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FOREWORD

The occasion of this issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY is the publication of the *Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible* by the Westminster Press, a subsidiary of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

It would be natural to expect, in view of the auspices under which this Bible appears, that its explanatory material will accord with that view of the inspiration and authority of the Bible that is expressed in the doctrinal standards of the Church of which the Board of Christian Education is an agency.

The two articles that follow—the one by an outstanding scholar in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the other by an equally outstanding scholar in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.—make clear that such is not the case. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that this Bible is being advertised as containing “a thorough explanation of what the Church believes about the Bible.”

If this Bible sets forth “what the Church believes about the Bible” it is passing strange that the Church requires its ministers and elders, on assuming office, to affirm their belief that the Bible is “the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.”

No doubt it will be alleged that the doctrine of Scripture assumed in this *Study Edition* of the Bible is in accord with the Westminster Confession just as it has been alleged that the doctrine of Scripture assumed in the *New Curriculum* is in accord with the Westminster Confession (*A Statement Regarding the New Curriculum* distributed by the Board of Christian Education in reply to criticisms, p. 5). And that in face of the fact that the Westminster Confession asserts that “all the books of the Old and New Testaments” are “the Word of God written,” that their “author” is “God (who is truth itself),” that as they came from the hands of their human authors they were “immediately inspired by God,” that the Holy Spirit witnesses to their “infallible truth and divine authority,” and that “a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaketh therein.” It is open to those who will to maintain that the view of the Bible found in this *Study Edition* is a better view than that found in the Westminster Confession of Faith. It passes comprehension that any informed person should maintain that they are the same.

The full significance of this *Study Edition*, at least for the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., will not be clear unless it be noted that one of its chief editors is Dr. James D. Smart, editor-in-chief of the *New Cur-*

riculum, and that it has been announced that the subject for study in the *New Curriculum* during the entire second year will be “The Bible.” It seems certain, therefore, that Sunday School scholars in said Church, insofar as it uses the *New Curriculum*, will be taught that the Bible is a faulty book that abounds in conflicting and even flatly contradictory statements. It is equally important to note in this connection that its chief editors include three professors from Princeton Seminary, three from McCormick Seminary, one from Louisville Seminary and one from San Francisco Seminary—a fact that more than suggests that the view of the Bible taught in this *Study Edition* is being inculcated in the institutions training the great majority of the future ministers of said Church.

Since it is probable that many pastors and teachers have been using the *New Curriculum* materials unwillingly and with the hope that changes would be made in it which would make it really Bible-centered and Biblical, the following item is of special interest and significance. A Presbyterian minister of our acquaintance wrote to the editor-in-chief of the *New Curriculum* expressing general agreement with the criticisms of it made by Dr. Allis in a *Critique*, which was widely circulated throughout the Church last summer, and voicing the hope that the features objected to might be eliminated. He received a reply from which we quote the following: “I am sorry that I cannot promise any possibility that the curriculum will develop into closer accord with Dr. Allis’ viewpoint.” This reply indicates how groundless is the hope of reform-from-within of the *New Curriculum*. If this answer is disappointing, the reason that is given in justification of it is worthy of very careful pondering. “His [Dr. Allis’] position for some years has been generally recognized as schismatic, and he represents a type of barren rationalistic orthodoxy which is contrary to the great confessions of our Presbyterian Church.” This charge is surprising and startling to say the least. One of the most serious of the charges brought against the higher critics, and one that has often been made, is that their attitude is *rationalistic*, that they minimize or reject the redemptive Supernaturalism of the Bible—miracle and prophecy—as being contrary to or disproved by *reason*, and treat the Bible as a very human and fallible book. Dr. Allis has consistently maintained that the Bible is “the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice” and that the “Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaketh therein.” If this is “barren rationalistic orthodoxy,” it looks surprisingly like simple Christian (and Presbyterian) *faith*. As to the claim that his position

is "schismatic" and that it is "contrary to the great confessions of our Presbyterian Church," the only "confession," if it can be called that, to which Dr. Allis is vigorously opposed is, so far as we are aware, the heretical Auburn Affirmation. If this makes him *schismatic*, it must mean that the doctrinal position of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. is no longer that of the *Confession* but of the *Affirmation!* Have we really arrived at such a pass?

Many, perhaps most, of the books recently issued by the Westminster Press repudiate the Westminster doctrine of Scripture. Witness, for instance, its publication of five books by Emil Brunner whose open, even violent hostility to the notion of an infallible Bible is well known. It is hardly too much to say that more and more in recent years the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., has become an agency for promoting unbelief in the Bible as "the Word of God written" and so of creating doubt as to the validity of our hopes as Christian men and women. O Church of Christ, whither art thou straying!

A CRYING NEED

We refer to the need of a conservative periodic organ of expression in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Since the passing of *The Presbyterian* it has been without such an organ. The out-and-out liberals have such an organ in *The Presbyterian Tribune* but the out-and-out conservatives are without a voice. This is fitted to give the impression that such conservatives are, as some would have us believe, virtually extinct as far as said Church is concerned.

Little or no significance attaches to *Presbyterian Life* in this connection. For, however, excellent it may be as a news magazine and however effective it may be in promoting the activities of the Boards and agencies of

the Church, it avoids doctrinal discussions on the ungrounded assumption, apparently, that doctrinal unity now exists throughout the Church. Such a policy, needless to say, plays into the hands of the liberals who if not doctrinal indifferentists usually regard doctrines as matters of minor importance. Conservatives, however, hold that doctrines enter into the substance of Christianity to such a degree that a non-doctrinal Christianity or even a Christianity that is indifferent to doctrines is, to say the least, a very inadequate form of Christianity.

Let it not be said that the passing of *The Presbyterian* means that a conservative paper cannot find adequate support in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. It was not until that paper changed its policy, after being taken over by a semi-liberal group, that it found itself unable to continue. What is happening in other churches could, we believe, be duplicated in our Church. Witness the *Congregational Beacon*, the *Presbyterian Guardian* and especially the *Southern Presbyterian Journal*. It is safe to say that there are fewer conservatives in the relatively smaller Southern Presbyterian Church than in our own. There would seem, therefore, to be no sufficient reason why conservatives in the Northern Presbyterian Church should not have an equally effective organ.

It is high time, it seems to us, that the conservatives in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. were taking steps to establish such an organ. We have reason to know that there is a wide-spread demand for such an organ. How thickly spread this demand is we do not know. We would like to hear from those who share our concern about this matter. If there are any who are contemplating such a step we shall be glad to assist in any way possible. It may be added that if anything of the kind suggested should be attempted we are of the opinion that it should be a completely new venture rather than the continuation of any previously existing one.

Believe the Bible! or Believe Its Critics!

The Inescapable Issue in Christian Education

BY OSWALD T. ALLIS, Ph.D., D.D.

This is the issue of issues in the sphere of Christian Education today. It is paramount because our decision will necessarily determine our whole attitude to the Bible and the way it should be studied and taught. It is inescapable because the issue is not now as it once was between Christians and non-Christians. We do not expect unbelievers to believe the Bible. If they believed it they would not be unbelievers. The issue is inescapable because it represents an alternative which must be faced by Protestant Christians everywhere. For the critics of the Bible are found in large numbers in most of the denominations of Protestantism. It is an issue of especial importance and urgency for the members of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., because the attempt is now being made by our Board of Christian Education through its New Curriculum to make the Critical view of the Bible *official* in all the teaching of this great Church, which according to its doctrinal standards is whole-heartedly committed to the other position.

As is indicated by the alternative presented in the

heading, there are, broadly speaking only two methods of studying the Bible. They are the *Biblical* and the *Critical*. What is the difference between them?

The Biblical Method

The Biblical method of studying the Bible is set forth very clearly in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. In the chapter entitled "Of Saving Faith," the statement is made that, "By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaketh therein . . ." And in the chapter entitled "Of the Holy Scripture," the "consent of all the parts," by which is meant the unity and harmony of Scripture is stated to be one of the "arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God." In other words, the *Confession* declares that the Bible speaks with the authority of God and that its message in all its parts is perfectly harmonious. According to this teaching, which expresses the common belief of Bible-believing Christians in all Evangelical

Churches, the harmonistic method is the correct method of interpreting the Holy Scriptures. It has been very clearly summarized as follows: "If the Scriptures be what they claim to be, the word of God, they are the work of one mind, and that mind divine. From this it follows that Scripture cannot contradict Scripture. God cannot teach in one place anything which is inconsistent with what He teaches in another. Hence Scripture must explain Scripture. If a passage admits of different interpretations, that only can be the true one which agrees with what the Bible teaches elsewhere on the same subject" (Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, i.187). This is the Biblical and the only truly Biblical method of studying and teaching the Bible.

In regard to this method, it is to be carefully noted that it applies to the study and interpretation of every kind of evidence. It is a principle of Anglo-Saxon justice, as distinguished, for example, from that of the totalitarian countries, that a man is to be considered innocent until he is proved guilty, that his statements are to be accepted as true until they are proved false; and that if his statements admit of an interpretation which is in harmony with other statements made by him or with evidence gathered from other dependable sources, this interpretation should be accepted in preference to one which makes the witness contradict himself, or his statements conflict with the other available evidence. What applies to legal procedure in general applies equally to the study of documentary evidence of every kind. Even a document of rather dubious value is entitled to a fair trial and to the benefit of the principle of "reasonable doubt," before its statements are rejected as mistaken or false, or have a construction placed upon them which is clearly quite inconsistent with their obvious intent. And what applies to literature in general should apply in a very special sense to that Book which is revered by all Christians as the *Holy Bible*.

The Critical Method

The other method of study and interpretation, which is widely used today, is often called the "critical" or "higher critical" method of approach. It is not a new method. It will in fact soon celebrate its bi-centennial.* It has found expression in a very extensive literature: in technical treatises intended for scholars and in popular handbooks and "lesson helps" for the general reader. Its most important and distinctive principles, as applied to the study of the Bible, are two in number: (1) it refuses to accept the statements of the Bible as true, *because the Bible says so*, and (2) it declares that the Bible abounds in *inconsistent* and even *contradictory* statements which prove this "Holy Bible" to be a very human and faulty book, whose statements often cannot be taken to mean what they clearly state.

One of the most recent illustrations of this "critical" method of teaching the Bible is "*The Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible* (1948)." This volume of 2000 pages makes a very attractive appearance. It uses the Authorized Version as its Biblical text. It provides relatively brief introductions to both Testaments and shorter introductions to each of the books of the Bible. There are footnotes to the text, which rarely occupy as much as a third of the page. Headings are inserted in the text, but there are no cross-references, except those which appear in the notes. The Concordance covers 103 pages and includes a chronology and also a harmony of the Gospels. As a help to the study of the Bible this

*The Documentary Hypothesis regarding the Pentateuch is usually traced back to Astruc who published his *Conjectures* in 1753.

