

## WOMEN SHEPHERDS AND PASTORS: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE PT 1

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A number of years ago I found myself counseling a Christian woman regarding a certain problem she was experiencing in her marriage relationship. The gist of the problem was that, for various reasons, the woman was not happy with the church she and her husband were attending, so she decided to not attend at all, leaving the husband to go alone. I originally addressed this problem in the article entitled "Churchianity or Christianity: Which Do You Practice?". Despite the advice that I offered to this woman at that time, it seems that the problem was not fully resolved. Thus, the need arose for me to exchange a few additional email messages with her. During the course of our email exchanges, she informed me that her church was temporarily being shepherded by a female pastor, being as the previous pastor had resigned, or moved on to another church. I don't recall the precise details at this current time.

While I have addressed this topic before, allow me to state again that, as far as I am aware, nowhere in the Bible are women instructed to lead the Lord's Church. As I have shared with my readers on previous occasions, our faith and beliefs as Christians are not based on what some people think or say, or on what is taught by popular preachers who like to preach

the doctrines of men from the pulpits of their megachurches, or on anything else which some misguided individuals try to use to rationalize or justify their wayward actions. The fact of the matter is that our Christians beliefs and practices should be based solely on God's Word, and on what has been passed down to us in the pattern and practices of the First Century Church. Anything which is contrary to God's Word, or which attempts to override its authority, is misguided and wrong, and should be avoided. Consider the following verses which convey the eternal nature and importance of God's Word:

". . . For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."

Psalms 119:89, KJV

". . . Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Psalms 119:105, KJV

"Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it."

Psalms 119:140, KJV

"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."

Psalms 119:160, KJV

". . . thy word is truth."

John 17:17b, KJV

"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

Psalms 33:11, KJV

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

Psalms 138:2, KJV

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"

Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

As I pointed out a moment ago, any teaching or practice that contradicts God's Word, or which attempts to override its Divine Authority, is both misguided and wrong, and should be avoided. Jesus and the Apostles of the First Century embraced this very same attitude. This becomes evident by verses such as the following which are found in the New Testament. Notice how the First Century Church leaders warn the Disciples to beware of false doctrines:

"Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

Matthew 16:12, KJV

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"

2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

Returning to the subject of women, while we do find a few isolated examples where certain women were granted a degree of political and/or spiritual authority in the Old Testament -- the Prophetess and Judge Deborah and Queen Esther come to mind -- the Lord never granted this same degree of spiritual authority to women in the New Testament. To the contrary, the Apostle Paul informs his readers quite plainly that women are supposed to remain silent in the Church. This most certainly prevents them from accepting a leadership role, such as being a pastor, priest or minister. Consider the following verses:

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

1 Corinthians 14:34-35, KJV

While Paul was writing specifically regarding those women who desired to exercise the Gifts of Prophecy and Tongues, common sense dictates that his words apply even more when we speak of a woman spiritually leading an entire Church. Not only that, but the fact that Paul plainly states that women should learn from their husbands at home, further supports the view that women are not supposed to take on leadership positions -- or teaching positions -- in the Church.

Of course, there are certain liberal-minded people who seek to invalidate this understanding by pointing to the incident concerning the Prophetess Anna which is found in the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke. While it is indeed true that Anna was present in the Temple during Jesus' circumcision on the eighth day after His Birth, she was by no means usurping the authority of the priesthood of that era. She was an old woman of eighty-four years of age who appears to have been temporarily inspired by the Holy Spirit, as the text relates. The Gospel informs us that Anna spent her time there fasting and praying, and not being a leader in the Temple. The same thing seems to have occurred with the old man Simeon only a few minutes prior to that event. To reiterate, these two people were not recognized leaders in the Temple. Please consider the following verses:

"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth."

Luke 2:25-39, KJV

For informational and historical purposes, allow me to also share with you the part of the Levitical Law where the rites of circumcision and purification are commanded by the Lord through Moses, which is exactly what Joseph and Mary were fulfilling:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. But if she

bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean."

