

Feminine Holy Spirit: Bible Doctrine or Gnostic Heresy?

(2012 © upa7.org)

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” — **1 Corinthians 14:33**

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.” — **2 Corinthians 11:3, 4**

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” — **1 John 4:1-3**

The purpose of this study is to refute the heretical teaching of the Branch Davidians that believes the Holy Spirit is feminine. It will be shown that this teaching is based on faulty assumptions and superficial word studies in the original Greek and Hebrew.

Background

One of the most striking differences between the teaching of the True Davidians versus the beliefs of the Branch Davidians involves the *femininity of the Holy Spirit*. This doctrine was introduced into the Branch theology in 1977 by Lois Rodin, the wife of Ben L. Roden, founder of the Branch Davidians. Lois gained some popularity in a series of publications entitled “Shekinah” where her feminist beliefs were voiced. According to a Wikipedia article sponsored by one faction of Branch Davidianism . . .

“Contemporaneous with the [Feminist Movement](#) surge of the 1970s (and corresponding with the egalitarian teachings of many Adventist sects), Roden asserted that women, like men, were made in the image and likeness of [God](#), and that they thereby hold a position of co-dominion with man in all things. She openly shared this concept with the members of her sect since 1973, despite some resistance within the sect. In 1977, a year before Benjamin Roden died, Lois said she had received a vision of the person of the [Holy Spirit](#) symbolized as a feminine “shimmering silvery Angel.” She asserted as proof her ideas that the Hebrew word for Spirit (ruach) is feminine, and that [Jews](#) regard the concept of

"Holy Spirit" and the "Divine Presence" ("[shekhinah](#)" . . . both of which are "[feminine](#)" words in [Hebrew](#)) are one and the same. (Although [Judaism](#) does not subscribe to any concept of "Her individual Personhood", the feminine aspect of the "Holy Spirit" is a prominent feature in [Kabbalah](#)).

In 1979, along with publishing many related tracts, Roden began publishing a magazine entitled *Shekinah*. The magazine explored the issues of the feminine aspect of [the Godhead](#) and women in the ministry of the Church. *Shekinah* magazine contained Lois' commentaries as well as reprints of news articles and excerpts of publications from a variety of Christian, Jewish, and other sources which addressed women's place in the world of religion." — *Wikipedia*, Jan. 2012 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lois_Roden)

The outgrowth of Lois Rodin's visions on the feminine aspect of the Godhead lead to further radically heterodoxical beliefs such as the full ordination of women into the priesthood, the idea that there is a Holy family in heaven, holy sex in heaven, etc. This article will cut to the root by exposing the shoddy scholarship and Biblically unsound conclusions that form the foundation of the Branch teaching based on their word studies in the Hebrew. As the foundation crumbles under the weight of scriptural evidence, the whole house of false teachings falls in turn.

Faulty Assumptions Exposed

The central premise of the feminine aspect of the Godhead arises from perversion of the following scriptures:

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" — **Romans 1:20**

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." — **Genesis 1:26, 27**

The premise is that the Godhead must be understood by things of the world that are clearly seen leads to the conclusion that since there is a human family on earth comprised of husband, wife, and son therefore there must a family in heaven comprised of God the Father, the Holy Spirit as "Mother", and Jesus as the Son. Genesis 1:26, 27 is used a scripture proof based on a further assumption that God created Adam and Eve in the likeness of the Godhead and therefore equal. At first glance this appears reasonable, however, a closer and deeper examination reveals that it creates severe conflict with other

portions of scripture. First off, the verses cited do not say that the woman (Eve) was created in the image of the Godhead. It simply says that God “created man in his own image” who is Adam, not Eve. The details are sparse in these two verses but the account found in Genesis two further clarifies that:

- 1) God first formed man (Adam) from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils and he became a living soul (Gen. 2:7).
- 2) Later (1 Tim. 2:13) Eve was taken out of man (v. 23) — made from a rib taken out of the side of Adam (vs. 18, 21, 22).

The assumption that the woman was created in the image of God is fundamentally flawed because it requires the woman to be equal with the man. The three persons of the Godhead are equal in their divinity (John 5:18, 1 Pet. 5:18, Titus 2:13) but this does not harmonize with the human family where the man is appointed as the head. The scriptures plainly teach that the man is the image and glory of God but the woman is the glory of the man (1 Cor. 11:7, 8) and thus subordinate to her husband. The head of the wife is the husband (Eph. 5:22-24). Furthermore, the woman is told not to usurp authority over the man (1 Tim. 2:11-14). This model of the human family on earth cannot be made analogous to the Godhead—to divine beings.

