SPECTRUM

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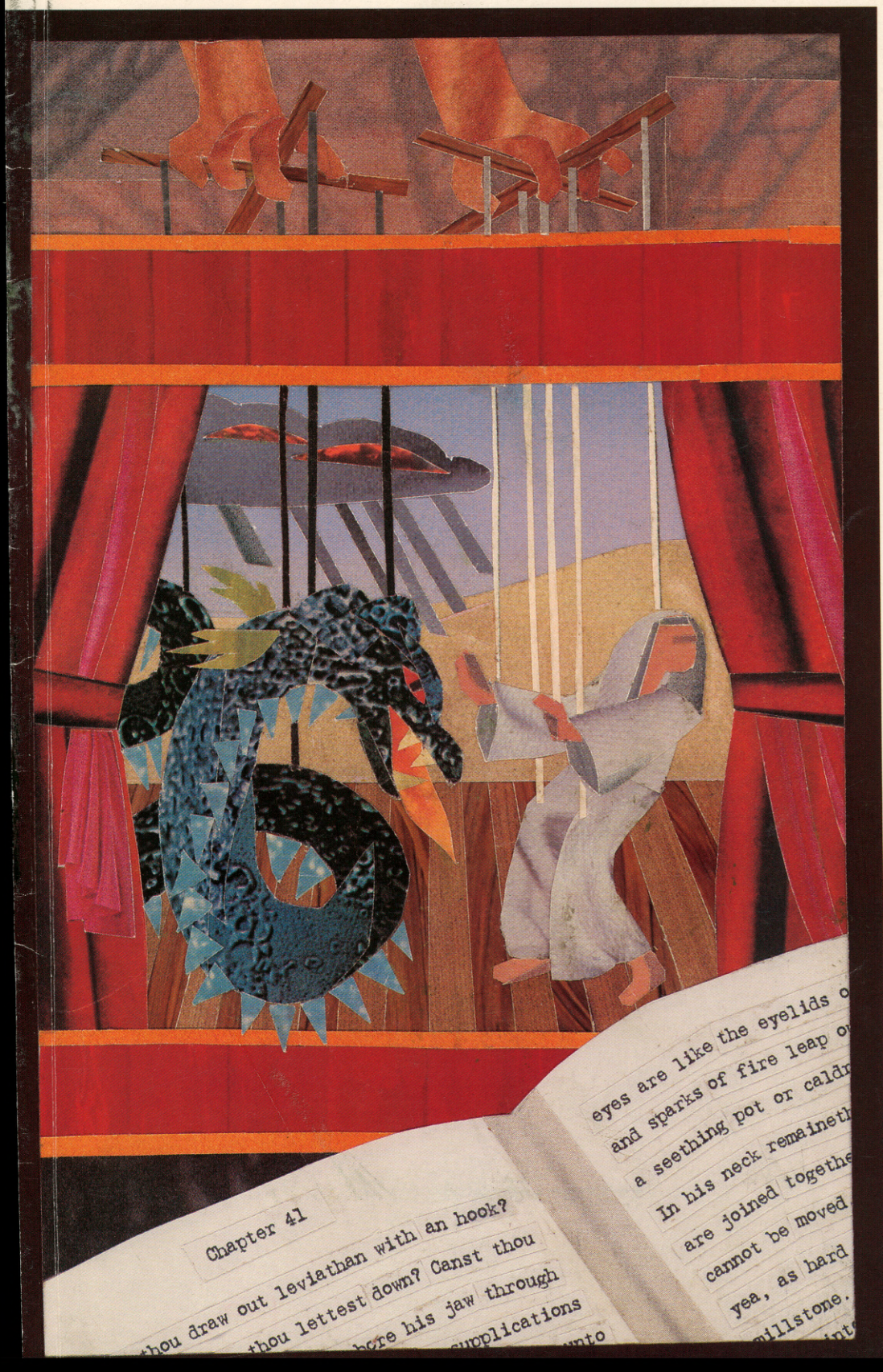

God's Justice in the Book of Job

Protection Island Eucharist

For the Beauty of the Earth

The Long and Winding Road for Adventist Women's Ordination

Contextualization and Women in the Church

What's Love Got To Do With It?

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SPECTRUM

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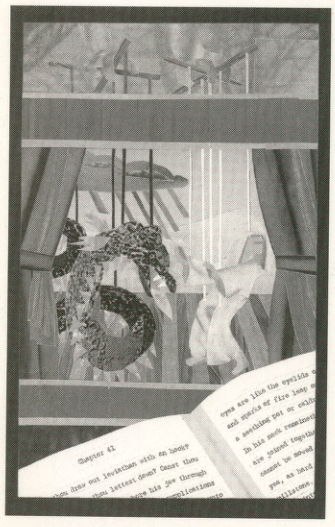

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Thomas Morphis is a professor of art at Pacific Union College. He holds an M.F.A. in painting from Cranbook Academy of Art. He has had over a dozen solo art exhibitions and has been included in almost one hundred juried and group shows.

About the Cover

The cover art was created as a collage of cut and pasted papers of various colors and textures. It illustrates the Leviathan from Job 41 as if in a staged drama. The setting alludes to the playlike structure of the book of Job: long monologues by different speakers, interrupted by brief narrative sections setting the scene, with characters unaware of driving forces that the audience is allowed to see.

SPECTRUM is a journal established to encourage Seventh-day Adventist participation in the discussion of contemporary issues from a Christian viewpoint, to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, and to foster Christian intellectual and cultural growth. Although effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and discriminating judgment, the statements of fact are the responsibility of contributors, and the views individual authors express are not necessarily those of the editorial staff as a whole or as individuals.

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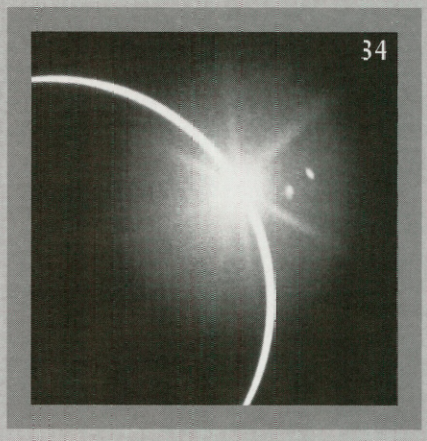

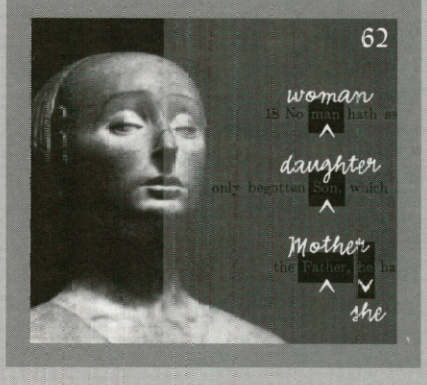

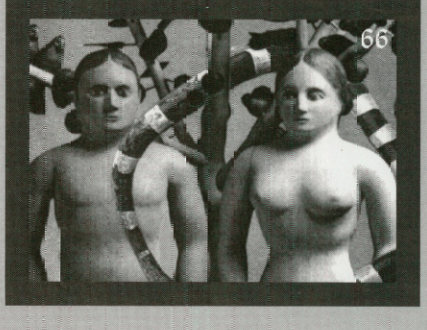

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It's About Time

Thirty years ago, a commission on women's ordination convened at Camp Mohaven in Ohio. There was good cheer at the end of the conference, according to attendee Kit Watts, with attendees approving a plan that was supposed to lead to women's ordination in 1975. As we know all too well, that did not happen and the issue remains a sore point to this day.

Of course, that was not the first time consideration was given to women's ordination. At the 1881 General Conference Session it was voted that women might "with perfect propriety, be set apart for ordination to the work of the Christian ministry." The action was then referred to the General Conference Committee. As Calvin Rock explained in 1995, after that, "nothing happened."

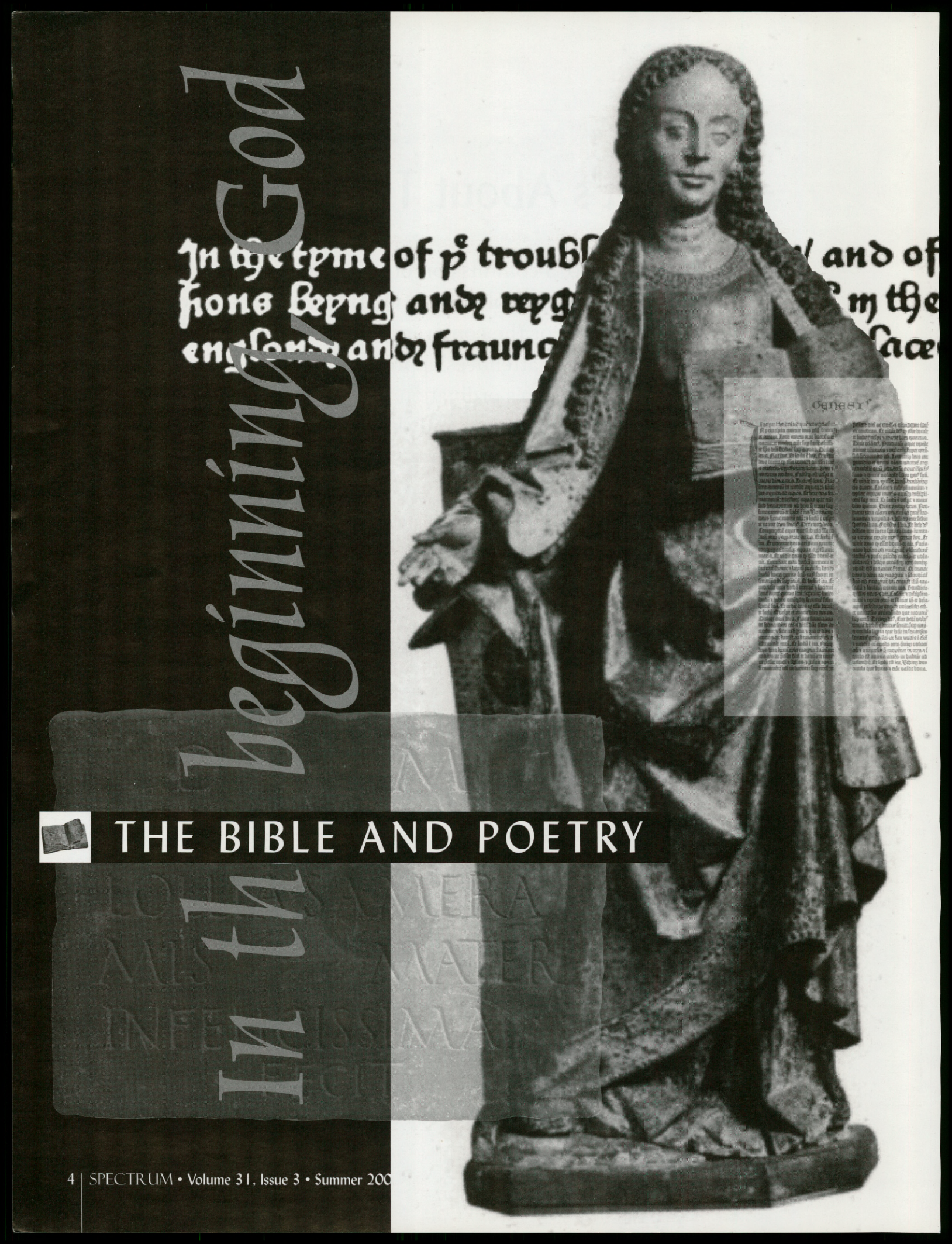
What does it take to make something happen on this issue? In Northern California, where the constituency voted over a year ago to have the conference pursue equal credentials for men and women, "nothing has happened." What crisis will finally prompt action? Do women need to form their own regional conferences? Do they need to stop paying tithe? What would make this an issue that the "brethren" would find time to resolve rather than just talk about and study?

In search of a "realistic" solution, here is a proposal: At the St. Louis General Conference session in 2005 a motion should be brought before the assembly affirming ordination as an honor bestowed upon persons by local congregations and sanctioned by local conferences. Then there could be a celebration of the "Priesthood of All Believers," honoring various ministers from around the world—men and women.

No one would have to vote for women's ordination. In areas of the world where it is culturally not viable to ordain women, it would not have to be done. In places that are ready for such ordination, it could proceed without stigma. We could be unified in our understanding of ministry, without being constrained by our differences. It would be a good way to demonstrate the contextualization of the gospel that the church officers have already said should be the mark of the Church. It would be a way to demonstrate our understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ.

Our definition of ministry as a worldwide event separates us, and causes dissension rather than bringing us together. Let us set it aside so that the priesthood of all believers can function.

Bonnie Dwyer
Editor



THE BIBLE AND POETRY

God Created Me

By Richard Rice

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." The great poem with which the Bible begins is filled with dualities. Consider a few that appear in its opening lines: darkness and light; God and world; chaos and word.

As the text reads, the earth was waste and void—empty and formless—when God began his creative work. In a series of majestic, transforming moments, exquisitely and dramatically timed, his words brought cosmos out of chaos, producing a magnificent reality, filled with beauty and purpose, bursting with enormous possibilities. His climactic act was the creation of beings who reflected their maker in a unique way.

They were responsive and responsible to the Power that had made them. Their minds were open to his mind. Their thoughts aspired to his thoughts. Their place *in* creation resembled his own sovereignty *over* creation. They of all God's creatures were able to appreciate the one in whom all creatures live and move and have their being.

This is not the Bible's only account of creation, of course. The very next chapter of Genesis paints a different picture. God's creative work has a distinctly hands-on character. He formed Adam out of dust and breathed life into his nostrils. There are other biblical accounts that describe God wrestling with the primal forces that have always threatened human existence. But the serenity and the majesty of this opening account have important things to tell us.

As expressed in an ancient formula, the first word of Christian faith is an affirmation of God's creative work. "I believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible." This is a statement with profound implications, and great minds have spent centuries exploring its meaning. It gives us a complex view of things. Ultimate reality does not consist in the physical world. There is something more than matter and energy. Yet this mysterious other is not opposed to the world; it does not negate or contradict the significance of finite reality.

Instead, it affirms it. "God saw that it was good." The story of creation upholds the value and importance of the world as a reflection of something even greater. It portrays the world in its primeval splendor as a mirror of God's great purpose. To quote German theologian Ernst Fuchs, "In the beginning was the Yes. And the Yes was with God. And God was the Yes."

There is something else these words provide us. They not only assure us that the world is important when it fulfills the Creator's original purpose. They also assure us that God cares for the world just as much when it falls drastically short of that purpose.

In other words, Genesis 1 tells us that God not only expresses himself in the world, God also commits himself to the world. In fact,

God's relation to the world is so important to him that from the moment of this great beginning he links his identity to it. Henceforth, God is inseparable from his creation. What happens among his creatures affects the inner life of God. Like parents who deeply love their children, God's care for his creatures binds his destiny to theirs. His decision to create was irreversible. From that beginning he would love the neighbor, the world, as he loved himself.

It is natural to let these majestic words—the greatest opening line in all literature—give flight to our loftiest metaphysical speculations, but these alone do not express the full meaning—or even the most important meaning—of this basic affirmation. According to Martin Luther, to recite the opening article of the creed is really to confess, "I believe that God created me." Think of all the things that this involves. It means that the great dualities of cosmic creation have their counterpart in my own life.

> I believe that I am utterly dependent, here and now, on God's creative, sustaining power.
>
> I believe that God values everything that makes me what I am.
>
> I believe that I am as important to God as he is to me.
>
> I believe that God's eternal purposes have a place in them for me.
>
> I believe that God's own eternal destiny includes his companionship with me.
>
> I believe that my faults and failures disappoint God, but they do not quench his love.
>
> I believe that my sins separate me from him, but not him from me.
>
> I believe that God grieves over the tragedies and disappointments of my life. But I also believe that he, and not they, will have the last word.

To say "I believe that God created me," like every statement of faith, flies in the face of all appearances—the impersonal objectivity of natural law, and the cold reality of life's bitter circumstances. How can we say "God created me," when the biological odds against our own existence were overwhelming? A single act of conception involves millions of genetic possibilities.

How can we say "God created me" when so much that happens, and so much that happens to us, could not possibly be what God wants? As each day's news reminds us, life is tenuous, even life in the quiet suburbs of a modern city, in the world's most powerful country, in the era of civilization's most sophisticated technology. There are no guarantees for nice people, for good people, for God's own people.

Like God's original words of creation, the statement of faith, "God created me," confronts a dark and formless reality. Yet, like those words, it carries the promise of light and life and beauty. There is no darkness that his word cannot dispel. There is no void that his presence cannot fill. There is no grief that his comfort cannot assuage. In other words, "God created me" are words of promise and hope. They direct us from darkness to light, from the present to the future, from reality to possibility.

Furthermore, this account of creation assures us, this all can happen more quickly than we can imagine—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—with the speed of thought. True, God doesn't always operate this way. In fact, it doesn't seem to be his preferred way of doing things. But it is always a possibility. The God who moves with great deliberation can also act with gracious speed. And he is never more eager to act than when we need his care.

In one of his sermons, John Donne expresses God's willingness to help with these words.

> God made Sun and Moon to distinguish seasons, and day and night, and we cannot have the fruits of the Earth but in their seasons. But God hath made no decree to distinguish the seasons of his mercies. In paradise the fruits were ripe the first minute, and in heaven it is always Autumn, his mercies are ever in their maturity. God never says, you should have come yesterday, he never says you must again tomorrow, but today if you will hear his voice, today he will hear you. He brought light out of darkness, not out of a lesser light; He can bring thy Summer out of Winter though thou have no Spring. All occasions invite his mercies, and all times are his seasons.

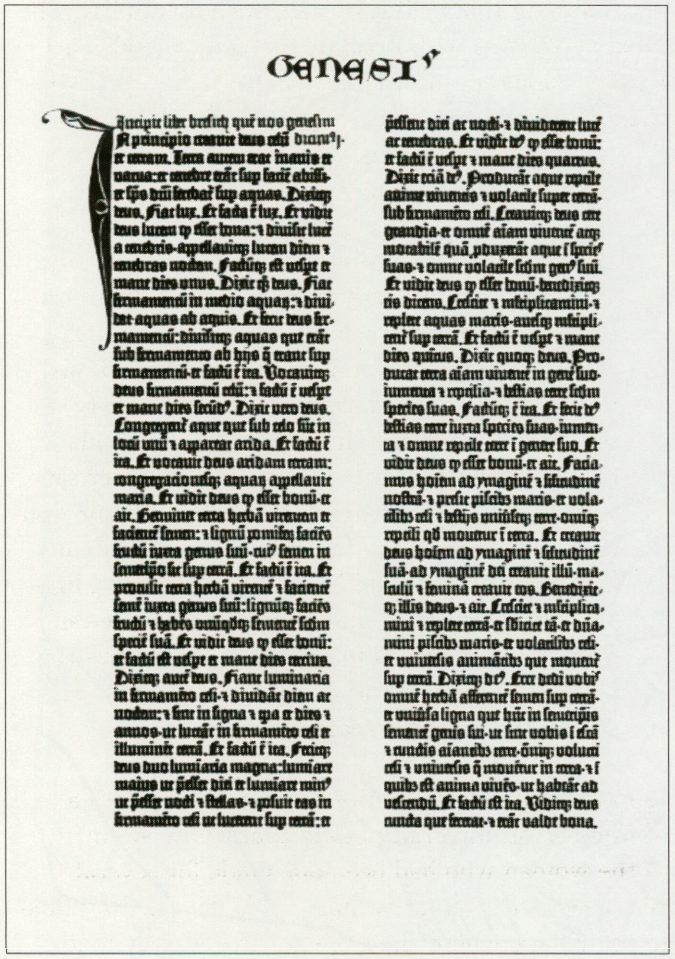
I have had the opportunity to visit Greece with a number of university study tours. One summer, the woman who had been our guide for several years described what it would be like for her to return to the village where she grew up. She was by that

time thoroughly urbanized and modernized, a woman of the world. She said if she went home the people there would still recognize her as someone they once knew, but to be sure, they would ask her this question: "Whose are you?"

In Greek villages to this day, a woman's identity is determined not by asking, Who are you? but Whose are you? To whom do you belong? Who claims you as his own? A man in traditional Greek thinking has his own identity, but a woman's identity is always connected to a man—either to her father, or to her husband.

Martin Luther's interpretation of the creed reminds us of the most important thing about us. As he interprets these great words of Genesis, the most essential question we can ever ask is not *who* we are, but *whose* we are. It's not our name, our profession, our fortune, or our accomplishments that matter most. The most important thing about us is the one to whom we belong.

German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer was arrested for helping to plan Hitler's death. His captors executed him just a few days before the end of World War II. While in prison, he produced a number of writings, including a poem entitled, "Who am I?"


Genesis

Incipit liber primus qui nos genesim
In principio creauit deus celum et terram. Terra autem erat inanis et
uacua: et tenebre erant super faciem abissi
et spiritus dei ferebat super aquas. Dixitq;
deus. Fiat lux. Et facta est lux. Et vidit
deus lucem q esset bona: et diuisit lucem
a tenebris. appellauitq; lucem diem et
tenebras noctem. Factumq; est vespere et
mane dies unus. Dixit quoq; deus. Fiat
firmamentum in medio aquarum: et diuidat
aquas ab aquis. Et fecit deus firmamentum: diuisitq; aquas que erant
sub firmamento ab his q erant super
firmamentum: et factum est ita. Vocauitq;
deus firmamentum celum: et factum est vespere
et mane dies secundus. Dixit vero deus.
Congregentur aque que sub celo sunt in
locum unum et appareat arida. Et factum est
ita. Et vocauit deus aridam terram:
congregationesq; aquarum appellauit
maria. Et vidit deus q esset bonum: et
ait. Germinet terra herbam virentem et
facientem semen: et lignum pomiferum faciens
fructum iuxta genus suum: cuius semen in
semetipso sit super terram. Et factum est ita. Et
protulit terra herbam virentem et faciemem
semen iuxta genus suum: lignumq; faciens
fructum et habens unumquodq; semen secundum
speciem suam. Et vidit deus q esset bonum:
et factum est vespere et mane dies tertius.
Dixitq; autem deus. Fiant luminaria
in firmamento celi et diuidant diem ac
noctem: et sint in signa et tempora et dies et
annos: ut luceant in firmamento celi et
illuminent terram. Et factum est ita. Fecitq;
deus duo luminaria magna: luminare
maius ut preesset diei et luminare minus
ut preesset nocti et stellas. et posuit eas in
firmamento celi ut lucerent super terram: et
presint diei ac nocti et diuiderent lucem
ac tenebras. Et vidit deus q esset bonum:
et factum est vespere et mane dies quartus.
Dixit etiam deus. Producant aque reptile
anime viuentis et volatile super terram
sub firmamento celi. Creauitq; deus cete
grandia et omnem animam viuentem atq;
motabilem quam produxerant aque in species
suas et omne volatile secundum genus suum.
Et vidit deus q esset bonum benedixitq;
eis dicens. Crescite et multiplicamini et
replete aquas maris auesq; multiplicentur super terram. Et factum est vespere et mane
dies quintus. Dixit quoq; deus. Producat terra animam viuentem in genere suo
iumenta et reptilia et bestias terre secundum
species suas. Factumq; est ita. Et fecit deus
bestias terre iuxta species suas iumenta et omne reptile terre in genere suo. Et
vidit deus q esset bonum et ait. Faciamus hominem ad ymaginem et similitudinem
nostram et presit piscibus maris et volatilibus celi et bestiis uniuerseq; terre omnique
reptili q mouetur in terra. Et creauit
deus hominem ad ymaginem suam ad ymaginem dei creauit illum masculum et feminam creauit eos. Benedixitq; illis deus et ait. Crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram et subicite eam et dominamini piscibus maris et volatilibus celi
et uniuersis animantibus que mouentur
super terram. Dixitq; deus. Ecce dedi vobis
omnem herbam afferentem semen super terram
et uniuersa ligna que habent in semetipsis
semina generis sui: ut sint vobis in escam
et cunctis animantibus terre omniq; volucri
celi et uniuersis q mouentur in terra et in
quibus est anima uiuens: ut habeant ad
uescendum. Et factum est ita. Viditq; deus
cuncta que fecerat et erant valde bona.

It draws a sharp contrast between the way other people saw Bonhoeffer and the way he saw himself.

Who am I? They often tell me
I stepped from my cell's confinement
Calmly, cheerfully, firmly,
Like a squire from his country-house.
Who am I? They often tell me
I used to speak to my warders
Freely and friendly and clearly,
As though it were mine to command.
Who am I? They also tell me
I bore the days of misfortune proudly,
Like one accustomed to win.

Am I then really all that which other men tell of?
Or am I only what I myself know of myself?
Restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a cage,
Struggling for breath,
Yearning for colours,
Thirsting for words of kindness, for neighbourliness,
Weary and empty at praying, and ready to say farewell to it all?

Who am I? This or the other?
Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,
And before myself a . . . weakling?
Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions of mine.
[But] whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am Thine!

When Bonhoeffer asked himself, "*Who* are you?" he couldn't find an answer. But he did find an answer to the question, "*Whose* are you?" If wondering *who* we are leaves us uncertain or discouraged, then let's ask the other question. It's not *who* you are, it's *whose* you are that counts.

Can you say with all your heart, "I believe that God created me?" If you can, then you belong to God. Your identity is secure. You are everything you ever need to be.

Richard Rice is a professor of religion at Loma Linda University.

ILLUSTRATION BY MAX SEABAUGH

God's Justice in the Book of Job

By Jean Sheldon

To many readers of the biblical book of Job, the divine speeches, found in chapters 38-41, have little or nothing to do with the rest of the book, its main issue (the problem of the innocent suffering), or Job's *rîb*, or lawsuit, against God. Conclusions regarding their purpose range from Yahweh's extolling his power and wisdom in creation as beyond human understanding to a portrayal of God as a blustery tyrant who does not answer Job; from a diatribe that puts Job in his place to an admission of failure to deal with the problem of evil; from a depiction of Job as the Leviathan to a description of divine amorality.

I believe there is yet another option, one that shows Job 38-41 to be a partial answer to the questions of divine justice raised by other sections in the book. This possibility is suggested by a comparison of these chapters with two tablets (IV and V) of the Babylonian Creation Epic, sometimes called *Enuma Elish*, which shows how the poet uses his memory of them to clarify in part the reason why the innocent suffer and the wicked prosper.[1]

The book of Job presents two basic but distinct worldviews—judicial justice and cosmology—that never fully harmonized (though they were often fused together) in ancient Near Eastern thought. It is my belief that these two large metaphors are what make Job a uniquely Hebrew theodicy and actually form the two sides in the debate over the doctrine of reward and punishment. Though both "sides" of the debate may employ metaphors from both worldviews, their basic philosophy and overarching canopy of thought derive prevalently from one of the two constructs.

In the book of Job, these two sides form the work's spinal column, with Job opposing the doctrine of divine justice and his friends upholding it, each from his respective dominant worldview. Just

where Satan, Yahweh, and Elihu (or even Job's final statement) fit into the picture depends on the reader's own perspective. The result can be at least two very different interpretations of the divine speeches, particularly in regard to Leviathan.

Whereas the common traditions of ancient Near Eastern theodicy generally debate the problem of the innocent suffering without use of the combat myth (the conquest of a threatening monster by a heroic god), the book of Job appeals to that myth particularly in the divine speeches. Utilizing the two themes of cosmology and legal justice as the premises in the debate, the poet seems to push each to its logical conclusion, concluding with the divine speeches, where the focus is almost exclusively that of cosmology.

What necessitates a closer look at the cosmology of the divine speeches is my discovery that the structure and content of these speeches parallel Tablets IV and V of the Babylonian Creation Epic so closely that it seems clear that the author(s) had this work in mind as he wrote the divine speeches. How he utilized it clarifies the purpose of Yahweh's declarations to Job.

Job 38:4-38 and *Enuma Elish* IV:127-V:66

The first comparison can be made between Job 38:4-38 and *Enuma Elish* IV:127-V:66. The first section of each of these texts deals with essentially the same issue: the laying of the foundations of the earth. In *Enuma Elish*, Marduk (the heroic god of the Babylonian creation) treads on the lower extremities of Tiamat (the chaos monster) and with his mace keeps beating in the top of her head. Next he severs her arteries and sends her blood to an unknown place via the north wind. All of this is preparatory to his creation of the world.

Similarly in Job 38:4-6, when Yahweh prepares to create the earth, he lays down its foundations and sets its measurements. He sinks its pedestals and casts its cornerstone. The imagery may actually be Canaanite and could allude to the Baal cycles in which Baal (the heroic god of Canaanite mythology) builds his palace after conquering Yam (the sea, here symbolizing a chaos monster). If so, it offers confirmation that the author is indeed utilizing the combat mythology, not just creating poetic images from it.

The next lines in the respective texts allude to celebration by the heavenly beings or gods. Their contents are so similar as to be almost startling. As the "fathers" of Marduk exult when they see his victory over Tiamat, just so the morning stars and sons of Elohim in Job rejoice upon Yahweh's creation of the earth's foundations. Though the underlying element of triumphant victory is highlighted more in Job than in *Enuma Elish*, the context of each is similar.

The two sections that follow are not identically arranged but contain similar subject matter. The birth of Yam, as described, seems unique to the text of Job, yet both sections deal with primordial waters that must be ordered, limited, and enclosed. Significantly, just as Marduk draws bars and appoints a watchman, ordering him not to let Tiamat's waters escape, so Yahweh traces limits around Yam, sets bars and doors (bars specifically being stated in both texts), and says, "You may come to here and no farther, and here your proud waves shall stay." In keeping with divine governance in the Hebrew Bible, Yahweh appoints no watchman but oversees the boundaries himself.

The subsequent discussion involves the inner recesses of the primordial waters, often termed *Ωhôm* in the Hebrew Bible. Here Yam parallels Apsû (a primordial god that represents water in *Enuma Elish*), though the descriptions are different for each. From this point on, the Hebrew text does not follow the work in sequence; one must reorder the Hebrew text in order to show the parallels. Nevertheless, the subject matter is clearly the same—the creation of the heavenly bodies and stars, the development of light (including the sun), as well as the formation of precipitation, clouds, and the waters.

