

# Mother's Word

A song cycle inspired by mothers from the Bible

Marian Partee Lamb, Lyricist  
Christina Whitten Thomas, Composer

Rebecca Sjöwall, Soprano  
Alicia Emerson, Mezzo-soprano  
Diane Wallace, Alto  
Lisa Edwards, Piano  
Frances Hale, Narrator

**Friday, September 23 at 7pm**  
**Saturday, September 24 at 2pm**

Pre-concert discussion at 6:30 and 1:30

Saturday matinee live-streamed at [live.lacnadapc.org](http://live.lacnadapc.org)

Childcare available

**A freewill offering will benefit the  
LCPC Parent Ed Founders' Scholarship Fund**

Kim Berggren

Artwork: *Breathe With Me* by Katie m. Berggren - [www.kmberggren.com](http://www.kmberggren.com)

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# ***Mother's Word***

## *Creative Team*

Marian Partee Lamb, Lyricist  
Christina Whitten Thomas, Composer  
Rebecca Sjöwall, Soprano  
Alicia Emerson, Mezzo-Soprano  
Diane Wallace, Alto  
Lisa Edwards, Piano  
Frances Hale, Narrator

## *Production and Technical Staff*

Jack D. Lantz, LCPC's Director of Music and Worship Arts  
Christina Whitten Thomas, Producer  
Marian Partee Lamb, Director  
Eddie Myers, Technical Manager and Sound Design  
Doug Spitznagel, Video Director  
Lana Myers, Publicity and Program  
Paige Speaker, Stagehand

## ***Act I***

- 1 "Will You Show Me How?" Hannah (Alicia), Naomi (Diane), Mary (Rebecca)
- 2 "Dream For My Son:" Eve (Rebecca)
- 3 "Desert Road:" Hagar (Rebecca)
- 4 "Testing, Testing:" Sarah (monologue) (Diane)
- 5 "You Must Win:" Rebekah (Diane)
- 6 "Then He Will Love Me:" Leah (Rebecca)
- 7 "You Are My Delight:" Jochebed (Diane), Miriam (Alicia), Bithiah (Rebecca)
- 8 "A Different Mission:" Zipporah (monologue) (Frances)
- 9 "A Daughter of My Own:" Naomi (Diane) and Ruth (Alicia)

## *15-Minute Intermission*

## ***Act II***

- 10 "Hannah's Prayer:" Hannah (Alicia)
- 11 "Why Should I Cling to Life?" Jezebel (Rebecca)
- 12 "Mother's Wisdom:" Bathsheba (monologue) (Alicia)
- 13 "It's Wild to be With Child:" Elizabeth (Diane), Mary (Rebecca)
- 14 "Do Not Be Troubled:" Herodias (Alicia)
- 15 "How Do You Tame a Son?" Elizabeth (Diane)
- 16 "Our House:" Mary (Rebecca)
- 17 "On Your Way:" Hannah (Alicia), Naomi (Diane), Mary (Rebecca)

## Notes from the Lyricist/Director

When Christina and I were trying to figure out what project to write next, we were toying with the idea of women from Scripture. Christina suggested, “What if it’s about mothers stressing out about their kids?” I was sold! We’re both moms, and we knew that we could make these biblical characters relatable to modern audiences... A mother and father are not on the same page on a parenting issue. A mother schemes to help her son get ahead. A mother is thrilled at the opportunity to adopt a baby. A mother argues with her husband for prioritizing work above family. A mother comforts her daughter who has been hurt. A mother longs to protect her child, but realizes she must entrust him to God’s care... Not much has changed in human behavior over the last few thousand years. I find it comforting that God can work with imperfect, messy mothers to accomplish divine purposes.

The first iteration of *Mother’s Word* was a one-act song cycle for soprano soloist (Rebecca Sjöwall), narrator (Tina Tong), and pianist (Aiko Fukushima) that included nine mothers from Scripture. LCPC premiered that version on Mother’s Day weekend, 2019. We donated our time to the creation of the piece and donated proceeds from the performances to Elizabeth House, a home in Pasadena that empowers pregnant and parenting women in need to reclaim their lives and build successful family legacies.

We have now expanded *Mother’s Word* to include three singers and seventeen women from Scripture. We’re delighted to work with Rebecca again, as well as four other artists whom we love and admire: Alicia Emerson, Diane Wallace, Lisa Edwards, and Frances Hale. We’re donating the proceeds from these performances to the LCPC Parent Ed Founders’ Scholarship Fund. You may read more about Parent Ed and this fund on the following page.

We are extremely grateful to the donors who contributed to our GoFundMe campaign so we could pay the artists who generously shared their time and talents for this project (see page 51). Thank you!!!

In *Mother’s Word*, we celebrate the power and beauty of women’s voices. Our voices are strongest in collaboration with one another. As Naomi sings with Ruth, “Together, we will find a feast.”

—Marian Partee Lamb



Christina and Marian at the first rehearsal for *Mother’s Word*

### **LCPC'S Parent Education Founders' Scholarship Fund**

A freewill offering at each performance will benefit LCPC's Parent Education Founders' Scholarship Fund. Parent Ed has reached approximately 600 participants a year to provide vital child-rearing education to those in the greater Los Angeles area. The program both educates and nurtures parents in a Christian atmosphere by providing quality education, resources, support and friendships—many that last a lifetime.

The Founders' Scholarship Fund was established in 2014 in honor of Parent Ed's founders: Claudia Zentmeyer, Annie Latte Krach, and Gail Hanson. These monies are used to provide partial and full scholarships so the program is never cost prohibitive.



Claudia Zentmeyer, Annie Latte Krach, and Gail Hanson

### **Why We're Supporting the Parent Ed Founders' Scholarship Fund**

Christina and I have both taken Parent Ed classes; in fact, it was our conversation about Parent Ed at the La Cañada Library that began our friendship. We have experienced the many benefits of these supportive and informative classes, and we want them to be available to all parents in the LA area.

When I had my first baby, I felt isolated and uncertain. My husband worked long hours. My parents and sister lived in Texas. I had no mom friends. I joined Parent Ed when Diana was six weeks old. It was wonderful for me to enter this community of young moms who were experiencing the same struggles and joys, and to learn from Nanette Brown's wisdom. Since the babies class, I have taken courses for parents of toddlers, two-year-olds, three-year-olds, elementary school kids, and kids with learning differences. My husband David loves *The Art of Fatherhood*. I've just started the tweens class with the fabulous Sloan Walsh and a Parent Ed Express class with the amazing Vicki Rekedal. The Lamb kids are now 7 and 11, and we're very grateful that the Parent Ed teachers and participants have been with us through every step of our parenting journey to help our family thrive.

