

# Phoebe Palmer

1807-1874

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Phoebe Palmer was born in New York City and lived there all her life. Her father was Henry Worrall, a well-to-do English merchant who had settled in the United States and who had been converted to Methodism by John Wesley himself. Her mother was Dorothea Wade, also a devout Methodist. Little is known about Phoebe's early education, but references in her writing attest that from a very young age she was familiar with the Bible and with biographies of early Methodists, including John Wesley, his mother Susannah Wesley, and early Methodist preacher Mary Bosanquet. Prepared by both the religious approach and the organizational structure of Methodism as originated by Wesley, Phoebe Worrall Palmer would become an important figure in both religion and rhetoric in nineteenth-century America.

John Wesley was a priest of the Anglican Church. He never intended to separate from this church, and his theology was mostly orthodox. But he felt that the church needed a spiritual awakening and that he himself needed a deeper conviction of his personal relationship with a saving God. After an unusually intense religious experience in May of 1738, Wesley began to articulate a "method" for achieving a heightened spiritual state. The process begins with God's free gift of "grace" to humans, by which God enables people both to recognize their sinful state and to change it. The next step is for people to repent of their sins, a decisive emotional moment. This "conversion" is evidenced by prayer and good works. Though these activities do not earn salvation, after they have been pursued sincerely for a time, people can hope to achieve a conviction of "justification," that is, the feeling that God has indeed forgiven their sins and is ready to accept their entire devotion. With justification comes "assurance" of God's love to the soul that is painfully conscious of its sinfulness. Believers now begin the process of "going on to perfection" or "sanctification," in which they are better and better able to understand God's love and to act according to God's will. "Entire sanctification" describes a state of complete love of God and conformity to God's will in all of one's actions. Achievement of this state, signaled by a second decisive emotional experience, comes to only a few before the moment of death, but people must continually strive for it.

Wesley believed that the Holy Spirit gives people the strength to undertake this process of salvation. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are unconstrained and unpredictable, and awareness of their presence comes from the believer's own perceptions of his or her spiritual state. Thus, although Wesley believed that followers of his spiritual path should remain connected to the Anglican Church in order to receive the sacraments, this path requires minimal clerical mediation. Nevertheless, people can be helped along the path, first by listening to preaching that awakens them to their sinful state and directs them to prayer and good works, and also by participating in prayer groups in which the members help each other chart their progress toward justification and sanctification. Wesley designed an organization that acknowledged the action of the Holy Spirit in raising up lay leaders to assist

people's spiritual progress. He encouraged lay preachers as well as ordained ministers to call people to repentance, and he recognized a range of preaching styles that relied more on personal testimony and less on the academic analysis of texts than would be found among the traditional clergy. He grouped new converts into "classes," in which they could pray, discuss their spiritual development, and encourage each other under the guidance of more experienced laypeople. At the same time, the more experienced received support in their own "bands." Preachers traveled from town to town and might visit classes and bands, but normally these groups were under lay leadership.

The great majority of early converts to Methodism were women, and Wesley accorded them positions of importance in the new movement. Among his many close women counselors was his mother, Susannah Wesley, who had led large prayer meetings in their home when her Anglican priest husband was absent. Wesley permitted women to lead both mixed-sex classes and women's single-sex bands. These activities required some speaking ability, and soon Methodist women felt called to preach to large, mixed crowds as well. There seemed no logical reason why they might not be touched by the Holy Spirit just as men were—no one would want to say that such action was beyond God's power—and if the principal content of Methodist spiritual discourse comprised accounts of one's own spiritual progress, then training in biblical scholarship, theology, and rhetoric, all largely unavailable to women, was not required for such preaching. Wesley condoned this public religious activism by women, although it was controversial.

Mary Bosanquet (who later married Wesley's colleague John Fletcher) was instrumental in persuading Wesley to accept women's preaching. She had fled her upper-middle-class home in 1759 at the age of twenty to escape what she saw as its spiritual emptiness and worldly frivolity, and she soon found a religious home in Methodism. She was an active class and band leader, and also helped to found one of the first Methodist charity schools. Her prayer meetings attracted hundreds of hearers and many converts, but she also drew criticism from male preachers. In 1771 she wrote Wesley a long letter defending her practice. She couched it in the form of a debate between objections to women's preaching and her answers. The first objection is the familiar citation of Paul's prohibition against women speaking in church:

OB:—But the Apostle says, I suffer not a woman to speak in the Church—but learn at home. I answer—was not that spoke in reference to a time of dispute and contention, when many were striving to be heads and leaders, so that his saying, She is not to speak, here seems to me to imply no more than the other, she is not to meddle with Church Government.

OB:—Nay, but it meant literally, not to speak by way of Edification, while in the Church, or company of promiscuous [mixed-sex] worshippers.

AN:—Then why is it said, Let the woman prophesy with her head covered, or can she prophesy without speaking? Or ought she to speak but not to edification?

OB:—She may now and then, if under a peculiar impulse, but never else.

AN:—But how often is she to feel this impulse? Perhaps you will say, two or three times in her life; perhaps *God* will say, two or three times in a week, or a day—and

where shall we find the Rule for this? But the consequences (here I acknowledge is my own objection, that all I do is *lawful*, I have no doubt, but is it expedient? That, my dear Sir, I want your light in) but what are the consequences feared?<sup>1</sup>

Bosanquet proceeds to deal with these fearful consequences, the first being that women preachers will draw hearers away from male preachers. If sinners are converted, she says, what matter who converts them? If it is feared that incompetent women will preach, simply censure those who are incompetent, not all women. To meet the objection that public preaching violates a woman's proper "Christian modesty,"<sup>2</sup> Bosanquet cites biblical examples of women who spoke out, beginning with Mary, who was asked by the risen Christ to deliver the news of his resurrection. She concludes: "I do not believe every woman is called to speak publicly, no more than every man to be a Methodist preacher, yet some have an extraordinary call to it, and woe be to them if they obey it not."<sup>3</sup> In his reply to this letter, Wesley seized on her concept of the "extraordinary call" as a way of defending women's preaching while still not completely overthrowing Paul's prohibition (which, he felt, the Quakers did):

I think the strength of the cause rests there, in your having an *Extraordinary Call*. So, I am persuaded, has every one of our Lay-preachers: otherwise I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me that the whole Work of God termed Methodism is an extraordinary dispensation of His Providence. Therefore I do not wonder if several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was, "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation." Yet in extraordinary cases he made a few exceptions. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Other Methodist women, including Sarah Crosby and Sarah Mallet, also received Wesley's approval as preachers. They would be important models for American Methodist women such as Palmer.

This support for women's public ministry was not unequivocal, as rhetorician Vicki Tolar Collins has shown. Wesley instructed Crosby to tell the crowds who came to hear her that she would not preach, since Methodism did not permit women preachers, but to say that "I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart."<sup>5</sup> Sarah Mallet first preached while convulsed by a seizure. She was unable to remember any of her words upon awakening. Yet she was ultimately the first English Methodist woman to be explicitly recognized as a "preacher" by her male colleagues. These examples suggest that speaking by Methodist women still had to be firmly differentiated from the more learned and rationally conscious preaching of men. Yes, the women could speak—but only if it was obvious that the Holy Spirit was providing their words. After Wesley's death in 1791, the male Methodist leaders

<sup>1</sup>Mary Bosanquet, letter to John Wesley, 1771, in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, vol. 4, ed. Rupert Davies, A. Raymond George, and Gordon Rupp (London: Epworth Press, 1988), p. 169, emphasis in original.

<sup>2</sup>Bosanquet, p. 170.

<sup>3</sup>Bosanquet, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup>Bosanquet, p. 172, emphasis in original.

<sup>5</sup>Quoted in Vicki Tolar Collins, "Women's Voices and Women's Silences in the Tradition of Early Methodism," in *Listening to Their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), p. 236.

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consolidated Methodism as a denomination separate from Anglicanism that was separately empowered to administer the sacraments. They also worked to close off public opportunities for women, and in England they were largely successful, although women continued to preach in some Methodist sects until the mid-nineteenth century. But in the United States, Methodism's emphasis on the unconstrained and unpredictable function of the Holy Spirit to raise up lay leaders continued to provide opportunities for women, and most prominent among them was Phoebe Palmer.

By the mid-nineteenth century, Methodism, which had arrived in the United States in 1784, was the largest religious denomination in the country, with separate black and white congregations and northern and southern branches differentiated by their stands on slavery. By midcentury, too, a veritable tract war over the right of women to preach was in full swing. Black Methodist preacher Jarena Lee was among those who used the genre of spiritual autobiography to describe and defend her call to preach:

Between four and five years after my sanctification, on a certain time, an impressive silence fell upon me, and I stood as if some one was about to speak to me, yet I had no such thought in my heart.—But to my utter surprise there seemed to sound a voice which I thought I distinctly heard, and most certainly understood, which said to me, "Go preach the Gospel!" . . . O how careful ought we to be, lest through our by-laws of church government and discipline, we bring into disrepute even the word of life. For as unseemly as it may appear now-a-days for a woman to preach, it should be remembered that nothing is impossible with God. And why should it be thought impossible, heterodox, or improper for a woman to preach? Seeing the Saviour [sic] died for the woman as well as the man. If the man may preach, because the Saviour died for him, why not the woman? seeing he died for her also. Is he not a whole Saviour, instead of a half one? As those who hold it wrong for a woman to preach, would seem to make it appear.<sup>6</sup>

Catherine Booth, an English Methodist who later helped to found the Salvation Army, published a defense of women's preaching after hearing Palmer speak in her country, and she became a powerful preacher herself. Frances Willard (p. 1114), first president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), confessed to an early longing to be a preacher, which she suppressed for fear of public censure; but she wrote an impassioned defense of *Woman in the Pulpit* (p. 1124), and arguably used her position as WCTU head to exercise spiritual influence through her public speaking. In 1864 American Methodists failed to pass a national resolution banning the preaching of women (British Methodists had enacted such a ban in 1803). Local conferences were allowed to make their own decisions—providing space for a number of "extraordinary calls"—and by the early twentieth century, according to historians Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider-Dayton, and Donald Dayton, female Methodist preachers were relatively common.

Palmer entered this tract war at the height of her influence as a leader of the Holiness Movement, which peaked in 1858, a year in which Palmer traveled all across

<sup>6</sup>Jarena Lee, "Autobiography," rpt. in William L. Andrews, ed. and intro., *Sisters of the Spirit* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 35, 36.

the United States and Canada speaking at large prayer meetings. In 1859, she published *The Promise of the Father* (excerpted here), over four hundred pages of argument in defense of women's public ministry (Palmer also summarized her argument in a much shorter pamphlet, the 1859 *Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord*, reprinted here). The "promise" of the title is expressed in the words of the prophet Joel, 2:28, "And thy sons and thy daughters shall prophesy," a prophecy applied specifically to Christians by Peter (Acts 2:17-18). A look at Palmer's biography will suggest how she achieved her position of prominence on this issue.

In 1827 she married Walter Palmer, a physician who shared her Methodist faith. They were apparently a happily united couple, although their early married life was marred by the loss of three babies between the years 1828 and 1833; three later children survived. Palmer wrote in her journal: "After my loved ones were snatched away, I saw that I had concentrated my time and attentions far too exclusively, to the neglect of the religious activities demanded."<sup>7</sup> Historian Anne Loveland has argued that Palmer used such reasoning to justify her increasing departures from the nineteenth-century ideology that confined women's activities to the strictly domestic. Palmer's young family shared a house in New York City with her sister Sarah Lankford and Lankford's husband, and in February of 1836 the two women began to hold regular prayer meetings there. At first the gatherings were for women only, but their fame was such that by 1839 men, too, were attending. These "Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness" continued for over sixty years and became a model for Methodist spiritual practice worldwide. At first Sarah Lankford led the meetings, which were characterized by "earnest prayer, study of scripture, [and] spontaneous testimony,"<sup>8</sup> but Palmer soon took over, especially after she achieved entire sanctification in July of 1837. Her sister moved away from New York in 1840 and Palmer continued leading alone.

