

Women's Speaking Justified

By Margaret Fell (1666)

Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures, All such as speak by the Spirit and Power of the Lord Jesus.

And how Women were the first that Preached the Tidings of the Resurrection of Jesus, and were sent by Christ's own Command, before he Ascended to the Father, John 20. 17.

Whereas it hath been an Objection in the Minds of many, and several times hath been objected by the Clergy, or Ministers and others, against Women's speaking in the Church; and so consequently may be taken, that they are condemned for meddling in the things of God: The ground of which Objection is taken from the Apostle's Words, which he writ in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, Chap. 14. Vers. 34, 35. And also what he writ to *Timothy* in the first Epistle, Chap. 2. Vers. 11, 12. But how far they wrong the Apostle's Intentions in these Scriptures, we shall shew clearly when we come to them in their course and order. But first let me lay down how God himself hath manifested his Will and Mind concerning Women, and unto women.

And first, when *God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he them, Male and Female; and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply: And God said, Behold, I have given you of every Herb, &c. Gen. 1.* Here God joyns them together in his own Image, and makes no such Distinctions and Differences as Men do; for though they be weak, he is strong; and as he said to the Apostle, *His Grace is sufficient, and his Strength is made manifest in Weakness, 2 Cor. 12. 9.* And such hath the Lord chosen, even *the weak things of the World, to confound the things which are mighty; and things which are despised, hath God chosen, to bring to nought things that are, 1 Cor. 1.* And God hath put no such difference between the Male and Female, as Men would make.

It is true, The Serpent, that was more subtle than any other Beast of the Field, came unto the Woman with his Temptations, and with a Lye; his Subtlety discerning her to be the weaker Vessel, or more inclinable to hearken to him, when he said, *If ye eat, your Eyes shall be opened;* and the Woman saw, *that the Fruit was good to make one wise:* There the Temptation got into her, and she did eat, and gave to her Husband, and he did eat also; and so they were both tempted into the Transgression and Disobedience; and therefore God said unto Adam, (who hid himself when he heard his Voice) *Hast thou eaten of the Tree, which I commanded thee that thou should'st not eat? And Adam said, The Woman which thou gavest me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat. And the Lord said unto the Woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the Woman said, The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* Here the Woman spoke the Truth unto the Lord. See what the Lord saith, ver. 15. after he had pronounced Sentence on the Serpent, *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel, Gen. 3.*

Let this Word of the Lord, which was from the beginning, stop the Mouths of all that oppose Women's Speaking in the Power of the Lord; for he hath put Enmity between the Woman and

the Serpent; and if the Seed of the Woman speak not, the Seed of the Serpent speaks; for God hath put Enmity between the two Seeds; and it is manifest, that those that speak against the Woman and her Seed's Speaking, speak out of the Envy of the old Serpent's Seed. And God hath fulfilled his Word and his Promise, *When the fulness of time was come, he sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons*, Gal. 4. 4, 5.

Moreover, the Lord is pleased, when he mentions his Church, to call her by the Name of Woman, by his Prophets, saying, *I have called thee as a Woman forsaken, and grieved in Spirit, and as a Wife of Youth*, Isai. 54. Again, *How long wilt thou go about, thou back-sliding Daughter? For the Lord hath created a new thing in the Earth, a Woman shall compass a Man*, Jer. 31. 22. And David, when he was speaking of Christ and his Church, he saith, *The King's Daughter is all glorious within, her Cloathing is of wrought Gold, she shall be brought unto the King; with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King's Pallace*, Psal. 45. And also King Solomon in his Song, where he speaks of Christ and his Church, where she is complaining and calling for Christ, he saith, *If thou knowest not, O thou fairest among Women, go thy way by the Footsteps of the Flock*, Cant. 1. 8. c. 5. 9. And John, when he saw the Wonder that was in Heaven, he saw *a Woman clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her feet, and upon her Head a Crown of twelve Stars; and there appeared another Wonder in Heaven, a great red Dragon stood ready to devour her Child*. Here appears the Envy of the Dragon, Rev. 12.

