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## Fundamentalism: The Extreme Reaction to German Higher Criticism

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FUNDAMENTALISM: THE EXTREME REACTION TO  
GERMAN HIGHER CRITICISM

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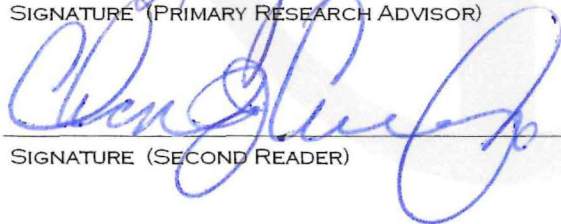
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## **PREFACE**

Beginning in the last half of the nineteenth century in America the Christian Church became radically divided over the issue of German Higher Criticism and the theory of evolution. Those who accepted German Higher Criticism and evolutionary theory called themselves Progressives, or Liberals, while those who rejected German Higher Criticism and evolutionary theory called themselves Fundamentalists. While those on the left usually see both names, Progressives and Liberals, as pejorative today, those in the Fundamentalist camp still hold proudly to the name and hold to the same basic beliefs. My thesis is that the Fundamentalist's rejection of German Higher Criticism is based on their total rejection of the evolutionary theory, not only in biology, but especially as it was applied to sociology and Biblical studies by the Germans.

This study will attempt to define those basic beliefs and point out how they continue to separate the Fundamentalists from all other Christian groups today. This will be done by examining the evolution of theology and science from the Enlightenment to the end of the nineteenth century; and then examining the reaction to that theology by the Fundamentalists, continuing up to the present day.



## CHAPTER ONE

### THE ENLIGHTENMENT: THE RISE OF RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICAL SCIENCE

Like all other movements in Western European history, the Enlightenment was a negative reaction to what had taken place in the recent past. Just as the Modern Age was a negative reaction to the excesses of the French revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, the Post-Modern Age is a negative reaction to the failure of Post-Millennial thought at the end of two world wars. Likewise, the Enlightenment was a negative reaction to the religious warfare of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>1</sup> The Western European world had become sickened by the continued use of the population as cannon fodder by kings and princes who sought to establish their version of “righteousness” by the slaughter of all who disagreed with them.

The problem lay in the fact that all the monarchies of Europe established their legitimacy on the claim of the divine right of kings, which is based primarily on Romans 13. The Christian Church and the monarchy were intrinsically bound in a symbiotic union and could not be separated. From the time of Charlemagne on the kings of Europe were crowned by the church, and were “defenders of the faith.”<sup>2</sup> The monarch was required to support the claims of the church because without the church the monarch had no claim to the crown.<sup>3</sup> Even in Protestant

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<sup>1</sup> *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Margaret C. Jacobs, The Bedford Series in History and Culture (Boston, New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2001), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 239.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 353-361.

countries, princes and kings used the power of the crown to kill those who were considered enemies of the church.<sup>4</sup> For centuries this powerful duo kept atheists and heretics in check.

In 1685 two events took place that shocked and alarmed Europe, and the reaction was to result in the Enlightenment. In France, Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes<sup>5</sup>, which had guaranteed the French Protestants sanctuary inside their communities. Huguenot cities were burned and an unknown number of Protestants were murdered. Protestants all across Europe became united in their anger and opposition to Louis XIV and religious warfare.<sup>6</sup> As a result of the persecution, 200,000 French Huguenots fled to Geneva, Berlin, The Dutch Republic, London and America.<sup>7</sup> “Wherever the refugees went, the educated among them gravitated to presses and engravers’ studios. In the 1690’s, they began an unprecedented propaganda battle against French Absolutism.”<sup>8</sup> One hundred years later the French monarch and his family would be executed and the Church all but destroyed in France.<sup>9</sup>

The other alarming event of 1685 was the ascension of James II to the throne of England. James II, like Louis XIV, was intolerant of Protestants and sought to use force to return England to Catholicism.<sup>10</sup> But the British had just recovered from a bout of Protestant intolerance with Oliver Cromwell<sup>11</sup> and his son. They wanted no more religious wars. Two men, Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke, through their publications, stirred-up public opinion until Parliament

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<sup>4</sup> Martin Luther, "An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Christian Estate.," in *Works of Martin Luther with Introduction and Notes.*, ed. C. M. Jacobs (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman, 1915).

<sup>5</sup> The Edict of Nantes was signed in 1598 by Henry IV granting protection to the Protestant Huguenots.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Treasure, *The Making of Modern Europe, 1648-1780* (London, New York: Methuen, 1985), 269.

<sup>7</sup> *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents*, 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>9</sup> *History of Europe*, ed. Marshall Whithed Baldwin Carlton J. H. Hayes, Charles Woolsey Cole (New York: Macmillan Co., 1956), 689-700.

<sup>10</sup> Harold J. Schultz, *History of England*, 3rd ed. (New York, Cambridge et. al.: Barnes and Noble, 1980), 125-129.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 116-124.

was forced to take action.<sup>12</sup> Parliament deposed James II and invited William of Orange and his wife Mary to take the throne of England in what became known as the “Glorious Revolution of 1688.”<sup>13</sup> This date can rightfully be seen as the beginning of the Enlightenment.

In fact, it was from the writings of Sir Isaac Newton that the Enlightenment got its name. Newton published his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* in 1687, in which he described the world as a machine that ran according to mathematical laws, and was controlled by a law-giver.<sup>14</sup> Mankind was now able, through the application of simple natural laws and rational logic, to deduce the workings of the universe. Rationalism and empirical science had teamed-up to throw back the curtain of heaven.

In 1704, Newton published *Optics*, which backed-up his work on physics by demonstrating that light could be broken down into waves of color through the use of a prism. Almost immediately, the question could be heard in the streets of London, “Are you enlightened?” from which came the name “The Enlightenment.”<sup>15</sup> The reference was to Newton’s “Optics,” but the meaning was, “Do you believe in the new philosophy of rationalism and empirical science?”

Although most people remember Sir Isaac Newton as a great scientist, Newton divided his time nearly equally between Bible study and science. Newton was a devout Anglican and a Deist.<sup>16</sup> With the exception of his views on Christology, which followed the Arian tradition, Newton would be seen as a conservative non-Pentecostal Christian by today’s standards. His

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<sup>12</sup> Louis K. Dupre, *The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2004), 19.

<sup>13</sup> Schultz, 131.

<sup>14</sup> Dupre, 19.

<sup>15</sup> *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents*, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Dupre, 112.

favorite Bible subject was prophecy, especially the books of Daniel and Revelation.<sup>17</sup> He said, “Giving ear to the prophets is a fundamental character of the church. . . The authority of Emperor, King, and Princes is human. The authority of Councils, Synods, Bishops, and Presbyters is human. The authority of the Prophets is divine, and comprehends the sum of religion.”<sup>18</sup> Newton believed that he could calculate the dimensions of heaven by studying Solomon’s temple.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, Newton was a supernaturalist. According to Newton:

True prophecies of unlikely events, fulfilled by unlikely means, are supernatural things; and as such, (especially their author and design considered) may properly enough be reckoned among miracles. And, I may add, these have a peculiar advantage above most miracles, on the score of their duration: since the manifest proofs of the prediction continue still.<sup>20</sup>

Newton reckoned that it was the direct and continued intervention of God into time and space that cause the rotation of the planets and the stability of the universe,<sup>21</sup> otherwise gravity would cause the universe to collapse. William Whiston, a close friend and colleague of Newton’s, became the Boyle lecturer at the turn of the eighteenth century. Regarding the universe he said, “Tis now evident that Gravity depends entirely on the constant and efficacious, and if you will, supernatural and miraculous Influence of Almighty God.” Whiston used Newton’s laws of gravity to theorize that the flood of Noah had been caused by a large comet passing very close to the earth. According to Whiston, the flood occurred on 28 November, 2349 B.C.<sup>22</sup> This was a widely accepted belief in the early eighteenth century. So, the tenor of the day in England at the beginning of the Enlightenment was not agnostic, or

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<sup>17</sup> Richard G. Olson, *Science and Religion, 1450-1900: From Copernicus to Darwin.*, Greenwood Guides to Science and Religion (Westport, London: Greenwood Press, 2004), 111-112.

<sup>18</sup> Newton quoted by Olson, 118.

<sup>19</sup> Treasure, 150.

<sup>20</sup> Newton quoted by Olson, *Science and Religion, 1450-1900: From Copernicus to Darwin.*, 118-119.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 121-123.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Guillen, *Five Equations That Changed the World: The Power and Poetry of Mathematics* (New York: MJF Books, 1995), 50.

atheistic, but devoutly deistic and the Bible was generally held to be true and reliable. Furthermore, a belief in supernaturalism was common, and few people saw a conflict between empirical science and the Bible.

## CHAPTER TWO

### IMMANUEL KANT AND THE END OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Enlightenment spirit quickly spread from England to all of Europe and America. Rationalism and empirical science did not produce the same “proof of God” for some, as it had for Newton. As rationalism spread to France, where the population was still suffering under the repression of an absolutist king, the devout deism of Newton was changed as it passed through the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, et al, into an atheistic-humanism.<sup>1</sup> In 1789 the New Republic was established and the monarchy of France was deposed. Soon after the monarchy was deposed a new religion was established to express the Humanism of the leaders of the revolution. Rousseau had made it clear in his writings that to get rid of monarchy you must get rid of the church as well.<sup>2</sup> On 7 May 1794, the French Convention declared the official religion of the New Republic would be the “Cult of the Supreme Being,” with mankind being that supreme being.<sup>3</sup> A new temple was built in the style of the Pantheon with statues of the new “gods” around the perimeter. Those “gods” included Voltaire, Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin and Mirabeau.<sup>4</sup>

In Germany the Enlightenment, known as *Aufklärung*, was marked by skepticism and Biblical criticism<sup>5</sup> that would become hallmarks of German thought from that point on. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) marks a paradigm shift in German theology that is characterized by

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<sup>1</sup> *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents*, 54.

<sup>2</sup> Adam Zamoyski, *Holy Madness: Romantics, Patriots and Revolutionaries 1776-1871* (New York: Viking Pub., 1999), 63-66.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>5</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *The Making of Modern German Christology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub., 1994). Lessing, Reimarus, Hess and Herder are examples of such critics.

a non-supernatural belief system and a reliance on natural laws and the evolutionary process to explain history and mankind's relationship to metaphysics. Lewis Beck describes this change in philosophy from Newton to Kant as follows:

Newton had formulated the laws governing the state of the solar system after it left, presumably, the hands of the Creator; Kant took a giant step forward and tried to show how, solely under Newton's laws, the solar system and the galaxy came to assume their present state, **evolving from a chaos of matter to which they will return, to be generated again under the same Newtonian only laws.**<sup>6</sup>

The *Critique of Pure Reason*, published first in 1781 and revised in 1788, is the masterpiece of Kant's career that stands as the foundation of modern liberal theology. Kant was a naturalist, and philosopher whose favorite author was Rousseau.<sup>7</sup> He was also a devotee of David Hume, the Scottish skeptic and atheist who doubted the existence of the material world. Kant applied Hume's skepticism to the human thought process in "*Critique*." He says, "I openly confess that a reminder by David Hume was the very thing which many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber and gave my investigations in the fields of speculative philosophy quite a new direction."<sup>8</sup> Kant's "*Critique*" is an examination of the way in which the human mind functions from stimulus, to thought, to proof. By applying Hume's skepticism to the thought process Kant concludes that anything that comes into the mind by way of the senses is untrustworthy. Will Durant sums up Kant's theory as follows:

Sensation is organized stimulus, perception is organized sensation, conception is organized perception, science is organized knowledge, wisdom is organized life: each is a greater degree of order, and sequence, and unity. Whence this order, this sequence, this unity? Not from the things themselves; for they are known to us only by the sensations that come through a thousand channels at once in disorderly multitude; it is our purpose that put order and sequence and unity upon

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<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Kant: Selections*, ed. Lewis White Beck, trans. Lewis White Beck, The Great Philosophers (New York, London: Scribner/ Macmillan, 1988), 2. Emphasis is mine.

<sup>7</sup> Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers* (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishers, 1926), 285.

<sup>8</sup> Kant, 159.

this importunate lawlessness; it is ourselves, our personalities, our minds that bring light upon these seas.<sup>9</sup>

In short, Kant was a Skeptic about the possibility of knowing anything through the senses. In other words, because everything we sense is distorted by the mind of every individual who senses it, nothing can be proven to be what our senses tell us it is. Every individual changes the original object of sensation into his own personal conception of that original object by the function of the human thinking process. Therefore, everything that comes to the mind through the senses is a distortion of the original and ultimately unknowable and unproveable. Kant was not skeptical of material existence as was Hume, he simply says that we can't prove what the original was. Therefore, everything that enters the mind through sensory perception must be doubted. That leaves only things which were in the mind at birth, or which enter the mind by some way other than the senses, as trustworthy. At this point you might think that Kant has arrived at the same position of faith in God through "innate ideas" as did Rene Descartes and John Locke.<sup>10</sup> However, Kant found no "innate idea" of God in his thinking.

When applied to theology this principle rules out all dogma and "proofs" of God. The Scriptures become meaningless as does Church tradition. Kant was not an atheist; he simply believed that everything about God was beyond proof and must be believed on the basis of faith alone. The three arguments for God's existence, physico-theological, cosmological and ontological, are all shown by Kant to be false because of their derivation by the human senses.<sup>11</sup> Kant says,

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<sup>9</sup> Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers*, 295-296.

<sup>10</sup> *The Oxford History of Western Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Kenny (Oxford, New York, London: Oxford University Press, 1994), 123-130.

<sup>11</sup> Kant, 137-148.



The same discussion as to the positive advantage to be derived from the critical principles of pure reason might be repeated with regard to the concept of God and of the simple nature of our soul; but for the sake of brevity I shall pass this by. I am not allowed even to assume God, freedom, and immortality for the sake of the necessary practical employment of my reason, if I cannot deprive speculative reason of its pretensions of transcendent insights, because reason, in order to arrive at these, must use principles which are intended originally for objects of possible experience only. If in spite of this, these principles are applied to what cannot be an object of experience, it really changes this into an appearance and thus renders all practical extension of pure reason impossible. I had, therefore, to deny *knowledge* in order to make room for *faith*.<sup>12</sup>

By denying knowledge Kant means that he denies the proof of everything that is thought of as Christian faith, but allows that people can believe it on the basis of faith alone. In essence, the Christian faith is left hanging in mid air with no historical proof, or documents, to demonstrate its veracity. All human religions are placed on an equal footing with nothing but the faith of the believers to support them. The faith of the animist in the jungles of the Amazon is just as valid as that of Luther or Calvin. The facts of history are no longer facts, they are just “appearances,”<sup>13</sup> human distortions of whatever the original might have been.

Since Kant’s religion could not rely upon anything derived from the senses, he sought a source for faith that was transcendental, or not determined by the senses. This would have to be an innate knowledge that was universal to every human being. Kant found this source of faith in “moral worth.” The fact that mankind is civilized on every continent, and that civilization depends upon men acting in ways that uphold the law, is proof to Kant that there is an innate sense in every person of morality. This innate knowledge of right and wrong is determined to be “transcendental knowledge,” and the only true basis of religion. In Kant’s *Foundations of the Metaphysic of Morals*, published in 1785, Kant poses three propositions that must guide everyone’s search for “moral worth.”

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 103. Emphasis is Kant’s.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 102.

Thus the first proposition of morality is that to have genuine moral worth, an action must be done from duty. The second proposition is: An action done from duty does not have its moral worth in the purpose which is to be achieved through it, but in the maxim whereby it is determined. . . The third principle, as a consequence of the two preceding, I would express as follows: *Duty is the necessity to do an action from respect for law.*<sup>14</sup>

The “duty” that achieves “moral worth” in Kant’s thinking is an action that is done without sympathy, desire or emotion. Acts of charity for the poor, done because of Christian love for your fellow man, cannot be a proper motive for “moral worth,” because there is the possibility of the act having been done with some other thought in mind, such as the hope of a future reward. In Kant’s metaphysics, performing an act of charity done out of duty, when, in fact, there was no inclination to do so, other than an innately known universal law, was the only way to achieve good. So the “cheerful giver” is condemned and the spiteful giver achieves “moral worth.”<sup>15</sup>

The curiosity is that Kant’s secular transcendent universal law, innately known by everyman, sounds strikingly similar to the “Golden Rule” given by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. The only true difference is that Christ demands that acts of charity be done from a heart of love.<sup>16</sup> Kant says.

But what kind of law can that be, the conception of which must determine the will without reference to the expected result? Under this condition alone can the will be called absolutely good without qualification. Since I have robbed the will of all impulses which could come to it from obedience to any law, nothing remains to serve as a principle of the will except conformity to law as such. That is, **I ought never to act in such a way that I could not also will that my maxim should be a universal law.**<sup>17</sup>

According to Kant, everything that I do I should be willing that every other person on earth do as well, especially in regards to their treatment of me. He calls this the “categorical

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 253. Emphasis is mine.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 22:37-38

<sup>17</sup> Kant, 254. Emphasis is mine.

imperative.” In other words, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,”<sup>18</sup> but don’t do it out of love, do it because it is demanded by innate law. Kant argues that this universal law is the only proof that there is a God.<sup>19</sup> Yet, the law-giver is absent. How do you have a universal law without a universal law-giver? God is not a person or a personality to Kant; instead, God is a primeval force that is the sum total of all reality.<sup>20</sup> In many ways Kant’s theology resembles Buddhism. God is the unknowable and unproveable primeval force in the universe. Acting in a way that has “moral worth” (karma) is all that matters.

To Kant, Jesus Christ is not God, he is a moral teacher, and “salvation” is hoped for as a reward for living a good life,<sup>21</sup> making it “salvation by works.” But, herein lies another problem. To whom and how is that reward granted? It is hard to conceive of a personal relationship with a primeval force. So, what is the reward for “moral worth?” And, who grants it? If there is neither heaven nor hell, what does it matter if a person doesn’t gain “moral worth?” Is there a neutral, non-rewarding but non-punishing eternity for a life of non-moral worth?

Just as Sir Isaac Newton marks the beginning of the Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant marks the end of the Enlightenment and the beginning of the Modern Age. Newton was a supernaturalist. Kant was not. Newton was a devout deist. Kant’s deism more closely resembles the Pantheism of Spinoza.<sup>22</sup> Kant was not the first skeptic, nor would he be the last. What he did, however, was to propose a philosophical justification for his skepticism that seemed to have proof in the laws of nature. It is no wonder there was an outcry from the German Church that Kant had killed God. Durant says:

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<sup>18</sup> Matthew 7:12a

<sup>19</sup> Friedrich Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*, trans. Friedrich Paulsen (New York: Fredrick Unger, 1963), 221.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Kant, 315. “Therefore morals is not really the doctrine of how to make ourselves happy but how we are to be worthy of happiness. Only if religion is added to it can the hope arise of someday participating in happiness in proportion as we endeavored not to be unworthy of it.”

<sup>22</sup> *The Oxford History of Western Philosophy*, 146.

The most eloquent and incisive portions of the book had argued that the objects of faith – a free and immortal soul, a benevolent Creator – could never be proved by reason; so religion was “saved”! No wonder the priests of Germany protested madly against this salvation and revenged themselves by calling their dogs Immanuel Kant.<sup>23</sup>

The impact of Kant’s thinking on German theology, and all of Western Christian theology for that matter, can hardly be over-estimated. Christian ministers from all over Europe and America went to Germany to learn theology from the followers of Kant. In the 1850’s and 1860’s Harvard, Yale and Oxford began modeling their theology lectures on that of the German schools.<sup>24</sup> Will Durant says:

Never has a system of thought so dominated an epoch as the philosophy of Immanuel Kant dominated the thought of the nineteenth century. . . The philosophy of Schopenhauer rose to brief power on the romantic wave that broke in 1848; the theory of evolution swept everything before it after 1859; and the exhilarating iconoclasm of Nietzsche won the center of the philosophic stage as the century came to close. But these were secondary and surface developments; underneath them the strong current of the Kantian movement flowed on, always wider and deeper; until today its essential theorems are the axioms of all mature philosophy.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers*, 299.

