

GLORY RISING

by Ruth Buchanan



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Resurrection Reflections

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SYNOPSIS: This reader's script for the Easter season sparkles with all the brilliance of word pictures, stories, and future hope associated with the glory of the Lord. It highlights the broad sweep of biblical history, citing fire on Mount Sinai, Ezekiel's vision of a sapphire throne, John the Baptist heralding Jesus' coming, the Roman soldier proclaiming the crucified Christ as the Son of God, the risen Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene, and now interceding for us in heaven. Musical interludes alternate with the spoken word. Very easy to present though not simplistic in tone or approach as a quartet of speakers blend, overlap, crescendo, or whisper to communicate the power of the Lord's glory.

CAST OF CHARACTER

(4 either)

READER 1 (m/f) (34 lines)

READER 2 (m/f) (38 lines)

READER 3 (m/f) (40 lines)

READER 4 (m/f) (33 lines)

PRODUCTION NOTES

Staging

All four Readers are gender flexible. The parts are recommended for mature voices, and each voice should have its own microphone.

Some of the speeches overlap, meaning Readers will speak some lines in sync with one another. Occasionally, all Readers speak in unison. These transitions should be practiced until they are natural and seamless, achieving a flawless overlapping effect. Scripture references are given for reference and are not intended to be voiced.

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Music

The script has six musical interludes. You may choose to fill them with choral numbers, congregational singing, or instrumental meditations. If you choose to use licensed music, you must ensure the proper permissions through appropriate channels. In order for your music to flow naturally from the narrations, a recommended theme for each interlude is given.

The following are merely suggestions. Most of these songs fit an Easter/Resurrection theme and may be found in hymnals or songbooks. Please substitute any title of your choosing, provided that the choice fits the individual theme outlines. You could use either hymns or praise and worship songs. The interlude themes are:

1. Conviction
2. Worship
3. Humility
4. Confession
5. Joy
6. Adoration

Scripture

Unless otherwise marked, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible, Copyright 1999, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by Permission. Scripture marked (KJV) is taken from the King James Version.

AT START: *READERS 1-4 are in place around the podium.*

READER 1: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (*John 1:14, KJV*).

READER 1 and READER 2: (*Together.*) And we beheld his glory (*John 1:14, KJV*).

READER 1, 2, and 3: (*Together.*) The glory as of the only begotten of the Father (*John 1:14, KJV*).

ALL READERS: (*Together.*) Full of grace and truth (*John 1:14, KJV*).

READER 1: These words, recorded in the gospels, describe Jesus Christ, the promised Redeemer.

READER 2: The Anointed One.

READER 1: The Suffering Servant.

READER 4: The Conquering King.

READER 3: The Light of the World.

READER 2: The Lamb of God.

READER 4: Who is the image of the invisible God (*Colossians 1:15, KJV*).

READER 1: Although Moses did not live to see God's promised Messiah in the flesh, over a thousand years before Christ's advent, Moses was granted a glimpse of God's glory.

READER 2: As the children of Israel passed through the wilderness, God called Moses to Mount Sinai.

READER 3: There, he communed with God.

READER 2: And the Lord descended on Sinai in fire and smoke.

READER 4: Trumpets sounded.

READER 3: Thunder rolled.

READER 1: The mountain shook with the power of God's presence.

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 2: Then Moses said, "Please, let me see your glory" (*Exodus 33:18*).

READER 1: God told Moses that while no man could see his face and live, he would nevertheless allow Moses a glimpse of his grandeur.

READER 2: So God hid Moses in the cleft of a rock.

READER 3: He sheltered Moses with his hand.

READER 2: God covered Moses as his glory passed by.

READER 1: Because any more than a glimpse of a fraction of God's glory would have killed Moses.

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READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: Moses' eyes beheld God's glory.

READER 1: And he was not the only one.

READER 2: Men and women down through the ages have witnessed God's majesty.

READER 1: Seven hundred years before Christ's birth, the prophet Isaiah was granted a vision of heaven.

READER 3: He also beheld God in his glory.

READER 2: He saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne, and his robe filled the temple (Isaiah 6:1).

READER 3: Winged seraphim stood above him.

READER 4: And one called to another, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. His glory fills the whole earth" (Isaiah 6:3).

READER 1: The foundations of the doorways shook at the sound of their voices, and the temple was filled with smoke (Isaiah 6:4).

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: Isaiah beheld the glory of the Lord.

READER 2: "Woe is me!" he cried, "For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:5, KJV).

READER 3: Isaiah's eyes beheld God's glory.

READER 4: In response, he confessed his unworthiness to stand in the presence of a holy God.

SONG 1 — *Conviction*

READER 1: Isaiah wasn't the only prophet granted a glimpse of God's glory.

READER 4: Over a century later the heavens opened, and Ezekiel experienced a vision.

READER 3: Ezekiel beheld God in his glory.

READER 4: Although he did struggle to express the majesty of what he'd witnessed.

READER 2: Creatures emerged from whirlwind-driven flame.

READER 4: Flashes of fire, bolts of lightning.

READER 1: An overarching expanse of crystal.

READER 3: A sapphire throne.

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READER 2: On the throne, the form of a man.

READER 3: An amber gleam swathed in fire.

READER 4: Proceeding from the throne, a brilliant, rainbow-hued light.

