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Verbal Inspiration- a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks

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Verbal Inspiration — a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks

(Continued)

It is unworthy of a Christian to charge Holy Scripture with errors.—It might be well to emphasize and elaborate some of the points touched upon in the preceding articles. First, it is unworthy of a Christian to let fallible men exercise authority over Scripture. It is a shameful thing for a Christian theologian to revise and correct Scripture on the authority of some historian or some professor of natural history. Theologians are doing just that. What about the statement of Mark that Herodias, the wife of Herod Antipas, had been the wife of Philip, the brother of Herod, Mark 6:17? Dr. Haussleiter of Greifswald (Lutheran) said: "Here, it seems, a historical error has crept in. Josephus, who was fully informed regarding the complicated relationships of the family of the Herodians, names *Herod* [a half-brother of Herod Antipas] as the first husband of Herodias. According to Josephus, Philip was the son-in-law [the husband of Salome] of Herodias and not her first husband." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 53, p. 426.) So Josephus is a better authority than Mark, and Mark stands corrected. *The Expositor's Greek Testament* indicates the solution of this difficulty: "He, Herod [a half-brother of Herod Antipas], may of course have borne another name, such as Philip," but makes the fatal concession: "Even if there be a slip, it is a matter of small moment," etc. Wohlenburg, in Zahn's Commentary, operates in precisely the same way: "Entweder liegt hier bei Markus ein *verzeihlicher Irrtum* vor, oder jener erste Gemahl der Herodias hieß Herodes Philippus." According to these theologians the historical statement of Mark is either false or subject to doubt because of the greater or equal authority of a second-rate secular historian.—A similar case is discussed by Dr. J. C. Mattes in

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Kirchliche Zeitschrift, 64, p. 553. He quotes from F. C. Grant's *The Gospel of the Kingdom*: "Mark's story of John's martyrdom (6:17-29), following his rebuke of Herod's unlawful marriage, does not contradict the statement of Josephus and may be accepted as an added detail explaining Herod's antagonism — though the tale has the features of a later legend, and a *motif* completely different from that of the account in Josephus,"²⁷ and comments: "Apparently the gospels on occasion cannot be as reliable as the accounts of a secular historian, even those of one who handles his materials as apologetically as Josephus." Josephus is a *historian*; Mark tells a *tale*, a legend. — What was back of all the trouble about King Belshazzar? The old secular writers Berosus and Herodotus have a different name for the last ruler of the Babylonian kingdom. And Berosus and Herodotus are trustworthier than Daniel. — "Because Herodotus had written: 'There are no vineyards in Egypt,' and Plutarch had declared: 'Kings began to drink wine from the time of King Pсамметихус,' the writer of Genesis 40 must be mistaken when he affirmed that the Pharaoh of Joseph's time drank wine." (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, Jan., 1941, p. 117. Other similar cases are recounted there.)

Is the arboriculturist a better authority in his field than Paul? Of course he is, says Dr. R. F. Stamm. The arboriculturist has the right to show that Paul slipped in Rom. 11:17 ff. Paul did not know much about the art of grafting. Having quoted a statement dealing with this matter, the Gettysburg professor comments: "This is an interesting suggestion and a possible explanation; but one has the feeling that Paul, the man of the city, is here involved in his usual difficulty when he attempts an illustration from nature or from agriculture." (*The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, p. 320.) On matters biological the word of the professor of biology counts for more than that of Moses or Paul. For, says Dr. A. Traver, "the Bible is not a text for biology or for chemistry." "Bible-writers wrote with the background of their age and scientific belief." (*The Lutheran*, 1939, May 10, Feb. 22.) What about natural history? Professor Baumgaertel says: "If you want information on natural-history matters, go to the natural-history authorities." (See W. Moeller *Um die Inspiration der Bibel*, p. 31.)

And so all along the line. The Liberals declare: "Modern historical and literary criticism, not to mention 'science' generally, has rendered it [the doctrine of "the plenary verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture"] increasingly untenable." (*Christendom*, I, p. 243.)

27) Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, XVIII, 5: Herod feared that John's activities might stir up a revolt and for that reason executed him. Footnote in Demme's translation: "Der Evangelist gibt uns wohl die Ursache richtiger an, warum des edeln Täuflers Haupt fiel." (P. 508.)

And when the conservative commissioners of the U. L. C. declared that they were "unable to accept the statement that the Scriptures are the infallible truth 'also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters'" (*Minutes of the 1938 Convention of the U. L. C. A.*, p. 468), they declared that secular scholars are on some points more reliable than the sacred writers.

Must we, then, call in secular scholars to correct a given text before we preach from that text in our pulpits? The Liberals of the extreme left are ready to do that. And we can understand why they can do that. They look upon the Bible as the product of men, subject to the criticism of men. Speaking for the Liberals of the extreme left, R. Ingersoll declares: "We should read the Bible as we do every other book; and everything good in it, keep it; and everything that shocks the brain and shocks the heart, throw it away." (*Lectures of Col. R. J. Ingersoll*, p. 357.) Dr. Willett agrees with Ingersoll on this point. "These writings were not supernaturally produced" (*The Bible through the Centuries*, p. 254). These Liberals feel justified in subjecting the Bible to the criticism and correction of the historian and the scientist. But how can he do it who believes that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God"? We certainly are not going to tell our Bible class that, when Mark wrote that Herodias had been the wife of Philip, God permitted him to forget his history and to contradict the great historian Josephus. We are certainly not going to read the Christmas Gospel from our pulpit and tell our people that we shall have to omit verse 2 of Luke 2 because Luke blundered concerning Cyrenius, the Governor of Syria, and then tell them that the rest is Gospel-truth. Luther would not do it. Believing that "Scripture has never erred" and "cannot err," "that God does not lie nor does His Word lie" (XIX:1309; XV:1481; XX:798), he would not listen to any historian or any scientist whose story differed from that of the Bible. He studied the historians very closely; but: "I set Scripture above them. I make use of them in such a way that I am not compelled to contradict Scripture. For I believe that in Scripture the God of truth is speaking, but in the histories good people have done the best they could; they strove to be exact, but they were men! Or perhaps the copyists erred." (XIV:491.) It is inconceivable how one who believes in Inspiration would want to charge Scripture with errors because certain learned men disagree with Scripture. It is the word of fallible men against the word of the infallible God.²⁸⁾

28) The conservative moderns protest that they are not preferring the words of fallible men to God's words, for the portions of Scripture under consideration are not God's words, but the words of fallible men. Then they will have to say that every once in a while the inspiring

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Put it another way: the moderns are actually advising us to tell our people that certain portions of Scripture are not inspired, because otherwise the attacks of the infidels will prove successful. In other words: we cannot uphold the trustworthiness of the Bible unless we admit errors in it. They are actually giving this advice. Professor Evans, quoted with approval by De Witt (*op. cit.*, p. 43), says: "You may be sure that, so long as you hang the infallible authority of Scripture as the rule of faith on the infallible accuracy of every particular word and clause in the Book, . . . the irrepresible conflict between faith and science will go on. . . ." If the Church would only admit at once and unreservedly that the Bible contains the mistakes charged up against it by the historian and the scientist, "the iridescent declaration of Robert Ingersoll in his *Mistakes of Moses* would collapse like a pricked balloon." One cannot trust one's eyes. Surrender parts of the Bible in order to save the rest! By way of appeasement the Church must maintain herself!

What do you think of a theology which is at the beck and call of science and is glad to act as her train-bearer, "Schleppentraegerdienste zu tun"?²⁹⁾

The Christian disgraces himself when he asks fallible men to tell him how much of his Holy Bible he may accept. Take the lowest view of the case. We demand that the holy writers, say the Biblical historians, be treated as respectably as secular historians. Why should we take it for granted that in a case of conflict the heathen or the Jew should be right, but Daniel and Mark wrong? Daniel is entitled to at least as much consideration as Herodotus. Why not operate with the hypothesis that Josephus might have blundered? Why say *a priori* that Mark and Luke blundered? Read Dr. Lenski on Luke 2:2: "Luke was charged

activity of the Holy Ghost ceased; that every so often—and that was very often—the Holy Ghost left the holy writers to their own devices; that He permitted the Bible, the book of life, to become a conglomerate of truth and error; and that He put it up to the anxious sinner to search the Scriptures in order to separate the truth from the error. Is such a monstrous conception of the work of the Holy Ghost worthy of a Christian? And is it worthy of a Christian to say that the inspired words "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" do not express the full truth?

