



Women's Leaders in the OT and Church History

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1. **The Patriarchal View:** Men and women are both created by God, but women are (in their being and nature) inferior to men. Therefore, women are to submit to men.
2. **The Egalitarian View:** Men and women are both equally:
 - Created in God's image
 - Given equal dominion in Eden
 - Responsible for and distorted, by sin.
 - Redeemed by Christ and gifted by the Holy Spirit
 - Responsible for using their gifts in service to Christ
3. **The Complementary View:** Men and women are created in God's image as equals, but women have different "roles" or "functions" than men. Women's "role" or "function" means that women are to submit to male authority.

GENDER AND AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH: THREE VIEWS

► Is there a female in Scripture who did what is right in God's eyes, and who was consistently obedient to male/patriarchal culture?

► Women are celebrate for their spiritual moral physical, and intellectual rescue and leadership to the people of God.

O.T. WOMEN CHALLENGE PATRIARCHY

▶ A perfect world must include a male and female partnership

▶ Adam's aloneness is the only "not good" in a perfect world:

▶ The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper (ezer) suitable for him." **Gen 2:18**

▶ God created Eve as **ezer** (strong rescue)

▶ Ezer comes from the root words:

▶ "to be strong" & "to rescue"

▶ Ezer is used most often for God's rescue of Israel

▶ See Psalms 121:1-2

Genesis 2:19-25

"But for Adam, no suitable helper (ezer) was found."



"I lift my eyes up to the mountains—where does my help (ezer) come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

► Scripture emphasizes the unity and oneness of Adam and Eve.

They share:

- A physical substance because Eve comes from Adam's body
- A spiritual substance because both are created in God's image
- A common destiny because they are both given dominion or authority over the earth, not over each other.

THE CREATION OF EVE

"So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them....Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Gen 1: 26-27

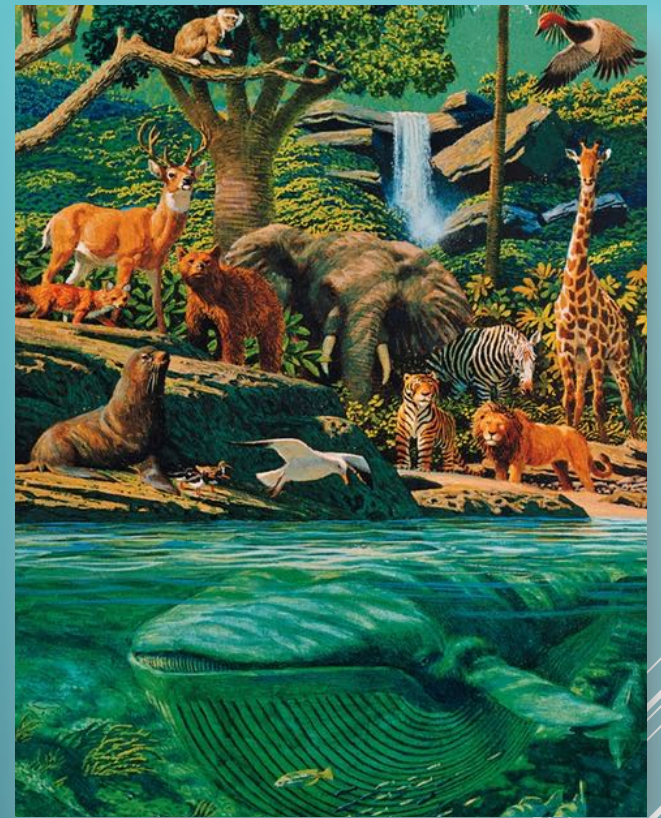


"The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman' for she was taken out of man.'" Gen 2:23

“Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a help fit for him.” **Gen. 2:19-21**

