

IN A WEEK'S TIME

by Marilyn D. Bacon



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Snapshots of Holy Week

Marilyn D. Bacon

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MIRIAM

A widow in the city of Jerusalem

JOSIAH

Miriam's young son

JOANNA

Miriam's neighbor and friend

CHOIR and CITIZENS

Two or more citizens

PRODUCTION NOTES

Miriam acts as both a character and narrator, stepping forward from the room set when she is in the latter role. She speaks with fervor about the events of the most important week in history. The roles of Miriam and Joanna are suited for teenagers or adults. The role of Josiah is suitable for a young child.

The play is centered in the home of Miriam. Simple furnishings are placed at the left of the set: a simple wooden table with earthen bowls, wooden utensils, and a pitcher on it, two chairs, and a basket on the floor. Actors may simply enter from the far left, as through a door. For more elaborate sets a door may be placed at far left for entry into Miriam's home.

The only required props are a palm frond (real or fake) and a coin.

Costumes are typical biblical attire: robes, head coverings, and sandals. Josiah wears a coat in the first scene.

Songs: Two of the songs, "Jesus Loves the Little Children" and "Were You There?" are in the public domain and are widely available in hymnals and other sources. "Ride on, King Jesus" by Henry Panion, copyright © 1990 HPIII Music Publishing. CCLI # 5678446. "He Touched Me" by William J. Gaither, copyright © 1964 William J. Gaither, Inc. CCLI # 13072. "Because He Lives" by Gloria Gaither and William J. Gaither, copyright © 1971 William J. Gaither, Inc. CCLI # 16880.

Run time: Twenty minutes.

Scene 1

Palm Sunday

(MIRIAM enters. She stands at Center Stage and addresses audience.)

MIRIAM: My name is Miriam. I live in the city of Jerusalem with my son, Josiah. I would like to tell you about a most amazing week — a week that changed the condition of all humanity. In a week's time, all humankind was lifted from hopelessness to the greatest hope imaginable. I am proud to say that I lived through it all, although I got most of my information secondhand. You see, I am a widow with a young son to care for, so most of my time is spent at home. It all began one Sunday afternoon when Josiah came bolting through the door. (She crosses to the table and goes about preparing the table for a meal. JOSIAH enters from the left carrying a palm frond and wearing a dirty coat.)

JOSIAH: Mama, mama! Look what I have.

MIRIAM: Where have you been? It's almost dark. What have you been up to, young man?

JOSIAH: I was welcoming the king with the others.

MIRIAM: King? What are you talking about?

JOSIAH: King Jesus. He rode into town today, and everyone was so excited. We threw palm branches in his path, and some people even threw their outer garments down.

MIRIAM: King Jesus? I've never heard of a king named Jesus, though I have heard rumors of a prophet and healer by that name.

JOSIAH: He is a king too! He must be. You should have been there.

MIRIAM: I have no time to welcome kings. It takes all my time and energy to take care of you and put food on the table. Now go draw water and get washed up for supper. (He turns to go outside. MIRIAM notices a stain on his outer garment.) Josiah, what happened to your coat?

JOSIAH: Well, uh, I was kind of one of the people who put

1 their clothes in Jesus' path.

2 **MIRIAM:** Have you lost your mind? Do you know how much
3 that coat cost? *(She pulls it off his shoulders.)* It's ruined.
4 I'll never get these stains out! What kind of a king
5 tramples a widow's son's coat with his chariot?

6 **JOSIAH:** *(Quietly)* He rode a donkey.

7 **MIRIAM:** A king ... rode a *donkey*?

8 **JOSIAH:** But Mom!

9 **MIRIAM:** Don't "But Mom" me. Now you go draw water like
10 I told you for my supper. You will have none tonight,
11 mister. *(He grabs a pitcher and turns to leave. MIRIAM holds*
12 *the coat and looks wearily at the stain, shaking her head before*
13 *placing it in a basket on the floor. She sits at the table,*
14 *exasperated.)*

15

16 **SUGGESTED SONG: "Ride on, King Jesus"– Choir**

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18

19 **Scene 2**

20 **The Next Day**

21

22 **MIRIAM:** *(Standing and addressing the audience)* I was so angry
23 at Josiah about his coat. He is a typical boy, but this
24 was ridiculous, using his coat for a so-called king to
25 ride on. But that was just the beginning. The next
26 afternoon, Josiah came home with more wild stories.

27 **JOSIAH:** *(Entering the room)* Hi, Mom. Look what I have. *(He*
28 *shows his mother a coin.)*

29 **MIRIAM:** A shekel? What did you do to earn it? Did you help
30 the widow Abigail with her animals again?

31 **JOSIAH:** I didn't do anything. But I want to buy you
32 something nice with it.

33 **MIRIAM:** Where did you get it from, Josiah?

34 **JOSIAH:** Someone gave it to me.

35 **MIRIAM:** *(She puts her hands on her hips in exasperation.)* What's
36 going on? Why would someone just give you money?

37 **JOSIAH:** Well, actually, I was at the entrance to the temple
38 when Jesus overturned the money changers' tables.

1 The shekel fell at my feet, and I picked it up.

2 **MIRIAM:** What? You stole money from the temple?

3 **JOSIAH:** I didn't steal it. It rolled to me, honest.

4 **MIRIAM:** Boy, I don't know what's gotten into you. And these
5 stories about this man Jesus. Tomorrow you will return
6 this coin to the temple. Do you understand?

7 **JOSIAH:** Yes, Mama.

