

a paper:

AMERICAN HERETIC – THE LEGACY OF CHARLES AUGUSTUS BRIGGS

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4/16/2006 AD

PREFACE

This paper was written to explore the heretical theology of the late American theologian Charles Augustus Briggs.

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### ABSTRACT

Is The Holy Scripture in its original autographia 'verbally inspired' or 'conceptually inspired?' If 'verbally inspired,' then every word has been accurately recorded by the prophets and apostles in both the Old and New Testaments as the absolutely errorless and infallible holy Word of GOD - dictated by The Holy Spirit word-for-word and reliable in all that it says. If merely 'conceptually inspired,' then - although men may still feign Divine inspiration of The Bible - the accuracy and reliability of Holy Scripture becomes unsure and set adrift for the minds of men to interpret according to their own vain imaginations.

Charles Augustus Briggs was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century AD theologian who was a disciple of Biblical higher criticism and an aggressive proponent of Holy Writ as being - not 'verbally inspired' as Christian orthodoxy rightly demands - but rather of 'conceptual inspiration' of Scripture. This allowed Briggs to claim - as so many apostate and deviant Christian clergy and laity do so today - that Scripture might be Divinely inspired, but its clear words, commands, prohibitions and guidance are all open to human interpretation. It is most certain that almost every Christian blasphemy that curses The Church on earth with its foul flow of falsehoods today in America stem from Briggs' view of Holy Scripture as merely 'conceptually inspired' and not 'verbally inspired.' Although Briggs was a brilliant linguist endowed with a stunning intellect, his lasting legacy is that of one thing above all others: heretic!

### DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century AD American theologian Dr. Benjamin Warfield - a champion and defender of the 'verbal inspiration' of Scripture which proclaims the sure foundation of The Word of GOD as inerrant and infallible in its original autographia!

### EPIGRAPH

"The Scripture cannot be broken!" - JOHN 10:35b [KJV]

## I. MEET THE MAN CHARLES AUGUSTUS BRIGGS

Charles Augustus Briggs lived from 1841 to 1913 AD. He was an American Christian apostate of the 19th Century - a Presbyterian "clergyman, theologian and educator." Briggs graduated from the University of Virginia in 1860 AD and the Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1863 AD, followed by studies at the University of Berlin in Germany.<sup>1</sup> He in fact remained in Germany to study for 6 years.<sup>2</sup> He then returned to America and, having been ordained a Presbyterian Pastor, came to pastor a Presbyterian New Jersey Church from 1869 to 1874 AD.<sup>3</sup> The following year in 1875 AD, he joined the faculty at Union Theological Seminary and remained so until his death in 1913 AD.<sup>4</sup> From 1880 to 1890 AD Briggs "was an editor of the Presbyterian Review."<sup>5</sup>

Fatefully, Briggs was considered by many of his day to be "the leading authority on the history of the Westminster Assembly" - the same Assembly that produced the Westminster Confession - and one of America's "leading Old Testament scholar[s]" of his time.<sup>6 7</sup> By 1890 AD, Briggs was chosen at Union Theological Seminary to become its Department Chair of Biblical Theology.<sup>8</sup> On the public occasion of his instillation to this exalted position, he gave an inaugural address on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1891 AD.<sup>9</sup> And it was his own words from this speech that finally stirred the Presbyterian Church to action against him. He was tried by Church authorities for heresy, acquitted, retried and convicted.

Briggs then fled to the Protestant Episcopal Church and was there ordained an Episcopal Priest in 1899 AD. In spite of his unorthodox and heretical theology, he remained on the faculty of Union Theological Seminary, there producing large volumes of theological works. Nor was Briggs rejected by all of Christian academia. Briggs was

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<sup>1</sup> 1, "Charles Augustus Briggs." Wikipedia.

<sup>2</sup> 2, "Charles Augustus Briggs." bartleby.com.

<sup>3</sup> 1, "Charles Augustus Briggs." Wikipedia.

<sup>4</sup> 3, "Briggs, Charles Augustus." encyclopedia.com.

<sup>5</sup> 1, "Charles Augustus Briggs." Wikipedia.

<sup>6</sup> 4, "A Religious History of the American People," p 777.

<sup>7</sup> 2, "Charles Augustus Briggs." bartleby.com.

<sup>8</sup> 3, "Briggs, Charles Augustus." encyclopedia.com.

<sup>9</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case Before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," opening to CHARGE I, SPECIFICATION I, p 50.

able to remain at Union Theological Seminary because, after he was convicted of heresy by the Presbyterian Church USA, that seminary responded with the outrageous action of “severing its denominational ties with the PCUSA.”<sup>10</sup> For his continuing scholastic theological pollution of The Church on earth, Briggs was awarded "the honorary degree of D.D. from Edinburgh... [in 1884 AD] and from Glasgow... [in 1901 AD], and that of Litt.D., from Oxford... in 1901 AD)." <sup>11</sup>

His life’s works have had a lasting effect upon Christendom and the world well beyond his earthly lifetime. Becoming an expert in Hebrew, he produced a well known Hebrew-English lexicon in 1906 AD - “A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament” - the revised edition that bears in part his name being familiar to many English-speaking Hebrew language students today. <sup>12</sup> His brilliant mind helped to establish contextual Biblical hermeneutical principles that are widely recognized today. But it was his liberal views on the nature of The Holy Scriptures that eventually brought him to trial on charges of heresy. Sadly, many remember Briggs above all else “as an infamous liberal... rationalist who championed higher critical theories at the expense of the Divine authority of The Bible.”<sup>13</sup>

There are several things however even more shocking than Briggs’ heretical views on Scripture and related notions: First, he was at initially acquitted of all charges of heresy by the Church authorities to which he was answerable! Second, he was not convicted of heresy and defrocked until his retrial on those same heresy charges a short time later by a wider court of his Church. Third, although his pastoral ordination was removed from him by his own denominational Church, he was able to obtain re-ordination by another major American Protestant denomination. Fourth, he remained on the faculty of a major American seminary until his death many years later. There he continued to teach, preach and write on his heretical Biblical views until his death many years later, instilling in many a soul doubt, damage and damnation, the depths of which the devil no doubt dances over daily in delight!<sup>14 15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> 6, “Inspiration, Authority & Criticism in the Thought of Charles Augustus Briggs,” p 1.

<sup>11</sup> 1, “Charles Augustus Briggs.” Wikipedia.

<sup>12</sup> 7, “The Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament,” a 1997 AD revision of Briggs’ original 1906 AD Hebrew-English lexicon.

<sup>13</sup> 6, “Inspiration, Authority & Criticism in the Thought of Charles Augustus Briggs,” p 1.

<sup>14</sup> 3, “Briggs, Charles Augustus.” encyclopedia.com.

## II. FIRST GLIMPSE INTO THE THEOLOGY OF CHARLES AUGUSTUS BRIGGS

In 1891 AD - the year Briggs ascended to the leadership of the Biblical Theology at Union Theological Seminary - he gave an inaugural speech appropriately enough "on the authority of Holy Scripture."<sup>16</sup> But his speech was no ordinary orthodox defense or summation of the inerrancy and infallibility of The Holy Bible. In fact, it's message speaks of exactly the opposite. It reflected the liberal state of theology at Union Theological Seminary - a state of decay evidenced in that Briggs was anointed chair of an entire department there in spite of such books as his "Whither?" in 1889 AD. In "Whither?" Briggs clearly revealed his doubt as to the Divine authority of The Holy Bible.<sup>17</sup> This and other works - combined with Briggs' brilliant mind and aggressive personality - marked him for leadership in the emerging liberal theological war against Christian orthodoxy!

One source makes this 'enlightened' observation on "Whither?" - in which Briggs allegedly deduced the views of the Presbyterian Westminster Assembly of 1646 AD that produced the orthodox Westminster Confession as supportive of his views of Scripture - the following:

"... [Briggs] is at great pains to show that the doctrine of inerrancy of Scripture is a modern development of orthodox opinion, and that it was with careful forethought that the [Westminster] Assembly refrained from committing itself and The Church to any specific doctrine of inspiration or to the statement that the Bible is the Word of GOD. It had proclaimed indeed that the Bible was the only infallible rule of faith and practice but refused to extend its authority beyond the moral and religious sphere."<sup>18</sup>

Yet the Westminster Confession opens with the subject "Of The Holy Scripture" and clearly shows the Westminster Assembly indeed did commit itself and The Church to the doctrine of inspiration of Scripture as the very Word of GOD! Chapter I, Section I tells us that GOD caused the knowledge of Who He is and His Will for men to be "commit[ed] wholly unto writing" in "The Holy Scripture." This was "most necessary"

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<sup>15</sup> 1, "Charles Augustus Briggs." Wikipedia.

