King David

Sweet Psalmist of Israel

(A Musical Drama in two acts) By Gloria L. Emmerich

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Male:

KING DAVID SAMUEL YOUNG DAVID

JONATHAN (Saul's son) KING SAUL

HANOCH

JESSE (David's Father)

AARON ELIAB

AMOS (Servant boy)

SOLDIER ABINADAB SHAMMAH MESSENGER

Female:

KETURAH (David's mother) ZERUIAH (David's sister) MICHAL (Jonathan's sister) DORCAS (Female servant) HANNAH (Keturah's servant)

ISCAH (Can be male; depends on your needs.)

NOTE: If you choose to incorporate choreography, you will need to have more women in this cast for chorus/dancers.

SONG ASSIGNMENTS

ACT ONE:

1.	Canticle of the King	King David & Company
2.	He's Chosen Me!	Samuel, Jesse, Keturah & Sons
3.	David's Song	Young David
4.	A Shepherd's Prayer	Keturah, Young David, Zeruiah, Hannah
5.	Goliath's Fall	Young David/Older David & Men
6.	Saul Has Slain His Thousands	Company except Keturah
7.	Friends For Life!	Jonathan, David, Hanoch, Aaron
ACT TWO:		
8.	I Don't Understand	Michal, Jonathan, David
9.	My Brother, My Friend	Jonathan & David
10.	I will Lift Up My Head (Psalm 27)	David, Jonathan & Camp
11.	Friends For Life! (Reprise)	David, Jonathan & Camp
12.	My Brother, My Friend (Reprise)	David & Jonathan
13.	David's Song (Reprise)	Keturah & King David
14.	O (1)	King David & Company

Copyright © 1984, 1998, by Gloria L. Emmerich Published by Emmerich Publications Inc., Minneapolis, MN No portion of this musical work may be reproduced by any means without specific permission in writing from the publisher.

King David - Sweet Psalmist of Israel

OVERTURE: [CUE #1] (The end of the overture gives an arpeggio as an intro for the opening song which begins a capella. [CUE # 2] begins on DAVID'S word 'sing' [End of DAVID'S second line.] and song continues on from there with soundtrack.

Act One Sc 1: At the palace - the Coronation of KING DAVID

SONG #1 - CANTICLE OF THE KING David & Company

DAVID: Humbly I bow before You, Lord, as I am crowned the king.

Now I will serve all Israel; Your praises I_will_sing_!

(Company "Ahhhs" underneath solo)

DAVID: I will exalt Your Name on high, proclaiming to all nations,

That You are the Lord, the One True Living God,

The Great Ruler of all generations.

This is the day You are crowning me king, to reign on Israel's throne.

You have chosen me; I pray You'll help me be,

The greatest leader that Israel's people have known. Yes,

ALL: We will exalt Your Name on high, proclaiming to all nations,

[That] You are the Lord, the One True Living God,

The Great Ruler of all generations.

We have all gathered to worship You, Lord, and sing a song of praise.

You delivered us; You kept Your promises,

So with a heart of thanksgiving our voices we raise!

[DANCE BREAK]

ALL: You delivered us; You kept Your promises,

So with a heart of thanksgiving our voices we raise!

We raise ! (KEY CHANGE)

ALL: We will exalt Your Name on high, proclaiming to all nations,

That You are the Lord, the One True Living God,

The Great Ruler of all generations.

We have all gathered to worship You, Lord, and sing a song of praise.

You delivered us; You kept Your promises,

So with a heart of thanksgiving our voices we raise!

You delivered us; You kept Your promises,

So with a heart of thanksgiving our voices we raise! We raise____in praise!

(BLACKOUT) [CUE #3]

(Scene change music continues on, becoming underscore for KETURAH'S monologue.)

Act One Sc 2: The Palace after the Coronation. KETURAH; then HANNAH and DAVID.

KETURAH: Oh my! What a day *that* was! The singing, the dancing, the rejoicing.....the *FOOD!* I've never seen so much food. Even with my boys, I have *never* in all my life seen so much food! Why, it was a sin! And I don't mind telling you, I went straight to the King and I told him so. I said, "King David, this is outrageous! *All this food* and there are poor people starving just outside the city. It's a sin to have that much food and not share it!" Well...he agreed wholeheartedly! And then, what did he *do?* He ordered his men to open the city gates and let anyone who was able come and join the feast! Now, I tell

you, that's a man of action! That's a man who cares! That's a man with compassion! That's...that's... (Slowly smiles.)...that's MY SON!

