

SHEKINAH

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The Holy Spirit: Let's get beyond the ghost story

*It's either a bird, or a flame, or a sheeted spook.
And it has bottom billing in the Sign of the Cross.
The Holy Spirit definitely needs a public relations agent.*



The Holy Spirit has a problem. It's the same problem anyone has who lives in the shadow of more famous colleagues. After all, imagine the plight of the third baseman forgotten while Tinkers, Evers, and

Chance are immortalized. Then there's the case of Gerardo Marco left behind while Groucho, Chico, Harpo, and even Zeppo attained loftier heights. Who remembers the third DiMaggio brother, and whose

name is at the bottom of the list that begins "Merrill Lynch"? Like an anonymous vaudevillian, condemned to soft-shoe away his days with bottom billing on the posters plastered all over town, the Holy

Spirit is a neglected, unappreciated person.

It's bad enough to be last in the list of the Sign of the Cross, but the Holy Spirit doesn't even have an image to call his (her? its?) own. God the Father, Michelangelo showed us, is a large man with a long beard, his gnarled finger sparking life into Adam. God the Son is as familiar a figure to us as Uncle Sam. In fact, they share the same unshaven avuncularity.

But stop a Catholic to ask what the Spirit looks like and you'd better be prepared for new achievements in blank stares. While the Father and Son resemble us, the Spirit is forced to look like a bird at best, a tongue of fire at worst.

"I really don't know him," admits a middle-aged businessman. "He's always last. What he needs is a good PR person. What does he look like? I go back to the Baltimore Catechism—I still see the flame."

Echoes a recent college graduate: "The Holy Spirit has bad PR people behind him. He's a tongue of fire; he's like a flame. I just don't know him beyond that."

Asked about the Holy Spirit in her life, an office worker fell silent for a moment and then answered, "I don't know anything about him. You can't see him. He's a bird."

Retorts another woman: "That's hogwash that he's a bird. The Holy Spirit is God so the Holy Spirit is a man."

"After 12 years of Catholic education," laments a mother of five, "all I can tell you about the Holy Spirit is that he's part of the Trinity. That's all I know. He's invisible and I can't relate to anything I can't see."

Concludes an elderly woman: "He looks like a man. It's wrong to picture him as a dove because an animal can't be God."

But then again, neither can a man—and therein lies part of the problem, according to theologians, charismatic leaders, and devotees of the Holy Spirit who were contacted to find out who the third person of the Trinity is and why he has been so neglected by Catholics. The desire to picture God as something concrete leads people into a wrongheaded approach to the deity, an approach that causes un-

derstanding of the Spirit to suffer the most.

Seeing is believing

"We tend to think visually. We're brought up with images," explains Sister Anita Dion, local coordinator for the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in Massachusetts. "We're visual-minded and that's a problem. We teach this to kids in school. They want to see before they can understand."

Sister Elaine Raymond of Saginaw, Mich., community coordinator for the Mission Sisters of the Holy Spirit, agrees. "Image is a real problem with the Spirit. We can relate to a father, son, or brother. America is a prove-it-to-me-and-then-I'll-believe country. We want to see. But I don't pray to a flame or a dove, but to the Spirit who is all-powerful, warm, and all that these symbols represent."

Dominican Father William Hill, president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, warned against the tendency to slap a face on God. "I'm suspicious of that because God is transcendent. Images should give only a jumping-off point. I'd warn people against giving human form to God. The word 'person' when used about God does not mean a human but an individual. Our human concepts of person cannot be carried over to our understanding of God."

Father John Bertolucci, a nationally-known charismatic preacher, underlines the need to eliminate images of God. "God is spirit so he can't be pictured. He is totally other and pictures aren't important."

Nevertheless, people cling to the concrete even when dealing with the spiritual. They want to hold rosaries, feel holy oils, smell incense, and see statues.

The answer for the Holy Spirit may be better PR people who can convince Catholics that they can still picture the Holy Spirit as a mental concept.

"The distinct characteristics of the Holy Spirit," Hill notes, "all focus on such notions as invisibility, inwardness, spontaneity. These things are difficult to get hold of in

an image. There is something anonymous about the identity of the Spirit because he conceals himself in order to put the focus on the second person, the Son. The Spirit is intangible because love works intangibly. We can lay hold of the Spirit not by reflecting on him but by living his love."

If the Spirit has a face, in short, it may be that of the person next to you. As a New York secretary put it, "To me, the Holy Spirit is the feeling I have that God is with me. He is how the Lord comes into your heart."

Just so, agrees Bertolucci. "The Spirit is needed to live in the way Jesus intended. The Spirit brings the gifts we need for the Christian community. Without him, the church is another human organization, like the Elks."

"If we're attuned to the Spirit," avers Dion, "then everything takes on a new dimension. As Paul says, the Spirit makes of us a new creation. He is the one who moves us to be. He taught Jesus who he was; the Spirit can teach us who we are."

Seeing the Spirit in the work of Christians is central to understanding who the third person of the Trinity is, according to Hill. "Only in Christianity is God three in one. Only because God is father and son can he become man. And the doctrine of a third person is the basis for our concepts of church and sanctification. Unless one has some sort of understanding of the trinity of God, one cannot have an in-depth grasp of the Incarnation on the one hand, and the church, sacraments, and community on the other. The Trinity expresses to us that God is not self-contained or enclosed but that he is self-communicating absolutely. This inner circulation of life spills over into first, creation and second, redemption. The Spirit is the animating principal of the church; so our sense of belonging is derived from the Holy Spirit."

If God the Father is "I am who am," perhaps the Holy Spirit's slogan could be "I am who does." In the minds of these experts, it is he who inspires the church and its members. In the words of Raymond, the Spirit is "a power within

myself that strengthens me to continue when I'm discouraged, disgusted, or sad. The Spirit deepens my relationship with Jesus and the Father."

Sister Agnes Marie, provincial of the Missionary Sisters, Servants of the Holy Spirit, in Techny, Ill., describes how the Spirit deepens her faith. "He adds a dimension of truth and wholeness to my life. He is the one who has the gifts which all of us need."

Spirited semantics

Coming to an understanding of and relationship with the Holy Spirit has not been easy for contemporary Catholics, however. In the first place, many of them were raised with the Holy Ghost, who, if not a bird or a flame, was a sheeted spook. Growth in religious education did nothing to bridge the gap between believer and third person because so much of the lore of the Holy Spirit is involved with subtleties of theology. Early church members debated endlessly on which preposition best described his tie-in with the other two persons of the Trinity. Did the Father work "through" the Son "in" the Spirit? Or did the Spirit proceed "from" the Father "through" the Son? And was the correct verb "proceed" or "begotten"? What sundered the Orthodox Church from the Roman Church was, to a large extent, an argument over the "filioque," a semantic fight over whether "and" or a preposition best captured how the Spirit came about.

Add to that the charismatic movement. In recent years, those most likely to refer to the Spirit have been charismatics. To those on the outside of that movement, the third person became associated with speaking in tongues, uplifted arms, and rapture. It was strange territory and many were put off. As a businessman complained: "The Spirit seems to hit just the charismatics. He seems very selective."

But Raymond thinks otherwise: "People who don't know charismatics don't connect them with any specific person of the Trinity. To a great degree, they are making the

power of the Spirit known more because they are much more vocal than Christians usually are. That's to their credit."

Says Dion, "It can happen that people are turned off by the charismatics, but I think more are turned on. The charismatics induce people to pray. That's a help."

He, she, or it?

All this debate—over what the Spirit looks like; whether the third person is a he, she, or it; how much the charismatics actually hold a special claim over the Spirit; and what the Spirit holds for the individual Christian—results from a poor theology of the Holy Spirit to begin with, according to Dominican Father Richard Woods. "The level of theology on the Holy Spirit is not very great. It's much more developed in the Eastern Church. They are more in touch with the vitality of the Spirit. In the Western Church, we spend so much time on creation and redemption, the work of the first two persons of the Trinity, that we never get around to the work of the third person—sanctification."

Woods, a professor at the Institute of Pastoral Studies of Loyola University in Chicago, holds that the Spirit might best be referred to as a "she." "The emphasis today should be on the mothering aspect of the Spirit, who hovers over us, brooding, mothering the church. Traditionally, God has been a very masculine figure. While no gender has been assigned to the Spirit, seeing her feminine qualities could be a corrective to the masculinization of the Father and Son."

To find the work of the Spirit in the modern world, Woods suggests looking at anything which contributes to the "wholeness of the church."

"The mystery of salvation," he explains, "is seen as a movement out of the Father by the Son to the world, and a return to the Father through the Son. The movement is the work of the Spirit. The Spirit gathers, sanctifies believers, and creates one body in Christ. If you want to look for a manifestation of the Spirit, look for those qualities

which promote harmony and unity in the world, and wholeness and holiness in the church.

"In practice, this can be seen in the life of an ordinary Christian in the gifts and fruits of the Spirit. The signs of the Spirit's presence to the whole church are the gifts of ministry and prophecy, the charisms of tongues and healing—as long as they serve to create wholeness in the church. But if they create schism and narcissism, they are false signs. The manifest evidence of the Spirit is love, peace, harmony, unity."

Closer than you think

For anyone interested in elevating the Holy Spirit to a new place on their order of billing, the advice from the experts is simple to follow: pray.

"Just ask him for the gift of faith," suggests Dion.

"The answer is prayer above all," counsels Hill, "because the Spirit represents the closeness of God, the presence of God."

Raymond recommends that the person seeking a new understanding of the Spirit "sit back, find a quiet time, and let the Spirit take over. Really try to listen. Let him reveal himself and his love. If we ask, he will be with us."

To that, Bertolucci adds research. "Study the Scriptures, especially the New Testament and what Jesus taught us about the Spirit. And study our own roots, because the Spirit is responsible for the church. Go back to our origins. Find out what Jesus told his disciples and read papal pronouncements. If we don't study and reflect on church teaching about the Holy Spirit and the Bible, we are missing important sources of information."

A Catholic layman from Vermont suggests the simple method of switching around the familiar formula of the Sign of the Cross: "Put the Spirit first for a while. Rotate them around."

