**Josiah Henson**

*Adapted from Father Henson’s Story of His Own Life*

*[https://books.google.com/books/about/Father\_Henson\_s\_Story\_of\_His\_Own\_Life.html?id=KUJ6RonhFBMC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp\_read\_button#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books/about/Father_Henson_s_Story_of_His_Own_Life.html?id=KUJ6RonhFBMC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button" \l "v=onepage&q&f=false)*

[*https://www.pbs.org/video/redeeming-uncle-tom-the-josiah-henson-story-4vetit/*](https://www.pbs.org/video/redeeming-uncle-tom-the-josiah-henson-story-4vetit/to)

*(could be done with or without orchestra ... only chorus, gourd banjo, timpani, pipe organ, etc)*

**Cast**

*In order of appearance*

FATHER baritone

MOTHER mezzo soprano

3 YEAR OLD JOSIAH

DR. MCPHERSON baritone

6 YEAR OLD JOSIAH

MASSA ISAAC

ADAM ROBB bass

AUCTIONEER tenor

ADULT JOSIAH bass/baritone

CHARLOTTE soprano

MASSA AMOS baritone

YOUNG AMOS tenor

Extras: Slaves, Overseer, Auctioneer, Buyer in the Red Shirt, Indian braves, Indian chief,

**Prologue**

*Downstage right, Father playing gourd banjo and singing while children dance and shuck corn, youngest is 3 or 4 year old Josiah, seated on ground close by his father. (Samples of gourd banjo playing and percussion without instruments* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTKE3IaVVmA*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTKE3IaVVmA)

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmuJmKmSAZo*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmuJmKmSAZo)*) gourd banjo)*

**FATHER:** *(singing)*

*David Play on your Harp*

*or use this* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmpdRMTroko*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmpdRMTroko)

*(L’il David starts at 0:57 on video)*

Little David play on your harp

Hallelu, hallelujah

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp, hallelu

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp

Hallelu, hallelujah

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp, hallelu

Little David was a [shepherd](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shepherd) boy

He [killed](https://www.definitions.net/definition/killed) Goliath and [shouted](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shouted) for joy

Little David play on your harp

Hallelu, hallelujah

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp, hallelu

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp

Hallelu, hallelujah

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp, hallelu

Now Joshua was the son of Nun

He [never](https://www.definitions.net/definition/never) would quit till his work was done

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp

Hallelu, hallelujah

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp, hallelu

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp

Hallelu, hallelujah

Little [David](https://www.definitions.net/definition/David) play on your harp, hallelu

*(Downstage left, toward the end of the song, beyond a shed, overseer approaches Josiah’s mother. She steps away from him. He moves closer, she cautiously shakes her head, “No.” He grabs her. She tries to pull away and screams. Father stops singing, drops his gourd banjo, and runs to help her. Overseer raises his whip in anger. Father grabs overseer and pulls him away. Overseer falls and hits head on foam rubber rock, and goes unconscious.)*

**MOTHER:** *(Grief stricken)* O why’d you come ? They will surely whip yo’ fo’ this. Run! Run away! Don’t let them ketch you !

**FATHER:** I’d rather suffer a hundred blows than let anyone harm you.

**MOTHER:** You may *well* get you a hundred blows, if you escape with your life at all. Run! Run !

*(Father runs off stage left.Overseer gets up angrily and runs after Father. All flee except little Josiah. Commotion in the wings. Repeated sounds of whip, and cries of pain … until … sadly … sound of whip … but no cries at all.)*

*(Father head bandaged and bloody and being dragged across upstage by 2 others. Stage right, only one small child remaining, Josiah. Lights dim as little Josiah calls out.)*

**3 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:** Papa? Papa?

*(Lights go slowly out.)*

**Act I**

**Scene 1**

*(Dr. Josiah McPherson, sitting in a chair with 6 year old Josiah sitting on the ground at his knee. Mother in background praying. Massa McPherson bends forward toward little Josiah and sings a little song about George Washington to entertain him.)*

**MOTHER:** *(praying in constant repetitious short phrases, perhaps imitating the Rosary, in the background before doing her work … which could be anything, churning, spinning, snapping peas, etc. during his song.)*

Oh Lawd, bless my chillin’, bless my chillin’ bless my chillin’. Let them find freedom, find freedom, find freedom of spirit in this oppressive land, this land, this land. Let them find happiness, happiness, happiness of spirit, to overcome unkindness with kindness, and make him glad I gave him life. Amen Lawd.

**DR. MCPHERSON:**  I’m glad you and your mother are living with me now, little Josiah, instead of so far away on Col. Newman’s farm. He didn’t treat your father as well as he should have. Your father was a good man. He cheered everyone with his music. Would you like to hear me sing a little song? *(Little Josiah nods)*  How about this one?

*(Dr McPherson sings Francis Hopkinson “The Toast”)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxL8oofQmw4*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxL8oofQmw4)

*(If slaves joined in, it could be sung like this.* [*http://www.troubadourinteractive.com/born-in-battle-the-american-revolution-online/music/a-toast-to-general-washington/*](http://www.troubadourinteractive.com/born-in-battle-the-american-revolution-online/music/a-toast-to-general-washington/) *)*

‘Tis Washington’s health–fill a bumper all round,  
For he is our glory and pride.  
Our arms shall in battle with conquest be crown’d  
Whilst virtue and he’s on our side.

‘Tis Washington’s health–loud cannons should roar,  
And trumpets the truth should proclaim:  
There cannot be found, search all the world o’er,  
His equal in virtue and fame.

‘Tis Washington’s health–our hero to bless,  
May heaven look graciously down:  
Oh! Long may he live, our hearts to possess,  
And freedom still call him her own.

**DR. MCPHERSON:** Do you like that little song Josiah?

**5 YEAR OLD LITTLE JOSIAH:**  Yes, Massa. I do.

**DR. MCPHERSON:**  I thought you would. *(Pats Little Josiah on the head)* I’ll see you later. I must go to town, now. Goodbye little Josiah.

(*Dr McPherson leaves stage left. Little Josiah goes to Mother who welcomes him with a hug, then indicates for him to sit down beside her.)*

**5 YEAR OLD LITTLE JOSIAH:**  When’s Papa coming home?

**MOTHER:**  Yo’ Papa was sent south. It will be a long time before you see him again.

**5 YEAR OLD LITTLE JOSIAH:**  Is he happy there?

**MOTHER:** *(turns away and lies to protect him.):* Yes, he’s happy. He is his old self again.

**5 YEAR OLD LITTLE JOSIAH:** I love Massa Josiah. He’s almost like a Papa.

**MOTHER:** Yes, he’s very kind, and he loves you, too. He gave you his own Christian name, Josiah, and the last name of his favorite uncle Henson, who fought in the Great Revolution**.**

**LITTLE JOSIAH:** Then I mus’ be little Massa Josiah.  *(very pleased with himself.)*

**MOTHER:** Yes, I guess you is. But now let me teach you another song, Josiah, one you must remember all your life.

*(Mother teaches little Josiah the Lord's Prayer. “Our Father” Duet, mother and child. duet. She sings it somewhat crudely, but the spirit of the prayer is heard in the background sung by an unseen heavenly chorus, perhaps the Lord's Prayer written by Albert Hay Malotte,* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEplqV0scyo> *1935 hummed without words by unseen angels . Artistic license, Angels could know it before it was written.)*

Our father which art in heaven

Hallowed be thy name

Thy kingdom come

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom the power the glory for ever amen

**5 YEAR OLD LITTLE JOSIAH:** *(Repeats last two words of each phrase.)*

*(When they are done. Mother goes back to snapping peas, and Little Josiah helps her.)*

*(suddenly, the peace is broken by two slaves who enter excitedly, loudly fussing with each other.)*

**1ST SLAVE:**  O Lawdy! O Lawdy ! Massa Josiah’s dun falled off his hoss !

*(Josiah’s mother looks up.)*

**2ND SLAVE:** Hit his head, an’ drownded in de creek.

MOTHER: No !  *(in a breathy dismay)*

**1ST SLAVE:**  O Lawdy Lawdy ... We’s doomed now.

**2ND SLAVE:** What’ll become of us ?

**1ST SLAVE:** No telling who’ll buy us. We could be sold south !

**2ND SLAVE:** , Nobody’s never be seen again dat’s been sold south.

*(each repeats his/her message over and over, in various forms, to anybody nearby as they runs by, fading into the distance.)*

*(Mother looks sorrow stricken, then terrified. She puts a protective are around little Josiah.)*

*(Little Josiah ,only paying attention only to his snap beans, doesn’t understand, and thinks she is missing his father.)*

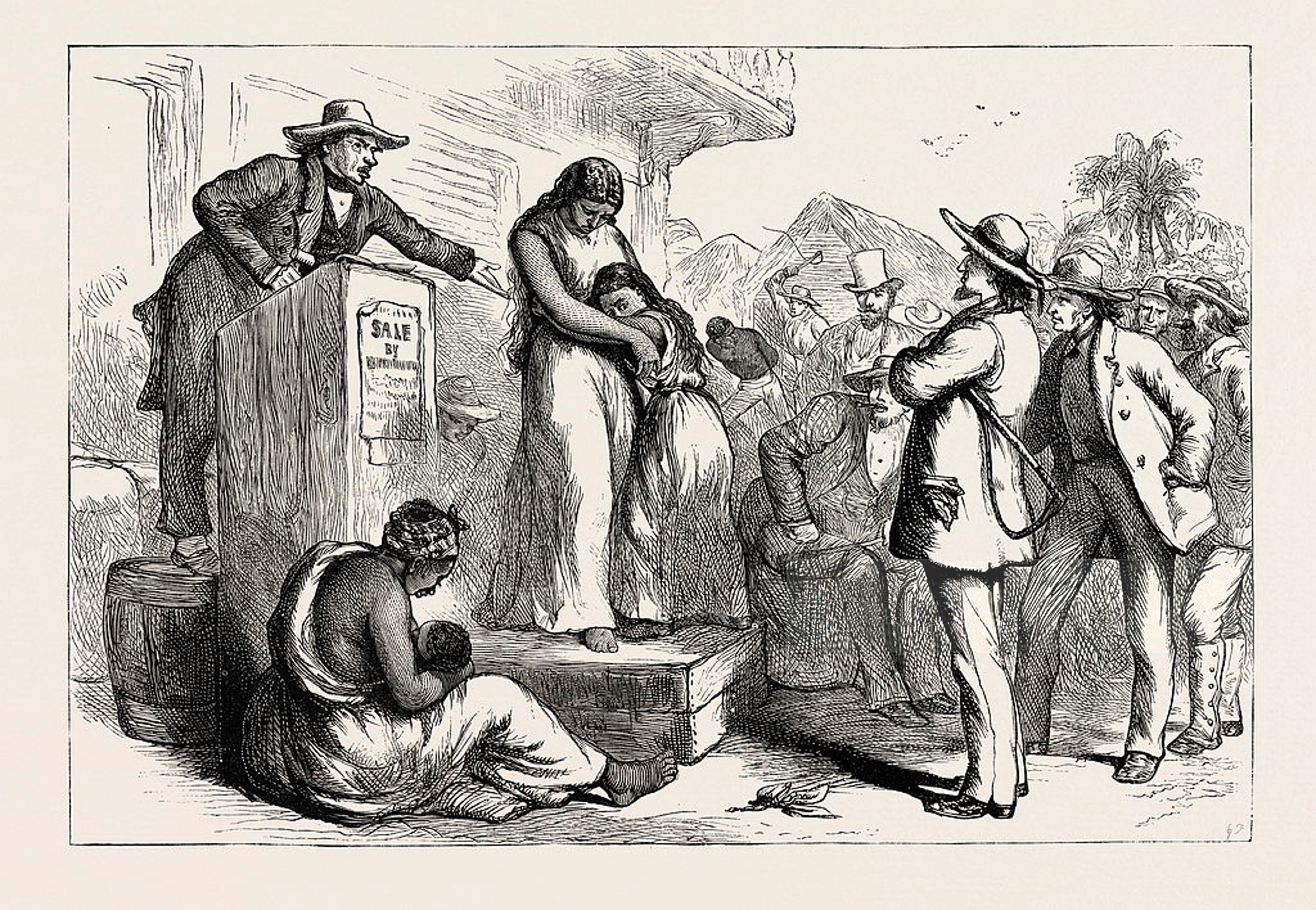
**5 YEAR OLD LITTLE JOSIAH:**  Don’t be sad. You still have me. I’ll always take care of you. *(She hugs him tightly, and weeps. Lights out.* *)*

*(crescendo bass drum roll like thunder threatening a storm* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XanwGC_Gtwg> *If possible a lower bass drum for the last boom)*

**SCENE 2**

*The Auction*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tu3j7rPscpY*

**

*(Auctioneer down stage right, list in hand. Center stage a raised platform. Slaves huddled stage left with handlers. Mother in front of them holding little Josiah’s hand amid her other 5 children. Buyers milling about.)*

**MOTHER:** *(to her 6 children.)* Chillin’ Be brave. Hold your heads high. An’ pray the Lawd gives you good new homes. *(The oldest boy goes up on the platform.) She sings.*

*song about being brave goes here*

*“Hold On”*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfvLZjofEXA*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfvLZjofEXA)

*Substitute “Keep your head up high” for “Keep your hand on that plow”*

*children could harmonize refrain “We’ll hold on”*

*Lyrics could be something like this.*

*Chilluns let no harm come in  
Do’s all fast’ned an’ de winders pinned  
Keep yo’ han’ on dat plow  
Hold àn! Hold on!  
  
