

Revelation:
An Interpretation Based upon its Structure
and upon the Analogy of All Scripture

Introduction: Part I.

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Introduction

The Bible's Book of Victory

Revelation is the Bible's book of victory. First, it foretells and describes Jehovah's and the Lamb's victories over all the evil in the universe, including, and by means of, their victories over all the evil supernatural powers in the universe. Second, it foretells and describes the vindication, victory, and glorification of Jesus our Lord, who will return to Earth as a Bridegroom and as the Warrior-King who will overthrow the assembled kings of the earth and their armies. Third, it foretells the victory of the dead in Christ. As risen saints, they will not only be priests but will reign (και βασιλευσουσιν) for a thousand years with our Lord during the Millennium, but following its close they will dwell for ever and ever in the great city of His God; that is, in that New Jerusalem which will then come down out of Heaven from God (Revelation 3:12 and 22:5). And finally, it foretells the victory of the living Christians whom God will translate and who will also be priests and will reign with our Lord during the Millennium and thereafter. And thus, Revelation is par excellence the book of the wars, victories, and Kingdom of Jehovah.

It foretells several great culminations and consummations. One of them is the point at which Jehovah will take His great power and reign. This will happen when the Seventh Angel blows the Seventh Trumpet; for we read that then “great voices in heaven” will speak, saying:

The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever. (Revelation 11:15)

At that time, moreover, the twenty-four Elders, who sit before God on their thrones, will fall upon their faces and will worship God, saying:

We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast; because thou hast taken (ειληφες, perfect tense) thy great power, and didst reign (εβαλευσας, aorist tense). (Revelation 11:17)

These statements refer to the inauguration and establishment of the Kingdom of God properly understood; that is, the kind of kingdom on the earth which Daniel, Zechariah, and other prophets had foretold, and which John the Baptist and Jesus our Lord had originally proclaimed, and which those who first heard them had understood that it was their intention to proclaim.

Later, in the Wilderness Vision, an angel explained things to John. He then heard

as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying,

**Hallelujah:
for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth.**
(Revelation 19:6)

The speakers whom he heard were referring to the same event, namely, the future establishment of the Kingdom of God. The text shows that this will be a great culmination; for there are only four Hallelujahs in the entire New Testament. John had just heard the first three (in Revelation 19:1,3,4); namely, the three that will ring out when Jehovah has punished the Great Whore and avenged the blood of His servants which she had shed. This (in Revelation 19:6) was the fourth. It will sound forth when Jehovah has become King (Daniel 7:9-10). At that time He will give “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom” to His Messiah, who will then “come with the clouds of heaven.” He will “come even to the Ancient of Days.” “His dominion is (will be) an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Daniel 7:14, and see Psalms 2). In other words, the theocratic kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ will then begin, namely, the so-called Millennium. It will be a kingdom in which Christ will reign for a thousand years. In it He will not reign alone, but the saints will reign along with Him; for the dead in Christ will then have just risen from the dead

in the First Resurrection, the Resurrection of the Just; and the living saints will then have been transformed and translated, and caught up along with them to meet their Lord in the air. And thus, when it comes, that Millennium will be nothing less than the Kingdom of God which the prophets had foretold, which John the Baptist and Jesus had preached, and which Jesus had promised to His Apostles when He said:

Ye are they who have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Luke 22:28-30)

Obviously, therefore, it is necessary to understand Revelation in the light of the Bible's, and especially of the New Testament's teachings concerning the Kingdom of God.

Long ago, in 32 A. D., when our Lord ascended into Heaven and sat down with His Father in the Father's throne, He had acquired His present heavenly Lordship and His present Headship in all things to the Church. At that time He had already truly begun to come into His own. Later, when He acquires His Kingdom in the Millennium, He will continue to do so. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that our Lord's Kingdom in the days of the Millennium will not even then be the final state or condition. It will certainly be a great event in a series of great events, but it will still be only an episode in Jehovah's Cosmic Epic. For other very great events are scheduled to follow it; for example, the post-Millennial release of Satan from prison, the Satanically inspired rebellion of the nations of mankind, the deliverance of the Holy City by the destruction of the armies of Gog and Magog, the casting of Satan into the Lake of Fire, the Advent of the God of Heaven seated upon His Great White Throne, the resurrection of all the dead, the adjudication of the case of each of them, and last and most important of all, the hurling of Death and Hades into the Lake of Fire. Finally, after all the aforementioned events have occurred, the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, will descend out of Heaven from God and take up its eternal seat on the Earth. The throne of Jehovah and of the Lamb will be in it.

During the first three hundred years of Church History the promises of these great victories and of several others fired the minds of Christ's people and made them very willing to die as martyrs. During the

following centuries, however, several developments occurred in which the promises of other victories beguiled Christians — promises of victories which the Bible and Revelation never foretold. So that later developments robbed most of them of the Bible's, and especially of Revelation's, promises of the greatest victories. In short, “the word of the kingdom” which the great Sower had planted in the hearts of His people was “caught away” --- ερχεται ο πονηρος και αρπαζει — out of their hearts (Matthew 13:19). For first, during the fourth century the Christian churches became highly double-minded on the subject of the Kingdom of God. Quite early Dionysius the Great, Eusebius, Jerome, and Augustine led the churches to give up their original, long-held belief in the Millennium. The result was that in place of the Christian hope of the establishment of our Lord's great Theocratic Kingdom in that period of a thousand years, and in place of the Bible's ideas of what it would be like, they substituted (on their own authority) entirely different ideas — ideas of a growth and worldwide expansion of Christian churches under imperial sponsorship. Indeed, very many of them claimed that one branch of the Church was the Universal Church, which it was not. They even went so far eventually as to proclaim that it was the Kingdom of God on Earth, which it was not, and claimed that, as such, it had a divine right to rule over all kings and emperors. They dreamed of a growth and worldwide spread of Christianity under the most corrupt kind of ecclesiastical sponsorship. And after a while even the Jews, who had long overcome all temptations to give up their sound Biblical views concerning their Messiah's Kingdom, became double-minded in their views of it.

Finally, in one of the most significant developments, the Kingdom of God became the subject of great controversy during the past century. For in 1892 Johannes Weiss published Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes). He convinced the leading critical scholars that Jesus had believed in and taught an apocalyptic Kingdom of God. Ever since then scholars have been propounding many conflicting interpretations of this doctrine. Some of them have told the world that the Kingdom of God ought to be understood as a sheer illusion. Others have said that it is a reality, but they have disagreed about whether it ought to be considered a present or a future reality, or both. Those who claim that it has been and is a present reality disagree as to when it began. They also disagree concerning in what sense it was, or is, a present kingdom. Indeed, they have spawned many fantastic and utterly unbiblical interpretations of the Kingdom of God.

So that the Book of Revelation has nonplussed the entire Christian Church ever since the fourth century, and has done so most of all at the present day. The outcome is a state of utter confusion in the ecclesiastical and scholarly worlds. [The Kingdom of God and History (an Official Oxford Conference Book) by H. G. Wood, C. H. Dodd, Edwyn Bevan, Eugene Lyman, Paul Tillich, H. D. Wendland, Christopher Dawson (Chicago: Willett, Clark, & Co., 1938). The Kingdom of God in 20th Century Interpretation (by fourteen writers), Wendell Willis, Editor (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1987). Eschatology and the New Testament (by nine writers), W. Hulitt Gloer, Editor (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1988)]. Many have rejected it out of hand as worthless. Those who have tried to take it seriously have had little success in producing any interpretations of it which many would accept. Consequently, and especially in the total absence of any generally received interpretation of Revelation, both Christians and others in the world at large have directed most of their attention to the plagues and punishments which Revelation foretells, and almost never think of it as our great book of victory. They see only that it contains threats to which they react emotionally and are appalled.

Understanding Revelation

The nature of a subject determines what it will take in order to be able to understand it. If the nature of our subject — in this case the Bible's book of Revelation — requires a reader to have knowledge of a certain kind and understandings of a certain kind, then, in order for him to be able to understand it, he must bring to it what it takes to understand it; that is, what the nature of the subject requires one to have and to use.

The interpreter who hopes to understand Revelation must have certain indispensable intellectual keys.

One is the idea of divine revealments in genuine oracles.

Another is the idea of prophecies in those genuine oracles which contain long-range predictions.

A third is the idea of a comprehensive prophecy which is a Capstone and Wrap-up for the entire contents of previous Biblical prophecies. The idea is that prophecies can be structurally compatible in such

ways that often the contents of a later prophecy can supplement, further develop, and perfect one or more earlier prophecies; and similarly that the contents of an earlier prophecy can often supplement, further develop, and perfect one or more later prophecies. So that the result of their structural compatibility is that it becomes possible for the contents of a single great late prophecy to supplement, further develop, and perfect very many partially developed lines of prophecy, thus bringing them to their appropriate culminations, and then combining them all to show that they actually form a unified system of Biblical prophecy. Such is the idea of a comprehensive prophecy which is a Capstone and Wrap-up for the entire contents of previous Biblical prophecies.

A fourth is the idea of a divinely revealed interpretation of history, including an idea of the dynamics of world history.

A fifth is the idea of a divinely designed Cosmic Epic which Jehovah God and the Lamb (and the Seven Spirits who are before the throne of God) are in the process of creating.

No one who does not have this intellectual equipment — that is, who does not apprehend or at least glimpse the meaning of these five kinds of basic ideas — will be able really to understand what Revelation says.