In the first lines of *Mother's Word*, the mothers sing:

“Lord, you've given me a child.

What do I do now?

I must comfort and nourish and guide.

Will you show me how?”

For me, Parent Ed was the answer to that prayer.

—Marian Partee Lamb

## Creative Team of *Mother's Word*



**Marian Partee Lamb,  
Lyricist and Director**

Marian enjoys exploring characters from history, scripture, and folklore, presenting ancient stories with fresh perspectives. Marian's plays and musicals include: *Miss Vulcan 1939* (Red Mountain Theatre in Birmingham, AL), *Past Time* (Theatre Building Chicago), *The Silence of the Hams*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Little Red Ridinghood*, *Hansel and Gretel* (The Great American Melodrama), *Rapunzel* (City Lights Theater Company of San

Jose), *Madwomen and Powder Puff Pilots* (UC Irvine), *East of the Sun, West of the Moon* (Northwestern University), *McBeth! The Musical* (Cal Arts), *Esther*, *At Home in Galilee*, *Kids of Galilee*, and *Sleepless in La Cañada* (LCPC).

In addition to *Mother's Word*, Marian has collaborated with Christina Whitten Thomas on four choral commissions: "Resilient Voices" for Vox Femina Los Angeles (awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts), "The Deceiver" for Seraphim Singers in Boston, "And I Shall Sing" for Middlebury College Choir in Vermont (awarded first prize in NDSU's Edwin Fissinger Choral Competition), and "Spinning Through the Sky" for Bivins Honor Choir in Texas. You can learn more about this team at: [www.martina.music.org](http://www.martina.music.org)

Marian earned her BS from Northwestern University, where she studied Theatre and Creative Writing, and her MFA in Acting from California Institute of the Arts. As a performer, Marian has appeared in over forty plays and musicals.

In addition to her artistic work, Marian serves as Assistant Director of Spiritual Formation at LCPC. She lives with her husband, David, and their two children in La Cañada. [www.marianpartee.com](http://www.marianpartee.com)



**Christina Whitten Thomas,  
Composer and Producer**

Christina's works have been performed throughout the United States including premieres at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and Disney Concert Hall. Christina has received commissions from the Los Angeles Master Chorale Chamber Singers, Vox Femina Los Angeles, the Golden Bridge, the

Seraphim Singers of Boston, the Denver Women's Chorus, the Esoterics of Seattle, Melodia Women's Choir of NYC, the Middlebury College Choir, the Apollo Men's Chorus of USC, and the Vermont Choral Union. Her awards include 1st place in the NDSU Edwin Fissinger composition competition, 1st place in the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir competition, 1st place in the Los Robles Master Chorale competition, 1st place in the Park Avenue Christian Church competition, 2nd place in the NATS Art Song Composition Award, the Sorel Conductor's Choice award, and the Sorel Medallion. Her choral cycle *Choral de Bêtes* can be heard on Musica Sacra's recording *Messages to Myself*.

Her music is published by E.C. Schirmer and Hal Leonard, as well as available through MusicSpoke.com. Christina holds a M.M. in composition from the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music and resides with her family in Claremont, California.

In addition to being an active vocalist and teacher, Christina is the Director of Worship Arts at La Cañada Congregational Church.



**Rebecca Sjöwall, Soprano**

Rebecca Sjöwall is a classically trained singer and recording artist, known for collaborations with the legendary band Sparks and as the singer of the Rapture Anthem on BioShock. Her voice can be heard as Connie O'Connor in the 2021 film *Annette* and as a featured vocalist on the film soundtrack for *Barb And Star Go To Vista Del Mar*.

Trained at UCLA, she has sung more than 20 different concert works with various symphonies and performed over 30 roles on opera stages across the U.S. One of her portrayals, as Mrs. P in Michael Nyman's opera *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat*, was released as a studio recording by Naxos.

Rebecca is married to Swedish composer Marcus Sjöwall, and they started releasing their own music in 2020. Visit her website to learn more: [www.rebeccasjowall.com](http://www.rebeccasjowall.com)



**Alicia Emerson, Mezzo-Soprano**

Alicia earned her Bachelor of Music in vocal performance from California State University, Northridge. As a Los Angeles native, she frequently performs in local church concerts, providing support and warmth to the choirs. Her classical music training has enabled her to perform in numerous oratorios, cantatas, symphonies, and concertos. She has also performed with the Donald Brinegar Singers and the Pasadena Symphony and Pops.

In addition to her work as a singer, Alicia serves as Assistant Director of Outreach at LCPC.

She is incredibly honored to be a part of the *Mother's Word* and to lend her voice and musicianship to this project.



**Diane Wallace, Alto**

Diane grew up in Dallas, Texas, singing, dancing, and acting. She studied music at North Texas State University, won a scholarship to the University of Oklahoma, and graduated in 1982 with a Bachelor's of Music. During college she joined the chorus of the Ft. Worth Opera and Dallas Lyric Opera. She acted in several musicals, operas, industrials, and plays in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, including a national tour of *A Christmas Carol*.

In 1989, she and her husband, Kendall, also a musician, moved to Los Angeles, where they reside today. Diane continued her theater work in various musicals and plays, including Gilbert and Sullivan operettas with the Hillside Repertory Theatre at Occidental College. She was a member of the Los Angeles Master Chorale 2001-2006 under Grant Gershon.

Diane has been the alto worship leader/soloist at La Cañada Presbyterian Church for 22 years.

Favorite theater projects: *Forbidden Planet*, *Esther the Musical*, *Songs for a New World*, *The Square Root of Love*, *Showboat*, starring Alan Young of "Mr. Ed" fame, with the California Music Theatre, and *My Fair Lady*, starring Noel Harrison, also with the California Music Theatre.

Favorite music projects: The Mom Song, lyrics to the William Tell Overture, Life Is A Ballgame, and singing songs from The Great American Songbook with various Big Bands and jazz combos.