Thus much may prove, that the Church of Christ is represented as a Woman; and those that speak against this Woman's speaking, speak against the Church of Christ, and the Seed of the Woman, which Seed is Christ; that is to say, Those that speak against the Power of the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord speaking in a Woman, simply by reason of her Sex, or because she is a Woman, not regarding the Seed, and Spirit, and Power that speaks in her; such speak against Christ and his Church, and are of the Seed of the Serpent, wherein lodgeth Enmity. And as God the Father made no such difference in the first Creation, nor ever since between the Male and the Female, but always out of his Mercy and Loving-kindness, had regard unto the Weak. So also his Son, Christ Jesus, confirms the same thing; when *the Pharisees* came to him, and asked *him, if it were lawful for a Man to put away his Wife?* He answered and said unto *them, Have you not read, That he that made them in the beginning, made them Male and Female; and said, For this Cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and shall cleave unto his Wife, and they twain shall be one Flesh; wherefore they are no more twain, but one Flesh? What therefore God hath joyned together, let no Man put asunder*, Mat. 19.

Again, Christ Jesus, when he came to the *City of Samaria, where Jacob's Well* was, where the *Woman of Samaria* was, you may read in John 4. how he was pleased to preach the Everlasting Gospel to her; and when the Woman said unto *him, I know that when the Messiah cometh, (which is called Christ) when he cometh, he will tell us all things.* Jesus saith unto *her, I that speak unto thee am he.* Also he said unto *Martha, when she said, she knew that her Brother should rise again in the last day.* Jesus said unto *her, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet should he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth, shall never die. Believest thou this?* She answered, *Yea, Lord, I believe thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* Here she manifested her true and saving Faith, which few at that day believed so on *him*, John 11. 25, 26.

Also that Woman, that came unto Jesus with an Alabaster Box of very precious Ointment, and poured it on his Head as he sat at meat; it is manifest that this Woman knew more of the secret Power and Wisdom of God, than his Disciples did, who were filled with Indignation against her; and therefore Jesus saith, *Why do ye trouble the Woman, for she hath wrought a good Work upon me? Verily, I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole World, there shall also this that this Woman hath done, be told for a Memorial of her,* Mat. 26. Mark 14. 3. Luke saith farther, *She was a Sinner, and that she stood at his Feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his Feet with her Tears, and did wipe them with the Hair of her Head, and kissed his Feet, and annointed them with Ointment.* And when Jesus saw the Heart of the Pharisee that had bidden him to his House, he took occasion to speak unto Simon, as you may read in Luke 7. and he turned to the Woman, and said, *Simon, seest thou this Woman? Thou gavest me no Water to my Feet; but she hath washed my Feet with Tears, and wiped them with the Hair of her Head: Thou gavest me no Kiss; but this Woman, since I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my Feet: My Head with Oil thou didst not annoint; but this Woman hath annointed my Feet with Ointment: Wherefore I say unto thee, her Sins, which are many, are forgiven her; for she hath loved much,* Luke 7. 37. to the End.

Also, there was many Women which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministring unto him, and stood afar off when he was Crucified, Mat. 28. 55. Mark 15. Yea even the Women of Jerusalem wept for him, insomuch that he said unto them, *Weep not for me. ye Daughters of Jerusalem; but weep for your selves, and for your Children,* Luke 23. 28.

And certain Women which had been healed of Evil Spirits and Infirmities, Mary Magdalen, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's Steward's Wife; and many others which ministred unto him of their Substance, Luke 8. 2, 3.

Thus we see that Jesus owned the Love and Grace that appeared in Women, and did not despise it: and by what is recorded in the Scriptures, he received as much Love, Kindness, Compassion, and tender Dealing towards him from Women, as he did from any others, both in his Life time, and also after they had exercised their Cruelty upon him; for Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James, beheld where he was laid; And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James, and Salom, had brought sweet Spices, that they might annoint him: And very early in the Morning, the first Day of the Week, they came unto the Sepulchre at the rising of the Sun; and they said among themselves, *Who shall roll us away the Stone from the Door of the Sepulchre? And when they looked the Stone was rolled away, for it was very great,* Mark 16. 1, 2, 3, 4. Luke 24. 1, 2. and they went down into the Sepulchre, and as Matthew saith, *The Angel rolled away the Stone, and he said unto the Women, Fear not, I know whom ye seek, Jesus which was Crucified: He is not here, he is risen,* Mat. 28. Now Luke saith thus, *That there stood two Men by them in shining Apparel, and as they were perplexed and afraid, the Men said unto them, He is not here, remember how he said unto you when he was in Galilee, That the Son of Man must be delivered into the Hands of sinful Men, and be Crucified, and the third Day rise again; and they remembred his Words, and return'd from the Sepulchre, and told all these things to the Eleven, and to all the rest.*

