THEOLOGY of ORDINATION

Study Committee Report

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST® CHURCH
North American Division

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○ From a presentation to GC Theology of Ordination Study Committee. Reprinted with permission of the author.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is the product of our assignment by the North American Division to conduct a comprehensive review of the theology of ordination—its theory and practical implications—and to present our conclusions and recommendations for action.

PROCESS

Since May 2012 our diverse committee of pastors, theologians, and administrators has been engaged in a thorough exploration of ordination, identifying current policy and practice and considering the appropriateness of ordaining women to pastoral ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In addition to studying Scripture, we considered numerous papers, books, and resources, and we undertook various assignments for in-depth research. We exercised accountability to each other by reading drafts together aloud, discussing our findings, and incorporating peer feedback in revisions. And we prayed together, inviting the Spirit to govern our process and guide us into all truth. The unified desire of our hearts has been to bring glory to God and to obey His will.

DEFINITION OF ORDINATION

We understand all believers to be called and equipped—anointed—by God for service. Individuals are imbued by the Holy Spirit with spiritual gifts in order to edify the body of Christ and fulfill the gospel commission, and in this general sense all believers are "ordained."

The committee agreed on the following statement as a common point of reference:

> *Ordination is a formal acknowledgment and authentication of one's call to service ministry by God. Authentication should be understood as ratifying what only God can dispense. Ordination neither supersedes God's call nor enhances it. Ordination affirms the genuineness of the call as having borne the proper fruit of the Holy Spirit's work. God initiates the call and equips the recipient for enacting it. God's person accepts the call. God's people affirm the call.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the recommendations in this report represent the position of the overwhelming majority of the

The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible writers with thoughts, ideas, and objective information; in turn they expressed these in their own words. Therefore the Scriptures are an indivisible union of human and divine elements, neither of which should be emphasized to the neglect of the other.

"Methods of Bible Study" document

committee, not all concur; however, the committee stands in unanimous agreement with respect to the following statement:

> *We believe that an individual, as a Seventh-day Adventist in thorough commitment to the full authority of Scripture, may build a defensible case in favor of or in opposition to the ordination of women to the gospel ministry, although each of us views one position or the other as stronger and more compelling.*

As a culmination of our study, the committee submits the following recommendation for North American Division action:

RECOMMENDATION 1

In harmony with our biblical study, we recommend that ordination to gospel ministry, as an affirmation of the call of God, be conferred by the church on men and women.

Because the Bible does not directly address the ordination of women, and because the principle-based evidence is neither complete nor irrefutable, it can be expected that differing conclusions may be drawn by equally sincere and competent students of God's Word. We believe the interpretive approach adopted by the Seventh-day Adventist Church as explained in the "Methods of Bible Study" document may allow Bible-believing members to have differences of opinion on this issue. In light of this, we submit this additional recommendation:

RECOMMENDATION 2

The committee humbly recommends that the North American Division support the authorization of each division to consider, through prayer and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, its most appropriate approach to the ordination of women to gospel ministry.

What follows in this report is a summary of the key points of our study, including evidences from Scripture and the writings of Ellen White, which we regard as overwhelmingly supportive of ordaining women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In-depth analysis of the major themes, as well as a minority report, are provided with this report.

HISTORY

Our earliest founders were reluctant to organize, not wanting to repeat the mistakes of other churches of the time in what seemed like exalting human authority. However, in the interest of curbing the threat of confusion caused by false, "unauthorized" teachers, and in response to visions of Ellen White in the early 1850s and diligent Bible study, steps were taken to organize. Preachers were "set apart," generally by the laying on of hands, as the official indication of approval.

Throughout Adventist Church history, the role of women has not been formally clarified. Early discussions about some of the controversial texts in the Bible arose in relationship to Ellen White's influential public role, which was unusual for a female at the time. Women have served as licensed preachers, evangelists, conference secretaries, General Conference treasurers, and in many other positions. As early as 1881, a resolution recommending the ordination of women to ministry was presented at the General Conference Session, but after being forwarded to the General Conference Executive Committee, no action was taken. One-hundred-thirty years later, after numerous resolutions, studies, meetings, recommendations, and votes, a request at the 2010 General Conference Session led to the present worldwide study of the theology of ordination.

Prior to this time, General Conference Session rulings have consistently maintained that women not be ordained to pastoral office, partly out of concern that the global church would not yet be ready for it. Recent actions by North American unions to ordain women pastors lend urgency to the need for resolution.

HERMENEUTICS

An understanding of the influence of hermeneutics is helpful for recognizing differences in the ways individuals discern the meaning of Scripture. Hermeneutics, the science of interpretation, considers all the factors that influence worldview. Biblical hermeneutics refers specifically to the principles and practice of interpreting Scripture.

Early in our study process, the committee unanimously acknowledged as a guide the principles outlined in the "Methods of Bible Study" document, which was voted and published by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1986 to provide parameters

The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen.

1 Selected Messages, 21.2

for the study of Scripture.

The model below helps illustrate the range of approaches compatible with the "Methods of Bible Study" document. The "no inspiration" side of the continuum represents the idea that the Bible is not divinely inspired and should be regarded as any other literary work. The "biblical inerrancy" side represents the idea that God dictated the precise words of Scripture. The traditional Adventist approach to interpreting Scripture reveals a centrist path of "thought inspiration."

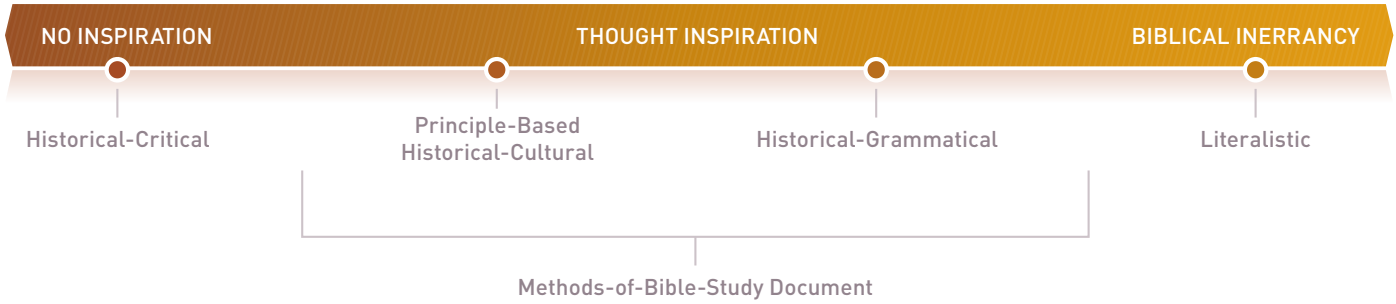
Since the various hermeneutical approaches can lead to differing interpretations, it follows that approaches designated by more distant points on the continuum—even those within the central portion representing traditional Seventh-day Adventist guidelines—may draw conflicting conclusions about issues for which there is not a clear, unequivocal biblical mandate.

HEADSHIP

The decades-old debate about the role of women in Seventh-day Adventist Church leadership is complex and sensitive. Those who disagree with ordaining women to the offices of elder and pastor are usually in harmonious agreement concerning most facets of the discussion—that women, too, are created in God's image; that they are created of worth equal to men; that they bring equally valuable gifts to the church; and that they also bring exclusively female contributions to the mission of the body of Christ.

The agreement breaks down around passages in Scripture that have been associated with the concept of headship. Generally, those who would stop short of ordaining women to the offices of pastor or elder take issue with appointing women to headship roles, maintaining that a plain reading of Scripture does not allow women to exercise spiritual authority over men. Others believe that biblical headship does not apply to church leadership roles but is limited in application to the husband's role as servant-leader in the home. Still others contend that headship is not even a biblical concept, but rather a relatively modern term, and that the original Greek word for *head* (*kephalē*), denotes *source*,

A continuum of hermeneutical approaches



not *leader*. These argue that hierarchical position is not the point, and that correct interpretation of these challenging passages is dependent on understanding the context in which they were written.

The majority of the committee does not view the issue of headship as a barrier to ordaining women to pastoral ministry.

UNITY

Some may be concerned that the unity of the worldwide Church is compromised if members in some regions practice the ordination of women while others do not. In its supreme sense, unity is characterized by oneness with God and with each other, as Jesus said in His prayer in John 17. However, unity must be differentiated from uniformity, which implies invariability.

In deference to the unity Jesus identified, our doctrines comprise the common ground upon which our Church denomination is organized. For the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the 28 Fundamental Beliefs are the common doctrines. They are officially adopted and are considered scripturally clear. Other issues not unequivocally outlined in Scripture are subject to varying interpretations. Because a scripturally based, reasonable case may be made in favor of or opposed to the ordination of women to pastoral ministry, a worldwide mandate is neither practical nor necessary.

In recent years, the General Conference has established policies recognizing women in leadership roles: the ordination of deaconesses and elders and the commissioning of pastors. Although these policies are not practiced in all regions of the world, the Church has remained a single, worldwide organization. It is the conclusion of the study committee that differences in opinion and practice on this issue do not constitute disunity in Christ nor in the Church.

Since the first resolution recommending the ordination of women in 1881, members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have intensely debated, without consensus, the advisability of ordaining women to the gospel ministry. In 1973 the General Conference made its first formal appointment of a committee to study the role of women in the Church. Forty years later, it is the recommendation of this North American Division Theology of Ordination Study Committee that ordination to gospel ministry, as an affirmation of the call of God, be conferred by the Seventh-day Adventist Church on men and women. ■

Submitted by the
North American Division
Theology of Ordination Study Committee
November 2013

Q&A

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF ORDINATION?

Ordination serves to formally sanction an individual for the purpose of fulfilling the church's global mission (Matthew 24:14; 28:19–20). The worldwide body accepts in good faith what has been locally ratified (e.g., Paul's introductory letter exhorting congregations to cordially receive Timothy, as he had been properly trained and commissioned). While ordination grants special sanction, it does not imbue the individual with added ability or spiritual acumen. It does not elevate the recipient above the laity nor grant any special dispensation of grace. Yet, ordination ought not to be trivialized as an automatic process following a set duration of effort and training.

DOESN'T THE BIBLE OPPOSE THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN?

Although the word *ordination* doesn't appear in the Bible, the concept is referenced using other terms, such as *laying on of hands* and *anointing*. The Bible doesn't mention gender in reference to the topic.

SINCE THE BIBLE IS SILENT ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN, WOULDN'T IT BE ADVISABLE TO NOT ORDAIN THEM?

When specific topics aren't addressed in Scripture, it is considered a sound, acceptable practice to apply principles drawn from the Bible. James and Ellen White followed this practice in an example cited in *Review and Herald* (April 26, 1860):

> *If it be asked, Where are your plain texts of scripture for holding church property legally? we reply, The Bible does not furnish any; neither does it say that we should have a weekly paper, a steam printing-press, that we should publish books, build places of worship, and send out tents? Jesus says, "Let your light so shine before men," &c.; but he does not give all the particulars how this shall be done. The church is left to move forward in the great work, praying for divine guidance, acting upon the most efficient plans for its accomplishment. We believe it safe to be governed by the following RULE: All means which, according to sound judgment, will advance the cause of truth, and are not forbidden by plain scripture declarations, should be employed.*

DOESN'T THE BIBLE SAY THAT WOMEN SHOULD NOT SPEAK IN CHURCH?

In 1 Corinthians 14:34 (KJV), Paul writes, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

Guidelines for interpreting Scripture (published by the Adventist Church in the "Methods of Bible Study" document, included in this report) encourage the consideration of cultural context for interpreting texts. The Adventist Church considers Paul's statement a cultural application made for local circumstances.

IF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH BEGAN ORDAINING WOMEN, WOULDN'T THAT ALSO OPEN THE WAY FOR TOLERANCE OF HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR?

The Bible makes several clear, direct references condemning homosexual behavior, but it does not directly address the ordination of women. The Bible consistently elevates women above the local cultural norms that tended to degrade them.

SHOULDN'T THE BIBLE ALWAYS BE TAKEN LITERALLY?

Approaches to biblical interpretation range from assuming that Scripture is not at all inspired to assuming that every word was "dictated" by God. The approach to biblical interpretation officially adopted by the Seventh-day Adventist Church acknowledges thought inspiration, not literal word-for-word interpretation. (See the "Methods of Bible Study" document, included in this report.)

In the introduction to *The Great Controversy* (p. vi), Ellen White explains that the truths of God are written in the language of humans:

> *The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the different writers. The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed have themselves embodied the thought in human language.*

IF WE INTERPRET THE BIBLE AS FAVORABLE TOWARD THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN, DOESN'T THAT OPEN THE WAY FOR ALLOWING MOST ANYTHING?

Everyone interprets the Bible according to their personal worldview, even those who embrace a literalist approach to Scripture.

When the Bible doesn't seem to offer a clear, indisputable directive on a subject, we use a principle-based approach, which considers similar or related examples in Scripture. Bible interpretation is not a mathematical science, but is dependent on the guidance of the Spirit that leads to all truth (John 16:13). Following biblical principles is a safeguard against "allowing for most anything."

IT SEEMS THE DENOMINATIONS THAT ORDAIN WOMEN ALSO ORDAIN PRACTICING HOMOSEXUALS. WHY SHOULD WE FOLLOW THEIR LEAD?

The Adventist Church doesn't seek to pattern itself after others. Rather, we have studied Scripture and examined numerous resources leading to our recommendations. Over a two-year time span, the NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee has researched this topic; but ever since 1881, when a resolution recommending the ordination of

women to ministry was presented at the General Conference Session, questions about ordination have been under examination.

The Adventist church has consistently had a vision for elevating the human race by returning to the model found in the Garden of Eden. Two illustrations of this are Sabbathkeeping and vegetarianism. Uplifting the theology of the Eden model, along with the direct biblical references condemning homosexual behavior in the Old and New Testaments, prevents our church from ordination of those engaged in homosexual behavior. However, the Bible does not directly address the ordination of women and it consistently elevates women above the cultural norms of the day.

IS ORDAINING WOMEN THE RESPONSE OF OUR CHURCH TO THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT, AND WOULD IT THEN BE A FORM OF FOLLOWING THE WORLD?

The ordination of women was first formally proposed in the Adventist Church back in 1881 when a resolution was presented at the General Conference Session. (That resolution was forwarded to the General Conference Executive Committee, and no action was taken.) In the last 50 years, women's ordination has been formally researched and debated within Adventism. The recommendations of the North American Division Theology of Ordination Study Committee are the result of prayerful study of Scripture and history, theory and practice, not an attempt to comply with the standard of the world.

DOESN'T THE BIBLE TEACH THAT A WOMAN IS NOT TO HAVE AUTHORITY OVER A MAN?

In most cases where there is disagreement about whether women should be ordained as pastors and elders, the issue of headship is the point of contention.

Generally, those who would stop short of ordaining women to the offices of pastor or elder take issue with appointing women to headship roles, maintaining that a plain reading of Scripture does not allow women to exercise spiritual authority over men. Others believe that biblical headship does not apply to church leadership roles but is limited in application to the husband's role as servant-leader in the home. Still others contend that headship is not even a biblical concept, but a relatively modern term, and that the original Greek word for *head* (*kephalē*), denotes source, not leader. These argue that hierarchical position is not the point, and that correct interpretation of these challenging passages is dependent on understanding the context in which they were written.

The NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee maintains that the issue of headship is not a barrier to ordaining women as pastors.

ISN'T CHURCH UNITY JEOPARDIZED IF ONLY SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD ORDAIN WOMEN?

There are ordained ministers in our church today who would not be effective everywhere in the world

because of language and culture. Suitability is a paramount factor when a minister is appointed to a position. Acceptance of diversity in the various divisions brings unity, not disunity.

In recent decades, the General Conference has approved policies recognizing women in leadership roles: the ordination of deaconesses and elders and the commissioning of pastors. Although these policies are not practiced in all regions of the world, the Church has remained a single, worldwide organization.

IF GOD MEANT FOR WOMEN TO BE CHURCH LEADERS, WOULDN'T JESUS HAVE INCLUDED WOMEN AS DISCIPLES?

Jesus' inner circle of disciples was not only exclusively male, it also included no slave, no freed slave, no Gentile, and no person of color. Women were mentioned as following Jesus, but to travel full-time with Him would have been viewed with suspicion and disapproval. It would have raised questions of propriety about Jesus as well as the other disciples. Including female disciples would have undermined the ministry of Jesus. It appears that His choice was in deference to the culture of the day.

DID THE FOUNDERS OF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH SUPPORT FEMALE PASTORS?

In *Review and Herald* (Jan. 15, 1901), Ellen White states, "It is the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God."

DOESN'T THE FACT THAT ALL OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PRIESTS WERE MALE DEMONSTRATE THAT WOMEN WERE NOT INTENDED FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP?

It's true that the Old Testament priests were exclusively male; they were also chosen from only one tribe, the Levites. The Levitical system included dozens of ordinances that are not to be practiced today, such as sacrificing lambs. The Old Testament priesthood is not the model for New Testament Christian ministry.

WAS ELLEN WHITE IN FAVOR OF ORDAINING WOMEN?

The White Estate has concluded that Ellen White did not take a formal stand concerning the ordination of women.

In *Review and Herald* (July 9, 1895), Mrs. White said, "Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands."

In *Review and Herald* (Jan. 2, 1879), she said, "The refining, softening influence of Christian women is needed in the great work of preaching the truth." ■

METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

Bible study: presuppositions, principles, and methods

1. PREAMBLE

This statement is addressed to all members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the purpose of providing guidelines on how to study the Bible, both the trained biblical scholar and others.

Seventh-day Adventists recognize and appreciate the contributions of those biblical scholars throughout history who have developed useful and reliable methods of Bible study consistent with the claims and teachings of Scripture. Adventists are committed to the acceptance of biblical truth and are willing to follow it, using all methods of interpretation consistent with what Scripture says of itself. These are outlined in the presuppositions detailed below.

In recent decades the most prominent method in biblical studies has been known as the historical-critical method. Scholars who use this method, as classically formulated, operate on the basis of presuppositions which, prior to studying the biblical text, reject the reliability of accounts of miracles and other supernatural events narrated in the Bible. Even a modified use of this method that retains the principle of criticism which subordinates the Bible to human reason is unacceptable to Adventists.

The historical-critical method minimizes the need for faith in God and obedience to His commandments. In addition, because such a method de-emphasizes the divine element in the Bible as an inspired book (including its resultant unity) and depreciates or misunderstands apocalyptic prophecy and the eschatological portions of the Bible, we urge Adventist Bible students to avoid relying on the use of the presuppositions and the resultant deductions associated with the historical-critical method.

In contrast with the historical-critical method and presuppositions, we believe it to be helpful to set forth the principles of Bible study that are consistent with the teachings of the Scriptures themselves, that preserve their unity, and are based upon the premise that the Bible is the Word of God. Such an approach will lead us into a satisfying and rewarding experience with God.

2. PRESUPPOSITIONS ARISING FROM THE CLAIMS OF SCRIPTURE

a. Origin

(1) The Bible is the Word of God and is the primary and authoritative means by which He reveals Himself to human beings.

(2) The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible writers with thoughts, ideas, and objective information; in turn they expressed these in their own words. Therefore the Scriptures are an indivisible union of human and divine elements, neither of which should be emphasized to the neglect of the other (2 Peter 1:21; cf. *The Great Controversy*, v, vi).

(3) All Scripture is inspired by God and came through the work of the Holy Spirit. However, it did not come in a continuous chain of unbroken revelations. As the Holy Spirit communicated truth to the Bible

writer, each wrote as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, emphasizing the aspect of the truth which he was led to stress. For this reason the student of the Bible will gain a rounded comprehension on any subject by recognizing that the Bible is its own best interpreter and when studied as a whole it depicts a consistent, harmonious truth (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:1, 2; cf. *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 19, 20; *The Great Controversy*, v, vi).

(4) Although it was given to those who lived in an ancient Near Eastern/Mediterranean context, the Bible transcends its cultural backgrounds to serve as God's Word for all cultural, racial, and situational contexts in all ages.

b. Authority

(1) The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the clear, infallible revelation of God's will and His salvation. The Bible is the Word of God, and it alone is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested (2 Timothy 3:15, 17; Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 30:5, 6; Isaiah 8:20; John 17:17; 2 Thessalonians. 3:14; Hebrews 4:12).

(2) Scripture is an authentic, reliable record of history and God's acts in history. It provides the normative theological interpretation of those acts. The supernatural acts revealed in Scripture are historically true. For example, chapters 1–11 of Genesis are a factual account of historical events.

(3) The Bible is not like other books. It is an indivisible blend of the divine and the human. Its record of many details of secular history is integral to its overall purpose to convey salvation history. While at times there may be parallel procedures employed by Bible students to determine historical data, the usual techniques of historical research, based as they are on human presuppositions and focused on the human element, are inadequate for interpreting the Scriptures, which are a blend of the divine and human. Only a method that fully recognizes the indivisible nature of the Scriptures can avoid a distortion of its message.

(4) Human reason is subject to the Bible, not equal to or above it. Presuppositions regarding the Scriptures must be in harmony with the claims of the Scriptures and subject to correction by them (1 Corinthians 2:1–6). God intends that human reason be used to its fullest extent, but within the context and under the authority of His Word rather than independent of it.

(5) The revelation of God in all nature, when properly understood, is in harmony with the written Word, and is to be interpreted in the light of Scripture.

3. PRINCIPLES FOR APPROACHING THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

a. The Spirit enables the believer to accept, understand, and apply the Bible to one's own life as he seeks divine power to render obedience to all scriptural requirements and to appropriate personally all Bible promises. Only those following the light already received can hope to receive further illumination of the Spirit (John 16:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 2:10–14).

b. Scripture cannot be correctly interpreted without the aid of the Holy Spirit, for it is the Spirit who enables the believer to understand and apply Scripture. Therefore, any study of the Word should commence with a request for the Spirit's guidance and illumination.

c. Those who come to the study of the Word must do so with faith, in the humble spirit of a learner who seeks to hear what the Bible is saying. They must be willing to submit all presuppositions, opinions, and the conclusions of reason to the judgment and correction of the Word itself. With this attitude the Bible student may come directly to the Word, and with careful study may come to an understanding of the essentials of salvation apart from any human explanations, however helpful. The biblical message becomes meaningful to such a person.

d. The investigation of Scripture must be characterized by a sincere desire to discover and obey God's will and word rather than to seek support or evidence for preconceived ideas.

4. METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

a. Select a Bible version for study that is faithful to the meaning contained in languages in which the Bible originally was written, giving preference to translations done by a broad group of scholars and published by a general publisher above translations sponsored by a particular denomination or narrowly focused group.

Exercise care not to build major doctrinal points on one Bible translation or version. Trained biblical scholars will use the Greek and Hebrew texts, enabling them to examine variant readings of ancient Bible manuscripts as well.

b. Choose a definite plan of study, avoiding haphazard and aimless approaches. Study plans such as the following are suggested:

(1) Book-by-book analysis of the message

(2) Verse-by-verse method

(3) Study that seeks a biblical solution to a specific life problem, biblical satisfaction for a specific need, or a biblical answer to a specific question

(4) Topical study (faith, love, second coming, and others)

(5) Word study

(6) Biographical study

c. Seek to grasp the simple, most obvious meaning of the biblical passage being studied.

d. Seek to discover the underlying major themes of Scripture as found in individual

texts, passages, and books. Two basic, related themes run throughout Scripture: (1) The person and work of Jesus Christ; and (2) the great controversy perspective involving the authority of God's Word, the fall of man, the first and second advents of Christ, the exoneration of God and His law, and the restoration of the divine plan for the universe. These themes are to be drawn from the totality of Scripture and not imposed on it.

e. Recognize that the Bible is its own interpreter and that the meaning of words, texts, and passages is best determined by diligently comparing scripture with scripture.

f. Study the context of the passage under consideration by relating it to the sentences and paragraphs immediately preceding and following it. Try to relate the ideas of the passage to the line of thought of the entire Bible book.

g. As far as possible ascertain the historical circumstances in which the passage was written by the biblical writers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

h. Determine the literary type the author is using. Some biblical material is composed of parables, proverbs, allegories, psalms, and apocalyptic prophecies. Since many biblical writers presented much of their material as poetry, it is helpful to use a version of the Bible that presents this material in poetic style, for passages employing imagery are not to be interpreted in the same manner as prose.

i. Recognize that a given biblical text may not conform in every detail to present-day literary categories. Be cautious not to force these categories in interpreting the meaning of the biblical text. It is a human tendency to find what one is looking for, even when the author did not intend such.

j. Take note of grammar and sentence construction in order to discover the author's meaning. Study the key words of the passage by comparing their use in other parts of the Bible by means of a concordance and with the help of biblical lexicons and dictionaries.

k. In connection with the study of the biblical text, explore the historical and cultural factors. Archaeology, anthropology, and history may contribute to understanding the meaning of the text.

l. Seventh-day Adventists believe that God inspired Ellen G. White. Therefore, her expositions on any given Bible passage offer an inspired guide to the meaning of texts without exhausting their meaning or preempting the task of exegesis (for example, see *Evangelism*, 256; *The Great Controversy*, 193, 595; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 665, 682, 707–708; *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 33–35).

m. After studying as outlined above, turn to various commentaries and secondary helps such as scholarly works to see how others have dealt with the passage. Then carefully evaluate the different viewpoints expressed from the standpoint of Scripture as a whole.

n. In interpreting prophecy keep in mind that:

   (1) The Bible claims God's power to predict the future (Isaiah 46:10).

   (2) Prophecy has a moral purpose. It was not written merely to satisfy curiosity about the future. Some of the purposes of prophecy are to strengthen faith (John 14:29) and

to promote holy living and readiness for the Advent (Matthew 24:44; Revelation 22:7, 10, 11).

(3) The focus of much prophecy is on Christ (both His first and second advents), the church, and the end-time.

(4) The norms for interpreting prophecy are found within the Bible itself: The Bible notes time prophecies and their historical fulfillments; the New Testament cites specific fulfillments of Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah; and the Old Testament itself presents individuals and events as types of the Messiah.

(5) In the New Testament application of Old Testament prophecies, some literal names become spiritual: for example, Israel represents the church, Babylon apostate religion, etc.

(6) There are two general types of prophetic writings: nonapocalyptic prophecy as found in Isaiah and Jeremiah, and apocalyptic prophecy as found in Daniel and the Revelation. These differing types have different characteristics:

(a) Nonapocalyptic prophecy addresses God's people; apocalyptic is more universal in scope.

(b) Nonapocalyptic prophecy often is conditional in nature, setting forth to God's people the alternatives of blessing for obedience and curses for disobedience; apocalyptic emphasizes the sovereignty of God and His control over history.

(c) Nonapocalyptic prophecy often leaps from the local crisis to the end-time day of the Lord; apocalyptic prophecy presents the course of history from the time of the prophet to the end of the world.

(d) Time prophecies in nonapocalyptic prophecy generally are long, for example, 400 years of Israel's servitude (Genesis 15:13) and 70 years of Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah 25:12). Time prophecies in apocalyptic prophecy generally are phrased in short terms, for example, 10 days (Revelation 2:10) or 42 months (Revelation 13:5). Apocalyptic time periods stand symbolically for longer periods of actual time.

(7) Apocalyptic prophecy is highly symbolic and should be interpreted accordingly. In interpreting symbols, the following methods may be used:

(a) Look for interpretations (explicit or implicit) within the passage itself (for example, Daniel 8:20, 21; Revelation 1:20).

(b) Look for interpretations elsewhere in the book or in other writings by the same author.

(c) Using a concordance, study the use of symbols in other parts of Scripture.

(d) A study of ancient Near Eastern documents may throw light on the meaning of symbols, although scriptural use may alter those meanings.

(e) The literary structure of a book often is an aid to interpreting it. The parallel nature of Daniel's prophecies is an example.

o. Parallel accounts in Scripture sometimes present differences in detail and emphasis (for example, cf. Matthew 21:33, 34; Mark 12:1–11; and Luke 20:9–18; or 2 Kings 18–20 with 2 Chronicles 32). When studying such passages, first examine them carefully to be sure that the parallels actually are referring to the same historical event. For example, many of Jesus' parables may have been given on different occasions to different audiences and with different wording.

In cases where there appear to be differences in parallel accounts, one should recognize that the total message of the Bible is the synthesis of all of its parts. Each book or writer communicates that which the Spirit has led him to write. Each makes his own special contribution to the richness, diversity, and variety of Scripture (*The Great Controversy*, v, vi). The reader must allow each Bible writer to emerge and be heard while at the same time recognizing the basic unity of the divine self-disclosure.

When parallel passages seem to indicate discrepancy or contradiction, look for the underlying harmony. Keep in mind that dissimilarities may be due to minor errors of copyists (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 16), or may be the result of differing emphases and choice of materials of various authors who wrote under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit for different audiences under different circumstances (*Selected Messages*, Book 1, pp. 21, 22; *The Great Controversy*, vi). It may prove impossible to reconcile minor dissimilarities in detail which may be irrelevant to the main and clear message of the passage. In some cases judgment may have to be suspended until more information and better evidence are available to resolve a seeming discrepancy.

p. The Scriptures were written for the practical purpose of revealing the will of God to the human family. However, in order not to misconstrue certain kinds of statements, it is important to recognize that they were addressed to peoples of Eastern cultures and expressed in their thought patterns.

Expressions such as "the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh" (Exodus 9:12) or "an evil spirit from God..." (1 Samuel 16:15), the imprecatory psalms, or the "three days and three nights" of Jonah as compared with Christ's death (Matthew 12:40), commonly are misunderstood because they are interpreted today from a different viewpoint.

A background knowledge of Near Eastern culture is indispensable for understanding such expressions. For example, Hebrew culture attributed responsibility to an individual for acts he did not commit but that he allowed to happen. Therefore the inspired writers of the Scriptures commonly credit God with doing actively that which in Western thought we would say He permits or does not prevent from happening, for example, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

Another aspect of Scripture that troubles the modern mind is the divine command to Israel to engage in war and execute entire nations. Israel originally was organized as a theocracy, a civil government through which God ruled directly (Genesis 18:25). Such a theocratic state was unique. It no longer exists and cannot be regarded as a direct model for Christian practice.

The Scriptures record that God accepted persons whose experiences and statements were not in harmony with the spiritual principles of the Bible as a whole. For example,

we may cite incidents relating to the use of alcohol, polygamy, divorce, and slavery. Although condemnation of such deeply ingrained social customs is not explicit, God did not necessarily endorse or approve all that He permitted and bore with in the lives of the patriarchs and in Israel. Jesus made this clear in His statement with regard to divorce (Matthew 19:4–6, 8).

The spirit of the Scriptures is one of restoration. God works patiently to elevate fallen humanity from the depths of sin to the divine ideal. Consequently, we must not accept as models the actions of sinful men as recorded in the Bible.

The Scriptures represent the unfolding of God's revelation to man. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, for example, enlarges and expands certain Old Testament concepts. Christ Himself is the ultimate revelation of God's character to humanity (Hebrews 1:1–3).

While there is an overarching unity in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and while all Scripture is equally inspired, God chose to reveal Himself to and through human individuals and to meet them where they were in terms of spiritual and intellectual endowments. God Himself does not change, but He progressively unfolded His revelation to men as they were able to grasp it (John 16:12; *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 945; *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 21). Every experience or statement of Scripture is a divinely inspired record, but not every statement or experience is necessarily normative for Christian behavior today. Both the spirit and the letter of Scripture must be understood (1 Corinthians 10:6–13; *The Desire of Ages*, 150; *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 10–12).

q. As the final goal, make application of the text. Ask such questions as, "What is the message and purpose God intends to convey through Scripture?" "What meaning does this text have for me?" "How does it apply to my situation and circumstances today?" In doing so, recognize that although many biblical passages had local significance, nonetheless they contain timeless principles applicable to every age and culture.

5. CONCLUSION

In the "Introduction" to *The Great Controversy* Ellen G. White wrote:

The Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. (p. vi)

As it is impossible for those who do not accept Christ's divinity to understand the purpose of His incarnation, it is also impossible for those who see the Bible merely as a human book to understand its message, however careful and rigorous their methods.

Even Christian scholars who accept the divine-human nature of Scripture, but whose methodological approaches cause them to dwell largely on its human aspects, risk emptying the biblical message of its power by relegating it to the background while concentrating on the medium. They forget that medium and message are inseparable and that the medium without the message is as an empty shell that cannot address the vital spiritual needs of humankind.

A committed Christian will use only those methods that are able to do full justice to the dual, inseparable nature of Scripture, enhance his ability to understand and apply its message, and strengthen faith. ■

SUPPORTING PAPERS

The following research papers represent the analysis on which the committee bases its recommendations to the North American Division Executive Committee.

HERMENEUTICS AND THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

I. WHY DO WE NEED HERMENEUTICS?

The term hermeneutics in its traditional meaning indicates the discipline that deals with principles of interpretation. Although it may sound like a set of sophisticated techniques, the reality is that we are consciously or unconsciously taught hermeneutics from birth. Hermeneutics is used in daily life simply because human beings need principles of interpretation for understanding everyday verbal and nonverbal events.

Words are fickle, making human language by nature "largely equivocal."[1] Furthermore, language represents a perception of reality, which may be understood in more than one way. In the case of written language, the perception of reality is both the author's and reader's. The author attempts to persuade us to see things his or her way, while readers decipher meaning from their own contexts. There would be no disputes or misunderstandings about speech or writing if that were not the case.

It is common practice to place what is said or written in its historical, linguistic, or cultural context for understanding. The same should be true when reading the Bible. There are significant linguistic and cultural differences as well as a vast historical gap between author and reader in the modern reading of the Bible. Without recognizing these issues in our reading of Scripture, it is more likely that modern readers will apply their customary ways of reading to the reading of the Bible. But the Bible is not just any other book.

On one hand, the Bible is a divine book. It is a unique, Spirit-produced collection exhibiting coherence, interconnections between the books, and a paradigm of prophecy and fulfillment. As a divine book, it also contains uniquely inspired content—it is authoritative and truthful and includes divine revelation, miracles, prophecy, nature, and plan. As a divine book, it has a unique purpose; it has spiritual worth, with the capacity to change lives, and is understandable.

On the other hand, the Bible is a human book. First, it uses human language with words and grammar of the time. Serious interpreters must study linguistics, syntax, and semantics to gain an accurate reading. Second, it uses common genres and literary conventions known at the time of writing. Comparing parallel genres from the biblical world provides cultural and literary contexts with which the Bible may be understood in depth. Third, it was written by human authors in their own time and space, and their historical background and culture should be learned. And, finally, it communicates through the plain sense of the text. No effort should be made to look for a hidden or mystical sense.

As in daily life, there is no absolute guarantee that anyone will ever completely understand the words in the Bible. The immediate recipients of biblical texts had the advantage of a shared context; but for later readers, the words and their meanings can be difficult to pin down.

This should not, however, lead to thinking that problems lie in the Bible. For the most part, the Bible is clear and understandable. There are not many words or sentences that perplex to the degree

that doctrines and practices will change. After all, the God who became human also used language—not just signs or miracles or mystical visions—to communicate divine truth to humanity. The Bible is given for understanding. Communication between author and reader of the Bible naturally takes place in the reading experience.

The Bible is a "book in which a child can wade, and an elephant can swim."[2] There are thus some difficult passages in the Bible. There also are some teachings that require hermeneutical skills, not only to find the meaning but also to properly apply it in modern context. With the use of a proper set of hermeneutics, an attempt can be made to bridge the distance that separates modern humanity from the biblical text and its world.

Recognizing the significance of hermeneutics from the outset, the NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee began by establishing a hermeneutic for the given assignment.

II. ADAPTATION OF THE "METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY" HERMENEUTICAL METHOD

A. Action. The committee agreed on the importance of establishing a hermeneutic at the outset before drawing further conclusions. We read together the "Methods of Bible Study" document voted by the General Conference Annual Council in 1986, and, after some discussion, voted to utilize its presuppositions, principles, and methods of biblical hermeneutics.

B. Rationale. The "Methods of Bible Study" document was written and voted 27 years ago, and as such does not address a whole new movement in biblical studies which the last twenty years have seen; however, it still provides a good hermeneutical framework for guiding the study of this committee. In particular, the document outlines the boundaries concerning two significant areas.

1. Thought Inspiration: This document adopts thought inspiration as the official Adventist approach to interpreting Scripture.

"The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible writers with thoughts, ideas, and objective information; in turn they expressed these in their own words. Therefore the Scriptures are an indivisible union of divine and human elements, neither of which should be emphasized to the neglect of other."

2. Historical Approach: The document also provides these specific recommendations (among others):

- As far as possible, ascertain the historical circumstances in which the passage was written.
- Take note of grammar and sentence construction in order to discover the author's meaning.
- In connection with the study of the biblical text, explore the historical and cultural factors. "Archaeology, anthropology, and history," it argues, "may contribute to understanding the meaning of the text."[3]

What is significant here is to note that this official document, voted by the General Conference, emphatically advises the interpretation of Scripture in its cultural and historical context.

3. Authorities. The committee further agreed to affirm three authorities: (a) Holy Scripture, as inspired revelation from God; (b) the writings of Ellen G. White, as inspired guidance for the Adventist Church; and (c) the 28 Fundamental Beliefs, as expressive of Adventist doctrinal understanding. All committee members felt strongly that establishing these authorities at the outset set the boundary within which this committee was to operate.

III. TWO MAJOR SETS OF HERMENEUTICS IN THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

The committee quickly discovered that Ján Barna's study[4] succinctly summarizes two major hermeneutical strands prevalent in the Adventist Church today. These two strands are being used to look at the biblical evidence on the issue of ordination, particularly those controversial texts that speak directly to the issue of headship, which is the most contentious textual issue bearing on this topic.

A. Plain, Natural, and Literal Reading

Barna identifies the preferred method of those opposed to women's ordination as the "historical-grammatical"[5] method, which places strong emphasis on a plain, natural, and literal meaning of words. This approach was even referred to as "the common sense approach,"[6] which leads to the discovery of the "natural and normal sense of the text."[7] Literal reading, therefore, predominantly characterizes this method. This approach amazingly presupposes "a correlation of meaning between then and now."[8] In other words, modern readers' common sense and their plain reading take charge of the interpretive process.

This approach, though historical, has a strong tendency to avoid employing any extra-biblical sources. The authority of the Bible is upheld with the phrase *Sola Scriptura*, "which embraces not only using the Bible as *the evaluative source* (epistemological meaning) for extra-biblical sources, but also using the Bible as *the only (sole) source* (hermeneutical limitation) excluding or minimizing the use of extra-biblical sources."[9]

Basic to this historical-grammatical method is, in Barna's opinion, the acceptance of Scripture as the verbally inspired and inerrant word of God. Barna summarizes it this way: "The Bible is inerrant, not only in matters of salvation and theology, but also in matters of science and history, down to the very last detail. The assumption of *absolute* biblical inerrancy is firmly rooted in and necessitated by the opponents' concept of *full* inspiration."[10]

It is true that several influential figures in the opponents' circle hold either this view of inspiration or a very similar one.[11] It is also probably true that the grassroots theory of biblical inspiration, often found among those who don't favor the ordination of women, strongly runs along this line of thinking. This view of inspiration may have consequently served as an influential backdrop against which the ordination of women is fiercely opposed.

To be fair, it must be noted that Barna's summary and conclusion on this issue are based mainly on two Adventist writers, and doesn't necessarily represent the view held by others who are not in favor of the ordination of women. It is theoretically and practically possible to establish a view that opposes the ordination of women without subscribing to this mode of inspiration.

With this plain, literal approach to the Bible, the ordination of women is not possible unless there is

a clear biblical mandate. This argument seems to be quite weak because none of the texts used against the ordination of women specifically address the issue and because a literal reading of these texts assumes a "hermeneutical principle that is neither acceptable nor traditionally practiced in Adventist theology."[12]

B. Principle-Based Reading

The preferred method of the proponents of the ordination of women is described as including "principle-based, contextual, linguistic and historical-cultural reading strategies…at the heart of their biblical approach."[13] This approach, consequently, sees most of the so-called controversial passages in the "context of family relationships, [and] some emphasize a two-way submission." With the use of this approach, no conclusive evidence prohibiting the ordination of women can be found in the Bible.

Those who take this approach believe that hermeneutical inquiries should be discussed within the larger framework of the topic of inspiration and revelation. Although they differ in technical points, their plenary view of inspiration becomes their modus operandi in the discussion of this topic. As verbal inspiration was historically rejected by the Adventist church in the nineteenth century, they do not adopt "a verbal-mechanical-dictation concept both in terminology and in the analysis emphasizing more the personal-dynamic aspect in the inspiration theory."[14] This view of inspiration is supported by Ellen White when she says: "The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen."[15]

The practitioners of this approach believe in the complete reliability and trustworthiness of the Bible in terms of its salvific message while moving away from "an absolute inerrancy view."[16] At the same time, a proper discernment between temporal, cultural elements and transcultural, permanent elements is fundamental to this approach, for the Bible was written in a certain space and time.[17]

C. An Issue of Hermeneutical Justice to the Text

Overall the committee thinks that both methods fit within the broad range of what the "Methods of Bible Study" document approves to be within the appropriate realm of reading in the Adventist church.

A plain and literal reading strategy would be sufficient to understand most of the Bible. Yet the committee believes that there are occasions when we should employ principle-based reading because the passage calls for an understanding of the historical and contextual settings.

Method is not the end but rather a means by which we access the meaning of Scripture. It should not be idolized or esteemed over the text. The history of biblical interpretation testifies that people tend to select the hermeneutic that works best for their own interests. Perhaps no hermeneutical method is final. But the biblical text still remains, even after a particular method is not in vogue.

One question will be considered by an honest reader of the Bible: Which approach or reading strategy does more justice to the meaning of the text? This question is especially important when considering difficult passages or issues, and is fundamental to the proper interpretation of Scripture. Method is a means for tackling the text. The text determines which method may be more appropriate for interpretation. The text takes priority over the hermeneutical method.

Furthermore, an ethical reader of the Bible will assess the outcome and ask: Who benefits from this particular interpretation? This stems out of recognition that interpretation may become a power issue. The interpretation then needs to be assessed within the framework of the totality of Scripture. When one's reading contradicts the overall picture of God and the major driving themes of the Bible, such reading should be rigorously scrutinized.

When should we decide not to use one method and switch to another? What should be our criteria for determining the proper use of a contextual or principle-based approach? These questions must be answered for the proper reading of the text. The general rule of thumb is that when two or more interpretations are claimed for a passage, the one that works with all information gathered should serve.

D. When to Adopt a Principled-Based Approach

The following interpretive situations are best addressed with a principle-based approach.

1. **Conflicting Interpretation:** When there is a challenge of conflicting interpretations due to textual variants and/or particular historical and cultural contexts.
2. **Historical Background:** When an understanding of the historical background greatly enhances the reading. The Bible, in most cases, doesn't provide detailed information about historical or cultural situations behind a passage. For example, while the people in Corinth obviously would have known the context in which Paul wrote to them, it is not possible for us to become first-century readers and fully understand the context. Yet the Bible is given for human understanding and spiritual wellbeing. It is the solemn task of readers to exert their best effort to understand the context as much as possible.
3. **Contradiction:** When an interpretation of a specific passage contradicts the teaching of Scripture on a point. The Bible is a unified book in its salvific message.
4. **Essential Need of Reasoning:** When the use of reasoning seems to be necessary for our reading. The act of interpretation is also an act of logical reasoning. While divine inspiration is absolutely assumed, that doesn't preclude the use of reason in reading. Since the Bible is given in the form of human language and therefore appeals to human reason, it invites serious investigation when current interpretation doesn't make sense.
5. **Illumination of the Holy Spirit:** When the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of truth" (John 16:13), illuminates what is revealed in Scripture, so that "we may understand what God has freely given us" (1 Corinthians 2:12). The ministry of the Holy Spirit is primarily not about communicating new truth but helping to show the salvific work of Jesus Christ in wider scope and beyond our cultural and contextual boundaries. It doesn't expect the discarding of common sense and logic in Christian faith.

These guidelines can lead the modern-day Adventist reader to consider many of the difficult passages regarding the ordination of women in their linguistic, historical, and cultural contexts.

IV. A HERMENEUTIC OF REDEMPTIVE HISTORY

Since the Bible is a divine and human book, written in particular space and time, it is necessary to find a set of principles to distinguish that which is transcultural from that which is cultural. As long as the twenty-first-century Christian takes the Bible as the norm for life, hermeneutical issues are fundamental in assessing the normative status of commands and practices in the Bible.

What hermeneutical approach should we generally take in our reading of scriptural texts? How should the biblical text be applied in the contemporary world? What hermeneutics should be developed to distinguish that which is merely cultural from that which is timeless? How can common ground be established where there is hostility within the Adventist community? What components of the biblical text have ongoing practical significance and what components are limited in application to the original audience?

These questions must be answered to interpret the Bible as a unified whole. One persuasive way to do that is to adopt a "redemptive movement hermeneutic,"[18] which can be applied to many issues that emerge when reading difficult passages. This redemptive hermeneutic is fundamentally based on the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, in whom we find the complete revelation of God, and also in whom we find the ultimate climax and fulfillment of all of redemptive history in Scripture. Furthermore, this redemptive, historical characteristic in the Bible can well serve as our reading strategy when it comes to difficult texts in Scripture.

This approach looks for the redemptive spirit (or "trajectory") in the text to discern what still applies today. God moves His people to the fullest realization of His will for them, that is, what is more righteous, equitable, loving, and just. It is based on a firm belief that "relative to when and where the words of Scripture were first read, they spoke redemptively to their given communities."[19] For example, some of the counsel in Scripture was intended to redemptively temper the harsh treatment of slaves without outlawing slavery; but that doesn't represent the conclusive stance of the Bible on that issue. When the entire Word is considered in the context of redemptive history, slavery is not tolerated.

Since the Bible is a divine and human book, written in particular space and time, it is necessary to find a set of principles to distinguish that which is transcultural from that which is cultural.

This approach is contrasted with a "static" hermeneutic, which is interested in interpreting the text as an isolated entity and does not recognize the direction in which the Bible is moving. This "static" hermeneutic can even justify slavery or other unjust acts, because the Bible seems to endorse or tacitly recognize them.

One of the tasks for interpreters in reading Scripture is to consider how it should be applied today. The command that women suspected of adultery should go through the water-purification rite of Numbers 5 was intended to protect women from arbitrary charges in a patriarchal society, not to single them out for punishment. This command, in its cultural setting, improved the life of women. Today both men and women may be implicated or responsible in cases of adultery. The fundamental basis of this hermeneutical approach is that we should not restrict the application of the biblical text to the cultural world of the Bible, but let its redemptive spirit or redemptive movement guide the modern reader.

Some modern interpreters of Ephesians 6:5–9 maintain that employees should submit themselves to their employers. Such an interpretation wrongly applies the text to contemporary society. Employees are not required to submit to employers, but to faithfully fulfill the terms of their contract. The faithful execution of a job brings glory to God, and in a way functions as a witness to others.

The same is true of slavery (Exodus 21:28–32). It is not the assumption of modern society that wives

are the property of their husbands (Exodus 20:17). These texts should not be read in a static or fixed state. The redemptive movement of the text dictates the proclamation that all human beings, slaves or free, are equal, and that wives are equal to their husbands.

The Bible speaks to culture-specific issues as well as those that transcend culture and time. Slavery is specific to a former culture, while the love-your-neighbor command is directly applicable across all cultures. It is the task of a modern reader of the Bible to distinguish between cultural and trans-cultural values within the Bible. Such efforts help readers avoid the pitfall of being trapped into rigid literalism.

V. LOCATION OF MEANING AND A HERMENEUTIC OF HUMBLENESS

A. Text and Meaning

Biblical hermeneutics is mainly preoccupied with the interpretation of Scripture and the complexities of the relationship between text and reader. The Adventist Church has successfully dealt with the issue of hermeneutics to a certain extent. It has not, however, addressed the complex issues between reader and text, mainly due to the traditional placement of meaning in the text. The Adventist stance is that "the Bible is the only creed," but this sheds some light on the assumed location of meaning. Adventists take an "archaeological" approach: since meaning is in the text, it is the responsibility of the reader to dig for that meaning.

Adventists have long held an exegetical stance that the reader should seek to discover the author's intended meaning, the only true meaning, and must avoid superimposing meaning on the text. The meaning of a passage is determined or fixed by the author and is not subject to modification by readers. The role of the reader is to discover the meaning.

The reading process is not as simple as it seems on the surface, and the same is true for biblical interpretation. There are three foci in biblical interpretation. While some readers are entirely committed to one focus, others attempt to integrate two or three.

1. **Focus on the author.** The task is to dig for authorial intent. Verbal meaning is whatever the author has willed to convey by a particular sequence of words that can be shared by means of linguistic signs. The author's truth-intention provides the only genuinely discriminating norm for discerning between valid or true interpretations and invalid or false ones.[20]
2. **Focus on the text.** The task is to delineate the world within the text. The text, once written out and produced, represents its own world. The language, its structure, and its literary context become the source of meaning.[22]
3. **Focus on the reader.** Fundamental to this approach is its recognition that the text is semantically independent of the intention of its author. The text is primarily seen as a construct, insofar as meaning is taken to reside in the encounter or interchange between text and reader. Meaning thus emerges as an outcome of interplay between text and reader, both of which are culturally and historically conditioned.[21]

Focusing on the author is probably the only absolute choice for the denominational hermeneutic. Text has a specific determined message that the author attempts to deliver to the reader. Readers embark on a journey to discover the author's intended meaning. In other words, for Adventists meaning is a property of the text rather than the result of a reader's engagement with the text.

Even after recognizing this author-focused interpretative tradition in the Adventist church, it is helpful to recognize what the other two foci might

bring to the reading experience. Note the case of 2 Peter 1:12. When considered in context, 2 Peter 1:12 is a positive affirmation of the apostolic message, of which Peter is committed to reminding his readers. It is an "authoritative statement… of the Christian eschatological hope as he [Peter] has been expounding it.… He makes it all the more impressive and solemn by casting it in the form of a valedictory message, or last testament, penned by the Apostle himself in full consciousness of his imminent martyr-death."[23] Early Adventists, however, took "the present truth" in 2 Peter 1:12 and progressively applied it to their newly awakened messages such as the Sanctuary and the Sabbath[24] that, in their opinion, prepared people to be perfect or holy. For many nineteenth century Adventist readers, with their particular set of theological immediacy, this was the primary understanding in their encounter with the passage.

All interpreters have preconceptions. Whether they recognize it, they bring themselves to the text.

The truth of the matter is that no interpreters are immune from such an encounter in their reading of the text. As humans, we are naturally inclined to read the Bible in our current context, which influences our interpretation and application of the text, for good or for ill. All interpreters have preconceptions. The bottom line is that regardless of whether interpreters openly and candidly recognize it, they bring themselves to the text. Recognizing one's social location in reading of the text provides a candid platform for interpretation. It doesn't necessarily indicate that we have to be swayed by our own social location.

As one case study of 100 readings of Nehemiah 5 shows,[25] the differing contexts of the readers, with their particular concerns and problems, influence the reading of Scripture. Most Anglo-Saxon readers find in Nehemiah 5 teachings on various topics such as family planning, proper exercise of anger, exemplary living, and principles of Christian leadership. Many in the developing world, along with several Anglo-Saxon readers, feel that Nehemiah 5 addresses aiding the poor and the role of ideology, government, and the masses. Readers in North America see little about today's poor, but feel that proper money management is a main idea in this chapter.

Current context is an interpretive lens for readers, whether or not they recognize it. Applying a contemporary filter to the biblical text is the only point of departure for contemporary readers. Such a departure can mask the meaning of the text. An ethical reading of the text calls for the admission that we unavoidably read the Bible first through eyes conditioned by our own culture and experience. It must be noted, however, that a new understanding of a text, especially reached from within a different culture and context, doesn't contradict a traditional understanding of the text, but enriches interpretive traditions.

To be sure, different cultures do not control interpretation, but the text "itself provides the most important control for distinguishing between interpretations properly or improperly influenced by contemporary context."[26] It is true that ambiguity sometimes prevents the evaluation of this influence. However, even in this case, the text should "restrain" the imagination.

B. A Hermeneutic of Humbleness

Christians are often confused by contradictory interpretations of the same passage. Each interpreter claims that his or her interpretation

is biblical. Furthermore, the term "biblical" has sometimes been abused to justify one interpretation over another. To make matters worse, very few interpreters openly acknowledge the potential for misinterpretation that accompanies, for example, the ambiguity of human language, distance in time, or pre-conceived ideas.

Interpreters may disagree about the meaning of text for various reasons:

1. Hermeneutical. Confusion or misunderstanding over the relationship between meaning (interpretation) and significance (application) creates an interpretation not carried out to its fullest possible degree.

2. Authorial. Due to the vast gap in time and space, there aren't sufficient data about the historical setting such as culture, history, language, and ideology. Interpreters work with the most updated historical data in their hands. Even the most recent historical data in many instances are more likely to be a reconstruction of earlier data based on reasoning and arguments.

3. Textual. Ambiguity in a text opens up many different possibilities for interpretation. Interpretive ambiguity must be admitted and accepted. To be sure, interpreters are to be blamed if they inadequately analyze or identify the structure and genre of a particular text.

4. Reader. Interpreters come to a text with different analytical ability and skill. They also approach text with different sets of pre-understanding such as knowledge, personal experience, and preconceptions.

Not many readers candidly acknowledge these issues in their reading process. The worst possible case is to superimpose preconceptions upon an interpretation and call it biblical. To be sure, there is also an issue of individual competency.

The Bible has a prominent place in the life of Seventh-day Adventists. It plays a crucial role in our theology and practice. We may not have every exegetical answer to difficult or perplexing passages. We should, thus, adopt a hermeneutic of humbleness in our reading of the Bible; that is, to acknowledge above all a possibility of misunderstanding or incomplete understanding on our part, and allow other interpretations to enrich our reading.

If the reading of the Bible joyfully results in a prophetic community with lives lived faithfully before God, Adventist interpreters should, above all, recognize themselves as capable of manufacturing, knowingly or unknowingly, a forced reading. These virtuous readers of the Bible, regardless of their theological orientation, must be humbly prepared to repent of their sometimes forced (and sometimes superficial) readings, acknowledging that their interpretation may not be "biblical" in the end and being open to correction.

At the same time, the Adventist hermeneutic of humbleness should recognize a place for the Holy Spirit in our interpretation. The Spirit "sanctifies the reader, removing pride and prejudice and creating the humility of heart and mind ready to receive something not of its own making."[27] The Holy Spirit leads us, in all its cultural variety, into a deeper appreciation of the text, finding the meaning of a text for our contemporary faith community. The objective meaning in the text is "best approximated by a diversity of reading contexts and communities."[28]

IV. CONCLUSION: HERMENEUTICAL INTEGRITY

This paper is not aimed to discuss in detail the so-called difficult or controversial passages regarding the ordination of women. These difficult passages, such as 1 Corinthians 11:1–3 and 14:33–36, 1 Timothy 2:1–15, Ephesians 5: 21–33, have been sufficiently

dealt with in detail by many faithful, Bible-believing Adventists in the past.[29] Most of these studies attempt to read these passages in context, analyze semantic backgrounds, or explore the historical-cultural background for interpretation. These approaches are in line with the guideline set in the "Methods of Bible Study" document, which recommends, among other things, to explore the biblical texts in their cultural and historical context. The overwhelming majority of the committee feels that these difficult passages require the modern Adventist reader to employ a principle-based reading.

The "Methods of Bible Study" document also recommends that the Bible should be looked at in its entirety or unity. Many studies done by Adventists follow this approach by focusing on different aspects of the issue: (1) some theologically discuss equality of man and woman, especially in the Genesis Creation story, which is in direct opposition to the headship and submission argument;[30] (2) some consider Jesus' revolutionary way of treating women, especially in the context of the cultural and historical conditions of the first century Jewish society;[31] and (3) some discuss the New Testament teaching on spiritual gifts, with an emphasis on women being equal recipients of spiritual gifts alongside of men.[32] All of these studies argue for the ordination of women in the Adventist Church.

The issue of women's ordination in the Adventist Church provides a valuable lesson for the denomination in the area of hermeneutics. Hermeneutical integrity is demanded in our reading, which implies hermeneutical responsibility. Being responsible in hermeneutics means being equipped with hermeneutical virtues. Hermeneutical tools technically equip readers to rightly divide the word of truth, free from arbitrariness and unrestrained play with texts. It is not sufficient, however, to know and use the right approach in reading the biblical text. Adventist readers should cultivate hermeneutical virtues too, which are openness, wisdom, humility, receptivity, and honesty. These spiritual qualities lead readers to a fuller knowledge of God's redemptive history in its entirety. Cultivating these hermeneutical virtues will undoubtedly lead to the reading practice that best corresponds to the ethos of the Bible study done by the early Adventists. ■

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IS ORDINATION OF WOMEN A THREAT TO OUR UNITY?

in necessary things unity;
in uncertain things freedom;
in everything compassion[1]

For more than 50 years, members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have intensely debated, without consensus, the advisability of ordaining women to the gospel ministry. Sound, cogent reasoning has been presented in defense of both sides of the question. Since neither the Bible nor the Spirit of Prophecy provides a definitive, unequivocal word on the issue, it is the study committee's consensus that our differences should not create a rift in the Church. We believe the Scriptures can be interpreted to support a position either for or opposed to women's ordination, and for that reason the issues should not be a cause for disunity in the Church.

UNITY DEFINED

Some may be concerned that the unity of the church is compromised if some regions of the world practice the ordination of women while others do not. We believe that unity in Christian fellowship may be identified by oneness with God and with each other, as Jesus said in His prayer in John 17. However, "denominational unity"—agreement about the clear doctrines unequivocally manifest in Scripture—is secure, because for the Seventh-day Adventist denomination the unifying doctrines are the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. These doctrines are officially adopted as scripturally straightforward. Other issues not unequivocally outlined in Scripture, such as ordination, are subject to varying interpretations and therefore cannot be considered non-negotiable . The unity that is important for the church is outlined in the fourteenth Fundamental Belief:

> **14. Unity in the Body of Christ***:*
> *The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. . . .*

Unity is important to the church, but this unity is not uniformity, as the fourteenth doctrinal statement itself notes the many differences that "must not be divisive among us." We celebrate different gifts, varieties of expression of worship, different languages, and a diversity of evangelistic techniques, but we hold in common the foundational beliefs that make us Seventh-day Adventists.

The *Church Manual* is another means by which the Church manifests unity as it implements certain policies in a similar way from church to church. However, the *Church Manual* and the *Minister's Manual* contain policies that are not all based on

a "Thus saith the Lord" in Scripture, but rather reflect changing circumstances and needs. Church officers are added in some areas of the world and not in others, and descriptions of responsibilities vary depending on local needs and culture. A modern-day example that helps illustrate unity without uniformity is the McDonald's restaurant chain. McDonalds requires certain things to be the same whether the store is in China, Mexico, or the United States. It does allow, however, for some differences in the food to accommodate regional taste differences.

UNITY REMAINS

Over the years, changes in policies on ordination have not led to disunity. Consider that different branches of the church have already voted at least four policies relative to women in leadership that are not followed in all parts of the world.

1. The ordination of deaconesses was voted at the 2010 General Conference Session.[2]
2. Authorization of females as elders was voted at the Spring Meeting in 1975.[3]
3. Ordination of female elders was voted at Annual Council in 1984.[4]
4. Authorization of females to serve as commissioned ministers was voted in 1989.[5]

These policies, though controversial in some areas, have not resulted in the breaking apart of the Church. While these particular policies have not been followed everywhere around the world (in fact, not even everywhere in the North American Division), they have not shattered the unity of the church, because unity is based on something far deeper than making certain that everyone everywhere follows the same policies.

Sometimes churches in the same towns hold different views. One church ordains women deacons or elders, and the other church in the same town does not. We have women pastors in some parts of the world, and there are other parts of the world that don't have women pastors. These churches are not in disunity because they hold different perspectives on this issue. Differences in opinion about ordaining women does not constitute disunity, because the 28 Fundamental Beliefs are not compromised.

The North American Division believes strongly in the importance of the unity of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our church is the only Protestant church that has not broken into national churches on different continents. We are together as a worldwide church communicating the unique message of Adventism to the world. That message is summarized in the 28 Fundamental Beliefs, and the ordination or non-ordination of women need not be enshrined as a part of the Adventist message to the world.

A fundamental question related to the ordination of women and maintaining church unity is whether or not ordination must be universally applicable around the world. Would granting that authority in only some divisions or unions bring the worldwide Church into disunity?

It is important to make a distinction between granting ecclesiastical authority to lead a church and the social/community acceptance of that authority. It is the position of the committee that the church could grant ordination and worldwide authority to represent the church while not at the same time empowering every person given that authority to practice it in locations where it is not culturally accepted. To illustrate: during the years of apartheid in South Africa, black and white ministers were ordained and had the authority to represent the Adventist Church, but that authority did not authorize them to practice ministry or to use that authority among groups where the social-cultural conditions mitigated against it.

The worldwide church is held together in unity by our focus on Jesus and our shared mission outlined in the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. Disunity will come to the church when the majority seeks to impose convictions on the minority in areas that are not defined by the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. Ordination should be a policy determined at the division level; it cannot become Fundamental Belief No. 29, because there is no consensus on the issue in the Church. The worldwide unity of the Church will be assured when the focus is maintained on Jesus and our shared mission outlined in the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. Disunity will result when all are required to come to an agreement on issues over which we have developed no consensus.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE FOR MANAGING DISAGREEMENT

In light of the reality that the church has not come to a consensus on the theology that would authorize ordination of women, it is appropriate to look at how the early church handled issues that had the potential to cause disunity in the early church. In that regard, Acts 15 is very instructive. Paul and Barnabas are confronted in Antioch with those who believed "Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved" (verse 1, NLT). It was the biblical conviction of these early Jewish Christians that all who were to be identified as the people of God must be circumcised.

This was a major conflict. As the King James Version puts it, "therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them" (verse 2, KJV). This conflict in Antioch went to the very core identity and belief of the first Christians.

So the Jerusalem Conference was convened. Paul and Barnabas traveled to Jerusalem to share with the church leadership the mission stories from Antioch about how the Gentiles were believing in the gospel and were manifesting the power of the Holy Spirit even though they were not circumcised.[6]

There were those Jews in Jerusalem, however, who were convinced that what they thought to be the clear commands of the Bible should be followed. Genesis 17:10–11[7] provides clear instruction to Abraham that in order to keep the covenant, each male "must be circumcised." They were committed to a hermeneutic that required following the biblical mandate for circumcision. I imagine they eloquently defended the faith based on their theology, the Scripture, and their hermeneutic; they probably also recited the story of Moses, who was nearly killed by an angel because he had not circumcised his own son (Exodus 4:24–26).

These Jews appealed to that meeting of church leaders to not abandon the faith as handed down to them by Father Abraham. They wanted unity—a unity based on the Jewish traditions. Would the early church break into disunity? Acts 15:6 says, "The apostles and elders met to consider this question" (NIV).

The question was, *What shall we require of all?* What is the common denominator that we all need

Uniform consensus on the subject of ordination is not intrinsic to and essential to participate in receiving the Good News, nor is it part and parcel of being identified as a Seventh-day Adventist.

to agree on? What are our Fundamental Beliefs? The discussion revolved around circumcision, but the real question was about what all must agree on to live in unity. Peter spoke up, and he argued for a spiritual basis for unity.[8]

SPIRITUAL BASIS FOR UNITY

This first argument of Peter is simple: God demonstrated his acceptance of these Gentiles when he poured out His Holy Spirit on them (verse 8).

As a church founded through the leading of the Spirit of Prophecy, we must continue to be open to the leading of that same Spirit. Around the world as women have exercised their gifts in ministry, they have demonstrated the outpouring of the Spirit. They are leading growing churches in the United States, China, India, and Mexico. We are seeing the leading of the Spirit.

The second argument that Peter makes is where he said, "He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith" (verse 9, NIV).

God made no distinctions, God made no difference. Man drew lines where God did not. Man makes distinctions where God does not. We isolate where God unifies. We build walls, and God came to break down the "dividing wall of hostility" (Ephesians 2:14, NIV, cf. NLT).

As Paul would later say, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28, NIV).

The third argument that Peter makes is as follows: "Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?" (Acts 15:10, NIV).

We assure a schism in the church when that which is conditioned by history is imposed as law, when that which grows from culture is made the policy for all, when that which is local in importance is made universal in application. We will break into national separatist churches when we elevate debatable issues to binding policies required to maintain unity. When we elevate church policies on ordination to the status of a twenty-ninth Fundamental Belief, we assure disunity.

The fourth argument Peter uses gives us the principle of unity: "No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are" (verse 11, NIV).

TIME FOR RESOLUTION

After Peter's speech, the time had come for a decision. What would they do? Gentiles were flooding into the church. Would they set up circumcision clinics in Antioch? Would they establish a new fundamental belief? James had listened to Peter's appeal, and now he shares what seemed to be the consensus of the group: "'It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God'" (verse 19, NIV).

The consensus was: Don't make it difficult! In those few words, James sums up the gospel. Don't

Unity means that our hearts are bonded together even when our function, our gifts, or our thoughts and perspectives are different.

make it difficult. Let's not make it difficult for women who have been called by the Holy Spirit. Let's not make it difficult for grace to prevail in the church. Let's not make an issue out of our differences on this issue. Let's live in unity and not seek uniformity.

So today, with no crystal clear "Thus saith the Lord" about the ordination of women and with no "thus saith the Lord" from Ellen White, the issue should be left up to local considerations.

How did Paul handle circumcision after the Jerusalem Conference? Note his experience in Acts 16:2-3 (NLT): "Timothy was well thought of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium, so Paul wanted him to join them on their journey. In deference to the Jews of the area, he arranged for Timothy to be circumcised before they left, for everyone knew that his father was a Greek."

Paul adapted to the local sensitivities because he didn't want to offend, and he understood that circumcision was not prohibited, nor was it mandated, but should be left to the local situation. Paul related to the eating of meat offered to idols in a similar fashion, where he encouraged consideration of the sensitivities of others.[9]

Uniform consensus on the subject of ordination is not intrinsic to and essential to participate in receiving the Good News, nor is it part and parcel of being identified as a Seventh-day Adventist. Actually, *ordination* is not used in the Bible to initiate people to a church office.[10]

Similar to the situation described in Acts 15, today we would say that some places in the world church have mission stories of how women are spreading the good news and sharing its blessing. Their leaders are coming to the General Conference and saying what Paul and Barnabas said in the Jerusalem Conference.

We might bring Paul's comment into our time by rephrasing it as follows: God knows people's hearts, and he confirmed that he accepts the ministry of women by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to men. He made no distinction between men and women when it comes to sharing the gospel.

Instead of quoting Amos 9:11-12, as James did, we might quote Joel 2:28 (NLT):

> *Then, after doing all those things,*
> *I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.*
> *Your sons and daughters will prophesy.*
> *Your old men will dream dreams,*
> *and your young men will see visions.*

JESUS DESTROYED THE DIVIDING WALL

Paul also appeals for unity in his letter to the Ephesians. The Christians in Ephesus were famously divided along several lines.[11] Paul told them, in effect, that at the cross Jesus destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, and in so doing he made them one (Ephesians 2:14). And he provides a list of realities that were to be the basis of their unity. The list is strikingly short: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:3-6, NIV).

Paul lists seven foundations for unity: *one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

one God and Father of all. Surprisingly short, isn't it? It's also surprising what is missing from the list. He says as much by what he leaves out as by what he includes.

He does not say that there must be unanimity of thought regarding circumcision. He did not say that there must be unanimity about how to approach the issue of food offered to idols. He did not even say that there must be unanimity over the issue of how to handle the Jewish festival days, though he has much to say elsewhere about all three issues.

Rather, he provides us with a list that is Trinitarian: *one Father, one Lord, one Spirit.* His list includes how we receive salvation and live the Christian life: *one faith.* It includes how we come into the church: *one baptism.* It includes the context in which we live the Christian life and grow mature as believers: *one body.* And it includes the ultimate destiny toward which the church is heading: *one hope.* Simple. Succinct. Non-negotiable. But it allows for differences in conviction about many other facets of our life and practice.

We make a mistake when we confuse two terms: *unity* and *uniformity.* Unity means that our hearts are bonded together even when our function, our gifts, or our thoughts and perspectives are different. *Uniformity* means that we must all walk in lockstep fashion, thinking, believing, behaving, and voting in precisely the same manner while all seeking to participate in the same practices at the same time.

The danger that the church faces is one that the Jews faced with the development of the Talmud. As organizations mature, there is a natural desire to codify in ever more specific detail doctrinal issues. Our church founders expressed concern that church organization would go beyond the clear word of God in the development of a creed.[12]

We must avoid the temptation to continue to more narrowly define the truth so as to exclude those who have a different perspective.

> *He drew a circle that shut me out—*
> *Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.*
> *But love and I had the wit to win:*
> *We drew a circle that took him in!*[14]

The circle we draw must not be so ill defined as to essentially include everyone; on the other hand, let us not narrow the circle beyond what the clear word of God and Spirit of Prophecy require. ■

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SHOULD WOMEN BE ORDAINED AS PASTORS?

Old Testament Considerations

INTRODUCTION

This paper builds upon the hermeneutical principles generally accepted by Seventh-day Adventists, as set forth in the 1986 "Methods of Bible Study" statement voted by the Annual Council, and as synthesized in the chapter "Biblical Interpretation" in the *Handbook of SDA Theology*.[1] Insights for this summary position paper have been gleaned over the last 30 years, from my first assigned paper dealing with the subject, "The Role of Women in the Old Testament" (BRICOM, 1982), through several journal articles on the subject, on 25 years later to the 2007 publication of *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (844 pages),[2] and to the present in my continued wrestling with how best to account for all the data in the Old Testament (hereafter OT) dealing with the relation between men and women and the place of women in ministry. This paper first looks at the material in Genesis 1–3, and then moves to the OT witness on the role of women outside of Eden, both in the home and in the covenant community. Finally, consideration is given to OT statements pointing forward to the eschatological future with the coming of the Messiah. In harmony with sound hermeneutical principles, while maintain a strong belief in the unity of Testaments, I do not use my pre-conceived understandings of New Testament (hereafter NT) passages which allude to OT passages as a grid into which those OT passages must be forced. Rather, I seek to allow the meaning of OT passages to emerge from their immediate context, and then compare this meaning with later OT and NT parallel passages. I have found that the interpretations of OT passages in this paper fully harmonize with an informed and careful examination of parallel NT passages (the latter will be set forth in the paper by Teresa Reeve).

I. GENESIS 1–3: THE FOUNDATIONAL DATA REGARDING MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIPS

A consensus within biblical scholarship has emerged in recent decades concerning the foundational nature of Genesis 1–3 in the interpretation of Scripture: "whether one is evangelical or liberal, it is clear that Genesis 1–3 is the interpretive foundation of all Scripture."[3] This is especially true with regard to the understanding of human nature and the relationship between man and woman: "Canonically, the understanding of human nature expressed or implied in the laws, wisdom literature, narratives, prophetic texts, and other genres of the Hebrew Scriptures may be viewed as commentary on the creation texts.... The Bible's first statement concerning humankind remains the normative statement that governs all others."[4] "In the opening chapters of Genesis the triangular relationship of God/man/woman is set in place to explain and inform subsequent narrative and legislation as it unfolds. The reader has the necessary framework to

read the codes and recognise proper and improper behaviour."[5]

In the modern discussion over whether women should be ordained as pastors, the foundational passage for both those who affirm and those who oppose women's ordination is Genesis 1–3. Those who affirm women's ordination (often called "egalitarians"[6]) find in the Genesis creation accounts a statement of full equality without hierarchy of man and woman, set forth as the divinely ordained creation order. They see the rest of Scripture calling us back toward that creation ideal, and allowing for women to fill any position of authority to which God calls and gifts them. Those who oppose the ordination of women (often called "hierarchicalists" or "complementarians"[7] or "subordinationists") also go to Genesis 1–2, where they find support for their view that male headship, both in the home and in the church, is a divinely ordained creation ordinance. They see this reaffirmed in Genesis 3 and the rest of Scripture, and thus they assert that women cannot assume the role of authoritative headship in the church. What is often common to *both* groups is a similar view of authority—as top-down ("chain-of-command") hierarchy. Opponents argue that such hierarchical leadership in the church is a male prerogative; proponents urge that women should have equal rights to those hierarchical leadership offices. What is the truth regarding these matters? Let us go to the opening pages of Scripture to discover what constitutes God's creation order for the relationship between men and women.

II. GENESIS 1: GENDER RELATIONSHIPS OF MALE AND FEMALE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

In Genesis 1:26–28 "the high point and goal has been reached toward which all of God's creativity from v. 1 on was directed."[8] Here in lofty grandeur is portrayed the creation of humankind (*ha'adam*):

> *(26) Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." (27) So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (28) And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.*

A. The Meaning of the Image of God and Male-Female Relationships

In a separate study, I have examined in detail what it means for humanity to be made in the image of God.[9] Based upon the clues in the text itself, one

may identify three major ways in which humans constitute the image of God: (1) resemblance (structural constitution); (2) relationship (personal fellowship); and (3) representation (function). All three of these aspects of the *imago Dei* reveal a full equality without hierarchy between man and woman.

It is important to note that Genesis 1:27 presents the equal pairing of male and female in parallel with "humankind."

First, humans are made in God's "image" in terms of *resemblance* or structural constitution (i.e., in form and character). The Hebrew words *tselem* "image" and *demu* "likeness", although possessing overlapping semantic ranges, in the juxtaposition of v. 26 appear to emphasize the concrete and abstract aspects of the human being, respectively.[10] Ilona Rashkow summarizes the implications of this juxtaposition: "God says that his intention is to make Adam both in 'in our image' (that is, physically similar, whatever that may mean), and in 'in our likeness' (having the same abstract characteristics)."[11] Ellen White is thus on the mark when she writes: "Man was to bear God's image both in outward resemblance and in character" (PP 45). Again, she states: "In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature" (GC 644-5).[12] It is important to note that Genesis 1:27 presents the equal pairing of male *and* female in parallel with "humankind" (*ha'adam*). Both male and female are made in God's image, according to His likeness. While indeed the terms "male" and "female" connote sexual (biological) differences, there is no hint of leadership[13]/submission roles between male and female in this passage. Both are explicitly presented as "equally immediate to the Creator and His act."[14]

Second, humans are created in God's image in terms of *relationship*. It is hardly coincidental that only once in the creation account of Genesis—only in Genesis 1:26—does God speak of the divinity in the plural: "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." There have been many attempts to account for this use of the plural, but the explanation that appears most consonant with both the immediate context and the analogy of Scripture identifies this usage as a "plural of fullness,"[15] also termed a "plural of fellowship or community within the Godhead."[16] This plural "supposes that there is within the divine Being the distinction of personalities" and expresses "an intra-divine deliberation among 'persons' within the divine Being."[17] It is crucial to recognize that in describing the divine interrelationships ("let Us") which form an analogy with human relationships ("male and female"), the narrator gives no indication of a hierarchy in the Godhead, no reference to the asymmetrical submission of one Person (the Son) to the Other (the Father). In describing the interrelationship among the members of the Godhead, the emphasis in this text is upon the deliberation and fellowship of Equals. If there is any submission implied, it is a *mutual submission* of Equals as the members of the Godhead discuss and deliberate together concerning the creation of humankind. The divine "Let Us" implies that One is not commanding, and Another obeying; all are equaling engaged in the deliberation. Such equality without any top-down hierarchy, by analogy, is thus emphasized with regard to the *mutual* submission in human (male-female, husband and wife) relationships, who are made relationally in the image of God.

Third, humans are made in God's image in terms of *representation* or function. "Just as powerful

earthly kings, to indicate their claim to dominion, erect an image of themselves in the provinces of their empire where they do not personally appear, so man is placed upon earth in God's image as God's sovereign emblem. He is really only God's representative, summoned to maintain and enforce God's claim to dominion over the earth."[18] Whereas human rulers were not able to be in every place at one time, and thus felt the need to erect an image representing themselves, the Godhead is omnipresent (Psalm 139, etc.), needing no representative to take their place when they were not present. Yet, in an act of self-denying submission, the Godhead entrusts the responsibility of dominion over the earth to humankind. Thus there is submission in the Godhead, but it is submission of the full Godhead (the "Us") who together entrusted Their prerogative of dominion to humans They had made (Genesis 1:26, 28)—humans whom the Godhead, in Their infinite foreknowledge, knew would rise up in rebellion against Them and eventually cost the death of the Son of God, God being ripped from God at Calvary. The submission of the Godhead is also displayed in Their giving freedom of choice to human beings, thus limiting Their own sovereignty. This is implied in the *imago Dei* of Genesis 1:26–28, and also further indicated in the presence of the tree of life and tree of knowledge and good and evil in the Garden (Genesis 2:9).

According to the biblical text (Genesis 1:28), humans are to be the creative shapers of the new creation, to "fill the earth and *subdue* [*kabash*] it"—not by exploitation, but by "shaping the creation into a higher order of beauty and usefulness."[19] They are also to be "co-managers" of God's creation (Genesis 1:28): they are to "rule" (*radah*) over the animal kingdom, again not by exploitation, but by judiciously representing God's sovereignty in the earth.[20] They are not slaves to do the menial work of the gods, as in the ancient Near Eastern stories,[21] but co-regents, the king and queen of their earthly dominion! Neither is the designation "image of God" reserved for the ruling monarch, as in Egyptian and Mesopotamian sources; all humans are in God's image, His representatives on the earth.[22]

It is again crucial to note that according to Genesis 1:27–28, both the man and woman are equally blessed. Both are to share alike in the responsibility of procreation, to "fill the earth." Both are to subdue the earth. Both are given the same co-managerial dominion over God's non-human creation. As Rebecca Groothuis states it, "both have been commanded equally and without distinction to take dominion, not one over the other, but both together over the rest of God's creation for the glory of the Creator."[23] There is no mention in this passage of any differentiation in the male and female's authority to rule.

B. Male Leadership Role in the Beginning?

Proponents of male leadership as a creation ordinance generally concede what they term an "ontological"[24] equality (i.e., in personal and spiritual value before God) between the genders in Genesis 1, but a functional leadership role for the male is often seen as implied in Genesis 1:26, where God identifies male and female as *'adam* "man." So Raymond Ortlund writes: "God cuts right across the grain of our peculiar sensitivities when He names the human race, both man and woman, 'man.'… God's naming of the race 'man' whispers male headship…."[25] What Ortlund and others who employ this argument fail to recognize is that the word *'adam never* means "man" (in the sense or implication of male gender) in Scripture! The problem is a modern language translation issue, not an aspect of the Hebrew text. The word *'adam* is a generic term

meaning "human person" or "humanity."[26] Aside from Genesis 1–3, where it refers to the first human person, this term is *never* in the whole Hebrew Bible used to designate a "man" in the sense of male (as opposed to female). The use of *'adam* does not whisper male headship as a creation ordinance.

According to Genesis 1, male and female are regarded wholistically, as equal without hierarchy. The full equality of man and woman—in resemblance/constitution, in relationship, and in representation/function—is unhesitatingly proclaimed in the first chapter of the Bible, and is evaluated by God Himself as "very good" (Genesis 1:31)! In short, both man and woman participate equally, and without hierarchy, in the image of God, just as the Godhead in Genesis 1 is functioning in a relationship of equality without hierarchy among the Persons comprising that Godhead.

III. GENESIS 2: GENDER RELATIONSHIPS ACCORDING TO THE DIVINE CREATION ORDER

The one major question which has dominated the scholarly discussion of man-woman relations in Gen 2 concerns the status of the sexes relative to each other that is set forth as a divine creation ordinance. The "traditional" view—held by the vast majority of Christian commentators and theologians before the twentieth century—has held that according to Gen 2 woman was created by nature inferior to man, and thus women as a class or even race are not competent and must be excluded from leadership or from exercising authority in the home, church, or society.[27]

Many recent proponents of male leadership as a creation ordinance now acknowledge that Genesis 1 emphasizes equality on the personal and spiritual level, but at the same time maintain that Genesis 2 emphasizes a male leadership and female submission role on the functional or societal level.[28] Does Genesis 2 affirm a fully egalitarian view of the relationship between the sexes, or does it support a hierarchical ranking in which man is in some way in leadership over the woman at creation?

A. Gender Hierarchy (Male "Headship") as a Creation Ordinance? Evaluation of Arguments

The main arguments from the narrative in Genesis 2 used by Adventist (and other conservative) hierarchicalists to prove a "creation order" of hierarchical gender ranking may be summarized as follows: (1) man is created first and woman last (vv. 7, 22) and the first is head/leader and the last is subordinate; (2) man, not woman, is spoken to by God and does the speaking (vv. 16–17, 23); (3) woman is formed for the sake of man—to be his "helpmate" or assistant to cure man's loneliness (vv. 18–20); (4) woman comes out of man (vv. 21–22) which implies a derivative and subordinate position or role; (5) woman is created from man's rib (vv. 21–22) which indicates her dependence upon him for life; and (6) the man names the woman (v. 23) which indicates his authority or leadership over her. Do these points really substantiate a hierarchical relationship between the sexes? Let us look at each point in turn.

The order of creation. First, because man is created first and then woman, it has been asserted that "by this the priority and superiority of the man, and the dependence of the woman upon the man, are established as an ordinance of divine creation."[29] Adventist (and other conservative) hierarchicalists today generally avoid the word "superiority" for man but argue instead for male leadership from this order of creation. But a careful examination of the literary structure of Genesis 2 reveals that such a conclusion of hierarchy does not follow from the fact of man's prior creation. Hebrew literature often makes use of an *inclusio* device (also called

an "envelope structure" or "ring construction") in which the points of central concern to a unit are placed at the beginning and end of the unit.[30] This is the case in Genesis 2. The entire account is cast in the form of an *inclusio* in which the creation of man at the beginning of the narrative and the creation of woman at the end of the narrative correspond to each other in importance.[31] The narrator underscores their equality of importance by employing precisely the same number of words (in Hebrew) for the description of the creation of the man as for the creation of woman! As Trevor Dennis puts it, "the writer has counted his words and been careful to match the lengths of his descriptions exactly."[32]

As with the first creation account in Genesis 1, the movement in sequence in Genesis 2 is from incompleteness to completeness. In Genesis 2 woman is created as the climax, the culmination of the story, and as Adam's full equal.[33] Mary Corona summarizes the narrative progression:

> *The movement of the story beautifully progresses from the utter loneliness of Adam, through the presence of useful living creatures that only accentuate the loneliness by their incapacity to be his companions, to the ecstasy of delight in discovering the companionship of an equal [Genesis 2:23 cited].*[34]

I have found no evidence in Genesis 1–2 that the law of the primogeniture ("firstborn") is operative at creation. The paper by Carl Cosaert on 1 Timothy 2 also demonstrates that Paul is not referring to the priority of creation (Adam as "firstborn") to substantiate male headship as part of the creation order.[35]

Mention of "firstborn" and "birthright" and related terms in Scripture are only employed to describe conditions after the Fall (e.g., Genesis 4:4; 10:15; 25:31–36). Even after the Fall, the law of the firstborn was not a hard-and-fast rule. In fact, in the case of the patriarchal covenant line in Genesis, it is regularly the second-born (or sometimes an even later-born), not the first-born, who inherits the birthright: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and Ephraim. In the New Testament, Jesus Himself is not the firstborn in His human family (He had older half-brothers through the line of Joseph), and when the term "firstborn" is employed of Jesus, it does not refer to His chronological order of "birth", but to His "pre-eminence" (that is the meaning of the Greek *prōtotokos* in Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15, 18; Revelation 1:5).

This does not deny that (at least) Adam was the one-time "head of the human family" (Ellen White, 6T 236), "the father and representative of the whole human family" (Ellen White, PP 48). Adam's representative headship of the entire human race is based upon the biblical principle of corporate solidarity, the individual(s) representing the many.[36] Adam bears the Hebrew name *'adam*, which is also the name meaning "Humankind" (Genesis 1:26–27; 5:1–2). Only Adam in OT salvation history is given this personal name. The fluid use of the term (*ha*) *'adam* in Genesis 1–5 to refer both to an individual "human" and to "humanity" indicates that Adam the individual is to be viewed in corporate solidarity with the *'adam* which is humanity as a whole. (This is the theological truth recognized by Paul in Romans 5:12–21.)

With reference to Adam as the "head of the entire human race," at first glance it may seem apparent that he exercised this representative role alone. However, the biblical text also makes clear that God named both the first man and the first woman "Adam" (*'adam*, Genesis 5:2). Eve also was given a representative role in solidarity with the entire human race, as "Mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20). The spiritual followers of God are traced through

her "seed" and *not*, as might be expected, through Adam's (Genesis 3:15, contrary to usual reference to a man's "seed" elsewhere in Scripture). So it is very possible that God intended from the start that both Adam and Eve serve as representative heads, mother and father, of the entire human race. Thus both would have joined the "sons of God" in the heavenly council instead of Satan, representing this earth (Job 1–2). As a parallel to this usage, Ellen White states that "Adam was crowned king in Eden, and to him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created" (1SDABC 1082), although it is evident from the biblical text that Eve equally exercised this dominion (Genesis 1:26, 28; cf. PP 50). Likewise, although Ellen White mentions Adam as "head of the human family," she does not thereby necessarily exclude Eve, his "equal partner" and "second self" in that representative role.

Regardless of whether Adam served in this headship alone or along with Eve, what is important to our issue in this paper is that this was a *one-time*, *representative* (*non-hierarchical,* or better, inverse-hierarchical servant) headship, and involved headship of the entire human race, including both men and women. Non-hierarchical (or inverse-hierarchical) representative headship may be illustrated in United States politics, where congressmen in the House of Representatives serve to *represent* their constituency, but by no means are in hierarchical authority over them. This *one-time representative* (not *hierarchical*) headship of the "first Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:54) was not passed on from generation to generation. Intended to be a one-time representative headship, it was usurped by Satan (who became the "prince of this world," John 12:31) and was restored by the "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:54). Hence there is no indication here of female subordination to male headship; rather, what was intended was the entire human race ("humanity," male and female) being represented by the Father (and Mother) of the human race.

Man's priority of speech. A second argument concerns the man's priority in speaking and being spoken to in the narrative. It has been claimed that the man's leadership over his wife before the Fall is revealed in that God addresses the man, and not the woman, and also in that the man does the speaking in the narrative of Genesis 2, not the woman. However, such a claim fails to take into account the movement of the narrative from incompleteness to completeness and climax as has been pointed out above. As part of the process of bringing the man to realize his "hunger for wholeness,"[37] that he is alone and like the other creatures needs a partner, God indeed speaks to him, warning him not to eat of the forbidden tree. As soon as God created a human being such information was crucial for that being to avoid transgression, and in order to be a free moral agent with the power of choice. But the divine impartation of such knowledge to the man before the woman was created does not thereby reveal the leadership of the man over his partner.[38] Likewise, only the man speaking (not the woman) in Gen 2 does not reveal his pre-Fall leadership over the woman any more than only Eve speaking (and not Adam) outside the Garden (Genesis 4) reveals Eve's leadership over Adam after the Fall.

If there had been an intention to emphasize *male* headship in Genesis 2, the narrator would have regularly employed the term *'ish* "man," which indicates the male gender, and not *ha'adam* "the human," a term which never in the Hebrew Bible implies a male (as opposed to female). Throughout this narrative (except for the two verses 23–24 which use the gender-explicit terms *'ish* "man" and *'ishah* "woman" when specifically describing marriage) the term *ha'adam* "the human" (or *'adam* with the preposition *le* in v. 19b) is consistently used, emphasizing the

human's relationship with God and solidarity with all humanity, and not a male headship over the woman.