Job 38:39-41:26 and Tiamat's Warriors

The next points of comparison disclose a surprising feature of both texts: the number of creatures or chaos monsters. At the outset of Tiamat's planning for war, she has created eleven monsters to fight on her behalf: the elevated serpent (I:134), the great dragon (I:137), the womb snake, the mušhuššu dragon, Lahamu (I:141), great lion, mad dog, scorpion man (I:142), mighty storm monster, fish man, and bison (I:143).

Yahweh likewise names eleven kinds of creatures in the book of Job: the lion (39:39), raven (39:41), mountain goat, hind (39:1), onager, wild ass (39:5), wild ox (39:9), ostrich (39:13), horse (39:19), hawk (39:26), and eagle (39:27). In contrast to Tiamat's army, rendered dysfunctional by Marduk, these parallel creatures are under Yahweh's care and some of them are even set free by Yahweh to roam with reckless abandon, unfettered.

Included in the list are both prey and predators, with human beings serving both as inferred prey and predators. Of particular interest to this study is the

fact that the first and last pairs of the list are predators; and the first and last creature—the lion and the eagle—when combined, create an allusion to the earlier Mesopotamian mythic forerunner of Tiamat, namely, the Anzû-bird (a chaos monster portrayed as a composite lion-eagle) slain by Ninurta (the heroic god of the Babylonian Anzû myth). Thus, the very framework of these creatures draws the reader into the imagery of combat mythology.

Marduk uses to destroy Tiamat (Job 41:18-21; compare *Enuma Elish* IV:35-38, 101-4, 128-30; VI:82-91).

Finally, the concluding lines of Job 41 recall the overall description of Tiamat and her highhanded arrogance. However, one line stands out, to which Job alludes in 41:26. When Marduk confronts Tiamat, he asks, "Why are you rising up? Why are you lifted on high?" (IV:77). Similarly, Leviathan "sees everything high; he is king over all the sons of pride."

The purpose of the description of Leviathan is to make clear that God is more fierce, more terrifying than this, the most frightening of all monsters, and that he is the owner of everything, including the upstart Job (or all of humanity).

Given these elements and especially extensive similarities to just one form of the myth, it is clear that the author of the divine speeches has used Behemoth and Leviathan as parallels to two of the main opponents of Marduk: Qingu and Tiamat. These are surprisingly parallel: just as Behemoth is "the first of the ways of God" (40:19), so Qingu (by contrast) is Tiamat's first-born, whom she elevates. Both Tiamat and Leviathan appear to be dragonlike creatures whose resistance to ordinary weapons is marked.

From this point to the end of the divine speeches significant parallels may be found indicating a concern for divine moral responsibility. Yahweh says of the Behemoth: "Let him who made him bring near his sword!" (40:19). In *Enuma Elish*, Anshar cries out to Ea, shortly after hearing the distressing news about Tiamat's advancement against the gods, "The works you did by yourself; you bear (them) yourself" (II:54). The implication is clear: "This is your fault; you take care of it." Of interest here is the contrast between the two different divine beings and their spheres of responsibility. Anshar charges Ea with having started the war; Yahweh offers to take on the responsibility for his creation of the Behemoth.

Other points of similarity can be noted. The mention of reed twine or thorns in the nose as a means of capture is found in both texts. Yahweh asks Job, "Who can open the doors of his [Leviathan's] face, the terror surrounding his teeth?"—a clear allusion to Marduk's use of winds to open Tiamat's mouth in order to shoot the fatal arrow down her innards. Likewise, the line—"In his neck resides strength and before him dances despair" (41:14)—alludes to the line—"Tiamat cast her spell; she did not turn back her neck" (IV:71). The description of various weapons recalls the weaponry

Two sections remain to be dealt with because their significance is crucial to our understanding of the Joban author's possible intent. These are Job 41:1-4 and 10-15, as well as some similar minor lines. The first of these two sections involves a radical departure from traditional translations; the second involves a strange twist of usage by the author of the divine speeches.

Translation of Job 41:1-4

The traditional way these particularly difficult lines have been interpreted is probably best represented by the Revised Standard Version:

> Behold, the hope of a man is disappointed;
> he is laid low even at the sight of him.
> No one is so fierce that he dares to stir him up.
> Who then is he that can stand before me?
> Who has given to me, that I should repay him?
> Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.
> I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
> or his mighty strength, or his goodly frame.

This interpretation suggests that the purpose of the description of Leviathan is to make clear that God is more fierce, more terrifying than this, the most frightening of all monsters, and that he is the owner of everything, including the upstart Job (or all of humanity). By logical extension, then, Job was not only audacious to "stir God up," but also downright foolish, and the surprise

for the reader is that God did not simply destroy him.

One can quite easily render these lines (without emending the text) so that Yahweh is showing the absurd arrogance of this creature in attempting to attack him:

> Look! His hopes are proven false!
> Was not even his countenance cast down?
> I would not be loath to stir him up.
> Who is he that he should take his position before me
> Who is he that he should get one over on me
> and that I should have to make it good?
> Under the entire universe he is mine!
> I will not be muted by his casting of spells or
> claims to prowess or battle formations.

This translation is consistent with the traditional notion either that Yaweh has already defeated Leviathan or could easily do so, but it avoids the notion that Yahweh is merely more fearsome than this mythic figure for evil. From a literary standpoint, these lines are best read as a uniform description of Leviathan. Thus, they could be translated in a manner that maintains an underlying premise of the doctrine of divine retribution: that Yahweh is the slayer of all evil monsters, and thus evildoers are destroyed to show his supremacy. This interpretation fits neatly with one of the two positions being delineated throughout the book of Job—that which sees the work as a clear vindication of retributive justice, the doctrine under dispute.

By contrast, these same lines can be rendered to convey an entirely different (and almost opposite) sense, namely, that Yahweh has not yet conquered Leviathan.

> Look, one's hopes are proven false.
> Even a god is cast down when he sees him!
> I would not be so despicable as to stir him up.
> Who is he who can advance before him?
> Who shall approach him? Then let me reward him!
> Let him [Leviathan] be mine in exchange for
> all the heavens!
> I would not be muted by his incantations or claims
> to prowess or battle formations.

With the imagery from *Enuma Elish* serving as the basis for this rendering, these lines suggests a less-than-decisive battle, in which Yahweh does not vanquish Leviathan summarily. The translation offered portrays a stage in the combat myth tradition well drawn out by both the Anzû myth and *Enuma Elish.* First, word comes back to the gods that a monster-deity is gathering forces to come up against them. Fear seizes the gods as they deliberate about what to do. Several approach the monster-dragon, only to be forced to turn back. For a time the head god looks for someone who can defeat this foe. Who will take him on? Who *can* take him on? Even in the telling of Marduk's success, there is intimidation. When Marduk advances against Tiamat,

> The lord drew near to her middle; he peered into Tiamat.
> He sought of Qingu, her lover, his strategy.
> As he was looking, his thinking became confused.
> His intentions were disrupted; his actions became
> disordered.

When compared to this mythic tradition that surrounds Tiamat, Leviathan can be interpreted as an unconquered monster of the deep. Yahweh notes that none of the usual combat weaponry can vanquish him—not even that normally used by conquerors in combat mythology. After describing Leviathan's daunting nature, terrifying to both heaven and earth, Yahweh concludes that "he [Leviathan] is king over all the sons of pride." The "sons of pride" may allude—by way of antithesis—to "the sons of Elohim," a term in the Prologue that designates the divine assembly. The "sons of Job" refer to humanity, but who are the "sons of pride"? Are they Leviathan's assembly?

In the Hebrew Bible and no less than in Job, the wicked are often characterized as "the proud" or "the arrogant." Yahweh himself denotes evildoers as "the arrogant" in 40:10-11. It would follow, then, that Leviathan is king over all the unrighteous. Thus, further support is given to the idea that these chapters deal with the problem of evil.

If the divine speeches are indeed a hymn of praise to Yahweh's superior power over the forces of chaos, this ending is unexpected. No boasting of Yahweh's complete victory over Leviathan would likely conclude with such an assertion of this monster's might. One must either assume a textual lacuna or find another purpose for this emphasis on the formidable nature of this chaos power.

Leviathan as Tiamat

The present comparison of the divine speeches and *Enuma Elish* IV and V illuminates the Joban author's probable purpose and thus the function of Leviathan in Job 40-41. The initial and final sections of Job 38-41 are the reverse of the beginning and the ending of Marduk's confrontation of Tiamat and the creation of the world. The following chart illustrates this reversal:

ENUMA ELISH	THE DIVINE SPEECHES
Tiamat is a formidable terror to the gods	Yahweh creates the world (including Yam)
Marduk prepares for war	Yahweh provides limits for Yam
Marduk conquers Tiamat	Yahweh prepares the order of the universe
Marduk captures Tiamat's eleven warriors	Yahweh provides for eleven wild creatures
Marduk creates the world from Tiamat	Leviathan is a formidable terror to all

Whereas in *Enuma Elish* the creation of this world is the result of slaying the monster Tiamat, in Job, Yahweh lays the foundation of the earth, following which Yam is brought to birth. Leviathan enters the picture *after* the order of creation has been established (Job 38). The chaos powers are not slain before creation takes place, but rather remain a part of it. Thus the Joban poet, by utilizing the Akkadian combat myth in this reverse order, has revealed one of his main points: the chaos monsters, symbols of evil, are not utterly slain (that is, Yahweh does not destroy all of the wicked); rather, evil remains in the world yet unconquered.

In this interpretation, an obvious conclusion may be made: not all who suffer because of chaotic forces do so because they are wicked, but because the king of all the sons of pride still rules, and evildoers, like the untamed creatures and monsters of Job 38–41, still roam the earth unwilling to submit to the righteous. This accords with the evidence that surrounds Job himself. He has ardently argued that the wicked linger on and die, like the righteous, in old age (21:1-34). Evildoers continue to abound on the earth and the innocent such as Job still suffer. The question obviously left unanswered for the reader is whether Yahweh (or someone he designates) will yet conquer these powers of chaos.

If one compares *Enuma Elish* with the divine speeches further on, the pivotal lines (41:1-4) could refer to the stage in the general combat myths where the high god looks for someone to be the hero of the battle. In ancient Mesopotamian mythology, the person who conquered the chaos monster was originally supposed to melt back into ordinary life. But eventually it seems that the exaltation and power a hero gained from his victory was too tempting to surrender so easily. Thus in the Anzû myth, Ninurta keeps the Tablets of Destiny to himself after wresting them from Anzû; in *Enuma Elish* Marduk flatly demands supremacy over all the gods in exchange for his victory on their behalf before he even goes forth to conquer Tiamat.

Perhaps a hint of this is evident in the words, "Let him [Leviathan] be mine in exchange for all the heavens!" Could this passage not be compared with the gods' proclamation to Marduk in *Enuma Elish* IV:13-14 as they send him off against Tiamat?

> Marduk, you are the one who will avenge us.
> We give you kingship of the entire universe!

Likewise, Yahweh will give his all just to deal with this monster and to silence his prideful attacks. He will reward whoever can do it. The question remains, Who can?

In Job 40:1-14, Yahweh once again invites Job to prepare himself as a hero. As part of his defense against Job's lawsuit (*rîb*), Yahweh asks him if he (Job) were God whether he could eliminate all evildoers. Three options are possible: Yahweh may be asking Job to trade places with him, as it were, to see if he could effectively bind the wicked permanently in the Netherworld; he may be asserting that Job is an arrogant

Theologian Jean Sheldon's interest in Job dates from her undergraduate days, when she suspected that the Leviathan might be significant for understanding the Old Testament book.

rebel (namely, Leviathan) vis-à-vis Zophar's comment; or this is a satirical address to Job as a mortal fallen in battle. Although the immediate context would seem to support the second position of Job as the rebel, the overall framework of combat imagery favors either the first or third positions.

It appears, then, that the poet is closely following the section of *Enuma Elish* Tablet II where Anshar looks for a worthy warrior who can conquer Tiamat. All the previous attempts—including that of Marduk's own father, Ea—have ended with the god being forced back in terror. Now Marduk, who has agreed to go against the monster, enters. Before sending him out, the gods must determine his ability to meet the formidable Tiamat. They achieve this by a series of tests.

In a similar manner, the series of questions in 40:7-13 and 40:24-41:6 may be read as Yahweh's examination of Job to see if he is qualified to take on Leviathan. Yahweh invites Job to tour the universe with him and to view his creation—particularly with all its chaos elements and evil creatures—through divine eyes. This defensive posture by Yahweh toward Job is appropriate because of Job's lawsuit (*rîb*) against Yahweh. Let the one who insists that Eloah does not single the wicked out for punishment take on the evildoers himself; let the one who argues with God deal with the wicked. If he can succeed, he is worthy of praise. It appears, however, that Yahweh concludes that Job is incapable: "There is no one of dust his rival, one made without fear" (Job 41:25).

This raises the issue, once again, of just which reading to accept for 41:1-4. Is Yahweh looking for a warrior-hero, such as Job, to take on Leviathan? Or is he showing Job his inadequacy due to his lowly mortal nature? Either reading is plausible, and neither one negates the evidence that Leviathan is yet to be tamed or slain.

Nevertheless, it appears that the issue does not center around merely *who* will take on Leviathan, but *how*. This is a major question in both Mesopotamian combat myths, Anzû and *Enuma Elish*, in which several advances are made against the chaos monster only to be aborted as gods flee in terror. In the end, though, it takes not only the right god (Ninurta, Marduk), but also the right weapons and strategy. This is especially highlighted in *Enuma Elish* when Marduk invents the bow with which he manages (with the aid of wind and club) to slay Tiamat.

In Job 41, the poet seems to follow this part of the myth as well. Shortly after discussing who will go against this monster, Yahweh turns to a peculiar description of Leviathan for which a parallel may not be found anywhere in the portrayal of Tiamat or her army. Verses 10-13 may be translated as follows:

> His sneezings shine light;
> His eyes are like the eyelids of dawn.
> From his mouth eject flashing torches;
> They shower down sparks of fire.
> From his nostrils goes forth smoke
> Like a pot boiling and glowing.
> His breath fans the coals
> And a flame shoots out of his mouth.

Nevertheless, we are not without a parallel from *Enuma Elish*, and surprisingly it comes from I:96-98, 102-4 and IV:39-40, a remarkable description of Marduk:

> When his lips parted, fire was constantly kindled.
> They were great—each of the four ears, with respect to understanding
> And his eyes in like manner inspected everything....
> My son of the Sun, Sun of the heavens!
> Clothed with the splendor of ten gods, he was loftily crowned.
>
> He set lightning from his face;
> His body was filled with a blazing flame.

It appears that the Joban poet deliberately merged the two rivals—Marduk and Tiamat—into one, Leviathan. Marduk himself becomes an opponent to be conquered by Yahweh. Furthermore, none of the weapons normally used in war and in the combat myth—including those used by Marduk—can render Leviathan slain. Indeed nearly all of the traditional combat weaponry is included here, and none of it can prevail.

> The sword reaches him, but cannot succeed whether spear, dart, or javelin.
> He likens iron to straw and bronze to rotten wood.
> The bow's arrow does not make him flee; to him, slinging stones are turned into stubble.
> He considers the club as stubble and mocks the threatening javelin.

When one includes verses 5-9, especially verse 6—"Who can open the doors of his face, the terror surrounding his teeth?"—the description is complete; that is, Marduk's winds would fail to open the mouth of this creature in order to shoot the arrow. One can note that Marduk's other weapons, the bow and the club, would be useless as well.

Thus, Yahweh mocks the weaponry of Marduk, Anzû, and all the other conquerors of chaos. None of them can penetrate this creature, about whom, alone out of the other twelve, Yahweh makes no claims of creating, supporting, or maintaining. There could be no more trenchant way to denigrate Marduk completely than to amalgamate him with his victim!

Similarly, when the Hebrew poet focuses on Leviathan he elaborates on his prowess, describing him as the most powerful of all the creatures in the divine speeches. Worse yet, he is described vis-à-vis Marduk, as the great conqueror of Leviathan-like monsters. Who, then, can take on this Leviathan? And with what kinds of weapons?

Once again, one is faced with two possible options. One might conclude that the point of the poet was to ensure that Yahweh had even more power than Marduk himself. Thus, Yahweh is indeed superior to all rivals including the one who slew Tiamat.

The other position is not so simply stated. Elsewhere in the book of Job, divine power is not questioned, but divine justice is. Indeed this is the overall concern of the book of Job, and it becomes the main point of variance between Job and his three friends. Job maintains that the wicked remain and prosper; the three friends contend that God punishes all of them. Clearly this is the issue emphasized in the opening lines of Yahweh's second speech in Job 40:6-14:

> Yahweh answered Job from the storm and said:
> Gird up your loins like a hero.
> I will ask you and you will inform me.
> Will you even annul justice,
> Will you condemn me in order to vindicate yourself?
> If you have an arm like God's
> And you can thunder with a voice like his,
> Then adorn yourself with pride and highness
> And clothe yourself with majesty and splendor.
> Disperse the overflowings of your anger
> And look on all the arrogant and abase them.
> Look on all the arrogant and humble them
> And tread down the wicked in their place.
> Hide them in the dust together;
> Bind their faces in the nether regions.
> Then indeed I will praise you
> Because your right hand has come to your aid.

This description of how Job is to take on the wicked is reminiscent of Marduk's strong words in *Enuma Elish* IV:77-86 as he challenges Tiamat to a duel:

> Why are you rising up?
> (Why) are you lifted up on high?
> Your heart is plotting to muster the battle.
> The sons went far away; they treated
> their fathers with disrespect.
> And you their begetter, you hated compassion.
> You appointed Qingu for your consort.
> You appointed him inappropriately for the office
> of Anuship.
> You sought evil against Anshar, king of the gods.
> And you established your evil against the gods,
> my Fathers.
> Let your troops be drawn up; let them be girded
> with your weapons.
> Come here! I and you, let us have a duel.

The difference, however, is also marked: Unlike Marduk, Yahweh does not accuse Job, but challenges him to rise up against the wicked just as Tiamat rose up against the gods. Yahweh's words also fit the Babylonian examiner's questions; they allude to concerns about whether or not Job was a warrior fit enough to take on the wicked. The final verse (40:14) fits neatly with the second translation of 41:1-4, where Yahweh offers to reward whoever can successfully vanquish the wicked. The parallel of the gods testing Marduk's ability to take on Tiamat and their willingness to reward him with supremacy cannot be missed. Yahweh even offers to praise Job if he can successfully eliminate all evildoers.

The testing of Job's ability as a hero includes more than mere power. In almost all the combat myths, the hero-gods who conquer the enemy do so after several tries and with specific weaponry that finally succeeds. In the Baal Cycles, Baal makes a failed attempt at killing Yam before actually doing so. In each instance, Kothar-wa-Hasis, his advisor, must make special weapons and give them names.

In the Anzû myth, several gods go against this birdlike monster and only Ninurta succeeds. He makes several attempts before gaining the upper hand. In order to kill the evil creature, Ninurta's weapons alone are not enough; he must first tire him and then use a special implement to get the bird's wings off so he cannot fly away before the weapons reach their mark. In *Enuma Elish*, Marduk is the last of several gods to make the attempt to conquer Tiamat. In order to do so, he invents a special bow and creates twelve storm

winds. It is these weapons alone that vanquish the dragonlike monster and relieve the gods.

Though several interpretations are possible for the divine speeches, the one most consistent with the trajectory that follows *Enuma Elish* is that Yahweh is likewise testing Job's ability to be the warrior-hero who will take on Leviathan. He wants to know if he has the weapons needed in order to conquer the wicked, and, in the opinion of this study, their ruler, Leviathan. But with what weapons can Job do this? The description of Behemoth and Leviathan has ruled out all of the usual combat weaponry: Marduk's flood fails to take out the Behemoth (40:23), and *Ωhôm* (the Hebrew term for "the deep," a form of chaos) becomes Leviathan's residence (41:24); the wind Marduk used to open Tiamat's mouth will not penetrate Leviathan's armor (41:7); the arrow that Marduk shot into Tiamat's mouth will not make him flee (41:20); he mocks Ninurta's javelin (41:21); and considers Baal's club and Marduk's mace to be mere stubble (41:21).

Superficially, it would seem that Yahweh offers Job no weaponry at all to take the place of these powerless implements of war. Instead he merely suggests that Job trade places with Yahweh, dispatching the wicked according to the ancient doctrine of justice. At this juncture one may either conclude that Yahweh has no solution to the weaponry needed or that this struggle does not belong to the physical but rather the ideological realm. If one does look for physical weapons in Yahweh's response to Job's lawsuit in 40:1-14, the list is as follows: his divine arm, his voice of thunder, the power of an abasing look, feet that can tread down the wicked (40:9-12). In addition to these more anthropological aspects are the elements of ancient perceptions of divinity: pride, highness, majesty, splendor, and anger (40:10-11).

An analysis of these lines (40:9-14) can net a couple possible interpretations: (1) they are reminiscent of Marduk's advance against Tiamat in *Enuma Elish* IV:39-104, and thus Yahweh offers Job the position of Marduk if he can so demonstrate his prowess; or (2) they generally depict divinity, and thus Yahweh is asking Job to wipe out the wicked with Job's own "divine" power.

If the conclusions of this study are valid—that the divine speeches show marked and deliberate affinities to *Enuma Elish*—the first proposal is most appropriate. Yahweh's invitation to Job to wipe out the wicked is thus extremely well timed by the poet in preparation for the following descriptions of the Behemoth (Qingu) and Leviathan (Tiamat). Yahweh is asking Job to play the role of Marduk in taking on Leviathan but without his weapons—only with retributive power and justice.

The most obvious result, then, would be the interpretation that Job, who is obviously not divine but rather a mere mortal ("one upon dust") is not up to Marduk's power, let alone Yahweh's. This is one of the options left to the reader of the book of Job. If this position is the best one, then the divine speeches fall short of solving one of the problems raised by the dialogues: Why does God *not* eliminate evildoers according to the ancient tradition of divine justice?

Has Job ... annulled the divine justice? Has he made Yahweh out to be evil?

Many assume that this is Job's question, but actually it is more likely the reader's. Job's defense of his innocence rests upon the establishment of the fact that God does not destroy the wicked any more often than the righteous. He states it in two ways: God destroys the righteous and the wicked together (Job 9:22) and the wicked prosper and live to mature age (Job 21). Nevertheless, Job does not understand why God treats him so extremely cruelly when he created him in the first place (Job 4). The question for readers (especially ancient ones) is why God does not eliminate the wicked. Is he really just? Since Job's concerns, taken together, strongly imply this question, Yahweh addresses it in Job 40:8, in the lines just before his invitation to Job to play Marduk's role:

> Would you even annul justice?
> Would you condemn me in order to vindicate yourself?

The overriding questions are: Has Job, by stating that God does not eliminate evildoers any sooner than the righteous and that God has mistreated him, annulled the divine justice? Has he made Yahweh out to be evil? The claim of the three friends and, most particularly, of Elihu (a fourth contender of Job) is that Job has annulled God's justice. The temptation of modern readers is to take the divine speeches out of their court setting and assume that Yahweh is only addressing Job's own claims, not the claims of his opponents.

But in any typical court case, the claims of *all*—defendant, prosecutor, and witnesses—must be

addressed. Thus, Yahweh is addressing all of the claims together in these words by voicing the complaints of the friends and Elihu that Job has indeed misrepresented God as unjust. He then invites Job to take Marduk's divine role and eliminate the wicked according to the traditional view of divine retribution—contrary to Job's own perceptions about God's justice that *formed the basis of his own claims to innocence.*

If this is merely an attempt to silence Job's implied accusation that God is wrong not to destroy the wicked and spare the righteous, it most certainly works. It puts Job in a double bind and forces him to realize that if his claims to innocence are valid, he simply cannot do this. If he agrees to this kind of justice—the justice of Marduk, ancient Mesopotamia, many in ancient Israel, and Job's three friends and Elihu—he has eliminated whatever hopes he has of obtaining a clear vindication of his innocence. If divine justice is retributive—and God *should* wipe out (or has wiped out) the wicked—then Job has merely suffered what he deserved. His claims to innocence are gone.

Job's silence at this point can be taken as his recognition of this fact or as indication of the rhetorical nature of Yahweh's "wisdom teaching" or examination style. On the other hand, Yahweh's invitation along with Job's silence could actually be the beginning of Job's vindication. Rhetorically speaking, the purpose of the divine examiner would not be merely to show Job his ignorance but also to make an important point. Either Yahweh is here defending the doctrine of divine retribution as the basis by which evil is or has been dealt with or he is attempting to show Job and the friends that such a doctrine simply does not exist in the reality of the universe.

Several indications may be found in the invitation and subsequent descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan to indicate that Yahweh's purpose is to denounce retributive justice as his modus operandi and to replace it with a different kind of justice, one cosmological in nature. In the first place, one cannot but notice the irony of Job's adornment of himself with pride in order to put down the king over all the sons of pride. Would he not, then, become a "son of pride" himself?

In the ancient Near East, any king worthy of the title was known for his pride. The greater the arrogance of a king, the better able he would be to defend his subjects; and the reverse was more likely, that a conqueror was more likely to be described as haughty. Yet, as has been shown above, the Hebrew Bible uses this attribute as a metaphor for the wicked. In the Joban setting, the pride that would allow Marduk or any divine being to take on Tiamat and thus execute retributive justice could make Job one of her sons (vis-à-vis Leviathan).

Therefore, in my opinion, just as Marduk's divine *numina* (special rays around a deity representing divinity) are later assimilated in the description of Leviathan, so Job would become a member of the "sons of pride." The principle alluded to here seems to be that one cannot use oppression to put down oppressors without becoming an oppressor. The use of violence leads to counterviolence and oppressors are often replaced by the oppressed or other oppressors, who then rise up against them and counteroppress them.

A second reason that supports the likelihood of Yahweh's rejection here of the doctrine of divine retribution lies in the pragmatic argument that weapons of force simply do not seem to work. This is suggested by the questions Yahweh raises in Job 40:25-32 about Leviathan:

> Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?
> Can you suppress his tongue with a rope?
> Can you put a reed twine through his nose
> or pierce his jaw with a thorn hook?
> Will he multiply supplications to you or speak gently
> to you?
> Will he form a covenant with you so that
> you may take him for a slave for ever?
> Will you play with him as with a bird or tie him up
> for your girls?
> Do guildsmen barter over him or divide him up
> among the traders?
> Can you fill his skin with spears or his head with a
> fishing harpoon?
> Place your hand on him—remember the battle?
> You won't do it again!

At first glance it appears that Yahweh is reminding Job of his power and ability to slay Leviathan and Job's corresponding inability to do so. Indeed this is one possible reading of these lines.

One cannot but wonder, on the other hand, whether Yahweh really assumes Job would take Leviathan on with fishhook, rope, reed twine, or thorn hook. Would any human being consider using these "weapons" against the monster of the Deep? A very different interpretation, then, is possible. The suggestion here is not that Leviathan can only be slain by Yahweh and not by any human being, but rather that he cannot be *tamed* by applying *force.*

The implied notion of "slaying" this monster follows the idea of taming him and gaining his willing servitude. The words *Remember the battle? You won't do it again* suggest that any attempts to humble this arrogant monster will only lead to a counterreaction. Instead of speaking gently to Job, he would only retaliate against oppressive measures. Even an attempt to slay him using force against force will lead to an unforgettable no-win battle that one will never wish to repeat. The issue here seems to include not merely doing away with evildoers, but also attempting first to gain their submission.

This interpretation can be extended to encompass the entire divine speeches. At the outset, Yahweh takes Job on a tour of the universe and asks him if he knows on what its foundations were laid. Does he know who set the limits around chaos (Yam) as he came bursting from the womb? Has he been the one who ordered justice (the sun) to expose the guilty? Has he been throughout the limits of chaos and evil (darkness) to examine them? Does he know the way to the origin of justice (light)? Does he know the kind of weapons Yahweh keeps in storage? Does he know who sends rain on the desert (a region of chaos as well), where no one lives and where no one needs rain? Could he set up the order of the great universal systems such as the planets? Could he establish the laws that govern the heavens on the earth? Could he achieve the "obedience" of the natural world?

Cosmological Justice

It appears that the divine speeches involve the nature of divine governance and justice. They suggest that the journey of Yahweh has been a turbulent one, with hostility and chaos lurking everywhere, and that the constant issue has been *how* to get order out of chaos, *how* to bring the wicked into line. For the righteous, who observe the interchange of good and evil, the question was, "If God could destroy, or at least abase, the wicked, why does he not do so?" The ancients had long since given up on these questions and consigned the wicked to their deserved and arbitrary fate, yet they are raised in the divine speeches. Yahweh's response to these questions, implicit in the book of Job, contains no simple solutions, but instead suggests a very different approach.

As noted above, the eleven creatures that follow belong to the corpus of Leviathan's sphere of chaos. They are parodies of Tiamat's convoy of monsters, the ones that Marduk captures in his net and leaves bound, ready to be destroyed, or, later, to be forced into slavery. Yahweh's treatment of these creatures is diametrically opposite that of Marduk. Instead of capturing them, putting them to forced labor, or slaying them, Yahweh treats them the same way as he treats his obedient offspring. He feeds the young of the predators, protects the mountain goats and hinds when giving birth, and lets their offspring multiply.

The lion and the ass are particularly significant because they are featured in the Babylonian Theodicy (a Babylonian work in which a sufferer argues with his friend about the gods and human suffering) and elsewhere as metaphors for the wicked. In a very crucial section of the dialogue between the sufferer and the friend (I:48-51), the following conversation ensues:

The sufferer speaks:
The wild ass, the onager who satisfied itself—
Did it give its ear to the guarantor of the god's thinking?
The angry lion who devoured good flesh—
Did he carry his container of oil to relax the goddess's wrath? . . .

The sufferer is protesting, much like the biblical Job, that the rich neglect their offerings to the gods and still prosper. Unlike Job, however, he asks what good it does to worship the gods (I:59-62).

The friend responds:
Observe on the steppe, the noble wild ass,
The arrow will turn back the gorer who overruns the pasture lands.
Come, look at the foe of cattle herds, the lion which you considered,
For the crime the lion did, the pit lies open for him.

The friend—much like Job's friends—claims that ultimately the evildoer will be wiped out; as for the rich who neglect their gods, "the king will burn them in the fire" at an unexpected time.