<sup>24</sup> William R. Hutchison, *American Protestant Thought in the Liberal Era* (Lanham, New York, London: University of America Press, 1968), 137.

<sup>25</sup> Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers*, 276.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RISE OF UNIFORMITARIANISM

Uniformitarianism is the underlying principle upon which the theory of evolution is based. In essence, it is the belief that a gradual process of change takes place in nature, according to the laws of physics.<sup>1</sup> In biology this gradual change causes new species to arise. In geology this process is responsible for stratigraphy, orogeny and soil formation. The principle is sometimes stated simply, “the present is the key to the past.”<sup>2</sup>

During the Enlightenment empirical science was seen as the key to understanding the universe. Spinoza, Whiston, Burnet, Leibniz, Woodward and others had all proposed theories doubting the literalness of the Genesis account of creation. Skepticism and criticism of the church and Scriptures increased rapidly, and with that criticism came new “scientific” answers to the question of cosmology. The increase of knowledge in the fields of biology and geology would provide the basis of most of the new cosmology.

J. O. de la Mettrie published *Man a Machine* in 1748, in which he postulates that man has evolved from lower forms and lives strictly according to the laws of nature.<sup>3</sup> If the universe is a machine, then man is simply another cog, no different than any other species. That same year the posthumous work of Benoit de Maillet was published, the *New System of the World: or discourses with Telliamed*. (Telliamed is de Maillet spelled backwards.) De Maillet speculated that mankind had descended from sea creatures.<sup>4</sup> As proof he offered tales from sailors of sea-

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<sup>1</sup> Isaac Asimov, *Asimov's Biographical Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*, 2nd ed. (Garden City, New York: Double Day, 1981), 194.

<sup>2</sup> A phrase coined by geologist Archibald Geikie.

<sup>3</sup> Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of the Theories of Culture* (Walnut Creek, Ca.: Alta Mira Press, 2001), 22.

<sup>4</sup> Gabriel Gohau, *A History of Geology*, ed. Albert V. Carozzi and Marguerite Carozzi (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 71.

monsters with human traits. In order for this change to have taken place de Maillet reasoned that the earth was covered with a vast sea for 500,000 years and then gradually receded over hundreds of centuries.<sup>5</sup>

In 1749 Georges Louis Leclerc Comte de Buffon published *Natural History*, which proposed a new “theory of nature” based on the Newtonian laws of physics. According to Buffon, the earth as we know it today has been gradually evolving from chaos to its present condition after an impact with a comet that was circling the sun in ages past.<sup>6</sup> The present state of the earth’s surface has been caused by deposition and erosion as a vast ocean receded in a slow and measured way. There is no mention in Buffon’s work of supernatural creation or miraculous intervention.<sup>7</sup> The earth has simply followed the laws of nature in its development, including the rise of plant and animal life.<sup>8</sup> Buffon’s assertion of evolution of plants and animals was made more than 100 years before Darwin’s *Origin of the Species*.<sup>9</sup> Because Buffon worked for the king of France as the director of the Jardin du Roi, he was careful in his speculation about the age of the earth. He placed the age at 75,000 years in his public manuscripts, which he could get past the royal printer. However, in his private manuscripts he speculates that the earth is at least 3,000,000 years old.<sup>10</sup>

The non-supernatural view of mankind as an animal who follows natural laws was furthered by Paul Henri Thiry, Baron D’Holbach (M. Mirabeau), in 1770, in his work, *The system of Nature, or The Laws of the Physical and Moral World*. There is no room for God or miracles in D’Holbach’s work He said:

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>6</sup> Phillip R. Sloan, and John Lyon., *From Natural History to the History of Nature: Readings from Buffon and His Critics*, ed. Phillip R. Sloan and John Lyon, trans. Phillip R. Sloan and John Lyon (Notre Dame, Paris: Notre Dame University Press, 1981), 131.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Singer, *A History of Biology* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1951), 288.

<sup>9</sup> *Origin of the Species* was published by Darwin in 1859.

<sup>10</sup> Gohau, *A History of Geology*.

Man is the work of nature; he exists within nature and is subject to nature's laws. . . . There is neither accident nor chance in nature; there is no effect without sufficient cause, and all causes act according to fixed laws. . . . Man is therefore not free for a single instant of his life.”<sup>11</sup>

So, in the middle of the eighteenth century support for an uniformitarian system of biology and geology was gaining acceptance. The work of two men would make that view almost universal by the second decade of the nineteenth century. The first was Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet de Lamarck, known as the founder of modern biology. Lamarck's contribution lay specifically in two areas; classification and evolutionary theory. Lamarck worked for Buffon at the *Jardin du Roi* as director of *Jardin des Plantes*, before it was taken over by the National Convention. His work, *Zoological Philosophy* was published in 1809. His stated purpose in writing was to put an end to the theory of “special creation and the fixity of the species.”<sup>12</sup> According to Lamarck all species have evolved by innumerable changes so gradual as to be almost imperceptible. Yet if all species were laid out together there would be a continuous chain “beginning with Monads and ending with Man.”<sup>13</sup> His theory of the inheritance of acquired traits was rejected, but the idea of gradual evolution was accepted.

James Hutton, the other contributor and the father of modern geology, published *Theory of the Earth, with Proofs and Illustrations*, in 1795. Hutton was a very careful scientist who made his judgments from observation rather than speculation. He was the first to correctly classify rock and strata formations as igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary and to show that rocks have the ability to be transformed by pressure and temperature. Like many others before him, Hutton based his theory on the uniformitarian principle. Geikie said:

Hutton started with the grand conception that the past history of our globe must be explained by what can be seen to be happening now, or to have happened only

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<sup>11</sup> Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of the Theories of Culture*, 22-23.

<sup>12</sup> J. B. Lamarck, *Zoological Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Elliot (New York: Hafner Pub. Co., 1963), xxx.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, xvi.

recently. The dominant idea in his philosophy is that the present is the key to the past. We have grown so familiar with this idea, it enters so intimately into all our conceptions in regard to geological questions, that we do not readily realize the genius of the man who first grasped it with unerring insight, and made it the chief cornerstone of modern geology.<sup>14</sup>

So the nineteenth century began with the scientific world believing in a very old earth and the changing of species from lower to higher forms, yet having no mechanism to make that change. That mechanism for change would be supplied by Charles Darwin in 1859 with *Origin of the Species*. Darwin's contribution was not as the originator of the theory of evolution, but rather, as the originator of a proposed mechanism by which that evolution could take place. His beneficial mutations theory swept the Continent in the 1860's because the idea of evolution was already generally agreed upon.

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<sup>14</sup> Archibald Geikie, *The Founders of Geology* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1905), 299.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE WEDDING OF UNIFORMITARIANISM AND GERMAN THEOLOGY

In 1754 Immanuel Kant published *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*, in which he speculated that the solar system had been formed gradually by the Newtonian laws of gravity. This became known as the Kantian-Laplace theory.<sup>1</sup> Kant's work relies heavily on the work of Buffon.<sup>2</sup> Like la Mettrie, Buffon and D'Holbach, Kant was a non-supernaturalist in his view of world history. However, in contrast to Buffon, Kant does see a teleological purpose in creation,<sup>3</sup> which is in keeping with his view of reward for a life of "moral worth." According to the Kantian-Laplace theory, the world has progressed slowly in a step-by-step process from chaos to the present, and it will continue until ultimate perfection is reached.<sup>4</sup> In this step-by-step process Kant expresses his support for the view of uniformitarianism and the gradual evolution of plants and animals including mankind. He said:

It is evident, that the knowledge of natural objects as they are at present, would still leave the desire for knowledge of them as they have been in the former times, and of the series of changes they have undergone in order to attain their present condition in every locale. The history of nature, which we still almost wholly lack, would teach us the changes of the earth's form, and likewise those which the earth's creatures (plants and animals) have undergone through natural changes, and their alterations which have thence taken place away from the original form of the stem genus. This presumably would trace back a great many apparently different species, and thus convert the presently greatly extended formal system of the description of nature into a physical system for the understanding.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kant., 2.

<sup>2</sup> Sloan, *From Natural History to the History of Nature: Readings from Buffon and His Critics*.

<sup>3</sup> Ernst Cassirer, *Kant's Life and Thought*, ed. James Haden (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1981), 47.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-48.

<sup>5</sup> Sloan, *From Natural History to the History of Nature: Readings from Buffon and His Critics*, 1. Kant's comments concerning Buffon's work quoted by Sloan and Lyon.

This a priori assumption of uniformitarian change is an underlying principle behind Kant's major work, *A Critique of Pure Reason*, which would be published 17 years later. The lack of a supernatural creation and the view that God is a primeval force had its source in the works of la Mettrie, Buffon, D'Holbach, Diderot, et. al. But the marriage of that view to nineteenth century German theology is the work of Immanuel Kant.

The difference between the Orthodox and Kant's views of God has to do with personality. Both sides would agree that God is transcendent, that is, "other worldly." God is not available for us to measure, weigh or touch. He is beyond empirical methods of quantification. The difference is to be found in each side's view of God's personality. Is God a transcendent person with attributes, such as omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence, or not? If he is, then miracles would be normal in any history that pertains to God. If God is transcendent and non-personal, i.e. just a spirit of reality that somehow inhabits the universe, then he has no attributes. Indeed, he is incapable of having attributes, because attributes pertain only to persons. Intervening in human affairs would be impossible and things like creation *ex-nihilo* and the inspiration of Scriptures would be out of the question. Prophecy and answering prayers would fall into this category as well.

This transcendent/non-personal God is the God of Immanuel Kant. He has no ability to operate other than by following prescribed laws of nature. He must operate by uniformitarian principles. In fact, using a personal pronoun such as he to describe this God is a misnomer, yet this deception is maintained throughout the nineteenth century by German theologians.

Even though most people believe that Deism died out in the nineteenth century, what really happened was a transition among deists from belief in a transcendent/personal God to belief in a transcendent/non-personal God who is equated with the laws of nature, or just

nature. Throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century German theology would follow Kant's view of God and uniformitarian principle. In general, miracles would be denied, and a human explanation was sought. Christ was viewed as a man on a mission to reform society, and his deity was symbolic, not reality. This is the non-supernatural point of view that pervades German theology from the time of Kant onwards.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE TRANSCENDENT NON-PERSONAL GOD FROM KANT TO SCHWEITZER

One reaction to Kant's teaching was German Romanticism typified by Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834). Schleiermacher studied Kant's philosophy for two years at Halle beginning in 1787. The Kantian trends in Schleiermacher's philosophy are easily seen in his concept of God as a non-personal spirit of reality and his rejection of all Christian dogma.<sup>1</sup> His emphasis was on piety, just like his mentor Kant. One researcher has characterized his teaching as Post-Kantian Spinozism.<sup>2</sup>

However, unlike Kant, Schleiermacher still sought to have a relationship with this spirit of reality through a "feeling of absolute dependence" on the existence of God apart from all knowledge except for a keen self-consciousness and God-consciousness.<sup>3</sup> It is no wonder that Schleiermacher, like Kant, was accused of pantheism.<sup>4</sup> His major work, *The Christian Faith*, (1822), is an attempt to separate the Christ of faith from the Jesus of history. The end product is a theology with no doctrine, and a faith based only on feeling.

The successor to Kant as the leader of German philosophy/theology was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) who became the chair of the department of Philosophy at the University of Berlin in 1818. This was the most prestigious teaching position of that time. Hegel's famous publication, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1806) is an answer to and an

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<sup>1</sup> Julia A. Lamm, *The Living God: Schleiermacher's Theological Appropriation of Spinoza*, ed. Julia A. Lamm, trans. Julia A. Lamm (University Park: Penn State University, 1996), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1999), 17.

<sup>4</sup> Lamm, *The Living God: Schleiermacher's Theological Appropriation of Spinoza*, 4.

expansion on Kant's *Critique*, in which Hegel continues the evolutionary, non-supernaturalist philosophy.<sup>5</sup> The opaqueness of the writing style makes it difficult reading. Caird characterizes it as the "stringing together of senseless and extravagant masses of words."<sup>6</sup> Even Hegel is said to have complained that "only one man understands me, and even he does not."<sup>7</sup> His other major works were *Logic* (1812-16) and *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences* (1817).

Hegel's influence was mainly felt through his philosophy of dialectic history. Fichte summarized and over-simplified Hegel's philosophy as Thesis, Anti-Thesis, Synthesis.<sup>8</sup> Durant describes this system as follows:

The movement of evolution is a continuous development of oppositions, and their merging and reconciliation. . . . For not only do thoughts develop and evolve according to this 'dialectical movement,' but things do equally; every condition of affairs contains a contraction which evolution must resolve by a reconciling of unity.<sup>9</sup>

This idea did not originate with Hegel; in fact, he borrowed the idea of the evolutionary development of society from the Scottish economist Sir James Steuart.<sup>10</sup> Hegel applied this theory of dialectic development to his re-writing of history from the Garden of Eden to his day. He theorized that the Garden of Eden was not Paradise, but simply a state of pre-historic life where living was simple and food was bountiful. Mankind was a hunter-gatherer with no personal possessions. There was a unity between nature and spirit in this original state and mankind was in touch with the spirit of the universe, yet things were not perfect. When conditions of famine arose, mankind resorted to magic spells to overcome nature. This created a class of shamans and witch-doctors who now had authority because of their special contact

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<sup>5</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, trans. P. Christopher Smith (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1976), 36.

<sup>6</sup> Edward Caird, *Hegel*, trans. Edward Caird, Blackwood Philosophical Studies (London: J. B. Lippincott, 1907), 5.

<sup>7</sup> Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the Greater Philosophers*, 320.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>10</sup> Clark Butler, *G. W. F. Hegel* (Boston: Twayne Pub., 1977), 22.

with the spirit that was lacking in others.<sup>11</sup> And so a separation occurred between nature and spirit, and power was found only in certain individuals. According to Hegel, the history of the Bible is simply the history of conflict and resolution as seen in the rise of special shamans like Abraham, Moses and Jesus, who were granted special authority because of their contact with the spirit.<sup>12</sup>

This spirit is not God in the sense of a personal being, as taught by Orthodox Christianity. Rather it is the Spirit of the Age, or the Absolute,<sup>13</sup> which is equal to the universe. Hegel objected when he was charged with pantheism, because the Absolute was not material in Hegel's view, it was directly akin to the logos of the Greeks; it was thought, it was knowledge, it was education.<sup>14</sup> That is why Hegel would say, "Our universities and schools are our churches."<sup>15</sup>

Hegel saw all of human history as the evolutionary struggle of mankind to re-connect through education, on an individual basis, with the spirit of the Absolute that he had lost when he granted that privilege to shaman and witch-doctors. In so doing mankind becomes God.

It is characteristic of Hegel's Christianity that it requires man to abandon the guilty standpoint of man as a sinner and to rise to the standpoint of God Himself. Hegelian Christianity is comprehended from the divine side of the divine-human relationship. It requires man to overcome the religious alienation which made him define himself as *other* than God. . . For if man becomes God, God exists, and so atheism is ruled out. Man becomes God through becoming infinite, through an Incarnation in which he identifies himself anticipatively with the universe and thus through a recovery of the prenatal Oceanic feeling of oneness with the world.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 34-39.

<sup>13</sup> John Edward Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path toward Dialectical Humanism*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, London, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 66.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Butler, 139.

So, was Jesus Christ the God in Hegel's view? This is where his teaching becomes opaque. Hegel would answer with resounding "Yes," and claim that the sacrifice of Jesus redeemed mankind from their sins.<sup>17</sup> David Strauss, a disciple of Hegel, explains the Hegelian view of Christ as, "The concept of the divine idea includes in itself not merely a realization of God in the self-replenishing totality of individuals but also its complete appearance in one individual."<sup>18</sup> The deity of Jesus Christ in Hegel's view was in his perfect reunification of the God-Man relationship, which (through knowledge,) is obtainable by every human,<sup>19</sup> allowing all to become part of the Kingdom of Heaven (or realize their deity). At times, Hegel sounds like a conservative evangelical!

For Hegel, that evolutionary process of regaining God was about to be realized by Napoleon's conquest and the destruction of the established church. Even though Hegel had been forced to flee from his home in Jena in 1806 by Napoleon's forces, he remained a staunch supporter of Napoleon all his life.<sup>20</sup> He believed that the establishment of a modern state run by an enlightened despot would realize the dream begun in 1789 by the French Revolution, and would finally bring the Kingdom of God to Earth in the form of an enlightened society.<sup>21</sup>

Hegel's influence on German theology was immense. And, because his teachings were so hard to comprehend, his followers were divided into right and left wing groups. Both groups, however, continued to apply Hegel's theory of the dialectical evolution of religion with a non-supernatural Biblical criticism. Those on the left became atheists and headed some of the most famous non-Christian movements of the nineteenth and twentieth century. Among

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 125-126.

<sup>18</sup> David Friedrich Strauss, *In Defense of My Life of Jesus, against the Hegelians.*, ed. Marilyn Chapin Massey, trans. Marilyn Chapin Massey (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1983), 15.

<sup>19</sup> Butler.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 148.

them were David Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud.<sup>22</sup> Their works lie beyond the scope of this thesis.

Those in the moderate group formed the schools that are now commonly referred to as German Higher Criticism, applying the evolutionary theory to Biblical criticism. It was the teaching of these schools that provoked the Fundamentalist's response in the United States, and are of interest to this thesis.

### *F. C. Baur and the Tübingen School*

Since the Reformation, Biblical criticism has been divided into Higher and Lower classes. Lower Criticism is concerned with finding the original reading of the text, or as close to the original as is possible. It is sometimes referred to as Textual Criticism. Higher Criticism, on the other hand, is concerned with the historical background of the text. It is concerned with things like authorship, date and reason for writing. It is sometimes termed Biblical Introduction, or Prolegomena.

Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792-1860) marks a turning point in German theology and Biblical criticism. There had been many critics before Baur, but he was the first to create a complete history of the New Testament based on the premise of higher, or historical criticism. Harris says, "It would not be too much to say, that after Strauss's *Life of Jesus* the Tübingen School exerted the greatest influence on the course of theology in the nineteenth century."<sup>23</sup>

Baur began his training at the Benedictine cloister of Blaubeuren where his father had been the dean of the seminary. He went on to study at Maulbronn, and finally at Tübingen. In

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<sup>22</sup> *The Oxford History of Western Philosophy*, 201-202.

<sup>23</sup> Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1975), 149.



1817 Baur joined the faculty at Blaubeuren. With the death of E. G. Bengel in 1826, the faculty of Tübingen underwent a reform that reflected the more modern theology of Hegel, and distanced itself from the older style of Orthodox teaching.<sup>24</sup> Baur was asked to take the chair of the history department that year, and held the position until his death in 1860. His greatest work, *History of the Christian Church*, was published in five volumes. The first two were published by Baur between 1853-1859, the last three were published posthumously by his son-in-law between 1861-1863.

