

The Fullness of Time

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

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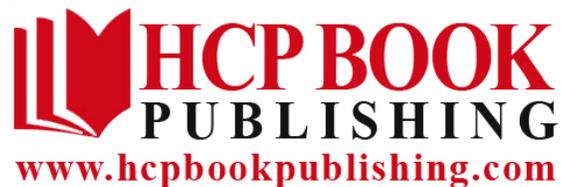


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Characters

THOMAS

DAVID

PETER

JACOB

CAIAPHAS

YOUNG MAN

EXTRAS (Male & Female)

Setting

An Old Market scene with stalls, merchandise, sellers, and buyers.

(You are limited only by your imagination.)

The Story

This play examines the season and times when Jesus Christ was born into this world. In a small marketplace in Bethlehem, four friends gather to sell whatever merchandise they can get their hands on. It is a time of Roman rule, when Rome has united the world military-wise, while Greece has influenced the world culturally. There is one government, and predominantly one language, and much trouble.

Jacob has been slowly sinking away from the normal cycle of life to pursue knowledge in light of a series of dreams he has been having. He has calculated that the birth of the Messiah is very near, amidst the skepticism of his three friends, but none of them truly know just how accurate Jacob's predictions are.

Play Details

Cast: 6 Males | Extras (Male & Female)

Length: 60 Minutes (5 Scenes)

Genre: Biblical Drama

THE SCRIPT



SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP

Outdoor market, afternoon. Old friends Thomas, David, Peter, and Jacob are standing in front of one of the stalls talking.

THOMAS: *(smiles at the DAVID, PETER, and JACOB)* Beautiful day, isn't it?

DAVID: At least it's not as cold—

JACOB: What's so beautiful about it? Just a day like any other.

The other three men are surprised at his reaction.

PETER: What's wrong, Jacob? Have a fight with your wife?

JACOB: No, I didn't have a fight with my wife. I'm just tired of the way we live.

DAVID: The way we live? We eat. We sleep. We go to the marketplace, where we solve all the problems of the empire.

JACOB: You make light of it. But what do we have? Absolutely nothing.

THOMAS: You must have gotten up on the wrong side of the bed.

JACOB: What's it to you? And for your information, I always get up on the right side of the bed. Never the left.

DAVID: You believe in that—that superstition? That you can't get up on the left side of the bed?

PETER: It's bad luck.

DAVID: What's bad luck?

PETER: Getting up on the left side of the bed.

THOMAS: A ridiculous superstition. That's all.

PETER: You think so, do you? Well, let me tell you about my brother-in-law. One day he was in a hurry and didn't scoot over on the bed. You know what happened?

THOMAS: Yeah, he got up on the left side.

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PETER: (*Giving THOMAS a disgusted look*) He fell and broke his ankle, that's what happened.

THOMAS: That's ridiculous.

JACOB: As I was saying before all this nonsense came up—

DAVID: What were you saying, Jacob?

JACOB: Don't you see anything wrong with the way we live?

DAVID: Well, it would be nice not to have to worry about where the next meal is coming from?

THOMAS: That's just the way it is. Nothing we can do about it?

JACOB: I'm not suggesting anything. I'm telling you. We shouldn't have to live the way we do.

THOMAS: We're alive. The four of us have our health.

PETER: Let's listen to what Jacob has to say.

THOMAS: (*Shrugs*) So go on, Jacob.

JACOB: Soldiers patrol the streets. Pushing or kicking us out of the way if we don't move fast enough.

DAVID: That's just the way it is, Jacob.

JACOB: The way it is. Do you think it was always that way?

PETER: So far as I can remember.

JACOB: You're not thinking, Peter. Do you suppose it was that way back in the time of the ancients?

PETER: The ancients? Who are we talking about here?

JACOB: People like the prophets. People like Moses who wasn't afraid to lead his people to the promised land.

DAVID: To the promised land. Some promised land, if you asked me.

JACOB: That's what I'm saying, David. The nobility treats us like vermin. Do you think they even consider us human beings?

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THOMAS: Of course, they don't.

PETER: They chop off people's heads for no reason. Just because they're in a bad mood.

DAVID: And look at the taxes. It's almost impossible for most families to make it through the year. The farmers have to give Caesar Augustus so much grain, so many goats or cows, they hardly have enough to sustain themselves till the following year.

THOMAS: And since we're talking about things like this, look at the hovels we live in compared to the nobility.

JACOB: Like night and day.

PETER: And look how Herod lives.

