

**A Happy Journey through Wisdom Tales
Of Judaism, Christianity & Islam**

**a play for grades 7-12+
to perform for grades K-6**

by Carol Lynn Pearson



CARAVAN



CARAVAN by Carol Lynn Pearson received its Script-In-Hand Series world premiere reading on October 16, 2015 as part of the Parliament of the Worlds Religions. Directed by Christy Summerhays, stage managed by Michael Johnson. Featuring the ensemble of Tyson Baker, Anne Brings, Dee-Dee Darby-Duffin, Bijan Hosseini, Michael Johnson, Tito Livias, JJ Neward, Jay Perry & Susanna Florence Risser.

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NOTE TO THE DIRECTOR

This play is a celebration of three cultures that often live in distrust and misunderstanding but that have much in common and indeed have much to learn from each other. The author has gone to great lengths to give each of the three as fair and balanced a showing as is possible. She therefore requests that there be no cutting of scenes or characters that would skew this balance. The play should run about one hour. If it is essential to trim it a bit for time, there must be only minor interior cuts or cuts of scenes in which all three cultures are represented. To change this play in any way that would lessen the emphasis given to any of the three cultures would be a serious violation not only of trust but of copyright.

THE CAST

The play can be performed by a cast as small as eight or as large as can be fit onto the stage. A clever director might use an even smaller cast. Even though historical tradition presents most of the characters as male, feel free to have female actors assume any role you would like.

STAGING

The staging should be very simple, using the three large blocks as described at the opening of the play, and the two smaller blocks (or more as the director wishes.) The blocks, bearing the three religious symbols, are turned as each scene begins so that two are black and one shows the symbol of the religious tradition in the scene to be played. All five blocks can be used creatively to change the look from scene to scene.

PROPS

It is suggested that there be no props, that all business be pantomimed.

COSTUMES

The play can be done in whatever dress the director chooses. Simple theatrical costumes that can easily flow from scene to scene would be best. The director may choose to have a variety of costume pieces that can be hung on something like a large “family tree” that is positioned to one side of the stage. If so, these should be removed and returned very quickly so that no time is lost between scenes.

SCENES

Scene One: INTRODUCTION

Scene Two: THE CARAVAN (Muslim)

Scene Three: THINGS COULD BE WORSE (Jewish)

Scene Four: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES (Muslim)

Scene Five: STONE SOUP (Christian)

Scene Six: OUR PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED

The Christian Mystic

The Muslim Hodja

The Jewish Rabbi

Scene Seven: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES (Muslim)

Scene Eight: WHATEVER GOD DOES IS FOR THE BEST (Jewish)

Scene Nine: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES (Muslim)

Scene Ten: OUR FOOLISHNESSES

Mulla Looks for the Key

The Wonder Working Rabbi

The Preacher

Scene Eleven: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES (Muslim)

Scene Twelve: WHY THE CHIMES RANG (Christian)

Scene Thirteen: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES (Muslim)

Scene Fourteen: OUR GOLDEN RULE

Rabbi Hillel

Christian Minister

Muslim Imam

Scene Fifteen: THE CARAVAN CONCLUDES (Muslim)

Scene Sixteen: FINALE

“An enemy is someone whose story you do not know.”

–Jewish saying

SCENE ONE: INTRODUCTION

(The stage is bare except for five sturdy wooden blocks, two of them about a foot square, three of them between two feet and three feet square. All are painted black. On one side of the three large blocks is a well-designed symbol of one of the three cultures we are celebrating—(1) a six-pointed Jewish Star of David, blue on a white background (2) a Christian Cross, white on a red background and (3) a Muslim Crescent Moon and Star, gold on a green background. These blocks are arranged so that as we open, the audience sees only the black sides. THREE ACTORS enter.)

FIRST ACTOR: Two wise men of Chelm went out for a walk. One carried an umbrella.
(SECOND ACTOR hoists to side an imaginary unopened “umbrella.”) The other did not.
(THIRD ACTOR gestures “not me”!) Suddenly it began to rain.

(SECOND & THIRD ACTORS put out a palm as if to check for rain.)

THIRD ACTOR: Open your umbrella! Quick!

SECOND ACTOR: It won’t help.

THIRD ACTOR: What do you mean, it won’t help? It will protect us from the rain!

SECOND ACTOR: It’s of no use. It’s as full of holes as a sieve

THIRD ACTOR: Full of holes? Then why did you bring it in the first place?

SECOND ACTOR: (Shrugs.) I didn’t think it would rain!

(As if this makes perfect sense, SECOND & THIRD ACTORS continue their journey for a few steps, then freeze.)

FIRST ACTOR: Welcome to our play! A play about the wisdom—and sometimes the foolishness of--

(SECOND and THIRD ACTORS run back to FIRST ACTOR, each put an arm around THEIR shoulder and smile big.)

FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD ACTORS (In unison.): –Our family!

SECOND ACTOR: Hey, Coz!

THIRD ACTOR: How ya doin’?

FIRST ACTOR: Great! (To audience.) Now, our family is a little different from your family in that it’s—uh--

SECOND ACTOR: –Bigger! Way bigger!

THIRD ACTOR: Millions and millions in this family!

FIRST ACTOR: And, like most families—sometimes we have loved each other a lot!--
(SECOND and THIRD ACTORS plant an exaggerated smack on each cheek of FIRST ACTOR.) Sweeeeet! And sometimes we have fought worse than cats and dogs!

(SECOND & THIRD ACTORS strike an exaggerated fighting pose.)

SECOND & THIRD ACTORS: (Mean grunt.) Uhhhhhhhhhg.

FIRST ACTOR: In fact, right now is not a very good time in the history of our family. It's a sad, sad time. Some members of our family are hurting—even killing—other members of our family, because of fear and hate and misunderstanding, seeing each other as enemies.

SECOND ACTOR: That's no way for a family to behave, is it? There is a Jewish saying—"An enemy is someone whose story you don't know."

THIRD ACTOR: So— today [tonight] we're going to take you on a journey—a caravan, in fact, through some of the best stories that come from the different parts of our family. And we believe that when we know each other's stories, we can be better family, better friends.

SECOND ACTOR: All right! Better friends!

FIRST ACTOR: Yahoo! So. Once there was a Sultan—.

SECOND ACTOR: Whoa! They need to know where we came from. What about our history?

FIRST ACTOR: Right, right, right. Well, we'll make this part quick so we can get on to the fun stuff. Okay, so, our family—. Hmmm.

SECOND ACTOR: First there was this man named Abraham and he lived, like—oh, roughly about four thousand years ago in the Middle East. Here, I'll be Abraham! (Poses heroically.)

FIRST ACTOR: And Abraham had two wives. I'll be Sarah. Sarah gave birth to Isaac.

THIRD ACTOR: No! I get to be the first wife!

SECOND ACTOR: See? This is how the whole trouble started in the first place! (To THIRD ACTOR.) Okay! You be Abraham! I'll be Hagar, Abraham's second wife. She gave birth to Ishmael.

THIRD ACTOR: From Abraham and Sarah came the part of the family known as the Jews--

("JEWISH BLOCK" is turned to face forward, showing the Star of David.)

SECOND ACTOR: –And then about two thousand years ago, after the life and teachings of Jesus, some of the family became known as Christians.

(“CHRISTIAN BLOCK” is turned to face forward, showing the Cross.)

FIRST ACTOR: –And then about fourteen hundred years ago, after the life and teachings of Mohammad, some of the family became known as Muslims.

(“MUSLIM BLOCK” is turned to show Crescent Moon and Stars.)

SECOND & THIRD ACTORS: Now can we tell the stories?

FIRST ACTOR: Yesssss!

SCENE TWO: “THE CARAVAN”—MUSLIM BLOCK SHOWS CRESCENT MOON AND STARS—OTHER TWO BLOCKS TURNED TO BLACK SIDE

(SULTAN & TWO SONS enter. MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL PALACE enter as well.)

SULTAN: Once there was a Sultan, who was very good and wise. And obviously very handsome! (Bows.) He had two sons, whom he loved very much indeed.

ABDULLAH: One of the sons was named Abdullah. (Bows.)

ALI: The other son was named Ali. (Bows.)

ABDULLAH: The Sultan was getting along in years—.

SULTAN: –But was still very handsome!

ALI: --And it was necessary for him to decide which son would become Sultan after he died.

SULTAN: Both of his sons had entered the world in the same hour, and no one was certain just which had been born first. And so—. (To sons.) I have it! Only the wisest of men is worthy to be Sultan. To determine which of you is the wiser, I will send you into the world to travel for one year. When you return, you will each answer this question. (Thinks.) “What is the most powerful force in the world?—the most powerful force *in the whole wide world?*” Go, my sons!

