

SHEKINAH

Second Anniversary Edition



The
SHEKINAH GLORY

Saturday, April 10, 1982

Los Angeles Times

'New' Concepts in Christianity Revive Ancient Ideas

Is Holy Spirit Best Seen as Female?

By JOHN DART, *Times Religion Writer*

A dozen years ago, some Christian feminists began half-seriously referring to God as "she" while struggling with the heavily masculine images of the Creator.

Eventually, it was widely agreed that the biblical God embraces both genders.

But that left the problem of the pronoun unresolved. In an era when women religious leaders have challenged church-as-usual, how could the feminine dimension of the Deity be expressed?

A new response is taking shape quietly in Christian theological circles: Recognize the Holy Spirit as female.

The Holy Spirit—or God's Spirit—plays varied roles in Judeo-Christian traditions—acting in Creation, imparting wisdom and inspiring Old Testament prophets. The Holy Spirit of the New Testament is the presence of God in the world and a power in the birth and life of Jesus.

Holy Spirit Well-Established

The Holy Spirit, rendered the "Holy Ghost" in the 1611 King James Version of the Bible, was well-established as a partner in the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit after doctrinal controversies of the late 4th Century. Churches today speak of "gifts of the Spirit" (especially tongues-speaking Pentecostals) and of guidance from the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit is not called "it," despite the fact that the New Testament, written in Greek, uses a neuter noun, *pneuma*. Church doctrine regards the Holy Spirit as a person, not a force like magnetism. "He" is used to match the pronoun for God.

Referring to the Holy Spirit as "she" draws some linguistic justification from the Hebrew word for "spirit"—*ruach*, a noun of the feminine gender.

So far, the voices advocating a feminine Holy Spirit are scattered and subtle.

But for them, it is a view theologically defensible and accompanied by psychological and sociological benefits.

"in effect makes us deprived children of a one-parent family." He said people tend to project onto God the concept of a human father who gives support on condition of performance.

"At that stage, we do not really expect justification by faith," he said, "we're still trying to meet goals."

Drawing on certain biblical pic-

The academic study of Christian roots is often spurred in new directions by manuscript discoveries or contemporary movements. It sometimes develops ideas seemingly heretical at first blush to the churchgoer. For that reason, and because of the scholarly jargon and unfinished nature of most theological debates, most churches do not keep members posted—in spite of the potential impact on central beliefs.

These reports look at two concepts in their early stages: a major thesis on the earliest Christian beliefs about the Resurrection and a developing debate on the appropriate gender for the Holy Spirit.

German theologian Jurgen Moltmann, a well-known thinker in mainline Protestantism, says "monotheism is monarchism." He says a traditional idea of God's absolute power "generally provides the justification for earthly domination"—from the emperors and despots of history to 20th Century dictators.

Moltmann argues for a new appreciation of the "persons" of the Trinity and the community or family model it presents for human relations.

A Moltmann lecture in Pennsylvania about the feminine aspects of the Holy Spirit prompted Neill Q. Hamilton, professor of New Testament at Drew University School of Theology, to develop the idea further in his own writings, which are aimed at church people rather than theologians.

Emphasis on God as a father figure, Hamilton said in an interview,

notably in the Gospel of John, Christians will find that "the Holy Spirit begins to perform a mothering role for us that is unconditional acceptance, love and caring," Hamilton said. "God then begins to parent us in father and mother modes."

A Catholic scholar, Franz Mayr, a philosophy professor at the University of Portland in Oregon, also favors the recognition of the Holy Spirit as feminine. He contends that the traditional unity of God would not have to be watered down as a result.

Mayr, who studied under theologian Karl Rahner, said he came to his view during his study of the writings of St. Augustine (AD 354-430). That influential church father decried the lingering beliefs of some Christians that the Holy Spirit was "mother of the Son of God and wife of the Father," saying that was a

pagan outlook.

But Mayr contends that Augustine "skipped over the social and maternal aspect of God," which Mayr thinks is best seen in the Holy Spirit.

Some Feminists Object

Ironically men, not women, are raising the possibility of a maternal Spirit. The concept strikes some feminists as unfair.

"It's two against one" in a reconceived Trinity of Father, Mother and Son, one woman scholar said wryly.

A suggestion to describe the Holy Spirit as feminine was made in 1979 by Joan Chamberlain Engelsman of Drew University in "The Feminine Dimension of the Divine."

"The Holy Spirit is the least sexually defined member of the Trinity and . . . it is often symbolized by feminine images—by fire and the dove," she wrote.

(The Holy Spirit comes upon Jesus in the form of a dove in the New Testament stories of Jesus' baptism. Historians of religion note that the dove was often associated with female deities in the ancient Near East.)

But Engelsman named two other choices feminist theology might make: (1) Add a fourth member to the godhead in the person of the Virgin Mary or (2) develop the feminine aspects of each member of the Trinity.

Asked recently by telephone which alternative she prefers, Engelsman named the latter.

The only woman apparently pushing the idea of the feminine Spirit actively is Lois Roden of Waco, Tex., a fundamentalist-oriented sect leader who began her effort after a personal revelation. The 65-year-old widow has traveled to Jesus rallies and the recent National Religious Broadcasters convention to try to catch the unsympathetic ears of conservative evangelicals.

Regardless of how naturally the mental picture of a "divine family" occurs in church upon the mention of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Christianity has historically labeled it an apostate idea typical of ancient religions.

That may not have been the case at all times and places in the church's history, however.

A 14th Century fresco in a small

Catholic church southeast of Munich depicts a female Spirit as part of the Holy Trinity, according to Leonard Swidler of Temple University. The woman and two bearded figures flanking her appear to be wrapped in a single cloak and joined in their lower halves, Swidler wrote in "Biblical Affirmations of Women."

And, most significantly, manuscript discoveries of recent decades have demonstrated that more early Christians than previously thought regarded the Holy Spirit as the Mother of Jesus.

St. Jerome, a contemporary of Augustine's, and two church fathers of an earlier period, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, quoted from "The Gospel of the Hebrews," which depicted the Holy Spirit as a mother figure.

The gospel tells of the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus at his bap-

tism. She says, "My Son, in all the prophets was I waiting for you that you should come and I might rest in you . . ." In the same gospel, Jesus says, "Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away to the great mountain Tabor." (Mt. Tabor is in Galilee.)

'Mother of All Creation'

The 3rd Century "Acts of Thomas," a legendary account of the apostle Thomas' travels to India, contains prayers invoking the Holy Spirit as "the Mother of all creation" and "compassionate mother," among other titles.

These two sources were belittled by theology Professor Paul K. Jewett of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena.

"Both of these apocryphal works are late 2nd or 3rd-Century documents, belonging to the rubric of



A 14th-Century fresco, left, in small Catholic church southeast of Munich, West Germany, depicts a female Spirit as part of Holy Trinity

DEBATE: Is Holy Spirit Feminine?

romance rather than history . . ." Jewett wrote in a book published last year. Current suggestions to think of the Holy Spirit as feminine have historical precedent only among "obscure and heretical sects on the periphery of the Christian church," Jewett said.

However, Jewett relied on research that had neglected the discovery in 1945 of the Nag Hammadi Library, some 50 texts buried in a jar in upper Egypt by monks in about AD 400. The subsequent translations and studies of the texts brought to light not only the views of Gnostic Christians attacked as heretics from the 2nd Century onward, but also traces of early Christian thinking.

The best-known find was "The Gospel of Thomas," a collection of 114 sayings attributed to Jesus. One of its principal American analysts, Harvard's Helmut Koester, believes that it was composed about the same time as the biblical gospels in the 1st Century.

Considered Historically Valuable

Koester and a number of other New Testament scholars term the "Gospel of Thomas" and a few other apocryphal works as historically valuable.

In one "Gospel of Thomas" saying, Jesus declares that his disciples must hate their earthly parents (as in Luke 14:26) but love the Father and Mother as he does, "for my mother (gave me falsehood), but (my) true (Mother) gave me life."

In another Nag Hammadi discovery, "The Secret Book of James," Jesus refers to himself as "the son of the Holy Spirit."

These two sayings do not identify the Holy Spirit as mother of Jesus, but more than one scholar has interpreted them to mean that the maternal Holy Spirit is intended.

"The Gospel of Philip," a clearly Gnostic Christian text recovered at Nag Hammadi, refers repeatedly to the Holy Spirit as a mother figure—for both believers and Jesus.

Tradition in Error

The tradition that Mary conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit is in error, asserts "The Gospel of Philip." "They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman?" the gospel author asked.

The feminine Holy Spirit appeared to linger longest in favor among Syrian Christians in Edessa. That is the site where the gospels of Thomas and Philip and "The Acts of Thomas" may have been composed or finally edited. A 4th-Century orthodox Christian, Aphraates, wrote in a homily, "A man who is yet unmarried loves and honors God his father and the Holy Spirit his mother."

Elaine Pagels, one of the Nag Hammadi editors, contends in "The Gnostic Gospels" that female imagery for God was lost to the church because of a political-ideological battle between freewheeling, Gnostic-oriented Christians and victorious, organization-minded orthodoxy.

Pagels' contributions to discussions on the female aspects of the Deity have been as a historian, however, not

as a theologian recommending beliefs.

The numbers of women studying religion in universities and seminaries is increasing, but few are writing theology.

"A genuine feminist reconstruction of systematic theology is yet to be written," declared Catholic scholar Rosemary R. Ruether in a recent review of women's religious studies.

Women tend to go in one of three directions, Ruether said.

The evangelical feminists hope to "clean up sexism" in the Scriptures through better analysis, she said. Others are abandoning the Judeo-Christian framework to celebrate womanhood through an evolving Goddess religion.

'Liberationist' Alternative

Ruether prefers a third alternative that she calls "liberationist." In it, she said, "Biblical sexism is not denied, but it loses its authority."

Religious feminists loyal to the churches, for all their daring in eliminating unnecessary masculine wording in worship services and religious literature, have seldom reached into the apocryphal Christian writings for feminine imagery.

Many may be unfamiliar with the material and its historical context. Others may be resigned to the church's usual rejection of writings once deemed heretical.

Fuller Seminary's Paul Jewett said, as a conservative, he looks to the New Testament sources as the only authoritative ones—"not simply as an accident of history but rather due to the divine leading of God's Spirit in the early church."

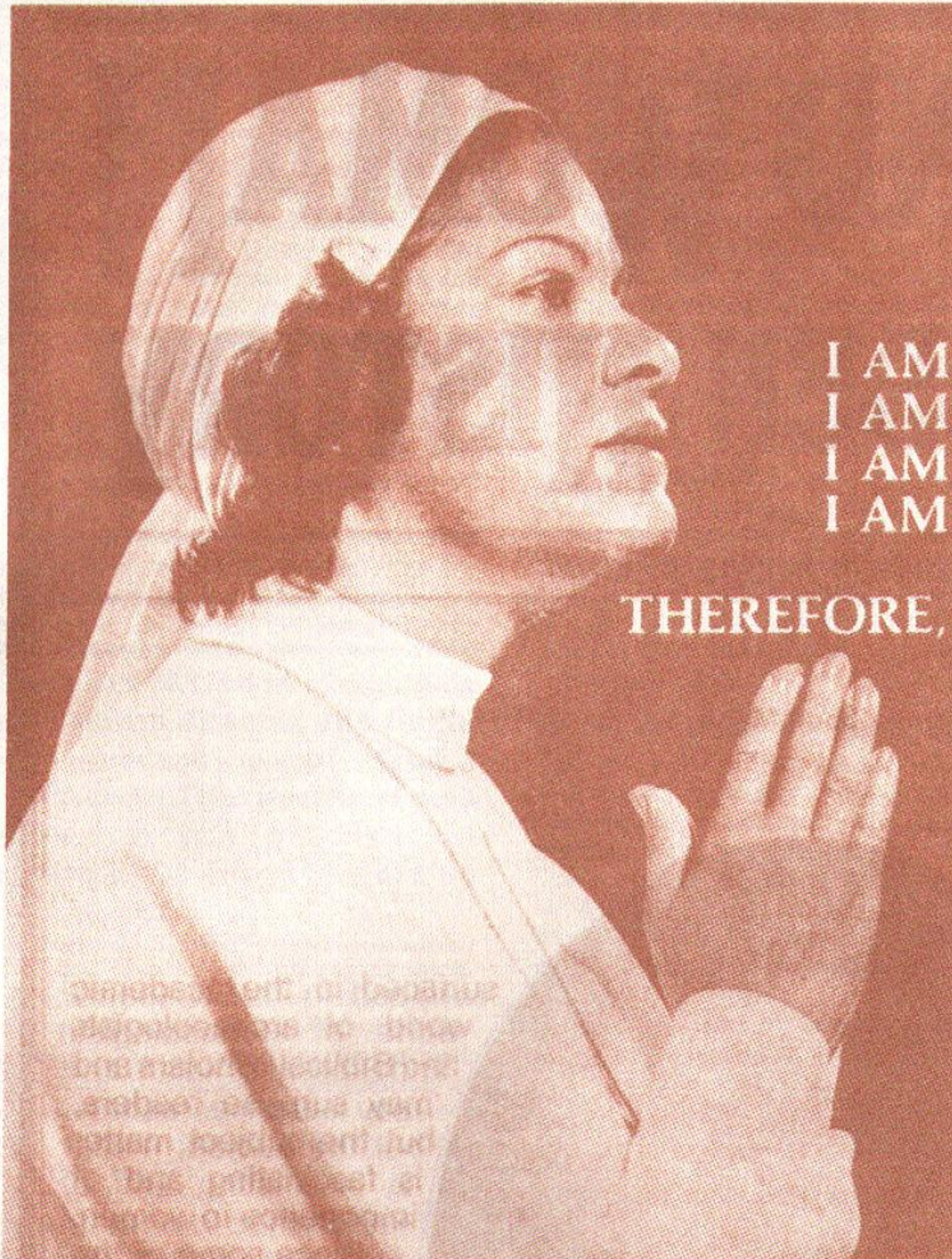
Another evangelical scholar, Donald G. Bloesch, recently conceded that the Holy Spirit could be portrayed as feminine "as the indwelling presence of God within the church, nurturing and bringing to birth souls for the kingdom." But, Bloesch added in recently published "Is the Bible Sexist?," the Spirit who acts on humanity with transforming power "is properly designated as masculine."