In contrast to this view of divine control, the Yahweh of Job responds to the lioness by providing for her whelps and lets the wild ass go free. When it is captured, he even loosens its bonds so that it can run about in the steppe. Thus, Yahweh treats the wicked with care and gives them freedom. Similarly, just as Job would have difficulty getting the wild ox to *want* to be his servant—getting him to board at his crib, to be willing to follow him in the fields, and then bring the produce home without coercion—so Yahweh has difficulty obtaining a willing response from rebellious oppressors.

Yahweh next defends rights of the stupid (ostrich), the powerful in war (horse), and the high (thus proud) and bloodthirsty (the falcon and the hawk, who love to gorge themselves on the dead and dying on the battlefield) to find places in his creation. This may serve to highlight the purpose of the poet—to show that Yahweh treats the predators and their victims alike (that is, the wicked and the righteous), without showing deference for any over another.

Perhaps this is what has led to the conclusion that the Yahweh speeches provide an amoral view of the universe, where there is no justice. If retribution is the only kind of divine justice possible, this is true. If the doctrine of divine retribution and reward is the basis of cosmological order, the divine speeches may be read as validations of this doctrine. But the poet seems to imply that Yahweh's justice is neither retributive nor merely distributive, but rather cosmological. Indeed, once the divine speeches are understood against their counterpart in *Enuma Elish* IV and V, as well as Job's own *rîb* (case) against God (40:2), they may be viewed as Yahweh's

The poet seems to imply that Yahweh's justice is neither retributive nor merely distributive, but rather cosmological.

defense of *cosmological* justice in the face of evil.

Cosmological justice is different from judicial justice; it is derived from the sphere of creation in which its maker not only brings creatures into existence, but also maintains their care. In it, according to Job 38, chaos/evil is not slain before creation takes place. The foundations of creation are formed first; afterward chaos and evil emerge to be contained by Yahweh within their confines as a part of the natural world. Cosmological justice deals with all of creation, not merely cases of dispute; it seeks to establish truth rather than to arbitrate; it deals with persons, not merely with their actions.

Ultimately evil has existed from primordial time, before human beings came into being. Yahweh therefore does not operate from considerations of reward and punishment or retribution, but rather, as creator of all living elements, takes care of all his creatures—good and bad alike. Yahweh will treat all of his creatures the way he wants and will not necessarily slay them. Like parents who consider their bad dependent offspring their children just as much as their good offspring, Yahweh provides an appropriate environment for the peculiar needs of *all* his creation—both prey and predator.

Taking responsibility for the disorderly conduct of some, he puts limits around chaos, oversees the interactions of warring elements, traces their routes and ways, provides for the young of evildoers, lets the obdurate go free, and allows the monarch of evil to move unconquered through the deep and to rule over all those who are arrogant.

Conclusion

Normally, one would expect Yahweh to end on a triumphant note rather than upon the glorification of Leviathan. Where is the poet's closing doxology extolling Yahweh's victory over this fearsome monster? Like the central figure in the story, the Joban poet seems content to end in the bowels of chaos in which not all the questions are satisfactorily answered. Yet, this is the reality of Job, the sufferer. Why foist on him a meaningless tradition that evil had already been rendered impotent by Yahweh in order to make the world a well-ordered place? The reality of the inhabited world is—and Job notes it—that the wicked do seem to prosper and that both the wicked and the righteous suffer the same end: death.

Perhaps the Joban poet responds to the view offered by the Sumerian and Babylonian theodicies to the problem of suffering—that the gods were indeed incomprehensible, no one could understand their ways, or what displeased them. By attempting a cosmological answer, the poet has tried to portray Yahweh as a *morally* supreme deity in contrast to ancient Near Eastern gods, whose ways could not be explained ethically.

Furthermore, by including in his cosmological scheme the combat myth through his parody of *Enuma Elish*, the Joban poet attempts to provide—though probably not to everyone's satisfaction—a partial answer to the questions of divine justice raised in the book of Job. To him Yahweh's cosmological justice provides a far more realistic portrayal of life within the context of good and evil. Though cognizant of popular beliefs, and although fair to their hearing, he is reticent to accept wholesale the prevailing view that suggests only the wicked suffer. Rather, evil remains a part of God's universe and thus the innocent may suffer also.

In the effort to reconcile reality with belief in divine power, the poet of the Yahweh speeches turns away from retributive justice to the cosmological sphere. Unlike Marduk, Yahweh does not create the foundations of the world from the carcass of the slain foe, but rather evil emerges from within primordial creation. Within the boundaries he sets, Yahweh maintains the care of *all* his creatures, whether good or evil. In the cosmological frame of the book of Job, Yahweh presides over the sons of Elohim while Leviathan rules over the sons of pride.

Notes and References

1. The text of *Enuma Elish* used is that of W. G. Lambert and copied by Simon B. Parker, *Enuma Eliš: The Babylonian Epic of Creation; the Cuneiform Text* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966).

Jean Sheldon is an associate professor of religion at Pacific Union College. This article is adapted from Chapter 7 of her dissertation, "The Book of Job as Hebrew Theodicy: An Ancient Near Eastern Intertextual Conflict Between Law and Cosmology," completed as part of the requirements for the joint Ph.D. in Near Eastern Religions at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Graduate Theological Union, 2002. The author can be contacted at <jsheldon@puc.edu> or One Angwin Avenue, Pacific Union College, Angwin, Calif. 94508.

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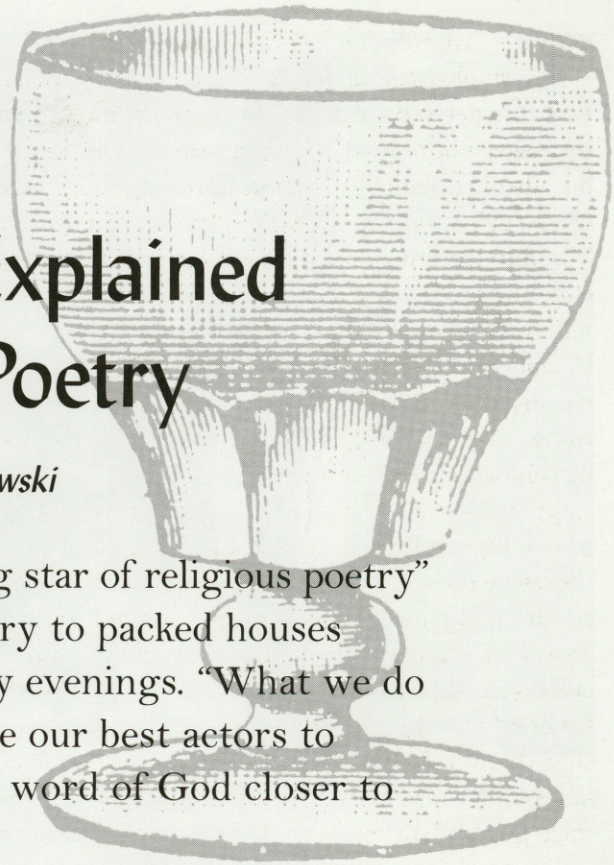


The Gospel Explained Through Poetry

By Ray Dabrowski

Zita Kirsnauskaite, "the rising star of religious poetry" in Lithuania reads her poetry to packed houses during her frequent literary evenings. "What we do is not only read poetry, but I invite our best actors to read the Bible aloud. It brings the word of God closer to the people," Kirsnauskaite says.

The poetry readings also often include musical performances. Irena Jeriominaite, an opera star from Vilnius, has included in her repertoire one of Kirsnauskaite's poems that has been set to music.

With four poetry books that have won acclaim from Alfredas Guscius, Lithuania's renowned columnist and literary critic, Kirsnauskaite is often on the road now sharing her art. Several of her poems have become lyrics to music set by Lithuania's well-known contemporary composer and professor, Lionginas Abarius. The latest book of poetry, *Spindinti giesme* (Glittering Song) includes these songs and Kirsnauskaite seems overwhelmed by the attention the artistic community of Vilnius is giving her. She explains that she doesn't ask for it:

"Look at this collection of poems," she summons. "One of my poet colleagues has written a poem about my poetry," she blushes as she showcases dozens of publications, newspaper and magazine articles, about her and her poetry. On the walls of her two-room apartment are memorable pictures of meetings, as she explains, with "important (United States) presidents, (Bill) Clinton and (George W.) Bush."

This public acclaim comes after years of restrictions under the Soviet system, when she wrote solely for herself.

"I lived in the capital of Latvia for many years, but I was not able to show what I wrote to anyone. It was not possible to write and share it publicly. The police frequently came and checked on people. The police often looked for people like me. They were suspicious of anyone expressing themselves freely," Kirsnauskaite explains. "But I continued to write just for myself. It kept me going.

"Now that Lithuania is free, I concluded—after returning in 1996 (to

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY DABROWSKI

Lithuanian Adventist Zita Kirsnauskaite has won critical acclaim for her poetry.

Vilnius)—that I should write again. And now that's what I do," she joyfully explains.

"My poems are about relationships between God and people. I write about him and where to find him—in nature, in the word of God, which is the source of true happiness.

"But I also write to comfort people. Sadness of this world is temporal, but hope is eternal and we need to cling to it. My poetry aims to turn the reader's attention toward God and not to end their lives senselessly, but to cling to hope. There is a better life that we all are waiting for—that's what I am saying."

A nurse by profession, Kirsnauskaite is a widow who lives with her son, David, in a two-room apartment on Subaciaus Street. The Soviet-style block of apartments is like many that dot the landscape in the Lithuanian countryside. She has been a Seventh-day Adventist for thirty-one years.

"On the Wings of an Angel," her fifth book of poems, is ready now. She is waiting for a sponsor to realize the project. "The poems are about everlasting life, joy, and a feeling of calm for the disturbed and about the everlasting truth of the gospel," she says.

Ray Dabrowski is communication director for the General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists.

1.

Do not enter into despair
Do not enter into despair
When the frozen earth of pain
    disturbs the silence . . .
Do not enter into despair
When the time comes to drink from the glass
    of anxiety . . .
Do not enter into despair
Even if a bitter tear
Eats away deep folds on your cheeks
Tempting towards despair.

Do not enter into despair
Never, never
Never ever,
Do not leave the hope of Faith . . .
He who gives it up easily
Is the one that is abandoned by Hope . . .
Do not enter into despair
Even if the time comes
When the sun does not rise!
Do not go! I pray! Do not abandon hope!

2.

When you Look around in Pain
The goblet of concerns is full
Even though I drink from it each morning and in the
    evenings.
I cannot quiet the soul with prayer,
If, dear heart, you look with pain upon the past,

Look ahead, broadly, at the clear Distance,
Embrace the bright space with your eyes
It is good for the soul if we wave with hope at
    Expectation
And ennoble the depths of the heart with love and
    patience.

3.
If an icy drop of pain penetrates the heart,
And having melted turns into a bitter tear
The consoling song will seem like a miracle
All will seem light and good.

Leaden heartbreak—a temporary arrow . . .
The black shield of pain will soon fade
And nothing similar to suffering will remain
Flowers of bliss will bloom again in the soul!

4.
Anxiety came to my heart
Inebriated me with pain
Placed a heavy burden of worries . . .
Oh dear Lord, look onto my soul,
For you see how sad it is there!
I knelt before you, crying . . .
Help me, save me, great God,
You have healed so much pain!
Now, shines a ray of light hope.
Grant peace and acceptance of daily life!
Cover me with Your holy wing
And guard from misfortunes and danger!

5. As the Sunset Approaches
When I am similar to a dimming sunset,
To a yellowing ripe autumn,
Care for me Lord, refresh and brighten,
May the energy of the soul never become weak, never run dry.

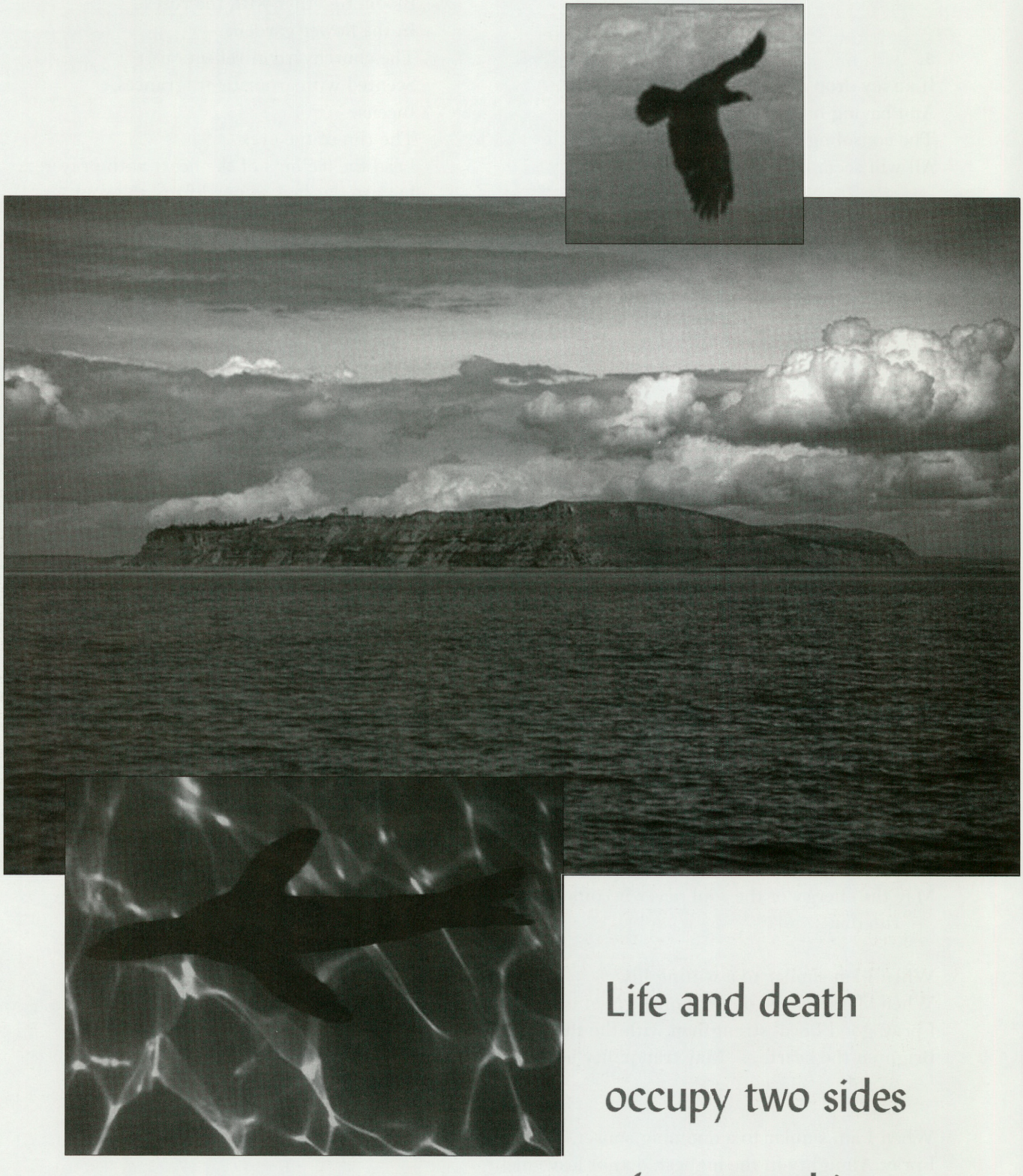
When I am similar to a wilting lily,
When blossoms die out and only green is left,
I pray, good Lord, strengthen with the threads of love,
Brighten the heart. . . . May tranquility be born in the world.

When I am similar to a dimming sunset,
I pray, Almighty in the highest, do not leave me!
Care for me like at daybreak when you blessed with blooms,
Strengthen with vigilance, illuminate my gloomy eyes.

May the soul, like the hidden sun, never die out,
Until it meets Your heaven-beckoning voice!

6. For Love
Bloom together with the roses
In the flower gardens—
The churchyard of reflections.
Scented with aromatic fragrances,
Incense.
The rim of the eyes
Lead the feelings of the heart with prayer. . .
Diffuse the rays of good from the soul.

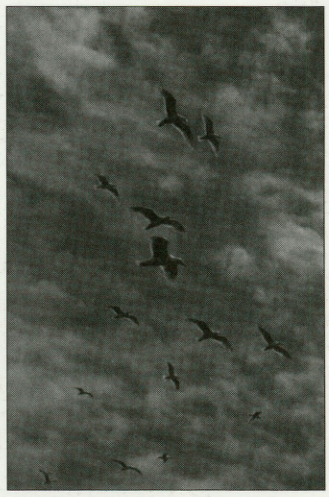
In the churchyard of reflections,
Gently lower the
Beauty of the flowers whose blooms have expired
Into the depths of the heart.
As if on an Altar
Covered with roses
For the Lord,
Shine with sacred pearls
In the chest of Hope!



Life and death occupy two sides of a razor-thin reality...

Protection Island Eucharist

By James L. Hayward
Photography by James L. Hayward

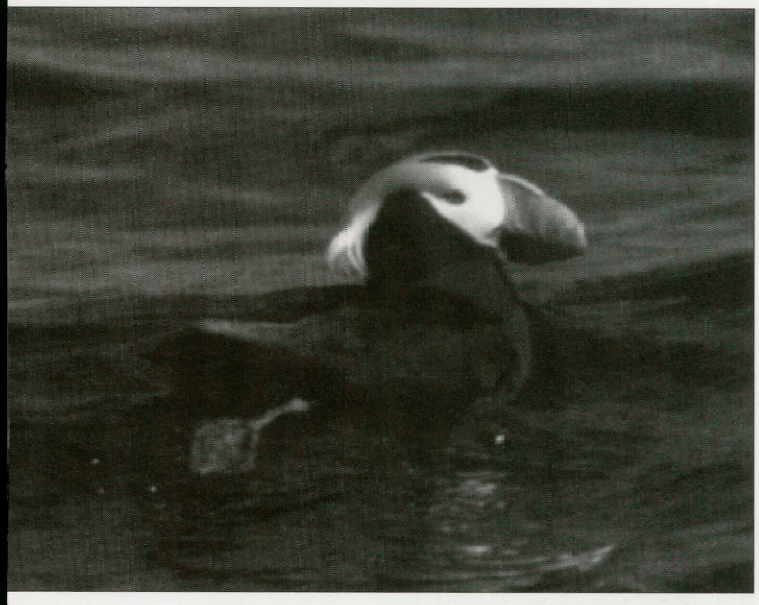


The night calls. I leave my colleagues in the cabin to plan tomorrow's work and step into the darkness gathering over Protection Island National Wildlife Refuge. I pause to glance at the sky where a half moon, draped in gossamer silk, slips free.

I secure my collar—warmth caresses my neck, a cold gust tussles my hair. The Olympic mountains and Vancouver Island are silhouetted against the fading horizon. I turn and walk east. A meteor falls earthward, splits, each half traces a separate ending—then darkness. My movement startles three deer. They bound across the path ahead. One stops, awaits my approach, snorts repeatedly. With each expletive it drops its head, paws the ground.

I hike to the edge of a steep bluff. The Strait of Juan de Fuca, placid this evening, separates this island from the San Juans to the north. Below and extending to the east, Violet Point provides a stage where ten thousand gulls worry, tend chicks, contest territory boundaries. To the west, Douglas firs, grand firs, and western red cedars occupy a small wood, the canopy of which stands high and serrated against the glow of the lingering day. Two bald eagles, still unsettled, call from the trees. To the south I hear the rapid flutter of wings—a stubby, fish-laden, rhinoceros auklet gracelessly returns to its burrow, hurtling, not flying; crashing, not landing. Oblivious to my presence, it emits its kazoo-like call.

Minutes pass. I absorb—am absorbed by—this expectant world. Time evaporates…muscles relax…



Seventeen summers ago, I came here to study glaucous-winged gulls—where they build their nests, why they move from here to there, how they say this and that. I also came to study bald eagles, great-horned owls, rhinoceros auklets, tufted puffins, pigeon guillemots, harbor seals, and elephant seals. I now see vastly more.

The creatures teach me uncensored things about life. The sea teaches me about contingency and vitality. The night sky teaches me about creation and eternity. No pretense here. Life and death occupy two sides of a razor-thin reality. Comedy and tragedy define existence and mold the passage of time.

Born of water and ice, the island's endless story merges with my own.

Place

Protection Island lies at the southeast corner of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, just north of Miller Peninsula and west of Quimper Peninsula. In 1792, British explorer George Vancouver gave it this name because it protects Discovery Bay, between the two peninsulas, from northwesterly winds. Here, from the top of an ancient sand dune, one can see the Olympic range, Mount Rainier, Mount Baker, Whidbey Island, Fidalgo Island, Vancouver Island, the San Juan islands, and Dungeness Spit.

Pay it but passing notice and the island shouts "story!" The low, gravel spits at each end; the high central island; the gentle, undulating surface of the upper plateau; the giant boulders poised above the south road cut; and, the steeply eroded cliffs above its northeast and northwest shores—layer upon layer of gravel, sand, silt, and peat with channel cuts, cross-bedding.... Here and there, a mammoth tooth, sometimes a tusk.

Annie Dillard writes that when we die, the last thing our minds register is the "dreaming memory of land as it lay this way and that." For me, this will be Protection Island.

Color

I hike south across the prairie in front of the cabin to collect samples of a plant species found last week. I complete my task, then head east, parallel to and south of the old landing strip where I look for other plants. But a twenty-knot breeze makes searching and collecting difficult.

A strong and sustained gust of wind surges in from the northwest, drives hard against my back as I face a vast ocean of tall grass. Stems dance this way and that, bending, quivering, undulating. Billows roll along the surface of the grassy sea. Greens, yellows, and browns ripple, shift, and quake. I lose my balance. For one insane, chaotic moment I comprehend through the eyes of Vincent Van Gogh.

I laugh, throw myself down, and raise a grateful prayer toward a blue expanse framed by bouncing heads of grain.

Boundary

Fog enshrouds us often during this El Niño summer. The misty layers roll in from the west to form a trinity of superimposed seas—water, fog, sky of blue. Once enveloped, the island pokes through the top of the middle sea.

By compass, I take a colleague through the whiteness toward the mainland. We approach the beach. I cut the ignition, tilt the prop, and ease the bow onto Diamond Point. My colleague leaps ashore. I pass him his gear, he pushes me off.

I point the boat back toward the island and see that the blanket has slid to the east. Its lagging edge forms a receding white wall off starboard.

I angle toward the fog, which teases me to define its boundary. Several meters distant the edge looks real; upon approach it diffuses, phantom-like, to mist. In and out I work the boat, attempting to draw together two realities.

Might as well try stitching sky to sea.

Music

After fifteen hours of counting birds and seals, I pack my gear and head to the cabin. I haven't felt well—I made two urgent trips back along the path earlier today.

As I trudge back this third time, mercifully with less exigency, a nearly full moon illuminates the way ahead. Olympic peaks loom in bold relief against a darkening sky festooned by high clouds.

A steady westerly breeze wooshes with a high-pitched rustle through the tall grass from the south, and whirs with a bass sound from the north as it curls the tops of firs and cedars.

I approach the cabin threshold and pause to hear a third sound of this ensemble—the dull whistle of hurried air striking sharp corners and penetrating uncaulked cracks in thin walls. I turn the latch, push open the door, feel the warmth.

Kin

I sit at breakfast. Outside a doe stands, statuesque, wading in a shallow sea of purple-flowered vetch against the Olympic backdrop, tawny coat gleaming in the morning sun, head down. She now lifts her head as she chews a mouthful of flowers, stems, and seeds. Her facial muscles flex and ripple.

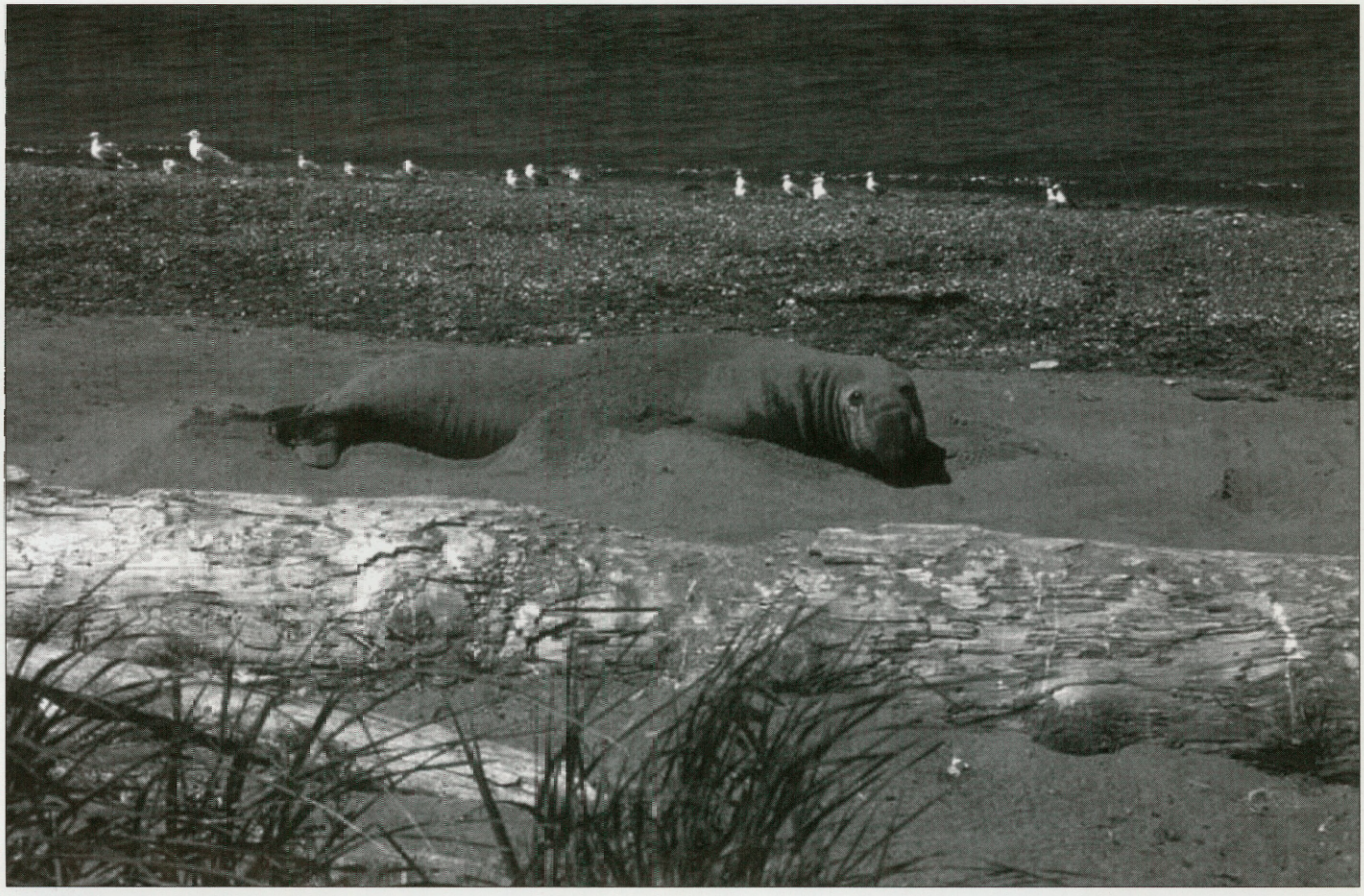
As I stare, I become aware that she and I chew in common cadence. Mammalian siblings.

A faint smile plays across my face.

Lust

During June and early July, the omnipresent chorus of mewing, choking, yelping, and long-calling pulses with the lusty sounds of male gulls, copulating. The randy roosters stand atop their hens, who twist their heads and necks approvingly back toward their mates. The males, in turn, twist their hindquarters around and try to transfer their gamete-laden semen. With no organ of intromission, mating is like fueling a car from a spoutless can.

Strewn throughout the colony are fetid gull corpses. Carrion beetles hump within the gulls' ruptured loins, turned on by the putrefying masses. On the feathered outer surfaces, blow flies couple, lay cream-colored eggs around the margins of the stilled eyes, bills, and vents.



On the north beach a bull elephant seal lines up with his cow, his ventral surface aimed in her direction. He reaches out to her with his right front flipper and tenderly pats her side. Soon his stiffened, foot-long phallus reaches out to her as well.

Fireworks

20:32. In the nursery area along the north beach, a female harbor seal seems uncomfortable. She raises her head, anxiously looks side-to-side, flexes her body as she holds her hindquarters high. She presses her hind flippers together as in prayer. During contractions, she spreads her flippers to reveal pinkish, swollen vulva, dilated several centimeters. Now she lies on her left side. Another contraction. Once again she covers the opening with her flippers and short tail.

20:45. She reorients along the beach, tries to get comfortable. Three other pregnant females lie nearby.

20:48. She raises her tail and forms a protective circle around the birth opening by touching the tips of her flexed flippers.

21:10. She's now at the water's edge. Another contraction. A protrusion. She snaps at a seal nearby.

21:15. The pup is quickly expelled into the shallows. Its arrival is announced by a red burst that spreads through the sea like fireworks, then disappears. The mother noses, pokes, and gently nips the pup. The two then swim and roll together in surf.

Baptism

A fledgling rhinoceros auklet has tucked itself beneath the tall grass by the marina. Until today it was safe within its burrow high along the bluff. Perhaps it ventured out too early, unable to fly. Or perhaps it could fly, but not far enough to reach the water.

I bend down to snatch the dark form from certain dehydration, starvation, and death. Instinctively it pushes deeper into the grass. I wrap my fingers around the stout body. Once lifted, the form does not struggle. Instead, it scans its enlarged vista. I carry it to the end of the pier. As I walk, it bobs in countercadence to my stride.

I kneel, open my hands, and it takes its first dive. Head down, legs kicking, it disappears.

Seconds later it emerges ten meters away, turns, swims toward me. Sensing error, it dives again, this time for a longer immersion.

Born of land, naive creature of the sea comes of age.

Apparitions

Dusk closes in as I trudge along a deer trail, hoping to learn what I can from the gathering darkness. A doe, startled to find me walking along her path, veers cross-country down the hill at a rapid clip. Clouds shelter the tallest peaks of the Olympics and when the sun has set, their pinkness deepens to a crimson flush.

A stirring of grass makes me look to where the trail disappears over the slope. A second doe, spotted twins in tow, moves down the trail from which I've just come. She does not sense my presence.