By 1839 Palmer had expanded her ministry in several ways. She began to speak frequently at religious revival meetings around the country. Although her husband would later join her in these efforts, initially he stayed home with their children. At the Tuesday meetings, Palmer had functioned primarily as a discussion leader, speaking at no greater length than any other participant. But at revival meetings, she addressed the congregation much as a minister would do, mounting the pulpit, expounding a biblical text, exhorting her hearers to repent or to seek further holiness, and praying with those who came forward for salvation. Contemporary descriptions suggest that she was not an emotional or histrionic speaker:

In addressing an audience her position is erect. . . . She is calm and free from vociferation, and is rarely vehement. Her style is clear, concise, and colloquial. In the structure of her sentences there is nothing elaborate or involved. . . . In her communications there is more of logic than of rhetoric. . . . Her spirit is intensely earnest. . . .<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Quoted in Anne Loveland, "Domesticity and Religion in the Antebellum Period: The Career of Phoebe Palmer," *The Historian* 39 (1977): 457.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Oden, "Introduction," in Phoebe Palmer, *Phoebe Palmer: Selected Writings*, ed. Thomas Oden (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), p. 11.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Harold E. Raser, *Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought* (Lewiston, Maine: Edwin Meller Press, 1987), pp. 117-18.

In addition, Palmer and Sarah Lankford encouraged publication of the first journal directed toward the American revivalist movement, the *Guide to Christian Perfection*, later the *Guide to Holiness*, edited by regular Tuesday Meeting participant Timothy Merritt. Palmer wrote frequently for this journal. She and her husband assumed the editorship in 1864, and its already large circulation then boomed; by 1870 it had become one of the most popular religious magazines in the country. Moreover, Palmer took the lead in encouraging social action by Methodists. In 1849, for example, she helped to found the first urban settlement house for the poor, in the Five Points, Bowery, New York City, notable for ministering to the physical as well as the spiritual needs of the neighborhood. She encouraged missionary work among American Jews, and she is credited with founding American Methodism's vigorous program of foreign missions. She abandoned a plan to go to China herself but raised funds to put other missionaries in foreign fields. Oddly, though Palmer deplored slavery, she never actively supported abolition, perhaps because she feared its schismatic effect on the Methodist Church. She was also influential in education: Attendees at the Tuesday Meetings and correspondents included the founders, presidents, and trustees of such institutions as Northwestern University, Boston University, Oberlin, Cornell, and Syracuse. Palmer also collaborated with Catherine Beecher to send young women to the American frontiers to teach school and Sunday school. Prominent reform leaders who knew Palmer as an evangelist included Susan B. Anthony and Frances Willard (p. 1114), who experienced religious conversion at one of her Tuesday Meetings. Palmer also began what would be a prolific career as a writer on religious matters, publishing *The Way of Holiness*, an account of her own progress to entire sanctification, in 1843; it became a best-seller.

Palmer became well known for her speaking in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1853 she undertook the first of her evangelizing trips to Canada. She became a leader of the "Holiness Movement," a religious revival movement that soon spread beyond its Methodist origins, and she was one of the leading Methodist theologians of the nineteenth century, according to Methodist theologian Thomas Oden. The Holiness Movement was the central current in the revivalism that dominated American Protestantism from Jonathan Edwards's Great Awakening in the early eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth century. It had been launched by the preaching of Charles Grandison Finney in the 1820s. Finney was an ordained Presbyterian minister, but, much like the founder of Methodism, he found mainstream Protestantism lacking in spiritual power for the individual believer.

Finney's renewal movement, which soon connected with American Methodism, was especially important to women. From the beginning, he encouraged women to speak in mixed-sex public meetings, a scandalous position at that time (for more on prohibitions against women's public speaking, see the headnote on Sarah Grimké, p. 1045). He renewed the religious conviction of many prominent feminists, including Theodore Weld, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Paulina Wright Davis. Finney went on to teach theology at Oberlin College, the country's first coeducational institution, and among his early students were feminist leaders Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the latter being one of the first American women to be ordained as a Christian minister. Methodism's association with women's rights is

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attested by the fact that the famous 1848 Seneca Falls women's rights convention took place in a Methodist church building.

Historians Hardesty, Sider-Dayton, and Dayton argue that the Holiness Movement was congenial to women for several reasons. For one thing, it offered a "theology centered in experience,"<sup>10</sup> obviating the need for extensive education and allowing each individual to work actively for his or her own salvation. In contributing to Holiness theology, Palmer encouraged Methodists to believe that their earnest efforts at prayer and Bible study could lead them to entire sanctification much more quickly than John Wesley had anticipated, and the emphasis on personal experience expedited this process. Furthermore, the Holiness Movement required that people testify before the congregation about their religious experiences, and Palmer used this requirement to encourage women to overcome their fear of violating conventional prohibitions against women's public speaking. "HOLINESS IS POWER," wrote Palmer in this context.<sup>11</sup> The Bible, not the writings of human theologians, was the central Holiness text, and Palmer encouraged women to find their own interpretations of Scripture. The Holiness Movement stressed the action of the Holy Spirit in inspiring religious seeking, and Palmer emphasized that the Holy Spirit could touch women just as powerfully as men. It was necessary to experiment in religious practices—such as by allowing women to preach—to give the power of the Holy Spirit free play. Palmer also encouraged more spontaneous and heartfelt prayer as part of the worship service.

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At the same time, Palmer deplored "emotive, subjective pietism"<sup>12</sup> and emphasized rationality in guiding the seeker to conviction. She taught that the achievement of entire sanctification relies much more on the believer's rational apprehension of scriptural promises and the resolve to act on them than on continual anxious monitoring of fluctuating emotional states. Hardesty, Sider-Dayton, and Dayton maintain that Palmer's doctrine that entire sanctification was within the immediate grasp of ordinary Methodists was an inherently revolutionary view that encouraged dissatisfaction with the status quo not only in one's personal spiritual life and church practices but also in one's social interactions. This dissatisfaction led to participation in reform movements, for example, on behalf of the poor and for women's rights.

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Palmer continued and expanded the Methodist tradition of lay leadership and enhanced opportunities for women. Interestingly, she never pushed for the formal ordination of women, perhaps because ordination was not needed to provide the kind of authority on which she and other lay speakers depended—the inwardly felt direction of the Holy Spirit. At the same time that she advocated change, Palmer remained faithful to the Methodist Episcopal Church and deprecated break-away radical sects. Nevertheless, according to Oden, she is a pivotal figure not only in the

<sup>10</sup>Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider-Dayton, and Donald W. Dayton, "Women in the Holiness Movement: Feminism in the Evangelical Tradition," in *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Rosemary Reuther and Eleanor McLaughlin (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), p. 241.

<sup>11</sup>Hardesty, Sider-Dayton, and Dayton, p. 243, capitalization in original.

<sup>12</sup>Oden, p. 12.

development of American Methodism but also in the formation of the Pentecostal, Holiness, and Charismatic churches that emerged from the Holiness Movement. These new denominations offered many leadership roles to women, and the ordination of women became commonplace in them well before it was accepted in other American Protestant denominations.

In 1859, already well known as a powerful preacher, Palmer published *The Promise of the Father*, a book-length defense of women's public ministry, and *Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord*, a pamphlet-length summary of the argument. Because of her fame and her leadership position in the most powerful Christian denomination in the United States at the time, Palmer's opinions had wide circulation and influence. In that same year, she departed with her husband on a four-year missionary trip to Britain, where they were very well received. Upon their return in 1864, they assumed the editorship of the *Guide to Holiness*, as noted above, and also continued a hectic schedule of preaching at religious meetings in the United States and Canada, until Palmer died in 1874. After her death, her widowed sister Sarah married Walter Palmer, and they continued to conduct the Tuesday Meetings and to edit the *Guide to Holiness*.

#### SUMMARY OF *THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER*

Chapter 1 (reprinted here) opens by reassuring readers that Palmer does not intend to overturn all nineteenth-century gender conventions. Nevertheless, drawing on Mary Bosanquet Fletcher's formulation of the "extraordinary call," Palmer justifies some kinds of public speaking by religious women. She also cites biblical precedents. She says that Paul's prohibition against women's speaking applies only to the particular circumstances of his day. In Chapter 2, Palmer indicts the Christian Church for neglecting God's gifts to women and contrasts this attitude with the praise given in the New Testament and by the early Church Fathers to women who followed Jesus and served the early Church. Chapter 3 contends that women were fitted for leadership in the early Church by their participation in the Pentecost experience, fulfilling Joel's prophecy that both men and women would be enabled to speak with power. Palmer contrasts the early Church's recognition of women's gifts with the cold reception of a contemporary woman who wished to testify for Christ.

Chapter 4 explores the question of what prophecy is, since Joel's promise was that both men and women would prophesy. Palmer contends that in primitive Christianity prophecy was hard to distinguish from preaching because both delivered divinely inspired messages. As denominations age and grow away from their early ardent connection to the Holy Spirit, says Palmer, such inspired speaking, especially by women, decreases or is positively discouraged, to be replaced by showier but spiritually empty pulpit oratory. Here she adds long quotes from male authorities supporting the claim that the early Church was distinguished by women's public ministry and reinterpreting Paul to allow it.

Chapter 5 shows that modern times have witnessed women's prophetic gifts as well, as is evidenced in the careers of Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, Susannah Wesley, and other British Methodists. It notes John Wesley's support for these women and gives examples of Quaker women speakers. Chapter 6 continues with the example

of Mrs. Mary Taft, a Methodist preacher of the early nineteenth century, and cites approval of her career by contemporary male ministers. Chapter 7 begins by citing male ministerial authority on women's moral and intellectual equality with men and goes on to discuss at length the career of Mary Bosanquet Fletcher.

Palmer begins Chapter 8 with an acknowledgment that her topic is unpopular, but says she is compelled to speak the truth anyway. She illustrates the strength of such compulsion with Wesley's account of the career of Sarah Mallett—who became a preacher in spite of herself—along with quotes from Mallett's journal. In Chapter 9, Palmer admonishes male ministers not to betray their responsibility to speak the truth by opposing women's preaching. She cites examples of many eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century women who, though timid, persevered against such opposition and won many souls to Christ. Chapter 10 tells the story of a woman who stepped forward to lead her church when it was without a minister and was fast declining. A neighboring minister led a fight against her, driving her out of the community. He has much to answer for, says Palmer. When women are silenced, the spiritual quality of the congregation always declines, she contends in Chapter 11; such silencing of women resembles their cloistering by Roman Catholicism (Palmer assumes her readers will want to reject anything "Popish"). Yet even men coarsened by business are allowed to speak.

How do we know that women's current compulsion to preach is of divine origin? Palmer begins Chapter 12 with this question. One sign is the intense suffering of women speakers, who are fearful of attracting censure yet even more fearful of disobeying God's command. Of course, no easy way ever led to salvation. Such women offer themselves as "whole burnt offerings" upon God's altar when they obtain the courage to speak. Palmer asks her readers to consider whether they have surrendered as entirely to God's will as these women have done. Another sign of divine origin is the large number of converts these women—and men—bring to Christ. Palmer gives many examples of the Holy Spirit's wonderful power currently manifested in both women and men, and in many religious denominations. She discusses at length one example of such power: the Tuesday Meeting she and her sister originated. Palmer then describes her own ministry, the theology that underlies it, and its success as attested in her own records and in letters from friends, some of them male ministers.

Chapter 13 begins with another story of a women stepping forward to speak in her home church and being denied by the minister and other male authorities. She moves to another church where she is allowed to preach, and this church soon experiences a remarkable "outpouring of the [Holy] Spirit." Palmer says, think how absurd it would be to gather your family together and yet forbid the female members of it to speak. Women are never silenced at a worldly social gathering. Yet, when godly women wish to speak in a religious gathering, they are not allowed to. Fortunately, some ministers do regard women's call to preach as equal to men's. Palmer cites these authorities. Chapter 14 continues the theme by describing a woman friend of Palmer's who preached powerfully. Do not reject the truth of women's call because it is unpopular, Palmer exhorts. Women are "crucified" by enforced silence.

Chapter 15 asks the question, What is preaching? In the Bible, says Palmer, it is simply telling the good news of Christ's message. This is what Paul does, what any

Christian may do, and what women must also do. It is not an oration such as we think of preaching today. Pastors who understand the message will not silence women preachers. Palmer begins Chapter 16 with the image of the church as a "potter's field" where innumerable women's gifts lie buried, when they could be serving the Church. She gives a man's testimony on how he and his wife discovered that she needed to speak in church and he needed to allow her to do so. Then Palmer describes a cultivated, fascinating woman, much sought out by worldly company for her conversation, who becomes religious and brings her eloquence to the church—and who is silenced. Christian men who permit such waste must answer to Jesus!

