

TREE OF LIGHT

A HANUKKAH MUSICAL DRAMA IN TWO ACTS

by Larry Heather

Music by Helen Hooker and Larry Heather

*Premiere performances at the Beth Shechinah (House
Of Glory) Messianic congregation on December 19 & 20th.,
1997 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.*

Directed by Roger Hamm of Patchwork Productions

BETH SHECHINAH PRODUCTION COPY FOR DECEMBER 1999

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*Jewish sayings taken from Leo Rosten's TREASURY OF JEWISH QUOTATIONS
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Glossary of Hebrew terms and their meanings should be included in play
program.

*Luke 2:25-40 Taken from the JEWISH NEW TESTAMENT by Dr. David H. Stern,
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TREE OF LIGHT CAST OF CHARACTERS

SHIMON ben Palat, a student, apprentice metalworker, 16

PALAT ben Ishi, father of Shimon, a metalworker, 50

MIRIAM bat Shomer, mother of Shimon, a painter, 47

YEHUDAH ben David, Rabbi of Shimon, Wisdom Teacher
(Hakamim), 62

HANNAH bat Panuel, 1st. cousin to Shimon, an olive grove
worker, 25

BENYAMIN ben Calev, A Pharisee (Perushim) , 41

ALEXANDER , A Sadducee (Zaddukim), 35

LEMUEL ben Ezra, A Scribe (Soferim), 25

ZADDOK ben Eliyah, A Essene (Hasidim), 54

DEVORAH, Mother of Hannah, Sister to Palat, 53

PANUEL, Father to Hannah and brother in law to
Palet, 57. (Offstage voice only)

NON SPEAKING ACTORS - ZEBULUN & four or more Yeshiva
students. Scrim Scenes: (Live voice or taped) ALEXANDER
& COURT HISTORIAN, ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES / YUDAH MACCABEE
and brother SHIMON MACCABEE (2nd.) / Older Shimon (1st.)
and Hannah.

Miked Instrumentalists and Vocalists Off Stage

TIME:

The week of the 25 of Kislev, Hanukkah 64 B.C.E.
(The 100th anniversary of the Hasmonean Rededication
of Temple and just prior to the Roman takeover by
Pompey in 63 B.C.E. (3753 year since creation - Hebrew
Calendar)

SETTINGS:

- A. The workshop, home, and courtyard of Shimon and his
parents in Yerushalayim.
- B. The Yeshiva (School) of Yehudah ben David near the
Temple Mount in Yerushalayim.
- C. The Olive Grove of the Temple Oil near Tekoa in
Southern Judah.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene OneACT ONE ** SCENE ONE

*(As the lights come up on workshop bench, SHIMON and his father PALAT enter from the house and put on their aprons. As SHIMON fires up the forge with the bellows PALAT begins to hammer on a branch of a half finished Menorah. His rhythmic hammering on the anvil sets the beat for the music of the theme song ONE HUNDRED YEARS * As the music starts a crowd enters the marketplace and begins an Israeli circle dance, which SHIMON joins. The crowd and miked vocalists offstage begin to sing...)*

(Chr. One)

One Hundred years since the Maccabees
 Won for us a very great victory
 Where they hid in the hills was a mystery
 But when the Greeks weren't looking they made history

1. The ruler Antiochus they could not please
 How could you serve a braggart like Epiphanes?
 The Holy Temple of the Lord he wickedly did seize
 Commanding Israelites to spurn their Elohim

Chr. I

2. Faithful Mattathias and his five sons a team
 Met the enemy at the gates of Modin
 Started a resistance that was true to the faith
 The ones that Daniel spoke of, Yes they knew their God

Chr. I

Bridge:

One Hundred Years Ago they shone so bright
 Olive oil that burned for eight days and nights
 The few against the many by their faith won out
 A Great Miracle Happened Here - Is what we SHOUT!!

Chr. I

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene
One

3. Now we celebrate the Days Of Dedication
Yudah cleansed the Temple from most vile desecration
Lit the holy lamps that beamed forth their light
A witness to the nations of the Adonai!

Chr. I

One Hundred Years since the Maccabees
Won for us a very great victory
Where they hid in the hills was a mystery
But when the Greeks weren't looking they made history
(Instrumental ending)

*(The crowd leaves amidst laughter as
PALAT motions for SHIMON to return to
the shop. The music fades and returns
to the beating of PALAT'S hammer on the
anvil. PALAT hands SHIMON a near
completed hanukkiyah.)*

PALAT

I hope you can finish that one son, before you have to
go to Yeshiva. There's a rush on it because it has to go
to the coast.

SHIMON

Yes father, I do what I can, but Rabbi Yehudah doesn't
like his students to be late.

PALAT

Studies are important, but a man has to make a living
too! One hundredth anniversaries of Hanukkah don't come
by every year. We have to fill the special order
Menorahs while they are needed.

SHIMON (preoccupied)

We have been studying the history of the Menorah at the
Yeshiva. Many rabbis believe that the Menorah design
given to Mosheh for the Tent of Meeting is a double
symbol. Of the Tree of Life in the garden, and the
burning bush Mosheh saw in the desert. So Rabbi Yehudah
calls the Menorah, the Tree Of Light.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene One

PALAT

Well for our livelihood it is the Staff Of Life. Please concentrate on yours, or we may go hungry before firstfruits! Almond blossoms and buds on each of the branches... they are the hardest to fashion... Why don't they just go for replicas of Aaron's budded rod? That I would live another 100 to be so fortunate!

(PALAT'S wife enters workshop from home)

MIRIAM

Palat, you are braying like Baalam's donkey again! At least give us a prophecy or even a warning to chew on!

(Palat gives irritated gesture and continues to mimic MIRIAM when her back is turned.)

MIRIAM (Cont'd)

Shimon! Why haven't you left for the Yeshiva yet? You know Yehudah ben David doesn't like his students to be late. And we are paying good Hasmonean coinage for the privilege of sitting you at his feet. It may not be exactly what we are looking for, but we are going to see you a scholar yet! Hurry on, and don't forget to stop at the market on the way home.

SHIMON

Yes mother, I'm on my way right now. Two clusters of figs and three of Hebron grapes, right?

(SHIMON exits quickly with school scrolls and MIRIAM decorates a menorah.)

PALAT

Miriam, I don't mean to be intrusive, but you must understand we are running a business here. Surely the wise one knows that Hanukkah is around the corner. Surely you know that there are only seventy seats in the Sanhedrin. And only the Most High knows how many mother Rebekahs are scheming to sit their sons in one of

them!

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene One/Two

MIRIAM

Palat, I'm sorry to be so brash. It's just that so many wonderful opportunities are open to us since we have moved here from Ziklag. There is no other city like Yerushalayim. Even you sister Devorah, jumped at the chance to move to Tekoa to marry Panuel. From the tribe of Asher yet!

PALAT

Yes, they and their daughter Hannah have done well. In charge of the olive grove which supplies the holy oil for the Temple Menorah. It produces the finest olives in all of Yisrael ... In Ziklag my father and I made swords for the Hasmonean army, instruments of war that were necessary at the time. Now we as a family can make instruments of illumination, to help our neighbors in celebration.

MIRIAM

But dear, you must admit there is something special about Shimon. He has such a passion in the study and pursuit of truth. And this is a city whose business is that pursuit. There is no end to what we can help him accomplish.

PALAT (wearily)

Miriam, Miriam, slow down slow down...

(Workshop fades out and light comes up on the Yeshiva of Yehudah ben David)

ACT ONE ** SCENE TWO

(The RABBI is teaching a group of students from a scroller lecturn which advances when the handes are turned)

RABBI YEHUDAH

... And in the wisdom of the Holy One, the seven branches , the perfect number of completion, the number of days in the week of creation. Of course, in our celebration of Hanukkah we use an eight branched menorah, representing the eights days of the feast.

An additional ninth branch, the shamash or servant light, kindling all the rest.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Two

Mosheh was commanded that this Tree of Light be fueled by the purest oil from the Olive tree. The olive branch is first mentioned in the Torah, when it was brought back by the dove sent out by Noah. It is one of the most valuable of trees, symbolizing virility and fruitfulness. Used as a food, a medicine, a beauty preparation, and in our study here, a fuel.

The almond blossoms and buds represent blessings in the present, and future fruit to come. The almond tree is the first to bud in the spring, and it's leaves are the last to wither. It is perhaps the closest outside of Eden to the Tree of Life. A source of life and immortality.

