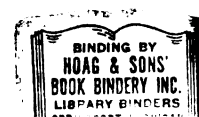
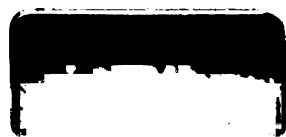


MASADA: STAGE AND FILM VERSIONS  
OF AN HISTORICAL EVENT

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
CHARLES GARO ASHJIAN  
1970



131

AUG 21 2007

## ABSTRACT

### MASADA: STAGE AND FILM VERSIONS OF AN HISTORICAL EVENT

By

Charles Garo Ashjian

This thesis contains a stageplay and filmplay based upon the tragic and resolute defense of the citadel Masada by Jewish survivors of the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. against an invading Roman Legion commanded by General Flavius Silva. Included, also, is a brief essay comparing and contrasting the two scripts with the intention of indicating and exemplifying the advantages and disadvantages which exist between them. Points considered include the greater realism and detail which are possible in a film treatment of the event in contrast to that possible in a stage treatment. The greater dependence of the theatre upon the spoken word is considered with reference to the special capability of the film to convey much of its meaning through the use of images alone. The sustained and continuous performance of the stage actor is considered and contrasted with the often interrupted presentation of the film actor. The constant physical relationship of the



theatre audience to the dramatic event is considered and contrasted with the ever-changing focus of the film audience. Finally, the problem of adaptation as it pertains to the included scripts is considered and suggestive conclusions are derived therefrom.

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OF AN HISTORICAL EVENT

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Charles Garo Ashjian

A THESIS

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

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Department of Television and Radio

1970

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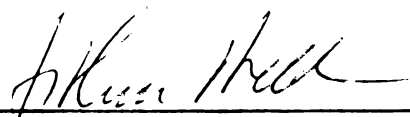
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Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Television and Radio, College of Communication Arts, Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

  
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Director of Thesis

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Professor Arthur Weld, whose effort, encouragement, and understanding made the completing of this thesis possible.

I wish, also, to use this opportunity to thank Professors Colby Lewis, Leo Martin, Ali Issari, and Robert Schlater for their assistance and understanding during my period of study in the Department of Television and Radio.

PART

I. INTRO

II. MASADA  
HISTOR

III. MASADA  
HISTOR

IV. ANALYS

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## PART I

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## INTRODUCTION

After the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D., a band of Jewish survivors fled to the fortress of Masada--a citadel in the Judean desert near the Dead Sea which had been established by Herod in an earlier day. Here the survivors, numbering under a thousand, withstood the onslaught of an embarrassed Roman force numbering nearly twenty-five thousand. After a heroic and prolonged struggle against the Roman invaders and faced with an inevitable defeat which would entail death and slavery for the survivors, the defenders of Masada all chose to commit suicide rather than submit to the final intentions of the, now, conquering Roman army. The incident is recorded on about six pages of Josephus' The Great Roman-Jewish War. This story of Masada and its brave defenders remains as an outstanding example of the willingness of a group to withstand an invader by choosing freedom in death rather than slavery and humiliation in life.

With this background, I have written two full-length original scripts--one intended for the stage, and another intended for film. Both scripts are based on the only available and pertinent primary information which has been

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preserved by the historian Josephus. However, the film script will be dependent for its detail upon the stage script which is directly derived from the account by Josephus. Included with this work is a brief essay comparing and contrasting the two scripts with the intention of indicating and exemplifying the advantages and disadvantages of the respective scripts.

## PART II

M A S A D A

A Stage Version of an Historical Event

by

Garro Ashjian

To Franz Werfel



## CHARACTERS

(In Order of Appearance)

General Flavius Silva

Envoy

Hannah

Sarah

Eleazar ben Yair

Joab

Shmuel ben Ezra

Yehohanan

Miriam

Rabbi Aqavia

Engineer

Priest

With Squadron Leaders, Centurions,  
Soldiers, Men, Women, and Children.

MASADA

A Stage Version of an Historical Event

At Rise:           The summit of Masada--a fortress in  
                    the Judean Desert.

GENERAL FLAVIUS SILVA enters the  
area. SILVA is escorted by armed  
and cautious ROMAN SOLDIERS who  
also bear the ornate battle stand-  
ards of several military units.  
Smoke and debris from ruined and  
smoldering structures are evident.  
The place conveys a feeling of the  
extent and utter weariness of  
death.

SILVA

This silence is foreboding . . .

CENTURION

Soldiers--maintain your caution . . .

ENVOY

Is it some form of deceit?

SILVA

I am not certain . . . Centurion--sound the trumpets. Call  
the Jews forth.

CENTURION

Sound the trumpets . . .

(The trumpets are sounded. There  
is a silent pause)

Come forth--throw down your arms . . .

(Silence)

There is no answer, my lord.

SILVA

I have ears, Centurion . . .

ENVOY

This place bears the stench of death . . .

SILVA

A thousand Jews cannot disappear so rapidly--even if God is on their side as they proclaim so loudly.

CENTURION

Should I send soldiers forward, my lord?

SILVA

Send them . . .

CENTURION

You men . . .

SILVA

Go with them.

CENTURION

Yes, my lord.

(The CENTURION and several SOLDIERS depart)

ENVOY

This is a strange response . . .

SILVA

Surely no response is a very strange one . . . These Jews are cunning. We must remain cautious . . . I did not expect to enter the summit of Masada so readily.

ENVOY

I had anticipated a more startling and bloody arrival . . .

SILVA

Perhaps the Jews still will not disappoint us . . . Sound  
the trumpets again.

(The trumpets sound)

ENVOY

Little did Herod suspect that this great fortress he labored  
to build would provide such a final task for his Roman  
allies. He built well indeed.

SILVA

Would Herod had not built so well--even after death, he has  
caused the Roman Empire lengthy embarrassment along with  
extensive casualties.

SOLDIER

My lord, someone comes . . .

SILVA

Calm yourself, it is our Centurion.

ENVOY

Along with several captured Jews . . .

SILVA

Women and children . . . They are not worthy prisoners--or  
victims.

(The ROMAN SOLDIERS enter with two  
women captives. HANNAH is carry-  
ing a baby and SARAH is holding  
two children by the hands)

CENTURION

My lord, Silva, there are bodies--hundreds of them . . .  
Dead by their own hands . . . It is the most frightening  
sight. Only these people survive.

SILVA

Hundreds of bodies--can this be real . . . ?

CENTURION

I can never be more certain . . .

SILVA

I can see that you are--such certainty has shaken your  
manner.

CENTURION

I saw them with my very eyes. May I never again behold such  
a sight . . .

ENVOY

But how can such a thing be . . . ?

SILVA

You say dead by their own hands . . . ?

CENTURION

Yes, my lord, hundreds of them--by sword and dagger. Near  
the main palace especially. It is ghastly--men, women,  
children, babes. It seems that none have been spared  
except for these . . .

SILVA

Let us be more certain of this--take your men and survey  
the entire area most thoroughly.

CENTURION

Yes, my lord.

SILVA

Bring me the body of Eleazar ben Yair . . . Then I will  
possess a better calm.

CENTURION

I will do my best . . .

SILVA

Do your best, Centurion.

CENTURION

Yes, my lord.

(The CENTURION and SOLDIERS exit)

SILVA

And who are you . . . ?

HANNAH

I am Hannah--a widow and mother of these three children.  
This is my elder sister, Sarah . . .

SILVA

You are foul and rebellious Jews . . .

(Silence)

ENVOY

How well they have learned to rebel, Silva . . .

SILVA

Speak--or I will have your tongues moved with a hot  
blade . . .

HANNAH

I will speak, my lord . . .

SILVA

What has happened here--why are we allowed to find death rather than cause it . . . ? How have you managed to survive such an abundance of death and destruction . . . ?

HANNAH

We hid from death, my lord--on one of the large water cisterns. We came forward when we heard the trumpets . . . We knew the meaning . . .

SILVA

Are you cowards or traitors . . . ?

HANNAH

Neither, my lord, merely weary of death and desirous of life--especially life for my children.

SILVA

How do you know that I will spare you?

HANNAH

I do not know this, my lord . . .

SILVA

Nor do I . . . Tell us what has happened . . . Tell us truly and completely or you shall forfeit life also . . .

HANNAH

I will, my lord. I will tell all that I know . . .

SILVA

Then do so--and do so quickly for I would hasten from this cursed place . . .

## HANNAH

It was when your battle ramp neared completion--when death came closer and closer to our lives. It was then that dissent and doubt and, if I may add, renewed courage entered our camp. It was then that Eleazar assembled the ten squadron leaders atop the Western Wall to observe and discuss the Roman advance and consider methods by which to thwart this same advance. Eleazar spoke to the leaders and . . .

(Lights . . . ELEAZAR and JOAB, along with the ten SQUADRON LEADERS dressed in silver breastarmor, stand atop the Western Wall of Masada. THEY are observing the activity on the battle ramp which is being erected toward the wall. ARCHERS are poised in defense of the area)

## ELEAZAR

Our fortress is strong. Herod, in his desire to build a strong retreat from the threat of Jewish subjects and the acquisitiveness of Cleopatra, built as well as he intended. The Roman works proceed--but to no avail. We will defend our fortress and withstand whatever . . . We are the last free men within our nation and we will survive as such . . .

## SHMUEL

It is an impossible task to withstand any longer. There are many thousands of them below and there are only nine-hundred and sixty of us here--including many women and children.



ELEAZAR

But we have the love of freedom and God on our side . . .

SHMUEL

God has deserted us. He has allowed the enemy to capture Jerusalem--to destroy our sacred Temple . . . And the love of freedom is no defense against the swords and arrows of an entire Roman Legion.

ELEAZAR

God has not deserted us for He has surely allowed us to survive the fall of Jerusalem. God has led us into the safety of the desert even as He led Moses to such safety. God has provided us with ample refuge here atop Masada . . . We may have faith in God . . .

JOAB

The Romans have already attacked once and failed. We will survive this further onslaught.

SHMUEL

It is impossible--there are at least twenty-thousand men below. The Tenth Legion of General Silva is too mighty a foe. This new ramp they are building means our defeat and end. The next attack will allow for great formations of men to approach our wall. Our arrows and stones, our javelins have barely delayed the Roman works. They have managed to shield themselves so well that death is our certain lot.

JOAB

The Romans shall not defeat us.

SHMUEL

You are too young to be realistic. Let us surrender--at least there is the hope of life.

ELEAZAR

We are the last free members of our nation. We will remain so. We will always prefer freedom in death to slavery in life . . . Do you believe that the Romans will allow us any better fate than slavery? Our only hope is in struggle and this struggle will wear upon the patience of the Roman leaders.

SQUADRON LEADER

Eleazar is correct . . . A small victory here cannot mean so much to the Romans. They will depart rather than expend their effort to any greater extent.

SHMUEL

This ramp which creeps forward steadily is an indication of the effort the Romans are willing to expend. It is an engineering feat such as has never been seen in the world.

JOAB

And it shall end in frustration for the Romans.

ELEAZAR

The ramp cannot approach much further. It shall remain beneath the level of our wall. It shall be inadequate as a means for breaching our defenses. There is still hope for us. You are correct, Shmuel ben Ezra. And this hope is in our continued struggle.

## SHMUEL

These are the same words many of us heard in Jerusalem. It was soon thereafter that the Romans gained their horrible victory. There surrender was possible also--and there, also, many relinquished the opportunity for continued life with a vain and prolonged struggle . . . We escaped Jerusalem. We were the fortunate ones. Here we cannot be so fortunate. Escape is impossible and death is inevitable.

## ELEAZAR

I would prefer death to a Roman master . . . This is not Jerusalem and I will not bear such further words from a squadron leader in my command. I repeat--this is not Jerusalem. This is the fortress of Masada and here there is no civil war such as occurred within the walls of Jerusalem. The Jews--by their division among themselves--not the Romans defeated Jerusalem. Here there is no such division of will--nor shall there be. Our will is one and powerful in the desire to struggle and remain free men. Our people are one and shall remain so. The enemy shall not succeed in its efforts. Our food stores are abundant. Our water supply is contained within these very walls and is permanent. Our weapons are plentiful. We will withstand the enemy in any manner that such an effort may require.

## SHMUEL

The ramp is a threat which cannot be banished with mere words . . .

Shmuel is

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SQUADRON LEADER

Shmuel is correct . . .

(Several of the SQUADRON LEADERS  
agree)

SHMUEL

The Romans are as aware of the limitations of the ramp as  
we are--surely they have some further plan in mind to in-  
crease its effectiveness.

(Pause)

SQUADRON LEADER

Send a spy into the Roman camp. Learn if there is any such  
plan . . .

(Pause)

ELEAZAR

We will take this precaution . . .

JOAB

Then I will go.

ELEAZAR

You are always ready for danger, Joab. How has one so  
young come to possess such an abundance of courage?

JOAB

I possess such courage only because I am fearful of the  
loss of my wife and child.

SHMUEL

He is too young. Send a more experienced man. Courage is  
not enough for such an important task.

YEHOHANAN

I will go, Eleazar . . .

SHMUEL

Yes, send Yehohanan. He will accomplish the task.

ELEAZAR

I agree . . . Then prepare yourself--go with care and detect whether these cursed Romans have any unknown plans for our future . . . And may God bear his mighty shield before you . . .

(Lights . . . Several people, including HANNAH and SARAH, are gathered in a room of the fortress. HANNAH is cooking over a fire that is steadily marring an ornate wall mural. Noisy children are playing about a crib containing a sleeping baby)

HANNAH

Stop that noise--you will disturb the child . . . Do you hear . . . ?

(The children stop their loud playing)

Cursed life--is there no peace in the world? Is there no peace for a Jew in the entire world?

SARAH

It is our fate . . .

HANNAH

Then curse our fate. I would deny our fate.

SARAH

There is no denying the decree of God.

HANNAH

Then let us ignore it--I am tired of suffering . . . Let God choose the Romans instead. Let God give our fate to the Romans. They deserve it more than we do . . .

(Pause)

Look at this food--where does all the food go? Why are there such shortages? The storehouses are filled with the best of foods and we must get along in this emptyhanded manner . . .

SARAH

The food must be rationed to insure our survival.

HANNAH

Our leaders cannot live with such thrift . . . Eleazar does not lose any weight before my eyes . . . And why must we live in this narrow quarter when Eleazar and so many of the others live in the main palace of Herod. We share a room--while they share apartments . . .

(HANNAH and SARAH serve the food  
to those who are gathered)

Look at this food . . .

SARAH

Would you prefer death to suffering . . .

HANNAH

I will have no more of death. I have lost a husband already--and I will lose no more to these Romans. I will have life--and life without further suffering.

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SARAH

And how will you accomplish this? Let us know also for we are tired even as you . . .

HANNAH

I am not certain . . . I do not know--but I will fulfill my word. I will preserve life.

MAN

Do not burden us further with your simple misery. We are all tired of death and destruction. We have already experienced enough for a lifetime and lifetimes to come. Our anguish is as fresh and full as yours. We have been through Jerusalem. We have escaped from death also. We have witnessed the bloodshed, the civil war, the flames, the massacre . . . We have witnessed the fall of the sacred Temple also . . .

WOMAN

A Temple that stood for a thousand years since the time of Solomon.

SARAH

We have sinned and God has turned his wrath upon us . . .

HANNAH

I have not sinned--I was a mother and a wife only. I have not sinned. Let God punish those who have sinned--let him spare the innocent.

SARAH

It is only for God to judge those among us who are sinners and those among us who are innocent.

HANNAH

I will judge and I judge myself to be innocent. I judge us all to be innocent and undeserving of suffering or death.

SARAH

I would have happiness and life also--but it will be the decision of God.

HANNAH

It will be my decision. I will have life . . .

(HANNAH raises the baby from the crib and cradles it in her arms)

I will have life--and I will have life for my children . . .

(Lights . . . The gardened lower terrace of the Northern Palace just below the summit of Masada. MIRIAM, a lovely young person with plaited hair, is cradling a baby in her arms. JOAB enters anxiously from the stairwell which is toward the rear. The area is reminiscent of the prow of a ship. Soft and melancholy music from a flute can be heard)

JOAB

Miriam . . . Miriam . . .

MIRIAM

Joab . . .

(THEY embrace)

Be careful of the child . . .

JOAB

I love both of you so much . . .

(JOAB takes the child and holds it in the air. HE returns the child to MIRIAM. THEY walk to the edge of the terrace overlooking the desert)

MIRIAM

Oh, that we could flee across the desert--or across the Sea into the Mountains of Moab. There we could hide from the world and its cruelties and build ourselves a peaceful refuge. There our child could grow into a fine young man . . . If we could escape from this life in which we have been made prisoners . . .

JOAB

It seems hardly possible . . .

MIRIAM

Oh that it were possible . . .

JOAB

I have failed you both . . .

MIRIAM

You must not say such a thing. You must never say such a thing. You have done everything possible. It is not your fault but that of the Roman invaders . . .

JOAB

That Rome would come to an end. That Rome would become a part of the past so we could gather our deserved future . . .

MIRIAM

Is there really such a future for us, Joab? I am so frightened . . .

JOAB

I am not certain--but if there is any way to gain our future, I will discover it. I promise you this much. I promise both of you . . .

MIRIAM

Then I have hope, Joab. I have hope for the future. One day we will have happiness and peace. One day we will rest together and fear the Romans and death no longer . . .

JOAB

Pray that such a day shall come, Miriam. Pray that such a day shall come.

(A ram's horn is heard)

And surely it is a time for prayer. The shofer horn calls us to service . . . Let us return to the summit . . . Let us return to the foul world . . .

MIRIAM

Joab . . .

JOAB

Yes.

MIRIAM

Hold us again. When you hold us, when I feel your arms about us, I am no longer afraid . . .

(THEY embrace)

Oh Joab . . . Joab . . .

(Lights . . . The synagogue on the summit of Masada. It is the only place where some discreet luxury has been allowed by the Jews. The

people  
RABBI  
THEY  
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an en

There is none like  
are no deeds like  
Kingdom and Your  
King, the Lord  
and ever. May  
the Lord bless  
passion, may it  
ness and to reb  
we trust, O King  
universe.

(The

When the ark was  
O Lord, that You  
deny You be put  
the Torah, and  
Praised is He who  
people Israel.

(The

Hear, O Israel:  
our God, great

(The

Proclaim the glory  
His glory . .

people have gathered for the service.  
 RABBI AQAVIA is assisted by ELEAZAR.  
 THEY both wear the traditional  
 talith. A plaintive song comes to  
 an end)

RABBI

There is none like You among the mighty, O Lord, and there are no deeds like Yours. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and Your dominion endures forever. The Lord is King, the Lord was King, the Lord shall be King for ever and ever. May the Lord give strength to His People; may the Lord bless His people with peace . . . Father of compassion, may it be Your will to favor Zion with Your goodness and to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. In You alone we trust, O King, high and exalted God, Lord of the universe.

(The Ark is opened)

When the ark was carried onward, Moses exclaimed: Arise, O Lord, that Your enemies be scattered and those who would deny You be put to flight. For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem . . . Praised is He who in His holiness gave the Torah to His people Israel . . .

(The Torah is taken from the Ark)

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One. One is our God, great is our Lord, Holy is He.

(The Torah is carried in procession)

Proclaim the greatness of the Lord; together let us exalt His glory . . . Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the

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## RABBI (Continued)

power and the glory. Yours is triumph and majesty over all heaven and earth. Yours, O Lord, is supreme sovereignty . . . Exalt the Lord our God, and worship Him for He is holy. Exalt and worship Him at His holy mountain. The Lord our God is holy . . . Eleazar ben Yair . . .

## ELEAZAR

Praise the Lord, Source of all blessing. Praised is the Lord, eternal source of all blessing. Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who chose us from among all peoples by giving us His Torah. Praised are You, O Lord, Giver of the Torah.

(RABBI AQAVIA stands at the desk  
and reads from the Torah)

## RABBI

And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended . . . Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right He is . . . Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the Lord saw it, He abhorred them,



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## RABBI (Continued)

because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn into the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs. I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this. For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would

## RABBI (Continued)

consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left. And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted, which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection. See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood,

## RABBI (Continued)

and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people. And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun. And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel. And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it. And the Lord spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in Mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the

RABBI (Continued)

children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel . . .

ELEAZAR

Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who gave us a Torah of truth, endowing us with everlasting life. Praised are You, O Lord, Giver of the Torah.

(RABBI AQAVIA raises the Torah)

This is the Torah that Moses set before Israel. This is the Torah given by God, through Moses. It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it. All who uphold the Torah are blessed. Its ways are delight; its paths are peace . . . Lead us back to you, and we shall return. Renew our glory as in days of old.

(Lights . . . The synagogue. JOAB is in the midst of prayer and is halted by the entrance of ELEAZAR and RABBI AQAVIA)

JOAB

Is there no other way . . . ?

ELEAZAR

There is no other.

JOAB

I am not afraid of death--and yet I still crave life for myself and family. I wish for happiness for . . .

RABBI

Our lot is not one of happiness. This suffering is our lot . . .

JOAB

Surely we have suffered enough--surely some happiness is now our due . . .

RABBI

Happiness is our enemy. There is yet much effort and work for us to perform. We are a chosen people and to lead--to possess the power and desire for leadership--is to suffer . . . We cannot relinquish our holy obligation.

JOAB

Why must we alone be chosen . . . ? If our God is for all men, why must He single out a special people--a single nation? What kind of God is this who restricts himself to a single people? Let him choose some others, everyone--let God give himself to everyone. Let Him go to the Romans in haste . . . Perhaps if they learn the Torah and sacred law . . .

RABBI

Perhaps they will . . .

JOAB

Then the Romans would not wish to kill and enslave us . . . Would that we were a mighty power such as Rome . . . Would that we possessed the strength to protect ourselves from the enemy--to kill and vanquish the enemy. Then we could

## JOAB (Continued)

seal ourselves within our own boundaries--within our own walls--and let the strangers go their own way. A Jewish state with Jewish rulers--freedom in our own land with our own rulers . . .

## RABBI

I would not have this sort of nation. May we never be remembered as a nation of warriors--may we never be remembered for such strength. May we never relinquish our book and ethic for the sword. May we never make love of nation a substitute for the sacred Torah and commandment of God. Our truest nation--our truest allegiance--is to a nation of the spirit . . .

## JOAB

If we have no nation--no land of our own, we will have neither book or ethic--we will remain as foreigners in the land of another. We will lose the freedom--through fear or desire--to preserve our own identity, our own truth and wisdom . . . Our book and our ethic--our sacred truth--will prevail only within the safe boundaries of our own nation. The foreigners shall remain our enemy and destroyer. They are always our enemy. They have never failed to kill and destroy our brethren. They shall never change--and I will never forget or forgive this crime or this enemy . . .

