

# *Christianity & Society*

*A Quarterly Journal for the Application of Christian Principles  
to Contemporary Society*

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VOL. XIII, NO. 4, OCTOBER 2003

*If there was ever a man systematically consistent in a line of argumentation developed from certain premises accepted as unassailable, this man was Rutherford. Deeply persuaded that Presbyterianism was the irrefutable teaching of the Bible, Rutherford derived extreme logical conclusions from this basic assumption. The unloving, and even cruel results of his intellectual reasoning, did not seem to have caused him the slightest vacillation or doubt about the validity of the premises on which he based his argumentation. For Rutherford Presbyterianism was an unquestionable axiom of biblical truth and the consequences derived from it were also self-evident. This is the great problem that confronts us when we try to understand this Scotsman. How could a man that lived and experienced so deeply and bountifully the love of Christ be, at the same time, so uncharitable and intolerant in his Presbyterian views? How could a man who has been judged as “the keenest intellect in the Presbyterian party in the Westminster Assembly” go so far in his line of thought as to regard liberty of conscience and religious freedom as “dammable doctrines”?*

—David Estrada, “Rutherford as a Presbyterian Theologian and Political Thinker” (p. 10)

*Christianity & Society* is the official organ of the KUYPER FOUNDATION, a Christian educational trust founded in 1987. The Kuyper Foundation exists to promote a renaissance of Christian culture in society by furthering awareness of the implications of the Christian faith for every sphere of life, including the Church, family and State. Its vision of Christian society was expressed in the words of Abraham Kuyper, the Dutch Christian theologian and statesman, who said: "One desire has been the ruling passion of my life. One high motive has acted like a spur upon my mind and soul. And sooner than that I should seek escape from the sacred necessity that is laid upon me, let the breath of life fail me. It is this: that in spite of all worldly opposition, God's holy ordinances shall be established again in the home, in the school and in the State for the good of the people; to carve as it were into the conscience of the nation the ordinances of the Lord, to which Bible and Creation bear witness, until the nation pays homage again to him." The Foundation seeks to promote this vision of Christian society by publishing literature, distributing audio-visual materials, and running lecture courses and conferences. The Kuyper Foundation is funded by voluntary donations from those who believe in the cause for which it works. More information on the ministry of the Foundation can be obtained from the address below or from the Foundation's web site.

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OCTOBER, 2003

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Designed and typeset by Avant Books, P. O. Box 2, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4ZD, England.

Printed by SD Print and Design, Kingsdale House, Martinet Road, Old Airfield Industrial Estate, Thornaby, Cleveland TS17 0AS, England.

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**Editorial office:** *Christianity & Society*, P. O. Box 2, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4ZD, England.  
Tel. (01823) 665909 Fax. (01823) 665721  
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**Subscriptions:** four consecutive issues

**UK:** £16.00

**Europe:** £20.00 (airmail).

**All other subscriptions:** £25.00 (airmail).

**Payment by cheque:** cheques should be in sterling only drawn on a bank in the UK, made payable to "The Kuyper Foundation" and sent to: P. O. Box 2, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4ZD, England.

**Credit card payments:** Please supply the following information: (1) card number, (2) expiry date, (3) name of card holder and (4) card statement address (plus delivery name and address if different from card holder and statement address). Credit card information may be sent to the address or fax number above, or emailed to: "[cands@kuyper.org](mailto:cands@kuyper.org)" (See the credit card payments form on p. 32).

# EDITORIAL

## SPIRITUAL ANOREXIA

by *Stephen C. Perks*

THE triumph of style over content is one of the defining features of contemporary British society. “Cool Britannia,” the inane “sound bite” of current political culture, represents the dominating influence in society of an infantile world-view that prioritises outward appearance and the superficial and denigrates the deeper, more fundamental spiritual questions about life for which the condition of our society, and indeed the world, demands an answer. This triumph of the ephemeral and the superficial prioritising of the unimportant over the vital questions facing mankind has led modern society to cast aside much of the valuable spiritual, intellectual, moral and cultural heritage that previous generations have put at our disposal.

This deleterious trend has been as evident in the life of the Church as it has been in the rest of society. The result has been that the mission of the Church has been vitiated by the dominating influence of the trivial. What the preacher is wearing, his acceptance in the right clique, i.e. whether he can drop the right names, his ability to speak without notes and amuse his audience (histrionics) all take precedence over the content of the message, with the result that the ministry is no longer focused on the training and equipment of the members of the congregation for service in the world when they leave the church building but rather on giving the right impression, and often this amounts to no more than a game of “spiritual” one-upmanship or keeping up with the Church down the road. The consequence is that the Church becomes irrelevant in society because she is no longer being properly equipped to fulfil her true mission, indeed she no longer recognises her true mission. The cult of personality replaces the preacher’s calling under God to equip those under his care for service and outward appearance dominates the life of the Church instead of the pursuit of the cultural mandate.

If we look to the Bible, however, we see, both in the Old Testament and the New, that this attitude is a worldly infatuation, an attitude that is contrary to the teaching of Scripture and that should have no part in the life of the Church. The Old Testament prophets were almost to a man outsiders, people who did not fit in with the prevailing old-boy network and whose uncompromising stance against the apostate fashions of the times puts them in stark contrast to the men of the ministry who overwhelmingly dominate modern Church life, yet whose leadership has taken the Church in Britain to utter ruin. As Jesus said of John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, “What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. But what went ye out to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet” (Mt. 11:7–9). The

prophets were not great orators who entertained the political leaders or the people of Israel with fine appearances, men-pleasing social connections, charismatic personalities and inspiring preaching. Not a few of them found the whole business of speaking for God difficult precisely because they were not great orators. One did not invite a prophet in to give a politically correct after dinner speech or deliver a congenial homily—which is what most preaching amounts to today. The same applies in the New Testament. Christ did not choose for his disciples respectable pillars of society who fitted in well with the religious authorities of the day so that they would give a good impression. He chose for the work of his kingdom those who were without the necessary credentials for leadership in the eyes of the scribes and Pharisees. Even the apostle Paul, who was, before his conversion to the Christian faith, an accepted member of the Jewish religious establishment, was not regarded as a charismatic speaker and natural leader by many in the Church, even among those who had been converted by his ministry. He had to defend his apostleship not only against the Jewish leaders of the Church in Jerusalem, who had promulgated as dogma a criterion for apostleship, i.e. a “qualification,” that Paul did not have and could never have had (namely to have been one of the disciples from the beginning—Acts 1:21–22), but also against those in the Gentile Church who complained that his letters were “weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible” (2 Cor. 10:10). And he rebuked the Corinthians in this very context for looking at the outward appearance, the style if you like, rather than at the substance, the content, of the message (2 Cor. 10:7).

The Bible rejects the prioritising of style over content that so dominates the modern world (Jn 7:24). The Church’s acquiescence in this worldly trend is a departure from the straight and narrow path of the Christian faith. The loss of substance and content in the proclamation and practice of the Church, indeed the deliberate rejection of the content of the faith in much of modern British Church life,—one might justifiably characterise this as an obsession with ignorance, which is often perversely seen as a superior spiritual condition—has created a Church that is emaciated and weak to the point of being virtually useless. The Church is sick. She suffers from malnutrition as a result of her infatuation with the outward appearance, the ephemeral, which cannot provide the spiritual sustenance that she needs in order to grow and mature into a healthy body. Spiritual anorexia is the only fitting description of this condition.

The answer to the dilemma that this situation poses is, of course, that the Church must abandon her obsession with the outward, with mere style, and return to the Bible. The content of the Christian faith as a biblical world-view, a way of thinking and living in the light of biblical revelation, must be embraced. This way of life must be intellectual as well as emotional, theoretical as well as practical. It must embrace the whole man in the whole course of his life, in his thoughts, emotions, will and actions, and it must embrace his social life no less than his individual devotional life. Only by living in this way can the Church, i.e. the community of the faithful, provide an alternative culture to the culture of sin and death that presently surrounds her and thereby fulfil her role as the conduit through which God’s salvation in Jesus Christ is manifested to the world. Without this antithesis, however, the Church is no use, has no role to play, and has become worthless to the world, fit only to be trodden under foot by

men. Men-pleasing, following the fads and fashions of the world, the constant infatuation with style over content, is death for the Christian Church, and therefore death for the world, which is the Church's mission field. The Church must repent of her abandonment of the vigorous spiritual, moral and intellectual content of the Christian message, and by embracing this content in her thoughts and actions once again provide light to a fallen world. The discipling of the nation to Christ cannot take place without this change of mind by the Church, without *repentance*.

Yet we face a problem at this point. Many Christians do not know what repentance is nor what they need to repent of. And this condition is only made worse by a ministry that is unable to provide spiritual guidance for the Church and that has substituted infantile entertainment for spiritual edification. Let me give an example. I recently went to hear someone speak in a church about the problems confronting Christians living under Muslim rule. His talk raised some important questions that Christians in Britain, and indeed most other Western countries, need to face. There was a brief time after his talk for questions and some discussion. After about 15 minutes of this the speaker was asked what he thought was the way ahead for the Church in Britain. His answer was "repentance." However, immediately after this and before we had any opportunity to discuss what this meant, the leaders of the Church brought the meeting to an abrupt end by announcing the final chorus. The opportunity to think through the issue facing us was snatched from under our noses and the meeting ended with the singing of a banal chorus that totally destroyed the atmosphere of serious contemplation that had up until that point characterised the meeting. The serious issues that had been raised in the meeting and that needed further discussion were effortlessly dispelled by the dominating triviality of the final chorus. Before leaving the church I asked two of the Church leaders what they thought about what the speaker had said at the end. They both agreed that what the Church needs to do is repent. When I said that the word *repentance* means *a change of mind* and asked what we needed to change our minds about I was faced with a look of total blankness.

The point is simply this: it is impossible to change one's mind if there is nothing going on in one's mind in the first place. And this is sadly the condition of much of the Church today. The only thing vaguely related to the Christian faith that occupies the minds of many Christians is banal choruses, the superficial and the ephemeral, which has little relevance to the daily life of faith and how this should be different from the way the world lives. There is virtually no content to the life of faith for the Church much of the time and therefore the superficial and the ephemeral take on an importance out of all proportion to what they should have. And what little content there is amounts to an infantile infatuation with choruses and "doing the actions" like little children. The content of most Church services in Britain today is moronic, i.e. adults behaving like little children. The *Oxford Concise Dictionary* defines a moron as "an adult with a mental age of about 8–12." This adequately defines the condition of spiritual life for much of the Church in Britain today—adults with the spiritual maturity, and often the intellectual immaturity, of children.

How does the Church expect to win the world for Christ, to constitute a new, alternative society that will grow and overtake the culture of secular humanism in our land,

with an attitude like this? How can such moronic spiritual behaviour generate a mature Christian culture capable of leading the world rather than being led by it? *Does* the Church expect to win the world, to lead the nation culturally? Probably the question has ceased to have any relevance or meaning in the lives of most Christians. Christianity is not perceived as a life- and culture-transforming religion anyway, not even by most Christians, but rather as a free ticket to the afterlife. Instead of being a religion it has become a cult practised in a ghetto.

This is not the Christian faith (biblical religion). The Bible teaches that the Church is to disciple the nations to Christ, i.e. bring the nations under the discipline of Jesus Christ so that they will serve God by submitting to his authority and rule. The Church has not fulfilled her mission until the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ (Rev. 11:15 cf. Ps. 2). Our calling is to subdue the world for the glory of God (the cultural mandate—Gen. 1:27–28; 2:15; 9:1–7) by discipling the nations to Christ (the Great Commission—Mt. 28:19–20; Mk 16:15; 2 Cor. 10:5). If we are to fulfil this mission we must understand the content of the Christian faith and we must be prepared to live accordingly. And this means we must be prepared to make the sacrifices that the fulfilment of this mission involves, since there can be no progress in the kingdom of God without the Church being prepared to take up her cross for Christ's sake. All progress in the work of the Kingdom involves tribulation (Acts 14:22) i.e. the living sacrifice of obedience to the covenant.

A Church suffering from spiritual anorexia does not have the strength to fulfil the Great Commission. This condition is the result of the Church's neglect and abandonment of the content, the substance, of biblical faith for the fads and fashions of the modern secular world in which we live. Without a return to the vigorous spiritual, moral and intellectual tradition of the Church the nation will not be won for Christ. Without this the world has no reason to listen, and the Church has nothing to offer. Non-believers do not need to get their secular lifestyles second-hand from the Church, mediated through an irrelevant and stifling Christian sub-culture. They can get it direct from the source. Christianity is a religion, i.e. an overarching structure to human life that anchors both the individual and the society to which he belongs in God's will for man in Christ, not merely a devotional cult of Jesus. The Bible has a world-view of its own, and it is our duty to think and live in terms of this world-view. This is a totally different way of life from that of the world. Christendom is a kingdom in its own right that must conquer all other kingdoms. It is our calling to live as subjects of this kingdom. This means that we must abandon the idolatry that characterises the life of the world and commit ourselves to the covenant life of faith that the Bible sets before us as the only way of obedience. This way stands in stark contrast to the way that the unbelieving world lives. If the antithesis between the Church and the world is not obvious in an age of apostasy such as our own the Church has failed. The only obedient course of action is repentance, a change of mind that will work itself out in every sphere of life.

Anorexia is a behavioural problem not a disease. The state of spiritual anorexia in which the Church finds herself today is also a behavioural problem, a result of her unwillingness to feed the mind with the word of God and an infatuation with the world that is sapping her bones. What an



anorexic person needs is nourishment that will build up the body so that it can function properly. What the spiritually anorexic Church needs is the word of life, the spiritual, moral and intellectual nourishment that can only come from understanding God's word. But just as the anorexic person cannot get better if she is unwilling to eat, so too the anorexic Church cannot grow and mature into her God-given role

unless she is prepared to repent of her refusal to feed her mind with the word of God. The Church must abandon the worldly prioritising of style over content and subject her mind to the word of God. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your *mind*, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). *C&S*

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# SAMUEL RUTHERFORD AS A PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGIAN AND POLITICAL THINKER

## THE QUESTION OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

by *David Estrada*

### *Historical Background*

THE distinguishing characteristics of the Scottish Reformation and the main contributions of its original leaders are clearly traceable in Rutherford's writings. As Thomas M'Crie pointed out, there was a striking difference between the Scottish and the English Reformation. In England the reigning powers took the lead, and the people followed. In Scotland the people were converted to the Protestant faith before the civil power had moved a step in the cause; and when the legislature became friendly to the Reformation, nothing remained for it to do but to ratify the profession which the nation had adopted. The consequence has been that the Church of England, with all her excellencies (and they are many), never ventured to advance beyond the limits prescribed by Queen Elizabeth, while the Scottish Church, carrying the legislature along with her, made various steps in reformation which improved her standards and her testimony to the times. The Reformation in Scotland resulted in a solid establishment of Calvinistic Presbyterianism. Whereas in England politics controlled religion, in Scotland religion controlled politics.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Carlyle calls the Scottish Reformation "a resurrection from death to life."<sup>2</sup> The Scottish Reformation elevated the nation to a very high degree of religious, moral, and intellectual eminence. The first impulse to the Reformation in Scotland came from Lutheran writings and from copies of Tyndale's New Testament. The first preachers—

and martyrs—were Patrick Hamilton, who had studied at Wittenberg and Marburg and was burnt at the stake in 1528; George Wishart, who shared the same fate in 1546; and the aged Walter Mill, who in 1558, from the flames predicted: "A hundred better men shall rise out of the ashes of my bones, and I shall be the last to suffer death in Scotland for this cause." Unquestionably, the leader of the Scottish Reformation was John Knox (1505–1572). He has been called the Luther of Scotland, the incarnation of all the noble and rugged energies of his nation and age. Philip Shaff speaks of him as "the most heroic man of a heroic race. His fear of God made him fearless of man. Endowed with a vigorous and original intellect, he was eminently a man of action, with the pulpit for his throne and the Word for his sword. His unflinching purpose aimed at a thorough reformation of the Church in matters of doctrine, worship, and discipline, on the basis of Scriptural testimony. Knox was, beyond a doubt, the providential man for his country. Scotland alone could produce Knox, and Knox alone could reform Scotland."<sup>3</sup>

Knox had been ordained as a Roman Catholic priest, but in the same year of Wishart's martyrdom he embraced Protestantism. Shortly afterwards, he was taken prisoner by the French fleet and made a galley slave for nineteen months. On obtaining his liberty, he laboured five years in England as a pioneer of English Puritanism. After the accession of Bloody Mary he fled to Germany and finally reached Geneva, where—according to his own words—he found "the most perfect school of Christ that ever was since the days of

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1. Thomas M'Crie, *The Story of the Scottish Church*, Presbyterian Armoury Publications, 2002, ch. 3. [http://www.pap.com.au/mccrie2/tm\\_ssc00.htm](http://www.pap.com.au/mccrie2/tm_ssc00.htm).

2. *Heroes*, ch. IV.

3. Philip Shaff, *Creeks of Christendom* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1977), vol. I, pp. 673–680.

the Apostles.” Though four years older, as an admiring pupil he sat at the feet of John Calvin and became more Calvinistic than the great Reformer. More than in any other country, it was in Scotland where the influence of John Calvin proved to be the strongest and most decisive. The Presbyterianism which the French Reformer had established in Geneva found in Scotland a larger and more congenial field of action, and there became freer and more independent of the civil power. While in Geneva, Knox preached to a flock of English exiles, and took part in producing the Geneva Bible. The accession of Queen Elizabeth marked his return to his native land where he spent the remaining twelve years of his life. Knox had the stern and uncompromising spirit of a Hebrew prophet. It has been said that he confronted Queen Mary as “Elijah confronted Jezebel, unmoved by her beauty, her smiles, and her tears.”

Andrew Melville (1545–1622) succeeded John Knox as the leader of the Scottish Reformed Church, giving the Church her Presbyterian character by replacing bishops with local presbyteries and gaining international respect for Scottish universities. As Knox had been a disciple of Calvin, Melville had been a theological student under Theodore Beza. When the Scottish Parliament restored the bishops to their ancient privileges, Melville protested and was imprisoned in the Tower of London for four years. He was released only to accept a chair of biblical theology at the French University of Sedan, where he remained until his death. His chief work was in the universities and Church courts rather than in the pulpit. There were in that generation faithful ministers who stood side by side with Melville. Among these were such men as John Welsh of Ayr, the son-in-law of John Knox, John Craig, Robert Bruce of Edinburgh, Robert Rollock and John Davidson. John Craig (1512–1600), a former renowned Dominican monk, was converted in Italy by reading the *Institutes* of John Calvin. He was in prison at Rome, condemned to the stake as a heretic, but when Pope Paul IV died the mob opened the prisons and he escaped. He made his way home to Scotland and was one of the leading successors of Knox to keep alive the Reformed witness. Craig was the author of the *Second Scots Confession* and of two famous Catechisms. Catechetical instruction, as we shall see, was always pivotal in the Scottish religious system of education, and accounted for the solid doctrinal foundation of the members of the national Kirk. The Reformed Church of Scotland was legally recognised and established by Parliament in 1567. Seven years later, the *Scots Confession* was adopted and the first General Assembly was held. The Confession consisted of twenty-five articles and agrees in all points with those of the other Reformed Churches on the Continent. In December 1557, at Edinburgh, a number of Protestant nobles and gentlemen signed the first Covenant in order “to maintain and defend to death the whole *Congregation of Christ*, and every member thereof.” National Covenants were a peculiar and prominent feature in the history of the Kirk of Scotland. While the earlier Covenants were safeguards against popery, the later were against episcopacy.

