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undermined, and planted the banner of reason and "common sense" on its ruins. If our Church, which is now [1858] lying in the dust shall rise again and not gradually degenerate into a body which is Lutheran in name only, without any characteristics of the Church of the Reformation, then all the fine words about ecclesiastical propriety, about the re-introduction of ancient rites and ceremonies, all attempts to invest the office of the ministry with special glory and authority, all this will be utterly in vain. The only help for resurrecting our Church lies in a renewed acceptance of its old orthodox confessions and in a renewed unconditional subscription to its Symbols.*



Natural Theology in David Hollaz

By JAROSLAV PELIKAN, Jr.

Christianity is a religion of supernatural revelation: to this "give all the Prophets witness." It is an assertion of the fact that the true meaning of God lies beyond the ken of the unaided human mind. Indeed, the Christian faith is so bold as to assert that "he that loveth not — and only a Christian is capable of ἀγάπη, true love — knoweth not God, for God is Love" (1 John 4:8).

As a result it may seem incongruous for Christian thinkers, dealing as they do with supernatural revelation, to concern themselves with natural reason. And yet that is what they have always done. In fact, the past century in the history of Protestant theology has seen a heightening of the concern with "natural theology." Ever since Immanuel Kant proved to his own satisfaction and to that of many others that "all attempts to establish a theology by the aid of speculation alone are fruitless, that the principles of reason as applied to nature do not conduct to any theological truths, and, consequently, that a rational theology can have no ex-

* That our Synod in its Centennial year still holds high the banner of God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure is due to Walther's indefatigable efforts in the classroom, at pastoral conferences and synodical conventions, and through the printed word to exalt the priceless treasure contained in our Symbolical Books. One way in which we, the heirs of God's grace, can show our gratitude is a renewed study of the Book of Concord.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

istence,"¹ Christian theologians and semi-Christian philosophers have debated the possibility of a natural or rational theology.

An attempt by Emil Brunner of Zürich to settle that debate has recently been translated into English and published in America.² In this latest stage on the controversy with Karl Barth on natural theology and natural Law,³ Brunner's book seeks to present a Christian view of the relation between revelation and reason—the reversal of the traditional order is significant—in arriving at transcendent truth. And while his attempt is certainly subject to serious qualifications (which would be the subject of a review, but lie beyond the scope of this essay), Brunner does show that the question is by no means an academic one. To become aware of its relevance, one need but remind himself of the fact that it has engaged the attention not only of the Reformed theologians Barth and Brunner, but of Blaise Pascal, the quasi-Catholic philosopher,⁴ of Christian Ernst Luthardt, the celebrated Lutheran theologian of the nineteenth century,⁵ of Charles Hartshorne, a prominent American disciple of Alfred North Whitehead,⁶ and of the thoroughly unclassifiable Soren Kierkegaard⁷—to name only a few.

In addressing himself to the questions of natural theology, David Friedrich Hollaz was in a tradition of almost two centuries of Lutheran dogmatic history. His *Examen Theologiae Acroamaticae*, which first appeared in 1707,⁸ has been called

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by J. M. D. Micklejohn (New York, 1901), p. 473; refutation of the proofs for the existence of God, pp. 438—76.

² Emil Brunner, *Revelation and Reason* (Philadelphia, 1946).

³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 77—80, and Index sub "Barth."

⁴ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, Modern Library Edition (New York, 1941), Par. 252, p. 89; Par. 542, p. 172; and *passim*.

⁵ C. E. Luthardt, *Apologetische Vorträge über die Grundwahrheiten des Christentums* (12—14th ed.; Leipzig, 1897), pp. 20—57.

⁶ Prof. Hartshorne's *Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism* (Chicago, 1941) is an attempt to restate the ontological argument in terms of Whitehead's philosophy.

⁷ Among other places, see his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, translated by David F. Swenson and edited by Walter Lowrie (Princeton, 1941), p. 485 on "the disparaging air with which one would prove God's existence."