Baur held three a priori assumptions in his critical method of Bible study. First, dogma could never be asserted in place of critical analysis. If any dogma was to be believed it had to be arrived at by critical analysis.<sup>25</sup> Second; no event could be validated as historically accurate unless it fell within the bounds of empirical science.<sup>26</sup> This automatically rules out miracles, because to believe them you must accept the supernatural, which cannot be measured by empirical science. At the same time, it rules out “inspiration” as impossible to verify and therefore incredible. Third; one must never forget the universal, or the “tendency” of the text.<sup>27</sup>

This “tendency criticism”<sup>28</sup> became Baur’s trademark. It was, in fact, his application of Hegel’s principle of dialectical historical development applied to the New Testament.<sup>29</sup> Baur saw the development of the New Testament as the conflict between Paul and his Gentile oriented religion, and the Apostles with their Jewish, Jerusalem based religion. The result of the conflict was the synthesis found in the Catholic Church of the third and fourth centuries.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Roy A. Harrisville, and Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture: Theology and Historical-Critical Method from Spinoza to Kasemann* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 111.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Harris, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur.*, xi.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, xii, 156, 168-172.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii- xvi.

In order to justify this view Baur made a few adjustments to the Canon. Romans, Galatians, and I, II Corinthians were attributed to Paul as his authentic writings. The other nine epistles normally attributed to Paul were considered “unauthentic,”<sup>31</sup> mainly because they did not fit the “tendency” that Baur saw in Acts and the four “authentic” Pauline epistles. Baur’s “tendency” was to see conflict and resolution by New Testament documents being written with the purpose of countering another New Testament document from the opposing camp.<sup>32</sup> This dialectical development continued through the third century and included the writings of the Post-Apostolic fathers. Since Baur did not believe that inspiration was possible, the writings of the Post-Apostolic fathers had the same authority as those of the canon. But the canonical books were chosen on the basis of their being able to balance out the Pauline-Apostolic conflict and form a Catholic canon.<sup>33</sup>

For instance, Baur dates Paul’s four “authentic” epistles between AD 50-60. Revelation is seen as a Jewish counter to Paul’s Gentile epistles (AD70). All other canonical books, except I, II Thessalonians, Baur dates to the middle or last half of the second century by pseudepigraphical authors. Luke is seen as Pauline (AD130-140). Matthew is seen as countering Luke (AD135-140). Mark is seen as mediating (AD140-150). John is seen as authored by the Montanists (AD170).<sup>34</sup> The end product is a synthetic Catholic canon.

A brief look at Baur’s work, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, his life, his work, his epistles, his doctrine*, will demonstrate his scientific method of historical criticism. In the introduction Baur states the “tendency” he intends to follow through Paul’s life and works; that

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 197.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 200.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 256-263.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., See Baur’s chart of dates and purposes, or “tendencies” on page 237.

is, the continuing conflict between Paul and the Jewish Apostles.<sup>35</sup> This tendency leads Baur to conclude that the first half of Acts was written by someone who was trying to glorify the Jewish Apostles and the Jewish Gospel. Many statements in these chapters are in conflict with the four authentic epistles of Paul (Romans, Galatians, I, II Corinthians,) and therefore, someone is lying.

As in the Gospel history, historical criticism has here two accounts before it, which differ from each other and must be weighed and compared, in order to get from them what purely historical matter they contain. These are the accounts given in the Acts of the Apostles and the historical data to be found in the Apostles own Epistles. . . Between the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles, as far as the historical contents of the latter can be compared with the former, there will be found in general the same relation as that between the Gospel of John and the Synoptical Gospels. The comparison of these two sources leads us to the conclusion that, considering the great difference between the two statements, historical truth must be entirely on one side or entirely on the other.<sup>36</sup>

This assumption leads Baur to conclude that it is the writer of Acts of the Apostles who is distorting the historical facts in order to make a theological point. Baur believes there could not have been the conflict between the Apostles and the Sanhedrin as described in Acts, because the Church found favor with the people and attended Temple services on a daily basis. The miracles ascribed to the Apostles did not happen, but were recorded to enhance the reputation of the Apostles. The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira were a coincidence that was distorted by the author to magnify Peter's ministry. Peter and John did not heal the lame man at the temple. Barnabas was not sent from the Jerusalem Church to Antioch and in fact never lived in Jerusalem. Gamaliel didn't speak out to restrain the Sanhedrin,<sup>37</sup> etc.

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<sup>35</sup> Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, His Life, His Work, His Epistles, His Doctrine: A Contribution to the Critical History of Primitive Christianity*, trans. Dr. Eduard Zeller and Rev. A. Menzies (London, Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1876), 3-5.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 15-35.

What is the scientific basis for these critical-historical conclusions? It is simply the three a priori assumptions made by Baur before his work began. And, the most critical of these is the assumption that the miraculous must be ruled out in every case. The source of this assumption can be traced to two factors. The first factor is the incorporation of the “Myth” factor which Baur learned from his one-time student, David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874). In 1835, Strauss published *The Life of Jesus, Critically Examined*. This book caused an outrage among the conservative community because it denied the historical truth of the New Testament and the deity of Jesus Christ. Strauss did so on the basis of what he called the “Myth” factor.

According to Strauss, there are three kinds of myth found in the New Testament. The first is Evangelical Myth, relating to the narratives concerning Jesus life. The second is Pure Myth, relating to the Messianic ideas concerning Jesus and the Jewish expectations of a Messiah. And the third is Historical Myth, or incidents that were seized upon by the Church and distorted into fantastic stories for the purpose of dogma.<sup>38</sup> When combined, there is nothing left in the New Testament (except a portion of the Sermon on the Mount,) that Strauss considered to be historically accurate.<sup>39</sup> Baur acknowledged to Strauss that he had made use of his “Myth” principle in a private letter to Strauss, yet he denied Strauss’ influence publicly.<sup>40</sup>

The second factor in forming Baur’s assumption of non-supernaturalism was his incorporation of Hegel’s dialectical history based upon Hegel’s concept of God as a non-personal spirit.<sup>41</sup> However, Baur broke with Hegel in the application of this concept, and instead

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<sup>38</sup> McGrath, 60.

<sup>39</sup> Harrisville, *The Bible in Modern Culture: Theology and Historical-Critical Method from Spinoza to Kasemann*, 116.

<sup>40</sup> Harris, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur*, 193. Compare this statement with, Baur, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, His Life, His Work, His Epistles, His Doctrine: A Contribution to the Critical History of Primitive Christianity*, 2-3.

<sup>41</sup> Harrisville, *The Bible in Modern Culture: Theology and Historical-Critical Method from Spinoza to Kasemann*, 114.

followed Strauss's lead in denying that a person can be the perfect unification of the God-Man.<sup>42</sup> Baur denied the Deity of Christ, denied the possibility of the miraculous being true, denied the resurrection, and denied even the possibility of the inspiration of Scripture.<sup>43</sup> All of this is the logical conclusion of someone with a belief in a non-personal God, combined with a belief in rational empiricism expressed in a theory of uniformitarian evolution. If his a priori assumptions are true, Baur's conclusions seem perfectly acceptable. However, what Baur taught was a complete denial of all Christian doctrine and a rejection of Orthodox truth.

The impact of Baur's work has been every bit as immense as that of Hegel. Other New Testament commentators who followed Baur's a priori assumptions and wrote in a historical-critical style include Alexander Schweizer, Volkmar, Keim, Biedermann, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Holsten, Hausrath, Lipsius, Pfleiderer, Albercht Ritschl, Harnack, Herrmann, Johannes Weiss, Albert Eichorn, Gunkel, Bousset and Bultmann.<sup>44</sup> They all resort to a denial of the supernatural in their work, calling into question the veracity of the Scriptures; and rely on a historical-critical method of investigation, based on an uniformitarian evolutionary credo and a transcendent non-personal God, who is, in fact, nature.

Baur also influenced Old Testament commentators in the same way he did New Testament commentators. According to Harris, Baur's influence is directly seen in the works of Graf, Wellhausen, Duhm and Budde.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Harris, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur*, 156.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 156, ix.

Harrisville, *The Bible in Modern Culture: Theology and Historical-Critical Method from Spinoza to Kasemann*, 114-116.

<sup>44</sup> Harris, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur*, 250.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

### *Julius Wellhausen and the JEDP Theory*

Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918,) gives credit to a long line of predecessors who influenced his work, including Karl Heinrich Graf (1815-1869), who normally shares honors with Wellhausen as a co-founder of the J. E. D. P. theory. But, the man to whom Wellhausen gives credit for the strongest influence is Wilhelm Vatke<sup>46</sup> (1806-1882).

While an assistant professor of Hebrew studies at the University of Berlin in 1835, Vatke published *Biblical Theology Delineated Scientifically: The Religion of the Old Testament Developed According to the Canonical Books*. Cross says, "As a devout student of Hegel he described this dialectical in terms of thesis, antithesis and synthesis."<sup>47</sup> Vatke believed that Israel passed through the stages of Paganism, Propheticism and Legalism in its development.<sup>48</sup> Blenkinsopp also points out Vatke's dependence upon Hegel's philosophy of history; ". . . is already apparent in Vatke's work which divided the history into pre-prophetic, prophetic and post-prophetic, an arrangement which allowed for easy accommodation to Hegel's philosophy of History."<sup>49</sup> It was this same Hegelian philosophy of history that influenced Wellhausen's work, and for which he gives credit to Vatke.<sup>50</sup>

Harrison says of Wellhausen's work, "Starting from a Positivist premise that religion was merely an offshoot or product of human cultural activity, he applied the evolutionary philosophical concepts of Hegelianism to a study of the faith of Israel."<sup>51</sup> Many scholars choose

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<sup>46</sup> Julius Wellhausen, "Prolegomena to the History of Israel, with a Re-Print of the Article "Israel" from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*," (The Project Gutenberg EBook, 2003), 25.

<sup>47</sup> Frank Moore Cross, "The History of Israelite Religion," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 31, no. 3 (2005): 43.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Old Testament Theology and the Jewish-Christian Connection," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 28, no. 1 (1984): 8.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 8,9. Also see Cross, p. 44.

<sup>51</sup> Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament: With a Comprehensive Review of Old Testament Studies and a Special Supplement on the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1969), 352.

to label Wellhausen's work the Graf-Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis, giving credit to Karl H. Graf for his contribution. But Harrison, understanding the basic foundation of the thesis to rest upon the principle of uniformitarian evolution, chooses to call it the Evolutionary Hypothesis.<sup>52</sup> According to Wellhausen, Israel's religion evolved through several stages on its way to Judaism. Among those stages were animism, totemism/tabuism, ancestor worship, polytheism/polydemonism, henotheism, and finally monotheism.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, the monotheism continued to evolve through several stages until it reached its final form in legalistic Judaism in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> centuries B. C.<sup>54</sup>

In 1878 Wellhausen published his major work, *Prolegomena to the History of the Nation of Israel*, which formed the basis for the J. E. D. P. Developmental Hypothesis. In summary, Wellhausen proposed that Joshua be included with the Pentateuch making it a Hexateuch. The major historical portions of the Hexateuch, known as "*Gründschrift*," or "main stock," are divided into J. and E. portions according to the use of the names of God, Jehovah and Elohim, with Elohim being considered the oldest. These two traditions were redacted into one document prior to the fall of the Northern Kingdom (8<sup>th</sup> century B. C.). Deuteronomy (D.) was written next during the reign of King Josiah; probably by Hilkiah the priest who said he found it in the temple. And finally the law portions of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers (P.) were written by Ezra after the second Temple was built in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B. C.<sup>55</sup>

No portion of the Hexateuch is attributed to Moses or Joshua. The J. and E. *Gründschrift* are said to be redacted from "materials handed down by tradition."<sup>56</sup> There were no written documents to copy; these were simply "oral" traditions. This means the oldest Hebrew document

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Wellhausen, 24, 45.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 14-45.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 19.

is from the time of the divided kingdom. The historical facts of the Hexateuch are discounted; “It is historical only in form; the history serves merely as a framework on which to arrange the legislative material, or as a mask to disguise it.”<sup>57</sup> In short, Israel’s history is the opposite of what the Bible says. The Jews gradually changed from just another pagan tribe into the “people of God” through an evolutionary process where oral traditions are changed into written traditions over many centuries, with the Law being added last after returning from Babylon. Daniel, Esther, some of the later Prophets and Psalms are then added between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries B. C.<sup>58</sup>

W. Robertson Smith, in his introduction to Wellhausen’s *Prolegomena*, says, “This book is for the person who has faith enough to see the hand of God as clearly in a long providential development as in a sudden miracle.”<sup>59</sup> In other words, the miraculous event of inspiration by the power of the Holy Spirit has been changed into a human process of evolution guided by the hand of “providence.” Yet, this statement is designed only to stave-off charges of Atheism, because the “providence” of Wellhausen is a transcendent/non-personal spirit that can only “act” through the laws of nature and cannot intervene in human affairs. The miraculous events pertaining to creation, the flood, the Patriarchs, the Exodus, etc., never happened. They were added by the redactors to “mask”<sup>60</sup> the truth.

Wellhausen’s scientific proof for his re-writing of Biblical history came from his study of other ancient tribes surrounding Israel. According to Pfeiffer, the Sumerians and Akkadians began writing around 3000 B. C.<sup>61</sup> The tale of Gilgamesh dates to 2000 B. C. while the Tell el-

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>59</sup> Collin Smith, "A Critical Assessment of the Graf-Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis," in *Alpha & Omega Ministries, Christian Apologetics and Theology*, ed. Richard Pierce James White, Simon Escobedo, Sean Hahn (VisualPresence, June 2002).

<sup>60</sup> Wellhausen, 19.

<sup>61</sup> Charles F. Pfeiffer, *The Biblical World: A Dictionary of Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1972), 33.



Amarna letters date to 1400 B. C.<sup>62</sup> The Code of Hammurabi is thought by some to be a model for the Law of Moses. It is dated to 2000-1700 B. C. while the Hittite and Assyrian law codes are dated to 1400-1200 B. C.<sup>63</sup> The Bible says that Moses was trained in the learning of the Egyptians who have written records going back to 3000 B. C. An unbiased look at Israel's neighbors would lead one to assume that writing was a common practice that Israel would have used along with everyone else in the early to mid second millennium B.C.E. It seems very odd that the peoples around Israel would have written documents and religious codes hundreds, if not thousands of years before Israel, making the Israelites seem primitive by comparison. Yet, this is Wellhausen's proposal.

Within a decade of Wellhausen's theory being published archaeological evidence began mounting that showed Wellhausen had been wrong about several of his assumptions. The work of world renowned archaeologists A. H. Sayce and W. F. Albright continued to show Wellhausen's errors.<sup>64</sup> In fact, the oral tradition argument of Wellhausen flies in the face of archaeological evidence. Youngblood says, "As K. A. Kitchen has pointed out, oral *dissemination* of written information to *contemporaries* was common enough in ancient times, but for *transmission* of anything important to *posterity*, the Ancient Orient insistently resorted to written rather than oral transmission."<sup>65</sup>

Another oversight by Wellhausen in his study of the Ancient Near East was his failure to notice that the book of Deuteronomy is written in the form of a Suzerainty Treaty.<sup>66</sup> This style of treaty was common to the second millennium B. C., but not to the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>63</sup> Smith, "A Critical Assessment of the Graf-Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis," 17.

<sup>64</sup> Barbara Zink MacHaffie, "'Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies': Archaeology and the Popularization of the Old Testament Criticism in Nineteenth Century Britain.," *Church History* 50, no. 3 (1981).

<sup>65</sup> William Henry Green, *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1978), ix.

Emphasis is Youngblood's.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, accessed 8/1/2005.

millennium B. C. when Wellhausen supposes Deuteronomy was written. Both Green and Harrison point out that the laws and customs described in the book of Deuteronomy fit well with a people about to embark on the conquest of the Promised Land; but they do not fit with a people living in the city of Jerusalem a thousand years later.<sup>67</sup>

Of course, the main impetus for the J. E. D. P. theory in the first place was the supposed different sources that can be seen by uses of the different names of God. However, the subjective nature of this reasoning makes it impossible to verify. As Youngblood points out, "Different names are used not because they characterize different sources but because they have different nuances of meaning."<sup>68</sup> Those who followed Wellhausen's lead sub-divided the J. E. D. P. sources into J1, J2, J3, J4, J5, E1, E2, E3, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 P6, L, S, K, G and N.<sup>69</sup> All of this sub-division was done on the basis of supposed differences that can be detected by experts in philology. Yet some of the greatest Hebrew experts who have ever lived have concluded that the supposed differences in names, style, and philology exist only in the minds of the beholders. Men like E. B. Pusey, A. Sayce, D. S. Margoliouth, W. F. Albright, J. Orr, W. H. Green, et al, have concluded that this line of criticism is not valid.<sup>70</sup> E. H. Dewart said, "The critical contest is not, as is often assumed, between 'scholars' and unlearned 'traditionalists' who blindly cling to the beliefs of the past. . . but between scholars who have adopted the evolutionary theory of the

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<sup>67</sup> Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament: With a Comprehensive Review of Old Testament Studies and a Special Supplement on the Apocrypha*, 43-46. Green, *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, 63-64.

<sup>68</sup> Green, *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, xvi.

<sup>69</sup> Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament: With a Comprehensive Review of Old Testament Studies and a Special Supplement on the Apocrypha*, 37. Gerald A. Larue, *Ezra's Torah? Origins of the Old Testament Canon* (The Nazarenes of Mount Carmel, 2005, accessed 6/7/2005 2005); available from <http://www.essene.com/History&Essenes/ezra.htm>.

<sup>70</sup> Canon Dyson Hague, "History of Higher Criticism," (R. W. Nadeau, 2005), 14-15. Green, *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, 65.

origin of the Old Testament, and equally learned Biblical scholars who refuse to accept . . . this Higher Criticism.”<sup>71</sup>

Perhaps the greatest encouragement to the multi-source theorists came with the discovery of the Temple Scroll at Qumran in 1956. This document has been likened by some to Tatian’s Diatesseron since it attempts to combine the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Torah MSS. Since both the before and after texts are available it was felt that by studying the Temple Scroll the process of redaction, which many have supposed had taken place in the current Torah MSS., could be dissected and verified in the Temple Scroll.<sup>72</sup> But what researchers had expected to see was not there. According to Kaufman,

“(1) One of the basic principles of the documentary hypothesis is that the many apparent contradictions and duplications in the Pentateuch are signs of a composite text, whereas in the Temple Scroll repetitions and contradictions are generally avoided. (2) The Scroll is noteworthy for its judicious blending of Pentateuchal texts with each other and with minor though not unimportant additions, but it also has substantial sections that are almost entirely the work of the author; whereas the Redactor is not usually credited with lengthy contributions of his own.”<sup>73</sup>

You might think that if there is any text where source criticism should be able to deduce authorship from different sources, this would be it. But, again, this is not the case. Kaufman says, “There is no way that I have found to regularly and accurately separate out and reconstruct the sources that have been used by the Temple Scroll. In many places it is difficult, if not impossible to distinguish between earlier sources and the authors own words.”<sup>74</sup> If style and philology cannot be used in this case to determine who wrote what; how can anyone expect to achieve a reputable and verifiable dissection of the Pentateuch? In fact, one cannot; it is not “science,” but

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<sup>71</sup> Edward H. Dewart, *Jesus the Messiah in Prophecy and Fulfillment. A Review and Refutation of the Negative Theory of Messianic Prophecy* (Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1891). Quoted in, Nigel M. de S. Cameron, *Biblical Higher Criticism and the Defense of Infallibility in 19th Century Britain*, Texts and Studies in Religion, vol. 33 (Lewiston, Queenston: Edwin/Mellen Press, 1987), 118.