<sup>16</sup> 3, "Briggs, Charles Augustus." encyclopedia.com.

<sup>17</sup> 2, "Charles Augustus Briggs." bartleby.com.

<sup>18</sup> 2, Ibid.

because - although “the light of nature and the works of creation and providence” show that GOD is and His “goodness, wisdom and power” so that men are without excuse to worship Him - yet they are “not sufficient” to bring men “unto salvation.” Thus GOD gave The Scriptures for the “preserving and propagating of the truth” to bring men to salvation and to better establish and comfort His Church “against the corruption of the flesh and malice of satan and the world.”<sup>19</sup>

### III. VERBAL VS CONCEPTUAL INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Briggs put forth the view of “conceptual inspiration” of Holy Scripture over that of “verbal inspiration” – the orthodox view so well expounded by Warfield. This allowed Briggs to acknowledge that the Scriptures in their original autographia are indeed Divinely inspired as GOD’s special revelation to man, but at the same time hold that the words used were themselves not inerrant or infallible! This is the fouled fountainhead of Briggs’ fulminating liberal theology used as a bludgeon by the devil to beat down the orthodox view of the inerrancy of Holy Scripture from within The Church! This is the serpeant’s age old lie whispered in the souls of men - as he did in The Garden to Adam and Eve - who when confronted by the very Word of GOD before them instead heed the devil’s diabolical chatter, “Did The LORD GOD really say that?”

The 19th Century orthodox American theologian Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield confronts this vital issue in his book "The Inspiration and Authority of The Bible" by citing the very Words of our Lord in JOHN 10:35b as his battle cry, "The Scripture cannot be broken!"<sup>20</sup> This is possible only if Scripture is seen as the result of the process of ‘verbal inspiration:’

“...supernatural knowledge became confluent with the natural in a manner which violated no law of reason or freedom [of the human writer of Scripture]. And throughout the whole of His work The HOLY SPIRIT was present, causing His energies to flow into the spontaneous exercises of the writer’s faculties, elevating and directing where need be, and everywhere securing errorless expression in language of the thought desired by GOD.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> 8, “The Westminster Confession [of 1647 AD],” Chapter I, Section I.

<sup>20</sup> 9, “The Inspiration and Authority of The Bible,” subscription under picture of Dr. Benjamin Warfield just before introduction to book - no page number. This is the theme of Warfield’s entire book - taken from JOHN 10:35b - "The Scripture cannot be broken!"

<sup>21</sup> 9, Ibid., p 7.



Against this Briggs tells us that no, Scripture is rather the result of only 'conceptual inspiration.' Briggs instead emphasized "the active role of the human mind in the reception of revelation" and rejected as contrary to the natures of GOD and man the mere "dictation theory" of verbal inspiration of Scripture – whereby "GOD overrode the human mind of the prophet using the individual as a [mere] 'speaking tube'." <sup>22</sup> So we see Briggs's 'conceptual inspiration' doctrine in his words, couched in a pious and mystical ecstasy:

"...the teaching of these prophets [in recording Scripture] was a joint product of the subjective investigation made by the prophets themselves and the objective revelation made by the Divine Spirit [in them]. All this is strictly in accord with the laws and operation to the human mind. The Divine Spirit enters into the human mind and takes possession of it for the time and the purpose of religious guidance. He occupies the throne-room of the reason, in the innermost seat and fountain-source of authority in man. He touches the most sensitive point of the religious feeling, and quickens it so as to make the man conscious of his union with GOD and his call to be a prophet. He fills the chamber of the metaphysical reason and guides the intellect in its working in all the categories..." <sup>23</sup>

#### IV. ARE NOT BOTH THEORIES OF BIBLICAL INSPIRATION THE SAME?

One might ask then, what is the difference between these two views? Both Warfield and Briggs adamantly confess that Holy Scripture is divinely inspired by The HOLY SPIRIT through the human writers. The difference is this: Warfield's 'verbal inspiration' produces an infallible Scripture that is without error via dictation by The HOLY SPIRIT through the pious and godfearing prophet: The Scripture in the original autographia is without flaw. Briggs' 'conceptual inspiration' produces a fallible Scripture that is the mere imperfect human interpretation of the prophet who has been filled with The HOLY SPIRIT's objective presence in his mind and his subjective human interpretation by use of his intellect: The Scripture in the original autographia is open to error!

Contrary to Briggs, Warfield defines the 'verbal inspiration' of The Bible as "that extraordinary, supernatural influence... exerted by the HOLY GHOST on the writers of our Sacred Books, by which their words were rendered also the words of

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<sup>22</sup> 6, "Inspiration, Authority & Criticism in the Thought of Charles Augustus Briggs," p 6-7.

<sup>23</sup> 6, Ibid.

GOD and therefore perfectly infallible.”<sup>24</sup> Verbal Inspiration holds then that "by a special, supernatural, extraordinary influence of the HOLY GHOST, the sacred writers have been guided in their writing in such a way, as while their humanity was not superseded, it was yet so dominated that their words became at the same time the words of GOD, and thus, in every case and all alike, absolutely infallible.”<sup>25</sup>

So while Briggs could with a straight face claim he absolutely held The Bible to be divinely inspired by The HOLY SPIRIT, his ‘conceptual view’ opens the door to the claim that the words of Scripture themselves may be incorrect, in error or even outmoded! And indeed, this is exactly the liberal Church's claim today of The Holy Scripture: "That was then, this is now! The Church wrote The Bible, so we can rewrite The Bible to suit today's more modern world and our more enlightened theology!" Perhaps Briggs would be horrified to see today's apostate and blasphemous views held by so many theologians, clergy and laymen in The Church now. Perhaps he would tear his clothes in repentance, garb himself in sackcloth and pour ashes of lament upon his head before The Throne of GOD for the abominations that have emerged from his ‘conceptual inspiration’ theory of Scripture. Perhaps not.

## V. THE HERESY CHARGES AGAINST CHARLES AUGUSTUS BRIGGS

For his ongoing challenge to the Divine inerrancy of Holy Scripture, and for promoting a multitude of un-Biblical concepts derived from his ‘conceptual inspiration’ theory of Holy Writ, Briggs was at last brought to trial in 1892 AD "for heresy by the presbytery of New York... The charges were based upon his inaugural address of the preceding year."<sup>26</sup> As a result, "after a defense conducted by himself with great skill and acumen, he was initially acquitted of all charges of heresy by his Presbytery in January, 1893" AD. However, following this acquittal, the case was appealed to the Presbyterian General Assembly and at last he was convicted of heresy. As a result, Briggs was "suspended from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in March of the same year."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> 9, "The Inspiration and Authority of The Bible," p 420.

<sup>25</sup> 9, Ibid, p 422.

<sup>26</sup> 1, "Charles Augustus Briggs." Wikipedia.

<sup>27</sup> 2, "Charles Augustus Briggs." bartleby.com.

As to the exact heresy charges brought against Briggs, there were 8, all of which attack the ‘verbal inspiration’ view of Scripture as being without error in its original autographia. Thus, we shall examine from the text of Briggs’ 1892 AD address in his own most disturbing words the basis for these 8 charges against him. We shall then consider the proofs offered by the Church court prosecutors to refute Brigg’s contentions, all of which come directly from The Bible, the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647 AD and the Longer and Shorter Westminster Catechisms. Briggs was thus charged with teaching these heresies:

I. That salvation may be had through reason apart from Holy Scripture and our Lord JESUS CHRIST; II. That salvation may be had through The Church apart from Holy Scripture; III. That the original texts of Holy Scripture contain errors; IV. That much of Old Testament Biblical prophesy has been undone by history & that much of Messianic Biblical prophecy has not and can not be fulfilled; V. That Moses did not write The Pentateuch; VI. That Isaiah did not write the second half of ISAIAH; VII. That the process of redemption extends to the world to come; VIII. That sanctification of the saints is not complete at death.<sup>28</sup>

Nor was Briggs shy about his teachings, for he publicly and proudly stood by the words of his seminary inaugural address of 1891 AD. The charges noted that Briggs’ speech “has been published and extensively circulated with the knowledge and approval of the said Rev. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., and has been republished by him in a second edition with a preface and an appendix.”<sup>29</sup> All of the charges include wording that state Briggs’ teachings were “...contrary to the essential doctrine of the Holy Scripture and of the Standards of the... [Presbyterian] Church, ...and the rule of faith and practice.”<sup>30</sup> The prosecution and refutation of Briggs’ statements were based first on The Holy Scriptures themselves, then secondly on the Westminster Confession of Faith and thirdly on the Larger and Shorter Westminster Catechisms.

