL CLEAR.
YES, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

WISEMAN ENSEMBLE

(animated in sync)

WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!

WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

WISEMAN #1

OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
BUT JUST FAN THE FIRE AND BETTER MAKE IT HOT!
OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
WHO WILL NOT BOW, WE WILL SHOW HOW.
YES, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

WISEMAN ENSEMBLE

YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

(The King signs the orders, and the Wisemen
merrily exit.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Worried)

Giles, why that look on your face?

GILES

(Hesitant)

It's nothing, Sire, but I am afraid that we shall be
losing a few wisemen after all. I'm not one to name
names, but I believe your dreamer is in peril. Oh, but
wait. You are the dreamer; He is just your interpreter.
Well, I guess it'll be alright as long as you don't have
any more of those silly dreams -

(backtracking)

not saying that you are silly, only those crazy dreams.

(backtracking)

Not that you are crazy, My Lord, ... only ... Never mind.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Contrite)

Oh, Giles, I think I made a boo-boo. Will you please
summon Daniel?

GILES

Yes, Sire.

(Giles pulls the royal chord with a
coincident chime. Kettle Drum cadence.
Daniel appears out of breath.)

DANIEL

(windd)

Oh King, may you live forever. I ran all the way across the palace. May I be of service?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(mischievously)

Yes, Daniel. I have a very urgent mission for you. Yes, an urgent mission ... an urgent mission in ... the northern province of the kingdom. You are to carry a message to the prefect and people of Upper Ur. ... Well, go! What are you waiting for?

DANIEL

(uncertain)

My King, where is the message you wish to deliver? Shall I retrieve it from the Royal Printshop?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Buying time)

Oh, the message ... the message ... Oh yes, the message is ... the message is this. Yes, the message you are to deliver is ... "The King is ... pleased."

DANIEL

(perplexed)

The king is pleased?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(impatient)

No, the king is VERY pleased. Now go and deliver the message.

DANIEL

(Puzzled)

I am to deliver the message "The King is VERY pleased" to the prefect in the northern province of Upper Ur?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Yes, the prefect AND the people.

DANIEL

The people?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Yes, the people.

DANIEL

(unsure)

All the people?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(edgy)

Yes, ALL the people. Must I explain EVERY detail? You are to stand on the bridge leading to the southern gates of Upper Ur and deliver my message to ... to all who cross. Yes, to all who cross.

DANIEL

(verifying)

To all who cross?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(annoyed)

Is there an echo in here? Yes, to all who cross over a ... 60 day interval. That should do. Then return to me with a report.

DANIEL

A report?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Yes, a report of your findings.

DANIEL

My findings?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(breakthrough)

By George, I think he's got it, Giles! Now chop, chop. Time is money.

(Daniel leaves.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(relieved)

I thought he'd never leave. Giles, do you think he suspects something?

GILES

(calmly)

No, My King, your royal vagueness was beyond all suspicion.

(cut to black)

SCENE EIGHT

(Kettle Drum cadence. In the Kings Court, we now see a newly unveiled statue of gold. The king and all his court are present. The smelting furnace used to cast the gold is in the background. After much milling around, there is a gong. All freeze for instructions.)

WISEMAN #1

(Authoritatively)

By order of the king, when the music begins, all must bow down and pay homage to the king's likeness in gold.

SHADRACH

(Fretting, to friends)

I wish Daniel were here. He'd know what to do.

MESHACH

(Supportive)

Do you not recall, My Brother, the words of the law our brother Daniel has instilled in us?

ABEDNEGO

You mean the "Top Ten?"

MESHACH

(Sternly)

Yes, in particular, Number 2. We are not to do Number 2.

ALPHERAT

(Disgustingly)

I don't want to even go THERE.

MESHACH

(Reprimanding)

Commandment number 2, Silly! We are not to bow to any idol.

SHADRACH

(Reverent)

Yes, we must honor God and his Word.

ALPHERAT

(Relieved)

I feel much better now.

ABEDNEGO

(Pondering)

What will happen to those refusing to bow?

WISEMAN #1
(Deviously)

By proclamation of the king, any refusing to bow will be thrown into a furnace.

SHADRACH
(Skeptical)

A furnace?

WISEMAN #1
(Definite)

A furnace.

