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# SHEKINAH

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## 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)

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on the footing of now-we-know-where-we-stand.

Whether this is the conscious intention of Roman statements I cannot say, although a glance backward at "Humanae Vitae" and even farther at "Veterum Sapientia" leads me to believe that this is the curiously involuted Roman way of taking a step forward, while meeting the needs of both conservatives and liberals at once.

Once the points we were to debate had been announced, Arlene Swidler and Leonard Swidler took the next step of organizing the opposition in the form of a volume of essays commenting on individual phrases of the statements (Wo-



## editorial

# THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

In the Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 44, we have a confrontation between the prophet and the people of Judah, his fellow-refugees in Egypt, over the worship of a heathen deity, namely the queen of heaven. Just who was this queen of heaven to whom the children of Judah so vehemently pledged themselves, as recorded in verse 17 of the Chapter? *"But we will certainly do whatever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil."*

Raphael Patai brings out something of the probable identity of this queen of heaven in his book, *The Hebrew Goddess*, page 263 (Avon). *"We know that, following their penetration of Canaan, the Hebrew tribes adopted several local gods, or deities who held sway in neighboring countries, among them the goddesses Asherah, Astarte, and Anath (called the Queen of Heaven). This was bitterly denounced by Biblical authors and labeled as 'awhoring after foreign gods.' What, in fact, took place in the early Israelite period was an incorporation of Canaanite gods and goddesses into the...religion of the Hebrews."*

The history of Israel shows that whenever they were without divine leadership or without the Sanctuary (the center of their worship), they tended to revert to the worship of the gods of the nations around them. This can readily be seen from the case in question. Jerusalem had been besieged and the Temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar some years before. A similar situation developed after the ten northern tribes, under the leadership of Jereboam, seceded from the remaining two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. In order to keep the people away from the Temple and the true worship in Jerusalem, Jereboam set up an alternative or counterfeit system of worship within the borders of the northern kingdom (See 1 Kings 12).

Webster's definition of a counterfeit, as *"a copy or imitation passed as genuine with intent to defraud,"* poses two questions. 1. Of what was this queen of heaven, recorded by Jeremiah, a copy? 2. Why were Jeremiah's fellow-countrymen so easily duped into accepting the counterfeit as the real thing?

In answer to the first question, Alexander Hislop, in his book, *The Two Babylons*, pages 307-309, gives us some insight. *"That Semiramis, under the name of Astarte, was worshipped not only as an incarnation of the Spirit of God, but as the mother of mankind, we have very clear and satisfactory evidence. . . . Semiramis, being deified as Astarte, came to be raised to the highest honours. . . attributed to the Godhead, to identify her, under the name of the Mother of the gods, with that Divine Spirit, without whose agency no one can be born a child of God. . . . Hence, also, the character attributed to the Grecian Minerva, whose name Athena. . . is only a synonym for Beltis, the well-known name of the Assyrian goddess. . . . Athena. . . is universally known as the 'goddess of wisdom,' . . . The name Astarte signifies also the 'Maker of investigations,' and in this respect was applicable to Cybele or Semiramis, as symbolized by the Dove. . . . Semiramis, then, as Astarte, worshipped as the dove, was regarded as the incarnation of the Spirit of God. . . . As Baal, Lord of Heaven, had*

*his visible emblem, the sun, so she, as Beltis, Queen of Heaven, must have hers also — the moon, which in another sense was Asht-tart-e, 'The maker of revolutions;'. . ."*

The answer to the second question becomes understandable when we consider the fact that the Hebrews were daily confronted with the feminine aspect of God by many of the symbols used in their worship services. The word Elohim, showing plural Gods, conveyed the idea of both the feminine and the masculine aspects of the Godhead. Terms such as Holy Spirit (Ru'ah ha-Kodesh), Shekinah (Shekhinah or Malkhut), Sabbath (Shabbat) and Law (Torah), were all feminine terms, used in connection with the Sanctuary, itself bearing the feminine gender.

In the name Melchizedek, with whom the Hebrews were familiar from the time of Abraham, we find the combination of two Hebrew words: Melchi — king or queen, and zedek — a feminine noun for righteousness. Hence, the descriptions relating to Melchizedek, *"priest of the Most High God," "without father,"* with no *"beginning or ending,"* describe a member of the Godhead with Whom the Hebrews were, more or less, well acquainted — the original Queen of Heaven.

In the book of Revelation, by the Apostle John, we find a description of just such a Queen pictured in Heaven. *"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars"* (Rev. 12:1). Note the crown, showing her royal authority and, also, the place (Heaven) where she is pictured as having that authority. In the Psalms we have another picture of this same woman. *"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. . . upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir"* (Psalms 45:6,9). Henry Halley gives this comment on the latter scripture. *"Bearing the name of God, seated on an Eternal Throne. It may, in part, have reference to David or Solomon. But some of its statements are wholly inapplicable to either, or to any other human sovereign"* (Bible Handbook, page 192, Billy Graham Crusade Edition, Comment on Psalms 45). John sees not only the woman or queen in heaven but he, also, observes *"a great red dragon"* (Rev. 12:3) which he terms *"that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan"* (verse 9) waiting to devour the child that the woman is expecting. And all this, took place in Heaven as is shown by the fact that the devil was not cast out of Heaven to earth until sometime after his war with Michael, whom many Bible scholars associate with Christ, the child which this woman brought forth.

Some interpret this woman to represent the Church. And others believe that she is none other than Mary, the mother of Jesus, proceeding, therefore, to place the title, Queen of Heaven, upon her. Both schools of thought may be right, in a sense; but, in the Heavenly setting, as seen by John, we have a deeper, yet higher meaning than we might, heretofore, have understood. Note Jesus' words to His disciples: *"Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he (Jesus) stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For*

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## The Ordination of Women

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*men Priests: A Catholic Commentary on the Vatican Declaration*, Paulist, 1977). Subsequently the Women's Ordination Conference took up its "Second Argument Project," collecting signatures and theological material to counter the statement's argument that priests must necessarily be males in order to present the image of Jesus as a male. The difficulty of dealing with this argument begins, I think, with our inability to maintain a straight face and sober credulity when hearing it, and this loses us several points in the opening round.

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. . .*"

This assertion has been countered so far by the extremely weak argument that tradition should not be permitted to be normative on this point, which is really only the simple and inadequate appeal to justice of the have-nots against the haves, a technique seldom effective in any realm—certainly not among Christians.

And it would be a shame to abandon tradition here, for all along our suspicions should have been alerted by the statement's use of such words as "never" and "only." Behind such absolutes are sure to lie motives which narrow the breadth of our history to what is "desirable" today; the scope of Christian tradition should not be gauged by the wishfulness of the present clergy.

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-Chris-



Bishop Theodora

tian, 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 (*hond*)*rabilis femina episcopa*, an "honorable woman bishop."

Although we have information from early texts that certain heretics, in particular Montanists, ordained women, I do not have any material which is to be identified as Montanist. In view of the unpolemical nature of the six types of sources mentioned above, in contrast for example to texts which oppose the ordination of women, these sources must be taken very seriously.

