

## SEVEN WISE WOMEN, THREE FOOLISH

A Good Friday Skit by Jewell Ellen Smith

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Theme: God is omnipotent. Each person must choose for himself whether or not to serve Him.

Length of Skit: About 15 to 18 minutes.

Persons Required to Stage Play: Program leader, soloist, organist, and 10 women players.

Props and Scenery, Special Effects: Stage, or riser, with side curtains, organ, or piano, organ preferred. Huge double-door sized Bible, made so that characters can walk out of its pages, and with the words HOLY BIBLE clearly visible to audience.

Costumes: Program leader, soloist, and organist wear choir robes. Use authentic Biblical costumes made of inexpensive material for each of 10 characters. Colors should suit age and personality of each. These are suggested:

Eve: green

Job's wife: dark blue

Lot's wife: sandy gray

Rebekah: yellow

Ruth: sky blue

Jezebel: orange and yellow, with gaudiness

Widow of Zarephath: black

Anna, the Prophetess: dark purple

Mary of Bethany: pale blue

Mary Magdalene: lavender

Part of Soloist and Organist: Before the program leader introduces the play, the soloist should sing a well-known hymn to set the serious tone of the occasion. ("Take Time to Be Holy" is suitable.) The soloist should be visible to the audience at this time. During the play she remains hidden as she sings a refrain or several lines (from different hymns) as each player re-enters Bible. These few words from familiar hymns reemphasize the point made by the Biblical character. Too, they serve as a break between the speeches of the 10 Women of the Bible. The skill of the organist will add greatly to the whole effect.

Part of Program Leader: After opening solo, Program Leader comes on stage, stands in front of drawn curtains and gives what amounts to a prologue. Then,

she walks off stage. After the 10 Women of the Bible have spoken, she comes back on stage to present the epilogue speech.

## SCRIPT

PROLOGUE BY PROGRAM LEADER: *Speaking to audience* All of you know the parable which Jesus told concerning the Ten Virgins who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom--to light his way to the wedding feast.

Five of the virgins were wise and took extra oil. Five were foolish and took none. While the bridegroom tarried, they all went to sleep. And, at midnight, when it was announced that the bridegroom was coming, the foolish five had to go out and buy more oil. As a result, they missed the bridegroom, the wedding, and the feast!

In a few minutes we're going to open the Bible, so to speak, and out of it will step ten persons--not the ten in the parable--but some other Bible characters: "Seven Wise Women, Three Foolish."

Several are the wives of famous Biblical characters. One is a bride-to-be. Another is a young widow. There's a queen. There's an elderly prophetess. You'll recognize them all.

As each tells her story, try to take what she is saying and apply it to your own self, to your life. Please notice that God made Himself known to each of the ten, in far different ways. But, in every instance, each woman made her own choice as to what she would do. Each decided for herself whether or not to honor the omnipotent God, whether or not to obey His simple commands, whether or not to worship Him.

Here they come! Of course the first one will be Eve!  
*Program Leader leaves stage. Curtain opens to reveal huge Holy Bible. Eve walks out.*

## EVE

EVE: *Eve is an average woman, sincere, matter-of-fact in tone of voice.* I am Eve, the first woman, the wife of Adam, the mother of all living. You know my life well: How God said, "It is not good that the man (I have made) should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him." You know how Sin came as a serpent, how man fell, and how our world was no longer the Garden of Eden.

You have been taught, too, that many, many generations later God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to die on the cross to bear this Sin, to conquer Death. It is His death and burial that you remember today, in the solemnity of Good Friday. It is His glorious resurrection and triumph that you will commemorate on Easter Sunday.

When you think of me, Eve, remember two things. In a sense I failed God. Yet later I carried out his plan for womankind. All sin. All come short of the Glory of God. Years after my time the writers of Holy Scripture were to say:

"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

And remember, secondly, that God created woman. Therefore, she is precious in His sight. God loves all, and desires that all turn to Him, the Creator, the Father, the Good Shepherd.

*Goes back into Bible*

SOLOIST: *Lines from "Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us.":*

Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us; Much we need Thy tender care;  
In thy pleasant Pastures feed us; For our use Thy folds prepare.

### JOB'S WIFE

JOB'S WIFE: *Middle-aged. Shows regret, tinge of bitterness.* The Bible tells of me, Job's wife, probably because I gave such rotten advice to my husband! Job was one of the richest and greatest men of his time. Then came misfortune, calamity, and suffering. Job lost his flocks, his herds, his servants, all his children, and finally his health.