In Chapter 17, Palmer directs her Holiness theology toward the topic of how to acquire the gifts of the Holy Spirit. You must demand these gifts now, she says—it is a matter of your will, and your willingness to make any sacrifice. Then the power will come, as she illustrates with some brief examples. In Chapter 18, she tells the story of a husband and wife who opposed women's preaching until the woman was required by the Holy Spirit to open her mouth. Chapters 19, 20, and 21 conclude the book by discussing two women and a male minister who became convincing preachers once they followed Palmer's path to entire sanctification.

### *Selected Bibliography*

*The Promise of the Father* (1859) is available in a Garland reprint (1985), the source of our excerpt. Thomas Oden reprints the entire text of *Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord* (1859), our source for this work, along with a wide selection of Palmer's other writings, including poems, diaries and journals, religious tracts, and more, in *Phoebe Palmer: Selected Writings* (1988). Oden's introduction is especially helpful for understanding Palmer's place in Protestant theology. The complete text of Mary Bosanquet's letter to John Wesley regarding women's preaching (1771) can be found in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, volume IV (ed. Rupert Davies, A. Raymond George, and Gordon Rupp, 1988). Jarena Lee's autobiography (1836) is reprinted in *Sisters of the Spirit* (ed. William L. Andrews, 1986).

On the origins of Methodism in England and women's roles in the early days of the movement, see Earl K. Brown, *Women of Mr. Wesley's Methodism* (1983); and Paul Chilcote, *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of Early Methodism* (1991). Vicki Tolar Collins provides a helpful overview that focuses on British Methodist women's rhetoric in "Women's Voices and Women's Silences in the Tradition of Early Methodism" (in *Listening to Their Voices*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer, 1997).

A good survey of evangelical religion in antebellum America and its influence on the women's rights and abolition movements is Nancy Hardesty's *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (1984), which frequently refers not only to Palmer but also to Sarah Grimké (p. 1045) and Frances Willard (p. 1114). Focused specifically on the battle over women's public speaking is Barbara Brown Zikmund's "The Struggle for the Right to Preach" (in *Women and Religion in America, Volume I: The Nineteenth Century: A Documentary History*, ed. Rosemary Reuther and Rosemary Skinner Keller, 1981); Zikmund reprints excerpts from a number of arguments both pro and con. Melvin E. Dieter's history of the Holiness Movement, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century* (1980; second ed., revised and expanded, 1996), focuses on Phoebe Palmer's central contribution. The Holiness Movement as a training ground for Palmer and other women leaders and speak-

ers is analyzed by Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider-Dayton, and Donald W. Dayton in "Women in the Holiness Movement: Feminism in the Evangelical Tradition" (in *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Rosemary Reuther and Eleanor McLaughlin, 1979).

Harold E. Raser's *Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought* (1987) provides useful details on Palmer's public speaking, as well as a sketch of her life and religious views. Charles Edward White's biography of Palmer covers the major aspects of her career, as can be seen from its title: *The Beauty of Holiness: Phoebe Palmer as Theologian, Revivalist, Feminist, and Humanitarian* (1986). On Palmer's adaptation of nineteenth-century ideologies of female domesticity to permit her public activism, see Anne Loveland, "Domesticity and Religion in the Antebellum Period: The Career of Phoebe Palmer" (*The Historian* 39 [1977]: 455–71). Lucy Lind Hogan discusses some of Palmer's rhetorical strategies in "Negotiating Personhood, Womanhood, and Spiritual Equality: Phoebe Palmer's Defense of the Preaching of Women" (*American Transcendental Quarterly* 14 [September 2000]: 211–26).

## *The Promise of the Father*

### *Chapter I*

*Stand up for Jesus! All who lead his host,  
Crowned with the splendors of the Holy Ghost!  
Shrink from no foe, to no temptations yield,  
Urge on the triumphs of this glorious field—  
Stand up for Jesus.*

Do not be startled, dear reader. We do not intend to discuss the question of "Women's Rights" or of "Women's Preaching," technically so called. We leave this for those whose ability and tastes may better fit them for discussions of this sort. We believe woman has her legitimate sphere of action, which differs in most cases materially from that of man; and in this legitimate sphere she is both happy and useful. Yet we do not doubt that some reforms contemplated in recent movements may, in various respects, be decidedly advantageous. But we have never conceived that it would be subservient to the happiness, usefulness, or true dignity of woman, were she permitted to occupy a prominent part in legislative halls, or take a leading position in the orderings of church conventions. Ordinarily, these are not the circumstances where woman can best serve her generation according to the will of God. Yet facts show that it is in the order of God

that woman may occasionally be brought out of the ordinary sphere of action, and occupy in either church or state positions of high responsibility; and if, in the orderings of providence, it so occur, the God of providence will enable her to meet the emergency with becoming dignity, wisdom, and womanly grace.

Examples of modern and ancient days might be furnished of women who have been called to fill positions involving large responsibilities, both civil and ecclesiastical. It was thus that Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was called to judge Israel—not because there were no men in Israel who might fill the position, but because God, in his wisdom, had so ordained; and it was also by the direction of Providence she was compelled to take the lead in the orderings of the battle—not because there were not men in Israel to do this, for she sent and called Barak, who might, as captain of the host, have led forth the people to conquest, but his faith and courage were insufficient to lead out Israel. Her disinterested, womanly heart would have given Barak the honor of the conquest, but he was faint-hearted; and the holy zeal of this mother in Israel nerved her for the conflict, and, with a faith and courage outbraving every difficulty, she led forth the armies of God to glorious conquest. Yet who

talked of Deborah as overstepping the bounds of womanly propriety, in either judging Israel, or in leading forth the armies of the living God to victory? Whisperers might have said that, in using this gift of prophecy with which God had endued her, and in leading out Israel to conquest, she stepped beyond the sphere of woman, and weakened her influence; and thus, perhaps, the Merozites were hindered from coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and brought down the curse of the God of battles on themselves. But whether there were such whisperers is not recorded; and if so, in fact, their names are written in the dust, while the name of this ancient prophetess, who led Israel forth to victory, stands recorded in the Book of eternal remembrance.

And when Josiah the King of Israel and his officers of state saw, from the reading of a book found in the house of the Lord, that great wrath was impending, they did not go to Huldah the prophetess for advice, because there was not a male prophet who might have been consulted; for it was in the days of Jeremiah the prophet, that this official deputation went from the king to Huldah. And when, in the order of God, woman has from time to time been called to sustain positions of momentous trust, involving the destinies of her country, facts show that she has not been wanting in ability to meet the demands of her station in such a manner, as to command the respect of her constituents or the homage of her subjects. Look at Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, the reigning sovereign of the most mighty, intelligent people of this or any other age. Who questions her ability for her station, and talks of her as having transcended the bounds set by public opinion of the sphere of woman?

And is it in religion alone that woman is prone to overstep the bounds of propriety, when the impelling of her Heaven-baptized soul would lead her to come out from the cloister, and take positions of usefulness for God? Whence has the idea obtained that she may not even open her lips for God in the assembly of the pious, without being looked upon repulsively, as though she were unwomanly in her aims and predilections?

And where is the beloved female disciple of any denomination, truly baptized of the Holy Ghost, but feels the Spirit's urgings to open her

mouth for God? We do not now speak of that cold, worldly conformed professor, who has never, in obedience to the command of the Saviour, tarried at Jerusalem, as did Mary and the other women, on the day of Pentecost. We speak of that consistently pious, earnest, Christian woman, whose every-day life is an ever-speaking testimony of an indwelling Saviour, and on whose head the tongue of fire has descended. And it is of the power of an ever-present Jesus that the Spirit would have her testify; but the seal of silence has been placed on her lips. And who has placed the seal of silence on those Heaven-touched lips? Who would restrain the lips of those whom God has endued with the gift of utterance, when those lips would fain abundantly utter the memory of God's great goodness? Not worldly opinions or usages, for these reprove. Think of a refined social gathering of worldlings, to which invitations have been extended to ladies with the expectation that the seal of silence would be imposed! No, it is not the world that forbids; for due consideration will constrain us to acknowledge that in this regard "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Who is it then that forbids that woman should open her mouth in either prayer or speaking in the assemblies of the saints?

And here we come to the point, and are forced to an answer to which in the name of the Head of the church we claim a rejoinder. Our answer is this: The Christian churches of the present day, with but few exceptions, have imposed silence on Christian woman, so that her voice may but seldom be heard in Christian assemblies. And why do the churches impose it? The answer comes from a thousand lips, and from every point. The Head of the church forbids it, and the churches only join in the authoritative prohibition, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." And here we come fairly at the question. If the Head of the church forbids it, this settles the question beyond all controversy.

But if Paul's prohibition, "Let your women keep silence in the churches," is to be carried out to the letter in relation to the prophesying of women,—that is, her speaking "to edification, exhortation, and comfort,"—regardless of explanatory connections and contradictory passages,

how is she positioned by the church?

why should it not be carried out to the letter in other respects? If the apostle intended to enjoin silence in an absolute sense, then our Episcopalian friends trespass against this prohibition at every church service, in calling out the responses of women in company with the men in their beautiful Church Liturgy, and when they repeat our Lord's Prayer in concert with their brethren. And thus also do they trespass against this prohibition every time they break silence and unite in holy song in the church of God of any or every denomination. And in fact, we doubt not but it were less displeasing to the Head of the church that his female disciples were forbidden to open their lips in singing, or in church responses, than that they should be forbidden to open their lips in fulfilment of the "Promise of the Father," when the spirit of prophecy has been poured out upon them, moving them to well nigh irrepressible utterances of God's great goodness.

Under what circumstances was this prohibition given? Was it not by way of reproofing some unseemly practices which had been introduced into the Corinthian church, and which, in fact, seem to have been peculiar to that church, for it is in connection with this and kindred disorders which had been introduced among the Corinthian believers, in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, that Paul says, "We have no such custom, *neither the churches of God;*" that is, the other churches of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. Surely it is evident that the irregularities here complained of were peculiar to the church of Corinth, and in fact, we may presume, were not even applicable to other Christian churches of Paul's day, much less Christian churches of the present day, as no such disorders exist. The irregularity complained of was not the prophesying of women, for this the apostle admits, and directs how the women shall appear when engaged in the duty of praying or prophesying. But the prohibition was evidently in view of restraining women, from taking part in those disorderly debates, which were not unusual in the religious worship of those days. In the Jewish synagogues it was a matter of ordinary occurrence for persons to interrupt the speaker by introducing questionings, which frequently resulted in angry altercations. This prac-

tice had now, we have reason to infer, been introduced into the Corinthian Christian assemblies, and women—doubtless devoid of spirituality—were disposed to take part in these debates. This unseemly practice the apostle reproofs, and says, "Let your women keep silence," &c. Any one who will carefully look at this subject, with its connections, will observe that it was in reference to this reprehensible practice, which had obtained in the Corinthian church, that Paul enjoins silence, and not in reference to the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which, in connection with this subject, he so plainly admits. Otherwise the apostle's teachings were obviously contradictory. But a careful review of the subject in connection with the well-known usages of that day, will relieve it of all difficulty, and show that Paul had these questionings in view and not the ordinary speaking of women in prophesying; for says he, "If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home."

But Paul also says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man." It will be found by an examination of this text with its connections, that the sort of teaching here alluded to, stands in necessary connection with usurping authority. As though the apostle had said, The gospel does not alter the relation of woman in view of priority. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And though the condition of woman is improved, and her privileges enlarged, yet she is not raised to a position of superiority, where she may usurp authority, and teach dictatorially, for the law still remains as at the beginning. It is an unalterable law of nature. Adam was first formed, then Eve, and all the daughters of Adam must acknowledge man first in creation, long as time endures.

But the sort of teaching to which the apostle here alludes, in connection with usurping authority, cannot be of the sort to which he refers, 1 Cor. xiv. Here Paul admits the prophesying of women in public assemblies, and of course could have had no intention, in his Epistle to Timothy, to forbid that sort of teaching, which stood in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which arose from the immediate impulses of the Holy Ghost, and which is rendered abundantly plain by another passage in his Epistle to the

Corinthians, in which he notices the public prophesying of females, and gives particular directions respecting their conduct and appearance, while engaged in that sacred duty. "Every man *praying or prophesying*, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head." That this passage, as well as the fourteenth chapter of the same Epistle, particularly relates to the conduct of the Corinthian Christians in their assemblies for worship, and can have no special bearing on the present day, is obvious, and is allowed by eminent commentators, and is indeed evident from the whole tenor of the advice which is here given. The apostle therefore recognizes the public prophesying of females.

