Chapter Thirty-four

Retrenchment and Revival in Western Christianity, to ca. 1750

In the seventeenth century men of science, philosophers, and textual critics of the Bible had given western Christendom a powerful push toward the Enlightenment, but western Christendom was far too deeply established to be quickly undone.   If we place the beginning of modernity late in the eighteenth century - with the commencement of the Industrial Revolution and capitalist economic theory, the formation of the United States of America, the French Revolution, and the crystalizing of nationalism - for a long time after Spinoza, Newton and Locke the scriptures were still fundamental for western European civilization.   In the late seventeenth and the eighteenth century new and more emotional forms of Christianity emerged in Germany and Britain.

Several important Christian doctrines, however, were losing their credibility.   During the first half of the eighteenth century many Christians in western Europe and Britain abandoned doctrines that had scarcely been questioned in earlier times.   The "reasonable" form to which in some quarters Christianity was reduced during the Enlightenment was quite different from what Christianity - whether Protestant or Catholic - had been in the sixteenth century.   As Christianity (and eventually Judaism) was pruned back, western Christendom began to evolve into modern civilization.

The cooling of Protestantism in Britain

Although important steps toward the Enlightenment were taken in France, the Netherlands and some of the German states, even more important were events and attitudes in Britain.   The Scientific Revolution in the seventeenth century and the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 had instilled in many English citizens a confidence in the future and in parliamentary government that made possible the creation of a maritime empire.   Religious skepticism, thanks in part to England's relative freedom of the press, was

vigorous and it was primarily in England that deism had taken root.   King William III (ruled 1688-1702), himself a member of the Dutch Reformed church, was nominally the governor of the Church of England but "King Billy" seldom interfered in religious matters.   The Act of Toleration of 1689 restored their civil rights to the many Protestant dissenters in England (William had hoped to extend the same rights to Catholics, but for most members of the parliament that was going much too far).

In 1707 Scotland was united with England in the Kingdom of Great Britain, and within a short time Scotland began producing intellectuals - David Hume was far the most important - who were instrumental in laying the foundations of modern civilization.   The "Scottish Enlightenment" is remarkable because Scotland had always been a poor country and as a sovereign state had seldom played more than a marginal role in the history of Christendom.   Most of Scotland was not arable or even profitable for grazing.   Although it had a long coastline and usable harbors, Scotland had few products to export.

Linguistically, Scotland was divided three ways.   The eastern Lowlands were populated by speakers of Scots, a language closely related to English.   Both Scots and English were descended from the Anglo-Saxon brought to Britain in the fifth century.   By the Middle Scots period (linguists define the Middle Scots period as lasting from about 1450 to 1707) its pronunciation was so different from English that most English speakers could not understand it.   When written it could be at least partially understood by an English reader, although with considerable difficulty.   As English gained in popularity Scots declined, but even now is understood by many people in eastern Scotland.

In the western Highlands of Scotland, poor even by Scottish standards, several dialects of Gaelic (Ghàidhlig) were spoken.   They were descended from the Gaelic language that "the Scoti" had brought from Ireland to the Hebrides and northwestern Britain in the sixth and seventh centuries. Speakers of English and Scots found Gaelic completely unintelligible.   In the sixteenth century, while John Knox's Presbyterianism spread rapidly through the Lowlands, the Highlands in the west remained mostly Catholic.

The Lowlanders, however, were much stronger and began to force the Highlanders to convert to Presbyterianism and at the same time to learn the Scots language.   Today, scarcely one per cent of the population in Scotland is fluent in Gaelic.

The anglicizing of Scotland was a centuries-long process.   It began in the 1290s, when Edward I of England captured Edinburgh and several other strongholds and tried - unsuccessfully - to take control of Scotland. Scotland remained a sovereign kingdom, but by the sixteenth century English was a second language for much of the population in the Lowlands.   As indicated in Chapter 29, Presbyterian Scotland made do with an English Bible - at first, the Geneva Bible - because no Bible in the Scots language was available.   After 1603, when James VI of Scotland also became James I of England, the use of English increased again.   The King James Bible of 1611 came to be used in most of the Scottish Kirk.   Despite the increasing reliance on English, Middle Scots - as both a spoken and a written language - remained widespread during all of the Stuart dynasty.   In the eighteenth century, however, Scottish writers usually wrote in English, even when writing for a Scottish public, and tried to rid their expression of obvious Scotticisms.

Since 1603 both England and Scotland had been ruled jointly by the same monarch, who either came from the House of Stuart or had married a Stuart.   When it appeared that the last of the Stuarts - Queen Anne (ruled 1702-1714) - would not produce an heir to the throne, the linkage of the two kingdoms had a dubious future.   By 1700 the economic gap between Scotland and England was wider than ever, in large part because English trade (especially with the English colonies in North America) was flourishing, and the port cities of eastern Scotland were not.   The leaders in these cities knew that if at Anne's death Scotland and England went their separate ways, the consequences for Scotland would be dismal.   Instead of separation from England, they hoped for a more durable union.   The parliaments of England and Scotland therefore began negotiating finally to unite their two kingdoms into a single Kingdom of Great Britain.   At Anne's death the throne would go to a distant but Protestant relative of hers: the elderly Sophia, Electress of Hanover.[1]   Although the initiatives for union

came more from Scotland than from England, the English parliament was the first to pass an Act of Union (1706).   The next year the parliament in Edinburgh did the same.   The two parliaments merged, their place of assembly now being the Westminster palace in London.   The union brought a new prosperity to Scotland, as Scottish merchants now had access to markets in England and the English colonies in North America.