The purpose of woman's creation. If a hierarchy of the sexes is not implied in the *order* of their creation or *priority* of speech, is such indicated by the *purpose* of woman's creation, as is suggested in a third major argument for the hierarchical interpretation? Genesis 2:18 records the Lord's deliberation: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him *'ezer kenegdo*" (KJV—"a help meet for him"; RSV—"a helper fit for him"; NASB—"a helper suitable to him"). The Hebrew words *'ezer kenegdo* have often been taken to imply the inferiority or subordinate status of woman. For example, John Calvin understood from this phrase that woman was a "kind of appendage" and a "lesser helpmeet" for man.[39] More recently, Clines argues that the Hebrew word*'ezer* refers to someone in a subordinate position.[40] But this is not the meaning conveyed by the Hebrew!

The masculine noun *'ezer* is usually translated as "help" or "helper" in English. However, this is a misleading translation because the English word "helper" tends to suggest one who is an assistant, a subordinate, an inferior, whereas the Hebrew *'ezer* carries no such connotation. In fact, of the nineteen occurrences of *'ezer* in the Hebrew Bible outside of Genesis 2, sixteen employ *'ezer* to describe a *superordinate*—God himself as the "Helper" of Israel.[41] The other three occurrences outside Gen 2 denote military allies.[42] Never does the word refer to a subordinate helper. As elsewhere in the OT, in Genesis 2 the word *'ezer* is a relational term, describing a beneficial relationship, but in itself does not specify position or rank.[43] The specific position intended must be gleaned from the immediate context. In the context of Genesis 2, with God bringing the parade of animals (all apparently with mates) but Adam finding no fitting companion, the "help" intended is clearly "real companionship that can be given only by an equal."[44] This "help" or benefaction is indeed "for the man" (v. 18) in the sense that she "would bring benefit to Adam,"[45] but this does not imply a hierarchy of roles. The benefit brought to the man is that at last he has an egalitarian partner.

Genesis 2:18 and 20, confirm this equality of ranking with the expression which adjoins *'ezer*, namely *kenegdo*. The word *neged* conveys the idea of "in front of," "opposite," or "counterpart," and a literal translation of *kenegdo* is thus "like his counterpart." Used with *'ezer* this prepositional phrase indicates no less than equality without hierarchy: Eve is Adam's "benefactor/helper," one who in position and status is, as recognized by the standard Hebrew lexicon, "*corresponding to* him, i.e., equal and adequate to himself."[46] Eve is "a power equal to man;"[47] she is Adam's "soul-mate,"[48] his equal partner, in nature, relationship, and function. The phrase *'ezer kenegdo* in no way implies a male leadership or female submission as part of the creation order, but instead affirms the full equality of man and woman.

Woman's existence derived from man. As a fourth alleged indication in Genesis 2 of male leadership and female submission, it has been argued that since woman came out of man, since she was formed from man, therefore she has a derivative existence, a dependent and subordinate status. That her existence was in some way "derived" from Adam cannot be denied. But derivation does not imply subordination! The text indicates this in several ways. Note, for example, that Adam also was "derived"—from the ground (v. 7) but certainly one is not to conclude that the ground was his head or leader![49] Furthermore, as the first woman was derived from man, every subsequent man comes from woman, so there is an expression of integration, not subordination, indicated here (see Genesis 3:20).

With regard to the naming the animals, the man is not exercising his authority over them, but classifying them.

Again, woman is *not* Adam's rib. It was the raw material, not woman herself, that was taken out of man, just as the raw material of man was "taken" (Genesis 3:19, 23) out of the ground.[50] Samuel Terrien rightly points out that woman "is not simply molded of clay, as man was, but she is architecturally 'built' (2:33)." The verb *banah* "to build," used in the creation account only with regard to the formation of Eve, "suggests an aesthetic intent and connotes also the idea of reliability and permanence."[51] To clinch the point, the text explicitly indicates that the man was asleep while God created woman. Man had no active part in the creation of woman that might allow him to claim to be her head.[52]

Woman created from man's rib. A fifth argument used to support the hierarchical view of the sexes concerns the woman's creation from Adam's rib. But the very symbolism of the rib points to equality and not hierarchy. The word *tsela'* can mean either "side" or "rib." Since *tsela'* occurs in the plural in v. 21 and God is said to take "one of" them, the reference in this verse is probably to a rib from Adam's side. By "building" Eve from one of Adam's ribs from his side, God appears to be indicating the "mutual relationship,"[53] the "singleness of life"[54] in which man and woman are joined. The rib "means solidarity and equality."[55] Created from Adam's "side [rib]," Eve was formed to stand by his side as an equal. Peter Lombard was not off the mark when he said: "Eve was not taken from the feet of Adam to be his slave, nor from his head to be his ruler, but from his side to be his beloved partner."[56] This interpretation appears to be further confirmed by the man's poetic exclamation when he sees the woman for the first time (v. 23): "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!" The phrase "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" indicates that the person described is as close as one's own body. It denotes physical oneness and "a commonality of concern, loyalty and responsibility."[57] The expression certainly does not lead to the notion of woman's subordination or submission to man, but rather implies full equality without hierarchy, in constitution, relationship, and function. Ellen White well captures the meaning when she writes:

> *Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self, showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it." Ephesians 5:29. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one." (PP 46.)*

Some have taken Ellen White's statement that the Eve was "to be loved and protected by him [Adam]" as indicating male hierarchical headship, but protection here implies greater physical strength, not hierarchy! A government leader's body guards are protectors, but that does not make the leader subordinate to them. The context of Genesis 2 is not one of hierarchy but of symmetrical equality.

Woman named by man. The last major argument used to support a hierarchical view of the sexes in Genesis 2 is that in man's naming of woman

(v. 23) is implied man's authority over her, as his naming the animals implied his authority over the animals.[58] This conclusion is predicated upon the commonly-repeated thesis that assigning names in Scripture signifies authority over the one named, but this widely-held scholarly assumption has been recently effectively challenged, with examples from numerous Scriptural passages.[59] George Ramsey shows from the OT data of naming that "if the act of naming signifies anything about the name-giver, it is the quality of *discernment*" and not the exercise of authority or control. Even if the man did name the woman in Genesis 2:23 (which I argue below is unlikely), "the exclamation in Genesis 2:23 is a cry of discovery, of recognition [cf. Jacob's cry in Genesis 28:16–17, prior to bestowing the name Bethel], rather than a prescription of what this creature built from his rib shall be. An essence which God had already fashioned is recognized by the man and celebrated in the naming."[60] The preceding poetic lines of Adam's speech confirm that exercise of leadership authority is not intended here: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." This clause, as already noted, clearly connotes mutuality and equality, not subordination.[61] The second part of Genesis 2:23 also confirms this interpretation: the arrangement in Hebrew is chiastic (symmetrical parallelism), with the words for "woman" and "man" placed in parallel in the center,[62] "suggesting a corresponding and equal relationship to one another."[63]

With regard to the naming the animals, the man is not exercising his authority over them, but classifying them.[64] This can be seen in the immediate context of man's being "alone" and this being "not good" (v. 18), evidencing that God's bringing of the animals to the man for him to name further implies that the man is entering into a delightful companionship with the animals, only to ultimately discover that such companionship is inadequate to satisfy his quest for complete reciprocity and mutuality.[65]

Furthermore, it appears most probable that Adam does *not* name the woman before the Fall at all. The designation *'ishah* occurs in the narrative *before* Adam ever meets her (Genesis 2:22). She is already called "woman" by the narrator even before the man sees her. Jacques Doukhan has shown that Genesis 2:23 contains a pairing of "divine passives," indicating that the designation of "woman" comes *from God*, not man. Just as in the past, woman "was taken out of man" *by God*, an action with which the man had nothing to do (he had been put into a "deep sleep"), so in the future she "shall be called woman," a designation originating in God and not man. Doukhan also indicates how the literary structure of the Genesis creation story confirms this interpretation.[66]

There is no indication in the text that the word-play in v. 23 between *'ish* (man) and *'ishah* (wo-man), and the explanation of the woman being taken out of man, are given to buttress a hierarchical ranking of the sexes; rather, in context, they are best understood to underscore man's joyous recognition of his second self.[67] In fact, the word *'ish* (man) first appears in this verse; the man becomes aware of his own identity as he discerns the identity of *'ishah* (wo-man). In his ecstatic poetic utterance the man is not determining who the woman is—any more than he is determining who he himself is—but rather delighting in his recognition of what God has done. He is saying yes to God in recognizing his own sexual nature and welcoming woman as the equal counterpart to his sexuality.[68] After the Fall Adam *did* give his wife a name (Eve), but even then it is more probable that he is discerning what she already was by the promise of God, "mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20), and not exercising authority over her.[69]

In short, none of the arguments advanced from Gen 2 to support a hierarchical relationship between the sexes can stand the test of close scrutiny. In light of the foregoing discussion, I concur with a host of other commentators and scholarly studies in their conclusion that Genesis 2, like Genesis 1, contains no statement of dominance, subordination, or leadership/submission in the relationship of the sexes.[70] Rather, these very arguments affirm the opposite of what is claimed by those who oppose ordination of women. The man and woman before the Fall are presented as fully equal in rank, with no hint of a hierarchy of nature or relationship or function, no leadership/submission ranking between husband and wife. Gilbert Bilezikian has summarized well:

> *Conspicuously absent in Genesis 1–2 is any reference to divine prescriptions for man to exercise authority over woman. Due to the importance of its implications, had such an authority structure been part of the creation design, it would have received clear definition along with the two other authority mandates [God's sovereignty over humans, and human's dominion over all the earth]. The total absence of such a commission indicates that it was not a part of God's intent. Only God was in authority over Adam and Eve. Neither of them had the right to usurp divine prerogatives by assuming authority over each other. Any teaching that inserts an authority structure between Adam and Eve in God's creation design is to be firmly rejected since it is not founded on the biblical text.*[71]

This affirmation of the full equality and mutuality of man and woman in the Gen 2 account of creation is all the more striking when seen in contrast with the other ancient Near Eastern creation accounts which contain no separate narration of the creation of woman. The Genesis creation narratives not only give a detailed account of origins, but at the same time appear to serve as a direct polemic against the mythological creation stories of the ancient Near East.[72] By its special, lengthy, separate account of the creation of woman in Genesis 2, the Bible is unique in ancient Near Eastern literature with its high valuation of woman on an equal par with man.

B. Different Roles for Man and Woman in Creation?

Those who oppose women's ordination insist that Genesis 2 (like Genesis 1) depicts different roles for men and women. It is true that the terms "male" and "female" imply biological differences, and an affirmation of the egalitarian relationship of Adam and Eve does not deny their complementarity.[73] They were to have no interests independent of each other, and yet each had an individuality in thinking and acting. They were bone of each other's bone, flesh of each other's flesh, equal in being and rank, and at the same time they were individuals with differences. As Trible points out, "oneness does not level life to sameness; it allows for distinctions without opposition or hierarchy."[74]

Some have called attention to the different modes of creation between the man and women—the man's creation out of the ground, and the woman's creation out of man—and suggest this may be intimately related to unique differences between the sexes. It is proposed that a man tends to have "an immediate relationship to the world of things" while "the woman is primarily directed to the world of persons."[75] However, the divine mandate in Genesis 1–2 for both male and female to join in the work of procreation, subduing, having dominion, and tending the garden (Genesis 1:28; 2:15), reveals that the sexes are not one-dimensional; both genders are directed to the world of things and the world of relationships.

While biological gender differences are acknowledged in Genesis 1–2, other differences between the genders are not described. The emphasis of the stories is on a shared equality of nature and status and responsibility. Since the biblical text in Genesis 1–2 differentiates between the sexes (male and female) but does not specify certain behaviors that belong exclusively to the male, and others that are exclusively the domain of the female, it seems inappropriate to go beyond the biblical evidence to insist that certain gender-specific "roles" such as "male headship" and "female submission" are part of the creation order.

While the text of Genesis 1–2 implies complementarity between the sexes, it presents no stereotypical roles that constitute the "essence" of manhood and womanhood respectively. Both genders without differentiation are made in the image of God; both are given the command to be fruitful and multiply; both are commanded to fill the earth and subdue it; both are commanded to have dominion over all the other creatures (Genesis 1:27–28). They are equal partners corresponding to each other, with full reciprocity and mutuality, and without hierarchy (Genesis 2:18). Any attempt to distill the essence of the "roles" of man and woman respectively from the opening chapters of Genesis is going beyond the revelation of the text.[76] Complementary wholeness without hierarchy is the portrait of man-woman relationships in Genesis 1–2.

In fact, the very use of the term "role" by gender hierarchicalists/subordinationists to describe a permanent subordination of women to men is highly problematic. The French word *role* had its origins in regard to the part that an actor played on the theater stage. In the 1930s the word "role" became a key term in the secular humanistic discipline of functional sociology ("role theory"). It was only in the mid-1970s that the term "role" was combined with a new understanding of creation orders, and introduced into the ordination debate by George Knight III, in his book *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Women and Men.*[77] Knight, and the many who have since followed his lead, attempt to distinguish between gender equality in person and role differentiation in function. Whereas earlier opponents of women's ordination simply assumed that women are inferior to men and thus are subordinate to male headship, the new argumentation since the Knight's book redefines women's subordinate status based upon role differentiation.

Kevin Giles provides an incisive critique of this new kind of argumentation. He points out "Nowhere does the Bible suggest that women and men are simply *acting out* their maleness or femaleness or that apart from procreation there are some tasks given only to men and others only to women.... In our very being we *are* differentiated: we are not merely functionally differentiated."[78] Giles affirms that "The recently popularized usage of terminology and ideas drawn from the theater and humanistic sociology actually contradicts divine revelation.... When conservative evangelicals interpret biblical teaching on women and men in terms of role differentiation, we have to recognize that they are reading into the text something that is not there and that is never mentioned prior to the 1960s. To use their own terminology, they are not being 'biblical.'"[79]

Giles also shows how the use of the term "role" by recent opponents of women's ordination is not only unbiblical, but also logically flawed. The term "role" by its very definition refers to something transient and secondary, not something part of a person's essential nature or being. In the theater the actor plays a "role" but is not essentially and permanently the character whose role he takes in the performance. Again, an officer and a private in the

army have different roles, based upon training and competence to lead. It is possible for the private to become an officer and for the officer to be demoted. The officer's leadership role is "not intrinsically connected with who he is. His role is not an essential feature of his personhood."[80] By contrast, in the modern debate over women's ordination, Giles points out that according to subordinationists, "because a woman is a woman, and for no other reason, she is locked into a *permanent* subordinate role, no matter what her abilities or training might be. Who she is determines what she can do; her sexual identity determines her role. The private can assume higher responsibilities, but a woman can never become a leader in the church and can never assume equal responsibility with her husband in the home, simply because she is a woman." [81]

Perhaps without realizing it, those who use this argument based upon "role differentiation" have actually recast the term "role" in essential terms; roles are not just functions, but are part of the very essence of the person. "Introducing the sociological term *role* in this argument for the *permanent functional* subordination of women does not negate the fact that women because they are women, and for no other reason, are subordinated.... Cleverly worded phraseology cannot avoid this fact. If a woman's role is not essential to her nature or being, then it can change. If it cannot change because it is basic to her nature or being as a woman, then it is not just a role she performs."[82] Paul Petersen states the matter concisely: "from the point of semantics, when anyone speaks about an eternal role, it is no longer a role, but describes the very essence and being.... Per definition a role cannot be permanent or eternal."[83]

If "role" is no longer a temporary, secondary feature of being a woman or man, but involves a permanent subordination of women to men because of their very personhood, then "role" is not the appropriate word to describe this situation. It may be a nice-sounding term, but it is misleading, since, as Giles points out, for gender subordinationists "The issue is not *gender roles* but essential *gender relations*. God has set men over women because they are women. The word *role* only has the effect of obfuscating this fact."[84]

What those who oppose women's ordination call "role differentiation" is actually a permanent, hereditary social division based solely upon gender. The dictionary term which best fits this description is "caste." On the basis of subordinationists' interpretation of Genesis 1–2, viewed through the lens of their assumed understanding of 1 Timothy 2, "half the human race is subordinated to the other half." According to this interpretation, "in creation God instituted an *unchanging social order* that gives men the leading role in the home and excludes women from leading . . . in church."[85] This is nothing less than a caste system in which there is permanent subordination of the female gender to the male gender. Against this and all other caste systems Ellen White's words apply: "No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption" (COL 386). "Caste is hateful to God. He ignores everything of this character" (CC 291).

Evangelical subordinationists often support the permanent subordination of women to men by analogy to the Trinity, in which they argue there is found the subordination of the Son to the Father. Many Adventists have taken over this evangelical analogy between man-woman relationships and the Trinity in their opposition to women's ordination. But what they apparently have failed to recognize is that the analogy only works if one takes the common evangelical position on the Trinity, i.e., that it

involves the *eternal subordination* of the Son. The analogy is then straightforward: just as the Son was *eternally* subordinated to the Father, so women are *permanently* (from creation) subordinated to men in the home and in the church. Ironically, Adventists who use this argument of analogy to the Trinity do not normally accept that the Son was *eternally* subordinate to the Father, but see Him as only *economically* subordinate in the context of solving the sin problem (in the Incarnation),[86] since they realize that the idea of eternal subordination is not biblical and ultimately undermines the doctrine of the Trinity. Nonetheless they seek to retain the analogy, when in actuality the analogy without the *eternal* subordination of the Son undercuts the very argument they are trying to make. Logically, if Christ's subordination to the Father is only temporary (in the context of the sin problem) and is changeable, then by analogy the subordination of women to men is only temporary (in the context of the Fall), and is changeable.

What those who oppose women's ordination call "role differentiation" is actually a permanent, hereditary social division based solely upon gender.

Those who oppose women's ordination often support the hierarchical interpretation of gender relations in Genesis 1–2 by referring to the "order" in heaven in which there is hierarchy even before sin entered the universe: there were the "commanding angels" (Ellen White, GC 646) and others who followed the commands (PP 37). According to this argument, if such hierarchy is appropriate in heaven before sin, why should it not be appropriate in Eden between Adam and Eve before the Fall? In response to this argument, I affirm that Scripture does indeed recognize hierarchy on earth before the Fall: Adam and Eve, as co-equal vicegerents of God, were made "a little lower than God [LXX, angels]" (Psalm 8:5); and they both had dominion over the rest of the animal kingdom, who were "lower orders of being" (PP 45). (However, as I will argue later/below, this was actually an "inverse hierarchy," one of servanthood.) But this hierarchy from angels to humans to the lower orders of animals, did not involve a hierarchy among human beings themselves.

This is not to deny that if humans had not sinned, and the human family had expanded into a developed society, there would no doubt have been representatives chosen for various positions of responsibility, in parallel to the ordered society of the angels. But such "ordering" of society would not have been based upon a "caste" system, in which persons, simply by virtue of their gender, without regard for their aptitude and training, were stratified into different levels of society in which women were subordinated to men.

We do not have much information in inspired sources regarding the "order" among the angels in heaven before the Fall, but the evidence available leads to the conclusion that such heavenly order is based, not upon a permanent and hereditary "caste" system, but rather, angels were chosen for their various duties because of their particular aptitude and skill for the tasks assigned, and those positions of responsibility could change over time. See, for example, the description of the qualities such as wisdom and musical talent that fitted Lucifer for his post of covering cherub and choir leader (Ezekiel 28:12–14; 1SP 28). Moreover, Lucifer was specifically installed in this position and was removed from it when he sinned (Ezekiel 28:14, 16), and his position was replaced by Gabriel who then became "next in rank to the Son of God" (DA 232).

While order among humans, involving certain persons in representative positions of responsibility, would probably have developed eventually had the first pair not experienced the Fall, order did not necessarily involve hierarchy (or inverted hierarchy) in the beginning. Egalitarian marriages today testify to the possibility of an ordered marriage relationship without hierarchical structures (I am experiencing such a relationship!) And such egalitarian gender relationship is that which is described in Genesis 1–2 as part of the creation order. Some argue that "every ship must have a captain" and in parallel therefore the couple in Eden had to have one "in charge." But the first family was not a ship! Even today, many business firms pride themselves in being established and run by senior partners who are fully equal, with no hierarchy between them. (My uncle ran such a successful CPA business in full partnership with another accountant.) According to Genesis 1–2, such was the full partnership of equals without hierarchy in the Garden of Eden before the Fall.

C. Mutual Submission of Husband and Wife from the Beginning

With regard to marriage, the complementarity established by God involves a *mutual* submission involving both husband and wife as the divine ideal both before and after the Fall. This is apparent from Genesis 2:24: "therefore [*'al-ken*], a man leaves [*'azab*] his father and his mother and cleaves [*dabaq*] to his wife, and they become one flesh [*basar ekhad*]."[87] The introductory "therefore" (*'al-ken*) indicates that the relationship of Adam and Eve is upheld as the pattern for all future human sexual relationships, and not just an etiological insertion to explain the common legal custom at the time of Moses. Robert Lawton insightfully points out, as I will expand further below, that it was *not* the normal custom in OT patriarchy for the man to leave his father and mother, but rather for the woman to leave. Therefore, the Hebrew imperfect verb in this context is best taken not as a frequentative imperfect "he [typically] leaves" but as a potential imperfect "he *should* leave." The verse thus expresses "a description of divine intention rather than of habitually observed fact." [88] What is particularly striking in v. 24 is that it is the *man* who is to "leave" (*'azab*). It was a matter of course in the patriarchal society at the time Genesis 2 was penned that the wife left her mother and father. But for the husband to "leave" was revolutionary![89] In effect, the force of this statement is that both are to leave—to cut loose from those ties that would encroach upon the independence and freedom of the relationship.

Likewise, it is the *man* who is called upon to "cleave, cling" (*dabaq*) to his wife. This Hebrew term implies a strong voluntary attachment involving affectionate loyalty, and is often used in the OT to describe Israel's "cleaving/clinging" to the Lord.[90] It was expected in a patriarchal society that the woman would have such attachment to her husband, and hence the force of this statement is that *both* man and woman are to "cleave" or "cling" to each other. Reciprocal "clinging" implies a mutual submission without hierarchy—a self-sacrificing love where the husband identifies himself with his wife so as to provide for her needs, and vice versa (as Paul recognizes in his citation and elaboration of the verse in Ephesians 5:21–31). Finally, in the context of the marriage covenant, the husband and wife are become "one flesh" (*basar ekhad*). This expression, like the "leaving" and "cleaving" in Genesis 2:24, implies a mutual submission. It indicates a oneness and intimacy in the total relationship of the whole person of the husband to the whole person of the wife, a harmony and union with each other in all things.

This mutual submission of husband and wife parallels what we have seen above regarding the

Godhead—a mutual submission of Equals as They deliberated together regarding creation of humankind (Genesis 1:28), and in submission together as They entrusted Their dominion over this earth into the hands of humanity. Mutual submission in the symmetrical (non-hierarchical) relationship of Adam and Eve before the Fall leaves no room for an asymmetrical (hierarchical) "servant leadership" on the part of the man over the woman as a creation ordinance.[91]

D. Man and Woman as Priests in the pre-Fall Eden Sanctuary

Genesis 2 not only portrays Adam and Eve as equal partners in mutual submission in their marriage relationship; the narrative also indicates that both of them served as priests officiating in the pre-Fall sanctuary worship services in the presence of Yahweh. According to Genesis 2:15, the first couple were to "tend" (*'abad*) and "keep" (*shamar*) the garden. These terms literally mean to "serve" and "guard" respectively, and imply more than that Adam and Eve were entrusted with a responsible stewardship of serving and protecting their environment. There is abundant textual evidence that links Genesis 1–2 with the biblical sanctuaries mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, indicating that the pre-Fall garden of Eden is to be regarded as the original sanctuary on earth, a copy of the original heavenly sanctuary, and in parallel with the later Mosaic sanctuary and Israelite temples. The evidence for this conclusion has been documented by scores of biblical scholars.[92] See Table 1 for a few examples of the more than thirty textual parallels that have been recognized.

The suffusion of sanctuary language in Genesis 1–2 leads inescapably to the conclusion that the Garden of Eden is to be regarded as the original sanctuary on this earth. In light of this sanctuary context, the paired use of the two terms *'abad* and *shamar* to describe the work of Adam and Eve in the Eden garden is extremely significant. These two words, when used together elsewhere in the OT in the setting of the sanctuary, function as a technical expression for the service of the priests and Levites in the sanctuary (see Numbers 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:3–7). (A modern parallel to understand how OT "intertextuality" works would be the typing into "Google Search" the three key words "serve" and "guard" and "sanctuary," and being led directly to the work of priests and Levites as the only place where these term intersect.) Thus, the use of this paired terminology in the setting of the Eden Garden sanctuary clearly implies a sacerdotal function for the first couple in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve are portrayed as creative co-participants, spiritual intimates, yes, priests, in the sacred worship service of the Eden sanctuary! This is in harmony with the original (pre-sin) worship function of the heavenly sanctuary ("Eden, the Garden of God," Ezekiel 28:13), where Lucifer, adorned with the same stones as the High Priest in the later earthly sanctuary, apparently served a similar priestly function as worship leader (Ezekiel 28:13–14). And it is also in harmony with the heavenly sanctuary's return to its primary worship function after the windup of the Great Controversy, with the redeemed serving as priests in that Temple (Revelation 5:10; 7:15; 20:6; 21:3).[93]

Note also that the work of the priest in the OT earthly sanctuary after sin involved the functions of leader in the worship service (Numbers 18:7; cf. Numbers 6:23–27), teacher (Deuteronomy 33:10), and judge or decision-maker (Deuteronomy 19:16), fully appropriate to a pre-Fall context. The OT priest was also an offerer of sacrifices (Leviticus 1–7). Before sin, there were of course no bloody sacrifices or intercession because of sin, but offering "sacrifices of praise" (Hebrews 13:15), along

TABLE 1: INTERTEXTUAL PARALLELS BETWEEN EARTHLY EDEN AND OTHER BIBLICAL SANCTUARIES

Intertextual Parallels	The Earthly Garden of Eden Sanctuary	Other Biblical Sanctuaries
"Eden."	"Garden of Eden" (Gen 2:8, 10, 15),	"Eden, the Garden of God," identified with the heavenly sanctuary (Ezek. 28:13)
Orientation	Eastward (Gen 2:8)	Eastward (Exod 27:13–16; 36:20-30; 38:13–18; 1 Kgs 7:21; Ezek 47:1).
Divine "planting."	"Planting" (*nata'*) of the garden (Gen 2:8)	"Planting" (*nata'*) at the place of His sanctuary (Exod 15:17; cf. 1 Chr 17:9)
"In the midst."	Tree of life "in the midst" (*betok*) of the garden (Gen 2:9)	The living presence of God "in the midst" (*betok*) of His people in the sanctuary (Exod 25:8)
God "walking around." (only two times in Scripture)	God "walking around" (*Hithpael of halak*) in the garden (Gen 3:8)	God "walking around" (*Hithpael of halak*) in the midst of the camp of Israel (Deut 23:14 [Heb. 15]).
Flowing river.	River flowing from the central location in the Garden (Gen 2:10)	River flowing from the sanctuary shown to Ezekiel (Ezek 47:1-12) and from the throne of God as shown to John (Rev 22:1).
Precious metals	Bdellium, and onyx, and gold (Gen 2:12)	Bdellium (Num 11:7), onyx (Exod 25:7, 28:9, 20; 35:9, 27; 39:6, 13); and gold throughout (Exod 25:9, etc.).
Three spheres of ascending holiness.	The earth, the garden, and the midst of the garden.	The court, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place
Series of verbal parallels.	"Saw [*ra'ah*] . . . made [*'asah*] . . . finished [*kalah*]. . . blessed [qadash]" (Gen 1:31; 2:1; 2:2; 2:3)	"Saw [*ra'ah*]. . . made [*'asah*] . . . finished [*kalah*] . . . blessed [qadash]" (Exod 39:43; 39:32; 40:33; 39:43)
Six + Sabbath.	Creation in six days (each introduced by the clause "And God said"), followed by the seventh day Sabbath (Gen 1:3—2:3)	Instructions for construction of the tabernacle (Exod 25-31) in divided into six sections (introduced by the phrase "The Lord said to Moses"), followed by the seventh section dealing with the Sabbath.
Portrayals of the natural world.	Plants and animals of creation week.	Lilies and other flowers, palm trees, oxen, lions of the Solomonic temple (1 Kgs 6:29, 32, 35; 7:26, 29, 36), artistic portrayals representative of the return to the lost Garden, the earth's original sanctuary.
"Light" of the menorah.	The term for "light" (*Heb ma'or*, "lamp") used to describe the sun and moon in Gen 1:14-16; they are "lamps" of the Eden sanctuary.	This term is found elsewhere in the Pentateuch only for the light of the menorah in the Holy Place of the sanctuary (Exod 25:6; 35:14; 39:27, etc.).

with other functions of a priest, was certainly appropriate. Furthermore, even the role of priest as mediator was appropriate in a context before sin. A mediator's function is not just in connection with solving the sin problem. A mediator is a "go-between." According to John 1:1–3, "in the beginning" at creation Christ was the "Word." A word is that which "goes-between" someone's mouth and another person's ear so that there can be communication between the two parties. In a separate study of Proverbs 8:22–31 and other OT passages, I have shown that from the beginning of creation Christ served as the "Angel [Messenger] of the Lord," the "Go-between" or Mediator between an infinite God and finite creatures.[94] Ellen White may be referring to this larger role of Christ's mediation when she writes: "Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds is also preserved by His mediatorial work." (MYP 254). Adam and Eve likewise were mediators, "go-betweens," representing God to the creatures over which they had dominion. Ellen White writes: "He [Adam] was placed, as God's representative, over the lower orders of being. They cannot understand or acknowledge the sovereignty of God, yet they were made capable of loving and serving man." (PP 45.)

From the very beginning, before the Fall, woman, as well as man, is welcomed into the priestly

function in the Eden sanctuary, to be a leader in worship and to serve in other priestly functions alongside her male counterpart.

E. The Nature of Human Dominion/Authority: Inverted Hierarchy

It is not enough to recognize that Adam and Eve functioned as priests in the Eden Sanctuary before the Fall. We must also inquire as to the nature and status of their priestly work. Did this pre-Fall priesthood give them authoritative leadership status? In order to answer this question, we must revisit the dominion of humans over the earth assigned to them in Genesis 1:26. Reading this passage from the standpoint of our modern concepts of authority in the context of fallen humanity, we might be tempted to see this "dominion" or rulership as one of hierarchical power/authority on the part of humans to subject the rest of creation according to their will and wishes. However, the dominion given in Genesis 1:26 is further defined in Genesis 2:15, where God challenges our post-Fall concepts of rulership hierarchy. God puts the human in the Garden to *'abad* and to *shamar* the Garden. These words literally mean "to serve" and "to guard." Although the term *'abad* in other creation passages (Genesis 2:5 and 3:23) has the primary meaning of "to till/work [the soil]" (with the addition of the word "ground"), in 2:15 (without the use of "ground") it is probable that the connotation of "serving" is especially present. As Victor Hamilton writes: "The word we have translated as *dress* is '*abad*, the normal Hebrew verb meaning 'to serve.' So again the note is sounded that man is placed in the garden as servant. He is there not to be served but to serve."[95] To state it differently, "Man is to function as the servant leader in the inverse hierarchy."[96]

The inverted hierarchy of humans in their servant leadership over the earth also applies—with even greater force—to the kind of spiritual leadership envisaged for Adam and Eve in their role as priests in the Eden sanctuary. The Eden priesthood is a role of *'abad*—servanthood! Adam and Eve were not to exercise the hierarchical authority of "chain of command," but to display an inverted hierarchy of servanthood. Such a model of servant leadership —involving both man and woman—is the model set forth from the beginning as God's ideal in the setting of public worship. As we have pointed out above, this servant pattern of submission is already modeled by the Godhead in the creation.

IV. GENESIS 3: MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIPS AFTER THE FALL

When God comes to the Garden after Adam and Eve sinned, he initiates an encounter that constitutes nothing less than a "legal process," an investigative trial judgment conducted by God."[97] God begins the legal proceedings with an interrogation of the "defendants," and the defensive and accusatory responses by Adam and Eve (vv. 9–14) indicate the rupture in inter-human (husband-wife) and divine-human relationships that has occurred as a result of sin. Following the legal interrogation and establishment of guilt, God pronounces the sentence in the form of curses (over the serpent and the ground, vv. 14, 17) and judgments (for the man and the woman, vv. 16–19).

The judgment pronounced upon the woman is of particular concern in this paper (v. 16):

(a) I will greatly multiply your pain [*itsabon*, hard labor] in childbearing;
(b) in pain [*itsabon*, hard labor] you shall bring forth your children;
(c) yet your desire [*teshuqah*] shall be for your husband,
(d) and he shall rule [*mashal*]over you.

The meaning of the last two enigmatic lines (v. 16*c* and *d*) of the divine sentence is crucial for a proper understanding of the nature of God's provision for man-woman relationships after the Fall.

A. Genesis 3:16: Divine Judgment and the Relationship between Adam and Eve: Major Views

Six major views have been advanced for the interpretation of this passage. The first, and perhaps the most common, position maintains that the submission[98] of woman to man is a creation ordinance, God's ideal from the beginning (Genesis 1–2). This position holds that part of the Fall consisted in the violation of this ordinance, with Eve seeking to get out from under Adam's leadership and Adam failing to restrain her (Genesis 3). As a result of sin, Genesis 3:16 is a predictive *description* of the continued distortion of God's original design with the man's exploitive subjugation of woman and/or woman's desire to control the man (or her "diseased" desire to submit to his exploitations).[99]

The second major interpretation also understands the hierarchical gender relationship (submission of woman to the leadership of man) as a creation ordinance (Genesis 1–2), and agrees that at the Fall this creation ordinance was violated (Genesis 3). But according to this second view, Genesis 3:16 is as a divine *prescription* that the man must "rule"—i.e., exercise his "godly headship"—to restrain the woman's desire, i.e., her urge get out from under his leadership and control/manipulate him.[100]

The third major interpretation also views the hierarchical relationship between the sexes as a creation ordinance, and agrees that at the Fall this ordinance was somehow violated. But this third view sees in Genesis 3:16 not a distortion but a *divine reaffirmation* of the submission of woman to the leadership of man, provided as a blessing and comfort to the woman in her difficulties as a mother.[101]

The fourth major view contends that the subordination or subjection of woman to man did not exist before the Fall; the mention of such a subordination/subjection in Genesis 3:16 is only a *description of the evil consequences of sin*—the usurpation of authority by the man and/or the woman's desire to rule or be ruled. These evil consequences are not a prescription of God's will for man-woman relationships after sin, and are to be removed by the Gospel.[102]

The fifth major position concurs with the fourth view that God's original design was for an egalitarian relationship between the sexes (Genesis 1–2), and the Fall brought a rupture in their relationships. But in the fifth view, Genesis 3:16 is to be understood as *prescriptive* and not just descriptive: this verse presents the husband's leadership and the wife's (voluntary) submission as God's normative pattern for the marriage relationship after the Fall.[103]

The final (sixth) view agrees with views four and five that God's original plan was an egalitarian gender relationship. It also agrees with the view three that Genesis 3:16c–d is a blessing and not a curse, but differs in denying that subordination/subjection of woman to man is a creation ordinance. This position argues, by various means of translation and interpretation, that even in Genesis 3 no gender hierarchy (leadership/submission) is either prescribed or described.[104]

The various major interpretations of Genesis 3:16 in its larger context are summarized in Table 2.

B. The Meaning of Gen 3:16: Evaluation of Views and Evidence in the Text

In assessing the true intent of Gen 3:16, I must immediately call into question the first three interpretations which proceed from the assumption that a gender hierarchy existed before the Fall (views one, two and three). My analysis of Genesis 1–2

TABLE 2: MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BEGINNING (GENESIS 1–3)—MAJOR VIEWS

Creation (Genesis 1–2)	Fall (Genesis 3)	Divine Pronouncement Concerning Eve (Genesis 3:16)
1. Hierarchical (Submission of woman to male leadership)	Violation of male-female hierarchy and/or ruptured relationships	Description of the perversion of hierarchical relationships (woman seeks to control man and/or man exploitively subjugates woman)
2. Hierarchical (Submission of woman to male leadership)	Violation of male-female hierarchy and/or ruptured relationships	Prediction that woman would desire to get out from under man's authority, and prescription that man must exercise his "godly headship" to restrain her urge to control him.
3. Hierarchical (Submission of woman to male leadership)	Violation of male-female hierarchy and/or ruptured relationships	Reaffirmation of original hierarchical roles as a continued divine blessing, or a statement of continued subjugation of woman by man
4. Egalitarian (Full equality with no submission of woman to male leadership)	Ruptured relationship between the sexes	Predictive description of the consequences of sin—man usurps authority over the woman—which "curse" is to be removed by the Gospel with return to egalitarianism
5. Egalitarian (Full equality with no submission of woman to male leadership)	Ruptured relationship between the sexes	Permanent prescription of divine will in order to preserve harmony in the home after sin: wife's submission to her husband's leadership
6. Egalitarian (Full equality with no submission of woman to male leadership)	Egalitarian relationship continues	Blessing of equality (no hierarchy of leadership/submission) in the midst of a sinful world and its challenges

has led to the conclusion that no such submission of woman to man's leadership was present in the beginning.

Nor is there any indication of male leadership over the woman, and female submission to the man in the account of the Temptation and Fall (Genesis 3:1–7). The temptation of the woman by the serpent is presented in vv. 1–6. In this passage the woman's response to the serpent reveals her to be intelligent, perceptive, informed, and articulate, contrary to frequent assertions in the past that she was feeble-minded, weak, and naive.[105] Furthermore, the temptation to which both Adam and Eve yielded was the temptation to become like God—to exercise moral autonomy in acting against the express command of God. God specifically states what the sin of both of them was— not the violation of a man/woman leadership/submission principle, but eating from the tree from which he commanded them not to eat (3:11). As Hess aptly puts it, "The challenge of the snake is not directed against the man's authority. It is against God's authority."[106] While the passage may well allow for the interpretation that Eve wandered from Adam's immediate presence, lingered at the forbidden tree, and later offered the fruit to her husband,[107] there is no warrant in this text for maintaining that their sin consisted of the woman getting out from under the authoritative leadership of her husband, or of her husband failing to exercise his "godly headship" to restrain her. Marrs rightly concludes: "the woman's sin in 3:1–7 has nothing to do with usurping the man's authority; rather, it involves exalting herself above the Creator to determine for herself right and wrong."

Marrs also correctly points out that God's statement to the man in 3:17 ("Because you have listened to the voice of your wife") does not imply that the man had failed to control his wife or had abdicated his leadership role. Rather, it is simply "an acknowledgment of the man's decision to follow his wife's direction rather than God's command."[108] The sin of Adam was not in "listening to" or "obeying" his wife *per se*, but in "obeying" his wife *rather than* or *in opposition to* God's explicit command not to eat of

the fruit. Of course, this is not to deny that there is "strength in numbers" in withstanding temptation, and Eve made herself more vulnerable to the serpent's attack by separating from her husband. But such fortification against temptation by partners standing together is just as applicable in a totally egalitarian relationship (which I see here before the Fall) as in a hierarchical one (which I do not find in the narrative before Genesis 3:16).

Many Adventist opponents of women's ordination have used the following quotation from Ellen White to attempt to prove that Eve's sin consisted in seeking to get out from under the authority of her husband. In the context of interpreting Genesis 3, Ellen White writes:

> *Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband's side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God's plan. In their efforts to reach positions for which He has not fitted them, many are leaving vacant the place where they might be a blessing. In their desire for a higher sphere, many have sacrificed true womanly dignity and nobility of character, and have left undone the very work that Heaven appointed them. (PP 59).*

A careful examination of the immediate context of this passage makes clear that the "higher sphere" which Eve hoped to enter was to be *like God*, not to get out from under her husband's headship. The sphere which God had assigned her was to be an equal partner "by her husband's side," not to be in submission to her husband's male headship: this is made clear in the previous paragraph (PP 58): "In the creation God had made her the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—they would ever have been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other." The asymmetrical submission of one to the other came only after the Fall! Likewise, Ellen White's reference to "restless modern Eves" is not describing their attempts to usurp male headship in the home or church, but rather describes any attempt on their part to "reach positions for which He has not fitted them." This principle applies equally to men as to women, as one aspires to a position that he/she does not have the necessary preparation for filling, or abandons other work God has given him/her to do in attempts to advance in career or status.

Neither does the argument have persuasive power that after the Fall God approached and addressed the man first because the man was in a position of leadership over his wife.[109] God questions the man first for a number of reasons that are apparent in the text: (1) A primary reason no doubt is that the man was created first and the first one to have received the command not to eat from the fruit of the forbidden tree (2:17), and since he had been the one directly and personally warned, it was natural for him to be the one God would approach first. But such choice in no way implies pre-Fall male leadership over his wife. This is clear because, (2) the man clearly is not approached by God on behalf of his wife, but solely on his own behalf, since the personal pronoun of God's question in v. 9 is singular, not plural: "Where are you [singular]?" (3) In the dialogue between God and the man, the man does not function as the woman's overseer; in answer to God's questioning he explains only his

own behavior, not that of the woman, and instead of being her spokesperson, he is her accuser. (4) The woman is summoned to give her own testimony concerning her behavior, and answers directly on behalf of herself. (5) The interrogation of vv. 9–13 proceeds in chiastic (reverse) order from that in which the characters in the narrative are introduced in vv. 1–8, with God in the center of the structure (this is in harmony with an overarching chiastic structure of the entire chapter,[110] and with another reversal of order in vv. 14–19). (6) In this legal trial investigation, God must examine the witnesses one by one to demonstrate their individual guilt; the man blames the woman, who then naturally in turn is put on the witness stand for divine interrogation. (7) The answers of both man and woman, with their blame of others (the woman and the snake respectively), reveals that "sin's breakdown of the creation order was not an abdication of divinely instituted hierarchy but the loss of loving harmony between the man and the woman."[111] Paul Borgman states it well, "That no sort of one-way submission could be part of the Ideal Marriage is underscored by what is lost."[112] I conclude that those espousing views 1–3 who argue for implications of hierarchy from Genesis 3:1–13 are reading into the text what does not exist in the chapter, just as they have done for Genesis 1–2.

I also find that view four (that Genesis 3:16 is only descriptive, and not in any way intended by God) is unsatisfactory, despite its popularity, because it fails to take seriously the judgment/punishment context of the passage, and the nature of this judgment/punishment as indicated by the text. As I have already noted, Genesis 3:16 comes in a legal trial setting, a "legal process," a "trial punishment by God,"[113] and v. 16 is thus not just a predictive description but a divine sentence involving a new element introduced by God.

Thus the basic thrust of view five seems correct, even though for reasons described below, I avoid using the term "prescriptive." The divine origin of the judgment upon Eve is underscored by the Hebrew grammar of God's first words in the legal sentencing (Genesis 3:16): "I will greatly multiply [*harbâ 'arbeh*, literally, 'multiplying I will multiply,'] …" The use of the first person singular "I" refers to the Lord Himself who is pronouncing the judgment, while the Hebrew infinitive absolute followed by the finite verb implies "the absolute certainty of the action."[114] God is not merely *informing* the woman of her fate; he is actually pronouncing the juridical sentence introducing the state of affairs announced in Genesis 3:16. In the context of the other judgments/punishments of Genesis 3, and the use of the generic name for "man" and "woman," it is clear that the biblical writer intended to indicate that this judgment was not just applicable to the first man and woman, but was to extend beyond to the human race outside the Garden.[115]

It also seems clear that according to Genesis 3:16*c–d* a *change* is instituted in the gender relationships after the Fall. God is not simply re-iterating or reaffirming a relationship that had already existed in the beginning. The intent of v. 16*a* is unmistakable: "I will greatly multiply your *'itsabon* [pain, anguish, (hard) labor]." There was no pain/anguish/hard labor prior to sin. This is announcing a change in conditions, and sets the tone for the parallel changes prescribed in the remainder of the verse.[116] This conclusion is confirmed by the judgments/curses upon the serpent and the man—both announcing radical changes from the previous Edenic conditions.

Some suggest that the changes inherent in the judgments after the Fall are only quantitative, and not qualitative, and actually parallel pre-existing conditions before the Fall. According to this

argument, (1) woman already had the capacity to give birth before the Fall; this is only now rendered painful; (2) the man already labored in agriculture; it now becomes hard labor; and (3) in the same way, male headship was already in place before the Fall, but now only is especially emphasized. But such argument fails to take into account the actual parallels/contrasts, and totally overlooks the fourth ultimate judgment—of death as a result of sin. The true contrasts move from complete absence of conditions before the Fall to their presence after the Fall: (1 and 2) from no pain or hard labor (of both man and woman) to pain and hard labor; (3) from no hierarchy (no male headship) to hierarchy in man-woman relationships; and (4) from no death to the inevitability of death.

The changes in Genesis 3:16*c*–*d* definitely involve the subjection/submission of the wife to the husband. The force of the last line (v. 16*d*) is unavoidable: "he [your husband][117] shall rule over you." The verb *mashal* in this form in v. 16*d* definitely means "to rule" (and not "to be like" or "to be irresistible" as some have suggested) and definitely implies submission/subjection.[118] At the same time, the verb *mashal* "rule" employed in Genesis 3:16 is not the same verb used to describe humankind's rulership over the animals in Genesis 1:26, 28. In the latter passages, the verb is *radah* "to tread down, have dominion over," not *mashal*. In the Genesis accounts a careful distinction is maintained between humankind's dominion over the animals and the husband's "rule" over his wife. Furthermore, although the verb *mashal* does consistently indicate submission, subjection, or dominion in Scripture, "the idea of tyrannous exercise of power does not lie in the verb."[119] In fact, there is a number of passages where *mashal* is used with the connotation of servant-leadership, to "comfort, protect, care for, love."[120] In later usages of *mashal* in Scriptural narratives (e.g., the time of Gideon), the people of Israel are eager to have someone to "rule" (*mashal*) over them (Judges 8:22), and the term *mashal* describes the rulership of Yahweh and the future Messiah.[121] Thus *mashal* is predominantly a concept of blessing, not curse.

The semantic range of the verb *mashal* thus makes it possible to understand the divine sentence in v. 16 as involving not only punishment but promised blessing, just as the sentence pronounced upon the serpent and man included an implied blessing in the curse/judgment.[122] As Cassuto puts it, "The decrees pronounced by the Lord God mentioned here are not exclusively *punishments*; they are also, and chiefly, *measures taken for the good of the human species* in its new situation."[123] This also fits the pattern of Genesis 1–11 as a whole where each sequence involving divine judgment was also mitigated by grace.[124]

That the element of grace/blessing is especially emphasized in this verse appears to be confirmed by recognizing the same synonymous parallelism between v. 16*c* and v. 16*d* as occurs between v. 16*a* and v. 16*b*.[125] The divine sentence upon Eve concerning her husband's servant-leadership is shown to be a blessing by its placement in synonymous parallelism with Eve's "desire" for her husband. The meaning of the Hebrew word *teshuqah* is "strong desire, yearning,"[126] and not, has been suggested, "attractive, desirable"[127] nor "turning [away]."[128] This term appears only three times in Scripture, and its precise connotation in Genesis 3:16 is illuminated by its only other occurrence in a context of man-woman relationship, i.e., Song of Solomon 7:11 (English v. 10). In this verse, the Shulamite bride joyfully exclaims, "I am my beloved's, and his *desire* [*teshuqah*] is for me." As will be argued below, this passage is in all probability written as an intertextual commentary on Genesis 3:16. Along the lines of this usage of *teshuqah* in the Song of Songs to

indicate a wholesome sexual desire, a desire for intimacy, the term appears to be employed in Genesis 3:16*c* to indicate a blessing accompanying the divine judgment.[129] A divinely-ordained, intimate (sexual) yearning of wife for husband will serve as a blessing to sustain the union that has been threatened in the ruptured relations resulting from sin.[130] As Belleville puts it, "The wife's desire is as God intended—a desire to become 'one flesh' with her husband (Genesis 2:24)."

The husband's servant-leadership in the home, even though it grows out of the results of sin, may be regarded as a divine blessing in preserving the harmony and union of the relationship.

Thus, an essential feature of the sixth view of Genesis 3:16 (the aspect of divine blessing) also seem to be valid. If Genesis 3:16*d* is seen to be in synonymous parallelism with v. 16*c* (as v. 16*a* is with v. 16*b*), then the emphasis upon promised blessing as well as judgment should also apply to man's relationship with his wife. The husband's servant-leadership in the home, even though it grows out of the results of sin, may be regarded as a divine blessing in preserving the harmony and union of the relationship. As is implied in the semantic range of *mashal*, this is to be a servant-leadership of protection, care, and love. In the modern idiom, the husband is to lovingly "take care of" his wife.

Genesis 3:16*c* and *d* together also seem to be a combined blessing that relates to the first part of the verse (v. 16*a* and *b*). The conjunction *waw* linking the first two lines of this verse with the last two lines should probably be translated as "yet," as in some of the modern versions.[131] God pronounces that even though the woman would have difficult "labor" in childbearing—an ordeal that would seem naturally to discourage her from continuing to have relations with her husband—"yet," God assures her, "your desire shall be for your husband," and his loving servant-leadership will take care of you even through the roughest times. He will be your "strong umbrella" of protection and care.[132] The ruptured relationship between husband and wife, indicated in the spirit of blaming by both man and woman immediately after the Fall (Genesis 3:12, 13), is to be replaced by reconciliation and mutual love, with the wife resting in her husband's protective care.

At the same time, the synonymous parallelism between v. 16*ab* and v. 16*cd*, as well as the parallelism with vv. 17–19, also reveal that it is not inappropriate for humankind to seek to roll back the curses/judgments and get back as much as possible to God's original plan. Few would question the appropriateness of taking advantage of advances in obstetrics to relieve unnecessary pain and hard labor during delivery, or of accepting agricultural and technological advances to relieve unnecessary hard labor in farming, or by scientific and medical advances to delay the process of death. In the same way, it is not inappropriate to return as much as is possible to God's original plan for total egalitarianism ("one flesh," Genesis 2:24) in marriage, while at the same time retaining the validity of the husband servant-leadership principle as it is necessary in a sinful world to preserve harmony in the home. Thus it is appropriate, indeed important, to speak of a divine remedial[133] or redemptive[134] provision, rather than "prescription" (which may to some imply a permanent divine ideal) in these verses. As husbands and wives learn more and more to live in harmony through the infusion of divine grace, there is less and less need to resort to the voluntary submission

of the wife to the husband in order to maintain harmony and unity in the home, and a gradual return to egalitarian relationship as before the Fall. As will become apparent later in this study, such movement back toward the egalitarian marriage of pre-Fall Eden is the canonical thrust of the Old Testament.

Thus I suggest a seventh interpretation of Genesis 3:16, that combines elements of views five and six above. Like view five, there is a *qualified divine sentence announcing the voluntary submission of the wife to her husband's servant-leadership*[135] *as a result of sin.* This involves, however, not so much a judgment as a *promised blessing* (as suggested in view six) *of divine grace designed to have a remedial/redemptive function leading back as much as possible to the original plan of harmony and union between equal partners without hierarchy*.

Three final points may be underscored with regard to the practical application of this passage today. First, as already alluded to above, although in Gen 3 the husband is assigned the role of "first among equals"[136] to preserve harmony and union in the marriage partnership, yet this does not contradict the original divine ideal of Genesis 1:26–28, that both man and woman are equally called to accountable dominion, sociability and fruitfulness. Nor does it nullify the summary statement of Genesis 2:24 regarding the nature of the relationship between husband and wife. Genesis 2:24 is clearly written in such a way as to indicate its basis in the pre-Fall ideal ("For this reason," i.e., what has been described before) and its applicability to the post-Fall conditions. God's ideal for the nature of sexual relationship after the Fall is still the same as it was for Adam and his equal partner [*'ezer kenegdo*] in the beginning—to "become one flesh" in non-hierarchical (symmetrical) mutual submission. The divine judgment/blessing in Genesis 3:16 is to facilitate the achievement of the original divine design within the context of a sinful world.[137] The context of Genesis 3:16 reveals that it is entirely appropriate for marriage partners to seek to return as much as possible to non-hierarchical egalitarianism in the marriage relationship.

Second, the functional behaviors attached to Adam and Eve in the divine judgments of Genesis 3 correspond to what will be their respective primary concerns in a sinful environment, but do not lock husband and wife into pre-determined, or mutually-exclusive, roles. Even as the divine judgments in Gen 3 were given separately to Adam and Eve, and dealt with the aspect of life with which they would have primary concerns, at the same time the judgments of both overlapped with and included each other. Their concerns were not to be mutually exclusive. The divine judgments state what will be true with regard to Eve's primary concern (childbearing), and what will be true with regard to Adam's primary concern (food production), but the judgment nowhere limits or pre-determines that these concerns must remain exclusively (or even primarily) the woman's and the man's respectively. The context of Genesis 3:16 reveals the appropriateness of husbands and wives seeking to return as much as possible to pre-Fall egalitarianism, including equally-shared functions of dominion (work) and fruitfulness (procreation) as described in Genesis 1:26–28.[138]

Third, the relationship of subjection/submission between Adam and Eve prescribed in v. 16 is not presented as applicable to man-woman role relationships in general. The context of Genesis 3:16 is specifically that of marriage: a *wife's* desire (*teshuqah*) for her own husband and the *husband's* "rule" (*mashal*) over his own wife. This text describes a *marriage* setting, not a general family or societal or worship setting, and thus the submission of wife to husband prescribed here cannot be broadened into a general mandate subordinating women to

men (whether in society or in the church). The *mashal-teshuqah* remedial provisions of Genesis 3:16 are specifically linked to the woman's relationship to her own husband, and to the husband's relationship to his own wife. Because of the poetic parallelism in Genesis 3:16 between the husband's "rule" and the wife's "desire," if one attempts to broaden the husband's *mashal* role prescribed in this passage (v. 16*d*) so as to refer to men's "rule" of women in general (both home and the wider society), then to be faithful to the poetic parallelism it would be necessary to broaden the *teshuqah* of the wife (v. 16*c*) for her husband to include the (sexual) desire of women for men in general, not just their own husband! The latter broadening is obviously not the intent of the passage, and therefore the former cannot be either. Thus, any suggestion of extending the specific marriage-specific provision of Genesis 3:16 beyond the husband-wife relationship to become a divinely-prescribed mandate for the leadership of men over women in general is not warranted by the text. As will be shown in the remainder of this paper, the rest of the Old Testament is consistent with this position, upholding the remedial/redemptive *mashal-teshuqah* divine provision for husband and wife as beneficial to preserve the marriage relationship (and ultimately return it to the egalitarian ideal), but not extending *mashal-teshuqah* relationship beyond the marital relationship, and not barring women from roles of servant leadership within the covenant community at large.

I find it encouraging to note that Ellen White adopts the basic interpretation I have summarized above:

> *And the Lord said, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." In the creation God had made her the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—they would ever have been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other. Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband. Had the principles joined in the law of God been cherished by the fallen race, this sentence, though growing out of the results of sin, would have proved a blessing to them; but man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter and made her life a burden. (PP 58–69.)*
>
> *When God created Eve, He designed that she should possess neither inferiority nor superiority to the man, but that in all things she should be his equal. The holy pair were to have no interest independent of each other; and yet each had an individuality in thinking and acting. But after Eve's sin, as she was first in the transgression, the Lord told her that Adam should rule over her. She was to be in subjection to her husband, and this was a part of the curse. In many cases the curse has made the lot of woman very grievous and her life a burden. The superiority which God has given man he has abused in many respects by exercising arbitrary power. Infinite wisdom devised the plan of redemption, which places the race on a second probation by giving them another trial.* (3T 484.)

Ellen White emphasizes the same points as emerge from the biblical text: (1) Before the Fall Adam and Eve were equal "in all things," without hierarchical role distinctions. (2) The hierarchical

Ellen White says nothing about "male headship" before the Fall; in fact she denies this by pointing to Eve as "in all things" the equal of Adam.

relationship with asymmetrical "submission on the part of one" came only *after the Fall.* (Note that this is in direct contradiction to the traditional interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12, which sees Genesis 3:16 as merely reaffirming the hierarchical headship of Genesis 1–2.) (3) The hierarchical relationship was a remedial provision, given by God to Adam and Eve so that "their union could be maintained and their harmony preserved." (4) This remedial arrangement was limited to the marriage relation: Eve "was placed in subjection *to her husband.*" Ellen White never broadens this to men-women relations in general in the church. (5) The subjection of the wife to her husband "was part of the curse;" and the "plan of redemption" gave the race an opportunity to reverse the curse and return to the original plan for marriage whenever possible.

Ellen White also gives us clear indication as to the reasons why it was Eve who was placed in subjection to her husband, and not the other way around. She says nothing about "male headship" before the Fall; in fact she denies this by pointing to Eve as "in all things" the equal of Adam. Rather, she gives three reasons for Eve's submission to Adam and not vice versa: (1) "Eve had been the first in transgression;" (2) "she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction;" and (3) "it was by her solicitation that Adam sinned." Based upon these three criteria, it would seem reasonable to assume that if *Adam* had been first in transgression, if *he* had fallen into temptation by separating from his companion, and if it was by *his* solicitation that Eve sinned, then, Adam would have been placed in subjection to his wife, and not the other way around.

These conclusions regarding gender relations in Genesis 1–3 have significant implications for the current Adventist and wider Christian debate over the role of women in the home and in the church. Major concerns of both "egalitarians" and "hierarchicalists" in the modern debate are upheld, and at the same time both groups are challenged to take another look at the biblical evidence. With the "egalitarians" (and against "hierarchicalists") it can be affirmed that Genesis 1–2 presents God's divine ideal for men and women at creation to be one of equality both in nature and function, with no leadership of the male and no submission of the female to that male leadership. With "hierarchicalists" (and against "egalitarians") it can be affirmed that God's provision for harmony and unity *after the Fall* does include the wife's submission to the servant-leadership of her husband. Against the "hierarchical" position, however, the evidence in Genesis 3:16 already points to the implication that the male servant-leadership principle is limited to the relationship between husband and wife. Also against the "hierarchical" position, the evidence of this text points toward a provision which is *qualified by grace*, a temporary, remedial/redemptive provision representing God's less-than-the-original-ideal for husbands and wives. This implicitly involves a divine redemptive call and enabling power to return as much as possible to the pre-Fall egalitarianism in the marriage relationship, without denying the validity of the servant-leadership principle as it may be needed in a sinful world to preserve unity and harmony in the home. Also against the "hierarchical" position, Genesis 1–3 should not be seen as barring women from accepting whatever roles of servant leadership in the believing community (church) or society at large to which they may be called and gifted by the Spirit.

Finally, as pointed out above, often common to

both egalitarians and hierarchicalists is a similar view of authoritative leadership in the church—as a "chain-of-command" top-down hierarchy. Opponents of women's ordination argue that such authoritative leadership in the church is a male prerogative; proponents urge that women should also have the right to such authoritative leadership offices. Against *both* hierarchicalism and egalitarianism, I find that the biblical data in Genesis 1–3 presents a surprising third alternative, of inverted hierarchy, in which servanthood and submission on the part of leaders—following the servanthood/submission example of the Godhead Themselves—takes the place of top-down "chain-of-command" leadership. Seventh-day Adventists, with their unique understanding of the issues in the Great Controversy, in which Satan has accused God of not being willing to exercise humility and self-denial,[139] have a unique opportunity to lift up the divine model of self-denying servanthood before the world. It is hoped that these conclusions, by moving beyond both hierarchialism and egalitarianism to a biblical "third alternative," may assist in breaking the impasse in the current discussion within Adventism as well as the wider evangelical world.

C. Adam and Eve as Priests of the Eden Sanctuary after the Fall

Already in Genesis 3, strong evidence is given that the temporary, remedial/redemptive provision for husband-leadership in the home did not bar Old Testament women from leadership positions, even priestly office, in the setting of public worship.

Adam's nakedness described in Genesis 3:10 obviously refers to more than physical nudity, for Adam depicts himself as still naked even though already covered with fig leaves. The nakedness of Genesis 3 seems to include a sense of "being unmasked,"[140] a consciousness of guilt, a nakedness of soul. Likewise, God's clothing of Adam and Eve with skins appears to represent more than a concern for physical covering, more than a demonstration of the "modesty appropriate in a sinful world,"[141] though these are no doubt included. The skins from slain animals may be seen to intimate the beginning of the sacrificial system and the awareness of a substitutionary atonement, because of which humans need no longer feel unmasked or ashamed.[142]

Moreover, there is strong inter-textual evidence that the clothing of Adam and Eve by God has another significance beyond the aspects suggested above. In connection with our discussion of Genesis 2 above, we referred to the abundant inter-textual parallels between Genesis 1–2 and other biblical sanctuaries showing that the Garden of Eden is to be considered the original sanctuary on earth already before the Fall. The parallels are even more direct and striking for after the Fall, indicating that Gateway to the Garden of Eden is a sanctuary, the precursor to the later biblical sanctuaries. After Adam and Eve are expelled, in their sinful state they are no longer able to meet with God face to face in the Garden's Holy of Holies. But at the *eastern* entrance to the Garden (Genesis 3:24; cf. the *eastern* entrance to the later sanctuaries), now appear cherubim—the beings associated with the ark in the Most Holy Place of the Mosaic sanctuary (Exodus 25:18–22). These cherubim, with a flaming sword, are "placed" (Hebrew *shakan*), the same specific Hebrew verb for God's "dwelling" (*shakan*) among his people (Exodus 25:8), and also the same root as for the "sanctuary" (*mishkan*) and the *Shekinah* glory, the visible presence of God in the sanctuary.[143]

In light of this sanctuary language of Genesis 3, it is significant to note one more linkage between Eden and the Mosaic sanctuary rituals. Before Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden, God "clothed" (*labash*, *hip'il*) them with "tunics/coats" (*kotnot*, pl.

of *ketonet*), Genesis 3:21. As one today enters several key words into an internet search engine to find the point of intersection of these terms, the connection between "sanctuary" and "clothed" and "tunics" leads to one, and only one, convergence of ideas. In a sanctuary setting, the terms *labash* ("clothe") and *kotnot* ("tunic/coat") are only found together in describing the clothing (*labash*, *hip'il*) of the priests—Aaron and his sons (Leviticus 8:7, 13; Numbers 20:28; cf. Exodus 28:4; 29:5; 40:14). Robert Oden has demonstrated that this phraseology in Genesis 3:21—the combination of "clothing" (*labash*, *hip'il* [causative]) with "tunics/coats" (*kotnot*, pl. of *ketonet*)[144] describes a divine conferral of status upon Adam and Eve.[145] Jacques Doukhan draws out the implication of the divine ceremony in light of its canonical intertextual parallels: "The rare occasions where God clothes humans in the OT always concerned the dressing of priests.... Adam and Eve were, indeed, dressed as priests."[146] The unmistakable and consistent linkage within the Hebrew Bible of this pair of terms—"to clothe" (*labash*, *hip'il*) and "tunics/coats" (*kotnot*)—with the clothing of Israel's priests, viewed in the larger setting of the Garden of Eden as a sanctuary, clearly points to Adam and Eve's inauguration as priests in the post-Fall world. By highlighting God's clothing of Adam and Eve with the skins of sacrificial animals (instead of the fine linen of the later priests), the final canonical form of the text further emphasizes the divine confirmation that Adam and Eve are to be identified as priests, for the skin of the sacrificial animals belonged exclusively to the priests in the Mosaic cultus (Leviticus 7:8). As Doukhan summarizes, "By bestowing on Adam and Eve the skin of the sin offering, a gift strictly reserved to priests, the Genesis story implicitly recognizes Eve as priest alongside Adam."[147] At the very beginning of the portrayal of man-woman relations after the Fall, the narrative indicates that women are not barred from serving in a priestly capacity alongside their male counterparts. The far-reaching implications of this conclusion regarding the divinely-ordained priestly status of woman as well as man after the Fall will become more evident as we look at the proceed through the Old Testament and beyond.

V. THE PATTERN FOR HUSBAND-WIFE RELATIONS OUTSIDE OF EDEN

A. Servant Leadership of the Husband/Father in OT Families

Patriarchy. There is little question that in ancient Israel (and throughout the ancient Near East) a patriarchal structuring of society was the accepted norm, and the father was the "titular head of the ancient Israelite family."[148] The family, not the individual, was the basic unit of society in ancient Israel. In familial/marital situations the father assumed legal responsibility for the household. His formal leadership and legal authority are evidenced in such concerns as family inheritance and ownership of property, contracting marriages for the children, and over-all responsibility in speaking for his family.[149] (Compare our modern use of the term "head of household," which has some of the same legal implications as in biblical times.)

The institution of patriarchy ("rule by the father") was wisely arranged by God in his condescension to the human fallen condition, as a temporary remedial and redemptive measure to bring about unity and harmony and integrity in the home in the midst of a sinful world. Patriarchy, as intended by God, was not evil in itself, but rather one of those God-ordained remedial provisions instituted after the Fall, but not the ultimate divine ideal.[150] The very term "patriarchy" ("rule of the father"), or the OT phrase "father's house" (*bet 'ab*), emphasizes the role of the *father* to his children, not the *husband*

to his wife. As we will observe below in concrete examples throughout OT history, the "patriarchy" of OT times consisted in the *father's* authority over his children, not his authority over his wife. Furthermore, this was *not* male authority over women, but the authority of one patriarchal figure over all of his descendants, male and female. As will also become apparent below, it is fully compatible with this patriarchal model of leadership to have a *matriarch* functioning in an egalitarian relationship with her husband, the patriarch, and the married children of the patriarch and their spouses likewise functioning in an egalitarian marriage.

Examples of the husband's servant leadership. What we have just said about patriarchy does not deny the remedial measure of the husband's servant leadership in the home and the wife's respect for her husband, as provided in Genesis 3:16. In the narrative of the life of Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 18:12), Sarah refers to her husband as "my lord" (*adoni*), and elsewhere in Scripture the word *ba'al* ("lord"—both as a verb and a noun) is used to identify the husband.[151] However, the meaning of these terms must not be pressed too far, for they often may simply denote polite respect. As I concluded with regard to a husband's "rule" over his wife in Genesis 3:16, the description of husband as "lord" seems to emphasize his position as the "titular head" of the family and not his domination or hierarchical authority over the wife in marriage.[152] The husband has authority to accomplish his task of representing the family, not authority over his wife. This becomes evident in the next section of this paper as Sarah and Abraham and other couples in the OT demonstrate a very egalitarian marriage.

The attendant servant leadership and/or legal responsibility and protection given by God as a remedial provision to the husband in Genesis 3:16 seems implied in the Mosaic legislation concerning wives who were "under their husbands" in Numbers 5:19–20: "if you have not gone astray to uncleanness while *under your husband* [*takat 'išēk*].... But if you [the wife] have gone astray, though you are *under your husband* [*takat 'ishek*]..." Verse 29 summarizes, "This is the law of jealousy, when a wife, *under her husband* [*takhat 'ishah*], goes astray and defiles herself." These verses do not spell out exactly how the wife is "under" her husband, but in context it seems best to supply the expression "under [the legal protection of]" or "under [the legal responsibility of]." In light of the OT evidence that follows in the next section of this paper, which reveals many examples of essentially egalitarian husband-wife relations, to supply the unqualified term "authority"— "under [the authority of]"—as in many English versions, is too strong.

B. Return to the Edenic Ideal of Egalitarian Marriages

Although Genesis 3:16 provided a remedial measure of husband (servant) leadership to preserve harmony and unity in the home, the ideal of egalitarian marriages set forth in Genesis 2:24 was still the ultimate divine plan for marriage. The OT provides many examples of marriages in which the husband and wife have moved (or are moving) back toward that egalitarian ideal.

Egalitarian marriages of OT husbands and wives. It came as a surprise to me in my research—actually, building upon the research of my wife!—to discover that the Hebrew patriarchs mentioned in Scripture from the OT "patriarchal" period were regularly portrayed as married to a powerful *matriarch* and their marital relationships were described as functionally non-hierarchical and egalitarian.[153] From among the twenty-nine named women mentioned in Genesis, let us look more closely here at a couple of examples. First, details of Sarah's life in the

Genesis narratives reveal the high valuation of this matriarch, as she and her husband are portrayed as equal partners.[154] Consider the following:

1. When Sarah and Abraham approach Egypt during a famine, Abraham does not command her to agree to his planned deception, but begs her, with an almost apologetic plea, to say she is his sister (Genesis 12:13).
2. God protects Sarah from harm at Pharaoh's court and again in the household of Abimelech, and returns her to her husband (Genesis 12:10–20; 20:1–8).
3. Abraham cohabits with Hagar because Sarah wants him to, and expels Hagar again at Sarah's insistence (Genesis 16:1–4; 21:8–21).
4. God defends Sarah in her demand that Hagar be sent away, telling Abraham "Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice!" (Genesis 21:12)
5. Sarah is regarded as just as critical to the divine covenant as Abraham himself, with God's continued insistence (at least after the birth of Ishmael) that it is *Sarah's* seed that will fulfill the covenant promise (Genesis 17:18–19; 21:12).
6. Sarah's name is changed (from Sarai) just as Abraham (from Abram), with the accompanying promise that "she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her" (Genesis 17:16).
7. The literary structure of Genesis 17 emphasizes the significance of Sarah by placing her in the middle of the passage concerning circumcision, thus showing that the covenant blessings and promises apply to her—and to women—just as surely as to Abraham and his male descendants.[155]
8. Abraham and Sarah share in the meal preparations when offering hospitality to the three strangers (Genesis 18:6–8), showing that there is no distinct division of labor by gender.
9. Sarah is the only matriarch with her age indicated when she dies, as is always seen with the patriarchs (Genesis 23:1).
10. Her death and burial at Mamre receives extended attention textually: in the sparse historical style characteristic of the Genesis narrator, it is surely remarkable that an entire chapter is devoted to this event (Genesis 23), with no more details given of the last forty-eight years of Abraham's life after Sarah's death.

Sarah the matriarch is no wallflower! Janice Nunnally-Cox summarizes how Sarah and Abraham are presented as equal partners:

> *She appears to say what she wants, when she wants, and Abraham at times responds in almost meek obedience. He does not command her; she commands him, yet there seems to be an affectionate bond between them. Abraham does not abandon Sarah during her barrenness, nor does he gain other wives while she lives, as far as we know. The two have grown up together and grown old together, and when Sarah dies, Abraham can do nothing but weep. Sarah is a matriarch of the first order: respected by rulers and husband alike, a spirited woman and bold companion.*[156]

To cite a second example, that of Rebekah, note the following:[157]

1. Although she is described as physically beautiful (Genesis 24:16) Rebekah is not appreciated solely for her outward appearance.
2. Her independence and trust and hospitality parallels that of Abraham: like him she was willing to take the risk of leaving her

family and travel to a strange land; like him she showed eagerness to perform her hospitable acts.[158] Most impressive in the Rebekah narratives is the noticeable correspondence of key terms with the Abraham narratives. "It is she [Rebecca], not Isaac, who follows in Abraham's footsteps, leaving the familiar for the unknown. It is she, not Isaac, who receives the blessing given to Abraham (22:17). 'May your offspring possess the gates of their enemies!' (24:60)."[159]

3. The Genesis genealogical record highlights the prominence of Rebekah by listing only her as the one begotten by Bethuel (Genesis 22:23), although later the narrative includes her brother Laban (Genesis 24:29). The unusual placement of this genealogy immediately after the account of the testing of Abraham with his son Isaac (22:1–19) emphasizes the importance of Rebekah.
4. In Genesis 24, when Abraham directs Eleazer to find a wife for Isaac, he declares that "if the woman is not willing to come with you, then you will be free from this oath of mine" (24:8). Contrary to those who claim that the woman under the patriarchal system had no voice in who she would marry, here "Abraham assumes the woman will have the final say in the matter."[160] Ultimately it is Rebekah herself that chooses to go with Eleazar. In fact, in the lengthy narrative of Genesis 24, her determination to travel with Eleazar is spoken directly by her in the dialogue and not just reported by the narrator (24:58), and Rebekah's answer is saved by the narrator for the very climax of the narrative.
5. Upon Eleazer's arrival, Rebekah arranges for his hospitality herself. Eleazar asks for a place in her "father's house," but Rebekah arranges with her "mother's house" (v. 28). Her father says hardly a word throughout this entire narrative. Rebekah's father determines nothing, as might be "expected" in an oppressive patriarchy.
6. After Rebekah marries Isaac and becomes pregnant, in apparent agony she is anxious enough "to inquire of the LORD" (paralleling the great prophets of the OT); and she does this herself (Genesis 25:22), receiving a direct oracle from the Lord. Highly significant also is the formula used to announce Rebekah's delivery: "And her days were fulfilled that she should give birth" (Genesis 25:24). This formula is used of only three biblical women: Elizabeth and Mary in the NT and Rebekah of the OT.
7. Later, when Esau marries two Hittite women, the text informs us that this was a "grief of mind to Isaac *and Rebekah*." (26:35, emphasis added). This inclusion of Rebekah's distress regarding Esau's marriage to pagan women reveals that Rebekah was just as concerned about the covenant line as was Isaac.
8. Finally, the biblical narrator in many ways accents the role of Rebekah the matriarch far beyond that of her husband Isaac, the patriarch. Teubal summarizes:

If the narration of events following the death and burial of Sarah was truly patriarchal, it would deal with the life and exploits of the male heir, Isaac. Instead, once again the accent is on the role of a woman. Rebekah. About Isaac, her husband, we are told little relating to the establishment of the religious faith. He is a placid, sedentary man whose life is colored and influenced by the presence of his outstanding wife. Apart from the incident of the Akadah (The

Binding of Isaac in which Abraham is commanded to sacrifice his son), we know nothing of the boyhood or youth of the supposed hero. 'His' story begins with a detailed account of Rebekah's betrothal.... Rebekah is vividly depicted in Genesis.... Rebekah's strength, beauty, and suffering have not been dimmed.[161]

Examples could be multiplied in the marriage relationship of other Genesis matriarchs and patriarchs, and in Israelite homes depicted throughout the history of the nation.[162] The embodiment of (or move toward) the pre-Fall ideal of an egalitarian marriage is revealed in the descriptions of the day-to-day relationships between husbands and wives throughout the OT, in which the "ancient Israelite wife was loved and listened to by her husband, and treated by him as an equal…"[163] "The ancient Israelite woman wielded power in the home at least equal to that exercised by the husband…; she participated freely and as an equal in decisions involving the life of her husband or her family."[164]

Egalitarian respect for men/husbands and women/wives in Pentateuchal laws. The various laws dealing with major cultic, ethical, and moral prohibitions and infractions are fully egalitarian. The Decalogue is clearly intended to apply to both men and women, using the gender-inclusive second masculine singular "you" to apply to both men and women. (If the masculine "you" were not gender-inclusive, then such commands as "You shall not steal" would only prohibit men and not women from stealing.) The judgments of the chapters following the Decalogue (the so-called Covenant Code) which apply the "Ten Words" to specific cases make explicit that both male and female are included (Exodus 21: 15, 17, 20, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32), and this appears to set the standard for later legal material where gender inclusiveness is to be implied although masculine terminology is used.[165] With reference to ritual impurity legislation, the Hebrew Bible presents "a system that is rather even-handed in its treatment of gender."[166] Aside from the menstrual uncleanness that applies only to women, the other major sources of ritual impurity are clearly gender-blind."[167]

Pentateuchal legislation that seems to give women/wives a subordinate status or place their sexuality under the "possession" of the male leader of the household should actually be viewed as setting forth the obligation of the husband/father to protect his wife/daughter's sexuality and personhood and thereby the integrity of the family structure. These are laws that are designed to protect women, not oppress them. I have set forth the evidence for this conclusion with regard to each of these laws elsewhere.[168]

As an example, the tenth commandment (Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21) is often cited to demonstrate how a wife was considered as man's "chattel," but in actuality, the wife is not here listed as property but as the first-named member of the household.[169] That the wife was not considered as "chattel" or on the level of a slave is confirmed by the fact that an Israelite could sell slaves (Exodus 21:2–11; Deuteronomy 15:12–18) but never his wife, even if she was acquired as a captive in war (Deuteronomy 21:14).

As another example, some have argued that the woman was the "property" of the husband because at the time of the marriage, the bridegroom gave the father of the bride the "brideprice" or "dowry"—thus implying that the husband "bought" his wife much as he bought other property. However, the term *mohar* (used only three times in the OT, Genesis 34:12; Exodus 22:17; and 1 Samuel 18:25), often translated "brideprice," is more accurately translated as "marriage present,"[170] probably represents the

compensation to the father for the work the daughter would otherwise have contributed to her family,[171] and probably ultimately belonged to the wife and not the father.[172]

In contrast to elsewhere in the ancient Near East, where vicarious punishment was carried out (i.e., a man was punished for a crime by having to give up his wife or daughter, or ox or slave) indicating that indeed wives and daughters were viewed as property of men, in biblical law no such vicarious punishment is prescribed.[173] Likewise, in contrast to other ancient Near Eastern laws, where a husband is permitted to "whip his wife, pluck out her hair, mutilate her ears, or strike her, with impunity,"[174] no such permission is given to the husband in biblical law to punish his wife in any way.

Far from being regarded as "chattel," according to the fifth commandment of the Decalogue and repeated commands throughout the Pentateuchal codes, the wife/mother was to be given equal honor as the father within the family circle (Exodus 20:12; 21:15, 17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 21:18–21; 27:16).[175] There is "no discrimination in favor of father and against mother. The mother's authority over the son is as great in the law codes as is that of the father."[176] The same penalty is imposed upon the son for striking or cursing his father or his mother (Exodus 21:15, 17). In fact, amid a Near Eastern milieu in which the mother was often controlled by the son, Leviticus 19:3 surprisingly places the mother *first* instead of the father in the command: "Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father." This reversal from normal order clearly emphasizes the woman's right to equal filial respect along with her husband. Likewise, the fourth commandment of the Decalogue implicitly places the husband and wife on a par with each other: in Exodus 20:10 the masculine "*you* shall not" clearly includes the wife, since she is not mentioned in the list of the household dependants that follows.[177]

In the book of Proverbs, the position of woman is regarded as one of importance and respect. The wife is placed upon an equal footing with the husband in numerous passages.

When one looks at the empirical evidence of family life as it emerges from the OT narratives and laws, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the wife was treated by her husband in an egalitarian manner, that she exercised an equal power in the home, and participated equally in the family decisions. The "functional nonhierarchy" in ancient Israel makes any question of exact legal or jural equality a moot point.[178]

Husband and Wife in Proverbs. In the book of Proverbs, the position of woman is regarded as one of importance and respect. The wife is placed upon an equal footing with the husband in numerous passages: both have equal authority in the training of children (1:8, 9; 6:20; 23:25); the mother is entitled to the same honor as the father (19:21; 20:20; 23:22; 30:17). A lofty view of the true dignity and value of woman in her own right seems implied in the personification/hypostasization of wisdom as a great lady in Prov 1–9.[179] The wife is particularly singled out for praise and honor in Proverbs 12:4: "An excellent wife [*'eshet kayil*, lit. 'woman of power/strength/might'] is the crown of her husband." This high valuation becomes concretized in the paean of praise to the *eshet kayil* in Proverbs 31.[180] Here in an intricately and elegantly crafted acrostic and chiastic[181] form a portrait is provided of the *'eshet kayil*—the "mighty woman of valor"—[182] who is "far

more precious than jewels" (v. 10), a woman of individuality and independence, valued for her own sake and not just as the property of her husband. She is, to be sure, a loyal and devoted wife: her husband has implicit trust in her and she meets his needs (vv. 11–12). She is a model homemaker: a thrifty shopper (vv. 3–14), superior seamstress (vv. 12, 13, 21–22, 24), gourmet cook (v. 15), able administrator of domestic affairs (v. 15*b*), and successful in parenting (v. 28). Furthermore, she is a capable business woman: knowledgeable in real estate and agriculture (v. 16); an enterprising and farsighted entrepreneur (vv. 18, 24, 25). She takes good care of herself: she is a paragon of physical fitness (v. 17). She dresses becomingly with attention to beauty, quality and economy (vv. 13, 21–22). She has a high reputation in the community for her liberal philanthropy (v. 20), her noble dignity (v. 25), her wisdom, tact, and kindness (v. 26). It is no surprise that (vv. 28–29)

> *Her children rise up and call her blessed;*
> *her husband also, and he praises her:*
> *"Many women have done excellently,*
> *but you surpass them all."*

A wife of valor possesses more than physical charm and beauty: she is to be praised ultimately because she is "a woman who fears the Lord" (v. 30).[183] Therefore, concludes the book (v. 31), "give her the work of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates."

Many have recognized that this *summa summarum* of a wife's virtues encompasses all the positive characterization of woman in the book of Proverbs, and at the same time this valiant woman serves as an embodiment of all the wisdom values of the book, "the epitome of all the Lady Wisdom teaches.... Throughout the Book of Proverbs women are neither ignored nor treated as inferior to men; in fact the climactic conclusion found in 31:10–31 elevates womanhood to a position of supreme honor."[184] That this woman is elevated to such honor is further indicated by the literary genre of the poem, which, as Wolters incisively analyzes, is reminiscent of Israel's hymnic form (utilizing, e.g., overall hymnic structure, the grammatically unique "hymnic participle," and the theme of incomparability), and forms a part of Hebrew "heroic literature" (utilizing various military terms and themes from the tradition of Hebrew heroic poetry; cf. Judges 5 and 2 Sam 1).[185] Thus, here is a "heroic hymn" in praise of a valiant woman![186]

Claudia Camp also states correctly that this depiction at the end of Proverbs provides a literary model for women "as creative, authoritative individuals, very much in league with men for the well-being of the world in which they lived (though not, primarily, for its perpetuation through reproduction), but not defined by or dependent on them."[187] The woman of Proverbs 31 stands as "a role model for all Israel for all time."[188]

Husband and Wife as Egalitarian Partners in the Song of Songs. This section of the paper may seem inordinately long in proportion to the rest of paper. But I am convinced that the evidence from the Song of Songs is even more crucial than that found in NT passages such as 1 Timothy 2, and hence must be included here in detail. In the Song of Solomon we have the OT inspired commentary on Genesis 1–3, providing insight as to the nature of the relationship which God envisaged between a husband and wife. This book, written by Solomon in the early years of his reign during the some twenty years of his monogamous marriage to "the Shulamit,"[189] shows that even after the Fall it is possible to return to the fully egalitarian (non-hierarchical) marriage relationship as before the Fall.

In the Song of Songs we come full circle in the

OT back to the Garden of Eden. Several recent studies have penetratingly analyzed and conclusively demonstrated the intimate relationship between the early chapters of Genesis and the Song of Songs.[190] In the "symphony of love," begun in Eden but gone awry after the Fall, the Song constitutes "love's lyrics redeemed."[191] Phyllis Trible summarizes how the Song of Songs "by variations and reversals creatively actualizes major motifs and themes" of the Eden narrative:

> *Female and male are born to mutuality and love. They are naked without shame; they are equal without duplication. They live in gardens where nature joins in celebrating their oneness. Animals remind these couples of their shared superiority in creation as well as their affinity and responsibility for lesser creatures. Fruits pleasing to the eye and tongue are theirs to enjoy. Living waters replenish their gardens. Both couples are involved in naming; both couples work…whatever else it may be, Canticles is a commentary on Genesis 2–3. Paradise Lost is Paradise Regained.*[192]

The Song of Songs is a return to Eden, but the lovers in the Song are not to be equated in every way with the pre-Fall couple in the Garden. The poetry of this book reveals the existence of a world of sin and its baleful results: there are the angry brothers (1:6); the wet winter (2:11); the "little foxes that spoil the vineyards" (2:15); the anxiety of absence from one's beloved (3:1–4; 5:6–8; 6:1); the cruelty and brutality of the watchman (5:7); and the powerful presence of death (8:6). Yet the lovers in the Song are able to triumph over the threats to their love. In parallel with Genesis 2:24, the Song depicts the ideal of "woman and man in mutual harmony after the fall."[193] As becomes apparent from the evidence that follows, "What is extraordinary in the Song is precisely the absence of structural and systemic hierarchy, sovereignty, authority, control, superiority, submission, in the relation of the lovers."[194]

The Song of Songs highlights egalitarianism, mutuality, and reciprocity between the lovers. The Song "reflects an image of woman and female–male relations that is extremely positive and egalitarian."[195] "Nowhere in the OT is the equality of the sexes…as real as in the Song."[196] "Nowhere in ancient literature can such rapturous mutuality be paralleled."[197] The keynote of egalitarianism is struck in Song 2:16: "My beloved is mine and I am his." The same refrain recurs in 6:3: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine." And a third time in 7:11 [ET 10]: "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." Scholars have not failed to point out the implication of this thrice-repeated refrain: "love-eros is mutual; it puts the two partners on a perfectly equal footing …"[198] "The present verse [7:11] speaks of a relationship of mutuality, expressed in a formula of reciprocal love like that in 2:16, 6:3. In the Song, sex is free of notions of control, dominion, hierarchy."[199]

This egalitarianism/mutuality/reciprocity is revealed throughout the Song in a number of ways. Several recent studies have pointed to various literary techniques in the Song that highlight the gender mutuality between the lovers.[200] Perhaps most obvious is the frequent use of echoing, in which the words or actions of the one lover are repeated or patterned on the other's.[201] Especially significant are the mutuality of actions and statements in reversal of stereotypical gender conceptions which usually place the woman in a passive-receptive and dependent role and the man taking the independent initiative. So, for example, the woman, like the man, is portrayed as a person of capability, independence, and self-reliance. She, like the man, is gainfully employed—(1:6, 7; cf. 6:11). Even after the marriage—at the conclusion of the Song—she

The woman in the Song possesses not only awesome power, but power over the man. She ravishes him with one look of her eyes.

continues to display her business acumen and retain her self-reliance: like Solomon, she owns a vineyard, and is not totally dependent upon her husband for sustenance (8:11–12). Both the lovers see each other as having eyes like doves (4:1; 5:12); both are proud and tall like trees (5:15; 7:8); both describe parts of the other's body as rounded and crafted like art works (5:14, 15a; 7:2b, 3a [English vv. 1b, 2a]).