RABBI

One day all shall forgive their enemy and call them  
brethren. Such a world shall come to pass . . .

JOAB

I will never forget or forgive . . .

ELEAZAR

I can almost forgive the Romans for killing our sons--but I  
can never forgive them for having forced us to teach our  
children to kill . . .

(Pause)

RABBI

We will learn to forgive--even such injustice and crime.  
We are a chosen people and it is our duty and destiny to  
excel--to gather respect--so that we may share our truth  
with the willing members of all nations . . . If we have  
sinned, we shall repent our sins. If we have been cast  
into exile, we will regain our homes and sanctuaries. And  
if we have sought redemption, we will gain it for this is  
the decree of God. And one day all men shall share in our  
good fortune. Our history--our suffering and pain--is a  
passing thing. Only our destiny is permanent and  
certain . . .

JOAB

How often must we gain our redemption . . . ?

RABBI

As often as we falter into sin . . . As often as we ignore  
the sacred word of the Lord . . .



JOAB

We will be redeemed forever when we possess a mightier sword and recover our own land for our own people--we will be redeemed when we have excluded the enemy--the foreigner--forever. This is our redemption . . .

RABBI

This is sin and corruption . . . It would be immoral if we would exclude anyone, whatever his origin, his descent, or his religion, from participating in our achievements. For we stand on the shoulders of other civilized peoples . . . What we own we owe to the preparatory work of other peoples. Therefore, we have to repay our debt. There is only one way to do it, the highest tolerance. Our motto must therefore be, now and ever: Man, thou art my brother. Love, thou art my standard. God, thou art my guide . . . Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the most powerful Lord.

(Lights . . . The candlelit chamber of ELEAZAR. HE is seated at a writing table. SHMUEL BEN EZRA and HANNAH enter)

ELEAZAR

Yes . . . ?

SHMUEL

We would speak with you . . .

ELEAZAR

Then speak . . .

ELEAZAR (Continued)

(Pause)

Speak if you will . . .

HANNAH

We would ask you to surrender before the Romans--while there is still an opportunity for survival.

ELEAZAR

Surrender . . .

SHMUEL

Yes, the Romans have once offered us the opportunity. They will do so again to avoid any further loss of time and life . . .

ELEAZAR

And what do you think would become of our people . . . ?

SHMUEL

They would gain life . . .

ELEAZAR

Life as slaves in the service of a corrupt nation . . .

HANNAH

I prefer such slavery to death.

(ELEAZAR rises and moves to the tablefront)

ELEAZAR

And I prefer death to slavery.

SHMUEL

Some of the people feel differently . . .

ELEAZAR

But the majority feel as I do . . .

HANNAH

Only because you have convinced them that this is the only proper way. Words are plentiful but life is still scarce. Many of us remain in disagreement . . .

ELEAZAR

I will not hear of such disagreement. I will not hear any talk of surrender to the Romans. Now leave me before I gain greater anger . . .

SHMUEL

We will not leave until you have gained greater reason. We would have life and surrender, while there is still an opportunity, is the only way for our people to acquire life.

ELEAZAR

Are you another Josephus? Is there another such traitorous and cowardly commander among us?

SHMUEL

Josephus lives--and we are surely dead if we continue to heed your word . . .

ELEAZAR

We will survive--even as David survived before Goliath . . .

HANNAH

But we are not David nor are the Romans Goliath . . .

ELEAZAR

Curse your cowardice--both of you . . . Go from my sight . . . Would that our nation were rid of your kind . . .

SHMUEL

And would that our nation were rid of your kind. Such fanaticism can only breed death and we have had enough of death . . .

ELEAZAR

I will not hear such talk from a leader of the Jewish people . . . Go from my sight--and when you have gone remove all the badges of your command. I would have another in your place . . . Now leave--before I throw you from the summit into the Roman camp you so earnestly crave . . . Do as I command you . . .

SHMUEL

I will do as you command. I will go far from your sight--farther than you would see . . .

ELEAZAR

Then do so in haste--I would have you that far from my sight . . .

HANNAH

I will shun the destiny you so desire for your own people . . .

ELEAZAR

Go--I command you!

ELEAZAR (Continued)

(THEY exit. ELEAZAR draws a sword and ponders it. HE hurls it to the ground)

My God, my God--what is your command . . . ?

(ELEAZAR returns to the chair and slumps his head upon the table . . . Lights . . . ELEAZAR is at the Western Wall with several of the SQUADRON LEADERS. Breastarmor intended for JOAB is placed in a prominent manner)

SQUADRON LEADER

It is a worthy choice--Joab will make an excellent substitute for Shmuel ben Ezra.

SQUADRON LEADER

He is young--but is courageous and intelligent.

ELEAZAR

Then send for him--and let us bestow the silver armor of leadership upon him . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

I will bring him here . . .

(The SQUADRON LEADER departs)

ELEAZAR

Youth, courage, intelligence--and these qualities are wasted upon war and bloodshed. How war corrupts all that is approached and enmeshed--is there ever a good or just war . . . ? Silver armor--how glittering and deceptive are the surface appearances for those who are uninitiated . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

I believe they return, Eleazar . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

No--it is Yehohanan returned from the enemy camp . . .

(YEHOHANAN and a SQUADRON LEADER  
enter)

ELEAZAR

Safe return, Yehohanan--God has seen fit to escort you . . .

What news do you bring . . . ?

YEHOHANAN

It is better that I brought no news . . . The Romans do  
have more in mind than is apparent . . . The great batter-  
ing ram--the great war engine which the Romans call Victor--  
is being brought to Masada from Jerusalem . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

The very engine which shattered the walls of Jerusa-  
lem . . . ?

YEHOHANAN

The very same . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

This is terrible news--but can they raise such an engine to  
the head of the ramp . . . ?

ELEAZAR

With enough men . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

The archers will slay these men before they near our  
wall . . .

ELEAZAR

Will they slay the Jewish captives of Flavius Silva--for surely these are the ones who will bear the burden of such labor . . . And will we allow such slaying . . .

(Pause)

There must be some other way to halt their effort . . .

(JOAB enters with the SQUADRON  
LEADER)

JOAB

I heed your command, Eleazar . . .

ELEAZAR

Greetings, Joab--I would command you better things but my sole command is that you assume this symbol of leadership . . .

(ELEAZAR hands Joab the breastarmor)

JOAB

It is a greater honor than I deserve . . .

ELEAZAR

And an even greater burden--the Roman sword draws ever nearer to us. Yehohanan brings word of a Roman plan to raise the great engine, Victor, to the head of the ramp and destroy our wall . . . Now wear the armor and begin to feel its burden . . .

(JOAB dons the armor)

JOAB

The weight is that of Jerusalem . . . We cannot leave any piece of Jerusalem behind . . . Is there no way to thwart such a plan . . . ?

ELEAZAR

I am not certain . . . There is only one position from which the ram may perform its destructive work and only one section of the wall which may be shattered--perhaps a second inner wall . . . a second inner wall . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

That is the solution . . .

ELEAZAR

It is, at least, our only hope . . .

YEHOHANAN

Such a wall must be erected in haste--the engine is no further than two days march from the Roman camp--perhaps even closer by now . . .

ELEAZAR

Then let us proceed hastily in the following manner . . . We will lay together great beams of wood lengthways, one close to the end of another, and in the same way in which they are cut. Let us lay two of these rows parallel to one another and place earth into the space between these rows . . . The engine may shatter the outer wall--but as it strikes this second inner wall the blows will be weakened by its yielding construction . . .



## SQUADRON LEADER

And the materials by such concussion will be shaken closer together. The pile shall become even firmer and more unyielding than before . . .

## JOAB

It is an excellent plan--and we will remain secure as ever . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

And the Romans shall remain frustrated as ever . . .

## ELEAZAR

Perhaps--but let us begin the work. There is no time to waste . . . Assemble the men to their tasks . . . Let us see what this great engine, Victor, may accomplish now . . . And let us witness whether God still stands atop Masada . . .

(Lights . . . The tent chamber of GENERAL FLAVIUS SILVA. SILVA and a MILITARY ENGINEER stand before a large rotating model of Masada and the surrounding vicinity)

## ENGINEER

It is a great rock, a formidable obstacle and challenge this Masada--but this Jewish stronghold shall soon become a Jewish burial ground . . .

## SILVA

Let us hope so--we have wasted enough time and effort on these Jewish dogs . . .

## ENGINEER

See here--how well laid are the plans . . . As it was impossible to move mass formations of soldiers along the snake's path of the Eastern slope--the great cone-shaped ramp was constructed on the Western slope to take advantage of the promontory of white rock which already exists and approaches the summit . . . Here, atop the ramp, we have placed a large pier for the great tower, Victor, and its powerful battering ram . . . This ninety foot tower will be flanked by two siege towers seventy-five feet in height. From their tops, archers will protect the troops as they perform their destructive tasks. Here, catapults . . . here, stone throwers . . . here archers and here javelins . . . Jewish doom is inevitable. The ramp does not reach the wall of Masada--but by merely canting and elevating the battering ram of Victor within its cradle and extending the tow lines a bit further than usual--the troops may pull and pound and pummel the wall above to their own content . . . The wall shall fall--entrance shall become a simple matter--and victory shall be in your hands.

## SILVA

And what of Jewish archers--their arrows become deadlier with the shortening of distance . . . ?

## ENGINEER

Our own archers will stand in defense . . . Victor and the two flanking towers have been encased in heavy iron

## ENGINEER (Continued)

also making them invulnerable to fire--those of our troops who man them shall be well protected . . . And here, protected passageways to each tower . . . Each instrument has been made so solid and firm that if the Jews in any way attempt to overturn them, they shall surely fail . . . It is all so marvelous . . . And here, below, all about Masada--a siege wall which surrounds the entire rock--let them dare attempt an escape or an attack upon our camps . . . It is all so thoroughly considered . . . The Jewish days on Masada are approaching a swift end . . .

## SILVA

And to position these towers so they may perform their task . . . ?

## ENGINEER

Jewish prisoners--of course . . . They will not shoot their own--and, if they do, it is of little concern. There are many to take the places of any dead . . .

## SILVA

Your craft and consideration are impressive . . .

## ENGINEER

May the Jews be so impressed . . .

## SILVA

May the Jews hasten to their graves . . .

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ENGINEER

They shall be surprised by the appearance of Victor--little do they realize that we bring them a memento of Jerusalem to accompany their final days . . .

SILVA

Let us hasten with these plans--I would see the surprise upon their faces . . .

ENGINEER

If only we could prolong matters a bit--I am certain that I could devise some marvelous new devices for their pleasure . . .

SILVA

This affair has been prolonged sufficiently--let us now gain the Jewish defeat.

ENGINEER

I am almost aroused to enter the Jewish camp and attempt a defense against these measures. It would be a challenging task . . . But it is impossible--I have planned with such excellence . . . It is all so very perfect . . .

SILVA

We will see . . . we will see . . .

(Lights . . . A Roman outpost.  
Several SOLDIERS are huddled by  
a small fire)

FIRST SOLDIER

We should leave and give them the whole desert--I have a family in Rome . . .

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## SECOND SOLDIER

As long as we're here--you have no family but us . . .

## THIRD SOLDIER

What are we waiting for--let's get this thing over  
with . . .

## FIRST SOLDIER

We have no business here--what do these politicians and  
generals have in mind . . . ?

## SECOND SOLDIER

They can't stand anyone about without their permission . . .

## THIRD SOLDIER

Let's kill the Jews and have it done with . . .

## FIRST SOLDIER

You're so anxious for blood--what have these people ever  
done to you . . . ?

## THIRD SOLDIER

Nothing--but they're Jews--and that's enough reason to kill  
them . . . We'll do the same thing here that we did back  
in Jerusalem . . . They're a curse upon the earth . . .

## SECOND SOLDIER

I don't care what they are--they can have their rock. They  
can have the whole dirty desert with its heat and sand . . .

## FIRST SOLDIER

It's a waste of lives any way you look at it . . .

## SECOND SOLDIER

And a nuisance . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

I've nothing better to do . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

I have . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

I could think of better things to do . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

You make miserable soldiers--I'd be on top of that rock carving Jewish throats if I could . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

The centurion may carve all of our throats if he catches us sitting about like this . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

Damn the centurion . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

Don't let him hear that . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

I'll let any man hear what I have to say of him. I'm not a coward like some people . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

Nor am I--but I'd leave this place if I could . . . Let these Jews have their worthless land . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

If I never see another Jew for the rest of my days, I'll be happier for it. As long as they leave me alone, I'm willing to leave them alone. Let them go their way and I'll go mine . . .



## THIRD SOLDIER

And I'd just as soon kill each one of them--a little bit at a time . . . except for a few of the women . . . I have better plans for them . . .

## SECOND SOLDIER

You can have anything you want--you can do anything you want--but I'm tired of this place. You can take my position in the attack if that'll make you happy . . .

## THIRD SOLDIER

We'll soon get our chance--all of us--it won't be long now. You'll all kill whether you want to or not--and I'll enjoy every moment of it . . .

## SECOND SOLDIER

And I'll be glad when it's over . . .

## FIRST SOLDIER

I hope it never begins . . .

## THIRD SOLDIER

You're a coward. You see a bit of death and shudder all over . . .

## FIRST SOLDIER

I haven't your appetite for blood--or your heart . . .

## THIRD SOLDIER

The centurion would have one of me for every ten of you . . .

## FIRST SOLDIER

The centurion can have all of you that he wants . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

Hold it--here he comes. Stand on your feet . . .

(THEY rise and appear attentive.  
The CENTURION and ANOTHER SOLDIER  
enter with SHMUEL BEN EZRA)

CENTURION

What are you men doing here by the fire . . . ? While  
you're wasting about, this Jew is walking around free in  
the dark . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

We're doing our duty . . .

CENTURION

You look too comfortable for that . . . One of you men  
come with me . . . This prisoner must be taken to General  
Silva . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

I'll go . . .

CENTURION

You stay--I need good men on line . . . You, soldier, come  
with me . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

Yes, sir . . .

CENTURION

Have your rest now--it will be the last one. An attack is  
due to begin very soon . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

That's good news . . .

CENTURION

Not if you end as one of the dead . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

There's no chance of that--no Jew will ever lay a hand on me . . .

CENTURION

Perhaps--but they're no foe to take so lightly in their situation . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

It looks like they're done for--it's about time. A year in the desert is too much for any man. Let's get it done with . . . I want to see the view from the top of the rock . . .

CENTURION

You'll get your chance soon enough . . . Let's go now . . .

(The CENTURION and the TWO SOLDIERS  
depart with their prisoner)

THIRD SOLDIER

Did you hear the Centurion . . . ? We'll get our chance soon . . . I wonder if those Jews have much gold with them . . . ?

(Lights . . . The tent chamber of  
FLAVIUS SILVA. OFFICERS are  
gathered with SILVA about the  
model of Masada. GUARDS and  
SERVANTS are present. Sensual  
flute music is heard. A HERALD  
enters followed by the ENVOY  
from Rome)

HERALD

Hear all--the envoy from Titus, Great Emperor and General  
of Rome . . .

ENVOY

Greetings, Flavius Silva--greetings from Rome and the  
Emperor Titus . . .

SILVA

Greetings to the Emperor . . . Enter and join with us . . .  
Servants--refreshments . . . It is a long while since we  
have had greetings and news from Rome

(The SERVANTS soon reenter with re-  
freshments and begin serving them)

ENVOY

And a longer time since Rome has gathered news from  
Judea . . .

SILVA

Too soon with business--take of the drink and then to  
affairs . . .

ENVOY

So be it . . .

(Cups are filled by the SERVANTS)

SILVA

To Titus and Rome . . .

(THEY toast)

What news do you bring from Rome . . . ?

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## ENVOY

There is little news and much impatience from Rome . . .  
Rather what news does Silva bear for Rome and Titus . . . ?

## SILVA

All is well--the campaign progresses evenly and surely . . .

## ENVOY

Titus has expected more from General Silva and the Tenth Legion--an entire year, an entire year against fewer than a thousand Jews with women and children among them and no sound of victory . . . It is a terrible embarrassment to the Emperor . . . The arch of victory over the Jews is built in Rome--even the coins declare this victory, and yet there is no final victory, no final defeat . . . A band of outlaws declares the Emperor to be a liar . . .

## SILVA

They are a desperate and fierce band of outlaws--and more, they have a fortress of near impregnable quality to support and sustain them . . .

## ENVOY

And you have ten thousand men of the elite Tenth Legion and nearly fifteen thousand Jewish prisoners of war with which to wage a siege--and you have still failed . . .

## SILVA

We have not failed--we have merely been delayed and this delay shall soon come to an end as you will even see for yourself . . .

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## ENVOY

Let us hope so--Titus grows impatient. He cannot chance the prolonged existence of a stronghold such as Masada . . . Other Jews may take example and other such strongholds may rise . . . Rome will not tolerate the encouragement of any further hostility . . .

## SILVA

Remember--we have not the advantage of a civil war within the Jewish camp as at Jerusalem. We will not divide and conquer Masada--nor was Jerusalem such a natural fortress as Masada . . .

## ENVOY

I have been impressed by my view of the citadel--but Titus has not had the privilege of such a view. And he certainly will not be impressed with words . . .

## SILVA

We will give him more than words . . . The engineers have provided for that--surely you have seen the great ramp and the engines which are being drawn into position for an assault . . .

## ENVOY

I have . . .

## SILVA

Then you have seen signs of the Jewish end.

## ENVOY

Let us hope so--Rome is a great nation, the greatest nation in the world. Rome cannot allow such a small group to



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## ENVOY (Continued)

humiliate her before the eyes of the world. The strength of empire depends greatly upon the belief of Roman subjects in this very strength. Power demands a strong appearance of invincibility--and Rome shall preserve such an appearance at any cost . . . And not only are these things necessary for power but for pride--Rome shall have pride.

## SILVA

I do not require a session in the ways of government

## ENVOY

It is merely my duty to present the concerns of Titus. I do as I am bid . . .

## SILVA

And I will do as I am bid--I promise a Roman victory within a week. You shall observe it with your own eyes and report as much to Titus . . . I have already sent for the priest and his omen . . .

## ENVOY

My eyes remain anxious and expectant and I would witness the omen . . .

(A CENTURION enters and whispers  
to SILVA)

## SILVA

Excellent--we have a new prisoner, a deserter. You shall see one of these rebellious Jews for yourself . . . Bring the prisoner before us . . .

(SHMUEL BEN EZRA is escorted into  
the tent)

CENTURION

Kneel before General Flavius Silva . . .

SHMUEL

(Kneeling)

I am your servant and your ally . . .

SILVA

I would have no Jew as an ally . . .

SHMUEL

I bring valuable information . . .

SILVA

We know all that is necessary of the Jewish camp . . .

SHMUEL

I bring news of discord and dissension. There is strife among the Jews--even as in Jerusalem. A Roman victory is assured. I have led this dissension in an attempt to aid Rome . . .

ENVOY

This man is a coward and incapable of leadership . . .

SILVA

I agree . . .

SHMUEL

No, no--this is not true. I have sown great agitation and dissent among my people in order to bring this futile madness to an end. I beseeched the people to surrender before the superiority of Rome. I am loyal to Rome . . .

SILVA

And why have they not surrendered . . . ?

SHMUEL

They will--it is inevitable . . .

SILVA

It is inevitable--and why are you not upon the summit  
giving guidance and encouragement to your faction . . . ?

SHMUEL

I have come to ask mercy for them. We are friends . . .

SILVA

You have not responded to the question . . .

ENVOY

He has no faction. He is a coward and a deserter--another  
Josephus . . .

SILVA

You are correct--and I am already tired of this . . .  
Centurion, remove this man. Slay him . . .

SHMUEL

No, my lord. I am an ally, a friend. I will plead with  
the Jews for surrender . . . I will do anything--but spare  
my life . . .

SILVA

Remove him . . .

(A struggling and pleading SHMUEL  
BEN EZRA is removed by the GUARDS.  
A dying scream is heard)

Such make me ill . . .

ENVOY

Is this the character of the enemy that has so delayed  
Rome . . . ?

SILVA

Would that the enemy were of such character . . .

ENVOY

If, in a like manner, Titus would rid himself of the other fawning Josephus--the Roman court would be a more noble and comfortable place . . .

SILVA

Beckon the priest--let us have a sign from the gods . . .  
Religion should always be used to supplement our intelligence . . .

(A PRIEST enters bearing a dove)

PRIEST

My lord, Silva . . .

SILVA

Grant us an omen, priest. Speak to the gods. Tell us whether the time is proper for an attack upon the Jewish fortress . . . Speak to them well, priest . . .

PRIEST

I will do your bidding . . . O holy gods of Rome--hear our prayer and lend us thy guidance. Lead us to the enemy of our great religion and empire. Show us the way to victory. Bid us to vanquish in the proper time . . . O sacred gods of Rome--enter this chamber, grant us the wisdom of the future . . .

(The PRIEST slays the dove and examines it)

SILVA

Hasten and tell us the omen . . .

PRIEST

The omen is favorable, my lord. The gods bid an attack with victory for the outcome.

SILVA

Do you hear that . . . Centurion, see that the priestly word is communicated to the troops. Let them hear the will of the gods . . . Sound the drums . . . Assemble all of my officers before me--the time has come . . .

(Lights . . . ELEAZAR and the SQUADRON LEADERS are at the Western Wall. There is much activity in the building of an interior wall. The steady pounding of a battering ram is heard)

SQUADRON LEADER

The construction has gone as well as possible--work on the interior wall is nearly complete.

ELEAZAR

It is in proper time--the battering ram has done its work more swiftly than expected . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

The outer wall is nearly destroyed and there is no halting the Roman engine . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Arrows tipped with fire, rocks, javelins, hot oil--none of these things have halted the Romans. The towers are encased in armor. Soldiers approach and depart freely through protected passageways . . .

ELEAZAR

Roman engineers seldom lack in skillfulness and forethought  
 --let us discover if they have failed on this occasion . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

And if this inner wall fails us instead . . . ?

ELEAZAR

Then there is no hope--death and slavery shall be our  
 fate . . .

JOAB

The wall shall hold--we will not die . . .

ELEAZAR

Pray to God that this is so--pray that God will not fore-  
 sake our cause . . .

(Lights . . . The base of the ramp  
 where Romans are observing the  
 assault)

ENVOY

The day grows too long . . .

SILVA

The work will soon be accomplished . . .

ENGINEER

They can do little more than observe our advance . . .

SILVA

They will soon have more to do than merely observe . . .  
 Our soldiers have been made thirsty with anger by their  
 long wait in the desert. They will quench their thirst  
 with Jewish blood . . .