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” **Gen. 2:21-25**

THE ONENESS OF ADAM AND EVE



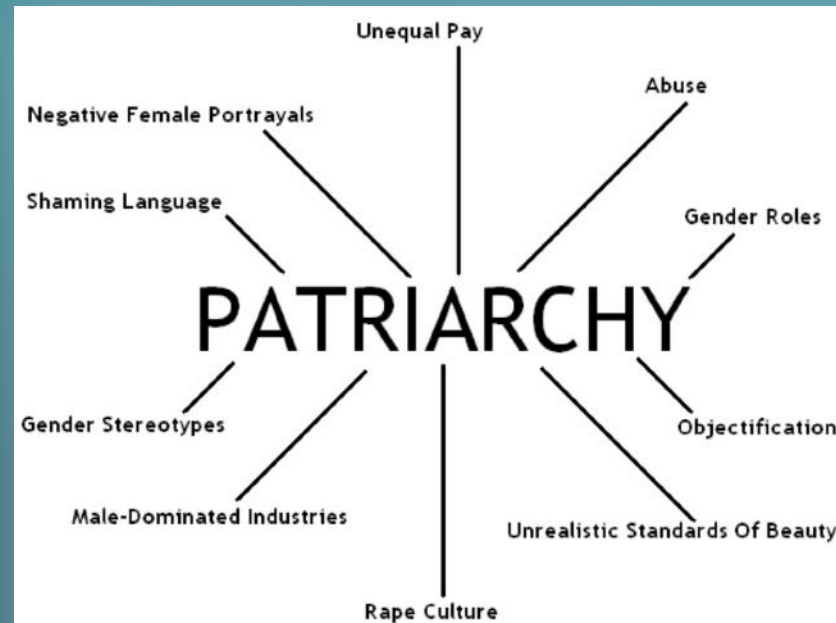
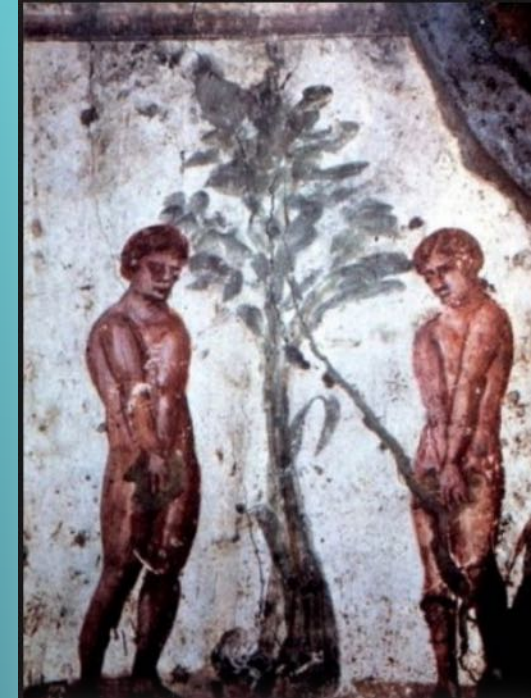
“Then the man said, ‘The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.’

Then the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’

The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and ate.’” **Gen 3: 12-13**

“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” **Gen. 3:16b**

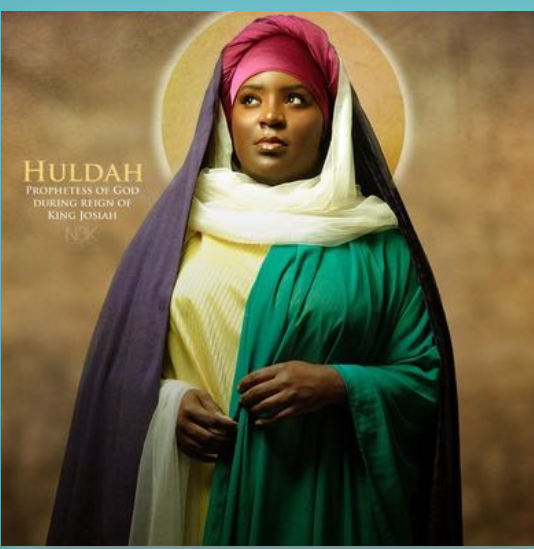
Sin Distorts Mutuality



- ▶ Women assumed leadership as opportunities arose and through God's gifting
- ▶ Prophets held significant positions of leadership and influence
 - ▶ Prophets held significant positions of leadership and influence
 - ▶ They were leaders of leaders
 - ▶ Female prophets provided moral, spiritual, and judicial leadership at the highest level.