Let none say, “Ya lost yo’ track  
Can’t plow straight an’ keep a-lookin’ back”…  
Keep yo’ head up high.  
Hold on ! Hold on !  
  
If you wanna get to Heaven, let me tell you how  
Just keep yo’ han’ on de Gospel plow  
Keep yo’ head up high.  
Hold on ! Hold on !  
  
If dat plow stays in you’ han’  
It’ll lan’ you straiht into de promised lan’…  
Keep yo’ head up high.  
Hold on ! Hold on !  
  
Mary had a golden chain  
Ev’ry link was my Jesus’ name  
Keep yo’ head up high.  
Hold on ! Hold on !*

*Keep on climbin’ an’ don’t you tire  
Ev’ry rug goes high’r an’ high’r…*  
*Keep yo’ head up high.  
Hold on ! Hold on !*

**AUCTIONEER:** *Something like this wretched thing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tu3j7rPscpY*

*(Her five older children are put up for sale one at a time, beginning stage left they walk onto the auction block and leave it stage right. Auctioneer could ad lib. Mother puts her free hand to her mouth in worry. When the 5th boy goes up for sale she reaches out her arm toward the boy, but is roughly pushed back by handler. Then she is taken from Josiah, who is left alone, waiting to be auctioned last.)*

*(Isaac Riley standing down stage far right, raises his hand to bid.)*

**AUCTIONEER:**  *(takes bids up to $90, which is low because she is ~40 years old.)* ….. Sold ! To Mr. Isaac Riley !  *(Image of Isaac Riley* [*https://www.pbs.org/video/redeeming-uncle-tom-the-josiah-henson-story-4vetit/*](https://www.pbs.org/video/redeeming-uncle-tom-the-josiah-henson-story-4vetit/) *16:00 – 16:07)*

*(Mother is led down stage right, just beyond the auctioneer. Little Josiah is led onto the platform from stage left Mother pulls away from her handler, runs back across the stage, throws herself at Isaac’s feet and grabs onto his legs begging him to buy her baby, now 6 years old.)*

**AUCTIONEER:** And who will bid on this strapping young ‘un?

**MOTHER:** *(to Isaac Riley)* Oh please, sir, please, buy my baby. Please don’t let them take him from me. They have taken all my other chillun. Please, please, leave me this one. He’s sick. He needs his mother. Please, please, please don’t let them take him away.

*(Isaac Riley roughly strikes her and kicks her aside. She crawls away in mental and physical pain. Her pleas becoming weaker, in pain in body as well as soul.)*

Please …. please …. please ….

**AUCTIONEER:** *(continues to auction Josiah)* ….. Sold to the man in the red shirt !

*(6 year old Josiah, (some say 9) who has been looking sickly, now collapses. The man takes his hand and drags, then carries, Josiah’s limp body off stage right. )*

**MOTHER:** (*Mother still sitting on ground, sings.)* Gives out a terrible wail ... then sadly sings.

“Sometimes I feel like a motherless child.”

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXg9UFUXFXU*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXg9UFUXFXU)

*Sometimes I feel like a motherless child  
Sometimes I feel like a motherless child  
Sometimes I feel like a motherless child  
A long way from home, a long way from home*

*Sometimes I feel like I'm almost done  
Sometimes I feel like I'm almost done  
Sometimes I feel like I'm almost done  
And a long, long way from home, a long way from home*

*True believer  
True believer  
A long, long way from home  
A long, long way from home*

*(Commotion of complaining voices off stage right.)*

**BUYER (ADAM ROBB) IN RED SHIRT:** Wake up! Wake up! You little brat!

*(shaking the prostrate boy’s arm. Then scoops the boy up and comes back carrying the boy.)*

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** This baby is sick. He ain’t no good. You cheated me. He’ll probably die. He ain’t worth a penny, much less what I paid for him. Take him back.

**AUCTIONEER:** You bid on him. He’s yours. The auction is over. I can’t take him back.

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** Confound you, selling me this worthless nothing. Take him back.

**AUCTIONEER:** Why not ask Riley to take him? He took the mother.

*(Buyer in Red Shirt strides over to Isaac Riley and offers to sell the child for a low price, then lower, then lowest. As the price goes lower and lower, so can his voice. He would have to be a growly bass.)*

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:**  You’ve got the mother, I’ll give you this pickaninny cheap, say five bucks.

**ISAAC RILEY:** That much, for a sick and spindly boy? *(Turns away.)*

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** Four ….

**ISAAC RILEY:** Humph !

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** Three ….

**ISAAC RILEY:** Humph !

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** Two …*.*

**ISAAC RILEY:** Humph !

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** six bits …

**ISAAC RILEY:** Humph !

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** two bits … now that’s just 25 pennies !

**ISAAC RILEY:** I don’t have money to waste. *(nods his head toward horses, probably off stage)* That there. That your horse team?

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:**Yes, what of it ?

**ISAAC RILEY:** Make you a bargain. If the brat lives, I’ll shoe those horses. If he doesn’t, you get nothing.

**BUYER IN RED SHIRT:** *(In a growly voice.)*  A brat for a horse shoe’n. Better ‘n nothin’.

*(Isaac gestures the buyer to give the baby to Mother, and when the Red Shirt fellow does, Isaac Riley says roughly to Mother, with exasperation .)*

**ISAAC RILEY:**  Here’s your little whelp. Take him.

**MOTHER:**  *(stage darkens, left alone in spotlight hugging body of limp boy tightly, rocking and crying.)* My baby, my baby. *(Lights out.)*

**Act 2**

**Scene 1**

*Years later, inside a small cabin with a dirt floor. Mother praying again, muttering short phrases. In contrast to her short rosary-type prayer, backstage a chorus of angels sing Ave Maria, which shows how deeply her prayer is felt. Josiah, age 18 or 19, big and strong, comes in, wearing typical slave attire, shirt open to the waist showing his (hopefully) muscular physique. (If singer has no muscles, maybe a closed shirt.)*

**MOTHER:**  *(as before)*  Lawd, save my chillin’, save my chillin’ save my chillin’. Let them find freedom, find freedom, find freedom of spirit in this oppressive land, this land, this land. Let them find happiness, happiness, happiness of spirit, to overcome unkindness, overcome kindness, and make him glad I gave him life. Oh! (She stops and looks up when Josiah comes in.) Amen Lawd.

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:** Mornin’, Mother !

**MOTHER:**  My don’t you look fine today. To think, you was half dead when they gave you to me. Now look at you, and foreman of the plantation, too. If it weren’t for you finding food for de other slaves they’d all be skin and bones. You done good.

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:**  Isaac might not like that if he knew I sneaked them food, but he likes his income’s when his slaves is fed and happy an’ can work with spirit. An, after all, how can property steal property? We’s all still his’n.

And I can do the work better than any slave on the plantation, even with my bum shoulder.

*He could sing a proud song about his work here*

**MOTHER:**  To think you got dat bum shoulder protectin’ that no good Isaac in that shameful Saloon. Shoulda’ let them trounce him then and there.  *(looking upward)* Fo’give me Lawd.

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:**  It’s my job. An’ it’s fun rescuin’ my po’ drunkin’ massa.

**MOTHER:** There’s more than just workin’ that makes a man big. He gotta have a big heart an’ a generous spirit, too. The baker, Mister John McKenny, o’er in Georgetown, preaches nearby this week. Ask Massa Isaac’s permission to go hear him.

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:**  Isaac will never let me go.

**MOTHER:**  He better. You made his farm earn twice what the dishonest white overseer did … an’ Isaac had to pay him. And you got your shoulder broke saving him. Isaac will grumble, but he will let you go. I’ll pray that he does. Ask him.

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:**  *(big strong Josiah says obediently and lovingly.)* I will, Mama.

**Scene 2**

*Evening is falling. Stars shimmering through the silhouetted trees. Josiah enters from left. To the right is a tent where the prayer meeting is held. The doors are open wide enough to see light and people inside.*

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:**  *(Josiah talking to himself.)*  So *much* scolding … Isaac made it pretty clear what would befall me if I didn’t return right after the service … but Isaac *must* like me ... for he let me come.

**CHORUS:** *(Singing comes from inside the tent. Either the coronation hymn common at the time … or a spiritual.)*

*Hymn (this or another)*

*“All hail the power of Jesus’ name”*

*Written by Oliver Holden, one of the earliest Am hymn tunes, still found in most protestant hymnals. lyrics written to Edward Perronet*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7W6gxLXASg*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7W6gxLXASg)

*(Josiah steps closer )*

**PREACHER MCKENNY:** (*begins sermon based on Hebrews ii 9* ***)*** “That by the grace of God should taste of death *for every man*.” For he so loved the world with his tender love for mankind, his forgiving spirit, his compassion for the outcasts and despised, his cruel crucifixion and *glo-ri-ous* ascension,… These glad tidings were not for a select few. They were for the slave as well as the master, the poor as well as the rich, for the persecuted and distressed and heavy laden, the captive He looks down in compassion from heaven on you. He died to save *your* soul. Someday he’ll welcome you to the skies. So Comfort yet all.

*(A phrase from Comfort Ye would not be out of place here.* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EME124honk*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EME124honk) *0:00-1:15)*

*(Preacher McKenny concludes his sermon, and congregation is softly sings another short hymn, or spiritual, Josiah steps away from the tent. Talking to himself he wanders to the far side of the stage where there are some trees.)*

**18 (or 22) YEAR OLD JOSIAH:** *(Josiah talking to himself again)* He loves me ? Me a slave? “That by the grace of God should taste of death … for every man.” … For every man .... Not just fo’ rich folk ! Jesus died for me, a poor despised abused creature, deemed of others fit for nothing but unrequited toil, and mental and bodily degradation. Oh the blessedness and sweetness of feeling that I am LOVED ! He loved me enough to give his life for me … For me ! It’s true ! *(Josiah weeps for joy and laughs at the same time.)*  I feel transported with delicious joy. Jesus will be my dear refuge. He’ll wipe away all tears from my eyes. He’ll save me, and tek me to Heabin. Now I can bear all things. Nothing will seem hard after this.

I feel swallowed up in beautiful divine love, I love my enemies, and I’ll pray for them that did despite-fully use me. *(Josiah falls on his knees and prays)* P 18-19

Oh Lawd, thank-you. I’ll try to be like you the rest of my life.

*Song could go here*

*(He cocks his head as a thought suddenly occurs to him, thinking out loud again.)*

I feel sorry Massa Riley doesn’t know Jesus. Sorry massa should live such a coarse, wicked, cruel life. He will never know such joy.

*(resuming his prayer.)*

An please make Massa Isaac happy as me and show him how to be loving and kind, so he be happy, too.

*(While Josiah is weeping for joy, a slave girl spied him and crept quietly toward him. He looks startled and embarrassed.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** *(noticing he is taken aback by her sudden approach)* I’m Charlotte. I heard you weeping. Are you all right?

*(Josiah fairly bounds up, still filled with joy.)*

**18 YEAR OLD JOSIAH:**  All right? All right? Why, I’m so happy, I could marry you !

*(He throws his arms round her. Picks her up and spins around. She looks startled and puts up her hands on his shoulders for protection. He immediately comes to his senses, puts her down, and backs off a bit, and looks sheepish.)*

Uh … thank you Charlotte … that was very kind of you to ask.

**CHARLOTTE:**  *(after looking at him for a moment, seeing that he’s kind)*

Well, you getting so free an’ all, I guess you’ll have to marry me.

*(He picks her up and spins around again. She laughs.)*

**Scene 3**

*(One night, 16 years later, in January 1825, inside the same cabin. Fire in hearth to the right. Josiah, his wife, mother, and 2 children l asleep on mats on the dirt floor. A tree stump chair here and there.)*

*(Knocking at the cabin door.)*

Somebody’s Knockin’ At Yo’ Do’

sung by Josiah (or his wife or mother)

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLiTovam5Ww*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLiTovam5Ww)

Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
O sinner, why don't you answer?  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door.

Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
O sinner, why don't you answer?  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door.

Can't you hear Him?

Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
O sinner, why don't you answer?  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door.

Sounds like Jesus,

Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
Somebody's knocking at your (my) door,  
O sinner, why don't you answer?  
Somebody's knocking at your door.

**JOSIAH:** *(fussing in good humor)*  I been workin’ at this farm for 30 years, and now in the middle of a freezin’ night, when I’m half asleep someone comes poundin’ at my door. What’s wrong with them? Don’t they work hard enough to need sleep ?

*(Josiah gets out of bed, which is a mat on the floor, and answers the door. He is surprised to see his master.)*

**JOSIAH:**  Massa Isaac ! I were expectin’ somebody else.  *(pause)* Why you at my door this hour o’ night. Why what’s the matter?