<sup>72</sup> Stephen A. Kaufman, "The Temple Scroll and Higher Criticism," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 53 (1982): 30.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

speculation based on assumptions about the nature of God and his ability, or inability, to intervene in human events. After more than a hundred years of archaeological research and progress, the short-comings of Wellhausen's theory have become evident to many. LaSor says, "It is doubtful that the documentary hypothesis will survive the critical labors of contemporary scholarship."<sup>75</sup>

The greatest single bone of contention between those who hold to the J. E. D. P. theory and those who can be called "historicists," is the question of who wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy. Placing the various theories on a time-continuum line beginning with Joshua and ending with Ezra, those who hold to the historical accuracy of the events conclude that Joshua, one of the judges, or possibly Samuel wrote Deut. 34. The J. E. D. P. theorists would say that Ezra wrote it and the events are not history, but religious fiction. The variations of the J. E. D. P. theory would place it somewhere between the divided kingdom and Ezra. All of these theories are based on faith, not scientific fact; and they are determined by one's assumptions about the nature of God.

The timing of Wellhausen's theory had a great deal to do with its rapid spread and popularity. Since Darwin published *Origin of the Species* in 1859, Thomas Huxley (Darwin's Bulldog) had been fighting off critics and increasing the theory's popularity in England. It was accepted immediately in Germany where evolution had been preached from the days of Immanuel Kant. By the time Darwin published *The Descent of Man* in 1871, the theory of evolution had already become popular in America. Herbert Spencer, biologist and philosopher,

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<sup>75</sup> William Sanford LaSor, David Allan Hubbard, Frederic Wm. Bush, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996; reprint, 1982), 12.

had been arguing that the theory should be applied to areas other than biology.<sup>76</sup> Wellhausen's theory was just what Spencer had been calling for. They seemed to fit together like hand in glove. It was logical to assume that religion had evolved just like everything else. With the death of Edward B. Pusey in 1882, and his replacement as chair of the Hebrew department at Oxford by Samuel R. Driver, Wellhausen's theory won the day.<sup>77</sup>

### **Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus***

Beginning with Strauss' *Leben Jesu* in 1835, German theologians began painting a picture of Jesus that excluded deity and the miraculous.<sup>78</sup> McGrath says, "The intense interest which developed in the 'Synoptic Problem' was thus partly a consequence of the perceived dogmatic need to establish the facts concerning the historical Jesus. . . It was this enterprise which has been poetically described in English as the 'quest of the historical Jesus'"<sup>79</sup> The "quest" was a desire to find a Jesus that could be made to fit more easily into modern German society. "The portrayals of the religious personality of Jesus were radically subjective, so that the rediscovered Jesus of history turned out to be merely the embodiment of an ideal figure by the progressive standards of the nineteenth century."<sup>80</sup> Tyrell describes the situation as follows:

They wanted to bring Jesus into the nineteenth century as the incarnation of its ideal of divine righteousness, i.e. of all the highest principles and aspirations that ensure the healthy progress of civilization. They wanted to acquit him of that exclusive and earth-scoring otherworldliness, which had led men to look on his religion as the foe of progress and energy. . ."<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Herbert Spencer, *First Principles: A System of Synthetic Philosophy*, vol. 10 Volumes (London: Williams and Norgate, 1862-93). Spencer was known as the father of Social Darwinism for his insistence that the principles of evolution be applied to industry and social conditions and religion.

<sup>77</sup> Cameron, *Biblical Higher Criticism and the Defense of Infallibility in 19th Century Britain*, 117.

<sup>78</sup> Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 818.

<sup>79</sup> McGrath, *The Making of Modern German Christology*, 99.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>81</sup> George Tyrell, *Christianity at the Crossroads* (London: Farber, 1963), 47.

In order to find such a Jesus the Gospels were subjected to radical redaction through a “scientific” process of historical criticism. The subjective nature of this criticism led many to conclude that Jesus was just a Jewish Messiah pretender who wanted to establish his kingdom in men’s hearts by teaching morality; while the more radical, like Bruno Bauer, suggested that Jesus was a fictitious character invented by the church.<sup>82</sup> It was during this time that the idea of Marcan priority became the norm and the “Two Document Theory” was developed. Mark was considered to be historically accurate when the miraculous elements were removed. Matthew and Luke were seen as products of Mark’s Gospel plus one or more additional sources.<sup>83</sup> This theory gained widespread acceptance in liberal circles. There were two chief reasons for its popularity. One, it allowed for a totally human Jesus by explaining the miraculous as the later invention of Church fathers, or as the psychological reaction of those who wanted to believe. And two, it made inspiration a totally non-supernatural human process and left the New Testament as the product of plagiarism and pseudepigraphical authors.

William Wrede’s *The Messianic Secret* in 1901 pointed out some of the errors of this theory.

First of all, it is indeed an axiom of historical criticism in general that what we have before us is actually just a later narrator’s conception of Jesus’ life and that this conception is not identical with the thing itself. But the *axiom exercises much too little influence*. As a rule it is remembered only when certain things shock us; which means essentially (1) where we find strictly miraculous features, (2) where there are manifest contradictions in the same source, and (3) where one report clashes with another. . . . A second point is closely bound up with this one. *We are in too great a hurry to leave the terrain of the evangelist’s accounts*. We urgently want to utilize it for the history of Jesus itself. In order to do so features that cannot be credited are cut out and the meaning is worked out in such a way as to become serviceable. . . . Thirdly, *the scientific study of the life of Jesus is suffering from Psychological*

<sup>82</sup> Hans-Martin Sass, "Bruno Bauer's Critical Theory," *Philosophical Forum* 8 (1978): 93-103.

<sup>83</sup> Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 113.

“suppositionism” which amounts to a sort of historical guesswork. For this reason interpretations to suit every taste proliferate.<sup>84</sup>

The irony is that Wrede wrote his own life of Jesus which discounted the supernatural and relied on Marcan priority. It wasn't Wrede's life of Jesus that inspired Albert Schweitzer; rather it was his criticism of the a priori assumptions which were common to all the Life of Jesus histories that prompted Schweitzer to write *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A critical study of its progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, (1906). Schweitzer traces the history of the life of Jesus movement through one hundred and fifty years, showing that the criticism of Wrede is indeed valid. His final analysis of the Life of Jesus history movement is as follows.

Those who are fond of talking about negative theology can find their account here. There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the Life of Jesus. The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the Kingdom of God, who founded the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and died to give His work its final consecration, never had any existence. He is a figure designed by rationalism, endowed with life by liberalism, and clothed by modern theology in an historical garb.<sup>85</sup>

This is the state of German liberal theology and Higher Critical thinking at the end of the nineteenth century. It is this mind-set of rationalism, skepticism, non-supernaturalism and absolute belief in the process of uniformitarian evolution as it is applied to biology, sociology and especially religion that formed the catalyst for the fundamentalist movement.

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<sup>84</sup> William Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, trans. J. C. G. Greig (Greenwood, S. C.: Attic Press, 1971), 5-6. All emphasis as Wrede's.

<sup>85</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, trans. W. Montgomery (London: A. and C. Black Ltd., 1931), 398.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE FUNDAMENTALIST REACTION

Fundamentalism is not a denominational movement. Rather, it began as a cross-denominational reaction to liberalism, and in particular, to the German Biblical Higher Criticism of the nineteenth century and the application of the theory of evolution to religious history. In particular, the J. E. D. P. theory of Julius Wellhausen combined with Charles Darwin's theory of human evolution sparked the first debates of the Fundamentalist vs. Modernist controversy. Fundamentalism is not a total rejection of the idea of evolution, nor is it a strictly literal understanding of Scripture as some have supposed. Several of the biggest names in the fundamentalist movement accepted an allegorical reading of Genesis 1-3 that allowed for a God-driven evolution. For instance, W. H. Green and C. I. Scofield believed in a "Gap" theory that allowed for the age of the dinosaurs and a very old earth; while B. B. Warfield and J. G. Machen believed in "Theistic" evolution.<sup>1</sup>

The problem came when the transcendent/non-personal God of German Higher Criticism was combined with the American Post-Millennial theology of the Progressive Kingdom of God. Theologians who termed themselves liberals and progressives now created a new God who was totally immanent and equated with human progress. William Hutchison sees this as a shift to the philosophy of "cultural immanentism."<sup>2</sup> This is such an important factor in understanding the success of the fundamentalist movement, especially after W.W.I.,

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<sup>1</sup> Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 24. D. G. Hart, "When Is a Fundamentalist a Modernist? J. Gresham Machen, Cultural Modernism, and Conservative Protestantism," *American Academy of Religion* 65, no. 3 (1997): 605-635.

<sup>2</sup> William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 2.



that it is necessary to examine the Post-Millennial shift to “cultural immanentism” a little more closely. Robert Clouse gives a very good summary of the Post-Millennial theology. He says:

In contrast to premillennialism, the postmillennialists emphasize the present aspects of God’s kingdom that will reach fruition in the future. They believe that the millennium will come through Christian preaching and teaching. Such activity will result in a more godly, peaceful, and prosperous world. The new age will not be essentially different from the present, and it will come about as more people are converted to Christ. Evil will not be totally eliminated during the millennium, but will be reduced to a minimum as the moral and spiritual influence of Christians is increased.<sup>3</sup>

From the founding of the American colonies until the first Great Awakening, the Puritans were Pre-Millennial in their eschatology.<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Edwards may be credited as the first Post-Millennial preacher in America.<sup>5</sup> From his time until the end of the First World War most American Protestant clergy fell into the Post-Millennial camp. Hatch says, “The Second Great Awakening, like its namesake a generation removed, was driven by the compelling hope of clergymen that their labors would be instrumental in establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. . . this later wave of religious fervor sustained its momentum throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and swelled the tide of Millennial anticipation throughout Protestant America.”<sup>6</sup> The idea of “Manifest Destiny” was integral to this doctrine. The Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark expedition opened up the American West. Coinciding with the push west, the Methodist itinerant ministers were spreading the Gospel to the “uttermost parts of the World.” It seemed that the Post-Millennial optimism was justified. Hatch goes on

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<sup>3</sup> Robert G. Clouse, "Fundamentalism, Modernism, and Brethren Millennialisms," *Brethren Life and Thought* 46, no. 1-2 (2001): 113.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875-1925* (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), 13.

<sup>5</sup> C. C. Goen, "Jonathan Edwards, a New Departure in Eschatology," *Church History* 28 (1959): 25-40.

<sup>6</sup> Nathan O. Hatch, "Visions of a Republican Millennium: An Ideology of Civil Religion in the New Nation," in *Critical Issues in American Religious History*, ed. Robert R. Marsden (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2001), 128.

to say that Millennial optimism became the “‘religion of the Republic’ or an American civil religion.” Sandeen says:

The eschatology of United States Protestants, reflecting their brimming optimism and hope, was expressed most frequently as a blending of millennialism and American nationalism. Stemming from the Puritan conviction that the colonists were a chosen people and their commonwealth a ‘city set upon a hill,’ reinforced by the War for Independence and the potentialities of the West, Americans vied with each other in producing grander and more glorious prospects for the United States.”<sup>7</sup>

This grand optimism produced the missionary outreach from America in the nineteenth century as well as the drive to end slavery. It also gave rise to the ‘Social Gospel’ that sought to end the misery of the millions of immigrants who came to America seeking refuge, to grant full civil rights to women, and to inspire the tireless work of men like Walter Rauschenbusch. At the end of the nineteenth century it seemed that the “American dream” might be fulfilled. Europeans seeking their piece of the American pie swelled the population in that century from five to seventy-six million, and the gross economy increased from seven to eighty-eight billion dollars.<sup>8</sup> American industrial might was beyond compare and the standard of living was unmatched by any other nation.

The spirit of optimism continued unabated throughout the nineteenth century. However, a paradigm shift took place during the American Civil War that changed the landscape of American religion. Both the church and the Bible lost credibility by the war of words that took place between Northern and Southern preachers in justifying each side’s position during the Civil War.<sup>9</sup> The invocation of God’s name to justify the bloody massacre of

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<sup>7</sup> Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 43.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, and Henry Steele Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), 354.

<sup>9</sup> Stewart G. Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1971; reprint, 1971), 18. George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925*. (Oxford, New York, Toronto, London: Oxford University Press, 1992), 13.

the war (a war which took more American lives than any war in history), seemed too reminiscent of the religious wars of European history.

Coincidentally, the influence of Hegelian philosophy was growing in America. Men like Peter Kaufmann, Moncure Conway, and August Willich were preaching the idealism of non-supernaturalistic human progress.<sup>10</sup> In New England, the Unitarians, led by Harvard Seminary, were teaching the German philosophy.<sup>11</sup> This philosophy was bolstered considerably by the theory of human evolution which came to American shores in the early 1860's. As a result, Marsden sees three changes that came about in the Post-Millennial view after the Civil War.

First, the progress of the Kingdom of God is identified with the progress of civilization, especially in science and morality. Secondly, morality has become the essence of religion and is indeed virtually equated with it. Third, the supernatural is no longer clearly separated from the natural, but rather manifests itself only in the natural.<sup>12</sup>

Charles Hodge questioned, "Is development an intellectual process guided by God, or is it a blind process of unintelligible, unconscious force, which knows no end and adopts no means?"<sup>13</sup> Again, Marsden says:

The implications of Darwin's theory, particularly concerning impersonal natural process as opposed to divinely guided order, went far beyond biology. The new Biblical criticism which gave naturalistic explanations of cultural development was based on virtually the same assumptions.<sup>14</sup>

The new science of evolution was based on the a priori assumption of atheism. And, likewise, the new "scientific" Biblical criticism of Wellhausen was based on the same assumption; each one re-enforced the other. Where does that leave God? In the minds of many,

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<sup>10</sup> Loyd D. Easton, *Hegel's First American Followers* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1966).

<sup>11</sup> Noll, 12-13.

<sup>12</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925.*, 24.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 20.

God became the process of progress. And, what about the Bible, could it be trusted? The conservatives, such as Charles Hodge and Jonathan Blanchard said, "Yes." The liberals and progressives such as William Robertson Smith and Henry Ward Beecher said, "No!" Both sides, at this point, were Post-Millennial. It was only their a priori assumptions about the nature of God that differed.

### *An Uneasy Alliance*

As stated earlier, the fundamentalists were not a homogenous group. Neither did they spring up over night as an easily recognizable group with a defined theology. Rather, this was a movement that began gathering momentum in the middle of the nineteenth century as a reaction against the non-supernaturalist theology coming out of Germany. Robert Clouse quotes Sandeen as saying, ". . . Fundamentalism developed from an alliance between two newly formulated nineteenth century theologies, dispensationalism and the Princeton Theology, . . ."<sup>15</sup> These two fountain-heads of conservatism, Pre-Millennial Dispensationalism and Princeton Post-Millennial theology, merged in the first two decades of the twentieth century to form what is now easily recognizable as the fundamentalist movement. But Joe Coker points out that the "alliance" was more of a marriage of convenience, and the marriage ended in divorce in the late 1930's.<sup>16</sup> To understand the nature of this brief "alliance" we must look at Pre-Millennial Dispensationalism.

In contrast to the optimism of Post-Millennialism, Pre-Millennialism has a negative attitude about man and his natural ability. Following the Calvinist doctrine of original sin, Pre-

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<sup>15</sup> Clouse, "Fundamentalism, Modernism, and Brethren Millennialisms," 113.

<sup>16</sup> Joe L. Coker, "Exploring the Roots of the Dispensationalist/Princetonian 'Alliance': Charles Hodge and John Nelson Darby on Eschatology and Interpretation of Scripture," *Fides et Historia*, no. 30 (1998): 41.

Millennialism sees mankind as a fallen creature without hope apart from the grace of God.

Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, describes mankind's estate as follows:

It may be concluded, then, that men are either lost, being under sin, which is to be meritless before God in the issues related to their salvation, or they are perfected in Christ by the saving grace of God, which salvation is divinely secured to all who believe.

To be without merit in relation to salvation is to be in possession of nothing which might be credited to one's account. It is according to human reason to suppose that a moral, cultured person would have something which God might accept and incorporate into His saving work, but such is not the case. To be under sin is not only to be hopelessly condemned because of the sinful state, but to be without merit, or utterly void of any good which might be credited to one's account.<sup>17</sup>

This doctrine assumes that mankind has no hope without first receiving the grace of God into one's life. And that doctrine, in turn, is based on the assumption that God is a person with attributes, who can and will distribute grace. It is the antithesis of the "cultural immanentism" which had become so popular in mid-nineteenth century America. W. E. Blackstone wrote, "Millenarian faith gives us a view of the world as a wrecked vessel, and stimulates us to work with all our might that we may save some."<sup>18</sup>

Besides the negative view of mankind, Pre-Millennialism expects a return of Christ to the earth prior to a literal 1000 year reign of Christ on earth.<sup>19</sup> This is the opposite of the Post-Millennial view that sees the 1000 years as a figurative number describing the period during which the Church will reach the world with the gospel message. Instead of the world getting better and better, the Pre-Millenarians see the world getting worse and worse until it finally destroys itself during the tribulation described in the book of Revelations. This pessimistic

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<sup>17</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1973; reprint, 1973), Vol II, 320.

<sup>18</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 162.

<sup>19</sup> The only passage in the Bible that speaks of the 1000 year millennium is found in Rev. 20:1-10. Since the publication of Augustine's *City of God*, most Christians have held this passage to be figurative.

view of mankind will play a big part in the acceptance of Fundamentalism during and after the First World War.

The Princeton theologians were Calvinist's as well. And being Calvinists they had the same view of the nature of mankind as the Per-Millenarians. They only differed with the Pre-Millenarians on the view of their grace-inspired ability to spread the gospel, and their figurative understanding of the 1000 year period. But as the non-supernaturalistic belief of "cultural immanentism" spread, more and more Calvinists joined the Pre-Millenarian ranks. As you would expect, they came mostly from the Anglican/Episcopal, Baptist and Presbyterian Churches. Few Methodists were willing to accept Pre-Millenarianism until after the turn of the twentieth century when the Holiness Movement became united with the Fundamentalist cause.<sup>20</sup>

Some in the Pre-Millennial camp claim to be able to trace remnants of the Pre-Millennialist theology from the Apostles to the present.<sup>21</sup> There were several Pre-Millennial groups in the United States before 1840, e.g. the Millerites, the Shakers and the Oneida community. And, there were Pre-Millennialists who were conservative Orthodox Christians, such as segments of the Presbyterians and the Baptists. One might think that a permanent alliance between these two groups of conservative Pre- and Post-Millenarian Orthodox Christians could have been forged to fight against liberalism. But there was another aspect of Pre-Millennialism that prevented this from happening; and that was the extreme dispensationalism of John Nelson Darby.

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<sup>20</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 163.

<sup>21</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), 65 ff.

*John Nelson Darby and the Secret Rapture*

John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) was an Anglican minister who became a founding member of the Plymouth Brethren movement in the late 1820's. In 1833 Darby broke ranks with another founding member of the Brethren movement, Benjamin W. Newton. B. W. Newton was a Pre-Millennial Dispensationalist who held to the theory that God had worked with mankind in five separate ways, making five dispensations.<sup>22</sup> His dispute with Darby was about Darby's understanding of a secret Pre-Tribulational rapture.<sup>23</sup> It took several years before the complete system of Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalism was solidified in Darby's thinking. But during the course of eleven lectures in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1840, Darby completed his theory.<sup>24</sup> It is safe to say that Pre-Millennial Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalism did not exist before this date.<sup>25</sup>

Darby's system of extreme dispensationalism is based on five key assumptions, as spelled out by Charles Ryrie. They are: one, a literal hermeneutic; two, all prophecies concerning Israel will be fulfilled literally; three, an absolute separation between the Church and Israel; four, a pre-tribulational rapture of the Church; and five, a literal 1000 year reign of Christ on earth before the final judgment.<sup>26</sup> Premillennialists before Darby had accepted the literal hermeneutic and the literal 1000 year reign of Christ before the final judgment. But, what really made Darby's system distinct was the complete separation of the Church and Israel

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<sup>22</sup> B. W. Newton, and S. P. Tregelles, *B. W. Newton and Dr. S. P. Tregelles: Teachers of the Faith and the Future*, ed. George H. Fromow (Taunton: The Phoenix Press, 1958).