ENVOY

The Jews will be desperate . . .

SILVA

It will not matter . . .

(The pounding of the ram ceases)

ENGINEER

A breach--they have made a breach . . .

(Pause)

SILVA

But the troops fail to advance . . . Centurion, go forward,  
and discover the reason for such delay . . . Remain as you  
are--a messenger approaches . . .

(A SOLDIER enters)

SOLDIER

My lord . . .

SILVA

Speak . . .

SOLDIER

The wall has been breached, my lord--but a new inner wall  
of wood and dirt has been raised against us . . .

SILVA

What do you say now, engineer . . . ?

ENGINEER

A simple obstacle, my lord. Let us continue with Victor--  
it is but another certain task for the engine . . .



1

SILVA

Take word to continue with the ram--but with haste. I  
grow impatient with these Jewish tricks . . .

SOLDIER

Yes, my lord.

(The SOLDIER departs)

ENVOY

These Jews are truly cunning . . .

SILVA

They will require more than cunning to preserve their  
lives . . . Engineer . . .

ENGINEER

Yes, my lord . . .

SILVA

Go forward--observe and bring me an account of this new  
barrier . . .

ENGINEER

Yes, my lord . . .

(The ENGINEER departs)

SILVA

His life will be the cost of failure . . .

(Lights . . . The base of the ramp)

ENGINEER

It is a clever obstacle, my lord--great lengths of wooden  
beam placed in parallel rows with dirt filling the space  
between. It stands as a pliable wall--the pounding of the

engine merely strengthens it . . . I have bid the engine  
to a halt . . .

SILVA

What of your perfect plans now, engineer . . . ?

ENVOY

I wait to observe the victory you have promised . . . Titus  
awaits also . . .

ENGINEER

You shall have your victory, my lord . . . The barrier is  
of unshielded wood--and wood shall burn . . .

SILVA

And who will deliver the flames? The Jews shall slaughter  
any soldiers who approach the barrier . . .

ENGINEER

It is no difficult task, my lord. In this matter, we will  
take our lesson from the Jews--arrows tipped with fire,  
such as the ones wasted upon our own armored engines . . .  
We will light the sky with this new barrier and send our  
soldiers to tread across its ashes . . .

SILVA

Prepare the archers then--and quickly for it grows  
dark . . . If you fail me, I will have your life . . .

ENGINEER

I will not fail you, my lord . . .

(The ENGINEER departs)

## ENVOY

What calm and satisfaction he brings to the task of  
destruction . . .

## SILVA

He will perform the same task as readily for the Jews if  
they offer any quantity of gold . . . At least the Jews  
fight for an idea . . .

## ENVOY

Even if it is the wrong one . . .

## SILVA

Of course . . . Centurion . . .

## CENTURION

Yes, my lord . . .

## SILVA

Let us grant the Jews another opportunity for  
surrender . . .

## ENVOY

You would grant them life . . . ?

## SILVA

That is yet to be decided . . . Bear a sign of truce and  
take this offer to the Jewish leader . . .

## CENTURION

I am at your command . . .

## ENVOY

You should not have disposed of the deserter so  
hastily . . .

SILVA

It is as well--the sight of such cowardice would merely anger them further . . . Take the following message to Eleazar ben Yair . . .

(Lights . . . Within the Western Wall. A CENTURION, with an ESCORT bearing a sign of truce, is meeting with ELEAZAR and the other JEWISH LEADERS. Armed people have gathered to observe the meeting)

CENTURION

I bear a message from General Silva--an offer for life in exchange for the surrender of your forces . . . Men, women, and children will be granted life. General Silva is a man of honor and his message is a guarantee . . .

ELEAZAR

What are the conditions . . . ?

CENTURION

There is but a single condition--life in exchange for surrender . . .

ELEAZAR

What sort of life does Silva guarantee for my people . . . ?

CENTURION

This matter remains for decision.

SQUADRON LEADER

A life as Roman slaves--and we have already witnessed the Roman treatment of live Jews from the wall of our fortress . . .

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## CENTURION

These are merely the exigencies of battle . . . Peaceful times will present a superior situation for the Jews . . .

## ELEAZAR

The ring of the future does not bear any note of superiority . . .

## CENTURION

Life in whatever guise will be superior to an alternative which must mean defeat and death . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

Let us continue in battle . . .

## CENTURION

Heed your senses--look about you . . . Observe your numbers and the quality of your warriors . . . Then observe below where there are thousands of experienced Roman soldiers who will not be halted once they are released . . . Consider your women and your children . . . To prolong this situation is madness. General Silva offers you life--the alternative is only death . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

Let us welcome death--if it is capable of approaching . . .

(Many assent)

## ELEAZAR

You have heard . . . We will remain free men . . .

1



## CENTURION

Indeed, this is madness--or unprecedented bravery. The world has never seen a thing of this sort . . . I will inform General Silva of your decision . . .

(The CENTURION salutes ELEAZAR.  
The ROMANS depart)

## ELEAZAR

We will remain free men . . . ! We will preserve our freedom . . . !

(The PEOPLE assent with the word  
"freedom" . . . Lights . . .  
Within the Western Wall. The  
flickering of great flames can  
be seen against the darkened sky)

## SQUADRON LEADER

There is no hope. The flames cannot be dampened . . . The Romans cast a shower of arrows upon any who approach to halt the flames . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

It is the certain end . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

They will enter the fortress--but they will pay a most severe toll . . .

## ELEAZAR

Death heaped upon death--and there is no action remaining to prevent such an end . . .

## JOAB

There is nothing more to be done . . . ?

ELEAZAR

It is futile . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Then let us die in a memorable manner--let others take  
courage and pride from our deed . . .

(Voices of assent)

ELEAZAR

Yes--let us die in a memorable manner so that others may  
take courage and pride from the deed . . . Go and gather  
the people . . . Assemble them before me so that I may  
address them in this hour . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

And the defenders . . . ?

ELEAZAR

All of the people--the night stands as guardian. The  
Romans will not be upon us until the morning . . .

(SQUADRON LEADERS depart to gather  
the people who soon begin assembling)

SQUADRON LEADER

Let us sieze whatever opportunity and enter the Roman camp  
while they remain asleep . . .

ELEAZAR

It is impossible . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Then what will we do . . . ?

ELEAZAR

The people shall decide.

(A mournful song is heard)

SQUADRON LEADER

The people are already assembling . . .

ELEAZAR

They are aware already . . .

MAN

Speak to us, Eleazar--tell us whatever there is to do . . .

WOMAN

Preserve us . . .

MAN

Grant us life . . .

ELEAZAR

God alone will grant life . . .

WOMAN

Then help us . . .

MAN

Speak to us . . .

(Voices of assent)

ELEAZAR

Long ago, my brethren, we resolved never to be servants to the Romans, nor to any other than God himself, who alone is the true and just Lord of mankind. The time now comes which obliges us to make the resolution true in practice . . . We were the very first that revolted from the Romans, and we are the last that fight against them. I cannot but regard it as a favor that God has granted us, that it is still in our power to die bravely and in a state of freedom.



## ELEAZAR (Continued)

It is very plain that we shall be taken within a day's time --but it is still possible to die in a glorious manner. Our enemies cannot prevent this . . . We are now aware that God, who has taken the Jewish nation into favor has now condemned them to destruction. For had He either continued with favor, or been but in a lesser degree displeased with us, He would not have overlooked the destruction of so many men, or delivered His most holy city and sacred temple to be burnt and demolished by the enemy. We have hoped to preserve ourselves, and ourselves alone, out of the whole Jewish nation still in a state of freedom. But consider how God has shown that our hope is in vain by bringing such distress upon us with the desperate state we are now in. The nature of this fortress, which was in itself unconquerable, has not proved a means for our deliverance; and even while we have still a great abundance of food, and a great quantity of arms, we are deprived by God himself of all hope for deliverance. This is the effect of God's anger against us for our many sins. The punishment for these sins is not received from the Romans, but from God himself . . . Let us receive this punishment of God and execute it by our own hands for these will be more moderate than those of the Romans . . . Let our wives die before they are abused and our children before they have tasted of slavery; and after we have slain them, let us bestow that glorious

## ELEAZAR (Continued)

benefit upon one another mutually--and preserve ourselves in freedom. Let us persevere in our original resolution. Let the world remember that we have preferred death by our own hands before slavery . . .

(The responses are mixed)

## RABBI

No, No--I must speak against such sin. It is for God alone to grant life--and God alone will take life . . . To do as Eleazar bids is to strike angrily at God. For surely the sacred gift of God, an immortal soul, shall not be profaned by human hands--if God has declared our fate to be one of death by Roman hands, then allow the Roman hands to fulfill this fate. If such death is our destiny, then it shall be the will of God and we shall remain free of sin and God shall provide for us . . . But to act against His dictate--to ignore the sanctity of life in such a manner--is to abandon God and to suffer the worst of consequences . . . I bear no solution to our predicament but I bear the knowledge that such a blasphemous abandonment of life shall place us in opposition to God--and God will remain the last and eternal refuge for our people. There is no other way. There is no other hope.

(Voices of assent)

## HANNAH

I do not bear such knowledge. The ways of God will always remain a mystery to me--but I do understand that death is

HANNAH (Continued)

not the only way remaining for us. There is yet another-- and that is surrender . . . They have offered us the opportunity--we can regain this opportunity if we act in haste . . .

MAN

It is too late . . .

HANNAH

It is not too late--Shmuel ben Ezra has departed the summit . . .

(There are knowing voices)

He has gone below to the Roman camp--surely he has found life . . . It does not matter that I remain a slave or servant for the rest of my days. What does matter is that my children shall have life--and whatever is the quality of such a life is not important. Let them see the sun rise and set, let them see the fullness of the years which belong to them--it shall be enough. What do I care for freedom and such--these are mere words and I am only a simple person with simple desires . . . Let men like Eleazar have this thing they deem to be so sacred and valuable and which they call freedom. I do not understand such a thing. What I understand is life. I crave life--for myself and my children. And we can have such life if we act in haste and approach the Romans . . . Let us have life . . . Let us retain what is our most certain possession . . .

(Many voices of assent)

## ELEAZAR

Truly I have been mistaken for I thought to be assisting brave men who struggled earnestly for their liberty--and such as were resolved either to live with honor, or else to die. I find that you are such people as are no better than others, either in virtue or in courage, and are afraid of dying even though you be delivered thereby from the greatest of miseries. Remember that the laws of our country, and of God himself, have from ancient times, and as soon as ever we could use our reason, continually taught us, and our forefathers have corroborated the same doctrine by their actions, and by their bravery of mind, that it is life that is a calamity to men, and not death for this death affords our souls their liberty, and sends them by a removal into their own place of purity and eternal life where they are insensible of all misery; for while souls are tied down to a mortal body, they are partakers of its miseries; and really to speak the truth, they are themselves dead; for the union of the divine and the mortal is unsuitable . . . But suppose instead that we had been brought up under another persuasion and taught that life is the greatest good which men are capable of and that death is a calamity. Even then the circumstances we are now in ought to be an inducement to us to bear such a calamity with courage, since it is by the will of God, and by necessity that we are to die; for it now is certain that God has made such a decree





## ELEAZAR (Continued)

against the Jewish nation. We shall be deprived of this life for we would not make a proper use of it. Do not ascribe our present condition to yourselves, nor think the Romans are the true occasion that this war we have had with them has become so destructive to us all. These things have not come to pass by their power but only because a more powerful cause has intervened . . . For we had arms, and walls, and fortresses so prepared as not to be easily taken, and courage not to be moved by any dangers in the cause of liberty. But then, these advantages sufficed us but for a short time, and only raised our hopes, while they really proved to be the origin of our miseries; for all we had has been taken from us, and all has fallen under our enemies, as if these advantages were only intended to make their victory over us the more notable. And as for those that are already dead in the war, it is reasonable that we should esteem them blessed, for they are dead in defending, and not in betraying their liberty. But as to the multitude of those that are now under the Romans, who would not pity their condition? And who would not make haste to die before he would suffer the same miseries with them? Some of them have been put upon the rack and tortured with fire and whippings, and so died. Some have been half devoured by wild beasts, and yet have been reserved alive to be devoured by them a second time, in order to afford laughter and sport

## ELEAZAR (Continued)

to our enemies. And such of those as are still alive are to be looked upon as the most miserable, who being so desirous of death, could not achieve it. And where is now that great city, the center of the Jewish nation which was fortified by so many walls, which had so many fortresses and large towers to defend it and which could hardly contain the instruments prepared for the war, and which had so many thousands of men to fight for it? Where is this city that was believed to have God himself inhabiting therein? It is now demolished to the very foundations and has nothing but that monument of it preserved. I mean the camp of those that have destroyed it and which still dwells upon its ruins . . . Some unfortunate old men also lie upon the ashes of the temple, and a few women are there preserved alive by the enemy for their bitter shame and reproach. Now, who is there that revolves these things in his mind and yet is able to bear the sight of the sun, though he might live safe from danger? Who is there so unmanly and desirous of living as not to repent that he is still alive? And I cannot but wish that we had all died, before we had seen that holy city demolished by the hands of our enemies, or the foundations of our holy temple dug up in so profane a manner . . . But since we had a generous hope that deluded us, and has left us alone in this distress, let us make haste to die bravely. Let us pity ourselves, our children,

## ELEAZAR (Continued)

and our wives, while it is in our own power to show pity to them--for we were born to die, as well as those whom we have begotten . . . We revolted from the Romans with great pretensions to courage, and when at the very last, they invited us to preserve ourselves, we would not comply with them. Who will not, therefore, believe that they will certainly be in a rage at us, in the event they can take us alive? Miserable will then be the young men who will be strong enough in their bodies to sustain many torments; miserable also will be those of elder years who will not be able to bear those calamities which young men might sustain. One man will see his wife outraged, or will be obliged to hear the voice of his son implore help of his father--when his hands are bound . . . But while our hands are still at liberty, and have a sword in them, let them be subservient to us in our glorious design. Let us die before we become slaves under our enemies, and let us go out of the world, together with our children, and our wives, in a state of freedom. This it is that our laws command us to do; this it is that our wives and children crave at our hands; nay, God himself has brought this necessity upon us, while the Romans desire the contrary and are afraid lest any of us should die before we are taken. Let us therefore make haste, and instead of affording them so much pleasure, as they hope for in getting us under their power, let us leave

## ELEAZAR (Continued)

them an example which shall at once cause their astonishment at our death, and their admiration of our hardiness and fortitude therein . . .

(The assembly assents but there is no need or desire to give voice to it)

Then go--the decision has been made. Let fathers join their families--let them first join in prayer and then perform such harsh and terrible duty . . . Let the leaders assure those who remain of a swift end. When this duty is complete--let fire destroy all possessions and structures atop Masada . . . Let no Roman hand gather that which shall be made so sacred by the blood of Jew . . . Let no Roman hand gather any relic of our people . . . Let no Roman hand benefit from so much Jewish misery . . .

(The PEOPLE slowly depart. Many are weeping. The mournful song is heard again and is prolonged. ELEAZAR remains)

My God, my God--what is this fate you have cast upon your people? What unmerciful sum must we offer to prove our devotion . . . ? What is thy will . . . ? And when shall there be peace . . . ? When shall there be peace for our people . . . ?

(Lights . . . The gardened lower terrace just below the summit of Masada. JOAB enters from the stairwell. HE is carrying a sack and is leading MIRIAM who is carrying the child)

JOAB

Come--you will be hidden and safe here . . .

MIRIAM

What are you saying . . . ?

JOAB

I say you will be safe here . . . You must keep the child from raising any sound . . . They may hear it above . . .

MIRIAM

Joab . . . ?

JOAB

Remain silent--the decision has been made . . . I will not destroy the lives of my own wife and child . . . These things are far more precious to me. Do as I say--remain here and I will find a way to return . . . I must go to the summit--if I do not appear they may grow suspicious . . .

MIRIAM

What of the people--they are . . .

JOAB

Do not think of the people--they have made their decision and I have made mine . . .

MIRIAM

It shall be a great sin . . .

JOAB

They are the ones who commit sin--did you not listen to the Rabbi?

MIRIAM

But Eleazar . . . ?

JOAB

Ignore Eleazar--he is merely a speaker, a convincer of men. It is the Rabbi who possesses a true knowledge of the law of God . . . Now remain here and be silent . . . I will go above and conceal the entrance to this level from the Romans . . . They will not discover us--and they will not remain at Masada for long after. The stench and extent of the death above shall make this place too uncomfortable for even the hardest of men. The Romans shall not linger about . . . We possess enough food and drink for the duration . . . I must go now . . .

MIRIAM

(Embracing JOAB)

Joab . . . Joab--I am afraid . . .

JOAB

There is no longer reason for fear--you are safe now and I will return soon to take you into the peaceful mountains of which we spoke . . . I must go . . .

MIRIAM

Return, Joab . . .

JOAB

I will, I must return--I will find a way . . .

(JOAB departs . . . Lights . . . Above the terrace. Joab is obstructing and concealing the entrance. HE is interrupted by a MAN)

JOAB

What are you doing here . . . ? You should be with the others . . .

MAN

I would go below . . . I would conceal myself from the Romans also . . .

JOAB

What do you mean . . . ?

MAN

You have hidden your family below . . . I would join them-- it is the price for my silence . . .

JOAB

That is a lie . . .

MAN

You cannot fool me--I observed you entering . . .

JOAB

They are dead--as Eleazar has bid . . . I protect their bodies from tainted Roman hands . . .

MAN

You are lying . . .

JOAB

Do not doubt me in this matter or I will have your life . . .

MAN

It is a small threat in a time like this . . .

JOAB

Leave the area--take your place with the others . . .



MAN

I would go below--I will not die while there is an opportunity to conceal myself from the Romans . . .

JOAB

Leave the area . . .

MAN

(Revealing a pouch and emptying  
its contents)

Here . . . I have more than a hundred silver coins--they are yours if you will let me pass . . .

(JOAB strikes the coins and scatters  
them upon the ground. The MAN  
hastens to regather them)

You should not have done that--I will inform those who remain . . . Your family is alive, I know it now . . .

JOAB

They are dead . . .

MAN

Then let me see your sword--there must be blood upon it . . .

JOAB

I shall let you see my sword . . .

(JOAB draws his sword)

MAN

You see, it is as I have said--there is no blood. I will tell the others--it is not just . . . If I must die so will . . . no . . . no . . . I do not mean . . .

(JOAB slays the MAN)

## JOAB

I have learned to kill the enemy--and now I am able even to slay my brethren . . . And I will do so again if it is necessary . . .

(JOAB proceeds to complete the work . . . Lights . . . The chamber of ELEAZAR. He is wearing a talith and is sunken in prayer. Fragments from broken pottery are upon the table along with a container of ink and a writing instrument. The SQUADRON LEADERS and RABBI AQAVIA enter toward the end of the prayer)

## ELEAZAR

We have turned away from Your good commandments and judgments and it has not profited us. You are righteous in all that has befallen us, for You have acted truthfully while we have wrought unrighteousness . . . What shall we say before You, who dwell on high, and what shall we recount before You, who abide in the heavens? You know all things, hidden and revealed. You know the mysteries of the universe, and the hidden secrets of all living. You search out the innermost reason and probe the heart and mind. Nothing is concealed from You, or hidden from Your sight . . . May it therefore be Your will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, to forgive us for all our sins, to pardon us for all our iniquities, and to grant us atonement for all our transgressions . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

The task is complete--there are no survivors . . . May  
God grant us atonement also . . .

## SQUADRON LEADER

We are the only ones who remain . . .

## RABBI

It is another cursed day for the Jew . . .

(Pause)

## ELEAZAR

I have prepared these ten fragments--each bears the name of  
a leader . . . One shall be drawn--it shall be the task of  
the appointed one to fulfill the work which is so nearly  
complete . . . I will cause my own end--may God give me  
the strength . . . The Rabbi shall select the frag-  
ment . . .

## JOAB

No, No . . .

(JOAB sweeps the fragments from  
the table and writes on another  
fragment)

Your hands shall be sullied with the blood of our  
people . . . There is but a single name to be selected--  
that of Eleazar ben Yair . . . We have already bloodied  
our swords sufficiently . . . We have already caused  
enough death among our brethren . . . While you pray for  
atonement, we witness and cause the suffering and death of  
our people . . . We now contain a misery which makes our

JOAB (Continued)

swords too heavy to bear . . . Let Eleazar be the one--  
let him be the last survivor . . . Let this misery linger  
for the longest while within the mind of Eleazar . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Yes--let Eleazar share in the bloodshed. Let Eleazar  
participate even more actively in his own bidding . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Yes--let Eleazar end this foul night . . . He pours out  
words to God while we cause blood to pour upon the  
ground . . .

(Voices of assent)

ELEAZAR

I will complete the work if it is the will of God . . .

JOAB

It is our will--God has relinquished Masada . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Slay us near our families--I would rest in the presence of  
my wife and child . . .

(Voices of assent)

RABBI

I will go the way of my people also--may God forgive me  
for this deed . . . And may God have mercy upon our  
souls . . .

ELEAZAR

God will have mercy upon our souls . . .

JOAB

Enough of words--let us be done . . .

(The RABBI departs and the SQUADRON  
LEADERS follow him. ELEAZAR departs  
with the group while JOAB lingers  
and remains in the chamber . . .  
Lights . . . The chamber of ELEAZAR.  
ELEAZAR returns bearing a bloodied  
sword. JOAB is withdrawn to a  
corner of the chamber)

ELEAZAR

Come, my son--we are the only ones who remain . . .

(Pause)

Come quickly--it will soon be light and the Romans will be  
upon us . . . Let us not prolong this heavy affair . . .

(JOAB draws his sword)

What does this mean . . . ?

JOAB

I will not die--I will save my life and that of my  
family . . .

ELEAZAR

Your family . . . ?

JOAB

Yes . . .

ELEAZAR

Where are they . . . ?

JOAB

Hidden--alive and safe from Roman hands . . .

ELEAZAR

You must not do this thing . . .

JOAB

I **w**ill not be stopped . . .

ELEAZAR

It is a sin--and betrayal of the people . . .

JOAB

They chose as you bid them--I choose as I must . . . It is  
an opportunity for you also--you may join us in safety and  
life . . .

ELEAZAR

I **c**annot--I will not . . .

JOAB

Then remove yourself from my way--I would join my wife and  
child . . .

(Pause)

I **s**ay remove yourself . . .

(Pause . . . JOAB approaches ELEAZAR  
in anger and desperation)

ELEAZAR

I **w**ill spare you from any further crime--may God have mercy  
upon you . . .

(ELEAZAR plunges the sword into  
himself and slumps to the ground.  
JOAB rushes to ELEAZAR and cradles  
him within his arms)

You **m**ust do as you will--for it is the dictate of God . . .