*(Isaac galumphs in, says nothing, stumps over to a log stool, sits down and moodily warms himself at the fire. He begins to groan and wring his hands. )*

**ISAAC:**  *(moaning.)* Ooooooo ! Ooooooo! (etc.)

**JOSIAH:** Sick massa ?

*(Isaac continues putting on an act moaning.)*

**ISAAC:**  Ooooooo ! Ooooooo! Oh, Woe is me.

*(There could be an aria here with lyrics, “Ooooo! Ooooo! Woe! Is me” To a tune something like an up-side-down “exhalted” in Handel’s “Every Valley” including trills.* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCLUhVkCoPE*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCLUhVkCoPE) *)* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvUBF3kU7qk*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvUBF3kU7qk) *exhalted upside down*

**JOSIAH (Sometimes called “Sie”):** *(tenderly with compassion for his owner’s wretched appearance.)* Can’t I help you any way, massa ?

**ISAAC:** Ooooooooo! Oh, Sie ! I’m ruined, ruined !

**JOSIAH:**  How so, massa ? *(still sincerely.)*

**ISAAC:**  They’ve got judgment against me, and in less than two weeks every darkie I’ve got will be put up and sold. *(curses.)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(does a doubletake, powerless to utter a word, pity for Isaac and terror at the anticipation of his family’s fate)*

**ISAAC:** And now, Sie, there’s only one way to save anything. You can do it; won’t you, won’t you do it? Only, you can. Won’t you ?

*(In his distress Isaac stands up and throws his arms around Josiah.)*

**JOSIAH:** *(somewhat alarmed, arms pinned at his sides, but still compassionate.)*If I can do it, massa, I will. What is it ?

**ISAAC:**  *(without saying what)* Won’t you, won’t you ? *(Turning away again.)* I raised you, Sie; I made you overseer; I know I’ve abused you, Sie, but I didn’t mean it. Promise me you’ll do it, boy. *(now loud sobs and tears)*

**JOSIAH:**  What is it you want me to do Massa?

**ISAAC:**  You must , or the sheriff will seize every slave, separate them, and sell them south … *(He Looks over his shoulder at Josiah to see if the threat has taken root.)*

Give me your promise, Josiah. I know you are an honest man, give me your promise that you will do as I say. Say you will. *(between sobs, he begs in tears,)* Say you will.

**JOSIAH:** I promise faithfully to do whatever I can to save you from the fate impending over you.

**ISAAC:** I want you to run away, Sie.

**JOSIAH:**  *(steps back incredulous)*  Run away, Massa !?

**ISAAC:** I want you to run away, Sie. Run away and take the younger servants with you.

**JOSIAH:**  Run away, Massa !? and take what ... !?

**ISAAC:** And take your wife, and 2 children, and 18 of my slaves to my brother, Amos Riley, in Kentucky.

**JOSIAH:** *(looks startled as though he’d been asked to go to the moon)*  To Kentucky ?!

**ISAAC:** Kentucky would be far better than *(flourishing and arm to indicate a great distance, and in an evil hissing whisper)* being separated and sold to someplace South ! … like … Louisiana … or Georgia … or even *(with emphasis)* Mississippi **!**

**JOSIAH:** But … I’ve never traveled a day’s journey from the plantation. How will I find the way?

**ISAAC:**  O, it’s easy enough for a smart fellow like you to find it.

*(P 49 of book mentions Alexandria, Culpeper, Fauquier, Harper’s Ferry, to Cumberland, but these are just signs he would have passed taking an old indian route from Bethesda through Winchester toward Cumberland along what is now route 50. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S.\_Route\_50\_in\_Virginia#/map/0](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Route_50_in_Virginia" \l "/map/0) )*

It’s Not Far

*(sung in a snidley manner by Isaac Riley)*

You get a horse and a wagon, stocked with oats, and herring,

That you the horse and children be sharing.

It’s not fa’.

*( pronounced “fa” for sing-ability)*

Take the old indian road to Cumberland without erring

A marvelous feat for you most daring.

It’s not fa’.

Pass signs to Culpepper and Harpers Ferring *(Harper’s Ferry)*

They will help you get your bearing.

It’s not fa’.

*(Each section could be a monotone, ascending until the mountains are crossed and the river boat journey begins, then descending.)*

Over the mountains to the horse don’t be sparing.

To Wheeling sell horse and wagon as a pairing.

It’s not fa’.

Buy a yawl boat with money be sparing

Then you float down the Ohio with nary a caring

It’s not fa’.

Don’t stop in Ohio, but keep on repairing

Til you see Yellow Banks appearing

It’s not fa’.

Then land and walk south 5 miles to a clearing

and the plantation house where yourself you be declaring.

It’s not fa’.

Why it’s not even a thousand miles.

**JOSIAH:** But it’s winter massa.

**ISAAC:** It’s February, boy. It’ll be spring in no time. You’ll be marching over the mountains in March, and there will be April flowers by the time you get there.

Start at 11 tomorrow night, so nobody will know. If you walk all night you’ll be well on your way. I trust you, Josiah. You will know what to do.

*(Aside)* I have no idea what he will do.

**JOSIAH:** I will try, Massa.

*(Isaac departs, this time wringing his hands with evil glee.)*

**JOSIAH:**  Feburary 1825. I be 36 years ol’ an’ I gonna walk a thousand miles, leading my people, like Moses led his people to the promised land. He led them to escape an evil Pharaoh massa. I’ll lead them to ’scape goin’ south.

*(Josiah by this time, taken by the responsibility could have a song with   
“It’s not far” theme” … but ending with a question … )*

**JOSIAH:** *(coming to himself and ends with a question)*  It’s not far ?

*(Lights dim, faint spotlight on Josiah, then all lights go out.)*

*notes concerning what happened between scenes*

*could have a stormy interlude*

*(They started in February 1825 at 11 at night and walked until the following noon, with only minor rests. The route would have looked like this.* [*https://www.google.com/maps/dir/Bethesda,+Maryland/Wheeling,+West+Virginia+26003/@39.6950094,-80.0402446,8z/data=!4m19!4m18!1m10!1m1!1s0x89b7cbb76a24022d:0x26b279f76a2bcd0d!2m2!1d-77.0947092!2d38.984652!3m4!1m2!1d-78.1636815!2d39.1849934!3s0x89b5ee4eeb5fa031:0x73bc8f34f845fbb9!1m5!1m1!1s0x8835dac77b90c5e9:0xbb87ed67ecd6e599!2m2!1d-80.7209149!2d40.0639616!3e0*](https://www.google.com/maps/dir/Bethesda,+Maryland/Wheeling,+West+Virginia+26003/@39.6950094,-80.0402446,8z/data=!4m19!4m18!1m10!1m1!1s0x89b7cbb76a24022d:0x26b279f76a2bcd0d!2m2!1d-77.0947092!2d38.984652!3m4!1m2!1d-78.1636815!2d39.1849934!3s0x89b5ee4eeb5fa031:0x73bc8f34f845fbb9!1m5!1m1!1s0x8835dac77b90c5e9:0xbb87ed67ecd6e599!2m2!1d-80.7209149!2d40.0639616!3e0) *Walked over the mountains to Wheeling where they exchanged the horse and wagon for a boat and floated down the Ohio River. On and on each day until April arriving 15 miles above Yellow Banks ( Owensboro) at Big Blackfoot Creek, where we walked 5 miles south to the massa’s house.)*

**Scene 3**

*In Kentucky three years later. Charlotte, his wife, in a rocking chair on the front porch of a log cabin, darning socks. Chorus of slaves, softly humming in background.*

**CHARLOTTE:** It’s been good living in Kentucky these 3 years. It was a good omen from the start. The two months we walked here in 1825, the winter was mild, without any snow. When we arrived it was springtime with flowers bloomin’ all ‘round. Amos is kinder, we’ve had enough to eat, and the soil is rich and good and the chillin’s fat and happy.

And massa Amos likes you, making you overseer right away. We can’t talk while we work, but we can sing.

**JOSIAH:** And there are lots of churches to attend, where you can sing, too. These past 3 years I’ve had opportunity to improve myself, to learn not just cultivation the soil but the cultivation of the harvests which ripen only in eternity.

*(Church bells in distance)*

**CHARLOTTE:** *(Puts down her darning and looks at Josiah)* To think, now you be a preacher of the *(proudly with emphasis)* Me-tho-dist E-pis-co-pal Church.

**JOSIAH:** I think my preaching may have helped some, or at least they say so.

*(Music from distant church begins, and Josiah joins in.)*

When morning gilds the skies,

My hear awaking cries:

May Jesus Christ be praised.

Alike at work or prayer,

to Jesus I repair:

May Jesus Christ be praised.

*Suddenly enters young Amos*

**YOUNG AMOS:** News just in from Maryland. Isaac’s wife refuses to come. Now he wants all the slaves are to be sold south ‘cept you and your family, Josiah.

*(Young Amos runs off)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(at first dumbfounded silence, music trails off and is silent)*  I have done good !? Do you know what this means !

(Josiah moans.) I should have listened to those in Ohio, who said, “Stay here in this free state.” Instead I bring them here, only to be sold. To another heart-rending scene. Husbands and wives, parents and children, bound by strong affection Just as my own mother with such strong affections torn by grief are to be separated forever. . Torments of hell seize upon me. My eyes are open and the guilty madness of my conduct in preventing them from availing themselves of th opportunity for acquiring freedom, which offered itself at Cincinnati overwhelms me. Oh! What would I not give to have the chance offered once more ! An now, through me, are they doomed to wear out life miserably in the hot and pestilential climate of the far south. Death would be more welcome to me in this agony. Was it pride that I could do the massa’s impossible bidding. But I didn’t think it right to steal us from Massa Isaac. I had given my word.

*(I need to incorporated some of the words above into the following spiritual.)*

I done done what yo tol’ me to do.

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62LSdhqxHXM*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62LSdhqxHXM)

[*https://hymnary.org/text/o\_lord\_ive\_done\_what\_you\_told\_me\_to\_do*](https://hymnary.org/text/o_lord_ive_done_what_you_told_me_to_do)

Oh, what have I done, in my pride, swayed by the devil himself.

**CHARLOTTE:**  *(trying to comfort Josiah)* But your mother was still in Maryland. You don’t know what that ruffian Isaac might have done to her if you’d left his slaves free in Ohio . *(She sings the other verses of the hymn)*

Does sadness fill my mind,

A solace here I find

May Jesus Christ be praised;

Or fades my earthly bliss

My comfort still is this

May Jesus Christ be praised;

Some day he will order you sold, too.Didn’t your Methodist preacher friend say you should go to Maryland to Isaac and buy your freedom.

**JOSIAH:** He said it must not be known that he had spoken to me on this subject. But he has friends in Cincinnati. And after I’m free, I can buy you and the children, too. I will go.

**CHARLOTTE:**  We must part for now, so we may be together. He be a man o’ God. He must know.

*Could have a song about parting to be together*

**JOSIAH:**  He says I can preach along the way and he’ll ask folks to take up a collection to help buy my freedom. I could use something like a beautiful sermon I heard recently. I’m not sure what it means, but it goes like this.

*Matthew 5:1 – 7:29 and Luke 6:17 – 36 with small changes*

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for (in the cause of right) righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when others abuse you and persecute you and speak all manner of evil (calumny) against you falsely on my account.

“Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven as it was for the prophets persecuted before you.”

**WIFE CHARLOTTE:**  We could certainly use some comfort, and poor in spirit. I wonder what Heaven plantation be like. Hope they’s got good massa’s there.

**JOSIAH:**  Oh, Charlotte.  *(laughing)*

Scene 4

[*https://www.pbs.org/video/redeeming-uncle-tom-the-josiah-henson-story-4vetit/*](https://www.pbs.org/video/redeeming-uncle-tom-the-josiah-henson-story-4vetit/)

*16:26 shows accurate picture of what the house looked like at that time.*

*(Located at the base of a downward sloping driveway off Old Georgetown Road in North Bethesda, Maryland. The frame section of the house dates to 1800-1815, while the log wing dates to 1850-51 has not yet been built.* [*https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riley-Bolten\_House*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riley-Bolten_House) *11420 Old Georgetown Rd, North Bethesda, MD Rough cabin to far side of stage with rickety chair on porch, porch is only dirt with roof supported by cedar tree trunk posts.)*

*(Josiah did in fact do well during his travels. He enters cleanly dressed riding horseback, or walking having left his horse off stage left. It is very early morning and the farm is shrouded in shadows.)*

**JOSIAH:**  It is Christmastide. I shall soon be home, with my dear old mother. Surely it is a good sign that my liberation is near.

Goin’ Home

*(This may not be appropriate, unless the original spiritual tune is found, the popular one having been written by Dvorak ~1893)*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9smSP1dq-A*

Goin' home, goin' home, I'm a goin' home;  
Quiet-like, some still day, I'm jes' goin' home.  
It's not far, jes' close by,  
Through an open door;  
Work all done, care laid by,  
Goin' to fear no more.  
Mother's there 'spectin' me,  
Father's waitin' too;  
Lots o' folk gather'd there,  
All the friends I knew,  
All the friends I knew.  
Home, I'm goin' home!  
  