It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the Mother of James, and the other Women that were with them, which told these things to the Apostles, and their Words seemed unto them as

Idle Tales, and they believed them not. Mark this, ye despisers of the Weakness of Women, and look upon your selves to be so wise: But Christ Jesus doth not so; for he makes use of the weak: For when he met the Women after he was risen, he said *unto them*, All Hail! And they came and held him by the Feet, and worshipped him; then said Jesus *unto them*, *Be not afraid, go tell my Brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me*, Mat. 28. 10. Mark 16. 9. And John *saith*, when Mary was weeping at the Sepulchre, that Jesus said *unto her*, *Woman, why weepest thou? what seekest thou? And when she supposed him to be the Gardner, Jesus said unto her, Mary; she turned her self, and said unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master; Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God*, John 20. 16, 17.

Mark this, you that despise and oppose the Message of the Lord God that he sends by Women; What had become of the Redemption of the whole Body of Mankind, if they had not cause to believe the Message that the Lord Jesus sent by these Women, of and concerning his Resurrection? And if these Women had not thus, out of their Tenderness, and Bowels of Love, who had received Mercy, and Grace, and Forgiveness of Sins, and Vertue, and Healing from him; which many Men also had received the like, if their Hearts had not been so united and knit unto him in Love, that they could not depart as the Men did; but sat watching, and waiting, and weeping about the Sepulchre until the time of his Resurrection, and so were ready to carry his Message, as is manifested, else how should his Disciples have known, who were not there?

Oh! Blessed and Glorified be the Glorious Lord; for this may all the whole Body of Mankind say, though the Wisdom of Man that never knew God, is always ready to except against the Weak; but the Weakness of God is stronger than Men, and the Foolishness of God is wiser *than* Men, 1 Cor. 1 25.

And in Acts 18. you *may read* how *Aquilla*, and *Priscilla*, *took unto* them *Apollos*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly, who was an Eloquent Man, and mighty in the Scriptures; yet we do not read that he *despised* what *Priscilla* said, because she was a Woman, as many now do.

And now to the Apostle's Words, which is the Ground of the great Objection against Womens Speaking. *And first*, 1 Cor. 14. Let the Reader seriously peruse that Chapter, and see the end and drift of the Apostle in speaking these Words: For the Apostle is there *exhorting* the Corinthians unto Charity, and to desire Spiritual Gifts, and not to speak in an unknown Tongue; and not to be Children in Understanding, nor to be Children in Malice; but in Understanding to be Men. And that the Spirits of the Prophets, should be subject to the Prophets; for God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace: *And then he saith*, *Let your Women keep Silence* in the Church, &c.

Where it doth plainly appear, that the Women, as well as some others that were among them, were in Confusion: *For he saith*, *How is it Brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a Psalm, hath a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, hath a Revelation, hath an Interpretation? Let all Things be done* to Edifying. Here is no Edifying, but Confusion speaking together: *Therefore he saith*, *If any Man speak in an unknown Tongue, let it be by two, or at most by three, and that by course, and let one Interpret: But if there be no Interpreter, let him keep Silence* in the Church.

Here the Man is Commanded to keep Silence, as well as the Woman, when in Confusion and out of order.

But the Apostle saith farther, *They are commanded to be in 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 a Woman, to speak in the Church.*

Here the Apostle clearly manifests his intent; for he speaks of Women that were under the Law, and in that *Transgression* as Eve was, and such as were to learn, and not to speak publickly, but they must first ask their Husbands at home; and it was a shame for such to speak in the Church: And it appears clearly, that such Women were *speaking among* the Corinthians, by the Apostles exhorting them from malice and strife, and confusion, and he preacheth the Law unto them, and he saith, in the Law *it is written, With Men of other tongues, and other Lips, will I speak* unto this People, Vers. 2.