In a roundabout way, the political union of Presbyterian Scotland and Anglican England represented an advance of secularism.   The union, undertaken in large part out of fear of Catholic France, reflected a relatively casual attitude toward Protestant orthodoxy.   This was quite new, and in contrast to the conflicts within Protestantism in the middle of the seventeenth century (after the execution of Charles I, when they had briefly been the established church in England, the Presbyterians had immediately published long lists of heresies, errors and blasphemies that would no longer be allowed).[2]   The Act of Toleration passed by the English parliament in 1689 had provided for the peaceful coexistence of England's many Protestant denominations while at the same time preserving the Church of England as the realm's established church.   For a century and a half the English crown had tried, with diminishing success, to force all its subjects to worship in Anglican churches and according to Anglican rules.   By 1689 such a project no longer seemed worth the effort: the English parliament, as well as King William and Queen Mary, believed that differences among Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers and other "nonconformists" were after all not so important as wide public support of the government.

This subordination of religion to secular goals was expressed once more in the Acts of Union of 1706-07.   Henceforth the monarch in the single Kingdom of Great Britain not only would serve as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, but also would be a communicant member of the Presbyterian church and bear the title, "Protector of the Church of Scotland." Although many in the two clergies were indignant that Queen Anne would now present herself as both an Anglican and a Presbyterian, most of the laity regarded the blurring of lines between religious denominations as a price worth paying for the practical advantages of a united kingdom.   For many

people in Britain doctrinal "purity," which had long been of vital importance for Protestants, was by 1707 losing its urgency.

Freemasonry and secularism

Another harbinger of modernity in Britain was the Freemasons' lodge. The growth of Freemasonry followed closely after the union of England and Scotland and after the decades-long growth of deism. Although the Freemasons' lodge included many traditional Christians, it was a fraternal organization in which deists felt very much at home. This was because the lodge was essentially a secular institution. In the eighteenth century thousands of important men were Freemasons. Except in the Catholic kingdoms, where royal and ecclesiastical authorities combined to suppress the Freemasons, men who became eminent tended to regard their membership in a lodge as a badge of distinction. British Freemasons included poets, composers, members of parliament, bishops and even kings. In America many privileged English colonists became Masons. In German lands distinguished lodge members were Mozart, Frederick the Great, and the poets Lessing and Goethe (and probably Schiller). The lodge provided a close community: its members were united by secret initiations, secret passwords and handshakes, secret rituals, and secret symbolism.

Although it incorporated the Old Testament "history" in its charter myths and thus placed itself in a Judaeo-Christian tradition, Freemasonry was otherwise deistic and secular. God was recognized and honored, but not worshiped, as "the Grand Architect of the Universe." The lodge was not anti-Christian, and declared that it respected all of the Christian denominations, but it offered a social and ethical framework without reference to Christianity..

The formal organization of Freemasonry in England came soon after the two Acts of Union. It is convenient to say that as a legal organization Freemasonry - here distinguished with a capital F - began with the creation of the Grand Lodge of England, on June 24 of 1717. This action brought four London lodges into a single, corporate organization. Anthony Sayer was elected as the first Grand Master of the English Freemasons. In emulation of the English example, a Grand Masonic Lodge was organized in Ireland ca.

1725, and in Scotland in 1736.   From Britain the movement not only came quickly to the English colonies in America but also spread rapidly in Germany, the Netherlands, and elsewhere in Europe.   In 1738 Pope Clement XII sent out a papal bull excoriating the movement and excommunicating Catholics who were members of a Freemason's lodge.[3]   The Anglicans and Presbyterians pointedly made no such pronouncements, and individual clergymen in these communions preached sermons commending the brotherly love and the spirit of charity that characterized the lodges.

Although Freemasonry burst into international prominence only after its formal organization, its roots lay in late medieval England and especially Scotland.[4]   Freemason legend claims that Rosslyn Chapel - an impressive church near Edinburgh, on which construction began in 1456 - was built by freemasons who had connections with the Knights Templar.   The Templar claim has not found much credence among historians, but we may agree that freemasons did indeed build Rosslyn Chapel, along with many other churches and cathedrals.   Medieval masons had their own guilds or craft organizations, as did the members of other trades.   In the fifteenth century the word "freemason" seems to have served only to distinguish an accomplished stonemason from his less skilled counterparts.[5]   When a great building, such as a cathedral, was under construction the freemasons would erect a shed or lean-to at the site: in this "lodge" they could keep their tools, work stone while shaded from the hot sun, eat their meals, and even spend the night.   From the building the word "lodge" was extended to the men whom it sheltered, to the qualifications for admission, and to the rules under which it functioned.

