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LUTHERAN CHURCH -
DOCTRINAL AND
CONTROVERSIAL WORKS

**THE APPROACH TO, AND
RETHINKING OUR DOCTRINAL POSITION AS
THIS APPLIES TO THE INDIVIDUAL PASTOR**

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**ORTHODOXY VERSUS NEO-ORTHODOXY
AS IT CONCERNS DOCTRINAL DISCIPLINE**

BY

REINHOLD H. GOETJEN

WHERE'S MOSES?

IN TWO PARTS

BY

E. P. SCHULZE

The Approach To, and Limitations of, Rethinking Our Doctrinal Position as This Applies to the Individual Pastor

BY DONALD W. HINRICHS

(A pastoral conference essay delivered to the Oregon Pastoral Conference in Immanuel Luther Church, Hood River, Oregon, February, 1962)

PREFACE

(composed after the conference)

I must confess that I was quite dismayed when I received the assignment from the program committee of the Oregon Pastoral Conference to prepare a paper on the topic given above. I felt that the title implied something that I could not accept, namely that there is, or may be, a need to adjust or modify our doctrinal position as a result of recent controversies, the ecumenical movement, etc.

Then the thought began to shape itself in my mind that this might be a God-given opportunity. There is a kind of "rethinking" that all of us must do. It is based on the conviction that God speaks to us in the clear, infallible, inerrant Scriptures. This does not at all mean that we have "God in a box." It involves no denial of the "human element" in the Scriptures, correctly understood. It does mean that we do not expect to find "new truths", but by Spirit-wrought faith continually to be "guided into all truth."

It is my conviction that such "rethinking" will result in a firm doctrinal position and also in the firm, evangelical discipline that is absolutely necessary to maintain it.

D. W. HINRICHS

SEARCHING FOR CERTAINTY

It was Thursday evening, and the pastor's class was having its weekly meeting. Mr. Lane spoke: "Pastor, you have been giving us the doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church and supporting it with passages from the Bible. But, as you know, other denominations use the same Bible to support their teachings in opposition to the Lutheran Church. I'll admit, your presentation is very convincing. But I venture to say that a Presbyterian or a Baptist minister could probably do about as well for his position. Now, it doesn't seem quite right that I should accept the Lutheran position and say that I believe it, simply because I have been exposed to it and not to the others. On the other hand, I am afraid that if I were given an equal exposure to all the other denominations, I would be more confused than ever. How is a person like myself to know what is really true?"

All of you have probably answered that question, not merely once, but many times. I am sure that you directed the questioners to the Bible as a book that does not confuse or deceive, but one from which God gives the certainty they seek, if only they will go to it in true faith. Perhaps you quoted John 8:31-32, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Perhaps also 1 Cor. 2:5, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The next morning Pastor Mueller sits at his desk and reads an editorial in the *Lutheran* or in the *American Lutheran*. He becomes aware of a certain difference of emphasis which, he feels, is due to a slight shift in the doctrinal base from that which he has regarded as Lutheran. His theological senses are alerted. He is accustomed to testing truth. It is his responsibility to His Lord and to the people for whom he is a preacher and teacher of truth. If there is error here, he must not be deceived by it, but, as he has opportunity, he must oppose and expose it.

On the other hand, he is aware that the Father of Lies is exceedingly clever. If he can persuade the pastor to reject truth because it comes in a different dress, or in a different application from

that to which he is accustomed, or if he can get him to be sure of his position because he learned it from Dr. Pieper, or because the Missouri Synod has always firmly maintained it, Satan has already won a victory.

Pastor Mueller needs the same advice as that which he gave to the man in his class: go to the Word of God; let God speak to you and teach you without hindrance from your preconceptions or prejudices of any kind, not only the denominational and environmental ones, but also those arising from fleshly pride and self-sufficiency. All of us must apply to the fleshly thoughts which our own hearts devise against the knowledge of God the words that St. Paul in 2 Cor. 10:4,5 applies to the enemies of the Gospel in Corinth: "The weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought" (anti-God thinking) "captive to obey Christ."

WHAT DO YOU MEAN— RETHINKING?

It will be evident from the above, I think, what the word "rethinking" in the topic of this essay means to me. There is no suggestion, first of all, that a doctrinal position may come merely from "thinking." Having a doctrinal position is nothing more and nothing less than believing God's Word, and such faith is always God's gift. Thinking certainly is to be done, but never independently of Scripture or in judgment over it. Secondly, although the prefix "re" in "rethinking" may suggest to some the idea of change for the purpose of improvement, I accept on suggestion that our doctrinal position as such has in any way been shown to be faulty or out of date. I do not advocate uncertainty regarding it, but only that every Christian, and certainly every pastor, must continually go to the fountain of God's Word for what he says, confesses, teaches, or preaches. We must be aware of the constant danger of being "deceived or seduced into misbelief," in the words of Luther's explanation of the Sixth Petition.

So that we may understand each other and speak about the same thing, a few comments may be in order also about the term "doctrinal position." To my mind it is practically synonymous with what we call *publica doctrina*, public teaching. For the meaning of that term permit me to quote from Resolution 9, Committee 3, of the 1959 San Francisco convention:* "Resolved: A.

That Synod further clarify its position by reaffirming that every doctrinal statement of a confessional nature adopted by Synod as a true exposition of the Holy Scriptures is to be regarded as public doctrine in Synod." It is true, as Dr. Behnken has pointed out, no doctrinal statement is specifically named in this resolution, but I think it would not be seriously questioned that such documents as the **Brief Statement** and the **Statement on Scripture** were in * Proceedings, page 191

tended to be included, along with the confessional writings of our Church, as establishing our doctrinal position.

Now then, what is the approach to such rethinking of our doctrinal position? What are the limitations?

THE APPROACH

Jesus promises that it will be possible to have a definite and firm doctrinal position when He says, John 8:31,32: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." That is His recipe for rethinking. To continue in His Word, of course, means much more than merely continuing to read and study it. As He here says that we are to continue in His Word, He also says (John 15:4,7) that we are to abide in Him and He in us, using the same Greek word, *menon*. What Jesus requires of us, then, is that we accept His Word in simple faith and thus enter into close and vital fellowship with Him.

HUMBLE, OBEDIENT FAITH, NOT SUBJECTIVISM

Such a faith is humble, for it is the mighty God Himself who meets us and gives Himself to us here. It is not for us to test the validity of what He says in establishing such fellowship. God is not merely offering some statements for intellectual consideration. His truth is not set out like merchandise in a store, where you may accept or reject as you please, without giving any reason. It is there for us to accept and believe. There is no other "store" which offers an acceptable and valid substitute. That is why our response to God is represented in the Bible not only with such words as "receiving," "believing," and so on, but also with the words "obey," "obedience," and "obedient." Rom. 1:5: "By Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations." Rom. 16:19: "Your obedience is come abroad to all men." Acts

6:7: "A great company of priests were obedient to the faith." Rom. 10:16: "They have not all obeyed the Gospel."

There is no room for subjectivism here. Subjectivism emphasizes man's own inner consciousness, his feeling for what is true, and get away from the foundation of Scripture. Not that it throws the Bible overboard altogether. It uses and interprets the Bible according to its own preconceptions. It is characteristic of Modernism.