#### RUTHERFORD’S RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL IDEAS

As we already indicated in our first article, Rutherford’s works constitute an epitome of the pure essence of Scottish thought and theology. The title of his works clearly establish

four main issues around which revolve the core of his thinking:

1. The defence of the gospel of Free Grace.
2. Presbyterianism as the biblical form of Church government.
3. The primacy of *Law*, or “*Lex Rex*.”
4. Uniformity of religion and rejection of tolerance in a Christian State.

#### I. THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL OF FREE GRACE

“*Free grace: the theme of our songs*. All our songs should be of His free grace. I rejoice that I am grace’s freeholder.”<sup>4</sup>

In the controversies held by the Reformers against Rome, many were the issues under debate, but all of them were subservient to the main and pivotal theme of discussion: the doctrine of *justification by faith, without works, as a free and unmerited act of God’s grace in Christ*. This is the very core of the gospel, and on this the agreement of the Reformers was unanimous. The slightest insinuation of personal merit was regarded as a serious attack on the doctrine of salvation. On the other hand, any attempt to diminish the consequences of the fall and sin by allowing the exercise of free will in matters of salvation was equally rejected as contrary to the gospel of free grace. When in matters of salvation Erasmus—in his *Liberio arbitrio*—vindicated an element of free will in man’s fallen condition, Luther retaliated with his *Servo arbitrio*—probably his best work, in defence of the biblical doctrine of man’s total servitude to sin in matters of salvation, and his total inability to exercise a free will apart from the regenerating influence of God’s Spirit.

With the teachings of Arminianism, the Reformed Churches had to face a more serious threat to the doctrines of free grace. This time the “theological enemy” arose from within Protestantism itself and proved to be a formidable opponent. In this important theological issue Samuel Rutherford became the great champion of the gospel of free grace in Scotland and the ablest controversialist against Arminianism. His first book, published in 1636 under the title *Exercitationes de gratia*, constituted an elaborate refutation of Arminianism and was the cause of his confinement to Aberdeen. But also one of his last books, published in 1551 under the title *De Divina Providentia*, is a defence of free grace. In it Rutherford assails once again the teachings of Arminianism, and its parallel correspondences with Jesuitism and Socinianism.

The founder of Arminianism, from whom it derived its name, was James Arminius (1560–1609). He studied under Beza at Geneva, for a time he was minister at Amsterdam, and then professor of theology at Leyden. His teachings, under the title of *Remonstrance*, were formularised by his followers in *Five Articles*. According to Arminianism, the decrees of predestination and condemnation are conditioned by God’s foreknowledge and made dependent on the foreseen faith or unbelief of men; Christ died for all men, and his grace, which is not irresistible, is extended to all. Arminianism was condemned by the Reformed National Synod of Dort in 1618–1619, and strongly opposed by the Churches of Calvinistic creed, both on the Continent and in the British Isles. But this was not a lasting reaction: the distinctive Arminian doctrines of sin and grace, free-will and

4. Samuel Rutherford, *Letters* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1951), p. 364.

conditional election, were soon extensively adopted in the Episcopal Church during the reign of Charles I, and in the nineteenth century by the Methodists of Great Britain and America and by many of the fundamentalist groups that rose up within Protestantism during the twentieth century. Scotland, however, withstood with a firmer determination the Arminian doctrinal trends, and in this the role played by Rutherford's writings cannot be ignored.

#### *The Westminster Assembly*

The theology of Samuel Rutherford cannot be dissociated from the doctrinal articles of the Westminster Confession of Faith. This Confession is an eloquent mirror of his biblical beliefs. He was one of the Scottish representatives to the Westminster Assembly and took an active part in the deliberation and final framing of the doctrinal articles. In the seventeenth century Scottish Presbyterianism and English Puritanism combined to produce a second and more complete Calvinistic Reformation in doctrine, discipline, and worship. The Westminster Assembly was called for the purpose of legislating for the faith, government, and worship of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and by adopting the Solemn League and Covenant the Assembly was pledged to "the extirpation of popery, prelacy, and all types of heresy." This famous Assembly was convened in July 1643 by an Act of Parliament. It was to consist of 120 divines, with 30 lay assessors, of whom 10 were lords and 20 were commoners. The divines of the Assembly combined learning and piety in beautiful harmony; their knowledge of the Bible, of the patristic tradition, and of the history of the theological inheritance was indeed unmatched. The Assembly took about five years and six months for the completion of the work proposed, and held no less than 1163 regular sessions. The Westminster Assembly represents the most important chapter in the ecclesiastical history of England during the seventeenth century. It stands first among Protestant Councils. The Synod of Dort was indeed fully equal to it in learning and moral weight and was more general in its composition, since it embraced delegates from nearly all Reformed Churches; the Westminster Assembly was purely English and Scottish. The doctrinal legislation of the Synod of Dort was confined to the *five points* at issue between Calvinism and Arminianism; the Assembly of Westminster embraced the whole field of theology, from the eternal decrees of God to the final judgement. As to doctrine, there were no serious differences among the members: with more or less rigor they all held the basic tenets of Calvinism. But in matters of Church government and discipline the Assembly was by no means of one accord. The most frequent and earnest debates were on this point rather than on doctrine and worship.

#### *The Scottish Representation*

Scotland sent five clerical and three lay commissioners. They declined being considered members in the ordinary sense, but were allowed by warrant of Parliament to be present and to debate. As a matter of fact, their influence far exceeded their number. These were the men of the Scottish delegation: (1) Alexander Henderson, Rector of the University of Edinburgh, who in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism ranks next to John Knox and Andrew Melville. He

was the author of the Solemn League and Covenant, which linked the Scottish and English nations in a civil and religious alliance for the Reformed religion and civil liberty. (2) Robert Baillie, Professor of Divinity and Principal of the University of Glasgow, who led the movement to reject the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer. His "Letters and Journals" are a jewel of graphic narrative and memoir. (3) George Gillespie, minister of Edinburgh, was the youngest and one of the most gifted men of the Assembly. He took a leading part in the debates against Erastianism and Independency. Gillespie died in 1648, in his thirty-sixth year. (4) Samuel Rutherford was also a leading theologian in the Assembly, and a key man in their deliberations. As already mentioned, he is thought to have been a major influence in the preparation of the Shorter Catechism, which according to Baillie, was nearly agreed on at the end of 1644.<sup>5</sup> (5) The fifth Scottish commissioner was the Rev. Robert Douglas, who never sat. Among the lay commissioners, John Lord Maitland distinguished himself first by his zeal for the Scottish Covenanters, and afterwards by his apostasy and cruelty against them. The Marquis of Argyll was also an influential man of the Scottish representation. Latter on he suffered death for his loyalty to the Scottish Kirk.

#### *The Independent Representatives*

Though small in number, the Congregationalists or Independents—"the five dissenting brethren" as they were called by the Presbyterians—were strong in ability, learning, and weight of character, and to a certain degree, they possessed the confidence of the rising Cromwell. The Independent representatives were Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Jeremiah Burroughs, William Bridge, and Sydrach Simpson. Among the lay assessors, both Lord Viscount Say and Seale and Sir Harry Vane sympathised with the Independents. According to the Independents, the Christian congregation should consist only of converted believers, and govern itself according to Christ's law, without being subject to the jurisdiction of presbyteries and synods. They fought the Presbyterians at every step on the question of ruling elders, ordination, jurisdiction of presbyteries and synods, and on the question of religious toleration. Various circumstances combined to render them also very influential in the political realm. Philip Nye, for example, maintained valuable contacts with Lord Kimbolton, known also as Lord Manchester, under whose orders Oliver Cromwell served.

#### *The Erastian Representatives*

The advocates of Erastianism in the Assembly were Selden, Lightfoot, and Coleman, all distinguished for Hebrew and Semitic learning. They denied that any particular form of Church government was prescribed in the New Testament, and claimed for the State the right to establish such form as might be most expedient. According to Erastianism the ecclesiastical supremacy rests with the civil government; the Church is a mere department of the State; the role of clergymen is that of teachers, not rulers, and the exclusive power of discipline rests in the hands of the secular

5. According to some historical sources, the more direct author of the *Shorter Catechism* seems to have been Dr. John Arrowsmith, head of St. John's College, Cambridge, who together with Dr. Anthony Tuckney was also the chief composer of the *Larger Catechism*.



magistrate. Both the Independents and Erastians withdrew before the final adoption of the *Book of Discipline*, and left the field to the Presbyterians. The Presbyterian Church polity was at length established by the English Parliament, which ordained in June 29, 1647, that “all parishes within England and Wales be brought under the government of congregational, classical, provincial, and national Churches, according to the form of Presbyterian government agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster.”

#### *Doctrinal Standards of the Confession*

The framing of the Westminster Confession of Faith was largely due to Scottish influence and sets forth the Calvinistic doctrinal system in its most refined scholastic maturity. The leading ideas—with the exception of the doctrine of the Christian Sabbath—reflect a basic agreement with the standards of the Continental confessions, but the form exhibits a peculiar character of Anglo-Saxon identity. It consists of thirty-three chapters, which cover all the leading articles of the Christian faith, from the creation of the world to the final judgement. It rests entirely on the authority of the Bible, corroborated by the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. The Confession was at once brought to Scotland, and in August of 1647, at Edinburgh, the General Assembly adopted it in full as it came from the hands of the Westminster divines, declaring it “to be most agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk.” The Westminster Confession of Faith became also the highest standard of doctrine for American Presbyterians. With some modifications, affecting mainly the matter of Church Polity and Baptism, the Standards have also governed the Congregational or Independent, and the regular Baptist Churches of the British Empire and the United States. Both the *Old London Confession* and the *Philadelphia Baptist Confession of Faith* are based on the Westminster doctrinal standards. Assent to the Westminster Confession of Faith was officially required at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton Universities. With the restoration of the monarchy the Confession shared the fate of Presbyterianism in England. According to Shaff, the main weakness of the Confession lies in the doctrinal *order* it exhibits: by starting with Divine sovereignty and justice and not with Divine love and mercy, the Confession places the predestinarian scheme above the historical and Christological scheme of Redemption.<sup>6</sup> A similar objection has been levelled by Karl Barth in our time.

#### *The Westminster Catechisms*

Simultaneously with the Confession, the Assembly prepared two Catechisms: a large one for public exposition in the pulpit, according to the custom of the Reformed Churches on the Continent, and a smaller one for the instruction of children—a clear and condensed summary of the former. Both Catechisms depart from the catechetical tradition by omitting the Apostles’ Creed. The doctrinal contents are presented in such a pedagogical way that somehow each question already embodies part of the answer. The Larger Catechism is indeed a masterpiece of catechetical skill, and exhibits in popular form a most complete system of divinity.

6. *Op. cit.*, p. 790.

Its concise wording and severely logical answers are traced to the Rev. John Wallis, an eminent grammarian and mathematician, who as a young man fresh from Cambridge was appointed an amanuensis of the Assembly.<sup>7</sup> It has been objected that the Catechism lacks warmth, freshness, and the childlike simplicity of other similar works, and that its mathematical precision in definitions is above the average mental capacity of a child.

#### 2. PRESBYTERIANISM

Rutherford was a strong defender of the Presbyterian form of Church government. Some of his treatises deal exclusively with the issue: *A Peaceable and Temperate Plea for Paul’s Presbytery in Scotland*, *The Due Right of Presbyteries*, and *The Divine Right of Church Government*; and practically in all of his other writings there are references to the subject. On this matter, the agreement among the Scottish leaders was indeed remarkably unanimous. Rutherford was unyielding in his claim that Presbyterianism represented the true biblical form of Church government. English sectarianism, he charged, had sought to defend several forms of organisation, such as prelacy, popery, presbyteries, and Independency. According to them, the Church is a body of saints dispersed amongst many sects. This false conception of the Church, maintains Rutherford, “lies at the basis of the theory of religious toleration, and it has infected persons high in the civil Government.”<sup>8</sup>

Contrary to the widespread view that Presbyterianism, so congenial to Scottish soil, was an artificial plant in England, historical evidence seems to show otherwise and sustains the fact that Presbyterianism, already during Elizabeth’s reign, found strong supporters in that country. The learned and influential Thomas Cartwright (1535–1603), professor of theology in Cambridge, was a strong Presbyterian; and so was Walter Travers (d. 1624), Preacher in the Temple, London, and afterwards Provost of Trinity College, Dublin. The first Presbyterian Church in England was fully constituted on November 1572, in the village of Wandsworth, on the banks of the Thames. The example was followed by others and the number of Puritan congregations that embraced Presbyterianism began to increase all over England. Stephen Marshall (1594–1655), one of the great Puritan leaders who also endorsed Presbyterianism in England, was an influential preacher to the English Parliament and a member of the Westminster Assembly. He might have assisted John Arrowsmith and Anthony Tuckney in the preparation of the Shorter Westminster Catechism. He was one of the authors of a famous book which under the title *Smectymnuus*<sup>9</sup> attacked the policies of Church government

7. Frances Luttikhuisen, “In Memory of the Versatile Puritan Divine, Dr. John Wallis,” in *Christianity & Society*, Vol. XIII, No. 3 (July 2003).

8. Samuel Rutherford, *A survey of the spiritual Antichrist: Opening the secrets of familisme and antinomianisme, etc.* 1648, p. 8. The sect of the *Familists* or *Family of Love*, have been associated with one David George of Delft, who affirmed that he was the true David whom God had promised to send to restore again the kingdom of Israel. Henry Nicholas, one of his followers, maintained the same doctrine, but applied it to himself.

9. The name was derived from the initials of the book’s real authors: Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstowe. John Milton wrote three tracts in defence of the Smectymnuus position.

and liturgy of Anglicanism and upheld the doctrinal principles of Presbyterianism. When the Westminster Assembly began its sessions the great body of English Puritans had already become Presbyterians.

Presbyterianism marked the general tendency of Church government in the Continental congregations, but it was in Scotland where it reached its more mature form. It is therefore understandable that the English Puritans looked to Scotland for inspiration in their model for Church polity. It must be noticed, however, that the issue of Church government was not raised by Calvin in his influential epistolary contacts with the religious and political leaders of the English nation. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Calvin's theological influence was strongly felt in that country, and continued down to the time of Archbishop Laud. His *Institutes* were translated at an early date and passed through six editions in a surprisingly short time. They were used as a textbook in the universities. The nine Lambeth Articles of 1595, and the Irish Articles of Archbishop Ussher of 1615, constitute an eloquent proof of Calvinism in England. In the question of Church polity, however, Calvin did not wish to interfere with the theological leanings of the Anglican Church. After the death of Henry VIII, the first Duke of Somerset was nominated Regent for the nine-year-old King Edward and for two and a half years acted as king in all but name. In a long letter to Protector Somerset (Oct. 22, 1548), Calvin advised him to implant decisive Reformed articles of faith for the country. It is worth noting, however, that in this important letter Calvin makes no objection to the Episcopal form of government, nor to liturgy. Neither did he make any mention of the subjects in the several letters he wrote to Edward VI—to whom he dedicated his Commentary on Isaiah.

Puritanism—a name originally given in reproach—aimed at a radical purification of the Church on the sole basis of the word of God. The Puritans were no separate organisation or sect, but represented the advanced wing of the national Church of England. Their intention was not to secede, but simply to reform still further the national Church in the interest of primitive purity and simplicity by legislative and executive sovereignty.<sup>10</sup> The open conflict between Puritanism and the official Church reached its highest point under Charles I (1625–1649) and William Laud. They both shared the same aim: the establishment of an absolute outward uniformity in religion. Charles wanted to rule without a Parliament. He did so, in fact, for more than eleven years, and the four Parliaments which he was compelled to convoke he soon arbitrarily dissolved. Laud's religion consisted of High Church Episcopalianism and Arminianism in the nearest possible approach to Rome, which he admired and loved, and the furthest possible distance from Calvinistic Geneva, which he detested. The height of his folly, and the beginning of his fall, was the enforcement of his Episcopal and ritualistic scheme upon Presbyterian Scotland in defiance of the will of the people and the law of the land. This brought on the Scottish Covenant and hastened the Civil War. In England the Long Parliament organised the opposition, and assumed the defence of constitutional liberty against royal absolutism.

10. The name *Puritans*—from *pure*—occurs first about 1564 or 1566, and was employed to brand those who were opposed to the use of priestly vestments, such as the cap, surplice, and the tippet—but not the gown, which the Puritans and Presbyterians retained. Shakespeare uses the term half a dozen times, and always reproachfully.

The Westminster Assembly was almost solidly Puritan, and that had come to mean Presbyterian. The Scottish delegates on their part sought to achieve a close uniformity in structure, doctrine, government, and discipline for England and Scotland. As already mentioned, the work of revision of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England was suspended by an order of Parliament requiring the assembly to enter upon the work of Church government. Though many days were spent on the question of ruling elders, the most important and lengthened debate in this Assembly was regarding the divine right of Presbyterianism. In one of his letters written from London, Rutherford summarises the debate of the Assembly in these terms:

We are debating, with much contention of disputes, for the just measures of the Lord's temple. It pleaseth God, that sometimes enemies hinder the building of the Lord's house; but now friends, even gracious men (so I conceive of them), do not a little hinder the work. Thomas Goodwin, Jeremiah Burroughs, and some others, four or five, who are for the Independent way, stand in our way and are mighty opposites to the Presbyterian government. We have carried through some propositions for the Scripture right of presbytery, especially in the church of Jerusalem (Acts 2, 4, 5 and 15), and the church of Ephesus, and are going on upon other grounds of truth; and by the way have proven, that ordination of pastors belongeth not to a single congregation, but to a college of presbyters, whose it is to lay hands upon Timothy and others (1 Tim. 4:14; 5:17; Acts 13:1–3; 6:5–6). We are to prove that one single congregation hath no power to excommunicate, which is opposed not only by Independent men, but by many others. The truth is we have at times grieved spirits with the work; and for my part, I often despair of the reformation of this land, which saw never anything but the high places of their fathers and the remnants of Babylon's pollutions; and except that, "not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord," I should think God hath not yet thought it time for England's deliverance. For the truth is the best of them almost have said: "A half reformation is very fair at the first"; which is no other thing than, "it is not time yet to build the house of the Lord." And for that cause, many houses, great and fair in the land, are laid desolate. Multitudes of Anabaptists, Antinomians, Familists, Separatists, are here. The best of the people are of the Independent way . . .<sup>11</sup>

Under Cromwell, the political and religious programme of the army alienated the Presbyterian Puritans—mainly for granting freedom to all religious groups, and for giving special privileges to Congregationalism. After Cromwell's death in 1658, Parliament was recalled, and Presbyterianism was briefly re-established. When the monarchy was restored under Charles II in 1660, Episcopacy became once again the accepted form of Church government. More than two thousand Presbyterian ministers resisted and were deposed from their churches. Presbyterianism never regained power in England. After William and Mary became the English monarchs (1689), all Protestants in England were granted toleration. In the eighteenth century Presbyterianism in England was revived by Scots who began settling on English soil. Finally, in 1876 the Presbyterian Church of England was officially established.