The masonic guilds took great pride in the antiquity and nobility of their profession.   Expert masons occasionally served as architects, and as such were expected to have mastered the science of geometry.   As a result, architecture and geometry were prominent in the masons' private history, which of course went back to Adam, the first mason and architect.   When English masons in the fifteenth century were admitted to a lodge, they normally were required to listen attentively as a senior mason read the "Old Charges."   One of the later copies of the Old Charges is the Kilwinning Manuscript (Kilwinning lies on the Firth of Clyde, on Scotland's Atlantic

coast). According to David Stevenson, "the manuscript opens, as is standard, with a brief invocation or prayer addressed to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and the narrator then launches into his subject:

> Good brethren and fellows: Our purpose is to tell yow how and in what manner wise this craft of massonrie was begun, and how it was keepet by worthy Kings and Princes, and by many other Worshipful Men. And also to those that be here wee will charge by the Charges that belongeth to every free Masson to keepe, ffor in good faith, and they take heed of it, it is worthy to be weell keeped, for it is a worthy Craft and a curious Science. For there be sevin liberal Sciences, of which sevin it is one."[6]

The pride that the freemasons took in their pedigree - they claimed that freemasons drew and designed Noah's Ark, the Egyptian pyramids, and Solomon's temple - inspired them to seek wisdom from exotic sources. Late in the Renaissance this opened the door to Neoplatonism and then to the Hermetic corpus with its pseudo-Egyptian lore.[7] By the seventeenth century the lodges taught that geometry had been invented before the Flood, by Jabal, son of Lamech (Genesis 4:20). The freemasons believed that Jabal built houses, worked out geometry, and then wrote its secrets on pillars of stone; and that after the Flood Jabal's secrets were read by Thrice-Great Hermes of Egypt, who passed them on to posterity.

The fraternity of the lodges was not ruptured by the Reformation, the lodges choosing to emphasize their ancient wisdom and to bypass the ecclesiastical disputes of their own time. By the seventeenth century their insistence upon avoiding religious controversies, and focusing on secular matters, had become a great part of the lodges' attraction. As freethinking spread, and doubts about Christianity increased, the lodges of the freemasons began to enroll Scottish and English gentlemen who wished to escape from religious wrangling into a benign deism.

At the same time, the Reformation had reduced the need for actual freemasons in Scotland, as the Presbyterians frowned on the building of impressive churches and had no place at all for cathedrals.   Masonic lodges

flourished, however, precisely because they performed a variety of social and ritual functions, and were admitting men who had little or no experience as stonemasons.   At least two dozen such masonic lodges were scattered across Scotland in the middle of the seventeenth century.[8]   Although many members were still "operative" (or working) masons, most lodges were welcoming men who were not.   The latter were called "speculative" masons, and tended to be men with considerable education.   In 1641, for example, Sir Robert Moray - one of the top officers in the Scottish army - was inducted into the Edinburgh lodge. As religious differences and "enthusiasm" grew in the seventeenth century, deism offered an antidote, and many of the lodges headed in a deist direction.

The history of Freemasonry becomes fairly clear with the founding of the Grand Lodge of England.   The national organization requested a manual, and *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* was printed and distributed in London in 1723 (*anno Domini* 1723, Year of the World and of Masonry 5723), having been compiled by a Dr. Anderson, evidently the Rev. James Anderson, a native of Aberdeen, Scotland.[9]   An American edition of the *Constitutions* was published in 1734 by Benjamin Franklin.   Anderson was asked by the Grand Lodge to come up with an improved version of "the old Gothic constitutions," and the result was his 1723 booklet.   The booklet purports to give the history of the Freemasons, states the obligations of a Freemason, the powers and obligations of Wardens, Masters and Grand Masters, the rules for voting, procedures to be followed at induction of new brothers, and songs to be sung.

So far as "God and Religion" are concerned, the booklet dispensed with them quickly in a few sentences.   Under the general heading, "The Charges of a Free-Mason," Dr. Anderson states that "a Mason is oblig'd by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist nor an irreligious Libertine."   In ancient times the Masons were obliged to adhere to whatever religion was practiced in a country or nation, "yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and True, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be

distinguish'd."[10]   A few pages later Dr. Anderson emphasized that religious arguments had no place in the Freemasons' lodge, especially after the Reformation:

> Therefore, no private Piques or Quarrels must be brought within the Door of the *Lodge*, far less any Quarrels about *Religion*....   We are also of all *Nations, Tongues, Kindreds* and *Languages,* and are resolv'd against all *Politicks*, as what never yet conduc'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will.   This Charge has always been strictly enjoin'd and observ'd; but especially since the *Reformation* in BRITAIN, or the Dissent and Secession of these Nations from the *Communion* of ROME.[11]

Anglicans, Presbyterians, Puritans, Quakers, Unitarians and deists all enjoyed the fraternity and secularism of the lodge.   Although "stupid atheists" were discouraged they were not prohibited from joining.   In 1717 perhaps all members of the English and Scottish lodges were Christian or came from a vaguely Christian background, but by the middle of the eighteenth century the lodges in London and other large cities included a few Jewish members. Some lodges on the European continent and in the English colonies in America were also open to Jewish candidates, but others were not.[12] Although only a tiny minority of eighteenth-century Freemasons were Jewish, that the lodges included any Judaeans at all led some non-masonic Christians to suspect that the entire Freemason movement was a Jewish conspiracy.   In fact, the lodges were a first and tentative step toward secularism and pluralism.

The fading of Satan and his evil spirits

When the Reformation began, almost all Christians still took Satan seriously.   Martin Luther's contests with the Devil in the Wartburg castle are well known.   Under the Devil's control were supposed to be a myriad of evil spirits, or demons, who had joined Satan in rebelling against God and had therefore been cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9).   These demons were available for wicked women and men to employ against their enemies.   The burning of witches - tens of thousands of them - in western Christendom from late in the fifteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth was based

on the assumption that the women and men were doing the work of Satan, and that in return Satan had given them powers of black magic and the services of his evil spirits.