DAVID: (Enters with the maidservant HANNAH) Mother, please, you must be tired after all this feasting and celebrating. Why don't you come in and lie down for a while. Hannah will see that you're comfortable and have everything you need. I'll return later; I've so much to do. (As he turns to leave, KETURAH grabs his arm.)

KETURAH: (Surprised.) But David, you just got here...!

DAVID: I can't stay with you right now, mother. I still have to work out the final preparations for the return of the Ark of the Covenant. (Gives KETURAH a quick kiss on the head then exits.)

KETURAH: (Calls after him.) David...David! Oh, the return of the Ark! As if he has nothing else to do! It gives me a headache just thinking of all the things he does! (Turns to HANNAH.) Hannah...are there any more of those little pastries left, you know, the ones with the nuts and dates...? Be a dear and bring some to me... (Incredulous that KETURAH would want more food she just stares at her, mouth agape. KETURAH starts making excuses for needing more.) I was er...too excited to eat much during the ceremony... (HANNAH puts her hands on hips and gives KETURAH a scolding look.) ...it will help me relax... (Now HANNAH folds her arms and refused to budge.) ...it will help my headache! (KETURAH gives HANNAH a dismissive wave. HANNAH finally gives in and huffs off to get the pastries. KETURAH turns back to audience.) All right! So I like them! Is that such a sin?! (Remembering something else she calls to HANNAH.) Oh, and Hannah, perhaps something to drink to wash it all down. (Back to audience.) Now, what did I tell you? David works so hard, serving God, caring for His children. And the people love him dearly! He's a good boy...oh my! He's not a boy any longer! He's a fine young man; a good leader and a great king! But, it hasn't always been "fancy pastries" and singing, and dancing. Oh no. (Chuckles, then stops abruptly, in thought.) In fact, if memory serves, it was just after the prophet Samuel anointed David that things started to happen. (Walks across stage for next scene.) Now, that was a day to remember! Sometimes I would say to myself, "Maybe David should have stayed in the field with his sheep!"

(Cross fade. KETURAH walks into the next scene.)

Act One Sc 3: In front of JESSE/KETURAH'S house, before DAVID is anointed by SAMUEL. JESSE, KETURAH, HANNAH, ZERUIAH, BROTHERS, SAMUEL.

JESSE: (Entering with SAMUEL, he raises his voice so KETURAH knows who has come to their house.) And to what do we owe this great honor, that the prophet Samuel (He gives KETURAH a look.) should come to our tiny village of Bethlehem?

SAMUEL: I come in peace, Jesse. God has brought me here to sacrifice unto the Lord. So, come, be sanctified Jesse; you and your sons, so that you may all come to the sacrifice *with* me today.

KETURAH: (Aside to JESSE.) Don't you think we should send a servant for David? **JESSE:** Hush woman. We have more important things to do. Eliab, Abinadab, come! Stand before the prophet Samuel to receive God's blessing. (Aside to

KETURAH.) It may be that God will choose Eliab or perhaps our second son, Abinadab for some great honor!

KETURAH: But, David should be...

JESSE: Keturah, please! Samuel is praying. [CUE # 4.] (He quickly bows his head but tries to keep an eye open to see if SAMUEL indeed will bless one of his sons.)

SONG # 2 - HE'S CHOSEN ME! Samuel, Jesse, Keturah, & Sons

SAMUEL: Surely the anointing is with him, Lord. So strong and tall...

ELIAB: It's prob'ly me! **SAMUEL:** Fairer than all.

KETURAH: Jesse... JESSE: Shhh! KETURAH: But...

JESSE: God is fin'lly showing us His favor.

SAMUEL: No...?

JESSE: He'll choose Eliab or Abinadab I'm sure!

KETURAH: Possibly...
SAMUEL: Next...
KETURAH: But...

JESSE: And of course, it may be He wants Shammah.

ABINADAB: It's me. **SAMUEL:** No...