11. Rutherford's letter to Lady Boyd, London, May 25, 1644, pp. 417–418 of the *Letters*. The "Separatists" were a kind of Anabaptists, so called because they pretended to be separate from the rest of the world. They condemned fine clothes. To them that laughed they would cry: "Woe be to you that laugh, for hereafter ye shall mourn." They did look sadly, and fetched deep sighs; they avoided marriage meetings, feasts, music; and condemned the bearing of arms and Covenants.

*The Christian Sabbath*

Another subject of pivotal importance for Samuel Rutherford was the strict observance of the Christian Sabbath. He refers to the subject in several of his writings. On this issue he was not alone. The strict keeping of the Lord's Day was a distinctive characteristic of the Scottish religious life, as well as exclusive singing of Psalms—another note of strict Presbyterianism.<sup>12</sup> The strict observance of the Sabbath was not specially taught by the Reformers and, as a doctrinal article, does not generally appear in the Continental Confessions. This was not indeed the case with those denominations where Presbyterian theology left a strong stamp and the Westminster Confession of Faith became the accepted doctrinal creed—as in the national Kirk of Scotland. The Westminster Confession of Faith speaks of the Christian rest-day of the Sabbath under three aspects: (1) as a divine law of nature, rooted in the constitution of man, and hence instituted (together with marriage) at the creation, in the state of innocence, for the perpetual benefit of body and soul; (2) as a positive moral law, given through Moses, with reference to the primitive institution—“Remember the Sabbath Day,” and to the typical redemption of Israel from bondage; (3) as the commemoration of the new creation and finished redemption by the resurrection of Christ; hence the change from the last to the first day of the week, and its designation “the Lord's Day.” In April 1644, the Scottish Parliament passed an ordinance securing the pious observance of the Sabbath.<sup>13</sup>

The observance of the Sabbath was also a matter of religious and political friction between the Nonconformists and the leaders of the Anglican establishment. In 1603 James VI of Scotland succeeded Elizabeth as James I of England. The professed Calvinism of the King soon dissipated and the Presbyterians of England and Scotland suffered the religious repression of his intolerant and arbitrary decisions. Against

12. From a very early period the *Psalms*, which were translated into metre by Sternhold and Hopkins, were sung in the Scots churches, and great pains were used to instruct the people in psalmody. Psalm singing became one of the distinguishing notes of the solemn worship of the Scottish *Kirk*.

13. Although greatly detached from theological questions, many people today associate Scotland with a strict keeping of the Sabbath as a result of having seen the popular film “Chariots of Fire.” My own first encounter with a strict observance of the Sabbath day was as a student at Westminster Theological Seminary in the 1950s. For a time I attended Knox Presbyterian Church, pastored by Dr. David Freeman. Professor John Murray was a member of this congregation and also the Bible teacher for the adult Sunday School. Coming from “pagan” Spain I was indeed surprised at the formal metamorphosis which our dear Presbyterian brethren underwent on the Lord's Day: on the Sabbath everything was grave and serious and hardly any conversation went on among the members of the congregation. It seemed that the only proper and justified use of the vocal cords on that day was reserved for Psalm singing. We generally drove to Knox Church in Professor Murray's car—the “funeral car,” according to another foreign student who found it difficult to understand the strictness of the religious keeping of the Sabbath. On one occasion, as we were driving to church, this particular student asked Professor Murray to tell us something about the “ghost stories” related to the old Scottish castles. That day I was close to having the worst automobile accident of my life. In the middle of a stream of heavy traffic, Professor Murray slammed on the brakes and stopped the car on a dangerous curve. Extremely annoyed, he told the student that he regarded his “ghost question” as a most flagrant profanation of the Lord's Day. Unaware of the danger and inconvenience he was causing to all vehicles, Professor Murray esteemed it appropriate to give his frightened riders a powerful and well remembered lesson on the reasons for keeping the Sabbath.

the observance of the Sabbath the King ordered the *Book of Sports*—a list of recreations permissible on Sundays—to be read in every parish church, and threatened clergymen who refused to do so with severe punishment. Permission was given for dancing, archery, leaping and vaulting, and several other amusements. Refusal to comply with the King's injunction was one of the reasons that forced the congregation of Scrooby, England, to flee to Holland in 1607, and to cross the Atlantic in the *Mayflower* and establish the Plymouth Colony on the shore of Cape Cod Bay in 1620. Charles I reaffirmed his father's order and insisted upon the reading of the *Book of Sports* by the clergy. When Charles was overthrown during the English Civil War, Puritan prohibitions against sports and games on the Sabbath again prevailed until Charles II was restored in 1660.

## 3. “LEX REX”—OR LAW AS KING

Rutherford's works did not pass unnoticed. As a matter of fact his writings aroused great controversy and opposition from both the ecclesiastic and religious spheres, and caused him grave and painful consequences. As already mentioned, his treatise against Arminianism led to the deprivation of his ministry at Anwoth and his exile to Aberdeen. But this was not all: his last days were assailed by the persecution which followed the publication of *Lex Rex, a Dispute for the Just Prerogative of King and People*, his best work. In this treatise Rutherford deals with the rights and limitations of both monarchs and subjects, and establishes the basic principles of an organic conception of constitutional law. His arguments against the absolutist power of the King over the citizen are indeed devastating, and implied a valiant defiance of an authority until then regarded as unassailable. Resentful, and at the same time concerned for the consequences that the propagation of these liberating views might have on the population, Charles II ordered all copies of *Lex Rex* to be burned. Rutherford was deprived of all his offices, and on a charge of high treason was cited to appear before Parliament—something which did not occur on account of his death on February, 1661.

As we analyse the contents of *Lex Rex* we become aware of the uniform line of thought which in matters of Church competences and civil government controlled the views of the Scottish theologians. It could be asserted that in *Lex Rex* Rutherford further develops and leads to logical completion the essential views of the *Second Book of Discipline* (1578), in which Andrew Melville had a chief hand. The book sustains that the aim of civil authority is the promoting of external peace among the subjects; whereas the goal of the ecclesiastical authority is that of directing men in all that concerns their spiritual welfare. The Church has its own proper courts in its sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, which admit of no superiority of office above a teaching presbyter, or minister of the gospel. There should be, therefore, no interference between the ecclesial and civil authorities. Consequently, lay patronage and government interference in the affairs of the Church constitute a flagrant intrusion in the spiritual ecclesiastical realm, and must be rejected.

*Lex Rex* was written in an historic frame of oppressive and arbitrary monarchical decisions. In 1625 Charles I succeeded to the throne of England and soon exhibited an unlimited and abusive sense of royal power. He saw himself



as superior to all law—civil or ecclesiastical. He supported the view that a monarch's right to rule came from God, not from the people. His opposition to Parliament was most arrogant, and eventually led to his own ruin. In less than four years Charles called three Parliaments and dissolved them when their members demanded political and religious reforms that he did not agree with. In 1628 he was forced to accept the so called "Petition of Right," obliging him to rule by existing laws. He soon ignored the agreement and from 1629 to 1640 governed without Parliament. In 1642, his conflicts with Parliament led to the Civil War. In a despotic decision he tried to force Scotland to use English forms of worship. The Scottish Kirk, in the Assembly of 1638, reacted with extreme vigour to the absolutist pretensions of the monarchy and reaffirmed the sole headship of Christ in the Church. In 1646 the King surrendered to the Scottish army.

The appearance of Oliver Cromwell on the scene added a note of confusion to the political and religious situation. "It is hard to say," writes M'Crie, "whether our worthy fathers were more alarmed at the secular weapons of Cromwell's soldiers, or at the monstrous heresies which they imported. They beheld with dismay an army of sectaries impregnated with all the errors of the times, and quite as ready to combat the pastor in the pulpit, as to meet his people in the battlefield."<sup>14</sup> The great body of the Scottish "Protesters"—among them Rutherford himself—were far from favourable to republicanism or to the usurpation of Cromwell, although such an important and respected minister as Patrick Gillespie publicly prayed for the Protector.<sup>15</sup> After several years of intrigues and wars, a special Parliamentary court led by Cromwell convicted Charles of treason and he was beheaded.

*Lex Rex* contains forty-four "questions," stated in lengthy presentations. Here too, the "answers" are partly advanced, or implicitly contained in the questions themselves. The recourse to Bible quotations, mostly from the Old Testament, is constant. There are also references to jurists who, like Hugo Grotius, began to raise decisive questions on matters related to international law. Rutherford did not go along, however, with Grotius' idea that nations, independently of God, are bound by a natural law inherent in man's own nature. For Rutherford, although Church and State are two separate entities, both depend on and are subject to divine authority. The view of two separate governments represented a serious threat to the monarchical absolutism of the time and caused the prompt condemnation of the book by the Royalists and the Prelatists. For a time, the mere possession of a copy of *Lex Rex* could be punished by death. Although we must applaud Rutherford in his advanced view of "two separate governments," we regret, nevertheless, the fact that he failed to apply this principle of *separation* to matters which had to do with religious uniformity and toleration. In this point, the bonds between Church and State could not be broken, therefore it was lawful for the ecclesiastical authorities to resort to the "sword" of the magistrate to suppress heresy in the land. As the title of the book indicates, it is clear that for Rutherford, in a God-ordered society, the real "King" is the Law. "The royalists

make the king as absolute as the great Turk." Against the absolutism of the monarchy, Rutherford vindicated the authority of the law: "We obey the king for the law, and not the law for the king." Within the realm of "civil competences," *Rex Lex* represents an important contribution in asserting the rights and limitations of both monarchy and Parliament. Although "neither king nor Parliament have a voice against law and reason, the Parliament doth regulate, limit, and set bounds to the king's power." Members of Parliament, "as elders appointed by God to be judges may convene and judge without the king."<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. RUTHERFORD'S REJECTION OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

If there was ever a man systematically consistent in a line of argumentation developed from certain premises accepted as unassailable, this man was Rutherford. Deeply persuaded that Presbyterianism was the irrefutable teaching of the Bible, Rutherford derived extreme logical conclusions from this basic assumption. The unloving, and even cruel, results of his intellectual reasoning, did not seem to have caused him the slightest vacillation or doubt about the validity of the premises on which he based his argumentation. For Rutherford Presbyterianism was an unquestionable axiom of biblical truth and the consequences derived from it were also self-evident. This is the great problem that confronts us when we try to understand this Scotsman. How could a man that lived and experienced so deeply and bountifully the love of Christ be, at the same time, so uncharitable and intolerant in his Presbyterian views? How could a man who has been judged as "the keenest intellect in the Presbyterian party in the Westminster Assembly" go so far in his line of thought as to regard liberty of conscience and religious freedom as "damnable doctrines"?

For Rutherford Presbyterianism represented the true Church of God from which there could be not the slightest deviation. This Church, speaking in its lawful assemblies, is the sole rule and guide of conscience, and speaks infallibly in controversial questions of dogma. The officers of the Church declare the mind and will of Christ just as judges in interpreting the law declare the normative codes of a nation. To deny this principle would be to engulf Christendom in spiritual anarchy, to raze the foundations of Christian discipline, and to exalt the individual will above the will of God. Man's conscience is God-given and, if tender, should be respected. But the wilful conscience may not be permitted to override truth or to breed dissension. The formal conscience of the Church must prevail over the individual conscience. For God has ordained that his word shall be sufficiently clear for the Church to determine infallibly the fundamentals of belief. God has invested the synods of the Church with an exclusive and infallible power to define truth, and all men are bound by their decisions. The Independents, charges Rutherford, "border atheism and are guilty for advocating the damnable doctrine of liberty of conscience . . . They seek to dissolve the unity and the very fabric of the Church by a capricious claim to a liberty of conscience which the laws of Christ do not allow."<sup>17</sup>

14. *Op. cit.*, Part I, ch. 10, p. 21.

15. In a letter of November 1650 to Colonel Gilbert Ker, leading man among the Covenanters, Rutherford speaks of "that unjust invasion of this land made by Cromwell's army, and of the blood of the Lord's people in Scotland" (*Letters*, p. 448).

16. *Lex Rex* XXII, XXIX, XXXVIII, XLIII, XXI.

17. Samuel Rutherford, *A survey of the spiritual Antichrist: Opening the secrets of familisme and antinomianisme, etc.* 1648, pp. 253–260; *A free disputation against pretended liberty of conscience tending to resolve doubts moved by Mr. John Goodwin, John Baptist, Dr. Jer. Taylor, the Belgic Arminians,*



Regarding the *sects*, the views of Rutherford are as unwavering as blunt. According to him, the sects forget that Christ is the head of the visible Church as well as of the invisible: “Liberty of conscience and religious tolerance, advocated by the sects, are teachings implicit in a false conception of the Christian Church, and it has infected persons high in the civil government. There is, therefore, no warrant for religious toleration in the Word. It is clearly nothing less than a covert encouragement to atheism and scepticism. God hath not left men a freedom to follow the dictates of conscience at will, which often is conceit, not conscience.” Presbyterianism must rally to the defence of the absolute truth which it represents, refusing to be ensnared in the plausible but deadly pleas for peace, moderation, and toleration which the enemies of Christ advance to accomplish the overthrow of his Church. For the doctrine of toleration cultivates and emphasises a sceptical spirit concerning the certainties of revealed truth. It questions the infallibility of the necessary truths with which God has endowed his Church. It destroys man’s faith in the Bible, denies the power of the Church to maintain its very unity and doctrine, and decries the certainty of faith which resides at the very basis of election.<sup>18</sup>

“Cromwell and his army,” writes Rutherford, “under the guidance of enthusiastic chaplains, have elevated liberty of conscience as the symbol of their revolutionary demands. The sectarians had given a strong support to the doctrine of complete religious liberty; they also have denied to the magistrate any coercive power in religion. They are, indeed, heretics, and heresy is an insult to the majesty of God which the Scriptures clearly require us to avenge . . . There is but one true Church and all who are outside it are heretics who must be destroyed.” A heretic, maintains Rutherford, is “technically guilty of *soul murder* and should accordingly be cut down by the civil magistrate under the guidance of the Church.” The sword is an external agent which prevents heresy from destroying others and which guards the Law of God and His Church from the impious assaults of error. At this point, however, Rutherford and the Presbyterians in general had to harmonise the accusation of “soul murder” with the doctrine of election. Under all circumstances the elect are safe; they cannot be contaminated by error. The sword, then, may be used as “a mean to punish acts of false worship and eradicate blasphemy in the land.” Even secondary errors in worship and discipline should be punished if they are obstinately held.<sup>19</sup>

As a native of Spain, and having suffered Catholicism’s intolerance under Franco’s regime, the views of Rutherford gave me a feeling of estrangement and bewilderment. Was I reading a Protestant author or a committed disciple of Torquemada? The sad fact is that exclusiveness and religious intolerance have been practised, not only by the Roman Church, but also—in a lesser degree—by Protestants. As Shaff poignantly remarks, with the exception of a few denominations of recent date all Christian Churches have more or less persecuted when in power, and must plead guilty. The difference is only of degree. The Episcopalians

were less intolerant than the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians less intolerant than the Episcopalians, the Independents less intolerant (in theory) than the Presbyterians. But they were all intolerant Protestants, who began with the assertion of private judgement against the authority of Rome, and complained bitterly of her persecuting spirit; yet once they gained power they refused the same right to others and persecuted them for its exercise. According to this great Church historian, intolerance is rooted in the selfishness and ambition of human nature and in the spirit of sectarian exclusiveness, which assumes that we and the sect to which we belong have the monopoly of truth and orthodoxy, and that all who dissent from us must be in error. Persecution follows as a legitimate consequence of this selfishness and bigotry wherever the intolerant party has power to persecute.<sup>20</sup>

Intolerance is an unavoidable consequence of the *uniformity in religion* implicit in the idea of a National State Church. In Worms, in front of the Emperor and the Vatican legates, Martin Luther made the most brave and stupendous vindication of the rights of conscience ever heard before in Christendom. But as soon as he himself had to face the issue of religious tolerance in a Protestant country, the Reformer stumbled on the hard stone of *religious uniformity* and fell back into some of the old practices of Romish intolerance. This was also the stumbling block on which the rest of the Reformers fell—and with them the main Protestant denominations. The prevailing sentiment in the Westminster Assembly was stoutly opposed to toleration. Even Bailie, the most moderate of the Scottish delegates, in his treatise *Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time* (1645) condemned the “error” of toleration—“the mother and nurse of all sorts of heresies and blasphemies threatening the overthrow of religion and society.” The Confession claims for the civil magistrate the right and duty, not only legally to protect, but also to support the Christian Church, and to *prohibit* or *punish* heresy, idolatry, and blasphemy.<sup>21</sup> In question 109 of the *Larger Catechism*, we read that “tolerating a false religion” is included among the sins forbidden in the Second Commandment. Our beloved Rutherford, so enlightened on the issue of the primacy of law and justice against the claims of unrestrained monarchical absolutism, nevertheless on this matter of *religious uniformity* was also a child of his time; his whole Presbyterian scheme was vitiated with the inferences drawn from this old erroneous principle.

*Uniformity of religion*, with all the consequences that it entails, has so powerfully conditioned the minds of Christians in the past as to rule out the rights of conscience and of religious liberty. It has been the cause of much sin, suffering, and confusion among Christians. Religious freedom, now regarded as one of the fundamental and most precious rights of men, is the final result and gain of ages of intolerance and persecution. The history of religious persecution, writes Shaff, “is the *darkest chapter in Church history*—we may call it the devil’s chapter—and the darkest part in it is the persecution of Christians by Christians.<sup>22</sup> J. Maritain once said that *exegesis* is a bush behind which we find that which we

*Socinians, all contending for lawless liberty, or licentious toleration of sects and heresies*, 1649, pp. 145–147.

18. *A free disputation*, pp. 61–64; 182–187, 298; *A survey of the spiritual Antichrist*, pp. 251–255; 257–261.

19. *A survey of the spiritual Antichrist*, pp. 7–8; *A free disputation*, pp. 46, 61–63; 282–187.

20. *Op. cit.*, 800ff.

21. The principle of intolerance is found in chapters XXIII “Of the Civil Magistrate,” XXX “Of Church Censures,” XXXI “Of Synods and Councils,” and in the last clause of chapter XX “Of Christian Liberty.”

22. *Op. cit.*, p. 800.

previously wished to find. The plain fact is that in not a few instances, biblical interpretation has been vitiated with the added material of preconceived ideas. Key biblical texts have been interpreted through the filter of certain ideas uncritically received as true and sound. The Protestant principle of interpreting the difficult passages of Scriptures in the light of those which are clear and pristine, is not easy to practice; it requires a *previous* cathartic effort of laying aside

ingrown material of untested tradition. *Religious uniformity*—with all the monsters it has engendered—has been one of these ingrown religious errors that since the days of Constantine has been accepted as fundamental in the corpus of ecclesiological doctrine. It is hard to accept that some of the Presbyterian errors are that old! This is what we will endeavour to show in our next chapter as we will be surveying some centuries of the history of the Church. *C&S*

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# MAD OR BAD? ILL OR EVIL?