During the course of the seventeenth century the witch-hunting craze subsided.   It ended first, as described by Andrew Fix, in the Dutch Republic:

> The last execution for witchcraft had taken place in 1608, the last judicial complaint regarding witchcraft had been filed in 1643..., and after 1670 accusations of witchcraft became ever more rare in the Republic. Although capital punishment for witchcraft ended earlier in the Republic than elsewhere in Europe, by the 1690s the great 'witch craze' that had convulsed Europe for over two hundred years had largely run its course.   A remarkable, if horrific, chapter in European history was ending.[13]

In England the last person executed as a witch was Alice Molland, at Exeter in 1684.   The Witchcraft Act issued by James I in 1604 remained on the books but was becoming obsolete as attitudes changed. In 1736 the British parliament replaced it with a very different statute.   The 1604 Act had assumed that evil spirits actually exist, and assigned the death penalty for persons who "use, practice or exercsise any Invocation or Conjuration of any evill Spirit, or shall consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feede, or rewarde any evill and wicked Spirit."   In contrast, the parliament that passed the Witchcraft Act of 1736 (and King George II, who signed it) assumed that evil spirits and witches were merely figments of the imagination, and that a person who pretended to be a witch or a wizard was nothing more than what in American slang is called a "con artist," preying upon the gullibility of the masses.   The 1736 act stipulated one year of prison plus standing on the pillory for one hour each season of that year for "such Persons as pretend to exercise or use any kind of Witchcraft, Sorcery, Inchantment, or Conjuration."   Such charlatans, the Act of 1736 recognized, make pretenses "whereby ignorant Persons are frequently deluded and defrauded."

As belief in witches and evil spirits faded, the Devil himself became less credible.   Among the educated - physicians, lawyers, academicians, and

even theologians - the belief in Satan began to decline in the seventeenth century and by 1700 a consensus was beginning to form among the learned that the Devil was not to be taken literally: "Satan," that is, was a figure of speech, a personification of Evil.   The Copernican cosmology and the Scientific Revolution that followed it had weakened Satan's credibility, but the hunting and burning of witches had also provoked some Christians to express doubts about the existence of the Devil and his minions.[14]   In John Milton's great epic, *Paradise Lost* (published in 1667) Satan is a fascinating and even somewhat admirable figure, but not quite believable.   It is unclear whether Milton himself believed in his existence, but for many Christian readers *Paradise Lost* must have exorcized their fear of Satan.

Late in the seventeenth century, however, such skepticism was still confined to private conversations or was published anonymously.   Dutch Christians were therefore surprised in 1691 when a pastor in the Reformed church published a suggestion, albeit vague, that belief in the Devil was a superstition.   The pastor was Balthasar Bekker, and his multi-volume work was *De betoverde Weereld* ("The World Bewitched").[15]   Bekker denied not only witchcraft but also "possession" by the Devil or an evil spirit.

Ten years after Bekker's publication another book discouraging belief in the Devil made its appearance.   Unlike Bekker's book, this one - *Dissertatio de crimine magiae* ("A dissertation on the judicial charge of magic") - was written specifically for scholars.   It was written by Christian Thomasius, a distinguished professor at the University of Halle.   Thomasius' field of expertise was the philosophy of law, and he was greatly troubled that in his own state (the realm of Frederick I of Prussia) as well as in most of the rest of western Christendom the laws still made "consorting with the Devil" a crime.   Although by 1701 these laws were seldom enforced, they remained as an enticement for citizens to bring a charge of witchcraft against persons whose character or behavior disgusted their neighbors.   Thomasius therefore argued that legally a "pact with the Devil" was nonsense: unless Satan's existence was demonstrated, the state could not find a person guilty of having made a contract with the Devil.

More durable than "the fallen angels" were the good angels.   They had

been no threat to public order, so no effort was made to discredit them. They had in fact proliferated greatly over the centuries.   In his *Summa theologica* Thomas Aquinas stated that every person has a guardian angel and that there are more angels than all other creatures combined.   To these billions of angels Aquinas devoted Questions 50-64 of the *Summa theologica.*   He determined, for example, that an angel could be in one place in one instant and in a distant place in the next instant, without any time intervening (Question 53, Article 3).   Renaissance painters were fond of depicting angels.   With the Reformation, angels began to lose their immediacy.   Protestants who believed that miracles had ceased after the Apostolic Age were also inclined to believe that angels had not appeared since then.   About the existence of angels, however, Protestants had few doubts, because the Bible frequently mentioned them.   Even most of the early deists believed in angels, just as they believed in miracles.   Thomas Hobbes, at *Leviathan* 34 ("Of the signification of spirit, angel, and inspiration in the books of Holy Scripture"), admitted to some skepticism about angels, inclining toward the opinion that they were "supernatural apparitions of the fancy, raised by the special and extraordinary operation of God."   He finally concluded, however (on the basis of several New Testament passages), that there must also be some angels who are "substantial and permanent."

Hell and Purgatory

        In western Christendom Hell began to fade along with Satan and his demons.   Belief in Hell was almost as old as Christianity itself (see Chapter 13).   Although absent from the letters of Paul and from the fourth Gospel, Hell is prominent in the Gospel of Matthew, the Book of Revelation, and several other early Christian texts (especially the *Apocalypse of Peter*).   By the end of the second century most Christians believed that Hell - rather than eternal death - was what Jesus the Christ had saved them from.