And what is all this to Women's Speaking? that have the everlasting Gospel to preach, and upon whom the Promise of the Lord is fulfilled, and his Spirit poured upon them according to his Word, Acts 2. 16, 17, 18. And if the Apostle would have stopped such as had the Spirit of the Lord poured upon them, why did he *say just before, If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace, and you may all Prophesie one by one?* Here he did not say, that such Women should not Prophesie as had the Revelation and Spirit of God poured upon them: But their Women that were under the Law, and in the Transgression, and were in Strife, Confusion and Malice; for if he had stop'd Womens Praying or Prophesying, *why doth he say, Every Man Praying or Prophesying, having his Head covered, dishonoureth his Head; but every Woman that Prayeth or Prophesieth with her Head uncovered dishonoureth her Head? Judge in your selves, Is it comely that a Woman pray or prophesie uncovered? For the Woman is not without the Man, neither is the Man without the Woman in the Lord,* 1 Cor. 11. 3, 4, 13.

Also that *other* Scripture, in 1 Tim. 2. where he is exhorting that Prayer and Supplication be made every where, lifting up Holy Hands without Wrath and Doubting; he saith in the like manner also, *That Women must adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefacedness and Sobriety, not with broidered Hair, or Gold, or Pearl, or costly Array. He saith, Let Women 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.*

Here the Apostle speaks particularly to a Woman in relation to her Husband, to be in subjection to him, and not to Teach, nor usurp Authority over him, and therefore *he* mentions Adam and Eve: But let it be strained to the utmost, as the opposers of Womens Speaking would have it, that is, That they should not Preach nor Speak in the Church, of which there is nothing here: Yet the Apostle is speaking to such as he is teaching to wear their Apparel, what to wear, and what not to wear; such as were not come to wear modest Apparel, and such as were not come to Shamefacedness and Sobriety; but he was exhorting them from broidered Hair, Gold, and Pearls, and costly Array; and such are not to usurp Authority over the Man, but to learn in Silence with all Subjection, as it becometh Women professing Godliness with good Works.

And what is all this to such as have the Power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus poured upon them, and have the Message of the Lord Jesus given unto them? Must not they speak the Word of the Lord, because of these undecent and unreverent Women, that the Apostle speaks of, and to, in these two Scriptures? And how are the Men of this Generation blinded, that bring these Scriptures, and pervert the Apostles Words, and corrupt his Intent in speaking of them? And by these Scriptures, endeavour to stop the Message and Word of the Lord God in Women, by contemning and despising of them. If the Apostle would have had Womens speaking stop'd, and did not allow of them; Why did he intreat his true Yoak-Fellow to help those Women who laboured *with him* in the Gospel? Phil. 4. 3. And why did the Apostles join together in Prayer and Supplication *with* the Women, and Mary the Mother of Jesus, *and* with his Brethren, Acts 1. 14. if they had not allowed, and had Union and Fellowship with the Spirit of God, where-ever it was revealed, in Women as well as others? But all this opposing, and gainsaying of Womens Speaking, hath risen out of the Bottomless Pit, and Spirit of Darkness, that hath spoken for these many Hundred Years together in this Night of Apostacy, since the Revelations have ceased and been hid. And so that Spirit hath limited and bound all up within its Bond and Compass; and so would suffer none to Speak; but such as that Spirit of Darkness approved of, Man or Woman.