ALI: I will try my best, Father, to learn the answer to your question.

ABDULLA (To audience.): Ho, ho! How simple this will be! I will take a year’s vacation—travel—see the sites. Then return here and announce that the most powerful force in the world is—*the Sultan!* I’m sure that is the truth. And no doubt that is what my father wishes to hear.

SULTAN (To audience.): Servants were assembled and a caravan was fitted out. (To sons.) What will you need to take with you, my sons?

ABDULLAH: Four servants. Clothing of the finest brocade, and my elegant pointed slippers. Food fit for a future Sultan, of course. Bracelets of gold, bells of silver. Satin cushions on my camel. Peacock feathers with which my servants shall fan me. And, what else—?

ALI: One servant, Father, if you please. And a camel. And—that's all.

SULTAN (To audience.): And so the caravan set out. (SERVANTS can either enter or can come from MEMBERS OF PALACE.) Allah be with you, my sons! (SULTAN and MEMBERS OF PALACE exit.)

ALI: Ah, what an adventure! How much I shall learn!

ABDULLAH: How boring! It's hot. And these flies! Oh, to be home instead of on this dusty road!

(FOUR OR MORE TRIBESMEN enter.)

FIRST TRIBESMAN: Soon the caravan arrived at an oasis, where men of two desert tribes were quarreling. (To other TRIBESMEN.) Quarrel, quarrel! I tell you—quarrel, quarrel, quarrel!

SECOND TRIBESMAN: No, quarrel, quarrel! The truth is that quarrel, quarrel, quarrel!

ALI: What is the trouble here?

FIRST TRIBESMAN: The water from this well belongs to our tribe!

SECOND TRIBESMAN: It does not! We have the right to this water!

THIRD TRIBESMAN: Not so! The water is ours!

FOURTH TRIBESMAN: The Sultan himself gave this well into the care of our tribe!

ALI: What is the name of your tribe?

FOURTH TRIBESMAN: Nesib Said.

ALI: Then what you say is true. My father is the Sultan, and I myself heard him give the order placing the water into the care of your tribe.

SECOND TRIBESMAN (To audience.): Whereupon the other tribesmen were given the water they needed and sent on their way.

(TRIBESMEN exit, some grumbling.)

ALI: Ah! The most powerful force in the world must be—the Sultan! For his word can decide matters of great importance! He speaks and men obey!

ABDULLAH: Silly boy. I could have told you that. (To servant.) Fan faster, lazybones! And more dates and figs!

ALI (To audience.): They traveled on. But in the meantime—.

SCENE THREE: “THINGS COULD BE WORSE”—JEWISH STAR OF DAVID SHOWN—OTHER TWO BLOCKS TURNED TO BLACK SIDE

(MORDECHAI and CHAYA enter.)

MORDECHAI: Once there was a man named Mordechai--

CHAYA: And his wife named Chaya--

MORDECHAI: --who lived in a miserable little farmhouse on the edge of the village.

CHAYA: Miserable! Oy! You should see it! Two rooms! And no money this man brings in. The cabbages he grows? A joke!

MORDECHAI: Enough already, Chaya. They get the picture. (To audience.) One terrible day Mordechai's father died--

(MOTHER enters, hand on forehead.)

MOTHER: Oy! Leaving his poor old mother to pay her husband's debts by selling their house. So, of course--

CHAYA: Of course!—

MORDECHAI: (Arms out.) Mother! Come and live with us!

(BOTH embrace MOTHER.)

CHAYA: Which was not so bad—except—two rooms! And every night--

(MORDECHAI assists MOTHER in climbing onto the three large blocks that are side by side. SHE lies on HER back, closes HER eyes, and remains thus for the rest of the scene.)

MOTHER (Snores loudly.): ZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzzzzzz.

MORDECHAI: All night!

MOTHER: ZZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzz.

MORDECHAI: Chaya! What shall we do? I can't sleep!

CHAYA: Nor can I! And the kitchen—how she crowds me!

MOTHER: ZZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzz.

CHAYA: Go see the Rabbi!

MORDECHAI: The Rabbi! What good will that do?

CHAYA: What harm will it do? The Rabbi is a wise man!

MORDECHAI (To audience): So off Mordechai went to see the Rabbi--

(RABBI enters.)

RABBI: —A very wise man!

MORDECHAI: —And told him everything!

RABBI: Hmmmmmmmm! I seeeeeeeee! Crowded and noisy, you say?

MORDECHAI: Oy vey!

RABBI: Hmmm. Have you any animals?

MORDECHAI: A few chickens and a rooster. A goat. A cow.

(TWO CHICKENS, ROOSTER, GOAT and COW enter.)

RABBI: Here is what you must do. Move the chickens into the house.

MORDECHAI: Move the chickens—?

(MORDECHAI turns from the RABBI to face CHAYA.)

CHAYA: —Into the house???

MORDECHAI: He's the Rabbi!

CHAYA (To audience.): So Mordechai—Oy!—moved the chickens and the rooster into the house!
(They shoo CHICKENS and ROOSTER into the house.) And all day long--

CHICKENS: Cluck! Cluck! Cluck! Squak! Squak! Cluck! Scratch!

CHAYA: –And all night long--

CHICKENS: Scratch, scratch, scratch! Cluck! Cluck!

MOTHER: ZZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzz.

CHAYA: –And at daybreak--

ROOSTER: COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!

CHAYA: Mordechai! Go back to the Rabbi! Tell him everything is--

(MORDECHAI turns from CHAYA to face the RABBI.)

MORDECHAI: –Ten times worse than before!

RABBI: Hmmmmmmmmmm. You said you have a goat? Move the goat--

(MORDECHAI turns from the RABBI to face CHAYA.)

CHAYA: --Into the house? The goat too? The Rabbi has gone mad!

MORDECHAI: But he's the Rabbi! An educated man!

(MORDECHAI leads goat into house.)

CHAYA: So Mordechai–Oy!--moved the goat into the house! All day long--

GOAT: BAA-BAA-BAA!

CHICKENS: Squak! Squak! Cluck, cluck, cluck! Scratch, scratch!

CHAYA: And at night--

GOAT: BAAAAA AAAA!

CHICKENS: Scratch, scratch. SQUAAAAAAK!

MOTHER: ZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzz.

ROOSTER: COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!

CHAYA: Mordechai! Go back to the Rabbi! Tell him everything is--
(MORDECHAI turns from CHAYA to face the RABBI.)

MORDECHAI: --one hundred times worse than before!

RABBI: Hmmmmmmmmmmmm. You have a cow? Move the cow--
(MORDECHAI turns from the RABBI to face CHAYA.)

CHAYA: --Into the house? The chickens, the goat, and now THE COW???

MORDECHAI: He is the Rabbi! A wise and an educated man!

CHAYA: So Mordechai--oy!-- moved THE COW into the house!
(MORDECHAI leads COW into the house.) And all day long--

COW: MOOOOOOOOOOO!

GOAT: BAAAAAaaaaaa!

CHICKENS: CLUCK, CLUCK, CLUCK! SCRATCH, SCRATCH! SQUAK, SQUAK,
SQUAK!

CHAYA: And at night--

COW: MOOOOOOO!

GOAT: BAAAAAaaaaaa!

CHICKENS: CLUCK! SCRATCH! SQUAK!

MOTHER: *ZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzz.*

ROOSTER: COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!

CHAYA: Mordechai! I cannot take this one more day! WE ARE BOTH GOING TO THE--
(CHAYA grabs MORDECHAI and they turn to the RABBI.) RABBI! We are being driven to
our graves! The noise! The stench! What shall we do?

RABBI: (Considers.) Take the chickens, the goat, and the cow--

MORDECHAI AND CHAYA: Yes?

RABBI: --Back to the barn!

MORDECHAI AND CHAYA: YES!

(MORDECHAI leads the COW and the GOAT out. CHAYA shoos the CHICKENS and the
ROOSTER.)

COW: MOOOOOOOOOOO!

GOAT: BAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

CHICKENS AND ROOSTER: CLUCK! SQUAK! COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!

MORDECHAI (To audience.): At last, they settled down for the night.

MOTHER: ZZZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzzz.

CHAYA: How quiet our house is!

MORDECHAI: A wise man, the Rabbi!

MOTHER: ZZZZZZZZZZZzzzzzzzzzz.

MORDECHAI and CHAYA: (Contented sigh.) Aaaaahhhhhh!

(MORDECHAI, CHAYA and MOTHER exit.)