⁸ I have used the edition of Rostock and Leipzig, 1722, edited by Hollaz' son, with Krakevitz' preface; all references in the text of this study are to this edition of the *Examen*.

the "last of the great textbooks of Lutheran orthodoxy."⁹ A comparison of the dates of his life (1648—1713) with those of Philipp Jakob Spener (1635—1705) shows Hollaz' unique position in the history of Lutheran systematic theology. His place in that history may be indicated by the ratio—Hollaz' *Examen* : Calov's *Systema* :: Bengel's *Gnomon* : Calov's *Biblia Illustrata*. And although the significance of natural theology for the beginnings and the fruition of Lutheran dogmatics has been ably presented by the twenty-six-year old Tröltzsch,¹⁰ a thorough treatment of its place in the whole development,¹¹ and especially in the period from Gerhard to Pietism, has not yet appeared.¹² Such a study would perhaps be useful for an understanding of Kant, as well as of Pietism and of our own Lutheran forebears.

I

What right has a Biblical theologian to discuss the problematics of natural theology? This question, to which Tröltzsch makes passing reference on pp. 28—35 of his aforementioned monograph without coming to grips with it anywhere directly, is the first to claim our attention.

One of the moments in Hollaz' theology which seems to have influenced his answer to this question is his view of the perspicuity of Scripture. Revelation in the stricter sense means "a manifestation of matters which are secret and which

⁹ *The Concordia Cyclopedia*, p. 334. Ivar Holm believes that a study of Hollaz may help much toward an understanding of the development of Lutheran orthodoxy: *Dogmhistoriska Studier till Hollazius, I, Trostankarna i rättfärdiggörelseläran* (Lund, 1907), 6—9. As far as I have been able to determine, Holm's work, with its strong soteriological emphasis, has never been completed.

¹⁰ Ernst Tröltzsch, *Vernunft und Offenbarung bei Johann Gerhard und Melancthon* (Göttingen, 1891).

¹¹ Werner Eiert has a brief but excellent summary in his *Morphologie des Luthertums*, I, (Munich, 1931), 44—52. Hans Emil Weber, *Reformation, Orthodoxie und Rationalismus, I, Von der Reformation zur Orthodoxie* (Gütersloh, 1937), 174—77, presents an interesting critique of Tröltzsch's interpretation of Melancthon; Volume II would have treated Gerhard, where, it seems to me, Tröltzsch's thesis is even more vulnerable.

¹² This essay is the first fruit of a study which hopes to treat, among others, Calov's *Theologia naturalis et revelata* (1646); Musaeus' *De usu principiorum rationis et philosophiae in controversiis theologicis* (1665); the same author's *Luminis naturae insufficientia*; Hundeshagen's *Theologia naturalis* (1671); and Hebenstreit's *Theologia naturalis Arminianis imprimis opposita* (1696). All these and many more are available in the Pritzlaff Memorial Library in St. Louis.

are hidden under a sort of veil" (I, 67); "for by the force of the origin of the word, 'to reveal,' ἀποκαλύπτειν, is to uncover and manifest things which are secret and which are hidden under a sort of veil" (I, 93). On the basis of 1 Cor. 4:6; Heb. 1:1, and similar passages, he concludes that "after the completion of the canon of Scripture there is no new and immediate revelation," that the Bible is "a suitable and adequate principle of saving knowledge . . . also for the present state of the Church" (I, 70).

This conception of revelation, which bears verbal affinity to Luther's controversy with the enthusiasts, had nevertheless undergone considerable revision by Hollaz' day, principally through the controversy with Rathmann.¹³ Thus the clarity of Scriptural doctrine necessary for salvation, defended by Luther against Erasmus in 1525,¹⁴ was now formulated in the words: "Scripture is said to be clear not with respect to things, but with respect to words, for unseen things can be expressed in clear and perspicuous words" (I, 167).