(SHIMON enters late, out of breath, and sits at the back of the group.)

RABBI YEHUDAH (cont.)

Of course, Paradise lost is not Paradise destroyed. The Cherubim were sent to close the way to the Tree of Life. But they were also guarding the preservation of the way to Paradise in the future. (Gen.3:24)

(At this point a Zebulun, seated on a brightly colored favored student stool, falls asleep & keels over. The other students burst out in laughter.)

YEHUDAH

Well Zebulun, it seems my teaching provides you with ill-nourishment. If you are starving, remember the saying of the sage: "Where there is no meat, one must pick the bones."

And you Shimon, your chest still heaves like the rising of the Red Sea before Mosheh.

SHIMON

I'm sorry Rabbi, the craft of my father made me late. I ran across the city to get here. I will try to not let it happen again.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Two

YEHUDAH

No my son, I understand what season it is for you and your good father. As the learned one has said;

"Excellent is Torah-Study along with some worldly occupation, for the labour in both of them causes sin to be forgotten. All Torah-Study and no worldly labour ends in failure, and brings sin in its wake."

And now we will consider what the venerable Prophet Daniel said about the times which led to the Feast of Dedication which we now celebrate.

Our people are discouraged to have heard no prophets speaking to Yisrael since the time of Malachi. Yet Daniel predicted all the way from the Persian rule in exile, to the Greek and Roman powers we see battling today.

But Rabbis wiser than I, have shaken their heads in despair interpreting Daniel's mysteries. Nevertheless, we shall try. Shimon, could you read this commentary for us?

SHIMON *(reading)*

Even Daniel was perplexed at some of his visions and was told by the angels that some of the answers were sealed up until the distant future.

In Daniel's very words; " I , Daniel was exhausted and lay ill for several days... I was appalled by the vision; it was beyond understanding" (Dan. 8:27)

Rabbi Yehudah, what hope do we have if so great a prophet as Daniel despaired?

YEHUDAH

There is hope, even for our sleepy Zebulun here! As our teachers have said; "Wisdom, like gold ore, is mixed with the stones and dust of history." It is my prayer that one of you, will be blessed with the wisdom to unlock the mysteries of Daniel. To recognize the Anointed One when He appears.

YEHUDAH *(cont.)*

Fortunately, what Daniel teaches about the Greek conqueror, Alexander the Great, starts us on our

journey. " A fourth king of Persia when he had gained

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Two

power by his wealth, .. will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. Then a mighty King will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases." - (Dan. 11:2c,3)

*(Lights fade on school as action freezes
Scrim with Alexander the Great lights
up. Alexander is addressing crowd from
his balcony, then turns inside to talk
with court historian in the newly
conquered Palace of the Greek King
Darius)*

(Trumpet Fanfare and crowd sounds)

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

I, Alexander, the Son of Zeus, today sit on the Throne of Darius at Persepolis, capital of Persia. I declare sovereignty over his vast kingdom from Egypt, through Jerusalem, to Media. It is my destiny to forge a new world unity by spreading the Greek culture and language everywhere.

I will continue to establish my own personal cities, all called Alexandria, to serve as the outposts of trade and commerce to link the markets of Greece with my new empire. I decree the Athenian standard of coinage to be used as the basis of trade throughout the empire.

No longer will the wealth of Persia lie dormant in the King's treasury. Put it to work in the marketplace with public works for the benefit of all my new subjects. Introduce our Grecian way of life to my new subjects. Have the soldiers celebrate with sacrifices to the gods, torch races, and gymnastic contests...

*(Crowd sounds diminish as Alexander's
turns and enters palace)*

COURT HISTORIAN

O mighty Alexander, we have found in the archives of the King, the writings of one Daniel , a Hebrew prophet in exile during the reigns of two Babylonian and two Persian Kings. It reads; "Then a mighty King will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. After he has appeared, his empire will be broken up and parceled out to the four winds of heaven.

It will not go to his descendants.....

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Two/Three

(Alexander abruptly interjects)

ALEXANDER

Silence! ... Enough! ... Take this scroll to my private chamber. *(Historian leaves)*

The signs of my birth have assigned me a short span of life and to this I am resigned....but who did this impudent Daniel think he was!!Oh gods, have I not done enough in this short life, to sit among you?

(He turns and enters balcony again)

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!!

(Scrim fades out with fanfare, and a drum march effect as students leave with YEHUDAH in dim light)

ACT ONE ** SCENE THREE

(Moonlight comes up on HANNAH in the olive grove in Tekoa. PANUEL speaks to her from off stage.)

DEVORAH

Now Hannah, don't stay out too late in the grove tonight . If the Almighty intended us to watch over our crops that closely, we would have no need of a bed!

PANUEL *(offstage)*

That's right my daughter, we're not shepherds you know. Olive trees do not wander in the dark and get carried away by wolves. Besides, you need your rest. Remember the priest's servant will expect the oil to be delivered a few days ahead of time.

HANNAH

Yes Ema, Yes Abba, I'm sorry I stayed out so late last night. I lose all sense of time out here ...

DEVORAH

Well we lose all sense of sleep with the noise of your late night nibblings in the storeroom.

(DEVORAH heads in)

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Three

HANNAH

Yes, my ema There is no place in all of Judea like the hillsides of Tekoa. Good... , the moon and the stars shine bright tonight over this village of Amos. He was a dresser of fig trees and I, a dresser of the holy olive grove.

Yes, there to the north I can see the smoke from the evening sacrifice in Yerushalayim. How I love to spend time in the courts of the Lord. What it must have been like when the Glory filled the Most Holy Place!

HANNAH (cont'd)

I wonder what Shimon is up to. I remember when I used to tend him when his mother was visiting. His used to drive me up a stone wall with all his questions about Amos... (She lifts hands in prayer)

"Dear Creator in the heavens, I thank you for your love over us, and your provision for our family. It was Mosheh's words to our forefather Asher ... "Let Asher be blessed with children ... and let him dip his foot in oil." (Deut. 33.24)

Now we deal in the oil which fuels the sacred Menorah in the Temple. Thank you for leading our ancestors to this village in the time of good King Hezekiah, most of our tribe in the north mocked your ways. But Your grace on our family is manifold.

May I also be one who looks for the redemption of Yisrael as father's name Panuel declares.... Amen!"

(HANNAH begins to sing her song)

TO DWELL IN YOUR COURTS - by Helen Hooker

1. As Father Avraham gazed up into your heavens
I gaze on that same starry host
Now I'm one of those stars,
Yes, I'm a promised daughter
Shining, burning just for You

I will not go in to the chamber of my house
Or go up to the comfort of my bed
I will not give slumber to my eyes

Till I've watched with you, O Lord!

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Three/Four

To Dwell In Your Courts (cont)

2. Praises wait for You, Lord, in Yerushalayim
 Though our sins prevail
 You will provide atonement for our transgressions
 Our salvation you'll reveal

(To Dwell In Your Courts continued)

You will send the One who will carry all our sorrows
 He'll bring David's Kingdom again
 I will wait in hope , Oh G-d of my life!
 Lord come light our lamps again.

(Music ends and HANNAH feels a chill)

Oh no, it is getting so late again. I must get some rest for my trip to Yerushalayim. Perhaps my father will find someone in Zion to be my husband! Oh to be able to visit the Courts of the Lord everyday.....

DEVORAH

Hannah, are you nightdreaming and stargazing so late again? Come in from the cold! You know your abba likes you to start early in the morning. Don't get him upset.... *(They turn to go in...)*

DEVORAH *(Cont'd)*

Some men are like new sandals, the cheaper they are, the more they squeak....

(Lights fade on grove and come up on the home courtyard where SHIMON enters as Miriam is busy cleaning up)

ACT ONE ** SCENE FOUR

MIRIAM

Shimon, you are back a bit late. Did you make it to the market?

SHIMON

Yes, Ema, The Rabbi had some very interesting teaching on Daniel and Alexander the Great. Now that was three

clusters of figs and two of grapes, right?

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Four

MIRIAM

No, no , you've got it backwards, two of figs/ three of grapes....Is Yehudah teaching you the sort of things that will get you anywhere? Like, up a rung or two on Ya'akov's ladder so to speak?

SHIMON

He is a very practical teacher, but not too many of the younger Rabbis seem to appreciate his depth.

