



WOMEN IN THE HEBREW TESTAMENT A STUDY

Women of the Hebrew Testament is a study of some of the most famous and infamous women in the biblical history. We will explore the lives, trials and contribution of women such as Bathsheba, Deborah, Esther (and Vashti), Hagar (and Sarah), Hannah, Leah (and Rachel) Rahab, Naomi and Ruth, Tamar, and Ziporah (and Miriam).

Who are they? What is their story? How have they shaped our understanding of women (or have they)? And so many more questions to ask.

Our task is to make the journey alongside the biblical character, to be her companion in a literary and hermeneutical or interpretive adventure. Welcome to the journey, may we be challenged and changed by these remarkable women of faith.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Lets start with the stories of creation and what they tell us about human kind and genders.

Read each creation story -

First account Genesis 1:1 - 2:4a

Second Account Genesis 2:4b - 2:25

Record your observations of the questions below

How long did creation take?
1 st Creation story
2 nd Creation Story

Are there different depictions, different starting points?
1 st Creation story

2 nd Creation Story

Take note of the order of events - do they differ?
1 st Creation story
2 nd Creation Story

Are different views of God presented - are they compatible?
1 st Creation story
2 nd Creation Story

Note the differences in creating human beings and does this lend itself to different or similar views of humanity? Consider specifically - equity.
1 st Creation story
2 nd Creation Story

A LITTLE LANGUAGE

I think the Creation stories have important things to say to us about God, God's intentions for our lives and about human kind. Even in the Hebrew language we find clues. The Hebrew word *adam* is a neutral term meaning "human," not specifically a man or male figure. In the original Hebrew text, all references to Adam are neutral until God takes some of Adam's flesh and makes a woman: *ishah*, in Hebrew. At this point in the biblical account (and not before) is Adma referred to as *ish* or 'man'. Scholars have pointed to the literary intertwinement of the Hebrew words for Man and Woman - To make something feminine in Hebrew the suffix 'ah' is added. So *ish*, becomes *ishah* - man becomes woman. This literary intertwinement implies that male and female cannot define themselves fully human without the other. Of course this presents considerable difficulty for the modern reader who understands the complexity of humankind is found in much more than man and women, male and female. What is (in my opinion) clearly defined is that in God's design, is that the whole of the delightful complexity of humanity together is ultimately reflect the image of God. We need each other.

אִשָּׁה
אִישׁ

Adam exclaimed, "This time, this is the one! Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh!
Now, she will be Woman (ishah), and I will be Man(ish), because we are of one flesh!"
This is why people leave their parents and become bonded to one another, and the
two become one flesh.
(Genesis 2:23,24 Inclusive Bible)

נְקִיבָה Female, feminine gender, woman

גַּלְשׁ Concupine, consort, paramour, woman, wife, mistress

אִשָּׁה woman, wife, spouse, old woman, female, hen

NOW LETS TALK ABOUT THE WOMEN

Women ~ the leaders! (Sunday, May 24, 2020)

Bathsheba	2 Samuel 11:1-12:24
Deborah	Judges chapters 4 and 5
Esther (Vashti)	Esther the book

Women ~ the barren ~ the children ~ the cost!

Sarah and Hagar	Genesis: chapter 16; 17; 18:1-15; 21:1-21
Hannah	1 Samuel 1:1-2:21
Leah and Rachel	Genesis: chapter 29; 30:1-23; 31:1-21

Women ~ the violence

Rahab Joshua chapter 2
Tamar Genesis chapter 38
Woman of Judges 19 Judges chapter 19

Women ~ the foreigner

Naomi and Ruth Ruth the whole book
Zipporah Exodus: chapter 2; 4:18-31; chapter 18