        The ancient Christian creeds affirmed "the resurrection of the body" (Apostles' Creed) or "the resurrection of the dead" (Nicene Creed), and this doctrine was either resisted or ridiculed by the Hellenes.   Many philosophers and other educated Hellenes regarded a human body as the temporary home of an immortal *psyche* ("soul").   At death, they supposed, the soul was released from the body and entered into an Afterlife of bliss or - temporarily

and less often - punishment.   The Christian belief that at the End of Time our physical bodies would be reconstituted and sent to Heaven or Hell grew out of Hellenistic Judaism and especially the eschatology of the Pharisees.   But whereas the belief was of secondary importance for the Pharisees and for rabbinic Judaism, it was central for Christians.   Because the physical resurrection of Jesus was the cornerstone of Christianity, to doubt the possibility of physical resurrection was to doubt Christianity itself.[16]

Christian eschatology was nevertheless complicated by passages in the New Testament that spoke of something quite different from a physical resurrection at the End of Time.   Jesus himself seems to have believed that at death the soul enters immediately into Heaven or Hell.   The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) assumed as much, as did the report that on the cross Jesus promised the thief next to him, "today shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).   More importantly, the Gnostics - who ridiculed the belief in physical resurrection and insisted on the immortality of the soul - claimed that the source of their doctrine was Jesus the Christ.

Early in the third century Tertullian replied to the Gnostics with his *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* (*De carnis resurrectione*).   Although his main argument was that the true Christian must believe in a physical resurrection at the End of Time, Tertullian began by declaring that the immortality of the soul is obvious, something that both Christians and philosophers accept. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus meant for Tertullian that after death and before resurrection the disembodied soul can suffer psychical pain or enjoy psychical pleasures.   Like Tertullian, most New Covenant Christians looked forward to the final resurrection of the body while at the same time believing in the immortality of the soul.   In the *Martyrdom of Perpetua*, another early third-century text, Perpetua's own account of her "prophetic" dreams shows her belief that her young brother Dinocrates, who a few years earlier had died at the age of seven, was somewhere first in a place of suffering and then (after her prayers for him) in a place of contentment. Perpetua and her readers apparently assumed that the souls or shades of the dead, while awaiting the final resurrection of their bodies, were experiencing some reward or punishment for their earthly lives.   A few decades later Origen, in his pioneering work in Christian theology, made belief in the

immortality of the soul the most important part of his eschatology. Although much of Origen's work was eventually anathematized the Christians of Late Antiquity had no quarrel with his views on the soul's immortality.   In 387, a few months after his baptism by Bishop Ambrose, Augustine wrote his tract *De immortalitate animae*.   Modern scholars suspect that when Augustine wrote the tract he was more a Neoplatonist than a Christian, but no such suspicions were harbored by medieval Christians in western Europe.

It is therefore not surprising that over the medieval centuries an elaborate notion of Purgatory took shape in western Christendom: while a Christian's body was decomposing in the grave, his or her soul went to Purgatory to be "purged" of those sins for which penance had not been done during the sinner's lifetime, and after the purging was complete the soul was released to Heaven, where it happily awaited reunification with its body on Judgement Day.   Although the word *purgatorium* appears no earlier than the eleventh century, the concept had certainly crystalized long before that.   Its most well-known description is in the central third, the *Purgatorio*, of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.   In these cantos we visit the Mount of Purgatory, set somewhere in the southern hemisphere, looking northward to those constellations that for Europeans are in the south.   The Mount of Purgatory has seven levels, or terraces, one for each of the seven deadly sins.   So Dante works his way up the mountain, from pride and envy (here the punishment is that the envious souls sit wearing hair-shirts, and with their eyelids sewn shut) to the last level, in which the soul is purged of lasciviousness by fire (because the fire is not physical the pains it inflicts are less intense than those of Hellfire).   After this final purging the soul is admitted to the summit of Purgatory, which is a Garden of Eden, and from here one ascends to *Paradiso*.   The souls in *Purgatorio* are imagined to be ghost-like, impalpable figures that cast no shadow and that the visiting Dante cannot grasp, but from their appearance he can immediately recognize them as the "shades" of the persons who have died.

Protestant eschatology and its consequences

When in 1517 Martin Luther posted his ninety-five theses he still believed in Purgatory, arguing only that the pope or the Church had no power

to forgive the sins for which a soul was sent to Purgatory.   Eventually, however, Luther discarded Purgatory as a false doctrine, and taught that after death the soul sleeps until Judgement Day.   Although Luther, Zwingli and Calvin did not deny the soul's immortality, much less its existence, their eschatology deprived the soul of its earlier significance.

By rejecting Purgatory and the consciousness of the soul after death the Protestants intensified their focus on the resurrection of the body.   They also raised the stakes considerably.   Until the sixteenth century, Christians in western Europe were quite confident that they would not be sent to Hell on Judgement Day: the average Christian assumed that at death his or her soul would enter Purgatory, there to be punished for whatever sins had been unconfessed and unforgiven on earth.   By dispensing with Purgatory the reformers removed this safety-net.[17]   Forced to contemplate Hell in a way that earlier Christians had not, Protestants in the sixteenth century found much that horrified them.

A factor of secondary importance was the abandonment of the old Ptolemaic description of the universe.   Hell had traditionally been supposed to lie at the center of the earth and therefore at the center of the universe.   In his great epic Milton described Hell in poetic diction but traditional imagery:

> A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round
> As one great furnace flam'd (*Paradise Lost*   Book I)

But with Satan and his henchmen - Beelzebub, Moloc, Belial - as carefully developed characters, Hell became in the epic more an imaginary than an actual place, and Genesis 1 and 2 began to resemble a classical myth.   For Dante, Hell had unquestionably been deep in the center of the earth, and the earth was at the center of the universe.   Although Milton was quite familiar with the Copernican theory that earth was one of six planets that circled the sun, he kept to the old Ptolemaic concept, perhaps because nowhere in the Copernican system was there so good a place for Hell.

