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# 17 Great Women of the Bible Every Christian Must Know

Great women of the Bible are plentiful throughout its pages. Here are 17 strong women in the Bible you must know.

CATEGORY

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Women have played a powerful role in God's story of redemption throughout Scripture. The Bible portrays women as strong, resilient, and faithful players in the narrative of the Bible. Let's take a closer look at 17 great women of the Bible.

## Why We Should Study the Women of the Bible

Women in the Bible played crucial roles in biblical narratives: Women were not just side characters; they were central to many of the Bible's most pivotal moments.

That being said, here are a few core reasons why we should study and reflect on women depicted in the Bible.

Women of the Bible have:

- **Contributed to the fulfillment of God's plan:** From Sarah to Mary, women played integral roles in God's overarching plan for humanity.
- **Left a lasting legacy and impact:** Their stories continue to inspire and guide believers today.
- **Inspired and empowered others:** Through their faith and actions, biblical women have motivated countless generations.
- **Served as examples of righteousness and virtue:** Their lives can provide lessons in how to live righteously.
- **Encountered transformative encounters with God:** Stories of women like Hannah and Mary Magdalene show profound moments of divine interaction.
- **Nurtured and cared for their families:** From the very beginning, women like Eve played essential roles in the family unit.
- **Embraced their unique callings and giftings:** Each woman, from Deborah to Ruth, had a unique role and purpose in the biblical narrative.



## the Bible?

If you want to learn more about women in the Bible, then it can help to read, study, and even memorize Scripture that talks about women. You can even choose a verse or portion of Scripture to meditate on (like Proverbs 31).

## The Creation of Women in the Bible

The creation of women is described in Genesis 2: "The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man." (Genesis 2:22)

## How Does God Describe a Godly Woman?

A Godly woman is famously described in Proverbs 31, saying "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised."

## Women in the History of Christianity

Christianity gave women rights and dignity beyond cultural norms. Likewise, women have played a key role in the formation of the Church over the last 2,000 years.

Women who are also followers of Christ have:

**Upheld moral and spiritual values.** Women like Susanna Wesley (mother of John Wesley) have acted as incredible role models for their tireless devotion to Jesus.

**Displayed wisdom and discernment:** Women like Abigail in the Bible or the "Proverbs 31 woman" demonstrated keen insight and wisdom in their dealings.

**Demonstrated love, compassion, and forgiveness:** Women like Mother Theresa and Elisabeth Elliot have become famous for their incredible capacity for compassion, and in the case of Elliot, [forgiveness](#).

**Acted as intercessors and prayer warriors:** Who doesn't have a praying grandma? Women have been interceding on behalf of their families, the lost, and entire nations since the beginning of Christianity. Consider Peggy and Christine Smith, who are credited for praying in a [Scottish revival](#).

**Exercised leadership and influence:** Women have been important figures in the direction and spiritual formation of churches. St. Bridget of Ireland, for example, was a key player in the monastic movement.

**Faced persecution and stood for their beliefs:** Women like the martyr Perpetua stood firm in their faith despite intense persecution.

**Sought justice and advocated for the marginalized:** Women like Heidi Baker have advocated for children in impoverished nations, bringing justice globally.

**Provided hospitality and support to others:** Women have shown extraordinary support and hospitality throughout history. Lydia, for instance, opened her home to Paul and his companions.

In honor of them, instead of talking about [how to write better sermons](#), [church management software](#), or the [best online giving for churches](#), we want to shine the spotlight on 15 **women in the Bible** who contributed to God's powerful work in the world and the advancement of his kingdom.

## 1. Mary of Nazareth

Mary's significant role in Scripture is widely known: Mary of Nazareth is the mother of Jesus.

She gave birth to the savior of the world when she was just a teenager.



## Scripture on the life of Mary:

"Six months after Elizabeth knew she was to become a mother, Gabriel was sent from God to Nazareth. Nazareth was a town in the country of Galilee. He went to a woman who had never had a man.

Her name was Mary.