In gauging the appeal of the concept, or lack of it, the key might lie in watching the grammar of theologians and biblical scholars.

All but the careful reader would have missed the "she" referring to the Holy Spirit in a Christian Century article by biblical authority James A. Sanders.

It was not a typographical error, said Sanders, a professor at the School of Theology at Claremont and president of the Ancient Bible Manuscript Center for Preservation and Research.

Mentioning the impossibility of alluding to God as "he/she" to recognize the Deity's nature, Sanders said his use of the feminine pronoun for the Holy Spirit "is just a choice I have made."



I AM
I AM
I AM
I AM

THEREFORE,

- Definite and Positive
- Constructive and Productive
- Dynamic, Creative and Alive
- Loving, Beloved and Thankful
- I Always have Wonderful Results, Beautiful Experiences Excitement and Happiness

BILL OF PARTICULARS

1. To recognize the fact that everybody is somebody.
2. To motivate the "forgotten man" to improve his self image and inspire him to attain his goals.
3. To develop first, respect of self, then to accept others as individuals.
4. To become involved with people and to extend to them a hand of encouragement.
5. To bridge the communications gap between the power structure and the "forgotten man."
6. To appeal to the conscience of man for the benefit and salvation of humanity.
7. We believe in projecting the mind in a creative and positive manner to attract prosperity.
8. We believe that the individual has a value and deserves time and understanding.
9. We know that love is the strongest force on earth. There is no progress in anything negative and, hate is negative.
10. We recognize the power of a Supreme, Divine Force. . . however you conceive it to be.

GOD BLESS YOU, WE LOVE YOU!!!



In our modern-day age, where many are called but few are chosen, God chose His messenger in the personage of a female. He chose one who was well established in a distinguishing career, having leadership abilities, charisma and a listening audience of thousands that accepted her as "The Queen" in the broadcast media.

On February 2, 1972, God spoke to "The Queen" of a **Special Assignment**. He needed her to serve as "The Queen" in HIS Kingdom, subordinating **ALL** things — career, status, financial security and popularity — to do **HIS WILL**.

MARTHA JEAN "THE QUEEN" STEINBERG accepted the **SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT**. On April 10, 1975, The Order Of The Fishermen Ministry was founded in Detroit, Michigan.

The headquarters, known as **THE HOME OF LOVE** and located in the northwest area of Detroit, is a beautiful and serene expression of God's **LOVE IN ACTION**, serving the needs of all who come, seeking **HIM**.

* * *

THE ORDER OF THE FISHERMEN MINISTRY BELIEVES IN:

- OUR FATHER, OUR MOTHER, OUR EVERYTHING GOD
- THE HOLY TRINITY, ONE POWER AND ONE PRESENCE
- LIVING LIFE MORE ABUNDANTLY BY FOLLOWING JESUS THE CHRIST
- THE DIVINE POWER OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE
- **TITHING** ONE-TENTH OF ALL SUBSTANCES RECEIVED

GOD AND WOMAN

THE HIDDEN HISTORY

by Elizabeth Rodgers Dobell

"Reprinted from Redbook Magazine, March 1978."

From the earliest times, the religious experience of the human race has undergone constant change and modification. Some changes, particularly in the Judaeo - Christian tradition, have been well documented: for instance, those of the Protestant Reformation and the Counter-Reformation of the Catholic Church. But other changes have not been so well recorded. The article that follows discusses what scholars are beginning to recognize as one such change that seems to have taken place early in history. It contains information that only recently has



surfaced in the academic world of archaeologists and Biblical scholars and may surprise readers, but the subject matter is fascinating and of importance to women.

Since some of the ideas and evidence being turned up by the researchers may seem to set on end some conventional religious thought, you may want to discuss them with your priest, your minister or your rabbi. He or she probably will be familiar with the new ideas, and you may be surprised—as we were when we called clergymen and clergywomen—at how widely they are accepted by the religious community. —The Editors

The Greek goddess Athena, who sprang full-grown from the head of her father Zeus.
Many ancient images of divine "motherhood" were displaced in classical Greece by images of divine "fatherhood."
Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.

The Ordination of Women in the Early Church: Our Right to Know

by Dorothy Irvin

The Vatican "Declaration on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood" issued in October, 1976, has, like most statements coming from Rome, served the valuable purpose of letting us know what points the controversy will hinge on. Although its formal purpose is to squelch definitively any thoughts anyone might have in that direction, its actual result is to set future debate (which it has certainly aroused) on the footing of now-we-know-where-we-stand.

A more respectable issue is the statement's contention that to ordain women would be against the tradition of the Church: *"The Catholic Church has never felt that priestly or episcopal ordination can be validly conferred on women . . . by calling only men to the priestly order and ministry in its true sense the Church intends to remain faithful to the type of ordained ministry willed by the Lord Jesus Christ and carefully maintained by the Apostles. . ."*

For several years before the appearance of the statement, I had been trying to ascertain the breadth of Christian tradition in the matter of the ministry of women in the early Church. Given a first impetus by Joan Morris' careful history of women in high ecclesiastical office in the Middle Ages, (*The Lady Was a Bishop*, Macmillan, 1972) I put my background in ancient near eastern archaeology and iconography to work in the area of early Christian archaeology. This is not the place to survey the material which, as I discovered, is known, but I would like to try here to answer the first question generally asked when I have presented this material in the form of a slide lecture, and that is "Why haven't we heard this before?"

Although it is not perfectly clear what constituted ordination at different times and places in the early centuries of the Church, the archaeological evidence shows women as receiving ordination and exercising ministry on a par with men, however uncertain and variable we know the latter to have been. The archaeological material confirms many of the written sources. The archaeological material is of the following types:

- Inscriptions from the Roman period, from tombstones or for legal-financial purposes, which name women who bore the titles *archisynagogos* "ruler of the synagogue;" "mother of the synagogue" and *presbitera*, the feminine of presbyter. These titles were used by Jewish, Jewish-Christian, and Christian communities. We have inscriptions of

the same type giving men these titles, as well as burial inscriptions of the wives of men who have such titles. These have a different form from the inscriptions in which the woman herself bears the title.

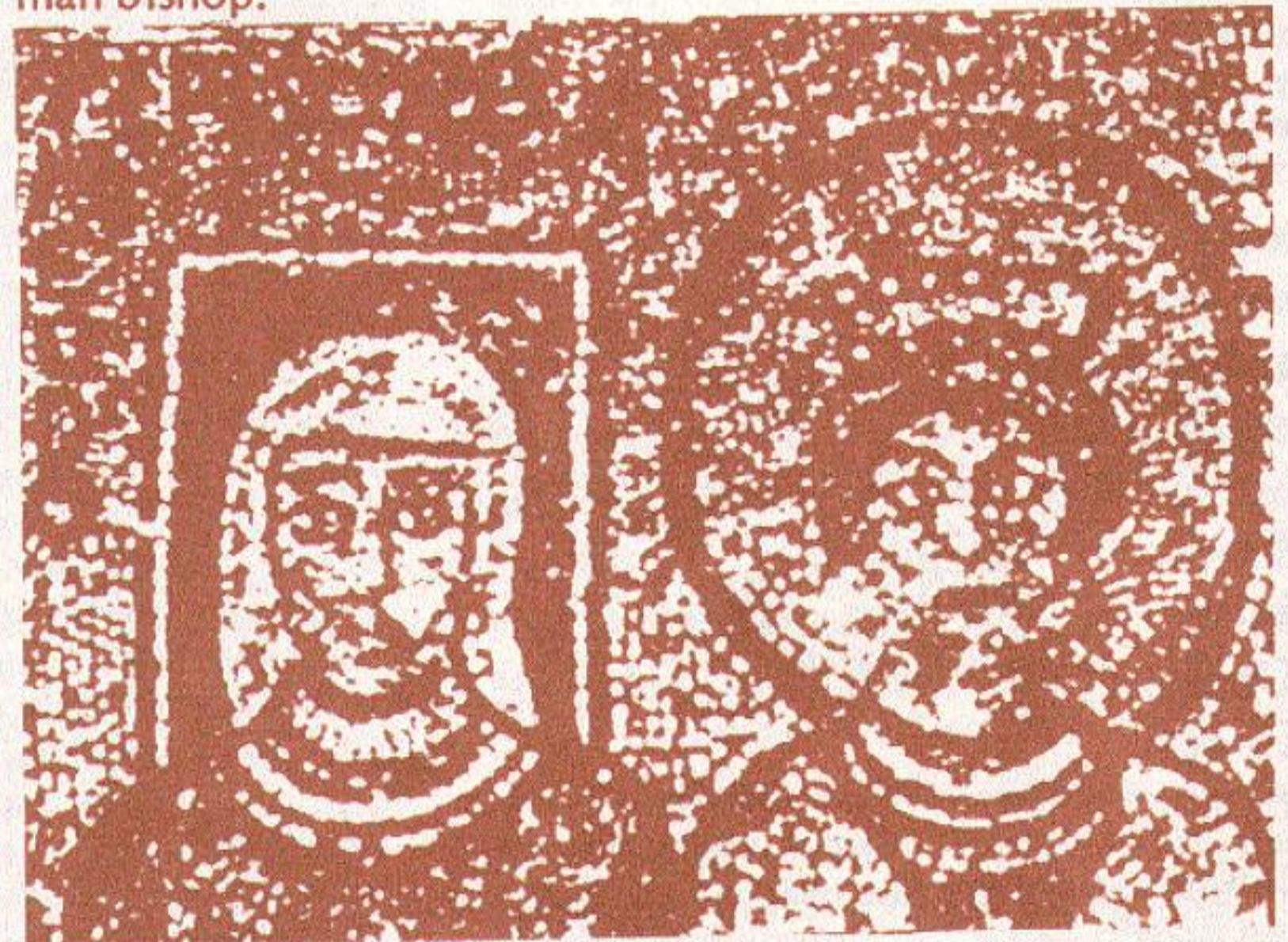
- A fresco, dating to the end of the first century, in a Roman catacomb, which depicts a group of seven women celebrating a Eucharist. Several similar scenes from a later date depict groups of seven men.

- A fourth century catacomb fresco, also in Rome, shows a woman receiving ordination from a bishop. I do not know of any scenes of the ordination of a man, although all agree that men were ordained at this period.

- Many frescoes of women (as well as men) dressed in liturgical vestments and standing in attitudes of liturgical leadership.