ORIGINAL MEANING COUNTS

Faith lets the intended meaning of the original writing stand. It determines the intended meaning, whether it be literal or figurative, according to the common rules of language and communication. Faith does not say that since the Word of God was communicated through human personalities in human settings, therefore the form in which it was given, being human, was subject to error, misconception, lack of information, or even deliberate misrepresentation of facts, while the content, the real message, being divine, was and is pure unadulterated truth. Those who wish to rethink their doctrinal position along such lines claim for themselves the right to sit in judgment on the words of Scripture, rejecting or reinterpreting certain parts of it as being merely the symbolical shell, while they discover and retain the real kernel of God's message. Nowhere does God give men the right to pick His Word apart, rejecting this as human and accepting that as divine. There is a majesty about His Word that forbids such presumption.

The interpreter of God's Word must indeed take into account the religious, political, and cultural setting in which the Word was originally proclaimed, so that he may determine as closely as possible the meaning which it had and was intended to have for the original readers or hearers, but he dare not assume that that meaning may have been at variance with the actual facts of the case. That original intended meaning, together with the deductions which may correctly be drawn from it, is as true for us today as it was when first spoken. Faith yields unquestioning obedience to everything God says.

DOCTRINAL CERTAINTY IS NOT SINFUL PRIDE

Therefore also faith is not uncertain or doubtful about doctrine. Not that we would be justified in fancying ourselves to be so right that we could not possibly be mistaken in any position we

have held in the past or hold now. It must be our constant and humble prayer that God may give us an ever clearer perception of His truth along with a willingness firmly and evangelically to hold fast to it. That is our duty to God, and it is necessary both for our own sake and for the sake of others. Concerning textual readings, exegesis of particular passages, grammar, etc., there may indeed be differences of opinion among believing interpreters, no one insisting on his own opinion as the only possible correct one. But our doctrinal position does not depend on choosing this or that opinion. There are more than enough clear passages to establish our position concerning which there is no basis for such difference of opinion.

Nor is it a mark of sinful pride to be certain of one's doctrinal position. On the contrary, fleshly pride may lead a person to be uncertain and even to claim the virtue of humility for his attitude. If he accepts a certain interpretation, not on the basis of what God has actually said, but because it appeals to his human reason, to his feeling of self-sufficiency, then he must grant the same right to others, not insisting that he only is right. There is a great deal of such doctrinal uncertainty and indefiniteness today, and there is a good deal of boasting about it. One is reminded of the story told by Prof. Coiner in his essay at the Counselors conference at Valparaiso in 1960: An airplane pilot was asked by a passenger, "How are we doing?" The pilot replied, "We are lost, but we're making good time." It is faith that says confidently, "Haec dixit Dominus," while unbelief asks the old, old question, "Yea, hath God said?"

NO FLESHLY FEAR

Our flesh may hesitate when majorities rise up against us, when we are called obscurantists, loveless, proud, division makers, and so on. Such things may well drive us ever more pressingly to searching of the Scripture and to wrestling with God in prayer. But they should not make us one bit less certain of our doctrinal position. They may keep us humble, but they should not make us afraid boldly to confess the truth which God has delivered and entrusted to us. God knew that we would be tempted. That is why He has given so many urgent admonitions to stand firm in His truth: Jude 3: "Contentend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." 2 Thess. 2:15: "Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught." 2 Tim. 3:14: "Continue

thou in the things which thou hast learned." 1 Tim. 6:14: "Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 2:42: "They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine."

A humble spirit, every ready to acknowledge our imperfections and limitations, but at the same time a humble determination ever to be faithful witnesses to God's truth—because it is God's and not ours—that is the proper approach to rethinking our doctrinal position. By the grace of God, may it be ours.

THE LIMITATIONS CONFESSIONAL WRITINGS

Our doctrinal position is not a vague and nebulous quantity. It is clearly stated, both in positive and in negative ways, in the confessional writings of our church. To this standard every pastor, professor, and teacher of religion in our Synod is pledged. Moreover, it is required that our subscription be unqualified and unconditional. This fact does not put a strait jacket on the kind of rethinking advocated above. We do not tell the Holy Spirit that in teaching us all things in accordance with Jesus' promise, He must be careful not to lead us beyond or outside of the Lutheran confessions. We rather express our confident faith that He will never lead us to deny any part of them. Further, I believe that this too is included in our pledge: should we ever become convinced that any part of our confessional writings is contrary to Scripture, or should we even lose our faith in Scripture itself, we will nevertheless not use our office as pastor, professor, or teacher to expound our views contrary to the confessions and try to win a following. However much we may become convinced that proclaiming our views will serve the glory of God and the eternal welfare of our fellow man, we have no right to use for that purpose institutions built on a doctrinal foundation which we intend to destroy.

The confessional writings then, are a limitation on the expression of our thinking within the area of our responsibility as members of a confessional group.

OTHER STATEMENTS

What about the other statements referred to earlier as establishing, along with the confessional writings, what public doctrine is in our church body?

The **Brief Statement** has in recent years come to be regarded by some members of our Synod as an unwarranted restriction on their thinking and teaching. They would like to see it modified or repealed. In itself there is nothing un-Lutheran about that. A professor on our St. Louis faculty has expressed doubt that a certain sentence in the **Brief Statement** would "pass this faculty today" without "some very careful and limiting definitions":*

It is true, the **Brief Statement** and similar documents do not have confessional standing. We are not pledged to them as we are to the confessional writings. They are subject to challenge and change. Resolution 9 of Committee 3 at the 1959 convention in San Francisco outlines the proper procedure.** The resolution is very clear in stating: "Those who believe that such statements are not satisfactory in part or in their entirety are **not to teach contrary to them**, but rather are to present their concern to their brethren in the ministry, particularly in conferences, to the appropriate District officials, and if necessary to the synodical officials." The Missouri Synod has repeatedly shown, as clearly as this can be done in so large a group, that it still holds to, and intends to hold to, the doctrinal standard set up in the **Brief Statement**. It is unethical for any pastor, professor, or teacher to teach publicly contrary to it.

DOCTRINAL DISCIPLINE

Continual rethinking of our doctrinal position in the fear of God and in the light of His Word, and in the same way, continual rethinking of our subscription to the confessional writings will compel us to insist on firm and evangelical doctrinal discipline in our fellowship. When doctrinal discipline is neglected, our doctrinal position becomes soft. And when that happens, what becomes of fellowship? It is destroyed. True, we have synodical and

* Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann in "The Inerrancy of Scripture." The sentence in question reads: "Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no error or contradictions, but that they are in all parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters," John 10:35." (Emphasis by Dr. Scharlemann).

** Proceedings, page 191, Dr. Scharlemann's presentation of "The Inerrancy of Scripture" to his faculty would be an example.

district officials whose responsibility it is to exercise doctrinal discipline. Those who have protested certain doctrinal situations in our Synod have been advised that the proper officials were dealing with the matter and they should have confidence in those officials. Confidence is fine, but it doesn't mean that we should depend on them to take the proper action without concerning ourselves further about it. We should actively support them. And if the officials should fail to take adequate action, so that the error persists, we are under obligation to admonish the officials and, if they still do not do their duty, to protest against and expose both the error and the lack of proper action against it. Be it remembered that this must be done in a humble and loving spirit and with God's glory and the salvation of blood-bought souls in view.