And Raymond wonders if part of the problem is lack of education. "When was the last time you heard a sermon on the Spirit? They're always much more related to the Father and Son." She also suggests joining a small prayer group where

"people experience the power of the Spirit better because the prayer is freer flowing."

Looking back in history, these experts see a parallel to the neglect of the Spirit today. In the Old Testament, the people did not recognize the presence and power of the Father. In the New Testament, many were ignorant of the Son. Today, it seems to be the third person's turn to display his presence without winning many adherents.

"We're following the patterns of

the Old and New Testament people," admits Dion. "We have much the same problem as they did. History is repeating itself in us."

That repetition may be an advantage if we recognize it, in the view of Bertolucci. He asserts that "we can learn from our biblical ancestors. A clear study of the Scriptures will help us understand how they came to believe. We'll find both the problem and solution if we study church history."

We know from the Old Testament the creative power of God. From the New Testament, we learn of his forgiving love. In our own times, perhaps in the discovery of the Holy Spirit, we may come to understand—through this intangible, faceless, invisible person of the Trinity—God's desire to fill our lives. If the Father made us and the Son stood beside us, then we may conclude that the Spirit is the one who will take the next step: engulfing us with God's presence and love. □

THE AGE (Melbourne, Australia), 2 December 1981

When the Great Goddess ruled

Did women once rule the Earth? KATHY KIZILOS interviews a woman who is researching ancient myths and legends for clues to the existence of a woman-centred culture.

CLAIRE FRENCH believes in a time when women were honored and peace reigned on Earth. A time when God was the Great Goddess, people were vegetarian, and land was passed down from mother to youngest daughter.

All Europe and the Middle East, she says, were once woman-centred (gynocentric) cultures. But a series of wars starting about 800 BC in Greece eliminated them, replacing them with man-centred societies (patriarchies) such as we have today.

She believes evidence for woman-centred cultures exists in myths and legends (her special interest is a series of Welsh Celtic legends called the Mabinogion)

and she is writing a PhD. on the subject at Deakin University.

Claire French came to Australia from Bavaria in 1950. Having spent her youth under Nazi occupation. She has an MA, and started a women's studies course for the Council of Adult Education. She says she started looking for evidence of woman-centred cultures partly because she needed to know, for her personal self-esteem, that women once had a more elevated status than they did in the Germany of her girlhood.

After finishing high school in Bavaria in the 1930s she wanted to go to university. The Government had a policy of discouraging women students by sending them to labor camp for a year before they started tertiary education. Claire French was told this was necessary, "so I would know what it was like to work".

"I agree with the conclusions of Dr Jim Cairns in 'Growth to Freedom' that you can't be a patriarch without also being a racist. My father and grandfather were very authoritarian and gave their women-folk hell. There is a German saying that

women are only good for children, kitchen and church."

It is important for both sexes to respect femininity, she says. "As Jung points out, a man makes himself a sort of schizophrenic when he is taught to regard woman as seductress and a source of sin, because his own real feeling is to revere her.

"I realise my beliefs in this area put me among what is called the lunatic fringe, or the ratbag minority, but I am over 50 and I have nothing to lose."

The idea that there was a series of wars in which men and women struggled for supremacy is not generally known. Claire French says evidence exists in the myths of the warrior women, the Amazons "who rebelled against the patriarchal takeover". According to myth, Amazons lived in all-female societies, and would periodically capture men for sexual binges, and then either kill them or let them loose. They would maim their sons so they would only be fit for menial tasks.

Legend has it Amazon women bred horses and lived on horses' blood and mares' milk. Claire

French believes this may be why the strongly male-centred Judaic culture has a taboo against cooking meat in milk.

Another legend, a Celtic one, tells of Branwen, one of the four great Queens of England. She marries an Irish king, but after the marriage is wrongly accused of subversion. As punishment she is forced to serve as a kitchen maid and is beaten every day by the butcher.

To alert the English of this injustice, Branwen trains a starling to carry news of her mistreatment across the Irish Sea. This starts a great battle between the two nations, and both are exterminated.

"In many old legends," says Claire French, "be they of Branwen or of Helen of Troy, the woman is the centre around which the battle rages." The woman is the symbol for the gynocentric cultures of old confronting the new wave of patriarchy.

Claire French will not describe woman-centred cultures as matriarchies (the opposite to patriarchies) because she says the term is misleading; evidence suggests women never ruled by force but exerted religious influence, as queens or high-priestesses.

The ruins of a woman-centred culture have been found in one of the earliest archaeological sites in Asia Minor, Catal Huyuk in Anatolia, dating back to 10,000 BC. The people followed one deity, the Great Goddess, and women had an honored place in a community that ate no meat, had no weapons, fortresses or signs of violent death.

Evidence such as this led Elizabeth Gould Davis in her book about woman's contribution to civilisation, 'The First Sex', to describe woman-centred societies as "paradise lost". She writes

that since men took over "the result is chaos. War and violence make their appearance, justice and law fly out the window, might replaces right, the Great Goddess is replaced by a stern and vengeful God, man becomes carnivorous, property rights become paramount over human rights, woman is degraded and exploited, and civilisation starts on the downward path it still pursues".

Claire French says although many aspects of woman-centred societies were admirable, the principle of elevating one sex above another is flawed; many of these ancient communities had male sacrifices. "I think patriarchy is a natural part of human evolution," she says. "Civilisation develops like a child, first it recognises the mother and then the father. Now it is time we reached a coming-of-age. We should overcome the polarity of the sexes and just see people and the Divine Spirit above us."

Yet for some men, she says,



"the subliminal memories of a gynocentric culture are too painful to contemplate" and suggests this may explain the opposition to the ordination of female priests.

She also proffers an alternative interpretation to the Old Testament. According to Maryse Choisy's book 'La Guerre des Sexes', the Old Testament is a running war commentary between the patriarchs (Israelites) and the gynocentric Philistines, who worshipped a goddess with priestesses who were liberal in their sexual favors.

"The reason behind the sexual prudishness of the Israelites," says Claire French, "is that men

owned all the property and land was passed through the first-born son." (By contrast in gynocentric societies the land was passed through the youngest daughter, the family member who would live the longest). "The only way men could be certain the first born was theirs was by demanding their women be faithful."

It is natural that if men feel threatened, or are fearful of women they will come to despise them, Claire French says. In gynocentric societies women had exclusive knowledge of healing, midwifery and herbal medicines. This came to be known as "magic" and its practitioners as "witches". "Millions of women were killed in witch hunts on the stake all over Europe," says Claire French. "It was motivated by fear of women who had the knowledge."

The realization that men were responsible for impregnating women contributed to the demise of gynocentric cultures, says Claire French. Women no longer held the mysterious secret of life, but became mere vessels which held the male seed, an attitude which was particularly prevalent among ancient Greeks, one of the first patriarchal civilisations.

But traces of women's early influence are still evident today, she says. In many languages the words for justice, peace and love are feminine. And in the Catholic Church the Holy Spirit is represented by the dove, ancient symbol of Aphrodite.

An Introduction to the Peshitta

The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East

BY GEORGE M. LAMSA

Part 3

THE ARAMAIC PESHITTA TEXT

The term Peshitta means straight, simple, sincere and true, that is, the original. This name was given to this ancient and authoritative text to distinguish it from other Bible revisions and translations which were introduced into some of the Churches of the East (Monophysites) after the division at Ephesus and Chalcedon in 431 and 451 A.D., respectively. This ancient Peshitta is still the only authoritative text of the Old and New Testament of all Eastern Christians in the Near East and India, the Church of the East, the Roman Catholic Church in the East, the Monophysites, and Indian Christians. This is because this text was in use for 400 years before the Christian Church was divided into several sects.

The Peshitta Old Testament contains what is known as the **Books of the Apocrypha**, which have been handed down in the Peshitta manuscripts together with the Books of the Law and the Books of the Prophets, and since these Apocryphal books are included in the text they are looked upon as a sacred literature, even though they are not as commonly used as the others. Moreover this ancient New Testament text omits the story of the woman taken in adultery, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. (But these books are included in later Aramaic texts.) The Peshitta canon was set before the discovery of these books.

Amid persecutions, the ancient Church of the East, through God's help and protection, was able to keep these sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments in the Biblical lands in Persia and India just as the Roman Catholic Church preserved them in the West. Christianity also owes a debt to the Jewish people who preserved the Word of God amid persecution and suffering.

Therefore, Peshitta should not be confused with the 5th century Bible revisions in Aramaic and new versions which were made from Greek. None of these new revisions and versions made by the Monophysite bishops in the 5th century has ever been accepted by the Church of the East. Moreover, these bishops who left their church and joined the Greek church and produced these versions for theological reasons so that their doctrine might agree with the doctrine of the Byzantine Church, which was the powerful imperial sect, were expelled by the Patriarch of the East and their works were condemned. However, in some provinces, owing to the pressure exerted by the Byzantine emperors, these new revisions were introduced. But when the territory was occupied by the Persian government, they were destroyed.

Had the Peshitta been made by order of one of the rival churches, the others would have rejected it. But since all Christians, even the Moslems, in the Middle East accept and revere the Peshitta text, it proves beyond a doubt that it was in use many centuries before the division of the Church.

The originality of the Peshitta text is strongly supported by early evidence.

Aphraates quoted it. St. Ephraim wrote a commentary on it and the doctrine of Addi placed it at the apostolic times.

According to the Peshitta text, the Semitic names of people and towns and localities, in both the New and Old Testaments, agree. The names which end with "s" are retained for the western reader. In the Peshitta text, Barnabas is Barnba, Abbas is Abba, Peter is Kepa. Then again, some of the names of localities are different but older than those in other texts. For example, Rakim is used instead of Kadesh, Mathnin instead of Bashan, Amorah for Gomorah; the error in this instance is due to close similarity between *gamel* and *ain*. A town near the city of Gomorah is called Amoriah. No doubt, the pre-exile Hebrew texts used these older names.