By 1700, however, most astronomers were persuaded - with Copernicus - that the earth revolved about the sun, and - with Galileo - that

the sun was just one of the countless stars.   Where in this newly described universe should Hell be located?   One solution, offered by Tobias Swinden, was that the sun itself was to   serve as Hell.   In his *Enquiry into the Nature and Place of Hell*, published in 1714, Swinden proposed that Hell must be located in the sun.   The sun not only would burn eternally, but was also large enough to accommodate all of the damned.   Swinden calculated that several hundred billion people were to be damned, and for so immense a crowd the traditional location of Hell - in the depths of the earth - seemed too small a place, the circumference of the earth having by 1714 been well established.[18]

Although the Scientific Revolution may have been a factor in the waning of belief in Hell, more important seems to have been a heightened compassion for those less fortunate than oneself.   Enthusiasm about Hell began to decline, D. P. Walker suggested, because of "a general change in the attitude to other people's suffering, a change which was only just beginning at this period...."[19] An especially repellent aspect of Hell for those who did not expect to go there was a doctrine that in the nineteenth century (by which time it had long been abandoned) was branded an "abominable fancy."[20] Almost as old as the doctrine of Hell itself, this "abominable fancy" promised Christians that their eternal joy in Heaven would be increased as they watched the damned suffer in Hell.   Tertullian, at the opening of the third century, provides the earliest and most vivid evidence for the belief:

> Yes, and there are still to come other spectacles - that last, that eternal Day of Judgement, that Day which the Gentiles never believed would come, that Day they laughed at, when this old world and all its generations shall be consumed in one fire.   How vast the spectacle that day, and how wide!   What sight shall wake my wonder, what my laughter, my joy and exultation, as I see all those kings, those great kings, welcomed (we are told) in heaven, along with Jove, along with those who told of their ascent, groaning in the depths of darkness! And the magistrates who persecuted the name of Jesus, liquefying in fiercer flames than they kindled in their rage against the Christians! those sages, too, the philosophers blushing before their disciples as they blaze together, the disciples whom they taught that God was concerned with nothing.... Such sights, such exultation, - what praetor,

consul, quaestor, priest, will ever give you of his bounty?[21]

Although far more discreet in expressing it, Augustine shared Tertullian's belief.   In the twentieth book of *City of God* is a chapter that in Henry Bettenson's translation is titled, "The saints' knowledge of the punishment of the wicked."   Here Augustine declares that "those who are undergoing punishment will not know what is happening inside, in the joy of the Lord; whereas those who are in that joy will know what is happening outside, in the 'outer darkness.'"[22]   Late in the medieval period the "abominable fancy" was given its scholastic support by Thomas Aquinas, who argued that the joy of Christians in Heaven would not be complete without their watching the torments of those cast into Hell:

> Nothing should be denied the blessed that belongs to the perfection of their beatitude. Now everything is known the more for being compared with its contrary, because when contraries are placed beside one another they become more conspicuous. Wherefore in order that the happiness of the saints may be more delightful to them and that they may render more copious thanks to God for it, they are allowed to see perfectly the sufferings of the damned.[23]

The fading of Hell

The problem with Hell was not only what it portended for all of humankind - those who watched as well as those who suffered - but especially what it implied about God.   That is, it was difficult to love God or even to admire him if he was indeed bent upon sending most of his creatures to an eternity of torments terrible beyond description.   This was especially true for the person contemplating the fate of infants who died soon after their birth, and before they had received the sacrament of baptism.   Until late in the nineteenth century infant mortality was very high in Europe, which meant that Hell would be populated in large part by such infants.   Here again Catholics had some comfort, since by the sixteenth century they had long been instructed about Limbo, that "edge" between Heaven and Hell where unbaptized infants of Christian parents would spend eternity.   Protestants, rejecting Limbo as yet another medieval fantasy, were driven back to Augustine's doctrine that unbaptized infants would burn eternally in Hell,

although their pain would be less than that of adults.[24]

By the middle of the sixteenth century Europeans were also unsettled by their discovery that Christianity had never reached a large part of the earth: sub-Saharan Africa, the New World, the islands of the Pacific, and all of eastern Asia.   According to the traditional eschatology these heathen populations were damned *en bloc*.   An atrocity so enormous could be excused if God was not omnipotent - if he had wished to save people from Hell but had been unable to do so - but he could not be both omnipotent and benevolent.

Although most European Christians - both Catholic and Protestant - continued to warn that unbelievers would suffer eternally in Hell, the more radical movements ignited by the Reformation believed and said otherwise. The Socinians, adherents of the anti-trinitarian "heresy" that thrived in Poland and Transylvania in the later sixteenth century, taught that the wicked would indeed be resurrected and sent to Hell, but that instead of burning eternally they would be quickly consumed by the flames and annihilated. This doctrine of finite punishment seems to have had a Jewish origin, having been promulgated in Poland by students of the *kabbalah*.   Even more extreme than the Socinian doctrine was a tenet approved by a group of Anabaptists in a synod at Venice in 1550.   Attracting delegates mostly from northern Italy and Switzerland, the synod declared that the saved will arise to eternal bliss at the End of Time, but that "there is no hell but the grave; the souls of the wicked perish with their bodies."[25] In this milder soteriology - not far from that of Paul - Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection gives the Christian eternal life, while the lot of unbelievers is eternal death.   Like the Socinians, many Anabaptists were social as well as religious revolutionaries and as a result were feared and persecuted by both Catholics and moderate Protestants.   The Venice Anabaptists' denial of Hell was generally condemned as yet one more of their dangerous heresies.