In considering each of these heresies from Charge I through VIII, we may discern a progression of Briggs’ blasphemous theology, all of which stem from his view of Scripture as ‘conceptually inspired’ and not ‘verbally inspired.’ And as we shall see - his

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<sup>28</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” topics of heresy CHARGE I-VIII against Briggs, p 50-79.

<sup>29</sup> 5, Ibid., opening to SPECIFICATION I, of CHARGE I, p 50.

<sup>30</sup> 5, Ibid., basis of Church doctrines offended by Briggs, found in body of CHARGE I-VIII, p 50-

faith being liberated from the constraints of the inerrant view of The Word of GOD - Briggs allows himself the self-deceiving luxury of erecting a new deity in the dark recesses of his mind's imaginations more to his liking - the false god of Biblical 'higher criticism.'

## VI. CHARGE1 - SALVATION APART FROM SCRIPTURE AND JESUS CHRIST?

Charge I accuses Briggs of teaching that salvation may be had through human reason apart from The Holy Scriptures and The Saviour JESUS CHRIST. Specifically,

"...teaching that the Reason is a fountain of Divine authority which may and does savingly enlighten men, even such men as reject the Scriptures as the authoritative proclamation of the will of GOD and reject also the way of salvation through the mediation and sacrifice of the Son of GOD as revealed therein; which is contrary to the essential doctrine of the Holy Scripture and of the Standards of the... [Presbyterian] Church, that the Holy Scripture is most necessary, and the rule of faith and practice."<sup>31</sup>

These assertions were refuted first with quotes from The Scriptures, then from the Westminster Confession of 1647 AD, then from the Larger and Shorter Westminster Catechisms: ISAIAH 8:20; MATTHEW 10:32-33; LUKE 16:29-31; JOHN 5:39; JOHN 14:6; I JOHN 5:10; GALATIANS 1:9; II TIMOTHY 3:15-17; II PETER 1:19-21. From the Westminster Confession: Chapter I, Sections I, V,VI, X. From the Larger Westminster Catechism, Questions 2 and 3. From the Shorter Westminster Catechism, Question 2.<sup>32</sup>

Here Briggs first sets the stage with the proposition that men may come to salvation before GOD in one of three ways, asserting, "There are historically three great foundations of divine authority - the Bible, the Church, and the Reason."<sup>33</sup> He then cites a certain Martineau, whom he reports, "...could not find Divine authority in the Church or the Bible, but he did find GOD enthroned in his own soul." The essential issue, Briggs tells us, is not in the means by which one comes to GOD's saving grace, but simply that

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<sup>31</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case..." text of CHARGE I, p 50.

<sup>32</sup> 5, Ibid., sources of refutation of Briggs' heresy under CHARGE I, p 52-55.

<sup>33</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs' 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 24, lines 7-10, 31-33] under SPECIFICATION I of CHARGE I, p 51.

one seeks GOD and the path of Divine authority that best suits him.<sup>34</sup>

Briggs concludes, "...and if these men have found GOD without the mediation of Church and Bible, Church and Bible are means and not ends; they are avenues to GOD, but are not GOD..."<sup>35</sup> Implicit in this remark is that those who hold The Holy Scriptures and The Church as the only proscribed pathway to saving faith in GOD are worshippers of false idols - men who elevate both Church and Scripture above the worship of The LORD Himself. One can almost hear the echos of today's liberal Church's battle cry, "How mean spirited and un-Christian of you to insist that CHRIST as revealed in The Bible is the only way to eternal life!"

ISAIAH 8:20 says that, if men "speak not according to this word," which is "the law and the testimony" of Scripture, "there is no light in them."<sup>36</sup> Human reason apart from Scripture is in utter darkness and can not alone guide a man to GOD's saving grace. Thus CHRIST tells us in JOHN 5:39 to "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me!"<sup>37</sup> The Lord tells us that we can not know Him unto salvation apart from The Scriptures. So our Lord cautions us that he who denies Who He is - as revealed in Scripture - shall not be saved. CHRIST warns in MATTHEW 10:33, "...whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven!"<sup>38</sup>

This is why The Larger Westminster Catechism in Question 2 answers, "The very light of nature in man, and the works of GOD, declare plainly that there is a GOD; but His Word and Spirit only do sufficiently and effectually reveal Him unto men for their salvation."<sup>39</sup> This is stated plainly in The Westminster Confession in Chapter I, Section I "Of The Holy Scriptures." Yes, the human mind may perceive the "light of nature, and the works of creation and providence" as clearly revealing the existence of a good, wise and powerful Creator of all things. But only in The Holy Writ is there sufficient revelation "to give that knowledge of GOD, and of His will, which is necessary unto

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<sup>34</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case....," quotes Briggs' inaugural speech [p 27, line 9-21] under SPECIFICATION I of CHARGE I, p 51.

<sup>35</sup> 5, Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> 10, KJV, ISAIAH 8:20.

<sup>37</sup> 10, KJV, JOHN 5:39.

<sup>38</sup> 10, KJV, MATTHEW 10:33.

<sup>39</sup> 11, "Larger Westminster Catechism," Question 2 & answer.

salvation.” This is why CHRIST revealed Himself “and declares[s]... His will unto His Church... wholly unto writing” in The Scriptures.<sup>40</sup>

A subjective intellectual or mystical meeting of Who we think The Almighty to be - erected by our own fancy in our feeble minds - can not bring us to salvation. Human reason - unguided by the objective revelation of Holy Scripture and apart from CHRIST JESUS Who alone is the way to everlasting life - can not secure our entrance into Eternal Paradise. Sadly, this is exactly what Briggs advocates here: the alternate pathway of human reason - cut off from the firm guidance of Holy Scripture and The Saviour as revealed therein - is a false pathway which leads only to the very pits of hell!

## VII. CHARGE 2 - SALVATION VIA THE CHURCH APART FROM SCRIPTURE?

Charge II accuses Briggs of also teaching that men’s salvation may be had through The Church apart from The Scriptures. Specifically,

"...with teaching that the Church is a fountain of Divine authority which, apart from the Holy Scripture, may and does savingly enlighten men; which is contrary to the essential doctrine of the Holy Scripture and of the Standards of the said [Presbyterian] Church, that the Holy Scripture is most necessary and the rule of faith and practice."<sup>41</sup>

The heresy of Briggs in Charge II here was refuted with exactly the same quotes from The Bible, the Confession and the Catechisms used in Charge I. Restated they are: ISAIAH 8:20; MATTHEW 10:32-33; LUKE 16:29-31; JOHN 5:39; JOHN 14:6; I JOHN 5:10; GALATIANS 1:9; II TIMOTHY 3:15-17; II PETER 1:19-21. From the Westminster Confession: Chapter I, Sections I, V, VI, X. From the Larger Westminster Catechism, Questions 2 and 3. From the Shorter Westminster Catechism, Question 2.<sup>42</sup>

Briggs begs the question, “Can a Church be a Church without The Holy Scriptures, and without The CHRIST to Whom they testify?” GOD forbid! Our Lord says in I JOHN 5:10 that “He that believeth on the Son of GOD hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not GOD hath made him a liar.” How does a man grieve the heart of CHRIST? Because such a man “...believeth not the record that GOD gave of

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<sup>40</sup> 8, Westminster Confession, Chapter I, Section I.

<sup>41</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” text of CHARGE II, p 55.

<sup>42</sup> 5, Ibid., sources of refutation of Briggs’ heresy under CHARGE II, p 57-60.