And so here hath been the Misery of these last Ages past, in the time of the *Reign* of the Beast, that John saw when he stood upon the Sand of the Sea, rising out of the Sea, and out of the Earth, having *seven Heads* and ten Horns, Rev. 13. *In this* great City of Babylon, which is the Woman that hath sitten so long upon the Scarlet colour'd Beast, full of Names of Blasphemy, having seven Heads and ten Horns. And this Woman hath been arrayed and decked with Gold, and Pearls, and precious Stones; and she hath had a Golden Cup in her Hand, full of Abominations; and hath made all Nations drunk with the Cup of her Fornication; and all the World hath wondred after the Beast, and hath worshipped the Dragon that gave Power to the Beast; and this Woman hath been drunk with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus. And this hath been the Woman, that hath been Speaking, and usurping Authority for many Hundred Years together: And let the Times and Ages past testifie how many have been murdered and slain, in Ages and Generations past; every Religion and Profession, (as it hath been called) killing and murdering one another, that would not join one with another: And thus the Spirit of Truth, and the Power of the Lord Jesus Christ, hath been quite lost among them that have done this. And this Mother of Harlots hath sitten as a Queen, and said, She should see no Sorrow: But though her Days have been long, even many Hundred of Years; for there was Power given unto the Beast to continue forty and two Months, and to make War with the Saints, and to overcome them: And all that have dwelt upon the Earth have worshipped him, whose Names are not written in the Book of the Life of the Lamb, slain from the Foundation of the World.

But blessed be the Lord, his time is over, which was above Twelve hundred Years, and the Darkness is past, and the Night of Apostacy draws to an end, and the true Light now shines, the Morning Light, the bright Morning Star, the *Root* and Offspring of David, he is risen, he is risen, Glory to the Highest for evermore; and the Joy of the Morning is come, and the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is making her self ready, as a Bride that is adorning for her Husband; and to her is granted, that she shall be arrayed in fine Linen, clean and white; and the fine Linen is the Righteousness *of the Saints*; the holy Jerusalem is descending out of Heaven from God, having the Glory of God; and her Light is like a Jasper Stone, clear as Chrystal.

And this is that free Woman, that all the Children of the Promise are born of; not the Children of *the Bond-woman*, which is Hagar, which genders to Strife and to Bondage, *and which* answers to Jerusalem, which is in Bondage with her *Children*; but this is the Jerusalem which is free, Which is the Mother of us all. And so this Bond-woman and her Children, that are born after the Flesh, have persecuted them that are born after the Spirit, even until now: But now the Bond-woman and her Seed is to be cast out, that hath kept so long in Bondage and in Slavery, and under Limits; this Bond-woman and her Brood is to be cast out, *and our holy City*, the new Jerusalem, is coming down from Heaven, and her Light will shine throughout the whole Earth, even as a Jasper-Stone, clear as Chrystal, which brings Freedom and Liberty, and perfect Redemption to her whole Seed; and this is that Woman and Image of the Eternal God, that God hath owned, and doth own, and will own for evermore.

More might be added to this purpose, both out of the Old Testament and New, where it is evident that God made no difference, but gave his good Spirit, as it pleased him, *both to Man and Woman, as Deborah, Huldah, and Sarah*. The *Lord calls by his Prophet Isaiah, Hearken unto me, ye that follow after Righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the Rock from whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the Pit from whence ye were digged; look unto Abraham your Father, and to Sarah that bare you; for the Lord will comfort Sion, &c.* Isa. 5. And Anna the Prophetess, who was a Widow of Fourscore and Four Years of Age, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with Fastings and Prayers night and day; she coming in *at that instant*, (when old Simeon took the Child Jesus in his Arms) and she gave Thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them who *looked for* Redemption in Jerusalem, *Luke 2. 36, 37, 38*. And Philip the Evangelist, into *whose House* the Apostle Paul entred, *who* was one of the Seven, Acts 6. 3. he had four Daughters which were *Virgins*, that did prophesie, Acts 21.

And so let this serve to stop that opposing Spirit that would limit the Power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus, whose Spirit is poured upon all Flesh, both Sons and Daughters, now in his Resurrection; and since that the Lord God in the Creation, when he made Man in his own Image, he made them Male and Female; and since that Christ Jesus, as the Apostle saith, was made of a Woman, and the Power of the Highest overshadowed her, and the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the Holy Thing that was born of her, was called the Son of God; and when he was upon the Earth, he manifested his Love, and his Will, and his *Mind*, *both to the Woman of Samaria*, and Martha, and Mary her Sister, and several others, as hath been shewed; and after his Resurrection also, manifested himself unto them first of all, even before he ascended unto his Father: Now when Jesus was risen, the first Day of the *Week*, *he appeared* first unto Mary Magdalene, Mark 16. 9. And thus the Lord Jesus hath manifested himself and his Power, without Respect of Persons; and so let all Mouths be stopt that would limit him, whose Power and Spirit is infinite, who is pouring it upon all Flesh.

