

Sovereignty and Responsibility has been the topic of theology and philosophy for nearly 2000 years. Can there possibly be said anything new on this topic? Has not everything been said before? Can anyone surpass Augustine, Luther or Wesley? And if the author from his personal theological tradition as a leading Reformed Systematic theologian stands on one side of the old fight between Calvinist and Arminian Christians, why should that be of any relevance?

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Thomas Schirmacher in his foreword

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**Dr. Thomas Schirmacher**

Henry Krabbendam

# Sovereignty and Responsibility

The Pelagian-Augustinian Controversy in Philosophical and Global Perspective



VKW Theologisches Lehr- und Studienmaterial 4

VKW Henry Krabbendam Sovereignty and Responsibility

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Henry Krabbendam  
Sovereignty and Responsibility

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# The Complementary Nature of Biblical Teaching

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*Foreword by Thomas Schirrmacher*

Sovereignty and Responsibility has been the topic of theology and philosophy for nearly 2000 years. Can there possibly be said anything new on this topic? Has not everything been said before? Can anyone surpass Augustine, Luther or Wesley? And if the author from his personal theological tradition as a leading Reformed Systematic theologian stands on one side of the old fight between Calvinist and Arminian Christians, why should that be of any relevance?

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work in Africa and elsewhere. Thus he knows his theological ‘opponents’ from personal encounter and working together in evangelism and theological training.

### *The Early Councils*

When the Early Church Councils (Nicea 325, Constantinople 381, Ephesus 431 and Chalcedon 451) resolved the issues of the relationships between the Persons of the Trinity and the relationship between the human and divine natures of Christ, they were exemplary in their refusal to accept a one-sided declaration but to accord all truths expressed in Scripture equal weight. The numerous views in these two major controversies had originated not only under the influence of non-Christian religions or popular world views, but also from apparently contradictory statements in the Bible itself. The councils fortunately chose not to insist upon a ‘rational’ solution, but included all Biblical information. The statement on Christ of the Council of Chalcedon (22-10-451 AD) says,

“As heirs of the holy fathers, we thus all teach unanimously that our Lord Jesus Christ is to be confessed as one and the same Son: the Same is perfect in His divinity, and the Same is perfect in His humanity: the Same is truly God and truly Man with a rational soul and body: the Same is according to divinity of the same substance as God the Father, and according to His humanity of the same substance as we are; in all things like us except for sin (Compare Heb. 4:15). The Same was on the one hand in His divinity begotten of the Father before time; on the other hand in His humanity in the latter days born of Maria, the Virgin (and) Mother of God for our sakes and for the sake of our salvation: one and the same is Christ, the only begotten Son and Lord, Who in two Natures, is seen to be neither commingled, nor alterable, undivided and indivisible. In no way is the difference between the natures disintegrated through unification, rather is the unique nature of each of the two natures preserved and unified into one Person and one hypostasis, the only begotten Son. God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, is not divided into two persons or divided, but is one and the same, as the prophets had testified and as Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the confession of the fathers has affirmed..”

Sections 2.3 and 8.2 of the Westminster Confession of 1647 summarise the Early Church’s doctrine of the Trinity and of the Dual Nature of Jesus and show that the complementary decisions of the early councils were of lasting value for later generations:

“In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.”

“The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man’s nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood were inseparably joined together in one person without conversion, composition or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.”

Unfortunately, later councils (Ephesus 431, Orange 529) failed to pursue this wise course in dealing with the issue of human and divine responsibility in salvation. The Church had negatively rejected Pelagius’ doctrines, but lacked the strength positively to incorporate all aspects of scriptural revelation as they had done when deciding on the Trinity and on the Nature of Christ. Had they done so, their complementary solution would have moulded and unified all of Christianity, as the former issues had done. Full Pelagianism (salvation by works alone), having been universally condemned, never really raised its head again, even in the Roman Catholic Church.

### *The Complementary Nature of Biblical Thought*

Physicists have discovered many phenomena which can be described as ‘complementary’ (from Lat. ‘complementum’; completion or supplement) in a double or triple form. Colors which produce white when mixed (for example, red and green), are called complementary colors. In a single experimental situation, an electron can be only demonstrated to be either a particle or a wave, although in reality it is both. This is therefore also true of light.

The theory of complementarity was controversial for many years. The Danish scientist Niels Bohr (1885-1962), who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1922, introduced the term to physics in 1927, assuring the success of the theory of complementarity in the physics of the Twentieth Century.

A leading German Lexicon describes the complementary nature of physical reality as the experimentally demonstrated fact that atomic particles have

two paired but apparently contradictory properties, for example, particle and wave. “Two complementary features cannot be observed simultaneously, but require two contradictory, mutually intolerable measurements.”

Complementarity thus implies that the various aspects of some phenomena can only be studied and defined separately from each other, even though we know that the results of both studies are simultaneously true, and that an accurate result can only be obtained by setting all aspects concerned into a proper relationship to each other - as in the case of complementary colors, which only produce white when properly mixed.

Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker defines complementarity as “consisting of the fact that the two features cannot be applied simultaneously, even though both must be applied”

In the mean time, this theory has been adopted by many sciences and disciplines.

It is not a lack of logical truth that forces man to rely upon complementary statements about scriptural revelation and theology, but the limitations of the human mind. In defending most central doctrines of the Christian faith, that God is Triune and that Jesus is truly Man and truly God, the Early Church deliberately chose complementary formulations.

A complementary approach can also play a significant role in overcoming many unnecessary conflicts between Christians. We still tend to play one side of complementary reality against the other, or to overemphasise one aspect of it. In the Early Church, Jesus’ humanity was emphasised at the cost of His divinity, and his submission to His Father at the cost of His equal status and substance.

The Bible frequently mentions two or more apparently contradictory doctrines in one breath. Jesus’ humanity and His divinity, and the Trinity are the most central examples.

***The following examples of complementarity are all expressed in the Bible in several ways which seem indivisible but insoluble:***

- Predestination and responsibility
- Law and Grace
- Faith and Knowledge
- Divine love and divine wrath
- Doctrine and life
- Baptism as divine act and as human act
- Church office and the priesthood of the believer

- Difference and equality of man and woman
- The Christian is free from the Law, but lives according to God's commandments.
- The Christian is free from Sin, but not sinless.
- Satan is overthrown but still wields great power.
- The Christian cannot lose his salvation, but is still warned to hold on to his faith.

***Several scriptures with complementary content illustrate the point:***

*Deuteronomy 28-30* pairs the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee (30:1). God's Covenant offers advantages, but also judgment (See also: Romans 2:9-10).

*Genesis 2:15* describes Man's commission to work and to keep Creation; two seemingly contradictory tasks, which, however, belong together in everyday life.

*Psalms 51:16-17+19*: "thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it ... The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. ... Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

*Psalms 73:23*: "Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand." The believer can hold onto God, because God holds him. Who holds whom? Both sides belong together.

*1 John 1:5-3:10*: John repeats four basic statements with continually new formulations: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (3,9); „If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1:8); „If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1:9); „My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." (2:1). These four statements - a Christian does not sin, every Christian sins, every Christian should confess his sin, and every Christian should stop sinning - do not contradict each other, but belong together.

*1 Cor. 8-10*: Paul rebukes believers who participate in idolatrous feasts, but also those who condemn the eating of meat offered to idols.

### ***Predestination and Responsibility***

As we have seen, many Biblical issues have two seemingly contradictory but equally important factors. Church history demonstrates that many theological disputes arise when two opposing parties insist on accepting or emphasising only one side of the issue.

Scripture makes the individual fully responsible, but only for that area of life, in which he has received responsibility from God. Above and beyond that area, God reigns in His omnipotence and directs Creation. Indeed, it is God's omnipotence that makes the human responsible and establishes the commandment. Paul states: „Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.“ (Phil 2:12-13). Knowing that God works all things leads not to passivity but to creative action.

Ephesians 2:8-10 relates the believer's good works to God's sovereign activity. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.“

The relationship between predestination and responsibility, i.e. between God's omnipotent and sovereign activity to human activity in responsibility before God, has immense significance for ethics, for it defines the areas for which Man can be called to responsibility. The human being is not responsible for God's domain, but only for those areas in which he has been placed by God.

Alister E. McGrath, discussing St. Augustine, comes to the conclusion that one must hold onto both the absolute sovereignty of God and onto the reality of human liberty and responsibility, if one is to do justice to the wealth and complexity of scriptural statements on the subject. To solve the problem by denying either divine sovereignty or human liberty would lead to serious uncertainty about the Christian understanding of the way in which God justifies man.

That the knowledge that God directs all things does not reduce human responsibility, and the complete responsibility of Man does not dispute God's sovereignty,, can be seen in several scriptures which mention both aspects at once, even using one to prove the other. Augustine once wrote, that no one who claimed that grace eliminates free will had ever understood that he does not establish the will, but allows it to drift without restraint.

Do we not thank both God and the cook for our food? Every time that a new human comes into being, he is a unique creation of God, but equally the product of a biological process initiated by a man and a woman. Such examples of the linking of God's sovereign activity and human operation are innumerable.

***Texts on Predestination to Salvation, which mention both predestination and human responsibility.***

*Philippians 2:12-13*: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

*1 Peter 2:7-8*: “To you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.” (They are personally responsible, because they are disobedient. At the same time, they have been appointed by God to do so.)

*John 1:12-13*: „But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.“ (We must receive Christ personally, but the power to do so comes from God.)

*John 6:37*: „All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.“ (We must come to Christ, but those who do so have been given Him by God.)

*1 Corinthians 15:10* (Paul speaking of himself): „But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain;“(All is due to God's grace, but Paul can still point out that this grace had not been bestowed in vain.)

*2 Corinthians 6:1*: „We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.“

*Galatians 4:8-9*: „Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God ...“

***Who hardened Pharaoh's heart?***

God hardened the hearts of Pharaoh and of the Egyptians: Ex. 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1+21+27; 11:10; 14:4+8; 14:17

Active person not mentioned: Ex. 7:13+14+22; 8:15+28; 9:7+35

Pharaoh hardens his heart: Ex. 8:11; 9:34; (See also 1Sam 6:6; Prov. 28:14).

“The hardening is so much both, divine act and equally decision of the subject, that such expressions alternate ... in the first respect, it is the result of divine wrath.”

***The expression 'to harden the heart' appears in the New Testament as:***

Divine act: Matthew 13:15; Joh 12:40; Acts 28:27; Romans 9:18; 11:7; 2 Cor. 3:14.

Man's own decision or as warning against it: Mark 3:5; acts 19:9; Romans 2:5, Heb. 3:8+13+15; 4:7

***Texts which mention both the responsibility of Man in general and the divine predestination of events***

*Acts 27:22-24+31.* Paul receives the promise that no one will be lost in the shipwreck, and announces to the crew, „There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship,“ but still warns the soldiers, „Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.“

*Luke 22:21-22* (Judas): “ But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!“ (Even though he is fulfilling prophecy, Judas is fully responsible for betraying Jesus.)

*Matthew 18:7:* “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!“

*Isaiah 50:11:* “Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.“ (They bring themselves into danger, but the judgment is still from God.)

*Deuteronomy 29:29:* „The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our chil-

dren for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.“ (God’s secret activity is never an excuse for disobedience to His revealed will.)

*James 4:13-17*: “We are not to boast of our plans, but to say, “ For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.“ (Although promises or plans can be made only under the reservation that God determines all, we still must go about our business.)

*Nehemiah 2:20*: “The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build“ (Knowing that God gives success leads not to passivity, but to active cooperation.)

*1 Peter 3:17*: „For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.“ (Suffering occurs according to God’s will, but we carry the responsibility for the cause of our suffering.)

*Proverbs 21:31*: “The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.“

***Men pray that God bring them to repentance:***

*Jeremiah 31:18-19*: “Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.“

*Lamentations 5:21*: “Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.“

***Teaching of predestination leads to evangelization***

*2 Timothy 2:10*: “Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.“

*Acts 18:9-10*: “Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.“ (Spoken before the people had been converted. Paul is to preach the Gospel, because God has elected some of them.)

*Philippians 2:12-13*: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Christians work only because they know that God does all. Knowing of predestination does not make them passive or lazy but active and diligent.)

*Nehemia 2:20*: “The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build“ (See above.)

***Peoples who carry out God’s judgment are still punished.***

*Isaiah 47:6-7*: Babylon conquers Israel according to God’s commandment, but are themselves judged.

*Isaiah 10:5-19*: Assyria conquers Israel according to God’s commandment, but are judged for their arrogant claim to have done so in their own power.

*2 Chronicles 28:1-5* (particularly verse 5, 10 and 13). The kingdom of Israel carries out divine judgement on the kingdom of Judah, but is punished for its own guilt.

*Ezekiel 14:9.10*: in reference to a prophet.

„O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Romans 11:33-36)

# Introduction

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*Jurassic Park*, the film, is a blockbuster illustration of American pop culture, a spectacular piece of entertainment. The box office receipts are there to prove it.<sup>1</sup> *Jurassic Park*, the book,<sup>2</sup> has greater philosophical merits. It basically tackles the age-old issue of determinism versus indeterminism. It is remarkable how in the book philosophy is interwoven with science, both classical and Chaos science. In fact, the philosophy of classical science squares off against the philosophy of Chaos science, and vice versa.

Classical science is thoroughly deterministic. It holds to the possibility of rational and total control, which fully rules out the random, the unpredictable, and particularly the irrational. Hence it is confident that “freedom,” interestingly enough presented as chaotic in the conventional sense of the term, and life threatening, can be kept in check. The Park, *Jurassic Park*, *will* be a success, even if enormous fences, charged with incredibly high voltages, must be constructed to form a barrier against a possible onslaught of murderous proportions on the part of imprisoned (pre-historic) animals, especially the ferocious velociraptors. Philosophically speaking, the “one,” or the rational “universal,” can and will keep the “many,” or the irrational “particulars,” at bay.

Chaos holds that classical science had its day. Determinism never can nor will have the final exclusive word. At the least it will have to share the stage with indeterminism. A non-rational, if not irrational, indeterminism is part of the fabric of everyday reality. The “particulars” will be able to hold their own, indeed, strike out against the “universal.” They cannot be kept in the prison of a stifling regimentation for too long. According to the Chaos scientist, life escapes all barriers, breaks free, expands into new territories, painfully, perhaps even dangerously, but “real” life finds a way to do so. In other words, *Jurassic Park* is “an accident to happen.”<sup>3</sup> This is not suggested

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<sup>1</sup> According to the latest estimate the gross worldwide intake was US \$1 bn.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Crichton, *Jurassic Park* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

as a prediction. It is posited as a fact, an inevitable fact of Chaos science. It claims to observe as part of everyday life the equal ultimacy of the “one” and the “many,” of “necessity” and “contingency,” of “order” and “disorder,” of “underlying orderliness” and “unpredictable behavior,” of “indisputable systems” and “inherent instability,” and ultimately of “stifling regimentation” and “destructive chaos.” Whatever is “done” by the first pole, will eventually and inevitably be “undone” by the second.<sup>4</sup> Of course, the millions of viewers of the film know that the “accident” did happen, with gruesome effects.

The question may well rise why the book does not seek to portray “order” and “freedom” simply as two poles of one ultimately harmonious and “cozy” reality. Instead, it is rather evident that deterministic and total domination (control) are presented as waging total war against indeterministic and unlimited freedom (chaotic conditions) and vice versa. The two poles appear to be mutually exclusive. In fact, they seem by definition to be on an unavoidable and destructive collision course. Whichever pole gains the victory, the fabric of meaningful life vanishes. Life is either totally boxed in. Remember the high voltage fences! Or it is torn to bits. Remember the gruesome velociraptors! But whether life is “killed” figuratively or killed literally, in each instance the victory is pyrrhic. The tendency of stifling regimentation is to deny life to exist as life was meant to exist. Life is petrified! The tendency of chaotic freedom is to deny life to exist, period. Life is shredded!

In the book the determinist never gives up trying to prove his point or state his case. Neither does the indeterminist. This suggests that the two poles do not only exclude each other, but also presuppose each other! The writer, indeed, seems to wrestle with the dual reality of, indeed, the equal need for, both the one and the many, of both order and freedom. However, in spite of all his references to Chaos science, which ideally insists on the equal ultimacy of both poles, he fails to solve the haunting problem of their relationship. This could not be any clearer. After all, peaceful coexistence is never reached. Harmony is elusive. Conflict is the order of the day. The desire to conquer, either by means of total control (the elaborate fences) or by barbarous destruction (the murderous raptors), remains the driving force. (Apparently this picture is presented as a symbol of all of life.) The upshot is that warfare is emphasized as universal and inevitable. It is the prerequisite of conquest – after all determinism can only survive with the defeat and demise of indeterminism, and indeterminism with the defeat and demise of

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-76, 246.

determinism –, and therefore emerges as the most fundamental component of life. Ultimately, each and every attempt to produce a “compromise,” so as to secure a peaceful coexistence of sorts between the two poles does and will shatter.

All this is explicitly acknowledged in the last few pages of *Jurassic Park*, the book. In order to rid the world of the murderous velociraptors they are scheduled for “ultimate control.” That is, they are scheduled, ironically, for annihilation by means of the “final solution” of saturation bombing.<sup>5</sup> But . . . at least a number of them manage to escape. They apparently refuse to be “nuked,” and are reportedly on the loose and out of control. Herewith the author makes a profound philosophical statement. The “one,” the “universal,” must by definition exclude the “many,” the “particulars.” But the latter in their irrationality and unpredictability, whether portrayed in a more positive sense as “freedom,” in a more matter of fact sort of way as “randomness,” or in a more pejorative fashion as “chaos,” are here to stay. They are a fact of life that cannot be “nuked” and destroyed in a million years. They are irrepressible.

At the same time, the surviving perpetrators of the tragedy of the Park are implicitly informed that they are placed in permanent custody.<sup>6</sup> Herewith the author makes a second philosophical statement, which is equally profound. The “many,” the “particulars,” must by definition exclude the “one,” the “universal.” But the latter with its imprint of design, rationality and predictability, whether presented favorably as “management,” neutrally as “order,” or disparagingly as “imprisonment,” is just as much a fact of life. This will not go away in a million years either. The author apparently wishes to go on record that we live in a reality in which both freedom cannot be chained and order cannot be relinquished. Still the basic relationship between the two poles seems to be warfare as an inevitable reality. Freedom and order simply “don’t mix.” They mutually exclude each other.

But now something quite interesting takes place. On the one hand, there are indications that the velociraptors seem both to migrate and to harvest the food that they need to survive in quite a peaceful and methodical fashion.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, not only is the place of imprisonment pleasant and comfortable, but also the two children who survive the “Park” are probably (!) free to go as they wish.<sup>8</sup> The synthesis that will harmonize the two mu-

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 371, 396-397.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 397-399.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 394-395 and 398-399.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 397-399.

tually exclusive poles seems within reach! Apparently “freedom” does not need to turn into the destructive chaos that the book stresses throughout as inevitable. “Suddenly” it is presented as quite “orderly.” At the same time “order” does not need to constitute the enslavement that the book continuously implies to be inescapable. Now it “unexpectedly” goes hand in hand with a condition that is posited as comfortable and does not need to be devoid of all freedom. The two poles do not only appear to exclude each other, they also (are made to) gravitate to each other.

In summary, it is evident that the author desires an all-encompassing and ironclad synthesis of complete control and full freedom. However, in the course of the book it eludes him, to put it mildly, while at its conclusion it remains at best wishful thinking. Nevertheless, it ultimately seems to be his grand obsession. Of course, the obsessive search for a synthesis is inevitable. The alternative is to acknowledge that the ultimate categories of life are, indeed, hatred, hostility, conflict, war, destruction and death. And who wishes to settle for that?

The question may well arise whether such search can, and ever will, be successful. That the stakes are quite high is clearly undeniable! It is a matter of ultimate categories. Will the bottom line of life be war or will it be peace, with all that this entails? Mankind clearly hungers for the latter, but just as clearly remains mired in the former. All of history bears this out. Its bottom line appears not to be peace, here and there interrupted by an occasional war. Rather it is war with here and there a very occasional period of peace.

*What emerges here is a dialectic, in which the two poles exclude each other as the foundational characteristic of life, and at the same time presuppose each other as an equally existing, undeniable and foundational reality.* The one and the many, universality and particularity, order and freedom, necessity and contingency, determinism and indeterminism, design and chance, are mutually exclusive, on the face of it. This spells warfare. But by the same token, as part of reality, they simultaneously presuppose each other, and as such cry for a synthesis as the basis for the solution of the enigma of life in general, and the tragedy of human existence in particular. Incidentally, this produces the various reconciliation efforts and peace initiatives that abound in this world. However, even the “common grace” of a cessation of hostilities, a more or less uneasy truce, or even an occasional full-fledged peace treaty, proves to be no more than a “living corpse”<sup>9</sup> in the long run. Sure, such “common grace” has often a temporary, gratifying, payoff, that is undeniable, and at times even an abundant pay-off in terms of

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<sup>9</sup> This phraseology is explained more fully below.

political stability, an improved infrastructure, economic progress, educational advancement, etc. But all this will evaporate or shatter again. Emperor Qin Shih-huang-ti's China of the 230's, 220's and 210's BC and Marshall Tito's Yugoslavia of the AD 1940's, 1950's and 1960's are vivid and telling examples! After the demise of their rulers these countries were soon engulfed in war and destruction. "Life" was swallowed up by "death."

All so-called evidence to the contrary, after all is said and done, the bottom line of life is, indeed, invariably and ironically death. Both corporate and personal history, of whatever sort or stripe, is there to prove this. The dialectic with its two mutually presupposing and excluding poles is a vicious malignancy that with the fall in sin, as I will argue later, has entered the body of mankind. It is destructive since warfare is its second, if not fundamental, nature. It is also deceptive since it holds out the mirage of a permanent peaceful coexistence. But it cannot deliver, neither philosophically nor practically. It is and remains a terminal case. Death does have the final word. Therefore, this dialectic must be unmasked, defeated and destroyed. That is mankind's only hope.

Viewed in this light the phenomenon *Jurassic Park* is more than entertainment. It is even more than a story. It is a statement. It is, in the final analysis, a symbolic statement about the totality of life. That's why the author could not portray "order" and freedom" as the two poles of a "cozy" reality. It would fly in the face of reality. Life's diagnosis looks grim across the board. Its "broken" condition appears universal. Life's prospects are dim at best. Its future is left open-ended. Clearly, the author had no intention to write "no exit" over it. He does not bring down the "final curtain." Hope, indeed, seems to spring eternal. But he certainly gives no reason to believe that an "exit" out of the dialectic dilemma will be found any time soon, or that the "final curtain" is not waiting in the wings.

*The Lost World*,<sup>10</sup> the sequel to *Jurassic Park*, fully corroborates this analysis, dialectic and all! In it the author sharpens his thinking considerably, and takes it one step further. On the surface it seems less sophisticated than his earlier book. But this is not really the case. The difference is that in *The Lost World* he is less global and more focused. In his first book he introduces his readers to Chaos theory, which recognizes both the "complexity" of the world (the reality of the "many") and its underlying order (the reality of the "one") as an indisputable fact of life (and death). In its sequel he applies Chaos theory to evolution.<sup>11</sup> However, at the end of the

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Crichton, *The Lost World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 1-2.

second book he is no closer to a solution of the problems he faces than at the end of his first one.

*The Lost World* tackles the issue of the well-documented, continuous, steady rate of the extinction of self-organizing,<sup>12</sup> complex species, such as dinosaurs, against the backdrop of the dialectic. How can that extinction be explained in the light of what is known about evolution? This is the focus of the book. Interestingly enough, the author admits that extinction is not a strictly scientific subject because it is “untestable, unsuited for experiment.” This explains why it is “embroiled in the most intense religious (sic!) and political controversy.”<sup>13</sup>

The question may well be asked why the author decided to make this controversial subject the focus of his attention, and actively to enter into this “religious debate.”<sup>14</sup> Apparently, he is persuaded that an analysis of extinction in the framework of *both* Chaos science *and* evolution provides an excellent prospect for a credible hypothesis. This persuasion is ultimately a statement of total commitment to, and faith in, the theory of evolution. Frankly, the idea of programmatic and catastrophic extinction is and must be a “mystery” for the evolutionist,<sup>15</sup> since it implies regress rather than progress, devolution rather than evolution. As such it goes against the grain of the theory of evolution, and must stick in the craw of its theorists. Anyone with a genuine zeal for the cause of evolution has little choice but to tackle the problem of extinction and to seek for a solution. The author of *The Lost World* is apparently a man with such zeal. It stands to reason that success in his undertaking would strengthen the case for evolution immeasurably, if not settle it once and for all.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> With the term “self-organization” we encounter the cutting edge of evolutionary thinking. The term describes a behavior that “seems to arise from the spontaneous interaction of the components (of a complex system).” Such behavior is not “planned or directed; it just happens.” If any kind of evolutionary activity were directed, it would come down to creationism, and that, of course, is out by definition. The author, *ibid.*, 2, 228, calls it “just plain wrong.”

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>15</sup> According to Crichton, *ibid.*, 429, in the history of the earth extinction “happened five major times.” In one instance, it “killed ninety percent of all of life, on the planet, on the seas and on the land.” It is hardly surprising that he calls it both a “great mystery” and a “catastrophe.”

<sup>16</sup> Failure will not necessarily have the opposite effect in the broad market place of ideas. It will merely “inspire” the protagonists of evolution to try another avenue within the evolutionary framework to arrive at a “satisfactory” solution of the problem. They are presuppositionalists of the highest order. Every failure causes them to double their efforts to succeed in presenting a compelling case for their views. The history of Darwinism proves that. Many, if not most, of its tenets have been found seriously wanting during the last century. See especially Philip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial* (Downers Grove:

But let us take a look at the author's argument, starting with the dialectic backdrop. "Of the self-organizing behaviors . . . two are of particular interest to the study of evolution. One is adaptation. We see it everywhere. Corporations adapt to the marketplace, brain cells adapt to traffic signals. We have come to think that the ability to adapt is characteristic of complex systems – and may be one reason why evolution seems to lead toward more complex organisms . . . But even more important is the way complex systems seem to strike a balance between the need for order and the imperative to change. Complex systems tend to locate themselves at a place we call 'the edge of chaos.' We imagine the edge of chaos as a place where there is enough innovation to keep a living system vibrant, and enough stability to keep it from collapsing into anarchy. It is a zone of conflict and upheaval, where the old and the new are constantly at war. Finding the balance point must be a delicate matter – if living systems drift too close, it risks falling over into incoherence and dissolution; but if the system moves too far away from the edge, it becomes rigid, frozen, totalitarian. Both conditions lead to extinction. Too much change is as destructive as too little. Only at the edge of chaos can complex systems flourish . . . By implication, extinction is the inevitable result of one or the other strategy – too much change, or too little."<sup>17</sup>

In this quotation the dialectic is clearly the bottom line. This makes it quite revealing. Apparently all of life is dialectically (and spontaneously) either self-organized or self-organizing. When either pole of the dialectic prevails, extinction/destruction is assured through anarchy (dissolution) or totalitarianism (rigidity). In short, total victory on the part of either the "many" or the "one" is not just pyrrhic, it is suicidal. The solution? A finely tuned balance between particularity and universality! But that admittedly spells conflict. The upshot is that their mutual presupposition is the condition for survival, while their mutual exclusion is the guarantee for continuous warfare. What emerges from all this is the rather grim situation of two ultimate options. (Here *The Lost World* constitutes a considerable fine-tuning over *Jurassic Park*.) Mankind either faces extinction when the balance is destroyed, or warfare when the balance is maintained.<sup>18</sup> (The reader

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sity Press, 1995). But it continues on its merry way, like an unstoppable juggernaut. Below an effort will be made to provide reasons for this phenomenon.

<sup>17</sup> Crichton, *ibid.*, 2-3.

<sup>18</sup> This reminds us of the scramble for an ever larger and more sophisticated nuclear arsenal by both the East and the West, and the subscription to the "MAD Doctrine" by both sides at the height of the Cold War. On the one hand, the nuclear arsenal was designed to make people sleep well. In case of war victory had to be assured. This encouraged a continuing build-up and the commitment to use it if this proved to be necessary. On the other hand, victory would be self-destructive. No one would survive an

will do well to remember these two options. It is a theme that will recur again and again throughout this study, like a "broken record.")

Of course, the author of *The Lost World* recognizes full well, that all this is (still!) a "theoretical construct." He acknowledges that "the gap between this theoretical construct and the fact of extinction is vast." But as has already been observed, chaos theory supposedly supplies the most promising avenue to get to the bottom of the extinction debate. Of course, unless chaos theory delivers, the latter remains a "*religious* (emphasis, mine!) debate"<sup>19</sup> Incidentally, a "lost world" populated by dinosaurs will not produce an observable overnight extinction. But it certainly is expected to present evidence that will support the theory of the author, which is ultimately the theory of evolution.<sup>20</sup>

The book rejects the idea that worldwide extinction is caused by worldwide catastrophes, such as Noah's flood or meteor impact. At first Noah's flood was the popular explanation. But it had to be ruled out because evolution (allegedly) proved to be factual.<sup>21</sup> Then, for a time meteor impact was the scientific in-thing. If the meteor smashed into land, its "resulting dust and debris" was believed to have "darkened the sky, inhibited photosynthesis, killed plants and animals, and ended the reign of the dinosaurs." If it did hit water, it would have produced two thousand foot high waves. As these waves washed over vast landmasses, they would have destroyed everything in their path, presumably the dinosaur population as well. However, the author rejects this theory. Not only would this introduce the questionable idea of blind fate. It is also said to run counter to the scientific evidence.<sup>22</sup>

No, the solution has to be found in evolutionary thinking, but then as it is informed by Chaos theory. The initial evolutionary theory stands or falls with the notion of adaptation through natural selection. "Mutations arise spontaneously in genes, the environment favors mutations that are beneficial, and out of this process evolution occurs. God is not at work. No higher organizing principle is involved. In the end, evolution is just the result of a bunch of mutations that either live or die!"<sup>23</sup> But this does not do justice to

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proved to be necessary. On the other hand, victory would be self-destructive. No one would survive an all-out nuclear war. This insured the virtual non-use of the arsenal, and, in fact, favored a mutual cut back. In short, the readiness to use it produced a balance. The decision not to use it perpetuated this balance.

<sup>19</sup> Crichton, *The Lost World*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 225-226.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, xii, xiv, 49-50.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

the complexity of reality. And this complexity requires that many things must evolve simultaneously. To resort to the idea of pure chance to explain this stretches one's credulity to the breaking point. It is like "imagining that a tornado can hit a junkyard and assemble the parts into a working 747 airplane."<sup>24</sup>

At this juncture the notion of self-organization comes to the rescue. This produces a major shift in the way one looks at evolution. Adaptation to the environment is complemented by self-organizing behavior resulting from the spontaneous joint interaction of the components of a complex system with a complex environment. A spiral develops. More complex environments produce more complex systems, and more complex systems produce more complex environments. In this way cells arranged themselves into a coherent organ, organs into a coherent individual, individuals into a coherent population, and populations into a coherent biosphere.

This self-organizing behavior soon not only encompassed the physical but also the social aspect of life. When human brains exploded in evolutionary terms, a price had to be paid. The narrow circumference of the birth canal did not allow the offspring to be born fully developed in body or brain. This would mean the death of either mother or child.<sup>25</sup> So forced into the world very early in their development infants are helpless for a long time. They need to mature physically. But more than that, as they mature rapidly in body and brain, they also need to be taught complex human behavior. Stable, social organizations, such as the family and the school, evolved to insure long term care. Adaptation through natural selection, therefore, is only a part of the story. Self-organization is the other, if not dominant, part.<sup>26</sup> This comes down to adaptation through socially determined, learned, behavior. In other words, "adaptive fitness" is "no longer transmitted to the next generation by DNA," but by "teaching."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>25</sup> Of course, the question arises why evolution did not cause an adjustment in the birthing procedure, just as in all other cases of live births. Why would the evolution of humans be so essentially different from that of elephants or giraffes? To argue that a narrow birth canal in the human species produced the human race as it functions today, physically as well as socially, seems rather specious. Not a violent tornado, but a narrow, inflexible channel allegedly produced an operational Boeing 747 airplane! I predict that some time in the future the advocates of self-organization as the ultimate explanation of life will find themselves in the same "left field" as the proponents of a Darwinian type of adaptation today, and will end up under heavy attack. But I also predict that at that juncture they will look for and find another ingenious, "temporary," solution, etc.

<sup>26</sup> Crichton, *The Lost World*, 228-230.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

It is admitted that self-organization is an incredibly complex phenomenon that defies the imagination. Only in one cell already one hundred thousand entities interact. But it is supposedly “doable.” The crystallization process is said to function as a model. In very quick order a liquid can crystallize in spontaneous, uncontrolled, self-organization from a fluid state in which the molecules move in random fashion to a solid state in which they are all locked in an exquisite, breathtaking, order. In a word, behavioral progress, whether physical or social, can happen much faster than imagined under the old evolutionary scheme.

All this also sheds a new light on the extinction issue. Self-organizing behavior is able to produce change, rapid change, for better or for worse, but also for the worst: extinction. This means that the latter is not just due to a failure to adapt to the environment,<sup>28</sup> but a matter of a destructive, possibly non-adaptive, behavior against the environment.<sup>29</sup>

In this context it is suggested that the rule of cyberspace may well spell the end of the human species. Cyberspace is a threat because it means the reign of global uniformity, which kills innovation, and swamps diversity, including intellectual diversity. Such reign is bound to “freeze the whole species.” This suggestion is not surprising in the light of the dialectic that governs the thinking of the author. In fact, it is basically a profound philosophical statement. The victory of pure universality is destructive by definition in that it effects the extinction of any particularity. That would mean the destruction of the fabric of reality, as we know it, by means of totalitarianism!<sup>30</sup>

At any rate, it was hoped that the study of the dinosaur population in the “lost world” would provide a model for the hypothesis, “extinction through behavior.” More precisely, that the behavioral changes among the dinosaurs would provide one or more clues as to the causes of extinction in general. However, several things went awry. In *The Lost World* the dinosaur population did not evolve, but was artificially created. In the process lack of “creative” expertise apparently resulted in the use of a diet that was easily contaminated. An impure batch infected the whole population physically with a fundamental disease that produced early deaths.<sup>31</sup> Thus ignorance, if

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv, 4.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 339.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 427-428.

not carelessness, wiped out any clues that would indicate reasons for a more “natural” extinction.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, that same artificial process was unable to duplicate the social aspect. The intelligent, but ferocious velociraptors were plunked into a world without older animals that could pass on a “socially determined” behavior, patterns of “adaptive behavior” that functioned as “a kind of morality” and “allowed members of a species to cooperate, to hunt, to raise young.” In other words, the older animals are indispensable “to show proper raptor behavior.” Without them the young ones “were on their own, and that was just as they behaved – in a society without structure, without rules, without cooperation. They lived in an uncontrolled, every-creature-for-himself world where the meanest and the nastiest survived, and all the others died.”<sup>33</sup> Here the other side of the dialectic emerges, and with it a second profound philosophical statement. A victory of pure particularity is just as destructive as that of its opposite, in that it results in the extinction of any universality. This would also destroy the fabric of reality, as we know it, but then by anarchy!

After all is said and done, *The Lost World* presents the reader with the unshakable conviction of the author that only proper, spontaneous, self-organizing, education can prevent extinction. Such education will stay away from the Scylla of pure, totalitarian, universality as well as the Charybdis of pure, anarchic, particularity, since both are deadly. But what is the prospect for that to occur? The author displays a mixture of pessimism and optimism on the final two pages.

The pessimism, on the one hand, is philosophical and long run. While the “Jurassic Park” was “an accident to happen,” the “Lost World” is at least partly a prophetic blueprint for disaster. While no one knows, why in the past regular extinctions took place, the pattern indicates that the next one is waiting in the wings. It is inevitable. And this time man is set up as the probable cause. “Human beings are so destructive . . . we’re kind of a plague, that will scrub the earth clean. We destroy things so well that . . . maybe that’s our function. May be every few eons, some animal comes along that kills off the rest of the world, clears the decks, and lets evolution proceed to its next phase.”<sup>34</sup> Evidently the killer this time is the “human”

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<sup>32</sup> This is either a clever way respectably to shroud the reasons for evolutionary extinction in mystery or a desperate attempt to stave off evolutionary defeat by means of mystery. Most likely both! At any rate, the anticipated evolutionary solution to extinction is elusive, which undermines the author's implicit claim that the theory of evolution can explain the totality of life.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 361-362.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 429.

animal, who will seal the doom of the world by its exclusive pursuit of either one of the two poles of the dialectic, universality or particularity.

The optimism, on the other hand, is mindless and a quick fix. Just forget about all depressing theories! “You feel the way the boat moves? That’s the sea. That’s real. You smell the salt in the air? You feel the sunlight on your skin? That’s all real. You see all of us together? That’s real. Life is wonderful. It’s a gift to be alive, to see the sun and breathe the air. And there isn’t really anything else.”<sup>35</sup> Here the dialectic is forgotten like a bad dream in an ostrich like fashion! As has been shown already, this dialectic presents mankind with two options. Its future is either destruction by the victory of one of the two poles. Or it is warfare, produced by the finely tuned balance between the two poles. However, the optimism points to a third option. This is love and life. The love is one of togetherness, without strife, conflict and warfare. This entails, if not spells, life! Undoubtedly, this option is suggested both by the hunger of the human heart for life, however defined, and by the very reality in which we live. This hunger is an irrepressible part of man, and it is fed by a reality, which owes its existence to God’s creation, and is still replete with God’s “common grace” as an enriching and beckoning fact of life. But in the context the author’s optimism is groundless. It simply does not follow from his premises, which are replete with man’s “self-imposed curse” of extinction or warfare.

In a word, ultimately *The Lost World* ends up the same way as *Jurassic Park*. It offers no solution to the plight of mankind, only wishful thinking. Once again, the author is far from ready to write “no exit” over history, or to bring down the “final curtain.” After all, he manages to make a virtue out of the necessity of extinction. All is apparently well, that evolutionarily ends well: the “human” animal clears the decks by means of a worldwide holocaust to make place for a new evolutionary process! But somehow that “virtue” seems quite hollow in the face of the nature of such holocaust. No, the earlier conclusion must stand. Once again, the author does not give his reader any reason to believe that an “exit” will be found any time soon, or that the “final curtain” is not waiting in the wings!<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 430.

<sup>36</sup> The only glimmer of hope is found in the concluding acknowledgment. “It remains . . . to remind the reader that a century and a half after Darwin, nearly all positions on evolution remain strongly contended, and fiercely debated.” *Ibid.*, 431. Although committed to the theory of evolution, the author appears to be (pain)fully aware that it is far from being “an open and shut case.” As will be argued below, the abandonment of the dialectic and its mode of thinking, which includes evolutionary thinking, is a necessary, although not the sufficient, condition for the prospect of hate, warfare and destruction to be replaced by that of love, peace and prosperity.

Incidentally, recognizing the author's understandable, but in the context groundless, longing for "love and life," one is inclined to respond to it in a Pauline fashion (Acts 17:23ff.), "What you are looking for in your – culpable – ignorance, that I wish to proclaim to you!" Of course, it must be shown, in an equally Pauline fashion, that this ignorance is, indeed, culpable (Acts 17:24-29). This naturally would pave the way, once again with Paul, to a call to repentance (Acts 17:30-31). The present volume is, in fact, an attempt to show that *all* dialectic thinking is culpable and that one can only extricate one self from its deadly grip through radical and total repentance.<sup>37</sup>

But what does the present analysis, of all things, have to do with the ancient theological controversy of Pelagianism versus Augustinianism, which seems both out of date and poles apart from our modern day *Jurassic Park*, and its sequel *The Lost World*? The answer to this question is simple. For one thing, this controversy addresses the same problem that is in evidence in both *Jurassic Park* and in *The Lost World*, be it in a garb that reflects its time and its setting, *namely the problem of the aforementioned dialectic*. This proves to be a universal problem that was just as up to date and pressing then as it is today and ever will be. But there is more, much more. It brings to light that all of unbelieving mankind throughout its history is spinning its dialectic wheels, without making one inch of progress. The dialectic problem in the latest century AD proves to be no more solved than in the early centuries AD, or in the centuries BC for that matter. Further, it also lays bare the deepest reason why mankind is stuck in a wheel spinning rut, philosophically, scientifically, politically, economically, and in every other way. And that, of course, is of the highest significance. There can be no cure without an adequate diagnosis.

All of its history is in a sense one great search for the synthesis between the one and the many, the universals and the particulars, the infinite and the finite, the eternal and the temporal, being and becoming, necessity and contingency, design and randomness, order and freedom, whether in philosophy, physics, economics, the state, the marketplace, the family, the labora-

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<sup>37</sup> This is fully in line with my conviction that a truly biblical apologetics does not target the mind as its great prize with a view to agreement, but the heart with a view to repentance and submission. Of course, without a heart transplant, constitutive of regeneration (Ezek. 36:26) and evidenced in repentance (Joel 2:13), this objective will ever be elusive. That is why a truly biblical apologetics always is and must be co-evangelistic by definition. After all, in the divine scheme of things the truth of the Gospel is the exclusive instrument (scalpel) in the hand of the Spirit (Surgeon-General) to effect regeneration (heart transplant) (John 3:5; Jam. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23-25). I intend to enlarge on this in a volume entitled "Biblical Apologetics," presently in preparation

tory, or in any other aspect or segment of society.<sup>38</sup> And it has failed miserably, across the board. Discord, hate, warfare, and destruction are the order of the day, rather than harmony, love, peace and prosperity, the intermittent and at times copious presence of “common grace” notwithstanding. A cursory perusal of the daily newspaper will be quick to convince any reader of that. Its reports run the gamut from divorce on the domestic level, strikes in the economic sphere, acts of terrorism in the political arena, and at times even genocide on the grandest possible scale.

At the same time here also the central objective of this study emerges. It is to show that only on God’s terms can one solve the perennial problem with which mankind wrestles from its very dawn, or more accurately, from the moment that man’s ambition to be “god” drove him to rebellion against his Maker, that is, ever since his fall into sin.<sup>39</sup> This means that we are in dire need of *theology*, more precisely, a *biblical* theology in order once and for all to deal with the problem. Throughout history it did, does, or will raise its ugly head in one way or another, and at one time or another, stare everyone in the face, and clamor for a solution. Frankly it has escaped everyone who has sought it apart from God and has refused to be guided by strictly biblical principles. Present day philosophers and scientists, as well as members of the present pop culture are no exception. History is the star witness that their all too human efforts have been totally in vain!

In other words, the solution to the dialectic, that has global implications in that it leaves no area, or aspect of life untouched, in fact, resembles a cancer in that it consumes whatever it touches, is *theological* in nature. That is why the ancient controversy of Augustinianism versus Pelagianism is so

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<sup>38</sup> This is argued extensively below. For the tip of this iceberg, see Paul Davies, *The Mind of God* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 28-31, 34-38, 177-181, 229-231. He makes a telling, be it implicit, comparison between Western philosophy, specifically Plato, Christianity, Western religions in general, and Eastern philosophy. Plato "recognized the fundamental tension between being and becoming . . . but made no serious attempt to reconcile the two" (35). "The traditional God of Christian theology . . . is a necessary, timeless, immutable, perfect, unchanging being . . . but . . . there is a serious difficulty about relating this God to a contingent, changing, universe, especially a universe containing beings with free will" (178). "We . . . find ourselves in the hopeless contradiction of a wholly necessary creation of a wholly contingent world . . . Volumes have been written by theologians and philosophers in an attempt to break out of this glaring and persistent contradiction" (181). "Western religions have a long tradition of identifying God with the Infinite, whereas Eastern philosophy seeks to eliminate the differences between the One and the Many, and to identify the Void and the Infinite – zero and infinity" (230). These quotations put us right in the thick of the debate that has been going on for millennia. It certainly seems like the proverbial Gordian knot. As I hope to show, only Scripture presents us with the final, liberating, word!

<sup>39</sup> For mankind’s self-inflicted hopelessness through its gravitation toward atheism, see R. Zacharias, *A Shattered Visage: The Real Face of Atheism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), and from the same author, *Can Man Live Without God* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1994).

significant. It shows how for the first time in its history the – early – Church began to face, explore, debate, define and endeavor to settle the issue. A study of this time period will help us to get underway in our own search for a solution to the dialectic! It will bring, at least, the component elements of the problem into focus.

Part I of this study deals with the details of the controversy. It introduces the issue of sovereignty (universality/control) and responsibility (particularity/freedom) as it took center stage in the early Church, and analyzes the two main positions in the debate. But, as has been stated already, the objective of its delineation, analysis, and evaluation goes beyond a mere reexamination of some historical events and views that "happened" to characterize a time period in the past in order to leave "our findings" in the dust of a bygone age. No, these findings should function as a launching pad for Part II. This deals with the philosophical roots and the global implications of the issue, in order, finally, to arrive at our own solution.

In fact, an attempt will be made to show that the issue, however extensively explored and hotly debated, was not fully settled by the early Church. That is why not only outside the Church, but also within its confines, it remained a perennial problem, that dominated life, and was invariably destructive, wherever and whenever it was left unsolved. The continuing Arminian controversy as well as the modern day *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World*, books and films, are both cases in point. Not only the Arminian controversy, but also *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World* are at bottom once again "same (age-old) tune, different (contemporary) verse!"

