



## What are the main reasons why many of the top women in the Bible had troubled lives?

### 8 Why was war troubling to Zeruiah?

One of her sons, Asahel, was killed during the war between the house of David and the house of Saul (2 Sam. 2:18-23). Surprisingly, other war fatalities involving leading women are rarely mentioned.

### 7 Why did couples disagree?

Sinful selfishness and the lack of faith (on one side or both sides) was usually involved. In some cases (like Ahab and Jezebel), however, there was harmony because of shared disbelief.

### 6 Why did women have trouble with work?

Working women are mentioned quite often, but their work is usually not shown to be especially troubling. Childbirth (Gen. 3:16) and child training (1 Tim. 2:15) were and still are very difficult, however.

### 5 Why was barrenness only #5?

The barrenness of Sarah, Hannah, and Elizabeth is well known. So too is the fact that the Lord blessed each of them with a son. Barrenness was often involved in other problems, especially polygamy.

### 4 Why was physical beauty a problem?

The main reason is because men were and still are lustful. Three of the top 60 women were sexually assaulted. The beauty of the Shulamite is presented in a positive light, however.

### 3 Why was 'natural' death a big problem?

First Corinthians chapter 15 presents death as a great enemy, but it will not continue to be so forever. Jesus demonstrated this through various women including Jairus' daughter. If all deaths were counted, death would be #1.

### 2 Why were many women persecuted?

Many, including Esther and Mary, were persecuted because they were God's people. Others, like Hannah, were persecuted for personal reasons. Thankfully Ruth was accepted rather than persecuted.

### 1 Why were polygamy & divorce the #1 problem?

God's design was for marriage to be between one man and one woman. Because hearts were / are hard, going against this through polygamy or divorce, was / is a common, foundational error (Mk. 10:6-9).

# the top 10 reasons why many of the top 60 women in the Bible had troubled lives

#1

	<b>polygamy</b> (divorce, rejection)
1.	<b>Sarah</b> (Gen. 16:1-16)
2.	<b>Esther</b> (Est. 2:12-19)
3.	<b>Rachel</b> (wife of Jacob)
7.	<b>Leah</b> (wife of Jacob)
11.	<b>Abigail</b> (wife of David)
11.	<b>Bathsheba</b> (wife of Uriah)
11.	<b>Hagar</b> (Sarah's maid)
15.	<b>Hannah</b> (1 Sam. 1:1-2:11)
19.	<b>Levite's concubine</b> (Judges 19)
21.	<b>Tamar</b> (David's daughter)
22.	<b>Michal</b> (wife of David)
34.	<b>Bilhah</b> (Rachel's maid)
34.	<b>the Samaritan woman</b>
34.	<b>Zilpah</b> (Leah's maid)
37.	<b>Samson's wife</b> (Jud. 15:1-8)
38.	<b>Vashti</b> (Est. 2:1-4)
41.	<b>Herodias</b> (Mat. 14:3)
46.	<b>Maachah</b> (wife of Rehoboam)
46.	<b>Pharaoh's daughter</b> (in Kings)
51a	<b>Ahinoam</b> (wife of David)

More polygamy and the sorrow that came with it is seen in the Old Testament, but divorce and remarriage are seen more in the New Testament. The two are similar.

#2

	<b>persecution</b> (prejudice)
2.	<b>Esther</b> (Est. 4:1-17)
4.	<b>Mary</b> (Mat. 2:13-15)
8.	<b>Ruth</b> (Ruth 2:10-13)
11.	<b>Hagar</b> (Gen. 16:4-6)
15.	<b>Hannah</b> (1 Sam. 1:6-7)
22.	<b>Miriam</b> (in Egypt)
27.	<b>Elizabeth</b> (Lk. 1:24-25)
30.	<b>woman with hemorrhage</b>
34.	<b>Samaritan woman</b>
46.	<b>Jael</b> (Jud. 5:24)
50.	<b>Jocbed</b> (in Egypt)
51e	<b>Hebrew midwives</b> (in Egypt)
51h	<b>Priscilla</b> (Acts 18:2)
51i	<b>widow of Sidon</b> (Lk. 4:25-26)

God's people have always been persecuted. There was also personal persecution and prejudice toward individual women.

#3

	<b>death in family</b> (natural) (sickness)
2.	<b>Esther</b> (parents, Est. 2:5-7)
3.	<b>Rachel</b> (Gen. 35:16-20)
8.	<b>Ruth</b> (her first husband)
9.	<b>Naomi</b> (husband & two sons)
11.	<b>Abigail</b> (her first husband)
11.	<b>Bathsheba</b> (her first son)
22.	<b>Miriam</b> (Num. 12:1-15)
27.	<b>Jairus' daughter</b>
27.	<b>Shunem wealthy woman</b>
30.	<b>woman with hemorrhage</b>
32.	<b>Martha</b> (Lazarus' death)
32.	<b>Mary</b> (Lazarus' death)
51i	<b>widow of Sidon</b> (her son)

There was much sorrow because of death, but there was victory over death as well.