Therefore, we shall briefly describe the nature of each of these keys to Revelation. In doing so we shall be careful not to say that an interpreter must believe anything in order to understand Revelation. We only wish to say that he must be capable of conceiving certain key ideas intellectually. For we shall assume that an interpreter can know what Revelation says without believing that what it says is true.

1) Revelation's Genuine Oracles

Revelation's divine revealments are genuine oracles. By “genuine oracles” we mean what the Bible defines as oracles; for example, in Numbers 12:6-8, and repeatedly — eight times in words of unsurpassable clearness — in Numbers 22:20,35, 38; 23:5, 12,16,26; and 24:15. We take our definition of genuine oracles from these passages and from many others such as Isaiah 51:16 and 59:21, and Jeremiah 1:9, in which Jehovah said:

Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

In such passages Holy Writ has defined the essential nature of its oracles. They consist of words in verbal statements which originated in Jehovah's mind.

He began with His own ideas, His own intended meanings. He then put them into words of His own choosing in His own mind. He afterwards put His chosen words which He had formulated into the mouth of some angel or man. And therefore, the most significant thing about such oracles is that the verbal statements which we have in Revelation, for instance, first existed objectively in God's own mind before He gave them to any angel or to any prophet to speak to men. And consequently, they do not convey the ideas of any man, nor the ideas of any angel, but instead, they contain and transmit Jehovah's own expressions of His divine knowledge and of His divine will. This means that the principal and absolutely essential thing in defining genuine oracles is to distinguish unerringly between words that have really come only from some human being, on the one hand, and words that have assuredly come from the Most High God, on the other. And it was in order to insure that this distinction should always be observed that Jehovah expressly told His holy prophets that they must not revise or edit the messages which He gave to them to transmit. And even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, though He was the incarnate Son of God, was under the identical obligation. For He said:

the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself
1 (John 14:10)

And of course, nowhere did our Lord express His views on this subject more clearly than in His temptation. For when Satan tempted Him, he had asked Him (in effect):

Yea, hath God said?

And in His reply to His Tempter's crucially important question He had showed His attitude toward Scripture's genuine oracles by answering:

It is written!

And of course, this is the right attitude for us as His disciples to take toward the genuine oracles of the Bible.

What makes this attitude right is that in a genuine oracle we have **true knowledge**. A person, namely God, has told us something that He **knows**. Therefore, if we believe His testimony we can **know** it. But if we refuse to believe His testimony, then we can not know it. It is written: “Out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6). This condition is radically supernatural. It is quite humbling. Nevertheless, that’s the way it is. We must take it, or we must leave it.

Some of the divinely revealed knowledge is **knowledge of another, higher world** and of its denizens and their activities. Other divinely revealed knowledge is **knowledge of things that happened in the days of creation and in pre-historical times**.

Most important of all is the divinely revealed knowledge of the future which only Jehovah’s prophecies can give. There is no other foundation for a Hope that is rational. Without that foundation darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the peoples. Blind guesswork is its only alternative. Moreover, where there is no vision (in this sense) the people perish. True as it is that men have loved the darkness rather than the light in the things of a sound morality, yet in this regard the lost children of men have loved the darkness even more.

Some other divinely revealed knowledge is **knowledge of ourselves** and our condition. The “demon” in Socrates told him: “Know thyself.” But the Holy Spirit in God’s Word tells you that God knows you better than you know yourself (Psalms 139). And when Christ speaks to the churches in Revelation 2 and 3 He tells them “I know” seven times.

Some genuine oracles contain **divinely revealed understandings**. Often these are of prime importance. For example, Jehovah’s oracles tell men and angels that He has put them under a government, and that

its laws have teeth; that is, under His government. Therefore, they must act responsibly because He will hold them accountable for their actions.

Other genuine oracles contain **divinely revealed wisdom**. These are especially valuable because, unlike ordinary knowledge and understandings, wisdom gives us knowledge of the best thing to do and shows us the best way to do it. In this regard the commands of Jehovah are the “Head” or chief part of wisdom. Other ethics and morals are only so many human opinions.

This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment with every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

For all of the foregoing principal reasons and others it is crucially important to be sure that we have genuine oracles in the Bible’s sense.

Of course, it is crucially important to be sure that we have correctly understood their meanings.

In this regard is necessary to realize that there always exists a unique combination of some divinely chosen word or words with the divinely intended meaning which God has used it to express. This is what makes genuine, verbally dictated oracles not simply valuable but indispensable.

Now, when anyone has understood that the essential thing in genuine oracles is not the word or words but the meaning, he will realize that it will frequently be difficult to understand what God has spoken. The unique combination of divinely chosen words and the divinely intended meanings — that is, the true meanings — does not exist either in the mind of the angel or of the prophet who receives the words and conveys them to us. Each reader of the words must discover it. The Spirit of God, who alone knows His mind, must give it.

Warning! All of us are so accustomed to using common words that we hastily assume that a meaning which comes first to our mind is the correct one. We often assume that we have understood God’s words when we have not. Consequently, we thoughtlessly fail to ask Him to correct our misunderstandings.

Therefore, the distinctions which the sound definition of genuine oracles establishes are absolutely the most important of all distinctions to make and to apply rigorously in every discussion of questions in religion and theology and philosophy and ethics.

Warning! Ever since Lord Herbert wrote *De Veritate* in 1624 it has been extremely difficult to keep this definition and these distinctions in sight because very many philosophers, theologians, ethicists, scholars, literati, journalists, and clergymen have undertaken to maintain that God never really spoke or wrote any words at all. Their assertions have made it absolutely necessary to face unflinchingly the most basic question of all. (More on this later. See section on “The First Development” below.)

The basic situation is that certain of the Bible’s statements confront not only humanity but every rational creature in the Universe with an inescapable dilemma. Jehovah has created an *Either/Or*. Either He really spoke certain words, or really wrote them, or He did not. Face up to it: God really spoke *versus* God never really spoke. These alternatives have numerous implications which never fail to disturb many people. They find it especially hard “to live with” the reality of a God who says what He means and means what He says.

And because the attempt to keep this particular reality out of sight has required men to maintain that God cannot speak, or that He can speak but never would, or that He has “spoken” nonverbally in some undefinable sense or other, etc., it has produced great confusion by means of much well-couched fraud in religion, theology, philosophy, and ethics.

For if fluent persons [Who was ever more fluent than Voltaire, or Kant, or Hegel, or Strauss, or Baur, or Harnack, *et al.*? Who?] believe that God did not speak the words of the Ten Commandments, and those in a large number of statements that begin: “Thus saith Jehovah,” but nevertheless insist on saying and teaching that He did (in some sense or other) speak them, then certain foreseeable inescapable confusions arise. Even without the help of the Devil such double-minded counselors can confuse all mankind. How much more with his prompting and all-out support!

In regard to this basic situation and its inescapable dilemma every one should note one key feature. It is that if Jehovah God has spoken, and if He did speak or write the statements which Moses and the prophets assert that He made, then He has an unmistakably knowable personal identity, and we may assume that it is inalienable and ineradicable.

Now, one foundation of the whole system of Jehovah God, natural and supernatural, is that He Himself has an unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identity. And a second foundation in it is that every angel and every man has an unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identity. And therefore, the effect of denying the authentic words of Jehovah in the Bible's genuine oracles is to wash out the unmistakably knowable personal identity of Jehovah the God of Heaven. Consequently, very much depends upon preserving the Bible's definition of genuine oracles intact. Indeed, it is impossible to overemphasize the necessity of doing so. The following reasons will show why it is necessary. They will also show that every honest scholar owes it to himself and to all others not only to preserve this definition intact, and to apply it relentlessly, but also to prevent any one from ever thrusting it aside and pushing it out of sight.

We just said that many reject the Bible's definition of genuine oracles while continuing to speak as if they had a word of God of some sort, in some ill-defined or undefined sense or other. However, even though it has produced endless confusion this writer does not bemoan it. The entire situation is in Jehovah's capable hands, and He probably has excellent reasons for permitting it to exist temporarily pending certain future developments, and especially pending the arrival of that promised future day in which He will vindicate Himself and all His words. For example, He may permit the confusion for the good of the confused, in order to prevent them from hating Him precipitately through misunderstandings, as they otherwise would. He may be thus giving them time to learn to trust, and obey, and love Him; that is, while it still remains possible that they may believe and repent and be saved. In evaluating this confusion, we must always keep in mind that Jehovah's strategy will be adjusted to match and defeat the tremendous intellectual subtleties in the strategies of the incorrigibly criminal angels and men who are working to seduce and destroy mankind. This alone makes it useful to state some

reasons why it is absolutely necessary to preserve the Bible's definition of genuine oracles intact and to apply it unfailingly.

First Reason

First, the only possible way that mankind can have any Word of God that is not in essence only so many words of men is by preserving the Bible's definition of genuine oracles intact and by applying it honestly and rigorously at all times. Whoever does not preserve it and apply it has ipso facto radically transformed the nature of all alleged words of Jehovah which the Bible contains. He has metamorphosed them into words of men. He has made authentic words of one author into unauthentic words. He could not have introduced a more radical alteration of its true nature if he had reinterpreted everything that was literally meant and made it figurative of something or other, and had at the same time also interpreted literally everything that was figuratively meant.