**Lisa Edwards, Pianist**

Lisa Edwards is a widely sought-after pianist, keyboard collaborator, and teacher based in Los Angeles. She is currently in her 19th season as pianist/music assistant at the Los Angeles Master Chorale, under the direction of Grant Gershon. As a project collaborator, Ms. Edwards is often involved with preparing productions with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Positions held are faculty artist at Idyllwild Arts Summer program, pianist for Vox Femina Los Angeles, organist/pianist at San Marino Community Church, organist/pianist at Stephen Wise Temple in Bel Air, and pianist at Congregation Kol Ami in West Hollywood. Previous faculty positions include California State University, Long Beach, Glendale Community College, and Pasadena City College. On disc, Ms. Edwards can be heard on two Nonesuch recordings of Steve Reich's music: "You Are (Variations)" and "Daniel Variations."



**Frances Hale, Narrator**

Frances began her career by producing, directing, and starring in a production of *Hansel & Gretel* at the age of six in her living room. She has worked as an actor in television, film, and theatre. Frances also enjoys working behind the scenes in production.

Frances has also had a long career working in public relations and event management and development for several nonprofits including the Atlanta History Center, The Women's City Club of Pasadena, Heifer International, and the Immune Deficiency Foundation.

Frances has written a pilot and is currently working on her first children's book.

## Text for *Mother's Word*

### ACT I

**Proverbs 22:6, 31:10, 18, 28; Psalm 113:5, 139:13-16; Luke 2:51**

#### 1. Prologue: "Will You Show Me How?"

HANNAH, MARY, NAOMI  
Lord, you've given me a child.  
What do I do now?  
I must comfort and nourish and guide.  
Will you show me how?

HANNAH (ALICIA)  
Who is like the Lord our God,  
The One enthroned on high?  
Once barren, I have borne a son.  
So why do I want to cry?

NAOMI (DIANE)  
A wife of noble character is a gem.  
Her children rise and call her blessed.  
Her lamp does not go out at night.  
When can that woman rest?

MARY (REBECCA)  
I treasure my mother's words  
And ponder them in my heart,  
In my heart.  
Yet in my own motherhood,  
I don't know where to start.

HANNAH, MARY, NAOMI  
Lord, I feel I'm not enough.  
What does this child need?  
I must nurture both body and soul.  
I'll follow where You lead.

HANNAH  
You knit him together in my womb.  
He is fearfully and wonderfully made.

You wrote all his days  
before even one began,  
So why am I afraid?

NAOMI  
A wife of noble character is a gem.

MARY  
I treasure my mother's words.

HANNAH  
So why am I afraid?

NAOMI  
Her children rise and call her blessed.  
Her lamp does not go out at night.

MARY  
And ponder them in my heart.

HANNAH  
You knit him in my womb.

NAOMI  
When can that woman rest?

MARY  
Yet in my own motherhood,  
I don't know where to start.

HANNAH, MARY, NAOMI  
Lord, you've given me a child.  
What do I do now?  
I must honor and teach and protect.  
Will you show me how?

**EVE**  
Genesis 1:26—4:25

God creates Adam and Eve in His image and walks with them in the Garden of Eden. When the couple disobeys Him, He exiles them from the garden and they must endure toil and pain. Eve is the mother of Cain, Abel, and Seth.



*The Rebuke of Adam and Eve* by Domenico Zampieri

## Genesis 4:1

*FRANCES: She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man."*

### 2. "Dream For My Son"

EVE (REBECCA):

From this moment,  
We begin anew.  
My boy, this moment,  
Let me share my dream with you.

I will be a patient mother,  
Your steady, tender guide,  
A friend through all your days.  
You will seldom leave my side.  
Far from the haven of the garden,  
I will be your guardian in the wild.  
I'll shelter you from danger.  
Do not fear, my perfect child.

You will be a brave explorer,  
Yet never stray too far.  
You'll wander from my sight.  
I will still know where you are.  
You will escape your family history.  
You will always listen to God's voice,  
And when you face temptation,  
You will make a wiser choice.

You give me hope  
That He still watches over us.  
Maybe He's forgiven us  
For all the wrong we've done.  
He's blessed us with a fresh creation,  
A miracle,  
A sinless son.

We will be a loving fam'ly.  
In harmony we'll live.  
Our quarrels will be few.  
We will easily forgive.  
You'll learn to work beside your parents.  
We'll tend the earth and till the sod.  
We'll pray and burn offerings.  
We'll raise you to love God.

Perhaps one day you may return  
To the home we had to flee.  
And you'll be ev'rything  
That we could never be.  
You will never taste our guilt;  
You will never taste our pain.  
Our beautiful boy,  
Our Cain.

**HAGAR**  
Genesis 16

Infertile Sarai convinces her husband Abram to father a child with her Egyptian slave, Hagar. When Hagar conceives, she and Sarai grow hostile to one another. Sarai mistreats Hagar, who flees into the desert. The angel of the Lord finds Hagar by a spring and urges her to return to Sarai and Abram. Hagar is the mother of Ishmael, who plays a foundational role in Islamic tradition.



*Sarah Presenting Hagar to Abraham* by Louis Jean Francois Lagrenée

### Genesis 16:9-13

*FRANCES: Then the angel of the Lord told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her." The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count." The angel of the Lord also said to her: "You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers."*

*She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me."*

### 3. "Desert Road"

HAGAR (REBECCA):

How can I return to them?  
My mistress offers curses.  
My master offers silence.  
This is not the life I would have chosen.

Ishmael, my son to be.  
How could I raise you, wild boy  
In a home that is not our home?  
Would your father be kind to you,  
When his heart is far from me?  
I wish you could remain in this fortress  
Where no enemy could strike you.

Ishmael, my son to be.  
How could I raise you,  
my blameless boy  
In this barren and friendless place?  
Where would we find shelter or bread?  
How would I know whom to trust?

I'll follow the angel's order.  
I must return to Canaan.

*(She goes to the spring and drenches herself with water.)*

I found a spring in the desert  
And here, you found me.  
You heard my cries.  
Your servant spoke my name.  
You are the God who sees me.  
Keep your eyes upon us.  
Stay, stay my Lord  
Through the minutes  
And the hours  
And the years.  
When my feet sink in the sand  
And the dust obscures my view  
Lead me to the spring.  
Lead me to the spring.

**SARAH** (Sarai)  
Genesis 12—22

In fulfillment of a divine promise, 90-year-old Sarah bears Abraham (Abram) a son. To test Abraham's faith, God asks him to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering. Abraham is willing to do so, but an angel stops him at the last moment. Sarah is considered the first matriarch of the Jewish nation.