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## The Ordination of Women

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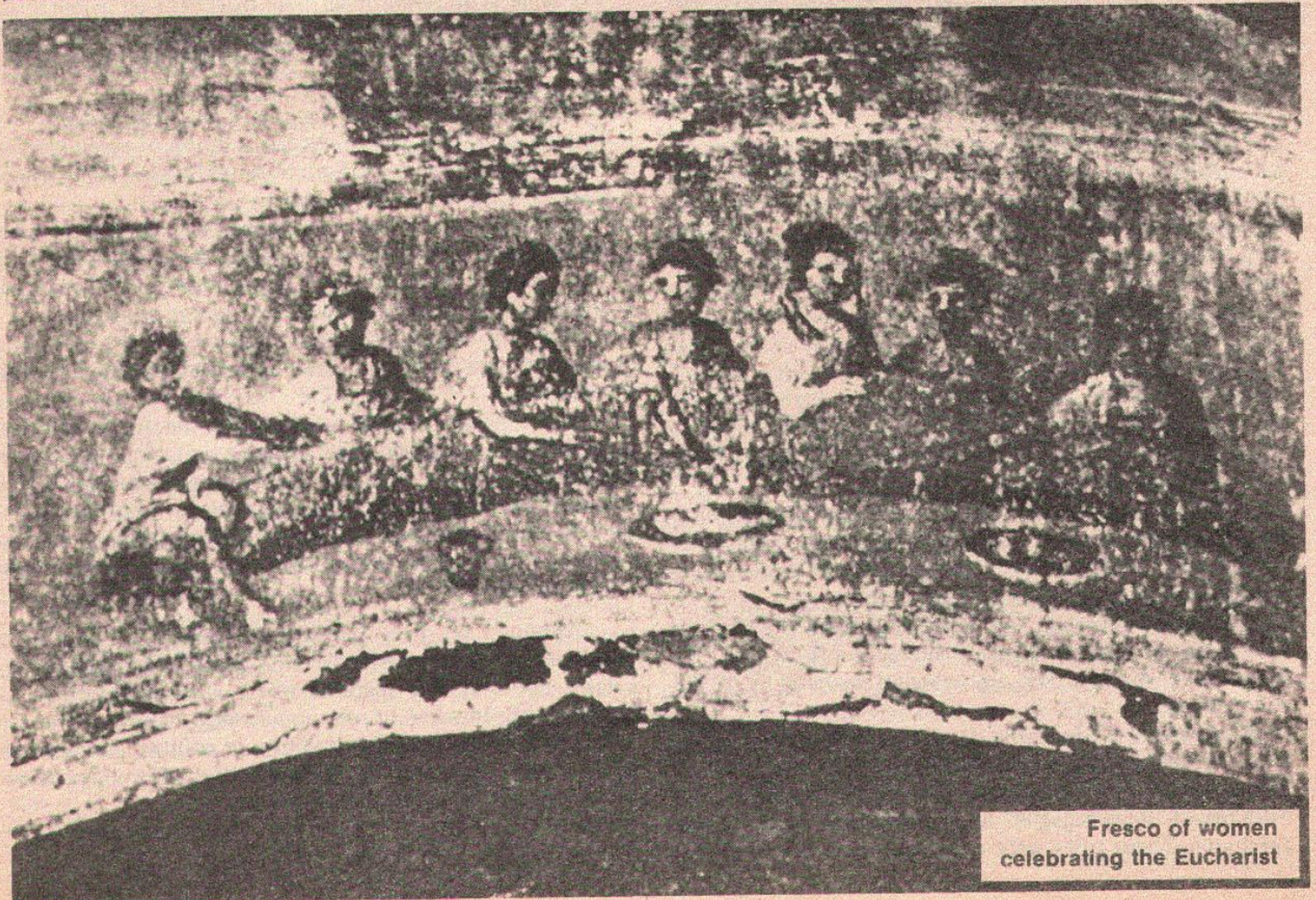
Although this is not the place for a study of the attempts to interpret, or sometimes, to interpret away, this evidence, the reason why we haven't heard of it before is closely related to the necessarily rather brief history of its interpretation. Most of this material has been known for only about a hundred years or less, with the exception of the Bishop Theodora mosaic which I suppose has always been visible in its present location in the church of St. Praxedis in Rome since it was first made. The reason why we haven't heard of the inscriptional material — the tombstone and votive inscriptions — is that they are published in scholarly books and journals, hidden away in seldom-visited basements of libraries, often not even photographed. Sometimes the original stone has been lost and we have only a copy made many years ago. A well-photographed collection of the tomb inscriptions of the women presbyters from the catacombs of Rome would do much to raise our morale, by reminding us of our historical importance.

In some cases, the reason why we haven't heard of a piece of evidence is more interesting. The fresco of the women celebrating a Eucharist in the Catacombs of Priscilla (that name is surely significant) was uncovered and cleaned in 1893/4 by Joseph Wilpert, working under the direction of de Rossi, and is visible today to tourists, who can buy postcards and slides of it. Many of those who see it, how-

ever, are not aware that they have seen a group of women celebrating a Eucharist. This faulty perception is due in part to a copy of the fresco, made in mosaic and displayed in the chapel above. The many changes that have been made in the copy are clearly identifiable when postcards of both are projected simultaneously; they evoke roars of laughter from the audience, because most of the women have been changed to men, in particular the figure at the left end of the group, identified by Wilpert as the principal celebrant (with some of the others possible concelebrating). Although this person's ankle-length skirt has been retained — men at this period wore knee-length skirts — a beard has been incongruously added. It seems that even people who have seen both the original and the copy often carry away the visual memory of the better lighted but masculinized copy.

The pilgrim to Rome is also very likely to see the impressively beautiful mosaic of the Bishop Theodora over the doorway of the Zeno chapel in the Church of St. Praxedis. The memory carried away, however, will not be as clear as the original if the tourist relies on the postcards and guidebook — for sale on the premises — to refresh her memory. In these photographs of the mosaic, a curious dark shadow falls on the upper left corner of the mosaic, right over the *Episcopa Theodora*, rendering it illegible. A visit to the archaeological archives and to a photographic firm specializing in archeological reproductions fails to unearth a better photograph. This, however, is not the fault of the original. Thanks to Joan Morris, I have a slide of it so clear that four-year-old children in the audience have been known to spell

**Continued next page.**



Fresco of women celebrating the Eucharist

## The Ordination of Women

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through the Latin inscription out loud with me — a tribute to its clarity and preservation.

Joan Morris herself reports, when asked why her important book *The Lady Was a Bishop* carries no pictures of the material she talks about, that the publishers were unwilling to go to the expense of photographs, and this answer contains, in miniature, all the elements of the entire problem. (I might add that she has been unable to find a publisher for her study of the manuscripts relating to Pope Joan.)

A final reason why we haven't heard of this important material must be described as "mindset" and here I must admit to having participated in the sociological phenomenon, already noted by perceptive blacks and women, by which the "oppressor's" view of the "oppressed" is accepted by the "oppressed" themselves as true, even against what both groups can observe in reality. In the small German museum at Bebenhausen, I found and photographed many beautiful mediaeval carvings and paintings of

women holding the host and chalice, of women preaching, and of women singing the office, all public liturgical acts for which ordination was required. (I must leave aside here the dating of these sources, and the possible variations of interpretation.) However, before I made these photographs, I had visited that museum many times over a period of ten years without realizing what I saw before me, or wondering about its significance. I hadn't seen these things before, although often studying them with my eyes, because I assumed they couldn't be true. And I was not conscious of assuming they could not be true!