The Strong Rescue of Women throughout Scripture



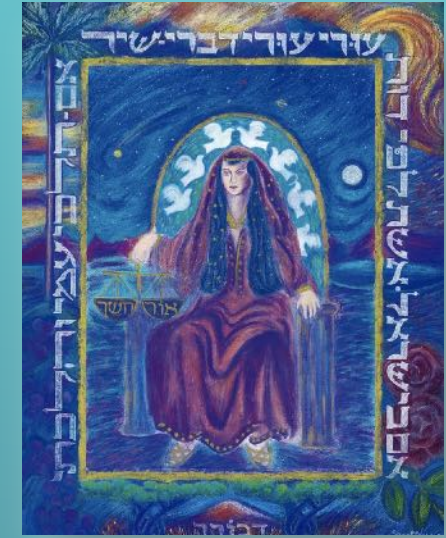
Huldah

- ▶ Prophet
- ▶ When the book of the law was discovered King Josiah turned to Huldah rather than to male prophets (2 Kings 22:14)



Miriam

- ▶ First person called 'prophet' in the Scriptures
- ▶ Israel refused to travel without her (Numbers 12:2-16)



Deborah

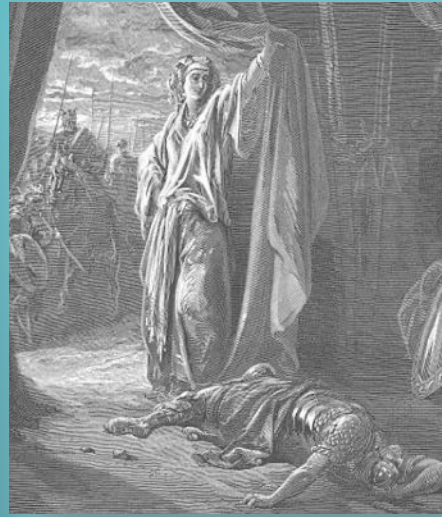
- ▶ Prophet and Judge
- ▶ Called the "mother of Israel"
- ▶ Armies of Israel would not go into battle without her leadership
- ▶ Judges 4:4-5; 5:7



Rebekah & Rachel

- ▶ Rebekah orchestrates an inheritance for Jacob, the younger brother, and not Esau
- ▶ Rachel makes key decisions by giving Bilhah and Leah to her husband Jacob

Gen 25:26-28



Jael

- ▶ Honored for killing the leader of an army at war with Israel

Judges 6-7



Sarah

- ▶ “Sar” means chief or chiefess. She lived in Pharaoh’s court independent of Abraham. She was a leader of the tribe of Israel.
- ▶ Abraham listens to Sarah and has a child with Hagar.
- ▶ God tells Abraham to listen to Sarah

Gen. 21:12



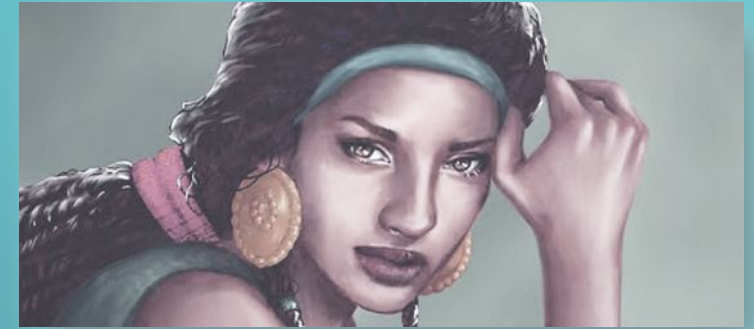
Ruth

- ▶ Ruth initiates romantic overtures in pursuit of Boaz, her Kingsman redeem **Ruth 2:10-12**
- ▶ Just as the women in the Song of Songs pursue their romantic interests **Song of Songs 3**