In the seventeenth century doubts about Hell proliferated, but the persecution of Socinians and Anabaptists squelched for a time any open denial of the eternity of Hell, lest the denier be labeled a Socinian.   In England this was especially the case after the restoration of the monarchy in

1660 and the parliament's passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662.   In private correspondence, however, people often expressed their skepticism about Hell.[26]   Not until after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and the freeing of the press from royal control, did skeptics and deists in England dare to publish their thoughts on Hell.

Despite the repugnance of Hell, the doctrine was simply too important for Christian society to set aside.   Philosophers and theologians whose theodicies worked better without Hell were inhibited from saying so because they supposed, as did everyone else, that the baser sort would embark on a splurge of sin and crime if Hell were not made real enough to frighten them. Relevant here is an anecdote told in 1764 by Voltaire, who - along with the other *philosophes* - regarded Hell as a grotesque invention.   The anecdote features a Calvinist clergyman, Petit-Pierre, who denies the doctrine of eternal torment in Hell.   A fellow Calvinist, taking Petit-Pierre to task for his indiscretion, admonishes the clergyman: "My friend, I am no more inclined than you are to believe in Hell's eternal punishment, but you know it's a good thing that your tailor, your servant, and especially your lawyer believe in it."[27]   D. P. Walker, in his study of the changing ideas about Hell, found that "nearly all discussions of hell until well into the 18th century are veiled by a mist of secrecy and dishonesty."[28]

An example of this duplicity is the *De statu mortuorum et resurgentium tractatus*, written by Thomas Burnet, a theologian much favored by King William and Queen Mary.   Burnet had written the *De statu* for learned clerics, not for the laity, and had never intended to publish it.   In 1723, however, eight years after his death, it was published.   In 1733 printers also issued an English translation: *A Treatise Concerning the State of Departed Souls Before, and At, and After the Resurrection.*   In the treatise Burnet conceded to divinity students that there was considerable doubt about the eternity of Hell, but he counseled them nevertheless to hew to the traditional concept in their sermons, lest the laity abandon itself to sin:

> Whatever your Opinion is within yourself, and in your own Breast concerning these Punishments, whether they are eternal or not; yet always with the People, and when you preach to the People, use the receiv'd Doctrine, and the receiv'd Words in the Sense, in which the

People receive them: For they are apt to run headlong into Vice, and are apt to be terrify'd from offending by the Apprehension of Punishment only.[29]

Thus the clergy, along with most of the educated class, was expected to take Hell with a grain of salt, while the laity was encouraged to keep believing that unrepentant sinners would burn eternally.

Until well into the eighteenth century arguments about the duration of Hell - whether punishment there was finite or eternal - were based entirely on scripture.   For example, at the beginning of the eighteenth century a Baptist named Samuel Richardson (not to be confused with the novelist) published *A Discourse on the Torments of Hell*, arguing that the fires could not be corporeal fires.   Many clergymen argued against Richardson and on both sides the debate was based on the Bible, various passages being selected and interpreted to advance one's thesis.[30]   A different approach was advocated by Marie Huber.   Huber (1695-1753) was a Swiss Protestant who wrote several books on theological subjects, the most important of which was anonymous and posthumous: *Lettres sur la religion essentielle à l'homme, distinguée de ce que n'en est que l'accessoire*.[31]   Although Huber conceded the importance of the Biblical passages and the early Church Fathers on the subject of Hell, she insisted that this doctrine, like any other, must also pass the test of reason.   She found it completely unreasonable that God could burn for eternity a person who had sinned for a few days, or even a few hours, or whose beliefs were a bit short of what was required for admission to Heaven: the goodness and justice of God are not compatible with the doctrine of eternal punishment.   A few decades earlier the deist Matthew Tindal had made the same point more boldly: Christians who declare that God will eternally punish unbelievers or wrongdoers in Hell make God the worst demon imaginable.[32]

In *Of the Immortality of the Soul*, an essay published after his death, David Hume observed   that the traditional dichotomy between Heaven and Hell, or saints and sinners, made little sense:

Punishment, according to our conception, should bear some proportion

to the offence.   Why then eternal punishment for the temporary
offences of so frail a creature as man?   .... Heaven and hell suppose
two distinct species of men, the good and the bad.   But the greatest
part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue.   Were one to go round
the world with an intention of giving a good supper to the righteous
and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be
embarrassed in his choice, and would find, that the merits and demerits
of most men and women scarcely amount to the value of either.

By the second half of the eighteenth century many educated Christians -
whether in Britain, northern Europe, or the English colonies in America - no
longer took literally the New Testament's warnings of an eternal torment in
Hell.   More reasonable seemed the belief that the wicked would be
annihilated in Hell.   Deists had gone much further, regarding Hell itself as a
fiction.

The question of miracles

In the seventeenth century religious skepticism was confined mostly to
witchcraft, the Devil and Hell.   Miracles were not part of this dark side of
the scriptural religions, and they were not yet - except by Spinoza -
discredited.   As we have seen, in the 1650s Thomas Hobbes accepted the
biblical miracles.   So also did Isaac Newton and John Locke fifty years
later.[33] Locke was nominally an Anglican (although his parents were
Puritans), and probably had Arian (anti-trinitarian) sympathies, as did Isaac
Newton.   In his *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695) Locke did not
express doubt about the biblical accounts of miracles, whether in the Old
Testament or the New, saying that the miracles were sufficiently supported
by "evidences" and witnesses.   As Locke saw it, Jesus showed himself to be
the Messiah by his miracles, by his "curing the possessed of the devil, the
dumb, and blind."   In 1701, Locke published *A Discourse of Miracles*.
Here he wrote that divine revelation must be validated by miracles.
Mahomet did not work miracles, whereas Moses and Jesus did.   The
Egyptian sorcerers performed miracles too, but were outdone when Moses'
serpents swallowed theirs.