Such a rejection of the evidence may well take place without hypocrisy or dishonesty; in fact, it is scarcely to be described as rejection. On the other hand, it cannot be described as scholarly and accurate study of our own tradition, either.

Sound historical method now teaches us to overcome our own presuppositions in favor of a look at the evidence. We know that these sources' attestation to the breadth and diversity of the early church must not be ignored in favor of what church practice has become today. Our history can help us to the solution of many problems, not least the problem of the Good News to women.



Sex changes in mosaic copy

### CORRECTION

In the February, 1981 issue of *Shekinah*: the article entitled "Does Male Dominance Tarnish Our Translations?" on page 24, the left hand column was pasted up incorrectly. From line 16 on to the end of the column should be read ahead of the first 15 lines of the column, which should then follow. The rest of the article was in order. Our thanks to the reader who brought this to our attention. — Ed.

# 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.

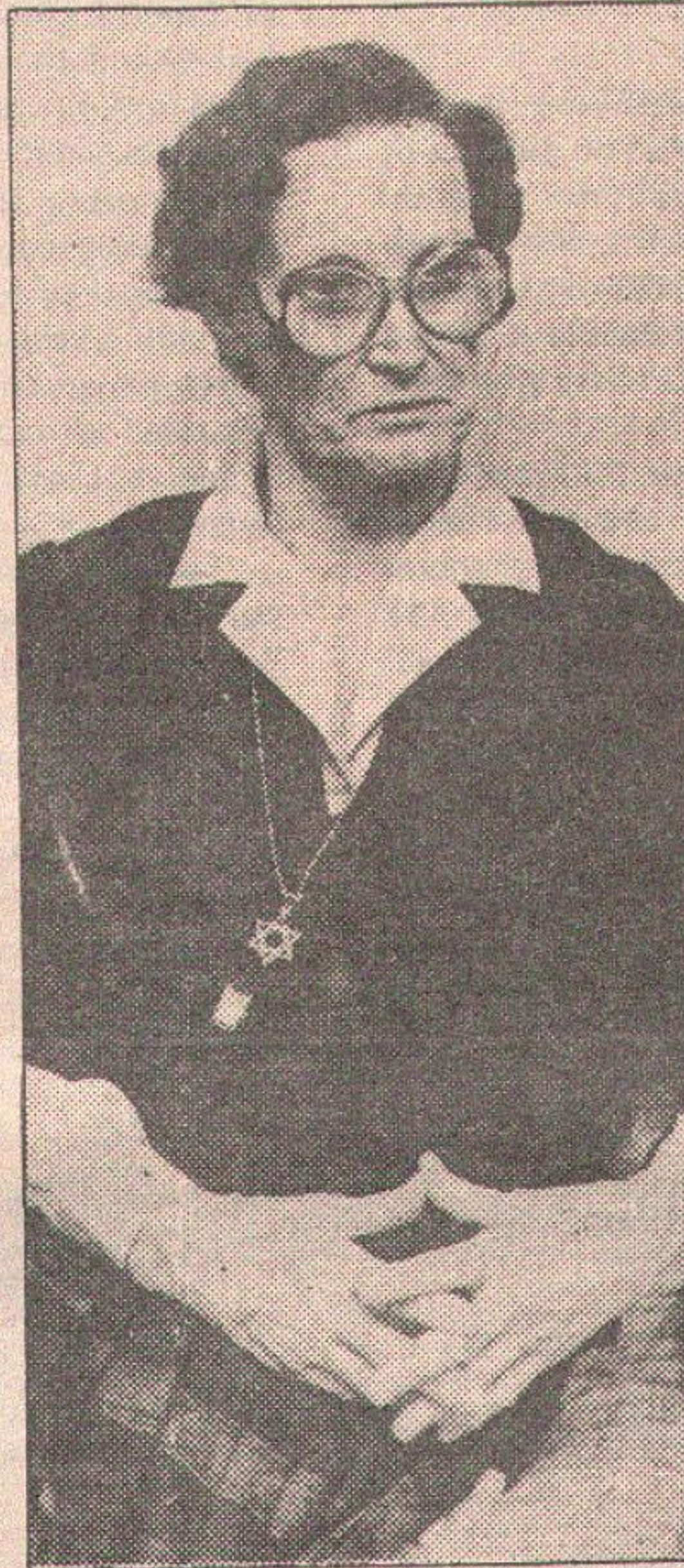
Last Wednesday, Roden appeared on a local radio 'hotline' show, sparking an emotional reaction from Kingston-area listeners. In an interview with The Whig-Standard, Roden noted that revelation of the Holy Spirit to the masses has been limited to religious teachings about "the symbol of the dove and the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

SHEKINAH

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# Ancient Synagogue Studies Question Status of Women

By JOHN DART, *Times Religion Writer*

Contrary to the prevailing view that nearly all ancient synagogues had a separate gallery or section for women, a Claremont scholar contends archeological and written sources yield no convincing evidence that there was.

Signs of a "women's gallery" in the ruins of synagogues are "much more meager than generally assumed" and the term itself does not

occur in documents from the early centuries of the Common Era, says Bernadette Brooten.

Brooten presented her conclusions in a paper at the western regional meeting in Pasadena of the Society of Biblical Literature which ended Friday.

## Challenge Is Broadened

Her survey of archeological re-

ports on synagogue sites broadened the challenge issued in the early 1960s by Israeli scholar Shmuel Safrai, who cited mainly the lack of literary evidence for a separate women's gallery.

The scholarly debate is pertinent today to both Orthodox Jewish practice and the origins of Christian views on women's roles in the churches. Brooten, interested primarily in the latter issue, is visiting instructor in New Testament at the School of Theology at Claremont and is supported in part by the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity.

The separation of women from men in Orthodox synagogues today ranges from galleries or sections, sometimes partitioned by lattice-work or transparent curtains, to separate seating for the sexes on either side of the building.