ELIAB: I'm the one!
ABINADAB: I doubt it!
SHAMMAH: He wants ME!
SAMUEL: Next...

KETURAH: Jesse, we should... **JESSE:** Must you always talk?!

BROTHERS: God has chosen me for service. God has chosen me.

KETURAH: But you're not listening, Jesse!

SAMUEL: Next...

KETURAH: David ought to be...

JESSE: Enough!

KETURAH: Why can't I make you see?

JESSE: Because I doubt that God would ever want a useless boy who watches sheep!

SAMUEL: Jesse...

JESSE: WHAT?! Sorry...

SAMUEL: I don't understand, I heard the Lord say,

That I would anoint a son from the house of Jesse.

JESSE: Yes?

ABINADAB: What'd I tell you?

SAMUEL: But, none of your sons who are standing before me...are chosen of God.

ELIAB: What's he mean?! ABINADAB: He's getting old...

SAMUEL: Is there another....perhaps you've overlooked...?

ALL: DAVID?! KETURAH: YES!

JESSE: But he's tending sheep!

SAMUEL: Doesn't matter...

KETURAH: (Turns to HANNAH) Go get David! **JESSE:** (Perturbed.) As you wish...

KETURAH: God is looking for a heart that's pure, I'm sure.

BROTHERS: He should've chosen me; he must be blind! Why can't he see?!

How can this be...it should be me!

JESSE: We're wasting time!

BROTHERS: Father, Father, hear me, hear me. Father, Father, bless me, bless, me.

Choose me, use me, Lord.

SAMUEL: Forgive me, Lord; I just remembered:

Outward appearances don't show what's deep inside.

JESSE: What good could *David* do for God?!

SAM/KET: God wants a man with a pure heart; a man after God's own heart! **JESSE/BROS:** [Waiting patiently, I'm waiting. Waiting patiently, I'm waiting!

(Dialogue continues over music.)

DAVID: (Enters breathless, baffled; HANNAH follows.) You sent for me, father? **JESSE:** (Gives DAVID a look of contempt.) No...not I. The prophet Samuel has

summoned you here. (JESSE and all of his sons slowly turn their backs on

DAVID while SAMUEL, with his horn of oil, walks toward DAVID.)

SAMUEL: (Places a hand on DAVID and looks into his face. KETURAH and ZERUIAH

watch in awe as the prophet speaks to DAVID then prepares to anoint him.) The Lord God of Israel has chosen you, David. For you are truly a man after God's own heart. May the Spirit of God dwell in you from this day forward.

You are anointed of God, my son.

(Music swells, lights fade, as SAMUEL pours the oil over DAVID'S head.)

(BLACKOUT) [CUE #5]

Act One Sc 4: KETURAH on her porch in Bethlehem

KETURAH: (Proud.) My baby! My beloved David! "God has chosen you," Samuel says. We all thought King Saul was a great man of God. The people of Israel chose Saul for their leader. But Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel...He chose David! How much better to be chosen of God than man?! My Davey! (Now reprimanding.) And, what does my beloved son do? He's been chosen by God himself, anointed with oil, the Spirit of God is upon him. And, he goes right back to his little flock of sheep! Of course! Why should today be different? He has sheep to tend; a responsibility. (Smiles.) Oh, I've seen him out there with his flock. He's a good shepherd; he loves and cares for his sheep. (Looks up.) That's where he "talks" to God, and sings praises to His Name. Ahh, what a beautiful voice the Lord God has given him...and David gives it right back to God! (Chuckles.) And what do you suppose he's singing about right now, this "anointed" son of mine...?

(BLACKOUT) [CUE #6]

Act One Sc 5: DAVID is in the fields tending his sheep. [SHEEP: CUE #7]

Calls offstage to the sheep grazing.) There. Now graze to your hearts content. At least allow your faithful shepherd to rest for a moment. (A sheep bleats back at him. DAVID bows then answers.) Why, thank you. It was really nothing. And, when you're finished here I'll find another field for you to graze in until you have no room in your bellies to even offer me the smallest of bleats! (Laughs then sits down, takes his harp in hand and begins plucking a few notes. Suddenly a wolf is heard. He leaps to his feet, takes a stone from his pouch, puts it in his sling, swings it round a few times then lets it go. The wolf gives a cry and is gone. [Wolf: CUE #8.]) Go feed elsewhere,

wolf! You'll not get near my flock while *I* stand watch! And if you come back again, it will be your *last visit* with *my* sheep! **[CUE #9]**

SONG #3 - DAVID'S SONG David's solo

DAVID:

I can remember as if it were yesterday, kneeling down by the side of my bed. I folded my hands and I closed my eyes, and bowed my tiny head.