In short, it pays off for us to travel to the initial formulation of the problem, to see how the great minds of the past endeavored to solve it, and then to proceed with our own assessment of the issue from an exegetical, biblical, theological, philosophical as well as from a broadly scientific perspective.

In the process I intend to propose a way of looking at it in a fresh way. For reasons to be presented more extensively later, this cannot and will not amount to an "exhaustive solution." After all, while we must utilize our intellect to its limits, we always ought to recognize that there are limits to our intellect.<sup>40</sup> This will not prevent us, however, to seek to establish biblical

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<sup>40</sup> To recognize and acknowledge the limits of the intellect is not to sacrifice its legitimate use! In emphasizing the inherent limitation of the intellect Hugh Ross, *The Creator and The Cosmos* (NavPress: Colorado Springs, 1993), 85, refers to Godel's universally accepted incompleteness theorem. According to this theorem, not even a set of mathematical propositions that meets all the demands of formal logical rigor "can have its proof of consistency within itself." In short, absolute proof is not, and never will be, in the jurisdiction of man. Such proof is the prerogative of God only, and he clearly has no need

truth. What is revealed, is at our disposal and must be taken into account. That just might lead to a (growing) consensus in which sovereignty and responsibility are unreservedly recognized and embraced as fully and harmoniously co-ultimate and co-functional without inner conflict or tension. The upshot will not be a *Jurassic Park/The Lost World* with their “kill” or “be killed” mentality, both with a finale of wishful thinking that serves as a pacifier. No, the truth of Scripture, that settles the *Jurassic Park/The Lost World* problem, will both produce “cognitive rest” and yield extensive practical dividends for all areas and aspects of life, an unbeatable combination. It will conquer and destroy the dialectic, with its inevitable warfare and dissolution (extinction), and produce harmony, peace and prosperity in the real and full sense of the word. In short, it, and it only, can and will show that life has a future!

It can hardly be contested that a consensus about the sovereignty/responsibility issue would enrich the Church. For one thing, a major rift that has split the Church virtually since its beginning, and therewith seriously hurt its testimony and hampered its ministry, would be healed. That would pave the way for the impact of the newly found consensus to reach its full biblical potential. In other words, for those united to Christ to see eye to eye and join hands in terms of the relationship between sovereignty and responsibility and the underlying issues, would not only enhance the unity of the Church, but also the quality of its life and its ministry immeasurably. The Church would, indeed, be energized afresh. Its preaching of the Gospel, its practice of holiness, and its commitment to outreach, all fed by and culminating in the worship of God, as I will argue in the course of this study, would reach new heights! This prospect should be sufficient to whet anyone's appetite.

But there is more. The message and reality of harmony, peace, and “prosperity,” would also extend to the other areas, aspects and disciplines of life, in which the destructive impact of the dialectic is manifest again and again. As I intend to show from Colossians 2:8, it will all come down to the message of the person and work of Christ, that is concretely, of (1) “Christ preeminent” over every square inch, aspect, sphere or structure, of his own creation (Col. 1:16-18), (2) “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27), and (3) “Christ as the repository of all the treasures of wisdom and knowl-

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for it! See also Davies on Godel's theorem, *ibid.*, 100-103, 107, 131, 141, 166-167, especially 225, “Godel's theorem warns us that the axiomatic method of making logical deductions from given assumptions cannot in general provide a system which is both provably complete and consistent,” and 231, “We encounter once more the Godelian limits to rational thought – the mystery at the end of the universe.”

edge” (Col. 2:3). There is no other way to transcend and overthrow the dialectic except through the threefold reality of (1) submission to the Lordship of Christ, (2) dependence upon the presence of Christ, and (3) drawing from the resources in Christ. In propagating this message from above, “biblical theology” will prove to be not the queen, but the servant of the sciences, including, as I intend to demonstrate, philosophy, political science, theoretical physics, and even the “dismal science,” economics, but above all the “science of life.” And that is where most of us make our living.



*Part I*

# **The Pelagian-Augustinian Controversy**

## Introduction

### *1. The Point-men in the Controversy*

The man who precipitated the controversy and gave his name to the twin heresies of Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism was Pelagius. He was presumably of British origin and lived between AD 360 and AD 430.

Details about his life are scarce. All we know is that he resided in Rome from AD 400 to AD 409, relocated to Carthage from AD 410 to AD 411 and settled in Palestine in AD 412. After the concluding condemnation of his views in AD 418 he vanishes from the records of history.

Only part of his writing is available. However, a fair compilation of the major tenets of his thought is possible from what is still extant, and from the quotations of his writings by other authors.<sup>41</sup>

He may be portrayed as a moral crusader/reformer who was troubled by the lax morality, at times bordering on libertinism, of his Roman contemporaries. He was eager to reintroduce a revitalizing moral rigor into the Church. While the sole focus of his theology was to bring this about, its pivotal premise was the absolute freedom of the human will as the *conditio sine qua non* for the success of his life's mission.

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<sup>41</sup> The extant writings of Pelagius are *De Divina Lege*, *Epistola ad Celantiam*, *Epistola ad Demetriadem Virginem*, *Expositiones XIII Epistolarum Pauli*, *Libellus Fidei ad Innocentium*, *De Virginitate* and *De Vita Christiana*. Fragments from several of his other writings are scattered through Jerome's and Augustine's Anti-Pelagian treatises. For Augustine, see his "Anti-Pelagian Writings" in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), Vol. V. For further information about the life and thought of Pelagius, consult the book length treatments of Robert E. Evans, *Pelagius, Inquiries and Reappraisals* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1968), and John Ferguson, *Pelagius: A Historical and Theological Study* (Cambridge, 1956); a historical survey in Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), Vol. III, 783-870; and articles on Pelagius and Pelagianism in *A Dictionary of Christian Biography* (William Smith and Henry Wace, eds., New York: AMS Press, 1967), Vol. IV, 282-295, the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (James Hastings, ed., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), Vol. IX, 703-711, *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (Mircea Eliade, ed., New York, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), Vol. 11, 226-227, and *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Samuel Macauley Jackson, ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Bookhouse, 1964), Vol. VIII, 438-444.

The main antagonists in the controversy on the Pelagian side other than Pelagius were his lawyer pupil and fiery spokesman Celestius, residing in Rome until AD 409, in Carthage until AD 412, and beyond that in Asia Minor, as well as a younger bishop, Julian of Eclanum. The latter wrote ably and prolifically in defense of Pelagius' views, was deposed in AD 418, made several attempts to reenter the Church, but saw this reentry blocked permanently by the Council of Ephesus in AD 431, which upheld the condemnation of Pelagianism.

They were opposed by Augustine of Hippo, Paulinus of Milan, Jerome of Jerusalem, Heros of Arles, Lazarus of Aix, and Orosius of Spain, who fought the Pelagian faction wherever it traveled and endeavored to make inroads into the Church.

## 2. *The Root of the Controversy*

At the root of the controversy lies the perennial problem with which any respectable philosophical or theological system of thought has grappled or will grapple, that of determinism and free will, or, couched in more theological terms, that of divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

As had astutely been observed, the controversy did not shape intellectual history so as to give – sudden and unexpected – birth to two sharply antithetical types of thought, namely Pelagianism and Augustinianism. Rather, the two perennial and seemingly irreconcilable components of all of intellectual history, that is, the two fundamental commitments in general philosophical thought to either indeterminism or determinism, and in theology to either free will or free grace, suddenly exploded into the controversy presently under discussion. The face-off was inevitable. Sooner or later this clash, the echoes of which have reverberated throughout history, simply had to take place.<sup>42</sup>

History informs us that what initially set Pelagius off was the now famous exclamation of Augustine, "Give what you command and command what you wish" (*Da quod jubes et jube quod vis*).<sup>43</sup> The confessed necessity of sovereign divine grace in this context seemed to militate against the freedom of the human will. To Pelagius this appeared to constitute a demoralizing fatalism and to turn man into a mechanical, antinomian robot. From his perspective both had to be perceived as a serious threat to the rigorous ethics that he championed.

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<sup>42</sup> *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IX, 703.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 704.

In a word, Augustine's type of grace and a full-orbed human freedom, together with its consequent morality, seemed to be mutually incompatible, if not mutually exclusive. That is why Augustine's theology, so pointedly expressed in his maxim, touched the deepest cords of Pelagius' heart and produced in him and his allies such an aversion that it agitated them into a never-ending battle against it and denunciation of it, by means of both the spoken word and the written page. In fact, they detested the Augustinian position so much that they tirelessly utilized every means at their disposal to destroy it.

The Pelagian controversy was officially adjudicated by AD 418. But the basic issues of human responsibility and divine supremacy<sup>44</sup> did not go away. They are also at stake in the subsequent Semi-Pelagian controversy, which pitted Prosper and Fulgentius against John Cassian and Faustus, and in the later controversies, that saw Luther square off against Erasmus and the Calvinistic tradition against Arminius and his views. With Whitefield and Wesley taking opposing sides as well, it seems doubtful that the issue will ever go away. It certainly has not been solved thus far to everyone's satisfaction.

### ***3. The Events in the Controversy***

Both because of his written defense of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and of his high moral standards and character Pelagius was well regarded during his stay in Rome. Even Augustine at one time called him a "holy man who made no small progress in the Christian life."<sup>45</sup>

However, when the views that undergirded his essentially rationalistic and naturalistic morality became known, the tide began to turn. In AD 411 Pelagius and Celestius found themselves in Carthage, where the latter presented himself for ordination in AD 412. However, Paulinus of Milan stood in his way. Celestius' doctrine was regarded as heretical, and he was refused ordination.

In the meantime Pelagius had settled in Palestine. With the condemnation of his pupil Celestius in the African West he himself came under scrutiny in the East. Opposed by Jerome, and charged first by Orosius and then by Heros and Lazarus with heresy, he was summoned in AD 415 to appear before a Synod in Jerusalem and later that same year before a Synod in Diospolis.

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 714.

<sup>45</sup> Quoted in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 11, 227.

However, the charges were ill defined and the investigations perfunctory. The East was much more sympathetic to the doctrine of free will, and much less willing to embrace Augustine's doctrine of grace in its entirety, than the West. This made it less than interested to delineate the limits of the human will and the precise relationship it sustains to divine grace in the production of morality. Hence Pelagius was able to mount a clever but partly evasive and partly deceptive defense that in both instances led to his acquittal.

But the West battled back. In AD 417 Pelagius and Celestius were condemned once again in Carthage and Mileve. Bishop Innocent, of Rome, concurred. His successor Zosimus broke ranks and provided Celestius with a clean bill of health, but not for long. In AD 418 the East banished Pelagius from Jerusalem. In the same year Emperor Honorius banished Pelagius and Celestius from Rome, and Carthage condemned them once more. This time also Zosimus fell in line in a comprehensive document defining and rejecting their heresies in detail and with precision.

Julian of Eclanum, refusing to submit to the orthodox position and consequently deposed from office in AD 419, continued to champion the Pelagian cause in various writings. He was vigorously opposed by Augustine. After the definitive condemnation of Pelagianism at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431 he disappears from sight. He reportedly died in obscurity.

It is significant to recognize that Pelagianism was only a side issue at Ephesus. The main focus was the analysis and assessment of the views of Nestorius and Eutychus pertaining to the two natures of Christ. When Celestius visited the East, he had found a sympathetic ear in Nestorius. The two had a questionable rationalism in common. Consequently, when Nestorianism was condemned, the Council decided for good measure to lump Celestius together with Nestorius and to include Pelagianism in the condemnation as well. In this condemnation, however, the issues of divine sovereignty and human freedom were not really addressed. This left a vacuum that begged to be filled.

#### ***4. The Aftermath of the Controversy***

After Pelagianism was condemned a modified form of it, later called Semi-Pelagianism, emerged under the leadership of John Cassian of Marseilles in the AD 440's and received further impetus from Faustus of Rhegium in the AD 470's.

As has already been indicated, this emergence was due to the fact that the final condemnation of Pelagianism was not accompanied by a biblical analysis and assessment of the will of man before and after the fall. Thus the door was left ajar for further speculation and aberration. Since the fountainhead of Pelagianism, namely the absolute inviolability of the freedom of the human will, was not really stopped, a modified form of the heresy, in retrospect, could only have been anticipated.

The Semi-Pelagians were opposed by Prosper and Fulgentius, who strenuously argued for Augustinianism. After decades of debate the Synod of Orange in AD 529 brought this phase of the controversy to a close by condemning Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism.

With all its opposition to Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism, however, it failed to formulate a fully Augustinian position. It espoused no more than a Semi-Augustinianism that left the settlement of the thorniest issue at worst up to the individual and at least to a later day. This issue is the essence and range of the will of man, especially in relationship to divine grace and specifically predestination.

In a sense, therefore, the condemnation of Semi-Pelagianism fell short in the same area as the condemnation of Pelagianism. This would come back to haunt the Church. History, indeed, repeated itself when a thousand years later it saw Calvinism square off against Arminianism. The battle about sovereignty and free will, that had never been officially adjudicated and therefore had really never ceased, took center stage once again.<sup>46</sup>

The present preoccupation with the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy, therefore, opens up a concern that transcends the narrow confines of a purely past-historical issue that had its day. Instead it comes to grips with a perennial issue that each generation does and must settle all over again in one way or another both intellectually and practically across the length and breadth of life.

The objective of this study is twofold. First, it aims to show that the spiritual benefits, were the Church of Christ to follow in the footsteps of Augustine, would be incalculable, even if some refinement and expansion of his thinking is inevitable. Second, it seeks to argue that the benefits of the theological solution to the fundamental dialectic, which lies at the root

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<sup>46</sup> It is noteworthy that the Church in its Councils settled the Trinitarian and Christological issues once and for all. Therefore, they never even caused a ripple anymore in its history. Apart from some fringe sects, the Church is rock solid in its commitment to the Biblical truth on the Trinity and the Two Natures in Christ. The same cannot be said about the area of Soteriology. No Council of the Church ever spoke the final word in the controversies that arose in this area. Therefore they continue to fester until today.

of the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian positions, would be equally incalculable. These benefits would accrue globally to literally all of life in all its phases and all its facets.

# The Pelagian Position in the Controversy

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## Introduction

The philosophical root of the controversy was the persuasion of the Pelagians that free will and determinism are mutually exclusive. Its practical backdrop was their conviction that Augustinianism, in holding that fallen man cannot avoid sin, was thoroughly deterministic.<sup>47</sup>

The strategic approach of Pelagianism was to lump Augustinianism together with Manichaeism and to portray the former as a thinly disguised form of the latter to make the charge of determinism stick. Its pivotal argument was that the Augustinian view of the lust of the flesh or "concupiscence," which was integral to original sin, was indissolubly linked to the sexual drive and so indicative of a created evil (Manichaean!) as a metaphysical and therefore deterministic principle.

The organizing principle of the polemic of the Pelagians against Augustinianism was their view of man that had the freedom of the will at its core and for that very reason obviated an allegedly and supposedly deterministic Augustinianism by definition. Its component elements were expositions on the essence of man under the three aspects of creation, the fall and

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<sup>47</sup> It should be recognized from the outset that the Pelagians delineated the controversy from their own perspective. It will become increasingly clear that at this point a universal principle emerges. Anyone in the grip of the dialectic, and victimized by it, cannot but define the position of his opponents in terms of that dialectic and therefore is bound to misrepresent or even caricature that position. There is no justification whatsoever for equating Augustinianism with philosophical determinism. By his biblical opposition to Pelagian indeterminism the Augustinian critic does not thereby qualify as a determinist.

redemption, and on the history of man in three time periods from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ and from Christ onward.<sup>48</sup>

*a. Focus on the Essence of Man*

Under the aspect of creation man is characterized as possessing a rational soul that has an absolute capacity for good as the fruit of his own choice. The capacity is divinely implanted. It is a natural consciousness of the law of nature that insures reliable direction for all human action. The good is endemic to man's makeup. It is written on the heart and therefore spontaneously willed. The choice is autonomous. It is free from any alien external or internal compulsion in conformity to human nature as originally willed and created by God.

At this point the essence of Pelagianism emerges. It is convinced that nothing, not even the Fall, can vitiate human nature as originally willed and created by God. Since the first sin is a single, insignificant, and excusable act, and any sin is essentially nothing more than negation, it simply could not accomplish that. To conclude, therefore, to a corruption of human nature through and subsequent to the fall derogates the goodness of original creation and exaggerates the potency and influence of sin. It is, therefore, to be rejected.

At the root of this rejection, of course, is the recognition that such corruption would substitute "slavery" for "freedom." This is intolerable to Pelagianism. The human will, after every decision or act for good or evil, in principle reverts back to the fork in the decision-making road, where man is once again free to determine the next decision or act, once again for good or evil. In a word, every start is virtually a fresh start. As will be shown below, where ignorance or habit seems to hamper the exercise of the will, both the law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ serve to make man aware of this fork in the road of everyone's life, bring him back to it, and prompt him to proceed in the right direction.

Furthermore, sin as an act of man's free will is not transmissible. Hence the doctrine of original sin as a phenomenon that can be inherited is dismissed as untenable, if not offensive. Every human being is born as Adam was created in Paradise. Hence for any human being to be sinful, he must have experienced an individual fall as a reenactment of the fall of Adam. In

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<sup>48</sup> For the three aspects of creation, fall and redemption, I am indebted to Schaff, Vol. III, 817-822; for the three time periods and their characteristics, to Evans, 96ff. and Schaff, Vol. III, 812-815.

summary, every sinner has his own individual fall and every sin is basically a new fall.

Redemption is linked to Christ. In the symbol of baptism he offers forgiveness of (only!) past sins upon the exercise of faith. Through his teaching he dispels man's ignorance about the component elements of obligatory moral conduct. And in his life he presents a stimulating example of such conduct to man. How Pelagius arrives at this three-pronged "blueprint of redemption," and what it implies, is explained in the next section.

### ***b. Focus on the History of Man***

Pelagianism distinguishes three time periods. The first is from Adam to Moses. This is the period of nature. The second is from Moses to Christ. This is the period of law. The third is from Christ onward. This is the period of the Gospel.

From Adam to Moses man's original nature remained operational. In his fall Adam injured only himself. The notion that the whole human race fell in his transgression is categorically dismissed. In fact, the very parallel drawn by the Apostle Paul between Adam and Christ, that is usually quoted to support that, is enlisted as an argument that supposedly militates against it. The reasoning goes as follows. Since the whole human race was not restored by identification with Christ, why would the whole human race have fallen through identification with Adam (Rom. 5:18)? That this argument is tortured should be clear on the face of it. After all, Pelagianism cannot make its case stick until it demonstrates that there is *no identification whatsoever* to be found in Romans 5:18. And such conclusion would be precisely the opposite of what the text sets forth.

At any rate, all this implies among other things, according to Pelagius, that sinless perfection remains a distinct possibility after Adam's fall. In fact, the examples of saints, such as Abel, Noah, and Abraham, etc., demonstrate that. What is evident, must be possible! To deny the possibility of a sinless life must per force lead to the denial of the freedom of the will. (To Pelagius the freedom of the will was non-negotiable, and therefore a denial of that freedom intolerable.) However, it was also emphasized that men such as Abel, Noah, and Abraham were exceptions. The vast majority developed sinful habits. Eventually the grime of those habits built up such a coating that man's original nature was at times hardly recognizable or even remembered.

With Moses God launched his first counter measure. In the period from Moses to Christ, the law was given to remove the blight of ignorance and the grime of habits. It opens up the possibility for man once again to obey God's will. The power of sinful habit, through example and from infancy, tended to remove the law of nature from mankind's vision and so to turn it into an obstacle to acceptable conduct. The Law of Moses was designed to function as the mirror for man to regain a fresh view of his own nature, which was fully able to do what the law requires. Pelagius insists that God would never require of man what he cannot do. However, because of the excessive power of habit the law ended up by exhibiting guilt and stirring up transgression. The bottom line is that the law failed to penetrate, break through and neutralize the excessive layers of counter productive grime.

Nevertheless, however guilty of sin and powerless to overcome the habit of sin, man still retains the capacity to live without sinning. The original creation, with its freedom of the will, is still ultimately determinative. Sin is not imposed by the conditions of creation or the fall but is due solely to the will of man. The opportunity, possibility, and ability to live a sinless life are and remain gifts of divine grace. (The term "grace" is used rather loosely, and is analyzed below). The upshot is that to desire sinlessness, and to achieve it, are fully within man's range and reach.

From Christ onward the commandments are "more easily"<sup>49</sup> kept by the grace of the Gospel. The original capacity for good by spontaneous and autonomous choice was already said to be a gift of divine "grace." So was the promulgation of the law. But the gift of the Gospel is its crowning piece. It is personified in Christ in a threefold way. As redeemer of past sins, he clears the decks and presents man with a clean start. As teacher he writes the law on the heart and penetrates through the layers of ignorance and sinful grime. As an example to be followed he shows that excellence in moral conduct, indeed sinlessness, can be achieved. This threefold grace enables human nature both to recognize itself for what it truly is, and to be itself, that is, fully free to pursue a sinless life.

Through the forgiveness of sins – baptism symbolizes and seals the forgiveness of past sins in the case of adults, and of future sins in the case of infants – the inherent capacity of man to obey the law is once again made explicit. In broad strokes, the grace of creation warrants that the human will is free from any kind of necessity of the metaphysical sort. Creation leaves no room for the determinism of the being of rational man. The grace of law guarantees that the human will is free from any kind of necessity of the

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<sup>49</sup> See for a discussion of this phrase, Evans, 105.

epistemological sort. The law removes the determinism of the ignorance of man. The grace of redemption insures that the human will is free from any kind of necessity of the ethical sort. The Gospel removes the determinism of any impotence of the will inflicted by itself upon itself.

In short, grace safeguards that the will never has been, can be or will be irresistibly determined or moved by anyone or anything else. This includes the will of God. The only necessity the latter safeguards is the necessity for the will to be the will and therefore to be free. All this, needless to say, does not tolerate any kind of predestination that awards the initiative to God. According to Pelagius, "to predestine is the same as to foreknow."<sup>50</sup>

### *c. Summary of the Pelagian Position*

Whether Pelagians acknowledge it, equivocate on it, or deny it, their position is characterized by the following nine tenets.<sup>51</sup>

- (1) All that God has created is intrinsically, immutably and indestructibly good. Thus the notion of the corruption of human nature in and through original sin is unacceptable.
- (2) The excellencies of man are his reason and his free will. The latter is an absolute and indefectible freedom of choice that, from moment to moment, determines itself and is unimpaired by previous choices. Sin is the choice of what is contrary to reason, and man can at any time avoid choosing it. His free will, endowed by God, is at the same time independent from God.
- (3) The desires of the flesh as part of creation are not evil. Hence sin is not in the desire itself, but in its excess. Marriage is therefore not per se sinful.
- (4) Every man at his birth is morally in the same condition as Adam was before he sinned, endowed inalienably by divine grace with natural holiness consisting of reason and free will. These are sufficient to enable man to lead a sinless life.
- (5) Adam sinned through free will. So do his descendants. In neither case is physical death a consequence of sin. Only spiritual death is. However, this is not inherited but acquired by each man through his own actual sins.
- (6) The idea of inherited sin and of inherited guilt is unthinkable and blasphemous. It is inconsistent with sin as an exercise of free will and im-

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<sup>50</sup> Quoted in Evans, 116.

<sup>51</sup> This point by point format is suggested by *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IX, 707.

plies that God's creation turns radically evil. In that case God either unjustly regards natures that have not committed sins as sinful or is responsible for creating evil natures. The difference between Adam and his descendants is a matter of environment, not nature. The latter are born in a society where evil customs and bad habits prevail.

- (7) Divine grace is threefold. It manifests itself (a) in man's natural constitution by virtue of which even some heathen have been perfect men, (b) in the law of God by which, to aid man's reason darkened by sin, he reveals what man ought to do, and (c) in the grace of Christ which is essentially enlightenment and teaching working through Christ's example through the assurance of forgiveness and the doctrines of the church. Grace is not an inward power that exerts an enabling influence upon the will, nor a principle that inspires righteousness. It is not an unmerited favor that rescues sinners. It merely facilitates. It puts itself at the disposal of the members of the human race, and in doing so simply offers assistance to anyone interested. Even those who avail themselves of it, however, remain quite capable of rescuing themselves. In short, it is something external that the will may hold on to, if it chooses to do so. All three types of "grace" have the potential to usher men into the Kingdom of God and may both in principle and in practice lead to sinless perfection.
- (8) Infants are not baptized for the remission of sins but to secure adoption and to achieve an elevated level of holiness through union with Christ.
- (9) Predestination is not based upon an arbitrary selection, but rather identical to foreknowledge. Since God wills all men to be saved, lack of salvation must arise from a negative movement of the human will.<sup>52</sup>

All this explains the condemnation of Pelagianism. In the judgment of the Church it is a system that exaggerates the stress upon the native capacity of man, wrongly estimates the fallen moral condition of man, unduly atomizes the conception of sin, fatally underestimates the necessity of divine grace, vastly underrates the need for redemption, and so completely disparages the dignity of the Savior.<sup>53</sup> It is unsound both as a treatment of human nature and as an assessment of the biblical data. It constitutes a revival of the pagan model and therefore falls short of genuine Christianity.

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<sup>52</sup> This summary is a compilation of the treatment of the subject by Evans, 116, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IX, 707, 709; *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. VIII, 439; and *A Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Vol. IV, 285, 292-295.

<sup>53</sup> This is the assessment (rephrased) of *A Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Vol. IV, 283.

This assessment is hard to deny in the light of Pelagius' conviction that "regeneration and conversion (are) a gradual process of the strengthening and perfecting of human virtue."<sup>54</sup>

#### *d. The Aftermath of Semi-Pelagianism*

Semi-Pelagianism owes its origins to the fact that the condemnation of Pelagianism did not touch the root cause of the Pelagian system. It was not accompanied by a biblical assessment of the essence, power, and direction of the human will both prior and subsequent to the fall. A case in point is the Eastern Church. It certainly did not feel forced by the condemnation of Pelagianism to subscribe to the "bondage of the will," as set forth by Luther many centuries later. It continued to leave room for, if not espouse, the freedom of the will, as Erasmus eventually defended it.

To be sure, Semi-Pelagianism avowed that all of the human race was involved in the sin of Adam, that moral corruption encompasses all descendants of Adam, and that no sinner can start, continue or complete a good work. But in an undeniable ambivalence it maintained as well that the gift of grace ordinarily depended upon the movement of the human will. Grace was not irresistible. It can be rejected or accepted. Neither is it uninterrupted. It can be retained or lost.

Semi-Pelagianism rejects the Pelagian notion that the descendants of Adam are born spiritually and morally sound. But it also opposes the Augustinian view that man is born spiritually and morally dead. It champions that man is born spiritually and morally sick.

Pelagians hold that Adam's descendants inherit no corruption whatsoever. Augustinians respond that they do inherit corruption: first the guilt and then the pollution of original sin. Semi-Pelagians consent to the reality of inherited corruption but have the pollution of original sin precede the guilt of actual sin. Original sin merely impairs. Only actual sin produces guilt. On both counts they leave room for the movement of faith as the effort of a native capacity in man.

This leads to the conclusion that cooperating grace is not to be identified as prevenient grace.<sup>55</sup> So, what they give with the one hand at the outset vis-à-vis Pelagius by affirming the need for the presence of grace, they in the final analysis take away with the other hand vis-à-vis Augustine by denying the need for the prevenience of grace.

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<sup>54</sup> Schaff, Vol. III, 844-845.

<sup>55</sup> The *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IX, 709 calls this "illogical."

The reason for and the outcome of this ambivalence are both rather simple. Facing the explicit indeterminism of Pelagius (absolute freedom from everyone and everything including God) Semi-Pelagians invariably emphasize grace. Facing the perceived determinism of Augustine (fatalism), they just as invariably emphasize free will. Since humans can never emphasize both with equal finality, they must show their hand and destroy the balance. Ultimately Semi-Pelagians abhor what they characterize as the determinism/fatalism pole more than the freedom pole. In coming down on the side of the freedom pole they proceeded to tinker with the essence of grace. This brought about their condemnation at Orange in AD 529.

Of course, as long as any ambivalence remains, it does and will force the Church to come back to the issue of the relationship of divine grace and human will, until it is biblically and fully adjudicated. It is the verdict of history that neither Ephesus (AD 431), nor Orange (AD 529) gave a full biblical and satisfactory treatment of the relationship of "the responsibility of the individual, the solidarity of the human race and the supremacy of God." Therefore the "ultimate synthesis between (these) three basal and undying convictions" still needs to be reached.<sup>56</sup> This will be one of the major concerns in Part II of this study.

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 711.

# The Augustinian Position in the Controversy

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## Introduction

While the East was occupied with Soterology, the Christological issue of the two natures of Christ, the West focused on Soteriology, the anthropological issues of sin and grace. The Pelagian controversy helped shape the consciousness of the Church. Up till the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy the facts of human sin and redeeming grace were universally acknowledged, but the extent of man's corruption and the connection between the human will and divine grace were far from clear or agreed upon. The controversy helped to clarify the issues to the Church and went a long way to assist the Church in formulating its position pertaining to these issues.

### *a. Focus on the Essence of Man*

Augustine taught that under the aspect of creation man enjoyed the presence of God perfectly, as he was without the slightest fault and endowed with a free will that was inclined toward the good virtue of his nature, although it had the possibility of sinning. Under free will Augustinianism understood the spontaneous power of self-determining choice that was not necessitated by any alien internal or external constraint.

Under the aspect of the fall Augustinianism holds that the possibility of sinning became a reality through and in the eating of the forbidden fruit. However, the essence of this outward act was disobedience to the command of God, which in turn was preceded by the root of pride. Sin in the heart precipitated open disobedience. Precisely because it was a heart matter, it vitiated Adam's nature.

Furthermore, by virtue of the organic unity of the human race the fall corrupted the nature of every descendant of Adam as well. The solidaric relationship that binds all of mankind together makes every member of the race a participant in original sin and an inheritor of its guilt by ordinary generation. The essence of the will as a spontaneous movement was not touched,<sup>57</sup> but because of the corruption of human nature it now is inclined to evil and unable to produce any genuine good.

In the state of creation man's nature is good and the will freely wills the good, although it could choose the bad (*posse peccare*). In the state of degeneration man's nature is corrupt and the will freely wills the bad, while it cannot choose the good (*non posse non peccare*). Pelagius holds that God will never ask what man cannot do, that ability limits obligation, that the fall does not lessen human ability, and that God will never tax the latter beyond its capacity. Augustine counters that God only asks what man cannot do. By virtue of the fall man can no longer do anything that God requires, and God cannot and does not lower his standards, even if the fall incapacitated man totally. Obligation, therefore, is humbling in character and causes humanity to cast itself upon mercy alone.

Under the aspect of redemption grace enters into the picture. It is indispensable as an inner, originating, regenerating and transforming influence.<sup>58</sup> It is needed to produce a change of nature. Man left to himself never would or will produce such change. In fact, he rebels against it, refuses to do so, and cannot nor will do so. Therefore, genuine grace is not merely an external auxiliary that facilitates with possible results. It is an internal force that initiates with definite results.

The consequent change of nature leads to a change of will and a change of ability. In the state of regeneration man is desirous to please God and now also able not to sin, be it only by abiding in Christ (*posse non peccare*). This state finds its culmination point in the state of glorification in the next life when man's nature and will are both perfect. That makes him unwilling and unable to sin (*non posse peccare*).

### ***b. Focus on the History of Man***

From Adam to Moses the universal corruption of human nature could hardly have been displayed in a more potent manner. Not only does God

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<sup>57</sup> See also W.G.T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d), Vol. II, 115ff., esp. 135-136.

<sup>58</sup> Schaff, Vol. III, 844-845.

declare that the "intent of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5), but also the episodes of the flood and the tower of Babel put on display that mankind was a "mass of perdition" (*massa perditionis*). If God had not taken the initiative in Abraham and with Abraham, and through Abraham with his descendants, mankind would not have had a future. Abraham would have perished in his idolatry, Isaac in his hedonism and Jacob in his self-realization. Israel would have been nonexistent and no benefits would have accrued to mankind.

From Moses to Christ the law was the dominant entity. It was given for at least three purposes. Substantially, it displays what constitutes genuine life, radical and total obedience to the law of God (see Deut. 30:20; 32:47). Methodologically, it exposes, indeed stirs up, sin, not only in the abstract to show what constitutes death, namely disobedience to the law of God, but also in the concrete to demonstrate that all men are spiritually dead in their transgressions (see Rom. 3:20; 7:7-9; Gal. 3:19). Preparationally, in the sacrificial system it foreshadows and so maps out the transition from death to life, the absolute necessity, the prospect, the content, purpose, and evidence of divine, redeeming, grace (see Hebr. 9:13-26).

From Christ onward the operation of sovereign grace is central. This grace is not a natural, creational gift, such as the makeup of man's constitution that in principle enables and in practice allows him to reach the objective of a perfect life. Nor is it some additional, facilitating instrument, such as "law" or "Gospel," that is put at his disposal and of which he may or may not avail himself, on his way to that objective. No, grace to Augustinianism is a divinely initiated, transforming, enabling, and consummate power. It transforms man radically in the once-and-for-all decisive act of regeneration and totally in the progressive unfolding work of sanctification. It enables man to believe and repent, as the evidence of the divine act of regeneration, and to display holiness as a result of the divine work of sanctification. It is consummate in that it will complete, ultimately and perfectly in heaven, what it has started, initially and in measure on earth. In short, grace rescues sinners!

This grace is indispensable. God must make the difference in the transition from spiritual death to spiritual life. If God does not do so, there never will be any difference at all, and consequently not one single shred of hope for humankind. True life cannot start, continue, or come to full bloom apart from him.

It is sovereign. It is God's prerogative either to dispense grace or not to do so. If God chooses to proceed, the recipients can only marvel. If God re-

fuses to do so, any and all protests are out of order. No blame or stigma can be attached to him.

It is irresistible. God overcomes the human opposition against himself in the objects of his sovereign election by means of divine grace that, once initiated, will accomplish its goal. Sure there is resistance. It is wrapped up with human nature. Man is born with it. But it is conquered. This conquest does not bludgeon or browbeat. It is not an external constraint placed upon the will, neither a resentment-creating violation inflicted upon the will. No, man's resistance melts away under the wooing, winsome, persuasive, and potent overtures of grace rooted in love and aiming at holiness.

It is holy. Whether or not God bestows grace depends solely upon his will and originates solely in his good pleasure. Although no reasons are ever advanced, this is not a matter of arbitrary choice. All God's actions, in motivation, execution and goal, are a reflection of his nature, which is thrice holy.

It is unmerited. By virtue of mankind's radical and total corruption, no human being can lay claim to God's grace. God is under no obligation, moral or otherwise, to take the initiative. There is nothing in man that necessitates that God respond favorably in order to be just. In fact, the dictates of justice alone would seal man's doom.

It is humbling. It breaks the proudest heart. Recipients of the divine overtures of grace will never lose a sense of the "wonder of it all." In the light of human depravity the only question that comes to mind is this, "Why are there any recipients at all?" And even more to the point, "Why am I one of them?"

It is encouraging. It addresses the most convicted heart. Grace cannot and will not be experienced as grace any more profoundly than upon the recognition that its bestowal was determined before the creation of the world, indeed before anyone had ever sinned. So, no sin, however outrageous and however filthy, can stand in the way of the divine overtures of grace, once God determined to dispense it before the creation of the universe.

It is liberating. Through divine grace human freedom comes into its own. True freedom is not the absolute power of independent, contrary choice. It is not freedom from any imaginable, external authority, whether it is spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, physical, or otherwise. It is freedom from the bondage of Satan, of self and of sin. The darkness of this bondage makes life wither and vanish. It is freedom under God, through

God, unto God, and unto holiness. The light of this freedom guarantees life and makes it to blossom.

It is persevering. When God decides to dispense grace, he will see it through to the end. Genuine faith, once initiated, and its accompanying holiness, once activated, *can* not and *will* not be revolted against either totally or finally. God will persevere with his own, and his own will persevere with their God. In this regard the heart of God and the heart of his own beat in unison.<sup>59</sup>

### *c. Summary of the Augustinian Position*

The early Augustinians would agree that the position to which they are committed is characterized by the following tenets, which stand in sharp contrast to the nine tenets of Pelagianism, mentioned above.

- (1) All of God's original creation is intrinsically good and therefore without reproach.
- (2) Man is created good, in the image of God, with a free will that is inclined to the good by virtue of his nature, but with the possibility of sinning (*posse peccare*).
- (3) Since man in his totality is created good, his created emotions, impulses, and interests are also good. Marriage by implication is good as well and to be viewed as a blessing of God.
- (4) By way of contrast, after Adam's fall every man is born spiritually dead, both guilty and polluted before God. Through the imputation and inheritance of Adam's sin, all men possess a corrupted nature. Man's will continues to be free, but since it is determined by his nature, it is now inclined to evil and unable to do what is good (*non posse non peccare*).
- (5) Adam sinned through free will. So did and still do his descendants. In both cases physical death is a consequence of sin. So is spiritual death. Both physical death and spiritual death are acquired through original sin or one's participation in it.
- (6) The notion of inherited sin and guilt is neither unthinkable nor blasphemous. The idea of all men sinning in Adam (analogous to Hebr. 7:9-10) makes perfect sense as a possible – "realistic" – model to ex-

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 846-850.

plain the manner of inheriting. So does the possible – "federal" – model of all men participating in Adam's sin because of his status as representative of all humankind. Furthermore, such inheritance does not imply in any way that the original sin had an eternal streak of evil in it.

- (7) Divine grace is an inner transforming and enabling power that transforms man's nature from man-centered and sin-centered to God-centered and holiness-centered. The will reflects this transformation. It desires obedience, and through sanctifying grace is now able not to sin (*posse non peccare*). In the state of glory, both human nature and the human will attain perfection. Then, sin is forever out of bounds. Man will not and cannot sin (*non posse peccare*).
- (8) Original sin and guilt are transmitted through natural generation, and specifically through the channel of procreative "concupiscence," wrapped up with the sexual drive. This necessitates baptism of infants. It signifies the remission of their sin. That is, it removes the guilt of original sin, but not the sin itself, "concupiscence." This remains and is inseparable from marriage. Although marriage from the perspective of creation is not vitiated thereby, the unmarried state is more conducive to a holy life.
- (9) Divine election is not based upon anything in man, but rather originates in the will and good pleasure of God. Although God does not explain his choice, it is not arbitrary, since all God's actions reflect his being and are therefore holy.

Of course, the identification of original sin as concupiscence is untenable. So is the notion that "concupiscence" in its most telling manifestation evidences itself in the sex act. This led to the mistaken conclusion that sexual activity is responsible for the transmission of original sin, and therefore must be treated with suspicion. It is hardly surprising that this casts an undeserved cloud over marriage. Furthermore, to define baptism as the removal of the guilt of original sin, and conclude on that basis to its necessity, is equally unacceptable. But the other tenets are fundamentally biblical and properly set forth by the various Synods and Councils as the orthodox position, even if, as is argued below, the use of some terminology may be open to a legitimate question or two.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> I mean the use of the terms "imputation" and "inheritance" to indicate the manner in which all of mankind became partakers in original sin. This is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

It must be noted, however, that Augustine's views on baptism are ambivalent. There is a shift in his thinking when he turns his attention to the Donatist heresy. In the Pelagian controversy he indeed defends the commonly held view that baptism is the removal of the guilt of original sin. His reasoning is as follows. All children participate in original sin, and no one can enter the Kingdom of God without regeneration (John 3:3) and faith (Mk. 15:15, 16). Therefore, if children who die in infancy are to be with the Lord, negatively their original sin must have been removed, and positively regeneration and faith must be theirs.

According to Augustine, baptism is the sole, divinely appointed, necessary and unailing channel to accomplish both the negative and the positive (John 3:5). The reception of this sacrament classifies infants as believers and constitutes their regeneration. Regeneration is subsequently construed as the forgiveness of (original) sin. The virtual identification of the sacrament with its substance (*res sacramenti*), therefore, enables Augustine to remove all obstacles to the salvation of children would they die in infancy. He is (dimly?) aware that in case of later apostasy baptismal regeneration would turn into a failure, and consequently that a loss of grace is the unpalatable implication. But he appears willing to pay that price to neutralize the Pelagians.

However, in the Donatist controversy, where he deals with adults, he takes another tack. In that context he vigorously opposes the notion that grace may be lost. A fall from grace is totally out of the picture. A child, who reaches the age of discernment and opposes the truth contained in baptism, was never a true believer, was never truly regenerated, and was never truly saved, even if he or she received the sacrament. Here the sacrament, although not separated, is clearly distinguished from its substance. To partake of the sacrament outwardly is not necessarily to share the grace of the sacrament inwardly! It is interesting to note that the definition of regeneration shifts as well. It no longer constitutes a mere forgiveness of (original) sin. It is now conjoined both to a verifiable conversion of the heart and to persevering Christian piety.

To sum up, two different battle lines led Augustine to two conflicting views. At the same time it is the conviction of the present writer that in the Donatist controversy Augustine comes into his own. It is only under the double pressure of a Church-threatening heresy and a generally held, but

mistaken view of baptism as the sole means of regeneration, that seemed to quell this heresy at least partially, that he taught otherwise.<sup>61</sup>

#### *d. The Aftermath of Semi-Augustinianism*

When Semi-Pelagianism reared its head after the condemnation of Pelagianism, the Church countered this last heresy at the Synod of Orange, held in AD 529, with a number of statements. They can be summarized in the following fashion.

The sin of Adam injured the total man, as well as all men, and caused death upon all of the Adamic race. It incapacitates to the production of any true good. Even grace that is bestowed as an answer to prayer is the very origin of prayer, for grace is the wellspring of its own gifts, including faith and all the good works that accompany it.

Whatever true good man possesses must be traced to the grace of God and constitutes a gift of God. Any and all sins of man originate in himself without any alien external or internal constraint. Any and all good in man, however, even if it is an execution of the will of God, is also a voluntary movement of man's own will. In a word, if a man sins, he freely wills it, and therefore he has only himself to blame. But if he is obedient, although it is still he who freely wills it, he has only God to thank.

In responding to the Semi-Pelagian position the Synod of Orange did not deal with the issue of "common grace." Although this is somewhat speculative, it might well have distinguished in the terminology of John Gerstner between four classes of people, good good people and bad good people among the regenerates, depending upon the process of and progress in their sanctification, and "good" bad people and "bad" bad people among the unregenerates depending upon the extent of God's restraint of sin and of the measure of his gifts of goodness in their lives.

Neither did the Synod give a full treatment of the disputed issue of predestination, let alone of predestination in its relation to human agency. Other than rejecting the predestination to evil, it apparently deemed it sufficient to remove any doubt about the indispensable necessity of grace for all acceptable human activity.

In short, Orange safeguarded the primacy of grace and preempted any trust that humans might place in themselves, as it emphasized their total dependence upon God. But it skirted the decisive issue of the essence, func-

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<sup>61</sup> H. Krabbendam, *Calling and Regeneration* (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1962), 116-143.

tion, range, and limits of the human will in its relationship to divine grace. Grace was not asked to obliterate the will. This is commendable for it refused to turn man into a deterministic robot. But it was not shown to imply the bondage of the will either. This is not commendable for it left the Pandora's box of an indeterministic free will open. This is why Orange is only Semi-Augustinian, did not speak the final liberating word in this matter, and ultimately left the Church in a quandary.

The implications of the failure to do so early, fully, and clearly in the history of the Church have already been stated. In Chapter 3 this issue must receive our attention in order to make progress beyond what the Church in its official declarations has already achieved.

# The Assessment of the Controversy

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## Introduction

The stance of the Church throughout its history against Pelagianism as a new paganism and against Semi-Pelagianism as semi-paganism is a matter of historical record. But the question may well be asked whether the various Synods and Councils of the Church made their case against Pelagianism/Semi-Pelagianism as clearly and persuasively as they could have. In other words, were the arguments presented in response to these twin heresies then, and are they now still, sufficiently strong so as to fully justify the position of the Church?

Any affirmative answer must at the same time concede that the case against Pelagianism, and especially for Augustinianism, could have been made more cogently (a) by calling attention to the wider (new) covenantal setting of the issues, (b) by examining the exegetical data more thoroughly, (c) by highlighting the broad biblical backdrop more clearly, and (d) by penetrating the theological issues more deeply. The first one would have markedly broadened the contextual understanding. The second one would have brought greater exegetical clarity. The third one would have yielded a deeper biblical insight. The fourth one would have provided a greater theological precision. All four together would have made a considerably stronger case for Augustinianism, should have sharpened the critique of the heresies in the process, might well have been more persuasive, and, at least, could have preempted the confusing aftermath.

An attempt will now be made to be more contextually (new) covenantal, more exegetically precise, more biblically penetrating, and more theologically comprehensive.

*a. The Wider New Covenantal Context*

Customarily the discussion about original sin centers on the issues of guilt and pollution. Typically, theologians of the Pelagian stripe deny that Adam's descendants can be painted with the brush of either original guilt or original pollution. They did not participate ontically, explicitly or implicitly, in the sin of Adam (the realistic model). Nor did they have any legal and moral corporate responsibility for that sin (the federal model). All men are born spiritually healthy. Since they are sound, they become sinners only when they themselves (choose to) sin actually.