*The Sacrifice of Isaac* by Caravaggio

## Genesis 22: 1-2

FRANCES: *Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"*

*"Here I am," he replied.*

*Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you."*

### 4. "Testing, Testing"

SARAH (DIANE):

The Lord told you to do WHAT?

*(Pause as she listens to Abraham.)*

To sacrifice our only son?! At least you didn't listen to Him!

*(Pause.)*

Oh, you did? Then why is he still standing here?

*(Pause.)*

An angel, huh?

*(Pause.)*

Isaac, you'd better leave the room.

*(Pause as she watches him go.)*

Are you mad? This is the son we waited for for SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS! And I can't leave you alone with him for five minutes!...Now I'll admit, we've had some trust issues with God in the past. We didn't think He'd give us our own child, so you thought it was a good idea to have a baby with my slave girl!

*(Pause.)*

It doesn't matter that it was my idea! You had the nerve to go along with it! Anyway, maybe God felt the need to test your trust. But He went too far! You and God have a weird relationship.

*(Pause.)*

You didn't even tell me what you were planning to do to Isaac!

*(Pause.)*

Of course I wouldn't have let you go! I probably would have taken the boy to Nahor's house and never come back!

*(Pause.)*

How were you planning to explain this to me later? A little hunting accident? You have trouble telling the truth, Abe. Pharaoh tried to marry me because you said I was just your SISTER! And then the same thing happened with Abimelek!

*(Pause.)*

No, I haven't forgotten those incidents. A woman never forgets.

*(Pause.)*

Sometimes I wonder if God actually says everything you say He said. I mean, why did I need a new name at ninety years old? And another case in point: The little operation that you performed on yourself and your sons and servants. I mean, if God gave you something, why would He want you go and do THAT to it? I'm just saying. And now this "test." I'm beginning to wonder if finally, at 107 years old, you might be losing it. Maybe you should retire from nation-building and covenant-keeping and babysitting.

We could find you a quiet home with Lot and Nahor where you can all sit and rock and stay out of trouble!

*(Pause.)*

I know, you've still got some life left in you. Who knows? Maybe after I die, you'll find another wife and a few concubines and have a bunch more sons.

*(Pause.)*

Of course I'm the love of your life. And don't forget it for a moment, "brother." I love you too, you stinky old bag of bones. But some things are gonna change. When you think the Lord is asking you to do something completely and utterly insane, talk it over with me first. No more hiding, no more lies. And that's the last time you take Isaac for a hike!

**REBEKAH**  
Genesis 24—27

Isaac and his beloved wife, Rebekah, have two boys, Esau and Jacob. Isaac favors the hunter, Esau, but Rebekah favors the homebody, Jacob. Jacob convinces firstborn Esau to sell him his birthright. Later, Rebekah convinces Jacob to trick Isaac into granting him a special birthright blessing. Rebekah is considered the second matriarch of the Jewish people.



*Isaac Blessing Jacob* by Giotto di Bondone

## Genesis 27:6-13

*FRANCES: Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Look, I overheard your father say to your brother Esau, 'Bring me some game and prepare me some tasty food to eat, so that I may give you my blessing in the presence of the Lord before I die.' Now, my son, listen carefully and do what I tell you: Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father, just the way he likes it. Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies."*

*Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "But my brother Esau is a hairy man while I have smooth skin. What if my father touches me? I would appear to be tricking him and would bring down a curse on myself rather than a blessing."*

*His mother said to him, "My son, let the curse fall on me. Just do what I say; go and get them for me."*

### 5. "You Must Win"

REBEKAH (DIANE):

Esau is a fool.  
He hunts, he grunts.  
He could never lead.  
But you, my son,  
Are destined to succeed.

You have won your brother's birthright  
With your cunning and your cooking.  
You'll inherit flocks and herds and  
wealth.  
I have taught you well.  
You've learned what you must learn:  
If you can't prevail with fairness,  
You'll have to win by stealth.

You must win your father's blessing  
With my cunning and my cooking.  
Give him wine and bread and tender  
meat.

Wear your brother's clothes  
And goat hide on your skin.  
With your father's potent blessing,  
Men will bow down at your feet.

You've always been a loyal, loving son,  
Content to stay home with mother...  
A world apart from your feckless,  
reckless brother.  
He has no respect for me

Or for the Lord,  
So you, my youngest,  
Will take his reward.

You must win our Maker's blessing  
With off'rings on the altar.  
You'll have offspring numerous as sand,  
Victory in war,  
And visions from our God.  
With His covenant of favor,  
You will take the Promised Land.

If this deception angers Isaac or the  
Lord, let the curse fall on me.  
You must be who you were born to be.

**LEAH**  
Genesis 29—30

Laban promises his youngest daughter, Rachel, to Jacob in marriage. On the wedding day, Laban deceptively switches Rachel for his eldest daughter, Leah. In an effort to win her cold husband's love, Leah bears him four sons. Jacob takes his adored Rachel as his second wife. Leah and Rachel are considered the third and fourth matriarchs of the Jewish nation.



*Vision of Rachel and Leah* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

## Genesis 29:30-32

*FRANCES: Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.*

*When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless. Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "It is because the Lord has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now."*

### 6. "Then He Will Love Me"

LEAH (REBECCA):

Close your eyes, my babe.  
The moon has risen, cold and pale.  
Drift into your dreams  
While I tell you a tale...

Once there were two sisters,  
One beguiling as wine,  
One plain as water.  
Their father fooled a man  
Into taking the eldest daughter.

She knew he did not want her  
On the day that they were wed.  
But she said, "That will change  
When we share our skin  
Upon the marriage bed.  
He will ease my deep and unspoken  
fears.  
I will please his longing of seven years.  
Then he will love me."

The morning light brought anger  
To his stern, angelic face.  
But she said, "That will change  
When we share a home,  
A warm and welcome place.  
I will feed his hunger and slake his  
thirst.  
He will need my comfort when he feels  
cursed.  
Then he will love me."

She loved him for  
His tireless strength,  
His boundless ambition.

His passionate faith,  
His God-given mission.  
She said, "How blessed am I to call him  
mine...  
This man who dreams of angels  
And speaks with the Divine."

He cherished her fair sister  
Whom he also took to wife,  
But she said, "That will change  
When I bear his child,  
A new and precious life,  
For this boy will kindle his father's pride  
And his joy will keep him at mother's  
side.  
Then he will love me."