If Scripture is completely clear, and if this is a clarity with respect to words, could not anyone at all, Christian or not, determine the meaning of the Bible by a simple historical interpretation? This question was bothering Lutheran theologians in Hollaz' time.¹⁵ For him, a theologian, in the broader sense, was "one who properly [rite] performs the task of a theologian, explaining, confirming, and defending theological truths, even though he lacks a sincere holiness of will," whether he had never been a Christian or had fallen away (I, 14). Consequently, "a tractable unregenerate man, prepared by the illuminating grace of the Holy Spirit, can attain to an external and literal knowledge of Sacred Scripture" (I, 174), though he might never be converted; for to

¹³ On the meaning of the controversy with the enthusiasts, cf. the brilliant essay by Karl Holl, "Luther und die Schwärmer," *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, I, Luther (6th ed.; Tübingen, 1932), 425 ff. On Rathmann and the entire seventeenth century development, cf. R. H. Grützmacher, *Wort und Geist. Eine Untersuchung zum Gnadenmittel des Wortes* (Leipzig, 1901), and the revision of Grützmacher's views in Otto Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, IV (Göttingen, 1927), 157—72.

¹⁴ "De servo arbitrio," St. Louis Edition, XVIII, 1680—84.

¹⁵ Cf. J. G. Walch, *Historische und Theologische Einleitung in die Religions-Streitigkeiten der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche* (Jena, 17—), II, 76—91, 537—42; V, 159—62.

the perspicuity of Scripture must be added its efficacy (I, 203).¹⁶

On the one hand, then, Hollaz dealt with the problem of a non-Christian's use of the Christian writings. We gain further insight when we observe how he dealt with the problem of a Christian's use of non-Christian writings. This had shaped the views of natural theology during most of the orthodox period¹⁷ and was receiving much attention at the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹⁸

Reason, unaided, cannot attain to the knowledge of the Gospel. But there is a distinction "between reason left to itself and reason illumined by the light of the divine Word. The mysteries of the faith exceed the grasp of reason left to itself; illumined reason, however, receives them as instrument and subject, though it is not the judge or norm of the articles of faith" (II, 662). Paul's use of logic in 1 Cor. 15:13 ff. shows that "logical process does not produce *fides humana*,¹⁹ which is uncertain and inconstant, but a firm and certain assent" (I, 127). This set of facts makes it permissible for the Christian theologian to employ both the "organic principles, which have to do with the instrumental disciplines, grammar, rhetoric, and logic," and the "philosophical principles." Indeed, "without the use of reason we can neither perceive, confirm, nor defend theological dogmas against the attacks of the opponents." He does admit, however, that it is not necessary "always and everywhere to turn a theological demonstration into a categorically and fully expressed syllogism"; for this form of expression, if used too much, tends to become "almost tedious" (I, 75—77).

¹⁶ See the brief note on Hollaz and the "theologia irrogenitorum" in Franz Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, I (St. Louis, 1924), 175—76, Note 584.

¹⁷ Cf. Tröltzsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 8—14, 41—54, 70—86, 173—90; there is much material in Peter Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie in protestantischem Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1921), and in the same scholar's study, "Aristotelisches in der Theologie Melanchthons," *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik*, CLXIV (1917), 149—58. But I have received most stimulation from a thorough treatment of these trends in Reformed theology: Paul Althaus, *Die Prinzipien der deutschen reformierten Dogmatik im Zeitalter der aristotelischen Scholastik* (Leipzig, 1914).

¹⁸ An example in Walch, *op. cit.*, V, 162—65.

¹⁹ On *fides humana*, which became almost a technical term in Lutheran dogmatics, see John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis, 1934), p. 70.