And thus much in answer to these two Scriptures, which have been made such a Stumbling-block, that the Ministers of Darkness have made such a Mountain of: But the Lord is removing all this, and *taking it out of the way*.

M. F.

A further Addition, in Answer to the Objection concerning Women keeping silent in the

Church: For it is not permitted for them to speak, but to be under Obedience; as also saith the Law, If they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at home, for it is a shame for a Woman to speak in the Church: Now this as Paul writing in 1 Cor. 14. 34. is one with that of 1 Tim. 2. 11. Let Women learn in silence with all Subjection.

To which I say, If you tie this to all outward Women, then there were many Women that were Widows, which had no Husbands to learn of; and many were Virgins, *which* had no Husbands; and Philip had four Daughters that were Prophetesses; such would be despised, which the Apostle did not forbid. And if it were to all Women, that *no* Women might speak, then Paul would have contradicted himself; but they were such Women *that the* Apostle mentions in Timothy, that grew wanton, and were Busie-bodies, and Tatlers, and kicked against Christ: For Christ in the Male and in the Female is one, and he is the Husband, and his Wife is the Church; and God hath said, that his Daughters should prophesie as well as his Sons: And where he hath poured forth his Spirit upon them, they must prophesie, though blind Priests say to the contrary, and will not permit holy Women to *speak*.

And whereas it is said, I permit not a Woman to speak, as saith the Law: But where Women are led by the Spirit of God, they are not under the Law; for Christ in the Male and in the Female is one; and where he is made manifest in Male and Female, he may speak; for he is the end of the Law for Righteousness to all them that believe. So here you ought to make a Distinction what sort of Women are forbidden to speak; such as were under the Law, who were not come to Christ, nor to the Spirit of Prophecy: For Huldah, Miriam, and Hannah, were Prophetesses, who were not forbidden in the time of the Law, for they all prophesied in the time of the Law; as you may read in 2 Kings 22. what Huldah said unto the Priest, and to the Ambassadors that were sent to her from the King, Go, saith she, and tell the Man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and on the Inhabitants thereof, even all the Words of the Book which the King of Judah hath read; because they have forsaken me, and have burnt Incense to other Gods, to anger me with all the Works of their Hands: Therefore my Wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to the King of Judah, that sent you to me to ask Counsel of the Lord, so shall you say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Because thy Heart did melt, and thou humbledst thy self before the Lord, when thou heard'st what I spake against this place, and against the Inhabitants of the same, how they should be destroyed; Behold, I will receive thee to thy Father, and thou shalt be put into thy Grave in peace, and thine Eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.

Now let us see if any of you, blind Priests, can speak after this manner, and see if it be not a better Sermon than any of you can make, who are *against* Women's Speaking. And Isaiah, that went to the Prophetess, did not forbid *her* Speaking or Prophesying, Isai. 8. *And* was it not prophesied in Joel 2. that Hand-maids *should* Prophesie? And are not Hand-maids Women? Consider this, ye that are against Women's Speaking, how in the Acts the Spirit of the Lord was poured forth upon Daughters as well as Sons. *In the time of the Gospel, when Mary came to salute Elizabeth in the Hill-Country in Judea, and when Elizabeth heard the Salutation of Mary, the Babe leaped in her Womb, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit; and Elizabeth spoke with a loud Voice. Blessed art thou amongst Women, blessed is the Fruit of thy Womb. Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as thy Salutation came to my Ear, the Babe leaped in my Womb for Joy; for blessed is she that believes, for there*

shall be a Performance of those things which were told her *from the Lord*. And this was Elizabeth's Sermon concerning Christ, which at this day *stands upon Record*. And then Mary said, My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour, for he hath regarded the low Estate of his Handmaid: For, behold, from henceforth all Generations shall call me blessed; for he that is mighty, hath done to me great things, and holy is his Name; and his Mercy is on them that fear him, from Generation to Generation; he hath shewed Strength with his Arm; he hath scattered the Proud in the Imaginations of their own Hearts; he hath put down the Mighty from their Seats, and exalted them of low degree; he hath filled the Hungry with good things, and the Rich he hath sent empty away: *He hath holpen his Servant Israel*, in remembrance of his Mercy, *as he spake* to his Father, to Abraham, and to his Seed for ever. Are you not here beholding to the Woman for her Sermon, to use *her Words*, to put into your Common Prayer? and yet you forbid Women's Speaking.