May God be praised . . .

(ELEAZAR dies. JOAB gently removes  
and keeps the talith. HE is in  
tears. HE rests ELEAZAR upon the  
ground. JOAB rises and becomes

disoriented. HE seizes a bow with a quiver of arrows and rushes from the chamber . . . Lights . . . The gardened lower terrace. JOAB enters bearing the talith, bow, and quiver. MIRIAM is awaiting anxiously with the child in her arms)

MIRIAM

Oh Joab . . . Joab . . .

(THEY embrace)

JOAB

Miriam . . .

(Pause . . . JOAB moves from MIRIAM. HE falls to his knees in tears. MIRIAM places the child upon the ground and moves to console him)

MIRIAM

Oh Joab, this misery must end . . .

(JOAB clutches her and then rises. JOAB moves to the child and removes his armor and dons the talith)

JOAB

We must pray . . . we must pray so this misery will end . . . Come to my side, Miriam . . . Come to us . . .

(THEY kneel)

My wife . . . my wife . . . my love . . . my love . . .

(JOAB embraces MIRIAM and then plunges a dagger into her side. HE is tearful and cradles her dying body)

MIRIAM

Joab . . . my husband . . . I know . . . I know . . .

(MIRIAM dies and JOAB rests her head upon the ground. HE re-moves the talith)

JOAB

My God . . . my God--what is this life you have thrust upon us . . . ?

(JOAB smothers the child to death with the talith. HE presses close to the child and rises. JOAB gets many flowers and places them upon the bodies of his wife and child. Trumpets are heard. JOAB sinks to his knees alongside the bodies and places his sword upon the ground)

JOAB

My God and God of my fathers, accept my prayer; do not ignore my supplication . . . Accept my pain and suffering as atonement and forgive my wrongdoing, for against You alone have I sinned . . . May my death atone for all sins and transgressions which I have committed before You. Shelter me in the shadow of Your wings and grant me a share in the world to come . . . Father of orphans and Guardian of widows, protect my beloved family, with whose soul my soul is bound . . .

(Trumpets are heard again)

Into Your hand I commit my soul. You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth . . . Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. The Lord, He is God. The Lord, He is God . . .

(JOAB thrusts the sword into his body and dies grasping his wife



and child . . . Lights . . . The  
summit of Masada as at the  
opening)

HANNAH

That is the tale, my lord . . .

SILVA

It is incredible--I would not believe it except for the  
fact that I am a witness to the result of these events . . .

ENVOY

They are madmen . . .

SILVA

No--if it were merely so I would not be concerned . . . It  
is far more than mere madness--it is a manner of bravery  
such as the world has not come to witness until this  
day . . . Centurion--lead these people from the vicinity.  
Give ample provisions and set them safely upon the way . . .

HANNAH

We are grateful, my lord . . .

SILVA

You shall come to lose such gratitude--of this I am con-  
vinced . . . Leave safely but bear these events within  
your mind--for it is now your poor destiny to bear the  
burden of these sorry memories and to ponder constantly  
whether you have acted in a righteous manner . . . Go . . .

CENTURION

Come, follow me . . .

(THEY depart)

SILVA

They shall be miserable and forsaken creatures for the  
remainder of their days . . .

ENVOY

The soldiers return . . . They bear a body . . .

(The CENTURION returns followed by  
SOLDIERS bearing the body of  
ELEAZAR. THEY place the body upon  
the ground before SILVA)

CENTURION

We have done with your command, my lord . . . We believe  
this to be the body of the Jewish leader--Eleazar ben Yair  
. . . There are no survivors, my lord, we have searched  
with great care . . .

SILVA

Eleazar ben Yair--brave and worthy foe . . . Would I have  
dared to ask so much of my people . . . ? Would I have  
acted with equal courage . . . ? I wonder . . . Would  
that I had never come to Masada--to ever witness such  
events . . . Let us depart quickly from this miserable  
place . . .

ENVOY

This is no time for regret--Titus will be pleased. It is  
another Roman victory . . .

SILVA

This is no victory--we are the conquered ones. We will be  
remembered--my name shall be remembered, cursed lot--not as  
victors. We are the defeated ones--and we will be

## SILVA (Continued)

remembered only because of their courage and conviction  
 . . . It is a defeat--that is the best we may call it--for  
 we will only be seen as the oppressor. It is the  
 fortitude and victory of these Jewish warriors which shall  
 be remembered . . .

## ENVOY

They are dead and forgotten. They are conquered--and now  
 Judea is conquered . . .

## SILVA

Such people are not conquered--such people shall not be  
 conquered. We have taken Jewish lives--no, we cannot even  
 make such a claim . . . It is only a poor day for the  
 Roman . . . Would that we had stormed across the wall with  
 great losses suffered at the hands of an enemy . . . Would  
 that we had attained this summit in such a forceful  
 manner--this we could call a victory. But Masada has not  
 been defeated--Masada has not fallen . . . What has  
 happened I cannot fully comprehend . . . But it is no  
 Jewish defeat for Masada has not truly fallen--nor, by what-  
 ever designation, shall it ever fall again . . . Masada  
 stands--by this deed Masada stands forever . . . And  
 Masada shall not fall again . . . Masada shall not fall  
 again . . .

(ALL depart as the lights fade out  
 upon the body of ELEAZAR BEN YAIR)

CURTAIN

PART III

M A S A D A

A Film Version of an Historical Event

by

Garro Ashjian

To Franz Werfel

MASADA

A Film Version of an Historical Event

FADE IN:  
(Theme music is heard)

EXTERIOR - THE SUMMIT OF MASADA (EARLY MORNING)

- |              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1            | DARK FRAME WITH NARROW PARALLEL STREAKS OF LIGHT  | 1 |
| 2            | COVER SHOT - DAY<br><br>The door of the assault tower falls forward allowing a full burst of the early morning light. Armed Roman soldiers rush forward and out of frame.   | 2 |
| 3            | LONG SHOT - ROMAN SOLDIERS<br><br>as they rush across the ruined defense barriers of the fortress Masada.   | 3 |
| ROLL TITLES: |   |   |
| 4            | WIDE HIGH ANGLE SHOT - ROMAN SOLDIERS<br><br>are making their way across the breach in the wall of the fortress. There are no defenders to oppose them. An assault tower is seen in addition to military activity on the great battle ramp in the background. | 4 |
| 5            | LOW ANGLE MEDIUM SHOT - GENERAL FLAVIUS SILVA<br><br>the commander of the Roman troops, observes their progress. The Roman Envoy and a Centurion are to the edge of the frame.  | 5 |

- |    |  |    |
|----|--|----|
| 6  | <p>WIDE COVER SHOT - SILVA'S POV</p> <p>Silva is in the foreground of the frame and troops are seen beyond advancing through the breach.</p>   | 6  |
| 7  | <p>FULL SHOT - ENGINEERS AND SOLDIERS</p> <p>place a plank walkway to facilitate passage through the breach for the horde of soldiers following.</p>   | 7  |
| 8  | <p>FULL REVERSE ANGLE SHOT - ENGINEERS AND SOLDIERS</p> <p>are seen performing their work from within the fortress.</p>  | 8  |
| 9  | <p>MEDIUM LONG SHOT - A CENTURION</p> <p>gives an attack signal. The camera draws back to a wider angle to show the mass of soldiers following him across the walkway.</p>   | 9  |
| 10 | <p>COVER SHOT - SOLDIERS</p> <p>in the background rush across the walkway. Silva is in the foreground of the frame and the camera is shooting over his shoulders.</p>  | 10 |
| 11 | <p>HIGH ANGLE COVER SHOT - SOLDIERS WITHIN MASADA</p> <p>are rushing into smoldering buildings in search of Jewish defenders.</p>  | 11 |
| 12 | <p>ANOTHER HIGH ANGLE COVER SHOT - SAME AREA</p> <p>as men establish a military perimeter. No enemy has been encountered. Several officers are at the center of the perimeter as many more soldiers take alert positions. The area feels safe now.</p> | 12 |



13                    LEVEL COVER SHOT - SAME AREA                    13

as Silva, the Envoy, and escorting officers with soldiers enter across the walkway. Several standard bearers and trumpeters are in this group. The camera pans with Silva as he passes the soldiers and ruined and smoking buildings.

END TITLES:

(Fade out theme music)

14(=12)            SILVA AND THE ENVOY                    14

are saluted by the assembled officers. A Centurion addresses the troops in order to make the area even safer for the commander.

CENTURION

Soldiers--maintain your caution

. . .

15                    MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA                    15

SILVA

This silence is foreboding . . .

16                    MEDIUM SHOT - ENVOY                    16

ENVOY

Is it some form of deceit . . . ?

17                    FULL SHOT - SILVA, ENVOY, AND CENTURION                    17

Standard bearers, trumpeters, soldiers and the ruined buildings are in the background.

SILVA

I am not certain . . . Centurion  
--sound the trumpets. Call the  
Jews forth.

CENTURION

Sound the trumpets . . .

18                    MEDIUM SHOT - TRUMPETERS                    18

The trumpets are sounded.

19(=17)

19

There is a silent pause.

CENTURION  
Come forth--throw down your arms  
. . .

There is silence

CENTURION  
(continuing)  
There is no answer, my lord . . .

SILVA  
I have ears, Centurion . . .

ENVOY  
This place bears the stench of  
death . . .

SILVA  
A thousand Jews cannot disappear  
so rapidly--even if God is on  
their side as they proclaim so  
loudly.

CENTURION  
Should I send soldiers forward,  
my lord?

SILVA  
Send them . . .

CENTURION  
You men . . .

20

MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA

20

SILVA  
Go with them.

21

MEDIUM SHOT - CENTURION

21

CENTURION  
Yes, my lord.

22

COVER SHOT - CENTURION AND SOLDIERS  
as they depart.

22

23 COVER SHOT - SILVA'S POV

23

Silva and the Envoy are in the foreground of the frame observing the Centurion and several soldiers passing through the perimeter in the background.

ENVOY

This is a strange response . . .

SILVA

Surely no response is a very strange one . . . These Jews are cunning. We must remain cautious . . . I did not expect to enter the summit of Masada so readily.

ENVOY

I had anticipated a more startling and bloody arrival . . .

24 FULL SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY

24

SILVA

Perhaps the Jews still will not disappoint us . . . Sound the trumpets again.

The trumpeters in the background of the frame obey the command.

25 (=23)

25

ENVOY

Little did Herod suspect that this great fortress he labored to build would provide such a final task for his Roman allies. He built well indeed.

SILVA

Would Herod had not built so well--even after death, he has caused the Roman Empire lengthy embarrassment along with extensive casualties.

A soldier calls from the perimeter.

(CONTINUED)

25

CONTINUED:

25

SOLDIER

My lord, someone comes . . .

The departed Roman soldiers reenter the perimeter with two women captives. Hannah is carrying a baby and Sarah is holding two children by the hands.

SILVA

It is our Centurion.

ENVOY

Along with several captured Jews . . .

SILVA

Women and children . . . They are not worthy prisoners--or victims.

Hold shot until the group reaches Silva.

26

FULL SHOT - GROUP

26

CENTURION

My lord, Silva, there are bodies --hundreds of them . . . Dead by their own hands . . . It is the most frightening sight. Only these people survive.

27

MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY

27

SILVA

Hundreds of bodies--can this be real . . . ?

28

CLOSE SHOT - CENTURION

28

CENTURION

I can never be more certain . . .

29 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA, ENVOY, AND CENTURION

29

SILVA

I can see that you are--such certainty has shaken your manner.

CENTURION

I saw them with my very eyes.  
May I never again behold such a sight . . .

ENVOY

But how can such a thing be . . . ?

SILVA

You say dead by their own hands  
. . . ?

30 MEDIUM SHOT - CENTURION

30

CENTURION

Yes, my lord, hundreds of them--  
by sword and dagger.

(Indicating the direction)

Near the main palace especially.  
It is ghastly--men, women,  
children, babes. It seems that  
none have been spared except for  
these . . .

31 FULL SHOT - SILVA, CENTURION, AND ENVOY

31

SILVA

Let us be more certain of this  
--take your men and survey the  
entire area most thoroughly.

CENTURION

(Saluting)

Yes, my lord.

SILVA

Bring me the body of Eleazar ben  
Yair . . . Then I will possess  
a better calm.

CENTURION

I will do my best . . .

(CONTINUED)

31

31

SILVA

Do your best, Centurion.

CENTURION

Yes, my lord.

32

32

depart through the defense perimeter.

33

33

SILVA

And who are you . . . ?

34

34

HANNAH

I am Hannah--a widow and mother  
of these three children. This  
is my elder sister, Sarah . . .

SILVA (O.S.)

You are foul and rebellious  
Jews . . .

Hannah is silent.

35

35

## ENVOY

How well they have learned to rebel, Silva . . .

SILVA

Speak--or I will have your  
tongues moved with a hot blade  
...

HANNAH

I will speak, my lord . . .

SILVA

What has happened here--why are we allowed to find death rather

(CONTINUED)

35

CONTINUED:

35

SILVA (Cont'd)  
 than cause it . . . ? How have  
 you managed to survive such an  
 abundance of death and de-  
 struction . . . ?

36

MEDIUM SHOT - HANNAH

36

HANNAH  
 We hid from death, my lord--in  
 one of the large water cisterns.  
 We came forward when we heard  
 the trumpets . . . We knew the  
 meaning . . .

SILVA (O.S.)  
 Are you cowards or traitors  
 . . . ?

HANNAH  
 Neither, my lord, merely weary  
 of death and desirous of life--  
 especially life for my children.

SILVA (O.S.)  
 How do you know that I will  
 spare you?

HANNAH  
 I do not know this, my lord . . .

SILVA (O.S.)  
 Nor do I . . .

37 (=35)

37

SILVA (Cont'd)  
 Tell us what has happened . . .  
 Tell us truly and completely or  
 you shall forfeit life also . . .

HANNAH  
 I will, my lord. I will tell  
 all that I know . . .

SILVA  
 Then do so--and do so quickly for  
 I would hasten from this cursed  
 place . . .

38

MEDIUM SHOT - HANNAH

38

HANNAH

It was when your battle ramp neared completion--when death came closer and closer to our lives. It was then that dissent and doubt and, if I may add, renewed courage entered our camp.

Start dolly to extreme close shot.

HANNAH (Con't)

It was then that Eleazar assembled the ten squadron leaders atop the Western Wall to observe and discuss the Roman advance and consider methods by which to thwart this same advance. Eleazar spoke to the leaders and . . .

FADE:

EXTERIOR - ATOP THE WESTERN WALL OF MASADA (DAY)

39

HIGH ANGLE COVER SHOT - GROUP

39

Eleazar and Joab are seen from the rear, along with the ten squadron leaders dressed in silver breastarmor, standing atop the Western Wall of Masada. They are observing the activity on the battle ramp which is being erected toward the wall. Archers are poised in defense of the area. The Roman camp can be seen below in the distance.

40

WIDE ANGLE REVERSE SHOT - GROUP

40

The wall is in the lower foreground of the frame. Shmuel is to the rear of Eleazar.

ELEAZAR

Our fortress is strong. Herod, in his desire to build a strong retreat from the threat of Jewish subjects and the acquisitiveness of Cleopatra, built as

(CONTINUED)



40

CONTINUED:

40

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 well as he intended. The Roman  
 works proceed--but to no avail.  
 We will defend our fortress and  
 withstand whatever . . . We are  
 the last free men within our  
 nation and we will survive as  
 such . . .

SHMUEL  
 It is an impossible task to  
 withstand any longer. There are  
 many thousands of them below and  
 there are only nine-hundred and  
 sixty of us here--including many  
 women and children.

41

HIGH ANGLE MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND LEADERS

41

Shot is from the rear of the group and Eleazar  
 turns to face the camera which favors him. The  
 leaders are in the foreground of the frame.

ELEAZAR  
 But we have the love of freedom  
 and God on our side . . .

42

FULL SHOT - GROUP

42

SHMUEL  
 God has deserted us. He has al-  
 lowed the enemy to capture Jeru-  
 salem--to destroy our sacred  
 temple . . . And the love of  
 freedom is no defense against  
 the swords and arrows of an en-  
 tire Roman Legion.

ELEAZAR  
 God has not deserted us for He  
 has surely allowed us to sur-  
 vive the fall of Jerusalem.  
 God has led us into the safety  
 of the desert even as He led  
 Moses to such safety. God has  
 provided us with ample refuge  
 here atop Masada . . . We may  
 have faith in God . . .

(CONTINUED)



42

CONTINUED:

42

JOAB

The Romans have already attacked once and failed. We will survive this further onslaught.

SHMUEL

It is impossible--there are at least twenty thousand men below. The Tenth Legion of General Silva is too mighty a foe. This new ramp they are building means our defeat and end. The next attack will allow for great formations of men to approach our wall. Our arrows and stones, our javelins have barely delayed the Roman works. They have managed to shield themselves so well that death is our certain lot.

43

CLOSE SHOT - JOAB

43

JOAB

The Romans shall not defeat us.

SHMUEL (O.S.)

You are too young to be realistic. Let us surrender--at least there is the hope of life.

44

MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

44

ELEAZAR

We are the last free members of our nation. We will remain so. We will always prefer freedom in death to slavery in life  
. . .

Begin dolly back to a group shot.

ELEAZAR (Con't)

Do you believe that the Romans will allow us any better fate than slavery? Our only hope is

(CONTINUED)

44

CONTINUED:

44

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
in struggle and this struggle  
will wear upon the patience of  
the Roman leaders.

SQUADRON LEADER  
Eleazar is correct . . . A  
small victory here cannot mean  
so much to the Romans. They  
will depart rather than expend  
their effort to any greater  
extent.

45

FULL SHOT - SHMUEL

45

as he moves to the edge of the wall and points to-  
ward the ramp.

SHMUEL  
This ramp which creeps forward  
steadily is an indication of  
. . .

46

LONG SHOT - THE RAMP

46

with Roman guards and the abused Jewish laborers  
who have been captured during earlier battles.

SHMUEL (O.S.) (Con't)  
the effort the Romans are will-  
ing to expend. It is an engin-  
eering feat such as has never  
been seen in the world.

47

COVER SHOT - GROUP

47

JOAB  
And it shall end in frustration  
for the Romans.

ELEAZAR  
The ramp cannot approach much  
further. It shall remain be-  
neath the level of our wall.  
It shall be inadequate as a  
means for breaching our

(CONTINUED)

47

CONTINUED:

47

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 defenses. There is still hope  
 for us. You are correct, Shmuel  
 ben Ezra. And this hope is in  
 our continued struggle.

48

WIDE HIGH ANGLE SHOT - SHMUEL

48

is still standing at the edge of the wall. The  
 camera favors Shmuel but the activity upon the  
 ramp is still quite visible in the background.

SHMUEL

These are the same words many of  
 us heard in Jerusalem. It was  
 soon thereafter that the Romans  
 gained their horrible victory.  
 There surrender was possible  
 also--and there, also, many re-  
 linquished the opportunity for  
 continued life with a vain and  
 prolonged struggle . . . We es-  
 caped Jerusalem. We were the  
 fortunate ones. Here we cannot  
 be so fortunate. Escape is im-  
 possible and death is inevi-  
 table.

49 (= 47)

49

ELEAZAR

I would prefer death to a Roman  
 master . . . This is not Jeru-  
 salem and I will not bear such  
 further words from a squadron  
 leader in my command. I re-  
 peat--this is not Jerusalem.  
 This is the fortress of Masada  
 and here there is no civil war  
 such as occurred within the  
 walls of Jerusalem. The Jews--  
 by their division among them-  
 selves--not the Romans defeated  
 Jerusalem. Here there is no  
 such division of will--nor shall  
 there be. Our will is one and  
 powerful in the desire to

(CONTINUED)

49

CONTINUED:

49

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 struggle and remain free men.  
 Our people are one and shall  
 remain so. The enemy shall not  
 succeed in its efforts. Our  
 food stores are abundant. Our  
 water supply is contained with-  
 in these very walls and is per-  
 manent. Our weapons are plen-  
 tiful. We will withstand the  
 enemy in any manner that such  
 an effort may require.

50

CLOSE SHOT - SHMUEL

50

SHMUEL  
 The ramp is a threat which can-  
 not be banished with mere  
 words . . .

51

CLOSE SHOT - SQUADRON LEADER

51

SQUADRON LEADER  
 Shmuel is correct . . .

52

COVER SHOT - GROUP

52

Several of the squadron leaders agree.

SHMUEL  
 The Romans are as aware of the  
 limitations of the ramp as we  
 are--surely they have some fur-  
 ther plan in mind to increase  
 its effectiveness.

There is a reflective pause.

SQUADRON LEADER  
 Send a spy into the Roman camp.  
 Learn if there is any such plan  
 . . .

ELEAZAR  
 (Slowly)  
 We shall take this precaution . . .

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

JOAB

Then I will go.

ELEAZAR

You are always ready for danger,  
Joab. How has one so young  
come to possess such an abundance  
of courage?

JOAB

I possess such courage only because  
I am fearful of the loss  
of my wife and child.

SHMUEL

He is too young. Send a more  
experienced man. Courage is  
not enough for such an important  
task.

53 MEDIUM SHOT - YEHOHANAN

53

YEHOHANAN

I will go, Eleazar . . .

SHMUEL (O.S.)

Yes, send Yehohanan. He will  
accomplish the task.

54 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

54

ELEAZAR

I agree . . . Then prepare  
yourself--go with care and detect  
whether these cursed  
Romans have any unknown plans  
for our future . . . And may  
God bear his mighty shield before  
you . . .

DISSOLVE:

INTERIOR - A ROOM OF THE FORTRESS (NIGHT)

55 COVER SHOT - GROUP

55

Several people, including Hannah and Sarah, are gathered in a room of the fortress. Hannah is cooking over a fire that is steadily marring an ornate wall mural. Noisy children are playing about a crib containing a sleeping infant.

HANNAH

Stop that noise--you will disturb the child . . . Do you hear . . . ?

The children stop their loud playing and settle about the room.

HANNAH (Con't)

Cursed life--is there no peace in the world? Is there no peace for a Jew in the entire world?

SARAH

It is our fate . . .

HANNAH

Then curse our fate. I would deny our fate.

SARAH

There is no denying the decree of God.

HANNAH

Then let us ignore it--I am tired of suffering . . . Let God choose the Romans instead. Let God give our fate to the Romans. They deserve it more than we do . . .

Hannah attends to the food again.

HANNAH (Con't)

Look at this food--where does all the food go? Why are there such shortages? The store-houses are filled with the best

(CONTINUED)



55

CONTINUED:

55

HANNAH (Con't)  
 of foods and we must get along  
 in this emptyhanded manner . . .