## A BRIEF BIBLICAL ASSESSMENT OF PSYCHIATRIC ILLNESS, PSYCHIATRY AND THE CHRISTIAN

by Nick Holloway<sup>†</sup>

### Introduction

WHERE, in the Scriptures, are the psychiatrists hiding? Where are the biblical examples of Christians suffering “mental breakdowns.” Do psychiatrists *really* have a more effective ministry than Christ and his apostles did?

Some years ago, in the 1980s, the nursing journals were carrying advertisements that were aimed at recruiting students to train as psychiatric nurses. These advertisements announced with confidence that one in eight women would need psychiatric help at some point in their lives. If this was

an accurate prediction, and there is no reason for thinking otherwise, then these estimates anticipated a vast number of mentally ill women, not to mention men and children.

Such a statistic is made up of many anonymous individuals, thousands of them, but each of these individuals will be a person with one or more actual or imagined needs. Some will be suffering in silence, whilst others will have sought out (or will have been referred to) a variety of so called “professionals” from whom they hope to “receive help.” Help for a kaleidoscopic array of conditions, all loosely grouped together and known as “psychiatric illnesses.”

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<sup>†</sup> Nick Holloway committed his life to Christ when he was eighteen, whilst a student nurse in the town of Dorchester, Dorset. Having qualified as a Registered General Nurse in 1975, he worked briefly in the operating theatres in Weymouth and District Hospital before going to Bible College in Surrey for three years. Weekend preaching engagements at Hove Pentecostal Church and regular visits to Bracknell Baptist Church balanced the academic studies. Ordained in 1984, his first Church appointment was to a Pentecostal Church in Sholing, Southampton, a ministry that continued for six years, 1980–86. For some of this time he also worked in a Southampton hospital. A two-year appointment at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Pengam, Gwent, involved a move to South Wales. After the two years he went back to full time nursing in local nursing homes. He now works as a Training Adviser (NVQ Assessor) for a Youth Training Company. His family attends Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Blackwood, Gwent, whenever possible. In addition, he currently preaches to several congregations of differing “denominations” in the Rhymney Valley area. He is married with daughters of nineteen and seventeen. To date, he has not suffered from any “psychiatric illness,” but recognises that preachers like himself must make better efforts to understand those who do. When we better understand what exactly these people are suffering from, the more appropriately we may be able to pastor them.

### *The Growth of Psychiatric Illnesses*

Over recent years the diagnosing and treating of psychiatric illnesses has become a growth industry. A lucrative industry, too. A dominating industry which dares anyone to challenge it. Previous generations have known little of “psychiatric illnesses” to any significant extent, whereas here we are at the genesis of the twenty-first century and most of us know of somebody who is “suffering with their nerves” or who has had “a mental breakdown” or who is “being treated for depression” or some such condition.

These “illnesses” appear to be increasingly common, afflicting ever-larger numbers of people with ever more diffuse and imaginative symptoms. Perversely, to be seen as suffering from some form of psychiatric condition appears to be rather fashionable in some circles of society. It’s held up as some form of “street cred”! I have read that pastoral psychotherapists are being added to the ministry teams of

some congregations in America, presumably to complement the ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher (Eph. 4), the gifts of Christ to his Church. This is a development that fills me with great alarm, but also with a sense of inevitability.

### *The Church's Dilemma*

The growing number of *Christians* who are being diagnosed as suffering from “psychiatric illness” is to be viewed with some consternation, if not indignation. Who is doing this diagnosing of the Lord’s flock? Who are these people that prescribe drugs and therapies to treat what has been diagnosed? And why are so many Christians doing the bidding of these practitioners without either: (a) reference to the Scriptures, which remain our divine guide for belief and practice, and (b) the knowledge or consent of their elders, those charged by the Lord with the oversight of his flock? Do ministers and elders approve of their sheep behaving like this? Is it because they have nothing to offer from their pastoral storehouse that they allow their flock to submit to the whimsical notions of the “professional”?

How can we pray effectively and without our consciences condemning us, (1 John 3:21) for those who are submitting themselves to the ungodly for counsel and treatment in contravention of biblical teaching? “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly . . .” (Ps. 1:1). “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight” (Pr. 3:5, 6).

Even in the congregations around my home in the Rhymney Valley there are Christians who speak of having suffered “a mental breakdown.” What, precisely, have they suffered? How is it possible for Christians to suffer from a condition that is completely absent from the biblical record?

From Genesis to Revelation there is no “psychiatric illness” of any sort, no “nervous breakdown” afflicting either Old Testament prophet or New Testament apostle. Significantly, there is not a psychiatrist in sight. He is absent from the ministry gifts of Christ to the Church (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers), and missing from the ministries and gifts mentioned, for example, in the twelfth chapter of Romans, (prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to the needs of others, leadership, showing mercy and so on).

### *The Way Forward*

It is time that our congregations were informed and challenged about the real and lasting dangers involved in going to non-Christian sources for help with what are supposed to be, after all, life-dominating problems, e.g. problems with life in general and problems with particular aspects of life such as relationships, sleep, money, sex, bereavement, unemployment.

There is no blessing (no happiness) to be gained from seeking counsel from the ungodly with regard to such matters. “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . his delight is in the Law of the Lord . . . he is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither . . . Whatever he does prospers . . .” (Ps. 1).

The immediate port of call for those who are floundering

amidst the waves of adversity and trial is a caring and competent Church eldership with an equally caring and competent congregation. A pastoral “haven of rest” that can offer, on Christ’s behalf, first aid in the form of biblical advice, prayer, friendship, or money, first aid and ongoing pastoral care and supervision. So often, however, this is where many members of our flock are likely to be let down. They may have to spend much effort and time looking around for a suitably mature eldership and congregation. However, it is to be hoped that the search will be rewarded.

Some Christians who are in general medical practice have a Christian counsellor attached to their team of health professionals. These doctors and their colleagues have taken the initiative in tackling the many patients who turn up in their surgery with nothing physically wrong with them, but who are suffering in some form from life’s pressures and strains. Such counsellors often seek to work with several ministers and congregations in a given area.

So, this proliferation of so-called “psychiatric illness” and “psychiatric disorder” within the Church of God is a most disturbing matter. Surely it is time for some incisive biblical evaluation of the situation? Such an evaluation does not mean that it is necessary to read the psychiatric journals and textbooks or to attend seminars on the subject. These will be biased and unhelpful. A strictly Christian methodology must be adopted, which means starting (and ending) with the Bible. The Bible is not biased, of course, but truthful. Any other starting place, any other foundation, would be a distinctly non-Christian and, therefore, an unacceptable approach. Other items of literature with the theories that they espouse, together with personal testimonies from sufferers, can be consulted at a later stage and interpreted in the light of Scriptural truth.

What does Almighty God say about this plague that is affecting so many of *his* flock? What spiritual guidelines has he laid down for us in the Scriptures in order that we may maintain our mental health? What personal testimonies has the Holy Spirit recorded within these sacred pages for our reading, learning and benefit?

### *The Biblical Record*

There is no mention of any “psychiatric illness” throughout the entire Bible. Neither is there any mention of a psychiatrist or of psychiatry. Should there be? That’s a good question! The answer is “Yes” if the Lord’s people are going to be submitting their lives to the diagnosis, the counsel and the treatment received from these practitioners. Yet, despite this absence from the biblical record, today’s Church leaders appear to accept their congregations’ submission to the professionalism of these secular priests without reservation or question.

None of the Old Testament prophets, nor any of the apostles of Christ, nor Christ himself, nor any of the elders of the early Church appear to have ministered to anyone along the lines of modern psychiatry. Even so, in no way was the ministry of any of these people defective and neither was anyone to whom they ministered disadvantaged. But in this new millennium, this enlightened twenty-first century, if one of the Lord’s flock shows signs of “odd behaviour” or describes peculiar symptoms they are likely to be referred to their family doctor with the hope that he will refer them to a “specialist” for “expert help.”

Perhaps it is an indictment upon Christ's Church that the elders of his Church do not spring to mind when "expert help" for such people is being contemplated and sought. "For the lips of a priest (Hebrew *kohen*, "priest" or "minister") ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction, because he is the messenger of the Lord God Almighty" (Mal. 2:7).

Readers of the Bible will know that there are instances within its pages of irrational acts, bizarre behaviour and anti-social conduct. Fears, depressions, incest, rape, theft, murders and suicides are all recorded there. Many of these incidents, if they took place today, would be considered the legitimate territory of the psychiatrist or psychotherapist. It is time that the Christian Church claimed back the territory that it has forfeited to the secular priests of psychiatry.

Consider King Saul's frenzied and murderous attacks on the young David, whom he knew would one day succeed him on the throne of Israel. What was the driving force behind Saul's fury? "But an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand" (1 Sam. 19:9). Could the cause have been Saul's jealousy, exploited and traded upon by the evil spirit sent from the Lord?

There are numerous murderers in the Bible, commencing with Cain's killing of his brother Abel, recorded in the fourth chapter of Genesis. Was Cain ill or evil? Was his behaviour psychotic or sinful? Was he guilty of homicide, or of manslaughter through diminished responsibility? The answer is given in the biblical text. He was deliberately harbouring evil thoughts about Abel, thoughts that he allowed to lead him into behaving sinfully, even to the murder of his own brother. His actions cannot be excused by pleading that the balance of his mind was impaired.

The prophet Ezekiel must have appeared as an odd character as he acted out God's message to the people of Israel with dramatic sketches. On one such occasion he lay down on one side and then on his other side for a prescribed three hundred and ninety days. On another occasion he made bread and ate it in a particular fashion. A third incident sees Ezekiel shave his head, burn some of the hair and then tuck some of the remainder into the folds of his garments. All of these three publicly enacted incidents (and there were others) were undertaken at the instruction of the Lord. If such a man were on the loose here, in Bargoed, he would surely be regarded as "a regular head case" and taken into custody.

King Herod's infamous command that all baby boys under the age of two years be killed can be included in the age-old list of despotic "crimes against humanity." So jealous was Herod of his throne and its power that he killed any real or perceived threat to his position. Several close members of his family were executed. You can imagine that the visit of the wise men, the Magi, with the news of the birth of one who was born to be "King of the Jews" was sure to prompt Herod to great anger. Sure enough, his response was to order the massacre of all the under-tuos. Was this man mad or bad? Should he be held accountable for his despotic actions or should we look for grounds upon which we might excuse him?

Was the nurse Beverly Allett mad or bad, evil or ill, when she murdered the babies in her care? Was it Judas Iscariot's sense of guilt at betraying Christ that drove him to commit suicide?

### *The Biblical Perspective*

How are we to assess these individuals and interpret these historical events? Do we find anything within the sacred narrative that helps us to assess and evaluate our contemporary attitude to psychiatric illness? I believe that we do. We find the absence of psychiatric illness.

Within the pages of the Bible there are three causes or explanations of the moods and behaviours listed above, with the exception of Ezekiel. (This prophet's actions were dramatic parables, what we would know today, perhaps, as a form of "street theatre.")

These three causes or explanations are, briefly: (1) *physical (or organic) disease*. There are some physical conditions that cause antisocial or otherwise odd behaviour or unacceptable moods. A brain tumour, a hardening of the brain's arteries (arteriosclerosis) or a hormonal problem might be regarded as examples of this. I recall a patient that I nursed on a medical ward in a Dorset hospital who did the exact opposite of what was asked of him. He meant the opposite of what he said, too. In his case the medical staff made a diagnosis of arteriosclerosis.

There is the opportunity for many congregations to rediscover their responsibilities to the sick. The "laying on of hands" and the "anointing of oil," with believing prayer that the sick person may be made whole, has been neglected. Teaching on the subject of divine healing, one of the glorious blessings inherited from our Lord's death and resurrection, would be the source of much blessing amongst the Christian community. This is not to state, though, that it is sinful for Christians to receive medications for diabetes or to undergo surgical operations for such physical injuries as broken bones.

Godly advice on healthy living is also a need of the hour. Look around your own congregation (discreetly!) this weekend and gauge how many of the Lord's people live sinfully unhealthy lives. Accustomed to such a lifestyle, the Christian then wonders why a loving God afflicts them with heart conditions, stomach ulcers, high blood pressure and the like, when these physical symptoms are often (though not always) "hamartiagenic" or "sin induced."

(2) *Demons*. The cause of disruptive or destructive behaviour may be due to the individual being troubled by demons in some way. Scripture teaches that a Christian is the real and eternal possession of God, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit. "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves" (Col. 1:13). So an evil spirit or demon cannot "possess" the Christian in the sense of ownership. But it is quite feasible for demons to trouble, afflict and oppress Christians. It is against such powers, after all, that we wage a holy war and against which we wrestle.

This scenario is not as common as some members of the Church would have us believe, but more common than others give credit for. Elders should always give some thought to this as a cause of problems if the sufferer has had some past experience of occult activities such as tarot cards or seances. And this is another area of ministry for elders to explore and develop, an area of ministry that needs a firm biblical foundation and a mature prayer support.

Incidentally, many of the patients in our psychiatric hospitals, or those to be seen living under supervision in our communities, are troubled by demons. You only have to look at them and watch them. A visit to the "locked wards"



of our psychiatric units will introduce you to many wretched individuals, testimonies to Satan's skills in wrecking and disfiguring lives. Tortured people who are imprisoned within a prison, waiting to be set free by the Strong Man's representatives on earth. This is spiritual warfare. It is a fight for a human soul, the mightiest battle of all, a battle which, remember, is the Lord's.

(3) *Sinful Behaviour*. By far the largest cause of behavioural difficulty lies in this third area, the area of behaving sinfully. It is likely to be anger (sin) and not a neurosis that leads to a loss of temper, to an assault, to an act of road-rage, to murder or to self-mutilation. It is usually greed (sin) and not a personality disorder that seeks to possess something or someone at all costs, even to the extent of wounding other people in the process. The desire to deceive people and to manipulate circumstances for one's own ends, for one's own advantage at work, perhaps, or to win over a rival in love, is sinful. Any lust (uncontrolled appetite) that will permit someone to be hurt in order to be satisfied is sinful. An inappropriate reaction to circumstances that brings everyday activities to a grinding halt in a fog of depression is a

sinful response. These are a few of the many sinful activities that we may sometimes engage in.

This is the area that needs most attention in developing and applying biblical counsel and guidance for those of Christ's Church who have been misdiagnosed as suffering from "psychiatric illness." Most basic of all in this matter, the concept of personal responsibility for behaviour and its consequences needs reinforcing. Mainstream psychiatry is predominantly secular and not Christian, which is why concepts such as demonisation and sinful behaviour are foreign concepts to it. It is due to this secular foundation, this faulty and inadequate foundation, that it is unable to supply the Christian with true and lasting results. Psychiatry does not begin with God, does not bring God into the sufferer's situation, does not look to God for answers and has no fear of God. The Lord's people should avoid it. "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water, that sends out its roots by a stream. It does not fear when the heat comes, its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" (Jer. 17:7). *C&S*

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# FOUR INTERPRETATIONS OF 11TH SEPTEMBER 2001

by *Jean-Marc Berthoud*

## INTRODUCTION

THE present international situation is extraordinarily complex and we cannot say that it gets clearer day by day. No simplistic, univocal explanation can account for the facts which can be commonly observed, let alone that mass of information hidden from our uninitiated eyes. But sufficient information is currently available for attentive observers of the international scene to feel more and more sceptical about the official explanations given of recent events. In this brief essay I shall put forward a number of hypotheses which provide, at different levels of interpretation, certain tentative explanations of the present situation.

### FIRST INTERPRETATION (THE OFFICIAL VERSION):

*An attack exclusively orchestrated by Islamic terrorist groups*

According to the official version of the 11th September the attacks against the twin towers of the World Trade Center as well as against the Pentagon constitute an aggression organised by Islamic terrorist groups whose action was orchestrated by Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda organisation. On first impression this interpretation of the events under scrutiny seems reasonable. The terrorists identified were quite clearly part of Islamic terrorist networks that were seeking to strike a decisive blow against the image of the United States in the world by the destruction a number of symbols, clearly visible to all, of American financial and military power. We must recognise, to say the least, that the blow struck on the 11th September seems to have gone even beyond the wildest hopes of its perpetrators. Thus the prestige of the power dominating the whole world by its financial, economic and military might was brought low in little more than an hour. The invincible master of the world was brought to its knees by truly ridiculous means: pocket knives and cutters wielded by men opposed to the most powerful and sophisticated weaponry but determined to sacrifice their lives in favour of a sacred cause.

The method by which these attacks were perpetrated gives the impression that their authors were conscious of the disciplines characteristic of the martial arts: the very strengths of the enemy must be used to effect his destruction. It was a masterly tactical action clearly characteristic of the methods

recommended by Sun Tsu in his fifth century B.C. classic exposition of the Art of War.<sup>1</sup>

Another aspect of this dramatic act of aggression was the remarkable understanding its perpetrators had of the political power of symbolic acts. The targets aimed at, the Babel-like twin towers of the temple of international finance in the heart of New York, as well as the Pentagon, strategic centre of the greatest military power on earth, (as well as the third target missed, whether it be a nuclear power station or the White House) all have highly symbolic value. It was this symbolic character which made these odious actions so particularly apt to strike with immeasurable force the imagination even of a highly rationalist society like our own. The day chosen for the attack—the very anniversary of the deliverance of the city of Vienna from the besieging forces of the Islamic armies of the Ottoman Empire by the Polish forces of Jan Sobieski—the 11th September 1683, was in itself of great symbolic moment.

The suicidal self-sacrifice of fanatical militant Muslims who, for the defence of their cause perpetrated three exemplary disasters on an abhorred enemy, rivals that of other religious and political fanatics in the past: the Jews' heroic resistance to the death at Massada in the first-century of our era or that of the fanatical communist comrades of World Revolution who also showed themselves capable in the past century of such absolute self-abnegation. The awesome efficacy of these different blows struck at the only great power in the world today, strikes all who contemplate this terrifying deed with stupor. All these elements brought together lead us to the conclusion that the perpetrator of such crimes is not only a highly sophisticated mind but one whose action is armed with a dreadful efficacy.

Seen in this perspective it becomes clear that the adversary of the United States is an international terrorist of no mean stature. It is also evident that the American response, and indeed that of the West in general, to such an act of brutal and bloody aggression was not only an absolute necessity, but one vital to the very survival of civilised society. General indifference to, and even sympathy for, former terrorist movements in South Africa, for present terrorist movements in Northern Ireland, in the Basque province of Spain, in Israel and elsewhere were overnight unanimously replaced

1. Sun Tsu, *The Art of War* (Oxford University Press, 1998).

by a sentiment of horror and utter rejection. On this level we seemed to be witnessing a salutary awakening of the West, a return to political good sense. No doubt the subversive problems of nations like Israel, Egypt and Algeria (who all suffer from the terror of militant Islam) would henceforth be taken more seriously. The extreme danger represented by Afghanistan was at last perceived to proceed from the presence on its soil of Islamic terrorist groups who had found there a long-term territorial refuge from which to organise and to launch sudden attacks of unimaginable brutality on unsuspecting nations, aggressions capable of destabilising even the most powerful nation of all. This danger represented by Islamic terrorism was already perceived by such nations as India, which feared the revival of such irrational violence on its northern frontier with Pakistan. For Russia, the struggle against an incredibly destructive Islamic terrorism was hardly a novelty. The present situation all too plainly confirmed the repeated warnings of President Putin to the Western nations so complacently tolerant of the most fanatical Islamic groups. Even China was aware of the threat militant Islam could represent to the security of its north-western provinces.