The late Mar-Yacob (Jacob) Eugene Manna, Chaldean Roman Catholic Metropolitan of Armenia, a distinguished Aramaic scholar whose writings are in Aramaic, says that the text which is called Peshitta is without dispute even earlier than the writings which came down from the works of Bar-Dasan, who was living in the latter part of the second century. He also states that the Aramaic speech in Mesopotamia was richer and purer than the Aramaic speech of other regions. It was the richness and the beauty of this language which was used as the lingua franca by the three great empires in the Near East and Middle East which enriched the English language. The Greek and Latin translators made literal translations of the Scriptures, keeping the Semitic rhythm and sentence structure.

Indeed, the translation of the Scriptures into the English language facilitated the work of later English writers. The style of Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning could not have been what it is without the beauty of the King James translation which was inherited from Semitic languages. This is true also of all languages into which the Bible has been translated.

The Septuagint is based on early Hebrew manuscripts and not on the later ones known as the Massoretic, which were made in the 6th to the 9th centuries. In other words, there are many similarities between the Septuagint and the Peshitta text but the former contains inevitable mistranslations which were due to difficulties in transmitting Hebrew or Aramaic thought and mannerisms of speech into a totally alien tongue like Greek. But as has been said, such was not the case between Biblical Aramaic and Biblical Hebrew which are of the same origin. Josephus used Aramaic and Hebrew words indiscriminately. Thus, the term "translating" from Hebrew into Aramaic or vice versa is incorrect. It would be like one stating as having translated the United States Constitution from the Pennsylvania language into the English language or from lower German to higher German. Even before the first captivity, 721 B.C., Jewish kings, scribes, and learned men understood Aramaic. 2 Kings 18:26.

The Israelites never wrote their sacred literature in any language but Aramaic and Hebrew, which are sister languages. The Septuagint was made in the 3rd century, B.C., for the Alexandrian Jews. This version was never officially read by the Jews in Palestine who spoke Aramaic and read Hebrew. Instead, the Jewish authorities condemned the work and declared a period of mourning because of the defects in the version. Evidently Jesus and his disciples used a text which came from an older Hebrew original. This is apparent because Jesus' quotations from the Old Testament agree with the Peshitta text but do not agree with the Greek text. For example, in John 12:40, the Peshitta Old Testament and New Testament agree. This is not all. Jesus and his disciples not only could not converse in Greek but they never heard it spoken.

We believe that the Scriptures were conceived and inspired by the Holy Spirit and written by Hebrew prophets who spoke and wrote, as the Holy Spirit moved them, to the people in their days, using idioms, similes, parables and metaphors in order to convey their messages. Moreover, these men of God sacrificed their

lives that the Word of God might live. The Jewish race treasured these sacred writings as a priceless possession.

Writing was prevalent from the earliest days. The Israelites made more extensive use of the instrument of writing than neighboring nations such as the Ammonites, Moabites, and other kindred people round about them. Moses wrote the Ten Commandments; Joshua wrote on an altar which he built west of Jordan. The Israelites were admonished to fasten the commandments to their foreheads and necks and to write them on their doorsteps. Everything was written at the time it was revealed. God said to Moses,

"Now therefore write this song for them, and teach it to the children of Israel; and put it into their mouths; this song will be a witness for me against the children of Israel." Deut. 31:19.

"And the LORD answered me and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he who reads it may understand it clearly." Hab. 2:2. Thus, the Old Testament Scriptures were written very early.

This is also true of the Gospels. They were written a few years after the resurrection and some of the portions were written by Matthew while Jesus was preaching. They were not handed down orally and then written after the Pauline Epistles, as some western scholars say; they were written many years before those Epistles. Other contemporary Jewish literature was produced at the same time the Gospels were in circulation. The Gospels, as well as the Epistles, were written in Aramaic, the language of the Jewish people, both in Palestine and in the Greco-Roman Empire.

Greek was never the language of Palestine. Josephus' book on the Jewish Wars was written in Aramaic. Josephus states that even though a number of Jews had tried to learn the language of the Greeks, hardly any of them succeeded.

Josephus wrote (42 A.D.): "I have also taken a great deal of pains to obtain the learning of the Greeks, and understand the elements of the Greek language; although I have so accustomed myself to speak our own tongue, that I cannot pronounce Greek with sufficient exactness. For our nation does not encourage those that learn the language of many nations. On this account, as there have been many who have done their endeavors, with great patience, to obtain this Greek learning, there have yet hardly been two or three that have succeeded herein, who were immediately rewarded for their pains." *Antiquities XX, XI 2*.

Indeed, the teaching of Greek was forbidden by Jewish rabbis. It was said that it was better for a man to give his child meat of swine than to teach him the language of the Greeks.

When the King James translation was made, western scholars had no access to the East as we have today. In the 16th century, A.D., the Turkish empire had extended its borders as far as Vienna. One European country after another was falling under the impact of the valiant Turkish army. Europe was almost conquered. This is not all. The reformations and controversies in the Western Church had destroyed Christian unity. Moreover, the Scriptures in Aramaic were unknown in Europe. The only recourse scholars had was to Latin and to a few portions of Greek manuscripts. This is clearly seen from the works of Erasmus. Besides, the knowledge of Greek was almost lost at this time and Christians were just emerging from the Dark Ages.

Many people have asked why the King James' translators did not use the Peshitta text from Aramaic or the Scriptures used in the East. The answer is: there were no contacts between East and West until after the conquest of India by Great Britain and the rise of the imperial power of Britain in the Near East, Middle East, and the Far East. It is a miracle that the King James' translators were able to produce such a remarkable translation from sources available in this dark period of European history. Even fifty years ago, the knowledge of Western

scholars relative to the Eastern Scriptures in Aramaic and the Christian Church in the East was conjectural. Moreover, these scholars knew very little of the Eastern customs and manners in which the Biblical literature was nurtured. Thank God, today new discoveries have been made; new facts have come to light; new democratic institutions and governments have been established in the East. What in the 16th and 17th centuries was viewed at a long distance now can be seen face to face. Today, not only scholars, ministers, and Bible teachers walk on Palestinian soil but also thousands of men and women visit Biblical lands every year.

For centuries translations from Semitic languages have been subject to revision. They are, even now, subject to revision. This is why there are so many Bible versions varying each from the other. Let us just take one instance which I consider very important. In the King James version, we read in Numbers 25:4:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel."

The Aramaic reads:

"And the LORD said to Moses, Take all the chiefs of the people and expose them before the LORD in the daylight that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from the children of Israel."

Some noted Greek scholars in recent translations have changed the word hang to execute, but this is not what the original writer said. God could not have told Moses to behead or execute all Israelites. The Lord was angry at the princes of Israel because of the sin of Baal-peor. They had been lax in enforcing the law and also guilty in joining the sensual Baal worship.

And in 1 Corinthians 7:36 and 38, King James, we read:

"But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and needs so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry." "So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better."

The Aramaic reads:

"If any man thinks that he is shamed by the behavior of his virgin daughter because she has passed the marriage age and he has not given her in marriage and that he should give her, let him do what he will and he does not sin. Let her be married." "So then he who gives his virgin daughter in marriage does well; and he who does not give his virgin daughter in marriage does even better." Some of the scholars use "betrothed" instead of "virgin daughter." The American Standard Version of 1901 correctly used the term "virgin daughter." Certainly the King James' translators would have known the difference between "virgin daughter" and "betrothed." Paul, in this instance, is referring to a virgin's vow. Num. 30:16.

These discrepancies between various versions have been the cause of contentions and divisions among sincere men and women who are earnestly seeking to understand the Word of God. At times, they do not know what to believe and what not to believe. They cannot understand why the Scripture in one place says, "Love your father and mother" and in another place admonishes, "Hate your father and mother." Moreover, they are bewildered when told that Jesus on the cross cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The King James says in John 16:32, "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Then again, the Old Testament in many instances states that God does not forsake the righteous nor those who trust in him. Jesus was the son of God and entrusted his spirit to God. Jesus could not have contradicted himself.

The Peshitta text reads: "My God, my God, for this I was spared!"

After all the Bible is an Eastern Book, written primarily for the Israelites, and

then for the Gentile world.

When we come to the New Testament, the new Covenant, we must not forget that Christianity grew out of Judaism. The Christian gospel was another of God's messages, first to the Jewish people and then to the Gentile world. For several centuries, the Christian movement was directed and guided by the Jews. All of the apostles and the evangelists were Jewish. These facts are strongly supported by the gospels and history.

The Pauline Epistles were letters written by Paul to small Christian congregations in Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. These early Christians were mostly Jews of the dispersion, men and women of Hebrew origin who had been looking for the coming of the promised Messiah whose coming was predicted by the Hebrew prophets who had hailed him as a deliverer.

At the outset, the Romans were the masters of the world and the Greeks were not looking for a deliverer to rise up from among a people whom they hated and had crushed. Paul, on his journeys, always spoke in the Jewish synagogues. His first converts were Hebrews. Then came Arameans, the kindred of the Hebrews, as in the case of Timothy and Titus. Their fathers were Aramean and their mothers were Jewish.

Jesus and his disciples spoke the Galilean dialect of Aramaic, the language which the early Galileans had brought from the other side of the river Euphrates. 2 Kings 17:22-25. Mark tells us in his Gospel, 14:70 that Peter was exposed by his Galilean Aramaic speech.

Paul, in all of his Epistles, emphasizes Hebrew law, Jewish ordinances and temple rituals. He refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as "our fathers." In his letters and teaching he appeals to the Jewish people to accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. Paul's mission was first to his own people. When they refused to listen to him, he shook his garment and went out among the Gentiles. Acts 18:6. Paul preached the Christian gospel written in Aramaic. His Epistles were written years later when Christianity had spread into Syria and parts of the Near East and India. In other words, the Pauline Epistles were letters addressed to the Christian churches already established. Moreover, Paul, in nearly all of his Epistles, speaks of the Hebrew fathers, subjugation in Egypt, crossing the Red Sea, eating manna, and wandering in the desert. This proves beyond a doubt that these letters were written to members of the Hebrew race and not to the Gentile world who knew nothing of Hebrew history and divine promises made to them. The Greeks had not been persecuted in Egypt nor did they cross the Red Sea, nor did they eat manna in the desert.

Paul was educated in Jewish law in Jerusalem. He was a member of the Jewish Council. His native language was western Aramaic but he acquired his education through Hebrew and Chaldean or Palestinian Aramaic, the language spoken in Judea. He defended himself when on trial in his own tongue and not in Greek. Acts 22:2. Paul was converted, healed, and baptized in Damascus in Syria. Acts 9:17,18.