Again, the woman is as active in the love-making as the man. She brings him to the love-chamber (3:4) as he brings her (1:4; 2:4). She sexually arouses him (8:5) as he has aroused her (2:3,4; 5:2–5). She uses reciprocal expressions of endearment and praise for him as he does for her (e.g., "my companion" (5:2, 16, etc.), "behold, you are beautiful" (1:15, 16). Both use similar language to praise the beauty of the other (e.g., eyes like doves [1:15; 4:1; 5:12], "beautiful and comely" [1:16; 7:17], lips dripping honey/myrrh [4:11; 5:13], and the whole matching sections with extended praise of one another's beauty [4:1–16; 6:4–10; 7:1–9]). She invites him to come with her into the fields (7:12–14 [English vv. 11–13]) as he invites her (2:10–14). In the Song, "where the lovers take turns inviting each other, desire is entirely reciprocal. Both are described in images that suggest tenderness (lilies/lotus flowers, doves, gazelles) as well as strength and stateliness (pillars, towers). In this book of the Bible, the woman is certainly the equal of the man."[202]

Daniel Grossberg's assessment of the reciprocity and mutuality of roles between man and woman is not an overstatement:

> *In all of Canticles there is hardly a thought, idea or deed that is not attributed to both the male and the female. Almost all expressions (spoken both inwardly, outwardly, and acted) are shared by the two lovers in the Song of Songs.... Sexism and gender stereotyping, so prevalent in ancient (and modern) literature is totally lacking in Canticles. Instead, undifferentiated, shared roles and positions are the rule. Harmony, not domination, is the hallmark of the Song of Songs.... In Canticles, neither one of the couples is subordinate; neither is minor. The Song revolves around them both equally. They are costars sharing the spotlight.*[203]

David Dorsey's literary structural analysis of the Song demonstrates how each of its seven sections reinforces and enhances the theme of reciprocity/mutuality, by means of various structuring devices, including alternation of speeches, initiations, and invitations, and the numerous matchings of reciprocal expressions of love. He concludes:

> *These structuring techniques underscore the point that the two lovers are equally in love, equally adore one another, and are equally ready to initiate, to suggest, to invite. The ideal conveyed by the author's structure (as well as by the contents of the speeches) is an egalitarianism and mutuality in romantic love that is virtually unparalleled in ancient Near Eastern literature. In a world that was strongly patriarchal, where love lyrics often portrayed the man as a "bull" and the woman as something less than his equal, the Song of Songs represents a surprisingly high view of woman and a remarkable vision of the ideal of equality and delightful reciprocity in the marriage relationship.*[204]

Indeed, apparently to accentuate this mutuality

and equality in dramatic reversal of gender stereotypes prevailing at that time, the woman is actually given the predominant role in the Song.[205] Landy aptly calls "the dominance and initiative of the Beloved [the woman] the most astonishing characteristic of the Song."[206] The Song of Songs begins and closes with the woman speaking (1:2–4a; 8:14). The image of the garden, representing the woman, falls at the midpoint of the Song, emphasizing her predominance.[207] Woman carries almost twice the amount of dialogue as the man.[208] A number of the man's lines are actually quotations of him made by the woman (2:10–14; 5:2), while the man never quotes the woman's words. It is the woman who interrelates with the other major and minor protagonists in the Song. The woman initiates most of the meetings with her lover. In these rendezvous, she repeatedly takes the initiative.[209] The woman's invitations to love are more forceful and outspoken than the man's (4:16; 7:13 [English v. 12]; 8:2). Most of the first person verbs have reference to the woman; she is the only one who uses the emphatic "I" (*'ani*) (twelve times); and the significant introspective term "soul, self" (*nepesh*) is applied only to her (seven times).[210] Only she makes dramatic, self-assured statements about her beauty and character: "I am dark and[211] I am beautiful!" (1:5); "I am the [glorious, beautiful[212]] rose of Sharon, the [singular, special[213]] lily of the valleys" (2:1); "I am a wall, and my breasts are towers" (8:10). Only she commands the elements: "Awake, north wind! And come, O south! Blow upon my garden" (4:16). The Shulamite is the one who pronounces the great wisdom sayings about love (8:6–7; cf. 2:7; 3:5; 8:4). "She is assertive, taking the initiative in this relationship. She is undaunted, risking misunderstanding and censure as she pursues her love. She is responsible, being accountable for her actions. She is protective, shielding her lover and the love they share from the prying eyes of others."[214]

The woman is also described with imagery that is normally connected with the male. Carol Meyers has shown how "the Song as a whole presents a significant corpus of images and terms derived from the military—and hence the male—world" and how "without exception these terms are applied to the female." She concludes from this: "Since military language is derived from an aspect of ancient life almost exclusively associated with men, its use in the Song in reference to the woman constitutes and unexpected reversal of conventional imagery or of stereotypical gender association."[215] Again, Meyers examines the use of animal imagery in the Song, and notes that while some animals (like the dove and the gazelle) depict the character of both the male and the female, the wild beasts—lion and leopard—with their wild habitations is associated exclusively with the female (4:8). She notes: "Nothing would be further from a domestic association for a female. Nor does the wildness, danger, might, strength, aggressiveness, and other dramatic features of these predators fit any stereotypical female qualities."[216] Combining both military and faunal imagery, the woman is also compared to a "filly among Pharaoh's chariots" (1:9). This connotes a powerful military ploy: "The female horse set loose among the stallions of the chariotry does violence to the military effectiveness of the charioteers. The female has a power of her own that can offset the mighty forces of a trained army."[217] Again, the military "terror of awesomeness" is twice linked with the woman in the Song: she is "awesome as [an army] with banners" (6:4, 10).

What is more, the woman in the Song possesses not only awesome power, but *power over the man*. She ravishes (Heb. *labab* in the *pi'el*) his heart with one look of her eyes (4:9). Her eyes *overcome* or *overwhelm* him—elicit his fear (Heb. *rahab* in the *hip'il*) (6:5). Amazingly, the king—one of the most

powerful humans on earth—is *held captive/bound/imprisoned* (Heb. *'asur*) by the tresses of her hair (7:6 [English v. 5]). Clearly "the reversal of conventional gender typing is again evident."[218]

Moving beyond the predominance of the female lover herself, one can recognize throughout the Song that a "gynocentric mode"[219] prevails. The third set of voices is the "daughters of Jerusalem," which play no small role in the movement of the Song.[220] The mother of the woman or man is mentioned seven times in the Song,[221] but never the father. The king is crowned by his mother for his wedding (3:11).[222] Furthermore, the Song twice mentions the "mother's house" (3:4; 8:2), never the masculine equivalent. This is very significant, even startling, in view of the importance of the term "father's house" elsewhere in Scripture.

The emphasis upon the woman—and women—in the Song does not imply the superiority or dominance of woman over man. Rather, in light of prevailing stereotypical biases that placed women in a subservient or subordinate role, the Song sets right the stereotypical gender imbalance by highlighting the woman's powers. At the same time the Song pictures the woman desiring the man to draw her away after him (1:4). She is pictured leaning upon, and resting under the protecting shadow of, her lover. So Song 2:3: "Like an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down in his shade with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Francis Landry has not failed to catch the intent of the imagery: "The apple-tree symbolizes the lover, the male sexual function in the poem; erect and delectable, it is a powerful erotic metaphor. It provides the nourishment and shelter, traditional male roles—the protective lover, man the provider."[223] Song of Songs 8:5a seems to continue the male-protector motif: "Who is that coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?" But notice that the rest of this verse re-introduces the "apple tree" metaphor, and this time it is the *woman* who awakens the man under the apple tree. Thus juxtaposed in two lines are the images of female initiative/independence and male protection. Certainly the author wished this balanced perspective to be held together.[224] This description of the man as protector is an echo of the egalitarianism in Eden before the Fall, where Eve was to stand by Adam's side "as an equal, to be loved and protected by him" (PP 46).

By highlighting both the woman's initiative/power and the protecting, providing role of the man, the Song paints a balanced portrait of full mutuality and egalitarianism, captured by the refrain already quoted from the woman: "My beloved is mine and I am his" (2:16; cf. 6:3; 7:11 [English v. 10]). Meyers summarizes this balance: "The Song has a preponderance of females, but that situation does not obtain at the cost of a sustained sense of gender mutuality. Neither male nor female is set in an advantageous position with respect to the other.... In the erotic world of human emotion, there is no subordination of female to the male."[225] S. S. Ndoga and H. Viviers concur: "although feminist scholars insist that the female 'voice' is very conspicuous in the Song, the male voice is also constantly 'there' and equally strong. Thus, the Song does not celebrate the supremacy of either gender, but praises mutuality and equality."[226]

A number of modern studies have pointed out that the Song of Songs constitutes a reversal of the divine judgment set forth in Genesis 3:16, and a return to Eden before the Fall (Genesis 1–2) with regard to the love relationship between husband and wife.[227] Such a reversal seems implicit in the Song's echo of Eden's "desire" (*teshuqah*)—a term found only in Genesis 3:16 and Song 7:11 (English v. 10) with reference to sexual desire between

man and woman. In Song 7:11 (English v. 10), the third of the woman's three explicit affirmations of mutuality with her lover (along with 2:16 and 6:3 already cited above), the Shulamite says: "I am my beloved's, and his desire (*teshuqah*) is for me." Whereas the judgment of God in Gen 3:16 stated that the woman's desire (*teshuqah*) would be for her husband, and he would "rule" (*mashal*) over her (in the sense of servant leadership), now the Song describes a reversal—the man's desire (*teshuqah*) is for his lover. However, contrary to the feminist readings that see here a movement away from a distorted use of male power (which is their [misguided] interpretation of Genesis 3:16), I find a re-affirmation of the divine ideal of full equality ("one-fleshness") between husband and wife set forth in Genesis 2:24 without necessarily denying the validity of Genesis 3:16. Song of Songs does not nullify the provision of Genesis 3:16 whereby the servant leadership of the husband may be necessary to preserve the harmony in the home. But the Song reveals that after the Fall it is still possible for man and woman to experience that mutual, reciprocal love wherein headship/submission is transcended and the egalitarian ideal of Genesis 2:24 is completely realized.[228]

We have indeed returned to Eden. This return to full reciprocity is encapsulated in the names of the lovers. Just as in pre-Fall Eden the husband and wife were called *'ish* and *'ishah* (Genesis 2:23)—names linked together by sound and (folk) etymology, so in the return to Eden the names of the lovers once again intertwine—*sholomoh* (Solomon) and *shulammit* (Shulamite/Shulamit = Solomoness).[229] The reciprocation between Solomon and the Solomoness displays the equivalent of the *'ezer kenegdo* "counterpart, complement" of Genesis 2:18. The lovers in the Song return to Eden as egalitarian, mutual, reciprocal partners.

VI. THE PATTERN FOR MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COVENANT COMMUNITY

Despite the prevailing patriarchal society of OT times, in the OT we find numerous women in public ministry, including leadership roles in the covenant community, in harmony with the pattern set in Genesis 1–3. I cite some of these examples in the sections that follow.

A. Women and the Priesthood: God's Original Plan and Subsequent Condescension

Perhaps the most-often-cited OT evidence for "male headship" in the OT covenant community is the fact that the Israelite priesthood was confined only to men. For many Adventist (and other Christian) gender hierarchicalists/subordinationists this is a crucial indication that women were (and still should be) barred from having a leadership role over men in the covenant community (the church).

But the Bible gives a different picture of the divine will regarding the priesthood. God's original purpose for the priesthood on earth included both male and female! As I have already argued above, Gen 1-3 gives the surprising picture that both Adam and Eve had the same role as the Levites and priests of the Mosaic tabernacle in the original Eden sanctuary (Genesis 2:15; cf. Numbers 3:7, 8, 38; 18:2–7), and that God himself clothed both Adam and Eve as priests (Genesis 3:21) after the Fall.

It may come as a further surprise for many to learn that this arrangement for both male and female priests continued to be God's ideal at the time of the Exodus when the Mosaic tabernacle was to be erected.

God's original plan for Israel was that all Israel be a "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6). This does not simply refer to a corporate function of the nation of Israel offering salvation to the surrounding

nations, as frequently claimed. In a penetrating study of Exodus 19, John Sailhamer has shown that it was God's original purpose for all Israel to be individual priests, and this was indicated in God's call for all the people, men and women, to come up on the mountain as priests to meet God on Sinai.[230] Although many modern translations translate Exodus 19:13b as a call on the third day for Israel to come only "to the mountain" (NIV) or to "the foot of the mountain" (NLT) or "near the mountain" (NKJV), the Hebrew is precise: after three days of sanctification (Exodus 19:11-13a) God is calling all Israel to "go up [Heb. 'alah] on the mountain" (so the NRSV and NJPS). Angel Rodriguez has shown that there were three spheres of holiness in connection with Mt. Sinai, corresponding to the three spheres of holiness in the sanctuary that was later constructed: (1) the plain in front of the mountain where the people camped (Exodus 19:2), equivalent to the courtyard; (2) the level place part way up the mountain where the priests and the 70 elders later met with God (Exodus 24:10), equivalent to the Holy Place; and (3) the top of the mountain where Moses alone went (Exodus 24:15-18), equivalent to the Most Holy Place.[231] According to God's original plan, all the people of Israel—including men and women—were to come up on Mt. Sinai, to the place on the mountain equivalent to the Holy Place in the later sanctuary, where only the priests could enter.[232]

It was only after the people refused to come up on the mountain because of their fearfulness and lack of faith (Exodus 19:16; Deuteronomy 5:5), and after their subsequent sin in the worship of the golden calf (Exodus 32), that God introduced the specialized priesthood into the sanctuary equation. In this alternate plan for the priesthood, most men were also excluded—all non-Israelites and within Israel all except for one family in one tribe in Israel.

In God's alternate plan condescending to human failure, why did he choose men and not women? Some have suggested that a woman was restricted from the priesthood in Israel because of her regular (monthly) ritual uncleanness that would have prevented her from serving in the sanctuary for up to one fourth of her adult life. Others suggest that the amount of upper body strength required to lift the sacrificed carcasses, or serve as military "guards" of the sanctuary,[233] would have made it very difficult for women to serve in the professional capacity as priests.[234] Still another suggestion is that "Since women's place in society is determined by their place within the family, women are not normally free to operate for extended periods outside the home."[235] Still others consider the typological connection, with God appointing a male priesthood to point to the coming of Jesus, who in His humanity was male. While these and other rationale may have contributed to the exclusion of women from the specialized priesthood in Israel, they do not seem to constitute the main reason.

The male-only priesthood in Israel was in stark contrast to the other ancient Near Eastern cultures where the cultic personnel included priestesses. Surely Otwell is correct when he observes: "Since other peoples in the ancient Near East worshiped in cults which used priestesses, their absence in the Yahwism of ancient Israel must have been deliberate."[236] Yahweh's institution of a male priesthood in Israel was made in the immediate aftermath of the worship of the golden calf linked to the Egyptian/Canaanite fertility cults. In this context, the choice of men only seems to have constituted a strong polemic against the religions of surrounding nations to which Israel succumbed at the foot of Sinai, religions which involved goddess worship and fertility-cult rituals. A primary function of the priestesses in the ancient Near East during the last half of the second millennium and the first millennium, was to

serve as a "wife of the god," and such a function for a woman in the religion of Yahweh was out of the question.[237] The exclusion of women in the specialized Israelite priesthood helped to prevent syncretistic contamination of Israel's sanctuary services with the introduction of the divinization of sex and sexual immorality that was so deeply imbedded in Canaanite Baal/Asherah worship.

Thus, the restriction of the priesthood to males from the house of Aaron in no way reveals a denigration of women's status, and likewise in no way implies that women are barred from leadership (teaching/administrative) roles in the covenant community. In fact, on the basis of Deuteronomy 33:8–10, Jacques Doukhan points to three essential duties of the Levitical priesthood: (1) didactic and administrative leadership functions (judging, teaching); (2) prophetic functions (oracular techniques especially with the Urim and Thummim to determine the future or will of the Lord); and (3) cultic functions. He then goes on to show that two of the three functions of the priest, the prophetic and the (teaching/administrative) leadership, were allowed of women (witness the OT women who functioned as prophet, teacher, and judge).[238] As I pointed out, it was only the cultic function that was barred to women, probably because of the polemical concerns directed against the ancient Near Eastern priestesses' involvement in the divinization of sex.[239]

Yet in the New Testament the Gospel restores God's original plan. Not a few male priests, but once more the "priesthood of *all* believers" (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6), as it was in the beginning.

B. The Old Testament Concept of Leadership/ Authority

In a separate (forthcoming) study I have surveyed the OT concept of leadership/authority.[240] Here I summarize some of my findings.

The OT refers to numerous different positions of leadership/authority, utilizing some thirty different Hebrew nouns,[241] and five major verbs.[242] These terms are primarily used to *identify* various kinds of leadership, or to indicate the general *function* of such leadership. But one additional concept (involving a number of specific Hebrew or Aramaic terms) specifically goes beyond mere identification and function, and serves to *characterize* the nature of godly leadership articulated in the Old Testament. This concept is servanthood. No other Hebrew concept covers the whole range of Old Testament leaders, whether civil (such as the judge or king), cultic (such as the priest), military (such as the commander), or religious (such as the prophet). Whatever their specific task of leadership, before anything else they were to consider themselves as servants.

The language of servanthood is pervasive throughout the Hebrew Bible. There are some sixteen different Hebrew/Aramaic terms for "servanthood" in the Hebrew Bible, involving an astonishing 1500 different occurrences.[243] While it is true that the language of "servanthood" does not automatically translate over into servant leadership (sometimes servant language actually becomes used by individuals as a term of power), we find that in the OT this servant language is used in particular to characterize the faithful leaders of God's people.

Two OT individuals were most frequently called God's servant: Moses and David. Moses is called "My servant" (e.g., Numbers 12:7–8), "the servant of the Lord" (e.g. Deuteronomy 34:5; Joshua 1:1); language of servanthood is employed of him over thirty times in the OT. David is referred to repeatedly by God as "My servant" (e.g., 2 Samuel 3:18; 1 Kings 11:13), and by the inspired biblical writer as "servant of the Lord" (Psalm 18:1); language of servanthood is used for David nearly sixty times in the OT.

It is instructive to note that when Joshua is first introduced in the narrative of the Pentateuch, he functions as Moses' "minister" (*mesharet*), a term that denotes the elevated status of those who are disciples of elect men of God.[244] In Joshua 1:1, after Moses' death, Moses is referred to as "[menial] servant [*'ebed*] of the Lord," while Joshua is still referred to as Moses' "[prime] minister" (*mesharet*). However, by the time of Joshua's death, Joshua is also called the Lord's "[menial] servant" (*'ebed*). Joshua came to embody the principles of servant leadership embodied by Moses.

Other OT figures were also called God's servant ("My [God's] Servant" or "His/Your [God's] Servant").[245] Still other OT individuals (figuratively) described themselves as "servant," or as ones who "served."[246] Individuals and groups "served" or "ministered" at the sanctuary/temple, beginning with Adam and Eve at the Eden sanctuary.[247] Other groups are metaphorically called "servants" or in situations portrayed as "serving."[248]

Finally, a number of biblical verses speak of the coming Messiah as God's Servant: the Messianic Servant as Branch (Zechariah 3:8) and as the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 42:1, 19; 49:5–7; 50:10; 52:13; 53:11).

The language of "servant[hood]" is used to describe some thirty-five named individual leaders and a total of over sixty different individuals or groups of people in the OT, spanning the entire scope of biblical history and including the full range of leaders in OT times: patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and his brothers, Job), prophets (Isaiah, Elijah, Elisha, Ahijah, Jonah, Daniel), priests (Adam and Eve, plus all the Aaronic priests and Levites who were to "serve"), judges (Samuel), kings (David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Nebuchadnezzar), various civil leaders (Ziba, Eliakim, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah), military figures (Caleb and Joshua, Uriah the Hittite), and many unnamed individuals who filled various offices and occupations and situations of service.

It is noteworthy how many women are noted as providing leadership, using explicit language of servanthood. They include such figures as Eve, Ruth, Hannah, Abigail, Bathsheba, the wise woman of Tekoa, and the wise woman of the city of Abel, in addition to those numerous unnamed women who served at the sanctuary or in other capacities. When females such as the wise woman of Tekoa and of the city of Abel spoke, they spoke with a voice of authority, and men listened. These OT women who are referred to by "servant" terminology, were recognized for their influential and far-reaching leadership in ancient Israel.[249]

Based on the usage and context of servant terminology in the OT, fundamental insights regarding servant leadership have emerged from my study, which may be summarized in the following points.

1. Old Testament Scripture contrasts two different forms of leadership: power (authoritarian, top-down, hierarchical) leadership and servant (bottom-up, inverse-hierarchical) leadership. The contrast between power leadership and servant leadership is dramatically illustrated in the counsel of elder and younger statesmen to young King Rehoboam as he takes office. The elder statesmen counsel the king to adopt a leadership style characterized by the attitude of service (1 Kings 12:7): "If you will be a servant to this people today, and will serve them and grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever." But the theory of the younger counselors "is that servant leadership will not work."[250] They counsel the king to exercise power leadership (1 Kings 12:10–11): "Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make *it* lighter for us'—But you

shall speak to them: 'My little *finger* is thicker than my father's loins! Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions!'" Unfortunately, King Rehoboam chose power leadership over servant leadership, as is evidenced by his response to the people, following the advice of the young men (1 Kings 12:13–14): "The king answered the people harshly… saying, 'My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.'" The results of this choice of power leadership are all too evident in the consequent breakup of the United Monarchy (1 Kings against God, see 1 Kings 12:21–33).

The contrast between two forms of leadership finds its ultimate basis in two contrasting root attitudes, as set forth in the book of Proverbs. Underlying servant leadership is the root attitude of a "servant's heart," whereas power leadership imbibes the root attitude of pride and a haughty spirit (Proverbs 11:2; 16:18; 29:23). It should be noted that those called of God, who were supposed to be functioning as servants of the Lord, who provided leadership in the OT community, did not always or necessarily evidence true servant leadership.

2. Servant leaders are those characterized by service to God and to others, possessing a servant's heart, and they need not be in a position or office of responsibility to exercise their leadership. Perhaps the most remarkable and greatest concentration of servant language in a single passage is used of Abigail in 1 Samuel 25. In this narrative we find a beautiful example of servant leadership as Abigail, wife of Nabal, speaks words of tact and wisdom to David:

> *She fell at his feet and said, "On me alone, my lord, be the blame; And please let your maidservant ['amah] speak to you, and listen to the words of your maidservant ['amah]…. Now let this gift which your maidservant [shipchah] has brought to my lord be given to the young men who accompany my lord. Please forgive the transgression of your maidservant ['amah]; for the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD; and evil will not be found in you all your days…. When the LORD deals well with my lord, then remember your maidservant ['amah]…. " Then David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me" …Then David sent a proposal to Abigail, to take her as his wife. When the servants of David came to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her, "David has sent us to you to take you as his wife." She arose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, "Behold, your maidservant ['amah] is a maid [shipchah] to wash the feet of my lord's servants ['ebed]" (1 Samuel 25:24, 27–28, 31–32, 39–41).*[251]

Abigail influenced David through her spirit of servanthood. She did not merely direct or order. Instead she exercised persuasion, exerting influence in a spirit of humility, and thus was providing leadership characterized as servant leadership.

3. There is a stark contrast between the [forced] service of the world and the [voluntary] service of God. In the context of Israel's Exodus from Egypt, the same Hebrew root *'bd* is used for Israelites serving (*'abad*) as slaves (*'ebed*) to Pharaoh in Egypt, and their serving (*'abad*) as servants (*'ebed*) of God after being delivered from Egyptian bondage. In the first case it was servitude (slavery) and in the second instance it was voluntary service. Later in Israel's history, God teaches this same lesson to His people, by allowing them to be attacked and subjugated

The ministry of servant leadership is a precious gift from God Himself.

by Egypt under Pharaoh Shishak and his army. God explicitly spells out the point He wants Israel to learn: "But they [the Israelites] will become his [Pharaoh Shishak's] slaves, so that they may learn the difference between My service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries" (2 Chronicles 12:8). The way of service to God is one of liberty, the way of service to the kingdoms of foreign nations is bondage.

4. Service is ultimately done to the Lord, but necessarily also involves serving the covenant community. On one hand we find clear indication in Scripture that the full-time workers for God were ultimately serving Him. Regarding the Levites, Moses writes: "At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord, to serve [*sharat*] Him, and to bless in His name until this day" (Deuteronomy 10:8; cf. Deuteronomy 17:2; 18:5, 7; 1 Chronicles 15:2; 23:13; 2 Chronicles 13:10; 29:11). On the other hand, Moses makes very clear to the Levites that they are serving the congregation: "the God of Israel has separated you from the rest of the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the service ['*abodah*] of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister to [*sharat*, 'serve' NKJV, NRSV, NJPS] them" (Numbers 16:9).

In later Israelite history, King Josiah summarizes this two-directional focus of service, as he addresses the Levites: "Now serve ['*abad*] the LORD your God and his people Israel" (2 Chronicles 35:3). Ezekiel juxtaposes this same duo-directional service: "Yet they [the Levites] shall be ministers [*sharat*, 'serve' NIV, 'servants' NJB] in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house and ministering [*sharat*, 'serving' NIV] in the house; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to [*sharat*, 'serve' NIV, NRSV, NJPS] them" (Ezekiel 44:11).

5. Service is a gift from God. God instructs Aaron the high priest and the other priests: "But you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything concerning the altar and inside the veil; and you are to perform service. I am giving you the priesthood as a bestowed service ['*avodat mattanah*, lit. 'service of gift']" (Numbers 18:7). Several modern versions emphasize this point by translating this latter clause: "I give your priesthood as a gift" (ESV, NIV, NRSV, etc.). The ministry of servant leadership is a precious gift from God Himself.

6. Servant leadership calls for a whole-hearted, willing-spirited, personal relationship with God. God evaluates the service of His servant Caleb: "But my servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it" (Numbers 14:24). David was called "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14) because of his whole-hearted commitment to divine service, despite his times of failure to live up to the divine ideal. David gave wise advice to his son Solomon about the kind of servanthood God desires: "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever" (1 Chronicles 28:9).

7. **The call and career of the servant leader is marked by humility and total dependence upon God, not self.** Hear the self-appraisal of Moses, the

servant of God: "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue" (Exodus 4:10). God's own evaluation of Moses coincides with His servant's self-testimony: "Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3). Solomon displayed this quality of humility as he took up the task of leadership over the people of Israel, as evidenced in his prayer: "Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not how to go out or come in. Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" (1 Kings 3:7–9).

Nowhere in scripture is the terminology of "servant" (*'ebed*) so concentrated in a large section of scripture as in the repeated references to "servant" in Isaiah 41–66 (a total of 31 occurrences). The individual Suffering Servant in Isaiah 42–53 is the Representative Israelite, the promised Messiah. The context and content of the four individual Servant Songs (42:1–9; 49:1–13; 50:4–11; and 52:13–53:12) clearly show the Servant to be the coming Messiah.[252] The NT witnesses regard these individual Songs as fulfilled in Jesus (Matthew 8:17; 12:18–21; Mark 10:45; Luke 2:32; 4:16–30; 22:37). The Messiah is the Servant Leader *par excellence.* Strikingly, the NT also recognizes that the life of the Messianic Servant provides a model of servant leadership for Christian leaders (see citations in Acts 13:47; 26:18; Romans 15:21; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Galatians 2:2; Philippians 2:16).[253] Profound principles for today's leaders emerge from Scripture's unparalleled concentration of servant language in the Isaianic Servant Songs.[254] It was amazing for me to find how the attitudes, attributes, and actions of the Messianic Servant consistently exemplify the bottom-up, inverted hierarchy established in Eden, and run counter to the top-down, "chain-of-command" hierarchy so often today equated with biblical authority.

C. Examples of OT Women in Public Ministry

Miriam. The daughter of Jochebed exhibits intelligence, diplomacy, and courage to speak to the Egyptian princess, cleverly suggesting a "nurse" for the baby in the basket (Exodus 2:1–10). Miriam may not have ever married; the OT includes no record of a husband or names of any children for her as it does for Moses and Aaron. Once the exodus from Egypt commences the focus of attention among most commentators centers on the lives of her two brothers, Moses and Aaron. Any regard ever granted Miriam concentrates on her errors. Thus this amazing woman's position during the exodus has been underestimated.

However, recent studies have begun to recognize the high profile and valuation of Miriam in Scripture.[255] In the book of Exodus the figure of Miriam is utilized by the narrator to bracket the exodus event: she appears at the bank of the Nile as the exodus account begins, and at the end of the story, on the bank of the Red Sea, she reappears (Exodus 2:1–10; 15:20–21)! Thus "the story of salvation of Israel delivered from Egyptian bondage begins and ends with Miriam.... Miriam's story brackets the salvation of the Lord! Israel's salvation from Egypt begins when Miriam saves Moses and it ends when Miriam sings her song."[256]

Miriam is presented as a prophet (Exodus 15:20), only the second person in the Pentateuch so designated thus far in its canonical form. At the crossing of the Red Sea one finds her in a dual

role as prophetess and musician at the side of her two brothers. The "Song of Moses" and the "Song of Miriam," are juxtaposed in Exodus 15— Moses' song starting with a first person jussive "I will sing to Yahweh" (v. 1), and Miriam's song commencing with a second person plural imperative "Sing to Yahweh" (v. 21). This juxtapositioning and specific use of verbal forms implies that "the song of Moses was meant to be a response to the invocation by the Song of Miriam."[257] Furthermore, such juxtaposition of songs indicates that "the prophet Miriam is included along with her fellow musicians, implying the concept of togetherness in the setting of the chorus of both genders and all statuses."[258] What is more, the antiphonal rendition of "The Song of Miriam" (Exodus 15:20–21) led by this inspired musician is reserved by the narrator to constitute the grand climax of the whole exodus story (Exodus 1–14).[259] Or stated differently, "the subtle emphasis on the importance of the roles of women in the fate of Moses…., and thereby the whole people of Israel, culminates in the duet of Moses and Miriam, where the reader is invited to remember and acknowledge the audacious roles of women, particularly Miriam."[260] Miriam's aesthetic performance as singer-dancer-percussionist has significant implications for her prominence, prestige, and power in Israel.[261]

Most of the passages in the Pentateuch which mention Miriam by name represent her as a leader.[262] Moreover, God himself insists through Micah (6:4) that she, along with her brothers, was divinely commissioned as a leader of Israel: "For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,

I redeemed you from the house of bondage; And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam."

Furthermore, the biblical record of Miriam's death (Numbers 20:1) highlights her prominence in the estimation of the narrator: most other named figures in the wilderness community disappear without mention. It is certainly not accidental that her death and the death of her two brothers coincide with the last three stops in the wilderness wandering.

Scripture also includes an indicative genealogical mention of her. First Chronicles 5:29 (ET 6:3) lists Miriam as a child (ben, lit. "son") of Amram. The fact that Miriam is mentioned among Amram's children (lit. "sons") in an entire chapter of fathers and male offspring surely confirms her prominence, implicitly underscoring her parallel status in religious leadership along with her two brothers.

Deborah. Deborah is set on center stage to reveal the high valuation of women by the narrator (and divine Author) in the book of Judges.[263] It cannot be overemphasized that the only judge described in any detail without mentioning serious character flaws (or pointing up how their life "went sour") was a woman![264] And "the only judge who combines all forms of leadership possible—religious, military, juridical, and poetical—is a woman"![265] That woman, Deborah, is introduced as "the woman/wife of Lapidoth" (Heb. *'eshet lappidot*), which, instead of referring to her husband's name, perhaps should be translated "woman of torches/lightning" or "spirited woman."[266] Male commentators of the past have often had a hard time with Deborah! Some have refused to recognize her as a true judge, suggesting Barak was the real judge; others focus on the battle as the real subject of the narrative and ignore Deborah's leadership as a woman; still others argue that she is only an exception, chosen by God as judge because he could not find a fit man available![267] Feminist interpreters of the Deborah narrative have also largely missed the mark, often seeing this as a text of empowerment for women and subversion of patriarchal oppression.[268] Most critical scholars see the narrative of Judges 4 in

contradiction with the ancient poem of Judges 5, and posit different redactional sources separated by a long interval of time.[269] Some conservative (including Adventist) writers who think the Bible forbids women from occupying leadership positions involving men make an effort to show that Deborah deferred to men: she was "not an abrasive or pushy woman" but rather "gave the man [Barak] the opportunity to take the honor of leading the nation to victory all for himself, but was not afraid or hesitant to help him in the leadership role when asked to do so…"[270]

In contrast to all these misreadings, I find the text straightforward, with the poetry highlighting and amplifying the narrative. In both narrative and poetry, Deborah is unequivocally presented as one of the most powerful woman leaders in the Bible. She is the recognized political leader of the nation, "one of Israel's chief executive officers."[271] She is the military leader on an equal footing with the male general Barak.[272] In fact, "the plot of Judges 4 signals the conceptuality of Deborah's predominant status and superior role in comparison with Barak. …Deborah is the initiator and Barak the reluctant follower. Deborah is the strategist and Barak the executor. Against this background the story develops with the subtle implication that the real heroic honor goes to the women, Deborah and Jael, as opposed to the men, Barak and Sisera."[273]

In the narrative of Judges 4 and the song that follows in Judges 5, "the reader finds an unusual and unexpected concept of the status of women, one that ironically surpasses that of men."[274] At the same time, there is compositional evidence in the narrative and accompanying poem of "teamwork and mutuality" between Deborah and Barak: "both leaders reveal their willingness to be open to and cooperate with each other. Together they build a team with mutual respect, communication, and correction. The only peculiarity is that in spite of the reciprocal relationship, Barak remains a follower."[275] Thus the texts ultimately imply "the concept of balance toward equality by means of the radical paradigm shift and role reversal between Deborah and Barak on the one hand, and through compositional effort to mention the two names together on the other."[276]

Deborah is a judge of the same stature as all the other judges in the book of Judges, one to whom men as well as women turned for legal counsel and divine instruction.[277] She is a prophetess, providing spiritual leadership in Israel. Contrary to a common modern claim, the role of prophet(ess) in Scripture entails leadership of men just as surely as the role of a teacher. Some seek to make a distinction between the prophet—who is only a messenger of God, and has unusual authority only because of being a prophet, with no leadership authority on his/her own to do more than deliver the prophetic message—and the teacher, who has an office of leadership authority to explain or apply the message.[278] But the prophetic witness throughout Scripture, including the narrative of Deborah, belies this false distinction, showing that if anything, the prophet has *more* authoritative leadership—including the authority to explain and apply the divine message—than the teacher.[279]

A nineteenth-century activist for woman's suffrage provided an apt summary analogy of Deborah's status when she noted that Deborah "appears to have been much the same as that of President of the United States with the additional functions of the judicial and religious offices of the nation. Hence this woman was President, Supreme Judge, and Right Reverend in the theocratic Republic of Israel."[280]

There is no indication in the Judges text that such female leadership of men as well as women in the

covenant community was looked upon as opposed to the divine will for women. "Deborah performs in this authoritative capacity normally and in all its complexity."[281]There is intertextual evidence that Deborah as "judge" was in fact an "elder" of Israel.[282] She calls herself a "mother in Israel" (Judges 5:7), which seems equivalent to the "father" imagery used as a "leadership title" in Israel (1 Samuel 10:12; 2 Kings 2:12).[283] Her role of "mother" is "not the soft, gentle, nurturing qualities that are often associated with maternity. Abruptly, we are pushed to associate mother and military commander."[284]

This juxtaposition of "woman of spirit" with "mother in Israel" is the same that appears in Prov 31 with the description of the *'eshet kayil* "woman of strength/valor," utilizing the term *khayil* "strength, might" that usually occurs in the depiction of military warriors.[285] In the public arena Deborah acts in relative independence of her husband (if she had one), son, or other male kinfolk. The Song of Deborah "celebrates the women who do not wait for sexual violence, capture, or death, women who do not wait to be acted upon, but who take action themselves." At the same time Deborah "does not stand over against the patriarchy."[286] This story is not about "*female* power directed against patriarchal oppression"[287] as so many have suggested. Patriarchy, according to the biblical ideal, is *not* oppressive of women: while providing the husband's protection of his wife in the home sphere, it does not prohibit women from assuming positions involving leadership of men in the public arena. Such examples of female community leadership are not numerous in the OT, since women's counsel, inspiration and leadership were focused upon the raising of her children in biblical times. Nonetheless, the leadership roles of women like Deborah in the covenant community, clearly accepted by society and given the blessing of God, reveal that such are not opposed to biblical patriarchy nor the divine will.

Women preachers during the time of David. Psalm 68:11—a verse unexplainably ignored in major treatments of women in the OT—embraces a most powerful affirmation of women as proclaimers of the word of the Lord: "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those who proclaimed it"! The thrust of this verse is largely overlooked perhaps because the feminine gender of "company" is obscured in most modern translations. However, the NASB catches the import of the Hebrew: "The Lord gives the command; the women who proclaim the *good* tidings are a great host"! Here is a portrait of women preacher-evangelists—a great host of them! And there is no hint of them being in their "proper subordinate position" under the leadership of men.

Exclusion of women leaders with the rise of the Monarchy under Solomon. Carol Meyers has set forth evidence suggesting that during the rise of the monarchy there entered both a systematic abuse of patriarchy and the exploitation of women.[288] God had warned of the dire consequences to the nation should Israel insist on having a king (1 Samuel 8). The king and his court—and not the patriarchal system—would become absolute in its control over the lives of the populace (vv. 11–18). God's prediction came true. With its "centralized mechanism for redistributing resources and for establishing a strong military presence" came a high price: it meant a "hierarchical structure" with "a complete break with the social, political principles on which tribal society is based."[289] It meant that "the locus of power moved from the family household, with its gender parity, to a public world of male control."[290]

This shift from patriarchy to state control is portrayed in the bureaucratic re-structuring of the kingdom carried out by Solomon accompanied by a demographic shift from rural areas to the cities

(1 Kings 9–10; 2 Chronicles 8–9). The wealthy wives of the urban bureaucrats no doubt led lives of leisure and boredom but lost the former parity with men in the maze of bureaucracies and political hierarchies; they are probably among the referents of the negative comments against women in the Prophets and Wisdom literature (especially Proverbs). There also developed a strong contrast between the upper and lower classes, with the inequalities that accompany such a situation. In the rural areas the egalitarian ideals were probably maintained for some time, although the restructuring of trade into a market economy and the burden of taxation and indenture certainly affected the patriarchal households there as well, especially by the 8th–7th cent. B.C.E. (see, e.g. Isaiah 1:17, 23; Micah 2:9).

The radical sociological shift which may be observed with the rise of Israel's monarchy is highlighted by an intertextual reference that seems to further confirm our suggestion made above regarding the interpretation of the word *mashal* ("to rule") in Genesis 3:16. There I proposed that it was God's intention for the mashal relationship be confined to the family setting, with the husband exercising servant leadership as necessary to preserve the unity and harmony of the home, and that there is no justification in the text for the *mashal* role of husband with regard to his wife to be extended to men in general in the public sphere. I find it significant that during the time of the Judges the people requested that Gideon *mashal* ("rule") over them, and Gideon refused, stating emphatically: "I will not rule [*māšal*] over you, nor shall my son rule [*mashal*] over you; the Lord shall rule [*mashal*] over you" (Judges 8:23). Even more significant, the first time Scripture utilizes the term mashal to describe someone in Israel ruling in the public sphere comes with the rise of the monarchy, in connection with the reign of Solomon: "So Solomon reigned [*mashal*] over all the kingdoms, from the River to the Land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt" (1 Kings 5:1).[291] It does not seem to be mere coincidence that the first extension of the mashal role from the husband in the family to the public arena of the covenant community is found with the rise of the monarchy and Solomon's political shift from patriarchy to state control. This intertextual linkage with Genesis 3:16 seems to indicate that although God condescended to work with the institution of the monarchy, at the same time such extension of the *mashal* role to the public arena was not His will for Israel. In such extension of the role of mashal to men in the wider covenant community, women inevitably suffered.

Despite the systematic abuse of patriarchy and the exploitation of women resulting from the establishment of the monarchy, women as a class were never deemed inferior in the Hebrew Bible, even during the time of the monarchy and beyond. The OT writers maintained the Edenic ideal and despite the moral degradation of society the biblical narrators continued to portray the dignity and value of womanhood, both by the narrative clues in the texts and by the employment of strong female imagery. Despite the monarchal setting in which male dominated, nonetheless women still occasionally appear in leadership roles—especially in the capacity of prophetesses and wisdom figures—implying a continuing "intrinsic acknowledgment of female worth and even authority."[292]

Wise women. Women of wisdom recorded by the biblical narrator during the early period of the monarchy include samples from various parts of the land and beyond. The woman of Tekoah in the south (2 Samuel 14:2–20), is specifically referred to by the narrator (v. 2) as a "wise woman" (*'ishah kakmah*),[293] and in her speech to David displays a perceptive understanding of the nature of justice and mercy and a grasp of exquisite literary techniques.[294] Note

also that she speaks with a voice of authority, and men listen![295] The wise woman of Abel in the far north of Israel (2 Samuel 20:14–22) likewise speaks with an authoritative voice, utilizing poetic speech (proverb), and men listen and obey![296] Her attributes include "sagacity, faithfulness, a commanding presence, and readily acknowledged influence with peers."[297] Note that the wise woman calls herself "a mother in Israel" (v. 19), perhaps modeling her role of deliverer at this juncture with that of Deborah who used the same title. The Queen of Sheba, who visits Solomon from Southern Arabia (1 Kings 10:1–13; cf. 2 Chronicles 9:1), is a "spectacularly colorful woman" who "travels freely and interacts with Solomon as an equal;"[298] she has been described as "Woman Wisdom, cast in narrative form."[299]

During the period of the monarchy the "great/notable"[300] woman of Shunem (2 Kings 4:8–37; 8:1–6), is presented as a woman of wealth and self-reliance.[301] Claudia Camp reaches for superlatives in her characterization of the Shunammite: "The portrayal of this unnamed woman is one of the most remarkable in the Bible. Both independent and maternal, powerful and pious, she brings to mind a number of other female characters, yet surpassed them all.[302] Camp emphasizes this woman's verbal skills and competence, and her initiative and self-reliance (in contrast to her husband)—"a self-sufficiency and an authority independent of motherhood."[303]Several studies argue that in the perspective of the narrator, this great women in some respects even overshadows the prophet Elisha with whom she interacts.[304]

Huldah. Narratives from the time of the monarchy also spotlight one woman of special divine calling, Huldah the prophetess (2 Kings 22:14–20). Against those who argue that God never calls women to an office which involves the authoritative teaching of men, note that when King Josiah commanded the priest and scribe to "Go, inquire of the Lord" (v. 13) regarding the discovery of the Book of the Law, they went to Huldah the female prophet for divine counsel, when the male prophets such as Jeremiah could have been consulted. A woman was chosen to authenticate that the scroll found in the temple was authoritative Scripture! According to 2 Kings 22:14, Huldah lived in Jerusalem in the *mišneh*, which most versions translate as the "Second Quarter," but the NJPS (Jewish translation) transliterates as "Mishneh" and the KJV translates as "college." This latter translation may actually represent the best one, inasmuch as some scholars have suggested that this term has reference to an academy perhaps even headed up by Huldah. This was apparently the view of early Judaism, who held Huldah in such high regard that the gates at the southern entrance of the Temple were named after her.[305]

Despite the few examples of notable women (mostly) in private life during the monarchy which have been surveyed, as pointed out above the institution of the monarchy, especially after its bureaucratization during the reign of Solomon, spelled the historical demise of any prominent place for (non-royal) women in public life. As Frymer-Kensky summarizes:

> *None of Israel's bureaucracies—the palace, the army, the law courts, even the 'Sages'—had any room for women. Once the state was consolidated, women had no role in the pyramid of power; they were not leaders outside the domestic sphere. They could still be wise, but they were no longer Wise Women. From the standpoint of political power, the days before the state were the good old days to women. Once the state was established, they could exercise considerable family power as wives and mothers—but only queens had an impact on the destiny of the nation.*[306]

Esther. The story of Esther indicates the estimate of human worth God places upon woman, and the qualities of leadership demonstrated by a woman.[307] In the providence of God (although the name God never appears in the book) Esther was indeed "come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14)—to be a savior of the Jews from the death decree of Haman under King Xerxes. Although Esther was of worth in the king's eyes because of her physical charm, yet according to the story, the ultimate value of her personhood was in her inner beauty—the character qualities of loyalty, courage, and obedience to God. The character of Esther is a model for life in a severe crisis. Michael Fox summarizes the author's shaping of the heroine Esther:

> *He respects Esther as a woman of courage and intelligence who does not abandon her dignity even when facing an enemy and struggling to influence the erratic will of a despotic husband. Moreover, the author depicts a successful relationship of power-sharing between male and female, in which both attain prestige and influence in the community. In the pivotal scene in ch. 4, man and woman each give each other mutual obedience. What is more, the book takes as its hero a woman whose importance to the Jewish people does not lie in childbearing; there are only a handful of such cases in the Bible.*[308]

Similarly, Sidnie Ann White concludes that "[Esther's] conduct throughout the story has been a masterpiece of feminine skill. From beginning to end, she does not make a misstep.... She is a model for the successful conduct of life in the often uncertain world of the Diaspora."[309]

Not only is Esther a model character; she is also a woman of influence and leadership. Starting out as a docile figure, "her personality grows in the course of the biblical story, as she moves from obeying to commanding. It is she who commands the fast, develops a plan and implements it. Ultimately she institutes the festival of Purim. Esther takes charge."[310] Esther's influence as a woman is also revealed by an emphasis upon her wisdom: the narrator makes use of intricate intertextual linkages between Esther and the Joseph narrative to present Esther as a wisdom heroine.[311] And finally, according to the epilogue of the book (9:16–32, esp. v. 32), Esther is "the one with the authority to codify and authenticate for later generations the celebratory practices begun by the Jewish populace at large."[312]

Women leaders in the time of Ezra-Nehemiah. Tamara Eskenazi presents important evidence (from the Elephantine papyri and Ezra-Nehemiah) that after the Babylonian exile with the dissolution of the monarchy there was a trend back toward gender parity and women in leadership on the part of the postexilic Jews.[313] Eskenazi shows how women in the 5th cent. B.C.E. Jewish community in Elephantine were able to divorce their husbands, buy and sell, inherit property even when there are sons, and even rise from slavery to an official temple role. Ezra-Nehemiah provides hints of a trend in this direction of gender parity and women of prominence in the contemporaneous community of Jerusalem: the probable mention of a female scribe (Ezra 2:55; Nehemiah 7:57), a clan which appropriated the mother's and not the father's family name (Ezra 2:61; Nehemiah 7:63), female as well as male singers (Ezra 2:65; Nehemiah 7:67), descendants of a possible famed princess Shelomith (Ezra 8:10; 1 Chronicles 3:19); women as well as men who repaired the walls of city (Nehemiah 3:12), and a woman prophetess Noadiah (Nehemiah 6:14).

In summary of this subsection, we may conclude that the pattern of Genesis 1–3 is continued in the remainder of the OT: the husband

As women were called and gifted by the Spirit for these positions of leadership, they were recognized and accepted by the covenant community.

servant-leadership model in the home is not broadened in order to bar women from positions of servant leadership in the covenant community. Despite a largely patriarchal society in OT times, and even despite the rise of the hierarchical structures of the monarchy, one finds numerous examples of women in public ministry, including positions involving leadership in the covenant community.

During OT times, there were eight major different kinds or positions of leadership according to God's ideal: (1) priests; (2) prophets; (3) elders; (4) judges; (5) military leader; (6) sages; (7) musicians/worship leaders; and (8) preachers/proclaimers of the Word. (I am omitting the position of monarchy/kingship, inasmuch as this was not God's original plan; He warned of the dire results of choosing a king, Deuteronomy 17:14–20; 1 Samuel 8–9.) It is important to notice that all eight of these positions of leadership were open to, and filled by, women, during some period of OT history! Women were (1) priests (Eve, and all Israelite women according to God's original plan in Exodus 19), (2) prophets (Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah), (3) elders (Deborah, and possibly some of the seventy elders), (4) judges (Deborah), (5) military leader (Deborah), (6) sages (the wise woman of Tekoah and of Abel, and Abigail), (7) musicians (Miriam and the musicians in the time of Ezra-Nehemiah), and (8) preachers (the great host of preachers in Psalm 68:11). The only position of leadership not open to women was that of monarch, an office which was not according to God's original will for Israel, and concerning which He warned would bring about an oppressive/hierarchical style of leadership. But note that in settings where a woman could be monarch, the wise foreign Queen of Sheba and the Jewish Queen Esther of Persia modeled sterling servant leadership.

There is no separation of the prophet, fulfilling a "non-headship" role, as opposed to or different from other positions of leadership where "headship" is apparent, as opponents of women's ordination often claim. All of the eight major positions of leadership in the OT approved by God were characterized by an inverse-hierarchical servant leadership style, and functioned (in God's original purpose) on the basis of Spirit-gifting. As women were called and gifted by the Spirit for these positions of leadership, they were recognized and accepted by the covenant community. At the same time the remedial provisions of patriarchy and male-dominated positions of leadership, and the hierarchical structures of the monarchy, prevented women from entering all the positions for which they might have been qualified, called, and Spirit-gifted. Thus the records of OT history indicate only a partial and imperfect return to God's original ideal for women in leadership.

VII. MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE ESCHATOLOGICAL FUTURE

The OT prophets announce that in the eschatological Day of the Lord, in connection with the coming of the Messiah, there will be radical changes in the status quo. The patriarchal society, and other remedial provisions of OT times, will give way to a new

social order which returns to the divine ideal for male-female relationships as in Eden before the Fall. Several startling predictions jolt us in this direction.

A. Jeremiah 31:22

Jeremiah makes an enigmatic but incredible statement about the eschatological Day of the Lord: "For the Lord has created a new thing in the earth—a woman shall encompass a man"! (Jeremiah 31:22) The last clause literally reads: "female [*neqebah*] surrounds [Poel impf. of *sabab*] (strong) man/warrior [*geber*]." The noun neqebah "female," which is the generic term for all females used in Genesis 1:27, is here "an inclusive and concluding referent" which "encompasses poetically all the specific female images of the poem…and it is other than all these images, for it is Yahweh's creation of a new thing in the land."[314] Kathleen M. O'Connor summarizes the possible interpretations and the profound implications:

> *Perhaps it refers to future sexual relationships in which women will be active agents in the procreation of a restored people. Perhaps it speaks of a society at peace so that women will be capable of protecting warriors. Or perhaps it anticipates role reversals of a different sort. What is clear is that the surprising new role of women symbolizes a changed order of relationships in a reconstituted and joyous society.*[315]

Does this passage, by its terminological allusions to the creation narrative in Genesis 1 (e.g., the use of key terms *neqebah* "female," *bara'* "create," and *erets* "earth", Genesis 1:1, 27), perhaps envision the reversal of the "curse" of Genesis 3:16 regarding the husband's "rule" over his wife, and announce the full return to the pre-Fall Edenic model in which there are no hierarchical relationships, and in which the female again takes a fully egalitarian position involving a reciprocal "encircling" the male with active protection and care, both in the home and in the covenant community (church)?[316]

Does the passage envision the reversal of other remedial gender structures of society, put into place by God as less-than-ideal provisions for a fallen humanity, such as patriarchy, and male-dominated positions of leadership, and a return to full reciprocity of public ministry, as in Eden when both Adam and Eve were officiating priests in the Garden Sanctuary?

B. Isaiah 61:6; 66:18–21

Isaiah 61 is a powerful portrait of the coming Messiah, announcing His salvific mission. The first four verses were chosen by Jesus to announce His public ministry (Luke 4:16-22). In verse 6, Isaiah announces to the people of Zion (v. 3) that in the Messianic Kingdom, "you shall be named the Priests of the Lord." Here is the unmistakable and incredible announcement of "the hitherto unrealized ideal of Exodus 19:6."[317] God's plan for the eschatological future included not just a few male priests, but all Israel, male and female, as "priests of the Lord."

But there is more. In the closing chapter of his book, Isaiah describes the eschatological gathering of all nations (Isaiah 66:18) at the time when God makes "the new heavens and the new earth" (v. 22). God's glory will be revealed among the Gentiles (v. 19), and Gentiles will come to Jerusalem, to God's holy mountain (v. 20). Then comes the "shocker." God announces: "And I will also take some of them [Gentiles] for priests and Levites." No longer will the priesthood be limited to a single family of a single tribe of Israel. The priesthood will include Gentiles. And there is no indication that all of these Gentiles will be male. There is an inclusiveness that extends the priesthood far beyond the sons of Aaron, and

far beyond all the people of Israel as "priests of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:6) Both Isaiah 61:6 and 66:18–21 "are anticipatory of the 'priesthood of all believers' in the New Testament."[318] The NT announces the fulfillment of these prophecies, in reestablishing the "priesthood of all believers", in which all the people of God, male and female, are considered "priests to our God" (Revelation 5:10; cf. 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6; 20:6).

C. Joel 2:28–29 (Hebrew Bible, 3:1–2)

In the context of the eschatological Day of the Lord (Joel 2:11–27), God gives an amazing promise regarding His repentant people:

> *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. (Joel 2:28–29 ESV [Hebrew Bible, 3:1–2])*

This prophecy harks back to the incident of the Spirit resting upon the seventy elders of Israel, when they all prophesied as a sign of their having received the gift of the Spirit (Numbers 11:24–30). At that time, two of the seventy elders were not personally present, but also received the gift of the Spirit. When Joshua, jealous for Moses' reputation, expressed his dismay at this development, Moses replied: "Are you zealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit on them!" (v. 29). It seems that Joel envisioned the future outpouring of the Spirit as the fulfillment of Moses' prayer.[319]

Joel was not predicting that all Israel in the future would necessarily have the full-time role of a prophet, any more than the seventy elders at the time of Moses became full-time prophets. They received an initial signal evidence of their spiritual gift of leadership when "the Spirit [*ha-ruakh*] rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did *so* again" (Numbers 11:25). The same was true when at Pentecost Peter announced the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy: all those in the upper room had the Spirit rest on them, and an initial signal evidence of the Spirit's outpouring was given: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). The fact that Joel particularly has in mind the Spirit-gifting of the OT elders (Numbers 11) may indicate the special fulfillment application of this prophecy to the Spirit-gifting of the elders in NT times. In such case, there is no dichotomy between the gifts of the Spirit and the office of elder for which believers (both men and women) are to be Spirit-gifted. Sharply distinguishing between and separating gifts and office is artificial and non-biblical.

Likewise, the reference to sons/daughters prophesying, young men seeing visions, and old men dreaming dreams, does not limit those gifts only to the segment of society to which they are attributed in the poetic passage. "The meaning of this rhetorical individualizing, is simply that their sons, daughters, old persons, and youths, would receive the Spirit of God with all its gifts."[320]

The primary emphasis in this passage is upon the universal inclusiveness and democratizing of the gift of the Spirit: no one will be excluded on the basis of gender, age, or social status.

> *The major characteristic of the outpouring of the Spirit is its universality. All the people of God receive the Spirit. The text specifically erases the major social distinctions of the ancient world: gender, age, and economic status. In an era in*

which men (not women), the old (not the young), and the landowners (not slaves) ruled society, Joel explicitly rejected all such distinctions as criteria for receiving the Holy Spirit. For Paul the fulfillment of this text is that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, and neither slave nor free (Galatians 3:28).[321]

In v. 30 (Hebrew 3:2), as in the previous verse, special emphasis is placed upon women as well as men: "It is perhaps noteworthy that Joel, in extending the promise of the Spirit to slaves, again asserts that both males and females will receive the gift. It is as though he wanted to insure that there be no possibility that a segment of society has been excluded."[322]

The reference to "all flesh" (*kol basar*) in v. 28 (Hebrew 3:1) refers primarily to the covenant nation (cf. the reference to "*your* sons and *your* daughters…, *your* old men…*your* young men"), meaning that within the nation limits of gender, age, and status are abolished. But note that the reference to "male and female servants" (v. 29 [Hebrews 3:2]) does not have contain possessive pronoun "your" and may well have included non-Jews. In fact, in this entire passage "we must not restrict the expression 'all flesh' to the members of the covenant nation, as most of the commentators have done. . . since it cannot be proved that the specification in verses 2 and 3 [English, 2:28] is intended to exhaust the idea of 'all flesh.'"[323] The climax of this passage, Joel 2:32 (Hebrews 3:5), clearly includes believers from all nations within its purview, as recognized by the apostle Paul (Romans 10:13).

The radical character of this prophecy is highlighted by Raymond Dillard:

It is important that the modern reader not miss the radical character of what Joel announces. In the world of ancient Israel, the free, older Jewish male stood at the top of the social structure: most of Israel's prophets had belonged to this group. Joel envisages a sociological overhaul: the distinctions between old and young ("your old men…your young men"), slave and free ("slaves and slave girls"), and male and female ("your sons and daughters," "slaves [masc.] and slave girls") are swept aside. This statement from Joel must be contrasted with the ancient daybreak prayer of the Jewish male: "I thank you God that I was not born a Gentile, a slave, or a woman."[324]

Hans Wolff speaks of this prophesied outpouring of the Spirit as introducing "an element of social revolution." He refers specifically to the Spirit gifting of male and female slaves. Not a single case appears in the OT where a slave receives the gift of prophecy. But "In the coming age they shall be incorporated fully into the community of the free, by being deigned worthy of the highest distinction along with all the rest…. Yahweh by his power wants to establish life in full community among those who are rootless and feeble…. Before the wealth of such an outpouring, all distinctions of sex and age recede completely, indeed even the contrasts of social position. Such is the future towards which Israel moves."[325]

The portrait is one of inverted hierarchy. "The new people of God no longer recognize privileged individuals."[326] The Messianic Age will introduce the quality of servant leadership that God had intended from the beginning, and the Messiah himself will rule as the Servant/Slave of the Lord (Isaiah 42–53)! All His followers will experience that inverted hierarchy where power and privilege and position give way to servanthood. Such is the experience that Jesus and the NT apostles and prophets announced was to be fulfilled in the NT covenant community!

CONCLUSIONS

The following major conclusions have emerged from our look at the OT materials:

Genesis 1–3 is foundational for understanding God's original and ideal plan for man-woman relationships.

Before the Fall Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, equal "in all things," including constitution, relationship, and function, without hierarchical gender role distinctions, but rather displaying mutual submission to one another. Male headship was not part of the creation order.

Adam and Eve's relationship before the Fall modeled the mutual submission of the Godhead in Their intra-divine deliberation among Equals to create humans.

The nature of human dominion/authority over animals before the Fall was one of "inverted hierarchy," or servant leadership, modeling the Godhead's submission in entrusting His authority over the earth to humans, and in giving humans freedom of choice.

The hierarchical relationship with asymmetrical submission on the part of Eve to Adam came only *after the Fall.* (This is in direct contradiction to the hierarchicalist interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12, which views Genesis 3:16 as reaffirming the pre-Fall hierarchical headship of Genesis 1–2.)

This hierarchical relationship depicted in Genesis 3:16 was a temporary remedial/redemptive measure, provided by God to Adam and Eve and succeeding generations so that union could be maintained and harmony preserved in their marriages.

The hierarchical remedial arrangement of Genesis 3:16 was limited to the marriage (husband-wife) relation, and not extended to general men-women relationships in the church.

The subjection of the wife to her husband was part of the divine judgment/curse; and the "plan of redemption" gives the race an opportunity and encouragement to reverse the "curse" and return to the original egalitarian plan for marriage whenever possible.

Throughout the OT the Genesis 3:16 pattern for husband-wife relations with the husband as servant leader in the home is not rejected, but in practice among God's people there is a trend (with many bumps along the way) toward gender parity in the marriage as in Eden before the Fall, as set forth in Genesis 2:24.

The Song of Songs is the pivotal OT inspired commentary on Genesis 1–3. This book highlights the divine call to return as far as possible to the original plan for egalitarian marriage, as in Eden, showing that such egalitarian relationship can be truly experienced after the Fall, through the divine empowering from "the Flame of Yahweh."

Adam and Eve were assigned by God the role of priesthood both before and after the Fall, without any hint of hierarchy of one over the other, thus implying that servant leadership is equally available to both men and women in the church.

The OT witness regarding male-female relations in the covenant community indicates that despite the patriarchal culture and divine condescension to the hardness of human hearts, the way back to the Edenic ideal for equality in gender relations was upheld in that all the various kinds or positions of leadership according to God's ideal were open to, and filled by, women: (1) priest, (2) prophet, (3) elder, (4) judge, (5) military leader, (6) sage, (7) musician/worship leader, and (8) preacher/proclaimer of the Word. Only the position of monarch was not open to women in Israel, but this was the one position not part of God's original plan, and concerning which He warned would bring about an oppressive, hierarchical style of leadership. Outside of Israel, however, women such as the Queen of Sheba and Esther ably filled the royal role.

The "return to Eden" movement in Scripture regarding gender relations is parallel to many other remedial provisions given by God for the hardness of human hearts in OT times, such as laws concerning clean and unclean foods, divorce, and slavery. The divine design of vegetarianism, permanence in marriage, and racial equality, given at the original creation, is the ultimate norm, with subsequent laws/practices prescribed or affirmed or tolerated by God as part of his redemptive program leading humanity back toward the Edenic paradigm. This "back to the beginning" principle, affirmed by Jesus Himself (Mattehw 19:8), does not allow culture to drive the church to unbiblical positions, but simply puts back into place what was God's will from the beginning. This is in radical contrast to homosexual practice, which was already rejected as part of the divine plan in Eden [Genesis 2:24], and was condemned univocally throughout the entire OT and NT witness, with no "back to the beginning" principle in operation.

The OT points forward to the eschatological future, when in the context of the coming of the Messiah, there will be radical changes in the status quo. The patriarchal society, and other remedial provisions of OT times, will give way to a new social order which returns to the divine ideal for male-female relationships as in Eden before the Fall. The "curse" of Genesis 3:16 will be totally reversed; all will become priests, including women and Gentiles; the Spirit will gift "all flesh", and limits of gender, age, and status will be abolished. All God's followers will experience the inverted hierarchy where power and privilege and position give way to servanthood.

The NT announces and describes the initial realization of this inspired OT vision of social revolution "back to the beginning" with the coming of Jesus and during the time of the NT church. Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church in these last days allow God to complete this upside-down revolution in our midst by recognizing and affirming, yes, ordaining, all those—including women— gifted by the Spirit for positions of leadership? ■

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ELLEN WHITE, WOMEN IN MINISTRY, AND THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

That Ellen White supported the involvement of women in various forms of ministry is well known and is not something that is debated among Seventh-day Adventists. Many publications, in particular *Daughters of God* and some sections of *Evangelism*,[1] have helped Adventists be more conscious of her thoughts on this subject. And today women are involved in all forms of ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Questions arise, however, as to the level of affirmation and recognition the church should give to these women in ministry. Should it be the same recognition as given to men involved in the same forms of ministry?

There are not many passages to turn to in Ellen White's writings to build a case for or against the ordination of women in the Seventh-day Adventist church—there is no precise "proof text" that says a woman can be ordained to become the senior pastor of a church or a conference president. Hence, many other issues and concepts are brought in, discussed and argued over to support the various perspectives on this issue. Furthermore, so many publications have been written on this subject during the last 40 years that I'm not sure any new thought or argument is now possible. But for the sake of those on this Study Committee who may not have read all the books and articles for and against women's ordination I offer the following thoughts and ideas.

What I would like to offer in this paper is that a careful consideration of Ellen White's thought on the role of women in the church, taken in its nineteenth-century context, her understanding of the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church, her counsels regarding ministry and its many functions taken in historical context, and her non-sacramental understanding of ordination and early Seventh-day Adventist practice of ordination, can support the case for allowing the ordination of women today. Ellen White supported the involvement of women in ministry but what is less known is the historical and social contexts in which she made these comments and why. Read in context, what she advocated takes on a new perspective that helps us understand that she was ahead of her time in many ways but also in sync with other movements that advocated giving women a more prominent role in society and in the church. The perspective I draw from Ellen White's writings encourages us to move ahead and stretch out the boundaries of our understanding of ministry and ordination, to step out in faith and to respond to God's leading in the involvement of women in ministry because we have a mission to finish.

1. ELLEN WHITE'S SUPPORT FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY

The Social Context

During her prophetic ministry, Ellen White not only addressed issues of doctrines and behavior to help prepare God's people for Jesus' second coming,

Denis Fortin
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Baltimore, July 2013

she also addressed issues of intrinsic evil in society. In her own ways she was an advocate of reforms, a social reformer, and at times she became insistent on these reforms. She readily espoused abolitionism and even advocated social disobedience in response to the federal government's *Fugitive Slave Act* of 1850.[2] She advocated temperance, the closing of saloons and taverns, and urged women to take a strong stand against the evils of alcohol in their homes and towns.[3] She advocated for health reform[4] and education reform.[5] Today, we benefit greatly from these reforms and we seldom think about the influence women like Ellen White had in making our society and church what it has become. To a large extent we have forgotten the social conditions in which our ancestors lived.

Early Adventists understood Paul's prophetic words in Galatians 3:28 that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ" as the seed of many reforms that led to the abolition of social evils like slavery, class distinctions based on birth rights, and gender exclusion in society and church. Early Adventists were thus abolitionists, social democrats and republicans in government. Given this historical and social context, we can say that to a large extent Ellen White was ahead of her time in advocating some of these reforms. But on the other hand, she was in step with her time and advocated reforms that many other Christian groups also advocated.

Also in this context is the role of women in society. In general, women had little influence in American society in the nineteenth century. Women could not vote. In many places they could not own property and their wellbeing often depended on a faithful husband or family relations. Few received an education beyond elementary school, and a very small number had a lifelong professional career. Social evils were particularly hard on women. Physical and sexual abuse was rampant, particularly in homes where alcoholism was a factor. Lack of adequate healthcare and poor hygiene deprived women of a good life and frequently caused the death of the mother and/or child in childbirth.

On the other hand, Ellen White was fortunate and blessed to have been raised in a good Christian home, with a devoted believing father who did not drink alcohol, and a mother who cared deeply for her family's spiritual and physical needs and provided them with an education. She knew first-hand the blessings to the parents, children, and by extension to the community, that such a home brings. In her own home, she replicated what she saw her parents do when she was a little girl. Ellen White understood the important role a godly woman could have in the home, in the community, and in the church.

Knowing the context of Ellen White's statements regarding the roles of women in society and in the church helps us also to define a clearer portrait of

Ellen White and her influence, and why she advocated these ideas. Today we have become familiar with many aspects of the roles of women in society and in the church, and we don't think about what life was like a hundred and fifty years ago. We read Ellen White's statements about women in ministry and we give an affirmative nod not realizing that when she stated these ideas she was perceived as pushing the boundaries of normalcy and even the boundaries of decency and propriety. Many men were not happy with her promotion of these ideas and many turned to the Bible to find arguments against the involvement of women. If today we have women in ministry as teachers, evangelists, pastors, administrators, treasurers, and chaplains, it is in part because Ellen White advocated for these roles in the church. And as a church we have followed her lead for over 130 years. Shall we go back on that history and undo this encouragement to women in ministry?

Women Speaking in Religious Meetings

As I've mentioned, a century ago women were not as involved in social or religious public life as they are today. In fact, it was sometimes an inappropriate novelty to see a woman speak in an assembly. Let's remember that Ellen White's first attempts in 1845 and 1846 at communicating the content of her first visions to groups of former Millerites were met with worrisome displeasure from her family. A single woman was not supposed to travel in those years, and even less speak in religious assemblies, unless she was accompanied by a family relation. It was felt unbecoming of her to do this and her behavior caused her family to be concerned about her reputation.[6]

Later in her life, Ellen White became very involved in the temperance movement in the United States. She became known as a good speaker at temperance rallies and drew large crowds of curious people who, in part, wanted to hear a woman speak. By the end of the nineteenth century it was still a novelty to hear a woman speak in public.[7] Many people objected to see women speak at religious meetings on the basis of Paul's two admonitions in 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 and 1 Timothy 2:12.

Two interesting anecdotes from Ellen White's ministry illustrate a few aspects of this context of women speaking in public and how she personally surmounted the resistance to her public ministry. In October 1870, during a tour of churches in the Midwest, James and Ellen White stopped at a gathering in Tipton, Indiana. In letters to her sons, Willie and Edson, she recounted her meeting with two Methodist women who came to hear her.

> *Tuesday afternoon [October 11] we left the encampment at Tipton. At the depot we were accosted by two ladies, members of the Methodist church, who had come for the purpose of speaking with me. One had been brought up a Friend, and still retained her "thee" and "thou." Both seemed to have had an experience in the things of religion. They were much pleased with my discourse Sunday afternoon. They, with other Christian women in the place, believed that woman can exert a powerful influence by public labor in the cause of God; but a large class, including the ministers of the several denominations, held that she was entirely out of her place in the desk.*
>
> *On learning that I was to speak at the campground, both parties determined to go and hear me, agreeing that if I proved myself able to expound the Scriptures to the edification of my hearers, the ministers should cease their opposition to woman's speaking, and, on the other hand, if my remarks failed to be edifying, the ladies would accept the ministers' views upon the point.*

These two ladies came to the meeting feeling that much was at stake. Said they, "We prayed earnestly that God would give you freedom and the power of His grace; and our expectations were more than realized. God helped you to speak. Such an impression was made on this community as was never known before. You have told us truths of which many were ignorant. All will have matter for serious thought. Prejudice against woman's speaking is gone. If the people had known that you would speak to the public, any of the churches in the place would gladly have opened their doors to you." These Christian women then urged us to stay and speak again, but we told them it was impossible. They also invited us to come to the Methodist camp meeting next year, promising us a good hearing. They then bade me Godspeed, and we parted.[8]

Ten years later, in a letter to her husband James, Ellen White recounted some of the activities she and other colleagues had been involved in near Oakland, California. Among many things, she told James the following.

Elder Haskell talked in the afternoon and his labors were well received. I had in the evening, it was stated, the largest congregation that had ever assembled at Arbuckle. The house was full. Many came from five to ten and twelve miles. The Lord gave me special power in speaking. The congregation listened as if spell-bound. Not one left the house although I talked above one hour. Before I commenced talking, Elder Haskell had a bit [piece] of paper that was handed (him) in quoting [a] certain text prohibiting women speaking in public. He took up the matter in a brief manner and very clearly expressed the meaning of the apostle's words. I understand it was a Cambelite [sic] who wrote the objection and it had been well circulated [among the audience] before it reached the desk; but Elder Haskell made it all plain before the people.[9]

These anecdotes illustrate a few important concepts for our discussion of women in ministry. First, it was a novelty in both Indiana and California to see a woman speak on religious matters and many people felt it was inappropriate. Yet, Ellen White noted that the attendance at both meetings was good, and in California the house was full and no one left the meeting even though she spoke for a long time. We should note as well that she did not see it as her task to argue with people who felt otherwise. She left the responsibility of defending her public ministry to others.

In both anecdotes, Ellen White refers to the opposition against having a woman speak and suggests that this opposition was at times biblically based. At the California meeting, she referred to a note being circulated in the congregation from a "Cambelite," that is a member from the Church of Christ of the restorationist Stone-Campbell movement, who quoted a certain text of scripture about women being prohibited from speaking in public. We are not told what that text was but we can guess that it was either 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 or 1 Timothy 2:12. Christians in the Stone-Campbell movement viewed these two texts as straightforward facts about women, without any need to interpret or understand Paul's context. They viewed Paul's admonition "let your women be silent" as a fact to be obeyed at all times and in all places. Two basic rules of interpretation that guided their study of the Bible—doing only what is specifically commanded or practiced in the New Testament, and paying attention to concrete words, not abstract principles or ideas—prevented the founder of their

movement, Alexander Campbell, from condemning slavery during the American Civil War (because the New Testament says nothing against slavery), but caused him to condemn women preachers (because the New Testament says women should be silent). In contrast, Adventists condemned slavery and encouraged women preachers.[10]

Ellen White mentioned to James that Stephen Haskell responded briefly to this "Cambelite" objection before she spoke and "very clearly expressed the meaning of the apostle's words." And it is obvious from the context that Ellen White concurred with this explanation.

What did Stephen Haskell say to this audience? What was his belief on this subject of women speaking in church or in public, of women doing ministry? What was his explanation that Ellen White agreed with? Through the 1860s and 1870s, a number of articles appeared in Adventist church publications, the *Review and Herald* and *Signs of the Times*, on this topic of women speaking in religious meetings. Having a woman prophet who spoke regularly in church assemblies and in public meetings was bound to raise some questions in regards to these two key texts of the New Testament, particularly also in the context that the Adventist and Stone-Campbell movements were in constant interactions in the Midwest in the nineteenth century. Three articles on this subject were published in 1879, during the year before this anecdote took place in Ellen White's ministry.

In January 1879, J. N. Andrews published a short article on women speaking in church in the *Review and Herald*. In this article, Andrews seeks to explain the two main texts used to prohibit women from speaking in church. His purpose is to show that a careful study of these texts cannot support this conclusion. In reference to 1 Corinthians 14:34–35, he explained that Paul's intent was to avoid confusion in the church and to urge women to stop chatting between themselves during the worship service. Hence, "what the apostle says to women in such a church as this, and in such a state of things, *is not to be taken as directions to all Christian women in other churches and in other times*, when and where such disorders do not exist." In regards to 1 Timothy 2:12, Andrews understands "this text to give Paul's general rule with regard to women as public teachers. But there are some exceptions to this general rule to be drawn even from Paul's writings, and from other scriptures." In fact, the evidence Andrews goes on to give indicates that this general rule is rather the exception and that women are free to labor in ministry.[11]

A few months later that same year, Andrews again published a brief article on this subject, this time in *Signs of the Times*. In response to an article he had read in another paper, which stated that women were not allowed to speak in early Christian churches, he explained that such a position did not concur with the testimony of the Old and New Testaments, and that Paul's remark in Galatians 3:28 was responsible for the "diffusive benevolence of Christianity" to counter the degradation that women had been subjected to in non-Christian societies. "The number of women of whom honorable mention is made for their labors in the gospel is not small. Now, in view of these facts, how can any man in this age of Bibles say that the Bible does not notice women, or give them a place in the work of God? The Lord chooses his own workers, and he does not judge as man judges. Man looks at the appearance; God judges the heart, and he never makes mistakes."[12]

One other article published before Ellen White's anecdotal event in California is an article published by her husband in the *Review and Herald*. While explaining the text in 1 Corinthians 14, James White

conceded that Paul may have referred to women participating in church business meetings but he took the firm position that this text did not refer to a prohibition for women to participate in worship services. Rather "Paul…places men and women side by side in the position and work of teaching and praying in the church of Christ." White also gave numerous examples of women who ministered for God in the Old and New Testaments to show that there is no such prohibition for women to labor for the gospel or to speak in church assemblies.[13]

The articles published in Adventist papers in this period took the position that what Paul referred to in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 had to do with particular situations in the local churches of his time. Paul's counsel regarding these situations was not applicable to all church congregations. Adventist pioneers did not understand Paul to be enouncing a general and universal ban on women speaking in religious meetings. Many of these articles also referred to many of Paul's female co-workers to state the obvious conclusion that Paul was therefore not speaking against women in ministry. Furthermore, none of these articles used the argument that a woman prophet (i.e. Ellen White) has a special dispensation from God to speak in church—an argument that is repeatedly used today to circumvent the misunderstood prohibition and to argue that women without a prophetic call from God should not be engaged in public speaking in religious meetings.

Somehow the history of our interpretation of these passages has been forgotten: one of our church founders was a woman and she spoke extensively in congregations. If this was the position taken by our church leaders 130 years ago in an era when women did not have social equality, I believe they would certainly favor women in ministry today and would see no reason to not include women in pastoral and other forms of church ministry. It is in this context that Ellen White encouraged women to be involved in many aspects of ministry because she genuinely believed that God calls women to ministry just as much as He calls men.

White also gave numerous examples of women who ministered for God in the Old and New Testaments to show that there is no such prohibition for women to labor for the gospel or to speak in church assemblies.

I also find it interesting that in her 70 years of ministry Ellen White never referred to or commented on 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 or 1 Timothy 2:12 to limit the ministry women can do in the church or society. Perhaps her silence speaks volumes as to the importance we should give to these two passages.

2. THE MEANING AND EXTENT OF MINISTRY

Another area of discussion is the level of involvement of women in church work and ministry. Can a woman do all the same activities or functions a man can do? Are there prohibitions, like the concept of male headship[14] and Paul's admonitions in his epistles, to the extent a woman can work for God in connection with church ministry? That leads us to ponder what Ellen White meant by ministry and a number of statements she penned while she lived in Australia in the 1890s are very instructive.

In 1898, Ellen White spoke quite forcibly about the need to remunerate fairly the spouses of pastors who do team ministry. Even if some men may not have felt comfortable with women doing ministry in partnership with their husbands and be remunerated for it, she argued, "this question is not for men to settle. The Lord has settled it." She went on to say that God is calling women to engage in ministry

In October 1899, Ellen White restated her conviction that women engaged in ministry should be paid adequately for their work.

and in some instances they will "do more good than the ministers who neglect to visit the flock of God." Emphatically she stated, "There are women who should labor in the gospel ministry."[15]

This statement immediately raises a question: what did Ellen White mean by "ministry"? Some argue that when she uses the word ministry in reference to men it refers to the gospel ministry of an ordained minister, and when she uses the word in reference to women it refers to other kinds of supportive ministry, like personal evangelism, visiting homes of the poor, teaching the Bible, or canvassing. I personally don't think such a clear distinction is entirely justified because the meaning of ministry changed in the first decades of the Adventist church and so did the practice of ordination and who received ordination. In the early decades of Adventist work, only the itinerant preacher, or evangelist, was ordained, and he was referred to as an ordained minister or "gospel minister." Ministry in that time period was focused on the work of the evangelist. With time, however, other kinds of tasks or functions became part of what ministry consists of. The work of Bible workers, literature evangelists, educators, publishing house editors and workers, and other administrators began to be included in the work of ministry for the church. And men in these functions, who at first were not ordained, started to be ordained. These changes and developments need to be part of our understanding of the context in which Ellen White wrote her words of encouragement to women in ministry.[16] Her encouragements to women help us see this change in the Adventist understanding of ministry, from a narrow meaning to a broad inclusion of many functions, and she consistently encourages women to join in all aspects of ministry. Her encouragements are inclusive and broad.

In 1879, Ellen White addressed a difficult situation at the South Lancaster church in Massachusetts. She felt the ministers working in that church or in the area had not been good leaders. One pastor had "a disposition to dictate and control matters." Knowing there were "humble, devoted women" in that congregation who had been sneered at by these ministers, she made this comment: "It is not always men who are best adapted to *the successful management of a church*. If faithful women have more deep piety and true devotion than men, *they could indeed by their prayers and their labors do more than men who are unconsecrated in heart and in life*."[17] In this early statement the ministry ordained ministers do includes management of a church and, in her opinion, women can have that ministry and be just as effective at it as men. Obviously, this statement does not call for the ordination of women but it is the beginning of a pattern in Ellen White's writings where we see her responding to some situations by inviting the leaders of the church to consider asking women do the work, or part of it, that ordained men do. This division of labor is for Ellen White conducive to facilitating the mission of the church.

Always close to Ellen White's heart was the work of literature evangelists, selling books filled with truth to those who were not acquainted with the three angels' messages. In 1880 she stated that literature evangelism was a good preparation for the work of ministers. "If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting our

publications before the public, thus leading them to search the Scriptures. Missionary work—introducing our publications into families, conversing, and praying with and for them—is a good work and one which will *educate men and women to do pastoral labor*."[18] In this context, she refers to ministry as "pastoral labor" and both men and women can prepare for it through literature evangelism.

Another similar inclusive encouragement to prepare for ministry through literature evangelism comes twenty years later. "All who desire an opportunity for true ministry, and who will give themselves unreservedly to God, will find in the canvassing work opportunities to speak upon many things pertaining to the future, immortal life. The experience thus gained will be of the greatest value to those who are fitting themselves for the *ministry*. It is the accompaniment of *the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God*."[19] This statement encourages both men and women to prepare themselves for ministry as pastors of churches.

One more statement from 1903.

> *The Lord calls upon those connected with our sanitariums, publishing houses, and schools to teach the youth to do evangelistic work.... Young men and young women who should be engaged in the ministry, in Bible work, and in the canvassing work should not be bound down to mechanical employment.... Some will be trained to enter the field as missionary nurses, some as canvassers, and some as gospel ministers.*[20]

In the last three statements, Ellen White particularly encourages young people to prepare themselves for ministry. Although she may have been aware that there would be limitations to what young women could do or be employed for by the church, she did not limit the options available to them. If somehow Ellen White believed that the concept of male headship restricts the ministry positions available for women, she had plenty of opportunities to clarify her thought. She never did. Instead, her encouragements to young women are consistently open-ended and inclusive as in this next statement in 1887.

While discussing the need to provide good, solid education to Adventist youth in our schools, she exhorted ministers, Sabbath School teachers and college teachers to do their best to "unite heart and soul and purpose in the work of saving our youth from ruin." The standard of education should not be lowered because "when suitable men are wanted to fill various positions of trust, they are rare; when women are wanted with well-balanced minds, with not a cheap style of education, but with an education fitting them *for any position of trust*, they are not easily found."[21]

A careful reflection of Ellen White's writings reveals another pattern in her counsels regarding the involvement of women in ministry: her counsels are also directed at women of all age groups over an entire lifespan. As we have just seen some of her counsels are addressed to young women and invite them to prepare themselves for ministry through good education and practical experience as in literature evangelism. Some counsels are addressed to mothers and earnestly entreats them to regard their homes as the greatest missionary field.[22] Other counsels are addressed to older men and women inviting them to even consider doing missionary work in areas where the gospel has not been preached.[23] And some counsels are directed at married women and spouses of ordained ministers.[24] While the home of a married couple can be blessed with children, sometimes the arrival of children may not be what is most desirable for that couple or for their ministry.[25]

For some women, Ellen White went so far as to recommend they postpone having children in order to allow them many years of useful gospel ministry as she favored ministerial and missionary teams of husband and wife. We will see the example of one such couple below in the last section of this paper.

In October 1899, Ellen White restated her conviction that women engaged in ministry should be paid adequately for their work. In this document it is not clear whether she is referring also to the spouses of ordained men, as she did in 1898, but her statement is nonetheless emphatic.

> Women, as well as men, are needed in the work that must be done. Those women who give themselves to the service of the Lord, who labor for the salvation of others by doing house-to-house work, which is as taxing as, and more taxing than standing before a congregation, should receive payment for their labor. If a man is worthy of his hire, so also is a woman.... The tithe should go to those who *labor in word and doctrine*, be they men or women.[26]

In this statement Ellen White distinguishes the work of the ordained minister who stands before a congregation and that of a woman who gives Bible studies in homes, but she also equalizes the value of both works by stating they are equally "taxing." Note also that she uses the words of Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17 to refer to the work of elders who "labor in word and doctrine" and uses them to refer to the ministry of women. Is this a clear hint on her part that the ministry of women is as important as that of men? In any case, although men and women do a different kind of ministry, they are equal in value, deserving of tithe support, and constitutive of the work of biblical elders.

3. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH AND ORDINATION

This last statement leads us to discuss the rite of ordination in the Adventist church and in the writings of Ellen White. If, guided by the Holy Spirit, further developments and changes were to come along in the Adventist church, would it be possible for women to be ordained to perform these functions of an elder and all these other functions of ministry men are ordained for and that Ellen White encourages women to do? Is there any indication that Ellen White favored their ordination to ministry? Did Ellen White state that ordinations should be limited to biblical precedents?

As already mentioned, in the 1890s and early 1900s, for the most part while laboring in Australia at a time when the needs for church workers were so large and opportunities for ministry so numerous, Ellen White wrote a few remarkable and significant statements regarding ministry and ordination. While she supported the traditional roles of pastor, elder and deacon, it is important to realize that she also recommended for ordination by the laying on of hands people serving in other forms of church ministry, since by then the concept of ministry had broadened to include a variety of activities. These areas of ministry for which she recommended ordination include women involved in personal ministry and other forms of ministry that are known today as chaplaincy, social work, counseling, and medicine. Her understanding of ordination and the rite of laying on of hands was grounded upon her beliefs that the dual purpose of the church is to spread the gospel and to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus Christ; therefore, forms of Christian ministry should be adaptable to the current needs, while remaining grounded on biblical principles, and include all Christians in active service. Understanding what Ellen White identified to be the purpose for the church and the meaning of the rite of laying on of hands is important for our discussion.

The Mission of the Church

One of Ellen White's basic ideas regarding the church is that it is the representative of God on earth.[27] Within the context of the great controversy theme, she believed that Christians are the instruments that God uses to witness to the universe that He is a God of love, mercy, and justice.[28] "God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will."[29] In this context, her comments about the church emphasize the pragmatic functions of the church, its role and purpose. Although ordained ministers, as servants of God and of the church, are no doubt to act as God's representatives on earth,[30] they are not the only ones. Every Christian has a role to play within the great controversy at the end of time and is a representative of Christ.[31] Indicative of her thoughts on this is the following passage written in 1904:

> *Brethren and sisters, how much work have you done for God during the past year? Do you think that it is those men only who have been ordained as gospel ministers that are to work for the uplifting of humanity? — No, no! Every one who names the name of Christ is expected by God to engage in this work. The hands of ordination may not have been laid upon you, but you are none the less God's messengers. If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, if you know his saving power, you can no more keep from telling this to some one else than you can keep the wind from blowing. You will have a word in season for him that is weary. You will guide the feet of the straying back to the fold. Your efforts to help others will be untiring, because God's Spirit is working in you.*

While in the Old Testament only certain men ordained to the priesthood could minister within the earthly sanctuary,[32] Ellen White believed that no one is ever restricted from serving God even though one is not an ordained minister. All Christians, regardless of their vocations, are servants of God and in a very broad sense all Christians have a ministry. Even though she never mentioned it as such, she nonetheless affirmed the Protestant concept of the priesthood of all believers. Two passages of Scripture are foremost in her understanding of this concept. The first is 1 Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (RSV).[33] The second is John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you." Many times she referred to or quoted parts of these passages in support of dedicated Christian service and to insist that all Christians are called, commissioned or ordained by God to serve Him.[34]

This concept of the priesthood of all believers underlies her understanding of both Christian service and ordination. Throughout her ministry, Ellen White made repeated appeals to church members to engage in wholehearted Christian service. According to her, it is a fatal mistake to believe that only ordained ministers are workers for God and to rely solely on them to accomplish the mission of the church.[35] "All who are ordained [i.e. baptized] unto the life of Christ are ordained [i.e. called] to work for the salvation of their fellow-men."[36] "Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour's commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands."[37] In a very real

sense, every Christian is thus a minister for God.[38]

Consequently, Christ calls and spiritually ordains every Christian for ministry. Emphatically, Ellen White asked, "Have you tasted of the powers of the world to come? Have you been eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God? Then, although ministerial hands may not have been laid upon you in ordination, Christ has laid His hands upon you and has said: 'Ye are My witnesses.'"[39] Thus, she could state, "many souls will be saved through the labors of men who have looked to Jesus for their ordination and orders."[40] Church ordination, therefore, is not a prerequisite to serve God because it is first the Holy Spirit who gives fitness for service to Christians who in faith are willing to serve.[41]

I believe this is how she also understood her own call to ministry. Although she was never ordained as a minister by the Seventh-day Adventist church, she believed that God himself had ordained her to her prophetic ministry, a spiritual ordination that was by far superior to any forms of human ordination. In her later years, while recalling her experience in the Millerite movement and her first vision, she stated, "In the city of Portland, the Lord ordained me as His messenger, and here my first labors were given to the cause of present truth."[42]

From these passages we can draw two initial conclusions concerning Ellen White's underlying thoughts on ordination. First, Ellen White's concept of the priesthood of all believers is the fundamental qualification for Christian service; every Christian is intrinsically a servant of God. Second, in a spiritual sense, God ordains every Christian to service.

The Ordination of Paul and Barnabas

A number of passages in Ellen White's writings give us significant thoughts on the meaning of ordination and in all of them the primary focus of the discussion is the role ordination plays in furthering the evangelistic mission of the church. These passages include her commentary on the ordination of Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13.

God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in order that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry. Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel.

Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God.