This whole situation proves all the more dramatic because the terrorism which strikes our nations does not have its essential base outside the West. In this sense the American-Afghan war scenario, clearly aimed for American media consumption, lets us wrongly imagine the source of our present danger to be abroad. In reality the cultural and religious organisations from which our present Islamic fanatics are recruited come from the innumerable Islamic study centres scattered everywhere throughout the Western world. It is our incorrigibly naïve thoughtlessness (our pluralistic polytheism!) which has led us to tolerate, and even to encourage, the establishment of these Islamic training groups.

We must also signal the political genealogy of this religious terrorism. It descends directly from Soviet government by terror which, in turn, is the ideological heir of the terrorism intrinsic to the French Revolution. The first signs in the history of Europe of this kind of political and religious violence must be placed in the practices of the Inquisition. These were continued in sporadic fashion through many centuries by the Roman Catholic Church's policy of exterminating its religious rivals. This is evidenced by the persecution of the Waldenses, of the Hussites, of the Huguenots, of the Slovaks, and closer to us, of the extermination of nearly a million Orthodox Serbs included within the boundaries of Hitlerian Greater Croatia during the Second World War.<sup>2</sup> The Nazi extermination of European Jewry is a classic (if exceptionally systematic) case of this kind of massive terrorism as are the similar political exercises of the Soviet and Chinese Communist regimes. In each case we find, to varying degrees, a confusion between the spiritual and the temporal power. Such a confusion between the spiritual and temporal orders manifested itself in a particularly brutal form during the Wars of Religion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which Roman Catholics and Protestants excelled each other in feats of mutual cruelty. In the Medieval Imperial Catholicism of Innocent III and Boniface VIII we can observe the absorption of the temporal order by the spiritual power. In the French

2. Marco Aurelio Rivelli, *Le génocide occulté: Etat indépendant de Croatie 1941 1945* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1998).

and Russian Revolutions it is the temporal power which, transformed into a messianic humanist religion, reveals the modern secular (i.e. atheistic) State for what it truly is: a totalitarianism intrinsically terrorist in nature. Fanatical Islam, when it draws the ultimate logical conclusions of its religious premises, manifests the fusion of the spiritual and temporal orders. Suicidal terrorist action in the name of Allah thus become the supreme means of spiritual salvation. The confusion of the spiritual with the temporal will always necessarily lead to different forms of totalitarian terror.

#### SECOND INTERPRETATION:

*The role of the United States government in the propagation of terrorism as a political force in the service of American foreign policy*

If we wish to see the present situation a little more clearly we must somewhat sharpen our analysis. A new factor to which our attention must be drawn muddles the apparent clarity of the official analysis we have just put forward. Varied information at our disposal makes it clear that the principal moving force behind the recent rapid growth of militant Islam as a terrorist force is none other than the subversive action of the government of the United States itself. This was the specific result of the use of fanatical Islam in the subversive anti-communist programmes put in place by the CIA, first in Afghanistan (with the support of Pakistan's ISI secret service and the financial backing of Saudi Arabia) against Soviet Communism, then in the anti-Russian and anti-European terrorist actions conducted by the CIA in the Balkans and on the southern frontier of Russia during the last ten years.<sup>3</sup> Is it not troubling to discover that bin Laden himself benefited from CIA training as one of the more zealous agents of this organisation, particularly in the context of the Mudjaheddin's heroic struggle against the occupying forces of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan?<sup>4</sup>

Was it not in 1979 that the well-known leader of the plutocratic New World Order, Zbigniew Brzezinski (then the Director of National Security Council under President Jimmy Carter) put into action the brilliant idea of attacking the Soviet Empire by harnessing Islamic fanaticism to the cause of universal anti-communism? In this way American funds channelled through the CIA and using the Pakistani ISI Secret Service financed the terrifying and finally successful fight of the Afghani Mudjaheddin against the Soviet army. They favoured the most fanatical of the Afghan resistance leaders, such as the Pakhtun commander Gulbeddin Hikmetyar, at the expense of the more restrained and civilised patriotism of the Tadjik military genius, Ahmad Shah Masud. The very sophisticated murder of Masud by means of a bomb concealed in the camera of a journalist

3. See here the decisive studies by Pierre-Marie Gallois, *Sang du pétrole, L'Iraq* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1989); *Le sang du pétrole, La Bosnie*, (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1989) and Alexandre del Valle, *Islamisme-États-Unis, Une alliance contre l'Europe* (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1997), *Guerres contre l'Europe* (Paris: Syrtes, 2002).

4. On the Afghan problem see the following studies: Brigadier Mohamad Yousaf and Major Mark Adkin, *The Bear Trap. Afghanistan's Untold Story* (Jang Publishers, 1992); John K. Cooley, *Unholy Wars. Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism* (London: Pluto Press, 2000); William Maley (Editor), *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban* (New York University Press, 1998); Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban. Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

carrying a Swedish passport sparked off, on the 9th September 2001, the crisis we are at present considering.

It is thus that the anti-Soviet activity of the CIA led to the opening of numerous Islamic schools in refugee camps established in Pakistan. In these schools the orphaned Afghan young people in exile were submitted to an Islamic brain-washing which turned them into Muslim fanatics. It was from this pool of fanatical young people that were to be drawn a few years later those “students” from which would come the backbone of the Taliban movement. Thus was fashioned by CIA and ISI agents a diabolical war machine which came out of the secret plans of morally unscrupulous and geopolitically short-sighted international agents of the United States government. One of the long-range effects of the subversive and terrorist policy thus set in motion by Zbigniew Brzezinski in 1979 (at that time in the service of the Government of the United States of America) was the destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Center on 11th September 2001.

But this is not all. Later American foreign policy followed a very similar course, first in Bosnia and then in Kosovo and finally in the newly established Republic of Macedonia. This alliance between US foreign policy and Islamic terrorism is still being put into practice in the Balkans at this very moment. Islamic terrorists who played such an important role in the development of the Balkan crisis from its very inception have since the early 1990s been supported, financed and sometimes even trained by the CIA. The fanatical Islamic troops of Osama bin Laden have, with the conscious support and blessing of the American Government, had an important role in the guerilla warfare in the Balkans, (particularly in Bosnia) as well as in Central Asia (in Chechnya). We must here add in passing that in the genealogy of modern political terrorism these Islamic fanatics, largely put into orbit by the CIA, are the worthy successors of the terrorists of the French Revolution as well as of Stalin’s Great Terror. They are the political exponents of the same demonic urge to murder. More recently they are to be recognised as the direct successors of the Red Terrorists of the seventies and eighties.<sup>5</sup> The CIA has to some degree simply replaced the KGB as the source of command of terrorist action.

These facts can easily be confirmed by surfing on a number of politically incorrect sites on the Internet which reproduce articles from the European and American press documenting them in detail. Anyone with access to the Internet can consult them. It is particularly interesting to note that during the preparation of the Afghan war in the weeks which followed the 11th September, reference was often made to the Gulf War. But almost nothing was said of the true prototype of the present war in Afghanistan: the aerial aggression by Nato on the now deceased Yugoslav Republic of Slobodan Milosevic in the spring of 1999. In particular the constant bombing of the Serbs seems to have been a kind of general rehearsal for the overwhelmingly successful air campaign of the American Air Force over Afghanistan.

To this must be added the sinister role played by Saudi Arabia. Both in Pakistan and in Afghanistan, in Bosnia and in Kosovo, as well as in the green Islamic belt bordering the southern frontier of Russia, the utterly corrupt Saudi regime

(corrupt politically, financially and morally) has played a capital role, both financially and on the religious level, in these events.<sup>6</sup> But before examining more closely the political and financial collusion between fanatical Islam and the geopolitical strategy of the CIA, it is necessary briefly to consider the relations between the Saudi Monarchy and the United States.

Since the end of the Second World War the United States and Saudi Arabia have followed a common policy of mutual support. The United States guaranteed the protection of the Monarchy whilst the Saudi Government guaranteed privileged American access to the petroleum resources of the region. In the recent creation of fanatical Islamic troops Saudi Arabia furnished, on the one hand, the finances and, on the other, its own version of Islam, Wahabism, through which it assured the ideological formation of the forces of liberation. Wahabism is a fundamentalist Islamic sect whose aim is a return to the primitive purity of the Islamic religion, freed from all later accretions. From the beginning of the twentieth century the fate of Wahabist Islam has been closely linked to that of the reigning Ibn Saud family. It is ironical to note that the contracting firm of the bin Laden family played an important role in the construction of the massive American base situated on the holy ground of the Arabian Monarchy. This implantation since the Gulf War of infidel US troops on the sacred soil of Arabia is considered to be a sacrilege by Wahabi Muslims and this in part explains bin Laden’s unending hatred for all things American.

It is also useful here to note that in spite of the fact that almost half of the authors of the terrorist acts of the 11th September have been positively identified as Saudi citizens, and that there is a very strong Islamic opposition in Saudi Arabia to the presence on Arabian soil of American troops, any kind of Saudi implication in the recent terrorist assault on the United States has simply been ignored.

We may ask the following question: What has been the constant direction of the United States government’s foreign policy since the disappearance of the Soviet Union? The Gulf War led to the permanent establishment of American military bases in Saudi Arabia and in Kuwait. The Balkan Wars have had for effect the implantation of a permanent American base in Kosovo. The recent Afghan War has led to the establishment of an important permanent American base in Uzbekistan as well as others in Afghanistan itself. A map indicating the petroleum resources of the region and the direction taken by petroleum and gas pipelines can leave us in no doubt whatever.

The aim of American foreign policy is perfectly clear. Guarantee (1) the control of the energy resources which this region has been so richly provided with, and (2) the protection of the routes taken by the pipelines necessary for the exportation of these extremely precious commodities. This is clearly the case for Kosovo and Macedonia. This is evident with regard to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. This is also manifest with regard to the new American bases in Uzbekistan in Central Asia and in Afghanistan. The long projected pipeline between the petroleum-rich regions of Central Asia and the Indian Ocean, which must necessarily pass through Afghanistan if it is to avoid Iranian or Russian interference, is not in any way foreign to American interest in this country.

5. Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network. The Secret War of International Terrorism* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981).

6. Jean-Charles Brisard and Guillaume Dasqué, *Ben Laden: La vérité interdite* (Paris: Denoël, 2002).



In all these regions the shock troops of the Islamic Revolution have been used by the American Government as mercenary armies permitting it to attain the aims of American foreign policy whilst engaging its own troops as little as possible in direct military action. The recent unfinished Afghan War illustrates this point perfectly.

We must consider one final aspect of this spectacularly coherent American geopolitical strategy. This concerns the political purpose of this constant American collaboration with fanatical Islam with regard to two of the United States' traditional rivals: Western Europe and Russia. With regard to Western Europe, the establishment of small Islamic states in the Balkans (in Bosnia and in Kosovo) under the explicit protection of the United States army constitutes a permanent factor of instability for a Europe already largely infiltrated, and we must say tactically undermined, by a large Islamic population which can very easily be transformed into a dangerous fifth column within the frontiers of the European Union acting in favour of the world-wide Islamic revolution. This represents a very great danger for the nations of Europe, whose international political action is paralysed by the constant fear of the possible outbreak of internal terrorist urban warfare.

With regard to Russia, the United States has systematically pursued a policy of encirclement and containment by establishing a series of military agreements between the new Islamic republics of Central Asia and US dominated Nato. The American implantation in Bosnia and Kosovo marks the western extremity of the diplomatic, economic and military action pursued by US diplomacy with exemplary perseverance and aiming at the complete encirclement of Russia. It is in this way that the United States government directs its Islamic scimitar to the soft underbelly of an apparently derelict Russia. And it is quite obvious that there is not the slightest discontinuity in the long-term geopolitical design put in place by the American government. Whether this policy is directed by Republicans or by Democrats is of little importance. President George W. Bush is obviously following in the footsteps of his father and is applying, with much more energy and efficiency than his predecessor, the hegemonic policies of President Clinton.

We must mention in passing an unsubstantiated hypothesis which is occasionally raised, as it was just recently before Congress by the present head of the CIA: the possibility of Russia having somehow succeeded in turning the terrible weapon of Islamic fanaticism against its own godfather, the United States of America. Islamic fanaticism would thus have been transformed into a particularly dangerous mask by the traditional enemies of America. This might also explain the access of a number of Islamic countries to the bacteriological weaponry produced on such a large scale by the now defunct Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup>

From the general perspective developed above it is interesting to note that two major pipelines bringing petrol from Central Asia to Black Sea ports intersect in the vicinity of Grozny, the capital of Chechnya. There are indications showing that the Chechen revolt against Russia was ideologically fomented by the importation of Saudi Wahabism

and jointly financed, armed and organised by the CIA and Saudi Arabia.

In the geopolitical panorama we have briefly tried to describe the recent war in Afghanistan takes on a very different significance from that of a simple offensive against the Afghan stronghold of world terrorist number one, Osama bin Laden, and against his camps for the training of al Qaeda terrorists.

### THIRD INTERPRETATION:

#### *The One World Stakes in American Foreign Policy*

But we can go further. The foreign policy of the Government of the United States which we have attempted to describe, finds itself at the centre of a far wider geopolitical ensemble which, for want of a better expression, we must call the New World Order. Here we take our cue from the first major statesman to have used this expression publicly, President George Bush Senior. This is the third aspect that I would like to consider at present.

As a Japanese-American friend pointed out to me recently, multinational corporations today often wield far greater power than national governments. This is what we have been forced to recognise with regard to recent events in my country Switzerland where, to take two concrete examples, both in the bank accounts scandal concerning the assets of Jewish victims of the Holocaust and their descendants<sup>8</sup> as well as in the recent disintegration of our national air transport company, Swissair, our international banks (United Banks of Switzerland and Crédit Suisse) wielded far greater international clout than the Government of the Swiss Confederation.

The One World orientation of American foreign policy is well documented and this aspect of international politics cannot today be simply debunked as the paranoid myth-making of amateur historians in search of strong historical sensations through simplistic explanations of complex events. This, of course, is but one aspect of the web and woof of history and it would be unwise both to exaggerate its importance and to ignore it altogether.

The writings of a brilliant French researcher, Pascal Bernardin, for example, have clearly shown from official public documents drawn mainly from international organisations (documents which unfortunately few analysts of the international scene bother to read) the very close relation that has developed over the last ten years between the One World orientation of our present political international elite and an expanding and very influential ecological lobby promoting a largely pantheistic One World ideology.<sup>9</sup> This ecological ideology evidently represents the distraction of a just concern for the good of the environment from its legitimate end: the sane protection of the environment. Ecological ideology has become a powerful force in international politics, aiming at enticing (or eventually forcing) individual nation States gradually to abdicate their sovereignty over important segments of their national territory

7. See, Ken Alibek, *Biohazard: The Chilling True Story of the Largest Covert Biological Weapons Program in the World Told from Inside by the Man Who Ran It* (New York: Random House, 1999); Leonard J. Horowitz, *Death in the Air: Globalism, Terrorism and Toxic Warfare* (Tetrahedron, Sandpoint [Idaho], 2001).

8. Norman G. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry. Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (London and New York: Verso, 2000); Angelo M. Codevilla, *Between the Alps and a Hard Place: Switzerland in World War II and Moral Blackmail Today* (Regnery, 2000).

9. Pascal Bernardin, *L'Empire écologique* (Notre Dame des Grâces, 1999).

in favour of multinational ecological-financial institutions. The fact is that an important part of the political and cultural elites of our respective nations has largely abandoned the sense of its responsibility towards those by whom it is elected in favour of new loyalties of an internationalist, or rather supranationalist, character. The members of what we may call “the international political jet-set” see themselves as being more accountable to these international organisations than to the political institutions of their own countries. This is certainly true of my own nation, Switzerland, which just recently, under the pressure of our federal authorities, has abandoned its tradition of sovereign armed neutrality and agreed to become a full member of the United Nations Organisation. As ran the title of a local Lausanne newspaper, after the referendum which gave us full access to this organisation: “At last, a nation like others.”

The intimate cohabitation between the New World Order and this ecological ideology would have been maintained if the Presidency of the United States had fallen to that Prince of political ecologists, Al Gore. The fact that this did not occur to some extent explains the extraordinary difficulty which attended the finale of the last presidential election. The stakes here were of far greater weight than the usual considerations directing American partisan politics. For the clearly proclaimed anti-ecological positions of George Walker Bush implied the collapse of the construction of a One World Order based on the necessity for the nations of the world gradually to abrogate their national sovereignty in order to counter the pretended ecological threat to the survival of Planet Earth.

With the election of President Bush the worst fears of our internationalistic ecologists were fully realised. To make things even worse President Bush did not seem particularly impressed with the politically correct jargon of the One Worlders (as was witnessed by the official American reaction to the Durban conference on racism in 2001). For those working towards the political and ideological unification of the world the consequences for their agenda of his election were a catastrophe.

It is here that the 11th September disaster came as a totally unexpected godsend to our One World international elite. The artificially concocted ecological scarecrow promoting the idea of an imminent demise of Planet Earth was indeed unsatisfactory as a reason for national leaders to abrogate important elements of their national sovereignty. But suddenly, with the destruction of the World Trade Center’s twin towers and the attack on the Pentagon, there appeared an unimagined and far more credible motivation, one of undreamed of force and efficacy, apt to drive the nations of the world into global unity. The very real, indeed palpable, menace of world-wide Islamic terrorism was as welcome as it was unexpected. As a result of the 11th September attacks the One World machine moved into high gear, at its head a wounded and brutalised nation—the uncontested dominating power on the world scene—unanimous in its resolve to avenge the criminal aggression of which it had been the victim. During the days following the attack the media often spoke of a Pearl Harbor effect of this dastardly aggression on the United States, binding together the nation in its warlike resolve. On a world wide base the 11th September had the remarkable effect of putting almost all the nations of the world into a forced (and willing) march towards an American dominated World Order.

The logo which greets the internaut on opening the Internet site of the New York City Council, “New York, capital of the world,” now took on an ominous reality. This was also the symbolically significant moment chosen by the Nobel Committee to award its Peace Prize to Kofi Anan, General Secretary of the United Nations. If the question “whom does the crime profit?” has in these tragic circumstances any meaning, the obvious answer would be: “the New World Order,” and certainly not Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda gang of Islamic terrorists who, as a direct result of their insane and despicable actions, were all but exterminated by the cumulative fire-power rained on them from heaven by the US Air Force.

We must here add that numerous sectors of American industry and finance, conscious of the extreme fragility of the present international economic and financial situation, did not look unfavourably on the idea of an important war as a means of revitalising the national economic machine. Many analysts express similar fears in the face of a financial situation they view as a real powder-keg. In such a perspective a good war can appear an excellent means to get the economy out of the quagmire into which it was sinking. This gambit seems to have paid off with the present recovery of the American economy.

Everywhere today the United States is perceived as the motor of the One World Order. This global unification is also generally seen as functioning essentially to the advantage of the dominant nation of the world. In spite of their inevitable tacit or explicit practical submission to this domination, most of America’s vassal nations resent subservience as a violation of their national identity. The brutal, often illegal and amoral actions of the United States internationally have thus revived in Europe a strong anti-American reflex, a left-wing anti-Americanism which had been temporarily anaesthetised by the fall of the Soviet Union.