Leviticus 12:1-8, KJV

Returning to the Prophetess Anna, to be temporarily inspired by the Holy Ghost -- as appears to have been her case -- is not the same thing as spiritually leading the entire Body of Christ in a regular capacity, and on a regular basis, as we see happening with so many women pastors and preachers today. In fact, I would dare say that this misguided phenomenon is more akin to the rebellious false prophetess Jezebel, who by the Word of the Lord, the Apostle John describes for us in the Book of Revelation. As you can see by the following set of verses, this proud, deceitful woman set herself up as a spiritual leader over what basically amounted to an ancient idol-worshipping sex cult:

"Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Revelation 2:20-23, KJV

Please notice in particular that the Lord says "which calleth herself a prophetess". In other words, God did not appoint or anoint Jezebel; she did this herself. Doesn't that sound very similar to what we see happening today with so many so-called

"prophets" and "prophetesses"? They are found in a lot of the modern churches, as well as all over Facebook, and in many other online social communities and networks. As you can see, in the Book of Revelation the Lord strongly condemned Jezebel due to her heresies and fornication, which led His children astray. In the three synoptic Gospels -- Matthew, Mark and Luke -- Jesus issued a similar warning regarding those people who would cause His children to fall away from the faith, and abandon sound doctrine, when He stated the following:

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Matthew 18:6, KJV

"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

Mark 9:42, KJV

"It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

Luke 17:2, KJV

As I explain in a few other articles, in the original Greek language, that word "offend" does not have the same meaning as it does today. It is derived from the ancient Greek word "skandalizo". When read in context with the Scriptures, it means to place an obstacle in one's way, so that they sin, stumble and fall away from the truth of the Gospel. Placing the sin of sexual perversion before a person, so that they yield themselves to temptation and forsake the true Gospel of Christ, will not go unpunished, according to the Lord's own words in the Gospels, and in the Book of Revelation. So be very careful that you are not found guilty of this sin.

Returning to our earlier discussion, throughout the Bible, women normally played a supportive role to their husbands and male leaders. As I noted earlier, in a few rare instances in the Old Testament, the Lord did raise up a woman in order to fulfill His Divine Purpose. However, it is important to note that in the two examples that I gave -- Deborah and Esther -- there was likewise a dominant male figure. In the case of the Prophetess Deborah, we find the military leader, Barak, who was of the tribe of Naphtali. Along with his brethren from

the tribe of Zebulun, Barak pursued Kishon Sisera, who was the captain of Jabin's army. In the end, it was Jael -- who was the wife of Heber the Kenite -- who actually smote Sisera by driving a nail through his head, after his army had been destroyed by Barak and his brethren, as we can determine by the following set of verses:

"But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left. Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle. And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him. Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? that thou shalt say, No. Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples. So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan."

Judges 4:16-24, KJV

Following the death of Sisera by the hand of Jael, in Judges chapter five we discover Deborah and Barak rejoicing together as they sing their song of praise and victory to the Lord. What is interesting to note here, is that even before Barak went to fight against Sisera and his army, Deborah told him that while he would be victorious in battle, Sisera would be defeated by a woman. Consider the following verses:

"And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak



said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh."

Judges 4:7-9, KJV

Why did the Lord do this? Was it to show that He had changed the rules regarding male/female relationships which had been laid down in Genesis chapter three, and to demonstrate that women were now equal to men? I do not believe so. This would contradict the bulk of Scriptural evidence which defines the proper roles of men and women in society -- as well as in personal relationships -- which we find throughout the Bible. I suspect that the Lord used this tactic merely to humble Jaban the Canaanite king and his army, and to demonstrate His great power through the act of defeating the enemies of the Israelites by the hands of women.

We find a similar example where God used a woman in order to fulfill His Will in the story of a very proud and ambitious man by the name of Abimelech. He was the son of Gideon, who is likewise known in the Bible as Jerubbaal. Following the the defeat of the Midianite army by Gideon, the Israelites wanted to make him their king. Even during that time, several hundred years prior to the appearance of the Prophet Samuel and King Saul, the Israelites were so backslidden in heart -- as I point out in the series "The Fruits of Disobedience" -- that they were not happy with just having the Lord as their Eternal King who ruled over them from the Heavens. Thus, they foolishly approached Gideon and asked him to accept the job of being their king. How did God-fearing Gideon reply to their misguided request? Consider the following verses:

"Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you."

Judges 8:22-23, KJV

Gideon simply did not want the job. He basically told them, "Why do you need an earthly king to rule over you, when you already have a Heavenly King who rules over you?". In fact, this conviction burned so deeply in Gideon's heart, that he also added that none of his sons would be their king either.