I work my way down the slope. Two great-horned owl fledglings glide from a small tree to the middle of the path between me and the sunset. Each bird is enclosed within a diffuse corona of down.

The fledglings bounce kitten-like, one over the

other, and attack make-believe prey along the path. Their wings spread and flap silently against the still gray air. Apparitions of the dusk.

Pups

A young, gray elephant seal emerges from the water's edge like a biblical leviathan. Stopping repeatedly to catch its breath, it heaves its way up the north beach toward a larger, brown male. Upon arrival, it raises its burly head, mouth wide open revealing a red and gleaming buccal cavern protected by formidable ivories. The larger animal responds by rearing up, and coming down on the smaller animal's head and neck.

Over and over, this cycle repeats itself. Each time the huge opposing forequarters rise upward at seemingly impossible angles. Then, as if responding to some invisible signal, they move forward and downward in unison. Massive necks and chins collide, a ponderous mingling of flesh. A bout of jawing and biting—necks and backs taking most of the abuse—follows. Brobdingnagian pups at play.

Breach

20:30. A female harbor seal lies high on the beach. She seems restless, agitated. She turns from side-to-side, glancing here and there. She lifts her hindquarters stiffly.

Contractions. The hindquarters of a pup protrude. She rests.

20:45. Another bout of contractions. She circles, twists her head back and around. Protruding mammae show her readiness to nurse. She lifts her hindquarters and pushes.

20:57. Gulls, ever nosy, stand close by. One walks behind mother and pecks at the emerging pup.

20:59. The pup now extends out to midsection. The mother pushes hard.

21:00. The pup is nearly out. The mother swings her body around and the pup is finally free. But it does not move. The mother turns toward the pup, puts her front flipper over its body. No response.

21:04. The mother, with birth blood covering her neck and chest, attacks another pup, snapping, nipping at the head. She lunges at the pup's mother. Both move away.

21:06. She now attacks a second pup and its mother. Her own pup continues to lie still on cobbles.

21:08. The mother is agitated. A gull eyes the pup.

21:10. The mother sniffs the head of her pup, then moves away.

21:11. The gull walks toward the pup, but the mother chases it away. She snaps at other gulls.

21:15. The mother continues to chase gulls. She comes around to the back of the pup, puts her front flipper over it as she passes. Her body pushes against it; it jiggles passively.

21:25. An adult bald eagle lands by the pup. The mother and other seals disappear into water.

21:26. A juvenile eagle lands and begins to feed on the afterbirth.

21:27. Another adult and two more juveniles land, making a total of five. They fight over the afterbirth. During the mayhem, one of the juveniles tumbles into the water.

21:28. A juvenile pecks at the pup. It's displaced by another juvenile, who hops atop the pup. An adult also attempts to stand on the pup, but is displaced by the juvenile.

21:32. Starting around the eye, one of the juveniles begins to work on pup's head. It tugs hard.

21:47. A food fight ensues. Much flapping about and tugging on the pup.

22:45. The eagles are still feeding but it's too dark to see more.

Redemption

I approach the intersection by the water tower at sunset Blimp-bodied June beetles zoom erratically above the marram grass. Here and there on the ground, pairs clasp, bump, and grind toward genetic redemption. But there is more to this spectacle than reproductive exigency Topsy-turvy beetle corpses, thoraxes picked clean, litter the ground. Some retain just enough muscle to shadow-box on their backs. Others lie still, piecemeal.

Ahead, three shadowy forms appear—one pounces on an escaping beetle, another hawks a beetle in flight, a third pecks a downed corpse. *Turdus migratorius.* American robins. Any sex-crazed beetle that encounters one of these feathered dinos is knocked silly by sharp blows to the body, flight muscles ripped from its middle.

I nudge a copulating beetle pair. Hsssssssssss! Their size alone would discourage many predators. I wonder why the dinos fail to devour their bulbous abdomens, so I slit a dead one open. Dry, meatless, sham.

Conversion

Gulls fly up just northeast of the marina. An adult eagle circles, hovers, then drops, talons extended, toward the colony surface.

A gull chick, maybe two weeks old, is carried in golden clasp high above its home. Midair, the eagle brings its grasp forward, reaches down with hooked bill, dispatches the chick.

Two juvenile eagles materialize to pursue the adult in an attempt to steal the prey. The adult lands again and again along the beach. Each time it is displaced. Finally, prey still in grasp, it flaps unimpeded to the south beach, where it alights atop the tangled roots of a beach log. The late afternoon sun illuminates predator and prey without the distorting heat waves that impeded my view earlier today. I switch from binoculars to spotting scope, rest my hand on the cold metal barrel, zoom in.

The eagle arranges the limp carcass on a root branch, then plucks out gray feathers that join the stiff breeze. The corpse is opened. Beaks full of warm chick are ripped away, chomped down. The breeze ruffles the brown covert feathers of the back and belly of the predator, exposing white down.

Intermittently the feeding process is halted while the eagle attends to an annoyance under its left wing—a mite, perhaps, making its own dinner. The softer meat now gone, the eagle attacks the tough connective tissue. Soon, everything is gone. An elaborate honing process begins—beak twisting this way and that against the wooden perch.

Erstwhile chick fast becomes eagle.

Venom

It's early afternoon. I'm sitting by the sliding glass door cleaning my camera. A movement catches my eye. Outside the glass, a crane fly flutters ineffectually while it dangles from a nearly invisible line, a half meter long. The fly swings to and fro like a pendulum gone wrong.

I look more closely. A tiny zebra spider has embedded its chelicerae in the left side of the fly's thorax, close to where it joins the head. The fly is hooked to the spider, the spider to the thread, the thread to the casing at the top of the door.

The fly ceases its struggle. The predator climbs backward several centimeters, up its silken line. The fly once again commences to struggle, stopping the spider. But soon the swings, less pronounced, dampen to zero. The spider, once again, backs up the thread, fly in tow.

This alternating pattern—prey struggling, predator hauling—continues for fifteen minutes until the spider's hind legs contact the door casing. The spider drags its much larger prey up the vertical side of the casing, and backs over the top to a narrow, horizontal surface. With some difficulty, it hauls the fly over the cliff edge. The fly continues to move—antennae and legs flex and extend—but with little vigor. The poison is taking effect.

Now the spider—part predator, part angler, part buckaroo—backs up to the wooden siding and waits.

Minutes pass. The fly moves no more. The spider hauls the stilled form five or six centimeters higher and stops, its chelicerae still embedded and sucking venom-digested nutrients from the spindly prey.

Abundance

Dense fog envelops the island. Huge numbers of dew-dappled spider webs are spread among the prairie grasses. I stretch a 100-meter line and randomly select 10 points along the line. At each point I place a 1-meter-squared rectangle over the grass and count the webs within. Average number of webs per square = 33.

Multiply 33 by the size of the island. Or by the size of the world.

Eucharist

The island caretakers have invited me over to watch *I Heard the Owl Call My Name.* She makes coffee. He begins the movie.

> Unaware that he is terminally ill, a young Anglican vicar moves to a remote Indian village north of Vancouver, B.C. Full of idealism, he sets out to bring God—and Anglo culture—to the villagers. Much to his surprise, he discovers that their view of life encompasses more than his. The vicar was assigned to this village to learn about life. This he has done. But when informed of his fate he refuses to believe—until, that is, the owl calls his name. This, to the villagers, signals an approaching end. Having embraced the fullness of life, he now accepts impending death.

We briefly discuss the simple charm and rich meaning of the story, then say good night. I drive slowly back along the winding road to the cabin. I park and step into the night, walk onto the prairie under the star-spangled sky, lie on my back.

Drooping grasses frame the heavenly dome. The Milky Way arches over my stretched form. Imagining this galactic disc horizontal—the trees, cabin, vehicle, ships, island, and sea itself—my world clings vertically, like woodpeckers, to the earth. Or, more precisely, the earth clings to them . . . tugs coolly against my back. Chilled, I rise, trudge to the cabin, throw open the window, wrap myself in down…drift off….

…A predawn glow registers on my half-open eyes.

A pleasing, somber rhythm—the call of a great-horned owl—wafts through an open window. But just as mental cobwebs dissolve, the call grows silent…I remember the vicar's story. I strain to hear the call again. Only silence. I strain to recall the intonation, the inflection, the rhythm. What had it said?

I stand cold and naked in the front room. The low, early morning light illumines two abandoned cabins to the west, one rectangular, the other octagonal. The rectangular housed a caretaker, the octagonal, a contractor. Accident claimed her, cancer him.

I live in the third cabin along the island's north side.

Someday, with clear intonation, certain inflection, and precise rhythm, I will hear the owl call my name.

At the end of my vegetation transect, a circle of dark brown auklet feathers, mostly curved coverts, are sprawled over the bindweed. A detached leg rests to one side. A pair of carrion beetles, black with gaudy red stripes, couples shamelessly where tibiotarsus joins tarsometatarsus. A third beetle scrounges below. Two types of flies crawl sluggishly about the remaining corpse in the cooling air. The head and wings are gone, perhaps removed by crows. Among the carnage a brown-and-tan feather, dropped from the wing of an owl, tells the story.

I hike out onto Violet Point to collect samples of the local beach grass. A graduate student emerges from his blind.

"A few minutes ago a juvenile eagle flew into the tall grass over there. I saw something white in its beak."

We walk to the site. An adult gull—a female, judging by the size of the bill and the shape of the head—sits a meter away atop a matted bed of beach grass. She rests motionless, eyes wide open. The feathers along her once gray back are now red. She stares into a future she cannot comprehend. Nor can we.

Out of respect we turn away. Slowly and quietly, life will drain from her form.

Next day I return to find a circle of white feathers surrounding her disarticulated head, wings, legs. Eagle leftovers.

Take eat; this is my body.
This is my blood; drink ye all of it.

Blessing

A last walk to the bluff. I pause, look up at a brilliant Jupiter and sprawling Milky Way. A lunar crescent describes its slow path across the crystal dome. I see and feel so much, but I understand so little.

Perhaps . . . just perhaps . . . in the vastness of it all, things will be okay.

I raise my arms, spread my fingers, and receive the blessing of the stars.

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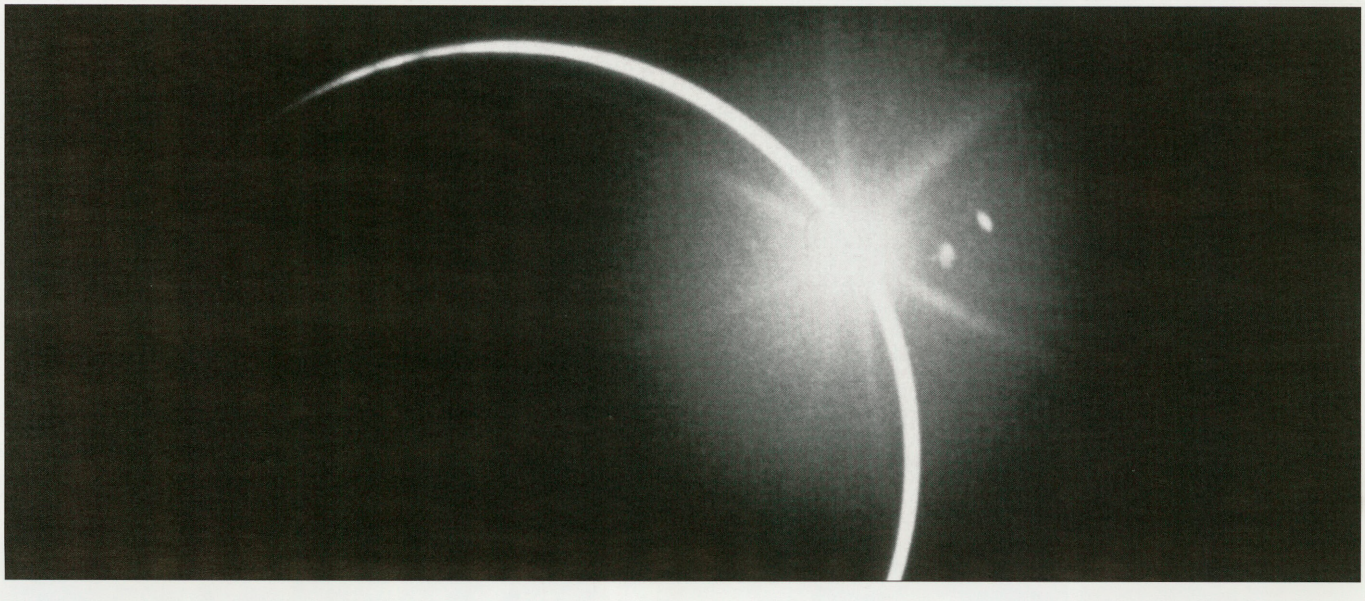
For the Beauty of the Earth:
An Adventist Theology of Ecology

By Warren C. Trenchard

Christians and the Earth

For most of its history Christianity has shown little interest in nature as anything other than the context in which humans live and the support system for their lives. Typically, Christians have seen nature as something that God gave humans to dominate. They have usually understood this dominion to be the right of exploitation. In this regard, Christians have seen themselves different from those they consider pagans and from adherents of other, particularly Eastern religions whose ties to nature are thoroughgoing and spiritual. On one occasion, a Christian missionary asked Gandhi what he wanted to achieve in the world. Gandhi replied, "To identify myself with all creation." The missionary left disappointed.[1]



For the last third of a century many have come to blame the present environmental crisis on the formative impact of Western Christian theology and ethics on the development of science and technology and the resulting industrial revolution. The germinal study in this regard was published by Lynn White in 1967. In this oft-quoted essay, White argued that "our present science and our present technology are...tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature." For White, such Christianity therefore "bears a huge burden of guilt" for the present ecologic crisis.[2] Eastern Christians, non-Christians, aboriginal people, and New Agers are often seen to be more committed to environmental responsibility than Western Christians.[3]

In the last twenty years, Christian theologians and other writers have begun seriously to address this issue, not only acknowledging the ambiguous heritage of Christian theology in this regard, but also exploring ways that contemporary Christian theology and ethics can creatively foster environmental responsibility and renewal.[4] No longer is stewardship for Christians merely faithfulness in the giving of tithes and offerings.

Adventist Christians and the Earth

Seventh-day Adventists, like most Christians, have historically displayed little interest in ecological matters. The traditional fascination of Adventists with nature is not based on any developed theology of the natural world. Rather, it is associated with their commitment to health and the belief that time spent in nature will positively affect the mind and body. One notable exception, of course, was the pantheism of John Harvey Kellogg and others, with its virtual deification of nature.[5]

For Ellen White, nature seemed important largely for its educational and restorative values. She did not have a doctrine of environmental responsibility. Yet she did offer some insights that are fundamental to an Adventist theology of the earth. In a generic way she spoke of "the unity of man with nature."[6]

Although her numerous references to stewardship consistently refer to the wise management of finances and abilities, she occasionally viewed stewardship in a somewhat broader sense. Even when discussing financial stewardship, she sometimes wrote of the more general responsibilities of humans as God's stewards.[7]

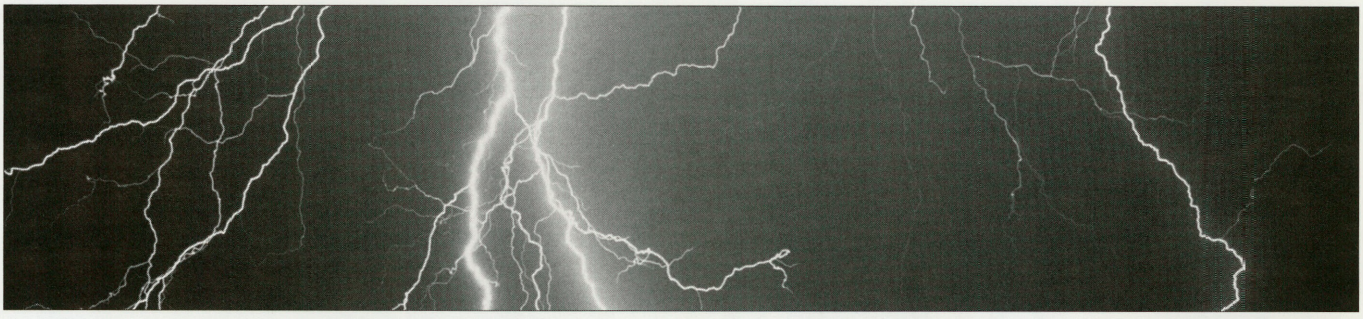
In perhaps her most specific consideration of an ecological theme, Ellen White wrote on the treatment of animals, albeit in nineteenth-century terms:

The traditional fascination of Adventists with nature is not based on any developed theology of the natural world.

> Few realize as they should the sinfulness of abusing animals or leaving them to suffer from neglect. He who created man made the lower animals also, and "his tender mercies are over all his works." The animals were created to serve man, but he has no right to cause them pain by harsh treatment or cruel exaction.
>
> It is because of man's sin that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." Suffering and death were thus entailed, not only upon the human race, but upon the animals. Surely, then, it becomes man to seek to lighten, instead of increasing, the weight of suffering which his transgression has brought upon God's creatures. He who will abuse animals because he has them in his power, is both a coward and a tyrant.... A record goes up to heaven, and a day is coming when judgment will be pronounced against those who abuse God's creatures.[8]

About 1970, Seventh-day Adventist authors began to address the issue of Christian responsibility for the conservation and renewal of the earth. Their writings include discussions of the growing ecologic crisis, efforts at developing an environmental conscience among Adventists, and insights into the relationship between theology and ecology.[9]

Although some writers have featured a few elements of Adventist theology, none has developed a distinctly Adventist theology of the earth. As we might expect, several see the Sabbath as a time not only to celebrate the Creator but also to remind us of our environmental responsibilities.[10] In 1993, the Andrews (currently



Adventist) Society for Religious Studies devoted its annual meeting to the topic of "Adventists and Environmental Responsibility."

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has issued several official declarations on environmental issues. In 1980, the Church included a statement on stewardship, with a reference to "the earth and its resources," in the list of Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. However, despite the inclusion of this phrase, the statement is thoroughly money-oriented. Subsequently, the Ministerial Association of the General Conference published a book that discusses these beliefs. Its chapter on stewardship contains a small section on this issue.[11]

The first comprehensive official statement by the Church on the subject of environmental responsibility was voted by the Annual Council of the General Conference in 1992.[12] Theologically, the statement is distinctly Adventist only in its reference to the Sabbath as emphasizing "the importance of our integration with the total environment." Philosophically, it is anthropocentric; politically, it supports the concept of sustainable development.

In 1995 and 1996, the Church issued three other statements relating to Adventists and the environment. These statements were voted by the General Conference Administrative Committee. Two, which are almost identical in wording, indicate that humans are stewards of "the natural environment" and that they have badly failed in this responsibility. The third statement discusses climate changes caused by industrialized countries and calls for governments to take specific political actions. All three end with similar paragraphs that describe the commitment of Seventh-day Adventists to environmental responsibility.[13]

The number of Adventist publications and pronouncements on the topic of environmental responsibility is impressive. However, most are short, incomplete treatments of the issue. Furthermore, none attempts to set out a comprehensive Adventist theological position. It is time for Adventists to move beyond consciousness raising and unstructured theological musing, as important and necessary as they have been. Adventists need to focus these scattered ideas into a comprehensive and systematic theology of environmental responsibility, a theology that is not only Christian but also uniquely Adventist—an Adventist theology of the earth.[14]

Unless they engage in this task, Seventh-day Adventists in general will not take the issue seriously. Some will practice ecologically responsible activities, such as paper and glass recycling and water conservation, for social or political reasons. A few will do such things because of religious convictions. Most will continue to live with little or no regard for the status or fate of the environment. However, there will be no general movement of Adventists toward responsible ecology until they have a well-developed theological basis for such behavior. Furthermore, without such a developed theology, Adventists will not be taken seriously by others in the Christian community and beyond.

A Paradigm for an Adventist Theology of the Earth

Therefore, as an initial step in this direction, I propose that Seventh-day Adventists develop an Adventist theology of the earth within a paradigm of five basic affirmations and two symbols. Although none of these affirmations or symbols is entirely unique to Adventism, the assemblage is particularly characteristic of Seventh-day Adventist thought and practice.

Five Affirmations

The five affirmations reflect a trajectory of cosmic time that is central to Adventist theology—a temporal expanse from creation to re-creation, from Eden to eternity. Adventists sometimes have called this "the drama of the ages" or, expressed more negatively though with an anticipated positive outcome, "the Great Controversy" or "the cosmic conflict."

CREATION **THE FIRST AFFIRMATION CONCERNS CREATION—GOD CREATED AND SUSTAINS THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND ALL ITS HUMAN, ANIMAL, AND PLANT LIFE.** The focus of this affirmation is who created and sustains, not how things were created or when. This is also the focus of the two principal biblical accounts of creation in Genesis.

The narrative in Genesis 1 describes a progressive emergence of order from a state of dark, watery chaos. At the word of God, light dispels the darkness, firmament separates the water, land further divides the water and produces plants, special lights appear in the firmament, creatures emerge in the firmament and in the water, and animals spring forth on the land. This culminates in the creation of godlike humans—male and female. To these humans, God gives dominion or trusteeship over all the creation. At each stage, God sees that the outcome is good. In a final summary assessment of this creation, the writer observes, "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31)[15]

The writer of Genesis 2 describes God's creation from a different perspective. The primordial chaos is a desert-like cosmos without plants or animals. Water comes from the ground. Then God makes the body of a creature from the soil and activates it with life, producing a human being. God next puts this human into an environmental setting that he is to protect but with limitations that he is not to exceed. Similarly, God proceeds to create "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" and "every animal of the field and every bird of the air" out of the soil (Gen. 2:9, 19). God shares the creation process with this human by having him name all the animals. From the male human, God creates a female counterpart.

Together, these stories convey several important insights that must be part of an Adventist theology of the earth in the context of the affirmation of creation.

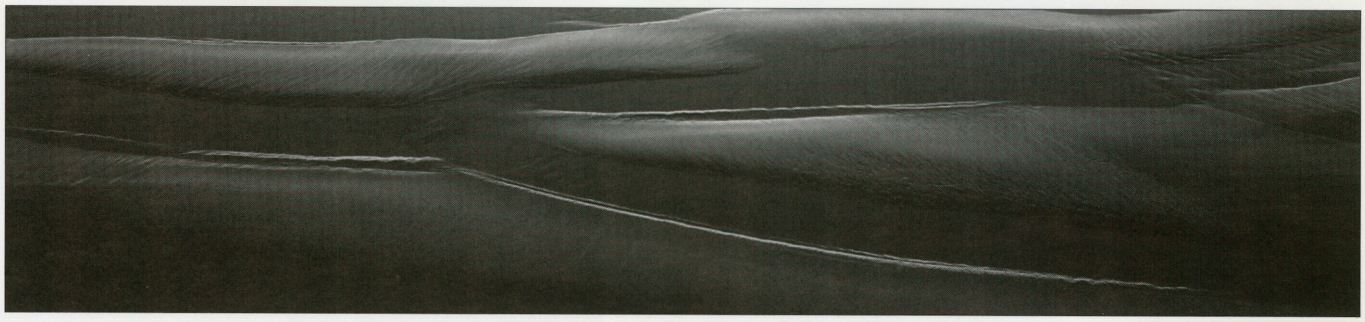
1. The God of the Hebrew Scriptures is the source of all the physical universe and its life forms, particularly the humans, plants, and animals of the earth.
2. God intentionally brought the earth and its creatures into being.
3. God was overwhelmingly satisfied with the creation, declaring it to be "very good."
4. Humans, plants, and animals share a common physical relationship to the soil—to the earth itself.
5. Humans are monistic entities that exist only when life is combined with their physical bodies.
6. God made humans to be like God, at least in part, by involving them in the creation process and by making them responsible for the well being and protection of the physical world with its plants and animals.
7. God made humans with physical, rational, spiritual, and spatial dimensions.
8. In creation, God established an order of authority and relationships of responsibility with limitations.
9. Humans and animals are dependent on the plants of the earth for food and thus the continuation of life.

It is time for Adventists to move beyond consciousness raising and unstructured theological musing, as important and necessary as they have been.

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who affirm the doctrine of creation will acknowledge God's ownership of the earth and all its life forms, the inherent goodness of all aspects of God's creation, their common relationship —along with the plants and animals—to the physical world, the goodness and necessity of their bodies and all bodily functions, their assignment as trustees or stewards of the well being of the earth and all of its life forms, their spatial dimension as part of the holistic understanding of human life, and the order of human authority and limitations with regard to the earth.

DETERIORATION **THE SECOND AFFIRMATION CONCERNS DETERIORATION—HUMAN REBELLION AGAINST GOD RESULTED IN THE DEGRADATION OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND ALL ITS HUMAN, ANIMAL, AND PLANT LIFE.** The principal source material that supports this affirmation is the narrative in Genesis 3. This story, like those in Genesis 1 and 2, is an etiological or foundational story, in this case explaining the origin of sin and evil in the world.

The narrator links this story to that of Genesis 2 by describing how the recently created humans ration-



ally decide to exceed the boundaries of the divinely imposed limitations. One of the animals helps to facilitate this rebellion by creating doubt and distrust of God. The humans are beguiled and immediately feel shame and fear toward God and alienation and blame toward each other. After searching for the hiding pair and finding them, God tells them of the consequences of their choice and actions.

Everyone and everything involved will suffer as a result. The snake will be humiliated and crushed by the woman's offspring, even while biting his heel. The woman will suffer pain and humiliation. The man will experience difficulty extracting food from the earth. The earth itself will become hostile to human life and eventually claim humans in death.[16] Finally, God further extends the boundaries of limitation for the humans by removing them from their original pristine habitat. Yet, God intervenes to provide clothing of animal skins to help protect the humans from the hostile environment and leaves the restricted tree of life as a symbol of hope.

This story conveys several important insights that must be part of an Adventist theology of the earth in the context of the affirmation of deterioration.

1. Even during the time of deterioration, humans are still dependent for life on the physical world with its animals and plants.
2. Stewardship for the earth is even more important, because humans must now work harder to care for the earth.
3. The spiritual, mental, physical, and spatial dimensions of the humans are all negatively affected by the human rebellion.
4. The ultimate result of deterioration is death, which for humans means nonexistence.
5. Even in deterioration God provides hope.

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who affirm the doctrine of deterioration will acknowledge that humans are still dependent on the earth for the continuation of life, that they are now even more responsible to God and themselves for the care of the earth and its life-sustaining elements, that spatial and other dimensions have suffered because of human rebellion, that they will die and no longer exist, and that their only hope for ultimate life resides in God.

3 SALVATION

THE THIRD AFFIRMATION CONCERNS SALVATION—GOD IN THE FORM OF JESUS CHRIST PROVIDED FOR THE END OF THE DETERIORATION OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND ALL ITS HUMAN, ANIMAL, AND PLANT LIFE AND FOR THEIR ULTIMATE RESTORATION.

The glimmer of hope contained in the foundational story of deterioration was fanned into a burning torch of expectancy in the history of God's communications and interventions in the lives of the Hebrew people and recorded in their Scriptures. However, it was not until the incarnation of God into humanity itself that the full blaze of divine revelation and fulfillment burst on the human scene after millennia of deterioration. This is an affirmation of the saving act of God in and through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The earliest biblical interpretation of Jesus and his meaning for the salvation of humans and their world was written by Paul of Tarsus, a Hellenistic Jewish convert to the Jesus Movement. Later, other writers gave their own accounts and interpretations of Jesus, especially those who composed what eventually came to be called the Gospels. In particular, the Gospel writers provided extensive accounts of Jesus' teachings and supernatural activities, edited to convey the meaning of Jesus for various groups of Christians in different parts of the Hellenistic world.

The stories, discourses, expositions, and interpretations of these writers convey several important insights that must be part of an Adventist theology of the earth in the context of the affirmation of salvation.

1. Jesus' incarnation showed God's solidarity with deteriorated humans and their world. Jesus came with a deteriorated human body (John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-8;

Heb 2:17); Jesus overcame the hostile deterioration of nature[17]; Jesus defeated disease and death[18]; Jesus announced the arrival of "the kingdom of God" as a present reality and a future certainty.[19]

2. Jesus' death showed God's love for deteriorated humans and their world as Jesus experienced the ultimate effect of human deterioration (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).
3. Jesus' resurrection showed God's power over the effects of deterioration on humans and their world. God defeated death by raising Jesus from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20-26); Jesus defeated the hostile cosmic powers through his resurrection (Col. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:21-22).
4. The good news is that, in Jesus, God saved the whole world and all its people (2 Cor. 5:18-19; Rom. 5:18) and that to be saved those who rebelled against God need only believe in Jesus and accept the good news (Acts 16:31; Gal. 2:15-16).
5. God saves humans holistically, including their spiritual, mental, physical, and spatial dimensions (1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Pet. 3:13).

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who affirm the doctrine of salvation will acknowledge that Jesus came in deteriorated human form to show God's solidarity with humans and their world, that Jesus demonstrated his power over the hostile forces of nature and human diseases and death, that Jesus proclaimed the beginning of God's renewed administration of the world, that Jesus died to demonstrate the depth of God's love for deteriorated humans and their world, that God defeated death and the cosmic powers by raising Jesus from the dead, that deteriorated humans may experience salvation by believing in Jesus and accepting the good news that God has saved the world and all people, and that God's salvation involves all the human dimensions including the spatial dimension of the earth.

4 ANTICIPATION THE FOURTH AFFIRMATION CONCERNS ANTICIPATION—GOD IN THE FORM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT PROVIDES THE FIRST INSTALLMENTS OF THE RESTORATION OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND ALL ITS HUMAN, ANIMAL, AND PLANT LIFE.

This affirmation focuses on the interim period in salvation history between the definitive acts of God in the death and resurrection of Jesus and the completion of that history in the future restoration to occur in association with the second advent of Jesus.

The interim comes after the defeat of death and the cosmic powers by Jesus but before their destruction. It lies between the "already" and the "not yet" aspects of the "kingdom of God"—between its inauguration and its consummation. It is the time between the definitive battle and the end of the war.

Believers may even now begin not only to prepare for that restoration but also to live an environmentally conscious and active lifestyle.

During this interim, believers in Jesus have both privileges and responsibilities. According to the New Testament, they are privileged to have hope and confidence in God's future restoration because of what God has already done in Jesus (Rom. 5:1-5). They can even face death with confidence in a future bodily resurrection because God raised Jesus from the dead (1 Thess. 4:13-14; 1 Cor. 15:20).

