

Gods of Old

Interactive Narrative Gameplay Based On Historical Theology

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Background

This is an interactive narrative game that allows the player to make choices regarding clothing, equipment, and dialogue within Chapter 1 of a visual novel. Most choices will impact only visual elements or the non-player characters' (NPCs) reactions to the player's character.

Design Notes

- Opening the app initiates a loading screen with the game name and publisher logo.
- Once the game loads, the player will see the menu landing page with the following button options:
 - Start
 - Music On/Off
- Game mechanics are limited to static images with a moving camera, minimalistic character animations (such as moving an arm or changing facial expression), and button interaction.

Script Notes

- Words surrounded by brackets [Example] on their own line represent the button that needs to be clicked to initiate the dialogue that follows.
- Words in all caps represent the current speaker.
- Words surrounded with brackets as a variable, such as [Player Name], represent the code string that will change based on player input.
- Words in *Italics* are descriptions of what the player will see in the completed game (i.e, design notes for the artist).
- Bullet points represent the player's choice option, which will appear as buttons on the bottom half of the screen.
- Words broken up by ellipses indicate that the player has to tap the screen to continue to a new on-screen textbox.
- Words colored green will be clickable, opening a pop-up overlay with glossary definitions (See Appendix I)

[Start]

Black screen 0.5 seconds

Fade in: Panoramic image showing a map of Israel and the land of

Canaan

NARRATOR

“In a time when gods dwelled among their people and war ravaged the land, one nation stood out among the rest, for they had only one god: The Most High. The Israelites were chosen by this god, YHWH, as His holy people, set apart from the rest of the world...”

Image of Abraham and his descendants down to Jacob

“He gave the nation life. Twelve tribes descended from one great man...”

Image of Joseph in Egypt giving his brothers food

“He saved them from famine...”

Image of Moses leading the people across the Red Sea

“He saved them from slavery...”

Images of Miracles in the Wilderness

“He performed miracles that saved them from the wilderness...”

Image of the Promised Land

“And he delivered them to the Promised Land. The land of Canaan was filled with enemies who practiced heinous crimes in YHWH’s eyes...”

*Image of Canaanite crimes with the Israelites leading an army
against them with the Ark of the Covenant*

“Demon worship and child sacrifice were among these crimes. So YHWH led the Israelites to victory over them all...”

Image of Jerusalem

“Yet, even after witnessing all of His great works, The Israelites began to forget their Lord...”

Image of Slavery

“Generations passed, and they took the Canaanites as slaves and married their daughters...”

Image of Idols

“They worshiped idols and false gods, and they forgot what it meant to have the Creator of all things dwell in their presence.”

Image of the Ark

“But they never forgot the Ark of the Covenant. A great, golden vessel built to hold the laws of Israel and represent the seat of The Most High God, who had led them to victory so many times...”

Image of the Sea People arriving in Canaan

“When the Philistines arrived from across the sea, the Israelites thought they could use this power to claim victory and protect their land once again. But YHWH is not a dog, and he cannot be controlled...”

Fade to black 1 second

*Black screen wipe transition from center for open eyes animation
(first person view) to reveal the inside of a tent. Camera pans to a
mirror.*

Black Screen 0.5 seconds

*Character Creation Menu opens with the options to select the
following:*

- Hair: Style and Color
- Eyes: Color
- Tunic: Color
- Skirt: Long Armored Skirt, Short Armored Skirt, Long Cloth Skirt, Short Cloth Skirt
- Armor: Chestplate or Mail, Belt or Girdle, Shoes or Sandals, Helmet
- Weapon: Sword only, Sword and Shield, Bow, Spear, War Club, Sling, Dagger
- Character Name (text box)

[Continue]

Camera pans through the tent entrance

Black screen 0.5 seconds

Desert camp with a man waiting.

COMMANDER

[Player Name]! The Philistines have reached Aphék, we can not let them advance further toward Shiloh. We must protect the Holy City at all costs. Prepare for battle!

[Player Name]

- What's going on?
- I'm ready!

[What's going on?]

COMMANDER

The Philistines have formed a line against Israel, and they've started their attack. It's not going well, we need all the men we can get at the front line now!

- I'm ready!

[I'm ready!]

Cinematic scene of the battle showing the Israelites taken over by the Philistines.

Cut to the injured Commander standing back at camp, surrounded by Israel's Elders.

COMMANDER

Elders of Israel, the battle is not going well. We've lost 4,000 of our men in a single battle today. If this continues, Israel will be lost to the Philistines.

ELDER

Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies...

You there! Take this message to [Eli](#) in [Shiloh](#), take one soldier with you, and do not return without the [ark](#).

*The camera zooms out to three soldiers with names above them,
and the text “Who Will You Choose?”*

*From left to right, The Commander is dressed in full armor,
wielding a sword and a shield; The Ranger is dressed in a tunic
and half-skirt armor, wielding a bow with a sling on his hip; The
Soldier is dressed in a tunic and full-length skirt armor, wielding a
spear.*

[Who Will You Choose?]

- The Commander
- The Ranger
- The Soldier

ELDER

Good. You and [Companion] will leave for [Shiloh](#) at once. The battle has worn out your gears. Stop at the armory before you leave to stock up on quality equipment for your journey.

Black screen 0.5 seconds

*Cut to the armory with an equipment selection screen. The player
can select one new outfit and one new weapon. Options will be the
same as the character selection screen, but with a wider variety of
styles, colors, and quality of items.*

[COMPANION]

Are you prepared for the journey, [Player Name]?

[PLAYER NAME]

- Not Yet.
- Let's Go.

[Not Yet]

Return to the equipment selection menu.