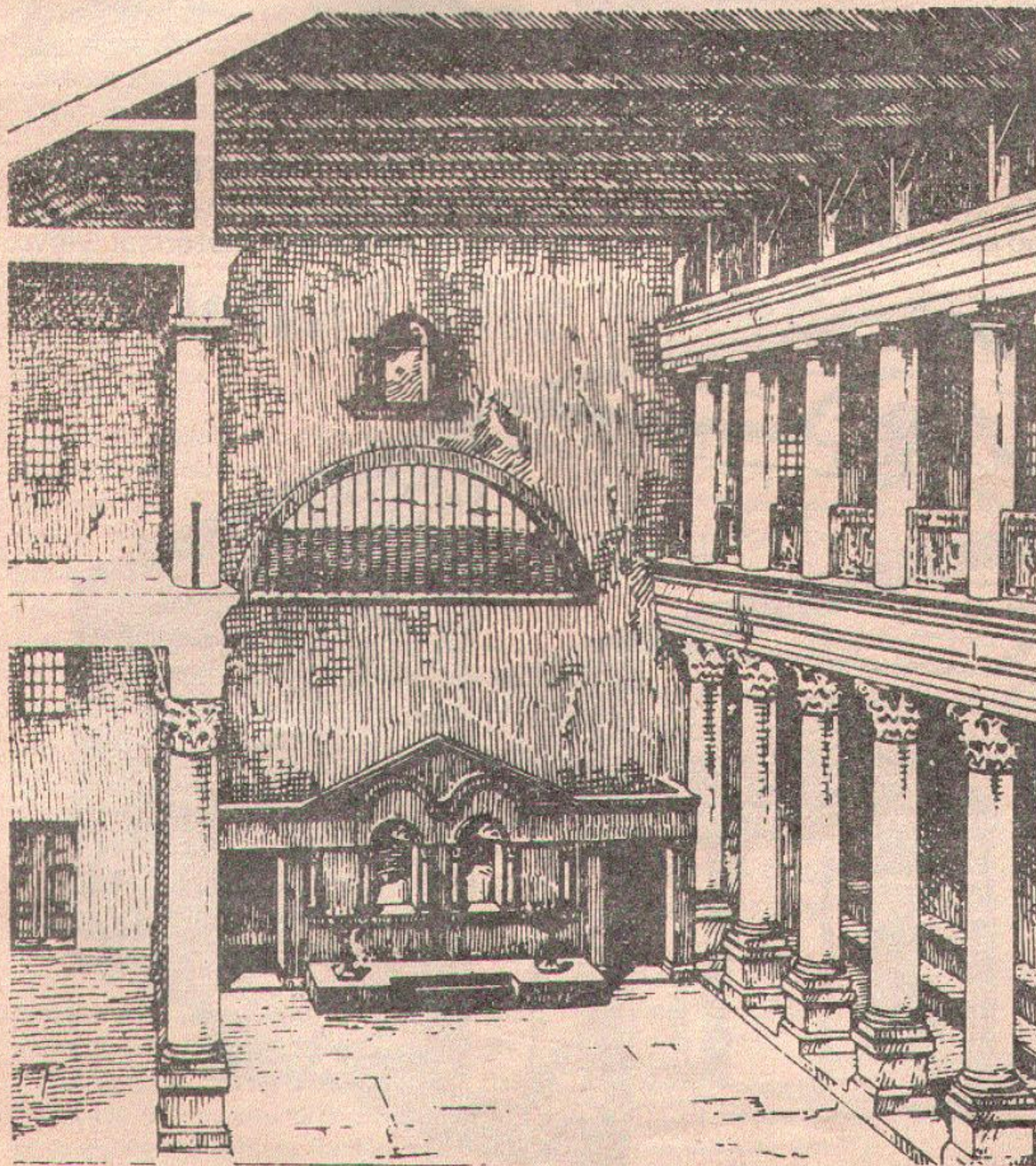
Many U.S. Orthodox synagogues in the 1950s began allowing men and women to sit together—as had become the standard practice in Reform and Conservative wings of Judaism. But amid a resurgence of traditionalism in the last decade nearly all Orthodox synagogues have divided their seating.

There is no doubt that men and women sat in separate sections in the synagogues of the Middle Ages, but most authorities have presumed the practice went back to the time when the Jerusalem Temple was the center of Jewish worship.

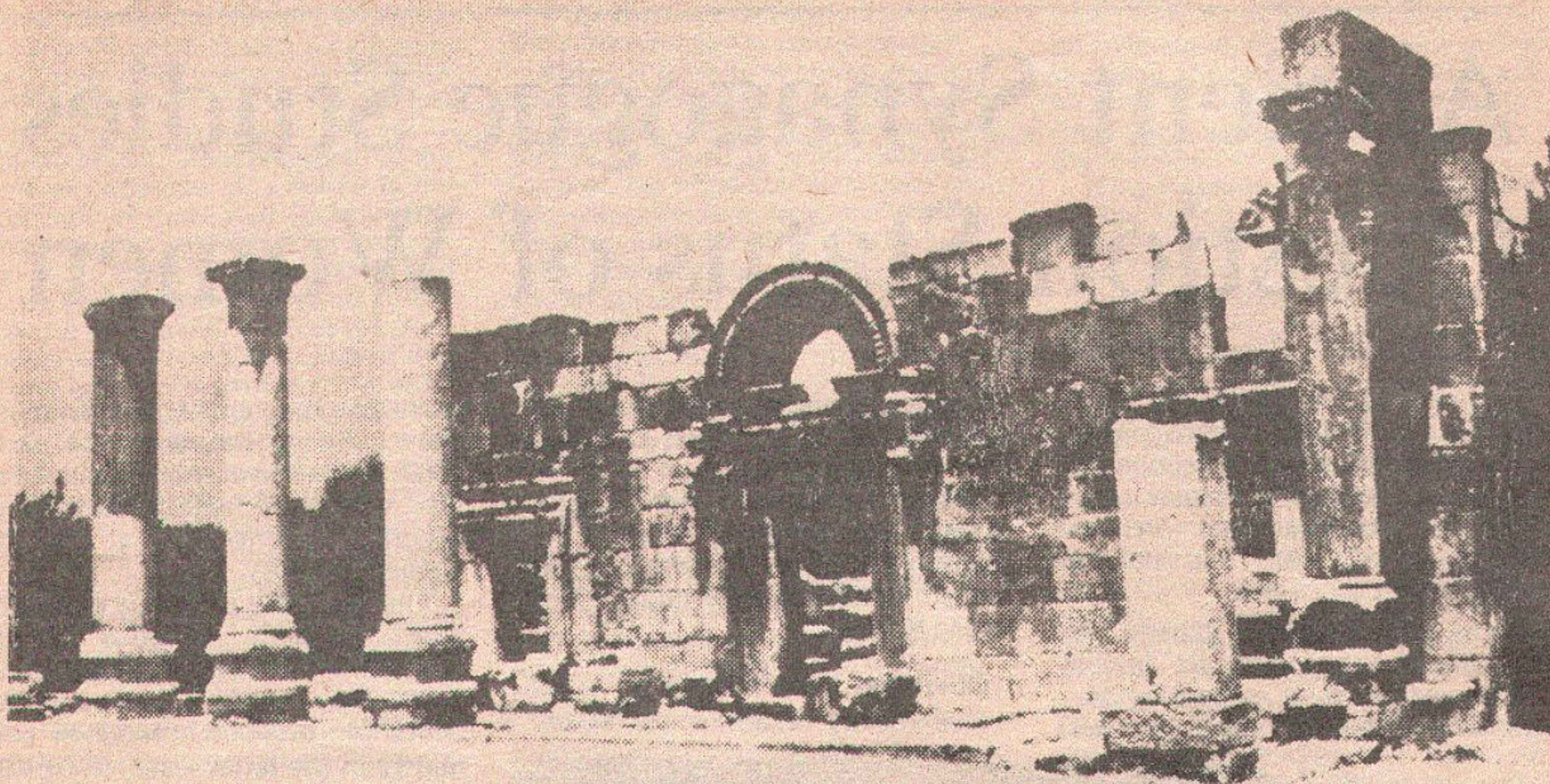
The rebuilt Second Temple, which was used until the Romans destroyed it in AD 70, had a "Women's Forecourt," which contrasted with the men-only Forecourt of Israel.

