

## The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible

George Arthur Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962),

Concubine is a slave girl who belonged to a Hebrew family and bore children. Concubines were acquired by purchase from poor Hebrew families, captured in war, or taken in payment of debt. A girl in this classification achieved a certain status if she had sons (Gen. 21:10; 22:24; 30:3; 31:33; Ex. 23:12; 21:7, 10).

Otto J. Baab. *Concubine. The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. George Arthur Buttrick, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 666.

Many references to the widow indicate an unfortunate state and she was frequently subjected to harsh treatment. As an object of public concern she is often linked with the orphans or fatherless.

Otto J. Baab. "Widow," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. George Arthur Buttrick, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 842. O.J. Babb is the late Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, Carrett Theological Seminary.

Laws concerning widows: In every code except the Hebrew, the widow has rights of inheritance but in Hebrew law she is completely ignored. One reason for this strange neglect may be the Hebrew belief that death before old age was a calamity, a judgment for sin which was extended to the wife that was left. It was therefore a disgrace to be a widow (Ruth 1:20-21; Is. 54:4).

Otto J. Baab. "Widow," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. George Arthur Buttrick, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 842.

The stern condemnation voiced by the prophets and other writers against injustice include attacks upon the mistreatment of widows (Is. 1:23c; 10:2; cf. Job 22:9; 24:3; 31:16; Ps. 94:6). In the day of judgment God will take swift action against those who oppress hired laborers and the widow and the orphan (Mal. 3:5). The prominence of these strong words of denunciation abundantly testifies to the prevalence of oppressive treatment of the widow in biblical society. "Widow" in Hebrew resembles the word meaning "be mute," suggesting the muteness induced by disgraceful widowhood. Her plight may have been aggravated by the possibility that she wore identifying garments (Gen. 38:14, 19).

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The widow as an object of compassion.

The biblical concern for the widow is evidence that she needed compassion because of her inferior position in the community. She evidently had only the protection which public compassion afforded her by acts of charity and justice. The Law and the Prophets, as well as some of the Writings of the OT, contain evidence of this situation.

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It appears also in NT writings. As a member of the covenant community the widow must receive the same merciful treatment as that which is given to the sojourner and the fatherless (Deut. 14:29); her garment must not be taken in pledge (Deut. 24:17; cf. Amos 2:8), because she may own only one. The process of gathering grain and grapes should take into account the hunger of the widow and leave some of the harvest for gleaning purpose (Deut. 24:19-21). The Levites, the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow are to

be given the tithes of the produce in the third year (Deut. 26:12; cf. 27:19). ... God is declared to be the 'father of the fatherless and protector of widows' (Ps. 68:5). He watches over the forlorn and needy, the fatherless and those without husbands (Ps. 146:9). Jesus reaffirmed the biblical view of God's concern for the widow by speaking with anger of those who devour widows' shoes and then make long prayers (Luke 20:47).

Special class of widows in the Christian community (P. 842) – bottom

The term for 'widow' is applied to the city of Babylon. To her will come both widowhood and loss of children (Is. 47:9)-loss, i.e., of her population. Desolated Israel is to be of good cheer and to forget the 'reproach of (her) widowhood' (Is. 54:4a). Sad at heart, one poet says that Jerusalem sits lonely; she has become like a widow (Lam. 1:1). Another cries out; 'Our mothers are like widows,' and then mentions poverty and servitude as proof of this (Lam. 5:3-4).  
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As part of the healing ministry of Jesus, a considerable number of widely differing diseases were encountered and cured. Blindness, leprosy, paralysis, physical infirmity, and mental affliction all came within the scope of his beneficent activity.

George Arthur Buttrick, ed. *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, R.K. Harrison, *Disease* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 847-853. R.K. Harrison was Professor of Hebrew, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto.

Causes of all these illnesses can be physiological as well as psychological.  
Some medical professionals describe vividly how mind impact on the physical health:

Impact of disease on their life  
According to purity system

Impact of his touching