

Divorce, Remarriage and Adultery  
New Sculpture by Alan Collins

# SPECTRUM

A Quarterly Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

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## WOMEN

Merikay and the Pacific Press

Did God Give Women Second Place?

Fascinating Womanhood

Women Preachers: Evangelical Precedents

# SPECTRUM

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## About This Issue

“Nay, we must remember, first, that we were born women, who should not strive with men. . . .” With that advice Ismene tried—vainly—to dissuade her sister, Antigone, from defying the ruler of Thebes. Would she, with the same appeal, have any better luck today?

She might. Even though it is the day of feminism—far removed from Greek culture of the fifth century before Christ—the traditional view that woman’s place is second place remains very much alive. One evidence is the striking popularity of a book called *Fascinating Womanhood*, in which female subservience seems not merely to be accepted but to be lionized. Another evidence, perhaps closer home, is the fact that within the Adventist church women are still prevented from becoming ordained pastors.

In this issue, SPECTRUM directs attention to the question of woman’s place, not in an exhaustive way but in a way we think is both provocative and helpful. As you will see, Ismene’s view gets short shrift in what follows. We felt that the necessary thing was to bring out views that have not yet been widely circulated

within denominational publications.

And so *Fascinating Womanhood* is severely criticized in these pages. And in articles about women and work, women and the creation story, and women and church ministry, the authors draw conclusions that, if true, clearly require repentance and change in us all.

One article reports on litigation (involving the Pacific Press Publishing Association) that at first had to do simply with payment of female employees, but has since touched on the issues of religious liberty and church authority. This suggests, perhaps, that the question of woman’s place is not simply about women; it has considerable effect on all of life.

This issue of SPECTRUM also illustrates our “sensitivity,” as we have said in this space before, “to the rhythms of Adventist organizational life.” It is anticipated that the question of women’s ordination will be discussed this fall at the church’s Annual Council. And the same goes for a topic of a different sort discussed in these pages: divorce, remarriage and adultery.

The Board of Editors

# Divorce, Remarriage and Adultery

by Gerald Winslow

*Mr. Brown has been married for several years. Both he and his wife have been members of the SDA church in good and regular standing. Eventually, Mr. Brown "falls in love" with a younger, single SDA woman with whom he works. Mr. Brown divorces his wife and marries the second woman.*

In 1973, just over 200 ministers responded to questions about this case.<sup>1</sup> Here are their answers tabulated in terms of percentages:

Would you ordinarily advise the local congregation to disfellowship Mr. Brown and his second wife?

95% Yes  
4% No  
1% no answer

Would you consider Mr. Brown and his second wife to be living in adultery as long as they continue living together?

72% Yes  
20% No  
8% no answer

Would you advise Mr. Brown to divorce his

*Gerald Winslow is specializing in medical ethics in the Religion and Society program at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. He is on leave from the religion department of Walla Walla College.*

second wife and attempt reconciliation with his first wife?

43% Yes  
42% No  
15% no answer

If Mr. Brown and his second wife are disfellowshipped, can you envision a time when you might advise the local congregation to readmit them?

75% Yes  
18% No  
7% no answer

None of these questions is new. Problems of divorce and remarriage have always been an issue for Seventh-day Adventists. The presentation of a "Study Document on Divorce and Remarriage" at the last Annual Council<sup>2</sup> not only revealed substantial areas of agreement but also disclosed a number of unresolved problems.

My purpose here is to focus on an issue the "Study Document" does not discuss directly. It can be put in its starkest form by asking: When one has become divorced and remarried without "biblical grounds," is the second marriage a continual state of adultery as long as the first spouse remains alive, chaste and unmarried? I shall maintain that this question has been debated throughout the history of the denomination, and that it has never been adequately resolved. The article is *not* about church discipline (although it may have implications for

discipline). It discusses only the arguments for and against considering some second marriages to be in a state of "continual adultery."

The question of divorce has created severe disagreements during the history of the Christian faith.<sup>3</sup> Hardly a teaching on divorce can be mentioned that has not been thoroughly disputed. And yet within Adventism, the degree of *concord* on several points has been remarkable. At least four of these deserve mention because of their relationship to the doctrine of continual adultery:

1. Divorce is sometimes necessary. The current denominational policy recognizes that "there may be conditions that make it unsafe or impossible for husband and wife to continue to live together."<sup>4</sup>

2. In those cases where divorce seems necessary but adultery is not involved, the divorced parties have no moral right to remarry. Even the so-called "Pauline privilege" (based on 1 Corinthians 7:15), which permits the Christian who has been divorced by an unbelieving spouse to remarry, is rejected by early Adventist leaders,<sup>5</sup> by Ellen White<sup>6</sup> and by the official denominational policy.<sup>7</sup>

3. Only the sin of adultery can dissolve the marriage and thus permit remarriage. This teaching is based on the words of Jesus: "Whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery." (Matthew 19:9; see also Matthew 5:32) This view was consistently expressed by early leaders,<sup>8</sup> and it was often upheld by Ellen White.<sup>9</sup>

What in fact constitutes "unchastity" (*porneia* in Greek) has been discussed only rarely and superficially. For the sake of church discipline, Adventists have generally interpreted "unchastity" to mean only proven cases of physical adultery.<sup>10</sup> (The "Study Document" notes that *porneia* has a broader meaning than adultery in the New Testament, and seems to argue for a view of "unchastity" that would, for example, include homosexuality.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, as the current policy stands, it would seem that only a proven case of adultery constitutes justifiable grounds for a divorce and remarriage.<sup>12</sup>)

4. In the case of a divorce obtained because of adultery, only the "innocent party" has the

moral right to remarry. Actually, as the official policy is stated, the "guilty party" has no moral right to remarry as long as the "innocent party" is alive and "remains unmarried and chaste."<sup>13</sup> So the rule might be more accurately stated: Only the "innocent party" has the right to remarry *first*.

Other generally accepted teachings could also be mentioned, but these four should provide the necessary background for the discussion that follows.

Adventists have been struggling with the problem of second marriages for a long time. The first delegated business meeting of the first state conference of Seventh-day Adventists resulted in the following report:

Brother Sanborn brought before the meeting the following items, upon which he and the brethren in Illinois and Wisconsin wished the opinion of the Conference:

1. How shall we treat divorced marriages?

Bro. White calls for a full and clear definition of the expression "divorced marriages." Bro. Sanborn explains that he means by it, those who have been divorced from their former husbands or wives for other causes

*"When one has become divorced and remarried without 'biblical grounds,' is the second marriage a continual state of adultery as long as the first spouse is alive, chaste and unmarried?"*

than mentioned by the Savior in Matthew xix, and under that divorce have married again. Shall such persons subsequently embracing present truth, be received among us?

1. Resolved, That the matter of divorced marriages be referred to the Conference committee.<sup>14</sup>

It is not unusual to refer questions to committees. But it may be some indication of the difficulty of this issue that no direct action was taken during the business meeting. Did the

conference committee later establish guidelines for cases of “divorced marriages?” Did the committee consider the cases of those who were already church members as well as those seeking to become members? Unfortunately, the actions of the committee are no longer extant, so far as I know. But apparently the issue was not definitively resolved.

Over 20 years later, G. I. Butler, then General Conference president, raised the issue of second marriages again.<sup>15</sup> “In some instances,” he wrote, “husband and wife present themselves for membership both of whom have been divorced and entered new relations. Some of these cases involve great hardship, as they have children by second marriages and are living happily together. Shall such be received or rejected? Where shall the line be drawn?” After raising these questions, Butler decided not to answer them. He concluded that “each case must be considered on its own merits . . .” And he cautioned the church against being brought into disrepute by having overly lax membership requirements.

Later, it became commonplace to advocate that new members be accepted and given a “new start” without insisting on changes in marital status. For example, Uriah Smith wrote: “Take them [i.e. those in second marriages] as they are found, leaving these things that cannot be undone to the past . . .”<sup>16</sup> To the present, this has remained the most prevalent stance toward candidates for membership in the denomination.<sup>17</sup>

**B**ut what about divorce and remarriage *within* the ranks? It might seem that acceptance of new members with second marriages would deny the doctrine of continual adultery. Surely, no one would favor accepting a candidate who is living in a “state of adultery!” Yet, curiously, many have held the doctrine of continual adultery and still have argued for admitting new members regardless of former marital irregularities.<sup>18</sup> Does this mean that a first marriage established prior to church membership is not considered a valid marriage? Or does it mean that divorce and remarriage without biblical warrant can be forgiven those who were not church members at the time but cannot be forgiven those who were? Or is the

central concern not actually continual adultery but rather the reputation of the church? I must leave these questions unanswered—mostly because any attempt by me to answer them would be mainly guesswork. What is quite certain is that the divorce and remarriage of a member has always been the more problematic case. And it is in such cases that the doctrine of continual adultery has generally been applied.

Those who hold the doctrine of continual adultery usually argue that unbiblical second marriages are really not marriages at all: the first marriage is still in force, the second is nothing more than an adulterous relationship. Of course, if the “innocent spouse” of the first marriage loses innocence, or remarries, or dies, the first marriage can no longer be considered binding.

Paul’s use of divorce and remarriage to illustrate “being dead to the law” often figures importantly in the arguments for the teaching of continual adultery. “A married woman,” Paul writes, “is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. Accordingly she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive.” (Romans 7:2, 3 RSV) This text is interpreted as direct proof that Paul considers second marriages to be adulterous by definition. Additional support is also usually derived from 1 Corinthians 7, especially verses 10 and 11, and from Jesus’ words (Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; Matthew 5:32 and 19:9). These passages are understood to indicate that the Christian who has been divorced for reasons other than adultery has no moral right to remarry and that any second marriage without the grounds of adultery is itself adulterous.

Proponents of this view are likely to ask: If the Bible teaches that second marriages without proper warrant begin as adulterous relationships, when do such “marriages” cease to be adulterous? How can the passage of time, or the birth of children, or the apparent sincerity of repentance turn a continuing, adulterous relationship into a valid marriage? From this perspective, the obvious answer to these questions is that such adulterous “marriages” remain sinful until they are dissolved or the first spouse dies, commits adultery, or remarries.

Those who argue against the idea of continual

adultery generally begin with one major premise: Adultery *does* dissolve the original marriage. The main support comes from Jesus' prohibition of divorce "except on the ground of unchastity" (Matthew 19:9 and 5:32 RSV). Advocates of this view are likely to ask: How can a second marriage go on being a continual state of adultery when the first marriage has been disestablished by the act of adultery? From this viewpoint, the branding of a second marriage as being continually adulterous is tantamount to equating adultery with the unpardonable sin.

Long before the publication of any official guidelines on divorce and remarriage, church leaders were expressing their viewpoints. As with many other issues, Uriah Smith was one of the most influential. Early in his career, Smith spoke out against "extreme views" based on Romans 7:2, 3. Smith argued that Paul was "only giving us an illustration, and not laying down rules in regard to the marriage relation."<sup>19</sup> In the same article Smith claimed that "the parties" who divorced because of adultery were "as free as if the marriage contract had never existed between them."

But as the years passed, Smith began to move toward what appears to have been the mainstream of Adventist opinion at that time. In his later writings, he consistently taught that only the "innocent party" has the right to remarry<sup>20</sup>—a position shared by other Adventists.<sup>21</sup> He also became a strong advocate for the doctrine of continual adultery. Answering one divorced and remarried correspondent, Smith said that only the "innocent party" could remarry without "living in adultery."<sup>22</sup> If the questioner had remarried without having been the "innocent party" in a divorce caused by adultery, then "no church could receive him as a member while living in that condition."

Smith's answer must have stimulated some controversy. A month later, he wrote a second article.<sup>23</sup> He retreated from the position of rejecting prospective members because of second marriages. But he retained the doctrine of continual adultery. Referring to a woman who had remarried without biblical reasons, Smith wrote: "A marriage on her part is always, and ever after, an adulterous relation, so long as her first

husband is living." This statement seems to be representative of the prevalent thinking in the denomination during its early years.

In the following decades, articles on divorce continued to appear.<sup>24</sup> But little or nothing new was added to the earlier discussions.

To my knowledge, the first official action of the General Conference on divorce came in 1925. After noting the alarming rate of divorce in society and warning of the possibility that church members might become lax in their attitudes toward divorce, the following resolution was passed:

*Resolved.* That we greatly deplore the evil of divorce, and place our emphatic disapproval upon any legal action for the separation of those once married, on any grounds other than that given in Matthew 5:32.<sup>25</sup>

The resolution obviously does not institute much in the way of a working policy. Most importantly, it says nothing about what should be done with offenders. But, in any event, it is unlikely that the denomination could be accused of being too "soft" on adultery. For example, the *Manual for Ministers* published in the same year indicates that a minister who commits adultery must be disfellowshipped and never again restored to the ministry.<sup>26</sup>

In 1932, when the first *Church Manual* was published, it included the resolution from the

*"Those who hold the doctrine of continual adultery usually argue that unbiblical second marriages are really not marriages at all."*

1925 Annual Council.<sup>27</sup> The manual added that the church should always work for the reconciliation of a couple with marital difficulties—and cautioned against failing to reprove sin and disfellowship offenders. No doubt, the disfellowshipping of culprits was generally practiced during earlier years, but, so far as I know, this is the first official action requiring this procedure. The manual also forbade Adventist ministers to conduct weddings for any divorced person except the "innocent party" in a divorce for adultery.

The 1941 General Conference saw the need

for a clearer divorce policy. The executive committee of the General Conference was authorized to appoint a commission with the charge to study the issue of divorce and report to the Autumn Council.<sup>28</sup>

Between the time when the commission was established and the Autumn Council, C. B. Haynes published an important article reaffirming the view that only adultery could break the marriage contract and that only the “innocent party” had the right to remarry.<sup>29</sup> He then made the following statement—a significant precursor for later policy:

In the case of the divorce of church members who have been separated by a decree which the church cannot recognize and who plan remarriage, this church must hold that they cannot properly remarry . . . They [i.e. those who do remarry after an unscriptural divorce] cannot be admitted to church membership unless they can find some way to regularize their status. There must be no compromise here.

The commission reported to the Autumn Council in 1942, and a six-point policy was enacted.<sup>30</sup> The policy repeats the long estab-

*“Those who argue against the idea of continual adultery generally begin with one major premise: Adultery does dissolve the original marriage.”*

lished denominational position of divorce and remarriage only on the grounds of adultery. A number of procedures, however, are more clearly delineated than in earlier statements. The fourth point is of particular interest here:

. . . A church member who is a guilty party to the divorce forfeits the right to marry another and the church does not recognize the right of the minister to officiate at such a marriage. Should such a person marry another, he must not be readmitted to church membership so long as the unscriptural relationship continues.

This point states officially for the first time the notion that the second marriage of the offender is a continual state of sin. It may seem

strange that a view which was obviously held by many in the church would take so long to become a part of official policy. Perhaps the view was so widely held that it was simply taken for granted. Or maybe official action was prevented in earlier years by those who disagreed with the position. What is certain is that this official formulation of the doctrine of continual adultery was relatively short-lived.

By the late 1940s, it is evident that a revision of the official policy was again being contemplated. In an editorial, F. M. Wilcox asked: Is there the danger that the standards of the church will be lowered to the level of the usages of the world around us? We believe this danger exists, and the church should be warned of it.<sup>31</sup>

Wilcox then included in his editorial the 1942 policy in total, and encouraged church members to uphold the standards. He emphatically stated that one who “continues to live in adultery” should not be readmitted to church membership. He said that the church would be condoning the “state of adultery” if it reinstated the offender who continued to live with a second spouse. As far as I know, this editorial is the last strong defense of the doctrine of continual adultery to appear in official denominational publications.

In 1949, A. V. Olson, then a vice president of the General Conference, began to research the issues of divorce and remarriage. His work resulted in a paper presented to a group of denominational leaders prior to the 1949 Spring Council.<sup>32</sup> Olson argued that not only death but also adultery breaks the marriage union. If the marriage has thus been broken, Olson contended, it is inconsistent to say that the parties are not free to remarry. He asked rhetorically:

Does a chain that has been broken still bind?  
Is a contract that has been annulled still in force?  
Does a tie that has been dissolved still exist?

The inference from these questions seems to be that both parties are free to remarry—a position not often advocated in Adventism.

Olson then devoted a large portion of the paper to the issue of reinstating former members who had been disfellowshipped for divorce and remarriage. He said that the fact that the church



had at times readmitted such offenders was proof that the church did not really believe in the idea of continual adultery. He claimed that in all his research he had not found any support for the contention that a second marriage must be dissolved before the parties could demonstrate repentance and be restored to church membership. He also argued that the church must be consistent, and that if it lets new converts come into membership without breaking second marriages, then it must also allow the same right to former members. Olson then offered some suggestions for formulating a new

*“If the ‘Study Document’ being discussed points the way for the future, it does not appear that the doctrine of continual adultery will soon be revived.”*

policy on readmission of former members. The main points can be summarized as follows:

1. That a period of five years elapse after the remarriage before the application can be considered.
2. That the offenders acknowledge their former sins as grievous and a great disgrace to the church.
3. That they give evidence of genuine repentance.
4. That admittance be by rebaptism.
5. That where reinstatement might cause dissension in the church, the offender must wait indefinitely.

In 1950, the divorce policy in the *Church Manual* was revised.<sup>33</sup> (The policy then adopted is still in force.) The effect of Olson’s work is clearly in evidence. The key element of change is found in point number eight. It recognizes that for the “offender” to “bring his marital status into line with the divine ideal” may present “insuperable problems.” The policy then indicates a procedure which seems to allow for the readmission of former members who are truly repentant even though their second marriages are still intact. At least, it has been widely interpreted in this way. But does the policy actually relinquish the doctrine of continual adultery? Or are former members to be reinstated in spite of

the belief that they are “living in adultery?”

It seems clear that Olson won only part of his case. The door was opened (however slightly) for the readmission of offenders who continue in second marriages. But Olson’s rejection of the doctrine of continual adultery is not included. In fact, in a somewhat softer way than before, the present policy still seems to ask the offender to *try* to bring his or her marital status into harmony with the “divine ideal.” Does this mean leaving the second spouse and remaining single or returning to the first spouse? The present policy does not say. It is no exaggeration to say that the 1950 policy has perpetuated considerable confusion on these questions. For example, of the ministers who participated in the survey mentioned at the beginning of this article, only 51 percent thought that the present policy is “clear” or “understandable.”

Since 1950 some in the church have vigorously challenged the policy and called for a return to a clear-cut teaching on continual adultery.<sup>34</sup> Others have presented views akin to Olson’s and against the doctrine of continual adultery.<sup>35</sup>

The “Study Document” currently being discussed moves further toward establishing procedures for readmitting offenders. It says, for example, that the applicant should reveal true repentance, confess wrongdoing and make “such restitution as lies within his power.”<sup>36</sup> But it is recognized that the reunion of the first marriage may be “inadvisable or impracticable.”<sup>37</sup> A number of similarities could be noted between Olson’s 1949 paper and the present document. For example, an applicant must wait a minimum of five years after his or her offense before being considered for readmission. According to the document, this time is needed so that the offender can reveal “the reality of a renewed Christian experience, the healing of wounds caused by the dissolution of the former marriage, and for demonstrating the stability of a new home, in the case of remarriage.”<sup>38</sup> If the “Study Document” points the way for the future, it does not appear that the doctrine of continual adultery will soon be revived.

**B**ut what should be the way for the future? No good purpose is served either by ignoring the issues associated with the doctrine

of continual adultery or pretending they do not exist. Many church members (perhaps even a majority) firmly believe in the doctrine of continual adultery. Continuing to develop guidelines for readmitting persons involved in second marriages without carefully addressing the issue of continual adultery seems likely to perpetuate misunderstanding. The widest possible study and discussion should be sought within the church. Toward that end, I will briefly (and rather tentatively) state and show the basis for my own conclusions.

I am convinced that the weight of the inspired evidence is against the doctrine of continual adultery. The Old Testament clearly does not have such a teaching. The adulterers among the Hebrews did not “continue”; they were put to death (Leviticus 20:10)! When the main Old Testament statement about divorce (Deuteronomy 24: 1-4) is properly translated, as it is in the Revised Standard Version, it serves primarily to condemn the practice of a husband’s taking back a former wife if she had remarried.

Jesus went beyond the Mosaic law of divorce and restated the divine ideal of monogamous marriage for life (Mark 10:11, 12). But, according to Matthew’s version of the teaching, Jesus also recognized that unchastity (*porneia*) disrupts human relationships and shatters the bond of marriage (Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 RSV). Jesus makes it clear that the remarriage of any who have divorced for causes other than unchastity constitutes adultery. But if unchastity breaks the marriage union, then the doctrine of continual adultery is inconsistent and untrue. Adultery is a sin against an existing marriage. If a former marriage has been destroyed, it makes no sense to speak of the continual adultery of the second marriage. This is *not* to say that Jesus condones second marriages any more than He condones adultery! But I believe that no doctrine of *continual* adultery can be found in the words of Jesus.

The early Uriah Smith was right when he said that some have held “extreme views” based on Romans 7. <sup>39</sup> Paul had no intention of establishing a prescriptive teaching about divorce and remarriage. He used existing marriage law to illustrate the truth about the Christian’s “death to the law.” It is as erroneous to interpret Paul’s illustration normatively as it is to understand Jesus’ story about the rich man and Lazarus

(Luke 16:19-31) as a statement about the human condition in death.

