

ABORTION RITES

How Feminist Spirituality is
Re-framing the Abortion Debate



BY KENDRA WILCOX
WITH A FOREWORD BY REV. PHILIP L. BENHAM

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published by Operation Rescue

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ISBN 0-9770702-0-4

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*To Jesus Christ my personal Savior
and the Only Legitimate Human Sacrifice.*

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that
whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

(John 3:16 KJV)

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FOREWORD

For years now we have been shouting from the housetops that abortion is preeminently a Gospel issue. America is embroiled in a battle that began with the devil's rebellion in heaven and has come to this earth with all of the rage, violence, and fury that hell can muster. It is a battle over who is Lord, and whose laws reign. When Jesus is acknowledged and honored as Lord, there is life. When any other false deity (the devil has many of them) is acknowledged as lord, there is death.

Abortion was a spiritual issue long before it manifested itself in the physical realm. Kendra Wilcox, in her fascinating new book, pulls back the curtain of the abortion industry's lies and rationalizations and gives us a look into the very depths of the evil of child sacrifice. She vividly portrays how child sacrifice has become a veritable sacrament in the "pro-choice movement," offered up to the devil himself for prosperity and spiritual peace with "god." This "god" however, is not the God of the Bible.

Have you ever wondered how a young mother can walk into an abortion mill, with her Bible tucked safely under her arm, and kill her child in the name of “Jesus?” Ever wondered how abortionists and staff can live with their consciences after murdering children? Ever wondered why those in the pro-choice movement believe that abortion is actually a way of honoring God? Ever wondered how so-called “ministers” in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) became so depraved and deceived?

Have you ever wondered how an abortionist in Wichita, Kansas can kill late-term babies, have a “minister” from RCRC baptize their dead little bodies, and then incinerate them in his “on-premises” crematorium? This same abortionist is a member of good standing in the Reformation Lutheran Church in Wichita, Kansas.

Kendra Wilcox meticulously lays out the spiritual foundation of how these things came to be. She shows us the root of the problem. Abortion not only kills children, it destroys women, marriages, families, churches, cities, and nations. Child sacrifice has

always done this. Abortion is the crown jewel of Satan himself.

Kendra slays the devil on every page of her marvelous book with the sharp double edged Sword of the Spirit – the Word of God! This is a thoroughly documented work that will keep you reading and will equip you in overcoming the lies being told women today.

If it is true that abortion is a Gospel issue then the only institution ordained by God to overcome the horrible holocaust savaging our nation is the Church of Jesus Christ. The gates of hell cannot prevail against God's Church. That's what the Bible says! They will, however, prevail against the President, the Congress, and the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

There are no political compromises, legal mandates, or executive orders coming out of Washington, D.C., that will extricate us from the mess we are in. Abortion is not a political issue and therefore cannot be fixed with our failed pro-life strategy.

Kendra makes it very clear that abortion will come to an end in America when the Church of Jesus Christ makes up her mind

it will come to an end – not one second sooner!

Flip Benham

Director

Operation Rescue/Operation Save America

PREFACE

“Why should I care?” one blunt Christian friend asked. “Feminist spirituality, what does it have to do with me?” I was asked some form of this question more than once during the writing of this book. The Christians who asked the question know their Savior. They know Jesus Christ is “the way, the truth, and the life.”¹ They know he is the only way. They also know a relationship with Jesus Christ is the only true legitimate woman’s spirituality. But many other women do not.

Within the pages of this book, I uncover a religious movement loosely termed *feminist spirituality*, a label coined by feminists. This spirituality is not limited to the feminist movement, although that would be reason enough to care. Its special danger is how it is reframing the abortion debate. The first half of this book

¹ John 14:6.

explores feminist spirituality's destructive doctrine. The second half uncovers feminist spirituality's influence on the abortion rights movement.

This book is a Christian response to feminist spirituality and its spiritual justification for abortion. Since this book contains references to sexuality, abortion, and the occult it is intended for mature readers.

To highlight the dangerous hypocrisy inherent in this movement, I have elected to use feminine pronouns when referring to unborn children. I have included biblical "Points to Remember" at the end of each chapter and, unless otherwise cited, all scripture is the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible.

Feminist spirituality, or *womenspirituality* as it is more presumptuously called, attempts to persuade women that goddess worship, not Christianity, is a better way, a better truth, and a better life for them. Its labels imply it is *the* spirituality for women.

Feminist spirituality is a mixture of predominately non-Western religions, a spirituality of numerous beliefs making it difficult to narrowly define. It can be as obvious as witchcraft and as subtle as feminist liturgy.

At its center, feminist spirituality is self worship. Feminist spirituality is a modern, feminist version of goddess worship prevalent before the spread of Christianity. Within feminist spirituality, women are taught they are embodiments of the goddess they worship. In other words, a woman is a goddess.

Rather than reject the Bible outright, feminist spirituality often reinvents scripture to facilitate feminism and the worship of a goddess. Though it incorporates many spiritual beliefs, feminist spirituality is completely lacking crucial elements of Christianity. An immutable and transcendent God, absolute truth, original sin, and salvation are rejected within feminist spirituality. Instead, spiritual feminists insist Judeo-Christian religions are to blame for the

institution of patriarchy and what they consider to be its accompanying injustices. Due to this belief, as one feminist author put it, “The feminist movement in Western culture is engaged in the slow execution of Christ and Yahweh.”² The same author maintains, “Women are going to bring an end to God.”³

Feminist spirituality has found fertile ground in North America, popular with feminists here in America as well as in Canada. The philosophies of relativism, morality is relative to a particular culture’s requirements, and existentialism, morality and truth are determined by an individual in accordance with his or her own circumstances and feelings, have proved to be wonderful compost for feminist spirituality’s growth. Feminist spirituality teaches women they are goddesses. Since truth is whatever a goddess

² Naomi R. Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), 4.

³ *Ibid.*, 3.

determines it to be, feminist spirituality answers society's longing for religious identification but does not demand obedience to a transcendent, absolute truth.

Feminists believe the goddess will “shake, rattle, and roll the status quo right off its pedestal.”⁴ At one time, feminist spirituality was considered the fastest growing faction of feminism. It evolved from the feminist consciousness-raising sessions, the sexual liberation movement, and radical environmentalism that defined the 1960's and 1970's.

Anjelica Huston's \$35,000 gold-and-citrine necklace imprinted with the Greek goddess Rhea⁵ reveals the fascination celebrities have with feminist spirituality. Hollywood personalities Olympia Dukakis and Cybill Shepherd are blatant in their worship

⁴ Sheryll Hirschberger, “Speaking Honestly About the Goddess”, *Cape Woman*, Pg. 29, Summer/Fall, 1999, Vol. 2, No. 1

⁵ Nancy Perry Graham, Insider, *People*, July 19, 1999.

of the goddess.

Singer Tori Amos; the movies *Practical Magic* starring Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman with the tag “There’s a little witch in every woman;” *The Craft* starring Neve Campbell; the Albert Brooks comedy about a goddess titled, *The Muse*; and television programs such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed* have done much to popularize goddess worship among teenagers.

The program *Sabrina*, about a kindly teenage witch, was once rated prime time’s number one show among the preteen set. The popular internet site and board game *Go Goddess!* teaches our daughters “There’s a goddess in every girl!”⁶ The internet site instructs girls to identify with various goddesses and a game called “Goddess Guide Me!” allows for players to ask the goddesses questions about life. Moving beyond pop culture, books like *Teen*

⁶ Go Goddess, “There’s a Goddess in Every Girl! Which One Are You?” Go Goddess, <http://www.gogoddessgirl.com/index.php> (Accessed October 3, 2004).

Goddess: How to Look, Love and Live Like a Goddess, which I found prominently displayed in the young readers section of my local library, and *Maiden Magick: A Teens Guide to Goddess Wisdom and Ritual* make feminist spirituality accessible to even our youngest daughters.

Visit any college ground or university campus, channel surf with your remote control during prime time, browse the Internet, or frequent the trendy boutiques your daughter shops at and you will find overt feminist spirituality.

Green goddess salad dressing, bronze goddess nail polish, a line of Bob Mackie designer goddess Barbie dolls -as an ad in the “personals” section of our community newspaper indicated, “EARTH GODDESS SWF, 27, brown/blue, liberal,”⁷ - feminist spirituality is mainstream.

There are those who, when asked, will clearly identify

⁷ Personals, *Cape Cod Times* (Hyannis, MA), January 24, 1999.

themselves as “spiritual feminists” or maintain that they are part of feminist spirituality. However, it is more often a mindset than an affiliation. An article in the *New Age Journal* reveals, “The movement is so diffuse that many women who consider themselves spiritual feminists have no idea they are part of a larger trend.”⁸

It is possible for an individual to practice feminist spirituality and yet not identify herself as a spiritual feminist. Many who follow or promote its beliefs are ignorant as to the existence of an organized movement called feminist spirituality. These individuals are simply expressing their own views or unconsciously reflecting the social climate.

Writers may, through the imagination of their own hearts, instruct others in feminist spirituality theology without that being the specific intention. Advertising executives or Hollywood insiders

⁸ Marguerite Rigoglioso, “Awakening to the Goddess,” *New Age Journal*, May/June, 1997, 63.

may commercialize feminist spirituality not out of devotion but simply because it sells. And a woman who is unaware of feminist spirituality may nevertheless live it. When the term feminist spirituality is used in this book, it does not necessarily confer a conscious religious affiliation.

Within feminist spirituality, concepts of the goddess vary. She is sometimes imagined as an impersonal force but more often as a personal deity. The goddess is worshiped as *the Goddess*. Other times she is worshiped as a specific goddess, one of various female deities. For the purpose of this book, I will refer to *the goddess* when speaking of any of the goddesses worshiped within feminist spirituality. The goddess is also considered a psychological archetype for women. As a result, a woman does not have to believe in a supernatural being to practice feminist spirituality. According to its promoters, since a woman's awareness of her own power is magnified through goddess worship, even an atheist can venerate the

goddess.

Like other religions, feminist spirituality has a sacrificial element. Political feminism discovered women do suffer emotional and spiritual ramifications after an abortion. Because of this spiritual backlash and to safeguard abortion-on-demand, feminist leaders decided to treat the abortion experience as a conscientious and spiritual act. Religious justification became the new slogan and abortion was repackaged to accommodate women's grief. Additionally, feminist leaders realized that by focusing on the spiritual and ritual aspects of abortion, their new religion, feminist spirituality, flourishes.

Within feminist spirituality, abortion is considered a blood rite in honor of the goddess and the "witch is the holy abortionist."⁹ The blood of unborn babies is poured out as drink offerings to

⁹ Nevada Kerr, "Abortion as a Sacred Rite," Snuff It, no. 4, <http://www.enviroweb.org/coc/snuffit4/abortion.html>

Mother Earth; their remains are buried under trees or on mountaintops; their life is exchanged for a magical colored stone. At the impetus of feminists, abortion industry insiders are referring to abortion in spiritual, even sacrificial, terms. In a gruesome reminder of ancient paganism, unborn babies have become a socially acceptable sacrifice to the goddess.

Why should you care about feminist spirituality? Because not only is Jesus Christ the only legitimate women's spirituality, he is the only legitimate human sacrifice. The question, my friends, is not "Why, should I care?" The question is what do we do.

PRELUDE

As she quietly considered her options, Eve placed her hand on her belly. She imagined for a moment she could feel the baby kick. A slight smile crossed her face. When she first thought she might be pregnant, she tried to tell herself what was growing inside her was not a baby. That was before she went to the clinic for the pregnancy test. As she approached the walkway to the building, she saw, in a protestor's elderly hands, a picture- *the picture*. Now she couldn't get the image out of her mind. Grotesque little mangled limbs, flesh like pulp, and blood covering tiny hands with perfectly formed fingers. "That's what an abortion looks like," the woman told her.

Eve forced the thought from her mind and looked down at her breasts. Even now, only ten weeks into her pregnancy, they were tender. What should she do? Her mother wanted a Catholic priest to

baptize the aborted baby with holy water but her boyfriend thought it was foolish. A practicing Buddhist, he said the baby caused its own karmic destiny and wanted to die. Though he never said it, Eve wondered if he blamed her for the pregnancy. Did he think she caused her own karmic destiny and wanted an abortion? Is that why he never offered to help her care for the baby, why he seemed so distant? Or was she the distant one? Eve was not sure anymore.

Her friend told her of a place she could go where she could memorialize her baby with a handwritten message on a pink paper heart.¹ They hang them on the walls like valentines, her friend said matter-of-factly. Eve remembered a story she heard at college, a friend-of-a-friend self-induced an abortion by using herbs. The gossip around campus was that she fed the blood from her abortion to her plants.

¹ Daryl Chen, “Are You Ready to Really Understand Abortion?”

Glamour, September 2003, 264.

Eve's older sister, a feminist who knew the trauma of abortion first hand, insisted Eve "connect with the spirit life while it's in the womb." Her sister even offered to arrange a religious ceremony and burial. "You'll need closure," her sister said. When Eve balked at the idea of a funeral her sister suggested she take the remains and find a quiet spot under a tree or on a mountain top and offer the aborted baby to Mother Earth.² "In that way," her sister claimed, "the fetus will become part of the circle of life." Eve had shrugged her shoulders, feigning indifference.

Her sister was hard to ignore, "Let me plan a grief ritual for after the abortion. We can go to the moonlodge." Eve knew the moonlodge was a shrine in the woods for the goddess, with rugged facilities

² Ava Torre-Bueno, *Peace After Abortion*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Pimpernel Press, 1997), 154-155.

available for post-abortion healing.³ Her sister called it a “magical womb-an’s space.”⁴ Eve called it silly.

Her sister continued, “If you won’t even have a grief ritual, at least let my friends come and bless you afterwards.” She described how she would prepare a scented bath of flower petals for Eve, as part of a wiccan ritual of purification. It would help her regain a pre-abortion state of grace, her sister said. Eve reluctantly agreed.

Sensing her conflicting emotions, her sister explained Eve was a daughter of a goddess and as such she possessed the power of life and

³ Sacred Groves for Women’s Mysteries, “Rituals and Circles,”<http://www.sacredgroves.com/rituals.html>.

⁴ Sacred Groves for Women’s Mysteries, “The Moon Lodge,”
<http://www.sacredgroves.com/moonlodge.html>.

⁵ Daryl Chen, “Are You Ready to Really Understand Abortion?”
Glamour, September 2003, 266.

⁶ Debi Jackson, “Abortion Rhetoric Doesn’t Help: Caring Does,”
Cincinnati Women’s Services,
<http://www.wpmensservices.com/pages/01html> (accessed August 21, 2004).

death. She encouraged Eve to choose any abortion ritual that felt meaningful to her.

What should she do? The time was going by so quickly Eve thought, as she mindlessly stroked her belly. She had to make up her mind because she did not want indecision to lead to a late-term abortion. Eve eventually decided on a clinical abortion at the same place she had her pregnancy test. She liked that clinic staff gave out colored stones to women after their abortions.⁵ Eve was required to meet with the clinic's "patient advocate."⁶ As she entered the building, Eve noticed the picture again. She hurried past, careful not to look.

Once in the office, Eve blurted out, "But is it a baby? Will I be killing something?" She emphasized *killing*. An awkward silence hung in the air.

"Do you consider it a baby, Eve?"

Remembering the picture, Eve fidgeted.

The advocate asked about her background. When she learned she was raised Catholic, she asked, “Wouldn’t your god forgive you?”

Eve was uncomfortable with the question. Well of course, she thought.

The advocate continued, “Most Christian religions are pro-choice . . . The Bible doesn’t say anything about abortion directly.”⁷

Feeling embarrassed and unsophisticated Eve asked, “So God doesn’t care if I have an abortion?”

“God gave us free will.”

Eve nodded.

⁷ Charlotte Taft, *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and the Heart*, Cincinnati Women’s Services, <http://www.womenservices.com/pages/02b.html>.

The advocate reached across the table and handed her a pamphlet. Eve read the first line, “God loves abortion, God loves children, God loves you, God loves choices that feel positive to you.”⁸

“Now we need to work through some of the peripheries,” the advocate said with a smile. “Would you prefer low lighting or hospital lighting?”

“Lighting?” Eve repeated.

The counselor chuckled, “This isn’t the 70’s. We offer a full assortment of abortion options to personalize your experience, including aromatherapy.⁹ You deserve to be pampered. Have you given any thought to music? Some patients enjoy listening to

⁸ The Spiritual Rebel/Yes Center, Abortion (Venice Beach, CA: Spiritual Rebel/Yes Center, [1994?]).

⁹ Northland Family Planning Centers, “About Northland Family Planning Centers,” Northland Family Planning Centers, <http://northlandcenters.com/content/index.asp?id=59> (Accessed September 25, 2004).

classical.”

Eve mumbled something about wanting to hear soothing music, twisting the pamphlet nervously between her hands. She took a deep breath and asked in a slightly louder voice than she intended, “What happens to the baby?”

“Everything living is part of a cycle of life and death.¹⁰ Your baby,” the advocate said *baby* slowly and carefully, “is part of that miracle.” She motioned to an open journal containing scrawled notes.¹¹ “Why don’t you write a letter to the baby?”

As Eve feathered through the pages, the advocate explained

¹⁰ Charlotte Taft, *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and the Heart* ([Dallas:Routh Street Women’s Clinic, 1991?]), <http://www.womensservices.com>.

¹¹ Daryl Chen, “Are You Ready to Really Understand Abortion?” *Glamour*, September 2003, 294.

abortion is a holy act and the clinic staff performs sacred work.¹²

The advocate reminded her all people have souls. She explained the women she counsels understand their baby's soul is in heaven waiting to be born again. She then told a story of a woman who described her abortion as "flinging a star back into the sky."¹³

Lying on her back with her legs in the stirrups, Eve didn't think of stars in the sky. She didn't think of grief ceremonies or her boyfriend. She thought of the picture. As the suction aspirator vibrated and moaned, she felt the life leave her body.

Eve studied the stones- aventurine for emotional tranquility, tiger's-eye for personal power and crystal for amplifying energy and meditation. "That one," Eve said, pointing to the rose

¹² Cincinnati Women's Services, "Providing Quality Healthcare to Women Since 1973," Cincinnati Women's Services, http://www.womensservices.com/pages/frame_content.htm.

¹³ Charlotte Taft, *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and Heart* ([Dallas: Routh Street Women's Clinic, 1991?]), <http://www.womensservices.com>.

quartz. She liked the soft pink color. “Good choice,” the clinic staffer said, reaching for the quartz. “This stone aids forgiveness and heals the heart. It helps with sexual and emotional imbalances too.” The woman handed the small stone to Eve, in a black velvet sack. “Don’t forget to attach meaning to your stone,” she said softly. The clinic worker advised Eve to project her feelings of the baby onto the stone.

Eve took out the stone and studied it closely. It looked glassy and smooth. She held it up and noticed some light shined through. She felt the stone in her hand and imagined that it held the soul of her baby girl. Girl? Yes. For some inexplicable reason Eve knew she was a mother of a daughter. Was a mother? She held the stone tighter and swallowed a sob. The picture flooded her mind. For a moment she relived the sensation of life being sucked from her womb but also from somewhere deeper - her soul. The memory caused her body to quiver.

Eve rubbed the stone. She heard her own broken voice from far away, “It’s ok. It’s ok. My baby is floating with the stars. She’ll come back again when I’m ready for her. It’s true. It’s true. They couldn’t say it if it wasn’t true.” Eve looked down at the stone again, cold, like she felt. She turned it over in her hands studying it for life-nothing. As she left the clinic, she touched the stone to her belly.

CHAPTER 1

THE SEDUCTION OF EVE

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.

2 Corinthians 11:3

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

2 Timothy 4:3-4

“Diana, protect this place,” the woman prayed.

Diana? Goddess Diana? Could she really be praying to an ancient Roman goddess from mythology? I tried to take in the enormity of what I was witnessing. I was with a large pro-life prayer gathering at an abortion clinic in southern California. I had left the group, clutching their Bibles and kneeling in prayer on the

pavement behind the building, to walk around to the front sidewalk.

That was when a friend motioned to the woman praying to the goddess.

The attractive woman was neatly dressed and her blonde hair was swept up into an elegant French twist. With her arms stretched out above her head she cut a dramatic figure on the sidewalk.

“Diana,” she repeated. I watched as the woman appeared to cast spells. It was clear she was praying to the Goddess Diana to defend the abortion clinic. I had read enough mythology to know Diane is considered “the Huntress” and “Goddess of the Moon.” I also knew in Greek mythology the Goddess Diana is known as Artemis. But what was the Goddess Diana’s connection to abortion?

The Goddess Butcher

So began my research to unveil this mysterious goddess and her relationship to abortion. What I discovered became the inspiration for this book.

Goddess Diana is a patroness of childbirth and of women. But like the moon she symbolizes, she has a dark side. A dark side that insists “The Goddess who has the strength to support women as they give birth does not falter when, with her swift arrow, she provides a quick death.”¹

At various times in human history, bloodletting and human sacrifice² was practiced in the goddess’ name. As Artemis, she was “goddess of birth” and “goddess of blood sacrifice.”³ In ancient

¹ Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, trans. Joann Mott (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1992), 51.

² Barbara G. Walker, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1983), 58.

³ Michael Jordan, *Encyclopedia of Gods: Over 25,000 Deities of the World* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1993), 26.

Sparta, Artemis was called Artamis, meaning “Cutter” or “Butcher.”⁴

As goddess of fertility and the hunt, Artemis was “killer of the very creatures she brought forth.”⁵

According to a popular feminist, spirituality, women must identify with the goddess to complete their personal and political liberation. Empowerment is actualized by women when they understand they are embodiments of this goddess.

A goddess is both a creator and a destroyer. If a woman possesses the power to create life it only follows that she owns the moral authority to end the life she created. Like the Goddess Artemis, a woman who practices feminist spirituality could become a “killer of the very” life she conceives.

⁴ Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (New York: Penguin Books Inc., 1995), 1:86, quoted in Barbara G. Walker, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1983), 58.

⁵ Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 276, quoted in Barbara G. Walker, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1983), 58.

In a shadowy image of ancient human sacrifice, within this feminist spirituality a woman is “Butcher,” her body is “the first and best altar of the Goddess,”⁶ and “abortion is a sacred act.”⁷ As one goddess worshiper put it, abortion is a “sacrifice to Artemis.”⁸

The title of this chapter, “The Seduction of Eve,” refers to the seduction of women through this feminist spirituality. Seduce is, “to persuade to disobedience or disloyalty” or “to lead astray usually by persuasion or false promises.”⁹ It is from a Latin word meaning, “to lead away.”¹⁰ Succinctly put, to be seduced is to be led away or

⁶ Marguerite Rigoglios, “Not for Women Only” (includes an interview with Daniel Campbell), *New Age Journal*, May/June, 1997, 140.

⁷ Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, trans. Joanna Mott (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1992), 8.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁹ Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, s.v. “Seduce,” <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=seduce&x=12&y=10> (accessed August 17, 2004).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

led astray.

Not content to rest on the Word of God, the first woman was seduced. Eve was led astray by the Serpent's temptation. She was led away from an intimate relationship with the God of her creation. The intimacy she had previously known with the God who loved her was shattered, her Paradise lost. Eve divorced herself from everlasting life when she left her first love.

Women of today are experiencing the very same temptation that confronted Eve. Like the first woman, they are tempted to doubt God's word and to transgress his law. Women are being led astray by feminist spirituality's false promises. They are being led away from faith in the One True God. Whereas women were created to be morally virtuous, full of faith, loyal to and in love with God, many women know degradation in place of virtue, a self-gratification in lieu of moral obligation and lies instead of truth. Women are being seduced by a feminist spirituality that whispers

“ye shall be as gods.” And tragically, women are listening.

A survey conducted by the Brand Futures Group of Young and Rubicam found that to fifty-four percent of Americans, religion is an important part of their life. The results of the consumer marketing survey caused the CEO of the company to claim, “God is back.”¹¹ Yet, with the increasing popularity of alternative religions, there is ample evidence to suggest that it is not the God of the Bible who is “back” in the lives of women. Women are moving toward the spiritual, but this spiritual awakening is not predicated on the Word of God. Women are having “religious experiences” but we are seeing a move toward darkness, a movement away from the light of Christ. There is deepening spirituality but it is a counterfeit of the one true faith.

¹¹ Associated Press, “God is Back Says Trend Watcher,” In Brief, *San Diego Union Tribune*, June 4, 1999.

Do-it-yourself Spirituality Kits

There is a new trend of spiritual acceptance evidenced in the lives of women. Women in growing numbers are substituting the God of the Bible for do-it-yourself spirituality kits. A November 1998 *Ladies' Home Journal* survey discovered that eight-three percent of women polled “consider themselves spiritual” and of that number, forty-three percent said “they feel more so now than in the past.”¹² The same *Ladies' Home Journal* contained an article, “30 days to a More Spiritual Life,” which suggested women broaden their religious outlook because every religion has an appreciation for holiness.¹³ The article went on to suggest that women read the Koran, the Tao Te Ching and the Bhagavad Gita while the Bible

¹² “Ladies' Home Journal's American Woman Survey,” *Ladies' Home Journal*, November 1998, 156.

¹³ *Ibid.*, “30 Days to a More Spiritual Life,” 158.

was not recommended.¹⁴ Within the article, there was an underlying implication that all faiths, beliefs, and practices are acceptable as long as they increase a woman's spirituality.

During a recent trip to my local bookstore, I met a woman who typified this spirituality. She introduced herself as I stood reading the titles in the "Religious" section. Displayed on the shelves was a confusing assortment of subjects. With books on angels, paganism, and the occult placed near the Bible it was impossible to tell where the "Religious" section ended and the "New Age" section began.

An attractive blonde in her thirties, the woman wore a silver Buddha and a Christian cross from a delicate chain around her neck. She immediately struck me as intelligent and friendly, eager to share

¹⁴ Ibid.

her New Age reading preferences. This opened up an opportunity for me to share the truth of the Gospel.

As we spoke, I learned the woman considered herself a Christian but did not believe the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God. She described the account of the Fall in the Garden of Eden as an allegory. In her feminist spirituality, there is no original sin or need for a personal Savior.

She searches through the spirituality section of the bookstore looking for the mysterious. Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”¹⁵ There is no esoteric secret to Jesus Christ so she merges aspects of Christianity with what she discovers. Buddhism, Christianity, New Age Spiritualism, it is all the same. For this woman, Christ is just another idol on her self-made spirituality charm necklace.¹⁶

¹⁵ Heb. 13:8.

¹⁶ Anonymous conversation with the author, Summer, 1998.

I heard a Christian woman once say, “The Word of God is not a salad bar. You can’t choose what you want and leave the rest behind.” True. Neither is God a blank page on which a woman can draw her own image and color according to her preference. Yet, that is what is happening in the lives of women.

The woman from the bookstore and the goddess worshiper at the abortion clinic, are not the only women creating their own spirituality. Hallie, quoted in the feminist spirituality workbook, *A God Who Looks Like Me*, explained her religious exploration this way, “I imagine an empty table upon which I can try out different images and concepts of a God of my understanding. I discard those that don’t feel absolutely right.”¹⁷

The premier issue of *Women’s Faith and Spirit* magazine reported a survey by DYG, Inc., in which 66% “of women describe

¹⁷ Patricia Lynn Reilly (includes an interview with Hallie), *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-Affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 177.

themselves as spiritual.”¹⁸ The article continued by pointing out, “spiritual fulfillment can come in any of a number of ways” and many women “try a mix-and-match approach to find what works best for them.”¹⁹ This “mix-and-match” spirituality is growing in popularity and it can be easily mistaken for genuine Christianity. A former co-worker of mine, an attractive middle-aged woman with a vivacious personality, described herself as a Christian when we first met. She spoke openly of her active prayer life, her Catholic background and, more important, her love for Jesus.

I soon learned when she said prayer she meant something decidedly different than what Christians, as taught by Jesus, practice. The “jesus” she worshiped was not the God of the Bible but a deity of her own making - a cross between a comforting

¹⁸ Shana Aborn, “Why Women Need Faith,” *Women’s Faith and Spirit*, Premier Issue, 15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

childhood memory and a mystical teacher.

Once, during a coffee break, she explained her beliefs. She told me she did not believe in an original sin and denied the need for a personal savior. Without querying her on the tenets of her faith, one would assume that she is a Christian. I did and so did many women in our workplace. In reality, her “Christianity” was a blend of Catholicism, meditation, crystal energy, New Age healing and goddess worship.

Eve: Mother of All Living

Although faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is our country’s religious heritage, of late we have adopted a one nation under *any* god creed. We have gradually moved from Bible believing Christianity into religious pluralism.

We live in a pluralistic society, a society in which the strange and the sacred compete for cultural acceptance. There are as

many accounts of the creation of the world as there are cultures, as many concepts of God as there are human faces. Yet, there is only one truth, just as there is only one God. The truth is life did not originate from primeval waters, a cosmic egg, or a big bang. Life is not the interaction between yin and yang. God is not she, not an abstract it, not an impersonal force, and not a distant first cause. The God of creation is the God of the Bible.

Although our finite human nature limits our understanding of God, we are graced with his Word. His Word discloses to us a part of his hidden person and a portion of his eternal purpose. It explains the end of all things just as it explains the beginning. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.”²⁰ When translated more accurately from the original Greek, “given by inspiration from God” becomes “God-breathed.” The Bible is God-breathed. We learn from the Bible, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

²⁰ 2 Tim. 3:16

with God, and the Word was God.”²¹ Jesus, in a prayer to the Father, said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”²² God’s Word is truth. The Word was made flesh in Jesus Christ.²³ Your truth, or mine, is not *the truth* if it does not originate from him, if it is not contained within his word.

Within the Scriptures, the book of Genesis is mentioned more often than any other book in the Bible.²⁴ Christian author Dennis Gordan Lindsay writes, “Every major [biblical] doctrine has its basis in Genesis.”²⁵ The first book of the Bible introduces the saving grace of God to a sinful world. It explains the origin of man, the fall of man, the beginning of mankind and the promise of

²¹John 1:1

²² John 17:17

²³ John 14:6

²⁴ Dennis Gordan Lindsay, *Foundations for Creationism* ([Dallas?]: Christ for the Nations, Inc., 1990), 20.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

redemption.

Genesis is a timeless account of man's greatest honor (fellowship with God) and man's worst tragedy (dissolution of the same). It is the first scene in an unfolding human drama that points the way to Christ's sacrifice. It reminds us that there was once a state of Paradise, this Paradise was lost to us by human folly, and the way back requires God's direct and personal intervention.

Contained within Genesis is the story of man's separation from the Creator. This separation devolved us into creatures at odds with life and at war with God. Genesis lucidly describes our origin and our proclivity to sin. A genetic outlook on the nature of man prepares us for a perfect relationship with the God of our creation. Without a comprehension of man's inherently sinful state as outlined within Genesis, a person is right in his or her own eyes. If there is no original sin, then why need a savior? Genesis is the reason for, and the promise of, the Messiah. It is within verse one of

chapter one of Genesis that God introduces himself to the world. The initial verse of Genesis reads, “In the beginning God created.” *God* is from the Hebrew *Elohim*, Supreme God. He is Elohim, Supreme God and Creator. As the Creator, all is his. We must acknowledge his divinity and our dependency. It is his self-portrait, as observed in the first verse of Genesis, which illuminates him to us. God’s description of himself foreshadows for us a right relationship with him. These first words, “In the beginning God created”²⁶ establish the foundation upon which the ensuing Bible, indeed all of creation, rests.

Genesis chapter one, verse two discloses the very act of creation, “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”²⁷

²⁶ Gen. 1:1

²⁷ Gen. 1:2

In Genesis, we read the Lord “created the heaven and the earth,”²⁸ the seas, the seasons, the light, the day and night, and all of creation. The verb, “created” is from the Hebrew, “bara,” “to make from nothing.” Through a movement of his Spirit, God created all that is from nothing. It is this creation from nothing, creation ex nihilo, which sets the tone for all of Genesis.

We learn in Genesis chapter two, after the Lord created the heavens and the earth, He caused a “mist from the earth” to water the ground.²⁹ Afterwards, the Lord God created man, “of the dust of the ground” and bestowed within him a soul.³⁰ The book of Job, perhaps the oldest book of the Bible, describes the creation process this way, “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the

²⁸ Gen. 1:1

²⁹ Gen. 2:6

³⁰ Gen. 2:7

Almighty hath given me life.”³¹

Genesis chapter two, verse eight reveals, “the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden. There he put the man whom he had formed.”³² Surmised as lying between what we now call the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the Armenian highlands, the garden was fertile and teeming with life. *Eden* is from a Hebrew word that means pleasure and delight. The Garden of Eden was a place of pleasure and delight.