To the Jew this form was a significant one. When a Jewish father blessed his children, he laid his hands reverently upon their heads. When an animal was devoted to sacrifice, the hand of the one invested with priestly authority was laid upon the head of the victim. And when the ministers of the church of believers in Antioch laid their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, they, by that action, asked God to bestow His blessing upon the chosen apostles in their devotion to the specific work to which they had been appointed.

At a later date the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands was greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as if a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work. But in the setting apart of these two apostles, there is no record indicating that any virtue was imparted by the mere act of laying on of hands. There is only the simple record of their ordination and of the bearing that it had on their future work.[43]

Some significant insights about ordination appear in this story. First, Ellen White acknowledged that there is a calling and spiritual appointment before the church ordains someone, and ordination is a public recognition of this prior divine appointment. This, we have already seen, concurs with her understanding of the spiritual ordination of all believers. Second, she also stated that the rite of ordination does not in itself qualify someone for an office or task, this qualifying has already happened through the work of the Holy Spirit in one's life and ministry; rather, ordination is to be understood as a form of appointment to an office and a recognition that this person is given the authority to perform that office. Third, ordination is also a rite during which the congregation asks "God to bestow *His blessing* upon the chosen apostles". Fourth, ordination is for a *specific work* and is not meant to "immediately" qualify someone "for any and all ministerial work."[44] This implies there is room for various kinds of laying on of hands, for various kinds of work, ministry, functions or offices, each with specific responsibilities and, therefore, attending authority.

There is a world to be warned and a people to be prepared for the second coming of Christ, and those who are thus spiritually qualified should be entrusted with their mission, affirmed, and blessed by the church's laying on of hands.

In this context, as we will see below, it is now possible to understand why Ellen White allowed for the church to decide whether some people, other than gospel ministers or itinerant preachers, could be ordained by the laying on of hands for other ministries. If one allows for a missionary understanding of the role of the church, then ordination is also a functional rite to affirm and commission individuals for various ministries and responsibilities that further the mission of the church. There is a world to be warned and a people to be prepared for the second coming of Christ, and those who are thus spiritually qualified should be entrusted with their mission, affirmed, and blessed by the church's laying on of hands.

Ordination of Early Adventist Ministers

Very early in Seventh-day Adventist history, the leading pioneers of the movement felt concerned about the confusion and false teachings that were manifested sometimes among the small group of Sabbatarian Adventist believers. Following the example of New Testament apostles who had set apart elders to oversee local congregations against false teachings and to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, these early Adventist leaders selected promising men and set them apart with prayer and laying on of hands. The criterion for their ordination was the "full proof" evidence "that they have received their commission from God." By ordaining them the group of believers "would show the sanction of the church to their going forth as messengers to carry the most solemn message ever given to men."[45] The ordination of these early Adventist itinerant preachers served as a rite to authorize them to speak on behalf of the church and to preserve order in the emerging church.

Ordination to Other Forms of Ministry

Ellen White earnestly believed that the ordained pastoral ministry alone was not sufficient to fulfill God's commission, that God is calling Christians of all professions to dedicate their lives to his service.[46]

Since the church can acknowledge different kinds of spiritual gifts and ministries beyond those of pastor, elder and deacon to meet the needs of the people, she favored the setting apart of trained professionals, including medical missionaries and those who today would be referred to as chaplains and social workers, by the laying on of hands. Among these groups of ministers, and given a broader definition of what ministry is, would be women who are engaged in personal evangelism. Strictly speaking, these two recommendations do not have biblical precedents but they are possible given her understanding of ministry and ordination.

In 1908, in a manuscript to encourage the mission of Adventist medical institutions, Ellen White wrote about the need for cooperation between gospel workers and medical doctors in Adventist medical institutions. Her desire was to see the medical work of the church as the right arm of the church's evangelistic efforts, and she understood that pastors and medical workers were both essential to this work. She considered the work of the medical profession as a great means for proclaiming the gospel and, for this reason she believed medical missionaries ought to be set apart for God's service. In respect to this, she wrote:

> *The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work. It includes prayer and the laying on of hands; he therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work as is the minister of the gospel. Those who are selected to act the part of missionary physicians, are to be set apart as such. This will strengthen them against the temptation to withdraw from the sanitarium work to engage in private practice.*[47]

Ellen White believed that the work of the medical profession is a ministry for proclaiming the gospel. She saw a correlation between the setting apart of the medical missionary and the minister of the gospel and viewed the ceremony of the laying on of hands upon medical missionaries to be a form of ordination. In this ceremony, as with ordination to the more traditional offices of the church, the church acknowledges the blessings of God upon the medical profession and its practitioners, and this recognition by the church serves to strengthen the dedication of the worker in his or her service for God.

In a similar context, in 1895, Ellen White wrote a long article about the work of lay people in local churches. She urged ministers to let lay people work for the church and train them to do so. And she favored that women serving in local ministry also be set apart for the evangelism they do, a work that today would be identified with Bible workers, chaplains and social workers. She counseled:

> *Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor.* ***They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands.*** *In some cases they will need to counsel with the church officers or the minister; but if they are devoted women, maintaining a vital connection with God, they will be a power for good in the church.* ***This is another means of strengthening and building up the church. We need to branch out more in our methods of labor.***[48]

Here Ellen White counseled that God is leading the church in setting apart women for these various forms of ministry. It is God's will for the church to branch out, be strengthened and built up by ordaining women and men to serve in the various

forms of gospel ministry and to provide care for the mental, physical and spiritual needs of others. Her understanding of ministry is broad as is her understanding of ordination. Ordination in this context is both asking God's blessing on the individuals and affirming their ministry for the church.

Some have argued that since Ellen White does not use the word ordination in these two examples it should not be implied that she is referring to ordination to ministry, but that she refers only to a kind of spiritual affirmation of some lower types of ministry, like the work of deaconesses in local churches. While this may have been the case in her day, today in most Adventist churches these three types of ministry she mentions are usually done by ordained male pastors or elders, depending on the size of the congregation.

In both examples, Ellen White uses the same words Luke used in Acts 13 to describe Paul and Barnabas' ordination: they were set apart with prayer and laying on of hands. (By the way, Luke does not use the word ordination either.) In her reflection on the ordination of the first Sabbatarian Adventist ministers, she does not use the word ordination but refers to setting apart and commission; yet, we naturally accept that she is referring to ordination. If Ellen White can describe these events as ordinations, we can certainly say her reference to medical missionaries and women being set apart with prayer and laying on of hands are also referring to ordination. What matters here is not whether one event is an ordination and the other is not, on the basis of the presence or absence of the word ordination in her writings; they all refer to the same rite of laying on of hands. Instead of limiting our understanding of what ordination is and for whom it is valid, we need to broaden our understanding to include a variety of meanings and circumstances as Ellen White invited us to do. And, furthermore, her comment regarding the ordination of medical missionaries is obviously stating that in her mind there is only one kind of laying on of hands: "he [the medical missionary] therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work *as is the minister of the gospel*." All these comments give us the picture that Ellen White that her non-sacramental and functional use of the word ordination is better described by the words affirmation and commissioning than by the sacramentally loaded word ordination. Thus, with this context and meaning in mind, her view of the laying on of hands can be and is gender inclusive.

These two statements also support what we saw earlier, that for Ellen White ministry is to be understood in broad terms and cannot be limited only to the work of an itinerant preacher or church pastor. Earlier, in our discussion of her comments about the need to have more women join ministry with their husbands and her invitation to women to be educated for ministry, her statements are clear that whether one is preaching a series of evangelistic meetings or giving a sermon on Sabbath morning, giving Bible studies in homes, or visiting families in need, all these activities are qualified as gospel or pastoral ministry. She invited and urged both men and women to be involved in ministry. She understood that these women "are recognized by God as being as necessary to the work of ministry as their husbands."[49] Consequently, she approved of their labor in the gospel ministry, noting: "Again and again the Lord has shown me that women teachers are just as greatly needed to do the work to which He has appointed them as are men."[50] Ellen White urged the church to recognize God's call to women by the laying on of hands so that the ministry of the church might be more diversified and complete in both its message and its mission. This picture is also framed in the context of mission. She was passionate about the salvation of the lost and she

felt strongly that all Adventist men and women be active in all facets of ministry. While her concern was missiological (accomplishing the mission of the church), ours has become ecclesiological (determining who has authority in the church).

Some may consider these thoughts somewhat radical and a rupture with the New Testament teaching on the ordination of deacons, elders, and pastors. However, what allowed Ellen White to see the laying on of hands in this broader sense is her non-sacramental, functional view of ordination. Although it symbolizes the giving of church authority, ordination is not primarily for the purpose of granting authority—in our denomination, church assemblies, committees, and boards do this. Ordination affirms the spiritual gifts God has given to a person and invites God's blessings on this person's ministry. Such an affirmation is in her view inclusive of males and females and is not to be limited to the ministries of deacons, elders, and pastors. The organization of the church is to be adaptable to the needs of the church wherever it is located in the world so that all may hear the message of God's salvation in his or her own language and culture. Ordination and the laying on of hands is a means to bless people in ministry and to encourage them to do their ministry with the church's affirmation. She did not view ordination as a sacrament to be given to only to a few men in the church, who form a cohort or caste of spiritually endowed ministers, and who have sole authority to lead the church.

One more anecdote further illustrates Ellen White's non-sacramental view of ordination. In 1873, John Tay joined the Seventh-day Adventist church and soon felt called by God to volunteer his time as a missionary in the South Pacific. In 1886, he landed on the island of Pitcairn and succeeded by God's grace in converting the entire population. But not being an ordained minister, he was not authorized to baptize the people on the island who accepted the three angels' messages.[51] Ten years later, Ellen White commented on this event and had this to say.

> *Another thing I want to tell you that I know from the light as given me: it has been a great mistake that men go out, knowing they are children of God, like Brother Tay, [who] went to Pitcairn as a missionary to do work, [but] that man did not feel at liberty to baptize because he had not been ordained. That is not any of God's arrangements; it is man's fixing. When men go out with the burden of the work and to bring souls into the truth, those men are ordained of God, [even] if [they] never have a touch of ceremony of ordination. To say [they] shall not baptize when there is nobody else, [is wrong]. If there is a minister in reach, all right, then they should seek for the ordained minister to do the baptizing, but when the Lord works with a man to bring out a soul here and there, and they know not when the opportunity will come that these precious souls can be baptized, why he should not question about the matter, he should baptize these souls.*[52]

It is an interesting comment for Ellen White to say that the idea that only an ordained minister can perform baptism, even in special circumstances, "is not any of God's arrangement; it is man's fixing." Perhaps she overstated her response to what happened. But nonetheless, there is something in her understanding of ministry and ordination that leads her to say this. In this case, ministry is viewed as non-hierarchical and ordination is viewed as an affirmation of God's prior spiritual ordination. Her passion for saving the lost is strong and human church limitations on what a layperson can do should not hinder the salvation of souls. If there are

such limitations, even as to prevent baptism in the absence of an ordained minister, they are "man's fixing."

Admittedly, and to be fair, she did support the broader principle of unity and church order and agreed that ordination functions as a rite to show that ministers receive authority to work for the church. But if ordination is seen as a way to establish some hierarchy to keep lay people in their lower places, it is obvious here that she did not support such a view. She objected to the idea that *only* ordained ministers can represent the church as their exclusive rights and function. Clearly, in her mind, the link between ordination and granting church authority is somewhat fluid and ordination is more akin to a commissioning to do God's service for the church.

4. CONTEXT AND HERMENEUTICS

The question of the ordination of women is also a question of hermeneutics and how we understand the relevance and authoritative nature of the writings of Ellen White on this issue. I have attempted so far to present her broad understanding of ministry with multi-faceted functions and tasks, and her broad understanding of ordination as a function of the church to affirm and commission men and women to various forms of ministries and responsibilities. These views of ministry and ordination open avenues that the traditional Catholic sacrament of ordination cannot allow.

It is true that Ellen White did not specifically say that women could be ordained to become senior pastors of churches or conference presidents. But the interpretation of her writings must be done within the circumstances and times she wrote. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women in general did not occupy leadership functions in churches and society. However, she encouraged women to be active in a multitude of functions and ministries, and believed that with the proper education, women could occupy "any position of trust."[53] Therefore, to limit our current practices to only what the church allowed in her day is not automatically in agreement with her thought.

The interpretation of Ellen White's testimonies and writings cannot be static because we must understand the times and circumstances that led her to say what she did, and learn from them principles to guide our thinking and actions today. A statement written many years ago may not necessarily have the same force and relevance today as it did then. Attempting to explain how to use her writings, she stated in 1911 that the context of her thought is very important: "Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered."[54]

An example of this is the question of the proper age for school entrance—an idea debated among Adventists a hundred years ago. In 1872, Ellen White had written that "parents should be the only teachers of their children until they have reached eight or ten years of age."[55] Many Adventists took this statement as an unvarying rule for the age of entrance into Seventh-day Adventist schools and when in 1904, upon their return to the United States, her son W. C. White and his wife Ethel wished to enter their young children in the newly established school in St. Helena, California, the school administration refused to take their children on the basis of Ellen White's statement. When she was asked about this, however, she explained that when this counsel was given there were no Adventist schools yet and her counsel had specific reference to the "common" [public] schools. Children younger than 9 or 10 were not prepared to discern and resist the temptations they would meet in the public schools. As the Adventist school system became more extensive,

Rather than limiting ordination to men only, her comments open the door to women being ordained as well.

she advised students of all ages to attend Adventist schools wherever they were available.[56] She advised using "common sense" in this regard and not to make her comments on entrance age an unbending rule and thus miss the underlying principle.[57]

The Ordination of Some of Our Pioneers

This anecdote illustrates that we must take carefully into consideration the historical context of Ellen White's writings before coming to any conclusions. One very human tendency is to superimpose our current understanding of issues on prior statements in the writings of Ellen White. Let me illustrate one major problem I see happening today: through the years we have changed our practice regarding the ordination of men but we have not been willing to do the same for women.

George I. Butler became president of the Iowa Conference in June 1865 even though he had "no experience as a preacher." It was not until June 1867, that he received a ministerial license, and then ordained later that year in September. "Interestingly," notes Denis Kaiser, "even after he had been elected conference president, the church saw no need to hurry his ordination, as they apparently did not see it as necessary prior to him beginning his service as president."[58] Similarly, Uriah Smith became editor of the *Review and Herald* in 1855, secretary of the General Conference in 1863, and president of the Michigan Conference also in 1863, a position he served in intermittently until 1872. He was not ordained until 1874.

Early Seventh-day Adventists ordained only the ministers among them who had given evidence that they were good evangelists or itinerant preachers. Ordination was a recognition of their gifts and that the church authorized them to be spokesmen for the truth. Those who were not itinerant preachers were not ordained even if they served the church in some capacity. As we grew in numbers and diversified our ministries, the role of ministers changed and those who had responsibilities in the church were also ordained, irrespective of whether they had been itinerant preachers. So our practice of male ordination has evolved since the time of Ellen White to be more inclusive of other male forms of ministry.

The ordination of W. W. Prescott in 1889 is an illustration of that development. Prescott had never worked as a pastor or evangelist, yet during his service as president of Battle Creek College and education secretary of the General Conference, church leaders noticed the fruits of his educational work and his powerful preaching abilities. They were convinced of his divine calling and decided to ordain him in 1889. He counseled with Ellen White about his doubts and whether he should accept ordination. "If he could serve the cause of God any better in receiving ordination and credentials," she surmised, "it would be best" for him to be ordained.[59]

We should note that the elections of Butler and Smith to their functions would likely not be allowed today with our current church policies. But, in all honesty, that is not an entirely fair historical judgment or interpretation. If Elders Butler and Smith were working for the church today, they would have been ordained by the time they were asked to serve in their functions or would be ordained immediately upon being voted into a function. Our times and practices are different from those of our pioneers and we cannot make direct comparisons and links. We can learn from the past but our present

is different. Who receives ordination today is based on our current understanding of ministry and it is different from what our pioneers understood ministry to be and thus who can be ordained. This also indicates that as we age we are following in the footsteps of many other denominations, and we are giving more and more attention to church structures and ecclesiastical roles, to who has authority within a hierarchy. Our pioneers did not have this preoccupation at first.

If this is what has happened with the development of the practice of ordination for men in ministry, how about the development of the practice of ordination for women in ministry? Why should such a development remain stagnant? In 1895, Ellen White recommended the ordination of women who were involved in visiting the sick, looking after the young, and ministering to the necessities of the poor. Even though some have argued that this ordination referred to the limited role of a deaconess in Ellen White's day, men who do the same functions today are now ordained as ministers or elders. In the 1860s and 1870s, men who did these same activities in local churches would also have been ordained as deacons. But now they are ordained as elders and ministers. Should we not ordain women as ministers or elders as well if they do the same functions as their male counterparts? If it is possible to allow for the development of the practice of ordination for men, why not allow the same for women? These are serious questions that must take into consideration the historical context of Ellen White's writings and our own current context.

If Ellen White was so willing to encourage women in various forms of ministry in the 1890s and 1900s, in a society and context in which women were not encouraged to do so, it is because she believed in a broad gender inclusive ministry to warn a dying world of Christ's soon coming. While she was not concerned with the women's rights movement of her day, she was concerned about all Seventh-day Adventists joining together to spread the gospel. And today to limit what women can do in the church on the basis of only what the church allowed women to do in her day or on the basis of the limited options for ministry she offered women in those years is taking her comments out of context, a context in which she encouraged progressive and innovative approaches to ministry. Rather than limiting ordination to men only, her comments open the door to women being ordained as well.

C. C. Crisler's Interpretation

In March 1916, a few months after Ellen White died, her secretary C. C. Crisler received a letter from a sister Cox in Texas asking him for Ellen White's opinion and counsel regarding the ordination of women as referred to in the *Review and Herald* article of July 1895.[60] Although he did not presume to interpret what Ellen White meant, he ventured to say that "this article published in the *Review* does not refer to the ordination of women as ministers of the gospel, but rather touches upon the question of setting apart, for special duties in local churches, God-fearing women [as deaconesses] in such churches where circumstances call for such action." He added that "Sister White, personally, was very careful about expressing herself in any wise as to the advisability of ordaining women as gospel ministers. She has often spoken of the perils that such general practice would expose the church to by a gainsaying world;...This is not suggesting, much less saying, that no women are fitted for such public labor, and that none should ever be ordained; it is simply saying that so far as my knowledge extends, Sister White never encouraged church officials to depart from the general customs of the church in those matters."[61]

Crisler's comments are interesting in a number of ways. First, he refrains from using the word ordination to refer to this action, calling it simply, as Ellen White did, a setting apart and thus attributes much to the absence of the word ordination in this counsel. He also describes these women as doing the work of deaconesses in some local churches where they would be set apart. This in itself would show that these women were undertaking a new kind of ministry not performed heretofore by the average deaconess. Another comment that stands out is Crisler's opinion that Ellen White did not encourage church officials to depart from the church's general customs on this practice and that she was concerned about what people would say regarding such an uncommon practice. Ellen White was careful that the church not expose itself to "a gainsaying world." Although he may have been privy to some information we no longer have, there is no evidence that Ellen White counseled church leaders not to ordain women ministers. Also Crisler believed that the ordination of women to ministry had not been on Ellen White's agenda because she was afraid of what the world would say or that some churches would use this new practice as a way of disparaging the Seventh-day Adventist message.

Crisler's depiction of Ellen White's hesitant role or soft advocacy in some issues is accurate. While she was an uncompromising reformer on some social issues (e.g. temperance and education), in some other areas, she was soft spoken, not willing to raise opposition for the sake of it. When advocating a particular style of reform dress in the 1850s, she encountered some opposition and ridicule that made her back away from her advocacy. On this issue she was careful and measured, and did not wish the health reform message be hijacked by a secondary issue. Her funny-looking reform dress was finally discarded not because it was not a good idea, but because it was too radical for some people. People made fun of it and discarded her counsels. What mattered was for women to be better dressed; the style and shape of the dress was secondary. The same can be said of her advocacy for the involvement of women in ministry. She was not interested in displacing men from the traditional roles they have had in the family, church and society. Her thought naturally implies that because of their family and social roles, husbands/fathers will tend predominantly to work outside the home and will be more numerous in leadership roles, while wives/mothers will tend to care for the home and children, and have less involvement in church and society. However, this traditional arrangement did not prevent some women from occupying various positions of ministry, even administrative positions, during Ellen White's time.[62]

Given the social and family constraints of her time, it is still remarkable that Ellen White was able to recommend that more women be involved in active ministry and in spreading the gospel. If there was ever an ideal social and family structure it is likely the one we see in her writings. But times have changed tremendously. Today, in the United States, the ideal family model of a father working outside the home to supply his family's needs while the mother stays home to care for the children is becoming very rare. One-income families have a hard time to survive in our economic conditions and lifestyle expectations. What we find instead in our churches are more and more family units of single parents, multi-generational families, and blended families. Single women (never married, divorced or widowed) form a large segment of our congregations. In our context, Ellen White's appeals for the involvement of more women in all forms of ministry are even more relevant and significant. Our context begs for more women in ministry.

The fact that Ellen White was able to recommend the setting apart of medical missionaries and women involved in ministry indicates that the church should be open to more women in ministry. The ordination of women in the Adventist church is thus possible because she understood ordination as a prayer of divine blessing, as a form of affirmation of one's spiritual gifts, and as a commissioning. In fact, we have already been ordaining women to ministry: we call it commissioning. Based on Ellen White's understanding of ordination we can conclude there is no difference between the two rites, they are one and the same. The setting apart by laying on of hands and prayer is a means to commission someone to ministry. The church decides what authority comes along with that ministry, what the ministry is, and the person's qualification to perform it. It is not the rite of ordination that determines these factors.

5. ALLOWANCE FOR DIVERSITY

One last area of theological reflection on Ellen White's writings I'd like to offer is regarding the allowance for diversity of thoughts, opinions and practices she advocated in her life and ministry. We have a history of allowance for diversity within the Seventh-day Adventist church.

This year marks the 125th anniversary of the 1888 General Conference session in Minneapolis, Minnesota. What we remember most about this session is the acrimonious debates before and during this session. Two "major" issues were argued over: the identity of the law Paul referred to in Galatians 3:24 and the identity of the ten northern European tribes that fulfilled the end of the prophecy of Daniel 7. Some leaders and pioneers of our church felt the Seventh-day Adventist church could not change its teachings on these. Others felt it behooved Adventists to be faithful to Scripture and history and provide more accurate interpretations of these two passages.

Both sides of these controversies wished for Ellen White to provide the definitive interpretation and thus close the debates. But she refused to do so and she objected to such a use of her writings. Instead she pleaded with the delegates to study their Bibles and to come to some conclusions by themselves. In the end she commented that these two issues were not key, "landmark" doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist church and diversity of opinions was possible. What mattered most for her was the exhibition of a proper, cordial and gentle spirit among the delegates and unity in the mission of the church.[63]

Another such argument occurred around 1910 regarding the interpretation of the word "daily" in the prophecy of Daniel 8:11–13. Again, people appealed to Ellen White's writings to settle the issue and again she refused to do so. She did not believe this issue was a "test question" and did not think her writings provided an exegetical interpretation of the passage. Like the other controversies in 1888, her main concern was directed toward the disunity, the rancor, the time spent in debate, and the distraction from evangelism.[64]

I find these two controversies give us a paradigm for the use of Ellen White's writings in the interpretation of Scripture and they also show that her concern was primarily with church unity and mission rather than focusing on dividing, secondary issues. I cannot but muse about what she would say today regarding our use of her writings to muster support for one or the other side of our ordination debate. In the end, I learn also from these discussions that Ellen White allowed for diversity of thought for questions that she felt were secondary and not key doctrinal beliefs of our church.

Many other examples of allowance for diversity could be given. We could reflect on the church's

teaching on vegetarianism and the importance Ellen White gave it, even that eating of meat must ultimately be discarded at the end of time, yet allowed for flexibility and personal choices.[65] I have already alluded to the age of school entrance and who can perform baptisms in special circumstances. We could talk about the crucial role of a mother in the home in raising and caring for her children,[66] yet she herself allowed for exceptions and, for five years, gave the responsibility of raising her first son Henry to a trusted family while she and her husband preached the three angels' messages. She did not feel good about this, but understood God called her to make this sacrifice.[67] To some extent, personal circumstances and contexts allowed for exceptions and differences of opinions and practices.

> But an organization must look carefully at its past and not idolize it or fossilize it if the organization is to continue to be relevant in its constantly changing context.

I understand that allowing for exceptions may not be considered a good thing because there's a strong tendency among Adventists to call for uniformity of beliefs and practices. Sometimes we tend to do this when it comes to secondary issues and beliefs. At the same time it is difficult to pigeonhole Ellen White when it comes to the behavior of others. There seems to be exceptions to hard-core rules: goals, values, and ideals are taught, but often displaced by or accommodated to the realities of life.

When it comes to the assigned ideal role of women in family, church and society, there are ideals that she taught, and then sometimes there is the reality of a particular circumstance and context. One of Ellen White's most prominent teachings, as we have seen, is her insistence that both men and women be involved in evangelistic ministry, but children in the home can interfere with the woman's ministry. One such example is the case of Isaac and Adelia Van Horn who were married by James White in 1865. Soon after their marriage they went as a pioneer missionary couple to Washington and Oregon. Ellen White was disappointed when they began to have children for this interfered with their joint ministry.[68] Many years later, she reminded them of James's words at their wedding:

> I remember the words of my husband when you were sent into this new field. They were these: "Isaac and Adelia, God would have you enter this new field together unitedly in the work. I would not trust you, Isaac, alone where you might lack in the financial working of the cause. Adelia will help you out with her business tact where you would be more inclined to be easy and not thorough in the work. Adelia will be your good [partner] to spur you up to energy. Both of you will make a perfect whole. God would have Adelia in the field. He would have you work side by side together, for this, the Lord has shown, was His will. We can afford to pay you better wages, with Adelia to help you, than for your labors alone. The Lord will bless you together."[69]

Ellen White then continued, writing to Isaac, "God did not ordain that you should take Adelia out of the field. God did not ordain that you should accumulate family cares to take yourself out of the field." However we interpret this situation, Ellen White desired for both Isaac and Adelia to be involved in ministry, and Adelia's talents were particularly needed in this missionary context. Ellen White felt the Van Horns had not been true to their calling by having children so soon after they entered ministry together. Exceptions to the ideals of a family home are sometimes needed.

Some people build intricate schemes of interpretation of the writings of Ellen White to categorize the goals, ideals and values that she espoused regarding women in general and to impose a limit on what women can do in the church today. There are those who advocate that families, church life and society today should be following the same arrangements that Ellen White experienced in her day, or witnessed in her visions and wrote about in her writings. This grand scheme and ideal is sometimes based on an understanding of the relationship between the persons of the Godhead, that Jesus was submitted to the Father and thus implying there is an intrinsic value for some people in church and society to be submitted to others. The same goes with the ranking and hierarchy of angels in heaven.[70]

Ellen White saw all these beautiful and inspiring scenes of angels in her visions. She wrote about the order and harmony she saw in heaven which gave her reasons for advocating order and harmony in the early Seventh-day Adventist church organization.[71] Yet she urged the involvement of all people in church life, rebuked those elected and ordained to work for the church who used a form of kingly power to get what they wanted and to displace others from participating in the life of the church. She decried the use of power and authority on the basis of one's hierarchical standing in the church; no one has an intrinsic rank or importance that positions him as superior to others. While she affirmed leadership positions to facilitate the good and proper operations of the church, and to avoid anarchy, confusion, and false teachings, a form of hierarchicalism that displaces, supplants or controls others is not condoned in her writings. And she never used any of these concepts to limit what women can do in the church.

In any social organization, including churches, there is a conservative element that prevents developments that appear to remove traditional ways of doing things. For many, it is fine to leave things as they are. But there is also a progressive element that wishes to see things change in order to see progress when things begin to stagnate. So there's a tension between traditionalist tendencies and progressive tendencies. Neither is bad. But an organization must look carefully at its past and not idolize it or fossilize it if the organization is to continue to be relevant in its constantly-changing context.

As I see it, the mission of our church has been for over 150 years to preach the three angels' message to the world and to prepare a people for Christ's soon return. To that end and for that purpose, Ellen White understood that all Seventh-day Adventists must be involved in this mission, both men and women, lay people and ordained pastors, young and old—all have a role to play in this grand mission. Throughout her ministry she encouraged and urged men and women to be involved.

As I see it also, the inclusion of women in ministry will only facilitate the completion of our mission. To think that only ordained men can do some of this work, or that only men can have a place or role to play in the accomplishment of some parts of this mission, is to me a traditionalist approach to our mission that will only hinder what we are about. I don't think Ellen White would approve of this in this day and age in many parts of the world. Maybe she would say we are hindering the role and ministry of women by refusing them to be ordained, and that it is unfair to have them do all the work and not have the blessing of the church to do so. She said the same thing about the unfairness of the pay scale for women while she lived in Australia. Her own life and ministry allowed for diversity of opinions on many questions and issues. She allowed for exceptions to some rules or ideals when the context demanded them.

In 1892, she stated, "We cannot then take a

position that the unity of the church consists in viewing every text of Scripture in the very same light. The church may pass resolution upon resolution to put down all disagreement of opinions, but we cannot force the mind and will, and thus root out disagreement. These resolutions may conceal the discord, but they cannot quench it and establish perfect agreement."[72]

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have attempted to build from Ellen White's writings and her context a theological framework to understand first what ministry and ordination are and then how it can allow for the ordination of women. This framework is built on what she believed to be the role and mission of the church, that all Christians have a role to play in fulfilling this mission, and that women have an essential role in the church.

We find many insights in her writings regarding what she understood ordination to mean. First, all believers are spiritually ordained by God to participate in the mission of the church. This is the fundamental qualification for Christian service; every Christian is intrinsically a servant of God. This does not supersede the specific roles of church officers and pastors, but it indicates that ministry is inclusive. This spiritual ordination goes so far as to allow any Christian to baptize someone when special circumstances demand it.

Significant insights about ordination appear in Ellen White's commentary on the story of the ordination of Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13. First, she acknowledged that there is a calling and spiritual appointment before the church ordains someone, and ordination is a public recognition of this prior divine appointment. Second, she also stated that the rite of ordination does not in itself qualify someone for an office or task, this qualifying has already happened through the work of the Holy Spirit in one's life and ministry, and through a good education; rather, ordination is to be understood as a form of appointment to an office or a task and a recognition that this person has the authority to perform that task. Third, ordination is also a rite during which the congregation asks God to bestow His blessing upon the chosen person. Fourth, ordination is for a specific work and is not meant to "immediately" qualify someone "for any and all ministerial work." This implies there is room for various kinds of laying on of hands, for various kinds of work, ministry, functions or offices, each with specific responsibilities and, therefore, attending authority.

Ellen White's recommendation that there be an ordination for medical missionaries and women in ministry is based on her understanding that gospel ministry is a broad activity and not limited to what pastors do for the church. In these recommendations, which do not find their precedent in Scripture, she invites the church to broaden its understanding of ministry and compares the ordination of medical missionaries to that of a pastor. In this context, Ellen White understood ordination as a form of affirmation or commissioning. Thus, with this context and meaning in mind, her view of the laying on of hands can be and is gender inclusive. All these insights lead us to see that Ellen White understood ordination as an ordinance at the service of the church to commission people in various kinds of ministry and responsibilities, and to ask God's blessing on their ministry. There is no indication in her writings that the rite of ordination should be limited only to men or that it should be used to establish some kind of church hierarchy. She never referred to some key texts like 1 Corinthians 14:33–35 or 1 Timothy 2:12 to limit the ministry of women in the church. Theological concepts like male headship

in the church, the subordination of Jesus to the Father or the hierarchy of angels in heaven are never used in her writings to prevent women from some forms of ministry that would be only accessible for men. She emphatically encouraged the involvement of women in all forms of ministry.

Ellen White allowed for diversity of thought and practice in many areas of personal and church life, in beliefs and behavior. I think we are all in agreement that ordination is not a key, fundamental belief of the Seventh-day Adventist church. In that case, we can allow for differences of opinions and practices. Instead of dividing ourselves over this issue, we should go forward with the mission of our church.

It seems to me that the core of our current discussion is whether women in ministry should have the same authority as men have. In many functions, they already do and we commission (ordain) them to do so. Based on Ellen White's writings, interpreted within her context, we have followed her lead and, according to our various cultural and national circumstances, have given women the opportunities to serve in a multitude of ministry functions. The question now is whether these women could be given the authority to perform a few more tasks (ordain church elders, organize or disband churches, serve as conference presidents). My reading of Ellen White's writings leads me to ask a simple question: why not? Why should we not give women in ministry the authority to do these other tasks? Why can we not trust women to be as competent in these other functions? I think Ellen White would still say that competent women can be given "any position of trust" and be set apart for them. ■

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IS HEADSHIP THEOLOGY BIBLICAL?

The Bible verses in the New Testament often referred to as "the headship passages" must be considered carefully and prayerfully since, as many perceptively note, the interpretations often say more about the interpreters' biases than Scripture's intent. We undertake this brief study seeking to understand Scripture and to live it faithfully. We are not surprised that understanding Scripture is often a challenging task. Sometimes a note written just two weeks ago by a loved one or close friend can be misunderstood and requires clarification. Phrases written almost 2,000 years ago in a language other than our own certainly require care and prayer as we seek to understand. So we proceed in humility, grateful for a God who has made us all one family. This paper will show that headship,[1] as understood with the English connotations of ruler or leader, is not present within these New Testament passages.

ROME'S THEOLOGY VS. PAUL'S THEOLOGY: "CAESAR IS RULER!" VS. "CHRIST IS LORD!"

The wonder of the literal words of Scripture is best grasped against the backdrop of the time in which they were written. Imagine a world where Caesar reigns and everyone is vulnerable to his whims. In this world power is always top-down, and all people are subject to the authority of those above them on the hierarchical ladder. Always at the top is the emperor, followed by royalty, elite Romans, Greek patrons, soldiers, merchants, tradesmen, peasants, the sick, slaves, and untouchables. In such a world, people know their place. If not, life is cheap; such lives can easily be extinguished.

Then a letter arrives to a group of Christians who meet regularly in house churches in Ephesus. They are a small minority in such a big city, but they are trying to remain faithful to Jesus. The letter says to "be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (5:21),[2] continuing on to show that Christ, not Caesar, must be Lord of their lives. When Caesar is replaced by Christ, new thinking is possible! Christians are called to a sense of mutual responsibility between husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and slaves (5:22–6:9).

In another letter to the house churches in Philippi, Christians are challenged to "let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (2:5), and then they are reminded of Jesus' sacrifice through words set to a hymn (2:8–11):

> *He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.*
>
> *Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Here is the motivation and inspiration for another way of looking at the world. Caesar seeks honor and exaltation, even demanding it from his subjects. In contrast, Christ willingly became

a suffering servant, even entering the grave and forever proclaiming by his actions that humility is better than so-called "kingly power."

Paul is so convinced of this new era ushered in by Christ that, in his declaration to the house churches of Galatia focusing on the centrality of faith in Christ, he includes: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (3:28). The Jewish men—who had regularly said the prayer at synagogue thanking God that they were not made Gentiles, slaves, or women—could no longer pray that prayer as followers of Christ. Paul's challenge to the rite of circumcision reflects his conviction that a new creation had begun in Jesus (Galatians 6:15; Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15) and that it included the uncircumcised.

THERE IS NO LONGER JEW OR GREEK

Paul elaborates on the first phrase, "there is no longer Jew or Greek," in his longer letter to the Romans. "For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (3:22–24). This letter to those Christians trying to be faithful in the emperor's capital city concludes with a list of twenty-seven people to be greeted for the apostle. Some of the names are Latin, some are Greek, and some are Jewish. The list embodies a wondrous diversity, all included and remembered by Paul. He greets Jewish women serving as deacons and as apostles (16:1, 7), a very wealthy male convert of Corinth named Erastus (16:23), Greek men who had joined the faith (16:14), two male slaves (16:22–23), and the list goes on.

THERE IS NO LONGER SLAVE OR FREE

Paul elaborates on the second phrase, "there is no longer slave or free," in his very short letter to those worshipping at the house of Philemon and Apphia. Using the rhetorical style of a well-educated Roman, Paul pushes Philemon to change his thinking from the world of Caesar, where master is over slave, to the kingdom of God, where Onesimus is Philemon's own brother in Christ. Although Paul could demand Philemon's actions (vs. 8), he would rather Philemon respond on his own accord, on the basis of love (vs. 9). Would Philemon treat Onesimus as he would treat Paul's own "child," his "heart," or as he would treat Paul himself (vs. 10, 12, 17)? Would Philemon see that a fellow believer must be considered "no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother" (vs. 16)?

THERE IS NO LONGER MALE AND FEMALE

Paul assumes the third phrase, "there is no longer male and female," in several letters that are now part of the Christian Scriptures. In several places within his first letter to the house churches in Corinth, Paul suggests new ways of understanding the family. Men and women may remain single, with their

focus on the work of God, rather than following the traditional pressure to marry (7:25–40). Men and women opened their homes as places of worship (16:19), and men and women prophesied (11:4–5). Paul cautions that, due to customs and cultural norms (11:16), men should keep their heads uncovered and women should cover their hair in worship, since private homes had become public spaces. Out of respect for their first-century cultural norms, and embracing the principle of loving others more than their own freedom (8:1–13; 10:23–11:1), men should act as the other men of their day acted, and women should act distinctly as women while leading in prayer and prophesying (11:3–5). The relationship between God and Christ was to be the model for the relationship between husbands and wives (11:3).

> Is this letter really saying that women are saved by bearing children and by other good works, contradicting Paul's deep conviction that salvation is through Christ alone?

Continuing his calling and cautions to church members at Corinth, Paul considers the variety of spiritual gifts, noting that "all these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses" (12:11). Believers are then reminded that "in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (12:13). Why isn't the "male or female" couplet included here? Was elitism due to ethnicity and class more of a problem than sexism when it came to seeing the distribution of gifts, thus the caution of 12:13? This entire section about spiritual gifts never distinguishes between gifts for women and gifts for men (12:1–14:25). The focus throughout the section is on the building up of the church body through gifts that the Spirit gives to all members, with particular emphasis on the gift of love (13:1–13).

Then why is the very specific command made that women "be silent in the churches" (14:34)? Is it because of problems with speaking in tongues and disorderly worship? This seems to be the focus of the section (14:26–40). But to what is Paul referring in verses 14:34–35? Does the request for women to ask questions of their husbands at home (14:35) suggest that there is a sense of lively (too lively) discussing and talking while at worship? After saying that "women should be silent in the churches," why does Paul then ask the male believers: "Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?" (14:36). Is Paul actually quoting others when he includes the phrase "women should be silent in the churches"? How did the believers in Corinth understand this letter, and how did it shape their worship and church community? After all, Prisca and Aquila would continue their ministry of setting up house churches in Rome (Romans 16:3–5), Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:19) and Corinth (Acts 18). The apostle would also affirm the church in Nympha's house (Colossians 4:15), and the one in the home of Philemon and Apphia (Philemon 1–2). The tension reflected in 1 Corinthians 14 suggests that the Christian community experienced diversity of opinion concerning the changes that come when Christ is Lord rather than Caesar.

"SOURCE-SHIP" RATHER THAN HEADSHIP

However one understands the situation at Corinth, and therefore Paul's concerns and commands

throughout the letter, one point needs to be clearly made. The Greek word *kephalē*, translated as head in 1 Corinthians, is a play on words, with one use being the literal head of a person (11:4–7) and the other meaning best understood as life source. If Paul had meant ruler or leader, another Greek word would have been used.[3] Paul is arguing that what men and women wear on their physical heads is connected to the idea of man as woman's life source (11:3, 8–9). This argument continues with the proclamation: "Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God" (11:11–12).

Here it is important to understand that word meanings are determined not only by a dictionary but by how words are used (*kephalē* is not used as ruler or leader in the New Testament) and by the context of words in a sentence and passage. The wordplay works in verse 12 only if the origin of humanity is being considered here. It seems that dress code in the Corinthian house churches was being challenged as some Jewish men adopted the cultural habit used by Gentile men, who covered their heads as a status symbol. (Roman men also covered their heads during some cultic celebrations.) In addition, some Christian women leading out in prayers and prophesying were leaving their hair uncovered, which was against Jewish synagogue norms and emulated Roman women at the time. Paul says "no" to both behaviors. Elite male Christians must not flaunt their status, and females must not flaunt their freedom. The reputation of the house churches was at stake. In his argument Paul appeals to "source-ship," if you will. In worship they should follow the hair and dress codes that underscore maleness and femaleness, a reminder of creation and the God who created man and woman (11:7–9), while acknowledging that hair coverings are customs (11:16). (I am reminded of Maasai women I met on a trip to Kenya in the 1980s, for whom shaving the head is the embodiment of femaleness, while males wear their hair longer.) Paul says that church members should follow dress codes in worship. When praying, men should act appropriately. When prophesying, women should embrace their femaleness as created by God. One could actually see this passage as reflecting Paul's conviction that both men and women are needed in leading the churches. The use of this chapter in Corinthians to argue for a theology of "headship" imposes the similar English words head and headship on words and ideas that are not present in the passage.

DISCIPLESHIP, NOT DISTRACTIONS

When a group of angry men and wealthy women was causing problems in the house churches of Ephesus, the apostle uses strong language to their pastor, Timothy (1 Timothy 2:8–10). The wording throughout this letter against false teachings suggests that the message sent earlier to those living in Ephesus had been neglected by at least some members of the house churches there. The wondrous message that Christ's flesh "has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us" (Ephesians 2:14) had been forgotten, and instead anger and immodesty filled the church (1 Timothy 2:8–10). The community apparently had much to learn, and the traditional rabbinical way of learning, historically available only to males, was listening quietly to the master. This small letter endorses the radical idea that women could learn as male students learned, "in silence with full submission" (2:11). Women's flaunting of wealth (2:9) did not disqualify them from their new freedom in the gospel, but they needed to learn before they could teach others (2:12). As we hear these words, we

again wonder at the events occurring in the city of Ephesus and the small minority of the population who met as Christians in house churches. Why is the church reminded of Adam and Eve and told of the order of creation (2:14)? Is this letter really saying that women are saved by bearing children and by other good works (2:15), contradicting Paul's deep conviction that salvation is through Christ alone?

We do not know why some of the men meeting in the house churches of Ephesus were angry and perhaps even violent (2:8). We also do not know why some women worshipers were extremely wealthy. Were they converts? Were they considering converting? What is very clear from the apostle's description in 1 Timothy 2:9–10 is that they were letting others know of their status (braiding one's hair with gold was a status symbol and only available to the extremely wealthy). Were they formerly part of the cult at the temple of Artemis (Diana) in their large city? This famous cult had only women priests, who often encouraged other women to take control of their lives by living celibately. For some members of the cult of Artemis, child bearing was a burden and was unavoidable in the first-century world unless they refused to have sexual relations with their husbands. Is this the background to these new worshipers? What were they suggesting to other members of the congregations?

It is ironic and distressing that one of the most liberating passages in the New Testament for women has been typically used to suppress them: "Let a woman learn in silence with full submission" (2:11). Learning "in silence and with full submission" was understood as the way students or disciples learned from a teacher or rabbi in that day. The phrase "sitting at the feet" refers to the student's position before the teacher; and it is a sign of respect and submission. Paul was this kind of a disciple to Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). In the first century, the opportunity to study was available to very few men—and certainly no women. It was this very challenge to social convention that bothered Martha about her "sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying" (Luke 10:39). How could her sister assume such a traditionally male position (Luke 10:38–42)? It was just not right. Yet, Jesus affirmed Mary and reassured Martha.

Even as women were now allowed to learn, 1 Timothy 2 goes on to say: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent" (2:12). Does this mean always and in every situation? Or only in church services (which would seem to contradict 1 Corinthians 11)? Or does this mean specifically while listening to the teacher, in order to be a good disciple (2:11)? Is this a command to the new believers who had only recently left the Artemis cult? Some translate "teach or to have authority" as having a sense of "trying to dictate" to men or "seizing control" over others. What exactly was going on at Ephesus? We do not know. But it sounds like this letter of concern about false teaching (1:4, 6–7; 4:1, 7, 16; 6:3, 20) also conveys concern that women not be deceived like Eve (2:13–14) but learn what is right and wrong, including that child bearing is not an evil thing, but a wondrous gift (2:15).

SOME CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The above interpretations suggest that headship theology is not present in these passages. In fact, the New Testament view of the Christian family contrasts with the typical assumptions about headship as rulership. A top-down understanding of power and authority is not an adequate reflection of the meaning of particular words in these New Testament passages, nor of first-century house churches and the gifted men and women who led out in them.

In the context of the first-century Roman

Empire, where Caesar was worshiped as savior, believers living in major cities as minority communities were trying to be faithful to Jesus Christ. They struggled, as we do, with the intersection of Christ and culture. To what degree should they continue the Jewish culture that birthed Christianity? To what degree could they maintain parts of the Greco-Roman world in which they lived? To what degree did the call of Christ mean a radical departure from their cultural norms? Like all humans, the first-century church members messed up, posed challenging questions, acted contrary to the gospel, and had blind spots. But one of the wonders of Scripture is that 2,000 years later we can read the words written from inspired apostles who were trying to help these congregations, guiding them into greater understanding and more faithful living.

The language of headship is a cultural construct that we impose on the texts. It is a way to discuss certain New Testament passages from a particular perspective. While Scripture uses language that says "the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church" (Ephesians 5:23), most Christians today would not say that the husband is the savior of the woman's body, even though the metaphor continues in just that way: "the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior." To interpret the metaphor as denoting authority, power, or rulership would be to impose a personal perspective that ascribes to the Caesar model. It is an imposition of the modern concept of headship onto the term head, which is not part of the Greek meaning. If the Caesar model is actually being challenged in the New Testament, and Christ is the new model for the believing community, head then connotes humility, self-sacrifice, and being "obedient" to others (Philippians 2:8).

The demographics we are accustomed to in the United States today would have been unthinkable in the New Testament. In the United States, 102 million adults (44.1 percent of the population) are unmarried. Of these, 53 percent are women, 47 percent are men, and 62 percent have never been married. In 2011, 33 million Americans lived alone (28 percent of all households). In addition, 10 million unmarried mothers live alone with children, and 1.7 million fathers are unmarried. In the United States today, male headship has little logic or relevance to people living alone, and it could be confounding to single mothers and their children.[4]

Included in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is a call to respect and love others in one's faith community more than one's own freedom (8:1–13; 10:23–11:1). This must guide our discussion of the question of the ordination of women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is why we are not asking for the ordination of women as a global policy, even though we are convinced that such a policy is biblically and morally right. Rather, we are asking that in those places in our world where not treating men and women equally is not respecting cultural norms and is hindering the mission of the church we love, that we be allowed to follow the mandate of Paul's letter to the Corinthians and respect culture even as we proclaim the gospel.

FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This approach to interpreting Scripture is also reflected in the Principles of Interpretation listed for the proponents of the ordination of women in Ján Barna's work, *Ordination of Women in Seventh-day Adventist Theology*.[5] This book is extremely helpful for understanding the two major hermeneutical positions of Adventists who are opponents and proponents of the ordination of women. It is clear from Barna's study that both sides are deeply committed to Scripture and, while embracing significantly

different presuppositions, have much more in common than is sometimes understood (see especially pages 253–318).

In his chapter in *Women in Ministry: Biblical & Historical Perspectives*, Richard M. Davidson concludes that equality was the ideal, but that after the Fall, "the husband was given a servant headship role to preserve the harmony of the home, while at the same time the model of equal partnership was still set forth as the ideal."[6] This male headship is limited to the relationship between a husband and a wife and does not apply to society as a whole.[7]

In a paper commissioned by the Biblical Research Committee for the 1973 Mohaven meetings, Madelynn Haldeman challenges the church to be careful not to endorse pagan societal norms rather than the way of the New Testament, which she believes proclaims that all women "have been called by Christ and some of them to the pulpit."[8]

Sheryl Prinz-McMillan in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women* concludes that when New Testament passages are taken in their historical context, "there is no such thing as biblical 'headship',"[9] at least not understood in terms of hierarchy. Discussion of Ephesians 5 in light of the Roman household codes shows Paul leaving out the command for husbands to "rule" their wives and rather to "love" them (Ephesians 5:25–33).[10]

Peter M. Van Bemmelen shows that in Ellen White's writing the focus of redemption is on the restoration of God's ideal for man and woman.[11] He writes, "Equality and companionship are key concepts for Ellen White in connection with the marriage relationship."[12] And in regard to the church: "Never does Ellen White quote biblical 'headship' language in reference to the human leadership of the church; neither is there any evidence in her writings that she referred to ordained ministers in terms of headship."[13]

Adventist Fundamental Belief #14, Unity in the Body of Christ:

The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children. (Romans 12:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–14; Matthew 28:19, 20; Psalm 133:1; 2 Corinthians 5:16, 17; Acts 17:26, 27; Galatians 3:27, 29; Colossians 3:10–15; Ephesians 4:14–16; 4:1–6; John 17:20–23.) ■

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A REVIEW OF ORDINATION

In the Early Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1844–1881

This paper addresses the following questions identified by the North American Division Theology of Ordination Study Committee (2012–2013):

- What was the concept of ordination in the early Seventh-day Adventist Church?
- How was it practiced? Who was eligible?
- What was the theological basis for ordination?
- What was the organizational need giving rise to ordination?
- To what extent did the early Adventist church follow precedent of the churches they came from?
- What were the differences between ordained and non-ordained clergy?
- How did they resolve any differences between various understandings of ordination?
- How did the three tiers of ordination develop?
- What was the role of women in ministry in early Adventist community?

ORDINATION IN THE EARLY ADVENT MOVEMENT

The anti-organizational Adventist Movement relatively quickly embraced the roles of elders and deacons and the value of "setting apart" those called to ministry. Any inconsistencies between their strongly held opposition to church organization and this level of church structure were not as important as the needs of local congregations. The earliest stated motivation for such offices and actions highlighted the needs of new believers, especially their vulnerability to the many "false preachers" trying to confuse them. Repeatedly in the pages of the denomination's periodical, *Review and Herald*, James White justified this concession to organizing as preferable to falling into ecclesiological chaos. Although Adventists saw themselves as having left the Babylonian churches with their creeds and hierarchies of church authority, Adventists were not to leave Babylon only to join Babel as churches in confusion. Some type of acknowledged authority was necessary. The earliest Adventist references to those called by God did not typically use the words *ordained* or *ordination*, but rather *setting apart* or *laying on of hands*. Such actions were deemed appropriate given the needs of local congregations.

Because there was such suspicion of human structures, every precaution was made to avoid drawing unnecessary lines of power. For example, J. N. Loughborough recalled his first years within the Advent Movement (1849–1852) as a time when no records of church membership were kept, no church officers were appointed, and "no ordination of any kind except that of one preacher" was performed. Apparently that one preacher urgently requested ordination. After a group of leading ministers reluctantly agreed to ordain the man in 1851, Loughborough recalls it as almost a non-event: "Instead of its being a solemn and impressive ceremony before the body of believers, the ministers waited until the congregation had left, when one of the ministers offered a dry, formal prayer. There was no laying on of hands; no charge given" (*Review and Herald*, May 28, 1901). No one would mistake this

event as embracing any kind of apostolic succession, even if it did require the prayer of a minister. Everett Dick's *Founders of the Message* (Review and Herald, 1938) tells of Loughborough's own ordination, which took place following camp meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1854. Rather than a grand ceremony before the group of gathered believers, his ordination occurred "at a home after the tent had been taken down" (*Founders*, 273).

The First Ordinations by the Sabbatarian Adventist Movement: Authority to Administer the "Ordinances of the Church"

Many people, including James White, joined the Advent Movement having already been ordained within the churches they had left. Washington Morse may have been the first person "set apart" by the Sabbatarian Adventist Movement. Although Morse's own recollection was that this took place in 1852 ("Ordination" in *SDA Encyclopedia*), an eyewitness contributed her reflections on the event to the August 19, 1851, issue of *Review and Herald*. Sister F. M. Shimper said: "After baptizing six of our number, our dear Bro. Morse was set apart by the laying on of hands, to the administration of the ordinances of God's house[.] The Holy Ghost witnessed by the gift of tongues, and solemn manifestations of the presence and power of God. The place was awful, yet glorious. We truly felt that 'we never saw it on this fashion'" (*Review and Herald*, Aug. 19, 1851).

The reason for ordaining Morse was not specified. Was he ordained in response to the gifts of the Spirit? Was he ordained because of his effective ministry that had drawn people to accept baptism? Was he ordained in order to regularize the six baptisms he had just performed? Is the authority to baptize part of "the ordinances of God's house"? Or would that come later? This is a particularly interesting account, since two years later James White would argue the wisdom of ordaining preachers so that they might promptly baptize those who accepted the church's message. By 1858 it would be noted that "It is contrary to both the practice and views of the church, that any one should administer the ordinance of baptism who has not been regularly set apart to the work by the laying on of hands" (*Review and Herald*, July 8, 1858). Morse would reflect on his ordination thirty-seven years afterward in the pages of the denomination's periodical. Morse recalled that after sharing the Sabbath truth with a company of new believers in Vermont, "The following summer, I was duly ordained to the ministry, and received the most unmistakable evidence of the approbation of God" ("Items of Advent Experience During the Past Fifty Years," *Review and Herald*, Oct. 16, 1888).

In September 1853, *Review and Herald* carried the account of another gathering where the Spirit was present. The Pottsdam Conference was held on John Byington's front lawn. Approximately eighty people gathered, and J. N. Andrews spoke in such a way that the people listened with rapt attention. On the second day of the conference, "the Spirit of God was graciously poured out. The whole congregation

was at times in tears." In this context, James White recalled: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to set apart our dear Bro. Lawrence to the work of the gospel ministry, to administer the ordinances of the church of Christ, by the laying on of hands. The church was of one accord in this matter. We hope our dear brother will be able to give himself wholly to the study, and the preaching of the word; and wherever he may labor, give from the word alone the reason of his hope." Brother Lawrence was "set apart" for training in careful Bible study in preparation for his work as an itinerant preacher.

Combating False Teachers: Ordination as the Authority to Preach and to Baptize

Two months later, the church periodical told of more people who were "set apart" (*Review and Herald*, Nov. 15, 1853). The New Haven Conference met in a packed schoolhouse. After the official close of the last meeting, discussions continued among some until 1 a.m., with James White reporting that "the Spirit of God was poured out upon us." In their extended discussion, "the wants of the cause were considered. And it was decided that there were those present that should be ordained to the work of the gospel ministry." The leaders sensed a need to ordain people to serve in the area, especially since some teachers were "not worthy," and it would distinguish the two groups. Later in his report, James White described two such unworthy teacher-preachers and noted: "Probably the cause has suffered more by individuals moving out of their place, and taking upon themselves the work to teach, than by any other cause. Satan, doubtless, pushes out some to take this stand." Those who led the conference and debated these issues decided to sleep on it and returned at eight in the morning, "when the subject of ordination was again taken up." At that time, the group not only unanimously decided to "set apart to the work of the ministry" J. N. Andrews, A. S. Hutchins, and C. W. Sperry, but also to enhance the work throughout Vermont by setting apart E. P. Butler, Elon Everts, and Josiah Hart.

The next month, on consecutive weeks, James White published a two-part series titled "Gospel Order" for the benefit of Adventist readers (*Review and Herald*, Dec. 13 and Dec. 20, 1853). The two articles began the same way by quoting from 1 Corinthians 14:33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." Knowing that his second article would call for particular parameters for those ordained, White's first article emphasized his continued conviction that churches whose organizational structures demanded creeds in order to maintain church unity would never succeed. However, White was also convinced that unity and order were demanded within the fellowship of believers. The anti-organizational convictions of the early Adventists needed modification, or at least nuance.

White set up his second article by saying he would be discussing "the calling, qualifications, and the duties of a gospel minister." He then used a string of quotes from different New Testament works to support his convictions that "God calls men to the work of the ministry" and that those who go out to "teach all nations" should be able to baptize the people who repent and believe. "Why should repenting, believing souls wait six months, or even one day, to see whether they will backslide or not before being baptized? Rather let them have the benefit of this, and all other gospel ordinances, to keep them from backsliding. This seems to be gospel order."

But then White asks: "Who should administer the ordinance of baptism? We have seen that this ordinance is closely connected with teaching. 'Teach all nations, baptizing them,' said our Lord. Then those, and those only, should administer this ordinance

who have been called of God to teach his word." After finding support in Titus and 1 Timothy, White concluded: "From this we learn that the order of the gospel is that men who are called of God to teach and baptize, should be ordained, or set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands. Not that the church has power to call men into the ministry, or that ordination makes them ministers of Jesus Christ; but it is the order of the gospel that those who are called to the ministry should be ordained, for important objects." Then White listed three such important reasons: (1) "That those who go out into a cold world to teach the Word of God may know that they have the approbation and sympathy of ministering brethren of the church"; (2) "To produce and secure union in the church. The laying on of hands should be done, we think in behalf of the church. A united expression of the church in this thing would certainly have a tendency to unite the people of God"; and (3) "To shut a door against Satan." This was a major concern, given the amount of space allocated to its explanation. New believers suffered because "false teachers" confused and distorted the teachings of the church. Those whose ministries were affirmed by the church must be distinguished from those preaching falsehood in order "to save the flock from imposition of this kind." The article then included a string of Bible quotes proving that the qualifications of such teachers were clear from Scripture (references to 1 Timothy, Hebrews, Matthew, 1 Peter, Titus); and that their duties were preaching the Word with knowledge and boldness.

Ordination to gospel ministry did not become a general practice among Sabbatarians until the autumn of 1853. . . The key elements of the ordination service . . . were prayer and the laying on of hands by the other ministers. Thus there was nothing unique in the ordination service of Sabbatarian Adventists. They were quite in harmony with the practices of the evangelical churches of their time.

Other services ordaining ministers and deacons followed. According to George Knight in his chapter "Early Seventh-day Adventists and Ordination," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical & Historical Perspectives* (Nancy Vyhmeister, editor, 1998, 106), "Ordination to gospel ministry did not become a general practice among Sabbatarians until the autumn of 1853." Knight explains: "The key elements of the ordination service in these reports and the many others provided by the *Review* were prayer and the laying on of hands by the other ministers. Thus there was nothing unique in the ordination service of Sabbatarian Adventists. They were quite in harmony with the practices of the evangelical churches of their time" (Knight, 107).

Ordaining Deacons and Elders

The week after James White's second "Gospel Order" article, H. S. Gurney, in a letter to White, wrote about his church having felt impressed to set apart two men as deacons in order to serve the Lord's Supper when "the messengers are called to travel." They saw their actions in harmony with "Gospel Order" and with Acts 6:1–7. In a Sabbath afternoon service, Frederick Wheeler "set apart

The threat of false teachers who confused believers and caused chaos in congregations was considered a major reason to set apart those who had received the church's official approval.

those brethren, by prayer and laying on of hands. While thus engaged, the Spirit of God was manifestly present, to bless. And we felt that in answer to prayer the work was ratified in the Heavenly Sanctuary. The peace of God rested upon us" (*Review and Herald*, Dec. 27, 1853).

By January 1855, new practical pastoral questions about church order had naturally grown out of several years of the "Gospel Order" practices advocated by James White in the pages of the denominational paper and supported by Ellen White in her work "Gospel Order" (see A *Supplement to Experience and Views*, printed in 1854 within *Early Writings*). John Byington asked Adventist readers: "Are Elders and Deacons to be appointed in every Church where the number, talent and graces of individuals are sufficient for the work? And if so, by whom should it be done? Should brethren who are traveling at large do it? It appears to me that the little Churches in many places are in a distracted and discouraged condition. The ordinances to a great extent are neglected. What shall be the remedy?" (*Review and Herald*, Jan. 23, 1855). The response was in the affirmative: "they should be set apart to their work by those of experience and sound judgment, whom God has called to labor in word and doctrine, after being selected by the voice of the church" (Jan. 23, 1855). Although it was not yet clear what the division of duties would be between traveling ministers, elders, and deacons, the three-part language began to enter the church and is particularly confusing because initially *elder* seemed to refer to the traveling minister, then later it also meant someone whose primary task was the welfare of a local congregation. The pastoral epistles were used repeatedly in articles by both James White and J. B. Frisbie (see especially a series by Frisbie in *Review and Herald*, June-July 1856).

To expound on the tasks of the "elder" or "bishop," Frisbie used the language of "shepherd," who tended to the flock through teaching as well as exhorting. While the affirmation process paralleled that of the traveling minister—God gifted, the Holy Spirit gave authority, and the church gave official approval—the description of "elder" began to sound much more like the position of contemporary "pastors." In yet one more complicating nuance, Frisbie suggested a relationship between "elders" and "elderly men and women in the church" (July 3, 1856). Stated Frisbie: "The younger members of the church should esteem and call each other brother and sister, while the elders should be regarded as fathers and mothers. And would it not be well for the churches abroad to appoint at least one of their number, whose duty it shall be to have an earnest care for the little flock around them where they live, who may generally see that the meetings are appointed and led. One in whom the brethren have confidence, who may exhort, admonish, and watch for the best interest of the cause; who may have judgment, wisdom and piety, having their children in subjection."

With the emergence of local elders, Frisbie specified deacons as those who see to "the temporal wants of the church" (July 31, 1856). Phoebe (Romans 16:1–2) was referenced as textual support for this important work of "helper" to Paul and to the whole church. Deacons were "servants, helpers or laborers with the

apostles in the gospel." While their role as ministers in the absence of itinerant preachers slipped away, deacons were still associated with the Lord's supper as those who distributed the blessed bread and took care of the poor in the community. By March 1857, the office of deacon would be designated as "subordinate." However, both elders and deacons continued to be set apart in ordination services.

It is fascinating to read the account (*Review and Herald*, Nov. 25, 1858) of a company in West Union, N.Y., with approximately twenty new Sabbathkeepers who were eager to set up a church. After an unspecified struggle among the group, R. F. Cottrell reported: "An overseer and a deacon were chosen with much unanimity, and set apart to their work by the laying on of hands. And, after midnight, in accordance with the apostolic example at Troas, we broke bread and enjoyed a heavenly sitting together in Christ Jesus." The account assumed that, while Adventist leaders and itinerant preachers would occasionally stop by to encourage this group of new believers, the local church began when an elder (overseer) and deacon were set aside for the ministry of this new congregation.

Some Observations from These Early Years of the Post-Disappointment Adventist Movement:

1. Initially, probably due to Adventism's imminent eschatology, ministerial duties were either performed by those already ordained in other congregations prior to joining the Advent Movement, or there was no distinction in the duties performed by clergy and non-clergy.
2. The first ordination, in 1851, seems to focus on the need for the minister to be able to lead out in the ordinances of the church. Since the minister had already baptized people, "ordinances" refers to leading out in the Lord's Supper; ordinations in September 1853 were also understood as authorizing people to celebrate the "ordinances."
3. Those identified as gifted preachers and teachers were initially "set apart" by the "laying on of hands." Although not specified, documents seemed to assume that this act would be performed by ministers who had already been ordained. Ministers were typically itinerant preachers.
4. Itinerant preaching created the necessity for cards of official approval from the Advent Movement. (According to Loughborough, the issuing of cards began in 1853 with signatures by James White and Joseph Bates. See "The Church: Its Organization, Order and Discipline," *Review and Herald*: 1907, 101.) In November 1853, the authority to preach was associated with ordination in order to have a way of dealing with teachers who were "not worthy."
5. In December 1853, the importance of ordination to allow ministers to baptize was mentioned specifically.
6. Also in December 1853, the "laying on of hands" by the church in affirmation of its itinerant preachers was expressed by James White as an opportunity to foster church unity. As preachers went out to new places, they went with the affirmation and official approval of their church.
7. The threat of false teachers who confused believers and caused chaos in congregations is again emphasized in December 1853 and was considered a major reason to set apart those who had received the church's official approval.
8. Pastoral needs in the interims between visiting preachers created the occasion for the

ordination of deacons. In the absence of itinerant preachers, these church leaders were authorized to lead out in the Lord's Supper and to care for other pastoral needs of the congregation.

9. As the number and size of Adventist churches grew, a distinction was made between traveling preachers (elders) and those who ministered to the needs of a local congregation (also called elders). Both types of elders were ordained.
10. The earliest descriptions of the acts of "setting apart" and the "laying on of hands" consistently acknowledged the presence of the Holy Spirit. The displays of the Spirit at the time of these ordinations reveal an Adventism that was open to a variety of religious experience and expression.
11. To track early Adventism's understanding of ordination reveals a community that was suspicious of hierarchical structures even as it came to acknowledge the necessity of structure for its survival.
12. Early Adventist literature discussing ordination consistently emphasized the importance of acting in accordance with the New Testament and, in many ways, the development within Adventism from itinerant preaching ministers, to deacons caring for the needs of the community, to elders as stationary ministers paralleled development of the early Christian church.
13. There was flexibility in the early Adventist Movement. The new needs of a developing church required adaptation in approaches to ministry. These adaptations, in harmony with Scripture and mission, were not only supported but also advanced by both James and Ellen White.

No. 13 is not only true of the inclusion of traveling ministers, deacons, and elders. Ellen White would later encourage the ordaining of women and medical missionaries. In this July 9, 1895, statement in *Review and Herald*, she says:

> *Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands. In some cases they will need to counsel with the church officers of the minister; but if they are devoted women, maintaining a vital connection with God, they will be a power for good in the church. This is another means of strengthening and building up the church. We need to branch out more in our methods of labor... . Not a hand should be bound, not a soul discouraged, not a voice should be hushed; let every individual labor, privately or publicly, to help forward this grand work.*

Thirteen years later, in 1908, Ellen White recorded this statement (Manuscript 5, 1908):

> *"The work of the true medical missionary is largely a spiritual work. It includes prayer and the laying on of hands; he therefore should be as sacredly set apart for his work as is the minister of the gospel. Those who are selected to act the part of missionary physicians, are to be set apart as such. This will strengthen them against the temptation to withdraw from the sanitarium work to engage in private practice" (Evangelism, 546).*

A shifting approach to ministry within the Advent Movement had ramifications for women in ministry.

1840s—Millerite-Early Advent Movement

Women were very much involved in preaching and evangelism in anticipation of the return of Jesus:

- James White—had been an ordained minister of the Christian Connection
- Frederick Wheeler—had been an ordained minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church
- John Byington—had been an ordained minister in the Methodist Church
- A. S. Hutchins—had been a Freewill Baptist minister
- J. G. Matteson—had been a Baptist
- Roswell F. Cottrell—had been a Seventh Day Baptist

The following women are recorded as having served in a preaching ministry during this time (taken from "Route to the Ordination of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church: Two Paths," by Bert Haloviak, March 18, 1985):

- Olive Maria Rice
- Lucy Stoddard
- Emily C. Clemens
- Sarah J. Paine
- Clorinda S. Minor

1850s–1860s—First Major Shift

An atmosphere of freedom to preach and use gifts, along with the itinerant nature of ministry and a resistance to organize, shifted to a sense of need for credentials due to "false teachers" and the needs of the members of local congregations.

While many Millerite women (and men) leaders were drawn into fanaticism, Ellen White continued as a leader within the Advent Movement. The Advent Movement did have to defend, at least occasionally, women's freedom to preach:

> *We are informed on the authority of divine revelation that male and female are one in Christ Jesus; that in the relation in which they both stand to him, the distinction is as completely broken down as between Jew and Gentile, bond and free.... Experience has proved that many females have possessed the natural qualifications for speaking in public, the range of thought, the faculty of communicating their ideas in appropriate language, the sympathy with suffering humanity, a deep and lively sense of gratitude to God, and of the beauty of holiness, a zeal for the honor of God, and the happiness of his rational creatures—all these are found among the female part of the human family, as frequently and as eminently as among the men. Then let no stumbling-block be thrown in their way, but let them fill the place that God calls them to fill, let them not be bound down to silence by church rules* (S. C. Welcome, "Shall the Women Keep Silence in the Churches?" *Review and Herald*, Feb 23, 1860, 110).

James White's concerns about the lack of control of itinerant preachers, who were causing chaos and confusion in new companies of believers, led him to the call for more church structure. This was met with resistance, given the anti-organizational convictions of the Millerites and the early Advent Movement. It had been the practice in the formation of the movement not to embrace language outside of Scripture. However, White defended his position: "True, the Bible does not say in so many words that we should have yearly meetings; neither does it say that we should have a weekly paper, a steam printing press, that we should publish books, build places of worship and send out tents. Christ says, 'Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set upon an hill cannot be hid,' 'Let your light so shine before men,' etc. He does not enter into the particulars just how this shall be done. The living

church of God is left to humbly move forward in this great work, praying for divine guidance, and acting upon the most efficient plan for its accomplishment" (White, "Yearly Meetings," *Review and Herald*, July 21, 1859). Later White would repeat some of these same points, concluding with, "We believe it safe to be governed by the following RULE: All means which, according to sound judgment, will advance the cause of truth, and are not forbidden by plain scripture declarations, should be employed" ("Making Us a Name," *Review and Herald*, April 26, 1860).

The next year, on Oct. 6, 1861, after the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was established, it was decided that local churches would issue "ministerial papers" to ordained ministers. "It was also voted to grant to all Seventh-day Adventist ministers in the State who were in good standing, ministerial papers, consisting of a certificate of ordination, and credentials, signed by the chairman and clerk of the conference, which credentials should be renewed annually" (J. N. Loughborough, *Pacific Union Recorder* Vol. 11, No. 45 [June 6, 1912]).

At the 1862 annual meeting of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, further resolutions regarding ordained ministers were passed. George Knight states: "First, it took a giant step forward when it decided that ministers would be assigned to their field of labor by the conference. Before that time every minister went where he thought he might be needed. The result was that some churches were consistently neglected while others at times had surplus leadership. Second, at the yearly meetings ministers would report their labors for each week of the year. And third, ordained ministers coming into the Adventist faith from other denominations would no longer automatically be able to perform ministerial functions in Adventist congregations. Such ministers would now have to 'give proof of being called to preach the message, and be ordained among us'" (Knight, 110).

On May 21, 1863, the church organized itself as the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Regarding ordination of ministers: "What had been developed over the previous decade and had been institutionalized by the Michigan Conference became the pattern for all local conferences affiliated with the General Conference" (Knight, 111). Knight concludes, "The Sabbatarian approach to ordination was pragmatic and eclectic rather than built upon a tightly-reasoned theology of ordination.... ordination was something that Adventists did, not something to which they gave a lot of theoretical thought" (111).

1870s–1880s—Second Major Shift

A second shift took place when the primary emphasis on preaching and tent evangelism moved to an emphasis on stationary ministries and local churches.

The first examples of local ministry (1860s) were deacons, elders, and teams of couples. One such couple was Brother and Sister Cornell (Iowa). After her husband finished preaching in a particular town and moved onto the next, Sister Cornell continued to work doing house visits, "defending the truth" in conversations and bearing "responsibilities of the work in the midst of young disciples" (James White, *Review and Herald,* March 8, 1860). "My views and feelings are that the minister's wife stands in so close a relation to the work of God, a relation which so affects him for better or worse, that she should, in the ordination prayer, be set apart as his helper" (James White, *Review and Herald*, Aug. 13, 1867, 136).

Women with a ministerial "license to preach" were involved in preaching and tent evangelism.

- 1871—After Ellen White addressed her concern for ministerial training, it was voted at the General Conference session that "means should be taken to encourage and properly instruct men and women for the work of teaching the word of God" (Bert Haloviak, Actions of the 1871 GC Session, in "Longing for the Pastorate," 4). "Ellen White was informed concerning the licensing of women ministers. She routinely involved herself in the examinations that occurred prior to the issuing of licenses and she attended conference proceedings where ministerial licenses were issued to women" ("Longing for the Pastorate," 9).
- 1873—Sarah Lindsey was licensed by New York-Pennsylvania Conference
- 1878—Mrs. E. S. Lane was licensed by Michigan Conference. In 1872–1873 Ellen Lane began to assist her ailing husband in ministry in Ohio; they participated in many evangelistic efforts. In 1876 they began the work in Virginia; she would preach to hundreds at a time (650 people reported at one gathering; at another the United Brethren Church was so crowded that only half those wishing to attend could get into the church).

Within seven years from the time the newly established Seventh-day Adventist Church first issued ministerial licenses, women were receiving them:

> *When the Michigan Conference met a month after the death of Ellen Lane's husband, she was again voted her 'license to preach.' She was voted the ministerial license for the next seven years. Thus Mrs. Lane continued her work as a full-fledged denominational minister, except for her lack of ordination, which prevented her from organizing churches, baptizing, or leading the ordinance services* ("Longing for the Pastorate," 11).

In 1882 Ellen Lane was one of two women among the original 24 members of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association of Michigan.

- 1878—Julia Owen was licensed by Kentucky-Tennessee Conference
- 1879—Hattie Enoch was licensed by Kansas Conference. Three years later, George Butler would report to Ellen White that Elder Cook, a minister in Kansas who would soon be the conference president, said that he "thinks she [Hattie Enoch] is a better laborer in such things than any minister in the state" (George Butler to Ellen White, May 24, 1881).
- 1881—Helen Morse was licensed by Illinois Conference
- 1881—Ida Ballenger was licensed by Illinois Conference
- 1884—Mrs. R. Hill was licensed by Kansas Conference
- 1884—Anna M. Johnson was licensed by Minnesota Conference
- 1884—Libbie Collins was licensed by Minnesota Conference
- 1886—Ida Hibben was licensed by Illinois Conference
- 1887—Mrs Ruie Hill was licensed by Kansas Conference
- 1887—Mrs. S. E. Pierce was licensed by Vermont Conference

For additional examples, see list in Appendix B of Josephine Benton's book *Called by God* (1990).

> *Although the church did not agree on the question of their ordination, they were considered within the ministry of the church; they were not laymembers. Women were licensed and paid by*

Women were involved in each aspect of ministry as the denomination in the late 1870s shifted its primary focus to emphasize the needs of the local churches.

> *the local conferences or the General Conference from tithe funds. They followed the same path to the ministry as that followed by men. The fact that some women were licensed for seven or eight years consecutively indicates that the local conferences considered them successful in ministry* ("Longing for the Pastorate," 7).

Ellen White and Ministerial Reform: Needs of Local Church Ministry

Both James and Ellen White expressed caution against embracing evangelistic efforts to the neglect of local congregations. "It is not enough to preach to men; we must pray with them and for them; we must not hold ourselves coldly aloof from them, but come in sympathy close to the souls we wish to save, visit and converse with them. The minister who conducts the work outside the pulpit in a proper manner will accomplish tenfold more than he who confines his labor to the desk" (Ellen G. White, "An Appeal to the Ministers," *Review and Herald*, Aug. 8, 1878).

This second shift emphasized the needs of the local churches and, as had been the case since the Millerite movement, women would contribute to this new phase of ministry:

> *"Women can be the instruments of righteousness, rendering holy service. ... If there were twenty women where now there is one...we should see many more converted to the truth. The refining, softening influence of Christian women is needed in the great work of preaching the truth. ... Zealous and continuous diligence in our sisters toiling for the spread of the truth would be wholly successful, and would astonish us with its results"* (*Review and Herald,* Jan. 2, 1879, 1).

Women were involved in each aspect of ministry as the church shifted its primary focus. It was not surprising that two resolutions would be discussed at the 1881 General Conference Session:

"RESOLVED, That all candidates for license and ordination should be examined with reference to their intellectual and spiritual fitness for the successful discharge of the duties which will devolve upon them as licentiates and ordained ministers.

RESOLVED, That females possessing the necessary qualifications to fill that position, may, with perfect propriety, be set apart by ordination to the work of the Christian ministry" (*Review and Herald*, Dec. 20, 1881, 392).

While the first resolution was adopted, the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist church awaits the second. ■

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AUTHORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN LEADER

INTRODUCTION[1]

In order to thrive, every human society must establish its own organizational and authoritative structures. Eventually, if someone desires to know something about a particular nation, family, or association, they are most likely to inquire about the nature and use of its authority. Human groupings may thus be described as "dictatorial," "authoritarian," "democratic," "egalitarian," "republican," "laissez-faire," and so on. Each of these designations reflects the way in which authority is used within a particular community.

While different from a nation, family, or association, the Church is also a human society that must have organizational/authoritative structures in order to disseminate its message and thus fulfill the Great Commission given to it by Christ.[2] Because of this, it is legitimate to inquire about the nature and use of authority within the community of believers.[3] Such inquiry is of vital importance, as much depends on the way authority is understood and exercised within the Church. Even such foundational Christian teachings as the nature of God and salvation are influenced by the way authority is defined.

Any discussion on the nature of Christian authority, however, tends to be muddied by our cultural context, as the way we view authority is shaped by the way in which authority is exercised within the society of which we are a part. For many people, the term "authority" carries few positive connotations. A simple class exercise proves the point. When I teach on the subject of ecclesiology, I sometimes flash the word "authority" on the screen and ask students to tell me what immediately comes to their minds. Invariably, I hear words such as "dominance," "power," "control," "abuse," "rule," or "final decision making." Then we check the dictionary definition of "authority" and, indeed, we find that the most prominent way in which authority is defined follows the same line of thinking, i.e., "the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience" or "the power to determine, adjudicate, or otherwise settle issues of disputes; jurisdiction, the right to control, command, or determine." Authority defined as such demands submission, which is defined in the dictionary as "the action or fact of accepting or yielding to a superior force or to the will or authority of another person." In my personal experience, I have yet to meet a person who likes to submit in such a manner. On the contrary, it almost seems as though we arrive in this world with an inborn tendency to resist this type of authority—just ask parents whose children have entered the teenage years or think about our inner reaction when we are flagged by an officer for speeding.

Very rarely do my students consider "authority" a positive thing in the life of a society. And yet, authoritative structures are essential, as they provide society with continuity, stability, safety and boundaries. Without some form of authority, no human society would or could exist; this includes the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is the combination of our sinful nature and the abuse

Darius Jankiewicz
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of authority that causes us to develop negative attitudes towards authority. Unfortunately, all too often abuse, disguised by the addition of the adjective "spiritual," happens in the church, the community Christ established to be different from any other human society on Earth.

In recent years, the issue of authority has received a fair amount of attention in Adventist circles. As we have experienced the delay of the Second Coming of Christ, we have become increasingly concerned with issues related to Gospel order, organization, ranking, and policy, all the while attempting to be faithful to Scripture. The nature of authority and its use has surfaced most prominently within the context of the discussion on women's ordination. The most sensitive question raised in these debates is whether women can or should hold authoritative positions within the church structure. Should women be allowed to preach/teach or lead in the church? Would not ordination place them in headship positions over their male counterparts?

Responses to these questions vary. Some believe that women can never be placed in any position—be it pastor, theology professor, university or hospital president—that would situate them in authority over men. Others would allow women to fill leadership roles within the greater Adventist organization but not in the church. Accordingly, women must not be allowed to teach or preach in the church when men who are able to do so are present. Still others go so far as to allow women to preach in the church providing that they stand under the authority of an ordained male senior pastor. All of these positions have one common denominator: *the position of "spiritual headship" in the church must be limited to men alone*. Ordination is believed to raise a particularly gifted man to a position of spiritual headship in the church, and since the Bible speaks of male headship alone, the position of pastor (or senior pastor) is closed to women; no woman, it is believed, can have authority over any man.

Observing the debate for a number of years and listening carefully to both sides, I ask myself several questions: Are we certain that we truly understand what we mean when we use the word "authority"? Am I possibly making the false assumption that when I utter the word "authority," you know exactly what I mean and vice versa? What informs the concept of authority that resides in our minds? Is it our culture (both secular and religious) or is it careful attention to the words of Jesus?

Like many good things in life, the concept of authority has its counterfeits. The purpose of this paper is to explore two opposing views of authority. This is necessary to tease out the essential elements of the New Testament view of authority and thus help us avoid the ecclesiological pitfalls—of which many of us may not be aware—that modern Christianity inherited from post-Apostolic Christianity and which are deeply ingrained in both Catholic and Protestant traditions. For this reason I will, first, explore the characteristics of a counterfeit kind of "authority" as it evolved in Christianity from the second century onward, and which continues

to be the foundation of both modern Roman Catholicism and Protestant fundamentalism[4]; second, I will explore the concept of authority flowing from the teachings of Jesus; and finally, I will provide a response to the counterfeit view of authority.

THE POST-APOSTOLIC CHURCH AND A COUNTERFEIT VIEW OF AUTHORITY

Faced with the death of its pioneers, the delay of the Second Coming, schism, the rise of heretical teaching, as well as persecution, the early post-Apostolic Christian Church searched for ways of maintaining its unity and defending itself against various heretical teachings.[5] Such a goal could be accomplished through providing the church with strong leadership.

Going beyond the Gospels and the writings of Paul, writers such as Ignatius (d.ca. 110–130AD), Irenaeus (d.ca. 202AD), Tertullian (c. 160–c. 225AD), Cyprian (d.ca. 258AD), and Augustine (354-430AD) gradually endowed Christian ministry with special authority, which was available only through the rite of ordination. The Christian ministry that emerged from this era was far removed from what we find in the pages of the New Testament; the authority of the ministry was (and continues to be) marked by the following characteristics:

First (A), it was hierarchical; i.e., conceived in terms of order, ranking, or chain of command. The church became divided into two classes of individuals—clergy and laity—separated from each other by the rite of ordination. At the head of the church was a monarchical (mon—one, arche—rule) bishop, surrounded and assisted by a group of elders as well as deacons, who were at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder.[6] The bishop—or the senior pastor—was placed at the center of religious activity and was endowed with complete control over the affairs of the local church.[7] His duties included preaching, teaching, administration of the community, and money management. Without his presence, no Christian rite, such as baptism or the Lord's Supper, could be conducted. Believing this system to be established by God, Christians were expected to submit to the decisions of their bishop-pastor.[8] The bishop-pastor's position and prestige in the church was significantly strengthened by the doctrine of Apostolic Succession developed by Irenaeus, who taught that the twelve apostles passed on their leadership and teaching authority to the bishops.

This system of early church governance was largely modeled on the way in which the Roman Empire was governed.[9] While it was originally established for the sake of order and unity in the church, it eventually became an end in itself, to be protected and perpetuated at any cost. Such concentration of power in the church in the hands of the ordained elite led, of course, to the eventual establishment of the papacy. There is no need to elaborate here on the prophetic significance of this development.[10]

Second (B), it was sacramental; i.e., the spiritual life of the believers, and thus their salvation, in some way depended on their pastor. It was during this time that the Christian minister began to be referred to as a priest. The writers of this period came to the conclusion that the Old Testament priesthood was a type of Christian ministry.[11] An ordained Christian pastor, thus, became a mediator between God and other believers. This mediation was enabled through the rite of ordination when the pastor received a special seal—known as dominicus character—which enabled him to re-enact Christ's sacrifice each time he celebrated the Lord's Supper.[12] In such a system, the existence of the church itself depended upon the existence of the ordained ministry.[13] As with the previous point, the prophetic significance of this development cannot be overestimated and will be elaborated on below.

Third (C), it was elitist; i.e., divided into two classes of individuals, those ordained and those un-ordained. As mentioned above, it was gradually accepted that, through the rite of ordination, the minister became separated from the rest of the community. The laying-on-of-hands endowed the pastor with special authority from God and enabled him to provide spiritual and mediatorial leadership to the believers.[14] This teaching, first introduced by Tertullian, stated that there are two groups of people in the church: the ordained and the un-ordained, otherwise referred to as clergy and laity.[15] Only those who were ordained could provide spiritual leadership in the church. In line with this thinking, the church could not be conceived as egalitarian. It was not a community of equals in terms of leadership roles. This is clearly reflected in the documents of the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). The Constitution on the Church thus states:

> *The Church of Christ is not a community of equals in which all the faithful have the same rights. It is a society of un-equals, not only because among the faithful some are clerics and some are laymen, but particularly because there is in the Church the power from God whereby to some it is given to sanctify, teach, and govern, and to others not.*[16]

Through the act of ordination, therefore, an elite group of leaders was created in the church and only members of this elite could take the office of pastor in the church. As we shall see below, this view is contrary to the teachings of the New Testament.

Fourth (D), it was oriented towards male headship in the church; i.e., only men could fulfill headship roles in the church. Ever since its beginnings, the Christian Church has taught, and continues to teach, that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. However, faced with the reality of the physical absence of Christ on earth, the post-Apostolic Church felt it needed someone who could take His place, represent Him to believers and the world, and represent believers to God. Viewing themselves as separated for special ministry via the rite of ordination, early Christian ministers assumed the position of headship in the church in place of Christ. This is the actual meaning of the widely used Latin phrase in persona Christi Capitis (in place of Christ the Head).[17] Another phrase, Vicarius Filii Dei (in place of the Son of God), expresses the same belief.

The acceptance of ministerial headship through the rite of ordination was accompanied by a developing theology of male headship in the church. The reasoning was very simple: in the New Testament, the relationship between Christ and the Church is represented in nuptial terms. Christ is represented as a bridegroom, a male, who marries His bride, the Church, a female. If the pastor serves his church in persona Christi Capitis, i.e., taking the role of headship in place of Christ, he also must be a man. It follows that the ordination rite is not a simple blessing but a conferral of headship powers and duties and, as such, it is a type of a marriage ceremony; the church becomes the pastor's spouse.[18] In short, through the rite of ordination, the pastor assumes a headship position in the church.[19] All this means that women cannot be ordained as ministers in the church because they must remain in hierarchical submission to male pastors. This ancient theology is clearly expressed in John Paul II's Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (On the Dignity and Vocation of Women) issued in 1988, in which the late pope takes the biblical teaching of male headship in the home and applies it to the church.[20] As we shall see below, there are significant problems with applying male headship terminology to relationships within the church.

JESUS ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN LEADER

Does the evolution of Christian ministry into papal hierarchy, as documented above, mean that the church should be deprived of leadership and organization? Or that authoritative structure should not exist within the community of faith? By no means! In order to exist and disseminate its mission the church must have organization and leadership. Rather than modeling its organization upon secular structures of authority, as early post-Apostolic Christianity did, the church should first of all look to Jesus to search for ways in which authority in the church should be exercised. It is Christ who founded the church and He knows best what Christian authority is and how it should be exercised. Thus, His followers must take His teachings on authority seriously. Other New Testament teachings related to the issue of authority, including difficult Pauline passages (eg., 1 Timothy 2:12) must thus be read through the prism of Jesus' understanding of the term rather than vice versa. So what did Jesus have to say about authority?

In preparation for this presentation, I decided to once again re-read and think through the Gospel passages where Jesus speaks about authority.[21] His views are truly astounding. For most of us, immersed in hierarchically-oriented cultures, Jesus' message continues to be counterintuitive and difficult to comprehend, much less to accept. For this reason, we tend to gloss over the passages dealing with authority without much thought. And yet, these passages, if understood and applied, have the potential to revolutionize our personal and communal lives.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus' disciples had shown a tendency to be preoccupied with status and ranking in the kingdom of God. This is understandable, as their attitudes reflected the prevalent cultural and religious conceptions of authority. The Kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus presented such a breathtakingly different understanding of Christian authority that it took the death of Jesus for the disciples to understand His teachings. Jesus' teachings on the authority of the Christian leader are most crisply articulated in a conversation that found its way into the three synoptic Gospels.[22]

The story is well known. Two of Jesus' disciples, John and James, approached Him with a request to be seated on His right and left in His Kingdom. It appears that they assumed that the Kingdom of Jesus would operate like other earthly institutions, their underlying desire was to have authority over others. Mark tells us that when the remaining ten disciples heard about it, they became very angry, not because they had a different idea of "authority," but because they themselves desired such power also. In response to this, Jesus gathered them together, and in simplest terms explained the operational rules of the Kingdom of God. His words are so striking that they must be quoted here:

> *"You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them* (katakurieusin)*, and their high officials exercise authority over them* (katexousiazousin)*. Not so with you! Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant* (diakonos)*, and whoever wants to be first must be slave* (doulos) *of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45, NIV).*

In this concise passage, Jesus presents two models of authority. The first is the Roman idea of authority. In this model, the elite stand hierarchically over others. They have the power to make decisions and expect submission from those below them.