Concordance is decidedly inadequate. For example, the NT mentions three men named Ananias. No one of them is listed. The OT mentions perhaps 30 different Zechariahs, among whom are included a king, a prophet, a high priest's son. The name does not appear in the Concordance (except in the NT form Zacharias). Consequently, the statement on the jacket that this is "the most complete Bible of its kind ever published" must be taken with more than the usual grain of salt. The Maps and Map Index are the same as the ones used in the *Westminster Dictionary of the Bible*.

The Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible Is "Critical"

But it is not with such matters as these, important as they are, that we are primarily concerned, but with the fact that the viewpoint of the *Westminster Study Edition* is definitely "critical." It is an attempt to present in popular form and for the average reader the more or less radical conclusions of the higher critics. Those who are at all familiar with the critical theories which have been advanced with ever increasing confidence and dogmatism, first in Germany, then in England, and finally in this country, during the last half century and more, will probably find little that is new or startling in this volume. But for those who are not so well-informed, a few examples will suffice to establish this obvious fact and to indicate its vast significance for the student and teacher of the Bible.

The Old Testament

The critics have been insisting with ever increasing dogmatism for nearly a century, that the *Pentateuch* is composed of at least four major documents (J, E, D, P), that the earliest of these documents dates from about the time of Elijah, and that the composite work was not completed until about 400 B.C. This view is definitely accepted by the editors (p. 13f.), despite the fact that it makes it difficult, if not impossible, to regard any part of the Pentateuch as really dependable history.

Another book which has been a storm-center as long or even longer than the Pentateuch is *Isaiah*. The claim that chs. 40-66 cannot have been uttered by the Isaiah of Hezekiah's time has led gradually to the disintegration of the entire book. According to radical critics, only about a fifth of the book which bears his name can be assigned to Isaiah the son of Amoz. It has even been called a little "library" of prophetic writings. The general position of the editors can be gathered from the following facts (p. 923f.).* They distinguish *three* Isaiahs, but they think it probable that chs. 56-66 "were written by a group of followers of the Second Isaiah rather than by an individual. These men may have lived in the middle of the fifth century B.C." They reject large sections of the First Part of Isaiah. They assign chap. 1 to "the latest period of Isaiah's ministry"; and they tell us that it consists of three addresses "delivered at different times in Isaiah's life" (p. 925). They think that "Chapters 2 to 12 and 28 to 31 may, for the most part, be ascribed to Isaiah himself," also that "Some of the oracles in chs. 13 to 23 may well date from the time of Isaiah. But there are many signs of editing, and in their present form large sections of these chapters belong to a later age." Such statements as these make it

*Simple page references are all to the *Study Edition*. The reader should note that in it the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Concordance are paginated independently of one another. Thus p. 51 in the OT contains part of Gen. 24, p. 51 in the NT contains Matt. 16:19-17:8, p. 51 in the Concordance is in the F's. This is somewhat complicated and may confuse the reader at times.

difficult to determine just how much of the Book of Isaiah the editors are willing to regard as actually Isaianic. But it would certainly be fair to them to say that they do not regard more than a quarter or at the very most a third of the book to be by Isaiah, and that they hold that even those passages which they regard as "for the most part" Isaianic have been more or less extensively edited by writers of later times.

Another book which has, much more recently, been under heavy fire from the critics is *Ezekiel*. The editors apparently are disposed to regard this attack as unjustified. But they do not hesitate to make this sweeping statement: "As in all the prophetic books, however, later editorial hands undoubtedly labored on the prophecies, and brought the book to its present form" (p. 1163). The word "undoubtedly" serves to camouflage the fact that it is, as we shall see presently, only their own radical theory regarding predictive prophecy which can be appealed to in support of this amazing statement. For those who accept it, it destroys the authority of the "prophetic books." For who is to decide between what is genuine and what is the result of later editing? Consequently, the phrases, "as we now have it," "in its present form," etc., which are met with in the marginal notes, serve as a reminder to the reader that the words which appear in the AV text as, for example, the "thus saith the Lord" uttered by the prophet Ezekiel, may have been "labored" with by unknown editors and given a somewhat different meaning from what was originally intended.

It may suffice to add that *Daniel* is treated as Maccabean and dated about 168 B.C. (p. 1236), that *Jonah* is regarded as "an extended parable" written some three or four centuries after Jonah's time (p. 1312), that *Esther* is treated as "a historical romance," written about the third century B.C., "whose whole spirit is contrary" to the teachings of the New Testament (p. 626f.), that only comparatively few of the *Psalms* can be regarded as Davidic in authorship (p. 693) and that even these were probably subjected to later editing.* Thus we are told regarding Ps. 18, which most critics who admit any psalms to be Davidic assign to him, "The tradition that David wrote this psalm may be accepted, at least for its original form, though it was likely revised and edited for later purposes, probably in honor of Josiah" (p. 707). Such statements as these serve to keep the editors in good standing among the critics of the Bible. But they also show very clearly how radical is the position held by the editors of the *Study Edition* in regard to the Old Testament and its interpretation.

The New Testament

In the New Testament we observe the same critical attitude on the part of the editors as in the Old. The genuineness of four of the books is more or less emphatically denied: of *1* and *2 Timothy* and *Titus*, all of which claim to be by Paul, and of *2 Peter*, which claims to be by Peter. The generally accepted view that *James* was written by the Brother of the Lord is rejected and it is regarded as possible that "late in the first century some unknown Jewish Christian composed this book of exhortation in the style of the wisdom literature of the Old Testament" (p. 423). If so, why has James found

a place in the NT canon, while Ecclesiasticus was not admitted to the OT? It is declared to be "most unlikely" (p. 458) that the *Fourth Gospel* and *The Revelation* are both by the same author. So if John the Apostle wrote the *Gospel* and the *Epistles*, which is rather hesitatingly admitted, he cannot have been the writer of the *Apocalypse*. The editors take the view regarding the *Synoptic Gospels* that Mark was the earliest and that Matthew and Luke made use of Mark and of an independent source which the critics have called Q. In the case of *John* the "dramatic form" of presentation is stressed and the inference is drawn that "the discourses contained within it are probably not expressed in the precise form in which they were originally given" (p. 165). This disquieting statement is offset to some extent by the assurance that "careful study makes it clear that the dramatic discourses of the Gospel give an accurate representation of the true nature and essential mind of Jesus, and there is no reason to doubt that in a large number of cases they consist of the actual words which he himself used." In their discussion of "The New Testament," the *value* of the writings which compose it and the more or less gradual *recognition* by the Church of their *value* is affirmed (pp. 16f.). But it is not pointed out that the reason these books and these only were accepted as "canonical" was because it was recognized that they were written by the Apostles or under their authority and that it was for that reason that they were distinguished from merely "human writings," and held to be books "All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life" (*Confession*, I. 2, 3.)

Thus it appears that the careful reader will not need to read very far in this *Study Edition*, before he will observe very plainly that the two principles of critical interpretation mentioned above find frequent illustration in its pages. Again and again he is given to understand that what the Bible says is not to be accepted *because the Bible says so*, and at its face value and in its obvious sense, but is either to be rejected as false or to be interpreted to mean something quite different from what it clearly states. Again and again it is pointed out that statements made in one book or passage are in conflict with statements made elsewhere. The following examples which are more specific than those already given will furnish conclusive proof of this very important fact. No attempt will be made to classify the examples under the two principles, since these are so closely related as to be in essence one. But the reader will readily see the manner in which they illustrate one or both of them.

Adam and Eve

According to the editors "it is questionable whether the story of Adam and Eve was ever intended to be simply a literal and factual account of what two people said and did at a particular time in history" (p. 19). This is a round-about way of saying that they do not regard it as historical, but as an allegory, myth, or legend designed to teach an important lesson. That this is the view of the editors is indicated by the fact that in their Chronology (p. 18) they date the Stone Age as "beginning 200,000 to 500,000 years ago," which would be roughly the time to which Java-man (*Pithecanthropus erectus*) is assigned by the evolutionary anthropologists. This clearly implies that the words of Gen. 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them," are

*Of the 150 psalms, 116 have a heading of some kind; and of these headings 73 bear the name of David. The editors place all of the headings between square brackets, apparently to indicate to the reader that they are no part of the original text. There is no warrant for this. The earliest Hebrew Mss. all contain the headings. The oldest version, the Septuagint, has them; and its rendering of them indicates that they were ancient when that version was prepared and that the meaning of some of the words was unknown to the translators.

to be interpreted in terms of evolution and not in terms of special creation. Yet it seems clear that Jesus (Mt. 19:4f.) and Paul (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 15:22, 45; 1 Tim. 2:13f.) took the account literally. In some of their notes on these passages the editors might be understood to do the same. E.g., the comment on 1 Cor. 11:12, "Eve was taken from Adam's side; man is born of woman" (p. 302). But they have elsewhere made it quite plain that they do not. This is an inconsistency which appears not seldom in the *Study Edition*.

Jacob Wrestling with the Angel

The editors tell us, "In a dream . . . before he met his brother, Jacob met and wrestled with an angel throughout a troubled sleep" (p. 64). The narrative says nothing about a dream or a troubled sleep. It does tell us that as a result of the wrestling Jacob suffered severe bodily injury, that he was limping the next morning, and also that for many generations his descendants did not eat of "the tendon that shrank." Was the dream so vivid that Jacob injured himself physically in the course of it? Was there no physical injury at all, and did a later writer take the dream so literally that he mistook the dreamed injury for a real one and used it to account for a custom early practiced by the Hebrews but with which it had not the slightest connection? Or, is the dream theory simply an attempt to avoid the natural meaning and implications of the narrative?