“And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”³³ The first man was given rapport with every creature. Still, God’s omniscient will saw that it was “not good that

³¹ Job 33:4

³² Gen. 2:8

³³ Gen. 2:9

man should be alone”³⁴ amongst the creatures, and created one like the man from the man. “And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.”³⁵

Eve, “the mother of all living,” was composed of the first man’s form to become his companion, equivalent and counterpart. She was taken from Adam’s side, indicative of their mutual dependency and unity. However, Eve was not identical to Adam. Yet, just like Adam, she was consecrated to a purpose.³⁶ She was created as a “help meet” to aid the man. This in no way implies a pejorative role. *Help* is the vernacular used to describe one of God’s own attributes.³⁷

³⁴ Gen. 2:18

³⁵ Gen. 2:22

³⁶ see Gen. 2:18

³⁷ see Ps. 70

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”³⁸ Life in the garden was a paradise for the man and the woman. Together the man and the woman tended the garden. They knew Peace. The Bible does not state how long this idyllic state lasted, but we learn from Genesis chapter three that something happened that broke the fellowship the first couple enjoyed with their Creator.

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it,

³⁸ Gen. 1:27

lest ye die.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat.”³⁹

A few verses down we read, “And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.”⁴⁰

Eating the forbidden fruit brought about a fall from

³⁹ Gen. 3:1-6

⁴⁰ Gen. 3:13

perfection to a condition of total depravity. The Fall in the garden caused a state of corruption called original sin. Original sin is passed down to us through Adam. As a result, the whole human race is born into a state of sin and suffers under the curse of death.

Isaiah chapter fifty-nine, verse two reads, “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” God is holy. Sin separates us from his holy presence. Yet, because God loves us, he has provided the way back to a relationship with him.

The first preaching of this good news is found in Genesis chapter three, verse fifteen. God is speaking to the serpent but the promise is for Eve’s consolation, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

God has promised, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift

of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”⁴¹ Despite the fact Eve was the first woman to sin the promise is that through her body a savior will come. He will deliver all who put their faith in him from “the wages of sin,” by paying the price for all of mankind. Jesus Christ’s willing sacrifice on the cross for our sins is the atonement necessary for reconciliation with God.

Father of Lies

We learn from God’s Word, “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”⁴² Jesus Christ said of the devil, “He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a

⁴¹ Rom. 6:23

⁴² 1 John 3:8

liar, and the father of it.”⁴³

Satan is a liar. Just as he did in the Garden of Eden, the Serpent still causes mankind to doubt God’s word. The subtle whisper heard and then repeated is that God did not create the world. Another common temptation relegates God to an impersonal and un-intrusive force; if there is an Author of the Universe then this entity is vastly different from the personal and loving God of creation described in Genesis. Both beliefs cause the account of Genesis to be rejected.

Others have their own account of the creation of the world. Though they concur that a male god did not create the universe, they reject secular humanism’s godless world view. The women who hold to this peculiar cosmogony believe a female deity created the universe and she caused evolution. These women repudiate most, if not all, of Christianity and insist on a female godhead. They parrot

⁴³ John 8:44

the claim that “the oldest cosmologies start with a primal goddess”⁴⁴ and ascribe the creation of the universe to this goddess.

Proponents of this cosmogony believe Genesis is an allegory for a supreme goddess and her consort the snake. Patriarchy, they claim, perverted their story of creation and stole their symbols. While they acknowledge various parts of the Judeo-Christian creation story, in their version the serpent of the Garden is esteemed. The serpent, rather than a figure of temptation and evil, is the goddess’ enlightened counselor and a symbol of her worship. The snake’s ability to shed its skin signifies the rejuvenating and recycling power of the goddess. The relationship between Eve and the serpent was one of peers, not one of tempted and the tempter, they say.

They assert the goddess created the Tree of Knowledge and

⁴⁴ Buffie Johnson, *Lady of the Beasts: Ancient Images of the Goddess and Her Sacred Animals* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 87.

Eve, as a daughter of the goddess, had every woman's right/rite to eat it. These women celebrate the first mother's pluck of its fruit and her taste of its pulp. Eve's reach for the tree's fruit, her finger's gentle snap of its stem, the presumable way in which she studied it curiously, and finally her bold bite into its skin and flesh is interpreted by these spiritual feminists as liberation through self-empowerment. According to this growing feminist spirituality, the Fall in the Garden was the Rise of women.

Points to Remember:

1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Jesus Christ is the "Word made flesh." He is truth and life (John 14:6).
2. God created you, the universe and all that exist (Gen. 1:1).
3. The Devil is the father of lies (John 8:44). Just as he deceived Eve, he attempts to deceive you.

4. The Devil was “a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44).

The curse of death was brought about through Satan’s deception (Gen. 3:1-13).

5. The Devil “sinned from the beginning.” He wants you to die in your sins. Jesus Christ destroyed the power of the devil when he died for you on the cross (1 John 3:8).

CHAPTER 2

THE RISE OF WOMEN

Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Jeremiah 2:11- 13

Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

Deuteronomy 11:16-17

In its eagerness to displace patriarchy, feminist

spirituality has created its own narrative of the past. In feminist spirituality's *herstory*, in lieu of *history* and for that matter accuracy, the worship of the goddess and the fraternity accompanying such worship is romanticized. Former cultures that worshiped the goddess are said to have been peaceful, orderly and marked by innovation. Within that utopia the goddess was worshiped as the matrix of the known universe.

It is said the sons of women participated in the social strata of the female centered community in limited ways. According to spiritual feminists, since they could not create life as their mothers and sisters appeared to, men were relegated to the role of help mate and became provisional hunters. As women developed agricultural and animal husbandry, the role of hunter became decidedly less important. Base feelings erupted on the part of men. Feminist theorists conclude that over an indefinite period of pre-patriarchal time, the goddess' male creations began to reject matriarchy. Thus, a

rebellion was triggered against the goddess as sovereign ruler. They believe a masculine usurpation stole from the goddess her rightful scepter, ending her tranquil rule. This rebellion, they claim, spawned the ethos of masculinity and God was made Father.

This decidedly feminist spirituality teaches that women are the daughters of this great goddess, made in her image. As a result women transcend mere womanhood. The advocates of this religion maintain the goddess is “in nature, in life, in woman.”¹ Women are, they tell each other, goddesses.

Feminist spirituality sees women as victims of religious traditions that honor God as Father. They believe patriarchal religions recognize God as male because these religions “were founded to spread or buttress male supremacy.”² Spiritual feminists

¹ Starhawk (Miriam Simos), “Witchcraft and Women’s Culture,” in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, eds., Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, 259-268 (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1979).

² Marilyn French, *The War Against Women* (New York: Summit Books,

claim the “Adam and Eve story is blatant anti-Goddess propaganda.”³ The Christian concept of original sin, feminists assert, was instituted by patriarchy and its hierarchical religions that pay homage to a masculine deity.

While feminist spirituality rejects the doctrine of original sin, it advances in its place an “Original Goodness.” Within feminist spirituality, eating the forbidden fruit actually affirmed the first woman’s inherent goodness. In the workbook, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-Affirming Spirituality*, Patricia Lynn Reilly retold the story of Eve to accommodate feminist spirituality’s sinless Genesis account. In this rendition of the story, Eve bids women, “Take, eat of the fruit, the good fruit of life.”⁴ Eve then tells

1992), 51.

³ Sheryll Hirschberger, “Speaking Honestly About the Goddess,” *CapeWomen*, Summer/Fall, 1999, 29.

⁴ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 129.

women “Affirm the Original Goodness of your children and your children’s children until the stories of old [the biblical account of Genesis] hold no power.”⁵

The story of the Fall in the garden has been replaced with a heresy of empowerment. In the feminist spirituality story, it was liberating to bite the forbidden fruit. Eve is said to be the “first woman to challenge the subjugation of woman in the patriarchal garden.”⁶

Dependent on the version of the story, the serpent was either a symbol of, or an advisor to, the goddess. By modifying the collective memory of the Fall and the role of the snake, feminist spirituality is transforming spirituality. Feminist revisionism has

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Kim Chernin, *Reinventing Eve: Modern Woman in Search of Herself* (New York: Times Books, 1987), xvi.

made Eve into a proto-feminist and the snake in the garden into a benevolent, pro-women reptile. Together the woman and the serpent consort to “free” the world from the God of patriarchy.

By calling into question the original true creation account, with the woman as tempted and the tempter, feminist spirituality is instilling a pro-feminist twist to the age-old creation story. The drama of the Fall has been lifted up, becoming a glorified model of power for feminists; the first woman’s reach for the forbidden fruit is reinterpreted to imply a feminist grab for selfhood and enlightenment.

Heroine of Disobedience

Since the inception of feminism, Eve has been used as an example of female empowerment and autonomy. Certain leaders of the women's suffrage movement were not above using Eve's rebellion as justification for their political coalition. The first woman's rebellion has become a rallying cry for independence.

Pioneering feminists Lillie Devereux Blake and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, part of the committee of twenty-three women who reinterpreted Scripture to accommodate their feminist goals and later published their version as *The Woman's Bible*, were among the first to endow Eve with both feminist and goddess characteristics. Lillie Devereux Blake described Eve as "eternal mother."⁷ Blake compared Eve's behavior in the Garden to Adam's and resolved,

⁷ Lillie Devereux Blake, "Comments on Genesis," in *The Woman's Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, 26-27 (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/>, also available in print.

“The conduct of Eve from the beginning to the end is so superior to that of Adam.”⁸

Stanton viewed the account of Genesis as an “allegory”⁹ but nevertheless wrote of Eve’s, “lofty ambition” and “courage.”¹⁰

According to Stanton, the serpent “saw at a glance the high character [of Eve] ... He did not try to tempt her from the path of duty by brilliant jewels, rich dresses, worldly luxuries or pleasures, but ... with the wisdom of the Gods.”¹¹

Eve’s motive for eating the forbidden fruit becomes almost laudable when an emphasis is placed on a desire for wisdom.

However, this completely ignores biblical context. We read in

⁸ Ibid. pg. 26.

⁹ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Comments on Genesis,” in *The Woman’s Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, 23-26 (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/>, also available in print.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

Genesis chapter three, verse four and five, “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Satan did not limit his temptation to “you will know good and evil.” He seduced Eve with deification. Taken in context, it is clear Eve was tempted with the thought of being “as gods.”

The statements by Blake and Stanton should not surprise us for one of the spiritual motivations behind political feminism has always been feminist spirituality. On close inspection, the seeds of feminist spirituality are seen planted in the early women’s movement. A feminist reinterpretation of the Word of God and glorification of the fallen Eve are but two examples. Spiritualism is another.

According to Barbara Goldsmith, author of *Other Powers: The Age of Suffrage, Spiritualism, and the Scandalous Victoria*

Woodhull “woman’s rights were inseparable from Spiritualism.”¹²

Spiritualism, communion with the spirits of the dead, empowered the seminal women’s movement. Leaders of the women’s movement often communed with spirits, among the feminist icons that did so were Isabella Beecher Hooker and Victoria Woodhull, the first female presidential candidate.¹³ Mary Ann McClintock and Amy Post, signers of the Declaration of Sentiments in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848, also practiced spiritualism. And, according to Goldsmith, at the funeral for Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “At the head of her coffin was placed the mahogany McClintock Spirit Table, recalling the time when the woman’s movement had begun.”¹⁴

It was at the mahogany tea table in the home of Mary Ann

¹² Barbara Goldsmith, *Other Powers: The Age of Suffrage, Spiritualism, and the Scandalous Victoria Woodhull* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1998), xi.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 314.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 435.

McClintock that Stanton composed the “Woman’s Declaration of Rights and Sentiments.”¹⁵ Yet what makes the table curious is not what was communicated *at it*, but what communicated *through it*. The McClintock Spirit Table was noted for being the first “spirit table.” It was said that spirits used the table to communicate with the living through a system of rapping.¹⁶ It was at this Spirit Table that Stanton reportedly received inspiration for the Declaration.¹⁷

Together with birth control advocates, Annie Besant and Margaret Sanger, pioneering feminists infused their cause with feminist spirituality. Besant served as international president of the Theosophical Society. Sanger believed in a “feminine spirit” that is a “motive power of woman’s nature.”¹⁸ It is in the context of Sanger’s

¹⁵ Ibid., 38-39.

¹⁶ Ibid., 31.

¹⁷ Ibid., 38-39.

¹⁸ Margaret Sanger, *Woman And The New Race* (New York: Brentano’s Publishers, 1920), 10.

statement that a developing “feminist spirituality” is observed.

Sanger criticized Christianity and the teachings of the apostles.¹⁹ She claimed when the “feminine spirit” flourishes within women they will “demolish old systems of morals” and “Dark Age religious concepts.”²⁰ Sanger believed a new morality created by the “feminine spirit” would take the place of tradition.²¹

Thinking much the same, Stanton concluded women are oppressed by Christianity, “The real difficulty in woman’s case is that the whole foundation of the Christian religion rests on . . . the necessity of a Redeemer and a plan of salvation.”²² As part of an attempt to address this “difficulty,” Stanton taught a concept of the

¹⁹ Ibid., 173-174.

²⁰ Ibid., 70.

²¹ Ibid., 182.

²² Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Appendix” in *The Woman’s Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, 213-214 (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/>, also available in print.

holy trinity which included a feminine aspect. She called this third person of the trinity, “Heavenly *Mother*.”²³ According to Stanton, it is to her, as well as to God, women should pray. Women need to identify with a female godhead, Stanton explained, for the “elevation of woman to her true position.”²⁴ In 1895, feminist Lillie Devereux Blake wrote this of Eve: “She was Life, the *eternal mother*, the first representative of the more valuable and important half of the human race.”²⁵

Compare Blake’s view of Eve to feminist spirituality author, Patricia Lynn Reilly’s exaltation of Eve published a century later in

²³ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Comments in Genesis,” in *The Woman’s Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, 14-16 (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/>, also available in print (*italics mine*).

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Lillie Devereux Blake, “Comments on Genesis,” in *The Woman’s Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, 26-27 (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/>, also available in print (*italics mine*).

1995: “We remember the times when our Mother reached for the apple, the moments when she remembered her former glory and refused to obey. We honor the Mother among us.”²⁶

The forerun

theme of female superiority can be found in contemporary feminism. Reilly’s capitalization of “Mother” indicates the same glorification of Eve as the capitalization of “Life” by Blake.

Much like feminism’s early pioneers, within feminist spirituality Eve is thought to have shown remarkable courage in the face of adversity. According to today’s feminist spirituality mind set, Eve bucked patriarchy when she “heroically” rebelled against her Heavenly Father.

Feminists maintain Eve’s, “direct violation of divinity’s edict ... suggests not evil, but rather an evolutionary step toward

²⁶ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-Affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 125.

humanity's cultural progress."²⁷ She is a "heroine of disobedience,"²⁸ a "heroine who paved the way for an increase in knowledge."²⁹ By eating the forbidden fruit, Eve left independence to her female descendants; her daughters must simply take back from patriarchy what she has bequeathed to them. The fallen woman has become the feminist ideal.

In her book, *Lady of the Beasts*, Buffie Johnson wrote an idolized account of Eve's transgression, "By following a dangerous path that promises a wondrous prize, Eve shows courage and initiative."³⁰

²⁷ Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 49.

²⁸ Kim Chernin, *Reinventing Eve: Modern Woman in Search of Herself* (New York: Times Books, 1987), xvi.

²⁹ Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 49.

³⁰ Buffie Johnson, *Lady of the Beasts: Ancient Images of the Goddess and Her Sacred Animals* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 188.

In the feminist rendition of Genesis, Eve utilized her “freedom of choice” when she disobeyed God’s command. Yes, Eve did possess free will. But contrary to what feminist spirituality teaches, Eve did not have a *lawful* choice between eating and not eating of the Tree of Knowledge. God said, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.”³¹ Eve did not have the “right to choose” disobedience.

God did not grant *carte blanche* to his creations. Eve’s choice was limited to trees that were lawful. As created beings, not gods, our options are limited to that which our Creator deems lawful. It was the serpent that first whispered an egregious concept of choice into a woman’s mind. Though the first woman’s choice

³¹ Gen. 2:16-17.

resulted in sin and death, her “choice” or “right to choose” is glorified. Today the feminist daughters of Eve justify and demand the same expanded “freedom of choice,” most notably in regards to abortion, regardless of permissibility or spiritual consequences.

In the minds of spiritual feminists, Eve represents a plethora of images and characteristics. To certain spiritual feminists, Eve personifies women collectively, during a time on earth when a female deity was honored and women were the goddess’ venerated priestesses. To others, Eve is seen as the first woman to indulge in knowledge and self-awareness that together emancipates the feminine gender from patriarchal religious and social controls, and who, in her largess, shares this new liberation with the willing but hesitant man (making her the dominate gender and the savior of mankind). Still others regard Eve as the Supreme Goddess herself. The variations on this theme continue. Spiritual feminists insist that at the very least, Eve was willing, ingenious, and aggressive, possibly

a priestess of the goddess; at the most, she is the “Creatress.” Eve is never, however, objectified as passive and seduced.

Feminist spirituality maintains that Eve was never tempted by the wiles of the serpent, neither did she fall to temptation. Eve, they insist, did not sin. For a feminist to admit to the truth of Eve’s transgression would be to concede to original sin. It would force her to acknowledge her own inherent sin and need for a personal savior.

The serpent, depending on the story, was an oracle, consort, friend, or totem of the Goddess. Spiritual feminists believe that the serpent from the garden was, and remains, a “wise adviser,” “counselor,” and “interpreter of dreams.”³² Eve hearkened to its counsel after judging that its counsel was sound. Johnson determined the first woman was “neither timid, credulous nor easily

³² Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 128.

swayed.”³³ Instead, she is regarded as thoughtful and open to counsel. Eve’s dialogue with the serpent indicates to spiritual feminists that she exercised her “right to choose” with full cognizance. In any case, she did not fall to sin. She simply partook of her right/rite “to be as god knowing good and evil.”

³³ Buffie Johnson, *Lady of the Beasts: Ancient Images of the Goddess and Her Sacred Animals* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 188.

Within feminist spirituality, the descriptions of Eve are nothing short of fantastic. She is feminism's caped crusader -a heroine with the female symbol emblazoned across her chest, wielding a piece of forbidden fruit in one hand and a rusty coat hanger in the other. Blake described Eve as "fearless of death."³⁴ She is lauded as a "harbinger of a New World spirit,"³⁵ and an "heiress"³⁶ to the goddess. She is seen as, "intelligent, curious, eager, and strong."³⁷ According to author Bettina Knapp, Eve was "the genius

³⁴ Lillie Devereux Blake, "Comments on Genesis," in *The Woman's Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Revising Committee, 26-27 (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/wmn/wb/>, also available in print.

³⁵ Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 50.

³⁶ Buffie Johnson, *Lady of the Beasts: Ancient Images of the Goddess and Her Sacred Animals* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 189.

³⁷ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 129.

of her day”³⁸ and compares her to, “Galileo, da Vinci, Shakespeare, and Einstein.”³⁹

In contrast, the first man is regarded as obtuse and abjectly obedient. As Knapp proclaims, it was Eve “who lifted the passive and mindlessly obedient Adam out of blind subjection even while instilling in him a zest for life.”⁴⁰

Although both Eve and Adam consumed the forbidden fruit in the Garden, through which sin and death entered the world, the first man presumably had no such right/rite. Within feminist spirituality the original fallen woman is revered while the original fallen man is ridiculed. Adam is referred to as violent⁴¹ and

³⁸ Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 49.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 50.

⁴¹ Miriam Therese Winter, *The Chronicles of Noah and Her Sisters: Genesis and Exodus According to Women* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1995), 38.

“lonely.”⁴² Feminist thinkers maintain, “Adam appeared to be a bit of a clod, while Eve’s curiosity suggested an intelligent quest for knowledge and autonomous experience.”⁴³

Women involved with feminist spirituality feel a kinship with Eve that surpasses religious boundaries. Spiritual feminists regard Eve as “Everywoman.”⁴⁴

She is “mother” or the “comprehensible sister.”

Catholic religious writer Barbara Grizzuti Harrison, in her article, “My Eve, My Mary” in *Newsweek*, wrote of her affection for Eve, “I have always been inordinately fond of Eve; it was she, my comprehensible sister, who had planted in my blood and bones and

⁴² *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴³ Rosemary Radford Ruether, ed., *Womanguides: Readings Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 86.

⁴⁴ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 277.

flesh a variable human love, the intoxication of the body.”⁴⁵

Harrison also suggested that it was “Eve’s fall from grace- her radical curiosity- set in motion the wheels of salvation.”⁴⁶

The theme “Eve as Savior” can be found throughout feminist spirituality literature. Patricia Monaghan, in *The New Book of Goddesses and Heroines*, described Eve as one of “the saviors of humankind, seeking and winning the prize of resurrection.”⁴⁷ Reilly wrote, “The Mother of All Living has been exiled from the myths of old, from within us and from among us. For the salvation of the world, may she return.”⁴⁸

Harrison, Monaghan and Reilly fail to point out that before

⁴⁵ Barbara Grizzuti Harrison, “My Eve, My Mary”, *Newsweek*, August 25th, 1995, 56.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Patricia Monaghan, *The New Book of Goddesses and Heroines*, 3rd ed. (St Paul: Llewellyn Publications, 1997), 120.

⁴⁸ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 125.

the Fall in the garden, there was no need for salvation. It was not Eve or her action that caused salvation. It was God in his mercy who provided unmerited salvation through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Feminist spirituality promotes a belief that women possess within themselves a “saving and sustaining power”⁴⁹ and do not need to look “to men or male figures as saviors.”⁵⁰ If Jesus Christ is acknowledged at all within feminist spirituality he is regarded as a “child of a divine Mother,”⁵¹ not the Savior of mankind.

Biting the Apple

⁴⁹ Carol P. Christ, “Why Woman Need the Goddess: Phenomenological, Psychological, and Political Reflections,” in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, eds., Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, 273-286 (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1979).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987), 102.

It is not enough for feminist spirituality to fictionalize creation accounts or justify sin. Feminist spirituality encourages each woman to duplicate, in her own life, original sin. According to feminist spirituality author Kim Chernin, the goddess “presides over our rebirth as women.”⁵² Cherin believes the goddess requested Eve eat the forbidden fruit because women “seem to be afraid of eating.”⁵³ Eve “knows what woman will become when one day she creates herself in the image of a goddess.”⁵⁴ One way in which a woman “creates herself in the image of a goddess” is through conscious, goddess-centered crafts. In her book, *The Knitting Goddess*, Deborah Bergman wrote that knitting is a means to “connect with the ancient goddesses.”⁵⁵ According to Bergman,

⁵² Kim Chernin, *Reinventing Eve: Modern Woman in Search of Herself* (New York: Times Books, 1987), xx.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., xix.

⁵⁵ Deborah Bergman, *The Knitting Goddess: Finding the Heart and Soul*

“knitting patterns we learn and execute can literally repattern us within.”⁵⁶ Bergman explained the process this way, “As the fiber runs through our hands . . . an exchange that is both physical and spiritual can happen.”⁵⁷ As women knit, “We ourselves become knitting goddesses.”⁵⁸

In the feminist spirituality workbook, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-Affirming Spirituality*, women are encouraged to explore a “woman-affirming spirituality” either alone or within group settings. This book served as the spiritual curriculum for a woman’s participatory study course held at a Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in my hometown.

of Knitting Through Instruction, Projects, and Stories (New York: Hyperion, 2000), xvi.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 66.

⁵⁷ Ibid., xvi.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

In a chapter called, “Eve, The Mother of Living,” women are told, “Bring apples into your sacred space.”⁵⁹ They are then encouraged to visualize Eve coming into their own sacred area, “As she looks into your eyes, she hands you an apple. Hear her say, ‘Take, eat of the fruit, the good fruit of life’.”⁶⁰ Women are then instructed, “As you eat the apple, write a creation story that celebrates your Original Goodness.”⁶¹

Although not advocating an actual reenactment of the Fall in the garden, Cait Johnson, author of *Cooking Like a Goddess: Bringing Seasonal Magic into the Kitchen*, encourages women to consume food in such a way that we connect with the goddess. Johnson maintained food is the “key to sacred experience.”⁶²

⁵⁹ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 133.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Cait Johnson, *Cooking Like a Goddess: Bringing Seasonal Magic into*

Johnson wrote, “According to the Goddess Way, food can be our spiritual guide, a guide that leads us to direct experience of the numinous, the Divine.”⁶³ She suggests women build a “kitchen altar,”⁶⁴ choose a kitchen goddess⁶⁵ to worship and place her image in the kitchen. *Cooking Like a Goddess* teaches women to sin by ritually preparing food and consuming it in honor of the goddess.

How does food invoke the goddess? Just ask JoAnn. A grandmother who resides with her husband on Cape Cod, JoAnn is an active senior with an energetic personality. Raised in the Congregational Church and mother to a grown Christian daughter,

the Kitchen (Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1997), 1.

⁶³ Ibid., 8.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 21.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 22.

spirituality has remained an important part of her life. Yet sadly, her image of God has changed over the years.

When I met JoAnn, she was teaching a religious course for women at her new church, a Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. She offered to share the curriculum for her course as part of my research for this book. The religious course she teaches is entitled “Cakes for the Queen of Heaven.” The curriculum promotes goddess worship.

The Queen of Heaven is a reference to an ancient goddess condemned in scripture. Identified variously as the Assyrian Ishtar, the Canaanite Astarte, or the Phoenician Asherah, women in ancient Israel worshiped this goddess by baking cakes made with her image.

“Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other

gods, that they may provoke me to anger.”⁶⁶

The women shamelessly led her worship in public and involved their children and compliant husbands. Jeremiah prophesied against their idolatry but they refused to repent. The women and their husbands replied to the prophet, “As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done.”⁶⁷

Diana, Artemis, Queen of Heaven -the goddess worshiped within feminist spirituality has many personifications. One of her titles is the “Goddess of Ten Thousand Names.” In addition to her various images, the goddess is frequently envisioned as a “triple

⁶⁶ Jer. 7:17, 18.

⁶⁷ Jer. 44:16- 17.

goddess.” This means she comprises three aspects of aging, maiden, mother and crone. Since goddess worship teaches women they are made in her image, these three aspects of aging glorify three phases of a woman’s life.

When I arrived at her home for the material, JoAnn invited me in. She was a gracious hostess and enjoyed chatting. We spent a few moments discussing her spirituality. JoAnn was passionate and articulate but when the conversation turned to her daughter, she became sorrowful. It was clear by what JoAnn shared with me her newfound spirituality was at odds with her daughter’s.

In spite of her daughter’s disapproval, JoAnn seemed comfortable with merging her new spirituality with her childhood memories of Jesus. Within feminist spirituality the goddess is sometimes imagined as having a male consort. This god is the goddess’ son, who later becomes her lover. She seemed to think this could be Jesus Christ.

JoAnn did not understand how the goddess actually created her son and it was clear the hint of incest offended her sensibilities. Regardless of her confusion, JoAnn firmly believed her goddess is more powerful than God. She was unwavering in her worship of the goddess. I reminded her of what Jesus said about himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."⁶⁸ Slightly shaken, she replied she had never heard the quote before.

Like the deity she worships, JoAnn is a curious blend of contradictions. She is a member of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans and high priestess of the Moon Tree Circle. She is a former churchgoer and a practicing pagan, a teacher of religion and a student of witchcraft, grandmother and crone. Reminiscent of the rebellious women in Israel, she honors the goddess through ritual and openly instructs other women to do the same. Like the

⁶⁸ John 14:6.

biblical women before her who answered “we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth,” JoAnn offers “Cakes” for the Queen of Heaven.⁶⁹

Women’s Liberation?

The doctrine of original sin is rejected within feminist spirituality. Instead, spiritual feminists maintain, while it may be beneficial for a woman to commit sin, women are not subject to an inherent inclination to do so.

The Bible teaches man is born in sin, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”⁷⁰ In Romans we read, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”⁷¹

Ignoring Jesus’ warning, “Verily, verily, I say to you,

⁶⁹JoAnn, conversation with the author, April 29, 1998; also prior telephone communication with the author.

⁷⁰ Ps. 51:5.

⁷¹ Rom. 3:23.

Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin,”⁷² in the make-believe world of feminist spirituality there is no bondage to sin. Instead, women are encouraged to sin for their own purposes; sin is viewed positively as a means to liberation and personal empowerment.

In the “Garden of the Goddess” women are not punished for wanting to be gods, “In the much more ancient, original, and beautiful Garden of the Goddess, human beings are asked to participate in her immortality, to know and enjoy the ecstasy of divine oneness.”⁷³

Feminist authors, Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, in *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, describe a growing feminist prejudice; “The tragedy of Christianity is that it

⁷² John 8:34; see also Prov. 5:22, Rom. 6:16, 7:23, and 2 Pet. 2:19.

⁷³ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 171.

has kept untold millions of human beings from sinning, i.e., from knowing their own souls.”⁷⁴

Sjoo and Mor cite feminist author Mary Daly, as the academic basis for their conclusion that sinning is, “knowing.” Daly, in her book, *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy*, devoted a portion of chapter three to, “The Courage to Sin.” Daly maintained sin can likely be traced to, “the Indo-European root es-, meaning to be.”⁷⁵ She concluded a woman’s, “courage to be, implies the courage to be WRONG. Elemental be-ing is Sinning; it requires the Courage to Sin.”⁷⁶

Daly even attempted a defense of Satan. She wrote, “Clearly, this ‘fallen’ angel’s problem was that ‘he’ wanted to find

⁷⁴ Ibid. 343.

⁷⁵ Mary Daly, *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 151. Citations are to the HarperSanFrancisco edition.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

happiness commensurate with his own natural ability, rather than remaining an eternal recipient of divine care packages. ‘He’ was proud and independent, valuing ‘his’ own nature.”⁷⁷

This reads as an attempt to reframe the nature of sin. Based on the sum of Daly’s writings, women are seduced into believing that the Fall and expulsion from the garden represent emancipation from “divine care packages” and sin is empowerment. Through this retooling of the creation story, women are encouraged to embrace the spirit of “independence” the serpent has come to represent.

Feminist spirituality teaches women the snake from the garden, “is very good”⁷⁸ and the Fall was vital for human (or more precisely, female) evolution. As one author put it, “Yes, Adam and

⁷⁷ Ibid., 190.

⁷⁸ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 128.

Eve did Fall-*they fell into life.*⁷⁹ Daly wrote the Fall that is currently occurring at the impetus of feminism is “a Fall into the sacred and therefore into freedom.”⁸⁰ She also wrote, “The beginning of liberation comes when women refuse to be ‘good’ and/or ‘healthy’ by prevailing standards.”⁸¹ Women’s liberation occurs when women sin? In an ironic twist, by justifying sin and refusing the Savior, women involved in feminist spirituality are never truly liberated. A cycle of doubt (“I’m not sure that I believe the Word of God” or “I don’t believe in the God of patriarchy”); sin (rebellion, lust, hate, idolatry, witchcraft, blasphemy, delusion); and goddess affirmation (“You shall be as goddess” or “I am a goddess”) keep women in Satan’s bondage.

⁷⁹ Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 50 (italics in original).

⁸⁰ Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women’s Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), 67 (italics in the original).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

In spite of Daly's confusing play on words in *Pure Lust*, "be-ing is sinning," she fails to address the true meaning of the word sin. Though she advocates sinning as a woman's way of being, sin, according to standard usage, implies a "transgression of the law of God" or "an offense against religious or moral law."⁸² The Bible states, "Whosoever committeth sin transgreeth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."⁸³ Our Creator established rules of conduct. When we sin, we violate God's law.

Through etymology Daly obscures this critical point. One must also question her philosophy. Is sinning considered a purely personal experience with no impact on the world we live in and, if so, is that possible? If not, will our community norms and biblical

⁸² Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, s.v. "Sin," <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=sin7x=21&y=17>.

⁸³ 1 John 3:4.

morality be dismantled to allow for the free uninhibited expression of sin? Without God's Word as our standard, how is society to judge between the profane and the holy and the evil and the good? How are we to protect the innocent from the wicked?

Spiritual feminists also fail to consider that God's law is for our best. The Bible instructs, "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day *for thy good*."⁸⁴

Again we read, "And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, *for our good always*, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day."⁸⁵ Because God loves

⁸⁴ Deut. 10:12-13 (italics mine).

⁸⁵ Deut. 6:24 (italics mine).

us, he commands us not to sin. Anything outside of God's law is a sin and sin results in death.⁸⁶

Daly and Sjoon and Mor fail to critically examine their doctrine. If the only defense one can put forth for the unrestrained practice of sin, is that its very essence is to be, surely this is a viewpoint without practical worth. If being is sinning, being is also filling ones belly, digesting food and expelling waste. It makes as much sense to center feminist spirituality on excrements as it does on sin.

⁸⁶ Rom. 6:23.

Points to Remember:

1. You are a sinner (Rom. 3:23).
2. You sin when you violate God's law (1 John 3:4).
3. God's law is for your good (Deut. 10:12,13).
4. Your freedom to choose is limited to options that are not sin (Gen. 2:16, 17).