The Epistles were translated into Greek for the use of converts who spoke Greek. Later they were translated into Latin and other tongues.

I believe that this translation of the Bible based on the Eastern text of the Scriptures, written in a Semitic tongue which for many centuries was the lingua franca of the Near East and Palestine, will throw considerable light on many obscure passages and that it will elucidate many other passages which have lost their meaning because of mistranslations.

Many church authorities in the Near East, India, and other parts of Asia have been looking for a long time for a translation of their venerable Aramaic text of the Scriptures into the English language. Many of them, despite their religious differences, have prayed for the translation and publication of this work so that thousands of educated men and women whose second language is English might

read the Word of God translated from their own ancient text rather than made from secondary sources. This is also true of thousands of educated Moslems who revere the Peshitta and look upon it as the authentic text of the Scriptures.

All the English speaking people in Asia will welcome a translation based on what they believe to be the pure original sources which have been carefully kept all these centuries without the slightest modification or revision. I firmly believe that this work will strengthen the faith in Jesus Christ of many Christians in the Near East and Far East and enhance missionary efforts in spreading the Word of God to millions of people in Asia. These were the facts which motivated me when I undertook this task, to which I have devoted my life.

Since World War I, when the Aramaic speaking people were brought to the attention of the Western world and some of their ancient books brought to America, more facts from the ancient past have come to light. *The National Geographic Magazine*, as well as British and American newspapers have touched on the question of the Aramaic speaking people. *The National Geographic Magazine* in an article on Syria and Lebanon, December, 1946, speaks of Assyrian nurses, newly trained in Christian healing, who could have understood The Sermon on the Mount as it left Jesus' lips nearly two thousand years ago. The article also mentions *The Four Gospels According to the Eastern Version*, translated by George M. Lamsa, an Assyrian, from Aramaic into English, and states that Aramaic is the still living language which Jesus spoke.

The translator wishes to express his sincerest and deepest gratitude to Dr. Walter D. Ferguson of Temple University for editorial work, for his sincere interest in this translation, for his rich knowledge and understanding of the Biblical background, and also for his inspiration and enthusiasm. I am also indebted to many others for consultation, among them my countrymen, Archdeacon Saul Neesan and the Rev. Isaac Rehana; also to a number of Jewish scholars.

The translator is also grateful to the men and women of many denominations whose generous interest and financial help enabled me to complete this work. God only can reward them for their generous part in this work.

I wish also to state that I firmly believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God. I believe in the miracles and wonders which God wrought in the past and which are still demonstrated today. May the Holy Word of God give us faith, wisdom, and understanding to grasp the inner meaning of God's Holy Word and to make us partakers in His Kingdom. May the blessings of God rest upon the readers and students of this translation. May God's richest blessings be upon this country without whose freedom and democratic institutions, this translation could not have been made.

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105.

GEORGE M. LAMSA

MAY 1957.

Group wants revision in Catholic thinking

TORONTO (CP) — A Catholic women's group is requesting the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to publicly support and work toward the ordination of women.

The Canadian Catholics for Women's Ordination, which has about 75 members, favors the reorganization of power structures within the church, the ordination of community-chosen leaders and the ordination of both single and married members of both sexes.

"We feel it is time to look internally at (the Roman

Catholic Church's) structure and see if it is just ... and we feel it is not just," Rosemary Cooke, a spokesman for the fledgling group, told a news conference Sunday after the organization's first conference, held in Toronto this weekend.

Attendance at the conference was restricted to women, but the group's members and supporters include men, some of whom are priests.

Although the group anticipates a strong reaction to its proposals and recognizes the possibility that some church members will be alienated by them, group members said many church members have already been alienated and this process will continue if the policy of excluding women from decision-making in the church is continued.



what the people are saying



Thanks for I have received *Shekinah* Vol. 1, No. 1, Dec. 1980. I am a young man of twenties and I fully support the ordination of women to God's ministry. Salvation is for all humanity, not just males only. I have explained to some people about it — ordination of women. They backed the idea, but most of them requested me to write to you for an invitation to visit our country, Kenya, to meet more of our people. . . have donated one hectare of my land for any gatherings or building. . . . There has never been a time more needy than today for a mighty spiritual awakening. In the midst of the present appalling darkness, spiritual declension and economic depression, let us daily be sending up to the throne of God a heart-cry for revival. I was brought up and baptized in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1976. I fully back ordaining women as ministers. Yours in God's service,

Christopher M. Magwaro
Kenya, East Africa

The Oral Roberts University Library has a Holy Spirit Research Center containing one of the world's largest collections of Pentecostal/Charismatic materials. We now have approximately 8,000 books, 400 current magazines, 1,000 tapes and cassettes, and a vertical file of tracts, pamphlets, brochures, newsletters and news articles. We are wondering if your publication would fit in this specialized collection. Please let us know your stand on the Pentecostal experience; your frequency of publication and, if not complimentary, the price per subscription. We are looking forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Karen Robinson, Director
Tulsa, Oklahoma

A neighbour has been giving me copies of *Shekinah* for a long time. I love it, it is all good and true. In it, it says things which have changed my mind to accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. I could be happy if you can send me 10 copies of *Shekinah* every month to share with my friends.

Sospeter N. Onserio
Kenya, East Africa

Here is O My Father by Eliza R. Snow. Her poem has been set to music for some time. It is the basic Mormon reference to Heavenly Parents and a Heavenly Mother. The tune on page 139 is the one most often sung in Mormon churches.

Alice A. Pottmyer
Arlington, Virginia

O MY FATHER

Eliza R. Snow

O my Father, thou that dwellest
In the high and glorious place,
When shall I regain thy presence,
And again behold thy face?
In thy holy habitation,
Did my spirit once reside?
In my first primeval childhood,
Was I nurtured near thy side?

For a wise and glorious purpose
Thou hast placed me here on earth,
And withheld the recollection
Of my former friends and birth,
Yet oft-times a secret something
Whispered, "You're a stranger here;"
And I felt that I had wandered
From a more exalted sphere.

I had learned to call thee Father,
Through thy Spirit from on high;
But until the key of knowledge
Was restored, I knew not why.
In the heavens are parents single?
No; the thought makes reason stare!
Truth is reason, truth eternal
Tells me I've a mother there.

When I leave this frail existence,
When I lay this mortal by,
Father, Mother, may I meet you
In your royal courts on high?
Then, at length, when I've completed
All you sent me forth to do,
With your mutual approbation
Let me come and dwell with you.

I am very very happy for the Wisdom of God in you. I believe that God showed you the secrets of Wisdom above. I also believe you are speaking the Wisdom of God. I believe the Trinity of God to be Father, Mother or Spirit and Son. I believe with you. I know that the family of man is father,

mother, son. Please take me in your mailing list. God and Mother in Heaven bless the Branch Family, Amen!
Etim J. Okpokpo
Nigeria, West Africa

Thank you for the *Shekinahs* sent me today. My whole and complete desire is to know truth. I am getting acquainted with more truth. These are truths that you are teaching. The Spirit has been bearing witness all along, its just that I was so very cautious. Thank El-Yon, El-Shaddi, our Creator, for fresh (well for me fresh and new revealed) truth. As far as I know, you all are the only ones with this truth. You will be blessed (and persecuted) for this. But according to His (or Her) purpose, the ones who are supposed to get this, will. How grateful I am to be one of them. You are being faithful to the revelation given you (from Mother, Wisdom). Of course the Holy Spirit is feminine. Who else in the world can comfort, and hovers over her brood etc., except a mother? Inside I've always felt along these lines. Just hadn't the words or knowledge of it.

Odessa Morace
Ferriday, Louisiana

More women are joining the clergy

WOMEN ministers are gaining acceptance in Protestant churches, a new study shows. In fact, 20 percent of the clergy in nine denominations surveyed by Connecticut's Hartford Seminary are female.

The study shows that the clergywomen have excellent performance records.

They lagged behind men only in handling budgets — and in salaries. But women clergy are younger and have held their jobs less time than the average clergyman.

Part 2

Melchisedec Manuscripts

by Norene Nicholls

There are quite a few scriptures dealing with ELYON, but some of them are but a repeat of other scriptures, so we shall limit somewhat these repetitions. Now we shall proceed to the Psalms and consider some of the references to ELYON, The Most High.

Psalm 21 is a Psalm of David and refers to "the king" all the way through. Some have thought this was referring to David, which it certainly does, but that is but a beginning point. It likewise is a picture of THE KING OF KINGS and well describes Him. But let us consider that Melchisedec was likewise a king, and so the Psalm speaks also of him. The beauty of the scriptures is that they continue to unfold in ever widening meaning and revelation. But there is one verse in this Psalm to be considered in regards to the Most High, and that is verse 7, "For the king trusteth in the Lord, and through the MERCY of the MOST HIGH he shall not be moved." The first point to be noted is that the MOST HIGH is MERCIFUL. This particular word in Hebrew has somewhat of a different meaning than most think, for it comes from the Hebrew CHACAD which means to bow the neck only in courtesy to an equal. It rarely has anything to do with reproof. The thought here conveyed is staggering, for it infers that the MOST HIGH bows His neck or nods His head in courtesy and love to an equal. Can we begin to even minutely comprehend this? The Melchisedec kingship comes into such unity with the Most High that the Most High has to but nod His head in approval as if we are His equal, and nothing can then move or hinder that kingship. The Hebrew word for MOVE means WAVER. Therefore by the mercy, the approving nod, of the Most High, this kingship shall never even waver let alone be moved. O for the full comprehension and realization that the Most High lifts His kings to the place of co-partnership with Him! This is something even greater than we have imagined as we have read that we are co-heirs with Christ, as wonderful as that is, for this is co-partnership with the Most High who was before He divided Himself into Father, Son, Spirit, masculine, feminine, etc. We shall touch on this later in more detail.

Psalm 46 is titled, TO THE CHIEF MUSICIAN FOR THE SONS OF KORAH, A SONG UPON ALAMOTH. The word ALAMOTH means SOPRANO from the word ALMAH meaning a VIRGIN.