<sup>23</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 62.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. Also see R. A. Huebner, *Precious Truths Defended through J. N. Darby*, vol. 1 (Morganville, New Jersey: Present Truth Publishers, 1991), 68.

<sup>26</sup> Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, 158-160.

that demanded a rapture of the Church, leaving Israel here on earth to go through the tribulation.

In order to accomplish this separation, Darby carefully distinguished which passages of the Bible were meant for the Church and which were meant only for Israel. For instance, Darby said: “When other New Testament writers spoke of the Lord’s coming they spoke of His coming for judgment, ‘the appearing.’ . . . However, when Paul spoke of the rapture, there were no conditional clauses, for all is grace. You never find the ‘assembly,’ nor the rapture, except in Paul.”<sup>27</sup>

This unique separation of the New Testament into passages for Jews and passages for the Church was based on Darby’s understanding of the Church as being set-apart for grace and blessing and not for judgment. Therefore, any passage that speaks of judgment was for the Jews, and any passage dealing with blessing is speaking of the church. Darby said:

It is this conviction, that the Church is properly heavenly in its calling and relationship with Christ, forming no part of the course of events on the earth, which makes its rapture so simple and clear. . . Those who believe in the rapture of the Church before the appearing of Christ hold that the Church has a special and peculiar character and connection with Christ. . . The Church’s joining Christ has nothing to do with Christ’s appearing or coming to earth. Her place is elsewhere. She sits in Him already in heavenly places. She has to be brought there as to bodily presence. . . The thing she has to expect for herself is not Christ’s appearing, but her being taken up where He is.<sup>28</sup>

So, according to Darby, the prophecies that deal with events here on earth in the future must be speaking about Israel and not the Church, if the Church has “no part of the course of events on the earth.” For instance, the prophecy of Daniel chapter nine is explained in such a way as to make the Church the “mystery” of the New Testament, unseen by Old Testament

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<sup>27</sup> Max S. Weremchuk, *John Nelson Darby, a Biography* (Neptune, New Jersey: Liozeaux Brothers, 1992), 127.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.



prophets; and the seventy weeks of years are the history of Israel alone.<sup>29</sup> And, only certain passages of the New Testament, not the whole New Testament, speak to the Church.<sup>30</sup> So, the great white throne judgment of Revelation 20:11ff must be for Jews and pagans, but not Christians; even though the same event is spoken of by Paul in the context of his letter to the Church at Rome.<sup>31</sup> This same logic is used to turn the Olivet Discourse into a speech to the unbelieving Jews, rather than a reply to Jesus disciples who asked him a question in private.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, Ephesians 1:1-11 deals with our blessings in Christ, so that must apply only to the Church.<sup>33</sup>

Another one of the five “distinctives” of this theory is their supposed reliance upon a literal hermeneutic. This hermeneutic is applied to passages that deal with the future of Israel and especially all Old Testament prophecies. And it may be agreed by all, that if these prophecies are understood in a literal way, they do predict that the nation of Israel will be rescued by the Messiah from their enemies in the last days; and that after that Christ will rule over all the earth. However, trying to establish a 1000 year millennium from Old Testament prophecies is not possible, simply because it is never mentioned. There is only one passage that possibly can be made to refer to a 1000 year millennium, and that is Isaiah 65: 17-25; and even that is debatable.

Even though it may be granted that Darby was consistent in his application of a literal hermeneutic concerning Old Testament prophecy, the same cannot be said of his use of Scripture when searching for passages to support a secret rapture. When it comes to “proof texts” for the rapture, the passages are usually interpreted in an allegorical fashion. For

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Romans 14:10-12.

<sup>32</sup> Matthew 24:3.

<sup>33</sup> Weremchuk, *John Nelson Darby, a Biography*, 121-123.

instance, the seven letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 are seen as seven church ages, or dispensations, rather than as seven literal letters to seven literal churches. The “proof” of the rapture is seen in 3:10, “Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on earth.” Because this is understood to be an allegorical Church age, rather than a letter to a literal Church, the meaning is that there will be a secret rapture during the Philadelphia Age. And the demonstration of the “proof” is seen in 4:1b; “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” The command of the angel to John to “Come up here. . .” is an allegorical picture of the rapture of the Church. This passage is one of the key “proof texts” of the New Testament supporting the secret rapture, and is consistently interpreted in the same fashion by Pre-Millennial, Pre-tribulational Dispensationalists, from Darby to the present.<sup>34</sup>

This is only one of many passages where the “secret rapture” is found in the New Testament by those who believe. Rather than looking at them one at a time, it is simpler to say that the method of interpretation stays consistent when proving the “secret rapture.” There is nothing literal about this kind of interpretation. After many years of personal effort, this writer has failed to find a single passage of Scripture supporting the “secret rapture” that has been interpreted in a literal fashion, considering the normal meaning of the words and taking the historical context into consideration. It seems ironic that the allegorical interpretation of Scripture in regard to the millennium was a major source of criticism of the Post-

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<sup>34</sup> Huebner, *Precious Truths Defended through J. N. Darby*, 85-86. Also see, Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948; reprint, 1973), Vol 4, 374 ff. Also see Dwight J. Pentecost, *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958), 152 ff. Also see, Paul Lee Tan, *The Interpretation of Prophecy* (Winona Lake, Indiana: BMH Books, 1974), 338.

Millennialists; yet the same method of interpretation is used consistently by the Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalists to justify the “secret rapture.”

From this point on this author will refer to Darby’s position as Pre-Pre since this is the accepted terminology among Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalists today.

### ***Darby’s Converts begin the Bible Conference Movement***

Even though Darby was the founder of the Pre-Pre brand of dispensationalism, he was not personally successful in making many converts in the United States. But he did succeed in making four key converts in four major cities. They were James Brookes in St. Louis; D. L. Moody in Chicago; Robert Cameron in New York; and A. J. Gordon in Boston.<sup>35</sup> These four men, more than any others, were responsible for carrying the message of Pre-Pre to America through the Bible Conference movement.

In 1875 a group of conservative Christians got together to study the Bible and discuss prophecy in relation to current events in American culture. Among this group were James H. Brookes, George C. Needham and William J. Eerdman. They met privately near Chicago the first year, but the following year they placed a call for an open meeting. The first year the conference was known as the Believer’s Meeting for Bible Study, and was held at Swampscott, Mass.<sup>36</sup> In 1877 the name of the meetings was changed to the Bible and Prophetic Conferences, and for the next few years the meeting place changed several times.<sup>37</sup> Finally in 1883, the meetings were moved to Niagara-on-the Lake, Ontario, Canada, where they remained until 1897; and the name was officially changed to the Niagara Bible Conference.

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<sup>35</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 78.

<sup>36</sup> Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875-1925*, 331-332.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

These meetings are of extreme importance to the Fundamentalist movement because they accomplished five things. First, they made the Pre-Pre position acceptable to a large portion of the American public. Second, they joined forces with Princeton Seminary through the efforts of James H. Brookes. Third, they spawned the next generation of Pre-Pre preachers, who can for the first time rightfully be called Fundamentalists. Fourth, they brought the Holiness movement into fellowship with the Pre-Pre movement, mainly through the efforts of D. L. Moody. And fifth, they spawned the Bible School movement. Taking these one at a time, we will begin with the effort to make the Pre-Pre position acceptable to the American public.

First, after the Civil War there was no preacher in America more respected and more influential than James Hall Brookes (1830-1897). Brookes was a Presbyterian who attended Princeton and then took a pastorate at Walnut Street Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, from 1858 until his death in 1897. He wrote many books and published a periodical called The Truth. Through these he was able to have a great influence on the public. When he accepted the Pre-Pre position in the early 1870's he added a great deal of credence to the faith. J. N. Darby spoke at Brookes' church on five occasions and Brookes advocated the literature of the Plymouth Brethren.<sup>38</sup>

In 1875 Brookes accepted the responsibility of being president and general organizer for the Bible and Prophetic Conferences. At the first two public meetings in 1876 and '77 there was considerable debate over a few hot issues. Among them was the confusion of the "imminence" teaching that made people confuse the Pre-Pre teaching with that of the discredited Millerites.<sup>39</sup> And another was the condemnation of the Post-Millennial beliefs of

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<sup>38</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 71.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

liberals who accepted the J. E. D. P. theory of Julius Wellhausen.<sup>40</sup> Charles Briggs was the main proponent of the liberal position and attacked the Pre-Millenarian position in 1878 in an article titled “The Origin and History of Premillenarianism.”

It depends entirely upon themselves what the future is to bring forth. If they will abandon their organization, disband their committee, stop their Bible and Prophetic Conferences, we doubt not that there will soon be a calm again, and they will remain undisturbed in their ecclesiastical relations; but if they are determined to go on in their aggressive movement, they will have only themselves to blame if the storm should become a whirlwind that will constrain them to depart from the orthodox churches, and form another heretical sect.<sup>41</sup>

This charge of heresy by Briggs made an enemy out of Brookes. It was Brookes who convinced the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to declare Briggs the heretic in 1893.<sup>42</sup> What Brookes had done to incite Briggs was to write a doctrinal statement for the 1878 Bible and Prophetic Conference that followed the Princeton line on inerrancy. The fourteen points of the creed were used as a guide-line for inviting speakers and keeping away dissenters. Brookes commented concerning the creed; “If they do not stand upon it, and yet choose to attend, they are expected to keep silent.”<sup>43</sup> Briggs chose not to attend.

Brookes lined-up over 120 speakers for the 1878 conference, and in the next few years the number of those attending would swell into the many thousands.<sup>44</sup> So, in large part, James H. Brookes is responsible for making the Pre-Pre position both acceptable and popular in America.

Second, the conferences were important because the issue of inerrancy was of extreme importance to all those who were fighting the liberal heresy of J. E. D. P. theory and cultural

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<sup>40</sup> Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism*, 33-34.

<sup>41</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 155.

<sup>42</sup> Carl E. II Sanders, *The Premillennial Faith of James Brookes: Reexamining the Roots of American Dispensationalism* (New York: University Press of America, 2001), 91.

<sup>43</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 140.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

immanentism, which was brought about by accepting the social and religious implications of the evolutionary theory. Brookes decided to make inerrancy the first article of the Bible and Prophetic Conference creed, demonstrating his ties to Princeton. It said:

We believe “that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole of the book called the Bible; nor do we take the statement in the sense in which it is sometimes foolishly said that works of human genius are inspired, but in the sense that the Holy Ghost gave the very words of the sacred writings to holy men of old; and that His Divine inspiration is not in different degrees, but extents equally and fully to all parts of these writings, historical, poetical, doctrinal and prophetical, and to the smallest word, and inflection of a word, provided such word is found in the original manuscripts. II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:21; I Cor. 2:13; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Acts 16:1; 2:4.<sup>45</sup>

This statement of faith is remarkably close to the inerrancy position of the Princeton theologians A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield who will do verbal battle with the same enemy, Charles A. Briggs, in the next few years. It is because of this relationship of kindred spirits doing battle against a common enemy that gained the Pre-Pre faith of James Brookes a large degree of acceptance among conservatives. And, in so doing, the founding fathers of what became the Fundamentalist movement gained acceptance in American churches. A. A. Hodge and Francis Patton, the president of Princeton Seminary, were glad to have an ally in the battle against Briggs, but were not willing to tolerate the Pre-Pre position, calling it foolish and unscriptural.<sup>46</sup> However, J. Gresham Machen was more kind in his attitude. He said:

The recrudescence of “chiliasm” or “premillennialism” in the modern church causes us serious concern; . . . Yet how great is our agreement with those who hold the premillennial view: They share to the full our reverence for the authority of the Bible; and differ from us only in the interpretation of the Bible; They share our ascription to the deity of the Lord Jesus, and our supernaturalistic conception both of the entrance of Jesus into the world, and of the consummation when He shall come again. Certainly, then, from our point of view, their error, serious though it may be, is not deadly error; and Christian fellowship, with loyalty not

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., Appendix A.

<sup>46</sup> Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875-1925*, 29.

only to the Bible but to the great creeds of the church, can still unite us with them.<sup>47</sup>

Brookes was careful to not write a doctrinal statement that would drive away the conservatives who did not hold to Darby's position of a Pre-Tribulational rapture. He did this by making the 1878 creed Pre-Millennial but not Pre-Tribulational.<sup>48</sup> Yet he continued to teach and preach the Pre-Pre position. Since the Pre-Millennial position had always been acceptable to the Presbyterian Church, he was sure not to alienate Princeton as long as he held to the Orthodox line on other issues. This partnership with Princeton would prove to be very useful in gaining acceptance and respectability. It helped to unite conservatives from all denominations in fighting against liberalism. This coalition of conservatives would later be called Fundamentalists.

Third, the conferences were important because among that next generation would be C. I. Scofield, a disciple of Brookes, who would publish the famous Scofield Reference Bible in 1909. This Bible, with the Scofield notes, explained the rapture theory in detail, giving the Pre-Pre interpretation for dispensationalism and a secret rapture. It has been re-printed many times and is still popular among fundamentalists. A. C. Gaebelein, Lewis Sperry Chafer and Lyman Stewart were also members of the next generation. They will be discussed in more detail later.

Fourth, the conferences were important because Dwight L. Moody was also a member of the Niagara Bible Conferences. Moody was an evangelist who was more ecumenical than many of the Pre-Pre members of the conferences. In 1881 Moody started his own conferences at Northfield, Mass. Just like the Niagara conferences, the Northfield conferences were

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>48</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, Appendix A.

attended every year by Brookes, A. J. Gordon, A. T. Pierson, George Needham, R. A. Torrey, C. I. Scofield and hundreds of others. And, like the Niagara conferences, the Northfield conferences held to the same fourteen points that Brookes had established in 1878.

Because of Moody's evangelical bent he wanted to reach out to a broader range of people than just the Pre-Pre crowd. He began to invite Methodist preachers like Henry Drummond, who became a regular speaker at Northfield. This brought dissention from some of the Pre-Pre speakers.<sup>49</sup> But Moody persisted in reaching out. The fourteenth point of the Niagara confession of faith was a Pre-Millennial statement, but not a Pre-Pre statement,<sup>50</sup> even though all to the speakers at both conferences were Pre-Pre theologians.

Moody traveled in Britain during 1882-84, but resumed the Northfield conferences in 1885. He invited members of the Keswick movement whom he had met in England to speak at Northfield, and in 1886-88 the Keswick speakers out-numbered the Pre-Pre speakers at Northfield.<sup>51</sup> The Keswick men were members of Church of England who had experienced a spiritual awakening through missionaries who had come to England from Oberlin College in the 1850's. Rather than teaching "perfectionism," as was common at the time among Methodists, the Keswick movement stressed the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer to lead one away from sin.

The Keswick speakers were Pre-Millenarian, but not Pre-Pre, and associated with Methodism. This made them unacceptable to many of the Pre-Pre attendees of the Northfield and Niagara conferences. Until this time the Bible conference movement was attended by Calvinists who held to the Westminster Confession.<sup>52</sup> But now, the Keswick teachers had

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<sup>49</sup> Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism*, 34.

<sup>50</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, Appendix A.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 174-175.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.



modified the most objectionable aspects of Methodism. Sandeen says, “Thus when Moody began to bring the Keswick teachers to the Northfield conference, the holiness doctrines had undergone a transformation that made them acceptable to American millenarians.”<sup>53</sup> This opened the door to the Methodists, Nazarenes and Pentecostals to join with the Pre-Pre movement and become regular members of the Bible Conference. The importance of Moody’s ecumenicalism at this point must be recognized. Now all conservatives who held to the inerrancy of the Scriptures and a Pre-Millennial return of Christ, whether they were Calvinist or Arminian, were considered part of the brotherhood. The “alliance” of conservative evangelicals now included everyone except the Catholics.

The fifth reason these conferences were important is the Bible schools that were started by several prominent members. The most well known is Moody Bible Institute, started by D. L. Moody in 1886. Graduates of Moody were trained as evangelists, pastors and missionaries, rather than as academicians.<sup>54</sup> Other schools that were started by members of the Niagara Bible Conferences are Northwestern Bible Training School in Minneapolis, The Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA), The Toronto Bible Training School, Philadelphia Bible College, and Dallas Theological Seminary.<sup>55</sup> All of these schools developed able speakers who spread the message of the Niagara Bible Conferences.

### **Princeton vs Union: American Theologians Duel**

Though not a part of the Pre-Millenarian movement, the theologians at Princeton were a part of the conservative alliance and engaged in battle with the same forces of liberalism in

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 179.

<sup>54</sup> Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism*, 43.

<sup>55</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 182-183.

America. During the time that conservatives were gaining strength through the Bible and Prophetic Conference movement A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield and Francis Patton carried on a running debate with Charles A. Briggs over the issue of inerrancy. This is the same Charles Briggs who became the enemy of James Brookes when he attacked Pre-Millennialism, calling it a heretical sect.

### ***Charles Augustus Briggs***

Charles Briggs was a Hebrew scholar who taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York from 1874-1904. The first portion of the battle began with a series of articles published in the *Presbyterian Review* from 1881-83. A. A. Hodge and Charles Briggs were co-editors of the periodical at that time and agreed to write a series of articles debating the proper understanding of inspiration in light of the currently popular theory of Julius Wellhausen and J. E. D. P. Briggs accepted the teaching of Wellhausen and Hodge did not. B. B. Warfield, though not a member of the faculty at Princeton at that time, was asked by Hodge to co-author articles defending the current understanding of inspiration as accepted by the Presbyterian General Assembly and taught by Princeton. Briggs took on the challenge of defending Wellhausen, and challenging the factuality of the Old Testament.

Briggs explained his position in two articles, "Critical Theories of the Sacred Scriptures in Relation to Their Inspiration: the Right, Duty, and Limits of Biblical Criticism;" and "Authority of the Holy Scripture." Neither of these articles is readily available to the general public; however, Briggs wrote two books defending his position. The first, titled "Messianic Prophecy," explains his view of Scripture in light of German higher criticism. It was published early in the battle in 1886. The second book, titled, *The Bible, The Church, The Reason: The*

*Three Great Fountains of Divine Authority*, was published in 1892, just before his heresy trial by the Presbyterian General Assembly. It is a full explanation of his beliefs regarding inspiration and higher criticism. These documents will be the main source for Briggs' argument in this thesis.

The influence of German philosophy and theology are apparent in Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*. He begins by explaining the history of the religion of Israel in terms of the theory of religious evolution.

Prophecy appears in any religion so soon as the need is felt of religious instruction, and therefore at a very early stage and among the most primitive peoples. It manifests itself at first in occasional and sporadic forms; but as the religion advances into higher stages, it develops into an office in order to give official guidance in religious knowledge and practice. In the patriarchal constitution of society the three functions of authority, prophecy, priesthood and royalty are ordinarily combined in the father of the family and the chief of the tribe; but at a very early stage the function of royalty is eliminated, and develops into an office of a monarch, and at a later stage into a dynasty: so the function of priesthood is eliminated and develops into an office and an order, which perpetuates itself by lineal descent or adoption.<sup>56</sup>

This is nothing more than a paraphrase of Georg Hegel's theory of the evolution of Israel's history based on his anti-supernatural assumptions about the origin of the Scriptures.<sup>57</sup> Likewise, many passages seem to be taken directly from Wellhausen's *Prolegomena*.<sup>58</sup> Briggs argues that the prophets of Israel were no different than the prophets of any other religion. They saw dreams, visions and had ecstatic experiences; some of which were true and some of which were false.<sup>59</sup> Religious leaders of the peoples around Israel had the same kind of prophetic experiences, e.g. Balaam, the prophets of Baal, Nebuchadnezzar, etc. Some of these experiences were caused by evil spirits and some by good spirits, but they all were mixed

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<sup>56</sup> Charles A. Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), 1.

