

Flames of Freedom Podcast Episode 7

"Troubled Times"

Written by Richard Stone. Produced and directed by Mark Simon at Cue Tone Productions. Audio Engineering, Original Music, and Sound Design by David Wilson. Executive Producer Lance Toland.

This is a production of Lance Toland Entertainment.

FLAMES OF FREEDOM

EPISODE 7: TROUBLED TIMES

FADE IN UNDER  
OPENING MUSIC:

SFX: OPENING MUSIC

ANNOUNCER

Welcome to Flames of Freedom,  
Episode 7: Troubled Times, a  
docudrama based on actual  
historical events brought to you by  
Lance Toland Entertainment. In the  
previous episode, Samuel and  
Rebekah's boys are becoming more  
and more disillusioned with life in  
London, mirroring Rebekah's own  
disappointments with the decision  
to start a new life in England and  
her growing disenchantment with  
Judaism...

FADE IN: [Pick up from the conclusion of Episode Six]

SFX: musical transition

ZIPPORAH

Mamae, are you not coming to  
Shabbat services with Papa, Ester,  
and me?

REBEKAH

No, you three go ahead.

ZIPPORAH

Mamae, it's been weeks since you  
joined us.

REBEKAH

It's enough that I light candles on  
Friday night and say the prayers.  
Besides, I can't understand a word  
they're saying, so what's the point  
of sitting there for over two hours  
watching the men? Are your brothers  
going?

ESTER

No Mamae, what difference does it  
make what Moses and Daniel do?

(MORE)

ESTER (CONT'D)

It means so much to Papa when we're there.

REBEKAH

You know, I used to love attending Catholic mass with your Papa. We'd sit in the back where no one could see us and hold hands. But here, I'm banished to the balcony. Plus, I get no pleasure or solace from the liturgy. At least in Portugal, I could receive communion with the men. And I could understand the Latin prayers. It felt like I mattered. Here...not so much.

ZIPPORAH

It's just different customs, Mamae. It takes time.

REBEKAH

It's been over three years. That's plenty of time. And nothing has changed, at least for me. But I'm glad you're going for Papa. Now, leave me to my knitting, **please**.

ESTER

You know, Mamae, knitting is prohibited on Shabbat.

REBEKAH

Yes, I am well aware, but I have been knitting for over fifty years on the Sabbath, and God has yet to strike me down. So, I will continue to knit because there is no harm in it. Now go. You can say a prayer for my soul. Just leave me in peace. And tell Papa I just needed to rest.

SFX: Musical transition to Synagogue

ZIPPORAH

That Saturday Shabbat Services at Bevis Marks Synagogue were not well attended. Many of the back pews were empty of congregants praying, except for my father.

(MORE)

## ZIPPORAH (CONT'D)

I looked down from the balcony as he stood there with the prayer shawl wrapped around his head and body, swaying back and forth in rhythm with the prayers. When the services concluded, he looked up at us as he took off his Tallit. Tears were streaming down his face.

END RECAP

SFX: Musical transition

## ZIPPORAH

I could not have imagined things becoming much worse. Then, one evening, after midnight, we were all awakened by a loud banging on the front door. I got up and found my parents in their nightclothes standing in the hallway.

SFX: Banging on door; flames of torches

## SAMUEL

Zipporah, stay here. I will see what this is all about...

## CONSTABLE I

Open up immediately! Open up, I say! In the name of Chief Constable James Whitmore, open the door, or we'll break it down.

## REBEKAH

What do they want?

## SAMUEL

I have no idea, but they are demanding we open the door immediately.

## REBEKAH

At this hour? Who can it be?

## SAMUEL

I don't know. Just stay calm.

## REBEKAH

Samuel, be careful.

SAMUEL

Don't worry. It must be a mistake.  
Remember, this is not Lisbon.

SFX: Samuel is walking down the stairs. We hear the footsteps of +Rebekah and Zipporah behind him.

SAMUEL

Who is it?

CONSTABLE I

Constable Henry Lawson with the  
London Constabulary.

SAMUEL

What is it you want at this late  
hour?

CONSTABLE I

We have a warrant for the arrest of  
Mr. Moses Nunes.

SFX: Samuel undoing the latch and opening the door.

SAMUEL

What has he done to deserve this?

CONSTABLE I

Sir, it's about what he has not  
done. He owes Mr. Richard  
Holdsworth a sum of seventy-eight  
pounds, twelve shillings.

SAMUEL

For what?

CONSTABLE I

Sir, I am not privileged to know  
the nature of the debt. I am just  
charged to carry out his arrest.