8 **MIRIAM:** Then you come straight home. You are not going
9 anywhere else this week. You will stay here and help
10 me prepare for the Passover. Now you go gather some
11 wood so that I can cook supper while I decide whether
12 you will eat tonight or what other punishment you
13 deserve. See what trouble this man Jesus has gotten
14 you into? I've warned you about interacting with
15 strangers.

16 **JOSIAH:** Jesus is not a stranger. He is wonderful! He talks to
17 all of the children at the temple and listens to us. He
18 seems to love us as well as the adults. Please, may I stay
19 at the temple awhile and listen to Jesus? He tells us
20 wonderful things.

21 **MIRIAM:** Definitely not. The temple is not a place to
22 entertain children. Now you go get me some wood and
23 be quick about it; then you can go straight to sleep.

24 **JOSIAH:** Yes, Mother. *(He turns to leave. MIRIAM goes about*
25 *preparing to cook as the choir sings. Near the end of the song,*
26 *she sits at the table with a worried look on her face again.)*

27

28 **SUGGESTED SONG:** "Jesus Loves the Little Children" –
29 Choir

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Scene 3

Tuesday

MIRIAM: *(Stepping forward from the table and addressing the audience again)* I was so mad at Josiah, and I was worried about the influence this man Jesus seemed to have on him. But the next day I learned more about Jesus when my neighbor Joanna came to visit me. *(As MIRIAM talks, JOANNA goes to the table and takes a seat.)* If you ever needed to know what was going on in town, Joanna was the one to talk to. She told me that Jesus had healed her. Now, Joanna has more ailments than a fish has scales, but I was so amazed by her story. But instead of me telling you about the conversation, here. *(She waves her hand toward the table.)* You can listen in. *(She walks to the table and sits opposite JOANNA.)*

MIRIAM: How are you today, Joanna? It's so nice of you to visit me. I know you haven't been feeling well lately.

JOANNA: Oh, I feel wonderful! Never better!

MIRIAM: Really? The last time I saw you, you seemed to be in so much pain.

JOANNA: Not anymore. Not since I met Jesus.

MIRIAM: Jesus? The prophet who is at the temple this week?

JOANNA: Yes, Jesus. But he is more than a prophet.

MIRIAM: Well, I have heard that he healed some folks.

JOANNA: Yes, and he healed me too.

MIRIAM: Really?

JOANNA: I was in so much pain when I went to the temple. But I had heard that Jesus is a healer. I had to go see him and find out for myself. I was a little afraid when I walked up to him, but his eyes were so warm and compassionate. He seemed to know why I was there. It was the first time I had met him, but he called me by name. He reached out and touched me, and I was healed.

MIRIAM: Of everything?

JOANNA: Yes, of all my ailments. The headaches, the back and joint pain, all melted away. And you remember that

- 1 **hideous growth on my arm?** *(She pulls up her sleeve and*
2 *presents her arm to her friend.)*
- 3 **MIRIAM:** *(She gasps.)* **It's gone!**
- 4 **JOANNA:** I didn't even realize it until I got home. Jesus
5 healed me. I am like new! That's what I came to tell you
6 about, Miriam. I'm going to tell everyone I know about
7 what Jesus did for me. You should go see him, Miriam.
8 I hear he is still at the temple. I saw your son there
9 yesterday. Jesus is so sweet to the children.
- 10 **MIRIAM:** So everything Josiah told me is true.
- 11 **JOANNA:** I'm going back to the temple today to thank Jesus
12 and to bring everyone I know to see him. Will you and
13 Josiah come with me?
- 14 **MIRIAM:** Well, I have some chores to finish, and I still have
15 to prepare for Passover. Josiah went to the temple
16 briefly this morning, but now he's outside doing chores.
17 I will go with you after the Passover.
- 18 **JOANNA:** Well, OK, but I hope he will still be in town then.
19 I'll see you later, Miriam. Much peace to you and your
20 household. *(She hugs MIRIAM lightly and leaves. MIRIAM*
21 *sits at the table and contemplates all that JOANNA has told*
22 *her.)*
- 23
- 24 **SUGGESTED SONG: "He Touched Me"** *(Instead of the CHOIR*
25 *singing the song, as an alternative JOANNA can sing the song*
26 *as she leaves MIRIAM's home and walks toward Stage Right*
27 *on her way to the temple. She ends the song as she exits Stage*
28 *Right.)*
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Scene 4

Good Friday

MIRIAM: *(Coming forward and addressing the audience)* This amazing week seemed to go by so quickly. The next day was uneventful. Following that, Josiah and I quietly observed Passover. The day after that, after contemplating Joanna's amazing testimony, I decided to let Josiah go to the temple to listen to Jesus' teachings again. I figured I would visit the temple to see him the following week. I assumed there was plenty of time to meet Jesus, but I was very wrong. That Friday was a strange day, and I soon wished that I had not let Josiah leave the house. At the noon hour it became dark as night. The later it got, the more I worried about Josiah. *(She goes to the right of the set as if outside of her home and paces back and forth.)* Josiah! Josiah! *(JOSIAH enters slowly from right with his head down. MIRIAM runs to him and hugs him.)* Josiah, it's about time you got home, boy! I was worried. *(She lifts his head up by his chin and notices how sad he looks.)* What's the matter? Did Obadiah hit you again?

JOSIAH: They killed him.

MIRIAM: Killed who? What are you talking about?

JOSIAH: They killed King Jesus. He didn't do anything, and they killed him!

MIRIAM: Oh, no! Josiah, I'm so sorry. *(She hugs him tightly in her arms as the CHOIR sings.)*

SUGGESTED SONG: "Were You There?" – Choir



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