**SCENE FOUR: “THE CARAVAN CONTINUES”—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN—
OTHER TWO BLOCKS TURNED TO BLACK SIDE**

(CARAVAN enters.)

ABDULLAH: (To servant.) Water! Fan faster! And you—shade me from that blistering sun!

(BUILDER enters, pantomimes lifting and hammering. HE appears weary.)

ABDULLAH (To audience.): The caravan had traveled for two weeks when they entered a village and came upon a builder constructing a dwelling.

ALI (To BUILDER.): Has the Sultan commanded you to build this? For he is the greatest force in the world.

BUILDER: The Sultan? Of course not!

ALI: Then why do you work?

BUILDER: I work for money. Why else would I labor here in the heat of the day?

ALI: Ah! Money must be a more powerful force than the Sultan himself! Money must be the greatest force in the whole world! Abdullah! I think I have learned something—.

ABDULLAH: Don't bother me, Ali. And you—fan faster! Ah, the heat! (CARAVAN exits.)

SCENE FIVE: “STONE SOUP”—CHRISTIAN SYMBOL SHOWN

(SIX TOWNSPEOPLE enter.)

FIRST TOWNSPERSON: Once upon a time in Eastern Europe, there was a great famine in the land and food was very, very scarce.

SECOND TOWNSPERSON: The people jealously hoarded whatever food they had, hiding it even--

(ALL put both hands behind their backs as if hiding something.)

THIRD TOWNSPERSON: —From their friends and neighbors.

(SOLDIER enters, leading unseen donkey.)

SOLDIER: One day a wandering Soldier came into the village. (To townspeople.) Ah! This looks like a good place for my donkey and me to spend the night.

FOURTH TOWNSPERSON: No, no, no. There's no food here.

FIFTH TOWNSPERSON: You'd best keep moving on. No food here.

SOLDIER: Oh, I have everything I need to make a fine supper. I'll just build me a fire right here-- (SOLDIER quickly rubs two “sticks” together. TOWNSPEOPLE gather around.) —And fill this cauldron with water from that stream. (SOLDIER takes from “donkey's back” a heavy “cauldron,” fills it with one scoop, and arranges it over the “fire.”) And now for the stone! (Takes from “bag” on “donkey” a large “stone” and plops it into the “cauldron.”)

SIXTH TOWNSPERSON: Stone?

SOLDIER: A special, magical stone—for my most delicious stone soup, of course.

TOWNSPEOPLE: Stone soup???

SOLDIER: You've never heard of stone soup? Delicious! Fit for a king! And I'll be glad to share with all of you. There will be plenty! (Sniffs.) Ah. I can smell the broth already. Mmmmm! (A few of the TOWNSPEOPLE lean in, sniff.) But stone soup with a bit of cabbage in it—that's the best! Sure wish I had a cabbage.

FIRST TOWNSPERSON (approaches, shyly brings out what SHE was hiding behind HER back and extends it to SOLDIER.): I—I have a cabbage.

SOLDIER: Ah! Excellent!

(With eight or ten quick “chops,” edge of hand on other palm, SOLDIER makes speedy work of the “cabbage” and throws it into the “cauldron.” HE picks up a “stick” and stirs the soup, sniffs it.) Heavenly! But if only—an onion! Ah, for an onion!

SECOND TOWNSPERSON: (slowly steps up to SOLDIER, holding out something that has been hidden behind his back.) I have—an onion.

SOLDIER: No! (SOLDIER takes the “onion,” chops it and tosses it into the soup.) Ahhhhh! Just smell! But, you know--I once had stone soup with a bit of salt beef-- (Now in speeded up action-- as if on “fast forward,” the other TOWNSPEOPLE hand the items mentioned to the SOLDIER, who chops them and throws them in the soup.)

—and a potato—

(Chop, stir, sniff.)

--and a carrot

(Chop, stir, sniff.)

—a bit of salt and pepper

(Shake, stir, sniff.)

—some mushrooms--

(Chop, stir, sniff.)

Ah! Per-fect-a-ment!

(SOLDIER clasps hands in prayer and looks to heaven. TOWNSPEOPLE do the same.)

Dear Lord! We thank thee for this most magical and delicious stone soup. Amen!

TOWNSPEOPLE: Amen! (Again in speeded-up action, SOLDIER fills a “bowl” for each TOWNSPERSON. THEY receive their “bowls” with “ohhh’s” and “ahhhh’s.” At last SOLDIER serves self. On cue ALL lift THEIR “bowls” and drink their “stone soup.”) Ahhhhhhh!

SOLDIER: (Smiles.) No food, you say? I think you have fed each other well! (SOLDIER hoists “cauldron” onto “donkey” and exits. TOWNSPEOPLE look at one another and smile.)

FIRST TOWNSPERSON: Shall we make soup again for supper tomorrow evening?

TOWNSPEOPLE (Ad lib.) :Absolutely! Great idea! I’ll bring the carrot this time. I’ll bring a turnip. You’ve got a turnip? (TOWNSPEOPLE exit.)

SCENE SIX: “OUR PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED” SCENE SIX-A--CHRISTIAN SYMBOL SHOWN

(FOUR ACTORS enter.)

FIRST ACTOR: In medieval times there was a Christian mystic who spoke to God, saying--

CHRISTIAN MYSTIC: Dear Lord, I will do anything you ask of me. Anything! Only tell me what is your will.

SECOND ACTOR: Day after day she prayed.

CHRISTIAN MYSTIC: There is nothing I will not do for you, dear Lord. But tell me your will that I might do it. Anything you ask, I will do! But tell me what it is!

THIRD ACTOR: Finally, after many, many days, came the voice of the Lord--

FIRST, SECOND, THIRD ACTORS: (In unison, hands cupped for calling.) SURPRISE ME!

SCENE SIX-B: MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

SECOND ACTOR: Once there was a Muslim Hodja who spoke to Allah, saying--

HODJA: Dear Allah, I really don't understand your ways. Here I sit under this great tree that grows tiny little walnuts. And over there is a spineless vine that grows huge and yellow pumpkins. Would it not have been better to have the tiny little walnuts grow on that spineless vine--and the huge and yellow pumpkins grow on this great walnut tree?

THIRD ACTOR: And Allah replied- (THIRD ACTOR stretches out arm and lets a "walnut" drop.)

SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH ACTORS: (In unison, hands cupped for calling.) PING!

(Startled, HODJA rubs head and looks up.)

HODJA: Ah! If that had been a pumpkin--! You are wiser than I am, Allah! Wiser than I am! Allah be praised!

SCENE SIX-C—JEWISH SYMBOL SHOWN

THIRD ACTOR: Once there was a Jewish Rabbi who spoke to God, saying--

RABBI: Dear God--this world! So much suffering! So much hatred and division and selfishness! So much sorrow! You must send help! Dear God, you must send help!

THIRD ACTOR: And God replied--

FIRST, THIRD AND FOURTH ACTORS: (In unison, hands cupped for calling.) I ALREADY HAVE! I SENT--YOU!

RABBI (Softly.): Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh!

(NOTE: It is important in the above scene that both genders be represented in the responses from God.)

SCENE SEVEN: “THE CARAVAN CONTINUES”—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

(CARAVAN enters. From a different direction SIX SHEPHERDS enter.)

ALI: Five months into their journey, Ali and Abdullah and their caravan came upon six shepherds tending their flock. (To SHEPHERDS.) Tell me! Will you be paid well for your labors?-- for I know that money is the most powerful force in the world.

FIRST SHEPHERD: Money? No! We will receive no money for our labors.

ALI: Then why do you work?

SECOND SHEPHERD: These are hard times. We work only for food and a place to lie down at the end of the day. Money is nothing! Food and shelter we must have!

(SHEPHERDS exit.)

ALI: Ah! The need for food and shelter must be the most powerful force in the world, more powerful than money, more powerful than the Sultan himself! Abdullah—did you hear?

ABDULLAH: Leave me alone, Ali. I already know the answer we seek. More grapes, there!

(CARAVAN exits.)

SCENE EIGHT: “WHATEVER GOD DOES IS FOR THE BEST”—JEWISH SYMBOL SHOWN

(AKIVA and FIVE ACTORS enter.)

FIRST ACTOR: When Rabbi Akiva was young, he was very poor and his life was hard. But did he ever complain? No matter what happened to him, he always said--

AKIVA: Everything God does is for the best!

SECOND ACTOR: One day--

(All FIVE ACTORS turn THEIR backs, making two sets of pairs and one alone. AKIVA goes to one of the pairs and “knocks,” thumping a sound effect with foot. The TWO ACTORS turn around unwelcoming, arms folded.)