DAVID: Herod? Nothing like Augustus and his marble palaces.

THOMAS: And people's morals. We've become completely ungodly. Living together in sin. The wealthy men having concubines instead of wives.

PETER: And the risk we're taking right now. Think about that.

JACOB: What risk, Peter?

PETER: What if Herod's men or the emperor's men heard us talking? What do you think would happen?

THOMAS: Well, I for one am not afraid to express my opinion.

PETER: But we *are* being foolhardy. Any of the people in the market could be the king's spies.

Pause.

THOMAS: What can we do, but enjoy life until our time comes? Absolutely nothing.

JACOB: Maybe there is something.

DAVID: What are you going to do, Jacob? Start a revolution?

JACOB: Nothing like that. Just pray, maybe.

DAVID: Pray? For what?

JACOB: You know the prophecies as well as I do.

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DAVID: Psh!

THOMAS: What prophecies?

JACOB: I'm talking about the Son of God.

THOMAS: We're all children of God.

JACOB: I'm talking about the Savior, the Messiah.

DAVID: Do you believe that old tale?

JACOB: Of course, I believe it. It's been prophesied by—

PETER: It's nothing more than a myth.

JACOB: It's no myth, Peter. All you need is faith. The Savior will be born.

DAVID: But when? After we're long dead and gone?

JACOB: Or maybe tomorrow or the next day.

PETER: Maybe never.

THOMAS: Brothers, I must go check on my wife. She is due to give birth any day now. I need a good midwife.

JACOB: Seems a lot of babies are being born in Bethlehem these days.

PETER: And they grow fast too. My son is already one year old. Can you believe that? It's been one year since I circumcised him. Feels like yesterday.

DAVID: I feel old. All my children are grown.

David, Peter, and Thomas turn to look at Jacob.

JACOB: Please, not now!

The three shrugs, and walk away.

DAVID: *(speaks softly to Thomas)* You think his wife will ever return?

THOMAS: Nope!

JACOB: I can hear you.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP

Outdoor market, evening.

Thomas is making a sale.

Jacob is busy looking over some scrolls, making comparisons and scribbling notes at his stall. He misses a few customers in the interim.

THOMAS: *(walking over)* You are missing quite a few sales. Any particular reason why?

JACOB: I had a dream last night.

THOMAS: Another dream. What was it this time? Parting of the Red Sea?

JACOB: It was a proclamation of sorts. I could not see the man talking, but he was bigger than the average man.

THOMAS: Alien, perhaps?

JACOB: Maybe I should keep my thoughts to myself. Avoid being made fun of.

THOMAS: Cmon. Talk.

JACOB: In a minute.

THOMAS: You know if the Roman's catch you with these scrolls, you are going to be in big trouble.

JACOB: I have to return these to the temple by sundown.

THOMAS: And how did you get them from the temple? Peasants are not allowed within those walls.

JACOB: *(smiling)* It's always good to know somebody, who knows somebody.

Jacob finds a piece of papyrus and reads from it.

JACOB: This is what I heard in my dream. "But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law."

Pause.

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Jacob maintains eye contact with Thomas, waiting for a response. Thomas looks confused.

THOMAS: And – what does that mean?

JACOB: I believe it is speaking to the timing of the coming Messiah. What is the single most irritating system we exist under today?

THOMAS: The law, of course.

JACOB: Exactly.

THOMAS: It is also the most financially lucrative system for marketplace dwellers like you and me.

JACOB: Life is more than money.

THOMAS: You say that now because you have been relieved of your responsibility.

Jacob looks sad.

JACOB: My wife will return when she is ready. We probably needed a break from each other anyway.

THOMAS: Or, maybe your obsession with all this Messiah stuff is just not healthy for you and those you associate with.

JACOB: I did offer to keep my obsession to myself.

Thomas has a customer. He goes over to attend to them.

Peter appears, goes over to Jacob.

PETER: I am all out of fleece. Can you believe it? Something is changing. I have never sold so much merchandise in my entire career.

JACOB: You call this a career?

PETER: Do you have a better word for it?

JACOB: Survival comes to mind.

PETER: Embrace who you are my brother.

Thomas comes over.

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THOMAS: Your celebration will be short-lived when the Romans come to collect their tax.

Peter's countenance falls.

THOMAS: *(slaps Peter on the back)* Not to worry. If Jacob is right, the Messiah is coming to make all things right.

PETER: We are still talking about that?

Jacobs shots Thomas a disapproving look.