CHAPTER 3

RITUALIZED SEX

And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

Numbers 25:1-2

For the lips of a strange woman drop as honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

Proverbs 5:3-5

Feminism's defense of abortion rights goes something like this- attack the messenger instead of the message and when that fails attack the messenger again. Feminists love to rail at Christians, calling them narrow minded, bigoted, misogynistic (which is

amusing if you are Christian woman) and my personal favorite, intolerant. They reserve a special animosity for Bible believing, Spirit filled Christians who exercise their faith in the public square. A woman in an online abortion discussion group in which I was a participant complained, "Fundamentalism is fundamentalism ... all harmful." She was comparing fundamentalist Christianity to the Taliban, the fanatical Islamic terrorist group known for its gross abuse of women. When her arguments in favor of abortion were condensed her support for abortion was essentially, "Your God hates women so why should I care about anything the Bible has to say about abortion?"

Feminists love to compare Christianity to repressive religions but the good news is the Good News. Feminist spirituality can stand in as the liberating spirituality for women only as long as feminists can convince others that biblical Christianity is anti-women and oppressive.

God's Love for Women

Christian fundamentalism came into being to preserve fundamental biblical truths. It acknowledges the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, his bodily resurrection, substitutionary atonement, and his Second Coming to judge the living and the dead. It also professes the inerrancy of Scripture.

An understanding of Jesus' work while he was on earth and his Word as set forth in the Bible, are of incomparable worth. The Bible is all about Jesus; it is about God reconciling the world to himself through the Son. Yes, there are people who use the Bible to batter women with but *the message* of the Bible is one of love and forgiveness. It is the most empowering proclamation of freedom ever written. History teaches that liberation and empowerment flow to women when the good news of Jesus Christ is preached. Because the

Bible teaches that women are made in God's image,³² everywhere Christianity is faithfully and truthfully preached the dignity and status of women improves.

It is also important to note, Christianity is not about religion. It is about being in love with God. An expert at religious law once tried to trap Jesus. He asked him which of the commandment was the greatest. Jesus replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."³³

Jesus defied the religious traditions of men by keeping the law of God. In Israel during the time of Jesus, women were prohibited from speaking to men in public never mind travel around

³² Gen. 1:27.

³³ Matt. 22:37-40.

with them to do ministry work. Yet, Jesus, through his love and inclusiveness, repeatedly lifted women's social status to a level on par with men. He met with the Samaritan woman, a social outcast, who in turn preached the Gospel to her community. He taught Mary the way a rabbi taught male pupils, "which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word" and when her sister complained, he responded "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."³⁴

While Jesus walked on earth, he cared for the social outcast, the downtrodden, the oppressed- the person without a voice. He reached out to women and identified with their suffering. In one example, Jesus disregarded the convention not to come in contact with dead bodies when he touched an open bier and healed the dead son of the widow of Nain;³⁵ her well being was more important to

³⁴ Luke 10:38-42.

³⁵ Luke 7:11-15.

him then ceremonial cleanness.

Jesus turned power on its head when he preached the greatest in the Kingdom of God is humble³⁶ and the meek shall inherit the earth.³⁷ He said, “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”³⁸

An elderly woman was the first to preach of the arrival of the Messiah to the Jews³⁹ and it was a woman, Mary, whose heart

³⁶ Matt. 18:4.

³⁷ Matt. 5:5.

³⁸ Matt. 20:25-28.

³⁹ Luke 2:38.

was pierced at the suffering of Christ.⁴⁰ Because of their famous love for Jesus, women were the last to leave Christ's side⁴¹ and the first to gaze on His empty tomb.⁴² The resurrected Jesus appeared first to a woman⁴³ and women were the first to proclaim his resurrection to others.⁴⁴

Women were the first to hear the Gospel preached in Europe⁴⁵ and one of the women, Lydia, the first to experience conversion.⁴⁶ The New Testament is replete with references to women who loved Jesus and followed him. Women were committed

⁴⁰ Luke 2:35 and John 19:25.

⁴¹ Mark 15:44-47 and Luke 23:49-55.

⁴² Luke 24:1-3 and John 20:1.

⁴³ John 20:11-18.

⁴⁴ Luke 24:9-10 and John 20:18.

⁴⁵ Acts 16:13.

⁴⁶ Acts 16:14-15.

laborers in the early Church.⁴⁷

The women who personally met Jesus, and the earlier women who lived their lives in expectation of him, are just like us. We can identify with their personal struggles because they are our struggles. The Bible gives examples of notable women so we can learn from their lives. They were prostitutes (Rahab) and pagans (Ruth). They had adulterous affairs with politicians (Bathsheba) and challenged political powers (Jehoshabeath). They were young virgins (Mary) and postmenopausal (Naomi). They were infertile (Hannah) and part of extended families (Rachel). They were victims of domestic violence (Abigail). They were surrogate mothers and unwed mothers (Hagar). They were victims of incest (Tamar), victims of date rape (Dinah) and victims of gang rape (Levites Concubine). They were slaves (Moses' Mother) and victims of forced abortion and population control (Women of Gilead). They

⁴⁷ Acts 18:26, Rom. 16:3, 6, and Phil. 4:3.

were forced to give up (adoption) or hide their children to protect them from government death warrants (Moses' Mother, Mary). Some women were beautiful (Rachel) and some disfigured or physically challenged (Leah).

Among other things, women in the Bible were conquerors (Jael); spies (woman in 2 Sam. 17:17); military leaders, judges (Deborah); deliverers (Jehoshabeath); prophetesses (Huldah, Miriam); survivors (Tamar, Dinah); patriots (the wise woman of Abel); midwives (Puah); queens (Esther, Queen of Sheba); disciples (Tabitha); career women (Lydia); mothers and martyrs.

The very first preaching of the Gospel was by God himself and it was for the comfort of the first woman.⁴⁸ God loves the women he created so much he chose to die for us rather than let us remain under the curse of sin and death. His willing sacrifice on the cross guaranteed freedom to any woman who calls on his name. His

⁴⁸ Gen. 3:15.

dying words, “It is finished,”⁴⁹ are an eternal pronouncement of women’s liberation.

“Lady of the Beasts”

Regrettably, spiritual feminists refuse to accept or acknowledge God’s sacrificial love for them. Instead, they make women out to be victims of the God of the Bible- the very God who died for them! Feminist spirituality maintains “traditional religions of the West have betrayed women” and therefore “must be reformed or reconstructed to support the full human dignity of women.”⁵⁰

Those who sympathize with feminist spirituality suggest, the "seemingly innocent myth of Paradise and how the world began was actually carefully constructed and propagated to ‘keep women in

⁴⁹ John 19:30.

¹⁹ Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, eds., *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1979), 1.

their place'.⁵¹ Spiritual feminists overlook the reality of the dual expulsion from the Garden and the chastisement and consequences that befell both sexes. As a result, they read an indictment against women within Genesis.

Yes, some women do suffer abuse at the hands of certain men who claim to be Christian. The Bible calls this a false profession of faith, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him."⁵² Scripture has always been twisted to fit ambitions, prejudices, and societal whims and marginalized members of society too often bear the brunt of false religious teachings (today, we see this happening to the unborn). This is an ugly reality of living in a fallen world. But by ignoring the totality of scripture, and in particular the teachings of Jesus Christ, it is feminist spirituality

⁵¹ Merlin Stone, *When God was a Women* (1976; repr., New York: Barnes and Noble, 1993), 197.

²¹ Tit. 1:16.

which has betrayed women, not the God of the Bible.

It is also true that women have been objectified, by some men, as earthly or sensual in nature. Feminism has been quick to charge that such generalizations are sexist. Indeed they are. However, if spiritual feminists characterize women in a similar manner, their descriptions are not considered stigmas. The very adjectives that were regarded as disagreeable when used by men have become tokens of esteem when applied by women. This is indicated by one of the titles conferred on Eve, “Mistress of Vegetation and Lady of the Beasts.”⁵³

Suppose a man stated the first woman “preferred the wild places,”⁵⁴ “wore flowers”⁵⁵ in her hair, and “ran with wolves.”⁵⁶ A

⁵³ Boffie Johnson, *Lady of the Beasts* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988), 186.

²³ Miriam Therese Winter, *The Chronicles of Noah and Her Sisters: Genesis and Exodus According to Women* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1995), 35.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 36.

shrill cry would be heard coming from feminist camps. Yet, that is exactly what spiritual feminists' claim. In one re-imagined story of creation, the first woman is depicted this way, "Eve and her daughters swam in the water, sang with the birds, danced among the growing things . . . wore flowers in their hair . . . played by the apple tree, told stories and made ritual, and even talked to serpents and snakes."⁵⁷ Spiritual feminists have objectified women by identifying them with wildness and nature. These word pictures of Eve indirectly color all women. Her descriptions parallel descriptions of the goddess. Anciently, the goddess Artemis was "Mistress of Wild Animals."⁵⁸ Her Roman equivalent, Diana, was

⁵⁶ Ibid. 35.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 37.

⁵⁸ Encyclopedia Mythica, s.v. "Artemis" (by Ron Leadbetter), <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/a/artemis.html>; Artemis is associated with Potnia Theron, Mistress of Wild Animals.

“Mother of Animals” and “Lady of Wild Creatures.”⁵⁹

In addition to the goddess’ association with animals, the earth is viewed as the body of the goddess. The goddess is often referred to as Gaia or “Mother Earth.” Within feminist spirituality, a woman is a “Mistress of Wild Animals” and a daughter of the Earth.

In the creation account contained within, *The Chronicles of Noah and Her Sisters*, original sin is eliminated. In this story Eve was allowed to eat from the forbidden tree. The female deity within this myth permitted it so that Eve “could grow to be more like” a goddess.⁶⁰ In this version of Genesis, the first couple was not cast out of the garden paradise because of transgression. Instead, Adam

⁵⁹ Barbara G. Walker, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1983), 233.

⁶⁰ Miriam Therese Winter, *The Chronicles of Noah and Her Sisters: Genesis and Exodus According to Women* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1995), 36.

“knew that his world was slipping away, for he could no longer control it.” Eventually, when the first man, “could bear it no longer, he let the woman lead him to a place beyond the garden.”⁶¹

Here again we observe a description of the first man that is pathetic and impotent. In contrast, Eve is depicted in a dominant, leadership role. The first man is the woman’s companion, submissive to her leadership. The first woman is noted for her religious ritual suggesting that it is the woman, not the man, which is the family’s high priest. In this garden paradise, headship is conferred on the woman.

⁶¹ Ibid., 37.

Carnal Knowledge

Feminist spirituality's interpretation of Genesis stands in dark contrast to Christian interpretation. Although the Bible teaches there was a literal Fall in the Garden of Eden, in the minds of spiritual feminists the account of the Fall is nothing more than an allegory.

Feminist spirituality maintains Eve did not sin by eating forbidden fruit; she simply “committed the sexual act.”⁶² Feminist spirituality teaches that just as Eve discovered her sexuality and procreative powers in the garden, women must learn to harness and control their sexual energy. In the minds of spiritual feminists, sex is

⁶² Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman Affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 165.

power. Although it would be incorrect to claim that all women involved with feminist spirituality hold to this unusual sexualized account of the Fall, many do. Those who do, view the fruit in Genesis as a metaphor for sex; the consumption of the forbidden fruit meant “being” sexual.

“What?” you may be asking. How has Eve's consumption of the forbidden fruit come to mean indulging in forbidden sexuality?

When Eve expressed her sexuality, she discovered her sexual prowess and tapped into a source of female power, or so the story goes. Power that, in spiritual feminists' minds, patriarchy wants to suppress. Hence, Eve's sexuality was “forbidden” by men who fear women's power. The serpent, according to spiritual feminists, simply instructed Eve in the pleasures of the flesh. The “Fall” took place when Eve was made conscious of her natural sexual identity and experienced it for the first time. They claim the forbidden fruit was invented to obscure the truth and “keep women in their place.”

Feminist spirituality teaches Eve was curious about her sexuality. When Eve tasted the forbidden fruit, she “received the wise secrets of life and the *awareness of sexuality*.”⁶³ Eve’s curiosity resulted in wisdom, sexual awareness and personal empowerment.

Eve was curious? No. The Bible states Eve was deceived.⁶⁴ Eve's deception led to her rebellion. By yielding to temptation, the first woman effectively revolted against the God that loved her, created her and cared for her and surrendered her allegiance to the enemy of God, albeit, however inadvertently. She divorced herself from everlasting life when she left her first love.

Through feminist spirituality rationale, sin is softened. "Curious" implies she was merely desirous “to investigate and

⁶³ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman Affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 129 (italics mine).

⁶⁴ 1 Tim. 2:14.

learn."⁶⁵ As such, Eve's sin sounds harmless, even meritorious.

Feminist spirituality has done away with the concept of sin by justifying, lessening or denying Eve's action in the Garden.

Although Eve transgressed Divine law, women are manipulated to sympathize with and thereupon justify Eve's disobedience. As one bumper sticker stated, "Eve was framed."

Through feminist spirituality's influence, Eve is no longer remembered as bereft of her perfect, sinless state and of Paradise. Instead, she has become the memory of idealism, autonomy, sexuality and power.

Sexuality is a gift from God. He tells us to exercise this gift, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every

⁶⁵ Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, s.v. "Curious," <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=curious&x=10&y=14>.

living thing that moveth upon the earth.”⁶⁶ This command was given before the Fall.

On the sixth day of creation, God observed everything He had made in the Garden and “it was very good,”⁶⁷ this includes a woman’s sexuality. The Bible reveals “Every good gift and every perfect gift”⁶⁸ is from God. Sexuality should be celebrated as another expression of God’s goodness.

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.”⁶⁹

Sex is for unity, procreation, comfort, joy and pleasure.

⁶⁶ Gen. 1:28.

⁶⁷ Gen. 1:31.

⁶⁸ James 1:17.

⁶⁹ Gen. 2:24-25.

Sexuality is a beautiful part of God's creation. It allows women to experience and participate in a portion of God's creative process.

When God gave the gift of sexuality, He set moral perimeters to ensure the appropriate exercise of this blessing.⁷⁰ Feminist spirituality, by attributing the pleasure and satisfaction of physical intimacy to rebellion against God, teaches women to indulge in sexuality outside of God's established boundaries. Although the "will of God" is that we should "abstain from fornication,"⁷¹ feminist spirituality encourages sin.

Altar of the Goddess

As stated earlier, feminist spirituality envisions the earth as the body of the goddess. The goddess is said to have created the world

⁷⁰ Exod. 20:14, 22:19, Lev. 18:6, 22, Deut. 22:13-30, Rom. 1: 26-27, and 1 Cor. 6:18.

⁷¹ 1 Thess. 4:3.

without male contribution- the goddess is attributed all the power of fecundity. Within feminist spirituality myths, sexuality is the divine agent through which the universe, earth, and life were created. These stories present a lascivious, inordinate goddess who possesses the power of life and death. In an article within *SageWoman*, Kathy Larson wrote an eroticized version of creation, comparing the earth to a lustful goddess. Her account is too graphic to relate but in her article she maintains women need to “create new stories in which sex is sacred, and women are teachers.”⁷²

Merlin Stone, in her book, *When God Was a Woman*, suggested that “in the worship of the female deity, sex was Her gift to humanity.”⁷³ She was, according to Stone, “Goddess of Sexual

⁷² Kathy Larson, “Sex Magic: Sacrament of the Goddess,” *SageWoman*, Summer 1996, http://www.sagewoman.com/samp34_3.htm.

⁷³ Merlin Stone, *When God was a Women* (1976; repr., New York: Barnes and Noble, 1993), 154.

Love and Procreation.”⁷⁴ Since the goddess is viewed this way, adherents of feminist spirituality worship her through indiscriminate sexuality. Sexual activity is ritualized. Lesbianism is esteemed. Masturbation is exalted as sex with the inner goddess. If-it-feels-good-do-it is the accepted standard.

Within feminist spirituality, sexuality is a “moment of Divine presence.”⁷⁵ Feminist spirituality instructs women to let “your acquaintance” with the goddess “transform your relationship to your body.”⁷⁶ As a result, women are encouraged to experiment with their own sexuality. Since the “Goddesses loved themselves,” women are encouraged to “wrest” their bodies “out of the hands of men” and meet their own sexual needs.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibid., 154-155.

⁷⁵ Shirley Ann Ranck, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: An Exploration of Women's Power Past, Present and Future* (Chicago: Delphi Press, Inc., 1995), 45.

⁷⁶ Patricia Lynn Reilly, *A God Who Looks Like Me: Discovering a Woman-Affirming Spirituality* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995),

Although not speaking specifically of lesbianism, Larson wrote, “The Goddess has helped me to let go of my inhibitions.”⁷⁸ She maintained, “If we understand that plants, animals, rocks, all beings, are not only sacred, but sexy, the bond between ourselves as humans and the rest of the cosmic web grows stronger.”⁷⁹ According to Larson, sexuality is “a door to creation” and orgasm is a “magical tool.”⁸⁰ She advised, a “woman who loves sex and knows her own body is powerful and harder to dominate.”⁸¹ In way of empowerment, she suggested “Sex Magic,” a ritual that begins with casting a circle and invoking a sex goddess. According to Larson, if a

181.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 181-182.

⁷⁸ Kathy Larson, “Sex Magic: Sacrament of the Goddess,” *SageWoman*, Summer 1996, http://www.sagewoman.com/samp34_3.htm.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

woman surrenders to an “animal-self, you never know what might happen.”⁸² She then listed “bark[ing] hoarsely in the rain,” and “a sudden desire for that maple tree in your backyard”⁸³ as possibilities.

The *Charge of the Goddess* reads “all acts of love and pleasure” are goddess rituals. Laurie Cabot, a practicing witch and author, asserted a woman’s “entire existence is sexual” and her “sexuality is extraordinary power.”⁸⁴ Cabot advised, “When it comes to sex, a modern woman must say to herself, ‘I am the Divine Goddess.’”⁸⁵

Many men would agree. According to one male goddess

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Laurie Cabot with Jean Mills, *The Witch in Every Woman: Reawakening the Magical Nature of the Feminine to Heal, Protect, Create, and Empower* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1997), 83.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

worshiper, sex is “a doorway to a much deeper kind of passion”⁸⁶
and women’s bodies are “the first and best altar of the Goddess.”⁸⁷

As I sipped my hot chocolate, the light dimmed and a reverent hush fell on the audience. With her long flowing hair and smoldering kohl lined eyes, it was easy to imagine the dancer, Katrina, as an Egyptian. In the dimly lit coffeehouse the delicate jewel in the middle of her forehead sparkled with each catch of the light. As her scarf draped form wove around the small round tables, her hips swayed to the Arabian music. Some of the customers looked surprised as she sipped their coffee. Those who came expecting the performance were deeply moved. For them, this was more than a belly dance. It was a worship service.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Marguerite Rigoglioso, “Not for Women Only,” (includes an interview with Daniel Campbell), *New Age Journal*, May/June, 1997, 142.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁸⁸ Khadija and the Kharamana Dance Troupe, Prodigal Son Coffeehouse (Hyannis, MA), August 25, 2001.

As Katrina belly danced, she conjured up an inner priestess. This evening she was dancing as “Khadij,” an Egyptian priestess of the goddess. The other women of her dance troupe channeled priestesses or goddesses of their own choosing. One woman danced as the bloodthirsty Goddess “Kali.” Kali is the gruesome Hindu goddess of destruction, often depicted with a necklace of skulls and holding a severed head. The Indian manifestation of Kali often shows her dancing on the body of a male deity in domination.

Katrina teaches a dance called “Awakening the Goddess.” According to Katrina and her dance troupe, “Middle Eastern Dance is the most ancient dance form known, originating in the temples of the Goddess.”⁸⁹ Goddess dancing is described as “centered in the belly and firmly connected to the earth” on Katrina’s web site. Goddess dancing “exalts the form and presence of the Goddess in

⁸⁹ Khadija and the Kharamana Dance Troupe, “Marhaba! Welcome!” (handout, Prodigal Son Coffeehouse, Hyannis, MA, August 25, 2001).

each woman.”⁹⁰

I watched as the “goddesses” and the “priestesses” circled the floor and gently drew women from the audience into their dance. The sultry women enraptured the men. It was not long before a married man left his seat by his wife and kneeled before one of the “priestesses.” The beautiful woman’s movements grew more suggestive, more arousing. Still on his knees, he slowly lifted his arms in worship of the goddess. Her body writhed in response.

Imbedded within feminist spirituality is the belief that women merit worship by men. There is hypocrisy in the spirituality as well. Picture the feminist protest that would occur if a powerful, political lobby of men were reinventing scripture, revising history, promoting a new religion to further their ideological goals, and declaring themselves gods - to be worshiped by women! This form of

⁹⁰ Transformation Tours, “Egyptian Dance/Awakening the Goddess,” www.Transformationstours.com/dance/egyptiandance.html.

chauvinism would never be tolerated by feminists.

The not so subtle reverse sexism in feminist spirituality can likely be traced to the ancient myths associated with the goddess. In many of these accounts, the goddess is said to have conceived a son god who later became her lover/consort. It is important to note, the goddess' consort is always subordinate to the goddess for he is her divine creation.

In feminist spirituality, women are embodiments of the goddess. If women, as the goddess incarnate, create life then the world is made up entirely of mothers and their offspring. Because of this dynamic, within goddess worship men are minimized as "women's children." Although there are women, in particular witches, who maintain the male deity is not inferior to the goddess, in practice, the goddess takes preeminence.

Unlike feminist spirituality, in Christianity holiness and intimate fellowship with God is not circumscribed to a specific gender. The Holy Spirit is promised to all believers regardless of gender, “For John truly baptized you with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”⁹¹ Women and men who accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, receive His Spirit. In contrast to feminist spirituality where women alone embody the divine, in Christianity both sexes are “heirs together of the grace of life”⁹² Women and men are equal in worth and personhood, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”⁹³ Together women and men are “joint heirs”⁹⁴ of the Kingdom of

⁹¹ Acts 1:5.

⁹² 1 Pet. 3:7.

⁹³ Gal. 3:27-28.

⁹⁴ Rom. 8:17.

God.

According to spiritual feminists, in the coming feminist spirituality consciousness, the original social order (matriarchy) with its feminine godhead and “life-honoring” ethos, will replace patriarchy and its masculine “death centered” ethics. How do men, who worship the goddess, relate to feminist spirituality’s relationship paradigm?

Some men are willing to, “restructure their relationships with women in their lives”⁹⁵ in order to receive it. According to author John Kalb, men “need the love of the Goddess.”⁹⁶ In an article in *Spirit of Change* he advised, “The Goddess [in a woman] needs to have her wants, needs, fears and feelings heard.”⁹⁷ “Men will have to die into the Goddess,” another claimed, “in order to be

⁹⁵ John Kalb, “The Green Man,” *Spirit of Change: New England’s Holistic Magazine*, July/August, 1998, 55.

⁹⁶ Ibid..

⁹⁷ Ibid.

reborn.”⁹⁸ One goddess worshiper hears the goddess saying, “It’s ok-
you’re my son!”⁹⁹

Sex with a priestess enables men to experience the goddess
“through the body of a woman.”¹⁰⁰ Larson believes, “women in a
variety of cultures had the role of sex priestesses, holding open the
door to the mysteries of the Goddess through sexual energy.”¹⁰¹

Spiritual feminists describe this sacred prostitution as women
surrendering to the goddess.¹⁰² Sacred prostitution, according to
author Shirley Ann Ranck, was the “way for both women and men

⁹⁸ Marguerite Rigoglioso, “Not for Women Only,” (includes an interview
with Daniel Campbell), *New Age Journal*, May/June, 1997, 142.

⁹⁹ Marguerite Rigoglioso, “Not for Women Only” (includes as interview
with Mark Roblee), *New Age Journal*, May/June, 1997, 142.

¹⁰⁰ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother:
Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York:
HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 159.

¹⁰¹ Kathy Larson, “Sex Magic: Sacrament of the Goddess,” *SageWoman*,
Summer 1996, http://www.sagewoman.com/samp34_3.htm.

¹⁰² Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother:
Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York:
HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 159.

to participate in the essence of the divine.”¹⁰³

For a believer to commit a sexual sin is to defile the temple of the Holy Spirit. Our body belongs to God; we have been “bought with a price.”

“Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid.

What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, *which* ye have of God, and ye are not

¹⁰³ Shirley Ann Ranck, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: An Exploration of Women's Power Past, Present and Future* (Chicago: Delphi Press, Inc., 1995), 44.

your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."¹⁰⁴

In contrast to Christianity, feminist spirituality encourages women to surrender to the goddess through indiscriminate sexuality. Women are instructed to glorify the goddess in their body through ritual sex. In so doing, they afford the way for men to experience the goddess' presence. In essence, feminist spirituality is advocating a return to temple prostitution, a time when men engaged in sexual relations with temple priestesses believing they were worshiping the goddess incarnate.

An example of this type of goddess worship can be found in the movie, *Practical Magic*. One aspect of the movie portrayed sacred prostitution. Nicole Kidman played a witch involved in a sexual relationship with a man. In describing their physical intimacy,

¹⁰⁴ 1 Cor. 6:15-20

Kidman's character explained "sometimes we just stay up all night worshipping each other."

Feminist spirituality claims, "Women in ancient Goddess-worshipping societies were free to take as many lovers as they chose."¹⁰⁵ Even the term, virgin, has been reinterpreted to reflect goddess worshipping sexual mores. According to Ranck, the term virgin once referred to "sexual independence" not sexual purity.¹⁰⁶

Since the goddess is imagined as always lustful and as "the heat in cats and dogs,"¹⁰⁷ as women identify with the image of the goddess, sexual immorality abounds. One author admits "there are

¹⁰⁵ Shirley Ann Ranck, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: An Exploration of Women's Power Past, Present and Future* (Chicago: Delphi Press, Inc., 1995), 44.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Zsuzsanna E. Budapest, *The Grandmother of Time: A Woman's Book of Celebrations, Spells, and Sacred Objects for Every Month of the Year* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 69.

few taboos about sexuality” within paganism.¹⁰⁸

There are no sexual standards or moral absolutes within feminist spirituality. The closest anything comes is the Threefold Law or the Wiccan Rede. A twist on the Eastern philosophy of karma, the Threefold Law is the ambiguous belief that what you do comes back to you threefold. The closest thing to a moral code of conduct is the Wiccan Rede which states “An it harm none, do what ye will.” This should be read, “Do what you want and pretend it harms no one.” Sin always hurts us. Moreover, the “harm none” clause is habitually discarded when a woman is confronted with an unplanned pregnancy brought about by her goddess worshipping sexual mores.

¹⁰⁸ Vivianne Crowley, *Phoenix from the Flame: Pagan Spirituality in the Western World* (San Francisco: Aquarian/Thorsons, 1994), 163.

¹⁰⁹ Shirley Ann Ranck, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: An Exploration of Women’s Power Past, Present and Future* (Chicago: Delphi Press, Inc., 1995), 45 (italics mine).

Ranck recommends this ritual for women, “Caress and anoint yourself with your favorite lotion or perfume or oil. Know that for a millennia the menstrual, life-giving and life-taking female body was worshiped as Divine, and that lovemaking was a sacred ritual. Say aloud: The Goddess affirms my sexual pleasure.”¹⁰⁹

This ritual conveys:

1. Women’s bodies are made in the “Divine” image of a goddess.
2. Women merit worship.
3. Sexuality was a method of worship.
4. Women possess the power to create life and the authority to destroy it.

Ritual is a vehicle for expressing intangible, spiritual concepts in a non-verbal way. The intrinsic meaning of a ritual is absorbed by a woman through participation in the religious act or

acts. Because the goddess is seen as comprising both “life-giving and life-taking” aspects, the impression that is communicated to women is that they have supremacy over life. A woman who thinks she is a goddess, capable of creating life, has little if any qualm bringing that life to an end. The goddess is “sexual goddess and death goddess all at once.”¹¹⁰ As a result, if a woman becomes inadvertently pregnant through ritualized sex, abortion is considered an appropriate option. As one goddess worshiper put it, the goddess “who whets your appetite with sexual pleasures also whets the knife.”¹¹¹

Points to Remember:

1. Sexuality is a gift from God (Gen. 1:28).

¹¹⁰ Zsuzsanna E. Budapest, *The Grandmother of Time: A Woman's Book of Celebrations, Spells, and Sacred Objects for Every Month of the Year* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 69.

¹¹¹ Nevada Kerr, “Abortion as a Sacred Rite,” Snuff It, no. 4, <http://www.enviroweb.org/coc/snuffit4/abortion.html>.

2. A woman's sexuality is "very good" (Gen. 1:31).
3. God has set moral perimeters to ensure the appropriate exercise of this gift (1 Thess. 4:3-4).
4. A woman is filled with the Holy Spirit when she accepts Jesus Christ as her personal Savior (Acts 1:4-5). His Spirit indwells her physical body (1 Cor. 6:19).
5. A woman is to glorify God with her body (1 Cor. 6:20).

CHAPTER 4

WHETTING THE KNIFE

Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

Psalm 106:37-38

Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

Deuteronomy 12: 30-31

Leaders and advocates of feminist spirituality understand “by worshiping the Goddess, women internalize those qualities

associated with the Goddess.”¹ The undeniable danger of idolizing a lascivious, bloodthirsty deity is that a woman incorporates within herself these same characteristics. In addition, by projecting onto women glorified sexual images or those of death, women are objectified in the basest of ways. In other words, goddess worship legitimizes and reinforces what was once considered unconscionable characteristics- idolatry, sexual immorality and abortion- while creating cultural stereotypes. What is worse, because of their identification with the deity, these qualities and stereotypes are then made sacred.

Idolatry, although arguably a peril to one’s emotional, mental and spiritual health, does not necessarily pose a danger to others. And generally speaking, sexual immorality is primarily a risk to those who live it. However, abortion does categorically affect

¹ Vivianne Crowley, *Phoenix from the Flame: Pagan Spirituality in the Western World* (San Francisco: Aquaria/Thorsons, 1994), 120.

another human being- by violently ending her precious life- but through its association with the goddess, abortion is sacred.

Feminist spirituality has elevated abortion to a form of religious expression, endangering the most innocent and helpless among us.

The Power of a Priestess

Recognized as the mother of the feminist spirituality movement, Zsuzsanna E. Budapest², teaches that abortion is a woman's holy responsibility. Speaking of the goddess, she contends "abortion is the prerogative of the Dark Mother."³ Because of this

² Zsuzsanna E. Budapest is a Hungarian-born witch and a prolific writer. She is the founder of the Women's Spirituality Forum, a nonprofit organization dedicated to instructing girls and women in feminist spirituality. In the early 1970s, she founded the Susan B. Anthony Coven #1, likely the first feminist coven in the United States. It served as a model for other feminist witches' covens.

³ Zsuzsanna E. Budapest, *The Grandmother of Time: A Woman's Book of Celebrations, Spells, and Sacred Objects for Every Month of the Year* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 127.

prerogative, abortion is a woman's "responsibility, making the choice of life and death as much a part of the Goddess as her life-giving good nature."⁴

Budapest's claim makes abortion an exclusive right of women by virtue of their deity. As one abortion supporter succinctly put it, "Women as the goddess incarnate" have "sovereign power over issues of life and death."⁵

Similar to Budapest's view, author Ginette Paris suggested abortion is a "mother's responsibility."⁶

Not only is abortion a woman's "responsibility," according to post-abortion counselor Terra Wise, abortion is an expression of love. In her article "Midwife for the Soul: Unbiased

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Nevada Kerr, "Abortion As A Sacred Rite," Snuff It, no. 4, <http://www.enviroweb.org/coc/snuffit4/abortion.html>.

⁶ Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, trans. Joanna Mott (Dallas: Spring Publications), 95.

Post-Abortion Healing Support,” in *Vision* magazine, she described abortion as a decision motivated out of love and “maternal compassion.”⁷

According to Paris, “It is morally acceptable that a woman who gives life may also destroy life under certain circumstances.”⁸ In other words, according to feminist spirituality, if a woman possesses the power to create life she also owns the moral authority to end the life she created.

In her book *The Sacrament of Abortion*, she argued “abortion is a sacred act.”⁹ She asked, “If the issues surrounding life and death and children and love are not religious issues, or at least

⁷ Terra Wise, “Midwife for the Soul: Unbiased Post-Abortion Support,” *Vision*, June 2004, 27.

⁸ Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, trans. Joanna Mott (Dallas: Spring Publications), 53.

⁹ *Ibid.* 8.

spiritual ones, what is left that is religious?”¹⁰ Paris suggested a woman reflect on her reasons for abortion. She wrote, “To what ideal or what set of values is she sacrificing the fetus?”¹¹ Her choice of the word *sacrificing* is purposeful. In her book she exalts the Goddess Artemis and compares abortion to ritual sacrifice. The premise of the book is that abortion is a sacrifice to the goddess. The last paragraph reads, “Abortion as a sacrifice to Artemis. Abortion as a sacrament- for the gift of life to remain pure.”¹²

Although Paris’ position on abortion is shocking, it appeals to radical abortion supporters. A feminist study group on birthing and abortion used Paris’ book as a topic for discussion. Notes from the meeting were transcribed into an essay. In it, abortion was

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 94.