MIRIAM

I've also heard he is not very well travelled ... Alexandria...once .. , perhaps you might consider someone with more contacts on the inside...

(PALAT enters courtyard suddenly and MIRIAM abruptly changes topics..)

MIRIAM *(cont'd)*

.... There surely must be a way to sell our menorahs to a larger market, especially with the custom Hanukkiyah lamps we are offering. I've been painting up some new designs as well.

PALAT

Ah, so we are talking shop, good... Shimon by the way, I finished up the rush order for the coast. The trader leaves soon. We are getting some custom orders from important liaisons with the religious parties. Now we really need to get the hustle on!

(SHIMON hurries out to the shop)

PALAT

I got a list from Panuel and it's got the *RIGHT* people on it! *(MIRIAM perks up in excitement PALAT goes out singing in a dance)*

PALAT *(Singing)*

One hundred years since the Maccabees, won for us a very great victory, So many customers its just a mystery, But if my bills are paid it will make history!
La,la,la.la....

(Lights fade on courtyard and come

*back slowly up on shop after a brief
musical bridge of 100 years.)*

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Five

ACT ONE ** SCENE FIVE

*(SHIMON, PALAT, & MIRIAM deal with
a procession of customers as they
place their orders. The Pharisee
Benyamin enters first.)*

PALAT

Shalom to you my friend! How may we serve you today?

BENYAMIN

Shalom Aleichim! My name is Benyamin ben Calev. I am a membership agent for the Perushim party. I wish to place a order for a commemorative Hanukkah lamp.

We would like to see a model made which communicates values we as Pharisees hold dear. Perhaps something with a little protection to keep it safe?

MIRIAM

Allow me to introduce our family. Palat my husband you have met, I am Miriam who will do the design artwork. And this is our son Shimon, an eager and aspiring scholar who also works the craft.

PALAT

We will be happy to begin your project right away. I'm sure we can come up with a pleasing design.

BENYAMIN

Scholar you say? Well I see that I have come to the right place. We are always looking for new blood. Shimon, I like that name. One of 12 sons of Ya'akov. A good start. Why do I not know your family?

SHIMON

My father moved here from Ziklag just recently. He used to make swords for the Hasmonean army ... How do you begin to study for the Perushim?

BENYAMIN

Hmm...Hasmoneans...you of course realize that we Perushim take a dim view of kings who are not from the

tribe of Judah. And then there's the question of priesthood..... We might have to look into your background a bit more. But I'll send over an application.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Five

MIRIAM

Blessings on you, son of Calev. I'm sure you will be most pleased with Shimon's potential.

PALAT

We'll be contacting you as soon as your lamp is ready. And we also supply olive oil from a grove my brother-in-law owns right beside the Temple grove in Tekoa. It is very popular. Shalom!

(BENYAMIN exits and ALEXANDER the Sadducee enters, and as they cross paths they make two opposite arcs as if magnetically repulsed)

PALAT

Shalom! Can we be of some help? You saw our sign outside perhaps?

ALEXANDER

Hail! I'm Alexander of the Zaddukim party and I understand you design custom menorahs. As the youngest member ever of the Sanhedrin when I was 28, I want something really unique for the One Hundredth.

(MIRIAM nearly swoons in excitement)

My parents named me after Alexander the Great, who was favorable to the people of Yisrael. We would like something a little more cosmopolitan. Something that would show our ability as Sadducees to work with the ruling powers. Perhaps with some Greek on it, and just a touch more of Roman numerals?

MIRIAM

Of course. We have been expecting your order and my son Shimon, who is studying to be a scholar can help us with the languages. Do you have any openings for new Zaddukim?

SHIMON

We have just been learning about Alexander at yeshiva.

ALEXANDER

We are always on the lookout for those with the highest potential. At what Yeshiva are you studying?

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene FiveSHIMON

That of the Hakam, the Wisdom Teacher, Yehudah ben David!

ALEXANDER

Yehudah! Don't put him at the top of your resume. I know him as an advisor to the Sanhedrin. He has not been easy to take advice from! ... Still, we can use students who have absorbed his discipline. Some of your ideas may need adjusting. But Try it out. Good day!

(ALEXANDER exits, and briefly has an argument at the door with LEMUEL ben Ezra the Scribe who has just entered)

LEMUEL

There you are! My client says these bills to your party are over three months due!

ALEXANDER

This is most rude of you! I have an important appointment. See my assistant and make an appointment next week! Boker Tov!

PALAT

Shalom my lettered friend. I see you have acquaintance with our previous customer. It's the first time we have met him. Let me introduce my family. This is my fine wife, and my son who is a student, and an even better metalworker. If it's Menorah's you want, you have the wisdom of King Shlomo to come here!

LEMUEL

Thank you for your warm and discerning greeting. I am Lemuel ben Ezra of the Soferim. The Scribes have sent me as their secretary, to order, you know what. We need something that reflects our legal profession. Blessed that you should mention Shlomo, son of David. Perhaps something along the lines of the scales of justice or some writing instruments?

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Five

MIRIAM

Our son Shimon practices beautiful calligraphy, and has purchased a Daniel Scroll from your library by the Temple. I'm sure he will have some scholarly inspiration for your project. Perhaps you are looking for an apprentice?

SHIMON

I am very interested in defending the right of the poor. And, of course, in the copying of the Torah. But I don't like some parts of the Greek translation, because my Rabbi says there are errors in the text.

LEMUEL

We need motivated young men like you and advancement can come quickly. However, I would beg to differ with you on the Greek translation. One of the 72 scribes who translated it down in Alexandria, Mika-el ben Avi, was my grandfather.

(PALAT's family all cringe)

PALAT

Hmm... Well we will let you know when your order is complete. Let me assure you that we always honor our contracts, especially to lawyers! Shalom!

(LEMUEL exits, there is a distinct pause before ZADDOK ben Eliyah the Essene enters from back of theatre and steals in behind MIRIAM in a reclusive manner.)

MIRIAM *(slowly)*

Shimon, you have to learn not to be so forthright in speaking everything you know. Remember, honey is always better than vinegar! (Startled) AAHhhhhaaa!!

(Miriam is startled by Zaddok who is hidden in a dusty hooded cloak. PALAT moves between them quickly)

PALAT

Excuse me, my friend. Can we be assisting you?

Looks like you have come through quite a duststorm!

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Five

ZADDOK

Forgive me, I am not used to being around such a crowded city. I understand you are making the item that my Council has sent me for. I live in the assembly of the camp of the Hasidim at Qumran.

We only enter this city through the gate of the Essenes. And while the corrupt High Priest reigns, as little as possible.

SHIMON

How can we serve you? aaaahh.. I didn't catch your name.

ZADDOK

Oh it's not important, ... Zaddok ben Eliyah. We are looking for a Menorah which is very plain in design. Something that can be easily hid in case of a catastrophe.

PALAT

Are you expecting anything Zaddok, we don't know about?

(MIRIAM bursts through in a frenzy)

MIRIAM

It's the Idumeans, isn't it? They once captured me outside of Ziklag for ransom. May the Holy One be praised for rescuing me from the hands of Antipater.

(ZADDOK nods no and calms her.)

SHIMON

Do you know anything about the secrets of Daniel?

ZADDOK

I am taught by the disciples of the great Teacher of Righteousness. It is said He knew all of these mysteries.

SHIMON

Shekinah! How can I get to be their student?

ZADDOK

They teach only those who have taken the two years to qualify for the Council. And you must take a vow not to marry.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Five/Six

(SHIMON and MIRIAM step back in dismay)

MIRIAM

No marriage? I don't know about that... but I do like the access to the secret knowledge of this Teacher,,, It definitely would give one a leg up...

ZADDOK

Why did your family move from the small town of Ziklag to *this* corrupt capital. The Messiah has not yet cleansed it? That's not a good sign.

PALAT *(in jest)*

Well, you'll have to give me a tour of your metal shop at the camp someday? ... We'll be in touch, I hope you can wait around a few days?

ZADDOK

Alright, but just a few days, I should be getting back.

(The sound of rushing chariots is heard)

I prefer exploring caves around Qumran, to street dodging these mad Yehu's in their careening chariots. Shalom, if you can find it here!

(Zaddok exits and lights fade on workshop as more horses and markets sounds are heard , the light then rises on the Yeshiva of Yehudah, where the Rabbi is lost in thought before his students arrive)

ACT ONE ** SCENE SIXYEHUDAH *(Holding a medallion)*

Ah how I miss you my dear wife Adah.. its been two years. We had a great life together... three lovely daughters and two hardworking sons,... but neither of them a scholar. You were so loving with my father. He longed for the days when he as a mason, helped the Maccabees restore the Temple. He could take me places

there where the other boys weren't allowed. Ah Yes....