Nothin lost, all's gain,  
No more fret nor pain,  
No more stumblin' on the way,  
No more longin' for the day,  
Goin' to roam no more!  
Mornin' star lights the way,  
Res'less dream all done;  
Shadows gone, break o' day,  
Real life jes' begun.  
There's no break, there's no end,  
Jes' a livin' on;  
Wide awake, with a smile  
Goin' on and on.  
  
Goin' home, goin' home, I'm jes' goin' home,  
goin' home, goin' home, goin' home!

*(Dawn gradually lights the scene well enough for Josiah to see the decaying farm)*

*(The environs become visible. Slaves dressed raggedy are seen. The property appears gray and gloomy, having changed for the worse in Josiah’s absence.)*

**JOSIAH:**  Doesn’t look like Christmas came here.

*(Isaac coming out of the house, wearing clothes rumpled. His wife coming a little after him)*

**ISAAC:** Why, what in the devil have you been doing, Sie ? you’ve turned into a regular black gentleman. (aside) I’ll take the gentleman out of you pretty quick.

**JOSIAH:** I been preaching, Massa Isaac. People gave me enough to buy a suit and a nice pony. I was told you might sell me my manumission papers.

**ISAAC:**  We’ll talk later. Let me see your pass. *(Looks at it and hands it to his wife.)* Here, put this in my desk so it won’t get lost. *(She takes it into the house.)* Put your horse away, and you may rest in the kitchen. See you later, Sie.

*(Isaac returns to the house. Josiah, in his fine clothes, goes into the porch of a log cabin, probably the kitchen, open so the interior is visible … the log addition to the main house had not been built yet ….Others are asleep on blankets on the dirt floor. One turns over and leans on her elbow.)*

**GIRL SLAVE:** Who dat ?

**JOSIAH:**  I’m Josiah. I used to live here. Do you know where can I find my mother?

**SLAVE:**  So yo’ is Sie. Ah heard tell ‘bout you? Yo’ mother? Din’t nobody tell you. Yo’ mama died years back. *(seeing his shock and grief.)* I’s sorry fo’ yo’, an’ sorry yo’ didn’t come sooner.

*(She goes back to sleep. Josiah sits in a chair thinking, talking quietly to himself.)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(sadly and solumnly)*  O Mama ! I come all this way hoping to see you. I’m tired Mama. So tired. O Mama, I shall never see you again, or hear your soft voice.

*(still sitting on the chair he quietly sobbing ... he falls asleep.)*

*(Stage darkens. Except for a pale light as Josiah’s mother appears up high as though in heaven. As if in a dream, she sings Bach or Schubert Ave Maria. Although she wouldn’t have known Latin, it sounds best that way, and she may have learned Latin in Heaven. )*

**MOTHER:**

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uzZu9HZBWA*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uzZu9HZBWA)

Ave Maria, gratia plena,  
Maria, gratia plena,  
Maria, gratia plena,  
Ave, Ave, Dominus,  
Dominus tecum.  
Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus,  
Et benedictus fructus ventris (tui),  
Ventris tui, Jesus.  
Ave Maria!  
  
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,  
Ora pro nobis peccatoribus,  
Ora, ora pro nobis;  
Ora, ora pro nobis peccatoribus,  
Nunc et in hora mortis,  
In hora mortis nostrae.  
In hora, hora mortis nostrae,  
In hora mortis nostrae.  
Ave Maria!

*(Josiah, startles, as if waking from a dream, looks up questioningly towards the heavens.)*

**JOSIAH:**  What a strange dream. It warms the soul, so different from the loneliness in this poverty stricken farm. How shall I escape from this accursed spot? I know but one friend to which I could appeal - “Master Frank” How different brothers can be. He will persuade Isaac to sell me my freedom.

*(Rooster crows. Josiah gets up and fetches his horse, or simply picks up his bag, if no horse available.)*

*(This section could be left out?)*

**ISAAC’S WIFE:** Where are you going, ‘Siah?

**JOSIAH:**  I am going to Washington, mistress, to see Mr. Frank, and I must take my pass with me, if you please.

**ISAAC’S WIFE:** O, everybody knows you here; you won’t need your pass.

**JOSIAH:**  But I can’t go to Washington without it. I may be met by some surly stranger, who will stop me and plague me, if he can’t do anything worse.”

**ISAAC’S WIFE:** Well, I’ll get it for you.

**JOSIAH:**  Thank’y missus.

**Scene 5**

*( On the 9th of March 1829 Josiah received his manumission papers in due form of law. And on the 10th he was in front of the house, preparing to leave on foot, when Isaac came up to him in a pleasant manner.)*

**JOSIAH:** You have the money I earned on my way here, and my horse. That makes up $350 of my $450. I’ll get that other $100 for you soon as I can.

**ISAAC:** What will you do with your certificate of freedom? Will you show it on the road.

**JOSIAH:** Yes.

**ISAAC:** You’ll be a fool if you do. Some slave-trader will get hold of it and tear it up , and the first thing yo know, you’ll be thrown into prison, sold for your jail fees, and be in his possession before any of your friends can help you. Don’t show it at all. Your pass is enough. Let me enclose you papers for you under cover to my brother. Nobody will dare break a seal, for that is a state-prison matter; and when you arrive in Kentucky you will have it with you all safe and sound.

*(Isaac goes inside the house, secretly draws another zero on the price owed, and seals the valuable manumission papers in 2 envelopes with 2 seals,. Josiah leaves Maryland March 10, 1829, on foot.)*

*Josiah sings “Oh Freedom”*

*(*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBygI3ht_2w>

*this was written in the 20th century, and while it would be appropriate. )*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBygI3ht\_2w*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBygI3ht_2w)

Oh, freedom, Oh, freedom  
Oh freedom over me  
And no more be a slave  
til I be buried in my grave  
And go home to my Lord and be free  
Oh, freedom

**Act 3**

**Scene 1**

*Josiah arrived home in Kentucky. The sun was setting and the sky was dusky. He and his wife are eager to tell each other what has happened.*

**JOSIAH:** Charlotte.

**WIFE CHARLOTTE:**  *(Charlotte gives a little jump of surprise.)* Oh Josiah ! *(She gives him a hug.)* You back at last!

**JOSIAH:**  Are you all right? And the children?

**WIFE CHARLOTTE:** We all fine, workin’ hard as usual. Josiah, the chill’n from the great house tole me you put a down payment on your freedom. Where you git all dat money. *(suspiciously)* You steal it?

**JOSIAH:**  You have so little faith in my preaching?

**CHARLOTTE:**  Preachin’ ? You got that money preachin’ ? Now that you back, how you gonna get the rest o’ de thousand dollars ?

**JOSIAH:** (Steps back in shock.) Thousand dollars ? What thousand dollars ?

**CHARLOTTE:**  The thousand dollars to give for your freedom.

**JOSIAH:** What? A thousand dollars? *(in breathy shocked disbelief)* Tell me again what you heard.

**CHARLOTTE:** The chillin’ from the great house said you paid three hundred and fifty dollars *(with emphasis on the fifty.)* down of your thousand dollar price, and when you had made up six hundred and fifty more you was to have yo’ freedom.

**JOSIAH:**  Massa Amos said that ?

**CHARLOTTE:**  Dat’s what dey said. Isn’t it true what they been saying, that you cost a thousand dollars ? That’s a lot, but you be worth more than money to me. *(hugging him again)*

**JOSIAH:** A thousand dollars ? *(sitting down on a stool as though he could no longer stand.)* I gave him my horse and all the money I had earned on the way to Maryland, which together was the three hundred and fifty dollars. That part is true. But Massa Frank arranged so I would only owe one hundred dollars more. He said that I only owed Four hundred and fifty dollars in all. Isaac must have …

*(Josiah stops before finishing the sentence, pulls the envelope from his shirt pocket, realizing the deception.)*

Charlotte, hide this somewhere and don’t tell me where.

*(Charlotte takes the envelope.)*

**CHARLOTTE:**  Can’t you ask Frank to tell them the truth?

**JOSIAH:** How? He’s ‘most a thousand miles away….

**CHARLOTTE:**  They exchange letters. You could send one, too.

**JOSIAH:**  How could I send one? I cannot read or write …

**CHARLOTTE:**  Have someone send it for you.

**JOSIAH:** But the only folks hereabouts who can read and write are slave holders. They wouldn’t believe me, much less send a note.

*(Could have an aria about reading and writing and education in general … )*

**CHARLOTTE:**  Oh Josiah. After all that !?? You can’t buy yourself ? They still own you?

O Josiah, They will sell you south for sure. *(Charlotte hugging him again, burying her face against him. He puts his arms around her to comfort her. Lights dim slowly.)*

*Scene 2 in front of curtain or in a small spotlight*

**OLD MASSA AMOS** A thousand dollars, Josiah. *(Master Amos laughs)* You be worth a lot Josiah. Don’t think I could sell my own son for that. Young Amos needs to take our produce in a flatboat to sell to New Orleans to sell. You go with him and help dispose of his cargo to best advantage. P 80

**JOSIAH:**  Yes, Massa Amos.

**CHARLOTTE:**  *(silently coming up behind Josiah)*  There have been letters between massa Isaac and massa Amos, somethin’s afoot. Isaac keeps asking the rest of the manumission fee be paid. Oh Josiah, I feel it in my bones. They gonna sell you south. He packing beef-cattle, pigs, poultry, corn, whiskey … and you.

**JOSIAH:**  I feel that, too. I’m old. South where there’s too little food, and too much heat and ‘skeeters ? I shall surely die … I shall never to see your dear face again.

What is money to them? Can it equal my love for you and our little ones? I’ll never see you again. Never talk to you again. Never hear your voice. Where there is not love there is not life in the world. Even the animals in the stable seek the company of friends. And you be the dearest friend I have.

*(Could have Money vs love aria ) (They embrace. Lights out.)*

Scene 3

*Scene on/in flat boat. mats on the floor for sleeping, chicken crates, possibly pigs and goats being led leaving the stage. Night is falling.*

**YOUNG AMOS:** You steered the boat well, Josiah, as well as the captain before he took down with the river sickness.

**JOSIAH:** The last sheep and pig is sold, Massa Amos. There's nothing left to sell massa.

**YOUNG AMOS:** You know I have always liked you Josiah. It’s not my idea. But I guess you know, Isaac wants me to sell you in the morning.

**JOSIAH:**  Yes young Massa Amos. You rest now. I’ll be ready in the morning.

*(Young Amos lies down with other workers and falls asleep. Full of agitation Josiah paces quietly back and forth, far enough away not to wake them.**Starts off calmly worrying and gradually works himself into a frenzy. As his intentions get lower, so does his speech revert to its old slave accent.)*

**JOSIAH:** I’ll never see my loved ones again. I can’t stand it. I have to run away. But these people know me and be after me. It’s hopeless, 'lessen they was ... lessen they was … dead."

if dey was dead nobody'd know me. I ha’ my trav'lin papers. I be free.  I high me north and fetch my wife and chillin's an we run an be free.  All I need do is they be dead, and scuttle the boat. Nobody be the wiser. Nobody know them here.

*(Josiah Picks up an ax and holds it above the boy’s head ready to strike ... kindly do not use a real ax. Light shines in the window. chord as in a hymn changes the mood.)* p86

*A light shines in the window of the flatboat. Josiah turns his head as though he heard someone.*

**JOSIAH:** What was that ? Who whispered in my ear ? Who said no ?

*( He pauses and looks down lovingly)*

This son of my master has done nothing to injure me. He was only obeying commands which he could not resist. I would lose the fruit of all my efforts at self-improvement, the character I had acquired, and the peace of mind that has never deserted me. Love thy neighbor, to good to those who persecute you ...

*(He puts down the ax, sits with head in hands, and sobs as he quotes.)*

But I tell you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you,

*I’m troubled in mind 120*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RMNLeu9v-A*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RMNLeu9v-A)

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK8IRtZObT4*

*(This negro spiritual was sung by a former slave known as Mrs. Brown, who learned the song from her father. She said that when he had been whipped he would sit on a log outside their cabin and sing it with such pathos that even his masters were moved.)*

I’m troubled, I’m troubled, I’m troubled in Mind

if Jesus don’t help me, I surely will die

On Jesus my savior on Thee I’ll depend

When troubles are near me, You’ll be my true friend

I’m troubled, I’m troubled, I’m troubled in Mind

if Jesus don’t help me, I surely will die

When laden with troubles, and burdened with grief

Jesus in secret, I’ll go for relief

I’m troubled, I’m troubled, I’m troubled in Mind

if Jesus don’t help me, I surely will die

With darkness upon me, to Jesus I pray

help me to bear it, he gave his ...ay

I’m troubled, I’m troubled, I’m troubled in Mind

and if Jesus don’t help me, I surely will die

*followed by*

*Lord I want to be a Christian in my heart.*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osQhtkIDERM*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osQhtkIDERM)

Lord I want to be a Christian in my heart, in my heart  
Lord I want to be a Christian in my heart,  
In my heart, in my heart  
Lord I want to be a Christian in my heart.

Lord I want to be more loving in my heart, in my heart  
Lord I want to be more loving in my heart,  
In my heart, in my heart  
Lord I want to be more loving in my heart.