Tamar

- ▶ Continues the bloodline by deceiving Judah—head of her tribe.
- ▶ Judah admits that she “is more righteous than I!” **Gen 38:26**



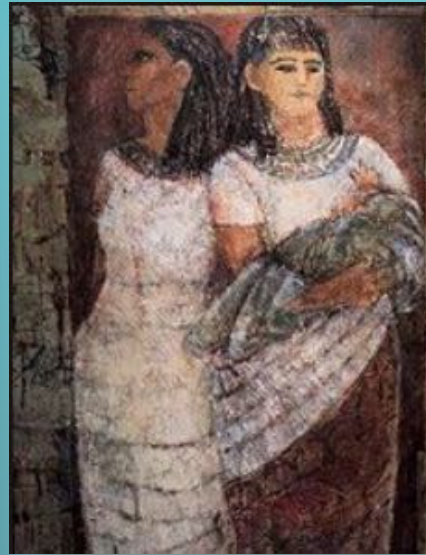
Zipporah

- ▶ Wife of Moses
- ▶ Circumcised their son
- ▶ Performed a role that would later become a priestly function, to be performed exclusively by male priests **Num 27:1-11**



Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah

- Five sisters challenged male-only inheritance laws in response, Moses gives them the right to inherit property
Numbers 27:1-11



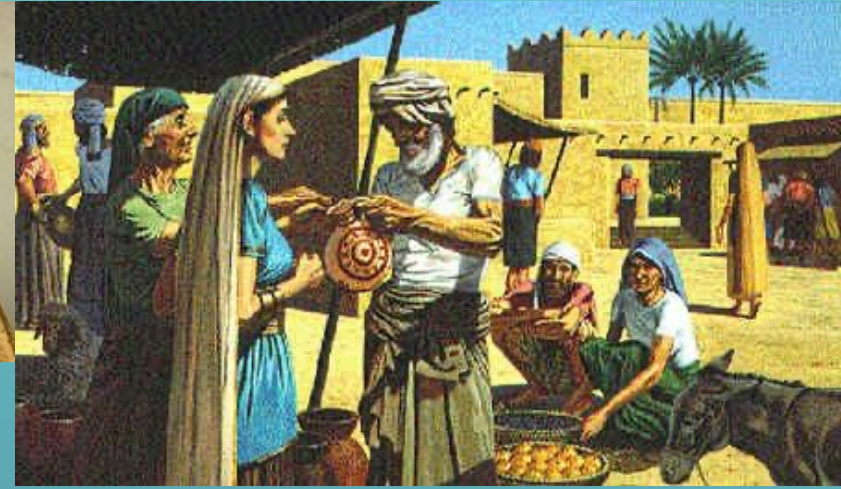
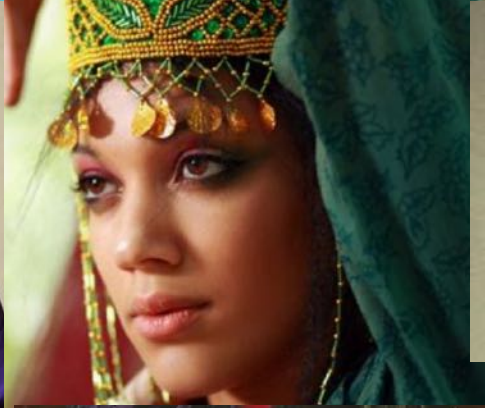
Shiphrah & Puah

- Midwives disobey the king to save Hebrew babies
Exodus 1:8-22



Rahab

- Sent Israel's spies to safety
- Remains in control by negotiating for the safety of her family **Deut. 3:8, Josh. 2:1**
- She is mentioned in the New Testament and included among the courageous and faithful name in Hebrews **Heb. 11:31**



- ▶ Ruth pursues her husband and kinsman redeemer **Ruth 2:10-12**
- ▶ Esther approaches her husband and king uninvited and in public, without his invitation **Esther 4:4-17**
- ▶ Abigail's diplomacy eclipse her husband **1 Samuel 25:25**
- ▶ Proverbs 31 woman has an international business reputation.