"The Women's Forecourt, however, was not reserved for women," Brooten said. "In this large outer court the sexes mingled together freely, and the men had to

Continued next page

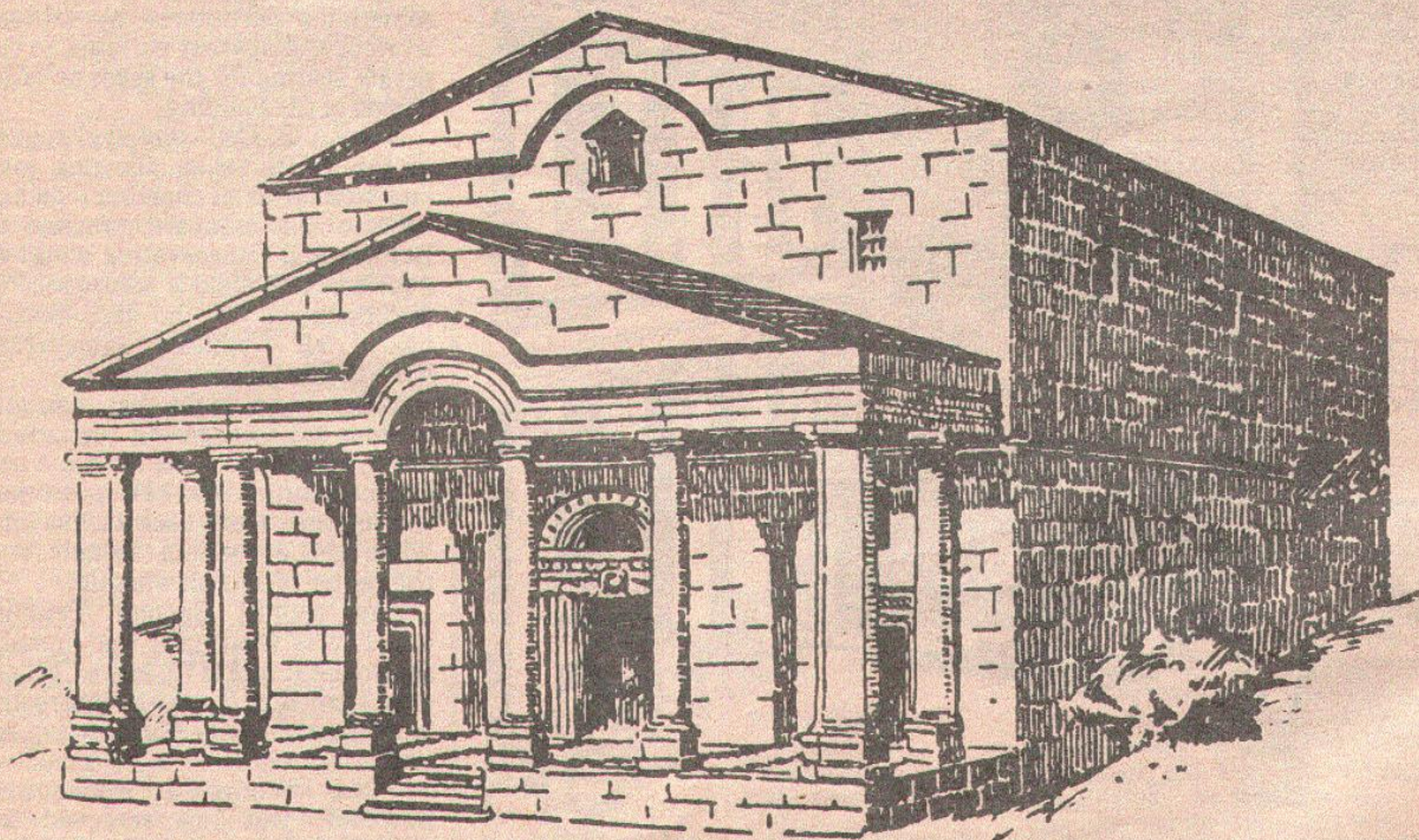


Women's galleries were drawn in reconstructions such as this one for a synagogue at Capernaum. But most recent excavators dispute this, saying the stairs here probably led only to storage areas.



The partly reconstructed remains of a synagogue at Bar'am in northern Israel shows no evidence of

FROWALD HUTTENMEISTER  
a second story to accommodate a women's gallery, contrary to a prevailing historical view.



A disputed drawing of the same synagogue at Bar'am reflects the belief that such ancient struc-

tures were made with women's galleries. Scholar Brooten is challenging this viewpoint.

pass through this area in order to enter the Forecourt of Israel. Therefore, it can hardly be taken as an example of the separation of the sexes."

Brooten also criticized generalizations drawn from rabbinic description of separating men and women during the Feast of Tabernacles and from the description by Philo of Alexandria of separate seating used by a 1st Century Jewish sect which practiced celibacy.

### Seen as 'Rare Custom'

Of Philo's picture of the sectarian Therapeutae, Brooten said the "detailed description arouses the impression that we have before us a rare custom rather than one so widespread that describing it is unnecessary."

Brooten said women did attend synagogue services according to indications from both Christian and Jewish sources. She cited New Testament accounts of women being

converted to Christianity in synagogues. "In rabbinic literature," she said, "there are accounts of women attending synagogue services and references which assume women are present."

Question of women's galleries interests Christian researchers, Brooten said in an interview, because "many people believe the position of women was low in the early church because it was low in ancient Judaism."

### Practice in Christianity

Some early Christian communities apparently did separate the sexes for worship, said Brooten, whose research is part of her doctoral dissertation at Harvard University.

But, she added, "the evidence points to its being an independent Christian development which occurred in an uneven and regionally varied way."

In surveying archeological studies, Brooten noted that synagogue

ruins dating from the 1st Century are difficult to identify, probably because the floor plans of the earliest synagogues may have differed little from those of normal houses.

In three 1st Century buildings identified as synagogues, including the one at Masada, Brooten said there is no sign of a separate room for women or a gallery.

The remains of synagogues built in later centuries at Capernaum, Korazim, 'En-Gedi and Khirbet Sussiya "have been listed as good candidates for galleries because they at least have the remains of staircases," Brooten said.

However, Brooten contended that in none of the cases is it clear that the stairs led to a gallery and not to a second floor, roof or storage room. The Capernaum site has more unaccounted-for fragments than the other sites, but Brooten said the most recent excavators at the site believe not enough material has been found to postulate an upper gallery.



## what the people are saying



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*, I am

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

Please send me your free materials about the Holy Spirit being(?) a woman. I saw Lois on "Betty and Friends" (on Canadian Television) and am interested in studying the subject further.

**John T. Walsh**  
Jacksonville, North Carolina

Thank you for the first sending of your *Shekinah* Vol. 1, No. 1, December 1980.

I am very glad to receive it and it's very useful for me in reading that *Shekinah* so I could know the news from abroad. Would you please send me the *Shekinah* regularly?

**J. O. Shaw**  
West Java, Indonesia

I have received the Dec. '80 and Feb. '81 issues of *Shekinah*. I have found them interesting reading. I would appreciate it very much if you would send any additional issues of *Shekinah* and other literature pertaining to the Branch. If you have any tracts or literature that are "a statement of faith" ie: the Branch's view of other Christian/Biblical doctrines. In other words, please send me all you can.

**Bob Bennett**  
Downey, California

Back at the end of November last year, I read a news item by Mary Barrineau, originally published in the *Dallas Times-Herald*, headlined: "Is the Holy Spirit Feminine? Texas Seventh-Day Adventist

Sect Tries to Convince World It's True." If convenient, I should very much appreciate information on your views and enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for your convenience. I am not a good church member but have been more than commonly interested in religious matters all my life. (Am now 72).

