

For if outwardly they were ruled over by their enemy, what was the state of government within? Committed to the hands of a woman! At the outset, as the Word of God teaches us, the oversight of the church locally was committed to elders, appointed for this purpose by the apostles or their delegates, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The order of the assembly, in that which pertained to it locally, fell to their charge. Dropping for a moment man's imitation of this divine institution, would there be any exaggeration in saying that the tendency to entrust government, wholly or partially, into the hands of women is becoming increasingly marked amongst the sects of Christendom in the present day? It is even boasted of, and Christians go so far as to state and seek to prove that such a condition of things is of God, and shews the flourishing state of the church. They quote Deborah in favour of their opinion, but let us see what she was like.

Deborah was a remarkable woman, a woman of faith, one deeply impressed with the humiliating condition of the people of God. She sees that it would be to the *shame* of the leaders in Israel, that God should entrust a post of public activity to a woman in their midst. She says to Barak: "I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding the journey that thou takest *shall not be for thine honour, for* Jehovah shall sell Sisera into the hand of a *woman*." (v. 9.) But, in all her exercise of authority for God, to the confusion of this people