

# Joel Bulu

## A musical play

Words and Music by Cheryl Reid Artistic Direction by Bethany Eloise

### **Cast** (*in order of appearance*)

Joel's Mother and Baby Joel (Scene 1)  
Boy Joel (a child – Scene 1)  
Young Joel (in late teens or twenties – Scenes 1-3)  
Older Joel (replaces Young Joel at Scene 4)  
Narrator Joel (possibly 40 years or older)  
Dancers (any number)  
Tongan Man  
Village Men (about 4 or 5)  
Heathen Priest  
Village Women (about 5)  
Children (about 7)  
Mr. Thomas (1<sup>st</sup> white missionary) – possibly needs a 'translator'  
Older Joel  
White Missionary (2<sup>nd</sup> white missionary)  
Christian Men (about 4 or 5)  
Isaac  
Warriors (about 4 or 5)  
Head Chief  
Joel's Grandchildren (same children as before)

**Total male Fijian actors: about 20**

**Total male white actors: 2**

**Total female actors: 6**

**Dancers: any number, male and female**

**Children: 8**

**Musicians: to play accompaniment for songs and also traditional music for dances etc.**

**Singers: any number**

### **Scenes**

Scene 1: The Land in the Stars  
Scene 2: No other god  
Scene 3: The Parable of the Weeds  
Scene 4: Rewa  
Scene 5: God in the Storm  
Scene 6: Spiritual Warfare  
Scene 7: Epilogue

### **Songs**

"Take me to that land" by Cheryl Reid 2014  
"I will serve no other God" by Andre Kempen 1989  
"Amazing Grace" by John Newton and William Cowper 1779  
"Sailin'" by Phil Moore 2014  
"Pass me not, O gentle Saviour" sung in Fijian, Frances J. Crosby and William H. Doane 1868

### **Props**

Boat, clubs, spears, carved god, cooking pots, utensils, cassava, old black Bible, a length of blue fabric for the dancers, boat supplies, whales tooth necklace x2

### **Costumes**

Fijian men: sulus, grass sulu over a fabric sulu, bare tops  
Women: traditional patterned clothing with grass skirt over top  
White missionaries: a suit and maybe a hat

## Scene 1: The Land in the Stars

### Props: Boat

**Cast:** there are five Joels (to show Joel at different stages of life). These are: 'Baby Joel', 'Boy Joel' (a child), 'Young Joel' (late teens or in his twenties), older Joel and Narrator Joel; Joel's mother; dancers; Tongan man

### Music: Traditional Fijian Music

*Joel's mother enters carrying Baby Joel in her arms then exits.*

*Joel's mother enters holding the hand of Boy Joel, walks across the stage then exits.*

*Joel's mother enters with Young Joel and they walk centre stage.*

*She kisses him on the forehead then exits.*

*Dancers enter and join Young Joel in a traditional dance, dressed in traditional clothes. At the end of the dance, Young Joel and the dancers sit on the stage. Narrator Joel enters and sits by the boat side stage.*

**Narrator Joel: My name is Joel Bulu. I grew up on the island of Vavau, one of the friendly islands of Tonga. When I was 23, I heard a report that the Lotu had come to my land. The "Lotu" is the word that we used to describe the faith of the Christian missionaries. When I first heard that the Lotu had come, I firmly declared that I would never forsake the gods of my own ancestors.**

*A Tongan man walks on stage and 'talks' to the group of dancers.*

*Young Joel stands and walks towards the Tongan man.*

*They both stand centre stage as the Tongan man points upward and the dancers look on.*

**Then one day a Tongan man came to our village. He told me that people of the Lotu have a Promised Land where they go after death... a beautiful land among the stars. This sounded wonderful to me... a land among the stars where there is peace and happiness. I wanted to go to that land.**

*Young Joel and the Tongan man look upward in awe.*

### Song: Take me to that land

*Verses can be solos if solo singers are available. All join in the chorus, including Young Joel and dancers. Harmony if possible.*

**I decided that from that day onward I would choose the Lotu and throw away the gods of my own people.**

*Young Joel, Tongan man and dancers exit.*

## Scene 2: No other god

**Props:** Club, carved god

**Cast:** Village men (about 5), Heathen Priest, Narrator Joel, Young Joel

### **Music: Drumming**

*Village men enter and form a circle side stage.*

*The heathen priest enters and 'addresses' the group, holding up a club in anger. Narrator Joel stands*

**Narrator Joel:** In my village, people were talking about me because I had cast away the gods of my people. The village priest decided that I should be clubbed to death.