One day when my husband Job was sitting on an ash heap outside the city wall--miserable and covered with hideous sores--I went out to talk to him. I looked down at him and said, "Dost thou retain thine integrity? Curse God and die!"

But Job looked up at me and said, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Later he exclaimed, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him!"

From me you can learn this: Trust God, no matter what befalls you. When trials come, do not choose to blame God. Encourage your husband and others in your family when things do not run smoothly, for truly as Scripture says:

"Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

Women must have faith in God if they are to weather life's natural storms. I was foolish. I would not trust God.

*Turns, goes back into Bible*

SOLOIST: *Lines from "God Will Take Care of You," by Civilla D. and W. S.*

*Martin* "Be not dismayed whate'er betide. God will take care of you.

Lean weary one upon His side. God will take care of you...

Through every day, o'er all the way He will take care of you.

God will take care of you..."

## LOT'S WIFE

LOT'S WIFE: *Rebellious tone. Stands stiff, straight, rigid.* I am Lot's wife. The Old Testament records my story in just 15 words. It says:

"But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."

In a way, I was a great deal like an Army wife, for I was sick and tired of being transferred from one place to another. So, when we got orders to leave Sodom, I just refused to go!

This is what had happened: My husband, Lot, was the nephew of Abraham and for years and years we had traveled here and there across the fertile plains of the Promised Land--to wherever there was grass enough for all our herds and flocks. Then, when Lot and Abraham decided to part, Lot chose to pitch our tents toward the city of Sodom.

Later, Sodom and Gomorrah became so wicked that God decided to destroy both cities. But God provided a way for us to escape. He issued Lot orders to leave, and with the orders He even dispatched two angels to lead us by the hand to a place of safety.

But, I looked back and lingered, and when God rained down the brimstone and fire out of Heaven, I was turned to salt. See? I did not choose to obey God.

My suggestion to you is this: Treat each set of orders, each permanent change of station, as an opportunity to serve God in a new place. You can. Or, you can go from this place to that, from one assignment to the next, and never let your time count for God. If you do, in God's sight, you become as useless as a lump of salt with no savor.

However, if you choose to obey God, you can become not a pillar of salt, like me, but truly "the salt of the earth."

*Re-enters Bible*

SOLOIST: *First verse of "Jesus Calls Us:"*

"Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult of life's wild, restless sea,  
Day by day His sweet voice soundeth,  
Saying, 'Christian, follow Me!'"

## REBEKAH

REBEKAH: *Lovely, young, happy, laughing. Wears one large golden earring and bracelets. Carries water jar on shoulder.*

I am an Old Testament bride-to-be, Rebekah. In Genesis, I am described as a "damsel very fair to look upon, a virgin." And I lived in Nahor, in Mesopotamia.

Now the day all the excitement in my life started, I didn't know I was about to become a bride. It was just an ordinary day. And late in the afternoon I went down to draw some water from our village well--just like I did every afternoon. This time, when I got to the well, there sat a tired traveler, a dusty looking old

man, with ten camels. He looked so thirsty his tongue was hanging out, and his camels' ten tongues were sort of hanging out, too! So, I drew the old traveler some water. Then I gave his camels all they could drink. When I did that, the old man almost had a fit! He was so glad and so excited and so grateful. He was almost dancing for joy.

Why, he even gave me a golden earring and two gold bracelets! Then, my brother came, and we took the old man home with us. It turned out that he was from far south of Nahor and that he was the servant of one Abraham, a cousin of my father. Abraham had sent this servant to look for a bride for his son, Isaac! Furthermore, the old servant told us that when he had arrived at the well, he sat down and prayed to God to help him find a bride. He prayed something like this:

"Now, God, it's late in the afternoon. All the young girls will be coming to this well to get water. Please let it be that I will ask each one for a drink of water. And let one of them offer to give my camels some water, and let that one be the bride for Isaac!"

And that's what happened! When I watered his camels, he knew God had chosen me! But I didn't know a thing about his and God's agreement.

My father and family were delighted with the wedding plans--and with all the presents Abraham had sent. Those ten camels were loaded down with gifts! And we were all happy when we found out that Abraham and Isaac were very rich. My people asked the old servant to wait at least ten days before taking me home to his master. The servant wanted to leave right away. When they asked me what I thought, I said, "I'll go now." So it was that I went to become the wife of Isaac.

The Bible records that Isaac brought me into his mother Sarah's tent, that he loved me, that I became his wife, and that he was comforted after his mother's death. The Bible also tells how I became the mother of twins, Esau and Jacob, and thus the grandmother of the twelve tribes of Israel--all because God chose me, and I in turn chose to let God direct me.

