

72 Women's Place in the Bible

God made man, an intelligent creature with a living soul. Then he took a fragment of this man's body, from right close to his throbbing heart, and out of that fragment created a Woman. She was just as intelligent, just as vibrant with life, and, too, had a living soul. Thus she became Man's counterpart and whether we like it or not, became an indispensable factor in his life!

It is mostly men that history accords the honor of cognizance, but alongside them march the women. True, Moses led the Israelites. Aaron offered the sacrifices, but we can be sure it was Miriam who tugged at their sleeves and prodded them with sound . . . and sometimes not so sound . . . suggestions! However, when at one point she wanted to usurp authority, God put her swiftly, surely, back into her place.

Deborah, again, was a woman who was in authority. She led a whole army of men into battle. Why? Because the men were cowards! They were not brave enough, so Deborah led them in a valiant battle. On the same occasion, through the shrewd scheming of another woman the enemy's General was slain. Women had saved the day.

And who can fathom the responsibility resting on the slender shoulders of Queen Esther! On her selflessness, her faithfulness, rested the fate of a whole nation. Her's was a position so unique that, among others, she is referred to as a type of Christ.

Woman's role is not, and never has been insignificant. On the credit side, take into account that King Ahaz was one of the worst kings in Judah's history. However, his son Hezekiah was one of the best. There is a little note in 2 Chronicles 29:1 that perhaps explains this strange phenomena. It says who his mother was. She must have trained him well. But just as certainly as a woman can be a force for the good, she can be the source of terrible ruin. Jezebel is, perhaps, the most lurid Biblical example of this.

When Christ came on the scene, women were considered more or less a chattel, like animals or other property, but He looked at them from a different point of view. He treated them as God had from the first intended . . . subject, but equal. Women were persons! They were intelligent. They were worthy to communicate with about the things of God. Hence His conversation with the startled harlot of Samaria, who immediately became a missionary! (John 4:29)

In Christ's eyes, women were persons in need of help, of forgiveness, of respect, no matter what their age, from the little girl He raised from the dead, to the older woman who had been ill for twelve years.

He respected womanhood with a profound consideration completely out of context with society's concept of them as a whole. He forgave them where other men, guilty of the same sins, would condemn and cast aside