

A Dozen Decisions, One True God What if... If only

By Kathy Applebee

CHARACTERS: 12 F, doubling possible

COSTUMES: Period

SETTING: Bare stage

SCRIPTURE: Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. Joel 3:14

DELILAH

Five thousand, 500 pieces of silver. I can buy a lot with 5500 pieces of silver. But I can't buy happiness. I can't buy peace. I can't go back and change where I have done.

You would think that I have it all. I am beautiful. I'm intelligent; I know how to use my charm to get what I want. I had influence over all the rulers of my time. And with that power I was able to get this - 5500 shekels of silver.

Beauty is fleeting and charm is deceptive and one day I will lose them both. Even if I invest this 5500 pieces of silver wisely, it will one day turn to dust. But not before I will.

And after I die what will become me?

If only I haven't sold the man who loved me into the hands of the Philistines. If only I had looked beyond what he was to what he could have been. What if I had seen what Simpson could be, strong, not just in a physical sense, but strong in the power of the Lord?

What if I had thrown my lot in with Israel, like Rahab did?

Rahab and I had much in common: prostitutes, harboring political criminals, a decision that would change the entire course of our lives based on what we did with these men.

What does it profit one, to gain the whole world and lose one's soul?

I made my choice. I have 5000, 500 pieces of silver.

SAPPHIRA

If only I hadn't lied. If only I had convinced my husband Ananias to tell the truth. But if onlys will not bring us back from the grave.

King Solomon once said “Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income.” How true. How true. And the Lord hates lying lips.

When we sold our property, the money was at our disposal. We certainly had every right to keep all of it or to keep part of it back and give part to the Lord. But we lied about it and now we’re dead.

I knew my husband intended to lie and keep back part of the money. It doesn’t matter why – whether he was trying to look big in the eyes of the apostles or trying to be another Barnabas.

Was it Satan? Or was it me? It doesn’t really matter because we are both dead.

If only I had encouraged him to tell the truth. Or maybe I should have encouraged him to give the whole sum, trusting God more. Maybe I should have told the truth myself and feared God more than my husband’s opinion of me.

If only I had encouraged my husband to do the right thing and had the courage to do it myself.

PUAH & SHIPRAH

PUAH: (*Timid, even frightened*) When messengers from Pharaoh came, I could scarcely breathe, I was so scared.

SHIPRAH: (*Strong, defiant*) Civil disobedience. That’s what you call it. But in Egypt thousands of years ago, it was simply defying authority, defying the Pharaoh’s orders.

PUAH: The king of Egypt had told us that when we helped the Hebrew women during childbirth and saw that the baby is a boy, we were to kill him. If it was a girl, we could let her live. But Shiprah and I chose to disobey the king.

SHIPRAH: We may be slaves, but Pharaoh doesn’t own our souls. God does.

PUAH: When we were brought before him, my knees shook so badly I could hardly stand. I would have thrown up, except I already had when word came & his soldiers took me to the palace. Thank God, Shiprah was right there beside me.

SHIPRAH: (*Mocking the voice of Pharaoh*) “Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?”

PUAH: (*Standing straight, in an unwavering voice, very unlike her timid voice*) “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.” (*pause, with a big smile*) That was it. He let us go. We went on with our lives and God gave them families of their own.

SHIPRAH: We weren't the first or the last to defy human authority to obey God. Did Daniel think of us when ordered not to pray? Did our actions help Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when facing the king? Peter and the disciples before the Sanhedrin?

PUAH: (*joyfully*) The God we serve is able to deliver us,

PUAH & SHIPRAH: (*in unison*) and he does deliver us.

EVE

Why did I listen to the serpent? Why did I let him deceive me? And why, oh why, did I drag my husband Adam into it as well?

Now we are cast out of the garden, the perfect garden of Eden. My husband labors hard every day, fighting against weeds and thorns to feed us. Not only is my pain in childbirth great, but I have doomed all my daughters to the same pain, generation after generation.

And worst of all I have brought sin into the world to haunt all generations that follow me. Why did I listen to the evil serpent? What if I had made a different choice?

JOB'S WIFE

What if? What if I had encouraged my husband instead of advising him to curse God and die? I guess I'll never know.

SARAH

If only I had had the patience and the faith of my husband Abraham. If only I had waited on the Lord. If I had hoped in the LORD, he would have renewed my strength. Yes, the strength of a 90 year old woman. I would have soared on wings like eagles; I would have run and not grown weary, I would have walked and not grown faint.

If only I had not leaned on my own understanding and came up with a plan for Hagar to have a baby for me. If Ishmael had not been born, then the Edomites would not have been a thorn in the side of Israel for generations after generation. How could I have known that one decision would have such terrible repercussions?