Now, whenever any Word of Jehovah God becomes confused with the words of men, such confusion, of course, automatically wipes out the intrinsic power and authority which belongs to it quâ a word from the God of Heaven. And consequently, to maintain the Bible's definition of genuine oracles in full force is the only possible way to prevent a kind of confusion that obscures the nature and authority of the Bible's truly divine revealments and very effectively keeps men from recognizing the true words of the God of Heaven for what they really are.

Second Reason

Second, preserving intact the Bible's definition of genuine oracles is essential because it is the only way to set the words of Jehovah apart from the words of other gods; that is, apart from the words of demons and other so-called gods. Evil supernatural beings, the demons, want men to worship them. Therefore, they masquerade as gods. Posing as angels of light they lead men to set up establishments of (false) religion, and to build temples. They aspire to overthrow Jehovah and replace Him; or at least to prevent Him as much as possible from accomplishing His good purposes. They are very determined to prevent Him from being worshipped anywhere in accordance with His Law and His holy Gospel. And above all, they are resolved to prevent men from worshipping Him in any Temple of His in Jerusalem. In other words it is war. They are at war with Him (and us), and He is at war with them.

Now, they have contrived to make multitudes believe that they have spoken. Therefore, it is necessary to discern Jehovah's words correctly and to keep them apart from the words of these false gods. However, it is never easy to do this because multitudes have itching ears to hear something pious seize upon something supernatural but only indiscriminatingly and not according to knowledge. Consequently, they are quick to assume that any supernatural agent whatever, either good or evil, can give knowledge of the future and do other desirable things for men. Therefore, they go a-whoring after false gods. For this reason Jehovah's words expose them. He jeers at their inability to do good or evil. He asserts that He is the only supernatural being who can give men knowledge of the future. In this way He makes it clear that His words have truth and power, while the words of the other gods have neither. Other supernatural beings can only give men the very limited knowledge of the future that He permits them to reveal. He has been careful to keep the power to reveal the future almost entirely in His own hands, and to use it for His own purposes. By this means He has ever been able to turn the false gods into liars and to make diviners mad; that is, by deliberately frustrating the efforts of other supernatural beings to reveal future events, as well as the efforts of all human futurologists to foresee them.

Third Reason

Third, there are the words of the false prophets and the false apostles who are usually very zealous propagandists and proselytizers. It is essential to preserve the Bible's definition of genuine oracles intact in order to keep Jehovah's words apart from the spurious words which were not His but which false prophets and false apostles have invented and had put into His mouth or which certain others have attributed to Him. In Jeremiah 23:9-40 Jehovah Himself explained at length to His servant Jeremiah the utter and horrifying untrustworthiness of the words of the false prophets.

Both the prophet and the priest are profane (Jeremiah 23:11).

They speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of Jehovah (Jeremiah 23:16).

Their prophesy lies in the Name of Jehovah (Jeremiah 23:25),

even the deceit of their own hearts (Jeremiah 23:26).

I sent not these prophets, yet they ran (Jeremiah 23:21).

From the prophets of Jerusalem is ungodliness gone forth into all the land (Jeremiah 23:15).

These statements make absolutely clear why it is always necessary to keep Jehovah's words apart from the words which were not His but which false prophets put into His mouth. For the same reason our Lord Himself made the resounding warning "beware of false prophets" characteristic of His preaching from its start (Matthew 7:15-23) to its finish (Matthew 24:4,11).

However, it has always been very difficult to do this because. multitudes have always been ready to believe that a false prophet who says, "Thus saith Jehovah" must be a true prophet. Moreover, there is very often an infestation of false prophets, a veritable plague, and they are everywhere. They are also very arrogant, arrogating all religious authority to themselves and wiping their feet on any true prophet who dares to contradict them. Scripture contains several vivid accounts of their abominable behavior (I. Kings 22:24 and Jeremiah: 20:1-2 and 28:1-17). Consequently, it was always necessary for anyone to be sure that "the

word of Jehovah is with” a prophet before he could trust him to give true words of Jehovah. Jehoshaphat the King of Judah was alert and perceptive in this regard. He knew that Jehovah may put a lying spirit into the mouth of any or of all the (false) prophets whom men trust. He tried the prophets (I. Kings 22:5-28 and II. Kings 3:11-12). It was, and still is, necessary to try the prophets and the spirits whether they be from God.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. (I. John 4:1)

It was so important to prevent false prophets from deceiving His people that Jehovah told them how to recognize false prophets whom He had not sent, in order that they might be able to know assuredly that the words which they attributed to Him were spurious (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). When the false prophets foretold future occurrences, Jehovah prevented the events which they had foretold from occurring, thus making them liars while giving His people a sure sign that they were false prophets. So it was when Moses and Jeremiah prophesied, and it has been the same ever since.

False prophets and other successors, heirs, and assigns of the old false prophets have been everywhere. Just as we have had the poor always with us, so we have also always had the false prophets with us. They have infested synagogues and churches. They teach men vanity in the form of quasi-divine “traditions of the elders,” canon laws, acts of councils, indulgences, confessions, catechisms, and various other surrogates and substitutes for the oracles of God. Worse still, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, and heretics have ever been ravening wolves in sheep's clothing. Our Lord warned His disciples concerning them (Matthew 7:15). He also gave them a sure method of recognizing them (Matthew 7:16-20). And today it is more necessary than ever to hold fast the Bible's definition of genuine words of Jehovah and to separate them from words of false prophets.

And we must add that it is also necessary to keep the words of Jehovah apart from any words which true prophets of Jehovah may speak on their own initiative. Indeed, to take an extreme case, we may point out that our Lord Himself, even though He is the Incarnate Son of God,

was careful to distinguish the words of His Heavenly Father from any words which He might speak on His own initiative.

Fourth Reason

The fourth is the most important reason why it is necessary to preserve the Bible's definition of genuine oracles intact and to apply it rigorously at all times.

An Incredibly Evil Situation

Two parallel developments in modern history have created an incredibly evil situation. The very highest cosmic issues are at stake in it. The future developments and events which Revelation foretells can rectify it, and, thank God, they will.

The first of the two developments which created today's incredibly evil situation was a movement led by intellectuals who asserted positively that God never spoke in any allegedly genuine oracles, including the Bible's. This movement of anti-revelationists denied the reality of every allegedly revealed word of God.

The second development which created today's incredibly evil situation was also led by intellectuals. They claimed that the men who are the specialists and experts in astronomy, biology, psychology, history, criticism, and some other sciences and studies not only do speak with more authority than the God of Scripture in the areas of their expertise, but also that they have a right to do so because they have the truth and the Scriptures which they contradict are in error.

The first of the two developments totally abolished the verbal statements of Jehovah God. The second established the right of a mixed multitude of "scientists" to claim in the name of scientific truth that any Biblical statement which contradicted any opinion of theirs was false and only an erroneous religious superstition. And therefore we must describe these developments and evaluate them.

The First Development

The first of the two developments began when Lord Herbert wrote *De Veritate* in 1624. Very many philosophers, theologians, ethicists, scholars, literati, journalists, and clergymen then began to maintain that God never really spoke or wrote any words at all. Of course, they rejected the Bible's sound idea of genuine oracles. In a short time many Christian scholars and theologians became leading opponents of the doctrine of genuine oracles in the Bible. Some of them wrote book after book in which they repudiated and discarded the Bible's definition of genuine oracles. [Theologian Karl Barth said: "Die Bibel ist kein Orakelbuch." And theologian Emil Brunner claimed "that Scripture presents us with eight different kinds of revelation. One of the eight is a serious error that must be rejected. The seven other kinds are new kinds, but of these seven, as Dr. Brunner finally admits, six kinds are not really revelation at all. Only one of the seven new kinds is the real revelation. All of these seven new kinds of revelation differ from what the churches have understood revelation to be. For the sake of completeness we must add that in addition to the seven kinds of revelation Dr. Brunner also propounds a new idea of the "Word of God", which differs from what the churches have understood the Word of God to be." {Taken from "The Great Deception."} And in The Authority of the Bible C. H. Dodd, accomplished the same purpose by avoiding the connection between divine authority and verbal statements while listing everything else that he could find in the Bible which might seem to give it some authority of one kind or another.] Eventually it came to be rejected almost everywhere, and this widespread rejection became one principal cause of today's incredibly evil situation. They have told the world that no one should suppose that the words which Moses and the prophets and Christ and His Apostles have attributed to Jehovah had ever actually existed objectively in the mind of God before any angel or man had ever thought of them or ascribed them to Him.

Such writers and all those — preachers or laymen — who have accepted their views have done three things. First, in repudiating and discarding the Bible's basic concept of genuine oracles of Jehovah they have reduced the words of Jehovah in the Bible to a mass of human opinions; that is, to opinions which, as such, neither have nor can have any divine authority whatever.

Second, such writers and their disciples have continued to speak freely of “the Word of God,” and of “revelation,” and of “divine revelations,” using such words and expressions in loose senses as undefined buzzwords. This practice of theirs produced many new definitions of “revelation” and theories of “inspiration.” It resulted in interminable discussions and great confusion. It also enabled them to deceive and mislead many, especially because those who have read their books or heard them preach have naively supposed that men who were using such words and expressions must surely be thinking, writing, and speaking of genuine oracles as the Bible defines them.

Third, such writers have told the whole world — the secularists, atheists, Buddhists, Hindus, et al. —

Don't worry! The Bible has no genuine oracles.

