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## Shaker Messages from Mary Magdalene and John Calvin: Haughty Spirits, Bearing for the Dead, and the Problem of History

### Cover Page Footnote

Earlier versions of this paper were delivered at the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, Texas, Women and Religion session in 2004 and at the Shaker Seminar at Canterbury, New Hampshire, in July 2009.

## **Shaker Messages from Mary Magdalene and John Calvin: Haughty Spirits, Bearing for the Dead, and the Problem of History<sup>1</sup>**

*By Jane F. Crosthwaite*

Among the pleasures and puzzles of the Era of Manifestations are the many messages that Shaker instruments received from personages long dead. The responsibility and perhaps temptation of the scholar is to decode these messages, to analyze the intention of the instrument, the value of the message, and the utility of the experience for the larger Shaker enterprise.

I have chosen two messages to examine; although they are rather dissimilar—one being a life story from Mary Magdalene and the other a confession from John Calvin—they do have several features in common. They exemplify the range of messages recorded by Shaker scribes who preserved dispatches from spirits such as early Shaker leaders, biblical prophets, world leaders, and unnamed Native Americans. And these two, like a number of other messages, are very full accounts so that one can sink one's teeth into the stories that were saved and thus explore ramifications that may appeal to us today.

Let me begin by stating my conclusion about both accounts: I think the Shakers missed important opportunities with each message. It is as if each instrument began with a plummy insight that could have important theological and social implications, but then failed in knowledge, imagination, or opportunity to consolidate the vision. Certainly, during the Era, there were a raft of messages, and any single one would be easily lost in the jumble of trances and notebooks, hardly visible to the most learned of Shaker leaders as they tried to control the many songs, messages, and enactments. Still, these words from Mary Magdalene and John Calvin could have furthered the Believers' understanding of their place in religious history, could have strengthened their internal theological acumen, and could have opened a door to contemporary social reforms. To venture, now, on an excavation 170 years after the original messages were received is to see some weaknesses of the Era of Manifestations—to see its potential for community renewal and, alas, its failure to understand

that potential. Spiritual manifestations could not overcome the limitations in education, historical knowledge, and religious leadership the Shakers were suffering by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Manifestations from the Era of Manifestations rested on a number of Shaker assumptions and practices. The validity of the Shaker message—and the specific teachings of Ann Lee—depended on a belief in continuing revelation, belief that new Christian teachings were possible and, indeed, present. The second appearing of the Christ—the millennial dawning of a new age—meant that Mother Ann’s teachings, especially about celibacy, opened doors between heaven and earth. Not only had the age of revelation not ended with the close of the biblical canon, but new messages and other interactions with heaven were possible.

Mother Ann herself was said, in the 1816 *Testimonies*, to have communicated with the dead—to be bearing for the dead. A whole chapter in this account of her life and ministry is devoted to this topic. Mother Ann was responding to the anxieties of her new recruits over the missed opportunities of their deceased loved ones who had not lived to receive the new messages. Mother Ann said she saw those spirits in heaven, knew they could and would be saved, and she consoled her new flock that new revelations would not handicap the salvation of the deceased—nor would the deceased impede the new mode of faith. As the introduction to Chapter XXVII states:

Mother Ann and the Elders with her, uniformly taught the doctrine of a free offer to *all souls*, whether in this world, or in the world of spirits. That none could be deprived of the offer of salvation because they had left the world before Christ made his appearance; or because they had lived in some remote part of the earth, where the sound of the gospel had never reached their ears. Their labors in the work of regeneration were not confined to this world, but extended to the world of spirits, and their travail and sufferings for the salvation of departed souls were often distressing beyond description.<sup>2</sup>

The idea of the open door relied on biblical passages, many identified by Daniel Patterson in his book, *The Shaker Spiritual*.<sup>3</sup> An extended, and modified, version of bearing with the dead became operative in the Era of Manifestations as the instruments traveled back and forth between heaven and earth, conversing with spirits in heaven, and learning that those spirits not only had messages, information, and instructions to convey to the living, but were themselves capable of changing, growing, and finding the new Shaker truth in heaven.