Theologians of the Semi-Pelagian conviction hold that Adam's descendants inherit Adam's original pollution and that this (inherited) pollution eventually (and invariably) produces actual guilt. There is an imputation of Adam's sin. But this does not encompass guilt. Guilt enters into the picture only by virtue of the actual sins that these descendants commit themselves. All humans are born spiritually sick. But they become guilty sinners only when they sin actually and because they sin actually.

Theologians of the Augustinian persuasion affirm that both original guilt and original pollution, in that order (!), are imputed to all Adam's descendants. They argue that the solidaric relationship between Adam and his descendants entails a corporate responsibility in both areas. Whether they wish to explain the manner of this imputation through the realistic or the federal model, is a separate issue. All men are born spiritually dead. They (cannot but) sin because they are guilty and polluted sinners.

However, the Augustinian position can be strengthened and more persuasively argued by bringing out the fact that Scripture not only quarrels with the sinner in the area of his record (guilt)<sup>62</sup> or his life (pollution),<sup>63</sup> but even more fundamentally in the area of his heart (rebellion).<sup>64</sup> When that is understood, it will be difficult to deny that the sinner is not just a (mere) "basket case," but a (veritable) "casket case" (Is. 6:5a; Eph. 2:1).

Scripture is replete with references to the heart of man. However, to understand their significance and impact in the present context there must be a clear grasp of what the heart in Scripture is all about, especially in its eye-opening diagnosis of the human heart in its fallen state.

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<sup>62</sup> This indicates the need for justification.

<sup>63</sup> This indicates the need for sanctification.

<sup>64</sup> This indicates the need for regeneration.

The heart is a figure of speech that stands for the very core of man's being, the very radix of his personality, the very hub of his nature, and the very essence of his I-ness. It has been said that in Scripture the heart can have a variety of meanings. At times it is to be equated with the intellect, at other times with the emotions and sometimes even with the will. It has also been said that it should be equated with the human soul in its totality, inclusive of these three internal human functions. However, neither one of these two proposals is very satisfactory. They are too amorphous and nebulous. They do not pinpoint with sufficient accuracy the incisive biblical meaning, and therefore fail to come to grips with the remarkable biblical message. In Scripture the heart is the spiritual center of the embodied human soul. It is the wellspring from which all of life and its activities originates, takes its cue, and receives its propulsion, spiritual as well as physical.

As such it is also the seat and subject of the three internal functions of thinking, willing and feeling. It may neither be divorced from them, nor be identified with them, whether with one at the time or with all of them simultaneously. To do so would unacceptably blur the biblical teaching. A plethora of data in Scripture constitutes overwhelming evidence that the heart is the "I," who is doing the thinking (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Deut. 15:9; 1 Ki. 3:9; 12:33; Esth. 6:6; Ps. 49:3; Prov. 19:21; Eccl. 8:5; Is. 6:10; Dan. 10:12; Mt. 15:19; Lk. 9:47; Acts 8:22; 28:27), the feeling (Gen. 6:6; 42:28; 45:26; Ex. 35:21; Lev. 19:17; Deut. 1:28; Judg. 18:20; 19:6; 1 Sam. 1:8; 2:1; 4:13; 28:5; 2 Sam. 24:10; 1 Chr. 16:10; Esth. 5:9; Ps. 13:2; 33:21; 73:21; 119:111; Prov. 15:13; Eccl. 2:10; 11:9; Lam. 3:65; 5:15; Jer. 15:16; 20:9; 48:31; Ezek. 25:6; Acts 2:46; John 14:1; 16:6, 22; Rom. 9:2; Eph. 5:19) and the willing (Gen. 8:21; Ex. 25:2; 35:5, 29; Ps. 10:6; 95:8; Dan. 1:8).

That the Scripture resorts to a figure of speech to indicate what the heart stands for is no coincidence. As the seat and root of the thinking process it constitutes a level of being that goes deeper than that process itself. Its essence can never be exhaustively conceptualized, just as little as this can be done with realities, such as love, joy, etc. Ultimately their deepest essence can only be "experienced." That should not come as a surprise. After all, the assigned purpose of the mind neither has been, nor ever will be, to grasp essence, but rather to pursue ethics (Deut. 29:29)! Incidentally, that is why the various descriptions of the heart as "core," "radix," "hub," "center," "wellspring," etc. are figures of speech as well. The fact that in the human heart time and eternity intersect (Eccl. 3:11) may well be an additional indicator why conceptual thinking cannot comprehensively package it.

However, this should not and does not lead to an irrational and unbiblical mysticism. Although its essence cannot be "caught" in a concept, one

can “close in” on it, delineate it, and assess its status, be it indirectly. A comparison with the human eye may clarify how the “contours” of the heart as the human “I” can be obtained in this way. Just as the human eye can (only) analyze itself by looking at its reflection in a mirror, so the human “I” can (only) know and assess itself properly by looking in the mirror of God’s Word.

Careful study of Scripture reveals not only that the heart is the core of human existence. It also overwhelmingly presents the heart from the moment of conception as blind (Deut. 29:4; John 3:3), rebellious (Deut. 9:24; 10:16; 31:27; John 3:5), and as such desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). From it only evil thoughts, evil words and evil actions (Gen. 6:5; Deut. 31:29; Mk. 7:6, 21) can, do and will continually spring forth.<sup>65</sup> God methodologically puts up with Israel for a thousand years after Mount Sinai just to drive this point home forcefully and undeniably, for everyone to take note. Israel is not just guilty and polluted. It is a stubborn, rebellious, nation (Deut. 31:27-29; Jer. 6:28; Ezek. 12:25; 20:8)! All three components together make up Israel’s total depravity and explain why it is called a “Graveyard” (Ezek. 37:1) and a “Dead Sea” (Ezek. 47:8). Ironically, these terms indicate that it is not only spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1), but also manages to kill everyone else (Tit. 3:3).

All this is not to claim that in defense of the Augustinian position never an occasional mention has been made of the human heart or of human nature. However, it is to emphasize that in the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian controversies the issue of the heart has not received the full attention it should have, and has not been given the full weight that the Scriptures appear to require.<sup>66</sup> God never deals with the “fruit” of guilt and corruption without bringing the “root” of the rebel heart into the picture. Both the problem of man’s sinfulness and God’s gift of salvation are triadic in nature. This runs like a red thread throughout the Scriptures. The four following pivotal instances should make that abundantly clear.

First, upon their entrance into the land of Canaan God tells Joshua to embark upon a mass circumcision of all the males (Josh. 5:2), to celebrate the Passover (Josh. 5:10), and to remove his shoes from his feet (Josh. 5:15). These are clearly three symbolical acts. Circumcision points to the need for a new heart in regeneration (Deut. 10:16; Rom. 2:29). The Passover indicates the need for a new record in justification (Ex. 12:11-13; 1 Cor.

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<sup>65</sup> "Common grace," indeed, is designed more or less to put the brakes on so that the destructive flow is mitigated. But it can never stop it, let alone reverse it. Only special, saving, grace can accomplish that.

<sup>66</sup> As we will see later, Jonathan Edwards is a notable exception.

5:7). The removal of the shoes in view of the holy ground testifies to the need for a new life in sanctification (Ex. 3:5).

The threefold message can hardly be any clearer. (1) The enemy is not on the outside, but on the inside. The rebellious and blind heart needs replacement. The situation is serious. A heart transplant is in order. (2) The enemy is not other people, but God. God is a “killer,” an “executioner,” (See Ex. 19:12; 1 Sam. 6:19; 2 Sam. 6:6-7; and Is. 53:7-9!) to everyone who is not under the blood. It is imperative that the filth and shame of man’s totally depraved ledger be cleaned up. (3) Finally, the enemy is not the external circumstances or the conditions in which people find themselves by providence or by choice, but an unholy lifestyle. Man’s total inability to do anything that is truly good, truly holy, must be remedied. In short, God instructs the Israelites by means of three symbols that without a threefold solution to their threefold problem the land cannot and will not remain theirs. It is a matter of historical record that Israel did not take this message seriously and for that reason was eventually banished from the land. The infamous triad of the rebel heart, the guilty record and the unholy life got the “better” of them.

Second, upon their exile God informs the Israelites that he will return them to their land, be it for the sake of his own reputation (Ezek. 36:22-23). But he adds that he will also provide them with the condition for their continuation in it. God promises them a new heart (Ezek. 36:26), a new record (Ezek. 36:25) and a new life (Ezek. 36:27). These are the *better* promises of a *better* covenant, namely the *new covenant* (Jer. 31:31ff.; and Hebr. 10:6ff.).<sup>67</sup> At this point the need for the threefold solution to Israel's threefold problem is no longer just symbolically stated as in Joshua 5. Its sub-

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<sup>67</sup> It ought to be emphasized that these *better* promises were here promulgated for the first time. They were foreshadowed, such as in the circumcision and the Passover. They were even announced as forthcoming, such as in Deuteronomy 30:1ff., esp. 6. But they did not become the “property” of God’s covenant people until this time, and only became operational at the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In short, the new covenant was promised by God in the exile (Jer. 31:31ff; Ezek. 36:25-27), and in subsequent history personified by Christ (Is. 42:6) and personalized by the Holy Spirit (Is. 59:21). What this implies in detail will be set forth below. But at this point already it should be recognized that the new covenant is not just a fulfillment of the old covenant (promises). This would be to stress the unity of the covenant at the expense of the uniqueness of the new covenant. Neither, of course, should the uniqueness be pressed so as to obviate the unity. Both continuity and discontinuity, unity and progress, ought to be given their biblical due. To upset the biblical balance is bound to produce a vast array of serious practical aberrations. A bent toward the discontinuity of the covenants frequently leads to the denial of infant baptism. A penchant for the continuity of the covenants often obscures the recognition that infants ought to be evangelized. The proper biblical balance of continuity and discontinuity recognizes that children of believers are born into the new covenant, and are therefore recipients of the threefold promise of a new heart, a new record and a new life, but are not born into the kingdom, and therefore are in need of regeneration, justification and sanctification (Deut. 30:6; Is. 44:3-5; 59:21; Jer. 32:37-39; Acts 2:38-39). Believers are expected to teach their children both realities.

stance is now definitively promised. Without it history would simply repeat itself. A thousand years of Israel's history, culminating in the exile, make it clear that God had to intervene in all three areas, if there was to be a future for Israel.

Third, Christ's teaching echoes this. He emphasizes the need for rebirth, that is the implantation of a new heart that can see the King and enter the Kingdom. Both blindness (John 3:3) and rebellion (John 3:5) had to be removed. He also stresses the need for justification, that is the gift of a new record that produces the peace with God and the worship of God. The guilt of sin had to be settled (John 4:16-18). He insists on sanctification as well, that is the presence of a new life essential for discipleship. Coexistence with unholiness cannot be tolerated (John 8:31-32).

It is no coincidence that Christ's work matches his teaching. Here emerges the substance of the biblical statement that Christ *personifies* the new covenant (Is. 42:6). He first produces the new heart. The rebellious heart is killed in union with him on the cross, the new one rises in union with him from the grave (Rom. 6:6-11). Then he produces a new record. He wipes the old record clean through his substitutionary atonement on the cross, and in his resurrection he completes the new record of his own righteous life (2 Cor. 5:21). Finally, he produces the new life. The old life is expunged once for all by his sacrifice (Hebr. 10:10, 14), and the new life is stored up in him as the risen Lord (John 15:15; Eph. 2:10).

The upshot is that man in himself needs total replacement. This replacement, both in whole and in all of its parts, is found in Christ only. The cross of Christ is the (ex)termination point of all of (the old) man and the resurrection is the origination point of all of (the new) man. The only true life is at the far end of the cross. All things must and have become new (2 Cor. 5:17). Incidentally, the need of replacement not only extends itself to man's heart, his record, and his life, but also to his (future) body (Phil. 3:21) and his (future) residence (Rev. 21:1).

Fourth, the beginnings of the New Testament church age reflect this fully. Peter in preaching a new covenant message on the Day of Pentecost sets forth the need for a new heart (repentance), a new record (forgiveness of sins) and, as crowning piece of God's saving activity, a new life (the gift of the Spirit) (Acts 2:38). The triadic nature of both man's depravity and salvation can hardly be missed.

The Spirit implements and applies the work of Christ. Through the preaching of the Gospel he *personalizes* the new covenant (Is. 59:21). He first implants the new heart (regeneration). This serves a twofold purpose.

In this way he enables a man to see and enter the Kingdom (John 3:3, 5). At the same time he creates his own future living quarters. He could not possibly reside in a rebellious heart. First, the worst must be turned into the best, a "condemned, infested, slum dwelling" into a "palace."<sup>68</sup> Then, following God's justifying verdict and its ensuing peace, including the cessation of all hostilities, he takes up permanent residence in the new heart. In fact, with his indwelling, which constitutes the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:38), he seals the new record received in the decree of justification and guarantees the consequent "peace treaty" as irreversible (Eph. 1:13-14). He could not possibly reside in an environment that either is on a war footing with God, or might become the scene of renewed hostilities. Finally, through his indwelling as a welcome guest he is actively engaged in producing the new life in the process of sanctification (Rom. 15:16). He could not possibly take up residence where he would not leave the imprint of his holiness and where his "host" would not be eager to receive that imprint.

In sum, it is the clear and concerted testimony of all of Scripture that God's saving activity is not only Trinitarian, but also triadic. The new heart is its existential starting point. The new record is its legal framework. The new life is its active crowning piece. In this context it is significant to emphasize that *all* of this is *all* of grace! It is all of grace when God breaks man's rebellion. It is all of grace when God atones for man's guilt. It is all of grace when God removes man's pollution. This destroys the lamentable Pelagian notion of a "good will" in regeneration, just as it destroys the deplorable Roman Catholic idea of "good works" in justification and the regrettably widespread Protestant emphasis upon "good efforts" in sanctification.<sup>69</sup>

The view that God does not demand anything from man that he cannot accomplish is false. In fact, it is quite the opposite. God only demands from man what he cannot accomplish. This is true not only in justification (Rom. 3:24), and in sanctification (John 15:5), but also in regeneration. God, indeed, summons man to regenerate himself (Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4; and, most strikingly, Ezek. 18:31). But man is utterly unable and unwilling to do so (John 3:3, 5, 8, 19, 20; 5:39, 40; 6:44, 65). In short, man "must," but man "cannot" and "will not," when left to himself. This "shuts" him "up" solely to sovereign grace. There is simply no other remedy. Anyone who is

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<sup>68</sup> See also John Flavel, *Keeping the Heart* (Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace Publishers, 1971), 1, "The heart of man is his worst part before it is regenerated, and the best afterward."

<sup>69</sup> The rather common, but mistaken, Protestant idea that the Christian life is essentially a response to God "out of gratitude" for his salvation contributes greatly to this emphasis. See the excellent treatment of this problem by John Piper, *Future Grace* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1995), 11, 31ff., 41ff.

gripped by this realization will cast himself upon grace alone, "God, command whatever you wish, but have mercy and give what you command." This Augustinian phraseology, which went against the grain of Pelagius, is man's only hope!

All this, but especially the Bible's teaching on the heart, cannot but spike the Pelagian, the Semi-Pelagian, but also the Arminian, idea of a will that either has any vestige of good in it, or can produce anything that is good. The heart of the problem, in this context, is clearly the problem of the heart. This applies to Adam as well as all his descendants. Before they are guilty and polluted, in need of justification and sanctification, they are rebellious, in need of regeneration. It is the testimony of Scripture that all of humankind is both conceived and born that way, fully responsible for its rebellion as well as its guilt and pollution. It will now be argued that the implications of this Biblical teaching, especially on the depraved state of the heart of the sinner, prove to be fatal for the Pelagian as well as Semi-Pelagian position.

### ***b. The Greater Exegetical Refinement***

The Semi-Pelagian would do well to take another look at Psalm 51:15 against the above-mentioned "triadic" backdrop. Also the Pelagian could benefit from this Psalm and beyond that from Romans 5:12-21 as well.

Psalm 51:5 testifies that man is not a sinner because he sins, but sins because he is a sinner, from the moment of his birth, indeed from the moment of conception. Solely to interact, therefore, with the question of the presence or priority of guilt or pollution in original sin is not sufficiently radical. Man's heart must be exposed as the Psalmist does it (see also Mk. 7:21). The need for a new heart (see also Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9) and man's unwillingness and inability to give himself a heart transplant (see also Deut. 31:27, 29; Josh. 24:19) once and for all destroys the notion of a good will in whole or in part.

Any Semi-Pelagian (and any Pelagian as well for that matter) will have to face the question, "Since I am conceived in sin, and my sinfulness extends itself also to my heart, am I or am I not responsible for the 'born rebel' that I am?" One may be able to deny responsibility for his pollution, and possibly also for the ensuing guilt. But to deny responsibility for one's rebellion is a contradiction in terms. Failure, therefore, to bring the problem of the heart into the discussion did and will short circuit a conclusive rebuttal of the Pelagian as well as Semi-Pelagian position and, therefore, keep the issue festering.

I can testify from personal experience that the biblical teaching on the heart joins the issue. In one setting the exposition of the heart as one of the three new covenantal gifts of God precipitated the following protest: "If you hold that the new heart is solely a gift of God, the doctrine of free will cannot be maintained. Therefore, I must reject your position." Never mind, apparently, the teaching of Deuteronomy 31:6 and Ezekiel 36:26! Nevertheless, it is revealing that there is an instinctive recognition that the systematic biblical teaching on the heart and the Pelagian as well as Semi-Pelagian view of the freedom of the will are mutually exclusive.

While both the Semi-Pelagian and the Pelagian must recognize with Psalm 51 that the state of the human heart is rebellious from conception, the latter must square his views with Romans 5:12-21 as well.<sup>70</sup> He must recognize that this passage, and specifically 5:12-14 and 5:19, attests that there is a solidaric relationship between Adam and his descendants and a corporate responsibility for the first, or original, human sin (see also 1 Cor. 15:21-22). In Adam's fall men sinned all. And through their (participation in and responsibility for the original) sin they are subject to death.

To flesh this out, Romans 5:12 teaches that all men die, "*because all sinned.*" Taken by itself the sin in view in this small phrase can indicate original as well as actual sin. However, Paul adds Romans 5:13-14 to ensure that it is understood as original sin. "Why do men die from Adam to Moses when actual sins are not chargeable for lack of law?" "Because of sin committed," is the answer! But since it was not committed "in the likeness of Adam's sin," the sin in view cannot be construed as an actual sin. That leaves original sin as the only possible cause for the death of all mankind.<sup>71</sup> Romans 5:19 underscores this when it adds that in and through Adam's fall all men are "constituted sinners."

Note that the manner of the participation, the rationale for the solidaric relationship, the ground for the corporate responsibility, or the way in which all men were constituted sinners, are not stated in Scripture. Therefore the so-called realistic view (mankind sinned in Adam, just as Levi paid the tithes in Abraham; Hebr. 7:9), as well as the federal view (Adam's action was representative of all of mankind, just as the official action of a King is representative of all his subjects), both of which have been set forth

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<sup>70</sup> See for an excellent commentary on this passage, John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), Vol. I, 178-210.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 187-191.

as explanations, represent only possible, even if properly suggestive, models.<sup>72</sup>

Similarly, care should be taken not to attempt to prove too much with terms such as "inherited" or "imputed" in conjunction with original sin. For one thing, these terms are not found in Scripture in this context, and apparently for a good reason. Both the inheritance and the imputation model raise serious questions when applied to original sin, because they give the impression that the inheritors/imputees are *totally passive* in the reception of their inheritance/imputation. Such passivity may well constitute the ground for a legitimate protest on the part of Adam's posterity. After all, for the recipients to be saddled with the inheritance/imputation of sin without having any input or say in the matter does not seem quite right.

But what should clinch the case against this twofold terminology is the text of Romans 5:12 itself. It is indisputably stated in it that all men die, "because all men sinned." This puts the responsibility for the universal experience of death squarely on the shoulders of all men. No one is excepted of this responsibility. The very wording of the text, therefore, leaves only two options open. Death is the result of either actual sins for which all men must take full responsibility, or of original sin, for which all men must take full co-responsibility. The notions of neither inheritance nor imputation, whether they apply to guilt *and* pollution, to pollution only, or even to a "mere" propensity to sin, as is advocated in some circles, square with either individual, personal, human responsibility for actual sins, or human participatory, solidaric, (co)responsibility for original sin. All in all, it is the better part of biblical wisdom to avoid these terms in this context. In fact, there are some (additional) compelling arguments to come to this conclusion.

First, it may not be forgotten that the relationship that Christ sustains to the sinner in the area of justification does *not* appear to run fully parallel to the relationship Adam sustains to his descendants in terms of the fall. Of course, a partial parallel is indicated. "For as through the disobedience of one man the many were constituted sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be constituted righteous" (Rom. 5:19). But it is the explicit testimony of Scripture that the manner in which this double "constitution" takes place does not run parallel. The righteousness of Christ is presented as being *imputed* to each believing sinner (Rom. 4:9-11, 22-25). But the first sin of Adam is portrayed as having been *committed* by each

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<sup>72</sup> Frankly, because the "realist" view can refer to a specific Scripture, and the "federal" view is based on general biblical and cultural analogies only, I personally am leaning toward the former. Besides, the realist view seems to make a better fit with the biblical notion of mankind's solidaric participation in, and co-responsibility for, Adam's sin.

one of his descendants in solidaric relationship with Adam (Rom. 5:12b). That is to say, each believer receives the *alien* righteousness of Christ as a free gift. But each sinner shares full responsibility for the first sin with Adam as his very *own* doing. That is why the believer has only God to thank for his justification through Christ, while the sinner has only himself to blame for his fall in Adam.<sup>73</sup>

Second, it does not seem to be correct to describe original sin, usually defined as the corruption of human nature, as the inherited *result* of the first sin.<sup>74</sup> This gives the impression that it was foisted upon Adam's "unsuspecting" descendants who were not (even) extended the "courtesy" to refuse such "inheritance."

No, the Church should hold to the doctrine of original sin, when it comes right down to it, not as much because original sin is a matter of imputation, but because Scripture emphasizes (solidaric) *participation in*, and therewith (corporate) *responsibility for*, the first sin on the part of all Adam's descendants. To a man and a woman and a child, born or unborn, they all personally "came up to bat," and "struck out" in Adam. Similarly, these descendants, in the final analysis, did not as much inherit Adam's sin, as in Adam's sin they themselves struck out "swinging."

In fact, all Adam's descendants are born with three strikes against them. If they had been born with one strike (pollution) against them, they *would*, and if they had been born with two strikes (guilt and pollution, in whatever order) against them, they *might* have cause to lodge a protest in the day of judgment and to move for dismissal of all charges on the basis of "unfair disadvantage." But with three strikes against them the case does not even come up.

Rebellion<sup>75</sup> (both of Adam and in Adam of each and every human being), which actualized, or produced, and consequently was responsible for, the corruption of the nature or heart of man,<sup>76</sup> constituted the first strike,

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<sup>73</sup> It is more than interesting to note the explanation of imputation by Alan Cairns, *Dictionary of Theological Terms* (n. p.: J.C. Print Ltd., 1982), 71-72. He distinguishes two imputations. The first one is "to describe the transmission of the **guilt** of Adam's **first** sin to his descendants" (his emphases). The second one is "to describe the act of God in visiting the guilt of believers in Christ and of conferring the righteousness of Christ upon unbelievers." The second imputation is copiously supported by Scripture references. There is no reference at all in support of the first one, in my estimation because there are no references to be found to back this up.

<sup>74</sup> R.C. Sproul, *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1992), 146.

<sup>75</sup> Analogous to Satan's rebellion described in Isaiah 14:13-14.

<sup>76</sup> In Paradise it was, indeed, rebellion, for which both Adam and his descendants were equally responsible, that produced the corruption of the nature or heart of all men, rather than that the rebellion of all men resulted from the inherited corruption of the nature or heart of man.

guilt the second, and pollution the third. Truly, in Adam's fall men freely and personally *sinned* all. In Adam's fall they rebelled, they contracted guilt, and they acquired pollution. As a result of this all men are not only born rebellious, guilty and polluted, but also fully responsible for this three-fold condition.<sup>77</sup>

In short, Scripture teaches unequivocally that Adam's descendants die, not as much because Adam's sin was imputed to them or inherited by them, but because they themselves, personally, sinned Adam's sin (Rom. 5:12).<sup>78</sup> The only twofold caveat is, for one, that this sin may not be construed as an actual sin on their part (Rom. 5:13-14), and for another, that the manner in which they committed this sin remains a profound mystery in Scripture.

To be sure, in the area of the models that explain original sin, a great deal of flexibility should prevail. But the reality of original sin as well as man's responsibility for original sin are and must be beyond dispute. In Adam's fall and through Adam's fall all of mankind became a rebel race, loaded with a world of guilt, and warped by a world of pollution. Once again, the manner in which this took place may theologically be shrouded in mystery. But all humans do, must, or eventually will own up to original sin. It is theirs from the very moment of their conception, and therefore they do,

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<sup>77</sup> Jonathan Edwards is refreshing in his treatment of original sin. Although he retains the concept of imputation, he insists that original sin is, first of all, a matter of the human *heart*, more precisely, of the *rebellion* of man's heart. Herewith he transcends the rather customary treatment of original sin. See *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1976), Vol. I, 220ff.

<sup>78</sup> It has been argued that the term "imputation" can and must be retained in this context. After all, God charges all men with original sin, because he imputes their *own* sin in Adam to them. In other words, he credits their account with the sin that they *themselves* committed in Adam. If the term wishes to get this across, it must be conceded that its use in the present context can no longer be regarded as objectionable. However, it should be pointed out that in view of the common parlance, "the imputation of Adam's sin," rather than "the imputation of *my own* sin in Adam to me" (in both instances, italics mine), this argument to retain the term may well be too subtle! The common parlance has a history. It indicates the answer to the question that every diligent student of Scripture faces, "What does Adam's sin have to do with me?" The common response was, "Adam's sin is *imputed* to you!" (In fact, John Murray published a book with the title, *The Imputation of Adam's Sin*.) My contention is that this is an unsatisfactory answer due to the wrongful use of the term imputation. By dropping it, one will at least avoid unnecessary confusion in the formulation of original sin. And what is even more important, it would militate against any kind of mistaken notion to minimize one's full responsibility for it, or any kind of inclination to duck it! On a personal and historical note, in the late 1980's I was invited to a public debate on the topic of "original sin" by an opponent of this doctrine. Preparations went smoothly, until the time that the topic had to be formulated. My potential opponent proposed "The Imputation/Inheritance of Adam's sin." Apparently he was persuaded that he could easily win that debate. Frankly, I concurred in that judgment. The topic would allow him to argue that the imputation/inheritance of someone else's sin and the responsibility of the imputee/inheritor for that sin would be mutually exclusive. Therefore I countered with "Mankind's Participation in and Co-responsibility for Adam's sin," knowing that I could not lose with that topic. My potential opponent must have shared my conviction, for his interest in the debate cooled down considerably. Eventually he withdrew his original invitation and backed out altogether!

must, or eventually will take full responsibility for their rebellious heart, guilty record, and unholy life.

For all practical purposes, it has now been argued that one reason why the issue of man's will festered so long and still festers today is the failure to present the crowning argument of the rebel state of man's heart. Only that ultimately settles the issue biblically. In a Pelagian, Semi-Pelagian, or Arminian climate one cannot expect this emphasis, but in a Reformed setting this should be a natural. Regrettably this is not always the case. In fact, the Reformed world seems confused about regeneration. Broad cross sections of the Reformed world hold to the doctrine of presumptive regeneration, either in principle or in practice. This is a crucial error in that it tends to veil the seriousness of the state of the rebel heart of man.

It may seem astounding, but this is partly due to an oversight on the part of John Calvin. In his *Institutes* he never presents a systematic treatment of the doctrine of regeneration.<sup>79</sup> This seems to go hand in hand with his failure to have a clear understanding and present a full picture of the uniqueness of the new covenant with its *threefold* promise of a new record, a new life as well as a new heart. This, incidentally, would not only explain why regeneration did not get its biblical due in the *Institutes*, but also why Calvin in his opposition to Pelagianism was satisfied with the traditional, but not sufficiently radical, objections.

At any rate, his oversight cost the Church dearly. Even the Creeds of the Reformation, that are influenced by Calvin, customarily speak about (only) two benefits of the Gospel, namely justification and sanctification, rather

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<sup>79</sup> To Calvin regeneration is virtually identical with renewal, which includes repentance, transformation, renovation, mortification and vivification. See John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Henry Beveridge, tr., 2 vols., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1957), II,iii,1; III,iii,9; IV,xv,5.6.9.; xvi,2.3.5.10; and Gordon. J. Spykman, *Attrition and Contrition at the Council of Trent* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1955), 239-240. It is interesting to note that in his *Institutes* Calvin holds that faith is the mother of regeneration, "We are regenerated through faith," *Institutes*, III,iii. (This makes sense if regeneration is merely another term to indicate the process of sanctification.) In his commentaries, however, he talks about faith as the fruit of regeneration. He emphasizes that both are true. Faith is the "mother" when it is defined as the only subjective means by which Christ and all his benefits are received. It is the "fruit" when it is described as the gift of God's sovereign grace. In this context he uses the term regeneration in the more traditional sense, for in his effort to explain this further, he essentially appears to indicate that faith and regeneration, regeneration and faith take place simultaneously, "When the Lord breathes faith in us, he regenerates us by some method that is hidden and unknown to us." (See John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948) on John 1:13.) This is commendable. But two facts remain. First, he does not enlarge on this further. He seems to present it more instinctively as a biblical fact, than discursively as a theologically reasoned view. Second, he did not give a systematic treatment of the use of the term regeneration, such as found in John 3:13 and John 3:3, 5, in his *Institutes*. This vacuum apparently was an invitation for all kinds of views to capture a corner of the theological market. This turned out to be a liability under which we still labor today.

than three, justification, sanctification, as well as regeneration. If this criticism is justified, even the majestic hymn “Rock of Ages,” often lauded for pronouncing Christ’s work on the cross as the double, rather than the single cure, of the power as well as the guilt of sin, falls regrettably short of the full biblical truth. It is not the double, but the triple cure: of the appetite for sin (the heart issue/Rom. 6:6), the guilt of sin (the record issue/2 Cor. 5:21), and the power of sin (the life issue/Phil. 4:13).<sup>80</sup> If the latter view had prevailed in the (early) Church, the case against Pelagianism/Semi-Pelagianism, convincing as it is, could have been stated with so much more precision and persuasiveness!

But we must now proceed beyond the occasional biblical exegesis of passages such as Psalm 51 and Romans 5, however appropriate that may be, and however compelling that should be. It has been quite astutely observed that the controversy will not go away until the relationship between divine supremacy and the free agency of man has been settled. After all, it cannot be ignored that the biblical proof pertaining to man as radically and totally depraved and pertaining to grace as radically and totally indispensable, however clear and sufficient, does not always appear to be convincing. That makes the question as to why that is the case, urgent and unavoidable. At this point the underlying problem of the fundamental dialectic emerges. This must be the focus of the next section.

### *c. The Broader Biblical Framework*

The question may well be asked what drives the Pelagian, the Semi-Pelagian, and the Arminian to espouse their view and even to suffer for it. It is the unshakable conviction that sovereign divine grace and genuine human freedom are ultimately incompatible.<sup>81</sup>

In response to this conviction it is not sufficient simply to pontificate that grace and freedom are quite compatible and not at all mutually exclusive. However correct, this is hardly persuasive, and therefore is usually ignored or dismissed. *Human* say so does not necessarily make anything to *be* so!

It becomes curious, however, when biblical evidence is adduced to the effect that the sovereign plan of God, which determines everything that comes to pass (Eph. 1:11), on the one hand encompasses all human actions,

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<sup>80</sup> This goes to show that however excellent hymns, or even creeds, may be, they should never be extolled to the point that the good (human products) becomes the enemy of the best (Scripture).

<sup>81</sup> J.I. Packer, *Introductory Essay to John Owen's The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* (Chateau: Gospel Mission Press, 1980), esp. 4-5, 8-9, 16.

including human sin, while on the other hand, and at the same time, it neither destroys nor diminishes human responsibility, and neither vitiates nor infringes upon human free agency, but rather posits and undergirds both of them as part of that plan (Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28)!

The Pelagian/Semi-Pelagian/Arminian reaction always seems to be at best in the "yes, but" mode. "Yes, there is 'sovereignty,' *but* there is 'free will' as well." Invariably the "but" is so loaded that in the final stages of the response divine sovereignty becomes virtually non-functional. The dialectic tension, and the warfare that accompanies it, is palpable! Once the notion of indeterministic, libertarian, free will, as one of the poles of the dialectic, captures the heart and the mind, everything else that seems to militate against it, or compete with it, including the clear biblical data on sovereignty, eventually must yield, and for all practical purposes will vanish from the theological scene. If the term sovereignty is retained in the vocabulary, it either takes the backseat or is basically gutted.

In this context even the terminology and comments of trusted Reformed thinkers are at times puzzling. Incidentally, they remain trusted, because their questionable contributions in this context represent only "small" flaws in "big" men to whom most of us cannot hold a candle. Nevertheless, it is appropriate in the analysis of any issue to cover the total picture as we encounter it, and to deal with flaws, if they are more than cosmetic, especially when this serves to make an essential point.

In one instance the sovereignty/responsibility relationship is called an "antinomy."<sup>82</sup> Frankly, this is *in principle* to give the store away. For an antinomy goes beyond a paradox, which is only a seeming contradiction. An antinomy is an insoluble contradiction, plain and simple.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Edwin H. Palmer, *The Five Points of Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Co., 1972), 85, "The Calvinist accepts both sides of the antinomy . . . holds to two contradictory positions . . . and freely admits that his position is illogical, ridiculous, nonsensical and foolish." See also J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1976), 18-36, for his use of the term antinomy.

<sup>83</sup> Sproul, *Essential Truths*, 8-9, and *Not A Chance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 72-73, defines an antinomy as an insoluble contradiction that is inherently, intrinsically and eternally unintelligible, and sharply distinguishes it from a paradox, which is only a seeming contradiction, that can be resolved. Packer, on the other hand, equates antinomy with paradox, and denotes both as a "*seeming* contradiction" (only), and proceeds on that basis to enlarge on his views on the relationship between sovereignty and responsibility. Of course, his views on both these issues can be fully and warmly endorsed. However, even if Packer has the right to stipulate a definition of a given term, and use it with that denotation, a word of caution against his use of the term antinomy in this context is justified. This is not simply because it might be confusing since in the common parlance it has such a greatly different meaning. No, the objection goes deeper. It tends to obscure the fact that the sovereignty/responsibility relationship appears and *must* appear as an antinomy (Sproul definition), *when (and only when)* the intellect is awarded ultimacy or primacy status. It *cannot* be viewed any other way by a mind that intrin-

This, of course, raises the question whether it is ever justified to endorse an antinomy. The reply, "Yes, when it is biblical," is not quite satisfactory. For this answer does not merely imply that man should believe a certain teaching on biblical authority alone. (One should be able to live with that whenever it concerns a genuinely biblical teaching.) No, the moment something is called an antinomy it is thereby stipulated, according to common parlance, that it contradicts reason. Therefore, to invite anyone to embrace an antinomy in faith would come dangerously close to a sacrifice of the intellect. Frankly, this would be hardly appealing or reassuring to the opponents of a doctrine that would seem to require such sacrifice. Neither would it be helpful for the apologist whose task it is to defend such a doctrine.

But more to the point, there is no biblical justification for any demand ever to sacrifice the intellect. Therefore, to endorse the antinomious nature of any doctrine would be counterproductive, to put it mildly.

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sically or methodologically wishes to have the final say. Human reason can never *think* sovereignty and responsibility together. From the vantage point of the human mind they *must* be contradictory. This, of course, has always been the presupposition, the claim, and (!) the stumbling block, of all Pelagianizing and Arminianizing theologies. This is why they cannot and will not be convinced of their error *when and as long as* the ultimacy/primacy of the mind is naively ignored as an illegitimate and presumptuous point of departure, or (in a sense just as bad) uncritically accepted as a legitimate or necessary point of departure. This must be recognized and acknowledged before any progress can be made. The two necessary conditions for this progress are both a challenge of the ultimacy/primacy of the mind, and a summons to the heart, be it through the mind, to acknowledge that God is God, and to bow before him and his truth in a true Job-like (Job 42:1-6) and Preacher-like (Eccl. 3:11) fashion. In short, is the sovereignty/responsibility relationship an antinomy (in the common parlance)? Although it must look that way from the perspective of a self-styled, but illusory autonomy, the answer is no, and once again no! The reason is quite simple. The human mind is *not* ultimate. It never was and never will be. It *does not* have the primacy either. It never had and never will have. God does not live in man's world, but man lives in God's world. That, in the final analysis, is and must be the blunt challenge to be hurled at any and every kind of Pelagianizing and Arminianizing thinkers or thinking. This is fully in line with Paul's challenge of the "questioner" in Romans 9:19-20, "Who are you to reply against God?" The upshot is this. It is the better part of biblical wisdom to avoid the use of the term antinomy to describe the essence of the sovereignty/responsibility relationship, because it fails to address the twofold *vitium originis*, the rebellion of the heart and the ultimacy/primacy of the intellect. To return to Packer once more, the term "antinomy" *in its ordinary dictionary meaning* does not square with his (fully biblical) theology. If he wishes to retain the latter, which he should, it may be advisable for him to drop the term, and replace it with paradox. In fact, it may be more than advisable in the light of a questionable conclusion that has been drawn from his use of "antinomy." David Basinger, *The Case for Free Will Theism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 28, appears to argue that Packer's statement that we must do "our thinking" in the present context in terms of "revealed antinomy" (Packer, *Evangelism*, 23) turns him into an incompatibilist (theological determinism is incompatible with voluntary choice). Technically speaking, it would. However, there is ample evidence in J. I. Packer's Introductory Essay to John Owen's *Death of Death in the Death of Christ* that he is a convinced "compatibilist" (divine sovereignty is quite compatible with human responsibility). Therefore Packer would do well to drop the term antinomy from his vocabulary at this point. At any rate, his use of the term is confusing, to say the least. What is more, however, the manner of its use tends to obscure the basic issues of the state of man's heart, as well as the function and range of his intellect.

In another instance, the equal ultimacy of reprobation and election is called hyper-Calvinism. That supposedly turns man into a robot.<sup>84</sup> The upshot of this is, however, that over against the state of eternal blessedness, which is fully part of God's plan, the state of eternal misery seems a "horse of a different color." Somehow the latter's relationship to God's plan is a gray area. This should raise an eyebrow or two in light of the fact that Scripture clearly appears to teach the equal ultimacy (Rom. 9:22; 1 Pet. 2:8).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> R.C. Sproul, *Chosen by God* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1986), 141-153, esp. 142 and 153. In the context of Romans 9 Sproul affirms "double predestination." But he rejects the notion of "equal ultimacy." This allegedly would lead to an unhealthy hyper-Calvinism. He defends this rejection by opting for a passive rather than an active hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The latter would introduce evil in his heart, and make God the author of sin. The former treats Pharaoh as a sinner, and constitutes a judgment upon existing sinfulness. I have little zeal to contest the thesis that by virtue of Pharaoh's sinfulness any hardening is fully deserved. This is manifestly true. But the question of Romans 9:19, and the phrase, "fitted for destruction," in Romans 9:22 (parallel to the "preparation to glory" in Romans 9:23 and comparable to the "appointment to stumbling" in 1 Pet. 2:8) seem to go beyond that. Both the question and the phrase are not quite satisfied to portray the 100% of God's hardening as a judgment that reacts to the 100% of man's sinfulness. By opting for the distinction of active and passive hardening Sproul resorts to an all too human theodicy that "makes sense to anyone with an open mind." As Sproul puts it, "Granted the sinfulness of all men, God's determination to harden one individual is not necessarily unreasonable." Clearly, Paul could have used the same argument if he had wished to do so. But he did not. Both in 9:20 and in 9:21-22 he unashamedly brings his questioner face to face with the absolute sovereignty of God. He challenges him twice with the primacy of the 100% God, and he expects him to bow for that in his heart. The "equal ultimacy" appears undeniable. Of course, the biblical arithmetic, that *equally* safeguards the 100% man, ensures that Pharaoh's responsibility in the hardening process is never in question. It is stated time and again that he as a fully responsible free agent hardened himself. To take it one step further, rather than to take issue with God's right to harden Pharaoh's heart, the Church would do well to recognize that all of mankind, due to its rebellion, deserves the same treatment. If that would ever dawn upon the Church universal, it would no longer be surprised that (only) Pharaoh is hardened, but rather be amazed in utter humility that not everybody finds himself in his shoes. At any rate, all this implies that "equal ultimacy" and hyper-Calvinism are poles apart. To be sure, from the perspective of the ultimacy/primacy of the mind, to maintain both "equal ultimacy" and human responsibility is tantamount to embracing an antinomy. But the surrendered heart resists such conclusion. Neither the heavens nor the earth can contain the eternal God (1 Ki. 8:27; Is. 66:1), let alone the human mind! But he "fits" snugly in the broken and humble heart of man (Is. 57:15; 66:2). And there the truth of "equal ultimacy" is (and should be) warmly welcomed as fully biblical. That, by the way, is the reason why a biblical apologetics must always address the heart, and aim for it as the grand prize, even if this is done through the mind. Until the heart is conquered, apologetics is going nowhere, because it has nowhere to go. It will always run into the barrier of the autonomous mind, until and unless it is undermined and leveled from the inside (the heart) out! More about the double 100% below!

<sup>85</sup> Let it be emphasized that the equal ultimacy goes hand in hand with the *non eodem modo* (i.e. "not in the same manner"). Eternal damnation does not flow forth from divine reprobation in the same manner in which eternal salvation flows forth from divine election. Between election and eternal salvation Scripture posits the "link" of faith as a gift of God, between reprobation and eternal damnation sin as the responsibility of man. Furthermore, it also goes hand in hand with the foreground/background distinction. Divine reprobation is and remains the dark background against which divine election shines ever so brightly (Rom. 9:22-23). The deepest heartbeat of God is found in the latter. He did not, does not, and will not take delight in the death of the sinner (Ezek. 33:11). Any attempt to minimize or get rid of the biblical truths of the *non eodem modo* or the background/foreground distinction betrays the

The question may well be asked what is behind Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, the use of the term "antinomy" in this context, or the rejection of equal ultimacy? More generally, what is behind the, sometimes blunt, denial of, or the sometimes vague uneasiness with, full-orbed, biblical sovereignty? It is the conviction that for the human mind the 100% God must vitiate the 100% man, and that any 100% human input must subtract from the 100% God. Somehow this conviction cannot and does not (fully) swallow the biblical arithmetic that 100% God plus 100% man equals 100% ( $100\% + 100\% = 100\%$ ). This equation, of course, needs an explanation.

In the main it has three characteristics. First, the 100% God does not infringe upon the 100% man, and the 100% man does not impinge upon the 100% God (100% + 100% = 100%). They both can be accommodated simultaneously. This guarantees their peaceful coexistence. Second, the 100% God always has the primacy (100% + 100% = 100%). The divine ever gives rise to the human. This guarantees the sovereignty of God pertaining to every individual, every thing and every event, without any exception. Third, every "vacuum" appears to be "filled" twice ( $100\% + 100\% = \underline{100\%}$ ), first with the presence and actions of God, and then with the presence and actions of his creatures. Orthodox theology has captured this biblical truth by means of the concept *concursum*, a term with a distinguished track record. God's presence and actions and man's presence and actions occur simultaneously and non-competitively, and result in a common, uncompounded product. This does not only safeguard a full-orbed, unimpeded, and all-determining divinity but also an unfettered, freely functioning, and fully responsible humanity.

Before this is further analyzed, let me establish that this biblical arithmetic with its three components of 100% plus 100% equals 100% is all pervasive in Scripture. It is part of the warp and woof of biblical truth. There is no doctrine where it does not leave its imprint one way or another. In fact, the commitment to this arithmetic may well be the fundamental *conditio sine qua non* for all orthodoxy. Three examples (only because of the constraint of space), in which all three elements of the biblical arithmetic are in evidence, should go a long way to establish this.

They are evident in the person of Christ. (1) He is both fully God and fully man (100% + 100%). The two natures in Christ do not compete with or militate against each other. (2) The divine nature has the primacy (100%

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sinister influence of the ultimacy/primacy of the intellect. More about this below. See also the excellent treatment of these issues by J. Douma, *Algemene Genade* (Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1966), 289-302.

+ 100%). In the incarnation he remained what he was, and he became what he was not. (3) He is both divine and human in one person (= 100%). The two natures are neither confused or changed, nor divided or separated (Chalcedon).

They are also evident in Scripture. (1) It is the product of both the divine author and the human writers (100% + 100%). Mutual infringement is also here nonexistent. (2) The divine has the primacy (100% + 100%). Scripture is breathed out by God through humans under the superintendence of the Spirit. (3) Scripture is one book (= 100%). It is the one uncompounded product of both the divine and human factors. There is no seam in the Bible between these two factors. Every effort to either find or fabricate one is doomed from the start.