29) Moeller's phrase. Read the entire paragraph. "Es fragt sich, ob es gut ist, sofort beim ersten Kanonenschuss der Feinde die Aussenwerke zu raumen, um die Festung selbst halten zu wollen, um so mehr, wenn es sich um einen blinden Schuss und um schwache Feinde handelt. Die heutige Theologie verbeugt sich vor jeder Wissenschaft oder auch oft Pseudowissenschaft und Naturphilosophie, die den Mund etwas voll nimmt, und erklart sich bereit, Schleppentraegerdienste zu tun. Das ist ein erbarmungs- und unwuerdiger Zustand, der ein Ende nehmen muss!" (*Op. cit.*, p. 36.)

with misdating this enrolment. What helped the matter along were the mistaken statements of Josephus (on which see Zahn in his commentary on Luke). The word of the renegade Jewish priest Josephus, born as late as 37 or 38 A. D., was taken against the word of Paul's faithful assistant, the inspired writer Luke, who was an active member in the church at Antioch as early as the year 40. Recently discovered inscriptions vindicate Luke."³⁰) Omit the "inspired" and the concluding sentence and get the point we are at present stressing. Dr. Stoeckhardt thus stresses the point: "Who will forbid us, where the testimony of one witness counts for as much as that of the other, to accept the testimony of the Bible?" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 32, p. 316.) Those who say that the testimony of the secular writer has the preference, are swayed by bias. That is unworthy of a "historical critic." And it is unworthy of a Christian.

The matter gets worse when we realize that these fallible men who are set above Scripture are indeed fallible men who have been convicted time and again of making false statements. Josephus is not an absolutely reliable historian. "It should no longer be denied that Josephus contradicts himself in his account of the census under Quirinius as in other accounts, constructs from different accounts of the same facts different facts, and commits other blunders." (Zahn, *Commentary on Luke*, p. 130.) "The testimony of Professor Sayce to the inaccuracy of Herodotus and other ancient writers is as follows: 'Let us now turn to the classical writers who have left accounts of the ancient history of the East. Among them Herodotus and Ktesias of Knidos claim our first attention. Herodotus has been termed "the Father of History." . . . Ktesias had access to the state archives of Persia; on the strength of these he maintained that Herodotus had "lied," and he wrote a work with the object of contradicting most of the older historians' statements. But when confronted with contemporaneous monuments, Herodotus and Ktesias alike turn out to be false guides.'" (D. MacDill, *The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch*, p. 163.) These "good people," says Luther, did their best but could not help blundering. The man on the street knows that the historians of the present day spend much of their time in correcting the mistakes of the historians of yesterday. And still the moderns faulted our fathers for refusing to trust Josephus more than Mark.

30) Zahn, page 129: "Es will doch nicht einleuchten, warum, wo es sich um Ereignisse der Zeit zwischen 7 v. Chr. und 7 n. Chr. handelt, geschichtliche Angaben des griechischen Arztes und Christen Lukas, der schon vor dem Regierungsantritt des Kaisers Claudius ein erwachsenes Mitglied der Gemeinde zu Antiochien war, von vornherein misstrauischer angesehen werden sollen, als Angaben des ehemaligen Priesters Josephus, der zu Ende 37 oder Anfang 38 geboren ist."

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It is unbelievable. Dr. Stoeckhardt tells them: "Will you say that secular history gives the lie to Scripture? . . . Are we to correct the Biblical history on the authority of occasional scraps in the ancient tradition or the obscure language of the monuments, which are partly contradictory . . .? Das waere Wahnwitz," (*Lehre und Wehre*, 32, p. 315.)

This applies to all branches of human knowledge. Are the geologists who would master Moses infallible? Then why do the geological theories change so often, so often that the layman cannot keep count? "Of the eighty (geological) theories which the French Institute counted in 1806 as hostile to the Bible, not one now stands." (A. T. Pierson in *Fundamentals*, 7, p. 63.) And has higher criticism, for our moderns the queen of sciences, established any assured results? Is there any finality there?³¹⁾ The science of one epoch is abandoned by the science of the next. (See Gladstone, *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, p. 49.) We would invite the critics to spend their time in searching out the discrepancies in the secular writings. They will then feel less inclined to produce them as witnesses against the Bible.—The judge would disgrace himself who consented to try a case where the plaintiff is unable to produce unimpeachable witnesses. And the Christian disgraces himself if he permits fallible men to testify against the infallible Bible.³²⁾

31) In his latest book, *A Philosophy of the Christian Revelation*, Edwin Lewis mentions on page 34 "the reverberations of the bitter controversy of the so-called Documentary Hypothesis of the Pentateuch," the old "symbols J, E, D, and P," and says: "That chapter in the history of criticism may now be regarded as closed." Other theories now have their day—and it will be a short day. The tragic thing, however, is that in the very next paragraph Dr. Lewis assails Verbal Inspiration on the strength of "facts" furnished by higher criticism. He says: "The Church had unfortunately committed itself to a type of verbalism. . . ." He rejoices over "the breaking of the stranglehold of this verbalism." "How mixed-up the message [of the Pentateuch] is with transient and purely human elements can hardly be denied except by a doctrinaire who persists in closing his eyes to facts."

32) A final word on the unscholarly habits of the discrepancy-hunters, as evidenced by Dr. Haussleiter. A later article, dealing with the "Biblical errors," will discuss other instances. What the *Expositor's Greek Testament* and *Zahn's Commentary* say in a half-hearted way we want to express in stronger terms. It is frivolous to charge Mark with a historical error "on the assumption that Herod the Great could have only one son named Philip" (*Lenski's Commentary*). Dr. Haussleiter and his ilk should take the trouble of studying the genealogical table of the Herodians. Herod had two sons named Philip; one (the husband of Herodias) by Mariamne, the other (the tetrarch) by Cleopatra. Even so two of his sons bore the name of Antipas. For two half-brothers to bear the same name in a family like that of Herod the Great is nothing unusual. Haussleiter constructed the "historical error" by ignoring a matter of common occurrence. For his benefit we shall also mention the other historical fact that Salome, the daughter of Herodias and

And now let us take high ground. We shall take our stand on the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture. We take this position: even if the historians and the scientists and the philosophers had never been convicted of a single error, misstatement, or inaccuracy, we would say that in every case where they contradict Scripture they are in error, and Scripture is right. To say less than that is unworthy of a Christian. If all the philosophers and scientists were united in declaring one statement of Scripture to be false, we would tell them that this little verse of Scripture will stand as true in all eternity. The Christian has no difficulty to say with Luther: "God's Word counts for more than all angels and saints and creatures" (XVIII:1322) and historians and philosophers. He encounters insuperable difficulties in saying that in this instance the scientists are right and Scripture is wrong.

We shall tell the philosophers that, where doctrine is concerned, they know nothing of these things and that the declaration of Scripture is conclusive and decisive. And we shall tell them another thing: on these matters we know more than you. You may know a lot more about science than we do. But do not talk to us on matters of faith. "To be able to judge the Bible, a man needs spiritual sense. I would as soon expect a man to appreciate the Sistine Madonna because he was not color-blind as to expect an unspiritual man to understand and appreciate the Bible simply because he understands the laws of grammar and the vocabulary of the languages in which the Bible was written. I would as soon think of setting a man to teach Art merely because he understood

the disinherited Philip (the first husband of Herodias) married the tetrarch Philip, her half-uncle. Furthermore, when Josephus named Herod as the first husband of Herodias, he was right; when Mark gave his name as Philip, he was right. The two historians are not contradicting each other. The trouble is not with Josephus (in this instance) and Mark; the trouble is with Hausleiter and the other critics. They misinterpret one of their historians. — Mark was not a shallow examiner; Hausleiter proved himself a superficial reader.

There are other similar cases. Examining the case of the Gadarene swine, Gladstone remarks: "Both Bishop Wordsworth in his *Commentary* and Archbishop Trench refer to Josephus. I am, however, under the impression that both these excellent authors may have insufficiently examined the effect of the passages in Josephus which relate to the subject." (*Op. cit.*, p. 326. These passages listed and examined there.) So we have this situation: to prove the errancy of Scripture, secular writers are quoted. That is inadmissible. Secondly, the secular writers relied upon as witnesses are in many cases shown to be in error. And in the third place, the charge of "errors in the Bible" rests in some case on a misinterpretation of the secular authority. We read this the other day: "As down payment on an automobile, a man in Tarrytown, N. Y., tendered three \$50 bills. They were not only Confederate money but counterfeit." The statements of scientists and historians are in this matter not legal tender. Sometimes they are erroneous, counterfeit. And where there is misinterpretation of the secular authority, the counterfeit of the outlawed money is mutilated beyond recognition.