With respect to the prophesying to which the apostle here alludes, as exercised by both men and women in the churches of the saints, he defines its nature. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 3.) The reader will see that it was directed to the "edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers," and the result anticipated was the conviction of unbelievers and unlearned persons. "Such," says the author of an excellent work, "were the public services of women which the apostle allowed, and such was the ministry of females predicted by the prophet Joel, and described as a *leading* feature under the gospel dispensation. Women who speak in assemblies for worship under the influence of the Holy Spirit assume thereby no *personal authority* over others. They are instruments through which divine instruction is communicated to the people."

It may be conceived by some that the devoted Christian female, who is willing thus to be led by the Spirit into paths of usefulness, may lose, in some degree, those lovely and becoming traits of character, which we admire in the female sex. As far as our observations have aided us, the effect has been diametrically opposite. Religion does not despoil woman of her refined sensibilities, but only turns them into a finer mould, and brings out to the charmed beholder every thing that is pure, lovely, and of good report. Says the late Mr. Gurney, a minister in the Society of Friends, "We well know that there are no women among us more generally distinguished for modesty,

gentleness, order, and a right submission to their brethren, than those who have been called by their divine Master into the exercise of the Christian ministry." And who finds fault with the ministry of woman as practised among the society of Friends? We imagine few are so fastidious.

But says one, Is the proclamation of the gospel, as dispensed by women among the people called Friends, of such manifest utility as to warrant the belief of a divine call to this work? Says a theological writer, in treating on this subject, "There is, however, in some sections of the Christian church, a recognition of the full and free agency and operation of the Holy Spirit which divideth to every man severally as he will, and a thankful acceptance of that great gospel truth, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female,' but 'they are all one in Christ Jesus.'" Among such the preaching of women has been acknowledged to be a special gift from Christ, who only has a right to appoint, and who alone can qualify his ministers effectually to publish the glad tidings through him. And so effectually have these glad tidings been proclaimed by females that many have been through their instrumentality converted from the error of their way, and brought from darkness to light; many hungry and thirsty souls have been refreshed and strengthened, and many living members of the church edified together. Can we believe that the Holy Spirit is *now* more limited in its manifestations and in its requirements than when by his inspirations Miriam prophesied and sang the praise of Jehovah?"

Says the devoted philanthropist, Miss Bosanquet, afterwards the wife of the distinguished Vicar of Madely, Rev. J. Fletcher, who felt herself called to proclaim the power of saving grace to others, "Some think it inconsistent with that modesty the Christian religion requires in women professing godliness. Now, I do not apprehend Mary could in the least be accused of immodesty when she carried the joyful news of her Lord's resurrection, and in that sense taught the teachers of mankind. Neither was the woman of Samaria to be accused of immodesty when she invited the whole city to come to Christ. Neither do I think the woman mentioned in 2 Sam. xx. could be said to sin against modesty, though she called to

the general of the opposing army to converse with her, and then went to all the people to give them her advice, and by it the city was saved. Neither do I suppose Deborah did wrong in publicly declaring the message of the Lord, and afterwards accompanying Barak to war because his hands hung down at going without her. But says the objector, All these were extraordinary calls; sure you will not say yours is an extraordinary call? If I did not believe so, I would not act in an extraordinary manner. I praise God, I feel him near, and prove his faithfulness every day."

That Christ was successfully preached to the Samaritans through the instrumentality of a woman is manifest, John iv. 39. "Many of the Samaritans believed on him for the saying of the woman." This woman was the first apostle for Christ in Samaria. She went and told her fellow-citizens that the Messiah was come, and gave for proof that he had told her the most secret things she had ever done.

But Providence, under ordinary circumstances, assigns woman a sphere of action both suited to her predilections and her physical and mental structure. Indeed, can we conceive of a work more important than that which in the general orderings of Providence falls to woman? "The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother," said the sagacious Napoleon. The training of the human mind irrespective of sex, as it comes forth fresh from the hand of the Dispenser of life, is, for the most part, committed to woman. What a high and holy trust! It were difficult to give a just presentation of the magnitude of this work. Immortal minds are to be trained for immortality and eternal life; and all the minutiae of future life, whether for

good or evil, are to show the result of these early trainings. And to all eternity, as millions on millions of ages pass away, the result of those early motherly trainings will influence largely the destiny of that deathless spirit. Not only will the women of this age have to do with the women of the future age, but, as the men of the future age will have had their early training mostly from the women of the present age, how greatly have women to do with the destinies of the moral and religious world! Wonderful indeed is the work to which woman has been called in the social relation. Says Mrs. Hale, "But with the privileges we must take the position of women; leave the work of the world and its reward, the government thereof, to men; our task is to fit them for their office, and inspire them to perform it in righteousness."

It is not our aim in this work to suggest, in behalf of woman, a change in the social or domestic relation. We are not disposed to feel that she is burdened with wrong in this direction. But we feel that there is a wrong, a serious wrong, affecting cruelly in its influences, which has long been depressing the hearts of the most devotedly pious women. And this wrong is inflicted by pious men, many of whom, we presume, imagine that they are doing God service in putting a seal upon lips which God has commanded to speak.

It is not our intention to chide those who have thus kept the Christian female in bondage, as we believe in ignorance they have done it. But we feel that the time has now come when ignorance will involve guilt; and the Head of the church imperatively demands a consideration of the question proposed in the following pages.

*this view not so much in line w/ Grimké's it seems*

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# Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord

## I. FEMALE PROPHESYING; OR, DAUGHTERS OF THE LORD ALMIGHTY

When the founder of our holy Christianity was about leaving his disciples to ascend to his Father, he commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power from on high.<sup>1</sup> And of whom was this company of disciples composed? Please turn to the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We see the number assembled in that upper room was about one hundred and twenty.<sup>2</sup> Here were Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.<sup>3</sup> "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."<sup>4</sup>

Let us observe that here were both male and female disciples, continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication, in obedience to the command of their risen Lord: they are all here waiting for the promise of the Father.<sup>5</sup>

And did all these waiting disciples, who thus with one accord continued in prayer, receive the grace for which they supplicated? It was the gift of the Holy Ghost that had been promised. And was this promise of the Father as truly made to the daughters of the Lord Almighty as to his sons?—See Joel ii. 28, 29. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit."<sup>6</sup> When the

Spirit was poured out in answer to the united prayers of God's sons and daughters, did the tongue of fire descend alike upon the women as upon the men? How emphatic is the answer to this question.

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon *each of them*."<sup>7</sup> Was the effect similar upon God's daughters as upon his sons? Mark it: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak as the Spirit gave utterance."<sup>8</sup> Doubtless it was a well-nigh impelling power which was thus poured out upon these sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, moving their lips to most earnest, persuasive, convincing utterances. Not alone did Peter proclaim a crucified, risen Saviour, but each one, as the Spirit gave utterance, assisted in spreading the good news; and the result of these united ministrations of the Spirit, through human agency, was that three thousand were in one day pricked to the heart. Unquestionably, the whole of this newly baptized company of one hundred and twenty disciples, male and female, hastened in every direction, under the mighty constrainings of that perfect love that casteth out fear;<sup>9</sup> and great was the company of them that believed.<sup>10</sup>

And now, in the name of the Head of the Church, let us ask, Was it designed that these demonstrations of power should cease with the day of Pentecost? If the Spirit of prophecy fell upon God's daughters alike as upon his sons in that day, and they spake in the midst of that assembled multitude as the Spirit gave utterance, on what authority do the angels of the churches<sup>11</sup> restrain the use of that gift now? Who can tell

Edited by Thomas Oden.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Luke 24:49. [T. O.]

<sup>2</sup>Acts 1:15. [T. O.]

<sup>3</sup>Acts 1:13. [T. O.]

<sup>4</sup>Acts 1:14. [T. O.]

<sup>5</sup>Acts 1:4. [T. O.]

<sup>6</sup>For an analysis of Phoebe Palmer's understanding of the prophetic role of women, see Nancy Hardesty, "Minister as Prophet? Or as Mother?" in *Women in New Worlds*, ed. Hilar

F. Thomas and Rosemary Skinner Keller, vol. 1 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), 88–101. [T. O.]

<sup>7</sup>Acts 2:3. [T. O.]

<sup>8</sup>Acts 2:4, *her emphasis*. [T. O.]

<sup>9</sup>Cf. 1 John 4:18. [T. O.]

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Acts 11:21. [T. O.]

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, etc.; Mrs. Palmer refers elsewhere to church pastors as "angels of the churches," i.e., "ministering spirits" within the church. [T. O.]

how wonderful the achievements of the cross might have been, if this gift of prophecy in woman had continued in use as in apostolic days? Who can tell but long since the gospel might have been preached to every creature?<sup>12</sup>

Evidently this was a specialty of the last days, as set forth by the prophecy of Joel. Under the old dispensation,<sup>13</sup> though there was a Miriam,<sup>14</sup> a Deborah,<sup>15</sup> a Huldah,<sup>16</sup> and an Anna,<sup>17</sup> who were prophetesses, the special outpouring of the Spirit upon God's daughters, as upon his sons, seems to have been reserved as a characteristic of the last days. "This," says Peter, as the wondering multitude beheld the extraordinary endowment of the Spirit falling alike on all the disciples,— "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And also upon my servants and upon my handmaidens will I pour out my Spirit.'"<sup>18</sup>

And this gift of prophecy, bestowed upon all, was continued and recognized in all the early ages of Christianity. The ministry of the word was not confined to the apostles. When, by the cruel persecutions of Saul, all the infant church were driven away from Jerusalem, except the apostles, these scattered men and women of the laity "went everywhere preaching the word;"<sup>19</sup> "that is, proclaiming a crucified, risen Saviour."<sup>20</sup> And the effect was that the enemies of the cross, by scattering these men and women who had been saved by its virtues, were made subservient to the yet more extensive proclamation of saving grace.

Impelled by the indwelling power within, these Spirit-baptized men and women, driven by the fury of the enemy in cruel haste from place to place, made all their scatterings the occasion of preaching the gospel everywhere;<sup>21</sup> and believers

were everywhere multiplied; and daily were there added to the church such as should be saved.<sup>22</sup>

Justin Martyr, who lived till about A.D. 150, says, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, "that both women and men were seen among them, who had the gifts of the Spirit of God,"<sup>23</sup> according as Joel the prophet had foretold, by which he endeavored to convince the Jew that the latter days were come; for by that expression Mannasah Ben Israel tells us all their wise men understood the times of Messias."<sup>24</sup>

Dodwell,<sup>25</sup> in his dissertations on Irenaeus, says, "that the extraordinary gift of the spirit of prophecy was given to others besides the apostles; and that not only in the first and second, but in the third century, even to the time of Constantine, men of all sorts and ranks had their gifts; yea, and women too."<sup>26</sup> Therefore we may certainly conclude that the prophetic saying of the Psalmist, lxxiii. 11, was verified: "The Lord gave the word, and great was the company of those that published it." In the original Hebrew, it is, "Great was the company of women publishers, or women evangelists." Grotius explains, Ps. lxxiii. 11, "*Dominus dabat sermonem, id est, materiam loquendi uberem, nempe ut feminarium praedicantium (victorias) multum agmen diceret, scilicet, eaequae sequuntur.*"—"The Lord gave the word, that is, plentiful matter of speaking, so that he would call those which follow the great army of preaching women, viz., victories, or female conquerors."<sup>27</sup>

The Hebrew scholar, Rev. J. Benson, in his voluminous and deeply spiritual commentary,

<sup>12</sup>Acts 2:47, her emphasis. [T. O.]

<sup>13</sup>Dialogue with Trypho, ch. 88, ANF, 1, 243. [T. O.]

<sup>14</sup>The last of this quotation, beginning with "according as Joel," is a paraphrase. [T. O.]

<sup>15</sup>It may seem remarkable that she was apparently reading in Latin the works of Henry Dodwell (1641–1711), prolific, nonjuring Anglican theologian of Oxford. For neither Dodwell nor the following quotation from Grotius were available to her in English translation. It should not be surprising, however, that a young woman well brought up in a pious New York environment should read some Latin. [T. O.]

<sup>16</sup>Dodwell, *Dissertationes in Irenaeum* (Oxford: Sheldon Theatre, 1689). [T. O.]

