

## TIME TO DIE, ELI

by JOHN COSPER

**GENRE:** Drama

**SYNOPSIS:** The last of the Israelite slaves is stunned to learn that he, too, must die before the children of the slaves will enter the promised land.

**DIRECTOR'S TIP:** The tone can start a little light, but it should grow very serious and somber as Eli's fate is revealed.

**TIME:** 5 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 2M

**THEME:** Sin, Listening to God

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Numbers 14

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** Any

**SUGGESTED USE:** Sermon Illustration

**CHARACTERS:**

ELI--an old Israelite, the last of the Egyptian slaves  
GOD (Voice)

**PROPS:** Simple furnishings from an Israelite tent

**COSTUMES:** Biblical robe for Eli

**SOUND:** Wireless microphones (optional)

**LIGHTING:** General stage

**SETTING:** A tent in the wilderness

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*Eli enters his tent, where his belongings are spread out. He walks with a staff; he is VERY old.*

**ELI:** Well, I guess that about does it. Old Hezekiah finally died this morning. His children bury him in the morning. The last of the Egyptian slaves has finally succumbed. Now, at last, the Lord will lead us into the Promised Land. Time to start packing, I suppose. Huh, where to start? We've been out here in this desert so long, it's almost home. A shame it had to be this way, but I understand. I think in the end, we all did. God delivered us out of slavery, led us across the Red Sea on dry land, and how did those fools reward him? By doubting God's goodness and rebelling against the very men God appointed to be our leaders. The fools. I could have told them it would all end in tears. Not that they would have listened. Joshua, Caleb, they tried. Fat lot of good it did. They made their choice, and now, now the last of them has paid for that sin. How blessed am I that the Lord spared me.

*Eli starts to pack things in a trunk.*

**GOD:** Eli!!!

**ELI:** What? Who's there?

**GOD:** Eli, it is I!

**ELI:** Eye? I don't know anyone named Eye.

**GOD:** I am that I am.

**ELI:** I am... Wait, that's what Moses said the Lord called... Lord? Is that you?

**GOD:** Eli, it is time for you to die.

**ELI:** What?

**GOD:** My children have been denied the Promised Land long enough. But you will not enter with them.

**ELI:** Now wait just a minute! Haven't I always been faithful to you?

**GOD:** Yes, Eli, you have.

**ELI:** Didn't I remain faithful to you when everyone else was grumbling for food?

**GOD:** Yes, Eli, you did.

**ELI:** Didn't I remain faithful to you when everyone else bowed down to that idol?