PETER: Is that why your stall is covered in scrolls, Jacob? Did you steal them?

JACOB: Don't you feel it?

THOMAS: Feel what?

Jacob points to a few people standing around, seemingly joyful and more happy than usual.

JACOB: There is great anticipation among the Jews, despite the Roman rule. We should be groveling in self-pity, but instead, there is joy.

THOMAS: I don't feel anything.

PETER: I don't feel anything, but I smell something.

THOMAS: What?

PETER: Roman pigs.

Everyone takes their position at their stalls.

Jacob attempts to scrape up all his paperwork and put them away. He doesn't get through hiding it all before CAIAPHAS marches on with TWO SOLDIERS behind him.

CAIAPHAS shoves a few people out of the way and stops at Jacob's stall. Jacob is holding a scroll in his hand. Caiaphas extends his hand to Jacob. Jacob hands him the scroll. Caiaphas reads what is written on the scroll.

CAIAPHAS: *(looking incredulously at Jacob)* What is this?

JACOB: Some reading material I got from the temple, sir.

(Pause)

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CAIAPHAS: *(to Soldiers)* Bring him.

The TWO SOLDIERS pick Jacob up, and they follow Caiaphas offstage.

A beat.

THOMAS: I keep warning him about this. He never listens.

PETER: What will they do to him?

THOMAS: *(sighs)* Make an example out of him, I suppose.

PETER: You will understand now why he seeks this Messiah. How else will anything change around here, unless somebody changes it?

THOMAS: So, one man is going to come and take on the whole Roman Empire? That makes sense to you?

PETER: But, if the Jews are right, He will be more than just a man.

Pause.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 3

LIGHTS UP

Outdoor market, evening.

Thomas, Peter, and David gather at Jacob's stall.

THOMAS: *(sighs deeply)* No sign of the lad.

PETER: It's been four days.

DAVID: And no one has heard anything.

THOMAS: *(glances around nervously)* We should talk in hush tones. I don't like how this looks. Those Romans are capable of anything.

PETER: People disappear all the time. But this is our friend. There must be something we can do.

THOMAS: There is nothing we can do, but wait for word.

DAVID: Would they do him harm? For a few ancient scrolls?

THOMAS: Not just any scroll. It's the word of the prophets. The prophets are highly esteemed by most Jews. They speak of a government and rule that would one day come and override all other governments.

DAVID: No wonder Herod is on edge.

PETER: There is talk that the time is near.

JACOB: *(O.S.)* Nearer than we think.

Jacob enters, disheveled and looking very tired.

The three gather around him, hugging him. He pushes them aside and takes a seat, unstrapping his sandals.

PETER: You look terrible. What did they do to you?

JACOB: This is my own doing. All the Soldiers did was give me a stern warning, and two lashes and set me free.

Pause.

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THOMAS: It took you four days to get back here?

JACOB: I heard talk. Everybody is talking. There is a tale of a woman who miraculously had a male child in a little town near Nazareth, just outside of Jerusalem. I had to go and see for myself.

PETER: Since when is having a male child a miracle?

JACOB: When the woman is almost 100 years old.

Pause.

Thomas, David and Peter's mouth drops open.

DAVID: That's not possible.

JACOB: It is. I saw it myself. Two elderly parents now have a son by natural means.

THOMAS: Old wives tale. Isn't there another story like that in those scrolls you are always reading?

JACOB: Yes, Sarah. Our foreparents. They had Israel when they were old as well.

THOMAS: And you believe this?

JACOB: It would be hard – if I didn't see it myself.

PETER: And you walked 70 miles just to investigate this preposterous tale?

JACOB: Yes.

DAVID: And --?

JACOB: I met the parents. I held the child. His name is John. A name given by angels.

Pause.

PETER: What does this mean? Surely the world is coming to an end.

JACOB: No, not yet. The Messiah is coming. The whole world has been in preparation for this.

DAVID: And according to your studies, where will this child be born?

JACOB: (*excitedly*) Here. In Bethlehem.

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THOMAS: Well, at least we will get to see this one with our own eyes.

JACOB: Thomas, why do you have to see to believe it to be true?

THOMAS: That is the law of nature. If it is not visible, it cannot be real.

JACOB: Do you see the wind?

THOMAS: I have no time for your philosophical mind games. I have a young son waiting for these strong arms to embrace his little body and keep him warm.

JACOB: (*excited*) You have a son?