SARAH  
 The food must be rationed to  
 insure our survival.

HANNAH  
 Our leaders cannot live with  
 such thrift . . . Eleazar does  
 not lose weight before my eyes  
 . . . And why must we live in  
 this narrow quarter when Eleazar  
 and so many of the others live  
 in the main palace of Herod.  
 We share a room--while they  
 share apartments . . .

56

MEDIUM SHOT - HANNAH AND SARAH

56

as they serve food to several of those who are  
 gathered.

HANNAH (Con't)  
 Look at this food . . .

SARAH  
 Would you prefer death to suf-  
 fering . . .

57

CLOSE SHOT - HANNAH

57

HANNAH  
 I will have no more of death.  
 I have lost a husband already--  
 and I will lose no more to  
 these Romans. I will have  
 life--and life without further  
 suffering.

SARAH (O.S.)  
 And how will you accomplish  
 this? Let us know also for we  
 are tired even as you . . .

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

HANNAH

I am not certain . . . I do not know--but I will fulfill my word. I will preserve life.

58 MEDIUM SHOT - MAN AND WOMAN

58

seated against the wall.

MAN

Do not burden us further with your simple misery. We are all tired of death and destruction. We have already experienced enough for a lifetime and lifetimes to come. Our anguish is as fresh and full as yours. We have been through Jerusalem. We have escaped from death also. We have witnessed the bloodshed, the civil war, the flames, the massacre . . . We have witnessed the fall of the sacred Temple also.

WOMAN

A Temple that stood for a thousand years since the time of Solomon . . .

59 (=55)

59

SARAH

We have sinned and God has turned his wrath upon us . . .

HANNAH

I have not sinned--I was a mother and a wife only. I have not sinned. Let God punish those who have sinned--let Him spare the innocent.

SARAH

It is only for God to judge those among us who are sinners

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

SARAH (Con't)  
and those among us who are innocent.

HANNAH  
I will judge and I judge myself to be innocent. I judge us all to be innocent and undeserving of suffering or death.

SARAH  
I would have happiness and life also--but it shall be the decision of God.

60 MEDIUM SHOT - HANNAH

60

as she moves to the crib.

HANNAH  
It shall be my decision. I will have life . . .

Hannah raises the child from the crib and cradles it in her arms. Dolly to a close shot of Hannah and the child.

HANNAH (Con't)  
I will have life--and I will have life for my children . . .

MATCH DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - THE GARDENED LOWER TERRACE (DAY)

61 CLOSE SHOT - MIRIAM AND CHILD

61

Dolly back the camera to a wide medium shot revealing the gardened lower terrace of the Northern Palace just below the summit of Masada. Miriam, a lovely young person with plaited hair, is cradling a child in her arms. Soft and melancholy music from a flute can be heard throughout the scene.

JOAB (O.S.)  
Miriam . . . Miriam . . .

62 LONG SHOT - MIRIAM AND CHILD

62

are in the foreground of the frame and favored by the camera. Joab has just entered from a stairwell in the background.

MIRIAM

(Turning)

Joab . . .

Joab comes to Miriam and the child.

63 MEDIUM SHOT - GROUP

63

as they embrace.

MIRIAM (Con't)

Be careful of the child . . .

64 COVER SHOT - GROUP

64

JOAB

I love both of you so much  
. . .

Joab takes the child and holds it in the air. He returns the child to Miriam. The camera pans them as they walk to the edge of the terrace. The panning halts on a wide angle medium profile shot which gives an impressive view of the desert below and the mountains and sea beyond.

MIRIAM

Oh, that we could flee across  
the desert--or across the Sea  
into the Mountains of Moab.  
There we could hide from the  
world and its cruelties and  
build ourselves a peaceful  
refuge. There our child could  
grow into a fine young man . . .  
If we could escape from this  
life in which we have been made  
prisoners . . .

JOAB

It seems hardly possible . . .

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

MIRIAM

Oh that it were possible . . .

JOAB

I have failed you both . . .

MIRIAM

You must not say such a thing.  
You must never say such a  
thing. You have done everything  
possible. It is not your fault  
but that of the Roman invaders  
. . .

65 CLOSE SHOT - JOAB

65

JOAB

That Rome would come to an end.  
That Rome would become a part  
of the past so we could gather  
our deserved future . . .

MIRIAM (O.S.)

Is there really such a future  
for us, Joab? I am so  
frightened . . .

JOAB

I am not certain--but if there  
is any way to gain our future,  
I shall discover it. I promise  
you this much. I promise both  
of you . . .

66 CLOSE SHOT - MIRIAM

66

MIRIAM

Then I have hope, Joab. I have  
hope for the future. One day  
we will have happiness and  
peace. One day we will rest  
together and fear the Romans  
and death no longer . . .



67 MEDIUM SHOT - GROUP

67

JOAB

Pray that such a day shall  
come, Miriam. Pray that such a  
day shall come.

A ram's horn is heard.

JOAB (Con't)

And surely it is a time for  
prayer. The shofer horn calls  
us to service . . . Let us re-  
turn to the summit . . . Let  
us return to the foul world  
. . .

68 FULL SHOT - GROUP

68

Joab begins to depart.

MIRIAM

Joab . . .

JOAB

Yes.

MIRIAM

Hold us again. When you hold  
us, when I feel your arms about  
us, I am no longer afraid.

They embrace.

MIRIAM (Con't)

Oh Joab . . . Joab . . .

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - SYNAGOGUE (DAY)

69 COVER SHOT - GROUP

69

The synagogue on the summit of Masada. It is the  
only place where some discreet luxury has been  
allowed by the Jews. The people have gathered  
for the service. Rabbi Agavia is assisted by  
Eleazar. They both wear the traditional talith.

(CONTINUED)

69

CONTINUED:

69

An ark and reading desk are prominent. A plaintive song comes to an end.

RABBI

There is none like You among  
the mighty, O Lord, and there  
are no deeds like Yours. Your  
kingdom is an everlasting king-  
dom and Your dominion endures  
forever. The Lord is King,  
the Lord was King, the Lord

70

PANNING SHOT - THE PEOPLE

70

who are gathered and attentive.

RABBI (O.S.) (Con't)

shall be King for ever and ever.  
May the Lord give strength to  
His people; may the Lord bless  
His people with peace . . .  
Father of compassion, may it be  
Your will to favor Zion with  
Your goodness and to rebuild  
the walls of Jerusalem. In You  
alone we trust, O King, high and  
exalted God, Lord of the uni-  
verse.

71

FULL SHOT - RABBI

71

as he opens the Ark.

RABBI (Con't)

When the ark was carried on-  
ward, Moses exclaimed: Arise,  
O Lord, that your enemies be  
scattered and those who would  
deny you be put to flight.  
For out of Zion shall go forth  
the Torah, and the word of the  
Lord out of Jerusalem . . .  
Praised is He who in His holi-  
ness gave the Torah to His  
people Israel . . .

The Torah is taken from the Ark.

(CONTINUED)



71 CONTINUED:

71

RABBI (Con't)  
Hear, O Israel: The Lord our  
God, the Lord is One. One is  
our God, great is our Lord,  
Holy is He.

72(=69)

72

The Torah is carried in procession.

RABBI (Con't)  
Proclaim the greatness of the  
Lord; together let us exalt His  
glory . . . Yours, O Lord, is  
the greatness and the power and  
glory. Yours is triumph and  
majesty over all heaven and  
earth. Yours, O Lord, is su-  
preme sovereignty . . . Exalt  
the Lord our God, and worship  
Him for He is holy. Exalt and  
worship Him at His holy moun-  
tain. The Lord our God is  
holy . . . Eleazar ben Yair  
. . .

73

FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR

73

ELEAZAR  
Praise the Lord, Source of all  
blessing. Praised is the Lord,  
eternal source of all blessing.  
Praised are You, O Lord our God,  
King of the universe, who chose  
us from among all peoples by  
giving us His Torah. Praised  
are You, O Lord, Giver of the  
Torah.

74

MEDIUM SHOT - RABBI

74

Rabbi Agavia stands at the desk and reads from the  
Torah.

RABBI  
And Moses spake in the ears of  
all the congregation of Israel

(CONTINUED)

74

CONTINUED:

74

RABBI (Con't)  
 the words of this song, until  
 they were ended . . . Give  
 ears, O ye heavens, and I will  
 speak; and hear, O earth, the  
 words of my mouth. My doctrine  
 shall drop as the rain, my  
 speech shall distill as the dew,  
 as the small rain upon . . .

75(=70)

70

RABBI (O.S.)  
 the tender herb, and as the  
 showers upon the grass: Be-  
 cause I will publish the name  
 of the Lord: ascribe ye great-  
 ness unto our God. He is the  
 Rock, His work is perfect: for  
 all His ways are judgement: a  
 God of truth and without in-  
 iquity, just and right is He  
 . . . Of the Rock that begat  
 thee thou art unmindful, and  
 hast forgotten God that formed  
 thee. And when the Lord saw it,  
 He abhorred them, because of the  
 provoking of his sons, and of  
 his daughters. And he said, I  
 will hide my face from them, I  
 will see what their end shall  
 be: for they are a very froward  
 generation, children in whom is  
 no faith. They have moved me  
 to jealousy with that which is  
 not God; they have provoked me  
 to anger with their vanities:  
 and I will move them to jealousy  
 with those which are not a  
 people; I will provoke them to  
 anger with a foolish nation.  
 For a fire is kindled in my  
 anger, and shall burn into the  
 lowest hell, and shall consume  
 the earth with her increase,  
 and set on fire the foundations  
 of the mountains. I will heap

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

75

RABBI (Con't)  
 mischiefs upon them; I will  
 spend mine arrows upon them.

DISSOLVE:

76(=74)

76

RABBI (Con't)  
 And Moses came and spake all the  
 words of this song in the ears  
 of the people, he, and Hoshea  
 the son of Nun. And Moses made  
 an end of speaking all these  
 words to all Israel. And he  
 said unto them, Set your hearts  
 unto all the words which I  
 testify among you this day,  
 which ye shall command your  
 children to observe to do, all  
 the words of this law. For it  
 is not a vain thing for you; be-  
 cause it is your life: and  
 through this thing ye shall  
 prolong your days in the land,  
 whither ye go over Jordan to  
 possess it. And the Lord spake  
 unto Moses that selfsame day,  
 saying, Get thee up into this  
 mountain Abarim, unto Mount  
 Nebo, which is in the land of  
 Moab, that is over against  
 Jericho; and behold the land of  
 Canaan, which I give unto the  
 children of Israel for a pos-  
 session: And die in the mount  
 whither thou goest up, and be  
 gathered unto thy people; as  
 Aaron thy brother died in Mount  
 Hor, and was gathered unto his  
 people: Because ye trespassed  
 against me among the children  
 of Israel at the waters of  
 Meribah Kadesh, in the wilder-  
 ness of Zin; because ye sanc-  
 tified me not in the midst of  
 the children of Israel . . .

(CONTINUED)

77

WIDE FULL SHOT - RABBI

77

is in the foreground of the frame with the Ark and Eleazar to the rear.

RABBI (Con't)

Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel . . .

ELEAZAR

Praised are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who gave us a Torah of truth, endowing us with everlasting life. Praised are You, O Lord, Giver of the Torah.

Rabbi Aqavia raises the Torah.

ELEAZAR (Con't)

This is the Torah that Moses set before Israel. This is the Torah given by God, through Moses. It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it. All who uphold the Torah are blessed. Its ways are delight; its paths are peace . . .

Dolly to a close shot of the upheld Torah and hold.

ELEAZAR (O.S.)

Lead us back to you, and we shall return. Renew our glory as in days of old.

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - SYNAGOGUE (NIGHT)

78

MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB

78

is in the midst of prayer and is halted by the entrance of Eleazar and Rabbi Aqavia.

79 COVER SHOT - GROUP

79

JOAB  
Is there no other way . . . ?

ELEAZAR  
There is no other.

80 CLOSE SHOT - JOAB

80

JOAB  
I am not afraid of death--and  
yet I still crave life for my-  
self and family. I wish hap-  
piness for . . .

81 MEDIUM SHOT - RABBI AND JOAB

81

RABBI  
Our lot is not one of happiness.  
This suffering is our lot . . .

JOAB  
Surely we have suffered enough--  
surely some happiness is now our  
due . . .

RABBI  
Happiness is our enemy. There  
is yet much effort and work for  
us to perform. We are a chosen  
people and to lead--to possess  
the power and desire for leader-  
ship--is to suffer . . . We  
cannot relinquish our holy  
obligation.

82 FULL SHOT - GROUP

82

JOAB  
Why must we alone be chosen  
. . . ? If our God is for all  
men, why must He single out a  
special people--a single na-  
tion? What kind of God is this  
who restricts Himself to a  
single people? Let Him choose  
some others, everyone--let God

(CONTINUED)

82

CONTINUED:

82

JOAB (Con't)  
give himself to everyone. Let  
Him go to the Romans in haste  
. . . Perhaps if they learn  
the Torah and sacred law . . .

RABBI  
Perhaps they will . . .

83

MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB

83

JOAB  
Then the Romans would not wish  
to kill and enslave us . . .  
Would that we were a mighty  
power such as Rome . . . Would  
that we possessed the strength  
to protect ourselves from the  
enemy--to kill and vanquish the  
enemy. Then we could seal our-  
selves within our own bound-  
aries--within our own walls--  
and let the strangers go their  
own way. A Jewish state with  
Jewish rulers--freedom in our  
own land with our own rulers  
. . .

84

MEDIUM SHOT - RABBI

84

RABBI  
I would not have this sort of  
nation. May we never be re-  
membered as a nation of war-  
riors--may we never be remem-  
bered for such strength. May  
we never relinquish our book  
and ethic for the sword. May  
we never make love of nation a  
substitute for the sacred Torah  
and commandment of God. Our  
truest nation--our truest alle-  
giance--is to a nation of the  
spirit . . .

85 CLOSE SHOT - JOAB

85

JOAB

If we have no nation--no land of our own, we will have neither book or ethic--we will remain as foreigners in the land of another. We will lose the freedom--through fear or desire --to preserve our own identity, our own truth and wisdom . . . Our book and our ethic--our sacred truth--will prevail only within the safe boundaries of our own nation. The foreigners shall remain our enemy and destroyer. They are always our enemy. They have never failed to kill and destroy our brethren. They shall never change--and I will never forget or forgive this crime or this enemy . . .

86 COVER SHOT - GROUP

86

RABBI

One day all shall forgive their enemy and call them brethren. Such a world shall come to pass . . .

JOAB

I will never forget or forgive . . .

ELEAZAR

I can almost forgive the Romans for killing our sons--but I can never forgive them for having forced us to teach our children to kill . . .

RABBI

We will learn to forgive--even such injustice and crime. We are a chosen people and it is our duty and destiny to excel--to gather respect--so that we may share our truth with the willing members of all nations.

(CONTINUED)





86

CONTINUED:

86

RABBI (Con't)

. . . If we have sinned, we will repent our sins. If we have been cast into exile, we will regain our homes and sanctuaries. And if we have sought redemption, we will gain it for this is the decree of God. And one day all men shall share in our good fortune. Our history--our suffering and pain--is a passing thing. Only our destiny is permanent and certain . . .

JOAB

How often must we gain our redemption . . . ?

RABBI

As often as we falter into sin . . . As often as we ignore the sacred word of the Lord . . .

87

MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND JOAB

87

JOAB

We will be redeemed forever when we possess a mightier sword and recover our own land for our own people--we will be redeemed when we have excluded the enemy--the foreigner--forever. This is our redemption . . .

88

MEDIUM SHOT - GROUP

88

The Rabbi is favored in the frame.

RABBI

This is sin and corruption . . . It would be immoral if we would exclude anyone, whatever his origin, his descent, or his religion, from participating in

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

RABBI (Con't)  
 our achievements. For we stand  
 on the shoulders of other  
 civilized peoples . . . What  
 we own we owe to the preparatory  
 work of other peoples. There-  
 fore, we have to repay our debt.  
 There is only one way to do it,  
 the highest tolerance. Our  
 motto must therefore be, now  
 and ever: Man, thou art my  
 brother. Love, thou art my  
 standard. God, thou art my  
 guide . . . Not by might, nor  
 by power, but by My Spirit,  
 says the most powerful Lord.

DISSOLVE:

INTERIOR - THE CHAMBER OF ELEAZAR (NIGHT)

89 COVER SHOT - CANDLELIT CHAMBER OF ELEAZAR 89

He is seated at a writing table. Shmuel ben Ezra  
 and Hannah enter after knocking.

ELEAZAR  
 Yes . . . ?

90 FULL SHOT - HANNAH and SHMUEL 90

SHMUEL  
 We would speak with you . . .

ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
 Then speak . . . Speak if you  
 will . . .

HANNAH  
 We would ask you to surrender  
 before the Romans--while there  
 is still an opportunity for  
 survival.

91 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

91

ELEAZAR

Surrender . . .

SHMUEL (O.S.)

Yes, the Romans have once offered us the opportunity. They will do so again to avoid any further loss of time and life . . .

ELEAZAR

And what do you think would become of our people . . . ?

SHMUEL (O.S.)

They would gain life . . .

ELEAZAR

Life as slaves in the service of a corrupt nation . . .

92 MEDIUM SHOT - HANNAH

92

HANNAH

I prefer such slavery to death . . .

93 COVER SHOT - GROUP

93

Eleazar rises and moves to the tablefront.

ELEAZAR

And I prefer death to slavery.

SHMUEL

Some of the people feel differently . . .

ELEAZAR

But the majority feel as I do . . .

HANNAH

Only because you have convinced them that this is the only proper way. Words are plentiful but life is still scarce. Many

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

HANNAH (Con't)  
of us remain in disagreement  
. . .

ELEAZAR  
I will not hear of such disagreement. I will not hear any talk of surrender to the Romans. Now leave me before I gain greater anger . . .

94 MEDIUM SHOT - SHMUEL

94

SHMUEL  
We will not leave until you have gained greater reason. We would have life and surrender, while there is still an opportunity, is the only way for our people to acquire life.

95 MEDIUM REVERSE SHOT - ELEAZAR

95

ELEAZAR  
Are you another Josephus? Is there another such traitorous and cowardly commander among us?

96 (=94)

96

SHMUEL  
Josephus lives--and we are surely dead if we continue to heed your word . . .

ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
We will survive--even as David survived before Goliath . . .

97 MEDIUM SHOT - HANNAH

97

HANNAH  
But we are not David nor are the Romans Goliath . . .

98

COVER SHOT - GROUP

98

ELEAZAR

Curse your cowardice--both of  
 you . . . Go from my sight  
 . . . Would that our nation  
 were rid of your kind . . .

SHMUEL

And would that our nation were  
 rid of your kind. Such fanati-  
 cism can only breed death and  
 we have had enough of death . . .

ELEAZAR

I will not hear such talk from  
 a leader of the Jewish people  
 . . . Go from my sight--and  
 when you have gone remove all  
 the badges of your command. I  
 would have another in your  
 place . . . Now leave--before  
 I throw you from the summit  
 into the Roman camp you so  
 earnestly crave . . . Do as I  
 command you . . .

SHMUEL

I will do as you command. I  
 will go far from your sight--  
 farther than you would see . . .

ELEAZAR

Then do so in haste--I would  
 have you that far from my  
 sight . . .

HANNAH

I will shun the destiny you so  
 desire for your own people . . .

ELEAZAR

Go--I command you!

Hannah and Eleazar depart.

99

FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR

99

draws a sword and ponders it. He hurls it to the  
 ground.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

ELEAZAR  
My God, my God--what is your  
command . . . ?

100 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

100

returns to the chair and slumps his head upon the  
table. Dolly to an extreme close shot.

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - THE WESTERN WALL (DAY)

101 COVER SHOT - GROUP

101

Eleazar is at the Western Wall with several of the  
Squadron Leaders. Breastarmor intended for Joab  
is placed in a prominent manner.

SQUADRON LEADER  
It is a worthy choice--Joab  
will make an excellent substi-  
tute for Shmuel ben Ezra.

SQUADRON LEADER  
He is young--but is courageous  
and intelligent.

ELEAZAR  
Then send for him--and let us  
bestow the silver armor of  
leadership upon him . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
I will bring him here . . .

The Squadron Leader departs.

102 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

102

Eleazar is standing alongside the armor.

ELEAZAR  
Youth, courage, intelligence--  
and these qualities are wasted  
upon war and bloodshed. How war

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
corrupts all that is approached  
and enmeshed--is there ever a  
good or just war . . . ? Silver  
armor--how glittering and de-  
ceptive are the surface appear-  
ances for those who are unin-  
tiated . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
(O.S.)  
I believe they return, Eleazar  
. . .

103 COVER SHOT - GROUP

103

SQUADRON LEADER  
No--it is Yehohanan returned  
from the enemy camp . . .

Yehohanan and a Squadron Leader enter.

ELEAZAR  
Safe return, Yehohanan--God has  
seen fit to escort you . . .  
What news do you bring . . . ?

YEHOHANAN  
It is better that I brought no  
news . . . The Romans do have  
more in mind than is apparent  
. . . The great battering ram  
--the great war engine which the  
Romans call Victor--is being  
brought to Masada from Jeru-  
salem . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
The very engine which shattered  
the walls of Jerusalem . . . ?

YEHOHANAN  
The very same . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
This is terrible news--but can  
they raise such an engine to  
the head of the ramp . . . ?

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

ELEAZAR

With enough men . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

The archers will slay these men  
before they near our wall . . .

ELEAZAR

Will they slay the Jewish cap-  
tives of Flavius Silva--for  
surely these are the ones who  
will bear the burden of such  
labor . . . And will we allow  
such slaying . . .

There is a silent pause.

ELEAZAR (Con't)

There must be some other way to  
halt their effort . . .

Joab enters with the Squadron Leader.

104 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND JOAB

104

JOAB

I heed your command, Eleazar  
. . .

ELEAZAR

Greetings, Joab--I would com-  
mand you better things but my  
sole command is that you assume  
this symbol of leadership . . .

105 FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR AND JOAB

Eleazar hands Joab the breastarmor.

JOAB

It is a greater honor than I  
deserve . . .

ELEAZAR

And an even greater burden--the  
Roman sword draws ever nearer  
to us. Yehohanan brings word

(CONTINUED)



105

CONTINUED:

105

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 of a Roman plan to raise the  
 great engine, Victor, to the  
 head of the ramp and destroy  
 our wall . . . Now wear the  
 armor and begin to feel its  
 burden . . .

Joab dons the armor.