Ellen White consistently maintained that “there is only one sin, which is adultery, which can place the husband or wife in a position where they can be free from the marriage vow in the sight of God.”<sup>40</sup> But at no time did she endorse the doctrine of continual adultery.

In 1891 Ellen White sent a letter to an Adventist minister which aids in understanding the position which she taught. The minister had advised a couple to separate because one had formerly been divorced for reasons other than

*“How broadly should Jesus’ phrase, ‘except for unchastity,’ be interpreted? For example, is homosexuality included? Is ‘incurable’ insanity justifiable grounds for divorce and remarriage. Is desertion?”*

adultery. Here is a portion of Ellen White’s counsel:

You have asked my counsel in regard to this case; I would say that unless those who are burdened in reference to the matter have carefully studied a better arrangement, and can find places for those where they can be comfortable, they better not carry out their ideas of a separation. I hope to learn that this matter is not pressed and sympathy will not be withdrawn from the two whose interests have been united.

... I advise that these unfortunate ones be left to God and their own consciences, and that the church shall not treat them as sinners until they have evidence that they are such in the sight of Holy God. He reads the hearts as an open book. He will not judge as man judgeth. <sup>41</sup>

It seems quite incredible to say that Ellen White could advise the church *not* to urge the couple to separate, *not* to withdraw its sympathy, and *not* to “treat them as sinners,” and still hold that the couple was living in adultery.

Another case that deserves mention concerns a young Adventist minister whose first marriage

developed difficulties. The man, referred to as M,<sup>42</sup> attended Battle Creek College and then entered the ministry. He held ministerial credentials in 1890 and 1891. By 1891, M was having serious marital problems with his first wife who has been described as “domineering.” M became infatuated with another woman, divorced his first wife and married the second woman. M then lost his ministerial credentials and was disfellowshipped.

For several years, M and his second wife continued to drift away from Adventism. Then, about 1900, they apparently repented and sought reinstatement in the church. During this entire time, M’s first wife remained unmarried.

It was M’s own father and brother (both ministers, I have been told) who tried to convince M that he should not continue to live with his second wife. The father began to stir up trouble for M and his second wife who by now had both been readmitted to church membership. It was this situation that made it necessary for Ellen White to write the following letter in 1901:

I have just read your letter concerning M. I regard the matter in the same light that you do, and think it a cruel, wicked thing that the father of M should take the course that he is taking . . . I would say that his [i.e. M’s] case cannot be improved by leaving the present wife. It would not better the case to go to the other woman in the question.

I consider the case of the father one that is singular, and his record is one that he will not be pleased to meet in the day of God. He needs to repent, before God, of his spirit and his works. The best thing for him to do is to cease to stir up strife . . . Let the father and brother make diligent work for themselves. They both need the converting power of God. May the Lord help these poor souls to remove spot and stain from their own characters, and repent of their wrongs, and leave M with the Lord.

I am sorry for this man; for his course is in such a shape that it will not answer to be meddled with, for there are difficulties upon difficulties. I would say that the Lord understands the situation, and if M will seek Him with all his heart, He will be found of him. If he will do his best, God will pardon and receive him.

M may hope in God and do the best he can to serve God in all humility of mind, casting his helpless soul upon the great Sin Bearer . . . I would gladly do something to help poor M to make things right, but this cannot be done as matters are now situated, without someone’s being wronged.<sup>43</sup>

Ellen White certainly saw that M’s case could not be made fully “right.” But she also saw that if M “will do his best, God will pardon and receive him . . .” And in the words of the first paragraph, M’s “best” would be to remain with his second wife. M’s “case cannot be improved by leaving the present wife,” according to Ellen White. Even though such a second marriage is seen to be tragically short of God’s ideal, no support can be found in this counsel for the doctrine of continual adultery.

Apparently, the church accepted the repentance of M and his second wife as genuine. M is listed as an Adventist minister in the 1904 edition of the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*.<sup>44</sup> Other evidence indicates that M was a very effective laborer for souls and that he was instrumental in establishing some large churches in the locale where he worked.

M’s problems, however, were not yet over. Eventually, dissension arose over M’s reinstatement to the church. After 1905, M’s name never again appears in the yearbook as a minister. M did, however, continue a highly successful work as a lay evangelist and colporteur. The problem of M’s status finally reached such a point that it caused the local conference president to write to W. C. White asking if his mother, Ellen White, had any counsel on the case.<sup>45</sup> The president explained that M had demonstrated “wonderful ability” and had given evidence of “deep consecration.” The problem which the conference officers found most perplexing was whether or not M should be restored to the ministry.

The query was answered by W. C. White on behalf of his mother who was in poor health at the time. One portion of his reply is particularly instructive:

Mother says that those who have dealt with the perplexities arising from his many transgressions in the past, should take the responsibility of advising regarding our present duty toward him. Mother does not

wish to take large responsibility in this matter; but she says regarding M as she has said regarding other men in a somewhat similar position; if they have thoroughly repented, if they are living such lives as convince their brethren that they are thoroughly in earnest, do not cut them off from fellowship, do not forbid their working for Christ in a humble capacity, but do not elevate them to positions of responsibility.<sup>46</sup>

At a later time, Ellen White wrote at the bottom of a copy of this letter: "This is correct advice in such cases. Let him walk humbly before God. I see no light in giving him responsibilities."<sup>47</sup>

It is clear that Ellen White followed the progress of this case for many years. On at least two occasions, she offered counsel. She was certainly aware of the fact that M and his second wife had been readmitted to membership. If ever there was a case in which the doctrine of continual adultery could be applied, it would seem to be this one. M's father and brother made just such an application. But it is quite obvious that Ellen White did not.

Other examples could be cited and other points made in establishing the case against the doctrine of continual adultery. But perhaps enough has been said in one article. It should be apparent to anyone who has had the tenacity to read this far that neither quick nor facile solutions will be forthcoming for many of the problems which have been discussed here. If I have succeeded in sharpening the discussion about the doctrine of continual adultery, then the effort will not have been fruitless.

Numerous unanswered questions remain. How broadly should Jesus' phrase, "except for unchastity," be interpreted? For example, is homosexuality included? Is "incurable" insanity justifiable grounds for divorce and remarriage? Is desertion? Much scholarly labor is needed in order to even begin answering these and many other questions.

Finally, I must add that nothing I have written should be interpreted as a call to "liberalize" attitudes toward divorce and remarriage. There is no evidence for such "liberalization." The sin of adultery is committed by many who divorce and remarry. And if they fail to repent and confess their sin, they go on "living in sin." In its personal and social destructiveness, adultery can

be compared with the most heinous of sins. But we must never forget that the Good News offers forgiveness for *all* sins—even adultery. Although God is willing to forgive all sins, for some reason (which I will let others explain) it seems to be especially difficult for humans to forgive adultery. Many find even murder easier to forgive than adultery. (In fact, some repentant murderers have nearly been made folk heroes!) No one would think of asking a murderer to resurrect the victim in order to make restitution. And yet to ask a person to revive a "dead" marriage, especially after another marriage has been established, would seem equally unthinking. How much better it would be in many cases if we would repeat the words of Ellen White to one who had made the mistake of divorce and remarriage: "... the Lord understands the situation, and if M will seek Him with all his heart, He will be found of him. If he will do his best, God will pardon and receive him."<sup>48</sup>

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This survey was conducted by Robert W. Gardner and the writer in 1973. Questionnaires were mailed to 324 ministers who represent the total number of ministers in the union where the study was done; 204 ministers returned the questionnaires—a response rate of 63%. No inferences should be drawn from these data for the general population of Adventist ministers. The data represent only the responses of one group of ministers in one union in the spring of 1973.
2. This meeting was held at Loma Linda University, October 9-17, 1974. The "Study Document on Divorce and Remarriage: North America" (hereinafter cited as "Study Document") was presented and then referred to the President's Executive Advisory for further study. A report of the action may be found in the "1974 Annual Council Actions Pertaining to the North American Division" printed by the General Conference, p. 15.
3. For an excellent presentation of the discussions on divorce during the Reformation, see V. Norskov Olsen, *The New Testament Logia on Divorce: A Study of Their Interpretation from Erasmus to Milton*, Vol. X: *Beiträge zur Geschichte Der Biblischen Exegese* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1971).
4. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1967), p. 254. Hereinafter cited as *Church Manual*.
5. For example, see G. C. Tenney, "Marriage and Divorce," *Review and Herald*, LXXI (October 30, 1894), 681.
6. Ellen White, Letter 4a, 1863 in *The Adventist Home* (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1952), p. 344.
7. *Church Manual*, pp. 253-56. For a discussion by a conservative scholar on the "Pauline privilege," see G. W. Peters, *Divorce and Remarriage* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), pp. 14-18.

8. For example, see G. W. Morse, "Scripture Questions," *Review and Herald*, LXIII (August 17, 1886), 531.
9. Ellen White, *loc. cit.*
10. Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," *Review and Herald*, LIV (September 4, 1879), 84.
11. "Study Document," p. 12.
12. The *Church Manual* (p. 253, ff.) consistently uses the phrase "unfaithfulness to the marriage vow." Although the manual does not define precisely what constitutes such "unfaithfulness," the context seems clearly to indicate that adultery is the intended meaning.
13. *Church Manual*, p. 254.
14. Joseph Bates, "Business Proceedings of the Michigan State Conference," *Review and Herald*, XX (October 14, 1862), 157.
15. George I. Butler, "Marriage and Divorce," *Review and Herald*, LX (December 18, 1883), p. 785, 786.
16. Uriah Smith, "Divorce and Marriage," *Review and Herald*, LXIV (February 8, 1887), 89.
17. For example, see "Study Document," p. 5.
18. For example, see Uriah Smith, *loc. cit.*
19. Uriah Smith, "Divorce," *Review and Herald*, XIX (April 15, 1862), 160.
20. Uriah Smith, "To Correspondents," *Review and Herald*, LIV (September 4, 1879), 84.
21. For example, see G. W. Morse, *loc. cit.*
22. Uriah Smith, "Divorce and Marriage," *Review and Herald*, LXIV (January 11, 1887), 32.
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24. For example, see F. M. Wilcox, "The Divorce Evil," *Review and Herald*, XCIII (January 2, 1916), 5, 6.
25. "On Divorce," *Review and Herald*, CII (November 26, 1925), 14.
26. *Manual for Ministers* (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1925), p. 8.
27. *Church Manual* (Washington, D.C., General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1932), p. 175, 176.
28. "Proceedings of the General Conference," *Review and Herald*, CXVIII (June 12, 1941), 261.
29. C. B. Haynes, "Divorce," *Review and Herald*, CXIX (January 8, 1942), 6.
30. "Divorce," *Review and Herald*, CXIX (December 3, 1942), 10.
31. F. M. Wilcox, "The Question of Divorce," *Review and Herald*, CXXV (January 15, 1948), 3.
32. A. V. Olsen, "The Divorce Question," a paper presented on April 5, 1949, at a meeting of the General Conference officers and the North American union presidents.
33. This revised policy first appeared as "Divorce and Remarriage in Relation to Church Membership," *Review and Herald*, CXXVII (July 23, 1950), 228, 29. The policy has subsequently been incorporated in the various editions of the *Church Manual*.
34. Marguirite Williams and Roy O. Williams, *Unscriptural Divorce and Social Relationships* (4th ed. rev.; Tucson, Arizona: by the authors, 1956).
35. For example, see R. R. Bietz, "The Minister's Calling, Work and Responsibility," *Ministry Magazine*, XXVII (September 1954), 17.
36. "Study Document," p. 4.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
39. *Supra*, p. 5.
40. Ellen White, Letter 4a, 1863, in *The Adventist Home*, p. 344.
41. Ellen White, Letter 5, 1891.
42. Some of the information about this individual's life comes from his obituary which was written by H. H. Hamilton, "Asleep in Jesus," *Review and Herald*, CXI (September 27, 1934), 21. Some additional information has come to me from people who were acquainted with this person.
43. Ellen White, Letter 175, 1901, in *Selected Messages*, Vol. II, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), p. 341, 342.
44. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1904), p. 134.
45. C. F. McVagh, Letter written August 15, 1911 from Nashville, Tennessee.
46. W. C. White, Letter written September 15, 1911 from Sanitarium, California.
47. See document file 294 of the E. G. White Estate's vault at Andrews University.
48. Ellen White, Letter 175, 1901, in *Selected Messages*, Vol. II, p. 341, 342.

# Regeneration: A Sculpture by Alan Collins

by Marianne Collins

In his book *Beyond Modern Sculpture*, Jack Burnham writes that vitalism “has been traditionally allied to a concern for protecting religion . . . against the erosive effects of scientific rationalism.” But what are the problems a sculptor encounters when he produces work for members of a religious community, many of whom feel threatened by nonrepresentational art?

Recently, Andrews University commissioned Alan Collins, a member of the art faculty, to make a sculpture for the campus. Even though it was understood that Collins would have creative freedom, he had to face the fact that the university administration and staff are members of a denomination more conservative than the society in general in their attitudes toward the arts.

Collins, then, had to develop a form which his audience would feel did not violate any of its beliefs and which both the artistically educated and artistically naive could appreciate. It appeared necessary to include some type of iconography, as the community would more readily accept a nonfigurative sculpture, knowing that it carried a Scripture-based interpretation.

The site for the piece is the forecourt of a newly built complex of buildings for the chemistry, biology, physics and mathematics departments. The character of the buildings is massive with deep floor/ceiling slabs of exposed concrete alternating with wall treatments of fairly light orange-brown brick.

*Marianne Collins, a senior student of art history at Michigan State University, wrote this article for a professor at the university. Alan Collins is her father.*

The artist’s initial impulse was to take a strip of concrete from the severe, rigid facade of the architecture and tie it in a knot—a dynamic, curving, compressed form to contrast with the law and order of the building. Several knot forms proved too compressed and confining. The piece needed to be large enough for the site but not overwhelming to the human scale. So space was admitted and the ribbon opened up. A continuous band comprising two intersecting loops evolved, suggesting the joining and dividing of cells in the growth process.

At no point does the ribbon touch itself on its course from or to the ground. This adds to its visual dynamism or “spring” and suggests the course of the life span— “from dust we were made and to dust we return.” The twisting of the lower part alludes to the DNA spiral in the formation of protein.

This twisting, animated form seems intimately connected with the “life force,” a concept beloved by vitalists. And if this *élan vital* does not “denigrate the existence of man, nor nullify his divine origins,” to use Burnham’s words, then it should also be acceptable to the Adventist community.

The overall impression one receives, however, is more akin to a scientific model. The DNA spiral has a loose interpretation of a model for the atom. Collins has made use of the mathematical concept of the Mobius band and obviously been influenced by Max Bill’s various interpretations of the form. The huge, twisted rectangular-sectioned ribbon is reminiscent of Clement Meadmore’s monochromatic industrial forms and one is also reminded somewhat of Jose de Rivera’s tubular steel constructions.

At the same time, while dealing with formal problems, Collins, knowing that his audience was literary in bias, was watching for forms that

would symbolize some aspect of Biblical teaching known and accepted by all—a universal myth that would transcend mathematical or organic principles.

He felt that it would be right to set the form up, off the general patio level, on a slight mound making it separate but not inaccessible, suggesting the curve of the earth and fruitful shapes. But set on its twin stems, the piece would seem too isolated from the viewer. Collins explains: “It needed secondary, intermediate

forms that would reach out and engage the viewer with both tactile and visual contact. Since the plan of the stems was basically square, four additional forms were indicated. Orientation on the great North-South-East-West grid is strong in the midwest so I began by thinking of these subsidiary forms as the main points of the compass.”

However, the search for iconographic validity was still on and a fairly clear mandorla form was found imprisoned in the intersecting loops. This



*A model of Alan Collins' sculpture, Regeneration.*

is the symbol for Christ in Christian iconography as seen in manuscript illuminations and tympana sculpture on Gothic cathedrals. Now, an alternate significance for the secondary forms began to be apparent as the profile of a nuclear fission cloud, with its internal mandorla symbol, was recognized. They assumed the identity of the four primitive elements: air, earth, fire and water. Air is represented by the arch form; earth by the concave, receptor shape; fire by the twisting tongue moving from passive (horizontal) to active (vertical) at its outer edge; and water by the rippling, most graphic form of all.

Collins was prompted to use these element symbols because the great majority of Protestant Christians anticipate a second coming of Christ to this earth and Seventh-day Adventists in particular hold this belief as central to their creed. According to Old and New Testament prophecies this will be a purging by fire, not unlike that of nuclear fission, when the "elements shall melt with fervent heat." By making the element symbols take a basically horizontal position in relation to the "lifeforce" form in the center, the whole piece becomes a pictogram based on the scriptural doctrine of the second advent of Christ "*in the clouds*" (1 Thess. 4:17).

The initial impulse to use the same material used in the architecture—reinforced concrete—was followed up. The procedure was to build a finished full-size form that will be molded in laminated glassfibre and polyester resins. The mold will be designed in sections to allow removal of the form and the placement of adequate steel reinforcing rods in the mold. The full box section of the mold will be replaced a section at a time and a fill of low-slump concrete vibrated well in. When all sections of the mold are filled, it will be cut away and discarded.

Expanded polystyrene (styrofoam) has been used to build the form, pegged together with wood stakes and stuck with plaster of Paris. After being carved to near the final shape, it was skimmed with lightweight plaster rubbed smooth. The overall height of the work from patio level is 20 feet.

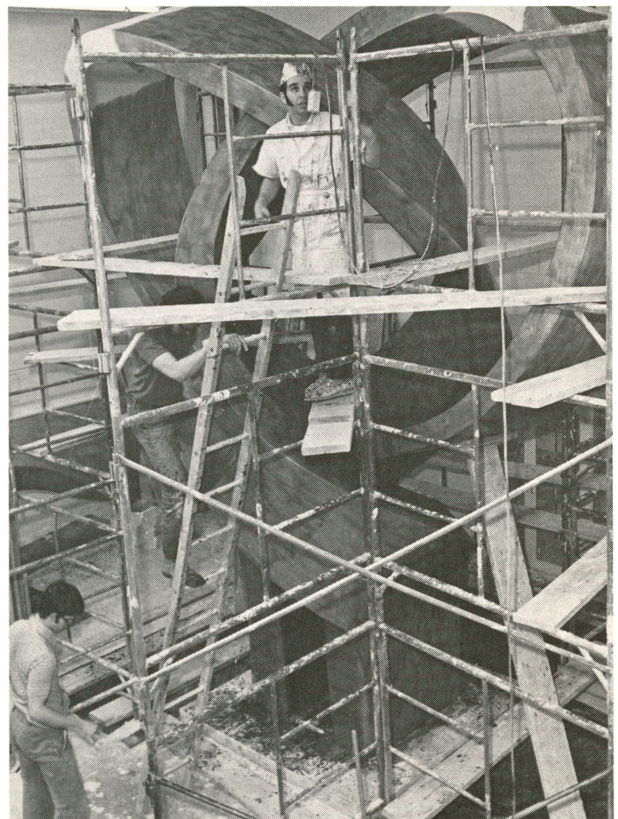
In designing the paving forms, it was felt that they should flow as people flow in unregimented movement. Large corpusclelike cells focus on the entrance steps in alternating coarse/fine concrete aggregates. In the paving of the upper entrance platform, the mandorla form is intro-

duced, again in a two-dimensional pattern of two intersecting circles. This is framed by a band of lettering reading, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth: and without Him was not anything made that was made."

Whatever the overall ethos or gestalt of the design—and some have likened it to a growing plant sloughing off a husk, an expression of the elusiveness of the scientist's problem, or have just waved their arms, saying "light, space, movement"—it has the alternative validity of being a piece of visual symbolic shorthand for a central tenet of faith. In the words of the artist:

Since we are committed essentially to verbal transmission of our faith, I will need to set down the biblical relationship of the various components in pamphlet form. This aspect of the work will depend on words, but many other nonself-descriptive works have relied on a title or subject, or even a great many words in the case of conceptual art. I would regard this as a valid means of gaining and retaining interest that might otherwise be "turned off."

In this piece, Collins seems to have visually pleased and educated his audience without compromising his art in any way.



Constructing Regeneration



# Women as Preachers: Evangelical Precedents

Lucille Sider and Donald E. Dayton

Current discussions about the role of women in evangelical churches are often based on strange and historically untenable assumptions. It is usually taken for granted, for example, that the evangelical churches more than any others have resisted giving women a major role. Even Richard Quebedeaux, who advocates the ordination of women in his recent book, *The Young Evangelicals*, asserts that "in almost all non-Pentecostal Evangelical or Fundamentalist denominations women are not ordained to the ministry." This mistaken assumption then supports another: that to raise the question of ordaining women is to let the world—the secular movement for women's liberation—set the agenda for the church.

A better case could be made for the opposite assumption on each point. It is evangelical Christianity, especially in its more revivalistic forms, that after, perhaps, Quakerism and Unitarianism has given the greatest role to women. Denominations in the National Association of Evangelicals have by and large ordained women earlier, in larger numbers, and more consistently than those in the National Council of Churches. And the extent to which this practice has declined in recent years may be better attributed to a general accommodation to the dominant culture, seen also in the decline of other distinctive behavior patterns.