- A mosaic, dating probably to the ninth century, which shows a female head with the superscription, also in mosaic, *Episcopa Theodo(ra)*, "Bishop (feminine) Theodora." She wears a coif, indicating that she is not married.

- Tombstone inscriptions of women bishops, for example (*hono)rabilis femina 'episcopa*, an "honorable woman bishop."



Bishop Theodora

For complete article, please write for
SHEKINAH, April, 1981.

Her crusade: To tell the world the Holy Spirit is feminine

By MARY LASOVICH
Whig-Standard Staff Writer

Lois Roden, the 64-year-old leader of the Living Waters Branch — a reformist group that broke away from the Seventh-Day Adventists — launched a crusade in 1977 to inform the world that the Holy Spirit is a feminine representation.

Members of the 16-family community in Waco, Texas, devote countless hours and the bulk of their incomes to research and promotion of what Roden claims is the "correct" image of God: A Trinity that consists of the Father, Mother and Son. The male-female balance of the Godhead, she says, is a "old, old truth" that has been acknowledged by scholars, but has been "covered up" — until now.

Most church leaders have dismissed the notion of the femininity of the Holy Spirit as "ridiculous" and many religious orders reject, as well, the ordination of women into the ministry — a corollary of the theory adopted by the Living Waters Branch. But the unique sect persists in its uphill battle to restore the equality of the sexes, which Roden contends was lost during the temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden.

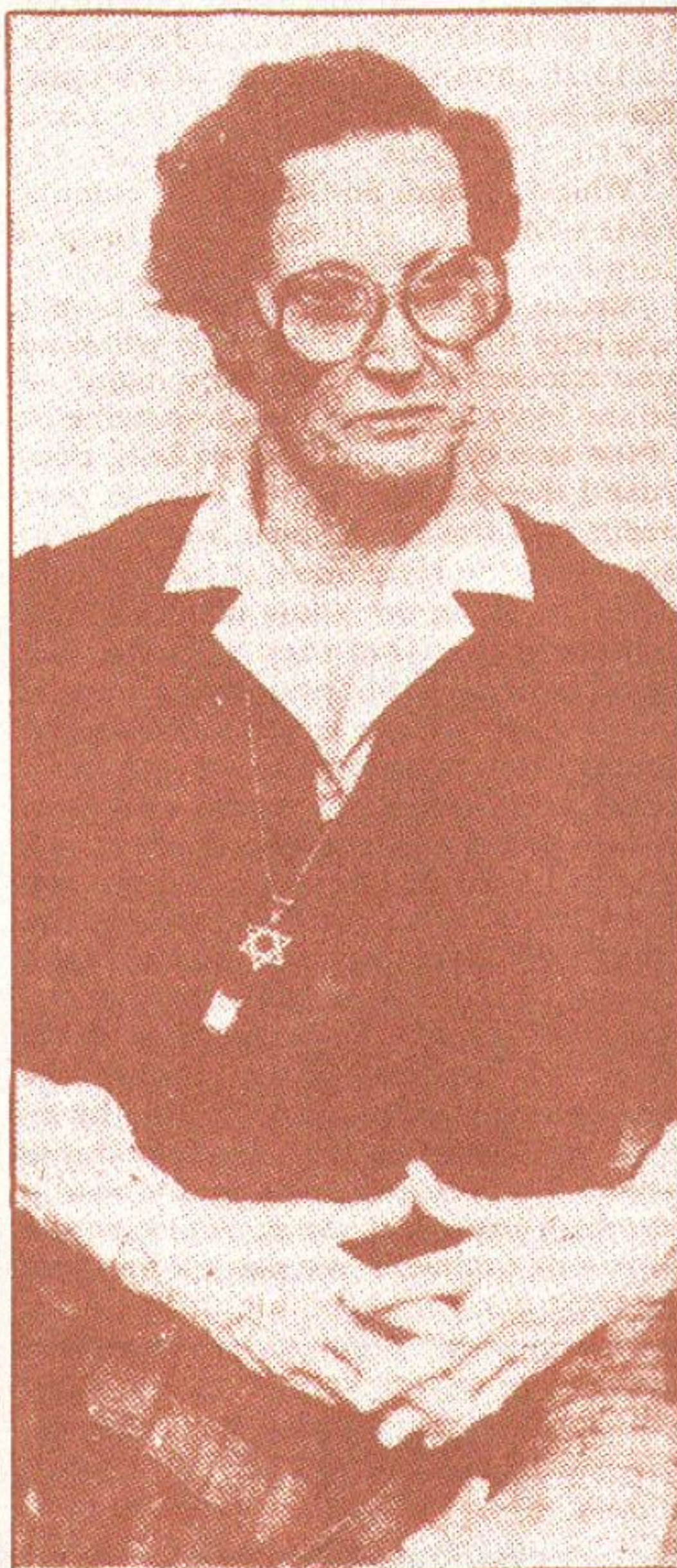
Last Wednesday, Roden appeared on a local radio 'hotline' show, sparking an emotional reaction from Kingston-area listeners. In an interview with The Whig-Standard, Roden noted that revelation of the Holy Spirit to the masses has been limited to religious teachings about "the symbol of the dove and the tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost." The time has come, she said, to unravel the "mystery" of the Holy Spirit.

The following is an edited transcript of that interview:

Whig-Standard: You preach a new revelation about the Holy Spirit — and it came to you in a vision?

Roden: Yes, it did. It was a very emphatic impression...or vision that I had after I first started [teaching that the Holy Spirit is a feminine representation] in 1977. There was quite a bit of controversy within my own congregation — the men just couldn't believe it, and some of the women couldn't believe it. But they decided to study the subject in depth and they finally came to the same conclusion that I had. Historical records, archeological records all prove it, especially the Aramaic — the original manuscript which the Gospels were written in — verify the fact that the Holy Spirit is indeed feminine.

Whig-Standard: How did this vision



LOIS RODEN: 'The Holy Spirit is feminine' come to you?

Roden: I was studying one night, about 2 o'clock in the morning...I was studying the book of Revelation (Rev. 18:1-4) which tells of a mighty angel that is to come down to earth and lighten the whole earth with the glory of God. I looked up at my window and there was a vision of a shimmering, silver angel in feminine form on a background of myriad silver angels and so, from that time on, I had no difficulty. I was sure then that God had confirmed the femininity of the Holy Spirit to me...I have no doubt that [this issue] is going to cause quite a reformation in the religious ranks.

Whig-Standard: It's already sparked a very emotional reaction — including the reaction that you got on the hotline show in Kingston...

Roden: It takes a while for new things to catch on — even Einstein was not credited until many years after his discovery and Galileo was [branded] a

heretic. Many dissidents of the past who brought new truth were martyred...Technologically-speaking, we have advanced far beyond the first century. But, as far as religion is concerned, we've advanced only a little further than the vision of Christ on the cross, and of the Father as depicted by Moses in the Ten Commandments. As far as knowledge of the Holy Spirit is concerned, it's still a mystery. So God revealeth his secrets to his servants, the prophets — and that's the way the world is made acquainted with God.

Whig Standard: Why is it, do you think, that you in particular would be chosen...or, at least, that now would be the time?

Roden: Well, I couldn't understand why God would permit me to have such a great part in the work...The only reason I could see is that I'm just ignorant enough to follow instructions that I believe I'm given, and the fact that I'm a woman makes it reasonable...A woman is the only one that would know about the femininity of the heavenly woman — I mean she would understand it more. Men do not understand it.

Whig-Standard: Is it primarily men who are rejecting the idea of the Holy Spirit being feminine?

Roden: It depends on the background of the men and women to whom you're speaking. If the women are professionals, if they have responsibilities in the public, then they are more acquainted with the position of women in the world...Most of the women who oppose this idea are women who are not accustomed to taking responsibility for their own actions — that's what it really amounts to. And men, if they are of the scholarly background, then it's not difficult to talk to them...This information is in the Vatican right now. All of it is hidden behind locked doors but it's coming out — because it's time for the world to know about the third person of the Godhead.

Whig-Standard: What was the initial reaction in your own community?

Roden: Well, the men thought I'd lost my mind...and they almost convinced me that I had. But that's when I had the vision. I was very frustrated and troubled about it, and thinking that I would leave it all — not talk about the subject any more — when I got the absolute conviction that the Holy Spirit was feminine.

Whig-Standard: Why do you think that it's important that people know that, and not only know it but come to believe it?

Roden: I think that a family without a mother figure is incomplete and I think the image of God is incomplete without the image of the feminine part of the Godhead. You have the Father and the Son, which both tell you that there's a mother there. It takes a woman to make a father; it takes a woman to produce a son. Now the concept that most religionists have, saying that the Holy Spirit is masculine and the Holy Spirit begat the Son within Mary — this is an erroneous doctrine because what they're teaching is that Jesus had two Fathers in heaven.

Whig-Standard: There are far-reaching implications if people do accept that the Holy Spirit is feminine — as far as changing the whole concept of women, not only in religion but, perhaps, in daily life.

Roden: In every walk of life, it's going to lift up the moral image of woman on this earth, which has been downtrodden and suppressed until this time.

Whig-Standard: You present a feminist view, yet you've said that you're not...

Roden: I'm not [a feminist] because I base my concept of the femininity of the Holy Spirit strictly on the Scriptures. Most people do not know that God was worshipped as female before the advent of Abraham and Moses, during that nearly 2,000 years...but archeologists have proved it, and it's a matter of record that is really not questioned. I have made it my business to learn everything that I can about this subject and I'm still learning. Authors have sent me books and graduate students have sent theses on this subject...This is not new, it's just new to me. Scholars for the last 15 years have been bringing forth evidence, and [Arthur] Watson has shown [in an iconographic study published in 1934] that the Isaiah 11:1 Tree of Jesse is feminine, but it's still accepted as an all-male lineage of the Messiah...

Whig-Standard: Will you tell me a little more about the founding of the Living Waters Branch [by Roden's late husband, Benjamin, in 1955]?

Roden: We have backgrounds in the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Davidian Seventh-Day Adventists...but before that, I was a member of the Church of Christ so I have a varied background. When I find truth, I feel that I should start observing it, obeying it, so it takes me from one church to another. When the concept of new truth comes to a congregation, there are some who accept and some who reject, and it's usually the majority who reject — so the minority are usually cast out. That's the way it happens. [Martin] Luther was cast out of the Catholic Church...All the reformatory churches were cast out. When new truth came, the minority accepted and then they formed a new denomination

— that's the history of the denominations of today. The [Living Waters] Branch was a reform movement, [founded] because a new truth came to that denomination that the new name of Jesus was the Branch...And when you go to the Scriptures, Jeremiah 33:15-16 shows [the coming of a female Messiah] a Branch — She — the Lord our righteousness.

Whig-Standard: So the second coming of the Messiah will appear in female form?

Roden: Yes, that's right. Jesus says 'I will pray to the Father and He will send you another comforter in my name' — so the Holy Spirit has the same name as Jesus and that's why they're both confused. People think they're one, that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one person...that the Holy Spirit is just a force, an energy. But we know now from the creation story that they are male and female in the Godhead. Because God said [Genesis 1:26] 'let us make man in our image,' we see that the Godhead made their images in the earth both male and female, in Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were two distinct images of God in heaven. And so, the question is: Who was Eve made in the image of? Certainly not Adam or the Father or the Son, so she's made in the image of the female personality of the Godhead. Romans 1:20 says that the invisible God is clearly seen by the things that were created, that the Godhead is made known and that we're really 'without excuse' if we don't know that there's male and female in the Godhead...

The Whig-Standard

KINGSTON, ONTARIO

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1981

Whig-Standard: What kind of reaction have you had from Seventh-Day Adventists?

Roden: Well, Seventh-Day Adventists, as a whole, are not amenable to this idea. But I had a call from a young pastor in the western part of the United States who informed me that he'd just ordained his first woman elder in the church. And he said a certain person in the high leadership [of the Seventh-Day Adventists] 'told me six years ago that the Holy Spirit was female.' He said 'I believe it and I'm going to teach it' — so we have the beginning of the breaking through of the wall of Adventist opposition.

Whig-Standard: Have there been things that have encouraged you? I'm

thinking of the [1980] task force report of the National Council of Churches [in the United States] — one of the things they addressed was the question of the Holy Spirit, suggesting that we should rid ourselves of masculine references. I'm not sure if they recommended a feminine substitute...