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paints, as to set him to teach the Bible merely because he understood Greek and Hebrew and Aramaic." (R. A. Torrey, *Is the Bible the Inerrant Word of God?* P. 46.) See 1 Cor. 2:14. The Christian would be degrading himself and belittling his spiritual faculties if he asked Kant and Fosdick to tell him how many of the Bible doctrines he may believe.

And with regard to secular matters we shall tell them that what Scripture says about creation and the husband of Herodias and the grafting of olive-branches is absolutely true. If they agree, well; if not, they are wrong. "One passage of Scripture has more authority than all the books in the world." (Luther, XIX:1734.) We should hold this one passage even if all the philosophers from Plato down to Santayana and all scientists from Pythagoras to Einstein declared it erroneous. A Christian can say nothing less. "Wir muessen so keck werden, allen Menschenwitz und alles, was von Menschen kommt, mit Fuessen zu treten, sobald es die Worte Christi betrifft. . . . Was kuemmert's mich was dieser oder jener begabte Suender ueber dieses oder jenes denkt, heisse er nun Schleiermacher oder Storr oder Kant oder Swedenborg, oder wie er will." (Hofacker. See *Lehre und Wehre*, 57, p. 137.) Let us be as bold as Walther: "Let science publicize ever so confidently the results of its research as absolutely certain truths, we do not regard science but only Scripture as infallible. When the results of scientific research contradict clear statements of Scripture, we are certain before all investigation that these teachings of science are absolutely not true, even if we are unable to prove this save by our appeal to Scripture. As often as we must choose between science and Scripture, we say with Christ, our Lord: 'The Scripture cannot be broken,' John 10:35, and with the holy apostle: 'We bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,' 2 Cor. 10, 5." (See *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 190.)

The Christian, though he be a mere layman, must be bold enough to challenge not only the philosopher but also the erring theologian. Here is a fine Christian manifesto, issued by Der Deutsche Ev.-Luth. Schulverein (150 members): "We maintain the miracle of Inspiration and believe that the Bible is, word for word, God's Word. . . . Over against the testimony of Christ and His apostles the wisdom of the most learned professors and D.D.'s is, for us, nothing but wind. You may look down upon us as unlearned laymen. We shall hold our position in spite of that." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 55, p. 234.)

When the experts discuss scientific matters, we keep our mouths shut. And we are aware that some of these men, many of them, know more Greek and Aramaic than we do. And more than our high-school boy. But we tell this boy that, when his

teacher begins to charge the Bible with historical and scientific errors, he should open his mouth in protest. He need not be abashed and apologetic. He should say: In this matter "I have more understanding than all my teachers," Ps. 119:99.

It might happen, of course, and it will happen, that the professor gets the young man in a corner. The young man cannot solve the historical or chronological difficulty. And then perhaps the young man will worry and give up his case as lost. But that would be unworthy of him as a Christian. That is the next point that needs to be emphasized and elaborated: the Christian is not taking the right attitude if he permits the fact that he cannot solve all Biblical difficulties to perturb him overmuch.

Dr. Stoeckhardt had some difficulty with Matthew 27:9: "spoken by *Jeremy* the prophet." It seems that Zechariah should have been named (Zech. 11:12). And Dr. Stoeckhardt freely says: I cannot solve the difficulty, nor could the others solve it. "Instead of exhausting oneself with such vague guesses, it would have been better to confess *Non liquet* and let it go at that. It would not, after all, be the only obscure passage in Scripture which we cannot decipher." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 31, p. 272.) We do not notice that Dr. Stoeckhardt's pen was quivering when he wrote these words. Luther was equally free to confess occasionally that he was baffled. "Here, in the case of Abraham, sixty years are lost." (I:721.) They have not been located to this day. But that did not raise the suspicion with Luther that Scripture here made a mistake. On John 2:13-16: "Here the question arises how the statements of Matthew and of John harmonize. . . . Aber es sind Fragen und bleiben Fragen, die ich nicht will aufloesen. Nothing much depends on it. What do I care that there are many sharp and superclever people who raise all kinds of questions and demand an answer on every single point?" (VII:1780 f.) Peter Martyr took the same attitude: "Although obscure passages occur as to chronology, we must beware of pretending to reconcile them by imputing blunders to the inspired books. Therefore it is that, should it sometimes happen that we know not how to account for the number of years, we ought simply to confess our ignorance and consider that the Scriptures express themselves with so much conciseness that it is not always possible for us to discover at what epoch we ought to make such or such a computation to commence." (See Gaussen, *op. cit.*, p. 243.)³³ Here is one fact which is well established: the great theologians of the Church are not able to harmonize all "contradictions" in the Bible. Nor are they able to prove, by

33) "Conciseness"—that accounts for some of the difficulty. Other factors are mentioned in the same paragraph.

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science, that all the scientific statements in the Bible are true; to demonstrate in all cases that the Biblical historian is right and the secular historian wrong; and to adduce corroborative testimony in all cases from outside sources. "We do not claim that every historical statement contained in the Pentateuch can be proved to be true by external testimony." (D. MacDill, *op. cit.*, p. 89.)

But this fact should not disturb us. It is not worthy of a Christian to let that fact lead him to doubt in any way the trustworthiness of Scripture. It may embarrass some to be forced to make Luther's and Peter Martyr's and Augustine's confession of ignorance, — and it should put those to shame whose ignorance is due to their neglect of serious study of the case. But we have no reason to be embarrassed and perturbed at our inability to solve all Biblical difficulties. We do not, and the most pronounced foes of Verbal Inspiration do not, feel that difficulties about a certain philosophical truth cast doubt upon that truth. When we and the Bible critics find a statement in some secular book which seems to contradict some other statement in the same book, we do not begin to hoot at the writer. "There may be difficulties with individual passages in the Bible that I in my very limited knowledge cannot explain. But a man is not a philosopher but a fool who gives up a thoroughly established theorem because there are difficulties that he cannot explain. No reputable scientist in any department of science does that." (R. A. Torrey, *op. cit.*, p. 22.) Let us give our Bible the same respectful consideration as reputable human writings receive.

And let us give it higher respect. The doubts as to the absolute and all-embracing reliability of the Bible which arise from our inability to solve every difficulty are not worthy of a Christian. God's guarantee means more than our human limitations. Read on in Torrey: "The proof that Jesus is a teacher sent from God who spoke the very words of God is absolutely conclusive; indeed, it is overwhelming, and therefore I unquestionably accept His say-so, however difficult it may be to reconcile with some things I seem to know. Therefore, when the Lord Jesus says, as He continually does say, that this Book is the inerrant 'Word of God,' I heartily believe it; I would be an egregious fool if I did not." (*Loc. cit.*)

We accept the *doctrines* of the Bible even though we do not understand them; and when to our finite mind two doctrines seem to be in contradiction, we do not doubt the truth of either of them. Is it worthy of a Christian to deny the universality of God's grace because certain facts of experience do not seem to agree with it? And are you taking the Christian attitude when you permit your

inability to solve minor difficulties in the Bible to raise doubts in your mind as to the reliability of the Bible?

Who told you that the Bible, if it is really God's Word, cannot contain difficulties? The Bible does not tell you that. Your Bible tells you, for instance, that in the epistles of Paul there "are some things hard to be understood" (2 Pet. 3:16). So when you meet with a difficulty in *any* part of the Bible, the Bible does not permit you to say that this part of the Bible must be deleted.

You have no cause to worry. Our faith need not suffer in the least from the fact that our mind is not omniscient. You cannot harmonize the accounts of Matthew and John on the purging of the Temple. Luther tells you: "Let it be as it will, es sei zuvor oder hernach, eins oder zwier geschehen, our faith does not suffer thereby." (VII:1781.) The chronology in the case of Arphaxad seems confused (Gen. 11:11); "one offers this solution, the other another. But, in the first place, it will not hurt us at all if we cannot find a perfectly satisfactory solution. . . . Denn das ist gewiss, dass die Schrift nicht luegt." (I:714.) The unbeliever makes much of the seeming confusion in isolated passages of Scripture; the Christian reader does not let it bother his faith: "Christliche Leser werden sich leichtlich darein finden." (II:1024.)³⁴⁾

What we should worry about is that we are worried about our inability to solve all Bible difficulties. The latent distrust of the absolute infallibility of the Bible which lies at the bottom of it is a wicked thing. Another wicked thing is the pride of reason. We think that, if we cannot demonstrate that everything is in order, God's Word will suffer in the estimation of men or our own faith will suffer. Thinking these thoughts we are making our wisdom and learning the measure of the truth of God's Word. That ill befits a Christian. And if you find fault with the occurrence of these difficulties in the Bible, you are faulting the Holy Ghost.

