

HOW SEVEN INFLUENTIAL BIBLE WOMEN COPEd WITH CONFLICT

*Do not be anxious about anything,
but in every situation, by prayer and petition,
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
Philippians 4:6 NIV

Hello, Sister Friend.

If you're like me, you haven't arrived at a pinnacle where you can profess to know all there is to know about prayer.

I still marvel at the mystery that characterizes the practice and power of a disciplined prayer life. I hunger after an intimate and consistent communion with my Father God. Perhaps, this describes you too.

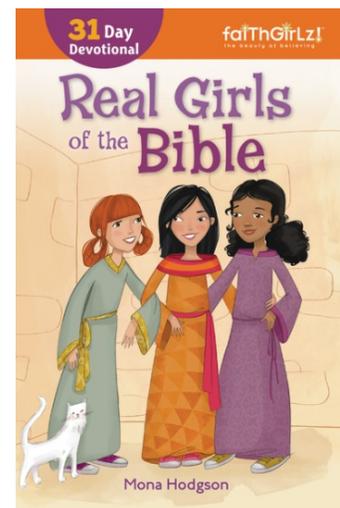
What fun that we have sisters in the Word, who serve as examples to you and me when it comes to expressing ourselves to the Father, who calls us "daughter" and delights in those who put their hope in His unfailing love. (Psalm 33:18)

As a gift to you, I've gathered prayers and references to prayers of seven influential women mentioned in the Bible. My hope and prayer is that as you prayerfully read their stories, you will experience a fresh energy in your own conversations with God.

Hugs and smiles,

Mona

P.S. You can read more about these Bible women and others in [*Real Girls of the Bible: A 31-Day Devotional*](#).





Breathe in freedom. Embrace the adventure. Savor sisterhood.

CANAANITE WOMAN

A Prayer for Mercy

Following a tedious encounter with the Pharisees from Jerusalem, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out,
“Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me!
My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”
Matthew 15:22 NIV

This dear sister battled conflict with prayers for mercy.

Jesus’ disciples were not fond of distractions; not fans of interruption. The woman’s persistence wearied them, and they advised Jesus to send her away.

Her breaking mama-heart didn’t let her back down. Instead, she knelt at Jesus’ feet, pleading,
“Lord, help me!”

Jesus heard her unrelenting cry for mercy and said, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” In His mercy, in that instance, He healed her daughter.

Read the Canaanite woman’s story in Matthew 15:21-28.





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MARY

A Prayer of Surrender

Mary, a virgin teenager appointed to marry Joseph, received a heavenly caller. The angel Gabriel dropped in with a greeting from God.

Mary had found favor with God. She would conceive and give birth to a son, whom she would call Jesus. The Messiah. The Son of the Most High.

Copious cause for internal and external conflict, agreed?

After taking a brief timeout to process the angel's proclamation, Mary drew in a breath for fortification.

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered.

“May your word to me be fulfilled.”

Luke 1:38, NIV

Mary battled the unknown in a prayer of surrender to the God she knew.

Read Mary’s story in Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20, 41-52; Matthew 1:16-25 and 2; Mark 3:20-35; John 2:1-12; 19:25-27; Acts 1:12-14.





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MARTHA

A Pity Party Prayer

Sisters. A sure source of conflict.

At least that was the case for a couple of sisters from Bethany—Mary and Martha.

Martha opened her home to Jesus and His disciples as a retreat center on their travels through her village. Mary sat at Jesus' feet chewing on every word He uttered while meal preparations consumed Martha.

Miffed, Martha parked herself in Jesus' presence, her shoulders squared.

“Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself?

Tell her to help me!”

Luke 10:40 NIV

There's a prayer I relate to—a pity party prayer. Sometimes the woe-is-me mantra bubbles to the surface first.

Still, Jesus meets Martha (and the rest of us) where we are and offers perspective.

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things,
but few things are needed—or indeed only one.”

Luke 10:41-42 NIV

Read Martha's story in Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-12:3.





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ESTHER

A Prayer of Petition

The commissioners of King Xerxes chose Esther as one of the virgins selected to compete for the role of Queen. After a year of beauty treatments, special foods, and careful placement in the harem, Esther became the king's choice for queen.

In a heart-pounding drama, Haman, the highest of the king's nobles, plotted to have Mordecai, Esther's cousin and secret caretaker, and all the Jews killed. You guessed it, unbeknownst to King Xerxes or Haman, Esther was a Jew—one of the people they had marked for death.

When word of Haman's plan reached Esther, she rattled off a reply to Mordecai.

“Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf,
and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day.
I and my young women will also fast as you do.
Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”
Esther 4:15-16 ESV

In Esther's prayer of petition, she pled with God to spare her life and the lives of her people—the Israelites.

King Xerxes not only welcomed Esther into the inner court, but granted her requests. The king not only spared their lives, but also punished Haman with the sort of death the trickster had set up for Mordecai.

Read Esther's story in Esther 2:5-7:7, and 9.





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ANNA

A Persistent Prayer

Anna took a bold step. Widowed after only seven years of marriage, she moved into the temple in Jerusalem. Luke, Chapter 2, says Anna, a widow for 84 years, never left the temple. Wow!

Night and day, Anna worshipped God, fasted, and prayed. Wow! (Yep, my reaction is redundant, but real.)

Anna knew something about persistence in prayer. During her temple watch, Mary and Joseph brought in their child, Jesus, who was both human and deity.

Coming up to them at that very moment,
she [Anna] gave thanks to God and spoke about the child
to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Luke 2:38 NIV

God rewarded Anna for her faithfulness. She watched and waited and prayed, then the day dawned when Jesus, her Savior—the Savior of the world—filled her vision and flooded her heart with Jesus-joy.

Read Anna's story in Luke 2:36-38.





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DEBORAH

A Prayer for Deliverance

At a time when the role of judge was like that of a king, God chose Deborah to serve as a judge over Israel.

Having done evil in the eyes of the Lord, the Israelites experienced twenty years of oppression under the rule of Jabin, king of Canaan. As leader of the Israelites, Deborah prayed for her nation's deliverance as she held court under the Palm of Deborah settling disputes among her people.

When Deborah received instruction from God for action against their oppressors, she shared His commands. Barak, a military commander, told her that if she went to the battle with him, he would go. If she didn't go, he wouldn't either.

“Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah.
“But because of the course you are taking,
the honor will not be yours,
for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.”
Judges 4:9 NIV

God had prepared the way and delivered Deborah and her people.

Read Deborah's Story in Judges 4:1-17, 5:1-31.





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HANNAH

A Prayer of Lament A Prayer of Praise

Hannah wanted a child. A son.

Her husband's second wife bore him many children and made sport of provoking Hannah to tears and loss of appetite. Year after year.

On day, in the temple at Shiloh, Hannah held nothing back.

In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly.

And she made a vow, saying,

“LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me,
and not forget your servant but give her a son,
then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life,
and no razor will ever be used on his head.”

1 Samuel 1:10-11 NIV

Witnessing Hannah's prayer of lament, the priest Eli suspected her of drunkenness.

When Hannah explained her grief, he told her to go in peace, and added, “May the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

After a hearty meal, Hannah flirted with her hubby. She soon became pregnant and gave birth to a son, Samuel.

When Samuel was of age, Hannah stood in the temple fulfilling her promise to God and offering Him a prayer of praise.

“My heart rejoices in the LORD; in the LORD my horn is lifted high.
My mouth boasts over my enemies for I delight in your deliverance.

There is no one holy like the LORD: there is no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God....”

1 Samuel 2:1-2 NIV

Read Hannah's story in 1 Samuel 11-2:11, 18-21, 26.