Lord I want to be like Jesus in my heart, in my heart  
Lord I want to be like Jesus in my heart,  
In my heart, in my heart  
Lord I want to be like Jesus in my heart,

Lord I want to be like Jesus in my heart.

Josiah sits down, head in hands, and moans. time passes like theme in Madame Butterfly waiting for Pinkerton,

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPuBGcng6Tw(Sky growing gradually light. Ascending chords, similar to those in Tosca, but with a bit of dread. Chimes in church steeple marks the time of dawn.)*

**YOUNG AMOS:** (Moans) Josiah! Where are you, Josiah ? I can’t see ! Don’t leave me ! Take me home !

**JOSIAH:** "My gawd he's got the river sickness."

**YOUNG AMOS:** Get me to the steamship. Take me home. Take me home Josiah. don’t leave me Josiah! Don’t leave me ! Don’t … *(passes out.)*

**JOSIAH: (opt or reword?):** "I'll tek you back on that steamship to yo ol’ Kentucky home." check wording.

*(Gently holds young Amos in his arms.)* "I won't leave you massa ...."

(Curtain falls)

Act 4

Scene 1

*Back in Kentucky in Josiah’s cabin. Charlotte is sewing patches on child’s pants.*

**JOSIAH:** They didn’t even thank me for saving young Amos’ life.

**CHARLOTTE:** Young Amos, once he was well enough to move, he thanked you. He said if he had sold you, he would have died. And it’s true.

**JOSIAH:** The others didn’t thank me. They just looked at me as though I were a prize bull that had increased in value. (sighs) If that is how they feel about me, they will try to sell me again. We must run away.

*(Charlotte puts down her sewing and looks terrified.)*

**CHARLOTTE:**  Run away ?

**JOSIAH:**  It wouldn’t be like stealing. I ‘most paid for myself in Murland, and gave more than what was due in service to Amos and Isaac.

**CHARLOTTE:**  *(terrified)* You lost yo’ mine ? You know what they do to you if they ketch you tryin’ somp’in like dat ?

**JOSIAH:**  I’ve thought it through. They won’t catch us. We’ll travel at night and hide in the day. I’ll tell them at the house that you want to patch Tom’s clothes and freshen him up. We’ll leave Saturday night. They don’t see us Sundays and on Monday they will think I’m at some far end of the plantation.

*Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcHT6XVFtRo*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcHT6XVFtRo)

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtL1jYM2s1w*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtL1jYM2s1w)

Didn't my lord deliver daniel, deliver daniel, deliver daniel  
Didn't my lord deliver daniel, then why not every man

He delivered daniel from the lion's den  
Jonah from the belly of the whale  
And the hebrew children from the fiery furnace  
Then why not every man

Didn't my lord deliver daniel, deliver daniel, deliver daniel  
Didn't my lord deliver daniel, then why not every man

The wind blows east and the wind blows west.

(Missing stanza)

Didn't my lord deliver daniel, deliver daniel, deliver daniel  
Didn't my lord deliver daniel, then why not every man

I set my foot on the gospel ship and the ship began to sail  
It landed me over on Canaan's shore and i'll never come back no more  
Didn't my lord deliver daniel, deliver daniel, deliver daniel  
Didn't my lord deliver daniel, then why not every man

Didn't my lord deliver daniel, deliver daniel, deliver daniel  
Didn't my lord deliver daniel, then why not every man

**CHARLOTTE:**  We shall die in the wilderness !

**JOSIAH:** No we won’t. I’ll be there to protect you. If I am sold south, I shall die anyway.

**CHARLOTTE:** They will hunt us down with blood-hounds.

**JOSIAH:** No I won’t let them find us.

**CHARLOTTE:** When they find us they will beat us to death.

**JOSIAH:** They can’t beat us if they can’t find us.

**CHARLOTTE:** Oh please remain contented at home.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84YASWe3_2Q>

this could be repeated in the last scene, with poignant irony

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide;  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day;  
Earth’s joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see—  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour;  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter’s pow’r?  
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;  
Where is death’s sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies;  
Heav’n’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

*http://openhymnal.org/Pdf/Abide\_With\_Me-Eventide.pdf*

**JOSIAH:** No Charlotte. Though it would be a cruel trial for me to part with you, I will nevertheless do it and take all the children with me except the youngest, rather than remain at home, only to be forcibly torn from you, and sent down to linger out a wretched existence in the hell I had lately witnessed. It’s morning. I must go to work now. *(exasperated)*

*(Josiah leaves forcefully striding away from the house.)*

*(Charlotte sees that he is dead serious. She gets up from her chair and walks back and forth in despair, panic, and indecision, then suddenly she goes to the door and calls to him.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** Josiah ! Josiah !

*(Josiah turns and walks back to her.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** *(quietly, in full knowledge of the impossibility of it all.)* Josiah ! I love you, and I am your wife. Where you go, I will go with you … and the children, too.

*“You go, I’ll go with you” part 2 page 44*

You go, I’ll go wid you;

Open yo’ mouth, I’ll speak for yo Lord

if I go, tell me what to say

Dey won’t believe in me

Now Lord I give myself to thee

‘Tis all dat I can do:

If thou should draw thyself from me,

Oh wither shall I flee?

De archangels done droop dere wings

Went upon Zion’s hill to sing.

Climbin’ Jacob’s ladder high

Gwine reach Heav’n by an’ by

Oh, you go I’ll go wid you,

Open yo’ mouth I’ll speak for youngest

Lord if I go tell me what to say

Dey won’t believe in me.

*(Josiah hugs her and weeps tears of joy faster than had hers of grief.)*

**CHARLOTTE:**  But I don’t know how. What about the little un’s.

**JOSIAH:**  *(Full of enthsiasm in anticipation of their escape)* We can do it. Put the little ones in a knapsack on my back.

*(He picks up a knapsack and wife signs and dutifully puts the youngest 2 children in it, and shake her head dubiously.)*

Git on Board, Little Chillen p 126

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmpdRMTroko*

Get on board, little children  
Get on board, little children  
Get on board, little children  
There's room for many-a-more

I hear the train a comin'  
I hear it close at hand  
I hear those car wheels rumblin'  
And rollin' through the land

Get on board, little children  
Get on board, little children  
Get on board, little children  
There's room for many-a-more

I hear the train a-coming  
She's coming round the curve  
She's loosened all her steam and brakes  
Straining every nerve

Get on board, little children  
Get on board, little children  
Get on board, little children  
There's room for many-a-more

The fare is cheap  
And all can go  
The rich and poor are there

No second class aboard the train…

**CHARLOTTE:**  You will surely break down under these heavy little’uns before we five miles from the cabin.

**JOSIAH:** No I won’t. The feeling we be finally free will make them a light as a feather.

Josiah cheerfully makes a game of carrying them around, singing, (also one above)

“Heaven, Heaven” p 26. or could be later when they’re in Canada

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEtMhIB9oIg*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEtMhIB9oIg)

I got a robe, you got a robe  
All o' God's chillun got a robe  
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to put on my robe  
I'm goin' to shout all ovah God's Heab'n  
Heab'n, Heab'n  
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere  
Heab'n, Heab'n  
I'm goin' to shout all ovah God's Heab'n  
  
I got-a wings, you got-a wings  
All o' God's chillun got-a wings  
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to put on my wings  
I'm goin' to fly all ovah God's Heab'n  
Heab'n, Heab'n  
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere  
Heab'n, Heab'n  
I'm goin' to fly all ovah God's Heab'n  
  
I got a harp, you got a harp  
All o' God's chillun got a harp  
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to take up my harp  
I'm goin' to play all ovah God's Heab'n  
Heab'n , Heab'n  
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere  
Heab'n, Heab'n  
I'm goin' to play all ovah God's Heab'n  
  
I got shoes, you got shoes  
All o' God's chillun got shoes  
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to put on my shoes  
I'm goin' to walk all ovah God's Heab'n  
Heab'n , Heab'n  
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere  
Heab'n, Heab'n  
I'm goin' to walk all ovah God's Heab'n

*(After which he collapses on the bed with his bundle of children, being careful not to squash them.)*

Scene 2

***Mid Sept 9pm 1830****, on a dark moonless night, only pale blue light, they go to the river where a fellow slave has a skiff waiting, and rows them across the Ohio River. Where they land …*

*Steal Away to Jesus p 114*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-O5hz5KnSdc*

*could be duet end of last scene*

*or could be back ground chorus in flight scene like this*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPHiN27IivM*

**SLAVE WITH BOAT:**  This affair may end in my death, but you will not be brought back alive will you?

**JOSIAH:** Not if I can help it.

**SLAVE WITH BOAT:**  And if you are overpowered and return, will you conceal my part in the business.

**JOSIAH:** That I will, so help me God.

**SLAVE WITH BOAT:**  Then I am easy and wish you success. (*I* won’t tell a soul.)

*(As he rows away, voices in the shadows across the river sing in a whisper.)*

**CHORUS:**

“Fare Ye Well”

[*https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200196400*](https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200196400)

Chorus sings quietly from behind trees, “Fair thee well, fair thee well.”

**CHARLOTTE:**  Josiah, did you hear somethin’ ?

**JOSIAH:**  Never you mind. We’s on our way now.

**CHARLOTTE:**  Where? Where do we go from here?

**JOSIAH:**  Not to worry. See that little star above the end of the big dipper’s cup. That’s the north star. The Lord put that little star up there to show us the way, just as surely as the Christmas star showed wise men the way to Bethehem It’s a tiny star. It hides up there in the sky, just as we must hide down here. All we have to do is …

**JOSIAH:** *(singing softly)*

*“Follow the Drinking Gourd.”*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjBZEMkmwYA*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjBZEMkmwYA)

*(Show the big dipper and the tiny north star in the sky)*

When the sun comes back, and the first quail calls  
Follow the drinkin' gourd  
For the old man’s awaiting fo’ to carry you to freedom  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

Well the river bank makes a mighty good road  
Dead trees will show you the way  
Left foot, peg foot, travelin' on  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bySicsI5W-s

Follow the drinkin' gourd, Follow the drinkin' gourd  
For the old man’s awaiting fo’ to carry you to freedom  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

Well the river ends, between two hills  
Follow the drinkin' gourd  
There's another river on the other side  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

Follow the drinkin' gourd, Follow the drinkin' gourd

For the old man’s awaiting fo’ to carry you to freedom  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

Well, where the great big river meets the little river  
Follow the drinkin' gourd  
For the old man is waiting to carry you to freedom  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

Follow the drinkin' gourd, Follow the drinkin' gourd  
For the old man is awaiting fo’ to carry you to freedom  
Follow the drinkin' gourd

**CHARLOTTE:** Such a tiny little star to be so important ?

**JOSIAH:** Many small things are important. Now we must go. It will take a fortnight just to get to Cincinnati.

**CHARLOTTE:**

Walk Together Children

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv5NaxKOVlI*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv5NaxKOVlI)

O, Walk together children  
Don't you get weary  
Walk together children  
Don't you get weary  
Walk together children  
Don't you get weary  
There's a great camp meeting in the Promised Land

Don’t talk together children  
Don't you get weary  
Talk together children  
Don't you get weary  
Talk together children  
Don't you get weary  
There's a great camp meeting in the Promised Land

One of these days and it won't be long  
Walk together children don't you get weary  
You might look for me and I'll have gone on  
There's a great camp meeting in the Promised Land  
When I get to Can’da gonna sing and shout  
Walk together children don't you get weary  
There'll be nobody there to put us out  
There's a great camp meeting in the Promised Land…

Scene 3

*They have been walking every night for a fortnight (2 weeks).*

*(Altogether they walked 43 days, ~400 miles arriving Oct 28th 1830, ~10 miles a day.)*

***CHARLOTTE:*** I’m weary. *(sighs)* It was kind of your Cincinnati friend to give us a ride in his wagon for 30 miles. I only wish he could have taken us 60. I fear we are lost. It’s cloudy and we cannot see the north star. Oh Josiah, can’t we go back home ?

*Charlotte could sing this “My way is Cloudy” p 48.*

My Way’s Cloudy 92

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUljWwnWccM*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUljWwnWccM)

*words ?*

<http://pancocojams.blogspot.com/2015/07/my-way-is-cloudy-spiritual-examples.html>

Oh! brethren, my way, my way's cloudy, my way,  
Go send them angels down,  
Oh! brethren, my way, my way's cloudy, my way,  
Go send them angels down.  
  
1  
There's fire in the east and fire in the west,  
Send them angels down,  
And fire among the Methodist,   
O send them angels down.  
2  
Old Satan's mad, and I am glad,  
Send them angels down,  
He missed the soul he thought he had,  
O send them angels down.  
3  
I'll tell you now as I told you before,   
Send them angels down,  
To the promised land I'm bound to go,  
O send them angels down.  
4  
This is the year of jubilee,  
Send them angels down,  
The Lord has come and set us free,  
O send them angels down.