Roden: On one occasion I got a report that the World Council of Churches was thinking of [using the term] 'she' for the Holy Spirit — so it shows they've been investigating this matter. But I don't think that you have to change the language of the Bible. You don't have to reinterpret it — you just have to teach the true meaning of it, because any time you say 'father' you're saying 'mother' at the same time...

Whig-Standard: So you don't believe you need to start the Lord's prayer with 'Our Mother'...

Roden: No. You can say 'Our Father and Our Mother who art in heaven' but by saying Our Father...you're automatically saying Our Mother — because it takes a woman to make a father. You see, it's the understanding of the terminology that counts and if the ministry would teach the true understanding, they'd know that the Holy Spirit is feminine and there would be no problem of reinterpreting the Bible.

Whig-Standard: Although acceptance of that view would lead to radical changes in the structure of the church — the ordination of women to the ministry of the Catholic Church, for example.

Roden: They take [their stand] on the premise that there's no female image in the priesthood...but now, since the Holy Spirit is revealed as feminine, there is an image in the priesthood for females. Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God, having no beginning or no ending, could speak of no other personage than a person of the Godhead. So we have God the Father, God the Mother and God the Son — and they were all of the order of Melchisedek...the word in itself is masculine/feminine [reflecting] the Hebrew term for king or queen, and the original name of Jerusalem.

Whig-Standard: You made a trip to Israel last year?

Roden: I've made three trips to Jerusalem and I consulted an eminent rabbi in East Jerusalem who definitely told me that the Shekinah — which is the counterpart of the Christian Holy Spirit — is feminine...the Shekinah is the manifestation of God's presence in different places.

Whig-Standard: It strikes me as interesting that your premise is coming out at a time when feminism, or whatever you want to call it, is focusing attention on the fact that women have not been treated as equals...

Continued next page.

Roden: Jesus accepted men and women apostles and we have records in the early Christian church [of periods] when there were women bishops and women priests but this knowledge has been suppressed...A Catholic teacher — an archeologist — has presented to the world [photographs of] a mosaic in the catacombs of Rome that show women being ordained as priests. This information will normalize the situation and give a religious background to the equality of women, whereas it's been mostly a social or a civil aspect and means have been employed to bring equality in a way that has brought suffering to both men and women...I don't teach either female supremacy or male supremacy. I normalize it and show that they're both going to be equal — and glad of it. The church has presented to the world an unbalanced image of God...It has brought an abnormal view by eliminating the feminine image in the Godhead.

Whig-Standard: Are you optimistic that [the notion of the femininity of the Holy Spirit] is going to be commonly accepted?

Roden: Yes, I have the conviction and the verification from God that this is going to be effective and it's going to succeed. It's going to be the greatest reformation that the world has ever known — and also the greatest controversy.

Whig-Standard: The Bible is something that people tend to quote when they want to support their point of view, and it's often been said that you can prove almost anything that you want to prove by taking certain sections of the Bible. Do you think it's going to be enough for people to hear you say that there is Scriptural evidence for your concept of the Holy Spirit?

Roden: That's the reason there are so many different views in the world today — because everyone is interpreting the Bible for himself. But God's method of teaching truth is through the prophetic voice. In the past, it's been almost totally rejected by each generation, but if we want unity in the world we have to listen to God's voice...

Whig-Standard: Do you envision a great upheaval in religious ranks with breakaway sects, whether they are known as the Living Waters Branch or something else, being established in different parts of the world?

Roden: I see that it isn't necessary for people to move around in their denominations, only to grow in the truth. I'm not calling people into some new movement — I'm calling them into the truth...but there are thousands of people who are writing in, telling us they want to associate with us. In our own church, we don't take offerings, we don't sell literature, we don't sell tapes, we give everything free. We're self-sup-

porting literature evangelists...

Whig-Standard: Who do you find to be the most receptive to your message?

Roden: It tends to be young people — male and female. They're more progressive and less set in their ways...and they're not bound by some tradition in the past. But I find that most older people, religionists especially, are bound by denominational walls. You'll find that when a denomination gets so organized and so advanced in what they think is knowledge, they become very intolerant...so God surprises them at every turn with new truth to shake them up and keep them moving. God wouldn't force anyone's religious conscience, you know, but man...has persecuted and killed in the name of God. I don't see that. I say that if a person doesn't agree with me...they have that right. If you have the truth, you can encounter error and survive.

Whig-Standard: Do you think that religion, as a force in society, has declined?

Roden: It's burned out. They have no more to offer because they haven't given the complete image of God to the world. If they give the family image, then we'll know we're not orphans — that we belong to someone, that we're the images of the family in heaven.

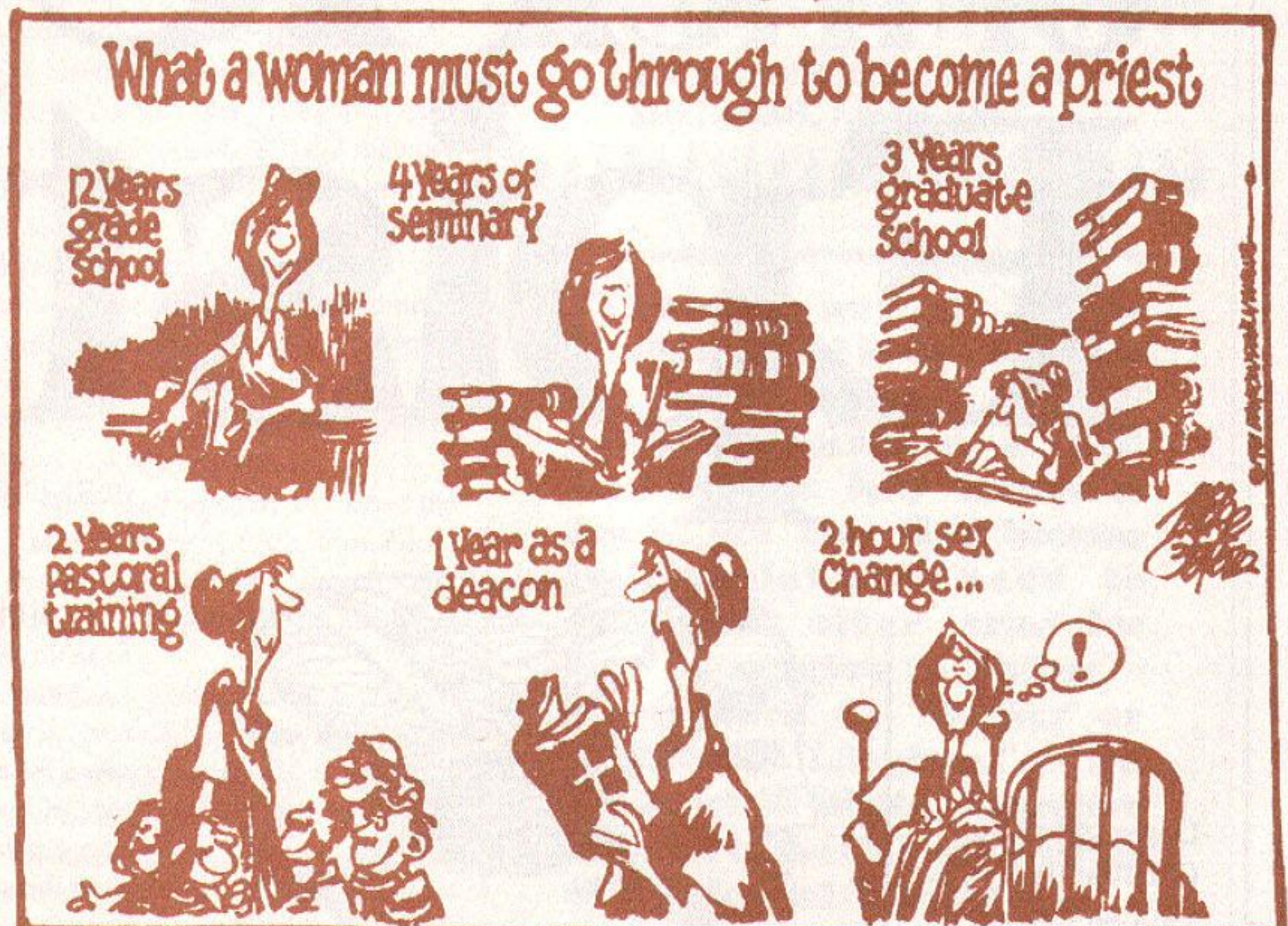
Whig-Standard: You certainly present an intriguing point of view...

Roden: It's really exciting...The evidence is piling up to where a reasonable person wouldn't object, but it's new and that's why it's being resisted. It's out of the common order of things. Just so, in the time when Jesus came, the Hebrews were so accustomed to knowledge of one God the Father, as revealed by Moses, that they said Jesus was a blasphemer because He said He was the Son of the Father. They didn't want

knowledge of another God, so they killed Him. Now, we're coming to the knowledge of another person in the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, so there will be more controversy, more enmity, over this revelation than any before. But it will be victorious...

Whig-Standard: Was there anything in your vision that revealed how long your work may take...whether acceptance will occur in your lifetime?

Roden: I understood in the beginning, in 1977, that I would be teaching this truth seven years to the leadership — to religious leaders — and then it would go to the laity of the whole world. But even before this seven years has finished, I have seen it going over the whole world already, so I have hope that it's not going to be very long...The promise of this is that there will be people living on earth now who will never see death. That was the original purpose that God had for Adam and Eve, that they were to live forever and continually become more and more like God, their creators. Satan interrupted the plan so an alternate plan had to be brought forth...We're facing this right now — the restitution of all things as it was in the beginning, man having direct communication with God, face to face like Adam and Eve did. That's a wonderful thing to think about...but to know God personally, you'd have to know about the persons [of the Trinity]. So to get the power of the Holy Spirit, you'd have to be acquainted with the person that you get it from — that's my position. There's a woman who wrote a graduate thesis on the feminine Holy Spirit, back in 1971, who relates this quip: She said — 'My Father in heaven, where is my mother?' And God answered back — 'My daughter, I thought you would never ask.' ●





WHAT DID the Apostle Paul mean when he wrote, "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body" (Eph. 5:23)? And, "The head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3)?

Discussion about the biblical role for men in church, society, and home is based on these verses. The meaning of these verses rests largely on the meaning of the Greek word *kephale*, translated "head" in the New Testament.

One possible way the word "head" is used today means leader, chief, or director. We say, "He is the head of his company," or, "He is the department head." In husband-wife and male-female relations this

idea popularly carries over to suggestions of authority. The husband is said to be the boss of the family. Before we accept that idea, we must ask what the Greek word *kephale* (head) meant to Paul and to his readers.

To find the answer, we must first ask whether "head" in ancient Greek normally meant "superior to" or "one having authority." In the first half of this article we will introduce three kinds of evidence:

1. Lexicographers Liddell, Scott, Jones, and McKenzie (*A Greek-English Lexicon*, ninth edition, Clarendon Press, 1940, a really comprehensive Greek lexicon) give no evidence of such a meaning.

2. The Septuagint translators took pains to use different words than "head" (*kephale*) when the Hebrew word for head implied "superior to" or "authority over."

The 'Head' of the Epistles

BERKELEY AND ALVERA MICKELSEN



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February 20, 1981
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3. In his commonly used lexicon (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Early Christian Literature*, William Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, eds., U. of Chicago Press, 1957/1979), Walter Bauer gives little or no salient support for such meaning outside of his personal interpretation of five Pauline passages in the New Testament.

In the second half of the article, we will answer the

THE 'HEAD' OF
THE EPISTLES

Misconceptions
about meaning.



fundamental question: If "head" does not normally mean "superior to" or "authority over," what does it mean in those seven New Testament passages where Paul uses it figuratively?

FIRST, WHAT about the differences in the lexicons? One of the most complete Greek lexicons (covering Homeric, classic, and *koinē* Greek) is the work by Liddell, Scott, Jones, and McKenzie. It is based on examination of thousands of Greek writings from the period of Homer (about 1000 B.C.) to about A.D. 600, which, of course, includes New Testament times. Significantly, for our purposes here, it does not include "final authority," "superior rank," or anything similar as meanings of *kephale*. Apparently ordinary readers of Greek literature would not think of such meanings when they read "head."

However, another commonly used lexicon is the *koinē* Greek lexicon by Arndt and Gingrich (usually called Bauer's). It does list "superior rank" as a possible meaning for *kephale*. It lists five passages in the New Testament where the compiler thinks *kephale* has this meaning. As support for this meaning in New Testament times, the lexicon lists two passages from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, where *kephale* implies leadership or authority.