She was promised in marriage to a man named Joseph. Joseph was of the family of David. The angel came to her and said, 'You are honored very much. You are a favored woman. The Lord is with you. You are chosen from among many women.' When she saw the angel, she was troubled at his words. She thought about what had been said.

The angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid. You have found favor with God. See! You are to become a mother and have a Son. You are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great. He will be called the Son of the Most High.

The Lord God will give Him the place where His early father David sat. He will be King over the family of Jacob forever and His nation will have no end.'" (Luke 1:26-33)

## 2. Ruth the Moabite

Ruth the Moabite played a significant role in the coming of Jesus.

After her husband died, she followed her mother-in-law Naomi to her homeland in Israel, where she met Boaz. They would become the great grandparents of King David, and eventually propagate the lineage of the messiah.

Ruth faced great tribulation as a woman in an ancient context with no protection.

But she boldly followed Naomi to the land of Israel, devoted herself to the Lord, and played a critical role in the victory of God over sin and death through her everyday faithfulness in the face of impossible circumstances.

## The most popular Bible verse from the Book of Ruth:

"But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God'" (Ruth 1:16).

## 3. Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene is often misunderstood.

She was a faithful follower of Jesus.

After Jesus healed her, she ventured alongside him in his ministry, meeting his needs and encouraging the disciples, eventually bearing witness to his crucifixion and burial.

Three days later, she would be the first witness of the empty tomb of Christ and one of the core critical eye-witnesses to his resurrection that would later resource the gospel writers to give the church historical credibility.

## Mary Magdalene in the Bible:

"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb" (Matt. 28:1).

## 4. Rachel

Rachel waited earnestly, but patiently, to marry the love of her life: Jacob, who would later be named Israel. She was deceived by her father Laban and sister Leah who, after Jacob had worked

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handedly saved all of Israel, and Benjamin, the last tribe in Israel to remain faithful to the Lord before the time of exile.

Rachel's role in the history of redemption is difficult to underestimate, and she should be celebrated for her strength in the face of adversity by the strength of the Lord.

## Rachel in the Bible:

"And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb." (Genesis 30:22)

## 5. Hannah

Hannah was initially childless, and prayed desperately for a son.

She made a promise to God that if he permitted her to bear a son, she would devote him to God.

When God fulfilled this request, she faithfully kept her word. She left her son, Samuel, to be raised in the temple of the Lord while continuing to provide him guidance and mentorship along the way.

Hannah's faithfulness was never in question.

Samuel, her son, would go on to rescue Israel from centuries of slavery to the Canaanites and idolatry to Baal by anointing King David, whose heart was fully devoted to the Lord and who gifted God's people with most of the Psalms, which the church uses on a daily basis as a source of strength, encouragement, and worship, both through seasons of blessing and tribulation.

## Hannah in the Bible:

"It is not by strength that one prevails; those who oppose the Lord will be broken. The Most High will thunder from heaven; the Lord will judge the ends of the earth" (1 Sam. 2:10).

## 6. Eve

Eve is a very often misunderstood character in the Bible.

While she and Adam both brought sin and death into the world through partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she is the mother of the human race, and represents God's promise to beget the one who would crush the head of the devil and redeem humanity from sin once and for all.

## Eve in the Bible:

"The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20).

## 7. Deborah

The season of the judges was a tumultuous time for Israel.

After Moses led Israel out of the land of Egypt and Joshua had led Israel into the land promised to Abraham to conquer the Canaanites, Israel fell into cycles of disobedience that prompted God's wrath to fall on Israel in the form of slavery to the Canaanites.

In this time, God raised up judges to redeem Israel from political slavery and give them an opportunity to repent. Israel often did repent for a single generation, but fell back into idolatry and disobedience, prompting once again God's wrath.

Deborah was the only named female judge during this time.

She aggressively pulled on the moral bridle of Israel to return to worship of the one true God, and ruthlessly purified the nation of those evil actors who were interested in keeping Israel spiritually complacent and under slavery to the Canaanites.