HONORING GOD: DEFYING PATRIARCHAL TRADITIONS

The superiority of males in Greek and Roman Culture is noted in:

- The vast numbers of girl babies that were exposed after birth

Christians rescued abandoned baby girls

- Women rarely participated in philosophy & politics

Christian Women served in positions of leadership as apostles, deacons, teachers, evangelists, church

- Christian Women participated in the agape meals

Women participated in the agape meals

- Women did not join social gatherings with males

Christian women were martyred beside males for their social influence

- Males had many sexual partners including slaves, female prostitutes (*hetairai*) and boys/men, in addition to their wives. Marriage was to ensure legitimate heirs

Christian marriages were monogamous, for the purposes of love, intimacy and raising godly children

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

- **Irenaeus** (130–202 A.D.) “Both *nature* and the law place the woman in a subordinate condition to the man.”
- **Augustine** (354–430) “Nor can it be doubted, that it is more consonant with the order of *nature* that men should bear rule over women, than women over men.”
- **Chrysostom** (347–407) “The woman taught once and ruined all. On this account therefore he said, let her not teach... for the sex *is weak and fickle...*”

THE CHURCH FATHERS

THE GOSPEL IN WORD & ACTION



Francis Willard
1839-1898



Sojourner Truth
1797-1828



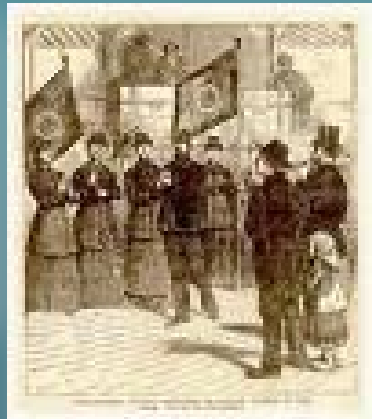
Hannah More
1745-1833



William Wilberforce
1759-1833



Catherine Booth
1829-11890



The Salvation Army
'Hallelujah Lassies'



Pandita Ramabai
1858-1922



Josephine Butler
1828-1906



Katharine Bushnell
1855-1946

QUALITIES THAT CHARACTERIZED THE EARLY EVANGELICALS

Conversion: The belief that lives need to be changed

Activism: The expression of the gospel through effort

The Bible: A Particular regard for the Bible...that all spiritual truth is found in it.

Crucicentrism: A stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross

Together these qualities constitute 4 of guiding priorities of the early evangelicals.

David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from 1730 to the 1980s*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1998), pp. 2-3. See also Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*. (Downer Groves, IL: IVP, 2003), 19.



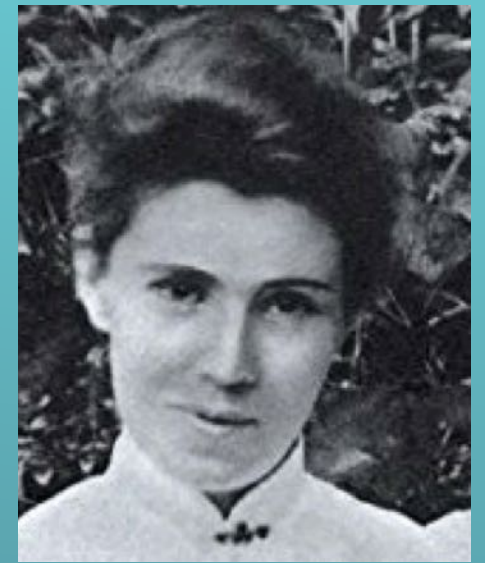
Amanda Berry Smith
1837 – 1915



Mary Slessor
1848 – 1915



Lottie Moon
1840– 1912



Amy Carmichael
1867 – 1951

CONVERSIONISM

THE GOSPEL IN WORD & ACTION



Francis Willard
1839-1898



Sojourner Truth
1797-1828



Hannah More
1745-1833



William Wilberforce
1759-1833



Frances Willard
1839-1898
Woman in the Pulpit



Catherine Booth
1829-1890
*Female Ministry or
Women's Right to
Preach the Gospel*