<sup>17</sup>Hugo Grotius, *Annotaciones in Vetus et Novum Testamentum* (London: Jos. Smith, 1727), vol. 1, 214. [T. O.]

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Mark 16:15. [T. O.]

<sup>19</sup>i.e., the Old Testament, the dispensation of law prior to grace, wherein women received the Spirit's gifts. [T. O.]

<sup>20</sup>Exod. 15:20. [T. O.]

<sup>21</sup>Judg. 4:4. [T. O.]

<sup>22</sup>2 Kings 22:14. [T. O.]

<sup>23</sup>Luke 2:36. [T. O.]

<sup>24</sup>Acts 2:16–17. [T. O.]

<sup>25</sup>Cf. Acts 8:1 and 4, her emphasis. [T. O.]

<sup>26</sup>Quotation marks inaccurately placed in text. Cf. Acts 2:23, 36, 4:10. [T. O.]

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Mark 16:20. [T. O.]

says the clause here given, "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of those that published it," literally translated, is, "*Large* was the number of women who published the glad tidings."<sup>28</sup> The eminent linguist, Dr. Adam Clark, quotes the original text, and follows it with the literal reading, "*of the female preachers there was a great host.*"<sup>29</sup> And then, as though he anticipated the incredulity with which this literal rendering would be received, and resolved on relieving himself of the responsibility of a non-reception of it, he affirms, "Such is the literal translation of the passage," and leaves it with the reader to make the application, with the exclamation, "The reader may make of it what he pleases."<sup>30</sup>

But though this excellent commentator suggests that the reader make what use of it he please, it certainly ought to be assumed that all sincere Christians, whether male or female, will in their Scripture searchings, make it their highest pleasure to ascertain the mind of the Spirit, adopting the Bible mode of interpreting the Scriptures by comparing Scripture with Scripture,<sup>31</sup> fearful that he may be compelled to the sustainment of some unpopular theory, is not in a state of mind to warrant the belief that he shall know of this or any other doctrine, whether it be of God.

Schaff's "History of Christ's Church"<sup>32</sup> says, "Woman, among the early Christians, had the fullest freedom in the house of worship; and the consequence was, not only that she added vastly to the success of Christianity in those times, but her own character was wonderfully elevated, and her genius developed, by this equality of right. It is said that Libanius, on seeing the mother of St. Chrysostom, a most noble woman, exclaimed, 'What women these Christians have!'"<sup>33</sup>

Eusebius speaks of Potominia Ammias, a

<sup>28</sup>Joseph Benson, *The Holy Bible with Notes* (New York: Harper, 1823), vol. 2, 795. [T. O.]

<sup>29</sup>Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible with A Commentary and Critical Notes* (New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1829), vol. 3, 218. [T. O.]

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 218. [T. O.]

<sup>31</sup>Cf. Adam Clarke, *Christian Theology* (Salem, Ohio: Schmul, 1967), 47-63. [T. O.]

<sup>32</sup>Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*. [T. O.]

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 1886 edition, revised from 1867, vol. 3, p. 934. [T. O.]

prophetess in Philadelphia, and others, who were equally distinguished by their zeal for the love which they bore to Jesus Christ.<sup>34</sup>

Chrysostom and Theophylact take great notice of Junia, mentioned in the apostle's salutations. In our translation (Rom. xvi. 7), it is, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles." By the word *kinsmen*, one would take Junia not to have been a woman, but a man.<sup>35</sup> But Chrysostom and Theophylact were both Greeks; consequently, they knew their mother-tongue better than our translators, and they say it was a woman: it should therefore have been translated, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsfolk."<sup>36</sup> The apostle salutes other *women* who were of note among them, particularly Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labored in the Lord,<sup>37</sup> and Persis, who labored much in the Lord.<sup>38</sup>

We could refer to many women who in the apostolic age used this gift to the edification of the Church, particularly Phebe,<sup>39</sup> the *servant of the Church*, or deaconess, as the Greek word signifies, of the *church at Cenchroea*.<sup>40</sup> Deaconesses were ordained to the office by the imposition of the hands of the bishop. Theodorus says, "The fame of Phebe was spread throughout the world, and she was known, not only to the Greeks

<sup>34</sup>Eusebius, *Church History*, v. 17, *NPNF*, 2, 1, p. 234. [T. O.]

<sup>35</sup>Modern advocates of gender equity in language may be amazed that such a point was being made in the middle of the nineteenth century. The implication is that the word *kinsman* is tilted in the direction of reference to males. Phoebe Palmer wished to see such language shift toward greater equity and accuracy, hence, *kinsfolk*. The point is not a petty one. For she is trying to demonstrate that women were named by Paul as "among the apostles." She was willing to use ancient Greek authorities to make her linguistic point. [T. O.]

<sup>36</sup>John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Romans*, XXXI, *NPNF*, 1st series, XI, pp. 554, 555. Cf. Theophylact or Theophylactus of Bulgaria, Archbishop of Okhrid, fl. 1078, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos*, J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Paris: Migne, 1857-66, vol. 124 (1864), 551 (it is not likely that an English translation of Theophylact was available to Mrs. Palmer, though private translations could have been available). [T. O.]

<sup>37</sup>Cf. Rom. 16:12. [T. O.]

<sup>38</sup>Cf. Rom. 16:12. [T. O.]

<sup>39</sup>Sic: Phoebe. [T. O.]

<sup>40</sup>Cf. Rom. 16:1-2. [T. O.]

wow!  
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like 'don't  
blame me!

and Romans, but also to the barbarians";<sup>41</sup> which implies that she travelled much, and propagated the gospel in foreign countries.<sup>42</sup> "It is reasonable to suppose, in view of her being a succor of many," says the Rev. Mr. Benson, "that this acknowledged servant of the Church was a person of considerable wealth and influence; or we may suppose the appellation, 'servant of the Church,' was given her on account of the offices she performed as a deaconess."<sup>43</sup> Says another able divine on this subject, "There were deaconesses in the primitive Church; and it is evident that they were ordained to this office by the imposition of the hands of the bishop; and the form of prayer used on the occasion is still extant in the apostolic constitution."]<sup>44</sup> And this order was continued for several centuries in the Church, until the reign of the man of sin commenced.

The Christian churches of the present day, with but few exceptions, have imposed silence on Christian woman, so that her voice may but sel-

<sup>41</sup>Should be Theodoret, *Interpretatio Epistolae ad Romanos*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* (Series Graeca), ed. J. Migne (Paris: 1859), vols. 82, 218, 219. [T. O.]

<sup>42</sup>Cf. Eric Berne, *What Do You Say After You Say Hello?* (New York: Grove, 1972), argues that person's names are crucial factors in "scripting." Could Phoebe's name have affected her sense of calling to diaconal service? She too "travelled much" and "propagated the gospel in foreign countries." [T. O.]

<sup>43</sup>Joseph Benson, *HBN*, V., p. 359 (somewhat paraphrased by Mrs. Palmer). Cf. Benson, V, pp. 120-21: "We may suppose the name was given her on account of the office she performed to many as a deaconess." [T. O.]

<sup>44</sup>The quote is from Adam Clarke, *The New Testament With a Commentary and Critical Notes*, (HBC) (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1851), vol. 6, 161, but it ends with "apostolic constitution" (quote not closed in text; cf. *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII. 19-20, *ANF*, VII, p. 492). Clarke goes on to say that the office of deaconess continued in the Latin church until the 10th or 11th century, and to the end of the 12th century in the Greek church. The following sentence, apparently, is Mrs. Palmer's own. It remains puzzling as to whether some historical figure such as Constantine was implied in her reference to the "man of sin," or whether simply the Devil. It would not be unusual for a Protestant reference of this period to refer in this way to Constantine or more generally of the period of papal hegemony, but that could not have been consistently asserted if Mrs. Palmer had fully accredited what followed in Clarke's commentary. Paul Bassett suggests that the "man of sin" might have reference to Gregory VII (Hildebrand, c. 1023-85). [T. O.]

dom be heard in Christian assemblies. And why do the churches impose it? The answer comes from a thousand lips, and from every point, "The Head of the Church forbids it, and the churches only join in the authoritative prohibition, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches.'"<sup>45</sup> And here we come fairly at the question: If the Head of the Church forbids it, this settles the question beyond all controversy.

But under what circumstances was this prohibition given? Was it not by way of reproofing some unseemly practices which had been introduced into the Corinthian Church, and which in fact seem to have been peculiar to that church? for it is in connection with this and kindred disorders which had been introduced among the Corinthian believers, in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, that Paul says, "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God"; that is, the other churches of God over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer. It is evident that the irregularities here complained of were peculiar to the church of Corinth; and, in fact, not even applicable to other Christian churches of Paul's day, much less Christian churches of the present day, as no such disorders exist. The irregularity complained of was not the prophesying of women; for this the apostle admits, and directs how the women shall appear when engaged in the duty of praying or prophesying. The prohibition was evidently in view of restraining women from taking part in those disorderly debates which were not unusual in the religious worship of those days. In the Jewish synagogue, it was a matter of ordinary occurrence for persons to interrupt the speaker by introducing questionings which frequently resulted in angry altercations.<sup>46</sup> It was in reference to this

<sup>45</sup>1 Cor. 14:34. [T. O.]

<sup>46</sup>Paul's argument reconstructed: In urging women to "remain silent in the churches," (1 Cor. 1:34), Paul is reproofing a particular unseemly practice found at Corinth: that of interrupting the speaker, and of disorderly debates. Mrs. Palmer argues that this practice was peculiar to the Church of Corinth, and not found elsewhere, hence inapplicable elsewhere, unless that abuse should appear. It is in relation to the usurpation of authority that Paul enjoins silence, not generally of women who are not usurping authority. It could not apply to the prophesying of women, which he elsewhere commends. [T. O.]

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reprehensible practice that Paul enjoins silence, and not in reference to the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which, in connection with this subject, he so plainly admits. Otherwise the apostle's teachings were obviously contradictory.

But if Paul's prohibition, "Let your women keep silence in the churches," is to be carried out to the letter in relation to the prophesying of women,—that is, her speaking "to edification, exhortation, and comfort,"<sup>47</sup>—regardless of explanatory connections and contradictory passages, why should it not be carried out to the letter in other respects? If the apostle intended to enjoin silence in an absolute sense, then our Episcopalian friends trespass against this prohibition at every church service, in calling out the responses of women in company with the men, in the Liturgy, and when they repeat our Lord's Prayer in concert with their brethren. And thus also do they trespass against this prohibition every time they break silence and unite in holy song in the church of God of any or every denomination. And in fact we doubt not but it were less displeasing to the Head of the Church that his female disciples were forbidden to open their lips in singing, or in church responses, than that they should be forbidden to open their lips when the spirit of prophecy has been poured out upon them, moving them to well-nigh irrepressible utterances.

But Paul also says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man."<sup>48</sup> It will be found by an examination of this text, with its connections, that the sort of teaching here alluded to stands in connection with usurping authority. As though the apostle had said, "The gospel does not alter the relation of women in view of priority. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And though the condition of woman is improved, and her privileges enlarged, yet she is not raised to a position of superiority, where she may usurp authority, and teach dictatorially, for the law still remains as at the beginning."

But the sort of teaching to which the apostle here alludes, in connection with usurping authority, cannot be the same to which he refers, I Cor.

xiv. Here Paul admits the prophesying of women in public assemblies,<sup>49</sup> and, of course, could have had no intention in his Epistle to Timothy to forbid that sort of teaching which stood in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which arose from the immediate impulses of the Holy Ghost, and which is rendered abundantly plain by another passage in his Epistle to the Corinthians, in which he notices the public prophesying of females, and gives particular directions respecting their conduct and appearance while engaged in that sacred duty. "Every man *praying or prophesying*, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head."<sup>50</sup>

With respect to the prophesying to which the apostle here alludes, as exercised by both men and women in the churches of the saints, he defines its nature (see I Cor. xiv. 3). The reader will see that it was directed to the "edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers"; and the result anticipated was the conviction of unbelievers and unlearned persons. "Such," says the author of an excellent work, "were the public services of women which the apostle allowed; and such was the ministry of females predicted by the prophet Joel, and described as a *leading* feature under the gospel dispensation. Women who speak in assemblies for worship, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, assume thereby no *personal authority* over others. They are instruments through which divine instruction is communicated to the people."<sup>51</sup> *clear more!*

But by whom has the exercise of the gift of prophesy in woman been most seriously resisted? Has not the use of this endowment of power been withstood mainly by those<sup>52</sup> whose lips should keep knowledge? Have not the people who have sought to know the law on this important topic been met with the dissuasive teachings, as though

<sup>47</sup>The distinction between exercising the gift of prophecy and usurpation of authority is the critical one for Paul, as viewed by Mrs. Palmer. The former he approves, the latter he rejects. [T. O.]