Thus the Psalm deals with the feminine side of the matter. Then in verse 4 we read, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the TABERNACLES of the MOST HIGH." Let me stop right here to inject a thought that might clarify the matter: The term MELCHISEDEC is both masculine and feminine, the first part of it being masculine and the later part being feminine. A Hebrew student first pointed this out to me quite a number of years ago, for not being a student of Hebrew I would not have known it, but he is also the first one who turned my thoughts into the subject of the daughters of God. So it is reasonable to see then how the EL-ELYON would be intertwined with this Psalm concerning the virgins or the feminine part of His purpose. And, therefore it is understandable how the priesthood after the order of Melchisedec is both masculine and feminine.

Showing that the city is feminine, verse 5, continues, "God is in the midst of HER; SHE shall not be moved: God shall help HER, and that right early." This coincides well with the picture of the New Jerusalem given in Revelation where it is referred to as THE BRIDE, THE LAMB'S WIFE. All of this is said to further point out that this city is the holy place of the TABERNACLES of the MOST HIGH. To what does a tabernacle or tabernacles refer? It refers to BODIES, for the body is called a tent or a tabernacle or a temple. Therefore we ascend from one level of truth to another, from understanding that our body is the temple of God to that of our body being the TABERNACLE OF THE MOST HIGH. There are various manifestations of the EVER LIVING ONE, such as, YAHWEH (the One who reveals Himself), EL (the Strong One), MESSIAH (the Anointed One), etc., but there is nothing higher, no higher manifestation than the MOST HIGH. Out of this came all the other manifestations, the manifestations whereby He broke Himself into different facets for the comprehension of men. Every revelation or manifestation of Himself came out from the MOST HIGH and will return into the MOST HIGH. Thus the TABERNACLES of the MOST HIGH will be those changed bodies of the elect who manifest and reveal Him in His totality. I grope for words trying to convey to you the greatness of what a tabernacle of the Most High can mean, but words seem so useless, for the magnitude

of it and the majesty of it is overwhelming. I can only trust that the Holy Spirit will quicken it to your hearts and make it ever so real.

Psalms 47:2 states, "For the Lord MOST HIGH is TERRIBLE; He is a great King over all the earth. We have already dealt with the fact that He is possessor of Heaven and earth, but now we have the added thought that He, the MOST HIGH, is TERRIBLE. We think of terrible as being awful, but that is not the meaning here, but rather AWESOME, not awful. Awe is a reverential fear, not a slavish fear. The presence of the MOST HIGH produces awe and reverence, and well it ought. Yet with His awesome presence there is the mingling of His blessed mercy, and the one balances the other.

Now we come to Psalm 77:10, "...but I will remember the YEARS of the RIGHT HAND of the MOST HIGH." This statement was prefaced by the psalmist telling about overwhelming experiences, troubles, afflictions and castings off, but always there is the thought that he recalls the Father's mercies, and though the above statement is partly in italics showing it was supplied by the translators, the thought remains that he is remembering something from the past to encourage him in the present. In this case it is the YEARS OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MOST HIGH that is being recalled in the midst of the afflictions. The Hebrew word for YEARS literally means a FOLD, a DOUBLING, a CYCLE, a REVOLUTION. It does not necessarily mean a year of 365 days, but also it refers to greater periods of time, to cycles of His unfoldings, to revolutions of His power. This then could not simply mean the psalmist was recalling past days or years of his mere lifespan, but rather a calling to mind of something of greater proportion than that. This takes us back into the cycles of time prior to the earth or even prior to this little time we call the lifespan. This goes into antiquity when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy at the laying of the foundation of the earth. It is way back there when we consented to this lowering into a body of flesh, into this grueling experience under the powers of this present world system. Even then we said YES to the Father's plan and came here with

a volume inscribed within us telling us all that was past, present and future. Back in the rolling cycles of time before the world was we foresaw all that was to be both in misery and then in consequential glory. Therefore, in the midst of our perplexities we remind ourselves of this and are thus encouraged. It is the YEARS (cycles) of the RIGHT HAND (the place of power) of the MOST HIGH that we remember. You may state that you do not remember it yet, but we have the assurance that we shall know all things, and this includes all past, present and future. It has been well said that KNOWING IS REMEMBERING, and the fulness of knowledge is the fulness of remembrance. Take courage, for the priests of the MOST HIGH shall fully know and remember all things!

In conjunction with the above is Psalm 82:6, "I have said, Ye are gods (Elohim), and all of you are children (sons) of the MOST HIGH." What a powerful statement! But it is balanced with the next verse showing our lowered estate, but that later verse cannot disannul the fact of who we are. It sounds almost like heresy to say that we are gods, but the Hebrew word of ELOHIM indeed is the name used in Genesis 1 during the acts of creation. ELOHIM IS PLURAL! EL is the singular form, for ELOHIM is plural, and if we are ELOHIM, then we were with Him in the creative work. We created the very earth into which we have now been lowered, what a mystery! But nevertheless true. That is one facet of the truth, but besides that, we are SONS, not just children of minority, but those having reached majority, and having come to this point we are SONS OF THE MOST HIGH, the Highest One. Christ Himself was termed SON OF THE HIGHEST, and we thus follow in His footsteps unto full majority finalizing it by being glorified with the glory we had with Him before the world was. We are now facing the redemption of the body which is the beginning of glorification which is also the manifestation of the sons of God according to Romans 8:23. But as the years (cycles) of the right hand (power) of the MOST HIGH continue we shall fully remember that we are SONS OF THE MOST HIGH, and as such, we, too, are of the ORDER OF MELCHISEDEC!

Jesus was a feminist to a degree far beyond that of His fellows and followers. . . . No other Western prophet, seer, or would-be redeemer of humanity was so devoted to the feminine half of mankind.

— Charles Seltman

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down, all alone — these together ought to be able to turn it back and get it rightside up again: and they is asking to do it. The men better let 'em.

Sojourner Truth (1851)

Women in the ministry

By FRED HERMAN
Bee staff writer

You used to dial 411, ask for Diane Darling's phone number, and directory assistance would tell you, "We have no such listing; we only have a Rev. D. Darling."

The Rev. Diane Darling's College Avenue Congregational Church flock did something about that.

"We bugged them (the telephone company) daily," she giggles. One day an operator responded with "she's a minister, isn't she?"

Darling enjoys a chuckle about that with three colleagues, the Rev. Leslie Hall of Modesto's First United Methodist Church, the Rev. Peggy Schultz-Akerson of Emanuel Lutheran Church, and Kathy Hammel, a licensed Disciples of Christ minister at First Christian Church.

While most of them have known each other individually for some time, the four were together in one room for the first time in a recent talk with The Bee about their experiences as women in one of the most traditional male domains: the ministry. What problems, limitations or advantages do women religious leaders face?

The interview took months to arrange because of the pressing demands of the ministry. After this day's two-hour session, they say, they will get together on a more regular basis to discuss areas of mutual concern.

One such area:

They say their parish life still assigns them chores traditionally left to pastors' wives. Among them, leading women's groups and planning parties. Nevertheless, acceptance is growing for what Schultz-Akerson terms "the authenticity of our ministry."

Others: links to their bosses, their congregations. All four deem their senior male pastors superior to varied degrees. All four report acceptance from their parishioners.

Sitting in the College Avenue Church library, the four reveal distinctly different personalities.

Darling, 28, seems relaxed, comfortable. She exudes the poised assurance of one used to leadership positions.

Hall, 27, has the sparkling eyes, expressive hands, speaks with alternating intensity and flashing smiles. She and Darling were classmates in Berkeley's Pacific School of Religion.

Schultz-Akerson, 28, comes across as guarded, a



The Rev. Diane Darling

private person, expressing reluctance over in-house problems appearing in print. She is a Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary graduate.

Hammel, 22, is the youngest. She seems apprehensive that signs of intelligence and wit will make her come across as egotistic. A graduate of Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Ore., she is permitted to perform any sacraments allowed any ordained person in her denomination, but says she still is wrestling with whether to enter seminary.

They are not the first women to lead Stanislaus

County flocks. Indeed, at least three small churches currently are led solely by women.

But these four represent mainstream Protestantism, establishment churches with combined membership that totals four figures. Their youth and energy make them — in the words of College Avenue Congregational's Rev. David McCracken — a new force on the city's spiritual scene.

"We're all fresh out of school," Darling muses, "and suddenly there are four of us. One September Sunday, I noticed in *The Bee*, three of us were in the pulpit. Things are changing. A couple of years ago that wasn't possible."

All are involved in the quest for social justice, term themselves feminists but won't preach feminism in church.

Hall insists "you can't separate the social and the spiritual. Jesus went off and prayed, but he also rabble-roused. I used to be an activist . . . but I haven't had the time here. I'm anti-nuclear and anti-hunger, and I guess especially anti-sexism

and anti-racism. Eradicate them and . . ."

She starts to say it would cure all the world's evils. But after the interview, she calls, concerned that's going too far.

Schultz-Akerson hesitates, expresses a trace of discomfort, then says she feels a "biblical call to being active for social justice . . . and Jesus cared for the poor and the oppressed."

She says she is anti-nuclear and pro-women's rights. She hails Dan Berrigan, the activist Catholic priest of the 1960s, for "moving us on," but won't preach Berrigan's militant pacifism in the pulpit.

"The parish pastor needs to be sensitive to where the parish is. They need to trust you, to be shown you care about where they are. Sometimes you have to tread water . . ."

Hammel: "I get involved more readily in political causes than feminist ones. I'm more likely to be involved in the Nestle boycott or nuclear proliferation than pushing the ERA. I am a biblical



By Al Golub, *Bee* staff photographer

The Rev. Peggy Schultz-Akerson of Emanuel Lutheran Church and son Marty.

feminist, not an equal rights soapboxer, but one who readily believes men and women are equal before God. I've really become more aware lately of sexist language in theology."

Darling has become the most visible of the four. She supported abortion rights on a Modesto Library panel. She advocated the equal rights amendment at a Stanislaus County Courthouse rally. She says she feels free to preach about El Salvador or nuclear energy.

"I don't feel any great conflict with my pastoral duties," she adds, "and I don't feel I've done anything incredibly radical."

