THE COURAGE OF NACHSHON
By
Meridith Shaw Patera

CHARACTERS
Ezra (the Father)
Dinah (the Mother)
Nurit (the daughter)
Binyamin (the son)
Nachshon (a Hebrew teenager)
Additional Hebrews (as many as desired)
Moses
2-4 Sea Holders

For Fewer Actors:
• Eliminate the parts of the Additional Hebrews

For More Actors:
• Divide up any or all of the parts of Ezra, Dinah, Nurit, and/or
  Binyamin among more actors
• Add more Hebrews

PRODUCTION NOTES

Setting:
The action takes place on the shore of the Sea of Reeds just after Pharaoh
has let the Hebrew people go.

Scenery:
The Sea – Use a wide piece of blue cloth, almost the length of the stage.
One or two actors (the number will depend on the width of the cloth) hold it
at each end. These actors kneel or stand simultaneously to raise and lower
the cloth or to wave it gently or wildly as required.

Props:
• Staff for Moses
• Rock – Use a stepstool with a large “rock” cut out of poster board
taped to its front

Costumes:
All characters should wear robes and sandals (see Introduction for more
details on costuming). Men have beards, women can cover their heads with
scarves.
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(The sea is in place a few feet from the front of the stage, with the large rock at SR. The actors holding the sea are kneeling. Enter SL DINAH, EZRA, and NACHSHON.)

Dinah: I can’t believe we finally made it out of Egypt.

Ezra: Well, that last plague was a real doozy.

Nachshon: Yes, even Pharaoh had to admit that Adonai is greater than any of his so-called gods.

Dinah: You said he would, Nachshon. You always kept your faith in our God.

Nachshon: Of course. I knew that God would free us from slavery eventually.

Ezra: Hmph. Could have been sooner.

Nachshon: Oh, Ezra, you complain about everything.

Ezra: Well, we’ve had a lot to complain about. Beatings, killings, plagues . . .

Nachshon: But not anymore. Now we’re heading to the Promised Land!

Dinah: Are you sure Moses knows which way to go?

Ezra: What if we get lost?

Nachshon: Relax. I’m sure God gave Moses good directions.

(Enter NURIT SR, running.)

Nurit: Mommy! Daddy!

Dinah: What is it, Nurit?

Nurit: (Pointing at the sea.) Look at the big sea. Can I play in the water?

Dinah: But you can’t swim.

Ezra: None of us can swim — we’ll all drown.

Nachshon: Don’t be silly. We’ll just have to go around it.
Ezra: Impossible — we’ll get lost!

Nachshon: God will help us.

(Enter BINYAMIN SL, running.)

Binyamin: Father! Mother!

Ezra: What’s wrong, Binyamin?

Binyamin: The Egyptian army! They’re heading straight for us!

Ezra: Wouldn’t you know it — Pharaoh must have changed his mind again.

Nurit: Oh, no! We’re caught between the army and the sea!

Binyamin: (Crying.) We’re all going to die!

Nachshon: Calm down, calm down. I’m sure Moses received a plan from God.

(Enter MOSES SR, climbs on rock.)

Nachshon: Look, he’s climbing up that rock.

Moses: Adonai, God of Israel, has told me to raise my staff. The sea will part and we can cross over.

Nachshon: What did I tell you?

Ezra: Ugh, we’ll get muddy.

Dinah: That beats getting killed.

(MOSES raises his staff as all stare at the Sea. He lowers it. He raises it again, then lowers it. Nothing happens.)

Ezra: (Groans.) I knew it! We’re all going to die!

(MOSES gives Ezra a dirty look and raises the staff again.)

Nachshon: God didn’t bring us all this way to die in the desert.

(Nachshon steps into the sea. The sea rises up to his ankles.)

Dinah: Stop, Nachshon! You’ll drown!
(Nachshon takes another step forward. The sea rises to his knees.)

**Binyamin:** Maybe he’d rather drown than be killed by the army.

(Nachshon steps forward again. The sea rises to his waist.)

**Nurit:** Mommy, are we all going to die?

**Dinah:** I don’t know, Nurit.

(Nachshon steps forward again. The sea rises to his chest.)

**Ezra:** He’s out of his mind! I’m going to go and get him.

**Dinah:** No! Wait!

(Nachshon steps once more. The sea rises to his neck, then his chin, then his nose. He tilts his head up and cries out:)

**Nachshon:** Mi Cha-mo-cha Ba-ay-lim Adonai? Blub, blub. Who is li-i-i-khh you, O God, among the gods that are worshiped?

(The sea recedes to his neck. Nachshon clears his throat and continues.)

**Nachshon:** Mi Ka-mo-cha Ne-dar Ba-ko-desh — Who is like you, majestic in holiness . . .

(The sea recedes to his waist.)

**Nachshon:** No-ra Te-hi-lot, O-say Fe-leh?

(The sea recedes to his knees.)

**Nachshon:** Awesome in splendor, doing wonders?

(The sea recedes completely. Nachshon smiles.)

**Nachshon:** Truly awesome.

**Moses:** Thanks to Nachshon’s faith in God, the sea has parted for us. Now, Children of Israel, let us cross over before the Egyptian army arrives!

(They all cross over, including Moses. Binyamin points to SL.)

**Binyamin:** Here comes the army!
Ezra: Oh, no! We're doomed!

Dinah: Haven't you learned anything yet?

(The waves move back and form wildly.)

Nurit: (Pointing.) Look! The Egyptian chariots are sinking into the mud!

Binyamin: The sea is closing up again!

Ezra: Wow! Imagine that! God has saved us from destruction at the shore of the sea!


(The sea calms down.)

Nachshon: Even you can't complain any more, Ezra.

Ezra: Well, my sandals are muddy. And I'm kind of hungry.

Dinah: Don't worry, we'll eat later — we've got all that matzah to finish. But now Nurit and I have to join Miriam and the other women for dancing and singing.

Ezra: (Whining.) Why can't I sing, too?

Nachshon: We'll all sing.

All: (Singing.) Mi Cha-mo-cha Ba-ay-lim Adonai? Mi Ka-mo-cha Ne-dar Ba-ko-desh, No-ra Te-hi-lot, O-say Fe-leh?