**Lawrence B. Haley**  
Huntsville, Alabama

Having seen the program "Betty and Friends" I am writing to ask for your information on the femininity of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for making this available.

**Donna Doelman**  
St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada

I have just completed reading *Shekinah* issue of February 1981 and as thirty year student of religion, history, philosophy and psychology I find your articles to be of great interest and of considerable contribution to my research and documentation of sources of the same. I would appreciate receiv-

## Letters

ing any back issues you may have available. I found the reprints of various letters you receive interesting and typical. . . May you find continued success in your endeavors to elevate the position of women in the church.

Clay Anderson  
Flintridge, California

I would like to relate to you some thoughts that I have received when I study or ponder your message of our Heavenly Mother. Consider Isaiah 1:18, could it be that the Jewish men have neglected the pre-ordained new moon services, in general, as well as the Christians, in order to keep a low profile for, or on the women. The moon is her sign, read Ezekiel 32:7; Isaiah 13:10 etc. All refer to the moon as her. Consider also Joseph's dream, Genesis 37:9,10.

By the Jews obscuring the identity of the Shekhina, they paved the way for the scribes of the New Testament to obscure and confuse the identity of the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Jews understand that the Shekhina Glory is a Divine person, and is female, and remember they didn't hesitate to elect a qualified woman to be their Prime Minister (Golda Meir 1968-1974). So the scribes, being all men, preferred to give the Holy Spirit no gender if they could not apply the masculine gender.

Self-exaltation, I believe, was the reason behind it all, on the part of men, to exalt themselves over our women-folks.

Now that we are in another period of spiritual darkness according to Isaiah 60:1,2, we must naturally depend on the moon for light, for the moon is made visible in darkness. Moreover the light of the moon (the Holy Spirit Mother) shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days (could this be applied to the Passover week and the Feast of Tabernacles?). The moon is always full and bright on the first night of the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Mr. and Mrs. Adam had a Heavenly Father and Mother, even though they were created, they were nevertheless a son and a daughter of Gods, the Elohim. Can we now see how, they, our first parents, broke the fifth commandment, along with the rest, because when you

break one you break them all. The Bible seems to come to life with your message.

Well it just shows that it takes a female to give life. Without the female, we would become extinct. Without a female we could not have been born in earth (our natural mothers) or born again of the Holy Spirit (our Heavenly Mother, the Shekhinah).

John Ramsay  
New Bedford, Massachusetts

I read your story in the *Shekinah* and I was happy you are finding out the truth. It is true that the Holy Spirit is a female. The Bible says the Spirit broods over her children, whoever saw a male brood over his children, it is always a mother. The Bible is not the original scriptures, but translations of copy after copy of already tampered-with scriptures. Every translator, of every Bible, has changed the meaning of the scriptures — sometimes due to their misunderstanding or

## HEBREW COLUMN

Haim Nahman Bialik's contributions to Hebrew literature are legion. Bridging tradition and modernity, Bialik adapted old Hebrew poetic forms with a fresh flexibility of language and thus opened a new era in Hebrew poetry. As his reputation grew, Bialik came to be regarded as a spokesman for the national aspirations of the Jewish people, yet he remained essentially a lyric poet whose focus was inward.

"Alone" reflects a major theme of Bialik's poetry—the struggle between Judaism and western secularism, between faith and skepticism. Bialik refers to the *Shekhina*, the feminine aspect of the Divine Presence, as a symbol of the sheltering and loving aspects of Jewish tradition. The poet is at the same time drawn to "the window, for the light"—a reference to the Enlightenment and secular learning.

ALONE

לְבַדִּי

כָּלֵם נִשְׂא הָרוּחַ. כָּלֵם סָחַף הָאוֹר,  
שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה אֶת-בֶּקֶר חַיִּיהֶם הִרְנִינָה;  
וְאֲנִי, גֹזֵל רֶגֶל. נִשְׁתַּכַּחְתִּי מִלֵּב  
מַחַח כְּנָפֵי הַשְּׂכִינָה.

וּכְשֶׁכֵּלָה לְבָבִי לַחֲלוֹק. לְאוֹר,  
וּכְשֶׁצִּיר-לִי הַמְּקוֹם מִתַּחַת לְכַנָּפֶיהָ —  
כְּבִשָּׁה רֵאשָׁה בְּכַתְפִּי, וְדִמְעָתָה עַל-דֶּרֶךְ  
נִמְרָתִי נִטְסָה.  
חָרַשׁ בְּכַתֵּף עָלַי וּמִתְרַסֵּק עָלַי.  
וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּה בְּכַנָּפֶיהָ הַשְּׂכִינָה בְּעֵדָי:  
' כָּלֵם נִשְׂא הָרוּחַ, כָּלֵם סָחַף לָהֶם.  
וְאֲתֵר לְבַדִּי, לְבַדִּי... »

All of them were carried away by the wind, all swept away by the light,  
A new song made joyous the morning of their lives;  
And I, a tender fledgling, was forgotten  
Under the wings of the *Shekhina*.

And when my heart longed for the window, for the light,  
And when the place under her wing was (too) narrow for me,  
She hid her head in my shoulder, and her tear dropped on my Gemora  
page.

Silently she wept over me and enfolded me  
As though shielding me with her broken wing:  
'The wind carried them all away, they have all flown off  
And I was left alone, alone. . . ."

RUTH H. KASLOVE  
Hebrew Studies Chairman

THE AGE (Melbourne, Australia), Monday 9 March 1981

## Letters

ignorance and sometimes due to a deliberate plot to substitute Christian doctrine. However, there are the Dead Sea Scrolls that have not been tampered with and they are the original scriptures preserved for these Last Days, by the Messiah himself. These Dead Sea Scrolls will be translated correctly very soon now, for the time is right and when they do, you will see quite a change in religion. All the false beliefs will be forgotten. We are coming into a New Age. I know that these truths are shocking to a person that has never known them and has been taught so diligently in the Bible way. I know because I was a Baptist for better than forty years and I had to learn the shocking truth. "But you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

Violet Butler  
Georgetown, Florida

Please enter one FREE subscription for *Shekinah* at the address above. Thank you.

Judy H. Barrick  
EMLR Library  
Salina, Kansas

Would you please add me to your mailing list and, if possible, send me back issues of your publications including newsletters, pamphlets, or whatever that would enable me to better and more completely understand your teachings.

Paul Chappell  
Oral Roberts University  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

As indicated, your publication is free on request. Would appreciate it if you would put the Library on your mailing list. Wish to thank you for the February issue of *Shekinah* and also for future issues that we receive. I am sure the students will make use of the information published.

Lorann Montgomery  
Ass't to the Librarian  
Smiley Library  
Central Methodist College  
Fayette, Missouri



# Church reform likely for women

By MICHAEL DOYLE

The Anglican Church is expected soon to clear the way for women who want to become priests or deacons.

The church's General Synod — bishops, priests and lay people, representing about 25 diocese — is almost certain to vote for a constitutional reform when it meets in Sydney on 24 August.

If the change goes ahead, the way would be clear for the introduction of an historic canon permitting the ordination of women at the next General Synod, due no later than 1985.

The theology lecturer at Trinity College in Parkville, Dr John Gaden, said yesterday he could not foresee "any problem" in removing the constitutional barrier.

He said: "Something like a three-fifths majority at the last General Synod said they had no theological objection to the ordination of women. My feeling is that the climate is more positive now."