ABEDNEGO
(Disbelieving)

A furnace with fire in it?

WISEMAN #1
(Definite)

A fiery furnace.

ALPHERAT
(Shuttering)

What I said about feeling better ... I take that back.

MESHACH
(Firm)

A furnace or not. A furnace with fire or not. We will not bow. If we perish, we perish. But the God we serve is able to deliver us from the fire.

(The music for WILL YOU BOW NOW? Starts.)

ROYAL COURT

(Hebrew response in italics)

WHEN THE MUSIC COMES, YOU'VE GOT TO BOW.
YOU'VE GOT TO BOW, OR ELSE! NO!
WHEN THE MUSIC COMES, YOU'VE GONNA HAVE TO BOW.
YOU'VE GONNA HAVE TO BOW, OR ELSE! NO!
WHEN THE MUSIC COMES, YOU'VE GONNA HAVE TO BOW.
YOU'VE GONNA HAVE TO BOW, OR ELSE! NO!
WHEN THE MUSIC COMES.

WILL YOU BOW NOW? *WE WILL WORSHIP NONE BUT THE GREAT I AM.*

WILL YOU BOW NOW? *WE WILL WORSHIP NONE BUT THE GREAT I AM.*

WILL YOU BOW NOW? WE WILL WORSHIP GOD, THE GREAT I AM.

WILL YOU BOW NOW? YOU MAY BE OUR KING ... BUT YOU'RE NOT GOD!

(As we reach an instrumental channel, Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego are given a 2nd chance.)

WISEMAN #1

O' King, live forever. I believe we have netted some traitors. Watch this.

(The music repeats from the beginning, concluding with the following line as the collective Hebrew response.)

YOU MAY BE OUR KING ... BUT YOU'RE NOT GOD!

WISEMAN #1

(Manipulative)

O' King, live forever. I believe the sentence has already been prescribed.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Incensed)

Make the furnace seven times hotter. I want to see them sweat. Guards, off with them!

(The fire is stoked. There is a drum cadence. The king is furious and motions that they be thrown into the furnace. Soldiers toss them in to the sound of splash cymbals. With a shadowbox effect, 4 are seen walking around. Some tension background music begins by the orchestra. The onlookers are astonished.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Shouting)

Silence!

(An oboe is heard in the orchestra after all others halt as ordered. All glance in that direction.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Both shaken and perturbed)

Giles, did we not cast three into the fire? I see a forth walking around, and he has the appearance of a god.

(with awe and impatience)
Release those men! Quickly!

(Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego step out as
the doors are opened.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(Aside)
Giles, what was that Royal musician playing?

GILES
Which musician, My King?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(Perturbed)
The one who played the extra note.

GILES
(Calmly)
My King, THAT is an oboe.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(Rushed)
I think we can do without an oboe, do you not agree?
There is a more pressing need. We need to test this
furnace.

(Kettle Drum cadence. Guards quickly pull
the boy from the orchestra pit and toss him
in. A puff of smoke is seen.)

GILES
(Calm and organized)
It works, My King! Shall I place an ad on Sir Craig's
List for a replacement musician?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(Refocusing with reverence)
It is unimportant. The God of Shadrach, Meshach and
Abednego IS God.

(Determined)
Round up all those cursed fellows which meant harm to
God's own. Oh, you will not be needing these.

(The king pulls off Velcro badges and
transfers them to Shadrach, Meshach &
Abednego. Several wisemen are tossed in
the furnace. The flames soar to new
heights. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
take centerstage.)

SHADRACH
(In awe)

That was amazing!

MESHACH
(Worshipful)

I have never sensed the presence of the Lord so strongly.
His hand was surely upon us.

SHADRACH
(Reconciling)

We honored the Word of God, and He honored us.
(Noticing a contemplative Abednego)
Abednego, why so silent? Do you have a word for us?
(with a sweeping arm motion)
For ALL of us.

ABEDNEGO

(He speaks the following line as the music
to I HAVE A WORD begins playing.)

Indeed, I do.

(He sings.)



I HAVE A WORD FOR ALL THE FAINT-HEARTED.
I HAVE A WORD NO MATTER WHAT YOU'RE GOIN' THROUGH.
A WORD BEFORE THE FIRE'S STARTED
OUR GOD WILL BE WITH YOU.