And then my mother would tell me just what to say,

Making sure that I understood.

She taught me to talk to Him night and day, and pray the things I should. I lifted my voice to the Father above; asking forgiveness, expressing my love.

I said, "Lord, You're the only One worthy of,

Praise and adoration; You are my Salvation from sin. As years went by I learned to trust and to follow Him.

I grew up with the Lord by my side.

In spite of my sin He had let me in; His arms were open wide.

I would listen to His voice in the still of night;

At the break of day I still felt Him near.

He took all my sorrows, my doubts and fears, and made them disappear.

I loved Him with all of my heart, mind, and soul.

I knew that without Him I'd never be whole.

I now had a vision, a purpose, a goal...

To make a joyful noise before Him; worship and adore Him on high.

Now I am ready. How can I serve You?

I'm patiently waiting. Show me what to do.

I have a reason, a calling to serve You, Lord.

I would do anything, everything in Your Name.

Give me the wisdom, the strength, and prepare the Way.

Lord, let Your Spirit within me arise in my soul!

Yes, I remember as if it were yesterday, saying prayers to the Lord every day.

My loving mother had taught me well to follow in His way.

There's not a day that goes by I don't talk to Him;

I'd be foolish if I thought otherwise.

All night long I can sing His song beneath the starry skies.

He gives me the music; He gives me the words,

Beautiful melodies I've never heard. My heart rejoices; my spirit is stirred.

There's such a joy that comes from singing,

Bringing songs of praise to the Lord!

You have created this yearning to serve You, Lord.

I will do anything, everything in Your Name.

Give me the wisdom, the strength, and prepare the Way.

Lord, let Your Spirit within me arise in my soul!

Help me to know when it's time to go; please don't let me get in Your way. Continue to teach me what I must know; guide me day by day...Lord, I pray.

(At end of song DAVID hears a noise again. Assuming it's a wolf, he loads his sling, spins it over his head, then turns just in time to see his mother enter.)

KETURAH: (Dodges DAVID'S sling.) I've had enough stones for today, (Points at her feet.)

so I'll thank you to put that sling of yours away before you hurt someone!

DAVID: (Smiles; happy to see her.) Mother! Come, sit here. (Sees her shoes.) You need

new shoes, Mother. Yours are too worn out for walking in these fields.

KETURAH: My shoes are fine for what I do. Maybe you should tend your flock closer to

home! Why is it when I decide to come visit, you are always further away than the time before? And this ground! What is so wonderful about grazing

on stones?! Did I miss something? Is today some *Holy* day of fasting for sheep, and *that* is why you come out to sit among the rocks?!

DAVID: (Laughs, enjoying her banter so he gives some back.) And I've missed you too... my favorite "Handmaid" of the Lord! (Chuckles again then holds up his slingshot.) I don't know why I carry this! Every beast in the field hears you coming for miles around!

KETURAH: (*Tries to give him a stern look.*) David!

DAVID: (*Pretends to "behave," but continues teasing.*) They hear you talking to God...praying for your sons and daughters...asking for *patience* with your youngest son, I imagine? (*Now bends down to poke her shoes.*) And mother, while you're praying, why don't you ask God for *new shoes?!*

KETURAH: (Lovingly slaps his hand.) I've told you; I do not need new shoes! I need greener pastures near my house! Oh, I almost forgot! I sent the servant Hannah, back for Zeruiah. I promised her the next time I came to visit that she could come along. She would never forgive me if she knew I was here and did not bring her with me. You and your sister have always been so close. She misses you, you know?

DAVID: And I miss her! We use to have such fun singing and dancing every morning. (*He laughs, remembering.*) She could skip and leap about with more grace than any deer I've ever seen!

KETURAH: (Both laugh.) Oh my, she still does! In fact, she should be "skipping" and "leaping" her way up here any min... (She stops mid-sentence when she sees ZERUIAH come skipping in.) What did I tell you...? (ZERUIAH enters skipping, dancing, oblivious to her mother or DAVID.)