106

COVER SHOT - GROUP

106

JOAB  
 The weight is that of Jerusalem  
 . . . We cannot leave any  
 piece of Jerusalem behind . . .  
 Is there no way to thwart such  
 a plan . . . ?

ELEAZAR  
 I am not certain . . . There  
 is only one position from which  
 the ram may perform its de-  
 structive work and only one  
 section of the wall which may  
 be shattered--perhaps a second  
 inner wall . . . a second inner  
 wall . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
 That is the solution . . .

ELEAZAR  
 It is, at least, our only hope  
 . . .

YEHOHANAN  
 Such a wall must be erected in  
 haste--the engine is no further  
 than two days march from the  
 Roman camp--perhaps even closer  
 by now . . .

ELEAZAR  
 Then let us proceed hastily in  
 the following manner . . .

107

CLOSE SHOT - THE SWORD

107

in Eleazar's hand drawing in the ground as he describes the inner-wall.

ELEAZAR (O.S.)

We will lay together great beams of wood lengthways, one close to the end of another, and in the same way in which they are cut. Let us lay two of these rows parallel to one another and place earth into the space between these rows . . . The engine may shatter the outer wall--but as it strikes this second inner wall the blows will be weakened by its yielding construction . . .

108

COVER SHOT - GROUP

108

SQUADRON LEADER

And the materials by such concussion will be shaken closer together. The pile shall become even firmer and more unyielding than before . . .

JOAB

It is an excellent plan--and we shall remain secure as ever . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

And the Romans shall remain frustrated as ever . . .

109

MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

109

ELEAZAR

Perhaps--but let us begin the work. There is no time to waste . . . Assemble the men to their tasks . . . Let us see what this great engine, Victor, may accomplish now . . . And let us witness whether God still stands atop Masada . . .

DISSOLVE:

INTERIOR - TENT CHAMBER OF SILVA (NIGHT)

110 MEDIUM SHOT - ENGINEER

110

ENGINEER

It is a great rock, a formidable  
obstacle and challenge this  
Masada--but this Jewish strong-  
hold shall soon become a Jewish  
burial ground . . .

Dolly back to show the torchlit tent chamber of  
General Flavius Silva. Silva and a Military  
Engineer stand before a large rotating model of  
Masada and the surrounding vicinity.

SILVA

Let us hope so--we have wasted  
enough time and effort on these  
Jewish dogs . . .

ENGINEER

See here--how well laid are the  
plans . . . As it was . . .

111 CLOSE SHOT - MODEL OF MASADA

111

The Engineer is using a pointer to indicate.

ENGINEER (O.S.)

impossible to move mass forma-  
tions of soldiers along the  
snake's path of the Eastern  
slope--the great cone-shaped  
ramp was constructed on the  
Western slope to take advantage  
of the promontory of white rock  
which already exists and ap-  
proaches the summit . . . Here,  
atop the ramp, we have placed a  
large pier for the great tower,  
Victor, and its powerful bat-  
tering ram . . . This ninety  
foot tower will be flanked by  
two siege towers seventy-five  
feet in height. From their  
tops, archers will protect the  
troops as they perform their  
destructive tasks. Here, cata-  
pults . . . here, stone throwers

(CONTINUED)

111

CONTINUED:

111

ENGINEER (Con't)

. . . here archers and here  
javelins . . . Jewish doom is  
inevitable. The ramp does not  
reach the wall of Masada--but  
by merely canting and elevating  
the battering ram of Victor  
within its cradle and extending  
the tow lines a bit further  
than usual--the troops may pull  
and pound and pummel the wall  
above to their own content . . .  
The wall shall fall--entrance  
shall become a simple matter--  
and victory shall be in your  
hands.

112

MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA AND ENGINEER

112

with the model in the background.

SILVA

And what of Jewish archers--  
their arrows become deadlier  
with the shortening of dis-  
tance . . . ?

ENGINEER

Our own archers will stand in  
defense . . . Victor and the  
two flanking towers have been  
encased in heavy iron also  
making them invulnerable to  
fire--those of our troops who  
will man them shall be well  
protected . . . And here, pro-  
tected passageways to each  
tower . . . Each instrument  
has been made so solid and  
firm that if the Jews in any  
way attempt to overturn them,  
they shall surely fail . . .  
It is all so marvellous . . .  
And here, below, all about  
Masada--a siege wall which sur-  
rounds the entire rock--let  
them dare attempt an escape or  
an attack upon our camps . . .

(CONTINUED)

112

CONTINUED:

112

ENGINEER (Con't)

It is all so thoroughly considered . . . The Jewish days on Masada are approaching a swift end . . .

113

CLOSE SHOT - SILVA

113

SILVA

And to position these towers so they may perform their task . . . ?

114

CLOSE REVERSE SHOT - ENGINEER

114

ENGINEER

Jewish prisoners--of course . . . They will not shoot their own--and, if they do, it is of little concern. There are many to take the places of any dead . . .

SILVA (O.S.)

Your craft and consideration are impressive . . .

ENGINEER

May the Jews be so impressed . . .

115(=112)

115

SILVA

May the Jews hasten to their graves . . .

ENGINEER

They shall be surprised by the appearance of Victor--little do they realize that we bring them a memento of Jerusalem to accompany their final days . . .

(CONTINUED)

115

CONTINUED:

115

SILVA

Let us hasten with these plans--  
I would see the surprise upon  
their faces . . .

ENGINEER

If only we could prolong matters  
a bit--I am certain that I could  
devise some marvelous new de-  
vices for their pleasure . . .

SILVA

This affair has been prolonged  
sufficiently--let us now gain  
the Jewish defeat.

116

MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND ENGINEER

116

The model is in the foreground of the frame.

ENGINEER

I am almost aroused to enter  
the Jewish camp and attempt a  
defense against these measures.  
It would be a challenging task  
. . . But it is impossible--  
I have planned with such ex-  
cellence . . . It is all so  
very perfect . . .

SILVA

We will see . . . we will  
see . . .

Tilt up to close shot of a torch.

MATCH DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - A ROMAN OUTPOST (NIGHT)

117

CLOSE SHOT - FLAME

117

from fire. Dolly back to medium shot revealing  
several soldiers seated about it.

(CONTINUED)

117

CONTINUED:

117

FIRST SOLDIER

We should leave and give them  
the whole desert--I have a  
family in Rome . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

As long as we're here--you have  
no family but us . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

What are we waiting for--let's  
get this thing over with . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

We have no business here--what  
do these politicians and  
generals have in mind . . . ?

118

CLOSE SHOT - SECOND SOLDIER

118

SECOND SOLDIER

They can't stand anyone about  
without their permission . . .

119

CLOSE SHOT - THIRD SOLDIER

119

THIRD SOLDIER

Let's kill the Jews and have it  
done with . . .

120

CLOSE SHOT - FIRST SOLDIER

120

FIRST SOLDIER

You're so anxious for blood--  
what have those people ever  
done to you . . . ?

121

MEDIUM THREE SHOT

121

THIRD SOLDIER

Nothing--but they're Jews--and  
that's enough reason to kill  
them . . . We'll do the same  
thing here that we did back in

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

THIRD SOLDIER

(Con't)

Jerusalem . . . They're a curse  
upon the earth . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

I don't care what they are--they  
can have their rock. They can  
have the whole dirty desert  
with its heat and sand . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

It's a waste of lives any way  
you look at it . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

And a nuisance . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

I've nothing better to do . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

I have . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

I could think of better things  
to do . . .

122 CLOSE SHOT - THIRD SOLDIER

122

THIRD SOLDIER

You make miserable soldiers--  
I'd be on top of that rock  
carving Jewish throats if I  
could . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

(O.S.)

The centurion may carve all of  
our throats if he catches us  
sitting about like this . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

Damn the centurion . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

(O.S.)

Don't let him hear that . . .

(CONTINUED)



122 CONTINUED:

122

## THIRD SOLDIER

I'll let any man hear what I  
have to say of him. I'm not a  
coward like some people . . .

123 CLOSE SHOT - FIRST SOLDIER

123

## FIRST SOLDIER

Nor am I--but I'd leave this  
place if I could . . . Let  
these Jews have their worthless  
land . . .

## SECOND SOLDIER

(O.S.)

If I never see another Jew for  
the rest of my days, I'll be  
happier for it. As long as they  
leave me alone, I'm willing to  
leave them alone. Let them go  
their way and I'll go mine . . .

124 (=121)

124

## THIRD SOLDIER

And I'd just as soon kill each  
one of them--a little bit at a  
time . . . except for a few of  
the women . . . I have better  
plans for them . . .

## SECOND SOLDIER

You can have anything you want--  
you can do anything you want--  
but I'm tired of this place.  
You can take my position in the  
attack if that'll make you  
happy . . .

## THIRD SOLDIER

We'll soon get our chance--all  
of us--it won't be long now.  
You'll all kill whether you  
want to or not--and I'll enjoy  
every moment of it . . .

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

SECOND SOLDIER

And I'll be glad when it's  
over . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

I hope it never begins . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

You're a coward. You see a bit  
of death and shudder all over  
. . .

FIRST SOLDIER

I haven't your appetite for  
blood--or your heart . . .

THIRD SOLDIER

The centurion would have one of  
me for every ten of you . . .

FIRST SOLDIER

The centurion can have all of  
you that he wants . . .

SECOND SOLDIER

Hold it--here he comes. Stand  
on your feet . . .

125 FULL SHOT - GROUP

125

They rise and appear attentive. They are in the foreground of the frame as the Centurion and another soldier enter with Shmuel ben Ezra in the background.

CENTURION

What are you doing here by the  
fire . . . ? While you're  
wasting about, this Jew is walk-  
ing around free in the dark  
. . .

SECOND SOLDIER

We're doing our duty . . .

126 MEDIUM SHOT - CENTURION AND PRISONER

126

CENTURION  
You look too comfortable for  
that . . . One of you men come  
with me . . . This prisoner  
must be taken to General Silva  
. . .

127 COVER SHOT - GROUP

127

THIRD SOLDIER  
I'll go . . .

CENTURION  
You stay--I need good men on  
line . . . You, soldier, come  
with me . . .

FIRST SOLDIER  
Yes, sir . . .

128 MEDIUM SHOT - CENTURION

128

CENTURION  
Have your rest now--it will be  
the last one. An attack is due  
to begin very soon . . .

THIRD SOLDIER  
(O.S.)  
That's good news . . .

CENTURION  
Not if you end as one of the  
dead . . .

129 MEDIUM SHOT - THIRD SOLDIER

129

THIRD SOLDIER  
There's no chance of that--no  
Jew will ever lay a hand on  
me . . .

CENTURION (O.S.)  
Perhaps--but they're no foe to  
take so lightly in their situ-  
ation . . .

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED

129

## THIRD SOLDIER

It looks like they're done for--  
it's about time. A year in the  
desert is too much for any man.  
Let's get it done with . . . I  
want to see the view from the  
top of the rock . . .

130 FULL SHOT - GROUP

130

## CENTURION

You'll get your chance soon  
enough . . . Let's go now . . .

The Centurion and the two Soldiers depart with  
their prisoner.

131 CLOSE SHOT - THIRD SOLDIER

131

## THIRD SOLDIER

Did you hear the Centurion  
. . . ? We'll get our chance  
soon . . . I wonder if those  
Jews have much gold with  
them . . . ?

INTERIOR - THE TENT CHAMBER OF SILVA (DAY)

132 COVER SHOT - TENT CHAMBER

132

of Flavius Silva. Officers are gathered with  
Silva about the model of Masada. Guards and  
servants are present. Sensual flute music is  
heard. A Herald enters followed by the Envoy  
from Rome.

## HERALD

Hear all--the envoy from Titus,  
Great Emperor and General of  
Rome . . .

## ENVOY

Greetings, Flavius Silva--greet-  
ings from Rome and the Emperor  
Titus . . .

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

SILVA

Greetings to the Emperor . . .  
 Enter and join with us . . .  
 Servants--refreshments . . . It  
 is a long while since we have  
 had greetings and news from Rome  
 . . .

ENVOY

And a longer time since Rome has  
 gathered news from Judea . . .

SILVA

Too soon with business--take of  
 the drink and then to affairs  
 . . .

ENVOY

So be it . . .

Cups are filled by the servants.

SILVA

To Titus and Rome . . .

All join in the toast.

133 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY

133

SILVA

What news do you bring from  
 Rome . . . ?

ENVOY

There is little news and much  
 impatience from Rome . . .  
 Rather what news does Silva  
 bear for Rome and Titus . . . ?

SILVA

All is well--the campaign pro-  
 gresses evenly and surely . . .

134 CLOSE SHOT - ENVOY

134

## ENVOY

Titus has expected more from General Silva and the Tenth Legion--an entire year, an entire year against fewer than a thousand Jews with women and children among them and no sound of victory . . . It is a terrible embarrassment to the Emperor . . . The arch of victory over the Jews is built in Rome--even the coins declare this victory, and yet there is no final victory, no final defeat . . . A band of outlaws declares the Emperor to be a liar . . .

## SILVA (O.S.)

They are a desperate and fierce band of outlaws--and more, they have a fortress of near impregnable quality to support and sustain them . . .

## ENVOY

And you have ten thousand men of the elite Tenth Legion and nearly fifteen thousand Jewish prisoners of war with which to wage a siege--and you have still failed . . .

135 CLOSE SHOT - SILVA

135

## SILVA

We have not failed--we have merely been delayed and this delay shall soon come to an end as you will even see for yourself . . .

136 CLOSE SHOT - ENVOY

136

## ENVOY

Let us hope so--Titus grows impatient. He cannot chance the

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

136

ENVOY (Con't)

prolonged existence of a strong-  
hold such as Masada . . . Other  
Jews may take example and other  
such strongholds may rise . . .  
Rome will not tolerate the en-  
couragement of any further hos-  
tility . . .

137 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY

137

SILVA

Remember--we have not the ad-  
vantage of a civil war within  
the Jewish camp such as at  
Jerusalem. We will not divide  
and conquer Masada--nor was  
Jerusalem such a natural for-  
tress as Masada . . .

ENVOY

I have been impressed by my  
view of the citadel--but Titus  
has not had the privilege of  
such a view. And he certainly  
will not be impressed with  
words . . .

SILVA

We will give him more than  
words . . . The engineers have  
provided for that--surely you  
have seen the great ramp and  
the engines which are being  
drawn into position for an  
assault . . .

ENVOY

I have . . .

SILVA

Then you have seen signs of the  
Jewish end.

138 MEDIUM SHOT - ENVOY

138

## ENVOY

Let us hope so--Rome is a great nation, the greatest nation in the world. Rome cannot allow such a small group to humiliate her before the eyes of the world. The strength of empire depends greatly upon the belief of Roman subjects in this very strength. Power demands a strong appearance of invincibility--and Rome shall preserve such an appearance at any cost . . . And not only are these things necessary for power but for pride--Rome shall have pride.

## SILVA (O.S.)

I do not require a session in the ways of government.

## ENVOY

It is merely my duty to present the concerns of Titus. I do as I am bid . . .

139 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA

139

## SILVA

And I will do as I am bid--I promise a Roman victory within a week. You shall observe it with your own eyes and report as much to Titus . . . I have already sent for the priest and his omen . . .

## ENVOY (O.S.)

My eyes remain anxious and expectant and I would witness the omen . . .

140(=132)

140

A Centurion enters and whispers to Silva.

(CONTINUED)



140 CONTINUED:

140

SILVA

Excellent--we have a new prisoner, a deserter. You shall see one of these rebellious Jews for yourself . . . Bring the prisoner before us . . .

Shmuel ben Ezra is escorted into the tent.

CENTURION

Kneel before General Flavius Silva . . .

SHMUEL

(Kneeling)

I am your servant and your ally . . .

SILVA

I would have no Jew as an ally . . .

SHMUEL

I bring valuable information . . .

SILVA

We know all that is necessary of the Jewish camp . . .

141 MEDIUM SHOT - SHMUEL

141

SHMUEL

I bring news of discord and dissension. There is strife among the Jews--even as in Jerusalem. A Roman victory is assured. I have led this dissension in an attempt to aid Rome . . .

ENVOY (O.S.)

This man is a coward and incapable of leadership . . .

SILVA (O.S.)

I agree . . .

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED:

141

SHMUEL

No, no--this is not true. I have sown great agitation and dissent among my people in order to bring this futile madness to an end. I beseeched the people to surrender before the superiority of Rome. I am loyal to Rome.

142 LONG SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY

142

are in the background while Shmuel is in the foreground.

SILVA

And why have they not surrendered . . . ?

SHMUEL

They will--it is inevitable . . .

SILVA

It is inevitable--and why are you not upon the summit giving guidance and encouragement to your faction . . . ?

SHMUEL

I have come to ask mercy for them. We are friends . . .

SILVA

You have not responded to the question . . .

ENVOY

He has no faction. He is a coward and a deserter--another Josephus . . .

SILVA

You are correct--and I am already tired of this . . . Centurion, remove this man. Slay him . . .

143 CLOSE SHOT - SHMUEL

143

SHMUEL

No, my lord. I am an ally, a friend. I will plead with the Jews for surrender . . . I will do anything--but spare my life . . .

SILVA (O.S.)

Remove him . . .

144(=132)

144

A struggling and pleading Shmuel ben Ezra is removed by the guards. A dying scream is heard.

SILVA

Such make me ill . . .

ENVOY

Is this the character of the enemy that has so delayed Rome . . . ?

SILVA

Would that the enemy were of such character . . .

ENVOY

If, in a like manner, Titus would rid himself of the other fawning Josephus--the Roman court would be a more noble and comfortable place . . .

SILVA

Beckon the priest--let us have a sign from the gods . . . Religion should always be used to supplement our intelligence . . .

A Priest enters bearing a dove.

PRIEST

My lord, Silva . . .

145 LONG SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY 145

with the priest in the foreground.

SILVA

Grant us an omen, priest.  
 Speak to the gods. Tell us  
 whether the time is proper for  
 an attack upon the Jewish for-  
 tress . . . Speak to them  
 well, priest . . .

146 MEDIUM SHOT - PRIEST 146

as he moves to a small ceremonial table.

PRIEST

I will do your bidding . . . O  
 holy gods of Rome--hear our  
 prayer and lend us thy guidance.  
 Lead us to the enemy of our  
 great religion and empire.  
 Show us the way to victory.  
 Bid us to vanquish in the  
 proper time . . . O sacred  
 gods of Rome--enter this cham-  
 ber, grant us the wisdom of the  
 future . . .

The Priest slays the dove and examines it.

147 COVER SHOT - GROUP 147

SILVA

Hasten and tell us the omen . . .

PRIEST

The omen is favorable, my lord.  
 The gods bid an attack with  
 victory for the outcome.

148 FULL SHOT - SILVA 148

SILVA

Do you hear that . . . Cen-  
 turion, see that the priestly  
 word is communicated to the  
 troops. Let them hear the will

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED

148

SILVA (Con't)  
 of the gods . . . Sound the  
 drums . . . Assemble all of my  
 officers before me--the time  
 has come . . .

149 FULL SHOT - CENTURION

149

salutes and departs.

150 COVER SHOT - AREA

150

outside the tent of Silva. Drummers and trumpet-  
 ers are calling the troops to arms. Pan the area  
 which is filled with the activity of men prepar-  
 ing to do battle.

FADE:

EXTERIOR - THE WALL OF MASADA (DAY)

151 LONG SHOT - EXTENT OF THE RAMP

151

from a low angle at its base. The engine, Victor,  
 has been drawn into battle position and is pro-  
 ceeding to destroy a section of the wall of  
 Masada. It is flanked by two assault towers with  
 many archers firing from atop them.

152 LONG HIGH ANGLE SHOT - ELEAZAR

152

and the leaders are at an unattacked section of  
 the wall. They are in the left foreground of the  
 frame observing the ram which is in the right  
 background. Draw the camera back to give a long  
 cover shot of the interior of the wall and the  
 inner wall which is nearly completed and still  
 covered with workers.

153 FULL SHOT - GROUP

153

SQUADRON LEADER  
 The construction has gone as  
 well as possible--work on the

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED:

153

SQUADRON LEADER  
(Con't)

interior wall is nearly complete.

ELEAZAR

It is in proper time--the battering ram has done its work more swiftly than expected . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

The outer wall is nearly destroyed and there is no halting the Roman engine . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Arrows tipped with fire, rocks, javelins, hot oil--none of these things have halted the Romans. The towers are encased in armor. Soldiers approach and depart freely through protected passageways . . .

154 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

154

ELEAZAR

Roman engineers seldom lack in skillfulness and forethought--let us discover if they have failed on this occasion . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
(O.S.)

And if this inner wall fails us instead . . . ?

ELEAZAR

Then there is no hope--death and slavery shall be our fate . . .

155 MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB

155

JOAB

The wall shall hold--we will not die . . .

156 CLOSE SHOT - ELEAZAR

156

ELEAZAR  
 Pray to God that this is so--  
 pray that God will not fore-  
 sake our cause . . .

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - THE BASE OF THE RAMP (DAY)

157 FULL THREE SHOT

157

Romans are observing the assault.

ENVOY  
 The day grows too long . . .

SILVA  
 The work will soon be accom-  
 plished . . .

ENGINEER  
 They can do little more than  
 observe our advance . . .

158 COVER SHOT - GROUP

158

and many Roman soldiers in the background pre-  
 pared for an assault.

SILVA  
 They will soon have more to do  
 than merely observe . . . Our  
 soldiers have been made thirsty  
 with anger by their long wait  
 in the desert. They will  
 quench their thirst with Jewish  
 blood . . .

ENVOY  
 The Jews will be desperate . . .

SILVA  
 It will not matter . . .

The pounding of the ram ceases.

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED:

158

ENGINEER

A breach--they have made a  
breach . . .

SILVA

But the troops fail to advance  
. . . Centurion, go forward,  
and discover the reason for  
such delay . . . Remain as you  
are--a messenger approaches  
. . .

159 LONG SHOT - A SOLDIER

159

hurries down the ramp toward the assembled group.

160 FULL SHOT - SOLDIER

160

enters frame in background facing camera. Silva  
is in foreground of frame.

SOLDIER

(Saluting)

My lord . . .

SILVA

Speak . . .

SOLDIER

The wall has been breached, my  
lord--but a new inner wall of  
wood and dirt has been raised  
against us . . .

161 FULL SHOT - GROUP

161

SILVA

What do you say now, engineer  
. . . ?

ENGINEER

A simple obstacle, my lord.  
Let us continue with Victor--  
it is but another certain task  
for the engine . . .

(CONTINUED)



161 CONTINUED: 161

SILVA

Take word to continue with the  
ram--but with haste. I grow  
impatient with these Jewish  
tricks . . .

SOLDIER

Yes, my lord.