If only I had waited on the Lord.

ESTHER

Do you ever look back on your life and wonder what would have happened if...? I do. I wonder where relief and deliverance for the Jews would have come, if I had not risked my life and gone before the king.

Mordecai is convinced that had I chosen to remain silent, that aid for the Jews would have come another way. I'm sure he's right. Mordecai always did the right thing, even if it could have cost him his life.

Mordecai asked me "And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" But I can't help wondering ... What if I had looked around at the physical things, at my position, my power, my possessions instead of looking beyond to my people and my God?

Did you know that when I faced that big decision it really wasn't all that hard to make? I had year of practice obeying Mordecai in the small everyday things. He never steered me wrong. It came naturally to obey him in this.

That's how it is with obedience. When you obey the Lord in little things, day after day, every day, the big decisions, the risky obedience, comes easily.

What would have happened if I had not spoken up for my people? I don't know. And I am so thankful I will never find out.

BATHSHEBA

Thirty minutes. Have you ever wondered what a difference 30 minutes might make? It could steer the entire course of your life on another path.

What if I had taken my bath just 30 minutes later? Instead of evening, it would have been night. No one, not even a king, could have seen me bathing on my roof if I had waited another 30 minutes.

SALOME

If someone promised to give you anything you wanted, and they were rich and powerful enough to deliver up just about anything you could ask for, what, (*pause*) what would you ask for?

God asked Solomon that question.

At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon asked for wisdom. The Lord was pleased so God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like

you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.

What would you have asked for?

King Herod asked me that question. (*remembers, painfully and regretfully, self-loathing apparent on her face*)

And I asked for the head of John, the one they called the baptizer, on a platter. (*Looks afar, shakes head in disbelief*)

I could have asked for anything, up to half his kingdom, and I asked for John's head on a platter.

(*remembering and gazing at her hands holding an imaginary platter*) And as I carried the gristly gift back to my mother, his blood spilled onto my hands. (*Looking at audience*) I washed them, but the stain will never come off. (*holding out hands*) His blood will be on my hands and head forever.

If only I had asked for something else.

RAHAB

As I stood in the crowd of Israelites gathered before Joshua at Shechem, my children pressed around me, listening as he recounted the escape from Egypt, crossing the Red Sea and the Jordan, taking Jericho and defeating 30 more kings. I too had heard those stories as a child, mouth open in awe. As an adult from my home on the city wall I had watched the Jordan ripped open as they marched across.

Then Joshua's voice thundered out: choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living.

And I thought, I made my choice years ago. I could have turned the Israelite spies over to the king of Jericho and been applauded as a good citizen. But I choose not to. When every other heart in Jericho melted in fear and everyone's courage failed, my resolve grew stronger.

I knew the LORD their God was God in heaven above and on the earth below. I put my trust in Him, threw my lot in with the spies and made my choice.

And as Joshua finished (Joshua voice) But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD, I said those words right along with him in my heart.

Had I not made that choice, I would be dead.

RUTH

One of your modern day poets once wrote “two roads diverged in a yellow wood and sorry I could not travel both. I took the one less traveled by and that has made all the difference.”

I too faced two roads. One well-traveled way that would lead me back home, to Moab, to the familiar, to my family by blood. The other, less traveled led to a foreign land, an uncertain reception, the great unknown.

My sister in law Orpah chose to go home. I chose to go with Naomi to Israel and that made all the difference.

Joshua once spoke to the Israelites saying “choose this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house we will serve the lord.” Even though I never met the man, even though I only had heard stories from Naomi, I knew that when the time came to make a choice, I would choose the Lord, no matter what path led to Him.

ALL: Multitudes, multitudes
in the valley of decision!
For the day of the LORD is near
in the valley of decision.

Online interactive games

Acts 1- 12 scrambled people (Sapphire)
<http://www.quia.com/jw/348075.html>

Adam and Eve Scriptures
<http://www.quia.com/rr/364570.html>

Exodus 1 and 2 Rags to Riches (Puah and Shiprah)
<http://www.quia.com/rr/432071.html>

All about Samson (Delilah)
<http://www.quia.com/cb/611383.html>

Esther 1-2 Matching
<http://www.quia.com/jg/1460301.html>

Esther Rags to Riches chapters 3-6
<http://www.quia.com/rr/374624.html>

Esther's Jumbled Words chapters 7 - 10
<http://www.quia.com/jw/257295.html>

Ruth Jeopardy
<http://www.quia.com/cb/450955.html>