The moral of my story is not that if a young girl wants to catch a wealthy husband she should go around drawing water for camels! The moral is that God is interested in all phases of our lives. And if we choose to let Him, He will guide in the choice of a husband, or in anything else we may undertake.

*Re-enters Bible*

SOLOIST: *Lines from "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah."*

"Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah, Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty, Hold me with Thy powerful hand."

## RUTH

RUTH. *Young, pretty, joyous. Carries sheaf of wheat.* When I tell you that I lived in the land of Moab, in the time of the Judges and that my mother-in-law was Naomi, you will know immediately that I am Ruth, the young Moabitess.

Naomi and her family were Israelites from Bethlehem-Judah. And they had moved to Moab because of a famine. Both of Naomi's sons married in Moab. One became the husband of Orpha; the other, my husband. Then, Naomi's husband and both her sons died; and she decided to return to her own country.

Naomi persuaded Orpha to stay in Moab. She went back to her people and to her gods. But I chose to go with Naomi. My words to her were: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Wherefore thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

So, Naomi and I arrived in Bethlehem at the time of the barley harvest. Because we were so poor, I went to the barley fields to glean scattered grain left by the reapers.

You know the rest of my story. I chanced to be gleaning in the field of Naomi's kinsman, "a mighty man of wealth ... and his name was Boaz." When Boaz saw me, it must have been what you call love at first sight. He said many kind things to me. One was:

"Blessings on thee from the LORD God of Israel, 'under whose wings thou art come to trust.'" And he invited me to eat with him and his reapers.

Not long after that I was married to Boaz. Our first son was called Obed, and Naomi became his nurse. Obed's son was Jesse, the father of David, the great king--a man after God's own heart. Thus, I became one of the ancestors of Mary and Joseph, and of the Christ!

How wonderful is the God I chose, the God under whose wings I came to trust!

*Goes back into Bible*

SOLOIST: *Lines from "How Great Thou Art":*

"Then sings my soul, my savior God to Thee,  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.  
Then sings my soul, my savior God to Thee.  
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!"

## JEZEBEL

JEZEBEL: *Haughty, proud, defiant. Gaudily dressed. Hair high on head, with flashy ornaments.* Ha! I'm Jezebel! I'm a queen! My very name, Jezebel, has come to be a synonym for wickedness!

For 30 years, beginning in 869 BC, I ruled as a tyrant in northern Israel. I was the domineering, idol-worshipping wife of King Ahab. Ahab married me in Phoenicia, and I was the one who introduced the sensuous, lewd worship of the nature god Baal into Israel.

The Israelites were worshipping the one God, Jehovah, when I got there; so I tried my best to put a stop to that! I knew that idols were the thing to worship! What difference did it make if the Baal cult tended to drag both manhood and womanhood to shame! To get Baal worship organized, I had no less than 450 priests of Baal eating at my table. And, I ordered that all prophets of Jehovah be put to death!

The person who gave me the most opposition and trouble was a man of God, the Prophet Elijah. And, in spite of all Elijah said and did, I chose to keep right on with our Baal religion. Even when Elijah's God sent a terrible drought on our land, I didn't change. I merely redoubled my efforts to get rid of that Elijah. But his God preserved him. That Elijah even prophesied that the dogs would eat my bones!

What finally happened to me? I'll not tell you! But, if you look in the Old Testament in II Kings, 9th chapter, you'll read of a certain queen who painted her face and "tied" her hair and sat herself high up in a window of her lofty ivory-decorated place--to watch some enemy troops ride through the city. The God of Elijah allowed some of the queen's own attendants to throw her down to the enemy, and her blood splattered on the palace walls. The horses trampled her underfoot. Then, the dogs ate all except "the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands."

*Rushes back into Bible.*

*Interlude of turbulent music. No singing here.*

#### WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH: *Sedate. Carries large bread tray with a little meal in it. You have heard the expression of a thing being "like the widow's meal." This saying came from my life. Sifts meal through her fingers.* I am the Widow of Zarephath. During the terrible drought in Israel when the prophet Elijah was fleeing from the wicked Queen Jezebel, God directed the prophet Elijah to my home.

The famine had already been raging for two and a half years. And my son and I were on the verge of starving. In fact, that day Elijah arrived, I was out gathering sticks so that I could build a fire and bake my last bit of meal into cakes of bread for me and my son. We had planned to eat the bread, and die.