Such were the cases of Mary Magdalene and of John Calvin, each of whom, it seems, had seen new light, had met with Mother Ann in heaven, and had special new information for Shaker Believers and, perhaps, for the rest of the world as well. The messages from Mary Magdalene and John Calvin have led me, as a Shaker historian particularly interested in theological permutations, into increasingly fascinating pathways, many of which I wish the Shakers themselves had followed more closely.

Mary Magdalene told her story to a Believer at the Shirley Shaker community in 1841; I am assuming, but cannot verify, that it was a woman who received and/or recorded the story.<sup>4</sup> The transcribed story covers about ten typewritten pages and aims to tell the story of the Magdalene's life, that is, to flesh out what is, in fact, a rather sketchy biblical story. The instrument betrays a thorough knowledge of the biblical story when she identifies Mary Magdalene as the woman cleared of seven devils,<sup>5</sup> as a possible companion who anointed Jesus,<sup>6</sup> as one of the women at the cross,<sup>7</sup> and then as the first person to report that the tomb was empty.<sup>8</sup>

The Shirley account also relies on two non-canonical traditions, albeit to a lesser degree. The first is the assumption that Mary of Magdala was also the woman taken in adultery who was saved by Jesus.<sup>9</sup> It is useful to note that, in spite of generations of tradition, this woman was not necessarily a prostitute! The bible does not name that woman, although Christian tradition has done so. Her identity as Mary Magdalene was eventually made firm by the teaching of Pope Gregory I, the Great (540-604) in 591,<sup>10</sup> and to a lesser extent it has also lived in the many artistic renderings of Mary with long, usually red hair by which she is seen both as a loose woman and as using her hair to dry the feet of Jesus. The Shirley account does not name her as a prostitute, but it does have Mary referring to her "extreme wickedness" and, more indirectly, to her lust.<sup>11</sup>

It is, in fact, however, just on this first "prostitution" point that I think Mary's story fails to be adequately used by either the recording instrument or the Shaker family. And this for two reasons: (1) here was a theologically opportune moment to argue against lust and for celibacy with the aid of Mary's confession, and (2) here was a chance to work with a number of impressive local reform movements currently afoot which were designed to help both prostitutes and other unprotected women (and children) in need.

Rejecting earlier Shaker evangelical fervor for denouncing lust and carnality, the Shirley account gives a genteel spin to the prostitution issue, having Mary speak in euphemisms and with a certain literate air: "Many

have wondered what my extreme wickedness could be that so many devils could have taken possession of my heart. My Blessed Mother has requested me to write this my history to enlighten the understanding of her children respecting many things.” Mary says that as a child she was indulged by superficially committed Jewish parents and that she grew to be proud and haughty and lacking in self control. She became, she says, overbearing, selfish, dressed in gaudy attire, and was “drawn to the great whirlpool of evil as a ship at sea is often drawn into unfathomable depths of a great maelstrom, where it meets [with] certain destruction.”

Mary reports that she was first astonished by the message of John (“truly an object of admiration for his countenance was verry [*sic*] beautiful to look upon ... most melodious accents ... power of conviction”), then she thought she might try to entice Jesus who she understood forbade people to marry. But when she saw Jesus and his graceful beauty and heard his message, she stripped off her gay ornaments, tore her hair and fell at his feet. She became a follower; he visited her house and healed her mother; she, in turn, joined his mother and other “apostolic sisters” in his ministry. And later in heaven, of course, this company of redeemed women was joined by Mother Ann Lee.

Beyond the prostitute question, there is a second, equally inviting category for thinking about Mary Magdalene, and this is her role as an apostle. In spite of her questionable reputation, she is often referred to in Christian tradition as the “apostle to the apostles,” and this for her first encounter with the risen Jesus and for his instruction to her to instruct the other apostles to change their understanding of his crucifixion and death. The male apostles mourned his death; she reported that he still lived. In point of fact, Shaker tradition has Ann Lee using Mary Magdalene’s apostolic role in the justification of her own ministry as a woman. The 1816 *Testimonies* records Eunice Goodrich’s account of Mother Ann as saying, “His appearing first, to a woman, showed that his second appearing would be in a woman!”<sup>12</sup> Mother Ann’s ability to utilize this idea suggests not only the powerful currency of Mary Magdalene’s revelatory role but the familiarity of the early Shaker church with that tradition. The gates of heaven were open in ever new ways, and a woman could lead the way.