REBEKAH

Let us see this warrant.

SAMUEL

Rebekah, please, let me handle  
this.

REBEKAH

No one takes my son to jail without  
proof. Now, show us the warrant.

SFX: Constable reaches into his jacket, extracting a piece of paper, and hands it to her.

SFX: Torches continue

SAMUEL

Rebekah, see that Moses is awakened  
and dressed at once.

SFX: Rebekah's footsteps down the hall, then opening a door.

MOSES

Mamae, don't let them take me.  
Please.

REBEKAH

What have you done?

MOSES

Nothing.

REBEKAH

Moses, this is no time for lies.  
What have you done?

MOSES

It's just a small gambling debt,  
Mamae. I promised I would pay it  
back, but I fell behind...

REBEKAH

You did what? You lost good money  
playing card games!

MOSES

It's not what it seems, Mamae.

REBEKAH

After everything your father has  
sacrificed to give you a better  
life, you go and do this.

MOSES

Mamae, please understand.

REBEKAH

Oh, I understand. Get your clothes  
on now! Your father and I will  
straighten this out, but I don't  
want to hear another word. Now  
dress and join your Papa at the  
front door.

SFX: Rebekah slams the bedroom door and leans against it,  
breathing heavily, then walks down the hall to the front  
door.

REBEKAH

He is getting dressed and will be here in a minute.

SAMUEL

Where are you taking him?

CONSTABLE I

Marshalsea Prison, sir.

SFX: footsteps of Moses.

SAMUEL

These men are here to take you to prison, Samuel. How could you be so foolish?

MOSES

Papa...

SAMUEL

Not another word. I can't stomach any ore of your filthy lies.

CONSTABLE I

Are you Moses Nunes?

MOSES

Yes.

CONSTABLE I

Your hands, sir.

SFX: manacles being put on wrists; Moses being grabbed by the constable and roughly pushed toward the waiting cart.

SAMUEL

How do we find him?

CONSTABLE I

You can inquire at the prison's front gate. Have a good evening, and sorry to wake you at this late hour, sir. Good evening, miss.

SFX: Moses being thrown into the cart; cart being led away over a cobblestone road.

SFX: Front door being shut and latched.

SAMUEL

Daniel, Daniel, come to the living room immediately.

SFX: his footsteps.

SAMUEL

Daniel, what do you know of this?

DANIEL

Father, I told him not to gamble, but he never listens to me. Papa, he really thought it would help our family...

SAMUEL

To help the family?

DANIEL

Papa, just listen. He knew you weren't earning enough and thought winning some money would help pay our bills.

SAMUEL

Really? I don't need that kind of help. All he has done is bring shame on us. Shame! Gambling? Why didn't you come to tell me? You've always been the one with a level head.

DANIEL

(crying)

Papa, I'm so sorry. I didn't know what to say or do. He went from losing just a little and kept trying to win it back to get even. I begged him to stop, but by then, he was in too deep. I'm so sorry.

REBEKAH

Come here, son.

SFX: Rebekah holding Daniel as he sobs.

REBEKAH

Daniel, that's enough. It will be all right. It's not your fault.

REBEKAH

Samuel, tomorrow morning, you must see the Rabbi. We can't leave Moses in there, regardless of what he has done.



SAMUEL

No, we can't. But, if it were up to me, I'd let him rot there for a few days to learn a lesson.

SFX: musical transition

BENJAMIN

Nonna, did he ever get out of prison?

ZIPPORAH

Well, that's an interesting story filled with unexpected coincidences. But as you might imagine, my father did go to see the rabbi the next morning where he gave the man who took care of the synagogue a surprise.

SFX: Carts in road

SAMUEL

Solomon...

SOLOMON

Good morning, Dr. Nunes. You're early for the minion. It doesn't start for another hour.

SAMUEL

Actually, I'm here to see the Rabbi.

SOLOMON

Oh. Is he expecting you? I rarely ever see him here this early.

SAMUEL

No, he doesn't know I'm coming. I'll wait for him to arrive.

SFX: Solomon unlocks the gate and swings it open.

SOLOMON

Come in. I'm sure he won't mind you waiting in his study.

SAMUEL

That's kind of you.

SFX: footsteps, door opening, and Samuel sitting.

SOLOMON

I'll let him know you're here the moment he arrives.

SAMUEL

Thank you.

SFX: time passing; door swinging open.

RABBI NIETO

Samuel, Solomon told me you were here at the break of dawn. What has happened?