Finally, they are evident in the order of salvation. (1) The relationship between regeneration and faith may serve to illustrate this. Regeneration emphasizes the 100% God (John 1:13), without obscuring that it is fully, for 100%, as has already been argued, a human responsibility (Jer. 4:4; Ezek. 18:31) and a human experience (1 Pet. 1:3). Faith focuses upon the 100% man, without overlooking that it is fully, for 100%, a gift of God (Eph. 2:8) (100% + 100%). (2) Regeneration as the fountainhead of faith, and faith as the evidence of regeneration show the primacy of the divine (100% + 100%). (3) This primacy cannot be construed in terms of temporal priority. Regeneration and faith take place simultaneously (= 100%).<sup>86</sup>

It appears to be proper to see in the biblical arithmetic the hallmark of true orthodoxy. Both liberalism and neo-orthodoxy will take issue. The liberal does not enjoy the first half of the equation. He prefers 50% + 50% (or in any other configuration) to equal 100%. The neo-orthodox does not like the second half of the equation. He holds that 100% + 100% equals 200%.

To illustrate! In the area of Scripture, according to the liberal "50%" of the kernel of the divine and "50%" of the husk of the human make up 100% of Scripture, as they complement each other. According to the neo-orthodox, the 100% human Scripture and the 100% divine Word add up to 200%, as they do not coincide at any given point.

Not so incidentally, the biblical arithmetic with its three component elements is evident in divine providence as well. (1) Human history is planned and produced by both God and man, however different the motiva-

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<sup>86</sup> J. Murray, *Collected Writings* (Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1977), Vol. 2, 262, "There is no state or condition of regeneration without faith always coincident; the priority of regeneration is logical and causal, not chronological." See also the commentary of Donald A. Carson, *The Gospel According To John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) on John 1:12-13.

tion and the goal may be. (2) The divine is always the final determinant, however it may appear. (3) History is one and reflects as such the simultaneity of the divine and the human involvement. The cross is only one case in point. (1) It is fully a part of the plan of God and just as fully a product of man's evil scheming (**100%** + **100%**: Acts 2:23; 4:27-28). (2) The divine input predominates (**100%** + 100%: 1 Peter 1:19-20). (3) At the same time there was only one crucifixion of Christ (= **100%**: Hebrews 9:28).

All this, of course, has an immediate bearing upon the Pelagian controversy, which ultimately is a controversy about the truth or falsehood of the biblical arithmetic, both in principle and in practice.

#### *d. The Deeper Theological Analysis*

Turning now to the analysis of this arithmetic, it must be admitted that it is difficult to grasp that the 100% God has both the primacy over the 100% man, and at the same time is fully simultaneous with it. In fact, from the perspective of the human intellect this both-and architecture does and must constitute an antinomy and therefore an impossibility. Man's brain does not and cannot encompass or fathom it. Precisely at this point, whenever human reason is viewed as (ontologically) ultimate or even when (only) the (methodological) primacy of the intellect is practiced,<sup>87</sup> the root of the issue emerges.

Pelagius' point of departure is that *intellectus praecedit fidem*. The intellect precedes, measures, determines and guides faith.<sup>88</sup> To put it bluntly and colloquially, Pelagius in a purely rationalist fashion holds that "whatever the net of his intellect cannot catch, cannot possibly be fish." He is committed to the ultimacy and therefore also to the methodological primacy of the intellect, unwaveringly and irreversibly. Here the trouble begins. The reason is simple.

The intellect is not able to encompass at the same time the primacy of the divine over the human and the simultaneity of the divine and the human. In other words, it *cannot* embrace both sides of the equation simultaneously. This implies that from its perspective it cannot accommodate divine

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<sup>87</sup> Ultimacy in this context indicates that reason is man's final "resting place," *both ontologically and methodologically*. To think is to be. The unregenerate holds to that position by definition. The regenerate rejects it by definition. The latter ascribes ultimacy only to God and his truth. However, some Christian scholars do avail themselves of the term primacy to describe the function of the intellect. This is stipulated to mean the *methodological* priority of the intellect (only). So against this backdrop ultimacy always implies primacy, but primacy not always ultimacy. In my estimation both the ultimacy and the primacy of the intellect should be shunned. More about this later.

<sup>88</sup> Schaff, Vol. III, 788-789.

grace and human responsibility at the same time. That is to say, to the extent that human reason decides to function as fundamental point of departure and absolute judge, either ontologically or methodologically, it *must*, per force, conclude that the relationship of these two is one of antinomy, is essentially contradictory and inherently unintelligible. The reason is simple: *finitum non capax infinitum*. More precisely, finite reason cannot, does not, and never will grasp infinite being. If it tries, it pays the dire consequences. At best it mires down, and at worst it shipwrecks.

To acknowledge these limits of the intellect is neither a shame for, nor a sacrifice of, the intellect. Man's mind is simply not made to fathom the infinite. When it is recognized that a dog has it over a human in the sense of smell, a bat in the sense of hearing, and an eagle in the sense of sight, it should not come as a surprise that God may have construed the human intellect with limitations that it cannot transgress, if it does not wish to self-destruct. Just as bulky automobile tools are not the appropriate instruments to repair a sophisticated Swiss watch, so the human intellect is not the tool to penetrate the "stuff" of reality, let alone the being and inner workings of God. Their essential tapestry goes deeper than, and is therefore out of reach for, the human intellect. The essence of divine reality, as well as of all of created reality for that matter, cannot be exhaustively grasped by the human mind. It is not non-rational or irrational, but trans-rational. It transcends human rationality. Similarly, it is not a-logical, nor illogical, but trans-logical. It transcends human logic.<sup>89</sup>

In short, the infinite God (including his blueprint for created reality) simply does not fit in the human brain. To put him there will either "hurt our head" ("antinomy") and even explode it (Nietzsche ended up in the insane asylum), or tone down biblical truth ("no equal ultimacy") and even destroy it (Pelagianism).

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<sup>89</sup> The interaction with the views of Gordon Clark on the nature and function of the intellect must await another publication. In a nutshell, however, my view of the human intellect, including its relationship to the mind of God, is predicated upon the conviction that it is a created entity. The mind of God "encompasses" it. This excludes irrationalistic equivocity. At the same time, the mind of God transcends it. This excludes rationalistic univocity. The exclusion of irrationalistic equivocity makes genuine communication and true knowledge possible, the exclusion of rationalistic univocity leaves biblical mystery and incomprehensibility intact. The same thing applies to human logic. It is similarly a created entity, including the law of contradiction. Divine logic both encompasses it and transcends it. The former ensures the abiding validity of human reasoning, and vitiates irrationalism of any sort. The latter determines its inviolable boundary, and excludes any and all rationalism. Compare R. Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God*, 80, "We delude ourselves into believing that these finite minds of ours not only can know, but should know everything about everything. God's answer is 'You don't - and you can't; and what is more, there is legitimate mystery that breeds a needed sense of wonder.'" It is hardly surprising, that modernity has lost the "wonder of it all." After all, it has removed the occasion for such wonder when it cut "deity" and the divine down to the size of the human intellect.

However, the infinite God (including his truth) fits very snugly in the (regenerate) human heart, where he can be "experienced" in all his fullness (Eph. 3:16-17, 19-20, 21). In a word, truth as ontologically ultimate and the regenerate heart as methodologically primary are a perfect match. In the final analysis, therefore, the fundamental issues are never of the epistemological sort. They could not be. The limitation of the intellect will not allow it. Rather, they are ethical in nature. Will the human heart bow before, appropriate, and rejoice in divine truth, including the equal ultimacy not only of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, but also of divine election and reprobation (and . . . worship!), or will it not?

This is also the challenge of a remarkable passage in Scripture, Ecclesiastes 3:11, "God has made everything beautiful in its time. Also he has put eternity in the hearts of man. Only no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end." This verse has three elements. First, its core is the statement that God has placed "eternity" in man's heart (11b). In the deepest layers of his humanity man is no stranger to things eternal. That is, in his heart eternity intersects and enters time. This is an awesome reality that transcends conceptualization and language. That is, its essence cannot be grasped in concepts or communicated in words. It transcends human knowledge and exhaustive understanding. But wherever and however it manifests itself, it proves to be a reality nevertheless, a reality where eternal verities such as the love of Christ and the peace of God are "tasted." (Eph. 3:16-19; Phil. 4:6-7). It is a reality of experiential fellowship in which man truly comes into his own. Such fellowship could never come about, if man was not created in the image of God (Gen. 1:28; and esp. 2:7), and may well be a constituent element of his experience, because he is capable of being a "partaker of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4).<sup>90</sup> In short, man's heart is restless within him until "eternity" comes to rest in it and it comes to rest in "eternity," to paraphrase Augustine. This both anchors a new world-and-life view (the second element in the text), and precipitates a sobering word of caution (the third element).

A telling new world-and-life view is the second element (11a). In its analysis and assessment of reality the human heart now no longer endorses the notion that futility has the final word. It has a vision of the overarching primacy of God in, and the orderly disposition of, all things temporal. By

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<sup>90</sup> Hopefully it is superfluous to emphasize that Scripture does not wish to convey with this phrase, neither this author with his reference to it, that man could actually be deified! It is the plain biblical truth, however much beyond exhaustive human comprehension that "metaphysical union" between God and man is forever out of the question, while at the same time "covenantal communion" between God and the believer, with all that this entails, is a much cherished fact.

virtue of this vision everything created and providential is experienced as beautiful and well arranged, in short, as just what it ought to be. This includes birth and death, weeping and laughing, war and peace, etc. (Eccl. 3:1-8). That this is quite a vision can hardly be denied! The New Testament fully endorses it as well. Although in one sense creation is and remains subject to futility, nevertheless despair vanishes and hope replaces it (Rom. 8:18-21). A heart after God embraces the truth that God is in full, perfect and purposeful control. He causes all things to cooperate toward the good of them that love him (Rom. 8:28). Any notion of capricious randomness or ultimate chance is ruled out. His government is all-encompassing, though not dialectically to be equated with stifling regimentation. Later this aspect will be further developed.

The third element of the text is a sobering word of caution. There is the lurking danger that the human heart by virtue of its privileged position transcends the creaturely limits in an all too human display of pride. The experience of "eternity" may not and should not lead to the attempt to come to the *exhaustive* comprehension of creation and history from its start to its finish, in terms of its origin, its unfolding and its goal. This is and remains beyond the range of man's intellect. To grasp and control (the) essence (of things) by means of human reason is a pagan preoccupation, and has no place in the covenantal relationship a child of God enjoys with his Father. It is speculative and futile. It is an attempt to transcend one's humanity. It seeks to penetrate the impenetrable. It will never succeed, and in the end it will dialectically self-destruct.<sup>91</sup> It is hard to miss the contours of the biblical arithmetic, as well as its implications for the primacy of the heart and the limitations of the intellect. Ecclesiastes 3:11 is a remarkable passage, indeed!

All this was essentially the subject matter of the discussions in Paradise between God and Adam on the one hand, and between Satan and Adam on the other. God presented Adam with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The name indicates that what God has in mind with that tree is much more than a mere "test of obedience." It stands for a symbol of a source of interpretation (knowledge) with a view to moral assessment and action (good and evil) outside God. That is to say, it represents a supposedly independent epistemology and ethics that is not answerable to God.

God informed Adam that death would be inevitable if either epistemologically or ethically he listened to anyone else but him. The issue was clearly a matter of the heart, in fact, what was at stake was the primacy of

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<sup>91</sup> K.J. Popma, *Heersende te Jeruzalem* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1961), 69-85.

the heart. "You are in heart's submission to me, choose to listen to me only, and you will live. You are in heart's rebellion against me and in heart's submission to the Enemy, choose to listen to him, and you will self-destruct. Incidentally, this implies that you will never be Number 1. Whether you are a 'slave' of me, or a slave of my opponent, you are and always will remain Number 2."

This promptly became the point of Satan's attack. According to the Enemy, God's dilemma is self-serving as well as mistaken. "Did God posit that you will always be Number 2? That is patently false. Yes, if you submit to God, you will be Number 2. But if you listen to yourself epistemologically and ethically, you will be Number 1. And . . . by eating of the tree you can achieve Number 1 status." This temptation proved too much. To Adam it appeared worth the gamble to eat in order to become Number 1. So he ate, knowing full well what he did (1 Tim. 2:14). It was an act of rebellion, rooted in his heart.

It is ironic that in eating Adam proved God to be correct. For he listened to Satan in doing so! Consequently he did not transcend Number 2 status. And since Satan was a liar and a murderer from the beginning, Adam who got first an "ear" full of deceiving information, then a "heart" full of rebellion, and subsequently acted upon it, called upon himself and his descendants destruction and death.

In short, God presented Adam with the unavoidable primacy of the heart, the irrevocable reality of submission, and the perennial Number 2 status either under God or under Satan. Satan held out the prospect of the beckoning ultimacy and methodological primacy of the intellect, the enticing reality of independence and self-determination, and an achievable Number 1 status.

By implication, everyone who holds to the ultimacy or primacy of the intellect eats in whole or in part of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil all over again. So here is the dilemma. Choose the ultimacy and primacy of the intellect, independence from God, and die. Acknowledge the primacy of the heart, submission to God, and live.<sup>92</sup>

Incidentally, rebel man holds by definition to the ultimacy as well as the methodological primacy of the intellect. As has been mentioned already,

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<sup>92</sup> As will be shown later, all this has implications for Christian Apologetics. There is no common, neutral, epistemological ground. Hence an apologetic argument cannot proceed on that basis. Neither is there a common, neutral, ethical framework. Hence an apologetic argument cannot proceed with that in view. A biblical apologetics, which recognizes this, does not aim at an agreement of the mind, but at a repentance and submission of the heart.

some Christian scholars reject the former, but affirm the latter. That is regrettable, for it is an unacceptable compromise that opts willy-nilly for partial independence. The price for such independence is (still) too steep, namely partial death, both in method and effectiveness.

When ultimacy is ascribed to the intellect, and to the extent that the primacy of the intellect triumphs, death, indeed, rules. That means in this context that the biblical arithmetic is ruled out of order, either in whole or in part. Divine grace and human responsibility appear forever incompatible. Terms like "antinomy" cannot but emerge. The equal ultimacy of election and reprobation cannot but be denied.

In short, all efforts to sidestep, undermine, or do away with this arithmetic betray to a greater or lesser degree the apostate stance of the ultimacy or primacy of the intellect. Whether adhered to consciously or unconsciously, whether enunciated clearly or vaguely, whether practiced wholeheartedly or halfheartedly, once the intellect is in the driver's seat Scripture will be brushed aside in one way or another, in whole or in part.

Pelagianism as well as Semi-Pelagianism brushed Augustinianism aside. Once they held to the ultimacy of the intellect and committed themselves to the freedom of the will, they simply could not accommodate the sovereign gratuity of divine grace. In the 1600's Arminianism followed suit and brushed Calvinism aside. Today a modern Reformed writer with otherwise impeccable credentials has a blind spot and brushes aside the equal ultimacy of election and reprobation in the decree of predestination.

It is noteworthy that in these cases the final argumentation is never biblically concrete, "This or that goes against the grain of, or is not found in Scripture." It always is speculatively human, "The two sides of the equation cannot be held simultaneously," however it is formulated. This basically betrays that "it is too jarring a proposition for the intellect to accept." And since the heart should not be asked to embrace any proposition that the mind is not able to affirm,<sup>93</sup> it ought to be rejected. The culprit is only too visible. It is the ultimacy or primacy of the intellect. And full-orbed sovereignty bites the dust, once again.

Is this all that can be said about the "equation?" Not quite! The human mind cannot fathom it. But the regenerate heart loves it because it puts on display that God is God. He put reality together in a way no human being ever could. The rebel human heart with its commitment to the ultimacy of

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<sup>93</sup> R.C. Sproul, *Classical Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), ix, "Man is so constituted that his heart is to follow his head," and 21, "It is axiomatic that the heart cannot truly embrace what the mind repudiates will not affirm what the intellect has not accepted."

the intellect must dismiss the equation and what it stands for out of hand. The surrendered human heart with its commitment to God recognizes the limitations of its own intellect, humbly and gratefully receives the equation, and worships. In short, God's truth that does not fit into the finite human brain finds a perfect resting-place in the regenerate human heart. In fact, for the truth to take up the residence specifically made for it constitutes a veritable "homecoming" with full cognitive tranquillity as a consequent benefit.

For such a heart it would be too jarring a proposition to hold that God is not able to be and do what he clearly is and did, namely to be 100% sovereign over all of created reality and its history, and at the same time to hold humans 100% responsible for all that they are, have and do. Admittedly, no human being can pull that off and no human mind could have thought that out. But God can and did. The denial of this truth simply calls for the response that "Your God is too small!"

This is the bottom line. The biblical arithmetic does two things. It brings out that God is God, who transcends man and the boundaries of his rationality, and it evokes worship (Rom. 11:33). This is a far cry from a "god" who must pass the bar of human reason in his being, his plans, and his activities whether in whole or in part, and subsequently is told that he cannot do what the Bible said he did do.

But there is one more step to take! Adherence to the ultimacy/primacy of the intellect evokes and betrays the presence of the fundamental dialectic mentioned in the Introduction. This proves to have a firm grip on the proponents of such ultimacy/primacy, again either in whole or in part. The nature and impact of this dialectic, not in the last place upon the theological enterprise, now need to be explained more fully. It lays bare the roots as well as implications of the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy in historical and global perspective. That is to say, this controversy proves to be only the peak of the iceberg. The exposure of its roots will lead to the acknowledgment that what is at stake is a universal problem that touches all of mankind at all times, in all places, in all settings and in all circumstances. The Pelagian controversy is one instance. The *Jurassic Park* / *The Lost World* sequence is only a second one among many others.

This exposure will also explain the reason for the religious fervor with which the biblical arithmetic is rejected, and the human impossibility of changing the opponent's mind even in the face of clear biblical data. Finally, it will lead to the recognition as to how the biblical position both theologically and globally can, should, and will prevail. It is the first order of business in Part II of this volume.

*Part II*

# **The Philosophical and Global Perspective**

## Introduction

What comes into view in this section is the foundational philosophical setting of the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy. It also will become clear that this controversy is only one aspect of what are literally worlds in collision. In short, what explodes on the scene is a fundamental, all-embracing, dynamic that shapes history in a global way and should be recognized by a truly biblical philosophy of history for the destructive cultural force that it was. Such philosophy will not only demonstrate that Augustine was right on when he posited the radical antithesis between the City of God and the city of man as that which shapes and moves all of history. It will also show the grounds for that antithesis, why it is inevitable, why it is all-encompassing, and why it will not go away as long as God prolongs history in its present form. Mankind is locked in battle in every phase, aspect, sphere, and structure of reality, including the disciplines that examine, analyze, critique or seek to direct reality in all its facets, whether metaphysically, epistemologically or ethically. “Common grace” insures that this does not come down to a perpetual blood bath. But, ironically, even “common grace” is an essential element in God’s battle plan, in fact, one of God’s weapons in the battle in that it is designed to lead the recipients of such grace to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

## The Philosophical Setting

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### *a. The Fundamental Dialectic*

As has already been argued, the rebellion against God, which gives rise to the ultimacy and primacy of the intellect, also produces a fundamental and sinister dialectic. This determines the direction of both the thinking and the activities of all those whom it victimizes, that is, of all those who are rebellious at heart, or who espouse an apostate methodology, whether consciously or not.

The term *dialectic* has been used in the history of philosophy in a variety of ways. Here, however, as has already been indicated in the Introduction to this volume, the stipulated definition is that of a totality structure ("metaphysics") consisting of two poles that mutually and simultaneously presuppose and exclude each other. The first pole is characterized by indeterminism, contingency, discontinuity, irrationalism, randomness, and uncertainty (the "particulars" prevail). The second pole is characterized by determinism, necessity, continuity, rationalism, purpose, and certainty (the "universals" rule). In a word, the perennial problem of "the one and the many" surfaces.

To flesh this out some more, due to the mutual presupposition of the two poles there are the constant need and the ever-recurring attempts for them to be thought ("epistemology") or brought ("ethics") together. Due to their mutual exclusion there is the ever-recurring failure to succeed. Since the poles must, but cannot, be thought or brought together, the dialectic ends up with a "never ending dead-end street."

Each pole will manipulate its own proponent "hot heads" to aim at the destruction of the other, as *The Lost World* so aptly recognized. After all, it is impossible for both rationalism and irrationalism, determinism and indeterminism, etc., to coexist or to fill a vacuum at the same time. But, as will

be shown below, the victory of the one pole will always precipitate the reemergence of the other.

When "cooler heads" temporarily prevail, efforts are undertaken to synthesize the poles into an uneasy truce. After all, the commitment to rationalism is basically irrational, and the commitment to irrationalism essentially rational. This implies that there is an inner connector between the two poles.<sup>94</sup> But even more so, the "stuff" of reality, which is indicated by the mutual presupposition of the two poles, continues to put in its claim to be recognized. This calls for a truce. However, such truce will eventually be shattered on the rocks of their equally fundamental mutual exclusion.

"Wiser heads" will, indeed, notice that a perfect equilibrium is not and cannot be reached. Either rationalism or irrationalism turns out to have the upper hand. But since any domination by one of the poles is unacceptable to the "underdog," the battle will eventually be resumed. Conflict, and not harmony, appears to be the bottom line. So the pendulum swings and will ever swing from the one pole to the other with intermittent periods of an uneasy truce. This is a characteristic that all apostate thought and all apostate conduct have in common. They simply cannot escape it. It comes with the territory of the dialectic as an inevitable apostate-historical dynamic.<sup>95</sup>

At this point two reminders are called for. First, because this dialectic operates whenever and wherever rebellion against God prevails, its presence and impact are pervasive and must be pervasive. In fact, if anything, this turns the world into the questionable "global village" that it is, and frankly from this perspective always has been!

Second, what comes to light is why the sovereignty/responsibility issue, which is one aspect of "the one and the many" problem, is only the tip of the iceberg.

A further inquiry into the dialectic will not only present a full picture of the foundations for anything Pelagianizing, but also show why it is so difficult to unshackle oneself from its sphere of influence once one is drawn into it. At the same time it will show the way of escape.

The reason for the emergence of the dialectic and the way it operates are worth noting. When man dethrones God, as he did in Paradise, he is essentially left with a "vacuum," something that also Nietzsche incidentally was

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<sup>94</sup> See also J. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Philipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1987), 361-362, who quite persuasively argues this same point.

<sup>95</sup> This was very well understood and very clearly expressed by Michael Crichton in his book *The Lost World*.

quick to observe. Without divine sovereignty and control reality can be nothing else but contingent, discontinuous, and undetermined. The "particular," "the irrational," and therewith randomness does and must ultimately reign supreme.<sup>96</sup>

Before too long it is recognized as unpredictable, unsettling, and chaotic. This is soon "getting to" man. It begins to pose a threat. After all, no one can live in such a "vacuum." As a result of that the search is on for a principle of necessity, continuity, and determinism. Help is sought from the "universal," "the rational." Order is established. Purpose is introduced. The threat appears to be gone.

Ironically, however, when discontinuity is replaced by continuity, the shoe begins to pinch on the other foot. Control asserts itself. Quickly it is considered as regimenting and stifling. The danger of a treadmill existence and zombie-like reality begins to loom large.

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<sup>96</sup> It is noteworthy that in his search for the key to the universe Davies, *The Mind of God*, 231-232, concludes with (1) sharing a "frank admission of hopelessness," (2) stating "the worth (of) trying to construct a metaphysical theory that reduces some of the arbitrariness of the world," and (3) suggesting "mystical experiences . . . (as) . . . possibly . . . the only route beyond the limits . . . (of) . . . science and philosophy . . . the only possible path to the Ultimate." He does so because he "cannot believe that our existence in the universe is a mere quirk of fate, an accident of history, an incidental blip in the great cosmic drama." After all, "We, who are children of the universe – animated stardust – can nevertheless reflect on the nature of the same universe, even to the extent of glimpsing the rules on which it runs." The author is clearly groping. Particularity seems to have the final word. Wherever the mind turns, it runs irremediably into mystery. Still there is universality, and what is more, a corresponding universality of the universe and the mind. They appear to be a "perfect" fit. Unless that is pure chance, particularity cannot have the final word. It is rather clear what is going on. Faced with the facts of God's creation, he somehow cannot miss particularity, universality, or the limitations inherent to his own Number 2 status. From this perspective he is justified not only to put particularity into his equations, but also to conclude that particularity does not have the final word, even if he cannot make that compelling. At the same time, from the perspective of his premises, which display the indelible imprint of the fundamental dialectic, his conclusions cannot be but a mixture of painful observation (the primacy of particularity) and wishful thinking (the clinging to universality). Although he bumps into the limitations inherent to his Number 2 status, he operates from a pretended Number 1 status. Hence he cannot synthesize particularity and universality, as is apparent from his conclusions. His book is therefore part of the pavement of the afore-mentioned dialectic never-ending dead-end street, even if many of the individual stones that make up the pavement are precious. The latter could be no different! After all, anyone who labors in and with God's creation must come up with (some of) God's nuggets. Christian scholarship must recognize, and may avail itself, of that. By the same token, it must also recognize that a never-ending dead-end street, however much it bathes in the light of common grace, is still the road to hell. By all means, feel free to acknowledge the (stolen) pavement as fully God's truth that spells life. But at the same time recognize the direction of the road simultaneously as Satan's lie that ends up in death! The former allows for scientific collaboration that is always carefully and at times narrowly defined. The latter calls for evangelistic confrontation that is always winsomely and at times boldly pursued. The two should go hand in hand! Regrettably Christian scholarship has too often extolled the "virtues" of collaboration at the expense of confrontation. When it chooses "comfort" over "courage," history testifies that it invariably ends up with losing its birthright. All in all Davies does not appear to differ much from the author of *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World*. Basically it is "same tune, different verse."

Because no one wishes to live in such an atmosphere, contingency, discontinuity, and indeterminism, which at one time appeared to be threatening, now look suddenly inviting. Under the guise of personal freedom and personal choice they are permitted to enter. The danger of stifling regimentation recedes.

In sum, as soon as the first pole is viewed as disorderly, chaotic, and unsettling, in short as a threat to stability and security, it by definition lays out the welcome mat for the second pole. However, as soon as the second pole is viewed as orderly, regimenting, and stifling, in short as a threat to freedom and entrepreneurialism, it returns the compliment, and by definition lays out the welcome mat for the first pole. From the perspective of the second pole the first pole must manifest itself as "unsettling dissolution," which it challenges in terms of its own "order." From the vantage-point of the first pole, the second pole must manifest itself as "stifling regimentation," which it challenges in terms of its own "freedom." All this gave rise to the earlier remark that the victory of the one pole invites the emergence of the other. It also explains why in historical perspective the dialectic dynamics has the poles alternate in taking control in the various aspects or spheres of life. In doing so, they virtually "leapfrog" over each other.

An intermediate illustration from the history of evolution will make clear what has been argued so far. The first phase, which originates with Darwin, substituted total randomness for purpose as the core of reality. (Of course, the idea of purpose was bound up with the sovereignty of God. The idea of randomness made it possible for him to deny the existence of God and therewith escape his sovereignty.) This substitution not only effected a sweeping change in the prevailing world and life view. It also reduced man to "one" phenomenon "among many," fully a part of the "prime slime," from which he originated. This is apparently a "small price" to pay to get rid of God. Faced with the liabilities of randomness, the second more sophisticated phase, the phase of scientific evolutionism, saw the need to impose purpose. (Pure randomness can never function as an exclusive and permanent bedfellow.) It opted for man to accomplish this task. From "one among many" man became "one of a kind." Thus it elevated man, taken in the collective sense, to a position of uniqueness as he was appointed the author of purpose, which was the aim of the dethronement of God in the first place. The central government was assigned the task to define purpose and enforce it, too often in a totalitarian way. The inevitable tyranny this produced sooner or later proved to be its own undoing. (The dialectic in its historical dynamics would see to that!)

Evolutionary history, in a word, ran the gamut from a rejected (divinely established) purpose via an introduced (allegedly ultimate) randomness to a reinvented (humanly imposed) purpose.<sup>97</sup> The dialectic pendulum is manifest, and the rest is history. The former East Bloc is especially illustrative of this. In the Soviet Union and its satellites a man-orchestrated and State-enforced purpose turned into a tyrannical regimentation in both politics and economics behind the former "iron curtain." This eventually created a vehement backlash. The pursuit of freedom prevailed. And . . . now the East Bloc is no more!

Returning to the main argument, the mutual hostility of the poles effects a power struggle. The one pole aims to conquer the other. Depending upon the relative strength of the poles, and by virtue of their mutual presupposition, the upshot is at times an uneasy truce, that never appears to last. Thus the dialectic is a dynamic, a driving power, a historical force that produces basically a continuing pendulum swing from pole to pole with ever failing intermittent syntheses. The evidence for this is pervasive in every area and aspect of life, and is there for all to see. No diligent student of history can miss it!

It appears that the twin pillars of a rebellious heart and the primacy of the intellect have produced a shambles. The rebel heart brings the dialectic relationship of the two poles into existence. The intellect is faced with the impossible task of thinking them together and of showing ways to bring them together.

Because of the pervasive presence and influence of the dialectic as a totality structure, it can serve as a starting point for a "brief description of everything (apostate)." Like homosexuality and drugs it is life controlling. This will now be illustrated, first in the disciplines of philosophy and economics in section b of this Chapter, and then in the practice of politics and business in section c, in order to return after that to theology by way of a case study in modern science in Chapter 5.

In the process we will encounter what the apostle Paul aims at in Colossians 2:8. He warns against the philosophical theories ("epistemology") and the empty, deceitful practices ("ethics") that follow the traditions of man and the systems of the world both in their intellectual accounting for and in

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<sup>97</sup> H. Krabbendam, "Biblical Instructions Applied to the Business World," in *Biblical Principles & Business: The Foundations* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1989), 100-101.

their life's response to the "ABC's" or "basic building blocks" of human existence.<sup>98</sup>

Metaphysically all men have these basic building blocks, such as the "one and many spheres" (accommodating both universals and particulars) and the "authority structures" (reflective of both sovereignty and responsibility), in common. These spheres and structures are not only all-pervasive, in that all humans find themselves always and everywhere at any given time, and at any given place, in one or more "one and many" and in one or more "authority" relationships. But they also overlap.

Every "one and many sphere" is also an "authority structure" and vice versa, every "authority structure" is also a "one and many sphere." This so, whether they are voluntary, such as marriage (with its husband/wife relationship), the church (with its elder/member relationship) and the business (with its employer/employee relationship) or involuntary, such as the family (with its parent/child relationship) and the state (with its government/subject relationship). If the "one and the many spheres" constitute the horizontal component, the "authority structures" provide the vertical perspective.

Epistemologically and ethically, however, two diverging tracks are in evidence. The believer and the unbeliever go their separate ways in their approach to these spheres and structures.

In the believer's experience the relationship of both poles is one of harmony for three good reasons. First, in terms of both the one and many spheres and the authority structures the "stuff of reality" is no fluke of chance, or evolution. Far from it! It has the imprint of the being of God indelibly upon it. It is ontologically a reflection of the Trinitarian being of God. The ontological Trinity, in whom the "One and the Many" are equally ultimate, accounts for the created one and many spheres. The economic Trinity, in whom the "in and under authority" positions are equally functional, accounts for the created authority structures. This explains that in created reality both poles in either instance can be accommodated simultaneously. That is, they were originally meant to function in peaceful coexis-

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<sup>98</sup> The term *stoicheia*, or "elementary principles," can be used pejoratively, as in Galatians 4:3,9, favorably, as in Hebrews 6:1, or neutrally, as in 2 Peter 3:10, 12. In Colossians 2:8 the term is neutral in itself. However, it has a negative contextual connotation, because the phrase of which it is a part, "kata ta stoicheia tou kosmou" (according to the ABC's of the world), is ("dis")qualified by the addition "kata ten paradousin toon anthropoon" (according to the traditions of man). See also Gerhard Friedrich, editor, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), Vol. VII, 683-687.

tence, and through the influence of God's goodness (common grace) still frequently do so, even after the fall into sin.

Second, the understanding of reality for the believer is epistemologically furnished by the interpretation of God. The Number 2 position is acknowledged and the ultimacy of the intellect shunned. This yields a hefty dividend. God's interpretation of the one and many spheres and the authority structures provides instructions and guidelines to steer them unfailingly in the right operational direction. The principal co-ultimacy of the poles in the one and the many spheres and co-functionality of the poles in the authority structures are not just wishful thinking! After all, they are embedded in created reality by divine fiat.

Third, the behavior in reality by the believer is ethically determined by the inner-Trinitarian conduct of God. This is characterized by self-denial in the divine One and Many sphere, and by self-sacrifice and submission in the divine Authority structure.<sup>99</sup> That is to say, in the Trinity the "Parties" are there not for themselves but for the others in a radical and total manner. For example, in the Trinity as an authority structure, the Father, who is in authority, exemplifies self-sacrifice in a rather astounding fashion when he transfers his life, authority and judgment to the Son, who is under authority (John 5:20-22, 26-27). At the same time, the Son exemplifies submission in an equally astounding fashion when he refuses to proceed on his own initiative or to implement his own will, but rather determines only to please his Father and to do his will (John 5:30; 6:38-40; 8:28-29, 42). Of course, without the pure, self-denying, love on the part of both Father and Son (John 5:20) this "divine ethics" could never have materialized. Further, this divine ethics is the embodiment of the perfect unity that exists between Father and Son (John 10:30).

All this explains why in godly created one and many spheres self-denial in love and holiness does and should prevail, and in the godly human authority structures self-sacrifice and submission in love and holiness is and should be the order of the day. It also explains why such godly conduct, rooted in love and exemplifying unity is the fundamental apologetic that validates Christianity (John 13:35), and authenticates the mission of its

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<sup>99</sup> The cross would have been impossible without self-denial, self-sacrifice and submission. In the divine One and Many sphere the cross was a model of self-denial on the part of both the Father and the Son. In the divine authority structure the cross was equally a model of the Father's self-sacrifice and the Son's submission. It hardly needs to be argued that the cross, or anything even remotely resembling it, could never have been initiated or achieved by fallen man. Pernicious self-interest, self-service and self-preservation would have precluded that. (This is not to deny that common grace throughout the history of mankind has "routinely" produced behavior that is more or less (faintly) reflective of divine ethics.)

Author (John 17:21-23). One can only imagine what a breath taking testimony it would be, if in the Christian orbit all those in authority could without reservation entrust that authority, and all that this entails, to those under their charge and care, in the absolute certainty that the latter in the footsteps of Christ as their model would comport themselves as “perfect trustees,” ever renouncing their own independent and self-serving initiative, will, and actions! Under this scenario, once again, 100% + 100% would equal 100%. The one (in authority) would be there *for* the other and operate *through* the other (under authority). At the same time the one (under authority) would be there *for* the other and operate *from* the other (in authority). This would produce (true) freedom (from self) (100% *plus* 100%),<sup>100</sup> harmony (*equals* 100%), and prosperity. But more about this reflection of the Trinitarian model later!

It is no accident that both Ephesians 4-6 and Colossians 3-4, after stating that in the believer the old heart is replaced by the new (Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:8-11), first deal with the one and many relationships (Eph. 4:25-5:21; Col. 3:12-17), and then with the authority structures (Eph. 5:22-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1). Paul surely treats them as the basic building blocks of all human interaction. Neither is it an accident that the issue of the new heart is addressed first (Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:8-11). Without the “foundation” of the new heart the basic building blocks of society simply “do not stack up.” “Self” must be crucified as the minimum requirement for that to occur!

It is hardly surprising that in the experience of unbelievers these basic building blocks fail to “fall into place.” Unbelievers are victimized by their rebel heart. The self is alive and well, even if at times it is toned down by common grace. Therefore the poles of the building blocks, not so “suddenly,” take on the form of a dialectic. They can no longer be argued with equal force and be accommodated equally. True freedom is replaced by bondage (to self). Conflict supplants harmony. Human thinking bogs down and human life is crippled. The two poles, as, once again, *The Lost World* acknowledged, can no longer be *thought* or *brought* together.

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<sup>100</sup> It is amazing that Jesus can say that he lays down his life on his own initiative and simultaneously as an act of obedience (that is, not out of his own initiative) (John 10:18). This is not a logical contradiction. From the perspective of the new heart it is not even a paradox. The Father gives him the authority. So he acts in perfect freedom. At the same time, he takes everything out of the Father. So he follows his command. Freedom and law merge in the divine way of doing things.

### ***b. Philosophical Thought and Economic Theory***

First of all, I will show in a rather elaborate way from the history of philosophical thought and more in a summary fashion from economic theory that the poles cannot be *thought* together.

Philosophy aims to give a rational accounting of one's total experiencing. Since in its apostate form it is driven by the dialectic, it only makes sense, as has correctly been observed, to understand it as one gigantic series of efforts to solve the one and the many problem,<sup>101</sup> to find a synthesis between the particulars and the universals, that is, to think the poles of the dialectic together. There is *prima facie* evidence that it has failed and a principial certainty that it will fail. It has failed. Every subsequent philosopher has demonstrated the failure of his predecessor. It will fail. The mutual exclusion of the poles guarantees that.

What now follows is a summary of the history of ancient and modern philosophy in order to illustrate this.

In a bird's eye view, ancient philosophy begins with the empiricism (emphasis upon the particulars) of Heraclitus and the rationalism (emphasis upon the universal) of Parmenides, continues with the efforts of Plato and Aristotle to combine the two, and concludes with the attempted synthesis by Plotinus.<sup>102</sup>

To Heraclitus the universe was basically a matter of "becoming." He portrayed it as an eternal flux, as expressed in the well known maxim, "*panta rei, ouda menei*," "everything flows, nothing remains." This is not to say that universality was ignored. Quite the contrary! He consistently sought to emphasize unity in diversity, identity in difference, by means of the "logos" or universal reason. The latter structured the eternal flux by both forging the unity of all things and determining their constant change. However, through his "over-assertion of becoming,"<sup>103</sup> particularity appeared to have the final say.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> See F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Image Books, 1962ff.), Vol. I, Part I, 38ff., 54ff., 64ff., 76ff., 174ff., 204ff., and Part II, 208ff., 229ff. See also R. Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God*, 147ff. He also points to the ontological Trinity as the metaphysical backdrop for the existence of both the one and the many, and the economic Trinity as the ethical backdrop for pursuing relationships in the one and the many spheres.

<sup>102</sup> For an excellent survey of the philosophies of Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus, see Copleston, *A History*, Vol. I, Part I, Chs. 5-6, 17-25, and Part II, Chs. 27-34, 45, 47.

<sup>103</sup> This terminology is used by Copleston, *A History*, Vol. I, Part I, 95. See also, *ibid.*, 69.

<sup>104</sup> The Pythagoreans were even more radical than Heraclitus. The latter, at least, *endeavored* to do justice to both unity and diversity. The former, as Copleston, *ibid.*, Vol. I, Part I, 76, observed, "as-

Parmenides construed the universe as “being.” He regarded the flux of matter and “being” as mutually exclusive. Only “being” exists. Since Parmenides equates it with theoretical thought, it has the imprint of rationalistic necessity indelibly upon it. Eventually universality was emphasized to the point that any kind of particularity, including movement in time or space was regarded as an impossibility. In fact, the flux of particularity was designated as “non-being” and said to be non-existent. That turned all plurality, all becoming, all change, all motion, all space, all time, in short, all of the empirical world, the world of all alleged sense-perception into an illusion.

Ancient philosophy continues with seeking the synthesis of both the universals and the particulars, the rational and the irrational, first in the transcendent form/matter scheme of Plato, and subsequently in the immanent form/matter theory of Aristotle.<sup>105</sup>

Plato's goal was to synthesize Heraclitus and Parmenides in a way in which both the particulars and the universals would be fully accounted for. He distinguished to that end between the lower realm of matter (flux, particulars) and the higher realm of the forms (order, universals). The former was made possible by means of “participation” in the latter as its transcendental condition. Individual entities, such as particular horses are said to participate in the universal idea or concept of “horse-ness.” Matter, then, functioned as the principle of individuation.

Aristotle's philosophy was a variation on the same theme. He charged that Plato's construction was not satisfactory. Since the sum-total of the ideas were epitomized in the idea of the “good,” Plato could not account for realities, such as aberrant conduct, disease and dirt, in short, of sin and its consequences. Therefore, full participation of the material world in the upper realm appeared to be elusive. But even more fundamental, the concept of participation as such had no substantive reality. There was no internal principle that constituted the objects in the sensible world in their essence, and bound the ideas and sensible world together. This left Plato with an unbridged and unbridgeable chasm, a dualism between pure universality and pure particularity, which gave the sensible world less than a shadowy existence.<sup>106</sup> As a consequence the much hoped for synthesis did not materialize. Hence Aristotle rejected the specific “two-tiered” scheme proposed by

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serted plurality to the exclusion of the One.” Thus they were even more than Heraclitus the antipode of Parmenides, who, as we shall see, “asserted the One to the exclusion of the many.”

<sup>105</sup> Form stands for the universals, matter for the particulars.

<sup>106</sup> See Copleston, *ibid.*, Vol. I, Part II, 116-117.

Plato, and introduced his theory of the immanent, essential, forms. In the chain of being, also hierarchical in nature, but less “box” like, the lower form functions as matter for the higher form and higher matter functions as the form for the lower matter, with the understanding that the highest form is *pure* form, and the lowest matter virtually *pure* matter. It is commonly agreed, however, that the latter stipulation destroys any possibility of a synthesis between the two poles. Looking at Aristotle’s construction “from the top down” everything must be form, for if the second form in the hierarchy of being is at the same time matter, it must be matter for the highest form, and with it the idea of pure form vanishes. Similarly, when looking at it “from the bottom up,” everything should turn out to be matter. The type of reasoning, of course, is the same.

Ancient philosophy concludes with the transcendental form/matter thinking of Plotinus. He holds that both the rational pole of universality and the irrational pole of particularity emanate from a common origin, the “One.” This designation is self-explanatory, since it supposedly gave rise to both poles. This “One” is unknowable, otherwise it had to be identified with rationality and universality. This, of course, would have disqualified it as a point of synthesis. The emanation, furthermore, is both necessary and unconscious. It is necessary in order to account for the rational pole, and it is unconscious in order to do so for the irrational pole. It soon became evident on immanent grounds that this construct was not viable. Knowledge of the unknowable is self-contradictory. The upshot was that all of ancient philosophy, including its major contributors, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus, failed to arrive at the synthesis.<sup>107</sup>

In modern philosophy history repeats itself. Once again in a bird’s eye view, modern philosophy starts with the rationalism (emphasis upon the universal) of Leibnitz and the empiricism (emphasis upon the particulars) of

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<sup>107</sup> It should not go unnoticed that in Heraclitus the One exists in the tension and conflict of opposites. In fact, strife and war are essential to the existence of the One. The cessation of strife would be tantamount to the destruction of the universe. See Copleston, *ibid.*, Vol. I, Part I, 56. This cannot be understood apart from the dialectic. A victory by either pole means destruction. Only a finely tuned balance will guarantee a future. But this balance can only be maintained at the cost of tension, strife, conflict and war. However much the two poles presuppose each other, they will always and by definition exclude each other. Apparently, what *The Lost World* advocates at the end of the 20th. Century AD, was already common fare in the 5th. Century BC. There is nothing new in the dialectic darkness. Incidentally, the same dialectic violence is visible in Heidegger. But while Heraclitus makes a virtue out of a necessity – the war of the opposites are not a blot on the One – , Heidegger seeks to transcend it. More about this below.

Hume, continues with the efforts of Kant and Hegel to combine<sup>108</sup> the two, and concludes with the attempted synthesis by Heidegger.<sup>109</sup>

Leibnitz claims that the essence of reality consists of a mathematical continuum, in which all positions, similar to a calculus, are occupied and occupied only once. It is a noumenal reality, which is filled in gap-less density with windowless (men) monads. In these monads, which account for the mathematical coherence of the world order, rationality and sensory perception come together. The knowledge derived from reason, such as logic and mathematics, is based on innate ideas and is necessarily true on the basis of the law of contradiction. The knowledge derived through sensation is based on ideas that are potentially innate, and is contingent and aposteriori. It is interesting to note that in Leibnitz' thought the metaphysical imperfection of the world is caused by sensory perception in that it obscures pure mathematical thought. This imperfection is what Leibnitz calls "sin" or "evil."

This philosophical accounting for reality calls for several observations.

First, since monads are windowless, the outside world cannot be experienced or known immediately. In fact, the perceptions of the monads are no more than representations of the external world. These representations owe their existence to Leibnitz's "deity," which is no more and no less than "universal mathematical harmony," and is portrayed as the "master geometrician." This "deity" functions as a movie Projector within the monad, and produces as a *deus ex machina* the representations on the screen of

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<sup>108</sup> The use of the verb "combine" in this context is technically not correct. Copleston, *ibid.*, Vol. VI, Part II, 217ff. argues persuasively that the philosophy of Kant (and that of Hegel as well) is more than the confluence, conflation, or synthesis, of rationalism and empiricism. He derived elements from both, but at the same time, rather than combining the incompatible, he (allegedly) superseded them, and so "triumphed" over them. At the same time, it ought to be emphasized that there was a continuity between Kant and his predecessors. Not only was Kant's philosophy a "culmination point of previous lines of thought." But in seeking to harmonize "the world of mechanistic causality and determinism, and the world of freedom," he tackled the same dialectic issue that was faced by Leibnitz and Hume. The fact that in his clearly original solution he turned his back to both should not veil from sight that ultimately all three were in the grip of the dialectic, and attempted to solve the (identical) problem posed by it, namely that of the synthesis of its two poles that would give a total accounting of one's experiencing and therewith would earmark the God of Scriptures as irrelevant, superfluous and non-existent!