AKIVA: I am far from home and very tired. Could you let me sleep in your barn for the night?

FIRST ACTOR: We have no room anywhere.

SECOND ACTOR: Sorry!

(FIRST & SECOND ACTORS swing around, arms still folded, their backs to AKIVA. AKIVA approaches the THIRD ACTOR, “knocks,” again thumping a sound effect with foot. THIRD ACTOR swings around, folds arms and frowns.)

THIRD ACTOR: Sorry!

(THIRD ACTOR turns back on AKIVA. AKIVA approaches FOURTH & FIFTH ACTORS, “knocks” and thumps foot again. FOURTH & FIFTH ACTORS swing around, fold arms and glare at AKIVA.)

FOURTH AND FIFTH ACTORS: (In unison.) SORRY!

(FOURTH & FIFTH ACTORS turn backs on AKIVA. AKIVA walks on. ACTORS turn around to face audience as THEIR lines come.)

THIRD ACTOR: No one in the entire village would let him in.

FOURTH ACTOR: So Akiva decided he would have to sleep in a deserted field, with his coat for a blanket and a rock for his pillow. But he said to himself–

AKIVA: It doesn’t matter. Everything God does is for the best!

FIFTH ACTOR: Akiva tried to light his lamp. (AKIVA rubs two “stones” together.) He rubbed two stones together until finally they sparked.

AKIVA: Ah! Now I can feed my rooster and my donkey and myself and go to sleep.

FIRST ACTOR: Just then a gust of wind came from nowhere-- (FIRST ACTOR whirls around and circles the “lamp,” making a loud blowing sound.) Whissh! Whiiiiish! –And blew out the lamp. But Akiva said–

AKIVA: It doesn’t matter. Everything God does is for the best!

(SECOND ACTOR whirls around.)

SECOND ACTOR: Suddenly Akiva heard a fierce-- (Growls.) –Arrrrrrgh!

THIRD ACTOR (Whirls around.): –Followed by a frightened-- (Crows.) Cockle-doodle-do!
When he went to see--

SECOND ACTOR: A panther had eaten up his rooster!

THIRD ACTOR: But Akiva said–

AKIVA: Poor rooster! Oh, well. Everything God does is for the best!

FOURTH ACTOR: (Whirls around.) Just then Akiva heard another noise. (Brays.) Hee-haw, hee-haw! (Yelps in pain as donkey) Aieeee-yai Aieeee-yai!

FIFTH ACTOR (Whirls around.): But when Akiva went to see what was the matter with his donkey-- ROO-OO-ARRRR!

FOURTH ACTOR: A gigantic lion had devoured his faithful beast!

FIRST ACTOR: There Akiva was—with no light, no rooster and no donkey. But did he complain?

AKIVA: Everything God does is for the best!

(AKIVA lies down on the ground.)

SECOND ACTOR: In the middle of the night, Akiva was awakened by loud voices.

(AKIVA sits up with a start. All FIVE ACTORS become swaggering PIRATES.)

THIRD ACTOR: Ha, ha! This sword of mine is thirsty for blood. Blood, blood!

FOURTH ACTOR: And plunder!

FIFTH ACTOR (To audience.): A drunken band of pirates had come up from the coast to attack the village! (AKIVA huddles with arms over head.) But Akiva kept very still and the men passed without noticing him..

(The FIVE ACTORS cease being PIRATES. AKIVA cautiously stands up, looks around.)

AKIVA: Ah, how fortunate I am! If I had had a light, the pirates would surely have seen me! And if they had heard my animals, they might have killed me. And—oh—if the villagers had let me stay in their barn tonight, I might be—as they are likely being now—massacred by the pirates! Indeed—

AKIVA AND FIVE ACTORS: —Everything God does is truly for the best!

(FIVE ACTORS clap AKIVA on the shoulders as they exit, adlibbing, “Way to go, Man!” “Excellent, Dude!”)

SCENE NINE: “THE CARAVAN CONTINUES”—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

(CARAVAN enters.)

ALI: After traveling for another month, the Caravan turned around to make its way homeward.

ABDULLAH: Yes, yes, yes! Home! (To audience.) Before long, they came to the same six shepherds. But no longer were they herding sheep. Now-- (Six SHEPHERDS enter, "riding horses.") –they rode six fast horses!

ALI (To SHEPHERDS,): Are you riding to another country to earn your bread? For I learned from you that the need for food and shelter is the most powerful force in the world.

FIRST SHEPHERD: Oh, no! It has been many days since we have eaten. And the hard ground is all we have for a bed.

ALI: How is this?

SECOND SHEPHERD: Enemy soldiers have invaded our land. We ride to turn them away. It matters little that we must do without food and shelter. We cannot do without our freedom!

(The SHEPHERDS ride off.)

ALI: Freedom is more important to them than food and shelter! I must think on this!

ABDULLAH: Faster, there! We go towards home! Home!

(CARAVAN exits.)

SCENE TEN: "OUR FOOLISHNESSES" TEN-A—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

(MULLA NASRUDIN enters.)

MULLA: One day Mulla Nasrudin, the wise sage—that would be me, the very wise sage—(MULLA gets down on his hands and knees and searches for something.) I must find it!

(A WOMAN enters.)

WOMAN: What are you doing on that dusty ground, Mulla?

MULLA: I have lost the key to a great treasure and I am trying to find it!

WOMAN: A treasure! Let me help you! (WOMAN gets down on hands and knees and pats ground. A SECOND WOMAN enters.)

SECOND WOMAN: What in the world are you two doing?

WOMAN: We are looking for the key to a great treasure. Mulla has lost it!

SECOND WOMAN: Ah! Let me help you. Perhaps when we find it, he will share the treasure! (SECOND WOMAN joins them on the ground, searching.)

(MAN enters.)

MAN: Well, this is a strange sight. What are you three doing?

SECOND WOMAN: We're searching for the key to a great treasure. Mulla has lost it and we are helping him search.

MAN: A treasure you say? (MAN joins them on the ground, searching.)

(TOWNSPEOPLE enter.)

FIRST TOWNSPERSON: What do we have here?

SECOND TOWNSPERSON: What are you all doing?

MAN: Looking for the key to a great treasure. Mulla here has lost it. (Confidentially.) And perhaps he will share when we find it.

TOWNSPEOPLE (Ad lib.): Ah! Let me help! Move over! The key, the key! Where is the key? (TOWNSPEOPLE get on ground to search. YOUNG GIRL stands and looks on.)

YOUNG GIRL (After a few moments.): Mulla. Are you certain that you dropped the key right here?

MULLA (Straightens up.): No. I lost the key inside my house.

(The OTHERS stop searching and stand up.)

WOMAN: What?

SECOND WOMAN: In the house?

MAN: Then why are we looking for it out here???

MULLA: Excellent question! It is too dark to look for the key inside my house. The light is far better out here!

OTHERS: Ahhhhhgggg! (Grumbling, FOUR TOWNSPEOPLE pick up MULLA by the seat of HIS pants and shirt and give HIM the "bum's rush," tossing HIM to a standing position and freezing for two seconds.)

MULLA: And on the same day, somewhere else in the world--

TEN-B—JEWISH SYMBOL SHOWN

RABBI: –There was a Rabbi–well-known for performing wonders and miracles–who went on a journey--

FIRST DISCIPLE: –Along with--

SECOND DISCIPLE: –His many--

OTHER DISCIPLES: –Disciples!

(All DISCIPLES, who have arranged themselves in a formal line behind him, honor RABBI with a bow. RABBI smiles. INN KEEPER steps forward.)

INN KEEPER: One night, as an inn keeper was lying peacefully in bed-- (INN KEEPER lays cheek on hands in “sleep” position. RABBI “knocks” on door, making a thumping sound with HIS foot.) Go away! The inn is closed!! (RABBI knocks again, louder.) I am in bed! It is late! The night is cold!

FIRST DISCIPLE (Outraged.): You speak thus to a Rabbi–a holy man well known for the wonders he performs?

INN KEEPER: Wonders? I am in bed! Go and perform your wonders somewhere else!

DISCIPLES (Gasp. Ad lib.): Outrage! Insult! I cannot believe my ears!

RABBI (Full of holy wrath.): Wicked fellow! I hereby decree that your inn shall burn down tomorrow!

DISCIPLES (Gasp. Ad lib.): Ahhhh! And so it shall be! Reprobate!

(INN KEEPER, frightened out of her/his wits, hurries to the “door” and opens it.)