THOMAS: Three days old. You should see the little champ. Hewn from my own seed.

Jacob appears sad.

DAVID: (*notices Jacob's fallen expression*) What is it?

JACOB: A dream I had. I saw a lot of dead babies. Murdered by Roman soldiers.

THOMAS: They are cruel, but not that barbaric.

PETER: With the right motivation, a cruel man can become barbaric.

DAVID: Tell us plainly. Why are you so sure of what you believe?

JACOB: Because it makes sense.

PETER: It makes sense to you. I see no one else rallying around your cause.

JACOB: Think about it, brothers. If not now, then when? Rome has unified the world under one government. The empire is relatively peaceful, oppressed, but peaceful. Travel is easier now than it has ever been. Most of the world is speaking the same language. Any good news now, can travel through this world with ease.

DAVID: News does travel fast these days.

JACOB: Exactly. Consider the fact as well that Jews have lost their faith in all other false god. Yahweh is the only God with a proven track record. All other false idols have failed to deliver us from Roman conquerors. We have hit rock bottom in our faith --- spiritually depleted, empty, there's a void that needs to be filled. Am I making any sense to you?

THOMAS: Keep talking.

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JACOB: All mystery religions are emphasizing a savior-god and requires worshippers to offer bloody sacrifices. If God sends someone as the ultimate sacrifice, will that not be believable to all?

DAVID: Wait, what? The Messiah is a sacrifice? What do you mean?

JACOB: I don't fully understand it, but somehow His government on earth will be established in blood, His blood.

THOMAS: Okay, stop talking. My brain just entered the red zone. I need a drink.

Thomas quickly exits.

PETER: By the way, we are glad you are okay. Had us worried there for a minute.

JACOB: Yeah, I am fine. I do need a favor.

DAVID: Sure, anything.

JACOB: I need you guys to cover my stall for me for a few days. I need some time.

DAVID: Sure, no problem.

Jacob pats them on the shoulder, exits.

PETER: I am concerned about him. He has no awareness of the real world anymore. All he cares about are ideologies and fantasies.

DAVID: I have seen many like him. He will hit a dead end eventually, and snap back to reality.

PETER: I have a feeling the road he now travels has no dead ends.

Pause.

DAVID: Good news. My wife is pregnant.

PETER: Wow, David. You are the eighth person today to echo such words in my ears.

Pause.

DAVID: Remind me never to tell you anything.

PETER: You would tell me just the same.

They move towards their stall.

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LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 4

LIGHTS UP

Outdoor market, evening.

Peter and David gather at Jacob's stall, attending to a customer.

Thomas walks on, waits for the customer to leave.

THOMAS: No sign of Jacob?

PETER: Not a word.

DAVID: I went by his cot yesterday. I couldn't find him.

THOMAS: There are some strange things happening in Bethlehem.

PETER: I notice an increase in military personnel.

DAVID: Augustus Caesar issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. Everyone should go to their own country.

THOMAS: Sounds like an influx of potential customers heading our way.

PETER: And I am low on stock.

DAVID: So are our suppliers.

THOMAS: We have enough. Bethlehem's population is still a bit small.

DAVID: The Inns are already beginning to fill up.

Jacob rushes on, clumsily carrying several scrolls in his hand. Some fall from him, and he keeps turning back to pick them up.

JACOB: Brothers, I have figured it out.

Jacob lays the scrolls on his stall, looks around nervously to ensure the coast is clear.

DAVID: You look a bit uneasy, Jacob. What's going on?

Jacob unrolls several scrolls.

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JACOB: Daniel spoke of the ‘seventy weeks’ or the seventy ‘sevens.’ In context, these weeks or sevens refer to groups of seven years, not seven days. So, from the point of that prophecy to the fulfillment of it, we are looking at 70 years or weeks, which really is years.

THOMAS: Can you slow down a bit with the numbers.

JACOB: (*breathes, and tries to speak slower*) The countdown of the seventy weeks begins with (*Reads from a scroll*) “the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.” This command was given by Longimanus in four forty-five B.C., according to Nehemiah. After seven “sevens” plus sixty-two “sevens” or sixty-nine times seven years, the prophecy states, (*reads from scroll*) “the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary” and that the “end will come like a flood,” meaning major destruction. This is an unmistakable reference to the Savior’s death on the cross.

DAVID: Am I the only one who is not following any of this?

THOMAS: Jacob, you are not making any sense.

PETER: Thank you, Thomas. I didn’t want to be the one to say that.