[Let's Go.]

Cinematic scene of the player traveling with the chosen companion from Ebenezer to Shiloh.

Open scene at the front of the tabernacle in Shiloh with two Israelites standing at the entrance.

[ISRAELITE 1]

Halt! State your business at the Tabernacle of the Lord today.

[COMPANION]

We bring urgent news from the battle. We must enter the Tabernacle and speak with Eli at once!

[ISRAELITE 2]

What is this news?

[PLAYER NAME]

- Hand him the message from the Elders.
- Yell at him.

[Yell at him]

The Israelite draws his weapon.

[ISRAELITE 2]

We cannot allow just anyone to see Eli. What proof do you have?

[PLAYER NAME]

- Hand him the message from the Elders.

[Hand him the message from the Elders.]

[ISRAELITE 1]

Take them to Eli at once!

Black screen 0.5 seconds.

Open scene to inside the Tabernacle with Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas.

[ELI]

What news do you bring from the Elders at the battle?

[COMPANION]

We have been defeated in battle by the Philistines. 4,000 troops were lost in battle at the last count. The Elders request we bring the ark of the covenant to the battlefield so that the presence of the Lord will lead us to victory.

[ELI]

We must take action to defeat the Philistines! Go forth and take the ark. My sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall accompany you to carry the ark along your journey.

To Be Continued...

Glossary

The following are real-life verbatim definitions taken from reliable historical sources (see works cited for reference).

Aphek - A city on the military road from Syria to Israel.

Ark of the Covenant - the ornate, gold-plated wooden chest that in biblical times housed the two tablets of the Law given to Moses by God. The Ark rested in the Holy of Holies inside the Tabernacle of the ancient Temple of Jerusalem and was seen only by the high priest of the Israelites on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Canaan - area centred on Palestine. Its original pre-Israelite inhabitants were called Canaanites. The names Canaan and Canaanite occur in cuneiform, Egyptian, and Phoenician writings from about the 15th century bce as well as in the Old Testament. In these sources, “Canaan” refers sometimes to an area encompassing all of Palestine and Syria, sometimes only to the land west of the Jordan River, and sometimes just to a strip of coastal land from Acre (‘Akko) northward. The Israelites occupied and conquered Palestine, or Canaan, beginning in the late 2nd millennium bce, or perhaps earlier.

Canaanites - pre-Israelite indigenous population residing in the “promised land” who were conquered by the tribes of Israel under the leadership of Joshua following their Exodus from Egypt.

Ebenezer - a location named after the battle with the Philistines meaning “stone of help”. This was the location where the Israelites camped to stand against the Philistines who were marching on Shiloh. It stood between Mizpeh and Shen.

Eli - the High Priest, the most prominent representative of God in the most important religious city of the country. Under his charge were two other priests, his sons, Hophni and Phinehas.

Hophni - One of the sons of Eli and a priest under his charge. Both sons were known for stealing food from the sacrifices of the people.

Israel - either of two political units in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament): the united kingdom of Israel under the kings Saul, David, and Solomon, which lasted from about 1020 to 922 bce; or the northern kingdom of Israel, including the territories of the 10 northern tribes (i.e., all except Judah and part of Benjamin), which was established in 922 bce as the result of a revolt led by Jeroboam I.

Israelites - the descendants of the Hebrew patriarch Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel after an all-night fight at Peniel near the stream of Jabbok (Genesis 32:28). In early history, Israelites were simply members of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. After 930 bce and the establishment of two independent Hebrew kingdoms in Palestine, the 10 northern tribes constituting the kingdom of Israel were known as Israelites to distinguish them from the southern kingdom of Judah. In liturgical usage, an Israelite is a Jew who is neither a cohen (descendant of Aaron, the first high priest) nor a Levite (descendant of early religious functionaries).

Promised Land - a specific region of land that God endowed to His chosen people, as part of their heritage. (Genesis 12, Genesis 26:3, Genesis 28:13) God first gave this pledge of land to Abraham saying, "I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and from the desert to the Euphrates River." He then reiterated the vow to Abraham's descendants until the time came for His people to claim their inheritance.

Philistines - one of several tribes known as the Sea Peoples who invaded the land of Israel during the 12th century B.C. They lived in the cities of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza—the heartland of ancient Philistia on the Mediterranean Sea's southeastern shore.

Phinehas - One of the sons of Eli and a priest under his charge. Both sons were known for stealing food from the sacrifices of the people.

Shiloh - In 12th-11th century BC, the Israelites built the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant rested in the city of Shiloh. Here, it rested for three centuries where the tribes of Israel would visit for feasts or peace offerings.

Tabernacle - the center of the worship of Yahweh by the people of Israel from shortly after the exodus until it was replaced by Solomon's temple around 960 b.c. The term "tabernacle" is sometimes used to refer to one part of a larger complex: the tent-like structure that stood within a court enclosed by linen curtains. At other times the term describes the entire complex. The inner structure was comprised of gold-plated planks linked together and standing on edge. They formed three sides of a rectangle, with the fourth closed by a heavy curtain. The whole was draped with several layers of cloth and leather. Here God was understood to be especially present for his people.

Twelve tribes - the Hebrew people who, after the death of Moses, took possession of the Promised Land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. Because the tribes were named after sons or grandsons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel after he wrestled an angel of the Lord, the Hebrew people became known as Israelites.

YHWH - the name for the God of the Israelites, representing the biblical pronunciation of “YHWH,” the Hebrew name revealed to Moses in the book of Exodus. The name YHWH, consisting of the sequence of consonants Yod, Heh, Waw, and Heh, is known as the tetragrammaton.

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