*Heathen priest and village men exit.*

**My friends decided that they would warn me because my life was in danger. They wanted to convince me to give up the Lotu.**

### **Music: Traditional Fijian Music**

*Young Joel and dancers enter and perform a traditional dance.*

*One dancer is holding a carved 'god' and hands it to Young Joel while dancing.*

*Young Joel quickly passes the carved 'god' to another dancer.*

*The dancer hands it back to Young Joel.*

*This repeats several times until the carved 'god' is passes amongst all the dancers.*

*Young Joel is left holding the carved 'god' and dancers exit.*

*Young Joel holds the carved 'god' up*

**I told my friends that I would no longer believe in the Lotu. I felt sorry for I knew deep in my heart that I had only spoken these words with my lips. Truly I would not worship the gods of my ancestors. I would continue to believe in the God of the Lotu.**

*Young Joel looks upward and throws the carved 'god' to the ground.*

*Young Joel sits.*

### **Song: I will serve no other god**

*(There can be a solos on the verses if soloists available)*

## Scene 3: The Parable of the Weeds

**Props:** Cooking pots and utensils, cassava, Bible

**Cast:** Village people, Narrator Joel, Young Joel

### **Music: Traditional Fijian Music**

*Village people enter.*

*Women sit, cook and prepare food, children play and men harvest cassava.*

**Narrator Joel:** One day, a white missionary, Mr. Thomas came to my village.

*Mr. Thomas, white missionary, enters dressed in 19<sup>th</sup> Century European clothing (a suit).*

*He opens his Bible and 'reads' as some village people gather around and listen. Young Joel sits down to hear Mr. Thomas. Narrator Joel also sits.*

**Narrator Joel:** I listened to what he had to say. He told us about a man who planted good seed in his field, but while people were sleeping, an enemy came and planted weeds in the field. The weeds grew thick and tall and the good plants could not grow. He told us that God's enemy is Satan. Satan wants to plant weeds among the good seeds. The weeds are like the evil in the world; the fighting, killing and stealing. But God's Spirit is the good seed. His Spirit can live in the hearts and minds of those who are willing to accept Him. He will forgive those who come to Him.

*Mr. Thomas continues to 'read' to the group.*

**Narrator Joel:** I thought about the many wrong things I had done in my life. I feared that I would never see the land in the sky.

*Village people exit.*

*Mr. Thomas 'talks' to Young Joel centre stage, then they bow their heads to 'pray'.*

**But Mr. Thomas explained to me that I could ask God for forgiveness and God would accept me. So that's what I did. I knew that from that point on, God was in my heart.**

**Song: Amazing Grace verses 1, 2 & 3**

*Solos on verses if soloists available*

*Young Joel exits.*

## **Scene 4: Rewa**

**Props: Clubs, spears, blue fabric**

**Cast: Narrator Joel, another white missionary, Older Joel, village men; women and children; dancers**

*A white missionary enters, walks to the boat and starts preparing it.*

**Narrator Joel:** One day I met another white missionary on the path. He had been working in Fiji, telling people about God and trying to get the Fijian people to make peace, not war. When the missionary heard that I had become a Christian he asked if I would go with him to Fiji. I was now married. My wife and I prayed and decided that we would join him, so we prepared our boat ready to sail to Fiji.