¹² Ibid. 107.

referred to as “a woman’s decision to sacrifice a fetus,”¹³ echoing Paris’ views from her book. One woman in the group commented to the effect, “For a millennia abortion was carried out responsibly, conscientiously, and sacredly.”¹⁴ The essay revealed the group’s consensual “support for abortion was grounded in a profound understanding that, as in nature, the taking of life is sometimes necessary.”¹⁵

It was January 22, the anniversary of the United States Supreme Court decision to legalize abortion. I was not welcome here. I was supposed to be across the street at the March for Life but for some inexplicable reason I wanted to hear what the other side had to say today. I slipped away from the pro-life crowd,

¹³ Cathleen and Colleen McGuire, “Birthing and Abortion” (transcribed from an ecofeminist study group, New York, NY, October 5, 1992), Eve Online, <http://eve.enviroweb.org/perspectives/issues/birth.html>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

quickly crossed the street, and smiled at the police officer as I entered the gate.

Refuse and Resist, a militant faction of the abortion rights movement, organized the rally. Their event took place on a grassy clearing a short distance from the White House. On that cold afternoon, a wire fence surrounded the gathering.

I tried to blend in as well as I could. Signs reading “Keep Abortion Legal” and “Feed the Christians to the Lions” were scattered throughout the crowd. Someone forced a flyer into my hand. I scanned it then shot a glance up at the man who handed it to me. The flyer read, “Ban Christianity, not Abortion.” Could he tell I was a Christian? I tried to look behind his angry eyes, wanting to make a human connection. Since biblical Christianity opposes abortion, the leaflet encouraged participants to make “being a follower of Christ socially unacceptable.” By his attitude I could see he was doing his job.

I positioned myself to listen to the speakers. It was not long before an attractive African American woman in her late twenties addressed the crowd. She displayed a feminist confidence typical of her generation. Unlike the other speakers, she did not lapse into vulgarity. Her comments were direct and personal.

Standing on a makeshift platform, she shared the circumstance that surrounded her abortion. As I listened, I was surprised by what I heard. In the end her justification for abortion was not that it is a private matter between a woman and her doctor. Abortion is a private matter between a woman and her goddess. “I prayed to my goddess and my god, she explained.”¹⁶ I learned that day that for women influenced by feminist spirituality, abortion is not just a political right. It is a religious.

Practicing witch and author, Starhawk, in the book *The*

¹⁶ Tamara, untitled (speech, Refuse and Resist! Rally, Washington, D.C., January 22, 1998).

Pagan Book of living and Dying: Practical Rituals, Prayers, Blessings, and Meditations on Crossing Over, described when human life begins as a mystery. Speaking of abortion, she wrote, “It is in our encounter with the mysteries of birth and death ... that we meet the Goddess. So to take away our right to have that encounter, to face that often painful and difficult choice, is to deny a woman’s deepest spiritual self.”¹⁷

Starhawk makes abortion a time of communion with the goddess, Paris maintains abortion is a sacrifice to the goddess, and Budapest claims women possess divine authority to choose abortion. These perspectives give rise to a religious justification for abortion. A Wiccan High Priestess and abortion supporter put it this way, “It is only in maintaining full control of our bodies that

¹⁷ Miriam Simos a.k.k. M. Macha Nightmare and the Reclaiming Collective, *The Pagan Book of Living and Dying: Practical Rituals, Prayers, Blessings, and Meditations on Crossing Over* (NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 234.

we maintain our full empowerment as Priestesses.”¹⁸

Circle of Life

Spiritual feminists claim female centered, goddess worshiping societies were life-honoring. Ancient women are remembered as peaceful cultivators of life and nature. This is in contrast to men, who, as hunter-gatherers, are said to have been death-centered. This is feminist revisionism at its most dangerous. As unborn children are killed at the insistence of political feminism, spiritual feminists claim the moral high ground by assuming a nonviolent past, transferring a life-honoring ethos to a death-centered political movement. The reality is that early agricultural communities were more given to human sacrifice not less.

According to a theory put forth by Adolf E. Jensen, “Blood sacrifice

¹⁸ Lady Lee, “Ethics of Abortion: A Witch’s Perspective,” *Feminista!* 3, no. 3 (1999): <http://www.feminista.com/archives/v3n3/lee.html>.

is linked not with the cultures of the hunter-gatherers but with those of the cultivator.”¹⁹

According to authors Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, human sacrifice “undoubtedly occurred under the Great Mother.”²⁰ “From the beginning there was a primary human perception that our living is sustained by death; by the death of other life forms, animal or vegetable. For all the world was seen to be alive, and humans lived by eating the world. The Mother’s creatures lived by eating each other, within her body. There is a kind of ontological pain in this perception that can be resolved only through ritual, which was always a fusion of sex and eating, of fertility and death, of life through death and vice versa.”²¹

¹⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th ed., s.v. “Sacrifice.”

²⁰ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 178.

²¹ Ibid.

As Sjoo and Mor explained, the underlying sentiment within goddess worship is that “living is sustained by death.” This attitude informs the beliefs and practices of feminist spirituality.

Spiritual feminists will point to stories like the one above, “all the world was seen to be alive,” or analogies, “to ensure a fertile garden, excess sprouts are pulled so that the overall crop can thrive,”²² which ascribe the same value to all life as justification for their support of abortion. In the minds of feminists, “death often sustains life.”²³

For the reason that goddess worship is pantheistic, spiritual feminists undervalue human life, in particular unborn human life. Pantheism is the belief god is the creation, which is to say a tree is a goddess or a woman is a goddess. In pantheism, the goddess is not

²² Cathleen and Colleen McGuire, “Birthing and Abortion” (transcribed from an ecofeminist study group, New York, NY, October 5, 1992), Eve Online, <http://eve.enviroweb.org/perspectives/issues/birth.html>.

²³ Ibid.

distinct from the created world. All creation is interconnected, an emanation from the goddess. Since all life is interconnected, there is no distinction between the earth and its human and animal inhabitants. There is no intrinsic worth ascribed to human life. All share in the goddess' life force. All life is sacred. In the web of life, who is to say what or whom is more precious? Life is in a continual cycle of death and rebirth. Given that life is a cyclical process, death is meaningless. According to Starhawk, who also happens to be a licensed minister of the Covenant of the Goddess, "everything in nature is cyclical."²⁴ If everything in nature is cyclical, including the unborn, abortion is a non-issue.

For the most part, practitioners of feminist spirituality agree an unborn baby is a human life. On the other hand, they do not believe life begins at conception; life is a cyclical process.

²⁴ Starhawk, "Envisioning the Future" in the *Fabric of the Future: Women Visionaries of Today Illuminate the Path to Tomorrow*, ed. M.J. Ryan, 300-307 (Berkeley: Conari Press, 1998).

According to Sjoo and Mor, when abortion or infanticide was practiced among ancient goddess worshipping people, it was believed “the spirit of the dead child was returned to the earth-womb to await new birth, partaking still in the substance of the Great Mother. It was not lost; but the well-being of the living group was maintained.”²⁵

This view defines an unborn baby as an embodied spirit, capable of being reborn or transferred to something else. An aborted child is simply waiting reincarnation. A spiritual feminist, who kills her child by abortion, believes her child will be released back into the goddess’ cosmic life force.

²⁵ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 201.

A new friend, a Catholic who attended church regularly, confided to me that she had an abortion prior to the birth of her sons. She made this confession over the din at a crowded restaurant, as the waiter hovered at nearby tables. She briefly explained the difficult situation which led her to make her decision. Because we had both experienced similar circumstances in our life, she assumed I would support the abortion. I paused, wondering how to approach the sensitive subject. It was Friday night and the place was overflowing with people; the booths behind and across from us were full. Her vulnerability and lack of timing took me off guard. I did not want to open up an intimate, perhaps painful, discussion in public but I did not want to be in tacit agreement either.

“May I take your order?” After the waiter left, I leaned in and asked, as gently as I could, “What do you think happened to the *baby*?” It was my weak attempt at humanizing her unborn

child. She was surprised by my question. After a moment and with great confidence she replied, “The baby is in heaven with God.” Her tone said, “That’s final.”

Though my new friend, whom I sadly lost contact with shortly after, was not involved with feminist spirituality her story demonstrates just how attractive its abortion rational is to suffering women. As a Catholic, she could retain her faith (yes, a baby does have an eternal and precious soul) while still choosing to abort (but the soul will be in a better place).

In her book, *The Grandmother of Time*, Budapest admitted an unborn baby has a soul, “When the woman decides that she is not ready to take on the responsibility of developing and bringing to life and adulthood this fertilized egg with the soul in it, the soul is sent back to wait a little longer.”²⁶

In a chapter called “Rites of Passage,” Budapest teaches post-aborted women to construct a white altar and place pictures of deceased relatives and flowers on it. As a candle is lit, women are instructed to recite a special goodbye to the soul of the aborted

²⁶ Zsuzsanna E. Budapest, *The Grandmother of Time: A Woman's Book of Celebrations, Spells, and Sacred Objects for Every Month of the Year* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989), 188.

baby, “Good-bye, my friend, *until we meet again!* Seek your relatives among my own! When the time comes, you will know! Good-bye, my friend, good-bye, my own!”²⁷

According to Budapest, “women are surrounded . . . by a multitude of souls asking to be born.”²⁸ These entities are portrayed as pesky spirits, waiting to reenter life through the body of a woman. “But where,” asks Budapest, “does it say that every little soul that manages to land a fertilized egg is entitled to occupancy?”²⁹

Another practicing witch rationalized, “If you are pregnant and abort your baby, don’t you think that your baby’s soul will come to you the next time you get pregnant?”³⁰

²⁷ Ibid., (italics mine).

²⁸ Ibid. 126

²⁹ Ibid. pg. 127

³⁰ She of the Storm, “Abortion: A Responsible Choice,” The Witches Voice Adult Pagan Essay Series, http://www.witchvox.com/words/words_2001/e_abortion3.html.

A similar belief is promoted in the book, *Abortion...is not a sin: A New Age Look at An Age Old Problem*. It is suggested in the book that the spirit of an unborn baby determines what time to enter a womb and which womb to enter. Thus, an unborn baby has chosen its own aborted destiny.³¹

In its litany of spiritual excuses for abortion, the book offers that the unborn baby would not want to be born³² and since souls cannot die, the spirit of the aborted baby will come to earth at a later time.³³ These same spiritual justifications for abortion can be found within feminist spirituality.

In defense of abortion, a wiccan high priestess asked, “might a soul . . . choose an abortive experience?”³⁴ She also

³¹ K.B. Welton, *Abortion...is Not a Sin: A New Age Look at An Age Old Problem* (Costa Mesa, CA: Pandit Press, 1987), 22.

³² *Ibid.*, 19.

³³ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁴ Lady Lee, “Ethics of Abortion: A Witch’s Perspective,” *Feminista!* 3, no. 3 (1999): <http://www.feminista.com/archives/v3n3/lee.html>.

implied a woman's unborn baby could return in the future, "It's like asking company to wait for Friday instead of coming on Wednesday."³⁵ Mitigating any qualms over abortion, she maintained "no life force is ever truly destroyed."³⁶

In *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*, a book by Budapest teaching Dianic witchcraft,³⁷ women are instructed in how to perform a post-abortion ritual that aids a woman's release of her aborted baby's soul.

Once the stars arrive at night, friends of the aborted woman draw a bath and add rose petals to the water. As the aborted woman bathes, they sing. The aborted woman then watches "*the life she created* stir, grow and then leave her to fly up the Milky Way to join the dance of the stars." After the woman says goodbye to her baby, she "gathers the rose petals to sprinkle on

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ A feminist form of witchcraft in which a goddess is worshiped exclusively.

her garden.”³⁸ This ritual demonstrates the danger of a “woman-is-goddess” mind-set. It is affirmed during the ritual the woman aborted a “life she created.” However, by suggesting the baby’s soul is free-floating in a cosmic life force, much like a little astronaut in outer space, the ritual facilitates a denial of the baby’s actual death. Given that life is regarded as a cyclical process, placing flower petals in her garden allows a woman to memorialize her baby while reconnecting with the web of life. According to Deborah Maia, a post-aborted woman, “Giving death to a Spirit Life is giving birth to a Spirit Life.”³⁹ Abortion is “the passage from Womb to the Heavens.”⁴⁰

Maia published a diary of her self-induced herbal abortion,

³⁸ Chris Carol, ritual within, *The Holy Book of Women’s Mysteries*, Wingbow Press edition, by Zsuzsanna Budapest (1980; Oakland, CA: Wingbow Press, 1989), 82 (italics mine).

³⁹ Deborah Maia, *Self-Ritual for Invoking Release of Spirit Life in the Womb* (Great Barrington, MA: Mother Spirit Publishing, 1989), 24.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

which she called a “gentle, loving release of life,”⁴¹ In her diary, she insisted the goddess is “creatress of all.”⁴² She explained how, during her abortion, she returned the remains of her baby to the goddess, “I squat near a grandmother tree. My red moon blood flows upon Mother Earth.”⁴³

Maia referred to abortion as a “passage” to heaven, yet she used her baby’s remains as fertilizer for the planet. Maia’s conflicting mental attitudes establish the two patterns of thought in feminist spirituality’s abortion rites. There are spiritual feminists and abortion supporters who emphasize the eternal quality of the unborn baby’s soul, the aborted baby’s soul will be released into the cosmic life force, while others focus on the corporeal aspect. The latter are the ones who choose to imagine their aborted baby’s life as having returned to earth, not the cosmos. In that way, the baby

⁴¹ Ibid., 5.

⁴² Ibid., 2.

⁴³ Ibid., 18.

becomes a tangible part of the circle of life. Author Ava Torre-Bueno, psychotherapist and former Director of Counseling at Planned Parenthood, described a woman searching for spiritual closure after an abortion. The woman buried her aborted child under a tree on a mountain.⁴⁴ Torre-Bueno explained, “Placing the fetus out in nature was her way of recognizing that it was part of the ‘wholeness’ of life.”⁴⁵ Her “spiritual sense of her self was found in nature, and of being part of a bigger ‘whole.’ Burying the fetus was a way to help her baby be part of the ‘whole’ again.”⁴⁶

Nothing New Under the Sun

While feminist spirituality claims “sovereign power” over life in the womb, it is important to remember human sacrifice did not originate with feminist spirituality. The book of Ecclesiastes

⁴⁴Ava Torre-Bueno, *Peace After Abortion*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Pimpernel Press, 1997), 38.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

reminds us, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing wherefore it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us.”⁴⁷

The biblical nation of Israel provides examples of the sin of human sacrifice. In the Prophet Elijah’s time, child sacrifice had likely reached its peak in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. During the reign of King Ahab and his pagan wife Jezebel, apostasy was rampant. Their combined leadership resulted in the destruction of the Lord’s altars and the disavowing of his covenant.⁴⁸ Jezebel orchestrated the massacre of virtually all the Lord’s prophets⁴⁹ and replaced them with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the

⁴⁷ Eccles. 1:9-10.

⁴⁸ 1 Kings 19:10.

⁴⁹ 1 Kings 18:4.

goddess, Baals' consort.⁵⁰ Their worship involved gross sexual immorality and child sacrifice.

While excavating near Samaria, the Oriental Institute of Chicago University discovered the ruins of an ancient temple of the goddess Ashtoreth in the stratum of the time of Ahab's rule. "Just a few steps from this temple was a cemetery, where many jars were found, containing remains of infants who had been sacrificed in this temple."⁵¹

The book of Isaiah reveals child sacrifice was also practiced in the Southern Kingdom of Judah during the eight-century BC—people were worshiping idols under trees and "slaying the children in the valleys" and under overhanging rocks.⁵² So common was this barbarism, children were being sacrificed in *valleys* and under *rocks*, notice the plural. Child sacrifice was not circumscribed to just one

⁵⁰ 1 Kings 18:19.

⁵¹ Henry H. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, 24th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), 198.

⁵² Isa. 57:5.

location.

In the book of Jeremiah, we read how the murderous practice reared up again. Just outside the holy city of Jerusalem, in the southeastern area of the Valley of Hinnom, men and women sacrificed their young children to Molech,⁵³ a blood thirsty deity adopted from the Ammonites. Homer W. Smith, author of *Man and His Gods* wrote “the custom of burning children long persisted at Jerusalem,”⁵⁴ Smith described how the young victims “were rolled from the hands of a bronze image of the god into a pit of fire.”⁵⁵

Molech is identified with the pagan god Baal.⁵⁶ With the goddess Ashtoreth, his female consort, Baal was representative of the Semitic fertility cults popular in the region. Molech was the

⁵³ Also known as Moloch.

⁵⁴ Homer W. Smith, *Man and His Gods*, (New York: Grosset’s Universal Library, 1957), 106.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶Cf. 2 Kings 21:3-6, 23:10; Jer. 19:4-6, 32:35.

Ammonites principal deity. However, new evidence uncovered from an ancient stone monument inscribed in Phoenician, suggests the word *Molech* may refer to more than a deity. *Moloch* may also describe a practice.⁵⁷

Describing the evidence as a “biblical bombshell,”⁵⁸ the weekly CBS news program, *Sunday Morning*, presented the new information. “The inscription commemorates a military battle, but computer reconstruction revealed something else, something shocking: That the Hebrews sacrificed their children.”⁵⁹ Steven Kaufman, “a biblical studies scholar from the Hebrew Union College,”⁶⁰ stated the inscription explains “in detail about this practice, which went by the name, which is known in biblical

⁵⁷ From the transcript, *In the Beginning*, Sunday Morning, April 21, 1996, CBS News,

⁵⁸ Martha Teichner, “In the Beginning,” *Sunday Morning*, CBS News, April 21, 1996.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

records as Molech . . .”⁶¹ According to the broadcast, “For generations, scholars have argued that the word ‘Molech’ was the name of a pagan god or described a dedication ceremony.”⁶² Kaufman stated, “This inscription now makes clear that that’s not the case.”⁶³ The new evidence indicates the “Hebrews practiced Molech.”⁶⁴

People *practiced* Molech. Was child sacrifice so closely identified with the worship of Molech, the terms were synonymous? We can only imagine. We do know a prophet of the Lord in 600 BC, confronted the people with this sin. Speaking for the Lord, Jeremiah said, “For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me,

⁶¹ Steven Kaufmann, interview with Martha Teichner, In the Beginning, *Sunday Morning*, CBS News, April 21, 1996.

⁶² Martha Teichner, “In the Beginning,” *Sunday Morning*, CBS News, April 21, 1996.

⁶³ Steven Kaufmann, from the transcript, *In the Beginning*, Sunday Morning, April 21, 1996, CBS News

⁶⁴ Martha Teichner, “In the Beginning,” *Sunday Morning*, CBS News, April 21, 1996.

saith the Lord God. How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim [Baal]? See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done.”⁶⁵

It is clear from the Bible child sacrifice was carried out openly during this time. It was an accepted practice for the obstinate nation. “Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these.”⁶⁶

According to Matthew Henry, in his classic commentary on the Bible, the description, “Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls,” refers to “the life-blood of the poor innocents, which cried to heaven.” His reflection on this verse is insightful. He wrote, “The reference is to the children that were offered in sacrifice to Moloch; or it may be taken more generally for all the *innocent blood . . . the righteous blood*, especially the blood of the

⁶⁵ Jer. 2:22-23.

⁶⁶ Jer. 2:34.

prophets and others that witnessed against their impieties. This blood was found *not by secret search*, not *by diggings* (so the word is), but *upon all these*; it was above ground. This intimates that the guilt of this kind which they had was certain and evident, not doubtful or which would bear a dispute; and that it was avowed and barefaced, and which they had not so much sense either of shame or fear as to endeavor to conceal, which was a great aggravation of it.”⁶⁷

In the Bible, we read of the Lord’s great displeasure with the sins and violence of his people. He rebuked the people through the Prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Jeremiah. The meaning is unmistakable in the *New Living Translation* of the Bible, “They have committed both adultery and murder – adultery by worshiping idols and murder by burning their children as sacrifices

⁶⁷ Matthew Henry, “Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on Jeremiah 2,” *Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible*, <http://www.searchgodsword.org/com/mhc-com/view.cgi?book=jer&chapter=002>.

on their altars. Then after doing these terrible things, they defiled my Temple and violated my Sabbath day! On the very day that they murdered their children in front of their idols, they boldly came into my Temple to worship! They came in and defiled my house!”⁶⁸

Instead of approaching the Lord in repentance, the people came boldly and self-righteously into his presence. Apparently, the people saw no inconsistency in murdering children and worshipping a holy God in a sacred place. In the minds of the people, child sacrifice was a form of religious expression.

The Lord never commanded child sacrifice. This abhorrent practice never even entered his heart.⁶⁹ In fact, he expressly forbids it. The Lord told Moses, “Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that

⁶⁸ Ezek. 23:37-39; the Holy Bible, *New Living Translation*, copyright 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust. All rights reserved.

⁶⁹ Jer. 7:31.

giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death.”⁷⁰

In the face of this threatening prohibition, people still sacrificed their children, “Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them?”⁷¹

Is it inconsequential that you murdered *my* children? God asked. Children belong to God. In way of example, God instructed the Israelites to sanctify, or set apart, their firstborn sons.⁷² In the ancient Near East, the first male child was considered as belonging to deity. Within paganism, child sacrifice was a way of dedicating the child to the false god. In contrast, God validated the intrinsic

⁷⁰ Lev. 20:2.

⁷¹ Ezek. 16:20, 21.

⁷² Exod. 13:2.

worth of individual life when he called for the consecration, not the sacrifice, of that life. After sanctifying the firstborn son, the people were to redeem their child at a price fixed by the law.⁷³ Instead of being sacrificed, the children were to be redeemed! In a visceral way, this ritual observance underscored the importance of life and imparted to the people an understanding of God as the author and redeemer of life. It revealed that children belong to God. The Law of the Firstborn reminded the people of their deliverance from Egypt and the death of Egypt's firstborn at the hand of God, another representation of God's sovereignty over life. Children, all children, belong to God. But are unborn babies children in the eyes of God?

God Hates Abortion

I have been asked, "Where in the Bible does it explicitly say that embryos are people and that killing them is murder?"

⁷³ See Num. 18:16.

Nowhere in the Bible does it specifically state “embryos are people” but neither does the Bible specifically state “toddlers are people” or “prepubescent girls are people.” When we read the entire Bible in context however, we understand that embryos, toddlers and young girls are people at various stages of maturity. As such, they should not be murdered.

God is the author of life, “Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves.”⁷⁴ God had a personal relationship with us while we were still in the womb, “I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.”⁷⁵ God’s Word also reveals that at conception we inherit the guilt of original sin, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”⁷⁶ Only a human being with a soul can inherit the original sin passed down from Adam.

⁷⁴ Ps. 100:3; see Gen. 1:27, Deut. 32:39, John 1:1-3, 10.

⁷⁵ Ps. 22:10.

⁷⁶ Ps. 51:5.

Therefore, we had a soul at the moment of conception. Hence, God was our God from the moment of conception. From these Psalms we understand an unborn baby has a **soul with a unique personality**.

The Bible teaches, “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living”⁷⁷ and the psalmist wrote “thou art my God” from the womb. God is our God while we are in the womb and he is the God of the living. In other words, a baby is **alive and living** while she matures in the womb. This is an important clarifying point; because a tiny unborn girl is living, it cannot be argued biblically that she is simply a free floating soul awaiting birth in some spiritual realm.

Since she has a soul, she also **experiences emotion**. Mary, who was pregnant with our Savior Jesus Christ, visited Elizabeth, pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth said to Mary, “For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe

⁷⁷ Matt. 22:32.

leaped in my womb for joy.”⁷⁸

Before a little baby leaves the womb, **God determines a personal plan and a purpose for her life**, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”⁷⁹

The Bible also reveals conception is the beginning of life and personhood. We read in the Gospel of Matthew, “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with *child* of the Holy Ghost.”⁸⁰ Two verses down we read, “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is *conceived*

⁷⁸ Luke 1:44.

⁷⁹ Jer. 1:5.

⁸⁰ Matt. 1:18 (italics mine).

in her is of the Holy Ghost.”⁸¹ According to God’s Word, when Mary conceived, she was pregnant with a child, not a potential child. **Conception is the beginning of life and personhood.**

It is not possible to determine exactly when Joseph discovered his fiancé was “with child” but we can surmise it was early in the pregnancy, before Mary was showing. Prior to being visited by the angel, Joseph was planning on divorcing Mary secretly so she would not be made a spectacle.⁸² Joseph likely knew of Mary’s pregnancy before her trip or immediately after. When Mary was told of the miracle by the angel, she went “with haste” to her cousin Elizabeth’s home.⁸³ We know Mary visited with her cousin Elizabeth for “about three months.”⁸⁴ This means the angel called Jesus a child at or before 12 weeks gestation.

⁸¹ Matt. 1:20 (*italics mine*).

⁸² Matt. 1:19.

⁸³ Luke 1:39.

⁸⁴ Luke 1:56.

In Genesis we read, “And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.”⁸⁵ The next verse reads, “And the children struggled together within her.”⁸⁶ Not the “tissue,” not the “product of conception,” not the “contents of the uterus,” but the *children* struggled in Rebekah’s womb.

Consider this verse in Job, “Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!”⁸⁷ When Job says, “and no eye had seen me” he is speaking of death while still in his mother’s womb. The notable thing about the word *ghost* in this passage is that the same Hebrew word ⁸⁸ is used when speaking of adults that died.

⁸⁵ Gen. 25:21.

⁸⁶ Gen. 25:22.

⁸⁷ Job 10:18.

⁸⁸ See *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, James Strong (McLean: VA, Macdonald Publishing Company), #1478.

“Then Abraham gave up the ghost,”⁸⁹ “And Isaac gave up the ghost and died,”⁹⁰ Jacob “yielded up the ghost.”⁹¹ When an unborn baby dies, she gives up the “ghost” in the same way born people do.

We learn from the Bible conception marks the beginning of personhood; an unborn born baby has a soul; she is alive in the womb and living; she experiences emotion; she is endowed with a purpose for her life while still in the womb; lastly, and significant to this discussion, she can die. An unborn baby is a maturing person deserving of protection. This is why in the Old Testament the punishment for injuring a pre-born person was the same as for a born person.⁹²

The totality of the Bible speaks to the personhood of the unborn. Unborn babies are children, God’s children. One of the

⁸⁹ Gen. 25:8.

⁹⁰ Gen. 35:29.

⁹¹ Gen. 49:33.

⁹² Exod. 21:22-25.

guidelines for proper biblical interpretation is to let scripture interpret scripture. The Bible does not contradict itself. In other words, if a Bible verse teaches that unborn babies are children other verses should be read in light of that truth.

A certain Proverb describes “six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him.” In the list of the seven things God hates, we read “hands that shed innocent blood.”⁹³

The murder of unborn babies, by Israel’s enemy the Ammonites, was condemned by God in the book of Amos. One of the reasons God determined to judge the Ammonites was “because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border.”⁹⁴ In this barbaric practice, pregnant women were sliced with swords and their babies were torn from the womb. The Ammonites worshiped the bloodthirsty deity, Moloch,

⁹³ Prov. 6:16-17.

⁹⁴ Amos 1:13 (*italics mine*).

so this violence should not surprise us.

In another example, Elisha weeps over the “evil” he prophesied would happen at the hands of the king of Syria. One of the evils mentioned by the prophet is that the king would “rip up their women with child.”⁹⁵

These verses from Proverbs, Amos and Second Kings reveal God’s mind on abortion: God hates the shedding of innocent blood, a pregnant woman is pregnant with a child, not a potential child, and murdering an unborn baby is evil.

Contrary to what feminist spirituality teaches women do not own a claim to life in the womb. God’s Word makes it clear children belong to him and his claim begins at the moment of creation/conception. God hates abortion. In spite of the cultural messages telling us otherwise, abortion is a sin.

As a Christian pro-life woman, I have been accused of wanting to force women “to carry a fetus to term.” I would like to

⁹⁵ 2 Kings 8:12 (italics mine).

answer that charge now. God is omniscient and omnipotent.

Women, on the other hand, are fallible and finite. A good analogy would be a mother's relationship with her child. By virtue of being older and wiser, a mother knows more than her two-year-old does. Yes, a child has her own will but a loving mother will forbid her daughter to touch the hot stove because she knows her daughter will be hurt by the experience. The daughter may rebel, but because the mother loves her, she put limits on her freedom. If the daughter chooses to disobey, the mother disciplines her so her rebellion will not lead to further disobedience and greater suffering. In the same way, God sets perimeters on our freedom out of love.

Biblically speaking, we are God's children. He created us. By virtue of whom he is, he knows what is best for us. When we disobey him, we hurt and experience suffering. Is it his will for us to suffer? No. Will he continue to love us? Yes. Will we be better off because of the rebellion? Ask the little girl who touched the hot stove if she feels empowered or pained. Yes, there are choices in life.

Short of God's grace, we will continue to make bad ones. But we should never defend a choice we know will murder someone else. Liberation is not bought through the blood of an innocent child; it is bought through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Points to Remember:

1. There is nothing new under the sun (Eccles. 1:9-10).
2. Children belong to God (Ezek. 16:20-21).
3. Personhood begins at conception (Matt. 22:32, Ps. 22:10, 51:5, 139:13-16).
4. A pregnant woman is pregnant with a child, not a potential child (Gen. 25:22, Matt. 1:18-20).
5. It is evil to murder an unborn baby (2 Kings 8:12).
6. God hates abortion (Prov. 6:16-17).

CHAPTER 5

GODDESS OF BLOOD SACRIFICE

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out before thee.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12

And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Isaiah 8:19-20

Putting the lie to the assertion that feminist spirituality empowers women, unborn baby girls are regularly aborted in honor of the goddess. Far from creating empowerment for women, feminist spirituality creates a class of females whose sole purpose is to serve as sacrificial victims. Feminist spirituality calls its human sacrifice, reproductive freedom. The question is freedom for whom. Certainly not for the tiny females set aside for its abortion rituals. Neither is it freedom for the women who abort.

In reality, spiritual justification for abortion, post-abortion rituals designed to minimize guilt, and goddess affirmation create a cycle of abortion. Without the natural workings of conscience which leads to repentance, women will experience repeat abortions but not true spiritual reconciliation. A woman can abort, claim religious sanction, perform a ritual and abort again- a vicious cycle that may make post-aborted women perpetual victims.

Invoking the Goddess

According to Deborah Maia, “The incorporation of Feminist Spirituality into my life has given me empowerment.”¹ Shortly before Christmas, Maia began an abortion ritual that lasted nineteen days. The ritual involved herbs, crystals, visualization, masturbation, marijuana and the worship of the goddess. In a graphic diary of her experience titled *Self-Ritual for Invoking Release of Spirit Life in the Womb*, Maia revealed the bloodthirsty, sacrificial side of feminist spirituality.

On the eve of Winter Solstice, the pagan holiday in which the goddess’ son is reborn, Maia wrote, “The release of Spirit Life [through abortion] seems so appropriate during this Winter Solstice as the Great Mother now, once again, out of darkness, gives birth to

¹ Deborah Maia, *Self-Ritual for Invoking Release of Spirit Life in the Womb*, (Great Barrington, MA: Mother Spirit Publishing, 1989), 25.

the Divine Sun Child.”²

On December twenty-third Maia wrote, “The bleeding has ended.”³ Later that evening she worshiped the goddess in a sacred circle of women.

In her last entry dated Christmas Eve, she wrote, “My sense of well-being is restored.”⁴ As Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ, Maia celebrated the birth of a pagan sun god. As Christians rejoiced at the Savior’s reason for being born on Christmas Day, Maia rejoiced at the sacrifice of her baby. As Christians worshiped the Word Made Flesh, the Radiant Life, Maia worshiped a life taking goddess.

Occult incantations, abortifacient tinctures, and descriptions

² Deborah Maia, *Self-Ritual for Invoking Release of Spirit Life in the Womb*, (Great Barrington, MA: Mother Spirit Publishing, 1989), 22.

³ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴ *Ibid.*

of her ritual orgasm performed with the intention of miscarrying her unborn baby, make Maia's journal entries difficult to read. But it is her devotion to "releasing" the life of her child to the goddess that is most disturbing.

Maia described how over a course of a few days she collected the blood from her abortion and fertilized her plants, "Allowing this Womb Blood to flow onto a cotton flannel pad is comforting and offers a sense of freedom. I rinse the Womb blood from these pads and give it to Mother Earth, and to the plants within my house. As I make an intentional connection with this Womb Blood and give homage, an inner bliss comes upon me."⁵

Definitions for the word bliss include spiritual joy or perfect happiness. Bliss can also mean heaven or paradise. Given that Maia's abortion was filled with religious significance, the word obviously indicates spiritual joy. As Maia offered the blood of her baby to

⁵ Ibid., 20.