SAMUEL

It's Moses. He's been arrested.

RABBI NIETO

Arrested? For what?

SAMUEL

I'm embarrassed to say. A gambling debt.

RABBI NIETO

Guay de mi. This is terrible. Where have they taken him?

SAMUEL

Marshalsea Prison.

RABBI NIETO

This is una grande banya. It's a terrible place. When did this happen?

SAMUEL

Late last night. Around two in the morning, they arrested him at our home.

RABBI NIETO

We must get him out immediately. How much does he owe, and to whom?

SAMUEL

A Richard Holdsworth--a sum of seventy-eight pounds, twelve shillings.

RABBI NIETO

I have heard of this man. He's quite ruthless.

(MORE)

RABBI NIETO (CONT'D)

What was Moses thinking playing cards with a man like that?

SAMUEL

I think he wanted to help me and the family. But all he has brought to us is shame.

RABBI NIETO

(pausing to think)

He will no doubt learn something from this. But first things first. We must borrow the money to pay off the debt, and act fast. Every minute in that cesspool they call a prison can be catastrophic. I am sending you to see a friend of the synagogue--Anthony da Costa, with a letter of introduction. His office is at 127 Lombard Street in the City of London. He will take care of the debt.

SAMUEL

But how am I to repay him such a sum?

RABBI NIETO

We'll face that challenge tomorrow. Today, let's free Moses from prison, and then you and Anthony can discuss repayment terms.

SFX: Rabbi Nieto sitting at his desk; quill pen scrawls note a note on stationery; note placed in an envelope and wax seal applied.

RABBI NIETO

Here.

SAMUEL

I don't know what to say or how to thank you.

RABBI NIETO

Samuel, you repay this community every day you care for our sick who have nothing to give you in return. Don't trouble yourself worrying about this. Now go. Time is of the essence.

SFX: Musical transition

ZIPPORAH

My father left the rabbi's study and found a carriage to take him into the City of London. He arrived at 127 Lombard Street feeling more trepidation standing there than when he first met the King of Portugal. There, above the ornate door at the top of the stairs was a sign with gold lettering--Anthony da Costa, Esquire.

SFX: Samuel mounts the stairs to the entrance. Opening the door. Buzz of activity in the office

SECRETARY

May I help you?

SAMUEL

Yes, I am here to see Anthony da Costa.

SECRETARY

Is he expecting you?

SAMUEL

No. Rabbi Nieto directed me here, and I have this to give him.

SECRETARY

Let me see the letter. Hmm... Please sit and wait right here. I'll see if Mr. da Costa is available.

ZIPPORAH

After waiting for what felt like an eternity, Anthony da Costa emerged from his office and approached my father.

ANTHONY DA COSTA

Dr. Nunes. It's a pleasure to meet you. I have heard much about your work with our community's less fortunate. Let us go into the conference room where we can talk privately. Tea?

SAMUEL

Yes, please.

ANTHONY DA COSTA  
Miriam. Please bring tea service  
for us.

SFX: door opening then closing; footsteps; two people sitting

ANTHONY DA COSTA  
The Rabbi writes that your son has  
gotten himself into some financial  
trouble.

SAMUEL  
Yes. Unfortunately. He was arrested  
last evening.

ANTHONY DA COSTA  
I understand he owes quite a sum  
for a gambling debt.

SAMUEL  
Yes, I am ashamed to say.

ANTHONY DA COSTA  
Well, we can't have one of our own  
rotting in that prison. I will  
draft a cheque to this Mr.  
Holdsworth and have it delivered to  
his residence immediately.  
Unfortunately, your son is not the  
first in our Jewish community to be  
taken advantage of by this man.  
Hopefully, we can get him released  
by tomorrow.

SAMUEL  
I'm most appreciative, but I must  
be truthful with you. I have no  
idea how I can repay you such a  
sum.

ANTHONY DA COSTA  
Let's not worry about that this  
morning. God has been very generous  
to me and my family. Consider it a  
long-term loan for now. Perhaps  
someday you can return the favor to  
me or perhaps help someone else in  
need.

SAMUEL  
I can't thank you enough.

ANTHONY DA COSTA  
It is my honor to help.

SFX: Miriam opens door and places a tray with the coffees on the table.

ANTHONY DA COSTA

Miriam, take this note from the rabbi and have Ezekiel draft a cheque in this amount to Mr. Richard Holdsworth. And have him deliver it to his residence on Bishopsgate Arcade. He'll know where it is. And please close the door as you leave.