The soldier departs.

162 MEDIUM SHOT - ENVOY 162

ENVOY

These Jews are truly cunning  
. . .

163 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA 163

SILVA

They will require more than  
cunning to preserve their lives  
. . . Engineer . . .

164 FULL SHOT - GROUP 164

ENGINEER

Yes, my lord . . .

SILVA

Go forward--observe and bring  
me an account of this new  
barrier . . .

ENGINEER

Yes, my lord . . .

The Engineer departs.

165 CLOSE SHOT - SILVA 165

SILVA

His life will be the cost of  
failure.

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - THE BASE OF THE RAMP (DAY)

166      FULL SHOT - ENGINEER      166

is coming down the ramp in the background. Silva is facing him in the foreground of the frame. The Engineer arrives to dominate the frame.

ENGINEER

It is a clever obstacle, my lord--great lengths of wooden beam placed in parallel rows with dirt filling the space between. It stands as a pliable wall--the pounding of the engine merely strengthens it . . . I have bid the engine to a halt . . .

167      MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY      167

SILVA

What of your perfect plans now, engineer . . . ?

ENVOY

I wait to observe the victory you have promised . . . Titus awaits also . . .

ENGINEER (O.S.)

You shall have your victory, my lord . . . The barrier is of unshielded wood--and wood shall burn . . .

SILVA

And who will deliver the flames? The Jews shall slaughter any soldiers who approach the barrier . . .

168      MEDIUM SHOT - ENGINEER      168

ENGINEER

It is no difficult task, my lord. In this matter, we will take our lesson from the Jews--arrows tipped with fire, such

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED:

168

ENGINEER (Con't)  
 as the ones wasted upon our own  
 armored engines . . . We will  
 light the sky with this new  
 barrier and send our soldiers  
 to tread across its ashes . . .

SILVA (O.S.)  
 Prepare the archers then--and  
 quickly for it grows dark . . .  
 If you fail me, I will have  
 your life . . .

ENGINEER  
 I will not fail you, my lord  
 . . .

The Engineer departs.

169 FULL SHOT - SILVA, ENVOY AND CENTURION

169

ENVOY  
 What calm and satisfaction he  
 brings to the task of destruc-  
 tion . . .

SILVA  
 He will perform the same task  
 as readily for the Jews if they  
 offer any quantity of gold . . .  
 At least the Jews fight for an  
 idea . . .

ENVOY  
 Even if it is the wrong one . . .

SILVA  
 Of course . . . Centurion . . .

CENTURION  
 Yes, my lord . . .

SILVA  
 Let us grant the Jews another  
 opportunity for surrender . . .

ENVOY  
 You would grant them life . . . ?

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

169

SILVA

That is yet to be decided . . .  
 Bear a sign of truce and take  
 this offer to the Jewish leader  
 . . .

CENTURION

I am at your command . . .

ENVOY

You should not have disposed of  
 the deserter so hastily . . .

SILVA

It is as well--the sight of  
 such cowardice would merely  
 anger them further . . . Take  
 the following message to  
 Eleazar ben Yair . . .

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - WITHIN THE WESTERN WALL (LATE DAY)

170 COVER SHOT - GROUP

170

The open space within the Western Wall of Masada.  
 The new structure is prominent in the background  
 of the frame. A Centurion, with an escort bear-  
 ing a sign of truce, is meeting with Eleazar and  
 the other Jewish leaders. Many defenders are ob-  
 serving the meeting.

CENTURION

I bear a message from General  
 Silva--an offer for life in ex-  
 change for the surrender of  
 your forces . . . Men, women,  
 and children will be granted  
 life. General Silva is a man  
 of honor and his message is a  
 guarantee . . .

ELEAZAR

What are the conditions . . . ?

CENTURION

There is but a single condition  
 --life in exchange for surrender  
 . . .

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED:

170

ELEAZAR

What sort of life does Silva  
guarantee for my people . . . ?

CENTURION

This matter remains for deci-  
sion.

171 MEDIUM SHOT - SQUADRON LEADER

171

SQUADRON LEADER

A life as Roman slaves--and we  
have already witnessed the Roman  
treatment of live Jews from the  
wall of our fortress . . .

172 MEDIUM SHOT - CENTURION

172

CENTURION

These are merely the exigencies  
of battle . . . Peaceful times  
will present a superior situ-  
ation for the Jews . . .

173 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND CENTURION

173

ELEAZAR

The ring of the future does not  
bear any note of superiority  
. . .

174 FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR, CENTURION, AND LEADERS

174

CENTURION

Life in whatever guise will be  
superior to an alternative  
which must mean defeat and  
death . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Let us continue in battle . . .

CENTURION

Heed your senses--look about  
you . . . Observe your numbers

(CONTINUED)

174 CONTINUED:

174

CENTURION (Con't)  
 and the quality of your warriors  
 . . . Then observe below where  
 there are thousands of experi-  
 enced Roman soldiers who will  
 not be halted once they are re-  
 leased . . . Consider your  
 women and your children . . .  
 To prolong this situation is  
 madness. General Silva offers  
 you life--the alternative is  
 only death . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
 Let us welcome death--if it is  
 capable of approaching . . .

Many of those gathered assent.

ELEAZAR  
 You have heard . . . We will  
 remain free men . . .

175 FULL SHOT - GROUP

175

CENTURION  
 Indeed, this is madness--or un-  
 precedented bravery. The world  
 has never seen a thing of this  
 sort . . . I will inform  
 General Silva of your decision  
 . . .

The Centurion salutes Eleazar. The Romans depart.  
 Dolly camera to a Medium Shot of Eleazar.

ELEAZAR  
 We will remain free men . . . !  
 We will preserve our freedom  
 . . . !

176 COVER SHOT - THE PEOPLE

176

as they assent with the word "freedom."

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - WITHIN THE WESTERN WALL (NIGHT)

177 COVER SHOT - FLAMING INNER-WALL 177

against the darkened sky as people vainly attempt to quell it.

178 FULL SHOT - GROUP 178

observing from the steps of a building.

SQUADRON LEADER

There is no hope. The flames cannot be dampened . . . The Romans cast a shower of arrows upon any who approach to halt the flames . . .

179 COVER SHOT - FLAMING WALL 179

SQUADRON LEADER

(O.S.)

It is the certain end . . .

180 (=178) 180

SQUADRON LEADER

They will enter the fortress--but they will pay a most severe toll . . .

ELEAZAR

Death heaped upon death--and there is no action remaining to prevent such an end . . .

JOAB

There is nothing more to be done . . . ?

ELEAZAR

It is futile . . .

SQUADRON LEADER

Then let us die in a memorable manner--let others take courage and pride from our deed . . .

There are voices of assent.

181 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR 181

ELEAZAR  
Yes--let us die in a memorable  
manner so that others may take  
courage and pride from the deed  
. . . Go and gather the people  
. . . Assemble them before me  
so that I may address them in  
this hour . . .

182 MEDIUM SHOT - SQUADRON LEADER 182

SQUADRON LEADER  
And the defenders . . . ?

183 FULL SHOT - GROUP 183

ELEAZAR  
All of the people--the night  
stands as guardian. The Romans  
will not be upon us until the  
morning . . .

Squadron Leaders depart to gather the people who  
soon begin assembling.

SQUADRON LEADER  
Let us sieze whatever oppor-  
tunity and enter the Roman camp  
while they remain asleep . . .

ELEAZAR  
It is impossible . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
Then what will we do . . . ?

ELEAZAR  
The people shall decide.

A mournful song is heard.

184 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND SQUADRON LEADER 184

SQUADRON LEADER  
The people are already assem-  
bling . . .

(CONTINUED)



184 CONTINUED: 184

ELEAZAR  
They are aware already . . .

185 HIGH ANGLE COVER SHOT - THE PEOPLE 185

with the back of Eleazar in the lower foreground  
of the frame.

MAN  
Speak to us, Eleazar--tell us  
whatever there is to do . . .

WOMAN  
Preserve us . . .

MAN  
Grant us life . . .

186 REVERSE MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR 186

ELEAZAR  
God alone will grant life . . .

187(=185) 187

WOMAN  
Then help us . . .

MAN  
Speak to us . . .

There are voices of assent.

188(=186) 188

ELEAZAR  
Long ago, my brethren, we re-  
solved never to be servants to  
the Romans, nor to any other  
than God himself, who alone is  
the true and just Lord of man-  
kind. The time now comes which  
obliges us to make the resolu-  
tion true in practice . . . We  
were the very first that

(CONTINUED)

188 CONTINUED:

188

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
revolted from the Romans, and we are the last that fight against them. I cannot but regard it as a favor that God has granted us, that it is still in our power to die bravely and in a state of freedom. It is very plain that we shall be taken within a day's time--but it is still possible to die in a glorious manner. Our enemies cannot prevent this . . . We are now aware that God, who has taken the Jewish nation into favor has now condemned them to destruction. For had he either continued with favor, or been but in a lesser degree displeased with us, he would not have overlooked the destruction of so many

189 MEDIUM PANNING SHOT - PEOPLE

189

ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
men, or delivered his most holy city and sacred temple to be burnt and demolished by the enemy. We have hoped to preserve ourselves, and ourselves alone, out of the whole Jewish nation still in a state of freedom. But consider how God has shown that our hope is in vain by bringing such distress upon us with the desperate state we are now in. The nature of this fortress, which was in itself unconquerable, has not proved a means for our deliverance; and even while we have still a great abundance of food, and a great quantity of arms, we are deprived by God himself of all hope for deliverance. This is the effect of God's anger against us for

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED:

189

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 our many sins. The punishment  
 for these . . .

191(186)

191

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 sins is not received from the  
 Romans, but from God himself  
 . . . Let us receive this  
 punishment of God and execute  
 it by our own hands for these  
 will be more moderate than  
 those of the Romans . . . Let  
 our wives die before they are  
 abused and our children before  
 they have tasted of slavery;  
 and after we have slain them,  
 let us bestow that glorious  
 benefit upon one another mu-  
 tually--and preserve ourselves  
 in freedom. Let us persevere  
 in our original resolution.  
 Let the world remember that we  
 have preferred death by our own  
 hands before slavery . . .

The vocal responses are mixed.

192 COVER SHOT - PEOPLE

192

to include the Rabbi.

RABBI  
 No, no--I must speak against  
 such sin. It is for God alone  
 to grant life--and God alone  
 will take life . . .

193 FULL SHOT - RABBI

193

who turns back to camera and addresses the people.

RABBI (Con't)  
 To do as Eleazar bids is to  
 strike angrily at God. For

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED:

193

RABBI (Con't)  
 surely the sacred gift of God,  
 an immortal soul, shall not be  
 profaned by human hands--if God  
 has declared our fate to be one  
 of death by Roman hands, then  
 allow the Roman . . .

194 MEDIUM SHOT - RABBI

194

from people's POV.

RABBI (Con't)  
 hands to fulfill this fate. If  
 such death is our destiny, then  
 it shall be the will of God and  
 we will remain free of sin and  
 God will provide for us . . .  
 But to act against his dictate  
 --to ignore the sanctity of life  
 in such a manner--is to abandon  
 God and to suffer the worst of  
 consequences . . . I bear no  
 solution to our predicament but  
 I bear the knowledge that such  
 a blasphemous abandonment of  
 life shall place us in opposi-  
 tion to God--and God will re-  
 main the last and eternal  
 refuge for our people. There  
 is no other way. There is no  
 other hope.

There are voices of assent.

195 COVER SHOT - PEOPLE

195

including Hannah.

HANNAH  
 I do not bear such knowledge.  
 The ways of God shall always  
 remain a mystery to me--but I  
 do understand that death is not  
 the only way remaining for us.  
 There is yet another--and that  
 is surrender . . . They have

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED:

195

HANNAH (Con't)  
 offered us the opportunity--we  
 can regain this opportunity if  
 we act in haste . . .

MAN  
 It is too late . . .

196 COVER SHOT - HANNAH

196

is in the foreground of the frame. The people  
 are facing the camera and are favored.

HANNAH  
 It is not too late--Shmuel ben  
 Ezra has departed the summit  
 . . .

There are knowing voices.

HANNAH (Con't)  
 He has gone below to the Roman  
 camp--surely he has found life  
 . . . It does not matter that  
 I remain a slave or servant for  
 the rest of my days. What does  
 matter is that my children  
 shall have life--and whatever  
 is the quality of such a life  
 is not important. Let them see  
 the sun rise and set, let them  
 see the fullness of the years  
 which belong to them--it shall  
 be enough. What do I care for  
 freedom and such--these are  
 mere words and I am only a  
 simple person with simple de-  
 sires . . . Let men like  
 Eleazar have this thing they  
 deem to be so sacred and valu-  
 able and which they call free-  
 dom. I do not understand such  
 a thing. What I understand is  
 life. I crave life--for myself  
 and my children. And we can  
 have such life if we act in  
 haste and approach the Romans  
 . . . Let us have life . . .

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED:

196

HANNAH (Con't)

Let us retain what is our most  
certain possession . . .

There are many voices of assent.

197 FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR

197

from a low angle. He is enraged and prophetic.

ELEAZAR

Truly I have been mistaken for  
I thought to be assisting brave  
men who struggled earnestly for  
their liberty--and such as were  
resolved either to live with  
honor, or else to die. I find  
that you are such people as are  
no better than others, either  
in virtue or in courage, and  
are afraid of dying even though  
you be delivered thereby from  
the greatest of miseries. Re-  
member that the laws of our  
country, and of God himself,  
have from ancient times, and  
. . . as soon as ever we could  
use our reason, continually  
taught us, and our forefathers  
have corroborated the same doc-  
trine by their actions, and by  
their bravery of mind, that it  
is life that is a calamity to  
men, and not death for this  
death affords our souls their  
liberty, and sends them by a  
removal into their own place of  
purity and eternal life where  
they are insensible of all  
misery; for while souls are  
tied down to a mortal body,  
they are partakers of its . . .

198 MEDIUM PANNING SHOT - PEOPLE

198

(CONTINUED)

198 CONTINUED:

198

ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
 miseries; and really to speak the truth, they are themselves dead, for the union of the divine and the mortal is unsuitable . . . But suppose instead that we had been brought up under another persuasion and taught that life is the greatest good which men are capable of and that death is a calamity. Even then the circumstances we are now in ought to be an inducement to us to bear such a calamity with courage, since it is by the will of God, and by necessity that we are to die; for it now is certain that God has made such a decree against the Jewish nation. We shall be deprived of this life for we would not make a proper use of it. Do not ascribe our present condition to yourselves, nor think the Romans are the true occasion that this war we have had with them has become so destructive to us all. These things have not come to pass by their power but only because a more powerful cause has intervened . . . For we had arms, and walls and fortresses so prepared as not to be easily taken, and courage not to be moved by any . . .

199 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR

199

from a low angle.

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 dangers in the cause of liberty. But then, these advantages sufficed us but for a short time, and only raised our hopes, while they really proved to be the origin of our miseries; for

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED:

199

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 all we had has been taken from us, and all has fallen under our enemies, as if these advantages were only intended to make their victory over us the more notable. And as for those that are already dead in the war, it is reasonable that we should esteem them blessed, for they are dead in defending, and not in betraying their liberty. But as to the multitude of those that are now under the Romans, who would not pity their condition? And who would not make haste to die before he would suffer the same miseries with them? Some of them have been put upon the rack and tortured with fire and whippings, and so died. Some have been half devoured by wild beasts, and yet have been . . .

200 (=185)

200

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 reserved alive to be devoured by them a second time, in order to afford laughter and sport to our enemies. And such of those as are still alive are to be looked upon as the most miserable, who being so desirous of death, could not achieve it. And where is now that great city, the center of the Jewish nation which was fortified by so many walls, which had so many fortresses and large towers to defend it and which could hardly contain the instruments prepared for the war, and which had so many thousands of men to fight for it? Where is this city that was believed to have himself inhabiting therein? It

(CONTINUED)



200 CONTINUED:

200

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
is now demolished . . . to the  
very foundations and has nothing  
but that monument of it pre-  
served. I mean the camp of  
those that have . . .

201 CLOSE REVERSE SHOT - ELEAZAR

201

from a low angle.

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
destroyed it and which still  
dwells upon its ruins . . .  
Some unfortunate old men also  
lie upon the ashes of the  
temple, and a few women are  
there preserved alive by the  
enemy for their bitter shame  
and reproach. Now, who is  
there that revolves these things  
in his mind and yet is able to  
bear the sight of the sun,  
though he might live safe from  
danger? Who is there so unmanly  
and desirous of living as not  
to repent that he is still  
alive? And I cannot but wish  
that we had all died, before we  
had seen that holy city de-  
molished by the hands of our  
enemies, or the foundations . . .

202 CLOSE PANNING SHOT - PEOPLE

202

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
of our holy temple dug up in so  
profane a manner . . . But  
since we had a generous hope  
that deluded us, and has left  
us alone in this distress, let  
us make haste to die bravely.  
Let us pity ourselves, our  
children, and our wives, while  
it is in our own power to show  
pity to them--for we were born  
to die, as well as those whom

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED:

202

ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
(Con't)

we have begotten . . . We revolted from the Romans with great pretensions to courage, and when at the very last, they invited us to preserve ourselves, we would not comply with them. Who will not, therefore, believe that they will certainly be in a rage at us, in the event they can take us alive? Miserable will then be the young men who will be strong enough in their bodies to sustain many torments; miserable also will be those of elder years who will not be able to bear those . . .

203 (=201)

203

ELEAZAR (Con't)

calamities which young men might sustain. One man will see his wife outraged, or will be obliged to hear the voice of his son implore help of his father--when his hands are bound . . . But while our hands are still at liberty, and have a sword in them, let them be subservient to us in our glorious design. Let us die before we become slaves under our enemies, and let us go out of the world, together with our children, and our wives, in a state of freedom. This it is that our laws command us to do; this it is that our wives and children crave at our hands; nay, God himself has brought this necessity upon us, while the Romans desire the contrary and are afraid lest any of us should die before we are taken. Let us therefore make haste, and instead of affording them so

(CONTINUED)

203 CONTINUED:

203

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 much pleasure, as they hope for  
 in getting us under their power,  
 let us leave them an example  
 which shall at once cause their  
 astonishment at our death, and  
 their admiration of our hardi-  
 ness and fortitude therein . . .

204 COVER SHOT - GROUP

204

The people assent but there is no need or desire  
 to give voice to it.

205(=185)

205

ELEAZAR  
 Then go--the decision has been  
 made. Let fathers join their  
 families--let them first join  
 in prayer and then perform such  
 harsh and terrible duty . . .  
 Let the leaders assure those  
 who remain of a swift end.  
 When this duty is complete--let  
 fire destroy all possessions and  
 structures atop Masada . . .  
 Let no Roman hand gather that  
 which shall be made so sacred  
 by the blood of Jew . . . Let  
 no Roman hand gather any relic  
 of our people . . . Let no  
 Roman hand benefit from so much  
 Jewish misery . . .

The people slowly depart. Many are weeping. The  
 mournful song is heard again and is prolonged.  
 Eleazar remains.

206 FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR

206

from a high angle as he raises his arms implor-  
 ingly to God.

(CONTINUED)

206 CONTINUED:

206

ELEAZAR

My God, my God--what is this  
fate you have cast upon your  
people? What unmerciful sum  
must we offer to prove our de-  
votion . . . ? What is thy  
will . . . ? And when shall  
there be peace . . . ? When  
shall there be peace for our  
people . . . ?

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - THE GARDENED LOWER TERRACE (NIGHT)

207 COVER SHOT - GARDENED LOWER TERRACE

207

just below the summit of Masada. Joab enters  
from the stairwell. He is carrying a sack and is  
leading Miriam who is carrying the child. They  
move to dominate the frame in a full shot.

JOAB

Come--you will be hidden and  
safe here . . .

MIRIAM

What are you saying . . . ?

JOAB

I say you will be safe here . . .  
You must keep the child from  
raising any sound . . . They  
may hear it above . . .

MIRIAM

Joab . . . ?

208 CLOSE SHOT - JOAB

208

JOAB

Remain silent--the decision has  
been made . . . I will not de-  
stroy the lives of my own wife  
and child . . . These things  
are far more precious to me. Do  
as I say--remain here and I

(CONTINUED)



208 CONTINUED:

208

JOAB (Con't)  
 will find a way to return . . .  
 I must go to the summit--if I do  
 not appear they may grow sus-  
 picious . . .

MIRIAM (O.S.)  
 What of the people--they are  
 . . .

JOAB  
 Do not think of the people--  
 they have made their decision  
 and I have made mine . . .

209 MEDIUM SHOT - MIRIAM

209

MIRIAM  
 It shall be a great sin . . .

JOAB (O.S.)  
 They are the ones who commit  
 sin--did you not listen to the  
 Rabbi?

MIRIAM  
 But Eleazar . . . ?

210 MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB

210

JOAB  
 Ignore Eleazar--he is merely a  
 speaker, a convincer of men.  
 It is the Rabbi who possesses a  
 true knowledge of the law of  
 God . . . Now remain here and  
 be silent . . . I will go  
 above and conceal the entrance  
 to this level from the Romans  
 . . . They will not discover  
 us--and they will not remain at  
 Masada for long after. The  
 stench and extent of the death  
 above shall make this place too  
 uncomfortable for even the  
 hardest of men. The Romans  
 shall not linger about . . .

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED:

210

JOAB (Con't)  
 We possess enough food and drink  
 for the duration . . . I must  
 go now . . .

211 MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB AND MIRIAM

MIRIAM  
 (Embracing JOAB)  
 Joab . . . Joab--I am afraid  
 . . .

JOAB  
 There is no longer reason for  
 fear--you are safe now and I  
 will return soon to take you  
 into the peaceful mountains of  
 which we spoke . . . I must go  
 . . .

212 FULL SHOT - JOAB

212

as he departs. Miriam is in the foreground of the  
 frame watching his departure.

MIRIAM  
 Return, Joab . . .

JOAB  
 (Turning)  
 I will, I must return--I will  
 find a way . . .

Joab departs.

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - ABOVE THE TERRACE (NIGHT)

213 COVER SHOT - TERRACE ENTRANCE

213

Joab is obstructing and concealing the entrance.  
 He is interrupted by a man who first appears in  
 the background.

(CONTINUED)

213 CONTINUED:

213

JOAB

What are you doing here . . . ?  
You should be with the others  
. . .

MAN

I would go below . . . I would  
conceal myself from the Romans  
also . . .

JOAB

What do you mean . . . ?

Dolly to a full shot of Joab and the man.

MAN

You have hidden your family below . . . I would join them--  
it is the price for my silence  
. . .

JOAB

That is a lie . . .