His Son“ in The Scriptures themselves! <sup>43</sup> This is why the Shorter Westminster Catechism answers in Question 2, “The Word of GOD, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy” GOD. <sup>44</sup>

Going to the Westminster Confession, Chapter I, Section VI, we find it clearly declared that “The whole counsel of GOD, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture.” <sup>45</sup> We are there cautioned from trying to deduce new revelations especially from the “traditions of men.” But Briggs would set up his “traditions of men” as an alternate object of men’s worship by declaring The Church may offer men salvation apart from Scripture! To guard against this very danger the Westminster Confession in Chapter I, Section X declares, “The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined... [is] no other but The HOLY SPIRIT speaking in the Scripture!” <sup>46</sup> Contrary to Briggs’ vain imaginations, the precious jewel of salvation for men’s souls kept by The Church apart from The Holy Writ does not exist!

#### VIII. CHARGE 3 - SCRIPTURE ERRORS IN THE ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPHIA?

Charge III confronts Briggs with his statements that the original texts of The Holy Scriptures contained errors. Specifically,

"...teaching that errors may have existed in the original text of the Holy Scripture, as it came from its authors, which is contrary to the essential doctrine taught in the Holy Scripture and in the Standards of the said Church, that the Holy Scripture is the Word of GOD written, immediately inspired, and the rule of faith and practice." <sup>47</sup>

To these outrageous statements the Church court prosecution quoted the following: ZECHARIAH 7:12; MARK 7:13; ROMANS 3:1-2; I CORINTHIANS 2:13; GALATIANS 3:8; II PETER 1:20-21; II TIMOTHY 3:16. From the Westminster

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<sup>43</sup> 10, KJV, I JOHN 5:10.

<sup>44</sup> 12, “Westminster Shorter Catechism,” Question 2 & answer.

<sup>45</sup> 8, Westminster Confession, Chapter I, Section VI.

<sup>46</sup> 8, Ibid., Chapter I, Section X.

<sup>47</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” text of CHARGE III, p 60.

Confession: Chapter I, Sections I, II, IV, VIII. <sup>48</sup>

Here we need not search far to find Briggs tearing at the foundations of The Faith, for he openly declares, "I shall venture to affirm that, so far as I can see, there are errors in the Scriptures that no one has been able to explain away; and the theory that they were not in the original text is sheer assumption, upon which no mind can rest with certainty." This heinous proposition from hell is made with no authority given. And if you are educated and enlightened, your mind must accept his thesis without question! He continues, "If such errors destroy the authority of the Bible, it is already destroyed for historians. Men cannot shut their eyes to truth and fact." In one of history's greatest doublespeak assertions, Briggs tells us that -if we dare to close our eyes to the "truth and fact" that there are errors in the Bible - we are the ones who destroy the authority of Scripture! <sup>49</sup>

Note how he then asks, "But on what authority do these theologians drive men from the Bible by this theory of inerrancy?" If we are so ignorant as to hold to the inerrancy of The Bible, it is we - and not the heretic - who literally "drive men from The Bible!" Again Briggs makes unsubstantiated and easily disprovable assertions, "The Bible itself nowhere makes this claim. The creeds of the Church nowhere sanction it. It is a ghost of modern evangelicalism to frighten children." Never mind that Scripture itself throughout states its claim to inerrancy! Never mind that the Westminster Confession and Catechisms make the same clear claim of Biblical inerrancy! But if you dare to look it up, if you dare to quote from them - thus inconveniencing the enlightened genius of this man with mere literal facts - you are to be considered a magician of the black arts! You are most wickedly conjuring up "ghosts" in order to "frighten children!"

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Briggs goes on to explain that "the best scholars of our time" have "with open minds" most graciously "been willing to recognize any error that might be pointed out by Historical Criticism;" The false god to whom Briggs bows down is now laid bare for

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<sup>48</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case..." sources of refutation of Briggs' heresy under CHARGE III, p 62-64.

<sup>49</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs' 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 35, line 4 onward] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE III, p 61-62.

<sup>50</sup> 5, Ibid.



others to kneel before - so called “higher criticism.” And if you wish to be in the ranks of “the best scholars of our time,” and if you inquire “with open mind,” you too must accept the need to reject all that is supernatural in The Scriptures! But if this is too impious, enlightened minds may merely rest upon Briggs’ ‘conceptual inspiration’ theory of The Word of GOD, realizing - “with open minds” and in the company of “the best scholars of our time” - that Holy Writ has been full of errors from the its very beginning! <sup>51</sup>

Those who fall down before Briggs’ idol need not dispose of their reverence for The Scriptures completely, for he assures us, “...these errors are all in the circumstantials and not in the essentials; they are in the human setting, not in the precious jewel itself; they are found in that section of the Bible that theologians commonly account for from the providential superintendence of the mind of the author, as distinguished from Divine revelation itself.” Because his doctrine of “conceptual inspiration” of Scripture allows him this dishonest dichotomy, we too may shout for joy and dance the jig piped out by Briggs: the words of The Bible themselves are often in error! And Briggs consoles us further, for The HOLY SPIRIT did the best He could in inspiring “the mind of the author[s]” of Scripture. The HOLY SPIRIT - having apparently pleaded for the human writer of Scripture to put his subjective impressions of ‘conceptual revelation’ to pen and parchment - could do no better than give to mankind a flawed and error-saturated not-so-holy Bible! <sup>52</sup>

Briggs further soothes the orthodox heart by assuring us that “It is not important for our purpose that we should decide this question” of inspiration of The Scriptures. We can all still be good Church-going Christians, even if we don’t believe in the inerrancy of The Revealed Word of GOD! He condescends that The Bible - although proven by ‘higher criticism’ to be full of errors - is still good for something: “If we should abandon the whole field of providential superintendence so far as inspiration and Divine authority are concerned and limit Divine inspiration... to its religion, faith and morals, we would still have ample room to seek Divine authority where alone it is essential... in the teaching that guides our devotions, our thinking, and our conduct.” So Briggs assures the

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<sup>51</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 35, line 4 onward] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE III, p 61-62.

<sup>52</sup> 5, Ibid.

disheartened and now fully shamed 'Bible worshipper' that - even though Scripture is clearly completely unreliable as GOD's Guiding Word to man - it is still good for teaching us " religion, faith and morals... our devotions, our thinking, and our conduct!"<sup>53</sup> If nothing else, Scripture's moral teachings can help keep the city streets safer at night!

St. Peter declares in II PETER 1:20-21, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of The Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of GOD spake as they were moved by The HOLY GHOST."<sup>54</sup> If Scripture was written as a result of holy men being moved by The Holy Spirit - and not the will of men - how then could the autographia have any error? ZECHARIAH 7:12a answers that The Scriptures are "...the words which The LORD of Hosts hath sent in His Spirit by the former prophets."<sup>55</sup> The HOLY SPIRIT sent not merely 'concepts' to the minds of the writers of Scripture, but 'verbal inspiration' in the form of "words!" To contrarily maintain a 'conceptual inspiration' of Scripture as does Briggs is to accuse The HOLY SPIRIT Himself of being full of error! But this is exactly the blasphemy offered by Briggs to us on a silver-plated tin tray of treason against The HOLY SPIRIT!

Briggs would rob Christians of the hope which the Westminster Confession, Chapter I Section VIII assures us of, "The Old Testament... and the New Testament... [in their original autographia], being immediately inspired by GOD, and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical."<sup>56</sup> It is the authenticity of the very words of Holy Scripture that allows man to come before JEHOVAH and "...worship Him in an acceptable manner, and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope!" For trying to steal such hope from men by tearing down the reliability of The Bible, our Lord Himself condemns Briggs and those like him in MARK 7:13a, "Making the word of GOD of none effect through your

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<sup>53</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case..." quotes Briggs' 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 35, line 4 onward] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE III, p 61-62.

<sup>54</sup> 10, KJV, II PETER 1:20-21.

<sup>55</sup> 10, KJV, ZECHARIAH 7:12a.

