

And It Came to Pass

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In the beginning was the Word.

And almost since the beginning, famous stories from the Word have been depicted at church camps around the world—often with fascinating script changes.

What if the Bible writers had first witnessed the events not in their original settings, but at Bible drama night at church camp? Now that would have produced a different version of the Scriptures—a very different version indeed....



The Good Samaritan

Luke 10 (RCV, Revised Camp Version)

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he fell among his team members, who were yet angry at not being cast in the lead role. They stripped him of his raiment and left him, wounded and covered in ketchup.

By chance, two men came down wearing bulky clerical robes of old tablecloths and draperies. The wounded man giggled in spite of his injuries, and the ministers quickly passed by on the other side. After that, a certain Samaritan had compassion on the wounded man. He poured way too much Mazola oil on the man's wounds and bound them in a linen-like cloth, on which were inscribed the words "I've been to Gatlinburg!"

At length, he set the man on his own donkey—a mythical beast that was one half Billy Whitaker, one half Curly Jenkins, and one half a gray loop rug donated to the costume closet by Margaret Connelly.

Heading toward the sign marked "HOteL," the beast labored under its burden. For the path was long and dark; yea, marked with a set of steep stairs, whose negotiation had not been rehearsed.

After much uncertainty and wobbling (and contemptuous dialogue between the beast's front half and rear half), the beast was rent asunder.

The wounded man fell on cold hard concrete and was immediately healed. He jumped up and fled eastward with a rejoicing that sounded exceedingly like giggling. The three halves of the beast were scattered to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Go thou and do likewise.



Samson and Delilah

Judges 16 (RCV, Revised Camp Version)

And behold, a man named Samson (which means “one with suspiciously long, nylon hair”) approached the city of Gaza. Though small of stature and scrawny of build, he was known throughout the land for his great strength. That night, as evidence of his powers, Samson arose, put the doors of the city gate upon his shoulders, and single-handedly—with the help of two ropes that descended from the heavens—carried the doors away.

A woman named Delilah turned aside to see this sight. Samson pleased her. She looked down upon his face—for she was a tall, lanky blonde—and said, “Will you come to my house, Samson?” This utterance caused the lords of the Philistines to splutter and snicker. Then they plotted together, saying, “We must get Delilah to vex Samson’s soul till he reveals his secret to her.”

And Samson, wisting not that Delilah would deceive him, followed her to her chambers. She pressed Samson until he confessed wherewith his strength lieth; yea, in his long hair.

As Samson slept, Delilah revealed a large pair of scissors, with which she made snipping noises while removing the wig of long hair covering his head.

“Wake up, Samson!” shouted Delilah. And immediately the Philistines were upon him. With great fury and much scuffling, they wrestled together. The Philistines plucked out Samson’s marble eyes, three of which rolled across the floor. They bound him with fetters (which are called in the Hebrew, “lengths of plastic clothesline”). And they forced Samson to grind at the prison mill.

And it came to pass that the hearts of the Philistines were merry.

“Our hearts are merry!” they cried. “For our god Dagon delivereth Samson unto us. Samson hath slew many of us, but now he will . . . slaw no more!”

In their glee, the Philistines offered sacrifices to Dagon, a powerful god fashioned out of masking tape, spray paint, and a refrigerator crate made from the finest trees of Lebanon...Ohio.

The three thousand Philistines, which numbered nine, brought Samson to the temple area. They rejoiced and made sport of Samson.

Howbeit, the hair of Samson’s head had quickly grown again—as quickly as it took an arm to reach from behind the curtain and replace the wig on Samson’s head.

Then Samson, sensing that both his hair and his strength had returned, reached out his hands to feel the pillars whereupon the temple stood. And Samson leaned upon the pillars, praying, “O Lord God, remember me. Strengthen me only this once that I may be avenged of the Philistines.”

Then Samson pushed himself, both his right hand and his left, with all his might. But Samson prevailed not, for the pillars had been built to last by a very stout camp dean.

Thus prayeth Samson a second time: “O Lord God, strengthen me one more time Please!!!” But the temple pillars fell not. Samson babbled his prayer in vain repetition, adding “O Lord, let me die!” with heartfelt sincerity. At length, the Philistines had compassion on him. It behooved them to join him in bringing the pillars, yea the entire temple, down upon themselves. And great was the fall of it.