She recalls, however that "David (McCracken) once preached an entire sermon referring to God as 'she.' I couldn't get away with that. People would see a feminist banner over my head and miss the point."

Schultz-Akerson, who agrees when pressed she may be from the most conservative of the four congregations represented, notes Darling's church may be "the most liberal in town."

The conversation turns to the fact some major denominations, among them Catholicism and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, still will not elevate women to the priesthood. They are asked for biblical quotes to back their equal rights position. Suddenly there's a great hubbub.

All four in some way "refuse to interpret scripture in the press," although Darling suggests "some people still think the Bible exists to condone the status quo. But much theology just reflects human biases."

Hall: "Look at the way Jesus treated women. He never said that men do this and women do that."

Schultz-Akerson: "Jesus was a mind-blower to the patriarchal culture. He encouraged Mary (in the Lazarus story) to be in the circle of learners."

They're asked if they want to be "head men" some day.

"Head persons," they chorus. Then they reveal some hesitation.

Schultz-Akerson voices, as the other four nod, a preference for "a circle, not a ladder," a church leadership in which people are equal rather than structured from top to bottom.

"I'm more excited about a team ministry based on God-given gifts rather than being placed somewhere in a hierarchy. I couldn't function as senior partner on a Jacob's ladder."

Hall says she doesn't want to be a senior minister. Rather than junior and senior, Darling voices a preference for "co-ministry" and "collegiality," the latter a term Webster's New World Dictionary defines as "a sharing of authority among colleagues," like the pope and the bishops.

"Women," she insists, "are changing the model of hierarchy."

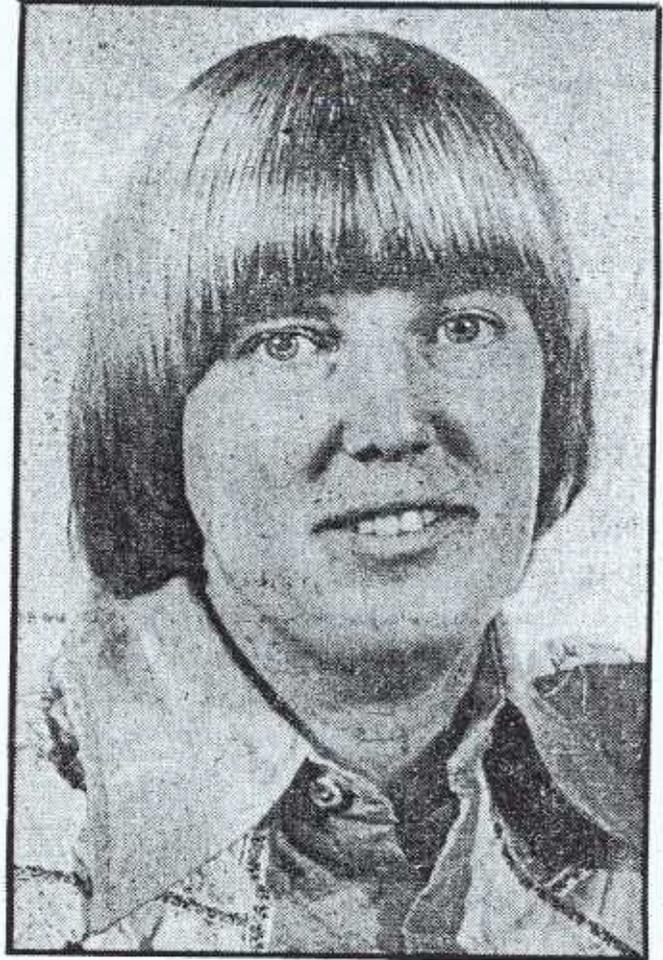
The former Peggy Schultz and the former Reg Akerson share Emanuel's associate minister post. They combined last names, along with everything else, when they married.

Each Rev. Schultz-Akerson works two-thirds

time. Together they're raising an 11-week-old son, Jon Martin (Marty).

"They used to think I was a nun when I went visiting in hospitals in my clerical collar," the female Schultz-Akerson laughs. "They stopped calling me sister when I was very, very pregnant, but I got some very strange looks."

She was preaching until two weeks before giving birth.



The Rev. Leslie Hall

Measuring the response

How have male senior pastors responded to having female aides assigned to them — all since mid-1980?

Hammel: "Larry (the Rev. Larry Hansmeier) has been wonderful, like a father to me. He recommended me to the board for



Kathy Hammel

associate status. He'd never worked with a woman before and wasn't sure about the risks involved, but I feel we have healthy teamwork."

Hall: "Doug (the Rev. Douglas Norris) was very open. He's easy to work with. He supports me as a person, if not as a woman," advised her to be "more aggressive" in pushing things like using women to serve communion if he didn't push them.

Schultz-Akerson called her situation complicated, voiced "great respect" for the Rev. Robert E. Segerhammar, Emanuel pastor for 25 years: "He was very open to a woman

(and) I experience that he really respects my abilities . . . but I feel a sense of benevolent dominance."

Darling: "I have not had one speck of trouble with Dave (the Rev. David McCracken) or any clash due to my being female. He's given me great honors — like Easter, when he said 'you take both services, I'll sit in a pew.' I feel a real sense of co-ministry. David has convinced me that the best thing a church can have is both a man and a woman (to) meet different needs."

And how have congregations responded?

Hammel: "There were about a dozen votes against me, probably more women than men, and two abstentions, but now I feel totally supported, appreciated and loved. I've gotten much feedback like 'we voted against you but we've changed our minds.' We (her church) have grown and I like to think I've been a part of that."

Schultz-Akerson: "There's probably been more (negative) reaction from women. I've been received just fine 'although' a few here have theological differences, don't find it good for women to be ordained. There are women in their 30s or so who interpret scripture as 'women are to be submissive to their husbands.'

"They're not against me personally; they've been very warm, but there's a big difference between being accepted and being advocated.

"Throughout history women have been conditioned to being vulnerable. So in a parish setting with a longtime male ministry, people have appreciated that vulnerability, that openness."

Darling: "Generally I've been received very well . . . no problem. Generally the congregation has celebrated having a woman on the staff. They're glad to have a woman to talk to. But there has been some subtle resistance . . . anger . . . sexism so subtle you can't put your finger on it."

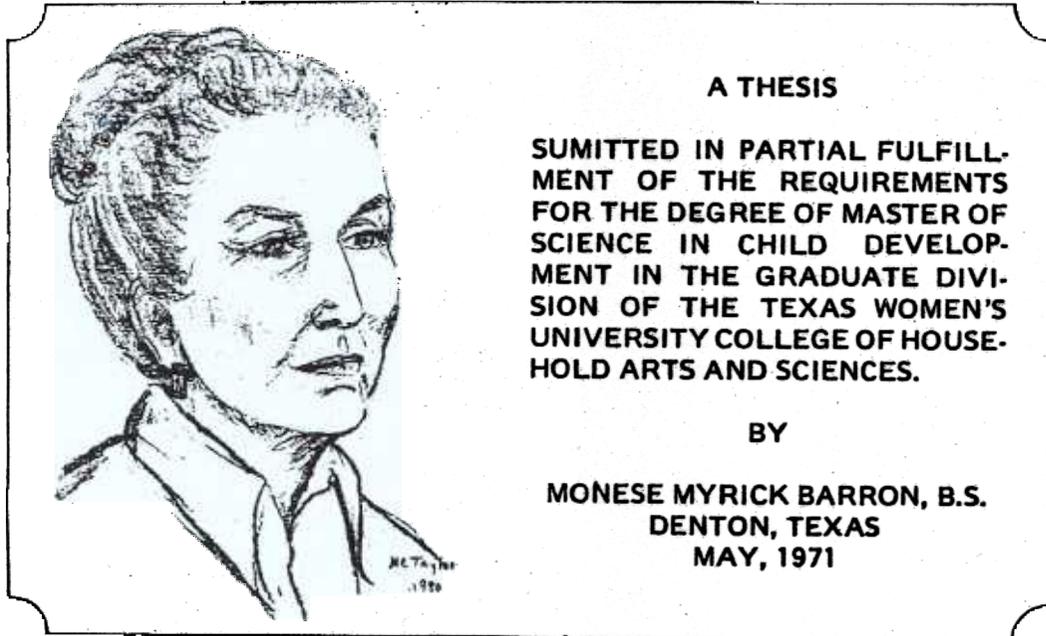
"There's also something about the way you may be hugged in the receiving line. We're a very hugging church. But I feel affirmation when a woman tells me:

"Something good happens to me when I see another woman in the pulpit. We've never before had a minister who looks like us."

▶ IMPORTANT SUBSCRIPTION ANNOUNCEMENT ◀

Due to increased production and mailing costs we are forced to remove from our mailing lists all who do not wish to continue receiving the SHEKINAH. To facilitate this we are enclosing a subscription card for 1982. Only those who fill in and return the card will be kept on our current mailing list. Also, the SHEKINAH will be produced quarterly, instead of bi-monthly, during 1982. We hope you will understand and continue to support this work with your prayers as well as financially. We look forward to your new subscription.

EARLY ICONOGRAPHY OF THE TREE OF JESSE HOLDS CLUE FOR WOMAN AS COUNTER-PART OF SPIRITUAL IMAGE



A THESIS

SUMMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE TEXAS WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF HOUSEHOLD ARTS AND SCIENCES.

BY

MONESE MYRICK BARRON, B.S.
DENTON, TEXAS
MAY, 1971

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the present study condensed the findings, contributing to the spiritual image of woman from three areas: a) the arts, b) the sciences, and c) the scriptures. The main point for the study was woman, and a way to identify temporal woman as a counter-part to a spiritual woman. The Tree of Jesse, subject of Isaiah's prophecy, is a tree of symbolic meaning. Isaiah's prophecies have been applicable to other generations; there is a meaning for the woman of today.

The Virgin of the Tree of Jesse, in the earliest art figures, iconography by Watson, was a representation of the spiritual Mother of God. The prefigurations in Latin and the position of the ascending figures indicate a return to heaven by way of the *scala* or stair, beginning at the lowest level, *Timor Domini* upward to *Sopientia*, the highest possible level.

