

119

GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Answering Atheists: Is the Bible Misogynistic?

TEACHING SUMMARY

This teaching responds to the claim that the Bible treats women as inferior to men. Its starting point is Genesis 1:27, which describes both male and female as created in God's image. It presents this shared identity as the foundation for equal human worth.

The creation of Eve and the establishment of marriage develop this argument. The teaching explains tselá as side and understands the account as emphasizing shared human nature. It also explains that the word ezer, or helper, does not by itself indicate an inferior position.

The teaching distinguishes equality of value from debates about particular roles in family and ministry. It does not attempt to settle those debates. Instead, it argues that differing views on roles do not require believing that one sex has less dignity than the other.

Examples of women throughout Scripture illustrate their importance in God's purposes. The teaching discusses Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, and other women of faith, highlighting Rebekah's choice to go with Abraham's servant and the courage and leadership of women such as Deborah and Esther.

The commandments to honor both parents and the Torah's treatment of moral responsibility are presented as further evidence. The teaching contrasts shared accountability for adultery with the unequal standards it identifies in other ancient law codes. It also emphasizes women's place in the resurrection accounts.

The conclusion affirms women's dignity, partnership, and shared moral responsibility. Difficult passages are acknowledged, but the teaching argues that they should be read in light of this wider biblical picture. Its closing argument connects objective human value and moral judgment to the biblical worldview.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Male and female are both created in God's image.
- The creation of Eve is presented as affirming shared human nature.
- Marriage is described as a committed covenant relationship.
- The word helper does not inherently imply inferiority.
- The teaching distinguishes equal worth from questions about ministry roles.
- The commandment gives honor to both father and mother.
- Rebekah's willingness to go is emphasized in the marriage account.
- Women are portrayed as important participants in God's purposes.
- The Torah is presented as assigning shared moral responsibility.
- Women's role in discovering the empty tomb supports the teaching's argument.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. Genesis says both male and female are made in God's _____.
2. The commandment says to honor father and _____.
3. The woman who chose to travel to marry Isaac was _____.
4. The teaching identifies _____ as a judge, prophetess, and leader of Israel.
5. The book emphasizing the courage of a woman who helped save the Jewish people is _____.
6. The first followers to discover Yeshua's empty tomb were _____.

Challenging

1. The Hebrew word translated rib and explained as side is _____.
2. The Hebrew word discussed for helper is _____.
3. Psalm 33:20 describes the Lord as our help and our _____.
4. The teaching identifies _____ as an advisor to King Josiah.
5. The Torah treats adultery primarily as a moral crime against _____.
6. The teaching describes marriage as a committed _____ relationship.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the creation account establish the teaching's argument about the worth of women?
2. Why does the teaching say that the word helper does not imply inferiority?
3. How does the command to honor both parents contribute to the argument?
4. What does the teaching emphasize about Rebekah's own decision in Genesis 24?
5. How do the examples of women's faith and leadership support the wider biblical picture presented here?
6. Why does the teaching distinguish shared moral responsibility from treating adultery as a property offense?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. image
2. mother
3. Rebekah
4. Deborah
5. Esther
6. women

Challenging

1. tsela
2. ezer
3. shield
4. Huldah
5. God
6. covenant