34) Study the valuable observations of Luther and Pieper on this point, in *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 340 ff. Read also page 56 in *Proceedings, Western District*, 1865: "Die Weltweisen berufen sich darauf, dass man in neuerer Zeit so viele Entdeckungen gemacht hat, die mit der Schrift nicht stimmen. Nach der Berechnung mancher Weltweisen muesste die Erde schon ueber 100,000 Jahre alt sein u. dgl. Solche Behauptungen moegen nun wohl manchen in Verlegenheit setzen, den Christen aber nicht. Wenn der sie auch nicht erklaren kann, so laesst er sich dadurch noch lange nicht stoeren in seinem Glauben. Dazu wissen wir ja, wie unsicher die Ergebnisse der neueren Forschung sind: was der eine heute setzt, das stoesset der andere morgen um." (See above.) "Carl v. Raumer, der selbst ein tuechtiger Geologe, aber zugleich ein Christ ist, sagt: 'Ein jeder huete sich vor den Geologen, denn sie geben gern mehr als sie haben.' Wir Christen haben bei allen Einwuerfen der Wissenschaft zunaechts nur eine Antwort: Wir glauben an einen allmaechtigen Gott."

He is the Author of the Bible, and just as it was written He wanted it written. He is responsible, for instance, for the variations in the four records of the institution of the Lord's Supper. "The Holy Ghost purposely ordered it so" (Luther, XIX:1104.) Guard your tongue when wrestling with these difficulties.³⁵⁾

All is not well when a Christian takes offense at "insoluble" difficulties. "The fact that you cannot solve a difficulty does not prove that it cannot be solved, and the fact that you cannot answer an objection does not prove at all that it cannot be answered. There are many who, when they meet a difficulty in the Bible and give it a few moments' thought and can see no possible solution, at once jump to the conclusion that a solution is impossible by any one, and so they throw up their faith in the inerrancy of the Bible and its divine origin. It would seem as if any really normal man would have a sufficient amount of that modesty that is becoming in beings so limited in knowledge as we all undeniably are to say: 'Though I see no possible solution of this difficulty, some one a little wiser than I might easily find one.'" (Torrey, *op. cit.*, p. 61.)

And all is well even if it is never solved for you. Pastor G. Schulze of Walsleben (Germany) has well said: "We wait for the time when the difficulty may be solved, and we die in good spirits even though this never occurs." (See Pieper, *What Is Christianity?* p. 251.)³⁶⁾

35) And when you have solved a difficulty, when you have, for instance, established the agreement of science with Scripture on some point, do not be overproud of it. Do not imagine that that alone makes for a stronger faith. "Hence Dr. Smith observes we should not be too much elated by the discovery of harmonies." (Gladstone, *op. cit.*, p. 50.) Philippi utters the same caution. (See *Christl. Dog.*, I, p. 269.)

36) This stubborn refusal to admit that there are errors in the Bible even though the truth of certain statements cannot be demonstrated is one of the reasons why the critics charge us with dishonesty and untruthfulness. They say that we close our eyes to the facts. Kahn makes the strong statement: "Only he will deny that Scripture contains contradictions who lacks the sense of truth." (See page 261 above.) Kahn again: "To retain the inspiration dogma of the old dogmatics means hardening oneself against the truth." (See *Baier's Compendium*, I, p. 43.) V. Ferm uses the term "loss of intellectual integrity." E. Lewis means the same thing when he says: "Once error is known to be error, its perpetuation becomes a menace. If new facts are discovered in the field of history or in the field of science or anywhere else, no respect for tradition should hinder their being made known." (*Op. cit.*, p. 259.) In *The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt* G. A. Buttrick raises the same charge: "It is no use our evading or trying to hide Bible inconsistencies." And if our attitude is not due to intellectual dishonesty, it is, says Buttrick, due to intellectual weakness: "That avowal [literal infallibility of Scripture], held to its last logic, would risk a trip to the insane asylum." It is due to a rabbinical superstition, declares Haussleiter: "Zerstören Sie den rabbinischen Aberglauben von der Buchstabeninspiration!" (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 57, p. 479.) What should

Another point that should be emphasized and elaborated is this: those theologians who operate with the alleged errors in the Bible find themselves in disreputable company. They are working shoulder to shoulder with infidels and Jews and continuing the work begun by the old rationalists and the ancient heathen adversaries of Christianity. The moderns are using the very same arguments which the pronounced foes of the Bible have been employing in the past centuries. Their weapons have been forged in the workshop of infidelity.

Thomas Paine, the deist, and Voltaire, the scoffer, and D. F. Strauss, the skeptic and religious anarchist, and the old rationalists took up the work, and employed the arguments of Celsus. R. Ingersoll, the agnostic, with Bradlaugh in England, "the last of the Old Guard" (avowed enemies of Christianity) drew on Paine and Voltaire. And now spokesmen of the Christian Church are repeating, in some instances word for word, what those enemies of Christianity have been saying against the Bible.

Gaussen: "The Scriptures have in all ages had their adversaries, their Celsuses and Porphyries. . . . Malchus Porphyry, whom Jerome calls *ravidum adversus Christum canem*, wrote fifteen books against Christianity. The first was entirely devoted to the bringing together of all the contradictions which, he maintained, he had found in the Scriptures. From Celsus and Porphyry down to the English unbelievers of the 18th century and from these down to Strauss, *who had hardly more to do than copy them*, unceasing endeavors have been made to discover more. Strauss says himself that in the criticism of the gospels he *had studied and collected from Celsus to Paulus*, and even to the fragments of Wolfenbuettel." (*Theopneustia*, p. 208.)³⁷ MacDill: "In these two writings of Voltaire we have almost all the points and arguments that are set forth by higher criticism." (*Op. cit.*, p. 18.) R. A. Torrey: "Most of our modern infidels from Tom Paine to Robert Ingersoll, and also the reputed 'scholars' of 'the modern

be our attitude over against these charges? We shall certainly re-examine our position in the fear of God and carefully guard against any intrusion of carnal stubbornness, any intention of evading the issue. And when we, ever and again, always, come to the same conclusion and are compelled to declare: "Scripture cannot be broken," all evidence of carnal reasoning to the contrary, we shall willingly bear the contumely heaped upon us. If we are charged with dishonesty or insanity because of our championship of the truth of Scripture, the charges leave us unaffected. They are false charges, and the words of Jesus, Matt. 5:11 and Luke 6:22, apply.

37) By the way, Strauss said of his own book, *Das Leben Jesu*: "The book praises itself. It is an inspired book; that is to say, its author has laid hold of the most powerful of the driving forces of the theological science of the day and so produced the book." (See Meusel, *Kirchl. Handlexikon*, s. v. Strauss.)

critical school,' have for the most part simply echoed and embellished the arguments of that bitter enemy of Christ of the second century Celsus." (*Is the Bible the Inerrant Word of God?* p. 24.) D. F. Burrell: "All the stock arguments against the inerrancy of Scripture were presented in the *Age of Reason*." (*Why I Believe the Bible*, p. 183.) Can these grave charges be substantiated?