## 8. Esther

Esther was a persecuting citizen of Israel under Persain reign.

In the 7th–6th century BC, Esther was chosen out of the women of Israel to be part of the harem of King Xerxes. She used her political influence to destroy the antisemitic actors who sought to destroy the Jews in Persia, and through her faithfulness, established the Jewish festival of Purim. She was thereafter chosen by Xerxes to be his queen, and she ruled Israel as a Jewish queen of a gentile nation.

Like Deborah a thousand years earlier, Esther saved Israel from the consequences of its own spiritual folly and established a safe place for Jews to worship in the land. It was on this basis that Judaism was allowed to flourish under Greek and Roman rule in the centuries to come, and it was because of Esther that the ministry of Jesus was able to thrive freely and openly in a public society.

### Simple story of Esther:

“So Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter concerning Purim. And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of Xerxes’ kingdom—words of goodwill and assurance—to establish these days of Purim at their designated times, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had decreed for them, and as they had established for themselves and their descendants in regard to their times of fasting and lamentation” (Esther 9:29–31).

## 9. Miriam

Miriam was a prophetess and Moses’s older sister.

She helped to save Moses when he was only an infant. Moses’s mother left him in a basket to protect him from being murdered by Pharaoh due to his being a Jewish baby. When Pharaoh’s daughter found Moses and had mercy on him, Miriam devoted herself to Pharaoh’s daughter in order to raise him so that they could remain together.

We can credit Miriam with instilling Moses with a devotion to the Lord that manifested itself in later days, which enabled his openness to divine encounter with the one true God and his moral conscience which guided Israel all the way to the promised land.

### Miriam in the Bible:

“Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron’s sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing. Miriam sang to them: “Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea.” (Ex. 15:20–21)

## 10. Sarah

Sarah was a strong woman of the bible.

She was Abraham’s wife, and served as an example of the fact that God always keeps his promises. When God promised Abraham he would bear a son, despite Sarah’s inability to bear children, Sarah gave birth to Isaac when she was 90-years old.

### Sarah in the Bible:

“And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, [and] with his seed after him” (Gen. 17:19).

## 11. Elizabeth

Like Sarah, Elizabeth was far too old to conceive a son.

Elizabeth's faithfulness is meant to draw our minds back to Sarah and the thousands of years during which Israel waited for the Messiah to come.

## Elizabeth in the Bible:

"And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit" (Luke 1:41).

## 12. Priscilla

Priscilla was a powerful church leader in the book of Acts.

She and her husband, Aquila, led the church in maintaining theological purity, love for the poor, and mentorship of young, charismatic leaders such as Apollos, who were still figuring out how Jesus fit into God's story of redemption.

Priscilla represents God's counter-cultural insistence upon the dignity of women in church leadership and the power he plans to accomplish through them to revolutionize what it means to belong in the people of God and what women can do to lead by example in faithfulness and [hospitality](#).

## Priscilla in the Bible:

"He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately" (Acts 18:26).

## 13. Mary of Bethany

Mary of Bethany was the sister of Martha and Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (Lazarus).

She hosted Jesus in her home.

While hosting him there, Jesus commended her for "choosing the better" by sitting at his feet instead of being distracted by housework and the duties of entertaining.

Mary of Bethany represents Jesus's clear message that he cuts through cultural expectations and desires to extend fellowship to all human beings, despite the hierarchy humans are often tempted to put into place which marginalize and suppress others.

## Mary of Bethany in the Bible:

"Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. Mary therefore took a pound[a] of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii[b] and given to the poor?' He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. Jesus said, 'Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me'" (John 12:1-8).

## 14. Martha

Mary's sister Martha was rebuked by Jesus for putting her entertainment obligations above learning the words of Jesus. However, she was still a devoted disciple of Christ and desired deeply to know and love Jesus, and did everything in her power to dignify him as the unknown king.

## Martha in the Bible:

answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her'" (Luke 10:38-42).

## 15. Jehosheba

Jehosheba was the daughter of King Joram.