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Robert Wearmouth, a close student of the social impact of the eighteenth-century "Evangelical Revival," has even argued "that emancipation of womanhood began with John Wesley." The same patterns that encouraged laymen and the poor to rise in church leadership opened the door for women. In a movement centered on the personal apprehension of divine grace, women could instruct as well as men, and as early as 1739, Wesley appointed women as "class leaders" in Bristol. The Evangelical Revival was willing to experiment with new forms of ministry and evangelism (such as "field preaching") and let their validity be judged in part by their results. And since "God owns women in the conversion of sinners," Wesley once said, "who am I that I should withstand God?"

The new role given to women in the Evangelical Revival was gradually expanded to include preaching. In 1787, Wesley wrote that "we give the right hand of fellowship to Sarah Mallet, and have no objection to her being a preacher in our connexion, so long as she preaches the Methodist doctrines and attends to our discipline." Adam Clarke, the great commentator of the Evangelical Revival, insisted early in the nineteenth century that "under the blessed spirit of Christianity they [women] have equal *rights*, equal *privileges*, and equal *blessings*, and, let me add, they are equally *useful*." These sentiments did not yet include the full ordination of women or the principles of modern feminism, but they were well on the way, especially when read in context.

The Great Awakenings in eighteenth-century America expressed many of the values of the British Evangelical Revival. Even before 1800, the Free Will Baptists permitted women to serve

as preachers and itinerant evangelists. Among these women were Mary Savage, who began to preach in 1791 in New Hampshire, Sally Parsons, who worked later in that decade, and Clarissa Danforth, who flourished from 1810 to 1820. But it was in the wake of the Second Great Awakening, and especially the revivalism of evangelist Charles G. Finney, that such practices became widespread and developed into the full ordination of women and a form of feminism.

One of Finney's controversial "new measures" was allowing women to pray and speak in "promiscuous" or mixed assemblies. Soon after his conversion in 1825, Theodore Weld, serving

as Finney's assistant, encouraged women to speak, and "seven females, a number of them the most influential female Christians in the city, confessed their sin in being restrained by their sex, and prayed publicly in succession." Weld later married feminist Angelina Grimke and at that time insisted that he had since boyhood felt "that there is no reason why *woman* should not make laws, administer justice, sit in the chair of state, plead at the bar or in the pulpit, if she has the qualifications." Weld suggested as well that women should feel free to initiate courtship and warned that "the devil of dominion over women will be one of the last that will be cast out" of men.

## A Lady Pastor Remembers

by a Staff Member

As a Bible worker, camp - meeting worker, preacher, pastor's assistant and district leader, Mabel Vreeland has tackled jobs that many men would have feared. Almost everyone in the New York Conference knows the small, thin woman, her hair pulled back severely into a knot, who at 80 almost runs when she walks. They remember her friendly smile, firm speech and vigorous handshake. And they see her as the exception to the stereotyped expectations for women in the church. "There's only one Mabel Vreeland," said a retired conference official who has known her for decades. "She's unique."

Mabel Vreeland, now 80 years old, started keeping the Sabbath in 1915, after having heard the Adventist message from relatives and neighbors. Three years later, when she was 23, she went to Lancaster Junior College (now AUC) to take the two-year Bible course. After graduation, she was asked to go to Bermuda to teach, but she was impressed that she should study the Bible with people in their homes. This impression became a conviction, and she soon began her life's work by assisting in tent meetings in the Southern New England Conference, in Springfield, Pittsfield and Boston.

In 1924, Miss Vreeland went to the Albany district as a Bible worker associated with

Elder L. H. King. The district was huge, stretching all the way to the Canadian border, and no one minister could possibly meet all the churches on Sabbath, so Mabel Vreeland began preaching on Sabbath and helping the churches to organize themselves and operate more efficiently. After two decades of working in almost every section of the conference, Miss Vreeland went back to the north-eastern section of the state in 1945, and from then until her retirement, she worked in the Adirondack region of New York.

For the last ten years of her work, she was leader of the Saranac Lake District. There were no men in the Saranac Lake church when she arrived. Since women could not hold the positions of elder and deacon, the church lacked official leaders and often, as a result, services were conducted in very casual fashion. In one of the district churches, on the first Sabbath she was present, the children were all out in the churchyard playing ball when it was time for the worship service to begin. When she asked the parents to bring their children into the church, they refused, saying that no one would hear anything if the children were in church. However, Miss Vreeland successfully lured the children in with a story. After that, she always included a story in her Sabbath sermon.

Mabel Vreeland did not back away from

After several years of full-time evangelism, Finney became professor of theology and later president of Oberlin College, a school founded largely to perpetuate his particular brand of revivalism and reform. Oberlin was the first coeducational college in the world. Later, feminists found it still a little stodgy, but a very high percentage of the leaders of the women's rights movement were graduates of Oberlin. Especially notorious was Lucy Stone, who preserved in marriage her family name and insisted on an "egalitarian marriage contract" repudiating the contemporary laws that made her essentially a property of her husband. Betsy Cowles, president of the second National Women's Rights

Convention, and Antoinette Brown, a Congregationalist who was the first woman to be ordained, were both Oberlin graduates.

There was during this period a close connection between the antislavery movement and the women's rights movement—and both were firmly rooted in Finney's revivalism. As in the 1960s "women's liberation" was in part a product of the civil-rights movement, the abolitionist movement of the 1830s evolved into the women's rights movement. Those who had attacked one social practice found it easier to question another. Many women found direct parallels between their state and that of the slave. Both were regarded at the time as "prop-

the practical problems of church management. That some of the churches in the district needed paint and carpentry work distressed her. She felt that a church should be a visual message of the congregation's respect for their beliefs. So she organized workers, and with no men to do the heavy work, she herself worked as a carpenter.

Her car presented another practical challenge. She remembers the difficulty of keeping it running in the winter weather in the mountains. Although she knew very little about cars, she learned to change tires, drive on muddy roads, put on chains. Somehow she managed. She worried about the roads from Saranac Lake to Chateaugay, where she had raised a new church. The 66-mile drive was difficult in the winter, and there was one stretch of nine uninhabited miles where cars were frequently marooned. Although she found such demands difficult to face at the time, when members from the churches she pastored come to visit her, as 42 of them did on a recent Sabbath, the difficulties of the work she carried on in the Adirondacks do not seem so great.

Mabel Vreeland comments with restraint on the changes that have occurred since she became a denominational worker in 1920. Although there were many women in positions of leadership in conference offices at that time and for a decade or so later, there are few now. Bible workers have nearly disappeared from conference work. And the few who are left do not have the opportuni-

ties she had. The division of work between minister and his assistants has changed. In her years of working with ministers in evangelistic efforts, she had the joy of studying intensively with interested people. She remembers having had 23 interested people studying together at one time, like a small congregation in her home.

Miss Vreeland is unvaryingly loyal to the denomination and to the church leadership. She says nothing to support any movement to include women in the ministry; she does not approve of the idea of ordaining women, finding no contradiction between the responsibilities she assumed in her own pastoral work and her inability to perform certain tasks because she was not ordained. She never led out in a communion service, although once she did conduct a funeral service.

Retirement has been difficult for her. Unmarried, she lives alone at the end of a dirt road often impassable in winter. Nevertheless, she is still lively and active in the work of her local church in Shelburne Falls. She has a great interest in young people and frequently invites them to her home for Sabbath dinner, and entertains them with stories of her experiences. She goes every summer to help in pitching camp for camp meeting in Union Springs. She occasionally is called to help in connection with evangelism in one of the upstate New York churches. But some of the pleasure is missing now, for her work is no longer that of studying with people in their homes.

erty" and merely a "means to promote the welfare of man."

But more important were the parallel problems in the interpretation of the biblical texts. Abolitionists faced conservatives who built a "Bible defense of slavery" on biblical instances of slavery and the Pauline admonitions to slaves. Those who developed in opposition a "Bible argument against slavery" discovered that the same questions arose in relation to the "woman question." Even the favorite text of Galatians 3:28 conjoined the issues in affirming that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." These facts called for a more sophisticated hermeneutic that appealed to an egalitarian "spirit" over against a repressive and subordinationist "letter" of the Scriptures. Along this line, the Reverend David Sherman argued in the preface to a biography of Mrs. Maggie Newton Van Cott, the first woman licensed to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church (in 1869), that while "yielding for a time to the form of the institution, the apostles laid down principles which cut away the foundations of the system" of slavery—and that the "same method was adopted in the case of woman."

Once this hermeneutical move was made, the way was opened for the full ordination of women and the emergence of feminism. Those traditions that most fully incarnated the revivalism and abolitionism of Finneyite evangelism also tended to ordain women and advocate women's rights. The first woman to be ordained was Antoinette Brown, whose family in upstate New York had been profoundly influenced by Finney. She was a graduate of Oberlin College and had insisted on sitting through the theological course as well. In 1853, some three years after she left Oberlin, Antoinette Brown was ordained in the Congregational Church of South Butler, New York.

The preacher for this service was Luther Lee, a founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which had broken with the Methodist Episcopal Church in an abolitionist protest against Methodist accommodation to the practice of slavery. Lee's sermon, entitled "Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel," can still be read with

profit. Though based on Galatians 3:28, it described "female prophets under the Old Dispensation" and "in the Primitive Church," argued exegetically that the New Testament speaks of women as "ministers," and insisted that the Pauline statements were either of local and limited application or binding only within

*"The founding president of Wheaton College affirmed that 'the first alteration which Christianity made in Jewish polity was to abrogate this oppressive distinction of sexes.'"*

the marriage relationship. (This and other sermons are reprinted in *Five sermons and a Tract by Luther Lee*, edited by Donald W. Dayton, Holrad House [5104 N. Christiana Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60625], 1975, \$3.)

The Wesleyan Methodists (the oldest branch of the current Wesleyan Church) had hosted earlier the first Women's Rights Convention. That meeting was held in 1848 in the Wesleyan chapel in Seneca Falls, New York. The Wesleyans began to ordain women in the early 1860s (the mainline Methodist Church did not grant full ordination to women until 1956). The practice did not find complete acceptance immediately, however, and was debated for the rest of the century before becoming relatively common in the early decades of this century.

Presbyterian/Congregationalist Jonathan Blanchard, the founding president of Wheaton College, shared at least some of these convictions. Blanchard was an ardent abolitionist with close connections with both early Oberlin College and the Wesleyan Methodists. In his *Debate on Slavery* with N. L. Rice, Blanchard affirmed that "the first alteration which Christianity made in the polity of Judaism was to abrogate this oppressive distinction of sexes" in which "women had almost no rights; they were menials to their husbands and parents."

Blanchard, like Luther Lee before him, preserved the teaching that "the husband is the head of the wife," but B. T. Roberts, founder of the abolitionist Free Methodist Church, urged instead the image of the business partnership. Roberts insisted that "the greatest domestic hap-

piness always exists where husband and wife live together on terms of equality.” He also argued for the ordination of women in a book called *Ordaining Women* (1891). But Roberts died before the issue was finally settled, and even though several other early Free Methodist bishops were distinctly feminist in conviction, their church allowed women to be ordained only as deacons until 1974, when this prohibition was discarded.

Another early evangelical leader holding to the same complex of convictions was A. J. Gordon, a Baptist who was the major figure behind present-day Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Ernest Gordon, Gordon’s son and biographer, said his father was “bred in the strictest sect of the abolitionists” and “advocated their [women’s] complete enfranchisement and their entrance into every political and social privilege enjoyed by men.” Gordon argued for the “Ministry of Women” in an 1894 article in the *Missionary Review of the World*.

Despite his abolitionist background, Gordon argued primarily not from a doctrine of human equality but on the basis of his doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Gordon insisted that in this “dispensation of the Spirit” inaugurated at Pentecost, the prophecy of Joel (quoted in Acts 2) that “your sons and your daughters shall prophesy” finds fulfillment. He then used this text as the hermeneutical key by which to interpret the rest of the New Testament. Gordon commented that when one starts from this point it is “both a relief and a surprise to discover how little authority there is in the Word for repressing the witness of women in the public assembly, or for forbidding her to herald the Gospel to the unsaved.”

But this argument had been developed 35 years earlier by Methodist lay evangelist Phoebe Palmer in a 421-page treatise on *The Promise of the Spirit* (1859), the whole of which was devoted to the explication of this “neglected specialty of the latter days.” Mrs. Palmer was the major force behind the nineteenth-century “holiness revival” that preserved a subtle synthesis of Wesleyanism and the revivalism of Finney. By the end of the century, this movement had produced a large number of

new denominations, most of which were ardently committed to the ordained ministry of women.

It was under the influence of Phoebe Palmer during an evangelistic crusade in England that Catherine Booth felt called to preach. She met resistance to this course with a number of articles and a booklet on *Female Ministry*. Catherine had earlier refused to marry William Booth until he capitulated to her egalitarian principles. Though the founding of the Salvation Army is usually attributed to William, Catherine was at least as important and was apparently the better preacher. Thousands attended her “revival services,” sometimes advertised by the slogan “Come and Hear a Woman Preach.” Catherine Booth carried her principles into the home and “tried to grind it into my boys that their sisters were just as intelligent and capable as themselves.” She insisted that “Jesus Christ’s principles were to put women on the same platform as men, although I am sorry to say that His apostles did not always act upon it.” Such egalitarian themes were built into the structure of the Salvation Army from the very beginning and are still largely operative today.

Another woman who felt the influence of Phoebe Palmer was Frances Willard, the founder and longtime president of the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Miss Willard felt she had a divine call into the suffrage struggle and served for a while as an assistant to evangelist D. L. Moody, speaking on temperance and suffrage in the Moody crusades. In 1888, she wrote *Woman in the Pulpit*, a sophisticated and exegetical defense of the ministry of women.

Phoebe Palmer’s basic argument was also taken in a distinctly feminist direction by many of her followers. Mrs. Willing Fowler, a Methodist, wrote a series of articles just before the turn of the century in *The Guide to Holiness* (which Phoebe Palmer had edited for years) arguing that “Pentecost laid the axe at the root of the tree of social injustice. The text of Peter’s sermon that marvelous day was the keynote of woman’s enfranchisement.” Or again, “when the Pentecostal light shines most brightly . . . [women] are principals, professors, college presidents, and are admitted to all the learned professions. . . . They have equal rights with men by whose side they labor for God’s glory.”

W. B. Godbey, a scholarly Methodist evange-

list associated closely with the early years of Asbury College, wrote in 1891 a pamphlet called *Woman Preacher*, arguing that "it is a God-given, blood-bought privilege, and bounden duty of the women as well as the men, to preach the gospel." Godbey insisted that the Pauline prohibitions about women's speaking in the church were given to maintain order and not to keep women from speaking, and affirmed that "I don't know a Scripture in all the Bible by whose perversion the devil has dragged more souls into hell than this."

Many of the evangelical churches founded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries explicitly endorsed and practiced the ordination of women. The Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), founded in 1881, had many women among its early leaders and preachers, perhaps as many as 20-25 percent. The denomination's historian reports that "no other movement, either religious or secular, in this period of American history except perhaps the suffrage movement itself, had such a high percentage of women leaders whose contribution was so outstanding." The Church of the Nazarene, founded in 1894, wrote into its original constitution a guarantee of the right of women to preach. This practice was later defended in *Women Preachers* (1905), in which a dozen women reported their testimonies and calls to the ministry. In early years, as many as one-fifth of the ministers in the Church of the Nazarene were women.

One of the founders of the Pilgrim Holiness Church was Seth Cook Rees, the father of Paul Rees, an important leader in early years of the National Association of Evangelicals. Rees copastored with his wives and argued that one of the marks of the ideal church is that it "is without distinction as to sex." He said:

Nothing but jealousy, prejudice, bigotry, and a stingy love for bossing in men have prevented woman's public recognition by the church. No church that is acquainted with the Holy Ghost will object to the public ministry of women. We know scores of women who can preach the Gospel with a clearness, a power, and an efficiency seldom equalled by men.

We could go on and trace these themes along a number of routes. It is largely recognized that Pentecostalism continued the focus on Pentecost and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that sup-

ported a role for women in the ministry in some contexts. Pentecostalism has preserved this practice from early evangelist Mary Woodworth-Emmett through Aimee Semple McPherson, founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, to Kathryn Kuhlman of today. Similar statements about the ministry of women were left by both Mr. and Mrs. Reader Harris, spiritual leaders in England at the turn of the century. Revell published in 1926 a detailed treatise on the *Bible Status of Women* by Lee Anna Starr, for years pastor of the college church (Methodist Protestant) in Adrian, Michigan. Jessie Penn-Lewis of England wrote in 1919 a book on *The "Magna Charta" of Women According to the Scriptures*. This was in turn based on *God's Word to Women* by the American Katherine Bushnell.

There is more, but this is enough to indicate the extent and variety of the evangelical precedents for supporting the right of women to preach and to be ordained. During the last couple of centuries evangelicals led the way in granting a major role to women in the churches.

It is true, however, that the practice of these principles has declined in recent years, especially since World War II. (In the Church of the Nazarene, for example, where in 1908 20 percent of the ministers were women, the figure was only 6 percent in 1973. A study of the American Baptists revealed that even from 1965 to 1971 the number of women in administrative positions decreased more than 50 percent). No doubt there are many reasons for this. One is the increasing "professionalization" of the ministry. With the growth of evangelical theological seminaries and increasingly sophisticated requirements for the ministry, women in general and lay people in general have both found their roles in the churches reduced. These trends have coincided with the breakdown of distinctive cultural and behavioral patterns that helped sustain separate subcultures in which patterns such as the ministry of women were preserved against a hostile culture. Successive generations, embarrassed by such "strange" and "unnatural" practices, have gradually accommodated to the dominant culture, becoming in some ways the sort of churches against which their forefathers and foremothers protested.

# Equality From the Start: Woman in the Creation Story

by Gerhard F. Hasel

The first three chapters of Genesis are of crucial importance for both the origins of our world and for determining relationships between man and woman. Without these chapters, any understanding of the mutuality between man and woman is impaired and one-sided.

An investigation of the status of man and woman in Genesis 1-3 is justified by new questions about the status of women in the church and by contradictory assessments of the evidence in these chapters. Some interpreters claim that "man assists passively in her [woman's] creation" and that since "woman [is] drawn forth from man [she] owes all her existence to him."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, woman is said to be inferior to man. Other interpreters say that woman is inferior and subordinate to man because of "the fact that she is the helper of man, and is named by him, . . ." <sup>2</sup> Another view holds that whereas Genesis 1 recognizes the equality of man and woman, Genesis 2 makes woman a second, subordinate and inferior being.<sup>3</sup> It is observed that Genesis 1:26-28 "dignifies woman as an important factor in the creation, equal in power and glory with man," while Genesis 2 "makes her a mere afterthought."<sup>4</sup>

Others, however, suggest on the basis of Genesis 1-3 that man and woman are created

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equal, and that woman is not an afterthought of creation. To them, woman as the last of all creation, is its climax and culmination. Woman is the crown of creation.<sup>5</sup> These contradictory views, all claiming to derive from Genesis 1-3, warrant a careful investigation of the evidence. This is all the more important because these chapters describe both man's perfect state before sin and the far-reaching changes introduced by sin.

On the sixth day of the creation week, after everything else had been created,

God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:26, 27, NASB)

This account is part of the summary narrative of creation (Genesis 1:1-2:3) which is complemented with more specific details in the rest of chapter 2.<sup>6</sup>

The first point to be made is that the Hebrew term for "man" in these two verses is not an equivalent for the name Adam. "Man" (*'ādām*) includes both "male and female" (1:27). It is a generic term for mankind.<sup>7</sup>

It should be stressed that man is created as both "male and female." There is no distinction between the sexes in terms of superiority or subordination. Man exists as a complete creature uniquely as man and woman. Indeed, the full meaning of *'ādām* is realized only when there is

man and woman.

Man has been created for communion. Though the male is the first creature formed (Genesis 2:7), and put into the Edenic garden “to cultivate it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15, NASB), he is not yet a perfect and complete creature: “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Genesis 2:18). Only with the creation of woman does man exist in complete and harmonious partnership and communion.

In the definition of mankind as bisexual, the Creator established complete equality between male and female. Genesis 1 knows of no superiority of one sex over the other.<sup>8</sup> Woman is not subordinated to man. She holds no inferior place nor is her role lower than that of the male.

It is striking that both “male and female” are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26f.). The whole man in his bisexuality—here the stress is not so much on a divinely given sex drive as on unity and mutual communion—is created in the image of God. There is no distinction in terms of superiority or inferiority.

*“Both man and woman share in their creation in ‘the image of God’; both find their full meaning in mutual communion. They are equals, each with his or her own individuality.”*

The blessing of God is bestowed on both of “them”; it comes to man (*’ādām*) as man and woman. It is a “blessing” that empowers them to be fruitful and to multiply and thus to perpetuate the human species. The responsibility of both man and woman in the propagation and perpetuation of mankind rests in equal manner upon both.

The task of “subduing” the earth (Genesis 1:28) and of “ruling” over the animal world (Genesis 1:26, 28) is also laid upon both man and woman. Man as “the crowning work of the Creator”<sup>9</sup> maintains his royal position in his rulership over (not exploitation of!) the animal kingdom.<sup>10</sup> Both man and woman are elevated to an equally noble status in their exercise of dominion over the created world.

In short, in Genesis 1 man (*’ādām*) is created

male and female. Both man and woman share their creation in “the image of God”; both find their full meaning in mutual relationship and communion; both receive the power to propagate and perpetuate the human species; both are to “subdue” the earth and “rule” over the animal kingdom in their common position as vicegerents over God’s creation. They are equals, each with his and her own individuality.