DAVID: Zeruiah!

ZERUIAH: (She jumps at his voice, spins round, then runs to meet him.) Davey! (They embrace then DAVID twirls her around.) Oh Davey, it's so good to see you! (She giggles, bubbly and joyful as always.)

DAVID: (He holds her at arms length and stares as if examining her.) And look at you! Mother, you must hide her in the barn...away from all the young men who will faint from her beauty! (She giggles again. KETURAH motions for HANNAH to join her. Then DAVID excitedly begins telling his sister about a new song.) I'm so glad you came, Zeruiah. I've written several new songs that I'm sure you'll love, and you can dance to them and...

KETURAH: Ahem! You two can sing and dance yourselves silly later. David, I want to talk about the Prophet Samuel's visit. (*No response.*) I want to know what you have to say. (*Still no response.*) What? You have nothing to say to your *own mother?*!

DAVID: (Gives ZERUIAH a wink and a smile before answering.) I've said plenty of things...to God. (Smiles, teasing.) ...and He's said plenty to me...

KETURAH: (Not satisfied with that answer she tries to see his face but can't.) And what "plenty of things" does God say?

DAVID: (He gazes out across the field.) To wait.... (Sees his mother's exasperated look and quickly adds.) ...patiently. (KETURAH gives him a look then lets out a "huff" of disapproval. DAVID lays a hand on her shoulder.) When the time comes, God will send for me...and I'll be ready to go.

KETURAH: So, in the meantime you stay with your sheep, chasing bears and lions, and wolves; mending little lambs broken legs...facing all kinds of danger out

here alone......and, you wait...... (Looks up at DAVID, who gives her a knowing smile and together they speak the key word.)

BOTH: *Patiently.* (In a huff KETURAH looks away.)

DAVID: Yes, mother. "Rest in the Lord, and wait *patiently* for Him." (*Ps. 37:7 He looks up to God and sighs.*) Teach me to wait, Lord.

KETURAH: And I suppose that's another one of those "songs" from the Lord? (DAVID and ZERUIAH give each other a "knowing" look.) You think I don't know? David, my feet may be worn out but my ears are not! I could hear you clear over the ridge singing at the top of your voice! (ZERUIAH giggles and DAVID tries to give her a stern look.) How do you think I find you so easily when I come to visit? (Chuckles.) How do you thing the bears and lions and wolves find you so easily? (Laughs again and ZERUIAH can't help but join her.)

DAVID: (Pretending to be offended.) That's what you get for teaching me to sing! It was your idea to get this harp! You said it would help to pass the time while watching the flock. (He hands his mother the harp then sneaks around behind to scare her as he continues.) Perhaps I should give it to the next young Philistine warrior who sneaks up on me in the night?! (Grabs her shoulders, making her jump then he and ZERUIAH laugh.)

KETURAH: (Feigning anger.) So now you think you are old enough to back talk your own mother? (Turns to HANNAH.) The prophet anoints him and now he shows such disrespect to his beloved mother?! (Now back to DAVID.) You are not so old I cannot still turn you over my knee! (DAVID puts his hands on his hips and grins.) You think I'm not able? Zeruiah, find me a switch! (KETURAH rises, takes two steps, then winces from the pain of her aching feet.) Ohhhh, my feet! (Sits back down. DAVID, ZERUIAH and HANNAH laugh with delight as ZERUIAH begins rubbing her mother's shoulders. DAVID and HANNAH follow suit, each taking a foot and massaging it.) What did I tell you? There are too many rocks! So now I must be a mountain goat to visit my youngest son? (The children humor her, smile and nod and DAVID continues rubbing her sore foot; all of them obviously enjoy each other's company.) So, do you have a name for that song you were singing, or did you just number it like all the rest, hmmm?

DAVID: (He and ZERUIAH exchange looks; they've been through this before.) Mother, I've told you. That's how I keep track of them. It helps me remember where I was when God gave it to me; and in what order He gave them. (Continues to rub her foot.) They don't need names, Mama...they're songs God has put in my heart.

KETURAH: *(Lovingly smiles at her son.)* I know...I know. Remember the song you taught me? We sang it together the last time I came to visit, remember?