<sup>56</sup> 8, Westminster Confession, Chapter I, Section VIII.

tradition!”<sup>57</sup>

#### IX. CHARGE 4 - O.T. & MESSIANIC PROPHECY UNDONE & IMPOSSIBLE?

Charge IV documented that Briggs publicly held that much of Old Testament prophecy and been erased by historical events and that many Messianic prophecies had not only not come to pass, but that it was impossible for them to occur. Specifically,

“...with teaching that many of the Old Testament predictions have been reversed by history, and that the great body of Messianic prediction has not been and cannot be fulfilled, which is contrary to the essential doctrine of Holy Scripture and of the Standards of the said Church, that GOD is true, omniscient and unchangeable.”<sup>58</sup>

To these diabolical outrages, the Presbyterian court prosecution again began with Holy Scripture: MATTHEW 5:17-18; MATTHEW 24:15; DANIEL 12:11; LUKE 24:44; EXODUS 34:6; HEBREWS 4:13; JAMES 1:17. From the Westminster Confession: Chapter I, Section IV and Chapter II, Sections I, II. And from the Shorter Westminster Catechism, Question 4.<sup>59</sup>

Briggs criticized what he called the “Minute Prediction” mindset of Biblical inerrancy, which he termed yet “another barrier to The Bible!” For if The Bible is inerrant, we are to believe that this is a “barrier to The Bible!” So to facilitate The Bible becoming more acceptable to modern society, we must work to prove its prophecies are false, thus revealing it to be more reliable! In particular, Briggs mourned that many overemphasized in The Scriptures its “Predictive Prophecy” by “...making it a sort of history before the time, and looking anxiously for the fulfillment of the details of Biblical prediction.”<sup>60</sup>

The suggestion is that one should feel overwhelmed with his own presumptuous ignorance when he reads how in an earlier part of Scripture future events are foretold with 100% accuracy via what could only have been Divinely revealed to the then writer, and then reads those events documented in later Scripture by other men exactly as had

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<sup>57</sup> 10, KJV, MARK 7:13a.

<sup>58</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” text of CHARGE IV, p 64.

<sup>59</sup> 5, Ibid., sources of refutation of Briggs’ heresy under CHARGE III, p 65-67.

<sup>60</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 38, line 20-30] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE IV, p 65.

been prophesied! According to Briggs, the value of Bible prophecy is not in its completely accurate fulfillment of prophecies passed, which he desires to destroy. Rather, we are to prize Biblical prophecy for its inaccuracy!<sup>61</sup>

But Briggs does not stop there! He cites another fellow enlightened and learned scholar of The Bible as fanciful reading by the name of Kuenen. This man Briggs announces - again without revealing how - “has shown that if we insist upon the fulfillment of the details of the predictive prophecy of the Old Testament, many of these predictions have been reversed by history;” Indeed, we see clearly that the contrite heart and humble spirit will stop here in its search for GOD in The Scriptures and retreat immediately to the ‘Briggs enlightened chapel of higher criticism!’ As to which Old Testament predictions “have been reversed by history,” Briggs conveniently does not share. But since he is the enlightened one and we the barbarous ‘Bibliolaters,’ we are to meekly accept his statement as fact!<sup>62</sup>

Now Briggs proceeds to his primary objective in his address - to detach the objective Messiah JESUS CHRIST from The Scriptures, so that He may be made the subjective messiah convenient to the minds and fancies of men’s vain imaginations! Briggs reveals, “the great body of the Messianic prediction has not only never been fulfilled, but cannot now be fulfilled, for the reason that its own time has passed forever.” Recall how Briggs has already declared in his brilliant seminary speech that there is more than one path to salvation before GOD for the souls of men, CHRIST being only one of them.<sup>63</sup>

Now he goes the step further by launching off from his claim that Scripture is rich in error to tearing down the Divine Son of GOD Incarnate as The One portrayed therein! Briggs desires that we succumb to his doublespeak - that we should deny that much of what has been prophesied with complete accuracy regarding CHRIST in His First Advent in fact did not occur - when we know perfectly well it did because it is clearly documented in The Scriptures. For here Briggs beckons us a smaller step further to doubting the future accuracies of as yet unfulfilled Messianic prophecy which await

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<sup>61</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 38, line 20-30] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE IV.

<sup>62</sup> 5, Ibid.

CHRIST's Second Advent! <sup>64</sup>

Here Briggs would deny The Almighty the ability of “working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will!” Here the Westminster Confession, Chapter II, Section I “of GOD and of The Holy Trinity” declares otherwise, identifying JEHOVAH as “infinite in being and perfection... immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute!” <sup>65</sup> Briggs' haughtiness here smacks of the sins of satan before his fall from Heaven when he coveted The Throne of The LORD and proclaimed, “I will be as GOD!”

Briggs goes even further: he would make GOD's will contingent upon man's cooperation by asserting that our Maker's desires in Bible prophesy are often thwarted by the flow of history and men's rebellion! He would have us believe that GOD is only sovereign over the affairs of men to the degree that man cooperates with The Divine will! And when man is not, GOD's Biblical prophecies are reversed, blocked, thwarted and made impossible to come to pass! This is answered in the Westminster Confession, Chapter II, Section II, which confesses that The LORD GOD has “...most sovereign dominion over... [all things], to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever Himself pleaseth. In His sight all things are open and manifest; His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; so as nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain!” <sup>66</sup>

There is then no Biblical prophecy which, having been fulfilled, may be undone by history. Nor are any Messianic prophecies that have not yet come to pass made impossible by being beyond GOD's sovereignty! Our Lord Himself assures us in MATTHEW 5:17-18, “Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled!” <sup>67</sup> CHRIST tells us that nothing shall be undone, prevented or occur contrary to Biblical

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<sup>63</sup> 5, Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs' 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [page 38, line 20-30] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE IV.

<sup>65</sup> 8, Westminster Confession, Chapter II, Section I.

<sup>66</sup> 8, Ibid., Chapter II, Section II.

<sup>67</sup> 10, KJV, MATTHEW 5:17-18.

prophecy! Neither The blessed Creator, nor His verbally inspired Scriptures given to men shall ever vary or turn from His stated will. For JAMES 1:17b assures us that all His gifts to men - including Scripture - come to us from His hand , “...with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning!”<sup>68</sup>

#### X. CHARGE 5 - MOSES NOT THE AUTHOR OF THE TORAH?

Here Briggs is confronted with his public contention that Moses did not author The Pentateuch. Specifically,

“...with teaching that Moses is not the author of the Pentateuch, which is contrary to direct statements of Holy Scripture and to the essential doctrines of the Standards of the said Church, that the Holy Scripture evidences itself to be the Word of GOD by the consent of all the parts, and that the infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself.”<sup>69</sup>

From the Bible the court refuted Briggs with EXODUS 24:4; NUMBERS 33:2; DEUTERONOMY 5:31; DEUTERONOMY 31:9; JOSHUA 1:7-8; I KINGS 2:3; I CHRONICLES 6:49; EZRA 3:2; EZRA 6:18; NEHEMIAH 1:7; LUKE 24:27,44; JOHN 5:45-47; ACTS 7:38; ACTS 15:21. And from the Westminster Confession: Chapter 1, Sections V, IX.<sup>70</sup>

It is not surprising that Briggs would make the assertion, “...It may be regarded as the certain result of the science of Higher Criticism that Moses did not write the Pentateuch.”<sup>71</sup> Note that Briggs capitalizes the first letters of his true god and idol, “higher criticism” in the same way one capitalizes the first letters of the Names of The Almighty! It is certainly no great jump for him to go from his allegedly ‘proven’ thesis that Scripture in its original autographia is chock full of errors to asserting that The Torah’s often found proclamation that Moses is the author is in error! Once again, we see that Briggs’ ‘conceptual inspiration’ doctrine of The Bible allowed him the liberty to embrace many liberal blasphemies. But at the same time, he was able to dance piously

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<sup>68</sup> 10, KJV, JAMES 1:17b.

<sup>69</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” text of CHARGE V, p 67.

<sup>70</sup> 5, Ibid., sources of refutation of Briggs’ heresy under CHARGE V, p 68-70.

<sup>71</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 33, line 6-8] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE V, page 67.

before men and proclaim his most firm and faithful belief in the Divine inspiration of Holy Writ!