Now here you may see how these two Women prophesied of Christ, and preached better than all the blind Priests did in that Age, and better than this Age also, who are beholding to Women to make use of their *Words*. And see in the Book of Ruth, how the Women blessed her in the Gate of the City, of whose Stock came Christ: The Lord make the Woman *that is* come *into* thy House like Rachel and *Leah*, which built the House of Israel; and *that thou* may'st do worthily *in Ephrata*, and be famous in Bethlehem, let *thy House* be *like* the House of *Pharez*, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the Seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young Woman. And blessed be the Lord, who hath not left thee this day without a Kinsman, and *his Name* shall be continued in Israel. And also *see* in the *first* Chapter of Samuel, how Hannah prayed and spake in the Temple of the Lord, O Lord of Hosts, if thou wilt look on the Trouble of thy Hand-maid, and remember me, and not forget thy Hand-maid. And *read* in the second Chapter of Samuel, how she rejoyced in God, and said, My Heart rejoyceth in the Lord; my Horn is exalted in the Lord, and my Mouth is enlarged over my Enemies, because I rejoyce in thy Salvation; there is none holy as the Lord, yea, there is none besides thee; and there is no God like our God. Speak no more presumptuously; let not Arrogancy come out of your Mouths, for the Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Enterprizes are established; the Bow, and the mighty Men are broken, and the Weak hath girded to themselves Strength; they that were full, are hired forth for Bread, and the hungry are no more hired; so that the Barren hath born seven, and she that had many Children is feeble. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; bringeth down to the Grave, and raiseth up; the Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; bringeth low, and exalteth; he raiseth up the Poor out of the Dust, and lifteth up the Beggar from the Dunghil, to set them among Princes, to make them inherit the Seat of Glory: For the Pillars of the Earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the World upon them; he will keep the Feet of his Saints, and the Wicked shall keep silence in Darkness; for in his own Might shall no Man be strong: The Lord's Adversaries shall be destroyed, and out of Heaven shall he thunder upon them; the Lord shall judge the ends of the World, and shall give Power to his King, and exalt the Horn of his Anointed.

Thus you may see *what* a Woman hath said, when old Eli the Priest thought she had been drunk; and see if any of you, blind Priests, that speak against Women's Speaking, can preach after this manner; who cannot make such a Sermon as this Woman did, and yet will make a Trade of this Woman and other Women's *Words*.

And did not the *Queen of Sheba* speak, that came to Solomon, and received the Law of God, and

preached it in her own Kingdom, and *blessed* the Lord God that loved Solomon, *and* set him on the Throne of *Israel*; because the Lord loved Israel for ever, and made the King to do Equity and Righteousness? And this *was the* Language of the Queen of Sheba.

And see *what* glorious Expressions Queen Hester used to comfort the People of God, which was the Church of *God*, *as* you may read in the Book of Hester, which caused Joy and Gladness of Heart among all the Jews, who prayed and worshipped the Lord in all places; who jeopardd her Life contrary to the King's Command, went and spoke to the King, in the Wisdom and Fear of the Lord, by which means she saved the Lives of *the* People of God; and righteous Mordecai did not forbid her speaking, but said, If she held her Peace, her and her Father's House should be destroyed. And herein, you blind *Priests*, are contrary to righteous *Mordecai*.