(pages may be from thinner book)

*He sings, “ Lonesome valley p 10.* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NJFiSwkHyc*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NJFiSwkHyc) *???*

*could be sung as an echo song, with the audience*

**JOSIAH:**  *(Sits down beside her and puts his arms around her.)*  It’s farther to go back than to go on. It wouldn’t make sense. We are almost there. Look, the Sun is rising, time you and all the children go to sleep. When we get to the military road there will be no one around and we can walk in sunlight. Things will look better after you rest a little bit.

*Need to look this up*

*Then, “Listen to the Cherubs p12” He sings them to sleep.*

*Then, “I don’t feel No Ways Tired,” and falls asleep himself.*

*(They both fall asleep.)*

**OLDEST SON TOM:** Father, wake up. I see the trees. The great sycamore and the elms. It is the Military Road. We are safe. Nobody is here. We can walk in the sunlight.

**JOSIAH:** We made it ? We made it ! We are here at the General Hull’s Military Road. See there? There are the trees of which he spoke. The Sycamore and the Elms at the start of the Military Road. I’ve heard a song about trees, written in a foreign tongue.

**OLDEST SON TOM:** The Trees ! Oh, the Trees !

*(wish Tom, or Josiah, could sing this,* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HSUx22UOC0> *but it would not be something he would know … only felt.)*

*(spotlight on Tom and on two trees)*

Ombra Mai Fu  
  
Ombra mai fu  
di vegetabile,  
cara ed amabile,  
soave più.

Cara ed amabile,  
Ombra mai fu, di vegetabile,  
cara ed amabile,  
soave più. soave più.

**JOSIAH SINGS:** *(Happily !)*

Gwinter Sing all along de way 128

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkFOVVj81dk*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkFOVVj81dk)

Oh, I'm gonna sing, gonna sing, gonna sing,Gonna sing all along the way!Oh, I'm gonna sing, gonna sing, gonna sing,Gonna sing all along the way!

*(He dances and the children dance imitating him)*

Oh, I'm gonna dance, gonna dance, gonna dance,Gonna dance all along the way!Oh, I'm gonna dance, gonna dance, gonna dance,Gonna dance all along the way!

Oh, I'm gonna clap, gonna clap, gonna clap,  
Gonna clap all along the way!  
Oh, I'm gonna clap, gonna clap, gonna clap,  
Gonna clap all along the way!

*(He skips and the children skip imitating him)*

Oh, I'm gonna skip, gonna skip, gonna skip,  
Gonna skip all along the way!  
Oh, I'm gonna skip, gonna skip, gonna skip,  
Gonna skip all along the way!

(He spins and the children spin around imitating him)

Oh, I'm gonna spin, gonna spin, gonna spin,Gonna spin all along the way!Oh, I'm gonna spin, gonna spin, gonna spin,Gonna spin all along the way!

**CHARLOTTE:**  You gonna wear those chilluns out before we start.

*(Night is falling)*

**JOSIAH:** Now we are safe walking by day. At last, we can sleep at night.

**CHARLOTTE:**  I could use a little good *night’s* sleep.

*(Charlotte and the children curl up to sleep. And Josiah starts to curl up, too.)*

*(Wolves howl in distance.)*

**JOSIAH:** *(a bit startled)* Maybe I’ll stay awake a little longer.

*(As the others rest, Josiah sits up. Occasionally waves a leafy branch to frighten away wolves.)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(in a whisper)* Shoo ! You old wolves. Let my poor tired family sleep this night !

*(Darkness falls, as does the curtain.)*

Scene 4

*(They have been struggling along the abandoned overgrown road. Josiah walks ahead of the others with the babes on his back. Charlotte holds the hands of the two older children, struggling over fallen logs. Finally she trips on a log and faints.)*

**TOM:**  *(stoops down to help his mother, and calls to Josiah)* Mother’s dying !

(Josiah hurries back, and believes it is really true.)

**CHARLOTTE:** *(weakly)* Oh Josiah, I want to go back. I want to go home. Please, let’s go back.

**JOSIAH:**  *(gently to her.)* We’re almost there. It wouldn’t make sense. It would be farther to go back than to go on. *(sings to comfort Charlotte, slowly rocking her in his arms.)*

There is a Balm in Gilead

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okl2XbTM7xM*

Refrain:  
There is a balm in Gilead  
to make the wounded whole.  
There is a balm in Gilead  
to heal the sinsick soul.  
  
Sometimes I feel discouraged,  
and think my work's in vain,  
but then the Holy Spirit  
revives my soul again.  
  
There is a balm in Gilead  
to make the wounded whole.  
There is a balm in Gilead  
to heal the sinsick soul.  
  
If you cannot preach like Peter,  
if you cannot pray like Paul,  
you can tell the love of Jesus,  
who died to save us all.  
  
There is a balm in Gilead  
to make the wounded whole.  
There is a balm in Gilead  
to heal the sinsick soul.

*(Josiah takes out a bit of salt venison and gives it to her and the childen.)*

**JOSIAH:** Take this last scrap of salt venison the kind lady gave us. Did I tell you? Her husband wouldn’t help but he laughed at her kindness. I took a quarter from my handkerchief to pay her … and you know … she put I back in my handkerchief … along with an additional quantity of venison. Think of her kindness, here with us, saving us. It won’t be long now.

*(aside to himself)*

I hope it won’t be long. The Doom of starving in the wilderness is staring us in the face.

**CHARLOTTE:** We mayn’t die of hunger, but after that salty venison, oh, I believe I may die of thirst.

*(children also groan and sigh from thirst.)*

**JOSIAH:** I’ll find you some water. You all just rest here.

*(Josiah goes off, breaking branches to mark the way, until he found a little rill. He drinks a large draught.)*

**JOSIAH:** So thirsty, sooo thirsty! How beautiful ! A little rill. Wish I could Wade in the Water.

*(He sings the refrain as he is drinking and filling his hat, but the hat leaks. So he washes his shoes and fills them with water and hobbles gingerly back to his family.)*

Wade in the Water

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uts2P8HZkGc*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uts2P8HZkGc)

Wade in the water  
Wade in the water  
Children wade, in the water  
God's gonna trouble the water

*(When he arrives at his children … one has a red, another a white, and another a blue neckerchief ... and gives them the shoes willed with water and he sings. They drink with great delight from their father’s shoes ! He gently stoops over and points to the shirt of each the son with the appropriate color to the stanza he is singing.)*

Who's that young boy dressed in red  
Wade in the water  
Must be the children that Moses led *(stands up tall and proud as though he were Moses)*   
God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children  
Wade in the water,  
God's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young boy dressed in white  
Wade in the water  
Must be the children of the Israelite  
Oh, God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children  
Wade in the water,  
God's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young boy dressed in blue  
Wade in the water  
Must be the children that's coming through,  
God's gonna trouble the water, yeah

Wade in the water, wade in the water children  
Wade in the water,  
God's gonna trouble the water

You don't believe I've been redeemed,  
Wade in the water  
Just so the whole lake goes looking for me  
God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children  
Wade in the water,  
God's gonna trouble the water

*(Then Josiah, who is really quite tired, sits upon the ground to rest.)*

**JOSIAH:** In all my days, never have I seen any human beings relish anything more than my poor famishing little ones did that refreshing draught out of their father’s shoes.

*(After a rest, they bravely start again. As they go Josiah supports Charlotte’s arm and begins to sing this, and the others join in.)*

Keep a’Inchin’ Along By n’ By p98

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBiTlSzD6Wo*

Refrain:  
Keep a-inching along,  
keep a-inching along,  
Jesus will come by and by.  
Keep a-inching along,  
like a poor inch-worm,  
Jesus will come by and by.

1 It was inch by inch that I sought the lord,  
Jesus will come by and by;  
It was inch by inch that He saved my soul,  
Jesus will come by and by. [Refrain]

2 We'll inch and inch and inch along,  
Jesus will come by and by;  
And inch by inch till we get home,  
Jesus will come by and by. [Refrain]

3 Oh, trials and troubles on the way,  
Jesus will come by and by;  
But we must watch as well as pray,  
Jesus will come by and by. [Refrain]

*(Three or four indians, coming from far back stage. They are near enough that if they were hostile it would be useless to try to escape. They are bent down with their burdens, and do not see Josiah’s family at first. And when they saw Josiah coming toward them, they looked at him in a frightened sort of way for a moment, then setting up a peculiar howl, turned round and ran as fast as they could.)*

**JOSIAH:** I can’t imagine why they’d be afraid, unless they suppose I am the devil, whom they had perhaps heard of as black, but with my wife and children might have reassured them. However there was no doubt they were well frightened .

**CHARLOTTE:** Josiah, let’s turn back. I believe, they have gone to collect more of a party to come and murder us.

**JOSIAH:** There were numerous enough to do that, if they wanted to, without help. I have had quite too much of the road behind us, and that would be a ridiculous thing if for both parties should run away. If they are disposed to run, we shall follow.

*(As they advanced the howling soon ceased and they could see Indians peeping at them from behind the trees and dodging out of sight.)*

*(If possible, stage may rotate and reveal wigwams (actually bark huts seen 0:02 and 0:32* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bySicsI5W-s>*) and a fine looking, stately indian chief, with his harms folded, waiting for them to approach.)*

**CHIEF:**  *(raises his hand in greeting)*  Greetings. We do not often have visitors come out of the woods.

**JOSIAH:** We have come from Kentucky. We are on our way to Canada to find a new life.

**CHIEF:**  Understand. Sometimes we, too, wish we could flee from troublesome people.

*(addressing the indians)*  You … um … braves, come greet our visitors.

*(Young men who were scattered about, came and now curiosity seemed to prevail. Each one wanted to touch the children, who were as shy as partridges with their long live in the woods: and as they shrunk away, and uttered a little cry of alarm, the indian would jump back too, as if he thought they would bite.)*

**CHIEF:** Eat and rest in our wigwam for night. In morning we show you way to Great Lake. Only 25 miles. Before lake is wide shallow river, too deep for children and wife. You must carry across. Then many trees followed by open plain. Beyond that … is lake ...

Beyond lake … is Canada.

*(Scene closes with children and indian children hurrying to campfire where supper is cooking, indian and Josiah’s children excitedly jumping about and chasing one another, and are given food and drink.)*

*(The indians were Wyandots also known as Hurons. Drums could be used here.)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAwSC0khWJo*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAwSC0khWJo)

*(If a song is needed, could use this authentic Huron song*

*Josiah could explain he is not a devil but a preacher of the methodist episcopal church. Chief says they are also christians and they sing Huron Christmas carol.)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6IG6F6E5Ac*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6IG6F6E5Ac)

*Twas in the Moon of Wintertime when all th birds had fled,*

*That mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead.*

*Before their light the stars grew dim and wand’ring hunters heard the hymn,*

*“The holy King is born, He is born! In excelsis gloria!”*

*(*[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4IJWWWRrTA*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4IJWWWRrTA) *translation*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WQpjFz035U*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WQpjFz035U) *)*

*(The following sounds like indian music, even though it is Ukraine orthodox chant. Wouldn’t mind having a chorus of indians singing this as the sun goes down, while all settle for the night, warm, fed, and safe among friends.)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h5YBrcbEHY*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h5YBrcbEHY)

Scene 5

*(Near Lake Erie ,Josiah, Stage left, is hiding his family among bushes.)*

**JOSIAH:**  You hide. I’ll go on ahead to see how we may cross to Canada. We are almost there now !

*(Turns to his children and sings … here or on the boat … or could use Jesus by the waterside.)*

Noah’s Ark (One Wide River)

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsMe8wXLKI0*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsMe8wXLKI0)

*This song is Public Domain: Copyright expired.*

Old Noah built himself an ark,There's one wide river to cross!He built it out of hickory bark,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.The animals went in one by one,There's one wide river to cross!The elephant, who weighed a ton,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.The animals went in two by two,There's one wide river to cross!The donkey and the kangaroo,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.The animals went in three by three,There's one wide river to cross!The hippo and a mouse and flea,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.The animals went in four by four,There's one wide river to cross!You should have heard the lions roar,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.The animals went in five by five,There's one wide river to cross!The bumblebee, he brought his hive,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.When Noah found he had no sail,There's one wide river to cross!He made one from his old coat tail,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.And as they talked of this and that,There's one wide river to cross!The ark it bumped on Arrarat,There's one wide river to cross!There's one wide river,And that wide river is Jordan,There's one wide river,There's one wide river to cross.

*(He walks a bit towards stage right. The stage where light gradually increases to reveal workers carrying heavy bags of corn from a small building, up a plank which leads off stage right, apparently to a boat waiting for them to fill the hold with the corn. The ship’s captain, hurries them along.)*

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  Keep up the pace my good fellows. A favorable wind is coming on and we don’t want to miss it and be here til next Christmas (or all Saint’s Day)

*(Captain notices Josiah.)*

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  Hollo there, man ! You want to work ?

**JOSIAH:**  (*shouted)* Yes, sir !

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  Come along, come along: I’ll give you a shilling an hour.