II

Hollaz could justify his interest in natural theology from the "theology of the unregenerate" as well as from the formal or organic use of the principles laid down by pagan philosophers. But did not the depravity of man forbid his having any knowledge of God? The problematics of this issue had forced Flacius into a denial of the *notitia Dei innata*.²⁰

This does not seem to have bothered Hollaz at all. His references to Flacius (I, 504, 513 ff.) refute his errors on the image of God, treating him quite sympathetically; but there is apparently no mention of Flacius' denial of natural knowledge. For Hollaz there was no conflict between the depravity of man and the natural knowledge of God, first of all, it seems, because of his view of the Fall.²¹

"Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt menschlich Natur und Wesen"—these words of the great Lazarus Spengler were known to Hollaz (I, 574). But the latter worked out his view of the Fall in greater detail. For example, he felt that "Eve sinned first, being not more simple of intellect, but more inclined with respect to will" (I, 551); and again that "it is false to say that Adam was not deceived by Eve's persuasion, but blinded by her love" (I, 555). To this view of the Fall must be added his view of its effect, namely, that "the remnants of the divine image are natural" (I, 519), a statement that he proves by elaborate demonstration (I, 528 ff.).

If there are remnants in the intellectual or rational sphere of life, even the sinner must be a rational creature, since "only a rational creature can receive the divine law" (I, 540). Hollaz points out that the divine image did not consist chiefly in dominion over the creatures (I, 518), and that it was "not to brutes, but to men who used their sound reason that God revealed the wisdom of eternal salvation in His Word" (I, 76). Man's body "in itself seems a brute thing, hardly capable of sin" (I, 159), while "the beasts, unreceptive to either divine law or holiness, are *expertes* of sin" (I, 541).

Because original sin "formally consists in the lack of the

²⁰ See the summary and interpretation in Wilhelm Preger, *Matthias Flacius Illyricus und seine Zeit*, II (Erlangen, 1861), 212—14; for an interesting side light on Luther's coming to grips with the problem in connection with the timelessness of God, cf. Johann Haar, *Initium Creaturae Dei* (Gütersloh, 1939), pp. 22—27.

²¹ On Hollaz' doctrine of sin in connection with his doctrine of the Atonement, see Holm, *op. cit.*, pp. 28—30.

original righteousness which should be in a man" (I, 569), there are certain "insights which are today innate in the minds of men; these are remnants of the lost divine image, testifying of the pristine wisdom much as ruins testify of a splendid collapsed house" (I, 512). These are the *articuli mixti*, "the parts of Christian doctrine about those divine things which are partly known from the light of nature as well as being believed from the supernatural light of divine revelation" (I, 48). And this in spite of the fact that 1 Cor. 2:14 means "by original sin darkness was put over the human intellect so that unless it is divinely illumined, it can neither comprehend purely spiritual matters nor correctly transmit them to the will, which is in itself a blind *potentia*" (I, 575).

Most prominent among these *articuli mixti* is the existence of God: as Luther said, God's "quod est" and "quid est." On the basis of Rom. 1:19, Luther emphasized that man can know "quod est Deus," but not "quid est Deus." Refuting the theory that "nihil est in intellectu, quin prius fuerit in sensu," Hollaz maintained that "after the Fall there have remained remnants of the divine image which are not dependent upon the senses" (I, 214). This is part of Hollaz' long treatment of the natural knowledge of God (I, 208—46), in which he maintains a position almost identical with that of Gerhard, except for his refutation of the inner light (220—31). His view is well summarized thus: "The natural knowledge of God is that by which a man partially recognizes the existence, essence, attributes, and actions of God from principles known by nature; it is divided into the innate and the acquired. The innate natural knowledge of God is the perfection with which a man is born, similar to a *habitus*; with its assistance the human intellect understands the truth of evident propositions about God without pondering them, having grasped their results, and grants them undoubting assent. The acquired natural knowledge of God is that which is gained through pondering, on the basis of the testimony of others, as well as of an observation of creation" (I, 209).²²

²² There is a great need for an extensive discussion of the psychological terminology of orthodox Lutheranism and Calvinism. Scattered references in Petersen's *Geschichte*, referred to in note 17, do not suffice to explain the use of words like "intellectus," "voluntas," "habitus," "percipere," "apprehendere," "assentire," etc. I have rendered "intellectus," for instance, with "intellect," knowing that the words connote two different things.