Jesus clearly rejected this model of authority when He stated, "Not so with you!" Instead, He presented the disciples with a breathtakingly new model of authority, a thorough rejection, or reversal, of the hierarchical model with which they were familiar.

The church should first of all look to Jesus to search for ways in which authority in the church should be exercised.

The concept of authority in Jesus' Kingdom was to be governed by two words: servant (*diakonos*) and slave (*doulos*). From our modern perspective, these two words, often translated as "minister," have lost much of their force. For a person familiar with ancient society and its institutions, however, Jesus' words must have been appalling. So much so that the disciples were unable to understand Jesus' words, and to the last moments of His life, during the Last Supper, they argued about "who is the greatest" (Luke 22:24). This is because, in the first century milieu, servants (*diakonoi*) and slaves (*douloi*) represented the lowest class of human beings, beings who had few rights, and whose job was to listen and fulfill the wishes of those whom they served. Among slaves "there [was] no place for one's own will or initiative."[23] "Ruling and not serving is proper to a man" believed ancient Greeks.[24] Thus, whatever the metaphors of servant and slave were meant to convey it certainly was not exercising authority, spiritual or otherwise, over others (*katexousiazousin*) or having status in the community.

Why did Jesus use these two metaphors if he could have compared His disciples with other leadership groups in society? I believe that Jesus was keenly aware that His Kingdom would be doomed if the disciples incorporated into it the authority structures prevalent within contemporary society. For His mission to succeed, all "pecking order" in the church had to be abolished. Murray Harris grasped this well: "Jesus was teaching that greatness in the community of his followers is marked by humble, self-effacing servanthood or slavery, modeled on his own selfless devotion to the highest good of others."[25] All this shows that Jesus certainly did not desire to abolish all authority in the church; He just radically redefined it and distanced it from the kind of "authority" that advocated submission to a higher authority. Instead, the church was to be a place where those who desired to follow His example were willing to serve in the lowest positions. In Philippians 2:5-7 Paul thus states, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God . . . made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a slave (*doulou*)." In the church of Jesus, therefore, it is not ordination to an office, a title, or a position that makes a leader, but the quality of a person's life and his or her willingness to be the least of all. Following His lead, the despised terms *diakonos* and *doulos* later became the quasi-technical descriptions of apostolic and ministerial leadership in the church.[26] Taking all of this into consideration, it is not surprising that to the question, "Who is the greatest? (Mark 9:33-35; Luke 9:46-48), Jesus answered: "For he who is the least among you all—he is the greatest" and "if anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant (*diakonos*) of all."

Two other terms, *exousia* and *dynamis*, are commonly translated as authority. *Exousia* appears to be related to Jesus' teaching ministry and His ability to forgive sins (e.g., Matt 7:29; 9:6; Mark 1:22; Luke 4:32). The authority (*exousia*) that Jesus exercised, thus, brought words of life and healing to those who were willing to listen. *Dynamis* is usually associated

The Christian rite of ordination, properly understood, is ordination to slavery; it is not going up in rank; it is not about status or having authority over others; it is about being the least in the community of believers.

with Jesus' power to perform miracles and drive out demons (e.g., Luke 4:36; Luke 9:1). Nowhere in the Gospels do the terms *exousia* or *dynamis* appear to be associated with exercising any form of headship, or having authority, over others. Such thinking was simply not part of Jesus' worldview. It is *exousia* and *dynamis* that Jesus bestowed upon the entire community of believers, and it is these two terms that are often confused with a secular understanding of ministerial powers.

There is a unique usage of *exousia* in Matthew 28:18, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." He does not hand over this authority to the disciples for it cannot be done. This is the absolute authority of the Almighty, Omniscient, Creator God. And how does the Almighty Creator God exercise His authority? Does He force His human subjects to be obedient? Does He take away their free will? In Ephesians 5:1-2, Paul provides an answer to the question of how God exercises His authority: "Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." The absolute authority of Christ, thus, represents a supreme example of love, servanthood, and self-sacrifice.

Thus, the concept of authority within New Testament Christianity, founded upon the words and actions of Jesus, does not represent any form of headship in terms of authority over others where submission is expected. Clearly, Jesus always allowed the exercise of free will. Instead of exercising authority over others, His kind of authority can be expressed in terms of serving others. This he demonstrated most forcefully when He knelt to wash the disciples' feet and when He died on the cross, thus giving a supreme example of the true conception of Christian authority. Thus, the Christian rite of ordination, properly understood, is ordination to slavery; it is not going up in rank; it is not about status or having authority over others; it is about being the least in the community of believers. Only understood as such can the ministry in the church fulfill Christ's vision for leadership.

The early, post-Apostolic Christian Church soon forgot Jesus' words and introduced pagan concepts of authority into Christian practice. "Pecking order" was established where it did not belong, all in the name of protecting the church's unity and its teachings.[27] Modern Christianity, including Adventism, inherited these patterns of authority. It would serve us well to return to the words of Jesus and attempt to view ministry in the church through the prism of His teachings, rather than merely adding the adjective "spiritual" to foreign authoritative patterns. What, then, were the characteristics of the New Testament community of Jesus?

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH: A COMMUNITY LIKE NO OTHER

First (A1), ministry in the New Testament church was non-hierarchical; i.e., the organization of the church was not conceived in terms of a chain of command. There seems to be no doubt that,

during His earthly ministry, Jesus endowed some of His followers with the special task of sharing in His mission of proclaiming God's Kingdom. They were chosen to be His representatives and were to continue His mission and to reproduce in their own lives the central characteristics of Jesus Himself, namely total commitment and service to God and to fellow human beings. Their witness, however, was not based on their position, rank, or status but on the mission they had received from Christ. Their special authority was based on the fact that they had been eyewitnesses to the presence of Jesus on earth. Thus, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, this authority entailed preserving and passing on a reliable and trustworthy account of Jesus life and teachings in a reliable and trustworthy manner. "On this basis . . . rested the special and unique respect accorded to the apostles within the Church."[28] The written accounts of many of those eyewitnesses were eventually collected into the canon of the New Testament and thus their writings became normative for Christian believers and expressed in a well-accepted Protestant axiom *sola scriptura*. The New Testament, however, does not provide any evidence that the special position of expertise held by the twelve apostles within the community of faith was transferred to other leaders in the Church.

What we do see in the New Testament, however, is a community like no other. It is a community whose leaders eschewed any form of hierarchy that would place some above others. In fact, following Jesus' example, the New Testament leaders proclaimed what we can only describe as a reverse hierarchy. Following the lead of Jesus, its leaders routinely referred to themselves as *doulos* and *diakonos* of both God and the church.[29] Accordingly, in 1 Corinthians 3:5, Paul writes: "What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants (*diakonoi*), through whom you came to believe." In 2 Corinthians 4:5, he emphatically declares: "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves (*doulous*)."[30] We thus constantly find him lifting Christ and others up, while speaking of himself in unflattering terms such as "chief of sinners" (1 Tim 1:15). Elsewhere he writes: "…and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle" (1 Cor 15:7-9). In 1 Corinthians 4:1 Paul refers to himself and his co-workers as under-rowers (*hupēretas*). An image of an ancient Greek or Roman war galley with three banks of oars comes to mind. Paul places himself in the lowest place on a trireme: he is under other rowers.

While Paul was commissioned to proclaim the Gospel, to teach, exhort, and rebuke, it appears, therefore, that he purposefully desired to avoid positioning himself in a role above his fellow believers. Instead, and despite his special position as an Apostle of Christ, we see him wooing people to follow Christ, not through the authority of his "office," but through the witness of his life.[31] "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1; 1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17, 4:9; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7). With a clear conscience, therefore, Paul was able to write to the Corinthians that when his young disciple Timothy visits them, he would "remind [them] of his [Paul's] way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what [he taught] everywhere in every church" (1 Cor 4:17). Thus, it was the way he lived his life, rather than his position, that resulted in Paul's having genuine authority in the church.

Within the context of being slaves in the church, the New Testament writers were remarkably egalitarian. Everyone could be a slave of the Lord! In Romans 12:11, Paul encouraged all believers to "serve the Lord as His slaves" (*tō kyriō douleuontes*).

In Galatians 5:13 he urged believers "to serve one another as slaves (*douelete*) through love." Every believer, thus, was to serve as a *doulos* of Christ and of each other.

While all believers were called to be slaves of God and one another, this especially applied to leaders in the Christian community who, according to the teaching of Christ, were to consider themselves "the least of all," and thus examples to those under their care. Peter echoed Jesus when he wrote to the leaders in the church: "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care . . . not lording it over (*katakurieontes*)[32] those entrusted to you but being examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:2-5). This was the primary reason why Paul, James, and Peter often introduced themselves to their congregations as slaves (*douloi*) of Christ (Rom 1:1; Jam 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1). All this suggests that New Testament leadership was not about having "authority" over others, about having the "last word," or having an "office."[33] Instead, it was all about having the attitude of Paul, Peter, and other leaders of the New Testament church, who led by the example of their devotion to their Lord and to each other. This was the bedrock of genuine Christian authority.[34]

Viewing church leadership from the above perspective, the overseers (*episcopēs* in 1 Timothy 3:1) or elders (*presbyterous* in Titus 1:9) were indeed to be special persons: they were to be servants (*doulous*) of the Lord and the community; they were to lead by example rather than by the authority of their position; they were to have good names in the community; they were to have stable, monogamous marriages; they were to manage their households well; they were be protectors of the community. One thing was quite certain, however: these slaves of the Lord did not have to be males.[35]

If ministry is to be understood as slavery to Christ and others, another passage must be highlighted. As stated above, Paul's favorite description of his own ministry and that of his co-workers (such as Timothy) was "slave of the Lord" (*doulos Christou*).[36] We find others, such as Peter and James, also referring to themselves as "slaves of the Lord."[37] The same wording, this time spoken by the Lord Himself, however, appears in Acts 2:18 where Peter quotes the prophet Joel: "Even on my slaves, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." Most frequently, this passage is used to highlight the fact that the gift of prophecy was not limited to men. However, we also find in this verse the masculine *doulos* and the feminine *doulas*. In both cases, the pronoun *mou* (my) is added. Considering that, in other places in the New Testament, *doulos* is most often translated as "minister," this passage could legitimately be translated as speaking of both "male ministers" and "female ministers," who are God's own. Is Peter making the point that, in the New Testament church, both males and females could slave the Lord equally? And that both, males and females, were to receive specific gifts of the Spirit that would enable them to fulfill their ministerial calling? Whatever interpretation we place on this particular passage, one thing is clear: the Holy Sprit is not concerned with the gender of the person upon whom He bestows His gifts. Should we be?

It is indeed tragic that soon after the disciples died, post-Apostolic Christianity abandoned the charismatic understanding of Christian ministry and, instead, incorporated a pagan understanding of authority.

Second (B1), ministry in the New Testament was not sacramental; i.e., neither salvation nor the life of the community depended on the presence of ordained clergy. While the early post-Apostolic Church created a system where ordained clergy were essential to the existence of the church, we do not find such a requirement in the New Testament.

From the New Testament point of view, it was Christ alone who was the mediator between God and humanity. Leadership in the New Testament, thus, fulfilled a purely functional role, i.e., its existence contributed to church order and the laying-on-of-hands simply acknowledged the gift of leadership already present in a person.

A sacramental view of ministry, of course, was prophetically significant, as the mediatorial work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary was replaced by the work of an earthly priest. In other words, the early post-Apostolic church sewed back together the earthly sanctuary's curtain rent by the divine hand at the time of Jesus' death. Consequently, every Catholic church on earth became a sanctuary with its own priest. This development clearly corresponded to the prophetic utterance of Daniel, "Yea, it magnified itself, even to the prince of the host; and it took away from him the continual burnt-offering, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down" (Daniel 8:11 ASV). It follows that any attempt to apply priestly language to the work of the ministry in the church takes away from the one unique priesthood of Christ and has direct, negative implications on the Adventist sanctuary message, which emphasizes that all have special access to the risen Christ without the need of spiritual mediators.

Third (C1), ministry in the New Testament was not elitist; i.e., the laying-on-of-hands did not create a spiritual elite in the church. The New Testament understanding was that functions, or roles, in the church were to be filled according to spiritual gifting. Ordination, thus, can be defined simply as "the action of the church to publicly recognize those whom the Lord has called to and equipped for local and global church ministry."[38] Disagreements begin to appear when we ask the question: Who can serve in the church as ordained elders or pastors?

The church of God described in the pages of the New Testament was decidedly non-elitist. In His sayings, Jesus focused on the non-elite of the day and proclaimed them to be the children of God (Matt 5:3–8). In Matthew 23:8–13, he said to His followers: "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. . . . The greatest among you will be your servant" (Matthew 23:8-11). In modern terms we could paraphrase this saying as follows: "But you are not to be called "pastor," "elder," "professor," or "doctor," for you have only one Master and you are all brothers." It is truly unfortunate that in Christian history the lowly term "pastor" has become a symbol of status.[39]

Paul's favorite imagery for portraying the Christian community, i.e., the Body of Christ, represented a markedly non-elitist ecclesiology (1 Cor 12:12–31; Rom 12:1–8; Eph 1:22). Central to this imagery were unity of the Church and the Church's vital relationship with its Head, Jesus Christ. Paul's insistence that the church functioned like a human body served to remind believers that they were completely dependent upon Christ for their growth and life. While unity and the headship of Christ were Paul's main concern, his discussion of the church as the body of Christ was framed within the context of spiritual gifting. The recipients of spiritual gifts were all who were part of the body of Christ, and the unity of the body of Christ depended on the presence, recognition, and use of these spiritual gifts (Eph 4:1–13). Any exclusive claim to these gifts was precluded, because their distribution was dependent upon the Holy Spirit and not on the church (1 Cor 12:11). Any form of elitism was settled by Paul's masterful discussion on the mutual interdependence of believers who exhibited various spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:12-31). Furthermore, in none of the four listings of spiritual gifts (Rom 12:6–8; 1 Cor 12:8–10, 28–30; Ephesians 4:11) was Paul exclusive in any way. Notably, in Romans 12:8, the

gifts of teaching and leadership were tucked in among other, seemingly insignificant gifts. It would be ludicrous to claim, on the basis of this passage, that the gift of encouragement was lower on the scale of giftedness, while the gift of leadership was higher and thus could only be endowed upon a certain class of believers in the church. Certainly this could not have been Paul's intention.

Any idea of headship in the church, be it male or female, . . . usurps the headship of Christ.

Paul's use of the Body of Christ imagery helps us to understand the reality of the church and the way it should function. Within such a community, all solidarities of race, class, culture, and gender are replaced by an allegiance to Christ alone. The old way of relating is replaced by a new relatedness in Christ (Gal 3:28, 29). In this community, all people are equal members of the Body of Christ, because all have experienced the risen Christ and all are gifted with a variety of spiritual gifts of equal value (1 Cor 12), which are to be utilized for the benefit of believers and the world (Rom 12:1–8). Thus, we do not find a hierarchy where some people rank above others according to status; neither do we find a division between ordained clergy and laity. What we see is a new community, the Body of Christ, a New Creation (2 Cor 5:17), where all relationships should hail back to the Garden of Eden. This is what the early post-Apostolic Church forgot soon after the death of the Apostles, introducing instead a notion of an un-equal society in which leadership in the church was restricted to ordained male clergy. The Holy Spirit was thus quenched!

The reality is that if anything apart from commitment to Christ and His church, spiritual gifting, and maturity determine fitness for various functions in the church, then, whether we intend it or not, we create an elitist community. No pious designations attached to the "office" of pastor—such as "servant," "spiritual authority," "spiritual leadership," or "spiritual headship"—can change this reality.

Fourth (D1), the ministry in the New Testament church was not male headship oriented; i.e, there was no room for male headship in the Body of Christ. While Scripture testifies that women were not restricted from leadership positions (Deborah, Phoebe, Junia, Lydia, Priscilla, Nympha), history witnesses to the fact that, from the second century onward, leadership and teaching positions in the church began to be restricted to men alone.[40] As outlined above, the main argument against women's ordination in the Catholic Church today is that the pastor must be a male since he represents Christ, a male, to the community of believers. Male headship in the home is, thus, extended to relationships in the church.

There are significant problems with extending the idea of male headship beyond the home circle. Most importantly, such a concept of headship clearly replaces Christ's spiritual headship of the church and endows selected individuals with Christ's own authority. The New Testament is clear, however, that the only Head of the Church is Christ (1 Cor 11:3; Eph 1:22; 4:15; Col 1:18; 2:19).[41] When, in Ephesians 5:23, Paul states that "Christ is the Head of the Church" and "man is the head of the wife," he does not say that man's headship in the home in some way extends to relationships in the church. Paul's meaning is clear: as a husband is the head of his wife, his bride, so Christ is the Head of the Church, His Bride.[42] In both cases, the nuptial language is clearly restricted to specific relationships: that between a husband and wife and that between

Christ and His church. It would be absurd to conclude that Paul meant to say that as Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church, so men in the Christian congregation are bridegrooms of women in the church. Neither is it scriptural to say that the pastor "marries" the church and becomes its head upon his ordination, just as Christ married His Bride and became its Head.

From this it follows that any idea of headship in the church, be it male or female, apart from that of Christ, usurps the headship of Christ. Thus, while we may legitimately speak of male headship in the Christian home, it is unscriptural to speak of any kind of headship in the church apart from that of Christ. While, within the greater context of mutual submission (Eph 5:21), wives are indeed asked by Paul to submit to their husbands (Eph 5:22),[43] nowhere in the New Testament do we find an injunction that believers are to submit to the headship of the ordained ministry; the Church submits only to Christ! It follows that when a pastor/elder and a church decide to operate according to the male headship principle, this pastor/elder and his church are committing spiritual adultery, otherwise known as sacramentalism.[44] For this reason, difficult Pauline passages, such as 1 Tim 2 and 3 and 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, can never be interpreted as teaching male headship in the church, but must be understood in light of Jesus' statements on authority. No amount of tinkering with the text "according to the ideas they happen to entertain upon them,"[45] and adding the word 'spiritual' to headship, can change this reality. As noted above, sacramentalism is primarily a hallmark of Catholic Christianity, but it also exists within those Christian denominations that choose to replace the pope (also referred to as "Holy Father;" from the Latin *papa*) with a male figure of a pastor/elder. Christian communities that embrace female headship in addition to male headship follow the same pattern.

So I have a question: Can we, as Seventh-day Adventists, really afford to flirt with applying the male headship principle to the ordained pastor/elder? I believe that this principle is a seemingly innocuous Trojan horse that has the potential to destroy the very heart of Adventism. It is telling that Ellen G. White never once used 1 Timothy 2 or 3 and 1 Corinthians 11 or 14 to support male headship in the church. The developments in early post-Apostolic Christianity, discussed in the first part of this paper, clearly show the dangers of extending the biblical notion of male headship in the home to male headship in the Church and must be avoided at all costs among true followers of Christ.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there can be no doubt that early Catholic Christianity incorporated various characteristics of the Old Testament priestly ministry into the theology and practice of Christian ministry. Christian ministry, thus, became hierarchical, sacramental, elitist, and oriented towards male headship. To a greater or lesser degree, most Christian communities, including Seventh-day Adventists, continue to perpetuate some of these characteristics in their communities.

All these characteristics, however, were fulfilled in Christ who, by virtue of being our Creator, stands over us and has no successors to His divine authority; who died sacramentally on the cross and thus became the sole provider of salvation; who, through His ministry on earth, made all humans equal in the eyes of God in terms of authority and endowed them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the Great Gospel Commission; and who, through His sacrificial death on the cross, became the sole Head of the Church, His Bride. He shares His headship with no one! Post-New Testament Christianity,

unfortunately, denied the sole headship of Christ in the church and contributed to the integration of a counterfeit view of authority in church organization and, thus, to the birth of an apostate religion.

I began this paper with a discussion on the nature of authority. Our God, who is a God of order, created a world in which human beings, the crown of His creation, were to live according to the authoritative patterns that governed the universe prior to the creation of the Earth. Then sin entered the world. The way God exercised His authority was challenged and a counterfeit notion of authority was introduced. This is the notion of authority that the "prince of this world" taught the first couple; this is the notion of authority that forever darkened the human vision of God and His character. The precise reason why Christ, God incarnate, came to this Earth and founded a community like no other was to counteract the counterfeit notion of God's authority. He accomplished it by His life of divine slavery (*douleia*) that ultimately led Him to the cross. Unfortunately, human beings, weakened by millennia of sin's existence on this Earth, returned to the old patterns of thinking soon after the death of its pioneers. Notwithstanding our devotion to Scripture, we, Seventh-day Adventists, inherited these patterns of thinking that are so tenaciously (and tragically) ingrained in the Christian faith.

It is a common human experience to be attracted to those who exhibit genuine Christian authority and to be repelled by the attitudes of those who rely solely on the authority of their office. Ideally, genuine Christian authority and the authority of a representative function should be integrated. After all, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with people holding an office, even though it is not really a biblical concept. Neither, is there anything inherently wrong with the way our church is currently organized. However, while Jesus left us with no model of running the church, He was adamant that His church would not resemble secular structures, where authority was organized according to a "pecking order." Is it possible that our current discussions regarding women's ordination are complicated by our misunderstanding or misuse of true Christian authority?

I am a third generation Adventist, grandson of a head elder, son of a pastor/administrator, and an ordained pastor myself. In all my years as a Seventh-day Adventist, rarely have I encountered the integration of true genuine Christian authority with the authority of an ordained pastor. Sadly, I often struggle with such integration myself. Some of the most authoritative persons in my life were not ordained ministers. The one I place above all others was an old Christian gentleman in Tasmania (where for a time I served as a pastor after receiving my PhD) who had only four classes of formal education and had only been ordained as a deacon. I recognized, accepted, and submitted to the true Christian authority he represented and learned more from him about slaving for Christ and others than from a lifetime of being an Adventist and all my theological education combined. Unfortunately, for too many of us, being an ordained pastor tends to be about having authority over others, status, ranking, and male headship, rather than being slaves for Christ and others. This, I believe, is the real reason why we are spending our time discussing the issue of ordination and who can be ordained.

Now, I understand that "slavery" has few positive connotations, as it implies no honor, no glory, no status, and no ranking. Nobody likes that; in fact, I am repulsed by the concept. And yet, this is the word that Christ used to describe Himself and His work; this is the word that the apostles used to describe themselves and their work as well as that of their co-workers, both men and women;

this is what Christ is calling us—Adventist pastors, deacons, elders, presidents of divisions, conferences and unions—to be; not to have authority over people but rather over the task of fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ. Gospel order in the church does not require hierarchical headship, spiritual or otherwise. For true Christian ministry is not about status, rank, gender, equality, rights, or having "spiritual authority" over others; it is about being slaves of Christ and His people; not to rule over others but to be examples and, through the witness of our lives, to woo others to follow Christ. No human laying-on-of-hands can provide this kind of authority; only the work of the Holy Spirit in a person's heart can! While all Christians are to be ministers, those who are set apart for special ministry, both men and women, are called to be chief examples of slavery to Christ and others. I am convinced that when we embrace this understanding of authority and ministry, Christ's vision for His community will be fulfilled, revival and reformation will follow, and the problem of women's ordination will disappear.

So I want to leave this short investigation of the nature of Christian authority with a question: Are we going to follow culture, both secular and religious, which has taught us a hierarchical and elitist understanding of authority? Or are we going to follow Christ, who said, "Not so with you!"? ■

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BACK TO CREATION: AN ADVENTIST HERMENEUTIC

IMPORTANCE AND NEED FOR HERMENEUTICS

1. There is no statement in the Bible: "Ordain women to ministry!" Moreover, there is also no command: "Do not ordain women to ministry!" Yet, we want to have a biblical answer to our fundamental question of whether to ordain women to ministry. So we need to reflect on, evaluate, and interpret the biblical data in order to arrive at a sound conclusion about this matter.
2. Two groups of scholars who love the Lord and take the Holy Scriptures seriously as the Word of God come to opposite conclusions from the same Bible on the same subject. How can this be that they come to different results? Let me stress that this is not primarily a theological discussion between liberals and conservatives, between those whose main arguments for ordination of women are based on culture or social justice (even though these arguments need to be also taken seriously) and scholars or theologians who maintain faith in God, but it is a debate among those who strongly uphold the authority of the Holy Bible.
3. Our distance in time and space from the biblical world necessitates the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. Today we use a different language, have a different culture, thinking, habits, customs, and worldview, and we also deal with different issues and audiences.

It is not enough to read or quote the biblical text; it is necessary to explain it. Even though the disciples of Jesus knew many biblical passages by heart, yet they did not understand that the Hebrew Scriptures testified about the Messiah Jesus. "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life" (John 5:39–40 NKJV). On the resurrection Sunday, two disciples on the way to Emmaus needed to understand the Scriptures regarding the role and mission of the Messiah, so Jesus explained the Old Testament teaching to them: "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted [*diermeneuō*] to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27 ESV). The correct understanding of the Bible enables the understanding of Jesus, and the understanding of Jesus gives better insights into the Scriptures. The word "interpreted" (*diermeneuō*) points to hermeneutics. The Apostle Paul asks how people can believe, and it is only if someone comes and proclaims the word of God to them: "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?" (Rom 10:14 ESV). Furthermore, the Ethiopian eunuch answered the question of the evangelist Philip: "Do you understand what you are reading?"

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> by stating "'How can I,' . . . 'unless someone explains it to me?' So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him" (Act 8:31 NIV).

The verb "explain" is a translation of the Greek word *hodegeō* which means "lead," "guide," "explain," "teach," or "instruct."

This short overview demonstrates that there is an urgent need for proper hermeneutics—how to interpret the biblical texts in regard to the ordination of women. And it is also evident that the issue of the ordination of women is first of all a hermeneutical issue; it is about how we read and interpret the biblical text in this case and in all our theology. Therefore, establishing principles of interpretation of the Bible are crucial in order to arrive at an accurate meaning of the Scriptures concerning gender relationships in Christ.

This paper summarizes and illustrates the hermeneutical principles from an Adventist perspective without going into minute detail and providing substantiation for each point, because other colleagues are presenting specific studies on these raised issues. The goal of the present study is to set a biblical-theological pattern of thinking, a mindset on how to approach and interpret biblical material in regard to the ordination of women.

WHAT IS BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS?

Biblical hermeneutics is a science of interpreting the Holy Scriptures in order to ascertain its meaning.[1] This science follows principles of interpretation as well as a clear methodology. Hermeneutics does not only deal with understanding of the Bible, but also with the process of thinking about and evaluating biblical interpretation. One cannot manipulate the biblical text to say whatever the interpreter would wish. We need to follow sound principles. Exegesis then applies these principles to particular texts, and exposition in preaching or teaching is the actual communication of God's message.[2] One cannot strictly dissect hermeneutics and exegesis. The goal of the hermeneutical-exegetical process is to discover what the message meant to the original audience, and what it means for us today: What does the author mean by what he writes?

Biblical hermeneutics is also an art, because putting different texts together and understanding its theology and significance requires special insight into the whole biblical teaching. It must be done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is why it is important that this task is done by a dedicated believer in God. As members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we accept the historical grammatical-theological method of interpreting the Bible as a proper tool for understanding the Bible.[3] At the same time, we firmly reject the historical-critical method of the interpretation of the biblical material.[4] This historical-critical method can only discover the horizontal dimension of the biblical text and uses a distorted methodology of imposing some preconceived patterns on the text, such as reconstructed history (e.g., there was no worldwide flood or Exodus from Egypt; the book of Daniel was written in the time of the Maccabean war around

165 B.C.) and literary compositions (like the JEDP [Jahvist, Elohist, Deuteronomist and Priestly writer] approach to the Pentateuch; Deutero-Isaiah; the book of Deuteronomy being the result of Josiah's reform in the 7th century B.C.; etc.).

It is not enough to use the right tools and follow the proper methodology of interpreting the Holy Scriptures; the exegete needs to also have the proper attitude toward the revealed Word:

1. **To accept the Bible as the Word of God**. It is of high significance to underline that the ultimate Author of Scriptures is God, that the biblical writers were guided by the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Bible is God's inspired revelation (2 Tim 3:15–17; 2 Pet 1:20–21). As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe that the Bible is the Word of God, and we accept the so called "incarnational" or "thought" model of inspiration.[5]
2. **To study the Word of God in a humble and teachable spirit**. The Lord declares: "These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word" (Isa 66:2b NIV). This is why the first task in doing exegesis is a prayer! Praying for the Holy Spirit and wisdom from above is existentially crucial so the interpreter will be in harmony and in tune with the Author of the Bible in order to understand it. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the interpretation process is limited and in jeopardy. Bible reading is first of all a spiritual discipline, and we need to read it with open eyes.
3. **To be willing to obey and follow the revealed Word**. The practice of the discovered meaning of the biblical message is the key element in the interpretation of the Bible. This means that the interpreter must be open to different interpretative options and cannot approach the text with given preconceived ideas. Thus, the proper attitude to the text includes a readiness to follow God's instructions, and not to try beforehand to reject a specific view even if it goes against an established pattern of thinking or *status quo* behavior. Jesus aptly states: "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority" (John 7:17 NKJV).
4. **To recognize our human limitations.** The Bible contains propositional truth, but our understanding of it is partial, tentative, never final (1 Cor 13:9–13). The final word always belongs to God. All our statements of faith are under His judgment and authority. This is why we need to carefully study His revelation, tremble at His Word, and attentively listen to each other and study together so that we can advance in the knowledge of His truth.

As time progresses, believers can better discern and understand the meaning of God's revelation:

1. Jesus declared to His disciples: "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Matt 24:15–16 ESV). When Jesus's followers saw the "abomination of desolation" (fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy of 9:27), they were to flee from Jerusalem.
2. Jesus proclaimed that his followers could understand and remember His Word better after certain things were fulfilled: "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe" (John 14:29 NKJV; see also 13:19, 16:4).
3. The New Testament church's radical discovery of the inclusion of Gentiles only became gradually clear for the Christian church (see Acts 10-11 and 15; Gal 2:11–16).

HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Bible is normative and has the ultimate authority in doctrine and practice. As Adventists, we believe in the self-testimony of Scriptures, and we accept the general principles of *sola scriptura* (Scriptures alone determines matters of faith and ethics) and *tota scriptura* (the use of Scriptures in its totality/entirety). The whole biblical canon needs to be seriously studied. We adhere to the principle of *scriptura sui ipsius interpres* (Scripture interprets itself); however, this does not mean that the student of the Bible will not look at the historical background, the context of the studied verse(s), and the intent of the biblical passage. On the contrary, this principle requires the study of the historical and literary context in order to know to what issue(s) the particular text responds and thus avoid misapplying it.

We need to let the biblical text speak! Exegesis is not a luxury or a necessary evil. It is not a mere playing with words and sentences, but it is a diligent work with the biblical text in order to discover its meaning. This process includes biblical theology as an inseparable part. Questions of relevancy and practical applications cannot be separated from the exegetical process. It may also prove useful to the entire hermeneutical process to know the history of the interpretation of the studied biblical text(s) up to the present time in order to be informed by it, understand the current debate, and avoid the pitfalls of interpretation by not repeating the same mistakes (e.g., the Trinitarian and Christological discussions; understanding of the structure, role, mission, and authority of the church; debates on revelation and inspiration; the doctrine of the nature of humanity; interpretation of ordination and the role of women in the Old Testament and the Christian church; etc.).

The historical-grammatical-theological method of interpreting the Bible uses the following main hermeneutical principles:

Historical Background—The Basic Six "Ws"

To understand the meaning of the biblical message, one needs to discover the basic historical background. Six "Ws" can help in this regard.

1. **Who**
   - A. Who wrote or said it? Deciding on the authorship of the book may radically affect the understanding of the book (e.g., Job, Isaiah, or Daniel). To know the authorship of some biblical books is very crucial for their interpretation. For examples, we accept that Genesis was authored by Moses in spite of the claim of the historical–critical scholars that it is not the case; we accept Paul's authorship of 1–2 Tim even though they belong among the Pastoral Epistles which some critical scholars regard as written later than Paul's time.
   - B. Who are the main protagonists, figures, or players in the studied text? What can be known about them (for example, see Junia, the Apostle in Rom 16:7)?[6]
2. **When**

   When was the book written, when did the event happen, and/or on what occasion was the mentioned speech/message given? For the majority of the biblical books, it is very important to know when events took place. For example, see the background of the book of Deuteronomy (were they speeches delivered by Moses in 1410 B.C. or were they only fabricated around 622 B.C.?) or the events in the beginning of the book of Daniel (a real besiegement of Jerusalem in 605 B.C. or only a made-up story from the Maccabean time?).

The inclusio in Genesis 2 makes clear that the man and the woman are presented as equals in this chapter.

3. **Where**
   Where was it written or said? The historical place and what happened there may play a key role in the understanding of the biblical message (e.g., the book of Joshua) or even prophecy (e.g., the fall of Babylon and the drying up of the Euphrates river in Rev 16). Study of the historical background includes the knowledge of language, culture, habits, worldview, etc. (e.g., the extra-biblical creation and flood narratives). The value of historical documents and archaeology for an understanding of the biblical world is indispensable, because it helps to better understand the ancient world and their worldview in which biblical history and polemic took place (e.g., understanding the cult of Artemis or Diana and other cultural movements afoot in Ephesus at the time of Paul helps one to better understand Acts 19:23-41 and 1 Tim 2).
4. **To Whom**
   Discovering the original audience determines its understanding and application (e.g., the audience of three speeches of Moses according to the book of Deuteronomy; or the audience of Ezekiel or Daniel). With regard to 1 Tim 2, what was the makeup of the believing community in Ephesus in Paul's day; in particular, who were the false teachers in Ephesus concerning whom the epistle gives counsel?
5. **Why**
   Why was it written or said? The author's purpose or intention reveals the main focus of the message. Discerning the intended drive of the biblical book is of utmost importance (e.g., the intent of the first and the second Creation accounts points to the Sabbath and Marriage as their focus, i.e., vertical and horizontal relationships and dimensions of our life; the purpose of the Fall account is to demonstrate God's grace in the midst of His judgments; etc.). Again regarding 1 Tim, what was the particular problem or problems that Paul was addressing in the epistle?
6. **What**
   What was written or said? To summarize the message into one sentence or short paragraph helps to discover the content, basic message, main teaching, and principal thought(s).

GRAMMATICAL OR LITERARY STUDY

Literary Study

Word Study. The careful study of words is necessary, because their meaning may change in time. The meaning of the biblical phrases is always determined by the context in which they are used.

For example, consider the different meanings of the words "head" or "authority." The immediate context should decide the particular meaning of these terms. So for example, in 1 Cor 11:3, does the expression "head" (*kephalē*) mean "authority" or does it mean "source"[7] or something else? Does it carry the same meaning in vv. 4-7, 10? What is the meaning of *exousia* ("authority") in v. 10? Does it have the same meaning here as elsewhere in the NT? There are all good and legitimate questions.

In 1 Tim 2:12, does the word *authentein* mean "to have authority" or does it mean "to domineer over" or some other negative connotation? And what about the meaning of *hēsychia* in the same verse: does it mean that a woman must be totally "in silence, silent" (KJV, NKJV, NIV), or does it refer to her overall demeanor which should be "at peace"

(CJB), acting "quietly" (NLT), as this same root word means just a few verses earlier with regard to all Christians (v. 2)?

For OT examples, in the Genesis creation narratives, does the word "man" (*'adam*) in Gen 1:26-28 and elsewhere imply male gender (and thus hint at male headship) or is it a gender-inclusive word that means "human" with no implication of maleness? Does the word "helper" (Heb. *'ezer*) in Gen 2:18, 20 imply a subordinate status for Eve, or is this term more neutral by having no reference to relative status since even God is referred to as "*'ezer*" (Exod 18:4; Deut 33:7, 26, 29; 1 Chr 12:19; Pss 20:3; 33:20; 70:6; 89:20; 115:7-11; 121:2; 124:8; 146:5; Hos 13:9)? The title *'ezer* for Eve in Gen 2 is actually a great compliment!

Grammar and Syntax. Martin Luther already said that theology is grammar because on it depends the understanding of the text. Grammar, for example, helps to determine which time is involved in the text—past, present, or future (e.g., the eternity of the Word which became flesh in a precise moment of time according to the use of the Greek past tenses [like imperfect and aorist] in John 1:1–3, 14). The study of syntax is very important in discerning the relationship of words and sentences to each other. For example, "naming" of animals (Gen 2:20) and Eve (3:20) in contrast to "calling" the newly formed woman a "woman" (2:23), i.e., recognizing the closeness and unity between Adam and his wife (received as a gift from God).

Another example: Paul's list of qualification for elders in the masculine gender "**husband of one wife**" (1 Tim 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9). This can be explained on the basis of understanding the biblical languages, how they express their thoughts. An important feature of biblical languages is the simple recognition that when both genders are included in a biblical text, they are described in the masculine gender. Also Phoebe is described as *diakonos* (but also *adelphē* [sister {fem.}] in Rom 16:1). The masculine gender is used throughout the Decalogue, but it does not exclude women from obedience too (the wife is not even mentioned, but is included in "YOU"). Jesus proclaimed: "I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt 5:28 NIV). However, it does not mean that women can look lustfully at men.

Statistics. Biblical statistics will help to determine the importance of words or phrases, and to discover key, rare, or unique words (*hapax legomena*). So, for example, the meaning of the Hebrew word *teshuqah* in Gen 3:16. Since it appears only three times in the Hebrew Bible, it is important to note the only other time where it occurs in the context of a man-woman relationship, i.e. Song 7:11 (English v. 10), where it clearly has a positive connotation of "[romantic, sexual] desire."

In 1 Tim 2:12, it is important to realize that the word *authentein* (to govern, have authority) in 1 Tim 2:12 is a *hapax legomenon*. Thus it is crucial to understand the meaning of this word in light of the current meaning of the Greek in the time of Paul, and not to import a meaning only current several centuries later into the text.

Different literary features. Literary study helps to discover special literary features like puns, grammatical anomalies, ironies, figures of speech, Hebrew parallelism, inclusio (envelope construction), metaphors, etc. For example, the inclusio in Gen 2 makes clear that the man and the woman are presented as equals in this chapter, and the flow of the passage from incomplete to complete is just the opposite of those who claim that this chapter emphasizes the priority of the man in creation. Again, the Hebrew parallelism of Gen 3:16 helps to explain the meaning of the divine judgments given upon the woman.

Contextual Study

It is of utmost importance to study the particular biblical word, phrase, or sentence in its immediate and larger context, because the context decides its meaning.

For example, Adam's wife is created as "helper suitable to him [Adam]" (NIV). The Hebrew phrase *'ezer kedegdo* literally translated is "help as opposite to him" or "help as corresponding to him" meaning that they are equal partners in life, even though they are sexually different (the biblical Creation text stresses the sexuality of both of them). Thus, even though they have different physical functions, there is no subordinate or superordinate hierarchical status in their relationship. Their difference is good, and only because they are different can they be a contribution to each other.

Another example is that there is no causative connection between vv. 12 and 13 in 1 Tim 2: "And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For [Gr. *gar*] Adam was formed first, then Eve" (1Tim 2:12 NKJV). The Greek conjunction *gar* in the beginning of v. 13 is explicative (as it is in v. 5) and needs to be translated as "for," and not as causative "therefore or because." Paul's reasoning apparently does not make sense: Why should a woman or a wife be silent/quiet in Ephesian church, because Adam was created first and Eve second? In reality, to be silent or quiet has nothing to do with the sequence of the creation of the first pair! This puzzle makes sense only if Paul is responding to a specific claim of his opponents, namely their claim that a woman—the goddess Artemis—was created first, and from her everyone else. Paul is difficult to understand because he is very polemic; **he reacts to a special proto-gnostic heresy which uplifted the woman to cosmic supremacy built on the cult of Artemis (Diana).** This woman's supremacy claimed that woman was created first, and everyone (including men) should submit to this goddess Mother. Due to worshipping this mother-goddess, women (especially the wives) were probably domineering over the men (including their husbands) in public meetings. The myth of Cybele and Attis, from which the Ephesian Artemis sprang, emphasized the creation of the goddess first, then her male consort.[8] Paul simply argues in reference to the Creation account that Adam was created first (Paul does not explain the Creation account). On that basis, he urges that such noisy women teachers must be silent, because their teaching is disruptive and their claims do not confer with the biblical Creation account. So he categorically states that he does not permit them to teach.

Literary Genre

Is the text under scrutiny history, prophecy, parable, song, genealogy, polemic, law, prayer, etc.? This is an extremely important point because on this recognition depends the whole approach to and the interpretation of the text. A different set of rules applies to the interpretation of parables, and again different ones apply to prophecies. The kind of literature determines the application of various interpretative rules. For example, if 1 Tim is a polemical letter then one needs to know the arguments to which Paul is responding, and then interpret the text accordingly. In this polemical epistle Paul reacts to serious problems and writes against incipient Gnosticism, false teachers refusal of the Creation order and their defense of multiple mediators, asceticism, and the women's cult of Artemis's supremacy (see 1 Tim 1:3-7; 2:3-6; 2:11-15; 4:1-5).

The Literary Structure

The literary structure of the book and the selected passage is very crucial for understanding the message of the Bible. This will determine the literary

units and delimitate them in order to know which verses belong together. It also shows the main flow of thoughts and helps to understand the principal points and the purpose of the biblical text (e.g., see the first and second Genesis Creation accounts; the Flood story; the books of Ezekiel; Daniel, and Revelation). For example, the chiastic structure of Gen 3 helps to explain the order in which God addresses the ones under judgment in this chapter. Again, the symmetrical macrostructure of the Song of Songs underscores the egalitarian relationship between Solomon and the Shulammite.

THEOLOGICAL STUDY

Understand the Big Picture of Biblical Revelation

The most important issue in our life is how we think about God because everything in our life depends upon it. A proper understanding of God's character, the Great Controversy, and the Plan of Salvation are the key entry points to the interpretation of the Bible.[9] The goal of interpreting the Holy Scriptures is to know God and His plans, and understand how we should live. Our discussion about the ordination of women is related to the big theological picture of how we view God, but comes down first of all to the basic issue of what is our—men—attitude toward women and toward our sisters in the church. How do we think, perceive, and talk about them? How do we relate and behave toward them? What kind of jokes do we say about them? Our studies on the ministry of women are not a mere theological exercise; at stake is how we treat women in general. In this context, we need to ask additional pertinent questions: What is God's view of women and how does He value them? How should the relationship between men and women be cultivated among believers in Christ? This set of issues leads to the other two specific theological questions closely related to our discussion: What kind of picture of God will be presented in my/our interpretation in favor of the ordination of women? What kind of picture of God will be painted by my/our denial of women's ordination?

From the Clear to the Unclear Texts, From the Known to the Unknown, From the Plain to the Problematic Verses

For example, the texts about Jesus as the beginning (*archē*) of God's creation, to be the begotten (*monogenēs*) Son of God, or to be the firstborn (*prototokos*), etc. Some have taken these passages to mean that Jesus is not fully God, or that He has eternally been subordinate to the Father. Others further the argument, based upon these kinds/ of passages, that if Jesus was subordinate to the Father, then this provides a model of female subordination to males in the home and the church. Such argumentation fails to start with the clear texts about the relationships in the Trinity, and interpret the unclear in light of the clear.

Another example is the need to proceed from Moses (Gen 1–3) to Paul (1 Tim 2) and not to try to obscure the clear statements in Genesis by beginning with Paul and pressing this meaning upon the Genesis text in order to explain the difficult verses of the Apostle Paul. To read Paul's statement "Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman, who was deceived and *became a sinner*" is very incomplete, because Adam also sinned *and became a sinner*, not only Eve. Yet, Paul does not say one word here about Adam's fall and sinfulness. This verse makes sense only if Paul (while referring to the Genesis Creation story) reacts to the specific heretical claims of his opponents who try to make the cult of Woman (Artemis) and the primacy of women dominant. Paul in Romans explains and proves that we are all sinners and points to Adam only. Is he contradicting himself? Not at all, because each text

needs to be explained in its proper context! Romans is a doctrinal epistle which teaches about true faith and how to be saved in Christ Jesus, but 1 Tim is a polemical letter.

Literal or Spiritual/Figurative Meaning?

How should we read the biblical text? Does the Bible have *sensus literalis*, i.e., a literal meaning, or *sensus spiritualis*, i.e., spiritual meaning? Is it possible to speak also about *sensus plenior*, i.e., a deeper meaning? Our guiding principle is that we read the biblical text literally unless the context demands otherwise, because we encounter parables, symbols, songs, prophecy, metaphors, etc. For example, Gen 2:4 characterizes the Creation account as "genealogy," i.e., as a historical, factual account as are nine other genealogies in the book of Genesis, including the genealogy of Adam, Noah, Terah, and Jacob (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 37:2). If the genealogies of these patriarchs are historical and really happened in a literal way, so must also "the genealogy of the heavens and the earth" be historical.

There is a difference between the literal and literalistic meaning of the text. "Literal" means that one reads the biblical text in its context with its intended message meanwhile "literalistic" reading means that the biblical text is taken in a very narrow dogmatic way without applying its contextual and larger theological considerations. For example, some have read 1 Cor 14:34 ("Let your women/wives keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak") literalistically, to mean that women are not to speak at all in public worship services. But information in this same epistle of 1 Cor indicates that women were indeed speaking in worship services (11:5), with Paul's blessing! Certainly this passage is not to be taken as a literal ban on all female speaking in church![10]

As Seventh-day Adventists we realize the complexity of the biblical message. We have never interpreted the biblical text in a literalistic or simplistic way. For examples: (1) We do not accept that texts like Rev 14:10-11 and 20:10 teach eternal conscious torture in fire even though they explicitly claim that; our reading of these texts is not literalistic or simplistic. (2) We refuse to believe that texts like Mal 4:2-3 and Rom 9:15-24 speaks about double predestination. (3) We do not believe in a literalistic way that after death we go immediately to heaven to be with Jesus, even though Paul sounds like he is claiming it (see Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:6-9). (4) We do not accept dichotomy between law and grace (that they are against each other) in spite of texts like Rom 6:14 and Gal 2:16-17. As Adventist we always seriously study the historical background, immediate and larger context, audience, theology, purpose, and intention of the text. Otherwise it is easy to be misled and come to false conclusions. In other words, the safeguard of the balanced interpretation does not lie in a simple quotation of the Bible, but in finding principles which need to be rightly applied.

Prescriptive or Descriptive Texts?

Does the biblical text only describe what happened (e.g., the behavior of people; the consequences of sin) or does it prescribe a certain behavior in stories, parables, or legal texts? Examples include Noah's drunkenness, David's adultery, Nehemiah's beating of people for not knowing Hebrew and for intermarriage with unbelievers/idolaters, etc. Regarding Gen 3:16, is it a permanent prescription of male headship or a remedial redemptive provision to facilitate the return to the Creation ideal (see Gal 3:26–29; Eph 5:21–33; similar to the "painful toil" for Adam in Gen 3:17b, NIV)?[11]

Additional questions need to be always carefully studied: To whom does the prescription apply? Is it

temporal or universal? Does it apply to an individual or to all people? To Israel only or also to all nations? The scope of the biblical instruction is important. For example, in 1 Tim 2:11-15 Paul uses the ambiguous vocabulary (*anēr-gynē*) which may refer to "man-woman" or "husband-wife" relationship.[12] Does Paul's counsel in 1 Tim 2:11-15 apply to all women everywhere for all time, or does it apply only to those in the specific situation in Ephesus (or similar situations which might occur elsewhere and/or later), in which women/wives domineer over men/their husbands in the worship service? Does Paul speak about men-women relationship or only about husbands-wives relationship, or has he in mind both relationships? Similarly, In 1 Cor 14:34, does the counsel regarding "women/wives" (*gynē*) apply to the men-women relationship in general in society and/or the church or to the marriage relationship between husband-wife only?

First Indicative and then Imperative of the Gospel

Grace always comes first and then the law follows. Faith and obedience go hand to hand, but faith is always the root of salvation and an ethical life is its fruit. The Spirit of the law, i.e., its intention, has priority over its literalistic application (e.g., the six antitheses of Matt 5:21–48 in the Sermon on the Mount). The act of ordination needs to be understood as the result of experiencing God's grace and the power of His Spirit in life.

Importance of the Study Within the Overall Biblical Teaching

Not all things are equally important that are taught in the Bible. For example, the death of Jesus on the cross is the great center truth of the Bible around which all other biblical teachings clusters.[13] We need to ask what place ordination has in God's system of truth, how it belongs in the plan of salvation,

The safeguard of the balanced interpretation does not lie in a simple quotation of the Bible, but in finding principles which need to be rightly applied.

and how it fits into the great controversy issues. Is the ordination of men or women a central or more peripheral teaching of the Bible? As a matter of fact, it is not something directly prescribed or repeatedly taught by biblical authors. Is it telling that Ellen White never once refers to the crucial passages like 1 Tim 2:8-14 and 1 Cor 11:3, which provide the foundational argument for those who oppose women's ordination?

Intra- and Inter-Textuality

How do the same and then later biblical authors use the previously revealed biblical material? Is it used in a dogmatic, ethical, exhortative, or polemical way? All related texts need to be a part of the conversation. At the same time, we need to be careful not to put together texts that do not belong together even though at first glimpse it may suggest so.

For example, the use of Mark 7:19 or Acts 10 as a denial of the biblical teaching on the clean and unclean food of Lev 11. Another example, Peter actually gives the right interpretation of Paul (because he is so easily misinterpreted) in order to show the true meaning of the husband-wife relationship (compare 1 Tim 2:8–15 with 1 Pet 3:1–7).

As another example, the Song of Songs has been widely recognized as an inspired commentary on gender relations in Gen 1–2. There are numerous intertextual links between the Song and Gen 1-2. Furthermore, the Song links with Gen 3:16, and

explicitly reverses the remedial provision of male headship and female submission as it underscores the possibility of returning to the Creation ideal for marriage as in Gen 2:24. One cannot overlook this crucial inspired testimony in interpreting the relationships between men and women in the early chapters of Genesis.

Unity of the Bible

The biblical authors do not contradict themselves. The analogy of faith is an important principle and needs to be maintained, because it is supported by the inner biblical evidence. For examples, the harmony between Moses, the prophets, Jesus, Paul, and James on justification by faith; the attitude toward women in the Old and New Testaments.

With regard to the role of women in the church, one cannot set Paul against Paul: one cannot interpret 1 Tim 2:8-14 in a way that contradicts Paul's numerous statements affirming women in positions of leadership in the church, and his basic principled statement regarding gender relations in Gal 3:28. One cannot set Paul against Moses and Solomon, by interpreting 1 Tim 2:8-14 in such a way that contradicts the exegesis of Gen 1–3 and the inspired OT commentary on this passage in the Song of Solomon.

Therefore, we need to read the Bible wisely, i.e., prayerfully, humbly, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and in its historical, grammatical, literary and theological context.

DANGERS AND FALLACIES IN INTERPRETING THE SCRIPTURES

Selectivity

We need to **avoid being selective—choosing only some texts which fit our own interpretative construct.**

For example, the Rabbinic identification of the Messiah in the time of Jesus focused on the righteous King (Isa 11) while ignoring another Messianic figure, namely the Suffering Servant or the Servant of the Lord of Isa 53. When Jesus Christ came as the Suffering Servant, they rejected Him because He did not fit into their interpretative category. What a tragedy due to the misunderstanding the Scriptures!

One needs to be willing to deal with a complexity of issues and to not avoid some tough problems, because what criteria we apply to interpret one problem may affect other issues. For example, we cannot speak only about the silence of women during worship in the church (1 Cor 14:34–35; 1 Tim 2:11–12) but avoid dealing with other closely related issues pertaining to women in the church—the head covering of women (1 Cor 11:5–6, 13) or their obligation to have long hair (1 Cor 11:6). We need to have a good reason for why we take so seriously 1 Tim 2 about women's silence (quietness), but ignore applying Paul's instructions about women's long hair or their head cover. These two other practices are not advocated in our church even by those who argue against the ordination of women. Why not? It seems that Paul does not use different reasons for defending these three practices; he advocates all of them with references to the Genesis Creation order (1 Cor 11:3–16; 14:34; 1 Tim 2:11–15). Can the knowledge of specific social habits, circumstances, or problems in the churches in Corinth and Ephesus help us to discern if these practices are or are not relevant to us?

Inconsistency

To speak about the silence of women in the church and to not allow them to teach according to 1 Tim 2:11–12, and then to apply it only to the ordination of women and/or to the work of an ordained pastor is very arbitrary and inconsistent. Generally speaking, in our churches this rule is not applied to women as they are teachers in schools and

churches, they are Bible workers, preachers, elders, deaconesses, Sabbath School teachers, etc. They are not silent in the church, they sing, pray, make announcements, teach, preach, etc. We need to be consistent in the interpretation and application of the Bible.

Eisegesis

Eisegesis is imposing on the text a meaning which is foreign to the whole thrust of the text. Thoughts coming from outside are pushed onto the meaning of the passage without substantive support or textual evidence. This imposition ignores the historical background, audience, the immediate and larger context, and the author's intention of what truth he really wants to communicate.

For example, the Bible testifies that we were created to the image of God (Gen 1:26–27). Some people would like to deduce from this fact that Adam and Eve were created with different functions, as there are different functions among the Godhead—one Person of the Deity cannot do what another Person is doing—so the Son and Spirit must submit to the will of the Father. Therefore, they claim that women have different functions from men, and they must submit to the authority of men. These interpreters are violating a basic theological assumption of the equality of the divine Persons and the equality of their different functions. This reasoning is absolutely theologically wrong because it makes God in our image and tries from this theological construct to build our human relationships.

This is more a philosophical approach to the biblical text, good for some gnostic esoteric speculations, but absolutely out of place in the issues about the subordination of women to men. We cannot compare the incomparable. For example, it is absolutely unsustainable in biblical-theological thinking to develop a hierarchy among angels with their different functions and subordinations, and then transfer or compare it to the relationship between men and women. Humans were not created in the image of angels! We know absolutely nothing about angels' sexuality, their marriage or family life (see Matt 22:29-30). There is evidently no analogy between angels' hierarchy and man-woman or husband-wife relationships, because there is no gender relationship between angels (at least it is not revealed in the Bible). We cannot project our own wishes or ideas onto the biblical text and its overall message.

Ellen G. White warns: "It is true that many theories and doctrines popularly supposed to be derived from the Bible have no foundation in its teaching, and indeed are *contrary to the whole tenor of inspiration*."[14]

Not Recognizing and Defining Personal Presuppositions

It is impossible to come to the biblical text without cultural, theological, and other presuppositions. We cannot pretend to come with a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate, and interpret the text purely objectively without any bias. Though we cannot avoid coming with presuppositions, we can seek to recognize and define what presuppositions, preunderstandings, and assumptions we bring to the text. We can ask the Holy Spirit to show us our presuppositions, and to help us evaluate these assumptions in light of Scripture, to see if they are truly biblical.

In discussing with some individuals regarding the ordination of women, when they have heard all the exegetical arguments, finally they have made the statement which revealed their unexamined presupposition: "Everyone knows that it is part of human nature: men lead and women follow." Such reveals a cultural bias that colors the interpretation of all the relevant texts. Others come to the

subject of women's ordination with presuppositions based upon liberal feminism or western concepts of social justice rather than the biblical understanding. These unconscious assumptions need to be recognized, defined, and then the Bible student needs to be open to the possibility for Scripture to verify, change, or correct one's presuppositions in harmony with the biblical teaching.

Textual discrepancies have no power to overthrow the main thrust and teaching of the Bible. They do not diminish the certainty of the biblical message in its totality.

Circular Reasoning

In our interpretation of the Bible we need to avoid circular reasoning. The exegete needs to be keenly aware of this trap because it is so easy to fall into this danger. Each text needs to be interpreted in its proper historical, grammatical, literary, and theological context, and only then can it be put into dialogue with other texts (analogy of faith). An interpreter cannot import into the studied text the meaning taken from another text in order to "fit" these two seemingly contradictory passages together, and then claim that these two biblical texts confirm each other. In reality this is reading into the studied text foreign ideas which are contrary to its intention and flow of thoughts.

For example, some interpreters are reading into Moses's Creation Story (Gen 1-2) their own thoughts about the headship of man and submission of Eve to Adam as they think Paul is stating it in 1 Tim 2:11–14 (thus projecting the idea of headship and the submission of Eve to Adam into the Genesis accounts), and then they interpret 1 Tim 2 and argue that this is what Paul says since it is consistent with the teaching of Moses. In order to do this, they need to impose on the Genesis text their own philosophical construct of ontological equality but functional hierarchy (in matter of leadership) in Gen 2,[15] take things out of their immediate context, and severely violate the biblical concept of the original harmony and unity of the first human pair. Thus the intention of Gen 2 is ignored and the idea of male headship is introduced even though not once is this concept or category mentioned in this chapter.

Dismissing All Difficulties, Tensions, and Problems

The student of the Bible needs to recognize that he/she will not solve all the problems related to the biblical text. However, these textual discrepancies have no power to overthrow the main thrust and teaching of the Bible. They do not diminish the certainty of the biblical message in its totality.

For example, 1 Tim 2:15 reads that women will be saved by bearing children. This statement presents a huge problem for interpreters to understand; however, we may know and be sure what Paul does not want to say through this statement: he is not advocating salvation by works, salvation by having children, because this thought runs completely contrary to what he teaches in his epistles. Otherwise, women with many children would be automatically saved as having babies would be the cause of their salvation. So, we know what Paul does not mean by it but to be exactly sure what Paul wanted to say is a matter of interpretation, and several compelling theories have been presented. I think it should be understood in the context of Paul's sharp polemic against those who advocated a woman's supremacy and the gnostic teaching about despising physical and bodily activities and rejected marriage (1 Tim 4:3). He probably encourages believers in Christ to

have children and tells wives that bringing children into the world does not endanger their salvation in Christ Jesus, they need only to continue in their "faith, love and holiness with propriety."

Apparent discrepancies and contradictions may help us to carefully study given passages, avoid simplicity, and find a better solution. For example, compare the story about sending the spies into the Promised Land: Did God or the people initiate it? See the apparent contradictory statements in Num 13:1–3 and Deut 1:22–23.

Another example: Are Paul and James in contradiction about justification by faith? No, if you know (1) how differently they define the two terms of faith and works; (2) what is the purpose of their statements (to what problem were each of them responding); and (3) who were their opponents (their different audiences). The harmony between both of them can then be established.[16]

Another example is where Paul is apparently contradicting himself when, on the one hand, he allows women to pray and prophecy publicly, as it is explicitly stated in 1 Cor 11:5: "**But every woman who prays or prophesies** with *her* head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved" (1Cor 11:5 NKJV; for Paul to prophecy means to edify the church, strengthen, encourage, and comfort people, see 1 Cor 14:3-4), and on the other hand, forbids women to speak in the church (1 Cor 14:34–35; 1 Tim 2:11–12). We should not put Paul against Paul! This must be a hermeneutical key for us. Only in two cities were there such big problems that Paul did not permit women to speak publicly in worship; this happened in Corinth (see 1 Cor 11:3-16 and 14:34–35) and Ephesus (1 Tim 2:11–12). Both cities were pagan centers with immense populations and many moral and syncretistic problems in the church. In Corinth, there was a disruption of worship by women through uncontrollable speaking in tongues, and there was a disturbing of worship in Ephesus by women who were still adhering to the cult of Artemis. So what Paul is really forbidding the women in those cities is disorderly speaking in worship (1 Cor 14:29–33, 40), because Paul is only in favor of orderly, decent, fitting, and honorable worship.

ACTS 15: JERUSALEM COUNCIL—A HERMENEUTICAL KEY

What are we to do as believers in Christ when we are seriously challenged in our practice or belief? The Apostolic Council in Jerusalem may serve as a pattern and the key on how to approach such difficulties.

The early church faced a huge new problem: the acceptance of believing Gentiles into the church. So far, it had only been a Jewish-Christian church. Gentiles were coming to the Jewish-Christian church, and believers in Jesus were growing in number. But the early church was not ready to open their arms to the uncircumcised Gentile believers because for centuries the uncircumcised Gentiles had been excluded from the community of believers. God had to dramatically intervene with dreams and with the gift of the Holy Spirit before the church was willing to baptize and accept Gentile believers (see Acts 10–11).

The Jerusalem Council was called, because two main questions had arisen:

1. Do Gentiles need to first become Jews in order to become Christians? Do they need to be circumcised as the Abrahamic covenant requires?
2. What do Gentile Christians need to keep from the Mosaic Law?

How were these questions decided? On what basis? By studying the Holy Scriptures, by going back to the Hebrew Bible, the apostles discovered

biblical-theological principles. Judaizers, legalistic people, had plenty of "good" reasons and biblical-theological "proofs" to argue for asking Gentiles to be circumcised and keep all the requirements of the Mosaic law. Their arguments sounded good; they were logical. They could build their reasoning on the facts of God's eternal covenant, clear requirements of the Abrahamic covenant, the validity of God's laws, the unchangeability of God's teaching, the categorical language of Gen 17:14, the necessity of faith and obedience to go together, etc. However, the council decided on the basis of Amos 9:11–12 (quoted in Acts 15:16–17) that Gentiles should be part of the church without requesting them to become first Jews by circumcision. Then another question arose about what laws from the Law of Moses were they to keep, and their decision was made on the basis of Lev 17–18.[17]

The apostles studied the already previously known Scriptures, but now with a new comprehension and understanding of the Word of God, they applied them differently. They were willing to restudy familiar texts and to see them under the influence of the Holy Spirit in a new light. In this way they discovered the original intent of these texts that was not clear to them before, and they opened their arms to the Gentiles. This new study of the Word of God under new circumstances and the guidance of the Holy Spirit helped them to discover the right meaning and application of the biblical principles. The apostles could appeal only to a few texts, but they could show that in this time after Jesus first coming, God wanted all to be in His church, both Jews and Gentiles. They were not reading into the text, because the meaning they stressed was always there and present in it. "**It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us** not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirement:" (Acts 15:28 NIV). They were not using their apostolic authority, but the authority of the Word of God. They were not appealing to the Holy Spirit apart from the Word but in combination. Moreover, they studied the Scriptures together and submitted to this new and correct interpretation.

All their decisions were made on the basis of the Scriptures and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. What is really important to catch is that, as for circumcision, their decision was made with a difference: Jews could go through this ritual if they wished to do so (because it was their national identity), but Gentiles were not obliged to be circumcised. This double practice was a radical step forward and a wise decision in harmony with the intention and spirit of the biblical text.[18] One decision was limited to the nation (for the Jews) and the other was universal (for the Gentiles)!

God intervened and gave them a new and fresh understanding of the Holy Scriptures. They knew the biblical texts before but the meaning was hidden and obscure to them. The apostolic church had to reflect on the same Old Testament material from a new perspective, the first coming of Jesus Christ. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the leaders now saw new hints in the biblical texts and a new light in the original purpose that helped them, led them, and gave new direction to the decision-making process as to what to do in new situations.

APPLICATION TO THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Establishing Biblical Guiding Principles

We need to reflect on the biblical material and extrapolate principles out of texts that can guide us in the process regarding the ordination of women. Ellen G. White states: "We are to stand firm as a rock to the *principles* of the Word of God, remembering that God is with us to give us strength to meet each new experience. Let us ever maintain in

our lives the *principles* of righteousness that we may go forward from strength to strength in the name of the Lord."[19] Ekkehardt Muller in his articles in *Ministry* and *BRI Newsletter*[20] accurately argues for "using biblical principles to determine how questions on theological issues should be decided."[21] This approach I would call "principled hermeneutics" or "principle based hermeneutics."

We need to follow sound hermeneutical principles (not a proof-text method or literalistic reading of the Bible). We need a balanced and biblically informed understanding of the biblical text which must be built on solid theological reasoning. We need to reason, seriously reflect on the divine revelation, and cultivate biblical-theological thinking. These guiding principles can be established on the basis of the metanarrative of the Bible, biblical-theological thinking on the recognition of the flow of doctrines and main events, prediction-fulfillments model, and biblical trajectory.

If we explained biblical truth simply by proof-texts instead of finding and applying principles (thus work with so-called "principled hermeneutics"), we would be not able take a stand against smoking or use of drugs. We would have immense problems to present and defend the doctrine of the Trinity, the sanctuary doctrine, system of tithing, etc. But because we derive principles on the basis of the biblical text, we can build doctrinal positions. As the SDA Church we have never read the Bible simplistically; we do not explain, for examples, such metaphors as "pluck out your eye" (Matt 5:29; 18:9), "cut off your hand" (Matt 5:30; 18:8), "move the mountain" (Matt 17:20), and the story of the rich man and Lazarus" (Luke 16:19-31), in a literalistic way.

Creation is the fundamental and overarching principle of biblical teaching. The doctrine of Creation is an article of faith on which the Seventh-day Adventist church stands or falls. Creation is also crucial for our theology because our essential doctrinal points can be directly or indirectly traced to Creation roots. Each of our 28 Fundamental Beliefs is somehow tied to Creation. Even where SDA teachings on doctrine and lifestyle issues are not unambiguously affirmed by explicit biblical references, these beliefs find their ultimate foundation in the doctrine of Creation. Let us look at a few examples:

1. **Why do we not as Seventh-day Adventists drink alcohol?** There is no text in the Bible which would explicitly prohibit the drinking of alcohol: "Do not drink alcohol." On the contrary, there is a legislation to use the (second) tithe for buying wine (*yayin*) and fermented drink (*shekar*)—see Deut 14:26: ". . . buy whatever you like: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink, or anything you wish . . ." However, there are texts against alcoholism, to drink in moderation. In addition, there are a plenty of examples of drinking alcohol in the Bible, but key stories are negative (see, for example, Noah's and Nabal's drunkenness). There are a few texts that present the ideal: Lev 10:8–9; Prov 20:1; 23:20–21, 29–35; 31:4–7; Rechabites—Jer 35:6. These few texts point to the real intention of God's revelation. This is why it is important to know what the biblical trajectory is in this regard. According to my understanding, it is abstinence, even though there is no proof text for it. Because we are in the service of our Lord continually and have received a special call to live for him and represent him well, I think it is proper to abstain from the drinking of alcohol.[22] The safeguard lies in the hints of the biblical texts and not behind the texts or outside of them! This recognition is against William Webb's usage of the trajectory of the Bible, because to him this trajectory is rooted outside of the biblical

We need to go back to the ideal of God's Creation when nothing was spoiled but pure.

text.[23] We need to go back to the ideal of God's Creation when nothing was spoiled but pure.

2. **Why are many SDAs vegetarians? Why are we vegetarians?** There is no biblical statement: "Be a vegetarian!" You have clear divine regulations for eating clean meat (Lev 11 and Deut 14). We theologically reason from Lev 11 back to the ideal of Creation. The main rationale behind the clean and unclean food legislation is the respect for the Creator.[24] Genesis 1 sets the tone! Behind the Pentateuchal dietary laws is the theological Creation-Fall-New Creation pattern. The main reason is theological: we go back to the **ideal before sin**—to the lifestyle in the Garden of Eden (Gen 1–2).
3. **Why are we against divorce? We adhere to Jesus's principle: "In the beginning it was not so!" We go back to the Creation ideal.** Jesus Christ's opponents argued on the basis of Deut 24:1, but he explained that divorce was allowed only because of the stubbornness of man's heart (*sklerokardia*; see Matt 19:1–9).[25] Another important hermeneutical principle is God's condensation to our level in time of need and sin (see, e.g., the killing of animals for food according to Gen 9:3 and divorce as shown in Deut 24:1–4).
4. **Why do we not practice polygamy? We go back to the ideal of Creation, when the marriage relationship was defined between one man and one women (Gen 2:24)! Jesus's principle** (when discussing divorce): "But it was not this way from the beginning" (Matt 19:8), should be applied here also.
5. **Why are we against slavery?** There are plenty of texts which regulate the relationship between masters and slaves in the Old and New Testaments (see Exod 21:2–11; Eph 6:5–9; Col 3:22; 1 Tim 6:1). But study Paul's letter to **Philemon** about how he urged him to have a new relationship with **Onesimus** (his fugitive slave) and how to treat him differently: "no longer as a slave but better than a slave, as a dear brother" . . . "welcome him as you would welcome me" (Phlm 1:16, 17). This is the direction to follow, it is the biblical trajectory! We are against slavery on the basis of the equality of all people created in the image of God (*imago Dei*, Gen 1:27). We go back to the ideal of Creation.

The Distinctive Adventist Hermeneutic: Creation—Fall—Re-Creation

We need to see the big picture of God's revelation, the unity of the Scriptures, and the ultimate intention of the biblical material as a whole (a canonical approach) in order to discern correctly the meaning of God's message. The biblical trajectory, built on the biblical metanarrative, from creation, to de-creation (the Fall, sin) and to re-creation presents for us Adventists the crucial pattern. We do not go beyond the biblical text; all is firmly rooted in it. It is Adventist hermeneutics that is reflected also in our name: we are Seventh-day (Creation) Adventists (Re-Creation), so the whole plan of salvation or story of redemption is included! Adventist hermeneutics moves from Creation to the Fall and from the Fall to the Plan of Salvation and to Re-Creation (from Gen 1–2 to Rev 21–22). "In the beginning it was not so." Our hermeneutic is built against the background of the Adventist understanding of the Great Controversy.[26]

Adam and Eve are representative of all humanity, and they were both priests in their position of

responsibility as head of humanity. Thus, the ministry of women is rooted in Creation (see below).[27]

This principled hermeneutics, tracing its roots back to Creation, is consistent, for example, with our Adventist stand against approving homosexuality as a lifestyle, because the biblical account of Creation provides the fundamental reasoning for a total opposition to the practice of homosexuality. Biblical teaching against homosexuality is rooted in the Creation legislation, is universal, not temporal, never changed, and is valid in all times (see Gen 1:26-28; 2:24; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26-27). It is consistent with the biblical trajectory built on the pattern from Creation through the Fall to the Re-Creation.[28]

REREADING THE BIBLICAL TEXT AND DISCOVERING A NEW EMPHASIS: SOME OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT HINTS FOR ORDINATION

What are the "new" texts which speak in favor of the ordination of women?

We are not reading back into the biblical text something which is not there, nor are we imposing on the text an external pattern. The truth was always present in the text, but it was simply not acknowledged or was forgotten. What we are doing is merely recognizing the "hidden" truth; we are rediscovering and reapplying it. The intention of the text is in harmony with the overall metanarrative of the Bible and the character of God. We reflect on this revelation of God from the perspective of the first coming of Christ, from the revelation which shines from the cross, the perspective of the plan of salvation, and the Creation-Fall-Re-Creation pattern. This is a consistent Adventist paradigm!

1. **Both Equally, Man and Women, Created in God's Image**

   "So God created mankind [*ha'adam*] in his own image, in the image of God he created them [object marker with suffix 3rd person sg.]; male and female he created them [suf. 3rd pl]" (Gen 1:27 NIV). Note carefully that both, male and female, are created in the **image of God**! They are **equal** and what is one is also the other—the image of God; and they together form it too! What is different is only their sexuality and with it their particular role in it (like parenting and motherhood). To be a woman is not to be subordinate to men or imperfect or wrong (or even evil)!

2. **Adam and Eve Were Priests in the Garden of Eden**

   "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it [*le'abdah uleshomrah*] (Gen 2:15 NIV). The Garden of Eden was a sanctuary, and Adam and Eve were priests in this garden! They should "work it and keep it" (ESV), and these are activities of priests (see Num 3:8–9; 18:3–7). In the Garden of Eden, the work assigned to man was actually to "serve" (*'abad* = serve, till) and "keep" (*shamar*) the garden (2:15), and it is more than coincidence that these are the very terms used to describe the work of the priests and Levites in the sanctuary (Num 3:7–8; 18:3–7). That the Garden of Eden was a sanctuary was discovered by non-Adventist scholars and is well established among scholars.[29]

3. **Partnership and Equality**

   Genesis 2:18—*ezer kenegdo* ("help as against him" or "as corresponding to him"). They are different but **equal**, they contribute to each other; they are **partners**.

4. **Belonging Together**

   Genesis 2:23-24 is a poetic statement of surprise and appreciation on the part of Adam to receive this special gift from God: a beautiful wife.

Adam uses a recognition formula, they belong together; they form a unity; it is not a naming formula (the word *shem* does not occur in 2:23 as it is present in the text of 2:19 and 3:20 Adam names Eve only after sin (see **Gen 3:20**).

5. **Genesis 3:16**

To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire [longing for love, support, safety, affections and care] will be for your husband, and he will rule over you" (NIV). How to understand **Gen 3:16**? It does not prescribe a husband to subdue and rule over his wife (the Hebrew word is *mashal*; this term ultimately focuses on the servant leadership); a different Hebrew word is used here than in Gen 1:28 (Hebrew words *kabash* and *radah* are employed).

God's punishing statement does not prescribe that humans be passive and not try to help. These complications come as the result and consequence of sin, so this divine judgment about the pain in having a baby, in giving birth, and raising children should not hinder us in doing everything possible within our human power to ease the pain of the women in delivery.

In the same way, the verse describes the difficulties in the husband-wife relationship, and it obliges us to overcome it by God's grace and through true conversion (see Eph 5:21–33; 1 Pet 3:1–7). This is impossible without God's help. So both husband and wife (the Lord is not talking about a general relationship between men and women!) need to dedicate their lives to God and live in a personal relationship with God so there is harmony in the marriage, a mutual submission and love! Truly a beautiful marriage may be possible only for converted people.

Ellen G. White powerfully explains: "Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband. Had the principles joined in the law of God been cherished by the fallen race, ***this sentence, though growing out of the results of sin, would have proved a blessing to them***; but man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter and made her life a burden."[30]

When God created Eve, He designed that she should possess neither inferiority nor superiority to the man, but that in all things she should be his equal. The holy pair were to have no interest independent of each other; and yet each had an individuality in thinking and acting. But after Eve's sin, as she was first in the transgression, the Lord told her that Adam should rule over her. She was to be in subjection to her husband, and this was a part of the curse. In many cases the curse has made the lot of woman very grievous and her life a burden. The superiority which God has given man he has abused in many respects by exercising arbitrary power. *Infinite wisdom devised the plan of redemption, which places the race on a second probation by giving them another trial*.[31]

6. **Both Are Priests even After Sin**

"The LORD God made garments [*kotnot*] of skin [*'or*] for Adam and his wife and clothed [*labash*] them" (**Genesis 3:21** NIV).

God **clothed** (*labash*) Adam and his wife with "**coats**" (*ketonet*, pl. *kotnot*). These are the very terms used to describe the clothing of Aaron and his sons (Lev 8:7, 13; Num 20:28; cf. Exod 28:4; 29:5; 40:14).

7. **Believers, Both Men and Women, Are the Kingdom of Priests**

   "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a **kingdom of priests and a holy nation**. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites" (Exod 19:5–6 NIV). Because of Israel's unfaithfulness an alternate plan was given: **only one family from one tribe of Israel** would be "a kingdom of priests." However, Peter in 1 Pet 2:9 is applying Exod 19:5–6 to the priesthood of all believers.

8. **Women in Leadership Positions in the Old Testament**

   See, for example, Miriam (Exod 15:20–21); Deborah (Judg 4–5); Huldah (2 Kgs 22:13–14; 2 Chr 34:22–28); Esth; Exod 38:8; 1 Sam 2:22; 2 Sam 14:2-20; 20:14-22.

9. **A Host of Women Preachers**

   "The Lord gives the word; the women who announce the news are a great host" (Ps 68:11 ESV, NASB).

10. **Holy Spirit Given to All Believers at the Time of the End Including Women**

    "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. **Your sons and daughters** will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, **both men and women**, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke" (Joel 2:28-30 NIV).

11. **Practice in the New Testament Church**

    See, for instance, Phoebe, a deacon (Rom 16:1); Junia, a female apostle (Rom 16:7); leaders of the church in Philippi church were women (Phil 4:2-3). Priscilla assumed an authoritative teaching role (Acts 18; see especially Rom 16:3). The "Elect Lady" (2 John) was probably a church leader in a congregation under her care.

12. **Galatians 3:26–29**

    "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (NIV). This is not merely a statement on equal access to salvation among various groups (see Gal 2:11–15; Eph 2:14–15). I once understood it only from this perspective, but deeper studies show more. Paul also speaks about equality in general. He especially focuses on three relationships in which the Jews of his time perverted God's original plan of Gen 1 by making one group subordinate to another: 1) **Jew-Gentiles Relationship**; 2) **Master-Slave Relationship**; and 3) **Male-Female Relationship**.

    In regard to the male-female relationship, by using a specific Greek pair vocabulary *arsēn-thēlys* [man-woman] instead of *anēr-gynē* [husband-wife]), Paul establishes a link with Gen 1:27 (LXX employs *arsēn-thēlys* language), and thus shows how the Gospel calls us back to the divine ideal, which has no place for the general subordination of females to males. Two additional arguments which go beyond the biblical evidence:

13. **Practical Reason in Favor of the Ordination of Women**

    The Spirit of God gives freely spiritual gifts, including to women (Joel 2). If God gives His spiritual gifts to women, who am I to stop it! If God calls women to ministry we should be able to recognize, accept, and implement it. God's

work can only gain if godly consecrated women will work in leadership positions in His vineyard.

This has been demonstrated, for instance, by my mother-in-law who was a Bible worker in Communist Czechoslovakia. She prepared people for baptism and preached with everyone listening carefully, even the children. She was a very wise mother in Israel who had great experiences and witnessed miracles.

In **China** women are in practical ministry where they not only preach but also baptize and serve the Lord's Supper. At least 16 women in China have been ordained to the Gospel Ministry by Seventh-day Adventists there. This ministerial ordination of women pastors is a reality that has arisen in China for very practical reasons, and these women are powerful instruments for sharing the Gospel among the Chinese people.

14. **Ellen G. White's Inspired Support for Women in Pastoral Ministry**

"There are women who should labor in the gospel ministry. In many respects they would do more good than the ministers who neglect to visit the flock of God."[32]

"It is the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God."[33]

The study by Denis Fortin considers these and other references by Ellen White in their context, and drawn important implications for the discussion of women's ordination.[34]

CONCLUSION

Even though there is no direct biblical statement that we should ordain women to ministry, there is no theological hindrance to doing so. On the contrary, the biblical-theological analysis points in that ultimate direction, because the Spirit of God tears down all barriers between different groups of people in the church and gives freely His spiritual gifts to all, including women, in order to accomplish the mission God calls all of us to accomplish.

In this time of the closing of this world's history, God calls His remnant to go back to Creation (see Rev 14:7) and reestablish the ideals of God's original plan of equality between men and women. The Advent movement should be an example of this true human relationship and genuine worship. The last-day people should be a model for the rest of the world and should assume a leadership role in this issue by fully demonstrating the true meaning of the theology of Creation.

Even though men and women are biologically different and have thus different physiological functions, the spiritual role for both genders is the same: to be the leaders in God's church today.

We need to go back to the Creation ideal in spite of the sin problem, because God's grace is more powerful than evil, and God's grace is a transforming grace, changing the old system into the new in the Church which should be a model of the world to come. From creation to re-creation! This is the biblical pattern built on our denominational name Seventh-day (Creation) Adventists (re-Creation). ■

To view the three appendices included with the original document, please visit adventistarchives.org.

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"YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS"

Reflections on the Divine Call

When the Holy Spirit prophesied through the ancient prophet Joel (2:28–29) and repeated His prediction through the apostle Peter (Acts 2:17–18), how shall we understand that divinely promised outpouring of "My Spirit" upon "your sons and your daughters" (v. 17, NKJV)? What follows is a biblical, pastoral reflection on the answer to that question.

CREATION

The opening salvo of Holy Scripture recites our human story writ large in the narrative of Adam and Eve. The divine record of Genesis 1–3 portrays man and woman in their complementary unity as the expression of the image of their Creator: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (1:26–27, NKJV).

Male and female together form the imago dei. Embedded in the story of Adam and Eve are these twenty statements depicting man and woman as equals:[1]

1. God creates both male and female in God's image and likeness (1:26–27; cf. 5:1–2).
2. God gives both male and female rule over animals and all the earth (1:26b, 28).
3. God gives both male and female the same blessing and tells them together to be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth, and subdue it (1:2829; cf. 5:2).
4. God speaks directly to both man and woman (1:28–29 "to them," "to you" plural twice).
5. God gives male and female together all plants for food (1:29 "to you" plural).
6. Woman is a "help" to man, a noun the Old Testament never uses elsewhere of a subordinate (2:18, 20).
7. Woman "corresponds to" man, literally "in front of" man, face-to-face, not below (2:18, 20).
8. God makes woman from the man's rib, so she is made of the same substance as he (2:21–23).
9. The man recognizes, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (2:23, NKJV).
10. "Father and mother" are identified without hierarchical distinction (2:24).
11. A man is "united" to his wife, implying oneness (2:24).
12. A man becomes "one flesh" with his wife, implying unity (2:24).
13. Both the man and woman are naked and feel no shame, sharing moral sensibility (2:25).
14. The woman and the man are together at the temptation and fall (3:6); both faced temptation.
15. Both the woman and the man eat the forbidden fruit (3:6), both exercising a (bad) moral choice.

16. The eyes of both are opened, they realize they are naked, and sew coverings (3:7).
17. Both hide from God (3:8), showing they both experience guilt.
18. God addresses both directly (3:9–13, 16–19), showing both have access to God.
19. Both pass the blame (3:12–13), showing both have this weakness.
20. God announces to both specific consequences of their sin (3:16–19); both are responsible.

Ellen White reflects on this shared unity and equality in the image of God: "Created to be 'the image and glory of God' (1 Corinthians 11:7[2]), Adam and Eve had received endowments not unworthy of their high destiny. Graceful and symmetrical in form, regular and beautiful in feature, their countenances glowing with the tint of health and the light of joy and hope, they bore in outward resemblance the likeness of their Maker. Nor was this likeness manifest in the physical nature only. Every faculty of mind and soul reflected the Creator's glory. Endowed with high mental and spiritual gifts, Adam and Eve were made but 'little lower than the angels' (Hebrews 2:7), that they might not only discern the wonders of the visible universe, but comprehend moral responsibilities and obligations."[3]

Thus the narrative of Holy Scripture begins with the declaration that in the union and unity of humanity's maleness and femaleness is found the fullest expression of "the image of God" on Earth.[4]

Does the subsequent moral collapse of Adam and Eve negate that divine ideal? Do the ensuing millennia of humanity's heartache and dysfunction neutralize God's original intentions for man and woman? What does the eventual incarnation of the Creator into the human family reveal about that ideal and those intentions?

REDEMPTION

While the life and ministry of Jesus did not provide an overt confrontation with the moral ills of slavery, racial discrimination, and gender inequities, nevertheless in the life of "God with us" we can trace the mind of God in the heart of Christ. Regarding the place of women in a post-Fall world, Jesus injected compelling evidences of God's intended Creation idea of equality. "The Gospels show that whenever possible—while remaining mindful of the cultural constraints of the day—Christ gave women special opportunities to fill a primary role in the main events of his redemptive ministry such as his birth, miracles, outreach missions, death, and resurrection."[5]

Gilbert Bilezikian identifies nine direct inclusions of women in Jesus' life and ministry: (1) four women are included along with Mary into the Messiah's genealogical record (Matthew 1); (2) a woman receives the first news of the incarnation (Luke 1:32–35); (3) a woman, with her wedded husband, provides the occasion for the first divine sign of Jesus' eschatological glory (John 2:1–11); (4) a woman is the

In reality, Jesus' inner circle of disciples was not only all-male—it was all-free-Jewish-male; that is, the first formal leaders of His church on Earth included no slave, no freed slave, no Gentile, no person of color, nobody except free Jewish males.

first Samaritan convert (John 4:7–42); (5) a woman is the first Gentile convert (Matthew 15:21–28); (6) a woman receives the first resurrection teaching (John 11:23–27); (7) a woman manifests the first perception of the cross (Mark 14:3–9); (8) a woman is the first to witness the Resurrection (Matthew 28:9; John 20:16); and, (9) women are the first witnesses of the Resurrection (Matthew 28:10; John 20:18).[6]

Bilezikian observes: "This list of exceptional roles played by women in the crucial events of the life of Christ suggests that he made deliberate choices concerning the place of women in the economy of redemption. The message conveyed by those decisions is not to be found in mere chronological primacy (which according to Jesus is of no advantage; see Matthew 20:16), but rather in the fact that Jesus himself gave women a foundational and prominently constitutional role in the history of redemption. Any subsequent reduction of the conspicuous involvement of women in the community of redemption could be perpetrated only in violation of the will of its divine founder."[7]

In his book-length examination of Paul's attitude and practice toward women in the early Christian church, Philip Payne notes the example of the Lord of Paul: "Paul affirms, 'I follow the example of Christ' (1 Corinthians 11:1). Christ's example in all his deeds and words was to treat women as persons equal with men. He respected their intelligence and spiritual capacity as is evident in the great spiritual truths he originally taught to women [Samaritan woman, Martha, et al].... Although a woman's testimony was not recognized in the courts, Jesus demonstrated his respect for their testimony by appearing first to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection (John 20:14–18) and instructing her to tell the others. After Jesus taught the Samaritan woman, she acted as the first missionary to her people and many of her people believed (John 4:39–42)."[8]

Payne further observes: "Jesus gives no hint that the nature of God's will for women is different than for men. He made no distinction in the righteousness demanded of both.... He calls a crippled woman a 'daughter of Abraham' (Luke 13:16), a linguistic usage seventy years prior to the first recorded rabbinic equivalent (Str-B 2:200). He says, 'You are all brothers' (Matt. 23:8), and he treats obligations to father and mother equally (Mark 7:10–12)."[9]

But what about Jesus' choice of only males as His disciples and apostles? Isn't Christ's all-male apostolate a template for us today? In reality, Jesus' inner circle of disciples was not only all-male—it was all-free-Jewish-male; that is, the first formal leaders of His church on Earth included no slave, no freed slave, no Gentile, no person of color, nobody except free Jewish males. So, shall the third millennial church follow suit?

And yet, didn't women minister to Christ throughout His ministry? Then why did He not include them in His inner circle?

"It is one thing for a number of women to be mentioned as following Jesus from time to time in his preaching in the towns (Mark 15:40–41; Luke 8:1–3), but traveling full time for three years with late night meetings such as at the Garden of Gethsemane and spending periods of time in the

wilderness are quite another thing. Strong cultural objections and moral suspicions would undoubtedly be raised not only about Jesus, but also about the men whom he chose to be with him. Married women could hardly leave their families for such a long period, and single women would have been even more suspicious. To have chosen women disciples would have raised legitimate suspicion undermining the gospel."[10]

A careful examination of the life of the Creator lived out in "the Word… made flesh" (John 1:14, KJV) reveals the dignity, courtesy, and mercy Jesus extended to both men and women, the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, the Jew and the Gentile. In His living, His ministering, His saving, it is compellingly clear that in Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female—for in all, He saw "heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29, NKJV).