<sup>109</sup> For an excellent survey of the philosophies of Leibnitz, Hume, Kant, and Hegel, see Copleston, Vol. IV, Part II, Chs. 15-18; Vol. V, Part II, Chs. 14-18; Vol. VI, Part I, Ch. 10, Part II, Chs. 11-16; Vol. VII, Part I, Chs. 9-11, and H. Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co, 1953), Vol. I, 223-260; 271-323; 325-402. For the philosophy of Heidegger, see the unpublished Doctor's Thesis by H. Krabbendam, *From Bultmann to Ott, A Critique of Theological Thought In Modern Hermeneutic* (Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1969), 176-289. This section presents an analysis of the intricate details and development of Heidegger's philosophy as well as his repeated admissions of failure.

the human mind. Since the Projector is present in, active in, and common to, each monad, a shared “experience” is assured. But this is not due to an immediate contact with the external world. The internal, so-called, sensation functions as (only) the occasion for the knowledge of the outside world.

Second, the so-called evil of sensory perception is there to be conquered. Of course, metaphysically God could have chosen another world, worse, better, or perfect for that matter. Morally, however, God chose the best possible world. Here Leibnitz turns a necessity into a virtue. Perfection would have meant uncompromised and uncompromising, rational, and ultimately stifling, universality. With it all “freedom” would have vanished. But science is not allowed to swallow up freedom or to eradicate it! Free human personality is just as sacrosanct as impersonal rational universality. So (reluctantly) the concession of imperfection is made to secure a semblance of freedom. After all, if reality would be perfect, no new worlds would beckon to be conquered. A perpetual status quo would freeze out all need for freedom. On the other hand, as long as there are still goals to be achieved, freedom pulsates and remains alive! This warrants only one conclusion. The concession of imperfection is a necessity masquerading as a virtue.

The dialectic pattern and tension are hard to miss. On the one hand the world is dominated by mathematical logic (the ultimacy of an all-encompassing, stifling science/ rationality/universality), which should exclude all particularity. On the other hand there is the goal of perfection to be reached (the input of an entrepreneurial, free personality), which should offset the absolutism of a tyrannical science and requires the presence of at least some particularity. There appears to be no bridge from rational universality to irrational particularity. It is difficult to come to any other conclusion in the light of the function of the deity as a *deus ex machina* to produce a common experience of the “external world.” No direct communication exists! Further, the attempt to synthesize the two poles is a failure. The dialectical upshot is that there is hardly any breathing room left for the particular, and therewith for human freedom. The price for a Leibnitz type of universality is manifestly huge.

All this was not lost to Hume. He endeavored to turn the tables by making particularity central. In him the empiricistic approach comes to its fullest modern expression. He claims that knowledge comes to man merely by impressions (vivid) and ideas (faint copies of impressions in the mind). On this basis he rejects innate ideas as well as all abstract ideas, for that matter.

As far as relations, such as causality, is concerned, he warns against drawing quick conclusions. Sense experience teaches no more than a temporal priority and an empirically verifiable constant conjunction between two events. Hardly enough to conclude to a “universal,” such as the “law of causation!”

With regard to the notion of substance, he holds that the world of perceptions is clearly subjective. Hence there is no good ground to speak dogmatically about the human soul or self as a “substance.” The latter is no more than a cluster of qualities perceived.

Hume's philosophy is clearly skeptical. However, it is only a theoretical skepticism, since practical life would wither away, if it would be permitted to take its course. Still this theoretical skepticism should be allowed to destroy all universality, and with it all types of dogmatism. The bottom line is that particularity reigns. Consequently the world is to be regarded as an inscrutable mystery. (It is hardly surprising that in the process religion is reduced to the level of a purely theoretical possibility only, which can be dismissed the moment this is admitted as such).<sup>110</sup>

All in all, Hume rejects the notion of abstract ideas and substance, and only accepts discrete ideas, faint replica's of impressions of the simplest elements. He even reduces arithmetic to sensory multiplicity. In the final analysis Hume undermined both the reality of (Newtonian) science (reason is expelled as legislator along mathematical lines) and the notion of human personality (the self as substance) disappears.<sup>111</sup>

Once again the dialectic rears its ugly head. Just as there is no bridge from Leibnitz's rationalism to the empirical world, so there is no bridge from Hume's empiricism to the world of thought. When all knowledge comes through sense impressions, comparable to a series of unrelated pictures taken by a camera, Hume is hard put to explain the continuity of the impressions. That is certainly not a given alongside the sense data. The synthesis once again proves to be elusive. While rationalism ultimately knows everything about nothing, empiricism ultimately knows nothing about everything.

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<sup>110</sup> From a Christian point of view Hume's mistake was that he reduced all of reality to the area of the psychological, just as Leibnitz had reduced all of reality to the area of mathematics. (For the reductionistic tendencies in Hume, see Copleston, *A History*, Vol. V, Part II, 89, 93, 105, 132, and Vol. VI, Part II, 59, 196.) Both lost sight of the colorful cosmos of God in its systatic integrity as well in the rich diversity of its aspects.

<sup>111</sup> Hume's concept of the State fits right in with the rest of his thinking. It is there to serve the interest of the subjects. But when advantage ceases, obligation to allegiance ceases as well. Once again this undermines any kind of universality in terms of natural law or contract.

Modern philosophy continues its efforts to combine universality and particularity, first in the transcendental freedom/nature scheme of Kant, and then in the idealistic freedom/nature scheme of Hegel.<sup>112</sup>

Kant set himself the gigantic task to save freedom and particularity from the onslaught of rationalists such as Leibnitz and to save necessity and universality from the attack of empiricists such as Hume. In order to do so he set the realm of freedom sharply over against the realm of nature or necessity. The realm of necessity is the realm of “science.” The realm of freedom is the realm of “religion and morality.” The dividing line between these two territories is radical and total. Consequently (scientific) knowledge, characterized by the theoretical subject-object relationship, and (religious) faith, which is non-objectifying and non-objectifiable, are dualistically opposed to each other. In fact, “the twain never can, nor ever will meet.”<sup>113</sup>

In his *Critique of Theoretical Reason* Kant attempts to save science by claiming that the collective human mind, the so-called transcendental thinking ego, the unity of consciousness, or consciousness in general, imposes upon the sensory material its own cognitive forms so that the external world cannot be known apart from these forms. These apriori forms that are inherent in the activity of the mind are the intuitions of space and time and the concepts of causality and substance. There is therefore a synthesis between the apriori forms of the mind and the “raw material” of the sense experience.<sup>114</sup> In this way science is both saved (versus Hume) and limited (versus Leibnitz).

It is saved because in the realm of the empirical data the outcome of the forming activity of the mind is predictable. This realm is called the phenomenal realm. It is also limited. The realm of freedom is beyond the molding power of the mind with its active forms. This means that it is once and for all beyond the reach as well as the jurisdiction of science to victimize free personality. But the price to be paid is high. Not only does science have absolute autonomy within the realm of nature. But also, because the apriori synthesis (forms plus sensory material) gives rise to universal laws

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<sup>112</sup> Freedom stands for particularity, and nature for universality.

<sup>113</sup> Incidentally, in introducing this absolute division between freedom and nature Kant has become the father of all modern philosophical and theological thought. The basic dialectic of freedom and nature, two poles that mutually and simultaneously exclude and presuppose one another, is determinative of all of the ensuing philosophical and theological enterprise.

<sup>114</sup> The example of a waffle iron is quite illustrative. The “transcendental ego” is the waffle iron. The “raw sensory material” is the batter. The combination of waffle iron and batter by definition produces waffles. Thus “science” is unfailingly predictable. In philosophical jargon, this is why apriori synthetic judgments are possible.

of nature, nature itself will be totally and uncompromisingly deterministic.<sup>115</sup>

In limiting the range of science Kant has reserved a territory for the freedom of man, namely the noumenal realm or realm of “faith.” In his *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant makes his case for this realm. He argues that it is characterized by the categorical imperative, “You Must.” The key to this realm is found in the moral experience. It is therefore essentially moral in character. Since the categorical imperative requires a condition that makes it possible to act for the sake of duty alone, he concludes to the practical necessity of freedom. This is a postulate,<sup>116</sup> and not a proof.<sup>117</sup>

Here Kant appears to arrive at his ultimate goal. From the outset his objective was to curtail “science” in order to make room for “faith,” that is, to put limits on rationalistic universality in order to give the freedom of particularity breathing room. Well, he seems to have succeeded.

However, there is more than meets the eye. He does not quite arrive at the synthesis he is after. Already on the face of it does the coherence between the realm of nature and the realm of freedom appear elusive! The very “definitions” of these realms as “objectifying” (nature) and “non-objectifying” (freedom) indicates this. But there is more. The origin of the “raw sensory material” is the so-called “thing-in-itself.” This resides in the supersensible or noumenal realm, and is therefore unknowable. This leads to a curious twofold conclusion. First, Kant apparently knows that an unknown and unknowable entity constitutes a known cause. (He carefully refrains from ascribing existence to it, so as not to confuse it with the phe-

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<sup>115</sup> This accounts for the fact that in all post-Kantian thought, whether philosophical or theological, “nature” is always and by definition a “closed continuum.” The dialectic does not allow for any exception. It has its victims in a tyrannically iron grip. See Edgar Krentz, *The Historical-Critical Method* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 55-60, on Ernst Troeltsch and his three principles of historical investigation. (1) All historical research must subject its objects to the acids of historical criticism. (2) Present experience and occurrence is the standard for all past events. (3) Historical explanation rests on a rational, verifiable cause and effect concatenation. The first principle indicates that historical investigation can only produce probabilities. The second one insists on the uniformity of all events. The third one implies that no alien intrusions, such as miracles, are possible. According to Krentz, Troeltsch’s legacy still haunts theology. It is naive to think that it can ever be scuttled without coming to grips with the underlying dialectic. Unless the latter is deactivated, any argument against this legacy will fall on deaf ears. A responsible apologetics goes beyond the level of the rational or the evidential. It is transcendental in that it tackles presuppositions as the sufficient and necessary conditions for a position or point of view.

<sup>116</sup> In fact, this is the first postulate of practical reason. The other two postulates are immortality and God. Immortality is practically necessary since virtue needs it to be perfected. God, finally, is a necessity because only he can insure the combination of virtue and happiness.

<sup>117</sup> Proofs are found in the realm of nature only. That is why Kant is adamantly opposed to the ontological and cosmological proofs of the existence of God.

nomenal realm, the realm of “appearances.” But by the same token, it must have a reality of one kind or another, because an appearance must be an appearance of something!) Second, causality is by definition restricted to the phenomenal realm, but it is simultaneously, and in a crucial fashion, operative in the noumenal realm. (By implication the thing-in-itself ends up being the originating cause of the sensory material, Kant’s denials to the contrary.) All this constitutes a twofold logical contradiction and therefore it completely explodes the synthesis.<sup>118</sup>

At this point Hegel enters into the picture. Kant had claimed that the mind by its intuitions and concepts imprinted its form on the “raw material” that comes through the senses. The origin of this “raw material” he had asserted, is found in a supersensible reality, the so-called “thing-in-itself.” This is in principle unknowable and undefinable, since it transcends the phenomenal realm. Quite apart from the logical contradiction in Kant’s thinking, the idea that the “thing-in-itself” was beyond the grasp of the transcendental-logical subject, the unity of consciousness, was not to Hegel’s liking. It was regarded as an obstacle to autonomous freedom, and consequently experienced as a monstrosity. In addition to this the way the absolutism of nature was bridled by the realm of freedom was viewed as questionable. It seemed to amount to a total formalization of the ideal of freedom.<sup>119</sup> The latter, it seemed, could only keep science at arms’ length at the terrible expense of assigning it such an autonomy that freedom had virtually nothing left to rule over.<sup>120</sup>

Kant’s failure, in short, to achieve the goal of safeguarding the absolute freedom of the transcendental thinking ego led to an irrationalistic, idealistic absolutization in which the ideals of science and freedom were synthesized in a gigantic effort by means of a dialectic mode of thought. This supposedly would undo the curtailment and formalization of freedom.

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<sup>118</sup> In his *Critique of Judgment* Kant makes a final, but unsuccessful bid to establish such a synthesis. See H. Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique*, Vol. I, 385ff.

<sup>119</sup> It should be understood that in Kant’s critique of practical reason the absolute freedom of the noumenal man exists by the grace of the same logical understanding, which is foundational for the way nature is experienced. Thus the very ideal of personality becomes totally formalized. This is reflected in the concept of the categorical imperative. There is no content to the “You Must.”

<sup>120</sup> “Neo-orthodox” theologians, such as Barth and Bultmann, drank deeply of the fountain of Kantian philosophy. All “things theological” were assigned to the non-objectifying, noumenal realm. Since this realm escapes all predication, which is by definition objectifying, theology was reduced to a series of feeble attempts to utter the unutterable. In the end it became void of all content. Eventually all terminology had to be disqualified, and fell by the wayside, including the terms “God” and “theology.” “God” was defined as a “kind of co-humanity,” and “theology” as a study of that phenomenon. It has been correctly observed that the Death of God theology is the logical consequence of neo-orthodoxy.

The transcendental thinking ego was absolutized as “Spirit” that in its logical, rational creativity does not merely mold the raw material that flows from the thing-in-itself – intolerable for the absolute idealist – , but *posits* the thing-in-itself in its creative activity. Thus the world becomes one gigantic rational projection. Since the Spirit also produces matter, we are faced with the “absolute idea” that unfolds itself in a universal development.

The way this idea develops itself divulges an irrationalist as well as a rationalist component, which are both equally ultimate. The development is characterized by the movement of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. First the thesis evokes its antithesis. Then from the thesis and antithesis arises a synthesis. Eventually the synthesis turns into a thesis, and the process starts all over again. This movement, it must be noted, puts an end to absolute truths (plural). The thesis, its opposite or antithesis as well as the synthesis of both are equally truthful. Here the “freedom” of the irrationalist particulars emerges. All three constituents of the movement have equal rights. While this means the demise of any and all absolute truths (plural), it does hold on to absolute truth (singular). The movement of thesis-antithesis-synthesis itself is inviolable.<sup>121</sup> What emerges here is the “necessity” of the rationalist universal.

In this dialectic movement the two poles of particularity and universality allegedly find their synthesis. But it appears wishful thinking. It has been properly observed that in this scheme man loses his creative freedom. He is reduced to a puppet of world reason. Particularity is virtually swallowed up by universality.<sup>122</sup> The eventual reaction, especially on the part of existentialism, was sharp and bitter.

The basic impulse of existentialism was directed against the domination of scientific rationality, coupled with modern technocracy. That is, it was directed against the continuing, and seemingly unending, annexation of freedom by the nature pole. Since rationalist and historicist Hegelianism caused its virtual destruction, new ways had to be found to safeguard it.

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<sup>121</sup> A case can be made for the claim that this formal irrational-rational movement itself is what Hegel calls “god.” It is the supposed “embodiment” of the “particular universal” or the “universal particular,” in which both poles of the dialectic have merged.

<sup>122</sup> Incidentally, Hegel’s influence was profound and pervasive. Both Darwin and Marx can be counted as his offspring. Ironically, by injecting his new, historical, mode of thinking into the naturalistic science of his day, his method did not only exercise a strongly historicistic and relativistic influence, but also proved to be a more powerful enemy of freedom than naturalistic science ever was. (Leninistic) Marxism is a case in point.

The crowning point of the existentialist impetus is the transcendental ontology of Heidegger. In him modern philosophy reaches its zenith and suffers its greatest defeat.

From the very start of his philosophy Heidegger's intention has been to find the concentration point of all of reality that guarantees human freedom, even if it in true Kantian fashion abandons the world as such to the domination of deterministic and positivistic science. He has called this concentration point by various names, of which "Being" is the most familiar. In his earlier thinking he takes human existence to be the gateway to Being. An in depth analysis of this existence functions as the launching pad from which he seeks to arrive at the concentration point of Being that synthesizes the two poles of the fundamental dialectic. When he admittedly fails to do so, he turns the tables. From that point on Heidegger no longer endeavors to arrive at Being through the analysis of human existence, but seeks to show that Being manifests itself in human existence (as its concentration point).<sup>123</sup> In other words, he does no longer argue from freedom (existence) to Freedom (Being). No, now he argues that Freedom (Being) is the originating origin of freedom (existence).<sup>124</sup>

Heidegger, however, states that this "turn" is not a turn, a reversal, in his thinking. It is a rather a "reversal" in Being itself. According to Heidegger, Being in its very revealment is in a state of concealment, except for a short period at the time of the early Greeks. The concealment of this concealment produced the forgottenness of Being. This forgottenness is responsible, ever since Plato, for the objectifying metaphysical philosophy in which man with his rationality attempts to penetrate into the essence of reality. (Even in his own early writings the traces of objectifying metaphysics are admittedly present. The presence of such metaphysics is inevitable in any and all attempts to arrive at Being. It cannot escape a universalizing rationality.)

However, the forgottenness of Being is not only responsible for virtually all (!) of the history of philosophy (!), presumably until Heidegger's later thinking, but also for all of the past, present as well as future objecti-

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<sup>123</sup> The Being-ward "works" of the philosopher, so to speak, are replaced by the man-ward "grace" of Being.

<sup>124</sup> While this fairly represents the thrust of Heidegger's thinking, he uses a much more sophisticated terminology. Eventually he shies away from words, such as Being (Sein) and human existence (Dasein), and expresses the substance of his thinking in terms of Thought and eventually Language. When Being as Thought and Language "arrives," somehow human existence participates in it. In a sense Thought and Language (Being) arrive in Thought and Language (human existence). The terms Freedom and freedom are used to indicate that Being as well as human existence are both non-objectifying and non-objectifiable in nature.

fyng and objectifiable reality with its present culmination point in the stifling domination of modern technocracy.

This is admittedly brilliant. Being in its forgotten, concealed concealment, or what amounts to the same, Being in its no longer remembered reclusive withdrawal, leaves “universality,” whether in terms of objectifying philosophy or objectifiable reality of whatever sort, in its wake. This constitutes half of the concentration point. Objectifying universality is now explained. But where is the other half? When and how does non-objectifying particularity come into view?

According to Heidegger, this occurs when Being reverses itself. In this turn Being reveals itself. It arrives. The focus shifts from concealment and withdrawal to revealment and arrival.<sup>125</sup> This revealment and arrival of Being occurs in thinking and language, presumably the thinking and language of the philosopher. At that juncture universality and particularity merge. The synthesis becomes a reality. Thinking and language become non-objectifying and non-objectifiable. The “particular universal” or “universal particular” has arrived!<sup>126</sup>

The problem is, however, that the revealment/arrival of Being is still outstanding. This turns the arrival into wishful thinking and the philosophy of that arrival into objectifying language. In the later phases of his philosophizing, Heidegger describes thinking in various ways. He portrays it as the retrieve of Being in its past revealment in early Greek philosophy, as a step-in-reverse into Being in its present concealed concealment, and as a waiting for Being in its future revealment. However, the synthesis of the two poles of the dialectic obviously is elusive. The retrieve of being is admittedly accompanied by acts of violence to overcome the metaphysics due to the for-

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<sup>125</sup> Since both “universality” and “particularity” are perpetual facts of life, neither concealment and withdrawal nor revealment and arrival are ever absent. Therefore it is more accurate to say that in the supposed “turn” of Being the accent shifts from *concealment* in revealment and *withdrawal* in arrival to *revealment* in concealment and *arrival* in withdrawal! Revealment and arrival now receive the emphasis. Of course, it should not go unnoticed that Heidegger's carefully chosen terminology only makes sense in the light of the dialectic. Being is “present” (as particularity, indicated by revealment and arrival) in its “absence” (as universality, reflected in concealment and withdrawal). Or with even greater sophistication, Heidegger's at first aims in the earlier phases of his thinking, and finally anticipates in his later phases, for Being to display itself as “a universal non-objectifying and non-objectifiable particular” or “a non-objectifying, and non-objectifiable particular universal.” His choice of terms is designed to make this aim/anticipation crystal clear. It is noteworthy that Heidegger has conceded both explicitly and implicitly that his aim/anticipation never materialized. It is the objective of this volume to show that the aim/anticipation cannot materialize due to the fundamental dialectic. It simply does not allow a synthesis. From an unbelieving standpoint, universality and particularity, however much in need of each other, simultaneously also repel each other by definition.

<sup>126</sup> This for all practical purposes is the apostate equivalent of the  $100\% + 100\% = 100\%$ .

gottenness of Being. The step-in-reverse is admittedly said to be an ever-recurring leap. And the waiting is admittedly time consuming.

The acts of violence, the ever recurring leaps, and the time consuming waiting are not incidental. They betray the irreconcilable tension between objectifying thinking and allegedly non-objectifying Being.<sup>127</sup> In Heidegger's philosophy 100% plus 100% (still) equals 200%. The twain have not met. In fact, in Heidegger's type of philosophy 100% plus 100% will always equal 200%. The twain can never and will not ever meet. The dialectic will never permit the irreconcilable to be reconciled. In earlier terminology, the second half of the concentration point, non-objectifying particularity, never showed up and never will show up! A particular universal or a universal particular is a contradiction in terms.

In short, just as Plotinus in the last phase of ancient philosophy Heidegger endeavored to provide the synthesis of the universals and the particulars at the conclusion of modern philosophy. In a real sense he was the mirror image of Plotinus, as he introduced Being and called it the "One." But he failed just as Plotinus failed, and . . . concedes as much!<sup>128</sup>

The dialectic of modern thought appears to be no different from that of ancient thought. In terms of their inner development they are each other's mirror image. Only the field is reversed.

The ancients feared the irrational disorder pole (matter) most of all, and emphasized the primacy of the order pole (form) as the answer to the deadly danger of a disconcerting and chaotic discontinuity. Of course, the tragedy of this thought is that in the grip of the dialectic precipitated by their rebel-

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<sup>127</sup> See specifically J. van der Hoeven, *Kritische ondervraging van de Fenomenologische Rede* (Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn, 1963), 142, who was the first one to alert me to this fundamental (dialectical) tension in Heidegger's thinking.

<sup>128</sup> Just as ancient philosophy came to a close with the gigantic effort of Plotinus, so modern philosophy seems to come to its conclusion with a similar effort by Heidegger. One may well ask, "What next?" Ancient philosophy after Plotinus missed the grand visionary sweep. After Heidegger history seems to repeat itself. All that is left is some philosophical tinkering with technical issues. The history of apostate philosophy basically seems to have run its course. It is interesting to compare Western philosophy with Eastern religions. It appears that Hinduism with its emphasis upon the universal is more akin to ancient Western philosophy, while Buddhism with its focus upon the particular is more in line with modern Western philosophy. So what ancient Western philosophy and modern Western philosophy are in succession, Hinduism and Buddhism are in juxtaposition. Modern philosophy, which basically cut off ancient philosophy, has now itself reached the end of the line. With the dialectic being bipolar, *tertium non datur*. In Eastern religions, however, Hinduism and Buddhism seem to feed off each other. There is no need (yet) for a *tertium*. That may be why Western philosophy appears to have run its course, but Eastern religions continue on. Of course, it is the implicit thesis of this volume that both Western philosophy and Eastern religions have failed to achieve the synthesis of the two poles in the fundamental dialectic. A detailed analysis of Eastern religions to argue explicitly that this also applies to them has to wait another time.

lion against and apostasy from God, they were unable to recognize the real problem, namely sin, and replaced by a pseudo-problem, namely that of contingency and chance. Subsequently the way of the "form" pole is proclaimed as *the way*.

The moderns view the rational order pole (nature) as the greatest threat,<sup>129</sup> and assign the primacy to the contingency pole (freedom) to save from the suffocating grip of an oppressive rationalism. The way of the "freedom" pole now becomes *the way*. The nature pole, to be sure, has a definite autonomy, but the freedom pole transcends it, controls it, and limits it. In the meantime, the tragedy remains. The one pseudo-problem is substituted for another one. The "demonic" is now found in the abundance of regimentation. Once again the problem of sin is suppressed. Therewith also the new way of the old apostate methodology can be nothing else but the way of death. All this demonstrates how perceptive *The Lost World* was when it pointed out the two options. Either destruction through the imperialism of one of the two poles or perpetual warfare!

It must be clear by now that the history of philosophy is determined by the fundamental dialectic with its two mutually excluding and presupposing poles. With all the, at times, vast differences between the various thinkers, the common point of departure is that the universe consists of two basic elements, the contingent and the necessary. Further, in spite of the, at times vastly, different solutions, they are all after an accounting of their experiencing of the universe in terms of the two poles of the dialectic, whether they give the primacy to the order pole (ancient philosophy) or the contingency pole (modern philosophy). However, the fundamental dialectic does not only determine the task and the direction of Western philosophizing, but also its failure. In neither of its two phases did it accomplish the task it set out to accomplish. It does not make too much difference whether one opts with ancient philosophy to drive out the particular in the name of the universal or opts with modern philosophy to drive out the universal in the name of the particular. Both phases are a dead-end street.<sup>130</sup>

The *prima facie* evidence already exhibits this. Western philosophy moves restlessly from the one solution to the other. It is a history of attempts that were discarded as fast as they were launched. More principally, it *had* to fail because the two poles are by definition irreconcilable. There is

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<sup>129</sup> The deep suspicions of the technocratic society is illustrative of this shift.

<sup>130</sup> See for the relationship and the failure of both phases also H. Krabbendam, "B.B. Warfield versus G.C. Berkouwer," in *Inerrancy* (Norman Geisler, ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1979), 443ff.; and "The Functional Theology of G.C. Berkouwer," in *Challenges to Inerrancy* (Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest, eds., Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 305ff., and especially, 310-311.

not and cannot be a peaceful coexistence between the two poles of the dialectic. The one demolishes the other or vice-versa. A careful balancing act proves to be impossible. Even the last gigantic efforts by Plotinus in ancient philosophy and by Heidegger in modern philosophy to posit the all-encompassing, overarching One that supposedly gives rise to the two poles collapse under their own weight. It is deeply tragic that thinkers who are in the grip of the dialectic, which is rooted in rebellion against the living God, and has the ultimacy of the mind as its corollary, are both driven to continue their search for a synthesis of the two poles and at the same time doomed to failure in that search. But it is even more tragic that all those who are enslaved to the dialectic are compelled by this dialectic to labor tirelessly to demonstrate the reality of this dialectic with the specific objective to neutralize the God of Scripture. After all, a philosophy, that could give a full dialectic accounting of one's experiencing of reality without leaving any loose ends, would make the Christian God irrelevant, superfluous and non-existent.

The only way anyone victimized by the dialectic can break out of its grip, and therewith leave the never-ending dead-end street behind, is by a renunciation of apostasy from God. Then, and only then, will the way be opened to an experiencing of created reality as the Word of God shows it to be! The implications for metaphysics, epistemology as well as ethics will be all-encompassing. The renunciation in view will either consist in a thorough, heartfelt, repentance, as an evidence of regeneration, or it will occur by distancing oneself in an equally thorough manner from an unacceptable methodology, as an indication of progressive sanctification. It may at times imply both.

Historically, the dialectic did not only determine the program and failure of philosophical thought. In economic theory something similar is in evidence. A few paragraphs will suffice to clarify this.

Theorists do battle about the virtues and vices of the controlled market system versus the free market system and vice versa. The sympathies of the collectivist lie with the all-controlling "universal," the "one" that binds the particulars together and so precludes a state of dissolution. Leaving "capitalist" man "alone" in a boundless and uncontrolled entrepreneurial freedom allegedly is bound to turn ugly. It will sooner or later lead to widespread misery. Some individuals will grow rich. But they will do so on the backs of the masses. The latter will become serfs and be treated solely as means to an end. Ultimately the rich will grow richer and the poor poorer. This will reduce the masses to a subhuman standard of living. The collectivist vehemently protests against this in word and in deed. He champions, and wher-

ever he can institutes a controlled market. This is to be superintended by the central government in a socialist state that levies high taxes and redistributes the wealth of the nation for the "common" good.

The "capitalist" favors the "particular," the individual, who is not to be restrained or constrained by outside forces. Stifling the entrepreneur by undue controls unavoidably leads to an economic down turn. If price control is imposed, scarcity is inevitable. When the production cost can no longer be recovered, the production itself will be suspended. No, let man spread his wings, amass wealth, and expand his operations. The trail blazing and trickle down effect will benefit everybody. So he champions, and wherever he can implements the free market. This is to run its course without any interference, hand in hand with a decentralized government that minimizes taxation for the good of every "individual."

The influence of the apostate dialectic in the world and life (view) of both the collectivist and the "capitalist" should not escape anyone. The collectivist calls "particularity" evil and "universality" good. The "capitalist," on the other hand, calls "universality" evil and "particularity" good. In other words, the ethical assessment of both collectivists and the "capitalists" springs forth from the allegiance to "their" pole in the dialectic. Both fail to see that from a biblical perspective evil and good are not determined by the dialectic polarity, but by God and his law. What violates the law of God is sin, and what conforms to that law is righteousness. This applies also to the collectivist and "capitalist" world and life (view). In the biblical framework God has the last word, in the dialectic setting man is the measure of all things!

By way of further analysis, it is difficult to deny that the socialist experiment is a failure. Never in the history of man has it produced a flourishing economy. But it is equally difficult to affirm that the capitalist strategy necessarily leads to a wholesome society. Too easily capitalism forgets that its birthmark is liberty that listens to (biblical) law. (This does not constitute an enslaving restraint that represses man's individuality, but a liberating force that represses the destructiveness of man's sinfulness.) Too easily, therefore, it degenerates into license that is lawless, if not antinomian. When that occurs, the "have's" and the "have-not's" will not remain on speaking terms for very long. Selfishly the former will tend to oppress the latter, while just as selfishly the latter will tend to resent the former.<sup>131</sup> It is

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<sup>131</sup> Adam Smith argues that selfishness must be assumed as the natural condition of fallen man regardless his economic status or condition. He further extols as one of the great achievements of the free market that it limits the potential harmfulness of this selfishness by tying the satisfaction of the free market participant to the service of others. Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction* (Nashville: Tho-

no coincidence that James, where needed, proceeds to explain the self-assessment of both (Jam. 1:9-11), to analyze the treatment of both (Jam. 2:1-13), and to condemn the conduct of both (Jam. 5:1-9) in terms of God, his law and the judgment to come, respectively. In doing so he cuts against the grain of the class warfare, and therewith against the grain of the dialectic.

Incidentally, the compromise of a semi-controlled or a semi-free market represents at best an uneasy truce that can never produce a permanent solution. In a world of unbelief it is the most likely consensual option, and therewith may seem to be the only practical solution. But it ought to be realized that unless human selfishness is uprooted in heartfelt repentance, it will always preclude the perfect synthesis. In fact, it will eventually rear its ugly head, and upset any and every compromise whenever it gets a chance.<sup>132</sup>

The upshot is that neither in philosophical nor in economic theory, nor in any other theory for that matter, can the poles of the dialectic be thought together. A non-Christian starting point turns every philosophy and every economics, and every other discipline, by definition into the never-ending dead-end street that was mentioned above.

### *c. Political Practices and Business Ethics*

But while the poles cannot be *thought* together, they cannot be *brought* together either. This will now be substantiated with examples from the world of politics and business.

In politics, the former East Bloc countries at one time were the embodiment of the regimenting and stifling order pole. Every movement that did not toe the line was squelched, until the pendulum would unavoidably swing again to the freedom pole, at times violently such as in Rumania.

It turned out that the emergence of individual freedom was not without its problems either. Denounced as producing chaos, it precipitated an attempted coup in the waning moments of the former Soviet Union. In the 1990's the Polish electorate apparently came to view it as inimical to social security from the cradle to the grave. This eventually led to the defeat of Lech Walesa. And socialism, be it in a more moderate form, became once again the official majority party in Poland. Politics in Mongolia followed

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mas Nelson, 1983), 51-54, presents evidence that the socialistic Welfare State does more to foster resentment than does the free market economy.

<sup>132</sup> H. Krabbendam, "Biblical Instructions," 104-105, 107.

the same pattern. In Bulgaria the next chapter has already been written. Also in this country a socialist government, consisting of former Communists, took over following the failure of the freedom party that came to power after the collapse of the Soviet Empire. But this change was of short duration. Once again it had to hand over the reigns of government to the freedom party. The 2000's thus far display the same pattern.

Of course, all this “leapfrogging” would be more than passing strange without an understanding of the pendulum swing of the dialectic. Because this dialectic continues its rule, there is no reason to believe that the basic picture will show a marked change any time soon. The dialectic as a dynamic historical force simply will not permit it. It has a tyrannical grip on everything apostate. The irony is that this dialectic tyranny is both self-inflicted and a divine judgment. Apostasy is responsible for setting it in motion and fully deserves it.

The West basically does not fare much better. In the 1980's the United States of America voted the party of the individual freedom (the “many”) into Presidential power, while the party that advocated control (the “one”) prevailed in Congress. In the early 1990's this was reversed. At that point in time the former took control of the Congress, and the latter of the White House. Intuitively the voters went for the checks and balances inherent in the United States constitution with a vengeance. The early 2000's saw one party take control of both the White House and the Congress for a short time, but the precarious balance was soon restored when it lost control over the Senate. All in all, it can hardly be said that American politics solved the underlying dialectic, and triumphed over the battle this entailed.<sup>133</sup> In the United Kingdom with its parliamentary form of government Conservatives and Labor tend to leapfrog over each other. Without the same checks and balances the pendulum swing proves to be much more pronounced. The politics of nationalization and privatization alternated. But the basic dialectic framework and tapestry are the same.

All in all, the rule of the dialectic continues also in the West. That is why also in that part of the world no change should be expected any time soon. To be sure, politics in the West has a much more benign face and takes place in a much more civilized fashion than in the former East Bloc.

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<sup>133</sup> A former White House chief of staff, Leon Panetta, quite perceptively stated once that there are always a number of idealists in Congress who not only gravitate toward the center, but also believe that it is possible to reach a point of total unity (the perfect synthesis!). Rather bluntly he added that such point will never be reached. Most likely these remarks were born out of his long experience as a politician. But he could not be more correct. The dialectic by definition precludes such synthesis!

But the hostility between the two poles is no less in evidence. There is no love lost between the parties that represent the opposing poles.

To give one more illustration, in the 1996 presidential and parliamentary elections in Uganda a vitriolic battle raged between the advocates of a no-party system and the proponents of a multi-party system. The accusations were fierce and . . . “classic.” The advocates of the no-party system presented themselves as champions of unity, law and order and accused their opponents of promoting chaos. The proponents of the multi-party system cloaked themselves in the mantle of freedom and charged their adversaries of essentially pushing a one-party system. As such it would head toward, and eventually end up in, (legalized) tyranny. There is no doubt that thus far all this appears to represent a classic example of polarizing dialectical thinking and debate! The issue was temporarily shelved by the Constitution of 1995 that postponed the final determination of the political future of Uganda by calling for a plebiscite in the year 2000. In this plebiscite the populace overwhelmingly expressed its preference for a no-party system. This was underscored in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections of 2001. For the time being, therefore, the no-party system is the law of the land.

However, there is an additional wrinkle. Proponents of Uganda's "no-party system" reject the charge that they are (insidiously) striving to install a one-party government. This would fly in the face of the struggle for freedom and democracy, the subtitle of the autobiography of President Museveni,<sup>134</sup> who is the architect of recent Uganda. Their political fight instead is for an all-in-one-party system, in which both the one and the many would receive their full due. On the one hand, the task of the government (the one) is to guard the freedoms of the people (the many). On the other hand, all citizens may run on their own merits (the many) for any and all political offices that are in place to govern the country (the one). This is totally in line with the political philosophy of President Museveni as it is expressed throughout his autobiography and exemplified throughout his career.<sup>135</sup> Incidentally, it is no secret that he has a genuine appreciation for the Christian faith.

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<sup>134</sup> Yoweri Museveni, *Sowing the Mustard Seed: The Struggle for Freedom and Democracy in Uganda* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

<sup>135</sup> I argue throughout this volume that the dialectic can never be overcome in everyday life without self-denial in the one and many spheres and sacrifice and submission in the authority structures. It is therefore no coincidence that these are emphasized in Museveni's autobiography. He seems to have a genuine insight, not only in the self-destructive nature of the dialectic, but also in the requirements needed to conquer it. The following quotation is offered to illustrate the latter at least partly, *ibid.*, 206,

By way of analysis of the Ugandan political scene, it may well be that for the first time in the history of mankind an effort is made to break politically through the dialectic, even if it was never defined as such. Still, it seems that many an anti-dialectic analysis, and many an anti-dialectic "right move," was in evidence throughout the rise to power by President Museveni, and in the subsequent exercise of that power over the last fifteen years. Whether these analyses and moves can be attributed to instinct, intuition, or brilliant sense, they certainly exemplified lots of "common grace." In the light of all this it is rather bewildering to recognize that the multi-partyists insist on putting the country in reverse, as they opt for operating the country dialectically, ironically with full support of the Western democracies. The dialectic battle, therefore, will inevitably continue, whether verbally or by the guerilla gun. It is quite clear that without the liberating Gospel the conflict may well tear this country, called "The Pearl of Africa" by Winston Churchill, apart. Once its present gifted leadership becomes a thing of the past, anything could happen.

In terms of the West, only the lingering leaven of Christianity may prevent it from the cauldron that is evident in the Balkan, in the Near East, in the horn of Africa, and in parts of East and Central Africa.<sup>136</sup> Of course, only a full-fledged presence of Christianity can provide the solution anywhere, whether in the West, in the East, in Africa, or in Asia and South America for that matter! This would require a self-conscious and thorough renunciation of rebellion against, and apostasy from, the God of Scripture. Only so can mankind be unshackled from its dialectic chains. It goes without saying that all this demands programmatic and sustained evangelism, that is both biblical and aggressive.

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"Everybody had developed the idea that being in government was a privilege, not a service to society . . . My own feeling towards power is that it is the farthest thing of a privilege one can experience. It is taxing . . . It exposes the leader to endless risks, especially in a country such as Uganda where politics took a very violent turn. Therefore, being in power, as far as I am concerned, has been one endless story of sacrifice . . . Ever since 1966, when I and my comrades started opposing Obote's dictatorship, we have never rested . . . To call (our) contribution (throughout the years) a privilege is an insult." His autobiography fully corroborates all this.

<sup>136</sup> The question may well be asked why a country like Japan, which is less than 1% Christian, does not self-destruct. There is at least a partial answer for that. It is a little known fact that the Japanese Imperial Iwakura Commission visited Europe and the United States in the 1890s to investigate what made them prosper. Their report pointed to the influence of the Christian Gospel, and the ensuing Christian ethic in the areas of contract law, work habits and savings. Their recommendation was to ignore the Gospel, but to adopt the ethics that was based upon it. Furthermore, it is a generally forgotten fact that Douglas MacArthur, a committed Christian, put his stamp on the Japanese Constitution. Both the practical and institutional Christian leaven in Japan may be more prominent than many surmise. Of course, the future of Japan is anyone's guess. In the light of the increasing secularizing Western influence the present fabric may well begin to unravel. In fact, it seems that the cracks are already showing!

The Church clearly has its work cut out. But, after all, that is exactly what Christ explicated in the Great Command of Matthew 28:19-20. He also warned time and again that this would produce casualties (John 15:18; 16:2; 21:18-19). In fact, he tells his disciples that he sends them as the Father sent him (John 20:21). Just as his Father sent him to his death (be it as the road to victory), so with this statement he basically sends them to their death (be it for the purposes of life). History underscores this. Eleven of the twelve appeared to have died a violent martyr's death. While John reportedly breathed his last in his own bed, he had his share of suffering during his exile on Patmos! Frankly, as the Son sends the apostles, the apostles should send office bearers, office bearers church members, and church members their children. There is no other way to spiritual conquest and victory. Paul for his part not only recognized this, but also welcomed it (Phil. 3:10), as the necessary means (John 12:24) to a rewarding end (2 Cor. 4:12). The upshot of all this is simple. Ultimately the Church must ask itself whether it is willing to pay the "price of obedience" to become once again a cultural force

In the meantime, anyone with any political savvy will recognize the implications of the dialectic as a historical force, and plan accordingly. The party that favors the "one" will *invariably* be replaced by the party that favors the "many" and vice versa, the party that promotes the "many" by the party that promotes the "one," either by means of election or by show of force. The more pronounced the governing party is in pursuing its ideology, whether left or right wing, the quicker it will be defeated in the polls in case of a democracy, and the more radical it will be replaced by force in case of anarchy or dictatorship. Political savvy, therefore, will always gravitate to the center, to bridge building and to accommodation. This will inflame the least number of people, and engender the least opposition. Therefore, that is the place of political survival. Victory, especially when viewed as excessive, will invariably rally the opposition, and will eventually self-destruct. To pursue partisan politics in a dialectic world in terms of principle may seem a well-intentioned and noble undertaking. But it has no substance. In the final analysis dialectic and principle, truly so-called, are mutually exclusive. Pure universality and pure particularity are governing "principles," all right. But they are wholly formal in nature, and besides, they are not and cannot be truly functional. They are by definition self-defeating. Hence pragmatism always wins out, whatever pole of the dialectic is favored, either "in principle" or in practice.

No, absolute principles and absolute standards that are substantive in nature are only to be found in the Christian faith. But even if common grace

exercises a tempering influence, ultimately they are and will be decried by both poles of the dialectic. This is where the antithesis enters the picture as a radical and total reality. If Christians seek conformity to God's Word, they will be labeled as authoritative and totalitarian. If they refuse conformity to the world, they will be painted as oddballs and anarchists. (Victims of the dialectic can define their opponents only in terms of that dialectic itself.) Ultimately both poles, however hostile against each other, will make common cause and wage total war against Christianity. This means, humanly speaking, that only where Christianity has a substantial presence, whether through number, influence or leadership, can it be expected to have a genuine impact, also in politics. At the same time, whether the Gospel is decried or not, it is and remains mankind's only hope.<sup>137</sup>

This brings us to the dialectic polarization in the business world. This polarization is quite evident in the labor-management relationship. The Eastern Airlines tragedy in the late 1980's is a case in point. The "sovereign" owner turned the pilots from "responsible" coworkers into robots and stripped them of their dignity. At least, that was the charge.

The same (sovereign) "individual" threatened the "unions" in their livelihood by selling off valuable assets allegedly for personal gain and insisting on a dramatic pay cut. The knife of the dialectic now cut both ways. As a result the "one," who was also "in authority," virtually forced those "under authority" (the pilots) and the "many" (the unions) to join hands and to make common cause. This precipitated a wholesale polarization in which each pole was willing to sacrifice itself, and the company in the process, in order to destroy the other. What ensued was seemingly a "double victory." In each defeating the other both could claim victory in a rather hollow "win-win" situation. Of course, it came down to a substantial "double defeat." Both bit the dust in a tragic "lose-lose" ending. All this is a matter of historical record. Eastern Airlines is no more!<sup>138</sup> Clearly at the height of dialectic activity the one pole will be so pitted against the other that it will in-

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<sup>137</sup> For these two reasons a biblical apologetics should always go hand in hand with a biblical evangelism. As will be argued below, the great prize in both ought not to be the mind, but the heart, however much the way into the heart is through the mind. Thankfully history also demonstrates that Christians can be influential and can make an impact, even if in the minority, by displaying integrity and dedication. Men, such as Wilberforce, are encouraging examples. But they did pay a price. They tirelessly exerted themselves on behalf of their cause.

<sup>138</sup> In the late 1990's history nearly repeated itself in the airline industry. Only a presidential directive avoided the stand-off between management and pilots union from boiling over into a prolonged strike and so from doing irreparable damage to American Airlines as well as the US economy. The dialectic is a hard taskmaster.

variably be glad to cut its own nose to spite its face.<sup>139</sup> In this it has the indelible imprint of the Enemy upon it. Any interpretation and action suggested by him, as the consummate liar and murderer from the very outset, is a deluding lie, and will end up in murder, at times in the form of suicide. It may well be that there are still former participants in the Eastern Airlines battle who claim victory, while on the unemployment line and with the company decomposed.

Ironically, the political party favoring “control” and in charge of Congress at the time of the Eastern Airlines debacle, clamored for federal mediation that, as expected, would benefit the “unions.” The party that gravitated to the freedom of the “individual,” at that time in power in the White House, vetoed legislation to that effect, which benefited, also as expected, the “owner.” The dialectic in the political arena endeavoring to settle the fallout of the dialectic in the business world is like Beelzebub driving out Beelzebub (Mk. 3:22-23).

Any mediation, incidentally, would only have prolonged the agony, since it would have favored the one side or the other. It could never have struck the perfect balance and would never have produced a peaceful coexistence. The dialectic would have seen to that.<sup>140</sup> Power struggles always and by definition lead to lose-lose situations, in spite of, or better yet by means of, (initial) victory.

In Paradisial terms, the rebel heart digs its own grave. It leads, in that order, to a self-proclaimed Number 1 status, the cruel horns of the dialectical dilemma (imagined “metaphysics”), the primacy of the intellect (“epistemology”), the “doing it my way” syndrome (“ethics), and finally “death.”

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<sup>139</sup> The final days of Eastern Airlines indicate this beyond a shadow of a doubt. A consortium under the leadership of Peter Uberroth, the organizing genius behind the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, made a bid for the Airlines that proved to be acceptable both to the owner and the unions. However, the final contractual agreement stipulated a reasonable transition period for the new management team to take over the reigns of the company. The owner insisted that he, without interfering with the new CEO and his team, would have continuing access to the executive boardroom to protect his interests until the contractual payment was deposited in his bank account. The unions flatly rejected that out of hand. So deep rooted were the mutual dialectic hostilities that both sides were unwilling to budge and ended up walking out of the deal with literally nothing to show for. The owner lost his company, and the employees lost their job!