RETHINKING UNDER PRESSURE

The doctrinal position of the Lutheran Church, to the extent that it is contained in the confessional writings, was hammered out in the heat and under the pressure of doctrinal strife and controversy. The Augsburg Confession and its Apology were the instruments with which the faithful confessors of the truth defended themselves against false accusations of the Papists. The Formula of Concord was the result of years of doctrinal controversy within the Lutheran Church. Are we nearing the time when we shall have the opportunity to clarify our position and win doctrinal certainty under similar conditions? "Buy the truth and sell it not." Prov. 23:23.

Orthodoxy Versus Neo-Orthodoxy as It Concerns Doctrinal Discipline

BY REINHOLD H. GOETJEN

ARE WE UNWITTINGLY BEING BRAINWASHED?

The time has come when we are not only in the midst of a great doctrinal controversy in our Lutheran Church but find that there is much confused thinking going on by such as have considered themselves stalwart Lutherans. It would appear that we have become somewhat brainwashed by the ideology of the "New Theology" which has infiltrated our ranks in recent years.

PREFACE

A number of mimeographed editions of this essay have already been issued. The third revised edition emphasized more emphatically the individual Christian's and the individual Christian congregation's responsibility to exercise doctrinal discipline. This printed edition differs only slightly from the latter.

Recently an essay by this author entitled "Orthodoxy Versus Neo-Orthodoxy as it Concerns the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures" was distributed by the Defenders of the Brief Statement. The principles laid down in that essay are considered basic for the understanding of the doctrinal problems which confront us at the present time. It is suggested that it be read in connection with the reading of this essay on Doctrinal Discipline.

REINHOLD H. GOETJEN

April 30, 1962

THE MISSOURI SYNOD PLEDGED TO THE ORTHODOX VIEW

Our synod has again and again pledged itself to the Brief Statement which is a clear setting forth of the orthodox view of the Scriptures and Biblical doctrine. This, however, does not mean that we can be "at ease" as far as the true doctrine is concerned. St. Paul warns: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, and of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them. Therefore, watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears."

THE GREAT DANGER IS FALSE DOCTRINE

St. Paul makes it clear that the great danger was the false doctrine which would be peddled by wolves who would come from without and within their own group and would attack the faith of the flock. St. Paul shows how serious he regards this danger by reminding the Ephesians that he had warned them for three years day and night with tears. This he certainly would not have done if he had not regarded false teaching a most serious matter. How different from the attitude we behold in the church today!

THERE IS REALLY NO FALSE DOCTRINE ACCORDING TO NEO-ORTHODOXY

In our day the advocates and followers of the "New Theology" in our

circles would try to lead us to believe that there really is no such thing as false doctrine but only different "interpretations" of Scripture. Their thinking runs something like this:

Some would interpret Gen. 1 and 2 in one way and some in another. We cannot be certain that our interpretation is right and the other is wrong. If we believe that our view is correct, that is fine, but we should not say that those who teach otherwise are wrong. To say that they are wrong is to set ourselves up as judges and we thereby brand ourselves as being conceited in thinking that we are so much wiser than others. We cannot be sure who is right. Doubt and skepticism are healthy attitudes of mind. Certainty of doctrine is a mark of the bigot.

The foregoing is an example of the thinking of the adherents of the "New Theology." Many of us from the old school are at times floored by this attitude. We realize that they have an altogether different spirit from that of Old Missouri and yet often we are not prepared to answer their objections. What is the answer?

THE ORTHODOX WAY IS TO ACCEPT THE BIBLE AS IT READS

If we want to find the answer we need to study this "New Theology" and determine the basically different concept which it follows. The spirit of the Missouri Synod in the past has always been that the Bible is God's inerrant Word from Genesis 1:1 to Rev. 22:21, and that we dare not add to nor subtract one word from the sacred record. When the Scriptures were written, the men of God wrote its very words as they were moved to do this by the Holy Ghost. We also believe that the Bible is a lamp unto our feet and is therefore perfectly clear in its doctrines and we, therefore, do not need the "interpretation" of some theologian, church, or pope to determine for us its true meaning. We accept it as it reads. We therefore base our faith on the clear words of Holy Scripture and not upon some "private interpretation" of Scripture—not even our own (cf. 1 Pet. 1:20). Any one who tries to put his own interpretation upon Scripture is trying to make himself his own god and is truly the conceited one. Likewise, anyone who wants to believe in the "interpretations" of some theologian or church is placing human authority above God's authority and is guilty of idolatry. Anyone who is unwilling to bow to the clear words of Scripture (cf. 1 Tim. 6:3) and

prefers the private interpretation of some individual or church is ready to make God a liar and is willing to place human authority above God. The Bereans were not ready to accept what Paul preached just because he had said it but "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (cf. Acts 17:11). We note that the holy writer commended them as being "more noble". Today Christians are often faulted if they search the Scriptures to see whether or not the things some of our professors and pastors are teaching are correct, and then report their findings. To be unwilling to declare that what is contrary to God's own clear words is false doctrine is rebellion against God. To doubt Scriptural doctrine is not faith but unbelief.

THE BIBLE A HUMAN RECORD ACCORDING TO MODERN THEOLOGY

The reason why followers of the "New Theology" do not follow the Old Missouri way of thinking is because to them the Bible is only God's Word in a certain sense. To them the Bible is primarily a human record of stories, myths, and legends which were current at the time, by which the writer interpreted God's Revelation in His mighty acts.¹ Through this fallible, imperfect, record and witness God is supposed somehow to reveal to the person the Truth concerning God Himself. According to this view, the Bible is inspired only in the sense that the holy writers declare that Jesus is the Lord. (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3). This they are said to have done by the Spirit². If this is the correct definition for inspiration then all Christians of all times are just as much inspired as were the Biblical authors.

The exponents of the "New Theology" hold to a "dynamic" theory of Inspirations³ which means that they believe that the writers of the Bible wrote under a limited "guidance" of the Holy Spirit. They recognize a certain divine power (dynamic) but do not exclude human fallibility. The truths are inspired, they say, but the words and phrases are the results of the writer's own individuality; the material is of God but the form is of man. Since man is fallible, therefore they maintain that we must expect mistakes in the Bible. Their definition of Inspiration is supposed to take care of not only the alleged "errors and contradictions" which they claim to find in the Bible, but also the words of such a passage as John 3:16 are said to be not from God but man's words⁴. This view of the Scriptures **The Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod** calls "horrible and blasphemous." To the fol-

lowers of the "New Theology" the Bible is a human fallible witness to God's revelations⁵. It is man's word first and God's Word only in a certain sense. Such people, therefore, often speak of the "human" side of the Scriptures by which they mean the supposed errors, mistakes, and imperfections.