We have seen that Hollaz found a place for philosophy in his system; it was "a sort of culture for the soul, liberating it from its inborn boorishness and preparing it to grasp subtler matters and to defend true doctrines against the attacks of the adversaries" (I, 30). Therefore the Trinity can neither be proved nor disproved by reason, though "without reason as the receiving subject and comprehending organ we cannot understand the mystery of the Trinity" (I, 375). The adversaries attack the doctrine of the Trinity with the philosophical axiom: "Quot sunt personae, tot sunt essentiae" (I, 78); but what they fail to see is that "philosophy neither opposes nor contradicts revealed theology," since "philosophy is the science of truth, and as the true does not contradict the true, so philosophical truth does not oppose the theological."²³ All that philosophy teaches is that "quot sunt personae finitae, tot sunt essentiae" (I, 31; italics my own).

But why, then, are there atheists in the world? The heathen who did not know God in Christ were in a sense atheists — "not speculatively, but practically" (I, 216, where, interestingly enough, he refers to the "Brasiliani in novo orbe"); for the natural knowledge of God cannot be eradicated.²⁴ Anyone who would deny the existence of God would do so because he does not want to believe that "there exists a God who is the omnipresent, omniscient, and most just Punisher of trespasses" (I, 66). On the basis of John 5:23; 1 John 2:23, and the Athanasian Creed, Hollaz concludes that "he who does not honor the Triune God is an atheist" (I, 379).

It is one thing to know that God exists, quite another that He exists for me; and though Hollaz did not know the distinction in terminology between the ontological and the existential knowledge of God, he did recognize that the unregenerate "cannot understand the way a sinner is reconciled with a God offended by sin from the principles of reason" (I, 129). Nevertheless, "God willed that after the

²³ On the "oneness of truth" cf. Brunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 362—74 and *passim*; also Karl Heim's "Zur Geschichte des Satzes von der doppelten Wahrheit," referred to *ibid.*, pp. 204—05, and reprinted in Heim's collected essays.

²⁴ Commenting on this passage, Prof. Pieper states that "wir werden Hollaz recht geben müssen," *op. cit.*, I, 447, Note 1,203.

Fall there should exist in the human intellect some common and practical concepts . . . so that all men might from them acknowledge, worship, and praise God for His . . . benefactions to all creatures" (II, 460). Suffice it to say that to other men, like Tennyson in Canto LVI of *In Memoriam*, the face of nature has looked different.

In common with the tradition in which he stood, Hollaz felt that a *regressus infinitus* was inconceivable, that therefore "creation out of nothing . . . is to be known from the light of nature" (I, 388—89, where, for some reason, he omits the usual Is. 40:26). Another problem which Hollaz takes up in the same connection is interesting because it had been treated extensively by the medieval doctors:²⁵ the eternity of the world, an eternal question to Christian Aristotelians. Two pages of close reasoning bring Hollaz to the conclusion that "the created world is in time not pre-existentially, but co-existentially" (I, 391—93). The same human reason which, unaided, could determine that there was a God who had created the world could also say: "He who could establish the heavens, the earth, and all that is in them out of nothing can also create again and reunite with their souls the bodies of men, dead and turned to ashes" (II, 721). Just in passing, he attacks Copernicanism by referring to the immeasurability of the movements of the heavenly bodies (I, 403—04).

Ever since Paul, Christian thinkers have closely linked the natural knowledge of God with the natural knowledge of the Law. In post-Apostolic times the influence of Stoicism made for the expansion of this concept; but, like Paul, most Christians used it to prove the universality of sin.

"Sin is an aberration from the divine law" (I, 531) — this was simple enough, and it had 1 John 3:4 behind it. But how does sin come about? It happens because "in choosing one object in preference to another the will often does not follow the ultimate judgment of practical reason, but neglects it, especially if it is torn in the opposite direction by emotions" (I, 623; cf. I, 551 on Eve, quoted above). Again,

²⁵ So, for a classic instance, St. Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica*, Q. 46. *The Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (New York, 1945), I, 447—57. Cf. the comments by Richard McKeon, "Aristotelianism in Western Christianity" in *Environmental Factors in Christian History* (Chicago, 1939), p. 220 ff.