Sadly, Gideon's proud son Abimelech, whom Gideon fathered by a concubine in Shechem, was of another persuasion. Thus, it seems that some time after Gideon had died, Abimelech put his misguided plan into action. In his mind, he figured that he would not be as "dumb" as his father had been. Instead, he would take advantage of the situation, build up a loyal following, and then have himself declared the king of Israel.

To keep my retelling of this story short -- you can read it in its entirety in Judges chapters eight and nine -- putting his plan into motion was not quite as simple as that. You see, Gideon had fathered a total of seventy sons by his wives and concubines. As was the cruel custom during that time with despotic rulers, the competition had to be killed off first. So this evil son -- Abimelech -- went to his mother's house in Shechem, undertook a bit of public relations work, and then he went to his father's house in Ophrah. Then, together with his mother's brethren, Abimelech had the seventy sons of Gideon killed, save for Jotham. In this fashion, he became king over Shechem. However, the Lord saw Abimelech's wicked deeds, as He always does. Consider the following verses:

". . . behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."

Numbers 32:23b, KJV

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings."

Job 34:21, KJV

"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."

Psalms 69:5, KJV

"Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance."

Psalms 90:8, KJV

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Proverbs 15:3, KJV

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD."

Jeremiah 23:24, KJV

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him."

Daniel 2:22, KJV

". . . Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad."

Mark 4:21b-22, KJV

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

Luke 12:2, KJV

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Hebrews 4:13, KJV

It should be evident to you then that God had Abimelech's number. As a result, after having ruled in Shechem for a period of three years, the people turned against wicked Abimelech. While he was eventually able to defeat them, it was another story when it came to the people of Thebez. As Abimelech's army drew near to the city, all of the people rushed to the top of a great tower, hoping that they would be safe. Abimelech's plan was to burn it down, just as he had done with the tower in Shechem. However, God had other plans. As had occurred with Sisera, the Lord was about to humble and destroy Abimelech through the hand of a single woman, as we discover through these verses:

"And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire. And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull. Then he called hastily unto the young man his armourbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died. And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place. Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren: And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal."

Judges 9:52-57, KJV

Thus, once again the Biblical axiom came to pass, as we see by the following verses:

"Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."

Job 4:8, KJV

"He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."

Psalms 7:15-16, KJV

"They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah."

Psalms 57:6, KJV

"Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him."

Proverbs 26:27, KJV

"He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him."

Ecclesiastes 10:8, KJV

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Galatians 6:7-9, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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WOMEN SHEPHERDS AND PASTORS: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE PT 2

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Story Of Queen Esther And King Ahasuerus, Summoned Before The King, Rebellious Queen Vashti, Pride Humility Submissiveness, Women Are To Be Submissive To Their Husbands, Danger Of Pride And Reward Of Humility, Biblical Mandates Regarding Christian Marriage, Ancient Israel's Male Leadership, Biblical Examples Where God Chooses Men For Spiritual And Leadership Positions, God Hasn't Changed, Women Are In Supportive Roles, Neither Male Nor Female Doctrine, Contradiction In The Scriptures Or A Misunderstanding On Our Part?, Context Of Epistle To The Corinthians And Epistle To The Galatians, Women Keep Silence

Leaving behind wicked Abimelech, let's move on to the story of Queen Esther. Regarding Esther -- whose Hebrew name was Hadassah, which means "myrtle" -- we discover that while a lot of Christians and Jews like to highly exalt this heroine of the ancient Israelites, and while the Lord did in fact greatly use her to save her people, the point still remains that even though she was queen over an empire, nevertheless, Esther was still required to be subservient to the Persian king, Ahasuerus. As I also discuss in the series entitled "The Seven Heads", some scholars believe that the Ahasuerus of the Scriptures was actually Xerxes.

At any rate, Queen Esther -- whose English name is derived from the false Babylonian goddess Ishtar, meaning "star", and from which we also get the name Easter -- risked being killed if she dared to enter into the presence of the king without his express permission, which was symbolized by his holding out the golden sceptre. Consider the following set of verses which verify this point:

"Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai; All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days."

Esther 4:10-11, KJV

"Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre."

Esther 5:1-2, KJV

"And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews. Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king,"

Esther 8:3-4, KJV

We need to remember that the primary reason why Esther was chosen to be the new queen, aside from the fact that it was obviously God's Will, was because the previous queen -- that is, Vashti -- had humiliated Ahasuerus by refusing to appear before him after she had been summoned. Greatly angered by Vashti's blatant rebellion, the king then passed an edict which was to be obeyed throughout his empire; that is, from India to Ethiopia. What were the terms of that particular edict? Consider the following verses:

"And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small. And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan: For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that it should be published according to the language of every people."