He held the babe so tenderly,  
And spoke of the great man he'd grow to  
be,  
The covenant he would receive,  
And visions he might see.  
All this, the mother heard,  
But to the mother, he spoke not a word.

And still, I am forsaken  
By this blind, unyielding man,  
But I know he can change.  
I will have more sons.  
O Lord, anoint my plan.  
He won't care for Sister. She's barren  
still.  
I will bear him boy after boy until  
One day, he loves me.  
One day, he must love me.

## JOCHEBED, MIRIAM, BITHIAH

Exodus 1—2:10

The Egyptian Pharaoh demands that all boys born to the Hebrews must be put to death. To protect her son Moses, Jochebed hides him in a basket among the reeds of the riverbank. When Pharaoh's daughter (called Bithiah in the Jewish tradition) finds the baby and takes pity on him, Moses' sister Miriam suggests that Bithiah hire Jochebed to nurse him. Bithiah agrees, and she raises Moses as her own son. Miriam later becomes a prophetess and joins her brothers in their quest to bring their people out of Egypt and lead them through the wilderness.



*The Mother of Moses* by Simeon Solomon

## Exodus 1:22-2:1-6

*FRANCES: Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."*

*Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman,<sup>2</sup> and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months.<sup>3</sup> But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.<sup>4</sup> His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.*

### 7. "You Are My Delight"

*(JOCHEBED/DIANE cradles a basket. MIRIAM/ALICIA looks on, distressed.)*

MIRIAM (*spoken*):

Mother, you can't leave him!

JOCHEBED (*spoken*):

This is his only chance, Miriam.

(*sung*):

May the heron sing you a lullaby.

May the Nile rock you on her gentle breast.

May the Lord watch over you

And grant you peaceful rest.

Remember, when you are alone tonight,

You are my delight.

MIRIAM:

May the crickets tell you a fairy tale.

May the stars bring you comfort from above.

May the angels tend to you,

Surrounding you with love.

Remember, though I may be out of sight,

You are my delight.

JOCHEBED, MIRIAM:

May you dream of kisses on your fingertips.

May you dream of milk and honey on your lips.

May you dream of tender arms enfolding you.

And when you wake,

May you find all your dreams are true.

*(JOCHEBED exits. MIRIAM retreats and watches the baby. BITHIAH/REBECCA enters. She wades into the water. She notices the basket and approaches it.)*

BITHIAH (*spoken*):

This is one of the Hebrew babies. You poor, tiny child. Who will care for you?

(*sung*:)

May I sing you a lullaby?

May I rock you on my gentle breast?

May I watch over you

And bring you peaceful rest?

Your smile is so disarming, your eyes so bright.

You are a delight.

(*MIRIAM approaches BITHIAH.*)

MIRIAM (*spoken*):

Excuse me, Princess. It seems you're fond of him. Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?

BITHIAH:

Yes, go.

(*MIRIAM exits.*)

BITHIAH (*cont.*) (*sung*:)

My Horus left me childless,

Yet the river gave a babe to me.

I have drawn you from the water,

So "Moses" you shall be.

For Father to accept you

I will undertake a harmless ploy.

I will dress you like our people.

You will be an Egyptian boy.

(*JOCHEBED re-enters with MIRIAM. JOCHEBED draws near the baby and sings*:)

JOCHEBED:

I will sing you a lullaby.

MIRIAM:

I will tell you a bedtime tale.

JOCHEBED, BITHIAH:

I will rock you on my gentle breast.

I will watch over you.

MIRIAM:

I will tend to you.

ALL THREE:

I will bring you peaceful rest.

When you need comfort, I will hold you tight

For you are my delight.

May you dream of kisses on your fingertips.

May you dream of milk and honey on your lips.

May you dream of tender arms enfolding you.

And when you wake,

You will find your dreams are true.

## **ZIPPORAH**

Exodus 2:15—22, 4:24—26, 18:1—27

Jethro, priest of Midian, gives his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage. God commands Moses to liberate the enslaved Israelites from the Egyptians. On the way to Egypt, Zipporah saves her husband's life. Moses later sends Zipporah and their two sons home to Midian, but Jethro brings them back to Moses.



*Moses and his Ethiopian Wife, Zipporah* by Jacob Jordaens

## Exodus 18:1-5

*ALICIA: Now Jethro, the priest of Midian and father-in-law of Moses, heard of everything God had done for Moses and for his people Israel, and how the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt.*

*<sup>2</sup> After Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro received her <sup>3</sup> and her two sons. One son was named Gershom,<sup>[a]</sup> for Moses said, “I have become a foreigner in a foreign land”; <sup>4</sup> and the other was named Eliezer,<sup>[b]</sup> for he said, “My father’s God was my helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh.”*

*<sup>5</sup> Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, together with Moses’ sons and wife, came to him in the wilderness, where he was camped near the mountain of God.*

### 8. “A Different Mission”

ZIPPORAH (FRANCES):

You look really tired, Mo. Haven’t you done enough? I mean, you already delivered thousands of slaves from Egypt. You parted the Red Sea. You defeated the Amalekites. Now the people are coming to you from morning ‘til night so you can resolve their petty arguments. Why are *you* the only one who hears from the Almighty? Can’t He delegate some responsibility? Can’t you?

You didn’t have to send us back to my dad. We could have stayed with you in Egypt. I know you thought it was for our safety, but I could have helped you. I’m stronger than you think. Remember how I saved your life? If it weren’t for me, the Hebrews wouldn’t have had a leader to redeem them from Egypt! You need someone to take care of you. It looks like you haven’t eaten or slept in days. And the boys have been asking to see you. Gershom wants to know how to shoot with a bow and arrow, and I can’t teach him. Eliezer wants to learn about the history of your people, but I don’t know very much. And he’s starting to notice girls, so I really wish you’d talk to him about a few things. They’re growing up, and you’re missing it. When can you go home and get your life back? When can we get *our* life back?

*(She listens.)*

Oh, I see...

I guess I should have known that things wouldn’t go back to normal. You can’t return to Midian. You’re in too deep here... I want to stay with you. I want you to help me raise our boys. But your mission has consumed you. Is there nothing left for us?

## NAOMI, RUTH

Ruth

Widowed Naomi plans to leave Moab for her native Bethlehem. Her widowed Moabite daughter-in-law, Ruth, insists on accompanying her and adopting her Jewish faith. Ruth later marries Boaz; the two are ancestors of Jesus.