SFX: Miriam leaves and closes the door.

ANTHONY DA COSTA

Word has it that you were the physician to the King in Lisbon...

SFX: musical transition

BENJAMIN

So, did your brother get released from prison?

ZIPPORAH

Yes, but it wasn't as easy as you might imagine. More importantly, when Father visited Moses in prison that afternoon, he surprisingly met one of the most important politicians and noblemen of the day--James Oglethorpe.

BENJAMIN

The man who founded the Georgia Colony?

ZIPPORAH

Yes, that very man.

BENJAMIN

What was he doing there?

ZIPPORAH

This is where our story and his story suddenly collide...

SFX: Prison gate being opened.

OGLETHORPE

What do you mean Castell died this morning? Of what? He's only been here, by my count, five days.

(MORE)

OGLETHORPE (CONT'D)

He was a vibrant, healthy man when he was arrested.

WARDEN

Smallpox, sir.

OGLETHORPE

Did your men throw him into a cell with infected inmates?

WARDEN

Sir, he couldn't pay for his own cell. He had no money. We put him where deadbeat indigent inmates sleep.

OGLETHORPE

So you're telling me he couldn't properly bribe your men, so you gave him a death sentence?! Where is his body?

WARDEN

It wasn't us that killed him, sir. It was the disease.

OGLETHORPE

Disease. The disease is a pitiful excuse. This prison is a disgrace. Now, I asked you, where is his body?

WARDEN

He has been buried already in the pauper graves.

OGLETHORPE

(under his breath)

You bastards. I will destroy all of you. And you will live to regret these barbaric policies.

WARDEN

Now, sir, don't be making frivolous and libelous accusations. I'll report you, sir.

ZIPPORAH

My father later told me that Mr. Oglethorpe pulled out his riding crop and shoved the warden against the wall with the crop lodged in his throat. The warden could barely breathe.

SFX: Man hitting wall and attempting to catch his breath.

OGLETHORPE

You don't realize who you're  
dealing with, do you?

WARDEN

I can't breathe.

OGLETHORPE

When I get done with you in  
Parliament, you won't ever breathe  
again as a free man. I'll see that  
you rot in your own excrement in a  
cell unworthy of a rat.

WARDEN

Please, let me go.

ZIPPORAH

Mr. Oglethorpe released him, threw  
him to the ground, and placed his  
foot on his neck.

SFX: Man hitting ground

OGLETHORPE

If you know what's good for you,  
you'll dig up his body, put it in a  
dignified casket, and deliver it to  
his widow by nightfall. Do you  
understand me?

WARDEN

(feebly)

Yes...yes...

SFX: The warden getting up and brushing the dust off his  
clothing.

SAMUEL

(hesitating)

Sir, I have come to see my son.

WARDEN

Your son--who is he? What's his  
name?

SAMUEL

Moses Nunes, sir.

WARDEN

The Jew who was brought in last  
evening?



SAMUEL

Yes sir.

WARDEN

He is to have no visitors until his debts are accounted for.

SAMUEL

They are being paid as we speak.

WARDEN

That may be so, but arresting and jailing your son has already incurred further debt. If you wish to visit him today, that will cost you ten shillings.

ZIPPORAH

The father stood just inches from the warden and stared at him indignantly.

SFX: reaching into a pocket for coins

SAMUEL

Very well. Here are your ten shillings. Now, may I see my son?

WARDEN

By the time we release him tomorrow, provided his debt is paid as you claim, he will have incurred even more expenses, Jew. At least another pound.

SAMUEL

That's outrageous.

WARDEN

Do you want to see him or not? That's the way things work here.

SFX: reaching into a pocket for coins

SAMUEL

Very well, here's your pound.

WARDEN

Higgins. Take this Jew to cell eight to visit Moses Nunes.

SFX: footsteps on stone, iron cell doors opening and closing.

ZIPPORAH

My father followed this man into the bowels of the prison, and they soon arrived at cell eight, which was packed with twelve men. It was so dark my father could barely make out individual faces.

SAMUEL

Moses. Are you in there?

MOSES

Papa. You came!

ZIPPORAH

My father was shocked as he took Moses's hand. His face was badly bruised from the beatings he had received.

SAMUEL

What has happened to you?

MOSES

Papa, they beat me for being a Jew. I am so sorry for what I have done to you and the family.

SAMUEL

Listen to me. I have made arrangements to pay off your debt. No time for sorrow. If we're lucky, we'll get you out of here tomorrow morning.

MOSES

Papa, please, don't make me spend another night in here with these men. Please. Please.