(*Music of GLORY OF THE LORD - by Larry*

Heather as

Yehudah mimes walking around the Temple)

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Six

Glory Of The Lord

1. Once as a young boy, going to the Temple
I was fascinated by the grand and simple
Veil enclosing the Holy Ground of History
Menorah burning in the sacred place of mystery
2. But off in the corner of the court of Israel
Stood an elder who in wisdom was a deep well
Lost in prayer as Father greeted him discreetly
As he turned around his face was shining brightly!

Chr. I

He said; "I pray for the Glory of the Lord
To return to His dwelling place
Ezekiel saw it leave o'er the Mount to the East."
But I thought I saw a glimmer- on the old man's face!

(Glory of the Lord cont'n)

3. Off in the desert, in the land of Midian
Mosheh guarded over sheep that had been given him
When it the distance by the Mount of Sinai
He saw a burning bush but had to rub his eyeieyeieyes
4. How could it burn and yet not be a shambles
"Your on HOLY GROUND so quick take off your sandals!"
Later on the Mount he said show me your GLORY
He saw just the back, but you know the storororree..

Chr II

He asked to gaze on the glory of the LORD
As the HOLY ONE passed him by!
He came down from the Mount with a face so bright:
He had to wear a veil to keep from hurting their eyes!
Lai,lai , lai , lai.....

(*Voice and music trail off as mystified students
peer in from doorway and then enter
gingerly*)

YEHUDAH

Ahem!... Today we will learn a history lesson from an
awesome statue that is predicted to topple. But in order
to prevent our own classroom topple, we will ask Zebulun

to take a seat nearer to the floor.

(He motions Shimon to take the seat)

We now study the prophet Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Babylon.

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Six

(He points to a lifesize cloth tapestry of a statue which is now on the Yeshiva wall next to the Scrim.)

In it he describes an enormous statue. The parts of the statue relate to four different kingdoms, each one inferior in prestige to the one that came before it.

At the top was the golden head representing Nebuchadnezzar's Kingdom of Babylon. Next, the chest and arms of silver being the kingdom of the four Persian kings.

Following that, the belly and thighs of bronze representing the Greek Kingdom, which begins when Darius is defeated by Alexander the Great. Alexander's general Ptolemy took over Egypt and his general Seleucus gained command of Syria.

Since then their leaders have fought back and forth for control of our fateful land of promise. In War after war, spinning like a top, we have been fought over and fought against.

Lastly, the statue is completed by the legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. It doesn't take a pyramid builder to figure out what this last kingdom is.

To the north of us the Roman general Pompey has defeated Mithradates, the strongest Greek defender. We shall return to a study of the coming Roman kingdom at our next lesson. Yes Shimon, you have a question?

SHIMON

Rabbi Yehudah, I find these mysteries hard to understand. Have you ever been to any of these countries represented by the statue?

YEHUDAH

Well , I have to admit I have only been to Alexandria once. You can't pull two hides off of one ox! I had to depend on the writings of others who have been to Babylon and Persia.

SHIMON

I have heard of a Teacher of Righteousness, who had the answers to all these mysteries. Did you ever meet him before he died?

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene SixYEHUDAH

No, I did not. But I would be glad to talk with you about this out of class. It is a most interesting subject. Let us first complete our lesson on the Greek period.

We are about to begin the celebrations for the one hundredth anniversary of Hanukkah. We shall take a look at what Daniel predicted about these events.

YEHUDAH (cont'd)

An evil Selucid ruler named Antiochus Epiphanes, was determined to bring the Jewish people fully into Greek culture.

Daniel predicted; "A despicable person will arise .. Who will seize the Kingdom by intrigue ... he will show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. And forces from Him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation." (Dan. 11:21,31)

(School scene freezes and Scrim with ANTIOCHUS by the Temple Altar activates. The squealing of a pig being sacrificed is heard before the scrim lights, then ANTIOCHUS is seen at the side of the Temple Altar the shadow of a dead pig on it)

ANTIOCHUS

There! I have accomplished the ultimate in bringing these rebellious Hebrews down to their size. The forbidden swine on the altar. I am a Goliath no Israelite can match! I, Antiochus the fourth, am called Epiphanes, the god's beloved. I have replaced their high cohen with a priest of my own, Menelaus, who will obey me.

I rededicate this Temple to Zeus, the chief of gods.

I, Antiochus, will complete what the great Alexander set out to do. I will crush all resistance in my path and become the foremost of all Kings. Hahahaha...

(Scrim fades out as Antiochus gives an evil laugh and menacing music plays)

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Seven

(Sound of birds in the morning comes in and the dawn comes up on the family busy in the workshop)

ACT ONE ** SCENE SEVEN

PALAT

Excellent! We are well on our way to completing the specialty orders. They should all be ready in time.

SHIMON

It's been a real crush to get them done, with my studies and all. Rabbi Yehudah has agreed to share the Maccabee's story with us at the Hanukah party. He is also bringing his statue tapestry to tell the story with! *(SHIMON goes into home)*

MIRIAM

Since we are the hosts of the party on our street this year, why don't we invite the religious school recruiters in to celebrate the last day with us? They could all bring their Hanukkiyah. And it would be a good opportunity for Shimon to show his stuff as an student.

PALAT

Miriam, It would not be a good thing to have them all here at once. We could run into problems. You know we need to cultivate repeat customers.

MIRIAM

Our son's future hangs on a cliff, and you worry about next year's shekels. That NOAH would think so in such a situation! *(Pointing to imaginary Ark)*

PALAT *(Gesturing to same)*

That NOAH'S WIFE, would double the mess to clean up in the

bottom of the Ark!

*(Miriam leaves in a huff and
enters the courtyard scheming to herself)*

MIRIAM

Such a Hanukkah party as this street has never seen!
And how much better if our SHIMON qualifies for not just
one profession, but ALL FOUR!

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Seven

*(MIRIAM begins her comedy solo which gradually
involves Shimon, family, then the whole
marketplace)*

OH SHIMI, SHIMI SHOW US WHAT IT TAKES

by Larry Heather

(Klezmer Style Instrumentation, lively)

Chorus One:

Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes,
Such an opportunity we never had before
Back in Ziklag you had nothing but a closing door
But here in Zion waiting is so much in store,
Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes.

Verse One:

It's peaceful now but you never know for sure,
You must prepare, for the Romans are astir.
It will not take much, to put history in a blur,
My Son , we are depending on you.

Chorus One:

Verse Two: *(Shimon enters)*

Your our only child, bringing to our life great joy,
You've grown so fast we say, "Where's our little boy."
The spirit of Elijah , a mind like Solomon..
A double portion of each one will do.

Chorus Two: *(mimes with Devorah)*

Oh my neighbor Golda brags about her son,
I invite her to the market for a little fun,
But it's sure you're going to hear before you walk-far
She reminds you that her brilliant son's a doc-tar....
Oh Shimi Shimi show them what it takes.

Bridge: *(Miriam stands behind one recruiter for each stanza who are all in a freeze)*

It's as Hebrew as a Pomegranate Punch, *(Behind Zaddok the Hasid, brushes against
Dusty cloak and Miriam almost sneezes)*
To want your son to rise above the bunch.

To do exploit's for the Lord as you stand *(Behind Lemuel the Sofer)*
A scholar of renown throughout the Land.

I've the best intentions for, *(Behind Benyamin the Perush))*
But there's times you need to push the door

That's what imaginations for, *(Behind Alexander the Z'adduk)*

To soar to heights unknown before....
 (Oh Shimi, Shimi, sometimes the door you have to jimmy!!)

Chorus One: (Twice Again– with Big Ending) (Sung with all in marketplace)

Tree Of Light, Act One, Scene Seven

Chorus One(First Time)

Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes,
 Such an opportunity we never had before
 Back in Ziklag you had nothing but a closing door
 But here in Zion waiting is so much in store,
 Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes.

Chorus One(2nd Time):

Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes,
 Such an opportunity we never had before
 Back in Ziklag you had nothing but a closing door
 But here in Zion waiting is so much in store,
 Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes.