Those who support Bauer's view that *kephale* meant "superior rank" point to these passages in the Greek translation of the Old Testament as evidence that this meaning of *kephale* was familiar to Greek-speaking people in New Testament times.

However, the facts do not support that argument. About 180 times in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word *ro'sh* (head) is used with the idea of chief, leader, superior rank (similar to the way English-speaking people use "head"). However, those who translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek (between 250 and 150 B.C.) rarely used *kephale* (head) when the Hebrew word for head carried this idea of leader, chief, or authority. They usually used the Greek word *archon*, meaning leader, ruler, or commander. They also used other words. In only 17 places (out of 180) did they use *kephale*, although that would have been the simplest way to translate it. Five of those 17 have variant readings, and another 4 involve a head-tail metaphor that would make no sense without the use of head in contrast to tail. That leaves only 8 instances (out of 180 times) when the Septuagint translators clearly chose to use *kephale* for *ro'sh* when it had a "superior rank" meaning. Most are in relatively obscure places.

Since *kephale* is so rarely used when *ro'sh* carried the idea of authority, most of the Greek translators apparently realized that *kephale* did not carry the same "leader" or "superior rank" meaning for "head" as did the Hebrew word *ro'sh*.

There are seven passages in the New Testament where Paul uses *kephale* in some figurative sense. The concept of a hierarchy, with men in a role of authority over women (at least over their wives) rests largely on two of these: I Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23. When Paul used *kephale* in these two passages, was he thinking of one of the usual Greek meanings of head, or

a common figurative Hebrew meaning?

Paul knew both Hebrew and Greek. Although he was a Pharisee who knew Hebrew well, he grew up in Tarsus, a Greek-speaking city. Greek was his native tongue. In all the passages where he used *kephale*, he was writing to Greek-speaking people in cities where most Christians were converts from Greek religions. Their contact with the Old Testament would be limited to hearing parts of the Septuagint read in their services. They might go to church for years without ever hearing those eight relatively obscure places in the Greek Old Testament where *kephale* seemed to have a different meaning from the usual meanings in their own language.

Since Paul was a Greek-speaking Jew, he would likely write to Greek-speaking Christians using Greek words with Greek meanings they would easily understand.

IF "HEAD" in Greek did not normally mean "supreme over" or "authority over," what did it mean in those seven New Testament passages where Paul used it figuratively? Careful examination of context shows that common Greek meanings not only make good sense, but present a more exalted Christ.

Can we legitimately read an English or Hebrew meaning into the word "head" in the New Testament, when both context and secular Greek literature of New Testament times seem to indicate that "superior rank" or "authority over" were not meanings that Greeks associated with the word, and probably were not the meanings the apostle Paul had in mind? Has our misunderstanding of some of these passages been used to support the concept of male dominance that has ruled most pagan and secular societies since the beginning of recorded history? Has this misunderstanding also robbed us of the richer, more exalted picture of Christ that Paul was trying to give us? □

For complete article write for
SHEKINAH, August, 1981.

"There is no sex in the Godhead. God is neither male nor female (and the point of Christ's Incarnation is that God became fully human in Jesus, not that God became fully male). We need to emphasize other terms for God in addition to 'Father'—terms such as 'Mother' or 'Creator' or 'Lifegiver.'" — Dr. Frederick K. Wentz, Executive Director of the Chicago Cluster of Theological Schools

4th Annual International Prayer Congress For Unity In Christ



Bishop Lois Roden meeting President Ferdinand Marcos at Malacanang Palace in Manila.



Recipients of Dove Awards from Left to Right—Gerald Derstine, David Du Plessis and Bishop Lois I. Roden

The Fourth Annual Prayer Congress for Unity in Christ was held July 23, 24, 1982, in Manila, Philippines, the gateway to the Orient—the only Christian nation in the eastern world.

Sponsored by the Dove Foundation and hosted by Rev. Sonia Y. Lim, founder and executive director, the Congress' purpose was to pray and work for unity in the body of Christ.



what the people are saying



An article from the newspaper about your church's belief that the Holy Spirit is a woman sparked a discussion in the adult Sunday School Class I attend last Sunday. Since none of us had considered the question before our discussion was quite general. The article mentioned that you have both Scriptural and historical evidence for your belief but did not elaborate. This is to request that evidence. One objection that was raised which I hope you will address specifically is this: Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, but how does this make sense if the Holy Spirit is a woman?

Kathleen S. McGhehey
Topeka, Kansas

I came across a newspaper reprint with the headline "Sect's Trinity: Father, Son and Mother" from Dallas Times Herald. I read the article and was very pleased to find fellow Christians that believe the same way as I do. I am a missionary in Thailand. I am not in any

denomination, but (with the Lord) on my own together with a few other Christians. I find people much more receptive than in the West. When in the West I was also distributing pamphlets about the Holy Ghost being the Mother of the Trinity. I realised this back in '78 through a revelation, and when praying for verses to confirm it, got the following: Prov. 3:13-18; 4:5-9; 7:4; all of Chap. 8; 9:1-12. Hallelujah! I would like to see the literature you are distributing.

Filip Bauer Spang
Thailand

I want to thank you first for the copy of *Shekinah* which you sent me several months ago, and which I read with interest. You have my permission to reprint my article from the *Witness*, but not my permission to use that text. The *Witness* made many editorial changes which I did not approve of. I am enclosing my correct text, which is the

one you should use without alteration. With best wishes for the success of *Shekinah*.

Dorothy Irvin
Department of Theology
The College of St. Catherine
St. Paul, Minnesota

I am deeply grateful to you for sending me your valuable and very informative magazine (*She-Kin-ah*) and two booklets "*As An Eagle*," and "*In The Beginning God*." I feel these two silent little evangelists of *Shekinah* should also be translated in our "Hindi" and "Urdu" languages for free distribution among Indian Christians, so that they may also know the reality and truth of the word of God. Many years ago the famous Scottish Highland Evangelist John Knox said, that in every age from the beginning, when the cause of truth emerged triumphant from the din and dust of controversy, the victory was won by a band of bigots

See Letters, page 19



Susanna Wesley

As Woman Goes,



Joan of Arc

So Goes The World



Emily H. Tubman



Lottie Moon



Catherine Booth

by
EDITH DEEN



Anne Hutchinson



Ann Judson



Narcissa Whitman

As I did research on *All of the Women of the Bible*, a path I followed arduously for more than three years, I became increasingly aware of the importance of the subject, AS WOMAN GOES, SO GOES THE WORLD. And now as I have delved another several years into the lives of *Great Women of the Christian Faith* through these 19 Centuries since the Bible, I began to see these noble women of the ages as bearers of a processional of light.

Women, especially the noble mothers, wives and teachers, must be transmitters of the light of civilization. Nowhere is this so evident as in the Bible. You may turn its pages and almost trace patterns of light and darkness by the women themselves.

Our friend, Dr. Elton Trueblood, the eminent Quaker-philosopher, said to me as I worked on the manuscript for *All of the Women of the Bible*, "Watch for the phrase in Kings and Chronicles, 'And his mother was.'" And as I studied I realized more than ever the importance of the phrase. In II Kings and II Chronicles, in the biographies of the Kings of Israel, this phrase appears there twenty times, like a refrain in a song.

"And his mother was. . .and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; And his mother was. . .and he did that which was good in the sight of the Lord." In placing the name of a king's mother and the evaluation of his reign side by side, the Hebrews showed how powerful they regarded the role of a mother.

Her influence is also stressed in Ezekiel 16:44, where appears the phrase, "As is the mother, so is her daughter." The love of children was deep in the hearts of Hebrew women, and the mother was regarded with profound reverence. In one place in the Law the mother is even placed before the father as the object of filial reverence (Lev. 19:3).

A mother is the Bible's most honored woman, and she plays a vital part all the way through Bible civilization.

Moses, for example, made the laws, but Jochebed, his mother, molded Moses, the lawgiver. And she it was who first taught Moses of the things of God. From her faith in things unseen, Jochebed gained her strength and force.

Though Moses was adopted by King Pharaoh's daughter, who found the child there when she came to bathe, it was his

own mother Jochebed, who was called into the palace to nurse him. And though King Pharaoh's daughter did not know that her foster child's nurse was his own mother, she it was who remained with him in the palace until Moses was seven.

The whole character of Moses displays his mother's guidance. She it was who instilled in him a belief in the one God, Creator of Heaven and earth, man and beast. She it was who imparted to him the sacred traditions of Israel and who told him of the Divine promise of deliverance from the Egyptian bondage.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Edith Deen

• Mrs. Deen, a native of Texas, is a long-time resident of Fort Worth where she was for twenty-nine years Women's Editor and a daily columnist for the *Fort Worth Press*. She is a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); holds an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Texas Woman's University. She is the author of *ALL OF THE WOMEN OF THE BIBLE*, *FAMILY LIVING IN THE BIBLE* and *GREAT WOMEN OF CHRISTIAN FAITH*.

See *SHEKINAH*, August 1981, for full article.



Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony

TORONTO STAR,
SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1982

A vast revolution is stirring deep in the heart of Christianity around the world — one which is pregnant with meaning, not just for women, who are 50 per cent of Christendom, but for every church member.

Women are gradually "taking back the church" (to use a current slogan of the more militant Christian feminists) and traditional theology will never be the same again



**TOM
HARPUR**
Religion
Editor

The present, male-dominated view of God will be radically altered once women and the female principle are accorded the full equality which growing millions are convinced the Spirit of Truth commands.

A masculine God, made in the image of centuries of males, has been characterized by a harsh, aggressive, competitiveness which lent itself as easily to the blessing of unlimited wars as to exploitative social systems.

But, once the sexism is gone, once it becomes natural to think — as Pope John Paul I, "Papa Luciani", once said during his brief, 34-day reign — of God as Mother as well as Father, the very concept of God (Himself or Herself) is changed.

The Women's Bible

COMMENTS ON GENESIS

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

CHAPTER I.

Genesis i: 26, 27, 28.

26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the

image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

HERE is the sacred historian's first account of the advent of woman; a simultaneous creation of both sexes, in the image of God. It is evident from the language that there was consultation in the Godhead, and that the masculine and feminine elements were equally represented. Scott in his commentaries says, "this consultation of the Gods is the origin of the doctrine of the trinity." But instead of three male personages, as generally represented, a Heavenly Father, Mother, and Son would seem more rational.

The first step in the elevation of woman to her true position, as an equal factor in human progress, is the cultivation of the religious sentiment in regard to her dignity and equality, the recognition by the rising generation of an ideal Heavenly Mother, to whom their prayers should be addressed, as well as to a Father.

If language has any meaning, we have in these texts a plain declaration of the existence of the feminine element in the Godhead, equal in power and glory with the masculine. The Heavenly Mother and Father! "God created man in his *own* image, male and female." Thus Scripture, as well as science and philosophy, declares the eternity and equality of sex—the philosophical fact, without which there could have been no perpetuation of creation, no growth or development in the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdoms, no awakening nor progressing in the world of thought. The masculine and feminine elements, exactly equal and balancing each other, are as essential to the maintenance of the equilibrium of the universe as positive and

Article carried in SHEKINAH, August 1981.

Reprinted with permission from U.S. Catholic, published by Claretian Publications, 221 W. Madison St., Chicago, IL. 60606

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.*

James Breig

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 Gummo Marx, 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."

Complete article is reprinted in the SHEKINAH for December, 1981.

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 understanding of the Spirit to suffer the most.

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."

PRODUCER, 1981 RIM ANGEL AWARDS



MARY DORR

With the Angel Awards show which she founded in 1977, Mary Dorr begins her eighth year as RIM's executive director.

She brings to RIM a background of many years in producing and moderating radio and television shows. She worked her way through the University of California as a San Francisco radio personality. Subsequently she covered the White House for ABC Radio, was with NBC in New York, and later with ABC television in Philadelphia.

In 1980 she was the only American honored by the National Religious Broadcasters for her outstanding leadership in the field of broadcasting. Religious Heritage of America conferred on her its Faith and Freedom Award. Pepperdine University gave her its Distinguished Diploma of Merit which it has bestowed only a few times in its long history. Golden State University conferred on her its Doctorate of Humanities. The mother of four, she was voted California's Mother of the Year.

She is past national president of American Women in Radio and Television. Before coming to RIM, she spoke throughout the world for the American Bible Society.