THE INTERPRETER BECOMES THE FINAL AUTHORITY IN THE "NEW THEOLOGY"

With such a view of the word "inspiration" we can readily see how these followers of the "New Theology" would regard the Bible as a mixture of truth, error, and imperfections. Thus it becomes the duty of the interpreter (according to their way of thinking) to decide just what is the truth God is supposed to be teaching us in this "human form." This makes the interpreter the "final" authority as to what is to be believed to be correct and not correct. He may even try to give the Holy Spirit the credit (blame) for his "interpretation" by maintaining that he has worked under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.⁶ (Their definition for "inspiration"). This has been the way of the "Schwaermer" or enthusiasts of all time. The Anabaptists of Luther's time did the same. It does not seem to occur to these enthusiasts that the guidance they received when they "interpret" something contrary to the clear words of Scripture is not that of the Holy Spirit but of an unholy spirit.

Since these men regard themselves, in the final analysis, as their own authority in religion, it is easy to understand why in their opinion it is conceited to claim that you know the Truth and that you know that those who teach otherwise are false teachers. These followers of the "New Theology" do not seem to know anything about accepting the Truth of God as it is related in the Bible in the spirit of a little child as Jesus exhorts us to accept it. (Cf. Mk. 10:14-15; Mt. 18:3; Luke 18:16-17; Mt. 11:25). It is, therefore, easy to understand why they consider themselves humble for maintaining that they are not certain of their stand and for being unwilling to call a person a false teacher who teaches otherwise. It does not seem to occur to them that uncertainty and skepticism is not faith but doubt and unbelief.

The basic difference between the Orthodox and the Neo-Orthodox is the divergent attitudes toward the Scriptures. The attitude of the "New Theology" destroys the very foundation of

the Christian faith (Eph. 2:20) and tries to build a faith upon the sinking sands of a person's fallible reason and personal sentiments. When the foundation of faith is destroyed, all that we have left is a mixture of pious opinions, uncertainty, skepticism, and doubt which, in reality, is nothing else than unbelief.⁷

THE NEO-ORTHODOX: WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

The preceding considerations should make it clear that the advocates of the "New Theology" are to be classified with the grievous wolves about whom St. Paul warned so earnestly night and day with tears. Truly every earnest shepherd of souls today should warn those in his charge against these wolves in sheep's clothing with equal earnestness. More and more pastors and people are being led astray by the soul-destroying gangrene of the false doctrine of the "New Theology". (Cf. 2 Tim. 2:17).

THE BRIEF STATEMENT IS NOT JUST MISSOURI'S "PRIVATE INTERPRETA- TION" OF BIBLICAL DOCTRINE!

Let us not permit anyone to get away with trying to maintain that our Brief Statement is only the Missouri Synod's "interpretation" of what God teaches in the Bible. May God have mercy on us if that is all that it is! The historical or accepted Missourian way (the Biblical way) is to insist that we accept the Bible as it reads and not place any private interpretation upon the Scriptures. We therefore maintain that the Brief Statement is merely a clear setting forth of what the Bible itself has clearly stated. Anyone who wishes to maintain that our Brief Statement is merely a "private interpretation" should be asked to do as the Bereans did, namely, search the Scriptures daily to see for themselves whether or not the doctrines set forth in the Brief Statement are in accord with Holy Scripture instead of judging our treasured doctrines according to human standards—"science falsely so called," philosophy, sociology, secular history, etc.

A FALSE VIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH PART OF OUR TROUBLE

Let us note that St. Paul in Acts 20:28 admonishes us to take heed to "the flock," the sheep, the true believers in Christ. Today it appears that an unscriptural view of the doctrine of the

church is becoming popular also within our ranks. The un-Lutheran, Roman doctrine that the visible organization of church members is The Church (The Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints) is being accepted by far too many. It is easy to understand how the adherents of this "New Theology" would accept this view, for they, in the final analysis, are doubters and skeptics. If they should limit the Church to the true believers (to those who are certain of their faith—"For I know Whom I have believed . . ." 2 Tim. 1:12; "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of . . ." 2 Tim. 3:14) they would exclude themselves. Therefore, they are ready to ascribe membership in the Holy Christian Church to all who profess a "Christian" faith. Just where the line should be drawn between Christian and non-Christian according to this "New Theology" would vary with the individual. The only that that we could expect them to agree on amongst themselves is that it is impossible to draw a certain line, for this "New Theology" is basically a theology of uncertainty. Thus, in their view, the important thing is to try to build up and hold together a large organization of church members. To insist, then, on doctrinal discipline of those who teach contrary to our Church's position would be regarded by them as a very great sin of "tearing the church apart," being "division makers"³ and of standing in the way of building the "Kingdom", which they identify with the visible church.

THE TRUE CHURCH CONSISTS OF BELIEVERS, AND BELIEVERS ONLY

To the Bible-believing Christian the Neo-Orthodox view is an abomination. We realize that when St. Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us to take heed to all the flock, he is not referring to the false teachers who may be members, yea, prominent members, in the visible church. Rather, he refers to the true believers in Christ who alone are the true Church of God. It is not our duty to "protect", "cover up for," or "get off the hook" the false teacher, but it is our duty to protect the sheep, the true believers, from the grievous wolves who come in sheep's clothing of outward piety and a show of sincerity. We must protect the sheep from the false teacher's smooth, suave double-talk—"good words and fair speeches" by which they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. (Cf. Rom. 16:18).

OUR FIRST CONCERN: THE SOUL'S WELFARE OF ERRORIST AND THOSE WHOM HE HAS LED AND IS LEADING ASTRAY

Applying the above principles to our present situation, it would appear that our first concern should be not only for the errorist but also for the faith (the soul's health) of those who may be misled. This would especially apply to an errorist who "arises" in our midst at our schools of higher learning. Professors who have fallen into error have tremendous influence upon pastors also, who trustingly look to our college professors for theological leadership. If the errorist is a professor at one of our colleges or seminaries which train pastors and teachers, we should also be deeply concerned about the faith (soul's health) of the church members these future shepherds and teachers will serve. The building of a large visible church with a large membership role is not our real concern. The building of the Kingdom of God which lies in the hearts of men (true believers) must always be our real concern.

WE SHALL ALL STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF GOD

The time will come when we all must stand before the Judgment Seat of God. Therefore it behooves us to act not according to what appears to be temporarily expedient according to the man of the world, but rather we are to act as we will wish to have acted when we stand before the Judgment Seat of the holy God and before Him who suffered and died to take all our sins away. Then we will not want to be forced to admit that we were more concerned about "peace at any price" than we were concerned for the faith and soul's salvation of the blood-bought souls in our church body.

"A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE"

If, when error is first detected, decisive disciplinary action is taken the church will be spared much distress and disturbance in the future and many will be spared the danger of losing their faith and soul's salvation through this error. Even civil law enforcement officials recognize the need for dealing with the wrong-doer immediately and suitably if he is to be helped and if society is to be made safe from his almost inevitable subsequent misdemeanors.

WE ARE ALL HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR DOCTRINAL DISCIPLINE!