Chorus One(3rd. Time):

Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes,
 Such an opportunity we never had before
 Back in Ziklag you had nothing but a closing door
 But here in Zion waiting is so much in store,
 Oh Shimi, Shimi show us what it takes.

END OF ACT ONE *** INTERMISSION**

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene One

INTRODUCTION TO ACT TWO

*(Lights Rise on marketplace filling with people
singing the Reprise to One Hundred Years,
except recruiters, then crowds goes
offstage again)*

ONE HUNDRED YEARS ** REPRISE - By Larry Heather)Chr. One

One hundred years since the Maccabees
won for us a very great victory
Where they hid in the hills was a mystery
But When the Greeks were'nt looking they made history.

Verse Three:

3. Now we celebrate the days of dedication
Yudah cleansed the Temple from most vile desecration
Lit the holy lamps that beamed forth their light
A witness to the nations of the Adonai!!

(Bridge:)

One Hundred Years ago they shone so bright
Olive Oil that burned for eight days and night
The few against the many by their faith won out,
A great miracle happened here is what we SHOUT!

Chr. Two

One Hundred Years since the Maccabees
Won for us a very great victory *(now slowing,,)*
Now the looming shadow of Great Rome is now in view
When will Messiah shine for us to lead us through?

(Act Two Scene One dialogs below)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene One

ACT TWO ** SCENE ONE

(As Reprise ends Shiimon enters with HANNAH thru gate. HANNAH, who has just arrived in Yerushalayim, is catching up on the news from SHIMON as they enter the courtyard carrying jugs of her father's olive oil)

HANNAH

....Yes we were able to deliver all of the olive oil to the Temple. The harvest was right on time. And here is the oil from the grove to the east. Your father will sell this batch with his lamps.

SHIMON

How are things in Tekoa these days? Have you heard the echo of the fig-dressing prophet in the hills there lately?

HANNAH

Oh Shimon, no more questions about Amos please... I've answered all I know about... Your ema tells me you have some interesting guests coming to the Hanukkah party?

SHIMON

Yes, I guess it's time for me to be applying to a more specialized field of study. I do need to explore my possibilities, and Rabbi Yehudah does not seem to be exactly what I need to get there.

HANNAH

Shimon, are you serious! The Yeshiva of Rabbi Yehudah ben David is renowned in the south where I live. He is one of the finest wisdom teachers in all of Yisrael! You had better pray hard before you move on to someone else!

SHIMON

But there are so many other choices....I should try other paths with people who have more connections...

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene
One/Two

HANNAH

I will pray for you cousin Shimon. May Adonai light your path of future study. Surely the Almighty has something great in store for you!

(Devorah comes outside)

DEVORAH

Hannah, please come inside at once! MIRIAM is beside herself with all the preparations. Its not often you have so many scholars coming to a celebration. The *right* impressions must be made for our young scholar here. And one of them may be looking for a wife.

ACT TWO ** SCENE TWO

(HANNAH enters home)

PALAT

Well Devorah my sister, I'm disappointed Panuel was not able to come. But you have brought a good supply of lamp oil I see.

DEVORAH

Yes, he certainly made sure of that , but he had to stay to send off a new shipment to Alexandria. This is our busy season as well. But I couldn't miss the 100th celebration and all the excitement here!

MIRIAM *(entering courtyard)*

Devorah, it is so good to have you and Hannah here to help. I can't remember when I have put so much work into something. And so much depends on the success of this celebration. Hannah, could you finish adding the jelly to the fried sweetcakes?

HANNAH

Yes Aunt Miriam, it looks like there are about a minor prophet's dozen to go. I do hope you will have time to come to the Temple service after the party.

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Two

DEVORAH

So Miriam, are there any prospects among the guests you are inviting? Like some catch for my beautiful and talented daughter. Of course someone who lives in the city. Tekoa is so far from any real culture above agricultural fairs.

MIRIAM

Well, it might be tough to get a commitment from the Hasid. He won't marry, he won't live in the city... but the Sofer is young and well schooled,...on the other hand the Perush has got to be wealthy and prudent...but nothing would beat the connections of the Zadduk on the Sanhedrin....

DEVORAH

Wonderful! Three out of four is no reason to suck lemons! Hannah... go and get your festive headband and jewelry.

(Hannah pokes head out of house and returns)

PALAT *(enters court from shop)*

Ahh.. Miriam...Devorah.... Don't you think the agenda for this party is getting a little too crowded?

DEVORAH

My brother, the cautious one! When Fortune knocks, one must invite Him in, no matter what the crowd!

PALAT

You two have done a crowd's worth of scheming!..Adam was the luckiest man, he had no sisters! *(He returns to shop)*

DEVORAH

Miriam, is there anything else left to do?

MIRIAM

Yes Devorah, could you take the time to hide the Hasmonian coins around the courtyard?

(She hands her the bag of coins)

DEVORAH *(distracted)*

What more do you know of your guests?... their families. Is there anything to be gleamed from the

business records....

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Two

(DEVORAH & MIRIAM conspire in low voices)

MIRIAM

Palat, could you go quick like a gazelle to the market for some more Hebron grapes, and a jug of bitterwater for the Essene.

PALAT

Yes my sweet blossom. But please wind down a bit, your going to give us all indigestion before we start0 the feast. *(Aside to the audience)*.... The tongue has no bones, so its very loose...

(PALAT goes out, MIRIAM hums theme song)

MIRIAM *(Singing)*

Where they hid in the hills was a mystery,
But now it's time to place my son in history!....hmmm...

(SHIMON enters)

MIRIAM

Shimon, have you been studying the answers to the questions in the EXACT order that we set out?

SHIMON

Yes ema, I've got the order down, but it's going to be awfully complicated. Shouldn't we try something simpler? What if something goes wrong?

MIRIAM

You leave that to me! Don't get the shakes on me now. Breathe deeply and picture the falls of En Gedi in your mind. *(She points to a location in the distance)*
Now that's a picture of serenity!

(Students are peering into the gateway)

MIRIAM

Oh look, here are some of you classmates! Start them playing on the tops ...

(Guests begin to arrive and DEVORAH re-enters to

*evaluate candidates as they arrive.
Students start spinning tops and LEMUEL*

*the scribe with his Hanukkiyah comes in
with PALAT, who has supplies in hand)*
Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Two

LEMUEL

I must commend you for your fine workmanship. The combination of the Quills over the inkpots and the scales are exactly what I was hoping for. And here is our aspiring Scribe..Shimon, let me commend you for the fine handwriting on your application; the prospects are promising.

SHIMON

Thank you honorable transcriber of the Torah. I hope I prove worthy of your enquires.

(LEMUEL is seated by some family business records which he starts examining and correcting, then MIRIAM, shaking a tambourine, enters with BENYAMIN the Pharisee)

MIRIAM

Announcing Benjamin of the Perushim party.

PALAT

Welcome Benyamin. It is good to see you again. I see you have brought your Hanukiyah as well.

BENYAMIN

It is perfect in design. I especially appreciate the fence which can be expanded outwards.

(Walks by and observes HANNAH with serving tray)

And you young Shimon, you'll get far among the Perushim with a mother who keeps such a kosher kitchen as this!

SHIMON

I have come to understand your priorities on keeping things in their separate appointed places.

LEMUEL *(addressing PALAT)*

You have made some errors in your business records which I am taking the time to amend. A perfect record is a happy record!

*(PALAT observers, and forces a smile,
turns and half begins a choking action)*

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Two

*(DEVORAH leads BENYAMIN to a place where
little lattice fences are placed, which
he promptly begins to adjust outwards.
MIRIAM leads in ALEXANDER the Sadducee,
clearing the children before his path.)*

MIRIAM

Alexander, son of Calev ON THE SANHEDRIN - Did I not tell
you my son would do a beautiful job on the Roman
numerals?

ALEXANDER

Yes and I am impressed with the Greek laurels you have
painted on each of the ends. Shimon, your family seems
to bridge the cultures easily. And your father knows the
intricacies of trade! The Zaddukim will be pleased!

SHIMON

I understand you have been to Rome. I have much to
learn about the world around me. *(Motions to the west)*

DEVORAH *(brushing in)*

My daughter too is eager to travel and see the world!
Hannah, could you please serve the guests some mint tea?