They are also privileged to begin experiencing in advance some important aspects of that restoration. Physically, they can even now "know that [they] have eternal life" (1 John 5:13) and start to experience the quality of endless existence by a health conscious lifestyle. Spiritually, they can begin to undergo a significant, though incomplete, transformation. This is what the New Testament writers variously describe through metaphors like justification, sanctification, redemption, reconciliation, adoption, expiation, forgiveness, and salvation (for example, 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11).

Intellectually, believers can develop their minds toward greater depths of understanding even if short of perfect knowledge (Rom 15:14; 1 Cor. 13:9-10). However, such proleptic experiences would be incomplete if they did not also include the fourth dimension of holistic humanity—the spatial dimension. Accordingly, Paul declares that the earth itself languishes in its deteriorated state and eagerly anticipates its restoration (Rom. 8:18-23).[20]

Although God has promised to recreate the physical world in the future (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:5), believers may even now begin not only to prepare for that

restoration but also to live an environmentally conscious and active lifestyle. God not only acted definitively in Jesus to overcome the deterioration of humans and their world caused by the rebellion but also in the form of the Holy Spirit acts in the interim to provide this hope and to give believers this advance experience of the future restoration of all things (Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Cor. 1:22).

salvation in Jesus and by the first installments of the restoration in the activity of the Holy Spirit in the present time of anticipation.

Even during the time of deterioration before the act of God in Jesus, God had promised to "create new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17; 66:22). God repeated this promise to the followers of Jesus, who himself had spoken of the end of the present heaven and earth

Adventist Christians... are privileged through the Holy Spirit to have hope and confidence in the ultimate restoration of the deteriorated earth and all its life forms.

During the interim, believers in Jesus also have responsibilities. These involve witness and work. The New Testament records Jesus' call for his followers to be his witnesses—to tell others about what God has done, is doing, and will do in their lives and in their world (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). He also asks them to do tangible things to help achieve God's purpose of restoration. This means they are to work with the Spirit to facilitate not only their own spiritual, mental, and physical renewal and development in anticipation of their future restoration but also the preservation and recovery of the physical world and its life forms from further deterioration (Gal. 5:22-23; Rom. 8:22-23).

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who affirm the doctrine of anticipation will acknowledge that during the interim between God's salvation event in Jesus and God's future restoration they are privileged through the Holy Spirit to have hope and confidence in the ultimate restoration of the deteriorated earth and all its life forms and to experience in advance some important aspects of that restoration, including the proleptic restoration of their spatial dimension in the physical world. They will also acknowledge that during the interim they have responsibilities to inform others of God's coming restoration of the earth and its commencement already and to work diligently to help bring it about by tangible acts of restraint, reuse, and renewal with respect to the earth and its resources.

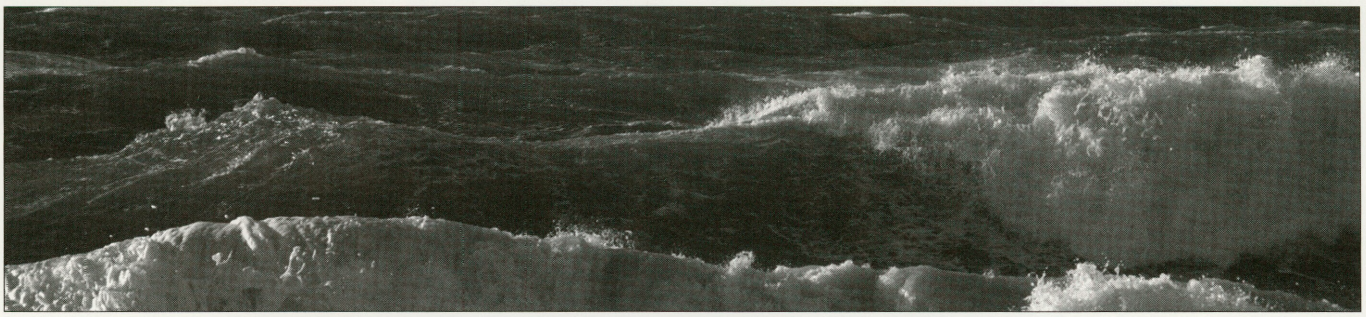
5 RESTORATION THE FIFTH AFFIRMATION CONCERNS RESTORATION—GOD WILL RESTORE THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND ITS HUMAN, ANIMAL, AND PLANT LIFE TO THEIR PRISTINE STATE FOR ETERNITY.

This affirmation focuses on the goal of salvation history and the climax of the cosmic drama. It looks to an event in the drama that is yet to come. However, its certainty is established by God's historical act of (Rev. 21:1; Mark 13:31). This restoration of the earth and its celestial environment will be comprehensive. Humans will be restored holistically to endless physical life, to perfect spiritual relationships with God and each other, to unlimited intellectual achievement, and to a perfect spatial environment. Animal and plant life will be restored to perfect harmonious existence.[21]

The earth itself will be restored to its pristine state. All that has been negatively affected by rebellion against God will be made perfect in the restoration (Rev. 21:5). However, this is more than merely a zero sum prospect. The restoration will bring humans and their world to a state even beyond their original condition. For humans, this means a degree of understanding God's love that was never possible before the rebellion and God's act of salvation in Jesus. For the earth, it means a level of God's presence that was not characteristic even of the world after creation (Rev. 21:2-3; 22:1-5).

The first followers of Jesus described in the New Testament were apocalypticists. They shared the basic world view of contemporary Jews that spiritual and social deterioration of their world and its society had reached such disastrous levels that only God's direct intervention could change things. God would bring the present world and its history to a dramatic end and would replace it with a new world. There would be a judgment of human behavior, and only those vindicated as followers of God would enter the new world. Through an end-time resurrection, these would include the believers who had died.

If taken in isolation from the other affirmations, an apocalyptic understanding of the restoration will usually lead to a depreciation of a positive theology of the earth. According to the typical apocalyptic theology, God will replace the present world with a new world. Therefore, inhabitants of the present world need feel no



responsibility to protect or preserve the present world.

However, when seen as the final part of a trajectory of affirmations that span the time and stages from Eden to eternity, belief in God's dramatic re-creation of the earth becomes the ultimate catalyst for a theology of the earth. God made the earth and everyone and everything on it perfect. The consequences of human rebellion against God brought about the deterioration of the earth and all its human and other life forms. In Jesus, God achieved salvation for humans and the world and made restoration possible by defeating the powers of evil and rebellion.

Through the Holy Spirit, believers in Jesus now live in anticipation of the future restoration, are privileged to share some of its benefits in advance, and are expected to work tangibly toward it realization. The final affirmation of restoration of humans and the earth is the capstone of this trajectory. This is apocalyptic in that God will dramatically terminate the history of human rebellion and all its consequences of deterioration and will comprehensively restore everything to its original perfect state.

The bodily resurrection of believers in Jesus who die before his return will be a significant means of linking the old earth with the new. It will also confirm the monistic understanding of reality and the ultimate goodness of matter in God's creation.[22] Once again, humans will be linked in solidarity with the earth.

These resurrected believers, along with others, will continue to depend on the earth for life. This is figuratively implied in the restoration story, which, in reminiscence of the second creation account, describes a "tree of life" beside the "river of the water of life" (Rev. 22:1-2; Gen. 2:9-10).

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who affirm the doctrine of restoration will acknowledge that, after the return of Jesus, God who brought the earth and all its human and other life forms into perfect existence will fully restore them from the comprehensive deterioration they have experienced, that the believers in Jesus who have died will live again through resurrection of the physical body, and that matter and the material world will continue to be positively part of the divine plan, and that humans will still depend on the earth and its resources for life.

Two Symbols

The symbols represent two of the most central concepts within Adventist theology and understanding. Although contemporary Adventism is better known for the first of these, the second is actually more foundational in Adventist history. Furthermore, the first is better understood and accepted by most Adventists today. Nevertheless, the second, although controversial, remains an important motif in Adventist thought. These symbols contribute to an Adventist theology of the earth in conjunction with the five affirmations.

SABBATH THE FIRST SYMBOL IS SABBATH—GOD RESTED AS AN EXAMPLE TO HUMANS AND GAVE THEM THE SABBATH AS A SPECIAL INTERLUDE IN ORDINARY TIME.

It is their day to rest from work, recover from stress, contemplate and worship God, enjoy fellowship with family and friends, and experience renewal for the following week.

Sabbath is a symbol related to creation. The first creation narrative climaxes with the introduction of the Sabbath as the crowning act of the Creator (Gen. 2:1-3). God rested, not from fatigue at creating—how tired can one get from giving a single order on each of six days?—but in satisfaction at the outcome of the creation. It was good, and God celebrated. Because God made humans godlike, they, too, would rest in celebration of the perfect creation with all of its wondrous life forms and its glorious physical environment. It was to be their special time to remember and worship the Creator and to recall their privileges and responsibilities

regarding God's world (Exod. 20:8, 11; 31:17).

Sabbath is a symbol related to deterioration. When humans rebelled, God instituted another functional symbol to remind them of their state of alienation from him and their fate of death. He informed the rebel humans that they would have to work to survive, not a pleasant, leisurely effort, but labor that would be difficult, demanding, and exhausting (Gen. 3:17-19). This is the opposite of the rest that the Sabbath represents. Yet, even in the setting of rebellion and the continuum of labor, the Sabbath was a reminder to humans of the glorious creation in the past and the promise of restoration in the future.

In the context of deterioration, God gave laws to humans that included regulations concerning the Sabbath. Humans were told to rest from work in celebration of God's creation and to share the rest with everyone and everything in their households, including their employees, guests, and animals (Exod. 20:8-11; Deut 5:13-14). Even the land was to have a renewing sabbath rest from production every seven years (Lev. 25:1-7). If God's special people failed to grant the land this rest, they would be punished with deportation, and the land would eventually get its sabbath rest anyway (Lev. 26:34; 2 Chron. 36:21).

Sabbath is a symbol related to salvation. Ancient Israel understood the Sabbath as a reminder of its deliverance from Egypt and of the God who could make them holy (Deut 5:15; Exod. 31:13; Ezek. 20:12). As an act of restoration from the physical deterioration that resulted from human rebellion, Jesus healed on the Sabbath and defended his actions.[23] He declared the Sabbath to be a gift from God for humans while defending his disciples' right to eat life-sustaining grain casually plucked on the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).

Furthermore, he used the concept of a sabbathlike rest from work to describe figuratively the saving renewal that he brought to deteriorated humans (Matt. 11:28-30). Finally, Jesus rested in the earth on the Sabbath before his resurrection in solidarity with all who die and with the earth itself, from which the resurrected dead emerge. The apostle to the Hebrews used the metaphor of entering God's rest for the experience of salvation—an experience that ultimately eluded ancient Israel but is experienced by all who believe in Jesus (Heb. 3:18; 4:3). Because God saves humans holistically, including their spatial dimension, the Sabbath as a commemoration of that salvation likewise memorializes the saving of the earth itself.

Sabbath is a symbol related to anticipation. While Sabbath provides rest from the work of the past six days, it also means renewal for the experiences of the next week. It is an interim between past and future—a time to remember and a time to anticipate. It is, therefore, an appropriate symbol for believers in Jesus who live in the reality of his past act of salvation and in the certainty of his future coming to restore. The Sabbath rest is a foretaste of that restoration. Since the restoration will be comprehensive, the foretaste of it should be as well. Thus, Sabbath is both a reminder of the future restoration of the earth and all its human and other life forms and a time to share this good news and do tangible things to help bring it about.

Sabbath is a symbol related to restoration. In the new earth envisioned by Isaiah, restored humans will worship God each Sabbath (Isa. 66:22-23). The comprehensive restoration of everything that deteriorated because of human rebellion, including the earth itself, is a sabbathlike rest that awaits both restored humans and their earth (Heb. 4:9; Rom. 8:22-23).

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who embrace the symbol of Sabbath will acknowledge that when they rest from work they commemorate God's creation and sustenance of the earth and all its life forms, that Sabbath is a gift of rest for both humans and the earth itself, that Sabbath is a reminder that God saves not only humans but also the earth, that they rest now in anticipation of the earth's ultimate renewal, that they must work tangibly now to advance that renewal, and that the ultimate rest of eternity will include the restoration of the earth from deterioration.

SANCTUARY **THE SECOND SYMBOL IS SANCTUARY—GOD HAS A PRESENCE AMONG HUMANS.**

This suggests that God not only considers humans to be important but also values their physical environment. Furthermore, God is serious about humans and the roles and responsibilities they have received, including their responsibilities regarding the well being of the earth and all its life forms.

In the end, God's seriousness involves what the Bible calls a judgment in which humans are held accountable for the discharge of their God-given responsibilities and in which they are vindicated because of their belief in Jesus.

Sanctuary is a symbol related to creation. The creation accounts in Genesis picture God as intimately involved in the creation—contemplating, making, forming, planting, instructing, resting. God shared the creation process with humans by involving them in naming things. The text describes God, like an estate owner, walking around the property at the end of the day (Gen. 3:8). God was serious regarding the care of the earth and gave responsibilities to humans about it.

Sanctuary is a symbol related to deterioration. Although human rebellion affected God's relationship to the world, it did not eliminate God's presence in it (Ps. 139:7-12). God was present in the experiences of personal worship and devotion and eventually among a particular people. The physical locus of this latter presence was a sacred tent that in time was replaced by a permanent shrine in Jerusalem—one that God shared even with nesting and singing birds (Exod. 25:8; Ps. 84:1-4). God's seriousness about human responsibilities, including the care of the earth, and the means of vindication were centered in the religious events of ancient Israel, especially the annual Day of Atonement.

Sanctuary is a symbol related to salvation. God's definitive act of salvation involved the incarnation of divinity into humanity in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. According to the opening hymn of the fourth Gospel, this "Word became flesh and lived among us"(John 1:14). He was "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). God came to share the human spatial dimension not only by living in the world of material things but also by sharing the human physical reality. Jesus taught humans to entrust the care of their most important needs to God, who provides for the birds, flowers, and grass (Matt. 6:25-32).

Sanctuary is a symbol related to anticipation. God's presence in the world during the interim between the act of salvation in Jesus and the restoration at Jesus' return is in the form of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is a reminder of the historical presence of Jesus in the past and a first installment of the physical presence of God in the future. The Spirit leads believers to the truth about God's seriousness and points to the time of judgment when God will hold humans responsible for their actions, including their sins against the earth (John 16:8-11, 13; Rev. 11:16-18).

Sabbath is a symbol related to anticipation.... It is an interim between past and future—a time to remember and a time to anticipate.

Sanctuary is a symbol related to restoration. The ultimate achievement of the restoration will be sanctuary—God will again dwell with humans in a restored earth (Rev. 21:3). Only then will the presence of God be fully realized since creation and the interlude of human rebellion. The unlimited presence of God will transform the natural world into a place fitting not only for restored humans but also for a perfect God.

Accordingly, Adventist Christians who embrace the symbol of sanctuary will acknowledge that from the beginning of creation God has been present in and identified with the earth and all its human and other life forms, that God's presence continues to grace the earth after humans rebelled, that God's presence reached its climax in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, that humans and the earth continue to experience God's presence in the form of the Holy Spirit, that God's presence with humans and the earth will be complete when all things are restored to their pristine perfection, and that God will hold humans accountable for how they have fulfilled their responsibilities to care for the earth.

God will hold humans accountable for how they have fulfilled their responsibilities to care for the earth.

Notes and References

1. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, "Introduction: Identification or Mastery?" in *Tending the Garden: Essays on the Gospel and the Earth*, ed. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 1.

2. For a discussion of this tendency, see H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 1-12. Lynn White's statement appears in his "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* 155 (1967): 1203-7.

3. Loren Wilkinson, "New Age, New Consciousness, and the New Creation," in *Tending the Garden*, 6-29.

4. In addition to those already noted, other writings include general Christian theological or ethical works on environmental responsibility, such as: John Hart, *The Spirit of the Earth: A Theology of the Land* (New York: Paulist, 1984); Sean McDonagh, *To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology* (Santa Fe, N.M.: Bear, 1986); Charles Birch, et al., eds., *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1990); William B. Badke, *Project Earth: Preserving the World God Created* (Portland: Multnomah, 1991); Michael Dowd, *Earthspirit: A Handbook for Nurturing an Ecological Christianity* (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991); Thomas Berry with Thomas Clarke, *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth* (Mystic, Conn: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991); Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); H. Paul Santmire, *Nature Reborn: The Ecological and Cosmic Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000). Art and Jocele Meyer, *Earthkeepers: Environmental Perspectives on Hunger, Poverty, and Injustice* (Scottdale, Penn: Herald Press, 1991) is a handbook of environmental action and worship. Three books represent specialized approaches to the issue: Anne Primavesi, *From Apocalypse to Genesis: Ecology, Feminism and Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); Charles Cummings, *Eco-Spirituality: Toward a Reverent Life* (New York: Paulist, 1991); Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001).

Even White recognized that there was a minority tradition in Christianity that showed concern for the natural world. This has typically been associated with Francis of Assisi, whom White proposed as "a patron saint for ecologists" (1207). If Francis is the patron saint of ecology, his "Canticle of Brother Sun" is its doxology. An important concern of Santmire's (*Travail of Nature*) is to document this early minority tradition with particular reference to Irenaeus and Augustine of Hippo.

5. For a biography of Kellogg, see Richard W. Schwartz, *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing, 1970).

6. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Oakland, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1903), 100. See also *Education*, 99–120; *The Ministry of Healing* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1905), 261-68.

7. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Oakland, Calif.: Pacific Press, [1875?]), 9:246.

8. Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets: The Conflict of the Ages Illustrated in the Lives of Holy Men of Old* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1908), 443.

9. The earliest Adventist publication that I have found is Jonathan Butler, "Pity the Planet, All Joy Gone," *Insight*, Oct. 13, 1970, 3-7. *Spectrum* 22.5 (Jan. 1993) was thematically devoted to the topic of ecology and contained a collection of articles on the subject: Alvin Kwiram, "Adventists and the Good Earth," 28-35; Glen Coe, "The Compelling Case for Nature," 36-37; Roy Benton, "Earth in the Balance," 38-40; Brian W. Harper, "Resurrection of the World," 41-44. It also had an editorial note by Roy Branson and five short pieces on what various groups of Adventists are doing practically to address the issue. For a bibliography of Adventist writings on theology and ecology see <http://www.lasierra.edu/schools/religion/wtrencha/adv_ecol.htm>.

10. The most comprehensive effort at summoning Adventists to environmental responsibility based on elements of Adventist teachings is A. Joseph Greig, "Adventists and the Environment," *Adventist Review*, Apr. 19, 1990, 15-18. In his short article, Greig invokes the doctrines of creation, Sabbath, "nonimmortality of the Soul," healthful living, and concern for the poor.

In regard to Sabbath and environmental responsibilities, see Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Divine Rest for Human Restlessness: A Theological Study of the Good News of the Sabbath for Today* (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1980), 204-14; Barry Casey, "Let the Wilderness Be Glad! The Apocalypse and the Environment," *Spectrum* 13.3 (Mar. 1983): 40-41; Benton, "Earth in the Balance," 39; Kwiram, "Adventists and the Good Earth," 31; Greig, "Adventists and the Environment," 16-17. Two articles deserve special mention: Sheryll Prinz-McMillan, "Feminists, Ecology, and the Sabbath," *Spectrum* 23.5 (Apr. 1994): 13-19; Niels-Erik Andreasen, "A Sabbath Rest for the Whole Earth," *Adventist Review*, Aug. 29, 1996, 18-21. "We might say that the Sabbath provides the basis for a theological ecology; it calls for respect for our environment." Richard Rice, *The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective*, 2d ed. (Berrien

Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1997), 407.

11. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . . : A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines* (Washington, D.C.: SDA Ministerial Association, 1988), 274. After noting the pollution and manipulation of the environment caused by industry and technology, the writer states that Christians as stewards of the earth should maintain "the ecological balance."

12. For the text of the statement, see "Caring for God's Creation," *Adventist Review*, Dec. 31, 1992, 13. This statement served as the basis for part of Charles E. Bradford's discussion of environmental responsibility in "Stewardship," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 2000), 662, 664-65, 667-68.

13. The three statements are "A Statement on the Environment" (released June 29-July 8, 1995); "The Dangers of Climate Change: A Statement to Governments of Industrialized Countries" (Dec. 19, 1995); and "Statement on Stewardship of the Environment" (released Oct. 1-10, 1996). For the text of these statements, see <http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements.html>.

The following is the text of the paragraph in "A Statement on the Environment": "Seventh-day Adventists advocate a simple, wholesome lifestyle, where people do not step on the treadmill of unbridled consumerism, goods-getting, and production of waste. We call for respect of creation, restraint in the use of the world's resources, reevaluation of one's needs, and reaffirmation of the dignity of created life."

14. Major subjects "that so far have received only minimal and preliminary Adventist attention but deserve, and will reward, sustained theological effort include . . . the relevance of environmental concern to Adventist thinking," according to Fritz Guy, *Thinking Theologically: Adventist Christianity and the Interpretation of Faith* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1999), 86.

15. All biblical quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.

16. The next story (Gen. 4:1-16) graphically shows how immediate and personal this outcome would be.

17. Mark 4:35-41 is an example of Jesus' nature miracles.

18. Mark 5:21-43 is a complex story that contains examples of a healing and a resurrection by Jesus. In verse 34, Mark uses the verb *sōzō*, which often means "to save," with the meaning "to make well."

19. Luke reflects both aspects of the kingdom (e.g., 17:20-21; 22:16-18).

20. The earth also mourns the human condition of evil and immorality (Hos. 4:1-3).

21. Isa. 65:25 describes harmony in nature as part of the cosmic setting of Israel's restoration.

22. The "spiritual body" of 1 Cor. 15:44 is clearly a "body," i.e., a physical reality. It is "spiritual" in that it is restored to perfection and no longer subject to death (vv. 42-43; 51-53).

23. For example, Luke 13:10-17. On the linguistic relationship between healing and salvation, see note 18.

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Live and Let Live: An Interview with Stephen R. L. Clark

By Gary Chartier

Stephen R. L. Clark is the most creative and accomplished philosopher of religion of his generation, a sophisticated philosophical and theological defender of the interests of the nonhuman world, and an articulate and capable contributor to discussions of moral and political philosophy, the philosophy of mind, and environmental philosophy.

Formerly a fellow of Oxford's All Souls' College (1968-75) and a member of the philosophy faculty of the University of Glasgow (1974–83), he is currently professor of philosophy at the University of Liverpool (1984–present). He has served on Britain's Farm Animal Welfare Council and is currently a member of the British government's Animal Procedures Committee.

Clark currently holds a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship for work on the ethical theory of the neo-Platonist philosopher Plotinus. He is the author of many books (see box). He is also the editor of *Money, Obedience, and Affection: Essays on Berkeley's Moral and Political Thought*, and the author of numerous scholarly articles in journals. He is the subject of a recent critical study, *Not Even a Sparrow Falls: The Philosophy of Stephen R. L. Clark*, by Daniel A. Dombrowski. This interview took place online in July 2003.

Gary Chartier *In what ways does your philosophical scholarship either reflect or inform your Christian faith? Are philosophy and theology enemies or allies?*

Stephen R. L. Clark The techniques of philosophical enquiry were partly created by Christian and other theologians, and they are there to be used to help understanding. The popular view that philosophers are bound to be atheists is simply false. I do find that mainstream theologians nowadays are sometimes too inclined to resort to rhetoric, or to buy into antirealist or constructivist interpretations, as if theological realism were somehow impossible "nowadays." They then speak as if philosophers were theologically naïve for being realists! So there is a tension between theologians and philosophers!

GC *How did you become interested in philosophical and theological issues related to the nonhuman world?*

SRLC My wife and I converted to vegetarianism soon after our marriage because we couldn't bear to continue financing modern farming practices. I decided to give some lectures in Oxford on the topic of animals. These developed after our move to Glasgow into a larger lecture series and book.

GC *What do you believe are our primary responsibilities with respect to the nonhuman world?*

SRLC Live and let live. We also have additional direct responsibilities to domesticated animals, as part of our society and civilization.

GC *Can you say just a bit more about living and letting live?*

SRLC If God hates nothing that he has made, it follows that each creature needs the space to be itself. Imposing our own plans on others, even with the pretext of "doing them good," denies them that space. Of course, in this world here, our very existence imposes upon others, but the better society is one in which there is the maximum liberty for each combined with equal liberty for all. Respecting God's creatures requires us also to respect their ways of being, and—unless there is very strong reason for interference—allowing them the space to live.

GC *Are the moral constraints on our treatment of nonhuman animals largely the same as the moral constraints on our treatment of human animals?*

SRLC It is easier for us to understand what other humans are doing, and to empathize with their problems. It's also easier, in general though not always in particular, to come to some explicit agreement about spheres of action, property, and the like. But the fundamental requirement, of respect for God's creatures, is the same in all cases.

Respecting God's creatures requires us...to respect their ways of being.

GC *What special obligations might we have to particular nonhuman animals in virtue of our society and civilization?*

SRLC "Domesticated" animals have been incorporated into our society (originally, the relationship may have been more balanced: a mutually supportive society was created that was neither wholly human nor wholly, for example, canine). We have direct responsibilities that go beyond the "live and let live" rule: they are owed for their service and support. If we don't provide that support we haven't the slightest right to the services we demand of them—and of course some parts of the implicit contract have long been broken, and other parts were probably illicit from the start.

GC *What, in general terms, ought to be our stance regarding the development and use of technology? At what point does putative technological advance violate the "live and let live" principle?*

SRLC When it denies space and being to others, or depends openly on a view of other creatures as mere instruments of our will.

GC *How might the practice of keeping the Sabbath reflect and inform a contemporary Christian ecological consciousness?*

SRLC The sabbatarian project as it is described in the biblical texts is, precisely, about allowing things their space—not treating them entirely as if they were made to be used by us. I wrote on this in *How to Think about the Earth.*

The sabbatarian rules include requirements to leave food for the wild things, and not to treat the world as there only for our convenience. Although we may have to farm and engineer—few of us can manage to live as Christ actually required of his followers, like the birds or the flowers, dependent on God for our daily bread—we need to acknowledge regularly that this is a concession, and that the world's being is something that God values for itself, and not just instrumentally for "human purposes."

One of the great errors of the Church was to take over the Stoic doctrine that everything existed only for human use—to be fair to the Stoics, they glossed this in such a way that most current human uses were utterly wrong!

GC *How are your views of the nonhuman world related to your moral, political, and theological convictions regarding other central issues?*

SRLC "Live and let live" is a principle that predisposes me against centralizing tendencies. I also heartily reject the notion that we own the world, or have even been appointed "stewards" of it.

GC *Christian ecological concern is often thought of as the province of liberals or radicals. But your theological and—to some extent—political position might be thought of by many people as conservative. Is there a conflict?*

SRLC No. Actually, I find it difficult to respond because I can't see why there is anything odd about my position! Why is it peculiar to be both conservative and conservationist (so to speak)? The "rational" and largely utilitarian ethics preferred by self-styled progressives seem to me to be rationalizations of ingrained and unexamined prejudices, transformed into a scheme that denies anyone else a say in what is to be done. My own preference is for an ethic grounded, explicitly, in the long historical development of natural impulse, mediated by the recognition that we are not the only creatures in the world (any more than I am the only person in the world).

"Conservatives," in common speech, may be assumed to be "right-wing" in their approval of hierarchies, stern government, draconian punishments. My own conservatism, like the mediævals', is of an older sort, as looking further back in history. To accuse me of conservatism, accordingly, may give the wrong impression: it is because I am—relatively—conservative in my political beliefs that I am on the side of revolution against more "modern" and "progressive" ways—against rule by the would-be international classes, armed with expensive technology and an ill-conceived morality that licenses oppression.

In brief, my conservative leanings, whether in epistemology or political philosophy, are populist rather than hierarchical, and compatible—or so I think—with just that respect for "animals" that others have thought far too "progressive." Just because we must both say and think that Being is, we must also respect the beings Being sustains.

If the Word was/is incarnate as a man, he was also... incarnate as a mammal, vertebrate, animal, living creature.

GC *You argue in a variety of places for a thoroughgoing incarnational Christology. Is there a link between your understanding of Jesus as the Logos incarnate and your view of the nonhuman world? Does the incarnation have redemptive significance for the nonhuman world?*

SRLC SRLC If the Word was/is incarnate as a man, he was also—automatically—incarnate as a mammal, vertebrate, animal, living creature. The central theme of incarnational theology is that God has chosen to surround himself with companions, each reflecting some part of his glory. That was the inference—traditionally—from both the birth narrative and the forty days in the wilderness with the wild beasts.

GC *You've emphasized the kinship between human and non-human animals and you don't dispute an evolutionary account of the earth's natural history. But you've been kinder to "creationists" than most philosophers and scientists. Why so?*

SRLC First, because it is clear that Philip Gosse was right to point out that all the existing evidence is compatible with God's having created the world, all of

a piece, with a merely virtual past. I don't say that God did, but the claim that he didn't do it like that is wholly unscientific: the real existence of the past is a metaphysical and not a scientific claim.

Second, because the way in which Darwinian theory has been presented over the last 150-odd years is deeply subversive of ordinarily decent humanity. What many objectors have been objecting to is "Social Darwinism," so called—a doctrine that identifies evolutionary success with merit, and provides excuses for ignoring the condition of the poor, welcoming the destruction of indigenous cultures, and presenting male, middle-class whites as the pinnacle of creation.

Even when that doctrine is abandoned, Darwinist theory continues to subvert ethical impulse: We have the ethical impulses that we do solely because they were the ones that bred themselves most successfully. Believing that, we cease to believe in our own ethical impulses (which include the wish to discover and tell the truth).

GC *How should Christians who acknowledge and celebrate the bonds among all animals and their common ancestry view the enterprise of human sociobiology?*

SRLC We should take the arguments seriously: Realizing how much of what we feel and do is to be expected of a certain sort of mammal is an important stage in our understanding. But—as above—we need to retain the notion that what our history (including our prehuman history) has done is bring us to a point where we can see something of what God requires of all of us.