Here it behooves us to look at the specific tenants of Briggs' Canaanite deity of 'higher criticism.' Bible higher criticism looks for internal evidences from The Texts on "authorship, date, composition, and authority of whole books or large sections" of The Bible. Any differences in anything from literary style, schemes of alternate dating or change of subject are often taken as license to dissect the unity of Scripture. In its most virulent anti-supernatural form, it begins by denying the Divine inspiration of The Bible, "proceed[ing] to apply critical tests to the Scriptures, in the same manner as if they were merely human productions."<sup>72</sup>

One such theory of higher criticism of The Bible is the so-called "documentary hypothesis" of The Pentateuch, which claims that its author was not Moses, but is rather a 'composite' of 4 different documents edited together by various authors in different ages. This astounding 'hypothesis' embraced by Briggs as supposedly proven fact relies "solely on literary analysis" to divide The Torah into "J, E, D and P" sections and epochs.<sup>73</sup> This fantastic fantasy was first cooked up by a Professor E. Reuss at "the University of Strasburg... [and] presented to the public many years later [in] (1866 AD) by his disciple H. K. Graf." Its popularity might well have fizzled back into the recesses of the blasphemously baffled brains of academia, had it not been "skillfully elaborated by Jullius Wellhausen, [supposed] professor (in 1908 AD) at the University of Gottingen, in works published in 1883 and 1889" AD.<sup>74</sup>

The focus of this heresy is on different names used for The Almighty in different parts of Torah, the later formation of Levitical Law and a supposed even later establishment of the Hebrew Priesthood cast. This enlightened "literary analysis" thus allegedly shows The Torah to be derived from 4 separate documents of different ages dishonestly sewn together by a later editorial Hebrew conspiracy! First, the 'J' section is identified as the English translation 'JEHOVAH' "characterized by the use of 'YAHWEH' as GOD's Name." Second, the 'E' section is identified as the English

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<sup>72</sup> 13, "Biblical Criticism {Higher}." newadvent.org. 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraphs of introduction.

<sup>73</sup> 14, "KenCollins.com." Glossary, entry for "[J-E-D-P] Documentary Hypothesis" of formation of The Torah.

<sup>74</sup> 13, "Since the eighteenth century, (1) Old-Testament Criticism outside the Church," 4<sup>th</sup>

translation of “ELOHIM to refer to GOD.”<sup>75</sup> These 2 allegedly separate time periods date from the ‘J’ epoch circa “the 9<sup>th</sup> Century BC” to several centuries onward.<sup>76</sup>

Third, the ‘D’ section “is essentially Deuteronomy,” in which the Deutoronical Laws are given.<sup>77</sup> The hypothesis lectures us that the ‘D’ epoch represents the age of “prophetic reform under [King] Josias... [circa] 621 B.C.” Fourth, the ‘P’ section represents the establishment of the Hebrew “Priesthood” upon return from the exile in Babylon to Jerusalem. The P epoch “is the outcome of the sacerdotal and ritual formalism” that supposedly only now came to distinguish restored Judaism in The Holy Land under Ezra and Nehemiah - and “therefore dates from the 5th Century BC.”<sup>78</sup>

Repeatedly, The Torah internally claims Moses as its human author. EXODUS 24:4a says, “And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD...”<sup>79</sup> NUMBERS 33:2a declares of the Israelite wanderings, “And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD...”<sup>80</sup> From outside The Torah, the Old Testament proclaims the Mosaic authorship of Torah in JOSHUA 1:7, “...observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee...”<sup>81</sup> And when the Babylonian exiles returned to Jerusalem, EZRA 6:18 documents that these Israelites already had at least part - if not all - of The Torah, “And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of GOD, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses!”<sup>82</sup>

The risen Lord CHRIST JESUS stated plainly of the Messianic Scripture prophecies concerning Himself that were being fulfilled exactly as foretold in The Old Testament - in The Torah, The Psalms and The Prophets. CHRIST’s own Words show He attributed The Torah to Moses, and that all of Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled in

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paragraph.

<sup>75</sup> 14, “KenCollins.com.” Glossary, entry for “[J-E-D-P] Documentary Hypothesis” of formation of The Torah.

<sup>76</sup> 13, “Since the eighteenth century, (1) Old-Testament Criticism outside the Church,” 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph.

<sup>77</sup> 14, “KenCollins.com.” Glossary, entry for “[J-E-D-P] Documentary Hypothesis” of formation of The Torah.

<sup>78</sup> 13, “Since the eighteenth century, (1) Old-Testament Criticism outside the Church,” 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph.

<sup>79</sup> 10, KJV, EXODUS 24:4a.

<sup>80</sup> 10, KJV, NUMBERS 33:2a.

<sup>81</sup> 10, KJV, JOSHUA 1:7.



Himself, for He said in LUKE 24:27, 44, “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me!”<sup>83</sup>

#### XI. CHARGE 6 - ISAIAH NOT THE AUTHOR OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> HALF OF ISAIAH?

Charge VI is, like V, a challenge to another contention of Briggs about the authorship of The Old Testament - in this case, that Isaiah did not write all of ISAIAH. Specifically,

“...with teaching that Isaiah is not the author of half of the book that bears his name, which is contrary to direct statements of Holy Scripture and to the essential doctrines of the Standards of the said Church that the Holy Scripture evidences itself to be the Word of GOD by the consent of all the parts, and that the infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself.”<sup>84</sup>

The following Bible verses were quoted by the prosecution: MATTHEW 4:14-15; MATTHEW 12:17-18; LUKE 3:4; ACTS 28:25-26; JOHN 12:38,41; ROMANS 10:16,20. And from the Westminster Confession was added Chapter I, Sections V, IX.<sup>85</sup>

Continuing to tear at the reliability of Old Testament prophecy and accuracy - so as to tear down The New Testament fulfillment in CHRIST JESUS as the only means of Divine grace unto salvation for men - Briggs assaults pious sensibilities with this pronouncement: “Isaiah did not write half of the book that bears his name.”<sup>86</sup> What would drive a presumably brilliant and educated man like Briggs to inject such insidious infection into The Church and the seminaries charged with training her clergy? The motivation driving Briggs almost certainly is the one who is the master of all darkness and the father of all lies, but that judgement of this man’s soul does in truth belong only

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<sup>82</sup> 10, KJV, EZRA 6:18.

<sup>83</sup> 10, KJV, LUKE 24:27, 44.

<sup>84</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” text of CHARGE VI, p 70.

<sup>85</sup> 5, Ibid., sources of refutation of Briggs’ heresy under CHARGE VI, p 71-72.

<sup>86</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 33, line 14-15] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE VI, page 71.

to The LORD GOD.

We can however trace the progression of Briggs' thesis of 'conceptual inspiration' of Scripture in the sequence of these heresy charges. For jumping from an error-filled Torah to an error-filled major Old Testament prophet like Isaiah - whose Messianic prophecies are so crucial to the advent of our Lord JESUS CHRIST and the Biblical Truth of Christianity - is quite logical! This supposed plastering together the entire Torah from many authors and era and claiming for its author Moses from within the text would - if it were correct - indeed be the mother of all supposed Jewish conspiracies! Unmasking such a grand conspiracy as this is well suited as a weapon in the hand of the apostate for denigrating the orthodox Christian tenant that CHRIST JESUS is the only way to reconciliation with GOD The Father and eternal life!

But surely, if such Jewish religious authorities were devious enough to cobble together a conspiracy spanning centuries to produce an error-filled Torah, it would have necessitated the manipulation of countless multitudes of peoples, nations, historical figures, events and even the flow of history itself! And if so, then what credibility could still be attached to The New Testament and the Jewish Messiah Who came to redeem mankind in accordance with the Jewish Messianic prophecies of The Old Testament? But is this not exactly the aim of such ungodly theology?

It was well prophesied by Isaiah in ISAIAH 53:5b of The Blessed Saviour CHRIST JESUS that "...with His stripes we are healed."<sup>87</sup> Briggs endeavors nothing less than to deny men the healing stripes of our Lord and instead dares to even offer up himself as a new false messiah by taking the stripes of orthodox criticism upon himself. Why? To benevolently free us from the only True Saviour's sacrifice made for us on The Cross according to Holy Writ! And so we should not wonder that the pious Old Testament saint and prophet Isaiah - and the infallible Book of ISAIAH which he inscribed at the direction of The HOLY SPIRIT - is the present target on Briggs' malevolent madness against a 'verbally inspired' Bible! But is there proof in The New Testament that Isaiah did actually write the entire Book of ISAIAH? Most certainly!