*(PALAT leads ALEXANDER to his place
raised up higher than the others with
some small Corinthian columns behind him.
He begins to nervously play with a small
sceptrelike rod in a regal manner)*

*(Meanwhile, ZADDOK the Essene enters
unnoticed and takes a place in the middle
while the others are preoccupied. He
suddenly sneezes from his dusty cloak and
startles everyone.)*

SHIMON

Recruiter of the Hasidim! Welcome to my father's house.
I hoped that you had not gone away yet. Again, how many
year's wait to be taught by the disciples of the

Teacher?

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Two

ZADDOK

Exactly two. I must thank you for the plain design,
and the hiding of the lamps in the mouths of the caves.
The Guardian will be ecstatic!

*(Rabbi YEHUDAH is met at the door by
PALAT and HANNAH and takes a seat behind
all the others. LEMUEL takes out a
legal bill and begins an animated
discussion with ALEXANDER)*

*(BENYAMIN and) ZADDOK takeover a game of
tops in progress and begin to argue on
the proper rules)*

BENYAMIN

No, this will not do. The top should always spin to the
right, the favored hand of Elohim!

ZADDOK

That is not proper! It shouldn't spin joyfully until
the priesthood is restored! To the left, the left!
*(MIRIAM breaks between them to restore
decorum.)*

MIRIAM

Erev Tov to all of our guests this evening. We are
honored to have each of you in our home for the
celebration tonight. Let us join in a song while we
await the Rabbi's arrival.

*(HI'NE MA TOV - {Traditional} is sung and
students do*

*circle dance while a worried HANNAH
informs MIRIAM that the Rabbi has been
overlooked. He is hurried to the front by
PALAT as the chorus ends)*

(All Sing)

Hi'ne ma tov uma naim, shevet achim gam yachad (2x)
Hi'ne ma tov...shevet achim gam yachad (2x) Repeat

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene ThreeACT TWO ** SCENE THREEPALAT

Excuse our oversight, Rabbi Yehudah has arrived.
 Rabbi, could
 You bless our meal before the celebration begins?

YEHUDAH

Erev Tov, friends of PALAT ben Ishi and family.
 A warm reception especially to our distinguished guests.
 Shalom to you on this eighth and last night. Hanukkah
 is a feast of great joy and merriment. It does not have
 the solemnity of other occasions such as Yom Kippur.
 Certainly not a time to fast.

One is reminded of the neighbor of a frugal Rabbi,
 who was overheard saying to his friend;

"Why, our Rabbi is so poor, that if he didn't fast
 every Monday and Thursday, he'd starve to death."
 As you can see, the Lord has blessed me with the fat
 of many feasts.

(Yehudah Raise hands to bless)

"Dear Almighty Maker of the Heavens, we ask for your
 rich presence to be in our midst as we celebrate this
 Feast of Dedication. Bless the fruit of the earth and
 vine as we fellowship at this happy time. Amen!"

*(The traditional song MI Y'MALEL is sung
 and the women circle dance separate from
 the students and all the men at the
 urging of the Rabbi join in a line
 dance.)*

Who can retell the things that befell us?
 Who can count them?
 In ev'ry age a hero or sage arose to our aid.

(Repeat)

Sh'ma! At this time of year in days of yore
 The Maccabees our Temple did restore;
 And today our people as a priest
 Will arise, unite and be redeemed.

(Repeat 1st refrain and end.)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Three

HANNAH

Don't forget there are plenty of the fried sweetcakes, nectar, and bitterwater for those who are accustomed to it. We have taken the time to hide the Hanukkah coins around our dwelling, and all of our guests are welcome to search them out.

(The guests search in some places and find some coins. An argument breaks out between BENYAMIN and ALEXANDER over whose image should be on the Jewish coins; meanwhile the Essene is placing the tops at the mouths of his caves. Shimon bravely pours cups of bitter water for the Essene and himself. LEMUEL suddenly turns and is startled by the tapestry Yehudah has brought.)

ALEXANDER

Of course, its only proper that Shimon the Maccabee's picture be on the coins. A symbol of leadership!

BENYAMIN

No, I do not agree... Only a king descended from Yudah should be on the coins, David perhaps....

PALAT *(intervening)*

We will now ask the Rabbi Yehudah to start the lighting of the lamps and tell us the Hanukkah story.

YEHUDAH

Blessed art Thou, O Adonai our Elohim, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us to kindle the light of Hanukkah.

Blessed art Thou, O Adonai our Elohim, King of the Universe, who wrought miracles for our fathers in days of old, at this season.

(Lights are kindled on all the hanukkiyah from left to right, using the shammash. MIRIAM, HANNAH, and Devorah all have one candle lit to light the shammash candle for all the others. YEHUDAH continues the blessing.)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Three

YEHUDAH

We kindle these lights on account of the deliverance's, miracles and wonders which you did work for our fathers in those days at this season, by means of Thy holy cohenim. During all the eight days of Hanukkah these lights are sacred. It is not permitted for us to make any use of them; but only to look at them.

In order that we may give thanks and praise to Thy great name for Thy miracles, Thy wonders, and Thy deliverance's. Amen! *(Students start to act out story)*

My students have been studying the prophecies of Daniel concerning our times. We reviewed how Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the altar of the Temple and set up the abomination of desolation, an altar to *(Yehudah spits)* Zeus!

For over two years this terrible violation continued as Antiochus attempted to force our people to deny their faith. Then one day, an officer of Antiochus was killed at Modin by a godly Hasmonean named Mattathias. Armed resistance spread to the rugged hill country.

Yudah Maccabeus, one of the five sons of Mattathias, began to conquer large forces of soldiers sent by Antiochus to crush the resistance. But let Daniel speak directly. Of Antiochus Daniel predicted;

YEHUDAH *(Cont'd reading Tenach)*

"With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered..." (Dan. 11:32,33)

(Lights fade down on home as the scrim lights revealing Yudah Maccabee in battle dress, with his brother Shimon beside the altar holding a vial of sacred oil.)

YUDAH MACCABEE

Shimon, we can wait no longer to rededicate the Temple. We have rebuilt the defiled altar with new stones. The

Levites have stored the old ones until a prophet should come and tell us what to do with them.

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Three

SIMON MACCABEE

Yes, Yudah, we have waited long enough for the Hassidim's miracle. We have purged the Temple of the worship of Zeus, torn down the latticework of the cult prostitution, and fashioned new vessels for the worship rituals.

YUDAH MACCABEE

Mosheh dedicated the Tent of Meeting over eight days. King Shlomo dedicated the First Temple over the eight days of sukkot. And now let it be declared that we shall celebrate for eight days starting on the 25th of Kislev, a Feast of Lights. It is exactly three years since the profaner defiled the Holy Temple.

SHIMON MACCABEE (holding up vial)

We have found but one vessel of holy olive oil whose seal was not broken ... With that we will light the sacred Menorah, representing the presence of Elohim the Most High. But a new supply cannot be consecrated in time before it runs out! Nonetheless, Let us light the lamp of Elohim!

YUDAH MACCABEE

We have waited for months to see the fire come from Heaven to kindle the altar as it did in the times of Mosheh and King Shlomo. To our keen disappointment this seems not to be the time for such a sign. Yet the Hassidim blame us!

(Yudah Maccabee cont.)

Perhaps our miracle has already happened.
 "Dear Elohim, we thank you for the miracles, for the Redemption, for the mighty deeds and triumphs, and for the battles which You performed. You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few.

As your prophet Zechariah has said in the vision,
 "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Adonai Almighty. Amen!" - (Zechariah 4:6)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene FourACT TWO ** SCENE FOUR

(SCRIM fades and lights come back up on the courtyard. Rabbi YEHUDAH has moved to the back and is obscured by the others. Miriam is seen on side rechecking the order of the papyrus fragments with the questions of the scholars on them. PALAT reluctantly, is seen moving the tapestry of the statue to divide SHIMON from the sight of the rest but he is still fully visible to the audience.)

MIRIAM

Thank you for your presence at our Hanukkah celebration. As you know we have some special guests from the scholarly schools here tonight. My gifted son Shimon, in search of his future choice of vocation, has found much value in all of the fields of study.

In order to demonstrate Shimon's knowledge of each of the religious parties, the scholars will test him with questions they have submitted, while he is concealed behind the tapestry. In fact, they may even *disguise* their voices, in order to increase the challenge.

(SHIMON looks startled at this new condition. He begins to count his fingers, checking the order to come in his mind)

MIRIAM *(summoning guests)*

Our four guests that will alternate are; LEMUEL of the Soferim; BENYAMIN of the Perushim; ALEXANDER of the Zaddukim; and...er where did he go... or there you are.. ZADDOK of the Hassidim.