Esther 1:20-22, KJV

It becomes evident then that the story of Queen Esther is not just a lesson in bravery, love and self-sacrifice, but is likewise a lesson in humility, and it carries the strong message that all women are supposed to remain submissive to their husbands, in spite of whatever his lot may be in life. Please notice that we are told "both to great and small." In

other words, a man's particular social status does not in any way diminish the requirement that his wife should remain submissive to him. Ladies, if you are with a husband, it is your duty to respect him, obey him, and submit to him. Some of you liberal-minded girls may find that hard to swallow. However, as we will see again in just a moment, this is in fact the Biblical mandate for Christian couples.

While this is personal speculation on my part, perhaps it was because of Esther's humility and obedience to her Uncle Mordecai, that the Lord knew that He could trust her. Thus, He honoured Esther with the great responsibility of being queen over the entire Persian Empire. On the other hand, as I point out in a number of other articles, it is when we foolishly choose to yield to our sinful pride, that we may end up suffering a severe demotion; as was the case with Queen Vashti. The Scriptures actually contain quite a few admonitions regarding the danger of pride, and the rewards of remaining humble. Consider the following examples:

"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts."  
Psalm 10:4, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."  
Proverbs 8:13, KJV

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom."  
Proverbs 11:2, KJV

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."  
Proverbs 13:10, KJV

"In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them."  
Proverbs 14:3, KJV

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility."  
Proverbs 15:33, KJV

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."

Proverbs 16:18-19, KJV

"A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit."

Proverbs 29:23, KJV

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:1-4, KJV

"And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Luke 14:7-11, KJV

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble . . . Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

James 4:6, 10, KJV

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty



hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

1 Peter 5:5-6, KJV

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:16, KJV

To reiterate my earlier point, the Bible makes it very clear that women are supposed to remain spiritually and physically submissive to their God-fearing husbands; because just as Christ is the Head of the Church, the husband is likewise the spiritual head of his own family. Thus, in honoring her husband, a woman is also honoring Christ as well. Of course, at the same time, husbands are also supposed to love their wives. Consider the following verses that are found in the writings of the Apostles:

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Ephesians 5:21-33, KJV

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

## Colossians 3:17-19, KJV

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

1 Timothy 2:9-14, KJV

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:"

1 Peter 3:1-5, KJV

"Have we not POWER TO LEAD about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?"

1 Corinthians 9:5, KJV

For any Christian woman to deny the truth that is plainly revealed in the previous set of verses is to be in open rebellion against God's ordained plan for His Church. The previous verses serve as our outline and guide, and also guarantee harmony and unity in Christian relationships. It is only when these Scriptural mandates are not honored, and are in fact abrogated, that we find ourselves in the midst of a broken marriage relationship. At the same time, it is by returning to and abiding by these very same Biblical admonitions, that a marriage relationship can be healed and restored. Pride divides and kills, while humility unites and brings alive.

As we have now seen, a few rare exceptions aside, the pages of the Old Testament reveal that, for the most part, the

leaders of ancient Israelite society were all men. This can be applied to the kings of Israel, the Prophets of Israel, and the Levitical priesthood as well. At the same time, the women of Israel were supposed to remain respectful to, and submissive to, their husbands. Being as Christianity was an offshoot of the religion of the Jews, these same principles were later applied to the Christian Church as well. Thus, it seems evident to me that God purposely chose men for leaders in these different areas of Israelite society, as an earthly reflection of the way that things are likewise run in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Turning our attention to the New Testament, insofar as the Christian Church was concerned, it is plain to see that the position of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher, Deacon and other administrative positions were all filled by men and not by women. That being the case, what justification can be made for delegating authority and leadership roles to women in the modern Church? There appears to be no scriptural precedent for this in the New Testament. Allow me to share a few more verses of Scripture with you in order to validate this particular point. I will offer some personal commentary afterwards:

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

1 Corinthians 12:4-11, KJV

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?"