The doctrine is not ours but God's! God, however, has entrusted the Word of Truth to His children. By virtue of the priesthood of believers (1 Pet. 2:9) the true doctrine is the precious heritage of every true orthodox Christian. In particular it belongs to the orthodox congregation, the only organization in the Church which God has instituted. We are stewards of the Word of Truth (1 Pet. 4:10-11).

Since the doctrine, the Word of Truth belongs to the orthodox congregation, and more specifically to the individual orthodox Christian, it also follows that it is the responsibility of the individual Christian and congregation to see to it that doctrinal discipline is carried out according to God's command (Titus 3:10; etc.).

That the individual Christian has not only the right but also the duty to judge doctrine is evident from such passages as "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 5:1. "Beware of false prophets." Mt. 7:15. (Cf. also Rom. 16:17,18; 1 Tim. 6:3,4; 2 John 9:10 and others).

It is therefore the duty of every individual orthodox Christian within a church body to judge doctrine and to insist that doctrinal discipline be carried out. Orthodox congregations have banded themselves into synods (federations of congregations) and have elected officials and called professors, editors, etc., to help in carrying out the work of the church—the spreading of the Gospel and the preserving of the Truth of the Gospel. However, this does not take the responsibility for these God-given tasks off the shoulders of the individual orthodox church member and congregation.

The initial responsibility in the case of doctrinal error lies upon the first orthodox Christian(s) who become(s) aware of a doctrinal aberration. Such are duty bound to admonish the offender and, if he will not hear them, take the necessary steps to see that the offending brother is dealt with according to Biblical injunction (Titus 3:10) and to see to it that long and dangerous digressions are not taken. The orthodox church member should also insist on a full retraction of the doctrinal errors and not settle for a mere restatement of the errorist's doctrinal position in terminology which may be understood in different ways.

It is to be feared that it happens all too often that the false position of a pastor or professor is known by many orthodox laymen, pastors and professors before it ever comes to the attention of the proper officials. When those who have the initial responsibility to deal with the offending brother (i.e. those who have first-hand information) do not take the proper steps to deal with the matter, they are not living up to their responsibilities as priests and brethren, as members of an orthodox church body. This is true whether these members be laymen, teachers, pastors or professors. Consider the position in which a District or Synodical President finds himself if a case of doctrinal discipline comes to him for his action and he finds out that the doctrinal aberrations have been in existence for years, and that many fellow clergymen, laymen, and professors who have been aware of it didn't carry out their duties to the erring brother! What a seemingly hopeless (humanly speaking) situation he faces when he finds that nearly all the pastors, professors, etc. who knew of the doctrinal aberrations decline to call them false doctrine even though what is being advocated by the accused is clearly contrary to the Scriptures and Synod's doctrinal position! Men and brethren, We are responsible for the doctrinal discipline in our church body! Let us face up to this responsibility as men of faith, courage and love. It is our responsibility to repudiate clearly the false doctrine. Love demands either correction, or, if the errorist will not be corrected, expulsion, not only for his sake, but also for the sake of those who are in danger of being misled by him—this includes us and our children.

When the members of an orthodox church body have taken the preliminary steps of admonition, then the matter should be turned over to the church's elected servants to be dealt with according to the stipulations of the Holy Scriptures and the constitution of our church body. Then it is their duty to repudiate publicly such false doctrine and to remove the false teachers who will not repent and retract their doctrinal errors from the office of the ministry, or teaching profession, or both, whichever the case may be, and report the same to the next Synodical Convention for final action.

WE MUST SEE TO IT THAT PROPER ACTION IS TAKEN BY OUR ELECTED SERVANTS

But what shall our members do if, when a false teacher has been admon-

ished but refuses to retract his false doctrine and his case has been turned over to the proper elected servants for action, and these elected servants fail to take the appropriate action even after repeated exhortation over a period of years? The answer is that we, the members of our church, particularly member congregations, are responsible. It is then our God-given duty to see to it that those we elected to serve our synod in this and other capacities carry out the responsibilities they assumed when they accepted the offices to which they were elected. If the members of synod were aroused as one man and encouraged those they elected to act with decision and courage, could they fail to act? If they fail to act, we may well ask ourselves, "What has happened to us?" For, normally, we expect that the best qualified men from among us have been elected to these important posts. If the "best" men no longer have the courage of their convictions, then what about the rest of Synod? De we still have the faith or are all succumbing, little by little, to doubt and skepticism, or is it just a matter of the love of many waxing cold? (Cf. Matt. 24:12)

We should exercise extreme care in selecting and electing our officials to make as certain as is humanly possible that we elect the best men available to serve our church. In this time of doctrinal confusion the most important qualification for our top officers is, undoubtedly, that they be good theologians who can readily distinguish between truth and error so that learned heretics cannot hoodwink them with suave "good words and fair speeches" into believing that false doctrine isn't false after all even though it clearly contradicts Scripture and our declared doctrinal position. Our leaders must be men of faith who have the courage of their convictions. They need to be men who are ready publicly to repudiate false doctrine when it first raises its ugly head without long and dangerous delays. We need men who will insist on full public retraction of false doctrine before they give their approval to the errorist's doctrinal position. They must be men who have the courage to insist on expulsion when no retraction of false doctrine is forthcoming.

It is a blessing to have top officials who are both able administrators, men of tact and energy, as well as sound theologians. However, if this ideal combination of talents is not available, then we must select the sound theologian with the courage of his convictions over the able administrator who is theologically weak and vacillates when a clear-cut decision is necessary.

The delegates to a District or Synodical convention carry heavy responsibilities. Someone may rightly ask, "But how am I to know who is the sound theologian and/or able administrator?" We must answer, "It is the duty of each delegate to find out. The eternal destiny of many blood-bought souls may well be in the balance of this vote!"

TRUE LOVE IS SHOWN WHEN DISCIPLINE IS CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS

We should not let the advocates of any so-called "New Theology" bog us down or deter us from carrying out our duty with their charges of lack of charity and wrong procedure. Things should be done decently and in order. Therefore we should be prepared to give even the apparently most hardened errorist an opportunity to show his true colors by following the instructions laid down in God's inerrant Word. (Tit. 3:10)⁹. We should give the false teacher the benefit of the first and second admonition before he is "rejected". However, if after that he still persists in defending his false doctrine, then fear and love of God and love for His Truth, love for the souls of God's sheep who have been or could be misled, as well as true love for the soul of the false teacher himself demands definite action — rejection. (This is, in this respect, similar to the act of excommunication which is done not to harm but to help the person being dealt with, as well as for the sake of the Church as a whole.) If this isn't done, the false teacher is in grave danger of being confirmed in his error by our failing to act according to God's instructions (procedure), and other pastors, students, and laymen who have been led astray by these errors are also in danger of being confirmed in their error by our lack of action and loving concern. Vacillating action is almost certain to be interpreted as doctrinal uncertainty which, in turn, will preach a sermon in reverse. If decisive action is not taken and laymen, pastors and officials do little or nothing, again this is bound to be interpreted as doctrinal uncertainty, indifference, weakness, lack of conviction. Decisive action, taken in love, will preach a powerful sermon stating in the strongest terms possible: "We believe that what God has said in His Holy Inerrant Word is true and we dare not tolerate adding to or subtracting from it one word of its sacred doctrines. To do so would be to go contrary to the Almighty God whom we fear, believe, love and obey, and refuse

to criticize and presume to correct." Such decisive action will undoubtedly save many from doubt, skepticism, and unbelief. This will reveal true love to the errorist who may, by seeing the firm faith of his brethren in action, be led to forsake his error and again embrace the Truth.