We offer in evidence the following excerpts from three scoffers and sceptics and ask the reader to compare them with the statements of the moderns quoted in our first article. Voltaire states: ". . . (7) that the accounts of prodigies and of God's strange and supernatural dealings with the Israelites in Egypt and in the desert, the ten plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea, the destruction of the Egyptian army, etc., are revolting to reason and cannot have been written by Moses." (*Is not this the voice of Fosdick?*) MacDill, who quotes this, says further: "The testimony of Christ and the New Testament to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was noticed by Voltaire as by the more modern analysts, and like them, he set it aside as untrustworthy." (P. 19.) "In regard to other books of the Bible, the views of Voltaire are in accord with the analytics; we might better say, their views are in accord with his." (P. 20.) "After stating these reasons, Voltaire proceeds to decry the general contents of the Pentateuch and closes this third section of his article on Moses with these words: 'It is very pardonable in human reason to see in such history only the barbarous rudeness of a savage people of the primitive times. Man, whatever he may do, cannot reason otherwise; but if God indeed is the author of the Pentateuch, it is necessary to submit without reasoning.'" (P. 18.)³⁸⁾

The following excerpts will show that the moderns (liberals, semiliberals and conservatives) are plowing with Paine's heifer. Paine exults: "I have now gone through the Bible as a man would go through a wood with an ax on his shoulder and fell trees. Here they lie; and the priests if they can, may replant them. They may perhaps stick them in the ground, but they will never make them grow. I pass on to the books of the New Testament. . . . And now, ye priests of every description, who have preached and written against the former part of the *Age of Reason*, what have ye to say? Will you, with all this mass of evidence against you, and staring you in the face, still have the assurance to march into your pulpits and continue to impose

38) We find ourselves in accord with this last statement. In the preceding article we told those who believe in a real inspiration of the Bible that they must accept its statements *a priori*, "without reasoning." Voltaire tells them that we were right.

these books on your congregations as the works of *inspired penmen* and the Word of God?"³⁹⁾

From the "mass of evidence" presented by Paine we select the following: "I begin, then, by saying that these two chapters [Gen. 1 and 2] contain *two different and contradictory stories of a creation*, made by two different persons and written in two different styles of expression. The evidence that shows this is so clear when attended to without prejudice that, did we meet with the same evidence in any Arabic or Chinese account of a creation, we should not hesitate in pronouncing it a forgery." (Dr. G. A. Buttrick, repeated this in 1935 and said: "The doctrine of literal infallibility is slain and pursuit is needless.") "This tale of the sun standing still upon Mount Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon is one of those fables that detects itself. Such a circumstance could not have happened without being known all over the world. One half would have wondered why the sun did not rise, and the other why it did not set; and the tradition of it would be universal, whereas there is not a nation in the world that knows anything about it." (Harnack, Fosdick and the Archbishop of York, too, think that this disproves Verbal Inspiration.)—"I observed two chapters, 16th and 17th in the First Book of Samuel, that contradict each other with respect to David and the manner he became acquainted with Saul. . . . These two accounts belie each other, because each of them supposes Saul and David not to have known each other before. This book, the Bible, is too ridiculous even for criticism." The moderns have kept this item in their list to this day. Also this one: "If the parts are found to be discordant, contradicting in one place what is said in another (as in 2 Sam. 24:1 and 1 Chron. 21:1, where the same action is ascribed to God in one book and to Satan in the other), . . . we may take it for certainty that the Creator of the universe is not the author of such a book, that it is not the Word of God, and that to call it so is to dishonor His name."—"In the former part of the *Age of Reason* I have spoken of Jonah and the whale. A fit story for ridicule if it was written to be believed, or of laughter if it was intended to try what credulity could swallow; for if it

39) *The Presbyterian*, Jan. 16, 1941: "Belief in plenary inspiration of the Bible is being discarded by many today, even among the conservative element in the Church. . . . Some time ago we listened to a scholar of national reputation lecture on one of the gospels. With almost nonchalant carelessness he tore the book to shreds. This part came out; that passage was apocryphal; these verses were by a later and uninspired writer. . . ." Note, in our first article, how a Lutheran theologian tore the Gospel of Mark to shreds. Note there how the moderns go through the Bible uprooting one passage after the other. Hear them cry out: The day of Verbal Inspiration is past! Verbal Inspiration is dead!

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could swallow Jonah and the whale, it could swallow anything." Dr. Fosdick's list also contains the story of Jonah and the great fish.—Jonah again: "The story of Jonah satirizes also the supposed partiality of the Creator for one nation more than for another." (Repeated, nearly verbatim, by Dr. Willet. See April number, p. 257 f.)

The moderns, as we have seen, use the "contradictory" versions of the inscription on the cross as one of their heavy guns. Paine, too. "Not any two of these writers agree in reciting *exactly in the same words* the written inscription, short as it is, which they tell us was put over Christ when He was crucified." The contradiction between the genealogies, referred to by a Lutheran theologian (page 247 above), is handled by Paine thus: "Did these two genealogies (Matt. 1 and Luke 3) agree, it would not prove the genealogy to be true, because it might, nevertheless, be a fabrication; but as they contradict each other in every particular, it proves falsehood absolutely. . . . Now, if these men, Matthew and Luke, set out with a falsehood between them in the very commencement of their history of Jesus Christ, and of whom and what he was, what authority is there left for believing the strange things they tell us afterward? If they cannot be believed in their account of his natural genealogy, how are we to believe them when they tell us He was the Son of God, begotten by a ghost, and that an angel announced this in secret to his mother? If they lied in one genealogy, why are we to believe them in another?"

Paine finds, of course, a lot of contradictions in the resurrection story. We have not the time to particularize. Nor have we given all of his objections. But we have space for two more items. "The Bible says (Jer. 20:5, 7) that God is a deceiver. 'O Lord' (says Jeremiah), 'Thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived. Thou art stronger than I and hast prevailed.'" (Dr. Dodd operates with the same passage.)—Read what Dr. Best says about the rights of reason (see second article) and then read Paine: "'Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord.' This is one of the passages you quoted from your Bible. . . . I requote the passage to show that your *text* and your *religion* contradict each other. It is impossible to reason upon things *not comprehensible by reason*; and therefore, if you keep to your text, which priests seldom do (for they are generally either above it or below it or forget it), you must admit a religion to which reason can apply, and this certainly is not the Christian religion." (Quotations are from *Life and Writings of Thomas Paine*, Vol. 6: "Age of Reason" and other writings.)

The moderns plow with Ingersoll's heifer, too. He says in *Mistakes of Moses*: "Every nation has had what you call a sacred record; and the older, the more sacred, the more contradictory, and the more inspired is the record. . . . Now, they say the book [Bible] is inspired. I do not care whether it is or not; the question is: Is it true? . . . I find in some book that the sun was stopped a whole day to give a general named Joshua time to kill a few more Amalekites. At another time, we read, the sun was turned ten degrees backward to convince Hezekiah that he was not going to die of a boil." And since this involves a stupendous astronomical error, Ingersoll and Paine and Fosdick and the Archbishop of York cannot believe in Verbal, Plenary Inspiration. — "The second account of creation differs from the first in two essential points. In the first account, man is last made; in the second, man is made before the beasts. In the first account, man is made 'male and female,' in the second, only a male is made, and there is no intention of making a woman whatever." The moderns may not agree with Ingersoll's exegesis, but both are agreed as to the general contention.

When you read the following: "Shall we reason, or shall we simply believe? Oh, but they say the Bible is not inspired about those little things. The Bible says the rabbit and the hare chew the cud. But they do not. They have a tremulous motion of the lip. But the Being that made them says they chew the cud. The Bible, therefore, is not inspired in natural history," you might think one of the moderns is speaking. Ingersoll wrote it.

The moderns will not employ the coarse language of Ingersoll, but some of them are with him when he says: "How many did they have when they went to Egypt? Seventy. How many were they at the end of two hundred and fifteen years? Three millions. That is a good many. . . . Is there a minister in the city of Chicago that will testify to his own idiocy by claiming that they could have increased to three millions by that time?" And this: "The whole supplies of the world could not maintain three millions of people in the desert of Sinai for forty years. . . . It would require millions of acres to support these flocks, and yet there was no blade of grass and there is no account of it raining baled hay."

The deadly parallel once more: N. R. Best: "When did the Creator ever brand man's reason as unholy — unfit to handle the sacred things of His words?" (See p. 353 above.) Ingersoll: "Do not imagine that there is any being who would give to his children the holy torch of reason and then damn them for following where the holy light led. . . . If God did not intend I should think, why did He give me a 'thinker?'" (Quotations from *Lecture*

of Col. R. G. Ingersoll, containing Mistakes of Moses and other writings.)⁴⁰⁾

In preparing for their war against the inspiration of Scripture the moderns found munitions to their liking prepared by the ancients. And as they are marching along, the unbelievers cheer them on. When Professor Smith in Cincinnati was being tried in a court of his Church (Presbyterian) for his attacks on Scripture, a Rabbi, a Theosophist, a Buddhist, a Unitarian, a Universalist, and an atheist defended him in the secular press of the city. (See *Lutheraner*, 49, p. 28.)