“Mother Earth,” she experienced spiritual joy. But was Maia’s abortion performed as a *conscious* sacrifice to the goddess?

World Book Encyclopedia describes sacrifice as “a religious ceremony in which something is given to a god or gods, thus becoming ‘holy’.”⁶ In her journal entry for December eleventh, Maia wrote, “The vision of releasing Spirit Life here and now, to Divine Mother burns brightly within my soul.”⁷ From her own admission, Maia intentionally sacrificed her unborn baby to the goddess.

In the forward to her personal treatise, Maia explained, “As the [abortion] ritual became manifest, I found myself making a commitment to Goddess within.”⁸ She continued, “For me, ritual is

⁶ World Book Online Reference Center, s.v. “Sacrifice” (by Jonathan Z. Smith), <http://www.aolsvc.worldbook.aol.com/wb/Article?id=ar481260>>.

⁷ Deborah Maia, *Self-Ritual for Invoking Release of Spirit Life in the Womb*, (Great Barrington, MA: Mother Spirit Publishing, 1989), 11.

⁸ *Ibid.* pg. 3

a way of honoring Spirit. Ritual is a way of prayer. Ritual is a way of invocation.”⁹

Maia’s ritual was actually her third abortion. In her treatise she revealed that during her past two clinical abortions, her spiritual needs were unmet. She designed her own abortion experience to address those needs. She wrote, “The intent for the series of ritual involved in this treatise is to go within, to connect with my Eternal Essence and with the Spirit Life within my Womb.”¹⁰In the forward, Maia defined “Eternal Essence” as deity.¹¹Her abortion ritual was performed as a means to connect with the goddess within.

When Maia aborted her unborn baby, she was conjuring up the goddess. Although Maia did not become pregnant to sacrifice her unborn child, after realizing she was pregnant she did choose

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid. pg. 4

¹¹ Ibid.

ritual abortion as a way to call upon the goddess' presence.

Unfortunately, Maia is not the only woman to invoke the goddess while attempting to ritually abort. In an article in the web-based magazine, *Sentence ov Desire*, a practicing witch suggested women preparing for an abortion “become the Crone,” the third aspect of the triple goddess.¹² According to this witch, “invoking the Crone into yourself” will “give you strength as you go through the abortion.”¹³

In her article, *An Abortion Ritual- A Magickal Alternative to Medical Abortion*, the witch related how she purposefully invoked the goddess to bring on a late period or, if need be, cause an abortion. After lighting candles on her altar to the goddess, she addressed each aspect of the triple goddess- maiden, mother and

¹² Zevaluz, “An Abortion Ritual- A Magickal Alternative to Medical Abortion,” *Sentence ov Desire*, January 9, 1999, <http://www.sentence-ov-desire.net/Magazine/volume-2-issue-1/issue-index.html>.

¹³ Ibid.

crone. When she spoke to the crone she demanded, “Kali, Hecate, the Dark Vengeful aspect of Erzulie, all of the destructive death-bearing Goddesses that are the Crone. Take away this child, it is NOT wanted!”¹⁴ After more ritual, she put on a “black robe and prepared to become the Crone.”¹⁵ After falling into a trance, she felt an “energy” enter her hands.¹⁶ She used this energy to psychically remove any life from her womb. The following evening her bleeding started. She ended her article by insisting, “I do believe my period was brought on by the Crone.”¹⁷

In the fourth chapter, I shared a post-abortion ritual published in *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*. As part of her ritual healing, an aborted woman bathes in a bath of rose petals, salt

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

and herbs.¹⁸ Once the woman “emerges from the water, the woman and friends give each other the fivefold blessing on head, breasts, womb, knees and feet.”¹⁹

The fivefold blessing is a ritual in which five symbolic parts of the body are kissed. With each kiss, a blessing is pronounced. In Dianic witchcraft, the fivefold blessing is given to identify the body as the temple of the goddess. The kisses honor the aborted woman as the embodiment of the goddess. In other words, the aborted baby was sacrificed for the goddess incarnate.

The Holy Abortionist

There are goddess worshipers who believe every abortion is an offering to the goddess. This is because it is the goddess “who

¹⁸ Chris Carol, ritual within, *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*, Wingbow Press edition, Zsuzsanna Budapest (Oakland, CA: Wingbow Press, 1989), 82.

¹⁹ Ibid.

devours life in her gaping mouth with her sharp fangs.”²⁰ In *Abortion as a Sacred Rite*, Nevada Kerr argued that the “death goddess” is the “holy abortionist.”²¹ In view of the fact women are believed to embody the goddess, “the midwife, healer, shaman or witch is the holy abortionist.”²²

An abortion clinic in Ohio describes abortion as “sacred work.” According to its website, “At Cincinnati Women’s Services, we do sacred work that honors the circle of life and death.”²³ The clinic’s executive director, Debi Jackson, believes abortion is a

²⁰ Nevada Kerr, “Abortion as a Sacred Rite,” Snuff It, no. 4, <http://www.enviroweb.org/coc/snuffit4/abortion.html>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Cincinnati Women’s Services, “Providing Quality Healthcare to Women Since 1973,” Cincinnati Women’s Services, http://www.womensservices.com/pages/frame_content.htm.

“timeless and sacred ritual.”²⁴

A nonprofit, feminist abortion clinic in Seattle, Washington is named after the goddess Aradia. In mythology, Aradia is the Goddess of Witchcraft. She was conceived during an incestuous encounter between the Goddess Diana and Lucifer, the one “driven from Paradise.”²⁵ Aradia was sent to earth by Diana to teach witches her mother’s divine powers.

Goddess worshipers affectionately refer to Diana as the Goddess of Empowerment, often invoking her to protect abortion rights. As I mentioned in the first chapter, in Greek mythology Diana is known as Artemis, Goddess of Blood Sacrifice. It is eerie that a feminist abortion clinic would call itself Aradia, daughter of the Goddess of Blood Sacrifice. Every unborn baby killed there is

²⁴ Debi Jackson, “The World As I Would Create It,” Abortion Providers Speak, National Coalition of Abortion Providers, http://www.ncap.com/promoting_providers.html.

²⁵ Charles G. Leland, *Aradia, or The Gospel of Witches*, (1899), chap. 1,

killed under the bloody banner of the goddess.

Elizabeth Moonstone is a practicing witch and an abortionist. In her “Blessing For the Abortionist’s Hands,” Moonstone wrote, “Once the Wise Woman and the Midwife undid the pregnant possibility ... Now as an abortionist I have sterile instruments, knowledge of anatomy, modern drugs, a suction machine, and my hands.”²⁶

Moonstone’s blessing was published in a feminist abortion rights book. Her reference to the suction cannula as a wand conjures up images of witchcraft. Her prayer reads in part, “May my hands be deft and tender ... In my abortionist’s hands I hold the plastic-tipped wand attached to a suction machine. May my hands move the wand skillfully, feeling the moment of emptying ... May my

http://www.sacred_texts.com/pagaradia/.

²⁶ Elizabeth Moonstone, “Blessing for the Abortionist’s Hands,” in *Our Choices, Our Lives: Unapologetic Writings on Abortion*, ed. Krista Jacob, 120-121 (Lincoln, NE: Writers Advantage, 2002).

hands stay connected to my heart as I release this spirit and return this woman to herself and other possibilities.”²⁷ Moonstones “blessed” hands have killed over 16,000 unborn babies.

Wiccan high priestess Lady Lee, in her article in the online journal *feminista!*, argued “access to abortion is truly a Witch’s issue.”²⁸ According to Lee, in the same way “Goddess-worshippers have been active in reclaiming the midwifery movement, so we need to be equally active in the pro-choice movement.”²⁹

More than just supporting abortion rights, according to Lee, it is a witches “ethical duty” to *provide* abortions for women. It has been suggested by feminist historians that witches from earlier times provided contraceptives, abortifacients, and even abortions to

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Lady Lee, “Ethics of Abortion: A Witch’s Perspective,” *feminista!* 3, no. 3 (1999): <http://www.feminista.com/archives/v3n3/lee.html>.

²⁹ Ibid.

women. Lee maintained that if witches “kept knowledge of herbal abortifacets alive, would it not follow that it is an ethical duty for some to be prepared to provide abortion as it is an ethical duty to keep coven traditions alive?”³⁰ In an attempt to safeguard women’s access to abortion, Lee encouraged witches to rediscover ways to abort. Her suggestions included herbal abortion and menstrual extraction.

Today’s witches are a visible presence at abortion clinics and pro-abortion rallies. They are creating many of the abortion rituals found within feminist spirituality. They are reclaiming ancient methods of birth control and abortion in an attempt to safeguard access. Witches are using spells, herbal lore and rituals to protect abortion rights, shifting the mainstream movement into a spiritual

³⁰ Ibid.

realm.

In the first chapter I described a woman who invoked the goddess Diana at an abortion clinic in southern California. Lee invoked Diana at a demonstration she attended. In her article, Lee related how she invoked the goddess while pro-life Christians prayed. Lee explained, “I stood before them, facing East, and did an immediate simple, repetitive invocation to Diana. Casting pentagrams in the air I yelled, ‘I invoke Diana, protect your women.’”³¹ She described how other pro-abortion women began chanting, “We all come from the Goddess” and some brandished rusty coat hangers.³² According to Lee, “As they supported my ritual they became a part of it, blending our energies together.”³³ Lee ended her article with a petition to the goddess Diana to protect

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

abortion rights.³⁴

Spiritism

Even when the goddess is not consciously invoked, spiritism is a central element of the abortion experience. Spiritual feminists will often communicate with “the Spirit Life” in the womb before an abortion or pray to their dead baby in counterfeit post-abortion reconciliation.

Lee instructed pregnant women to use divination as they decide whether or not to abort their unborn baby. Some of her suggestions included astrology, rune casting, tarot reading, interpretation of dreams and hypnosis.³⁵

She also advocated spiritism. Lee interviewed another high priestess who advises women considering abortion. Based on what

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

she learned from her, Lee recommended women communicate with the spirit of the unborn baby, “Some souls choose inappropriately to attempt to incarnate, and when this is discussed a mutual agreement can be reached.”³⁶

According to author Jeannine Parvati, it was a “visitation” from the Goddess Hygieia,³⁷ that inspired her book, *Hygieia: A Woman’s Herbal*. An appendix in her book promotes psychic abortion as a possible alternative to clinical abortion.

The appendix quotes a woman from a natural birth control seminar. The woman claimed she prayed to her unborn baby, reasoned with the baby to leave and regularly visualized light flooding her womb.³⁸ After her second missed period, in an effort to

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Jeannine Parvati, *Hygieia: A Woman’s Herbal* (A Freestone Collective Book, 1978), iv.

³⁸ Tami Slayton Glenn and Jeannine O’Brien Medvin, “Some Thoughts and Feelings on Abortion (or You’ve Come Along Way, Baby),” appendix to *Hygieia: A Woman’s Herbal*, by Jeannine Parvati (A

avoid a surgical abortion, she warned the baby what an abortion would be like, “I imagined being in a hospital. I imagined someone in white spreading my legs open. I imagined an instrument thrusting in and a tug. At that instant I felt a very sharp twinge of pain. I jumped. It was a sad and mystical moment. I didn’t dare breathe. Had it left? The next day my period started, deep red, full of clots. An incredible sense of loss filled me, and of relief. We [she and her partner] thanked the being for leaving when it did.”³⁹

In another example of psychic abortion, written as a letter to Paravati and published in her book, a woman described how she put herself in a deep meditative state and attempted to end her pregnancy. The woman wrote, “While lying on my bed that afternoon, I put my consciousness into my womb until I could look around inside and find the tiny fetus where it had implanted. It and

Freestone Collective Book, 1978), 202.

³⁹ Ibid. 202-203.

I had a long talk. I explained how things were for me . . . In the end, the baby agreed to leave.”⁴⁰ After drinking a cup of pennyroyal tea, a known abortion causing herb, the woman miscarried.⁴¹

Abortion supporter Torre-Bueno in her book, *Peace After Abortion*, teaches guided imagery to post-aborted women. In an exercise designed to help women process their feelings after an abortion, an imaginary wise being probes the woman’s reasons for ending her pregnancy. A taped recording leads the woman in the visualization.

After mindful breathing and visualizing a “safe place” in great detail, the woman is told to imagine a being entering her space, “This being is wise and intelligent, kind and caring . . . Whatever form this being takes, it is there to protect you, care about you, and

⁴⁰ Carolyn, “The Letter,” Appendix to *Hygieia: A Woman’s Herbal* by Jeannine Parvati (A Freestone Collective Book, 1978), 205.

⁴¹ Ibid.

help you understand yourself. When you've gotten used to this being, have a conversation. Talk to him or her or it and say: 'I have had an abortion.' Let the being ask you questions..."⁴²

A post-aborted woman, in the book, *Abortion- My Choice, God's Grace*, defended her abortion by explaining, "My experience with abortion opened me to communicate with the wise woman within me."⁴³ Although she did not describe herself as such, the woman's spiritual beliefs mirrored those of feminist spirituality. When she discovered she was pregnant, she claimed, "I talked to the Being growing inside me and asked for her forgiveness, trying to communicate to her that I was doing this out of love."⁴⁴

At first the woman referred to her baby as "the Being" but

⁴² Ava Torre-Bueno, *Peace After Abortion*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Pimpernel Press, 1997), 35.

⁴³ Lucine Gadoorian, "Our Pain Becomes Our Power," in *Abortion: My Choice, God's Grace*, ed. By Anne Eggebrotten (Pasadena: New Paradigm Books, 1994), 117.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* pg122

later named her Anahid Morningstar. Anahid is Armenian for “mother goddess.”⁴⁵ She spoke with Anahid until just moments before the abortion. She related how she asked the baby to leave her womb but sensed definite unwillingness. According to the woman, “I felt torn and as if there was no time for delay; I really wanted her to stay with me but felt compelled to ask her to leave. I heard a voice screaming inside, ‘What about ME!’”⁴⁶ Soon after though, she “felt bathed by a sense of peace.”⁴⁷ She concluded her unborn daughter had left her womb and would not experience the pain from the abortion.⁴⁸

According to the woman, prior to even discovering she was

⁴⁵ Ibid. pg. 122

⁴⁶ Ibid. pg. 124

⁴⁷ Ibid. pg. 125

⁴⁸ Ibid.

pregnant, she sensed a “strong feminine presence”⁴⁹ with her. She also believed that during her pregnancy Anahid was “within and around”⁵⁰ her. Sadly, based on the evidence, it was a demon that masqueraded as the spirit of the unborn baby. The poor woman was deceived into believing her unborn baby left her body because she had confused her child with an unclean spirit. By communicating with the spirit of “Anahid,” the woman engaged in, and was victimized by, spiritism. And instead of the baby being safe from the physical harm of abortion, which is what the woman wanted to believe, the demon influenced her to torturously kill her own child.

In one post-abortion ritual created by a practicing witch and posted on her web site, women are told to name their aborted baby, lovingly explain the reasons for the abortion and give permission for the baby to be born again. As part of the ritual,

⁴⁹ Ibid. 121.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

women are instructed to keep a rose quartz to represent the aborted baby.⁵¹ For people involved with the occult, rose quartz is believed to aid forgiveness and help with sexual and emotional imbalances.

Torre-Bueno recommends a similar exercise. To make the aborted baby easier to grieve, she suggests women make a collage to represent the baby,⁵² “Or endow a beautiful object or a worn stone, with your *sense* of the baby.”⁵³ She also offers that women may need to apologize to their dead baby and to form a mental picture of the baby forgiving them.⁵⁴

Offering women stones in place of their aborted baby is a familiar ritual within feminist spirituality, a practice recently

⁵¹ Arwen Nightstar, “Ritual For Remorse After An Abortion,” Arwen’s Grimoire, <http://www.anisoptera.com/grimoire/abortion.htm>.

⁵² Ava Torre-Bueno, *Peace After Abortion*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Pimpernel Press, 1997), 65.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 66 (italics in original).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 150.

adopted by abortion clinics.⁵⁵ It is important to realize transferring impressions of an aborted baby onto an object is dangerously similar to the occult belief of transmigration of souls- the belief that souls can leave a body and reside in another body, human or animal, or in inanimate objects.

Not surprisingly, feminist spirituality's practice of imparting occult meaning to stones can be traced to the story of Diana and Aradia. According to Charles G. Leland's, *Aradia, or The Gospel of the Witches*, in Diana's worship a spirit would possess a stone if properly invoked.⁵⁶

Abortion Rituals

⁵⁵ See Daryl Chen's article, "Are You Ready to Really Understand Abortion?" *Glamour*, September. 2003, 266; also Cynthia L. Cooper's article, "Abortion Under Attack," *Ms. Magazine*, August/September, 2001, <http://www.msmagazine.com/aug01/pas.html>.

⁵⁶ Charles G. Leland, *Aradia, or The Gospel of Witches*, (1899), chap. 1, http://www.sacred_texts.com/pagaradia/.

Within feminist spirituality, a woman is taught to visualize her aborted baby, not Jesus, forgiving her. Teaching a woman to visualize her baby forgiving her, is, in essence, deifying the baby. If a woman sees her unborn baby as the necessary vehicle for redemption, she can easily justify her “need” for an abortion as long as the baby is imagined as offering understanding and forgiveness.

In a case in point, a workbook designed to promote abortion recommends this very exercise. The workbook suggests some women may wish to “sense forgiveness” from the unborn baby *prior to* the abortion!⁵⁷

Such a rational minimizes the guilt over abortion. However, anything that takes away from Jesus Christ’s finished work on the cross and places the emphasis for forgiveness, redemption and

⁵⁷ Peg Johnston, ed., *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook* (Vestal, NY: Southern Tier Women’s Services, 1998), <http://www.ferre.org/workbook/>, also available in print.

healing on someone or something else is a counterfeit spiritual healing. Forgiveness comes from Jesus Christ. His blood paid for our sins. When a ritual takes the focus off of Jesus and places it on the aborted baby, God is robbed of his glory and genuine healing and redemption is impossible.

Releasing spirit life, and atonement, grief and purification rituals are regularly practiced within feminist spirituality. Releasing rituals entail freeing the unborn baby's soul or "spirit life" to return to the goddess, the cosmic life force, the web of life, etc. Releasing rituals may also include giving the unborn baby permission to be born again at a later date. Essentially, atonement rituals involve restitution, such as good works. Grief rituals allow for emotional expression while purification rituals call for a symbolic cleansing of the aborted woman.

As in "Abortion: A Healing Ritual," sometimes the ritual incorporates more than one component of post-abortion

reconciliation. Created by Minerva Earthschild, a wiccan priestess and a facilitator of post-abortion reconciliation workshops since 1984, and Vibra Willow, a priestess who instructs women on post-abortion healing, “Abortion: A Healing Ritual” is an elaborate ceremony designed for four sequential evenings or as a weekend long workshop. In the introduction to the ritual, the creators explained how by “using Wiccan practices and feminist process” they were able to create an experience through which women can heal and “reclaim sacred power in their reproductive choices.”⁵⁸

Since the ritual is pure witchcraft, a “grounding meditation”⁵⁹ is performed, a circle is cast, and the four directions and the four elements are invoked. Towards the end of the ritual,

⁵⁸ Minerva Earthschild and Vibra Willow, “Abortion: A Healing Ritual,” in *The Pagan Book of Living and Dying: Practicle Rituals, Prayers, Blessings, and Meditations on Crossing Over*, Miriam Simos a.k.a. Starhawk, Aline O’Brien a.k.a. M. Macha Nightmare and the Reclaiming Collective, 237-244 (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

women are given the option of undressing and going “skyklad”⁶⁰ [naked] during an intimate and physical blessing of the female body. As part of the ritual, post-aborted women are given an opportunity to discuss their feelings related to their abortion and are supported and affirmed in their choice. The practice also involves a purification of the participating women- a branch of rosemary wetted with salt water is sprinkled on the women- and a “trance journey to the Place of the Mothers, guardians of the cauldron of life.”⁶¹ During their trance, women are encouraged to “communicate with the spirits of unborn children” and “ask for help or guidance from the Mothers, Grandmothers, Goddesses, Crones, Midwives, and other wise women of this realm.”⁶²

Rather than the exception, such delves into the occult are

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

common in feminist spirituality's abortion reconciliation. Post-abortion counselor Terra Wise described the healing techniques she offers clients on her web site. Among her other methods, her site listed "trance journeys," "energy healing," "dream work," "healing meditations," and "personalized healing rituals/altars."⁶³

Spiritual feminists may erect an altar for an unborn baby or bleed the blood from an abortion onto the earth. Depending on the circumstances and legality, a sympathetic clergyman may baptize an aborted baby or the baby may be buried. A woman suffering from guilt may attempt to establish a psychic connection with the aborted baby.

After her abortion, a woman may arrange a grief ceremony in the woods, in a goddess shrine or at her home with supportive friends. As part of a purification ritual, a woman may bathe in

⁶³ Two Moons Women's Wisdom, "Healing Support After an Abortion," Two Moons Women's Wisdom, <http://www.terrawise.net/.ab.html>.

scented water or bless herself at an altar to the goddess. Some rituals call for women to offer a doll to the goddess as part of post-abortion healing. Transferring impressions of the aborted baby to a magical stone, communion with the aborted baby, planting a tree in honor of the aborted baby and the sewing of baby garments are just some of the ways post-aborted women are taught to resolve guilt and grief. Women are taught to practice guided imagery or to fantasize a terrible future had the aborted baby lived. These rituals are intended to comfort the post-aborted woman and aid emotional healing. Unfortunately, due to this spiritual legitimacy women are that much further removed from guilt that fosters true repentance and personal healing.

To assuage the guilt that accompanies the killing of innocent unborn babies, spiritual feminists put forward a number of possibilities regarding abortion.

- An aborted baby will be reincarnated.

- A woman's impression of her aborted baby should be transferred to something else.
- An aborted baby can offer forgiveness and understanding. An unborn baby can consent to an abortion.

Let us compare each argument to the inerrant Word of God, starting with the belief that **an aborted baby will be reincarnated**. In 2 Samuel, we learn from King David's example that a deceased child will not return at a later time. After the death of his child, David said, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."⁶⁴ In the book of the same name, Job states death is a place "I go whence I shall not return."⁶⁵ An aborted baby's soul cannot return to earth at another time because "it is appointed unto

⁶⁴ 2 Sam. 12:23.

⁶⁵ Job 10:21.

men once to die, but after this the judgment.”⁶⁶

It is suggested **a woman’s impression of her aborted baby should be transferred to something else**, like a stone or another inanimate object. But just as reincarnation is not a biblical concept, neither is transmigration. The Bible teaches that once a person dies, the soul returns to God, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”⁶⁷ God’s Word reveals we are “but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.”⁶⁸ For a Christian to be “absent from the body” is to be “present with the Lord.”⁶⁹

Spiritual feminists believe **an aborted baby can offer forgiveness and understanding** to the woman who aborted. This

⁶⁶ Heb. 9:27.

⁶⁷ Eccles. 12:7.

⁶⁸ Ps. 78:39.

⁶⁹ 2 Cor. 5:8.

belief is quite different than a repentant, post-aborted woman trusting God that her baby is in heaven and, *due to his atonement*, all is forgiven. We know from Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the dead cannot contact the living.⁷⁰ The Bible reveals that when an unborn baby dies, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."⁷¹ An aborted baby has no consciousness that we can communicate with. Therefore, it is impossible for us to receive her understanding or forgiveness.

Ecclesiastes teaches, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun."⁷²

⁷⁰ Luke 16:26.

⁷¹ Ps. 146:4.

⁷² Eccles. 9:5-6.

The “dead know not any thing.” Their “love” and “hatred” is gone. Feminist spirituality’s argument presupposes aborted babies exist as supernatural entities and can and should be communicated with. It also ignores the fact that we are told by God not to attempt to communicate with the dead or with spirits.⁷³

This brings us to feminist spirituality’s claim that **an unborn baby can consent to an abortion**. Why would she? The idea is too preposterous for words. At the gestational age of only eight weeks, an unborn baby has the ability to feel pain, perhaps even excruciating pain. Furthermore, an unborn baby has no authority to end her own life.⁷⁴ God is the Author of Life.

Spiritual feminists like to make abortion a mutual agreement between a woman and her unborn baby. However, just as a two-year-old does not possess the mental faculties and emotional

⁷³Isa. 8:19-20 and Deut. 18:10-12.

⁷⁴Exod. 20:13.

maturity to understand and consent to her own murder, a prenatal child cannot possibly understand “reproductive rights” language, never mind comprehend the implications of such an “agreement.” Moreover, when spiritual feminists attempt to contact the “spirit life” of their child for her consent, they are actually practicing spiritism. The Bible forbids spiritism and other occult practices- “all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD.”⁷⁵

The connection between abortion and spiritism is not new. Abortion is a practice inspired by demons. The curse of death was caused by Satan’s deception in the Garden of Eden; Jesus called him “a murderer from the beginning.”⁷⁶ In the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, Moses equates the sacrifice to pagan deities to the sacrifice to demons, “They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods that* came newly up, whom

⁷⁵ Deut. 18:10-12.

⁷⁶ John 8:44.

your fathers feared not.”⁷⁷ In the book of Psalms we read, “They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.”⁷⁸

Demons want to be worshiped. During Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness, Satan promised Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” provided Jesus would “fall down and worship” him.⁷⁹ In Leviticus and Revelation we are admonished not to worship devils.⁸⁰ The

⁷⁷ Deut. 32:17.

⁷⁸ Ps. 106:34-38.

⁷⁹ Matth. 4:8-9.

⁸⁰ Lev. 17:7 and Rev. 9:20.

Bible exposes the worship of false gods as the worship of devils. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul wrote “the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God.”⁸¹ There is nothing new under the sun.⁸² Lurking behind the seductive image of feminist spirituality’s goddess, are hideous, bloodthirsty demons.

Manasseh’s Example

Without a doubt, feminist spirituality is a portentous danger to unborn babies. But it is also a threat to women. There is no authentic spiritual reconciliation within feminist spirituality so women are left to repeat the same sins. Not only are women deceived into sacrificing their unborn children to demons, once they have done so they are at risk of aborting again because they are exhorted in their wrong doing. Spiritual feminists call good evil and

⁸¹ 1 Cor. 10:20.

⁸² Eccles. 1:9.

the evil of abortion good.⁸³ They have “strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way.”⁸⁴

Despite its emphasis on healing, self-forgiveness, and acts of redemption, feminist spirituality in no way addresses a post-aborted woman’s need for repentance. Even though post-aborted women are encouraged to express their grief over the abortion, unless they experiences genuine repentance, their sorrow will only produce more death. “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”⁸⁵

Feminist spirituality’s abortion rituals are designed to affirm a woman’s spirituality, but in reality, they erect a barrier between a woman and God. Abortion, like any sin, separates us from God’s

⁸³ Isa. 5:20.

⁸⁴ Ezek. 13:22.

⁸⁵ 2 Cor. 7:10.

holy presence.⁸⁶

The Bible teaches, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”⁸⁷ Second Chronicles says, “If my people, which are called by name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”⁸⁸ The order is important: humility and repentance and then God will hear, forgive and heal.

For us to receive God’s forgiveness, we must repent. The Bible gives examples of people grieving after having sinned, people like king Saul, Esau, and Judas who never experienced true

⁸⁶ Isa. 59:1-3.

⁸⁷ Isa. 55:7.

⁸⁸ 2 Chron. 7:14.

repentance. Though they felt the consequence of their behavior, perhaps even guilt, they never came to a place of repentance. Repentance follows conviction of sin.⁸⁹ It requires a heart change and a commitment to altering behavior, “But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.”⁹⁰

Manasseh was a wicked king of the nation of Judah whose fifty-five year reign is recorded in the Old Testament. Manasseh “seduced” his kingdom “to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed.”⁹¹ So wicked was his rule, the Bible relates he “shed innocent blood ... till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to

⁸⁹ Acts 2:37-38.

⁹⁰ Ezek. 18:21.

⁹¹ 2 Kings 21:9.

another.”⁹²Manasseh brought shame to his father’s memory, the righteous King Hezekiah, when he brazenly reversed his father’s religious reforms, “For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves [images of the goddess], and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall be my name for ever. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.”⁹³

Manasseh erected an idol in the temple of the Lord. He practiced witchcraft, divination and spiritism and used enchantments. If that were not enough, Manasseh sacrificed his children to demons, causing them “to pass through the fire in the

⁹² 2 Kings 21:16.

⁹³ 2 Chron. 33:3-5.

valley of the son of Hinnom.”⁹⁴ The Bible tells us God sent prophets to King Manasseh and to the people to turn them from evil, but they would not repent. “Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him into Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.”⁹⁵ Manasseh’s heart was pricked as a result of his sufferings. While in bondage he prayed and sought God. God heard his prayer of contrition and eventually freed him and returned him to his kingdom.

The important thing to note is that Manasseh did not make a show of repentance; his sorrow was backed up with definitive action. Once he was returned to his throne, he removed the idol

⁹⁴ 2 Chron. 33:6.

⁹⁵ 2 Chron. 33:11-12.

from the house of God and cast every pagan altar out of the city. He repaired the Lord's altar "and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel."⁹⁶ Manasseh was convicted of sin, brought his attitude and action in line with God's will, and received God's forgiveness.⁹⁷

It is important to note that God's forgiveness does not guarantee freedom from the *consequence* of our sin. We must often bear the outcome of our destructive choices, but when we repent God will meet us and give us the grace to endure.

We know from Manasseh's example, God will forgive child sacrifice. The Bible promises, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

⁹⁶ 2 Chron. 33:16.

⁹⁷ This is not to say we are saved by good works. We are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9).

unrighteousness.”⁹⁸ No sin, including the sin of child sacrifice, is too big for God. However, repentance is a necessary component of forgiveness.⁹⁹ An unsaved woman must repent of her sins and receive Jesus Christ as her personal Lord and Savior. A Christian who sacrificed her child through abortion must understand her sin was an affront to God, confess her sin, take responsibility for the sin and determine not to act in the same way.

Post-aborted women have a genuine need for reconciliation and healing but the methods promoted by feminist spirituality are detrimental to women. There is no reconciliation with God outside of Christ’s sacrifice,¹⁰⁰ no remission of sins without his atonement. The purification many post-aborted women know they need, is an

⁹⁸ 1 John 1:9.

⁹⁹ Acts 3:19, Zech.1:3 and Ps. 34:18.

¹⁰⁰ See Eph. 2:13-18, Rom. 5:1-21, Col.1:20-21, 2 Cor. 5:18-19 and Heb. 2:17.

inner purification. And that only comes through repentance and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Without him, there is no healing.

Points to Remember

1. When a child is aborted in honor of the goddess, in reality she is sacrificed to demons (Ps. 106:36-38).
2. God will forgive abortion (2 Chron. 33:11-13, 1 John 1:9).
3. Repentance is a necessary component of forgiveness (Acts 3:19, Zech. 1:3, Ps. 34:18).
4. There is no reconciliation with God outside of Christ's sacrifice (Eph. 2:13-18, Rom. 5:1, Col. 1:20-21 2 Cor. 5:18-19).

CHAPTER 6

THE NEW MORALITY

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Matthew 15:8-9

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within yea are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Matthew 23:27-28

If feminist spirituality's influence was confined to a small radical group within feminism, its beliefs could well be ignored. Because a few women who would have aborted anyway did so in honor of a goddess, does not necessarily demand a reexamination of

the abortion debate.

Unfortunately, feminist spirituality is not limited to extremists. It is affecting the mainstream abortion rights movement. Arguments in favor of abortion have evolved to incorporate feminist spirituality's cyclical life view. Abortion clinics, criticized by some feminists as too impersonal and sterile, incapable of addressing women's emotional and spiritual needs, are now adopting many of feminist spirituality's abortion rituals. More important, women contemplating abortion are finding religious justification to do so. In the end, feminist spirituality means more dead babies. The more women deceived by feminist spirituality, the more children prenatally murdered.¹

¹ Sin is incremental and it increases. See Jer. 7:26, Ezra 9:6, 2 Tim. 3:13.

Filling the Moral Void

Cynthia is the beautiful mother of three living children and one aborted baby whom she still grieves. It is her willingness to disclose the painful parts of her life and her unwavering commitment to truth that impresses people the most. Soft spoken by nature, Cynthia's has learned to make her voice heard. As a spokeswoman for post-aborted women, a former chapter chairwoman of her local right to life organization, and a mother of three active sons, Cynthia appreciates the need for loving confrontation. She explained to me the circumstances that surrounded her own abortion.

When I was a small child, I learned to succumb to pressure. Early trauma from family dysfunction and sexual molestation left me a people pleaser. I yearned for love, but learned to please and appease to relieve pressure. I 'looked for love in all the wrong places' and became pregnant at the young age of seventeen. I was unmarried, a senior in

high school. My boyfriend was getting ready to move away to go to college. I secretly wished he wanted our baby. He didn't and I felt I would lose him if I stayed pregnant.