Those who do not obey the scriptural command of rejecting the false teacher after the second admonition are themselves in danger of being deceived or "brain-washed" by the heretic. They are in grave danger of being infected by the false teacher's gangrene (2 Tim. 2:17) and leaven (Gal. 5:9). We cannot expect the Holy Spirit to protect us against this infection if we go against His explicit directions (Tit. 3:10). The Scripture does not leave the matter of rejection to our human judgment (e.g. after three or four more admonitions over a period of three or four years, but explicitly states, "after the first and second admonition reject.")

EVERY MEMBER IN SYNOD IS ON TRIAL

We cannot "pass the buck" and try to place all the blame on false teachers or procrastinating officials. They will have to answer for themselves, and so will each and every one of us. Not just our professors and officials are on trial—every member in Synod is being tested. We will each have to answer for our own action or lack of action. We will not be excused because others are more guilty. What are the false teachers that have risen among us proving about us? (Deut. 13:3). Are they proving that we have received the love of the truth, or that we are indifferent to the truth? Let us beware lest God shall find it necessary to send us strong delusions so that we should believe a lie because we refused to receive the love of the truth! (2 Thess. 2:10-12). St. Paul states that there must also be heresies among us so that those who are approved may be clearly recognized (1 Cor. 11:19). Our attitude toward false teaching reveals our own faith or lack of faith; our fear and love of God or our lack of fear and love of God. (Deut. 13:3).

ACTION WHICH BUILDS THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD

The type of action suggested in the foregoing will really edify and build the True Church of God, the spiritual temple, the communion of saints. Toleration of error may appear for the time being to be the most expedient in helping to

build up the "visible" church, but in reality it destroys the True Church of God which is made up of true believers only. This is the true "Kingdom of God" which is within the hearts of saints, the true believers, and is not made up of false teachers and misled and unbelieving members of the visible church. Error is sterile. False doctrine never leads anyone to true repentance and faith in Christ. On the contrary, it is like gangrene—it has the power to kill! (2 Tim. 2:17). Only the true doctrine leads to faith and builds the Church. False doctrine which spreads like leaven and is as dangerous as gangrene needs to be treated as the scourge that it is!

May God in His mercy awaken all true believers in our Church to the situation as it now confronts us and move them all to prompt and decisive action according to each one's God-given ability and station in life—whether they be laymen, theological student, pastor, professor or church official. May He grant us our petition for the Savior's sake. Amen.

NOTES

1. **Inerrancy of Scripture** by Dr. M. Scharlemann.
2. **Revelation and Inspiration** by Dr. M. Scharlemann
3. In Dr. J. W. Behnken's letter of August 22, 1960, Dr. M. Scharlemann is quoted as saying: "I have tried to point out that it is impossible to uphold and retain an adequate view of the authority of the Bible without a **dynamic doctrine of inspiration** that applies to the Scriptures in all their parts." (Emphasis is added.)
4. **Scripture Cannot Be Broken** by Dr. Th. Engelder p. 324-325.
5. "These human inspired words" A Statement on the Form and Function of the Holy Scriptures. **Lutheran Witness**, April 4, 1961, p. 16.
6. **The Inerrancy of Scripture**, Dr. M. Scharlemann: "The historical critical method may be used properly only by one who looks for guidance to the Holy Spirit **alone** as He leads the exegetic more deeply into an understanding of God's revelation in both divine and human aspects."
7. Dr. R. Preus's quotation of Dr. C. F. Walther in the Nov. 1961 issue of the C.T.M. p. 689.
8. Concerning those who have contended that his essays contain false doctrine Dr. M. Scharlemann writes: "That they contain any kind of false doctrine could be believed only

by such as pervert and distort even the simplest of English. It is these that have shown themselves to be the division mongers that Rom. 16:17,18 so strongly condemns." (In a letter written Dec. 22, 1961)

9. Dr. Franz Pieper in his **Christian Dogmatics** Vol. 1, p. 147, quotes Luther as saying: "It is certain that whoever does not rightly believe one article or refuses to accept it (after he has been admonished and instructed), certainly believes none sincerely and in true faith. And whoever is so presumptuous as to dare to contradict God or call Him a liar in one word (of Scripture), and does this wilfully, persisting in it, though he has been admonished and instructed once or twice, he is ready (and he does it, too) to deny God and accuse Him of lying in all His words. There are no two ways about it: either all and everything is believed, truly and fully, or nothing is believed. The Holy Ghost (who wrote all of Scripture, St. L. III: 1890) cannot be separated or divided, so that we would be free to teach and believe one article as true and another as false. This does not apply to the weak, who are ready to receive instruction and do not offer stubborn opposition." (St. L. XX: 1781.)

READERS' COMMENTS concerning the first edition of this essay:

"It is indeed an excellently written tract. Your simple style together with mastery of the subject reminds me much of our good Dr. Pieper. I hope you can get enough support . . . to give it the widest distribution. It would be fine if it could go to all our pastors."

—A pastor from the Mid-West

"Hurriedly I read Brother Goetjen's second essay 'Orthodoxy versus Neo-Orthodoxy as it concerns doctrinal Discipline.' I was delighted - overjoyed. It is of the same calibre as the foregoing essay He can write plainly and simply, and yet with a reasonableness and cogency of argument and persuasion that must unarm the adversary. I like the attitude, the pastoral concern in which he writes, that of a Christian pleading with his fellow-Christian More power to him, I would say, more Holy Spirit to him, through whose mighty operations alone we can hope to win the erring brother and the adversary."

—A pastor from Wisconsin.

". . . . I was thrilled with the excellent material you are putting out. It even restored within me some hope that Missouri just might get well after all! . . . May God bless your efforts Please send all your material to each family in our congregation. Note our enclosed mailing list." —A West Coast layman and chairman of the Board of Elders of his congregation.

Where's Moses? Part I

BY E. P. SCHULZE

"Where's Moses? — is a Moses to be found?

You'll seek him vainly in the bull-rushes,

While I in vain touch cymbals."

(E. B. B. Browning)

The critics have looked for him in Pentateuch, too, and have not found him, or, for the most part, more than mere traces of him. Perhaps this is so because they have not found much of God there in the first place. They have plucked the bush of its blackberries while

"... only he who sees takes off his shoes."

Denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was born in paganism. The Platonic philosopher Celsus negated it in his *Logos Alethes* as early as 178 of our era. Though his book was lost, and in spite of the reply of Origen in his *Kata Kelsou* (248), the opinion that Moses might not have been the author of what has been ascribed to him survived and met some degree of acceptance in the medieval period.

This anti-Mosaic view was nurtured in modern skepticism. The English deistic philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) not only denied miracles and revelation but also attacked the doctrine that Moses wrote the books which bear his name. In his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* the excommunicated Jewish rationalistic philosopher Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677) fought the time-honored Judeo-Christian view of revelation. He held that Ezra might have written the works credited to Moses.