(ROYAL COURT petitions in italics.)

*WHERE WAS THE LORD YOUR GOD? THE LORD, MY GOD, WAS
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
WHERE WAS THE LORD YOUR GOD? THE LORD, MY GOD, WAS
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
WHEN THE ROAD IS TOUGH, AND THE LIGHTS GROW DIM,
AND THE TRUTH IS LOST, AND THE RISK IS GRIM,
AND THE WATER'S DEEP, AND THE WAVES ARE HIGH,
AND YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN IN THE PUBLIC EYE.
STRENGTH IS GONE, BUT THE WORK'S UNDONE,
AND THE HEAT IS HIGH FROM A BLAZIN' SUN,
AND YOU'RE STANDIN' FIRM WHILE THE FURNICE GLOWS,
BUT THE FLAMES CAN'T QUENCH WHAT THE RIGHTEOUS KNOWS.*

WHERE WAS THE LORD YOUR GOD? THE LORD, MY GOD, WAS

RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
WHERE WAS THE LORD YOUR GOD? THE LORD, MY GOD, WAS
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.
RIGHT HERE NEXT TO ME.

(INSTRUMENTAL CHANNEL)

I HAVE A WORD FOR ALL THE FAINT-HEARTED.
I HAVE A WORD NO MATTER WHAT YOU'RE GOIN' THROUGH.
A WORD BEFORE THE FIRE'S STARTED
OUR GOD WILL BE WITH YOU.

(INSTRUMENTAL CHANNEL)

I HAVE A WORD FOR ALL THE FAINT-HEARTED.
I HAVE A WORD NO MATTER WHAT YOU'RE GOIN' THROUGH.
A WORD BEFORE THE FIRE'S STARTED
OUR GOD WILL BE WITH YOU.

(cut to black)

Ò-INTERMISSION-Ó

ACT TWO
SCENE ONE

(Kettle Drum cadence. The king's quarters. Much time has passed. The king is in his royal bedchamber tossing and turning. King Nebuchadnezzar screams. Giles and others in the Kings Court come running.)



GILES
(panicked)

O' King, live forever. Are you okay?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(The king says the following lines as music to I HAD A DREAM begins.)

No, I am not okay! Not in the least.

(He sings a repeat performance.)



I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
I HAD A DREAM.

I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
I HAD A DREAM.

CALL THE DOCTOR.
DOCTOR CALL THE NURSE.
CALL THE PREACHER.
MY HEADACHE'S GETTING WORSE.
CALL MY MAMA.
I THINK I'M FADING FAST.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.

ROYAL COURT

HE HAD A DREAM.
HE HAD A DREAM.
HE HAD A DREAM, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
HE HAD A DREAM.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.
I HAD A DREAM.

(The king leaps from his bed, this time
with more confidence.)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

(Annoyed)

Giles, summon the wisemen. Oh, on second thought, just
bring me Daniel.

GILES

(Reaffirming)

Yes, Sire. Wise choice.

(Giles pulls on the royal chime. Daniel
enters.)

DANIEL

You requested my service, O King?

DIRECTOR

(yelling, a bit disgusted)

Cut! We need makeup!

(Impatiently)

Many years have passed. The actors must look older.
Makeup!

(Makeup guy pulls down roll-up beard on
Daniel to new length and adds ample white
powder to both Daniel and the king's hair.)

DIRECTOR

Clear the stage.

(Muttering)

Amateurs!

(Loudly)

Quiet on the set! Action!

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

Daniel, is that you? I hardly recognized you.

DANIEL

(Coughing)

Probably a little too much makeup, Sire.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(Redirecting)

Indeed. Nevertheless, I need your assistance.

DANIEL

Another dream?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR
(Apologetically)

Yes, you got it.

(Unassuredly)

You did ... get it?

DANIEL

Get what?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR



The dream, of course.

DANIEL

(He recites the following line as the music
to THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL starts.)

Yes ... the dream... of course!

(He sings.)



O', KING, I SEE YOU'RE TROUBLED
BY A DREAM UPON YOUR BED.
A GREAT AND MIGHTY VISION OF
A TREE BY ALL ARE FED.
THEN A VOICE FROM HEAVEN SHOUTED,
"CUT IT DOWN AND BIND THE REST."
O' MIGHTY KING, YOU ARE THAT TREE.
YOU'LL FAIL THE HUMBLE TEST.