It would be the task of His church to determine how the walls of separation might be brought down.

EKKLESIA

Paul, who championed the life and the way of Christ, perpetuates the example of Jesus in his own ministry with women throughout both the church and the Roman Empire. More than any other apostle, Paul examines and teaches the role of women within the mission and ministry of the community of faith.

Philip Payne, whose 500-page tome is arguably the most extensive examination of Paul's statements regarding women in the early church, notes Paul's attitude toward their ministries by the titles he gave them: "The titles that Paul gives to the women he mentions imply leadership positions: 'deacon' (Romans 16:1), 'leader' (Romans 16:2), 'my fellow worker in Christ Jesus' (Romans 16:3; Philippians 4:3), and 'apostle' (Romans 16:7). Furthermore Paul describes them as fulfilling functions associated with church leadership: they 'worked hard in the Lord' (Rom 16:6, 12) and 'contended at my side in the cause of the gospel' (Philippians 4:3). Over two-thirds of the colleagues whom Paul praises for their Christian ministry in Romans 16:1–16—seven of the ten—are women."[11]

Regarding Payne's reference to the title apostle, there is debate about whether the apostle Junia, mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:7, was a man or a woman: "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen [translated kinsmen in NASB and relatives in NIV] and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me" (NKJV). Two recent works, Eldon Jay Epp's book *Junia: The First Woman Apostle*[12] and Nancy Vyhmeister's *Ministry* article "Junia the Apostle,"[13] re-examine the biblical text and the extrabiblical literature pertinent to determining the gender of Ἰουνιᾶν (the accusative form of the name Ἰουνιᾶς, which can be translated today as masculine or feminine depending on the accent—though the oldest uncial manuscripts used no accents at all, thus necessitating the reader to interpret the gender of this name).

Vyhymeister notes that a review of Christian Greek and Latin writers in the first millennium of Christianity indicates that the consistent interpretation (16 of these 18 writers) is that Junia in Romans 16:7 refers to a woman. Consider John of Chrysostom's comment on the mention in Romans 16:7 of Andronicus and Junia: "Who are of note among the Apostles. And indeed to be apostles at all is a great thing. But to be even amongst these of note, just consider what a great encomium this is! But they were of note owing to their works, to their achievements. Oh! how great is the devotion (*philosophia*) of this woman, that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle!"[14]

As a summation of her exegetical examination of the text and her review of early Christian writings, Vyhmeister concludes: "It is difficult to complete this study without finding that Paul is referring to a woman named Junia, who, together with Andronicus (probably her husband), was part of the NT group of apostles. Paul recognized her as one of the apostles, a woman who was willing to suffer for the gospel she was busily spreading."[15], [16]

The reality is that irrespective of the gender of this apostle named Junia, the other appellations of leadership Paul extends to women colleagues in ministry in Romans 16 clearly reveal his attitude toward their role in the spiritually authoritative ministry of the church. Moreover, his commendation of these women is all the more noteworthy in light of the social attitudes toward women in the first century A.D. Paul's high regard for the leadership of the women he lists in Romans 16 must illumine any examination of his teachings regarding the role of women in the home and in the church.[17]

GALATIANS 3:28

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (NIV).

Yes, Paul's declaration in Galatians 3:28 proclaims a new spiritual unity within the faith community. By virtue of the gospel of Christ through Calvary's sacrifice, heretofore disparate and separated segments of humanity are bound together as one—Jews and Gentiles, slaves and free, males and females. "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (v. 27, NIV) and "you are all one in Christ Jesus" (v. 28, NIV).

But to limit Paul's declaration to solely a spiritual unity or spiritual standing is to miss the radical assertion of Galatians 3:28. In the previous chapter, Paul describes his public confrontation with Peter over his duplicitous caving in to the circumcision party from Jerusalem and reneging on his practice of eating with the Gentile converts. Paul's public challenge of his fellow apostle was in defense of more than spiritual unity; Paul was defending the practical, everyday ecclesiastical unity and equality of status within the church that Jews and Gentiles must enjoy in Christ.

To suggest that Paul champions the equality of ecclesiastical status for Jews and Gentiles (as he does in Galatians) and for slave and free (as he does with Philemon), but then conclude he does not intend equality of spiritual and ecclesiastical status for male and female, is neither logical nor faithful to the biblical text.

"Galatians 3:28 carries important social and practical implications. Ethnic-religious, socioeconomic, and gender barriers are overcome in Christ. Paul's repeated insistence on the practical implications of spirituality throughout Galatians necessitate that the equal standing that Christ has opened to Jews and Greeks, slaves and free, male and female not be divorced from a corresponding equality of social standing in the practical life of the church."[18]

1 CORINTHIANS 11:3

"But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (NKJV).

For some this Pauline statement is conclusive biblical evidence that male headship is the divinely ordained order for both the home and the church. But such a conclusion confuses the meaning of κεφαλή ("head") for authority or rule, when the "majority view in recent scholarship has shifted to understand 'head' (κεφαλή) in this passage to mean 'source' rather than 'authority,' including many who argue that Paul believed men should have authority over women in social relationships."[19]

Payne goes on to list 15 key textual and linguistic reasons for translating the Greek word for "head" as "source."[20] While it is not in the scope of this paper to recite all these textual evidences, several of the reasons deserve reflection. Colossians 1:18 describes Christ as "the head [κεφαλή] of the body, the church" (NKJV). The TEV renders it, "He is the source of the body's life," the NEB "the origin." Payne notes, "Source makes good sense as the meaning of nine of Paul's eleven metaphorical uses of κεφαλή, whereas not one instance can be conclusively demonstrated to mean 'authority over.'"[21]

Furthermore, the 1 Corinthians 11:3 sequence—"the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God"—is not using a descending or ascending hierarchical order of authority, but rather a chronological order. Namely, Christ was the "head" or "source" of man at creation, and the man[22] (Adam) was the "head" or "source" of woman (Eve) in that same creation, and God was the "head" or "source" of Christ in the incarnation.

Had Paul's intent been to establish a hierarchical chain of command, the most logical or lucid way to present that chain would have been: God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman. Paul uses the listing of ordinal hierarchy elsewhere, as in 1 Corinthians 12:28: "And God has appointed these in the church: *first* apostles, *second* prophets, *third* teachers, *after that* miracles..." (NKJV). But the rabbi apostle rejects a descending or ascending hierarchy in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and instead portrays the sequence as follows: Christ is the head of man, the man is the head of woman, and God is the head of Christ.

Why? Consider Gilbert Bilezikian's conclusion:

"In this section which concludes with the declaration that 'everything comes from God' (v. 12 NIV), Paul shows that all relations of derivation find their origin in God. He was the initial giver of all life. But

Had Paul's intent been to establish a hierarchical chain of command, the most logical or lucid way to present that chain would have been: God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man, and man is the head of woman.

in chronological sequence, the origin of man was in Christ, the Logos of creation. Second, the origin of woman was man since she was formed from him. Third, the origin of the incarnate Christ was God with the birth of Jesus, the Son of God.... The apostle's use of the word *head* to describe servant-provider of life ["source"] relationships served as a rebuff to the Judaizers, who exploited it from within their own hierarchy-obsessed tradition to marginalize the Corinthian women in the life and ministry of the church."[23]

Thus it is no coincidence that Paul immediately moves (v. 4ff) to what it means for this nonhierarchical relationship of men and women to be lived out in the church. "Both men and women may pray and prophesy in the assembly of believers. These two verses ['Every man praying or prophesying...every woman who prays or prophesies...' 1 Corinthians 11:4, 5] present one of the clearest statements in the Bible about men and women having the same access to ministry in the church. They may both lead in worship and speak the Word of God to God's people."[24]

We naturally conclude that "praying or prophesying" by a man was done in the setting of a public house church. It is only natural to conclude the same about a woman who "prays or prophesies."

It is, therefore, "a striking affirmation of woman's equal standing with men in church leadership that Paul in verse 5 simply assumes that 'every woman,' like 'every man,' could pray and prophesy in public.... Thus, the terms "prayer" and "prophecy" suggest the entire scope of leadership in worship. Since Paul ranks prophets above teachers in 1 Corinthians 12:28, since he associates prophecy with revelation, knowledge, and instruction in 14:6, and since prayer and prophecy encompass both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of worship, Paul's approval of women prophesying should not be interpreted as excluding the related ministries of revelation, knowledge and instruction."[25]

The dismissive caveat that women prophesying in church does not carry the same "spiritual authority" as men teaching in church is vacuous. Paul himself ranks the gift of prophecy higher than the gift of teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:28, where he clearly intends a prioritization of authority through spiritual gifts.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:12

"For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God" (NIV).

Paul quotes from the LXX account of the Creation, using the identical phrase—ἐκ του/ ἀνδρός—to describe the woman (Eve) originating "from man" (Adam). By this Paul is reminding the church that in fact man and woman come from each other—Eve from Adam at Creation, and man from his mother at birth. Thus Paul, on the basis of his statement in 11:8—"For man is not from woman, but woman from man" (NKJV)—precludes the inference that from the beginning, man has been elevated over woman hierarchically. Rather, both man and woman are mutually dependent upon each other. Thus, Paul "emphasizes that God has ordained the equality of man and woman. It is ultimately God who repudiates a hierarchy of man over woman based upon source."[26]

1 TIMOTHY 2:12

"And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence" (NKJV).

This text has been described as "the most crucial verse regarding women in ministry.... Since this is the only verse in Scripture that, at least according to this translation, prohibits women from teaching or being in positions of authority over men, and since the meaning of the word sometimes translated 'have authority over' (αὐθεντεῖν) is debated and occurs nowhere else in Scripture, it demands careful examination."[27]

The central theme and overriding concern that runs throughout Paul's pastoral letter to Timothy is the havoc raised by false teachers and their heretical teachings in the church of Ephesus. Paul had warned the Ephesian elders at his farewell, "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves" (Acts 20:29–30, NKJV). The first epistle to Timothy is evidence that his prediction had come true. Paul's urgent concern for Timothy's confrontation of these false teachers is laid out in the first six verses; then explicit counsel on how to deal with them is interspersed throughout the rest of the letter. [28] In fact, so concerned is the apostle with the false teaching that "nearly every verse in this letter relates to it."[29]

The premise that women in the church were caught up with the false teachers and their teachings explains why "no other book of the Bible has a higher proportion of verses focused specifically on problems regarding women: 21 out of 113 verses (1 Timothy 2:9–15; 4:7; 5:3–7, 9–16)."[30] Because

1 Timothy is a pastoral letter from the apostle to his young associate, the counsel necessarily reflects the pastoral and congregational context of the Ephesian church. To suggest that Paul intended his context-specific admonition prohibiting women from teaching in the church in Ephesus to be applicable to the universal church overlooks Paul's clear recognition in 1 Corinthians 11:5 that women may both pray and prophecy in worship.

Furthermore, Paul extols the teaching ministry that Timothy's grandmother Lois and mother Eunice had in his young life (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14–16). As noted earlier, Paul's listing of seven women who served with him in ministry and leadership in the churches (Romans 16) belies the suggestion that in 1 Timothy 2:12 Paul is universally prohibiting such authoritative ministry and leadership. What is more, at around the same time Paul wrote this letter to Timothy he also wrote to Titus, another pastoral associate of the apostle, with the instruction that "older women" serve the church as "teachers of good things" (Titus 2:3).[31] Elsewhere Paul commanded the church in Colossae, including its women, to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you [plural] teach [no gender distinction is made] and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you [plural] sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16, NIV). And in the wider New Testament witness, the observation in Hebrews 5:12 that "by this time you ought to be teachers" (NKJV) was clearly addressed to both the men and women in the church and offers no gender restriction. Thus to suggest in 1 Timothy 2:12 a universal mandate prohibiting women from authoritative teaching contradicts both the practice and teaching of Paul. First Timothy 2:12 is Paul's divinely inspired counsel to the pastor in dealing with the women of that congregation who were being deceived by itinerant false teachers and were assuming authority over men in propagating those false teachings.

"Paul, who more than any other NT writer distinguished his personal advice for a particular situation from permanent instructions, did not give 1 Timothy 2:12's restrictions on women in the Ephesian church any universalization qualifier. Nor did he claim that these restrictions on women were from the Lord or that they should apply in all the churches [as he did in Romans 12:3 ("to every one of you"); 1 Corinthians 4:16–17 ("everywhere in every church"); Galatians 5:3 ("to every man"); 1 Timothy 2:1 ("for all men"); and 1 Timothy 2:8 ("in every place")]. There is no such universalizing phrase in 1 Timothy 2:12.... One cannot simply assume it to be universal any more than one can assume that the prohibition of braided hair, gold, pearls, and wearing expensive clothing (2:9) is universal or that men everywhere must raise their hands when they pray (2:8)."[32]

1 TIMOTHY 2:13-15

"For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" (NKJV).

From these verses some have argued that both the creation order of Eve after Adam and her subsequent deception and fall are the apostle's biblical rationale for a universal prohibition of women from exercising authoritative teaching in the church. But is that in fact Paul's intent?

As already noted, Paul's warning in this pastoral epistle regarding the deception of false teachers in the church in Ephesus "who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins" (2 Timothy 3:6, NASB) provides the context for his counsel to Timothy to prohibit such women from exercising authoritative teaching in that

Eve's deception vividly illustrates the danger when a woman is deceived.

congregation. Their claim of enlightened authority precipitates Paul's admonition to these Ephesian women to cease and desist, as it were, out of respect for their properly designated Christian teachers. The basis for such respect, Paul declares, is twofold: Adam was created first, and Eve was deceived first. In the narrative of the Creation and the Fall, Paul finds biblical grounds for his command to these women to respect their congregational leadership.

But do those biblical grounds, applied to the Ephesian turmoil over false teaching, provide the basis for a universal application to all churches? The parallel passage in 1 Corinthians teaches otherwise. "For as woman *came* from man, even so man also *comes* through woman; but all things are from God" (11:12, NKJV). While it is true that Eve was formed from Adam, Paul reminds the Corinthians that through childbirth man also comes from woman. Thus Paul corroborates the divinely intended mutual interdependence of man and woman from the beginning. Here in 1 Timothy, Paul makes the same point by balancing the creation order with childbirth: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve.... Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing" (2:13, 15). Thus in both passages Paul adds mitigating evidence to the creation order to affirm God's intended interdependence of the genders. For just as men are dependent upon a woman (their mothers) for their physical existence (1 Corinthians 11), even so are men dependent upon a woman (Mary) for the birth of their Savior and thus their spiritual existence (1 Timothy 2).

"The terrible consequences of Eve's deception highlight the seriousness of the deception of women in Ephesus. Yet the story of Eve also offers women hope and dignity. Although women experience pain in childbirth as a result of the fall, a woman has given birth to the promised Seed who will destroy Satan and overcome the fall. Not only was woman the vehicle for the entry into the world of sin, death, and the power of Satan, she was also the vehicle for the entry into the world of the Savior who delivers people from sin and death."[33]

Paul does not establish from the creation order an anthropological principle that all women are thus subordinated to all men in or out of the church, nor does he establish from Eve's being deceived first an anthropological principle that women are by nature more easily deceived than are men.[34] Rather, "Paul restricted teaching by women because false teachers had deceived women in Ephesus.... [Thus] the most natural reading of the present tense "I am not permitting" in verse 12 [is] that these are temporary requirements in light of the influence of the false teaching among women in the Ephesian church. Eve's deception vividly illustrates the danger when a woman is deceived. Consequently, there is no need to attempt to find here a cryptic appeal to gender-based hierarchy established at creation."[35]

1 TIMOTHY 3:1–13

"This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach.... Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (NKJV).

"Some are surprised to learn that in these Greek passages (1 Timothy 3:1–12; Titus 1:5–9) *there is not*

a single masculine pronoun. Rather it is the English translations that insert the masculine pronoun in these passages up to fourteen times (NIV, NAB) in Paul's list of requirements for the offices of overseer/bishop/elder and deacon."[36]

But what about Paul's requirement that the elder and deacon be "the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)? Is not such a designation incontrovertible evidence that the spiritual leadership offices of elder and deacon are reserved for only men? The Greek phrase is μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρά, literally one-woman man. Besides the obvious exclusion of polygamists (multiple women/wives) and adulterers (multiple sexual partners), what other exclusions does this single phrase cover? Some have isolated a single word from this phrase and used ἄνδρα ("man" or "husband") to function as a separate stand-alone qualification. But if it were acceptable to piecemeal this list of spiritual requirements, then one could just as logically dissect "one who rules his own house well" (1 Timothy 3:4) and reduce it to the phrase "his own house" in order to conclude that spiritual leaders must be house owners. Nobody would countenance such a reduction. Yet when a single word is isolated from the phrase one-woman man in order to insert an additional gender requirement, such reductionism is immediately logical to its proponents.

However, what is not logical are the implications of such a literal one-word reduction, when applied to the entire list. Along with marital relations ("husband of one wife," v. 2), Paul also lists requirements concerning children—"having his children in submission with all reverence" (v. 4), "ruling their children and their own houses well" (v. 12), and "having faithful children" (Titus 1:6). On the basis of a literal reading of these four phrases, the following categories of men would be disqualified: "single men; married men with no children; married men with only one child; married men with children too young or too indifferent or obdurate to profess faith; married men with believing but disobedient children; married men with children who are believing and obedient but not respectful in all things."[37] Moreover, Gilbert Bilezikian notes that the literalistic exclusion of single men would begin with Christ Himself: "Jesus Christ—since he was single—would have been unqualified to exercise leadership among the people he taught before and after the resurrection. Paul and Barnabas, who both served as missionaries and occasional leaders of local churches (Acts 13:1), would have been violating Paul's marriage requirement since they were both working as single persons (1 Cor. 9:5). Finally, should this requirement for the Ephesian church be absolutized, men who accept Jesus's radical challenge to celibacy for the sake of the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:12), thus exemplifying obedience to his call to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him (16:24)—the very men who should be upheld as exemplars of commitment before the Christian community—would be systematically and universally rejected from the most influential positions in church leadership. The personal sacrifice they would have made to serve the community with total dedication would be held against them as an impediment to such service."[38]

But what about women in ministry? Does Paul's list of requirements for spiritual leadership and ministry (without the masculine pronoun) exclude women from this calling of God? All nine Greek words or expressions that Paul applies to overseers/elders in 1 Timothy 3 are applied to women elsewhere in this pastoral epistle: "good works" (2:10; 5:10); "blameless" (5:7); "wife of one man" (5:9); "temperate" (3:11); self-controlled (2:9, 15); respectable (2:9); "reverent" (3:11); subject to "condemnation" (5:12); and "well reported" (5:10).[39]

The conclusion? The very traits once thought to be exclusively applied by Paul to men, as it turns out, were also applied by Paul to women—in this same epistle. Thus when the *one-woman man* phrase is correctly interpreted as excluding polygamous or adulterous individuals from ministering in spiritual leadership, there is no embedded or exegetical reason in 1 Timothy 2 and 3 to prohibit Spirit-gifted women from serving in the same overseer/elder offices that in the post-New Testament church eventually became reserved for men alone. The compelling evidence is that Paul never advocated an all-male clergy. His teaching and practice imitated the ministry of his Lord in purposefully widening the circle of spiritual leadership to include called and qualified disciples of either gender.

ESCHATOLOGY

Let us return to the opening question of this paper. When the Holy Spirit prophesied through the prophet Joel (2:28–29) and repeated His prediction through the apostle Peter (Acts 2:17–18), how shall we understand that divinely promised outpouring of "My Spirit" upon "your sons and your daughters"?

> *"And it shall come to pass in the last days,*
> *says God,*
> *That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;*
> *Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,*
> *Your young men shall see visions,*
> *Your old men shall dream dreams.*
> *And on My menservants and on My maidservants*
> *I will pour out My Spirit in those days;*
> *And they shall prophesy*
> *(Acts 2:17–18, NKJV).*

On the Day of Pentecost, when Peter began that first gospel sermon by quoting from the ancient prophet Joel, under the inspiration of the Spirit either Peter or Luke inserted a new opening phrase to Joel's prophecy: "in the last days." Peter was not speaking of epochs, but rather of imminence. He would eventually write: "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7, NKJV). But before the Day of the Lord—and this was Peter's point on Pentecost—there would be an eschatological, an apocalyptic outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon "all people." And in that outpouring God would dismantle three walls that have kept the human family divided and separated from its beginnings: the wall of gender (men and women), the wall of age (young and old), and the wall of class (free and servant). And in that apocalyptic unleashing, the spiritual gifts of prophesying, visioning, and dreaming would be bestowed upon "all flesh."

It is of interest that the spiritual gift Joel and Peter identify in that end-time outpouring is the gift of prophecy, a gift that is ranked second in Paul's hierarchy of spiritual-leadership gifts: "And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:28, NKJV). This is the same gift that the Apocalypse predicts will be operative within the remnant community in the same "last days" (Revelation 12:17; 19:10).

If both genders are chosen by the Holy Spirit to receive the second-highest gift of spiritual authority in the church, the same would surely be true for the lesser gifts, including third-highest gift of spiritual authority, the gift of teaching. Thus the Bible predicts God's apocalyptic calling and gifting of *both* genders, all ages, and all classes for the sake of His strategic endgame.

Having examined the salien t passages of the New Testament concerning women in ministry, it is the conclusion of this paper that there is no credible, exegetical, biblical ground for a male-only

gospel ministry. God's Edenic ideal of mutual interdependence, the example of the incarnated Creator Himself elevating both men and women to His cause, the clear Pauline embrace of both men and women in New Testament gospel ministry, the everlasting gospel's "priesthood of all believers," the very character and love of God that has from time immemorial sought to draw His intelligent creation into His Kingdom rule, the apocalyptic prediction that both our sons and our daughters would be gifted similarly by God's Spirit for His final work, and the fact that the founder of this movement was a woman who manifested the very gift predicted for this end-time community—all combine to support a decision of this community of faith to ordain both men and women for its apocalyptic, global mission and ministry for Christ. ■

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A THEOLOGY OF ORDINATION

As the family of God on Earth, the church is both called and equipped to carry out the will of God on Earth. The Holy Spirit imbues individuals with spiritual gifts in order to edify the body of Christ and fulfill the gospel commission (1 Peter 2:9; Ephesians 4:11–13). Upon being baptized, all are called into the service of Christ, anointed, and equipped by the Holy Spirit for service through the dispensing of spiritual gifts (Acts 8:14–17; Romans 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11).

MULTIPLE MINISTRIES

The Scriptures identify specialized ministries intended to meet the structural needs of the organized body. The offices of deacon and elder arose organically from the growth of the early church. They were established in order to adequately meet the need for responsible leadership and service. Deacons and elders functioned primarily within the local church setting (1 Timothy 3). Others served as minister-evangelists, traversing large regions in order to effectively proclaim and teach the gospel, intent on establishing, stabilizing, and growing the church (Acts 6:1–6; 13:1–3; Ephesians 4:11). These specialized responsibilities stand out due to their being preceded by the laying on of hands.

THE CALL

The genuine call to service ministry is divinely initiated and individually accepted. God impresses upon one's heart the sincere conviction of having been personally summoned into God's service. The call to service ministry is an invitation to join in effective partnership with God and God's church. The timing and circumstances of the call may vary (e.g., *in utero*, childhood, youth, or adulthood, as seen respectively with Jeremiah, Samuel, Daniel, and Amos).

PURPOSE OF ORDINATION

The gospel minister is entrusted with the solemn duty to serve as the representative of God and the church, proclaiming and teaching sound doctrine, exhorting others to respond to God's invitation for salvation, and administering church ordinances. Being mindful of God's station as Author and Ruler of the church, the church affirms God's declared and revealed intent, careful to observe the evidence, prove all things, and authenticate an individual's call to service ministry (Matthew 7:17–20; Romans 12:2). What is individually received must be corporately verified. Having opportunity to observe an individual's character, deportment, and abilities, the church retains the responsibility for substantiating and affirming the genuineness of a claimed call into gospel ministry service. The church is also responsible for officially designating and identifying its representatives.

Ordination serves to formally sanction an individual for the purpose of fulfilling the church's global mission (Matthew 24:14; 28:19–20). The worldwide body accepts in good faith what has been locally ratified (e.g., Paul's introductory letter exhorting congregations to cordially receive Timothy, as he had been properly trained and

commissioned). While ordination grants special sanction, it does not imbue the individual with added ability or spiritual acumen. It does not elevate the recipient above the laity nor grant any special dispensation of grace. Yet, ordination ought not to be trivialized as an automatic process following a set duration of effort and training. It can neither be demanded nor casually dispensed.

BIBLICAL BASIS FOR ORDINATION

The modern-day rite of ordination should be firmly grounded upon biblical concepts and practice. Concepts inherent to ordination are evidenced during the early formation of ancient Israel. The Bible documents multiple instances of people consecrated for sacred office and items consecrated for sacred use (Exodus 28:41; 40:9–16; Numbers 7:1; Deuteronomy 10:8). Their selection employs verbs such as anoint, consecrate, set apart, and appoint. The practice of laying hands upon an individual can be traced to the dispensing of the patriarchal blessing (Genesis 48) and for publicly appointing spiritual leaders (Numbers 27:22–23; Deuteronomy 34:9; 1 Kings 19:15–16; Acts 14:23).

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

The church acknowledges God's supreme authority to choose, equip, and commission individuals for service in accordance with the divine will. God selects whomever God wills, wherever God wills, whenever God wills. God's actions cannot be forecast except God reveals them. The church should consciously refrain from assuming restrictions on God to utilize any part of the creation for the advancement of the gospel (cf. Numbers 22:27–28; Matthew 21:15; Luke 19:39–40).

Thus, the body of Christ guards itself against the human inclination to pre-determine the plausibility or potential of an individual for service in gospel ministry based upon maleness. In determining qualification for ordination, the focus centers on spiritual gifts rather than gender (Romans 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11). The church thereby implements a means for testing qualities germane to each spiritual gift while acknowledging that God is no respecter of persons. The ministry of Ellen White within the Seventh-day Adventist Church provides helpful insight. Her acknowledged spiritual authority as God's spokesperson serves to insulate the church against assumptions of gendered limits pertaining to leadership within the body of Christ.

SERVICE MINISTRY

Gospel ministry should be viewed as service—ministering to the body, as opposed to commanding authority (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:25–27). The human tendency to view pastoral ministry as a position of power generally works to politicize the office. Such an inclination degrades into jealously guarding access to power. Ordination constitutes the recognition of one's call to serve within the body of Christ, but not to lord over it. Where spiritual authority is conferred, humility must govern those entrusted with it.

Ordination might best be viewed as certification. Having been called through God's election, a candidate becomes certified by God's church and commissioned for service in God's cause.

SIMPLICITY OF METHOD

The rite of ordination need not be infused with pomp. The example of Christ and the New Testament church portray uncomplicated simplicity. After prayerful deliberation, individuals are summoned, dutifully charged with a task, and sent forth following prayer and the laying on of hands (e.g., Mark 3:14; Acts 6:6; 13:2–3). The emphasis rests upon a formal commissioning for specialized service.

SIGNIFICANCE

Ordination might best be viewed as certification. Having been called through God's election, a candidate becomes certified by God's church and commissioned for service in God's cause. Ordination specifically to gospel ministry indicates that the recipient values and responds to God's call with a determination for lifetime service. Ordination is unsuitable for those who view gospel ministry as an occasional vocation or deem it a temporary profession. The responsibility of gospel ministry ought not be carelessly taken up nor casually put down. Ordination implies a determination for life service. Similar to the institution of marriage, the ordained minister is wedded to God's assignment.

While constituting an official call to duty, the laying on of hands does not indicate an elevated status. Care is needed to preserve humility, lest the temptation arise to view ministers as inherently different or spiritually superior. The minister remains within the body, whereas Christ reigns as head of the body. All members receive equal love and considerate attention from God, regardless of church station. Acknowledging the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9), the prayers of the clergy are no more efficacious than those of any other faithful and sincere supplicant.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

In summation, we assert:

Ordination is a formal acknowledgment and authentication of one's call to service ministry by God. Authentication should be understood as ratifying what only God can dispense. Ordination neither supersedes God's call nor enhances it. Ordination affirms the genuineness of the call as having borne the proper fruit of the Holy Spirit's work. God initiates the call and equips the recipient for enacting it. God's person accepts the call. God's people affirm the call. ■

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MINORITY REPORT

The current study of ordination involves deeply held values, including faithfulness to God and His Word, fairness and equality, respect for one another, and our unity as members of the body of Christ. The conclusions we reach must not sacrifice any of these values. Paul implored the various factions in Corinth "that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." (1 Cor 1:10).[1] This becomes possible as we all allow God to guide us by His Word and by His Spirit, which are always in harmony because one is the product of the other. It is with this aim in mind that this report is offered, beginning with a brief history of ordination and the role of women in the Adventist church in order to show how we arrived at our present situation. This is followed by a discussion of two Biblical approaches that have led to divergent conclusions on ordination issues before considering evidence from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White on the subject and, finally, an appeal as to how we can move forward in unity.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ORDINATION AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

Seventh-day Adventists were slow to organize, not wanting to repeat the mistakes of the denominations that preceded them and wanting to ensure that no steps would be taken that were not clearly prescribed in Scripture. However, with the growing number of Sabbatarian Adventist ministers traveling and preaching, the need to distinguish those the church considered truly called by God from "self-appointed preachers" who were causing confusion and disunity became increasingly evident.[2] Ellen White, based on visions she received in 1850 and 1852 which called for God's last-day church to implement the "gospel order" of the New Testament, began urging that steps be taken toward church organization. The church needed to distinguish the "servants of God who teach the truth" from "self-sent men" who were "unqualified to teach present truth."[3] Soon afterward, articles began appearing in the Review dealing with the subject. James White, in December of 1853, wrote that "the divine order of the New Testament is sufficient to organize the church of Christ. If more were needed, it would have been given by inspiration."[4] Numerous articles were published over the next few years so that, well before the official organization of the church in 1863, the basic framework of church officers had been hammered out. But it would take another twenty years after the organization of the General Conference to publish a church manual, and then not as a book but as a series of eighteen articles in the Review.[5] Nevertheless, apart from the reorganization in 1901 which dealt with the higher levels of church structure, the Bible-based system of ordination and church order established by the pioneers would remain essentially unchanged well into the twentieth century.

With the rise of the women's rights movement and the ordination of women ministers by other

denominations in the 1870s and 1880s, questions began to be raised in Seventh-day Adventist circles about the role of women in the church. On the one hand, in view of Ellen White's prophetic ministry, there was a need to defend the propriety of women speaking in church and the perpetuity of spiritual gifts. On the other hand, in the absence of a clear Biblical mandate, there was an unwillingness to ordain women to church office. Thus, at the 1881 General Conference Session, the resolution that "females possessing the necessary qualifications . . . be set apart by ordination to the work of the Christian ministry" was not approved.[6] The attitude against ordaining women to any office changed somewhat in the late 1890s, after Ellen White urged that "women . . . willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord" in visiting the sick, looking after the young and ministering to the needs of the poor "should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands."[7] Later, perhaps as a result, some women were ordained in Australia as deaconesses,[8] though these proved to be exceptions, and when the official Church Manual was published in 1932, it excluded women from being ordained as deaconesses because there was no clear Biblical basis for it.[9] Nevertheless, throughout this period, women served the church as licensed preachers, Sabbath School writers and editors, treasurers, and in many other capacities.

The most significant changes in the way Adventists viewed ordination were made in 1975 and 1977. They came about as a result of increased pressure to ordain women as ministers as well as assertions by the United States' tax authority, the Internal Revenue Service, that licensed Adventist ministers were not really ministers since they were not allowed to perform weddings, meaning that the church would have to pay half of their Social Security obligation—a sizable sum which would need to be taken from tithe funds. After studying the role of women in the church, the 1975 Spring Meeting of the General Conference Committee authorized "the ordaining of women to the office of local elder"[10] (a decision that was reaffirmed by the 1984 Annual Council).[11] The 1977 Annual Council, in order to demonstrate to the IRS that licensed ministers were indeed ministers, authorized "licensed ministers . . . to do what they had never before been empowered to do, namely, to perform weddings and baptisms, provided only that they were ordained as local elders and that their conference committees approved."[12] The twin effect of these decisions was to make ministerial functions more a matter of policy than theology and to pave the way for women ministers to perform substantially the same work as ordained ministers without being ordained.[13] Further study of the role of women was commissioned in the 1980s, culminating in a report by the Role of Women Commission to the 1990 General Conference session recommending that women not be ordained to the gospel ministry, which passed 1,173 to 377.[14] At the next General Conference session in 1995, the North American Division requested that divisions "where circumstances do not render it inadvisable" be invested with authority to "authorize the ordination of qualified individuals without regard to gender." The request was denied by a vote of 1,481 against to 673 in favor.[15] Despite these decisions, in 2012 the Columbia Union and Pacific Union conferences took action unilaterally to ordain women to the ministry, actions that were firmly repudiated at the 2012 Annual Council which voted 264 to 25 that "the world Church does not recognize actions authorizing or implementing ministerial ordination without regard to gender."[16]

The existence of conflicting decisions at various levels of church administration suggest that these issues cannot adequately be resolved through

policy changes alone, that in fact there are deeper theological issues involved—issues that have not been fully addressed by the studies that have been undertaken up to this point. The present worldwide study of ordination, in response to a request made at the most recent General Conference session in 2010,[17] offers hope of just this kind of solution. Addressing the matter at this deeper, theological level may enable the church to discover Bible-based answers for these gnawing questions that can then be translated into sound, lasting, and consistent policies. This latest study by the Adventist church is unique in its theological scope, the extent of global participation, and its ramifications. Much of what follows stems from and is intended as a positive contribution to this study process.

DIFFERING APPROACHES TO BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

The current divergence in views on the subject of women's ordination is due in part to different understandings of the nature of Scripture and how it should be interpreted. Some advocate an approach that takes into account the "trajectory" of Scripture. And there is, in a sense, a progression in Scripture from Eden lost to Eden restored, based on God's plan of salvation.[18] But the suggestion is made in some Adventist circles that we should take the notion of a progression in Scripture even farther. They urge that God can lead His people to a better understanding only as the social and cultural conditions permit the implementation of a higher ethic than was possible in Bible times. Thus, according to this view, the progression within Scripture must be extrapolated so that the trajectory beyond and outside of Scripture can be seen. While appealing on the surface, the problem with this approach is its reliance on an authority beyond the pages of Scripture to determine present truth in cases where the inspired writings are supposedly less clear. Such an approach, even though it might broadly affirm the Bible's inspiration, nevertheless undermines it by characterizing selected portions of Scripture as time- and culture-bound and, therefore, tinged with the author's or his community's prejudicial views on such topics, rather than God's thoughts which are valid for all places and all time. According to such a view, the Bible is not a unified, harmonious revelation and Paul's interpretation of Genesis, for example, is not normative for us today.[19] Most Adventists, on the other hand, consider that there can be no fundamental homogeneity in Scripture apart from supernatural intervention by revelation. They understand the Holy Spirit as the divine mind behind the human penmen. He is the One who has ensured that the entire canon of Scripture is theologically unified, that its teachings are valid for all time (Rom 15:4), and that they produce no conflicting opinions or opposing theological views (2 Tim 3:16-17).

Fortunately, with regard also to the question of ordination and the role of women in the church, God has given ample guidance in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to help us resolve even this seemingly intractable issue. But in order for Scripture to serve its intended purpose, all of what God says on this subject must be studied until we can perceive its underlying harmony. According to Ellen White: "To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know, then let every word have its proper influence; and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in error."[20] The "Methods of Bible Study" document (MBSD) approved by the Annual Council in Rio de Janiero, Brazil, Oct. 12, 1986, also gives important guidance: "Human reason is subject to the Bible, not equal to or above it." "The Bible is its own best interpreter and when studied as a

whole it depicts a consistent, harmonious truth. . . . Although it was given to those who lived in an ancient Near Eastern/Mediterranean context, the Bible transcends its cultural backgrounds to serve as God's Word for all cultural, racial, and situational contexts in all ages."[21] Those who are uncomfortable with the plain reading of the Biblical text look for a meaning or trajectory that goes outside of what Scripture explicitly teaches, but such an approach risks reaching decisions that are not Biblical.

Regarding cultural issues, the Bible itself provides us the key as to how to handle them. For example, while some Evangelical Christians would classify the Sabbath as a temporary, cultural institution,[22] Genesis 2:1-3 and Exodus 20:11 show that it originated as part of God's perfect plan for humanity and is therefore applicable in all cultures and for all time. Decisions regarding the perpetuity of institutions originating after the Fall is more difficult, especially in the case of those that seem to have been divinely established. Although circumcision began with God's command to Abraham, like the presence of the temple, it was no guarantee of God's favor without a right covenant relationship (Jer 4:4; cf. 21:10-12; 22:5). In fact, the time would come when God would treat the circumcised like the uncircumcised (Jer 9:25; cf. 1 Cor 7:18-19), apparently pointing to circumcision no longer serving as a sign of the covenant. This is confirmed by the New Testament, in which the reality symbolized by circumcision (Deut 30:6; 10:6)—a change of heart and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:7-11; Rom 2:28-29)—is replaced by baptism (John 3:3-8; Col 2:11-13). In fact, baptism itself derives from a Jewish cultural form of self-immersion in water for purification from ceremonial defilement (*baptizō*, Mark 7:4; Luke 11:38). Its meaning, however, is inseparable from the form, which transcends the meaning of circumcision in being egalitarian and symbolic of the believer's being washed from sin, identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and acceptance of Him as Saviour (Rom 6). Furthermore, the command is given in a universal setting ("all nations," Matt 28:19). Therefore, in the case of baptism, the form itself is universal and unchanging.

Slavery, on the other hand, was never instituted by God; it is a cultural and legal institution. God redeemed Israel from slavery and provided legal protections so that no Israelite would ever be sold into perpetual servitude (Exod 21:2-6). No such provision for servants existed in the New Testament church. Through Christ's sacrifice the door of salvation is open to everyone—rich and poor, slave and free, male and female (Gal 3:28)—and through God's grace we are all free moral agents. The slavery existing under Roman law, though much milder than the racial-based slavery of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America,[23] had to be borne by Jews and Christians alike, "but from the beginning it was not so" (cf. Matt 19:3-8). Christians are instructed to treat slaves with compassion as fellow-servants of Christ (1 Cor 7:22-23) because, as believers, we are all "slaves," with Christ as our one Master (Eph 6:5-9; Col 3:22-4:1). In the Lord, then, no one is to remain a slave, but is considered as a sister or a brother (Phlm 16).

As the above examples illustrate, indications exist within Scripture itself to guide us as to whether and when an institution is to be discontinued. The relevant historical-cultural contexts are vital to consider when studying the Bible. As the MBSD states, "In connection with the study of the Biblical text, explore the historical and cultural factors. Archaeology, anthropology, and history may contribute to understanding the meaning of the text."[24] However, it is one thing to study the historical-cultural backgrounds to enlighten our understanding of the setting in which the text was written; it

is another thing altogether to suggest that the text was culturally conditioned and that, therefore, a trajectory beyond the text must be constructed for our current, more enlightened, age.[25] If the latter were true, it would mean that the Bible does not set forth universal principles but only that which was perceived by the inspired writers to be valid for the local situation at the time or, even worse, reflects then-current prejudices and misunderstandings. In that case its relevance for other times and places would be muted, perhaps not even reflecting divine truth or principles. This is an important distinction to keep in mind when studying ordination in Scripture. What evidence does the Bible provide that the counsels it gives are culturally conditioned or of timeless value? How would one discern the difference?

These are crucial questions and, once again, the Scriptures themselves help us answer them. First, the merely descriptive must be distinguished from the normative, or else we would be practicing many of the sins of our forefathers, including idolatry, polygamy, slavery, and even murder. Jesus clearly indicates what constitutes normative behavior when He prayed, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:10; Luke 11:2). Practices that reach back to Eden or extend to the new world constitute God's will for all time. Without question there is a progression in Scripture whereby God is working to restore human beings into the image of God, but this should not be used to invalidate principles grounded in creation such as the equality of male and female, whose roles, however, are not completely identical. Interpreters should be extremely cautious in concluding that certain passages in Scripture pertain only to a given time or place. In fact, there would appear to be no secure basis to reach such conclusions without clear Scriptural indicators because, through divine foresight, the Bible's horizon extends beyond that of the human author to accomplish God's purposes until the end of time (Isa 55:11). What follows, then, is an examination of evidence from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy relevant to the subject of ordination and the role of women, beginning with the early chapters of Genesis, followed by a consideration of influential women in Scripture, ordination in the New Testament, and spiritual gifts.

HUMAN IDENTITY, EQUALITY, AND DIFFERENTIATION IN GENESIS

According to Genesis 1, human beings were created in God's image and, as such, are all equal. We are also complementary because from the beginning God differentiated us as male and female (Gen 1:27). Human beings were blessed by God and given dominion over the entire animal kingdom. They were also personally instructed by Him to be fruitful and multiply (v. 28). Biblically understood, equality, complementarity, co-regency, and mutuality are not contradictory. Genesis 2 elaborates on this initial overview of creation by focusing particularly on the creation of human beings and their relation to each other.

Both Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 give indications that man is given the primary leadership role. In Genesis 1:26-27, God calls the entire human family, both male and female, "Man" (*ʾādām*). The term occurs three times in Genesis 5:1-2, bracketing the Genesis account of the earliest days of human history. In this latter passage, the generic use of *ʾādām* is specifically distinguished from "Adam" as the name of the first man: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created."[26] In fact, one notable Old Testament scholar, who by his own admission

had accepted the typical feminist reading of these early chapters of Genesis[27] for more than a decade because he "wanted it to be true,"[28] shows that *ʾādām* in Genesis 1-3 refers not to undifferentiated humanity but to "man" with the male gender principally in view: "Hebrew is no different from what English has been on this score until quite recently: the ordinary word for 'human' (man) has been a word for 'male' but not for 'female' even though females are human."[29] Unfortunately, he uses the results of his own careful reading of Genesis 1-3 not only to reject some influential feminist-based studies of these chapters but also as a basis for rejecting Biblical authority entirely and in that way advancing feminist aims. Use of culture-based arguments to construct a trajectory beyond Scripture has the similar effect of denying Biblical authority, at least as it pertains to the specific issue of ordination without regard to gender. However, once Biblical authority is denied in order to resolve this particular issue, nothing would prevent the same method being applied to other issues such as homosexuality.[30]

According to Genesis 2, God formed "the man" (*hā ʾādām*) first (2:7; cf. 1:27) and placed him in the Garden of Eden to labor and care for it (2:15). The man was given instructions regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (vv. 16-17). God brought the animals to him and entrusted him with the responsibility of naming them (vv. 19-20). When God brought the first female human to the man he was also entrusted with naming her (v. 22), but now—the first time we hear a human voice in Scripture—it is the man's voice, speaking in poetry, and calling her "Woman [*ʾiššâ*], because she was taken out of Man [*ʾîš*]" (v. 23). The parallelism of these two naming accounts, using the same Hebrew verb (*qārāʾ*), reinforces the fact that the man is given the primary leadership role in this new world. Furthermore, since Genesis 1:5, 8, 10 employ this verb without once using the word "name" (*šēm*), "it cannot be denied that 'calling' is a perfectly acceptable Hebrew way of describing naming."[31] The conclusion follows that Adam is also made the primary leader of the home, since the man is told to take the initiative in leaving his father and mother (v. 24, note again the order: male then female). The reason given for the man to leave his parents is that he might "cling" or "hold onto" "his woman" (i.e., "his wife," also in v. 25), suggesting that he is to take responsibility for their staying together and for her protection. Thus Adam is created as both the prototypical man (2:7, 15-23) and the representative husband (2:24-25).

The role of the woman in the creation narrative of Genesis 2 is different, though no less important. She was "built" (*bānāh*) from one of the man's ribs, the verb vividly depicting the unique process of her creation from the building block of the man and probably also alluding to the building of the first family (cf. Prov 24:3; Ps 144:12). God could have made her too from the dust of the ground and at the same time as the man in order to exclude any suggestion of role differentiation, but the Creator's interactions with the man prior to the woman's creation and the manner of her creation indicate a difference in function. Her being created from the man in no way suggests superiority or inferiority to him, nor a male-female caste system.[32] To the contrary, the fact of her being created from the man's side shows both woman's equality to man and identity to him in terms of nature and yet also man's precedence and his being given the primary responsibility for leadership of the human family. The woman filled a need for the man as "helper" (Gen 2:18). The structure of the narrative makes clear that the animals could not provide this help by mentioning that the only thing "not good" about this otherwise perfect creation is that there was no one comparable

to the man, no "helper corresponding to him" (*'ēzer kᵉnegdô*, vv. 18, 20). The Hebrew term here for "help" in both its noun and verb forms commonly refers to divine help (e.g., Gen 49:25; Deut 33:26; Ps 115:9-11) but also of help given by human beings; in itself, therefore, it says nothing about the relative status of the one giving help, which must be decided by context.[33] For example, God warned the prince of Jerusalem that he would scatter all his "helpers" and troops (Ezek 12:14), a clear example where the noun refers to subordinates. The verb is used similarly: the two and a half tribes helped the larger segment of Israel to conquer Canaan (Josh 1:14; similarly 10:6), Abishai helped David against the Philistines (2 Sam 21:17), armed forces from Manasseh came to help David shortly before Saul's demise (1 Chr 12:19-21 [MT 20-22]), troops provided help to King Uzziah against the enemy (2 Chr 26:13), and valiant men helped King Hezekiah cut off the water supply outside Jerusalem in advance of Sennacherib's attack (2 Chr 32:3). The creation account's use of this term shows man as leader and woman created "for him" (*lô*) as supportive helper.[34] Paul affirms this perspective when he cites Genesis 1 and 2 in supporting different roles in the church for men and women within the framework of equality of personhood (1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:13). Genesis also shows that the woman was to gain self-understanding through the designation "woman" given her by the man, indicating at once both similarity and difference. "She found her own identity in relation to the man as his equal and helper by the man's definition."[35]

Unfortunately, the happy, harmonious relationship in Eden of two equals, one as leader and the other as supportive helper, both trusting in God as their Father, soon comes under attack. Genesis 3, in recounting the sad history of the Fall, describes the overthrow of selfless male leadership: the man is absent; the serpent talks to the woman as if she were the head and representative of the family; and the woman accepts the role accorded her by the serpent.[36] Her words, with their slight but telling variation on God's actual command, reflect already the evil influence of the serpent on her in its selfish characterization of God. The man's activity and initiative had been the focus in Genesis 2, but now, in chapter 3, the woman is shown taking the initiative. Based on her conversation with the serpent, she reasons to a decision, takes of the forbidden fruit, eats it, and gives some of it to Adam (v. 6). In sharp contrast with Genesis 2, in which the woman is called "his woman," the man is now called "her man." In other words, in place of the woman being defined by the man, he is now defined by her. But the narrative goes further. It also describes the man in terms of the woman as being "with her." In short, there is a total reversal of the principle of leadership based on the creation order. The man ate the fruit second, following the initiative and example of the woman. Paul points to the respective roles of men and women established at creation and the consequences of its reversal as a Scriptural basis for preserving male teaching authority in the church (1 Tim 2:13-14).

The dramatic significance of this reversal is underscored by the way in which Genesis describes the results of the Fall. The man's decision to eat the fruit is the decisive act, not the woman's. First, only after Adam eats did the negative consequences become clear: the eyes of both were opened; they knew they were naked and so sewed fig leaves into loincloths; then they heard God coming and hid themselves (Gen 3:7-8). Second, when God confronts this challenge to His command, he seeks out Adam, not Eve, as the one to be held principally responsible: "the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" The pronoun "you" is also a masculine singular form, referring only to

Adam. Third, in questioning the pair, it is clear that the man bears the primary responsibility. God first questions Adam at length, and only afterward questions the woman briefly (vv. 9-11). Finally, in pronouncing judgment upon Adam, God emphasizes the man's surrender of his leadership responsibility as the first misstep: "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree . . . ." (v. 17). Paul, in recognition of this headship principle, assigns full responsibility for the Fall of the human race to Adam (Rom 5:12-19; 1 Cor 15:21-22).

The Fall injects sin into the world, bringing pain and suffering into all human experience. Existing relationships are changed. Adam no longer wants to identify with Eve, going out of his way to avoid calling her "my woman" (i.e., wife, cf. 2:24-25) by using a very lengthy circumlocution: "the woman whom You gave to be with me." In so doing, he also distances himself from his Creator and places the blame for sin on God just as Lucifer did in heaven. Eve's desire will now be "against" her husband (3:16b marg.).[37] The divine plan, however, is for man's headship to continue: "he shall rule over you" (Gen 3:16c). Whether man's headship role would be predominantly positive or negative would depend on whether he would exercise this role with God's loving headship in view as well as on the woman's willingness to accept it. Unfortunately, as Ellen White observes, "man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter and made her life a burden." But God's redemptive intent in placing Eve in subjection to Adam was that, by their cherishing "the principles enjoined in the law of God," it would prove to be a blessing to them.[38] Before sin, the relationship of the man and woman was perfect and harmonious with Adam exercising unselfish leadership and Eve providing help and encouragement. This remains the ideal: "Christian redemption does not redefine creation; it restores creation, so that wives learn godly submission and husbands learn godly headship."[39] Ellen White comments on the significance of this history for women today:

> *Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband's side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God's plan. In their efforts to reach positions for which He has not fitted them, many are leaving vacant the place where they might be a blessing. In their desire for a higher sphere, many have sacrificed true womanly dignity and nobility of character, and have left undone the very work that Heaven appointed them.*[40]

WOMEN IN SCRIPTURE AND HEADSHIP

Throughout Scripture women are active in many influential roles, but there is no clear instance of their exercising a spiritual headship role. That is, no woman was ever placed by God as a religious head over a man: women were never given a priestly role in the Old Testament nor in the New Testament are they ever seen functioning as apostles or elders. Some women in the Bible are described as prophetesses,[41] but one cannot necessarily assume, by virtue of this work, that God intended for them to fulfill a spiritual headship responsibility. Miriam, for example, was explicitly condemned for attempting to arrogate to herself the privileges that God had given to Moses. She argued, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" (Num 12:2), implying that, since she also had the gift of prophecy, she was somehow equal to him

in spiritual authority. God made it clear by afflicting her with leprosy that her assumption was not only wrong but sinful. The punishment of Aaron, who joined with her in this challenge to Moses's authority, was evidenced by God's departure from the sanctuary (Num 12:9-10). Interestingly, however, by virtue of his headship authority as high priest, he could still intercede for Miriam, which, together with Moses' prayer to God, availed for her healing.

Deborah is a woman in Scripture who has been considered not only as a prophetess but also a judge. However, by means of several important indicators, the Biblical text reveals that Deborah was not a judge in the same sense as other judges. First, she is never called a "judge"[42] nor is the normal formula ("X judged Israel Y years") used of her.[43] Second, the temporary character of Deborah's judging activity is emphasized in several ways (Judg 4:4), including use of the phrase "at that time" (*bā ʿēt hahî ʾ*).[44] Third, in order to prepare the reader for a woman temporarily acting in this capacity, the way Deborah is introduced deliberately emphasizes in five different ways that she is female before mentioning her work of judging.[45] Finally, rather than sitting in the gate as judges and elders did (e.g., Ruth 4:9-11; 1 Sam 9:18) and kings somewhat later (1 Kgs 22:10; Jer 38:7), the description of Deborah is more in line with her role as a prophetic messenger (sitting under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel, Judg 4:5): "In the absence of the usual magistrates, the people had sought to her for counsel and justice."[46] Confirmation that Deborah's activity was more an extension of her prophetic role because the divinely-intended judge was unwilling to lead is indicated several times throughout the narrative: God calls Barak to act as Israel's deliverer through Deborah's prophetic message (vv. 6-7); at Barak's refusal to lead Israel into battle unless she would accompany him "and thus support his efforts by her influence and counsel,"[47] Deborah prophesies that she will go and the victory will be gained, but that it "will not lead to your glory, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman" (Jael, not Deborah, vv. 8-9); the "Song of Deborah," sung by Deborah and Barak, alludes to both of them as "leaders" who "took the lead in Israel" (5:1-2).

In short, Deborah was obedient to the prophetic role that God had called her to do in an exceptional situation. Her work was temporarily expanded to encompass some of the functions that a judge would do, but, as Ellen G. White indicates, it was Barak who "had been designated by the Lord himself as the one chosen to deliver Israel."[48] This reading of Judges is confirmed by the New Testament, which mentions Barak, not Deborah, in recalling Israel's deliverance at that time (Heb 11:32). This single Biblical example of notable leadership by a woman during the time of the judges, when "there was no king in Israel" and "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg 17:6, etc.), does not provide a sound basis for establishing a principle of female headship in contradiction to the rest of Scripture. Underscoring the fact that having female leaders of Israel was not God's plan, the two examples of women queens usurping power in the Old Testament are thoroughly negative. Queen Jezebel led the Northern Kingdom of Israel into apostasy and endeavored to exterminate God's true prophets, including Elijah (1 Kgs 18:4; 19:1-2). Athaliah, after coming to the throne of Judah, consolidated her power by killing all the male heirs save young Joash who was hidden away for six years by the wife of the high priest (2 Kgs 11:1-3; 2 Chr 22:10-12).

In the New Testament, female believers were called to significant supportive roles in the ministry of Jesus: learning lessons from Him just like the other disciples (Luke 10:39), providing financial means for the furtherance of His ministry (Luke 8:3), and supplying moral encouragement during the

Equality of service is not incompatible with different roles; all are servants of Christ and the glory belongs to God for the growth of the church and the abundant final harvest.

crucial closing week (John 12:1-8), not least by their determined presence at the cross (Mark 15:40-41; John 19:25). They were also His witnesses before and after His resurrection (Luke 8:1-2; 24:9-10). Jesus commanded Mary Magdalene to tell the news to the other disciples (John 20:15-18) and, together with the other women who went to the tomb, was among the first witnesses to His resurrection (Luke 24:2-10). Although these roles would undoubtedly have been offensive to Jewish cultural sensitivities, Jesus invited them to fulfill these important tasks. So out of step was Jesus' treatment of women with prevailing Jewish attitudes, that even the apostles did not believe the witness the women brought them of the risen Lord (Luke 24:11).[49]

We also have ample evidence of women working in local churches: Priscilla and her husband Aquila in their spare time labored in Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome, working with Paul, teaching accurately "the way of God," and opening their home for church gatherings (Acts 18:1, 18, 26; 1 Cor 16:9; Rom 16:3); Phoebe, a "servant" (*diakonos*)[50] of the church at Cenchreae near Corinth and patron of Paul and others, delivered Paul's epistle to Rome and may have encouraged generous support of his mission to Spain (Rom 16:1; cf. 15:25-32); Mary was notable in Rome for her hard work in the church (16:6); Junia with Andronicus were "well-known to the apostles" (v. 7);[51] Tryphaena, Tryphosa, and Persis "worked hard in the Lord" (v. 12). But there is no clear evidence that any of these women ever exercised a headship role. Their labors appear to be supportive of the work being carried forward by the apostles and other men whom God had called to lead His church. Today God still seeks both men and women willing to fill supportive roles in the advancement of His work. Paul indicates the importance of each person's contribution to the process of readying the crop for harvest (1 Cor 3:4-11). Every worker has an important role to play, but God gives the resultant increase so that no individual is more important than another. Equality of service is not incompatible with different roles; all are servants of Christ and the glory belongs to God for the growth of the church and the abundant final harvest.

ORDINATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Jesus established His church by ordaining twelve men from a much larger group of disciples.[52] He named them "apostles," thus anticipating their future sending as His personal emissaries (Mark 3:13-14). This took place more than a year after their initial call (cf. Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-51)[53] and represents a further stage both in their experience as disciples and in the development of the church. While all who join themselves to Christ are expected to be fruitful disciples (John 15:1-6), some were set apart or ordained to special leadership capacities. After His death and resurrection, Jesus bestowed the Holy Spirit on the apostles, making them His undershepherds, instructing them, and authorizing them to act on His behalf (John 20:21-23). In this light, Ellen White draws out the significance of the gift of the Holy Spirit in qualifying men for the gospel ministry:

> *Before the disciples could fulfill their official duties in connection with the church, Christ*

breathed His Spirit upon them. He was committing to them a most sacred trust, and He desired to impress them with the fact that without the Holy Spirit this work could not be accomplished. . . . Only those who are thus taught of God, those who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ-life is manifested, are to stand as representative men, to minister in behalf of the church.[54]

Ordination (to "set apart for an office or duty")[55] is described in the New Testament by various Greek words, which reflect the preferred vocabulary of the individual authors. The only ritual associated with ordination in the New Testament is the laying on of hands, although prayer, fasting, and other practices are also sometimes mentioned. Use of the ritual, based on Old Testament precedent (Num 8:10; 27:18) serves to represent both the sanction of the church at large (through the one previously ordained by the church) and church members (who have expressed their confidence in God's calling of the individual through their vote with the uplifted hand, 2 Cor 8:19).

Specifically mentioned as being recipients of the laying on of hands are deacons and elders (Acts 6:6; 14:23), which explains why these two offices also appear together in 1 Timothy 3. Paul, in writing to Titus on the island of Crete, makes no mention of deacons, instructing him to appoint elders for the churches in the various towns there (1:5). Timothy, on the other hand, was stationed in Ephesus. Being one of the leading cities of the empire, it must have had considerably larger churches than the island of Crete, because, like the church in Jerusalem, both elders and deacons were required. The role of Timothy and Titus, as elders overseeing a number of churches, is similar to that of the ordained minister today.

Turning in greater detail to 1 Timothy, the verses immediately preceding chapter 3 contain what some consider to be instructions as to how wives should relate to their husbands. However, normally such instructions are given as part of what is generally referred to as a household code like those found in Ephesians 5:21-6:9 and Colossians 3:18-4:1. The use in Ephesians 5 of pronouns which are translated "one's own" (*idios*, v. 22; *heautou,* vv. 28-29) show clearly that the Greek words *anēr* and *gynē* should be translated in that context as "husband" and "wife," not generically ("man" and "woman"). The article has a similar function in Colossians 3:18-4:1 to specify "wives" (v. 18), "husbands," (v. 19), as well as "children" (v. 20), "fathers" (v. 21), "slaves" (v. 22), and "masters" (4:1). 1 Peter 2:18-3:7 addresses instructions to servants (2:18) followed by "similarly" (*houtōs*, 3:1, 7) to address wives and husbands, thus signaling the presence of a household code there also. In short, household codes always have indicators showing that reference is being made to husbands and wives.

First Timothy 2, while it resembles a household code, has no such indicators;[56] nor is there mention of masters, servants or children. So here *anēr* and *gynē* should be translated generically, "man" and "woman" rather than "husband" and "wife." Further support for this translation is seen in the fact that 1 Timothy 2 deals with worship life rather than home life, as well as from 1 Timothy 3:15 which calls the church "the house of God." Understandably, then, this passage has been labeled a church code.[57]

Such an application of the rules of the house to the church should not be all that surprising since we have many references in the New Testament to churches meeting in homes, including in Ephesus (1 Cor 16:19) where Timothy was located at the time that Paul wrote his first epistle to him (1 Tim 1:3). First Timothy 2 begins with instructions that

prayer should be offered for all people (vv. 1-7),[58] and that the men "in every place," i.e., wherever there is a church gathering for worship (cf. 3:15), "should pray, lifting holy hands, without anger or quarreling" (v. 8). Next follows instructions for "women who profess godliness," i.e. believers—women in the church.[59] They should dress modestly and prudently (vv. 9-10), so that fashion does not lead to rivalry or divisions in the church. What immediately follows should also be understood as part of this church code: women should not take an authoritative teaching role (vv. 11-12) apart from or independent of the male-based church leadership prescribed in 1 Timothy 3. Again, as in the earlier part of the chapter, Paul gives his rationale for this assertion, this time based on the history and theological significance of the Creation and the Fall: "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor" (vv. 13-14).

Mentioning the order of creation, man first and then woman, concisely invokes from Genesis 2 the male leadership principle that God established in Eden. The word Paul chooses for deceive (*exapataō*; cf. Gen 3:13, LXX) means "to cause someone to accept false ideas about someth[ing]."[60] As we saw above, the serpent deceived Eve by approaching her as if she were the head, reversing the headship principle, and by suggesting that she and Adam could rise to a higher level of power through eating the forbidden fruit. Adam was not deceived—he saw the headship principle had been reversed and "mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side. . . . Love, gratitude, loyalty to the Creator—all were overborne by love to Eve. She was a part of himself, and he could not endure the thought of separation."[61] Yet, Paul also exalts as crucial one of the roles that only women can play in counteracting the Fall and obtaining salvation—as mothers in fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. This verse points first and foremost to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the promised seed (Gal 3:16), the source of eternal salvation (Heb 5:9); but it is also a part of God's plan that women who have the opportunity exercise this God-given privilege and role of bearing and raising godly children (1 Tim 2:15; 1 Cor 11:11-12). Paul is not suggesting that women who are unable or choose not to have children cannot be saved since he makes clear that the condition for obtaining salvation is not childbearing per se, but maintaining one's connection with Christ by continuing "in faith and love and holiness, with self-control" (v. 15).[62]

Paul's explanation in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 of the relations between believing men and women in the church, predicated on the creation order of Genesis 1-3 (which Paul had already established in 1 Cor 11), lays the basis for his stipulations regarding the qualifications for overseers and deacons that immediately follow in 1 Timothy 3. Confirmation that these chapters form a church code appears in 1 Timothy 3:14-15: ". . . that you may know how it is necessary for people to conduct themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth" (cf. v. 5, Mounce). As those who carry responsibility for the spiritual and material well-being of the church, overseers and deacons must be carefully selected based on the specified qualifications, which are almost the same for both offices. In addition, however, the overseer must also be "able to teach" (*didaktikon*, cf. 2 Tim 2:24), a qualification not required of deacons. Another church code, Titus 1:5-3:2, gives nearly identical qualifications for the overseer/elder, including competence in teaching (1:5-9).[63]

The importance of such competency is apparent in view of the frequent New Testament references to false teachers, and not only in the Pastoral Epistles. Requiring this competency of the overseer or elder

coupled with disallowing women an authoritative teaching role (1 Tim 2:12) helps to explain why the person filling the office of overseer/elder "must be . . . the husband of one wife" (3:2, *dei . . . einai*, *mias gynaikos andra*), a stipulation Paul underscores also to Titus (1:6). Deacons have a similar requirement (1 Tim 2:12).[64] Some translate this phrase as "one-wife husband," arguing that the word order in Greek places the emphasis on "one-wife" (as opposed to two or more) when actually the syntax makes all parts of the phrase emphatic. It stresses competence in managing a stable, respectable Christian home, which demonstrates in turn that, as an ordained officer of the church, the man should be capable of caring for and managing well God's church. The requirement that he be "the husband of one wife" cannot refer to polygamy, which was not practiced in cities of the Roman empire such as Ephesus;[65] rather, it stipulates that men be appointed who exemplify a loving, unselfish headship and the values of a lifelong marriage. The parallel between 3:12 for deacons and 3:2, 4-5 for the elder shows that there is a connection between having one wife and the ability to manage the household well (including any children).

The New Testament's emphasis on the importance and integrity of the family social structure is not simply out of convenience to harmonize with the surrounding culture or out of expedience to facilitate mission. In fact, not unlike today, there were many cultural forces in Greco-Roman society that tended to undermine family stability including immoral lifestyles, homosexuality, and materialism. In the church too, Paul expresses concern that false teachers were subverting "whole families" (Titus 1:12). The key role that Christianity accorded to the family, placing it at the heart of religious faith and worship, helps explain its explosive growth and rapid expansion throughout the ancient world. It also makes clear that the church's continued growth, vitality, and stability depend largely on godly spiritual leadership in the homes that compose it.

Paul underscores that the structure of the human family was established at creation: "the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man" (1 Cor 11:3 NIV). "For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man" (vv. 8-9; cf. 1 Tim 2:13). Christ is not just the head of Adam, but the head of every man. And "the husband is the head of the wife" (Eph 5:23). This human family structure was integrated at creation into heaven's existing order in which cherubim and seraphim are nearest the throne (Ps 99:1; Isa 6:2; Ezek 10:3; 11:22), Christ as Archangel is head over these as well as the rest of the angelic host (1 Thess 4:16; Rev 12:7; cf. Josh 5:13-15), and "the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor 11:3).

First Corinthians 11 is similar to 1 Timothy and Titus, but as a corrective church code. We see the same clues: a generic use of man and woman in connection with an argument from the creation order (11:3, 7-9) and instructions for how men and women are to behave in the church (11:4-6, 13-15). Apparently there were some believers in Corinth who were not following the accepted practices for affirming the headship principle in the church. So Paul first articulates the overarching principle that "the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man," which is modeled by Christ Himself, who is submissive to His Head, God the Father (v. 3). Paul makes application of this headship principle, based on the governing role of the head to the body (vv. 4-6, as also in Eph 5:22-33), and he defends it vigorously (vv. 7-16). "Head" (*kephalē*) in this context, as elsewhere in the New Testament,[66] does not refer to "source," which is not at issue here, but to "authority" (v. 10).[67] The notion of head as

authority is frequent also in the OT, where the term (Heb. *rō'š*) is used for rulers, chiefs, captains, and other authorities.[68] Even in prophecy, heads symbolize authority, whether kings, rulers, powers, or kingdoms (Dan 2:38; 7:6; Rev 17:9-10).

After explaining how the headship principle articulated in verse 3 should impact one's decorum in worship, Paul gives several supporting arguments for the principle. His primary Biblical rationale comes from the order and purpose of creation in Genesis 1-2: (1) woman is the glory of man inasmuch as she came from man (1 Cor 11:7-8); and (2) woman was created for the man (v. 9). He also appeals to the decorum angels manifest in worship (v. 10).[69] Paul balances this male leadership principle, however, with a "nevertheless" (*plēn*) clause in vv. 11-12 in order to remind his readers that it is not unconditional, that interdependence also functions among believers. Thus, as in the New Testament household codes,[70] unselfish love is presumed in the church code too. Paul wraps up his instructions with subsidiary arguments which are universal, not local or cultural—from reason (v. 13) and nature (vv. 14-15). Finally, he makes clear that all of the churches follow a consistent practice, from which no deviation will be considered (v. 16). While the nature of the head covering is not completely clear, Paul's main point applies with equal force today: the way men and women conduct themselves in church should indicate that the principle of male church leadership is operative and accepted by all who take part in worship. Since every reason Paul gives for upholding this principle transcends local culture and practice, it follows that what he enjoins for the church at Corinth is not unique or applicable only to them. The principle of submission to the designated head is not limited by location or circumstance because it is practiced in all the churches and even in heaven. Paul shows how headship functions throughout divine-human, human, and divine relations,[71] thereby emphasizing the same kind of nourishing headship relation by men in the church that Christ has with the church as a whole (cf. Eph 5:23), which resembles the role relation God the Father bears to Christ (1 Cor 11:3).

A few chapters later, in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul lays down another corrective church code. This set of rules deals with disruptive speech by both men and women in the church. Verses 33b-35, which forbid women from speaking in church, must be understood in this setting. Rather than contradicting what Paul has just said in 1 Corinthians 11:5 about women praying and prophesying in church, the rule should be read in light of this more comprehensive instruction that precedes it.

RELATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO ORDINATION

There are several lists of spiritual gifts in the New Testament, which together reflect a wide diversity of talents put to spiritual use. These gifts include prophecy, evangelism, teaching, helps, hospitality, ministry to the poor, and many others. Such gifts are available to both men and women without regard to race, class, or nationality. Still, while everyone is given some gift (1 Cor 12:7), there may be gifts that are not available to everyone since each of them is distributed in accordance with the Spirit's choosing, bestowal, and direction, not ours (v. 11). The same may be said of church offices. Various church capacities, including that of prophet, are open to women (Luke 2:36; Acts 21:9; cf. 2:17-18; 1 Cor 11:5). However, women are never seen functioning as pastors, even though some, like Priscilla with her husband Aquila, were certainly involved in the work of instructing and making disciples, because the commission to share the gospel is something that all Christians should be actively engaged in (Luke

24:8-10; Rev 22:17). Nor are women ever seen functioning as elders/overseers, no doubt because this office combines headship and shepherding functions. Paul speaks tenderly to the "elders" (*presbyteroi*) of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17), whom the Holy Spirit appointed as "overseers" (*episkopoi*) to "shepherd" (*poimainō*) the church of God (v. 28). Peter also seems to use overseer and shepherd (or "pastor") synonymously when he speaks of Jesus as "the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" (1 Pet 2:25),[72] as well as in his exhortation to the leaders of the churches of Asia Minor to "shepherd the flock of God, . . . exercising oversight [*episkopountes*]" (5:2). The elder is given oversight over God's "flock" to protect it from danger and deception (Acts 20:29). It is an office that was given only to men who, like Adam and other spiritual leaders of the home and the church, will be called "to give an account" (Heb 13:17).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the course of this brief but wide-ranging study, we have seen that the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of ordination and church order was established very early through extensive Bible study and remained essentially unchanged until the 1970s and 1980s when church policy started becoming more dominant in defining ministerial functions. However, the increasing conflict over the ordination of women, seen in recent years at various levels of our church, suggests that deeper theological issues are involved which can only be fully resolved by returning to a more Biblically based understanding and practice of ordination. An alternative approach suggests that we must continue down the path of pragmatic solutions because the Bible provides us no more than a vague, principle-based "trajectory." It implies that the Old Testament's consistent affirmation of male priests, the precedent of Jesus in ordaining twelve men as apostles, the selection of seven male deacons, and the teachings of Paul regarding the qualifications of church officers, are all products of the time, circumscribed by the limits of the culture. In fact, ordaining women represents a significant departure from the Biblical model. Is our degenerate Western culture of modernism and postmodernism, with its intentional dismantling of the family and family values, Christian distinctiveness, and, ultimately, "truth," better equipped to address the needs of the church today than are the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy? From our earliest beginnings as Seventh-day Adventists, we have found a solid, Bible-based approach to be our source of unity, and this challenge will be no exception. Ultimately, when policy-based rather than Scripture-based solutions to theological problems are employed, church order and unity may be undermined, as our recent experience in connection with this issue has shown. Genuine unity is the product of the converting power of the Word of God. It must be our guiding light—not a social reengineering of gender roles and functions that can never bring lasting relief from the abuses brought about by sin. Jesus has shown us the way, not through external social reforms but through inner transformation and the power of a positive example.

Beginning with the creation narrative of Genesis 1 and 2, the Bible consistently describes human beings as both equal and complementary, assigning the primary leadership role to the man with a supportive role given to the woman. The entrance of sin attempted to reverse these roles, but God indicated that male leadership would continue (Gen 3:16). Paul describes, based on Genesis, how this leadership, both in the home (Eph 5) and in the church (1 Cor 11), is to be subject to and modeled after Christ's own unselfish headship. Throughout Scripture, women fulfill important supportive roles

and women were specifically included by Jesus in His ministry. They also assisted the apostles in their work of establishing churches, but none are ever seen functioning as an elder or deacon because such persons "must be" (*dei . . . einai*) the husband of one wife, exhibiting godly character qualities and demonstrating wise spiritual leadership in the home (1 Tim 3:2-5, 12; Titus 1:6). This same Scriptural requirement applies also to pastors, whose headship role transcends that of a local church elder. The theological basis for this requirement is grounded in the early chapters of Genesis. Paul sets out guidelines for men and women in the church based on the creation order, which in turn is based on the relation between the Father and the Son (1 Tim 2-3; 1 Cor 11, 14; Titus 1-3). Within this Biblical paradigm of godly male headship, all supportive avenues for service within the church are open to both women and men based on their Spirit-bestowed gifts and calling, including teaching, helps, hospitality, ministry to the poor, and many others. Naturally, how men and women relate to each other in a church setting will vary somewhat from culture to culture. At the same time, it will be evident that the principle of male church leadership is supported by the congregation as a whole, particularly by those who take leading roles in worship.

To follow the Bible model on the issue of women's ordination will require courage like that of our pioneers. Nevertheless, it is the only basis on which we can expect to maintain global unity, receive God's continued blessing, and, most importantly, anticipate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to finish His work. ■

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ENDNOTES

HERMENEUTICS AND THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

1 Walter Kaiser and Moises Silva, " Who Needs Hermeneutics Anyway?" *An Introduction of Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 16. Cf. D. A. Carson, "Word-Study Fallacies," Exegetical Fallacies (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2nd ed., 1996), 27–55.

2 My own free application of R. Kysar's now-famous description of the Fourth Gospel in his *The Fourth Evangelist and His Gospel: An Examination of Contemporary Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975), 6. He is quoting an anonymous source mentioned in Siegfried Schulz, Die Studen der vier Evangelisten (Hamburg: Furche, 1967), 297.

3 *Adventist Review*, January 22, 1987, 18; online: https://adventistbiblical-research.org/materials/bible-interpretation-hermeneutics/methods-bible-study.

4 Ján Barna, "Ordination of Women in Seventh-day Adventist Theology—A Biblical and Theological Analysis and Synthesis of the Debate with Special Attention to Hermeneutical Matters." Ph.D. Diss., University of Bristol and Trinity College, 2009.

5 Barna's use of this term to describe the camp of the opponents may create some confusion over its meaning, because many in Evangelical circles use this term to denote the scriptural analysis, paying attention "both to the language in which the original text was written and to the specific cultural context that gave rise to the text." See Moises Silva, op.cit., 19. *Grammatical* here generally indicates a "literal" method of interpretation rather than following the grammatical rules of literature.

6 Barna, 95.

7 Barna, 94.

8 Barna, 95.

9 Barna, 73.

10 Barna, 78.

11 Barna, 62–82. Barna primarily deals with the writings of Raymond Holmes and Samuel Koranteng-Pipim on this issue, two of the most vocal opponents to the ordination of women in the Adventist church, whose writings on this topic influenced many members on this issue, both pastors and laypersons.

12 John Brunt, "Ordination of Women: A Hermeneutical Question," *Ministry* (Sep, 1988), 12.

13 Jan Barna, op.cit., 245.

14 Jan Barna, op.cit., 245.

15 1 SM 21 (MS. 24, 1886). See Raoul Dederen's "Toward a Seventh-day Adventist Theology of Revelation-Inspiration." A paper presented to the NAD Conference. 1974.

16 Jan Barna, op.cit., 158.

17 See Richard Rice, "Doctrine, Text and Culture: Biblical Authority and Cultural Conditioning." A paper presented to the GC committee on the ordination of women. 1995.

18 William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women, & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

19 Webb, 50.

20 E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); idem., *The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

21 New Criticism espoused this approach. Anglo-American schools in 1940 through the 1960s took this approach. See Vincent B. Leitch, *American Literary Criticism from the Thirties to the Eighties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 24–59; Robert Alter, "A Literary Approach to the Bible," Commentary 60 (December 1975) 70–77.

22 Hans G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1960); Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourses and the Surplus of Meaning* (Forth Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976). See also Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press) 1978.

23 J. N. D. Kelley, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1969), 311.

24 Daniel T. Bourdeau, *Sanctification, or Living Holiness*, 13, 115. John Loughborough even insisted: "In Peter's time there was present truth, or truth applicable to that present time. The Church has ever had a present truth. The present truth now is that which shows present duty, and the right position for us who are about to witness the time of trouble, such as never was. Present truth must be oft repeated, even to those who are established in it. This was needful in the Apostles' day, and it certainly is no less important for us, who are living just before the close of time." (*The Great Seventh-day Adventist Message*, 277). For further discussion on this matter, see George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 2000), 19, 20.

25 Gary R. Williams, "Contextual Influences in Readings of Nehemiah 5: A Case Study," Tyndale Bulletin 53 (2002): 57–74.

26 Williams, 74.

27 K. J Vanhoozer, "'But That's Your Interpretation,' Realism, Reading, and Reformation," *Modern Reformation* (July/August 1999), 28.

28 Vanhoozer, 28.

29 To list a few selected articles on this topic: see Richard M. Davidson, "Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture," in *Women in Ministry; Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 259–295; David R. Larson, "Man and Woman as Equal Partners: The Biblical Mandate for Inclusive Ordination," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995); Sheryl Prinz-McMillan, "Who's in Charge of the Family?" in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*; Larry W. Richards, "How does a Woman Prophesy and Keep Silence at the Same Time? (1 Corinthians 11 and 14)," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 313–333; William Richardson, "An Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:33b–36," Commission on the Role of Women Papers; James J. C. Cox, "Some Notes on 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 for the Commission on the Ordination of Women in the Pastoral Ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Commission on the Role of Women Papers; John Brunt, "The New Testament *Haustafeln* Passages," Commission on the Role of Women Papers; Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, "Proper Church Behaviour in 1 Timothy 2:8–15," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 335–354; Doug Matacio, "Contextualization and Women in the Church," *Spectrum*, Summer 2003.

30 Will Eva, "Interpreting the Bible: A Commonsense Approach," *Ministry* (March 1996): 4–5; Donna Jeane Haerich, "Genesis Revised," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995); Fritz Guy, "The Disappearance of Paradise," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995).

31 Jo Ann Davidson, "Women in Scripture: A Survey and Evaluation," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 157–186; Halcyon Westphal Wilson, "The Forgotten Disciples: The Empowering of Love vs. the Love of Power," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart

(Langley Park, MD; TEAM Press, 1995), 179–195.

32 Ralph E. Neall, "Ordination Among the People of God," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995), 251–268; Robert M. Johnston, "Shapes of Ministry in the New Testament and Early Church," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 45–58; Joyce Hanscom Lorntz, "Spiritual Gifts and the Good News," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995), 223–236.

IS ORDINATION OF WOMEN A THREAT TO OUR UNITY?

1 See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_necessariis_unitas,_in_dubiis_libertas,_in_omnibus_caritas

2 Church Manual, 54-55.

3 General Conference Committee, April 3, 1975, Spring Meeting.

4 General Conference Committee, Oct. 14, 1984, Annual Council.

5 General Conference Committee, Oct. 5, 1989 , Annual Council.

6 "When they [Paul and Barnabas] came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them. Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses'" (Acts 15:4-5, NIV).

7 "This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised. You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between me and you" (Genesis 17:10–11, NLT).

8 "After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: 'Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us'" (Acts 15:7-8, NIV).

9 "Don't tear apart the work of God over what you eat. Remember, all foods are acceptable, but it is wrong to eat something if it makes another person stumble" (Romans 14:20, NLT). See also 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, NLT.

10 John Brunt, "Ordination in the New Testament" presentation at the Adventist Society for Religious Studies, November 2012, Chicago.

11 Much of the following is from Randy Roberts, used by permission.

12 Ellen G. White wrote: "Oh, how Christ longed to open to Israel the precious treasures of the truth! But such was their spiritual blindness that it was impossible to reveal to them the truths relating to His kingdom. They clung to their creed and their useless ceremonies when the truth of Heaven awaited their acceptance" (The Desire of Ages, 241-242).

12 Charles Edwin Markham, "Outwitted."

SHOULD WOMEN BE ORDAINED AS PASTORS? OLD TESTAMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1 Richard M. Davidson, "Biblical Interpretation," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (ed. Raoul Dederen; Commentary Reference Series, vol. 12; Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2000), 58–104. The key to abbreviations used in the endnotes of this paper may be found in *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander et al; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002). Standard abbreviations of Ellen White's writings are employed throughout, and these references to Adventist primary sources are placed along with biblical references in the main body of the text.

2 Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007).

3 John Rankin, "Power and Gender at the Divinity School," in *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians*, ed. Kelly Monroe (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 203.

4 Phyllis A. Bird, "'Bone of My Bone and Flesh of My Flesh,'" *ThTo* 50 (1994): 525, 527. As pointed out in the Introduction, evidence for this growing consensus is found, e.g., in the monograph edited by William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr., *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor or W. Sibley Towner* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), which documents the "tectonic shift . . . nothing short of a paradigm shift from a once-exclusive stress upon the mighty interventions of God in history to God's formative and sustaining ways in creation" (Editors' Preface, xi.). See also Jesus M. Arambarri, "Gen 1,1–2,4a: Ein Prolog und ein Programm für Israel," in *Gottes Wege suchend. Beiträge zum Verständnis der Bibel und Ihrer Botschaft (Festschrift für Rudolf Mosis zum 70. Geburtstag)* (ed. Franz Sedlmeier; Würzburg: Echter, 2003), 65–86.

5 Deborah F. Sawyer, *God, Gender and the Bible* [Biblical Limits; London: Routledge, 2002], 29.

6 Represented in Christian evangelicalism esp. by the organization Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE), founded in 1987. A comprehensive presentation of this position is given by Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, eds., *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004); see also dozens of individually-authored books reviewed in chronological order in *Discovering Biblical Equality*, 58–75. Seventh-day Adventist publication supporting this view include, e.g., Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca F. Brillhart, eds., *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women* (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995); and Nancy Vyhmeister, ed., *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998).

7 Represented in Christian evangelicalism by the organization Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW), also founded in 1987. Its rationale, goals, and affirmations are found in the *Danvers Statement*, drawn up by some twenty-four Council members (including e.g., James Borland, W. Robert Gundry, Wayne Grudem, Mary Kassian, George W. Knight, III, Raymond C. Ortland, and John Piper); this statement was finalized in Danvers, Mass., in Dec 1987, made public in November 1988, and published in *Christianity Today* January 13, 1989. A comprehensive presentation of this position is given by John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991); Wayne Grudem, ed., *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2002); Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: : An Analysis of More Than One Hundred Disputed Questions* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2004); and Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. TenElshof, eds., *Women and Men in Ministry: A Complementary Perspective* (Chicago: Moody, 2001). Seventh-day Adventist publications supporting this view include, e.g., C. Raymond Holmes, *The Tip of an Iceberg: Biblical Authority, Biblical Intepretation, and the Ordination of Women in Ministry* (Wakefield, MI: Adventists Affirm and Pointer Publications, 1994); and Mercedes H. Dyer, ed., *Prove all Things: A Response to* Women in Ministry (Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Affirm, 2000). In the discussion that follows I intentionally focus upon evangelicals who hold these positions, and generally avoid citing Adventist authors. In doing so, I wish to emphasize that I am concerned about issues, not individuals. I do not wish to appear as attacking my brothers and sisters in the SDA church with whose views I disagree.

8 Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (trans., John H. Marks; OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 57. Similarly, Marsha M. Wilfong, "Human Creation in Canonical Context: Genesis 1:26–31 and Beyond," in *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor of W. Sibley Towner* (ed. William

P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 47, argues that "humankind is, in fact the lynchpin that holds creation together." Bruce A. Ware, "Male and Female Complementarity and the Image of God," in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (ed. Wayne A. Grudem; Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2002), 72, points to seven key internal textual indicators that the creation of "man" (his translation of *ha'adam* which I would prefer to translate "humankind") was "the pinnacle of God's creative work": (1) only after He creates "man" does God say creation is "very good" (Gen 1:31); (2) the creation of "man" is introduced differently than all other creation with the personal divine deliberative statement "Let Us . . ." (1:26); (3) the one God uses the plural "Us" as He creates (singular) "man" who is plural ("male and female"); (4) the phrase "image of God" is used three times in the creation narrative (1:26–27) and only with reference to the creation of "man"; (5) the special term *bar'a* "create" is used three times (1:27) with reference to the creation of "man"; (6) "man" (as male and female) is given rulership over the other created beings on earth (1:26, 28), indicating "man's" higher authority and priority; and (7) only the creation of "man" as male and female is expanded and further developed in the creation account of Gen 2.

9 See Richard M. Davidson, "Biblical Anthropology and the Old Testament" (Third International Bible Conference, Jerusalem, Israel, June 16, 2012), 2–17, available upon request from davidson@andrews.edu.

10 For a recognition that *tselem* emphasizes more something concrete and *demut* something abstract, see, e.g., Porteous, "Image of God," 684–5; and von Rad, *Genesis*, 57–58. W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism* (CHANE 15; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), 117–176 (summarized in 165–6), gives reasons for rejecting other suggestions regarding *tselem* and *demu*: that the two terms are used indiscriminately and interchangeably; that they do not describe two different sorts of relationship; that "likeness"simply reinforces the first term "image," or is used to "mitigate, weaken, attenuate, or limit the force of the first ('image')"; that either term lacks specific semantic content by itself; that the two terms are essentially synonymous.

11 Ilona N. Rashkow, *Taboo or Not Taboo: Sexuality and Family in the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 61.

12 Notice that when Ellen White mentions "image" she speaks first of the "outward resemblance," and when she uses the term "likeness" she refers first to "character," without excluding the other aspects in either term. See also her paraphrase of this resemblance as "moral faculties" and "physical powers": after citing Gen 1 26, 27, she writes, "The Lord created man's moral faculties and his physical powers. All was a sinless transcript of Himself." YI July 20, 1899 (3 SM 133).

13 I use the term "leadership" rather than "headship" throughout this paper, since the meaning of the term "head" (esp. as found in the Pauline writings) has become a matter of dispute and confusion in the current debate over gender status in Scripture. Further support for this use of terms is found esp. from Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, "Introduction," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy* (eds. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004), 15–16 (and the entire book).

14 Helmut Thielicke, *The Ethics of Sex* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 7.

15 Gerhard Hasel, "The Meaning of 'Let Us' in Gen 1:26," *AUSS* 13 (1975): 58–66; the quotation is from p. 64.

16 Jiří Moskala, "Toward Trinitarian Thinking in the Hebrew Scriptures," *JATS* 21 (2010): 258; see his critique of the various other views, 249–259.

17 Hasel, "The Meaning of 'Let Us," 65.

18 Von Rad, *Genesis*, 60.

19 Dan B. Allender and Tremper Longman, III, *Intimate Allies: Rediscovering God's Design for Marriage and Becoming Soul Mates for Life* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1995), 80. For a sensitive discussion of the implications of this principle of creative shaping for the marriage relationship, see ibid., 73–125.

20 See Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961–1964), 1:58, for a paraphrase of Gen 1:29–30: "You are permitted to make use of the living creatures and their service, you are allowed to exercise power over them so that they may promote your subsistence; but you may not treat the life-force within them contemptuously and slay them in order to eat their flesh; your proper diet shall be vegetable food."

21 See, e.g., Victor P. Hamilton, *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982), 41–42, for further discussion of this point, comparing the biblical creation narrative with the *Enuma elish* and the Atrahasis Epic.

22 See Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 135; and Middleton, *The Liberating Image,* 26–27, 206–212.

23 Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *The Feminist Bogeywoman: Questions and Answers about Evangelical Feminism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 27. Cf. Edward Noort, "The Creation of Man and Woman in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Traditions," in *The Creation of Man and Woman: Interpretations of the Biblical Narratives in Jewish and Christian Traditions* (ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuizen; Themes in Biblical Narrative 3; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 9: "Gen 1:27 aims at the credo that the separation in male and female belongs to creation from the beginning. There is no priority. Neither male or female have a dominant position here."

24 In this paper we generally avoid the use of the terminology "ontology" or "ontological," both because there is confusion in modern discussion over the precise meaning of this terminology, and also (more importantly) because this terminology does not seem to satisfactorily correlate with the intention of the biblical writer in the Old Testament.

25 Raymond C. Ortlund Jr., "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship: Genesis 1–3," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991), 97–98. Cf. Ware, "Male and Female Complementarity," 84: "we should resist the movement today in Bible translation that would customarily render instances of *'adam* with the fully non-gender-specific term 'human being.' . . . This misses the God-intended implication conveyed by the masculine generic 'man,' viz., that woman possesses her common human nature only through the prior nature of the man." So also Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth,* 34–36.