The multitude that witnessed this event marveled that the foolish Philistines would help Samson take their very lives. Then they reasoned among themselves, “Well, whaddya expect from people who worship a god made out of a refrigerator crate!”



The Philippian Jailer

Acts 16 (RCV, Revised Camp Version)

And it came to pass that Paul and Silas got into a small canoe and loosed from Troas. Soon, because they had great faith, they were able to arrive at Philippi without ever moving.

Much prayer, preaching, and healing were wont to be made in that city. But the multitude distrusted Paul and Silas (possibly because their costumes smelled of mildew). The multitude, unwilling to be shewn the way unto salvation, dragged Paul and Silas unto the marketplace. One of them, with a slight Brooklyn accent, said, “Yo! These men do exceedingly trouble our city.”

The magistrate ordered that Paul and Silas be beaten. And the multitude rose up together against them—angrily waving their Louisville Slugger baseball bats, which they had borrowed from the recreation director.

But lo, as they hastened to strike Paul and Silas, a great cry rose from a damsel outside the marketplace, beyond stage right—yea, a damsel who was not even part of this story.

The damsel, wearing a golden cloak in preparation for her debut as Queen Esther, had beheld a tribe of creatures, even field mice, inhabiting the folds of her garment.

(Is it not recorded in the chronicles of our forefathers that the camp costumes are stored in dark closets both in season and out of season?)

“What must I do to be saved?” shrieked the damsel.

“That’s MY line!” shouted the Philippian jailer from backstage.

Suddenly the angry multitude, followed by Paul and Silas and a great cloud of witnesses, left their places and thundered to where the damsel was. (The ground trembled at this disturbance as if in an earthquake, and the foundation of everyone’s nerves was shaken.)

The multitude, having forgotten all about Paul and Silas, cast many blows upon the damsel and her cloak—until the tribe of creatures was destroyed and the damsel was faint of spirit. The drama director sang a praise unto God. And the same hour of the night, the damsel’s golden cloak was baptized in much hot, sudsy water.

In the upheaval, Paul and Silas took their canoe and left the city, escaping further persecution—though rumors of their imprisonment at Philippi are commonly reported to this very day.



Jairus's Daughter

Luke 8 (RCV, Revised Camp Version)

Behold, there came a man named Jairus who, unaccustomed to wearing long biblical robes, fell at the feet of the Jesus the Nazarene. Jairus, full of faith, besought him to come to his house.

“My daughter is dying,” said the eleven-year-old Jairus.

But as the Nazarene passed through the crowd, they thronged him and hurled all manner of insults against him:

“Wait a minute! I didn’t know Jesus wore glasses!”

“He didn’t—glasses won’t even be invented for another thousand years!”

“Hey, Jesus, where’d ya get that beard?”

For indeed, the uncomely beard had been created hastily from a heap of cornsilks, the same which had been discarded in the camp kitchen.

And great was their unbelief.

Nevertheless, the Nazarene took Jairus’s daughter (another eleven-year-old boy) by the hand and said, “She is not dead, but sleepeth.” And the child sat up. Then Jesus commanded a woman nearby to give the maiden something to eat.

But as the woman reached for the plate of unleavened bread (which is called in Aramaic, “pretzels”), a great wave of alarm overshadowed her countenance. For the table was empty. She looked in vain for the plate. Then she was heard to cry out, “The food is gone! Where is the prop boy?”

The Nazarene soothed the woman, saying, “Uh . . . he is not dead, but sleepeth?” But the woman was not soothed. Indeed, she suffered many things until her eyes fell upon a member of another team sitting in the third row. And as quick as lightning flasheth from east to west, she leapt into the crowd and snatched away from the lad a strange metal container (which is called in Aramaic, “Coca-Cola”) and brought it hither to the maiden to partake.

The child’s parents, yea all the company, were amazed.

The crowd was charged by the Nazarene to tell no one what was done that day. And the lad in the crowd demanded that someone be charged thirty-five copper coins for his Coca-Cola.

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There are many other accounts worthy of being recorded in the *Revised Camp Version* of the Scriptures. Verily, verily I say unto you, were a decree to go out across the land, requesting similar testimonies, it would bring forth chronicles no man can number.