As the River Yarden in high season, let the questions flow!

(The scholars all switch positions and MIRIAM hands the first one to ALEXANDER)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Four

ALEXANDER

The party of the Zaddukim derive their origin from what Israelite ancestor?

SHIMON

From the sons of Zaddok whose father was installed as high priest under King Shlomo.

ZADDOK

A member of this community, upon rising in the morning, does what before he has said a word to anyone?

SHIMON

In the Assembly of the camps, a Hasid sings a hymn of praise to Elohim before he says any other words.

BENYAMIN

In our daily experiences, what kinds of law are used for ordering our lives?

SHIMON

The Perushim believe that both the written word of the Torah AND the oral word passed down to us from our fathers is to be observed.

LEMUEL

What Egyptian ruler gave orders that the Torah should be translated into Greek from Hebrew, ... how many were sent from Yerushalayim to translate it, ... how many days did it take?

SHIMON

The ruler Ptolemy Philadelphus in Alexandria... with 72 scribes .. in just 72 days!

(With a burst of excitement MIRIAM jumps for joy, suddenly flinging the remaining questions on the floor all out of order. She and PALAT desperately gather them up exchanging looks of dismay, and the scholars also scramble out of order. She nervously hands out the next question to Benjamin.)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Four

(Shimon is again seen counting his fingers in order. The mixed up answers Shimon begins to give bring varied reactions from whoever is pleased or offended by them.)

BENYAMIN

Young Shimon, can you tell me what kind of penalties you would impose for inns near Yerushalayim whose menus do not list kosher food?

SHIMON

If they contained but one small mistake, they would be taken, burned, and buried in the ground!

ALEXANDER

What is the best way to foster a positive relationship with the Roman General Pompey, as he heads this way from the north?

SHIMON

Such a one should be made to study in the city beside a house of noisy donkey merchants, until he repents to the Guardian of the Community.

(Reactions of Scholars grow more confused and divided. PALAT is off to side holding his head with hands)

LEMUEL

If a newly married man finds that his wife can't cook worth lentils, what should he say to his new father in law?

SHIMON

Your cook must satisfy the customers needs, or your licence to sell will be pulled from you!

ZADDOK

If a student is not able to keep silent while his instructor is teaching, how should he be disciplined?

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Four

SHIMON

When he enters, a fanfare of trumpets should be blown and flower petals thrown at his feet, to persuade him to negotiate.

(Shimon and the Questioners grow increasingly restive and divided. Meanwhile, HANNAH enters with a tray of sweetbread and PALAT makes a hopeless effort towards crowd control.)

PALAT

Would you like another serving of sweetbread?

SHIMON *(blindly)*

.....No!.. for the Teacher of Righteousness has urged us to be moderate in our pleasures.

ALEXANDER *(exasperated)*

...By what name should the Roman Governor be addressed when He pays a state visit?

SHIMON *(disoriented)*

Ohoo...HONEY?

BENYAMIN *(perfunctory)*

..... What personality best describes the most honored leader of the Perushim party?

SHIMON *(quickly)*

... AhhhhaaVINEGAR??!

(All Pandemonium breaks out as the recruiters begin to fight in a square. SHIMON is pulled into the center by MIRIAM to resolve the dispute. PALAT tries unsuccessfully to mediate on the borders.. The situation continues to deteriorate, they thrust their hands on opposite sides of SHIMON's shoulders in an effort to direct their maledictions to the intended victim on the other side.)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Four

BENYAMIN (To ALEXANDER)

May you own five ships of gold -- ALL WRECKED!

ALEXANDER (To BENYAMIN)

May you spend all you have on physicians!

ZADDOK (To LEMUEL)

May you be seized by a nine year convulsion!

LEMUEL (To ZADDOK)

May all your teeth fall out, except one, so you can have a toothache!

(The Rabbi YEHUDAH forcefully intervenes)

YEHUDAH

SHALOM! SHALOM!!!! For the sake of my sanity, and that of my student Shimon, I must intervene! Shimon my son, just as wheat cannot be without some straw, so no dream is without some nonsense.

(Scholars sheepishly drift back to their original places.)

YEHUDAH (cont'd.)

And what a nonsense-fest we are having! Storms pass, but their driftwood remains.

Your dream is one of great worth. To seek a vocation of study that will open to you the wisdom of the ages! And how do we know we are attaining that wisdom? Where many go, no grass grows! One coin in a bottle rattles; the bottle filled with coins makes no sound!

(YEHUDAH turns to the four recruiters and addresses them one by one starting with LEMUEL the Sofer)

YEHUDAH (Turning To LEMUEL)

Those who consider a thing proved, simply because it is in print are fools! Don't make fun of the ignorant, you may be maligning your ancestry! The world stands firm because of those who close their lips during a quarrel.

(To ALEXANDER the Zudduk)

No office can dignify a man, but many a man dignifies his office. Impudence is sovereignty without a crown. More smoke than roast!

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Four

(To ZADDOK the Hasid)

The door which is not opened for a beggar, will open for a doctor. In the desert, thornbushes are veritable fir trees! A little charm does no harm!

(To BENYAMIN the Perush)

Some men can't even spare a sigh. No physician can cure a prejudice, which is a blindness of the mind! Don't make a fence that is more expensive than what is fenced in!!

(Lights fade on courtyard, A full verse of A DEDICATION SONG - by Helen Hooker

played as an

instrumental as SHIMON, in obviously distress, goes outside in the night and prays. Meanwhile, the other guests are bid a silent farewell one by one and family exits to home after PALAT returns the tapestry to the wall. This leaves only a prayerful backlit Rabbi YEHUDAH in the courtyard looking on. SHIMON begins to sing)

1. O Lord at last, I turn my soul to You, alone
I hear Your voice, as wisdom calling me to Her home
I pull down ev'ry thought, ev'ry idol
That competes with You for my heart
Send Your light, send Your truth, let them guide me
I surrender now, every part

2. I dedicate my purpose Adonai, to you
I give my mind as a lamp to be lit\ only by You
Shine the light of Your Word into my darkness
Cause my prideful heart to understand
Fill my anxious thoughts with Your Wisdom
Let me burn with Light from above...

(Light fades as instruments slowly and stop as light come back up on Yeshiva where students along with SHIMON gather for another class.)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene FiveACT TWO ** SCENE FIVEYEHUDAH

Well my young seekers, it is good to have you back in class after all the excitement of yesterday. We shall complete our study of the Hanukkah predictions from Daniel and then look at a final vision from the prophet Zechariah.

Zebulun, stay with me! Many are those who slumber at the threshold of a rich storehouse and fail to enter in! To seek wisdom in old age is like a mark in the sand; To seek wisdom in youth is like an inscription on stone!

What is the answer to the question of our day? Why, one hundred years after the Hanukkah victory of the Maccabees, do we see the veil of Roman oppression looming over us? Why no fire of ELOHIM on the altar?

The answer is found in the tapestry which separated Shimon, and the vocation of study he was seeking.

Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Empire of gold; the silver Kingdom of the Persian Darius; the bronze Grecian Marketplace of Alexander the Great. This culture of the Marketplace has been a divine preparation. An established network of trade routes, a common currency, and a commerce version of the Greek language.

With the Torah now in this language, the message of the one God and His Kingship over the nations can be spread far and wide. Rather than compromise the faith of our Father Avraham with the idolatry of the Greeks, the faith will be the overcomer. But, as Daniel predicts, there is more to come! Shimon could you continue the reading from the last lesson?

SHIMON

"Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron - for iron breaks and smashes everthing, . . . so it will crush and break all the others. As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. In the time of those kings, the Elohim of Heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed." (Dan. 2:40, 42, 44a)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Five

Shimon (cont)

Of course, that's what Daniel meant! The Greeks produced goods and traded them in the marketplaces of their kingdom. The Romans excel in military power but produce little else to trade with. Their kingdom holds together only by smashing nations, and then exploiting their riches. When they run out of nations.....

(Other students begin to look amazed and dismayed at SHIMON's rapid advancements)

YEHUDAH

An excellent insight Shimon! The Adonai has blessed you with something I have never considered. Look what Daniel then tells us, "While you were watching a rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands..struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold...Broken to pieces like chaff, the wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock which struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth."

(Dan. 2:34.35,45b)

SHIMON (interjecting)

Did not King David speak "He alone is my Rock and my salvation, he is my fortress, I will not be shaken."