<sup>140</sup> The peaceful coexistence is only illusory. Whether the mediation is one of binding arbitration or one of thoughtful persuasion, history shows us that the moment one of the parties thinks that it can gain an advantage at the expense of the other, the peace will shatter and the hostilities will resume. The dialectic proves to be an overwhelmingly powerful historical force. Only the Gospel is stronger!

#### *d. Theological Orthodoxy*

A recent writer in the area of Christian Apologetics has claimed that all reasoning is circular in nature. The "apologist" with the widest circle takes the largest number of data into account, produces the greatest "cognitive rest," and is supposedly the most persuasive.<sup>141</sup>

Well, the last number of pages aimed at producing as wide a circle as was presently possible to show that what took place in the Pelagian controversy is not an isolated incident. It is part of a worldwide pattern that is in evidence wherever rebel man operates, and wherever man opts for a rebel methodology. With this reference to theology we have come "full circle," and are back at the theological enterprise and the issue at hand.

Theology is not immune to the presence and influence of the dialectic. It has succumbed to it both in the problem of the one and the many, and in the problem of sovereignty versus responsibility. The former is in evidence in the Sabellian and Arian controversies, the latter in the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian battles.

In the doctrine of God Sabellius and Arius both held that the one-ness and the three-ness were not equally ultimate and could not be accommodated simultaneously. Sabellianism acknowledged that the Son and the Holy Spirit were divine but absorbed them into the Deity, thus preserving the one-ness at the expense of the three-ness. Arianism recognized that the Son and the Spirit were separate centers of consciousness but placed them outside the Deity thus safeguarding the three-ness at the expense of the oneness. Both theological strands are heretical. Both were victimized by the dialectic. Both espoused the primacy of the intellect. Both left "death" in their wake. Without the Trinity the Gospel of grace vanishes. The Unitarians with their moralizing rationalism, and the Jehovah Witnesses with their works religion demonstrate this.

In Soteriology Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism both held that divine sovereignty and human responsibility cannot be argued with equal force and cannot be accommodated simultaneously. The first commitment of the Pelagian and the Semi-Pelagian is to the freedom of the human will as the capacity to choose good or evil at any moment, in any situation, pertaining to any person, event or thing. This commitment is pivotal and unshakable. Consequently they rule out the principle of originating, irresistible grace in salvation and the principle of originating, unconditional sovereignty in predestination.

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<sup>141</sup> J. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 130-132.

Their conclusion is forced upon them by the grip in which the dialectic holds them. They betray that when they formulate their adherence to the freedom of the will in terms of their hostility to Manichaeism. It is the dialectic that provides them with the horns, the "either-or," of the dilemma they embrace and within which they operate. From that perspective, originating grace and sovereignty must by definition spell Manichaeism (determinism) and on that ground must be opposed. The dialectic with its commitment to the ultimacy of the human intellect blinds them by definition to any and every alternative.

Here the wider new-covenantal context, the greater exegetical refinement, the broader biblical framework, and the deeper theological penetration is complemented by the wider philosophical framework of the controversy. To summarize! The very moment man rebels in his heart, the dialectic emerges and will begin to tyrannize him. To the extent that he is apostate in method he will tenaciously insist on the primacy of the intellect and consequently view reality as bifurcated, that is, as consisting of two poles that mutually presuppose and exclude each other. He will hold to the primacy of the one pole at the expense of the other, even as he may seek a synthesis. The more he is committed to the one, the more hostile he will be to the other. Even if he seeks a synthesis, he will never reach a permanent solution.

Further, he must and will define all issues in terms of the dialectic and interpret all data in the light of the dialectic. The more the dialectic has gripped him, and the greater the commitment to one of the poles is, the less he will (be able to) listen to arguments. Even arguments from Scripture, however self evident and compelling they may be, will (first) be (misinterpreted, however much that is done in subjective honesty, and then) dismissed.<sup>142</sup> (Note the Pelagian conviction that Augustinianism was nothing but deterministic Manichaeism in disguise, which of course it was patently not!). If any argument happens to cut off an occasional arm of the dialectical octopus, the "animal" itself does not lose its grip on its victim, unless the spear point of the Gospel – by way of analogy – cuts its way through the eye and pierces its heart. This analogy illustrates that (with a godly life as backdrop) the proper trajectory of teaching is from the heart of the instruc-

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<sup>142</sup> One of the most vivid, but at the same time chilling, examples of this is found in the philosophy of Gordon Clark. In the footsteps of Parmenides, and in the grip of his version of the dialectic, he denied the existence of the external world. What seem to be sense perceptions are merely "modifications of the (rational) spirit." This is an instance of a consistent rationalism that literally "knows everything about nothing." Even Scripture could not make a dent in Clark's denial of the existence of the external world.

tor through the mind of the instructed with their heart as target (and a godly life as final objective).

Proper biblical teaching, indeed, “pierces” the heart, whether the latter breaks and submits in the process (Acts 2:37), or rebels and lashes out as a result (Acts 7:54). The methodological objective of biblical evangelism, or apologetics for that matter, must always be the heart. The evangelist or apologist should never present or argue the truth unto agreement, but rather testify to the truth (John 18:37) unto repentance and submission. Not the mind, but the heart ought to be the grand prize.

The analysis thus far is, first of all, grim. It brings into focus the emptiness of the mind of the victim of the dialectic by virtue of the darkness of his understanding and his alienation from the life of God, and all this precipitated by ignorance and ultimately by a stubbornness of heart (Eph. 4:17-18).

But this analysis also suggests the way to escape. When through the truth (the opposite of ignorance) the heart breaks (the opposite of stubbornness), and through the restored fellowship with God (the opposite of alienation) the understanding returns (the opposite of darkness), the mind will be renewed (Eph. 4:20-24; Rom. 12:2). Epistemologically it is no longer empty (Eph. 1:17), but marked by single-hearted devotion (2 Cor. 11:3). And ethically it is no longer reprobate (Rom. 1:28), but marked by pure devotion (2 Cor. 11:3).

In his Epistles to Colossians and the Ephesians the apostle Paul goes into detail as to how the grip of the dialectic will be broken. Over against the empty and deceitful philosophical thought and ethical practice of Colossians 2:8 and the empty mind and insensitive sensuality of Ephesians 4:17-18 Paul posits in Colossians 2:8 and Ephesians 4:20 only one (counter) argument. That argument is a Person. He is the rock against which all apostate epistemology and ethics shatter. That rock is Christ.

This single argument is a piece of architectonic grandeur in its telling simplicity. The person of Christ spells grace, only grace, all grace and always grace. He does so in personifying the new covenant and its threefold promise. In Colossians he is, first, presented as the fountainhead of the new heart through union with him in his resurrection (2:12-13a), then, of the new record through his atonement on the cross (2:13b), and, finally, of the new life through communion with him in heaven (3:3). Similarly, in Ephesians he is portrayed as the terminator of the old heart (4:22) and the initiator of the new mind (4:23).

It may, but should not, come as a surprise that in the wake of both strands of Christ's accomplishment, according to both Ephesians and Colossians, the grip of the tyrannizing darkness of the dialectic is broken. As has already been indicated, after the heart is regenerated, hand in hand with justification, and the mind has learned to cherish its Number 2 status under God in both content and method, hand in hand with sanctification, "the one and the many" problem is fundamentally solved and the "sovereignty/responsibility" issue basically settled.

The former is solved by means of self-denial rooted in love and on display in holiness (Eph. 4:25-5:20; Col. 3:12-17). The latter is settled by means of self-sacrifice on the part of those in authority and submission on the part of those under authority, once again in love and holiness (Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1). In short, in Jesus harmony, peace, and life replace conflict, war, and death.

The epistemological implications for the philosophical enterprise and for economic theory hardly need to be emphasized. Neither do the ethical implications for politics and business.<sup>143</sup> The dialectic polarity vanishes. Both intellect and life are set free from going into pendulum swinging circles, or more precisely, into the pendulum swinging downward spiral, which doom them to a never-ending dead end street. Regrettably, space does not allow me to spell this out in detail in this context. But a case study, both in content and method, can be presented from the recent history of science that shows how explosive these implications are. It will also nail down the earlier contention that the *Jurassic Park / The Lost World* sequel is, indeed, a matter of "same (age-old) tune, different (contemporary) verse!"

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<sup>143</sup> H. Krabbendam, "Biblical Instructions," 106-112.

# A Modern Day Case Study

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## Introduction

The intended modern day case study is presented in terms of an antithesis between a new science that is barely twenty years old, and a recent proposal in theoretical physics. The new science is known as Chaos science. This has already been encountered when I introduced the subject matter of this volume with a summary analysis of *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World*. The proposal is authored by Stephen Hawking.<sup>144</sup>

### *a. Chaos Science*

The pivotal mark of Chaos science is that it is descriptive, a result of observation, without any apparent desire to explain exhaustively the observed and the observable. It is descriptive of two major phenomena. The rub is that these two phenomena appear to be mutually exclusive but presuppose each other at the same time. It is generally agreed that by means of computer technology the first scientific observation of these two phenomena

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<sup>144</sup> For information about Chaos science, see J. Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988). For Hawking's search for the theory of everything, see Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988); J. Boslough, *Stephen Hawking's Universe* (New York: William Morrow & Co, 1985); M. White and J. Gribbin, *Stephen Hawking: A Life in Science* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993); David Lindley, *The End of Physics: The Myth of a Unified Theory* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993); and Kitty Ferguson, *The Fire in the Equations* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994). Chaos science exploded upon the scene in the 1980's, as will be shown later, through its discovery of a mind boggling phenomenon that throughout the centuries had already routinely been recognized by every Augustinian and Calvinistic type of theology. It discovered that all of physical reality was shrouded in mystery. As it turns out, Chaos science was alerted to an analogous type of mystery in the area of the tangible that a truly biblical theology had recognized in its dealings with the being and the activity of God. Not only the co-ultimate and co-functional relationship of the uncreated One and Many in God, but also of the one and many in created reality is a mystery that the human mind cannot exhaustively comprehend.

took place, quite accidentally it appears, in the field of Meteorology in the early 1960's.

This observation eventually became known under the semi-technical name of *The Butterfly Effect*. Small initial variations, depending upon existing conditions, and eventual large-scale phenomena appeared to be at the beginning and the conclusion of one continuum. The simple wing movement of a butterfly in China or Spain could eventually lead to catastrophic events such as a blizzard in New York or a typhoon in the Philippines, or for that matter prevent such events.<sup>145</sup>

In the 1970's the new science started to gather momentum. By the end of the 1980's it had mushroomed and spread to every area of science, from physics to economics, from biology to cardiology, from mathematics to neurology, from zoology to astronomy, and from oceanography to political science. It had become a universal science, for in all of these areas there was the astounding recognition of the same two phenomena.

The first phenomenon saw deterministic systems give rise to irregularity, tranquillity to turbulence, predictability to randomness, rhythm to fibrillation, continuity to fluctuation, and steady motion to oscillation. In short, when small variations were fed into the computer, orderliness appeared to produce chaos!

This by itself, however, did not produce Chaos science. That was not born until a second phenomenon intruded itself. Large numbers of computer applications began to show more than irregularity and seeming randomness or unpredictability. They displayed patterns that were unexpectedly stable and structures that were well defined. In fact, they were invariably exquisite, if not fascinating in their tapestry. What was observed was tranquillity posing as turbulence, and "order masquerading as randomness."<sup>146</sup>

In short, what seemed to emerge were an orderly disorder and a disorderly order, an irregular determinism and a deterministic irregularity. Orderliness gave spontaneously rise to chaos, and chaos gave spontaneously rise to orderliness, with both poles apparently displaying an equal ultimacy, and accommodating each other simultaneously. These two phenomena, disorder and order, order and disorder, were eventually seen as one phenomenon and given the technical name Chaos.

In a word, with increasing wonder the practitioners of Chaos science concluded to the apparently harmonious simultaneity of "form" and "free-

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<sup>145</sup> Gleick, 8.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

dom” as two realities that are not reducible to each other, and at the same time do not compete with or impinge upon each other. (In other words, there is no evidence of either destruction or warfare!) As a result these practitioners have been called "tinkerers first, and philosophers second."<sup>147</sup> This designation is generally correct. First, they were, indeed, explorers (rather than "tinkerers?!"). Further, as they faced the reality of the two observed and observable “entities” that could not be thought or brought together by the human mind, they were by and large content to leave it at that! (This seems a miracle in itself.)

The latter, however, cannot be said of Stephen Hawking. His life’s objective and avowed aim is to explain the totality of the observed and the observable by means of a synthesis of the two entities with which Chaos science interacts.<sup>148</sup> “Our goal is nothing less than a complete description of the universe we live in.”<sup>149</sup> I will argue that with this objective he is after a principally unattainable Number 1 status in the universe. After all, as will be shown in detail, he recognizes that with his objective of the ultimate synthesis he aims at occupying, if not owning, the “mind of God.”

### ***b. Stephen Hawking***

Although not in the professional sense of the word, Hawking still aspires to be a philosopher, albeit as a theoretical physicist. He endeavored to arrive at a grand theory of everything that would rationally account for the totality of his experiencing. And that is (the essence of) philosophy!

He pursued this grand objective by means of a synthesis of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity and Heisenberg's Quantum Physics, both of which deal with the basic building blocks of all of reality (Col. 2:8). On the one hand he speaks about them as two theories that are inconsistent with each other and cannot both be right. On the other hand, he paradoxically sets out to search for a new theory that incorporates them both. He calls this a quantum theory of relativity.<sup>150</sup>

Einstein's theory spells order and certainty in the macrocosm, Heisenberg's theory disorder and uncertainty in the microcosm. Thus Hawking sought to reconcile order and disorder, certainty and uncertainty, that is to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable. Frankly, Einstein did not see how

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<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

<sup>148</sup> *The Lost World* clearly has come to the conclusion that this is not doable.

<sup>149</sup> Hawking, 13.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 12; see also 51, 61, 79.

that could be done. So he dismissed Heisenberg's uncertainty principle out of hand in the now well-known conviction that "God does not throw dice with the universe."<sup>151</sup>

Incidentally, the self-confessed rationalist Mortimer Adler agreed with Einstein, but he pursued a different line of argument. The uncertainty on the subatomic level was not to be denied. However, he posited that it was not ontological in character but epistemic. "Uncertainty" is not endemic to reality, but springs into existence through experimental and observational intrusion. This conclusion was admittedly(!) not based on scientific verification. Such verification was regarded as beyond human reach. Even if in a refrigerator in deep space the light is on when the door is opened, who can determine whether it is on or out prior to the "intrusion" of the "opening act"? But it was argued to be a *philosophical* necessity.<sup>152</sup>

Not so incidentally, if the irrationalist would have had his choice, he would have done away with the order (read: certainty!) pole. He loathes any kind regimenting, tyrannical, absolute that would impinge upon "freedom," to whatever degree and in whatever way. So ontological uncertainty would have fitted quite well in his scheme of things. A rationalist, however, out of principle cannot tolerate any ultimate disorder (read: uncertainty) of whatever stripe! It seems, therefore, that Adler's *presuppositions* made him conclude that the uncertainty is only observational, and neither can, nor may nor should be equated with ontological indeterminacy.

In the light of the previous section that deals with the dialectic, it should not come as a surprise that I reject Adler's rationalistic presuppositions, and why I regard them as unacceptable. All rationalistic presuppositions, just as all irrationalistic presuppositions are predicated upon the twin errors of a rebellious heart and the ultimacy/primacy of the intellect. Permit me to emphasize once again, that the rejection of rationalism, of course, does not and should not drive us into the arms of irrationalism, just as the rejection of irrationalism does not and should not force us to take Adler's position. Both rationalism and irrationalism are rooted in the above-mentioned twin errors, and are suspect. It has been and continues to be a major contention in this volume that the (dialectic) dilemma rationalism-irrationalism is false, in fact, apostate, and ought to be transcended. This, incidentally, is the characteristic of a transcendental apologetics that is not satisfied merely to as-

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<sup>151</sup> Boslough, 56-57; see also White, 172-173.

<sup>152</sup> Mortimer J. Adler, *Truth in Religion: The Plurality of Religions & the Unity of Truth* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), 71-72, 93-100; and *Intellect: Mind over Matter* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1990), 105-114.

sess surface assertions and positions without analyzing their root. If the latter is unacceptable, its fruit is untenable.

The results of Chaos science agree with this conclusion. In all of reality freedom and order, "determinacy" and "indeterminacy," appear to coexist in perfect harmony. Neither one competes with, subtracts from, impinges on, or destroys the other. Questions about the "how" do not negate the reality of the "that." Of course, (a properly understood) "determinacy," rooted in the tapestry of divine order, is poles apart from (an ontological) rationalistic and deterministic tyranny, that destroys true freedom. Similarly, (a properly viewed) "indeterminacy," that champions free agency, is equally far removed from (an ontological) irrationalistic and indeterministic chance.<sup>153</sup> Once again, *both* transcend the apostate dialectic. All this is captured by the conviction of the Church that God's sovereignty and man's free agency be held equally, as co-ultimate and co-functional, and is further underscored by its insistence that the relationship of sovereignty and free agency rises above the rationalism-irrationalism dilemma. This insistence is rooted in the recognition that the essence of this relationship is beyond the jurisdiction and the reach of the human intellect.<sup>154</sup> Any effort to transcend one's jurisdiction and exhaustively grasp this essence befalls the fate of Icarus. It will become unglued, and will self-destruct. Sovereignty and free agency enjoy a perfectly harmonious relationship as part of a reality ordained by God. As soon as the human intellect endeavors to penetrate this relationship, it turns into the rationalism-irrationalism dilemma, and the "turf wars" begin with their predictable outcome common to all wars, initial destruction and eventually an uneasy truce that cannot and will not last!

But there is more to be said. The metaphysical fact of both the One and the Many in God appears to furnish the perfect explanation as to the "why" of the phenomenon of the harmonious coexistence of the created one and many spheres in observable reality, such as family, state, church, school, business, etc. In short, the "stuff" of this reality is a reflection of the being of God! The "how" of the co-ultimacy and the co-functionality of both "the One and the Many" in God and "the one and the many" in created reality

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<sup>153</sup> R. C. Sproul, *Not A Chance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 37-75, properly attacks the notion of "indeterminacy" as irrationalistic chance, and cogently argues throughout the book the fallacy of such concept as the ultimate category of existence.

<sup>154</sup> This is not to deny that there may be some models that shed some light on realities that are basically "above and beyond us." See H. Ross, *The Creator*, 148,161,173,174, and from the same author, *The Fingerprint of God* (Orange, CA: Promise Publishing Co., 1992), 182-183. Of course, every attempt to come up with an exhaustive delineation is both illegitimate and doomed from the start.

will always remain a mystery to the human intellect, but the "that" of both will be a cause for worship to the regenerate heart.<sup>155</sup>

Returning to Hawking, in holding that "God did throw dice with the universe, but he forgot where he threw them," he very much disagreed with Einstein. To him the uncertainty/indeterminacy pole was a "fundamental, inescapable property," a "fundamental feature,"<sup>156</sup> of reality and therefore had to be maintained. He eventually sought the synthesis of order and disorder via the black hole.

In the first phase of his theorizing, he argued cogently from the general theory of relativity, which represents the principle of predictability and order, to an originating singularity,<sup>157</sup> a mathematical point of infinite density, of infinite curvature of space-time, and (possibly) of infinite heat as the origin of the universe.<sup>158</sup> With it he had established, he thought, that the universe had a beginning! He found a model for the explanation of the why's and the how's of its "emergence" in the black hole since he was able to determine that such a hole, either viewed as or containing a singularity, not only absorbs but also emits. "A mathematical zero point that 'explodes' into a universe," establishing the pattern of a "big bang" as the starting point of the universe, inclusive of time and space, appeared unveiled!<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> The charge that the One and the Many in God constitutes a logical (irrationalistic!) contradiction has no foundation in fact. The Church has always maintained that God is not One in the same way in which He is Three. He is One in Essence, and Three in Persons. But to affirm this is not to imply that the Trinitarian Being of God can be rationalistically and exhaustively conceptualized. The relationship of the One and the Three is and remains a mystery. Incidentally, it is the great merit of Chalcedon that it stated how *not* to construe the relationship of the two natures in the one Person of Christ. They are neither confused or changed (against Eutychus), nor divided or separated (against Nestorius). Its doctrinal pronouncement was refreshingly anti-speculative. It did not try to puzzle out how the natures *do* relate. That was recognized as beyond the operating range and competence of the human intellect. The Church should ever use this as its theological model, also in its confession of the Trinity. Denial of heresy is, and should be, based upon the Word of God, never upon a pretended exhaustive rational comprehension of incomprehensible truth. Both Sabellius and Arius in the Trinitarian controversy, and Eutychus and Nestorius in the christological controversy endeavored to penetrate what is impenetrable to the human intellect. In each case the endresult was heresy.

<sup>156</sup> Hawking, 55, 155-156; see also White, 181.

<sup>157</sup> Stephen Hawking, "The Origin of the Universe," in *Black Holes and Baby Universes, and other Essays* (London: Bantam Press, 1993), 91, "If general relativity is correct, any reasonable model of the universe must start with a singularity."

<sup>158</sup> Compare Ferguson, 101, ". . . everything we would ever be able to observe in the universe (would be) compressed . . . to infinite density. Space-time curvature would also be infinite. The distance between all the objects in the universe (though calling them objects would be inaccurate) would be zero."

<sup>159</sup> Hawking, *A Brief History*, 8, 34, 46, 49, 88, 116, 117, 126, 127, 133, 173; see also Boslough, 52-56; Lindley, 147, 211-213, 237; and White, 77, 79-80, 105, 116.

The synthesis seemed to have been reached. Hawking had arrived at the "particular" (singularity!) that supposedly gave rise to the "universal" (an orderly universe!).

However, the success of the general theory of relativity in establishing an originating singularity proved to be its own downfall. Hawking had to acknowledge that at the point of the "big bang" singularity all the laws of physics are suspended, and all the theories of science falter, including that of general relativity (!).<sup>160</sup> With it the breakdown of the predictability of the future appeared total. "One (simply) cannot predict what will come out of a singularity." In short, a "naked singularity," by virtue of the realities of quantum physics, unavoidably spells unpredictability rather than the orderly and predictable universe of the general theory of relativity.<sup>161</sup>

Behind all this there is more than meets the eye. This is not merely a "scientific conclusion." The underlying fact is that in the dialectic context laws that deal with "universals" can never reach, let alone merge with, "pure particulars." There is a gap between these two "poles" that man can never bridge. From the finite human perspective, the universal can never be reduced to, or even accommodate, the particular. In fact, universality invariably shatters on the rocks of brute particularity. This is endemic to a methodology that arises from the dialectic and is based upon the ultimacy of the intellect. That is to say, the two poles of the dialectic that emerges in the context of apostasy can never be thought together by human reason. This precipitates the shipwreck of any synthesis by definition.

At any rate, at this crisis point, which spells essentially the failure of Hawking's first phase, there is a turn in his thinking. This turn ushers in the second phase of his theorizing. When he recognizes that universality does not and cannot be traced back to and (be shown to) originate in particularity – rather than capturing particularity universality breaks down and self-destructs in the face of particularity – the flow is reversed. He no longer looks at the origin of the universe from the perspective of the general theory of relativity, which requires singularity as its starting point. No, from now on he looks at the present status of the universe from the perspective of quantum physics. But this does not only preclude a "stable singularity" by definition, but also raises the question as to how an unordered and unstable singularity can function as the originating origin of an ordered and stable universe.

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<sup>160</sup> Compare Ferguson, 102.

<sup>161</sup> Hawking, 46, 56, 61, 88, 122, 148.

More precisely, from now on Hawking solves this by assuming (while at the same time attempting to establish) that in the grand scheme of things particularity somehow can, should and does capture universality. In fact, his position is that it has already succeeded in doing so (although we will see that he gets in difficulty when he seeks to demonstrate this). In other words, the synthesis of particularity and universality is no longer his destination, but his presupposition. He openly acknowledges this “reversal” in which he methodologically turns the tables on his previous work, even while he continues to advance arguments why this presupposition has universal validity.<sup>162</sup>

It should not go unnoticed that in all this a curious state of affairs manifests itself. In his first phase Hawking *seeks to arrive* at the synthesis by reasoning from universality (Einstein’s theory of relativity) to particularity (Heisenberg’s quantum physics). This proved to be elusive. In his second phase, however, he *starts out* from the synthesis by virtually positing it as reality. At the same time, in order not to be accused of wishful thinking, he seeks to establish it.<sup>163</sup> The reason is simple. Hawking’s new procedure naturally precipitates some inevitable and tough questions. Why did and how can order in the present universe be co-ultimate with randomness? Why did and how can determinacy be co-original with indeterminacy?<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> *Ibid*, 50. It should not come as a surprise that Hawking tries, and tries again, to prove his presupposition. In the grip of the dialectic he is fully and unwaveringly persuaded, together with all others in the his predicament, that universality and particularity in their mutual presupposition and exclusion are the ultimate building blocks of the universe. In the grip of that same dialectic he is equally persuaded that finding the synthesis is only a matter of time. Any and all setbacks are only, and only can be, temporary in nature. The mere fact already of the dialectic makes this an inevitable certainty. In short, the hope of the dialectic does and must spring eternal by definition. Suddenly, all of the history of mankind, as one gigantic string of efforts to think or to bring the two poles together, begins to make tragic sense. The dialectic dooms its victims to an unceasing Sisyphus labor, blinds them to the reality of this never ending dead-end street, but somehow has them convinced that success is just around the corner. Hawking is no exception.

<sup>163</sup> There is a striking resemblance between the thinking of Stephen Hawking and the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Both display a “reversal” from a first to a second phase. Heidegger starts out with an analysis of human existence (Dasein) as a launching pad to arrive at Being (Sein). But he admittedly never arrives. This sets the stage for Heidegger’s famed “turn” or “reversal.” Now Being is no longer an objective to be reached, but (posited as) the origin from which all of “reality,” including human thinking/ existence, is said to originate. But also in his second phase Heidegger admits failure. He does not and cannot make a universally compelling case for it. Since Being is supposedly the transcendental condition for, and therewith the synthesis of, particularity (freedom) and universality (necessity), the similarity between Hawking and Heidegger is remarkable. Both the philosopher and the theoretical physicists are eyeing the same problem, and endeavor to solve it the same general way. Both also fail, and are aware of it. For the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, see H. Krabbendam, *From Bultmann to Ott*, especially Chapter III, sections 2-5. See also H. Krabbendam, “The New Hermeneutic,” in E. Radmacher and R. D. Preuss, editors, *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 533-558, esp. 541-547.

<sup>164</sup> *Hawking*, 172-173.

He endeavors to answer these questions by means of a grand theory of everything, that is, a quantum theory of relativity. Basically, this may be paraphrased as a “random theory of order.” It holds out the prospect that while universality could not be reduced to particularity (Hawking’s first phase), particularity will be able somehow to “accommodate” universality. Slowly but surely, he develops and identifies the features, properties, component elements and prospects of such a theory, basically through two lines of thought.<sup>165</sup>

The first line of thought is negative. Singularity must go! The second line of thought is positive. The implications of the Second Law of Thermodynamics must be taken into account. We will take a look at both.

First, then, and on the negative side, the singularity as a brute particular, an originating mathematical zero point characterized by a number of infinities, must fall by the wayside. "While general relativity allows for a perfect point-like singularity at the beginning of time, quantum mechanics does not, for it prohibits defining at the same time the precise location, velocity and size of any single particle or singularity."<sup>166</sup> "We must do away with the point-like singularity of infinite density (and of infinite space-time curvature, for that matter), as general relativity on its own implies, and imagine instead a universe passing from quantum to classical form, emerging from a literally uncertain initial state into the predictable, dependable universe of classical physics. The universe solidifies, so to speak, from an ectoplasm of quantum uncertainty, and once congealed proceeds to evolve in a deterministic, classical manner"<sup>167</sup> In a word, unchecked randomness, fundamental unpredictability and chaotic disorder appear so bound up with the all initiating naked singularity which allegedly lies at the root of the universe that its removal is the *conditio sine qua non* for any kind of law and order to have a chance. There cannot be a random theory of *order* without that. The synthesis *depends* on its removal!

The first indication that quantum mechanics might succeed in that was the realization that, apart from the fact that no black hole can ever be reduced to a mathematical point with zero volume, every black hole would eventually erode and vanish through evaporation or explosion. Any singularity that might be harbored on the inside would share this fate with it.<sup>168</sup> This disposal of the troublesome singularities meets the initial random, un-

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<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, 61, 79, 133, 156.

<sup>166</sup> Boslough, 57; see also Lindley, 212, and White, 179.

<sup>167</sup> Lindley, 242-243.

<sup>168</sup> Hawking, 112, 113, 117, 118; see also Boslough, 79; Lindley, 254; and White, 136, 151-152, 179.

predictable, disorderly and chaotic boundary conditions of the universe and their consequences head-on.<sup>169</sup>

After all, as long as the initial singularity posited by classical general relativity was retained, it is and remains puzzling, as has already been stated, why from the womb of randomness and unpredictability it produced the *present* universe. There is no rhyme or reason for the type of law and order it displays, nor for the intelligent life that has emerged. The present universe would be no more than a cosmic coincidence. Why it is suitable for human habitation and deployment, rather than inhospitable to life forms like ours, is a total enigma. Furthermore, there is no rational transition from a chaotic beginning to a smooth universe, nor a rational explanation for the emergence of an orderly universe from a disordered beginning.<sup>170</sup> That is why the singularity had to go!<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>170</sup> White, 217.

<sup>171</sup> Hugh Ross, *The Creator*, 82ff., contributes Hawking's aversion to, and his determination to get rid of, the singularity to the fact that such singularity constitutes a powerful argument for Christianity. Hawking supposedly reasons as follows. "An original, originating, singularity implies the God of Christianity. I am opposed to the God of Christianity. So such singularity has to be discredited, come what may. In fact, it has got to go, once for all!" This precipitates Ross's apologetic counter move. "If I establish an original singularity, I establish the God of Christianity. So all I need to do is to be successful in my efforts to secure such singularity, and the case for Christianity is compelling." In a word, an evidential and rational apologetics that argues singularity will gain the day. However, both the analysis of Hawking's thought and the apologetics are flawed. With all deference for Ross's intentions the situation with Hawking is a little more complicated and the apologetics a little too simplistic. That Ross's analysis is flawed should be self-evident from the fact that Hawking in his first phase rather triumphantly announces that together with Roger Penrose he has demonstrated the existence of an original, originating singularity. Apparently he regards that as a positive accomplishment! Why would he do so, if he were convinced that it would establish the God of Christianity, to whom he was unalterably opposed? Why would he be enamored with such singularity, if it would undermine his efforts to suppress the truth of God's existence and self-disclosure? Ross's analysis does not seem to be to the point. No, Hawking's initial determination to argue for a singularity was rooted in his conviction that to establish the existence of an originating singularity is to arrive at the synthesis of the two poles of the dialectic. Further, he subsequently made a 180% turn and determined to get rid of any such singularity as soon as he realized that such singularity, in fact, would prevent this synthesis! In short, to advance the cause of the synthesis he first promoted and then fought a naked singularity. He reasoned as follows. "The singularity prevents the synthesis. So it must go! Further, since the synthesis exists, it must be possible to demonstrate it. Since I failed to do so in my first phase, I will embark upon my second phase. Here the flow is reversed. I will start no longer with universality to arrive at particularity and therewith at the synthesis of the two, but with particularity as accommodating or giving rise to universality. That is, I will start with the synthesis of the two poles as the only point of departure that can and does explain all of the universe, and aim to make a compelling case for this, that is, to justify this point of departure as appropriate. And even if per chance I am not immediately successful in doing so, eventually someone will be!" Any apologetics, therefore, that joins the issue, must tackle Hawking's thinking in the area of the synthesis! Since it is rooted in the dialectic and accompanied by the ultimacy of the intellect, both of which arise from a heart that is rebellious against God, the first order of business must be to expose all this. This, in turn, explains the need for a heart transplant (regeneration) as the only way out of the dialectic predicament. In short, a biblical apologetics should not address the mind

The second indication was the recognition that the infinities that constituted a breakdown of the general theory of relativity<sup>172</sup> had to be dismissed. An originating point of infinite density and infinite space-time curvature could produce either an infinite universe or an infinite number of universes.<sup>173</sup> Incidentally, since there is potentially an infinity of black holes, there is no ground for denying that there may be an infinity of big bangs and consequently an infinity of (baby) universes, each with its own law system. Whether this makes the present(ly known) universe a (smooth) region of the infinite universe or one possible universe among (too) many (!),<sup>174</sup> it is once again difficult to present a rationale for its emergence or its makeup. Neither of these two possibilities, therefore, is palatable to Hawking.

He opts for a third alternative. He seeks to navigate between the Scylla of a universe that has an infinite existence and the Charybdis of a universe that has a beginning in a singularity at some finite time in the past. Instead he proposes a universe that is finite in terms of space and time (closed), but has no boundary in a naked, “stable,” singularity (open). By way of illustration, such universe is similar to the earth that is finite in extent but has no edge (A traveler who journeys around the world is confined to its surface, but he never faces an ultimate roadblock. In principle he can journey *ad infinitum!*).<sup>175</sup>

Incidentally, for the removal of the point-like singularity, seemingly required by the general theory of relativity,<sup>176</sup> Hawking avails himself of the conclusions of quantum mechanics. The latter shows that the momentum and the position of an electron orbiting the nucleus of an atom cannot be

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with a view to agreement, but the heart with a summons to repentance. The latter comes down to a renunciation of one’s rebellion. Of course, Ross sees clearly that Hawking suppresses the truth of God, in terms of his existence, as well as his creation of, and interaction with, his universe. But he is not sufficiently transcendental, and therefore flawed in his apologetic methodology.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>173</sup> Hawking, 123.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 123-124; See also White, 207-219, esp. 217.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 44, 135-136.

<sup>176</sup> The general theory of relativity cannot tolerate a “naked singularity” or “brute particular” as an originating origin. For at such singularity all the laws of science break down, and this would leave the orderliness that lies at the heart of the general theory of relativity not only without explanation, but also without justification! According to Hawking, *ibid.*, 133, quantum theory provides such justification, precisely because it can do without singularities, “As we shall see, it is possible in the quantum theory for the ordinary laws of science to hold everywhere, including at the beginning of time: it is not necessary to postulate new laws for singularities, because there need not be any singularities in the quantum theory.” Ultimately this is behind Hawking’s search for a quantum theory of gravity! It certainly would dispose of the need for a Creator!

measured simultaneously. In Ferguson's words, "the probability of finding the electron is spread out over some region around the nucleus."<sup>177</sup> Hawking suggests that singularities are similarly "smeared out."<sup>178</sup> He, furthermore, argues by means of "imaginary time" that in the singularity, thus conceived, time is reduced to and so identical with space.<sup>179</sup> This is an explosive proposal. For this effectively *removes* singularities<sup>180</sup> and so paves the way to the conclusion that the universe in its "earliest" phase only had a present and a future, *but no past*. The absence of time simply does not allow it. This by definition obviates the idea of a "beginning," for which he argued in his first phase.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Ferguson, 107.

<sup>178</sup> Stephen Hawking, "The Edge of Spacetime," in Paul C. W. Davies, ed. *The New Physics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 67.

<sup>179</sup> For the "magic of imaginary time," as she calls it, see Ferguson, 108-115, 132. This is not the place to examine the concept of imaginary time in depth. Suffice it to say that according to Hawking, *A Brief History*, 134, 135, imaginary time is "a well-defined mathematical concept," "a mathematical device . . . to calculate answers about real space-time." He defines it, *ibid.*, 185, as "time measured by imaginary numbers." These are, *ibid.*, 134, "special numbers (called imaginary) that give negative numbers when multiplied by themselves." The measurement of time by these numbers has "an interesting effect of space-time: the distinction between space and time disappears completely."

<sup>180</sup> Hawking, 139, "If the universe is really in such a quantum state, there would be no singularities in the history of the universe in imaginary time."

<sup>181</sup> Hawking's comments on this are noteworthy, 139, "It might seem therefore that my more recent work had completely undone the results of my earlier work on singularities". This, however, seems too quick a conclusion, "But, as indicated above, the real importance of the singularity theorems was that they showed that the gravitational field must become so strong that quantum gravitational effects could not be ignored. This in turn led to the idea that the universe could be finite in imaginary time without boundaries or singularities." He implies that the transition from phase one to phase two is a smooth one, in fact, that phase two is an organic development of phase one, rather than precipitated by the failure of phase one to arrive at the synthesis of the fundamental dialectic. But be this as it may, the existence of a phase two is acknowledged. His further comments are equally noteworthy. "When one goes back to the real time in which we live, however, there will still appear to be singularities." But, "this might suggest that the so-called imaginary time is really the real time, and that what we call real time is just a figment of our imaginations. In real time the universe has a beginning and an end at singularities that form a boundary to space-time and at which the laws of science break down. But in imaginary time, there are no singularities or boundaries. So maybe what we call imaginary time is really more basic, and what we call real is just an idea that we invent to help us describe what we think the universe is like. But . . . a scientific theory is just a mathematical model we make to describe our observations: it exists only in our minds. So it is meaningless to ask: Which is real, 'real' or 'imaginary' time? It is simply a matter of which is the more useful description." Hugh Ross, *The Creator*, 84, also quotes this section, though not in full. He interprets Hawking as "arguing the case against any real escape for the universe from the singularity and the boundary conditions." Based on this interpretation he makes his apologetic case as follows, "If we substitute biblical terminology here, we can say that God transcends "real time – that is, the single time dimension of the physical universe. Thus He is not bound to boundaries and singularities." Apparently Ross concludes to an analogy between God and the concept of imaginary time, and capitalizes on this to make a case for God. It seems, however, that the partial quotation is insufficient to do full justice to Hawking's intentions, that Ross's interpretation is flawed, and that his apologetics is misdirected. The following two reasons serve to substantiate this. First, Hawking is after the synthesis of the "one" (general theory of relativity) and the "many" (quantum physics) as the Grand Theory of

The practical upshot is that the universe as a “no boundary” universe has neither a beginning nor an end. It is not created and will not be destroyed. It is self-contained. It does not need an originating singularity to come into existence. Because of that the laws of science hold uniformly. Indeed, to Hawking the attraction of his proposal is that “it really underlies science . . . it is really the statement that the laws of science hold everywhere.”<sup>182</sup> They do no longer break down at any time and at any point. After all, it warrants the grand conclusion that the universe simply IS.<sup>183</sup> It is as it is, because it is what it is. In short, it is *as is*! In view of that there is a diminished need to ask the baffling question: “Why *this* universe and not another?”<sup>184</sup>

In summary, disorder, unpredictability, randomness, and chaos are pushed back. Brute particularity, that by itself is vulnerable to all four of these, approximates universality, and therewith order, predictability, structure and purpose. The universality of the laws of science in the universe secures a firm footing for order and predictability. The subsequent cognitive rest vis-à-vis the universe brings structure and purpose into view.

With this the quantum theory of relativity, that is, the random theory of order, is virtually posited, and therewith seems to be within reach. But is it? Not quite! Two reasons will be advanced to support this answer.

First, the presupposed launching pad for the universe is a combination of the minimum possible non-uniformity and the maximum possible uniformity allowed by the uncertainty principle. It is not fully uniform to account for the various irregularities and different densities in the formation of both the macrocosm and the microcosm. It is sufficiently uniform to ac-

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Everything. If “real time” leads us to that, fine, if “imaginary time succeeds, where “real time” fails, fine. In Hawking’s views, of course, imaginary time is the more promising, if not the (seemingly) indispensable, vehicle to do just that. However, by no stretch of the imagination can it be construed as “transcending” real time. Second, “imaginary time,” therefore, cannot serve the case of God. In fact, it does precisely the opposite! After all, it is the vehicle to argue for the often-mentioned synthesis. This implies that from the very start God is kept out of the picture as totally irrelevant, while in the final analysis successful arrival at such synthesis would preclude His existence by definition. I can only conclude that Ross should not have read in Hawking’s (partial) quotation the “common grace” of a promising parallel to the existence of God, but rather the antithesis of a destructive suppression of the truth of God that cannot be remedied except through the “special grace” of a heart transplant. If this would have been understood, it would have led to a summons to repentance, rather than to a presentation of “an alternative option.” Ross, *ibid.*, 86, does note that Hawking, as Romans 1:19-22 formulates it, “rejects clear evidence pointing to God.” But the lynchpin of this “rejection” does not impact his apologetic methodology.

<sup>182</sup> Quoted in Ferguson, 113.

<sup>183</sup> See also Ferguson, 76. Compare Carl Sagan’s statement to the effect that “The present universe is the only one that is, that ever was, and that ever will be.”

<sup>184</sup> Hawking, *A Brief History*, 135-136. However, as Ferguson, 137ff., shows, Hawking does not answer all questions. It appears that there are still plenty left!

count for the orderliness and smoothness of the structure and the component elements of the universe.<sup>185</sup> The rub is that this does not add up to the total quantization of gravity. The full merger of the particularity and universality has not been reached. The synthesis, therefore, is still elusive. This is explicitly admitted, in spite of all implicit claims to the contrary.<sup>186</sup>

Second, in terms of the cognitive rest pertaining to the why of the universe Hawking's second phase is presented as a dramatic improvement over his first phase. From the perspective of the classical theory of relativity and the consequent big bang singularity, the odds against the emergence of the present universe are said to be immense.<sup>187</sup> From the perspective of the quantum theory of gravity the present universe is allegedly the most probable of all possible universes. The odds for the present universe to exist seems, indeed, to have improved greatly. But until necessity overtakes probability, the why of the present universe will always remain a question mark. After all, it is still not fully unique.<sup>188</sup> The upshot is that relativity is still not quantized, and the synthesis is still outstanding. Also in this context that is acknowledged.<sup>189</sup>

Thus far we focused upon Hawking's negative line of thought, in which a point-like singularity was dismissed. In his complementary, positive, line of thought the implications of the Second Law of Thermodynamics are emphasized. Central to this law is the rule of entropy. That is, any change in a closed system invariably increases disorder, precipitates decay, and ultimately leads to chaotic conditions and disintegration. There are no exceptions. Any reversal, therefore, is out of the question, and any attempt to bring about a reversal is ill founded and doomed. Even the introduction of "order" in disorder by means of improvement programs or building projects of whatever stripe, proves to be a misnomer. It decreases the "ordered" ma-

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<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-106, 122, 140; see also White, 219.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 133, "We don't yet have a complete and consistent theory that combines quantum mechanics and gravity," and 136, "I'd like to emphasize that the idea that time and space should be finite without boundary is just a *proposal*: it cannot be deduced from some other principle," and 155-156, "It seems that the uncertainty principle is a fundamental feature of the universe we live in. A successful unified theory must therefore necessarily incorporate this principle. As I shall describe, the prospects for finding such a theory seem to be much better now because we know so much more about the universe. But we must beware of overconfidence. – we have had false dawns before. See also, *ibid.*, 12, where he states regarding a quantum theory of gravity, "We do not yet have such a theory," and Ross, *The Creator*, 83.

<sup>187</sup> Boslough, 121, 123.

<sup>188</sup> Hawking, 137; see also White, 218.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

terial or energy available. The universe, therefore, is running down, and can expect consummate disorder and complete burnout or "heat death."<sup>190</sup>

The plus side of this is that there can be no disorder without some sort of prior order. Hawking capitalizes on that when he posits that the universe must have "started off in a smooth and ordered state."<sup>191</sup> The reversal from phase one to phase two in his theorizing is too prominent to miss. Phase one traces the origin of an ordered universe to a singularity, which is a brute particular, and therefore (ultimately) chaotic. Phase two has an (ultimately) chaotic universe originate in (some kind of) orderliness. In both phases the synthesis of certainty (order) and uncertainty (chaos), uncertainty (chaos) and certainty (order) is the grand prize. In the relativity phase he admittedly failed. Did he succeed in the quantum phase? Let us take a look.

At this point, after emphasizing the deadly extent of the entropy, he pens one of the most remarkable statements of his book. "In the next chapter I will try to increase the order in our neck of the woods a little further by explaining how people are trying to fit together the partial theories (of relativity and quantum mechanics) to form a complete unified theory that would cover everything in the universe."<sup>192</sup> This is remarkable, because in a "grand, complete and ultimate theory of everything" neither "order" nor "disorder" may have the final word. They must be equally ultimate and accommodate each other simultaneously for Hawking to reach the objective of his grand prize, a quantum theory of relativity. But it is even more remarkable for a second reason. In his first phase he seeks to arrive at the synthesis by seeking to link "disorder" to existing "order" by means of an originating singularity. As already has been argued, in his second phase he basically starts from the synthesis by positing "order" as conjoined to "disorder" in a no boundary universe as an existing starting point. But in the statement just quoted it is openly acknowledged as still in the wishful thinking stage.

