

## DISCOVERING BIBLIODRAMA

### *Scripture Windows: Toward a Practice of Bibliodrama*

---

#### Quotes from *Scripture Windows: Toward a Practice of Bibliodrama*, by Peter and Susan Pitzele

Bibliodrama is “...an embodied experience, a lived and felt identification that brings the biblical story to life and to our lives” (xiii).

Bibliodrama opens “a two-way channel between our own stories and the mythic narrative of the Bible” and our very sense of self “is no longer alienated from that mysterious source” of life to whom we belong, God, as God speaks through and inhabits Scripture (xiv).

“Bibliodrama is an instrument of repair. The separation between our minds and the text, which is endemic to acts of reading words and interpreting them, is a kind of tear in the fabric of wholeness. We sense ourselves not only outside the text, seeing the text as the object of our attention and analysis, but outside of the Mystery the text bears and offers to us. This experience of being outside, of inhabiting a dualistic condition, is briefly but profoundly overcome in the act of participating in a Bibliodrama. For a moment, as I assume the role and the role assumes me, I am no longer separated. In that moment, I am returned to an original wholeness, or, perhaps better said, I regain for a moment my innate capacity for a direct and unified connection” (xv).

“For this reason, Bibliodrama is fundamentally *re-creational*...to create again, to refresh not by resting but by some activity that is paradoxically a not-doing. The act of re-creation *re-minds* us – that is to say, puts us back into our right minds again – so that we may be able to engage in the word of the world with a sense of wholeness” (xv).

“That growth is expressed in a greater capacity for empathy and compassion, a greater respect for the power of Scripture to lead us to new understandings, and even a way of forming a relationship with the figures of wisdom and prophesy who can play a part in one’s everyday life” (xii).

“Bibliodrama is, basically, a way to place oneself inside the *biblical* cosmos and to locate aspects of that cosmos in oneself. This connection – stepping into the shoes of biblical figures (characters, objects, figures of speech) – brings the Bible alive and home to one’s life” (xiii).

“Sacred texts are records of the human experience of an all-inclusive Mystery. Individuals and cultures throughout human history have known themselves to be embedded in a vast interconnected web of life that can only be brought into the human community through story, metaphor, and play” (xiv).

“The religious person is someone who finds a way of going back again and again into the Mystery that dissolves separateness. For those of us who recognize the Bible’s potential to offer re-entry into Mystery, Bibliodrama can be a vehicle for a religious life” (xvi).

“The spiritually awakening, the spiritually hungry – to say nothing of the ordinarily literate – do not, by and large, turn to the Bible for nourishment and direction. They do not see it as a mirror and window for their souls” (xx). Few of our leaders and guides “look to the Bible for those archetypes of human experience and feeling that might connect our struggles for meaning and continuity with the quests of our ancestors... we do not recognize how the old biblical figures are still able to tell us something about who we are, where we’ve come from, and where we’re going” (xxi).

“Today and tomorrow the Bible will need teachers who are passionate as well as literate, savvy as well as scholarly, street-wise as well as book-wise, and who can, without degrading it, make the Bible come alive as living myth, relevant, disturbing, and still capable of taking our breath away” (xxii).

“There is a traditional Jewish commentary that talks about the Bible as having been composed in black and white fire. The black fire is seen in the form of the printed or handwritten words on the page or scroll; the white fire is found in the spaces between and around the black. The black fire is fixed for all time; the white fire is forever kindled by fresh encounters between changing time and the unchanging words. The black fire establishes the canonized object we can all see before us; the white spaces represent the endless potential for the fresh interpretation of that object. Bibliodrama takes places in the open spaces of the text for which the black fire, the black letters, are the boundaries” (3).

“I found myself taken by the voicing to places I had never been before in all my thinking *about* this moment” (9).

“...necessarily draws some of its power from the substrata of personal history that run beneath our acts of interpretation” (64).

“A sense of healing power that comes from a commonly held story...when we hold a story together...when gather together under the canopy of God’s story...when we allow God’s story to give shape and depth to our personal stories...when we have the chance to hear the joys and struggles of one another...when we have the “opportunity to recognize how all our stories are held within the framework of an overarching human story articulated thousands of years ago in a tale preserved and handed down to us through the generations” (177).

“Irrefutably, indestructibly, never wearied by time, the Bible wanders through the ages, giving itself with ease to all men, as if it belonged to every soul on earth. It speaks in every language and in every age. It benefits all the arts and does not compete with them... More than two thousand years of reading and research have not succeeded in exploring its full meaning. Today it is as if it had never been touched, never been seen, as if we had not even begun to read it.”

Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man*