*Older Joel enter and prepares the boat with the white missionary.*

**Song: Sailing'**

*Soloists on verses if available*

*Dancers use blue fabric in their dance to this song.*

*Dancers, Older Joel and White Missionary exit.*

**Drumming: Death Drums**

*Narrator Joel stands.*

**We arrived in Fiji, at Rewa where there was much fighting and killing going on. In Rewa there was no sense of peace day or night. These were terrible times.**

*A man enters running across the stage screaming and exits. Another man with a club enters chasing him and exit. Village men enter with clubs and spears, 'talking' and looking aggressive.*

*Women and children enter and exit quickly, frightened.*

*Village men exit.*

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**Day after day we saw bodies of the murdered brought to the king. We saw dead bodies floating by on the river. The sound of the death drum was relentless.**

*Village people(women and children) can be heard screaming and crying off stage.*

**The chiefs hardened their hearts and set their faces against the Lotu, but still our work went on.**

**Drumming: Death Drums**

## **Scene 5: God in the Storm**

**Props: Boat supplies**

**Cast: Older Joel, Christian men, Isaac**

**Narrator Joel: Despite the hardened hearts, some Fijians did become Christians. These new followers joined our team to spread the light to other parts of Fiji. A Fijian named Isaac and a Tongan named Abraham were sent to the island of Kandavu where there were some people who wanted to know about Christianity. But the chief of Vusanamu made trouble. I heard reports that this chief had ordered for a canoe to be made ready to go to Kandavu to kill Isaac. I decided to sail to Kandavu to warn Isaac. I took a few Christian friends with me. The wind was strong, the sea ran high and the rain came pouring down all day. But the Lord watched over us and brought us safely to land.**

*Older Joel and a few Christian men enter carrying supplies and load them into the boat. They sit and join in singing the song.*

**Song: Pass me not, O gentle Saviour (Fijian language) Verse 1 and chorus twice.**

*Some solos if soloists available*

*Older Joel and the Christian men exit at the end of this part of the songs.*

**Narrator Joel: It was late at night when we reached Kandavu. We went to the town, not knowing whether Isaac was dead or alive. When we arrived, the smell of burning human flesh filled the air. Through wind and rain we desperately searched for Isaac's house. We found it and crept inside, fearing that his murderers might be sleeping there. But God had protected Isaac. He was peacefully asleep.**

*Older Joel and Isaac enter, ' talking and laughing. They stand centre stage.*

**Song: Pass me not, O gentle Saviour (Fijian language) V4 and chorus twice**

*Older Joel and Isaac exit.*

## Scene 6: Spiritual Warfare

**Props:** Clubs, spears, whale tooth necklace

**Cast:** Narrator Joel, Warriors, Young Christian men

**Music:** Drumming

**Narrator Joel:** I went back to Rewa, but back in Rewa things grew worse. The houses had been burnt to the ground and many people murdered. Things were so bad that I finally had to leave Rewa. I decided to sail to Vanua Levu, to a place where the Christian message might be received. On Vanua Levu, many people listened eagerly but the heathen priests there hated me and spoke evil of me. I needed help, so some young Christian men were sent. But the heathen priests made life difficult. They dug up our plantations, upturned our bread pits and killed our livestock.

*Warriors enter with clubs and spears, waving them dangerously around the stage, hitting things.*

**One day our best pig was taken. The young Christian men wanted to take revenge but I would not allow it. Things became serious. The heathen priests had persuaded the head chief to prepare a group of warriors to kill us.**

*Young Christian men enter and stand on one side of the stage, staring at the warriors.*

*Warriors stop waving their clubs and spears and stand on the opposite side of the stage.*

*Both groups stare at each other. Older Joel enters and stands centre stage, arms wide.*

**Narrator Joel:** “Do not fight!” I said, “No matter what happens, we will keep the peace.”

**Music:** Drumming

*The warriors give a war-cry.*

*They march toward the young men with clubs and spears raised high.*

*Older Joel and the young men creep slowly backwards, afraid, then sit down.*

**Song: Amazing Grace (One verse sung quietly unaccompanied by a soloist)**

*While the song is being sung:*

*The warriors stop suddenly in front of the young men then in fear, turn around and exit.*

*The young men give thanks to God, arms raised to heaven, then exit.*

*After song:*

*Head chief enters and walks to centre stage.*

*Older Joel walks towards the head chief.*

**Narrator Joel:** I asked the head chief why his warriors did not attack us. This is what he said: “A power took over us. A power so great that we couldn’t use our clubs or spears. Our arms could not move. It was then that we knew the power of your Lotu God.”