*(Josiah comes nearer, his lame arm becomes more obvious.)*

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:** O, you can’t work; you’re crippled

**JOSIAH:** *(cheerfully defiant)* O can’t I !

*(Josiah grabs hold of a bag of corn, throws it on his shoulder, takes his place in line next to a black worker, and strides up the gangway, throws the bag into the unseen hold, and goes back for more sacks. As they are loading the corn, Josiah speaks to the worker.)*

**JOSIAH:**  How far is it to Canada ?

*(Worker gives Josiah a peculiar look, as if immediately he knew all)*

**DOC:** Want to go to Canada ? Come along with us, then. Our captain’ a fine fellow. We’re going to Buffalo.

**JOSIAH:**  Buffalo; how far is that from Canada ?

**DOC:**  Don’t you know, man ? Just across the river.

**JOSIAH:**  (Breathlessly with hope) Just across the river. *(hesitates)*  But it’s not just me. I’ve a wife and children.

**DOC:** I‘ll speak to the captain.

*(Worker drops out of line and goes off to fetch the captain. While he is gone, Josiah sings One More River)*

*One more River to Cross* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5Ke8lFKO5o*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5Ke8lFKO5o)

*(optional)*

Oh, you got Jesus, hold him fast  
One more river to cross  
Oh, better love was never told  
One more river to cross

Tis stronger than an iron hand  
One more river to cross  
Tis sweeter than honey comb  
One more river to cross

 Oh, wasn’t that a wide river  
River of Jordan, Lord,  
Wide river  
There’s one more river to cross

 Oh, the good old chariot passing by  
One more river to cross  
She jarred the earth an’ shook the sky  
One more river to cross  
The good old chariot passing by

One more river to cross  
I pray, good Lord, shall I be one?  
One more river to cross

 Oh, wasn’t that a wide river  
River of Jordan, Lord,  
Wide river  
There’s one more river to cross

*(A moment later the captain comes and takes Josiah aside.)*

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:** *(with a Scottish accent)*  Doctor says you want to go to Buffalo

**JOSIAH:**  Yes, sir.

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  Well why not go with me! Doctor says you’ve got family.

**JOSIAH:** Yes, sir.

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  Where did you stop.

**JOSIAH:** About a mile back.

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  How long have you been here ?

**JOSIAH:** *(hesitates)* No time.

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:** Come my good fellow, tell us all about it. You’re running away, ain’t you ?

**JOSIAH:** *(hesitates again but sees he is with a friend)* Yes sir.

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  How long will it take you to get ready ?

**JOSIAH:**  Be here in half an hour, sir.

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  Well, go along and get them.

*(Josiah starts to run off.)*

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  *(holds up his hand after reconsidering)* Stop, you go on getting the grain in. When we get off, I’ll lay to over opposite that island and send a boat back. There’s a lot of regular nigger-catchers in the town below (Sandusky), and they might suspect if you brought your party out of the bush by daylight.

*(Josiah goes back to work away with a will, moving the 200 or 300 bushels of corn were aboard, hatches fastened down, anchor raised, and sails hoisted.)*

*(*[*c*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CuyLbC2TZo)*ould use a sailing song here)*

*(Once the bags of corn are loaded. Josiah watches as they sail away. He fears they have tricked him.)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(in a quiet tone)*  They are leaving. He said he’d stop by the island but he has gone further. My heart sinks within me. So near deliverance, and again to have my hopes blasted, again to be cast on my own resources.

Deep River I. p100

*(Josiah wants to cross over and sadly sings.)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qXBG5BRT3c*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qXBG5BRT3c)

Deep river,  
My home is over Jordan.  
Deep river, Lord.  
I want to cross over into campground.

Deep River,  
My home is over Jordan.  
Deep river, Lord,  
I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don't you want to go,  
To the Gospel feast;  
That Promised Land,  
Where all is peace?

Oh, deep river, Lord,  
I want to cross over into campground.

*(The sun had sunk to rest, and the purple and gold of the west were fading away into grey. Suddenly as Josiah gazed with weary heart … a series of ascending chords as he speaks)*

**JOSIAH:**  The vessel has swung round into the wind, the sails flapped, and she stands motionless. A boat is lowered from her stern, My hour of release has truly come !

*(Entering from stage right are Doc and two other sailors. His black friend and two sailors jumped out, and all start looking for Charlotte and the children.)*

**JOSIAH:**  Charlotte children come. O where are they! This is where I left them. Charl …

**CHARLOTTE:**  We’re here, Josiah.

*(They come forward and all hurry off to the little unseen boat stage right.)*

*Scene 6*

*(On deck of the sailing ship. It is fairly dark except for a light hung from the vessel. All hands on deck, milling, mumbling and hoisting.)*

*Nice place for a boat song*

*(As the little troop of Doc, children, Charlotte, Josiah, and two sailors are climbing on board, the crew gives three hearty cheers.)*

**CREW:** *(altogether)* Hip hip Hooray ! Hip hip Hooray ! Hip hip Hooray !

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:** Coom up on deck and clop your wings and craw like a rooster; you’re a free nigger as sure as the devil.

*(The vessel turns round and the wind plunged into her sails, and the water seeethed and hissed past her sides. )*

**JOSIAH:** Surely Man and Nature, and God of man and nature, who breathes love into the heart and maketh the winds his ministers, is with us this night. Such happiness I have never known. *(he hugs his wife and children … and weeps.)*  I feel we are surrounded by angels.

**CHARLOTTE:** They may look like sailors, but I can fairly see the wings on their shoulders.

*sings a Josiah, or maybe Charlotte, or the children if the simple version, crew becomes angels in his song.*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUztS66T5Vw*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUztS66T5Vw)

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwO\_pN0UnvQ*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwO_pN0UnvQ) *is a simpler version*

*Through dangers seen and unseen,  
There's protection all around.  
Under the refuge of God's wings,  
Security is found.  
For there are angels  
Watching you to keep you in all of your ways,  
Keeping you from stumbling,  
So don't be afraid.  
God's appointed angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.  
Angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.  
Unseen hands, guiding me,  
Through my storm and through my rain.  
Healing hands, holding me,  
Through the darkness of my pain.  
Wings of love encamped around me,  
So I will not fear,*

Nothing but...  
Angels watching over me  
Angels watching over me  
Angels watching over me  
Angels watching over me  
All night, all day,  
Angels watching over me my Lord.  
All night, all day,  
Angels watching over me.  
All night, all day,  
Angels watching over me my Lord.  
All night, all day.  
Angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.  
Angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.  
Angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.  
Angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.  
Angels watching over me,  
Angels watching over me.

*(Night passes as they stand on board, too excited to rest. As the morning light dawns the captain comes to Josiah.*

**SHIP’S CAPTAIN:**  You see those trees. They grow on free soil, and as soon as your feet tough that you’re a mon. I want to see you go and be a freeman. I’m poor myself, and have nothing to give you; I only sail the boat for wages; but I’ll see you get across. Here, take this for the ferryman to take you across, and a dollar for a good start.

*(Captain pulls a dollar from his pocket and gives it to Josiah. Then he puts a hand on Josiah’s head and says …)*

Be a good fellow, won’t you?

**JOSIAH:** Yes, I’ll use my freedom well: I’ll give my soul to God. I’ll never forget what you have done.

I’ve Got a Home in that Rock p 96

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fj7jmUBSuiM*

*different tune?*

I got a home in dat rock, don't you see?  
I got a home in that rock, don't you see?  
Between the earth and sky I thought I heard my Savior cry  
You got a home in that rock, don't you see?

Ol’ man Lazurus poor as I, don't you see?  
Ol’ man Lazurus poor as I, don't you see?  
Ol’ man Lazurus poor as I when he died he held my home on high  
He had him a home in that rock, don't you see?

Now, the rich man Davies (Riley) lived so well, don't you see?  
Rich man Davies (Riley) lived so well, don't you see?  
Rich man Davies (Riley) lived so well, when he died he had a home in hell  
He had no home in that rock, don't you see

Now, God gave Noah the rainbow sign, don't you see?  
God gave Noah the rainbow sign, don't you see?  
God gives no other rainbow sign, no more water but fire next time  
You better get a home in that rock, don't you see?

*(Could shine a rainbow in the sky)*

You better get a home in that rock, don't you see?  
You better get a home in that rock, don't you see?  
Between the earth and sky I thought I heard my Savior cry  
You better get a home in that rock, don't you see?  
You better get a home in that rock, don't you see?

*Sailors could sing in background, “He’s got a home in that rock”*

**JOSIAH:** *(As Josiah is leaving, talking to himself.)* God bless you ! God bless you eternally ! Amen !

Scene 7

(It is Oct 28,1830, as he comes down the gangplank he was in such a state of joy, he hugs and kisses his wife, he hugs and kisses his children. He throws himself on the ground, rolling in the sand, seizing handfuls of it. Then getting up and dancing around.

**COLONEL WARREN:** (who happened to be there) He’s some crazy fellow.

**JOSIAH:** O, no, master ! don’t you know ? I’m FREE !

*Could End here*

*(Colonel Warren burst into a shout of laughter.)*

**COLONEL WARREN:**  Well I never knew freedom to make a man roll in the sand in such a fashion.

Hallelujah Spiritual p 172

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpNIuouH4fA*

*Josiah continues hugging and kissing his wife and children and going on as before, until the firs exuberant burst of feeling was over … which takes quite a long while, so that as the curtain falls (or the lights dim) he is still dancing about.*

*Could End here*

Act 6

*(In Canada, for a while Josiah worked as a tenant farmer for a Mr Hifford. They are in front of a 2 story shanty, from which Josiah had expelled the resident pigs, then cleaned and scrubbed all in one afternoon to live in, much to the delight of his family, when they saw it, no longer having to live in a log cabin with a dirt floor.)*

**TOM age 12:** Where shall I read, father?

**JOSIAH:**  *(knowing not how to direct him)* Anywhere, my son.

**TOM:** *(reading Psalm ciii.)* It says David wrote, “Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy name.”

*(Josiah begins to weep)*

**TOM:**  Why are you weeping father ?

**JOSIAH:** *(Barely able to utter the words so overpowered by emotion)*  “Bless the Lord, O my soul” I remembered the dangers and afflictions from which the Lord has delivered me. That, compared to our present condition. “All that is within me blesses his holy name.”

*(trying to regain his composure)*

I am also grateful to Mr Hifford for paying for your education, and your school master for continuing to teach you. It is a great joy to hear you read.

**TOM:** Father, who was David ? He writes pretty, don’t he ?

**JOSIAH:** *(not wishing to express his ignorance)*  … he was a man of God, my son.

**TOM:** I suppose so, but I want to know something more about him. Where did he live? What did he do?

**JOSIAH:** *(seeing it was in vain to attempt to escape said frankly)*  I do not know.

**TOM:**  *(astonished but with kindness)* Why father, can’t you read?

**JOSIAH:** *(feeling as though he had lost all pride, admits frankly) I can not..*

**TOM:** Why not ?

**JOSIAH:** Because I never had the opportunity to learn, nor anybody to teach me. I can’t afford to pay anybody for it now, and, of course, no one can do it for nothing.

**TOM:** *(with great earnestness)*  Why, father, I’ll teach you to read. I can do it, I know. And then you’ll know so much more that you can talk better, and preach better.

**JOSIAH:** That is kind of you. You make me proud, but I an old. Let me think about it.

**TOM:**  *(undeterred)*  First you must learn the alphabet, the letters that make up the words.

*(Tom teaches Josiah the Alphabet song. Josiah has a difficult time of it. As Tom teaches, Josiah says starts getting the letters wrong, then learns cat dog rat and frog. As he progresses to greater and greater words with the greater and greater Mozart variation.)*

*(The reason I include, what appears to be a child’s song, I worked with a bright young girl in sorting at the US Post office. When she had to look up an address, she had to leaf through the phone book, … because she didn’t know the alphabet. I found it shockingly sad that this could still happen today.)*

*music adapted from Mozart Theme and Variations*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8emUqtNvtw*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8emUqtNvtw)

*Ah vous dirai-je, Maman (Ah, I will tell you Mom), Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Baa Baa Black Sheep, and the Alphabet Song.*

**TOM:** A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y and Z

**JOSIAH:**  (struggling) A B C D E G P T V Z

**TOM:** A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y and Z

*1st variation*

**TOM:** A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X and Y and Z

**JOSIAH:**  cat dog rat frog

*2nd variation lighter many syllables (more flourishes)*

**TOM:** A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y and Z

**JOSIAH:**  *(Spelling words)*

*3rd variation*

*(they do a delicate little dance together, holding hands dance in a circle. The let go and one arm up, one down, each dance a little spin. Etc to match music.)*

*4th variation crescendo theme biggest words (faster)*

**TOM:** A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y and Z

**JOSIAH:**  *(using words with many simple syllables yes ter day and the like)*

autobiography, cinematography, geography, choreography bibliography offset lithography cinematography

**TOM:** *cinematography ???*

*5th variation impossible words*

**TOM:** A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y and Z

**JOSIAH:**  *(now using majestic words, mixed with simple little ones to agree with music*

Glorious, arboreous, laborious, notorious, victorious, vain glorious

**TOM:** grandiose, adios, bellicose, blood glucose, booster dose, cellulose, diagnose, overdose, comatos

**JOSIAH:** monumental, accidental, compartmental, continental, departmental, detrimental, elemental, fundamental, governmental, incidental, instrumental, nonjudgmental, occidental, oriental, ornamental, regimental, sentimental, supplemental, temperamental, transcendental, and water fennel.