CHRIST JESUS, being GOD Incarnate, would surely have known if Isaiah did not write all of ISAIAH. But The Lord quotes the latter half of ISAIAH and firmly

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<sup>87</sup> 10, KJV, ISAIAH 53:5b.

attributes it to Isaiah's hand, no doubt anticipating such men as Briggs in future ages! For example, ISAIAH 53:1 says of The Messiah, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of The LORD revealed?"<sup>88</sup> St. John records The risen Lord explaining the rejection of Himself by the Jewish nation exactly as prophesied by Isaiah in JOHN 12:38, "That the saying of... [Isaiah] the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?"<sup>89</sup>

And again, in ISAIAH 65:1 we find the Messianic prophecy foretelling, "I am sought of them that asked not for Me; I am found of them that sought Me not: I said, Behold Me, behold Me, unto a nation that was not called by My Name."<sup>90</sup> So St. Paul chastises the hard hearts of those who reject The Son of GOD by quoting Isaiah as the author of ISAIAH 65:1 when he says in ROMANS 10:20, "...[Isaiah] is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me."<sup>91</sup>

## XII. CHARGE 7 - 2<sup>ND</sup> CHANCE REDEMPTION IN THE WORLD TO COME?

Charge VII brings out Briggs' theology that a man whose soul is presumed to have been lost at death and not secured in CHRIST may still be saved in the hereafter. Although this doctrine might well find sympathy with those who hold to the Roman Catholic concept of a second chance for salvation in Purgatory, this concept did not hold well with Briggs' fellow Presbyterians. Specifically,

"...with teaching that the processes of redemption extend to the world to come in the case of man who dies in sin; which is contrary to the essential doctrine of Holy Scripture and the Standards of the said Church, that the processes of redemption are limited to this world."<sup>92</sup>

To back this Charge up and refute Briggs yet again, the following Bible verses were cited: PROVERBS 11:7; LUKE 16:22-23; JOHN 8:24; II CORINTHIANS 6:2;

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<sup>88</sup> 10, KJV, ISAIAH 53:1.

<sup>89</sup> 10, KJV, JOHN 12:38.

<sup>90</sup> 10, KJV, ISAIAH 65:1.

<sup>91</sup> 10, KJV, ROMANS 10:20.

<sup>92</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case...", text of CHARGE VII, page 72.

HEBREWS 4:7. From the Westminster Confession was added Chapter XXXII, Section I. And from the Larger Westminster Confession, Questions 83 and 86.<sup>93</sup>

Briggs offers this: “Another fault of Protestant theology is in its limitation of the process of redemption to this world, and its neglect of those vast periods of time which have elapsed for most men in the ‘Middle State’ between death and the resurrection.”<sup>94</sup> Now this is a fair thought when posed in the form of a question. And Briggs sets the stage further by offering an orthodox Christian Biblical view: “The Bible does not teach universal salvation, but it does teach the salvation of the world, of the race of man... a definite number, but multitudes that no one can number.”<sup>95</sup> But our suspicion must be on the alert, for we have learned to anticipate that Briggs will - like lucifer - begin with a Biblical Truth and twist it into a lie.

Note the extension of the previous reasonable assertions evolving into this next unreasonable speculation: “The salvation of the world can only mean the world as a whole, compared with which the unredeemed will be so few and insignificant, and evidently beyond the reach of redemption by their own act of rejecting it and hardening themselves against it, and by descending into such depths of demoniacal depravity in the Middle State, that they will vanish from the sight of the redeemed as altogether and irredeemably evil, and never more disturb the harmonies of the saints.” Briggs offers us the beautifully buoyant hope that only a miniscule number of the most hardened heathens will be lost to eternal damnation. But in doing so, Briggs dances dangerously close to the seductive heretical soteriology of universal salvation for all men - secured by the atoning work of CHRIST JESUS for the “salvation of the world... [and] of the race of man!”<sup>96</sup>

Further, Briggs then clearly suggests that even men who die in an unforgiving state without the saving grace of CHRIST may still be redeemed by The Lord to Heaven when they are in the ‘middle state’ between death and the resurrection. Like the devil who tempted CHRIST in the wilderness, Briggs begins with citing Biblical Truth, but

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<sup>93</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” sources of refutation of Briggs’ heresy under CHARGE VII, p 72-75.

<sup>94</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 53] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE VII, p 73.

<sup>95</sup> 5, Ibid., quotes Briggs’ 1891 AD inaugural speech to the Chair of Biblical Theology @ Union Theological Seminary, USA [p 55-56] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE VII, p 73.

<sup>96</sup> 5, Ibid.

then brazenly besets us with questions of GOD's sovereignty: "Bow down and worship with me my false god of higher criticism," Briggs calls to us, "and I will free you from all the constraints of The Bible - that you may celebrate your sin, willfully wallow in wickedness, and even leave this life without CHRIST's grace - and yet you may yet be forgiven and found among the saints in Glory!"

Observe his pied piper song of seduction: "This raises the question whether any man is irretrievably lost ere he commits this unpardonable sin, and whether those who do not commit it in this world ere they die are, by the mere crisis of death, brought into an unpardonable state; and whether, when JESUS said that this sin against The HOLY SPIRIT was unpardonable here and also hereafter, He did not imply that all other sins might be pardoned hereafter as well as here."<sup>97</sup> Can we not see the dancing Briggs playing on his pipe the happy heretical tune of "Sin all you want now, because CHRIST will almost certainly pardon you in the next life, if not in this?" And can we not see him wave to us, "Come now, and let us reason together - we need not fear GOD's judgement - as long as we do not 'sin against The Holy Spirit' the 'unpardonable sin!'"

But PROVERBS 11:7 tells us that, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth."<sup>98</sup> Our Lord chastises the unbelieving Jews who would not accept Him as Messiah in JOHN 8:24, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins."<sup>99</sup> St. Paul echoes these words when he warned the Corinthian Church in II CORINTHIANS 6:2b, "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!"<sup>100</sup> A man must act to repent of his sins and accept GOD's salvation while he is yet alive in this life, for if his body dies without receiving GOD's grace in this life, he will have no hope of anything but spiritual death in the next!

This is seen in the Westminster Confession, Chapter XXXII, Section I, which is titled, "Of the State of Man After Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead." It opens by stating, "The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep)... immediately return to GOD who gave them."

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<sup>97</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case..." quotes Briggs' 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Appendix of his inaugural speech [p 104] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE VII, p 73.

<sup>98</sup> 10, KJV, PROVERBS 11:7.

<sup>99</sup> 10, KJV, JOHN 8:24.

Briggs confuses the redeemed souls of saints in their Heavenly spiritual state awaiting their resurrected glorified bodies as incomplete sanctification.<sup>101</sup>

He concludes in error that those who die in sin may have opportunity for salvation in the ‘middle state’ between the death and resurrection of their physical bodies. The Westminster Confession here corrects this distortion, “The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens... waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. [But] ...the souls of the wicked are cast into hell... reserved to the judgment of the great day!”<sup>102</sup> There is no continuation of redemption of men after their earthly death. By now it should not surprise us that Briggs - having throw off the yoke of Holy Writ - should offer us such sinister pseudo-science!

### XIII. CHARGE 8 - SANCTIFICATION OF SAINTS NOT COMPLETE AT DEATH?

Lastly we have Charge VIII accusing Briggs of declaring that a Christian’s sanctification necessary for salvation may indeed continue in the hereafter. Specifically,

“...with teaching that Sanctification is not complete at death, which is contrary to the essential doctrine of Holy Scripture and of the Standards of the said Church that the souls of believers are at their death at once made perfect in holiness.”<sup>103</sup>

Here the Church court’s refutation of Briggs was more limited in sources quoted: I CORINTHIANS 15:51-52; HEBREWS 12:23. From the Westminster Confession: Chapter XXXII, Section I. And lastly from the Larger Westminster Catechism: Questions 86 and 37.<sup>104</sup>

At last we come to the end of Briggs’ progression of perturbing prattle -all hatched from the same demonically diabolical egg that sees The Holy Bible as merely ‘conceptually inspired’ and not ‘verbally inspired.’ It is widely accepted - and rightly so by pious quoters of The Holy Bible - that a Christian’s sanctification is complete at his death. For how else can one enter the gates of Glory, if not covered fully by the

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<sup>100</sup> 10, KJV, II CORINTHIANS 6:2b.

<sup>101</sup> 8, Westminster Confession, Chapter XXXII, Section I.

<sup>102</sup> 8, Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> 5, “The Briggs Heresy Case...,” text of CHARGE VIII, 75.

<sup>104</sup> 5, Ibid., Heresy Case...,” sources of refutation of Briggs’ heresy under CHARGE VIII, p 77-78.

righteousness of our Lord JESUS CHRIST? The Lord's righteousness is perfect, and it is only by GOD's grace that are sins are washed white as snow by the sacrifice of our Saviour! How then can the Christian be incomplete in sanctification before the Throne of The Almighty, if he is indeed already made complete in this regard by the precious blood of The Lamb at his earthly death?