In the chapter to which he refers he makes one more effort to arrive at the elusive synthesis of "order" and "disorder" by means of the theory of (super)strings. However, he acknowledges that he *did not* succeed, both at the beginning and at the end of his book, although he seems confident that

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<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 102, 145-151; see also Boslough, 75, 123; Lindley, 31, 232, 234, 254; and White, 142-143.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 152. Ferguson, 105-106, observes that the remarkably uniform temperature of the cosmic background radiation points in the direction of a "super smooth" universe. The extremely small fluctuations in that radiation lies at the root of its "wrinkles," its "lumps," such as clusters of galaxies, and even "people." See also Ross, *The Creator*, 22-27.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

eventually success *will* dawn.<sup>193</sup> Lindley agrees that he *did not* succeed, but adds that he *will not* succeed either, neither by the theory of (super)strings nor by any other theory. He regards the notion of a unified theory a myth.<sup>194</sup>

Both agree that the hallmark of success is a universe of total predictability based upon an underlying order.<sup>195</sup> Both affirm the underlying order in the universe.<sup>196</sup> But both equally affirm that (total) predictability is elusive. To Hawking the powers of prediction can never transcend the limits set upon it by the uncertainty principle of quantum mechanics. To Lindley the (super)string theory has never made *any* prediction about the structure of the universe.<sup>197</sup>

A final critique, however, must take one additional step. Hawking *did not* succeed (according to Hawking himself), and he *will not* succeed (according to Lindley). So far, so good! But what must be added is that he *cannot* succeed either! This is due to the fact that he is victimized by the fundamental dialectic of the one and the many, determinacy and indeterminacy, purpose and randomness, order and chaos. This dialectic emerges by definition as a result of apostasy from God, and goes hand in hand with the ultimacy of the intellect. This will now be explained.

In the last chapter of his best seller Hawking still holds out the prospect of success for his enterprise, a single theory that provides a complete description of the whole universe, why it is as it is, and why it is at all, with as ultimate objective a complete understanding of everything, including our own existence.<sup>198</sup> He concludes his book by stating as his conviction that his arrival at the synthesis will constitute "the ultimate triumph of human reason." In that triumph he will have experienced "the mind of God."<sup>199</sup>

Of course, from a transcendent perspective the truth of Scripture precludes this as an impossibility. The incomprehensibility of God will not allow it. Further, from a transcendental perspective the dynamics of the dia-

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<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 12-13, 168-169, 174-175.

<sup>194</sup> Lindley, 19-20, 254-255. Davies, *The Mind of God*, 165-169, does not believe either that physicists can pull off a grand theory of everything. In his estimation both Godel's theorem and quantum physics block this off by definition. According to Godel's theorem, all human reasoning will eventually bump into mystery, which precludes an exhaustive theory by definition. Further, the quantum nature of the world with its inherent determinism will not allow a theory of everything to transcend probability. Either way, all grand theories of everything are DOA.

<sup>195</sup> Hawking, 12, 169; and Lindley, 20, 35.

<sup>196</sup> Hawking, 122-123; and Lindley, 54.

<sup>197</sup> Hawking, 122, 169, 173; and Lindley, 235.

<sup>198</sup> Hawking, 10, 13, 169, 173; see also Boslough, 93.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

lectic will never allow it. Nevertheless Hawking's claim is profound, more profound than anyone may grasp at first sight. Since only infinite mind (the mind of God) can think the "universals" and the "particulars," as a reflection of infinite being, together, to arrive at the synthesis is, indeed, tantamount to having the mind of God. This turns the claim into a chilling challenge of God's ultimacy. Its imperialism cannot be missed. Hawking wishes to usurp the mind of God. He is after its capture "at the end of a long and glorious chapter in the history of humanity's intellectual struggle."<sup>200</sup> However, from the biblical perspective this is forever out of human reach.<sup>201</sup> To pursue it nevertheless is indicative of Hawking's desire to be like God, indeed to be God.<sup>202</sup> It is to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil all over again. This tree casts a long shadow! It is the shadow of death, the death inherent to the rebellion of the heart and the ultimacy of the intellect. It eats away at philosophy, the natural sciences, the social sciences, in fact, at all of life. Nothing is safe from the destructive power of the dialectic. That will now be argued.

Unless the apostasy from God is renounced, the dialectic will never slacken its vice-like grip upon the heart and the mind of its victims. Because the two poles mutually presuppose one another, the human mind that claims ultimacy must and will try and try again to think them together. However, because they mutually exclude each other as well, the human mind will also fail and fail again. From its perspective it will ever endeavor to reconcile the irreconcilable and to effect the coexistence of the mutually contradictory.<sup>203</sup> This is what an attempt to establish a quantum theory of relativity is all about. This is also why it has not materialized, will not materialize, and cannot materialize.

However, more fundamental than the human mind is the human heart. The rebel heart attempts by means of the intellect to give a total accounting of its experiencing of the universe as a fully self-contained unit without any loose ends. Because it is in the grip of the dialectic, this must reflect the contours of the dialectic by means of a universally valid and binding syn-

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<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

<sup>201</sup> Ross, *The Creator*, 85.

<sup>202</sup> To construe Hawking's reference to "the mind of God" as a concession to the existence of a "personal God" is mistaken. In Hawking "the mind of God" is a figure of speech, and should be placed in quotation marks. In reply to the question whether he believed in God, he stated that he uses "the term God as the embodiment of the laws of physics." Quoted in Ferguson, 145-146. So to have "the mind of God" is to have "an exhaustive and universally binding grasp of the laws of physics that account *in toto* for all of reality and leaves no loose ends." In short, it is actually to have arrived at "**The Grand Theory of Everything**."

<sup>203</sup> Boslough, 57; and Lindsey, 99.

thesis of the two poles. Success in synthesis will establish a universe from which God by definition is excluded. Such success demonstrates once and for all that God is superfluous. This is the ultimate aim of all apostate philosophizing. It is also Hawking's aim. He verbalizes that when he unceremoniously (and prematurely by virtue of the failure of the synthesis) declares that God has outlived his usefulness. There is neither place nor need for a creator.<sup>204</sup>

It is hardly surprising that Carl Sagan in his foreword to Hawking's book relishes to cheering him on.<sup>205</sup> Both, however, fall victim to the dialectic's never-ending dead end street of the ever-recurring attempt and the ever-recurring failure to bring about the synthesis. Renunciation of the rebellion of the heart is the only way to escape both the crime (of the attempts) and the punishment (of the failures). A summons to that effect, which implies a call to repentance in the footsteps of the apostle Paul (Acts 17:30), is therefore very much in place in this context. In fact, it seems the compassionate thing to do!

### *c. Linear versus Nonlinear Thinking*

At this point we are ready to formulate the radical cleavage between the “pure” practitioners of Chaos science and the philosophizing Hawking. Hawking, on the one hand, is a linear thinker. First, for linear thinking the pieces of the thinking puzzle (must) always add up logically. Second, he holds to the ultimacy of the intellect. That implies that he is victimized by the dialectic. The upshot is that starting linearly from the one pole he will never arrive at the other, and vice versa. The mutual exclusivity prevents that by definition. This spells the shipwreck of his theorizing endeavor. The efforts in his first phase to “reduce” the universal to the particular failed. Similarly, the efforts in his second phase to have particularity accommodate universality failed as well.

To be sure, in the mind of God the poles are (thought and brought) together in perfect harmony, in equal ultimacy, and accommodated simultaneously. But that vantage point is beyond the reach of the human mind with its finite (creaturely) limitations. The entrapment in the never-ending dead-end street by virtue of the claim of ultimacy is unmistakable proof.

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<sup>204</sup> Hawking, 136, 141, “If the universe is really completely self-contained, having no boundary or edge, it would have neither beginning nor end: it would simply be. What place, then, for a Creator?” See also Ross, *The Creator*, 83.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, x, and Ross, *ibid.*, 82.

The Chaos scientist, on the other hand, is a nonlinear thinker. First, in nonlinear thinking the pieces do not (need to) add up logically. They may be trans-logical without being illogical. It is satisfied with exploration and observation and can marvel about the wonder of the tapestry that unfolds itself.

To summarize and underscore, this tapestry is one of simultaneous *and* harmonious particularity and universality. The particularity spells freedom, the universality order. The particularity is neither irrationalistic nor to be equated with chance. This would fly in the face of (a biblical) universality. The universality is neither rationalistic nor tyrannical. This would not comport with (a biblical) particularity. In other words, in the biblical world (view) they are not only co-ultimate, but also co-functional, not just incidentally and partially, but principally and globally. The implications, also for philosophy, economics, politics and business, are breathtaking! In none of these areas will the two poles ever be a critical problem. They only function as such from the perspective of the rebel heart. No, in the biblical world the interpretation of God has the final non-dialectic word, and the ethics of God is the final non-dialectic model.

Second, and by implication, nonlinear thinking accepts, whether by special or by common grace, a Number 2 status that will simply recognize and acknowledge observable realities that transcend its capacity to comprehend them exhaustively (and usually stand in awe).

This explains the linear thinker, Joseph Ford. He holds with Hawking that "God indeed throws dice with the universe," but adds that "they are loaded dice," and he sees it as "the objective of science to find out by what rules they are loaded" and how mankind "can use them,"<sup>206</sup> that is, how it will best operate within their parameters, apparently no more and no less. Einstein recognizes the order pole but rejects the existence of the uncertainty pole. Hawking affirms them both and claims competence to grasp the essence of their relationship, and he sets out to explain it. Ford affirms both poles as well, but he simply observes their equal ultimacy and simultaneous accommodation without claiming competence to grasp the essence of their relationship and without an attempt to grasp or explain it.

Any nonlinear thinker, who at the same time wishes to be a philosopher, can (and should) only cap his basic stance of wonderment about the existing

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<sup>206</sup> Gleick, 314. Compare Crichton, *Jurassic Park*, 158, 245. Chaos science is not (meant to be) a philosophy. It does not aim at the explanation of phenomena, however puzzling they may seem. It simply observes everyday life, describes it, and operates on that basis. It honors reality for what it is, and takes it from there.

tapestry with the recognition that the one and many relationship as well as the sovereignty/responsibility structure for that matter are metaphysically a reflection of the being of God. *There is no other capstone.* In doing so he would explain their existence (*raison d'être*), but not their essence (*être*). The latter is forever beyond his competence.

Of course, this nonlinear capstone goes hand in hand with the nonlinear recognition that a proper epistemology and a proper ethics can only prosper when they conform to the interpretation and to the conduct of God respectively. To be more precise yet, the capstone of a nonlinear metaphysics can only go hand in hand with a nonlinear epistemology with a view to a nonlinear ethics. Only so the biblical directive is honored: "The secret things belong to the Lord, but the revealed things belong to us that we may do all the words of the law" (Deut. 29:29). The mind is not given to grasp essence, but to pursue ethics. It is not meant to be in ontological charge, but to be obedient!

That is also why having "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16; Phil 2:5) is not as much an epistemological as it is an ethical reality. Of course, this does not deny that having Christ's mind has implications for epistemology. After all, every human activity, including man's epistemological activity, is ethical in nature, and has to meet all the standards of a truly biblical ethics. But it is to say that in both the Corinthian and Philippian context the focus is on the exemplary *modus operandi* of Christ, even if it would include the epistemological considerations that did contribute to that.

#### ***d. Theology Once More!***

In summary, only nonlinear thinking can escape the dialectic. Such thinking does not claim Number 1 status in terms of either ontological ultimacy or methodological primacy. When it arises from a surrendered heart, it marvels about the biblical arithmetic, embraces it, and worships its Author.

It will disclaim a rationalistic univocity with the thinking of God without falling victim to an irrationalistic equivocality. It will object when it is forced to make a choice between the two because it will view that as being speared on the horns of the dialectic dilemma. It will transcend the dilemma, precisely because it is nonlinear, without even resorting to the notion of analogicity, unless it is quite carefully defined. Even this it will shun if it veils a back door effort to grasp essence.

It will be biblically concrete and forge a parallel to the divine questions, "He who planted the ear, shall he not hear? He who formed the eye, shall he

not see?" (Ps. 94:9). That God's hearing and seeing transcends man's hearing and seeing is a given. For one, the divine activities of hearing and seeing do not have a physical base. They are not embodied! Furthermore, they are non-spatial and non-temporal. They transcend space and time! Nonetheless, God hears and sees what man hears and sees. This warrants two conclusions. In all man's hearing and seeing, he hears and sees what God already hears and sees. At the same time, all God's hearing and seeing, which transcends man's hearing and seeing, man cannot and does not hear and man cannot and does not see. So man's hearing and seeing is true, but not exhaustive. In short, God hears and sees the same that man hears and sees, and more. To go beyond this, even by attempting to define the "more," is unacceptable. It is to grasp for essence, and therefore speculative, counter-productive, and, in fact, self-destructive.

Similarly, God's thinking both transcends man's thinking, and includes man's thinking. In all that man thinks, he thinks what God thinks, while all God's thinking, that transcends man's thinking, man cannot and does not think. So man's thinking is true, but not exhaustive. In short, God thinks the same that man thinks, and more. Again, to go beyond this is to grasp for essence, and therefore speculative, counterproductive, in fact, self-destructive, and quite unacceptable.

Let it be underscored, to assign to the intellect Number 2 status is neither a shame nor a sacrifice. To opt for nonlinear thinking is not to shrink the intellect below biblical permission. But to opt for linear thinking is to blow it up beyond biblical legitimacy. To be satisfied with Number 2 status is an acknowledgment that the "stuff" of reality, not only of the divine, but also the human reality, is deeper, broader, and higher, in short, more fundamental by far, than the "intellect." But this requires a humility that the unregenerate cannot muster, and is too often absent even in the regenerate.

The fundamental layers of the divine and human realities cannot be conceptualized by the intellect, but can only be "experienced" by the heart. Even this "experience" cannot be conceptualized. Since all the issues of life originate in the heart (Prov. 4:23), it is the transcendental condition also for conceptualization. Hence, it is not the case that the heart will not embrace what the mind cannot affirm or has not affirmed. Rather, the mind will object and reject until the heart embraces. Again, this is not to deny that the mind is the instrument through which the heart is reached. But it is to underscore that one should never be satisfied just to address the mind. One should rather address the heart, even if it is through the mind. The heart is never a tool of the mind, but vice versa the mind is ever a tool of the heart.

Similarly, the heart does not follow the mind, but the mind the heart (Eph. 4:17-18).

When Chaos science suggests that the one twofold phenomenon of a disorderly order and an orderly disorder brings the issue of determinism and free will to mind,<sup>207</sup> we are presented with a remarkable insight. This issue is recognized as only one aspect of the total tapestry of created reality. With it we also have come full circle. It brings us back to theology and the Pelagian-Augustinian controversy. Pelagianism displays a linear thought pattern. It fell victim to the dialectic and therefore cannot accept the equal reality and simultaneous accommodation of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. This is jarring to any mind that claims ultimacy. What is the antidote?

When we are dealing with a non-Christian, the only antidote is a "heart" transplant in regeneration, and a consequent glad acknowledgment of his Number 2 status. Only then will the claim of ultimacy vanish, and the biblical arithmetic embraced. In short, what is indicated is the need for the renunciation of rebellion as the transcendental condition for the escape from the dialectic and the consequent surrender of the ultimacy of the intellect.

The usage (endorsement) of the term "antinomy" and the rejection of the equal ultimacy of election and reprobation on the part of Christian scholars are similarly linear. They indicate in one way or another both the presence of the dialectic and the methodological primacy of the intellect.

As the direct object solely of the intellect, the biblical arithmetic automatically takes on the shape of an antinomy. It requires a nonlinear approach to escape this trap. In this context of *Christian* scholarship, of course, the antidote is not a "heart transplant" in regeneration. (In Christian scholars such transplant has already occurred.) No, for the Christian it is the *recognition of the twofold implication* of this heart transplant, the liberation from (every last vestige of) the bondage of both the dialectic and the methodological primacy of the intellect.

A concluding analysis of the issue of the equal ultimacy of election and reprobation in its total biblical context will further support this conclusion. First, back of both eternal life (heaven) and eternal death (hell) is 100% God in his one twofold decree of election and reprobation. This spells equal ultimacy and full sovereignty.

Second, the 100% man is also in evidence. No one reaches eternal life except through the act of faith, however much it is a gift, and no one

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<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

reaches hell except as a result of sin. In either case this spells full human responsibility.

Third, damnation does not flow forth from reprobation in the same manner (*non eodem modo*) as salvation from election. When man reaches heaven, he has only God and his grace, including the grace of faith, to thank. When man is assigned to hell, he has only himself and his sin to blame. This spells full sovereignty *and* full human responsibility.

Fourth, the decree of reprobation and the administration of wrath is the ominous backdrop against which the glory of electing grace shines ever so brightly (Rom. 9:22-23). The heartbeat of God is found in the grace of election. He does not delight in the death of the sinner. This emphasizes the Gospel character of full sovereignty.

Fifth, the doctrine of predestination aims both to break the proudest heart by showing that man does not have the key to the jail of sin in his own possession and to bring hope to the most wounded heart by showing that election precedes even the most massive sinfulness of man. Full sovereignty presses toward the exercise of responsibility that seeks God by casting itself upon his mercy alone in the recognition that it is "more than welcome!"

Negatively, any charges hurled against the doctrine of double predestination and equal ultimacy, throughout the centuries, as if they are necessarily indicative of a "deterministic Manichaeism" or a "robotizing hyper-Calvinism," appear groundless in the face of all the biblical data.

Positively, the decree of double predestination in its biblical riches predicates full sovereignty and incorporates full responsibility. Both the emphasis upon the 100% God at the expense of the 100% man and the stress upon the 100% man at the expense of the 100% God, are illegitimate in the light of the biblical presentation of the doctrine. In the final analysis, the curtailment of either the 100% God or the 100% man constitutes heterodoxy and at times possibly even heresy. Both therefore must be shunned.

All this goes against the grain of linear thinking, regardless of whether it is rooted in a rebellious heart or finds itself side by side with a regenerate heart. But it is embraced by nonlinear thinking as originating in a surrendered heart that acknowledges a Number 2 status. It does not constitute a curtailment for the intellect to recognize its boundaries and to accept the fact that everything beyond it is shrouded in a mystery that God has reserved for himself.

With this the biblical picture is complete. The issue of the relationship of divine sovereignty and free human agency has been formulated, hope-

fully to the fullest extent of God's revelation in Scripture. Any type of fully Pelagianizing or partly Pelagianizing thinking has been found biblically wanting. At the same time full Augustinianism, including double predestination and the equal ultimacy of election and reprobation, has been biblically vindicated. The dialectic, linear thinking, conflict, and death appear pitted against the biblical arithmetic, nonlinear thinking, harmony, and life. The choice should not be difficult.

The concluding chapter will deal with a number of implications of the biblical arithmetic and nonlinear thinking for all of life. The contrast with its dialectical opposite will prove to be radical and total as well as heartening. After all it provides a way to escape from the two depressing options of *The Lost World!*

However, before I turn to the final chapter, it may need to be driven home once more that linearity spells "warfare." If in pursuit of such warfare it does not take prisoners, it will per force lead to destruction. As has already been stated, all linearity has a non-negotiable, fixed point of departure. Everything that does not logically follow from it is ruled "out of order," everything that is not compatible with it is illegitimate. Everything that competes with it is neutralized. And everything that threatens its existence is terminated. In short, anything jarring, of whatever kind, to whatever degree, and in whatever way, must go!

Nonlinearity, on the other hand, has the opposite philosophy and objective. It pursues peace, and aims at progress. It is trans-logical without being illogical. It seeks accommodation with what is incompatible. It pursues co-existence with its competition. It endeavors to come to terms with what threatens it. In short, it aims to arrive at a *modus vivendi* with anything that is jarring. Of course, it will always do "within the bounds of biblical truth" and "under God" (Rom. 12:9-21, especially 16 and 18).

The total range of the image of God in man can fall victim to linearity or, for that matter, may be graced by nonlinearity. This image is his spirituality, or non-materiality, breathed into man by God himself (Gen. 2:7). It covers (1) man's heart as the radix of his existence, his personhood, his I-ness, (2) his three internal functions of thinking, willing and feeling, (3) his two, moral and social, dimensions, (4) the internal dynamic of his (creative) imagination, and (5) the two activities of speaking and acting. If I claim either ultimacy or primacy in any aspect or facet of my spirituality, linearity reigns and the upshot will either be agreement or warfare. Since full agreement is and always will be elusive, warfare is inevitable. Heart will be pitted against heart, mind, will and emotions against mind, will and emotions,

the moral and the social against the moral and the social, imagination against imagination, and speaking and acting against speaking and acting! This seems to be a fair description of the cauldron, called The History of Man!

However, when the heart is regenerated, the way is open to nonlinearity, self-denial in the one and the many spheres, and sacrifice and submission in the authority structures, in both love and holiness. Hearts will turn to each other (Mal. 4:5), and fuse. That is, humans at the deepest level of their existence, at the origin from which everything else, including nonlinearity, springs (Prov. 4:23), will find and embrace each other. In its wake minds, wills, and emotions, the moral and the social, imaginations, speaking and acting, will merge as well. (This is not to deny that this phenomenon cannot be present in the unregenerate as a “common grace.”) The upshot is peace and prosperity. This explains the intermediate and temporary “better moments” in the history of man (resulting from either special or common grace).

In short, linearity because it arises from ultimacy or primacy of one kind or another always exemplifies the presence of the dialectic, whether lurking in the background, or brazenly being out in the open. Nonlinearity, on the other hand, indicates that the dialectic either has been conquered, or is only partially operational, or is temporarily non-operational.<sup>208</sup> Of course, the conquest of the dialectic is invariably a matter of special grace. It is only found in the Christian. For it to be partially operational indicates a failure to depend on special grace. Again this can only occur in a Christian's life. For it to be temporarily non-operational is a matter of common grace. This can be evidenced in non-Christians.<sup>209</sup> At any rate, in the concluding chapter special attention will be given to nonlinear thinking, specifically its implications for theology, for the Church, for all of life, and last but not least, for the worship of God.

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<sup>208</sup> The implications of this analysis for any kind of ministry, that deals with the “school of life,” especially counseling, are clearly profound. It will provide insight in what is going on in areas, such as conflict resolution, to mention only one.

<sup>209</sup> Incidentally, according to Calvin, common grace, which in this context consists of temporary or partial peace, harmony and prosperity, has a fourfold purpose. First, it puts the reigns on sin so that human life, both individual and communal, does not become an impossibility. Second, it greatly profits the Church so that it can go about its business peaceably and effectively. Third, it constitutes an open invitation for the recipient to come to know God as its source. Fourth, it is sufficient to render the recipient, who suppresses or opposes that knowledge, fully inexcusable. See J. Douma, *Algemene Genade* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1966), 234-239.

# Nonlinear Thinking

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## *a. Its Place in Theology*

Nonlinear thinking is not just a recent phenomenon ingeniously developed by the "Athens" of Chaos Science that "Jerusalem" now slavishly may borrow as the latest fad. Not at all! Bishop Hopkins, an eighteenth-century theologian, remarkably modern in his thought patterns and strikingly up to date in his terminology, despite a few antiquated words, already blazed that trail when he wrote in a Foreword on a book on Predestination, "Do you see a thousand little motes and atoms wandering up and down in a sunbeam? It is God that so peoples it, and He guides their innumerable and irregular strayings. Not a dust flies in a beaten road but God raises it, conducts its uncertain motion, and, by His particular care, conveys it to the certain place He had before appointed for it; nor shall the most fierce and tempestuous wind hurry it any farther. Though the world seem to run at random, and affairs to be huddled together in blind confusion and rude disorder, yet, God sees and knows the concatenation of all causes and effects, and so governs them that he makes a perfect harmony out of all those jarrings and discords. It is most necessary that we should have our hearts well established in the firm unwavering belief of this truth, that whatsoever comes to pass, be it good or evil, we may look up to the hand and disposal of God. In respect to God, there is nothing casual nor contingent in the world. All fortuitous events here below fall out unexpectedly as to us, but not so as to God."<sup>210</sup>

This is (eighteenth-century) "Chaos" theology at its best, rooted in a surrendered heart and expressed in nonlinear thought patterns. It is hardly surprising that Hopkins shuns all terms such as antinomy, and that his Foreword introduces a book that contains a staunch defense of double pre-

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<sup>210</sup> Quoted in the Preface of J. Zanchius, *The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), 14-15.

destination, with the often – unjustly – maligned equal ultimacy of election and reprobation as its crowning piece.<sup>211</sup>

How refreshing it is to notice that for once "Jerusalem" is not uncritically following in the tracks of "Athens" in suicidal dependence. No, it appears that "Athens" finally recognizes, through observation and by virtue of common grace, what "Jerusalem" had emphasized centuries earlier, through revelation and by virtue of special grace. Regrettably, the Church is not always in the vanguard in the pursuit and presentation of truth, whether biblical or extra-biblical truth. It is too often the tail, rather than the head (Deut. 28:13, 44). If that becomes a habit, it cannot but eventually swallow as common grace in a dangerous naiveté what it should have rejected as the deceptive products of dialectical thinking. It is not the most comforting thought that the Church can easily break down its own walls to play host to a Trojan Horse, and so becomes a part, however unintentional and unwilling, of the great deception. The Church escaped this fate, when it declared that Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism had no place within its walls. It was not so perceptive when large sections of it welcomed Arminianism. This is not to deny the existence of common grace, but it is to remind ourselves that enthusiasm for common grace should go hand in hand with the recognition of the antithesis as an at least equally essential fact of life. Since common grace does not preclude the need for evangelism, a strong case can be made for the claim that the antithesis is the more fundamental fact of life. The biblical teaching that every common grace constitutes a call to repentance (Rom. 2:4) only serves to drive this home more forcefully, if it does not clinch it!

To be concrete, it can be argued that if the Church is to be the victorious head rather than the deceptive tail (Is. 9:15-16) its theology can never afford to be anything else but nonlinear. This includes hermeneutical theology, exegetical theology, biblical theology, systematic theology, historical theology, practical theology, as well as apologetics, ethics and evangelism. Full-orbed nonlinear thinking will not make the intellect the final court of appeal, nor rebel against what transcends its operating range. It realistically recognizes and practically accedes to its own limitations, and is willing to acknowledge and accept biblical mystery, because the heart has bowed before God and his interpretation of the universe including his interpretation

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<sup>211</sup> Double predestination with its equal ultimacy of election and reprobation appears to be the *piece de resistance* for linear thinking. When this biblical doctrine is joyfully embraced, the last vestige of the ultimacy/primacy of the intellect and the last trace of the defiance/resistance of the heart will have melted away. A total surrender of the heart and a consequent full submission of the intellect will go a long way toward a comprehensive, unqualified, worship of God.

of man as finite. In short, it keeps out or purges itself of every influence of dialectical thinking.

This, incidentally, militates against any apologetic stance which holds that the heart never can nor ever should be asked to accept what the mind has not endorsed, and therefore insists upon at least the methodological primacy of the intellect. The truth is that the mind in either its apostate ultimacy or its methodological primacy will never accede to anything that displeases the heart. Man's created make-up is *not* such that "his heart is to follow his head."<sup>212</sup> Since his heart is the initiation point of life, the source from which all of life springs (Prov. 4:23), including intellectual, volitional and emotional life, the head – as well as the volition and the emotions, for that matter – invariably follows the heart. Besides, when the mind claims ultimacy or primacy, it cannot escape linear thinking, which by definition gets embroiled in warfare, and therefore is bound to self-destruct.

In the final analysis the present study has been arguing throughout for a theology that is characterized in all its disciplines by nonlinear thinking. Hopefully that was done with some persuasiveness. The next section simply continues the argument in a more practical vein.

### ***b. Its Service to the Church***

Nonlinear theology is not a Johnny-come-lately. In fact, it is the original biblical theology. It has been attacked frequently, not in the last place by Pelagianism. It has suffered serious setbacks, especially during the ascendancy of Arminianism. It has been sidestepped by those who by theological conviction should be its (most) faithful practitioners. But it has survived throughout the centuries. This is a cause for gratitude. Nonlinear thinking clears up confusion. It removes misconceptions. It answers tough questions. It meets challenges. In fact, it serves the total body of doctrine and benefits the full range of theology. It is no exaggeration to describe it as the conditio sine qua non for the understanding (hermeneutics), organization (systematic theology), defense (apologetics), and practice (ethics) of biblical truth. Thus it is of inestimable value to the Church.

Four illustrations, one in each of these areas, will underscore this. In the process it will once more become evident that the Pelagian controversy is only the tip of an iceberg, and that the analysis and assessment of that controversy is of great methodological significance for all of life. The biblical arithmetic will prove to yield a handsome spiritual dividend.

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<sup>212</sup> See once again Sproul, *Classical Apologetics*, IX and 21

First, in the area of the interpretation and understanding of Scripture, 1 Kings 15:28-29 informs the reader that Baasha kills all the descendants of Jeroboam "according to the word of the Lord, which he had spoken by His servant Ahijah" (1 Ki. 14:1-14). In 1 Kings 16:7 we read that the Lord speaks out against Baasha through the prophet Jehu because of all the evil he did in patterning himself after the house of Jeroboam "and because he killed them." Finally, 1 Kings 16:12 informs us that "Zimri destroyed the house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord spoken against Baasha by the prophet Jehu."

To linear thinking this cannot and must not make sense. God predicts judgment. That must be morally good. Baasha fulfills the prediction. But God promptly condemns that as morally evil. The upshot is Baasha's own destruction. The combination of these three facts seems to be confusing, illogical, and contradictory. But to nonlinear thinking it is none of the above. It recognizes in the story the pattern of the biblical arithmetic. In the destruction of Jehu's descendants we encounter both 100% God's hand and 100% Baasha's hand. Furthermore, the 100% of God's prediction gives rise to the 100% of Baasha's fulfillment. Finally, God's 100% judgment operates simultaneously with Baasha's 100% execution. God's 100% is totally just. From this perspective the destruction of Jeroboam's house is morally good and deserved. But Baasha's 100% is totally sinful. In this light his execution of Jeroboam's descendants is morally evil and deservedly punished.

Second, in the area of systematic theology, according to Genesis 50:20 Joseph's brothers intended to do him evil by selling him into slavery. God, however, intended that very same sale for good. Nonlinear thinking will tinker with this. It invariably will skirt the 100% God by introducing notions such as divine foreknowledge or permission as a "theodicy" of sorts. God only "foresaw" what would happen. Or, he only "allowed" certain events to happen.

Such "proposals" are passing strange since they literally fly in the face of the very wording of Scripture. But, as has been argued, this is the "second nature" of the dialectic and its concomitant, the ultimacy/primacy of the intellect. Once they grip their victim, even biblical truth will (have to) yield whether by subtle reinterpretation or by blunt denial. It is equally strange that it is not recognized that the proposals of "foreknowledge" or "permission" have no apologetic cogency whatsoever. It is certainly no feather in God's cap, nor satisfactory to his detractors/opponents, to claim that he merely "foresees" or "permits" calamity, let alone sin. If he is both God and

good, why did he not take decisive action to prevent or override it?<sup>213</sup> The dialectic apparently not only makes its victims recalcitrant against explicit biblical truth, but also blinds them to the implications of their own solutions. To speak of dialectic darkness is no exaggeration.

Nonlinear thinking, of course, once again chooses the high road of the biblical arithmetic. The practical implications cannot be overestimated. When the nonlinear thinker encounters evil, he does not first of all have eyes for the human perpetrators (100% man), ignoring, overlooking or toning down the divine involvement (100% God) in the process. That might tempt him first to strike back, and then, if he belatedly would decide to turn to God, to request him to duplicate the human retaliation or to add to the human revenge further divine retaliation. "Lord, I responded by giving him the one, you please give him the two."

No, he sees the hand of God first (all 100% of it), in whatever took place, in the footsteps of Joseph (Gen. 50:20) and of the Preacher (Eccl. 3:11a). Then, by virtue of his love for God he will proceed to thank him for it (1 Thess. 5:18) because it has the avowed aim of the good, whether this is personal sanctification (Rom. 8:28-29) or Kingdom growth (Gen. 50:20b). Finally, he will pray, "Father, do not charge them with their sin." (Acts 7:60). The presence and the primacy of the divine are experienced. The input and the responsibility of the human are recognized. The simultaneity of the divine and the human is acknowledged. All three elements of the arithmetic are practiced.

Third, in the area of apologetics, in Exodus 4:21; 7:4; and 14:4 God predicts that he will harden Pharaoh's heart, and in Exodus 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; and 14:8 we read that he did so. Further, Exodus 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; and 9:7, 34 inform us that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Finally, we are told throughout these chapters that this precipitated judgment after judgment and eventually Pharaoh's death. This seems totally arbitrary and unjust and therefore must raise the ire of linear thinkers. If God hardened Pharaoh's heart, Pharaoh acted like a robot when he hardened his own heart, and the harsh judgment meted out to Pharaoh in the Ten Plagues is hardly deserved. The protest is, therefore, never long in coming. In fact, according to Paul, it can be anticipated (Rom. 9:19). Incidentally, if this anticipation does not convince the Bible reader that Paul teaches sovereignty, nothing

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<sup>213</sup> Gordon Clark once made the astute remark that a lifeguard, who has the ability to rescue a swimmer from drowning but fails to do so, is certainly not let off the hook by informing the next of kin that he "foresaw" what would happen, and, in fact, "permitted" it to happen. This would be viewed as more than just a "lame excuse." It would be a travesty! Similarly, a "sharp" unbeliever will scoff at a theodicy in terms of foreknowledge or permission!

will. In the meantime, the protest is summarily rejected. In his defense Paul simply reminds the objector that man is man and God is God (Rom. 9:20-21). But apart from the fact that his reply demands a renunciation of any type of rebellion, how can Paul do that so serenely?

Again the biblical arithmetic comes to the rescue. Careful perusal of all the biblical data demonstrates that in the hardening process (1) both God and Pharaoh are involved for 100%, (2) God's 100% has the unquestionable primacy, and (3) God's 100% and Pharaoh's 100% occur simultaneously.<sup>214</sup> The conclusion is that God in his dealings with Pharaoh is not only properly sovereign, but also totally just, while Pharaoh in his response to God must assume full responsibility and cannot complain about the treatment he receives. To impinge upon the 100% God would leave Pharaoh in the driver's seat, which is patently unbiblical. To impinge upon the 100% man would either equate God with blind fate or make him arbitrary in his judgment, which is just as patently unbiblical. Of course, only nonlinear thinking can and will embrace the truth of the arithmetic.

Fourth, in the area of ethics, in Genesis 2:24 the man is told to leave his father and mother, and to cleave to his wife, so as to become "one flesh." This is quoted in the NT in Matthew 19:5-6; Mark 10:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:16; and Ephesians 5:31, underscoring its importance. The union in view in the expression "one flesh" is much more than a bodily union. It spells union in the essential equality of man and woman in terms of their spirituality (image), humanity (dominion) and sexuality (multiplication) (Gen. 1:27-28), but also in the functional difference between man and woman once again in terms of their spirituality (authority structure), humanity (helper status of the woman), and sexuality (biological uniqueness) (Gen. 2:18-23). In short,  $1 + 1 = 1$  in an all-encompassing sense.

God's blueprint for marriage did not have particularly smooth sailing. Following man's fall into sin, the dialectic did not leave the oldest human

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<sup>214</sup> In Romans 9:17-21 Paul without any reservation emphasizes the 100% God. In the verses 19-20 Paul answers the anticipated protest, "You will say to me, 'Why does He still find fault. For who resists His will?'" with a counter question. Frankly, he puts it in very polite and measured language, "Who are you to answer back to God?" However, in colloquial language he simply tells his anticipated opponent, to "shut up!" God is the potter and he may and will do with the clay whatever he decides. Period! In this context human responsibility is not mentioned. The first order of business is that man *must* submit to divine sovereignty. He *must* concede that he is Number 2! In other words, he first must "shut up." Only after that Paul is willing to talk, whether it pertains to human responsibility or otherwise, and to invite his readers to share what is on their heart. This stands to reason. When the rebellion is gone from man's heart, the sting has disappeared from man's language. Paul shows his willingness to talk further about the responsibility of man for his own hardness, and God's judgment upon it, in various contexts (Rom. 1:18-32; 2:5; 11:7-10; Eph. 2:1-4; 4:17-19; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Tit. 3:3), and also shows his interest in hearing from his readers (Philemon 10-14).

institution untouched. The supposedly mutual presupposition of the two poles in the marriage union was frequently more than offset by their mutual exclusion. Conflict and strife too often were the order of the day. Whether consciously or unconsciously both poles would quickly fall victim to a scenario in which either “ $1 + 0 = 1$ ” or “ $0 + 1 = 1$ ” would prevail. The tension that this scenario produced would eventually lead to a divorce rate of up to 50%.

Of course, true to form dialectical thinking will propose a compromise that is supposed to produce “the perfect synthesis.” But it can at best come up with a 50-50 proposition. Incidentally, this brings into view the naiveté of the Church. Innumerable times it has embraced this solution as a “common grace,” while it should have fiercely rejected it as antithetical and inimical to the Christian faith.

No, God’s solution is the biblical arithmetic of 100% (man) + 100% (woman) = 100% (“one flesh”). Only this “formula” spells co-ultimacy in marriage as a one and many sphere and co-functionality in marriage as an authority structure. Of course, the implementation of this arithmetic can only materialize by means of mutual self-denial as well as sacrifice and submission in love and holiness. In many instances this would disclose the need for regeneration and, and therefore, for evangelism. After all, without the new heart self-denial, sacrifice and submission are impossibilities. And it always calls for sanctification and, therefore, for careful instruction in biblical love and holiness.

These four illustrations suggest the dire need for and the surpassing value of a nonlinear hermeneutics, a nonlinear systematic theology, a nonlinear apologetics, and a nonlinear ethics. The first one will provide an understanding heart. The Jehu-Baasha-Zimri account will not create a stir. The second one will produce a worshipful heart. Just as the Romans 9-11 section does, the Joseph story will lead to worship. The third one aims at a transformed heart. Paul's counter question is designed to break the questioner's rebellion. The fourth one will foster an overflowing heart. Self-denial, sacrifice and submission in love and holiness will produce not only a joyful and fulfilled marriage life, but will also leave harmony and prosperity in its wake.

If practiced in biblical nonlinearity, all four disciplines do and will originate from a surrendered heart. This has to be the case, because at the boundaries of their metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical competence they encounter the shroud of mystery that surrounds all of created reality, and they bow before it in their understanding and practice. It is imperative

that they carry their thinking, and the use of all relevant faculties for that matter, to the limit. But they may (and do) not transgress or even seek to transgress this limit. Only a surrendered heart will be content both to pursue the assigned responsibilities and to honor creaturely limitations, both to cultivate its mandated domain to the full and to oppose any attempt to penetrate the impenetrable.

As has been suggested, a nonlinear mindset will have explosive implications for the Church, well beyond the area of academic disciplines. A few illustrations should drive this point home.

First, such mindset will champion and practice an evangelism (as well as an apologetics) that in epistemological self-consciousness, patterns itself after the biblical model. Its grand prize is not the mind, or the will, or the emotion. Therefore its aim is not merely to get people to agree with certain propositions, or to increase their excitement, or to see them become more active. No, it will target the heart (Acts 2:37, 7:54), and will not be satisfied with anything less than a heart transplant. Its objective is unconditional surrender!

Second, such mindset will produce a more biblical type of preaching. By design it will preach the Gospel of the Kingdom (Mt. 9:35). It will not just present the Kingdom as one topic among many. No, the Kingdom with its threefold focus of the new heart in regeneration (John 3:3, 5), the new record in justification (Rom. 5:1; Hebr. 9:22), and the new life in sanctification (John 8:31; Hebr. 12:14) will put an indelible stamp on every message. Regeneration will be set forth because it procures Kingdom entrance. Justification will be proclaimed because it procures Kingdom peace. Sanctification will be taught because it constitutes Kingdom life. But there is more. The new heart will be presented as (only) the starting point, the new record as (only) the launching pad for the crowning piece of holiness of life as the (super)natural consequence of the unconditional surrender that is targeted in evangelism.

All in all, biblical evangelism, (biblical apologetics<sup>215</sup>) and biblical preaching should produce soldiers, a whole army of them (2 Tim. 2:2), fit for the Master's use (2 Tim. 2:21), and ready to do battle (2 Tim. 4:5-7)! In short, they should produce reproducers! That this should keep the Church fresh and energize it, seems rather evident.

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<sup>215</sup> A biblical apologetics is in principle post-evangelistic, and should in practice be co-evangelistic. Any pre-evangelistic apologetics is predicated upon the primacy of the intellect, betrays therewith the influence of a dialectic mindset, and consequently should be avoided.

### c. *The Richness of Life*

The exquisite and fascinating patterns of “orderly disorder” and “disorderly order” that were brought to light by Chaos science are no accident. It only stands to reason that the universe, as the reflection of the infinite, all-controlling Triune God, displays both coherent unity and endless variety as co-ultimate and co-functional. It appears that in this regard the mystery of the eternal, uncreated being of God is reflected in the mystery of temporal, created reality. Both the macrocosm and the microcosm, as also Chaos science in its best moments recognizes, are dazzling as well as incomprehensible in the simultaneity of their colorful, multifaceted, detailed precision and their imposing, unified, overall architecture.

The corollary is the sobering thought that the features of unity and variety carry over into the world of sin. Sin did not only corrupt mankind (the one) and all of its members (the many), with devastating consequences for all the one and many spheres and the authority structures. It also manifests itself both in a unified and sharply focused rebellion against God (the one) and in the endless variations of wickedness with which we have to cope (the many). So also the world of darkness and death ironically reflects in a warped fashion the being of God. The focus and ingenuity of sin really should not come as a surprise. God literally and, in this case, ironically, puts his imprint upon everything!

Incidentally, the sinner who wishes to be Number 1 in his heart, and decides to have his mind make all final decisions vis-à-vis both God and man, and consequently gets mired in the dialectic, cannot but make a calamitous cauldron out of his world. Starting from the one pole of the dialectic, either universality (the one) or particularity (the many), and similarly in sovereignty (in authority) or responsibility (under authority), man begins to wage war with either tyranny or anarchy as its logical end. First, the war is already present within man. Self is the lethal enemy of self-denial and fights the latter with a vengeance. “I” want to do it “my” way! Then, the war spills over. The self opens hostilities against other selves who opt for the opposite pole in the dialectic, whether in the one and many spheres or in the authority structures. Finally, when it is a matter of survival, it is not beyond any self to consume the very selves who are in league with them, just like the velociraptors in *Jurassic Park* consume their very own young ones when famished.<sup>216</sup> *The Lost World* was, indeed, very perceptive when it presented

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<sup>216</sup> Crichton, *Jurassic Park*, 352. Dennis Peacocke, in his one page newsletter *The Bottom Line*, July, 1996, speaks of “the daily deluge of death being dished out in a culture killing itself in prodigious numbers.”

mankind its two dialectic evolutionary prospects. The present can only offer strife, conflict and warfare. The future is more of the same, with destruction as its sole alternative. Anything else is really nothing but unfounded wishful thinking.

All this explains the spiritual darkness in the various one and many spheres, such as in the social, political, and economic arenas. Social, political, and economic ambition, strife, upheavals and calamities are the worldwide order of the day. The same applies to the authority structures, such as the state, the church, business, and the family. Manipulation of power, provocation, oppression on the part of those in authority, and embitterment, revulsion and revolution on the part of those under authority are global ills as well. The daily newspaper supplies plenty of evidence that no state, church, business or family can escape them. In recent years the near programmatic devastation, caused by the rule of self, whether in the form of self-service, self-assertion, self-aggrandizement, or other types of self-centeredness, has been well documented by several authors.<sup>217</sup> The present age of genocide with its numerous “holocausts” is ironically a fitting crowning-piece of man’s achievements throughout the centuries. Only common grace in its life sweetening, and sin restraining influence, prevents *total* destruction. (Of course, common grace can never effect radical and fundamental renewal. But neither was it ever designed to do so. In fact, it is an implicit summons to repentance, which in turn is a plea for the special grace that will produce such renewal.)

Of course, these sobering thoughts do not have the final word. There is the joyful recognition of God's counter move. Righteousness does not only reign in the Church (the one) and in its members (the many), with healing consequences for all one and many spheres and authority structures. It also manifests itself both in the unified and sharply focused advance of the Kingdom of God (the one) and in the endless details of all areas, aspects and structures of life (the many), where self-denial, self-sacrifice, submission, rooted in love and evidenced in holiness prevail.

Naturally, this is, first of all, predicated upon the presence of a new heart, the new self, the new man, in regeneration, which is the corollary of the crucifixion of the old man, the old heart or old self. Second, it is predicated upon the preeminence of Christ in us as the hope of glory because he is not only the repository of all knowledge and wisdom, but also the source of all the strength required to give feet to that knowledge and wisdom. Here

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<sup>217</sup> P. Johnson, *Intellectuals* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988); R. Zacharias, *A Shattered Visage. The Real Face of Atheism*, and *Can Man Live Without God*.

is where both evangelistic and edificational preaching come into their own. Common grace can function only as a temporary Band-Aid. As has been argued already, this is no more than a “living corpse.” There is a “desperate” need for special grace, that produces a “living sacrifice,” that is, a life of self-abandonment in self-denial, self-sacrifice and submission. This is channeled through the twofold call to repentance/faith and holiness. Both common grace and special grace spell “death” of sorts. The former has the illusion of real life but will ultimately prove to be a dead-end street. The latter produces the reality of death to self, and will invariably lead to genuine and abundant life. The only true gain clearly comes through loss.<sup>218</sup>

That all this produces a clash stands to reason. In fact, this clash is both uninterrupted and total. World(view), centered in the human traditions that endeavor the build a brave new world from below in the strength of self, is pitted against world(view) as centered in a preeminent Christ who constructs a new world from above.<sup>219</sup>

The intensity of this clash can be concluded from the strong convictions of both Paul and his opponents. Paul describes the difference as one of darkness and death (Eph. 2:1 and 5:11) versus light and life (Eph. 2:5 and 5:13). His opponents on their part charge him with turning the world upside down (Acts 17:6). The battle of the Church against Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism is only one aspect of this clash.