The Tabernacle

A considerable part of the Book of Exodus (Chaps. 25-30; 35-40) is devoted to directions for the construction of the Tabernacle and to the carrying out of these directions. These commandments were, as we are repeatedly told, given to Moses and carried out by him. "As the Lord commanded Moses" runs like a refrain through Chaps. 39-40. Yet according to the editors the tabernacle is to be regarded as "an idealization of the tent of meeting . . . an idealization based upon the belief that the pattern for the Temple of Solomon had been established by Moses in a tabernacle (sanctuary) built while in the wilderness" (p. 126). What this really means is that the tabernacle, which is described in such detail in about a dozen Chapters of Exodus, never was made at all, that it was, as Wellhausen expressed it, a "reflexion backward" of Solomon's Temple, a kind of "portable" temple. According to this theory the Chapters in Exodus which describe the Tabernacle belong to the Priestly Document (P) which was combined with the other documents of the Pentateuch about a thousand years after the time of Moses (p. 14). So we are told that this tabernacle was an "idealization" with the clear implication that it never really existed, that "It is doubtful, however, whether the elaborate building described in Ex. chs. 25 pp., was actually constructed in the wilderness" (Concordance, p. 94), and that it was "erected nine months after the arrival at Sinai" (p. 148). The last statement may be intended to placate the reader who would like to believe that the tabernacle described in Exodus actually was made and erected at Sinai in the days of Moses, "as the Lord commanded Moses." But it is utterly irreconcilable with the "idealization" theory to which the editors have already committed themselves.

The Mosaic Censuses

According to the Book of Number (chaps. 1-2), Moses was commanded to take a census of all Israel at Sinai early in the second year after the Exodus. He

was also commanded to take a second census in the plains of Moab, at the end of the forty years, preparatory to the Conquest (chap. 26), and after the entire generation which had been numbered at Sinai had passed away (vss. 63 ff.). Two matters are made perfectly plain: that there were *two* census of *all* Israel separated by an interval of nearly forty years, and that both of them were taken by Moses before Israel entered the land of promise. The explanation that commends itself to the editors is the "theory" that the lists in Num. 1-2 and 26 are "two versions of the census of David (2 Sam., ch. 24)" (p. 192). The explanation which the editors give is noteworthy: "The one complete census of united Israel of which we know is that of David, and the figures here fit the situation in his day."* The reader will note that David's census was the "one complete census of united Israel" only if the two censuses recorded in Numbers as taken by Moses never were taken at all. The words "of which we know" are especially significant. For they definitely imply that no confidence whatsoever is to be placed in the express and detailed statements of Numbers. This is made still clearer by the explanation which follows: "According to this hypothesis, the lists were misplaced from their original context, recopied repeatedly, and here preserved in two variant forms." Such is the "hypothesis" which the editors prefer to the clear and unambiguous statements of the Book of Numbers that it records two censuses and that both were taken by Moses. When Bible teachers and their pupils have fully mastered this *hypothesis* and its implications, how much confidence will they be prepared to place in other statements of the Book of Numbers? Such considerations may well, to borrow the familiar words of Hamlet, "give us pause."

The Atonement Money

Since the editors claim that the tabernacle was an "idealization" of Solomon's temple and that the censuses taken by Moses were Davidic, the half-shekel ransom money which Moses was commanded to levy at Sinai acquires great significance. It was commanded before the tabernacle was built (30:12-16). It was paid by every male of "twenty years and above," as an offering and memorial. The total was 100 talents, 1775 shekels of silver, which at 3,000 shekels to the talent amounted to 603,550 half-shekels, the exact figure of the census of Num. 1-2; and the silver was used to make the 100 sockets for the boards of the tabernacle and of the pillars of the inner veil, while the 1775 shekels were used to make hooks and fillets for the pillars and to overlay their capitals (Ex. 38:25-28).

Now, if the tabernacle was actually made as the Book of Exodus tells us was the case, this levy and the use to which it was put are very significant, because they serve to bind the census and the tabernacle very closely together. The fact that the totals are exactly the same indicates that the census and the levy were both taken *as of the same date*, probably the first day of the first month, when the completed tabernacle was set up. And the fact that the silver was used in the construction of the tabernacle indicated in a beautifully symbolic way that every Israelite had a right to claim all the benefits which it offered to the people of God. It is all simple,

*The implication of this statement should not be overlooked. According to 2 Sam. 24:9, the total of the census of all Israel taken by Joab was 1,300,000, which is more than *twice* the total given in Numbers. According to 1 Chron. 21:5 the total was still larger, 1,570,000 (the reason for the difference does not here concern us). So if, as the editors tell us, the figures in Numbers "fit the situation" in David's time, the figures given in Sam. and Chron. must be regarded as grossly exaggerated.

natural, and eminently appropriate, *if* the tabernacle was constructed as Exodus tells us it was, and *if* the census was taken as Numbers says it was. But how artificial and almost absurd all this becomes, *if* this tabernacle which is described in such detail never was constructed at all and *if* the census which is so closely connected with it by the silver levy was Davidic and not Mosaic—the whole account being only the “pious” imaginings of the priests of the Exilic period or even later. We may admire its cleverness, just as we admire the cleverness of Lewis Carroll when he tells how Alice suddenly found herself swimming about in the tears which she had shed when she was nine feet high. Such flights of the imagination are highly amusing when we meet them in *Alice in Wonderland*. But somehow they seem out of place in a book which the editors are apparently still willing to call “The Holy Bible.”

Deuteronomy

That the editors are often unwilling to take the words of the Bible in their obvious sense, is indicated very clearly, for example, by their treatment of Deuteronomy, despite the fact that they make statements at times which seem to indicate the contrary. They tell us on the one hand that “Deuteronomy is written as a series of addresses delivered by Moses to the Children of Israel in the plains of Moab (ch. 4:1) beyond the Jordan (Num. 22:1f.; Deut. ch. 34)” (p. 244). The only words in this statement that sound at all suspicious are “written as.” How important they are is soon apparent. For the reader is told a little later on that “the book is to be understood as a series of addresses by Moses in the sense that it is a noble and inspired interpretation of the Mosaic covenant for the needs of the people in a later day” (p. 246); and the words “later day” mean that “while the core of the present book was very old in 621 B. C., yet during the seventh century it was expanded and edited by pupils of the eighth-century prophets, whose spirit breathes through the book (cf., for example, Mic. 6:8 with Deut. 10:12).” This amounts to saying that these addresses were not really delivered by Moses at all; and the reader is left in doubt as to just how much is “very old” (Mosaic?) and how much is “late” (8th and 7th century?). Here again, the editors follow a method which does not speak well for their sincerity, and cannot but be confusing to the reader. What is he to believe when he is told in a comment on 2:23 that “This and other allusions indicate that the writers of Deuteronomy lived in Palestine a considerable time after the days of Moses” (p. 251) and on the other hand finds the following comment on 31:9, “The whole of Deuteronomy to this point is ascribed to Moses” (p. 288). If the reader were a higher critic, he might easily draw the inference that two editors or groups of editors often collaborated on the notes to the *Study Edition*, the one conservative, the other critical, and that the result is a compromise which cannot have been acceptable to either, and will, as we have said, be very confusing and mystifying to the average reader, who naturally expects the notes and comments to clarify the problems of the book instead of complicating and confusing them.

Mosaic Monotheism

No one who will study the Decalogue carefully can be in any serious doubt that the worship instituted at Mt. Sinai was both monotheistic and spiritual, that it required the exclusive worship of Jehovah, who “made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is,” and

that it prohibited the use of images of any and every kind. The Bible does not conceal but rather emphasizes the fact that the history of Israel is one long and terrible record of repeated apostasies from the lofty ethical monotheism imposed on and accepted by Israel at Sinai. But if it points out the failures to attain to that ideal, it is equally consistent in stigmatizing them as shameful apostasies from it which merit and must receive the righteous judgments of the Holy God whose covenant Israel has promised to keep and has so often and so flagrantly violated.

According to many of the critics, the Decalogue belongs to the document E, which according to the editors dates from about 750 B. C. and is to be regarded as embodying the traditions of Northern Israel (p. 13). Some would even regard it as a later addition to E. Many of the critics also hold that this “Decalogue of E,” as they are accustomed to call it, was originally quite brief. So the editors tell us: “The Ten Commandments are, however, a summary of man’s duties toward God and toward his neighbor, which could be easily shortened or expanded as time and circumstances might demand. The original Commandments were probably lacking the explanatory notes appended for example in vv. 5, 6, 9-11” (p. 119). It will be noted that the elimination of these “explanatory notes” makes the meaning and implications of the Commandments much less definite and precise. Thus, if the Second Commandment is reduced to the form, “Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image,” the inference is at least possible, and it has been drawn by prominent critics, that other kinds of image worship were tolerated even if not authorized. If the Fourth Commandment is reduced to the words: “Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy,” the vitally important fact is ignored that the God whose day is to be kept holy is He who “made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is” and claimed the seventh day, the day of His resting, as peculiarly His. Consequently many of the critics, especially those who are disposed to regard this abbreviated Decalogue as Mosaic, are prepared to maintain that it is not truly monotheistic but merely requires the exclusive worship by Israel of Jehovah, who brought Israel out of the land of Egypt, and that it does not eliminate the use of all images in His worship.

The editors tell us that one of the “three fundamental elements” taught Israel was that they “must make no idols of any kind” (pp. 91, ff.) and they trace this distinctive form of Israel’s faith to Moses. For “critics” this is a decidedly conservative position. Yet one of the evidences which they give that the religion of Israel excluded the worship of God by means of images, constitutes a falsification of history that is simply amazing.

Jeroboam and the Calves

Thus the editors tell us regarding the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat: “The provision for worship in northern Israel was to offset the unifying influence of the Jerusalem Temple. The two golden calves (bulls) were probably meant to serve the same general purpose as the cherubim in the Temple (cf. ch. 6:23-28), or they may have been intended as the pedestals above which stood the invisible Lord. In course of time, however, they became an encouragement to idolatry and were worshipped as idols (cf. Hos. 8:5)” (p. 467). It would be difficult to find a more grievous falsification of the simple facts of history than this interpretation of them involves. The narrative plainly represents the

calves as central in a worship that was idolatrous and even polytheistic. It tells us that "the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, 'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt'" (1 Kgs. 12:25). The statement that "this thing became a sin" (v. 30), does not mean at all that "in course of time," i.e., gradually, in the course of the century or more between the time of Jeroboam (cir. 850 B. C.) and Hosea (cir. 750 B. C.), an innocent form of worship became a sin. For we are told that Jeroboam himself set the example of apostasy by "sacrificing unto the calves that he had made" (v. 32). And this sin of apostasy is represented constantly as the sin of "Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin." More than a score of times almost these identical words appear in the Books of Kings. And the fact that the kings who followed Jeroboam on the throne of the Northern Kingdom followed him in observing this worship, is cited again and again as the crowning proof of the sinful apostasy of Northern Israel from the true worship of the God of Israel.