<sup>57</sup> Butler, *G. W. F. Hegel*, 35-40.

<sup>58</sup> For example, see *Messianic Prophecy*, ch. 5, and *Prolegomena*, on the subject of the United Kingdom.

<sup>59</sup> Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, 2.

together in their religion.<sup>60</sup> Briggs argues that to assume that the prophecies of Israel were somehow more correct or of a different character is to ignore the facts of science. He says:

It is in fashion with a certain sort of Christian apologist to ignore the science of religion, and insist upon the supernatural character of Biblical prophecy over against the purely human, natural or false prophecy of the other religions. They decline to recognize anything in common between Biblical prophecy and the other prophecy. Such opinions may now be regarded as antiquated.<sup>61</sup>

So, Briggs agrees with Hegel, Vatke and Wellhausen that the Scriptures are of the same character as the writings of the religions around Israel and are not supernatural in origin. This is truly the heart of the difference in the arguments between Briggs and Hodge, Warfield, Patton and Brookes. Daniel Fouke points out this basic difference between the Princeton theologians and Briggs. Referring to Warfield and Briggs, he says,

While both men see themselves as operating within the perspective of Presbyterianism, there are actually vast underlying differences between Warfield and Briggs. They have radically different understandings of the Christian life and the way such things as faith, knowledge and reason operate. Behind these differences lies a level of even more fundamental differences in their concepts of God and man.<sup>62</sup>

This basic underlying disagreement about the nature of God and man allowed Briggs to think of the act of inspiration as an entirely human response to the prompting of a religious stimulant; be that from God, or some other source. It may be correct, it may be false, but in any event, it is not different from that of any other primitive people. Fouke goes on to say that Briggs viewed God as manifesting truth without being personally immanent in the life of the writer so that the writer was “influenced” but not directed in what he wrote.<sup>63</sup> Comparing the prophecies of the people around Israel, Briggs said, “Looking at these widespread phenomena

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>62</sup> Daniel C. Fouke, "B. B. Warfield Vs. C. A. Briggs: The Nineteenth Century Debate over Inerrancy (an Analysis of Problems in Intra-Religious Controversy)," *Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (1982): 26.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.: 28.

of prophecy, we find that the Hebrew prophecy exhibits similar phenomena. These are then the physical and psychological conditions of all prophecy, and not peculiar features of Hebrew prophecy.”<sup>64</sup> So, the Hebrew prophets and the prophets of Baal were equally “inspired,” by the same spirit of God, and their religions are equal in moral and spiritual value.

Briggs argues in *The Bible, The Church and The Reason*, that his presuppositions about the nature of Scripture and his understanding of inspiration lie within the Orthodox understanding of the Westminster Confession of Faith.<sup>65</sup> His first argument is that the Bible is the revelation of divine authority. It contains spiritual truth, but not necessarily factual truth. But the Westminster Confession only makes the Bible infallible in matters of “faith and practice,” not in science.<sup>66</sup> Briggs compares the fight between Luther and the Catholic Church to his fight with those who arguing for the traditional understanding of inspiration (the Princeton theologians).<sup>67</sup> He said, “The dogmaticians have gone so far as to identify the canonicity and divine authority of Scripture with questions of authorship and dates of biblical books, and thus array their doctrine of the canon of Holy Scripture against the science of literary criticism.”<sup>68</sup> He counters this argument by reasoning that if the canon is to be whittled down every time science determines something different than is currently believed, in no time at all there will be no canon left.<sup>69</sup>

In making his argument for the Scriptures being the divine authority of truth Briggs continually resorts to Scottish Common Sense Philosophy. Originally used as a defense against the Skepticism of David Hume, Scottish Common Sense Philosophy became the standard

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<sup>64</sup> Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, 11.

<sup>65</sup> Charles A. Briggs, *The Bible, the Church, the Reason: The Three Great Fountains of Divine Authority* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892), 3-6.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 91-92.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-7.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

method of argument. One must be able to believe what one senses form our surroundings as being true. Springing from the rationalism of the day, C. S. P. led people to believe that any field of study could be analyzed by inductive study methods that would ultimately lead to the one, and only, correct answer. C. S. P. taught that everyone could understand the Scriptures for themselves and they needed no interpreter, such as the Church,<sup>70</sup> they only need a rational mind. Briggs did not need the Church to tell him how to interpret the Scriptures: he, like everyone else, could do that for himself. In doing so, Briggs believed he was following in the footsteps of the great leaders of the Church, such as Wicklif, Luther and Calvin.<sup>71</sup>

Referring to Common Sense Philosophy Noll says, “It was the Bible alone, and the Bible studied as the scientist studies nature, which sustained evangelicals throughout the nineteenth century when they were the overwhelmingly dominant force in American religion.”<sup>72</sup> Some have argued that the Princeton theologians were wrong in resorting to C. S. P., but in fact, it was the common method of reasoning of the nineteenth century, and was practiced by both sides.<sup>73</sup> This was Briggs’s justification for using science to judge the Scriptures. The title of his book makes it clear that in his view Reason was the third fountain of divine authority, equal to both the Church and the Scriptures. So, the argument that either side was wrong for using Common Sense Philosophy is incorrect. The error, which was committed by both sides, was to assume that there was only one correct answer to any Biblical question, and that that answer could be found by scientific study methods. The Bible is not a mathematical problem that can be solved if you are smart enough.

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<sup>70</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925*.

<sup>71</sup> Briggs, *The Bible, the Church, the Reason: The Three Great Fountains of Divine Authority*, 9.

<sup>72</sup> Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America*, 15.

<sup>73</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925*, 110.

Another error that Briggs made was to make current scientific belief the final authority in determining truth. He was willing to “correct” the Bible in order to bring it into line with 19<sup>th</sup> century science. The problem is that “scientific facts” are as fluid as a river and have changed dramatically over the centuries. Even the universe as imagined by Einstein, is considered wrong by today’s string theory.

According to Briggs, there are many errors in the Bible, but they are not intentional deceptions, they are the result of human fallibility.<sup>74</sup> Pointing out these errors does not constitute heresy because they do not involve “faith and practice.” That leaves all of Scripture, with the exception of those passages directly pertaining to “faith and practice,” open to the judgment of science as to whether they should be believed or rejected. Just what those portions of Scripture are that are beyond criticism is never answered. Briggs said:

Criticism has no other aim than truth and fact. Whatever will not stand the test of criticism is false. Whatever shrinks from criticism excites doubt and suspicions. Truth and fact are indestructible. You may shut your eyes to the truth, you may hide behind the walls of error, you may imprison it in the cells of superstition; but sooner or later its own intrinsic light will shine through all obstacles. It is as indestructible as the light of the sun. . . Let us rejoice in an age of criticism, for it is an age which will doubtless excite anxiety in the minds of the weak and the timid, but it is an age which is laying bare the foundations of a magnificent future, when men will be certain of what they believe, and will stand firm on solid and indisputable facts.<sup>75</sup>

This rather high assessment of the human ability to find the truth through the “scientific” method of higher criticism fails to understand that one’s a priori assumptions always determine what results will be found by one’s inquiry. Virtually all of Wellhausen’s and Briggs’ judgments concerning the Old Testament have since proven to be false.<sup>76</sup> This author would argue that that is because their a priori assumptions about God and mankind were

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<sup>74</sup> Briggs, *The Bible, the Church, the Reason: The Three Great Fountains of Divine Authority*, 93.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>76</sup> LaSor, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, 6.

false. Scientists from Aristotle to the present have proposed thousands of theories that have later proven to be false. That will probably never change. If our faith is changed by every new scientific theory, our religion will change as fast as cloud formations. To allow those theories to be the final authority over Scripture is a dangerous and foolish practice.

### **A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield**

The most famous response to Briggs's espousal of the Wellhausen hypothesis came in an article published in the *Presbyterian Review* in 1882, titled "Inspiration." Archibald Alexander Hodge, co-editor with Charles Briggs of the *Presbyterian Review*, invited his friend and fellow conservative Presbyterian, Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield, to co-author the response. The premise of their response would be to attack Briggs's understanding of inspiration, and to defend the traditional understanding of inspiration which had been held by the Presbyterian Church since the time of John Witherspoon.<sup>77</sup> That understanding is commonly referred to as the "verbal, plenary inspiration" of the Scriptures.

Breaking down this title, verbal refers to the words of Scripture; and plenary means all, or completely. So, verbal, plenary inspiration means every word of Scripture is inspired, or God-breathed.<sup>78</sup> The Warfield/Hodge definition of inspiration is stated as follows:

During the entire history of Christian theology the word "inspiration" has been used to express some or all of the activities of God co-operating with its human authors in the genesis of Holy Scripture. We prefer to use it in the single sense of God's continued work of superintendence, by which, his providential, gracious and supernatural contributions having been presupposed, he presided over the sacred writers in their entire work of writing, with the design and effect of rendering that

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<sup>77</sup> Sydney E. Ahlstrom, "The Scottish Philosophy and American Theology," *Church History* XXIV, no. 3 (1955): 262.

<sup>78</sup> I Timothy 3:16.



writing and errorless record of the matters he designed them to communicate, and hence constituted the entire volume in all its parts the word of God to us.<sup>79</sup>

The Warfield/Hodge definition stands in sharp contrast to Briggs's definition, based on the difference in their presuppositions about God and his direct involvement in human affairs. Their definition presupposes the actual presence of a God who is transcendent and personal; and, who at times becomes immanent in the affairs of mankind. This "supernatural" element is central to their thesis. In distinguishing themselves from Briggs, they point out, "It will be observed that we intentionally avoid applying to this inspiration the predicate 'influence.'"<sup>80</sup> Contrast this with Briggs's view that prophets of all religions were "influenced" by both good and evil spirits to produce prophecy, both correct and erroneous. Warfield and Hodge go on to say, "The only really dangerous opposition to the Church doctrine of inspiration comes from some false view of God's relation to the world, and of his methods of working, and of the possibility of a supernatural agency penetrating and altering the course of a natural process."<sup>81</sup>

According to Warfield and Hodge, God used humans to write the Scriptures which then demonstrate their humanness. Their individual personalities shine through; "In every case the instinct of the creature is the intelligence of the Creator working through the creature's spontaneity, informing and directing, yet never violating any of the laws of his free intelligence."<sup>82</sup> This would demand that human errors be made in the record of the Scriptures, and indeed, that is what Warfield and Hodge admit. ". . . inaccuracies and discrepancies of the Bible are inconsiderable in number, and always of secondary importance, in no degree

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<sup>79</sup> Archibald A. Hodge, and Benjamin B. Warfield, *Inspiration* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1881; reprint, 1979), 17-18.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 10=11.

invalidating the great attribute of Scripture—its absolute infallibility and its divine authority as a rule of faith and practice.”<sup>83</sup>

This “infallibility” of the Scriptures, yet containing errors, would seem to be a logical inconsistency. But Warfield and Hodge argue that the Scriptures are so superintended by God that his very nature of perfection makes it impossible for his word to be imperfect. “The Scriptures not only contain, but ARE THE WORD OF GOD, and hence that all their elements and all their affirmations are absolutely errorless, and binding the faith and obedience of men.”<sup>84</sup> (Emphasis is that of Warfield and Hodge.) The argument being, if you believe that God is perfect, then you must believe that his word is perfect.

Warfield and Hodge then challenge anyone to prove that their argument is incorrect. In order to do so, the challenger must meet three criteria. First, he must prove that the error occurred in the original manuscript. Second, it must be proved that the interpretation of the passage containing the error is correct, taking into consideration our lack of knowledge of the original situation. And third, the fact of science or history that seems to be violated by the text must be proved to be correct beyond all doubt.<sup>85</sup> Only then will Warfield and Hodge admit that actual errors occur in the Bible.

There are three major problems with the Warfield/Hodge definition and defense of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. First, regardless of their denials, the Biblical writer becomes nothing more than a stenographer in this scenario. In order to produce a product that is errorless, and the very words of God, the author’s own human fallibility must be eliminated. That means that he must have copied every word as it was spoken to him; or, God is the actual writer, and the documents were handed to the human authors in the same way the

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 36.

Ten Commandments were handed to Moses. Any product that is 50% human and 50% divine is still going to be 50% fallible.

Along the same line of argument, the second problem is their admission that the Bible does contain some small quantity of errors, but that they make no difference. The statement, in itself, is illogical. Either the Bible is perfect and infallible or it contains errors. It cannot be both infallible and contain errors. In this instance, Warfield and Hodge have adopted Briggs's line of reasoning that the Bible is perfect when it comes to "faith and practice," but that is not the same thing as being infallible. They argue strenuously that the Bible is the "WORD OF GOD." With no intention of insulting God, I would ask, concerning the admitted errors, which of God's words are wrong?

Finally, setting up a challenge with impossible obstacles, such as producing the original autographs, does not prove their case. In fact, it shows the weakness of their logic. What possible good is it to have a Bible that was errorless at one time but now contains errors? If, in fact, those errors do not affect faith and practice, they must be spelled-out exactly as to their nature and extent. Otherwise, they leave the Christian in doubt.

Challenging Briggs's (Wellhausen's) theory of the historical evolution of religion and development of the Scriptures by arguing for the errorless perfection of the Scriptures through the doctrine of inspiration was a poor choice of battlefields. James Orr complained that the verbal, plenary inspiration argument was concentrating on the circumference rather than the center of the issue.<sup>86</sup> In fact, Warfield and Hodge became Neo-Scholastics, appropriating Thomas Aquinas's method of making the facts fit the theory. Rather, admitting to errors in the Scriptures, and giving logical answers for their existence, would seem to have been a more

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<sup>86</sup> James Orr, "Holy Scripture and Modern Negation," in *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, ed. R. A. Torrey and A.C. Dixon (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1973), 2.

reasonable approach. Fighting scholarship with scholarship, demanding proof to support assumptions, and highlighting Wellhausen's atheism (his denial of the existence of God in a personal sense,) would seem to have been more to the point.

If God is a transcendent personal God who intervenes in the affairs of mankind, then we should expect to have Scriptures that are historically correct, that describe the intervention of God into human affairs, and that convey the message of God to mankind. Yet, because God is forced to work with humans we should expect a fallible document.

In England, the defense of the Old Testament against the attacks of Wellhausen was carried out successfully by Pusey, Sayce, Albright and others, by closely examining the text and the scientific evidence. Instead of following that approach, the American conservative alliance was now stuck with the burden of two very questionable doctrines; the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and Pre-Pre Dispensationalism. This is a burden that within fifty years would prove to be too much to bear for the "alliance."

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### AMERICA'S SOCIAL CONDITIONS DEMAND REFORM

The nineteenth century saw the industrialization of Europe and America. Mechanized industry brought both great wealth and great poverty; wealth for a few and poverty for most. In 1848 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, both members of the Young Hegelians, formed the Communist Party. Marx's *Communist Manifesto* called for a world wide revolt to destroy capitalism and create equality through dictatorial communism.<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Engels, the more moderate of the two, modified Marx's call for the destruction of capitalism and instead formed the labor union movement, first in Germany, then in England and America.<sup>2</sup> The labor unions in America began striking against the big industrial giants of coal mines, steel mills and railroads as early as the 1860's.<sup>3</sup> Increased immigration kept a steady supply of labor available, which owners used to keep wages at near starvation levels. Blacks from the South were pitted against waves of Irish and Chinese immigrants, each underbidding the other for a low wage job.<sup>4</sup>

With the completion of the Trans-continental Railroad after the end of the Civil War, thousands of farmers moved west onto the Great Plains. But the 1880's and early 1890's saw drought and famine condition in the farm lands. In 1890 the average yearly production for a family farm earned \$167.00.<sup>5</sup> Conditions were so bad that thousands of farmers left the plains

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels, *Marks and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis S. Feuer, trans. Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1959), 22-41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 68-75.

<sup>3</sup> Morison, *The Growth of the American Republic*, 146ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 239.

to seek a factory job in the big city where a laborer could earn as much as \$1.00 for a fourteen hour work day.<sup>6</sup>

The year 1890 saw more labor strikes than any year up to that point in American history.<sup>7</sup> That same year the Populist Party was formed and James B. Weaver ran as the first Populist candidate for president in 1892. The battle cry was, “Raise less corn and more Hell.”<sup>8</sup> He won over a million votes, which got the attention of the Republicans and Democrats.<sup>9</sup> Now, the call for social reform, especially labor reform, industrial regulation and anti-trust laws became the rage.

Christian leaders of both liberal and conservative persuasion were actively pursuing campaigns of social reform. Prohibition, women’s suffrage and child labor laws were high on the agenda, along with soup kitchens to feed the hungry. Charles Sheldon’s *In His Steps* (1896) became very popular, selling two million copies.<sup>10</sup> Some of the biggest names in what would later be called the Fundamentalist Movement were very active in social reform. Mark A. Matthews, John R. Straton, William B. Riley, J. Frank Norris, Tom Uzzell, Billy Sunday, J. Wilbur Chapman, William E. Biederwolf and many more like them all portrayed themselves as champions of social service.<sup>11</sup>

Change came simultaneously in religion, politics and in education. Even though the conservatives had won some well publicized battles against Briggs and Henry Preserved Smith, they were losing the overall battle for control of the schools. The progressive movement demanded progressive thinkers. Szasz points out a survey taken by Norman H.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 240.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 241.

<sup>10</sup> Ferenc Morton Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930* (Birmingham, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1982), 56.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 59-61.

Maring, which showed no liberals in the Baptist seminaries in 1880; but by 1914 liberals were in every school.<sup>12</sup> But this wasn't just true of the Baptists. Mark Noll points out that during this one generation all forms of higher education in America moved from control by conservatives to control by liberals.<sup>13</sup> The epitome of this sweeping change can be seen at Princeton, the last bastion of conservative Presbyterian Theology in American Protestantism. In 1902 the board of directors removed Francis Patton as president and replaced him with Thomas Woodrow Wilson, a champion of progressivism.<sup>14</sup> Wilson was a liberal Presbyterian, like Briggs, who accepted the "cultural immanence" theory of human progress.

The effect of this shift from conservative to liberal control of the schools was to break the "alliance" of conservative evangelicals. The scholastic arm was no longer there. Even though major conservative scholars like B. B. Warfield, J. Gresham Machen and James Orr continued to write in defense of conservative positions, they were overlooked by the new academic leaders. Noll likens their silence regarding the conservatives to the "dog whose bark Sherlock Holmes did not hear."<sup>15</sup> Their silence shut the conservatives out of the academic discussion. This fact, not the lack of academic excellence, has had the continued effect of making the conservative position seem non-academic. Noll sees Kuhn's theory of "paradigm shift" applying to the situation of the conservative-liberal reversal, and the rejection of the conservative arguments as being unworthy of answer.<sup>16</sup> In short, once a shift in attitude happens, the old theory seems unworthy of further discussion, regardless of its merits. This was the situation the conservatives found themselves in just before the First World War. They

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>13</sup> Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America*, 44-45.

<sup>14</sup> David C. Whitney, *The American Presidents* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1985), 227.

<sup>15</sup> Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America*, 44.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 45.

were still defending the authority of the Bible against evolution and Wellhausen. But nobody was listening.

The only alternative the conservative evangelicals had was to turn to the common man with their arguments. At this point, two brothers, Lyman and Milton Stewart, became extremely important to the conservative cause. The Stewarts owned Union Oil Company of California. Lyman had been converted by reading W. E. Blackstone's *Jesus is Coming*. Blackstone was one of the Niagara Bible Conference preachers and solidly Pre-Pre. Lyman Stewart decided to use his \$26,000,000 fortune to sponsor Christian literature and spread the word to all who would listen. He founded BIOLA and funded the publishing of *C. I. Scofield's Reference Bible*.<sup>17</sup> The *Scofield Reference Bible* has been used to convince many millions through the years of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible and the imminent rapture of the Church.