SAMUEL

(to the jailor)

What would it take to get my son his own cell?

JAILOR

Sir, I regret to say that only our best inmates have their own cells.

SAMUEL

And what does it take to become a "best inmate?" A pound?

ZIPPORAH

The jailer shook his head.

SAMUEL

Two pounds?

ZIPPORAH

Once again, he shook his head.

SAMUEL

Three pounds is all I have on me.

ZIPPORAH

The jailor smiled and extended his hand. My father handed him the coins, and the jailor unlocked the door and motioned to Moses to come out.

SFX: Jail door being unlocked and locked.

ZIPPORAH

He re-locked the cell and, with his head, motioned them down a hall until they arrived at a row of empty cells. He opened one of the doors and shoved Moses in, locking it behind him.

SFX: Jail door closing and being locked

MOSES

Papa, thank you. I promise I'll never gamble again.

SAMUEL

I'll see you in the morning, Moses. Get some rest. We can talk more tomorrow. And Moses...

MOSES

Yes, Papa.

SAMUEL

Your mother wants you to know that we forgive you.

MOSES

(sobbing quietly)  
Papa, thank you.

SAMUEL

Now, get some rest.

SFX: Musical transition

BENJAMIN

I thought James Oglethorpe was a member of the landed gentry. A true Englishman. And what was he doing in that prison?

ZIPPORAH

A member of the landed gentry, that he was. And as you'll see, he soon became famous for leading the charge against debtor prisons. For that, families like ours were eternally grateful. But he also had a reputation for having a fiery temper. My father once told me that he killed a man...

BENJAMIN

He killed a man!

SFX: pub; rowdy drinkers

ZIPPORAH

Indeed. One night Mr. Oglethorpe and several of his young companions had been drinking at a pub near the docklands. Another party of young men sitting at a nearby table had become quite rowdy. One recognized Oglethorpe.

DRUNKARD I

Look who we have here. Royalty, I say. James Oglethorpe.

DRUNKARD II

Who's he?

DRUNKARD I

Who's he? If he's his mother's son, he's a bloody Jacobite. Or have you renounced that bitch who has been licking King James's ass and the cock of all the other bloody members of the Stuart clan in France?

ZIPPORAH

Mr. Oglethorpe stood and walked casually to his accuser's table.

OGLETHORPE

Sir, I don't believe we have ever met. Your name, sir?

DRUNKARD I

Geoffrey Callenwold. What's it to you?

OGLETHORPE

I always want to know the name of the man whom I write about in my journal.

DRUNKARD I

Not only is he a worthless Jacobite. He writes in his diary like my sister. And what might you say about me, Mr. Oglethorpe?

OGLETHORPE

I have a special section for definitions of two-faced arse-holes that belong on a dung heap. I want to be certain I have your name correctly spelled when I inscribe it below the rest of the worthless snot whose names populate my shit list.

ZIPPORAH

Callenwold and the rest of his mates jumped to their feet and unsheathed their swords.

SFX: Swords being drawn; sword fight; man collapsing and dying

ZIPPORAH

Oglethorpe did the same. These men's drunken state was no match for a sober skilled swordsman, and Oglethorpe quickly disarmed three of them, inflicting minor wounds. Callenwold rushed at him, but Oglethorpe sidestepped, parried the man's attempts to stab him, and then sliced him first across the neck before burying his sword between the man's ribs. Callenwold collapsed to the ground and took his last breath. One of his friends rushed to his side.

DRUNKARD II

Jesus. You killed him. You son of a bitch.

OGLETHORPE

You take another step in my direction, and your fate will be the same. You men started the fight. I finished it.

DRUNKARD II

We'll see to that. When I'm done with you, you'll be hanging from the gallows.

END

ANNOUNCER

This is the conclusion of Episode seven of Flames of Freedom. Written by Richard Stone. Produced and directed by Mark Simon at Cue Tone Productions. Audio Engineering, Original Music, and Sound Design by David Wilson. Executive Producer Lance Toland.

Special thanks to our ensemble cast...Zipporah played by Angelines Santana. Benjamin played by Jamie Treselyan. Diogo Nunes played by Juan Pablo Gamboa. Gracia Nunes played by Gabriela Lopetegui. James Oglethorpe played by Ian Russell. Additional roles played by Brad Davidorf, Barry Stoltze, Francois Clemenceau, and Roxanne Rittman.

Thanks to Rabbi Saul Rubin, whose assistance throughout the development of this series was invaluable.

(MORE)

## ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

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