

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. **What percentage of named characters in the Bible are women?**

a. **05-08%**. The majority of women in the Bible are unnamed. Those who are named usually stand out for having done some outstanding deed, e.g. over-throwing kings or military commanders or other powers as in the case of Esther.

2. **Which category of women are under-represented in the stories of the Old Testament?**

a. **Wives and mothers**. The ordinary, hard-working women are rarely mentioned in the Old Testament stories by name. Among those commonly named are the founding matriarchs—Sarah, Rebekah and Leah, i.e. the wives of the founding patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and some who were prophets; judges; heroines and queens.

3. **Which of the following is not among the ‘Seven Jewish Women Prophets’ of the Old Testament?**

d. **Rahab**. The Jewish Talmud names forty-eight male prophets and seven female prophets of the Jewish people. The seven are Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah and Esther. All the same, Rahab is a splendid character in her own right. She hid the Jewish spies from their enemies. Her story is found in the Book of Joshua and she is regarded as one of the ‘saviors of Israel’ for her allegiance to God and her people. She is listed in the ‘roll-call of saints’ (Heb. 11.4-32) in the New Testament book of Hebrews. She is mentioned also in Matthew (1.5) and James (2.25). The Christian poet Dante describes her blessedness as ‘like a sunbeam shining in clear water’ (*Paradiso* Canto 19).

4. **Which powerful woman in the Old Testament saved the Hebrew people from their enemy by driving a tent peg through the temple of their commander?**

c. **Jael**. The ‘Song of Deborah’ in the Book of Judges 5.24-26 tells you of Jael’s courage and cunning in seeing off an enemy of Israel:

Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

²⁵ *He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.*

²⁶ *She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.*

If you ever doubted the sheer brilliance of the language of the King James Version, verse 27 in Judges 5 ('hammering home' Jael's deed) ought to demonstrate it conclusively:

27At her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

5. Which outstanding woman from the Old Testament figures prominently in the oratorios on Biblical themes composed by George Frederic Handel (1685-1759)?

d. **All of the above.** George Frideric Handel composed a series of dramatic oratorios in English on Biblical themes. Among those with major roles for notable women from the Bible are *Esther* composed for private performance in a nobleman's home in 1718, revised into a full oratorio in 1732, *Deborah*, first performed at the King's Theatre in London on 17 March 1733, *Athalia*, first performed on 10 July 1733 at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford,^[124] *Samson*, premiere performance at Covent Garden theatre in London on 18 February 1743, and *Jephtha*, premiered at Covent Garden on 26 February 1752.

6. Which of these women in the Old Testament is not mentioned by Matthew in his genealogy of Jesus?

a. **Miriam.** The four women from the Old Testament mentioned by name in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus are: Tamar, Ruth, Rahab and Bathsheba.

Miriam was the elder sister of Moses and Aaron and was a prophet in her own right. She is ranked right there alongside Moses and Aaron in delivering the Jews from Exile in Egypt: *For I brought you up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam* (Micah 6.4).



Rahab hiding the Jewish spies