She produces and moderates the RIM programs nationally and locally.

Letters

who were sworn to its defense. As God is no respecter of persons (male, female, black or white) and has also granted repentance unto life to the Christians and non-Christians both, and for this reason we humbly request you to send a Lady Evangelist from your group here in India (Bijnor) to preach and teach about the truth of the "Holy Spirit female" and God's purpose for women in His ministry. The Urdu language is a

mixture of three Eastern languages ie: Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. Let us examine Genesis 1 :1,26,27 according to Urdu Version. "In the beginning God" – Elohim (El or Ellah) Urdu form Khuda. The word (Khud-a) means, who came himself. "Let us make man in our image. . . male and female." In Urdu we read: Let us (hum-plural) make man (Insan) in our (Apri-plural) image, male and female (Nar aur Nari). The word "Insan" is applied for both male and female, but a separate word for man is

(Nar or Admi) and for woman (Nari or Aurat). Naraud Nari are Hindi words and Admi and Aurat are Urdu words. Spirit of God, Genesis 1:2, "Spirit" in Urdu form is Rooh (feminine gender). This word "Rooh" is also used in Urdu for essence. Dove in Genesis 8:8,9 in Urdu "Fakhta" but here in this text the word "Fakhta or Dove is not used but instead the word "Kabootri" is used, which means a female pigeon. Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18 in Urdu it is
See Letters, page 31

RIM AWARDS PROGRAM

MARY DORR
Executive Director



Religion in Media

RIM

6817 FRANKLIN AVENUE • HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA 90028 • (213) 466-3342

October, 1982

Dear Media Friend:

We are pleased to enclose the Religion In Media Angel Awards Entry Blank for productions during the calendar year of 1982. This awards program is the "Oscars" of the religious world and we are proud to be a part of such an event which honors those who have striven for excellence in the media. We present Silver Angels in all facets of communication: visual, audio or silent media are eligible.

The exciting RIM Angel Awards celebration is always a highlight of the year in Hollywood. Plans are being finalized now for the awards banquet and ceremony on February 17, 1983 in the Coconut Grove of the Ambassador Hotel. Save the night and plan to be with us. **STEVE ALLEN AND JAYNE MEADOWS WILL BE THE CO-HOSTS!**

This year's awards program promises to be the best ever. Many stars of television and motion pictures, along with national and international leaders in the civic and religious communities will be presenting the awards. You and your friends will not want to miss it!

We look forward to receiving your entry.

Best wishes,

Mary Dorr

Mary Dorr

Founder/Producer of Angel Awards

MD:cr
Enclosures

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Religion In Media is DBA Tradestyle of Religious Radio/Television Film Association of Southern California.



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.

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

The full article was carried in two parts in SHEKINAH, Dec. 1981, and Jan.—Mar. 1982.

The Video Shepherds

4 Days of Prayer & Leaflets With the Broadcast Brethren

By Paul Hendrickson

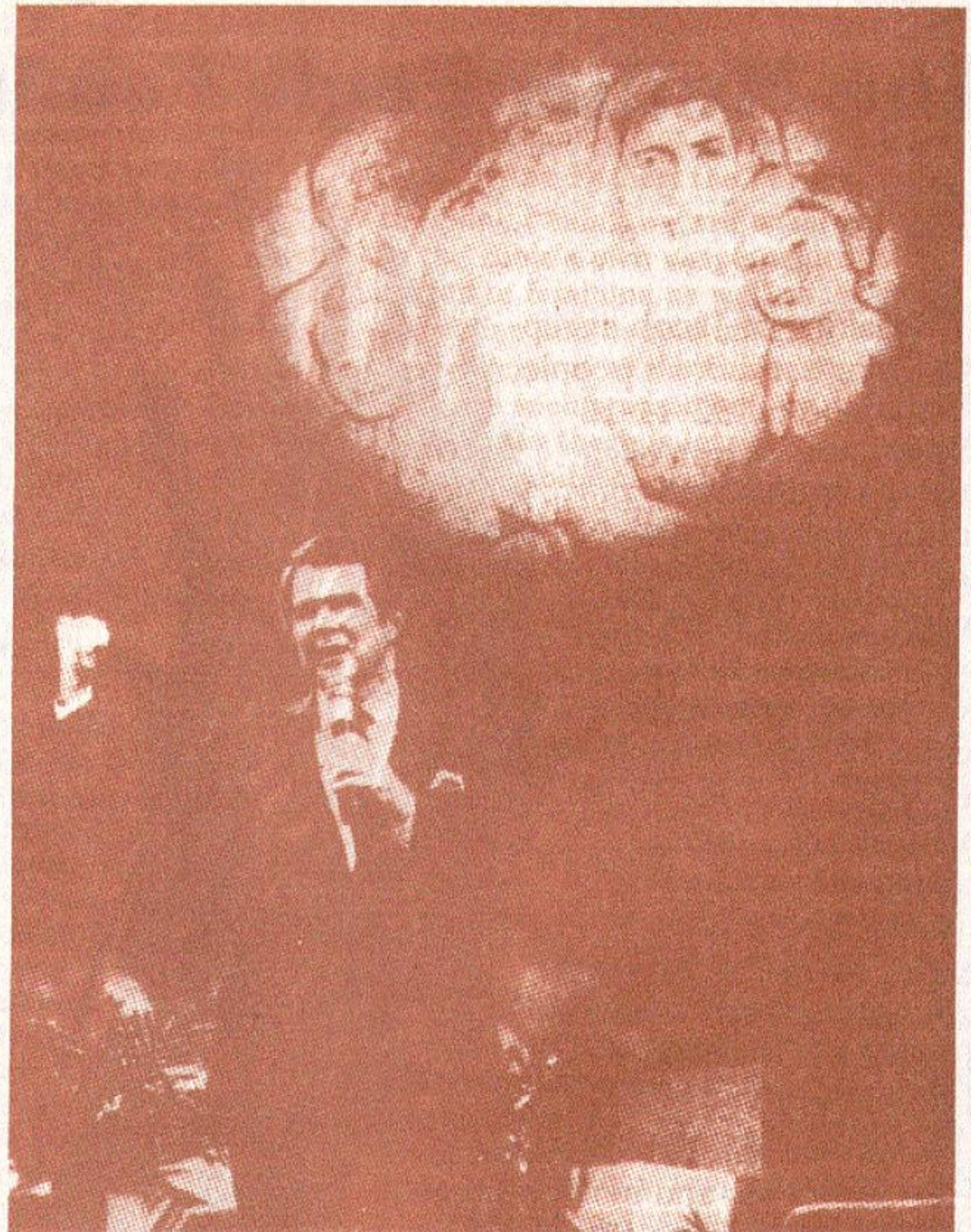
Prologue.

What is it that takes you to the prayer closet? Is it Brother Jimmy Swaggart crackling over Channel 20 every morning at 6 o'clock from Baton Rouge with all that earnest, teary promise? "Neighbor," Brother Jimmy says, "you may THINK Jesus doesn't love you, but when you turn that corner you're gonna find the yard LITTERED with welcomes."

Or is it Pat Robertson, a different sort of video shepherd? Robertson, who has his law degree from Yale and his Phi Beta Kappa key from Washington and Lee, does his daily 10 a.m. TV show amid plants and sofas and coffee tables.



For four days this week several thousand religious broadcasters and assorted believers in the electronic message turned the Sheraton Washington Hotel into a gigantic prayer camp. The theme was "Reaching the Family." Possibly never have so many people in radio and television under one roof been greeted as Brother this or Sister that. It was hokey, and it was holy. It was sacred, and it was profane.



The Feminine Touch

OUR MOTHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN. Her name is Lois Roden. She is 65 and a grandmother. She has hard, gnarled, working-woman hands and a blue blouse locked at the throat. She looks into you with a beaky, cheeky stare. Five years ago, at 2 a.m., while she was reading Revelations 18:1, she looked up and saw a vision passing her window. It was a

silvery glistening angel. And from that moment on Lois Roden has never had a doubt: She knew the Holy Ghost is feminine, and she knows now she has an obligation to say it. The truth is not always popular.

What do her children think of her prophecy?

"They say, Mother, you have a great thing going."

Lois Roden delivers the word

from the church her late husband, Pastor Benjamin Roden, founded. It's called the Living Waters Branch and the main Branch is on a farm outside Waco, Tex. She and the people with her subsist on vegetarian diets with prayer breaks a couple times of day. Otherwise they work on getting out their She-God literature. Waco itself is prophetic, she says. "It's fed by a river named Trinity."

(For complete article, please request SHEKINAH, January to March, 1982)



The Mother Eagle Feminine Images of God

Speaking of Jacob as representing the Lord's people, Deuteronomy 32:11-12 comments, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him...." Similarly, Exodus 19:4 pictures the Lord as telling the children of Israel, "I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." And in Job 39:27-30 the Lord asks Job from the whirlwind, "Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?" The answer, clearly, is that the female eagle is an expression of the will not of Job, but of God; and Deuteronomy and Exodus depict the female eagle not simply as behaving according to God's will, but as actually *imaging the nature of God in relationship to Her children.*

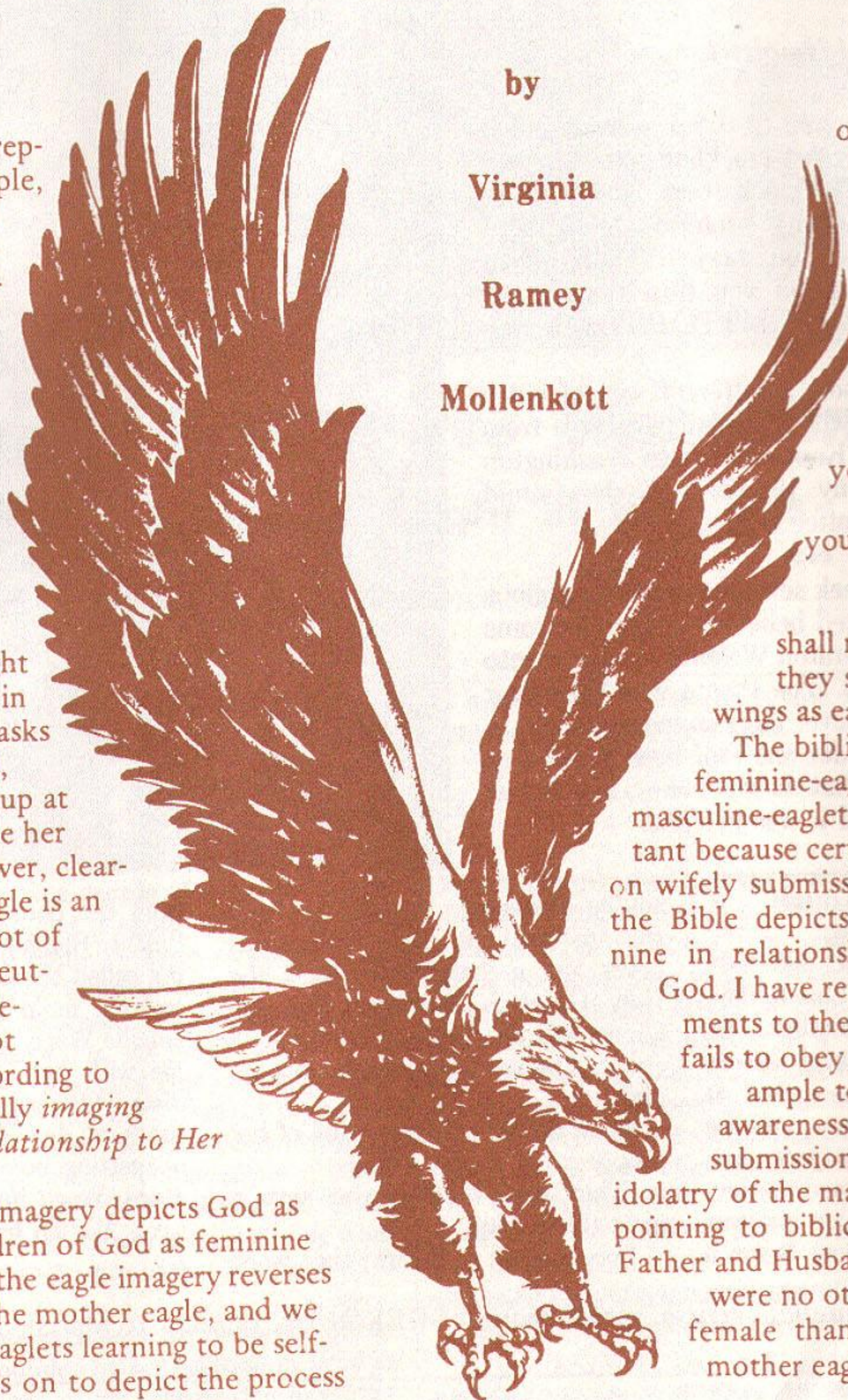
Whereas traditional imagery depicts God as masculine and the children of God as feminine in relationship to Him, the eagle imagery reverses that equation. God is the mother eagle, and we human beings are the eaglets learning to be self-sustaining (Job 39 goes on to depict the process

by

Virginia

Ramey

Mollenkott



of the mother eagle's teaching the eaglets to hunt). Where the sex of the young eagles is suggested or specified, it seems to be masculine,¹ as in Isaiah 40:31-32: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles...."