The narrative of Genesis 2:4-25 adds detail to the story of Genesis 1, complementing it on crucial points.<sup>11</sup> In Genesis 2:7 “the man” (*hā’ādām*, or Adam)<sup>12</sup> is the first creature formed from the dust of the ground. God breathes into him the “breath of life” and “man becomes a living being” (NASB).

God puts “the man” in the garden of Eden in order to till and to tend it (Genesis 2:15). This reference, it seems, refers to the male, because the tilling and keeping of the garden is an activity identified with male (cf. Genesis 3:17-19).<sup>13</sup> Meaningful and complete existence can be experienced by man only in connection with work.

Woman is created after man had been engaged in the naming of the animals (Genesis 2:20). A far-reaching observation grew out of this experience: “There was no helper suitable for him” (vs. 20, NASB). Then comes God’s pronouncement, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make a helper suitable for him” (2:18, NASB).

It is important to investigate the meaning of the term *’ēzer* rendered as “helpmeet” (KJV), “helper” (RSV, NJV, NASB), “partner” (NEB, NAB) and “aid” (Speiser, Anchor Bible). It is just as important to investigate the idea of “fit for him” (RSV) or “suitable for him” (NAB, NASB). This investigation should clear up the matter as to whether or not these thoughts stress equality or inferiority.

The expression *’ēzer* (“helper”) has many different usages in the Old Testament. It is to be distinguished from the feminine noun *’ēzrah* which means “help, support.” The writer’s choice of *’ēzer* for Genesis 2:18 shows, indeed, that he was avoiding the idea of making woman a mere “help” or “support” for man.<sup>14</sup>

The noun *’ēzer* is employed in the Bible primarily for God,<sup>15</sup> which indicates that it does



not imply inferiority. The Lord is “helper” for Israel. As “helper” he creates and saves.<sup>16</sup> In Isaiah 30:5 the whole people is designated as “helper.” In Hosea 13:9, the question is raised as to who will be Israel’s “helper” when destruction comes to her.

In all Old Testament instances “helper” has to do with beneficial relationships. The term itself does not specify positions within relationships nor does it by itself imply inferiority. Position must be determined from the context or additional content. In the case of Genesis 2, additional content is provided in verse 18 with the word *k<sup>e</sup>negdô*, which means literally “like his counterpart.” The idea is that woman is a helper “corresponding to him” or “alongside him.”<sup>17</sup> Inasmuch as woman is made a helper alongside and corresponding to man, she is his suitable counterpart and fitting companion.

The account of the creation of the woman (Genesis 2:21, 22) concludes the story of the creation of man. In the creation of the female God alone is active: “the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man” (2:21, NASB). Man himself has no part whatever to play. He neither participates nor looks on.<sup>18</sup> He is likewise not consulted. Woman owes her origin solely to God. She is equal to man as regards the one who created her.

An additional parallel of equality comes to expression in the creation of man and woman from raw material. Neither man nor woman is spoken into existence. Man is made from dust (2:7); woman is made from a rib (2:21).<sup>19</sup> The “rib” evidently points to the relationship of man and woman to each other. “The woman was created, not of dust of the earth, but from a rib of Adam because she was formed for an inseparable unity and fellowship of life with the man, . . .”<sup>20</sup>

The creation of woman from the rib of man, far from referring to a position of subordination on her part, stresses woman’s status as equal with man,<sup>21</sup> superior with man to the animals and inferior with him to God. To call woman “Adam’s rib” is to misread the text, which explicitly states that the extracted rib was but the raw material which God built into woman.

**A**fter the creation of woman, God takes her to the man who acknowledges her equality

and jubilantly cries out in the poem of 2:23:

This at last<sup>22</sup> is bone of my bones,  
and flesh of my flesh;

This one shall be called woman

for this one has been taken out of man.

In the first two lines (“bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh”) the man expresses joy at having received a fitting companion and suitable part-

*“The creation of woman from man’s rib, far from referring to subordination on her part, stresses her equality with man.”*

ner, the “counterpart corresponding to him” (2:18, 20). He stresses that his partner is of the same stuff as he is.

The last two lines introduce for the first time the terms “man” as male (*’iš*) and “woman” as female (*’iššāh*). This change of terminology indicates that man as male exists only in relationship with woman as female, and vice versa. With the creation of woman occurs the first specific term for man as male. The linguistic pun of *’iš* (“man”) and *’iššāh* (“woman”) in 2:23b proclaims both equality and differentiation in terms of male and female. There is no hint at inferiority or superiority.

Some interpreters suggest that the phrase “this one shall be called woman” (2:23b) refers to the naming of female by male, and that, therefore, man has power and authority over her. But the text does not support this inference. The typical biblical formula for naming involves the verb “to call” (*qārā*) plus the explicit object *name*. This is evident from the first naming in the Bible and is carried on consistently in Genesis. “And whatever the man *called* a living creature, that was its *name*. And the man *gave* names to all cattle; and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field” (2:19b, 20a). In giving the animals names, first man establishes his divinely given authority and dominion as God’s representative over them (Genesis 1:28) but comes to recognize that there is no suitable counterpart for him. We must keep in mind that in the Old Testament the conferring of a name is an act of power and an assertion of ownership or some other form of control just as the giving of a new name indicates a change of state or condition, the

beginning of a new existence.<sup>23</sup>

But the clause “this one shall be called woman” (2:23) does not constitute the naming of Adam’s partner. This sentence has the verb “call” but lacks the essential word “name”<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the word “woman” (*iššāh*) is not, in fact, a name or proper noun. It designates the female counterpart to man with the recognition of sexuality. This recognition naming is not an assertion of power and superiority over woman.<sup>25</sup> Man and woman are equal sexes with neither one having power and authority over the other. The conception that both man and woman “become one flesh” (2:24) strengthens further the notion of the oneness and equality of both companions.

But what about the suggestion that the creation of man before woman implies a divinely ordained subordination of woman? It has been claimed that the order of sequence establishes “the priority and superiority of the man . . . as an ordinance of divine creation.”<sup>26</sup> In fact, this supposition is not correct. The order of sequence of the creation of man and woman does not imply man’s superiority or woman’s inferiority. It serves a different function.

In Hebrew literature, the central concerns of a unit come often at the beginning and at the end of the unit as an *inclusio* device. The complementary narrative of creation of Genesis 2:4-24 evinces this structure. The creation of man first and of woman last constitutes a “ring composition”<sup>27</sup> where the first and the last (second) correspond to each other in importance. In terms of the thinking of the biblical writer this does not mean that the first is more important or superior and the second is less important or inferior. To the contrary, the existence of the creature created first is incomplete without the creation of the creature created last as the divine declaration emphasized: “It is not good for man to be alone” (2:18). Thus the Genesis 2 narrative moves to its climax, not its decline, in the creation of woman. Her creation is reported last not because the sequence and order of creation implies a status of woman secondary to man but because with the literary device of the ring composition the inspired writer attempted to indicate that man and woman are parallel and equal in position.

It may be parenthetically inserted that the remarkable importance of woman in the biblical

reports of creation is all the more extraordinary when one realizes that the biblical account of the creation of woman as such has no parallel in ancient Near Eastern literature. It indicates the high position of woman in the Old Testament and in biblical religion in contrast to woman’s low status in the ancient Near East in general.

Woman’s remarkable position as an equal of man is not maintained much longer after the entry of sin. The consequences of sin are enormous even for the harmonious relationship and delicate equality between man and woman.

It is not necessary to rehearse in detail the story of the serpent’s approach to the woman, their dialogue and the woman’s eating of the forbidden fruit (3:1-6a). To the woman, the fruit is “good for food,” able, that is, to satisfy the physical drives. It is “a delight to the eyes,” or aesthetically and emotionally desirable. It is “desirable as a source of wisdom.” When the woman acts, she is fully aware that she seeks not merely to satisfy divinely given drives but to attain a higher sphere of existence, approaching that of deity (3:5). Under these impressions and aspirations, she takes the fruit and eats. It is striking that the initiative and the decision to eat are hers alone without consultation with her husband, without seeking his advice or permission. In separating from her husband, she is “in greater danger than if both were together.”<sup>28</sup>

After man has joined his wife in eating of the fruit, both are one in the new knowledge of their nakedness (3:7). They are one in their hiding from the Lord God (3:8) and in their fear of Him (3:10). In the acts of disobedience both have broken the harmonious relationship with their God. An inferior position of woman after sin is never implied.

God addresses the first questions to man (3:9, 11). Finally Adam admits, “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate” (3:12). Here is another indication of the broken harmony between male and female and man and God. Just as shame is a sign of the disturbance of interhuman relationships and fear a sign of the disorder in divine-human relationships, so man’s defensiveness after sin is a sign of disruption of these relationships. The man puts the blame on woman and, since she was given to him by the Creator,

ultimately upon God. The woman, in turn, blames the serpent and, as her husband, ultimately God (3:13).

On what happens next the record is explicit. Divine curses are pronounced over the serpent (3:14) and the ground (3:17); but the woman and the man are not cursed. They are judged!

The judgment on woman is of special concern. She will suffer multiplied pain in pregnancy and childbirth (3:16a)<sup>29</sup> and her husband will “rule” over her (3:16b).

What does the troublesome statement that the woman’s husband (’iš) “shall rule over you” mean? At first sight, it might seem that woman’s aspiration for a higher sphere of existence has caused her actually to fall to an inferior position, equalling that of other creatures. But this is to misread the text. The writer carefully distin-

*“It must be remembered that the husband’s ruling function is not a part of God’s perfect creation but a result of sin.”*

guishes between man’s (’ādām) rule over the animals and husband’s rule over his wife. The Hebrew text employs two different verbs which are rendered into English (and other modern languages) by the same word. Man’s rulership over the animals is expressed with the verb *rdh* (1:26, 28). Man’s rulership over his wife is expressed with the verb *māšal* (3:16). In over 100 usages of forms of the root *msl* in the Old Testament, there is not a single example in which it expresses man’s ruling over animals. Accordingly, by the choice of this word to express that man shall “rule” over woman, the inspired writer excluded the idea of woman’s being reduced through sin to a position equal to animals.

The verb *māšal* is employed a number of times with Yahweh as the subject.<sup>30</sup> When used of man, it is employed of man’s rulership over creation (Psalm 8:7), his brothers and sisters (Genesis 37:8), slaves (Exodus 21:8) and nations (Deuteronomy 15:6), or of nations ruling another nation (Joel 2:17). Man can also “rule over” or “be in charge of” someone’s possessions (Genesis 24:2; Psalm 105:21). The verb can also refer to “self-control,” or the ruling of

oneself (Genesis 4:7; Psalm 19:14; Proverbs 16:32). A common usage is “to rule” in the political sphere.<sup>31</sup>

It is obvious that the verb *māšal*, being used of an activity of God, man, woman, nation, etc., has multiple nuances. It seems certain that it implies subordination. Again the context and additional content must define the nature of the subordination of woman to man.

It is a fact of nature that woman is not subordinated to man in intellectual, mental, emotional and other spheres of existence. A woman could take part in equal status with man in the religious and political leadership of ancient Israel. Miriam served as a counselor to government (Exodus 2:4, 7-8; 15:20, 21) and was a prophetess (Exodus 15:20). Deborah served as a “judge” on equal par with other judges (Judges 4-5). Athaliah reigned as queen over Judah for six years (2 Kings 11). Huldah the prophetess was consulted by the king’s ministers (2 Kings 22:14). Isaiah’s wife was a “prophetess” (Isaiah 8:3). Both men and women could take the Nazirite vow and dedicate and separate themselves for God (Numbers 6:2). The book of Esther tells how the nation was saved by a woman. Women were employed by God to do a work for Him just as were men.<sup>32</sup>

In returning to the meaning of the statement that man shall “rule” over woman, one needs to stress that this follows the statement that her “desire” (RV, RSV, NASB) or “urge” (NAB, NJV, NEB, margin) shall be for her husband (3:16). (The same Hebrew term is also used of man’s “desire” or “urge” for *his* beloved [Song of Solomon 7:11]. Both man and woman have a natural and strong desire for each other.)

What deserves notice is this: the divine declaration that man shall “rule” over woman is placed within the context of the man/woman relationship in marriage. Travail in pregnancy, pain in childbirth and the wife’s “desire for your husband” all take place in marriage. After this threefold reference to changes in the marriage institution, comes the sentence, “He [your husband] shall rule over you” (3:16).

The contextual setting of the marriage institution provides a crucial aid in understanding what this means. The ruling of man over woman is restricted to the sphere of marriage.<sup>33</sup> It does *not* support male domination and supremacy in all spheres of life.

What is the meaning of the husband's ruling over his wife? Does it mean male domination and supremacy in marriage? Does it imply that the female is to be reduced to a blindly obedient slave? Does it support man's reign as a despot? Does it mean the loss of the wife's individuality, the surrendering of her will to her husband? Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament gives any indication of saying yes to any of these questions. Yet sin disrupted not only the harmony of man and God but also the harmony of husband and wife. Harmony in marriage can be preserved only by submission on the part of the one to the other. So man is the head of the woman as the Father is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3). As the Father and Christ are equal and yet God is the head of Christ, so husband and wife are equal but the husband is the head. He is the first among equals, and is controlled by a love modeled on the love of Christ for his church (Ephesians 5:25).

**T**hat man does usurp power and authority over woman (contrary to God's will) is already illustrated in Genesis 3. The record reports, "Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living" (3:20). Adam names his wife. It has been shown above that the biblical formula for naming contains the verb to *call* and the object *name*. Both elements are present here. In naming his wife Adam asserts ownership and control over her. But there is no approval of Adam's naming his wife. It is an act that perverts the divinely established relationship between husband and wife. Significantly, it is followed by expulsion from the garden of Eden (3:22-24).

In spite of this perversion, however, the wife of the Israelite was by no means on a level much lower than that of man, nor was she reduced to slavery. Though an Israelite could sell his slaves (Exodus 21:2-11; Deuteronomy 15:12-18), he could never sell his wife, even if he had acquired her as a captive in war (Deuteronomy 21:14). Within the family circle, the law commanded that equal honor be given to the mother and wife as to the father.<sup>34</sup> Proverbs insists on the respect due to one's mother,<sup>35</sup> and the union of one man with one woman is clearly shown to be the norm, both by the absence of any allusion to the discords of polygamy and by the fully per-

sonal bond taken to exist between husband and wife. The two share the training of children and are assumed to speak with one voice (Proverbs 1:8f.; 6:20; etc.). The husband is urged not merely to be loyal but ardent toward his partner (Proverbs 5:19); a broken marriage vow is a sin against a companion and friend (Proverbs 2:17). This is a far cry from the not uncommon ancient idea of the wife as chattel and childbearer but not companion.

Far from being a cypher, the woman is the making or undoing of her husband. She is a God-given favor and boon (Proverbs 18:22; 19:14); indeed she is "her husband's crown" (Proverbs 12:4) or else "rottenness in his bones" (Proverbs 12:4). The capable wife is a model of benevolent constancy; she is a wise administrator, thrifty trader, skillful craftswoman, liberal philanthropist, and able guide whose influence and good reputation assure her a high standing in the community where what she has to say ranks as wisdom and reliable advice (Proverbs 31:10-30). All of this shows a very high view of woman.

Some suggest that woman had a vastly inferior position in ancient Israel because she did not serve as a priestess in the sanctuary. But it is precarious to read into this the idea that she ranked far below man in religious affairs. We need to remind ourselves for the sake of perspective that women figured prominently as prophetesses (Miriam, Huldah, etc.) and leaders in the affairs of state (Deborah, Bathsheba, Athaliah, Jezebel). Women participated fully in the religious activities revolving around the annual festivals of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Booths).

Although the Old Testament gives no reason why women did not serve as priestesses, it may have been to preserve Israel from Canaanite influences.<sup>36</sup> Priestesses played an important role in the utterly immoral cult of the Canaanites. Canaanite fertility religion became a deadly threat even without the establishing in Israel of worship involving both priests and priestesses. In His divine providence, God seems to have reduced possible inroads for Canaanite immorality to a minimum. And it should also be remembered that the priestly order of service prescribed certain periods of time for service at the central sanctuary. This did not lend itself very well to women's serving, since they were considered ritually unclean for determined

lengths of time during menstruation and after childbirth.

In view of these considerations, it does not seem to be a strong argument that since women in Israelite times did not serve as priestesses, they cannot serve today with changed circumstances (no Canaanite influence and no ritual uncleanness) to their full capabilities in all lines of work in the church.

It remains now to summarize our conclusions and to study their implications for the church at this time. Genesis 1 stresses full equality between man and woman. Genesis 2 does not stand in tension or opposition to this picture, but corroborates the compressed statement of Genesis 1, complementing them with additional details. That woman is created to be man's "helper" expresses both a beneficial and harmonious relationship between man and woman. Only woman is a suitable partner alongside and corresponding to man; she is his equal companion (2:18, 20).

The fact of Adam's creation before Eve's does not at all imply any superiority on his part. The inspired writer, in reporting the creation of man at the beginning (2:7) and that of woman last (2:18-25), used the *inclusio* device of a ring composition where the first and the last are parallel and equal in position.

With the entry of sin into the world (Genesis 3) the complete and total harmony between God and man, man and man/woman, and man and world is disrupted. But the divine declaration that man shall "rule" (*māšal*, not *rādah*) over his wife (3:16) indicates that she is *not* reduced to a slave or an animal. And the context of Genesis 3:16 indicates that the sphere of woman's submission is restricted to the marriage relationship.

It must be remembered, too, that the husband's ruling function is not a part of God's perfect creation but a result of sin. This has implications of immense significance for the task of proclaiming the gospel. If salvation is concerned with the reproduction of the image of God in men under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth,<sup>37</sup> is it then not the responsibility of the church precisely to bring about the reproduction of the image of God in man, to restore harmony between God and man, to establish equality and

unity where there is now inequality and disunity? Would this not involve among many things a restoring of equality between men and women in spheres of activity where the divine declaration of man's rulership over his wife and the wife's submission to her husband does not apply?

Furthermore, does the urgency of the task and the shortness of time not require the full utilization of all of our manpower and womanpower resources, which includes the full participation of women in ministerial activity? If "in Christ" there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free man, neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28), does this oneness and equality not call for a united effort to finish the task where all, both "male and female" (3:28), participate in full equality of responsibilities and privileges in all lines of work in order to hasten the coming of our beloved Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. E. Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 173; cf. S. H. Hooke, "Genesis," *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, ed. by H. H. Rowley and M. Black (London: Th. Nelson, 1962), p. 179.
2. John A. Bailey, "Initiation and the Primal Woman in Gilgamesh and Genesis 2-3," *JBL*, 89 (1970), 143; cf. A. van den Born, "Frau," *Bibel-Lexikon*, ed. by H. Haag (2nd ed.; Einsiedeln: Benzinger Verlag, 1968), col. 492; Claus Westermann, *Genesis* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), pp. 315f.
3. Eugene E. Maly, "Genesis," *The Jerome Bible Commentary*, ed. by R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer, and R. E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1968), p. 12, concludes that "woman's existence, psychologically and in the social order, is dependent on man."
4. Elizabeth C. Standon, *The Woman's Bible* (New York: European Publ. Co., 1895), I, 20. Cf. Elsie Adams and Mary L. Briscoe, *Up Against the Wall, Mother . . .* (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1971), p. 4; Sheila D. Collins, "Toward a Feminist Theology," *Christian Century* (Aug. 2, 1972), p. 798.
5. So Bailey, *JBL*, 89 (1970), 150; John L. McKenzie, "The Literary Characteristics of Gen. 2-3," *Theological Studies*, 15 (1954), p. 559; Walther Eichrodt, *Das Menschenverständnis des Alten Testaments* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1947), p. 35, and others.
6. The assessment of traditional liberal scholarship that there are two different creation accounts which manifest "irreconcilable" contradictions (so H. H. Rowley, *The Growth of the Old Testament* [New York: Harper & Row, 1963], p. 18 and many others) cannot be maintained. The difference in the usage of divine names is best explained on account of the different semantic aspects associated by each (see M. H. Segal, *The Pentateuch* [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967], pp. 32, 103ff.; U. Cassuto, *The Documentary Hypothesis* [Jerusalem:

Magnes Press, 1961], pp. 15-41). The difference of style is paralleled by the commonplace stylistic differences in extrabiblical ancient Near Eastern texts (see Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* [Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968], pp. 116, 117). The supposed differences in the conception of God are overdrawn (see Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960], p. 207; E. J. Young, *Introduction to the Old Testament* [3rd ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964], p. 51). The alleged difference in the order of events, namely that the animals were created *before* their naming and *after* the creation of man (Gen. 2:19), vanishes on the basis that the word "formed" in Gen. 2:19 can equally well be translated "had formed," because the perfect tense of the Hebrew verb does double duty for both past tense and pluperfect (see G. C. Aalders *A Short Introduction to the Pentateuch* [London: Tyndale Press, 1949], p. 44; G. L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* [Chicago: Moody Press, 1964], pp. 118f.; Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*, 118n. 19).

7. There is no difference of opinion on this point among interpreters.

8. Eichrodt, *Menschenverständnis*, p. 35, speaks of the "noteworthy equality between man and woman before God . . . in that she is designated by God as the equal supplementation of man [Gen. 2:18], in that she is also created in the image of God whereby she has part in the special place assigned to man over against nature."