If Jeroboam instituted a form of worship which was innocent in itself and followed the pattern or analogy of the worship of the Temple at Jerusalem—the likening of Jeroboam's calves to the cherubim of the tabernacle and temple is shocking and outrageous—then he has been most grievously maligned and made responsible for a perversion which he did not intend. But the evidence that he did intend it is overwhelming; and where is there the slightest evidence that he did not intend it? Furthermore, if the calves were only intended to be "pedestals" upon which the invisible Jehovah was to be supposed to be standing, why did Hosea and Amos fail to draw this all-important distinction and to remind the people that the calves were only the pedestals of their invisible God and that it was wrong for them to worship the pedestals instead of the God who stood above them? There is not a hint of this "pedestal theory" in the writings of the prophets, who emphasize the proneness of Israel to turn aside from the spiritual worship of Jehovah to worship the idols of the heathen. If there were any truth in it, Hosea, when he said of the calf of Bethel, "the workman made it; therefore it is not God", would have laid himself open to the annihilating rejoinder, "Of course it is not God, it is only the pedestal of the invisible God, as any spiritually minded person would readily perceive. You are confounding the God of Israel with the pedestal under his feet." But where is there the slightest evidence that any such rejoinder was ever made or could have been made to the denunciation of the idolatries of Israel by the true prophets of Israel's God? The absurdity of this attempt to "whitewash" Jeroboam the son of Nebat would be recognized even by the critics themselves were it not for the fact that their dismemberment of the Pentateuch and late dating of its contents has left them in such uncertainty as to what the religion of Israel really was, not merely in the days of Moses but even centuries after his time.

Davidic Hymnody

It is a noteworthy fact that the Bible definitely connects the service of song for the public worship of the God of Israel with David and not with Moses, with the temple and not with the tabernacle. The failure of the Pentateuch to mention singers is perfectly understandable, if the regulations for the worship of the tabernacle are Mosaic as they are clearly stated to be. But the

critics insist, as we have seen, that the Pentateuch was not completed until about 400 B. C., more than 500 years after David's time (p. 14). Hence the failure of the Pentateuch (especially P) to mention singers causes them difficulty. They think it proves that the Chronicler was wrong in assigning the institution of the service of song to David (1 Chr. 25); and they claim that this "Davidic" tradition must have arisen at a still later date (they assign Chronicles to 350-300 B. C.). So the editors tell us regarding the Chronicler: "The author's second aim was to depict the true norm for the organization of the worship of God. The regulations for the Levites and the singers do not go back to the times in which he sets them. It is, for instance, noteworthy that they do not appear in the Pentateuch, which was finally edited about 400 B. C. But by working them into the context of the story of Israel's past he succeeds in making them stand out vividly and dramatically before his readers' eyes" (p. 522). In this way the Pentateuch which, if *Mosaic*, is in perfect accord with Chronicles when it ignores an institution which Chronicles represents as *Davidic*, is made to contradict Chronicles and prove the Chronicler to have been more concerned to make his "story" impressive than to make it true. If this writer of *sacred* history did not hesitate to manipulate the facts in order to tell a good story, can we condemn the many writers of *secular* history today who do not hesitate to edit the facts of history to make them conform to their ideas of what these facts must or ought to have been, and are more concerned to write a "best seller" than a faithful history?

Miracles

A characteristic feature of the critical method of studying the Bible is hostility to the Supernatural. According to the *Westminster Confession*, "God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure" (ch. V. 3). The first part of this statement is quite acceptable to the critics; they recognize that God ordinarily uses means, i.e. second causes, in His providential activities. The second part which emphasizes His entire independence of these means, they find it difficult or impossible to accept, and they are constantly endeavoring to eliminate or explain away those extraordinary events of which the Bible makes so much.

The plagues of Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea are almost without exception reduced by the editors to natural phenomena, which the people regarded as signs and wonders. We read of the plague of frogs, "This natural scourge was seen as a witness to the power of God" (p. 102). Only in the case of the last is it otherwise. The slaying of the first born is likened to other "epidemics" which are frequent in Egypt in the spring time. It is only the fact that "deaths are here confined to the first born" that leads to the statement that "in this instance God is portrayed as working his dire punishment directly without the use of natural scourges" (p. 109). But since such extraordinary features of the "natural scourges" as are mentioned in 8:22; 9:6, 11, 26; 10:23 are all passed over in silence by the editors, the reader cannot help wondering whether the last plague, in their judgment, really differed essentially from the nine that preceded it.

The editors describe Elijah as "one of the most remarkable figures of Israel's history" (p. 474). But they proceed at once to point out that we must read the account of his remarkable career with caution and discrimination: "Elijah's ministry left a deep impression

upon Israel, and in later times stories such as these in vv.6 and 10ff. grew up about him." The stories referred to are the feeding by the ravens (v.6) and the meal and oil that failed not (vv.10ff.). These are stories which "grew up" about Elijah in "later times," which is simply a way of indicating to the reader that they are not true and are not to be taken seriously. Elisha is compared rather unfavorably with Elijah: "That he was a great man of God who inspired respect and who performed many unusual acts cannot be doubted" (p. 485)—many unusual acts is rather mild praise. But the editors go on to warn us that "we have here the greatest concentration of miracle stories in the Old Testament," which clearly implies that most of them grew up about Elisha in later times as in the case of Elijah. The statement just quoted is from the note on 2 Kgs. ch. 2. This chapter records the taking away of Elijah in the "chariot of fire." All the editors have to say about this uniquely "unusual" event is this: "The mantle of the master falls on his disciple." So we might wonder whether they regard this story as one of the fabulous accretions of the "later time."

Yet in commenting on the great encounter between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, the editors make this comment: "Observe also Elijah's scorn for an impotent god who is no god" (p. 476.) We can imagine the scorn with which Elijah, were he with us today, would view the attempts of the critics and editors to belittle or deny the mighty acts which the God of Israel performed in his day to prove that the gods of the heathen are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Predictive Prophecy

The hostility of the critics to the Supernatural appears nowhere more clearly than in their attitude to predictive prophecy. The sphere of activity of the prophet was defined many years ago by a distinguished critic, A. B. Davidson, in the following significant words: "The prophet is always a man of his own time, and it is always to the people of his own time that he speaks, not to a generation long after, nor to us. And the things of which he speaks will always be things of importance to the people of his own day, whether they be things belonging to their internal life and conduct, or things affecting their external fortunes as a people among other peoples" (*Hastings Bible Dictionary*, iv. 118). It will be noted that this statement greatly restricts even if it does not effectually eliminate the predictive element in prophecy by insisting that the prophet is a man of his own age who speaks to the men of his time of things of importance to them, and that this is "always . . . always . . . always" the case. This must mean that the prophets of Israel were occupied with the present and the near future; and it makes the recognition of the predictive element, in any adequate sense of the word, difficult, if not impossible. It practically means that the predictive element, except in a very restricted sense, is ruled out *ex hypothesi* from Biblical prophecy as defined and understood by the critics. A few examples from the *Study Edition* will illustrate how the critics prove this astonishing theory.

The Blessing of Jacob

According to Gen. 49:1, the blessing recorded in vv. 2-27 was uttered by Jacob; and vv. 28-33 state further that Jacob was then on his death-bed. According to the editors, "The allusions in the poem are to conditions in the period of the Judges, Samuel, and David. The date of the composition, therefore, is probably in the 10th

century B. C." (p. 85). According to the chronology given by the editors in their Concordance (p. 19), David died about 970 B. C., before the *middle* of the 10th century. So a prophecy composed in the 10th century, which dealt with "conditions in the period of the Judges, Samuel, and David," would not need to be prophecy at all, but history disguised as prophecy.

The Prophecy Regarding Josiah

According to 1 Kgs. 13:1f., a prophet appeared to Jeroboam the son of Nebat as he stood by the altar which he had made at Bethel for the calf-worship, "and cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that offer incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee." According to this statement, the prophet, speaking in the presence of Jeroboam, the first king of the Northern Kingdom, named Josiah, one of the last kings of the Southern Kingdom, as the one who should thus signally rebuke and punish Jeroboam's apostasy. This is certainly predictive prophecy 'with a vengeance.' It defies Davidson's dictum and refutes his thrice-repeated "always." So it must be dealt with. The editors accomplish this, at least to some extent, by saying, "A prophet from Judah denounces Jeroboam's sanctuary at Beth-el and foretells its destruction. Since Josiah carried out this destruction, his name became attached to this prediction (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:17)." No proof of this statement is given; and there is none to give. It is simply the inevitable result of the application to Scripture of a theory regarding prophecy which seeks to minimize or ignore the truly predictive element which is such an important feature of it. A general prediction, which simply expressed the prophet's righteous indignation and conviction that the God of Israel must certainly visit this flagrant apostasy with condign punishment might be regarded as consistent with the function of the prophet as understood by the critics. But a prediction which mentions Josiah by name goes much too far. So the offensive words must be stricken from the prediction and treated as an insertion made after the destruction foretold in the prophecy was "carried out."

In this connection it may be noted that the editors avoid the necessity of treating the mention of Cyrus by name in Isa. 44:28; 45:1 as a later insertion by claiming that at ch. 40 "we are transported to a period later than that of Isaiah, and chs. 40-55 are generally assigned to a prophet known as the Second Isaiah who wrote shortly before 539 B.C." (p. 984), the date at which according to the editors "Cyrus, king of Persia takes Babylon" (Concordance, p. 22). Thus there are two simple ways of eliminating the predictive element from prophecy: either *edit* it or *date* it *near* or *after* the event it describes. A third method is to *interpret it away*.

Isaiah's Prophecy against Babylon

A striking example of the way in which the "critical" theory that prophecy is not predictive is established is Isa. 13. The first verse of the chapter is a heading which declares the prophecy which follows to be "The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see." The critics will have it otherwise. So the editors tell us: "This *burden*, or pronouncement of doom, upon Babylon, dates from the time when Media (v.17) was threatening it, in the middle of the sixth century B. C." (p. 945). Since the date of the capture of the city by the Persians is given as 539 B.C. (593 is obviously a

typographical error) this means that the express declaration that Isaiah, who was a contemporary of Hezekiah, uttered this prophecy 150 years or more before the fall of Babylon is to be set aside in favor of a view which dates it only about a dozen years before this epochal event and attributes it to an unknown prophet who lived so close to the event he described that he may well have required no supernatural guidance at all to foresee an event which was then so plainly written on the program of things to come.