Mary Magdalene’s story continues to say that when Jesus appeared to her after his resurrection, she thought he was in the body, but that she came to learn that the angels had “disposed” of his body. Shakers long contended with the question of a bodily resurrection—which they

denied—in order to affirm the irrelevance of the carnal body, the value of celibacy, and the superiority of the spiritual over the physical life.<sup>13</sup>

Mary continues to report that during the ten years following the death of Jesus, she was “gathered into the first Order,” where she served until her death. In heaven, now, Mother Ann has instructed her to tell her story and—for the first time ever—to define the seven devils which heretofore have been unknown; she lists them as pride, lust, anger, jealousy, ambition, “overbearance and covetousness [*sic*].”<sup>14</sup>

Mary of Magdala does not dwell on questions of lust, celibacy, or the nature of the resurrection as one might expect a Shaker messenger to do; rather she sets her story in such a way as to warn against a haughty demeanor and negative judgments of others. Her cautions speak more to community manners than to sexual mores; they could be more profitably read as a way to limit carping among Believers or, at least, to encourage charitable welcome to new members. They are about behavior, not salvation.

The shift from reinforcing the doctrine of celibacy to the maintenance of Shaker community life parallels a second shift I have been concerned about, and again it is a focus on the internal community rather than the outside world where useful reform work could have been pursued. Although this message was recorded in 1841-42, there was no contemporary recognition that nearby Boston, New York City, and other urban areas were in the midst of establishing Magdalen Societies to rescue women trapped in prostitution.<sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> Female reform societies were active in the 1830s and 1840s, and the Shakers could have been enormously useful in aiding women and children in need, whether prostitution or poverty was the core issue. Plus they could, I would think, easily have recruited women in need of refuge and stable alternative lives—and done so on the strength of their own teachings, but certainly with the renewed authority of Mary Magdalene.

To turn to John Calvin’s confession is to turn in a slightly different direction, although one with a similar display of limited understanding of the material at hand and of missed opportunities for extending the message to the Shaker community and, perhaps, to a sympathetic community beyond. Oddly enough, however, “Calvin’s Confession” was published and thus made available to the world beyond the Shakers by Alonzo Hollister in 1904, but Hollister’s publication gives no indication of the purpose of the pamphlet and no context that would make sense to the

outside world.<sup>17</sup> The document could have been framed to speak to other traditions which criticized Calvin and to followers of unitarian traditions and of spiritualism as well, but as it stands, it would make little sense except to Shakers, and perhaps not many of them.<sup>18</sup> Shakers did practice continual confession of sins as a way to enter into and then maintain their lives in a communal society of common belief and devotion to celibacy. Once a sin was confessed, they taught that true repentance meant it would not be repeated. That Calvin would need to confess to join the Shakers in heaven would be a common expectation, although whether this confession would have been adequate in another Shaker context is debatable.

The pamphlet begins with a brief instruction from Father Joseph Meacham (identified only as a “Spiritual Parent” and not even as an early Shaker leader) to read this message and take it as a warning against a “haughty temper.” A second introductory paragraph was “given in the Name of Michael Servetus,” who also warns against that “haughty temper,” noting that this sin, if not confessed, will lead to suffering. Then follows the confession from Calvin (about fifteen pages), and the pamphlet ends with an eight-page message entitled “The Free Woman,” although referred to on the title page as “Dawn of Woman’s Era.”<sup>19</sup>

The instrument responsible for “Calvin’s Confession” is identified by Hollister on the cover sheet as J. Lafume of Watervliet. There is more work to be done to ferret out either an original copy of the 1842 confession or information about LaFume, although it is a nice stroke that LaFume, identified as born in France, was the source of the story about Calvin, also a Frenchman.<sup>20</sup>

