

Women of the Bible: A Printable Study Guide

Welcome to a thoughtful journey through the lives of women in Scripture. Each study offers a brief paraphrase, a point for reflection, and a question to help you connect the passage with everyday faith.

A note on the Scripture: the verse summaries in this guide are plain-English paraphrases, not quotations from a particular Bible translation. Read each passage in your preferred Bible for its full wording and context.

Christians across traditions understand some women's roles and passages differently. This guide aims to present the biblical accounts with care and leaves room for respectful study and conversation.

Eve

Bible reference: Genesis 2 to 4

Paraphrase: Eve is formed as the first woman and shares life in the garden with Adam. After they disobey God, they face painful consequences and begin life outside the garden, where Eve becomes the mother of Cain and Abel.

What we can learn: Eve's story invites honest reflection on choice, responsibility, and the possibility of seeking God after failure.

Reflect: Where might you need to take responsibility and begin again?

Sarah

Bible reference: Genesis 12, 16 to 18, 21

Paraphrase: Sarah leaves her home with Abraham and journeys towards the land God has promised. She struggles with the long wait for a child, yet in old age she gives birth to Isaac, as God had said.

What we can learn: Her account holds together uncertainty, imperfect choices, and the hope of a promise fulfilled.

Reflect: What helps you remain open to hope during a long wait?

Hannah

Bible reference: 1 Samuel 1 to 2

Paraphrase: Hannah grieves because she has no child and prays earnestly at the sanctuary. After Samuel is born, she brings him to serve at Shiloh and offers a song of praise to God.

What we can learn: Hannah's prayer gives space to grief and shows gratitude expressed through generous commitment.

Reflect: What would honest prayer sound like for you today?

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A STORY OF COURAGE AND LOYALTY

Ruth

Bible reference: Ruth 1 to 4

Paraphrase: After the deaths of their husbands, Ruth stays with Naomi and travels with her to Bethlehem. Ruth gleanes in Boaz's field, and through family redemption she and Boaz marry and become part of David's family line.

What we can learn: Ruth's loyalty and courage are shown in practical care, hard work, and trust amid uncertainty.

Reflect: Who could benefit from your steady care or companionship?

Esther

Bible reference: Esther 2 to 9

Paraphrase: Esther becomes queen in Persia while keeping her Jewish identity private. When Haman's plan threatens her people, she approaches the king at risk to herself and helps bring about their rescue.

What we can learn: Esther's story considers courage, careful preparation, and using influence to protect others.

Reflect: Where might you speak up for someone who is at risk?

Deborah

Bible reference: Judges 4 to 5

Paraphrase: Deborah serves Israel as a prophet and judge, giving guidance beneath a palm tree. She calls Barak to lead Israel's forces, accompanies him, and later celebrates the victory in song.

What we can learn: Deborah's leadership joins wisdom, courage, and shared responsibility.

Reflect: How could you use your judgement to encourage others?

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A STORY OF WELCOME AND WITNESS

Rahab

Bible reference: Joshua 2, 6:22 to 25

Paraphrase: Rahab welcomes Israelite spies into her home and hides them from the king of Jericho. She asks for protection for her family, and when Jericho falls, the spies bring her and her household to safety.

What we can learn: Rahab acts with courage and faith, and her account challenges assumptions about who can belong to God's people.

Reflect: What assumptions might you need to reconsider about faith and belonging?

Mary, the mother of Jesus

Bible reference: Luke 1 to 2

Paraphrase: Mary receives the angel's announcement that she will bear Jesus and responds with trust in God. She visits Elizabeth, gives birth to Jesus in Bethlehem, and later returns with Joseph to Jerusalem for the child's presentation at the temple.

What we can learn: Mary's response brings together humility, courage, and a willingness to trust God with an uncertain future.

Reflect: Where are you being invited to respond with trust?

Mary Magdalene

Bible reference: John 20:1 to 18

Paraphrase: Mary Magdalene comes to Jesus' tomb while it is still dark and finds it open. After meeting the risen Jesus, she goes to the disciples and tells them what she has seen.

What we can learn: Her encounter makes her a first witness to the resurrection and a trusted messenger of hope.

Reflect: What hopeful truth would you like to share with someone?

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A STORY OF SERVICE AND LEARNING

Martha and Mary of Bethany

Bible reference: Luke 10:38 to 42, John 11, John 12:1 to 8

Paraphrase: Martha welcomes Jesus into her home and later declares her belief in him when Lazarus dies, while Mary listens at Jesus' feet and anoints him at a meal. Together, their stories show grief, hospitality, attentive learning, service, and devotion in different forms.

What we can learn: Martha and Mary remind us that faith can be expressed through both active care and attentive presence.

Reflect: Which form of care or presence feels most needed in your life right now?

Lydia

Bible reference: Acts 16:11 to 15, 40

Paraphrase: Lydia, a seller of purple cloth in Philippi, listens to Paul's message and is baptised with her household. She welcomes Paul and his companions into her home, and after their release from prison they visit her again.

What we can learn: Lydia combines attentive faith with generous hospitality and practical support for a growing community.

Reflect: What resources or welcome could you offer to others?

Priscilla

Bible reference: Acts 18:1 to 28, Romans 16:3 to 5

Paraphrase: Priscilla and Aquila work alongside Paul and travel with him, later settling in Ephesus. They explain God's way more accurately to Apollos, and Paul describes them as fellow workers who risked themselves for him.

What we can learn: Priscilla models shared ministry, thoughtful teaching, and courageous partnership.

Reflect: How might you share what you know in a supportive way?

Closing prayer: God of wisdom and compassion, thank you for the women whose lives are remembered in Scripture. Help us learn from their courage, faith, questions, and care for others. Guide us as we read, reflect, and serve. Amen.

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