YOU SEE THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
YOU SEE THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
OH YES, THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.

(Nebuchadnezzar is displaced by his son
during the next verse. A peasant slips a
rope over the king's head. He is led off as
an animal on leash following a clump of
grass held by his handler.)

AND JUST THAT WAY IT HAPPENED
WHILE HE SWELLED WITH PRIDE THAT DAY.

THE MIGHTY KING WHO WORE THE CROWN,
REDUCED TO GRAZING HAY.
THOUGH HIS KINGDOM WAS RESTORED TO HIM,
HIS SON COULD HARDLY WAIT
TO THROW A ROYAL PARTY
THAT WOULD SURELY SEAL HIS FATE.

(In celebration of the son's coronation,
libation is liberally served in goblets of
gold in a party atmosphere.)

YOU SEE THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
YOU SEE THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
OH YES, THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.

("Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin" appears in red
on the wall by a floating bloody hand. All
are fearful and astonished. There is a
collective gasp.)

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.
WRITING ON THE WALL.
JUST LIKE HUMPTY DUMPTY, YEAH!
THIS KING IS GONNA FALL.
MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.
WRITING ON THE WALL.
JUST LIKE HUMPTY DUMPTY, YEAH!
THIS KING IS GONNA FALL.

O' KING, I SERVED YOUR FATHER WELL,
BUT NOW YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE.
YOU'VE PRAISED THE GODS OF BRONZE AND GOLD
AND TOASTED HOLY WINE.
NOW YOUR KINGDOM STANDS DIVIDED,
AND YOUR REIGN WILL SWIFTLY END,
FOR YOU'VE BEEN WEIGHED AND TIPPED THE SCALE.
ON THIS, YOU CAN DEPEND.

(The crown is lifted from the son and
bestowed upon Darius, the Mede. The son is
lifted overhead by four peasants and
carried off.)

YOU SEE THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
YOU SEE THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
OH YES, THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.
THE WRITING'S ON THE WALL.

(Darius rewards Daniel with more Velcro

patches pulled from nearby wisemen. Nebuchadnezzar runs back onstage, his royal robes torn, prompting a second finger-pointing interpretation. He is secured and hauled off for good.)

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.
WRITING ON THE WALL.
JUST LIKE HUMPTY DUMPTY, YEAH!
THIS KING IS GONNA FALL.
MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN.
WRITING ON THE WALL.
JUST LIKE HUMPTY DUMPTY, YEAH!
THIS KING IS GONNA FALL.

(Daniel and the new king exit. Wisemen congregate to scheme.)

WISEMAN #1
(Conniving)
Gentlemen, and I use that term loosely, we have a problem, and the problem will persist as long as Daniel breathes.

NEW WISEMAN #2
(Frustrated)
But he does no wrong! How can we rid ourselves of a righteous man?

WISEMAN #1
(Scheming)
I fear that we can never deal with this one ... unless it has something to do with his God.

NEW WISEMAN #3
(Objecting)
His God fights his battles. Everyone knows that Daniel speaks with Him three times daily.

WISEMAN #1
(Deviously persuasive)
Gentlemen, I feel a plan forming as WE speak.

NEW WISEMAN #3
(Fearfully)
I hope it doesn't have anything to do with a furnace. You know, that didn't turn out so well last time.

WISEMAN #1
(Yielding)
Furnace? Yes, I suppose we can do without the furnace

this time. And WHAT are you talking about? You got a promotion out of the deal, didn't you?

NEW WISEMAN #3
(Reconciling)

I suppose that's true.

NEW WISEMAN #2
(Whining)

We aren't going to repeat the past, are we? We'll never pull it off. It's too ... predictable.

WISEMAN #1
(Mindful)

Ah, but you forget, we have a different king.

NEW WISEMAN #2
(Coming around)

I get it now. Same plan, new king. Okay, but ex-nay the furnace-ay. My hair still reeks of smoke from Wiseman #4.

WISEMAN #1
(crescendoing)

Same plan. New king. Different result!