A merely Darwinist story gives us no reason to believe that we can ever have "the mind of God." A nonincarnational theology (of the kind that denies that any mere creature could have the mind of God) also gives us no reason to believe that we could ever know what the world is. Some sort of incarnational theology is all that gives us reason to believe that we could conceivably discover anything about the world apart from the immediate circumstances. Having embraced such an incarnational theology, we must recognize that God redeems the whole world, and not just "us humans" (as arbitrary a class as "us whites").

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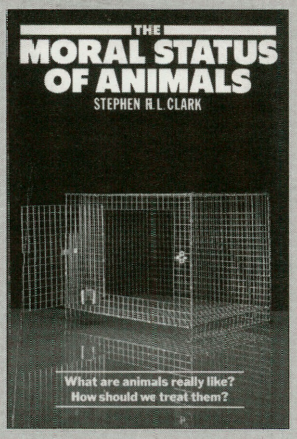
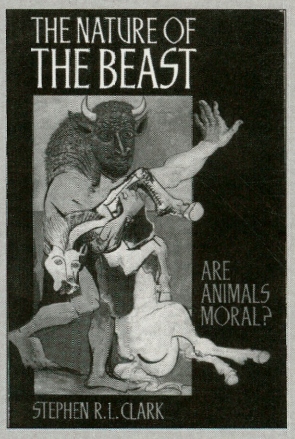
Books by Stephen R. L. Clark





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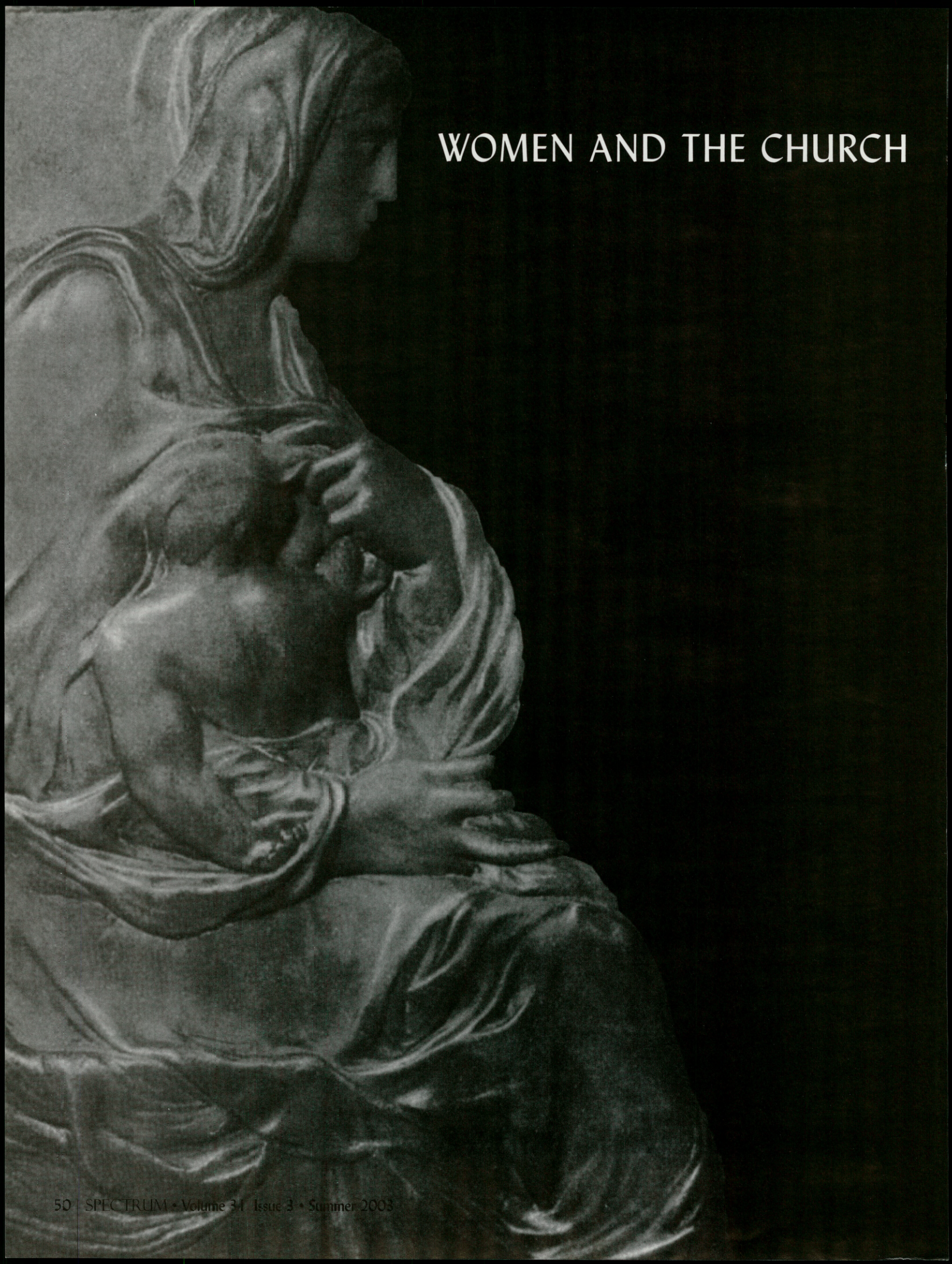

WOMEN AND THE CHURCH

Women's Leadership in the Church: Lessons from Church Planters

By Doug Tilstra

The long and heated Adventist debate over women in ministry and women's ordination has detracted needed emphasis from a very basic fact of Adventist history: God has used women in a significant way to build the Church. For instance, some of the most effective church planters in the denomination have been female, especially prior to Ellen White's death in 1915.

Take Lulu Wightman. During the nine years from 1896 to 1905, she planted twelve churches in the state of New York. Later, her husband joined her and together they planted another five churches. Archivist and church historian Bert Haloviak says of Wightman that "the results from her evangelism would rank her not only as the most outstanding evangelist in New York state during her time, but among the most successful within the denomination for any time period."[1]

The first one hundred years of Seventh-day Adventist church history explode with the stories of such powerful women leaders, at least nine or ten of whom were notable church planters. The last fifty years of recent church history reveal fewer women in recognized leadership roles and almost no record of any women church planters.[2]

Ellen White and the women who planted churches in the early days of the Adventist Church were part of a larger movement for women's rights that centered in American religious revivals of the early 1800s.[3] The fledgling Adventist Church, strongly influenced by Ellen White, was no exception. She endorsed women ministers and gave personal support to those Adventist women of her day who were planting churches.[4]

Minnie Sype and her family left Iowa to homestead in Oklahoma after the Oklahoma Land Rush of 1889. During the summer of 1901 a heat wave destroyed thousands of acres of farmland, including the Sype's homestead. Agriculturally, the venture failed, but Minnie discovered she could grow something else.

That fall, she gathered other disillusioned farm families to encourage them with friendship and spiritual hope. The gatherings became regular religious meetings, and Minnie was the leader and speaker. Her husband assisted her, lead-

ing song services in the meetings and doing the housework at home. That winter, the group organized officially as the Gyp, Oklahoma, Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Minnie had just started her church-planting ministry. The Oklahoma Conference sent her an appreciation check of $25. That spring, the conference leadership hired her as an evangelist and her husband as her assistant. For the next fifty years Minnie served as a licensed minister in Oklahoma, Iowa, Pennsylvania, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Florida, and the Bahamas.[5]

In 1927, Jessie Weiss, a forty-five-year-old, single, successful businesswoman, sensed the call of God to evangelistic ministry and arranged to preach a series of Bible lectures in a large tent near Drums, Pennsylvania. Eight converts and a new church planted in Drums marked Weiss's success and the beginning of twenty-five more years of active ministry and church planting.

Weiss was noted in the newspapers of her day as a skilled and successful preacher. Her many accomplishments included supervising construction of new church buildings, raising funds, sponsoring students' education, filling interim pastoral assignments, doing innovative graphic design for sermon illustrations, and training others for ministry.[6]

Ellen White's enthusiasm for the nontraditional public role of such women met with mixed responses from her male counterparts in the Church. Some, like J. N. Andrews, G. C. Tenney, and her husband, James, wrote vigorous articles in defense of women in ministry generally and Ellen White's ministry in particular.[7] Others opposed women's full acceptance in ministry, among them A.G. Daniells, General Conference president in 1901, who prevented Wightman from being ordained.[8]

One of the indications of White's influence as an advocate for women in ministry and church planting is the rapid decline in the number of women in church leadership roles after her death.[9] Just before White's death in 1915, 30 percent of all conference treasurers in North America were women; more than 60 percent of educational department leaders were women; and more than 80 percent of the Sabbath School department leaders were women. Between 1915 and 1975, those percentages dropped to almost zero. The number of women licensed as ministers dropped more than half during that same period.[10]

Some Adventists today believe that encouraging women in ministry or church planting is a drift away from Scripture and Adventist heritage and an accommodation to evil societal trends. Actually the opposite is true. What is needed in the Adventist Church today are women of the caliber of Lulu Wightman, Minnie Sype, or Jessie Weiss, and the administrators who will hire and urge them to excellence.

During the summer of 2002 I went in search of Adventist women who are planting churches today. I found six. My interviews with them revealed, among other things, the crying need for dialogue—dialogue about women in church planting ministry and about women in pastoral and other ministries.

Transitional Solutions Needed

Perhaps it would be helpful, at least initially, to separate the discussion of female church leadership from the discussion of women's ordination. It seems that there are women in ministry today open to the idea. Despite the stigma from the lack of ordination/affirmation, many women are nonetheless willing to move forward, allowing their ministry to speak for itself. This is not an ideal solution. Perhaps, though, it could be seen as a transitional solution while everyone matures and explores the dialogue.

If members at large and administrators and scholars in particular can respond with equal candor and grace, perhaps genuine dialogue can occur. That dialogue needs to include discussion, for one, with women who are doing ministry—church planting and otherwise. Their insights, needs, concerns, observations, and ideas must be heard.

They also need to hear the fears, concerns, insights, and goals of administrators. The discussion must also include those who receive the ministry of female church planters and those who work with them as colleagues. The dialogue must be open and ongoing. It needs to continue until all participants feel it is no longer necessary.

To illustrate the crucial role of such dialogue consider one issue that surfaced during my interviews with Adventist women who are planting churches. The women clearly identified the dramatic differences between church planting and traditional pastoral work. In every case they identified more closely with male church planters than with female pastors. Part of the reason is that church planters, male or female, must assume a posture primarily focused on leadership and only secondarily on nurture. In contrast, many pastors, and almost all female pastors assume a nurturing posture.

This dichotomy poses concerns particularly

for women currently in training for ministry. If they intend to enter more traditional pastoral ministry, then a nurturing model will work well. If, however, they enter a church planting ministry they need to prepare for an entirely different style of leadership. Their background may not have prepared them for that style or the anguish of being misunderstood as they use it.

This issue of leadership style (nurture vs. "take charge") is just one example of dozens of topics that remain unaddressed. They are not addressed, in part, because the dialogue to date regarding women in ministry has largely focused on "yes/no", "right/wrong", "biblical/unbiblical" types of questions. Perhaps it is time to explore the creative ministry questions (many of which can be appreciated by those on varying points along the women-in-leadership continuum) and build dialogue around those issues.

An early starting point for dialogue is the local church, along with academy and college campuses. We need to develop ways to raise the profile of women leaders. Many high school and college-age young women have never even heard of church planting, let alone a female church planter.

Very few of these young women have ever considered that God might be calling them to such a ministry, but they may sense that call while reading article in *Insight* magazine or listening to a class presentation from another young women telling her story of planting a church. Such presentations awaken curiosity, interest, and life-altering dialogue at a formative age.

Another place for dialogue could be in the planning councils for new church plants. Typically, leaders who plant churches are open to new and innovative ideas. They might be willing to ask new and probing questions about the role of gender in church planting. They might be able to model the growing ability to understand, celebrate, and capitalize on gender differences in their church rather than deny, debate, or decry them.

For example, if it proves true that women, as a general rule, bring a stronger relational style to church planting, they might ask how that factor can work in favor of church planting in North America. Also, they might ask what unique traits, as a general rule, male church planters bring. How can those traits complement the unique traits of female church planters? How can geographic areas be evaluated to know the unique traits, including gender mix, needed on a given church planting team? These and dozens of other questions could be creatively explored in an atmosphere of respectful yet probing dialogue.

Such dialogue would inevitably lead to better training and equipping for leaders of both genders. It could prompt the development of a new approach to church planting—an approach based on a team model rather than a solo pastor model. This team model would always include at least one woman either as the leader or one of the team members.

Not all of the dialogue will be creative or even pleasant. In addition to discussions among students or church planting leaders, administrators need to tackle

Seventh-day Adventist Men and Women in Ministry

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION, JULY 2003

Total Number of SDA Women within North American Division Known to Be Educated in Theology or Religion and/or Currently or Formerly Employed in Ministerial Capacities within or outside Denomination	475
SDA Women within NAD Known to Be Educated in Theology or Religion and/or Currently or Formerly Working within Denomination as:	
Active Pastors	80
Administrators or GC Employees	63
Bible Instructors	54
Chaplains	
Campus	9
Medical	47
Pastors' Wives Working as Associates	16
Teachers/Professors of Religion	60
Student Majors in Theology or Religion	53
Mothers on Leave	6
Total	388
Total Number of SDA Males Working within NAD as Active Pastors or Administrators	5,086

Sources: Dúane Schoonard, Associate Director, NAD Ministerial Association, from the NAD Ministerial Association database; and the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics.

Note: All numbers should be considered approximations due to incomplete, overlapping, and often outdated data.

some tough issues. Sexual harassment certainly needs attention. This includes both education and user-friendly organizational systems that function fairly and flawlessly. When there is an abusive situation, all parties need to see the entire process as much more than a politically correct posture, but rather as an integral part of the faith that they profess.

Just as important are such issues as promotion of healthy and productive work relationships between male and female co-church planters, support structures for spouses and families of church planters, support of conference administration, and eventually the topic of ordination. These are a few of the topics raised by the women interviewed. They would like to see the discussion widened.

Rebuilding the Culture for Diversity

Once the dialogue becomes part of the fabric of the leadership culture in the Church, we will move beyond merely allowing diversity, or even encouraging it, to managing it wisely. Administrators will undoubtedly look for models that will enable them to manage the diversity better. Several models are briefly suggested below.

R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.'s model for moving beyond affirmative action to affirming diversity might be relevant. Thomas challenges the traditional concept of an American melting pot and suggests that managers do the internal work of examining their own motives, vision, and focus before evaluating the corporate culture. Then he advises modification of assumptions, systems, and models before equipping pioneers who will actually translate the new theories into behaviors.

Another model is from Catalyst, a "nonprofit organization with the mission of furthering women's advancement in corporations and professional firms."[11] The Catalyst model has similarities to Thomas's model. As with Thomas's model, it begins with introspection as the first of three phases. In the first phase of introspection and foundation building, there is a subphase of evaluating gender initiatives in light of the organization's strategic mission and then drawing leadership into that vision. Building a fact base is the aim of the second phase. Finally, in phase three the work of developing, piloting, and implementing action plans is done.

A third model, entitled "Reframing Diversity," takes a different approach.[12] Reframing Diversity focuses almost entirely on the reflective and self-evaluation aspects. It does not make separate suggestions for action, as do the other two models. Rather, it envisions the reflection process extending through all of the action phases.

The reflection process of the Reframing Diversity model begins with the recognition of the leader's multiple identities and evaluates which identity is most pronounced in the given situation. With that awareness, the leader can evaluate costs and benefits associated with that identity, and finally the possibility of shared goals with others of differing identities.

The Reframing Diversity model is a good tool for forming a mental framework, though it is a bit theoretical and more difficult to apply than the other models. What it lacks in user-friendliness it has in depth of insight. The questions alone that accompany each stage probe the heart and soul of the leader. This model has the potential to shift one's basic paradigms regarding diversity management.

Impact on Those Outside (and Inside) the Church

The corporate witness of the Church will be greatly affected by what leaders decide to do regarding women. One of the church planters I interviewed told of the positive impression made on community people when they learned that the new church had a female pastor. The existence of women pastors began to break down stereotypes about the closed-mindedness and irrelevancy of the Church.

For some, such a discovery was the first step toward fellowship in the church community. But another story by another women shows another side to corporate witness. During her church planting experience she was not supported by some leaders in her church and actually opposed by others. Her friends from the community were dismayed. "What kind of church do you work for, anyway?!" they demanded.

The spirit that fosters open dialogue and confrontation of tough issues could also foster another needed trend in local churches. Too many Adventist churches understand the harmful effects of individual behavioral sin better than relational sin and its dangers. Bitterness, jealousy, rage, and contempt may actually work more havoc in Adventist churches than cigarette smoking or alcohol drinking. We condemn the latter and often ignore the former.

One female church planter described how she is working to confront the relational dysfunction in her church. She believes that church planters are in a

unique position to address those ills and work for healing. She also believes that women are more likely to discern and successfully address such issues.

Her view is that ideally every church needs a pastor of each gender and that relational healing could be a specialty area for many women pastors. Perhaps she is right. Perhaps a denomination that creates an atmosphere of open dialogue mature enough to address tough issues is ready for deeper relational healing.

Finally, there is a need for the Adventist Church to hold issues in tension without becoming paralyzed or fossilized. Sometimes holding a matter in tension is merely a political tactic to stall or force a default decision, but it can also be a wise way to deal with an unstable environment.

Holding matters in tension can include tentative, temporary, or transitional solutions until issues become clearer or people become more mature. That is the type of wisdom needed in current discussions of Adventist women who plant churches in North America, as well as women in leadership throughout the Church.

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The Long and Winding Road for Adventist

By Kit Watts

1960s

1968 Northern European Division asks for counsel regarding ordination of women, particularly in Finland.

General Conference officers appoint three-man committee to study desirability of a study on the theology of ordination of women.

1970s

1970 General Conference officers appoint larger committee to consider women's ordination.

1972 Josephine Benton ordained local church elder at Brotherhood Church, Washington, D.C., by Potomac Conference and Columbia Union presidents, W. G. Quigley and Cree Sandefur, respectively.

Far Eastern Division requests counsel on ordination of women, which General Conference officers refer to Biblical Research Committee.

1973 *July:* General Conference committee establishes ad hoc committee on role of women in Church, to include women's ordination. W. J. Hackett appointed chair; Gordon Hyde secretary.

September: General Conference ad hoc committee convenes at Camp Mohaven, Ohio, with thirteen men and fourteen women from North America in attendance to review twenty-nine papers. Reviewers recommend that women be ordained as local elders, that those with theological training be hired as "associates in pastoral care," and that pilot program lead to ordination of women in 1975.

October: Annual Council delegates agree to "more study" on ordination and provide ringing endorsement of women as mothers and homemakers.

1975 Spring Meeting delegates vote to end Church's 100-year policy of granting women ministerial licenses, but approve of women's ordination as deaconesses.

Biblical Research Institute prepares scholarly papers on women's ordination, which are not released to church members.

1977 Annual Council approves recommendation to call women "associates in pastoral care," but stipulates that designation does not place them on ordination track.

1980s

1982 Association of Adventist Women established.

1983 North American Division Office of Human Relations, directed by Warren Banfield, establishes NAD Women's Commission comprised of women chosen by union presidents to serve in voluntary capacity.

1984 *March:* Potomac Conference authorizes eight local elders, including three women pastors, to baptize candidates for membership.

July. One hundred edited copies of Biblical Research Institute's papers on women's ordination prepared in 1975 released for first time to attendees of second conference of Association of Adventist Women meeting in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

August. General Conference officers demand that Potomac Conference rescind action that permits women to baptize as local elders.

October: Annual Council delegates reaffirm decision of Spring Meeting in 1975 that allows ordination of women as local elders with approval of respective divisions. Meeting also approves additional study on ordaining women to gospel ministry.

1985 Commission on the Role of Women in the Church (I) meets in Washington, D.C., with sixty-five members from the world field. Recommendations include more study on ordination, affirmative action for women in jobs that do not require ordination, reform of ordination practices, and further study on the status of women pastors in the North American Division. General Conference vice president Frances Wernick urges agreement on issue throughout world church.

General Conference Session in New Orleans accepts recommendations of Commission on the Role of Women in the Church.

General Conference Women's Ministries Advisory Committee established with Betty Holbrook as chair. Elizabeth Sterndale of North American Division Health Department appointed to represent NAD on committee.

1986 Loma Linda University church board authorizes Pastor Margaret Hempe to perform baptisms.

1987 Under Charles Bradford, North American Division sponsors first gathering of women clergy, which attracts twenty-three of the forty women known to be serving in the North American Division as pastors and chaplains and in related ministries.

1988 Time for Equality in Adventist Ministry (TEAM) established among Adventist lay persons in Maryland.

Adventist Women's Institute (AWI) established among Adventist lay persons primarily on the U.S. West Coast.

Commission on the Role of Women in the Church (II) meets in Washington, D.C., with eighty representatives from the world church, nineteen of whom are women. Delegates recommend additional study on women's ordination.

Chinese woman, Hui Ying Zhou, reported to have baptized at least 200 people in Wuxi and often attracts up to 1,000 to Sabbath services.

1989 Southeastern California Conference establishes Gender Inclusiveness Task Force chaired by Penny Miller.

Columbia Union endorses Leslie Bumgardner of Ohio as candidate for ordination.

Women's Ordination: 35 Years and Counting

Hyveth Williams becomes senior pastor of Boston Temple, Boston, Massachusetts.

Commission on the Role of Women in the Church (III) meets in Cohutta Springs, Georgia, with more than seventy-five representatives from the world field. North American Division union presidents send message to delegates that endorses women's ordination in ministry. General Conference president Neal Wilson offers resolution, which delegates approve, recommending that women not be ordained to gospel ministry, but that divisions may authorize qualified females in ministry to perform baptisms and marriages.

1990s

1990 *July:* After bitter debate, General Conference delegates in Indianapolis vote to accept recommendation of Commission on the Role of Women in the Church (III) not to ordain women, but to permit women to perform baptisms and marriages where divisions approve.

September: North American Division establishes Women's Ministries Department with Elizabeth Sterndale as director.

October: Annual Council establishes Women's Ministries Department at the General Conference with Rose Otis as director.

1994 General Conference president persuades Southeastern California Conference to postpone ordination of women.

Atlantic Union Conference executive committee votes statement in support of women's ordination.

Annual Council delegates accept recommendation from North American Division that General Conference Session in 1995 consider authorizing women's ordination in divisions that find it helpful.

1995 Church publishes Biblical Research Institute's papers on women's ordination twenty years after being written.

July: After highly polarized debate, General Conference delegates in Utrecht vote against giving divisions authority to set up policies that meet ministry needs in their fields, such as ordaining women to gospel ministry.

September: Sligo Church ordains three women within congregation to gospel ministry: Norma Osborn, associate pastor; Kendra Haloviak, religion teacher at Columbia Union College, and Penny Shell, director of pastoral care (chaplain) at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital.

December: Victoria Church in Loma Linda, California, ordains pastor, Sheryll Prinz McMillan, to gospel ministry. La Sierra University Church conducts ordination for Halcyon Wilson, associate pastor, and Madelynn Jones Haldeman, religion teacher at La Sierra University.

1996 North American Division establishes President's Commission on Women in Ministry to consider how to expand participation and recognition of women in the Church. Members instructed not to discuss ordination as a solution.

Garden Grove Church in California ordains Margo Pitrone, associate pastor, to gospel ministry.

1997 La Sierra University opens Church's first Women's Resource Center, with partial goal of advocating and supporting Adventist women in ministry and other leadership roles.

Loma Linda University Church ordains Associate Pastor Margaret Hempe to gospel ministry.

1998 Andrews University Press publishes *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, a product of a special committee at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. "We believe that the biblical, theological, and historical perspectives elaborated in this book affirm women in pastoral leadership," reads the Introduction.

1999 By recommendation of Gender Inclusiveness Commission, Southeastern California Conference executive committee votes to improve fairness in recognition of gospel ministers within its territory.

2000s

2000 General Conference Ministerial Association begins to publish *Contact*, a newsletter for women in ministry throughout the world church.

Loma Linda University Church ordains Jennifer Scott, associate pastor, to gospel ministry.

Southeastern California Conference adopts equal credentials (using the terminology "ordained-commissioned") for male and female pastors. Conference constituency later upholds decision at October quadrennial session.

Arizona Conference adopts the new equal credential and ordains-commissions Patricia Hart, Jenny McBride, and Donald Smith during camp meeting.

In response to recommendations from President's Commission on Women in Ministry, North American Division appoints Dúane Schoonard, associate pastor of Southern Adventist University Church, to part-time position as associate in NAD Ministerial Association.

2001 North American Division sponsors retreat for Adventist women clergy that attracts 120 attendees to Pine Springs Ranch in Southeastern California.

2002 Northern California Conference constituency asks conference officers to explore adoption of equal credentials for male and female pastors.

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Contextualization and Women in the Church

By Doug Matacio

At their 2003 Spring Meeting Seventh-day Adventist General Conference leaders voted a document that emphasizes the need to contextualize the age-old gospel to "position the church for the future." The document recognizes that the Church "is far behind in developing, producing, and teaching the use of contextualized material," and challenges the world divisions and Religious Study Centers to act.[1]

The time has come for clear thinking and resolute action. Darrell L. Whiteman, editor for many years of *Missiology*, offers a valuable insight into the task at hand:

> Contextualization attempts to communicate the gospel in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural [and geographical/historical] context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people's deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.[2]

When the message is contextualized people understand it in their own language. If other cultural systems, such as leadership style, decision making, and gender relations, do not have hearers' own vocabulary and rules of "grammar" as well, hearers may remain clueless.

Contextualization follows the example of God, Jesus, and Paul, who all contextualized, and offers an essential tool for the Holy Spirit to help the Church accomplish its mission. It is a need within the Church's leadership as well as its message.

God's Everlasting Covenant

The source of the Church's mission is the everlasting covenant between God and his people, which is a primary biblical example of contextualization as the means of mission. The covenant has this importance because in all its contexualized forms, or "renewals," it was the means by which God himself chose to accomplish his mission. He entered our context by becoming one of us, and by doing so saved us.

"I will be your God; and because of my plan of salvation, you shall be my people forever if you will trust me," runs God's eternal covenant. Without it, there would be no good news of salvation to proclaim. God first presented it to Adam and Eve. Then in Bible times he renewed it in five distinctive historical contexts, which we call the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants, as well as the new covenant ratified by Christ's blood.

In each instance, the same message was repeated, but it was contextualized to fit differing historical circumstances. Each time there was (1) a recitation of God's mighty acts, (2) a word from God concern-

ing relationship commands, (3) promises, then (4) a response from God's people through worship and sacrifices, and (5) a physical sign or symbol of the covenant.[3] Each sign fit the local historical context but continues today. As a result, the contextualized manifestations of God's eternal covenant displayed profound continuity of essential content amid changes due to historical and cultural contextual factors.

A study of the Greek word for "new" as in "new covenant" sheds further light on God's contextualization. *Neos* refers to the kind of radical discontinuity we associate with the English concept of "new"; there is a complete break with the past. *Kainos*, on the other hand, refers to "continuity in the midst of change."

In John 13:34, Jesus issued a "new" (*kainos*) commandment to love one another. But what was "new" about it? Wasn't it a repetition of the Old Testament command to love one's neighbor? Jesus spoke of the new dimension to loving demonstrated by his own example. The New Testament, in every case except one, refers to the new covenant as a *kainos* covenant: the same everlasting covenant ratified by the blood of Christ.[4]

God's ongoing program of contextualization is the work of the Holy Spirit. Those who live "in accordance with the Spirit" (Rom. 8:5) will gain insight into God's truth for a particular context today. "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26).

Notice three points in this process of contextualization: (1) new things will be taught to us that Jesus did not mention while on earth, things that would come up in later contexts; (2) these new things will result from remembering what Jesus had said and applying it to the new contexts; and (3) the Holy Spirit will superintend the process.

John 16:12-13 repeats the same concept: "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth." Charles Van Engen has summarized this point well, "Again [in fresh contexts] there is clear unity of the truth; it is the truth of Jesus Christ, and it will not be a *neos* truth. It will be a *kainos* truth, which is both continuous with previous revelation and discontinuous in its radical contextualization."[5]

Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5:17-48 shows us how Jesus contextualized. The first-century context was not the same as that of Moses' law giving. By then, Jesus existed on earth in the flesh, and the people of God were deeply rooted Jews rather than wandering Israelites. So Jesus contextualized: "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'Do not murder,' and whoever murders will be answerable in the judgment. But I say to you that anyone who is angry at his brother will be answerable in the judgment" (Matt. 5:21-22).

The Sermon on the Mount shows that Jesus expected Christians to keep the whole law. But the way he expected them to do so was different from those of traditionalists (Matt. 5:17-21). Jesus' contextualization actually made the law more rigorous than before. Jesus internalized the law, focusing on inner motives. "By changing the focus of the law, he transformed it. In the language of verse 17, he 'fulfilled' the law."[6]

Jesus showed that even the ceremonial laws had meaning many centuries after they were first given, but he referred to only a few. He left it up to individual Christians and communities in their historical and cultural contexts to work out applications under the contextualizing guidance of the Holy Spirit (the John 16:12-13 principle again).

Sometimes Jesus performed a radical contextualization, as in the following example, which concerned gender relations: "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must [simply] give her a certificate of divorce. But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to commit adultery, and anyone who marries a woman so divorced commits adultery" (Matt. 5:31-32).

Still there was continuity amid change.

Contextualization by the Apostle Paul

For the Apostle Paul, contextualization was a toolbox that enabled him in the power of the Spirit to accomplish his mission. We must assume that 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 was a public announcement that he never went anywhere or did any evangelizing without those tools.

Changing metaphors, Paul was a slave to the contextualization process, making sure that wherever he went and whatever he did in the name of Christ he made himself "a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible" (1 Cor. 9:19). When working with Jews, he followed their customs to prevent creation of needless barriers to acceptance of the gospel, which itself was a formidable barrier that struck at the heart of their worldview. Paul's approach didn't

always work (see Acts 21:20-36), but he consistently applied the principle.

Paul also contextualized when ministering among Gentiles. Insisting that they did not need to become Jews first in order to be saved, he went so far as to reject the Old Testament rite of circumcision as a sign of God's covenant with his people. But he transformed it (like Jesus with the Mosaic law in the Sermon on the Mount) in the context of the New Covenant: Circumcision became not just a cutting of male foreskins; it represented the removal of both male and female hearts, thus bringing an end to lives of sin and preparing believers for new lives in Christ.

