

OPEN YOUR BIBLE • BIBLE STUDIES

Women of the Bible

Prophets, Judges, Teachers, Disciples - and the Passages Used to Silence Them

A printable companion for working through the study with your own Bible open.

READ • OBSERVE • ANSWER • COMPARE

Then let Scripture have the last word.

Name: _____

Date started: _____

Study completed: _____

Don't take my word for it - Open your Bible.

OpenYourBible.org

Before You Study

Set down the conclusion for a moment. Record where you are starting.

What have I been taught about women teaching, leading, prophesying, or speaking in the assembly?

What do I currently believe?

Which verses or teachings most shaped that belief?

What questions am I bringing to Scripture?

STUDY HABIT: Answer from the passage before reading commentary or checking someone else's conclusion.

As you work, mark each observation as one of three things:

TEXT The passage explicitly says it.

INFERENCE The conclusion may follow, but the words are not directly stated.

TRADITION I was taught this, but I still need to locate it in the text.

I. Creation: Start Before the Argument

Genesis gives us our first boundaries for what we may claim about women.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Genesis 1:26-28

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Who is made in the image of Elohim?

Who receives the blessing to be fruitful and multiply?

Who receives dominion over the living creatures? Does the passage give the man dominion over the woman?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Genesis 2:18-25

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What does Yehovah say is "not good"?

What problem is the woman created to answer?

WORD STUDY: עֵזֶר (ezer) - "help/helper". Look at Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7; Psalm 33:20; Psalm 70:5; Psalm 121:1-2.

Who is described as help/helper in some of those passages?

Does the word ezer itself mean inferior, servant, or lesser human? What can the word actually prove?

Do not use one Hebrew word to settle every later question. Record only what the evidence supports.

2. Women Speaking for Yehovah

Collect the evidence before interpreting it.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Exodus 15:20-21 • Micah 6:4

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What title does Scripture give Miriam? What does Micah 6:4 say about whom Yehovah sent before Israel?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Judges 4:1-10 • Judges 5

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

How is Deborah introduced? Write the exact descriptions from the text.

Who comes to Deborah, and why? Who communicates Yehovah's command to Barak?

Find the verse that says Deborah led because no qualified man was available. Did you find one?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 2 Kings 22:8-20 • 2 Chronicles 34:22-28

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Whom do the king's officials consult? What title does Scripture give her?

Is Huldah merely offering personal advice, or does the narrative present her words as a message from Yehovah?

3. Wisdom, Correction, and Learning

Ask what Scripture actually permits women to say - and men to receive.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE 1 Samuel 25

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What is David preparing to do? What does Abigail say about vengeance, bloodguilt, Yehovah, and David's future?

How does David respond to Abigail's counsel? Does he change course?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Proverbs 1:8 • Proverbs 6:20 • Proverbs 31:1-9

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Whose instruction is the son told not to forsake? Who teaches King Lemuel, and what subjects does she address?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Luke 10:38-42

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What does Mary choose to do? When Martha objects, whose choice does Yeshua defend?

If a theology makes women afraid to study deeply or reach biblical conclusions, how does that compare with this scene?

4. Yeshua, Witness, and the Spirit

Watch what women actually do around Messiah and in Acts.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Luke 8:1-3

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Which women does Luke name? What role do they play in the traveling ministry?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE John 4:1-42

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

List at least five theological subjects Yeshua discusses with the Samaritan woman.

What does she do after speaking with Yeshua? What effect does her testimony have?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE John 20:11-18 • Matthew 28:1-10

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Who carries resurrection news? To whom are they sent?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Joel 2:28-29 • Acts 2:14-21 • Acts 21:8-9

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Which male AND female groups receive the Spirit? What are Philip's daughters doing?

5. Priscilla and the Man Who Knew Scripture

Let Acts define the scene before using it to prove a larger system.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Acts 18:24-28

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Describe Apollos using Luke's own words. What does he already know and do well?

What is incomplete in his understanding?

Who hears him? Who takes him aside? Who explains the way of God more accurately?

What happens to Apollos afterward?

KEEP THE CATEGORIES STRAIGHT: The text shows Priscilla participating in instruction. It does not call her an elder or pastor.

Can Acts 18 support the absolute claim, "A woman may never teach a man anything about Scripture"? Explain from the text.