9. E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.; Pacific Press, 1958), p. 44.

10. Westermann, *Genesis*, pp. 221, 222.

11. See above n. 6.

12. In Genesis 2 *hā'ādām* ("the man") is not often used in a collective sense but as a general description of the first male. Cf. Th. C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology* (2nd ed.; Newton, Mass.: C. T. Branford, 1970), p. 406, and many others.

13. So correctly with Tribble, *JAAR*, 41 (1973), 35, against Westermann, *Genesis*, p. 301.

14. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*, p. 200; Westermann, *Genesis*, p. 309.

15. Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7; Psalms 20:3; 33:20; 115:9-11; 121:2; 124:8; 146:5; Daniel 11:34.

16. Psalms 121:2, 124:8, 146:5; Deuteronomy 33:7, 26, 29.

17. So Speiser, *Genesis* "Anchor Bible" (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1964), p. 17.

18. This point is made correctly by J. G. Thomson, "Sleep. An Aspect of Jewish Anthropology," *VT*, 5 (1955), 421-435.

19. Though the raw material itself is not identical, this does not do away with the fact that male and female are made from a divinely chosen raw material.

20. C. F. Keil, *The First Book of Moses (Genesis)* (Grand Rapids, Mich. Eerdmans, 1949), I, 89.

21. E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 46: "Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as a equal, to be loved and protected by him." Tribble, *JAAR*, 41 (1973), 37: "The rib means

solidarity and equality."

22. The common rendering of "now" for *ha-pa'am* is hardly sufficient. It should be translated as "at last" with NEB, NAB, NJV and Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, p. 295.

23. The change of the name Jacob to Israel (Genesis 32:29) indicates his new existence and implies the nature and mission of the bearer. The assigning of the new names to Daniel and his three companions (Daniel 1:7) establishes the authority and power of the Babylonians over the exiled youths.

24. At times the verb "call" is absent in the naming but the essential noun "name" is always present (cf. Genesis 32:29).

25. With Tribble, *JAAR* 41 (1973), 38.

26. Keil, *The First Book of Moses*, p. 89. Cf. above notes 1-4.

27. Term used by Muilenburg, *JBL*, 88 (1969), 9.

28. E. G. White, *The Story of Redemption* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald, (1947), p. 31.

29. The translation "your pain in childbearing" (RSV, NJV, NASB, NAB) captures admirably the meaning of the Hebrew idiom which is "a parade example of hendiadys" (Speiser, *Genesis*, p. 24). A hendiadys is a literary and idiomatic method whereby two formally coordinate terms, either verbs, nouns, or adjectives, are joined by "and" to express a single concept in which one of the components defines the other. The literal text would read "your pangs and your childbearing."

30. 1 Chronicles 29:12; 2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalms 22:29; 59:14; 66:7; 89:10; 103:19; Judges 8:23.

31. Genesis 45:8, 26; Joshua 12:2, 5; Judges 8:22, 23; 9:2; 14:4; 15:11; 2 Samuel 23:3; 1 Kings 5:1; Isaiah 3:4, 12; 14:5; 16:1; etc.

32. To deduce superiority on the part of man on account of statistics (women functioned not as often as man) is precarious.

33. E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, III, 484, interprets that Adam should rule over Eve in terms of the husband/wife relationship in the home in the following way: "But after Eve's sin, as she was first in the transgression, the Lord told her that Adam should rule over her. She was to be in *subjection to her husband*, and this was part of the curse." (Italics mine). In *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 58, she writes, "They (Adam and Eve) would have ever been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by *submission on the part of the one to the other* . . . she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now *placed in subjection to her husband*."

34. Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 21:18-21; 27:16.

35. Proverbs 19:26; 20:20; 23:22; 30:17.

36. See particularly M. Löhr, *Die Stellung des Weibes in Jahwe-Religion und Kult* (Leipzig, 1908), C. J. Vos *Woman in Old Testament Worship* (Kampen: Kok, 1968), Th. C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology* (Newton, Mass.: Branford, 1970), p. 412 n. 2.

37. E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

# The Bible and the Ordination of Women: A Bibliographical Essay

by Sakae Kubo

This essay does not deal with the broad subject of women's role in the church but concentrates specifically on the Bible's position concerning the ordination of women. Even on that narrower topic there seems to be no clear-cut directive in the Bible. Even if there were, one would still have to ask if the Bible's advice on ordination of women were intended as an eternal principal or if Scripture was recording a policy conditioned by time and situation.

The discussion in this essay centers on 1) general theological arguments, 2) conduct of women in worship and 3) principles of interpretation. Within each topic, I will note the work of scholars who believe the Bible opposes ordination of women and those who are certain the Bible allows it.

But, first, I want to recommend the best book and the best article giving a fair, balanced introduction to the general topic of ordination of women. Both are by Lutherans.

Raymond Tiemeyer's book *The Ordination of Women* (Augsburg Publishing House, 1970) condenses research done through the Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. After giving the arguments for both

sides, it concludes that Scripture is inconclusive concerning the ordination of women. John Reumann, in his article "What in Scripture Speaks to the Ordination of Women?" (*Concordia Theological Monthly* 44 [1973]: 5-30), also treats both sides fairly even though he clearly favors ordination of women.

First, the opponents to ordination. They come from the entire spectrum of Christendom. Two short articles in the World Council of Churches publication, *Concerning the Ordination of Women* (World Council of Churches, Department of Faith and Order and Department on Cooperation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society, 1964), present the Greek Orthodox Church's reasons for opposing the ordination of women. The first Orthodox writer, Nicolae Chitescu, presents three different reasons to support his position: 1) Jesus did not include any women among the twelve or the seventy; 2) The Apostles themselves did not appoint women as heads of Christian communities; 3) Women cannot carry on priestly duties during their impure period (p. 58). The Rev. Archimandrite Georges Khodre supports his position by citing the fact that the bishop is a representative of Christ and the church is the bride of Christ. The bishop fulfills the functions of Christ, the Bridegroom, towards the Church. "It is therefore normal," Khodre writes on page 63, "that the charisma of representing Christ in

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relation to the church (the Bride) should be borne by a man.”

An Anglican attack on the ordination of women comes from E. L. Mascall in a letter to the editor of *Theology* (57 [1954]: 428-429). “There is the further fact to be taken into account that the Word (as is congruous with his personal name as the Son [not the daughter] of the Father) became man as a male individual, and in that male humanity he performs forever that priestly work of which the work of the ordained priest in the Church is a communication and participation. It would seem to be this fact, . . . which is the basis of the masculinity of the historic priesthood.”

A thorough examination of all the arguments that Catholic dogmaticians have brought forth against the ordination of women, appears in Haye van der Meer’s *Women Priests in the Catholic Church? A Theological-Historical Investigation* (Temple University Press, 1973).

Some Lutherans also oppose ordination of women. Peter Brunner’s little pamphlet, *The Ministry and the Ministry of Women* (Concordia Publishing House, 1971), opposes women’s ordination since it goes counter to the order of creation and what he calls the *kephale*-structure (the order of subordination) established by it. In creation woman was taken “from” and was made “for the sake of” man. The fall modified the structure so that women were oppressed beyond the proper bounds but Christ redeems this structure to what it was before sin. He has a difficult time in justifying his opposition to women’s ordination inasmuch as he feels that women’s role as lawyers, judges, legislators and cabinet members does not oppose this *kephale*-structure. Anna Paulsen points out this weakness in Brunner’s paper, the weakness of his exegesis of Genesis 2 and 3, and also the fact that he completely neglects Genesis 1 in his discussion (*Lutheran World* 7 [1960-61]: 231-232).

**A**mong those supporting ordination of women, André Dumas gives the best theological arguments (“Biblical Anthropology and the Participation of Women in the Ministry of the Church,” *Concerning the Ordination of Women*, pp. 12-40). He first establishes the fact that the Trinity transcends any sexual differentiation even though God is known as Father and Jesus

Christ was male. The term “Father” is an expression of “Yahweh’s infinite love for His chosen people, expressed in terms of a patriarchal society” (p. 23). And Jesus Christ is usually spoken of as *anthropos* (mankind) rather than as *aner* (male person).

The second point is that according to Genesis 1 and 2, man and woman have “joint authority.” They together are made in the image of God. Genesis 2 calls woman a helper (*‘ezer*), which is used 16 times in the Old Testament of a superior who “assists” us. In five cases, it has no hierarchical use. “If the word *‘ezer* is to be inter-

*“The discussion in this essay centers on 1) general theological arguments, 2) conduct of women in worship and 3) principles of interpretation.”*

preted as ‘as assistant of inferior status,’ this would contradict its constant use in the Old Testament. Thus Genesis 2 seems to confirm Genesis 1, although it was written much later. The Old Testament, therefore, does not describe two orders of creation but a single order formulated twice for different purposes.”

According to Dumas, “The Epistles of Paul, on the other hand, are based on conventions which were indispensable to the Church’s testimony, but which do not interpret an ‘order of creation’ (as was wrongly assumed by the church for a long time, owing to incorrect exegesis)” (p. 30).

He believes that the reason for excluding women from the priesthood in the Old Testament are no longer valid in the New Testament. Although he finds no convincing answer for the fact that Christ did not call women to the apostleship, he points out that Paul did not cite this as a reason for excluding women. Rather, Paul gave as reasons “the need for the young Church to safeguard the honour of marriage, the building up of the Church by teaching submission to the Apostle’s words, as the women within it did” (p. 35).

If “conventional” considerations helped determine Paul’s view on allowing women into the ministry, we must examine the question on the same level today if we would be faithful to



his intentions. Dumas lists four reasons which he feels make it suitable in our situation to allow women into the ministry: 1) Honour and respect for *married women* no longer means that they must wear veils, keep silent, and be in subjection to their husband; 2) Neither anthropologically, nor biologically, can *the nature of women* any longer be described merely by the adjective "weak"; 3) *The education of women* is the tremendous new phenomenon which makes the independence of women entirely different from the time of Paul. When a woman is trained in theology, especially, she becomes edifying (no longer disturbing) in a Church; 4) Paul's *exegesis of Genesis 2* was "conventional," tuned to the intellectual convictions of those to whom he was writing, just as the scriptural typology of the author of Hebrews was suited to them.

Margaret Thrall, in "The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood," (*Theology* [1954]: 330-335), sees dominion and priesthood closely linked together in Scripture. Dominion according to Genesis 1 was granted to man and woman but through sin "this dominion was perverted and partly lost, and the female half of mankind, no longer exercising dominion, lost altogether the accompanying priestly function" (p. 334). Through the work of Christ equal dominion is restored to the woman and with this the priestly function. Another argument she uses is based on the prophetic and priestly role of Christ. "If then the ministry of the Church is an inseparable combination of the prophetic and priestly functions, and if women have in time past been called to exercise one of these functions, there seems to be very little reason why they should not be allowed to exercise both, especially as the objection to their exercise of the priestly function is not valid in the life of the New Israel" (p. 335).

In *The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood* (SCM Press, 1958), Miss Thrall deals at length with the differences between Genesis 1 and 2 regarding the relationship of man and woman. In Genesis 1 she finds that man and woman are made in the image of God in the fullest and most complete sense of the term. They are such from the very beginning. But in Genesis 2 Adam is described as in the image of God in an undeveloped, rudimentary state, and the woman exists in the image only by virtue of

her connection with and dependence upon man. The first chapter of Genesis describes the will of the Creator, but the second indicates that there will be a phase of imperfection, a process of development. This latter was interrupted by sin (Genesis 3). But through redemption the prior condition of Genesis again becomes possible. Now *no* human intermediary is necessary between woman and God. Thus, there is no theological reason for not ordaining women as priests.

While the Gospels present Jesus' attitude to women (which is favorable), they do not have passages which deal directly with the ordination of women. The significant New Testament discussion of this question are three passages in Paul's writings—1 Corinthians 11; 1 Corinthians 14; and 1 Timothy 2. Those opposed to ordination are adamant that these passages particularly prohibit ordination of women—they allow women to give private instruction, but forbid public proclamation. According to Georg Gunter Blum, women may serve as deaconesses. ("The Office of Woman in the New Testament," *Churchman* 85 [1971]: 175-189.) They are not, however, "allowed the office of preaching (and that would naturally include administration of the sacraments), whether in a free, charismatic or a specific, official form. This is not a matter of accidental, temporary character, due to the position of women in the classical world of primitive Christianity; it is a deliberate decision. As it rests on the highest authority possible in the Church, i. e., Apostolic authority, this decision must be equally valid and binding for the Church of the present day" (p. 185).

Those interested in the best book-length argument opposing ordination of women (based on these Pauline passages) should read Fritz Zerbst's *The Office of Woman in the Church* (Concordia Publishing House, 1955).

Biblical Scholars who favor the ordination of women, use different approaches to arrive at their position. Robin Scroggs ("Paul and the Eschatological Woman," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 40 [1972]: 283-303), eliminates the Pastorals as non-Pauline, and 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36 as a gloss. Thus, 1 Timothy 2: 11-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36

can be left out of consideration at least as coming from the hand of Paul. In Galatians 3:27, 28, where Paul discusses women, he shows their equality with men. As in Colossians 3:9-11 and 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, Galatians 3:27, 28, is placed in a baptism context showing that Christians recognized baptism as having a

*“Those who oppose ordination of women often do not spell out their principles of interpretation. They are inclined, however, to assume a literalistic view of Scripture.”*

societal-leveling quality. In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul goes out of his way to demonstrate the equality of women in all the situations described. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 11, simply demands a distinction in dress, and the head covering is, in fact, a way of protecting the new freedom of women in the eschatological community!

Elaine Pagels, answering Scroggs (“Paul and Women: A Response to Recent Discussion,” *Journal of The American Academy of Religion* 42 [1974]: 538-549), disagrees with his view that Paul is “a certain and consistent spokesman for the liberation and equality of women.” She feels that although Paul has a vision of human liberation, he is not able to sustain that vision without ambivalence. Nevertheless, she argues, our situation today is very different from Paul’s. Certain conditions that Paul thought could be realized only eschatologically, we must realize now.

J. M. Ford (“Biblical Material Relevant to the Ordination of Women,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 10 [1973]: 669-694) sees 1 Corinthians 11 as emphasizing the essential complementarity of man and woman. He regards 1 Corinthians 14:33-34 as an interpolation, and in any case, concerned only with married women. The latter seems “to be Paul’s application of the Jewish etiquette whereby a wife could not address any man other than her husband outside her home.” She sees 1 Timothy 2:9-15 as prohibiting women’s exercising supreme authority in the

sense of “formulating doctrine” which was the task of the bishop. Thus this passage does not forbid women from ordination as priests but only as bishops. Another interesting argument is that the Christian priesthood of Jesus is according to the order of Melchizedek which is not based on one’s physical condition.

N. J. Hommes (“Let Women Be Silent in Church,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 3, 4 [1968-69]: 5-22) concludes that 1 Timothy 2 does not have anything to do with what we call our preaching service. What is being forbidden cannot be pulpit preaching since that kind of worship service simply did not exist in the New Testament. Therefore, this passage cannot be used as a veto against women in office.

Russell C. Prohl (*Woman in the Church: A Restudy of Woman’s Place in Building the Kingdom* [Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1957]), finds no obstacle to the ordination of women in the three key Pauline passages. They refer, he says, to Christian wives, who were advised not to assert themselves in public meetings to avoid the then current accusation that the church was destroying the family. “We have liberty, but it must be adjusted to the world in which we are living” (p. 58).

Perhaps, as with so many other topics, the most important task in studying the Bible and ordination of women is that of arriving at a principle for interpreting Scripture. The best work on this topic written from the standpoint of a self-conscious principle of interpretation is Krister Stendahl’s *The Bible and the Role of Women: A Case Study in Hermeneutics* (Fortress Press, 1966). This was originally published in Swedish in 1958 when the question of women’s ordination was raised in Sweden. Stendahl finds in the New Testament elements that point beyond the period in which they are enunciated. He refers, for example, to the full development of the doctrine of the Trinity, the full implication of the meaning of Christ’s death and resurrection and the implications of 1 Corinthians 11:11-12 and Galatians 3:28. He says, “If the actual stage of implementation in the first century becomes the standard for what is authoritative, then those elements which point toward future implementation become neutralized and absorbed in a static ‘biblical view.’ This

is the pitfall of the 'realistic interpretation' and here its descriptive realism functions as an archaizing deep freeze" (p. 35). This is exactly what happened with respect to slavery, and yet those who argued for emancipation were more truly biblical than those who used "irrefutable biblical arguments" for their view. So, today it is not our problem "to harmonize the two tendencies into a perfect system. It is—as always in truly Christian theology—to discern where the accent should lie now, the accent in the eschatological drama which we call the history of the church and the world" (pp. 36-37).

Those who oppose ordination of women often do not spell out their principles of interpretation. They are inclined, however, to assume a literalistic view of Scripture. H. Cavallin ("Demythologizing the Liberal Illusion," in *Why Not? Priesthood and the Ministry of Women*, pp. 81-94) criticizes Stendahl's hermeneutics as liberal since "the leading feature of Liberal theology's reading of the biblical texts was its selectively critical principle, the presupposition of which was nothing else than the Liberal ideals themselves. That which agreed with them, or could be interpreted in accordance with them, was genuinely prophetic or a genuine word of Jesus. Everything else was primitive religion, postexilic Jewish legalism or Gemeindeftheologie" (p. 82). For Cavallin, Galatians 3:38 means that the woman in the New Covenant has full membership through baptism (no longer circumcision) like the Gentile and the bondman. Further, he says, "If, like Stendahl, one interpreted the admonition to men to love their wives as expressing a tendency towards equality between man and woman, one would also have to interpret Christ's love for his Church as implying the abrogation of the subordination of the Church to Christ. For the subordination of women to their husbands is parallel to the subordination of

the Church to her Lord, as the love of the men for their wives is compared to the love of Christ for his Church (Eph. 5:24d). From a modern point of view one would of course expect admonitions to mutual love between husband and wife. But as a matter of fact there are none in these texts" (pp. 86-87).

Finally, it may be helpful as we attempt to formulate a general method of understanding Scripture on this point, to look at the recommendation of G. W. H. Lampe, an Anglican scholar. He develops a principle of interpretation that differentiates within the church's tradition "two broadly distinguishable classes. Part of it consists of the accumulated deposit of doctrine, the result of the constant process of formulation and explanation by which the common mind of the Church has sought, consciously and deliberately, to interpret, and reinterpret for successive generations and different cultures the revelation embodied in Scripture. Part, on the other hand, is made up of customs, the ways in which the Church's life and work are organized, its worship ordered and its various rites conducted, all of which have developed almost imperceptibly, have come to be taken for granted, and have not usually been subjected to critical examination except at times of revolutionary change" ("Church Tradition and the Ordination of Women," *Expository Times* 76 [1964-65]: 123-125). He places the question of the ordination of women in the latter category of custom. Lampe sees a difference between the first category of doctrine which has clear and positive witness in Scripture, and the second category of custom for which Scripture gives no direct guidance. Lampe regards ordination of women as a matter of custom, not to be settled by Scripture.

# Fact and Fiction About Women and Work

by Roberta J. Moore

According to the United States Department of Labor, half of today's women marry by the time they are 21; they have their last child by the age of 30. When this youngster starts school, the mother still has 30 or more years of active life ahead of her.<sup>1</sup> Some choose to spend those years at home; others want to get at least part-time work, often to help meet family expenses; still others work because of the challenge they find in the job.

"I had my work done by 10:30 almost every morning," one woman told me. "Then I was free until the children came home from school at 3:30." She added, "With tuition running \$150 a month, can't you see why I wanted a job?"

Moreover, 23 percent of the women now working in the United States are single and another 21 percent widowed, divorced or separated.<sup>2</sup> I have a friend whose husband died 12 years ago, leaving her with a son to rear; another friend, mother of two teenagers, not long ago gave her husband the divorce he wanted so that he could marry his secretary. Of necessity, both these women work.

In the United States, as a matter of fact, about 2.5 million women workers, like my two friends, are heads of families; most of them must work to support themselves and children.<sup>3</sup> I

have tried unsuccessfully to get comparable figures for denominational workers: apparently, no one knows even how many women the church employs, let alone how many are single, married, or the heads of families.

Too often, however, those who speak for the church put all women into the same pigeonhole. This is a form of what we call stereotyping. It appears in books and papers which the church publishes. It surfaces in interviews with denominational leaders and with both men and women at every level of church work. It crops up in discussions with young people.

A secretary, fortyish and unmarried, says wryly, "I'm tired of hearing that a woman's place is in the home; we just don't all fit into that picture."

In its stereotyping, the church sometimes forgets its women members who have never married or those who married but are now widowed or divorced. It ignores the fact that there are many women who must work to feed and clothe their children or to keep them in church school. It shakes its head over those who cannot get inspired by a sinkful of dirty dishes or a stack of ironing, as though they are somehow unnatural.

Saying that a woman's place is in the home suggests that all of us are alike—that a woman exists solely to marry and to bear children and that having borne them, she must forever tend the nest in which she cradled them. It is like saying that all men, because they are men, belong on the farm.

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In the summer and fall of 1971, roused by articles such as "Women and the Church: Poor Psychology, Worse Theology," in *The Christian Century*,<sup>4</sup> Susan Berger<sup>5</sup> and I did exhaustive reading in books her youngest children were reading in church school and in periodicals the Sabbath School gave them.

We found sex stereotyping in much of the output of Seventh-day Adventist publishing houses, both books and periodicals.