(Devious laugh. The music to WE'RE BAD begins. The wisemen sing, taunting the audience.)

WISEMAN ENSEMBLE



WE'RE BAD.
WE'RE BAD.
A RUNNING SORE, A HANGING CHAD.
WE'RE BAD.
WE'RE BAD.
AS IF THERE WAS EVER A DOUBT, WE'RE BAD!

OOH GIRL

Ooh Honey, they's still bad!

(Lights dim momentarily.)

SCENE TWO

(Kettle Drum cadence. The king in his chamber, sitting on his throne. The wisemen approach.)

WISEMAN #1

(Alarmed)

Oh Mighty King, may you live forever. But I fear the kingdom is in jeopardy.

NEW WISEMAN #2

(Reinforcing)

Yes, O' King, and the practicality of your kingdom falling is inversely proportional to your acting ability.



DARIUS

(Annoyed with #2)

I didn't understand a word you said, but I must hear of this threat.

(The music begins to WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT.)

WISEMAN #1



OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER,
BUT THERE ARE THOSE WHO'D RATHER SEE YOU NOT!
OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER,
WE HAVE A PLAN TO CLEANSE THE LAND.
YES, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT.

OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
BUT THERE ARE THOSE WHO'D RATHER SEE YOU ROT!
OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
JUST SIGN RIGHT HERE. IT'S CRYSTAL CLEAR.
YES, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT.

YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

WISEMAN ENSEMBLE

(while dancing in sync)

WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!

WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT! YE-AH!
WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

WISEMAN #1

OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
JUST FEED THE BEAST AS SOON AS THEY ARE CAUGHT!
OH MIGHTY KING, MAY YOU LIVE FOREVER EVERMORE,
WHO'LL NOT OBEY, WHO WILL BETRAY.
YES, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT.

WISEMAN ENSEMBLE

YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!
YE-EH-EH-EH, WE WILL SMOKE 'EM OUT!

(The wisemen exit.)

DARIUS

(Concerned)

Giles, why that look on your face?

GILES

(Indifferent)

It's nothing, Sire, but I am afraid that you will be at least one advisor short after today. I'm not one to name names, but I believe your dreamer is in peril. Oh, but wait. He is not YOUR dreamer; He is just your interpreter - the one who handed the kingdom over to you after that nasty hand thing. I was grossed out by that whole situation -- I mean a floating hand appearing and writing in blood all over our royal walls. Yuk!

(Composing himself.)

I guess it'll be alright as long as there are no more of those silly visions -

(backtracking)

That's not to say that your vision for the empire is silly, only those crazy dreams.

(backtracking)

Not that your dreams for the kingdom are crazy, My Lord, ... only ... Never mind.

DARIUS

(with regret)

Oh, Giles, I think I made a boo-boo.

GILES

Me too, My Lord.

DARIUS
(Remorsefully)

A royal boo-boo!

GILES
Mine or yours?

DARIUS
Mine.

GILES
(Cheering up)
Oh ... Well, I'm feeling less like a toasted marshmallow now.

DARIUS
Marshmallow?

GILES
You know, King, one of those fluffy white things you skewer and roast over an open flame.
(aside, reliving the culinary moment)
Just as mine reaches a ready-to-eat toasty golden brown, it seem to always catch fire. Then I have to quickly blow it out and start over.
(elaborating)
Sometimes you put them in a graham cracker with a piece of
(slowing)
choc-o-late and sing songs by the campfire ...

(Darius grimaces.)

GILES
(looking down)
Never mind.

(Kettle Drum cadence. The wisemen approach the king's chambers with Daniel in custody.)

WISEMAN #1
(with delight)
King Darius, your kingdom is safe! We have found one disloyal to your kingdom and in violation of your law. He was caught red handed - praying!

DARIUS
(in disbelief)

But this is Daniel!

NEW WISEMAN #2
(Calculating)

The law of the Medes and Persians cannot be revoked. The punishment for his crime has been set, and no man can alter the fate of Daniel.

DARIUS
(Remorseful)

Belteshazzar, forgive me, for I am helpless to aid you in this matter. May the God you serve deliver you.

DANIEL
(Passionately)

God is My Judge. No king or creature can deliver me to a fate other than what God has intended for me. No king or creature can deliver me from a fate other than what God has prepared for me.