In 1909 Lyman Stewart heard Amzi C. Dixon, pastor of Moody Bible Church in Chicago, preaching about the second coming of Christ and the "rapture." Stewart proposed that Dixon be the director and editor of a series of booklets that he wished to publish to be distributed freely to every pastor in America. Stewart had seven very simple guidelines that all the articles in the booklets had to meet. They were: 1, the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture; 2, the deity of Christ; 3, the vicarious death of Christ; 4, the personality of the Holy Spirit; 5, the necessity of living a holy life; 6, the personal return of Christ; and 7, the need to evangelize the world.<sup>18</sup> The Stewart brothers were Presbyterian, and Lyman's seven point guideline shows a strong similarity to the five point declaration of faith passed by the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1910. It affirmed the verbal, plenary inspiration of

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<sup>17</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 78.

<sup>18</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 192.



Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ, the sacrificial atonement of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, and the supernatural nature of Christ's miracles.<sup>19</sup> Dixon agreed with Stewart's guidelines and in February of 1910 the first of 12 booklets titled, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, was published.<sup>20</sup>

Lyman talked his brother Milton into putting up one third of the \$300,000 cost of publication. But Milton's main concern was as a philanthropist for the China Inland Mission.<sup>21</sup> Two and a half million booklets were published initially, with another half million sent out later to those who requested them.<sup>22</sup> Louis Meyer and R. A. Torrey took over the publication of the latter issues, and in 1919 R. A. Torrey republished all twelve booklets in a four volume set. Altogether there were ninety articles by sixty-four authors.

At the outset these booklets were designed to reach the man on the street. They were written by the best minds in the conservative evangelical camp, but designed to be more devotional than academic. Among the authors nearly all had at least one earned doctoral degree, and many were noted scholars, such as B. B. Warfield, Frederick Wright, Franklin Johnson, H. C. G. Moule and James Orr. But most were leading pastors and evangelists like W. H. Griffith Thomas, A. T. Pierson, Arno C. Gabelein, R. A. Torrey, and G. Campbell Morgan.<sup>23</sup> These articles can be freely downloaded on the Internet at <http://xmission.com/~fidelis/>.

Stewart's desire was to make these booklets freely available to "pastors, evangelists, theological professors, theological students, Y. M. C. A. secretaries, Y. W. C. A. secretaries,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., xiv.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 195, 249-250.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ruben A. Torrey, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, ed. R. A. Torrey and A. C. Dixon (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1973), re-printed in 2 volumes.

college professors, Sunday School superintendents, and religious editors in the English speaking world.”<sup>24</sup> As would seem evident by Stewart’s seven guidelines, the major focus of *The Fundamentals* was the authority of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the need for personal holiness and the need to evangelize the world.<sup>25</sup> Stewart’s philanthropy and evangelistic spirit did more to spread the word of the fundamentalist cause than could have ever been done by debating the issues among scholars amid academic circles. Being shut out of the schools resulted in a plus for the fundamentalists. In the history of the Church it is hard to conceive of two laymen who have had more impact than Lyman and Milton Stewart.

The term ‘Fundamentalist’ takes its name from these articles.<sup>26</sup> The name was coined by Curtis Lee Laws, editor of The Watchman Examiner newspaper, in 1919, to describe those who believed in the message of *The Fundamentals*.<sup>27</sup> Yet the tenor of the articles is not the confrontational tone one might expect.<sup>28</sup> The dramatic growth and “Fightin-Fundie” attitude of the fundamentalist movement would be the result of the conflict that arose with the liberal-progressive movement concerning American involvement in World War I.

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<sup>24</sup> Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism*, 55-56.

<sup>25</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 79.

<sup>26</sup> Ed. Dobson, Ed. Hindson, Jerry Falwell, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 46.

<sup>27</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925.*, 159.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### WWI SEEMS TO PROVE THE FUNDAMENTALISTS RIGHT

From 1900 to 1914 America seemed to be on the verge of realizing the dream of inaugurating the Kingdom of God. Desire for social, political and religious reform was at its height. And the liberal-progressives, especially of the Northern Presbyterians, Northern Baptists and Congregationalists were ready to take credit for the progress. But, as Marsden points out, some of the liberal-progressives became more aggressive and radical in their theology.<sup>1</sup> A good example of this extremism can be seen in a speech given in 1909 at Harvard by President emeritus Charles W. Eliot. He titled his speech, "The Religion of the Future." Ferenc Szasz reports on his speech as follows:

The religion of the future would not be based on any authority, either church or the Bible, he said. It would have only one commandment—love of God, shown through service to others by contribution to the common good. Ideas about God would change greatly in the future and would "comprehend the Jewish Jehovah, the Christian Universal Father, the modern Physicist's omnipresence and exhaustless Energy, and the biological conception of a Vital Force." God would become absolutely immanent in all aspects of life, so much so that no mediation would be needed between Him and any part of His creation.

This new faith, predicted Eliot, would have no dealings with sin or the Fall, and its saints would be "the discoverers, teachers, martyrs, and apostles of liberty, purity, and righteousness." In the future there would be nothing "supernatural." Nor might there be any further need for worship. . . . The new clerics would be surgeons and social reformers—those who make positive social gains. The new religion would be in harmony with the great secular movements of the day: democracy, individualism, education, social idealism, preventative medicine, the spirit of research, and the advance in business and industrial ethics.<sup>2</sup>

This radical new religion was anything but Christianity, yet it was typical of the extremes that the new liberalism was attaining both in America and in Europe. In Germany the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>2</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 70-71.

combination of Hegelianism and Darwinism was combined with extreme nationalism to create a belief in the “superman” race. Marsden sees this as the ultimate cause of W.W.I.<sup>3</sup> Resembling the “Manifest Destiny” optimism of early nineteenth century America, the Germans now set out to attain their rightful place as rulers of the world. As they did, the inhuman and amoral nature of their new religion shocked their admirers (the liberal-progressives) here in America.

Beginning in 1914 stories of German atrocities filled the papers in America. Three things began happening as a result. First, the Pre-Millenarians began predicting the end of the world. Articles in Our Hope and The King’s Business urged people to discern the “signs of the times.”<sup>4</sup> Second, anti-German fervor began to grow.<sup>5</sup> And third, the liberals began to have self doubts about the amoral nature of the philosophy they had adopted from the Germans. This was expressed well by George Gordon, one of the leaders of the liberal movement, criticizing the extremes of the social Darwinist theories;

. . . during the last three light-hearted decades, we have been smoking the opium pipe of evolution, telling the world how far it has risen, chiefly by its own force, from the depths in which it began, describing the speed by which it has mounted under our sage and dreamy eyes, and prophesying of its complete ascension in the near and sweet bye and bye. Recent events have broken the opium pipe and dispelled the delusion.<sup>6</sup>

Shailer Mathews was more succinct yet just as self-incriminating, “we were incredibly optimistic, which is another way of saying we were incredibly blind.”<sup>7</sup>

After the sinking of the *Lusitania* (7 May, 1915) anti-German sentiment grew to a firestorm. Billy Sunday typified the American response by striding down the aisle of his church waving an American flag, mounting the platform and proclaiming, “If you turn hell

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<sup>3</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925.*, 149.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 153-154.

<sup>5</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 84.

<sup>6</sup> George Gordon quoted by Hutchison in Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*, 227.

<sup>7</sup> Shailer Mathews, *New Faith for Old* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), 195.

upside down you'll find 'Made in Germany' stamped on the bottom."<sup>8</sup> Some of this acrimony against Germany was then turned to those who held to German philosophy.<sup>9</sup> And, this is the beginning of the hardening of the fundamentalist movement in their fight against liberalism.

Hutchison, Marsden and Sandeen find the pro-war and anti-war advocates among both liberals and conservatives. However, those who favored joining the war were more numerous in the liberal camp. This was due to the very different world views concerning how the world was going to end. Fundamentalists saw the events of 1914-1917 as proof that the world was coming to an end at any moment. Within that three year period millions joined with their belief. Overall, they were more hesitant to join the war. Liberal leaders like Harry Emerson Fosdick, Shailer Mathews, Henry Churchill King and Lyman Abbott justified their pro-war stance as a chance to rid the world of evil and bring in the Kingdom of God by force.<sup>10</sup> Abbott called for a *Twentieth Century Crusade* against evil in hopes of creating a Christian world order.<sup>11</sup>

Marsden traces the beginning of the Liberal-Fundamentalist acrimony to a cross-town rivalry between the pro-war, liberal, Chicago Divinity School and the anti-war, Fundamentalist, Moody Bible Institute.<sup>12</sup> James M. Gray, dean of Moody Bible Institute, R. A. Torrey, dean of BIOLA, A. C. Gaebelein, editor of "Our Hope," a Fundamentalist journal, et al, had been urging the government not to get engaged in the war. This was the majority opinion of the American public in 1914 -1915. President Wilson was trying to keep America out of the war by help our allies through the lend/lease program. William Jennings Bryan

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<sup>8</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925.*, 145.

<sup>9</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 84-85.

<sup>10</sup> William R. Hutchison, *The Transcendentalist Ministers: Church Reform in the New England Renaissance*. (Archon Books, 1972), 238.

<sup>11</sup> Lyman Abbott, *The Twentieth Century Crusade* (New York: Macmillian, 1918).

<sup>12</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925.*, 146-147.

resigned his office as Secretary of State under Wilson in 1915 when he felt that Wilson was changing his mind about American involvement in the war.<sup>13</sup>

Shailer Mathews, president of Chicago Divinity School, and Shirley Jackson Case, professor of theology, gave a series of sermons and wrote articles accusing the fundamentalist of being a danger to the public, among other things. In Mathews' sermon, "Will Christ Come Again?," Mathews says, "For whenever a view, at once without moral emphasis, in origin mistaken and contrary to the recognizable facts of history and nature, is made central it inevitably becomes a danger."<sup>14</sup> In Mathew's view, not only were the fundamentalists wrong about their theology, but they were discouraging people from supporting the war, thereby endangering the country. The less than complimentary response can be seen in the title of R. A. Torrey's article, "Will Christ Come Again? An Exposure of the Foolishness, Fallacies and Falsehoods of Shailer Mathews."<sup>15</sup>

The low point in this war of words came when S. J. Case accused Moody Bible Institute and the fundamentalists of taking bribes to publish articles urging America to stay out of the war.<sup>16</sup> S. J. Case named the price of the bribes as \$2000 per week, which he claimed was coming from German agents in America.<sup>17</sup>

R. A. Torrey, editor of the fundamentalist journal *The Kings Business* at BIOLA replied to the charges: "While the charge that the money for premillennial propaganda 'emanates from German sources' is ridiculous, the charge that the destructive criticism that rules in Chicago

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>14</sup> Shailer Mathews, "Will Christ Come Again?" in *The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict: Opposing Views on Three Major Issues*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, 1922).

<sup>15</sup> Ruben A. Torrey, "'Will Christ Come Again?' an Exposure of the Foolishness, Fallacies and Falsehoods of Shailer Mathews," in *The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict: Opposing Views on Three Major Issues*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, 1922).

<sup>16</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 86.

<sup>17</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925*.

University ‘emanates from German sources’ is undeniable.”<sup>18</sup> Marsden adds, “This quickly became one of the most effective and widely-repeated accusations among opponents of liberal theology.”<sup>19</sup> The fundamentalists charged that what had happened in Germany was bound to happen in America if we stayed on the course of liberalism. The Hegelian/Darwinist Superman philosophy was bound to lead the entire world to hell.<sup>20</sup>

The moderating influence of conservative theologians like J. Gresham Machen, who believed in theistic evolution, was tossed aside by the fundamentalists. The number one enemy of religion for them became anyone who accepted the theory of evolution in any form.<sup>21</sup> Marsden says, “These ideas, and the cultural crisis that bred them, revolutionized fundamentalism. More precisely, they created it. . . the contention was that the whole moral course of civilization was involved. Evolution became a symbol.”<sup>22</sup> This was one of the most foolish and extreme mistakes of the fundamentalist movement. It removed all semblance of scholarship from the movement and made it a case of the preachers, verses the scientists.

Along with this openly hostile attitude towards anyone who accepted the theory of evolution came a revival of the Bible Prophecy Conference movement. Events during the course of the war, such as General Allenby retaking Jerusalem, caused a resurgence of interest in Biblical prophecy.<sup>23</sup> It seemed to many that the Apostle John’s prophecies were being fulfilled: nations rising up against nations, multi-national armies fighting over Palestine, hundreds of thousands dying on the battlefields of Europe, and unheard of new weapons of war, such as airplanes, tanks, machine-guns and poison gas were now in the news everyday.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 149-153.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>23</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 233.

William Bell Riley took advantage of the renewed interest in prophecy in 1918 to hold the Philadelphia Bible Conference. More than 5000 people attended to hear the Pre-Pre version of the end of the world that was about to happen at any moment.<sup>24</sup>

Because of the success of the conference, W. B. Riley, along with R. A. Torrey, A. C. Gaebelein, J. M. Gray, W. H. Griffith-Thomas, L. S. Chafer, L. W. Munhall, C. A. Blanchard, J. C. Masee, W. L. Tucker, W. L. Pettingill, M. A. Matthews A. C. Dixon, et al. formed the World's Christian Fundamentalist Association in 1918.<sup>25</sup> Riley then began planning a one year tour, presenting prophecy conferences all across the country, known as the "World Conference on Christian Fundamentals" tour. The tour kicked off at Philadelphia in 1918 with more than 5000 people attending.<sup>26</sup> These conferences were tremendously successful in spreading the Pre-Pre message and increasing the numbers of fundamentalists across the country.<sup>27</sup> This group of men and their associates, along with the tens of thousands of members of the W. C. F. A. were the true fundamentalists.

It is the five point creed of the World's Christian Fundamentalist Association that continues to characterize fundamentalism even today. Those five points are: 1, the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture; 2, the deity of Jesus Christ; 3, the substitutionary atonement of Christ's death; 4, the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ; and 5, pre-millennial dispensationalism and the literal return of Christ in the Second Advent.<sup>28</sup>

William B. Riley continued his conference tours on the principles of fundamentalism, the evils of the evolutionary theory, and Pre-Pre dispensationalism through 1920. The popularity of the conferences was phenomenal, giving Riley and others fundamentalists visions

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<sup>24</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 90.

<sup>25</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 243.

<sup>26</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 91.

<sup>27</sup> Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930*, 244-246.

<sup>28</sup> Dobson, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 7.



of grandeur. More than 6000 people attended the second Philadelphia conference in 1919.<sup>29</sup> Riley said of the Philadelphia Bible Conference of 1919, “The future will look back to the World Conference on Christian Fundamentals, held in Philadelphia, May 25 to June 1919, as an event of more historical moment than the nailing up, at Wittenburg, of Martin Luther’s ninety-five theses.”<sup>30</sup> Riley and the other fundamentalists believed they were about to reconquer America for orthodoxy.

It is not correct to label men like B. B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen as fundamentalists. Not everyone who fought against the liberal-progressive world view believed in the seven point creed of *The Fundamentals*, or the five point creed of the WCFA. Nor did they all become part of the Bible prophecy movement and predict the any moment return of Christ and the destruction of the world. Simply believing in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures is not enough to be included in the fundamentalist movement. The Pre-Pre dispensational theology is intrinsically linked to fundamentalism. So too, is a strongly held belief in the literalness of the first eleven chapters of Genesis and a rejection of evolution. The stereotypical charges of ignorance and belligerence are not unwarranted on the part of some. In some cases those same charges could be made about their opponents. However, unless one holds to the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture, along with a rejection of evolutionary theory, and Pre-Pre dispensational eschatology, they cannot be rightly considered a fundamentalist.

The success of the fundamentalist message and the growing number of followers caused Harry Emerson Fosdick to preach a sermon titled, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” Emerson charged the Fundamentalists with being “illiberal,” “intolerant” and “anti-

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<sup>29</sup> William Bell Riley, *The Antevolution Pamphlets of William Bell Riley*, ed. William Vance Trollinger Jr. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), xi.

<sup>30</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 91.

intellectual.”<sup>31</sup> Illiberal and intolerant were probably correct in some cases, but anti-intellectual was a stereotypical charge due to the lack of fundamentalists in the circles of higher education. For the most part the men who held to the fundamentalist position were highly educated. The fact that they were preachers rather than scientists does not justify the charge of anti-intellectual. Fosdick’s sermon was typical of the war of words that was conducted by both sides; including Fosdick, Shailer Mathews, Shirley Jackson Case, Lyman Powell, R. A. Torrey, A. C. Gaebelein, James Gray and Clarence McCartney, et al. Truth be told, there was little tolerance on either side, but the label of intolerance stuck with the fundamentalists.

For a brief while the fundamentalists looked like they might win. From 1918 to 1925 their numbers grew rapidly in all Protestant denominations, and they became a political force to be reckoned with.<sup>32</sup> For instance, the rejection of Wilson’s League of Nations proposal to congress was mostly due to the fear of the fundamentalists that the coalition of nations would be the forming of the “Fourth Beast” of Daniel 7.<sup>33</sup> The attention of the fundamentalists turned to the public schools with the goal of removing all traces of the theory of evolution from public education.<sup>34</sup> Much of their reputation as pulpit-pounding, “Fightin-Fundies” came during this time from men like William Bell Riley, J. Frank Norris, John Roach Straton, Clarence E. Macartney, A. C. Gaebelein and William Jennings Bryan in their campaign to rid the schools of evolution.<sup>35</sup> The battle would end in failure. The scientists would still teach evolution. The

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<sup>31</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" in *Critical Issues in American Religious History*, ed. Robert Mathisen (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 1922; reprint, 2001), 445.

<sup>32</sup> Robert A. Garson, "Political Fundamentalism and Popular Democracy in the 1920's," in *Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, ed. Martin E. Marty (New York: K. G. Saur, 1993), 129-143.

<sup>33</sup> Markku Ruotsila, "Conservative American Protestantism in the League of Nations Controversy," *Church History* 72, no. 3 (2003).

<sup>34</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 107.

<sup>35</sup> Clifford R. Jr. Hope, "Strident Voices in Kansas between Wars," in *Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, ed. Martin E. Marty (New York: K.G. Saur, 1993), 145-169. Patsy Ledbetter, "Defense of the Faith: J. Frank Norris and Texas Fundamentalism," in *Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, ed. Martin E. Marty (New York: K. G. Saur, 1993), 170-189. Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 107-111.

World's Christian Fundamentalist Association would collapse in 1929, and the fundamentalist would retrench into separatist groups.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Dobson, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 60.

## CHAPTER NINE

### WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN AND THE SCOPES TRIAL

William Jennings Bryan was born in 1860 in Salem, Illinois. His education included a degree in classical studies from Illinois College and a law degree from Union College of Law in Chicago.<sup>1</sup> After graduation Bryan had a brief and not very successful law practice in Jacksonville, Illinois and Lincoln, Nebraska.<sup>2</sup> Bryan gave up his law practice in 1890 to run for congress, and served two terms in the U. S. House of Representatives, where Bryan earned the nickname, “the Boy Orator of the Platte.”<sup>3</sup> Bryan was very much a product of the Populist uprising in the farm states and became an activist for reform and the cause of the common man. In 1896 Bryan made the first of three attempts to become president of the United States. It was at the Democratic convention that year that Bryan gave his famous “cross of gold” speech. His tireless fight for the little guy, and the paper that he co-edited with his brother, The Commoner, earned him his new nickname that would stay with him for the rest of his life; “The Great Commoner.”<sup>4</sup>

The fight for the nomination for president at the Democratic convention in 1912 went to 46 ballots. When Bryan switched his vote to Woodrow Wilson, there was a reciprocal gesture of offering the position of Secretary of State to Bryan; a position which Russell says

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<sup>1</sup> C. Allen Russell, *Voices of American Fundamentalism: Seven Biographical Studies* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 167.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Doug Linder, *William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)* (2004, accessed 10/09 2005); available from [Http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/bryanw.htm](http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/bryanw.htm).