6. Romans 16 Evidence Table

Before using Paul to silence women, meet the women Paul actually names.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE Romans 16:1-16 • Philippians 4:2-3

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Woman	Passage	What Paul Calls/Says	What She Does / Your Observation
Phoebe	Romans 16:1-2		
Prisca/Priscilla	Romans 16:3-5		
Mary	Romans 16:6		
Junia	Romans 16:7		
Tryphaena	Romans 16:12		
Tryphosa	Romans 16:12		
Persis	Romans 16:12		
Euodia & Syntyche	Philippians 4:2-3		

After filling the table, answer:
Does Paul describe women primarily as passive spectators or as active participants/coworkers? Use his own vocabulary.

7. I Corinthians 11 and 14

Do not let one passage erase another passage in the same letter.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE I Corinthians 11:2-16

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

In verse 5, what two activities does Paul describe a woman doing?

What issue is Paul regulating around those activities?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE I Corinthians 14:26-40

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What is the overall concern of the section - chaos, edification, order, turn-taking, interpretation, prophecy?

Who is told to be silent in verses 27-28?

Who must yield/be silent in verses 29-30?

Who is told to be silent in verses 34-35, and what are they told to do at home?

THE INTERPRETIVE TASK: Whatever 14:34-35 means must account for women praying and prophesying in 11:5.

Can "be silent" mean absolute female silence under every circumstance? Explain how your answer accounts for chapter 11.

8. I Timothy 2: Read the Whole Problem

Do not begin at verse 12. Start with the letter.

OPEN YOUR BIBLE I Timothy 1:1-11

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What problems involving teaching, myths, speculation, and Torah are already present in Ephesus?

OPEN YOUR BIBLE I Timothy 2:1-15

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

What does verse 11 actually command a woman to do?

In verse 12, what two activities are connected in the restriction?

WORD STUDY: αὐθεντέω (authentēō) - compare several translations and reputable lexicons.

Translation 1

Translation 2

Translation 3

Lexicon notes

OPEN YOUR BIBLE I Timothy 2:13-15

Read the passage before answering. Do not read ahead.

Where does Paul go for his rationale - Ephesus, Artemis, Roman custom, or Genesis?

What does verse 15 add to the interpretive difficulty? Compare translations and write what you still need to understand.

What can authentēō NOT prove by itself without syntax and context?

9. Test the Claims

A doctrine should survive every relevant passage, not just its favorite verse.

CLAIM: A woman may never teach a man spiritual truth.

TEST AGAINST: Proverbs 31:1-9 • 1 Samuel 25 • Acts 18:24-28

Does the claim survive exactly as stated? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ It needs qualification. Explain:

CLAIM: Women should never speak in a gathered assembly.

TEST AGAINST: Joel 2:28-29 • Acts 2:16-18 • 1 Corinthians 11:5 • 14:34-35

Does the claim survive exactly as stated? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ It needs qualification. Explain:

CLAIM: Women never exercised meaningful spiritual authority over men.

TEST AGAINST: Judges 4-5 • 2 Kings 22:11-20

Does the claim survive exactly as stated? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ It needs qualification. Explain:

CLAIM: Because women did important things, no sex-specific distinctions remain.

TEST AGAINST: 1 Timothy 2:11-15 • 1 Timothy 3:1-7 • Titus 1:5-9

Does the claim survive exactly as stated? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ It needs qualification. Explain:

10. Build the Evidence Map

Separate what is clear from what still requires interpretation.

WHAT SCRIPTURE CLEARLY SHOWS

Write only observations you can point to directly in the passages.

WHAT SCRIPTURE CLEARLY RESTRICTS

Write the restriction as narrowly as the actual text states it.

WHAT STILL REQUIRES INTERPRETATION

List questions where context, syntax, office, setting, or scope remain debated.

II. My Conclusion

Write what the evidence led you to before rereading anyone else's conclusion.

Does Scripture depict women speaking for Yehovah? List examples and references.

Does Scripture depict women giving spiritual wisdom or instruction to men? List examples.

What restrictions concerning women, teaching, speech, or authority did you actually find?

Does Scripture support the idea that every man has spiritual authority over every woman merely because he is male? What passage would prove that?

What do I currently believe Scripture teaches about women and congregational leadership?

It is acceptable to write, "I am not sure yet." Uncertainty can be the beginning of better study, not the failure of it.

12. After the Study

Return to where you started. Notice what Scripture changed - or clarified.

Did anything I believed change?

What became clearer?

What am I still unsure about?

Which passage had the greatest effect on my conclusion, and why?

What do I want to study next?

My one-sentence takeaway:

Don't take my word for it - Open your Bible.

Extra space for cross-references, questions, observations, and things you want to chase later.

Because one page of notes was never going to be enough.