26 See *DCH* 1:123–129, which defines *'adam* as "human being, humanity, people, individual person, humans," but avoids the term "man" except for reference to the first human, Adam. Cf. the discussion and bibliography in Victor P. Hamilton, "'*adam*," *NIDOTTE* 1:262–266; and Walter Vogels, "Man and Woman: Their Dignity, Mutuality and Fidelity in Marriage: A Biblical Perspective (Gen 1–3)," *BiBh* 23 (1997): 216–218.

27 See esp. Kevin Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2002), 145–155, for numerous examples throughout church history illustrating this dominant "traditional" view since shortly after NT times, including citations from such figures as Tertullian, Jerome, John Chrysostum, Augustine, Thomas Acquinas, (the early) Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, William Gouge and Robert Bolton (Puritans), Matthew Henry, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, Charles Hodge, and Adam Clarke. See also John A. Phillips, *Eve: The History of an Idea* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), passim; and Kristen E. Kvam, et al., eds., *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1999), passim.

28 This view, making a clear distinction between Gen 1 and 2, was popular among "first wave" feminists of the late 19th cent.: see, e.g., Elizabeth Cady Stanton, The Woman's Bible (New York: European Publishing Co., 1895, 1898; repr., Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 20–21. It is also a common view among contemporary liberal feminists, who regard Gen 1 as egalitarian and Gen 2 as hierarchical: e.g., Anne Gardner, "Genesis 2:4b–3: A Mythological Paradigm

of Sexual Equality or of the Religious History of Pre-Exilic Israel?" SJT 43 (1990): 1–18. Many conservative hierarchicalists/subordinationists also emphasize the difference between what they term "ontological" equality in Gen 1 and "functional" hierarchy in Gen 2. See, e.g., Ronald B. Allen and Beverly Allen, Liberated Traditionalism: Men and Women in Balance (Portland, Ore.: Multnomah, 1985), 89–117; Mary A. Kassian, Women, Creation and the Fall (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1990), 13–20; Susan T. Foh, "A Male Leadership View: The Head of the Woman is the Man," in Women in Ministry: Four Views (ed. Bonnidel Clouse and Robert G. Clouse; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1989), 72–73; George W. Knight, III, "The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Male and Female with Special Attention to the Teaching/Ruling Functions in the Church," *JETS* 18 (1975): 83–84; idem, The Role Relationship of Men and Women: New Testament Teaching (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 7–9; Richard N. Longenecker, "Authority, Hierarchy, and Leadership Patterns in the Bible," in Women, Authority and the Bible (ed. Alvera Mickelsen; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1986), 66–67; and Aubrey Malphurs, Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: Understanding Masculinity and Femininity from God's Perspective (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996), 21–62.

29 Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch: Three Volumes in One,* trans. James Martin; vol. 1 of *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes* (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 3:89.

30 For discussion of this construction, see esp. James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 (1969): 9–10; cf. Mitchel Dahood, *Psalms* (3 vols.; AB 16–17A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1965–1970), 1:5; and Phillis Trible, "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation," *JAAR* 41 (1973): 36.

31 Muilenberg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 9.

32 Trevor Dennis, *Sarah Laughed: Women's Voices in the Old Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 13. Genesis 2:7 and 2:21b–22 contain 16 Hebrew words describing the creation of man and woman respectively.

33 This is recognized already by John L. McKenzie, "The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2–3." *TS* 15 (1954): 559: "the creation of woman is the climax toward which the whole preceding narrative tends. . . . The narrative treats woman as an equal and a partner of man. This feature does not appear in any ancient Near Eastern story."

34 Mary Corona, "Woman in Creation Story," Jeev 21 (1991): 98–99. That reference to man first and then to woman does not thereby imply a patriarchal understanding of male leadership over woman is further supported by comparison with the account of the first marriage in the Akkadian parallel account, the Atrahasis Epic (extant copy from 17th century B.C.E.). While it is generally recognized that in the patriarchal society of ancient Mesopotamia the subservience of the wife to the husband exceeded that of ancient Israel. See esp. Sophie Lafont, Femmes, droit et justice dans l'antiquité orientale: Contributions à l'étude du droit pénal au Proche-Orient ancien (OBO 165; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), passim. It is instructive that in the description of the first marriage, and elsewhere throughout the Epic where both genders are mentioned, it is the woman who is mentioned first, and the man second! See Bernard F. Batto, "The Institution of Marriage in Genesis 2 and in Atrahasis," CBQ 62 (2000): 627. Richard Hess draws the important conclusion: "This indicates that the sequence of man's and woman's creation has no significance for implications of the society's view of or assumptions regarding hierarchy" (Richard S. Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence: Genesis 1–3," in Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy [ed. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004], 85–86).

35 Carl P. Cosaert, "Paul, Women, and the Ephesian Church: And Examination of 1 Timothy 2:8–15," paper for the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, Baltimore, MD, July 22–24, 2013.

36 See Richard M. Davidson, "Coroporate Solidarity in the Old Testament" (unpublished paper, revised December 2004), available upon request from davidson@andrews.edu.

37 This is the phrase coined by Sakae Kubo, *Theology and Ethics of Sex* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1980), 19.

38 Cf. Joy Elasky Fleming, *Man and Woman in Biblical Unity: Theology from Genesis 2–3* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Christians for Biblical Equality, 1993), 6: "Clearly the man needed to know the rules of the game during the interval before the woman's arrival. . . . This need not imply any superiority on his part; only that he needed to hear the command as soon as he was present in Eden."

39 John Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.), 217–218.

40 David J. A. Clines, "What Does Eve Do to Help? And Other Irredeemably Androcentric Orientations in Genesis 1–3," in *What Does Eve Do to Help? And Other Readerly Questions to the Old Testament* (ed. David J. A. Clines; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990),Clines, "What Does Eve Do to Help?" 25–48.

41 Exodus 18:4; Deut 33:7, 26, 29; Pss 20:3 [English v. 2]; 33:20; 70:6 [English v. 5]; 89:20 [English v. 19]; 115:9, 10, 11; 121:1, 2; 124:8; 146:5; Hos 13:9.

42 Isaiah 30:5; Ezek 12:14; Dan 11:34.

43 In a provocative article, R. David Freedman argues that the Hebrew word *'ezer* etymologically derives from the merger of two Semitic roots, *'zr*, "to save, rescue" and *gzr* "to be strong," and in Gen 2 has reference to the latter: woman is created, like the man, "a power (or strength) superior to the animals" ("Woman, A Power Equal to Man," *BAR* 9, no. 1 [January/February 1983]: 56–58).

44 Corona, "Woman in Creation Story," 99.

45 Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 118.

46 BDB, 617. So also Noort, "The Creation of Man and Woman," 12–13, who examines the phrase *'ezer kenegdo* and concludes that it "means here mutual stimulation, helping each other as equals" (13).

47 Freedman, "A Power Equal to Man," 56–58. Freedman notes that in later Mishnaic Hebrew *keneged* clearly means "equal," and in light of various lines of Biblical philological evidence he forcefully argues that the phrase *'ezer kenegdo* here should be translated "a power equal to him."

48 Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:128.

49 Cf. Judy L. Brown, *Women Ministers according to Scripture* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Christians for Biblical Equality, 1996), 19: "If Adam is better than Eve by virtue of supplying a bone, then the ground is better than Adam by virtue of supplying the dust. The dust and bone were simply raw materials in the hands of the true source of life, the one form whom both Adam and Eve were given their existence."

50 Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (OBT; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 101.

51 Samuel Terrien, "Toward a Biblical Theology of Womanhood," in *Male and Female: Christian Approaches to Sexuality* (ed. Ruth T. Barnhouse and Urban T. Holmes, III; New York: Seabury, 1976), 18; cf. idem, *Till the Heart Sings: A Biblical Theology of Manhood and Womanhood* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 12: "the use of the verb 'to build' for the woman implies an intellectual and aesthetic appreciation of her body, the equilibrium of her forms, and the volumes and proportions of her figure."

52 Paul's argument that "man is not from woman, but woman from man" (1 Cor 11:8) does not contradict the interpretation set forth here. See the study by Teresa Reeve.

53 Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974), 230.

54 Raymond F. Collins, "The Bible and Sexuality," *BTB* 7 (1977): 153. It may be that the Sumerian language retains the memory of the close relationship between "rib" and "life," for the same Sumerian sign *ti* signifies both "life" and "rib." See Samuel N. Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959), 146. This is not to say,

however, that the detail of the rib in Gen 2 has its origin in Sumerian mythology. The story of creation in Gen 2 and the Sumerian myth in which the pun between "lady of the rib" and "lady who makes live" appears ("Enki and Ninhursag: A Paradise Myth," translated by S. N. Kramer [*ANET*, 37–41]), has virtually nothing in common.

55 Trible, "Departriarchalizing," 37. Cf. Mary Phil Korsak, "Hebrew Word Patterns Retained in English in Genesis 2:4b–3:24," *ACEBT* 15 (1996): 16: "'Side' expresses man/woman equality."

56 Quoted in Stuart B. Babbage, *Christianity and Sex* (Chicago: InterVarsity, 1963), 10. A similar statement is attributed to other writers as well, including the earlier church fathers.

57 Walter Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (Gen 2:23*a*)," *CBQ* 32 (1970): 540. For biblical examples of this usage, see esp. Gen 29:14; Judg 9:2–3; 2 Sam 5:1; 19:13; cf. Job 2:5; and Ps 102:5. Samuel Terrien, *Till the Heart Sings: A Biblical Theology of Manhood and Womanhood* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 13, points out that these texts refer to "a psychic bond of covenant loyalty."

58 See, e.g., Thomas R. Schreiner, "Women in Ministry," in *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (ed. James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 206–209.

59 Biblical examples usually cited in support of the oriental view of naming as the demonstration of one's exercise of a sovereign right over a person, include such passages as 2 Kgs 23:34; 24:17; Dan 1:7. Cf. R. Abba, "Name," *IDB* 3:502. This thesis has been challenged in a penetrating article by George W. Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere?" *CBQ* 50 (1988): 24–35. Ramsey examines the major texts where it is claimed that bestowal of a name indicates control or authority over the person named, and shows that "instead of thinking of name-giving as a *determiner* of an entity's essence, the Hebrews regarded naming as commonly *determined by* circumstances. The naming *results from* events which have occurred" (34, emphasis his). For example, the non-Israelite kings' change of individual's names cannot be normative for Hebrew thinking (and these do not have the typical naming formula/terminology). Very significant is the fact that Hagar names God (Gen 16:13) using the typical naming formula! Certainly this does not imply her control/domination over divinity! Again, in Gen 26:17–21 Isaac names the wells even as he relinquishes authority over them. In Gen 2, when the man names the animals, here again "it is more appropriate to understand this as an act of his *discerning* something about these creatures—an essence which had already been established by God" (ibid., 34–35). For a similar assessment of the evidence, see also Rick R. Marrs, "In the Beginning: Male and Female (Gen 1–3)," in *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity* (ed. Carroll D. Osburn; 2 vols.; Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1995), 2:17–18; and Carol A. Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2–3," in *The Earth Story in Genesis* (ed. Norman C. Habel and Shirley Wurst; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 66.

60 Ramsey, "Name-Giving," 34 (emphasis his). For further discussion, see ibid., 32–34.

61 The same point is re-affirmed in Gen 3, where this equality/mutuality is described as recently broken. Mary Leith observes that "By reversing the negatives in God's curse of Adam and Eve, we come to the lost positives of the Garden—and the world as God meant it to be. . . . Reading backwards [from Gen 3:16], we can detect the earlier mutuality between the man and woman, a harmonious relationship expressed by Genesis 2:23. . . . The harmony of the relationship is evident even without the philological argument that the Hebrew words designating Eve as Adam's 'helper as his partner' (Genesis 2:18) does not imply subordination" (Mary Joan Winn Leith, "Back to the Garden," *BR* 18, no. 2 [April 2002]: 10, 46).

62 J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis: Specimens of Stylistic and Structural Analysis* (2d ed; Biblical Seminar 12; Sheffield: JSOT, 1991), 37.

63 Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 88.

64 Ibid., 87.

65 Paul Borgman, *Genesis: The Story We Haven't Heard* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001), 26.

66 Jacques B. Doukhan, *The Literary Structure of the Genesis Creation Story* (Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 5; Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1978), 47, points to "the use of the passive (*niphal*, *pual*) which conveys the idea of an intervention from outside, hence God, who is still the only 'other' (for the biblical usage of the passive as referring to God, see Lev 13:7; Luke 5:20)." For further discussion of the divine passive in the Scripture, see Hans K. La Rondelle, *Perfection and Perfectionism: A Dogmatic-Ethical Study of Biblical Perfection and Phenomenal Perfectionism* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University, 1975), 127–128; and Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (trans., D. M. G. Stalker; 2 vols.; New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 1:247–248, 261–262. For other lines of evidence disaffirming man's authoritative naming of woman in Gen 2:23 in contrast to his authoritative naming of the animals in Gen 2:19–20, see esp. Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 99–100; Gerhard Hasel, "Equality from the Start: Woman in the Creation Story," *Spectrum* 7 (1975): 23–24; and Fleming, *Man and Woman*, 14–15.

67 There is not general consensus among scholars as to the etymology of these words. The suggestion by some etymologists that *'ish* (man) has the root idea of "strength" and *'ishah* (wo-man) the idea of "weaker" sex could imply that the man was to be the protector-provider for the woman, but this does not connote leadership on the part of the man and submission on the part of the woman. Witness the famous and important people with stronger bodyguards that are protectors but certainly do not possess authority or leadership over the VIPs. Clearly, the intention of the Genesis account by linking this word-pair by (popular but inspired) etymology is to emphasize the mutual communion and commonality of the man and woman.

68 See Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of Creation* (trans. J. W. Edwards et al.; 4 bks.; vol. 3 of *Church Dogmatics,* ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1958), 2:291; Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 100.

69 See Ramsey, "Name-Giving," 35, n. 38, who points out that in Gen 3:20 the narrator makes clear that Adam is not trying to determine Eve's destiny (i.e., exercise authority over her), or he would have said "She will be the mother of all living." Instead the narrator reports again what Adam discerns already to be true: "she *was* [*haytah*] the mother of all living."

70 I have collected over fifty major scholarly studies which come to this conclusion. A sample of the more important analyses of Gen 2 (as well as of Gen 1 and of the various hierarchicalist/subordinationist arguments for male leadership and female subordination) include: Phyllis A. Bird, "Sexual Differentiation and Divine Image in the Genesis Creation Texts" in *Image of God and Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition* (ed. Kari Elisabeth Børresen; Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1991), 11–31; idem, "Bone of My Bone and Flesh of My Flesh," 521–533; Linda L. Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Crucial Questions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 96–103; Gilbert G. Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says About a Woman's Place in Church and Family* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 21–37; Brown, *Women Ministers according to Scripture,* 17–34; Corona, "Woman in Creation Story," 95–106; Dennis, *Sarah Laughed*, 8–18; Fleming, *Man and Woman*, 3–17; Mary J. Evans, *Woman in the Bible: An Overview of All the Crucial Passages on Women's Roles* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1984), 11–17; Stanley Grenz with Denise Muir Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1995), 160–165; Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, *Good News for Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 121–139; Mary Hayter, *The New Eve in Christ: The Use and Abuse of the Bible in the Debate about Women in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 84–117; Gretchen Gaebelein Hull, *Equal to Serve: Women and Men in the Church and Home* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1987), 152–183; (the later) Luther, *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1–5*, 138, 200–203; Marrs, "In the Beginning," 11–12, 18–22, 31–32; Alvera Mickelsen, "An Egalitarian View: There is Neither Male nor Female in Christ," in *Women*

in Ministry: Four Views (ed. Bonnidell Clouse and Robert G. Clouse; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1989), 181–187; John H. Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed: The Status of Women in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 15–18; Ramsey, "Name-Giving," 24–35; Alberto Soggin, "The Equality of Humankind From the Perspective of the Creations Stories in Genesis 1:26–30 and 2:9, 15, 18–24," *JNSL* 23 (1997): 21–33; Ada Besançon Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry* (Nashville, Tenn.: Nelson, 1985), 20–29; Lee Anna Starr, *The Bible Status of Woman* (New York: Revell, 1926; repr., New York: Garland, 1987), 17–26; Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Women* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979), 75–78; Terrien, *Till the Heart Sings,* 7–17; Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality,* 72–105; idem, "Depatriarchalizing," 35–40; Ruth A. Tucker, *Women in the Maze: Questions and Answers on Biblical Equality* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1992), 33–42; Vogels, "Man and Woman," 205–227; idem, "It Is Not Good that the 'Mensch' Should Be Alone; I Will Make Him/Her a Helper Fit for Him/Her," *EgT* 9 (1978): 9–35; and Erich Zenger, "Die Erschaffung des Menschen als Mann und Frau: Eine Lesehilfe für die sogenannte Paradies-und Sündenfallgeschichte Gen 2,4b–3,24," *BK* 58 (2003): 14.

71 Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 41.

72 For an overview, see esp. Gerhard Hasel, "The Polemic Nature of the Genesis Cosmology," *EvQ* 46 (1974): 81–102; cf. Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:7–177, passim; and Noort, "The Creation of Man and Woman," 8–10.

73 Some may find this juxtaposition of terms, "egalitarian complementarity" to be an oxymoron. But I am unwilling to surrender the word "complementarian" to those who use it to describe male leadership and female submission roles as a creation ordinance. What I understand as the biblical view of egalitarian husband-wife role relations is also just as "complementarian"—recognizing differences between the sexes in general and between individual marriage partners, without positing a creation leadership/submission role relationship between man and woman. I find most useful the definition of complementarity provided by Hyun Chul Paul Kim ("Gender Complementarity in the Hebrew Bible," "Gender Complementarity in the Hebrew Bible," in *Reading the Hebrew Bible for a New Millennium: Form, Concept and Theological Perspective*, vol. 1, *Theological and Hermeneutical Studies* [ed. Wonil Kim et al.; Studies in Antiquity and Christianity; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2000), 268: "The term 'complementarity' . . . implies an idea of the relationship of two distinct parties who share mutual needs, interdependence, and respect. This term is to be distinguished from the connotation of a hierarchical relationship of two parties where one is subordinate to the other. Rather, it is used to include the ideas of mutuality, balance, and equality, while maintaining the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each party rather than homogeneity." For recent further support and elaboration of the terminology of "complementarity without hierarchy," see esp. Pierce and Groothuis, "Introduction," 16–17 (and the entire book *Discovering Biblical Equality*). For a popularized elaboration of this concept, see, e.g., H. Dale Burke, *Different by Design: God's Master Plan for Harmony between Men and Women in Marriage* (Chicago: Moody, 2000), 19–51.

74 Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 110.

75 Werner Neuer, *Man and Woman in Christian Perspective* (trans. Gordon J. Wenham; Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991), 70.

76 Contra a main focus of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, represented esp. by Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*; Piper and Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*; and Saucy and TenElshof, eds., *Women and Men in Ministry*. For a critique (both from Scripture and the social sciences) of the attempt to establish fixed roles for men and women from Gen 1–2 and the rest of Scripture, see esp., Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace: Love, Work & Parenting in a Changing World* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1990); and idem, *My Brother's Keeper: What the Social Sciences Do (and Don't) Tell Us About Masculinity* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2002). What can be stated with certainty is that in these opening chapters of the Bible there is no gender status differentiation that gives the man the leadership authority over woman.

77 George W. Knight, III, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977).

78 Giles, *Trinity and Subordinationism*, 180.

79 Ibid., 181.

80 Ibid., 182.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 Paul B. Petersen, "Trinitarian Equality and 'Eternal Subordination of the Son': A Revival of an Anti-Trinnitarian Heresy?" Unpublished paper, May, 2013, 10–11.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid., 190–1.

86 Some have tried to stretch this subordination back to the time when Christ took up his role of mediating between infinity and finitude at creation, based in part upon my study of Prov 8:30–31: "Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ in the Trinity," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 33–54. However, in that article I make clear that the mediatorial role of the pre-Incarnate Christ was not one of being subordinate to the Father. This is made evident, e.g., when Christ appears to humans as the "Angel of the Lord" throughout the OT; He does not announce Himself as being sent by the Father, but speaks fully on His own authority. Even though the pre-incarnate Christ seems to have taken the form (not the nature) of angel in order to reveal the "Immanuel principle" of "God with us," that is, the immanence of the Godhead, while the one we call the Father represented the transcendence, and the Spirit represented the omnipresence, of the Godhead, all three Persons of the Godhead remained fully equal, none being subordinated to another.

87 The majority of biblical commentators throughout the centuries have taken this verse as referring to the institution of marriage. Notable exceptions to this traditional view include Hermann Gunkel, in his ground-breaking form-critical commentary on Genesis, *Genesis* (HKAT 1, no. 1; 3d ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1910), 13, 41, who saw Gen 2:24 an as an aetiology, explaining the mutual sexual attraction of the male and female as the longing of the two, who had originally been one (androgynous), to become one again. Another exception is Westermann, *Genesis,* 1:232, who argues that Gen 2:18–24 is referring to "personal community between man and woman in the broadest sense" and "is not concerned with the foundation of any sort of institution, but with the primeval event" and thus "is not talking about marriage as an institution for the begetting of descendants, but of the community of man and woman as such." A recent study by Batto, "The Institution of Marriage in Genesis 2 and in *Atrahasis*," 621–631, argues forcefully that "This debate over the question whether the author of Gen 2:18–25 invisions the institution of marriage or not can now be settled in the affirmative on the basis of comparative evidence, hitherto overlooked, from the Mesopotamian myth of *Atrahasis*" (623). Batto reviews the now-widely-recognized evidence that while there are significant differences between the Gen 2 account and the Atrahasis Epic, nonetheless the basic structural flow of the two accounts are in parallel. He then shows how in the structurally parallel equivalent to Gen 2:18–24 in the Atrahasis Epic, there is reference to "regulations for humankind" specifically focusing upon the institution of marriage. Thus, Batto, concludes, the narrator of Gen 2:18–24, surely intended v. 24 as the equivalent of "regulations for humankind" in *Atrahasis*, "that is, as a universal law regulating the normative behavior of the sexes within a community of marriage" (629); and as in *Atrahasis*, the Gen 2 narrator is "positing that the institution of marriage is grounded in the very design of creation itself" (631).

88 Robert B. Lawton, "Genesis 2:24: Trite or Tragic?" *JBL* 105 (1986): 98. See ibid., 97–98, for additional evidence supporting this conclusion. See also Sawyer, *God, Gender and the Bible*, 24: "The first couple provide the blueprint for normative citizenship in the theocracy proposed in the Bible's first story." Cf. Marrs, "In the Beginning," 22.

89 Terrien, *Till the Heart Sings*, 14–15, rightly points out that "in the ancient Near East and most other cultures, patriarchal lineage prevailed in such a way that the primary bond of solidarity was the duty of a man toward his ancestors in general and to his progenitors in particular. To honor one's father and mother was the most sacred obligation of social responsibility (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16). By dramatic contrast," Terrien continues, the author of Gen 2 "scandalously upsets, even shockingly reverses, this deep-rooted principle of tribal morality. Against the cultures of his environment," the Hebrew author "declares unambiguously that man's first loyalty is to his woman."

90 See, e.g., Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; Josh 22:5; 23:8; 2 Sam 20:3; 2 Kgs 18:6.

91 I express indebtedness to one of my graduate students, Kenneth Bergland, for his suggested use of the terms "symmetrical" and "asymmetrical" and "inverse hierarchy" in this context, and for his helpful insights into the mutual submission implied in such terms as "cleave" in Gen 2:24. See his unpublished paper, "Rereading Gender in Eden with the Language of Fallen Humanity," April 28, 2013.

92 For a summary of some seventeen lines of intertextual evidence for this conclusion, see Richard M. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium," JATS 11, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring–Autumn 2000): 108–111; for a longer list of thirty lines of biblical evidence, see idem, Song for the Sanctuary: SDA Textbook (Silver Spring, MD: SDA Biblical Research Institute, forthcoming), chap. 6. (draft copy available upon request from davidson@andrews.edu.) See also Margaret Barker, The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem (London: SPCK, 1991), 68–103; G. K. Beale, The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God (NSBT 17; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004), 66–80; Meridith G. Kline, Kingdom Prologue (South Hampton, Mass.: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1989), 31–32, 54–56; Eric Bolger, "The Compositional Role of the Eden Narrative in the Pentateuch" (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1993); William J. Dumbrell, The End of the Beginning (Homebush, New South Wales: Lancer, 1985), 35–76; Michael Fishbane, Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts (New York: Schocken, 1979), 12–13; Jon D. Levenson, Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 142–145; S. Dean McBride Jr., "Divine Protocol: Genesis 1:1–2:3 as Prologue to the Pentateuch," in God Who Creates (ed. William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2000), 11–15; Donald W. Parry, "Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary," in Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism (ed. Donald W. Parry; Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret, 1994), 126–151;Terje Stordalen, Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature (CBET 25; Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2000), 111–138; and Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies 9 (1986): 19–25; repr. in "I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11 (eds., Richard S. Hess and David T. Tsumara; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–404.

93 For discussion of the pre-sin function of the heavenly sanctuary as a place of praise/worship, and its return to that primary function when the Great Controversy is over, see R. Davidson, *Song for the Sanctuary*, chap. 5.

94 See Davidson, "Proverbs 8 and the Place of Christ in the Trinity," 33–54.

95 Hamilton, *Genesis*, 171.

96 Humans before the Fall were also given the role of "guarding" the Garden (presumably in light of the fact that Satan the fallen heavenly cherub was lurking in the Garden), but after the Fall they lose this role, and it is transferred to the "gurardian cherubim" at the Gate of the Garden (Gen 3:24).

97 Claus Westermann, *Creation* (London: SPCK, 1974), 96. So also, Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis* (IBC 1; Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 49: "The scene [Gen 3:8–24] becomes a trial." Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 117, likewise comments on this scene: "God becomes the prosecutor in a court of law." Cf. Marrs, "In the Beginning," 27–28, who describes Gen 3:8–13 as a "trial" and "verdict" followed by a "judgment" in Gen 3:14–19; and Malphurs, *Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 99, who summarizes the scene of vv. 14–19 thus: "God as the prosecuting attorney probed the two defendants who reluctantly admitted some guilt but shifted the blame to others. Now God moves from the role of prosecutor to judge and pronounces final judgment."

98 One could divide this view (and some of the others that follow) into two sub-categories, consisting of a liberal-critical version and conservative-evangelical version of the position. Liberal-critical scholars tend to use the terms "supremacy" and "subordination" to describe the relative status of Adam and Eve respectively, arguing that in the understanding of the narrator there existed a divinely-ordained *ontological hierarchy* between the sexes. Most conservative evangelicals who hold this view, on the other hand, argue for an equality of ontological status between Adam and Eve at creation, but propose that the text presents a divinely-ordained *functional hierarchy* (their preferred term is "complementarian" relationship) consisting of the roles of male leadership (or "headship," as many hierarchical complementarians prefer) and female submission respectively. For the purpose of this paper I focus mainly on the Adventist debate, which largely follows the contours of the conservative-evangelical debate, and use the terms "leadership" and "submission". For discussion of the liberal-critical views, see my fuller treatment of this subject in *Flame of Yahweh,* 60–80.

99 In this view, the *waw* in *wehu'* is coordinative ("and") and the *qal* impf. of *mashal* (*yimshol*) is a descriptive future ("he shall rule over you"). Supporting this position, John Calvin, for instance, sees woman's position before the fall as "liberal and gentle subjection"; after the fall she is "cast into servitude"; nonetheless she still desires what her husband desires (*Commentary on Genesis* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.], 1:172). The Keil and Delitzsch commentary similarly presents the original position of man-woman as rule/subordination rooted in mutual esteem and love, but argues that after sin the woman has "a desire bordering on disease" and the husband exercises "despotic rule" over his wife (*The Pentateuch*, 1:103). H. C. Leupold, in his *Exposition of Genesis* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, 1942), 172, describes a morbid yearning on the part of the woman after the fall that often "takes a perverted form, even to the point of nymphomania." John Skinner speaks of the woman's "desire which makes her the willing slave of the man" (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* [2d ed.; ICC 1; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1930], 82). See also Ronald B. Allen and Beverly Allen, *Liberated Traditionalism: Men and Women in Balance* (Portland, Ore.: Multnomah, 1985), 117–128; Thomas Finley, "The Relationship of Woman and Man in the Old Testament," in *Women and Men in Ministry: A Complementary Perspective* (ed. Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. TenElshof; Chicago: Moody, 2001), 58–61; Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than One Hundred Disputed Questions* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2004), 37–40, 108–110; Mary A. Kassian, *Woman, Creation and the Fall* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1990), 21–30; Malphurs, *Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 63–112; Robert Saucy, "The Negative Case Against the Ordination of Women," in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology: Papers from the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society* (ed. Kenneth S. Kantzer and Stanley N. Gundry; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 280; Michael F. Stitzinger, "Genesis 1–3 and the Male/Female Role Relationship," *GTJ* 2 (1981): 38–43; and Clarence J. Vos, *Woman in Old Testament Worship* (Amsterdam: Judels and Brinkman, 1968), 19–27.

100 In this interpretation, the *waw* in *wehu'* is adversative ("but") and the *qal* impf. of *mashal* (*yimshol*) is prescriptive ("he *must* rule over you"). This view is argued most fully by Susan T. Foh, "What is the Woman's Desire?" *WTJ* 37 (1975): 376–383 (cf. idem, *Women and the Word of God* [Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979], 68–69). A similar position is taken by, e.g., Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church* (Berrien Springs: Biblical Perspectives, 1987), 79–84; Collins, "What Happened to Adam and Eve?" 36–39; and James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 218–219. Cf. Walter Vogels, "The Power Struggle between Man and Woman (Gen 3,16b)," *Bib* 77 (1996):

197–209, who likewise pictures Gen 4:7 as a negative experience—sin as a wild animal crouching in wait for his prey—though he interprets it as descriptive and not prescriptive like Foh and others. For a critique of Foh's view, see esp. Stitzinger, "Genesis 1–3 and the Male/Female Role Relationship," 23–44.

101 Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Servant Books, 1980), 35. Clark does not rule out this as a possibility, but he more strongly favors view one. This third interpretation was also the view of Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica* 1a.92.1, 2 (see *Man Made to God's Image [1a. 90–102]* [vol. 13 of *St Thomas Aquinas* Summa theologiae*: Latin Text, English Translation, Introduction, Notes, Appendices & Glossary*; trans. Edmond Hill; 60 vols.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964], 34–41), who maintained that already before the fall there existed a subordination of the woman (*subjectio oeconomica vel civilis*) which was for the woman's advantage and well-being (*ad . . . utilitatem et bonum*), and this was reaffirmed after the fall. (For full discussion of Aquinas' view of the nature and role of woman, see esp. Kari Elisabeth Børresen, *Subordination and Equivalence: The Nature and Role of Woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas* [trans. Charles H. Talbot; Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981], passim). Similarly, Ambrose, *De Paradiso*, 72, in *St. Ambrose: Hexameron, Paradise, and Cain and Abel* (trans. John J. Savage; vol. 42 of *The Fathers of the Church*, ed. Roy J. Deferran; New York: Fathers of the Church, 1961), 350: "Servitude, therefore, of this sort is a gift of God. Wherefore, compliance with this servitude is to be reckoned among blessings." See also Irvin A. Busenitz, "Woman's Desire for Man: Genesis 3:16 Reconsidered," *GTJ* 7 (1986): 203–212 (who concurs in general with this view, but does not agree that the woman's sin consisted in getting out from under the leadership of her husband).

102 Of the dozens of major studies propounding this position, see esp., Belleville, *Women Leaders in the Church*, 96–108; Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 39–58; Brown, *Women Ministers according to Scripture*, 35–61; Evans, *Woman in the Bible*, 17–21; Fleming, *Man and Woman*, 19–42; Grenz, *Women in the Church*, 165–169; Groothuis, *Good News for Women*, 138–144; Patricia Gundry, *Woman Be Free! The Clear Message of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 60–63; Fritz Guy, "The Disappearance of Paradise," in *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women* (ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart; Langley Park, Md.: Team Press, 1995), 137–153; Hayter, *The New Eve in Christ*, 102–117; Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 79–95; Spencer, *Beyond the Curse*, 29–42; Starr, *The Bible Status of Woman*, 27–53; Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Human Sexuality,* 105–139; Tucker, *Women in the Maze*, 43–54; and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace: Love, Work and Parenting in a Changing World* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1990), 42–51.

103 This position is supported, e.g., by the later Martin Luther, *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1–5* (trans. George V. Schick; vol. 1 of *Luther's Works*; ed. Jaroslav Pelikan; St. Louis: Concordia, 1958), 137–138, 202–203: "If Eve had persisted in the truth, she would not only not have been subjected to the rule of her husband, but she herself would also have been a partner in the rule which is now entirely the concern of males" (203); "The wife was made subject to the man by the Law which was given after sin" (138); "Eve has been placed under the power of her husband, she who previously was very free and, as the sharer of all the gifts of God, was no respect inferior to her husband. This punishment, too, springs from original sin" (202). For further discussion of the views of the early and later Luther, see esp. Mickey Leland Mattox, *"Defender of the Most Holy Matriarchs": Martin Luther's Interpretation of the Women of Genesis in the* Enarrationses in Genesin*, 1535–45* (SMRT 92; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), 29–33, 67–108. Other more recent proponents of this position include Francis A. Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1975), 93–94; and Theodorus C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology* (2d ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 399.

104 E.g., Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed*, *18*, 197–198; John J. Schmitt, "Like Eve, Like Adam: *mšl* in Gen 3:16," *Bib* 72 (1991): 1–22; Kowalski Wojciech, "Female Subjection to Man: Is It a Consequence of the Fall?" *African Ecclesial Review* 35 (1993): 274–287. An alternate suggestion is made by Robert I. Vasholz, "'He (?) Will Rule Over You': A Thought on Genesis 3:16," *Presb* 20 (1994): 51–52, who contends that the masculine pronoun *hu'* should be translated "that" and not "he," referring not to her husband but to the "desire" of the woman (her capacity for affection) that will rule or prevail over her anticipation of suffering. This suggestion is critiqued below.

105 Trible perhaps exaggerates when she elaborates: "Theologian, ethicist, hermeneut, rabbi, she speaks with clarity and authority" (*God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 110). But her main point is on the mark. And she may well be right when she points out that Eve's addition of the phrase "nor shall you touch it," shows her hermeneutical ability to "build a fence around the Torah," like the later rabbinic exegetes, in order to insure obedience to it (ibid.).

106 Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 89.

107 I prefer this interpretation instead of seeing Eve as the talkative initiator and Adam as the silent bystander (contra Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 110–113). The Hebrew clause in Gen 3:6 "she also gave to her husband *with her* [*'immah*]" does not imply that Adam was right by her side at the tree; note the clarification for this preposition in Adam's reply to God (Gen 3:12): "The woman whom You gave to be with me [*'immadi*]"—showing that it refers to their partnership, and not to their proximity of location at any one given time. This interpretation seems to be implied in the last half of 3:12: "she gave me of the tree, and I ate." If Adam had been present and listened to the whole conversation between Eve and the serpent, it seems he would have implicated the serpent as well as the woman in his defense. Similarly, the woman's testimony in 3:13 ("The serpent deceived me") would also seem to have applied to Adam as well (he also would have been deceived) if he had been personally present at the tree next to Eve. See also Ellen White, PP 56.

108 Ibid., 34, n. 90.

109 Contra, e.g., Ortlund, "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship," 107–108; Schreiner, "Women in Ministry," 209. I do not deny the possibility that Adam was approached first because he was "father" and "representative head" of the whole human race, as discussed above. But I also pointed out above that Eve was "mother" and also likely "co-representative head" of the whole human race. In any case, Adam's representative (non-hierarchical) headship would not consist of a hierarchical relationship with regard to his wife.

110 Afolarin Ojewole, "The Seed in Genesis 3:15: An Exegetical and Intertextual Study" (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 2002), 98.

111 Hess, "Equality with and without Innocence," 89–90. For the gist of the arguments in this paragraph, I am particularly indebted to Hess (ibid.) and Brown, *Women Ministers*, 45–46.

112 Borgman, *Genesis*, 27. What is lost, Borgman continues, is clarified in v. 16: "The wife, now, must submit to the ruling husband. This is part of the 'curse.'" The interpretation of this verse is explored below.

113 Westermann, *Creation*, 96.

114 See the discussion in Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 99.

115 Beverly J. Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2–3* (JSOTSup 208; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 208, has aptly observed: "the generic names 'man' and 'woman' used throughout the text suggest that the punishment in 3:16 applies to all women. The narrator tells the story as if this verse describes God's current, if not original, intent for women as a group."

116 Many scholars recognize only one punishment each for the serpent, woman, and man, and hence the parallelism in Gen 3:16*ab* is often taken as the punishment (increased pain/labor in childbirth), and 3:16*cd* taken as description, not penal prescription, of conditions after sin. (See, e.g., Busenitz, "Genesis 3:16 Reconsidered," 206–208.) However, it seems clear that the man receives more than one punishment (although they are all interrelated): pain/hard labor in agricultural

pursuits (vv. 17*b,* 19*a*); having to deal with thorns and thistles, and a switch to eating of the herbs of the field (v. 18); and eventual return to dust in death (v. 19*b*). Likewise, the woman receives a multiple, but interrelated, sentence: increased hard labor in childbearing, and a new role of voluntary submission to the servant leadership of her husband. Moreover, while the first part of the divine judgment upon Eve and Adam arguably deals with those roles that will be their primary concern (the woman's childbearing and the man's providing for the family's physical needs), yet both of the judgments end in punishments that broaden to include both male and female. Both Adam and Eve will return to the dust in death; and both Adam and Eve experience a change in role relationships from egalitarian to leadership/submission. For further argumentation in favor of more than one punishment in each of the curse/judgments, see Jerome T. Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *JBL* 96 (1977): 168–169 (Walsh argues for two punishments for each party, one involving an essential life function and the other a relationship, with the two punishments mutually involved in each).

117 Contra Vasholz, "He (?) Will Rule Over You," 51, the masculine pronoun *hu'* has as its antecedent the masculine *'ishek* "your husband" and not the feminine *teshuqatek* "your desire." It is the husband who will "rule" and not the woman's desire. Although Vasholz correctly points out some exceptions in Genesis to the general rule that the masculine pronoun agrees in gender with its antecedent, in this verse there is a natural masculine noun ("your husband") immediately preceding the masculine pronoun, and it strains one's credulity to suggest that the general rule of gender agreement is broken in this case. The strongest parallel suggested by Vasholz, Gen 4:7, collapses under the explanation provided by Joachim Azevedo (summarized below), since this latter verse does not violate the rule of gender agreement.

118 Recent attempts by some scholars (see view six above) to translate mashal as "to be like" instead of "to rule" face insurmountable lexical/grammatical/contextual obstacles. It is true that (following BDB nomenclature) the root mashall in the nip'al stem does signify "to be like, similar," but in Gen 3:16 the root mashal is in the qal. Both mashall "to use a proverb" and mashallll "to rule" occur in the qal, but the context of Gen 3:16 seems to clearly preclude the idea of "use a proverb" (mashall). That mashallll "to rule" is intended in this passage is confirmed by the use of the accompanying preposition be, the normal proposition following mashallll (cf. BDB, 605), and other Hebrew words of ruling, governing, restraining (malak, radah, shala, 'aar, etc), and never used with mahall or mashalll. Arguments based largely on the meaning of ancient Near Eastern cognates should not be allowed to override the biblical context, grammar, syntax, and usage. Suggestions of the retrojection of the meaning "to rule" back into the fall narrative by later redaction, under the influence of an Egyptian cognate, although appealing, unfortunately rest on speculation without textual support. Likewise, Dennis' suggested translation of "to be irresistible" is not defensible as a meaning for mashal (Sarah Laughed, 25), in light of comparative lexical evidence.

119 Skinner, *Genesis*, 53.

120 See, e.g., 2 Sam 23:3; Prov 17:2; Isa 40:10; 63:19; Zech 6:13. See Robert D. Culver, "*mashal* llll, rule, have dominion, reign," *TWOT* 1:534: "*mashal* usually receives the translation 'to rule,' but the precise nature of the rule is as various as the real situations in which the action or state so designated occur." Specific examples follow to support this statement. Note, e.g., that the first usage of *mashal* in Scripture is in reference to the two great lights created by God (Gen 1:16)—they were to "dominate" (*Tanach*; New Jewish Version) the day and night. For further discussion of *mashal* in the positive sense here in Gen 3:16 as well as elsewhere in the OT, see Othmar Keel, "Die Stellung der Frau in der Erzählung von Schöpfung und Sündenfall," *Orientierung* 39 (1975): 75.

121 See, e.g., Judg 8:23; Isa 40:10; Mic 5:1; Zech 6:13; 9:10.

122 Hurley (*Man and Woman*, 216–219) has perceptively recognized how in each of the divine judgments in this chapter there is a blessing as well as a curse. Many from conservative Christian traditions (include SDAs) maintain that amid the curse upon the serpent appears a veiled blessing in the *Protoevangelium* (first Gospel promise) of Gen 3:15: "the warfare between Satan and the woman's seed comes to its climax in the death of Christ" (Hurley, *Man and Woman*, 217; cf. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978], 35–37, and Ojewole, "The Seed in Genesis 3:15," passim, for biblical evidence in favor of this traditional interpretation in contrast to the modern critical tendency to see here only an aetiological reference.) Likewise, in the curse of the ground and the "toil" that is the punishment of Adam, there is at the same time a blessing in that God promises the ground will continue to yield its fruit and man will still be able to eat of it. Furthermore, the term *ba'bur* employed in v. 17 probably means "for the sake of" (KJV) and not "because of" (RSV) inasmuch as the meaning of "because" is already expressed by *ki* earlier in the verse. The ground is cursed "for his [Adam's] sake"—that is, the curse is for Adam's benefit. Though it did result from Adam's sin, it also is to be regarded as a discipline rendered needful by his sin, to place a check upon the indulgence of appetite and passion, to develop habits of self-control. According to the biblical text, it was a part of God's great plan for man's recovery from the ruin and degradation of sin.

123 Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:163.

124 Clines, *Theme of the Pentateuch*, 63–64.

125 Otwell, *Sarah Laughed*, 18, cogently argues that the normal structure of Hebrew parallelism is followed here in that Gen 3:16*a* and *b* are in parallel and 3:16*c* and *d* are likewise in parallel. As the first two parallel members of this verse duplicate content with regard to childbearing, so "we may expect . . . that 'he shall rule over you' parallels 'your desire shall be for your husband.'" Otwell's argument is strengthened by the use of the conjunctive *waw* which serves to unite v. 16*a–b* with *c–d*, and is best translated by "yet" (RSV).

126 See BDB, 1003; Victor P. Hamilton, "*teshuqah*," *TWOT* 2:913; David Talley, "teshuqah," *NIDOTTE* 4:341–342.

127 Adrien Janis Bledstein, "Was Eve Cursed? (Or Did a Woman Write Genesis?)" *BRev* 9, no. 1 (February 1993): 42–45, who (mis)translates the noun "desire" (*teshuqah*) as an adjective "desirable," based upon a conjectural emendation of the MT, which I find unconvincing.

128 Contra earlier (first wave) feminist arguments, represented by, e.g., Katherine C. Bushnell, *God's Word to Women* (London: Women's Correspondence Bible Class, 1912; repr., Mossville, Ill.: God's Word to Women Publishers, 1990), lessons 16–19 (no pages), who followed the translation of most ancient versions (LXX, Theodotian, Syriac Peshitta, Samaritan Pentateuch, Old Latin, Sahidic, Bohairic, Coptic, Ethiopic). Cf. Starr, *The Bible Status of Women*, 28–29. It seems clear that these ancient versions are reading *teshubah* ("turning") instead of *teshuqah* in these passages. There is no good reason to abandon the MT for a misunderstanding of the Hebrew text on the part of the ancient versions. For further discussion, see Roland Bergmeier, "Zur Septuagintaübersetzung von Gen 3:16," *ZAW* 79 (1967): 77–79; Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:166; Hamilton, *Genesis*, 201; Talley, *NIDOTTE* 4:341–342.

129 Busenitz ("Genesis 3:16 Reconsidered," 208–212) gives strong reasons why Song 7:11 [10 ET], and not Gen 4:7 (where the other occurrence of teshuqah appears) should be the prevailing passage in providing illumination for the sense of teshuqah in Gen 3:16. One must recognize an entirely different context between Gen 3:16 and 4:7, and acknowledge the obscurity of meaning of the latter passage. Busenitz summarizes (211): "To grant Gen 4:7 in its obscurity a determinative role in the interpretation of Gen 3:16 without permitting the clarity of Cant 7:10 [11 ET] to permeate the exegetical process is to abandon hermeneutical discernment and propriety." J. M. Sprinkle concurs: "The 'desire' (teshuqah) a woman has for her husband (Gen 3:16) is probably sexual attraction or urge (as in Song 7:10 [MT 7:11] that leads her to marry despite its consequences of painful labor and male domination (pace Foh, 376–83, who interprets as 'woman's desire to dominate' her husband based on the use of teshuqah in Gen 4:7)" (Joe M. Sprinkle, "Sexuality, Sexual Ethics" (Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch [ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker; Downers

Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003], 742). See also Belleville, Women Leaders and the Church, 106; and Fleming, Man and Woman in Biblical Unity, 40.

At the same time, contrary to the claims of those who see a negative connotation of teshuqah in Gen 4:7, a penetrating article by Joachim Azevedo, "At the Door of Paradise: A Contextual Interpretation of Gen 4:7," BN 100 (1999): 45–59, argues for an interpretation of this passage in which the use of teshuqah is positive, thus in basic harmony with its usage in Gen 3:16, (although the sexual connotation is not found in the "desire" of Gen 4:7 as in the other two passages where it refers specifically to man-woman relationships). Azevedo points out the serious linguistic problems in the traditional translation/interpretation, and argues that the minority view in the history of interpretation is to be preferred—God here is alluding to the positive prerogatives of Cain's birthright which he would be in no danger of losing if his conduct were such as it should be. The antecedent of the masculine suffixed pronouns in teshuqtô "his desire" and timshol-bo "you shall rule over him" is not khatta't (usually translated "sin") which is feminine, but Abel (the nearest male antecedent nominative, and the one to whom Cain's anger is directed in previous verses, probably because he had lost his firstborn status by his non-compliance with the prescribed ritual, as pointed out by Gordon J. Wenham, Genesis 1–15 [WBC 1; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1987], 102). Furthermore, the word khatta't in this context of ritual sacrifice, should be translated as "sin-offering" or better, "purification-offering," and not "sin" (as implicit in the LXX translation, and as Jacob Milgrom, Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary [AB 3; Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1991], 253, points out with regard to the word in a similar, inter-textually related, context in Leviticus). The masculine participle robets "lying down, resting, reposing" provides further evidence of a sacrificial context here, pointing to the male gender of the required male sacrificial animal for the purification-offering, as in Lev 4:4, 23. The expression lappetakh "at the gate/door" again gives a cultic sacrificial context, referring to the cherubim-guarded door/gate of Paradise, where sinful humans were to bring their sacrifices, paralleling the numerous uses of petakh in the Torah describing the door of the Tabernacle. Gathering together the various strands of his exegesis, Azevedo, 59, provides the following contextual translation of Gen 4:7b: "a purification-offering [a male sacrificial animal] lies down at the door [of the Garden], and to you will be his [Abel's] desire and you will rule [again as the firstborn] over him [your brother]." This interpretation, supported by numerous lines of evidence adduced by Azevedo from grammar, syntax, context, ancient versions (LXX), cognate languages, literary structure, discourse analysis, and ancient Near Eastern parallels, seems plausible, and is consistent with the positive interpretation of teshuqah in Gen 3:16 and Song 7:11 (English v. 10).

130 It is not possible on the basis of word study alone (as per the cautions of James Barr and others) to determine exactly what is the scope of "yearning" of wife for husband that is implied here. Along the lines of the usage in the Song of Songs (which actually constitutes a commentary on the Genesis passage; see ch. 13 below), depicting Solomon's desire for the Shulamite, teshuqah no doubt includes a sexual desire (see, e.g., Sprinkle, "Sexuality," 742). In addition, along the lines of Gen 4:7 (which is grammatically parallel with Gen 3:16), with Abel's "desire" for his elder (first-born) brother Cain, it may involve a sense of dependance and respect. It theoretically could also involve a maternal desire or instinct for children that a relationship with her husband could fulfill, although, as I point out below, the text emphasizes that her desire will be for her husband, not for children. The point I am making here is that teshuqah in Gen 3:16 most probably has a positive and not negative connotation, just as in Song 7:11 (10 ET) (and perhaps also as in Gen 4:7, the only other occurrences of this term in the Hebrew Bible).

131 See, e.g., NASB and RSV/NRSV.

132 Note that the woman's "desire" is for her husband, not for children, as some would interpret this verse.

133 I find useful the terminology of "remedial hierarchy" utilized by Gilbert Bilezikian with regard to a temporary mode of local church structure for new church plants "as they attempt to establish their corporate identity under the guidance of directive leadership" (Community 101: Reclaiming the Local Church as Community of Oneness [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997], 181. But in Gen 3:16 I see God prescribing this "remedial hierarchy" for the home situation to facilitate harmony and unity, while all the time aiming toward the pre-fall Edenic ideal of egalitarianism.

134 The hermeneutic model of "redemptive- movement" has found its most articulate defender in William J. Webb, Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001); idem, "A Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic: The Slavery Analogy," in Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy (ed. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004), 382–400. In his book Slaves, Women and Homosexuals, Webb seeks to develop intrascriptural criteria of permanence in his cultural analysis of various biblical laws and practices. Many of his insights are helpful, but I find his weakest point is in failing to recognize the absolute and primary criterion of permanence to be the norms established by God at creation; he lists his "basis in the original creation" criteria as nos. 6 and 7 of his 18 proposed criteria, and labels these criteria as only "moderately persuasive." On this point of weakness, I am in agreement with the critique of Wayne Grudem, "Should We Move Beyond the New Testament to a Better Ethic? An Analysis of William J. Webb, Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis," *JETS* 47 (2004): 315–316, who shows that the culturally relative items Webb claims to find in the creation narrative (like Adam and Eve, all people should pursue farming as their occupation, should use only ground transportation, should practice primogeniture, and should never remain single) are in fact not taught as normative in Gen 1–2. I find Grudem correct in his assessment of Webb's criteria dealing with creation: "Webb fails to show that there are culturally relative components in the pre-fall garden of Eden" (ibid., 326, italics his). In my view, more promising than Webb's numerous, complex (and sometimes problematic) criteria of transcultural permanence, is a hermeneutic of cultural analysis that recognizes the divine design at the original creation as the ultimate norm, with all subsequent laws/practices prescribed or affirmed by God constituting part of his redemptive program leading humanity back toward the Edenic paradigm. This "creation-fall-redemption" hermeneutic is being developed by Alexandru Breja; see his "A Biblical Approach to Transcultural Analysis" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Atlanta, Ga., November 2003) and "The Meaning and Theological Implications of chuqqim lo tobim ('laws that were not good') in Ezekiel 20:25" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, San Antonio, Tex., November 2004).

135 I intentionally utilize the term "servant-leadership" rather than "headship" in framing this seventh position, because the term "headship" has become semantically loaded to imply the element of "authority over" which I do not find in the biblical mandate of Gen 3:16.

136 Gerhard F. Hasel, "Equality from the Start: Woman in the Creation Story," *Spectrum* 17, no. 2 (1975): 26.

137 While chair of a department at my Seminary, I saw God's leadership appointment in Gen 3:16 somewhat like my role as department chair. In all committees—at least those constituted after the fall—there needs to be a facilitator (the committee "chair"), and in a committee of equal numbers there must be some way to break a deadlocked tie vote. So God has designated the husband as facilitator and "tie-breaker" to maintain union and preserve harmony of their home "committee of two." The chair (at least in my OT Department) has no power to control the department members; he is the first among equals with the unenviable task of doing the "busy work" to facilitate the smooth performance of the department. So the husband as "first among equals" in the home, as Gen 3:16 seems to imply, "gets" to be "first": first to say "I'm sorry," first to offer to take out the garbage and do other disagreeable jobs, first to take responsibility if something goes

wrong! As Allender and Longman III put it (Intimate Allies, 165, 192): "the husband is to be the first to bleed on behalf of the person whom he has been called to protect: his wife. . . . To be the head is to lead by sacrificing first for those who we are called to serve." At the same time, just as a committee works best by consensus and it may rarely or never be necessary for the committee chair to break a tie vote as the members serve together in a harmonious union (I write now as a former department chair who had the privilege of working with such departmental members!), so the husband leadership may rarely need to be exercised (in the sense of "tie-breaking" or the wife's submission).

138 Throughout the OT, it is apparent in the description of male-female relationships that there are equally shared roles of work done by both men and women, such as serving as shepherds, cooking (cf. Jacob, Esau, and Abraham preparing food), etc. For development of this crucial point from both Gen 1–3 and beyond and from the social sciences, see esp. Van Leeuwen, Gender & Grace, and idem, My Brother's Keeper, passim.

139 See, e.g., Ellen White, 4SP 322; 7SDABC 475, 974; 1 SM 341.

140 Westermann, *Creation*, 95.

141 Stuart B. Babbage, *Sex and Sanity: A Christian View of Sexual Morality* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965).

142 See, e.g., Schaeffer, Genesis, 105–106. Many Seventh-day Adventists and other conservative Christians see here a typological reference to spiritual covering (the robe of righteousness) provided by the death of the coming Substitute, the Messianic Lamb of God.

143 For further discussion of this evidence, see R. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative," 108–111, and idem, Song for the Sanctuary, chap. 6.

144 Note that the significant intertextual linkage is made with the convergence of both of these terms in a single context, not just their isolated occurrence separately.

145 Robert A. Oden, Jr., The Bible Without Theology: The Theological Tradition and Alternatives to It (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 92–105 (this is his ch. 3, entitled "Grace or Status? Yahweh's Clothing of the First Humans"). Oden examines the use of the two key Hebrew words "to clothe" (labash, hip'il) and "tunic/coat" (ketonet), both in Scripture and in the ancient Near Eastern literature, and shows how these terms are regularly employed in contexts of status marking. See, e.g., Isa 22:21, where God marks the status of Eliakim by clothing him.

146 Jacques B. Doukhan, "Women Priests in Israel: A Case for Their Absence," in Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives (ed. Nancy Vyhmeister; Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1998), 36. An awareness of the nature of the hermeneutical principles of intertextuality in Scripture is needed to be fully sensitive to this identification.

147 Ibid., 37.

148 Otwell, And Sarah Laughed, 72. Cf. Erhard S. Gerstenberger, Yahweh the Patriarch: Ancient Images of God and Feminist Theology (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1996), passim; and Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy (Woman and History 1; New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), passim.

149 See the discussion of these areas of concern in Hurley, Man and Woman, 33–42. Otwell, And Sarah Laughed, 32–37, 143–146, shows that in each of these areas the whole family is involved, though the father as functioning leader of the family had formal responsibility.

150 See Ellen White's evaluation of patriarchy: "In early times the father was the ruler and priest of his own family, and he exercised authority over his children, even after they had families of their own. His descendants were taught to look up to him as their head, in both religious and secular matters. This patriarchal system of government Abraham endeavored to perpetuate, as it tended to preserve the knowledge of God. It was necessary to bind the members of the household together, in order to build up a barrier against the idolatry that had become so widespread and so deep-seated. Abraham sought by every means in his power to guard the inmates of his encampment against mingling with the heathen and witnessing their idolatrous practices, for he knew that familiarity with evil would insensibly corrupt the principles. The greatest care was exercised to shut out every form of false religion and to impress the mind with the majesty and glory of the living God as the true object of worship.

It was a wise arrangement, which God Himself had made, to cut off His people, so far as possible, from connection with the heathen, making them a people dwelling alone, and not reckoned among the nations. He had separated Abraham from his idolatrous kindred, that the patriarch might train and educate his family apart from the seductive influences which would have surrounded them in Mesopotamia, and that the true faith might be preserved in its purity by his descendants from generation to generation." (PP 141–142).

151 As a verb: Gen 20:3: Deut 21:13; 22:22; 24:1; Isa 54:1, 5; 62:4–5; Jer 3:15; 31:32. As a noun, Gen 20:3; Exod 21:3, 22; Deut 22:24; 24:4; 2 Sam 11:26; Joel 1:8; Prov 12:4; 31:11, 23, 28; Esth 1:17, 20.

152 See esp. the discussion in Otwell, And Sarah Laughed, 78, 145.

153 For the full range of evidence, see especially Jo Ann Davidson, "Genesis Matriarchs Engage Feminism," AUSS 40, no. 2 (2002): 169–178; and R. Davidson, Flame of Yahweh, 226–235.

154 For insightful studies on Sarah, see esp., Alice Ogden Bellis, Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes: Women's Stories in the Hebrew Bible (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 70–74; Mark E. Biddle, "The 'Endangered Ancestress' and Blessing for the Nations," JBL 109 (1990): 599–611; Adrien Janis Bledstein, "The Trials of Sarah," Judaism 30 (1981): 411–417; Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, Far More Precious Than Jewels (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1991), 85–131; Dennis, Sarah Laughed, 34–61; J. Cheryl Exum, "Who's Afraid of 'The Endangered Ancestress'?" in The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible (ed. J. Cheryl Exum and David J. A. Clines; Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 91–113; Sharon Pace Jeansonne, The Women of Genesis: From Sarah to Potiphar's Wife (SCB 4; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 14–30; Jacques Nicole and Marie-Claire Nicole, "Sara, soeur et femme d'Abraham," ZAW 112 (2000): 5–23; Janice Nunnally-Cox, Foremothers: Women of the Bible (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), 5–9; Sakenfeld, Just Wives?, 7–25; Savina J. Teubal, Sarah the Priestess: The First Matriarch of Genesis (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press, 1984); Phyllis Trible, "Genesis 22: The Sacrifice of Sarah," in Not in Heaven: Coherence and Complexity in Biblical Narrative (ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt and Joseph C. Sitterson; Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991), 170–191; Jack W. Vancil, "Sarah—Her Life and Legacy," in Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity (ed. Carroll D. Osburn; 2 vols.; Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1995), 2:37–68.

155 See Mary J. Evans, "The Invisibility of Women: An Investigation of a Possible Blind Spot for Biblical Commentators," CBRFJ 122 (1990): 37–38, for this analysis.

156 Nunnally-Cox, Foremothers, 9.

157 See esp., Christine Garside Allen, "Who Was Rebekah? 'On Me Be the Curse, My Son,'" in Beyond Androcentricism: New Essays on Women and Religion (ed. Rita M. Gross; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), 183–216; Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 51–54; Frymer-Kensky, Reading the Women of the Bible, 5–23; Jeansonne, Women of Genesis, 53–70; Donald B. Sharp, "The Courting of Rebecca: A Yahwist Portrait of the Ideal 'Bride-To-Be,'" IBS 22 (January 2000): 26–37; Meir Sternberg, The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1987), 136–152; Lieve Teugels, "'A Strong Woman Who Can Find?' A Study of Characterization in Genesis 24 with Some Perspectives on the General Presentation of Isaac and Rebekah in the Genesis Narrative," JSOT 63 (1994): 89–104; Mary Donovan Turner, "Rebekah: Ancestor of Faith," LTQ 20, no. 2 (April, 1985): 42–49; cf. Mishael Maswari Caspi and Rachel S. Havrelock, Women on the Biblical Road: Ruth, Naomi, and the Female Journey (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1996), 38.

158 Frymer-Kensky (Reading the Women of the Bible, 13–14) summarizes: "Rivka is the counterpart to both Abraham and Sarah. Like Sarah, she is the instrument of the promise, the agent through whom Isaac will become the father of a nation. She is also a second Abraham, who, like him, voluntarily chooses to leave Mesopotamia for Canaan. Her 'I will go' answers the four times the issue of going has been raised in the story (vv. 4, 7, 38, and 40) and echoes God's command to Abraham to 'Go!' in Gen. 12:1. . . . Rivka is very much like Abraham. They are both models of hospitality, and the narrator of her story highlights her similarity to him by describing her actions toward the emissary in the same language that describes Abraham's actions toward his angel visitors (Gen. 18:1–8)."

159 Danna Nolan Fewell and David M. Gunn, Gender, Power, and Promise: the Subject of the Bible's First Story (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 73). For analysis of the verbal correspondences between the Rebekah and Abraham narrative, see James G. Williams, Women Recounted: Narrative Thinking and the God of Israel (Bible and Literature Series 6; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982), 44. Cf. Turner, "Rebekah," 43–44.

160 Jeansonne, Women of Genesis, 57.

161 Teubal, Sarah the Priestess, xv.

162 See, e.g., Jo Ann Davidson, "Women in Scripture," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives* (ed. Nancy Vyhmeister; Berrien Springs, MI.: Andrews University Press, 1998), 157–172; and R. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh,* 223–242.

163 Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions (Toronto: McGraw Hill, 1961), 40.

164 Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed*, 111–112.

165 On gender inclusiveness in legal terminology in the Torah, see esp., Frank Crüsemann, *The Torah: Theology and Social History of Old Testament Law* (trans. Allan W. Mahnke; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 249–252. Numbers 6:2–21 and Deut 29:18–20 make this clear by using both masculine and feminine grammatical forms in the introductory verse and then only masculine in the verses that follow, while definitely implying both genders throughout.

166 Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: University Press, 2000), 39.

167 Ibid., 39. Klawans summarizes the evidence with regard to ritual impurity (ibid., 40): "In the final analysis, one cannot build a very strong case in defense of the argument that the biblical ritual impurity laws were legislated for the purpose of subjugating women." Ibid., 39. Klawans summarizes the evidence with regard to ritual impurity (ibid., 40): "In the final analysis, one cannot build a very strong case in defense of the argument that the biblical ritual impurity laws were legislated for the purpose of subjugating women."

168 For discussion of Pentateuchal legislation that purportedly treats women/wives as inferior, see R. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh*, 244–253.

169 Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed*, 76. The parallel in Deut 5:21 makes the distinction unmistakable by placing the wife in a separate clause.

170 De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 26–27; cf. Emmerson, "Women in Ancient Israel," 382–383.

171 See Carol Meyers, "The Roots of Restriction: Women in Early Israel,"BA 41 (1978): 98.

172 De Vaux, *Ancient Israel,* 26–27. De Vaux argues that the father was entitled to the interest accruing to the "wedding present" but the capital itself reverted back to the daughter when her father died, or earlier if her husband died. Hence Leah and Rachel refer to it as "our money" (Gen 31:15).

173 See, e.g., the critique of vicarious punishment in ancient Babylonia by Elisabeth Meier Tetlow, Women, Crime, and Punishment in Ancient Law and Society, vol. 1., The Ancient Near East (New York: Continuum, 2004), 71: "Vicarious punishment was tolerated in a society that regarded men as full persons and citizens and relegated wives and daughters to the category of the property of men." For instances of vicarious punishment in the ANE, see, e.g., "Laws of Hamurrabi," translated by Martha Roth, § 209–210 (COS 2.131:348; cf. ANET, 175): "If an awīlu strikes a woman of the awīlu-class and thereby causes her to miscarry her fetus, he shall weigh and deliver 10 shekels of silver for her fetus. If that woman should die, they shall kill his daughter." A similar example is in the Middle Assyrian Laws, where an assailant who beats up another woman is punished by having his own wife beaten up to the same extent ("The Middle Assyrian Laws [Tablet A]," translated by Martha Roth, §50 [COS 2.132:359; cf. ANET, 184]. Again in the MAL , the wife of a rapist could be gang raped as punishment for her husband's crime (MAL A §55 [COS 2.132:359; cf. ANET, 185]; for this and related laws, see my ch. 12).

174 MAL §59 (COS 2.132:360; cf. ANET, 185): "In addition to the punishments for [a man's wife] that are [written] on the tablet, a man may [whip] his wife, pluck out her hair, mutilate her ears, or strike her, with impunity."

175 See Bird, "Images of Women in the Old Testament," 55: "The ancient command to honor one's parents . . . recognizes the female as the equal to the male in her role as mother."

176 Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed*, 100.

177 Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Deuteronomy," in *The Woman's Bible Commentary* (ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe; London: SPCK, and Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 54, points out that the omission of the wife cannot mean she is to continue working, because the inclusion of daughter and maidservant in the fourth commandment indicates that the women stop from work. Rather, "the omission of a phrase 'and your wife' shows that the 'you' that the law addresses includes both women and men, each treated as a separate moral agent."

178 Meyers, *Discovering Eve*, 44–45.

179 For discussion of these passages (in light of ancient Near Eastern backgrounds), see esp. Gerlinde Baumann, "A Figure with Many Facets: The Literary and Theological Functions of Personified Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9," in Wisdom and Psalms (ed. Athalya Brenner and Carole Fontaine; FCB, 2/2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 44–78; Claudia V. Camp, Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs (Bible and Literature Series 11; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985); idem, "Woman Wisdom as Root Metaphor: A Theological Consideration," in The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honor of Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm. (ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund et al.; JSOTSup 58; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 45–76; Fontaine, Smooth Words, 88–149; Terrien, Till the Heart Sings, 90–99; and Christine Elizabeth Yoder, Wisdom as a Woman of Substance: A Socioeconomic Reading of Proverbs 1–9 and 31:10–31 (BZAW 304; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001). Cf. Job 28 for a similar personification of Wisdom by Job.

180 For theological studies of this passage, see esp. Ignatius G. P. Gous, "Proverbs 31:10–31—The A to Z of Woman Wisdom," OTE 9, no. 1 (1996): 35–51; Tom R. Hawkins, "The Wife of Noble Character in Proverbs 31:10–31," BSac 153, no. 1 (January–March 1996): 12–23; Steven R. Key, "A Virtuous Woman," in Far Above Rubies: Today's Virtuous Woman (ed. Herman Hanko; Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1992), 3–15; Jack P. Lewis, "The Capable Wife (Prov 31:10–31)," in Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity (ed. Carroll D. Osburn; 2 vols.; Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1995), 2:125–154; Thomas P. McCreesh, "Wisdom as Wife: Proverbs 31:10–31," RB 92, no. 1 (1985): 25–46; Dorothée Metlitzki, "'A Woman of Virtue': A Note on eshet ayil," Orim 1 (1986): 23–26; Yoder, Wisdom as a Woman of Substance; Albert M. Wolters, "Nature and Grace in the Interpretation of Proverbs 31:10–31," CTJ 19, no. 1 (April 1984): 153–166; and idem, The Song of the Valiant Woman: Studies in the Interpretation of Proverbs 31:10–31 (Waynesboro, Ga.: Paternoster, 2001).

181 See McCreesh, "Proverbs 31:10–31," 31–36; M. H. Lichtenstien, "Chiasm and Symmetry in Proverbs 31," CBQ 44 (1982): 202–211; Bruce K. Waltke, "The Role of the 'Valiant Wife' in the Marketplace," Crux 35, no. 3 (September 1999): 25–29.

182 Wolters, among many others, argues convincingly that the term 'eshet khayil in this context should probably be understood as the female counterpart of the 'eshet gibbor (the title given to "mighty men of valor" in the time of David), and should be translated as "mighty woman of valor" (The Song of the Valiant Woman, 9).

183 Wolters insightfully argues that "the Song of the Valiant Woman constitutes a critique of the literature in praise of women which was prevalent in the ancient Near East. As a distinct tradition, this literature was overwhelmingly preoccupied with the physical charms of women from an erotic point of view—in a word, with their sex appeal. Against the ideal of feminine perfection reflected in this widespread erotic poetry, which was cultivated in the context of royal courts and harems, the acrostic poem glorifies the active good works of a woman in the ordinary affairs of family, community and business life—good works which for all their earthliness are rooted in the fear of the Lord" (The Song of the Valiant Woman, 13). Wolters (ibid., 15–29) also shows how the element of grace ("fear of the Lord") has been interpreted in this passage with regard to the mundane ("secular") activities of the woman, and how the four main theological world-views of the relationship of nature and grace have affected the overall interpretation. I heartily identify with Wolters' fourth category of "grace restoring nature," and thus concur that the woman's fear of the Lord "is integral to the poem as a whole. Religion is not restricted to v. 30, but pervades the whole. . . . Here the woman's household activities are seen, not as something opposed to, or even distinct from, her fear of the Lord, but rather as its external manifestation" (ibid., 24–25).

184 Hawkins, "Proverbs 31:10–31," 19.

185 Wolters, *The Song of the Valiant Woman*, 4–14.

186 At the same time, Waltke ("The Role of the 'Valiant Wife,'" 30–31) underscores the hermeneutical importance of recognizing that the valiant wife of Prov 31 "is an idealized real woman who incarnates wisdom" and not just "a personification of 'Woman Wisdom'. . . . [She is] a real wife . . . [who] incarnates wisdom's ideals, without removing her from the historical realm" (30)

187 Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 83.

188 Waltke, "The Role of the 'Valiant Wife,'" 31.

189 For evidence of Solomnic authorship, the unity of the Song of Songs, Solomon's 20+ years of monogamous marriage, and his writing of the Song during this period, see R. Davidson, Flame of Yahweh, 556–569.

190 See Nicholas Ayo, *Sacred Marriage: The Wisdom of the Song of Songs* (illustrated by Meinrad Craighead; New York: Continuum, 1997), 37–53; Francis Landy, "The Song of Songs and the Garden of Eden," JBL 98 (1979): 513–528; idem, Paradoxes of Paradise: Identity and Difference in the Song of Songs (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), esp. ch. 4, "Two Versions of Paradise" (183–265); William E. Phipps, Genesis and Gender: Biblical Myths of Sexuality and Their Cultural Impact (New York: Praeger, 1989), 90–95; Trible, "Depatriarchalizing," 42–47; and idem, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality, 145–165.

191 Ibid., 144.

192 Idem, "Depatriarchalizing," 47.

193 Ibid., 48.

194 Alicia Ostriker, "A Holy of Holies: The Song of Songs as Countertext," in The Song of Songs (FCB 2/6; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 49–50.

195 Swidler, *Affirmations of Women*, 92.

196 Othmar Keel, *The Song of Songs: A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 32.

197 Phipps, *Genesis and Gender*, 94 (see ibid., 94–95, for a rich discussion of the equality/mutuality theme in the Song). See also David M. Carr, *The Erotic Word: Sexuality, Spirituality, and the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 134: "This bond, however is not one of the male claiming power over his wife's reproduction. Instead, this is a mutual passion between a man and a woman who are as equal as they can be in their social context."

198 André LaCocque, *Romance She Wrote: A Hermeneutical Essay on Song of Songs* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1998), 37.

199 Ariel Bloch and Chana Bloch, *The Song of Songs: A New Translation with an Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Random House, 1995), 207.

200 See, e.g., David Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 199–213; and Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin, 1985), 318–321; and Carol Meyers, "Gender Imagery in the Song of Songs," HAR 10 (1986): 209–223.

201 A partial list of gender parallel or "echoing" passages includes: 1:2–3 = 4:10b; 1:4 = 3:4; 1:4 and 3:11 and 7:6 = 7:1–2; 1:10 = 1:16; 1:10 = 5:13; 1:12–14 = 4:13 and 3:6 and 4:6; 1:14 = 7:9–10 [English vv. 8–9]; 1:14 = 1:14 = 5:12; 1:15 = 1:16 and 7:7 [English v. 6]; 1:15 and 4:1 = 5:12; 1:16 = 7:7 [English v. 6]; 2:2 = 5:13; 2:2 = 2:3; 2:3 = 7:9 [English v. 8]; 2:4 = 8:2; 2:8 = 4:8; 2:9, 17 and 8:14 = 4:5–6 and 7:4 [English v. 3]; 2:10, 13 = 7:12 [English v. 11]; 2:12–13 = 7:13 [English v. 12]; 2:14 = 5:12; 2:14 = 5:15; 2:16 and 6:3 = 4:5; 4:3 = 5:13; 4:11 = 5:11 = 6:5; 4:11 = 5:13; 5:14 = 7:3 [English v. 2]; 5:16 = 7:10 [Engish v. 9]. Note also the longer echoing wafs (praise descriptions): 3:6–11 and 4:9–16 = 4:1–16 and 6:4–10. M. Timothea Elliott, The Literary Unity of the Canticle (European University Studies 23/371; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989), 246–251, calls this technique "mirroring dynamic," and presents some twenty examples in the Song, including some not listed above which involve single-term descriptive metaphors applied to both the lover and the beloved.

202 Bloch and Bloch, *Song of Songs*, 4.

203 Daniel Grossberg, "Two Kinds of Sexual Relations in the Hebrew Bible," HS 34 (1994): 12, 15. See Ayo, Sacred Marriage, 40, for a similar assessment.

204 Dorsey, *Literary Structure of the OT*, 213 (see his discussion in 200–213).

205 For further discussion of this point, see Bloch and Bloch, *Song of Songs*, 4–6; LaCocque, Romance She Wrote, 39–53; Meyers, "Gender Imagery," 209–221; and Trible, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality, 144–165.

206 Francis Landy, "The Songs of Songs," in The Literary Guide to the Bible (ed. Robert Alter and K. Kermode; Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1987), 317.

207 Jill M. Munro, *Spikenard and Saffron: The Imagery of the Song of Songs* (JSOTSup 203; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995),109, elaborates: "the image of the garden, developed over a number of verses (4:12–5:1), falls at the midpoint of the Song. The position of the image not only emphasizes the predominance of the woman, who throughout the Song plays the major part, but also echoes structurally the relationship of the woman to the world beyond, in the eyes of her beloved one; the natural world and the abundance of life visible there is recreated in her, for she, to him, is the personification of its beauty."

208 The count may vary depending upon the interpretation of the sometimes ambiguous first-person statements and unmarked sections. Athalya Brenner, in her book *The Israelite Woman: Social Role and Literary Type in Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 44–50, analyzes in detail the distribution of male and female voices in the Song, and concludes that the female voice(s) account(s) for approximately 53% of the text, while the male voice(s) account(s) for only 34 %. G. Lloyd Carr ("The Love Poetry Genre in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East: Another Look at Inspiration," *JETS* 25 [1982]: 494) counts lines: out of 227 lines, 114 are for the girl, 54 for the lover, 31 of mixed dialogue, and 28 lines by a third party. My own count comes to 74 verses or parts of verses where the woman speaks and only 38 where the man speaks, giving the woman about twice as many lines as the man. (I include in the woman's speeches her citations of the man [2:10–14; 5:2] and 3:7–11 [following the arguments of Bloch and Bloch,

*Song of Songs,*161–2].) Carr (ibid.) cautions that these statistics must not be made to prove too much, inasmuch as the same two-to-one ratio of female to male speeches also occurs in the ancient Near Eastern love poems of Egypt and Mesopotamia. However, the preponderance of the woman's speech throughout the Song is much more than elsewhere in the ancient Near East if one eliminates the four lengthy wafs (descriptions and praise of the physical beauty of the man and woman: 4:1–15; 5:10–16; 6:4–9; 7:1–9): the woman still has 61 verses or parts of verses of dialogue, while the man only has seven verses, a ratio of over eight-to-one!

209 She invites the man: "draw me after you! . . . let's run!" (1:4). She commands the man (using the imperative): "Turn! Be like a gazelle . . . !" (2:17); "Make haste/flee! . . . be like a gazelle . . . ! (8:14). She grasps the man, and will not let him go (2:15). She leads the man to her mother's house and love-chamber (3:4; 8:2). She gives the man her love (7:13 [English v. 12]). She sexually awakens the man under the apple tree (8:5).

210 The occurrences of 'ani are 1:5, 6; 2:1, 5, 16; 5:2, 5, 6, 8; 6:3; 7:11 [English v. 10]; 8:10. The term nepesh is found in 1:7; 3:1, 2, 3, 4; 5:6; 6:12. See Grace I. Emmerson, "The Song of Songs: Mystification, Ambiguity and Humour," in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder* (ed. Stanley E. Porter et al.; New York: E. J. Brill, 1994), 101–102.

211 The Hebrew conjunction waw can be translated either "and" or "but." In this case, the meaning comes out essentially the same. She is saying in effect, "I am dark from the sun, and/but whatever you may think about it, I think it is beautiful!"

212 Most commentaries wrongly interpret this line as having a tone of self-depreciation. But in my view Bloch and Bloch (*Song of Songs*, 148–149) rightly point out that the very two flowers mentioned in Song 2:1, "rose" [khabatselet] and "lily" [shoshannah] are the ones mentioned in the prophecies of Israel's restoration to her former glory (Isa 35:1–2; Hos 14:6–8), and the mention of Sharon probably links with "the majesty of Carmel and Sharon" in Isa 35:2. The Blochs conclude: "Seen in this light, 2:1 is an expression of a young woman's proud awareness of her blossoming beauty. The Shulamite is not presenting herself—either modestly or coyly—as a common ordinary flower of the field ('I am a mere flower of the plain,' as Ginsburg and others would have it). Quite the contrary, she is identifying herself with the khabatselet and shoshannah, two flowers that are the very epitome of blossoming in the symbolism of the Bible.

213 The use of the -at ending of shoshannah in this verse (contrasted with the masculine plural in other occurrences in the Song) denotes "singularity." See Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 105: "Single components of a collective unit often appear with -at suffix: such a form is called a nomen unitatis or singulative." Waltke and O'Connor give shoshannah as an example of this phenomenon. The woman is a singular, special lily out of all the others in the valleys.

214 Dianne Bergant, *Song of Songs: The Love Poetry of Scripture* (Spiritual Commentaries; Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1998), 158.

215 Meyers, "Gender Imagery," 215. The imagery of military architecture (discussed in Meyers, ibid., 212–215) include the military tower, armory, and shields (4:4); the military tower, outpost "tower of Lebanon," pools of Heshbon (probably for military purposes), and defensive gate of Bath Rabbim (all in 7:5 [English v. 4]); and the towers and wall with "battlements" or "buttresses" or "turrets" (again in a military context, 8:9, 10).

216 Ibid., 216.

217 Ibid., 217. This military ploy, and the fact that Egyptian chariots were drawn by stallions, and not mares, is discussed in detail, with illustrations from ancient Near Eastern literature, esp. by Marvin Pope, Song of Songs (AB 7C; Garden City: Doubleday, 1977), 336–341.

218 Meyers, "Gender Imagery," 218. This is not to imply that the woman possesses magical powers or that she literally domineers over the man. This is the language of metaphor, not magic or manipulation.

219 Ibid.

220 The daughters of Jerusalem/Zion sing, or are addressed, numerous times in the Song: 1:4, 5, 11; 2:7; 3:5, 10, 11; 5:8, 9, 16; 6:1, 8–9; 8:4. By contrast, the brothers are only alluded to—and with the term "my mother's sons," not "brothers"—in 1:6, and perhaps (but far from certain) have lines in 2:15 and 8:8–9. For discussion of the significance of the daughters of Jerusalem in the structure, content, and flow of the Song, see esp., Munro, Spikenard and Saffron, 43–48.

221 Song 1:6; 3:4, 11; 6:9; 8:1, 2, 5.

222 If the groom in the Song is Solomon, as I have argued, then the mother is the famous Bathsheba, known for her great beauty (2 Sam 11:2).

223 Landy, "Song of Songs and Garden of Eden," 526.

224 Some have claimed that this verse does not refer to an apple tree, but some other kind of fruit tree (such apricot or even citrus), because it is claimed that the edible apple was not known in ancient Israel. But for evidence of the antiquity of the apple tree, and arguments of the probable existence of edible apples in the time of Israel, see, e.g., Garrett, "Song of Songs," 149–150.

225 Meyers, "Gender Imagery," 220. Meyers limits this arena of gender mutuality in Scripture only to the situation of domestic, non-public, love. However, my study of the theology of sexuality in the OT has convinced me that God's ultimate ideal throughout OT history has been an egalitarian one for the sexes, although the husband was given the responsibility of servant headship when necessary to preserve harmony in the home.

226 S. S. Ndoga and H. Viviers, "Is the Woman in the Song of Songs Really Free?" HTS 56 (2000): 1286. See their supporting arguments in the remainder of the article, 1286–1307.

227 Bloch and Bloch (*Song of Songs*, 207) write: "Song 7:11 reads almost like a deliberate reversal of Gen. 3:16, turning it upside down by making the woman the object of desire." Cf. Trible, "Depatriarchalizing," 46; idem, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality, 159–160.

228 My thinking has developed considerably on the question of egalitarianism since my earlier published treatments of the theology of human sexuality in the Song: Richard M. Davidson, "Theology of Sexuality in the Song of Songs: Return to Eden," AUSS 27 (1989):8–10; cf. idem, "Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 271–272. I still consider the divine judgment of Gen 3:16 to be a divinely-given remedial-redemptive provision applicable in situations where it is necessary to maintain harmony in the home. But I find the Song of Songs, like the Gen 1–3 accounts, showing us that God's ideal is still the pre-Fall egalitarianism without hierarchy of Gen 2:24, and that egalitarianism, mutuality, and reciprocity can be experienced by lovers even in a sinful environment.

229 Many suggestions have been made for the derivation and meaning of shulammit (Song 7:1 [6:13]. For the options in interpretation, see Bloch and Bloch, Song of Songs, 197–198; Fox, Song of Songs and Ancient Egyptian Love Songs, 157–158; Murphy, Song of Songs, 181; and Pope, Song of Songs, 596–600). I find the least problematic solution (without resorting to emendations or Ishtar mythology) is to take the word as the feminine equivalent of Solomon, or at least a name/title related etymologically (or by folk etymology) to Solomon. See the support for this connection of shulammit to Solomon in H. H. Rowley, "The Meaning of the 'the Shulamite,'" AJSL 56 (1939): 84–91, summarized (with additional support from an Ugaritic parallel) in Pope, Song of Songs, 596–597. In my estimation, Delitzsch (Song of Songs, 3:120) correctly concludes that the poet purposely used this name "to assimilate her name to that of Solomon." I take the article before the word as the equivalent of the vocative particle, "O Shulamite" (see Joüon, 137–138; GKC §126e, note [e]; Pope, Song of Songs, 600), and the article also seems to point to a specific woman as the Solomoness (implying that she was his one and only wife at this time). It is difficult to know

whether the term is to be taken as a personal name (Shulamite or Shulamit) or as an epithet (the Solomoness). As Pope (Song of Songs, 600) points out, "The distinction between proper name and epithet is not easy to maintain, since proper names often develop from epithets. The article may be applied to an epithet on the way to becoming a proper noun, or a proper noun with the article may be regarded as an epithet in cases like the Lebanon, the Nile, the Jordan, the Baal, the Christ, etc." Even if the name also denotes "completeness/perfection" (as suggested by various commentators, e.g., Pope, Song of Songs, 599–600), it seems clear that in the Song there is intended a paronomasia between this name and Solomon.

230 John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 51–59.

231 Angel Rodríguez, "Sanctuary Theology in the Book of Exodus," AUSS 24, no. 2 (1986): 131–137.

232 See further discussion and evidence in R. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh*, 251–253.

233 See Roy Gane, *God's Faulty Heroes* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 1996), 50, who interprets Num 3:38 and 18:7 as indicating that "priests had a kind of military function as guards of the sanctuary," and suggests this as at least a partial rationale for God's setting up of an all-male priesthood.

234 For a summary of these and other suggested rationales, see Mary Hayter, *The New Eve in Christ: The Use and Abuse of the Bible in the Debate about Women in the Church* (London: SPCK, 1987), 60–79. Other proposed reasons include the alleged lower social status of women (than men) in Israel, which would have meant they lacked the authority and prestige to be priests. But, Hennie J. Marsman, *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), passim, demonstrates that Israelite women had no lower social status than in neighboring Ugarit and other ancient Near Eastern societies, where there were female priests. Another suggested reason is that woman's role as mothers, requiring time at home to rear their children, would have little time beyond their child care and household tasks. But, again, the upper-class women in Israel as well as elsewhere in the ancient Near East had servants who performed these tasks, and thus at least for this class of women the maternal restrictions do not apply.

235 Phyllis Bird, "The Place of Women in the Israelite Cultus," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller Jr. et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 406. The exception would be women without families (widows, virgins, or women separated from family by a vow) (ibid., 407).

236 Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed*, 155.

237 Marsman (Women in Ugarit and Israel, 544–545) shows that while in Egypt and Mesopotamia numerous women were functioning in the role of priestess in the third and first half of the second millennium B.C.E., by the middle of the second millennium women to a large extent had disappeared from the priesthood, and during the period matching the period of Israelite history only women of high birth remained active in cultic functions as priestesses. These women "had a kind of marital relationship with the main deity. They were a wife of the god, whether the interpretation of this function was sexual or not, that is, whether their 'sacred' marriage was a carnally or a symbolically performed rite" (ibid., 545).

238 Doukhan, "Women Priests in Israel," 30–33.

239 Doukhan offers another rationale beyond the polemic concerns against the fertility cults; he suggests that it "may well reflect a Hebrew attitude toward women, who were, from Eve on, traditionally associated with the giving of life. [fn. 33: See Gen 3:20]. And since the woman stands for life, she should be exempt from the act of sacrificing that stands for death. . . . Because of her physiological nature as a provider of life, the woman could not be involved in the cultic act of taking life implied in the ritual of sacrifice" ("Women Priests in Israel," 33–34). For Doukhan this is the most decisive factor in preventing women from becoming priests. The priests were typological pointers to the Messiah who was to come as the true Priest, and women could not function in that typological role—not because of something they lacked, but because of something positive they possessed, i.e., "the sign of life and promise" that was incongruent with the slaughter of sacrifices (ibid., 38). Doukhan points to the occasions in the Garden of Eden and in the redeemed community (Rev 1:6; 5:10) when both men and women are priests, and notes that "These contexts are both free from the threat of ancient Near Eastern cults and from the ceremonial slaughter of sacrifices" (ibid., 39). As intriguing as this hypothesis is, its Achilles heel is that there is no prohibition against women slaughtering the animal sacrifices in the OT legislation (Doukhan's assertion that no actual sacrifice by a woman is recorded is an argument from silence, and may actually find exception in 1 Sam 1:25), and the setting of God's conferral of the priestly role upon both Adam and Eve in Eden occurs not only in a pre-fall setting before sin (Gen 2:15) but also after the fall (Gen 3:21), in a context not free from the ceremonial slaughter of sacrifices.

240 Richard M. Davidson, "Leadership Language in the Old Testament," in *Servants and Friends: A Biblical Theology of Leadership*, ed. Skip Bell (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, forthcoming), 1–20.