“Calvin’s Confession” concerns the haughty temper which led him to become an “anti-christian,” that is, one who led the Reformation astray and was too proud to take criticism or see his errors: “By this, my friends, you may see the consequences of cherishing a haughty, self-sufficient spirit, unrestrained by superior power.” Calvin recognizes that he had a “high mind and blind zeal” and that he was wrong to execute Michael Servetus. Calvin goes on to report that since his death he has suffered and wandered for many years—a hundred here and a hundred there—vaguely seeing some new light in heaven, hearing a woman’s voice, and even hearing sounds of music and dancing, which, he said, was accompanied by a smile from Peter, the first smile he had seen in eternity. Eventually, Calvin came to be befriended by Servetus and ultimately to be set free by Mother. From this account, however, one would barely grasp the background story, or



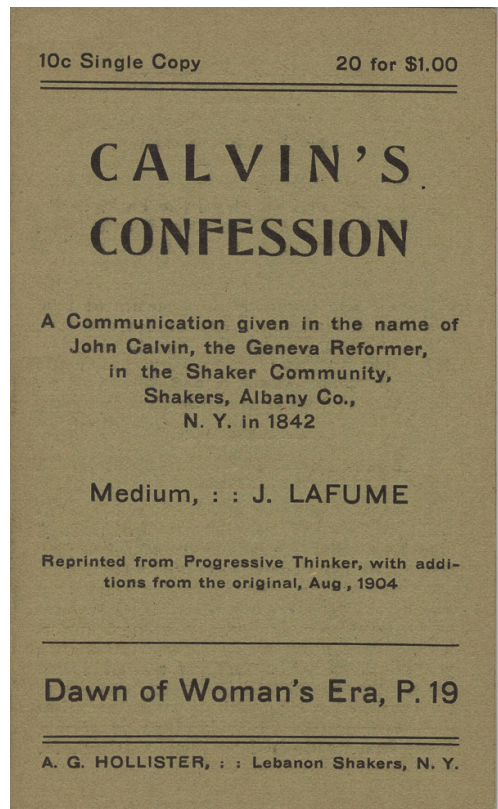
learn much more than that Calvin had a haughty temper.

But it is that haughty temper issue that, I think, leads us in intriguing directions and helps to flesh out the larger story.

Turning to the basic, although pared-down, story about John Calvin and Michael Servetus leads to a number of additional tantalizing threads.<sup>21</sup> John Calvin (1509-1564) joined the reformation movement aimed at challenging the power of the church in Rome. Calvin, born a Frenchman and well educated for his time, came to Geneva to establish a Christian community separated from the Roman church. His ambition for a new form of belief and practice was, of necessity,

matched by an equal ambition to insure the purity of that new vision. Thus was born the union of a religious vision and secular power that led many Protestants (and some Catholics) to view Calvin as the “Protestant pope”—a fascinating piece of slander that meant to slur both Calvin and the Catholics.

Calvin came to feel challenged by the theological views of Michael Servetus (1511-1553), particularly on the doctrine of the Trinity, and in 1553 when Servetus came to Geneva, Calvin set up a trial, manipulated the evidence, and had Servetus burned at the stake. Michael Servetus, for his part, was born in Spain and was something of a polymath with skills in theology, disputation, translating, editing, astronomy, and medicine. He has gained continuing fame as the first person to propose a circulation system for the blood, limited as his idea was. Certainly, however, he was



wrong to venture into Geneva in 1553.

In addition to the theological questions, Calvin's execution of Servetus reveals a number of prejudices about Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, and religion in general, to say nothing of the questions about Shakers in relation to these stories.