Don't worry! The Ten Commandments were not a divinely vocalized pronunciamento. God did not divinely engrave them on tablets.

Don't worry! Christianity is not founded upon any actual words of Jehovah.

Such assertions have made it absolutely necessary to maintain unflinchingly that the Bible contains genuine oracles. They have also made it very difficult for many to keep the crucially important definition of genuine oracles always in view in order not to be befooled into accepting new unwarrantable definitions. Such was the first basic cause of the evil situation.

In making the last statement, however, we must acknowledge that the almost universal loose use of previously meaningful terms has been able to deceive and mislead many because they have wanted to be deceived concerning the nature of the basic facts and concerning the real issues involved. Jehovah's words and deeds had scandalized them. They had not perceived that “the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether” (Psalm 19:9). They may have wished to believe in a “God” of some kind, but not in any God who is like the Jehovah of the Bible. In other words, they wished to continue to believe that some parts of the Bible may contain some true words of God, but not those parts which had scandalized them. Therefore, most of them have been very willing to allow the essentially dishonest and dishonorable practice to continue undisturbed, uninvestigated, and uncorrected. In other words,

they have desired that their qualified acceptance of some parts of the Bible should go unexamined and unchallenged. And they have also desired that the views of scholars and theologians upon which their practice is based should likewise go unexamined and unchallenged. And well they might because true impressions of the nature of its oracles and of the character of its Great Jehovah rudely disturb comforting illusions, and multitudes have always needed watered-down versions of the Bible's statements and of the character of God to soothe their consciences and calm their nerves.

The Second Development

The second development was an abysmal intellectual failure on the part of the leaders of the entire intellectual world, including those of the churches and the synagogues. Leading intellectuals made a false principle their positive criterion for determining truth. Their new principle sounded so reasonable and seemed so sound that almost all men thought that it must be as valid as the most assured, intuitively perceived truths, such as $2 + 2 = 4$. The misguided leaders regarded its discovery as an intellectual triumph. They said that it is a truth which no “sane thinker” could ever dream of questioning. Consequently, it was very easy for them to saddle it upon the entire human intellectual enterprise, as follows.

They conceived of two different, vaguely defined areas or spheres of knowledge. They asserted that in one of them — that is, in sciences, history, criticism, *etc.* — human experts should have all authority and an exclusive right to determine what is true and what is false. They claimed that when human specialists, for example, in science, history, or criticism, contradict anything that divine oracles in the Bible say, then what they say ought to be believed rather than what the Word of Jehovah God says. When He speaks, οὐδὲν ἐστίν. When an expert speaks, οφείλει.

Rev. Thomas Arnold, D. D., Head-Master of Rugby and Regius Professor of Modern History in Oxford University, stated this view when he wrote:

My object, in the foregoing pages, has been to distinguish carefully between that Christian faith, which is the guide and comfort of our lives, and a variety of questions, historical, critical, scientific, &c., connected with parts of that Volume from which the grounds of our faith are derived. With Christian faith there must be no tampering ...

We must, indeed, “render unto God the things that are God's;” but we must also “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's,” [in order] that intellectual wisdom, which exercises over this world more than imperial dominion, may not be denied her lawful tribute. It is within her province to judge of all questions of science, of history, and of criticism, according to

her own general laws; nor may her decisions on these matters be disputed by an appeal to the higher power of spiritual wisdom, who leaves such points wholly to her lower jurisdiction.

If it be said that this is a mere truism which nobody dreams of disputing, I have only to answer ...
[Thomas Arnold, Sermons, with an Essay On the Right Interpretation and Understanding of the Scriptures, Vol. II., Fifth Edition (London: B. Fellowes, Ludgate Street, 1851), pp. 424f.]

Note well what Arnold claimed. He spoke of “the higher power of spiritual wisdom,” which must mean God. He also spoke of a certain “intellectual wisdom” which has a certain “lower jurisdiction.” This must mean the wisdom of human beings who are scientists, historians, or critics; for he at once added:

It is within her province to judge of all questions of science, of history, and of criticism according to her own general laws; ...

Thus, his statement says that her decisions are final. This interpretation is quite certain because Arnold added at once, as part of the same sentence:

nor may her decisions on these matters be disputed by an appeal to the higher power of spiritual wisdom, who leaves such points wholly to her lower jurisdiction.

Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth! “She” has a lower jurisdiction. But there is a Higher Jurisdiction. It, or He, gave her her authority. Nevertheless, no one can ever appeal from any decision of hers to the Higher Jurisdiction which gave her her authority to make decisions “in these matters.” Therefore, whoever – angel or man – puts the Word of God in the Bible above any opinion of this so-called “intellectual wisdom” is plainly out of order. Now, of course, all of this was, and is, nonsense. Indeed, it is exorbitant and obnoxious nonsense.

However, this was very persuasive, very disarming, and very potent nonsense; for if men ever believed it, it could annul and abolish every spoken and written word of Jehovah God. Nevertheless, it was also

a perfect, truly acid test, which could infallibly separate all who really believed in the genuine oracles of Jehovah from all others who were merely trifling and puttering with the idea. And surely, it was a case of déjà vu. For this test is the modern version of the primal oldest temptation:

Yea, hath God said ... ?

Arnold and many who shared his view thought that they were giving ascertained truths their rights and were achieving victories for Truth — for scientific truth, historical truth, critical truth. They supposed that they were achieving an ideal adjustment of clashing interests and claims. They imagined that they had assigned the several spheres of knowledge to truly legitimate authorities and had found and established an ideal solution. Some of them claimed and probably did believe that they had done this in a way that upheld and protected the interests of the Christian Faith. In fact, some believed that they had salvaged the Bible, and had vindicated for it the right to speak with authority on a wide range of noble subjects, such as religion and ethics, faith and life. Indeed, they thought that they were saving Christianity from an otherwise inevitable destruction. They felt that they had preserved and protected the interests of a sound Biblical scholarship.

However, they had really done none of these things. In reality they had endorsed and sponsored some intrinsically unwarrantable demands. One was a demand that various human scholars — especially scientists, historians, critics, et al. — shall have intellectual autonomy, including a plenary unrestricted authority to define and establish truths and Truth. The authority which they demanded for such parties included a right to contradict the divine oracles in Holy Writ; that is, to declare that the Word of God had erred and that their opinions, which had contradicted what it says, were right. In other words, when they have spoken there shall be no divine corrections, emendations, amendments; much less contradictions or vetoes. For they had established the rights of human intellectuals to judge things; that is,

to judge of all questions of science, of history, and of criticism according to her own general laws ...

In doing so, they had actually asserted that anyone who seemed to be a qualified scientist in the world's eyes, or who seemed to be a competent historian, or who seemed to be a reputable philosopher, etc., had a right

to be believed when he expressed his opinion; and especially that he had such a right every time he contradicted a statement in explicit divine oracles. In other words, they had created a new situation. In it they had demoted the God of Heaven to a position in which the opinions of human experts were preferable to His understandings. In it the rule has been:

Let every so-called “scientist,” or “historian,” or “critic,” or “philosopher,” be true, and Jehovah God a liar.

The final outcome of this second development was that not only the outside world but leaders in churches and synagogues repudiated the right of the divine oracles to speak at all on scientific, historical, and critical subjects. Most of the well-intentioned attempts to adjust the clashing interests of science and of the Bible's genuine oracles were to prove futile.

The second development conquered and became the second basic cause of today's incredibly evil situation.

The two developments just described experienced phenomenal growth and created today's incredibly evil situation, as follows.

The Clash of Interests

In the resulting clash of interests hosts of superficial observers assumed that the Science Party championed valid knowledge and well-ascertained truths. Therefore, they judged the commotion to be due to the fact that religionists were mistakenly trying to suppress truth in the interests of their superstitious beliefs. Nevertheless, the real clash was not primarily between science and religion. Nor was it between science and theology. Nor was it between science and the church. It was between science and the Word of God in the divine oracles in the Bible. Strictly speaking, the truly basic clash of interests was not between true science and the divine oracles. It was between budding sciences and the science buffs who had produced the still-waiting-to-be-established hypothesis of biological evolution, on the one hand, and the divine oracles on the other. Or rather, it was between the presuppositions and implications of an unestablished hypothesis in biology which science enthusiasts were using as the basis for a completely materialistic hypothesis of cosmic evolution, on the one hand, and the purportedly historical account of the creation in Genesis 1:1—2:4, on the other. Thus, the essence of the matter was not a conflict between science and the divine oracles but between the claims which soft enthusiasts of science were making for certain opinions of certain scientists; that is, for opinions which were not based on actual scientific knowledge of facts but only upon still undiscovered “facts” which enthusiasts hoped that scientists would manage to discover in the future. Therefore, as was said, the actual choice was not between genuine science pure and simple and the words of Jehovah. It was really between the words of Jehovah and the “futures” which hopeful enthusiasts were peddling in the name of Science.

Another clash was between a still-to-be-established hypothesis or theory of biological evolution that demanded belief in an actual lineal descent of the first man from an original protozoon and through a long line of animal progenitors, on the one hand, and the historical account of Jehovah's creation of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:5—5:2, on the other.

A third clash was between those who championed a special geological theory (Lyell's) of the formation of the surface of the Earth, on the one hand, and the Bible's historical account of the Flood in Genesis 6:1—9:19, on the other. This clash arose because in order to establish Darwin's theory of biological evolution, it was necessary to establish

Lyell's theory of Uniformitarianism; and in order to establish the Uniformitarianism, it was necessary to deny the occurrence of catastrophes, and in order to deny the occurrence of catastrophes, the enthusiasts of science had to get rid of the historical account of the Noah's flood.