Almost invariably stories picture boys as doing things and girls who merely *are*. Boys not only are more active than girls; they come through as more alert and intelligent. Girls in the stories often need help and appeal to boys for it; boys give it. Boys appear as dominant characters more than twice as often as girls. Interestingly enough, authors are usually women.

The picture of mothers and fathers is also a stereotype. Mother is getting a meal in the kitchen, or washing dishes, or ironing. In other words, she appears always in what psychologists call her role as "nurturer."

Father, on the other hand, comes home at the end of the day, carrying his briefcase. While Mother and Jane get supper, Father and Dick play football on the lawn. Stories consistently show fathers coming home from work and then playing with children, not helping mothers or working around the house.

Mrs. Berger and I found a real dearth of books about women or girls. Most mission stories deal with men doctors, preachers and teachers. Asked about biographies of women, one librarian replied that there were very few. Then she explained, "Famous people are usually men, you know."

Librarians and teachers told us that stories must deal with boys in order to interest boys; girls, they said, will read stories about boys. This may be true. One might well ask, however, what girls would like to read; our libraries do not contain enough stories about girls to give them any choice.

Would anyone want to say that the stories children read and the pictures they see have no influence on what they think? If stories and pictures in any way shape a child's thinking, what about the psychological damage of sex stereotyping on boys and girls whose parents do not match the roles in which books and Sabbath

School papers cast them? Some children, for example, have fathers who are plumbers, taxi drivers and farmers. Storybook fathers, on the other hand, work in offices and schools; in illustrations they come home wearing dark business suits and ties. Some children, too, have mothers who work outside their homes, either from choice or necessity, instead of making cookies and gingerbread. Do these boys and girls think, perhaps, that their mothers and fathers are not proper parents? Do they feel cheated?

And what about the effect of stories about boys who are always doing things—usually with a fair degree of success—and about girls who simply are? Since the stereotyping remains more or less constant from first grade on into academy, would it be any wonder if little girls sometimes wish they were boys?<sup>6</sup>

"Every human being," Ellen White wrote, "is endowed with . . . power to think and to do."<sup>7</sup> Stereotyping gives Dick the power to think and to do; Jane can only be. If she wants to do something, of course she can always appeal to Dick for help, but is this what Mrs. White had in mind?

"In these early years," says Bruno Bettelheim, "it is rare indeed for girls to hear the slightest suggestion that they might one day do the interesting work of this world quite as well as many men, or even better."<sup>8</sup> Children's literature included in this study does nothing to show girls that there is any place for them except on the sidelines, watching Dick and Mike.

Several years ago I attended a Missionary Volunteer investiture, in which 18 boys and girls, all in uniform, told what they planned to be: the boys wanted to be doctors and ministers, the girls, teachers and nurses. Some specified that they wanted to be missionary doctors and nurses. Their leader smiled, obviously pleased. As I listened, I wondered how Paul would have fitted into that group: would the leader have smiled at a boy who wanted to be a tentmaker?

Still thinking about tentmaking and similar careers, I suddenly realized that no boy planned to be a teacher and no girl a doctor. These boys and girls had accepted their sex roles without question. The girls' answers, however, suggested problems to come, because if no girl spoke of her wish to be a doctor, neither did one see

herself as a housewife and mother. I'll come back to that. For the moment, what about her dream of a career?

All the girls in that investiture group, remember, wanted to be teachers and nurses. As they grew older, and one voiced an interest in becoming a doctor, what encouragement would she get from her parents, her teachers, her guidance counselor?

A few days after the investiture, a college girl came to see me. She was listless when I asked about her major. As we talked, I began to see why.

*“We found sex stereotyping in much of the output of Adventist publishing houses. Almost invariably stories picture boys as doing things and girls who merely are.”*

Back in academy, she had decided she wanted to study medicine. Her parents were doubtful. “Why don't you take nursing?” they asked.

Her teachers said the same. “Medicine is a man's field,” said the science teacher, “but you could be a nurse.” The Bible teacher who doubled as guidance counselor pulled her folder from his files and looked at the scores she had made on college entrance tests just a few weeks earlier. “You've got the ability,” he said, “but I would suggest you consider nursing. You want to get married, don't you?”

Too often we draw lines for reasons that are purely sexist. Boys can be doctors; girls should be nurses. According to the American Nurses' Association, 99 percent of registered nurses are women.<sup>9</sup>

This has not always been the situation. The National Commission for the Study of Nursing and Nursing Education points out that, in fact, through some periods of history nursing has been viewed as a male occupation, as for example, the era in which military orders of hospital knights flourished.<sup>10</sup>

What about other professions, which are dominated by either sex?

Teachers in office administration say that so

far, changing their department's name from secretarial science has not attracted men students.

“In national professional meetings, we go on talking about how we can change our image,” one teacher told me, “but apparently to men secretarial is still a woman's field.”

The reason? As she sees it, men think of secretaries as people who take orders. “Men want to give orders,” she explained.

A look at lists of alumni from our colleges, incidentally, shows that before 1930 several men finished a “secretarial” course. For several years, also, men came to college to take nursing.

Elementary teaching, like nursing and office administration, has traditionally been a woman's field. In recent years, however, men have begun to show more interest in it. In 1959-60, for example, 13.7 percent of all elementary teachers were men; ten years later, the total had increased to 15.4.<sup>11</sup> In Seventh-day Adventist elementary schools, 42 percent of the teachers are men.

“I think you'll find men teaching the upper grades and serving as principals,” says a teacher in one education department, “even though in some cases the man who is principal has less training and experience than a woman who works under him.”

The same teacher adds, however, that some men students are now interested in kindergarten and nursery school training, “and we would like to see more. Men who like small children aren't necessarily womanish.”

The fields of engineering, mathematics and the sciences are still predominantly male. Most science teachers are men, one reason perhaps that so few girls major in these fields.

“Some men try to discourage girls from taking biology,” says a teacher in that department. “I don't know why—the few girls we have in our graduate and undergraduate degree programs are among our best students.” He goes on to say that, according to a recent study, women, contrary to the usual opinion, do superior research in science and a considerable amount of it.

A few years ago a national survey showed that seven percent of all physicians, nine percent of scientists and one percent of engineers were women.<sup>12</sup> If teachers in these fields know what they are talking about, percentages would cer-

tainly be no higher among graduates from Seventh-day Adventist colleges.

Theology, like science, does not open its arms to women. Even women Bible instructors are becoming rare. Teachers in one Adventist School of Theology note that the church has had some good women preachers. "I guess they work hard on a sermon," he chuckles, "because they know they've got to be good to survive. We always get good reports from churches where women students have preached."

Some teachers of theology recall Ellen White's writing to a woman, "Address the crowd whenever you can."<sup>13</sup> A year later Mrs. White wrote that two women were "doing just as efficient work as the ministers." One of them, she said, took the Bible and addressed the congregation.<sup>14</sup>

The fact remains, however, that theology departments do little to attract women students and by holding out no hope for future work tend to discourage those who apply.

**B**ending the twig starts early; parents give their sons construction and chemistry sets and doctors' instruments and their daughters baby dolls, cooking and sewing sets and nurses' kits.

A widely known psychologist, Paul Torrance, has for more than a decade studied young children's attitudes towards toys. First-grade boys, he reports, often refuse to play with a nurse's kit; six-year-olds protest, "I'm a boy! I don't play with things like that."

Torrance says his experiments with older children and science toys show that girls are reluctant to play with this type of game; they often tell him, "I'm a girl; I'm not supposed to know things like that!" In one school, Torrance reported his findings to parents and teachers and asked them to help change the girls' attitudes. A year later he retested, using similar science toys; the girls "participated willingly and even with apparent enjoyment. And they performed as well as boys. But in one significant respect nothing had changed: The boys' contributions were more highly valued—both by other boys and by girls—than the girls' contributions, regardless of the fact that, in terms of sex, boys and girls had scored equally."<sup>15</sup>

What happens when children begin to talk

about what they want to do as grownups? I am, of course, particularly concerned with girls; that society defines the feminine role much more narrowly than the masculine I think few would deny.

To a child who says she wants to become a nurse, adults often say, "That's fine, dear, but of course you want to be a mommy, too, don't you?" As she grows older, the matter becomes serious, particularly when the girl begins to express an interest in a predominantly male profession. If an adolescent says she wants to be a doctor, she often becomes the target for pressure from parents, teachers and her peer group.

Parents, for example, try to dissuade a girl from a career such as medicine, with the explanation that "men don't like girls to be too brainy." (No one ever explains where to draw the line: what is brainy enough and what is too brainy?) Others dismiss the subject with an indulgent smile and "Why be in a hurry to decide?" If the interest persists, parents and school counselors may suggest that nursing is a better profession than medicine for a girl because she will probably get married anyway.

I myself went through a stage where I was going to be a secretary, so that—as various counselors advised me—I could earn my living while I waited for "Mr. Right" to find me. Then my family and a longtime friend who was a nurse convinced me that I should take up nursing; since there was always a dearth of nurses, they reasoned, I could surely find a job if I needed one. I was far more interested in veterinary medicine than in nursing, but I settled for two years of nursing as I had four years of secretarial science in high school.

Somewhere along the line I did a stint with two country newspapers. When those jobs had ended, my mother confessed that she had never known a good night's sleep during those months; I gathered that I had been a source of worry to her because I liked my job too much. I was 22 before I summoned the courage to announce to all concerned that I was going to finish college, even though this meant working my way—*all* my way. When I started a master's, my mother wept. "What man will ever want to marry you?" she asked. She died before I could disappoint her further; she would have been totally unable to understand my later urge to take a Ph. D. in journalism.

That the girl lives in a man's world from the time she enters ninth grade becomes evident when one realizes that 57 percent of her teachers are men. The cards are stacked; most academy vocational and guidance counselors are men and many women teachers still feel obligated to uphold the idea that a woman's place is in the home, explaining that they themselves work only to "help out."

Through academy as well as church school, however, the girl must compete with boys for grades and extracurricular activities. Except for physical education and home economics courses, she takes the same classes, including mathematics and science.

But when she enrolls in college, she must put away childish things, including any ideas she may have had of competing with men.

Most girls have no question about why their parents send them to a Seventh-day Adventist college. One big object is to meet prospective husbands, and they know it.

What does this mean to a college girl?

"If you get an A on a test paper," several girls have said to me, "you mustn't let the guy next to you see it."

One dean of women says she knows college women see their A's as a threat to their boy-friends' ego. When we talked, she had in mind one couple for whom the girl's ability was a real problem. "I told her she could just listen in class," the dean said, "and pull C's. Then he wouldn't feel threatened. Otherwise she would lose him, and he meant too much to her for that."

Some girls say that insuring a steady lineup of dates is a full-time occupation. One day three girls told me they had not done an assignment because they had spent all of the preceding evening trying to decide whom to invite to their club banquet, "before all the nice guys are taken." But this wasn't the end of the matter. For the rest of the week, the three lived in a dream world, trying to arrange a meeting that would look accidental and practicing the giving of their invitations in a casual fashion, as if they had just that moment happened to think of asking the fellow to the banquet.

Before they are more than started in college, most girls have created—or have had passed on to them—a romantic view of life, which includes

school, marriage and a family, and living happily ever after. A far more accurate picture would be school, work and/or marriage, a family (sometimes continuing with a job by choice or necessity) and a return to work when the youngest child starts school.<sup>16</sup>

"I don't think most college girls really plan on getting a job," a senior told me recently. "The big push is towards marriage."

As they approach graduation, however, some girls can see that they are going to work whether they want to or not. Some are married and their husbands plan to go on to medical or graduate school. Others have begun to face the realization

*"When 23 percent of women do not marry, when 21 percent find their marriages ending with divorce or a premature death, why can we not bring ourselves to look squarely at the subject of working women?"*

that perhaps they will not marry. In either case, the adjustment is hard. It is obviously worse for the girl who took it for granted, along with everyone else in her group, that long before this she would pace up the aisle to join some nice young man at the altar. If she has always been told that woman's place is in the home and that marriage is every woman's goal in life, her sense of personal worth plummets.

For a time, both the married and the unmarried girl are likely to think in terms of a job, rather than a career. A few, it is true, look ahead to graduate school and life as professional women, with or without marriage. Whether a woman views her work as a career or simply as a job, however, she could find in it more satisfaction and fulfillment had she looked ahead realistically to this day.

One might well ask, then—as I do—why we continue to ignore the situation that so many women face. When 23 percent do not marry, when 21 percent marry but find their marriage ending with divorce or a premature death, why can we not bring ourselves to look squarely at the subject of working women?



The church acts sometimes as if it thinks that by shutting its eyes and plugging up its ears, it will get rid of the woman question. Such an attitude is beyond understanding in an organization that numbers among its founders a woman.

Many years ago that woman wrote to other women in the Seventh-day Adventist ranks:<sup>17</sup>

We are inexcusable if we allow God-given talents to rust from inaction. Christ asks, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Let us consecrate all that we have and are to Him, believing in His power to save, and having confidence that He will use us as instrumentalities to do His will and glorify His name.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

Since this is an excerpt from research completed in the fall and winter of 1971, some sources and information should perhaps be updated. Few, if any, will insist that the overall picture has changed significantly.

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5. A 1971 Graduate of Walla Walla College with majors in journalism and psychology.
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14. Letter 169, 1900. *Ibid.*, p. 473.
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# Back to the Dollhouse: A Look at Fascinating Womanhood

by Marianne and Jonathan Butler

If you are a wife who wants to improve her marriage, "Next time you are angry with your husband, why not try some childlike mannerisms: stomp your foot, lift your chin high and square your shoulders. . . . Or, beat your fists on your husband's chest . . . saying, for example, 'How can a great big man like you pick on a poor little helpless girl?' . . . The reason children tend to exaggerate is due to their impotence. . . . Therefore, when a woman uses this same method, she gives the man the impression that she also is impotent and helpless and therefore childlike."

Be soft, delicate, submissive and dependent upon your man for his masculine help and protection. Lack any "male aggressiveness, competency, efficiency, fearlessness, strength and *'the ability to kill your own snakes.'*" Acquire a feminine appearance by "*accentuating the difference* between yourself and men, not the similarities." Wear "anything fluffy, lacy, gauzy or elaborate." Include in your wardrobe "chiffon, silk, lace, velvet, satin, fur, angora and organ-die. . . . Avoid such materials as tweeds, herringbones, hard finish woolens, denims, glen plaids, faint dark plaids, pinstripes, shepherd checks and geometrics, since these are materials that men wear."

"Stop mowing the lawn, fixing the roof, painting the fence or repairing the furnace. Stop

*Marianne and Jonathan Butler are living with their young daughter in Lincoln, Nebraska, where Jonathan, a church historian trained at the University of Chicago, teaches in the religion department of Union College.*

doing anything which requires masculine strength, skill or ability. Then, let him do things for you. . . . It is difficult to describe how seriously women rob men of their masculinity by becoming independent. A competent woman stands as a threat to the male ego—to his position and capabilities as a man. When he comes in contact with a capable, efficient woman, well able to get along without him or any other man, he does not feel masculine any longer."

"To be feminine, don't compete with men in anything which requires masculine ability. . . . Don't compete with men for advancement on a job, for higher pay, or greater honors. Don't compete with them in men's subjects. It may be all right to win over a man in English or Social Studies, but you are in trouble if you compete with a man in math, chemistry, public speaking, etc. Don't appear to know more than a man does in world events, the space program, or science or industry. . . . When expressing your viewpoint use words that indicate insight such as 'I feel.' Avoid the words 'I think,' or 'I know.'"\*

If all this smacks of a Victorian tract, it is because that is nearly the case. The author of *Fascinating Womanhood*, from which these quotations come, freely acknowledges that her book was "inspired by a series of booklets published in the 1920's, entitled *The Secrets of Fascinating Womanhood*." Helen B. Andelin, a 55-year-old Mormon mother of eight children, has published a kind of handbook for reviving drooping marriages. Since its publication in 1965, the book has sold over 400,000 hardcover copies.

\*All quotations in the article are taken from Helen B. Andelin, *Fascinating Womanhood*, revised edition (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1965; Bantam Books, 1975).

Mrs. Andelin has also established a Fascinating Womanhood Foundation in Santa Barbara, California, to train teachers in the art of making women into "Domestic Goddesses." In 14 years, 11,000 teachers have been trained and 300,000 women have enrolled in an eight-week, \$15 course. Among the course materials is a \$12.50 kit that includes a Domestic Goddess Planning Notebook for listing household chores and a Love Book for recording the sweet-nothings grateful husbands whisper when their wives become more fascinating.

In a decade of women's lib, consciousness raising and an amendment for equal rights and equal pay for women (a decade not too unlike the 1920s), Mrs. Andelin speaks of "woman's place" in the home and on the pedestal (also reminiscent of the 1920s). Conservative, middle-class housewives eagerly feed on Andelin's counsel, as an alternative to that of Betty Friedan or Kate Millet. And Seventh-day Adventist housewives, as well, seem hungry for the Andelin thesis. Conference retreats and week-night meetings are devoted to putting "sparkle" back into the marriage of Adventist ministers and laymen through Fascinating Womanhood. A well-worn pink paperback of the revised edition rests on many an Adventist end table.

What does *Fascinating Womanhood* offer this receptive audience?

For "a generation of women so disillusioned, disappointed, and unhappy in marriage," *Fascinating Womanhood* is designed to teach how to be loved and adored in marriage. Mrs. Andelin promises that the woman, by herself, can transform her marriage into a heaven on earth by obeying certain laws. She can become "The Ideal Woman," "The Kind of Woman a Man Wants," for "a woman holds within her grasp the possibilities of a heavenly marriage," says Andelin. "She can bring it about independent of any deliberate action on the part of the husband. . . . A woman holds the keys to her own happiness."

*Fascinating Womanhood* adopts a first century chain of being that subordinates woman to man, and infuses it with a nineteenth century romanticism which lifts woman to a pedestal of romantic adoration. Andelin terms this "Celestial Love" and cites as examples the love of John

Alden for Priscilla, Woodrow Wilson for his wife Ellen and Shah Jahan for Mumtaz.

The book complains of the modern effort to replace marital "patriarchy" with "equality" where husbands and wives make "mutual" decisions. Mrs. Andelin finds this to be impractical and unworkable as a family arrangement, for the family can serve only one master. Moreover, "since the man is by nature and tempera-

*"Men never want their women to grow up completely. The ideal wife is a child to be protected and coddled. For ideas on dress, 'visit a little girls' shop.' "*

ment a born leader, he is the logical one to lead. Men have inherent traits of leadership, tend to be decisive and have the courage of their convictions. . . ."

Not only is wifely subservience part of the natural order for Andelin, but a result of biblical injunction as well. "Keeping the man at the head of the family . . . is largely a matter of following God's instruction," Andelin asserts, as she appropriates a number of prooftexts in her behalf: Genesis 3:16 ("thy husband . . . shall rule over thee"), Colossians 3:18 ("wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands"), Ephesians 5:33 ("wife . . . reverence her husband"), 1 Peter 3:1 ("wives, be in subjection to your own husbands"), Ephesians 5:23 ("For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church"). Here Andelin is entirely naive about the question of cultural conditioning in these Jewish, and primarily Pauline Scriptures, while she conveniently ignores possibly the one scripture on the subject that transcends its cultural milieu: Galatians 3:28 ("There is neither male nor female . . . in Christ Jesus").

In any case, *Fascinating Womanhood* makes only expedient use of the *New Testament*. Celestial Love is actually more an offspring of medieval chivalry or Victorian romance than first century biblical marriage. And Andelin displays no biblical prooftexts to support her idea of romantic love. While there are a few notable illustrations of romance in the *Bible*, romantic

love as “a feeling almost like pain,” as “enchantment” and “fascination,” as “the deeper, more spiritual feeling almost like worship,” hardly has a biblical ring.

Andelin relies on the nineteenth century novels of Dickens, Hugo and Thackeray rather than the Bible, to illustrate romantic love. Moreover, her *Celestial Love* appears more at home in the *Book of Mormon* than the *Bible*. The Mormon idea of “celestial marriage” gives men exclusive privilege to the priesthood, and makes women dependent upon men and upon marriage for exaltation in the afterlife, and subordinate to men within the family on this earth. The adoration of woman, itself a dubious concept, comes only as a result of her role as wife and mother.

Another home for *Celestial Love* is fantasy-land. Mrs. Andelin revels in her childhood dreams of the handsome prince seeking her out, then sweeping her away to his kingdom. Snow White and Cinderella were among her favorite stories. In her own fairy tale, “the ideal woman, from a man’s point of view” is what she calls “angela human.” Her “human qualities” include femininity, radiant happiness, fresh radiant health and childlikeness. Her “angelic qualities” are that she understands men, has deep inner happiness, has a worthy character, and is a domestic goddess. “The human side of woman fascinates, amuses, captivates and enchants man. It arouses a desire to protect and shelter. . . . The angelic side of woman arouses in man a feeling approaching worship. These qualities bring peace and happiness to a man.”

What the fantasy leads to is a kind of phoniness. On the one hand, the woman plays the role of a petulant child in order to manipulate her man, and on the other, she assumes a mystic superiority to inspire devotion.