MAN

You cannot fool me--I observed  
you entering . . .

JOAB

They are dead--as Eleazar has  
bid . . . I protect their  
bodies from tainted Roman hands  
. . .

MAN

You are lying . . .

214 CLOSE SHOT - JOAB

214

JOAB

Do not doubt me in this matter  
or I will have your life . . .

MAN (O.S.)

It is a small threat in a time  
like this . . .

(CONTINUED)



214 CONTINUED: 214

JOAB

Leave the area--take your place  
with the others . . .

215 CLOSE SHOT - MAN 215

MAN

I would go below--I will not  
die while there is an oppor-  
tunity to conceal myself from  
the Romans . . .

JOAB (O.S.)

Leave the area . . .

Dolly back to a full shot.

MAN

(Revealing a pouch  
and emptying its  
contents)

Here . . . I have more than a  
hundred silver coins--they are  
yours if you will let me pass  
. . .

216 FULL SHOT - JOAB AND MAN 216

Joab strikes the coins and scatters them upon the  
ground. The man hastens to regather them. Dolly  
to Medium Shot of man on knees.

MAN

You should not have done that--  
I will inform those who remain  
. . . Your family is alive, I  
know it now . . .

JOAB (O.S.)

They are dead . . .

MAN

Then let me see your sword--  
there must be blood upon it . . .

217 CLOSE SHOT - JOAB 217

from Man's POV

JOAB

I will let you see my sword  
. . .

Joab draws his sword.

218 CLOSE REVERSE SHOT - MAN 218

MAN

You see, it is as I have said--  
there is no blood. I will tell  
the others--it is not just . . .  
If I must die so will . . .

219 FULL SHOT - MAN AND JOAB 219

who is favored in the frame.

MAN (Con't)

. . . no . . . no . . . I do  
not mean . . .

Joab slays the man.

JOAB

I have learned to kill the  
enemy--and now I am able even to  
slay my brethren . . . And I  
will do so again if it is  
necessary . . .

DISSOLVE:

INTERIOR - THE CHAMBER OF ELEAZAR (NIGHT)

220 COVER SHOT - CHAMBER OF ELEAZAR 220

He is wearing a talith and is sunken in prayer.  
The Squadron Leaders and Rabbi Agavia enter to-  
ward the end of the prayer.

ELEAZAR

We have turned away from Your  
good commandments and judgments

(CONTINUED)

220 CONTINUED:

220

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 and it has not profited us. You  
 are righteous in all that has be-  
 fallen us, for You have acted  
 truthfully while we have wrought  
 unrighteousness . . . What  
 shall we . . .

Several flashcuts of the bodies of the slain and  
 dead Jews.

ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
 say before You, who dwell on  
 high, and what shall we re-  
 count before You, who abide in  
 the heavens? You know all  
 things, hidden and revealed.  
 You know the mysteries of the  
 universe, and the hidden secrets  
 of all living. You search out  
 the innermost reason and probe  
 the heart and mind. Nothing is  
 concealed from You, or hidden  
 from Your sight . . . May it  
 therefore be Your will, O Lord  
 our God and God of our fathers,  
 to forgive us for all our sins,  
 to pardon us for all our in-  
 iquities, and to grant us atone-  
 ment for all our transgressions  
 . . .

221 FULL SHOT - SQUADRON LEADERS

221

SQUADRON LEADER  
 The task is complete--there are  
 no survivors . . . May God  
 grant us atonement also . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
 We are the only ones who re-  
 main . . .

222 FULL SHOT - RABBI

222

RABBI  
 It is another cursed day for  
 the Jew . . .

223 MEDIUM LONG SHOT - ELEAZAR 223

avored. He is standing by the table.

224 CLOSE SHOT - TABLETOP 224

bearing fragments from broken pottery with a container of ink and a writing instrument.

ELEAZAR (O.S.)

I have prepared these ten fragments--each bears the name of a leader . . . One shall be drawn--it . . .

225(=223) 225

ELEAZAR (Con't)

shall be the task of the appointed one to fulfill the work which is so nearly complete . . . I will cause my own end--may God give me the strength . . . The Rabbi shall select the fragment . . .

226(=220) 226

JOAB

No, no . . .

Joab sweeps the fragments from the tabletop and writes on another fragment.

JOAB (Con't)

Your hands shall be sullied with the blood of our people . . . There is but a single name to be selected--that of Eleazar ben Yair . . . We have already bloodied our swords sufficiently . . . We have already caused enough death among our brethren . . . While you pray for atonement, we witness and cause the suffering and death of our people . . . We now contain a misery which makes

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED:

226

JOAB (Con't)  
 our swords too heavy to bear  
 . . . Let Eleazar be the one--  
 let him be the last survivor  
 . . . Let this misery linger  
 for the longest while within  
 the mind of Eleazar . . .

227 FULL SHOT - SQUADRON LEADERS

227

SQUADRON LEADER  
 Yes--let Eleazar share in the  
 bloodshed. Let Eleazar partici-  
 pate even more actively in his  
 own bidding . . .

SQUADRON LEADER  
 Yes--let Eleazar end this foul  
 night . . . He pours out words  
 to God while we cause blood to  
 pour upon the ground . . .

There are voices of assent.

228 MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR AND JOAB

228

ELEAZAR  
 I will complete the work if it  
 is the will of God . . .

JOAB  
 It is our will--God has re-  
 linquished Masada . . .

229 (=220)

229

SQUADRON LEADER  
 Slay us near our families--I  
 would rest in the presence of  
 my wife and child . . .

Voices of assent.

RABBI  
 I will go the way of my people  
 also--may God forgive me for

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED:

229

RABBI (Con't)  
 this deed . . . And may God  
 have mercy upon our souls . . .

ELEAZAR  
 God will have mercy upon our  
 souls . . .

JOAB  
 Enough of words--let us be  
 done . . .

The Rabbi departs and the Squadron Leaders follow him. Eleazar departs with the group while Joab lingers and remains in the chamber. Dolly to a CLOSE SHOT of Joab.

DISSOLVE:

INTERIOR - THE CHAMBER OF ELEAZAR (NIGHT)

230 (=220)

230

Eleazar returns bearing a bloodied sword. Joab is withdrawn to a corner of the chamber.

ELEAZAR  
 Come, my son--we are the only  
 ones who remain . . . Come  
 quickly--it will soon be light  
 and the Romans will be upon us  
 . . . Let us not prolong this  
 heavy affair . . .

Joab draws his sword.

ELEAZAR (Con't)  
 What does this mean . . . ?

231 MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB

231

JOAB  
 I will not die--I will save my  
 life and that of my family . . .

232      MEDIUM SHOT - ELEAZAR      232

                         ELEAZAR  
Your family . . . ?

                         JOAB (O.S.)  
Yes . . .

                         ELEAZAR  
Where are they . . . ?

233      MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB      233

                         JOAB  
Hidden--alive and safe from  
Roman hands . . .

                         ELEAZAR (O.S.)  
You must not do this thing . . .

                         JOAB  
I will not be stopped . . .

234      FULL SHOT - ELEAZAR AND JOAB      234

                         ELEAZAR  
It is a sin--and betrayal of  
the people . . .

                         JOAB  
They chose as you bid them--I  
choose as I must . . . It is  
an opportunity for you also--  
you may join us in safety and  
life . . .

                         ELEAZAR  
I cannot--I will not . . .

                         JOAB  
Then remove yourself from my  
way--I would join my wife and  
child . . .

Pause.

                         JOAB  
I say remove yourself . . .

(CONTINUED)

234 CONTINUED:

234

Pause . . . Joab approaches Eleazar in anger and desperation.

ELEAZAR

I will spare you from any further crime--may God have mercy upon you . . .

Eleazar plunges the sword into himself and slumps to the ground. Joab rushes to Eleazar and cradles him within his arms. Dolly to a high angle medium two shot.

ELEAZAR (Con't)

You must do as you will--for it is the dictate of God . . .  
May God be praised . . .

Eleazar dies. Joab gently removes and keeps the talith. He is in tears. He rests Eleazar upon the ground.

235 (=220)

235

Joab rises and becomes disoriented. He seizes a bow with a quiver of arrows and rushes from the chamber.

DISSOLVE:

EXTERIOR - THE GARDENED LOWER TERRACE (EARLY DAWN)

236 COVER SHOT - JOAB

236

enters the terrace bearing the talith, bow, and quiver. Miriam is awaiting anxiously with the child in her arms.

MIRIAM

Oh Joab . . . Joab . . .

They embrace.

Joab

Miriam . . .



237      WIDE FULL SHOT - JOAB      237

moves from Miriam. He falls to his knees in tears. Miriam places the child upon the ground and moves to console him.

MIRIAM

Oh Joab, this misery must end  
 . . .

Joab clutches her and then rises. Joab moves to the child and removes his armor and dons the talith.

JOAB

We must pray . . . we must pray  
 so this misery will end . . .  
 Come to my side, Miriam . . .  
 Come to us . . .

They kneel.

238      MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB AND MIRIAM      238

from a high angle.

JOAB (Con't)

My wife . . . my wife . . . my  
 love . . . my love . . .

Joab embraces Miriam and then plunges a dagger into her side. He is tearful and cradles her dying body.

239      CLOSE SHOT - JOAB AND MIRIAM      239

who is favored.

MIRIAM

Joab . . . my husband . . . I  
 know . . . I know . . .

Dolly to a wider angle. Miriam dies and Joab rests her head upon the ground. He removes the talith.

(CONTINUED)

239 CONTINUED:

239

JOAB

My God . . . my God--what is  
this life you have thrust upon  
us . . . ?

Joab smothers the child to death with the  
talith. He presses close to the child and rises.

240 (=236)

240

Joab gets many flowers and places them upon the  
bodies of his wife and child. Trumpets are  
heard.

241 MEDIUM SHOT - JOAB

241

from a high angle. Joab sinks to his knees along-  
side the bodies and places his sword upon the  
ground.

JOAB

My God and God of my fathers,  
accept my prayer; do not ignore  
my supplication . . . Accept  
my pain and suffering as atone-  
ment and forgive my wrongdoing,  
for against You alone have I  
sinned . . . May my death atone  
for all sins and transgressions  
which I have committed before  
You. Shelter me in the shadow  
of Your wings and grant me a  
share in the world to come . . .  
Father of orphans and Guardian  
of widows, protect my beloved  
family, with whose soul my soul  
is bound . . .

Trumpets are heard again.

JOAB (Con't)

Into Your hand I commit my soul.  
You have redeemed me, O Lord  
God of truth . . . Hear O  
Israel, the Lord our God, the  
Lord is One. The Lord, He is  
God. The Lord, He is God . . .

(CONTINUED)

241 CONTINUED:

241

Joab thrusts the sword into his body and dies grasping his wife and child. Dolly back to cover.

FADE:

EXTERIOR - THE SUMMIT OF MASADA (DAY)

242 COVER SHOT - GROUP

242

HANNAH

That is the tale, my lord . . .

SILVA

It is incredible--I would not believe it except for the fact that I am a witness to the result of these events . . .

ENVOY

They are madmen . . .

SILVA

No--if it were merely so I would not be concerned . . . It is far more than mere madness--it is a manner of bravery such as the world has not come to witness until this day . . . Centurion--lead these people from the vicinity. Give ample provisions and set them safely upon the way . . .

HANNAH

We are grateful, my lord . . .

243 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA

243

SILVA

You shall come to lose such gratitude--of this I am convinced . . . Leave safely but bear these events within your mind--for it is now your poor destiny to bear the burden of these sorry memories and to

(CONTINUED)

243 CONTINUED: 243

SILVA (Con't)  
ponder constantly whether you  
have acted in a righteous man-  
ner . . . Go . . .

244 FULL SHOT - GROUP 244

CENTURION  
Come, follow me . . .

They depart.

245 MEDIUM SHOT - SILVA AND ENVOY 245

SILVA  
They shall be miserable and  
forsaken creatures for the re-  
mainder of their days . . .

ENVOY  
The soldiers return . . . They  
bear a body . . .

246 LONG SHOT - CENTURION 246

returns followed by soldiers bearing the body of  
Eleazar. They place the body upon the ground  
before Silva. Silva's POV.

247 FULL SHOT - GROUP 247

CENTURION  
We have done with your command,  
my lord . . . We believe this  
to be the body of the Jewish  
leader--Eleazar ben Yair . . .  
There are no survivors, my  
lord, we have searched with  
great care . . .

SILVA  
Eleazar ben Yair--brave and  
worthy foe . . . Would I have  
dared to ask so much of my  
people . . .? Would I have

(CONTINUED)

247 CONTINUED:

247

SILVA (Con't)  
 acted with equal courage . . . ?  
 I wonder . . . Would that I  
 had never come to Masada--to  
 ever witness such events . . .  
 Let us depart quickly from this  
 miserable place . . .

248 MEDIUM SHOT - ENVOY

248

ENVOY  
 This is no time for regret--  
 Titus will be pleased. It is  
 another Roman victory . . .

249 CLOSE SHOT - SILVA

249

SILVA  
 This is no victory--we are the  
 conquered ones. We will be  
 remembered--my name will be  
 remembered, cursed lot--not as  
 victors. We are the defeated  
 ones--and we will be remem-  
 bered only because of their  
 courage and conviction . . .  
 It is a defeat--that is the  
 best we may call it--for we  
 shall only be seen as the op-  
 pressor. It is the fortitude  
 and victory of these Jewish  
 warriors which shall be remem-  
 bered . . .

ENVOY (O.S.)  
 They are dead and forgotten.  
 They are conquered--and now  
 Judea is conquered . . .

SILVA  
 Such people are not conquered--  
 such people shall not be con-  
 quered. We have taken Jewish  
 lives--no, we cannot even make  
 such a claim . . . It is only  
 a poor day for the Roman . . .  
 Would that we had stormed

(CONTINUED)

249 CONTINUED:

249

SILVA (Con't)  
across the wall with great  
losses suffered at the hands of  
an enemy . . . Would that we  
had attained this summit in  
such a forceful manner--this we  
could call a victory. But  
Masada has not been defeated  
. . .

Start dolly back to a wide full shot and then to  
an aerial shot focusing on the body of Eleazar  
ben Yair. All depart as the image fades.

SILVA (Con't)  
Masada has not fallen . . .  
What has happened I cannot  
fully comprehend . . . But it  
is no Jewish defeat for Masada  
has not truly fallen--nor, by  
whatever designation, shall it  
ever fall again . . . Masada  
stands--by this deed Masada  
stands forever . . . And  
Masada shall not fall again  
. . . Masada shall not fall  
again . . .

THE END

#### PART IV

## ANALYSIS

In this section of analysis, I will state some of the differences between film and theatre as they occur herein. I will exemplify these differences by references to the scripts I have written myself. I will not cite every possible example but merely those sufficient to establish a point of significance or difference. For the sake of order and clarity, I will employ six subheadings under which these points may reasonably establish themselves. Some of these points are obvious and some of them are not so obvious. However, an awareness of all of these points and their proper place of application is necessary for the most successful effort in either medium.

### Realism

In performing the stage version of Masada, two methods of production suggest themselves. First, a director may utilize symbolic setpieces to suggest locales along with space-staging or the simultaneous location of settings upon the stage using lighting to shift from one locale or piece to another. Pieces may be "flown" with ease and lights changed as easily. There is little difficulty here.



Second, a director may establish one large abstract or formal setting and move the actors and action from place to place with only a shift in lighting to establish the new locale. Each method is common and effective. What is lacking in such stage performances is the great realism in setting which the film can provide. In the film, walls and masses of soldiers need not be suggested or implied, they may be shown and observed. The siege of the fortress need not be imagined, it may be witnessed as in shots number one through number fourteen of the film script. Such realism and breadth of environment could not be established upon the stage. In the film, they are commonplace and expected. On page forty-nine of the stage script, servants are sent offstage to gather refreshments for no other reason than to establish or suggest some breadth in the environment. Such directions are unnecessary and eliminated in the film script. Establishment of extensive and adequate measures of environment is unavoidable in the film. The scene with Silva and the Military Engineer beginning on page forty of the stage script has as a principal purpose the display of the model of Masada for the benefit and orientation of the audience. In the theatre such a scene was deemed necessary. In the film script, the scene is left nearly intact but for the entirely different reason of conveying much of the essential information necessary for the progression of the story or for the presentation of necessary

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facts. The significance of this scene has been drastically altered from its usage upon the stage to its usage within the film. Similarly, the bodies of the large numbers of dead defenders of Masada could only be imagined in the stage version, whereas a series of flashcuts at shot number 220 gives the film audience an actual view of these same bodies. In this type of realism, the stage version cannot compare with the film version. This is one obvious advantage that the film has over the theatre. Admittedly, this advantage is at a monetary cost but such a factor is not considered crucial in this discussion.

#### Dialogue

The theatre is an art form extremely dependent upon the successful and elaborate usage of language and dialogue. The film is very different in this respect. Film is primarily concerned with the depiction of story or idea through the use of image and symbol. The appeal is to the eye rather than to the ear. An audience enters the theatre prepared for a great deal of dialogue and rhetoric. They expect such and accept such accordingly. A film audience generally enters the theatre with an entirely different set of expectations. Accordingly, the writer must alter his creation. Whereas the stage writer must depend primarily upon the employment of words to convey meaning, the film writer must depend primarily upon the employment of image to convey meaning. This is another way of stating that

eloquence and an appeal to intellect and understanding are most proper in the theatre whereas fewer words and a greater appeal to sensation and emotion are most proper in the film. At shot number seventy-five, there is the shortening of a lengthy passage from the Old Testament. A dissolve suggesting a lapse in time is used to merely imply the presentation of the passage. In the theatre, the full passage could have been presented and accepted. During a film, it would become nearly intolerable. Such opportunities for the elimination of words were rare between the two different versions of Masada. This is a common difficulty in the adaptation of a film script from a stage script. This type of problem in adaptation will be considered in a later section. It is very difficult to convey in images essentially that which has been conceived for conveyance through words essentially and primarily.

### Acting

The stage actor may continue a performance in an uninterrupted manner. He is visible to the audience and his performance changes as a result of interaction with the audience. There are advantages and disadvantages to such a situation. The lack of interruption may allow him to sustain a more intense and profound performance. The performance may be gratifying to his ego to the extent that he derives satisfaction from being constantly before the eyes of an audience. Again, if the audience is responsive in a

positive manner, the actor may find his performance enhanced to a considerable extent. The opposite is true also. The situation is somewhat different for the film actor. He is often not visible to the audience and there is no possibility of interaction with the audience. His performance is often recorded or observed a bit at a time. The ego of the film actor may not derive nearly the satisfaction that the stage actor may derive since in many respects he is often subordinated for the sake of some unique image or special effect. More importantly, the actor's performance is a fixed one. There is no interaction with an audience. This may prove to be an advantage or disadvantage depending upon the quality of the actor and his mood at a particular moment. Further, since his performance is recorded a bit at a time due to the demands of cinematography, the film actor rarely develops the intensity and profundity in a performance of which he is usually capable. The presentation of film and stage versions of the script would vary accordingly. The film actor, however, does always have the slight advantage of not bustling about to change costume or setting. For instance, at shot number 100, Eleazar is at the table, in his chamber. At shot number 101, he is at the Western Wall. There is no difficulty in such a change with the film version as the scenes will probably be recorded on different days. On the stage, the change is immediate and may provide a bit of difficulty.

### Effects

In the film version of Masada, fades were used at shots number thirty-eight and number 241 to suggest lengthy passages of time. Elsewhere dissolves were used to suggest briefer passages of time. These are rather unambiguous customs which film audiences have learned to accept. Their meaning is evident in the context of the film. Lights dimmed and raised are used by custom in the theatre to suggest the same but it is not likely that differences in duration of time can be so clearly impressed with the use of lights as with the use of dissolves and fades. Again, only lights can be used to suggest the flaming walls of Masada in the stage version but, as at shot number 177 of the film version, the walls themselves can be seen in flames. The film does not need to resort to the use of artificial effects with the same frequency and necessity as does the theatre. At shot number sixty, a match dissolve is used to make the transition from scene to scene. This is a very smooth sort of transition. The theatre cannot focus audience attention with nearly such effectiveness or subtlety and therefore does not have the advantage and opportunity of such facile movement and transition as does the film.

### Audience

The physical relationship of the theatre audience to the performance upon the stage is fixed. The distance between audience and performer along with the particular

sightline is constant from beginning to end. In sharp distinction, the film audience is granted an everchanging relationship between itself and the film-event. Through the use of varying camera angles, the film audience has its attention redirected and refocused with a constancy and sharpness which is not possible in the theatre. At shot number 202, the camera closely pans the people as they respond to the words of Eleazar. We are allowed to see concrete individuals and exact emotions in a manner that is beyond the capacity of the theatre. Likewise with the numerous close and medium shots which are included in the film script. Attention may be drawn to objects, also, in a manner beyond the capacity of the theatre. At shot number 107, Eleazar draws in the ground using a sword to show the intended structure of the inner-wall of Masada. Such precision of focus is extremely difficult in the theatre. The ability for sharp focus and the easy direction of audience attention which is commonplace in the film gives a measure of capability and opportunity which is beyond the realm of the theatre.

#### Adaptation

Even though the stage version of the play is strongly influenced by the practices of the cinema such as with the usage of a flashback at the opening and the many scene changes throughout, it remains essentially a play. Meaning and action and character are implicit or explicit

or directed by the language and dialogue employed. As the meaning of the stage version is so inextricably involved with words, an adaptation to the film necessitates a commensurate dependence upon words--assuming that the playwright's intention is to be preserved. Cinematic techniques only embellish the film version of Masada; they do not form its basis as might be more proper. This could be considered a flaw in the film version. More properly, it is a common and unavoidable shortcoming in a film work honestly adapted from a stage work. The fact that one has not used the full capacity of a medium does not require that the medium itself should not have been employed. An independent script crafted to convey meaning through image to the greatest possible extent would have been preferable to an adaptation based on a stage work. Adaptation from a stage work leaves one with a "wordy" film script. This is acceptable or unacceptable depending upon the taste of the viewer and the quality of the final product. If adaptation is the task, then adaptation to the film medium from the medium of the novel would have been more fortunate. The novel is not dependent upon dialogue between characters to the same extent as the stage play. The novel also depends heavily upon narrative descriptions of character and environment. Such descriptions can be most readily transposed to the images and shots which are proper to the film medium. A less verbose and more effective film script can



be gathered from the novel which allows a greater extent of freedom and more amplitude for adaptation and transposition to cinematic terms. A play is primarily a highly concentrated medium of words. A film is primarily a highly concentrated medium of images. To go from the one to the other is a difficult task which will always favor the basic or initial script which, presumably, has been properly crafted to its medium.

♦

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