But it would be a great error to imagine such European criticism of present American foreign policy to be limited to subversive circles. Witness the recent editorial signed by Claude Monnier, the most respected political analyst of the Francophone press in this part of Switzerland. In an article dated 17th March 2002 he writes:

When George Bush announces that he intends to launch a massive attack on Iraq in order to dislodge Saddam Hussein; when the General Staff of the American armed forces plan the eventual use of atomic weapons against North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and even China and Russia, nations known, or suspected, to be stocking weapons of mass destruction; when the CIA obtains the arrest of a “terrorist suspect” in Indonesia and “exports” him to Egypt where he can, without violating American laws, be given the appropriate “body treatment”; when the White House calmly, openly and consciously violates the Geneva Conventions by refusing to grant a legal status to prisoners captured by its troops in Afghanistan and transports them to Guantanamo to imprison them in cages; in all these instances Europe stays silent.

After suggesting that this silence was at first due to legitimate fear in Europe of the terrorist offensive, Monnier offers the following explanation of the official silence on these and many other violations of what had, up till now, been considered civilised behaviour by the American government. Now, the time of this fearful reaction being passed, Monnier proceeds to ask the following question:

But if Europe is no longer afraid, why does it continue to keep silent? Because she has discovered a new America, extremist and proud of its extremism, a nation today as incomprehensible to the European mind as are Jivaro head-hunters. She remains silent today because she is quite literally flabbergasted by the excessive nature of the measures which an America, usually so calm and so unimpressed by even the most dramatic events, has taken during the last six months with the apparent aim of abolishing all that in the world displeases it, or disturbs its interests. Europe, shocked, gaping with astonishment, hardly knows in what way to react.<sup>10</sup>

The constant brutally militarised foreign policy of the Government of the United States with regard to whatever it may, to its advantage, call “Islamic terrorism,” seems well designed to provoke durable hatred of everything American amongst the billion Muslims in the world. Now that the Taliban regime has been overthrown and a relative peace has been installed in Afghanistan, we have once again seen the first signs of that guerilla warfare which in the eighties broke the back of the Soviet army. Afghanistan may be relatively quiet while it takes time to recuperate, but once its strength is renewed its fighting population will give as little shrift to the international forces now occupying the country as it did in the past to other equally rash invaders.

But let us now stand back a little to consider the general geopolitical situation from the perspective provided by distance. What major obstacles are perceived by the recognised spokesmen of the New World Order to their design of world unification? Let us limit ourselves to two of these gentlemen, the founder and actual President of the Trilateral Commission, Zbigniew Brzezinski and the former American ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Holbrooke. In his major study, *The Great Chessboard*, published in 1997, Brzezinski affirms the necessity of breaking Russia into three manageable pieces. Holbrooke for his part remarked that the United States itself should also, before the end of the twenty-first century, be likewise dismembered. In both cases the smaller territorial entities obtained should prove more easily adaptable to the grand design being put together. It is clear that one of the major obstacles to the realisation of such a project aiming at World unity is the national sovereign State. Thus, any State resistance to this grand design will be equated with “State terrorism.” A certain number of countries—no doubt at different levels—have tasted the dire cost of attempting such resistance to American might: South Africa, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Afghanistan. It is also clear that the present movement toward the unification of Europe also passes through the grid of the abrogation of national sovereignty.<sup>11</sup> For a time it would seem that the Soviet Union was used as the hammer with which to break many nations. Would it now be the turn of today’s unquestioned (and unrivalled) world-dominating power, the United States of America, to be used as the sledge-hammer of our One Worlders?

The other major obstacle facing our One World leaders is that of the religions which refuse to be dissolved into a syncretistic matrix and which thus still manifest a certain externally ordering influence in the field of politics. This was formerly clearly the case with the Roman Catholic Church,

at least until the death of Pius XII. But this religious impact on politics by the Roman Church was largely dissipated as a result of the disintegration of its traditional teaching in the wake of Vatican II. For Protestants, apparently the last politically significant Church in the United States seems to have been the now largely impotent Presbyterian Church of the United States. As is well known, she was, at the beginning of the twentieth century (and with the generous and efficient help of the Rockefeller Foundation), largely infiltrated by theologically liberal elements and thus eliminated as the faithful ecclesiastical expression of the Reformed Faith.<sup>12</sup> The result: the complete disappearance of any kind of genuinely Reformed social and political impact it might have had on society. With regard to the Churches in the Orthodox tradition, even though they are weakened and divided, they remain a major obstacle to the designs of our One World ideologues. There remains Islam which, in the eyes of our One World leaders, constitutes a very substantial threat to their ambitions, a menace far more serious than whatever fragments of the faithful Christian Church are still extant in the world.

Why not then try to destroy these two major obstacles to world unification at one blow? Would it thus be possible to eliminate both the United States as a nation and Islam as a political religion by pitting them one against the other in an interminable conflict which would, in the long run, be fatal to both? Such a scenario allows us better to understand the insane rationale, the apparent absurdity of a long-term (and suicidal) American Crusade against the Muslim world. Could the images of the destruction of American power seen by all on the screens of our television sets with the collapse of the twin towers of the World Trade Center and the partial destruction of the Pentagon on the 11th September, not in fact be symbolic of a long-term reality: the total demise, through the organisation of such an absurd conflict, of the very unity and identity of the American nation? Thus would be eliminated the only nation on earth, the United States of America, powerful enough to bring to nought the crazy designs of those working toward the political, cultural and economic unification of the planet. Islam itself might not survive as a religious political force from such a confrontation.

On various sides voices are raised questioning the official version of these terrible events. Many troubling facts raise questions for which few reasonable answers are given. But one thing is at present clear: it will be as difficult to disentangle the true causes of this tragedy as it has been to discover who really killed President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. The dealings of such organisations as the CIA and the Mossad<sup>13</sup> are, to say the least, far from clear. It is difficult to imagine that none of these secret services had the slightest inkling as to what was in fact brewing in these Islamic circles so systematically infiltrated and used by them in the past.

When President Bush first called his oriental expedition “Infinite Justice” and then, under the pressure not of the Christian Community to its shame, but of Islamic leaders who were deeply offended by such a self-divinisation of the

10. Claude Monnier, “L’Europe, abasourdie,” se tait, *Le Matin*, 17 March 2002, p. 27.

11. John Laughland, *The Tainted Source: The Undemocratic Origins of the European Idea* (London: Warner Books, 1998).

12. See Gary North’s massively documented study: *Crossed Fingers: How the Liberals Captured the Presbyterian Church* (Tyler, Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1996).

13. Robert Baer, *See No Evil. The True Story of a Ground Soldier in the CIA’s War on Terrorism* (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2002); Victor Ostrovsky and Claire Roy, *By Way of Deception: The Making and Unmaking of a Mossad Officer* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1990).



American President, changed it to the more moderate slogan of “Lasting Freedom,” we have the strange impression of entering into a world of Orwellian Newspeak. Must one interpret these expressions as meaning the very opposite of what they seem to signify? Infinite justice, being injustice without end; durable freedom meaning lasting slavery? This not only for the adversaries of the American government but, no doubt, for the American people themselves. “Noble Eagle,” the name for the ten year Anglo-Saxon Crusade against terrorism seems more appropriate for the World Empire being constructed before our troubled eyes. More troubling still is the explicitly gnostic dualist character of the slogans produced by the White House. It is a war of good against evil. Those who are with us are the good people (whatever their concrete actions may be); those who are against us are the very incarnation of evil. Even an attempt at a rational criticism of American foreign policy may no doubt to many smack of being of the Devil. Those who have some doubts as to the wisdom of the “might is right” policy of your present government will soon be branded as “terrorist” fellow travellers. Once you have placed your adversary in the rank of infamy you have made it impossible for him to be heard rationally. You have in fact defeated him before the very first shot is fired.<sup>14</sup>

During the days which followed the terrorist aggressions of the 11th September these dramatic actions were often compared to the Japanese surprise attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbor on the 7th December 1941. The element the world’s media sought thus to bring to the attention of a violently shocked public was the suddenness and perfidy of the terrorist action against the twin towers and the Pentagon. But what was not then said, and which has now definitely been proved, with the present access of military historians to classified documents from the American Navy Archives of the Second World War, is that the American Military and Governmental elite (President Roosevelt in the forefront) were fully aware of the Japanese threat to Pearl Harbour. Very precise secret Japanese information was obtained on a daily basis through the breaking of the Japanese secret naval codes more than a year before. The highest American authorities consciously withheld this information from the commanding officers on the naval base in Pearl Harbor, Lieutenant General Walter Short and Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, in order to let the Japanese strike a dramatic and irresistible blow first on the 7th December 1941 on the unsuspecting battleships of the US Navy at anchor. The Roosevelt administration had in fact manoeuvred in such a way as to incite Japan to an act of unilateral aggression on Pearl Harbor, all the while keeping the commanding officers of the Pacific base totally ignorant of the imminent danger. The immediate purpose of this deceit was to break the strong isolationist current in American opinion and thus to ensure that the American people rose up as one man against such a traitorous and dastardly enemy.<sup>15</sup> This political manoeuvre proved a perfect success.

Some affirm that such duplicity and utter cynicism is today not beyond the capacities of the CIA and of those who give it its marching orders. But we know full well that, whatever the machinations politicians may abandon themselves to, the moral rule that “the end never justifies the means” remains. For all the successes that such Machiavellian politics may in the short term reap, the utterly despicable, conscious and calculated betrayal of one’s own soldiers will certainly in the long run be outweighed by the perversion of the spirit of a nation, an undoubted sign of the calamitous judgements of a just and holy God on all those who perpetrate and abet against their own people such infamous acts.

#### FOURTH INTERPRETATION:

*The hand of God stands behind the different disasters which strike an increasingly unbelieving, impious and immoral world*

For thus saith the Lord: Enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them; for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the Lord, even loving-kindness and mercies. (Jer. 16:5)

Therefore thus saith the Lord; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. (Jer. 34:17)

It now remains for us to try to consider these events (as far as we may) in the light of eternity, that is in the light of God’s providential control and direction of history as we can understand them from the teachings of Bible. As a pastor friend of mine in France asked his parishioners: “Do you not hear the trumpets of God?”

When one examines from this angle the present situation in the world, that of God’s providential action, things appear in an even more serious light than we would be led to believe by the most thorough geopolitical analysis. Since the two famous tornados called Lothar which ravaged the European continent at the end of 1999—a dramatic close to the millenium!—the variety of catastrophes regularly afflicting the West strikes the observer as deserving of the closest attention. If we had merely to do with the terrorist threat from Islam, the rapacity of Petroleum Multinationals or the insane conspiracies of our One World elite, it would still be possible to respond to such political problems in political and military terms. But the events taking place before our astonished eyes force us to look both higher and further.

Today two moral realities are very generally ignored when we speak of political questions: the evils we commit and of which we must repent, both individually and communally, on the one hand, and, on the other, God’s growing irritation at our perseverance in our personal and public evil actions. First, we refuse to look the evil we commit in the face; and these evil actions result in the disorders with which our societies are afflicted, both on the moral plane and with regard to the order of nature. Then, we adamantly refuse to scrutinise as Christians God’s appreciation of our evil deeds as it is clearly revealed in his word. Finally, we carefully avoid addressing the evil others do us with the attention it merits, in order to deal with it with courage and in a limited and practical fashion. We thus avoid facing up to evil and fighting it with the measures appropriate to its

14. A classic description of such “strong speech” (verbal manipulation), by which a potential adversary is verbally disqualified, is to be found in that masterpiece of contemporary political thought, Arnaud-Aaron Upinsky, *La tête coupée* (Paris: Le Bec, 2001).

15. See the definitive and impeccably documented study of this whole question by Robert B. Stinnett, *Day of Deceit: The Truth about FDR and Pearl Harbor*, (New York: Touchstone, 2000).



eradication or containment. For many of our contemporaries the very category of the evildoer seems no longer to exist. For all sinful acts a psychological explanation must be found, i.e. every evil action must, in some way or other, be excused. But such an attitude only displaces the evil thus ignored. It never eliminates it or resolves the problems it produces. Evil will then appear in a paranoid form. It will be identified with others. It will be personified—Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic, Osama bin Laden. The reality of evil will thus be demonised, a procedure by which we shall identify ourselves with the “good” and those we hate will become the personifications of “evil.” This is clearly seen in the systematic refusal by Attorney General John Ashcroft’s application of the USA Patriot Act. His refusal to consider as binding the constitutional implications of the methods implemented by the American Government to combat “terrorism” are an eloquent tribute to the political and judicial imprudence represented by a certain form of univocal evangelical idealism. Such a judicially pathological attitude makes the defence of the liberties of American citizens largely an illusion.

We thus find ourselves in an era, either of irresponsible sentimental psychologising, or of wilful blind and brutal violence. The reason for this is that our society in general—and so many Christian Churches in particular—have lost all true sense of divine transcendence, have abandoned belief in the inscrutable majesty, holiness and justice of the only true God as well as a correct sense of his mysterious immanent presence in the created order. We have thus banished God’s holy, transcendent, good and blessed law from our midst. This can only lead to the degradation of the political and judicial institutions that protect our true liberties, which the practical respect for God’s law has over the centuries produced in our midst. Thus we have reduced to nothing the barriers against arbitrary (and totalitarian) government set up by the political traditions of Christian civilisation.

In our hedonistic, sensate and pragmatic atheism, we forget the very existence of God. We forget that he is neither deaf nor blind. That he is in no way indifferent to our actions, whether they be for good or for evil. We have forgotten the solemn teachings contained in Psalm 94:

O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth;  
 O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.  
 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth:  
 render a reward to the proud.  
 Lord, how long shall they utter and speak hard things?  
 and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?  
 They break in pieces thy people, O Lord,  
 and afflict thine heritage.  
 They slay the widow and the stranger,  
 and murder the fatherless.  
 Yet they say, The Lord shall not see,  
 neither the God of Jacob regard it.  
 Understand, ye brutish among the people:  
 and ye fools, when will ye be wise?  
 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?  
 He that formed the eye, shall he not see?  
 He that chastiseth the heathen,  
 Shall not he correct?  
 He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?  
 The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, they are vanity.  
 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord  
 And teachest him out of thy law;  
 That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity  
 Until the pit be digged for the wicked.

For the Lord will not cast off his people,  
 Neither will he forsake his inheritance  
 But judgement shall return unto righteousness:  
 And all the upright in heart shall follow it. (Ps. 94:1-15)

We have forgotten that for those nations who have had the privilege of knowing the Christian hope, such a peace, both internally and internationally, is not an automatic phenomenon. It is a gift from God, a grace accorded to those who seek to fulfill the moral and political requirements of the Covenant.

The very diversity of the calamities striking our nations from all sides leads us to understand that God’s peace is today being withdrawn from us. The protecting hand of God is being removed from our nations. This is more and more the case with my own country, Switzerland. Since the massacre of Swiss tourists by fanatical Muslim terrorists in Louxor in upper Egypt a few years ago, this divine protection of which my country has for so long been a beneficiary, seems little by little to be withdrawn. This was particularly clear in the final quarter of last year with the insane massacre of fourteen politicians in the Parliament of the canton of Zoug, the terrible accident in the Saint Gothard Tunnel and the financial hara-kiri of our national airline, Swissair.

This situation in my country seems all but irreversible for we can expect little light from our derelict Churches. The Church there no longer functions as the salt of the earth or the light of the world. What we above all need is a sincere and lasting movement of repentance in our Churches, a turning away from evil, a reparation for the evil done, a return to faithful obedience to God’s holy law. We must above all cry to heaven for a rediscovery of the majesty, the holiness and the mercy of the living God. It is only in response to such repentance in the Churches that the nation itself will be enabled to recognise its sin and the immense danger which threatens it, return to God and, through faith in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ, come once again to a position of renewed obedience to his holy and good commandments. What we need is truly to return to the true God, manifested to us in the flesh by our Lord Jesus Christ and revealed anew to us by the sovereign action of the Holy Spirit. Personally, ecclesiastically and nationally we must all turn from our evil ways and return to God, in joyful submission to the Lord of lords, the King of kings, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Such a submission will manifest itself, amongst other things, by our personal and public love for and obedience to God’s good law (Ps. 2). But as a pastor in Geneva—one of the last in that city still preaching the unadulterated word of God—recently put it: we are not yet ready for such a turning round and must in consequence expect the fruit of the enduring hardening of our hearts: to be awakened by the redoubled blows of an angered and merciful providence.

In the past our Swiss fellow-citizens, whatever might have been their denominational convictions, understood full well that such a return to Christian faithfulness would imply fundamental political, social and even military consequences. We must all imperatively return to such humility before God. But this has nothing whatever to do with the syncretistic and pantheistic religiosity which has, all over the world, publicly accompanied the violent emotion provoked by the 11th September disasters. Instead of true repentance, a sincere turning away from our sins and a return to the only true God, the God of the Trinity who, in the person and work

of our Lord Jesus Christ, manifested himself in the flesh for our salvation and that of our respective nations, we but offend him all the more by the mockery of worship services where are gathered together, under the righteous judgement of God, all the false religions of the world. It is thus that even our show of piety serves to bring on us and on our nations the

renewed blows of an indignant and holy God. May God have mercy on us and in his great compassion once again send a spirit of repentance into our Churches that, through such a beginning of our turning back towards him, the Lord of lords may once again fire all our nations with the love of what is true, what is just and what is good. *C&S*

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# POETRY, THE NATURAL LANGUAGE OF LIFE ABUNDANT

by *Doug Baker*

## *Emotion Bursting Forth*

Poetry is the language of strong emotions. When people are caught up in emotion they naturally break into poetic language without trying or even realising it. Often this poetry is of the lowest order, but it is still poetic; it is far more than straight prose.

As Tina and Fred stare into each other's eyes over a slice of pizza after the high school dance, Fred is overcome with the emotion of the moment and blurts out, "Your eyes are like deep pools of water; I could swim in them forever . . ." I hope you are smiling because, although I wasn't eavesdropping, I expect that you have either said or heard words like that at some time in your life. This is one of the inevitable lines that comes into most people's lives at some point in some shape or colour. And the remarkable thing is that Fred didn't quote the line but composed it extemporaneously. He did not struggle over how to form a simile which would fit her eyes, nor even over the transformation of that simile into a metaphor; the metre took care of itself without Fred counting syllables or becoming concerned whether his iambs were ascending or descending. The "falseness" of the statement about how long he could swim in her eyes never occurred to Fred. He never asked himself whether "forever" was really at his disposal. If Fred knew that such ridiculous extensions beyond the conceivable are called hyperboles, I hope he wasn't thinking about that fact at the moment.

Fred's little extemporaneous composition has been composed millions of times over millions of slices of pizza but it has never become trite. It has never been reduced simply to being a silly phrase that a boy is expected to say to a girl. No boy repeats the line under his breath all night at the dance hoping not to forget it and awaiting the right moment to use it. Each time it is heard is a fresh moment and the words spring unbidden and freely from the heart and longing of the individual. Even as you read this, somewhere on the globe some young man is staring into a young lady's eyes and comparing them in some language to pools in which he will eternally swim.