INN KEEPER: No! No! Forgive my mistake, honored Rabbi! Come in, come in, all of you! (RABBI and DISCIPLES enter inn, still in a formal line and each with hands clasped behind back.) Quick! Food for the Rabbi! A feast for the Rabbi and his excellent disciples! (RABBI and DISCIPLES pantomime a synchronized and smiling exaggerated eating of one bite of food and a sip of drink.) Hurry! Bedding for the Rabbi! The warmest quilts for our honored guests!

RABBI: Splendid! And in return for your great hospitality–I now decree that–your inn shall NOT burn down tomorrow!

INN KEEPER: Ah! Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!

(RABBI and DISCIPLES in unison lay cheeks on hands in “sleep” position. INN KEEPER gives a big sigh, then takes the same position. After two seconds--)

ROOSTER: (Offstage.) Cock-a-doodle-doo.

(ALL wake up brightly, yawn, stretch. INN KEEPER opens the “door” and in a formal line, the RABBI and DISCIPLES leave the inn. FIRST DISCIPLE steps forward.)

FIRST DISCIPLE (To audience.): And miracles and wonders!

SECOND DISCIPLE: We all saw it with our own eyes!

THIRD DISCIPLE: It happened exactly as the Rabbi said it would!

FOURTH DISCIPLE: That next day—the inn did not burn down!

(Again in THEIR formal line, the RABBI and his DISCIPLES continue on their journey.)

INN KEEPER: God be praised! A miracle!

RABBI (To audience.): And on the same day—somewhere else in the world--

TEN-C—CHRISTIAN SYMBOL SHOWN

PREACHER: –There was a preacher, a most humble and God-fearin’ preacher!

(PREACHER can be played with a Southern dialect, if that seems appropriate, or with any other manner of speech. PREACHER takes place in front of CONGREGATION.)

FIRST MEMBER OF CONGREGATION: Hallelujah!

SECOND MEMBER OF CONGREGATION: Amen, amen!

PREACHER: Brothers and Sisters! Tonight we will continue in the subject we began last Sunday, one of the sins that plagues the people of the Lord and makes a strong man become a weak and unprofitable servant--

CONGREGATION (Ad lib.): Help us, Lord. Oh, save us from sin.

PREACHER: –a sin that can make you the purchase of the Devil, who will take you and shake you over his hottest hell--

CONGREGATION: Not me! Oh, Lord, not me! Keep us, keep us from sin, oh Lord.

PREACHER: –And the sin that I speak of is the sin, Brothers and Sisters, the sin of lying! Lying! Thou shalt not lie, says the Good Book. But there are liars among us, back-sliders and liars! Now, I would like to see by the raise of hands all those who did what I told you to do last week before you come again to the church house tonight. How many of you read the twenty-first chapter in the book of Mark like I told you to?

CONGREGATION (ALL raise hands,): Fine chapter, that! Best chapter in Mark! Beautiful words in that twenty-first chapter! Amen!

PREACHER: Now all you liars can take your hands down! For there ain't but sixteen chapters in the book of Mark!

(CONGREGATION slowly bring down hands, bows heads.)

CONGREGATION: Oh, oh. My mistake. Sorry, Lord, sorry.

(Disgusted, PREACHER herds CONGREGATION off stage.)

PREACHER: Lord, keep us from fools!

SCENE ELEVEN: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

(CARAVAN enters. BUILDER enters, pantomimes building another structure.)

ALI: After a time, the Caravan passed through the village again. And Ali saw again the builder he had met before. (To builder.) Ah! What a splendid structure you are building. I've never seen a better. I'm certain you will be well paid for your labors. For you taught me the importance of money.

BUILDER: Oh, I am being paid nothing.

ALI: Nothing?

BUILDER: Money could not persuade me to labor as I am. See the fine detail on this window? I build this house as a gift for my son and his family. Do you think they will like it?

ALI: Indeed they will! It is the finest house I have ever seen! (The BUILDER exits.) Money could not make him labor as he does? Then perhaps money is not the most powerful force in the world.

ABDULLAH: Ali! Hurry up there! We're going home!

(CARAVAN exits.)

SCENE TWELVE: WHY THE CHIMES RANG—CHRISTIAN SYMBOL SHOWN

FIRST ACTOR: There was once—in a far-away country—a wonderful church. Every Sunday, as well as on sacred days like Christmas, thousands of people climbed the hill to its great archways.

SECOND ACTOR: The strangest thing about the church was the wonderful chime of bells. A

great tower rose so far into the sky that only in very fair weather did anyone claim to see the top.

THIRD ACTOR: Now all the people knew that at the top of the tower was a chime of bells, the most beautiful bells in the world.

FOURTH ACTOR: They were Christmas chimes, you see, and were not meant to be played by men. It was the custom on Christmas Eve for all the people to bring to the church their offerings to the Christ-child, and when the greatest and best offering was laid on the altar, there would come sounding through the music of the choir-- (ALL but FOURTH ACTOR look up in anticipation and freeze.) --the Christmas chimes far up in the tower.

ALL BUT FOURTH ACTOR (Ecstatic.): Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!

FOURTH ACTOR: But no one had heard them for years and years.

ALL BUT FOURTH ACTOR (Disappointed.): Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!

(THEY leave THEIR frozen positions.)

FIFTH ACTOR (To fourth actor.): My grandmother told me she heard them when she was a child.

FOURTH ACTOR: Really? What did they sound like?

FIFTH ACTOR: Like—heaven! Like the sigh of God!

FOURTH ACTOR: Oh, I wish I could hear them!

FIFTH ACTOR: My grandmother says people have been growing less careful of their gifts for the Christ- child, that no offering is brought that is great enough to deserve the music of the chimes.

FOURTH ACTOR: But every year the richest and the greatest crowd to the altar with splendid gifts!

FIFTH ACTOR: Yes—each one trying to bring some better gift than any other, without giving anything they really want for themselves.

(ALL ACTORS freeze. PEDRO and LITTLE BROTHER enter.)

PEDRO: A number of miles from the city, in a little country village, there lived a boy named Pedro—

LITTLE BROTHER: And his little brother.

PEDRO (To LITTLE BROTHER, pointing.): See? Right over there! If the clouds part just a bit,

you can barely see the tower. I think if we hurry we can make it there for the Christmas Eve service and be back again before anyone misses us.

LITTLE BROTHER: I'm ready, Pedro. Ah, but it's cold!

(OLD WOMAN enters.)

OLD WOMAN (To audience.): Although the walking was hard in the frosty air, before nightfall Pedro and Little Brother had trudged so far that they saw the lights of the big city just ahead of them. They were about to enter one of the great gates in the wall that surrounded it, when they saw something dark in the snow near their path.

(OLD WOMAN lies down.)

LITTLE BROTHER: Look, Pedro! What is that?

PEDRO: Why, it's an Old Woman. Wake up! Wake up! (Shakes HER.) Rub her hands, Little Brother. (PEDRO makes an effort to lift HER. SHE slumps back down.)

LITTLE BROTHER: She's as cold as the snow!

PEDRO: (Considers.) It's no use, Little Brother. You will have to go on alone.

LITTLE BROTHER: Alone? And you not see the Christmas festival?

PEDRO: This woman will freeze to death if nobody cares for her. Everyone has gone to the church now, but when you come back you can bring someone to help. I will try to keep her from freezing and perhaps I can get her to eat the bit of bread that is in my pocket.

LITTLE BROTHER: I cannot leave you.

PEDRO: Both of us need not miss the service. And you must see and hear everything twice, Little Brother—once for you and once for me. And oh, if you get a chance to slip up to the altar without getting in anyone's way, take this little silver piece of mine-- (PEDRO hands "silver piece" to LITTLE BROTHER.) --and lay it down for my offering to the Christ-child when no one is looking. Now, go.

(PEDRO freezes. LITTLE BROTHER walks a few steps and then freezes.)

FIRST ACTOR: The great church was a wonderful place that night, bright and beautiful. When the thousands of people sang, the walls shook with the sound.

SECOND ACTOR: At the close of the service came the procession with the offerings to be laid on the altar. The rich and the great marched proudly up to lay down their gifts to the Christ-child. And as they did so, each thought--

(In turn, each of FOUR ACTORS steps toward the audience “carrying” a treasure, kneels and places it on an “altar.”)

FIRST ACTOR: Surely these jewels that have been in my family for years will win the sound of the bells. Certainly I deserve it!

(ALL look up and listen expectantly. Nothing. Disappointed, FIRST ACTOR rises, takes a few steps and freezes in place. SECOND ACTOR steps toward the audience, “carrying” a treasure and repeats the same action.)

SECOND ACTOR: This basket of gold—so heavy I can hardly carry it—surely it is the richest treasure here. And I will be granted the sound of the chimes!