*Ruth and Naomi* by Julius Hübner

## Ruth 1:8-15

*REBECCA: Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her. "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."*

### 9. "A Daughter of My Own"

NAOMI (DIANE):

Why would you leave your homeland?  
Why would you share my bitter fate?  
Your life unfurls before you.  
For me, it is too late.  
Why would you leave your people  
And follow me to a life unknown?  
Why do you cleave to me  
As if you were a daughter of my own?

Ruth, you should stay in Moab.  
Go to your mother's house again.  
She'll find you a good husband.  
You'll have a fam'ly then.  
Ruth, we should say farewell now.  
I can continue on alone...  
Though I adore you so,  
And wish you were a daughter of my  
own.

Long ago I had a dream,  
When I was a young bride  
And I tended the house.  
I yearned for a girl with whom I could  
laugh  
And dance and work,  
In whom I could confide.

When you came into our home  
Our joy was bright, but brief.  
When death took our men,  
You were the girl with whom I could cry  
And talk and pray  
Throughout my deepest grief.

RUTH (ALICIA):

Don't make me leave you or to turn back  
from you.

RUTH (*cont*):

Where you go I will go,  
And where you stay I will stay.  
Your people will be my people  
And your God my God.  
Where you die I will die,  
And there I will be buried.  
May the Lord deal with me,  
Be it ever so severely,  
If even death separates you and me.

NAOMI:

Ruth, you possess such courage.  
You give me strength to travel on.  
I see that I will need you,  
A friend

RUTH

A friend

BOTH

To lean upon.

RUTH

You are a true companion.

NAOMI

Such love you have shown.

BOTH

After these cruel years

NAOMI

You have become a daughter

RUTH

A mother

BOTH  
Of my own.

NAOMI  
Let's go home to Bethlehem  
Where you will meet my kin.  
The barley fields are heavy.  
The harvest will begin.

BOTH  
If we have no meat,  
We can glean the grain, at least.  
Though this land left us empty,

NAOMI  
Together

RUTH  
Together

BOTH  
We will find a feast.

*INTERMISSION*

\* \* \*

## *ACT II*

### **HANNAH**

1 Samuel 1

A prophetess, Hannah is married to Elkanah. Elkanah's other wife has given birth to many children, and she taunts Hannah for her infertility. Year after year, Hannah prays for a baby and promises that she will consecrate the child for divine service. The priest Eli promises that God will grant her petition. Hannah gives birth to Samuel. When he is weaned, she takes him to the house of the Lord and leaves him in the care of Eli. Samuel is venerated as a mighty prophet by Jews, Christians, and Muslims.



*Samuel Dedicated by Hannah at the Temple* by Frank W.W. Topham

## 1 Samuel 1:10-11

*FRANCES: In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. And she made a vow, saying "Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life."*

### 10. "Hannah's Prayer"

HANNAH (ALICIA):

Once again I come into Your house.  
Another year has passed.  
Another year of Your silence.  
Why can *she* bear children with such ease  
And I am barren?

Oh Lord Almighty,  
Look upon your servant's misery.  
Have you closed my womb?  
My husband loves me, and I adore him,  
But that is not enough for me.  
I fear you have forgotten me.  
See my sorrow.

Oh Lord of Mercy  
Why do you refuse to speak to me?  
Am I stained with sin?  
My husband gives me a double portion  
But I can't bear to eat a crumb.  
My emptiness consumes me.  
Taste my hunger.

Remember me  
And give me a son.  
Then I will give him to You  
For all the days of his life.  
He will hear Your voice.  
He will speak Your words  
And do Your holy work.

Oh God my Father,  
Please accept your servant's offering.  
Will You bless my plea?  
I know You love me, and I adore You.  
Oh, why am I not satisfied?  
If it might be Your gracious will,  
Grant my prayer.

## JEZEBEL

1 Kings 16:31—2 Kings 9:37

Jezebel is the daughter of Ethbaal, priest-king of Tyre. When Jezebel marries Ahab, King of Israel, she persuades him to introduce the worship of the Tyrian god Baal. She defies the prophets Elijah and Elisha, kills nearly all of the priests of Yahweh, and weakens Israel for decades. After Ahab dies in battle, son Joram succeeds him. Elisha has a military commander named Jehu anointed king instead. This action provokes civil war. Jehu shoots Joram in the back and then comes for Jezebel. After she beautifies herself, she is thrown from her tower.



*Jezebel and Ahab* by Frederic Leighton

## 2 Kings 9:22-24 and 30

*FRANCES: <sup>22</sup> When Joram saw Jehu he asked, "Have you come in peace, Jehu?"  
"How can there be peace," Jehu replied, "as long as all the idolatry and witchcraft of  
your mother Jezebel abound?" <sup>23</sup> Joram turned about and fled, calling out to Ahaziah,  
"Treachery, Ahaziah!"*

*<sup>24</sup> Then Jehu drew his bow and shot Joram between the shoulders. The arrow pierced his  
heart and he slumped down in his chariot...*

*<sup>30</sup> Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard about it, she put on eye  
makeup, arranged her hair and looked out of a window.*

### 11. "Why Should I Cling to Life?"

JEZEBEL (REBECCA):

I see your chariot in the distance.  
You drive your horses with all speed.  
You think that I will run from you.  
Commander Jehu,  
I shall not flee nor plead.

When you approach my tower,  
I shall not hide from death.  
I shall look you in the eye,  
Rebel Jehu,  
Until my final breath.

Why should I cling to life?  
You stole my youngest son from me.  
I know Elisha put you up to that attack.  
Joram was the rightful king,  
Coward Jehu,  
But you shot him in the back.

Why should I cling to life?  
I brought you my beloved faith.  
Your people slaughtered all the prophets  
of my god.  
Yes, I slew your prophets, too,  
Hebrew Jehu,  
I know that Baal would applaud.

I've done great and terrible deeds.  
All Israel was under my command.

Yet I was pow'less to save my husband  
and my sons.  
The loss is more than I can stand.

Whatever lies beyond this land of dust,  
Be it pleasure or torment,  
I shall meet them there.  
My sons will lead me home  
When my soul has been laid bare.

Why should I cling to life?  
You turned my people's hearts to you  
And then you tore the mighty House of  
Ahab down.  
You have taken those I love,  
Traitor Jehu.  
Now you're coming for my crown.