The counseling I received consisted of what types of birth control were available after I had the abortion. I was told I would be in control of my body after I got over this little "inconvenience." I wasn't told of fetal development or given any information on the risks involved. At the very beginning of the procedure, I changed my mind and tried to leave. I was literally held down unto the table and soothed back into submission. I bled heavily at home after the abortion. There was no follow-up visit.

Three months after my abortion while writing a report on the first anniversary of Roe vs. Wade for my social studies class, I discovered the truth about fetal development. My twelve-week fetus was human and was my child. I ran from the trauma that I had been coerced and pressured into having an unwanted abortion. My life began to turn even

*farther from the light, into alcohol, marijuana and promiscuity.*²

According to Cynthia, women “do not realize the cost of abortion to their soul.”³ Her story does have a happy ending. Later in life, she found forgiveness through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and married a loving Christian man. She has come to terms with her painful past. Cynthia cautions women not to be misled by feminist spirituality’s abortion rites, “This deception recognizes the reality that children are being sacrificed and women are being hurt and need reconciliation, but offers a deceptive reconciliation ... In reality, the pain of true repentance is temporary and leads to reconciliation with God.”⁴

Cynthia is right, there is a cost attached to abortion. The

² Cynthia A. Klopfer, conversation with the author, January 22, 1998; Cynthia A. Klopfer, *The Face of Abortion and Reconciliation* (Hyannis, MA: Face of Abortion Campaign, 1998).

³ Cynthia A. Klopfer, *Pro-Life, Pro-Choice, Pro-Woman?* (Hyannis, MA: Face of Abortion Campaign, 1998).

⁴ *Ibid.*

Bible explains that a woman who sins against the Lord hurts her own soul.⁵ It also warns us that as a woman thinks, so she is.⁶ A woman's heart contains the "issues of life."⁷ It affects everything she does. It is her heart which determines her character therefore a woman is to guard her heart.⁸ Whatever wickedness her heart is tainted with, results in a corresponding sin.⁹ We see this in the lives of women seduced by feminist spirituality

Reframing the Debate

To the chagrin of abortion supporters, there are countless women just like Cynthia and these women are not going away. As

⁵ Prov. 8:36.

⁶ Prov. 23:7.

⁷ Prov. 4:23.

⁸ Prov. 4:23.

⁹ Mark 7:21-23.

more women come forward with Post Abortion Stress Syndrome¹⁰ and as advances in fetal medicine and 3-D and 4-D sonograms create a “window into the womb,” the abortion rights movement is compelled to address the spiritual and moral complexities surrounding abortion. But how do you spiritually justify abortion without alienating secularists? How do you admit to the humanity of the unborn baby without compromising on abortion-on-demand? How do you aid a woman’s emotional and spiritual healing without conceding she sacrificed *someone* for something else? Abortion proponents faced a difficult challenge.

Before feminist spirituality’s entrance into the abortion debate, the pro-life movement was in firm possession of the moral high ground. There was no intrinsic virtue to abortion, no real religious basis for claiming a right to an abortion. What was the best

¹⁰ PASS is believed to be a type of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD).

spin its supporters could come up with? Abortion was a necessary evil.

Then there was the privacy issue. The ambiguous “right to choose” slogan always begged the question “Choose what?” But what happened to an unborn baby while a woman’s legs were in the abortionist’s stirrups was not up for debate. Abortion was sold as “a private matter between a woman and her doctor.” Yet, unlike other surgical “procedures” there was a black mark on abortion. Though legal, abortion was on par with “dirty little secrets” and “skeletons in the closet.” The veil of secrecy surrounding abortion left a post-aborted woman alone in her grief and guilt. For the most part, abortion supporters ignored hurting post-aborted women and post-abortion reconciliation became the ministry of Christians.¹¹

The silence that accompanied a woman’s abortion and the

¹¹ Appropriately so since Christians have been given the ministry of reconciliation. See 2 Corinthians 5:18.

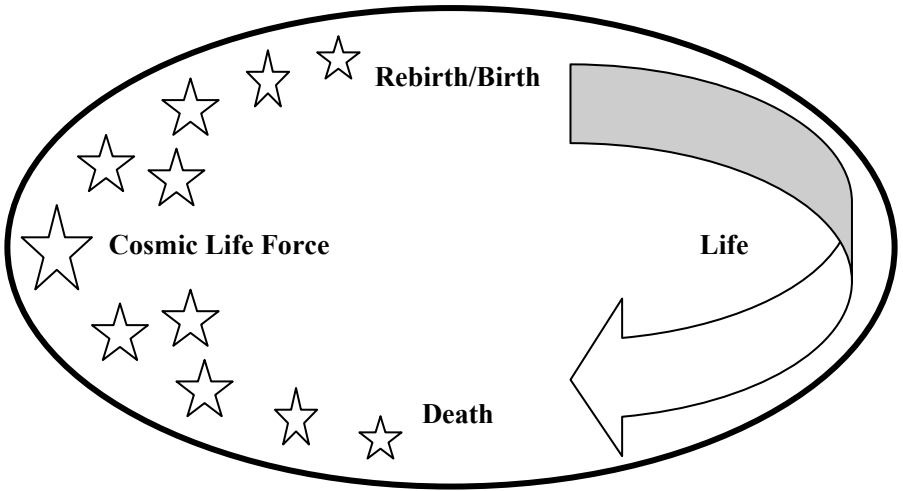
lack of moral or spiritual justification for the procedure seemed to guarantee an eventual pro-life victory. Because abortion was nothing more than an allowable evil, as science continued to prove the humanity of unborn babies and social conscience grew, it was destined to go the way of Hitler's death camps. Abortion would end, just as Auschwitz ended. The culture of death would come crashing down, just as the Berlin wall did. With the arrival of feminist spirituality, however, abortion supporters found the spiritual justification their movement lacked. By addressing what spiritual feminists call the inherent "spiritual crisis"¹² in abortion and offering pseudo atonement, feminist spirituality filled abortion's moral void and reframed the abortion debate.

The pro-life movement bases its arguments on a linear view of life. This view rightly recognizes life as having a beginning and an

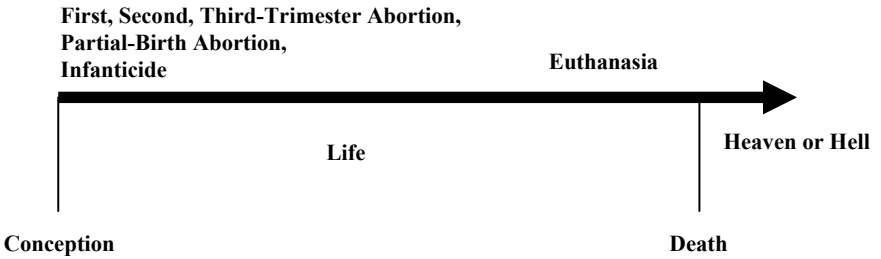
¹² Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, trans. Joanna Mott (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1992), 57.

end. Life is moving forward from a fixed point into the future. Before feminist spirituality's intrusion into the abortion controversy, the question was always where on this linear plane do unborn babies fall. Does life begin at conception or does life begin somewhere farther down the line, say at birth? But what happens when a cyclical view of life is transferred over the standard linear arguments?

A Cyclical View: Life is a Continuum



A Linear View: Life Begins and Ends



As the pro-life movement argues life begins at conception, feminist spirituality teaches, “Life does not begin. It is always here.”¹ While the pro-life movement warns abortion is murder, spiritual feminists maintain, “Death is a transition.”² When the pro-life movement says unborn babies feel pain, feminist spirituality tells women unborn babies caused their own karmic destiny. As the pro-life movement pushes back challenges to life on their linear line, feminist spirituality reframes the abortion debate by insisting life is in a constant cycle of death and rebirth. Spiritual feminists admit the question of abortion changes, “with a change of the sex of God, or the change of a straight line into a spiral.”³ Standard pro-life

¹ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 386.

² Deborah Maia, *Self-Ritual for Invoking Release of Spirit Life in the Womb* (Great Barrington, MA: Mother Spirit Publishing, 1989), 24.

³ Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 388.

arguments become irrelevant when applied against a cyclical or spiraling view of life.

One reason for the growing popularity of feminist spirituality and its cyclical view of life is the way it addresses a post-aborted woman's need for reconciliation. Imagining an aborted baby is released into the cosmic life force, to be reborn again later, is infinitely more pleasant than acknowledging the reality. By disembodiment of unborn babies, feminist spirituality has lessened women's internal conflict over abortion. An unborn baby has become "the soul of the pregnancy"⁴ or "the spirit of the pregnancy"⁵ and abortion is simply "releasing spirit life."

Cynthia's abortion experience is not unique and

¹⁶ Charlotte Taft, *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and the Heart* ([Dallas: Routh Street Women's Clinic, 1991?]), <http://www.womensservices.com>.

⁵ Peg Johnston, ed., *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook* (Vestal, NY: Southern Tier Women's Services, 1998), <http://www.ferre.org/workbook/>, also in print.

abortion supporters have finally come to recognize women do suffer emotional and spiritual ramifications after an abortion. They have also concluded that to safeguard the availability of abortion-on-demand, abortion must be seen as a conscientious, if not spiritual, act.

Whereas in the past abortion was compared to having a tooth pulled or a wart removed, abortion clinics are now acknowledging profound after-effects. Abortion counselors admit “abortion is not a simple physical process that is over and done with when the machine is turned off.”⁶ A workbook employed by clinics categorized abortion as “a major loss” which “deserves its own grief process.”⁷ Finally admitting the obvious, they are still unwilling to

¹⁸ Tami Slayton Glenn and Jeannine O’Brien Medvin, “Some Thoughts and Feelings on Abortion (or You’ve Come Along Way, Baby),” appendix to *Hygieia: A Woman’s Herbal*, by Jeannine Parvati (A Freestone Collective Book, 1978), 201.

¹⁹ Peg Johnston, ed., *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook* (Vestal, NY: Southern Tier Women’s Services, 1998), <http://www.ferre.org/workbook/>, also available in print.

retreat from abortion-on-demand. According to spiritual feminists, “we can still allow ourselves to mourn and grieve [abortion] while upholding absolutely our right to make the choice.”⁸

Abortion supporters have also been confronted with a deficit in abortion rights language -, i.e., whereas the words are *tissue*, *embryo* or *product of conception*, a woman thinks *baby* - and are attempting to communicate in language women can relate to. In her article, “Pregnancy: Lose the Adjective! Notes on Language,” abortion provider Margaret (Peg) Johnston admitted, “I find I am battling language these days in an attempt to talk about pregnancy in a real way.”⁹

²⁰ Miriam Simos a.k.a. Starhawk, Aline O’Brien a.k.a. M. Macha Nightmare and the Reclaiming Collective, *The Pagan Book of Living and Dying: Practical Rituals, Prayers, Blessings, and Meditations on Crossing Over* (NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 234.

²¹ Margaret R. Johnston, “Pregnancy: Lose the Adjective! Notes on Language,” *Sexing the Political: A Journal of Third Wave Feminists on Sexuality* 3, no. 1 (2003), <http://www.sexingthepolitical.com/2003/one/pregnancy.htm> (accessed August 23, 2004).

The need for spiritual justification for abortion, for post-abortion healing, and for new abortion rhetoric has forced the feminist movement to acknowledge the humanity of unborn babies while couching abortion in religious or spiritual terms. Peggy Loonan, executive director of Life and Liberty for Women, an abortion rights group, admits she wants to “change the language, strategy, and landscape of the abortion debate.”¹⁰ While Loonan acknowledges the “fetus is a human being,”¹¹ she maintains, “Intentionally killing an innocent human being is not always a moral wrong.”¹²

In a letter dated November 18, 2002, Loonan requested a

¹⁰ Peggy Loonan, “The Case for the Morality of Legal Abortion and Against Biblical Condemnation” (debate, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, November 15, 2000), Life and Liberty for Women, http://www.lifeandlibertyforwomen.org/issues/issues_morality_of_legal_abortion.html.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

meeting with the presidents of NARAL,¹³ Planned Parenthood and the Feminist Majority Foundation, to articulate a new abortion rights strategy.

Although it is unlikely the requested meeting ever took place, the letter demonstrates the changes in the mainstream abortion rights movement; abortion supporters are altering their message to appeal to the spiritual and emotional needs of women.

Marked “urgent,” Loonan’s letter was addressed to Kate Michelman, Gloria Feldt and Eleanor Smeal. In it, she recommended that abortion supporters “take back the higher moral ground.”¹⁴ Abortion “isn’t wrong, immoral, a criminal act or

¹³NARAL Pro-Choice America, formerly known as the National Abortion and Reproduction Rights Action League.

²⁶ Peggy Loonan to Kate Michelman; Gloria Feldt; Eleanor Smeal; November 18, 2002, Life and Liberty for Women, “Life and Liberty for Women’s Abortion Rights Message - At Odds With Mainstream Abortion Rights Organizations and Their Weak ‘Choice’ Message,” <http://www.lifeandlibertyforwomen.org/mainstream.html>.

murder, and ... the Christian God doesn't disagree."¹⁵

Loonan argued "the 'choice' language has allowed the anti-abortion movement" to make women "feel guilty and ashamed for ever daring to think that 'killing a baby' is an acceptable 'choice' and has forced us into defending the reasons to 'choose' abortion."¹⁶

According to Loonan, there is an "urgent need for a new strategy and message."¹⁷

A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Naomi's "Acts of Redemption"

Loonan's demand for a "new strategy" comes after feminist author Naomi Wolf's impassioned appeal for new "consciousness" regarding abortion. In her 1995 article, "Our Bodies, Our Souls" in *The New Republic*, Wolf called "for a radical shift in the pro-choice

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

movement's rhetoric and consciousness about abortion."¹⁸ In her article, Wolf admitted, "There is a hunger for a moral framework that we pro-choicers must reckon with."¹⁹

She also recommended the abortion rights movement "contextualize the fight to defend abortion rights within a moral framework that admits that the death of a fetus is a real death."²⁰

Wolf wrote "to its own ethical and political detriment, the pro-choice movement has relinquished the moral frame around the issue of abortion."²¹ According to Wolf, this has caused the abortion rights movement to "lose the millions of Americans who want to condemn it as a moral iniquity."²²

¹⁸ Naomi Wolf, "Our Bodies, Our Souls," *The New Republic*, October 16, 1995, 26.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

³³ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

Wolf maintained that if abortion supporters “uphold abortion rights within a matrix of individual conscience, atonement and responsibility ... we both correct the logical and ethical absurdity in our position - and consolidate the support of the center.”²³

Later in the article, she asked the telling question, “But how, one might ask, can I square a recognition of the humanity of the fetus, and the moral gravity of destroying it, with a pro-choice position? The answer can only be found in ... the paradigm of sin and redemption.”²⁴

One of the first feminist leaders to make the case for post-abortion acts of redemption, Wolf wrote, “If one believes that abortion is killing and yet is still pro-choice, one could try to use

²³ Ibid., 33.

²⁴ Ibid.

contraception for every single sex act; if one had to undergo an abortion, one could then work to provide contraception, or jobs, or other choices to young girls; one could give money to programs that provide prenatal care to poor women; if one is a mother or father, one can remember the aborted child every time one is tempted to be less than loving - and give renewed love to the living child.”²⁵

Feminist author Ginette Paris argued the guilt over abortion is best relieved through ritual. In her book, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, Paris complained the current abortion experience is often a mechanical process, comparing it to a car’s oil change. Paris wrote abortion supporters must “invent rituals, think up symbols, propose new ideas, and create a network of support for women.”²⁶ Similar to Wolf’s acts of redemption, Paris suggested specific post-

²⁵ Ibid., 35.

²⁶ Ginette Paris, *The Sacrament of Abortion*, trans. Joanna Mott (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1992), 90.

abortion rituals to help a woman come to terms with her abortion decision. Some of her suggestions include communicating with the unborn child, writing a farewell letter to the unborn baby, creating a personalized ritual to mark the occasion, or holding the dead baby after the abortion. According to Paris, “Our culture needs new rituals as well as laws to restore to abortion its sacred dimension.”²⁷

Krista Jacob, founder and editor-in-chief of the feminist online journal, *Sexing the Political*, called for a validation of women’s emotional and spiritual needs and for the creation of “a radical language of choice” to preserve abortion rights. In an article originally published in the *Minnesota Women’s Press*, Jacob admitted pro-life inroads have forced a change in tactics.

Referring to the abortion rights slogan, “It’s her body, her choice,” Jacob wrote, “For many women there are emotional,

³⁹ Ibid., 92.

physical, spiritual aspects of their experience, which are rarely acknowledged in mainstream discussions of abortion. When public support for abortion rights is limited to simply reciting a bumper sticker, our very cause is undermined.”²⁸ Jacob advised the abortion rights movement to “cultivate a radical language of choice that reflects the continuum of the abortion experience.”²⁹

Feminist and author Diana Alstad believes, “The time is ripe to offer a powerfully articulated alternative moral view of abortion.”³⁰ Shortly after Wolf’s article was published, Alstad co-authored a position paper entitled “Abortion and the Morality Wars: Taking the Moral Offensive.” Alstad was part of the

⁴⁰ Krista Jacob, “A Radical Language of Choice,” The Abortion Conversation Project, http://www.abortionconversation.com/lang_of_choice.pdf.

⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁰ Diana Alstad and Joel Kramer, “Abortion and the Morality Wars: Taking the Moral Offensive,” Resources for Independent Living, <http://www.rit.org/editorials/abortion/moralwar.html> (accessed December, 16, 2004).

movement to legalize abortion. She shared her new strategy during a 1997 NARAL event in San Francisco. Alstad opinion is that “the real battleground for abortion is morality.”³¹

In “Abortion as a Moral Act,” Alstad warned, “The American pro-choice movement has focused on rights. But how can choice compete with life as an ultimate value? How can legal rights compete with morality, which is more basic? Rights exist only if society grants them, and thus can be eroded whenever the climate of moral opinion changes.”³²

Author and bioethicist Leslie Cannold agrees the abortion rights movement needs a moral frame. According to Cannold, “The job of the pro-choice movement is to provide a moral defense of a

³¹ Ibid.

³² Diana Alstad and Joel Kramer, “Abortion as a Moral Act,” Resources for Independent Living, <http://www.rit.org/editorials/abortion/morality.html> (accessed December 7, 2004).

woman's freedom to choose abortion."³³ In her book, *The Abortion Myth*, Cannold criticized the movement for its "attempts to quash the moral ambiguity around abortion with deceptive language or by ignoring the fetus."³⁴ She argued the abortion rights movement must embrace "a new feminist perspective on abortion that includes a thorough feminist discussion of the moral aspects of abortion."³⁵

In an interview about her new book, Cannold maintained the viability of the unborn will become an increasing problem for abortion supporters. She stressed, "I don't think the current way we address abortion rights is going to stand up to that."³⁶ When asked by the interviewer if she felt abortion supporters were reframing the

³³ Leslie Cannold, *The Abortion Myth: Feminism, Morality, and the Hard Choices Women Make* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), 127.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 131.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 133.

³⁶ Leslie Cannold, interview by Jessa Crispin, "An Interview with Leslie Cannold," *Bookslut*, August, 2004,

debate to include morality, Cannold responded, “My argument is that we really don’t have a choice ... They’ve [pro-lifers] made it a moral issue.”³⁷

Frances Kissling is a former executive director of an abortion clinic and a founder of the National Abortion Federation. She currently serves as president of Catholics for a Free Choice. In *Choices*, a publication of International Planned Parenthood, Kissling wrote, “The challenge for the future ... is for us to develop an increasingly richer discourse about abortion and abortion rights. The challenge also is to train and educate ourselves to be able to conduct this discourse.”³⁸ She argued for room within the movement to explore the morality and ethics of abortion and suggested those who have reservations regarding the movement’s more extreme

http://www.bookslut.com/features/2004_08_002977.php.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Frances Kissling, “The Ethics of Pro-choice Advocacy,” *Choices*, 28,

positions be allowed to express their convictions in the context of abortion rights, so as not to alienate the base. According to Kissling, the movement must “find ways to help people come to terms with their own feelings about abortion.”³⁹ Kissling believes “it is critical” for abortion supporters to expand their “ethical framework and conceptualization of reproductive health.”⁴⁰

In a more recent article, “Is There Life After Roe? How to Think About the Fetus,” Kissling emphasized the importance of addressing the notion of fetal value, even going so far as to suggest the use of fetal anesthesia during late term abortions. Kissling conceded the need to “combine rights and morality, to consider both women and developing human life.”⁴¹ In her article she

no. 2 (2000): 10.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 8.

⁴¹ Frances Kissling, “Is There Life After Roe? How to Think of the Fetus,” *Conscience*, Winter 2004/2005,

explained, “Those committed to the right to choose have felt forced to defend what appears to be an absolute right to abortion that brooks no consideration of other values ... As the fetus has become more visible ... this stance has become less satisfying as either a moral framework or a message strategy.”⁴²

There it is. For the abortion rights movement to preserve its power, it must change its message. For it to gain the moral high ground, it must address women’s emotional and spiritual needs. And to resolve the disconnect between what it is (the killing of a woman’s baby) and what supporters pretend it to be (the removal of a pregnancy) the movement must promote abortion rituals to manage women’s guilt.

The November Gang

<http://www.cath4choice.org/conscience/current/LifeAfterRoe.htm>
(accessed December 16, 2004).

Feminist leaders have called for a change in abortion rights rhetoric and for “new consciousness” regarding abortion. Some are even calling for the creation of abortion rituals. But are abortion industry insiders taking their advice? Are they creating a “moral framework” for abortion?

The November Gang is a support group and think tank for the abortion industry. Known for developing pioneering abortion counseling techniques- techniques that often involve paganism and ritual- it was established in November 1989 in response to the pro-life rescue movement and the Supreme Court’s Webster decision allowing states to put limits on abortion.

At the invitation of Charlotte Taft, then director of the Routh Street Women’s Clinic in Dallas, twenty-five industry insiders from across the country attended the initial meeting. In 1995, the Dallas Observer identified roughly twenty clinics as

⁴² Ibid.

November Gang; according to a 2003 article in Glamour magazine, there are twelve principal members who meet twice a year.

Due to its introduction of spirituality in clinics, the November Gang never really received wide support within the abortion industry but with feminism's growing demand for a new abortion rights frame that has begun to change. The November Gang is becoming a powerful voice for alternative abortion practices. Its influence now reaches to the National Coalition of Abortion Providers (NCAP), the Abortion Conversation Project, Inc., the online magazine *Our Truth/ Nuestras Verdadesan*, and the new feminist post-abortion talkline, Exhale.

According to Ron Fitzimmons, president of the NCAP, the November Gang speaks about "abortion in terms of the good and the bad, talking about bad abortion providers or about the fact that some women do regret their abortions."⁴³ Fitzimmons maintains,

⁴³ Daryl Chen, "Are You Ready to Really Understand Abortion?"

“They’ve been way up-front about promoting conversation about abortion.”⁴⁴

In a case in point, in a recent article addressed mainly to abortion providers November Gang founder Charlotte Taft and abortion industry insider Shelley Oram argued for a reconstruction of abortion rights language to incorporate women’s experiences. Taft and Oram believe “it appears that most abortion clinic patients leave our facilities with secrets and shame powerful enough to keep them silent and prevent them from being Advocates for Choice . . . They do not currently have language that makes it easy and comfortable for them to talk about their experiences, and it seems that many do

(includes an interview with Ron Fitzsimmons), in *Glamour*, September 2003, 295.

not have positive experiences to share.”⁴⁵

In “A Challenge to the Pro-Choice Movement,” Taft and Oram listed the reasons which necessitated a change in language. They admitted women suffer emotionally after an abortion and women’s lives could be adversely affected due to post-abortion trauma. They concluded that it is as a result of these complications that many women do not defend abortion rights.

These admissions are nothing short of shocking when you consider the source. Taft functioned as the clinic director for Routh Street Women’s Clinic for seventeen years and is the author of the *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and the*

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Charlotte Taft and Shelley Oram, “A Challenge for the Pro-Choice Movement,” *Sexing the Political: A Journal of Third Wave Feminists on Sexuality* 3, no. 1 (2003), <http://www.sexingthepolitical.com/2003/one/challenge.htm> (accessed August 20, 2004).

Heart. She is currently with Imagine! a pro-abortion, consulting, training and counseling service.

Shelley Oram is a certified hypnotherapist and has facilitated abortion counseling workshops. She is the cofounder of Imagine! Imagine! provides individual abortion related counseling and consultation to clinics nationwide. Its counseling methods include guided imagery and exploration of spiritual issues.

November Gang member and clinic director, Debi Jackson, of Cincinnati Women's Services, admitted she wants to change the nature of the abortion debate. In "Abortion Rhetoric Doesn't Help: Caring Does," Jackson wrote, "Women need to find their own personal truths about abortion, and the rhetorical arguments of the pro-choice and anti-choice advocates do nothing to further those personal truths."⁴⁶ To assist women in discovering their own truth,

⁵⁸ Debi Jackson, "Abortion Rhetoric Doesn't Help: Caring Does," Cincinnati Women's Services, <http://www.womensservices.com/pages/01.html> (accessed August 21,

Jackson's clinic employs "patient advocates"⁴⁷ and counselors lead women in guided imagery. It has replaced impersonal clinical language with softer terms like *baby* and staff "discuss God, prayer, and saying goodbye to the child."⁴⁸

At the Southern Tier Women's Services in New York, a woman receives a "polished stone"⁴⁹ before undergoing her abortion. To facilitate post-abortion healing, the clinic's director, Peg Johnston, explains Buddhist and Native American rituals to patients.⁵⁰

Johnston is a member of the November Gang, former president of NCAP and the editor of *Pregnant? Need Help?*

2004).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Cynthia L. Cooper, "Abortion Under Attack," *Ms. Magazine*, August/September, 2001, <http://www.msomagazine.com/aug.01/pas.html>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Pregnancy Options Workbook. Her workbook contains an acknowledgment of gratitude to the November Gang and makes mention of the financial support of individual members.

Demonstrating the growing ties between the November Gang and the broader abortion rights movement, one of the organizations to financial contribute to Johnston's workbook is the NCAP- and one of the individuals is NCAP's current president, Ron Fitzsimmons!

Johnston's workbook contains a ritual to invoke the goddess of wisdom. This ritual is supposedly to help a woman decide whether or not to abort. At the beginning of the ritual, the woman is instructed to "light a candle, absorb its power, and pray" to wisdom. Within the ritual, wisdom is referred to as spirit and as "the Holy One." The ritual involves guided imagery and concludes with the admonition, "Wisdom lives within us. Listen to her! Trust her."⁵¹

⁶³ Diann L. Neu and Jennifer Benson, "Seeking Wisdom to Decide," in

According to the workbook, “Many women find that they are talking to the spirit of the child inside them, sometimes out loud and sometimes in their heads.”⁵² The workbook suggests women may want to write a letter to their aborted baby, and when completed, keep the letter as a memorial or “bury the letter or burn it, thus ‘releasing’ it back to the earth.” It also advised the occult practice of automatic writing - a type of spiritism. The workbook explained, “Some women ‘listen’ to what the spirit child is saying and write that down. One woman who chose an abortion reported that it said, ‘Don’t worry, I’m a spirit, I can come back in any form’.”⁵³

Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook, ed. Peg Johnston (Vestal, NY: Southern Tier Women’s Services, 1998), <http://www.ferre.org/workbook/>, also in print.

⁶⁴ Peg Johnston, ed., *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook* (Vestal, NY: Southern Tier Women’s Services, 1998), <http://www.ferre.org/workbook/>, also in print.

⁵³ Ibid.

In another form of spiritism intended to help a woman release the spirit of her unborn baby, a woman is led in meditation and visualization. After a woman imagines a beautiful place, the workbook instructs her to “allow yourself to sense the child you will not have.” After more visualization she is told, “Feel the child communicate its feelings to you, heart to heart.” After this period of communion, the woman is instructed, “Open your arms and allow the child to stand, and to begin to walk away from you.” The visualization ends when the child “walks down the path and slowly disappears into a bright white light.” The woman is told, ‘Feel yourself releasing the spirit of the child’.”⁵⁴

In a companion volume to *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook*, Johnston’s *Abortion: Which Method is Right for Me?* workbook refers to a woman’s unborn child as “spirit/baby”

⁵⁴ Ibid. (italics mine).

and “spirit within you.”⁵⁵ It also provides a sample ritual to be performed *during* an abortion! The ritual is designed for a chemical abortion, a process that can take two to three days. Before the woman takes her first prescription, she is to draw a soothing bath and add rose petals or herbs to the water. As she soaks, she is instructed to, “Let your heart fill with love and wish for a peaceful separation of the spirit within you from your own.”⁵⁶ At the conclusion of her bath, she is to collect the rose petals.

On day two of the procedure, when the woman takes the second drug she is instructed to light a memorial candle. “As the candle burns, the process of passing the pregnancy will continue ... See the path you are on continuing, but the path of the pregnancy

⁵⁵ Margaret R. Johnston, ed., *Abortion: Which Method is Right for Me?* (n.p.: Margaret R. Johnston, 2002), 54.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

(spirit/baby) going in another direction.”⁵⁷

After the candle has finished burning, the woman is told to explore her feelings and then gather her rose petals and release the petals to the earth by burning them, burying them, or casting them on water. Johnston’s ritual mirrors the witchcraft ritual of releasing spirit life described in chapter four.

Not only was Johnston’s *Abortion: Which Method is Right for Me?* funded, in part, through donations by November Gang members and the NCAP like the first workbook, but Ann Gerhardt, Medical Abortion Education Director with the National Abortion Federation, also provided financing.

Johnston is instructing women in feminist spirituality under the guise of abortion counseling. Her workbooks teach a woman to invoke the goddess, to ritually abort, and to release the spirit life of her unborn child. By continually referring to a woman’s

⁵⁷ Ibid.

unborn baby as “spirit child,” “spirit/baby,” “spirit life,” or the “spirit within you” the workbooks disembodied unborn babies.

Johnston is not limiting her influence to abortion patients. She admits to wanting to reframe the debate and to teach others to do the same. Johnston believes, “Providers are in a unique position ... to respond to women and their families in a new way. They can listen to women and men about what this decision means to them, and reflect back to them the responsibility and the morality of their position. They can acknowledge the harder emotions of loss and shame and guilt while empowering women to embrace the future ... *My colleagues and I are also trying to influence the training of abortion counselors and other staff* so more women can find a dreaded abortion experience to be transformational and validating.”⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Margaret R. Johnston, “Opting Out of the Abortion War: From the Birmingham Bombing to September 11th,” in *Our Choices, Our Lives: Unapologetic Writings on Abortion*, ed. Kirsta Jacob, 165 (Lincoln, NE: iUniversity, Inc., Writers Advantage, 2002), italics mine.

In another example of feminist spirituality, according to an article in *Glamour*, at the Allegheny Reproductive Health Center in Pittsburgh a basket of colored stones is offered to aborted women. According to an article in *Glamour*, women choose a stone and “can imbue it with whatever meaning they choose.”⁵⁹

At this same November Gang clinic, a woman is encouraged to write out a valentine to the baby she is aborting.⁶⁰ The article stated “women are encouraged to think of abortion as a loving act.”⁶¹ Women at November Gang clinics “are invited to share their religious beliefs and permitted to pray over their fetuses, even to sprinkle them with holy water in impromptu baptismal rites.”⁶² The clinic’s executive director, Clair Keyes, has even

⁵⁹ Daryl Chen, “Are You Ready to Really Understand Abortion?” *Glamour*, September 2003, 266.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 266.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 265.

performed baptisms of the aborted babies. According to an article in the *Pittsburg Post-Gazette*, Keyes said, “Who am I to say no to these women” when they request help in baptizing their aborted baby.⁶³

The Allentown Women’s Center in Pennsylvania is a sister clinic to the Allegheny Reproductive Health Center and the Southern Tier Women’s Services. According to the executive director of the Allentown clinic, Jen Boulanger, “Any woman who loses a pregnancy...will need to deal with the loss and the emotions that accompany it. It is up to her to decide what she will need in order to successfully cope with her abortion, which may or may not include grieving.”⁶⁴

⁷⁵ Mackenzie Carpenter, “Hearts Full of Hurt: Abortion Clinic Messages Reflect New Counseling Philosophy” (includes an interview with Claire Keyes), in *Health, Pittsburg Post-Gazette*, January 20, 2004, <http://www.postgazette.com/pg/04020/263254.stm> (accessed August 21, 2004).

⁷⁶ Jen Boulanger, “Memorials to the Unborn,” Abortion Conversation Project, Inc., <http://abortionconversation.com/conpiece.php> (accessed December 6, 2004).