On each of these three key issues the choice is between such "scientists" as Darwin, Lyell, Tyndall, and others, and Jehovah's word. If an intelligent person were fully convinced that the Bible contains genuine oracles, surely he would ask: "Would God or would Tyndal and Lyell have known more concerning the creation of the Heavens and the formation of the surface of the Earth? Would God or would Darwin have known more about the origin of species? Or concerning the descent of man? Would Noah and Shem or would Lyell have known more concerning the Flood? Or, if an intelligent person had observed that very many scientists, historians, and higher critics had often made snap judgments and jumped to unwarrantable conclusions which they have ever since been struggling to justify in defiance of ever-increasing counter-evidence, would he be afraid to take the word Jehovah in genuine oracles?"

Clearly, however, as was said, the real clash was not primarily between science and religion. Nor was it between science and theology. Nor was it between science and the church. It was between questionable claims which leading intellectuals had made in the name of "Science" and Bible's claims that it contains genuine, divinely given oracles.

In any case, these clashes became a great donnybrook in which all the parties that joined in the fray from the world and from the churches had a lot to say and made many mistakes. Among them were two tragic mistakes.

Two Tragic Mistakes

The first tragic mistake was a mistake from the standpoint of Arnold and others who imagined that they had saved a great deal, and especially that they had preserved for the Bible a right to speak with authority on religion and ethics, on faith and life. Unfortunately for them, the concessions which they made were death blows to the causes which they intended them to save.

The second tragic mistake was a mistake from the standpoint of the whole world because pushing the authoritative Word of God out of the picture had some disastrous consequences which were unforeseen. It not only perverted the entire human intellectual enterprise in several ways, but subverted it. The result of denying and discarding the Bible's divine oracles has been to take the entire human intellectual enterprise off of solid foundations and to re-seat it upon unsound, radically vitiated foundations.

The first mistake — the one which was from the standpoint of those who imagined that they had saved a great deal and had vindicated for the Bible a right to speak with authority on religion and ethics, faith and life — was that in practice the sphere of authority which they had assigned to the oracles of God turned out to be an illusion. For they had actually authorized the foes of Biblical religion to take away practically everything, either in the name of science, or in the name of history, or in the name of criticism. For example, in the name of Science they could contradict the Bible's account of Jehovah's creation, and every other account of a supernaturally performed or miraculous event. In the name of History they could contradict the Bible's accounts of the Flood, deny the realities of predictive prophecies, and contradict the accounts of other historical events. And in the name of Criticism they could question the foundations of all knowledge and deny to men the possibility of knowing God, knowing any other realities, or trusting any knowledge to be sound. Thus, Arnold and his kind had given the key to the house to arsonists, and given them the matches with which to burn it down. They had exchanged Jehovah, the fountain of living water, for cisterns, for broken cisterns which could hold no water (Jeremiah 2:12f.). They had incurred an unmitigated defeat in the form of a complete and permanent overthrow of the divine oracles of Jehovah God. In reality they had subverted the very causes and interests which they thought they had salvaged and protected. And they had done it with an incomparably great display of fuzzy and unrealistic thinking.

The second tragic mistake, which was from the standpoint of the world, was that they had moved the entire human intellectual enterprise from solid foundations onto unsound, radically vitiated foundations. In 1830, when Arnold wrote, the scientists were budding scientists. They were very acute, intelligent novices. Scientists were then only just beginning to scratch a few surfaces of the phenomena which needed to be

investigated. The sciences were the beginnings of sciences, and they were bachelors of science. Nevertheless, they did not hesitate in the name of “Science” to speak of germs of consciousness in primeval fireballs. They made claims for their then sciences which no one would dare to make for today's greatly more advanced sciences. It was a great display of intellectual arrogance. The world was being treated to a display of the fantastic thinking of intellectuals who were “drunk with sight of power” (Kipling). All ought to have known that many conclusions and opinions of the then scientists were very doubtful — nay, incredibly shallow. All ought to have reckoned soberly with the obvious possibility that it might be impossible for men ever to discover answers to many of the questions they were raising. However, a strange frenzy of enthusiasm for the physical sciences had seized on men's minds. They ignored the fact that the scientists whom they trusted were incessantly changing their opinions. They failed to realize that they were as yet only budding scientists at best. The sight of a few truly remarkable discoveries had blinded them to the fact that they were only beginning to scratch the surfaces of hundreds of unfathomable phenomena. If any did realize that much remained still to be discovered, and that they still had much to learn, yet even they could not imagine that any knowledge which they might acquire in the future could ever contradict their rashly formed opinions. And of course they never even dreamed that in future days all scientists who became Positivists would cease to claim that the methods of science could enable anyone to discover the natures of physical realities.

As a result, the entire human intellectual enterprise was swept headlong onto a great prolonged antisupernaturalistic “kick,” and incurred great damages. Some of the damages were the direct losses which it suffered because the Bible does contain much scientific knowledge which no scientists have ever discovered or can ever. Their theories and hypotheses filled the air

As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams
(Milton).

Whenever their hypotheses have contradicted the Bible's scientific knowledge, they have erred. Scripture also contains much historical knowledge which no historians have ever discovered or can ever. Whenever their guesses have contradicted its historical knowledge, or its

Traditionsgeschichte, or its Offenbarungsgeschichte, they have erred, and the entire human intellectual enterprise has suffered loss.

Consider! If Theology is the “Queen of the Sciences,” which it is, and if the intellectual world has repudiated Theology and thinks that it has lost nothing, then is not the human intellectual enterprise “poor, blind, and naked”? Besides, if Biblical Apologetics is the Emperor over the House of Intellect, which it is, and if the intellectual world has repudiated Biblical Apologetics and thinks that it has lost nothing, is not the human intellectual enterprise “poor, blind, and naked”? Not to mention the far greater losses of Jehovah the God of Heaven and of His true adorable and only Son!

Consider, further! If Metaphysics, which includes Ontology and Gnosiology, is the science of all the sciences, which it is; and if the overconfident claims of intellectuals have caused the intellectual world to repudiate Metaphysics, which they have in the case of all scientists who are Positivists and many others; then is not the human intellectual enterprise “poor, and blind, and naked”? Surely, jettisoning the words of Jehovah the God of Heaven has had some dire consequences!

In view of the natures of these two tragic mistakes, to dismiss the oracles of God in the way in which mankind has done was to make the greatest mistake which it was possible not only for the churches but for the world to make. Nevertheless, men everywhere thought of it as the wisest of arrangements. To them this was “a truism which no one should ever dream of questioning” (Arnold).

Grave Concomitant Damages

In addition to the direct losses just mentioned, the over-investment of time, intellect, and energy in purely scientific pursuits inflicted grave damages upon the entire human intellectual enterprise which, rightly considered, contains the human moral enterprise and the human religious enterprise and all the valid interests of civilization as well as the purely scientific investigations.

In short, there is an ecology of the intellectual world and an ecology of civilization. Throughout the nineteenth century the great emphasis upon the physical sciences and technology created several very detrimental lopsided developments.

Just as the growth of an overshadowing tree will take away the vitally important sunlight from the plants in a garden, and as its roots will rob the garden's plants of vitally important nourishment from the soil, and also as its roots will sometimes secrete poisons which will kill the garden's plants, so it was in the case of civilization's ecology. The overdevelopment of a few intellectual aspects of civilized life thrust the human moral and religious enterprises into a condition of neglect and produced a disastrous moral and religious underdevelopment.

The all-overshadowing overdevelopment has been a great evil, first, because moral science and ethical knowledge are the only things that can enable men to control their feelings effectively; that is, enough to be able to prevent many destructive — and frequently self-destructive — practices and developments. It was a great evil, second, because without religious sanctions moral and ethical knowledge is utterly feeble. It has no authority. Indeed, it can not have any. And it has no really effective sanctions. Consequently, the lopsided overdevelopment of intellect has rendered moral science impotent and has deprived the world of the moral ballast which moral science contributed to the ecology of civilization. Furthermore, the scientific emphasis was so largely upon physical agencies and processes that it has caused the human intellectual enterprise to discard and lose many perfectly sound intellectual concepts, categories, and much knowledge, such as the things of soul, spirit, and personal identities. Finally, the worst result of the overdevelopment has been that it has saddled an immensely powerful materialistic bias upon nearly all minds, even upon the minds of those who were not, or are not, or never will be Materialists. It planted in almost all men's minds the pernicious idea that the only valid explanations of phenomena are materialistic explanations, and also the idea that materialistic explanations are the only kind of explanations that are worthy of an intellectual's attention. As a result endless attempts have been made to force strained and unnatural materialistic explanations and interpretations upon many kinds of phenomena which ought never to be explained in any such way, and can never be. Such explanations misrepresent everything. Indeed, this strange enthusiasm for the physical sciences rendered every man incapable of trusting his own senses, or even of trusting the most basic intuitions of the human mind by which we know that we know certain things, and those by which we know that we are free to choose. It even led many to believe, contrary to the universal experience of all men, that they and all men are robotic automata.

Finally, it is necessary to say a word concerning the incomparably great enormity which today's "incredibly evil situation" has involved. We mean that feature which has inflicted the greatest damages of all and which has caused a confirmed alienation from God as follows.