<sup>49</sup>I Cor. 11:4-5. [T. O.]

<sup>51</sup>Cf. Clarke, *NT Commentary*, vol. VI, p. 250, on I Cor. 11:5. [T. O.]

<sup>52</sup>Clergy. [T. O.]

social networks  
legends

God's ancient promise had not been fulfilled? We cannot resist the conviction that the restraining of the gift of prophecy as given to woman in fulfillment of the promise of the Father involves far greater responsibilities than has been apprehended. The subject of which we treat stands in vital connection with the salvation of thousands; and if so, may we not anticipate that he, whose ceaseless aim is to withstand the work of human salvation in every variety of form, will, as an angel of light, withstand the reception of truth on this subject?

Again we repeat that it is our most solemn conviction that the use of a gift of power delegated to the Church as a specialty of the last days has been neglected,<sup>53</sup>—a gift which, if properly recognized, would have hastened the latter-day glory. We believe that tens of thousands more of the redeemed family would have been won over to the world's Redeemer if it had not been for the tardiness of the Church in acknowledging this gift. We believe it is through the workings of the Man of Sin, whose aim it is to withstand the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom on earth, that this deception has been accomplished. We believe that he who quoted Scripture to our Saviour has in all deceivableness quoted Scripture to pious men,—men who would not wickedly wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction,<sup>54</sup> but who, from a failure in not regarding the Scriptural mode of interpretation, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, have unwittingly followed the traditions of men, and have thereby been guilty of the egregious error of making the inspired teachings appear contradictory, and of withstanding the workings of the Holy Spirit in accordance with those teachings, in the hearts of thousands of the daughters of the Lord Almighty.

We believe that the attitude of the Church in relation to this matter is most grievous in the

<sup>53</sup>Recapitulating this crucial turn of argument: The gift of prophecy is commended by scripture to both males and females. This gift, when given to women, has been resisted by male clergy, whom one would expect most to welcome it. This is evidence of the power of sin. Those who, by quoting scripture, resist the prophesying of women are deceived by demonic reasoning. But in these last days amid a renewal of the reception of Pentecostal gifts, Mrs. Palmer thought, this gift too is being recovered [T. O.]

<sup>54</sup>Cf. 2 Pet. 3:16. [T. O.]

sight of her Lord, who has purchased the whole human family unto himself, and would fain have every possible agency employed in preaching the gospel to every creature. He whose name is Faithful and True<sup>55</sup> has fulfilled his ancient promise, and poured out his Spirit as truly upon his daughters as upon his sons.

God has, in all ages of the Church, called some of his handmaids to eminent publicity and usefulness; and when the residue of the Spirit is poured out, and the millennium glory ushered in, the prophecy of Joel being fully accomplished in all its glory, then, probably, there will be such a sweet blending into one spirit,—the spirit of faith, of love, and of a sound mind;<sup>56</sup> such a willingness to receive profit by any instrument; such a spirit of humility, in honor preferring one another,<sup>57</sup>—that the wonder will then be, that the exertions of pious females to bring souls to Christ should ever have been opposed or obstructed.

The earnestly pious of all denominations seem now disposed to recognize Wesley as having been greatly instrumental, under God, in the revival of primitive Christianity. To those acquainted with the history of the Church at the time this great reformer was raised up, we need not say that the reception of the full baptism of the Holy Ghost was but faintly, if at all, recognized as the privilege of the believer. But as soon as this primitive flame again revived, just so soon was this gift of power, anciently promised as a specialty of the last days, newly recognized. What a host of "laborers together in the gospel!"<sup>58</sup> were quickly raised up! And who that has read the correspondence and journal of Wesley but has marked his special recognition and appreciation of this endowment of power?<sup>59</sup> No more appreciatively did an ancient apostle regard "those

<sup>55</sup>Rev. 19:11. [T. O.]

<sup>56</sup>Cf. 2 Tim. 1:7. [T. O.]

<sup>57</sup>Cf. Rom. 12:10. [T. O.]

<sup>58</sup>1 Cor. 3:9 with 2 Thess. 3:2. [T. O.]

<sup>59</sup>There is indeed a significant body of literature on the special place of women in the Wesleyan tradition. For bibliography, see Kenneth E. Rowe, *Methodist Women: A Guide to the Literature* (Lake Junaluska, N.C.: United Methodist Commission on Archives and History, 1980); see Taft, *HW*; George Coles, *Heroines of Methodism* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1857); Jesse T. Peck, *True Woman* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1857); Abel Stevens, *The Women of Methodism*

women that labored with him in the gospel"<sup>60</sup> than did this modern apostle and his coadjutors.

A recognition of the full baptism of the Holy Ghost as a grace to be experienced and enjoyed in the present life was the distinguishing doctrine of Methodism.<sup>61</sup> And who can doubt but it was this speciality that again brought out a host of Spirit-baptized laborers, as in the apostolic days? And the satisfaction with which this apostolic man recognized and encouraged the use of this endowment of power is everywhere observable throughout his writings.<sup>62</sup> Says one, "Mr. Wesley pressed into the service of religion all the useful gifts he could influence." He well knew that in the ratio in which the devoted female, or any other instrumentalities, were calculated to be useful, to just that degree would the grand adversary raise up opposing agencies to withstand.

To his friend Miss Briggs, he writes, "*undoubtedly* both you and Philothea, and my dear Miss Perronet, are now more particularly called to speak for God. In so doing, you must expect to meet with many things which are not pleasing to flesh and blood; but all is well: so much more

will you be conformed to the death of Christ.<sup>63</sup> Go in his name and in the power of his might.<sup>64</sup> Suffer and conquer all things.<sup>65</sup> Over a century has rolled away, and still we may thankfully record that this ancient flame, though not cherished as it might have been, has not died out."<sup>66</sup>

Mr. Wesley, in his journal thus introduces the name of one of his female helpers, Miss Sarah Mallett, afterwards Mrs. Boyce: "I was strongly importuned by our friends at Long Stratton to give them a sermon. I had heard of a young woman there who had uncommon fits, and of one that lately preached; but I did not know that it was one and the same person. I found her in the house to which I went, and talked with her at large. I was surprised. Of the following relation which she gave me, there are numberless witnesses.

"Some years since it was strongly impressed upon her mind that she ought to call sinners to repentance. This impression she vehemently resisted, believing herself quite unqualified, both by her sin and ignorance, till it was suggested, 'If you do it not willingly, you shall do it, whether you will or no.' She fell into a fit, and, while utterly senseless, thought she was in the preaching-house of Lowestoft, where she prayed and preached for nearly an hour to a numerous congregation. She then cried out, 'Lord, I will obey thee; I will call sinners to repentance!' She has done so occasionally from that time, and her fits returned no more."<sup>67</sup>

[<sup>68</sup>]Perhaps this was intended to satisfy her own mind that God had called her to publish salvation, in the name of Jesus, to perishing sinners, and to incline her to take up that cross which appears to have been more painful to her than death itself; and also to convince others that *even now*

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(New York: Carlton and Porter, 1866); Gabriel P. Disosway, *Our Excellent Women of the Methodist Church in England and America* (New York: James Miller, 1873); Warren C. Black, *Christian Womanhood* (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1888); Alice Cook, *Women of the Warm Heart* (London: Epworth, 1952); Earl Kent Brown, "Standing in the Shadow: Women in Early Methodism," *Nexus* 17/2 (1974): 22-31, and "Women of Mr. Wesley's Methodism," *Studies in Women and Religion*, vol. 11 (New York: New York University, 1956); cf. biographies in *CBTEL*, *EWM*, *CM*. [T. O.]

<sup>60</sup>Cf. Phil. 4.3. [T. O.]

<sup>61</sup>By "full baptism of the Holy Ghost," she means sanctification as preached by the Wesleys. It would be inappropriate to read into this phrase post-Palmerian nuances, such as glossolalia, which she did not associate with it. [T. O.]

<sup>62</sup>It should be remembered that Wesley never made wide use of the phrase "baptism of the Holy Ghost," (nor did he identify that phrase with entire sanctification), or of the "endowment of power," and he never publically claimed to have attained what he called "entire sanctification" (preface to "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day of the Week" 1775, *WJW*, XIV, p. 272). Yet there is testimony in his works to his interest in those who had attained it, especially where he speaks of examining others who claimed to have received it. His preaching, a model for Mrs. Palmer's, strongly commended the gifts of the Spirit, to be received now, and by all. [T. O.]

<sup>63</sup>Cf. Phil. 3.10. [T. O.]

<sup>64</sup>Cf. Eph. 6.10. [T. O.]

<sup>65</sup>The quotation ending "conquer all things" is in a letter to Elizabeth Briggs, from Athlone, April 14, 1771 (*Letters*, vol. V, p. 237, Telford edition). The rest of the quotation does not appear in Telford. Endquotes misplaced. [T. O.]

<sup>66</sup>Endquotes misplaced (see above note). [T. O.]

<sup>67</sup>*Journal*, Mon., Dec. 4, 1786, ed. N. Curnock (London: Epworth Press, vol. VII, pp. 226-27). The quotation ends here. [T. O.]

<sup>68</sup>This paragraph was erroneously included within quotation marks. It is written by Mrs. Palmer, not Wesley. [T. O.]

I think we see a greater employment of irony here (of the type described by Whiteley)

God hath poured out his Spirit upon his handmaids and upon his daughters,<sup>69</sup> that they may prophesy or preach in his name the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The author of "The Heroines of Methodism," says, "Probably the experience of this young woman, and the wonderful dealings of the Lord with her, greatly helped to enlarge the views of John Wesley upon the subject of female preaching. It is very evident, from his letters and conduct towards her, that he believed her, as a preacher, to be doing what the Lord required at her hands."<sup>70</sup>

Says Miss Mallett, "At thirteen, I became member of the Methodist Society, and the Lord made known to me what he would have me do. But oh, how unfit did I see myself to be! From that time, the word of God was an unsealed book: it was my companion day and night. My love to God and souls increased. I have been often led to cry out, in the bitterness of my soul, 'O Lord! I am but a child, I cannot preach thy word';<sup>71</sup> but the more deeply was it impressed on my mind, 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel,'<sup>72</sup> till my distress of soul destroyed my body.

"In my twentieth year, the Lord answered my prayer in a great affliction and made known to others, as well as to myself, the work he would have me do; and fitted me in the furnace for his use. From that time, I began my public work. Mr. Wesley was to me a father, and a faithful friend. I have not, nor do I seek, either ease or wealth or honor, but the glory of God and the good of souls; and, thank God, I have not run in vain,<sup>73</sup> nor labored in vain.<sup>74</sup> There are some witnesses in heaven, and some on earth. When I first began to travel, I followed Mr. Wesley's counsel, which was to let the voice of the people be to me the voice of God, and where I was sent for to go.<sup>75</sup> To this counsel I have attended to this day. But

<sup>69</sup>Cf. Joel 2:28. [T. O.]

<sup>70</sup>George Coles, *Heroines of Methodism* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1857), 291. [T. O.]

<sup>71</sup>Cf. Jer. 1:6. [T. O.]

<sup>72</sup>1 Cor. 9:16. [T. O.]

<sup>73</sup>Cf. Gal. 2:2. [T. O.]

<sup>74</sup>Cf. 1 Thess. 3:5. [T. O.]

<sup>75</sup>Mrs. Palmer frequently followed this advice herself. [T. O.]

the voice of the people was not the voice of some of the preachers. Mr. Wesley, however, soon made this easy, by sending me a note from the conference held at Manchester, 1787, by Mr. Joseph Harper, who was that year appointed for Norwich. The note was as follows: 'We give the right hand of fellowship to Sarah Mallett, and have no objection to her being a preacher in our connection, so long as she preaches the Methodist doctrine, and attends to our discipline.'<sup>76</sup>

We believe that hundreds of conscientious, sensitive Christian women have actually suffered more under the slowly crucifying process to which they have been subjected by men who bear the Christian name than many a martyr has endured in passing through the flames. We are aware that we are using strong language; but we do not use it in bitterness, but with feelings of deep humiliation before God that the cause of truth demands the utterance of such sentiments. We conscientiously believe, and therefore must speak.