JACOB: Think about it.

THOMAS: Think about what? I can barely remember a few words from that epistle you just spurted out. And how did you get a hold of those scrolls, again?

JACOB: Just listen, okay. If the Messiah dies at the end of sixty-nine weeks, then by my calculations, that is 33 or 34 years from now.

THOMAS: So?

JACOB: I am thinking He is either already here, or He will be born this year.

Pause.

Three looks at one as if he is crazy.

JACOB: You are all looking at me weird.

THOMAS: Why are you doing this to yourself? You have abandoned your business, ignored your friends, you look like you haven’t eaten in days, and for what?

JACOB: Look around you guys. Nothing is changing. It’s getting worst. We get up every morning, come here, solicit people to buy from us, then go home to our wives, go to bed and wake up to do it all over again. There has to be more to life than that.

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PETER: Is that what this is about? Spending time with our wives?

JACOB: Is that all you heard?

DAVID: It's obvious that you are hurting because your wife left, but this is not the way to heal from that.

JACOB: I am not trying to heal.

THOMAS: Distracting yourself from pain has never made it hurt any less.

JACOB: You are completely abandoning the point I am trying to make.

THOMAS: No, you are abandoning the point we want to make. There is no Messiah, or savior coming. It's a smoke screen like everything else.

JACOB: I don't believe that.

THOMAS: Jacob, who cares what you believe?

PETER: The world has gone to the dogs, and there is no knight in shining armor coming to save us. We have to save ourselves.

Pause.

Jacob sinks into sadness.

JACOB: Unfortunately, we can't.

A YOUNG MAN hurriedly runs onstage, trying desperately to find someone to talk with.

Young Man comes over to Jacob's stall.

YOUNG MAN: Excuse me. My wife is about to give birth, and I can find no place for rest. All the inns are full. Can you help me?

THOMAS: We sell merchandise, dear sir. We don't rent rooms.

YOUNG MAN: I am desperately in need, and out of options. I don't know what to do.

THOMAS: I know a very good midwife. Her husband operates that Inn over there.

YOUNG MAN: I already stopped by. There was no room.

THOMAS: And who did you speak with?

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YOUNG MAN: The Innkeeper himself.

THOMAS: Young Man, when seeking opportunities through the pathway of pity, one must ensure that the woman in charge beholds thy plight.

YOUNG MAN: I don't understand, sir.

THOMAS: Go back to the Inn, and ask for Marie. Make sure she sees your aching wife and desperate case.

YOUNG MAN: Thank you kindly, sir.

The YOUNG MAN leaves.

PETER: Poor man, to be greeted with such a fate as this, on such a night like this.

DAVID: I hope they find shelter for the night. It's a shame to have traveled to here, only to have your child being born on the side of the road.

Peter is staring at a point offstage. He quickly moves towards his stall.

PETER: Romans are coming.

They look in the direction Peter is looking in, then back at Jacob, but Jacob is gone.

They each go to their respective stalls and try to look normal.

CAIAPHAS enters with his soldiers. He is looking at the faces of everybody until he gets to Jacob's empty stall.

CAIAPHAS: (At Thomas) Where is the owner of this stall?

THOMAS: I haven't seen him, sir.

Caiaphas looks at the empty stall, then at Thomas, at David, at Peter.

CAIAPHAS: You three. Come closer.

Thomas, David, and Peter come and stand before Caiaphas.

CAIAPHAS: How loyal are you to the Roman Emperor?

THOMAS: Very loyal, sir. We pay our alms, sometimes more than expected.

CAIAPHAS: Good.

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Caiaphas steps closer to Thomas.

CAIAPHAS: Some scrolls have gone missing from the temple. You wouldn't know anything about that, would you?

THOMAS: No, sir.

CAIAPHAS: Your friend here (*points at the empty stall*) seems to have a knack for acquiring those scrolls.

THOMAS: So, you think he took them, sir?

CAIAPHAS: He is definitely a person of interest.

THOMAS: I see.

CAIAPHAS: Where can I find him?

THOMAS: I don't know, sir.

Caiaphas steps over to Peter.

CAIAPHAS: How about you? Do you know where he is?

PETER: I do not --- sir.

Caiaphas walks over to David, who is trembling in his boots.

CAIAPHAS: How about you?

David can only shake his head.

ONE OF THE SOLDIERS pulls off a glove, and feel the seat at the stall.

SOLDIER: Sir, this seat is still warm.

Caiaphas expression changes.