Daniel the Prophet

The Book of Daniel contains in its dozen chapters a 'concentration of miracle stories' which might compare favorably with the Elijah-Elisha group. It also contains a series of prophecies most of which are regarded by all believers in predictive prophecy as finding, or still to find, their fulfillment in events lying far beyond the time of Daniel. Yet we are told expressly that these miraculous events happened to Daniel or his companions and that the prophecies or prophetic visions were all either revealed to him or interpreted by him. It is a common place of Criticism that the Book of Daniel is an "apocalypse," which is another way of saying that it is pseudo-prophecy, that its miraculous events and its amazing predictions are the imaginings of later times, which like the non-canonical apocalypses were attributed to some ancient hero, in this instance to the almost mythical Daniel of the time of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus. Thus the editors tell us: "The simplest explanation seems to be that the author is making use of a common practice of apocalyptic writers: a revelation is attributed to an ancient notable in order that it may carry weight with the readers for whom it is intended." And the further statement is made: "Although it cannot be definitely demonstrated, it is probable that the book is a work of the age of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.) and may be dated about 168 B.C." (p. 1236).

One of the most notable of the prophecies "attributed" to Daniel is the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (ch. 9). According to the editors "the writer is following no exact chronology from 538 to the Maccabean period." This statement is necessary because, if the 62 weeks or 434 years begin as the editors think they should in 538, they extend to 104 B.C. which is much too late to fit in with their interpretation. The words of v.26, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off," receive the following significant explanation: "v.26, *Messiah*, better, 'an anointed one' (cf. v.25) probably the high priest Onias III, who was murdered in Antioch about 171 B.C." The editors apparently regard the 70th week as beginning shortly before the murder for they tell us that the second half of this week "corresponds closely to the three years (168-165 B.C.) during which the Temple suffered sacrilege under Antiochus." This carries us about three years beyond 168 B.C., which the editors give as the approximate date of Daniel. We do not accept this "Maccabean" interpretation of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks as correct. It conflicts, as the editors admit, with any consistent interpretation of the passage. But what we are concerned to point out is that the date for the Book of Daniel given by the editors is almost exactly the same as their date for the *fulfillment* of this apocalypse or pseudo-prophecy. In other words, the writer or compiler or editor of Daniel, wrote this *prophecy* of the Seventy Weeks just about the time at which it was *fulfilled*! In this way the predictive element is all but completely eliminated from the predictions of Daniel the prophet.

It should be obvious to any one that the main reason for the treatment of Daniel as a late apocalypse is to eliminate, i.e., discredit, the supernatural element which is so prominent in it. If the book is late, its miracles can be treated with the same scepticism as the miracles attributed to Elijah and Elisha in Kings. If all of the predictions of the book were written about the time that their so-called fulfillment took place, or even after it, the theory of prophecy enunciated by Davidson is brilliantly vindicated. The critics advance many arguments in favor of the late date of Daniel. But the main reason for the late date is the one we have indicated. That this is so appears quite clearly from the following statement of S. R. Driver, who was a leader among the critics a generation ago and whose writings are still treated by them with profound respect. Driver was very positive that "a number of independent considerations, including some of great cogency" (he made great use of the argument from language) favor the conclusion that "the Book of Daniel was not written earlier than c. 300 B.C." But he made this significant statement: "More than this can scarcely, in the present state of our knowledge, be affirmed *categorically*, except by those who deny the possibility of predictive prophecy" (*Introd. to the Literature of the OT* (1910), p. 509). However much these other considerations may weigh with the editors, their general attitude to miracle and prophecy indicates that it is as a means to the elimination of the Supernatural that the late dating of the Book of Daniel makes its strongest appeal to them.

The Immanuel Prophecy

More significant still is the treatment by the editors of Isa. 7:14f., "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This is the great messianic promise which Matthew tells us was "fulfilled" in the birth and naming of Jesus Christ. The word "virgin" (*almah*) is important. It implies that the one so described has not "known a man." Consequently, for a virgin to be with child implies a supernatural conception. It has found expression in the familiar words of the Apostles' Creed, "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary." Is this rendering justified? The editors tell us: "v.14 *virgin*. The Hebrew word means a young woman old enough for marriage." (p. 936). What is the reason and the warrant for this explanation? Since every normal "young woman old enough for marriage" is presumably capable of motherhood and since the editors state that she will bear a child "nine months hence," the implication is that the young woman referred to is married, or ought to be, and that the birth of her child will be entirely in accord with the laws of life which govern "ordinary generation." Consequently, the correct rendering of this word is of great importance. Can it mean "virgin"? That it can is proved by its use in Gen. 24:43 where Rebekah, who has been described in vs. 16 as "a virgin (*bethulah*), neither had any man known her," is called "a virgin" (*almah*), no explanatory phrase being added. This indicates clearly that *almah* is a virtual synonym of *bethulah*. Of these two words, both of which AV renders by "virgin," *bethulah* occurs frequently, *almah* only a few times. That both of these words were used, like Greek *parthenos* and Latin *virgo*, of an unmarried woman, cannot be denied. It is quite true that we cannot affirm that they could not be and never were used in a broader sense. It is difficult if not impossible to prove a universal negative regarding the use of any word. Even words of very precise meaning are sometimes used broadly and

inaccurately. But it is undeniable that *almah* can be used and is used of a woman who is a *virgin*; and that fact is of prime importance in interpreting this prophecy. What is the reason then for rejecting the rendering "*virgin*"? The answer is to be found in the words of the editors: "The prediction is that nine months hence a mother will call her newborn son Immanuel ('God is with Us') as an expression of faith that God is with his people to save them." There is no hint of a larger and deeper meaning. The editors do not even suggest that the prophecy may be Messianic. It is to be fulfilled and completely fulfilled within nine months!

We turn to the New Testament, where Matthew (1:22f.) quotes the prophecy of Isa. 7:14 as *fulfilled* in the birth and naming of Jesus. The word in the Greek for "*virgin*" is *parthenos*. No one can deny that *parthenos* is correctly rendered by "*virgin*." So the editors remind us that "The Hebrew word means 'young woman'" and they add, "the Greek translation is here followed," which seems clearly intended to suggest to the reader that the Greek has added a definiteness of meaning which is not in the original Hebrew. Then they go on to say, "The Isaiah verse originally spoken of a birth in Isaiah's day, is here applied to Jesus' birth" (p. 26). Two things are to be noted about this statement. It tells us that what we are wont to call the Immanuel prophecy was "originally spoken of a birth in Isaiah's day." This means that any fulfillment of Isaiah's words came about as we have seen "nine months" after the prophecy was uttered. It also tells us that in Matthew this prophecy is "applied to Jesus' birth." The word "applied" is to be carefully noted. It means something quite different from "fulfilled." It suggests that Matthew discovered an interesting analogy between the birth of Jesus in the days of Herod and the birth of Immanuel in the days of Hezekiah. The analogy was simply in the *naming* of the child as expressive of the faith of the mother. And if the birth which took place in Isaiah's day was entirely according to the usual course of nature, the "application" of it made by Matthew would naturally favor the rejection of the Virgin Birth of Mary's child. Thus we find the editors asserting that Matthew "is pre-eminently the Gospel of fulfillment" (p. 21) and at the same time insisting that the *fulfillment* recorded in 1:22f. was an *application*.

It is to be noted that the editors have told us in commenting on vv. 18-25, "Jesus Christ was not merely a man who earned divine recognition. His birth was the result of the creative act of the living God, who by his Spirit thus acted to give salvation to his people (v. 21)." Since this might be taken to mean that the editors believe the birth of Jesus was not by "ordinary generation," the sentence which immediately follows should not be overlooked: "On any view of the birth of Jesus, this conviction of God's purposeful working is basic." What does this mean if not that God's purposeful working can be recognized in a natural birth to "a young woman old enough for marriage," quite as well as in a supernatural birth to a woman who was a *virgin*? It clearly implies that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, which is obviously not acceptable to the editors, ought not to be insisted upon or made an article of faith. This was demanded by Dr. Fosdick twenty-five years ago; and a statement to that effect was made a part of the Auburn Affirmation.

The Name of Messiah

Since the editors do not regard the Immanuel Prophecy as Messianic, it is instructive to turn to their treatment of the words: "And His name shall be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace" (Isa. 9:6). That these words, or groups of words, all constitute titles of the Messiah, may be properly called the evangelical Protestant interpretation; and it has sung itself into the hearts of multitudes to the majestic music of Handel's Messiah. In contrast to their attitude to the Immanuel Prophecy, the editors speak of this prophecy as Messianic. They tell us: "Freedom and peace will prevail in the new day. v. 6. The new day dawns at the birth of the Messiah" (p. 939). Then they go on to say: "The name given him may be translated, 'A wonderful counsellor is the mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace.'" The reader will note that this rendering makes every one of these titles belong, not to the Messiah, but to God. And to make this clear the editors add: "The Messiah's name describes the nature of the God for whom he is to rule"—not *his own* nature, but the nature of *the God for whom he is to rule!* It should be noted, therefore, that the editors have nothing to say in support of the rendering which they suggest except the words "may be translated." They are of course, aware that they are proposing a novel and very questionable rendering which has made little or no appeal to Christian commentators, whether conservative or critical.* They are also aware that it has nothing to commend it except the fact that while admitting the Messianic reference of the passage, it denies to the Messiah every one of the grand and majestic titles the Christian Church has for centuries delighted to ascribe to Him, having learned them from the lips of one who centuries before Messiah's coming "saw his glory and spake of him."

The Cleansings of the Temple

It would seem to be only natural to expect that all who profess to believe that the Bible is in any adequate sense of the words, the Word of God, would be not only willing but eager to accept that interpretation of any of its statements which does not conflict with statements made elsewhere in the Bible, instead of insisting on adopting one that does. But it has been pointed out above that one of the main characteristics of the higher criticism is that those who adopt this method of interpretation are constantly in search for differences and contradictions. A striking illustration of this is the *two* cleansings of the temple by Jesus. John records a cleansing (2:12-22) which took place very early in Jesus' ministry. The act was both natural and highly significant (Mal. 3:1). It was a "sign" of His Messiahship. His reference to the temple as "my Father's house" indicates this. But there is no evidence that this act had any lasting effect. Consequently, the same reason for a second cleansing may well have existed at the close of His ministry as at the beginning. All three of the Synoptists record such a cleansing (Mt. 21:12-13; Mk. 11:15-18; Lk. 19:46-47). Their failure to mention the first cleansing may be accounted for by the fact that they do not record any of the visits of Jesus to Jerusalem except the last at which He suffered. And John's silence regarding the second cleansing may be simply due to the fact that, his Gospel being written after the Synoptics, he saw no necessity of referring to an event recorded by all three.