1 Corinthians 12:27-30, KJV

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"

Ephesians 4:11-13, KJV

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Acts 13:1-2, KJV

In the previous verses, it is plain to see that the various positions of spiritual and administrative authority were all filled by men. The Apostle Paul specifically states several times "every man", and not "every woman and every man". Now, some people may take a legalistic approach and suggest that the original Greek word that is used in those verses -- that is, "hekastos" -- also means "every one", and thus could be stretched so that it includes women. However, if we simply take the time to study the Scriptures thoroughly, and see how the Lord and His followers operated, it is rather easy to conclude that the phrase "every man" means precisely that. That is, every man.

As I noted in part one, it is after describing the various positions within the Church body, that in 1 Corinthians 14, the Apostle Paul plainly informs his readers that women are supposed to keep silent in the Church. There is absolutely no way then that they can fulfill any of these spiritual or leadership responsibilities if they are to keep silent. Now, I realize that some modernists like to accuse Paul of being old-fashioned. "We are living in modern times" they claim. "Things have changed; the Church has changed; the Church has been liberated"; and on and on they go with their misguided assertions. Yes, sadly, the Church has changed so much, that there are now gay and female priests, and some are going so far as to bless gay and lesbian relationships! Perhaps these modern priests and priestesses would like to explain the following verses to me. Obviously, they must understand them

a lot differently than I do:

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Hebrews 13:8, KJV

"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Malachi 3:6, KJV

As far as I am concerned, the way God designed the Church to be run during the First Century, is the same way He expects it to be run today. The people who say otherwise, such as these liberal thinkers who accuse the Apostle Paul of being a woman-hater, are simply trying to void Paul's words, in order to validate their erroneous interpretations of the Scriptures. They are basically saying that Paul was overly legalistic and wrong. I disagree with them wholeheartedly; and do you know why? Quite plainly, because the practice of choosing men for all of these positions did not begin with Paul. Even before Paul came along, the brethren knew that the Lord expected them to choose men to fill the various spiritual and leadership positions, because this is the example that Jesus set Himself.

The Lord Himself specifically chose Twelve Men to carry on His Work; and women such as the Marys, Martha, Joanna and Susanna only served in supportive roles. This is not meant to belittle them or minimize their importance by any means. We all know that following His Resurrection, some of these women were the very first ones to see Jesus. So it is quite obvious that He loved them dearly. Yet they knew their place in God's order of things, and they accepted it gladly. In the four Gospels, women are always presented in a supportive role, such as we see in these verses:

"And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance."

Luke 8:1-3, KJV

In these verses, we see a clear division between The Twelve, and the other women, who it seems helped to provide some of

their needs. We see this same kind of division in the very first chapter of the Book of Acts when they were gathered in the Upper Room, prior to the day of Pentecost. Notice that protocol seems to be kept here. The Eleven are named first; followed by the other women; who are then followed by Mary, Jesus' mother; and finally, by Jesus' other brethren. It is my belief that the phrase "with his brethren" may possibly be a reference to the Lord's biological brothers; some of whom apparently believed in Him after their initial doubts had passed. Consider these two verses:

"And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

Acts 1:13-14, KJV

In the Book of the Acts, we also discover that the traitor Judas Iscariot was likewise replaced by another man named Matthias, so that the Original Twelve could be maintained, as we can determine by the following verses:

"And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

Acts 1:23-26, KJV

When a problem arose in Acts chapter six between the Hebrew and Greek Disciples, regarding the daily serving of tables, notice again that the Apostles clearly tell the Disciples to choose seven men amongst them to resolve the matter:

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report,

full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."  
Acts 6:1-6, KJV

Now, if we consider that this problem dealt with the serving of food and the setting of tables, which is normally viewed as being a woman's job, one would think that if the early Disciples were of the belief that it was alright for women to hold positions of responsibility, then surely some women would have been chosen to resolve this problem. Yet none are chosen. They are all men. In my mind, this again points to the fact that in the First Century Church, women were not to hold any kind of spiritual positions or leadership positions in which decision-making was involved. What other reason can be offered to explain why women were not chosen to resolve what was obviously a woman-related job?

Moving on, as I point out in "Where Are the First Century Churches?", when bishops were selected for various Churches in the New Testament, they were also men. Specifically, in the Epistles of Paul, we find Titus and Timothy mentioned as being two of the first bishops. Consider these verses:

"The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. [The second [epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the Church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.]]"  
2 Timothy 4:22, KJV

"All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen. (It was written to Titus, ordained the first bishop of the Church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.)"  
Titus 3:15, KJV

So from the time that Jesus chose His Original Twelve, we discover over and over again, that only men were chosen to fill the various positions of spiritual and administrative responsibility. We read of Apollos, Barnabas, John Mark, Justus, Luke, Matthias, Nicanor, Nicolas, Parmenas, Philip,

Prochorus, Silas, Stephen, Timon, Timothy, Titus and others as well. They were all male leaders in the First Century Church, chosen, directed by, and filled with God's Holy Spirit. Women clearly played a secondary role.