Faulty Word Studies in the Hebrew

A foundational argument of the femininity of the Holy Spirit comes from the use of the Hebrew word “ruah” <7307> a noun for “spirit” which is feminine in the Hebrew grammar therefore the actual person described by the noun, in this case the Holy Spirit, must therefore be feminine. Some scriptures cited as examples include Gen. 1:2, 6:3; Exo. 31:3. However this superficial word study collapses when one considers that the argument is based on an assumption which violates the basic structure of Hebrew grammar which can be summarized as follows:

The grammatical gender in the Hebrew noun **does not** always determine or define natural gender of the person or object.

This is understood by any expert in the original language, for example, as the following citation states.

“It is important to understand that feminine nouns (grammatical gender) do not refer only to feminine things (natural gender) or masculine nouns only to masculine things. For example, the Hebrew word for law is “Torah” <8451> and it is feminine. This does not

mean, however, that laws apply only to women.” — *Basics of Biblical Hebrew-Grammar*, Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, Zondervan, 2nd Ed., 2007, Chapt. 4, p. 29.

In scripture the Hebrew noun “ruah” the same noun that is used to claim that the Holy Spirit must be feminine is also used to identify persons that are distinctly male, e.g. Gen. 41:8 and 45:27. Are Pharaoh and Jacob somehow feminine because the noun “ruah” is used to identify them? This is one point that the feminine Holy Spirit advocates fail to address squarely and side-step because it proves their argument to be unsound, illogical, and thus deviant from scripture (see also: Exo. 6:9, 35:21; Num. 14:24; Deut. 2:30 for the use of spirit “ruah” for male figures).

Another inconsistency arises when amateurs and false teachers use arguments from the original Hebrew and Greek languages to establish doctrine when they have no fundamental understanding of the language structure they are using. For example, as explained in Pratico and Van Pelt, the Hebrew noun for father “ab” is masculine but when pluralized to identify fathers “abim” the noun becomes feminine. Does this mean that when a group of fathers come together they somehow become feminine? Also the Hebrew noun for women “Nahiyim” is masculine. It is obvious that when those who are unskilled and unlearned in the native Hebrew language use word studies to establish their doctrine they end up doing violence to the Word of God because it does not tell how a language works. If they were honest and faced all of the evidences from scripture itself as plainly revealed, they would see that their own arguments turn on themselves and collapse in a heap of confusion. Perhaps in an effort to rescue themselves from their trap of deception they should go back to school and invest their time to master the mechanics of the Hebrew language and thus avoid making fools of themselves.

Who do we follow: Christ Jesus or Lois Rodin?

How do those who believe the Holy Spirit as feminine deal with scriptures in the New Testament where Jesus himself plainly refers to the Holy Spirit as “He” (John 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, 13, 14) having the masculine demonstrative pronoun “ekeinos” <1565> in the Greek text? They side step these plain grammatical demonstrations by arguing that since the Greek word for “Comforter”, “pneuma” <4151> is neutral in gender then it does not have to be masculine, for example, as in John 16:7. The Holy Spirit must be feminine according to them because that is what the Old Testament tells us with the feminine noun “ruah”. Thus falling back on a severely flawed, unsustainable, and unproven argument they enter into circular reasoning of the worst kind. This is deception. Only the wise shall understand and take the Holy Bible *as it reads* in their own native tongue, in this case King James English, and accept and understand, even a child could, that the pronoun “He”

is referring to a male figure, not a female. Plain well defined rules for English grammar do not allow otherwise or else our language would be nothing but a maze of confusion.

Our awesome and all wise God who renders to us His unconditional love sent to us Christ Jesus to be our teacher and to be our example, not Lois Roden.

Misuse of Personification in Proverbs 8

A final illustration to expose the deceptive reasoning of the feminine Holy Spirit heresy is their use of Proverbs chapter 8 verses 1 to 3 where wisdom is personified as “she” therefore the Holy Spirit must be feminine. Just because wisdom is personified in these verses does not prove that the Holy Spirit is *literally* feminine. Throughout the Bible are numerous examples of objects being personified in a way to illustrate principles or teachings that can be related to things which people are familiar.

Personification—ascribing personal action or characteristics to a non-personal thing—is a prevalent figure of speech in the Bible. From the blood of Abel that cries from the ground (Gen. 4:10) to the tongues of the arrogant that strut through the earth (Ps. 73:9), biblical writers use personification often. Rivers clap their hands (Ps. 98:8), God’s light and truth guide pilgrims to the temple (Ps. 43:3), Babylon is a prostitute (Rev. 18), and money is a rival deity (Matt. 6:24), i. e., you can’t serve two masters.