"the natural law commands those things which are in themselves honest and forbids those things which are in themselves immoral. Those things which are in themselves immoral are unbefitting a rational creature" (I, 542). Among the "things which are in themselves honest" and commanded by the natural Law are "certain things concerning the worship of God and the love of the neighbor. . . . The manner of this worship, however, cannot be known in this state of sin" (I, 219).

Hollaz' separate discussion of the natural Law is conventional but brief. One statement bears quoting: The natural Law "cannot be changed by God Himself; for God can do nothing against His own justice, of which the law of nature is an express and infallible image" (II, 461)! What, then, is the relation between the revealed Law and the natural Law? In addition to the usual discussion of the relation between Law and Gospel (II, 502—06), there is an interesting passage which claims that "from the beginning of the world to the flood, then from Noah to Moses, God declared the natural Law to the patriarchs. . . . The law of Sinai is a sort of epitome of the natural Law" (I, 542).

Hollaz stands at the close of the classic period of orthodox Lutheran dogmatics. His approach to these two problems — the clarity of the Biblical revelation and the capacity of human reason — is all the more significant for that reason. For despite variations and occasional extravagances, the theologians of that period held fast to the clarity of the Biblical revelation because it was the revelation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and maintained that men's reason has a certain capacity because thereby "they are without excuse" (Rom 1:20): man is a sinner because he is capable of knowing God and still rejects Him.

But during Hollaz' lifetime forces were being set in motion which eventually beclouded that insight. Opposing the tendency of classical orthodoxy to identify the *believing* man with the *thinking* man, Pietism came to identify the believing man with the *feeling* man. Inevitably the rational criteria set up by orthodoxy became suspect, with the result that Pietism posited the theory that the Biblical revelation is clear in terms not of the intellect, but of the emotions.

Even more dissatisfied with orthodoxy, but unable to

accept Pietism as a substitute, early German rationalists rejected the primacy of the Biblical revelation and ultimately proposed that "natural religion" replace it. In Pietism and rationalism, then, the tension between revelation and reason was eliminated.

As Hans Emil Weber has shown, rationalism could claim a certain continuity with orthodoxy through their common interest in natural theology. But it is equally clear—and here Albrecht Ritschl's *Geschichte des Pietismus* needs considerable revision—that Pietism, too, could claim a certain continuity with orthodoxy through their common emphasis upon the supremacy of revelation, despite their divergent views on the psychological agency through which that revelation is mediated.

For an evaluation of that continuity and of the stand of Lutheran orthodoxy on the eve of the controversial eighteenth century, David Friedrich Hollaz is indispensable; and nowhere does his critical position in the entire development stand out more sharply than in his view of natural theology.

Valparaiso, Ind.

Time-log of Jesus' Last Days

By W. GEORGI

The last period in the Life of Christ comprises eight days, passed in or near Jerusalem, from Friday to Friday, Nisan 8—15, 30 A. D.

In order of events Jesus came to Bethany "six days before the Passover" (John 12:1).¹ The Passover was observed Nisan 15—21 (Num. 28:17-25; Ex. 12:8-19). That year Nisan 15 fell on Friday (John 19:31), after the preparation of the Passover meal on the day before, Nisan 14 (John 13:2; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; Ex. 12:6). Counting back six days from Nisan 14, that is from Thursday back to Saturday, Nisan 14—9 (extremes included) and considering, according to the accurate translation of Joh. 12:1, that Jesus came to Bethany before the six days that immediately preceded the Passover, we hold *Friday, Nisan 8*, of the foregoing week to be the day on which Jesus came to Bethany. At Bethphage He had left

¹ See Addition No. I.