(ALL listen again. Nothing. SECOND ACTOR rises and freezes, standing directly next to FIRST ACTOR. THIRD ACTOR steps forward, “carrying” a large book.)

THIRD ACTOR: This book has taken me years and years to create. Its engraving and bindings are the best in the world. Certainly the chimes will ring for me!

(ALL look up and listen again. Nothing. THIRD ACTOR rises and freezes, standing directly next to SECOND ACTOR. Then FIRST, SECOND and THIRD ACTORS turn their heads and speak in loud whispers.)

THIRD ACTOR: The King!

SECOND ACTOR: The King!

FIRST ACTOR: The King!

(FOURTH ACTOR strides forward, stands before “altar.” HE pauses a moment, then takes from HIS head the royal “crown.” *NOTE: this can be QUEEN instead of KING.* Other ACTORS gasp, then speak again in loud whispers.)

FIRST ACTOR: The crown!

SECOND ACTOR: The crown!

THIRD ACTOR: The crown!

(FOURTH ACTOR places “crown” on altar. ALL look upward expectantly. Nothing. THEY wait. Nothing.)

FOUR ACTORS (Disappointed.): Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!

(FOURTH ACTOR rises and stands beside THIRD ACTOR. They are now four in a row, facing the audience, and they should present a kind of screen that covers LITTLE BROTHER. Again

THEY freeze.)

FIFTH ACTOR: Only the cold old wind was heard in the tower. The procession was over, and the choir began the closing hymn. Suddenly the organist stopped playing as though he'd been shot.

SECOND ACTOR: Listen!

THIRD ACTOR: (Reverently.) The chimes! Oh, the chimes!

(On the other part of the stage, PEDRO moves from HIS frozen position and looks up, responding to the sound of the chimes. The OLD WOMAN stirs and rises on one elbow.)

FOURTH ACTOR: Such beauty! There are no words—!

FIRST ACTOR: So clear—so sweet!

FIFTH ACTOR: The people in the church sat for a moment as still as though something held each of them by the shoulders. Then they all stood up together and stared straight at the altar, to see what great gift had awakened the long-silent bells. But all that the nearest of them saw-- (Now the FOUR ACTORS standing in a line part, two going to one side and two to the other, revealing LITTLE BROTHER, facing the audience in frozen position, kneeling, with a hand outstretched to the altar.) —was the childish figure of Little Brother, who had crept softly down the aisle when no one was looking, and had laid Pedro's little piece of silver on the altar.

(ALL are silent for a few moments, then exit.)

SCENE THIRTEEN: THE CARAVAN CONTINUES—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

(CARAVAN enters.)

ABDULLAH: Ah, soon to have a perfumed bath again! And my bed of goose down and silk! (To audience.) As the Caravan came within two weeks of home, they again came upon the oasis of Nesib Said. There were the tribesmen who had been quarreling.

(TRIBESMEN hurriedly enter.)

TRIBESMEN (Ad lib.): It is not just! Something must be done! We will not rest!

ALI: Are you two tribes still arguing over rights to the water from this well? I thought that was settled.

FIRST TRIBESMAN: It is indeed. We are now friends. We have joined our tribes together.

ALI: And this is a decree of the Sultan?

SECOND TRIBESMAN: Oh, no! The Sultan could never force us to be friends. We have joined to seek justice. Some men that we know have been imprisoned for a crime they did not commit, and we go to the palace to tell your father the truth, to ask the Sultan to free them!

(Hurriedly the TRIBESMEN exit.)

ALI: This is strange. They have become brothers—something the Sultan could never make them do.

ABDULLAH: Ali! Hurry, hurry! We're nearly home! Ah—clean, silk sheets! Fresh wine!

(CARAVAN exits.)

SCENE FOURTEEN: OUR GOLDEN RULE FOURTEEN-A—JEWISH SYMBOL SHOWN

(FOURTH ACTOR approaches RABBI HILLEL.)

FOURTH ACTOR: Rabbi Hillel--

RABBI HILLEL: Yes?

FOURTH ACTOR: I have heard you are a very wise man. I wish to study the Torah, but I know it takes many years and I have little time. Can you tell me how to be a good Jew in just a few words?—in fact-- (Smiles, as if playing a joke.) --while I am standing on one foot?

RABBI HILLEL: (Thinks. Nods.) I can. Raise your foot and repeat after me. (FOURTH ACTOR stands on one foot.) Don't do to other people anything you don't want them to do to you.

FOURTH ACTOR: Don't do to other people anything you don't want them to do to you.

RABBI HILLEL: That is the entire law of God. Everything else just explains it.

FOURTH ACTOR: Ahhhhhhh! And, Bishop--

FOURTEEN-B—CHRISTIAN SYMBOL SHOWN

BISHOP: Yes?

FOURTH ACTOR: Can your gospel tell me how to be a good Christian while I am standing on one foot?

BISHOP: Of course. Repeat after me. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

FOURTH ACTOR: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Ahhhh! And, Imam--

FOURTEEN-C—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

IMAM: Yes?

FOURTH ACTOR: Can your Quran and Hadith tell me how to be a good Muslim?

IMAM: Certainly. You must desire for your brothers and sisters that which you desire for yourself.

FOURTH ACTOR: You must desire for your brothers and sisters that which you desire for yourself.

RABBI HILLEL, BISHOP, IMAM: That's it!

(FOURTH ACTOR, still standing on one foot, considers, then loses HIA balance and falls to the ground. The THREE OTHERS laugh and help HIM up.)

IMAM: And when that happens—you get up!

BISHOP: You repent!

RABBI HILLEL: And you try again!

(THEY exit, FOURTH ACTOR receiving pats on the back from the OTHER THREE.)

SCENE FIFTEEN: THE CARAVAN CONCLUDES—MUSLIM SYMBOL SHOWN

(MEMBERS of SULTAN'S PALACE enter.)

FIRST MEMBER OF PALACE: I see them! Look!

SECOND MEMBER OF PALACE: Yes! They are coming!

THIRD MEMBER OF PALACE: Your Majesty! They are coming!

(SULTAN and OTHERS enter. CARAVAN enters. SULTAN goes to embrace his SONS.)

SULTAN: Ah, my sons! My sons!

ALI: Father!

ABDULLAH: Home at last! My feather bed!

SULTAN: Tonight—a banquet! A celebration for my sons' safe return—and to honor the next Sultan. Who shall it be? Eh? You, Abdullah? You, Ali? Quick, I can wait no longer. Tell me the answer to my question. What is the most powerful force in the world?

ABDULLAH (Steps forward confidently.): Father, the most powerful force in the world is—you!—the Sultan! You speak and all obey!

SULTAN: I see. And you, Ali? What is your answer?

ALI: Father—you are very great—the greatest man I know. But I have learned that the Sultan is not the most powerful force in the world. No man is. (ABDULLAH and OTHERS react to this with surprise. The SULTAN listens with interest.) The Sultan's word can make men stop quarreling, but it cannot make them join together as brothers. Only their desire for justice can make them do that. For a time I believed that money was the most powerful force in the world. But then I saw that a laborer will work even harder for love. I thought for a while that the need for food and shelter is the most powerful force in the world. But then I saw that many will do without those things to fight for freedom.

SULTAN: What, then, my son, is the most powerful force in the world?

ALI: An idea, Father! It can be an idea of love—or freedom—or justice—or many things. But whatever it is—an idea moves people as nothing else can-- (Bows.) —even the Sultan! I think, Father, that an idea—can change the world!

SULTAN: (Considers, then smiles.) I believe you are right, my son. (Announcing.) The next Sultan—Ali, the wise! (ALL applaud. ABDULLAH slumps dejectedly. The SULTAN goes to him.) Abdullah, my son. Here is an idea for you, a powerful one. Hu-mi-li-ty!

(The SULTAN claps ABDULLAH on the shoulder and laughs.)

SCENE SIXTEEN: FINALE

(At this point ALL become only ACTORS. We move into a serious mood. FIRST, SECOND and THIRD ACTORS (from introduction) step forward.)

FIRST ACTOR: I have an idea! Let us end the problems and the pain our family has been having. Let our family—all of us—live in unity and cooperation--

SECOND ACTOR: —In respect--

THIRD ACTOR: —And in peace.

FOURTH ACTOR: I have an idea-- (TWO ACTORS move to a forward position the block that

features the JEWISH STAR OF DAVID.) Let us honor the stories—the gifts—and the people of Judaism.

(TWO ACTORS pick up the block that features the CHRISTIAN CROSS and place it on top of the STAR OF DAVID.)