Come, assassin Jehu,  
Come and banish me from life.  
I leave to you a kingdom  
Of envy, war, and strife.

Royal I was born.  
Royal I remain,  
A queen until the end!

## BATHSHEBA

2 Samuel 11:2—12:24 and 1 Kings 1:11—2:25

From his roof, King David sees beautiful Bathsheba bathing. Although she is married, David sends for her and impregnates her. He orders her husband Uriah to the front lines of battle where he is killed. Bathsheba mourns. David makes her one of his wives. David repents of his sin, but he has cursed his family. Their baby dies. Bathsheba bears David a second son, Solomon. She ensures that Solomon inherits the throne, despite rivals. King Solomon unites all the tribes of Israel and builds the first Temple in Jerusalem. Revered for his wisdom, Solomon is considered the author of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.



*Bathsheba* by Artemisia Gentileschi

## 2 Samuel 12:24

*FRANCES: Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon.*

### 12. “Mother’s Wisdom”

BATHSHEBA (ALICIA):

Solomon! I know your friends are at the door, but they can wait. Sit down, please, son.

Adah’s mother came to see me yesterday and she said you’ve been paying quite a bit of attention to her daughter. Adah is beautiful; I can see why she’s caught your eye.

I think it’s time for you to learn something about our family’s past. A story your father doesn’t like to tell. You know that your father was married when he met me. But did you know I was married too? His name was Uriah. He was a brave warrior and a kind, gentle husband. One day, while he was away, your father saw me. Then he sent messengers to fetch me. What could I do? He was the king. He should never have brought me here. I didn’t belong to him. And in my eyes, I never will.

Your father sent Uriah to the front lines to fight the Ammonites; he put an innocent man to death. Suddenly, my beloved Uriah was gone. And I was here in the palace to stay. Sometimes Uriah still wanders into my dreams. He reaches out to me and I want to speak to him, but then I wake in tears.

What I’m saying is that a king’s word should never betray justice. Your father David tried to hide his sin, but the eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch. Listen, son: be wise and keep your heart on the right path. There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the sun. Adah is like a locked garden. Do not pick the lock.—No, sit back down. I’m not finished yet.

When you marry, rejoice in your wife. She should not only be your lover, but also your friend. Protect her with the banner of your love. When you’re thirsty, drink water from your *own* well. A wife of noble character is her husband’s crown.

Don’t forget my teaching. Keep God’s commands in your heart.

Now, go have a good time with your friends. I won’t wait up.

## ELIZABETH, MARY

Luke 1:5—80

Zechariah receives the angelic message that he and his wife Elizabeth will finally have a child in their old age. Pregnant Elizabeth welcomes her unmarried, pregnant cousin Mary into her home for three months.



*Mary and Elizabeth* by Carl Heinrich Bloch

## Luke 1:39-45 and 56

*FRANCES: <sup>39</sup> At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, <sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! <sup>43</sup> But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" ... Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months...*

### 13. "It's Wild to be With Child"

*(14 weeks pregnant, MARY/REBECCA sleeps in a chair. She holds a broom in her limp hands. 42 weeks pregnant, ELIZABETH/DIANE waddles on, barefoot. She looks at MARY tenderly. ELIZABETH gently takes the broom out of her hands. MARY wakes.)*

MARY

I'm sorry, I must have dozed off.

ELIZABETH

It's all right. Sleep while you can. I'll sweep for a while.

MARY

No, let me do it. I don't want to be a burden to you, Elizabeth.

ELIZBETH

You're not a burden to us.

MARY

I'll go back to Nazareth soon, I promise. Just not yet.

*(sings:)*

When I told my neighbors  
I swore by my virginity,  
They said *they* would swear  
By Joseph's masculinity.

ELIZABETH

When I said my husband  
Had proven his virility,  
They said I had just  
Proven my senility.

This is a journey I never thought I'd take.

MARY

Sometimes I wonder if there's been a big mistake.

ELZABETH

There's one thing I know is true,  
And I am learning it with you:  
It's wild to be with child.

*(underscoring dialogue:)*

MARY

Yes, it is.

ELIZABETH

Could you please get me some dried fish, Mary?

MARY

Ugh, I can't stand the smell of fish!

ELIZABETH:

You can't stand the smell of anything I eat.

MARY

I'm sorry, I can't help it... You know, I thought a divine pregnancy wouldn't come with morning sickness.

MARY *(sings:)*

I feel so queasy.  
I need to take it easy.

ELIZABETH

All I want to do is eat!  
I want eggs, fish, and figs.

MARY

I would rather smell some pigs.

Those are foods that I hate.

I don't mean to be unkind,  
But you fill me with disgust.

ELIZABETH

A leek and a date.

Some crickets would be good.  
I could eat them 'til I bust.

BOTH

It's wild to be with child.

MARY  
I feel so sleepy  
And also, kind of weepy.

My brain is a fog.

I don't have a baby yet,  
But I have the baby blues.

ELIZABETH

I can never get good sleep.  
Baby kicks. I'm so hot,  
And I have to use the pot.

I'm the size of a hog.  
My feet have swollen up.  
I can't even wear my shoes.

BOTH

It's wild to be with child.  
I have such strange dreams.  
When I wake, life still seems very strange.  
I can barely comprehend  
How everything is going to change.

MARY  
I'm at the beginning

ELIZABETH  
I'm at the end

BOTH

Of my simple, little story.  
What do I know  
Of sacred wisdom and glory?

What if I fail  
To raise this boy right?  
What if he chooses  
To wander from the light?

*(MARY suddenly gasps and touches her belly.)*

ELIZABETH  
What is it?

MARY  
A fluttering!

ELIZABETH  
The quickening!

MARY

I'm so excited,  
And totally delighted!

Now I fin'ly begin  
To feel new life stir within.

ELIZABETH

Yes, that is the sweetest thrill!

BOTH

We both are so blessed.  
We should not be distressed.

ELIZABETH

I know that I'll endure,  
though the waiting is so long.

MARY

My son's dancing in my womb,  
And I know he's well and strong.

BOTH

It's wild to be with child!

**HERODIAS**  
Matthew 14:3-12

Herodias divorces Phillip in order to marry his half-brother, Herod Antipas. John the Baptist condemns the union, so Herod imprisons him. On Herod's birthday, Herodias's daughter Salome dances for him. Delighted, Herod promises to give Salome whatever she requests. Prompted by her mother, Salome asks for John's head on a platter.