The moderns are using the same arguments as the ancients and arrive at the same result. And the Liberals of today are talking the language of the unbelievers of yesterday. You cannot think hard of the *Lutheran Herald* (Jan. 21, 1941) for writing the following: "It happened that the editor picked up the current issue of a Lutheran theological quarterly while he was in the midst of reading Dr. Goodspeed's book (*How the Bible Came to Be*). There he read an article dealing pretty much with the inspiration of the Bible and discovered, what he knew more or less directly, that within the Lutheran Church in the United States we have scholars who are nicely along the road which Dr. Goodspeed is following. The book and the article side by side lead to some somber thought. Time was when the most liberal theologians in America would have shuddered to read a book which leaves the guidance of God the Holy Spirit out of the authorship of the Bible as does Dr. Goodspeed's. And here, in a Lutheran quarterly, we are

40) Here are some excerpts from *Origen Against Celsus* which show that Ingersoll and Paine are in accord with Celsus. "Celsus: The Son of God, then, it appears, could not open His tomb, but required the aid of another to roll away the stone." . . . He ridicules the account of 'the angel's visit to Joseph regarding the pregnancy of Mary,' and the birth of God from a virgin" (his words do not bear repeating). "Their cosmogony is extremely silly." "Celsus makes jest also of the serpent, taking the narrative to be an old wife's fable." Writing the story of the Deluge and the monstrous ark, they "imagined that they were inventing stories merely for young children." (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, IV.) Stories for children — that sounds familiar. See page 246 above. — From Porphyry's list: "He objects to the repetition of a generation in St. Matthew's genealogy; to Matthew's call; to the quotation of a text from Isaiah, which is found in a psalm ascribed to Asaph; to the calling of the lake of Tiberias a sea; to the expression in St. Matthew, 'the abomination of desolation'; to the variation in Matthew and Mark upon the text 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness,' Matthew citing it from Isaiah, Mark from the Prophets; to John's application of the term 'Word'; to Christ's change of intention about going up to the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:8); to the judgment denounced by St. Peter upon Ananias and Sapphira, which he calls an imprecation of death. . . . The prophecy of Daniel he attacked upon this very ground of spuriousness, insisting that it was written after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and maintains his charge of forgery, by some, far-fetched indeed, but very subtle criticisms." (W. Paley, *A View of the Evidences of Christianity*, pp. 169, 171.)

treated to an exposition of the doctrine of inspiration which, carried to a logical conclusion, might easily lead its author to a view not far short of that held by the most liberal theologians of the day." When we read the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, Oct. 1940 (see page 257 above), we could not help thinking of the argumentations employed by the old rationalists.

It is a sad spectacle. Christian theologians using the same methods as pronounced enemies of the Church — no, not the same methods! "There is a startling contrast between the former methods and those of today. The assault is now from within the gates: open warfare has given way to strategy. The Trojan horse has been wheeled within the walls of the Church itself, where a body of militant critics have been attempting to draw the bolts of the citadel." (Burrell, *op. cit.*, p. 184.)⁴¹⁾

Professor Laetsch asks: "Is that honest?" R. Ingersoll asked the same question. "I tell all the churches to drive all such men out, and when he" (a certain professor) "comes, I want him to state just what he thinks. . . . I want him to tell whether he considers the story about the bears a poem or not, whether it is inspired. . . . I had not the remotest idea that the most learned clergymen in Chicago would substantially agree with me — in public. I have read their replies and will now ask them a few questions. Do you believe in the stories of the Bible about Jael and of the sun standing still. . . ? Answer [Ingersoll now quotes one of them]: "They may be legends, myths, poems, or what they will, but they are not the Word of God.'" And so it goes on, from page 356 to page 426, showing that the Liberals teach what Ingersoll teaches and still remain in the Christian Church.

Do we, then, classify the moderns as infidels and agnostics? We do not. The Liberals believe in God and the conservatives believe in Jesus Christ. But we do say that in this campaign they are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the unbelievers. And we say another thing. They cut a sorry figure when their unbelieving comrades examine them on the consistency of their position. Ingersoll might ask them whether they believe in God and then declare: You have a queer God, who set out to give us revelation and was unable to keep it free from errors. — Do you believe in Jesus Christ, true God? Then why do you not believe Him when he says that "Scripture cannot be broken," and how can you charge Him with sanctioning those erroneous books of the Old Testament?

41) See CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY, current volume, page 396: "Ingersoll, openly professed his agnosticism; modern unbelief chooses to call itself a 'new meaningful way of interpreting old and familiar passages and stories.' Is that honest?"

Gausson says this: "On hearing such objections, we feel ourselves . . . under the impression of sadness, sadness at seeing persons who acknowledge the Bible to be a revelation from God and not afraid, notwithstanding, to bring so hastily the most serious objections against it." (*Op. cit.*, p. 199.)

The moderns are not in good company. And they have to deny their own principles in employing the arguments of their companions. That is unworthy of the Christian.

There is one more point that needs to be emphasized. When the moderns invite us to underwrite their list of errors, they are asking us to charge our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with error and to impeach His authority. That is asking too much of a Christian.

Jesus put His divine authority back of the Bible. He endorsed every statement made by the prophets and by the apostles when He solemnly declared: "The Scripture cannot be broken," John 10:35. He proclaims the absolute irrefragability, inerrancy, of this Book. He assures us that there is no error in the Old Testament, no error in the New Testament (Matt. 10:19 f.; Mark 13:11; Luke 21:14, 15).⁴²⁾ And just such portions of Scripture as have been put on the black list have been vouched for by Christ. Did Moses write the Pentateuch? "Moses wrote of Me," John 5:46. Is the creation story a myth and old wives' tale? Read Matt. 19:4. Is the story of the Flood history or mythology? Read Matt. 24:37 ff. Was Abraham a legendary figure? "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day," John 8:56. Is the story of Lot's wife true, and the story of Jonah in the whale's belly? Read Luke 17:32 and Matt. 12:40. Every story related in the Bible, every circumstance of it, and every single jot and tittle shall stand. Jesus guarantees the truth of it.⁴³⁾

42) See P. Kretzmann, *The Foundations Must Stand*, p. 38 ff. *Proceedings*, Iowa Dist., 1891, p. 30 f.

43) M'Intosh: "The object and burden of this book is to show that the Bible is, and claims to be, true, trustworthy, and of divine authority, and that Christ endorses and solemnly seals this claim with His divine authority and declares most absolutely the inviolability, solidarity, and organic unity of all Scripture." "The modern distinction between what is true and what is false in the Word of God is unknown to writers of Scripture and would have shocked the apostles and prophets and most of all the Son of God Himself, who set His solemn seal to every jot and tittle of it." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 2, 432.) S. C. Ylvisaker: "This is not the place to show in detail that or how Christ has identified Himself with all doctrines contained in Scripture, with all facts of history, geography, and so forth, which are mentioned there, and with every word written there as being His very own. Who are we to question one word which He has made His own, when He has said: 'The Scripture cannot be broken'; 'till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law'?" (*Report of the 1940 Convention of the Norwegian Synod*, p. 21 f.)

And is His guarantee worth anything? The moderns actually insist on ruling out His authority. Whether they believe in the deity of Christ or not, they are saying with Voltaire that His testimony on this point is untrustworthy. They speak of "the exegetical mistakes" of Jesus. "They say that Jesus committed blunders when in Mark 2:26 He confused Abiathar with Ahimelech and in Matt. 23:35 Barachias with Jehoiada" (*Neue Luth. Kirchengz.*, April 15, 1901). Baumgaertel, in a letter to the *Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchengz.*, Nov. 12, 1926: "We know more concerning the origin of the Scriptures of Israel than the Jewish scribes and Jesus, who got His knowledge of these matters from them." Jesus labored under certain limitations; for instance, He had the mistaken viewpoints of His day and age. Says C. H. Dodd: "We need not doubt that Jesus as He is represented shared the views of His contemporaries regarding the authorship of books in the Old Testament, or the phenomena of demon possessions—views which we could not accept without violence to our sense of truth." (*The Authority of the Bible*, p. 237.) Accordingly, "we no longer accept a saying as authoritative because it lies before us as a word of Jesus" (p. 233).⁴⁴⁾

Jesus is divested of His authority also by those who would extenuate His mistakes on the basis of the *kenosis*. W. Sanday opens the discussion of this question with the statement: "The question involved is nothing less than the authority of our Lord Himself." Absolutely true. He then says: "I should be loath to believe that our Lord accommodated His language to current notions, knowing them to be false." That, of course, is an impossibility. But then Sanday states: "I prefer to think, as it has been happily worded, that 'He condescended not to know.'" (*The Oracles of God*, pp. 103, 111.) *The Luth. Church Quart.*, 1935, p. 255, also operates with this false *kenosis* and, in addition, with the accommodation theory: "Jesus apparently shared the conceptions of His day regarding these things. As far as His speech indicates, He thought as the people of His time thought. At least when He emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a man, He accommodated His speech and activity to the concepts of the world in which He lived." That will not do. Scripture, indeed, tells us that Christ did not know the time of the Judgment (Mark 13:32), but that is far from saying that He could err in His statements.