(Speaking to his friends as the music to DELIVER ME starts.)

Pray for me, My Friends. Remember my words and the words of our forefathers. Our time here is almost complete.

(He sings.)

THINK BACK HOW HE SAVED YA.
REMEMBER ME TODAY.
RECALL HOW HE SAVED YA.
OUR GOD WILL MAKE A WAY.
THOUGH THE FURNACE KINDLED
WHITE HOT TO THE CORE,
JUST LIKE GOD DELIVERED,
DELIVER ME ONCE MORE.

DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM THE LIES.
DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM DEMISE.
DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM DECEIT.
JUST PRAY GOD WILL
DELIVER ME FROM THE BEAST.

PRAY FOR MY DELIV'RANCE.
REMEMBER HOW TO PRAY.
THREE TIMES WITHOUT FAILURE,
LET'S SEE WHAT GOD WILL SAY.



I'VE NOT TURNED MY BACK ON
WHAT WE KNOW IS TRUE.
GOD WILL GET THE GLORY
WHATEVER MEN MAY DO.

DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM THE LIES.
DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM DEMISE.
DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM DECEIT.
JUST PRAY GOD WILL
DELIVER ME FROM THE BEAST.

(Short dance feature in musical interlude)

DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM THE LIES.
DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM DEMISE.
DELIVER ME.
DELIVER ME FROM DECEIT.
JUST PRAY GOD WILL
DELIVER ME FROM THE BEAST!

(Daniel is bound and carried away to the
sound of lions roaring. Cut to black, then
one last roar.)

SCENE THREE



(Through us of shims and lighting, we are allowed to see through the rock wall into the pit. Daniel is in the lions' den where it is quite dark. There is just enough light to see Daniel's face and his dire environment. No lions are visible.)

DANIEL

(Speaking to the lions)

My friends, I know you're here ... somewhere. Can we all simply get along?

(He sings JUST A SIMPLE FAITH a capella.)



JUST A SIMPLE FAITH
LASTS FOREVER
OUR GOD WILL SEE YOU THROUGH
JUST A LITTLE FAITH
WHEN THE WALLS ARE FALLIN'
OUR GOD WILL RESCUE YOU.

(As the music kicks in for the second verse, numerous pairs of eyes are now visible via black light.)

DANIEL

(Speaking to the band)

Cut!

(The lights come up to reveal lions around Daniel.)

DIRECTOR

(Jumping in, Indignant)

Hey, that's my line!

DANIEL

(Apologetically)

Sorry. I thought a little stage intervention was necessary.

DIRECTOR

Just don't let it happen again.

DANIEL

(Speaking to the director)

Never.

(Speaking to the band.)

Gentlemen, I think I'd rather shoot for a more mellow sound, if you don't mind. A little less arousing, if you get my drift. Perhaps a different tune.

(Speaking to the director.)


Mr. Director?

DIRECTOR

What now? ... Oh, yes ... Lights, Camera, Action!

DANIEL

(The lights dim, but now all is visible. Daniel shifts into the alternate song, THE GOD WHO MADE ME. The music starts, and he sings. As the song progresses, so do the lights dim. Some lions settle down; others pace.)



THE GOD WHO MADE ME
MADE YOU TOO.
THE GOD WHO SEES ME,
HE WANTS TO SEE.
HE WANTS TO SEE US THROUGH.
THE GOD WHO LOVES ME
LOVES YOU TOO.
IF I DON'T MAKE IT,
I WANTED YOU TO KNOW.

GOD OF ALL, GOD OF ALL THAT'S REAL.
GOD OF ALL, WHO BRINGS EVERY MEAL.
HE WILL BLESS FROM YOUR HEAD TO TAIL.
HE WILL BLESS HIS FAM'LY WITHOUT FAIL.

THE GOD WHO MADE ME
MADE YOU TOO.
THE GOD WHO SEES ME,
HE WANTS TO SEE.
HE WANTS TO SEE US THROUGH.
THE GOD WHO LOVES ME
LOVES YOU TOO.
IF I DON'T MAKE IT,
I WANTED YOU TO KNOW.

(Lights dim to black. At the end of the song, we hear a roar or two.)