Thousands are in this day enduring this crucifying process, perhaps as never before. God has given the word; and in this wonderful season of the outpouring of the Spirit, great might be the company who would publish it.<sup>77</sup> This, in a most emphatic sense, is the day of which the prophet spake, — when God would pour out his Spirit on his sons and daughters.<sup>78</sup> Though many men have in these last days received the baptism of fire, still greater, as in all revivals, has been the number of females.<sup>79</sup> These constitute a great

<sup>76</sup>More about Sarah Mallett is in Zachariah Taft's *Holy Women* (London: Kershaw, 1825), vol. 1, 79-90. Cf. Sarah Crosby, "The Grace of God Manifested in the Account of Mrs. Crosby of Leeds," ed. Elizabeth Richie Mortimore, *Arminian Magazine* 19 (1806): 418-73, 516-21, 563-68, 610-71; Hester Ann Rogers, *An Account of the Experience of Hester Ann Rogers* (New York: Bangs and Emory, 1828); John Lancaster, *The Life of Darcy, Lady Maxwell, of Pollock* (New York: Mason and Lane, 1837); Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, *Jesus Altogether Lovely: Or, a Letter to Some of the Single Women in the Methodist Society* (Bristol: n.p., 1766); Mary Barritt Taft, *Memoirs* (Ripon, England: John Stevens, 1827). [T. O.]

<sup>77</sup>Cf. Ps. 68:11. [T. O.]

<sup>78</sup>Cf. Joel 2:28-29. [T. O.]

<sup>79</sup>A monograph is needed on the relative number of women attending and influencing the holiness revivals of the mid-nineteenth century. [T. O.]

company, who would fain, as witnesses for Christ, publish the glad tidings of their own heart-experiences of his saving power, at least in the social assembly.<sup>80</sup>

And when the reception of the gift of prophecy is thus recognized in all the disciples of the Saviour, whether male or female, the last act in the drama of man's redemption will have opened.<sup>81</sup> Says the distinguished Dr. Wayland, "private believers will feel their obligation to carry the gospel to the destitute as strongly as ministers."<sup>82</sup> Oh! if the word of the Lord, unrestrained by human hinderances, might only have free course, how great would be the company who, with burning hearts and flaming lips, would publish it!<sup>83</sup>

A large proportion of the most intelligent, courageous, and self-sacrificing disciples of Christ are females. "Many women followed the Saviour"<sup>84</sup> when on earth; and, compared with the fewness of male disciples, many women follow him still. Were the women who followed the incarnate Saviour earnest, intelligently pious, and intrepid, willing to sacrifice that which cost them something in ministering to him of their substance?<sup>85</sup> In like manner, there are many women in the present day, earnest, intelligent, intrepid, and self-sacrificing, who, were they permitted or encouraged to open their lips in the assemblies of the pious in prayer, or speaking as the Spirit gives utterance,<sup>86</sup> might be instrumental in winning many an erring one to Christ. We say, were they permitted and encouraged; yes, encouragement may now be needful. So long has this en-

dowment of power been withheld from use by the dissuasive sentiments of the pulpit, press, and church officials, that it will now need the combined aid of these to give the public mind a proper direction, and undo a wrong introduced by the "man of sin"<sup>87</sup> centuries ago.

But more especially do we look to the ministry for the correction of this wrong.<sup>88</sup> Few, perhaps, have really intended to do wrong; but little do they know the embarrassment to which they have subjected a large portion of the Church of Christ by their unscriptural position in relation to this matter. The Lord our God is one Lord.<sup>89</sup> The same indwelling spirit of might which fell upon Mary and the other women on the glorious day that ushered in the present dispensation<sup>90</sup> still falls upon God's daughters. Not a few of the daughters of the Lord Almighty have, in obedience to the command of the Saviour, tarried at Jerusalem; and, the endowment from on high having fallen upon them, the same impelling power which constrained Mary and the other women to speak as the Spirit gave utterance impels them to testify of Christ.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."<sup>91</sup> And how do these divinely-baptized disciples stand ready to obey these impelling influences? Answer, ye thousands of heaven-touched lips, whose testimonies have so long been repressed in the assemblies of the pious! Yes, answer, ye thousands of female disciples of every Christian land, whose pent-up voices have so long, under the pressure of these man-made restraints, been uttered in groanings before God!<sup>92</sup>

But let us conceive what would have been the effect, had either of the male disciples interfered with the utterances of the Spirit through Mary, or any of those many women who received the bap-

<sup>80</sup>Social assembly, as distinguished from "Women's Preaching," technically so called," *PF*, p. 1, i.e., in the service of public worship. [T. O.]

<sup>81</sup>That the last days begin with the full reception of the gifts of prophecy is a theme that would increasingly influence holiness revivalism. [T. O.]

<sup>82</sup>Francis Wayland, *Sermons to the Churches* (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman, 1858), 21ff. Dr. Wayland was president of Brown University, Providence, R.I. [T. O.]

<sup>83</sup>Cf. Lucille Sider Dayton and Donald W. Dayton, "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Feminism in the Holiness Movement," *Methodist History* 14 (1976): 67-92; "Women as Preachers: Evangelical Precedents," *Christianity Today*, 23 May, 1975, 4-7. [T. O.]

<sup>84</sup>Cf. Luke 23:49 with Matt. 27:55. [T. O.]

<sup>85</sup>Luke 8:3. [T. O.]

<sup>86</sup>Cf. Acts 2:4. [T. O.]

<sup>87</sup>Cf. 2 Thess. 2:3. [T. O.]

<sup>88</sup>Mrs. Palmer invested great energy in a ministry to ministers, and felt that their role was crucial in this instance—tragically so. [T. O.]

<sup>89</sup>Deut. 6:4. [T. O.]

<sup>90</sup>The reference is to the resurrection appearances of Jesus to women, which initiated the Christian dispensation. [T. O.]

<sup>91</sup>Rev. 19:10. [T. O.]

<sup>92</sup>The fundamental idea of repression receives clear expression here. These energies are destined to break through, however long pent up. [T. O.]

aid to the life of the church? spiritual pursuits men generally

tism of fire on the day of Pentecost. Suppose Peter, James, or John had questioned their right to speak as the Spirit gave utterance before the assembly, asserting that it were unseemly, and out of the sphere of woman, to proclaim a risen Jesus, in view of the fact that there were men commingling in that multitude.<sup>93</sup> How do you think that He who gave woman her commission on the morning of the resurrection, saying "Go, tell my brethren," would have been pleased with an interference of this sort?

But are not doings singularly similar to these being transacted now? We know that it is even so. However unseemly on the part of brethren, and revolting to our finer sensibilities, such occurrences may appear, we have occasion to know that they are not at all unusual in religious circles. We will refer to a Christian lady of more than ordinary intellectual endowments, of refined sensibilities, and whose literary culture and tastes were calculated to constitute her a star in the galaxy of this world.<sup>94</sup>

## 2. A LIFE-PICTURE

I have seen a lovely female turn her eye away from the things of time, and fix it on the world to come. Jesus the altogether lovely, had revealed himself to her; and the vision of her mind was absorbingly entranced with his infinite loveliness, and she longed to reveal him to others. She went to the assembly of the pious. Out of the abundance of her heart, she would fain have spoken,<sup>95</sup> so greatly did her heart desire to win others over to love the object of her adoration. Had she been in a worldly assembly, and wished to attract others with an object of admiration, she would not have hesitated to have brought out the theme in conversation; and attracted listeners would have taken her more closely to their hearts, and been won with the object of her love.

But she is now in the assembly of the pious. It

is true many of them are her brothers and sisters, but cruel custom sealed her lips. Again and again she goes to the assembly for social prayer and the conference meeting, feeling the presence and power of an indwelling Saviour enthroned uppermost in her heart, and assured that he would have her testify of him. At last, she ventures to obey God rather than man.<sup>96</sup> And what is the result? A committee is appointed to wait on her, and assure her that she must do so no more. Whisperings are heard in every direction, that she has lost her senses; and, instead of sympathizing looks of love, she meets averted glances and heart-repulses.<sup>97</sup> This is not a fancy sketch; no, it is a life-picture. Ye who have aided in bringing about this state of things, how does this life-picture strike you?

## 3. WHO WAS REJECTED?

Think of the feelings of the Christian lady, who has thrown herself in the bosom of your church community in order that she may enjoy the sympathies of Christian love and fellowship. Has grace divested her of refined sensibilities? No: grace has only turned those refined sensibilities into a sanctified channel, and given her a yet more refined perception of every thing pure and lovely and of good report.<sup>98</sup> What must be the sufferings of that richly-endowed, gentle, loving heart? But was it not her loving, gentle, indwelling Saviour, that fain would had her testify for him? and in rejecting her testimony for Jesus, did not Jesus, the Head of the Church, take it as done unto himself?

Just as we were about closing the preceding paragraph, the activities of our pen were interrupted by the call of a valued minister of the gospel, whose early religious training was in the bosom of a sect where the testimony of Jesus from the lips of women was not permitted in the church.

<sup>93</sup>Cf. Acts 5:29. [T. O.]

<sup>94</sup>The dynamics of polite rejection, so familiar to those bereft of power who have sought reformation in religious traditions, are deftly described here by Mrs. Palmer with a subtlety that is hardly exceeded among nineteenth century writers. These dynamics are circumspectly described and courageously confronted. [T. O.]

<sup>95</sup>Cf. Phil 4:8. [T. O.]

<sup>93</sup>The humor is wry and biting: The risen Lord gives commands to women; the disciples question and prevent their fulfillment. [T. O.]

<sup>94</sup>It is likely that this lady was among Mrs. Palmer's circle of friends, but insufficient clues are given for positive identification. [T. O.]

<sup>95</sup>Cf. Matt. 12:34. [T. O.]

We will introduce him to our readers. He tells us of an experience, in connection with the theme of our work, with which some husbands may sympathize. But we will let him speak for himself.<sup>99</sup>

#### 4. THE SEAL BROKEN<sup>100</sup>

Never shall I forget the conflicting emotions of my poor heart, when, for the first time, the voice of my wife was heard in a religious meeting. She had been trained from childhood in the Congregational Church, her father having been a deacon in the same for fifty years. I had been born and raised, and educated for the ministry, in the Episcopal Church. All know the oppressive silence imposed on woman's lips, by both these denominations, in their social meetings for prayer and Christian conference. But the voice of my wife, now for the first time, breaks upon my ear. We had only joined the Methodist Church the evening previous. I had anticipated some things in the new church not altogether in harmony with my views and tastes. But never had it entered my heart that my wife should so far forget custom of silence among females in the house of God.

My mortification for a few moments was indescribably keen. I would have dissolved our union with the church instantly, and retraced our steps, had it been possible. Such license, such disobedience to custom, I felt for the moment to be intolerable. My mortification arose, not from a conviction that God was dishonored, Christ displeased, or the Holy Ghost grieved, but that the community, our former friends in the church we had just left, would be grieved, and some point the finger of scorn. It was not a care for God's pleasure so much as a dread of violating long-established customs, wounding the hearts of old friends, that troubled me.

It was suggested to my mind that I had not religion enough to allow my wife to do what she deemed to be a duty to her Saviour; that my prejudices must be her standard of activity. I at once saw the injustice, both to my wife and to my Saviour, of

<sup>99</sup>Here begins the testimony of a formerly Episcopalian, later Methodist, clergy husband of a woman who bore testimony in religious meetings. [T. O.]

<sup>100</sup>At least the following five paragraphs are a quotation, source unidentified. [T. O.]

thus thrusting my feelings and preferences between her and the cross.<sup>101</sup> I was deeply humbled; and, lifting up my heart to God in prayer, forgiveness was at once bestowed. I was made happy, and blessed to enjoy woman's voice, in spite of former prejudices, in prayer and prophesying.

"I would have consulted you, my dear husband, had I imagined, before going to church, such a duty would have been impressed upon me," said my wife.

"It is well you did not, for my consent could not have been obtained. It is done now. It nearly killed me for the moment; but I have the victory, and your testimony both rebuked and encouraged me. Henceforth, please Christ, and not your husband."

I have often thought, since then, how cruel to woman it is to compel her to stifle her convictions, to grieve the Holy Spirit,<sup>102</sup> to deny the Saviour the service of her noble gifts, because the pleasure of the Church (not surely the world, for it favors woman's liberty) must be regarded above that of God.

