

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE
by Dr. Catherine Clark Kroeger

These Bible passages are all worth further study. Too often we concentrate on a few important women figures in the Bible, or on women who have titles, such as "prophet" or "deacon." But in the vast majority of cases, there is no title—what is important is a description of what the woman is doing, or how she is serving God, or how she is perceived by the author. Dr. Catherine Clark Kroeger, Scripture scholar and classicist, has given us in this brief study guide the results of many years of studying women in the Bible and in the ancient world. Open your Bible and study through these passages carefully. You will find much more information about women than you imagined in the Bible. D.I.

OLD TESTAMENT CONSIDERATIONS:

Creation of Man and Woman: Genesis 1 and 2

Woman made in God's image Genesis 1: 26-27.

(Do not image God as either male or female. Deuteronomy 4:16)

Feminine imagery for God: Deuteronomy 32:11, 18; Psalms 131:2-3; Isaiah 42:13-14; 49:15; 66:9-13; Hosea 13:8.

"Man" means "humanity": Genesis 5:1-2

The Fall: Genesis 3

GREAT WOMEN LEADERS

Miriam the woman prophet: Exodus 15:20

Micah 6:4; Exodus 2:1-10; 15:20-21; Numbers 12:1-15; 20: 1; 26:59; I Chron 6:3.

(Financing the Exodus - Exodus 3:22; 11:2)

Deborah the judge and prophet: Judges 4 and 5

(Judges raised up by God: Judges 2:16; Nehemiah 9:27)

Hulda the prophet: II Kings 22:8-23 and II Chronicles 34:14-28.

Her preaching triggered off a great revival the results of which are enumerated in II Kings 23:4-27; II Chronicles 34:29-35:19)

Other women in ministry: Exodus 33:7-9; 38:8; I Samuel 2:22;

I Chronicles 25:5-7; Nehemiah 7:67; Psalms 68:25-26.

Female prophets: Nehemiah 6:7,14; Isaiah 8:3; Joel 2:28-29.

Does God simply use women when men are not available? Esther 4:14; Matthew 3:9.

Wise Women:

Attendants on the mother of Sisera - Judges 5:29. To reprove David II Samuel 14:2;

Of Abel-beth-maacah. II Samuel 20:14-22. Negotiates lifting of siege.

Abigail I Samuel 25:1-44.

Proverbs 14:1; 19:14; 31:10-31.

Social activist - II Samuel 21:7-14.

Builder of cities - I Chronicles 7:24

Women as Construction Engineers Nehemiah 3:12

Female courier committed to David's cause 2 Samuel 17:17

Protectors of God's people: 2 Samuel 17:19-20, Joshua 2:1; 6:17, 25;

cf. Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25

Lessons from Queen Esther: Esther 1:16-22; 8:17; 9:11-12; 9:29,32.

Affirmations of wives and mothers: Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 5:16; Proverbs 5:18-19; 12:4; 18:22; 19:14; Malachi 2:14 - 15.

Stories of Women's Rights

Genesis 38; Exodus 2:16-19. Joshua 15:16-19; 17:3-6; Judges 1:12-15.

Alternative Translations: "The Lord giveth the Word: the women that publish the tidings are a great host." Psalms 68:11

"O woman that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O woman, that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, 'Behold your God'." Isaiah 40:9.

Jesus, the Friend of Women

Women in the genealogy of Jesus

Matthew 1:3, 5. Note Galatians 4:4.

Women in the birth narrative

Elizabeth - Luke 1:5-7 13-18, 24-25, 40-45, 57-61.

Anna the prophet Luke 2:36-38.

Mary, the mother of Jesus

Matthew 1:18-25; 2:11-14; 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-15; Luke 1:26-56;

2:4-51, 8:19-21; John 2:1-12; 19:25-27; Acts 1:14.

Miracles involving women

Matthew 9:18-26. Luke 4:38-39; 8:43-48; 13:10-17.

Jesus gives a lesson in assertiveness training

Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30.

Jesus rejects the double standard

John 8:3-11. See also Luke 7:36-50.

Concern for widows

Mark 12:40-43; Luke 7:12-15; 18:3-5; 20:47-21:3.