44) "The question being asked in a recent meeting of evangelical ministers: 'If Moses did not write the Pentateuch, why did Jesus say that he did?' a voice replied: 'Because He knew no better.'" (D. J. Burrell, *Why I Believe the Bible*, p. 116.) Burrell comments: "It is incredible, however, that such views should be entertained by any of the sincere followers of Christ."

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Refraining from the full use of His omniscience does not imply the harboring of erroneous ideas. If Christ "condescended" to be subject to error, His authority is destroyed.⁴⁵⁾

Whether the moderns say so in so many words, every one who underwrites the black-list says in effect that Christ was mistaken when He endorsed every word of Scripture. So this is the situation: Either there are errors in the Bible, or there are no errors in the Bible. And they who take the first alternative are confronted by another dilemma. They will have to say either that Jesus did not know that there were errors in the Bible or that He knew it but would not admit it. And whether they accept the first or the second alternative, they refused to accept Christ's endorsement of all Scripture as worthy of acceptance. They insist that, while they reject certain portions of Scripture as unacceptable, they do accept the teaching of Jesus, that being all that God requires. But, behold, they refuse to accept one of the basic teachings of Jesus — that concerning the inerrancy, absolute trustworthiness, and plenary inspiration of Scriptures.

And now they ask us to sign their round robin. Dr. Pieper tells them: "All objections to the divine inspiration and the inerrancy of the Bible are unworthy of a Christian because in that case fallible human judgment with respect to Scripture is exalted above the divine judgment of the infallible Christ, the Son of God." (*What Is Christianity?* p. 251.) R. Torrey tells them: "The Pentateuch is the very part of the Bible where the hottest fight has always been waged between those who believe the Bible to be the inerrant Word of God and those who think that much of it is only fable or 'folk-lore.' Here is where you find the two accounts of Creation,

45) They, too, destroy the authority of Jesus who assume that He might have been mistaken in some of His views and judgments. James Stalker does that. He subscribes to Tholuck's statement "Although we find in the sayings of Jesus which we possess no formal hermeneutic mistake, yet the impossibility of such cannot be asserted *a priori* any more than the impossibility of a grammatical blunder or a chronological slip." (*The Ethics of Jesus*, p. 277.) — Tholuck, by the way, belongs also in the first group. He held that Jesus labored under the prejudices of His day. "Tholuck, der die Rationalisten vielfach bekaempft hat, ist doch so weit gegangen, dass er sagt, Christus habe auch keine hoehere Erkenntnis gehabt, als er zu der damaligen Zeit bei der Stufe der Erkenntnis, die damals sich vorfand, haben konnte. Man traut seinen Augen kaum! . . . Christus ein gewoehnlicher Mensch, der nicht mehr wissen koenne als die uebrigen Menschen seiner Zeit! . . . Echt nestorianisch!" (*Proceedings, Iowa Dist.*, 1891, p. 29, quoting Walther). — So the possibility of error quickly turns into the actuality. But we cannot stand even for the "possibility." If, in pronouncing on the authorship of Moses or on any other matter, Jesus might have been mistaken, the truth of His judgment would have to be established by some other means. You or I would have to come to the help of Jesus. Is the Christian willing to play such a role?

about which so many superficial and ill-informed readers and teachers of the Bible gabble so much to their own satisfaction and so much to the disgust of all real students of the Bible. Here is where you have the story of the Fall. . . . And in Mark 7:13 our Lord calls the Pentateuch the 'Word of God' in so many words. And Matt. 5:18: 'One jot or one tittle.'" (*Op. cit.*, p. 15 ff.) Dr. Brooks reminds them of "the marvelous fact that those very passages that men are most apt to believe uninspired (Lot's wife, Sodom and Gomorrah, Jonah) are the ones which have received the sanction of Jesus Christ Himself" and tells them plainly: "It is nonsense to say: 'I believe Christ, but not those things.'" (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 57, p. 129.) They are asking too much of us. Can a Christian in his sober mind face Jesus as He endorses the Old Testament and tell Him: "You might be mistaken"? "Shall we side with the critics in opposition to the testimony given in the New Testament by the apostles and even by the Lord Jesus Himself? Were they so circumscribed by the ignorance of the age in which they lived that they did not know the Scriptures of their people as well as the critics do? Was Jesus? . . . This modern view of the Bible insists upon our acceptance of the Christ-dishonoring doctrine of the *kenosis*, vitally maiming our Lord's unique and perfect personality, making Him, as far as His knowledge is concerned, nothing more than a product of His time." (J. Bloore, *Alternative Views of the Bible*, pp. 60, 66.) God forbid that we should side with those who in order to be in harmony with pseudoscience put themselves out of harmony with Christ's sayings! It comes to this: "By these Scriptures Christ stands with a tremendous decisiveness. With them, in fact, as their Author, Fulfiller, and End, He identifies Himself. . . . Men cannot deny or reject them or their claim without denying or rejecting Him and His." (M'Intosh, *op. cit.*, p. 437. — Read, once more, the article in *Lehre und Wehre*, 69, p. 297: *Ein oeffentliches Bekenntnis zur Inspiration der Heiligen Schrift in Deutschland.*)⁴⁶⁾

46) We need not point out that Christ not only endorsed all that the prophets and the apostles wrote, but that their words are the very words of Christ. Christ is "the Author of Scripture." To say that Scripture is God's Word is to say that it is Christ's Word. And St. Peter tells us plainly that the prophets spoke by "the Spirit of Christ, which was in them" (1 Pet. 1:11), and St. Paul, that "Christ speaketh in me" (2 Cor. 13:3). It is thus apparent that our present section is merely an emphatic reiteration of the statement that he who criticizes Scripture commits a *crimen laesae majestatis divinae*. He who says that Scripture has erred and that Scripture can err is saying that God has erred and can err. But we wanted to reiterate and emphasize that in this present section because it has pleased Christ and the Holy Ghost to do that very thing, to reiterate and emphasize it. When the Christian is tempted to tamper with Scripture, the realization that his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has endorsed it generally and specifically adds weight to the warning: Do not lay unclean hands on this holy thing!

424 Verbal Inspiration — a Stumbling-Block to Jews, Etc.

Men cannot deny the claims of Scripture without denying Christ, who endorsed these claims. We are not saying that all who hold that there are errors in the Bible are no longer Christians. Any Christian, as the *Proceedings of the Synodical Conference of 1902* set forth, may be assailed by doubts on this matter when he reads Scripture or the dissertations of its critics. There are good Lutheran Christians, pastors and laymen, who, though they are convinced in their hearts that Scripture cannot contradict itself, frequently find themselves grappling with the thought that Scripture does contradict itself. (Pp. 21-25.) And on page 20 the old theologian Andreas Althammer is quoted: "Es gibt freilich einige fromme ehrliche Leute, die aus Unwissenheit und Einfalt die Schrift fuer selbstwidersprechend halten." Even great theologians sometimes get befuddled.⁴⁷⁾ Dr. Pieper mentions in this connection even the denial of the Vicarious Satisfaction. He states, first, that through the means of this doctrine the Holy Ghost enters into the heart, "who teaches men to recognize as His Word the Word He spoke through the prophets and apostles." And then he says: "That we do not deny outright, in every case, that he can have the Christian faith who in the security of his lecture-room or in his 'scientific' writings criticizes the *satisfactio vicaria* is due to the fact that we are willing to account for it on the basis of a 'double bookkeeping' or inconsistency, according to which a person does not believe in his heart and before God what he champions in *disputationibus*, as Luther and Chemnitz put it." (*Christl. Dog. I*, p. 364.)