It is also to be noted that there are important differences between the two accounts. John records Jesus'

*It is very similar to the rendering in the Version published by The Jewish Publication Society of America (1917, 1944), "Wonderful in counsel is God the mighty, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace," which likewise makes all of these exalted epithets apply to God and not to the Messiah.

words, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This statement is not mentioned by the Synoptists. According to their account, Jesus simply appealed to the words of the prophets: to Isaiah's words, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (56:7), to which He adds Jeremiah's terrible description of what it had already in his day virtually become, "a den of robbers" (Jer. 7:11). The words recorded by John, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," are especially significant. They occasioned, John tells us, indignant protest at the time. Yet the Synoptists do not mention them in connection with the cleansing which they record. But both Matthew (26:61) and Mark (14:58) tell us that when Jesus was on trial before the Sanhedrin, and after many false witnesses had testified against Him, finally two came who testified to the blasphemy against the temple which is recorded only by John. If this blasphemy had been uttered less than a week before the trial, we should expect that it would have been fresh in the minds of all present. The way it is introduced certainly suggests that an incident was being recalled which had happened so long ago that most of those who had witnessed it or heard about it had forgotten it. This favors the view that there were two cleansings, the one quite recent, the other somewhat remote and well-nigh forgotten.

The editors view the matter quite differently. In commenting on John's account, they tell us: "A serious difficulty arises in connection with this incident, in as much as the Synoptic Gospels place it at the end of Jesus' ministry. The most likely explanation is that John was not concerned with strict chronological sequence. It was rather the importance of this event as a 'sign' which led him to set it toward the forefront of his Gospel" (p. 172). As an example of obscurantism and dogmatism this statement would be hard to surpass. Hosts of commentators and harmonists have held and hold today that there were *two* cleansings. The editors ignore this widely, we may say generally, accepted interpretation completely. They assume without offering any proof that there was and could have been only one cleansing. And in order to solve the "serious difficulty" which results from this assertion, the fact that John and the Synoptists do not agree as to the *time* when this *one* cleansing took place, they assert that John was not interested in "chronological sequence" and did not hesitate to place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry an incident which properly belonged at its close.

The dogmatism of the above statement might be excusable, if the editors could support it by strong and conclusive evidence. It is, of course, a well known fact that negative critics as a rule have a very low opinion of the trustworthiness of John's Gospel. In this they agree with the Unitarians to whom this Gospel is especially offensive. It may have high *religious value*, they tell us, but its statements are not to be accepted as factually correct! But it is to be noted that at one point, the editors are apparently willing to accept John's statements as historically correct. John is the only one of the four Evangelists who gives us at all definite information as to the length of Jesus' ministry. In this respect he is the most chronological of the four. He tells of three passovers (2:13; 6:4; 12:1) and perhaps mentions a fourth (5:1). The Synoptists mention only the last, confining themselves to the account of Jesus' ministry outside of Jerusalem, until the time was come that He should be delivered up to be crucified. So it is John's Gospel which is the basis for the view that Jesus' ministry covered a period of two or three years. And John,

who mentions the three or four passovers which form the basis of this chronology, places the cleansing of the temple which he records at the time of the first of them. According to the statements in their Chronology (p. 23), the editors favor the view that the ministry of Jesus covered about three years (A.D. 27-30). This they derive from John's chronological sequence. But they reject his statement that it was at the first of these passovers that Jesus cleansed the temple. This means that they are prepared to accept just as much of his evidence as suits them and to reject the rest.

Another point is to be noted in this connection. John does not merely assign this cleansing to the first of the passovers which he records; he dates it, at least approximately, by the words which he quotes from the lips of Jesus' enemies: "Forty and six years was this temple in building." Counting from the 18th year of Herod, this gives us the date A.D. 27 for the first of the passovers. If, as many scholars hold, the Crucifixion was in A.D. 30, this involves a ministry of three years, which is based primarily on John's chronology. The editors apparently regard this chronology as probably correct (Concordance, p. 23). They even appeal to John 2:20 in support of the date A.D. 27. Yet they tell us that "The most likely explanation is that John was not concerned with strict chronological sequence. It was rather the importance of the event as a 'sign' which led him to set it toward the forefront of his Gospel." They make no comment on the significant fact that John connects the cleansing with the first of the passovers which he mentions. They make no comment on the mention of the "forty and six years." For these things indicate very clearly that John was interested in "strict chronological sequence," more so than the other Evangelists. But they make use of both of these important data when it comes to determining the chronology for the time and length of Jesus' ministry. The inconsistency of their method is only matched by its dogmatism!

The Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem

Since Matthew refers more frequently to the fulfillment of prophecy than does any other of the Evangelists, it is only natural that those who hold the "critical" theory regarding prophecy should view his frequent appeals to its "fulfillment" with distaste and suspicion. We have seen that the editors are careful to tell us that he "applied" Isaiah's prophecy of the Virgin Birth, not that it found its fulfillment in it. In the "Introduction to Matthew," the editors deem it necessary to inform their readers that there were "dangers in 'Matthew's' method and it is important that these should be clearly recognized" (p. 24). A danger in his treatment of prophecy is declared to be "that in seeking to point out particular aspects of fulfillment, he would work in too literalistic a fashion. A somewhat labored reference to fulfillment occurs in ch. 21:1-7; the account clearly differs from the other three Gospels in saying that Jesus sent for *two* animals, and that garments were placed on *both* and that Jesus sat upon them. This alteration in the narrative is due to the fact that the Old Testament passage which the author quotes was written in poetic parallelism and referred to the ass in both lines. But the author presents the picture of Jesus fulfilling the prophecy in the most literal way" (p. 24). According to this statement the author of the Gospel made two rather serious mistakes, if indeed we may call the second merely a *mistake*. The first was that he misunderstood the meaning of the prophecy in Zech. 9:9. The second was that he made an "alteration" in the traditional story

of the triumphal entry in order to make the fulfillment agree with what he mistakenly supposed to be the meaning of the prediction. We shall examine these charges in reverse order.

Matthew the Historian. If, as early tradition unanimously affirms, Matthew the apostle was the author of the Gospel that bears his name, the account that he gives us of the triumphal entry may be regarded as in all probability the account of an eye-witness. The other eye-witness was John. Both Matthew and John refer to Zechariah's prophecy. John quotes it in an abridged form and mentions only one animal, which he calls "a young ass" (*onarion*), or ass's "colt" (*polos*). Matthew quotes the prophecy more fully and speaks definitely of two animals, the ass (*onos*) and her colt (*polos*). Mark and Luke make no reference to the prophecy, but like John mention only one animal, the colt (*polos*). Have we then a conflict in testimony between two eyewitnesses, one of whom is corroborated by other testimony, while the other is not? It would be easy to draw this conclusion. But it is to be remembered that it often happens that testimony which seems to be conflicting is really in fundamental agreement.

John, as we have seen, refers to only one animal. We note also that he says nothing about the way in which the "colt" was secured. He simply says: "And Jesus, having found a young ass, sat thereon." The Synop- tists are more specific. They tell us how Jesus "found" the colt on which He rode into the city. The three accounts are quite similar. But there is a notable difference. Mark and Luke state that the two disciples were told that they would find a colt tied "whereon no man ever yet sat." How were they to know that the colt they were to find had never been ridden? For the answer to this natural question we turn to Matthew, where the instructions given to the disciples are: "straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt (*polos*) with her." Putting these statements together, the inference seems to be justified that the disciples were expected to be attracted to the colt and to infer that the colt was unbroken and untrained from the fact that it was still with its mother. Mark and Luke state that the disciples found the colt tethered and that they loosed it; but Matthew does not deem it necessary to mention this fact, but merely says that the ass was tethered and the colt was with her, as if to make it clear that the colt, whether tethered or not, would not leave its mother. This explains the bringing of both animals to Jesus. It was the skittish, timid, unbroken colt that was wanted. But it would not come by itself. So both animals were brought, the mother ass and the colt that would not leave her side. So when the animals came, the disciples cast their garments over both, over the colt and over the mother ass from which it was inseparable. Thus it came to pass that it was seated upon the garments of his disciples and mounted on the colt that the King entered His royal city. That the animal on which he sat was only a colt was obvious. But the presence of the mother with the colt and the fact that they were inseparable served to emphasize the fact that the animal was young, "a colt, the son of an ass" (beast of burden). If we may assume that Jesus actually sat only on the colt, but that the garments were thrown over both animals, and that Mark, Luke, and John mention only the colt because it was the animal on which Jesus actually rode, there is no conflict between the two accounts. It was the colt that was wanted. It was the colt upon which Jesus rode into Jerusalem. The presence of the mother was in a sense only a means to an end, a detail in the picture which

three of the Evangelists ignore, but in which Matthew sees a special meaning.

Matthew the Interpreter of Prophecy. The other charge that is brought against Matthew by the editors is that he misunderstood the prophecy which he held to be fulfilled in this significant event, that he thought Zechariah referred to two animals, while in fact the prophet mentions only one. The charge is based on the words:

"Lowly and riding upon an ass

And upon a colt the foal of an ass."

We are told that Matthew failed to recognize that in these words of prophecy the parallelism is synonymous, that the ass of the first line and the colt of the second are one and the same. This may seem to be a simple and natural explanation. But there are serious objections to it. The first is the general one arising from the fact that synonymous parallelism is so marked a feature of Hebrew poetry and appears so often in elevated prose and especially in prophecy, which frequently is poetic in form, that Matthew would have had to be a very stupid and ignorant Jew had he failed to recognize that this might be the case here and that ass and colt might be the same animal.

The second objection is that the Hebrew makes it quite plain that only one animal is referred to. A more accurate rendering of the Hebrew than that given in the A.V. would be:

"Lowly and riding upon a he-ass

And/even upon a colt the son of she-asses."

In Hebrew the words for "he-ass" and "she-ass" are quite different. Ordinarily in Hebrew the feminine is distinguished from the masculine only by the ending, the root and formation being the same. But in some cases the words for the male and the female are from entirely different roots. Such is the case here. And the distinction which appears here is found also in the Aramaic Targum. Consequently, if different animals were referred to in the two lines of the prophecy, they would be a he-ass and a colt. So the editors accuse Matthew not only of thinking that two different animals are referred to in the two parallel lines of the prophecy but of failing to recognize that the first was a male and not a female animal. But it is the editors and not Matthew who are guilty of the mistake which they charge to Matthew. For Matthew makes it quite plain that the animal which accompanied the colt was a she-ass (note the "with her" in vv. 2 and 7). Consequently, the two animals which Matthew finds in the prophecy are both mentioned in the second line, "a colt, the son of she-asses." The colt was the son of she-asses and it was accompanied by the she-ass which was its mother. In this sense and in this sense only the prophecy refers to two animals; and it is only in this sense that Matthew so interprets it; and he interprets it correctly. He does not misinterpret the prophecy, nor does he distort the history. But he sees in the strangely unique way in which the Son of David entered His royal city a singularly impressive fulfillment of the words of the ancient prophet. And the fact that all four Evangelists are at pains to make it clear to us that this manner of entering the city was brought about at the direction and by the express command of Him who said, "the scripture cannot be broken," and whose entire earthly life was in a unique sense the fulfillment of prophecy, should dispose the Christian to take the same delight which Matthew did in such striking examples of the fulfillment of prophecy as those which he has recorded in his Gospel. It is because the editors, instead of making an effort to

harmonize the statements of the Evangelists with one another and with the words of Zechariah, do not hesitate to accuse Matthew of ignorance and stupidity in the interpretation of prophecy and of distorting the facts of history to make them agree with his mistaken view of prophecy that it has seemed necessary to discuss this subject at such length.