It is certain that there can be no greater enormity than that the God of Heaven should speak and that almost all men should deny that He ever spoke the words which He had actually spoken.

Yet this very enormity has been perpetrated, and it has **three principal aspects**: first, as it affects Jehovah and moves Him to respond; second, as it affects each individual who has committed it; and third, as it affects the world at large. First, then, as to how it affects Jehovah.

A number of developments and events have thrust, or jockeyed, or dragooned almost all men into a fatal condition in which they are incessantly perpetrating the incomparably great enormity and by doing so have been outraging and enraging Jehovah the God of Heaven.

The situation would be hopeless because it is beyond the power of any human agency to correct it and its concomitant evils. The only possible way to correct it is by restoring Jehovah's oracles to their rightful place as true words of the Living God. Jehovah alone can correct it. He will rectify it by two actions. The first will be by inflicting the plagues which He will inflict upon the world when His Seven Angels blow the Seven Trumpets of Revelation. And the second will be by creating His fulfillments of the long-range predictive prophecies which Revelation contains.

In order to understand how repudiating and discarding the Bible's concept of genuine divine oracles has outraged and enraged Jehovah, it is only necessary to consider what every person's speech and writings are, and what they do, and what they alone can do.

They give a person his unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and in-eradicable personal identity.

And therefore, when the first two developments which were described earlier repudiated and discarded the Bible's concept of genuine divine oracles they made it impossible for men really to believe that He, the great Jehovah, had ever spoken, or could ever have spoken, or ever would have.

The great principle which is involved is the principle of personal identity — of personal individuation or individualization. And the great question for Jehovah became:

To have or not to have an unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identity?

This great principle is universally and always applicable. It is a bedrock foundation upon which Jehovah's system of Heaven and Earth rests because it is a necessary foundation of all justice; and also because it is a necessary foundation of all moral responsibility, including all intellectual accountability; and further because it is a necessary foundation of all religious responsibility. It applies not only to every angel and man, but also with special force both to Jehovah and to Jesus Christ our Lord, the Son of God. It is the foundation upon which the claim of Jesus that all His utterances are oracular rests. The great principle which is involved is the principle of personal identity — of personal individuation or individualization.

Therefore, when men rejected the Bible's sound idea of genuine oracles, two results followed.

The first was that Jehovah God no longer had an unmistakably knowable personal identity. This meant that they had ipso facto lost their grip upon Him. They had rendered Him unknown — nay, unknowable. And some of them — those who had a Kantian epistemology — even wanted it to be thus. A little later this would become crystal clear to all when scholars would “discover” that the writers and/or the editors of different parts of Scripture had held differing and sometimes contradictory conceptions of God.

And the second result was that they had ipso facto lost their grip upon the crucially important, vital principle which that sound idea embodies and exemplifies; namely, the principle of an unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identity of every angel and every man and of God. Consequently, the situation which needs to be rectified is one in which almost all men have failed to perceive the crucial importance of a vital basic principle which is universally and always applicable, and which is a necessary foundation of all justice. And viewed from the standpoint of the human race and the eternal welfare of its members, the most significant thing is that they — and above all their

religious leaders — have lost all sense of how important it is to apply it in one of the most necessary and obvious ways; namely, in the case of Jehovah the God of Heaven.

Certainly, when Jehovah God formed the natural and the supernatural, which together constitute His one system, He used the principle of the unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identity of every angel and every man and of Himself as one great foundation upon which His system rests. It became the basic foundation of all intellectual responsibility and accountability, and of all moral responsibility and accountability, and of all religious responsibility and accountability.

Of all **intellectual** responsibility and accountability, because every valid attribution of truth or falsehood, and of reality or unreality, must rest upon realities in the form of unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identities, and can rest upon nothing less.

Of all **moral** responsibility and accountability, because every valid attribution of honor and every valid imputation of dishonor must rest upon realities in the form of unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable personal identities, and can rest upon nothing less.

And it is a basic foundation of all **religious** responsibility and accountability, because all valid worship and obedient submission to the divine will, and all human glorification of God, and of the Son of God, and all divine glorification of the saints, as well as all divine condemnations of sinners, and all divine blessings, presuppose the existence of personal beings whose personal identities are unmistakably knowable, inalienable, and ineradicable.

Such are the basic realities, the foundations, upon which Jehovah's one system of the supernatural and the natural rests.

Now, when we examine this great principle of personal identity — of personal individuation or individualization — we see that it depends totally upon linguistic foundations. It is certainly the case with all rational beings that it depends upon semantic, semasiological, and semeiotical foundations; that is, upon meanings in the form of defined concepts and terms, upon semantic integrity and truthfulness, and upon verbalized inter-social communications — all three! These alone make the great principle possible and uphold it.

Therefore, whoever recognizes the importance — nay, the indispensable role — of these basic linguistic realities has discovered the intellectual vantage ground from which he can perceive clearly what the greatest evils of the present situation are, and why it is absolutely necessary that Jehovah shall correct them effectively and permanently. From this vantage ground he can also perceive that the kind of events which Revelation foretells, when they have occurred, will remove the evils and will re-establish the authentic words of our God, as well as the great basic principle upon which the basic realities rest, upon new and everlasting bedrock foundations. They will produce a very magnificent and most effective self-vindication of Jehovah's personal self-identity.

Obviously, destroying all credible belief in Jehovah's genuine oracles has virtually muzzled Him. The result has also been virtually to turn Jehovah the God of Heaven into an "Unknown God," if not even into a dumb and autistic unknowable God! This plight forced Him to ask:

Shall I, Jehovah God, have an unmistakably knowable personal identity, or not?

In other words, He had to ask how the great basic principle of an unmistakably knowable personal identity applies in the case of Himself and His Son.

Obviously, in the case of men (and angels), no man can have an unmistakably knowable personal identity unless he demands that others shall exercise due care to ascertain his words, and unless he insists that they shall always distinguish carefully and correctly between his words and those of all others. For otherwise it will be impossible for him to speak his own mind in his own words in such a way that we and others will have to know that he did indeed actually speak his own words and that he did not speak other words; that is, other words which gossips, slanderers, forgers, impersonators, false prophets, higher critics, historians, or any other persons had put into his mouth. It is thus in the case of men.

And it is exactly the same in principle in the case of Jehovah God. The chief difference between His case and the case with any man or angel is due to the inessential concomitant circumstance that it has been the usual practice of Jehovah to remain invisible to human eyes. This only means that in His case it is doubly necessary that His servants shall correctly ascertain His authentic words and be fully assured that they are

His and not any man's. And this is one reason why He regards it as intolerable whenever any servant of His fails to distinguish sharply between God's ideas and the ideas of all others, including those of the servant himself; and between God's words and the words of all others, including those of the servant himself. Certainly, Jehovah took care to make Balaam know that He insisted that Balaam must not speak anything but only Jehovah's authentic words (Numbers 22:20,35, 38; 23:5, 12,16,26; and 24:15). Certainly Moses understood this matter very well (Numbers 12:6-8 and 16:28). And certainly Jesus our Lord understood perfectly how to make the necessary basic distinction between His words and the words of His Father, and how to apply it rigorously. This understanding was the foundation of His perfect submission to the divine will. It was also the foundation of His right to insist that men must recognize that the words that He spoke were not His own, but were the words of His Father who had sent Him, and who had given them to Him. And consequently it is strictly impossible for anyone to do justice to Jesus our Lord unless he understands the Bible's definition of genuine oracles and applies it rigorously.

Obviously, this basic principle applies not only in the case of God and His words, but it applies equally in the case of every one else, living or dead, and his words. And consequently, the result of failures to make this basic principle clear, and to apply it rigorously, will always be to misrepresent reality, and will almost always be to perpetrate an injustice; and in the case of Jehovah, as we shall now point out, an absolutely horrid injustice.

In order for anyone vividly to realize this, it is necessary for him to put himself into Jehovah's place. He needs to imagine how he would react if all his words and deeds were dismissed as unauthentic and attributed to others — to others who were unknown and unknowable nobodies. He would be outraged. Moreover, he would not complain that those who had done this to him did not love him. No. He would complain that they had not known how to be fair to him. Their basic offenses were against justice and truth (= realities) in the first instance. Any lack of love was a secondary matter. It may have been equally outrageous or more so. It may have been a more serious fault in some important regards. Nevertheless, it was a very secondary matter. For he would know that the obligations of justice and truth were primary. They were the decisive considerations regardless of any questions about love or lack of

love. He would know that he had a right which the offenders had taken away from him, but which no one could ever have had any right to take away from him. He would complain of a horrid injustice. Certainly, anyone would know that this is the correct way to understand what others had done to him. Certainly, therefore, every one ought to perceive that it is the correct way to understand what men have done to Jehovah. They have been abominably unjust to Him. Moreover, their thinking concerning His existence and His deeds and His words has been so completely unrealistic that they can hardly comprehend either the fact that Jehovah has really spoken or the fact that they have regarded actual words of His as if they were things of naught. Now, this lack of realism has only made their offense doubly inexcusable and doubly culpable. So that, when Jehovah rises up and punishes men, including many Jews and Christians, for perpetrating a horrid injustice of this sort against Him, they will really have no right at all to complain.