But since the holiness of God, which may well be the very hub of his being (Is. 6:3 and Rev. 4:8), comes into its own in the display of righteousness in the unified and focused advance of the Kingdom of God as well as in the endless and multicolored aspects and areas of life, this clash between the kingdom of (dialectic) hate, darkness and death and the Kingdom of (nonlinear) love, light and life is in the final analysis no contest. Love *will* overcome hate, light *will* dispel darkness, and life *will* conquer death.

Furthermore, all this is guaranteed by the One in whom the Kingdom of love, light and holiness is personified, namely the Christ. He is not only

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<sup>218</sup> This is basically obnoxious to the unregenerate, although he often displays the common grace of unselfishness to one degree or another, depending upon setting and circumstances. Conversely, it is ultimately the desire of the regenerate, although he often demonstrates his selfishness to one extent or another. It is both ironic and tragic that the common grace in the unbeliever often outshines the special grace in the believer!

<sup>219</sup> Charles Hodge was very conscious of this clash, as is indicated by the following statement he reportedly made a few years before his death, “No man is molested for his religion or for his want of religion. No one is required to profess any form of faith, or to join a religious association. More than that cannot reasonably be demanded. More, however, is demanded. The infidel demands that the government should be conducted on the principle that Christianity is false. The atheist demands that it should

preeminent over all of creation with the authority that this entails (Col. 1:16-18). He is also in us as the hope of glory, with the needed strength that this provides (Col. 1:27). In addition to that, as the repository of all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom (Col. 2:3), he furnishes the “strategy” and gives the “directives” that ensure victory. To be sure, without him the Church can do nothing (John 15:5). This should remove all pride, and produce a stance of total dependence. But with him the Church can do everything (Phil. 4:13). This removes all fear, and supplies confidence and courage.

All in all, final and total triumph is secured. That is to say, love and holiness,<sup>220</sup> and therewith harmony, peace and prosperity, will win out whenever and wherever God’s Evangel prevails!

Love has three components or features. Its first component is a fervent desire, a heartfelt longing to be united, to be at one with an “object” in order to enrich “it.”<sup>221</sup> Its second component is an intense delight, a deep gratification, when the union with that “object” becomes a reality. Its third component is an unmistakable display of a bountiful generosity, an overflowing liberality, that lavishes gifts upon, and so enriches, its “object” both before and after the union is attained. The difference between a Christian and non-Christian love ought to be noted. Non-Christian love is invariably self-

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be conducted on the assumption that there is no God.” What is Hodge’s conclusion? “One sufficient response to all this is that there is no peaceful coexistence.”

<sup>220</sup> It is important to note that human love and holiness reflect the being of God (In Scripture God’s attributes or perfections are identical with his being!). More precisely, in them God’s being, more precisely, God’s Trinitarian being is mirrored on the human level. It is no coincidence that Christianity spells love, holiness and evangelism, while Islam without blushing accommodates “hate,” “unholiness” and “war.” The latter has the imprint of *its* “god” indelibly stamped upon it. Unity without a plurality does not have room, and cannot furnish an anchor point, for love. If unity is ultimate, any diversity that competes with it, or impinges upon it, must by definition be annihilated. It calls for “war!” Such war may be quite unholy from a biblical, Trinitarian, point of view (the rape of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein in the early 1990’s, as well as the wholesale execution of “unbelievers”). But when waged in the name and for the sake of a pure, and basically formalistic, unity, it must be called a “jihad,” a “holy war.” Among all the theologies, philosophies, or ideologies, that do not spring from biblical soil, Islam is a text book example of the tyrannical rule of the apostate dialectic. Any and all particularity that does not honor the Islamic “one,” is a potential candidate for destruction, however it may be accommodated temporarily. And by implication, anyone who identifies himself with the Islamic “one,” whether justifiably or not, is potentially entitled to destroy all competing particularities as his and Allah’s enemies. The cauldron of the Middle East is hardly an historical accident! This is not to say that the adherents of Islam are always in agreement about the practical application of their religion, or are always consistent in it. After all, God’s restraining and enriching common grace is always in evidence everywhere. This includes the world of Islam. But common grace does not neutralize the fact that a dialectic commitment to the “one,” or “One” for that matter (universality), is by definition hostile to the “many” (particularity). Eventually this will show up in either “destruction” or “warfare,” as also *Jurassic Park* and *The Lost World* so aptly indicate.

<sup>221</sup> That is why the poor does not have many friends (Prov. 19:4), in fact, “is hated even by his own neighbor” (Prov. 14:20).

centered and selfish. Apart from an occasional common grace unbelief's desire for and delight in being united with an "object" is to fill a vacuum in, and so to enhance and enrich, itself. At bottom this kind of love, which often prevails in Christians as well, is still a form of hate in a rather subtle disguise. Christian love is (ought to be) unselfish. It desires to fill a vacuum, any vacuum, every vacuum, *not in itself, but in its "object,"* and so to enhance and enrich *it*. In the process it will . . . "lose" itself, and paradoxically end up a winner.

In the display of his love Christ is the prime example. He "lost" vis-à-vis his Father when he denied himself by submitting to his will. He "lost" vis-à-vis his own when he denied himself in self-sacrifice. In both instances that meant the cross, on the face of it a rather convincing mark of a loser. But the "double loser" turned out to be a "double winner." Presently his Father has given him all the authority in heaven and on earth. And his own give him the worship of their heart both in heaven and throughout the length and breadth of the earth.

Here the contours of a truly new life and world order begin to emerge. Hate, and in its wake discord and war, are replaced by love, and its accompanying harmony and peace. Especially in the light of Christ as the great paradigm the implications for life in all of its spheres, structures, facets and phases are clearly explosive! (Imagine the realization of these implications in the world of education, economics, and politics, in the areas of the family, the Church and the work place. The adjective "explosive" might not be able to touch it.)

Genuine love is unconditional in the sense that it is not dependent upon anything meritorious found in its "object." But it is not unconditional in the sense that it implies a blanket acceptance of the status quo. Christian love has two additional components. It is also anti-conditional and reconditioning. That is to say, it will ever oppose what displeases God and promote what receives his smile. That is why true love always desires to remove sin and to replace it with holiness. In other words, genuine, Christian, self-denying, love seeks to implement the law order of God, all the Ten Commandments. Its grand objective is a mankind in mint condition.

Once again the Lord Jesus Christ is the foremost example. Both his life and his death are the embodiment of obedience to the law order of God (Ps. 40:8; Mt. 3:15; Gal. 3:13). In fact, in a real sense he personifies the law order of God. The peace that this produced, both between man and his God, and between man and man, led to life and prosperity, and will continue to do so. Death was destroyed on the cross, and life pours forth from the "open

grave.” Satan was crushed, and with it his network of lies, murder and the destruction that entails. The life and holiness that pours forth from the resurrection will be sufficient to mop up any and all remnants.

Similarly, in the light of Christ as the paradigm the implications of the implementation of God’s law order in all of life are equally explosive. On the foundation of love the superstructure of a truly “just society” will emerge. The potential impact upon, once again, all of the spheres, all of the structures, all of the facets and all of the phases of human existence is immeasurable.<sup>222</sup> It holds out the prospect of abundance and prosperity. This is the promise of God (Deut. 28:1ff.). Although this is not the context at length to present any additional “case studies” to undergird this thesis, two short illustrations from the field of politics are now given to show both the immense potential and the dire necessity of the presence of love and holiness.

The first illustration argues mainly the potential of this presence.

The party of the “one,” whether in a kingdom, oligarchy, republic or democracy, has the seemingly innate and irrepressible tendency to siphon off taxes and other services from its subjects or constituents (1 Sam. 8:1-22, especially 11-17). The motivation may be selfish, as in the instance of some absolute monarchs in the past. In that case it runs counter to genuine love in all its three components. Or the motivation is more or less altruistic, as in the case of a democracy. In that instance it runs counter to the law-order of God. First, the State is “the minister of justice,” and not a “minister of grace” (Rom. 13:1ff.). That is the prerogative of the Church. Whenever and wherever it usurps a “messianic” function, it sins against the first commandment. It takes the place of God, takes on the role as the source of (all) “well-being,” and is worshipped as such. If it imposes taxation in pursuit of this “messianic” role, it also transgresses the eighth commandment. It steals from its citizens, however noble the objective may appear.

At the same time, the party of the “many,” which champions individual freedom and responsibility, has the tendency to cut taxes and services. This supposedly brings about the so-called “trickle down” effect. Eventually everyone will experience the benefits. The charge that as a result of this the rich get richer and the poor poorer is historically quite inaccurate. There is enough evidence that the financial bottom rung of society will invariably show a pronounced relative improvement over the past when the economy

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<sup>222</sup> For the implications of the presence of love in, and the impact of God’s law order upon, the world of business, see Krabbendam, “Biblical Instructions,” 105-110.

is in a “trickle down” mode, or a “trickle down” policy is in force.<sup>223</sup> But if the individuals who make up the party of the “many” fail to take their personal responsibility seriously, close their eyes to the immediate needs of the poor, and refuse to be involved, then history repeats itself. While the relative poverty will be less, real needs can and still will go unattended. In that case genuine Christian love will be just as glaringly absent in the party of the “many” as it was in the party of the “one,” even if this manifests itself differently. Similarly, the law order of God with its emphasis upon the programmatic and constant care for the poor will be flouted as well. After all, once again an essential element of the eighth commandment will be ignored (Eph. 4:28).

Scripture neither endorses an illegitimate siphoning off, nor a merely “laissez faire” trickling down. Both fall victim to the dialectic. That is why the battle between them is bitter, and has no solution. Charge is met by countercharge: “lack of compassion that will allow folks to perish” is pitted against “promotion of irresponsibility that destroys folks,” and vice versa. Furthermore, both are a form of warfare, rooted in selfishness rather than self-denial, and in the refusal both to sacrifice and submit. The one is corporate warfare against an industrious citizenry, the other personal warfare against the deserving poor. No, genuine Christianity does not “siphon off” nor “trickle down,” but “overflows,” indeed, “pours out,” in the footsteps of Jesus who pours out his Spirit (Acts 2:45), and through the presence of that Spirit who produces “streams of living water” (John 7:37-39). This is a staggering reality, impossible without the presence of Christ in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Only they can produce the “power of his resurrection” that is the *conditio sine qua non* for such a “supernatural” lifestyle. Only they can produce a joyful embrace of the “fellowship of his suffering” that inevitably accompanies both love in its three component elements and the law order of biblical holiness. Only they can produce the eager anticipation of the “conformity to Christ’s death” that is part and parcel of self-denial in the one and many spheres, and sacrifice and submission in the authority structures (Phil. 3:10).

To be sure, an insistence upon and a display of compassion may be an evidence of “common grace” of sorts. So may be the insistence upon and the implementation of responsibility. But unless it is rooted in Christian

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<sup>223</sup> See E. Calvin Beisner, “Poverty: A Problem in Need of Definition,” in David W. Hall, ed., *Welfare Reformed* (Philipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1994), 112ff., esp. 120; “Is There an Invisible Hand to Help the Poor,” in *Crosswinds: The Reformation Digest*, Vol. II,2 (Fall/Winter, 1994-1995), 50-60; and Robert Rector, “How Poor are America’s Poor,” in Julian L. Simon, ed., *The State of Humanity* (New York: Blackwell, 1995).

love and embedded in the law order of God, it is, as has been argued already, like all “common grace” no more than a “living corpse.” There may be some temporary mileage in it (“living”), but in the long run it is destructive (“corpse”). Neither welfare (2 Thess. 3:10-11), nor lack of hands-on assistance (Jam. 2:15-16) serve the poor well! In fact, both stand condemned.  
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In short, while there are both biblical and practical reasons for holding that capitalism, (i.e. “individual capitalism”) will have greater societal effectiveness than socialism (i.e. “state capitalism”), neither one of the two is intrinsically more Christian.<sup>225</sup> In fact, in themselves they are both governed by the dialectic, just as anything else that does not have its roots in Christian soil.

The second illustration argues the dire necessity of the presence of love and holiness. In the 1930’s a powerful revival spilled across the border of Rwanda into Uganda, and succeeded in planting churches in virtually every community of that country. Literally millions were touched with the Gospel. The Rwandan streams of life produced nothing less than a miracle. But in the 1990’s these streams of life turned into streams of blood. Half a million Tutsis were murdered by the Hutus in a span of five weeks. Many bodies were unceremoniously dumped into the river, and thousands of them found their way into Lake Victoria, in the process traversing 125 miles of Tanzania territory. Water pollution became widespread in this second largest fresh water lake in the world, and infected the fish population as far as the Kenya shoreline. All fishing, including commercial fishing, was severely affected as the demand for fish dropped to nearly zero.

This genocide was perpetrated in a calculated manner by a frenzied mass of people. But according to the newspapers, the perpetrators were actively aided by prominent members of the religious, i.e. Christian, community. An in-depth analysis of this situation brings to light that the Gospel had been preached ever since the 1930’s, evidently with great individual success, but the instruction in the implications of that Gospel in terms of

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<sup>224</sup> Of course, all this poses a problem for a Christian in a republic or democracy, come election time. What is he or she to do when the only choice available is between a party of the “one” and a party of the “many”? First, total identification with any party, which is victimized by the dialectic should be out of the question. Second, a careful scrutiny as to which party or candidate would be the preferable co-belligerent should guide the Christian vote. Such co-belligerency should be determined by the presence of special grace as well as common grace, in this order, in terms of the three elements of biblical love and the implementation of God’s law order.

<sup>225</sup> In other words, while Christianity will promote a market economy because it is in line with biblical freedom, it will not endorse a market economy as Christian as long as it does not operate in obedience to the pertinent biblical commands.

love and holiness had been sorely missing. Streams of life will invariably turn into streams of blood, unless the Gospel impact is also evident in the loving embrace of the neighbor, regardless of color, culture, language or tribe, and in submission to the law order of God for all of society!

In summary, when biblical love and holiness prevail, discord, war, distress, disintegration, devastation and death are replaced by harmony, peace, delight, success, prosperity and life. Herewith both the Pelagian controversy and the *Jurassic Park* problem will have found their solution! This solution comes from above. It can never be solved from below!

When, finally, the question is brought up why this world displays the tapestry it does, with its love and its hate, its holiness and its sin, its good and its evil, its beauty and its ugliness, its delight and its horror, its pleasures and its pains, all culminating in heaven and hell, it is once again nonlinear thinking that comes into view and to the rescue.

The 100% God is, and should be, unmistakable. All of creation in all of its components and aspects, and all of history in all its phases and its consummation, serve one great purpose. God brought them about to display his infinite glory in all its facets. No aspect of creation nor phase of its history was ever formed or meant to be or have a source of life, strength, beauty, happiness, goodness, holiness, justice, etc. in themselves. Their place is one of absolute and unceasing dependence upon God. The fall into sin only serves to accentuate this. And even regeneracy does not change it (John 15:5). That's why, according to the Psalmist, "waiting upon God" is not only indispensable and factual (unconsciously) for all of the universe, including the animal creation (Ps. 104: 27, 28; 145:14-15), but should also be deliberate, continuous and uninterrupted as the highest nobility, and greatest joy of men (Ps. 25:4-5; 62:1, 5-6).<sup>226</sup> After all, their sole purpose and destiny is to manifest God in the infinity of his being and the sumtotal of his perfections. Waiting upon God is the acknowledgment and heartfelt embrace of that purpose. In short, God "pours" Himself into his world, in order for its total tapestry to display Him in all his perfections.

To take this one step further, that's why not only good, but also evil, with all that these realities entail, are decreed in the plan of God, and in evidence in the history of the universe. Romans 9:17-23 leaves no doubt about this whatsoever, as it speaks about God's wish to demonstrate his power and wrath, as well as his mercy and glory. Given the premise that this is God's objective, the presence of sin and evil is no longer a mere option for

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<sup>226</sup> See Andrew Murray, *Waiting on God* (Springdale: Whitaker House, 1983), esp. 11-21.

him. No, they must exist, by unassailable necessity, for the demonstration of God's justice and the display of God's grace to become a reality.<sup>227</sup>

In short, "sin and sorrow" constitute a necessary part of God's eternal plan for what has been called "The Grand Demonstration"<sup>228</sup> of all his perfections. Here is the bottom line of what God discloses about the presence of evil.<sup>229</sup>

Although the objective God wishes to reach is clearly stated, this does not mean that all mystery has vanished. Why he decided to execute his grand display, apart from his good pleasure, is not revealed. Neither is, incidentally, the origin of sin and its tragic consequences. So any and all probing into these aspects will end up in useless speculation. We simply *cannot* proceed beyond the content or limits of God's self-disclosure. But what is more, it is also harmful speculation. We *may not* do so. Deuteronomy 29:29 bluntly forbids it. At any rate, the 100% God is now unmistakable. "Of God, and through God, and unto God are all things" (Rom. 11:36), including the existence of sin and sorrow.

It may need to be emphasized once again that those who wait on God in complete humility and total surrender will never put God in the dock as if he were the "author of sin" or the "creator of evil." That would be linear thinking. "He decreed it, so He *must* have authored it." No, with the renunciation of both the rebellion of the heart and the ultimacy of the intellect that type of thinking has vanished. Those who wait on God bow before all of God's self-disclosure. They acknowledge and embrace that God decreed

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<sup>227</sup> Note well, although the presence of sin and evil is unreservedly necessary to accomplish God's purposes, this makes the fact of sin and evil no less grievous, loathsome and punishable.

<sup>228</sup> For the use of this phrase, see Jay Adams, *The Grand Demonstration* (Santa Barbara: EastGate Publishers, 1991). It may well be proper to conclude, be it with a good deal of biblical sobriety, that given the biblical premise of this grand demonstration, the present universe is the only possible universe. Given the further fact that its aim is to display *all* God's perfections, including his infinity and wisdom, it even should be called the best possible universe. Of course, the latter is the case only from the perspective of the glory of God as the ultimate objective of everything. From the perspective of the nature of sin as totally detestable and abhorrent to God, it may well be called the "worst" possible universe. If both are correct, it cannot but expose every last vestige of linear thinking! After all, once again the famed formula  $100\% + 100\% = 100\%$ , which is beyond exhaustive human comprehension, enters the picture. But it also pays handsome dividends. Identification with the glory of God gives both a cognitive contentment vis-à-vis the universe in all its providential dimensions and a militant dissatisfaction vis-à-vis sin in all its hateful dimensions. In the words of G. K. Chesterton, *Saint Francis of Assisi* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 76, this is the kind of perspective that depicts the difference between a "good man" and a "saint." For the former "all things do not illustrate and illuminate God," for the latter "God illustrates and illuminates all things."

<sup>229</sup> Here defined as the combination of sin and sorrow. See also Millard J. Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 139. He defines evil as both "moral" and "natural."

sin and evil (Acts 2:23; 4:27-28). But they also acknowledge and embrace him as the “Rock whose work is perfect, all of whose ways are just, a God who does no wrong” (Deut. 32:4), and “whose eyes are too pure to look upon evil, and who cannot tolerate wrong” (Hab. 1:13). Their finite intellect *cannot*, but their surrendered heart *will* encompass both simultaneously, and . . . worship! Not so incidentally, by virtue of their surrendered heart, they will become the recipients of glorious mercy. The fact that this is undeserved gives a further dimension to the 100% God!

However, not only the 100% God, but also the 100% man is unmistakable. Those who rebel against God and refuse to wait upon Him are fully responsible for that and have only themselves to blame for that refusal. They were neither through external or internal compulsion forced into their rebellion by anyone or anything. Their rebellion was a spontaneous and deliberate act of their own will. In fact, even those who are hardened (Ex. 4:21; 7:3, 13, 22; 8:19; 9:7, 12, 35; 10:1, 20, 27; 14:4, 8, 17; Rom. 9:18) can only, and will eventually, confess that they fully deserved it.

Further, the extent of the evil they produce depends upon the degree of their rebellion, and the pace of the hardening process – to which they themselves royally contribute, and for which they are fully responsible (Ex. 8:15; 9:34; Ps. 95:8; Pr. 28:14; 29:1; Hebr. 3:13).

Finally, they ironically will also manifest God, but willy-nilly, in the display of his justice and wrath that will reflect the extent of their rebellion and the degree of their wickedness. All linear charges against God that man thinks he can conjure up will prove to be groundless in the Day of Judgment. After all, every mouth will be stopped (Rom. 3:19).

One final time, where the rebel heart and the ultimacy of the intellect prevail, linear thinking will run rampant. This will by definition shut out “cognitive rest” about the “problem of evil.” However, where the heart breaks and the ultimacy of the intellect is renounced, any and all attempts to exhaustive comprehension will be given up. The end result? Radical surrender and total dependence produce a peace (both existential and cognitive) that transcends understanding, first in the heart and then also in the mind (Phil. 4:6-7). This, in turn, brings the capstone of all nonlinear thinking into view, the undiluted worship of God.

#### ***d. The Worship of God***

All good theology, just like all of life, begins in worship (Ps. 96:1), centers in worship (Ps. 96:2-3), and aims at worship (Ps. 96:7-9). The reason is

simple. All of reality as a reflection of the being of God is nonlinear. This means that not only the Triune God, but also all of reality, is surrounded by a shroud of mystery. The divine arithmetic does not leave anything untouched. In fact, it is woven into the warp and woof of all reality. Therefore it cannot be exhaustively grasped by the human intellect.

If the epistemological and ethical response is linear, the hostile polarities will immediately be activated. Whichever pole evokes the loyalty of the human heart or turns out to be the methodological starting point of the human mind, the opposite pole will be suppressed more or less brutally, treated with disdain, viewed with annoyance, ignored in indifference, dealt with in bafflement, tolerated as inevitable, or pursued as an object for synthesis. In all those contexts the worship of God is totally irrelevant, unacceptably intrusive, rejected out of hand or all of the above.

On the other hand, when the response is nonlinear, and it is consistently recognized that the poles can be argued with equal finality and can be accommodated simultaneously, worship is the only option, by definition. In fact, nonlinearity, and therefore good theology as well, will originate in, center in, and conclude with worship. After all the omnipresent and ever present shroud of mystery places us everywhere and always in the presence of God as God, more precisely in the presence of God as the Triune God. Paul's doxology as the crowning piece of his (nonlinear) exposition of both the double predestination by God and the unencumbered responsibility of man is but a single instance (Rom. 11:33).

Scripture's presentation on worship is remarkable.<sup>230</sup> It requires two preparatory steps and consists of two essential elements. The first preparatory step is to secure a vision of the transcendent holiness of God (Rev. 4:8; see also Is. 6:1-3). God is total and awesome purity! The second step is to arrive at submission to the all-encompassing dominion of God (Rev. 4:10a; see also Is. 6:8). God is all controlling and awesome majesty. The first step leads to the second by means of recognition and confession of sin as well as the subsequent cleansing and removal of sin (Is. 6:5-7). In the mirror of divine holiness Isaiah sees himself as "ruined," "decomposed," that is, as a spiritual "casket case," rather than a "mere" "basket case" (Is. 6:3-5). As the recipient of the purging power of the burning coal from God's altar he cannot but marvel about the astounding grace that made him emerge from his casket (Is 6:6-7). It is hardly surprising that divine dominion became precious to him (Is. 7:8).

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<sup>230</sup> See also H. Krabbendam, "Worship and Preaching," in *Worship in the Presence of God* (Frank J. Smith and David C. Lachman, eds., Greenville: Greenville Seminary Press, 1992), 157-177, esp. 157-160.

The two essential elements are the surrender of everything to God (Rev. 4:10b), and verbally assigning all the worth to God (Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12, 14). Without the "deed" the "word" is empty. But without the "word" the "deed" is blind. Verbalizing the praise of God belongs to the essence of that praise, just as the expression of love is the crowning piece of love.<sup>231</sup> To take the two preparatory steps and to practice the two essential phases will prove to be revolutionary!

First, the vision of the holiness of God, coupled with a broken heart about sin and the experience of forgiveness, silences forever any questioning or demanding "Why," both epistemologically and ethically. "Why do you run the world like this?" "Why did this happen to me?" In the light of the fact that mankind justly deserves eternal damnation and the consequent separation from God, such "Why's" simply die on the lips of each human who understands and acknowledges this. Whatever the affliction and the pain may be that humans suffer on earth, they are less than deserved, and could easily, indeed, should, have been worse. Furthermore, any challenging "Why" will quickly be replaced by a trustful "Why not!" After all, "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love him" (Rom. 8:28), namely conformity to the image of Christ in true holiness (Rom. 8:29). Why, then, would "my" world *not* be run the way it is? And why would "my" life *not* take the course it does? In the light of practical holiness as the grand objective of all God's dealings Christians will look at "all things" that befall them as a means to that end. And therefore they will receive them as a "moral good," in fact, as the "moral best," (Ps. 119:75), to be received with joy (Jam. 1:2) and even thanksgiving (Eph. 5:20).

Second, the submission to the dominion of God entails a total bowing down before everything that God is, determines, does, and says, that is, before God in his (nonlinear) being, plan, creation, providence, and revelation. God is a majestic God. His being is the awesome sum-total of all his perfections. His plan is an awesome indication, his creation an awesome reflection, his providence an awesome demonstration and his revelation an awesome presentation of this sum-total. To prostrate oneself before Him in and for everything is the only logical option (Rev. 1:17). The combined majesty of all emperors and kings who ever sat on a human throne is dwarfed by the majesty of the Triune God. If the "worship" of earthly rulers requires total submission, how much more should it be bound up with the worship of the Ruler of the Universe. Any reservations, any if's, and's or but's, any question marks are intolerable and unthinkable.

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<sup>231</sup> See J. Piper, *Desiring God* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1986), 36-37.

Third, the surrender of everything to God means returning from the heart (!) whatever man is and has to the Giver of all, without hesitation, reservation and exception. This is worship in deed. Believers are crowned with many gifts, such as health, strength, education, vocation, profession, a spouse, children, energy, a home, reputation, time, luxury, transportation, friendship, vacation, to name only a few. All these crowns are (to be) handed over, indeed, immediately returned to God when received, unequivocally, and without holding anything back (Compare Dan. 4:34-37). In short, the whole range of man's possessions and faculties, his intellect not in the last place, will be and should be yielded to God. If Christ is scheduled to surrender everything to the Father, man cannot be expected to (have to) do any less.

Fourth, verbally assigning all actual and possible worth to God conveys in word the recognition of God's incomparable being, plan, creation, providence, and revelation for what they are. This is worship in word. Analogous to love, worship that is not expressed is not worship. Worship in word belongs to the essence of worship, indeed is its crowning piece. Genuine worship cannot be contained. It bursts into the open in language. Whether this is simple, creative, striking or stirring language, depends upon the gifts, mood and temperament of the worshiper. But it will be in evidence, whether in the spoken word or in song (Rev. 4:8, 11; 5:9, 12, 14).

Two things in conclusion! On the one hand, it goes without saying that anyone who still utters his "why's" in the conviction that he deserves better, and chafes under God's design or directions in the persuasion that he knows better, is in no position to give God genuine and full worship. That is, the presence of any challenging "Why?" and the absence of full submission will threaten the self-surrender in deed and word, that is worship in its fullness. Consequently every last vestige or trace of dialectic and linear thinking better be purged. Precisely because it insists upon its independence, it will be a lethal enemy to such worship both in its two preparatory stages and its two essential components. This includes the thinking of the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian sort.

On the other hand, where the fullness of worship prevails, it is questionable whether any kind of Pelagianizing and Semi-Pelagianizing thinking, or more broadly speaking, any kind of dialectic and linear thinking, with the emotions it engenders, the actions it precipitates and the devastation it leaves in its wake, will ever emerge or remain operative for any length of time! By the same token, where it is prominent, it provides the soil as well as the setting for the new heart not only to manifest itself in a nonlinear way in its three functions of thinking (the mind), willing (the volition) or feeling

(the emotions), but also to express itself nonlinearly in both word (speaking and responding) and deed (acting and reacting) in a way that morally and socially spells harmony and peace, and leads to productivity and prosperity.

In other words, *The Lost World* with its philosophical premises and implications does not, should not, will not, and need not have the final word. If it does, it means dialectic darkness with its presence and prospect of war and destruction. The only alternative is Divine light with its presence and prospect of peace and life. How does this light break through and dispel the darkness? Mankind must first jettison the philosophy of *The Lost World*, which stakes its future merely upon improved self-organization.<sup>232</sup> This is empty, deceptive and hopeless, all wishful thinking to the contrary, because it originates from “below,” in the rebellion of the human heart and the ultimacy of the intellect. Then, it must humbly embrace the “theology” of “a lost world,” which is acutely in need of a Savior. This spells substance, truth and hope, all voices of opposition to the contrary, because it originates from “above,” in the love of God’s heart and in His sovereign plan! All philosophies that promote that “of man, through man and unto man are all things” self-destruct. On the other hand, the theology that proclaims that “of God, through God and unto God are all things” (Rom. 11:36) guarantees life. As has already been argued, there is no other transition from the “wisdom” of man to the wisdom of God than a repentant renunciation of rebellion and ultimacy, that is, a repentant renunciation of the rebellion of the heart and the ultimacy of the mind. It is only proper that, once more, at the conclusion of this study and arising from its content, a renewed summons is issued for just that (Acts 17:30). In the midst of a self-destructive world such summons is in a real sense the epitome of love. After all, the only alternative to repentance, conjoined with faith, is perishing (Lk. 13:3,5; John 3:16). To be sure, in a pluralist environment, that is hostile to any kind of

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<sup>232</sup> I predict that just as today’s evolutionary thinking scuttles adaptation through natural selection as the solution to the problem of existence, so “tomorrow’s” evolutionary thinking will ditch the notion of physical and social self-organization as the final answer. Yesterday’s sophisticated proposal appears crude today. Today’s sophistication will suffer a similar fate in the future. It will eventually dawn on the evolutionist that a “narrow birth canal” is just as unable to produce an operational 747 airplane as a tornado. See Note 25. But this will not lead to a wholesale abandonment of evolutionism. As long as the grip of the dialectic is in place, another sophisticated solution will be proposed, “soon” to suffer the same fate. The history of philosophy displays this pattern possibly as convincingly as anything. For this reason a biblical apologetics will not be satisfied with merely immanent criticism(s). (The unbeliever appears to be better at that than the believer, in the first place.) It will only prompt the unbeliever to turn to a new sophistication. Once again, the history of philosophy testifies to this. No, the biblical apologist will be and must be programmatically transcendental, that is, painstakingly disclose the deepest roots of the unbeliever’s stance. This, frankly, is what this study has attempted to accomplish. Only so, the issue is truly joined, and the way methodologically paved for the divine message to be directed at the human heart.

exclusivity and every kind of absolute, anyone who issues a summons to repentance may quickly be treated as arrogant or even be charged with a "hate crime." But this kind of reaction should not make the Church buckle, so as to forego or shy away from it. If it ever were to waver in its mission, whether out of a debilitating fear, a mistaken sense of civility, or a so-called distaste to be hurtful, to preach "repentance unto the forgiveness of sins to all nations" (Lk. 24:47),<sup>233</sup> it would not merely fail to love its hearers more than they love themselves by seeking to shield them from their bent to self-destruction. No, it would in effect be to compromise the Kingship of Christ!<sup>234</sup> It is hardly surprising that for the Church to be disobedient to its mission is to marginalize itself in the world, and eventually to jeopardize its own existence before God!<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> See also Acts 17:30.

<sup>234</sup> The kingship of Christ and repentance are indissolubly linked together. See Matthew 3:2 and 4:17.

<sup>235</sup> If my analysis of the all-encompassing, victimizing, iron grip of the fundamental dialectic upon "all things rebellious and unbelieving," whether a matter of heart, method, or practice, is correct, it does and must have implications for all of the Christian faith. This entails that the "educational enterprise" cannot and may not constitute an exception. If the latter is to be truly Biblical, such analysis, when properly executed, will to a greater or smaller degree impact both its erudite-theoretical and its practical hands-on dimension. By way of analogy, it will function like an X-ray machine in the total range of Christian scholarship, as this seeks to arrive at the proper diagnosis and comprehension of its subject matter. It will also facilitate such scholarship, as this seeks to make proper progress, and to come up with an appropriate "cure," where and when needed. In short, it is invaluable in providing assistance to all disciplines with a view to all of life, as positions are evaluated and alternatives considered, issues are defined and actions determined, policies are mapped out and programs suggested, problems are outlined and solutions proposed, etc. To be illustrative in the present context, the disciplines of both Biblical Exegesis and Christian Apologetics are fully a part of, and included in, such "educational" enterprise. It is my intention concretely to demonstrate in due time how in both of these two areas the recognition of the dialectic always enriches Christian scholarship, and at times even succeeds to put it back on track. First, in my forthcoming commentary on the *Epistle of James*, planned by the publisher of the present volume, I seek negatively to identify the reductionistic and often crippling effects of the fundamental dialectic upon commentators who are consciously or unconsciously driven by it, whether in heart or in method. To an unacceptably large and possibly suicidal degree, authors who are victimized by the dialectic tend to turn Scripture into a closed book in its essence and purpose, whether in whole or in part. This is the case in spite of many "incidental," rich, and enriching "common grace" insights that undoubtedly can be gleaned from their publications. Ultimately, therefore, we should take pity on preachers of the Word, who exclusively, or even heavily, lean on commentators who can never fully intellectually comprehend, personally experience, or practically live Scripture in terms of both its variegated and unified content and purpose. At the same time, and on the positive side, I endeavor to put on display what an amazing and bountiful harvest Christians can glean from Scripture, when they consciously pursue a threefold anti-dialectic understanding of mind (Dan. 9:3 in contrast to Prov. 22:3b), heart (1 Ki. 3:9 in contrast to Is. 6:10) and life (Job 28:28 in contrast to Prov. 7:7). The Epistle of James, just like any other book of the Bible, will never yield its true life, when it is in principle or in practice silenced by unbelief of heart or method, however brilliantly eloquent in appearance. In fact, when dialectically approached, Scripture simply "shuts down." It wishes to be "handled by man," all right (2 Tim. 2:13), but not to be "man-handled" (2 Cor. 4:2). At any rate, when it is properly received, its beauty as well as its impact is breathtaking. Second, in a work on *Biblical Apologetics*, presently in preparation, I aim to argue extensively that a truly Biblical apologetics, which takes the "scourge" of the fundamental dialectic seriously, has little choice. In the footsteps of Peter and Paul it must make

the summons to repentance its fully conscious and purposeful methodological objective. After all, there is no other way to conquer the destructive dialectic. Broadly speaking, it is customary to divide the various types of apologetics in roughly two main categories, "classical" and "presuppositional." Classical apologetics has a variety of representatives. They come in several stripes and colors. Some are more evidentialistic (Montgomery), others more rationalistic (Sproul), and again others more experiential (Carnell) in nature and emphasis, although each "classical" apologist is basically a mixture of these three approaches (Schaeffer). Presuppositional apologetics is more monolithic. It is usually identified with a particular, and undoubtedly unique, proponent of apologetic thought (Van Til). However, with all the various nuances and unmistakable differences in the apologetic method of the various apologists, they all have in common that apologetically they target the mind, rather than the heart. This is a peculiar, if not passing strange, phenomenon, since the mind is finite by virtue of Creation (Eccl. 3:11c; Is. 55:9), and blind by virtue of the Fall (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph 4:17). This makes the prevailing twofold apologetic methodology in principle both an unacceptably naïve and a basically sterile affair. The eternal truth of the infinite God, for one thing, does not fit into a finite brain, while, for another, it is kept at arms' length by a blind brain. Why, then, should apologists try to "cram" divine truth into it? It is like pouring an ocean into a bucket with a tightly sealed lid on it! It seems, therefore, that for the better part of two millennia Christian apologists have been barking upon the wrong tree. They should have gone for the heart. But, apart from an occasional instance to be specified in detail in a later context, they did not. In all honesty, however, "going for the heart" does at first sight not seem to show any more promise than "going for the mind." After all, the unregenerate heart is just as hostile to the truth as the unregenerate mind is blind to it. So the plight of the Christian apologetic enterprise seems rather hopeless. Unless, of course, there is a type of apologetics that is made to order for "a condition such as this." Frankly, there is! It is *Biblical* apologetics, the apologetics found in Scripture! In a crucial way it is distinct from both "classical" and "presuppositional" apologetics, as these are commonly understood. Classical apologetics is predicated upon the existence of a metaphysically common, and an epistemologically neutral, ground, and argues on this twofold basis. As such it is emphatically *pre-evangelistic*. Presuppositional apologetics readily agrees that metaphysically mankind has everything in common, but takes sharp issue with the idea of an epistemologically neutral ground, from which to proceed, and argues in that framework. However, it can be characterized as basically *non-evangelistic*, be it in my estimation by default, rather than by design. To be sure, I judge that presuppositional apologetics has it over classical apologetics by far. Nevertheless, *both* fall victim to the two prevailing Achilles' heels of Christian apologetics as pursued throughout the centuries. First, they both regard the mind as the great prize, and, second, they both fail to be evangelistic in nature. A biblically informed apologetics shuns both Achilles' heels. As has already been observed in Notes 92 and 137, it invariably goes for the heart as the source from which all human life originates in the sum total of its manifestations and endeavors (Prov. 4:24). Humans will forever spin their wheels, unless their depraved hearts are exterminated with Christ on the cross, and their new heart, which arises with Christ from the grave, is implanted in them by the Holy Spirit (John 3:5). Further, as already has been mentioned in Note 215, it invariably avails itself of the Gospel as the only God-given instrument to secure the indispensable heart transplant (1 Pet. 1:23). Apologists will forever spin their wheels, unless as instruments in the hand of the Spirit (1 Thess. 1:5) they actively seek to use the scalpel of the Gospel with a view to surgically remove "hearts of stone," and replace them with "hearts of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26). In short, in order not to be unacceptably naïve, a biblical apologetics is and must be heart-oriented, and in order not to be basically sterile, it is and must be Gospel driven. Of course, the present context does not lend itself to arguing all this at (great) length. I am presently in the process of developing this argument for publication. But if this effort would never see the light of (a publishing) day, I have at least the satisfaction that in this concluding Note I have presented the contours of what in my estimation a truly and fully biblical apologetics is and how it should function. If I am permitted to think out loud a little longer, I would like to top off the present Note by completing the circle. It would be a breath of fresh air, if Christian scholars across the board would not only pay legitimate attention to God's "common grace," that is in evidence everywhere, but also pay the necessary attention to the underlying "antithesis," that accompanies, and lies at the root of, all unbelief. In that case the call to repentance would not only ring out in the confines of evangelistic and apologetic undertakings, it would also fill the scholarly world. Such call would be precipitated in every discipline whenever and wherever the apostate dialectic and its octopus-like tentacles would be spotted. If "common grace," in terms of what Christians can "learn

from the world," has the last word in scholarly discussions, Christian scholarship will be the "tail" rather than the "head," forfeit its message, turn irrelevant, invite disdain, and in the process marginalize itself in the eyes of God and man (Deut. 28:13). Of course, Colossians 2:8 may still serve as a formal banner, and be quoted from time to time, but it no longer has any substantive and functional purpose. The salt of the earth would have turned worldly, and virtually lost its taste (Matth. 5:13). Scripture is unequivocal! Even "the lamp of the wicked is sin," (Prov. 21:4b). The fact that this lamp spreads "the light of common grace" seems indisputable. As such it may be enjoyed for 100% as a gift of God. At the same time that same "light" is characterized as sin, and stands equally condemned for 100% as the product of a proud, autonomous, outlook upon life and of a proud, apostate, heart (Prov. 21:4a). In the final analysis, therefore, "the light of the wicked is darkness." As such it must be shunned, and should precipitate a call to repentance. After all, only God is the "fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9a). To be sure, this is the life of "common grace" as well as "special grace." At the same time, only "in His light do we see light" (Ps. 36:9b), and it is this very light of God, which indicates that all "common grace," dispensed to unbelievers, whether of character, temperament, skills, accomplishments, etc., is both fully God's gift and simultaneously fully human darkness. (The observant reader cannot but recognize that also in this context the formula  $100\% + 100\% = 100\%$  has the final interpretative say.) The rub now is this. When Christian scholars do not recognize "common grace" for the darkness that it is (also), and define it only as the (common) light that it is as well, why would they seek to spread the (further) special light of saving grace that calls for repentance? They are so enamored by the (artificial) light of darkness that they forget to introduce the utter necessity of the true light that drives away the darkness of sin and transcends the darkness of common grace. Ultimately both constitute a suppression of the truth of God from the sinner's perspective. This puts them in double jeopardy. Not only does the "salt of the earth" lose its preserving qualities, which were designed to hold decomposing decay at bay, which is bad enough all by itself. But also, which makes matters much worse, "the light of the world" turns off its illumining and life-producing radiance. It is hardly surprising that an ever-increasing irrelevance invites an ever-growing ridicule on the part of the world and deserves an ever-intensifying displeasure of God. Frankly, all this puts Christian scholarship at the crossroads. It either looks at all of creation and history in God's light, will recognize that according to Scripture the antithesis, evidenced by the 100% human darkness, is more fundamental than common grace, however rich and enriching in its gift character. Consequently, with all due gratitude to God for his unmistakable benevolence, it will not tire of stressing the indispensable need for repentance and, where possible and appropriate, will not cease issuing the inevitable call to repentance. Or it mistakenly elevates common grace as a divine gift above the divinely diagnosed antithesis, whether in its scholarly endeavor or its practical output, failing to see in the process that this "grace" is at best God's kindly dispensed embalming fluid to keep the corpse of mankind from emitting its inherent stench and spreading its decay. Under the second scenario, therefore, Christian scholarship, not even recognizing that the very purpose of common grace as God's gift is designed to lead the recipients to repentance (Rom. 2:4), would ultimately interpret the world "in the supposed light of human darkness." That is when and why it will lose its birthright, marginalize itself, and eventually choke to death. History is littered with the "remains" of former Christian Schools, because in the name of "common grace" they turned "special grace" to pasture, and directed their energy mainly, if not exclusively, to pre-evangelistic and non-evangelistic endeavors. However unobjectionable in themselves, these endeavors did not just turn the often undoubtedly "good" into the competing enemy of the "best." No, they turned the at best "temporary profitable" into the deadly enemy of the only "eternal good." Again, all an observer needs to do, is to take a quick unbiased look at the long history of Christian (higher) education to be thoroughly convinced of that. In this very same context, the question has come up in some Christian colleges, whether classroom and student evangelization is part of its mandate. Too frequently this is rejected out of hand. After all, so goes the argument, regardless whoever runs a School, the latter is not a Church, but an educational institution! In other words, let the Church evangelize, and allow the School to do her own thing. Besides, she already has her hands full, if not more than enough on her plate. This argument is spurious, shortsighted and negligent. It is spurious on the face of it. If the Church, whose main mandate is preaching the Gospel to believers and unbelievers alike, is involved in Christian "education" as a highly touted auxiliary service, there is no reason why the tables could not be turned on the School. While its focus is naturally education, why could it not have an equally high-touted auxiliary service, namely an appropriate evangelistic output, snugly fitting the educational enterprise that deals with cold and hard data as well as living and breath-

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ing students! Not to offer this service vis-à-vis data indicates a shallow shortsightedness. After all, proper scholarly coverage of materials of any sort, which must include transcendental penetration of the data, will inevitably bring the scholar face to face with the fundamental dialectic. This implies that evangelistic apologetics must be woven in the warp and woof of any and all scholarly undertakings. Not to offer this service vis-a-vis students adds the further dimension of dangerous negligence. After all, given the biblical fact that the fear of God is the beginning of all genuine knowledge (Prov. 1:7) and wisdom (Prov. 9:10), which reside exclusively in Christ (Col. 2:3), and given the further fact that this fear lodges in a regenerate heart only, without which Christ as the repository of wisdom and knowledge is not accessible, evangelistic input that aims at a heart transplant becomes an utter necessity, however selectively applied, that is wherever and whenever this is called for. In short, that the School is not an evangelistic organization is royally admitted. But it seems utterly thoughtless and neglectful, if not "criminal," for the School not to be involved in evangelistic apologetics, when transcendental scholarly research and considerations require such, or in unapologetic evangelism, when students do not appear to have "the root of the matter" in them. In fact, either one will and must be pursued by a truly Christian scholarship both in an auxiliary manner and out of principle. Such pursuit ought to be the policy of every Christian School as a condition for employment, even if the matter of strategy is wide open for meaningful discussion. My recommendation would be that in case of need the implementation of such policy should be built into programs of new faculty orientation and continuing faculty improvement to insure quality standards and quality control. Anyone who is not yet fully persuaded of the wisdom of the scholarly pursuit promoted in this volume, may do well to remember the biblical teaching that there is no genuine wisdom or understanding in a heart, mind or life of any and all who rise up against God (Prov. 21:30). So much for making common grace a sole anchor point. Furthermore, what good does it do anyone to gain the world, including its wisdom, but lose his soul? So much for a methodology that makes bedfellows with the world and refuses or fails to call to repentance, whenever that is needful!