The evil seed began to germinate under the solicitous attention of scholars who for the most part were at least nominally Christian.

Richard Simon (1638-1712), a Roman Catholic priest who has been called the "Father of Higher Criticism," questioned the Mosaic origin of the first five books of the Bible "to show that Protestants had no assured principles for their religion."

EARLY DOCUMENTARY THEORIES

Early in the eighteenth century be-

gan the rise of the so-called documentary theories. Thus H. B. Witter in 1711 maintained that there were two accounts of creation in Genesis, distinguishable by the divine names used in them, and a Roman Catholic physician, Jean d'Astruc (1684-1766), developed this idea into a theory that Genesis is composed of two primary documents identifiable by their employment of the divine names Elohim and Jehovah. His hypothesis did not, however, deny at least editorship to Moses but merely held that he had access to earlier documents and put them together.

Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1827) built upon the foundation laid by d'Astruc, applying the theory to the entire Pentateuch. Though at first he followed d'Astruc in maintaining Moses' editorship, in the final edition of his *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* he concluded that while some of the material in the five books may date back to Moses most of it is a compilation of sources from a later time. He identified these sources as E (for Elohim) and J (for Jehovah).

FRAGMENT AND SUPPLEMENT

HYPOTHESES

About the same period the Scottish Catholic Alex Geddes (1737-1802) evolved the so-called fragment hypothesis which sought to prove that the Pentateuch is composed of fragmentary materials some of which go back to Moses or even beyond him but which were not compiled until long after his time. Another theory which was popular for a while was the "supplement hypothesis" of Heinrich Georg August Ewald (1893-1875) which postulated an original document called *Grundschrift*, some centuries later than Moses, to which additions were made from time to time. Though to some extent revived in our own day the fragment and supplement hypotheses rather quickly went into eclipse, and the nineteenth century was the heyday of what we know as the documentary theories.

GRAF-WELLHAUSEN

As early as 1798 K. D. Ilgen held that the Elohist source was composite and denominated the respective parts as E and E2. Herman Hupfield (1796-

1866) followed him in this view. Now at last it was time to add to the documentary theory the presupposition of the fragment hypothesis that Deuteronomy was of late origin. Hupfeld therefore named his documents in supposed chronological order as E or P (priestly), E2, J and D) Deuteronomy).

The documentary theory was further elaborated by K. H. Graf (1866) and Julius Wellhausen (1876). Known as the Graf-Wellhausen Theory, their system of surmises may be described as a development hypothesis, for it presupposed an evolution of religious thought.

Basic to the Graf-Wellhausen theory is a thoroughly naturalistic *Weltanschauung*. It is presumed that religion was an evolutionary development beginning with fetishism and proceeding through polytheism and henotheism to a final monotheism. There is, of course, nothing in Scripture nor in sound ethnology to support such a view.

Arguments employed to encourage the plausibility of the documentary theories are the alleged presence of two accounts of creation in Genesis, the differences between the levitical and the deuteronomic laws, the occurrence of Chaldean expressions which are said to indicate a late date, the varying styles and disparity in vocabulary.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE THEORIES

The contentions of the higher critics are met on their own ground by pointing out that so-called primitive and evolving religion is really a corruption of an original monotheism; that there is but one account of creation in the Bible, namely the general overview in Genesis 1 and the more specific account of various aspects in Genesis 2, that (besides other significant differences in view point) the levitical laws were for the wilderness and the deuteronomic, more specifically, for the promised land, that Aramaisms are accounted for by the circumstance that Abraham may have been an Aramean and that Jacob had

spent much time in Aram; that differences in style are accounted for by the varying nature of the subject matter or its purpose; and that vocabulary will vary in the same writer according to his materials and mood.

As to language, there is hardly any early Hebrew available outside the Bible. Of what little there is, we cannot always say for certain how much of it is dialect. Moreover, the Ras Shamra tablets have shown that some words previously regarded as late are really early and that Aramaisms are no evidence of late date. That writing was common in the time of Moses need, of course, no longer be argued.

Proof for the evolution of religious thought is simply manufactured out of the flimsiest materials. Thus the First Commandment has been said to smell of henotheism because it says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Such contentions require no serious refutation.

SYSTEMATIC BEWILDERMENT

The theories about the Pentateuch are almost incredibly numerous. In *The Pulpit Commentary* H. L. Hastings years ago listed 76 that appeared in the years from 1850 to 1880 alone. For Genesis there were 16; for Exodus, 13; for Leviticus, 22; for Numbers, 8; for Deuteronomy, 17. How many theories on the Pentateuch have there been altogether? Who knows? It matters very little. One by one they disappear into the stacks to gather dust and poison bookworms.

Here then we have a veritable Babel of ramshackle structures, labyrinthine as the home of the Minotaur, speciously impressive at first glance, yet without foundation except in the sinking sands of human speculation. Pondering them, one may be reminded that philosophy has been defined as a way of bewildering oneself systematically. "Made in Germany" is no guarantee of their validity. The evidence is subjective, not even plausibly circumstantial, and altogether of such a nature that it would be laughed out of court by any respectable justice of the peace.

Where's Moses? Part II

BY E. P. SCHULZE

Allis in *The Five Books of Moses* well says that "the basic question for the student of the Old Testament is his attitude toward the supernatural." Christians will accept the statements of

Scripture concerning its own divine origin. It will be interesting to see what the Bible itself has to say on the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

THE PENTATEUCH'S OWN TESTIMONY

The Pentateuch itself hints at its Mosaic origin. In Exodus 17:14 we read that after the defeat of Amalek "the Lord said unto Moses, 'Write this for a memorial in a book.'" Exodus 24:4: "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" which he had heard on Sinai (Ex. 19:3-24:2). Exodus 34:27: Concerning the Decalog "the Lord said unto Moses, 'Write thou these words.'" Exodus 34:28: Moses "wrote upon the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." Numbers 33:2: Of the journeys of the children of Israel, "Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord." These travels are detailed in Numbers 33:3-49.

In the case of Deuteronomy, of the supposed lateness of which much has been made, we have, happily, far more than intimations to indicate that it is not to be assigned to Josiah's time and that Moses was indeed its author, for in the very first verse of its first chapter we are told, "These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan, in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran and Tophel and Laban and Hazeroth and Dizahab. Again, four verses later: "On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law." It was there, before the conquest, that "Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel" (Deut. 31:9). "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, 'Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God'" (Deut. 31:24-26). In the Song of Moses was mentioned (Deut. 31:22) just before Moses finished writing the book and delivered it to the priests it seems likely that it was, as indeed its whole tenor shows, regarded as part of the deuteronomic law and was therefore included in the copy which Moses handed to the priests for safe-keeping in the ark. The song is given in Deuteronomy 32:1-43, and immediately after its recording Moses was commanded to climb Mount Nebo to behold the land of Canaan and die. Philo and Josephus held that Moses recorded his own demise. Some Christian scholars believe otherwise. It would seem, indeed, that the book was put into the ark (31:25-26) before the account of

Moses' death was written, but believers in verbal inspiration will, of course, not find it incredible that Moses could have written about his own death and burial.