> For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have this fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of your sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ. In baptism you were buried with him and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. (Col. 2:9-12)

Women in the Context of the Early Church

Because Paul contextualized to further his mission, contextualization becomes an important factor for understanding his counsel on women's involvement in the church, as given in passages like 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

It is useful to understand the context of Paul's practical advice in terms of the macrocontext and the microcontext. By macrocontext, I mean the historical and sociocultural backgrounds of the three major world influences in New Testament times: Jewish, Hellenistic Greek, and Roman. Microcontext refers to the unique local factors like heresy, legalistic false teachers, and disorderly worship.

Looking at the macrocontext of Paul's counsels on women in ministry, one should understand that the expected behavior of women was different in Greek and Roman societies. In Rome, women freely participated in public social events, conversing with men not their husbands without losing their reputations. But in classical Greek and Hellenistic culture only the *hetairai*, intelligent, upper-class prostitutes similar to modern–day geisha girls, could approach, converse with, and otherwise consort with men at social gatherings. Wives, for the most part, stayed home. Even at home dinner parties, they stayed out of sight.[7]

These differences must be kept in mind when reading Paul's letters to Greek Hellenistic churches in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:34-35) and Ephesus (1 Tim. 2:11-15), in which he advised women to remain silent in church. Paul's advice was a matter of crucial importance. For the sake of the church's mission, he could not allow inquirers to get any ideas that Christian women of Corinth and Ephesus might be *hetairai*.

Looking at the macrocontext of Paul's counsels on women in ministry, one should understand that women had different roles in Greek and Roman societies.

A closer look at the passage in 1 Corinthians gives the macrocontextual reason for Paul's counsel. After instructing women to be silent in the churches, "as in all the congregations of the saints" (which I interpret as Hellenistic churches), he told them to ask their own husband at home if they wanted to inquire about something.

Then Paul gives his macrocontextual reason: "For it is disgraceful (NIV) (shameful, NRSV) for a woman to speak in the church. The Greek word used here is *aischron*, which could refer to physical ugliness, but "was most commonly used in a moral sense . . . for something considered shameful or base."[8] Cognate words are *aischrosemnia*, "obscenity"; *aischrotes*, "filthy conduct," specifically, fellatio in Aristophenes; and *aischroourgeo*, "to act unseemly" with a connotation of masturbation.[9]

New Testament scholar Terence Paige in a groundbreaking article has recently concluded that the "shameful speech" in 1 Corinthians 14 "was not sacral speech at all; it was ordinary conversation with men who were not relatives." The Greek word *aischron* helps us to understand the macrocontextual reason that Paul told the women in Corinth not to speak in church: Paige concludes, "Women's leadership was not at issue; rather, it was modesty and honorable behavior."[10]

A microcontextual reason for the ban on women speaking is seen in the context of 1 Corinthians 14:33-35, where the topic is order in public services. After a long discussion on the dangers of disorderly speaking in tongues, Paul states, "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace." Note that mission outreach is

the reason for allowing prophesying but disallowing speaking in tongues without a translator.

Paul says that if everyone speaks in tongues an "unbeliever" might say "you are out of your mind" (1 Cor. 14:23). But an unbeliever at a service that includes prophesying might well be converted (1 Cor 14:24-25). Then he urges women to remain silent. In the local context, women had evidently been interrupting the worship service. Paul was pleading for orderly reverence instead of disorderly bedlam.

In contrast, in letters to the church in Philippi, a Roman colony (Acts 16:12), and to the church in Rome itself Paul said nothing about women not speaking in church. With our knowledge of Roman culture it is not surprising that Paul's first encounter in Philippi was in fact with a group of women by the river. They interacted openly with him and his companions (v. 13).

Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth, spoke up and said, "If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house" (v. 15). We see an openness in Roman culture that would not have been likely even in Hellenistic society, which was somewhat more liberal than that of ancient Athens.

The letter to the Romans provides additional evidence to support the thesis that Paul was fully aware of the differences between Greek and Roman culture. In the epistle to the Romans, Paul praises the gifted, hard-working ministry of Phoebe (16:1), Prisca (16:3), Mary (16:6), and Junia (16:7). Paul seemed to go out of his way to encourage women who were active in Christian ministry.

In Philippians 4:2-3, Paul speaks of two women, Euodia and Syntyche, who had "co-operated vigorously at his side in the cause of the gospel." These women, perhaps among those he had first met "down by the river," had worked with him openly, and his concern was that they not be lost to gospel ministry due to a personality conflict.

In contrast, Paul mentions women mainly in the context of simple greetings in his letters to the Hellenistic churches. Those named are Priscilla, along with her husband (1 Cor 19:19; 2 Tim. 4:19); and Nympha, the host of a house church, who was the recipient of Paul's greetings (Col. 4:15). The contrast is clear. The Roman letters commended women for working in ministry; the Hellenistic letters only convey greetings to or from women.

In 1 Timothy, Paul addresses a local situation in Ephesus, where a grave danger existed of women leading men into false doctrine, just as Eve had led Adam into sin. Paul has this microcontextual factor in mind as well as the macrocontextual factor that prompted his command to the women in Corinth: Women were not to speak to or with men in public in Hellenistic churches because non-Christians in attendance might think they were sexually available. Therefore, the Ephesians were not to conduct their worship services in a way that brought public reproach to the church and its mission—and, by extension, its head, Jesus Christ.

A Call for Action

God's covenant relation with his people, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, and Paul's practice of being all things to all people are models for us to contextualize our message and patterns of leadership. Contextualization aligns itself with the traditional Adventist concept of "present truth" quite well. Toward that goal, the Church needs to train leaders to be flexible and to lead in many cultural and strategic contexts. Eschewing ethnocentrism, we will not force others to use our tools, but will applaud one another as we develop tools appropriate to the cultural environment in which we work. We might also recognize that the concept of women as elders and pastors is an acceptable form of contextualized theology and mission practice.

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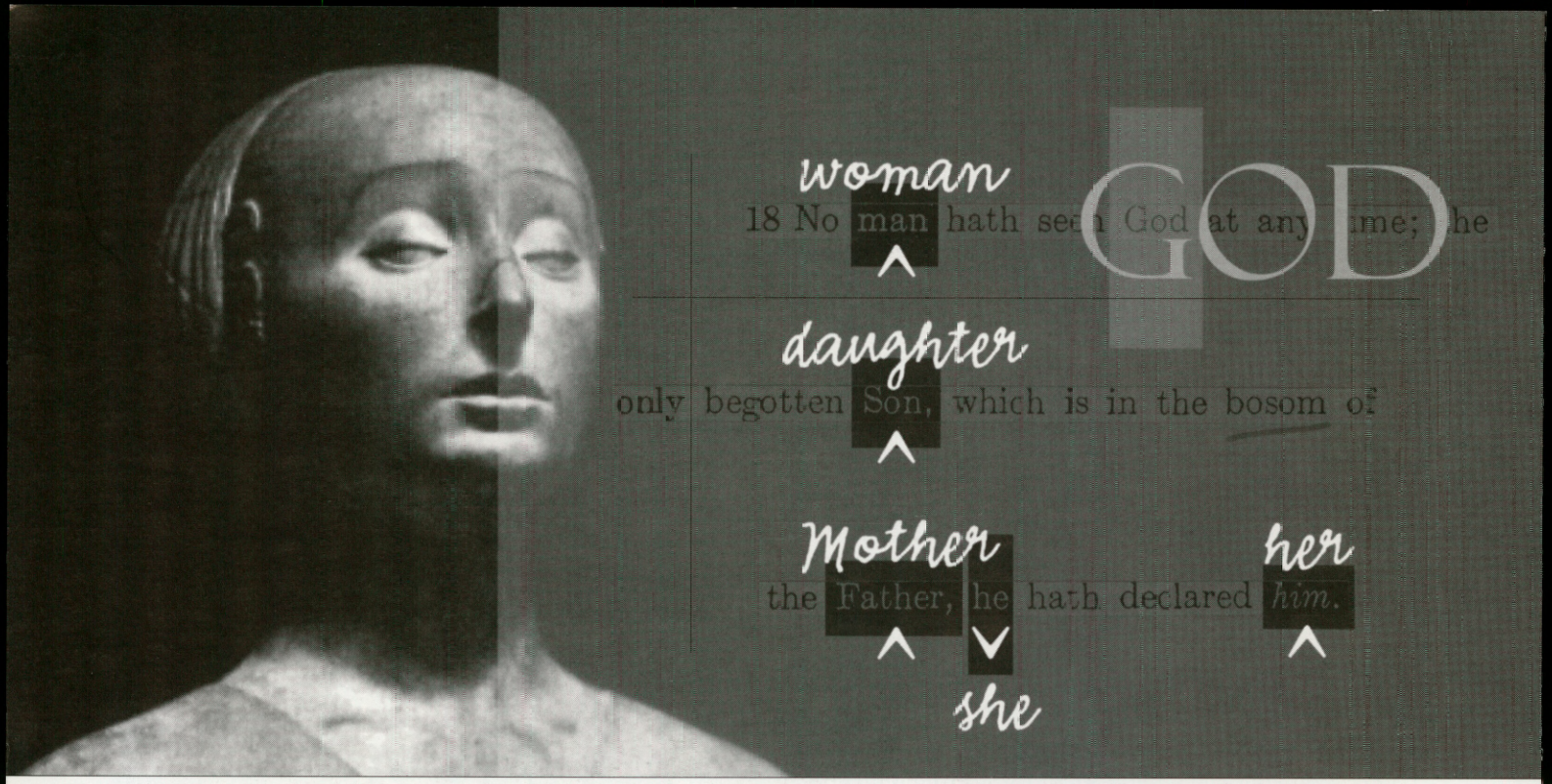


Reflections on She Who Is

By Heather Isaacs

How can Seventh-day Adventists as a corporate body begin to examine the cultural biases we bring to our specific reading of the Bible? We might begin with our language about God. For example, we speak about the need to be "born again," but never about the womb of God. In addition, we praise the "Father of All Creation" and the relationship between the Father and the Son without any inclusion of the Mother, a necessary counterpart to the Father.

The work of feminist theologian Elizabeth Johnson on the biblical concept of Wisdom, or Sophia, helped me to understand better the current limits of Adventist language about God. Johnson's book, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), challenges classical Christian tradition that uses the Bible to reaffirm preexisting patriarchal systems. In this book Johnson is critical of readings that do not recognize the weight of cultural judgments on biblical interpretation and instead assume a literal, verbatim revelation.

Johnson is up front about her normative standard of reading the Bible: The experience of women must be brought to the center of biblical interpretation and the resultant theology pointed toward the well being of all women. According to her, this will make possible "a new configuration of theory and praxis and the genuine transformation of all societies, including churches, to open up more human ways of living for all people, with each other and the earth" (11).

If women are not able to affirm their own self-worth, if they are not able to oppose sexism, if they cannot recognize their *imago dei* and despair because of it, then Christian theology has failed them.

What makes Johnson's work relevant to the Adventist principle of openness to new understandings of the Bible is her reliance on canonical writings. The canonization of the Bible excluded much of the Jewish Wisdom tradition that contains examples of feminine language for God. Still, the Bible has remained a "strong source of life for countless women throughout the centuries and continues to do so today" (63).

Johnson excavates the location of these sources for women's strength and affirmation in her study of Wisdom and its application to the Doctrine of God. To her, the biblical image of Wisdom is

> the most developed personification of God's presence and activity in the Hebrew Scriptures, much more acutely limned than Spirit, torah, or word. The term itself is of feminine grammatical gender: *hokmah* in Hebrew, *Sophia* in Greek, *sapientia* in Latin. While this does not in itself determine anything, the biblical depiction of Wisdom is itself consistently female, casting her as sister, mother, female beloved, chef and hostess, preacher, judge, liberator, establisher of justice, and a myriad of other female roles where she symbolizes transcendent power ordering and delighting in the world. She pervades the world, both nature and human beings, interacting with them all to lure them along the right path of life. (87)

Sophia is manifested in each person of the Trinity and reveals the work of the Triune God, which is to seek justice in the world for all her creatures: Spirit-Sophia as Life-giving Spirit, Mother-Sophia as Compassionate Creator, Jesus-Sophia as Sophia Incarnate. Our first encounter with God in the Bible is in Spirit-Sophia, "the Spirit of God hovering over the waters" (Gen. 1:1).

Spirit, in Hebrew *Ruah*, denotes breath. Using the Adventist belief in the soul as breath, Spirit-Sophia is the breath or soul of God exhaled across and into creation. Spirit-Sophia's activity involves

> a continuous energizing, an ongoing sustaining of the world throughout the broad sweep of history. She is the giver of life and the lover of life, pervading the cosmos and all of its interrelated creatures with life. If she were to withdraw her divine presence everything would go back to nothing. (134)

Mother-Sophia embodies the creative power of God, which includes the protective concern she has for her people. The Bible uses notable metaphors from mothering to describe God (Isa. 42:14; 46:3-4; 49:15; 66:13; Hos. 11:3-4). Like the she-bear in Hosea 13:8 ("Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack and rip them open"), Mother-Sophia is tirelessly seeking out justice on behalf of her creatures.

Part of the act of creating is protecting what one has created. Like loving human mothers, Mother-Sophia's sentiment toward her children is one of love and acceptance. But judgment is reserved against those who thwart the full flourishing of her creatures and is part of the maternal care that Mother-Sophia gives. Rather than interacting with her creatures as master or king, Mother-Sophia is interested in being in relationship with her people in mutuality and love.

The wisdom of Mother-Sophia that is merciful and justice loving was made flesh in the life of Jesus. In Jesus, "Sophia pitches her tent in the midst of the world" (150) and gets about the business of redeeming and restoring the world. Johnson believes that Jesus-Sophia redeemed the world not from what Martin Luther or John Calvin would have characterized as sin—pride and/or selfishness—for it is only those in power for whom sin is egotism and pride. For the powerless and oppressed, sin is the despair of not knowing one was made in the image of God, and Jesus came to save both.

Jesus as a man in a patriarchal society continually subverted social norms in his interactions with women. As a result, women were drawn to his ministry and became disciples and supporters. In his Christhood, oppressed women find rest and affirmation because Jesus' manhood does not constitute his Christhood and is therefore open to all.

In the same way, the metaphor of Son and Father should not be understood as a concrete, literal descrip-

tion of the relationship between the first and second persons of the Trinity. Rather, the work of Jesus-Sophia is the window to the true inner life of the Trinity and God's relationship to her people. "His solidarity with suffering people in the name of God even to death diagrams the heart of Sophia-God, the essence of her way with the world" (168).

Sophia-God, then, is God both transcendent and immanent in love. Each person of the Trinity exists in complete, divine freedom—the will to live freely enters into solidarity with creation. Though God is ineffable, the work of God is testifiable. There is not a place where God is not. She suffers with the suffering:

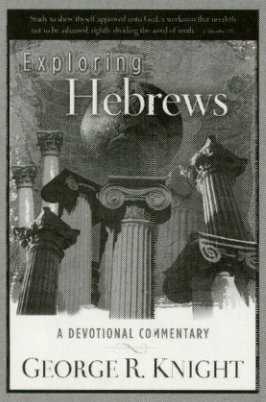
> Holy Wisdom does not abhor the reality of women but identifies with the pain and violence that women experience on the cross, of whatever sort....Through the long night when the Bethlehem concubine is gang-raped and tortured, where is God? She is there, being abused and defiled. . . . Sophia-God enters into the pain of women whose humanity is profaned and keeps vigil with the godforsaken for whom there is no rescue. In turn, their devastation points to the depth of the suffering God. (264)

In every dark place of privation and hopelessness, our Suffering God is there. She is not a passive onlooker, but an active, life-giving force that works to save and restore her creation.

I have condensed Johnson's argument to a few key points. Reading her book showed me our limitations in our discussion about the Nature of *Man*, being "born again," the Father of All Creation, the complementary function of the sexes, and other traditional doctrines about and metaphors for God. If we want our message to be universal and reflect God's concern for all of God's people, then we will need to change our language.

Adventists believe that before God can come again the "gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). Our language about God reveals that there is gospel left for us that we have not yet understood.

Heather Isaacs is a graduate student at San Francisco Theological Seminary.



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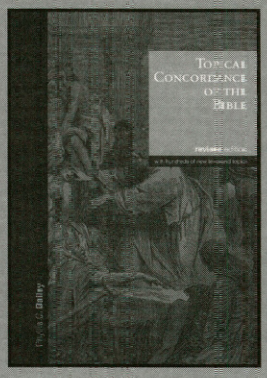

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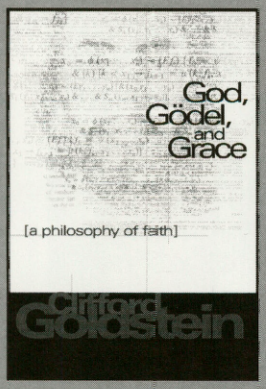

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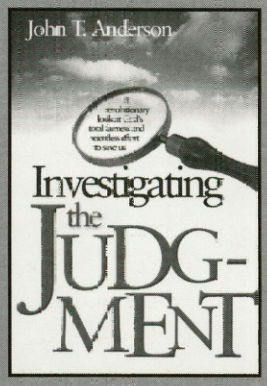

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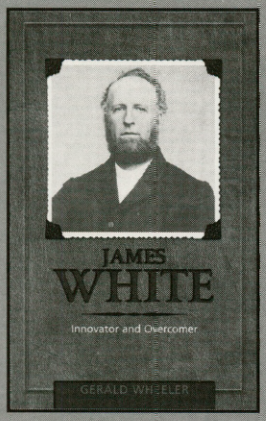

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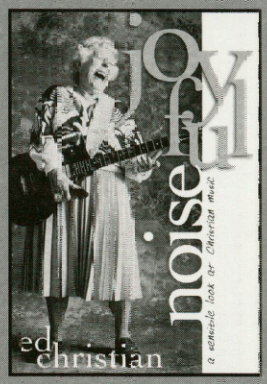

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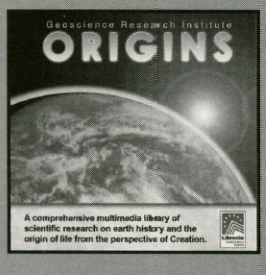

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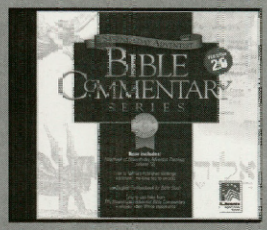

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What's Love Got To Do with It?

By Adam Andreassen

Meeting Amy was like arriving home at the end of a long day. We had known each other only a few days, but it already seemed as though we had always been together. Suddenly, the phrase made famous by the movie *Jerry Maguire* was no longer a silly cliché. Perhaps you remember the scene. Tom Cruise and Renee Zellwegger stand in an elevator watching a deaf couple interact. The man signs to the woman, "You . . . complete . . . me." And she melts into his arms.

Here I am, six months into marriage and feeling all the more that I have always been in love with Amy—even before our meeting. The silhouette of this blonde beauty was carved deeply into my heart long before I even knew her name. So when I finally met her, I knew what Jerry Maguire meant when he later repeated those three words, "You complete me." I understood what Adam experienced when he saw Eve, and said, "at last." And I comprehended just a little of what God felt when he first saw us, his new creation.

Now I realize why God gave Amy and me to each other—so we could join him in understanding how it feels to fall madly in love.

Beginnings

In the first century, when a Jewish man fell in love with a woman he went to her father's home and persuaded him to seal an engagement. Then he returned to his own father's house and began to build an addition to the home. For the next year everything the Jewish man did revolved around getting the house ready. When finished, he sent out word and a large party swept the waiting bride off her feet and away to her new home. While everyone else partied, the couple went together into the home and sealed their unity forever. Then they returned to the party, where the new bride was officially welcomed into their new home.[1]

After his resurrection, Jesus said to his disciples, "There are many rooms in my Father's home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am" (John 14:12-13 NLT).

The disciples understood what Jesus said. These were the words of a man who had just become engaged. Jesus' death and resurrection had accomplished the renewal of a broken love affair—one that had begun in Genesis. But without an adequate understanding of "beginnings," we see only dry theology in action on the cross. The story of Genesis introduces a theme developed in the rest of Scripture—the image of God as a passionately determined husband who will pay any price to reclaim his wife.

The story of Genesis introduces a theme developed in the rest of Scripture—the image of God as a passionately determined husband who will pay any price to reclaim his wife.

In this context we also find the beginnings of an answer to another question that has plagued us for thousands of years—did God institute a male-dominated society and religion?

Separation and Fulfillment

When God first speaks in the Bible his creation work begins with separation—taking something out of what had already existed.[2] "Then God says, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:3-4). God brings light out of darkness, a fact confirmed by Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:6, "For God... said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness." This act of separating is repeated throughout the creation account. God brings water out of water (Gen. 1:7), land out of water (vs. 9), vegetation from earth (vs. 11), even mankind from himself.[3]

Separation is the first of two phases that define God's creation. The second phase is combination. Combination completes God's creative act and brings a sense of fulfillment. The phrase "after their kind" appears in the creation account after the third day. Just as land was grouped together with other land, so also was the giraffe separated from elephants and then combined with other giraffes—thus completing the process that separation started.

Much as the baby giraffe would take "after its kind" and resemble its parents, we were intended to resemble God. But there is a difference. When other creatures take after their kind, the Hebrew phrase comes from *min*, which means "species" or "kind." By contrast, the two phrases used to describe man come from the words for "image" and "similitude." Whereas the rest of creation takes after its own kind, we are patterned after God, or resemble him. But what is the resemblance?

Nothing I have read makes as much sense as an explanation by Robert Davidson: "The meaning of 'in our image' may be defined by what follows in verse 26: 'and let them have dominion.'... Just as God is lord over all creation, so man reflects this lordship in his relationship to the rest of creation."[4]

Notice that man in God's image here refers to male and female collectively. Together, the imagery was complete. "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1:27). Contrary to the claims of many, the Bible is clear that male and female together would rule over the earth ("let them rule over," Gen. 1:26). It would likewise make little sense if only females lost their right to rule after the Fall because it would tear down our collective identity in the image of God.

Still, some questions surround male and female equality in Genesis 1. For instance, verse 27 uses the singular form to describe man created in God's image (Adam). Later, Adam is given authority over creation prior to Eve's existence. Furthermore, God allows Adam as lord of the garden to name all the creatures—including Eve. This has given some plausibility to the claim that Adam was in some way superior in authority to Eve even before the Fall. However, the text does distinguish between the earth, which man and woman would rule, and the garden, which was charged to Adam.

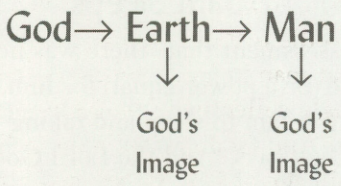
Someday Amy and I will stop teasing our parents that they will never have grandchildren and we will follow nature's path of rebuilding ourselves in a child. If I have a son, I want him to learn what my father taught me—how to be a man. I will want my daughter to learn what Amy's mother taught her—how to be a woman. It is not an insult to either

sex that we will raise a son differently than a daughter. When God gave Adam the garden to rule, he was not giving him more authority than Eve, only authority in a different realm.

Genesis 2:7 reads: "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." The word *Adam* means "ground." God formed man from (out of) the ground. Adam was named after that from which he came—the earth.

God→ Earth→ Man

God then placed Adam in the garden so he could "cultivate it and keep it." Just as God takes care of the universe, so also it was Adam's role to take care of the garden.[5] Adam in the garden symbolized God in the universe. God's lordship over the earth opens up to a new dimension when we see Adam's lordship over Eden.



God gave Adam instructions regarding the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Since Adam was caretaker of the garden, it seems safe to assume that he relayed the information about the tree to Eve, especially since she later quoted this command to the serpent. We may also infer that it was Adam's duty to keep the garden and its creatures well managed—a task he would soon neglect.

Something Missing

Genesis 2:4b-24 repeats and enlarges on the creation account in Genesis 1:1-2:4. Jacques Doukhan has demonstrated a parallel of themes between the two Genesis accounts.[6] Whereas Genesis 1:1-2:4 climaxes with the creation of man and woman and concludes with the separation of the Sabbath from other days, Genesis 2:4b-24 climaxes with the creation of woman and concludes with the separation of the couple for marriage.

For the first time, God utters the phrase, "It isn't good." Everything so far has been good. Now, in a moment of reflection, God declares, "It is not good for the man to be alone." Most Christians agree that God knows everything—seeing the end from the beginning. Nevertheless, on a practical level, one wonders how God knew that it wasn't good for man to be alone. Was he noticing something in Adam's behavior that demonstrated aloneness? Perhaps. More likely though, God was sharing a hint of his own emotions prior to creation of mankind.

Genesis offers no reason for God choosing to make man in his own image. Now as God looks at a mini-representation of himself, he declares that it isn't good for Adam to be alone. Note that Adam's reaction to being alone is not mentioned until after Eve is created. Instead we see God's response to Adam's aloneness. God understands what Adam feels because he was longing for us before we were even made! A man's love for a woman is a God-given glimpse into the passionate longing with which he threw himself into creating and loving us!

Again, Adam's response to solitude is not described, only that no helper was found. Creation is incomplete. Separation has occurred, as God brought Adam out of the ground and formed him into a unique being. But where is the combination to complete and fulfill this creation? God has a remarkable plan for completing his creation; he will now uniquely rebuild man and fashion a woman as an analogy to his own joy in uniquely recreating the image of himself in the man first, and then in the woman.

A Power Equal to Man

Genesis 2:18 is perhaps the most vital text in understanding woman in relation to man, yet it is a text that has in all probability been mistranslated for hundreds of years.

"Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him" (Gen. 2:18). Theologians have long suggested that woman was primarily intended to be Adam's helper—an assistant suitable (or corresponding) to him and his need. However, there is a better translation to this text, one that brings woman into existence not as a submissive servant, but as an equal power.

In 1983, R. David Freedman wrote a groundbreaking article for the *Biblical Archaeology Review* in which he suggested that the Hebrew words for "helper" and "suitable" have changed in meaning since they were originally written:

> I believe the customary translation of these two words, despite its near universal adoption, is wrong. That is not what the words are intended to convey. They should be translated instead to mean approximately "a power equal to man." That is, when God concluded that he would create another creature so that man would not be alone, he decided to make "a power equal to him," someone whose strength was equal to man's. Woman was not intended to be merely man's helper. She was to be instead his partner. A careful study of the two Hebrew words involved will demonstrate this.[7]

Freedman points first to the word for helper, *ᶜezer*, which is a combination of two roots, one of which is *ᶜz-r*, meaning "to rescue" or "to save," the other of which is *g-z-r*, meaning "to be strong." Freedman says that the difference is the first sign, the raised ᶜ, which stands for the letter *ᶜayin*. Today, that letter in Hebrew is usually silent, but in ancient times it was a guttural sound made in the back of the throat. The symbol *g* stands for the letter *ghayyin*, which is a guttural, much like the ancient *ᶜayin*.

Sometime around 1500 B.C., in Phoenicia, these two different phonemes, or sounds, began to be written with the same sign. Freedman says that in Hebrew, the merger of the two took place later, probably around 1200 B.C. "Thus, when the Bible was written, what originally had been two roots of *ᶜezer*, one with an *ᶜayin* and one with *ghayyin*, had merged into one."[8] Shortly after the merger in pronunciation came the merger in meaning. The word *ᶜezer* could mean "to save" (*ᶜz-r*) or "to be strong," (*g-z-r*). "But in time the root *ᶜz-r* was always interpreted as 'to help,' a mixture of both nuances."[9]

The word *ᶜezer* occurs twenty-one times in the Hebrew Bible. Eight of those times it means "savior." These are easily identified because they are grouped with other expressions of saving or with associated ideas.[10] In other passages it means "strength"[11]

> Thus, forms of *ᶜezer* as used in the Bible can mean "to save" or "to be strong." In Genesis 2:18b, when God speaks of the being He is to create to relieve the man's loneliness, He is surely not creating this creature to be the man's savior. This makes no sense. God creates this new creature to be, like the man, a power (or strength) superior to the animals. This is the true meaning of *cezer* as used in this passage.[12]

The second word in Genesis 2:18 is *kenegdo*, usually translated as "suitable," or "appropriate." This word is more problematic because it occurs only once. However, in later Mishnaic Hebrew the root means "equal," as in a famous saying that calls the study of the Torah equal (*keneged*) to all the other commandments. Freedman suggests that there is no basis for translating *keneged* as "fit" or "appropriate," preferring the translation that conveys equality. He states, "I think that there is no other way of understanding the phrase (*ᶜezer kenegdo*) that can be defended philologically."[13]

It seems that the passage, "I will make him a helper suitable for him," could be better translated, "I will make him a power equal to him." This translation gains some support in the Septuagint, where in Genesis 2:20, the word *o[moioj* is used to explain that there was no one who corresponded to Adam. In Greek, the word means "of the same nature" or "like" Adam.

Adam Sleeps

After God's assessment that "there was not found a helper suitable (or a power equal) for him," he goes to work—putting Adam to sleep and taking one of his ribs. Genesis 2:22 says, "And the Lord God *fashioned* into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and he brought her to the man."

Throughout history many have attempted to make this passage also suggest woman was in some way inferior to man because she came out of him. At times, this assumption reached outrageous proportions, such as in 1560, when Edward Gosynhill went so far as to suggest that a dog actually ran away with Adam's rib, forcing God to create Eve from the rib of a dog. According to Gosynhill, this incident explained why the woman "at her husband doth bark and bawl."[14]

In reality, the story of woman's creation from out of man offers profound insight into Adam, and by extension the rest of mankind. Adam's first recorded words occur after God has brought the woman to man. "At last!" Adam exclaimed. "She is part of my own flesh and bone! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of a man" (Gen. 2:23). Heretofore, only God's response has been mentioned. Now Adam looks at what came out of himself and offers his own form of, "It is very good."

Part of Adam's excited response stems from his recognition of complete equality in Eve. You might say that he saw himself in her. The Hebrew strengthens this interpretation in verse 22, when God "fashioned" woman. Genesis 2:7 uses the word *yasar*, which means

"to form," to describe Adam's creation. A much different word is used to describe how God built Eve. In Genesis 2:22, the term is from *banah*, which means "to build." But this word can also mean "to re-build." In this light, Adam's choice of words makes even more sense. To paraphrase, "She's just like me!"