Many Bible passages have been misinterpreted because private interpreters have failed to recognize when writers were using personification. The classic instance is Proverbs 8. Overlooking that “wisdom” here is a personification of one of God’s attributes, some interpreters have concluded that “wisdom” here is really Christ or the Holy Spirit, which produces the false conclusion that Christ is a created being (Prov. 8:22–26) or that the Holy Spirit is feminine, or has a beginning. Scripture flatly contradicts such assumptions, the Holy Spirit is eternal (Heb. 9:14) and the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3, 4) and cannot be likened unto an earthly man or woman. This is the usual problem—that false teachers of the scripture fail to recognize instances of personification in the Bible. (see: <http://www.equip.org/articles/is-the-holy-spirit-a-personification->)

“Know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so

do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.” —
2 Timothy 3:1-8

One final logical flaw from using Proverbs 8 that personifies “wisdom” as a “she” is an attempt to connect these scriptures with those in 1 Corinthians 1:21, 24, 30 where the word “wisdom” (Gk, “sophia” <4678>) is used to identify Christ “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” This is a basic violation of the rules of Bible interpretation known as the “collapsing context fallacy”. The violator takes scriptures from two different places, strips them of their context and then brings them together in an attempt to build up to support their private opinion or theory. This is deception and we are warned to stay away from such teachers of falsehood.

“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, the Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”— **Titus 1:9-16**

Ancient Gnostic Heresies Unearthed

This heart wrenching violence to the Word of God results in a multitude of winds of doctrine that plague the saints and brings much reproach upon the cause of God, but we are thankful to God for the wisdom to know that these heretical teachings on the perverted the nature of the Godhead are nothing new under the sun. In fact, the Branch teachings of Lois Rodin are in reality a resurrection of the age old *Gnostic doctrines* that plagued the early Christian church of which the apostle Paul gave ample warnings to avoid (Tit. 1:9-16). These teachings are also intestine to the highly spiritualistic mystical writings of the *Kabbalah*. Any adequate research will confirm these facts. We recently paid a visit to the library at a local seminary and located over twenty scholarly books of the world written on the subject of the feminine aspects of God. In a strange paradox, nearly all of the authors whether coming from a feminist, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, New Age, or Gnostic perspective all offered essentially the same arguments when appealing to scripture for support to try to prove that the Holy Spirit, or some part of God is feminine. *Strange fire* indeed! Some statements from contemporary Gnostic faith groups is perhaps most revealing.

One modern Gnostic faith group is *Novus Spiritis*. It has churches in San Jose, CA, Renton, WA and Las Vegas, NV. Their glossary of religious terms defines Novus Spiritus as:

"A Gnostic Christian Church, that believes in reincarnation, the duality of God as both masculine and feminine, and in tenets that explain how we can best advance our souls for God — while living with the negativity here on Earth. Founded by psychic Sylvia Browne on 1986-APR-14, Novus Spiritus is based on a long line of Gnostic churches that have existed for over 7,200 years. ref. <http://www.religioustolerance.org/gnostic.htm>

Some Gnostic groups had a ritual in which new members were baptized saying: "In the name of the Father unknown to all, in the Truth, Mother of All, in the One who came down upon Jesus, in the union, redemption and communion of powers." <http://www.religioustolerance.org/gnostic2.htm>

If the Word of God is ever to be our safeguard, then let us take refuge in these inspired counsels of the apostle Paul who had to meet similar heresies in his day.

'If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.'— I

Timothy 6:3-5

“But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.”— **Titus 3:9-11**

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”—

2 John 9-11

“Hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it.”

Praises be unto the Lord who knows the end from the beginning! God in His infinite wisdom knows that for those English speaking people He translated just what we need. For the simple and plain folk among us who cling to the Word of God as it reads in their native tongue we can thank God we do not have to become experts in Hebrew and Greek to understand the plain teachings from the Word as Inspiration affirms in the following

statements in the *Shepherd's Rod*. Ellen G. White and Victor T. Houteff never used the Greek or the Hebrew to defend their teachings, why should we?

“Let this counsel (1 Cor. 2:4, 5) warn God's people away from the precarious practice of hanging their doctrines and their faith on the gilded hooks of perverted interpretations and of renderings from tongues unknown to them (the Hebrew, the Greek, and this, that, or the other) and of interpretative translations that bolster up and serve the interests of theological preconceptions and predilections better than does the authorized version -- the version which God, in His providence and in His foreknowledge of finishing His work by the English-speaking world, has given to His people to lead them into His kingdom. Beware, therefore, of the pretensions of pseudo-scholarship, which assume to be more dependable than that which God, Himself, has chosen and wrought in simplicity.” — **Tract No. 9, pp. 75, 76**

“So it is with the Bible when one looks at a subject from a standpoint foreign to the author's. He finds discrepancies in the position held by the one who sees the subject through the author's eyes. In order consequently, to maintain the false idea resulting from his foreign point of view, he is led to resort to outside sources: to one commentator or the other; to this version or to that; to technicalities and inferences of language: in the Greek, in the Hebrew, in this, in that, or in the other (languages, none of which it is likely he himself either reads or writes); or to referring to this or that so-called original manuscript (which in all probability he has never seen).