And Fred, who probably denies liking poetry, spoke these words without a question as to whether Tina would understand him. Of course Tina can interpret poetry over a slice of pizza. It is only in the unnatural box called a classroom that Tina has trouble understanding poetry. She doesn't get hung up trying to decide what type of pool her eyes are like, whether there are snakes swimming in the pool or crawdads; she doesn't even form a real mental image of how her eyes could make someone think of pools. Especially she doesn't envision Fred doing the backstroke on her irises, or diving off of her lids into these pools. Instead, she sighs and silently welcomes him to swim all he wants.

Fred spoke and Tina listened with the heart. Even though no single part of what Fred said is true in a literal sense, Fred spoke the truth. Her eyes are not really much like pools and Fred can't swim in them. In fact Fred can't swim anywhere forever. But such pedantry is foolishness to Fred and Tina. His heart burst forth in song and hers responded.

## *The Depth of the Riches*

Poetry is the voice of the emotions. As Jesus told us, "it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks" (Lk. 6:45). Let's listen to the abundance of Paul's heart:

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!  
For who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counselor?  
Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?  
For from him and through him and to him are all things.  
To him be the glory forever. Amen. (Rom. 11:33–36)

Paul is often called the theologian of the new covenant. His writing is very thick with arguments, proofs and explanations relating to the Christians' position in grace. Peter even said that "there are some things in [Paul's letters] hard to understand" (2 Pet. 3:16). But we have no trouble understanding of what sort the abundance of treasure in Paul's

heart consists. He is overflowing with words; they come flying at us as if he couldn't get them out fast enough. Paul is the epitome of the poet theologian; the sharpness of his understanding of God's working increases the intensity of Paul's adoration. Paul is the perfect picture for us of one who truly does worship in spirit and in truth.

It is interesting to see at what point in Paul's letter to the Romans he broke forth with this song of praise. After spending ten chapters carefully opening up the Roman Christian's understanding concerning his position in Christ, Paul says "I want you to understand this mystery" (Rom. 11:25). The next few verses must be some of what Peter was referring to when he said that some things in Paul's letters are hard to understand. Paul peered deeply into the unsearchable and inscrutable ways of God, and having seen clearly, he broke out in song just as our friend Fred did when he stared into Tina's eyes. Paul could not separate theology from worship; his praise flowed from understanding.

Like Fred, Paul did not need to pause to consider how he would frame his poem, nor did he count syllables or worry about whether things rhymed. Instead, they both were moved by emotion and the poetry just poured out of them as if on its own. To Paul such emotion-laden thoughts were too great to be expressed in the rigid confines of prosaic language. One gets the feeling from the torrent of thoughts that Paul couldn't say or write them fast enough. I would bet that in the original manuscript these words are nearly illegible because of the rush of trying to get them on paper as quickly as they flowed out of him.

The greatest difference between Paul and Fred is that while Fred spoke truly about his emotions, not one word taken on its own could be said to be true, whereas every word of Paul's is true whether taken in pieces or *in toto*. Paul worshipped not only in spirit, but also in truth.

#### *The Voice of Christian Experience*

In the Christian life, the moment when we first see our sin and begin to fear and loathe it can be one of the most dreadful experiences,—sheer terror for most of us. See whether your heart has echoed these lines from John Collop's breathless and heart-wrenching poem of repentance, "The Leper Cleansed":

Whither? ah, whither shall I fly?  
To heaven? my sins, ah, sins there cry!  
Yet mercy, Lord, O mercy! hear  
Th'attoning incense of my prayer.  
A broken heart thou'lt not despise.  
See! see a contrite's sacrifice!

This poem, like most, must be read aloud; yet it is written in a metre that is both emphatic and very odd, which makes it difficult to read aloud. That difficulty amplifies the power of the poem in that it produces a breathlessness and a breaking of the voice that draws one in to the breathless and breaking heart of the poet as he cries out for a mercy that he knows he has no right to expect. If we have also experienced such a frightening time of repentance, then our hearts are immediately reminded both of the terror of our plight and of the sweetness of relief when grace came flooding in.

Such a life of strong emotions is part of the inheritance of the saints, who have been brought from death to life, and as living creatures can expect to feel as they never did while

lying dead. The intense experience of viewing life not from the bounds of earthly sight but from the freedom of spiritual sight is gloriously enshrined in *God's Grandeur*, by Gerard Manley Hopkins:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.  
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;  
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil  
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?  
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;  
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;  
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil  
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;  
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;  
And though the last lights off the black West went  
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—  
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent  
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

With the eyes of our hearts now having been enlightened by the indwelling Spirit we are alive both to see and to experience life with a greater fullness than before. The strength of our feelings can be a measure of our involvement in life, both carnally and spiritually. And, poetry being the voice of the emotions, it is the natural (God-given) way of expressing this heightened awareness and experience.

#### *The Fellowship of Sharing*

When God revealed himself to us, he did not write a manifesto and simply ask us to sign on the line at the bottom that we agree with what he has claimed about himself. Biblical faith in God and in Christ has to do with a relationship with him, knowing him personally and not theoretically. Faith is following Christ through the world and not just through the classroom. Book knowledge of God, such as is passed on in the recitation of creeds, in so far as the creeds are correct, brings us up to the level of demons (James 2:19). This is not to say that there is no value in protecting and teaching the truths of Scripture through creeds if faith is added to knowledge. The mere recitation of facts falls far short of the heart-changing relationship, which we desperately need. Our hunger for the knowledge of God must not be satisfied with systematic theology. We need to be in an emotional relationship with our God.

A religion that can be *adequately* expressed prosaically, such as in the Westminster Confession, is really only a theory of religion, not living up to the standard of Paul's longing, "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings . . ." (Phil. 3:10).

This idea of a fellowship of sharing speaks of intimate personal involvement. If we want to distinguish between the two words, "fellowship" speaks of an inner bond, of emotional commitment; "sharing" speaks of an exterior bond, of having things in common, either physical or experiential. Taken together, the fellowship of sharing requires that we walk together with Christ, think with him, eat and drink with him, and be rejected with him. Brothers and sisters, be not satisfied with a mere theory of religion, but seek to accompany Christ both in his power and his suffering, his glory and his shame. "Let us then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured" (Heb. 13:13).



Sentenced to execution, which sentence was, after fourteen years imprisonment, commuted to banishment from the British Isles, Sir Walter Raleigh chose instead to either clear his name or to die with Christ, both being ill accused. He returned to England, pled his case in a rigged trial, and was beheaded in 1618, a martyr for the Puritan revival. Below is *The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage*, which was supposed to have been written on the eve of his execution.

Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,  
My staff of faith to walk upon,  
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,  
My bottle of salvation,  
My gown of glory, hope's true gage,  
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer,  
No other balm will there be given,  
Whilst my soul, like a white palmer,  
Travels to the land of heaven,  
Over the silver mountains,  
Where spring the nectar fountains;  
And there I'll kiss  
The bowl of bliss,  
And drink my eternal fill  
On every milken hill.  
My soul will be a-dry before,  
But, after, it will ne'er thirst more.

And by the happy blissful way  
More peaceful pilgrims I shall see,  
That have shook off their gowns of clay  
And go appareled fresh like me.  
I'll bring them first  
To slake their thirst,  
And then to taste those nectar suckets,  
At the clear wells  
Where sweetness dwells,  
Drawn up by saints in crystal buckets.

And when our bottles and all we  
Are filled with immortality,  
Then the holy paths we'll travel,  
Strewed with rubies thick as gravel,  
Ceilings of diamonds, sapphire floors,  
High walls of coral, and pearl bowers.  
From thence to heaven's bribeless hall  
Where no corrupted voices brawl,  
No conscience molten into gold,  
Nor forged accusers bought and sold,  
No cause deferred, nor vain-spent journey,  
For there Christ is the king's attorney,  
Who pleads for all without degrees,  
And he hath angels, but no fees.

When the grand twelve million jury  
Of our sins and sinful fury,  
'Gainst our souls black verdicts give,  
Christ pleads his death, and then we live.  
Be thou my speaker, taintless pleader,  
Unblotted lawyer, true proceeder,  
Thou movest salvation even for alms,  
Not with a bribed lawyer's palms.

And this is my eternal plea  
To him that made heaven, earth, and sea,  
Seeing my flesh must die so soon,  
And want a head to dine next noon,

Just at the stroke when my veins start and spread,  
Set on my soul an everlasting head.  
Then am I ready, like a palmer fit,  
To tread those blest paths which before I writ.

As Sir Walter Raleigh awaits his execution, God has given him a peace which is beyond our earthly understanding. But this peace is not what it often is falsely portrayed to be, simply a lack of fear. Instead, Raleigh becomes giddy with excitement and anticipation. There is no diminution of emotions, but rather accentuation. We see in Raleigh none of the somber resignation which marks the squelching of the emotions by those trying to be brave in the face of the inevitable. Rather, we find him playfully enjoying his last hours, full of eager anticipation. Christian courage, like all of the Christian life, is an emotion filled journey.

### *The Mocking Heart of Faith*

This glance at the emotionality of life in Christ would be lopsided if it included only the "serious" and "pious" emotions: love, joy, fear, longing, etc. Though less esteemed, mocking is no less biblical and serious than these other emotions. According to Psalm 2:4, even the Most High mocks: "He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord has them in derision." And listen as Paul taunts death, "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

When someone or something is exalted above its place to confront the Most High, laughing it to scorn is not only acceptable, but laudable. The two following poems react against the natural human fear of death, by returning it to its place with a barrage of insults. The first and greater poem is by Anne Killigrew who met this foe at barely twenty-five:

### *On Death*

Tell me thou safest End of all our Woe,  
Why wretched Mortals do avoid thee so:  
Thou gentle drier o'th'afflicted's Tears,  
Thou noble ender of the Cowards Fears;  
Thou sweet Repose to Lovers sad dispaire,  
Thou Calm t'Ambitions rough Tempestuous Care.  
If in regard of Bliss thou were a Curse,  
And then the Joys of Paradise art worse;  
Yet after Man from his first Station fell,  
And God from *Eden Adam* did expel,  
Thou wert no more an Evil, but Relief;  
The balm and Cure to ev'ry Humane Grief:  
Through thee (what Man had forfeited before)  
He now enjoys, and ne'r can loose it more.  
No subtle Serpents in the Grave betray,  
Worms on the Body there, not Soul do prey;  
No vice ther Tempts, no Terrors ther afright,  
No Coz'ning Sin affords a false delight:  
No vain Contentins do that Peace annoy,  
No fierce Alarms break the lasting joy.

Ah since from thee so many Blessings flow,  
Such real Good as Life can never know;  
Come when thou wilt, in thy afrighting'st Dress,  
Thy Shape shall never make thy Welcome less.  
Thou Best, as well as Certain'st thing on Earth.  
Fly thee? May Travellers then fly their Rest,  
And hungry Infants fly the profer'd Breast.  
No, those that faint and tremble at thy Name,  
Fly from their Good on a mistaken Fame.



Thus Childish fear did Israel of old  
 From Plenty and the Promis'd Land with-hold;  
 They fancy'd Giants, and refus'd to go,  
 When Canaan did with Milk and Honey flow.

Anne Killigrew sees in her approaching death, not the morbid face of the end, but rather the gentle face of Jesus beckoning her. Seeing that the sting has been completely removed from death, she glories in the joy that this one time enemy is now lying in subjection under her protector's feet. Christ truly has freed those who were being "held in slavery by the fear of death" (Heb. 2:15). We are right to rejoice in the freedom which was purchased for us at so high a price. While the poem above belittling of death is well mixed with warmth and longing as she awaits her own soon expected death, the next by John Donne is far more confrontational and sardonic.

*Death Be Not Proud*

Death be not proud, though some have called thee  
 Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so,  
 For, those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,  
 Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.  
 From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,  
 Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,  
 And soonest our best men with thee do go,  
 Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.  
 Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,  
 And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,  
 And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,  
 And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?  
 One short sleep past, we wake eternally,  
 And death shall be no more: death, thou shalt die.

With phrases like "poor death," Donne turns the table on death, which he mocks as something to be pitied rather than feared. He calls to mind the little boy hurling insults at a bully from the security of hiding behind his big brother, and Donne's big brother is Christ.

*Poetry as a Response to Christ*

Within the Reformed tradition there has always been a strong undercurrent of distrust of human emotion. The call to place our hope not in our fleeting emotions but rather in the solid and unchanging promises and accomplishments of Christ is a hallmark of Reformed teaching. His finished work on our behalf, not our feelings about it, is the bedrock of our faith. However, it is a huge leap from here to the stoical stance which we often practise and sometimes preach.

Just as there are right and wrong uses of sexuality, of pride and of knowledge, so also there are right and wrong uses of our emotions. We must never try to base our assurance of God's love on how we feel at the moment, but our feelings should flow from our assurance of God's eternal promise of kindness to us. Just as it would be wrong to exalt our feelings above their rightful place, so it would also be wrong to degrade them as unworthy reactions to the grace of God.

I have been warned that when listening to Christian preachers I should distrust those who speak too much of their own feelings, for their faith is subjective, not based on objective truths. While I grant that this is a warning to heed,

I equally distrust anyone who tells me that Christ has died for him but who isn't overwhelmed by this fact. Love so amazing, so divine, demands more of a response from us than just intellectual assent.

Any reading of the Bible will show that God is depicted as experiencing the full range of emotions: love, anger, wrath, jealousy, tenderness, compassion, long-suffering and impatience, just to mention a few. At our creation he also passed on to us the capacity to experience each of these. It is when we are attuned to God's mindset and feel along with God and not contrary to God, that we can be said to be truly men and women after God's own heart.

Poetry, as we have said, is the voice of the emotions and therefore should be the voice of Christian experience. There is something inauthentic and anaemic about a Christian who can express his experience of grace in purely prosaic terms.

Let us learn to unite spirit and truth in a worship which breaks the bonds of prose and dances across the fields to our Lord, whose poem we are (Eph. 2:10). *C&S*

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## Forthcoming essays in *Christianity & Society*

"THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL VISION OF  
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 (INTRODUCTION & TRANSLATION *by Ruben Alvarado*)

"POST-HIPPOCRATIC MEDICINE:  
 THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION—HOW THE CHRISTIAN  
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"THE LIFE AND VISION OF ABRAHAM KUYPER"  
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# Book Reviews

A PRISON DIARY  
VOLUME I—BELMARSH: HELL  
BY FF 8282 (JEFFREY ARCHER)

London: Macmillan, 2002, 259 pages, cloth, £14.99,  
ISBN 1-4050-2094-6

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REVIEWED BY COLIN WRIGHT

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LORD ARCHER was sent to prison for four years in July 2001 on a charge of committing perjury in a previous court case regarding an alleged affair. The book is a diary of Archer's first three weeks of incarceration, at Belmarsh Prison in south London. From the three volumes of his diaries it has been estimated that Archer will reap nearly two million pounds sterling. Not a bad return, perhaps, on two years' detention (with good behaviour he should be free<sup>1</sup> by July 2003). The book caused a furore when it appeared, not least because it is against the rules for Her Majesty's guests to publish during their residency in her hostels. Further instalments will not be so easy to smuggle out of prison.

*A Prison Diary* is one of the most interesting books I have read in years. If nothing else, it raises a whole raft of issues about the treatment of Archer himself. It would be easy to believe the hostile press's delineation of him and to accept the establishment's animosity towards him. For myself, I cannot believe what they say, even if I have no way of justifying Archer either. His (alleged) crimes pale into insignificance compared to those of his detractors. About the same time, the Foreign Minister, Robin Cook, was engaged in an adulterous affair. Not in itself criminal in British law (though biblically it is a capital offence), it transpired that in order to conceal it his mistress's car was parked some distance from his house and he made regular and *illegal* sorties to feed the parking meter.<sup>2</sup> He was never charged with this offence and he never lost either his high office or his reputation. Something more sinister seems to be afoot in regard to Archer, regardless of his guilt or innocence in the matters that have been publicised. For sure, he is hated by the literary fraternity. They hate and envy his success, and over the years have attempted every form of character assassination. Some years ago I got sight of his publisher's

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1. The current Home Secretary, David Blunkett, is said to be doing all in his power to ensure that Archer does not benefit from his legal entitlement under this rule. This unfairness can have no other motivation than pure spite.

2. It is illegal to extend the allotted time one may park in a zone with meters by inserting more coins when one's time is up. Such parking is meant to be of a limited duration. "Feeding the meter" has become the accepted term for breaking this rule. Ironically, while engaged in this disgraceful activity, Cook was loudly proclaiming the need for a more ethical foreign policy.

league table of authors' incomes. Archer made more than the next ten on the list. Envy is a serious problem in British society and it is clearly visible here.

The most disturbing feature of this episode is the way in which the outcome was reached. Archer had won a libel case against a newspaper that had engaged a prostitute to demand money from him to keep quiet about "services rendered." Archer denied any involvement with the woman but undertook to pay her off anyway (£2000 in relation to the 7 or more million that Archer can make in a year from his writing is not worth the bother of arguing over, I suppose). In regard to some of the accusations made against him by the paper, he produced a friend—Francis—as witness and alibi for his being elsewhere. Whatever the validity of his case, the actions of the newspaper were abominable. Digging up dirt on celebrities and publishing sanctimonious condemnations, all in the cause of making a fast buck by satisfying the prurient interests of their low-life readers, is their stock in trade.

Archer came unstuck when Francis later reneged on him in reaction to a failed joint business venture. Francis admitted that they had engaged in a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice by means of a false alibi. But here is the strange thing. Francis was not even charged with the offence but Archer gets a four-year prison sentence. In addition, the trial introduced a former secretary of Archer's as a witness against him. She claims to have been ordered to replace his diary to cover up his misdeeds. But the secretary according to Archer was a self-confessed liar who had stolen thousands of pounds from him over the years she had worked for him. I gather she admitted to these matters in court. She was not charged with any offence either. So the word of two self-confessed miscreants is believed against a peer of the realm whose self-proclaimed innocence had already been vindicated in the High Court.

I find this extremely disturbing, whether Archer is ultimately guilty or innocent. One of the most serious problems in British life at present is the absence of justice. Of law and legality, of lawyers and lawsuits, there is an abundance, a positive surfeit. But justice is nowhere to be seen. The state of the rules of evidence is appalling. It often comes down to a simple matter of who is to be believed. And even when crimes have obviously been committed, there is little in the way of just recompense for the victims.<sup>3</sup> Some weeks ago a young man awaiting trial for six offences of driving a motor vehicle without legally required insurance, without a valid driving licence (he had never taken a driving test for a licence let alone failed one), in a vehicle that had neither tax certificate nor road-worthiness certificate, drove at 60 miles

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3. In recent years some compensation for victims has been made possible under English law. But it is State largesse. That is, it is the taxpayer, the *innocent*, who must foot the bill, not the criminal.

per hour through a village with a 30 miles per hour legal limit and killed a fifteen year old boy on his bicycle. He received the paltry sentence of two hundred pounds sterling.<sup>4</sup> What's more, his lawyer won him the right to pay it at a rate of five pounds per week. Why? Because he already had difficulty paying the 1400 pounds of fines already imposed for previous offences. The same young man is currently driving a vehicle, just as illegally and in flagrant breach of a court ban, without police interference. And while law-abiding farmer Tony Martin must rot in prison without remission for shooting a burglar who broke into his home in the dead of night (a home the police had refused to protect against repeated raids), nine Afghan terrorists who hijacked a plane full of innocent women and children at gunpoint have walked free from court because it was decreed they had every right so to act in light of the fears they had of threat to life and limb in Afghanistan. They are now claiming, and will almost certainly get, two million pounds in compensation.