I imagine God watching all of these events, full of warmth because Adam was experiencing what God experienced when he first saw us. Eve was feeling the delight of Adam similar to God's delight in us. And soon, she would experience the joy of creating something uniquely like her, from out of her own being—a child. Then, the circle would be complete and humans would have yet another spotlight of God's passionate love for us.

Adam's joy at having an equal companion is comparable, but not equal, to God's sense of companionship in creating beings that could relate to him. Thus, Eve's origin, just like Adam's, reveals God's heart of love and joy at his creation.

God→	Earth→	Man→	Woman→	Child
	↓	↓	↓	↓
	God's Image	God's Image	Man & God's Image	Woman/ Man/God's Image

Freedman writes: "Eve is in Adam's image to the degree that she is his equal—just as man is created in God's image in that he fulfills an analogous role. Moreover, 'male and female He created them' does not lead us to conclude the superiority of either."[15]

The effort God invested in woman is no mistake to the symbolism, for in a similar way to mankind being the crowning act of creation woman was similarly endowed with rich artistry and design. Paul says man is the "image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man" (1 Cor. 11:7). Far from downgrading women, this is actually a high compliment—God chose woman as his finest and last analogy, his lasting statement of the joy he had in making earth.

The second creation account finishes with a flourish, just like the first. "For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Gen. 2:25). Creation closes with the union of man to woman, separation has found combination.

Man and woman are one flesh—a union of equals. There can be no doubt that woman was equal to man in power, strength, authority, and worth. Did that equality change after the Fall? If not, why did God say woman would be ruled by her husband?

The Fall

The last verse of Genesis 2 reads as a chilling prologue, "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed" (Gen. 2:25). There can be only one reason to make this statement: soon Adam and Eve will be both naked and ashamed.

Genesis 3:1 begins, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." The Hebrew word for "crafty" is *aruwm*, which sounds much like the word for naked, *arowm*. There seems to be some connection between the two words—and both draw their names from the same root, which means "to be bare" or "to be smooth." Perhaps the serpent's craftiness was his eventual success in laying Adam and Eve bare—or aware of their nakedness in the universe and before God. Thus, although they were always bare and vulnerable, they become aware and ashamed only when the serpent introduces mistrust into the formula, and "lays them bare."[16]

The story of the temptation and Fall is a familiar one, though some distinctions should be drawn. The serpent deceived Eve; Adam was not deceived (1 Tim. 2:14). Though Eve was not guiltless, it would seem that the greatest responsibility lay on Adam's shoulders. Adam had been the only one actually to hear God's command to stay away from the tree; Adam had been placed in the garden specifically to take of it and its inhabitants. Why didn't he interfere?

Scripture does not support the traditional view that Eve strayed from Adam's side. Genesis 3:6 says, "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food . . . she took from its fruit and ate; and she also gave to her husband *with her*, and he ate." The Bible does not explicitly state whether Adam was silently present for the conversation, but it is clear that he was present when Eve ate. John Eldredge writes about the Fall in his book, *Wild at Heart*:

> Adam isn't away in another part of the forest; he has no alibi. He is standing right there, watching the whole thing unravel. What does he do? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. He says not a word, doesn't lift a finger. He won't risk, he won't fight, and he won't rescue Eve. Our first father—the first real man—gave in to paralysis. He denied his very nature and

went passive. And every man after him, every son of Adam, carries in his heart now the same failure. Every man repeats the sin of Adam, every day. We won't risk, we won't fight, and we won't rescue Eve. We truly are a chip off the old block.[17]

Adam's failure hurts more than only himself. Eldredge quotes Jan Meyers:

> "Eve was convinced that God was withholding something from her." Not even the extravagance of Eden could convince her that God's heart is good. "When Eve was [deceived], the artistry of being a woman took a fateful dive into the barren places of control and loneliness." Now every daughter of Eve wants to "control her surrounding, her relationships, her God." No longer is she vulnerable; now she will be grasping. No longer does she want simply to share in the adventure; now she wants to control it. And as for her beauty, she either hides it in fear and anger, or she uses it to secure her place in the world. "In our fear that no one will speak on our behalf or protect us or fight for us, we start to recreate both ourselves and our role in the story. We manipulate our surroundings so we don't feel so defenseless." Fallen Eve either becomes rigid or clingy. Put simply, Eve is no longer simply *inviting*. She is either hiding in busyness or demanding that Adam come through for her; usually, an odd combination of both.[18]

In that moment, rather than interfere, Adam deliberately chose to worship Eve's will over God's. Woman has been on a goddess pedestal ever since. Eldredge says, "If you think I exaggerate, simply look around. Look at all the art, poetry, music, drama devoted to the beautiful woman. Listen to the language men use to describe her. Watch the powerful obsession at work. What else can this be but *worship?*"[19] This dependence has left most men without their true source of strength (God) and caused women at the very least to feel suffocated, and at the worst, abused as objects.

Redemptive Judgment

Contrary to what I long assumed, Adam and Eve were not cursed—only the serpent was. In the story, the serpent is the only one not allowed to speak for itself, and the only one to which God predicted complete demise. Adam and Eve, on the other hand, were given judgments that would ultimately prepare them to receive their own redemption, just prophesied by God himself.

Eve was told, "You will bear children with intense pain and suffering" (Gen. 3:16). This must be understood in light of the analogy drawn in the creation story between God, man, and woman. Man's domain was in the garden—it was here that his actions most clearly reflected God's image. Woman's domain was in childbearing—where her actions most clearly reflected God's image. Together, they formed a balanced picture of God's image.

Eve's pain in childbirth would prepare her uniquely to understand God's pain in his own creation. The Hebrew word for "pain" in this passage is the same word used in Genesis 6:6, where the Lord was "grieved" in his heart over his own creation and sent the Flood. Understanding the damage done is vital in preparing us to receive grace. Allowing Eve a taste of God's grief, while causing great anguish, was redemptive at its core.

"And though your desire will be for your husband, he will be your master" (Gen. 3:16) has been interpreted a number of different ways. However one thing is sure: the passage does not give man the right to dominate woman. There are a number of problems with such thinking. First, God does not tell man to rule over woman. It would make little sense for him to enlist Adam to judge Eve when he was just as guilty, if not more so. Second, God makes this statement as a matter of result, not a matter of necessity—"he will be your master." Finally, even if it were established that this verse gave woman the responsibility of submission, it remains only in the context of the home. Otherwise, the preceding clause would be inconsistent because she must necessarily desire all men and not only her husband.

God next turns to Adam and curses the ground, for which Adam will feel the effects. As with Eve, Adam's punishment fits his crime. Failure to bring the ground into submission will afterward bring him great frustration, though his desire will still be to eat from it. The clause, "In *toil* you shall eat of it" (Gen. 3:17), comes from the same word as Eve's pain of childbirth and God's pain in his own creation at the Flood.

Still Equals?

But did Adam and Eve remain equals after the Fall? It seems clear that they did not lose their place in relation to God's image, for God's judgments reiterate women and men's unique roles as mother of creation and gardener/provider. The image was marred, but not lost. Furthermore, the imagery is expanded in the New Testament when the church comes out of Jesus (perhaps even from his side in John 19:33-34) and is thereafter likened to the woman, or bride.

If Eve retained her power and equality with Adam, how should one understand the statement concerning her husband ruling over her? If this statement could be reconciled, most, if not all justification for man's assertive dominance over women would be removed.

Freedman suggests that perhaps God's judgments should be seen not only in terms of his prescription, but also in his description of what would naturally change in Adam and Eve's attitudes as a result of their actions. As Freedman's chart shows, both would experience great frustration in their respective realms as childbearer and provider.[20]

	Role	New Attitude	Partner	Punishment
Adam	Farmer	Toil [Pain]	Earth	Willful production of thorns and thistles instead of grain (frustration)
Eve	Childbearing	Pain	Adam	Adam's willful dominance over Eve despite her desire for him (frustration)

Freedman's model seems to be in harmony with the spirit of the entire creation story. Sin would have its consequences, yet ultimately God would spare Adam and Eve from the worst, implanting redemptive elements in the consequences.

The Part of Me I Had Always Missed

Without picturing God as a lovestruck husband in Genesis, chances are we will find it difficult to see him as a passionate lover when he suffers on the cross for you and me. Without this passion, God's love is reduced to an impersonal benevolence. And of course the chain reaction continues, because if God simply felt sorry for us, then our own self-image is broken—leaving us incapable of believing that God really "loved us so much he gave His Son" (John 3:16).

According to Genesis, creation was completed and fulfilled when God made you and me. When I met Amy I felt that I had finally come home at the end of a long journey—she was the part of me I had always missed. As we begin our life together as one, I thank God for sharing his heart with us through the story of creation and the gift of marriage.

Notes and References

1. Larry Crabb, *Shattered Dreams* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Waterbrook, 2001), 127-28.

2. This is not to say that God never spoke the universe into existence out of nothing, only that Genesis is silent in regard to how the earth came to exist in its form prior to Creation week. Its existence in some way seems implied from the text.

3. Jacques Doukhan has noticed that in Genesis the separation theme is repeated in all of God's creative acts. Jacques B. Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1978), 48.

4. Quoted in ibid., 46. This thought is also developed in Ps. 8:3-8.

5. Richard M. Davidson sees Eden as a type or symbol of the Sanctuary that illustrates Christ's work on behalf of humans. The words used to describe Adam's work in the garden (literally, to serve and keep) are the same terms used to describe the work of the Levites in the Sanctuary (for example, Num. 3:7-8). Richard M. Davidson, "The Garden of Eden a Sanctuary?" Unpublished manuscript.

6. Duane A. Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the First Book of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1991), 195.

7. R. David Freedman, "Woman, A Power Equal to a Man," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 9 (1983): 56.

8. Ibid., 56.

9. Ibid.

10. Ps. 70:5 is an example: "O God, hurry to my rescue" (*'ezri*).

11. Deut. 33:26: "The Rider of the Sky in your strength (*be'ezreka*)."

12. Freedman. "Woman, A Power Equal to a Man," 57.

13. Ibid., 57-58.

14. Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 147.

15. Freedman. "Woman, A Power Equal to a Man," 58.

16. I would be interested to see a study done on circumcision as a potential connection to being "laid bare" willingly before God—giving back that which was lost in Eden.

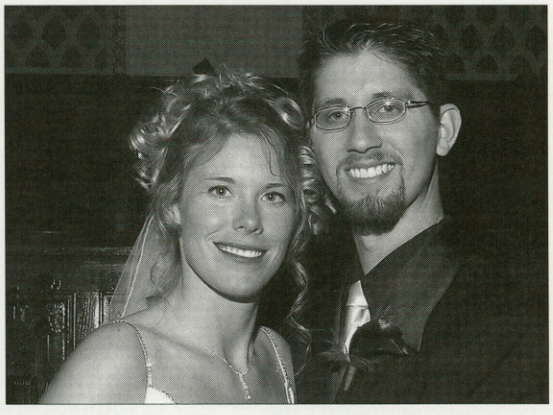
17. John Eldredge, *Wild At Heart: Discovering the Secret of a Man's Soul* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 51.

18. Ibid., 51-52.

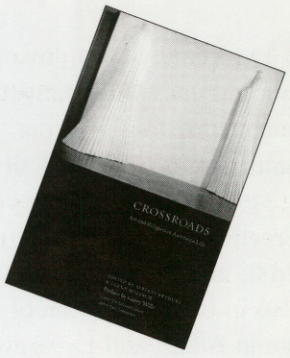
19. Ibid., 117.

20. Freedman, "Women, A Power Equal to a Man," 58.

Adam Andreassen is a youth pastor in Burleson, Texas. (Below, with Amy).



Art, Religion, and Tea



Alberta Arthurs and Glenn Wallach, eds. *Crossroads: Art and Religion in American Life.* New York: New Press, 2001.

Reviewed by John Hoyt

As a practicing visual artist, I am both impressed and a bit amused by the stated objective of this book: "to begin a more rational conversation about the relationships of the arts and religion in contemporary American society" (ix). Rational? Conversation? Artists sitting down with religious leaders (over cups of . . . tea?) to discuss ways in which they can work together toward a set of shared goals? In my world, even the artists (perhaps too absorbed in their personal search for self-expression) rarely talk to one another, and some would argue that the impulses that give rise to artistic and religious expression are often anything but rational.

Yet it seems axiomatic that religion and the arts do occupy some of the same psychic territory, and that artists and religious leaders do, at times, pursue similar goals. Certainly artists as diverse as William Blake, Wassily Kandinsky, and Louise Nevelson are evidence of this, and for hundreds of years Western art and religious art were all but synonymous.

As this book points out, art and religion have "similar or overlapping functions" (37); yet this overlap often seems to cast them in the role of antagonists. Both art and religion are expressions of humans' search for ultimate meaning. Yet although religion is often perceived as the path of conformity, art represents (for better or worse, depending on your viewpoint) the path of openness and imagination.

One woman, a leader in the Latino arts community in San Francisco, states matters this way:

> Religion states that only through following a certain path will you get to a certain place. With art, it's much more open, there's no specific path to follow, there are many different paths. With religion you have to conform to one way of doing things and practicing things in order to obtain eternal grace. (37)

A religious leader in the same city "reaches out" to artists with these words: "If there were the [proposed] dialogue, I will tell them 'Come back to the church. Come back to your roots. Come back to the source of the creativity'" (41).

Stated differently, the arts are often perceived by people who have a conservative religious view of the world as being elitist, self-centered, and solipsistic, whereas the church is more aware of the needs of suffering humanity, that is, in touch with the real beauty and pain of the world.

Although there is arguably a large body of American art that is religious in its underlying themes and inspiration, it would seem that there is very little—at least in the "mainstream" American Protestantism, which is the focus of this book—that is religious in any "official" or conventional sense:

> To find a profoundly religious poet, we must go back to preconstitutional days.... Serious novels that treat religion with reverence (not with satire) do not come from the mainstream Protestant culture. . . . [O]ur theater has been even more uniformly secular.... The only verbal art with a deep religious tradition in America is the sermon, ... In music, the only stream of religious inspiration was that of gospel music and the spirituals—and they have had less impact on American culture than the secular form of black music, jazz. It is not surprising, then, that our visual arts have little to show in religious terms. I cannot think of any great religious sculpture. Our few religious painters have come, like religious novelists, from the margins of society. (xiii)

This bleak view of the relationship between the religious and artistic communities is reinforced

throughout the book. An important indicator of American social attitudes and behaviors, for example, is the biannual General Social Survey. Recent (1998) results from this survey indicate that "non-Christian groups are most, and conservative Protestants least, supportive of the arts; Americans holding orthodox views of the Bible tend to be appreciably less supportive of the arts" (94). Conservative Protestants were more likely than any other group to agree with statements that reflect a lack of understanding of the goals of the artistic community.

For example, respondents were asked whether they thought art should "celebrate what is most beautiful about the world and the human spirit," or whether art "should freely express an artist's deepest thoughts and emotions, good or bad" (77). In other words (as the first of these statements implies), does the artist have a "duty to depict positive images and evoke positive emotions" (77)? Conservative Protestants were more likely than any other group polled to say "yes" to this statement, whereas non-Christians (unaffiliated and Jewish respondents) were more likely to opt for the second statement, which emphasizes artistic freedom and self-expression. Similarly, conservative Protestants were decidedly more likely to agree with statements that showed an incomprehension of "modern" art ("modern art is just slapped on—a child could do it" [78]).

It would, of course, be an over simplification to view Protestants as iconoclasts. In the devotional context, images have played an important, if rather restricted, role. Most readers will think of examples, such as traditional images of Christ in Sabbath School rooms (or possibly even in the sanctuary), didactic images (usually illustrations of Bible stories) used in the education of children, illustrated prophetic charts, and perhaps a few other examples (including celebratory hangings and elaborate stained glass windows in some sanctuaries).

As well, given the Protestant tendency to view Nature as "God's second book," landscape painting might be studied as a manifestation of the religious impulse in art.

> For American Protestants in the middle third of the nineteenth century, the natural landscape was one principal residence of religious content....With nature construed as a primary medium of divine creativity and communication, landscape painting was quintessentially religious art. (203)

In the mid-twentieth century the picture began to appear slightly more nuanced. Protestant congregations became increasingly urban and educated, and there was a concomitant rise in the diversity of interactions with the artistic community. As Liberal Protestants became painfully aware of (what they perceived as) the "vulgarity and banality" of mainstream Protestant artistic taste, a number of them sought to promote, as an antidote, the "virility and authenticity" of abstract expressionism. Yet, although many twentieth-century Protestants saw the work of artists such as Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman as deeply spiritual, for other Protestants the promotion of this sort of art was in itself a manifestation of a "spiritual void" that lay at the heart of the Liberal impulse (216-21).

To some degree, then, this antagonism between art and religion is a fundamental aspect of Protestant culture. In fact, as one of the artists interviewed in the final chapter points out, this conflict (perhaps somewhat perversely) serves the interests of both parties since it provides a reliable source of energy—to the artists since it gives them the sense that someone is looking at and responding to their work; to the religious conservatives because it provides a focal point for their righteous indignation (252-53).

Artists and religious leaders do, at times, pursue similar goals... and for hundreds of years Western art and religious art were all but synonymous.

A first step in the proposed dialogue, then, would be to acknowledge that points of disagreement and misunderstanding do in fact exist. Unfortunately, as the editors point out in their "afterward," these differences currently "exist as largely unexamined ambivalences between the two domains—a continual attraction and repulsion, admiration and rejection" (168). Rather than seeking to resolve these points of contention, perhaps the goal of a dialogue should be to examine these differences and to channel them into endeavors that will be profitable for both.

Visual artist John Hoyt is an instructor at Canadian University College, Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. Examples of his work can be viewed at <www.telusplanet.net/public/hoyt>.

Arriving at One's Own Conclusions about Rwanda

I have read the article on Pastor Elizaphan Ntakirutimana ("Searching for Truth in Reports of the Sabbath Massacre," spring 2003) twice and want to thank you for it. No, it does not contain all I would have liked to see, but that probably would have taken several hundred pages.

I must commend Alita Byrd for the effort she put into the article. Her approach was balanced: I appreciate her giving facts favorable to both sides then letting readers arrive at their own conclusions. Your decision to copy part of the Pastor's letter to me was very appropriate. However, it would have been nice had Alita been allowed to interview individuals in the Rwandan jails.

Three people beside the pastor who visited Mugonero at the time of the killings or shortly afterward are positive that there were no accusations against the pastor regarding any involvement in the genocide and that accusations did not come forth until many months after the killings. It seems to me that had the Ntakirutimanas been involved the accusations would have surfaced immediately.

Once again, thanks for the effort you have put into this article.

Barry Burton
(via e-mail)

A Linguist on Linguist Chomsky

Ronald Osborn's claim ("Anarchy and Apocalyptic," spring 2003) that Noam Chomsky is a libertarian with views like those of biblical prophets and early Adventist pioneers is so absurd that I am prompted to comment. Chomsky is an America-hating extreme leftist. While constantly attacking the United States, he has supported every Communist regime on earth. He even insisted, for a long time, that there had been no genocide in Cambodia!

Historically, Adventists have believed that at the end of time the United States will turn from a free democracy into a persecuting power. Also, Adventists have not agreed with certain government policies. But I have no reason to believe Adventists have ever hated America or objected to the free-market capitalism that has made her prosperous.

As for linguistics, it has been in Chomsky's pocket since the early 1960s, and whenever linguistics tried to get out of his pocket, he relined it, changing his theory several times. In at least one way, however, Chomsky's theories have been harmful to linguistics. In B.C. (Before Chomsky) times, the syntactic structure of various types of sentences could be explained with transparency to any intelligent person. By requiring that all possible sentences be derived from a single set of computerized rules, Chomsky succeeded in turning language structure into something so abstract and esoteric that only "chipheads" with years of specialized training can hope to understand it.

Chomsky as prophet/politician/theologian/linguistic genius? No, thanks!

Hector Hammerly
Retired Professor of Linguistics
Maple Ridge, B.C., Canada

Working for a World with No War

"Can War Ever Be the Lesser of Two Evils?" was the question posed by David A. Pendleton in the spring 2003 issue of *Spectrum*. I believe it can, but not the war against Iraq.

I respectfully disagree with his assertion that the UN authorized the use of force and therefore the United States had the legal authority to proceed. In fact, the United States did not introduce the resolution that would have authorized the use of force in the Security Council precisely because it would not have passed.

The U.S. government insisted that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction although no convincing evidence was ever presented. I am not aware of any such evidence even now, when the U.S. forces have occupied Iraq for months.

I want to be clear: I am not

defending Saddam Hussein in any way. I am focusing on the war against the country of Iraq. If we envision a new world in which there is no war, then would it not be reasonable for us to work toward it now? After all, Jesus called us to be peacemakers.

Paul H. Eun
(via e-mail)

The Demands of Christianity on Genesis

I enjoyed Fritz Guy's "Interpreting Genesis One in the Twenty-first Century" (spring 2003). This subject is pivotal—not only to the underpinnings of the Great Controversy, but also for the entire framework of Christianity.

At its roots, Christianity demands a literal Fall. It demands an event whereby humans who were aware and accountable made a volitional choice that constituted "sin." Christianity demands a cosmic reason that the second member of the godhead volunteered to cast off divinity to take on humanity. Original sin (and its introduction to earth) simply cannot be rationally understood in the light of a long evolutionary process.

Let's be honest: We cling to faith because we want to. It's comfortable. It gives us hope. But in this discussion, I must agree with the fundamentalists. It's difficult for me to see that Christianity has ANY merit as an intellectually sound framework for the meaning of life should I come to find out that there is no clear reason for a man named Jesus to have ever lived.

Critical thinkers—take the next step. Or don't bother with the first one.

Scott Davis
San Diego, Calif.

Dating and Measuring Time

Thank you for another fabulous issue of *Spectrum* (spring 2003).

I do not wish to enter into contention with anything in the two expertly written articles in the "Science and the Bible" section. In fact, Fritz Guy is one of my favorite authors. I have been reading his articles in Andrews University Seminary Studies for twenty-two years.

My observation is that Guy and Brian Bull both subscribe to "long time" explanations relative to phenomena on earth and in the cosmos. I am an engineer and have for five decades studied atomic dating methods and science's attempts to refine "constants" definitions. I feel it would be an injustice not to inform *Spectrum* readers that these things are not as well founded as commonly assumed.

First, atomic dating is not a precise science. Among many esoteric assumptions, it posits a constant between parent and daughter elements in the decay process, a "closed box" in which none of the parent and daughter elements in the material under investigation have escaped, parent and daughter elements unaffected by external influences, and a past uniformly represented by what is observed today.

My second observation involves the relation between various science constants (length, force, electrical units of measure, and so forth). Unfortunately, there are no real constants except possibly time, and even time, as portrayed in the September 2002 issue of *Scientific American*, is under attack. More and more constants are being redefined to make them dependent on time (length is a typical example).

If time is ultimately shown not to be constant, then the whole relative constant hierarchy is built on shifting sand. Everything is relative and nothing is constant (except God and love—and we don't have a unit of measure with which to quantize either).

Richard Lee McKinney
Ellijay, Ga.

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Roger Williams: Now More Than Ever!

In 1672, a sixty-nine-year-old man rowed a boat thirty miles from his home at Providence, Rhode Island, down the Narragansett Bay to Newport, near the Atlantic Ocean, to engage in a theological debate with some Quakers. This man had already provided the Quakers a home that was safe from those who would have persecuted them. His name was Roger Williams.

Williams was born in London, probably the year (1603) that King James I succeeded Queen Elizabeth I as the monarch of England. King James ruled for twenty-two years, the decades when Williams was growing up, and then died. Charles I became King of England in 1625. Two years later, in 1627, Williams received his bachelor of arts degree from Pembroke College at Cambridge University in preparation for a life of ministry in the Church of England.

His sympathies were with the Puritans, reformers who wanted the national church to side more thoroughly with the Protestants. In the winter of 1630, when he was twenty-seven, Williams and his bride of about a year, a clergyman's daughter named Mary Barnard, who was half a dozen years younger, sailed with twenty other passengers on the *Lyon* from Bristol, England, to Nantasket, a few miles south of Boston. Their winter journey across the Atlantic took a little less than two months, excellent time for that era.

Roger and Mary Williams first settled in Salem, north of Boston. Because he was frequently at odds with various religious leaders, he moved from there to Plymouth, and then back to Salem. After fourteen weeks of wandering in severe snow in order to escape arrest, primarily because he denied the right of King Charles I to grant land to the settlers without compensating those they called "Indians," he purchased some land from the Native Americans and established an outpost. It was located at the headwaters of the Narragansett Bay, about forty miles south and west of Boston. He named the settlement "Providence" in gratitude for God's mercies. A year later, in 1637, Mary and their two small children joined him.

Williams was not a flawless clergyman. He was excessively opinionated, outspoken, and abrasive. He also neglected his wife and children while he traveled in New England and back and forth to Old England in support of his fervent cause: religious liberty. Nevertheless, he was fair to the Native Americans and hospitable to all without regard to their religious convictions.

Williams embodied a third option in religion and life. Equally unlike the believing but intolerant Purtitans at Boston, such as John Cotton, and the later unorthodox deists in Virginia and elsewhere, such as Thomas Jefferson, he was an intense believer who accepted diversity. In *Roger Williams: Prophet of Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Edwin S. Gaustad, the doctoral advisor of *Spectrum's* own Leigh Johnsen, puts it this way: "Williams, who cared deeply about his own faith and his own conscience, would, with equal passion and devotion, ever care about and protect the conscience of others" (107).

Williams cared enough about his own beliefs to debate the Quakers. He cared enough about their convictions to guarantee them a safe home although he disagreed with some of their beliefs.

It is easy to be intolerant. It is just as easy to be indifferent. It takes true character to be convinced of something but equally persuaded that others have different points of view that deserve to be protected and honored. Now, more than ever before, we need Roger Williams' combination of conviction and forbearance. What a positive difference this would make in our families, churches, schools, and communities!

David R. Larson
AAF President

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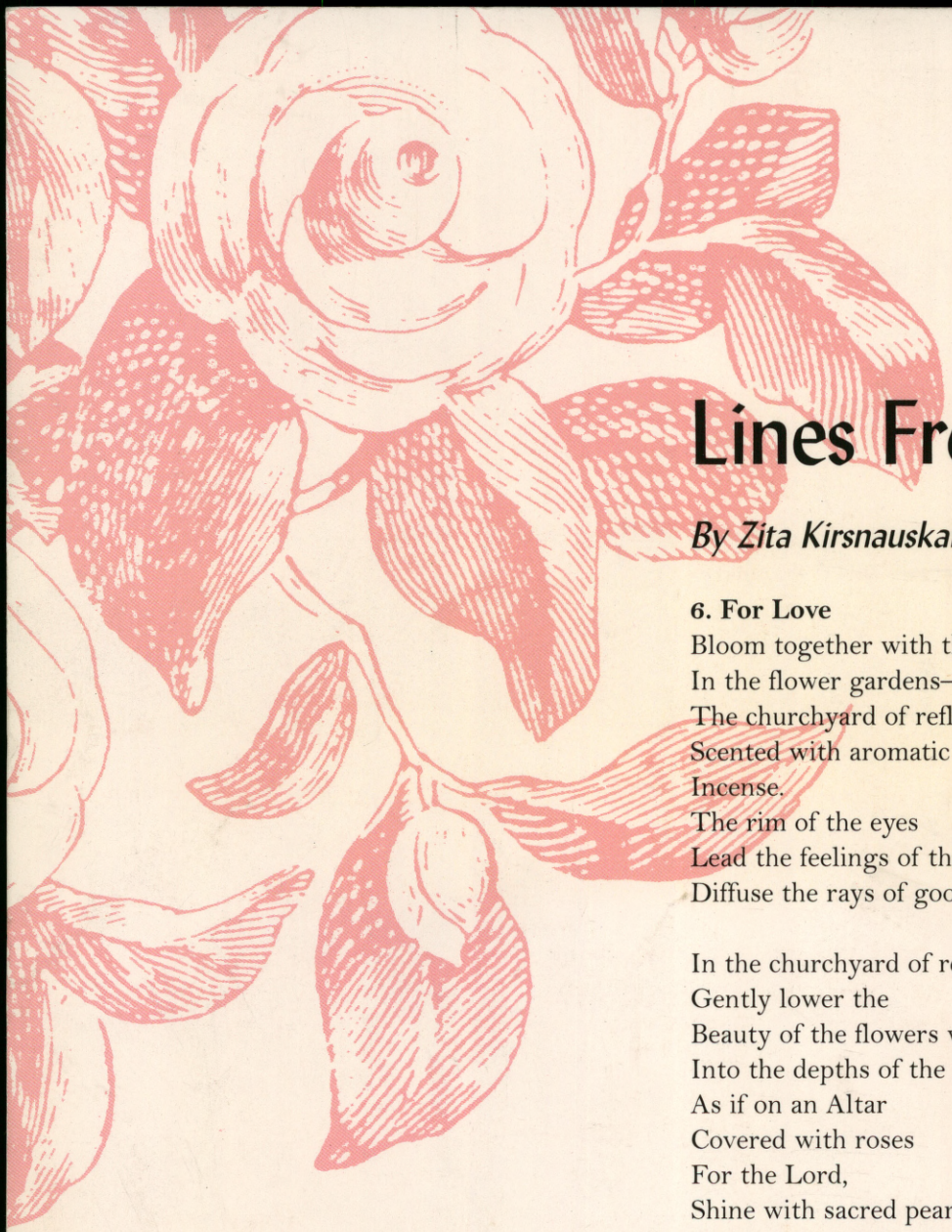

Lines From the Verse

By Zita Kirsnauskaite

6. For Love
Bloom together with the roses
In the flower gardens—
The churchyard of reflections.
Scented with aromatic fragrances,
Incense.
The rim of the eyes
Lead the feelings of the heart with prayer. . .
Diffuse the rays of good from the soul.

In the churchyard of reflections,
Gently lower the
Beauty of the flowers whose blooms have expired
Into the depths of the heart.
As if on an Altar
Covered with roses
For the Lord,
Shine with sacred pearls
In the chest of Hope!

—An excerpt from poetry on page 23, inside.

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