In her opinion piece posted on the ACP's website, Boulanger wrote, "Some women choose to mourn the loss of their pregnancies ... A woman may decide to hold a private memorial; write a letter to the unborn child; write poetry; plant flowers or a tree; or pray."⁶⁵

Allentown Women's Center is a member of the NCAP. In keeping with the NCAP's "new conversation," Boulanger characterized abortion as "a compassionate and moral decision" and compared it to "a painful and loving *sacrifice*."⁶⁶

Affiliated with the November Gang, Northland Family Planning Centers in Michigan has a web page entitled, "Religious and Spiritual Concerns," adapted from Johnston's *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook*. The page advises women contemplating abortion to "discover your own truth and honor it."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., italics mine.

⁶⁷ Northland Family Planning Centers, "Religious and Spiritual

In keeping with the new consciousness regarding abortion, Northland clinics, claim to “honor each patient’s spirituality” and to perform abortions in an “inspiring atmosphere.”⁶⁸ The clinics have taken on what they call a “holistic approach” to abortion services by providing “low-light, relaxing music, aromatherapy and guided imagery.”⁶⁹

According to Jackson, when a woman decides whether or not to abort, she is taking part in a “sacred choice.”⁷⁰ A woman knows

Concerns” (adapted from: *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook*, Peg Johnston, ed., Vestal, NY: Southern Tier Women’s Services, 1998), Northland Family Planning Centers, <http://northlandcenters.com/content/index.asp?id=65> (accessed September 25, 2004).

⁸⁰ Northland Family Planning Centers, “About Northland Family Planning Centers,” Northland Family Planning Centers, <http://northlandcenters.com/content/index.asp?id=59> (accessed September 25, 2004).

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Debi Jackson, “The World As I Would Create It,” Abortion Providers Speak, National Coalition of Abortion Providers, http://www.ncap.com/promoting_providers.html (accessed September 25, 2004).

“if she is truly ready to bring new life through her body into the world.”⁷¹ Cincinnati Women’s Services posted Taft’s *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and Heart* online for patients. In the workbook women are asked, “If prayer is a part of your life have you prayed about this decision? How would you know if your god answered your prayers?”⁷²

The workbook posed leading questions such as, if you believe a fetus has a soul, “what do you think happens to the soul when the *physical body* dies?”⁷³ It continued by suggesting that “some women believe the soul will return to where it came from.”⁷⁴ The workbook also related a story of how one client believed “the soul of

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Charlotte Taft, *Abortion Resolution Workbook: Ways to Connect the Head and the Heart* ([Dallas: Routh Street Women’s Clinic, 1991?]), <http://www.womenservices.com> (accessed August 20, 2004).

⁸⁵ Ibid. (italics mine).

⁸⁶ Ibid.

her pregnancy was meant to be with her and would return to her when she could accept it, as a baby, into her life.”⁷⁵

Carla Vogel, an abortion clinic counselor for the Midwest Women’s Health Center, described her role at the clinic as assisting women “through one of the most powerful and painful” times of their life.⁷⁶ According to Vogel, “For me that five minutes [during an abortion] is holy. I believe that within that short time, the mysteries of birth and death come full circle, and that the potential of life is transformed.”⁷⁷ Jenny Higgins, another abortion clinic counselor, maintains that women who abort “all share something incredibly private and sacred.”⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Carla Vogel, “Clinic Testimony,” in *Our Choices, Our Lives: Unapologetic Writings on Abortion*, ed. Krista Jacob, 131-132 (Lincoln, NE: Writer’s Advantage, 2002).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Jenny Higgins, “The Breeze in the Waiting Room,” in *Our Choices, Our Lives: Unapologetic Writings on Abortion*, ed. Krista Jacob, 133-

Abortion providers are developing new “consciousness” regarding abortion just as Wolf recommended. They believe a time is coming when a woman will know “she is the gatekeeper of life.”⁷⁹ They envision a future in which “abortion is a non-issue; pregnancy is seen as a profound and life-altering event and everything about it is treated as sacred - even, or perhaps, especially its *ending*.”⁸⁰

This concept of women as “gatekeeper,” can be traced directly to feminist spirituality. Witches maintain “women are literally a gateway between the worlds and that abortion is a responsible exercise of the sacred power of choice.”⁸¹

134 (Lincoln, NE: Writer’s Advantage, 2002).

⁷⁹ Margaret R. Johnston and Clair Keyes, “How Do You Want Your Abortion?” in *Viable Utopian Ideas: Shaping a Better World*, ed. Arthur B. Shostak, 141-147 (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003).

⁸⁰ Ibid.(italics mine).

⁹³ Minerva Earthschild and Vibra Willow, “Abortion: A Healing Ritual,” in the *Pagan Book of Living and Dying: Practical Rituals, Prayers, Blessings, and Meditations on Crossing Over*, Miriam Simos a.k.a. Starhawk, Aline O’Brien a.k.a M. Macha Nightmare and the Reclaiming

According to Johnston and Keyes, in the future women will have limitless abortion options and abortion will be “carried out lovingly.”⁸² Johnston and Keyes abortion utopia includes “guides” to assist women in navigating the abortion experience. In “How Do You Want Your Abortion?” from the book *Viable Utopian Ideas: Shaping a Better World*, they envision a time when women will choose from a menu of personalized abortion experiences ranging from “The Lunch Hour Special” abortion to the “Deluxe Spa Treatment” abortion, where a woman recovers from her abortion in a “special suite” with room service and may “choose from 3 relaxing options - a foot massage, a mud pack facial, or a rebalancing of your shakras by . . . [an] expert Reiki master.”⁸³

Collective, 237-244 (NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997).

⁹⁴ Margaret R. Johnston and Clair Keyes, “How Do You Want Your Abortion?” in *Viable Utopian Ideas: Shaping a Better World*, ed. Arthur B. Shostak, 141-147 (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003).

⁸³ Ibid.

In Johnston and Keys “Spiritual Journey” abortion, a woman goes on a “spirit quest” as part of her abortion. In this abortion experience, women can create their own ritual or may choose a ceremony from a pagan, Eastern or Native American tradition. A woman checks into a “mountain retreat Friday night for a ritual cleansing and spiritual preparation” and undergoes the abortion when she is “ready for a separation of paths with the spirit child.”⁸⁴

In the “Full Emotional Support” abortion, a woman receives two hours of pre-abortion counseling to discuss, among other topics, “religious and spiritual concerns,” two counseling appointments following the procedure and “consultation by phone with the clergy or spiritual leader” that represents the woman’s spiritual beliefs.⁸⁵

In “The World As I Would Create It,” Jackson described a future when a patient’s “spiritual preferences are . . . honored, with

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

specially designed rooms where a woman might receive spiritual guidance by clergy or a spiritual guide of the woman's choosing."⁸⁶ Jackson wants women to be able to create a sacred space for their abortion. She imagines a world where, "Patient advocates interview each woman about her physical and spiritual preferences. From choosing the kind of lighting (softer or brighter) to arranging for specific music that she would like to hear, the woman creates the space in which she will experience her abortion."⁸⁷

Jackson's foresees a time when a woman may choose to have her friends participate in the actual abortion procedure, the patient "may have a circle of women friends take part in the procedure itself -an ancient ritual of fertility, life, death and rebirth."⁸⁸ Following the

⁸⁶ Debi Jackson, "The World As I Would Create It," Abortion Providers Speak, National Coalition of Abortion Providers, http://www.ncap.com/promoting_providers.html (accessed September 25, 2004).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

abortion, Jackson's suggests "a period of reverence for the timeless and sacred ritual that is abortion."⁸⁹

National Coalition of Abortion Pagans (Oops, I meant *Providers*)

The NCAP believes in order for people to be "more tolerant and comfortable with abortion" abortion supporters "need to challenge the notion that abortion is immoral."⁹⁰ NCAP maintains, "It is time to lift the veil of secrecy and candidly address the ethical core of the abortion experience."⁹¹

NCAP's support for the November Gang runs deep. The organization's board of directors for 2005 include November Gang member Johnston and Amy Hagstrom Miller. In addition, Everett

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ National Coalition of Abortion Providers, "The Need for a New Conversation on Abortion," National Coalition of Abortion Providers, http://www.ncap.com/promoting_conversation.html.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

Sobieski is on the board. Sobieski is vice-president of WomanCare Centers in Florida, a clinic owned by November Gang member, Tammy Sobieski.

When asked about the November Gang, Ron Fitzsimmons implied he approves of attempts to introduce spirituality into a woman's abortion experience. According to the *Pittsburg Post-Gazette*, he “thinks highly”⁹² of attempts by abortion providers to incorporate alternative spiritual and emotional counseling techniques. In the article, “Hearts Full of Hurt: Abortion Clinic Messages Reflect New Counseling Philosophy,” Fitzsimmons called for a “national conversation on abortion.”⁹³ He listed the changing abortion landscape - multidimensional sonograms, partial birth abortion and the effective strategy of pro-lifers - as reason for fresh

¹⁰⁴ Mackenzie Carpenter, “Hearts Full of Hurt: Abortion Clinic Messages Reflect New Counseling Philosophy” (includes an interview with Ron Fitzsimmons), Health, *Pittsburg Post-Gazette*, January 20, 2004, <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/04020/263254.stm>.

abortion rhetoric. Calling “right to choose” slogans “a hollow response,” Fitzsimmons maintained, “We need to recapture the notion that abortion is a difficult moral choice for women, but one that is, in fact, a moral choice.”⁹⁴

One independent clinic affiliated with NCAP has dealt with the need for morality and spirituality by hiring a pro-abortion clergy member to “counsel” patients and to provide baptisms as part of its abortion service. At Women’s Health Care Services in Kansas, a chaplaincy program provides “individual counseling, group counseling and the celebration of spiritual sacraments such as baptism of the still born fetus and blessings for the aborted fetus.”⁹⁵

Women’s Health Care Services specializes in second- and

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Women’s Health Care Services, P.A., “Meet Our Chaplain,” Women’s Health Care Services, P.A., <http://www.driller.com/chap.html>.

third-trimester abortions. According to the clinic's website, more late-term abortions are performed at its clinic than anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere.

The website explains “many patients request a remembrance of their baby to take home with them.”⁹⁶ Because a woman may desire “a token of the precious time” she and her “baby had together” prior to the abortion,⁹⁷ the clinic offers hand prints and footprints of the dead baby, photographs of the dead baby and allows the woman to embrace her dead baby.⁹⁸

An anonymous letter posted on the clinic's website states, “We are grateful to allow her [the aborted baby] to pass from our lives without pain and with dignity. We are grateful that we were able to see her, hold her, baptize her and tell her goodbye. We are

¹⁰⁸ Women's Health Care Services, P.A., “Remembrances and Special Requests,” <http://www.driller.com/remembrance.html>.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

grateful for her tiny footprints as a visual reminder of her short existence. We are grateful for her ashes and urn that will remain a tangible part of our lives and will serve . . . as a living memorial to her.”⁹⁹

This same NCAP member clinic has an adult sized crematorium on site, to burn the aborted babies. A serene poster of a leaping dolphin decorates the ceiling of the room where the abortions are performed. In twisted fashion, while the crematorium fires up and ashes begin to fall patients can lean back and meditate on the words written below the poster- “set them free.”¹⁰⁰

Independent clinics reportedly perform 90 percent of all abortions in America, and NCAP represents one hundred and fifty of these clinics. In keeping with the clinics new strategy, NCAP’s

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Stephanie Simon, “A Late Decision, a Lasting Anguish,” *Los Angeles*

website includes a page entitled, “The Women Speak.” Posted on the page are twelve letters from aborted women or their supporters. The sampling of letters seems more than coincidental; it is an effort to frame the debate. Of the twelve letters, eleven included mention of God or spiritual themes such as forgiveness and prayer, three dealt with reincarnation and seven were addressed to the unborn or aborted babies. One such letter read, “God will save you for a time that’s better in our lives.”¹⁰¹ Another read, “You will always be my baby. I will see you in heaven, sweetheart.”¹⁰² The most startling letter was written to an unborn baby prior to the abortion. It was addressed to “the embryo inside me” and read, “I take some comfort that this will not be painful for you and I also take comfort in the

Times, May 31, 2005.

¹¹³ National Coalition of Abortion Providers, “The Women Speak,” National Coalition of Abortion Providers, http://www.ncap.com/promoting_women.html.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

fact that God exists, heaven exists, and life begins at conception. You are headed for more beautiful things than I could have given you here on earth.”¹⁰³

To facilitate its new rhetoric, NCAP relies on its educational arm, the Abortion Conversation Project, Inc. According to its website, the ACP derives its resources directly from NCAP members.

The website contains point-by-point instruction on how to guide NCAP’s new conversation into the mainstream debate. The ACP lists three immediate goals - to promote conversations between abortion providers and supporters, to research PASS, and to encourage relationships between clinics and clergy while creating an environment of spirituality for patients.¹⁰⁴

Of the ten directors on the board of ACP, four are

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ See, <http://www.abortionconversation.com>.

November Gang members. The offices of president and vice president are held by November Gang members, Johnston and Renee Chelian respectively, and Taft serves as a national "conversationalist" for the project.

As part of its goal to address post-abortion health, ACP co-sponsored an exploratory meeting on post-abortion emotional health in November 2003 with Exhale, a direct service post-abortion counseling organization. The closed meeting lasted a day and a half. Participants included Johnston and Taft.

The report listed "incomplete philosophical conceptualization within institutionalized religion ... regarding abortion and spirituality"¹⁰⁵ as an obstacle to women's emotional health. In the segment of the meeting, "What Do We Need to Know?" participants explored reclaiming abortion as a moral

¹⁰⁵ The Abortion Conversation Project, Inc., and Exhale, "Report from an Exploratory Meeting on Post Abortion Emotional Health," November, 2003.

decision. During discussion of, “What Needs to Shift,” certain words in common usage were criticized for not adequately communicating the pro-abortion message. To address this difficulty, participants were encouraged to “offer new slogans and language at pro-choice events” and to “expand the number of safe places for women to talk about their abortion experience.”¹⁰⁶

Abortion Leaders: Waiting to Exhale

Exhale’s executive director, Aspen Baker, serves on the advisory board of *Our Truths/Nuestras Verdadesan*, an online and print magazine created in collaboration with the ACP. In an obvious attempt to normalize the abortion experience, *Our Truths/Nuestras Verdadesan* offers feminist testimonies from post-aborted women. The magazine is slated for publication in June, 2005. In addition to

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Aspen, five November Gang members serve on the twelve member board.

Exhale is the first feminist “after-abortion” talkline in the country. It began in June 2000 in the San Francisco Bay Area of California. Five years later the counseling service launched multi-lingual, national coverage. With the new coverage, Exhale expects 3,000 callers a year.

In addition to its toll free talkline, Exhale provides training in post-abortion counseling and conducts public education to increase approval for abortion. According to a recent ad, Exhale’s peer counselors are expected to “increase awareness that abortion is normal in the reproductive lives of women.”¹⁰⁷

According to Aspen and Carolina De Robertis, program director for the organization, “For women who have abortions, the

¹⁰⁷ The Volunteer Center, “Peer Counselor,” The Volunteer Center, <http://www.thevolunteercenter2.net/org/opp/1311988-printer.html> (accessed January 5, 2005).

call to reframe the debate is long overdue.”¹⁰⁸ Exhale created a counseling framework which echoes a client’s language, validates her experience and feelings, and incorporates cultural sensitivity. This new frame is labeled “pro-voice.” The “Pro-Voice frame recognizes that whatever a person is feeling is normal and thereby breaks down stigma.”¹⁰⁹

Exhale claims its counseling model “respects each woman’s individual belief system”¹¹⁰ yet one of its volunteer counselors is employed at a local abortion clinic. Cristina Correa, center manager of Choice Medical Group in Sacramento, has been a counselor with Exhale for two years.

¹⁰⁸ Aspen Baker and Carolina De Roberts, “Pro-Voice: A Framework for Communicating Personal Experiences with Abortion” (PDF file), Exhale, <http://www.4exhale.org/publications.htm> (accessed June 5, 2005).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Exhale, “Programs,” <http://www.4Exhale.org/Pages/program.html> (accessed December, 27, 2004).

Exhale has ties to the ACP, the November Gang, Catholics for a Free Choice, and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. It has received grants from, among others, the feminist Third Wave Foundation, the Mary Wohlford Foundation and the Women's Foundation of California. The president of the Women's Foundation, Patti Chang, believes, "Exhale's work goes beyond providing important services to individual women. Collectively, Exhale is reducing the stigma associated with abortions and moving the dialogue to the often neglected place of post-abortion."¹¹¹

Johnston is a former national advisor to Exhale and its website provides a link to Johnston's *Pregnant? Need Help? Pregnancy Options Workbook*. November Gang member, Jennifer Baumgardner, serves on the current advisory council.

¹¹¹ The Women's Foundation of California, "News," The Women's Foundation of California, http://www.womensfoundca.org/news_ts.html (accessed June 5, 2005).

Planned Parenthood's Religious Right

A link on ACP's site is to the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health and Ethics (TRC). Daniel C. Maguire serves as TRC's president. Maguire is a Professor of Moral Theological Ethics at Marquette University and the author of the controversial book *Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions*, a book that spiritually justifies abortion.

Not to be outdone by NCAP, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., is “encouraging their staff members, volunteers, clients, donors, supporters, and other friends to read and study *Sacred Choices*.”¹¹² PPFA even created its own interactive workbook, *Planned Parenthood Discusses “Sacred Choices,”* based on

¹²⁴ Daniel C. Maguire, foreword, *Planned Parenthood Discusses “Sacred Choices”*: *The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Major World Religions*,” (n.p.: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2002), 8.

Maguire's book. It was designed to be used in conjunction with *Sacred Choices*.

Maguire is a longtime PPFA insider, a member of the PPFA's Clergy Advisory Board and a popular speaker at PPFA events. In January 2004, Maguire spoke at a PPFA event in New York. During his speech he referred to abortion services as "not just good work but holy work."¹¹³ In an article titled, "Sex, Ethics, and One Billion Adolescents," Maguire argued "the right to a safe abortion, is an issue of religious freedom."¹¹⁴ This concept permeates Maguire's *Sacred Choices*. The book repeatedly conceptualized abortion as a religious right, "the right to choose an

¹²⁵ Emma Pearse, "Pro-Choice Clergy Raising Moral, Religious Voice," *Women's E-News*, March 18, 2004, <http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/1753/context/archive> (accessed September 24, 2004).

¹²⁶ Daniel C. Maguire, "Sex, Ethics, and One Billion Adolescents," The Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health and Ethics, http://www.religiousconsultation.org/sex_ethics_&_one_billion_adolescents.htm (accessed September 24, 2004).

abortion has deep religious roots. Laws that deny women this right are unjust and violate religious freedoms.”¹¹⁵

In PPFA’s workbook, abortion is called a “sacred choice.”¹¹⁶ Maguire, one of seven contributors, also wrote the foreword. In it, he maintained that for a woman unprepared to give birth “it is an equally sacred choice to abort - a holy choice - a choice, in Christian terms that is full of grace.”¹¹⁷

The workbook reveals that the nation’s leading abortion provider is studying abortion in a religious context and is asking Maguire to educate abortion industry insiders.¹¹⁸ According to

¹²⁷ Daniel C. Maguire, *Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 105.

¹²⁸ Daniel C. Maguire, Foreword, *Planned Parenthood Discusses “Sacred Choices”: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Major World Religions*,” (n.p.: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2002), 8.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, introduction to *Planned*

PPFA, Maguire's book is only the starting point for a spiritual conceptualization of abortion rights. "The next steps," according to the workbook, "are to understand the implications of *Sacred Choices* for the future of reproductive rights . . . and to disseminate what we learn as widely as possible."¹¹⁹

In keeping with the goal to distribute religious justification for abortion, PPFA promoted a documentary film based on Maguire's book. The film, "Sacred Choices and Abortion," was advertised on PPFA's home page and a link was provided to TRC's website. According to PPFA, the film "explores 'the big lie' - that religion is opposed to a woman's right to choose."¹²⁰

Parenthood Discusses "Sacred Choices": The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Major World Religions," (n.p.: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2002), 12.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., "The Latest," Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., <http://plannedparenthood.org> (accessed December 17, 2004).

The Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing received recognition for its “Open Letter to Religious Leaders” in an article in PPFA’s online publication, *Choice! Magazine*. PPFA provided a link to the Religious Institute and made mention of PPFA insider, Ignacio Castuera’s participation in developing the letter.¹²¹

At the Religious Institute’s colloquium, pro-abortion theologians from various religious traditions composed a religious justification for abortion. The letter asserted the Bible is silent on abortion. It encouraged religious leaders to offer post-aborted women and their family members special “worship opportunities” to grieve abortion.¹²² But the most telling assertion was in the section

¹²¹ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., “Religious Institute Honors Roe,” *Choice! Magazine*, January 18, 2005, <http://www.plannedparenthood.org> (accessed April, 16, 2005).

¹²² Debra W. Hafner and Rev. Larry L. Greenfield, “An Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Abortion as a Moral Decision” (Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing, presented January 22, 2005), http://www.religioustheology.org/Abortion_OpenLetter.pdf (accessed June 5, 2005).

on “Religious Pluralism.” The open letter stated, “No government committed to human rights and democracy can privilege the teachings of one religion over another. No single religious voice can speak for all faith traditions on abortion, nor should government take sides on religious differences . . . We oppose any attempt to make specific religious doctrine concerning abortion the law for all Americans.”¹²³

According to PPFA, “Once it is understood that reproductive rights are solidly grounded in the world’s major religions, then it must follow . . . a government that restricts those rights abuses the religious freedoms of its citizens.”¹²⁴

PPFA is now claiming to be “engaged in a *prophetic* and

¹²³ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, introduction to *Planned Parenthood Discusses “Sacred Choices”: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Major World Religions*,” (n.p.: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2002), 13, (italics mine).

social action *ministry*,¹²⁵ which represents “the faith traditions of people in every corner of the world.”¹²⁶ The stage is being set to promote abortion as an exercise in religious freedom. Imbedded in a 2003 political action speech by PPFA president, Gloria Feldt, was the assertion, “forced motherhood is a violation of women’s human rights and a violation of the ethical and religious beliefs of most Americans,”¹²⁷ repeating the argument from *Sacred Choices*. PPFA is putting abortion rights in a religious frame so that to disallow or limit a woman’s access to abortion is to prohibit her free exercise of religion. In other words, to deny abortion rights, is to deny religious

¹³⁷ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, afterword to *Planned Parenthood Discusses “Sacred Choices”: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Major World Religions*,” (n.p.: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2002), 59 (italics mine).

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹³⁹ Gloria Feldt, “Hypocrisy, Theocracy, and Reclaiming our Birthright of Freedom,” (speech, City Club of Portland, Portland, OR, May 16, 2003), http://www.behindeverychoice.com/030527_portland_speech.asp (accessed September 24, 2004).

rights. By promoting abortion this way, PPFA moves the debate outside the reach of secular arguments and restrictions and shores up its political base.

According to the pro-life organization, Life Decisions International, PPFA is a not-for-profit entity that still manages to end each fiscal year with an average 20 million dollar surplus. Its fiscal year income for 2002-2003 was reportedly more than seven hundred million dollars.¹²⁸ Unlike feminists who possess an actual affinity for feminist spirituality, PPFA is an industry. In other words, if PPFA is adopting a spiritual justification for abortion, it is because it is good business.

In order to market abortion as a religious right, PPFA is building relationships within the community of faith. The PPFA

¹⁴⁰ Life Decisions International, "Basic Facts About Planned Parenthood," Life Decisions International, <http://www.fightpp.org/show.cfm?page=basic>, also available in brochure form.

Clergy Advisory Board began in 1994 and the formation of PPFA Pro-Choice Religious Network soon followed. Currently, PPFA has a countrywide network of nearly 2,000 clergy and lay people, 150 of which fill leadership roles within the entity.¹²⁹ It has a Clergy Advisory Board and clergy are employed “as counselors and public affairs officers.”¹³⁰ According to the workbook, “clergy volunteers counsel clinic patients and staff, support and use Planned Parenthood educational programs *in their congregations* and communities, and advocate on behalf of Planned Parenthood in the public arena.”¹³¹

In July 2001, Maguire was the featured speaker at the annual PPFA Political Academy where he received standing

¹⁴¹ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, introduction to *Planned Parenthood Discusses “Sacred Choices”: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Major World Religions*,” (n.p.: Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2002), 11.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid., (italics mine).

ovations; the same event sponsored a successful workshop on “winning clergy support for Planned Parenthood.”¹³² A 2001 issue of *Clergy Voices* described how Maguire was scheduled to speak at PPFA events in Los Angeles, Rhode Island and Denver during the same year.¹³³

In March of next year, Maguire is to be the feature speaker at an annual event by Planned Parenthood Centers of West Michigan. The event is being used as an outreach to the religious community. Information regarding the event has been disseminated to local churches and a discussion forum is scheduled for after the speech. According to the Communications Coordinator of the

¹⁴⁴ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., “PPFA Political Academy Gets a Theology Lesson,” *Clergy Voices*, 6, no. 2, (2001), <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/clergy/clergy20011116.html> (accessed September 24, 2004).

¹⁴⁵ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., “PPFA Clergy Advisory Board Members Hit the Road,” *Clergy Voices*, 6, no. 2, (2001), <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/clergy/clergy20011116.html> (accessed September 24, 2004)

Planned Parenthood Centers of West Michigan, “I hope . . . [the churches] consider it with an open mind. With Dr. Maguire’s presentation, we’d like people to look at issues in a new light.”¹³⁴

Just recently, PPFA selected a national chaplain “to articulate the spiritual dimensions of sexuality and reproduction,”¹³⁵ euphemisms for abortion. In a press release dated March 8, 2004, PPFA announced the appointment of longtime abortion proponent and activist, Reverend Ignacio Castuera to the new position. According to PPFA, Castuera is expected to “play a pivotal role in communicating the theological justification for choice.”¹³⁶

¹⁴⁶ Rachel Mavis, “Marquette Professor to Address Planned Parenthood Event,” *Grand Valley Lanthorn*, September 21, 2004, <http://www.lanthorn.com/archives.asp?aid=2022> (Accessed September 22, 2004).

¹⁴⁷ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, “Press Releases,” Planned Parenthood Federation of America, http://www.plannedparenthood.org/about/pr/040308_chaplain.html (accessed September 24, 2004).

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

As indicated by PPFA's "Employment Opportunity" posting on its web site, the purpose of this position is to articulate "the moral, ethical, and religious basis for our work."¹³⁷ The national chaplain will be required to partner with "affiliates to expand and enhance their relationships with religious organizations in their communities, particularly those affiliates that already have faith-based partnerships or are under attack by religious organizations" and will report to PPFA's senior vice president.¹³⁸

Local PPFA clinics are adopting a similar approach. Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois provided a link on their website to "After Your Abortion . . . A Natural Response," from the Hope Medical Group for Women.¹³⁹ "After Your Abortion . . . A

¹⁴⁹ Planned Parenthood Federation of America, "Employment Opportunities," Planned Parenthood Federation of America, [http://www.plannedparenthood.org/... JOBS/nat_030826chap.html](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/...JOBS/nat_030826chap.html) (posted August 26, 2003; site discontinued).

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Hope Medical Group for Women, "After Your Abortion...A Natural

Natural Response,” offers various coping techniques to post-aborted women. To help women overcome their post-abortion grief, the clinics suggest prayer, Yoga, Tai Chi, meditation and creating a memorial service for the aborted baby. The clinics even advocated spiritism; women are instructed to imagine a wise guide and to listen to the guides counsel.¹⁴⁰

Ava Torre-Bueno, former director of counseling at Planned Parenthood of San Diego and Riverside Counties, teaches post-aborted women to visualize a being, “Whatever form this being takes, it is there to protect you, care about you, and help you understand yourself.”¹⁴¹

Response,” Hope Medical Group for Women, <http://www.hopemedical.com/5.htm> (accessed September 25, 2004).

¹⁴⁰ See Planned Parenthood of Eastern Central Illinois, <https://www.ppeci.org/2002/medfpg.html> (accessed September 25, 2004).

¹⁴¹ Ava Torre-Bueno, *Peace After Abortion*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Pimpernel Press, 1997), 35.

Anna Runkle is a former research analyst for PPFA. She served as a volunteer abortion counselor and is the author of *In Good Conscience: A Practical, Emotional, and Spiritual Guide to Deciding Whether to Have an Abortion*. The book is recommended by Gloria Feldt, PPFA's president, and contains questions, checklists and write-in sections designed to help a woman determine if abortion is an appropriate decision.

In her book, Runkle explained people can worship God, "Higher Power, Goddess, Life Force, the Universe, Great Spirit, or Creator," or even "nature itself."¹⁴² In the write-in section of the book dealing with spiritual beliefs, Runkle suggested seven spiritual practices. Of the seven, two were relating to the occult. One was New Age meditation, and the other was occult writing. After writing a prayer to her deity, a woman is told to "Turn the piece of paper

¹⁵⁴ Anna Runkle, *In Good Conscience: A Practical, Emotional, and Spiritual Guide to Deciding Whether to Have an Abortion* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 4.

over, empty your mind, and write a letter back from your Higher Power.”¹⁴³

As to be expected, the questions and the personal testimonies she chose to publish steer readers to the abortion rights position. In Claudia’s story, the spirit of her unborn baby is said to have visited her, giving her permission to abort.¹⁴⁴ Although she admitted life begins at conception, Claudia believed “souls choose to be born or to live a certain amount of time in the womb and then depart, or they choose to be aborted, because they are on a path to give them certain experiences.”¹⁴⁵ Claudia was convinced her unborn baby would come back when she was ready to receive her, “Given my agreement with my child, I did nothing other than delay her

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 98.

¹⁵⁶ Claudia, interview by Anna Runkle, *In Good Conscience: A Practical, Emotional, and Spiritual Guide to Whether to Have an Abortion* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 45-46.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 47.

return to the earth.”¹⁴⁶

One question prompts, “Trust for a moment that you have a loving Higher Power who always wants what is best for you. In what ways do you ‘hear’ your Higher Power’s wish for you?”¹⁴⁷ The author does not recommend studying the infallible Word of God to know his will. Instead, she leads women into a sort of spiritual self-discovery through distorted teachings. Since the workbook does not acknowledge the God of the Bible and a transcendent absolute truth, it cannot help but reinforce a woman’s own self-centeredness.

The National Abortion Federation, the abortion industry’s professional association, represents over four hundred abortion clinics. NAF provides ongoing training and education for members—members who include Planned Parenthood facilities, hospitals,

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 97.

educators, and private physicians.

On April 4, 2001, NAF sponsored a national consortium entitled, “Increasing Access to Abortion for Women in Diverse Communities” in Washington, D.C. Both co-chairs of the consortium were affiliated with PPFA as were many of the participants.

The gathering explored the barriers to abortion for marginalized members of society and came up with five key recommendations to increase access. Of note was the third recommendation- “Acknowledge the Moral Agency and Spirituality of Women who Choose Abortion.” According to the report, “In attempting to connect the decision to have an abortion with the overtly secular rhetoric of choice and constitutional rights, the abortion rights movement has ceded ground to right-wing, religious groups who use spiritual language to denounce women’s ability to

make moral decisions.”¹⁴⁸

Those who participated in the consortium “felt that using ‘choice’ as a defining framework for the abortion rights movement has prevented mainstream organizations from highlighting the moral agency of women who choose abortion.”¹⁴⁹ The report recommended incorporating spiritual speech into the abortion conversation, framing the issue to include the fullness of women’s experiences, and reaching out to religious and spiritual leaders who support abortion rights.

In conclusion, the report advised, “Leaders in the mainstream movement must not be afraid to speak about morality and spirituality when discussing why women choose abortion. There is much to learn from activists ... who have begun to make

¹⁴⁸ National Abortion Federation, *Increasing Access to Abortion for Women in Diverse Communities: Recommendations from a National Consortium* (n.p.: National Abortion Federation, 2002).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

connections with religious leaders, and who recognize the importance of religion and spirituality as sources of healing, community bonding, and political change.”¹⁵⁰

False Prophetesses

The increasing viability of unborn babies, medical and scientific advancements, the pro-life movement’s ability to contextualize abortion as immoral, and their own disingenuous language and unwillingness to address the emotional and spiritual implications of abortion-on-demand, have caused a serious backlash for the abortion rights movement.

As a result, abortion providers are adopting a new communication style- reflecting the language of patients, admitting to the humanity of the unborn baby, and honoring women’s emotional and spiritual needs. They are creating personalized

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

abortion experiences- making available low lighting, music, aromatherapy, and patient advocates. They are adapting their counseling techniques to include spirituality- inquiring as to patients' religious beliefs, hiring religious leaders as counselors, imparting religious justification for abortion, and reaching out to the religious community. In addition, many clinics are incorporating feminist spirituality into the abortion experience itself- teaching women pagan rituals to deal with grief and providing workbooks and counseling that encourage spiritism and witchcraft.