The biblical image of God-as-feminine-eagle and humanity-as-masculine-eaglets is especially important because certain Christians insist on wifely submission on the basis that the Bible depicts humanity as feminine in relationship to a masculine God. I have repeatedly heard statements to the effect that if a wife fails to obey her husband, her example tends to erode human awareness of proper creaturely submission to the Creator. This idolatry of the male is thinly veiled by pointing to biblical images of God as Father and Husband. But even if there were no other images of God as female than the ones of the mother eagle, they alone should

be enough to explode the notion that it was God's intention for one sex to be subordinate to another because of a divine-human parallel. Furthermore, the mother eagle images depict a God who is *actively trying to create equals by empowering the eaglets* to take care of themselves. Hence the images do not encourage dominance and submission even in our relationship with the Creator, let alone our relationships with other human beings!

In Exodus 19, Deuteronomy 32, and Job 39, the image depicts the mother eagle teaching her eaglets to fly and to hunt their own food. She takes them on her wings, swoops downward suddenly to force them into solo flight, and then stays close to swoop under them again whenever they grow too weary to continue on their own. What a picture of a loving God, caring nurturantly for us when we are weak, yet always aiming at the goal of our maturity and internalized strength rather than at morbid dependency upon a force external to ourselves!

Several years ago I had a memorable dream of an eagle. It was sitting inside a huge circus tent or building, on a post or piling that stood just above my eye-level. From this perch the eagle gazed down into my eyes with the most infinite, amused, tender love I have ever seen (except in the eyes of my angel with the golden eyelids—but that was in *another* dream!). The next day I consulted my books on dreams and symbols and was told that because eagles are identified with the sun and with male fertilization, with high flight and with speed, they symbolize the Father, Divine Majesty, domination, and heroism. Dante, I was reminded, calls the eagle "the bird of God." So while I was glad to be dreaming of God's tenderness toward me, still as a feminist I felt discouraged that my unconscious mind was handing up masculine God-symbols to tell me how sexist my deep mind continued to be. Because until recently I viewed eagles only as they were filtered through the interpretative grid provided by my symbol-books, I did not even notice that the Bible several times depicted God as a *female* eagle.

By a similar process, most of us have associated eagles with warlike dominance rather than with pacifism. But like the nurturant eagle images in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Job, the use of eagles' wings in Revelation 12 seems a very deliberate reversal of any militaristic association. Whereas the center of the chapter uses the image of a war in heaven, the first and final portions depict the

triumph of a woman and the seed of the woman through purely non-violent means. Among these pacifistic methods we find that "to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place" and thus defeat the desire of the serpent to destroy her. To a feminist heart it is cause for great rejoicing that in this passage the divine purpose is centered upon a woman who not only *gives birth to the divine* (her child is immediately snatched up to God's throne), but who *symbolically assumes divinity* when she is given the wings of a great eagle. The association here of the female with life and pacifism as opposed to death, war, and militarism ties in with the statements in Genesis that Eve is the mother of all the *living* and that there would always be enmity between her and the serpent, her seed and the serpent's seed. The world is a militaristic powder-keg today largely because of its sexist assumptions, which warp our understanding of what power is all about—as witness our instant association of the eagle with dominance rather than nurturance. Fortunately, when we can clear up the confusion caused by our interpretive grid, the Bible provides us with healing insights.

Genesis 1:2 tells us that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The word *rachaph*, here translated "moved upon" or "hovered," also means "to shake" and "to flutter." The word is used only three times in the Old Testament, and only twice concerning God's action. The only use of *rachaph* concerning God other than Genesis 1:2 occurs when Deuteronomy 32:11-12 depicts God as the female eagle fluttering over her young. So although the enormous influence of Milton's *Paradise Lost* has taught us to see Genesis 1:2 as a dove image, the similar use of *rachaph* makes it more probable that the very first image in the Bible is of God as a mother eagle fluttering over the waters as She gives birth to the universe.

In Egyptian hieroglyphics, the letter A is represented by the eagle, standing for the Origin of all things and the warmth of life. We women are only reclaiming our biblical and cultural heritage when we see that Origin not in terms of masculine impregnation, but rather in terms of feminine involvement in the birth and nurturing process. God is our Mother-Eagle.² In Her we safely put our trust.

ENDNOTES

¹It would of course be absurd to conclude that because the eaglet image is addressed to males, the image excludes females from God's "nest." Males were understood to be the human norm in the Old Testament culture, so the maleness must be interpreted as inclusive of the female.

²A booklet published in June 1981, entitled *As an Eagle: The Holy Spirit Mother, has just reached me*. It is available from Lois I. Roden, publisher of a free feminist newsletter called *SHEkinah*, P.O. Box 4098, Waco, TX 76705. As much as I sympathize with Lois Roden's attempts to prove that the Holy Spirit is the feminine component of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Mother, and the Son), I think we are wiser to stick to the Bible's own usage, which is to associate feminine as well as masculine and neuter imagery with *all three Persons* of the Godhead. This practice seems wiser for two reasons: (1) because there is intrinsic value in reflecting biblical usage rather than departing from it, and (2) from a *political* perspective, limiting female God-language only to the Holy Spirit still creates an image of the Godhead in which the female is outnumbered, eternally outvoted in a two-to-one power bloc. As facetious as it may seem to speak of political conflict within the Godhead, women's experience within patriarchy teaches us to be very wary about the images we adapt.

Virginia would be happy to hear from anyone who would like to suggest feminine images of God that they would like to see treated in future columns, especially if people will recount their particular reasons for loving a certain image. Address: Route 3, Box 139, Hewitt, NJ 07421.



"God is Spirit, neither masculine nor feminine in human terms. We have anthropomorphized God into male and that is the ultimate put-down to women."—Dr. Kenneth Teegarden, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

THE MAGNA CHARTA OF WOMAN

By Jessie Penn-Lewis

PART 2

1

"Ye All Can Prophecy. . . ."

Let us consider the three passages in the New Testament which contain the teaching of Paul concerning the ministry of Christian women in the Church of Christ. As our examination of them involves questioning the rendering of the original text by translators, it would be well first to emphasize the vast debt we owe to the labors of scholars in the translation of the Scriptures and to remind ourselves of the fact that, as Schofield has said, "the labours of competent scholars have brought our English Versions to a degree of perfection so remarkable, that we may confidently rest upon them as authoritative." That this is so we gratefully admit, but, we are bound to add, with the exception of passages relating to the status of women. These most sorely need revision as must surely be acknowledged by all who honestly weigh the facts set forth by Dr. Bushnell who says, "It is very serious to base principles

of action on translations of obscure passages—those upon which no translators can dogmatise."

But "it is not worth our while," writes Dr. Bushnell, "to complain that men have not always seen truths that had no special application to their needs, either in interpreting or in translating the Bible; we merely wish to point out wherein there is need of changes. . . . Supposing women only had translated the Bible from age to age, is there a likelihood that men would have rested content with the outcome? Therefore our brothers have no good reason to complain if, while conceding that men have done the best they could, alone, we assert that they did not do the best that could have been done. The work would have been of a much higher order had they first helped women to learn the sacred languages . . . and then have given them a place on the translation committees. . . ."

For "there are truths," Dr. Bushnell rightly says, "that give light upon problems that women alone are called upon to solve," and "such truths

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man is not equipped to understand, much less to set forth to the understanding of women."

Canon Payne Smith says of the Bible, "A bad translation of this Book exercises a depressing influence upon a nation's civilisation; a good translation is one of the great levers in a nation's rise." This is especially so in the effect of a "bad translation" connected with the status of women in general. For, as Dr. Bushnell observes, the reason why "so large a proportion of the women of Christendom are given over to fashion and folly" is that they have never been "given a proper and dignified work in the advancement of God's kingdom. . . ." And this because three passages in the epistles of Paul have been rendered into English in such a way that they have entirely misinterpreted the teaching of the Apostle, and by so doing have shut out women from "proper and dignified work" in the church of God.

Now let us turn to I Cor. 14:34, 35 and see what fresh light Dr. Bushnell brings to bear upon it. It reads in the R.V. thus:

Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.

By minute examination of the original Greek text, references to authoritative scholars and the historical setting of the occasion calling forth the epistle, Dr. Bushnell shows clearly that Paul never wrote these words as a "commandment of the Lord," but was *quoting what the Judaizers in the Corinthian church were saying*. Their mischief making at Corinth was in connection with the work of Christian women as in other ways. This simplifies the entire subject, if the statement proves to be in harmony with the context and other parts of scripture.

Referring to the various attempts which have been made to reconcile Paul's words about women praying and prophesying (I Cor. 11:5: "But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoureth her head. . .") with his seeming command, "Let the women keep silence," in I Cor. 14:34, Dr. Bushnell points out some weak points in the explanations and expresses what many Christian women have felt, that most of these attempts have not solved the difficulty satisfactorily. "The Holy Spirit does not descend to sophistry to induce women to do the will of God," says Dr. Bushnell. Nor does Paul, as Prof. Ramsay suggests, use "tortuous special pleading," or resort to "Jewish fables" to "find a pretext for silencing women." For Paul spoke as "the mouthpiece of God," and his writings were prompted by the Holy Spirit. Therefore a "consistent worthy sense can be found" in his words, if his arguments are not twisted out of conformity with Scriptures. For it is a safe rule that scripture must interpret scripture under the illumination of the Spirit of God, and when it does so, it will be found to have no contradictions. The true interpretation carries with it, to a spiritual mind, a reasonableness and simplicity which is worthy of God.

So it appears in this instance. That Paul is but quoting the language of the Judaizers in I Cor. 14:34, 35 is in harmony with previous parts of the epistle. Again and again from chapter 5 on to end of chapter 14, it can be seen that he is replying to a letter of questions sent to him by the Corinthian Church. In instance after instance it can be detected that 'the reference to the questions is repeated whenever a new point is taken up.'

We need to remember that in the Greek manuscripts there were no capital letters to words, no quotation marks, and no punctuation.

editorial

An Introduction to Ancient Bible Manuscripts

As in all other fields of knowledge, new discoveries are being made every day concerning the origin and preservation of the sacred writings of the Bible.

From the inspired records we are to understand that knowledge in the spiritual realm is to be continually increased until we are perfected, seeing God not as in a glass darkly, but face to face, reflecting the Divine Image — re-created in the very Image of God.

Elohim (plural) is the name of God in Hebrew, the language in which the Bible was originally written, as well as in Aramaic.

Ancient manuscripts from the Eastern Church have been made available to scholars since 1957 in the Persian text of the Peshitta in Aramaic which helps to clear the mystery of the Third Person of the Godhead, now known to be the Holy Spirit MOTHER, from the original texts.

Our present Bibles do not contain the record of the truths spoken in the seven thunders of Revelation 10 because they were NOT WRITTEN down by John as commanded by the Angel. If we are to ever know these mysteries, a divine revelation would be necessary to explain their meaning, at the TIME of the voice of the seventh angel when the "mystery of God" is to be finished.

In the field of archaeology alone, excavations in many of the ancient sites have uncovered endless amounts of material, shedding light on the Bible from the manuscripts of the Dead Sea scrolls, the Nag Hammadi Gnostic Gospels, in Hebrew and Aramaic, and various other documents from antiquity.



Mountains of truth are rising from all over the world linking the past with the present and confirming the truths of scriptural records found even in the present day translations of the Bible.