FIFTH ACTOR: Let us honor the stories—the gifts—and the people of Christianity.

(TWO ACTORS pick up the block that features the MUSLIM CRESCENT MOON AND STAR and place it on top of the CHRISTIAN CROSS, making a tower of three.)

SIXTH ACTOR: Let us honor the stories—the gifts—and the people of Islam.

SEVENTH ACTOR: And let us honor the stories, the gifts and the people of every other culture across our wonderful world!

ACTOR: I have an idea! (HE/SHE touches the block with the CHRISTIAN CROSS. and begins to sing.)

AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace--

(ALL join and, with arms around each other, sing together.)

—How sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see.
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear, The hour I first believed.

ACTOR: (SHE/HE touches the CRESCENT MOON AND STAR and sings.)

EIDER CHAND (EID MOON)

I can see the Eid moon shining high--

[ALL join in singing and begin to dance:
(On line one, take seven steps to the left and stop.
On line two, take seven steps to the right and stop.
On line three, clap hands, skip into the middle of the circle and out.
On line four, skip around with a partner.
On line five, take seven steps to the left.
On line six, take seven steps to the right and clap.)]:

Show me where it shines up in the sky. From today we will sing and play,
We will all be friends together. From today we will sing and play, We will all be friends together.

I can see the Eid moon shining high, Show me where it shines up in the sky.

(MUSIC segues as ACTOR touches block with STAR OF DAVID and sings.)

ACTOR [HAVA NAGILA “LET US REJOICE”]: Hava nagila--

(ALL sing together and continue to dance—in front of and in a circle around the TOWER OF SYMBOLS.)

—Hava nagila,

(Step right foot; cross left foot over right; keep weight on right foot - for 2 beats

Bringing left foot back to original position,

Step left foot; cross right foot over left

keeping weight on left foot - for 2 beats

Step right foot; left foot steps behind right for 2 beats

This is a 6-beat pattern in a 4/4 song.)

Hava nagila, venis’mecha (“and be glad”);

Hava nerenena, hava nerenena (“Let us sing”)

Hava nerenena, venis’mecha.

Uru, uru achim (“Awaken brethren”)

Uru achim belev same’ach (“With a cheerful heart”)

Uru achim belev same’ach

Uru achim, belev same’ach

Uru achim—uru achim—uru-achim Belev same’ach!

(Song and dance continue, finally end on a note of explosive celebration.)

ALL: (Wave and call, ad lib.) Goodbye! Shalom! Salam! Thank you! Toda raba!
God bless! Allah be with you! Salam! Shalom! Goodbye!

END OF PLAY

Amazing Grace

Arr: Eric Laing

John Newton

♩ = 92

Soprano

Alto A - maz - ing

Red. * etc...

9

Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was

17

lost, but now am found was blind but now I see

Tenor

Bass

Through

24

ma - ny_ dan - gers, toils and snares I have al - rea - dy_ come. _____ 'Twas

32

Grace that brought me safe thus far, And Grace will lead me home.

39

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

When we've been there ten thou - sand years Bright shin - ing_ as the_ sun, _____

47

— We've no less_ days to sing God's praise Than when we_

53

first be - gun. A - maz - ing_

57

A - maz - ing_ Grace!

Grace!

Hava Nagila, Finjan

Chant, piano

Tempo $\text{♩} = 130$

Trad. Israël

Arr. : Bernard Dewagtere



Mélod

Ha- va na- gi- la, Ha- va na- gi- la, ha- va na- gi- la,

Piano



ve ne-s'- ma-cha. Ha- va na- gi- la, Ha- va na- gi- la,



Ha- va na- gi- la, ve ne-s'- ma-cha. Ha- va na- re ne- ra,



Ha- va na- re ne- ra, Ha- va na-re ne- ra, ve ne-s' ma-cha.



Ha- va na- re ne- ra, Ha- va na- re ne- ra, Ha- va na-re ne- ra,



ve ne-s'- ma-cha. U- ru, U- ru a- chim



U- ru a-chim ba-lev sa- me-ach, U- ru a-chim ba-lev sa- me-ach, U- ru a-chim ba-lev sa- me-ach,

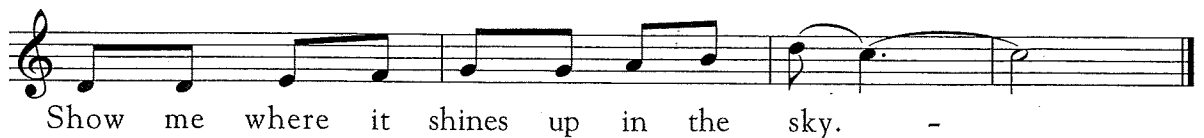
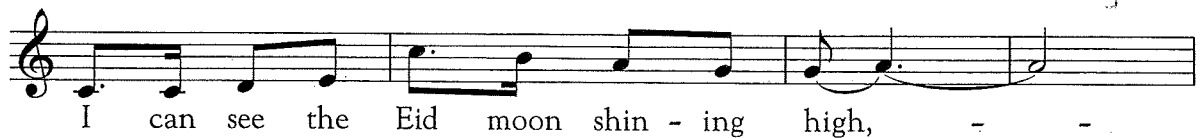
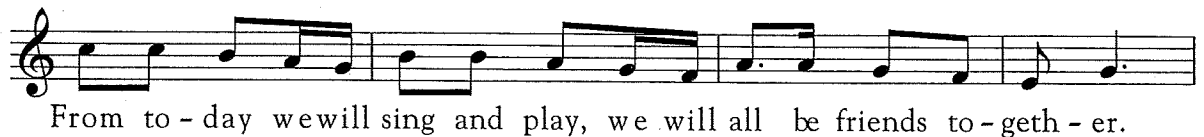
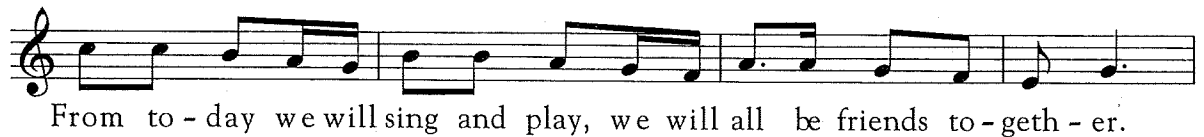
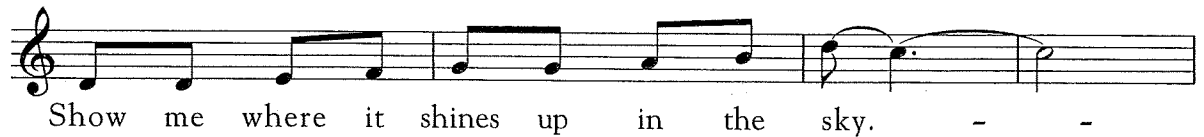


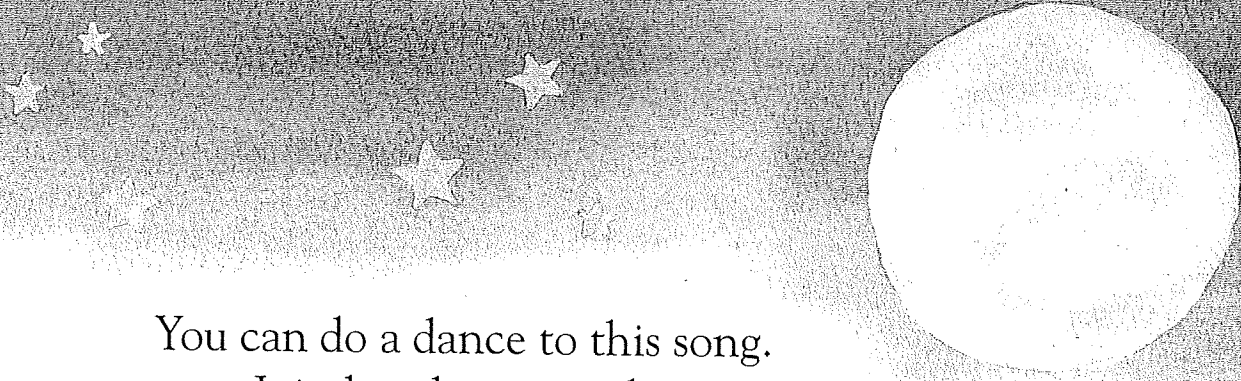

u- ru a-chim ba-lev sa- me-ach, U- ru a-chim, U- ru a-chim, ba- lev sa me ach. (Reprise 2x)

Eider Chand

This is a song from Bengal. Eider Chand means Id Moon in Bengali. Throughout the world, everybody looks out for the new moon which will mean that Ramadan has ended and the festivities of Id-ul-Fitr can begin after prayers. After the fast, everybody is closer to Allah and each other.