Let me try to isolate the two core issues. First, Servetus raised questions about just how the church—whether in its Catholic or in its rising Protestant form—was arguing for the Trinity. He wrote that most of the arguments were based, falsely, on Greek ideas rather than on the scripture, as would be proper. But, according to Servetus, the Bible did not use the word “trinity,” did not speak about three persons, except in one case,<sup>22</sup> and did not really exalt Jesus as God. It did see Jesus as somehow divine, as chosen by God, but not in the way described by the defining church council of Nicaea in 325, and several subsequent councils.<sup>23</sup>

Second, Servetus came to his conclusions based on scripture, but even more interestingly, he was educated—as others were not—in Hebrew. Knowledge of Hebrew made Servetus suspect as being tainted by Judaism, and, further, as a Spaniard he could also have been tainted by Islam; thus, for Servetus to question the Trinity was to be suspected, on multiple levels, of heresy—even though many theologians (including Calvin himself to a slight degree) knew that the doctrine of the Trinity was a political solution and compromise voiced in theological/philosophical language. Jews and Muslims have long charged Christianity with polytheism, and Christians, it seems, have often held fast to the Trinity in order to distinguish themselves from their religious kinfolk. Christians want it both ways: they claim a commitment to monotheism, yet affirm a Trinity. Judaism rests on a single, jealous God, and Muslims, for their part, set their creed in opposition to the Trinity: “There is no God but The God and Muhammad is [only] God's prophet.”

Calvin, apparently finding himself caught between a threatening Roman church, a need to establish his authority, and a refusal to change his own writings on the point of the Trinity, allowed himself to act with vehemence and violence. Almost at once following Servetus's death at the stake, Calvin himself came under fire for this action, and Servetus became a martyr to the cause of free religious expression.

And here, interestingly, one can turn directly to Shaker history to document some of the criticism directed at Calvin. First, let me remind you that the Shakers always fought for freedom of conscience, seeing

themselves in America because of that opportunity, and they felt a continuing responsibility to work on its behalf; second, in their arguments for toleration, they consistently challenged the authority of both Calvin and Luther for having abused their power and persecuted their opponents; and third, remember that the Shakers were opposed to the Trinity. They questioned the theory on numerous occasions and argued, instead, for a dual godhead of Power and Wisdom, the Heavenly Two in One.<sup>24</sup> While it is possible that the Shakers do not really belong in the camp of the Unitarians either, they certainly carried the same axe of anti-Trinitarianism and cited common historical sources.

These arguments appear best—and with clear citations—in the first Shaker history and theology book, written by Benjamin S. Youngs, *The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing*.<sup>25</sup> Page after page in this first presentation of Shaker origins and ideas carry lengthy quotations taken directly from several major Protestant historians—John Lawrence Mosheim (and his Scottish translator, Archibald Maclaine), Robert Robinson, and Richard Sewell—all of whom criticize Calvin's misuse of power and some of whom support Unitarian principles.<sup>26</sup>

Mosheim's translator, Archibald Maclaine, says of Calvin in a footnote:

It is impossible to justify the conduct of Calvin in the case of Servetus, whose death will be an indelible reproach upon the character of that great and eminent reformer. The only thing that can be alleged, not to efface, but to diminish his crime, is, that it was no easy matter for him to divest himself at once of that persecuting spirit which had been so long nourished and strengthened by the popish religion in which he was educated. It was a remaining portion of the *spirit of popery*, in the breast of Calvin, that kindled his unchristian zeal against the wretched Servetus.<sup>27</sup>

When Maclaine blames Calvin's action on the remaining stain of “the popish religion,” and on the “spirit of popery in the breast of Calvin,” he is lunging with a double-edged sword. Calvin would be horrified to be carrying any vestige of Catholicism. The Roman Church, which was still conducting inquisitions in Europe and which might have been secretly happy to have Servetus out of the way, would still be equally horrified to be so associated with Calvin. With this criticism of the two religious forces, however, one sees the way in which the dissenting Protestant churches, the direct—and chosen—progenitors of the Shakers, traced their heritage of

pure Christianity; they were the persecuted, not the persecutors. Shakers, like these historians, found good reasons to call the Roman Church — and the Reformation leaders — anti-christian.