*Herodias* by Paul Delaroche

**Matthew 3:1 (See also Matthew 14:1-12)**

*FRANCES: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.*

**14. “Do Not Be Troubled”**

HERODIAS:

Why do you weep, my sweet girl?  
That foolish boy shouldn't bother you.  
His words are many,  
But his wits are few.

Do not be troubled  
When others insult me.  
Some disagree with the choices I have made.  
Do not be troubled  
That we left your father.  
Our lives would have been so grim if we stayed.

Do not be troubled  
About your new father.  
He is not perfect, but he's better than the last.  
Do not be troubled  
By stories they tell you.  
His youthful mistakes are all in the past.

You're such a pretty girl.  
One day, you'll be a beauty.  
A beauty can always get her way.  
You're such a good girl.  
You always do as Mama tells you,  
And Mama will never lead you astray.

So dance, my girl.  
Spin and sway,  
Fair and free.  
Turn and twirl,  
Weave and whirl,  
Dance, dance for me.

Do not be troubled  
When that boy insults me.  
Let John prattle on and ignore him, Salome.  
Do not be troubled,  
For when the time is right,  
We will make him pay.

## ELIZABETH

Luke 1:5—80

The son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, John the Baptist, becomes a great prophet who preaches in the wilderness, criticizes the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, and prepares the people for the coming of Jesus.



*The Holy Family with Saint Elizabeth, the infant Saint John the Baptist and two angels...*  
by Anton Raphael Mengs

## **Luke 1:76-80**

*FRANCES: And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.*

*And the child grew and became strong in spirit and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.*

### **15. “How Do You Tame a Son?”**

ELIZABETH (DIANE):

*(spoken:)*

John! Where are you? John! Dinner’s ready! John!\_If you think God’s wrath is bad, you don’t want to see mine!

*(sings:)*

Oh, Zechariah, what do we do? The boy has run off again!  
One of these days, he’ll fall off a cliff or run in a lion’s den!  
He’s always climbing the tallest of trees  
Or taking a swim in the roughest of seas.  
I’ve never seen someone so eager to roam.  
I never know when he’s going to be home.  
He never bathes. He burns in the sun.  
We tamed a wild donkey once, but how do we tame a son?

Oh, Zechariah, what do we do? The boy is so very odd.  
He doesn’t have friends. He talks to himself... or maybe, I guess, to God.  
And yesterday, you know what he did?  
He got in a fight with a Pharisee’s kid!  
We wiggles away when I give him a hug.  
He turns down my cooking and then eats a bug!  
He just wears fur! I’m completely undone!  
He will not let me tame his hair, so how can I tame our son?

Why can’t John do one thing to appease us?  
Why can’t he be more like his nice cousin, Jesus?  
How will he become the great prophet the angel said he’d be?  
He won’t even speak to me!  
If you can think of some way to help him, go to it!  
But we’ll have another angel visit us to say,  
“Sorry, folks. You blew it!”

Oh Zechariah, what have we done? We’ve ruined the boy for life!  
He’ll never be fit to hold down a job or marry a decent wife!  
I thought that having a baby was bliss, but now I know I’m too old for this!

I've finally come to the end of my rope.  
There's only one thing that can offer me hope.  
We have to pray. Oh, Mighty One!  
You tamed some beasts for Daniel once, so now will you tame our son?

## MARY

Luke 1:26—2:51, Matthew 1:18—2:21, John 19:25—27

Angel Gabriel tells the virgin Mary that she will give birth to the Son of the Most High. Although perplexed, Mary agrees to the divine plan and becomes the mother of Jesus. Thirty-three years later, she stands at the foot of the cross.



*Madonna And Child* by Salvi Giovanni Battista

## Luke 2:42-51

*FRANCES: When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."*

*"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"*

### 16. "Our House"

MARY (REBECCA):

*(spoken:)*

In your Father's house?

*(sung:)*

What about *our* house?

That's where you belong,

With my fresh baked bread

And a fire on the hearth

And walls, sturdy and strong.

There, I've soothed your fevers.

There, I've dried your tears.

There, I've chased your nightmares  
away

Through the last twelve years.

What about our house?

You have much to learn

Of your father's trade.

You cannot sit here and talk.

You know you must return.

There, you'll grow to manhood.

There, you'll chisel wood.

There, you will live down the street,

Just the way that you should.

I will keep you safe.

They don't understand you

The way I do.

You are not like them.

They may try to harm you

If they knew.

Stay with those who know you.

Stay with those who care.

Stay with those who need you at home.

You can't just wander anywhere.

Yet...

Somehow you seem at home here.

You are wise beyond your age.

You amaze the learned teachers.

They can tell you are a sage.

Perhaps I was not meant to keep you.

Perhaps I must let you go your way.

Perhaps you must return to your Father's  
house alone.

Perhaps... but not today.

Come back to our house

While you still are mine.

I will wash your feet.

We will break a bit of bread,

And I could use some wine.

There, we'll share our stories.

There, our love is deep.

There, I will sing you a song

As you fall asleep.

*(segue into Epilogue)*

**1 Samuel 1:24-28, Romans 8:28, Jeremiah 29:11**

**17. “On Your Way”**

HANNAH:

You heard my prayer and granted me a child,  
A priceless treasure.  
I’ve cared for him as best I could,  
And loved him beyond measure.

As promised, Lord, I give him back to you.  
He’s in your keeping.  
Protect him with your mighty hand.  
Draw near to him in his laughter and his weeping.

NAOMI:

You have a fam’ly of your own,  
As I always hoped you would.  
Our God has shown His faithfulness to you.  
He’s worked all things for your good.

Write His words upon your heart  
And keep my words upon your mind.  
These words will guide you in the dark  
And help you lead the blind.

MARY:

I will always cherish you  
Wherever you may be.  
I will always pray for you.  
Will you pray for me?

My joy, my pride,  
My blood, my bone,  
Part of me, yet never truly mine.  
How the years have flown.

NAOMI

A fam’ly of your own.

HANNAH

He heard my prayer and granted me a child.

ALL

Your open path awaits.  
You can no longer stay.  
The Lord has plans to prosper you.

You are on your way.  
The Lord has plans for you.  
You are on your way.  
You are on your way.  
You are on your way.

*(Lights fade. End of song cycle.)*

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(as of 9/22/22)

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Our God who sees us