In pouting, appearing downcast, stomping her foot, the woman adopts so-called childlike behavior. (Andelin actually applies Matthew 18:3 here: “Except ye . . . become as little children. . .”). One questions whether such actions are appropriate for a child, much less an adult. And Andelin warns, “some of these actions may seem unnatural to you, at first. If they do, you will have to be an actress to succeed in childlike anger, even if only a ham actress. But remember, you will be launching an acting career which will

save you pain, tension, frustration, a damaged relationship and perhaps even save a marriage. . . .” Men never want their women to grow up completely. The ideal wife is a child to be protected and coddled. To get ideas on how to dress, “visit a little girls’ shop.”

And if such hypocrisy can save marriages, why not a little of the double-standard as well? “A man wants a woman of fine character, one he can place on a pedestal and hold in highest

*“Paradoxically, Mrs. Andelin would confine most women to domesticity, while she herself maintains a booming career, writing, lecturing, counseling.”*

regard,” comments Andelin. “Not only does he expect her to be good, but he expects her to be better than he is. He hopes that she will be kinder, more patient, forgiving and unselfish than he, and hold more valiantly to principle.” Such a charade not only severs men and women from their humanity, but seems to remove them from basic Christianity, too.

But playing the role brings its own reward. Submissive, infantile, pert, the woman receives handsome payoffs from a solicitous husband. The bread cast upon the waters comes back buttered. India’s Mumtaz and Shah Jahan were of a culture where women were inferior, dependent and “kept their place” in the feminine sphere, without demanding equality with man. “And yet,” exclaims Mrs. Andelin, “her husband gave to her the greatest token of love that man has ever given to a woman, in the Taj Mahal.” Such booty evidently makes a life of confinement in the golden cage all worthwhile for the Fascinating Woman.

Her life in the world is lived only vicariously through her husband. As a Fascinating Woman she foregoes any notion of developing her own potential apart from her husband: “The Domestic Goddess . . . is not looking for some challenging achievement in the world of men for fulfillment. . . . A threat to the man’s position occurs when a woman pursues other interests such as the development of talents. . . . A girl

should not center her education around a career, in which she becomes independent. . . . She will just naturally be tempted to use her knowledge at some time or another." It is a man's world and "there doesn't seem to be any way that a woman can step into the man's world . . . without losing some of her womanliness." Fascinating Women find "their 'bluebird of happiness' lies within their own walls."

Paradoxically, Mrs. Andelin would confine most women to domesticity, while she herself maintains a booming career, writing, lecturing, holding seminars, counseling, earning money and promoting her Fascinating Womanhood Foundation. She sees no conflict between her ideology and this life-style, and does not admit that it may be actually this *career* that provides her a sense of real fulfillment. And there is the further irony that her husband has given up his dental practice to manage the affairs of her empire—hardly the formula prescribed in *Fascinating Womanhood*.

Andelin assumes that most women work because they want a diversion or desire luxuries, when in actual fact most women work out of necessity. What relevance does her book have for the majority of working women?

And little account is taken of the woman who is widowed or divorced. If she has religiously avoided the development of her capabilities, how does she then support herself and the brood of children she may have acquired? Even Mrs. Andelin admits that husbands would like the assurance that their wives can take on "masculine" responsibilities if absolutely necessary. Yet the Fascinating Woman spends her life leaning on her husband, allowing him to earn the living and open the doors, while her independence atrophies.

Within her domestic sphere, the woman does attain a kind of independence: the burden of salvaging a less than ideal marriage rests on

her alone. She is to expect nothing of the man, as she takes total responsibility for restoring the marriage. Such a game and charitable attitudes on the part of either marital partner may produce good results, but Mrs. Andelin insures a guilt-producing element when she insists, "If a man does not love his wife with his heart and soul, it is the wife's fault."

Indeed, a pronounced attitude of female self-depreciation appears throughout the Andelin book. While men are born leaders, decisive and possess the courage of their convictions, "women . . . tend to vacillate, and lack the qualities of good leadership." Mrs. Andelin holds working wives responsible for "violence in the streets and on the campus, drug abuse, and rebellion against social customs," and confesses, "the things we women admire in each other are rarely attractive to men. . . . Women, especially, are inclined to be selfish."

Such self-hatred is matched by the Fascinating Woman's underlying contempt for men. The saccharine role-playing of these women actually seems to candy-coat hidden hostility toward the male sex. The paramount fact about men is how different they are from women, "so different in nature and temperament that it is almost as though they came from another planet." Mrs. Andelin declares that "*to be loved is more important to a woman and to be admired is more important to a man.*" But in Andelin's characterization man's need for admiration reflects in his fragile male ego and easily injured pride, especially in the face of a competent woman. And does she not show some contempt in saying, "He has a right to be himself, to be weak, lazy, to neglect his duty or even to fail."

All in all, if the vogue enjoyed by *Fascinating Womanhood* indicates the way women view their marriages, it is a sad commentary. But perhaps *Fascinating Womanhood* has more appeal to a generation of older wives than to young wives. If so, one can take heart for the future and the feasibility of matrimony.

# Merikay and the Pacific Press: Money, Courts and Church Authority

by Tom Dybdahl

*The events and documents reviewed below raise important issues for the church. It is hoped that publication of the article will stimulate discussion of these issues by persons of varying convictions.*

—The Board of Editors

On May 22, 1972, Merikay Silver went to her boss to ask for a raise. Her salary for editorial work at the Pacific Press Publishing Association was not sufficient for her needs.

The Press manager, Leonard F. Bohner, refused her request. It was the beginning of a series of events and legal actions that are still unresolved after more than three years.

Mrs. Silver went to work for the Press in the spring of 1972. She had not completed her college degree, but because of her talents and previous accomplishments she was hired in the editorial department. She did the work of a book editor, but her official title was that of editorial assistant.

When her first paycheck arrived, she was surprised by the small amount. From her discussions with the Press, she had expected to receive about \$600 per month. Instead, she received about \$400. Then, when her husband, Kim, lost his job, they ran into serious financial problems.

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She decided to speak with the manager and try to do something about it.

So, on May 22 she went with a co-worker in the book department, Max Phillips, and presented her case. Specifically, she asked for the "same compensation and benefits as a married man doing the same work." She had two reasons. First, the General Conference had voted recently that women were entitled to head of household status, and the benefits that accompanied it. Second, a Federal law required equal pay for equal work.

But neither argument carried weight with Elder Bohner. "If we gave head of household status to you," he said, "then all those women out in the factory would want it." And the meeting ended with his firm statement that Mrs. Silver would never receive "a man's wages."

Two days later, a friend and co-worker of Mrs. Silver's, Lorna Tobler, met with Elder Bohner and William L. Muir, the Press treasurer, and asked about equal job opportunities for women at the Press. Mrs. Tobler was the secretary to Lawrence Maxwell, editor of the *Signs of the Times*, and had worked at the Press for many years. She drew specific attention to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the section of the law that prohibits discrimination in hiring and payment practices. But the manager was unwilling to change his position.

Both women, however, refused to give up. They believed that current policies were unfair, and determined they would not be silent. Mrs. Tobler had several more visits with Elder

Bohner, yet there seemed to be no progress. She made several suggestions in a May 31 letter about how women could be better utilized at the Press, but received no response. She decided to appeal to the next higher authority.

In July, Mrs. Tobler wrote to Elder R. R. Bietz, then a vice-president of the General Conference and the chairman of the board of the Press. She pointed out that although the General Conference wage guidelines entitled Mrs. Silver and others to head of household status, the Press refused to comply. He replied that if the Press was not in full harmony with the policy, a solution would be found.

Mrs. Silver also wrote to Elder Bietz and enclosed several statements from the writings of Ellen White on the subject of women working for denominational institutions. She felt that there was nothing in the writings to justify the payment of lesser wages to women, but he replied that he didn't think there was a single statement "which would give anyone the impression that women should have the same wages as the men," although he said he was not opposed to the idea.

In August, Mrs. Tobler met personally with the General Conference President, Robert H. Pierson, as well as with Elder Bietz. Both expressed confidence in the leadership at the Press, and gave assurances that something would be done. At the meeting with Elder Bietz, he asked that she not distribute copies of the Title VII law to other women employees.

More weeks passed, with more correspondence. The women gave specific examples of inequities and problems, and continued to receive general assurances. There was a board meeting at the Press on October 13, which Mrs. Tobler asked to address, but Elder Bietz demurred, saying the agenda was full.

By November, nothing had changed. The women had spoken to their superiors—all the way to the top of the church—without apparent success. They were unwilling to simply sit and wait any longer. On November 7, both women filed complaints with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC).

About this time, an investigator from the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor came to inspect Press employment records, in response to an anonymous complaint. He also interviewed a number of workers.

As a result, Mrs. Silver received over \$1,000 on her first paycheck of 1973. But she felt that it was insufficient back pay compensation.

When she checked into the matter she found that the figures supplied by the Press management to the investigator did not coincide with the figures on her paychecks. She spoke with the investigator, and the following day he returned, and after copying some wage forms conferred with Press management.

A few hours later, Mrs. Silver received a call from the investigator. He told her that he felt management had withheld information from him, and that if she wanted, the Department of Labor would go to court in her behalf. But she did not want to make an immediate decision. So she consulted with her friend Joan K. Bradford, an attorney who had previously advised her. Mrs. Silver decided that rather than waiting for a government agency to act, she would act.

And so, on January 31, 1973, eight months after her original request for a raise, Merikay Silver filed a civil action against her employer, the Pacific Press Publishing Association. It was filed as a class action on behalf of herself and other women similarly situated.\*

Civil Action #C-73  
0168 CBR was a simple discrimination case at the outset. The briefs filed by Mrs. Bradford on behalf of her client were primarily an attempt to demonstrate that the Press was violating the Title VII section of the Civil Rights Act. She charged that the Press had violated the law in four specific ways:

- 1) Having a pay scale based on sex without regard to any standard of job performance;
- 2) Paying women employees below the job category in which work was actually done;

\*Since then the legal aspects of the case have become more complicated. Now there are three separate suits involved. 1) *Merikay Silver v. PPPA*. This was the first suit filed, and is now due for trial in October, 1975. While Mrs. Tobler is not named, she has participated and assisted with the suit. 2) *EEOC v. PPPA*. This suit deals with alleged retaliation, and was filed on September 20, 1974. 3) *Department of Labor v. PPPA*. This was filed in the summer of 1973, and deals with violations of the Equal Pay Act. Since all the suits involve the same basic issue, they are considered together, and quotes from the briefs are related to the issues they involve, and not separated according to case. The EEOC suit was tried in March and the decision is now being appealed by the Press.

- 3) Denying women substantial fringe benefits based on head of household status;
- 4) Retaliating against women employees in an effort to make them abandon any legal remedies for their employment problems.

*“Merikay Silver filed a civil action against the Pacific Press. It was a class action on behalf of herself and other women similarly situated.”*

The initial briefs were short on specifics, but after studying the records, Mrs. Bradford was able to point to particular problems. The Press had six job categories, ranging from managerial and supervisory to hourly office workers. In the three higher-paying categories, there were only two females, and these were paid well below their male counterparts. In the three lower-paying categories, the only male employees were students.

In addition to this, rent allowances and a year-end bonus further widened the gap between men and women. The rent allowance paid by the Press was a flat figure which had no relation to actual rent paid—only to sex and marital status. The overall effect of this was to produce differences of up to \$1,500 per year in the pay of persons in the same category doing the same work. The year-end bonuses provided additional differentials of \$1,000 or more.

The briefs also argued strongly in favor of the suit’s being a class action, that is, a suit on behalf of all women employees of the Press. Mrs. Silver did not want to appear to be suing simply for personal gain, and she felt strongly that she was fighting for a principle that would benefit all women employees.

The suit asked specifically that there be a preliminary and permanent injunction restraining the Press from discriminating against women, and from “harassment” of those who sought legal remedies for their employment problems. For Mrs. Silver and the members of the class action, the suit requested back pay including fringe benefits, and punitive damages of \$500,000. In addition, it was asked that the Press pay personal expenses and lawyer’s fees for the plaintiff.

Mrs. Silver did not expect the case to continue very long. As she wrote in her description of the situation: “We . . . thought that management would attempt to settle such a suit in a friendly way and correct the situation at the Press.” But the Press had a rather different view.

As soon as the suit was filed, everything changed. What had been a matter for general discussion, and a cause of annoyance to the Press, was now much more than that. It could no longer be ignored.

The Press answered the charges through its lawyer, Donald McNeil, on March 26, 1973. They admitted that “during a portion of the time . . . Pacific Press did not pay to plaintiff funds to which she was entitled as a head of household allowance.” But they denied all other discriminatory practices. The Press also argued against the class action because “many if not most of the members of the alleged class do not wish to make use of the civil courts to determine disputes.”

Meanwhile, Mrs. Tobler and Elder Bietz exchanged more letters. He deplored the use of the courts, while she argued that there was no other recourse; that the matter had been continually postponed and put off. “All the time this problem was building up,” she wrote, “when did the brethren ever invite sisters in and ask them to help work out a solution? When, in fact, did they do this to help solve any problem? At the last board meeting, you felt there was too much on the agenda to permit me even to address the brethren. As it turned out, nearly the whole time was devoted to this matter—with not a single woman present! . . . Is it any wonder there is a communication gap?”

She went on to suggest that a group of leading brethren and concerned sisters meet to work out together “a schedule of step-by-step corrections over a period of time that would be workable financially. You would find us as conscientious and dedicated to the Lord’s work as any of the brethren on your committees. It may be that you would have difficulty convincing the brethren that this is not a come-down from their positions of authority. But that is precisely the type of unfortunate attitude that has brought us into the present dilemma.” But such a meeting was never held.



By this time, rumors circulated around the Press as to what was going on. Many employees knew that the Press was being sued, but did not know the specifics. Mrs. Silver felt that she ought to present her side of the matter. So in the middle of June, 1973, she sent some material to each of the women workers at the Press.

Enclosed was a letter explaining her position. She told the women she had filed a class action so she would not be accused of suing the church personally, or for personal gain. The suit was a last resort, she said, and came after trying to work "through the channels" for many months. Mrs. Silver said she had received two offers of settlement, but had refused both because they required her to drop the class action.

"I don't believe I should accept the back pay money offered to me for myself alone while you are denied it unless you decide for yourself that you don't want the back pay," she wrote. She invited the women to a meeting with her lawyer so that they would "know what the law and the lawsuit are about before you decide."

The material also contained two letters from her attorney, Mrs. Bradford. One explained the class action and what it meant. The other was a copy of a letter written to Elder Bohner, the Press manager, outlining the Federal laws she believed he was violating.

But there was not a great deal of support from the women of the Press. About 50 attended the meeting, yet only a few were willing to give open support to the suit.\* Legal matters continued to develop slowly. On November 1, 1973, Elder Bietz filed an affidavit regarding the class action. He argued that "virtually all" of the employees of the Press wish not "to have their work affected by this litigation nor to take part in it."

This affidavit was supported by nine pages of petitions with 188 employee signatures. The petition was entitled "A Petition to the Management and Board of Directors of the Pacific Press Publishing Association: by the loyal group of employees whose signatures are affixed." The petition deplored the suit and urged management to retain the best legal counsel to settle the

\*Later on, when the court sent out notices about the action, 46 women employees at the press joined the class either by returning the court notice marked "yes" or not mailing the notice at all.

action. It stated that the current lawsuit and the actions associated with it were "a threat with hurtful and detrimental consequences to every loyal employee of the Pacific Press." The petition expressed concern that the suit would increase costs and result in a loss of sales, and might "even effect the ultimate closing of the doors of the institution."

In addition, the petition went on to state that the undersigned could not "condone a judgment which would favor one group or person above another, even though that group or person may feel their cause to be just." It concluded with the words: "Signed by the loyal majority."

Mrs. Silver's attorney responded with further arguments that the suit remain a class action. She argued that many had signed the petition through fear, and others had obviously misunderstood what the suit involved, since they thought it would favor one group or person over another.

In support of her argument, Mrs. Bradford filed three affidavits: one from Mrs. Tobler, and two from other Press employees. One woman wrote that many others were sympathetic to the suit but were "afraid to voice their opinions in public" because they "would be called names and have fellow workers turn their backs on them, and be embarrassed in public, as has happened with Lorna and Merikay." She further stated that since the petition had the word "loyal" in it three times, "anybody not signing would look disloyal."

After hearing the arguments, the judge certified the case to proceed as a class action. (This still stands, although it could be changed before the trial.)

Throughout the experience Mrs. Tobler had been a strong support to Mrs. Silver. As the months had passed, however, she found herself in a more and more difficult position. Her husband, Gustav, had been working in Mountain View as the editor of the German edition of the *Signs of the Times, Zeichen der Zeit*. But as the German-speaking audience in the United States dwindled, it was decided that he should edit the missionary magazine from the press in Hamburg. In late 1972, he left to take up his new duties there. Mrs. Tobler did not accompany him.

A major reason she stayed in California was

that she was deeply involved in the events at the Press and felt that she should stay until there was some resolution. As the months passed, the Tobler separation became the subject of considerable discussion. The officers of the Euro-Africa Division became concerned, and asked Elder Tobler to bring his wife to Hamburg.

On October 12, 1973, the Press treasurer, William L. Muir, handed Mrs. Tobler a letter informing her that her employment was "terminated" on or before October 31, 1973, "in order that you may return to Germany with

*"The Press argued that since a church should be free to deal with its ministers in any way it chooses, the government should have no interest in the case."*

your husband." The reason given was that the Euro-Africa Division was insistent that she join her husband.

Upon receipt of the letter, Mrs. Tobler asked Mr. Muir if there was any criticism of her work. He informed her there was not. Neither she nor her husband had been consulted before the letter was written.

One week later, on the 19th, she wrote a letter to the Press management asking them to rescind the action. She stated that it would "certainly be viewed by the law as a reprisal, and I myself can explain it in no other way."

In addition, she commented briefly on her marital situation. "Ordinarily, I feel no particular obligation to keep people informed on the state of our marriage, but under the circumstances I will tell you that Gustav and I think we have a great thing going. We wouldn't trade our marriage for anybody else's. We feel that unity of heart and mind is more important than any other kind. Sometimes this sort of unity calls for temporary physical separation. . . . It has not been easy for either of us, and we have been looking forward to the day in the near future when I would be able to go, too." That same day she filed charges with the EEOC that she had been discharged as an act of retaliation for her support of Mrs. Silver.

On October 26, the Press board adopted a resolution clarifying the use of the word "ter-

minated." They argued that the word had been misconstrued, and that the intent of the letter was to inform Mrs. Tobler that her services at the Press were not indispensable, and that she was free to join her husband whenever she wished. In any case, she was not fired, and continued her job.

On December 1, 1973, the president of the Pacific Union Conference, W. J. Blacker, replaced Elder Bohner as manager of the Press. Soon afterwards, he informed Mrs. Tobler that the Euro-Africa Division was absolutely insistent that she go to Hamburg to be with her husband. He said that some action would be taken, but gave no specifics.

About this time, an associate secretary of the General Conference Publishing Department, Bruce M. Wickwire, became involved in the case. He had been disturbed a great deal by the suit and felt that Mrs. Silver was in the wrong to pursue it. On December 10, he sent out the following letter to the General Managers of the three North American Publishing Houses.

"Dear Friends,

RE: ARTICLES AND MANUSCRIPTS  
BY MERIKAY SILVER—PACIFIC PRESS  
PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION EMPLOYEE.

Due to the fact that Merikay is presently at variance with the church,

And because, by her tendency to ignore Christian counsel,

And inasmuch as she has involved the PPPA in civil court litigation,

It is hereby requested that before any further production or promotion of her works is done, counsel be sought from General Conference administration and the General Conference Publishing Department, this request to apply until further notice.

Thanking you for your cooperation."

No copy was sent to Mrs. Silver.

Nevertheless, she heard of the letter, and on January 17 filed retaliation charges with the EEOC. The letter, however, was not a ban on any further publication; it merely recommended that General Conference officials be consulted. Although existing contracts were honored, nothing written by Merikay Silver since then has been accepted for publication by any of these presses.

Court cases do not just disappear. Eventually, they must be resolved in some manner. But months and months went by, and little seemed to be happening. Legal arguments were filed, meetings were held, yet the case continued.

After Mrs. Silver's lawyer filed the initial discrimination charges, the Press had responded only in a general way. They admitted underpaying Mrs. Silver, but denied all other discriminatory acts.

But it was not to be a simple case of discrimination against women. After some initial work by Mr. McNeil, the Press hired as its chief lawyer, Malcolm T. Dungan, a constitutional lawyer with the San Francisco firm of Brobeck, Phleger, and Harrison. It became his job to define and defend the position that the Press would take. Under his direction, the case was moved into another arena: religious liberty.

The basic argument raised by the Press was that this was in fact not primarily a case of discrimination against women, but rather a case of whether the government had the right to become involved in the internal affairs of the church. The entire problem was termed "a church controversy which ought to be resolved within the church and according to the doctrine of the church."

The reasoning went like this: The Pacific Press is a part of the church, and all church workers are "ministers." The case was, therefore, a controversy between the church and one of its ministers, Merikay Silver. As the brief stated: "Just as the initial freedom of selecting a minister is a matter of church administration and government, so are the functions which accompany such a selection. . . . Matters of church government and administration are beyond the purview of civil authorities." Since a church should be free to deal with its ministers in any way it chooses, the argument ran, the government should have no interest in the case.

A main thread of the argument was that it is contrary to church policy that members resort to the use of the courts for any reason. By continuing her suit, Mrs. Silver was "at variance with the church" and "a prime candidate for early disfellowshipping." Therefore, any actions taken against her (such as the letter to Publishing House managers about publishing her

writings) were not "retaliation," but rather the means chosen by the church to deal with an errant minister.