She is known for saving her nephew while he was an infant.

Her nephew was the prince Joash, who was to be massacred by the Queen Mother. Joash's survival enabled the line of David, and consequently the line of the Messiah, to endure.

Jehosheba's bravery played a critical role in the possibility of the coming of Christ, and God's working through her faithful devotion to his purposes is difficult to underestimate.

### Jehosheba in the Bible:

"But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the royal princes, who were about to be murdered. She put him and his nurse in a bedroom to hide him from Athaliah; so he was not killed." (2 Kings 11:2).

## 16. Rebekah

Rebekah was the wife of Isaac and the mother of twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Rebekah's story is intricately linked with God's divine plan for the lineage of Abraham. Notably, she was chosen as Isaac's wife after a servant of Abraham prayed for guidance, and she showed kindness by offering water to him and his camels.

Later in life, Rebekah played a pivotal role in ensuring that Jacob, the younger son, received Isaac's blessing, which had significant implications for the future of the Israelite nation.

"Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor." (Genesis 24:15)

## 17. Leah

Leah was the elder daughter of Laban and the first wife of Jacob. Though Jacob's heart was set on marrying Rachel, Leah's younger sister, Laban deceived him into marrying Leah first. Despite being less favored than Rachel, Leah became the mother of six of Jacob's sons, including brothers Levi and Judah, from whom the priestly and royal lines of Israel would descend, respectively.

Throughout her life, Leah sought love and validation, and her story is one of resilience and God's favor in unexpected places.

"When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless." (Genesis 29:31)

## Who is a Strong Woman in the Bible?

As you've just read, Scripture highlights strong women from Genesis-Revelation, but a few notably stand out: Rahab, who, despite being a prostitute, is commemorated for protecting Israelites in the city of Jericho; Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is celebrated for her extraordinary trust in the divine conception of Jesus; and Esther, who is commemorated for making a bold risk in order to save her people.

In all these women, we can find stories that challenge, encourage, and even guide us in our faith journeys.

## What Does the Bible Say About Women?

Women are recognized as equal in value to men in the Bible, as well as showcased for their strength, courage, compassion, and tenacity.

## What is the Biblical Role of a Woman?

The Biblical role of a woman is to live in such a way that glorifies God—to obey the teachings of Jesus, to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, to trust the Lord as Provider and Protector, and to follow Christ!

## Scripture Quotes about Women in the Bible

Here are three of our favorite scriptures about women.

1. "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." (Proverbs 31:10)
2. "And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed...'" (Luke 1:46-48)
3. "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

## Christian Words of Encouragement for Young Ladies

In a world filled with shifting standards and pressures, young ladies should remember that their true worth is found in Christ. You are fearfully and wonderfully made, created with a divine purpose and unique gifts that the world needs. Embrace the love and grace that God offers, knowing that you are cherished and valued beyond measure. Let your heart be anchored in faith, and let God's Word guide your steps.

As you journey through life, remember that you are not alone; the Lord walks beside you, strengthening and uplifting you in every challenge. Shine brightly, for you are a reflection of God's love in this world.

## Over to you

We implore you to follow the example of these women of the bible.

These strong women in the bible held the line of faithfulness when many men in Israel were satisfied to capitulate to the paganism of Canaan, Persia, and Greece.

These biblical women represent not only the kind of bravery to which all Christians are called to in the face of suffering, but represent a uniquely powerful purpose which God has designated for women to achieve God's plan which would otherwise be impossible.

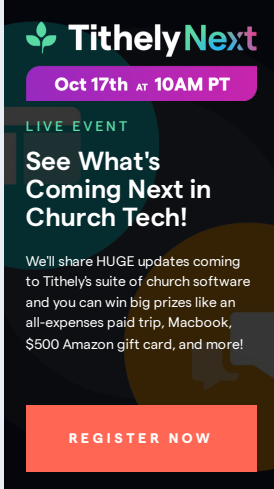
We hope you share these powerful women in the bible with someone else.

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