Women accepted as learners Luke 10:38-42. John 4. Luke 8:1-3.

Parables using women Matthew 13:33; Mark 2:21; Luke 13: 20-21; 15:8-10; 18:1-8.

Women as spiritual examples - Matthew 15:21-18; Mark 7:24-30;

12:41-44; 14:3-10; Luke 7:36-50.

Jesus' Use of Women in Public Ministry

John 4:28-39

Luke 8:43-48.

Luke 8:1-3 (cf. Acts 1:13-14 and 22) cf. Mark 3:14.

John 11:27;

Matthew 26: 6-13; Mark 14: 3-9.(cf. John 12: 1-8)

His acknowledgement of the ministry of women

Luke 4: 25-26. John 4:34-39.

The sole voice raised in defense of Jesus at His trial Matthew 27:19

Women as prepared witnesses

Luke 1:1-4 (cf. I John 1:1-4)

Luke 24:6-8

John 19:25; Matthew 27: 55-56. Mark 15:40-41.

Note progression in Luke 23:27-31, 49, 55-56.

Women at the burial

Matthew 27:61; Mark 15:47. Luke 23:55-56.

Women to proclaim their risen Lord

Matthew 28:1-10, esp. 7-10; Mark 16:1-11, esp. 7-11; Luke 24:1-12, 22-24,

John 20:11-18, esp. 17.

Cf. the following: John 8:17; 19:35, 21:24; III John 12, Acts 1:3, II Peter 1:16-19; Deuteronomy 19:15 ; Matthew 18:16. Mark 3:14

BIBLICAL RECORDS OF WOMEN IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Participation in decision-making in the upper room

Acts 1:13-26

Equal recipients of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1-4, 17-18.

Full recognition as hearers and bearers of the Gospel

Acts 8:3; 9:1-2; 22:4; - persecuted by Paul as subversive evangelists

Acts 5:14; 8:12 - converted to Christ

A disciple engaged in social service

Acts 9:36-43.

Women prophets

Acts 2:17-18; 21:8-9; I Corinthians 11:5 (Cf. I Corinthians 14:3-4; 26,31).

Women as leaders of house churches

Acts 12:12, 16: 13-15, 40; Col. 4:15; I Cor. 1:11; 16:19; Romans 16:3-5; II John.

Women teachers

Acts 18:26; II Timothy 1:5; Titus 2:2 (*kalodidaskalos* = good teacher or teacher of good things). I Cor. 14:26, 31; Colossians 3:16; II Timothy 2:2.

Business women

Acts 16:14; 18:2-3; Romans 16:1-2.

Women deacons

Romans 16:1-2; I Timothy 3:11.

Office of bishop (I Timothy 3:1-7) note that Jewish men were permitted more than one wife, so that the restriction as to number of wives applies only to men.

Office of widow I Timothy 5: 9-10.

Women elders Philippians 1:1-5; I Timothy 5:1-2; Titus 2: 3-5 (*hieroprepsis*= worthy of the priesthood)

A women apostle Romans 16:7

A woman overseer Romans 16:3-4

The verbal form of *prostatis* occurs at Rom. 12:8; I Tim. 3:4; 5:17; I Thes. 5:12.

Genesthai used for ordination or appointment to office at I Cor. 1: 30; Ephesians 3:7; Colossians 1:23,25; Hebrews 5:5.

Paul's ministry to women Acts 16:12-40; 17:1-4, 10, 34;

Paul's ministry shared with women

Acts 18: 1-4, 18-28; I Cor. 16:19; Romans 16:3-4; II Tim. 4:19 - a missionary associate

Philippians 4:2-3; Romans 16:3-4: fellow-laborers (cf. I Cor. 16:16)

Romans 16: 1-16. - Shared labors in the Gospel

Paul in trouble with well-behaved upper class women Acts 13:14-50.

Paul given a new perspective on integrating gentiles into the church

Acts 14:26 - 15:29, 36; 21:25.

Paul's Principles of adaptation

Romans 14:1-15:3; I Corinthians 8:1-13; 9:1-10; 10:23-33.

Paul well received by well-behaved upper class women

Acts 16:1, 13-15; 17:4, 12; 18:1; 24:24; 25:13,23; 26:30.