READER 1: This was the appearance of the form of the Lord's glory
(*Ezekiel 1:28*).

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: Ezekiel beheld the glory of the Lord.

READER 2: "When I saw it," said Ezekiel, "I fell facedown" (*Ezekiel 1:28*).

READER 3: Ezekiel's eyes beheld God's glory.

READER 4: Upon witnessing God in his splendor, he fell down in worship.

SONG 2—Worship

READER 1: When Jesus came and walked the earth, many followed him: listening to his teaching, witnessing his miracles, and anticipating that he would save the Jewish people from Roman rule.

READER 2: Not all his followers recognized what Jesus had really come to do.

READER 3: John the Baptist recognized Jesus for who he was, beholding the glory of God veiled in human flesh.

READER 2: "Here is the Lamb of God," said John, "who takes away the sin of the world!" (*John 1:29*).

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: John the Baptist beheld the glory of the Lord.

READER 2: The result humbled him, leading him to describe Jesus as "One... whose sandal strap I'm not worthy to untie" (*John 1:27*).

READER 3: John's eyes beheld God's glory.

READER 4: In response, he surrendered his pride.

SONG 3—Humility

READER 1: Jesus lived a perfect life.

READER 3: He died an undeserved death.

READER 4: As he hung on the cross, the injustice was apparent to all who watched.

READER 1: Some watched in silence. Some mocked. Others wept and mourned.

READER 3: Very few witnessing this scene could have imagined that they beheld God in the flesh, suffering for sin.

READER 2: But one of the Roman soldiers responsible for carrying out Christ's crucifixion recognized Jesus for who he was.

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: A Roman soldier beheld the glory of the Lord.

READER 1: After witnessing Jesus' suffering on the cross.

READER 2: After watching him die.

READER 1: After the darkness.

READER 3: After the earthquake.

READER 2: With fear and trembling, the soldier confessed to what he'd witnessed. "This man," he said, "really was the Son of God" (*Mark 15:39*).

READER 3: His eyes beheld God's glory.

READER 4: In response, he confessed Jesus as Lord.

SONG 4—Confession

READER 1: Jesus did not stay in the grave.

READER 2: On the third day he rose from the dead, just as he'd said.

READER 3: He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons (*Mark 16:9*).

READER 2: Unlike many of Jesus' followers, who had denied him and fled when he was arrested, Mary had followed him to the end—to the grave—and then, miraculously, back to glorious life.

READER 3: As Mary stood before the tomb, Jesus stepped from the shadows and called her name.

READER 2: Overjoyed, she clung to him.

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: Mary Magdalene beheld the glory of the Lord.

READER 4: Jesus sent her to announce his resurrection to the disciples, and she ran to obey.

READER 2: "I have seen the Lord!" she said (*John 20:18*).

READER 3: Mary's eyes beheld God's glory.

READER 4: She responded with joy!

SONG 5—Joy

READER 1: Forty days after his resurrection, Jesus ascended to heaven, where he now dwells.

READER 3: Sitting at the right hand of God, he intercedes for us.

READER 4: But Christ will come again.

READER 1: When he does, every eye will behold him.

READER 2: He will descend from the clouds in great power and glory.

READER 3: The Lord will judge the earth.

READER 4: Satan will be defeated and evil, bound.

READER 1: There will be a new heaven and a new earth.

READER 2: In the new earth, a New Jerusalem.

READER 3: It will come down out of heaven from God, arrayed with God's glory (*Revelation 21:10-11*).

READER 4: God's dwelling place will be with man (*Revelation 21:3*).

READER 2: And he will live with them (*Revelation 21:3*).

READER 3: They will be his people (*Revelation 21:3*).

READER 1: And God himself will be with them and will be their God (*Revelation 21:3*).

READER 2: He will wipe away every tear from their eyes (*Revelation 21:4*).

READER 3: Death will exist no longer (*Revelation 21:4*).

READER 4: Grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer (*Revelation 21:4*).

READER 1: Because the previous things have passed away. (*Revelation 21:4*).

READER 2: The city will not need the sun or moon to shine on it (*Revelation 21:23*).

ALL READERS: (*Together.*) Because God's glory illuminates it (*Revelation 21:23*).

READER 3: The nations will walk in its light (*Revelation 21:24*).

READER 4: And the kings of the earth will bring their glory unto it (*Revelation 21:24*).

READER 2: Therefore, "Comfort ye my people," saith your God (*Isaiah 40:1, KJV*).

READER 3: Every valley shall be exalted

READER 1: And every mountain and hill shall be made low: (*Isaiah 40:4, KJV*).

READER 1 and READER 2: And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: (*Isaiah 40:4, KJV*).

READER 1, 2, and 3: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed (*Isaiah 40:5, KJV*).

ALL READERS: (*Together.*) And all flesh shall see it together: (*Isaiah 40:5, KJV*).

READER 1: For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (*Isaiah 40:5, KJV*).

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: That day will come.

READER 2: And when it does, we will see revealed in full what we already know to be true.

READER 3: That because of the Resurrection, everything has changed.

READER 1: There was a time when any more than a glimpse of a fraction of God's glory would have taken our lives.

READER 2: Yet Christ willingly gave up his life so that we could behold our God face to face.

READER 4: Imagine.

READER 3: One day, our eyes will behold him.

READER 4: What will be our response?

SONG 6—Adoration

THE END



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