241 The full range of nouns includes the following (with Hebrew expressions and number of occurrences in the Hebrew Bible in parentheses): "lord/master" ('adon, 334 times [hereafter "x"]); "[ram], ruler/mighty one" ('ayil I, 7x with this meaning); "tribal chief" ('allup, 60x); "noble" ('atsil II, only in Exod. 24:11); "mistress, queen mother" (gebirah/geberet, 15x); "elder" (zaqen, ca. 127x with the meaning of an office of leadership); "free, noble one" who exercises some kind of authority and leadership (chor, 13x); "prince, ruler, leader" (nagid, 44x); "leader, chief, prince" (nasi', ca. 131x); "judge" (both the verb shaphat and the substantivised participle shophet, ca. 228x); "king/reign" (noun melek "king" and verb malak "reign," ca. 2891x); priest (noun kohen "priest" and denominative piel verb kihen "to act as priest," ca. 773x); prophet/prophesy (nabi' "prophet," ca. 317x, nb' "prophesy," ca. 115x); "eunuch, court official" (saris, 45x); "(Philistine) prince, ruler" (seren II, 18x); "[he-goat], leader" ('attud, ca. 6x with reference to human leaders); "administrator, steward, overseer" (soken, 3x); "provincial governor" (pekhah, 38x); "appointed official [civil, military, or cultic]" (paqid, 13x; cf. pequddah "oversight," 5x with this meaning); "[military] commander, leader [in general]" (qatsin, 12x); "head, leader, chief" (ro'sh, ca. 37x with meaning of leader); "[non-Israelite] captain, chief, commander" (rab II, ca. 50x); "rule/ruler" (verb razan "ruler" 6x, subtantivised participle rozen II "ruler, dignitary" only in Prov. 14:28); "official, chieftain, leader, prince" (sar, ca. 421x; cf. sarah I, "woman of rank, princess," 5x + the name "Sarah," 39x); "[high-ranking] noble" (shoa', only in Job 34:20 and Isa. 32:5); and "ruler" (shallit, 3x).

242 Examples of Hebrew verbs for leadership include the following: "[marry], rule over, [own]" (b'l I, 16x); "[dispute, reason together, prove, reprove,] judge, rule" (yakakh, Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3); "make subservient, subdue" (kabash, 15x); "rule, govern" (mashal II, ca. 69x); "supervise, direct" (natsach, ca. 64x); "[repel,] subdue" (radad, 3x); "rule, govern" (radah I, ca. 24 x); "rule, direct, superintend" (sarrar, 6x); and "gain power, have power, lord it over" (shalat, 6x).

243 Eight terms and the majority of occurrences are from the Hebrew root 'bd: (1) 'abad "to serve" (289 occurrences [hereafter "x"]); (2) 'ebed "servant, slave" (805x); (3) 'abodah "service, servile (customary, ordinary, heavy, laborious) work, worship" (145x); (4) 'abed (Aram.) "servant, slave, subordinate" (7x); (5) 'abudah "service (of household servants as a body), workforce" (3x); (6) 'abdut "servitude, forced labor" (3x); (7) ma'abad "deed, act" (2x); and (8) 'abad "work, labor" (1x). Other terms denoting some kind of servanthood include the following: (9) 'amah "female servant/slave, maidservant" (56x); (10) natin "temple servant" (16x); (11) netin (Aram.) "temple servant" (1x); (12) pelakh (Aram.) "to pay reverence to, serve (deity)" (10x); (13) tsaba' "to wage war, be on duty, serve (at the tabernacle)" (4x); (14) shipkhah "handmaid, female servant/slave" (63x); (15) sharat "to wait on, be an attendant, serve, minister (unforced)" (97x); and (16) sharet "minister, attendant" (2x).

244 TDOT 15:505.

245 Abraham: "My servant" (Gen. 26:24); Jacob: "My servant" (Ezek. 28:25); Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: "Your servants" (Exod. 32:13); Job: "My servant" (Job 1:1; 2:3; 42:7–8); Caleb: "My servant (Num. 14:24); Joshua: "Moses' minister" (Josh. 1:1); "Servant of the Lord" (Josh. 24:29; Judg. 2:8); the prophets: "My servants" (2 Kgs. 17:13 plus 16 times); Isaiah: "My servant" (Isa 20:3); Elijah: "His servant" (2 Kings 9:36; 10:1); Jonah: "His servant" (2 Kgs. 14:25); Ahijah: "His servant" (1 Kgs. 14:18, 29); Eliakim: "My servant" (Isa. 22:20); Nebuchadnezzar: "My servant" (Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10); Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: "Servants of the Most High God" (Dan. 3:26, 28); Daniel: "servant of the living God" (Dan. 6:20 [Heb. 21], Aram.); Zerubbabel: "My servant" (Hag. 2:23); the people of Israel: "My servants" (Lev. 25:42; Isa. 43:10; plus over 20 more times).

246 Lot (servant to strangers-angels: Gen. 19:2); Joseph (served the prison officials: Gen. 39:4; 40:4); brothers of Joseph (servants of Joseph: Gen. 42:10); Ruth: "your [Boaz's] servant" (Ruth 3:9); Hannah: "your [Eli's] servant" (1 Sam. 1:16); Samuel: "Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears" (1 Sam. 3:9–10); Abigail: alternation of *'amah* and *shipchah* (1 Sam. 25: 24, 25, 27–28, 31, 41); Ziba (servant of the house of Saul: 2 Sam. 9:2); Mephibosheth (servant of David: 2 Sam. 9:6, 8); wise woman of Tekoah: *'amah* (2 Sam. 11:15, 16), *shipkhah* (2 Sam. 14:12, 15,19); Uriah the Hittite (David's servant: 2 Sam. 11:21–24); wise woman of the city of Abel (Joab's [maid]servant: 2 Sam. 20:17); Bathsheba (David's [maid] servant: 1 Kgs. 1:13, 17); Solomon (God's servant: 1 Kgs. 8:28–30; 2 Chr. 6:19–21); Elisha (who served Elijah: 1 Kgs. 19:21; 2 Kgs. 4:43; 6:15); Hezekiah (began "service" in the house of the Lord: 2 Chr. 31:21); Nehemiah (Yahweh's servant: Neh. 1:11).

247 Gen. 2:15 uses the same paired Hebrew words—*'abad* and *shamar*—for the work of Adam and Eve as for the priests' and Levites' service in the Mosaic sanctuary (Num. 3:7, 8; 18:3–7). For some seventeen lines of evidence that the Garden of Eden is to be regarded as the original sanctuary on earth, with additional bibliography, see Richard M. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium." *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 11, nos. 1–2 (Spring–Autumn 2000): 108–111; and idem, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 47–48. Other individuals and groups serving in the sanctuary/temple include: priests (Num. 18:7; 1 Chr. 24:3, 19; Ezek. 44:14; Ezra 8:20; plus many more references); Levites (Num. 3:7–8 [and dozens of times in succeeding chapters]; 16:9; 1 Chr. 6:33; 9:13, 19, etc.; "to celebrate and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel" [1 Chr. 16:4 NASB]); gatekeepers (1 Chr. 26:1; 35:15); musicians (1 Chr. 6:17, 32; 25:1, 6); other temple servants who assisted the Levites (1 Chr. 9:2; Ezra 2:38, 43, 70, 77; 8:20; Neh. 3:31; 7:46, 60, 72; 10:28–29; 11:3, 21).

248 Forced (*corvée*) labor by the people for the king (Solomon): 1 Kgs. 12:4; 2 Chr. 10:4; political "servants" (=vassal nations): 2 Kgs. 24:1; 25:24; 1 Chr. 18:2, 6, 13; 2 Chr. 12:8; soldiers as "servants": 2 Kgs. 24:10, 11; 25:8; 1 Chr. 20:8; royal personal attendants: 2 Sam. 13:17–18; 1 Kgs. 1:4; 10:5; 2 Chr. 22:8; Esth. 1:10; 2:2; 6:3; Ps. 101:6; political officials: 1 Chr. 27:1; 28:1: 2 Chr. 17:19; Prov. 29:12; agricultural workers in the service of the king: 1 Chr. 27:26; foreign vassal nations who were to "serve" the king who was suzerain over them (1 Kgs. 4:21; Pss. 18:43; 72:11); captive Israelites who would serve their captors in Babylon: Jer. 25:11; 27:6–8; 40:9; Israelites after returning from captivity who were still virtual slaves of a foreign power (Persia): Neh. 9:36.

249 For discussion of the many women leaders in scripture, including those whose names are not accompanied by explicit "servant" terminology, see R. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh*, 213–295.

250 Paul R. House, Paul R. *1, 2 Kings*, The New American Commentary, 8 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 182.

251 See the penetrating description of Abigail's servant leadership, as penned by Ellen White: "Abigail addressed David with as much reverence as though speaking to a crowned monarch. . . .With kind words she sought to soothe his irritated feelings, and she pleaded with him in behalf of her husband. With nothing of ostentation or pride, but full of the wisdom and love of God, Abigail revealed the strength of her devotion to her household; and she made it plain to David that the unkind course of her husband was in no wise premeditated against him as a personal affront, but was simply the outburst of an unhappy and selfish nature. . . .The piety of Abigail, like the fragrance of a flower, breathed out all unconsciously in face and word and action. The Spirit of the Son of God was abiding in her soul. Her speech, seasoned with grace, and full of kindness and peace, shed a heavenly influence. . . . Abigail was a wise reprover and counselor." Ellen G. White, *The Story of the Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958), 667–668.

252 For evidence supporting the Messianic interpretation of these Servant Songs, see esp. C. Kaiser, "The Identity and Mission of the 'Servant of the Lord,'" in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology,* ed. Walter Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), 87–107; J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 289–458; and Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah,* 3 vols.; New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 3:108–359.

253 For analysis of the NT use of the Servant Songs, see esp. Walter Darrell Bock and Mitch Glaser, eds. *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), chaps. 4–6.

254 See Davidson, "Leadership Language," 13–16, for summary of these insights.

255 See, e.g. Rita J. Burns, *Has the Lord Indeed Spoken Only Through Moses?: A Study of the Biblical Portrait of Miriam* (SBLDS 84; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987); Phyllis Silverman Kramer, "Miriam," in *Exodus–Deuteronomy* (ed. Athalya Brenner; FCBSS 5; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994, repr. 2001), 104–133; and Phyllis Trible, "Bringing Miriam Out of the Shadows," *BRev* 5 (February 1989): 14–25, 34.

256 Robert Van Kooten, "The Song of Miriam," *Kerux* 16, no. 3 (2001): 38.

257 Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "Gender Complementarity in the Hebrew Bible," in *Reading the Hebrew Bible for a New Millennium: Form, Concept, and Theological Perspective* (ed. Wonil Kim et al.; vol. 1 of *Theological and Hermeneutical Studies*; Studies in Antiquity and Christianity; Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 2000), 273.

258 Ibid. Kim continues: "Likewise, in the correlation between cohortative and imperative verb forms the reader finds an authorial sketch of the interaction between the two parts of the choir, as if sopranos and altos sing the invitation hymn while tenors and basses echo with the responsive arias, and vice versa. In the corresponding interaction there is a concept of unity and mutuality between Moses and Miriam, between the men and women of Israel. . . . In that unity, though Moses assumes a more prominent role, the two songs imply the concept of complementarity of Moses and Miriam, not only brother and sister, but also coleaders and copartners" (ibid., 274, 276). It should be noted that by "complementarity" Kim "implies an idea of the relationship of two distinct parties who share mutual needs, interdependence, and respect. This term is to be distinguished from the connotation of a hierarchical relationship of two parties where one is subordinate to the other. Rather, it is used to include the ideas of mutuality, balance, and equality, while maintaining the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each party rather than homogeneity" (ibid., 268). I heartily concur with this definition of complementarity, in contrast to how it is frequently used in evangelical circles to denote hierarchical roles between women and men.

259 For examinations of Miriam's Song, see, e.g., Bernhard W. Anderson, "The Song of Miriam Poetically and Theologically Considered," in *Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry* (ed. Elaine R. Follis; JSOTSup 40; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 285–302; J. Gerald Janzen, "Song of Moses, Song of Miriam: Who is Seconding Whom?" *CBQ* 54, no. 2 (April 1992): 211–220; Gail R. O'Day, "Singing Woman's Song: A Hermeneutic of Liberation," *CurTM* 12, no. 4 (August 1985):203–204; and Van Kooten, "The Song of Miriam," 35–41. The arguments of some of these authors that Miriam's Song is primary and Moses' Song is

secondary are based upon source-critical assumptions that are outside the pale of my final-form approach toward the text, but nonetheless these articles rightly maintain the significant position of the Song at the climax of the exodus story.

260 Kim, "Gender Complementarity," 274.

261 See Meyers, "Miriam the Musician," 207–230, for examination of the biblical and extra-biblical evidence.

262 Exod 15:20, 21; Num 12:1, 4, 5, 10, 10, 15, 15; Num 20:1; 26:59; Deut 24:9.

263 See esp., Charme E. Robarts, "Deborah—Judge, Prophetess, Military Leader, and Mother in Israel," in *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity* (ed. Carroll D. Osburn; 2 vols.; Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), 2:69–86.

264 Robarts ("Deborah," 76) rightly observes: "Among the major judges, she escapes unscathed as a spiritual leader." See also Daniel I. Block, "Why Deborah's Different," *BR* 17, no. 3 (June 2001): 40, who makes this same point: "Not only was she the sole woman in this man's world, with exception of Othniel she was also the only 'judge' with a stainless personal reputation."

265 Mieke Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry: The Politics of Coherence in the Book of Judges* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 209.

266 Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women of the Bible*, 46, points out that this "is a strange-sounding name for a man and, moreover, does not have the standard patronymic 'son of.'" The Hebrew word *lappid* literally means "torch" or "lightning" and here (Judg 4:4) in the feminine plural may be a description of the character quality of the woman, much like the phrase *'eshet kayil* "woman of strength/valor" in Prov 31:10. This is the view of a number of scholars. See, e.g., Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry*, 208–209; Dana Nolan Fewell and David M. Gunn, "Controlling Perspectives: Women, Men, and the Authority of Violence in Judges 4–5," *JAAR* 63, no. 3 (Fall 1990): 391; and the NEB note "fiery woman." Weighty evidence for preferring this interpretation (instead of taking this as the name of her husband) is set forth by Klaas Spronk, "Deborah, a Prophetess: The Meaning and Background of Judges 4:4–5," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist* (ed. Johannes C. DeMoor; OtSt 45; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001), 239–240. While I favor the interpretation that the term *lappidot* is used symbolically/metaphorically (to refer to Deborah's character as a "woman of spirit"), I do not rule out the possibility that this word constitutes the name of her husband. But if married, Deborah does not receive her status in the narrative by virtue of her husband; he is heard of no more in the story; and furthermore, this passage then reveals that it was perfectly appropriate for the woman Deborah to perform her leadership role as a wife without violating any "headship" principle of her husband.

267 For a survey of modern commentaries that downplay the role of Deborah in the narrative, see, e.g., Rachel C. Rasmussen, "Deborah the Woman Warrior," in *Anti-Covenant: Counter-Reading Women's Lives in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Mieke Bal; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 79–83; Jo Ann Hackett, "In the Days of Jael: Reclaiming the History of Women in Ancient Israel," in *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality* (ed. Clarissa W. Atkinson, Constance H. Buchanan, and Margaret R. Miles; Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 27–28; and Gale A. Yee, "By the Hand of a Woman: The Metaphor of the Woman Warrior in Judges 4," *Semeia* 61 (1993): 110, 117–121. Cf. Herbert Wolf, "Judges," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 3:404: "her prominence implies a lack of qualified and willing men."

268 Others suggest a scenario arising out of a socially dysfunctional society with Deborah a liminal figure (neither male nor female as customarily defined) on the margins of society (Yee, "By the Hand of a Woman," 99–126); still others deplore a story attempting to justify violence (Fewell and Gunn, "Controlling Perspectives," 389–410). For a convenient survey of these and other major feminist views, see esp. Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes*, 115–119.

269 For summary of these redaction-critical reconstructions, see esp. Stephen W. Hanselman, "Narrative Theory, Ideology, and Transformation in Judges 4," in *Anti-Covenant: Counter-Reading Women's Lives in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. Mieke Bal; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 104–105.

270 Julia Staton, *What the Bible Says About Women* (Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1980), 264. See also Sara Buswell, *The Challenge of Old Testament Women: 1* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 120.

271 Hackett, "In the Days of Jael," 22.

272 Although, as Gane rightly observes, she was not a military general, for a very practical reason: "Generals were combat soldiers who led their armies into battles. Physical size and upper body strength, the main natural advantages possessed by males, were essential for effectiveness in ancient combat. Therefore, women were not used as soldiers and, consequently, they could not be military commanders" (*God's Faulty Heroes,* 50). Frymer-Kensky points out that "Like Moses, Deborah is not a battle commander. Her role is to inspire, predict, and celebrate in song. Her weapon is the word, and her very name is an anagram of 'she spoke' (*dibberah*)" (*Reading the Women of the Bible*, 49).

273 Kim, "Gender Complementarity," 277. Kim (ibid.) also shows evidence for this conclusion in the narrative's contrast between the courage of Deborah and the cowardice of Barak. For recognition and elaboration of this same emphasis upon woman's leadership in these chapters, cf. Robert Alter, *The World of Biblical Literature* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 40–43; and Mark A. Vincent, "The Song of Deborah: A Structural and Literary Consideration," *JSOT* 91 (2000): 64–65.

274 Kim, "Gender Complementarity," 277.

275 Ibid., 277–278. See ibid., 278–280 for discussion of the compositional balance of the two names. As another evidence of this compositional complementarity, note the phrase "woman of lightning" used of Deborah (Judg 4:4), paralleled with Barak, whose name means "lightning" (see the discussion of this above).

276 Kim, "Gender Complementarity," 280.

277 Contra e.g., Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than One Hundred Disputed Questions* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2004), 135, who mistakenly seeks to make a distinction between the use of the word "judge" with regard to Deborah and its usage with the other (male) judges. Deborah, Grudem claims (ibid.), never "ruled over God's people or taught them publicly or led them militarily." But such attempt to circumscribe Deborah's "judging" to the private sphere with no public leadership over men simply does not square with the full context of the narrative and subsequent poem. Furthermore, the very claim that a woman's "settling of private disputes" is not exercising leadership over a man, but public teaching constitutes such (inappropriate) leadership, is in my understanding a false distinction, resulting in endless casuistic lists of appropriate and inappropriate activities for women today, reminiscent of the Pharisaical hair-splitting lists of appropriate and inappropriate Sabbath observance in Jesus' day (see ibid., 84–101).

278 E.g., Grudem (ibid.), 137.

279 Ibid. Grudem fails to satisfactorily answer his own question: "Why then could women prophesy but not teach the people? We may not be able to understand all the reasons, but it is clear that the two roles were distinct, and that God allowed women to be prophets but not teachers" (ibid.). Such clear distinction of roles is not found in Scripture!

280 W. Kennedy Brown, *Gunethics or the Ethical Status of Woman* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1887), 36, cited in Yee, "By the Hand of a Woman," 119.

281 See, "By the Hand of a Woman," 110.

282 Deuteronomy 1, which melds together Exod 18 (the appointment of judges) with Num 11 (the appointment of the 70 elders) seems to imply that the two chapters are referring to the same office.

283 Hackett, "In the Days of Jael," 28.

284 Fewell and Gunn, "Controlling Perspectives," 402.

285 See the many occurrences of this usage as "valiant warrior" in the book of Judges alone: Judg 3:29; 6:12; 11:1; 18:2; 20:44, 46.

286 Fewell and Gunn, "Controlling Perspectives, 403, 307.

287 Hanselman, "Judges 4,"105 (italics his).

288 Meyers, *Discovering Eve*, 189–196. Cf. LaCocque, *The Feminine Unconventional*, 4.

289 A. D. H. Mayes, *Judges* (OTG 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press,1985), 90.

290 Meyers, *Discovering Eve*, 190. Cf. Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women of the Bible*, xvii–xviii: "When there is no centralized power, when political action takes place in the household or village, then women can rise to public prominence. . . . When a strong government is established, a pyramid of power extends from the top down through the various hierarchies and bureaucracies. At such a time, women in Israel were frozen out of the positions of power, and relegated to the private domain."

291 The term *mashal* is also used by David in his inspired "last words," reporting what God instructed him, that "He who rules [*mashal*] over men must be just, ruling [*mashal*] in the fear of God" (2 Sam 23:3). But this term *mashal* is not employed by the narrator to describe the reigns of either Saul or David.

292 Meyers, *Discovering Eve*, 196.

293 Several feminist interpreters of this story question whether this woman was really wise, or only shrewd, since she is seen to play into the hands of patriarchy (see Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes*, 153–155, for summary of views), but such a question ignores the perspective of the final form of the text, and the direct statement of the narrator. It is true that, according to the narrator and the woman's own testimony, Joab "put the words in her mouth" (2 Sam 14:3; cf. v. 19), but this does not detract from the wisdom of the woman and her ability to communicate the message to David.

294 See discussion of the profound understanding of the nature of justice and mercy displayed in her speech (esp. v. 9) by Roy Gane, *Altar Call* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Diadem, 1999), 232–237. For extended treatment of the proverb/parable (*mashal*) given by the wise woman Tekoa to David, with its many intertextual allusions esp. to the book of Genesis, see Larry L. Lyke, *King David with the Wise Woman of Tekoa: The Resonance of Tradition in Parabolic Narrative* (JSOT Supp. 255; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), although I do not subscribe to his post-modern emphasis on multiple readings.

295 See Claudia V. Camp, "The Wise Women of 2 Samuel: A Role Model for Women in Early Israel?" *CBQ* 43 (1981): 17–20, for the elaboration of this point. See also Brenner, *The Israelite Woman*, 34–35; and Patricia K. Willey, "The Importunate Woman of Tekoa and How She Got Her Way," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Bible* (ed. Dana Nolan Fewell; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 115–131.

296 See discussion in Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes*, 156; Camp, "The Wise Women of 2 Samuel," 14–29; and Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women of the Bible*, 58–61.

297 Camp, "Wise Women of 2 Samuel," 26. Camp (ibid.) draws implications for the relative status of women with men: "In the early years of Israel, with its egalitarian principles and desperate need for able minds as well as bodies, such qualities might have placed women not uncommonly in positions of authority in the village-tribal setting."

298 Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes*, 163–164. On the background of the Queen of Sheba, see Harold M. Parker Jr., "Solomon and the Queen of Sheba," *The Iliff Review* 24 (1967): 17–23.

299 Claudia V. Camp, "1 and 2 Kings," *The Woman's Bible Commentary* (ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe; London: SPCK Press, 1992), 102 (a fitting title, although I disagree with her denial of the historical basis of the narrative and with her suggestion that there is an "erotic subtext").

300 The narrator uses the term *gedolah* "great, notable, wealthy" (2 Kgs 4:8). See also discussion in Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes*, 173–174.

301 Frymer-Kensky (*Reading the Women of the Bible*, 64–73) pieces together the biblical clues that lead her to a plausible conclusion that this woman, like the daughters of Zelophehad, probably inherited land and lived among her own kin: "owning her own land, she is not dependent upon men for her livelihood" (72). Thus (ibid.) "The Shunammite may be an example of how women act when the *economic* constraints of patriarchy are removed."

302 Camp, "1 and 2 Kings," 106.

303 Ibid., 106–108 (citation 107).

304 See esp. Burke O. Long, "The Shunammite Woman: In the Shadow of the Prophet?" *Bible Review* 7 (1991): 12–19, 42; Mark Roncace, "Elisha and the Woman of Shunem: 2 Kings 4:8–37 and 8:1–6 Read in Conjunction," *JSOT* 91 (2000): 109–127 (and further bibliography listed on 109–110, n. 2); Mary E. Shields, "Subverting a Man of God, Elevating a Woman: Role and Power Reversals in 2 Kings 4," *JSOT* 58 (1993): 59–69; Jopie Siebert-Hommes, "The Widow of Zarephath and the Great Woman of Shunem: A Comparative Analysis of Two Stories," in *Samuel and Kings* (ed. Athalya Brenner; FCB 2/7; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 98–114; and Uriel Simon, *Reading Prophetic Narratives* (trans. Lenn J. Schramm; Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature; Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1997), 227–262.

305 For further discussion and characterization of Huldah, see Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes*, 174–175; Phipps, *Assertive Biblical Women*, 83–92; and Arlene Swidler, "In Search of Huldah," *TBT* 98 (1978): 1780–1785.

306 Frymer-Kensky, *Reading the Women of the Bible*, 63.

307 For studies dealing with the characterization of Esther (and Vashti), see esp. Mieke Bal, "Lots of Writing," *Semeia* 54 (1991): 77–102; Timothy K. Beal, *The Book of Hiding: Gender, Ethnicity, Annihilation, and Esther* (London: Routledge, 1997); Berquist, *Reclaiming Her Story*, 154–166; Michael Beckett, *Gospel in Esther* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster, 2002); Adele Berlin, *Esther: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (The JPS Bible Commentary; Philadelphia, Pa.: Jewish Publication Society, 2001), liv–lix; idem, "Reclaiming Esther: From Sex Object to Sage," *JBQ* 26, no. 1 (January–March 1998): 3–10; Klara Butting, "Esther: A New Interpretation of the Joseph Story in the Fight against Anti-Semitism and Sexism," in *Ruth and Esther* (ed. Athalya Brenner; FCB, 2/3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 239–248; Claudia V. Camp, "The Three Faces of Esther: Traditional Woman, Royal Diplomat, Authenticator of Tradition," *Academy: Journal of Lutherans in Professions* 38 (1982): 20–25; Linda Day, *Three Faces of a Queen: Characterization in the Books of Esther* (JSOTSup 186; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); John F. Craghan, "Esther: A Fully Liberated Woman," *TBT* 24, no. 1 (January 1986): 6–11; Michael V. Fox, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1991); Lee W. Humphreys, "A Lifestyle for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," *JBL* 93 (1973): 211–223; LaCocque, *The Feminine Unconventional*, 49–83; Larry Lichtenwalter, *Behind the Seen: God's Hand in Esther's Life . . . and Yours* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 2001);; Susan Niditch, "Short Stories: The Book of Esther and the Theme of Women as A Civilizing Force," in *Old Testament Interpretation Past, Present, and Future: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker* (ed. James Luther Mays et al.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 195–209; idem, *Underdogs and Tricksters: A Prelude to Biblical Folklore* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 126–145; Sakenfeld, *Just Wives?* 49–67; Sidnie Ann White, "Esther: A Feminine Model for Jewish Diaspora," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. Peggy L. Day; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 161–177; idem (now Sidnie White Crawford), "Esther and Judith: Contrasts in Character," in *The Book of Esther in Modern Research* (ed. Sidnie White Crawford and Leonard J. Greenspoon; London: T & T Clark, 2003), 61–76.

308 Fox, *Esther*, 210. Fox (205–211) refutes the feminist critiques of Esther Fuchs, A. L. Laffey, and others who see in this book only a "stereotypi-

cal woman in a man's world" in "full compliance with patriarchy." In this section I highlight the positive valuation of the woman Esther, although I do not wish to give the impression that she is without character faults. In the next chapter, as I discuss her exogamous marriage to Ahasuerus, Esther's compromise of biblical principles will be made clear.

309 White, "Esther: A Feminine Model," 173; cf. idem "Esther and Judith," 61–76. For a Christian perspective of Esther as an exemplar of God's servant, see Beckett, *Gospel in Esther*, passim.

310 Bronner, "Esther Revisited," 194; cf. idem, "Reclaiming Esther," 3–10. For further demonstration of Esther's role as authoritative, liberating leader, see esp. Berlin, *Esther*, liv–lvii; Craghan, "Esther," 6–11; Gitay, "Esther and the Queen's Throne," 73–93; Sakenfeld, *Just Wives?* 49–67; and Wyler, "Esther," 111–135.

311 For the intertextual linkages and implications, see esp. Butting, "Esther," 239–248; and Niditch, "Esther," 26–46.

312 Camp, "Female Voice, Written Word," 106 (see the discussion, 105–107).

313 Tamara C. Eskenazi, "Out from the Shadows: Biblical Women in the Postexilic Era," *JSOT* 54 (1992): 25–43. Cf. Joan E. Cook, "Women in Ezra and Nehemiah," *TBT* 37 (1999): 212–216, who also points out "egalitarian roles" (216) of the women mentioned in Ezra-Nehemiah.

314 Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 48, 50.

315 Kathleen M. O'Connor, "Jeremiah," in *The Woman's Bible Commentary* (ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe; London: SPCK, 1992), 176. Cf. the summary of interpretations by Bauer, *Gender in the Book of Jeremiah*, 138–145

316 See Deborah F. Sawyer, "Gender-Play and Sacred Text: A Scene from Jeremiah," *JSOT* 83 (1999): 99–111, who points out the many intertextual linkages between this section of Jeremiah and Gen 1–3, and moves in the direction of my suggestion (albeit with a postmodern deconstructionist approach which I reject). See also William L. Holladay, "Jeremiah XXXI 22b Reconsidered: 'The Woman Encompasses the Man," *VT*16 (1966): 236–239.

317 Motyer, *Isaiah*, 502. For evidence that this passage refers to the Messiah, see ibid., 489–505.

318 Ibid.

319 For discussion of key intertextual parallels between Joel 2 and Num 11, see especially Raymond B. Dillard, "Joel," in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, vol. 1, ed. Thomas E. McComiskey (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992), 294–295.

320 C. F. Keil, "Joel," in *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes,* by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, vol. 10 (2 vols. in one): *The Minor Prophets*, by C. F. Keil (reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 1:211.

321 Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The American Commentary, 19a (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 369.

322 Ibid.

323 Keil, "Joel," 211.

324 Dillard, "Joel," 295.

325 Hans Walter Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 67.

326 Ibid.

ELLEN WHITE, WOMEN IN MINISTRY, AND THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

1 *Evangelism, 456–495.*

2 This act created much division among the population and set the stage for civil disobedience among abolitionists and Sabbatarian Adventists. The Fugitive Slave Act imposed heavy penalties on those who refused to help government slave catchers or who obstructed the recapture of a fugitive slave. Northerners were held directly responsible for helping recapture slaves who fled to the north. Ellen White stood firmly against slavery and saw it as a moral evil. She straightforwardly advocated civil disobedience in regard to the Fugitive Slave Act. "I was shown that we have men placed over us for rulers, and laws to govern the people. Were it not for these laws, the world would be in a worse condition than it is now. Some of these laws are good, and some bad. The bad have been increasing, and we are yet to be brought into straight places. But God will sustain his people in being firm, and living up to the principles of his word. Where the laws of men conflict with God's word and law, we are to obey the word and law of God, whatever the consequences may be. The laws of our land requiring us to deliver a slave to his master, we are not to obey, and we must abide the consequences of the violation of this law. This slave is not the property of any man. God is his rightful Master, and man has no right to take God's workmanship into his hands, and claim his as his own" (*Testimonies for the Church, 1:201–202).*

3 See *Gospel Workers, 384–388 and her book Temperance.*

4 See, for example, her books *Ministry of Healing and Counsels on Health.*

5 See, for example, her books *Education and Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students.*

6 *Spiritual Gifts, 2:39; "Looking for that Blessed Hope," Signs of the Times, June 24, 1889.*

7 George R. Knight, *Ellen White's World: A Fascinating Look at the Times in Which She Lived (Hagerstown, MD:* Review and Herald*, 1998), 105–109.*

8 Ellen G. White to Edson and Emma White, October 17 (Letter 16a), 1870; Ellen G. White to W. C. White, October 17 (Letter 16), 1870.

9 Ellen G. White to James White, April 1 (Letter 17a), 1880.

10 See Gerry Chudleigh, "The Campbellite and Mrs. White," *Pacific Union Recorder*, (112:7) July 2012, 6. One of my doctoral students, Wendy Jackson, professor at Avondale College in Australia, is completing a dissertation comparing Alexander Campbell and Ellen White's views of church unity. Her study is a fascinating comparison of their biblical hermeneutics and doctrine of the church.

11 J. N. Andrews, "May Women Speak in Meeting?" *Review and Herald,* January 2, 1879, p. 324 (emphasis added).

12 J. N. Andrews, "Women in the Bible," *Signs of the Times,* October 30, 1879, p. 324.

13 James White, "Women in the Church," *Review and Herald*, May 29, 1879, p. 172.

14 Ellen White spoke in favor of male headship in the home but did not transfer this concept to the church or society. Furthermore, she based her thoughts on male headship in the home on the result of the fall of Adam and Eve, and not on the order of the creation of Eve after Adam. See *Patriarchs and Prophets, 58–59. If the concept of male headship is rooted in the creation order before the fall, then it becomes a permanent status and invariably applies to all men and women in the church and society.*

15 "The Laborer Is Worthy of His Hire," Manuscript 43a, 1898, in *Manuscript Releases*, 5:324–327.

16 I am grateful for insights I received from Denis Kaiser, a doctoral student at Andrews University, who has done recently a study of the development of rite of ordination and concept of ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist church from 1850 to 1920. His study was commissioned by the Inter-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists. Denis Kaiser, "Setting Apart for the Ministry: Theory and Practices in Seventh-day Adventism (1850–1920)," paper prepared for the Biblical Research Committee of the Inter-European Division, March 18, 2013; slightly revised May 13, 2013.

17 Ellen G. White to Brother Johnson, n.d. (Letter 33), 1879, in *Manuscript Releases*, 19:56 (emphasis added).

18 *Testimonies for the Church, 4:390 (emphasis added).*

19 *Testimonies for the Church, 6:322 (emphasis added).*

20 *Testimonies for the Church, 8:229–230 (emphasis added).*

21 R*eview and Herald, June 21, 1887, in Fundamentals of Christian Education, 117–118 (emphasis added).*

22 *Adventist Home, 35.*

23 *Retirement Years, 26.*

24 "The Laborer Is Worthy of His Hire," Manuscript 43a, 1898, in *Manuscript Releases*, 5:324–327.

25 In 1898, Ellen White had this to say regarding the adoption of children by ministers' families. "Letters have come to me from several, asking my advice upon the question, Should ministers' wives adopt infant children? Would I advise them to do this kind of work. To some who were regarding this matter favorably, I answered, No; God would have you help your husband in his work. The Lord has not given you children of your own; His wisdom is not to be questioned. He knows what is best. Consecrate your powers to God as a Christian worker. You can help your husband in many ways. You can support him in his work by working for him, by keeping your intellect improved. By using the ability God has given you, you can be a home-keeper. And more than this, you can help to give the message" (Manuscript 43a, 1898, in *Manuscript Releases, 5:325).*

26 "All Kinds of Workers Needed," Manuscript 149, 1899, in *Manuscript Releases*, 18:66–67 (emphasis added).

27 *The Desire of Ages*, 290.

28 *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:12.

29 *The Acts of the Apostles*, 163. Two chapters, in particular, clearly present her understanding of the purpose of the church: "God's Purpose in the Church," *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:9–13, and "God's purpose for His Church," *The Acts of the Apostles*, 9–16.

30 One good example of this is the chapter "A Consecrated Ministry" in *The Acts of the Apostles*, 359–371.

31 "A Preparation for the Coming of the Lord," *Review and Herald*, November 24, 1904 (emphasis added).

32 See Ellen White's comments in connection with the rebellion of Korah in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 398–399.

33 Three centuries before Ellen White, Martin Luther also appealed to 1 Peter 2:9 to express his belief that every Christian is a priest for God. In a 1520 treatise, in which he invited the German princes to reform the church, he wrote, "The fact is that our baptism consecrates us all without exception, and makes us all priests" (An appeal to the ruling class of German nationality as to the amelioration of the state of Christendom in John Dillenberger, ed., Martin Luther: Selections from his writings (New York: Doubleday, 1962), 408).

34 Concerning 1 Peter 2:9 see, for example, *Testimonies to Ministers*, 422, 441; *Testimonies for the Church*, 2:169; 6:123, 274. For John 15:16 see, *Testimonies to Ministers*, 212–213.

35 "The Great Commission; a Call to Service," *Review and Herald*, March 24, 1910.

36 "Our Work," *Signs of the Times*, August 25, 1898.

37 *The Acts of the Apostles*, 110.

38 "A Preparation for the Coming of the Lord," *Review and Herald*, November 24, 1904.

39 *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:444 (emphasis added).

40 "Words to Our Workers," *Review and Herald*, April 21, 1903.

41 *The Acts of the Apostles*, 40.

42 Ellen G. White to "Dear Brethren and Sisters," October 19 (Letter 138), 1909, quoted in Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Later Elmshaven Years, 1905–1915, 211 (emphasis added).

43 *The Acts of the Apostles, 161–162 (emphasis added).*

44 There is much confusion regarding the meaning of an office in Scripture and the writings of Ellen White. This passage indicates that an office, like that of the apostles Paul and Barnabas, is related to a function, task or work. The office of apostle is for a specific work in the church, and in the case of Paul and Barnabas it was to preach the gospel to Gentiles. Her comment, "At a later date the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands was greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as if a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work", seems to indicate again that someone's ordination should not be understood as necessarily qualifying this person for other future tasks he may be asked to perform. Rather, ordination is for a specific task. This comment invites some reflection on the Seventh-day Adventist practice of ordaining someone for life for any and all ministerial functions someone may be asked to perform thereafter. Traditionally, one's ordination to Seventh-day Adventist ministry has served as an initiation rite that qualifies one to perform all future tasks of ministry, including pastoral ministry, evangelism, teaching, leadership and administration. This ordination also remains valid in retirement even if the minister no longer functions in a ministry role.

45 *Early Writings*, 100–101. It is interesting to note that in this passage Ellen White does not use the word ordination, but rather refers to this rite as a setting apart and a commission. This indicates that she uses these words and concepts synonymously.

46 *Medical Ministry*, 248–249.

47 Manuscript 5, 1908, in *Evangelism*, 546 (emphasis added).

48 "The Duty of the Minister and the People," *Review and Herald*, July 9, 1895, (emphasis added).

49 Manuscript 43a, 1898, in *Manuscript Releases*, 5:323.

50 Ibid., 5:325.

51 In 1879, the General Conference voted that "none but those who are Scripturally ordained are properly qualified to administer baptism and the other ordinances." G. I. Butler, "Eighteenth Annual Session, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: Twelfth Meeting, November 24, 1879, 7 p.m.," Battle Creek, Mich., General Conferences Archives.

52 "Remarks Concerning the Foreign Mission Work," Manuscript 75, 1896 (emphasis added).

53 *Fundamentals of Christian Education, 117, 118.*

54 "Regarding the Testimonies," Manuscript 23, 1911, in Selected Messages, 1:57.

55 *Testimonies for the Church, 3:137.*

56 *Medical Ministry, 57, 58.*

57 An interview with Ellen White, "Counsel on Age of School Entrance," Manuscript 7, 1904, in *Selected Messages, 3:214–226.*

58 Kaiser, 33.

59 Manuscript 23, 1889, in *Manuscript Releases, 12:57; Gilbert M. Valentine, W.W. Prescott: Forgotten Giant of Adventism's Second Generation, Adventist Pioneer Series (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 2005), 80–81.*

60 See our discussion of this article on pp. 18–19 above.

61 C. C. Crisler to Mrs. L. E. Cox, March 12 and 22, 1916, in *Daughters of God, 253–255.*

62 Many studies have shown the involvement of women in various forms of ministry during Ellen White's time. Beverly Beem and Ginger Hanks Harwood, "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy": James White, Uriah

Smith, and the "Triumphant Vindication of the Right of the Sisters to Preach," Andrews University Seminary Studies, 43:1 (2005), 41–58.

63 Ellen G. White to "Brethren," August 5 (Letter 20), 1888, in 1888 Materials, 38–46. A short summary of the issues discussed at the session is A. V. Wallenkampf, What Every Adventist Should Know About 1888 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1988).

64 Ellen G. White to "My Brethren in the Ministry," August 3 (Letter 62), 1910, in Paulson Collection, 42–44.

65 *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 380–381. See the entire chapter, 373–416.

66 *Child Guidance*, 21–22.

67 *Spiritual Gifts*, 2:iii.

68 Ellen G. White to Isaac and Adelia Van Horn, (Letter 48) 1876, in *Daughters of God*, 138–140.

69 Ellen G. White to Isaac Van Horn, February 26 (Letter 8), 1884.

70 Such a scheme leads most readily to an Arian view of the divinity of Christ. Ellen White believed in the eternal equality of all three persons of the Godhead. Here's a sample of her thoughts: "This Saviour was the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person. He possessed divine majesty, perfection, and excellence. He was equal with God" (1869; Testimonies for the Church, 2:200). "Before the entrance of evil, there was peace and joy throughout the universe. . . . Christ the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, and in purpose,—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ, the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings. . . . and to Christ, equally with the Father, all Heaven gave allegiance" (1888; The Great Controversy, 1888 ed., 493). "He [Christ] was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore. The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right" (1906; *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906).

71 *Early Writings, 97.*

72 "Love, the Need of the Church," Manuscript 24, 1892, in *Manuscript Releases, 11:266.*

IS HEADSHIP THEOLOGY BIBLICAL?

1 The word *headship* itself is a relatively recent word, first used in 1582. The word *leadership* is even more recent.

2 Unless otherwise specified, the New Revised Standard Version is used.

3 The Greek word *archon* (ruler or leader) is used in the New Testament for Jewish leaders, of Roman officials, of the forces of evil, and of Christ, but never of Christian ministers.

4 In addition, what does male headship mean to the 22 nations currently led by female prime ministers or presidents and to the 13 commonwealth countries with women serving as governors general? Additionally, in the United States women make up 49 percent of currently enrolled medical students, 51 percent of law students, 47 percent of dental students, and 60.8 percent of pharmacy students.

5 Ján Barna, *Ordination of Women in Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Serbia: Euro Dream, 2012), 242–243.

6 Richard M. Davidson, "Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture," *Women in Ministry: Biblical & Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 284.

7 Davidson, 259–295.

8 Madelynn Haldeman, "The Role of Women in the Early Christian Church," Mohaven Papers (September 1973), 52; available online at http://www.adventistarchives.org/1973-5-mohaven#.UaEvRdimXl8.

9 Sheryl Prinz-McMillan, "Who's in Charge of the Family?" *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women*, ed. Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart (Langley Park, MD: TEAM Press, 1995), 216.

10 Prinz-McMillan, 197–221.

11 Peter M. Van Bemmelen, "Equality, Headship, and Submission in the Writings of Ellen G. White," *Women in Ministry: Biblical & Historical Perspectives*, Nancy Vyhmeister, ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 297–311.

12 Van Bemmelen, 305.

13 Van Bemmelen, 306.

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AUTHORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN LEADER

1 At the very outset of this paper, I would like to state that I fully accept Ellen G. White's inspiration and prophetic ministry in the Adventist Church. It was through reading the *Desire of Ages* that I fell in love with Jesus; through reading of the *Great Controversy*, I became acquainted with God's purpose for humanity; and no other book has taught me more about salvation through Jesus Christ than *Steps to Christ*. In preparing this paper, however, I purposely avoided using Ellen White's writings to support my conclusions. My insights, thus, are based on my understanding of Scripture's message alone. This, I believe, is in agreement with Ellen White's counsel that her writings should not be used to settle doctrinal debates when the Lord had not given her specific light on the matter. To my knowledge, Ellen White does not speak to the issue of women's ordination. William Fagal

reached similar conclusion when he wrote: "her statements neither support ordination for women nor explicitly forbid it. None of her writings deal directly with this issue." *Ministry*, December 1988, 11.

2 For an excellent treatise on the Church and its divinely instituted origin, mission, and organizational structures, see Raoul Dederen, "Church," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 538–581.

3 Dederen, 559–561.

4 For the sake of brevity, the following description will be limited only to the concept of authority that evolved within early post-Apostolic Christianity. In many ways, Fundamentalist Protestantism, especially those branches that come under the umbrella of Calvinism, tends to reflect the pre-Reformation understanding of authority. The question of the Fundamentalist Protestant understanding of authority, however, will be addressed in another study.

5 Ralph Martin Novak, *Christianity and the Roman Empire* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001), 45.

6 It is in the writings of the early Church writer Ignatius (d.ca. 110–130AD) that we encounter a strongly hierarchical ministry for the first time. Ignatius *Magnesians* 6.4 in *Early Christian Writings,* ed., Maxwell Staniforth (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 88. Kenneth Osborne, *Priesthood, A History of Ordained Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 52.

7 Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), 100.

8 Ignatius thus writes: "For your part, the becoming thing for you…[is] to show him [the bishop] every possible respect, having regards to the power God has conferred on him. . . . So for the honour of Him who loved us, propriety requires an obedience from you that is more than mere lip service." Ignatius *Magnesians* 3 in Staniforth, 87–88.

9 Thus Novak writes: "Because essentially all of the cultures of the Graeco-Roman world were hierarchical and patriarchal, a gradual increase over time of the bishop's authority might have been reasonably expected as the natural result of the local Christian communities adopting modes and structures of authority that paralleled the predominant cultural values." Novak, 45; Will Durrant adds that "when Christianity conquered Rome the ecclesiastical structure of the pagan church . . . passed like maternal blood into the new religion, and captive Rome captured her conqueror." *Caesar and Christ: The Story of Civilization* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944), 671–672; cf. Edwin Hatch, *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918), 185, 213; Bruce L. Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), 134.

10 For a detailed history of how the humble position of the pastor evolved into episcopal and papal offices, see Klaus Schatz, *Papal Primacy: From Its Origins to the Present* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1996).

11 Frederick J. Cwiekowski, "Priesthood," *Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989), 1049.

12 Paul Josef Cordes, *Why Priests?: Answers Guided by the Teaching of Benedict XVI* (New York: Scepter Publishers, 2010), 28–30.

13 Thus, in the fourth century Jerome stated: "There can be no Christian community without its ministers." Jerome *Dialogus contra Luciferanos* 21, in *The Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 6:331. It is not surprising, therefore, that Cyprian would famously exclaim *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside of the church there is no salvation). Cyprian *Epistle* 72.21 (*ANF* 5:384).

14 This happened mainly through the work of Augustine, although already in the second century Tertullian wrote of an essential (or ontological) difference between the clergy and laity. Cf., Benedict J. Groeschel, *A Priest Forever* (Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 1998), 185; Bernhard Lohse, *A Short History of Christian Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 139.

15 In his *Exhortation to Chastity,* he thus wrote: "It is the authority of the Church that instituted the distinction between clergy and laity [Lat.: *ordinem et plebem]* and the honor shown the ranks of the clergy made holy for God." Tertullian *Exhortation to Chastity* 7.3. Translation by Robert B. Eno, in *Teaching Authority in the Early Church* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1984), 54–55; cf., *ANF* 4:54. The exact Latin phrase reads: *Differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit ecclesiae auctoritas et honor per ordinis consessum sanctificatus*. John Henry Hopkins, *The Church of Rome in Her Primitive Purity, Compared with the Church of Rome at Present Day* (London: J. G. and F. Rivington, 1839), 89. Note the parallels between the order of senators and plebs of the Roman Empire and this usage found in Tertullian. P. M. Gy, "Notes on the Early Terminology of Christian Priesthood," in *The Sacrament of Holy Orders* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1957), 99.

16 "Constitution on the Church," in J. Neuner and H. Roos, *The Teaching of the Catholic Church* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1967), 219–220. Similar sentiments are expressed by Pius X in his 1906 encyclical *Vehementer Nos* 8. There the pope states: "The Church is essentially an unequal society, that is, a society comprising two categories of persons, the Pastors and the flock, those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful. So distinct are these categories that with the pastoral body only rests the necessary right and authority for promoting the end of the society and directing all its members towards that end; the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led, and, like a docile flock, to follow the Pastors." http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_11021906_vehementer-nos_en.html

17 Reading the section dealing with the office of a priest in the official *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is particularly illuminating on this point. In it the authors clearly and concisely explain the need for human headship in the church. The particular portion dealing with a pastor's headship in the church is entitled "In the person of Christ the Head." *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Liguori: Liguori Publications, 2004), 387–388.

18 *Ceremonial of Bishops: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope John Paul II* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1989), 33. See also Paul VI, *Inter Insigniores* (Declaration on the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood) issued in 1976 in *From "Inter Insigniores" to "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis"* (Washington, D. C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1996), 43–49. The imagery of marriage is clearly visible in the ceremony of Catholic episcopal ordination. The ordained bishop vows his fidelity to the church and receives the espicopal ring, which symbolizes his authority over the church. The bishop, thus, becomes the "husband" of the church. The symbolism of marriage is further accentuated by the use of the "marriage ring" and "the kiss of peace" within the ordination rite. One of the prayers used during ordination reads: "Receive this ring, the seal of your fidelity; adorned with undefiled faith, preserve unblemished the bride of God, the holy Church." Susan K. Wood, *Sacramental Orders* (Collegeville: The Order of St. Benedict, Inc., 2000), 53–55. In the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, a church manual for episcopal ordination, we also find this statement: "The *ring* is the symbol of the bishop's fidelity to and nuptial bond with the Church, his spouse, and he is to wear it always." 33. Megan McLaughlin further writes: "The bishop's marriage to his church [is] more than just a metaphor. . . . At least by the beginning of the tenth century, and probably before, it had acquired a mystical significance as well, which was derived from the ancient and influential allegory of Christ's marriage to the church." Megan McLaughlin, "The Bishop as Bridegroom: Marital Imagery and Clerical Celibacy in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," in *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed., Michael Frassetto (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 210. Conversely, when a Catholic woman takes her vows to become

a nun, she becomes a Bride of Christ. Completed with marriage vows and a ring, her final investiture represents a marriage ceremony. E. Ann Matter, "Mystical Marriage," in *Women and Faith: Catholic Religious Life in Italy from Late Antiquity to the Present*, ed., Lucetta Scaraffia and Gabriella Zarri (Eulama Literary Agency, 1999), 35.

19 Timothy M. Dolan, *Priests for the Third Millennium* (Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2000), 70–71; Sarah Butler, *The Catholic Priesthood and Women: A Guide to the Teaching of the Church* (Chicago: Hillengrand Books, 2006), 90. Megan McLaughlin, "The Bishop as Bridegroom: Marital Imagery and Clerical Celibacy in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," in *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York: Garland Publications, 1998), 210–211.

20 John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem* (Boston: St. Paul Books and Media, 1988). See especially the section entitled "The Church – The Bride of Christ," 79–94.

21 Matt 18:1–4, 20:20–28, 23:8–11; Mark 9:33–36, 10:35–45; Luke 9:46–48, 22:24–27; John 13:1–17.

22 Matt 20:20–28; Mark 10:35–45; Luke 22:24–27.

23 Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, "δουλος," *TDNT* (1964), 2: 270, 261.

24 Hermann W. Beyer, "διακονεω," *TDNT* (1964), 2: 82.

25 Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ* (Downers Grove, Inter Varsity Press, 1999), 102.

26 See, for example, 2 Corinthians 4:5 where Paul writes, "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants (*doulous*) for Jesus sake." See also 1 Corinthians 9:19. In Colossians 1:7 and 4:7, Paul uses the terms *doulos* and *diakonos* interchangeably.

27 For a history of these events, see my paper, "The Problem of Ordination," presented to TOSC in January 2013.

28 Campenhausen, 79.

29 While in ancient literature, both biblical and extra-biblical, these two terms normally have negative connotations, when used by Paul and applied to the followers of Christ, they acquire a new meaning signifying total commitment to Christ and to one another. Murray J. Harris *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 140–143.

30 Other examples include Phil 1:1, Col 1:7, 23, 25; Titus 1:1. Harris, in his book, notes an interesting phenomenon that most translations avoid translating the word *doulos* with reference to ministerial leadership, invariably translating the word as "minster" or "servant." He cites a general distaste for the concept of slavery and a possibility of misunderstandings as the main reasons behind this phenomenon. Harris, 183–185. And yet, this was the very word Paul and his co-workers adopted as representing their leadership work in the church.

31 It must be emphasized that the word "office" with reference to the leadership role in the church is not found in the Greek New Testament.

32 Jesus uses exactly the same Greek word, *katakurieuousin*, in Mark 10:42.

33 Sometimes 1 Timothy 2:12 and 5:17 are used to justify the continuance of a hierarchical understanding of authority in the church. In the former, Paul forbids women to exercise authority over a man. The word used for "authority" here is *hapax legomenon*, i.e., only used once in the Greek New Testament. A careful word study shows that in extra-biblical Greek literature of the first century, this was not a neutral word to express the concept of authority but was associated with an oppressive kind of hierarchical authority that left little room for the exercise of free will. On the basis of our study above, it becomes clear that no one in the church, *neither women nor men, should ever indulge in exercising this kind of power,* as it clearly represents a counterfeit view of authority. For an insightful discussion on the first century meaning of *authentein*, see Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 200–201; cf., Carroll D. Osburn, "ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ (1 Timothy 2:12)," *Restoration Quarterly* 25 (1982): 1–12. The authors of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, write on the issue of "usurping authority" in 1 Timothy 2:12: "The Scriptures exhort Christians to do everything decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:20). In the days of Paul, custom required that women be very much in the background. Therefore, if women believers had spoken out in public or otherwise made themselves prominent, these scriptural injunctions would have been violated and the cause of God would thus have suffered reproach." (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1957), 295–296. See also an excellent article, written on 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:12, that was heartily endorsed by Uriah Smith: G. C. Tenney, "Woman's Relation to the Cause of Christ," *The Review and Herald,* May 24, 1892, 328–329. A statement in that article deserves to be quoted here: "It is manifestly illogical and unfair to give to any passage of Scripture an unqualified radical meaning that is at variance with the main tenor of the Bible, and directly in conflict with its plain teachings. The Bible may be reconciled in all its parts without going outside the lines of consistent interpretation. But great difficulty is likely to be experienced by those who interpret isolated passages in an independent light according to the ideas they happen to entertain upon them." Tenney, 328.

In the latter passage (1 Timothy 5:17), Paul states: "Let the elders who rule well be counted of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine." The word "rule" is at the center of contention. However, the Greek *proestōtes*, often translated as "rule," simply means "those who are standing before you." It is a verb form of the noun *prostates*, which in ancient Greek was applied to those who were charged with protecting the community and helping it operate smoothly rather than ruling over it. For more details on the etymology of this word, see my article, "Phoebe, Was She an Early Church Leader?" *Ministry*, April 2013, 11–13.

34 All this does not mean that there may not be an emergency situation in the life of the church during which there could arise a need for someone to temporarily take a direct, hierarchical, leadership role. In such situations, anyone possessing appropriate leadership gifting could take charge until order is restored. Events like this, however, are rare, and ordained pastors are not always the best-qualified persons to deal with emergency situations. Once resolution is reached, however, the life of the church should return to a communal way of dealing with problems. On the importance of the community in Paul's writings and a communal way of resolving conflict, see the excellent study by James M. Howard, *Paul, the Community and Progressive Sanctification: An Exploration in Community-Based Transformation Within Pauline Theology* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007).

35 This conclusion is strengthened by several considerations. First, in 1 Timothy 3:1, Paul says, "if anyone" (*ei tis*) desires to be an overseer. *Tis* is a gender neutral indefinite pronoun. It simply means "anyone." In the NT, this is an inclusive term referring to both men and women. For example, in John 6:50 we find this passage: "But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone (*tis*) can eat and not die." It would be very strange to say that only men can eat bread and not die. Indeed, some translations, such as the KJV, translate *tis* as "a man" but we instantly think of humanity. This means that the NT often uses representative masculine language to speak of both men and women. E.g., Romans 12:1, "I urge you, brothers (*adelfoi*—masculine in Greek)…to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice." Would this mean that Rom 12:1–2 is written only for men? Obviously, this is not a correct interpretation. Second, "husband of one wife" could well refer to monogamy and sexual purity. If taken as it is written, we would not be able to have unmarried men or widowers as pastors. Yet Paul himself wrote that celibate persons can serve God better (1 Cor 7:32–35). Also, pastors would have to have children (that would exclude childless pastors). The real intent of the phrase seems to point to a person who is committed (faithful) to his one spouse. Thus, the "one woman man" phrase functions as an exclusion of polygamy and sexual

promiscuity rather than indicating that a bishop must be a man. Finally, the phrase "husband of one wife" appears again in 1 Timothy 3:12 with reference to deacons. The masculine word *diakonos* is used. If Paul did indeed speak in gender terms, it would mean that only men could be deacons. However, in Romans 16:1, Paul refers to Phoebe as a deacon of the church in Cenchrea. Most versions translate this word as "servant." The word is actually *diakonos*, the same masculine word used to describe a deacon as a husband of one wife in 1 Timothy 3:12. This clearly shows that when Paul used the phrase "one woman man," he did not try to convey that only men could be bishops or deacons. If so, Romans 16:1 would not make any sense. I am fairly certain that the gender of a bishop or deacon was not on Paul's mind. If gender was truly important to him, we would have a clear statement in 1 Timothy or elsewhere, such as "a bishop must be a man."

36 Examples abound. Here are some of them: Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:10; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 4:7; Acts 20:19. Gordon D. Fee calculated the number of times the word *doulos* and its various forms appears in the Pauline writings. The results are impressive: Fee estimates that, altogether, words that are related to the noun *doulos* appear 59 times in Paul: 30 times as *doulos*; 2 times as *syndoulos* (co-slave); 17 times as *douleuō* (to perform duties of a slave); 4 times as *douleia* (slavery); and 6 times as *douloō* (to enslave). While at times the word slave is used with reference to the actual institution of slavery (a negative usage of the term), a significant majority refer to the ministry of Paul and others. Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 62; cf., Harris, 20.

37 James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1.

38 Theology of Ordination Study Committee, *Consensus Statement on a Seventh-day Adventist Theology of Ordination*.

39 The very reason why we are discussing women's ordination testifies to the fact that today the role of the pastor in the church has lost its original meaning.

40 For more information, see my paper, "The Problem of Ordination," presented to TOSC in January 2013.

41 The Pauline image of the church as the Body of Christ clearly conveys the idea that Christ is the only Head of the church of God.

42 Of course male headship in the family must also be defined in non-hierarchical and self-sacrificial, rather than jurisdictional, terms. As Christ gave Himself up (or self-sacrificed Himself) for His bride, so husbands must self-sacrifice themselves for their wives and children.

43 It must be noted, at this point, that the word "submit" in Ephesians 5:22 in the Greek simply states "and wife to husbands." The mutual submission of Ephesians 5:21, therefore, provides a greater context for understanding Paul's message to husbands and wives. If so, then the husband's love is also a form of submission. Common human experience shows that by loving someone, we also submit to them.

44 This, of course, brings us back to the meaning of the twin expressions: *Vicarius Filii Dei* and *In persona Christi Capitis.* See footnote 17.

45 G. C. Tenney, "Woman's Relation to the Cause of Christ," *The Review and Herald,* May 24, 1892, 328.

BACK TO CREATION: AN ADVENTIST HERMENEUTIC

1 See Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 17: "Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation."

2 Hermeneutics is like a cookbook, exegesis like a baking process, and exposition (preaching or teaching) like a serving of freshly baked bread or cake.

3 As summarized in the "Methods of Bible Study" document voted by the General Conference Committee Annual Council, "Bible Study: Presuppositions, Principles, and Methods," Rio de Janeiro, October 12, 1986, published in the *Adventist Review*, January 22, 1987 (available online at https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/bible-interpretation-hermeneutics/methods-bible-study), attached as an appendix to this paper. This method has various names: the historical-grammatical method or historical-grammatical-literary-theological method. For basic treatments of biblical hermeneutics from an Adventist perspective, see also George W. Reid, ed., *Understanding Scripture: An Adventist Approach* (Biblical Research Institute Studies, vol. 1; Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2005); Richard M. Davidson, "Biblical Interpretation," in the *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen, Commentary Series, vol. 12 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 58–104; idem, "Interpreting Scripture: An Hermeneutical Decalogue," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 4, no. 2. (1993): 95–114; and Gordon M. Hyde, ed., *A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics* (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Institute, 1974).

For a comprehensive study of Biblical hermeneutics from a general Christian perspective, see Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, revised and expanded ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006); Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 3d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1970); idem, *Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987); and Gerhard Maier, *Biblical Hermeneutics* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994).

4 For the presuppositions, procedures, and methodology of the historical-critical method, see David R. Law, *The Historical-Critical Method: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012); Eryl W. Davies, *Biblical Criticism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013). For the evaluation of this method in comparison to the historical-historical-theological method, see Richard M. Davidson, "The Authority of Scripture: A Personal Pilgrimage," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 1, no. 1 (1990): 39–56.

5 See the article by Peter van Bemmelen on "Revelation and Inspiration," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Commentary Reference Series 12; Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2000), 22–57.

6 See Nancy Vyhmeister, "Junia the Apostle," *Ministry* (July 2013): 6–9.

7 For further study, see Philip B. Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 113–139.

8 For the historical background of the cult of Artemis (Diana), protognosticism, and other cultural movements in Ephesus in the time of Paul, see especially Sharon Hodgin Gritz, *Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus: A Study of 1 Timothy 2:9–15 in Light of the Religious and Cultural Milieu of the First Century* (New York: University of America, 1991). For further information on this and other issues related to 1 Tim 2, see Carl Cosaert, "Paul, Women, and the Ephesian Church: An Examination of 1 Timothy 2:8–15" (paper presented at the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July 22–24, 2013).

9 See, e.g., Richard M. Davidson, "Back to the Beginning: Genesis 1–3 and the Theological Center of Scripture," in *Christ, Salvation, and the Eschaton*, ed. Daniel Heinz, Jiří Moskala, and Peter M. van Bemmelen (Berrien Springs, MI: Old Testament Publications, 2009), 5–29.

10 For discussion of this and other relevant New Testament passages, see Teresa Reeve, "Ordination and Women Pastors: The Witness of the New Testament" (paper presented at the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July 22–24, 2013).

11 For work being a blessing, see, for example, Ellen G. White, *Adventist Home*, 142; and Ellen G. White, *Patriarch and Prophets*, 60.

12 In the Greek language the term *anēr* can mean either "man" or "husband," and the word *gynē* signifies "woman" or "wife." Always the literary context determines the meaning of these expressions. The same is true in Hebrew: the term *'ish* can mean either "man" or "husband," and

the word *'ishshah* has as well two meanings "woman" or "wife," and also the context decides their precise meaning. Can a biblical author play with these words and switch their meaning in the near context?

13 "The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption,—the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers" (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, 315).

"Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world. The proclamation of the third angel's message calls for the presentation of the Sabbath truth. This truth, with others included in the message, is to be proclaimed; but the great center of attraction, Christ Jesus, must not be left out. It is at the cross of Christ that mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. The sinner must be led to look to Calvary; with the simple faith of a little child he must trust in the merits of the Saviour, accepting His righteousness, believing in His mercy" (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, 156–157).

14 Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, 108–109.

15 This false philosophical concept contradicts the biblical Hebrew teaching on the unity and harmony of human nature and the complexity of all relationships. The dichotomy between "existence" and "function" is a "strange fire" in our Adventist circles (transported from the evangelical hierarchicalists or subordinationists). We cannot split a person into an ontological dimension on the one side and a functional dimension on the other side. The biblical teaching on the nature of humanity is that a human person is a unit. We are "made" of different functions and these functions characterize us as persons and reveal who we are. A person can have different functions, but these functions go always closely together with our very existence, with who we are! As we cannot split body and spirit, so we cannot dissect ontology and functions. Our functions and relationships define what kind of human beings we are. As Seventh-day Adventist we firmly stand on the platform of biblical monism.

Gen 1 and Gen 2 form two complementary Creation accounts and do not contradict each other. See my article, "A Fresh Look at Two Genesis Creation Accounts: Contradictions?" *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 49 (2011):45–65. The Hebrew language uses for Adam and Eve the same term *'adam* ("humanity") to designate them as human persons – see Gen 1:27. They are physically different but form a harmonious unit. They are perfectly united and are both spiritual leaders. There is no room in Gen 2 for the headship of Adam over Eve before sin!

Moreover, one cannot take examples from the "work" realm of our sinful world where the "leader" (director, president, dean, boss, ministerial secretary, etc.) can be considered as the "first among equals," and transfer this dynamic into the relationship between husband and wife in the sinless life of the Garden of Eden. This is a logical error.

Consider also the following explanation of the Spirit of Prophecy. Ellen G. White explicitly states that "harmony" between Adam and Eve was lost only after the Fall, and Eve's submission to Adam was the result of sin. Ellen White does not hint at all that there was a "functional spiritual male leadership" and submission of Eve to her husband before sin: "Eve was told of the sorrow and pain that must henceforth be her portion. And the Lord said, 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.' In the creation God had made her the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—**they would ever have been in harmony** with each other; **but sin** had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony **preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other**. Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband" (Ellen G. White, *Patriarch and Prophets*, 58; emphasis is mine). Ellen G. White never once differentiates between the "ontological equality" of Adam and Eve and "functional submission" of Eve to the "leadership or spiritual headship" of Adam before the Fall! She is not using this kind of vocabulary.

This misleading and false dichotomy was introduced into the evangelical discussion in the mid 1970's by George Knight III ("The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Male and Female with Special Attention to the Teaching/Ruling Functions in the Church," *JETS* 18 [1975]: 83–84); idem, *The Role Relationship of Men and Women: New Testament Teaching* [Chicago: Moody Press, 1985], 7–9), was popularized in the book edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991), and unfortunately has been adopted by many Adventists who oppose the ordination of women pastors and elders.

16 Pedrito Maynard-Reid, "Does James Teach Righteousness by Works?" in *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 416–417.

17 For details, see Jiří Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale* (*An Intertextual Study*) (Adventist Theological Society Dissertation Series 4; Berrien Springs, Mich.: Adventist Theological Society Publications, 2000), 377; cf. references cited in Richard M. Davidson and Paul S. Ratsara, "Dealing with Doctrinal Issues in the Church: Part 1," *Ministry* (February 2013): 6–7, 9.

It is also very interesting to observe that the Scripture reading in the Synagogue on the Day of Atonement (in the afternoon) is taken from Lev 17–18; Amos 9, and the book of Jonah. These three portions of the Hebrew Bible have Gentiles in mind. The first two readings (Leviticus and Amos) are definitely reflected in Acts 15, and the church's openness to non-Jews demonstrates familiarity and alignment with the main thought of the book of Jonah—the desire and compassion of God to save everyone.

18 Abraham became the father of all believers including Gentiles, because before he was circumcised, "he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness" (Gen 15:6 ESV). Thus, the Jewish-Christian church corrected the traditional interpretation of the Abrahamic covenant (only those who were physically circumcised were part of this covenant, see Gen 17; Exod 4:24–26), and by providing a new interpretation, all believing Gentiles were included into the church. Especially Paul helped the young Christian church to see the matter from this new perspective and to discover the intended meaning which was always present in the biblical text (Gen 12:2–3; Rom 4:1–17).

19 Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 12, 1913. Consider also the following: "A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend" (Ellen G. White, RH, February 25, 1902 par. 8).

20 Ekkehardt Muller, "Hermeneutical Guidelines for Dealing with Theological Questions." *BRI Newsletter* 40 (October 2012): 5–6.

21 Ekkehardt Muller, "The Ordination Debate: How to Approach the Theological Issues," *Ministry* (June 2013): 14–15.

22 Jiří Moskala, "Eating and Drinking," *Shabbat Shalom* (Spring–Summer 1999): 16.

23 See William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals, Exploring the Hermeneutic of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

24 Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11*, 344–348.

25 The same is with the biblical tithe. We pay it because we recognize that God is the Creator: we go back to Creation. The similar reasoning we use for our Adventist lifestyle of simplicity: back to Creation.

26 See Ellen G. White's 5-volume *Drama of the Ages* illustrating the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan: PP, PK, DA, AA, and GC.

27 For substantiation of this and other points dealing with the Old Testament material in this paper, see the study by Richard Davidson, "Should Women Be Ordained as Pastors? Old Testament Considerations," paper for the General Conference Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July 22–24, 2013), 1–88.

28 See, e.g., Richard M. Davidson, "Homosexuality in the Old Testament," in *Homosexuality, Marriage, and the Church: Biblical, Counseling, and Religious Liberty Issues*, ed. Roy E. Gane, Nicholas P. Miller, and H. Peter Swanson (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2012), 5–52.

29 See Richard M. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium," *JATS* 11, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring–Autumn 2000): 108–111; for a longer list of thirty lines of biblical evidence, see idem, *Song for the Sanctuary*: *SDA Textbook* (Silver Spring, MD: SDA Biblical Research Institute, forthcoming), chap. 6. (draft copy available upon request from davidson@andrews.edu. For non-Adventist scholars who have laid the exegetical foundation for these insights, see Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991), 68–103; G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (NSBT 17; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 66–80; Meridith G. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue* (South Hampton, MA: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1989), 31–32, 54–56; Eric Bolger, "The Compositional Role of the Eden Narrative in the Pentateuch" (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1993); William J. Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning* (Homebush, New South Wales: Lancer, 1985), 35–76; Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979), 12–13; Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 142–145; S. Dean McBride Jr., "Divine Protocol: Genesis 1:1–2:3 as Prologue to the Pentateuch," in *God Who Creates* (ed. William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2000), 11–15; Donald W. Parry, "Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary," in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism* (ed. Donald W. Parry; Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret, 1994), 126–151;Terje Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (CBET 25; Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2000), 111–138; and Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 9 (1986): 19–25; repr. in "I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood": *Ancient Near Eastern, Literary and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11* (eds., Richard S. Hess and David T. Tsumara; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–404.

30 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 58–59; emphasis is mine.

31 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 484; emphasis is mine.

32 Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, 472.

33 Ellen G. White, *6 T* 322 (1900).

34 Denis Fortin, "Ellen White, Women in Ministry, and the Ordination of Women" (paper presented at the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, July 22–24, 2013).

"YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS:" REFLECTIONS ON THE DIVINE CALL

1 Philip B. Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan 2009), 52–54.

2 Ellen White takes this Pauline description of man and applies it to both man and woman, Adam and Eve.

3 Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1902, 1952), 20.

4 Some have suggested that embedded in the Creation narrative are implicit evidences or hints that in fact God created the human race with an intended hierarchical order in gender. This paper examines that suggestion.

5 Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: What the Bible Says about a Woman's Place in Church and Family* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 71.

6 Bilezikian, 71–76.

7 Bilezikian, 76.

8 Payne, 57.

9 Payne, 58.

10 Payne, 59.

11 Payne, 68.

12 Eldon Jay Epp, Junia: *The First Woman Apostle* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005).

13 Nancy Vyhmeister, "Junia the Apostle," *Ministry*, July 2013, 6–9.

14 Quoted in Vyhmeister, 8.

15 Vyhmeister, 9.

16 Payne (65) notes the similar conclusions of Eldon Jay Epp: "Epp argues [in *Junia: The First Woman Apostle*] that the unanimous credible testimony of the church's first millennium identifies Junia as a woman (pp. pp. 31–36, 57), that no surviving Greek MS unambiguously identifies the partner of Andronicus as a man (pp. 45–49), that no early translation gives any positive sign that this is a masculine name (pp. 23–24), that Junia was a common Latin woman's name (pp. 54, 57), and that no bona fide instance of Junias has ever been found (pp. 24, 27, 34, 44, 57), nor is it likely to be found since the very similar Iunius was such a common name (p. 43)."

17 Payne (65) writes: "Paul's teachings about women in the church ought to be interpreted in harmony with Paul's actual practice. Since Paul's own affirmations of colleagues who are women are so extensive and their range of ministries is so broad, one ought to expect corresponding affirmations of women in his teaching."

18 Payne, 102.

19 Payne, 117–118.

20 Payne, 118–137.

21 Payne, 128.

22 Payne (130) notes: "Since in each of the other cases an article identifies a specific entity (Christ, God) and since the most common use of an article is to specify, it is most natural to understand 'the man' [the article appears in the Greek but is omitted in English translations], as in 11:12 as a reference to 'the man,' Adam, from whom woman came."

23 Bilezikian, 106.

24 Ibid.

25 Payne, 149–150.

26 Payne, 197.

27 Because 1 Timothy 2:12 is similar in wording to 1 Corinthians 14:34–35—"Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church" (NKJV)—this paper will examine only 1 Timothy 2. Regarding the 1 Corinthians 14 passage, Richard Choi observes in his annotated comments in the Andrews Study Bible (p. 1510): "Note that earlier Paul does assume that

women will pray and prophesy in public worship (11:5, 13). These verses perhaps address a problem that arose when women prophets tried to judge, test, and silence the prophetic utterances of their husbands and other men during public worship (see 14:29–30)."

28 See 1 Timothy 1:18–20; 4:1–8; 5:11–15; 6:9–10.

29 Payne, 296. Here Payne identifies in 1 Timothy 1:3–11 these five aspects of false teaching: myths and endless genealogies, controversies, causing people to leave the faith, meaningless talk, and inappropriate application of the law.

30 Payne, 300.

31 Some suggest that Paul's description of older women as "teachers of good things" does not refer to public teaching, but rather to some form of in-home ministry; however, Payne (329) argues that an "examination of all the words Paul uses with the root 'teach' shows that in every other instance teaching had verbalized content, and in this case the content is enumerated for older women just as it is for Titus. Thus, those who would interpret Titus 2:3 as teaching solely by example do so in opposition to Paul's universal use of this word in any form (noun, verb, participle, compound, root derivative) in this and every other context. They strip 'teacher' in [Titus] 2:3 of its basic meaning (one who verbally imparts knowledge of skills) in only this one instance simply because women are the teachers."

32 Payne, 322–323.

33 Payne, 422.

34 In his letters Paul sufficiently exposes the male proclivity to deception as well (Romans 1:29; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 11:13; Ephesians 4:14; Colossians 2:8; 1 Timothy. 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:13; Titus 3:3, et al).

35 Payne, 415.

36 Payne, 445.

37 Bilezikian, 139.

38 Bilezikian, 144.

39 See chart in Payne, 450.

MINORITY REPORT

1 Unless otherwise specified, all Bible quotations are from the English Standard Version.

2 "Ordination," Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, 254; see also J. N. Loughborough, *The Church: Its Organization, Order and Discipline* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1920), 98-101.

3 Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, 97.

4 James White, "Gospel Order," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* [RH], Dec. 6, 1853, 173.

5 "The S.D.A. Church Manual," published in eighteen installments. See RH, June 5 to October 9, 1883.

6 See David Trim, "The Ordination of Women in Seventh-day Adventist Policy and Practice" (paper presented at the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, Linthicum Heights, Md., July 22, 2013), 8-12.

7 Ellen G. White, "The Duty of the Minister and the People," RH, July 9, 1895, 434.

8 See Arthur N. Patrick, "The Ordination of Deaconesses," RH, Jan. 16, 1986, 18-19.

9 *Church Manual*, 1932 ed., 34, mentions that Rom 16:1-2 and "other references indicate that women served the early churches as deaconesses. There is no record, however, that these women were ordained, hence the practice of ordaining deaconesses is not followed by our denomination."

10 Minutes of the Three Hundred Fifteenth Meeting of the General Conference Committee (75-153), par. 5.

11 Minutes of the 1984 Annual Council (272-84G-N), 56.

12 C. Mervyn Maxwell, "A Very Surprising (and Interesting) History," in *Prove All Things: A Response to Women in Ministry* (ed. Mercedes H. Dyer; Berrien Springs, Mich.: Adventists Affirm, 2000), 226 (indicating, erroneously it seems, that the decision was made in 1976). The policy voted at the 1977 Annual Council appears in "Licensed Minister Role and Status—New Policy," *Adventist Review*, Dec. 1, 1977, 17.

13 According to Josephine Benton, *Called by God: Stories of Seventh-day Adventist Women Ministers* (Smithsburg, Md.: Blackberry Hill Publishers, 1990), 210 n. 2, since the 1970s women have generally been credentialed as commissioned rather than licensed ministers because the latter are on a path toward ordination. Mary Walsh, a licensed minister for sixty years, had her status changed to licensed commissioned minister after 1981 (ibid., 135).

14 Minutes of the Fifty-Fifth General Conference Session, *General Conference Bulletin* 7 (1990): 15.

15 Minutes of the Fifty-Sixth General Conference Session, *General Conference Bulletin* 8 (1995): 30.

16 Mark A. Kellner, "After Debate, Annual Council Votes Statement on Church Polity," online: http://news.adventist.org/archive/articles/2012/10/16/after-debate-annual-council-votes-statement-on-church-polity; cited June 10, 2013.

17 Minutes of the Fifty-Ninth General Conference Session, *General Conference Bulletin* 11 (2010): 34. This session also for the first time approved the ordination of deaconesses (ibid., 3).

18 Cf. Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, 19: "The illuminated soul sees a spiritual unity, one grand golden thread running through the whole, but it requires patience, thought, and prayer to trace out the precious golden thread."

19 Paul's statements citing Genesis 2 and 3 as a Scriptural basis for his arguments are minimized—even though they speak directly to church matters (1 Tim 2; 1 Cor 11)—because supposedly they apply only to Ephesus or Corinth, while a single Pauline verse is elevated to supra-canonical status (Gal 3:28). Genesis 2-3 is also reinterpreted and pitted against Paul's interpretation of the same, which goes against the principles of *sola Scriptura* and *tota Scriptura* as well as Christ's injunction that "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). See the discussion (pp. 16-18 below) on 1 Timothy 2:13-15 and 1 Corinthians 11:3, 7-9.

20 Ellen G. White (quoting approvingly of William Miller's hermeneutic), "Notes of Travel," RH, Nov. 25, 1884, par. 24.

21 "Methods of Bible Study Committee (GCC-A)—Report," *Adventist Review*, January 22, 1987, 18; online: http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/RH/RH19870122-V164-04__B.pdf#view=fit; accessed 31 May 2013. Notably, the NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee was unable to agree on acceptance of the Preamble of the MBSD, though the body of the document was accepted.

22 E.g., William Webb, *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001), 126-27 (favoring women's ordination, considering the Sabbath cultural); Wayne Grudem, "Review Article: Should We Move Beyond the New Testament to a Better Ethic?" *JETS* 47/2 (June 2004): 299-346 here 327 n. 20 (opposing women's ordination, denying the Sabbath a normative status in Eden).

23 Bondservants had strict protections under Roman law: they could earn their freedom, hold private property, and often occupied very responsible positions as lawyers, shopkeepers, and even financial managers working with huge sums of money as the parable of the talents shows (Matt 25:14-30).

24 "Methods of Bible Study," 19.

25 For a recent critique of Webb, who advocates such a trajectory hermeneutic, see Benjamin Reaoch, *Women, Slaves and the Gender Debate: A Complementarian Response to the Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 2012).

26 The RSV, NKJV, NASB (1995), and NIV (2011) all use "man" or "mankind" to indicate this clear distinction made by the Hebrew text, while the NRSV prefers "humankind." The term "generations" (Heb. *tôlēdôt*) regularly introduces genealogies of the patriarchs (6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27, etc.).

27 The seminal work of feminist interpretation, now followed by many evangelical and even some Adventist scholars, is that of Phyllis Trible, "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation," *JAAR* 41 (1973): 30-48; see also idem, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978).

28 David J. A. Clines, *What Does Eve Do To Help? And Other Readerly Questions to the Old Testament* (JSOTSup 94; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 8.

29 Ibid., 28-38.

30 In fact, such a trajectory has already been constructed to allow various Christian denominations to perform same sex marriages and to ordain clergy without regard to sexual orientation. See Wayne A. Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism?* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2006), 15-16, 156, 237-50 for a discussion and evaluation from a conservative perspective.

31 Clines, 25, citing George W. Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere?" *CBQ* 50 (1988): 24–35.

32 Cf. Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 46: "Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him."

33 See Wayne A. Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, 2004), 117-18. Clines, 16-18 argues convincingly that Eve's role is to help Adam fulfill the command of Gen 1:28, but Clines' limiting of this help to procreation (20-21) is too narrow.

34 It can also refer to the feeble help of Egypt (Isa 30:5, 7; 31:3) and of human help in general (Isa 41:6; 63:5; Jer 47:4; Eze 12:14; 30:8; Dan 11:45).

35 Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr. "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2006), 103, emphasis his.

36 Cf. Ellen G. White, *Confrontation*, 13-14, amplifying Gen 3:5, includes the deeper issue of power among the temptations: the serpent claimed the prohibition "was given to keep them [Adam and Eve] in such a state of subordination that they should not obtain knowledge, which was power."

37 The translation of the preposition *ʾel* as "against" is based on the close parallel with Genesis 4:7-8 (esp. v. 7b); there, as here, it is used to indicate action "of a hostile character" (BDB 413.4).

38 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 58-59.

39 Ortlund, "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship," 109.

40 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 59.

41 Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah, and the wife of Isaiah in the Old Testament, and Anna, and the four daughters of Philip in the New Testament.

42 Although the qal participle *šōpēṭ* is used substantivally to mean "judge" (Judg 2:16, 17, 18ter, 19; 11:27), this is never applied to Deborah, who calls herself "a mother in Israel" (5:7).

43 See Judg 10:2 (Tola), 3 (Jair); 12:7 (Jephthah); 12:9 (Ibzan), 11 (Elon), 14 (Abdon); 15:20 and 16:31 (Samson).

44 Besides this temporal phrase in Judg 4:4, use of a participle ("judging") rather than the normal verb form ("judged")—the only such case in the entire book of Judges (besides the verses listed in the previous footnote, see also Judg 3:10; 11:27; 12:8, 11, 13, all of which employ either a qal perfect or a qal imperfect with waw-consecutive)—suggests "a comparatively transitory act" (GKC §116f; cf. Joüon §121f).

45 Judg 4:4 is literally translated: "Now Deborah [feminine proper noun], a woman, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, she [feminine pronoun]. . . ." Since Deborah is a feminine name and "prophetess" (*nᵉbîʾâ*) is grammatically feminine in Hebrew there is no need to add that she was a woman unless that point is being stressed. Furthermore, this construction is unique in the Old Testament; nowhere else is "woman" (*ʾiššâ*) linked to *nᵉbîʾâ*.

46 Ellen G. White, "Defeat of Sisera," *The Signs of the Times*, June 16, 1881, par. 4.

47 Ibid., par. 6.

48 Ibid., emphasis supplied.

49 Cf. *ZIBBCNT* 1:182.

50 In the New Testament, *diakonos* is the preferred designation for all church workers irrespective of capacity, because all serve Christ, who made Himself a Servant (Luke 22:27; cf. Phil 2:7, which uses *doulos*). Elsewhere *diakonos* carries the technical sense of "deacon," a church officer working under the authority of an elder/overseer (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8-16), in apparent contrast to women who seem to have fulfilled some church duties, though without an official title (1 Tim 3:11).

51 Literary, epigraphic, and historical evidence is divided (BDF 125.2; MM 306) as to whether the name *Iounian* is feminine (Junia) or masculine (Junias), though the latter possibility is strengthened by the presence of three other shortened names in this list ending in -as (Patrobas, Hermas, Olympas, vv. 14-15), all clearly masculine (William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [4th ed.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900], 422-23); see also Al Wolters, "*IOYNIAN* (Romans 16:7) and the Hebrew Name *Yĕhunnï*," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127/2 (2008): 397-40. The translation "among the apostles" is possible too, but in that case may refer to "missionaries" (2 Cor 8:23; Phil 2:25) rather than to authoritative church leaders. Andronicus and Junia, then, could be a husband and wife missionary team with Junia directing "her energies especially to other women" (Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* [BECNT 6; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1998], 797).

52 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, 296: "When Jesus had ended His instruction to the disciples, He gathered the little band close about Him, and kneeling in the midst of them, and laying His hands upon their heads, He offered a prayer dedicating them to His sacred work. Thus the Lord's disciples were ordained to the gospel ministry" (cf. idem, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 4).

53 See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (ed. Francis D. Nichol; 7 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1956), 5:230-31; cf. 196-97.

54 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, 805.

55 D. Miall Edwards, "Ordain, Ordination," *ISBE* (1915 ed.), 4:2199, col. 2. The word "ordination," derived from *ordinatio*, has its analogs in the other Latin-based languages. However, the concept is translated in various ways, in some languages closely reflecting the Biblical idea of the "laying on of hands" (e.g., Russian and Korean), while in others (e.g., Indonesian and Tagalog) translating it with a word that means "poured oil."

56 Gordon P. Hugenberger, "Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis?", *JETS* 35/3 (1992): 357, is forced to admit that at most it is only "a partial 'household code.'" However, as we shall see, it really pertains to church life rather than home life.

57 Philip H. Towner, "Household Codes," *DLNT*, 514. Similarly, David L. Balch, "Household Codes," *ABD*, 3:318, who calls it a "congregational code."

58 Paul gives several reasons for this: God wants all to be saved, Jesus is mediator and died for all, and Paul was ordained a preacher, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles, which embraces the world.

59 Paul is well aware that some became believers while their spouses did not (cf. 1 Cor 7:12-16) and so, if he were writing about how to behave

at home, he could not assume that the women "profess godliness." He can only assume this because he is giving instructions for behavior in a worship setting. Besides, if this is a home setting verses 9-10 do not make sense: why would Paul be concerned about how women dressed at home?

60 BDAG 345.

61 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 56.

62 Some women (the unmarried or otherwise incapable of giving childbirth) might need to accept that it is not God's plan yet for them to have children; to such this verse obviously does not apply.

63 Here, and in Acts 20:17, 28, overseer (*episkopos)* is used interchangeably with elder (*presbyteros*). Judging from the negative qualities listed in Titus 1:10-14, there may have been problems with some of the overseers of the churches on Crete.

64 The possibility of construing *anēr* as "person" is excluded because it is linked in both these verses with *gynē* which refers to the man's wife. Further confirmation is found in v. 11 where "the women" are referred to separately and without such a specification, perhaps because they were the wives of the deacons. In any case, these women had a supportive role, doing work similar to that of the deacons though without the title (see n. 50 above).

65 Cf. Walter Scheidel, "Monogamy and Polygyny," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (ed. Beryl Rawson; Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World; West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 108: "Greco-Roman monogamy may well be the single most important phenomenon of ancient history that has remained widely unrecognized."

66 The word is used elsewhere of Christ as "head over all things" in relation to the church (Eph 1:22), which is His body (v. 23; similarly Col 1:18), and as the "head over all rule and authority" (Col 2:10 NIV). Both passages refer to His supremacy—over the church, as the Chief Shepherd and Overseer of our souls (1 Pet 2:25; 5:4), and over all other authorities and powers that have been made subject to Him (1 Pet 3:22). Parallel to Christ's headship over the church is the husband's headship in relation to his wife (Eph 5:22-24).

67 This has been clearly established by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "*Kephalē* in 1 Corinthians 11:3," *Int* 47 (1993): 52-59; Wayne Grudem, "The Meaning of κεφαλή ("Head"): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged," *JETS* 44/1 (2001): 25-65, who on 61-64 cites many others reaching this conclusion.

68 See, e.g., Exod 6:14, 25; 18:25; Num 1:16; 7:2; 10:4; Deut 1:15; 5:23; 33:5, 21; Josh 14:1; 19:51; Judg 10:18; 11:8, 11; 1 Sam 15:17, etc. None of these heads were sources in any sense of the word, as indicated by the Septuagint's translation choices (*archēgoi*, *archai*, *chiliarchoi*, *archontes*, *hēgeisthai*, *hēgoumenoi*, *kephalē*).

69 Perhaps referring at once to the reverence the angels exhibit in God's presence (covering their faces, Isa 6:2), the high degree of order they exemplify (cherubim, seraphim, etc., vividly described in Rev 4-5), and their presumed presence during church worship.

70 Wives are enjoined to submit to their husbands as to the Lord (Eph 5:22-24). Children are instructed to obey their parents in the Lord (6:1-3). Servants are enjoined to submit to their masters as serving the Lord (6:5-8). In addition, those in positions of authority are enjoined to reciprocate: husbands to love their wives (5:25-28), fathers to deal gently with their children so as not to exasperate them (6:4), and masters to deal gently with their servants, knowing that both serve the same Master, who will not show favoritism of the one over the other in the judgment (6:9). This reciprocation of love and kindness by the authority figure helps make the incumbent submission easy to practice and is akin to the mutual love and submission that all believers are to manifest toward one another (5:21).

71 The word order in each of the three relations places the heads in parallel and prioritizes Christ by placing this relation first, perhaps because He is the connecting link between the other two relational pairs.

72 Jesus likened Himself to the "good Shepherd" promised in the Old Testament (John 10:1-16; Mark 14:27; cf., e.g., Jer 23:4; Eze 34:23; 37:24; Zech 13:7).

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