The barrier in the constitution is the limitation to the use of male-only pronouns in references to bishops, priests and deacons. Any constitutional reforms approved by the General Synod will probably need to be ratified by all the metropolitan diocese — Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth — as well as by three-quarters of all other diocese.

The move for reform will come from the General Synod's standing committee, which is also expected to present a draft canon (law) for the ordination of women.

Dr Gaden said the Appellate Tribunal, a legal arm of the church, had advised that such a canon should not be introduced at the same time as a constitutional change.

"It is felt that the church has to move fairly cautiously. There's really a matter of prudence as well as the legal complications of

trying to do two things at once," he said.

Dr Gaden said the removal of the constitutional barrier would also open the way for women to become bishops, "but this is obviously a long way off".

He believed that "both men and women are called as disciples of Jesus Christ to represent Him in the world and in the church. It is true that there are some passages in the New Testament where women in certain churches were told to be silent, but I don't believe this was meant to be applied to all women right through history".

One of the church's most outspoken opponents of women as priests, Bishop John Hazelwood, of Ballarat, said he saw nothing in the Scriptures to support the ordination of women.

He also questioned whether the Anglican Church in Australia had the authority to make such a move, as he believed it should be a matter for all churches with the ministries of bishop and priest.

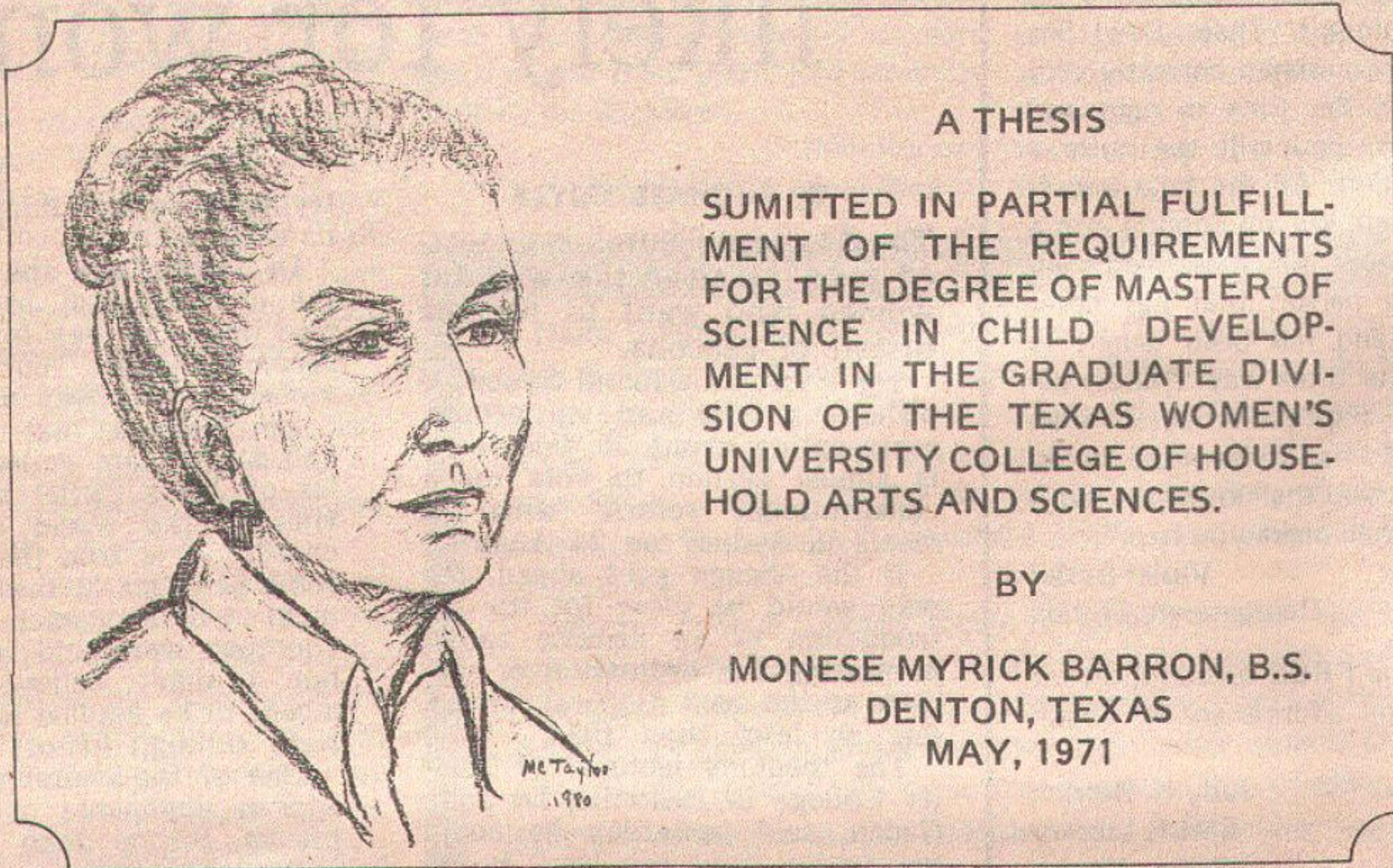
But he had no objection to removing the constitutional obstacle. "To say this is just a matter of law would be quite ridiculous. It's a matter of faith and order," he said.

He added: "Unless we (opponents of women as priests) are slightly more articulate about what we mean by priesthood and bishopric, I think it's inevitable that the majority opinion will be that women ought to be ordained."

Asked if dissidents might set up splinter churches in the event of women being allowed to be priests — as had happened in the United States — he replied: "I certainly wouldn't be in that caper."

Dr Gaden said he could not see the church splintering over the issue, although some individuals might defect to other established churches.

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



A THESIS

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

BY

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

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Temporal woman is a created prototype in the image of the spiritual Goddess. To recognize this beginning of woman places her in a position that is God-given, a place she occupies in the beginning. The purpose of the study was to take woman as the particular subject and investigate all possible areas of human knowledge that could contribute to the proposal that woman is a temporal counterpart to a spiritual image.

What proof is there for woman as a counterpart? There is no clear-cut statement to be gleaned from written scripture describing the Tree of Jesse. However, there exists representations on windows and on ceilings of churches describing the Tree of Jesse in figures and prefigurations in early art interpretations. Watson<sup>35</sup> examined eleventh and twelfth century art for imagery, also themes portraying the prophets, kings, virgins, and doves, authentic figures of the theme. He believes the ideas conveyed in the Latin version of the Bible have lost clarity through translation and revision in the English Bible. The Tree of Jesse, in Latin, *Arbre de Jesse*, may stand for the iconographic expression of Isaiah's prophecy, *egredietur virga*, extraordinary tree. There is a woman's image in the symbol.

Where can a spiritual identity for woman be found?

Look for woman where she can be found. She is a very important member of the human family.

Where is the family found? Stephens<sup>32</sup> declared:  
*All societies have the family. There is no exceptions.  
The family is universal to all mankind.*

The position woman holds in the family group and her obligations to the other members in the unit are not always the same. However, where there is "common residence," a home for family members, the residents are man, woman, sometimes children, and others.

Nickell<sup>23</sup> designated man and woman as home maker and responsible for the family's philosophy.