#4

	<b>passion / beauty</b> (sexual assault)
1.	<b>Sarah</b> (Gen. 12:11-20)
2.	<b>Esther</b> (Est. 2:7-9, 7:8)
5.	<b>Rebekah</b> (Gen. 26:7)
6.	<b>the Shulamite</b> (S.S. 2:7)
11.	<b>Bathsheba</b> (2 Sam. 11:2)
19.	<b>Dinah</b> (Gen. 34:1-4)
19.	<b>Levite's concubine</b> (Judges 19)
21.	<b>Tamar</b> (2 Sam. 13:11-22)
41.	<b>Rahab</b> (Josh. 2:1)
38.	<b>Samson's wife</b> (Jud. 14:1-4)
51b	<b>Cozbi</b> (Numbers chapter 25)
51d	<b>Delilah</b> (Jud. 16:4)
51j	<b>strange woman in Proverbs</b>

Sometimes physical beauty led to great blessing (Esther), but often it did not.

## Why?



Let's think about why certain troubles were more common.

#5

	<b>barrenness</b> (lacking an heir / help)
1.	<b>Sarah</b> (Gen. 16:1, Heb. 11:11)
3.	<b>Rachel</b> (Gen. 30:1, 22)
5.	<b>Rebekah</b> (Gen. 25:21)
8.	<b>Ruth</b> (Ruth 3:1, 4:14)
9.	<b>Naomi</b> (Ruth 3:1, 4:14)
15.	<b>Hannah</b> (1 Sam. 1:2-18)
18.	<b>Samson's mother</b> (Jud. 13:2-3)
21.	<b>Tamar</b> (2 Sam. 13:20)
22.	<b>Michal</b> (2 Sam. 6:23)
25.	<b>Tamar</b> (in Genesis chapter 38)
27.	<b>Elizabeth</b> (Lk. 1:7, 36)
51f	<b>Lot's daughters</b> (Gen. 17:31)

Several of the top ranking women in the Bible were barren for many years. Others had no children for other reasons.

#6

	<b>work</b> (home-related) (other work)
5.	<b>Rebekah</b> (Gen. 24:20, 27:17)
6.	<b>the Shulamite</b> (S.S. 1:6)
8.	<b>Ruth</b> (Ruth 2:2-23)
10.	<b>Eve</b> (Gen. 3:16, 1 Tim. 2:15)
11.	<b>Abigail</b> (1 Sam. 25:14-20)
15.	<b>Hannah</b> (1 Sam. 1:22-23, 2:19)
22.	<b>woman of Takoa</b> (2 Sam. 14:2)
32.	<b>Martha</b> (Lk. 10:38-42)
34.	<b>Samaritan woman</b> (John 4:7)
37.	<b>virtuous wife in Proverbs 31</b>
45.	<b>Abishag</b> (1 Kgs. 1:15)
51h	<b>Priscilla</b> (Acts 18:3, 1 Cor. 16:19)

Caution: often the work of women in the Bible was NOT said to be troublesome, because it was also a blessing.

#7

	<b>disagreements</b> (husband) (or partner)
1.	<b>Sarah</b> (Gen. 21:8-14)
3.	<b>Rachel</b> (Gen. 30:1-2)
5.	<b>Rebekah</b> (re. Jacob/Esau)
6.	<b>the Shulamite</b> (S.S. 5:2-6:3)
10.	<b>Eve</b> (Gen. 3:12-13, 16)
11.	<b>Abigail</b> (1 Sam. 25:14-19)
22.	<b>Michal</b> (2 Sam. 6:16-23)
37.	<b>Samson's wife</b> (Jud. 14:16)
37.	<b>Vashti</b> (Est. 1:10-12)
41.	<b>Herodias</b> (re. John the Baptist)
51d	<b>Delilah</b> (Jud. 16:4-21)

Disagreements between husbands and wives began with Adam and Eve. The conflict between Michal and David shows that they were very different.

#8

	<b>war</b> (captivity or flight)
2.	<b>Esther</b> (Est. 2:5-7)
11.	<b>Abigail</b> (1 Sam. 30:1-20)
14.	<b>Zeruiah</b> (2 Sam. 2:18)
19.	<b>Dinah</b> (Gen. 34:25-31)
19.	<b>Levite's concubine</b> (Judges 20)
37.	<b>Samson's wife</b> (Jud. 15:6)
41.	<b>Rahab</b> (Joshua chs. 2 & 6)
43.	<b>Deborah</b> (Judges chs. 4-5)
46.	<b>Jael</b> (Jud. 4:9-22, 5:24-27)
51a	<b>Ahinoam</b> (1 Sam. 30:1-20)
51c	<b>David's mother</b> (1 Sam. 22:3-4)

Although war was always very troubling. It brought salvation to Rahab.

#9 idolatry & covetousness

#10 famine & moving because of it