SCENE FOUR

(After some period of darkness, light dawns in the king's chamber. The king is tossing and turning upon his bed. Kettle Drum Cadence. He screams. Giles comes running, along with others.)

GILES

(calmly)

O' King, live forever. What was it - a dream?

DARIUS

(Sitting up in bed)

Worse. A living nightmare. Some awake to harp or strings. Here I get only drums.

(The king gets gingerly out of bed in pajamas into fluffy slippers and reinstalls his crown.)

DARIUS

(seriously)

Giles, my eyes fail me. I am weak for lack of sleep, for how could I slumber when the fate of Daniel is at stake?

GILES

(speaking without thinking)

It escapes me completely, My Lord. I do find it amazing how one can snore with such royal passion. I guess that is why you're king and I am ... I am ...

(realizing he spoke too freely)

I am quite worried about Daniel.

DARIUS

(Self aware)

I don't snore, do I?

GILES

(backtracking)

No, My Lord. I'm sure it must have come from the adjacent chamber. You know how paper thin these palace walls are. They just don't make them like they used to.

DARIUS

(refocusing)

We will look into this matter further, but now, I must know of Daniel's fate. I have heard of the shelter provided by Daniel's god in the belly of a fiery furnace. Perhaps the lions have submitted as did the flames.

(The king exits and lights dim.)

SCENE FIVE

(The lions' den. The king climbs a backstage ladder to an upper window of the lions' den on the back wall. He sticks his head through the window.)

DARIUS

(with genuine concern)

Daniel ... Daniel, has your God granted you favor over man AND beast?

(The den is now well lit. Daniel is nowhere to be seen. Awakened, Daniel stretches from beneath his bed of lions.)

DANIEL

(sleepily)

Is that you, My King?

DARIUS

(with delight and awe)

Giles, release Daniel from the lair. He is more esteemed than I. With the kingdom at my beckoning, I cannot command even one of these lions into obedience.

GILES

Yes, My Lord.

(The king and Giles exchange places at the window. We see a rope ladder dropped down into the pit. The lights dim as Daniel gingerly exits the lair by starting up the ladder.)

SCENE SIX

(The king's chamber. With minimal delay, Daniel enters with Giles into the chamber where the king is assembled with all his court.)

DARIUS

(kneeling)

Forgive me, you who are more esteemed than I. Tell me ... how is this possible? Men obey me out of fear, but such beasts have no fear except that they miss a meal.

DANIEL

(humble)

O' King, live forever! My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O' King.

DARIUS

(rejoicing)

May the God of Daniel be praised. Let no man call upon any other god. May it be so ... by the law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked.

(angrily)

Now, where are those accusers who have mocked the Lord's anointed? Round them up, and let THEIR god deliver them from the same fate, if that were possible.

(Kettle drum cadence. A crowd gathers. As the wisemen are rounded up, stripped of their badges, and forced en masse up a wooden ladder and over the other side into the lions' den. More velcro patches are transferred to Daniel. We hear a series of loud roars from behind the wall.)

ALL CAST

(The music to GOD HAS SPOKEN starts. All sing.)



GOD HAS SPOKEN
FAITH UNBROKEN
WE WILL NOT BOW
TO A GOD BUT THE GREAT I AM.
BUT THE GREAT I AM
BUT THE GREAT I AM

(Cut to black. Actors clear the stage.)

SCENE SEVEN

(Without delay, the Narrator returns to the stage, illumined by a spotlight.)

NARRATOR

And THAT is how Daniel, a mere Hebrew slave, was elevated to serve as advisor to kings.

(awestruck)

And as if possible, the Lord esteemed Daniel in his later days more than the former. Daniel was allowed to see visions of the heavenly kingdom to come. He was given knowledge of the last days upon this earth in which we now tread. Daniel saw the Lord in ALL his glory ... and lived to record it.

(Anticipating)

How do I know these things, you ask?

(Indignant, crescendoing.)

How do I know these things? How do I know these things? It's in THE BOOK!

(Cut to black. Medley of music without words for sequenced curtain call: SOMEWHERE 'ROUND JEHOSHAPHAT, I HAD A DREAM, and ending with HOPE IS IN THE ROCK. House lights. Kettle drum cadence as people exit.)



THE END