**TOM:** Can you read the Bible now, and do lots more things?

**JOSIAH:**  Well, I’ve done lots of things already. You can be kind without it, which is even greater. Reading is fine, but it isn’t as fine as doing. Reading helps you do things, wonderful things. those of us who couldn’t read, couldn’t even imagine. who can’t read can’t even imagine.

**TOM:** That’s true.

**JOSIAH:** I am proud of you, my son. And now I shall always be glad I can read, and know more that is in the Bible … and who David was.

*(They dance together some more as the curtain falls)*

Act 7

*(August 1852. Josiah, now with gray in his hair but still spry, hurries out of the woods from stage left. Stage right is a small but cozy house facing catercorner.* <https://nationaltrustcanada.ca/destinations/uncle-toms-cabin-historic-site> *The front faces Josiah, the side is open so we can see inside, where Charlotte, now ~62, lays covered with a lovely patchwork quilt, slightly propped up in a bed, asleep. The head of the bed is against the far wall. The foot of the bed is toward the door, so she can see who comes in.)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(to himself)* Am I in time? I barely dare look. To have come so far,...

**THREE GIRLS:** *(running up to him)*Papa ! Papa! We’re so glad you’ve come. Mama is so sick. She will be so happy to see you,

*(the three girls looking at each other, thinking it over.)*

But it may be too much for her. Stay here while we prepare her gently for the surprise.

*(This would be a good time for the girls to sing a trio)*

*(They rush, fairly dancing, to the cottage. As soon as they enter they become quieter and slowly kneel by the side of the bed, gently waking Charlotte. Then they start doing her hair, smoothing the covers, removing dishes, and bringing up a chair. Unheard by the audience they appear to tell her she has a visitor. Charlotte smooths her own hair, sits up scoots up a little taller in bed, smooths the comforter. Then they appear to tell her who the visitor is. She looks startled, and nearly faints. The girls grab a fan, and fan her, and offer a cup of water, then sprinkle it on her face. And she comes to. Someone who reads lips should be able to see her say, “Well, bless my soul.” She sits up with even more dignity, and braces herself.)*

*(at the same time, left alone, Josiah looks heavenward.)*

**JOSIAH:**  *(Looking skyward)*  Thank you Lord, she still lives. I came fast as I could. My family’s letter arrived on the 3rd, saying my beloved wife, companion, sharer of my joys and sorrows, lay at the point of death, and that she earnestly desired me to return, that she might see me once more before she bid adieu to earth.

I caught the first steamer bound for home, taking weeks that felt like years, and when I arrived here as my own Canadian home… I knew not whether she was still alive, or whether she had entered into rest.

O thank you, merciful Father, for kindly prolonged her life. p205

*(The girls come out again, and draw him into the house … He’s so happy to see Charlotte, and at the same time strong emotions of sorrow he is utterly unable to express, sitting by her bed, he starts to weep.)*

**JOSIAH:** Oh Charlotte. *(in tears)*

**CHARLOTTE:** Why you lookin’ so sorrowful. Aren’t you glad to see me?

*(Charlotte embraces Josiah with the calmness and fortitude of a Christian.)*

**JOSIAH:** Oh Charlotte.

*(The daughters quietly creep out to let Josiah and Charlotte be alone together.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** I rejoice to see you. Perhaps I did wrong allowing them to send for you. You had so much business across the ocean.

**JOSIAH:** I truly thank our Heavenly Father for allowing us to be together once more, no matter what. Being with you is worth more to me than all the fancied gains I might have gotten.

**CHARLOTTE:**  Now that you are here, I feel like I shall be restored to health. Tell me about your times in England, so I might feel as though I were there with you.

*(The stage has been gradually growing dark, as though at end of day, with only a soft blue light upon those inside the cabin.)*

**JOSIAH:** I already told you about the Great World’s Fair in London in the Crystal Palace, all **made of glass and so**  and (with emphasis) Queen Victoria came by. With my beautiful 7’ walnut boards cut from the virgin forests in Canada so large that they were 4’ wide without a warp or crack and pollished in the French manner so much that those who came by paused to look at me, perhaps my complexion attracted attention, but also themselves in my large black walnut mirrors.

Even Queen Victoria came by.

*(Queen Victoria, in all her finery, with her guide and perhaps others, steps into a spotlight stage left. … wonderful opportunity for dress designer. And her entrance could be quietly accompanied by “God Save the Queen” music with or without words)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8KSAtos-dk*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8KSAtos-dk)

*[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God\_Save\_the\_Queen#/media/File:Gstk.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_Save_the_Queen" \l "/media/File:Gstk.png)*

I uncovered my head and saluted her respectfully as I could, and she smiled and returned with a nod. Then she said to her attendants ...

**QUEEN VICTORIA:** Is he indeed a fugitive slave?

**ATTENDENT:** He is indeed, and that is his work.

**JOSIAH:** Later on she became friends and invited me to Buckingham Palace to meet her family.

Finish telling best points. Each character comes into the spotlight. Each time the spotlight fades and brightens as each character appears.

Include toasts he made … see p 201 and not to forget the king consort. ...

**JOSIAH:** But nothing there was more gratifying than sneaking back to the states and rescuing James Lightfoot’s and leading 118 slaves to freedom.

After josiah recounts the time the stars were falling. I wasn’t afraid, because I figured I’d been good and would go to a better place.

And when the cow showed us where to ford the river

My Lord What a Morning because she’s so glad to see him. But it sounds sad.

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJoDR704-BA*

**CHARLOTTE:**  Bless you, Josiah. You are so good to me. Please, bring me the children. I am tired now, and I wish to see them before I fall asleep.

*Children enter. Each one is kissed by their mother. “Bless you little one” to each … and “Bless you, Tom.” who comes last. “I commend you to the care of the dear Lord who has sustained us in so many hours of trial.”*

*Then Charlotte appearing to fall asleep, she passed from earth to heaven without a pang or a groan, as gently as the falling to sleep of an infant on its mother’s breast.*

*As the curtain slowly falls, Josiah and the children sing this.*

*This is the hymn Josia mentions at the end of his book, although the music was not written until after 1852 which was when Charlotte passed away. It could be sung as a round, started by Josiah, with others (there are 8 children, at least 4 are boys and at least 3 are girls) joining in until it becomes very grand, then fades as only Tom is left singing in the end. Could use all or only part of hymn. Josiah only mentions the last stanza.*

*Hymn 1429 Acts vii 60* [*https://hymnary.org/hymn/VoP1873/893*](https://hymnary.org/hymn/VoP1873/893)

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJacAF3bh-M*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJacAF3bh-M)

How sweet the hour of closing day,

When all is peaceful and serene,

And when the sun with cloudless ray,

Sheds mellow lustre o’er the scene.

Such is the Christian’s partinghour;

so peacefully she sinks to rest;

When faith endued from heaven with power,

Sustains and cheers her languid breast.

Who would not wish to die like those

Whom God’s own Spirit deigns to bless?

To sink into that soft repose,

Then wake to perfect happiness.

How sweet the hour of closing day,  
When all is peaceful and serene,  
And when the sun, with cloudless ray,  
Sheds mellow luster o'er the scene!

Such is the Christian's parting hour;  
So peacefully he sinks to rest;  
When faith, endued from heaven with power,  
Sustains and cheers his languid breast.

Mark but that radiance of his eye,  
That smile upon his wasted cheek:  
They tell us of his glory nigh,  
In language that no tongue can speak.

A beam from heaven is sent to cheer  
The pilgrim on his gloomy road;  
And angels are attending near,  
To bear him to their bright abode.

**Who would not wish to die like those  
Whom God's own Spirit deigns to bless,  
To sink into that soft repose,  
Then wake to perfect happiness?**

*Fini*

*Years have passed. Charlotte is dying and Josiah has left his work in England to be at her bedside. A soft blue spotlight could be on Caroline’s bed where she lay, slightly back stage right. In a brighter spotlight, stage left could be what Josiah is telling her. Lord Grey, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Queen Victoria, dressed in all her colorful finery,*

**CHARLOTTE:**  You’ve done so much. It hasn’t been that long since you led other friends out of bondage, and started the farm… and the mill you And when our little Tom asked, “Who is David?” and you had to admit, you didn’t know, for you couldn’t read the Bible from which you preached. And he had O such a time teaching you. We thought you’d never learn and he’d have to give up in defeat … but he never did, and you did learn. Tell me again what happened in England in both your trips abroad.

took beautiful oak from to the in England. Tell me again about your trips to England. I want to see it all again, and she closes her eyes.

**JOSIAH:** Well your remember at the at the Crystal Palace. And it really was like crystal, all made of glass, and arched so high a giant tree grew up inside it. And while I was there, the queen came by with her ….

*(To the left in a bright light comes Queen Victoria in all her regalia.)*

**Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister of England**  [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\_Russell,\_1st\_Earl\_Russell#/media/File:Lord\_John\_Russell.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Russell,_1st_Earl_Russell" \l "/media/File:Lord_John_Russell.jpg)

p 199 describes his sabbath school teachers beautiful grounds of LR’s park. Filled with deer of ll cololrs, and from all climes, and sleek hares, which the poet Cowper would havenevied with numberless birds whose plumage rivalled the rainbow in gorgeous colors with the coicest specimens of the finny tribe. (fish)

Finny tribe?

Fish in his pond.

O, how different the condition of these happy , sportive, joyful, creatures, from what was once my own condition, and what is now the lot of millions of my colored brethren in America!”

p 199 I would call it a picnic, with this difference, that, instead of each teacher providing his own cakes and pies and rruit, they were furnished by men and women, who were allowed to come on to the grounds with every variety of choice eatables for sale.

After that all 300 at least were ushered into a spacious dining hall, whose dimensions could not have been less than 100’ x 60’, and here were tables, groaning under every article of luxury for the palate, which England could supply, and to this pountiful repast we were all made welcome. I was invited to take the head of the table; I never helt so highly honored. The blessing was invoked by singing the two following verses.

Be present at our table Lord

Be here and everywhere adored:

These creatures bless,

And grant that we may feast

In Paradise with thee !”

**etc Thus ended one of the pleasantest days of my life. (June 1852 when Smuel gurney was 68) until I received the letter that brought me hither.**

**(what was happening in Ireland (?) elsewhere)**

**and even more opposite … my trips here … to rescue 118 slaves**

**PRIME MINISTER:** (holding and eating dainties): How do you like the weather here, Mr Henson?

**NARRATOR:** And he was invited to meet with t he for 15 minutes.

**ARCHBISHOP OF CANERBURY:** At what university, Sir, did you graduate?

**JOSIAH:** I graduated, your grace, at the university of adversity.

**ARCHBISHOP OF CANERBURY:** *(Looking up with astonishment)* The university of adversity. Where is that?

**JOSIAH:** It was my lot, your grace, to be born a slave, and to pass my boyhood and all the former part of my life as a slave. I never entered a school, never read the Bibile in my youth, and received all of my training under the most adverse circumstances. This is what I meant by graduating in the university of adversity.

**ARCHBISHOP OF CANERBURY:** I understand you Sir, but is it possible that you are not a scholar?

**JOSIAH:** I am not.

**ARCHBISHOP OF CANERBURY:** I should never have suspected that you were not a liberally educated man. I have heard many negroes talk, but have never seen one that could use such language as you. Will you tell me, Sir, how you learned our language?

**JOSIAH:** In my early life, it was my custom to observe good speakers, and to imitate only those who seemed to speak most correctly.

**ARCHBISHOP OF CANERBURY:** It is astonishing, and is it possible that you were brought up ingorant of religion? How did yo attain to the Knowledge of Christ?

**JOSIAH:** My poor slave mother taught me to say the Lord’s prayer, though I did not know then how, truely, to pray.

**ARCHBISHOP OF CANERBURY:** And how were you led to a better knowledge of the Savior?

*He was so affected by my simple story, that he shed tears freely.*

Prime Minister p199 describe gardens and picnic

*mention falling stars p 151* I did not need it to fetch # slaves to safety (be more specific) or And seeing things with your own eyes.

*Achievements:*

*renting and buying McCormack’s land where they set up a community.*

*p155 “The Lord sent that cow to show us where to cross the river.”*

*washing with snow 118 human beings out ot the cruel and merciless grasp of the slaveholder.*

*Joshia should mention his friends when he recounts with his wife*

*One local newspaper editor wrote, “Most of them are noble-looking fellows, stout of limb, athletic and agile, devoted to their families and brave and generous to a fault.”*

They left their Ohio reservation on July 9, 1843, and traveled to the Ohio River, where they boarded the steamboats Republic and Nodaway and headed west. The contingent of 674 tribe members included 120 wagons and 300 horses. There were even some white people who had married into the tribe, according to Mike Bergman, a Madison County historian.

One local newspaper editor wrote, “Most of them are noble-looking fellows, stout of limb, athletic and agile, devoted to their families and brave and generous to a fault.”

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoB-csNUX5Y*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoB-csNUX5Y) *wasn’t that a wide river, one more river to cross*

Round

dona Nobis Pacem

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSdGW_HBrLE>