The Church a Potter's Field,<sup>103</sup> where the gifts of women are buried! And how serious will be the responsibilities of that church which does not hasten to roll away the stone,<sup>104</sup> and bring out these long-buried gifts! Every church community needs aid that this endowment of power would speedily bring. And what might we not anticipate as the result of this speedy resurrection of buried power! Not, perhaps, that our churches would be suddenly filled with women who might aspire to occupy the sacred desk.<sup>105</sup> But what a change would soon be witnessed in the social meetings of all church communities! God has eminently endowed woman with gifts for the social circle. He has given her the power of persuasion, and the ability to captivate. Who may win souls to Christ, if she may not?<sup>106</sup>

<sup>101</sup>A nineteenth-century example of "consciousness-raising"? [T. O.]

<sup>102</sup>Cf. Eph. 4:30. [T. O.]

<sup>103</sup>Cf. Matt. 27:7; a powerful image of lost gifts, buried competencies in the church—the burial metaphor requires resurrection. [T. O.]

<sup>104</sup>Mark 16:3. [T. O.]

<sup>105</sup>I.e., pulpit. [T. O.]

<sup>106</sup>Mrs. Palmer thought that women were naturally more gifted for some acts of ministry than men—in persuasive gifts, where grace transmutes nature. [T. O.]

"grace transmutes nature"

the presence of testimony could be read via Whately?

the (-) invocation of names

And how well-nigh endless her capabilities for usefulness, if there might only be a persevering effort on the part of the ministry to bring out her neglected gifts, added to a resolve, on the part of woman, to be answerable through grace to the requisition. Our friend speaks too truly of the Church as the only place where woman's gifts are unrecognized;<sup>107</sup> that is, the church estranges herself from woman's gifts. To doubt whether woman brings her gifts into the Church would be a libel on the Christian religion.

Let us contemplate that lovely, fascinating lady, whose cultivated tastes, richly-endowed mind, and unrivalled conversational powers, made her the soul and star of every worldly circle in which she moved.<sup>108</sup> Did she move in the festive-hall, or the refined social circle, charmed worldlings, irrespective of sex, gathered around her, and, as they greeted her gifts by unrestrained manifestations of approval, acknowledged themselves won by her endowment of power over mind.

Surely there has been no tardiness of the children of this world in acquainting themselves with her gifts. But the Holy Spirit comes to the heart of this interesting worldling, bringing to her remembrance that she is not her own, but bought with the price of her Redeemer's blood.<sup>109</sup> She now apprehends, through the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, that all her various gifts have been purchased at an infinite price, and must all be brought into the Lord's storehouse,<sup>110</sup> in order that they may be used for his glory.

Sin has its short-lived pleasures, and she has enjoyed the pleasure of securing the smiles of an appreciative world. But the Holy Spirit assures her that she must come out from the world, and be separate;<sup>111</sup> and she sees that she must renounce the world and sin, and through Christ give herself up to God and his church, if she would become a member of the household of faith,<sup>112</sup> and secure

life everlasting. How crucifying to flesh<sup>113</sup> is the struggle! but she has resolved rather to endure the death of nature than to perish everlastingly. The struggle is severe. Nature, unreprieved by God, will often suffer intensely in passing through the struggle which ensues in emerging from the death of sin to a life of holiness. God will not reprove, because he knows that nature clings to earth. But the struggle past, the emancipated soul, with all its redeemed powers, is at once taken to the heart of infinite love. This point gained, it is the divine order that all the issues of future life should flow out upon a redeemed world in unison with the Head of the Church. The church militant is Christ's visible body.

And now these gifts, so often in requisition, and so prized in the social assembly of the children of this world, have been brought into the Church. We said it were a libel on the religion of Jesus to assert that natural gifts of a high order, bestowed by the God of Nature, are recalled or buried when the possessor becomes a recipient of grace, and a child of the kingdom. The God of Nature is also the God of all grace:<sup>114</sup> and whatsoever was lovely becomes now more lovely; and that which was of good report becomes of far better report<sup>115</sup> through the refinings of grace, and far more effectual for good.

And now that these natural endowments of power, which were so captivating and commanding, and so appreciatively recognized in worldly assemblies, are laid as a sacrifice on the altar of the service of the Church, what becomes of them? Does the church acquaint herself with these gifts? No! she is both a stranger to them, and estranges herself from them.<sup>116</sup> In most church organizations, she authorizes no church assemblies, where she brings her sons and daughters together to call out these gifts for mutual

<sup>107</sup>Mrs. Palmer apparently viewed the Church as more repressive than the society in this instance. [T. O.]

<sup>108</sup>Here begins a rich description of the redeemed powers of a natively gifted woman. [T. O.]

<sup>109</sup>1 Cor. 6:19-20. [T. O.]

<sup>110</sup>Cf. Mal. 3:10. [T. O.]

<sup>111</sup>Cf. 2 Cor. 6:17. [T. O.]

<sup>112</sup>Gal. 6:10. [T. O.]

<sup>113</sup>Cf. Gal. 5:24. [T. O.]

<sup>114</sup>The nature-grace relation is intuitively grounded in the Thomistic tradition, probably received through Anglican sources, see Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, I-IIae, Q109. [T. O.]

<sup>115</sup>Cf. Phil. 4:8. [T. O.]

<sup>116</sup>The dialectic of estrangement is intuited by Mrs. Palmer as both self-chosen and in a sense objective. This is a powerful indictment of the failure of the Church as an institution to recognize, develop, and utilize the gifts of women. [T. O.]

edification and comfort. What means of grace does she acknowledge where her female members, in common with her male members, may use the gift of utterance with which God has endowed her?<sup>117</sup> And, if the Church authorizes no means by which she may acquaint herself with the gift which God has bestowed on women, what becomes of them? Why, of course they are buried. And where are the sepulchres in which they are entombed?<sup>118</sup> Why, the Church.

And when the Head of the Church comes to receive his own with usury,<sup>119</sup> and demands that these buried gifts be brought forth, who will be required to meet the demand? Church communities are made up of individuals. Will it be some one individual member of that church session? or will it be that minister who has failed to acquaint himself and his church session, and other members of his flock, of their responsibility before God in thus entombing an endowment of power which might have been instrumental in the spiritual life of thousands? What wonder, then, that our devoted friend said, that the Church is as a Potter's Field to bury strangers in; for the Church estranges herself from woman's gifts, and buries them within her pale.<sup>120</sup>

But the spirit of inspiration within us and around us, from every point, seems to say, that the time is coming, and now is,<sup>121</sup> when woman's gifts, so long entombed in the Church, shall be resurrected.<sup>122</sup> The command, "Come forth!"<sup>123</sup> is already penetrating the sepulchre where these gifts have been buried. Faith sees the stone being rolled away.<sup>124</sup> And what a resurrection of power shall we witness in the Church, when, in a sense answerable to the original design to God, women

shall come forth, a very great army,<sup>125</sup> engaging in all holy activities; when, in the true scriptural sense, and answerable to the design of the God of the Bible, woman shall have become the "help-meet"<sup>126</sup> to man's spiritual nature! The idea that woman, with all her noble gifts and qualities, was formed mainly to minister to the sensuous nature of man, is wholly unworthy [of] a place in the heart of a Christian.<sup>127</sup>

And here, in the presence of the God of the Bible, we are free to declare that a consistent Christian man—we mean one who has been baptized into the spirit of his divine Master—will not cherish such an idea. Nominal or meagre Christianity may tolerate it; and we think we see reasons most palpable, and such as should alarm all professing Christians, why the ancient Tempter, in his enmity towards woman, should have thrust this repulsive particle of old leaven<sup>128</sup> into the Church, and have taken so much pains to keep it there. We sincerely believe, before God, that it is this repulsive doctrine that has so much to do towards keeping Christianity meagre; ay, so repulsively meagre, that men of the world, who believe in the doctrines of Christianity, fail to see in many so-called Churches any thing answerable to a social want of man's spiritual nature,—a want which the God of Nature hath himself implanted in the human heart, and which would be abundantly met in the precious bosom of the Church, if it were not for this ingredient of wrong which has been thrown in by the Arch-Enemy. We speak with confidence and with carefulness, in the presence of Christ, the glorious Head of the Church, who would have her stand forth before the world in symmetrical proportions of unrivalled beauty, and in inviting attitude.

<sup>117</sup>The Pentecostal traditions of preaching would later form powerfully around particular interpretations of this phrase not yet envisioned by Mrs. Palmer. [T. O.]

<sup>118</sup>Cf. Matt. 23:27-29; Luke 11:47, 48. [T. O.]

<sup>119</sup>Luke 19:23; Matt. 25:27. The tomb image of the religious institution used by Jesus is employed powerfully to speak of the deadly entombment of women's gifts. [T. O.]

<sup>120</sup>This damning critique of the lost possibilities of the Churches runs counter to those who tend to associate holiness revivalism with ecclesiastical conservatism. [T. O.]

<sup>121</sup>Cf. John 4:23. [T. O.]

<sup>122</sup>Cf. John 5:25. [T. O.]

<sup>123</sup>Cf. John 11:43. [T. O.]

<sup>124</sup>Cf. Mark 16:4; Luke 24:2. [T. O.]

<sup>125</sup>Joel 2:25. [T. O.]

<sup>126</sup>Cf. Gen. 2:18. [T. O.]

<sup>127</sup>The modern feminist critique that woman is demeaned by being viewed only or primarily in relation to man's sensual needs is clearly anticipated here by Mrs. Palmer. [T. O.]

<sup>128</sup>The "repulsive particle of old leaven" (cf. 1 Cor. 5:6-8) is the assumption that woman exists only to serve man's physical needs—a device of the enemy, and a morally unworthy assumption to be made by both males and females in the Christian community. Mrs. Palmer was convinced that it was the work of nothing less than supernatural demonic power (eventuating in social sin) that so rigorously kept women bound to submissive roles in the church. [T. O.]

she resonates w/ Astell very  
much through here

In the name of the Lord Jesus, who hath purchased the Church with his blood,<sup>129</sup> and hath made abundant provision, not only for her purification, but for her beauty and strength, we implore those who minister at the altar of Christian churches to look at this subject. Christ would not have the Church unseemly in the eyes of his enemies. How grievous in his sight that repelling influences should emanate from her whom he would call his beloved,<sup>130</sup> and whom he would fain have stand forth without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing;<sup>131</sup> so attractive in beauty and strength as to draw all men to her holy shrine!

Surely the Church should present a model of all the blessed proprieties of grace. He by whose forming hand she should be modelled would have her inward construction and exterior surroundings all so truly in the *beauty* of holiness<sup>132</sup> as to invite investigation and admiration. Why should she not be an embodiment of every thing pure, lovely, and of good report?<sup>133</sup> And such she must, in fact, be through Christ, or her Lord can never receive her approvingly, and say to her,

<sup>129</sup>Acts 20:28. [T. O.]

<sup>130</sup>Rom. 1:7. [T. O.]

<sup>131</sup>Cf. Eph. 5:27. [T. O.]

<sup>132</sup>Cf. Ps. 29:2. [T. O.]

<sup>133</sup>Phil. 4:8. [T. O.]

"Thou art all fair, my love: there is no spot in thee."<sup>134</sup> Yet such she cannot be, while she entombs in her midst the gift of prophecy intrusted to her daughters.<sup>135</sup>

Oh the endless weight of responsibility with which the Church is pressing herself earthward through the depressing influences of this error! How can she rise while the gifts of three-fourths of her membership are sepulchred in her midst? Would that we might speedily see her clothed in strength, and coming up out of "the wilderness leaning on her Beloved,<sup>136</sup> fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners!"<sup>137</sup>

Daughter of Zion, from the dust  
Exalt thy fallen head;  
Again in thy Redeemer trust:  
He calls thee from the dead.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>134</sup>Song 4:7. [T. O.]

<sup>135</sup>Cf. Donna Alberta Behnke, "Created in God's Image: Religious Issues in the Women's Rights Movement of the Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1975. [T. O.]

<sup>136</sup>Song 8:5. [T. O.]

<sup>137</sup>Song 6:10. [T. O.]

<sup>138</sup>James Montgomery, *HUMEC*, 1850, #229, v. 1, entitled "Daughter of Zion, from the Dust"; C. S. Nutter, *Hymn Studies*, NY: Hunt & Eaton, n.d.