At the end of this long winding road, he has succeeded only in magnifying from a mole hill to a mountain one passage of scripture, and in reducing from a mountain to a mole hill, or entirely setting aside, another passage of scripture, all because the Bible, which the Lord has placed in his hands, does not support his idea. These pretentious procedures are calculated to demonstrate his scholarly attainments in the hope of lending to his false idea such an appearance of authority as to compel their acceptance by all who come in contact with his theory.” — **Tract No. 3, p. 94**

This is a matter of soul salvation—the soul you save may be your own. Please ponder deeper upon the severe contradictions from scripture presented herein and turn away from error before it is too late.

~ End of Study ~

The Universal Publishing Association-CT

PO Box 2528

Hartford, CT 06146

ph: 860 798-3672

email: upa5453@gmail.com

Sources of feminine Holy Spirit Teachings: (**Warning:** Use at your own discretion)

Devotion to the Triune Deity:

http://www.gnosis.org/ecclesia/homily_Trinity.htm

Is God Mother? Background of a Pontifical Statement:

<http://www.traditioninaction.org/HotTopics/a009ht.htm>

“Goddess”

Wikipedia, Jan. 2012

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminine_Divine#Sacred_feminine)

In some Christian traditions (like the [Orthodox](#) tradition), [Sophia](#) is the personification of either divine wisdom (or of an archangel) which takes female form. She is mentioned in the first chapter of the [Book of Proverbs](#).

In [Mysticism](#), [Gnosticism](#), as well as some [Hellenistic religions](#), there is a [female spirit](#) or goddess named [Sophia](#) who is said to embody [wisdom](#) and who is sometimes described as a [virgin](#). In [Roman Catholic mysticism](#), [Hildegard of Bingen](#) celebrated Sophia as a cosmic figure both in her writing and art. Within the [Protestant](#) tradition in [England](#), 17th Century [Mystic](#), [Universalist](#) and founder of the Philadelphia Society [Jane Leade](#) wrote copious descriptions of her visions and dialogues with the "Virgin Sophia" who, she said, revealed to her the spiritual workings of the universe. Leade was hugely influenced by the theosophical writings of 16th Century [German](#) Christian mystic [Jakob Böhme](#), who also speaks of the Sophia in works such as *The Way to Christ*.^[11] Jakob Böhme was very influential to a number of [Christian mystics](#) and religious leaders, including [George Rapp](#) and the [Harmony Society](#).

“Heavenly Mother”

Wikipedia, Jan. 2012

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heavenly_Mother

Mormonism

Main article: [Heavenly Mother \(Latter Day Saints\)](#)

In the [Latter Day Saint movement](#), particularly [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#), many adherents believe in a Heavenly Mother as the wife of God the Father. The [theology](#) varies, however, according to denomination. The only clear declaration regarding a Heavenly Mother figure is that she exists. Some off-shoot denominations

disavow a belief in her, some do not make her a part of the official doctrine, and others openly acknowledge her.^[1]

[edit] Collyridianism

[Collyridianism](#) was a heretical Christian sect of [feminist theology](#). Collyridians worshipped the [Virgin Mary](#) as their Heavenly Mother and as a Goddess. The [Catholic Church](#) condemned the Collyridians of Marian Heresies, holding that Mary was to be venerated but not adored like God.^[2] The Collyridian service was similar to that of the [Catholic Mass](#), except that the [sacramental bread](#) was not considered Christ, or a sacrifice to God, but a sacrifice to the Virgin Mary. [Epiphanius of Salamis](#) wrote about the Collyridianism and their multiple heresies against the Catholic Church in his work entitled [Panarion](#).

[edit] Branch Davidians

In 1977, one of the leaders of the [Branch Davidian](#) Seventh day Adventists, [Lois Roden](#), began to formally teach that the feminine Holy Spirit is the heavenly pattern of women, and is the heavenly Mother of whom the "born again" are spiritually born. In her many studies and talks she cited numerous scholars and researchers from Jewish, Christian, and other sources.

They see in the creation of Adam and Eve a literal image and likeness of the invisible Godhead, Male and Female, Father and Mother, who is "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom. 1:20). They take the Oneness of God to mean the absolute Unity which exists between Them, which unity is not seen in any other depiction of the Godhead by the various non-Hebrew peoples.

Thus, having a Father and Mother in heaven, they see that the Bible shows that those Parents had a Son born unto them before the creation of the world, by Whom all things were created. The final element in their belief that mankind is literally made in the image and likeness of Gods is that of a divine Daughter, a feminine counterpart of the Son. They say that the concept has its roots in the Bible and Jewish concept of The Matronit. They see that the King James translators understood the concept of Christ having His own Spirit (feminine counterpart), by using the terms "Holy Spirit" (Mother - Spirit of God), and "Holy Ghost" (Daughter - Spirit of Christ).