

THE OLD TESTAMENT FAST FORWARD ►►

Words by **TOM S. LONG** Music by **ALLEN POTE**



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Words by **TOM S. LONG**

Music by **ALLEN POTE**

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FOREWORD

The Old Testament is really a library of books—law, history, poetry, wisdom, and prophecy—written in two languages by dozens of inspired authors. Viewed through Christian eyes, the story it tells begins with creation and moves through human sin and God’s great plan of redemption—a plan that included nearly 2000 years preparing the Hebrew people for a coming savior.

The Old Testament Fast Forward begins with the comic notion that this epic history can be recounted in ten minutes. In fact, the musical presents many of our foundational faith stories in a light-hearted way. We tried to preserve, however, the great themes of that history—God’s unending love for us despite our fallen natures, and God’s long-standing covenant with a Chosen People—ultimately fulfilled in the Messiah.

We also aimed for flexibility. The production requires only boxes and ladders for a set, t-shirts for costumes, and a minimum of props. When performed in its entirety, the work runs about forty minutes. However, with a few cuts, the musical can be shortened to thirty minutes or less.

A cast of young people in grades 4 through 8 performed in the original production; but we’re confident the material will appeal to older and younger groups as well. We also hope you’ll have as much joy staging it as we did—experiencing the old stories of love, forgiveness, courage, and promise in a new way.

—Tom Long and Allen Pote

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CHARACTERS:

The cast function as a group of energetic storytellers—assuming multiple roles as needed. For this reason, all parts listed below can be played by as few as eight to ten performers, or by a much larger group.

Stage Manager

Narrators 1 and 2 (Narrator lines can be divided among a larger group of performers.)

Serpent

Adam

Eve

God's Voice (can be performed by an adult)

Noah's Wife

Abraham

Sarah

Joseph

Moses

Gideon

Deborah

Barak

Samson

Delilah

Samuel

Saul

Nathan

David

Chorus: Cain, Abel, Noah, Shem, Japheth, Photographer, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, Esau, Rachel, Leah, Benjamin, Joseph's Brothers, Ishmaelite, Potifar, Potifar's Wife, Guard, Jail Master, Pharaoh, Pharaoh Ramses, Cast 1-23, Israelites 1-5, Goliath

PRODUCTION NOTES:

For a detailed "Director's Copy" of the script with blocking and other production ideas—go to www.hopepublishing.com. and search for 8501, which will bring up this product's page and the link to your free "Director's Copy."

Approximate performance time: 40-45 minutes. (Can also be performed in 10-30 minute segments.)

One strength of this script is its flexibility. It can be performed with casts of varying sizes—both large and small. Not surprisingly, many Old Testament stories focus on male characters. In this production, however, the cast function as storytellers, capable of stepping into any role—so in many cases it is possible to cast females in male roles.

COSTUMES:

Each cast member wears the same base costume. This could be as simple as a solid color T-shirt and pants, or as elaborate as a Biblical tunic and headband. The basic look must be plain enough, however, to allow cast members to quickly switch from one character to the next with the addition of one or two additional costume pieces.

Adam and Eve—leaf or vine garlands

Serpent—black jacket and sunglasses

Joseph—multi-colored coat or robe

Ark Animals—(animal hats optional) In the original production, the performers playing animals carried signs on sticks with a picture of their animal on it.

SET:

The only required set pieces are an assortment of boxes and at least one ladder. The boxes should be tall enough to be used as seats and sturdy enough to stand on. All other scenery suggested by the action of the script—e.g. Noah's Ark, Philistine temple, walls of Jericho, etc.—can be represented by cast members forming the items with their bodies.

PROPS:

A program for the audience with a title page or cover that reads: "The Old Testament Fast Forward" with the subtitle "The Complete History in 10 Minutes" under it.

Stage Manager's clipboard

Two real apples

Cardboard rainbow—in rainbow shape, carried by Noah's Wife

Flash camera—flash must have recovery time of less than 2 sec.

Ten Commandments on "stone" tablets

Gideon's toy trumpets

Samson's wig

David's sling

Goliath's spear

Miner's hats

David's crown

STAGING AND MOVEMENT:

In most cases, suggestions for movement during the songs of the musical are indicated in the score. In the original production, the performers also "acted out" the lines of verse narration with choreographed movement. (*See online production notes for details.*)

Commissioned in loving memory of Dr. Deborah (Debbe) Smith Hoffman,
dedicated musician, friend, and bearer of light, by the Music and Arts Program
at Mt. Tabor Lutheran Church, West Columbia, SC.

1

THE OLD TESTAMENT FAST FORWARD

*(The stage is set with an assortment of boxes and ladders. As the opening music plays
CAST enter and stand with their backs to the audience. The STAGE MANAGER is the
last to enter, and moves down center to address the audience.)*

INTRODUCTION

1 Moderately

mf

4

7

STAGE MANAGER: Ladies and gentlemen, The Complete History of the Old Testament,
in Ten Minutes.

*(During the introduction of the song, the CAST bounce or snap fingers in time to the
music.)*

GOD'S WORD

Words by
TOM LONG

Music by
ALLEN POTE

Brightly (♩ = ca. 116)

2

G Am/G Bm/G Am/G G Am/G Bm/G Am/G G Am/G Bm/G Am/G

f

(repeat as necessary)

4

CHORUS: (turning suddenly to face the audience and settling into a stage picture)

mf

God's word tells the sto - ry, God's

D // G7 C9

mf

6

word is where it starts, God's word makes a prom - ise, God's

G7 C9 G7 C9

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It begins with a piano introduction in 4/4 time, marked 'Brightly' with a tempo of approximately 116 beats per minute. The introduction features a series of chords (G, Am/G, Bm/G, Am/G) and a melody in the right hand, with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The introduction is repeated as necessary. The chorus begins at measure 4, marked 'CHORUS: (turning suddenly to face the audience and settling into a stage picture)' with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The chorus melody is in the right hand, and the piano accompaniment is in the left hand. The chorus consists of two lines of music, each with a key signature change from D major to C major. The first line of the chorus is: 'God's word tells the sto - ry, God's'. The second line is: 'word is where it starts, God's word makes a prom - ise, God's'. The piano accompaniment for the chorus features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand. The chords are G7 and C9. The score ends with a double bar line.

8

word is in our hearts. God's word lights the dark-ness, God's

G7 C9 Gm7 C9

10

word a burn-ing blaze, God's word fills cre-a-tion,

Gm7 C9 Gm7 C9

12

moves the earth to songs of praise. —

Am7(b5) D //

3