(Ps. 62:2)

Surely this Rock is the coming Messiah who is to establish the Kingdom of Elohim on earth! The Menorah has a shammash, a servant candle, to light all the other lamps! So the prophet Yeshayahu speaks of the Shammash of the Adonai. "Here is my Servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight.a light that will bring revelation to the Goyim, and glory to your people Yisrael"

(Is. 42:1/Lk.2:32)

YEHUDAH

BARUCH HA SHEM ADONAI! The Elohim of our fathers is granting you insight now that you have focused on the pursuit of true wisdom! Perhaps YOU will be the one to recognize and greet the Messiah!

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Five

Yehudah(cont.)

No study of the history of the Hanukkah season would be complete without recounting the vision of the Menorah amidst the Olive trees given to the prophet Z'kharyah.

"Then the angel .. wakened me ... and asked me, 'What do you see?' I answered, 'I see a solid gold Menorah with a bowl at the top and seven lights on it, with seven channels to the lights. And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on the left."

"I asked the angel ... What are these? This is the word of the Adonai to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Adonai Shaddai. ... These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth."

(Zech. 4: 1a,c;2-6;14)

SHIMON

Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord! Of course! The vision is a perfect illustration of what Hanukkah points to in the future. The Menorah is Israel bearing spiritual light to all nations about the Creator of all men. The two olive trees represent the priest Yohua and the governor Zerubbabel. The olive oil represents the Ruach Ha Kodesh, the Holy Spirit of Elohim.

Like oil, the Ruach Ha Kodesh lubricates against wear in the service of Elohim, promotes healing, lights our path, warms our spirits, gives us joyful energy, adorns our bodies, and makes our faces shine.

The Menorah of the Temple depends on priests to keep it burning. The Menorah of Z'kharyah's vision with its multiplied channels of fresh supply, depends on no man for its witness of light.

We, as witnesses of the Adonai are like the wicks of the lamps. Dependent on the oil to give light to others, from hour to hour supplied anew.

(Rabbi YEHUDAH gives a cheer and begins to dance with joy with SHIMON as a lively melody strikes up. {ie. Klezmer style with clarinet} The other students initially are jealous and throw balls of

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Six

*scrunched up paypri at SHIMON but
restrain themselves after they see the
Rabbi's exuberance. Lights fade as
students follow YEHUDAH and SHIMON in a
line dance out the door.)*

ACT TWO ** SCENE SIX

*(Night lights come up on HANNAH at the
Tekoa olive grove, crickets chirping)*

HANNAH

How I treasure my visit to Yerushalayim for the
celebration. I long to return there to live so I can
spend time in the courts of the Holy One. I can't stop
telling my friends about all I saw. Especially about
the commotion at the party..... (Thunder sounds)

"Dear Lord, I thank you for the way you have settled
Shimon's spirit to follow your true path of wisdom.
Please prepare him for the great purpose you have for
him in the future."

*(At this point HANNAH sings the last verse
of her song, TO DWELL IN YOUR COURTS -
by Helen Hooker after a brief intro.)*

Blessed is the one you cause to approach you
That he may dwell in your courts
I'll be satisfied with the goodness of Your House
Of Your Holy Temple

Blessed are those who hide in Your secret place
I have set my heart on pilgrimage to You
I have set my love on You...

*(Music ends and the renewed sounds
of thunder fill the air)*

DEVORAH

Hannah! Please come in at once! The weather is turning
bad. There is so much to do tomorrow and I want you to
write a letter to that young scribe up in Jerusalem
aahaa yes, Lemuel. Your abba is going up next week and
may drop by for a chat. Forget about Nabal in Tekoa. He
is mediocre. Not close to wise, and not far from
foolish!

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Six

(Lights fade as HANNAH & DEVORAH go in while the sounds of a storm grows stronger. A stage hand anchors a strong filament line to center stage which goes up to a black mountain outline on the side of the theatre wall in the audience. A costumed florescent actor takes up position in the same poise as the statue on the tapestry and freezes. The black light is activated as an errie music chords itself through the dark. In the workshop {stage right} the stone forge has had a large tumbleweed placed on it and instead of glowing coals one now sees a burning bush with Moses taking off his sandals and kneeling before it.

The focus shifts to stage left in the Tekoa olive grove where the Menorah of Zechariah's vision is seen floating between two olive trees {flat cutouts or 3d} All Florescent. Then the sound of armies battling amidst the thunder comes in. The actor- statue animates and begins challenging the nations around the stage to battle. Suddenly a light flashes on the summit of the mountain and the live statue challenges it with his sword at center stage. A jagged rock {foam & fabric} comes from the peak down the line to hit the live statue at its feet and in a puff of smoke it falls to the ground and disappears. The clamor abruptly stops and the intro to the song IN OUR DAYS - by Helen Hooker begins while the scrim activates and the outline of another mountain rolls upward in the scrim appearing to grow from the smaller rock. And the song is sung by offstage vocalists)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Six/Seven

IN OUR DAYS

1. In our days, the God of heaven will set up
 In our days, the God of heaven will set up
 A Kingdom that will never be destroyed
 A Kingdom that will never be destroyed
 Or left for others - - In our days! (Dan. 2:44)

In Our Days (cont)

2. In our days prepare the way of the Lord
 Soon will come, the tender mercy of our God
 Give His people the knowledge of salvation
 For the Morning Star will rise on us
 From heaven -- In our days!....

*(Scrim fades slowly in the last verse
 and music ends in the dark.)*

ACT TWO ** SCENE SEVEN

*Music sound track begins and Scrim
 lights in the Temple for New Testament
 ending of LUKE 2:25-40 with an elderly
 SHIMON, HANNAH, and MIRYAM , YOSEF, and
 baby YESHUA and a few Temple
 bystanders.)*

NARRATOR (all voiceovers)

"There was in Yerushalayim a man named Shimon. This man was righteous man, he was devout, he waited eagerly for G-d to comfort Yisrael, and the Ruach Ha Kodesh was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Ruach Ha Kodesh that he would not die before he had seen the Messiah of Adonai.

*(An aged SHIMON enters from scrim right
 to encounter MIRYAM and YOSEF and the
 baby YESHUA coming from scrim left)*

Prompted by the Spirit, he went into the Temple courts; and when the parents brought in the child Yeshua to do for him what the Torah required, Shimon took him in his arms, made a b'rakkah to G-d, and said,

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Seven

SHIMON

"Now, Adonai, according to your word, Your shammash is at peace as you let him go;
For I have seen with my own eyes your Yeshu'ah,
Which you prepared in the presence of all peoples -
A light that will bring revelation to the Goyim, And
glory to your people Israel."

NARRATOR

Yeshua's father and mother were marvelling at the things Shimon was saying about him. Shimon blessed them and said to the child's mother Miryam,....

SHIMON

"This child will cause many in Israel to fall and to rise, He will become a sign whom people will speak against; Moreover, a sword will pierce your own heart too,
All this will happen in order to reveal many people's innermost thoughts."

*(SHIMON exits scrim right and an aged
HANNAH and observers enters from same)*

NARRATOR

There was also a prophetess named Hannah bat Panuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was a very old woman - she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and she had remained a widow ever since; now she was eighty-four.

She never left the Temple grounds but worshipped there night and day, fasting and praying. She came by that moment and began thanking G-d and speaking about the child to everyone who was waiting for Yerushalayim to be liberated. (HANNAH exits..)

When Yosef and Miryam had finished doing everything required by the Torah of Adonai, they returned to the Galil, to their own town Natzeret."

** (Luke 2:25-40)

Tree Of Light, Act Two, Scene Seven

(They exit and the reprise of IN OUR DAYS vs. 1 & 3, begins as entire CAST assembles for curtain call and sing along)

*** Luke 2:25-40 excerpted from the Jewish New Testament, by Dr. David H. Stern, P.O. Box 615, Clarksville, MD. 21029, (410)764-6144, Used with permission.*

IN OURS DAYS (reprise) - by Helen Hooker

1. In our days the God of heaven will set up
In our days the God of heaven will set up
A Kingdom that will never be destroyed
A Kingdom that will never be destroyed
Or left for others - In our days!

3. In our days, prepare the way of the Lord
Now has come, the tender mercy of our God
Give His people the knowledge of salvation
For the Morning Star, has ris'n on us
From heaven In our days!

END OF ACT TWO ** CURTAIN