Conclusion

The aim of this examination of *The Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible* has been to make clear to the reader the vitally important difference between the *Biblical* and the *Critical* attitudes toward the Bible, and to establish the fact that the *Study Edition* is definitely critical, at times even radically so. A number of examples have been given. The number might easily be increased. But the important point in estimating the value of the *Study Edition* is not the question as to how much of the Bible the editors believe and how much they reject, how much they take in its clear and obvious sense and how much they interpret to mean something quite different from what it definitely states. The most important point is that they adopt an *attitude* to the Bible which cannot fail to undermine or destroy its authority and trustworthiness. An intelligent reader does not need to be told very many times that he is not to believe what the Bible plainly states, in order to get the impression that, if the editors are right, there is little or nothing in the Bible that he can be *absolutely sure of*. The editors are greatly concerned because of the widely prevalent ignorance of the Bible. Do they really believe that the way to get people interested in studying the Bible is to tell them again and again that they must not believe what it says? Do they really expect intelligent people to believe that an ancient Book which must be drastically edited, expurgated, and reconstructed in order to make it acceptable to its modern critics really speaks or can speak with the authority of God? It is hard to see how they can believe this. But apparently they do.

In view of this strangely inconsistent attitude of the editors to the Bible—their assertion that it is the Word of God and their treatment of it as a very fallible word of *men*—it is important to observe that the same inconsistency necessarily appears in their attitude to the Standards of that Church of which most of them are members. Nine of the eleven editors of the *Study Edition* are ministers in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. One of the nine is editor-in-chief of the New Curriculum. In *A Statement Regarding the New Curriculum* which was issued anonymously a few months ago but for which he is certainly mainly if not wholly responsible, the claim is made that in adopting the principles and methods of the New Curriculum, The Board of Christian Education “obeys an instruction from the General Assembly of 1939 ‘to bring the study of Biblical materials abreast of the best scholarship in the field of the Old Testament and the New Testament.’” The writer goes on to say, “The Board believes that the Church in issuing such a directive has been loyal to its standards.” It will be noted that the writer begs the whole question by assuming that the “best scholarship” is and must be “critical,” and that the General Assembly gave the Board a directive to introduce the so-called ‘assured results of criticism’ into the teaching of the Bible in the Presbyterian Church. We do not for one moment believe that the majority of the commissioners to the Assembly who voted for the report which contained this directive had any such thought in mind. The

critics are accustomed to claim that all real scholars agree with them and accept their critical views. The way they prove this is by making the acceptance of their views the test of the “best scholarship.”

The other point which concerns us is the question of loyalty to the Standards. We do not for one moment admit that the Assembly could have given such a directive as the *Statement* claims was given to the Board of Christian Education and have been “loyal to its standards” in doing so. We saw at the outset that it is the Biblical and not the Critical view of the Bible which is set forth in the *Westminster Confession*. From this it follows that if the editors are to defend their claim that the Critical view of the Bible is in accord with the Standards, they must inevitably treat the Standards which set forth “the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures” in the same way as they treat the Bible upon which these Standards rest and from which they derive their sole and entire authority. The meaning of the words, “By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaketh therein,” seems to be perfectly plain. It is that the Christian accepts the Bible as the Word of God not on any *human* authority but on the authority of *God Himself*. But if the critical method of interpreting the Bible is, as the author of the *Statement* asserts, loyal to the Standards of our Church, if it is in full accord with the particularly pertinent statement regarding the Christian’s attitude to the Bible that has just been requoted, then this statement of the *Confession*, like many statements of the Bible such as have been discussed above, must be revised and edited, according to approved critical methods, to read somewhat as follows: “The Christian believeth to be true whatsoever the critics tell him the Bible ought to say and mean. For, only those statements in the Bible can be accepted as truly the Word of God, which agree with or can be brought into harmony with the best critical scholarship.” Or, to put it slightly differently: “Where the Bible and the critics of the Bible disagree, the intelligent Christian will believe the critics and disbelieve the Bible.” As applied to the *Study Edition*, this means that the Christian who wishes to be abreast of the “best scholarship,” when he finds the explanatory notes of the editors flatly contradicting the statements of the Biblical text, will accept what the notes say and reject what the Bible says. If this is loyalty to the Standard, how would the editors define disloyalty?

But the question which most vitally concerns the great body of Presbyterians for whom the *New Curriculum* and the *Study Edition* have been prepared, is not whether those who are responsible for these materials believe themselves to be loyal to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The question Presbyterians everywhere must face is whether they themselves believe that by any stretch of the imagination a teaching which does not hesitate to contradict the Bible and to empty precious passages of their most precious meaning can be called *loyal* to the Bible and to the Standards of our beloved Church; and whether they are willing to accept and use materials which do this. The issue is clear-cut. The Board of Christian Education and the Committee on the New Curriculum are clearly determined to make the higher critical interpretation of the Bible *official* in our Church. Shall we permit this? Shall we not rather insist that all the materials for Bible study published by or with the authority of the Boards and Agencies of our Church be, not critical of the Bible, but strictly and wholeheartedly *Biblical*?

Some Test Questions

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The Westminster Press, the publishing house of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., has just issued a monumental edition of the King James version of the Bible with footnotes, maps, introductions, and a concordance. This extensive work has been done by a group of prominent scholars in which Presbyterian theological professors predominate. We have in mind to examine this book from three aspects, or to ask three questions about it.

1. What Think Ye Of Christ? The most significant question about any Christian book is its doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. Does the Westminster Bible express itself adequately about Christ, does it give Him all the glory which God has ascribed to Him in His Word?

The opening essay, "God Has Spoken," ably recognizes Christ as the focus of God's saving purpose, the starting point and the supreme key to the interpretation of Scripture. Here He is the Word of God incarnate, the risen Christ, the Son of God who was perfectly one with the Father. Is the Christological emphasis of this introductory essay adequately supported by the detailed comment?

Christ as God: According to the King James Version, Christ is described as God over all blessed forevermore (Romans 9:5) and as God whose blood purchased the Church (Acts 20:28). This translation is strongly supported by such a New Testament scholar as Professor Ethelbert Stauffer of Bonn (*Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 1947, pp. 94, 263, 224). The Westminster Study Edition, however, offers two interpretations for each of these texts, one of which in each case takes the term God away from Christ. There are three passages in the Greek text of the New Testament which apply the term God to Christ that the King James translators did not recognize. The Westminster Bible calls attention to one of these (Titus 2:13), it fails to do so in 2 Peter 1:1 and 2 Thess. 1:12 where the grammar equally requires the ascription of God to Christ. The Westminster comment is that the oldest texts do not call Christ God in I Tim. 3:16, but it fails to mention the fact that the best manuscripts do call Him God in John 1:18.

The Westminster Edition regularly speaks as if the noun God ascribed to the Word in John 1:1 were merely the adjective divine. (pp. 164, 168, Concordance 101). On the contrary, Stauffer finds Christ presented in John 1 as whole, true God and whole, true man. "The God of the NT descends from His heaven, He seeks men out in their world, He deals with them there where they live." (pp. 265, 99). And Professor Oscar Cullman, of Paris and Basel, interprets the Prologue thus: "The Word, the Logos, is God in His revealing acts," both those of creation and those of redemption: (*Christus und Die Zeit*," pp. 19-20). Cullman carries this same Christology into his interpretation of I Cor. 8:4-6 (*ibid* p. 21, cf. p. 99), but the Westminster Edition permits itself to describe Christ here and elsewhere as "God's agent in creation and providence" (pp. 299, 363). Bishop Moule has said, "A Saviour not quite God is a bridge broken at the farther end." For an exegesis showing that both the "one God the Father" and the "one Lord Jesus

Christ" of verse 6 are included in or subsist in the "no God but one" of verse 4 see *Who say ye that I am?* (Eerdman's, 1949, pp. 139-144). While the Westminster Edition interprets Christ as "God's agent in making all things" in the great Christological passage in Colossians, Dr. H. W. Clark finds this passage testifying that "Christ as God had redeemed, and Christ as God had created too." (*The Cross and the Eternal Order*, p. 147).

The Westminster Edition places a limiting interpretation upon Thomas' great confession to Christ as given in John 20:28, thus: "In worship and adoration Jesus is rightly addressed as **my God**." Now Thomas' affirmation is addressed to Christ in the vocative case. But there is no hint that such address is appropriate only in worship, nor any indication that Jesus may be spoken of as God only in address. John starts by affirming that Christ, the Word, is eternal God, God only begotten (1:1, 18); he shows that despite the unbelief of the Jews He is the **Lord** high and lifted up whom Isaiah saw in the Temple (Isa. 6; Jn. 12:41); and he concludes with the most dubious of the disciples answering and saying unto Jesus: "My Lord and my God." On the basis of John, as of other Scriptures, the Church confesses Christ as God in her creeds, teaches Christ as God in her theology and her catechetics, directs believers to commit themselves to Him as God their Saviour, as well as adores Him as God in her worship . . . because He is God. (cf. I John 5:20).

Isaiah 9:6 and Psalm 45:6 are the two texts which expressly describe the Messiah as God used by Warfield in "The Divine Messiah in the Old Testament" (*Christology and Criticism*, pp. 3-49). Our Churches use both these passages as proof texts to support our teaching that Christ is God, Larger Catechism, answer II. The Westminster notes deflect the application of God to Christ in both these texts. The Church has followed Matthew (1:22-23) in interpreting the sign which the Lord Himself gave to Ahaz of the virgin-born Immanuel as fulfilled in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. But the Westminster Edition explains this prophecy (Isaiah 7:14) as a mere prediction that nine months after the giving of the sign to Ahaz some mother will name her new-born child Immanuel.