And, note further, it is that “spirit of popery in the breast of Calvin” that Joseph Lafume translated into a “haughty spirit,” although the fire had died down in his characterization and the 1904 context was so diluted as to be negligible. The original historians, however, had been startlingly ferocious in their descriptions of both Servetus and Calvin. So in his multi-volume *Ecclesiastical History*, John Lawrence Mosheim said of Servetus:

This learned and ingenious sufferer was worthy of a better fate; though it is certain, on the other hand, that his faults were neither few nor trivial; since it is well known that his excessive arrogance was accompanied with a malignant and contentious spirit, an obstinacy of temper, and a considerable portion of fanaticism.<sup>28</sup>

It is also worth observing that Maclaine had similarly characterized Calvin almost three hundred pages earlier in another footnote:

This paragraph, relating to Calvin, is added to Dr. Mosheim’s text by the translator, who was surprised to find, in a history of the reformation, such late mention made of one of its most distinguished and remarkable instruments; a man whose extensive genius, flowing eloquence, immense learning, extraordinary penetration, indefatigable industry, and fervent piety, placed him at the head of the reformers; all of whom he surpassed, at least, in learning and parts, as he also did the most of them, in obstinacy, asperity, and turbulence.<sup>29</sup>

Even Benjamin Youngs joined the rhetorical frenzy. Following an extended quotation from Robert Robinson’s *Ecclesiastical Researches* summarizing the Servetus affair, Youngs adds: “*Bloody Cain! Where is Abel thy brother? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.*”<sup>30</sup>

For a slight side trip, let me add one other remarkable character who took up the cause against Calvin and in favor of Servetus, and although he was less interested in any particular religious stance and more in favor of toleration and free thinking every where, Voltaire (1694-1778) also rose to the occasion to attack Calvin as a “Protestant pope” and to recognize Servetus as the discoverer of the circulation of the blood “long before Harvey.”<sup>31 32</sup> Using Robinson’s *Ecclesiastical Researches*, Youngs quotes some of the analysis made by Voltaire, and although he does not mention the medical advances, he is happy to use Voltaire to criticize Calvin.<sup>33</sup>

In 1808, then, when Benjamin Seth Youngs and his associates wrote the *Testimony*, they were astonishingly up-to-date with current Christian scholarship. Mosheim's massive study had first come out in 1758 and was being republished all through the next hundred years in different editions. Robinson's *Researches* was published in 1792, barely fifteen years before the *Testimony*, and Richard Sewell's book on the Quakers was also recently published (1795). The Shakers were at the forefront of Protestant criticism and understanding; they stood in line with a dissenting Protestantism which valued freedom of religious practice, which found a supporting home in the New Republic of America, and which was free to question religious doctrines like the Trinity or to argue for celibacy as the new millennial form of true Christianity.

The Shakers were, perhaps, even more in agreement with the thinking of leaders like Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson than they could imagine because Franklin and Jefferson shared a warm friendship with Joseph Priestly, the inheritor of Servetus's medical breakthrough—and the founder of the Unitarian Society in Philadelphia (c.1797).

The point is that the Shakers were on the cutting edge of scholarship, criticism, political acumen, and history in 1808, but by 1841 and 1842, when the instrument from Shirley heard from Mary Magdalene and the instrument at Watervliet heard from John Calvin, much of the Shaker scholarship and theological doctrine on which their manifestations rested was beginning to erode. Shakers had come to rely on spirit manifestations to the neglect and devaluation of historical and theological study. Neither the elders nor the Believers were engaged in the intellectual foundations of their own tradition.

Mary Magdalene did not make a new argument for celibacy or for sheltering prostitutes, and she seemed closer to arguing for kindness among the sisters, however "apostolic" they might be, than for evangelical outreach and the redemption of fallen and needy women. John Calvin's confession rested all his sins on his "haughty temper," while failing to validate the Shaker critique of the Trinity by way of the writings of Servetus; nor did the confession reinforce the Shaker commitment to freedom of conscience except by indirection. The "Protestant pope" who burned his enemies at the stake became a bland wandering ghost. Calvin's "haughty temper" carried impressive historical weight but in the end he seemed to have had a personality problem rather than a significant and fundamental theological message for the Shakers. To reduce the theological and historical arguments

which led to Servetus's death—and their accompanying prejudices (many of which the Shakers shared) about Judaism, Islam, Catholicism, and the Reformers—to a sincere, but vapid apology was to trivialize what could have been a profound restatement of Shaker principals.