Yet, contrary to the opinion of the majority of Bible students, the original manuscripts of both the Old and New Testaments were originally written in Aramaic and Hebrew, now known to us from the Dead Sea scrolls and the Gospel of John. DeZwaan and Barny Torrey are of the opinion that John originally thought and wrote in Aramaic (which is Semetic) rather than Greek. Incidentally, all Greek manuscripts of the Gospel of John do not read the same. Today, the discovery of the Semetic and Palestinian nature of the tradition lying behind the Gospel of John disproves the common theory that it was originally written in Greek.

With all these additional manuscripts, scholars say there is no difficulty in perceiving the reality of the Holy Spirit as "She" both in Genesis and Job, and in the Aramaic New Testament.

The Bible in Aramaic — the Peshitta manuscripts — the Dead Sea scrolls, and the Gnostic Gospels in Hebrew and Aramaic have been rediscovered and published. Still, no honest and complete English translation has been made available to the world from the Aramaic New Testament.

The nearest translation from the Peshitta Text by Lamsa is considerably inaccurate, especially in rendering all the texts about the Holy Spirit in the masculine gender when, in fact, in at least 21 texts the correct translation is, the Holy Spirit "SHE."

When the King James Version of the Bible was translated into English from a few Greek and Latin manuscripts, the Aramaic Peshitta manuscripts were not available to the western world because the Ottoman Empire ruled the lands of the Eastern Apostolic Church which possessed these treasured oracles. Thus, for only 24-25 years has the world had access to them. No wonder that they are yet obscure and relatively unknown.

The truths found in these priceless records would certainly upset the so-called theology of the Christian and Moslem world and no doubt would unsettle the closed circle of those who have known these earth-shaking facts but refused to share them, without respect of persons, with the whole world.

Hebrew manuscripts dated 750 B.C. were found at Muraba in a cave near the Dead Sea. The Masorettes' (7th century) work was to establish a correct text of the Bible which began to appear in the second century. They set themselves to provide the original, purely consonantal text

(in early Semetic) with vowels to standardize pronunciation. They found up to 1500 verses with textual errors. The corrections were noted in the margins showing the correct way in the Hebrew (Masoretic). Note: Recently it has been brought to light that "scholars have now determined, so many hundreds of instances in the Hebrew scriptures in which deliberate changes were made from feminine to masculine terminology" (*God and Woman — The Hidden History*, by Elizabeth Rodgers Dobell, *Red-book* magazine, March 1978, p. 41).

The copyists and scholars of the Middle Ages did not preserve the whole of extant literature of their time but were very selective. Little more than 10% of the ancient Greek and about a third of the Latin manuscripts survived. Greek was practically unknown in Medieval Europe until the middle of the 14th century when interest in the Greek manuscripts had a short lived revival in the 12th century at the time of the Crusades.

Successive conquerors of Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Alexandria destroyed an enormous number of priceless manuscripts — 120,000 volumes in the conquest of Constantinople alone. The Hebrew as well as Latin, the language of the Middle Ages, were also destroyed. The first printed book in Latin was in 1465, Greek in 1488, and Aesop's Fables in 1478. From 1449 to 1515 all available Greek manuscripts were published.

Jewish literature in Greek was plentiful in the Hellenistic and Roman period. But because of the conflicts between the Jews and the Romans and the destruction of the Temple manuscripts, all these writings collapsed into oblivion. Only the writings of Philo and Josephus survived with a few others.

Today, the treasured remains of the original Bible manuscripts that have been discovered rest under tight security in various places in the world. "Keter Ha Torah," Crown of the Law, written by Aaron Ben Asher of the 9th century, has been kept in Jerusalem since 1948.

A complete copy of the Septuagint (Greek) with many differences from the original Hebrew text was discovered in the monastery of St. Catherines on Mt. Sinai in 1844.

The 1627 Codex Alexandria reached Great Britain: a third of the manuscripts are in the Vatican Library in Rome.

In 1947 the greatest archaeological find of the century was near Khirbet Qumran near the Dead Sea. Manuscripts dating from the 2nd century B.C. written in western Aramaic were recovered and four of these were published in 1955. The French Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem published a few in 1949.

"In 1956 in the Qumran Cave 11, a parchment about Melchizedek was discovered which revealed that 'Melchizedek as ELOHIM (feminine-masculine) has a place in the DIVINE ASSEMBLY' (*The Melchizedek Tradition*, p. 77, by Fred Horton), and it also speaks of the 'antecedent of the FEMININE singular suffix. . . and the person addressed seems to be Melchizedek' (*Ibid.*)."— *In Their Image*, p. 8.

The Genesis Apocryphon and other Dead Sea scrolls are now in the Israel Museum.

In view of all the recent discoveries — that the Bible appeared originally in Hebrew and Aramaic (the language of the Israelites, to whom were intrusted the oracles of God) — one would be expected to increase in knowledge and understanding of the rich meanings hidden in these languages and to advance with revealed truth instead of burying the head

ostrich-like in the sand, purposely oblivious to the facts.

With the mysteries surrounding a great number of texts about the Holy Spirit cleared and known to be FEMININE in gender, those who know, are "without excuse" (Rom. 1:20) if they do not know the "invisible" God, Who is "clearly seen," "from the creation of the world," "being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."

In part, the truth about God has been miraculously preserved in the present translation of the Bible. For instance, in Genesis, if one takes the word of God as it reads, he can know more about God than the scholars of today. Genesis 1:26,27 is the key to the knowledge of God. It says, "And God (Elohim, plural) said, Let US make man (human beings) in OUR image, male and FEMALE" "in OUR likeness." Adam and Eve — male and female images of God — tell us that Those Who made Their Images in the earth were represented as male and female—a family in Heaven (Eph. 3:15).

The great question now is: How is all this valuable information to be given to the millions, hungry for all the revealed Word of God?

When the source of a great oil discovery is made known, people get the fever and rush to the supply for their share of the benefits.

Likewise, should all resort to the rich supply of spiritual oil found in the original manuscripts of both the Old and New Testaments in Hebrew and Aramaic and demand their share in honest translations made available on a, heretofore, unprecedented scale for those who want the whole truth and nothing but the truth about God, then, all will share in the benefits.



Bible students and scholars should demand an honest translation of the original Peshitta text in Aramaic, verifying the FEMININE IMAGERY in the Godhead and correcting any and all errors in existing translations of the Bible.

The voice of every layman should rise in a loud cry for the cover to be removed from the treasures of knowledge that have been reserved for a select few for centuries.

The power of the Spirit of Truth awaits our demand and reception!

Let us now demand the whole Truth of God, remembering that great moral power is required to emerge out of such a state of ignorance as the people of God and the world have fallen.

My plea: Help us, O our God, to know Thee, in all the fulness of Truth!

LOIS RODEN

Living Waters

Holy Spirit's female, visitor tells Oshawa

By Cy Elsey
Staff Writer

A bumper sticker reads: Pray To God She Will Hear You.

A button carries the message: Trust In God She Will Provide.

Words on a T-shirt are: When God Made Man -- She Was Only Kidding.

They are among the various means that the Living Waters Branch -- an inter-denominational church group -- is spreading the view that the Holy Spirit is female.

The leader of Living Waters is Bishop Lois Roden, a 65-year-old grandmother.

While it is not known exactly how many people belong to the church, Mrs. Roden and other leaders of her group estimate the number in the "tens of thousands" in several countries.

Mrs. Roden has travelled almost all over the world.

She stopped off in Oshawa recently during a speaking tour in the Toronto area. She visited Oshawa's Living Waters Branch representative Gladys Ottman and other members of the group.

She was accompanied by her secretary Catherine Matteson; Novelette Sinclair, Montreal representative; Myrtle Clarke, Toronto representative; Perry Jones, public



The leader of the church group Living Waters Branch Bishop Lois Roden (right) was in Oshawa last week. She was greeted by Gladys Ottman, the group's Oshawa representative.

relations director.

Jean Burton is the Whitby representative.

Mrs. Roden recalls that shortly before her husband's death she had a vision of the Holy Spirit.

It was one night between 2 and 3 a.m. when she looked and saw the vision passing her bedroom window.

"It was of a silver angel, shimmering in

the night. It was a feminine representation of this angel. I had been studying Revelation 18 and it said that this mighty angel was to come down to earth and that was my understanding. I had been studying about it," recalls Mrs. Roden.

And, from that moment on Lois Roden has never had a doubt. She knew the Holy Ghost is feminine, and

she knows she has an obligation to say it and that is what Mrs. Roden has been doing the past five years.

She started delivering the word from the church her husband founded on a farm outside Waco, Texas, and it is still the main Branch of Living Waters Branch.

Mrs. Roden and others subsist on vegetarian diets with

prayer breaks a couple of times a day.

Mrs. Ottman's daughter Ruth, a laid-off stenographer, has joined Mrs. Roden on her speaking tour in the United States.

Living Waters Branch is planning a World Congress at Detroit in 1984, with representatives of numerous churches invited to attend.

Meanwhile, Bishop Roden is seeking an audience sometime next year with Pope John Paul. She claims to have friends who personally know Pope John Paul.

Mrs. Roden and some of her followers followed the Pope during his 1979 visit to the United States, handing out literature to all who would take it.

"We are self-supporting," says Mrs. Roden. "We give literature free to anyone who asks and we trust the Spirit to impress the individual as to whether he or she wants to financially support our work including the publication of literature."

Bishop Roden expects to be back in the Toronto area in January.

In the meantime, the Living Waters Branch message is being carried on bumpers, buttons and T-shirts.

Kitchener-Waterloo Record, Kitchener, Ontario, Saturday, February 21, 1981



LOIS RODEN
... talks today at UW

U.S. woman sees Holy Spirit as female figure

By JOHN ASLING
Record Staff Writer

When Lois Roden prays, she says, "Our Mother who art in heaven."

When she talks of the coming of the second Messiah, she talks about a woman.

She sounds like a rebellious young theology student, but this Texas-based promoter of the female deity is a 64-year-old grandmother, an exile of the Seventh Day Adventist Church who believes the Holy Spirit is a feminine image of God.

President of the Branch Church, a breakaway of the Seventh Day church, Roden will be delivering lectures on her revelation at the University of Waterloo's Campus Centre Room 110 today at 3 p.m. and again on Sunday at the same time.

Roden says the feminine Holy Spirit creates a Trinity that is a family and thus a force that can be far more positive than the all-male idea of God that has been preached for so long.

"It's enhanced my faith. It's given me a complete picture of the Godhead. Heretofore we've only had a partial view of the Godhead," she said in an interview Friday in Kitchener.

The fostering of the all-male God by the mostly male-led Christian churches for the past 2,000 years has meant that complete knowledge of God has been withheld for that time.

Roden, through the Branch Church — founded by her late husband in 1955 — and her many publications and tapes, is trying to right that wrong.

"It's good news for men and women. That's what I like about it. It gives a balanced picture. It equalizes things. God is male and female."

Without the positive image of God as a family of mother, father and son, many people have suffered, she said. And it has led to what she calls perversion and homosexuality, Roden said.

"Homosexuality is a result of the churches misrepresenting God," she said.

"This is a great reformation in religion," she said of what has really become a non-denominational movement to recognize the femininity of God.

The reformation began in 1977 when Roden, an ordained minister in the church, was teaching a Bible class and suddenly had the revelation that the Holy Spirit was a female.

People around her first thought she had lost her mind. The concept was so new to her that there were times when she wondered if they were right.

The opposition to her feminine concept of God was so strong, particularly from the males in her congregation in Waco, Texas, that she was becoming increasingly frustrated.

But then she says she had a vision of a shimmering silver angel with a feminine form. From then on she was convinced she was right. And once she began publishing her ideas in her magazines, *In Her Image* and *Shekinah*, she began to hear from scholars and feminists all over the world who agreed with her.

Roden can literally quote hundreds of Bible passages to prove her point that God is at least partly female. But the basis for her revelation is the Book of Genesis where it says, "Let us make men in our own image, male and female."

Since God in this case is clearly plural and mankind is made female as well as male, Roden deduces that God must be both male and female.

In order to help the rest of us learn that the Holy Spirit is a feminine image, that God is part female and that the Trinity is a family, Roden and her followers, which number somewhere in the thousands, including about 50 in Canada, have gone to great lengths.

An Introduction to the Peshitta

The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East

BY GEORGE M. LAMSA

THE ARAMAIC PESHITTA TEXT

"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. (Complete Introduction to the Peshitta is carried in three parts in SHEKINAH, August, October, and December, 1981.)