Such being the correct understanding of what men have done to Jehovah God, it is shocking to observe the astonishing thoughtlessness in the conduct of those who have treated Him in this abominable way. In their actions and in their words they show no signs at all of realizing that they have done anything that might offend Him. Therefore, we must ask:

How can it be that they show no signs of realizing that they may have offended Him? or that they may have acted unjustly toward Him? or that they may have violated a basic principle which is a foundation of righteousness upon which the whole rational creation of Jehovah God rests?

These questions do not concern the horrid injustice itself. They concern the astonishing thoughtlessness of the perpetrators. They require answers. And because the issues are so clear, and the injustice so undeniable, the answers will surely be very significant. But unfortunately they cannot be complimentary to the offenders, whoever they may be, and however great their repute as intellectuals or as religious leaders. We shall say more concerning this appalling thoughtlessness in a moment.

The perpetrators of this enormity have very effectively muzzled Jehovah. They have cancelled and discarded all His utterances, and have

plainly signified that they will not regard any statements of His as genuine words of God in genuine oracles. Certainly, it behooved the all-wise God to foresee that such an incredibly evil situation would arise. It also behooved Him to be prepared to deal with it when it had arisen; that is, to be ready in some forceful and ever memorable way to make the whole world know that He did indeed say what He had said, and that He did indeed write what He had written. And it behooved Him to show His just resentment, to make all the perpetrators of this enormity fully aware of what they had done to Him, and to rebuke them appropriately.

The Seven-Sealed Book, which Revelation has revealed and which our Lord opened nineteen hundred years ago, has shown us the answer Jehovah has long been standing ready to make. The Seven Angels will deliver His answer. The Seven Trumpets shall sound. The events which they will herald and introduce will take the whole world, and especially the intellectuals, off an already too long prolonged antiscientific infatuation. They will end the muzzling of Jehovah, and will make the world know from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same that Jehovah has spoken. Now, in this connection it is very important to observe the way in which Jehovah will end the muzzling. We must note exactly what the Seven-Sealed Book says that He will do. In Revelation 11 and in Revelation 15 we read:

And the temple of God was opened (ἡνοιγῆ) in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings ... (Revelation 11:19).

And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened (ἡνοιγῆ) ... (Revelation 15:5).

“The ark of His testament” is the repository of His Ten Commandments, and “the testimony” is the Ten Commandments. Therefore, these verses describe the great culminating act of Jehovah — the act in which He will vindicate and avenge His defied and discarded Ten Commandments, and in which He will also declare, announce, proclaim, and promulgate His Ten Commandments as the foundation of His Throne and as the Law of His Universe. Moreover, the Seven Bowls of the Divine Wrath will then function as a Sevenfold “Amen.” For Jehovah will perform this act toward the close of the events of the Seventh Trumpet and immediately be-

fore the Seven Angels pour out the Seven Bowls of His Wrath upon the whole world. And thus, by means of this act, and especially when it is backed up by the Seven Bowls of His wrath poured out, He will then say to the whole world, and especially to those who hate Him:

What I have written, I have written.

This act of Jehovah and those Bowls of His wrath will effectively reestablish all the words of Jehovah as unquestionably His words and as unquestionably the Law of His Universe. His enemies had gagged Him and stopped His mouth. When they did so, something was needed which would show the whole world that

... the word of our God shall stand for ever (Isaiah 40:8).

Those culminating acts of Jehovah will show the whole world that nothing shall make His faithfulness of none effect. Indeed, shall anything ever make of none effect the faithfulness of God?

God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy words, and mightest prevail (νικησεις) when thou comest into judgment ...(Romans 3:4).

So much then as to how it affects Jehovah and how He responds and will respond.

But now, **second**, how does the modern incredibly evil situation affect each individual? And especially, how does it affect the perpetrators of the enormity?

The principal thing to observe in this connection is that the simplicity and clarity of the Bible's idea of genuine oracles of Jehovah — especially in conjunction with the almost endlessly repeated "Thus saith Jehovah" — make it function always and everywhere as an acid test. For it is an acid test of the quality of every believer's faith; and it also functions as an acid test whenever the Bible's "Thus saith Jehovah" confronts and challenges any unbeliever.

The Bible's idea of genuine oracles is very simple and perfectly clear. It is so simple and clear that no one can ever fail to understand it. One can only accept it or reject it. If he rejects it openly and avowedly, there is no problem; for everyone knows what is going on. But whenever-

er anyone rejects it otherwise, much confusion ensues. This occurs because many try to offer explanations. For example, some feel that they must put something into its place and represent it as being "just as much" the word of God as the real thing, or equally as good as or superior to the real thing. Others feel that they must disparage the Bible's idea of genuine oracles, or slander it, or insist that it would be impossible for God to speak to men in human language; or unworthy of God for Him to do so; or injurious to men's dignity, or infringing upon men's freedom, etc. In all such discussions those who have tried to offer the world something just as good as the real thing have never convinced themselves, much less any others.

In any case, however, the most significant fact is that the incredibly evil situation always functions as an acid test of the quality of every believer's faith. For it infallibly reveals all those who know what genuine oracles are, and who truly believe that the Bible contains genuine oracles of Jehovah. And it also flushes out and exposes all those — including all Jews and Christians — who do not know what genuine oracles are, and who do not really believe that the Bible contains genuine oracles of Jehovah. Thus, however deplorable the incredibly evil situation may be in some respects, it has certainly performed a great service for God. In fact, it has been accomplishing one necessary thing of greatest value. For if Jehovah's "hand shall find out all His enemies," and if His "right hand shall find out those that hate Him" (Psalm 21:8), then the incredibly evil situation has certainly been flushing out great numbers of them most effectively. For example, it has exposed all the Jews and Christians who have such a feeble grasp of what it means to have actual words of God in genuine oracles of Jehovah, and who have so little comprehension of their actual value, that they can suffer the loss of them with no sense of any great deprivation, and indeed, with no feeling of pain whatever. Obviously, the thinking of all such Jews and Christians is so completely divorced from reality that they do not understand that Jehovah is a real, honest-to-goodness person and that they have dishonored Him, put Him in an impossible position, and offended Him.

Certainly, many have been and are guilty of committing this enormity, or of abetting its commission, or of accepting the modern status quo without deploring it or making any protest. Of course, many of them have a gracious Advocate who will say:

Father, forgive them, because they know not what they do.

Nevertheless, we must remember two facts. The first is that almost all of them were responsible for knowing what they did not know. And the second is that in the present case they could have had no excuse whatever for not knowing what they did not know. Indeed, the simplicity and clarity of the Bible's idea of genuine oracles — "Thus saith Jehovah" — as well as the obviousness of all the pertinent aspects of this crucially important question, make it impossible to believe that non-idiot human beings could ever fail to know the essential facts and understand their principal implications. The explanation of their conduct is that they had believed a slander and it had conditioned their thinking, as follows.

They dreaded the use of a mere word, the word "dictation" in the expression "verbal dictation." This usage had been slandered and it had haunted and terrified them. What had happened was that all forms of the word "dictate" had taken on bad connotations because quite a few "dictators" had been the vilest persons imaginable. Therefore, when some scholars and other intellectuals said that God would not have "dictated" words to His prophets because "dictating" to them would have degraded them, and would have turned them into just so many despicable "amanuenses," simple, well-intentioned souls — believe it or not — believed such rot. They banned the use of the phrase "verbal dictation" in order to save Jehovah's reputation. And in order to save their own repute as high-minded theologians they washed their hands in innocence and fastidiously dissociated themselves from all such usage. As if such a simple-minded reaction were not enough they then proceeded to try to salvage some belief in a divine inspiration of prophets and apostles and in the authority of the Bible. They formulated some new descriptions of inspiration to replace the only possible sound description of the character of Jehovah's genuine oracles, and to replace the only possible sound explanation of the Bible's authority as the Word of God. In all such activities the timid souls showed no signs of realizing that all men and angels, and God Himself have what we would probably call personal, quasi-legal "literary rights of authorship" which every one ought to recognize and respect. The complainants should have known that for the purposes of the record every man, and angel, and God has a right to "dictate" his own sentiments in his own name to any and every other person.

This strange panic and some other related facts have forced many intelligent observers to believe that at least part of the explanation of the behavior of the perpetrators is that the “god” of this world must have blinded their minds. Another part of the explanation is that very many of them have wished to remain blind. They know what they do not want to hear. However rational men may be in some regards and on some occasions, they have always been blind, and therefore less than fully rational, toward Jehovah and especially toward His words. One sure sign of this blindness is the extreme rarity of thankful statements which say how fortunate or how blessed we are, or how wonderful it is to have express, explicit, verbatim words of Jehovah. We almost never meet with any expressions of a wish for verbatim words of God. An equally sure sign of men's blindness is the total absence of any expressions of sorrow that men have treated Jehovah so shabbily and shamelessly, and have dismissed His words so unceremoniously. No one ever seems to think of how He must feel about being dishonored as they have dishonored Him, or to feel sorry that He has received such treatment. It is a situation that asks for the stones to cry out. It is one which surely calls for some expression of His displeasure — some reminder to the perpetrators that He is God and they are men, and that they are on Earth and He is in Heaven. Certainly, the incredibly evil modern situation has brought to light some of the most radical defects in human rationality.

These remarks sufficiently indicate how the modern incredibly evil situation has affected very many individuals, and especially, how it has affected the perpetrators of the enormity, we shall note, **third**, how it has affected the world at large.