The *rubus*, bramble bush or berry bush, yields bounteous harvest and is described by *igneus*, by fire, a feeling as intense emotion. *Egredietur virga*, an extraordinary tree, was the earliest interpretation of the Tree of Jesse, as a tree of the generations of mankind. Mystic phrases from early poetry described the Mother of God in imagery. The spiritual image is still concealed.

Watson for his purpose tested the validity of the trees, preserved by artists' representations, with an exacting formula. The author of the present study examined the meaning of the Latin prefigurations. The spiritual image of a woman is concealed in the Tree of Jesse.

The feeling permeating the interpretation of Isaiah's prophecy by the above medium showed woman as mother of the spirit generations beside the Father who created all things spiritually before the temporal creation. The concern intimated in the Latin word imagery, described a mother's emotions of intense concern over the return of the generations of earth to heaven.

There is a woman in heaven, an influence given to woman by intuition, who is a prompting spirit. Earthly woman reflects the same concern for her children as she strives to influence them to accept the father's guidance.

The author turned to science to find a mother figure in heaven; a mother on earth was associated with the home. Science formulates to find the thing that is unknown.

Where, And behold all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, Therefore, both things which are temporal and things which are in the heavens above.

State the known:

Where, Male A is father of heavenly home;
Male a is son of Heavenly Father.
Female B is mother in earth home;
Female b is daughter of Mother.

Question for unknown:

Where, A is God of Heaven B is ?
a is Only Begotten b is ?

The unknown of heavenly structure is the female. Known figures are God, Only Begotten Son and Holy Ghost — the Godhead. God is the Heavenly Father. The only organization in the universe with a father-head is the human family. Therefore, B is Holy Ghost, an alias for Heavenly Goddess, Heavenly Goddess, Heavenly Mother.

Formula:

Where, A is God

B is Goddess

a is Only Begotten Son

b is Only Begotten Daughter.

Therefore, $a + b = A + B$.

The Only Begotten Daughter is as the Heavenly Mother, a prevailing influence finding spiritual embodiment in temporal woman.

Christian religion gives woman less status than many ancient religions. The Bible as accepted by sectarians has been translated and revised many times. Woman's earliest and clearest identity in the scriptures is with man, accounted in Genesis and the Book of Moses. Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden. God punished them for disobedience and gave Adam his spiritual mother for heavenly guidance in the form of the Holy Ghost. He gave Adam Eve and told him that he would rule over her. An applied formula could be — woman is always identified with man, both become one in purpose. God and Goddess form a "Oneness" in heaven that has a likeness in the earth.

Three witnesses are required to establish a truth. Woman, *per se* is a well known entity. To establish her counter-part the author of this study calls forth three other witnesses. Thoughts must be communicated although not tangible can be accepted.

Three areas of thought expressing man's knowledge of his surroundings contribute to the identity of a spiritual image for temporal woman. First the Tree of Jesse, an iconographic study by Watson, second scientific findings by the present author set to formula, and third logistics applied by the author to reveal woman as human counter-part to a heavenly being.

The author of the present study offers to temporal woman the belief that there is a spiritual image, recommending the belief as a meaningful contribution to both men and women. Woman and man were equal counter-parts in the spiritual realm before God created Adam from the dust and took a rib from man to create the woman, Eve. She became flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone on the earth, and Adam and Eve were created in likenesses of a spiritual father and mother. A personal image is important to an individual because it is how one sees self that helps the self present to others the ego's image. A person's self confidence is greatly influenced by how others see him as well as by how he sees himself. Stature development is enhanced when the individual feels worthy of the responsibilities and capable of living up to the expectations of a position. Since his self image re-enforces his beliefs, it becomes of significance to others. Woman needs recognition to give her status. Man's free agency could have been hampered had the identity of the woman God gave unto him as a helpmate disclosed all the qualities that woman can claim and share with her husband and family. The female member of the heavenly family, the Holy Ghost referred to

as the Comforter, is described as knowing the "peaceable things of immortal glory, the truth of all things, that which quickeneth all things (gives life), and hath power, according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice and judgment."

Adam was given a saviour for his sin, Christ, named as the second Adam. The first Adam responsible for life and death; the second responsible for redemption and salvation. Eve was not given a redeemer for her sin; God's punishment for Eve was the same for all women, sorrow in conception as Adam and Eve fulfilled God's commandment to multiply and replenish the earth. The generations, God's children come to earth, are Eve's redeemer. Together Adam and Eve were to subdue the world, and again they failed God in order to bring about the Plan. God gave all of His creation free agency and the generations have been disobedient to the will of God.

Man should be happy to learn of woman as his equal, of woman as his helpmate and of woman who bears witness of him — all to the glory of God. God's plan was to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man and woman. How will this be accomplished? A prophecy from the "odes of Solomon" reads:

*But a wheel received it and came over it
And there was with it a sign of the Kingdom and
of the government:*

*The head went down to the feet, for down to the
feet ran the wheel, and that which was a sign
upon it.*

*And there was seen at its head, the head which
was revealed even the Son of Truth from the most
High Father.*

Truth will roll forward as a wheel and encircle the earth. Prophecy given in symbolical language must be interpreted again and again for the application of the symbol will accommodate for different dispensation. Many symbols of meaning to the early Christians have been adopted by governments and fraternities.

The dove is a Christian symbol for the Holy Ghost. John described the occasion:

*And thus he was called the son of God because he received
not the fulness at first. And I, John, bear record, and lo,
the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended
upon him in the form of a dove and sat upon him, and
there came a voice out of heaven saying, "This is my be-
loved Son," and I John bear record that he received a ful-
ness of the glory of the Father.*

The dove appears on coins, in the Peace Palace and as a symbol of peace wherever a symbol is needed to express the desire man has for peace in his world. Why is not woman recognized as the living symbol for peace? Woman you are a daughter of the Holy Ghost, and through so close a bond you are entitled to the Spirit of the Holy Ghost to identify with the woman role.

CONCLUDED.

Woman's Wilderness Wanderings: Plight of Flight or Fight in the '80s

Carole A. Rayburn, Ph.D., M. Div.

This paper was presented at the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, March 20, 1981. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, Michigan.

PART 1

The 1980s may prove to be a decade of decision-making for women, especially within the religious sphere. The past decade has seen the arena of battle between woman and the religious establishment: eleven female Episcopalian priests ordained in an unorthodox ceremony, fighting their uphill battle until they were accepted into the priesthood of their church. One of these women, Reverend Betty Bone Schiess, initiated a discrimination suit with the Episcopal Church in 1976, because the Diocese of New York refused to recognize her ordination and right to priestly employment.¹ While Reverend Schiess and others, such as the Reverends Alison Cheek, Alison Palmer, and Pauli Murray are not fleeing from the religious establishment, theirs has been a long and difficult struggle.

The '70s also witnessed the tragedy of the "trial" of Dr. Sonia Johnson, a fifth-generation Mormon, who questioned her church's fighting against the Equal Rights Amendment. Her very first "feminist awakening" was, in her words, more like "an epiphany." Feeling betrayed by her church and humiliated because she had been deceived, she had believed that Mormon women were equal and exalted. Then she felt immense sorrow for all the wasted lives of women believers in a male chauvinistic church, despite the church's doctrine of a Mother in heaven who sits by the side of Father in heaven. Declaring that she "ratified the E.R.A. in heaven and established Mother in heaven on her throne, equal to Father in heaven," she began to pray to Mother in heaven. For the first time, she began to experience a very special joy of praying to someone like herself — something that men do all the time and take for granted. Continuing her fight for the E.R.A. and establishing Mormons for E.R.A., she was excommunicated by her church officials. Having chosen out of a sense of faith and duty to fight the battle for equality within her church, having had her fight within terminated and having been forced to flee the Mormon Church she loved, she has established Ex-Mormons for E.R.A. Then, in 1980, Dr. Johnson and 20 other women chained themselves to the new Mormon temple dedicated in Bellevue, Washington. Thus, she is continuing her fight outside the Mormon Church which cast her out and her many years of faithful service aside.²

Mormon attorney Lee Anne Walker is the president of the Equal Rights Coalition of Utah. Ms. Walker has chosen flight from the Mormon Church and a fight for the E.R.A. from the outside of the church which excommunicated her sister Mormon, Sonia Johnson. In fact, the new church which Ms. Walker helped to found, Zion's First International Church, in

Salt Lake City, Utah, officially came into being on December 1, 1980, the anniversary of Sonia Johnson's Mormon excommunication trial. Emphasizing liberty, equality, and family, the new church is "offering a positive alternative to Mormonism" and establishing a mission to "aid those who are on the painful journey out of the Mormon Church," in the words of Ms. Walker. When Phillip J. Hart ordained his wife, Debbie A. Hart, to the Mormon priesthood, the Mormon Church excommunicated both of them and refused to recognize her priesthood. However, Debbie Hart then ordained four women and three men to the "Quorum of the 12 Apostates." This Quorum will eventually have six women and six men, so women will never be in the minority again. A requirement for membership is participation in an apple ceremony which symbolizes a refusal to use the story of Eve and the apple as a rationalization to discriminate against women. Women of all ages have been drawn to the new church: Aerie Wright, a 70 year old grandmother who had converted to the Mormon Church and had been a member for over 20 years, left the Mormon Church because of its fight against the E.R.A. She is a member of the Quorum of the 12 Apostates.³

Lois Roden, a 65 year old grandmother, heads the Living Waters Branch. The sect, founded by her husband in 1955 as a splinter from a splinter group of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, has preached that the Holy Family in heaven consists of Father, Mother, and Son. The vision of a feminine representation of Deity, of the Holy Spirit as the feminine presence of the Godhead, came to Mrs. Roden in 1977. Once a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, she admits to having been disfellowshipped because of a "doctrinal misunderstanding." Disclaiming that she is a feminist, she insists that she approaches the personality of the Holy Spirit as being feminine "purely from a Scriptural basis, not from a feminist view." She is quite concerned that females are left out whenever a masculine God and the masculine image of Deity is stressed to the exclusion of any concept of the feminine aspect of God.⁴