A final argument which some offended women pastors, liberals and legalists might try to use is this: "Well, doesn't Paul state that there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus? And doesn't that mean that God makes no difference between us when it comes to the administration of the Church?". To be honest, I believe that I have already provided sufficient Scriptural evidence to show that the people who teach this doctrine are utterly wrong. But let us look at the verse:

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 3:28, KJV

Now, if for the sake of argument we accept the previous interpretation of this verse, then we force ourselves to admit that not only is the Apostle Paul contradicting himself -- and contradicting what God has ordained since the Book of Genesis -- but it also forces us to conclude that the First Century Church must have been wrong. In other words, it was really out of the Spirit when they chose all men to head the various Churches and bishoprics. Obviously, Paul, a man who had at least several direct, close, personal encounters with the Resurrected Christ, and who was taught the Word by Jesus Christ Himself, is not going to write one Epistle to one church stating that women are to be quiet in the church, and submit to their husbands, and then turn around and tell the Galatian church that there is no difference between men and women in God's eyes. Therefore, there must be something wrong with the aforementioned doctrine.

As I have stated a number of times before, when we come across a seeming contradiction in the Bible, it usually lies in our own understanding of what we are reading. The very same holds true in this case. The themes addressed in the Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Galatians are very different. Instead of taking the previous single verse, and applying a twisted interpretation to it, in order to support the women pastors doctrine, we need to read the surrounding verses and chapters, in order to place Galatians 3:28 in its proper context. If we do that, we quickly see that in this Epistle, Paul is specifically dealing with the issues of



bondage to the Law, and the availability of Salvation to all men. That is the background for the above verse; and that is what Paul means when he states that there is neither male nor female in Christ. In other words, as I clearly point out in articles such as "Is the Message of Salvation Meant for All Men?", when Jesus died on the Cross, He opened the way to Salvation for all men everywhere; regardless of gender, or national origin. That is why He said the following in the Gospel of John:

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

John 12:32, KJV

On the other hand, if we go to Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, and read the three chapters which come before the verse where he tells women to keep silent in the Church, we discover that they have absolutely nothing to do with the topic of Salvation. What they actually do deal with, is the administration of the Church, and the distribution of Spiritual Gifts and ministries within the Church Body. That is when Paul writes the following verses, which we examined earlier in this series:

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

1 Corinthians 14:34-35, KJV

Please go to part three for the conclusion of this series.

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WOMEN SHEPHERDS AND PASTORS: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE PT 3

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Sin In The Garden Of Eden, Eve's Punishment, Old Testament And New Testament Connection, Motivation Behind The Apostle Paul's Words, Beware Of The Jezebel Spirit, Miriam Murmurs Against Moses, Closing Remarks, BBB Reading Resources List

One might ask "Why is Paul being so dogmatic about this? Why does the Lord emphasize men assuming all of these various leadership roles? Why are women required to take the lower seat to men?". As I mentioned earlier, it all goes back to the Book of Genesis and the fall of man. If we really study what occurred there, we discover that Paul hasn't created a new doctrine due to some hidden dislike for women. He isn't a woman-hater as some feminists and others modern liberals accuse him of being. The fact of the matter is, that since the Garden of Eden, women being subservient to men is the way the Lord has ordained things to be due to Eve's guilt in causing the First Pair to fall from grace.

Think about this for a moment. God created Eve from Adam's rib. Some theologians speculate that the reason why the Lord did this, was to remind Adam that Eve was his partner and equal. He created her from a place close to Adam's heart so that Adam would love and cherish her as his own flesh. Now, whether or not this is true, I really don't know. What I do know, is that the minute Eve was given an opportunity to make a major decision on her own, she made a very serious mistake. That mistake not only destroyed the harmonious relationship which the Lord had with His Creation, but it also resulted in the guilt of sin -- which John tells us is the transgression, or breaking, of the Law -- being passed to all men. Let's not forget that it was Eve who sinned first; and then she induced Adam to disobey God as well. As if this wasn't already bad enough, as I explain in other articles, then they each tried to blame someone else. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve then blamed the serpent. Consider the following verses:

And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Genesis 3:11-13, KJV

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"

Romans 5:12, KJV

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

1 John 3:4, KJV

So because Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord's Word, because they broke His Law, they had to be punished. We already know what the major consequence of their disobedience was. So let me draw your attention to Eve's part of the punishment. As you will see, it is directly related to the reason regarding why women are to remain submissive to men, and be silent in the Church. Consider this verse:

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

Genesis 3:16, KJV

In short, we can theorize that perhaps God did create Adam and Eve as equals, but Eve soon lost her right to be an equal to Adam when she caused the pair to fall from grace. The Lord very clearly tells her "he shall rule over thee". The fact that the Lord would even tell her that this is to be a part of her punishment, offers us a hint that perhaps it wasn't that way before she made her fateful decision. The Lord basically told Eve, "Look, I gave you everything you could possibly need to keep you happy. All I asked was that you refrain from touching the Two Trees in the midst of the Garden. I gave you a fair chance to prove yourself, but you failed me. Now I can no longer trust you the same. From now on, Adam is the boss. He has final say in all matters. He makes the decisions."

That is the gist of the matter; and that is why from Genesis all the way to the Book of Revelation, women normally play only supportive roles in the Lord's Church. This can clearly be seen throughout Jewish society of the Old Testament where we find male Patriarchs, male Prophets, male kings, and a male priesthood. This same arrangement continued in the New Testament Church which was founded by a male Jew and His

twelve male Jewish followers. They were all following the plan that was first laid down in the Book of Genesis. In Genesis, we find the first woman sinning and leading a man astray. Ironically, in the final Book -- Revelation, or the Apocalypse -- we likewise find one of the very last women mentioned -- that is, the evil, false prophetess Jezebel -- also sinning and leading the Lord's children astray. Then, of course, we also have the wicked, false bride represented by Babylon the Great.

If you are still in doubt that the sin of Eden, and Eve's punishment, are the primary reasons for male dominance in the Lord's Church, I believe that the following verses will clearly show that four thousand years after Eden, this is still how the First Century Disciples thought and believed. In his first Epistle to Timothy, who was his dearly beloved son in the faith, the Apostle Paul wrote the following:

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

1 Timothy 2:11-14, KJV

While Paul first mentions the silence rule in his Epistle to the Corinthians, it isn't until this letter to Timothy, that we fully understand why he mandated such a rule. As we saw earlier, Timothy became one of the first Bishops of the New Testament Church. So perhaps Paul wanted to make sure that Timothy really understood what the Lord required of him as a leader in the young Church. Doctrinal purity was extremely important.

Paul was not alone in this belief concerning women. Because as I have already pointed out, even before we are introduced to him in the Book of Acts, we already find a New Testament Church which is clearly dominated by all male figures. So in conclusion, if we obey God's Word, and abide by the example which was given to us by our Spirit-led brethren of the First Century, we can only conclude that any modern church which purposely employs a woman as its pastor or priest, is not truly following the Scriptural Plan that was laid down by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. Said church is certainly not following the Biblical blueprint.

I would also add that any woman who chooses to accept such a

leadership position, due to pride, or for any other reason, just might possibly be another Jezebel, and she would be in rebellion against the Lord's Word, just as evil Jezebel of the Apocalypse was. In fact, as I also point out in "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth" and other articles, the original Queen Jezebel of the Old Testament was likewise in rebellion against the Lord and even tried to kill His Prophet, Elijah. Lastly, let us also not forget the punishment of Miriam, who murmured against the leadership of her brother Moses, and who also claimed to be a prophetess, as we can determine by the following verses:

"And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. And the LORD said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again."

Numbers 12:1-15, KJV

So don't you be another Miriam, or a Jezebel. Stay submitted to the Lord and obedient to His Word. Obey your husband, and respect those people who may have spiritual authority over you in your local church, congregation or fellowship. God will bless you for it in the end; just as He apparently did with humble Queen Esther.

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. I hope that you have found it informative, and I pray that it has been a blessing and an inspiration in your life. If you have enjoyed reading this series, please consider sharing its URL with your online friends. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would also appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to this series, and which are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server:

Churchianity or Christianity: Which Do You Practice?  
Is the Message of Salvation Meant for All Men?  
Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth  
The Fruits of Disobedience  
The Seven Heads  
Where Are the First Century Churches?

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