<sup>4</sup> Russell, *Voices of American Fundamentalism: Seven Biographical Studies*, 165.

Bryan was “eminently unqualified” for.<sup>5</sup> However, Bryan served well from 1913 to 1915 when he resigned because of Wilson’s move towards war preparation.<sup>6</sup>

After his resignation Bryan continued his political activism for reform, becoming a champion for prohibition and women’s suffrage.<sup>7</sup> During this time Bryan read two books that changed the course of his life. One was Benjamin Kidd’s *The Science of Power*, published in 1915. Kidd’s thesis was that the theory of evolution was the driving force in politics around the world. It was at the heart of Germany’s drive to conquer the world. But, more than that, evolutionary theory, through the writings of Karl Marx, was the driving force behind the social unrest and injustice that was the burden of the common man.<sup>8</sup> Evolutionary theory was used by the industrialists to justify their exploitation of the laborer.<sup>9</sup> And evolutionary theory was used by the racists to justify their treatment of African-Americans. Woodrow Wilson, the darling of the liberal-left, was a champion of this view. Wilson’s *History of the American People* is quoted repeatedly in D. W. Griffith’s, “Birth of a Nation.” One of the often repeated lines from Wilson’s *History* is, “The white men were roused by a mere instinct of self-preservation until at last there had sprung into existence a great Ku Klux Klan, a veritable empire of the South, to protect the Southern country.”<sup>10</sup> Needless to say, Wilson’s “Fair Deal” did not extend to the black Americans.

The second book that changed Bryan’s direction was published the next year by James H. Leuba, titled *The Belief in God and Immortality* (1916). Leuba had done a statistical study of college students across the country and found that young people who attended college were

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 108.

<sup>7</sup> Linder, *William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)*(accessed).

<sup>8</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 109.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Josephson, *The Robber Barons: The Great American Capitalists 1861-1901* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962), 32ff.

<sup>10</sup> Woodrow Wilson, *History of the American People*, quoted by Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia, @ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodrow\\_Wilson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodrow_Wilson).

turning away from orthodox religion because of the teaching of evolutionary theory in the schools.<sup>11</sup> Bryan decided to dedicate himself to the cause of removing the theory of evolution from the public schools. From 1920 through 1925 he engaged in a speaking tour around the country encouraging state legislatures to pass legislation banning the theory of evolution from any school that received public funding.<sup>12</sup>

In May of 1925 Tennessee passed the Butler Law banning the theory of evolution from all state-funded schools. The ACLU took out ads in the *Chattanooga News* stating that they would pay all expenses for anyone who was willing to challenge the new law in court.<sup>13</sup> John Thomas Scopes, a part-time biology instructor, agreed to accept the ACLU's offer. In turn, William Bell Riley, president of the World's Christian Fundamentalist Association, asked William Jennings Bryan to prosecute the case, with the offer to pay all expenses.<sup>14</sup> Bryan accepted the challenge, but offered his services free of charge. The stage was now set for what has become known as the "Scopes Monkey Trial."

The defense team consisted of the three most successful lawyers the ACLU could find. Dudley Field Malone, ex-Assistant Secretary of State under William Jennings Bryan; Arthur Garfield Hays, and Clarence Darrow, the greatest trial lawyer of his time.<sup>15</sup> They were joined by John Randolph Neal, a law professor from the University of Tennessee.

The prosecution team was twice as large. They included Bryan, Sue Hicks, the local prosecutor, and her brother Herbert, Rhea County Attorney General Thomas Stewart, retired

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<sup>11</sup> Linder, *William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)*(accessed).

<sup>12</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 110-111.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Jeffery P. Moran, *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, The Bedford Series in History and Culture (Boston: Bedford /St. Martin's, 2002), 29.

Rhea County Attorney General Benjamin G. McKenzie, J. G. McKenzie, son of “General Ben,” and William Jennings Bryan Jr., son of the “Great Commoner.”<sup>16</sup>

Bryan had no formal theological training.<sup>17</sup> He knew only what he had heard in sermons and learned from his own private Bible study. He contacted Sue Hicks, the local prosecutor in Dayton, Tennessee, and suggested that Samuel Untermyer, a Jewish lawyer and an expert on the Old Testament, be added to the team. Hicks replied that she felt they had all the expertise they needed and declined to contact Untermyer.<sup>18</sup> This proved to be a fatal error for the prosecution.

Because of the high profile nature of the attorneys on both sides, the Scopes case drew nationwide attention. Newspapers all across America carried editorials on a daily basis giving blow by blow accounts.<sup>19</sup> On the opening day of the trial, 10 July, 1925, one hundred reporters crowded the courthouse and a Chicago newspaper set up a nation-wide radio broadcast of the proceedings.<sup>20</sup> Judge John T. Raulston opened the trial with prayer and a jury was selected. All twelve members of the jury were locals with limited education, one was actually illiterate.<sup>21</sup>

The defense saw two main issues in the case. The first was the unconstitutional nature of the Butler Law. They argued that by not allowing the theory of evolution to be taught in public schools the State of Tennessee had given preference to one religion above another in violation of the constitution.<sup>22</sup> This exchange between Malone and Stewart is typical of the three days of debate over this issue.

Malone: Does not it prefer the Bible over the Koran?

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Russell, *Voices of American Fundamentalism: Seven Biographical Studies*, 169.

<sup>18</sup> Linder, *William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)*(accessed).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.(accessed).

<sup>20</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 118. Moran, *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, 42.

<sup>21</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 119.

<sup>22</sup> Moran, *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, 33-39.

Stewart: We are not living in a heathen country.

Malone: Will you answer my question? Does not it prefer the Bible to the Koran?

Stewart: We are not living in a heathen country, so how could it prefer the Bible to the Koran?<sup>23</sup>

The fact that the defense recognized that the two sides were representing two different religions is an important point that will be returned to later. The second issue of major importance was the defense's attempt to introduce "expert" witnesses into the trial to verify the scientific nature of the theory of evolution. No one on the prosecution had any training in theology or science. They were relying on the expertise of William Jennings Bryan who had toured the nation for five years, giving speeches about the perils of evolution. But Bryan was not a successful lawyer, nor was he a good debater. His talent lay in his ability as a great orator.<sup>24</sup> The prosecution contended that the trial should be about the fact that Scopes violated the law, and not about the truth or falsehood of evolutionary theory.

Even though the prosecution won this issue with the judge, they lost the respect of the nation in the process. Part of the testimony was from a high-school student who testified that Scopes had taught in his biology class that mankind was one of the 3500 members of the mammal class, part of the primate family, specifically of the *Homo Sapiens* species. Bryan gave a rambling speech that lasted for more than an hour that attempted to disprove that mankind was a mammal.<sup>25</sup> His contention was that mankind was separate from the creation of the animal kingdom and therefore not an animal.<sup>26</sup>

Dudley Malone gave a rebuttal that lasted twenty five minutes and won thunderous applause from the audience, destroying Bryan's testimony. The judge recessed the court

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>24</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism 1870-1925.*, 186.

<sup>25</sup> Linder, accessed 10/9/2005.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., accessed 10/9/2005.



leaving only Bryan, Scopes and Malone in the courtroom. Bryan said, “Dudley, that was the greatest speech I ever heard.” Malone replied, “Thank you, Mr. Bryan, I am terribly sorry that I was the one who had to give it.”<sup>27</sup> The following day it would be Clarence Darrow’s turn to humiliate “The Great Commoner.”

On Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, Clarence Darrow petitioned the court to allow the defense to call William Jennings Bryan as a hostile witness. Judge John Raulston said he would allow the request but only if Bryan would be willing to testify. Bryan agreed. Darrow questioned Bryan about Jonah and the whale, Joshua making the sun stand still, and Noah’s flood. During all of this testimony Bryan handled himself well and won continued applause from the audience.<sup>28</sup> It was when the questioning turned to Genesis 1 and the creation story that things went sour for Bryan.

William Jennings Bryan was a believer in the Day-Age theory which allows for the six days of creation to be ages of time rather than twenty-four hour days.<sup>29</sup> This allows for the great age of the earth, and it allows for a limited form of evolution within the family; e.g. one set of birds being the ancestors of all birds. However, this theory was not popular among fundamentalists and lost Bryan the respect of many.<sup>30</sup>

When asked if the Bible said that the earth was created in 4004 B. C., Bryan answered that that was Ussher’s calculation, not his. Darrow then asked if Bryan thought that the days of Genesis 1 were twenty-four hour days. The testimony reads as follows:

Darrow: You think those were not literal days?

Bryan: I do not think they were twenty-four hour days.

Darrow: You do not think that?

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<sup>27</sup> Russell, *Voices of American Fundamentalism: Seven Biographical Studies*, 183.

<sup>28</sup> Moran, *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, 143-153. Moran includes a transcript of the trial that includes the full questions and answers.

<sup>29</sup> Dobson, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 54.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Bryan: No. But I think it would be just as easy for the kind of God we believe in to make the earth in six days as in six years or in 6,000,000 years or in 6,000,000,000 years. I do not think it important whether we believe one or the other.

Darrow: You do not think they were literal days?

Bryan: My impression is they were periods, but I would not attempt to argue against anybody who wanted to believe in literal days.

Darrow: Have you any idea of the length of the periods?

Bryan; No, I don't.

Darrow: The creation might have gone on for a very long time?

Bryan: It might have continued for millions of years.<sup>31</sup>

The testimony ended shortly after that with a shouting match between Bryan and Darrow. Bryan charged that Darrow was slurring Christians everywhere who believed in the literal meaning of the Bible. Darrow countered that he was only examining Bryan on his "fool ideas that no intelligent Christian on earth believes."<sup>32</sup>

The next day judge Raulston expunged Bryan's testimony from the court record and sent the case to the jury.<sup>33</sup> But it was too late; the damage had already been done. With nationwide radio and newspaper coverage the testimony could not be removed from the hearing of the people. In essence, Bryan had admitted that everything the defense believed about the age of the earth and the evolution of the species was true. The only differences in the two positions were the questions of the evolution across species lines, and the existence of God. The jury found Scopes guilty of teaching evolution and the judge fined him \$100.00, which was paid by the Baltimore Sun.<sup>34</sup> The prosecution had won, but fundamentalism had lost.

William Jennings Bryan died five days after the trial from diabetes melitis which was brought on by the triple digit temperatures in the courtroom.<sup>35</sup> The fight to remove the teaching

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<sup>31</sup> Moran, *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, 159.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>34</sup> Dobson, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 58.

<sup>35</sup> Linder, *William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)*(accessed).

of evolution from the public schools fizzled after this trial. That year the number of members who showed up at the meeting of the WCFA dropped sharply, and continued to drop until 1929 when the organization disbanded.<sup>36</sup> The fundamentalist movement now began a precipitous retreat. Dobson, et al says, "This withdrawal and separatist position became a leading characteristic of the Fundamentalist Movement. Rather than fighting, its members decided to withdraw from the liberal seminaries and churches and establish their own seminaries and churches. This left the major denominations in control of the liberals."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Dobson, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*, 59-60.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **LESSONS TO BE LEARNED**

The fundamentalists forgot the origin of the disagreement between them and the liberal/progressives. The disagreement did not begin in May of 1918. It began in Germany in the late eighteenth century. All of the arguments about evolution, the historicity of the Old and New Testaments, the deity of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of the Scriptures, were the logical outgrowth of the two conflicting a priori assumptions about the nature of God. Either God is a personal/transcendent God who has the power to become immanent at his command; or, God is non-personal/transcendent god that has no power at all. The Orthodox Christian faith has been from the very beginning a faith based on a personal/transcendent God.

This fact, that the liberal/progressive faith was, indeed, a separate religion was established during the Scopes trial, and was one of the two main arguments for the defense. Dudley Malone argued that it was unconstitutional to give preference to the Christian religion, and to ban the religion of Darwinism (See above). It has been the Liberal/Progressive belief since the days of Hegel that their god was akin to the Greek spirit of the logos. He is, therefore, a spirit of knowledge or education. As one gains knowledge, one believes mankind can accomplish anything. This feeling of progress is the god of Hegelianism.

The great fraud of the liberal/progressives was to continue using personal biblical names and pronouns to describe this god. There is very little doubt that this was a deliberate choice on the part of many in order to avoid the charge of atheism. But, once a definition of the Liberal/Progressive god is established the doubt vanishes. At least the French liberals during the

revolution had the honesty to admit that they were creating their own new religion.<sup>1</sup> But, instead, the German theologians from Kant to Wrede, misappropriated the name Christianity to describe a new religion with no God. Wellhausen, when asked if the Bible could remain a part of the Church if his theories were accepted, replied, “I cannot see how that is possible.”<sup>2</sup>

Instead of recognizing this fact early on in the nineteenth century and demanding that this new religion be identified as just that, conservative Christians continued to argue around the periphery of the issue. By the time the Fundamentalists Movement was firmly established in the early twentieth century they were left to defend three positions that were indefensible. The first issue is the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, which makes mankind a robot in the production of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are far from perfect. Adding the phrase, “in the original manuscripts,” only serves to point out the absurdity of the statement. It simply means, the Bible used to be correct, but it is no longer. This does nothing to answer the questions raised by the critics, and does not engender faith in the veracity of the Bible. In fact, it does the opposite. The admission that human beings will always produce flawed documents (even with spell-check), combined with well-reasoned explanations for the discrepancies would have been a more reasonable approach. The fundamentalists should have stayed with the arguments of Sayce, Albright, Pusey and others which showed that Wellhausen and his followers were factually incorrect, and the documents could be trusted as historically accurate, but not perfect.

Secondly, the Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalism of the fundamentalists is a distortion of the Scriptures which the fundamentalists claim to hold so dear. This belief gained great popularity during the hysteria over World War I. But, the time has long since past for the fundamentalists to re-examine this issue and stop labeling people as heretics who don’t believe it. If the Scriptures are to be understood in a literal fashion when it comes to the timing

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Zamoyski, *Holy Madness: Romantics, patriots, and Revolutionaries, 1776-1871*, 59-72.

<sup>2</sup> Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America 1880-1930*, 80.

of the Millennium, or if there will be a Millennium, then, surely the same principle must be applied to the future of the church and the tribulation. Does one have to interpret all Biblical prophecy in a strictly literal fashion in order to be a Christian? If they do, then the fundamentalists are in trouble themselves! The inconsistency of demanding a literal interpretation of Revelation 20, but an allegorical understanding of Revelation 2-3 is untenable.

Thirdly, the greatest mistake of the fundamentalists was to take an “all or nothing” stand on the issue of evolution. The rejection of the theistic evolutionary position of conservative Christian scholars such as James Orr, William H. Green, B. B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen forced the fundamentalists into the untenable position of having no scholarly support. This left people like William Jennings Bryan open to charges of “buffoonery.”<sup>3</sup>

This was due to a basic misunderstanding of the nature of religion; a misunderstanding that is shared by many people today. Most people do not understand that cosmology is religion, not science. Webster’s defines “science” as, “a branch of knowledge or study dealing with a body of facts or truths systematically arranged and showing the operation of general laws: . . .”<sup>4</sup> This has not changed since the days of Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Francis Bacon. Empirical science demands proof by repeatability. The “scientific” mind demands evidence beyond the mere hypothesis or supposition. This is one reason why it is wrong to criticize Warfield and Hodge for Common Sense Philosophy. Modern-man normally thinks in a Common Sense manner. The empirical study of phenomenal evidence gives proof of scientific fact. When the facts are arranged in a logical way we feel confident of the scientific nature of our beliefs. This is true in all fields of study.

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<sup>3</sup> Linder, *William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925)*(accessed).

<sup>4</sup> *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, (New York: Portland House, 1989).

But “cosmology” is defined as “a branch of philosophy dealing with the order and general structure of the universe: . . .”<sup>5</sup> And that’s just the point. Science deals with facts that can be verified by repeated experiment. Philosophy deals with the realm of beliefs. What part of creation, or the “Big Bang,” can be verified by repeated experiment? None! Regardless of what side of the argument your philosophy falls on, it is still philosophy; and therefore, it is your religious conviction. Having a preponderance of atheististic scientists on your side does not change the fact that your cosmology is still a religious view.

Many in the scientific community claim that their cosmology is scientific because Steven W. Hawking invented a new system of mathematics in 1970 that allowed astrophysicists to speculate concerning the process of the “Big Bang” from  $t = 0^{-1}$  seconds onward.<sup>6</sup> But that last little bit of time has never been discernable by any method of speculative mathematics. And Hawking, himself, admits that one has to make some rather large assumptions in order for his calculations to work.<sup>7</sup> Beyond that, the speculated temperatures and pressures of the “Big Bang” would not allow atoms to exist until 700,000 years after the “Big Bang” had occurred, so the laws of physics in our present world can never be used to duplicate the speculated conditions of the “Big Bang.”<sup>8</sup> But, perhaps most telling of all, Steven Hawking has spent the last eighteen years denying the “Big Bang.” He says, “It is perhaps ironic that, having changed my mind, I am now trying to convince other physicists that there was no singularity at the beginning of the universe—as we shall see later, it can disappear once quantum effects are taken into account.”<sup>9</sup>

So, cosmology is religion, no matter what one does for a living. Whether one is a scientist or a theologian; whether one believes in a six day creation, or a “Big Bang,” their

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Steven W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (London: Bantam Books, 1988), 50.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> John Gribbin, *In Search of the Big Bang* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 182.

<sup>9</sup> Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, 50.

cosmology is still believed strictly on the basis of faith. Can a Christian have a cosmology that believes in a “Big Bang?” Yes, as long as that Christian believes in a personal/transcendent God who has the power to become immanent. That is the point that the fundamentalists missed. As long as Christians believe in the same God, who is the Father of Jesus Christ our Lord, the process and time span of Genesis 1-2 is simply a matter of interpretation. There is room for more than the fundamentalist interpretation of Genesis 1-2 in the realm of Christianity. Some of the great conservative, evangelical authors of the past have had differing opinions on the length of time of Genesis 1-2. And, they have had differing opinions concerning the amount of involvement of the evolutionary process, as well. Believing in the evolutionary process only becomes wrong when it changes from theistic to naturalistic evolution. In that case it becomes a different religion.

Regarding those who are Christians, and believe in the evolutionary theory, I would only venture to ask: Why would a God who is personal and transcendent, a God who walked on water, calmed the storm with his word and raised the dead, need fourteen and a half billion years to create the world? Although, I do not doubt he could have used that process if he had desired; the personal/transcendent God I believe in had no need for such a time span. However, either belief can be accommodated under the label Orthodox Christian.

Finally, the time has long since come for those who have separated themselves into fundamentalist churches and organizations to reach out in fellowship to those who do not hold to the five tenets of the fundamentalist creed. It is not up to those who have stayed in the mainline denominations to reach out to the fundamentalists. It was the fundamentalists who chose to separate themselves. They must now decide to rejoin the fellowship of all Christians who believe in a personal/transcendent God. It is time to come down from the mountain-top, take off the white robe and recognize that many people who do not believe exactly as you do are



Christians too. This author knows all too well that the term “Fightin-Fundie” is still deserved by many in the Fundamentalist groups. It is time to let that go. If standing on the same platform with Billy Graham offends you because he is willing to work with non-fundamentalists as well, then, maybe you need to re-think your definition of Christianity.

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