However, "all such theological thoughts lie outside of the Christian sphere." (Pieper, *loc. cit.*) What we do say is that those Christians — laymen, pastors, professors — who find mistakes in

47) We find a case in point in W. Elerts latest book, *Der Christliche Glaube*. Discussing the teaching of the old dogmaticians on Inspiration, he uses, on page 209, the phrase: "Der tiefere Grund dieser *Irrlehre*," referring to the statement of Quenstedt that Inspiration covers also those things which were already known to the holy writers. And then he says: "Wenn manche Dogmatiker . . . folgerten, dass der schreibende Mensch auch an der Bildung des Wortlautes keinen eigenen Anteil mehr habe, so grenzt das an Gotteslaesterung. Denn wie will man den Heiligen Geist dafuer verantwortlich machen, dass Paulus nicht mehr weiss, ob er ausser der Hausgemeinschaft des Stephanus in Korinth noch einen andern getauft hat (1 Kor. 1:16)." To be sure, it would be blasphemy to ascribe Paul's failure to remember certain data to the Holy Ghost. But Dr. Elert has got things badly mixed up here. All that the old dogmaticians — and we — say on this point is that the Holy Ghost caused Paul to set down this statement and supplied the words, too. — We set down this case in order to show that rejection of Verbal Inspiration is not necessarily due to unbelief, but may arise from misconception. Yes, a man may even know what Verbal Inspiration is and reject it without realizing what bearing this has on the fundamental question of the authority of Scripture; in that case he certainly could not be charged with harboring a fundamental error.

the Bible and for that reason reject Verbal Inspiration are not thinking Christian thoughts. They are thoughts inspired and uttered by the Old Adam. It is the Christian's duty to suppress such thoughts. It should shock him to find them arising in his mind, just, to quote M'Intosh once more, "as the modern distinction between what is true and what is false in the Word of God would have shocked the Son of God Himself, who set His solemn seal to every jot and tittle of it." We deny Him when we make this distinction; and what would the outcome be if one knowingly and persistently denied a word of Christ? ⁴⁸⁾

There is another reason why the Christian abominates the teaching of the erroneousness and errancy of the Bible. This teaching endangers the faith of the individual believer and causes untold harm to the Church. ⁴⁹⁾

When the Lutheran professors Volck and Muehlau began their campaign against the inerrancy of the Bible in 1884, it "confused and saddened many in Dorpat. A lady said with tears in her eyes: 'I can no longer read the Bible.'" (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 2.) It is a stubborn fact that, when you persuade a person to believe that there are errors in the Bible, you have filled him with distrust of the Bible. For what H. L. Mencken, who knows little of the Bible but is very bright intellectually, has said: "If the Bible is true, then it is true from cover to cover. . . . Dr. Machen's position is completely impregnable," is absolutely true. (See *Lutheran Sentinel*, Feb. 13, 1939.) It is absolutely true, therefore, what the Liberal D. Schenkel said: "If error is admitted at one point, it is admissible at all points." (See Rohnert, *Dogmatik*, p. 73.) It is absolutely true, therefore, what the scoffer Paine said: "If Matthew and Luke cannot be believed in their account of

48) On this subject Bishop Charles Gore writes: "I am writing in full recognition of the fact that the leaders of criticism, especially on the Continent, have been very frequently rationalists, by which is meant men to whom the idea of the supernatural and the miraculous is intolerable. This sort of rationalism is, of course, incompatible with Christian faith. But many of the 'critics,' and especially those in Great Britain, have been devout believers; and their motive in maintaining 'critical conclusions' has been the conviction that such conclusions are really scientific and that it is disastrous to set religion in antagonism to science or to seek to shackle science, which is bound to be free. I am writing also in full recognition of the fact that almost every science 'sows its wild oats.'" (*The Doctrine of the Infallible Book*, p. 8 f.) Dr. Gore deals too gently with the Christian who is convinced that there are mistakes in the Bible. Such a theologian must be told that his conviction is not befitting a Christian. No Christian theologian is permitted to cultivate "wild oats" on the holy ground of the Bible.

49) We shall treat this matter very briefly at the present time. After we have discussed two further objections to Verbal Inspiration ("the ethical blemishes of the Bible" and "the trivialities"), we shall go into details.

Christ's natural genealogy, how are we to believe them when they tell us He was the Son of God?" Get people to believe that these genealogies are contradictory and unreliable, and you have put them on the road to disaster. "Ein frommer Laie," said Althammer, "muesste irre werden an der Schrift. Waere wirklich ein Widerspruch, wie koennte ein Leser der Schrift zu einer Ueberzeugung kommen, was darin fest und gewiss sein soll?" (See *Proceedings, Syn. Conf., 1902*, p. 20.) There are countless numbers whose faith has been shaken by the preachers of Bible errancy, and but for the grace of God countless numbers would have been lost to the Church and — heaven.

It does not help matters that they have words of praise for the Bible and call the untrue portions "holy ground" (Dr. Fosdick, *The Modern Use*, p. 52), "stories which because of their beauty and intrinsic worth should stand" (Dr. Nolde, *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1939, p. 301). Nor is the situation bettered by the claim that, if only the moral and religious truths of the Bible are true, all is well. The stubborn fact remains that "we would lose confidence in Scripture if we found that Scripture actually contains *falsa* and *errata*" (Stoekhardt, *Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 314). And Schenkel, Mencken, and Paine agree with Stoekhardt. Luther: "Dess wird mich (achte auch wohl, auch keinen vernuenftigen Menschen) niemand bereden ewiglich, dass ein Mensch (so er anders ein Mensch ist, der bei Vernunft ist) sollt mit Ernst glauben koennen einem Buche oder Schrift, davon er gewiss waere, dass ein Teil (schweige denn drei Teile) erlogen waere, dazu nicht wissen muesste, welches unterschiedlich wahr oder nicht wahr waere." (XX:2275.) Luther is speaking of the Koran. It would apply to the Bible, too, if the moderns had their way.

They say "the claim that the Scriptures are a perfect whole has wrought more mental distress and created more skepticism than any other dogma of Christian or Jewish theology." Under such preaching "poor souls pass off into the outer darkness" (see page 262 above). What actually happens is that the dogma of the errancy of Scripture is raising distressing doubts in the minds of the good Christians, is undermining the only foundation of faith (Walther: "Mit der Behauptung, dass dem goettlichen Inhalt der Heiligen Schrift auch Irriges, Menschliches eingestreut ist, wird nicht nur dieser Teil, sondern die ganze Heilige Schrift wankend und schwankend gemacht" [see *Lehre und Wehre*, 1911, p. 156]), and strengthens the infidel in his unbelief. No man ever lost his faith because of anything that the Bible says; the Holy Ghost takes care of that. But men have lost their faith because of the lie — which under the influence of Satan they believed — that the Holy Scriptures are untrustworthy. For the passing off of these

poor souls into the outer darkness the preachers of the errancy of Scripture are responsible.

This teaching is an evil and malignant thing. We say with Dr. W. Dau: "We deplore and denounce the open and the covert attempts which are being made by misguided men, to question or to deny the plenary or verbal theopneusty of the Bible or of parts of it. We abhor and abominate the irreverent schemes which unwise learned men have invented for producing a Bible which in their opinion will suit men better than the Bible of the prophets, evangelists, and apostles. We are indignant at the presumption of men who would have us rise mornings and inquire: 'What is the Bible today? How much . . . is still left of the dear old book?' We consider all these efforts abortive, futile, and doomed to utter failure. The last resting-place for all such dreams will be amid the spiritual and moral wreckage and *débris* which since time immemorial is the goal of rationalism." (From an address on the "Inerrancy of Scripture.")

TH. ENGELDER

(To be continued)

Some Notes on the Life and Works of Catherine Winkworth

Essay read before the Northwest Pastoral Conference of the Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Luth. Church, November 12, 1940

The change in the wording of my topic I ask you not to take amiss. To treat the "Life and Works of Catherine Winkworth" in one conference paper would demand more time than you would wish to devote to this topic and would tax too greatly the research facilities which I have had at hand. I have called this paper "Some Notes on the Life and Works of Catherine Winkworth" because of the unevenness and lack of balance which the subsequent pages will display, greater emphasis being placed on one or two topics than upon others. I had to do so partly because of the materials which were available to me, partly because I believed that those phases of her life and works which I have treated would be of grater interest to you than others.

While short biographical notices concerning Catherine Winkworth are numerous, only one seems to me to be of outstanding worth, that by Miss Elizabeth Lee in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.¹⁾ The closest approach to a full-length biography is found in *Memorials of Two Sisters: Susanna and Catherine Wink-*

1) Vol. LXII, London, 1900, pp. 194-5.