Naomi Goldenberg, in her book, *Changing of the Gods* (1979), questions whether traditional religions can ever faithfully image a non-male God. She concludes that feminism may indeed bring about the demise of traditional religions. Urging women to stop excusing Judaic patriarchal tradition and/or the traditions of the church fathers, she insists that they must overhaul the religious establishment radically. Real harm comes to women, she reasons, when father-gods are elevated as the only images of the highest religious value

in society. This encourages devaluation and scorn for women, convincing even women that they are innately inferior in the patriarchy. 5

In her welcome to Pope John Paul II on October 7, 1979, at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in Washington, D.C., Sr. M. Theresa Kane, RSM, voiced the sorrow of untold Roman Catholic women. She urged the Pope to "be mindful of the intense suffering and pain which is part of the life of so many women in these United States." She implored him to "listen with compassion and to hear the call of women who comprise half of humankind." In a stirring challenge to the Roman Catholic Church, Sr. Kane stated, "the Church in its struggle to be faithful to its call for reverence and dignity for all persons must respond by providing the possibility of women as persons being included in all ministries of our Church." Then she urged him "to be open to and respond to the voices coming from the women of this country who are desirous of serving in and through the Church as fully participating members." 6

Roman Catholic theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether, commenting on Sr. Theresa's address, insightfully pointed out the importance of not only the content but the context in which the remarks occurred. The aura created by a disarming and charismatic pope had lent credibility to his authority and his conservative views of the role of women in the Church. This credence of the Pope was shaken when Sr. Theresa urged inclusion of women in all the ministries of the Church — an inclusion which John Paul II had declared impossible because he believed God did not will it. Here was a woman, the leader of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union, questioning the judgment and even the authority of the Pope. Dr. Ruether concluded that, if the Pope did throw up further responses against feminist thought and communicating with women such as Sr. Theresa, by trying to repress the autonomy of Catholic religious women, "this will be a disaster, not only for women's orders, but for the credibility of his papacy. We can only hope that the Holy Spirit touches and changes his stubborn Polish heart before it is too late." 7

Roman Catholics have also been involved in fighting for equality for women within the Church through organizations such as Catholic Action for E.R.A. and the Women's Ordination Conference. Within the Jewish framework, the situation for women is somewhat different. In the synagogue, the struggle for women has been not only to make their importance felt (as in the cases of Protestant and Roman Catholic women) but their very presence as well, since traditionally it has been the men who have belonged to the synagogue and formed the *minyan*. Until recently, the problem among Jewish religious feminists has been that they were not organized enough to make their presence and concerns felt by the synagogue. In fact, when feminists have not cared for what went on in Judaism, they have done one of two things: either they have not chosen to become members of the synagogue at all, finding no setting within the religious establishment that was egalitarian enough for them, or (2) they have left unofficially and quietly, so that their absence is not really acknowledged or even a matter of concern to the synagogue authorities. Such quiet wandering in and out of the Jewish religious scene is possible because there is no excommunication or disfellowshipping of dissident members as in other settings. Blu Greenberg, an Orthodox Jewish writer and wife of a prominent rabbi, has been fighting for the equality of women with-

in Orthodox Judaism. She chairs the Task Force on the Jewish Woman in a Changing Society (sponsored by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies). 8

While men still determine what women can do in the Conservative synagogue, such as whether they may read from the Torah at the pulpit, the women have been speaking out more on even these concerns. For instance, in 1978, in a Long Island, New York, congregation, the women and some men refused to give another contract to the rabbi if her did not allow the women to participate in the *aliyah* within this Conservative setting. Further, some Conservative Jews have formed an organization called "GROW," an acronym for "Gaining Rabbinic Ordination for Women." This group has chosen to fight for women's equality within Judaism, but from outside an official committee. 9 Annette Daum, the Consultant to the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism, is the Coordinator of the Task Force on Equality of Women in Judaism of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues. She relates that this Task Force is an official committee of the Reform Judaism movement and that it was organized around "the issue of religious equality in each Reform Jewish synagogue." 10 Ms. Daum thinks that women must learn to organize a support system for themselves and others who think that equality for women as well as men is an important issue within the synagogue setting. Then, as a nuclear group of feminists within each congregation, they can more effectively approach committees and boards within the congregation. She commented that the Havurah Movement, which is gaining popularity within the Reform Jewish context, is another way in which women are expressing themselves religiously as equals to men. 11 The Havurah provides an opportunity for women to participate fully in the reading of the Torah, in the presence of Jewish men and with the men as co-sharers in the service.

All of these events presage the coming of the new and different relationship of women in the religious establishment which has historically championed patriarchy. Certainly, some women may still be unaware of the battle going on within their midst. Perhaps they are really choosing to ignore the fray, for the purpose of "keeping the peace." Increasing numbers, however, are not only knowledgeable about the problem of sexism in the church and synagogue but they also are no longer willing to tolerate such discrimination. They are not willing to accept second-class citizenship, especially when proffered in the name of God. Suspicious that the earth-bound gods are the ones who have made-up the rules of male-chauvinism to suit themselves and to control women, they are determined to reform the religious organization to which they belong. They are willing to have no less if they are to remain in the church or synagogue.

While women questioning the authority of a religious patriarchy is certainly not new, going back at least as far in modern times as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucy Stone, the intensity with which more and more women are demanding that the establishment deal with them and their spiritual needs is qualitatively and quantitatively of a different nature. "Religious feminists," a phrase which seemed incongruent to some individuals, is now more accepted and understood. Women are unwilling to give up either their religious lives or their fully expressed womanhood. Their dual identities as religionists and feminists make them appear more formidable to the religious establishment which can no longer dismiss them ca-

sually and coldly as "radical feminist dissidents." Those establishments that do, such as the Mormon Church seemed to do to Sonia Johnson, suffer the consequences of appearing not only sexist but punitive to women and a growing number of men in society in general. It is as though, in excommunicating or disfellowshipping a woman because she is not willing to be treated as an inferior within her Creator's house, the religious establishment is denying that women can be fully

human — even in terms of their femaleness — and spiritual believers at the same time. Women are becoming increasingly angry at even the suggestion that they make such a choice. They want what every man has claimed a right to have in life: full participation in the religious sphere and in all other realms of human endeavor.

TO BE CONTINUED

(Footnotes will be included with Part 2 in next issue.)

THE *Montgomery Journal*, Monday, November 30, 1981



Journal Staff Photo by Linda White

Carole Rayburn with her supporters outside Takoma Park's Sligo Ave. Seventh-Day Adventist Church which she claims didn't hire her as an associate pastor because she is a woman and "has associated with black persons."

Church Picketed on Woman's Job Dispute

Despite a cold and windy day, Carole Rayburn and about 40 of her supporters picketed outside Takoma Park's Sligo Ave. Seventh-day Adventist Church Saturday in support of a lawsuit which contends the church denied her employment as an associate pastor because she is a woman.

Rayburn, a clinical psychologist with a master's degree from Adventist Andrews University and a doctorate from Catholic University, filed the discrimination suit in a Baltimore federal court naming the denomination's top officers as well as the Potomac Conference, its regional group.

The suit asserts that Rayburn was denied employment as an associate pastor of the Sligo Ave. Seventh-day Adventist Church and as an associate in the pastoral care internship program with the Potomac Conference because of her sex and her race "in that

she was a white person who has associated with black persons."

While attending Andrews Seminary in Michigan, Rayburn was an officer in a black student group open to whites.

In her suit, she alleges that Kenneth Mittleider, former president of the Potomac Conference, wrote an internal memo calling her "a crusader."

Rayburn has made the memo public, which said: "You will notice one of the activities she joined in at Andrews is the Black Forum. She will constantly be working for 'the underprivileged,' trying to better their situation from a material standpoint."

The suit raises delicate church-state questions and will test how far anti-discrimination laws can be applied to churches.

THE AGE, Monday 24 August 1981

Anglican synod may move to ordain women

By LOUISE CARBINES

SYDNEY. — The Anglican Church of Australia is likely to clear the way for women to become priests at its General Synod, beginning today.

A proposal to change the constitution of the church to prepare for the ordination of women is high on the agenda for the General Synod, the church parliament held once every four years.

If a majority of Synod members, bishops, clergy and laity from 24 dioceses agree to the change, an historic canon to allow the ordination of women could be passed at the next General Synod, in 1985.

According to leading synod members, the constitutional amendment could proceed despite the protests of a "substantial minority". Of 210 delegates, 203 are men.

The change must be passed by each House of Synod, voting separately, and then by three-quarters of the diocesan synods, including the synods of each of the five metropolitan sees — Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide.

The synod's general secretary, Mr John Denton, said that at present the constitution specifies that bishops and priests be men by using male pronouns.

The Anglican 'Book of Common Prayer' and the 39 Articles, the standard of worship, assume that there are only male deacons, priests and bishops. As the constitution specifies that the prayer book and articles must remain unchanged, some opponents say it is impossible to draw up a suitable canon.

Mr Denton said he was "sorry for women trying to cope with the system as it is. The whole structure of the ministry has to be looked into. I think one of the problems has been that the job description and role of ministry has been set for thousands of years".

In 1977 the General Synod ruled that there was no theological objection to women taking full equality in the ministry. This year it is expected that objections will also be made on legal grounds.



Bishop Allin: Some fine women have been ordained in the US.

While the Anglican Church of Australia is making up its mind, women have been ordained in Canada, New Zealand, Hong Kong and America.

The presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States, the Right Reverend John Allin, opened the general synod last night. Since 1976 the Episcopal Church has ordained 200 women.

Bishop Allin, an American counterpart to the Archbishop of Canterbury, confessed that he had not been overjoyed by the admittance of woman priests to his church.

A small-town boy from Mississippi, who wears a sports jacket and open-necked shirt with his bishop's ring, he was once quoted as saying that "women could no more be priests than a husband or father". Later he said he was still "not crazy about it" but was learning to live with it.

Yesterday, Bishop Allin seemed to have mellowed. He said that since his church had allowed women into the ministry, it was benefiting from a clear "understanding of the ministry and human sexuality".

"Some fine women have been ordained," he said. "Many women in the church could do my job better than I do."

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P.O. Box 4098
Waco, Texas 76705
Phone: 1-817-863-5325

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INVITATION

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