Yes, I remember! (Excited, he drops her foot, jumps up and rushes over to his sister.) This is the song I was telling you about. I always picture you dancing when I sing it. If we sing it now, will you dance, Zeruiah?

KETURAH: Of course she will! And it will be lovely! Zeruiah can dance to anything! You both take after your mother... (DAVID and ZERUIAH look at their mother, skeptical.) I have...many talents! (ZERUIAH giggles and KETURAH swats her on the backside.) Well...I use to! (HANNAH pulls on KETURAH'S gown and looks at her expectantly.) Oh, of course! Now David, you'll be surprised at what your sister has taught Hannah. She too has become guite a dancer!

DAVID: (Ruffles HANNAH'S hair.) I'm sure she's a fine dancer if Zeruiah taught her.

(Takes HANNAH'S hands and helps her up.) So now we'll have two deer

leaping about the fields! (She giggles and runs to ZERUIAH.)

KETURAH: (In thought.) Now, what shall we call it? (DAVID gives her a look but she

ignores it.) It needs a name, Davey. Something simple (It comes to her.) I

know! A Shepherd's Prayer! [CUE # 10] That will do nicely!

DAVID: (Amused with his mother, he gives in and chuckles.) All right. Number 23

will be called "A Shepherd's Prayer!"

(Zeruiah & Hannah dance)

DAVID: The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I need.

KETURAH: He makes me lie down in pastures green;

Beside still waters He will lead.

DAVID: He restores my soul. **BOTH:** He restores my soul.

He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. Even when I walk through the valley of the Shadow of Death,

I fear no evil because You are with me, Your rod and staff will comfort me.

You've prepared a table for me in the presence of my foes. You anoint my head with oil; Lord, my cup now overflows.

KETURAH: Goodness and mercy surely shall follow you, Goodness and mercy surely shall follow you,

BOTH: Goodness and mercy surely shall follow me, all the days of my life.

KETURAH: And I will dwell...

DAVID: And I will dwell...

BOTH: In the house of Lord;

DAVID: Forever, KETURAH: Forever, Forever.

(During interlude, DAVID hugs ZERUIAH, then KETURAH.)

KETURAH: Goodness and mercy surely shall follow you.

(Forgetting his harp, KETURAH hands it to him then sings again.)

KETURAH: Goodness and mercy surely shall follow you.

(KETURAH watches him leave giving one last wave, then turns for ZERUIAH to help with her shawl. The three women slowly exit opposite DAVID. KETURAH turns to look at DAVID one last time as music ends. Lights slowly fade.)

(BLACKOUT) [CUE #11]

Act One Sc 6: King Saul's chambers at the palace. SAUL, ISCAH, DORCAS, AMOS.

SAUL: (In the blackout a loud, belligerent yell is heard from SAUL.)

Leave.....me...... ALONE!! (Lights come up.) OUT!! (SAUL throws a huge pillow at the terrified servant, DORCAS, who quickly scurries away nearly knocking over another servant, ISCAH. During the servants' dialogue SAUL is reclining restlessly on pillows sometimes groaning, tearing at his hair or beard; his face in his hands moaning as if in utter torment. AMOS is fanning SAUL.)

DORCAS: There is *no doubt* in my mind that the Spirit of God has left that man!

SAUL: AAARRGGHH!!

ISCAH: He moans and groans and bellows so that *all* the palace hears him,

sometimes throughout the night. I tell you, it's an evil spirit from God that torments him. Ever since that sacrifice at Gilgal before Samuel arrived, he's

been acting very strange. Not himself at all!

DORCAS: (Looking hurt and dejected.) I dare not go back in there! I fear for my life!

Anything he can get his hands on he throws at me! (She almost sobs as she

checks her arms for cuts and bruises.)

ISCAH: Now calm down. You're just fine. (Begins to slowly nudge DORCAS back to

SAUL'S chamber.) Here, let me go in with you and see what I can do. I may

have a cure for this madness. (DORCAS is reluctant so ISCAH has to

practically drag her into SAUL'S chamber.)

SAUL: (SAUL sits with his head in his hands. He peeks through his fingers and sees

them. He keeps his face covered as he yells.) WHAT?!

DO NOT COPY