*A family philosophy, or outlook upon life, forms a basic guide to the conduct of both individual members and the group, and from this philosophy grow the goals for home making and family life.*

Taylor<sup>34</sup> revealed woman's spiritual existence where she resided with father, mother, and brothers and sisters as a sister spirit, in a heavenly home.

*Knowest thou not that eternities ago thy spirit, pure and holy, dwelt in thy Heavenly Father's bosom, and in His presence, and with thy mother, one of the queens of heaven, surrounded by thy brother and sis-*

*ter spirits in the spirit world, among the Gods?*

God tells Moses of how He created all things. An account of the creations similar to Genesis. Smith<sup>27</sup> Moses, 7:63, stated:

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

Hebert<sup>14</sup> suggested that where there is failure in understanding the Old Testament by readers of the twentieth century, faith may be applied in seeking the meaning and in accepting His revealed word. The revealed word has been preserved in liturgy other than Bible scripture. The theme of the *Prophet Plays* was revelations. He stated:

*However much they may fail, they nevertheless know the meaning of faith as their response to God's call and their acceptance of His revealed word.*

He believed that some Hebrew prophecies will be fulfilled again and again, not necessarily by the same interpretation each time. The prophet concealed the meaning in symbols.

Smith<sup>27</sup> translated the Book of Moses from lost scripture. The account of the creation of Adam and Eve differs slightly but not significantly from Genesis, valuable as a re-told story. Moses tells how God's word is revealed through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Written scripture records man's beliefs in God and furnishes a basis for his philosophy of living. Preceding written law, oral communication directed man and influenced his behavior. Woman too, according to Genesis is an important part of man's earthly existence and an ever present influence upon man.

Klausner<sup>17</sup> proposed that ardent Paul, trying to remove pagan mystery misunderstood symbols; he was too fervent and not wholly successful in his attempt. The Christians background of myth and symbol could not be completely replaced with one God and few ordinances. The Corinthians were steeped in a tradition that accepted many gods and goddesses. Israel had received direction from God through prophets centuries before Paul. Many Hebrew concepts of religion were expressed in symbols that were given to the people through the prophets.

Hastings<sup>13</sup> described prophecy as a religion-directed concept. Semi-civilized and savage aboriginal peoples venerate the position of the prophet; he is held in higher esteem than priests or mystics. An Arab word for prophet is Nebiim, "Speaker," defined as one chosen to announce. Hebrew prophets, ascribing to the definition of "speaker" were heralds or messengers in the highest sphere is human interests. They were revered by the people and on occasion referred to as poets. Thus prophecy became the heart-throb of Israel's religion. Because they delivered a message of prophetic nature, they could never be classed under other religious titles such as "judges" of Roman origin or priests of pagan origin.

Hastings<sup>13</sup> printed:

*Priesthood, broadly speaking owes its origin to the uni-*

*versal need felt by mankind of superior human assistance in the struggle for life.*

The office of priest originated at a very early stage in man's social evolution.

Hamilton<sup>12</sup> declared religion to be the background for human beings need for a faith in their gods. The spread of a belief in one God by the Christians made necessary the elimination of many of the images known to and revered by the people before the doctrine of Christ and a monotheism. Anthropologists do not relate religion and mythology. Christians do not wish to accept evidence indicating influence of myth on Bible scripture.

Apostle Paul, a Hebrew, embraced for Christian doctrine many precepts from ancient Hebrew Law to strengthen monotheism, but man's likeness to his God is a Greek concept. Therefore, influence from man's early knowledge has a direct bearing on later development and design for his religion. Kubuen<sup>19</sup> admonished the Hebrews to search the prophecies made to Judah. Those directed to the plight of the Jew are fulfilled again and again. Eichrodt<sup>11</sup> wrote of the Cultus as a means of religious expression. He described it:

*The Cultus gives expression of religious experiences and directs spiritual intercourse with God.*

*The Cultus is a medium by which divine power is presented to men for their participation.*

Religious expression was given through women members of the cult as well as men. One very ancient order was the Cult of Helen whose symbol was the Plane tree with inscription, "I am Helen's tree, worship me."

Woman as a cultist, priestess, goddess, and prophetess appears in religious functions, more in ancient times than since the birth of Christ. Virgin, from Latin virgo meaning maiden, is substituted for woman in the New Testament.

More specifically, the objects of the study were to: 1) Rely on scientific contribution in studying human philosophy toward temporal and spiritual needs in living; 2) Observe the structure of the human family as it functions in the present society; 3) Examine cross-cultural patterns of the human family; 4) Recognize the importance of religion in man's (woman's) existence; and 5) Accept as essential, the part revelation and prophecy have played in developing and preserving woman's spiritual image.

Literature reviewed for the present study was from religions and scripture, sciences — family living in particular, works of ancient art and literature.

Watson<sup>35</sup> author of the published study of *The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse*, cited throughout the present study, alluded to a spiritual image for woman. The Old and New Testaments as interpreted by King James and Douay College, also, other scriptures on Isaiah's prophecies were compared for the purpose of the study.

Literature in the area of family living relating to purpose and organization of the family was reviewed. Particular attention was given to the concept of woman's role in

*See Next Page.*

the home and cross-culture. General information about woman was gathered from mythology, religion and ethics, history, sermons and writings by theologians, latter day revelations, as well as translations of ancient and obscure scriptures. Deen<sub>2</sub> proposed:

*Women in Revelation represent apocalyptic symbolism, to which the key has been lost.*

Xerox copies of the plates observed in Watson's study

are presented in Appendix A for observation by the author of the present study. Arthur Watson, author, *The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse*, published by University Oxford Press, was contacted through the press, for permission to include Xerox copies. The bound book is in the open stacks in the Lloyd Reading Room, University College of North Wales, Bangor, Caerns., North Wales.

TO BE CONTINUED

### Texas Woman's University

Denton, Texas

May, 19 71

We hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under our supervision by Monese Myrick Barron

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

be accepted as fulfilling this part of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science.

Committee:

Dona R. Tyler  
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Accepted:

J. L. Matthews  
Dean of Graduate Studies

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## THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

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*whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother"* (Matt. 12:48-50).

Just how is this possible? Let us consider the following from the Apocrypha: "For she (Wisdom) is the breath of the power of God. . . she is more beautiful than the sun. . . she is conversant with God, she magnifieth her nobility: yea, the Lord of all things himself loved her. . . Give me wisdom, that sitteth by thy throne; . . . O send her out of thy holy heavens, and from the throne of thy glory. . . give wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit from above?" (The Wisdom of Solomon 7:25,29; 8:3; 9:4,10,17). "Wisdom shall praise herself, and shall glory in the midst of her people. . . I am the mother. . . I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children which are named of him" (Ecclesiasticus 24:1,18).

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is of royal birth, being the only begotten Son of the King and Queen of Heaven. And as those on earth, who comprise the church, acknowledge this fact, they will

become part of the Family of God. They will give honor to their Father and Mother as commanded (Ex. 20:12), thus ensuring their long life on the earth.

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." "She (the church triumphant) is the only one of her mother (the Holy Spirit), she is the choice one of her that bare her" (The Song of Solomon 6:10,9). Many are called, but few are chosen. She (the Spirit-filled church) is the remnant of her (the Holy Spirit) seed who does battle with the dragon in the final conflict (Rev. 12:17). "The Lamb shall overcome (him) . . . for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him: are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Rev. 17:14).

*Cive Doyle*