The Shakers may have learned from Mother Ann to “bear for the dead” and, in the Era of Manifestations, to receive new messages from the converted dead, but they failed miserably to let the dead truly bear for them when they most needed refreshing visions and cogent instruction for reinforcing their theology and for using their message in new and purposeful ways.

## Notes

1. Earlier versions of this paper were delivered at the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, Texas, Women and Religion session in 2004 and at the Shaker Seminar at Canterbury, New Hampshire, in July 2009.
2. [Rufus Bishop and Seth Y. Wells], *Testimonies of the Life, Character, Revelations and Doctrines of Our Ever Blessed Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders with Her ...* (Hancock: Printed by J. Tallcott and J. Deming, Junrs, 1816), 236-45. A similar concern led to elaborate ritual practices in Mormon life.
3. *The Shaker Spiritual* (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1979), 83-85. Patterson lists Matt. 12: 40 which says the Son of Man will be three days and nights in heart of the earth; 1 Pet. 3:18-20 which says Christ preached to spirits in prison who had been disobedient in days of Noah; and 1 Pet. 4:6 which says the gospel was preached to the dead. Patterson adds that these passages challenged Calvin's doctrine of total depravity, but it is clear that they also challenged Calvin's teachings about predestination. See also Patterson's article, “Bearing for the Dead: A Shaker Belief and Its Impress on the Shaker Spiritual,” *The Shaker Quarterly*, 8 (Winter 1968), 116-28.
4. “A Brief History of the life of Mary Magdalene as written by herself,” Shirley, Winter 1841-42. OCWRHS VIII:B-52. A second copy of this message is in OCWRHS VIII:B-286.
5. Luke 8:1-2: “And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching . . . and the twelve were with him, and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils . . . and Joanna . . . Susanna.”
6. Mark 14:9 and other gospels.
7. Mark 15:40.
8. Mark 16:1; 16:9-10; Matt. 28:1.
9. John 8:3-11.
10. Wikipedia says that, in 1969, the Vatican “quietly retracted” the designation as a prostitute.
11. For scholarly analysis of the theological and historical treatment of Mary Magdalene, see, among other sources, Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: Myth and Metaphor* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1994), Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the*



- Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, Princeton U Press, 2000), and Karen L. King, *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2003).
12. 1816 *Testimonies*, chap. XXIII, 205, #3: “She spoke of the unbelieving Jews, in his first appearance. ‘Even his own deciples, [sic] (added she,) after he arose from the dead, though he had often told them that he should rise the third day, believed it not. They would not believe that he had risen, because he appeared first to a woman! So great was their unbelief, that the words of Mary seemed to them like idle tales! His appearing first to a woman, showed that his second appearing would be in a woman!’” This account from the *Testimonies* could also lead to additional speculations about Ann Lee’s own view of herself as a savior figure and of her followers’ confirming testimony, but we will not follow that path at this time.
  13. For a more extensive treatment of Shaker ideas about resurrection see Christian Goodwillie and Jane F. Crosthwaite, eds., *Millennial Praises: A Shaker Hymnal* (Amherst: UMASS Press, 2009), 32-34.
  14. The usual list of seven deadly sins includes wrath, lust, sloth, gluttony, greed, covetousness, and pride. The Shirley account substitutes ambition, jealousy, and “overbearance” for sloth, greed, and gluttony.
  15. See, for instance, American Female Guardian Society and Home for the Friendless documents, Smith College Collection, #9852-4; *Remarks on the Report of the Executive Committee of the New-York Magdalen Society* (New York: Printed for the Author, 1831); Carroll Smith Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City: The New York City Mission Movement, 1812-1870* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1971).
  16. An 1879 article in *The Shaker Manifesto* written by Henry Cumings at Enfield, N.H., does state, albeit forty years later, that the Shakers are not Magdalen Asylums, and he asserts that Shakers seek converts who want more than just a home and shelter. (March 1879), 56-58. Perhaps knowledge of these societies was broader than I have otherwise been able to determine. I am grateful to Mary Ann Haagen for bringing this source to my attention.
  17. *Calvin’s Confession: A Communication given in the Name of John Calvin, the Geneva Reformer, in the Shaker Community, Shakers, Albany Co., N.Y. in 1842. Medium, J. Lafume*. Lebanon Shakers, N.Y.: A. G. Hollister, 1904. (Richmond #780). A manuscript copy of the confession can be found in WLC #58. It is identified by Alonzo Hollister as a copy made by Seth Y. Wells, “as if for the press” and so brought into print by Hollister sixty years later.
  18. More might be said here about Alonzo G. Hollister, an energetic but undisciplined Shaker historian and writer, and the man Diane Sasson identified as an “inveterate scribbler.” Suffice it to note here that he seemed to think this publication could speak for itself, a hope I see as seriously misguided. Sasson, *The Shaker Spiritual Narrative* (Knoxville: U of Tennessee Press, 1983), 84.
  19. “The Free Woman” is a brief set of arguments for valuing women who, like men, can be anointed, are needed in making seeds grow and creating new spiritual creations where a woman has compassed a man and given us a “Motherhood in the Deity.” Hollister does not include any information about Ann Lee or the Shakers.
  20. LaFume documentation is a bit sketchy, but several lists in OCWRHS III:A-14 show him in the Watervliet Second Order and/or North Family. There are various spellings: LaFume, LeFume, Leffamy, LeFuma. He seems to have worked as a carpenter and had a daughter, Angeline, who was born in S. Canada and worked as a physician. One source (OCWRHS III:B-39A) says LaFume died on 29 December