But God had sent Elijah to us. So I gave him bread. And the wonder of it was that my supply of meal, and oil, never gave out through the whole year that Elijah remained with us.

Later, my son died; and Elijah, through the Almighty, raised him back to life.

For those of you who choose to serve God, what may seem a sacrifice can turn into a blessing. In all things, praise Him!

*Re-enters Bible.*

SOLOIST: *Sings chorus of "Day is Dying in the West."*

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts  
Heav'n and earth are full of Thee  
Heav'n and earth are praising Thee  
O Lord most high!"

### ANNA THE PROPHETESS

ANNA *Bent with age. Can scarcely walk. Carries walking cane.* I step out of the New Testament to tell you of the greatness of God. I am Anna, the aged Hebrew widow and prophetess. I spent my years, my days, in the Temple of Jerusalem, serving Jehovah with fastings and prayers, night and day.

I was blessed to be in the Temple the day Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to dedicate Him to the Lord and to offer the sacrifice required by Mosaic Law. I rejoiced when I saw this Babe, the long-awaited Messiah! I praised God and spoke of Him to all who were looking for the redemption of Israel.

It is said that I, Anna, was the first person to acclaim Jesus as the Christ! What an honor for a woman! One account has it that I was 84 years old at the time.

You, as modern day women, are not likely to be living in a temple when you become 84. You may or may not become 84. But every day that you do live, and wherever you live, you can serve the Lord, if you so choose.

It is your choice to make--whether you will speak of Him to others and whether you will offer prayers night or day. He bids you come to His throne.

*Hobbles back into Bible*

SOLOIST: *First verse of "Sweet Hour of Prayer."*

### MARY OF BETHANY

MARY OF BETHANY: *Young, serene. Carries a rose in her hand.* I am Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. You will remember that Jesus was our close friend, that He often visited in our home, which was near Jerusalem, and that He raised my brother Lazarus from the dead. Oh, how we did love Jesus, our Lord!

And did you ever read about the time Jesus came, and Martha was in such a flurry over preparing food while I was just sitting humbly at Jesus' feet, listening to His teachings?

Martha got quite upset. Finally she walked in *place hands on hips and imitate Martha* and said, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me!"

But Jesus just said, "Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things. But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chose that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Now, if you will choose Jesus to be your friend, if you will sit at His feet, if you will learn of Him, you, too, will have that good part, which shall not be taken away!

*Goes back into Bible*

SOLOIST: *Sings fourth verse of "When We Walk with the Lord."*

"Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet  
Or we'll walk by His side in the way;  
What He says We will do, Where He sends we will go;  
Never fear, Only Trust and Obey."

#### MARY MAGDALENE

MARY MAGDALENE: *Beautiful. Sincere. Almost saintly, Carries ointment jar.*

You can find my name, Mary of Magdala--or Mary Magdalene--recorded in the New Testament 14 times. And one of the most unusual things the Bible tells about me is that I was possessed of seven devils until Jesus healed me and I became His faithful and devoted follower.

On that Black Friday in Jerusalem, nearly 2,000 years ago, I went with others to follow Him to the place of the skull. We stood on a hillside, near the cross, and watched as Our Lord was crucified.

Then we women saw Him placed in the new rock-hewn tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, in a garden. We went home and prepared burial spices. Then we rested on the Sabbath, for that was our sacred law. But early in the morning on the first day of the week we hurried back to the garden, taking our sweet ointments.

When I looked into the sepulchre, I saw two angels in white. Moments later I saw the Lord, walking in the garden. But at first I thought He was the gardener. The instant He called my name, I fell at His feet to worship Him. And immediately He gave me a task, saying, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God."

With great joy, I ran to tell the disciples the good news! "I have seen the Lord!" The Scriptures record that I was the first person to see our risen Lord.

Any woman who so chooses, can tell with her voice--and with her deeds--that she too knows the risen Lord!

*Goes back into Bible.*

SOLOIST: *Sings from "In the Garden," by C. Austin Miles, these lines:*

"I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses;  
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses.  
And, He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own.  
And the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known."

*Ten women come back out of Bible and stand side by side as Program Leader gives epilogue speech.*

PROGRAM LEADER: *addressing audience* You have seen and heard how each of these ten Bible women reacted to God when He made himself known to her. Of course the three foolish ones rejected Him, while the seven wise women chose to acknowledge our Lord in all their ways, to keep within His master plan for their lives, and to accept His gracious mercy and tender love.

Let us be wise. Let us choose God to be our master, His Son to be our Lord, and His Holy Spirit to be our guide.

*Final Curtain*

THE END