Here again we must expect Briggs to start with sound Biblical doctrine and twist it in the devil's doublespeak to mean precisely the opposite of what it plainly declares. Observe: "...Believers who enter the middle state, enter guiltless; they are pardoned and justified; they are mantled in the blood and righteousness of CHRIST; and nothing will be able to separate them from His love. They are also delivered from all temptations such as spring from without, from the world and the devil. They are encircled with influences for good such as they have never enjoyed before..."<sup>105</sup> So once again we begin with orthodox Christian doctrine that we may readily agree with, and thus are the Christian man's defenses disarmed.

But now Briggs unleashes his horses of hades upon us once again: "Death destroys the body. It does not change the moral and religious nature of man." At the moment of one's earthly death, one is either saved in CHRIST or one is not. There is no halfway covenant of salvation sufficient to enter Heaven or avoid hell. And while earthly death does indeed "destroy the body," the issue is not the effect of the physical body's demise upon the destination of one's eternal soul. The issue rather is simply if one has appropriated - by GOD's grace - the complete work of CHRIST JESUS according to His Will - that our souls are secured as CHRIST's before our earthly death. Yet Briggs continues to dwell on the physical death of the human body, castigating all who object to his diversionary drama, chiding, "It is unpsychological and unethical to suppose that the character of the disembodied spirit will all be changed in the moment of death."<sup>106</sup>

Why this ploy of Briggs to hinge the question of full sanctification of Christian souls - not on the true confession and conversion of the sinful soul during one's earthly life in CHRIST JESUS - but rather on physical death itself? The answer is this: to

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<sup>105</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case...", quotes Briggs' 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Appendix of his inaugural speech [p 107-108] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE VIII, p 76-77.

<sup>106</sup> 5, "The Briggs Heresy Case...", quotes Briggs' 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Appendix of his inaugural speech [p 107-108] under SPECIFICATION of CHARGE VIII, p 76-77.

promote further his doctrine of near universal salvation of nearly all but the most depraved sinners. As we have previously seen, Briggs holds that those not saved in earthly life will often be saved in ‘the middle State’ between their physical death and their resurrection. From there it is a small step to universal salvation of all souls before GOD, for as the liberal today is often heard, “How could a loving GOD send any man’s soul to hell, if hell even exists at all?” Freed from the literal constraints of Scripture, do not the liberal universalists dare to declare, “With GOD this is impossible, but with enlightened and rational man all things are possible?”

Yet HEBREWS 12:23b tells us that “...the spirits of just men [are] made perfect.”<sup>107</sup> The soul of a man forgiven his sins by GOD’s grace is, by CHRIST JESUS, made to be without sin. On earth as Christians, however, we still sin and must repent of those offenses before GOD. It is our earthly Christian lives - not the sanctification of our souls vouched safe in CHRIST - that are to progressively show forth more and more the love of our Lord as He conforms us more and more to Himself! The sanctification of a man’s soul in CHRIST either is or it is not; there is no middle ground. Either your sins are covered by the blood of The Lamb of GOD or they are not. It is rather our Christian lives in this life that should be progressing more each day to be as our Lord JESUS CHRIST!

Thus the Larger Westminster Catechism in Question 86 asks, “What is the communion in glory with CHRIST, which the members of the invisible Church enjoy immediately after death ?” The Catechism then answers, “The communion in glory with CHRIST, which the members of the invisible Church enjoy immediately after death, is, in that their souls are then made perfect in holiness...”<sup>108</sup>

#### XIV. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH “PORTLAND DELIVERANCE” PLATFORM

At the same time as the Briggs trial, The American Presbyterian Church was rocked by two other major heresy trials of prominent Presbyterian theologians. There was also Henry Preserved Smith of Lane Seminary and A. C. McGiffert of Union Theological Seminary who, like Briggs, challenged the prevailing orthodoxy that held the Holy Scriptures to be the inspired, unerring and infallible Word of GOD. The

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<sup>107</sup> 10, KJV, HEBREWS 12:23b.

<sup>108</sup> 11, Larger Westminster Catechism, Question 86 & answer.



Presbyterian General Assembly as a result issued their "Portland Deliverance" response to the liberal assault, declaring a 5-point reaffirmation of orthodoxy: It was affirmed that

“Holy Scripture is the "inspired Word, as it came from GOD [...in the 'original autograph,' and] is without error;" that the Virgin Birth of CHRIST is true; that the complete work of CHRIST at The Cross is fully sufficient for the remission of a man's sins; that CHRIST bodily was resurrected from the dead on the 3rd day and then ascended into Heaven; that all the miracles of CHRIST presented in Scripture are indeed fully true.”<sup>109</sup>

But it was already long ago too late to stem the tide of liberal infection of The Church in America and beyond. A certain view of the Scriptures came to prevail in many Western Churches, seminaries and universities in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century AD that replaced the idea of ‘verbal inspiration’ with that of ‘conceptual inspiration.’ This in turn opened the door for the complete rejection of orthodox Christian doctrine and the widespread Biblical apostasy we see today.

#### XV. IN CLOSING - THE SAD FRUITS OF HERESY IN CHRIST’S CHURCH

This then is the source of the drift of the apostate Church today and in all ages - the refusal of the clear guidance, instructions, prohibitions and commands of The Holy Writ - which converts the House of GOD into a temple of the devil! When The Church on earth becomes cut off from The Objective Truths of The Word of GOD, she withers and dies - often evolving into anything but a Church! This low view of Scripture is fertile ground for the souls of those professing The Son of GOD as Saviour to become lukewarm in their faith. Thus are their eternal spirits in peril of being spewed out of the very mouth of JEHOVAH, risking the eternal flames of everlasting damnation! For then the joyous and blessed lives of the visible Saints in CHRIST risk being converted to the miserable and cursed lives of the visibly damned in satan!

Can one’s eternal salvation be lost if one is truly converted in CHRIST according to The Will of GOD? Most prayerfully, we must plead, “Never!” But the likes of Briggs endanger the souls of the weak, the unsure, the tottering, the mere professing and the unconverted. And Briggs’ ‘conceptual inspiration’ view of The Bible is widespread

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<sup>109</sup> 4, “A Religious History of the American People,” p 814.

today in Christendom - for everywhere in apostate Churches are the ideas that GOD's Laws, the means of salvation and Who CHRIST Himself is depends no longer on what The Bible says - but on what one's inner experience claims to be true and convenient! "Having been liberated from the orthodox doctrine of an infallible Bible by higher criticism, [the liberal] ...feels that he is also liberated from all concern for internal consistency of the Bible's testimony to CHRIST."<sup>110</sup>

Freed from the constraints of Scripture, the militant feminist, abortionist, sodomite and evolutionist - sheltered under a pseudo-Christian cheap grace delusion of universal forgiveness and universal salvation - men are thus assured that their chosen sin is perfectly acceptable to GOD - even if The Bible clearly says otherwise! It is no surprise then, that such foul fruits enshrined in Western Christendom by the likes of Briggs today yields the sinful spectacle modern man who - shaking his fist towards Heaven - declares "I define what GOD's Special Revelation is! I interpret what is relevant and what is not in The Bible! I set the means and manner of salvation! I declare unto GOD that He shall find me righteous and worthy of Heaven!"

Indeed, the diabolical view of Scripture as merely semi-enlightened morality from ages past is catastrophic for mankind, most especially in seeking restoration with The Almighty and His blessings in this life and the next. If the Christian man does not have Scripture as Our Maker's sure unerring Special Revelation, his salvation through faith In CHRIST JESUS is set adrift in the sea of uncertainty. The Word of GOD is no longer profitable for Christian doctrine, reproof, correction or even instruction in righteousness. Nor can the man of GOD be made perfect, much less receive Divine guidance in what The LORD deems good and what He deems evil by the hand of man.

But praise be to GOD that Holy Scripture is 'verbally inspired' - not merely 'conceptually inspired' - and thus is perfectly infallible! Knowing this, we may joyfully in full confidence read II TIMOTHY 3:15-17, "...The Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in CHRIST JESUS. All Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of GOD may be perfect, throughly furnished

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<sup>110</sup> 9, "The Inspiration and Authority of The Bible," p 63.

unto all good works.”<sup>111</sup> In The Name of The Father, and of The Son, and of The Holy Ghost, AMEN!

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<sup>111</sup> 10, KJV, II TIMOTHY 3:15-17.

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