When men believe that the Bible contains true words of God in genuine oracles, then they fear Jehovah and love Him. As a result, the Scriptures can then function as the most powerful educating agency in existence to teach mankind pure morals and true religion, and to produce sound manners and honorable industry. At present, however, the incredibly evil situation has made the powerful influence of Jehovah inoperative by removing the fear of Him and weakening the love of Him. The world has been the great loser. And the excellent work of giving mankind pure morals and true religion can not move forward again under full steam until the Bible's genuine oracles come fully into their own, as they will after the Temple of Jehovah's Testimony which in Heaven has been opened (Revelation 11:19 and 15:5).

Here ends the statement of the fourth and most important reason why it is necessary essential to preserve the Bible's definition of the Word of God intact and to apply it rigorously.

Fifth Reason

The fifth reason why it is essential to preserve the Bible's definition of the Word of God intact and to apply it rigorously is as follows. Theology and Ethics (= Moral Science) are two great sciences. Each of them needs truly adequate foundations. If the words of Jehovah in the Bible are really genuine oracles, then they can be a truly adequate foundation for the science of Theology and for the science of Ethics. But otherwise Theology and Ethics will not have really adequate foundations, and can never have. They must go begging for them. Their situation is as follows.

Theology is a science. It can not be a genuine science without assured knowledge concerning God. Of course, Natural Theology will always supply much knowledge of God when we draw sound inferences from many undeniable facts. It is certainly true that some of the knowledge that it provides concerning Him and His ways is very important and valuable. And moreover, it is not obtainable from any other source. Indeed, some of it consists of unique demonstrations of Jehovah's goodness. Nevertheless, Natural Theology is intrinsically incapable of supplying direct and valid knowledge either of many of Jehovah's greatest and best attributes or of many features of His holy will and ways. And therefore, there can not be a truly adequate science of Theology without much more knowledge and other kinds of knowledge than Natural Theology can provide; that is, without assured knowledge of those personal moral excellences of Jehovah which are His best attributes, and which make Him so worthy to be honored, loved, adored, and worshipped. Only genuine oracles in the form of verbal statements from Jehovah Himself — that is, as the Bible defines genuine oracles — can ever provide religion and theological science with the best and most significant kinds of knowledge of Him. Only He, by means of His very own words, can give us assured knowledge of His own nature quâ God, and of His own thoughts, intentions, purposes, and will. And of course, it is particularly important that Jehovah shall do this because His character has always scandalized so many. Therefore, He must make men know what He really is for two purposes. The first is in order to prevent presumptuous apologists from soft-pedaling His moral earnestness, or His uncompromising holiness, or His insistence upon having exclusive worship; that is, in their attempts to make Him more presentable by cleaning up His image. The second is in order to force men to know Him better, that

so knowing Him they may discover that the very qualities which at first scandalize men are really excellences of the highest order. In any case, however, He alone knows His own mind. And therefore any truly adequate science of Theology must be based upon two foundations: namely, upon what Natural Theology discovers, and upon Jehovah's own personal knowledge of what He is and of what He has done. Only His very own words in Scripture's genuine, miracle-attested, prophetically sealed oracles contain the divine knowledge which Theology requires, if it is to be what it can be and ought to be. For these reasons the Bible is a god-send for theologians because it supplies them with an abundance of genuine oracles in which Jehovah directly informs them of His will, His ways, His purposes, and His future activities.

Ethics is also a science. In Ethics or Moral Science one question which is vitally important is the question of authority. God's very own words alone have real authority — intrinsic authority, divine authority. Anything else is merely some man's opinion which, as such, can never have any intrinsic authority. Another question which is vitally important in Ethics is the question concerning obligation. A Christian is obligated to keep Christ's commandments. A Jew is obligated to keep Jehovah's commandments. And if “God commands all men everywhere to repent because He has appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He has ordained, whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:30f.), then the true foundation of Ethics is believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and repenting toward the God of Heaven. And of course, Moral Science is powerless without effective sanctions, and only God's warnings and threats have really effective sanctions. To attempt to achieve anything constructive in the Science of Ethics without having a divine authority, and while ignoring those concrete obligations which divine authority has actually established, and the effective sanctions which divine authority has long threatened and enforced — this is a truly Sisyphean labor, the very essence of futility. In any case, however, it is obvious that preserving intact the Bible's definition of genuine oracles not only provides the best of foundations for each of these two great sciences, Theology and Ethics, but it also directly determines the whole character of each, and gives them their power to command respect.

Sixth Reason

Finally, a sixth reason why it is essential to preserve the Bible's definition of genuine oracles is that all clear and honest thinking in Religion and Theology must be established upon solid semantic foundations. The idea of the Word of God is a very basic foundation-concept. As a result, it is not too much to say that if this idea ever becomes an ill-defined concept, or if it is turned into a congeries of discordant concepts, then not only all Theology but also all the foundations of Ethics will become a mass of uncertainties. How many different ideas of "revelation" have professional theologians dreamed up and suggested lately? They invented most of them, perhaps all of them, in deliberate attempts to evade the Bible's literal interpretation of "the Word of God," which they could not endure or submit to, but to do so while retaining the prestigious title "the Word of God" for their watered down interpretations of "revelation." Every one of them has its own special definition of the Word of God. The world has witnessed a series of attempts to repudiate and discard the normal, natural, long established, traditional, plain, obvious interpretation of "the Word (or words) of God." Under such circumstances, when hosts of scholars are asserting that God in some sense "said" things that He never did say at all, it is impossible to have sound semantic foundations for religious, or theological, or ethical thinking. The elimination of the Bible's sound kind of genuine oracles inevitably obliterates the essential semantic realities. It will be impossible to recover sound semantic foundations without recovering the Bible's definition of genuine oracles and making it normative in all religious, theological, and ethical thinking.

For all six of the preceding reasons it is absolutely necessary to preserve and rigorously apply the Bible's sound view of genuine oracles. Jehovah Himself has required every one — including His Son and His prophets — to make this distinction. In doing so He has only insisted that when He speaks it is one thing, and when anyone else speaks it is something quite different. He has simply insisted that His words not be attributed to anyone else, and that the words of any other not be attributed to Him. This principle is an indispensable basic foundation stone in the ethics of all personal responsibility. It is a valid basis upon which to determine all personal well-deserving and honor, and also upon which to determine all personal ill-deserving and blame. Certainly, the reasonableness of requiring all angels and men to observe this distinction is obvious, and its logical and its ethical justifications are absolutely compelling. Besides, in cases which require men to believe and trust state-

ments, as Christian faith requires such belief, everyone rightly assumes that if God tells us something it is ipso facto true, and therefore, a source of genuine knowledge because God has knowledge which no man ever has.

In any case, however, there can be no question about what the Bible considers genuine oracles. And certainly the Bible's book of Revelation claims to give us such statements. Indeed, it is almost totally oracular in the sense just defined. Its oracles were delivered to us by the Apostle John the son of Zebedee. He had received them in two series of visions and auditions which he beheld successively. The first series of revelations came to him during the Christophany of Revelation 1:10—3:22. The second series came to him during the Theophany of Revelation 4:1—22:5. The first series of oracles came to him from the High Priest of Heaven and Earth. In the Christophany the Son of God was functioning as a priest in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle not made with hands which exists in Heaven. John reported that Christophany and the oracles which he then received. The second series of Revelation's oracles came to him from the Living God Himself. For in the Theophany which John saw He was on His Throne in the Holy of Holies of that same Tabernacle. Scripture certainly leads us to believe that some of the revelata existed in His mind before He gave them to His Son. For example, the point in Revelation 5 is that the contents of the Seven-Sealed Book were not known to the Son of God before the Lamb took the book and opened it. John reported that Theophany and the oracles which he then received, especially the contents of the Seven-Sealed Book. Thus, Revelation's contents initially came to him directly from the Son of God, the High Priest of Heaven, and later, in the case of the Seven-Sealed book, indirectly, first from the enthroned Father to the Lamb, then to His angel, then to John, and then to us.

The writer accepts Revelation's claim at its face value. However, if anyone does not accept it, and even if he is interested in Revelation merely as an antiquarian, he should still be willing to learn what interpretation he ought to put upon its alleged oracles.

In this connection we shall watch our language carefully. For we must not use language which implies that John was a literary person who first gathered materials for a book he was writing; and then created an outline, and cast his materials into a form which he decided would be ef-

fective for accomplishing some purpose that he had in his mind. No! But in Revelation he simply recounted the things that he saw and heard. This is what he tells us, and in this crucially significant matter we ought to believe what he says.

If any one — any man or church — has genuine divine oracles from Jehovah, the God of Heaven, but has lost the intellectual ability, or the will, to recognize that they are genuine oracles, what then? What more can the God of Heaven say to such a man or church? Obviously, He must use more convincing ways and means of speaking; that is, if He wants to make them know that He has spoken. For example, He can use the Seven Trumpets of Revelation. If they speak to men, they will provide a very good answer to the members of the so-called "Jesus Seminar," and to all others in the churches who have been unable or unwilling to recognize that the Bible contains genuine divine oracles which reveal the mind and will of God. If they can provide a devastating answer to all such unbelief, the Seven Trumpets will be an ideal way of speaking to all mankind, including members of the synagogues and churches who have ceased to consider Holy Scripture a genuinely oracular Word of God; and who therefore have apostatized from true doctrines of Jehovah's divine creation of the world, and from true doctrines of Jehovah's intervening supernatural management of the course of human history.

(To be continued)