However logical the argument was, it led to some problems. First of all, it put the church into the position of making an argument that could easily be understood as the church's insisting that its constitutional privileges gave it the right to discriminate against women. Of course, church leaders denied that they wished to discriminate, they merely wanted to assert that the government had no right to interfere in any way with church employment policies. But as Mrs. Tobler put it: "How ironic that having borrowed from worldly industry the practice of exploiting female labor, we should now reject the correction of that abuse on the grounds that we're Christians."

Another problem involved the definition of the structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Since the Press was a General Conference institution, and the General Conference had become involved in the case, it was necessary to establish where authority lay within the church. In order to do this, the briefs went beyond merely quoting the *Church Manual* and its definition of church order.

Rather, the Press' briefs said that from a legal standpoint, there are only two forms of church government: congregational and representative, or hierarchical. Since the Adventist church was assuredly not congregational (that is, with complete autonomy in every local congregation), it was clearly of the "representative or hierarchical variety." The church was described as having "orders of ministry," with different levels of authority, and a first minister at the top. In his affidavit, Elder Pierson referred to himself as the "first minister" of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Mrs. Silver's lawyer charged that this represented a major change from the traditional Adventist view, and that church leaders were taking upon themselves powers which they did not properly possess. She argued that these legal briefs promoted ideas contrary to official positions as stated in the *Church Manual*.

But in the reply brief, the Press further defended this view by stating that "although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman

Catholic viewpoint, and the term 'hierarchy' was used in a pejorative sense to refer to the papal form of church governance, that attitude on the church's part was nothing more than a manifestation of widespread anti-papery among conservative Protestant denominations in the early part of this century and the latter part of the last, and which has now been consigned to the historical trash heap so far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned."

Such arguments underscored the fact that much of the case involved theology. The lawyers had become involved in some complex and important church issues. What emerged as the most important single point was this: Is there a legitimate Christian use of the courts?

From the beginning, some had simply written off the case as wrong because the women involved had sued the Pacific Press. Indeed, the words of Paul are very clear: "When one of you has a grievance against a brother, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? . . . I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no man among you wise enough to decide between members of the brotherhood, but brother goes to law against brother, and that before un-believers? To have lawsuits at all with one another is defeat for you. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?" 1 Corinthians 6:1, 6, 7 RSV

In their defense, the women argued that they had followed the biblical plan for dealing with problems as outlined in Matthew 18. That is, they had gone to the particular brethren involved, first privately, then with others. When they received no help, they had gone to higher authorities. Only as a last resort had they appealed to law. But even this did not solve the problem; nowhere did the New Testament say: "If other means fail, then you may go to law."

This issue had come up regularly in the church's handling of the case. It had been the primary factor in the letter about Mrs. Silver's writings, in which she was termed "at variance with the church" and having a "tendency to ignore Christian counsel" for continuing the suit.

The issue of using the courts also figured in the next major event of the case, that of the Press' annual constituency meeting. Since the

Press carries on business in the state of California and is organized as a nonprofit membership corporation, it must hold an annual meeting of members, usually called a constituency meeting. Traditionally, Press employees applied for membership in the constituency after a period of employment. Applicants were elected en masse by acclamation.

At the 1974 annual meeting, held May 13, there were 58 applicants for membership in the Press constituency. One of them was Mrs. Silver. For the first time in memory, Elders Blacker and Bietz decided that the election of members would not be en masse and by voice acclamation. Instead, the vote would be done individually and by secret ballot. A tally sheet listed the name of each applicant, with spaces to be marked for or against. Of the 58 applicants, 57 were accepted. Mrs. Silver was not.

In defending the action, Press management argued that if Mrs. Silver's name had come up with the others, the meeting might have been disrupted and confused. They believed that many members would oppose her application, and thus cause her public shame.

Mrs. Silver, on the other hand, pointed out that she had not asked for and did not want special treatment. She felt that it merely amounted to an easy way to deny her membership in the constituency of the Press, and filed retaliation charges with the EEOC.

*"The lawyers had become involved in some complex and important church issues. What emerged as the most important single point was this: Is there a legitimate Christian use of the courts?"*

Then, the theological arguments that had been present all along were brought to the foreground early this year, after the case had dragged along for more than two years.

On February 14, 1975, the General Conference Executive Committee met in a special Friday morning session to discuss the lawsuit. There is some dispute over what was said at the meeting, but the action that emerged was very

clear. The committee recommended that the board of the Press “discontinue the employment” of Mrs. Silver and Mrs. Tobler.

The General Conference action was entitled “Counsel to Pacific Press on Church Discipline.” It began by stating that scripture teaches that Christians are not to take fellow Christians before civil courts for settlement of even “legitimate grievances” and went on to quote from Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 6. It also quoted Ellen White that those who involve the brethren in lawsuits are “piercing the wounds of Christ and putting Him to an open shame.” (5T 243)

The action stated that “whereas Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler have sued the Seventh-day Adventist Church; and whereas despite the church’s patient and sincere efforts to remove the causes for dissatisfaction and misunderstanding, Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler have continued at variance with the church and unresponsive to spiritual counsel: VOTED, that the General Conference Committee, with deep regret but with awareness that employees of church institutions must meet the highest standards in adherence to Bible teachings and fidelity to church authority, reluctantly recommends to the PPPA board that Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler be discontinued from church employment.” It also recommended that their local church boards be appraised of the action.

On Wednesday, February 19, the Press board met, and by secret ballot voted to discontinue the employment of both women, effective the 21st. The women were notified by letters post-marked February 20, and were also informed of the monetary settlement they would be given for services rendered.

The EEOC immediately applied for a temporary restraining order on behalf of Mrs. Silver and Mrs. Tobler to prohibit the Press from firing them until the *EEOC vs. Pacific Press* trial. The request was granted, and the women were reinstated by court order to await the trial.

The trial was held at the end of March. It provided the fullest airing of the theological question on civil suits, and pointed up some of the complexities involved.

In its briefs, the Press had stated that the church could not tolerate “members to bring

church disputes into civil courts.” In an earlier affidavit, Elder Blacker had testified that “it is a matter of utmost gravity for a member to take a dispute with another member, or with the Church, before civil authorities.” In his affidavit, Elder Neal Wilson, General Conference vice-president for North America, had written that “one of the teachings of the church is that where differences of opinion exist or where there is a grievance, these should be settled within the church and not in civil or criminal courts. . . . This is to expose the church, which is the body of Christ, to open shame.”

But the issue was not quite that clear. For one thing, while there existed some consensus that church members should not sue one another or the Church, the *Church Manual* makes no mention of any doctrine or teaching on that point.\* Thus, there was no statement that such action would warrant any church discipline.

Some of this ambiguity had been pointed out earlier in affidavits filed on behalf of Mrs. Silver. Two Seventh-day Adventist lawyers had stated that there was “no tenet of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which forbids members to use the courts of law for redress of grievances between members and nonmembers, between members and other members, or between members and the church or any institution of the church.” Even further, they had stated they believed it was false to say that “the use of the court is viewed as a matter which is not permitted a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

For another thing, Mrs. Silver’s lawyer argued that the church had not always been consistent in this matter. In particular, she pointed to a case involving the Central California Conference, in which Elder Blacker and other leaders had some involvement.

A Seventh-day Adventist dentist, Dr. Earl E. Brenneise, rented offices in a building owned by the Central California Conference. When there

\*Since this article was written, at the recent General Conference session in Vienna the following reason for disfellowshipping was added to the *Church Manual*:

“7. Instigating or continuing legal action against other church members or against the church or any of its organizations or institutions, contrary to biblical and Ellen G. White counsels.”

was a misunderstanding over the lease, the Conference sued Dr. Brenneise. He then brought a cross action for declaratory relief, and won.

Prior to the court's decision, however, Dr. Brenneise had written to Elder Blacker, then president of the Pacific Union Conference, to ask for an internal church hearing. Elder Blacker responded by saying that the incident was "unfortunate, of course . . . it appears I should do nothing more regarding your letter, and we will hold everything pending until the court renders its decision."

*"Do we oppose the Roman Catholic form of church governance, or was that merely an expression of past times now consigned to the 'historical trash heap?'"*

After the court decided favorably for Dr. Brenneise, he was still willing to have the matter heard by a church organization. Over a two-and-one-half year period, he wrote to Elder Blacker several times, asking to be heard by a Seventh-day Adventist group and informed of the reason civil action had been brought against him. He wrote numerous letters to the General Conference president and the vice-president for North America, to no avail.

In addition to this particular suit, it was brought out in testimony that there were a considerable number of suits involving church members and church institutions. These made it difficult, the plaintiffs argued, for the church to affirm that in reality it had a firm objection to litigation.

After five days of hearings, the judge issued his decision. He ruled that the women be reinstated in their jobs under the same conditions that had prevailed during the two weeks prior to their firing, but that they need not be given editorial work.

The decision briefly recounted the facts of the entire controversy. The judge agreed that the Press was a religious publishing house, with the right to hire only "members in good standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

But he found that the Press "sought to terminate the employment of Tobler and Silver

because they had opposed practices they believed unlawful . . . and because they made charges, testified, and assisted and participated in investigations and proceedings. . . ." He ruled that since the Press was not exempt from complying with the Title VII provisions of the Civil Rights Act on the basis of the First Amendment, this action constituted "an unlawful employment practice."

The injunction was to remain in force until one of two things happened. Either the *Silver vs. PPPA* suit was settled, or until either woman was no longer a member "in good standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

The Press appealed the judge's decision in favor of the EEOC. In addition, they applied for a stay of injunction pending appeal, and this was granted. It did not alter any part of the judge's conclusions concerning the injunction, but it allowed the Press to terminate the employment of the women without running the risk of being cited for contempt of court—until the appeal on the *EEOC vs. PPPA* case is heard. The *Silver vs. PPPA* case remains to be tried. Meanwhile, Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler are no longer employees of the Pacific Press.

One major question through the whole episode is why the case has not been settled out of court. Both sides have expressed a desire to see the issue resolved. Why does it still go on?

While each side blames the other, there are some areas of agreement. The Press has agreed to make a monetary settlement with Mrs. Silver and her lawyer, Mrs. Bradford. In addition, they have agreed to back pay for women who may have been discriminated against while working at the Press. They have agreed to set up a panel to monitor the employment practices of the Press and make sure that they take steps to rectify the problems of the past.

But two major areas of difference remain. One, the Press is not willing to make all the across-the-board administrative changes that are being requested. To specific suggestions that the Press open up new job categories to women, or hire more women for management positions, the response has been that these things "are being worked on" and will be achieved as rapidly as possible.

But the most important difference centers on

the issue of who will monitor the changes. The women have argued that it is necessary for some representatives not employed by the church to monitor the process of change. Since the Press feels that government involvement in church affairs is the central issue, it has taken the position that no information of any kind regarding its employment practices can be given to anyone not designated by its board. The plaintiffs feel they cannot rely on the impartial judgment of the Press management to correct inequities, and thus the suit remains deadlocked.

Can any good thing come out of all this? At present, the answer seems to be a qualified maybe.

In the beginning, the primary issue was discrimination against women. Since that time, some changes have been made. The General Conference has adopted the "equal pay for equal work" concept, without regard to sex, and is encouraging other church institutions to do so.

The Press has also made some changes. It has equalized the rent allowance for single and married men, and raised the rent allowance for women. It has increased the base pay of some women, and made a number of lump sum back payments, although not on a systematic basis. On the other hand, the Press has not opened up some job categories to women. Nor have any women been hired for management positions since the suit began.

Yet, the church must beware of the temptation to be more concerned with its image than with practicing justice. Some of the letters written to Mrs. Silver and Mrs. Tobler by the

brethren show much more concern that this matter not "get outside" or be taken "to law" than that the wrongs be righted immediately.

Secondly, the suit has forced two important theological issues to the foreground: the nature of the church and the position it will take with regard to lawsuits among members.

Is the Seventh-day Adventist Church hierarchical? If so, in what sense? What is the relative authority of various "ministers?" Do we have a theological aversion to the Roman Catholic form of church governance, or was that merely an expression of past times now consigned to the "historical trash heap?"

What is the church's position on lawsuits? The Press argued that suing another church member or a church institution is contrary to Adventist beliefs, but the evidence shows that it has been done and is being done. Is it proper for church authorities to rule that a particular suit is out of order, while those initiated by a church conference or institution are acceptable?

The *Silver vs. PPPA* suit is scheduled for trial sometime in October, if there is no settlement or postponement. After that there may be appeals. The matter has gone on for over three years. A great deal of money and time have been spent. Two competent women workers have been fired. And the end is not in sight.

But even a court decision will not settle the issue. That can only come when both employers and employees, in our church institutions, make the search for what is fundamentally right the basis of their relationship. As Gustav Tobler said early on: "Whatever the cost may be, fairness and justice can only bring blessing in their train."

# Divorce in the New Testament

Review by Walter Douglas

*The New Testament Logia on Divorce: A Study of Their Interpretation from Erasmus to Milton*

by Norskov V. Olsen

Tubingen: J. G. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 161 pp., Brooch DM30-; Leinen DM 36-.

Even the most irreligious person expects religion to be relevant for morality. Many feel that this is the only area for which it may still be relevant. The very condemnation of the church's hesitancy and carefulness about issues such as marriage and divorce shows that in some quarters the church is expected to be outspoken about these things.

An institution that provides a system of ultimate meaning and interpretation can hardly avoid being linked to experiences and prescriptions of ethical conduct. Moral standards often form the channel by means of which Christianity can give finite expression to its system of ultimate meaning. Through these moral standards and the quality of commitment to a particular moral system, Christians have hoped that their faith or system of ultimate meaning would become more visible and, therefore, accessible to others.

*The New Testament Logia on Divorce* claims "that the New Testament teaching on marriage and divorce has experienced a deep influence upon Western civilization." And the subject matter of the book is precisely "a history of the interpretation of the New Testament divorce

texts during the Reformation." Beginning with the late medieval church, Norskov V. Olsen, president of Loma Linda University, focuses his attention on the historical background of the divorce problem and the biblical and theological discussions it created.

Olsen's first section, "The Interpretation of Erasmus and Roman Catholic Reaction," is intensely interesting, especially his discussion of the development of the sacramental idea of marriage. The church's teaching that marriage was a sacrament was of decisive importance in the discussions among the medieval theologians. The sacraments, it was taught, were saving powers, not merely strengthening powers as in Protestantism. As such, they were thought to have a hidden force of their own, mediated to all those who do not resist the grace; this authoritative teaching had an enormous influence on the medieval theologians who sought to draw together the New Testament teachings on the subject.

The influence of the Christian humanists on the interpretation of the biblical passages on divorce is particularly striking. Notice must be given of the fact that this influence coincided with the beginning of the decline of papal authority in the Middle Ages and the dawn of the Renaissance Reformation era.

The second division of the book focuses on an evaluation of "Martin Luther and His Associates." Here the author points to the main principles in Luther's work, which laid the foundation for the Protestant Reformation, and notes that the Reformer's understanding and interpretation of the sacrament of marriage and the question of divorce were derived also from those same principles. Olsen refers to Luther's *The Babylon-*

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*ian Captivity of the Church* as the treatise in which his first comments on the New Testament Logia on divorce appear. According to Olsen, he argues against the contemporary Roman Catholic teaching that marriage is a sacrament and supports his point of view through an exegetical study of the divorce texts based on Erasmus's Greek New Testament.

After a fairly lengthy discussion of Luther's teaching, Olsen then presents the teachings of some leading theologians and reformers of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, both on the Continent and in England.

The author presents Melancthon as believing marriage to be "the legitimate and indissoluble union of one man with one woman." Melancthon therefore warns: "Let married people know that it is the will of God that marriage ought to be on one man and one woman lawfully and indissolubly united, and that indisputably those who furnish cause for divorce as by adultery or desertion, commit sin."

Among the reformed theologians, Olsen selects Zwingli and his successor, Bullinger. Olsen notes that for Zwingli adultery was not the only ground for divorce and that the reformer denied the Catholic concept that married people could not be divorced for any cause. Zwingli suggested that such reasons as sorcery, treachery and parricide are legitimate grounds for divorce.

However, Olsen makes it clear that Zwingli did not condone or even excuse divorce. God had united man and woman into one flesh; therefore, it would be contrary to God's law for either to desert or forsake the other. Furthermore, the dignity of matrimony is illustrated in the relationship between Christ and His church.

Olsen also discusses the teachings of Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, John Calvin, Theodore Beza on the Continent; and in England, William Tyndale, Thomas Cranmer, John Hooper, John Raynolds, Joseph Hall, Lancelot Andrews and John Milton.

Although Olsen has established that there is a "direct line of interpretation from Erasmus to Milton," one must not think that the book has only historical interest. Indeed, the forcefulness and relevance of his study lies precisely in Olsen's effort to deal with a problem that is of critical importance in our contemporary society.

Although it is not a weakness, one wishes

that this study could have given more careful attention to the cultural, sociological and anthropological influences and outlooks of the period as these impinged on the biblical and theological discussions of the various writers and undoubtedly helped to shape their thinking on the subject.

Altogether, *The New Testament Logia on Divorce* has the distinction of giving a new dimension to the discussion of the problem of divorce and has profound implications and insights for our age. The book is slim but monumental, and the work behind it will not need to be done again.

## Journey of Faith

Review by Arthur R. Torres

*What A Beginning*

by William Loveless

Review and Herald, 127 pp., \$2.65

**W**hat A Beginning by William Loveless

brings together a series of sermons originally preached at the Sligo Church in Takoma Park, Maryland. The material, though slightly modified, appears basically in its original form.

The book is not a theology of the doctrine of creation nor a theology on the book of Genesis. It is not a comprehensive treatment of the issues in science and religion or philosophy of science and theology. Neither is it a book that argues for fiat creation and decries evolution. It is rather the work of a pastor who understands some of the obstacles to faith being experienced by many contemporary Christians. It is in this context that this book must be assessed.

Loveless presupposes a personal God who acted in creation. As he says in his preface, "the Genesis account is not on trial in this book." Both his statements and methodology show his belief that creation cannot be proved but must be accepted by faith. He simply leads the reader through several major themes of Genesis, on a journey of faith seeking understanding.

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Does this mean the book is valid only for Christians who already accept the epic stories of Genesis but have honest questions? No more than that the Bible is valid only for Christians. Loveless recognizes that neither God nor fiat creation can be verified empirically or demonstrated by reasoning from cause to effect. He begins from belief, not proof and demonstration. The Bible itself begins this way. It is an approach that has brought millions of unbelievers to faith through the centuries.

I would say that this approach is the book's greatest contribution to Adventist thought. Traditionally, we have sought scientific evidence to support our view of creation. This is why many Adventist books on the subject have been written by authors with a primarily scientific orientation. Loveless takes a theological approach that is interested in the implications of fiat creation for personal meaning and fulfillment.

Loveless uses history, science and philosophy to support the book's major premise, that the Bible answers the basic human questions whereas evolution does not. Yet, these questions are answered in a theological way and not in a scientific way. Where and how did nonliving matter become living? Where and how did life pass from biological to human, to cultural, to social man? The Bible, Loveless says, has a ready and simple answer: In the beginning by the act of God.

The author is well aware of the scientific issues. But he does not set out to topple evolution. He merely points out the inadequacy of evolution to answer the longings of the human heart, then suggests the biblical answer, and asks: "What are your alternatives?"

What about tragedy, pain and suffering in the world? Much of society asks: "How can an omnipotent, morally perfect, personally involved God be reconciled with a world in which most of the species are destined, even in spite of great effort, to perish prematurely, much of the time under circumstances of pain and cruelty?" Loveless suggests that the Bible can best answer this question also. The doctrine of sin teaches that because of human rebellion the perfect society that God created was marred. This world became the battlefield where the forces of good and evil fight to the death. Even so, God's original plan, of making man with free-

dom and the capacity for constructive responsibility, has not been thwarted. Even in tragedy God's purposes are being worked out. It is in this context that Cain and Abel, the Flood, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph are discussed.

Loveless introduces each of his chapters with poetry of his own composition. Each poem is a synopsis of the chapter that follows—and shows why Loveless' style and content have made him a popular preacher in the Adventist Church.

Yet his literary style sometimes obscures creative and important points. Here, for example, are the first and final verses of the poem that leads into the first chapter.

"In the beginning of what, God?  
How did You do it?  
Why did You do it?"

You moved from void to form and fullness,  
You moved from matter to me.

How did You do it?  
Why did You do it?"

You rested that I might know  
How You did it,  
Why You did it.

Blessed Sabbath explanation!"

The last line makes a beautiful theological point on the purpose of the Sabbath. Yet in order to understand that point much explanation is necessary. And while Loveless devotes several paragraphs at the end of the first chapter to the meaning of the Sabbath, the final verse in the poem is never explicitly explained.

Moreover, Loveless' prose is sometimes obscure. I found myself having to reread several chapters. While any book worth reading once is worth rereading, I cannot help but wonder whether some of Loveless' most important points might not be missed by an individual who does not take the time to carefully evaluate this book.

Yet, these criticisms are minor. And, in a sense, they are unfair because the material for this book was a series of sermons which probably were built on information the author had already presented to his congregation. Much in *What A Beginning* deserves to be read and reread. It is useful both to those who experience obstacles to faith and to those who seek a deeper experience of meaning and fulfillment in life.