Catherine Booth
1829-11890



The Salvation Army
'Hallelujah Lassies'



Pandita Ramabai
1858-1922



Josephine Butler
1828-1906



Katharine Bushnell
1855-1946

ACTIVISM

- Adam and Eve were both created in the image of God
- Adam and Eve were both equally called to be fruitful and to exercise dominion in Eden
- Eve was not the source of sin, and God does not curse women because of Eve.
- It was Satan, not God, who inspired the domination of men over women.
- God bestows leadership on those who do what is right in God's sight, regardless of their gender, birth order, nationality, and class.



Katharine Bushnell MD
1856-1946
God's Word to Women

THE BIBLE: ALL OF IT!

BUSHNELL ON PAUL FROM GOD'S WORD TO WOMEN



Paul affirmed the authority and leadership of women, provided that their leadership was:

- Neither domineering nor abusive (1 Tim. 2 :12); that those who teach must understand and advance the truth concerning the Gospel (1 Tim. 2 :11–12, Acts 18:26, Rom. 16:1–5, 7, 12–13, 15)
- When women pray and prophesy in public they are not disruptive, either by their clothing or through their chatter (1 Cor. 11:5, 1 Cor. 14:34).
- Women's status must be assessed not in the Fall, but in Christ's completed work on Calvary.
- A correct interpretation of Scripture views women's value in the same manner as man's value, [based] on the atonement of Jesus Christ.
- Prejudice has routinely viewed women through Eve's sin, rather than through their full redemption and inheritance in Christ.

“The ‘old creation,’ in its form of ‘Jew and Gentile’, must die to make way for a new creation ‘after the image of Him’ that created him; where ... there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are one in Christ Jesus. In the face of these words we cannot wonder that the Cross is a stumbling-block, and its message likened to a sword or knife, for it cuts deep into the very core of the pride of the old creation. God’s cure... is not a superficial one ... Nothing but the Cross will bring about the unity He desires.”

Penn-Lewis, The Climax of the Risen Life, p. 37.



Gal 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

The Patriarchal Perspective: Unequal in being, unequal in function

3rd Century – Early 1700s

The Egalitarian Perspective: Equal in being, equal in function

1700s – Present

The Complementary Perspective: Equal in being, unequal in function

1960-Present

3 VIEWS ON WOMEN & AUTHORITY

- All Christians are to submit to one another (**Eph 5:21**)
- Wives have authority over their husband's body and husbands have authority over their wife's body (**1 Cor 7:4**)
- Junia was outstanding among the apostles (**Rom 16:7**)
- Female prophets declare the truth of God (**1 Cor 11:3-5, 14:31; Acts 2:17, 21:9; Luke 2:36-38**)
- Women were deacons: Phoebe (**Rom 16:1-3**)
- Women house church leaders/church planters: Priscilla, Lydia, Chloe, Nympho, Apphia, the Elect Lady (**Rom 16:13-15, 40; 1 Cor 1:11, 16:19; Philem. 1:2; 2 John 1:1**)
- Women teachers: Priscilla (**Acts 18:26**)
- Women evangelists (**Phil 4:3; Philem. 1:2; Rom 16:3**)
- Women and slaves who do the heavy lifting of the Gospel (**1 Cor 16:15-16**)

DOES SCRIPTURE TEACH MALE AUTHORITY?

Jesus said “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” Matt. 20:25-27, NRSV

LEADERSHIP JESUS STYLE



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