Likewise you may read how Judith spoke, and what noble Acts she did, *and how* she spoke to the Elders of Israel, and said, Dear Brethren, seeing ye are the Honourable and Elders of the People of God, call to Remembrance how our Fathers in time past were tempted, that they might be proved if they would worship God aright: They ought *also* to Remember how our Father Abraham, being try'd through manifold Tribulations, *was found a* Friend of God; so was Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, and all they pleased God, and were steadfast in Faith through manifold Troubles. And *read also* her Prayer in the Book of Judith, and how the Elders commended her, and said, All that thou speakest is true, and no Man can reprove thy Words; pray therefore for us, for thou art an holy Woman, *and fearest* God. So these Elders of Israel did not forbid her speaking, as you blind *Priests* do; yet you will make a Trade of Women's Words to get Money by, and take Texts, and preach Sermons upon Women's Words; and still cry out, Women must not speak, Women must be silent: So you are *far from* the Minds of the Elders of Israel, who praised *God for a* Woman's speaking. But the Jezabel, and the Woman, the false Church, the great Whore, and tatling and unlearned Women, and Busie-bodies, which are forbid to preach, which have a long time spoke and tatled, which are forbidden to speak by the true Church, which Christ is the Head of; such Women as were in Transgression *under the Law*, *which are* called a Woman in the Revelations.

And see *farther* how the wise Woman cryed to Joab *over the* Wall, and saved *the* City of Abel, as you may read, 2 Sam. 20. how in her Wisdom she spoke to Joab, saying, I am one of them *that are* peaceable and faithful in Israel, and thou goest *about to* destroy a City and Mother in Israel: Why wilt thou destroy the Inheritance of the Lord? Then went the Woman to the People in her *Wisdom*, and smote off the *Head of* Sheba, that rose up against David, the Lord's Anointed: Then Joab blew the Trumpet, and all the People departed in Peace. And this Deliverance was by the means of a Woman's speaking. But Tatlers and Busie-Bodies are forbidden to preach by the true Woman, whom Christ is the Husband, to the Woman as well as the Man, all being comprehended to be the Church. And so in this true Church, Sons and Daughters do prophesie, Women labour in the Gospel: But the Apostle permits not Tatlers, Busie-bodies, and such as usurp Authority over the Man, who would not have Christ to reign, nor speak neither in the Male nor Female; such the Law permits not to speak; such must learn of their Husbands. But what Husbands have Widows to learn of, but Christ? *And* was not Christ the Husband of Philip's four Daughters? And may not they that are learned *of their* Husbands speak then? But Jezabel, and Tatlers, and the Whore, that deny Revelation and Prophecy, are not permitted, who will not learn of Christ; and they that are out of the Spirit and Power of Christ, that the Prophets were in, who

are in the Transgression, are ignorant of the Scriptures; and such are against Women's Speaking, and Men's too, who preach that which they have received of the Lord God; but that which they have preached, and do preach, will come over all your Heads, yea, over the Head of the false Church, the Pope; for the Pope is the Head of the false Church, and the false Church is the Pope's Wife: And so he and they that be of him, and come from him, are against Women's Speaking in the true Church, when both *he and the false Church* are called Woman, in Rev. 17. and so are in the Transgression, that would usurp Authority over the Man Christ Jesus, and his Wife too, and would not have him to Reign; but the Judgment of the great Whore is come. But Christ, who is the Head of the Church, the true Woman, which is his Wife, in it do Daughters prophesie, who are above the Pope and his Wife, and a-top of them. And here Christ is the Head of the Male and Female, who may *speak; and the Church* is called a Royal Priesthood; so the *Woman* must offer *as well as the Man*. Rev. 22. 17. *The Spirit saith, Come, and the Bride saith, Come;* and so is not the Bride the Church? and doth the Church only consist of Men? You that deny Women's Speaking, answer: Doth it not consist of Women, as well as Men? Is not the Bride compared to the whole *Church*? And doth not the Bride say, *Come*? Doth not the Woman speak then, the Husband, Christ Jesus, the Amen? And doth not the false Church go about to stop the Bride's Mouth? But it is not possible; for the Bridegroom is with his Bride, and he opens her Mouth. Christ Jesus, who goes on Conquering, and to Conquer; who kills and slays with the Sword, which is the Word of his Mouth; the Lamb and the Saints shall have the Victory, the true Speakers of Men and Women over the false Speaker.