- 1868 at age ninety, as does the “Shaker Death Records in *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* ( Rachel W. B. Cotterell, ed.), although they name him Joseph Lefriene; still, the dates of his life remain somewhat scrambled at this point. Stephen Paterwic has been generous in helping to sort through these records and has several additional suggestions that deserve further tracking.
21. For a popular but useful and wide-ranging overview of this controversy, see Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone, *Out of the Flames* (New York: Broadway Books, 2002).
  22. 1 John 5:7-8 speaks of Father, Word, and Holy Ghost and of spirit, water, and blood.
  23. Note that Nicaea was called at the instigation of Constantine to deal with quarrels over the nature of the divinity of Jesus. Arius was present and later condemned for his opposition to the resolution which made Jesus one “substance” with God. This combination of Constantine, political power, and the Trinity was challenged over and again in later quarrels, especially in the “memories” of Unitarians, Socinians, and Anabaptists, along with others seeking tolerance for dissent and opposing the union of Christianity and political force.
  24. For a concise statement of the Heavenly Two in One, see the first hymn of the first Shaker hymnal, “The Testimony of Eternal Truth,” printed with music in Goodwillie and Crosthwaite, 49-51.
  25. Whether Youngs and the two other Shakers listed with him deserve the full credit for this scholarly compendium is an open question. Certainly Richard McNemar and others also had the educational background to use and recommend these sources. (Albany, Printed by E. and E. Hosford, 1808).
  26. John Lawrence Mosheim, *An Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern ...*, 4 vols., trans. Archibald Maclaine (New York: Elvert Duyckinck et al., 1824); Robert Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches* (Cambridge: Francis Hodson, 1792); William Sewell, *History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers*, 2 vols. (London: James Phillips, 1795).
  27. Mosheim, III, 357 (emphasis mine).
  28. Mosheim, III, 356.
  29. Mosheim, III, 69.
  30. Youngs, 347 (emphasis in text).
  31. *The Works of Voltaire*, Edition de la Pacification, Vol. XXVII (Paris: E. R. DuMont, 1901), 85, 86. Voltaire has the date of Servetus’ death wrong, listing it as 1555 rather than 1553.
  32. A further round of comments could be made about the importance, or lack thereof, of Servetus in the debates over blood circulation. But one interesting continuing issue concerns the interest of Joseph Priestly (1733-1806) and his researches, his tenure in the United States, his friendship with Jefferson and Franklin, and his commitment to Unitarianism. See Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone, 285-295.
  33. Youngs, 347.