This is what is celebrated at Id-ul-Fitr.

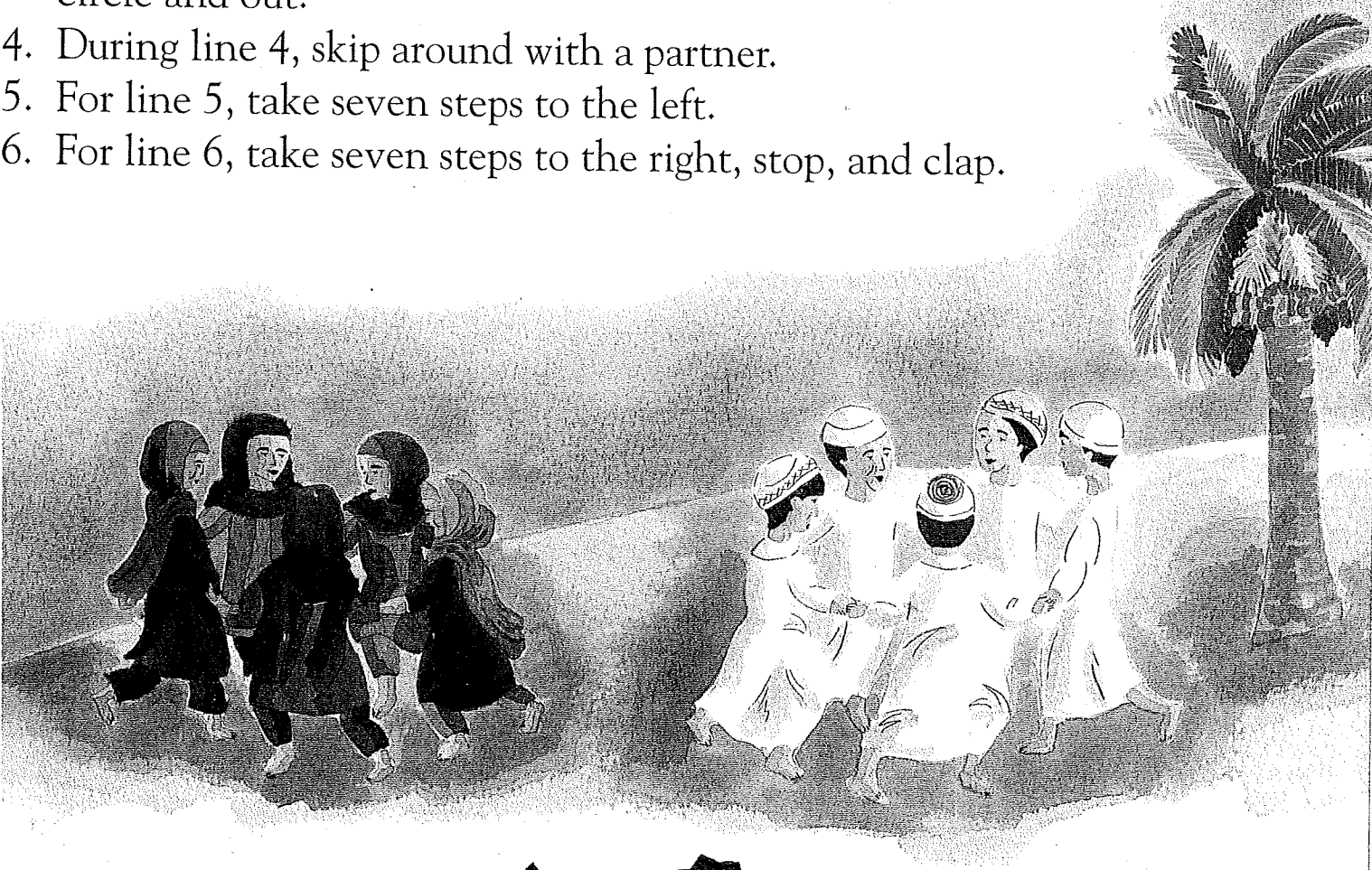




You can do a dance to this song.

Join hands in a circle.

1. When you sing the first line, take seven steps to the left, and stop.
2. During the singing of line 2, take seven steps to the right, and stop.
3. During line 3, clap your hands, and skip into the middle of the circle and out.
4. During line 4, skip around with a partner.
5. For line 5, take seven steps to the left.
6. For line 6, take seven steps to the right, stop, and clap.





CARAVAN

This “Happy Journey through Wisdom Tales of Judaism, Christianity & Islam” is a timely and needed piece in a world that is in perpetual conflict over religious beliefs and turf. Many teachers are unsure how to tackle this very important topic, for fear of making people angry. Through a framework of folktales and music, playwright Carol Lynn Pearson celebrates values shared by all three traditions.

Suggested Classroom Activities

Common Core Noted in Blue

Vocabulary

Define caravan. Have students create a vocabulary card, divided into fourths, with the word in the left-hand corner, the definition of caravan in the right-hand corner, a picture to help them remember the word in the lower left-hand corner, and an antonym or opposite of caravan in the lower right hand corner. Keep this card for future reference. Keep a collection of these vocabulary cards on a ring that students can access throughout the year. (See *Teaching Literacy in the K-5 Classroom* by Hattie, Fisher & Frey)

Individuals and Families

1. Read the book “People” by Peter Spier. Have students trace their hands and decorate the tracing with things that make them unique. Have children present their hands to one another after coloring them and cutting them out. Then, they can post their hands around the perimeter of an Earth cut out. This is a way to emphasize that we are all part of one family. Keep this on display throughout the study of CARAVAN.

K Social Studies Standard 1 Students will recognize and describe how individuals and families are both similar and different.

K-4th Theatre Standard C.1 Identify similarities between story elements and personal experiences

5th-6th Theatre Standard C.1 Explain how drama connects oneself to one’s community or culture.

2. Read “My Rotten Red-Headed Older Brother” by Patricia Polacco. Have students discuss the some of the minor conflicts they have in their families. Encourage them to pick a conflict and write about it, focusing on how it was resolved.

K-6th Writing Standard 3 Write narratives of a sequence of events

Compare and Contrast

1. Have students create a Venn Diagram showing the similarities and differences between Ali and Abdullah.

K-1st Reading: Literature Standard 9 Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters

5th Reading: Literature Standard 3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text

2. Read the book “It Could Always Be Worse” by Margot Kormach. Discuss with students this story, and the story of Mordechai, and discuss what the theme is. Have students write about the theme, using evidence from CARAVAN and “It Could Always Be Worse”.

4th-5th Reading: Literature Standard 2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text

Stone Soup

1. There are many picture book versions of “Stone Soup”. Some teachers love making their own version of stone soup in class. Students love being able to find the stone in their pot of soup on feast day!

K Reading: Literature Standard 10 Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

2. Have students discuss and write about the theme of STONE SOUP, using evidence from the text.

4th-6th Grade Reading: Literature Standard 2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text

The Golden Rule

Discuss the line, “Don’t do to other people anything you don’t want them to do to you.” What does this mean? Have students research and illustrate the golden rule and how this has been shaped by different cultures throughout history (mini-research project).

2nd -3rd Reading: Literature Standard 2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

4th Reading: Literature Standard 9 Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

The Power of Ideas

Is an idea the most powerful force in the world? Why do you think so? Have students debate this concept.

K-6th Speaking and Listening Standard 1 Participate in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners

World Religions

1. Divide the class into groups. List world religions on the board. Have groups choose, or assign randomly, the world religions. Students will research the world religions using the guide sheet from the respective Utah

Education Network lesson. List these world religions on the board from which students can choose: Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

2. Have students create the blocks that are used as set pieces in CARAVAN. The blocks should include a major symbol of the world religion as well as other learnings from the group's study of it.
3. Have students use the news source Newsela to research religions in the modern world and how religion influences current events. Discuss how our world family could address some of the conflicts associated with religion, based on the text CARAVAN.

K-6th Writing Standard 7 Conduct research projects

3rd Social Studies Standard 2 Students will understand cultural factors that shape a community.

6th Social Studies Standard 1, Objective 2 Evaluate how religion has played a central role in human history from ancient times to today.

Additional Relevant Standards

2nd Reading: Literature Standard 3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

3rd Reading: Literature Standard 5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as *chapter*, *scene*, and *stanza*; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

4th Reading: Literature Standard 1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

4th Reading: Literature Standard 3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

5th Reading: Literature Standard 1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

5th Reading: Literature Standard 4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.