These few instances highlight the increasing problem with justice in British society to which Archer's *Diary* has drawn attention. It proclaims loud and clear that Britain has by and large abandoned any notion of being a Christian country. Its legal system is a battlefield in which might not right wins the day. It has turned aside from the imperious demand of Holy Writ: "Justice, *Justice*, thou shalt pursue" (Dt. 16:20—The Authorised Version is a tame interpretation of the far more forceful Hebrew).

Archer's description of life "inside" was a revelation. Popular culture has taught, and I confess to having believed it, that prison life is a holiday camp; that it is no good locking people up if life behind bars is better than life on the outside. Archer dispels this myth and demonstrates the awful nature of incarceration. What's more, he brings out some exceedingly interesting observations. For instance, things often work out in precisely the opposite way to what one would expect. He mentions drugs. A well-meaning government had set out to rid prisons of drugs by introducing mandatory blood tests. Signs of drug use would lead to a longer time behind bars. The logic seems impeccable, but in fact the tests have led to more drug abuse and even worse, more serious drug abuse. Prisoners soon discover that one drug, unlike all others, can be quickly flushed from the body in 24 hours: heroin. So everyone abandons the milder drugs like cannabis and ends up mainlining on heroin. Again, one would expect those with life sentences for really serious and vicious crimes to be the most fearful inmates of the prison system. In fact they are the most tranquil; having recognised that they are there to stay, they do all in their power to make life comfortable for themselves.

Archer's description of prison in the title of his book as Hell is thoroughly justified by his account. Prison does not ennoble, it bestialises. So it should come as no surprise to find that prison does not feature in biblical justice as a means of punishment. Prison should be reserved for remand only. That is, prison is a means to ensure the attendance at court of those charged. It could be argued that in the case of serious criminal charges such as murder and intimidation some form of physical restraint will be necessary to prevent ab-

sconding. But until found guilty at the end of a trial (in any British law that is still free of Europe's clutches anyway) a man is innocent until proved otherwise. It seems unjust therefore that those who have only been *charged* with a crime, and not yet found guilty of one, should have to be incarcerated under such bestial conditions. Archer mentions the case of one youth of seventeen in the cell below him who had been charged with shoplifting. It was his first offence (technically not even that as it was not yet proved). He was even locked up in solitary confinement for eighteen hours when he arrived. As Archer says, how can spending a fortnight in the company of murderers, rapists, burglars and drug addicts be conducive to character building or reform?

Furthermore, the prison system takes on more and more the character of pure devilish vengeance and increasingly abandons the most important aspects of true justice. It is satisfied if it can lash out in violence against the offender. But it takes no care to do what true justice demands: a restoration or redressing of the balance. Justice is about retribution, that is, about paying back (Latin *retribuere*, to repay or recompense) what was taken. Biblical law makes this clear from beginning to end. Also, the retribution should be *to the victim and not to the State*. Incidentally, the injunction *eye for eye, tooth for tooth* is especially important here. It is generally misunderstood to mean: respond with equal brutality. In fact, it demands nothing of the sort. Rather it requires that the judicial response shall fit the crime. It insists on no more than an *eye's* worth for an eye, no more than a *tooth's* worth for a tooth. The repayment, the retribution, must be measured by the damage done and no more. Biblical law is not given, as modern law, in esoteric legal jargon that only lawyers can understand (what John Milton called *Norman gibberish*); it is given in ways that those who must obey it—the common people—can understand.

Prison is also unjust because it deprives the victim of crime of his property, whether that be cash, peace of mind, reputation or even life. Indeed it places a *further* burden upon him, because now he must also foot the bill for the prisoner's incarceration and victuals. It is also unjust because it is the act of a political power that is playing god. It sees criminal activity not as a wrong done by one man to another but as the wrong done by a man to the State. Punishment is for insulting *its* authority, for breaking *its* laws, not for harming a fellow citizen. This power is eager to promote and defend its sovereignty, as if the law it promulgates stems from itself. It refuses to regard itself as simply the servant of God administering *his* law.

But what more can one expect from a society such as Britain, which has abandoned the living God? This society supposes in its arrogance that it can retain peace and justice, law and order, without walking in God's ways. And it is continually at a loss to understand why, despite all its efforts, peace and justice, law and order, keep fading into the mist and evading its grasp. It is a society that fails to understand that the morality of which it still has a fleeting glimpse is the product of over a thousand years of Christian culture. Without Christianity that morality *must* disappear. It is even more surprising that those who call themselves Christian are equally blind. History has taught them nothing, not even what their fellow-believers were quite clear about nearly two millennia ago. For as Augustine said in his great diatribe against paganism: "The fact is, true justice has no existence save in that republic whose founder and ruler is Christ" (*City*

4. It has since transpired that this sorry individual had already received thousands of pounds in compensation for a whiplash injury caused by a crash for which he was responsible, and whilst he was driving a stolen vehicle.



of God, Book 2, chapter 21). When justice is taken away, he added, kingdoms become nothing more than great bands of pirates (Book 4, chapter 4).

Archer's trial is a shocking (and far from unique) indictment of the contemporary British legal system, and equally of the British news media (television, radio and newspapers). His book is just as damning of our prison system. For all the reservations one might have about anything written by a Member of Parliament—a class more reviled now probably than even double-glazing salesmen—this book is essential reading for any Christian who wants to engage with the problems of our crumbling society. But if for no other reason, they should pick it up because it is such a *dam good read*. *C&S*

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POLITICS, RELIGION AND  
THE BRITISH REVOLUTIONS:  
THE MIND OF SAMUEL RUTHERFORD  
BY JOHN COFFEY

Cambridge University Press, 2002, 319 pages,  
paperback ISBN 0521 893 19 4 £20.95  
hardback ISBN 0521 581 72 9 £50.00,

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REVIEWED BY MARTIN FOULNER

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SAMUEL RUTHERFORD [1600–1661] is recognised as one of the seventeenth century's great heavyweights and also one of the most prolific Scottish theologians ever. He made a lasting contribution to political theory, and his chief work, *Lex Rex*, became a classic of resistance to divine right monarchy and in recent times its main argument—that rulers rule with the consent of the people limited by God's law—has been a seminal work of the Christian Reconstruction Movement.

For Christians with absolutely no interest in making political life subject to God's law Rutherford has nevertheless become one of the great spiritual fathers of Church history along with William Law, Jeremy Taylor and Bernard of Clairvoux. This has been due to his celebrated "Letters." (The Calvinistic Banner of Truth Trust and dispensational Moody Press have both produced editions of Rutherford's letters in recent years. They perhaps have more in common with each other than with the theocratic Rutherford.)

When an author such as Rutherford can be honoured and celebrated by Roman Catholics, Arminians and Antinomians whilst Rutherford himself would have had the State execute all these groups, we can sense there is a story here that needs to be told.

Finally after 340 years we have a biographical study that properly balances the multi-faceted contribution of this great man. A godly pastor, powerful preacher, agitator for political change, defender of strict Calvinistic orthodoxy, churchman, statesman and internationally renowned scholar, Rutherford is celebrated as the spiritual genius whose insights have often been used in morning daily devotional manuals and yet whose weighty defences of divine right Presbyterianism are a godsend to Christian insomniacs the world over.

Numerous biographical studies have been written about him yet only Coffey's gives us the proper balance that he deserves. He is one of the Church's great heroes and yet his

works have today been largely ignored by the mainstream and, with the exception of his letters, which were never intended to be published, neglected. Apart from *Lex Rex*, and a few devotional sermons, all his other works have not been reprinted. The reason for this is simple: Calvinism since Rutherford's death has been predominately pietistic, delighting in Rutherford's "seraphic wisdom" but despising his rigorous Presbyterianism and theonomic politics. To read only his letters is a slap in the face to this great hero.

Coffey gives equal weight to Rutherford's many talents and sets his theology in the context of Britain and the continent in the seventeenth century. Contents include a fairly detailed and accurate biography, survey of six aspects of his life and work, and a complete bibliography of Rutherford's writings both published and unpublished. Coffey combines rigorous historiography with a pleasant style that engages the reader throughout. However at 319 pages this work could have been ten times the length and still not have done justice to the subject.

The only criticism I have is Coffey's assumption that religious pluralism is not merely the state of affairs in the West today, but that it ought to be so. Thus Rutherford's part in the implementation of theocracy in Scotland in the 1640's is sneeringly and superficially identified with the current Iranian revolution (for a thorough rebuttal of Coffey's pluralism see Stephen C. Perks, *A Defence of the Christian State* [Taunton: Kuyper Foundation, 1998]).

That said, for an English, Baptist, Evangelical, Cambridge, academic Coffey deserves full marks. *C&S*

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STEWARDSHIP ETHICS IN DEBT MANAGEMENT  
BY ROY MOHON

Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999, ISBN 0-7923-5747-7

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REVIEWED BY AUBREY ROBERTS

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THE recurring problem of debt management is still with us in the third millennium, with little progress since Magna Carta in 1216. There is an urgent need for the establishment of an acceptable ethical framework for borrowing and lending which the author derives from the concept of "stewardship."

Present day society seems to have adopted "debt," under the preferred name of "credit," as a way of life. Credit allows you to spend someone else's money now, and to pay later. Both business and domestic credit relies on the skilful management of resources that will secure timely repayment and overall benefit for all interested parties. Such management however must cope with the economic ups and downs of life, the variability of the market, and the pressures of cultural expectations. Failure at any point can result in the disgrace of default, social dislocation and loss. The law of the land may now keep you out of debtors' prison but "the borrower is slave to the lender" (Pr 22:7) and default does lead to desperation. We are faced by much pressure to live on credit, pressure from our culture to live up to the expectations of others, and pressure from financial institutions who offer credit as if there were no tomorrow. We are faced with a moral dilemma: how should society govern the whole man-



agement of credit to limit credit default and help those who have succumbed?

Callousness and greed can operate in any system. Changes are therefore required, not in the system itself, but in the moral values of the participants. Sustainable development requires decision making on stable financial data but such stability is lost with inflationary credit creation. Individual stewardship must be supported by responsible public stewardship. Controlling the money supply to achieve political ends destroys the stabilising effect of the price mechanism. Many “stakeholders” are involved in the market, and the relationships between them demand ethical conduct. This requires more than “codes of practice.” It requires an ethical framework to govern mutual responsibilities. The financial advisor must help the non-professional borrower to approach his debt in a reasoned way.

The purpose of this book is to present a “stewardship model” as the moral framework to govern the management of credit. Such a standard must not only be recognised as having validity and authority; it must be adopted by individuals as their *modus operandi*. The purpose of the author is to persuade his readers that they ought to adopt this model.

The title of this book made an immediate and powerful impact on my mind. On the one hand I saw the book as an opportunity to further my own financial education. On the other hand I was confronted with friends in despair over the problems of debt. How should I advise them? On the one hand we see injustices abound through the abuse of bankruptcy, and on the other corruption in the high places of government, business and finance.

It is clear that the author counts me as one of those with “far less financial acumen” than others. Nevertheless, as a professional engineer responsible for the economic management of the world’s largest engine, the telephone network, it was impossible not to gain some familiarity with financial terms and issues. And who can manage his domestic budget without becoming aware of the economic realities of life? However, I must confess that I found this book a challenging read, taking me well back to college days and text books. I found it a hard and difficult read because of my own lack of familiarity with the financial terms and concepts. But perseverance paid off.

Nevertheless, the author has been exceedingly helpful. When faced with the financial acumen of the banker, institutional advisor and well-established business practice, it is disconcerting to be faced with a growing suspicion that all is not well. While identifying much that is good in modern financial management practice, he does at the same time identify great weaknesses, deficiencies and oversights. The author gives confidence to the naïve initiate who faces these issues in the light of Holy Writ.

We all have models in our heads, for sorting, arranging and clarifying our understanding of the world. It may be a model of our route to the station, a model for laying the table, or a model of good behaviour—or a model for writing book reviews. But we need a model for our decisions in financial matters. Here the author presents a clearly obvious model. In a sense there’s nothing new here, we’ve heard of it before. Yes—but only in name, here it is clearly spelled out, described and defined. It is presented in its complexity, but integrated together as a whole framework of choice.

What of its elements? We must not ignore our responsibility to those who have loaned us funds, and we do hold

property and possessions in trust for our children also. We must be realistic—can we afford this proposed expenditure?—identifying all the costs. We must not take on more than we can manage. Do we not wish to leave this earth a better place for having been here? We must realise that we shall be called to account, in time and eternity. We must be fair. Even a child complains when he sees that something is unfair.

It is always encouraging to read the works of professionals who apply biblical principles to their chosen field of endeavour, whether in geology, cosmology, astronomy, medicine or finance as in this book. I would recommend this book to those in finance, and ask them to give serious consideration to their own adoption and application of the principles of this book.

As to my friends in debt, I think they would greatly benefit from the ideas of this book, but I don’t think they would be able to grasp the intricacies of its argument. Nevertheless, if you can grasp the argument you will be well equipped to help those less able to understand.

As to the suggestion that this model can be applied without a personal commitment to the Christian religion—well in God’s common grace, men do find that God’s principles, as revealed in Scripture, do function far more satisfactorily than others, and with compound growth. Such an application will bring blessing in the here and now. But clearly if this stewardship model is applied wholeheartedly, with an integrated view of all “interested parties,” then it must not and cannot avoid man’s stewardship relationship to God himself. Christ, as the Chief Steward of creation, accepted responsibility for man in debt, and he went to the cross to pay that debt in full, that those who believe in him may have their debt erased and have the full credit of Christ’s righteousness transferred to themselves. Then with such credit worthiness, justified in God’s sight, they will find true freedom as debtors to mercy alone. We are debtors not to the flesh to live in accordance with the principles of God-independent autonomy, but to the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Let us then not be ashamed to apply the principles of God’s word in our fields of labour, and when asked by those to whom we give account, for a definition of our goals and objectives, let us not be afraid to declare that man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. Make sure that some such statement heads the list of your goals in your calling. *C&S*

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THE ARROGANCE OF THE MODERN:  
HISTORICAL THEOLOGY HELD IN CONTEMPT  
BY DAVID W. HALL

The Covenant Foundation, 1997, \$21.95, 308 pages  
(including indices), ISBN 0-9650367-4-x

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REVIEWED BY STEPHEN HAYHOW

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DAVID W. HALL, author of a number of books on the social implications of the faith, covering everything from the snare of State welfarism, through to Presbyterian Church polity and editing a volume of *Election Day Sermons* (Covenant

Foundation, 1996), is also the director of CAPO (Centre for the Advancement of Paleo-Orthodoxy). He has now issued this new critique of modernity, *The Arrogance of the Modern*, which is really a collection of essays that discuss the neglect of history and a historical perspective. This, says Hall, characterises the modern age and, at the same time, the modern Church. *The Arrogance of the Modern* represents a plea for history.

Hall's *The Arrogance of the Modern* deserves to take its place with a number of competent works attempting to confront the spirit of modernity, for example *Walker's Enemy Territory: The Christian Struggle for the Modern World*, or David F. Wells' *God In The Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in A World Of Fading Dreams* or the unbeatable E. Michael Jones' *Degenerate Modern*.

Hall's book is concerned with modernity's abandonment of history. *En route* he acquaints us with G. K. Chesterton, C. S. Lewis, R. L. Dabney as well as lesser known defenders of history, for example Oakeshott on conservatism. The book roves, under the banner of a critique of modernity, from a study of the spirituality of the Westminster divines to the welfare strategy of Calvin in Geneva. Every topic covered is concluded with a call to a historical perspective that would have saved us so much time and effort in our strivings in the wilderness of modernity. Whether it is Church growth strategies, blasting old-new heresies, or the fundamentals of Christian spirituality, Hall reminds us that we needed to be rooted in, but not buried by, the past.

It is difficult to review a book like *The Arrogance of the Modern* because there is little to criticise, and so much to recommend. The easiest recommendation is simply "Read and enjoy"!

Hall includes a useful essay, "A Brief Tutorial on the Value of Religion for Politics." Naturally, Hall recommends a Christian republicanism based upon Exodus 18. But he is also critical of monarchy. The problem with this view, to my mind, is that it does not give due weight to Dt 17:14–20, which contains the instruction for selecting a monarch in Israel. If Ex. 18 isolated from Dt. 17 is the ideal form, then what of the recommendation of monarchy? What also of the fact that God chose monarchy as the form of government for his people Israel? Moreover, what of the fact that monarchy was chosen by God to prefigure the glorious kingly rule of our Lord and Saviour? If there is something inherently wrong with monarchy *per se*, how could it serve such a purpose in the divine economy? Surely these are arguments *for* monarchy, not arguments to be marshalled against it?

I believe that there need be no contradiction between these two views. The important point is that the republican form and the monarchical form were under the law of God. Biblical monarchy must not be confused with the *divine right of kings*. How do we reconcile these two positions? In Ex 18 Moses is effectively King in Israel. He stands at the top of the pyramid of lower to higher courts or magistrates in Israel. When God then added kingship, after the judgement on Saul, the king effectively replaced Moses as head of this *republican* system. The real solution is to see that there was no substantial difference between a constitutional leader under the law, Moses, and a constitutional monarch, and a constitutional president of the USA! All were under the law, all had under them local, regional, and national "elders" who applied the law and administered justice.

*The Arrogance of the Modern* is to be commended for its strongly Reformed flavour, whilst at the same time avoiding

the "nothing-happened-before-the-Reformation" view of Church history. When "Reformed" conferences in the UK narrowly focus upon Reformed works only, as if there were nothing to be learned from anything or anyone prior to the Reformation (except Wycliffe of course!) or outside of Reformed tradition, Hall is a breath of theological fresh air. Mr Hall is well-read and readable, so he introduces us to writings and writers that would be buried in Protestant obscurity if this narrow stance were adopted. *C&S*

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CONTRARY to much popular opinion, economics is not a subject that is religiously neutral. The way the economy works is intimately bound up with fundamental issues of right and wrong, and what one judges to be right or wrong is itself intimately bound up with one's religious perspective. It is necessary therefore that the Church should bring the moral teaching of the Bible to bear on the economic issues that face modern society. If Christians are to do this effectively, however, they must be informed. Ignorance of the economic realities upon which so much of life depends will vitiate the Church's ability to speak prophetically in this area and call the present generation back to faithfulness to God's word.

### A DEFENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN STATE THE CASE AGAINST PRINCIPLED PLURALISM AND THE CHRISTIAN ALTERNATIVE

*by Stephen C. Perks*

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PRINCIPLED PLURALISM is the belief that the State should be a religiously neutral institution and that all religions should enjoy civil liberty and equality. In this book Stephen Perks provides a detailed critique of the principled pluralist position. He sets out to show that religious neutrality in the political sphere is impossible, that *all* States, including so-called secular States, are religious institutions. The author argues that the case for principled pluralism fundamentally misunderstands the issues at stake and thus misconceives the proper Christian attitude to the political sphere. He then provides an exposition of the Christian doctrine of the State.

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