Christ One With The Father: In John 10:30 Jesus says: "I and My Father are one." The Westminster comment reads: "Jesus and His Father **are one** in their love and care for the sheep." Now A. Ritschl holds that Christ and the Father are one in their working rather than one in essence. Both Westcott interprets this text as teaching one essence, and O. Cullman and E. Stauffer (*op. cit.*, p. 102) find here a full unity with God.

Christ The Alpha And The Omega: In Revelation 22:12-13 Christ is speaking as the Westminster edition recognizes. The thirteenth verse reads, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." But the Westminster comment is, "Verse 13 Christ speaks (as in chapters 1:17; 2:8; cf. chapters 1:8; 21:6) of God (cf. Isa. 44:6; 48:12)." Now the Westminster Bible is right in saying that the one called

Alpha and Omega in 1:8 and 21:6 is God. However, Kittel in *Theol. Woerterbuch z. NT.* I. 1 applies Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 21:13 to Christ as does Stauffer, (*op. cit.* pp. 120, 226), and Lohmeyer, (*Hb.z.NT.* XVI:11, 17, 22, 176). Since all of these modern writers—the Westminster scholars, Kittel, Stauffer and Lohmeyer—agree that Rev. 22:13; 1:17; 2:8 stand together, the case against the Westminster group and in favor of the continental scholars is made by the references in 1:17 and 2:8, as well as by the natural exegesis of 22:13. For the one who is described as the first and the last is the one who died and lived again, that is, Jesus Christ.

The Worship of Jesus: Referring to the disciples after the Ascension, the Westminster edition has a sentence that conveys a disconcerting impression (Luke 24:50f.). We quote it in its context: "Probably and carried up into heaven (Verse 51) and worshipped Him, and (Verse 52) are to be omitted as added later. Verse 53. The disciples continue to worship as good Jews, and their first task is to invite the Jews to believe in and follow the risen Christ. Christianity is the fulfillment of true Judaism."

All the Revisers (ERV, ASV, and RSV) retain **worshipped Him** and in their text and relegate to their margins the omission which occurs in the Western text. The sentence, "the disciples continue to worship as good Jews," in the context of this omission leaves the impression that the disciples did not worship Jesus. "Good Jews" did not. Now Matthew twice records the disciples worshipping the risen Christ, and according to I Cor. 1:2, the saints are all those in every place who call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Acts 1:24 the disciples pray to the Lord for guidance in filling the vacancy in the Twelve, and in Acts 2:21 they invite men to call upon the Name of the Lord in order to be saved. The Expositor's Greek Testament refers both these passages to Christ, but the Westminster Edition ascribes them to God.

The Epistles frequently coordinate Christ and the Father as distinct and yet as conjoined sources of grace and blessing. The writer has noted four places in which the Westminster Edition comments on such passages. In I Tim. 1:1-2 it recognizes the conjoint position, but in the three other places (Gal. 1:1, Eph. 1:1 and 2 Peter 1:2) it reduces the coordination of the Son with the Father to a subordination. In their writings *On the Holy Spirit* the Great Cappadocians protested against such subordinationism and showed that the Son and the Spirit are connumerated and not merely subnumerated. We not only pray to the Father through Christ as the Mediator, we also pray to the Lord Jesus Christ and to God the Father for grace and peace.

The reviewer has written in defense of "the Worship of Jesus" in His *Our Lord* and notes that Stauffer (*op. cit.* p. 233) supports this position. Professor O. Cullmann, *Le Culte dans l'Eglise primitive* (Cf. also his *Christus und die Zeit*, p. 137 and K. G. Kuhn in *Th. Wb. z. NT.* IV. 470-475) sets forth the contrast between the worship of the primitive community centering in Christ and praying Him to come (Maranatha) and the worship of the good (non-Christian) Jews.

2. How Protestant Is The Book? The Westminster Bible is being advertised as a book maintaining a truly Protestant and evangelical viewpoint. The opening article is admirable in the emphasis it places upon the deeds of God. We are not saved by general truths but by the intervention of God—by the advent of Christ and the events of His acts for our salvation. But again, is

this general statement implement by the specific comments?

Romans 3:21-26 is the acropolis of the Christian faith because it weaves together the three-fold presentation of Christ's work for us, as redemption, as propitiation and as legal substitute. T. W. Manson (*Jesus the Messiah*, p. 185) shows that the terms "substitute" and "propitiation" were put together in an earlier writing, 4 Macc. 17:21-22. Paul speaks of the wrath of God and of Christ delivering us from this wrath in Rom. 1:18, 2:5, 5:9; I Thess. 1:10. Yet the Westminster comment first reduces propitiation to expiation and then expiation to a means whereby sin is forgiven. Luther and Calvin presented a Protestant doctrine of propitiation without such reductions.

For the Protestant, faith is the instrument of apprehending Christ, while the basis of salvation is what Christ did for us—His enduring our penalty, His obedience, His righteousness. Yet the Westminster Bible not only speaks of a salvation **based on faith** in Christ, it even says: "Here reference is to the sinner as considered righteous, forgiven, on the basis of faith," p. 270.

The Westminster notes on such key passages as Rom. 5:12-21; 8:4; 10:4; I Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:16-21; Phil. 3:9; 2 Peter 1:1 present Christ as delivering one from judgment and bringing him into life that the believer may attain to a new life of "real righteousness" for himself by dedication to the risen Christ. Calvin dismissed as Osianirian or Roman Catholic the claim that man produces "real righteousness" by his own works and instead made his own the words of the Apostle: "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (*Institutes* III.xi.11). One looks in vain for a clear statement that the sinner is righteous by the imputation (transfer) to him of the righteousness, the obedience of Christ such as one finds in Luther's statement of the argument of Galatians, in Calvin's *Institutes*, *in loco*, in the Westminster Confession, Chapter 11 (cf. l. c. 70-73), the communion service of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and in Buchanan or Boehl on *Justification*. Yet this historic Protestant doctrine has been preached in our day by men abreast of modern knowledge such as Lloyd Jones of London, John Macleod of Edinburgh, Barth and Thurneysen of Basel, P. Maury of Paris, M. Niemoeller and Paul Althaus of Germany, Joseph Hromadka of Prague, Walter Maier of St. Louis (cf. also Stauffer *op. cit.* pp. 125-6, 273, 470) and Gaugler (*Der Brief an die Roemer*, 1947). Is the doctrine set forth in the Westminster Study Bible Reformation Protestantism or is it Evangelical Arminianism?

3. Do the Higher Critical Positions Taken In This Edition Express "What The Church Believes About The Bible?" The Westminster Study Bible offers to give the Church "some share in the gains that the new knowledge and the new methods have made available." It is advertised to give to "the modern reader" "the discoveries of modern research in history and archaeology." From such statements one might infer that the editors had access to new information which had not been available or had not been used by those who have come to conclusions other than those presented in the Westminster Bible.

Now there are many helpful and suggestive thoughts found in this careful work. We rejoice in its insistence upon the fact that God has spoken, that the Bible is the record of God's revelation to man. We are happy to note this emphasis side by side with the statement of

"advanced" higher critical positions and are glad to acclaim this emphasis as what the Church believes about the Bible. Our Confession of Faith says that God is the Author of Holy Scriptures and that they are "the Word of God written."

What we fear is that the reader may infer that the higher critical positions taken in this study Bible are also "the explanation of what the Church believes about the Bible," and that they are based on new information which was not at the disposal of the trusted Presbyterian scholars who have opposed these conclusions of higher criticism. Have the editors of the Westminster Bible information that men like Warfield of Princeton, George L. Robinson of McCormick, Hendrickson of Calvin, Allis of Philadelphia, Mack of Richmond, McPheeters of Columbia and Gribble of Austin either did not have or did not use? More important still, is this "new knowledge" sufficiently attested to justify the Church in setting aside the testimony of Him, whom she rightly calls Lord and Master, that David spake Psalm 110 by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or to substitute for His reference to the things spoken by the prophet Daniel the Westminster view that the Book of Daniel was not written by the Prophet Daniel but was "attributed to an ancient notable" by some one writing four hundred years later? The sundry sections of Leviticus identify themselves thus: "And the LORD spake unto Moses saying."

Is the Westminster knowledge sufficiently explicit for the Church to try to force such testimony of the Bible to itself into the higher critical view that most of Leviticus was compiled by post-exilic "P" scribes and first read to the people in 444 B.C.?

As a matter of fact there are some discoveries that militate against the higher critical view which have been made since these views were enunciated over a century ago. It used to be said that Moses could not have written, or stood sponsor for the writing of the Pentateuch because writing was not known in his age. The Westminster edition admits that writing was done in Moses' day—in view of the Code of Hammurabi, it might have admitted that it was done in Abraham's day. The Westminster Notes, however, continue to speak of oral traditions in a way that shows their authors have not fully

integrated the fact of writing throughout Israel's history into their conclusions. Again it has been said that one must assume an evolution of man's ideas about God and that monotheism was too lofty for Moses' time. But Ikhnoton, an Egyptian monarch of the eighteenth dynasty was a monotheist, and Moses wrought under either the 18th. or the 19th. dynasty. W. F. Albright has stated that there is no evidence for the evolution of the idea of God in Israel's religion and that the earlier Old Testament documents present substantially the same view of God as the later ones. Again the Ras Shamra discoveries have shown as elaborate a ritual as that found in the Pentateuch in the period of the Exodus. But Dr. Robert Gribble has already turned his pen toward such matters in this Bible and we defer to his competent scholarship a full discussion of their Old Testament conclusions.

In the New Testament field the Westminster conclusions may also be compared with those offered by other competent scholars. The Westminster Bible dates Mark about 65, Matthew near 85, and Luke about 75. Professor Wilhelm Michaelis of Bern (*Einleitung in das Neues Testament*, 1945) dates the three synoptists in the decade of the sixties as does Professor F. F. Bruce of Leeds in *The Evangelical Quarterly* (July 1942). Albright dates them prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. Michaelis, Stauffer, Albright and E. K. Simpson hold and defend the view that John the Son of Zebedee wrote the Fourth Gospel. The Westminster Introduction does not. Michaelis also defends the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles and offers a chronology following a first Roman imprisonment into which they may be fitted. Bartlett in the *Britannica* defends them on the basis of a chronology ending with this imprisonment. Other scholars hold that Paul commissioned an amanuensis to draft these epistles in his name. This Westminster Bible concludes that they were likely not written by Paul. At least modern knowledge is not unanimous on the positions taken in the Westminster Study Bible and therefore these positions cannot be regarded as the united verdict of modern scholarship. Has the Church authorized the description of these views as "a thorough explanation of what the Church believes about the Bible?"

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