Because of NCAP's association with November Gang members, it is influenced by feminist spirituality. For PPFA on the other hand, abortion is not about rituals or goddess worship. It is about exploiting or twisting traditional religions to bring about feminism's goal of unrestricted abortion. The first example involves witchcraft and spiritism, the other involves reaching out to the religious community and creating a "religious rights" frame for

abortion. In both cases, feminists are using a spirituality of their own creation to reframe the abortion debate.

As PPFA demonstrates, feminist spirituality is not the only way abortion is being repackaged. Although a growing number of abortion supporters are adopting feminist spirituality's cyclical view of life, others still hold to the traditional perspective that denies an unborn baby personhood before a certain stage of biological development or before birth. Ironically, this group often points to the Bible as justification for abortion.

In an apparent effort to “take back the higher moral ground,” as Loonan advised, abortion supporters are formulating abortion in religious, even Christian, terms. They claim their perspective on abortion is “another valid, Bible based alternative.”¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Anne Eggebrotten, ed., *Abortion My Choice, God's Grace* (Pasadena: New Paradigm Books, 1994), 18.

They assert a woman “can’t be separated from God.”¹⁵² The founding director of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights in Southern California goes even further claiming that deciding whether or not to abort actually brings a woman closer to God, “Knowing that God is with her in the abortion decision ... brings a woman into deeper communion with the One from whom all life springs.”¹⁵³

Both beliefs demonstrate an arrogant contempt for the Word of God. Sin separates us from God’s holy presence,¹⁵⁴ and the “deeper communion” with God promised to women who contemplate abortion is deception. The Bible warns, “If I regard

¹⁵² Ava Torre-Bueno, *Peace After Abortion*, 2nd ed. (San Diego: Pimpernel Press, 1997), 110 (italics in the original).

¹⁵³ Bunnie Riedel, foreword to *Abortion : My Choice, God’s Grace*, ed., Anne Eggebrotten (Pasadena: New Paradigm Books, 1994).

¹⁵⁴ Isa. 59:1-3.

iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”¹⁵⁵

One of the more popular excuses for abortion asserts that since the Bible says God is a God of love and nothing can separate us from his love, God condones abortion. Another argument claims because God designed us with free will abortion is a woman’s prerogative.

The common biblical arguments for abortion are:

- The Bible is not specific on when “potential life” becomes a person.
- God is silent on the issue of abortion.
- God’s grace will make allowance for abortion.
- Since God created women with free will, women have an innate right to choose abortion.

¹⁵⁵ Ps. 66:18.

- Women must have the ability to choose to bring new life into the world because Jesus Christ willingly chose to die on the cross to bring us eternal life.
- Because God has revealed himself as a Covenant Maker and we are made in his image, women should only bring to birth children with whom they are willing to enter into a covenant relationship.
- The intentional destruction of human life is not always a moral wrong.

God's perspective on abortion and the argument that **the Bible is not specific on when "potential life" becomes a person** is addressed fully in chapter four. In brief, it is evil to murder an unborn baby¹⁵⁶ because personhood begins at conception.¹⁵⁷

The rationale that **birth is the beginning of human life**

¹⁵⁶ See 2 Kings 8:12.

comes from Genesis chapter two, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”¹⁵⁸ Abortion supporters claim this verse demonstrates human life begins when an infant takes her first breath, ensoulment occurs at birth.

This argument is rather like comparing apples with oranges. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground and Eve was created from Adam’s rib. Adam and Eve never experienced birth. Theirs was a unique beginning. In contrast, Adam and Eve’s descendants begin life at conception and go through a period of growth and maturity in the womb. Within the womb, the placenta allows for the exchange of oxygen. An unborn baby receives oxygen through the umbilical cord and “breathes” amniotic fluid into her lungs. The

¹⁵⁷ See Matt. 22:32, Ps. 22:10, 51:5, and 139:13-16.

¹⁵⁸ Gen. 2:7.

Bible teaches ensoulment happens before a child is born.¹⁵⁹ In way of an example, the Bible describes unborn “infants which never saw light” as “at rest.”¹⁶⁰ Unborn babies who die before birth will never know an independent breath, yet according to this passage they possess eternal souls and are at rest. More to the point, a verse taken out of context or interpreted in such a way to contradict other scripture is not a valid reading of the Word. The Bible is a complete work and must be studied in its entirety.

The argument that **God is silent on the issue of abortion** flies in the face of reason. Although it is true that abortion is never mentioned by name in the Bible, God is far from silent on the issue. The fact the Bible does not refer to surgical or chemical abortion specifically is not a religious justification for murdering unborn

¹⁵⁹ Ps. 22:10, Ps. 51:5.

¹⁶⁰ Job 3:16- 17.

children. A similar argument could be used to rationalize any number of modern evils. The Bible never explicitly condemns releasing mustard gas on children, exposing children to small pox or anthrax, dropping nuclear bombs on children or using hydrogen cyanide gas in gas chambers to murder children but defending such practices based on the Bible's "silence" would be unimaginably wicked.

It is asserted **God's grace will make allowance for abortion.**

However, grace is not a license to sin. We are warned not to "sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth."¹⁶¹ In the book of Romans, Paul reminds us, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"¹⁶² For a woman to abort her unborn baby because God will forgive her is

¹⁶¹ Heb. 10:26.

¹⁶² Rom. 6:1-2.

equivalent to a woman murdering her child and claiming it was an appropriate action because of God's goodness. This view of abortion distorts God's character and it calls into question a woman's salvation experience.

Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments."¹⁶³

When a person is saved, we see evidence of the new birth. There is conviction of sin, repentance, faith in Jesus Christ and obedience. Charles Spurgeon said, "It is a shameful thing for a man to profess discipleship and yet refuse to learn his Lord's will upon certain points, or even dare to decline obedience when that will is known. How can a man be a disciple of Christ when he lives in open disobedience to Him?"¹⁶⁴

The assumption that **since God created women with free**

¹⁶³ John 14:15.

¹⁶⁴ Charles Spurgeon, *The Best of C. H. Spurgeon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), 113.

will, women have an innate right to choose abortion is another dangerous pretext. A woman does not have a “right” to an abortion because God created her with free will. Can you imagine a defendant in a murder trial declaring to the judge, “I did nothing wrong when I killed my baby. I have free will and I choose to exercise it.” We will all stand before the Supreme Judge one day and I can guarantee you that defense will not be acceptable in his court room. Yes, a woman can choose to murder her unborn baby but the law - God’s law- prohibits it. God grants us freedom within his established parameters; anything outside of his boundaries is sin.¹⁶⁵

The fact that Jesus Christ willingly chose to die on the cross to bring us eternal life, does not grant women the right to choose between life and abortion. When Jesus ascended Golgotha and positioned himself on the cross, he chose to sacrifice his own life. A woman who chooses abortion is choosing to sacrifice someone else’s.

¹⁶⁵ Gen. 2:16-17.

The Bible tells us to put “on the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁶⁶ Jesus demonstrated for us the right response to an unplanned pregnancy while praying to his Father in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before his crucifixion. He said, “not my will, but thine, be done.” For the Christian, God is more than Savior; He is Lord. When we chose Christ, we chose death to our selfish desires and ambitions and yes to a surrendered life.¹⁶⁷ We have fellowship with Christ’s sacrifice by mortifying “the deeds of the body.”¹⁶⁸ Our body is to be a living sacrifice¹⁶⁹ and we are instructed to lay down our life for others, “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the

¹⁶⁶ Rom. 13:14.

¹⁶⁷ 2 Cor. 5:15.

¹⁶⁸ Rom. 8:13.

¹⁶⁹ Rom. 12:1.

brethren.”¹⁷⁰ This sacrificial love is central to the Christian faith.

The Bible warns in the last days people shall be without natural affection, “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”¹⁷¹ This lack of natural affection is evident in the justification for abortion that maintains **women should only bring to birth children with whom they are willing to enter into a covenant relationship.** According to the Bible, children belong to God and unborn babies are children. To argue for abortions based on the belief that unwanted children deserve death is unbiblical and unmerciful.

In the book of Ezekiel, God compares Jerusalem to an unwanted baby left to die. In the New Living Translation the passage reads, “When you were born, no one cared about you. Your umbilical cord was left uncut, and you were never washed, rubbed

¹⁷⁰ 1 John 3:16.

¹⁷¹ 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

with salt, and dressed in warm clothing. No one had the slightest interest in you; no one pitied you or cared for you. On the day you were born, you were dumped in a field and left to die, unwanted. But I came by and saw you there, helplessly kicking about in your own blood. As you lay there, I said, 'Live!'"¹⁷² In this moving allegory God commanded the baby to live. A few verses down we read he adopted the baby and entered into a covenant relationship with her.

God's love and mercy should be our example. Jesus instructed to be "merciful, as your Father also is merciful."¹⁷³ This argument also ignores the fact God has entered into a covenant with us and his covenant precludes abortion. The divine institution of marriage was part of God's initial covenant with mankind. The covenant of creation, given before the Fall, outlined man's

¹⁸⁴ Ezek. 16:4-6.

¹⁸⁵ Luke 6:36.

responsibility to subdue and exercise dominion over the earth. I also established God's prohibition about the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This creation covenant includes a procreation clause, if you will, to allow for other people to experience God's covenantal grace. Part of man's covenant responsibility is to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."¹⁷⁴ God always provides for the future succession of a covenant. Reproduction is intrinsic to the holy and permanent institution of marriage. Since conception marks the beginning of personhood and God is the author of life, abortion disannuls a specific part of God's creation covenant, the succession of the covenant. We are not upholding our part of God's covenant with us when we kill our unborn children.

¹⁸⁶ Gen. 1:28; see also Gen. 9:1.

Lastly, it is true the **destruction of human life is not always a moral wrong**. The sixth commandment reads, “You shall not commit murder.” Killing and murder is vastly different. Few people would call a soldier defending his country or a father defending his daughter from a violent crime, a murderer. A soldier is authorized by his country to take life and a father is exercising his God given responsibility to protect and defend his child. In a sense, both are killing in the line of duty. Murder, in contrast, is to kill someone without legal right. Revenge and vigilantism are unsupported by scripture.

God said, “See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.”¹⁷⁵ God determines who lives and who dies. There are examples in the Bible where God commands death as punishment and wages war against his enemies.

¹⁸⁷ Deut. 32:39.

The nation of Israel was told to completely destroy heathen nations, including women and children. In these situations, God the Author of Life invested men with the authority to execute his righteous judgment.

Since life is the sole providence of God, we must not decide issues of life and death contrary to his revealed will in the Bible. We read in Exodus, “Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.”¹⁷⁶ According to God’s Word, we are not to shed innocent blood. Whatever the spiritual justification, in God’s economy abortion is murder.

¹⁸⁸ Exodus 23:7.

Points to Remember:

1. A woman who sins hurts her own soul (Prov. 8:36).
2. As a woman thinks in her heart, so she is (Prov. 23:7).
3. Whatever wickedness a woman's heart is tainted with, results in a corresponding sin (Mark 7:21-23).
4. The more women deceived by feminist spirituality, the more children prenatally murdered (2 Tim. 3:13, Ezra 9:6, Jer. 7:26).

CHAPTER 7

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Isaiah 58:1

I have set watchman upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day or night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silent.

Isaiah 62:6

The Old Testament prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel were commanded by God to rebuke the sin of child sacrifice. These warnings were not limited to the faithful remnant in Israel who still obeyed God; they were spoken for all to hear. Nor were these warnings restricted to the place of worship; they were proclaimed throughout the rebellious nation.

In one example, Jeremiah was sent to the site where the

human sacrifices were performed to prophecy to the religious and political leaders of his day. The prophet was told to go to the valley of Hinnom and bring the leaders of the people and the priests with him.¹ Tophet, the area where the sacrifices took place, was located within the valley of Hinnom. So abhorrent was the valley of Hinnom to God that Jesus used this term to denote hell in Matthew chapter 5 and Luke chapter twelve. The narrow valley of Hinnom separated Mount Zion from a place that later came to be called the “Hill of Evil Counsel.” The “Hill of Evil Counsel” is believed to be where the house of the high priest Caiaphas stood when the religious rulers plotted to put Jesus to death.

Imagine for a moment what the scene must have looked like. One man stands before the hostile nation holding a small clay jar. The stench of burning flesh sickens those present. Smoke wafts. Fragile black ashes fall. Babies cry. All the while the merciless idol of

¹ Jer. 19:2.

Moloch looks on with fire roaring from its' hollow belly.

The frenzied drum beat slows as the people, with mocking interest, quiet to hear what the strange weeping prophet will say. With a loud voice full of power and authority the prophet declares, "Hear ye the word of the LORD, O Kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Israel. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; They have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake *it*, neither came *it* into my mind: Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of

Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.”²

The people’s amusement turns to shocked silence. Jeremiah continues the prophecy of judgment. He raises the clay jar high above his head and throws it violently to the ground. The jar smashes. The broken pieces of clay lay at the feet of the priests and the rulers. A moment passes, then another. A sense of doom settles on the crowd. Through tears the prophet concludes, “Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter’s vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury them in Tophet, till there be no place to bury.”³

From there, Jeremiah went directly to the Lord’s house and preached in the outward court where all the people could hear. The prophet publicly denounced the sin of child sacrifice where the

² Jer. 19:3-6.

³ Jer. 19:11

murders took place and then confronted God's people with that truth in the place of worship. In Jeremiah chapter twenty, verse one, we read that Pashur, "the chief governor in the house of the LORD heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things." He beat the prophet and had him imprisoned.

The Church's Responsibility: "Watchmen, What of the Night?"

Today we stand in our own valley of Hinnom. People are in hell. Idolatry and child sacrifice surround us. There are many religious leaders from the "Hill of Evil Counsel" but few prophets pointing the way to Mount Zion and eternal life.

Just as in ancient Israel, the Lord has prophets and watchmen speaking and interceding for our nation. These prophetic voices are warning the Church as to her complicity in abortion. With one voice they are decrying the sin of abortion, equating it with ancient child sacrifice, and warning of impending judgment.

At great personal cost, these humble men and women are praying and pleading for corporate repentance.

Operation Rescue has been a faithful voice for the unborn and a shout of warning on the walls of the Church. Operation Rescue/Operation Save America recently concluded its Walk Across America tour. In a prophetic visual, the walk team consisted of a man sounding a biblical shofar, a broken set of Ten Commandments, an aborted baby, a white horse marked *judgment* and a donkey marked *mercy*. As the solemn procession passed by the question left to observers was whether America wants to meet Jesus Christ in judgment or mercy.

According to the ministry, when God's people would not listen to his Word, "He would call his prophets to dramatize His message- sometimes in bizarre ways: Moses with all of the plagues, miracles, and judgments; Isaiah walked around Jerusalem naked for three years; Ezekiel laid outdoors on his side beside a model of

Jerusalem for 390 days, etc.”⁴

The ministry’s website explained, “When words fail God speaks in ‘Living Parables’.”⁵ Led by the Reverends Flip Benham and Rusty Thomas, the Walk Across America was meant to call the Church of America to repentance over abortion. The trek began in California and finished in Washington, D.C. Their large caravan rested in local church parking lots or at the homes of willing families. As they traveled, they were met along the way by fellow Christians. A woman who witnessed the procession with her two small children told me how she was moved to tears by the powerful, visceral message. During its final public demonstration in our nation’s capital, Reverend Benham warned, “Abortion will come to an end in America either through our repentance or the cataclysmic

⁴ Operation Rescue/ Operation Save America, “The Walk Across America,” Operation Rescue/ Operation Save America, <http://www.operationsaveamerica.org/walk/live/index.html> (accessed September 27, 2004).

judgments of Almighty God. One way or another, it will come to an end.”⁶

Of course, Operation Rescue/Operation Save America is not the only voice of warning. God has watchmen calling out from every corner of America. Matthew Henry wrote, “It is our duty to enquire of the watchmen ... what of the night?”⁷ Unfortunately, the Church rarely enquires of the watchmen, and if we do hear a shout of alarm all too often we feign deafness. The Church has become not only hard of hearing, but blind. Most Christians close their eyes to the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Kristene O’Dell, “It is Finished! But the Battle Has Just Begun,” Operation Rescue/Operation Save America, <http://www.operationsaveamerica.org/walk/live/index.html> (accessed September 27, 2004).

⁷ Matthew Henry, “Complete Commentary on Isaiah 21,” *Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible*, <http://www.searchgodsword.org/com/mhc-com/view.cgi?book=isa&chapter=021> (accessed September 25, 2004).

sin of abortion. Others respond with platitudes and a shrug of their shoulder, “I’m personally opposed to abortion but…” Some support politicians who create laws in favor of abortion. Still others shed the blood of their own children and behave as though no sin has been committed. Such attitudes engender a lukewarm Christianity that God will vomit from his mouth.

In the book of Leviticus, God promised to turn against the person who committed child sacrifice and to separate that person from the community “because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.”⁸ This passage does not imply the people carried out child sacrifice in the sanctuary; it refers to those who would worship in the holy sanctuary after having murdered children.

In Ezekiel we read of those who sacrificed children and then entered God’s house with unrepentant hearts, “For when they had

⁸ Lev. 20:3.

slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo; this have they done in the midst of *mine* house.”⁹ By practicing child sacrifice and then entering the sanctuary, the people made God’s house filthy!

By tolerating and supporting abortion Christians are defiling God’s house. When a Christian aborts her unborn child she has defiled the temple of the Holy Spirit. When a person professes Christ but is complicit in abortion she profanes God’s holy name. To our great shame, we are all guilty on some level of the sin of child sacrifice.

The Bible tells us not to practice child sacrifice, even as those around us do.¹⁰ We are to avoid falsehoods “and the innocent and righteous slay thou not.”¹¹ We are also warned not to “frameth

⁹ Ezek. 23:39.

¹⁰ Exod. 23:2, Deut. 12:30, 31 and 2 Kings 17:15.

¹¹ Exod. 23:7

mischief by a law” and “condemn the innocent blood.”¹² However, in God’s balance it is not enough to simply be against abortion.

What *is* the Church’s responsibility? Christians are called to deliver those unjustly sentenced to death.¹³ Furthermore, the Bible says if we refuse to stand for the innocent, God will judge our inaction, “If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it*? and shall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?”¹⁴

We know from the passage above in Leviticus, child sacrifice is an offense to God. Leviticus chapter twenty, verse two, instructs the people of ancient Israel to stone to death the person

¹² Ps. 94:20-22.

¹³ Prov. 31:8- 9.

¹⁴ Prov. 24:11-12.

who practices it. Naturally, I am not calling for a return to public stoning; I share this verse to make the point God expects his people to act. God charged the people to exact his judgment. This edict was so important that if the people failed to, God promised to. “And if the people of the land do any way hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not: Then I will set my face against that man.”¹⁵ We can construe from this passage there were people who connived at child sacrifice, who ignored God’s command to bring an end to the sin. However, their inaction in no way absolved them from their responsibility. God expected his people to act on his word.¹⁶ Their inaction was sin.

God has given us proactive commands. Christians have been charged with the duty, “Look not every man on his own

¹⁵ Leviticus 22:4-5.

¹⁶ James 2:17, John 5:36.

things, but every man also on the things of others.”¹⁷ As Christians, we are our brother’s keeper and Jesus compared not ministering to the less fortunate to not serving him, “Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.”¹⁸

We are instructed, “Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.”¹⁹

We are also told, “He that saith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: But

¹⁷ Phil. 2:4.

¹⁸ Matt. 25:44-45.

¹⁹ Lev. 19:17.

to them that rebuke *him* shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.”²⁰

Abortion in our country speaks of the biblical story of Baalim and the people of Israel. Baalim was hired by Israel’s enemies the Moabites to curse the people. As much as he wanted to, it was impossible for Baalim to put a curse on God’s people. “How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?”²¹ When Balaam could not curse them, he taught the Moabites to put a “stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication”²² with the women of Moab.²³

The people of God were under the blessings of God. It took sin to bring a curse. Has our Christian nation brought curses on

²⁰ Prov. 24:24-25.

²¹ Num. 23:8.

²² Rev. 2:14.

²³ Num. 25:1.

itself through fornication, idolatry and the shedding of innocent blood? God has set before us “life and death, blessing and cursing.”²⁴ God will not bless what he has already cursed. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”²⁵ Sin has caused us to step out from under the covering of the blood of Jesus Christ and the blessings of God. As long as the Church remains unrepentant over the sin of abortion, Jesus’ blood cannot atone for the blood which has been shed.

Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, used a javelin to kill two unrepentant people and thereby stayed the plague of judgment from Israel. His actions speak of cutting off sin from the camp to restore the blessings of God. The couple he killed, a prince of the house of Simeon and a Midianite princess, showed no contrition when

²⁴ Deut. 30:19.

²⁵ Gen. 9:6.

confronted with their gross sexual immorality and idolatry. The princess' name was Cozbi, which means lie or deception. Phinehas ended the deception by Israel's enemies to bring about the spiritual ruin of the nation. Because Phinehas was "zealous for his God," he acted. He brought an end to sin and was rewarded with God's "covenant of peace."²⁶

God desires men and women to be spiritual javelin throwers. Christians must halt the curse. We must act in a zealous way to bring the Church and this nation back under the covering blood of Jesus, back under the blessings of God.

Tent of Sacrifice

In the process of writing this book, I had a dream that

²⁶ Num. 25:1-14.

spoke to me about the Church's complicity in abortion.

I dreamt I was outdoors during a pleasant day. I was in a place reminiscent of a quaint New England village. Trees dotted the landscape and I noticed their leaves had turned the flaming colors of autumn. I was immediately impressed with the beauty and seeming tranquility of the place.

In the center of the village was a large area of perfectly tended grass - the village green. It was set between intersecting roadways. I saw buildings across the roads bordering the village green. The buildings faced the green. They were virtually identical to each other, with white shutters and front porches. It was a perfect portrait of traditional New England. Yet, it was strange there was no movement anywhere, no bustling sounds of village life.

I grew up in Massachusetts so the setting of my dream was a familiar one. One of the more charming facts about New England is that many of the towns and villages have these communal greens.

Historically, the village green was the heart of the community. A white steepled church or meetinghouse sat at one edge of the green. The meetinghouse functioned as a place of worship and as a civic building. Usually a general store, a blacksmith shop, a school and a tavern bordered the green. Homes were built around it. With the church at its focal point, the village green joined the residents into a community.

In my dream, an enormous white tent with loose side panels was positioned in the middle of the village green. The tent nearly covered the entire lawn. After the size, I noticed the tent was spotless and of perfect quality in spite of being outside in the elements. Because of the side panels, it was impossible to see what was taking place inside without approaching. I walked up to the tent and looked through a gap created by the fabric panels. I saw the back of a man bearing over an altar. I was shocked when I saw he was murdering a precious baby.

The next moment I was looking through the entrance of the tent at the same scene. Other than the man and the baby, the tent was empty. The man looked up, saw he was observed, and boldly continued. I knew then the tent was a place of continuous child sacrifice.

Horrified, I remember screaming out, "He's killing babies." I ran to the buildings desperate to find anyone to help me end the sacrifices, but no one was visible. I finally spotted an elderly man sweeping the porch of a general store, directly across from the green. His back was turned towards the tent. I ran up to him and yelled, "They're killing babies over there." On hearing my voice, the man turned slightly to address me but his back was still towards the tent. "We know," he replied with a shrug. At that, he turned completely away and continued to sweep. We know? I peered into the homes closest to me and sensed they were not empty. People were aware of the child sacrifice going on in the center of their community but

they remained hidden away in the comfort of their homes or the security of their stores. I woke up.

I asked God what he wanted me to learn from this dream. I recognized the correlation between abortion and child sacrifice but the rest of the dream meant nothing. Writing it down now, it seems so obvious.

It was autumn in the village, a time when things die. Winter was on the way, a time of hardship. The sacrifices were performed in the light of day and took over the public green. The community was built around child sacrifice meaning it was central to the community's way of life. The white shuttered buildings looked exactly the same and the elderly man responded, "We know." The people were of one mind. They were grossly indifferent to the murders happening right in front of them; they had turned their backs on the murder of the innocent.

On the outside, the tent was white and pure but inside it

was a place of blood and sin. It reminded me of Jesus' rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees "for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."²⁷ The tent panels were loose, anyone who cared enough could have parted the curtain and seen the reality. So essential was child sacrifice to the people's way of life, the tent was erected in the heart of the community where the Church once stood. The community was built on the blood of children instead of the blood of Christ. In place of a church with a white steeple, there was a tent of human sacrifice. And the Church was nowhere to be seen.

The Missing Church

The Church in America has been unwilling to speak to the sin of abortion in a meaningful way. While allowing individuals

²⁷ Matt. 23:27.

within the body of Christ to defend the unborn, the Church stepped to the side of the abortion debate and did not invest these individuals with its God ordained authority.

For those of us struggling to make meaning out of the cultural collapse around us and the Church's mixed message, we felt disenfranchised. Without the clear leading of the Church, pro-life Christians were left to figure out their own response. We knew love was the answer to abortion but our "flesh" was involved too. While loving the sinner, we also focused on a worldly response to a spiritual problem. The majority of us felt if we could only prove the humanity of the unborn baby, hearts would soften, laws would change, the culture would rebound -abortion would end.

Hindsight is twenty-twenty. With the advent of feminist spirituality and the ferociousness in which abortion supporters demand the right to partial-birth abortion, we now know this to be untrue. Due to the Church's indifference over abortion, or at the

very least its lack of vision regarding the spiritual magnitude of abortion and its implications for the future, pro-life Christians were untrained in spiritual warfare, making the Christians' battle over abortion untenable. The lack of Church oversight left room for vigilantism and acts of desperation, and it is impossible to process the reality of abortion - 44 million lives snuffed out in a tortuous but systematic way reminiscent of Nazi' Germany's efficiency-without spiritual guidance. Headship is a component of spiritual accountability and discipleship is necessary for maturation. Because of organized Christianity's lack of meaningful response, pro-lifers were left outside the protective covering of the Church. This resulted in a lack of real spiritual power and authority.

Fast forward thirty years. As we mature in our faith, we understand we are not engaged in a political contest or a clash of ideologies, we are not "wrestling against flesh and blood." We are coming up against principalities and spiritual powers - warring with

more than just demons. Principalities, the governing authorities in the kingdom of darkness, and powers, the energy or forces of evil, are behind abortion. At the risk of seeming overly spiritual, Charles H. Kraft, professor at the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary and the author of *Confronting Powerless Christianity: Evangelicals and the Missing Dimension* made the point abortion is a way for demons to control and inhabit unrepentant people. According to Kraft, “abortion establishments crawl with the spirits of murder and death.”²⁸ Kraft believes, “one of the major concerns of such cosmic-level spirits [principalities] is to move their demonic underlings into the people who participate in these activities.”²⁹

The author related, “Those of us involved in spiritual

²⁸ Charles H. Kraft, *Confronting Powerless Christianity: Evangelicals and the Missing Dimension* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002), 223.

²⁹ Ibid.

warfare often feel the presence of satanic spirits in and around establishments that propagate these activities. But when we partner with God to break the power of these spirits, interesting things happen. A former student of mine reported that she had once worked in an abortion clinic. As Christians prayed outside that clinic, what was going on inside was crippled. In fact, she said she felt the power of God so obviously that she left the clinic and never returned.”³⁰

As the story demonstrates, God has given his Church authority “over all the power of the enemy.”³¹ Yet our power to effectively conqueror has been neutralized through unrepentant sin. To our judgment, more Christians are like Pashur the priest who had Jeremiah seized, beaten and put in stocks for speaking the Word of the Lord in the Temple, then like Jeremiah, the weeping prophet.

³⁰ Ibid., 190.

³¹ Luke 10:19.

Our hearts are hardened, not broken over abortion.

The Church's silence has brought us into tacit agreement with sin. Our non-response has concealed the gravity of abortion. For every one thousand live births, there are three hundred and six dead babies. A prenatal child is murdered every twenty-four seconds; in less time than it takes to read this paragraph, another child will die. In spite of this horrible reality, the majority of Christians do not function as prophetic witnesses at abortion clinics or as ministers of reconciliation at crisis pregnancy centers. Neither do we corporately repent of the national sin of abortion or of the Church's part in the death of 44 million children. The Church is as salt and light that has lost its savour; in this all-important issue of murdering innocent children, we are "good for nothing."³²

The Church is ultimately responsible for the sin of abortion because we have willfully ignored Jesus' commission to

³² Matt. 5:13.

minister to “the least of these” and connived at prenatal murder. We abrogated our office as prophet by removing the responsibility of rebuke from our shoulders and placing the weight on the back of politicians. We have conceded abortion to the political arena and have walked away from the public square under the pretense of propriety.

It should not surprise us that the wholesale slaughter of helpless prenatal children has continued despite our best political efforts. The abortion issue is profoundly spiritual and the arm of the flesh has no power to cast down these strongholds. Paul wrote, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”³³ Because “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling

³³ Eph. 6:12.

down of strongholds”³⁴ secularizing our opposition to abortion is unbiblical, ineffective and an excuse to marginalize an issue that should be at the forefront of a national call for repentance by the Church.

There are no pat answers, no simple strategies for regaining the culture of life. But when I think of the Church’s role in the spiritual battle of abortion, I remember the account of the people of Israel crossing over the Jordan into the Promised Land, with Joshua as their leader.³⁵ God promised to drive out their enemies before them once they entered the Promised Land. Priests of Israel were instructed to carry the Ark of the Covenant into the waters of Jordan. As soon as their feet touched the waters, the Jordan

³⁴ 2 Cor. 10:4.

³⁵ Joshua 3:1-17.

divided and the people passed through to the blessings and the promises of God. The priests were told to simply stand still in the waters. Just stand. Stand in faith.

Abortion is a sin that separates us from the promised blessings of God and the waters seem impassable. If pastors and priests filled with God's presence would enter the waters of Jordan in faith, God would do the rest. God's people would follow them, the kingdom of God would advance, and the enemies' territory would be taken for the glory of God. I do not mean that Christian leaders should become embroiled in secular politics and abandon their spiritual authority and that realm of influence in the heavenly places to which God has ordained them. I refer to the need for them to enter the spiritual fray- to heed the call to repentance, to pray, to be a prophetic voice, to hold the sword of the spirit over the places of child sacrifice and command, in the name of Jesus, those places to fall, or to do whatever else the Lord would instruct them in this time

of war. As long as the organized Church stays on the shoreline, unwilling to enter the turbulent waters and stand on God's Word, we forfeit the blessings, promises, and victory of God. Until we are willing to cross the Jordan we will waste on the bank and suffer the encroachments of our enemies.

It is my opinion that the responsibility for the current spiritual crises lies at the door of the local church and nothing short of repentance and the power of the Holy Spirit released in the lives of forgiven saints can accomplish God's purposes. Before we can discern God's specific direction in this matter of innocent blood, we must remove the wall of sin that stands between us and him. It is God's heart to answer our intercessory prayers - for the unborn and for this nation. But our God is not a genie in a magic lamp. He answers prayers, he does not grant wishes. He asks us to join him in fulfilling his purposes on earth. God is waiting for us, his Church, to repent so he can act through us. God desires to answer our prayers

but he has withheld an overflowing of his spirit because we have not confessed our sin and repented corporately. We need a spiritual revival to end abortion and repentance always proceeds revival. In the preface I framed the question for this book as what should we do, not why should we care. The answer is as simple and as profound as repentance.

Without corporate repentance reconciling us to God, prayer pulling down spiritual strongholds and the Holy Spirit empowering us to accomplish the Father's will, how can we presume to end abortion? The battle can only be won through the power of God. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."³⁶

Abortion clinics are high places of child sacrifice. Although the sacrifice is designed to fit the requirements of our modern culture, the sin is the same. Women's bodies have become bloody

³⁶ Zech. 4:6

altars, abortionists the “holy” priests, and prenatal babies acceptable human sacrifices. By changing the nature of life, feminist spirituality has reconstructed the abortion debate and forced the often secular pro-life movement to address the spiritual implications of abortion and the larger questions of faith. Abortion is now being fought on familiar territory, the landscape of the Church. Feminist spirituality has drawn the abortion debate back into the arena in which it rightly belongs - the spiritual. Because feminist spirituality moved the battlefield, we may have just won the war. That is if we choose to enter in and fight it. We can take hold of the promises of God, “Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.”³⁷ Or we can relinquish more ground, the ground we are to occupy, to the enemy. The longer the Church waits, the greater our culpability.

³⁷ Ps. 44:5.

Points to Remember:

1. Abortion is a spiritual issue (Eph. 6:12).
2. Christians are given the responsibility to deliver those unjustly sentenced to death (Proverbs 31:8, 9).
3. God expects his people to act on his word (James 2:17, John 5:36).
4. If we refuse to stand for the innocent, God will judge our inaction (Proverbs 24:11, 12).