*The head chief places a whale tooth necklace over Young Joel’s head.*

**“Now, let there be peace between us, and please tell me about your God!”**

*Older Joel puts his arm around the head chief and they exit, ‘talking’ cheerfully.*

## Scene 7: Epilogue

**Props: Whale tooth necklace (identical to the one Older Joel has)**

**Cast: Narrator Joel, grandchildren and Boy Joel, Joel's mother**

*Narrator Joel walks centre stage, looking at the whale tooth necklace around his neck.*

**Narrator Joel: Everything was peaceful after that.**

*Narrator Joel sits.*

**Many years have passed since those days and I am now an old man. My body is weak, but my soul is as strong as ever, rejoicing in the work of the Lord. When I look forward to the Good Land which is now so near to me, my heart burns and my eyes fill with tears of joy as I think of the glory which I shall soon behold, for the Lord is ever present with me, both night and day. When I look around I see the great things the Lord has done, and I can say, "I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I'm convinced that he is able to protect what he has entrusted to me until the day that he comes."**

*Joel's grandchildren and Boy Joel enter and sit around Narrator Joel.*

**My name is Joel Bulu. I am 63, and I wait joyfully for that glorious day, when we will live together among the stars.**

*Narrator Joel looks upward.*

**Song: Amazing Grace**

*Solos on verses if possible.*

*Joel's grandchildren stand and help Narrator Joel to stand.*

*Narrator Joel holds the hands of other grandchildren.*

*They all exit except Boy Joel.*

*Boy Joel sits centre stage, alone.*

*Joel's Mother enters, walks to Boy Joel, holds his hand and they exit.*

## *Lyrics*

### **Take me to that land**

#### **Verse 1:**

I look into the stars  
And think about a land of beauty  
No fighting death or war  
Just happiness forever more

#### **Chorus:**

Beautiful land  
Land in the stars  
Take me to the land to live forever

#### **Verse 2:**

To live among the stars  
That's where I want to be forever.  
Somewhere up above  
A land of peace and love

### **I will serve no other god**

#### **Verse 1**

I lift my head to the God of love  
Who made the stars, the sky above  
For You're the One who reigns within my heart

#### **Chorus**

And I will serve no other god  
Or any other treasure  
You are my heart's desire  
Your Spirit without measure  
Unto your name  
I will bring my sacrifice

### **Amazing Grace (First time)**

#### **Verse 1**

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost, but now I'm found  
Was blind, but now I see

#### **Verse 2**

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed

#### **Chorus**

My chains are gone  
I've been set free  
My God, my Savior has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy reigns  
Unending love, amazing grace (Repeat last line on last chorus)

#### **Verse 3**

The Lord has promised good to me  
His word my hope secures  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures

CHORUS



## Sailin' (taking the Light to Fiji)

### Verse 1

We push our canoe into the ocean  
Some waves crash over me  
So sad to leave my friends and family  
So glad to sail for Thee

### Chorus

Sailing, we are sailing  
Sailing across the sea  
Sailing, we are sailing  
Ta-kin' the light to Fi-ji. (3x last time)

### Verse 2

No land behind, no land in front  
But the stars shine to give us light  
The sun set low, but our hope is high  
We're sailin' on this lonesome night.

### Verse 3

The land rises slowly out in front of us  
Our hearts are bouncing like the waves  
We thank the Lord for His guiding hand  
Now we're safely at this land.

## Jisu, au kerea tiko

### Verse 1:

Jisu, au kerea tiko  
Kivei kemuni  
Me'u sa bau rogoca mada  
Na domomuni.

### Refrain:

Jisu! Jisu!  
Me'u kacivi mai:  
Na domomuni me rogo  
Kivei au e dai.

### Verse 4:

Me'u sa bau kacivi mada  
Me'u sa nomuni,  
Me sa bau serauni tiko  
E Matamuni.

### Refrain:

## **Amazing Grace (Second time)**

### **Verse 1**

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me

I once was lost, but now I'm found

Was blind, but now I see

### **Verse 2**

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear

And grace my fears relieved

How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed

### **Chorus**

My chains are gone

I've been set free

My God, my Savior has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy reigns

Unending love, amazing grace

### **Verse 4**

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow

The sun no longer to shine

But God, Who called me here below,

Will be forever mine.

Will be forever mine.

You are forever mine.