JOSHUA TO MALACHI

Books of the Old Testament from Joshua to Malachi emphatically confirm the Mosaic authorship of all the Pentateuch with the possible exception of Genesis, the attestation of which we may safely leave to our Lord himself.

There are several references to Deuteronomy in Joshua, where "the book of the law of Moses" is twice mentioned (8:31 and 23:6) and the recording of "a copy of the law of Moses" upon the stones of the altar is cited (8:32).

In I Kings 2:3 David charged Solomon to walk in the ways of the Lord, to keep his statutes, his commandments and his judgments, "as it is written in the law of Moses." In II Kings 14:6 (II Chron. 25:4) we read that Amaziah would not slay the children of the murderers of his father, "according to that which is written in the law of Moses" (Deut. 24:16). In II Kings 23:25 we are told that there was no king like Josiah, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul and might "according to all the law of Moses." All these references are evidently to Deuteronomy, a copy of which each king was to write for himself and was required to read in it every day (Deut. 17:18-19).

References to various books of the Pentateuch are found in II Chronicles. There we are informed (23:18) that Jehoiada appointed the burnt offering to be performed "as it is written in the law of Moses." This could refer either to Exodus (29) or Numbers (28) or both. In Hezekiah's reign, and again in Josiah's, there was a notable Passover. In the first (II Chron. 30:16) the priests and the levites stood in their places "according to the law of Moses." In the second (35:12) these functionaries performed certain ceremonies "as it is written in the law of Moses." The allusion in each case would appear to be Leviticus (1). God (33:8) encouraged the Jews to do "according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses." This might mean Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers in addition to Deuteronomy. Hilkiah the priest (34:14) "found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses." Without being as positive as higher critics like to be, one may safely guess that this was Deuteronomy. Why did Josiah say, "Great is the wrath of the Lord . . . , because our fathers have not

kept the word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book"? Was he thinking of the curses from Mt. Ebal (Deut. 27:15-26) and those detailed at greater length in the discourse that follows (28:15-68)?

Ezra and Nehemiah have passages that are enlightening as to the Mosaic authorship. Ezra (3:2) speaks of "the altars . . . to offer burnt offerings . . . as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God." The type of these altars is described in Exodus 20:24-25. He mentions (6:18) the divisions of the priests and the courses of the levites, "as it is written in the book of Moses." This alludes to Numbers 3:6-10; 8:24-26. Ezra (7:6) "was a ready scribe in the law of Moses." Nehemiah (8:2) tells us that Ezra read to the people "the book of the law of Moses." Since he read and explained for six hours (8:3), this could hardly have been a fragment, and that it was indeed a considerable work is attested by the fact that he continued reading for seven days (8:18). It may well have been everything from Genesis to Deuteronomy, the whole Torah, or at all events Leviticus to Deuteronomy. Specific mention is made (8:14) of the Feast of Tabernacles, an item that must have been taken from Leviticus (23). This, apparently was read on the second day, and that in turn would indicate that the reading may have begun with Leviticus. That Genesis and Exodus were known, however, is apparent from the exhortation in Nehemiah 9, where some of the principle events of those books are detailed. One need hardly add that Ezra was not the man to invent such things.

Daniel (9:11) alludes to "the oath that is written in the law of Moses," which seems to mean the curses from Mt. Ebal (Deut. 27). Again (9:13) he says, "As it is written in the law of Moses all this evil is come upon us," and this may hark back to the predictions of Deuteronomy 28, particularly verses 36 and 37. Malachi says (4:4), "Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded thee in Horeb, with the statutes and the judgments," and this means not only the Ten Commandments but much more.

EVANGELISTS AND APOSTLES

Evangelists and Apostles proclaim the Mosaic Pentateuch. Luke (2:22) speaks of the purification of Mary "according to the law of Moses." This law is found in Leviticus 12. The same writer (Acts 28:23) says that at Rome Paul persuaded the Jews concerning Jesus "both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets." John forth-

rightly says in his Gospel (1:17), "The law was given by Moses," and in Revelation (15:3) he remarks that the saints "sing the song of Moses the servant of God" (Ex. 15:1-19); Deut. 32:1-43). Paul has the Torah in mind as he writes (II Cor. 3:15), "When Moses is read, the veil is upon their faces." In Acts (13:39) he speaks of "the law of Moses" and (26:22) of things "which the prophets and Moses did say should come." He quotes Deuteronomy (32:21) when he writes (Rom. 10:19), "Moses saith, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.'" He cites the same book (25:4) when he writes (I Cor. 9:9), "It is written in the law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn'."

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says (7:14) that of the tribe of Judah "Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." He reports (10:28) that "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses" (Deut. 17:6). James (Acts 15:21) declares that "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him." Peter (Acts 3:22) cites Moses as the author of Deuteronomy 18:15: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise upon unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." Stephen (Acts 7:37) echoes this.

WHAT JESUS SAID

Above all, our Lord and Savior set his seal to the Pentateuch as the work of Moses from Genesis to Deuteronomy. He vouched for him as the lawgiver when He said (Matt. 23:2), "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat," and again when He inquired, "Did not Moses give you the law?" (John 7:19). He mentions (John 7:22) His giving of circumcision (Lev. 12:3). In allusion to the divorce question (Deut. 24:1) He asks (Mark 110:3), "What did Moses command you?" When the Pharisees (Mark 10:4-5) reminded Him that Moses had permitted divorce He replied, "For the hardness of your hearts Moses wrote you this precept." When the Sadducees said (Mark 12:19-27; cp. Luke 20:28-38), "Master, Moses wrote unto us, 'If a man's brother die,'" etc., Jesus confuted them by answering, "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush," etc. (Ex. 3:2-6). Upon the leper (Matt. 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14) He enjoins "the gift which Moses commanded" (Lev. 14:3).

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write.'" (John 1:45). That Moses pro-

phesied Christ was, of course, not merely the private opinion of the guileless but uninspired Israelite. St. Paul, in passages already cited, had said the same thing by inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, and our Lord Himself declared (John 5:46-47): "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets," to the disciples on the way to Emmaus our Lord "expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27). In such passages there is obvious reference to such Messianic prophecies of the Pentateuch as Genesis 3:15; 22:18; 26:4; 48:16; 49:10,18; Numbers 21:9; Deuteronomy 18:15. "For," He said, "all things must be fulfilled that were written in the law of Moses . . . concerning Me" (Luke 24:44). To the unbelieving Jews He said (John 5:45), "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses."

"IF THEY HEAR NOT MOSES" . . .

According to a sound hermeneutical principle, all statements of Holy Writ are to be understood in their natural and obvious sense, unless there are compelling reasons to understand them

otherwise, and such reasons, in the cases cited, do not exist. But not even the testimony of Christ will convince one who is not open to conviction. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, through one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31). Those, on the other hand, who subordinate the pride of intellect to the humility of faith will accept the statements of the Bible and of Christ, and they will not be put to shame. They know, from plain words, that Moses is not buried somewhere in the Pentateuch, under the accretions of centuries.

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