CAIAPHAS: Lock this place down. Find him.

The Soldiers apprehend Thomas, David, and Peter.

Other Vendors in the background scatter, leaving their goods behind.

LIGHTS OUT

SCENE 5

LIGHTS UP

Outdoor market, night.

Most of the stalls are empty.

Peter and David drop coins in a jar already filled with coins. They are getting ready to leave.

DAVID: I wonder if the Emperor would be willing to decree a census every other week.

PETER: Demand would be greater than we can supply.

DAVID: We would find a way, I am sure.

Pause.

They both glance at Jacob's stall.

DAVID: I sure miss him.

PETER: So, do I.

DAVID: Anyway, it's already dark. We need to get home.

PETER: Oh yes.

They get ready to leave.

A shadow appears behind a stall.

JACOB: (V.O.) Is the coast clear?

David and Peter quickly glance around.

DAVID: Yes, come on out.

Jacob steps out of the shadows. He looks disheveled, tired.

PETER: You don't look so good.

JACOB: I will be fine.

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They embrace for a moment.

DAVID: They are still looking for you. You cannot stay in Bethlehem.

JACOB: I know, but I had to come back and warn you.

PETER: Warn us?

JACOB: You need to take your families, and leave Bethlehem --- do it as soon as you can.

DAVID: Why?

JACOB: "A cry was heard in Ramah—weeping and great mourning. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted, for they are dead." I see death coming.

Pause.

Jacob is looking up at the sky.

DAVID: Bethlehem is our home. We can't leave. We won't.

JACOB: I know --- but I had to try. If you stay, you must be willing to accept responsibility for whatever happens.

DAVID: What reason would anyone have to kill innocent children?

JACOB: Children are sacrificed to Molech every full moon.

PETER: So, it's a sacrifice?

JACOB: No. There are those who will do anything to stop the Messiah from coming into this world. They will do anything, do you understand?

DAVID: I somehow knew we would go full circle back to that. You talk about nothing else, and why do you keep staring up at the sky.

JACOB: (*points*) That star. I have been watching it for a few nights. At first, it would move steadily across the sky, but now it has stopped.

PETER: It just looks like it has stopped. It is impossible for a star to stop moving unless the earth is not moving.

JACOB: Exactly.

DAVID: And you think it means something?

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JACOB: The Messiah is here.

Pause.

David and Paul shake their head in pity.

DAVID: You used to be so ambitious, so passionate. You have lost your mind.

JACOB: *(looks at his friends)* Why do you struggle so hard to believe?

PETER: Believe what, Jacob? The nonsense you consistently talk about?

JACOB: If we choose not to believe the prophets, what is left to believe?

DAVID: We believe in our survival.

JACOB: We can't survive without Him. We never could.

Pause.

PETER: You are a wanted man --- a person of interest. You shouldn't be here, and we need to get home.

JACOB: The star is sitting over that Inn, towards the back. Come with me, see for yourself if there is any meaning to anything I have been telling you.

DAVID: We don't have time for that. Our family waits for us with lit lanterns, and a home-cooked meal.

PETER: You want to chase fantasies; you will have to do it without us.

Pause.

DAVID: Just don't get caught.

David and Peter reluctantly leave Jacob standing alone, still staring up at the star in the sky.

TWO SHEPHERDS appear, crosses the stage, exits. Jacob's eyes narrow.

TWO WISE MEN appear, bearing gifts in their hands. They are crossing the stage.

Jacob stops one of them, the other continues.

JACOB: You are Magi?

The Fullness of Time by Cleveland O. McLeish

WISE MAN: Yes, we have come from the east.

JACOB: To Bethlehem? Why have you come to Bethlehem?

Wise Man glares at Jacob for a moment, studying him.

WISE MAN: We have come to see the child King. *(points at the star)* We have followed that star for days, to here --- Bethlehem, you say?

JACOB: The child King? The Messiah?

WISE MAN: He has many names --- Counsellor, Majesty – Emmanuel ---

JACOB: God with us!

WISE MAN: Yes ---

Jacob turns his gaze upwards.

JACOB: He is born. He is here. *(turns to the Wise Man)* God is here --- in flesh --- He has become one of us.

WISE MAN: We have come to worship Him.

The Wise Man bows slightly and continues offstage.

JACOB: *(in disbelief)* It is really happening. He is really here. That means I am not crazy after all.

Jacob follows after the Wise Man.

LIGHTS OUT

VOICE: But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So, you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

BLACKOUT