Even through the early decades of the eighteenth century the "fact" of

miracles continued to be accepted throughout Christendom.[34]   In England intensive discussion of Jesus' miracles was begun by Thomas Woolston (1670-1733).[35] As a young man Woolston had been ordained an Anglican cleric, but in his middle age he was defrocked.   By then he was a fellow of Sidney Sussex College at Cambridge, and a respected authority on early church history and the patristic writers.   Impressed by Origen, Woolston argued for an allegorical reading of the New Testament.   His polemical works angered the administrators and some of his colleagues at Cambridge, and in 1721 he was dismissed from the university.[36]   In the aftermath, he bitterly attacked his former colleagues for this insult and injury, and went on to write even more controversial scholarship.   His *Six Discourses on the Miracles of our Saviour* were published from 1727 to 1729.   Woolston insisted that the Gospels' description of Jesus' miracles and resurrection must be understood allegorically: he argued that "the New Testament miracles were never intended to be taken as literal accounts of historical events. Following Spinoza, Woolston drew attention to 'absurdities' in Christian miracle accounts."[37]

To discredit the literal scriptures was blasphemy, and Woolston was arrested and charged under the 1697 Act of Blasphemy.   By the time of his trial he was regarded by many as a madman, but that image - together with the sensational trial itself - brought what had been a somewhat recondite academic debate to the attention of the general public in London and other cities and even in England's American colonies.   The court found Woolston guilty of blasphemy and he died in prison.   Important questions about miracles, however, had been raised.

Belief in miracles was further eroded in English-speaking lands by Conyers Middleton, who was an Anglican cleric, an eminent classicist, and librarian of Cambridge University.   Middleton's contribution to skepticism was his *A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers which are Supposed to have Subsisted in the Christian Church through Several Successive Centuries* (London: 1749).   In this book Middleton denied the miracles reported from the post-apostolic period.   While accepting as true the New Testament accounts of miracles performed by Jesus and his disciples, Middleton unmasked as pious inventions the numerous miracles attributed to Christian

saints and martyrs of later antiquity.[38]

At about the same time David Hume was firmly closing the door on all miracles. Spinoza had assumed that the miracles described in the Bible were based on real events, but that the events had a natural rather than a miraculous explanation. Hume, in contrast, argued that accounts of miracles are merely expressions of humankind's credulity. In his *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding* (1748), Hume devoted Chapter X to the subject of miracles. His illustrations came not from the New Testament, but from pagan writers and - briefly - from the Old Testament. Hume described at some length the attitude and method of the critical observer or historian. All of experience, he noted, weighs against the report of a miracle. A miracle is not merely a coincidence or an event that happens very rarely, but an event that has never happened at all and that violates the laws of nature. Reports of miracles, Hume observed, circulate especially in barbarous nations and in unenlightened times and places. Most people eagerly listen to miracle-stories and are quick to pass them on. The critical scholar, however, must withhold assent to such stories unless he finds them to be supported by eyewitnesses whose intelligence and integrity cannot be doubted. One must be no less skeptical about ancient or medieval miracles than about miracles in one's own time. Although Hume did not explicitly deny Jesus' miracles, his general argument implied that the evidence for them was not nearly enough to make them credible.

Beginning of the Industrial Revolution

The Scientific Revolution in the seventeenth century had brought great advances in knowledge in western Europe and Britain. A century later the Industrial Revolution began, bringing great material advances, first in Britain and then in Europe and the English colonies in North America.[39] The Industrial Revolution went hand in hand with the rise of the inventor and the entrepreneur, who experimented with machines in order to conduct his business more efficiently and profitably. The quickening pace of inventions reflected a widespread recognition that traditional ways of doing things were not always the best ways, and that in fact the old ways were probably not very efficient at all. Belief in "progress" was the belief that better methods can usually be found to achieve this or that goal.

In the eighteenth century progress meant the replacement of manual labor or animal power with mechanical power.   Many machines were invented to do the work that hitherto had been done by laborers.   In addition to new machines was a new source of power: steam.   Water power had been exploited since antiquity, and wind power since the eleventh or twelfth century, but beyond these natural power sources work had to be done by human muscle and dexterity or animal strength.   Toward the end of the seventeenth century experiments with steam engines were conducted by Denis Papin at Marburg.   A Huguenot who had fled from France to Germany, Papin was a mathematician and natural philosopher and one of Leibniz's collaborators.   In 1690 Papin demonstrated his "steam digester" or pressure cooker, and fourteen years later he built a steam engine that - slowly and awkwardly - propelled a boat.

Practical men in Britain then saw the possible application of the steam engine.   Early in the eighteenth century Thomas Newcomen constructed an engine and used it to pump water out of a coal mine (at the Conygree Coalworks, a mile east of Dudley Castle in central England).   By the time of Newcomen's death in 1729 he had built dozens of steam driven pumps, and by 1750 steam pumps were found in mines all over Britain.   The steam engine was radically improved by James Watt, who in 1775 received a patent for his inventions.[40]   Watt formed a partnership with Matthew Boulton, who financed their joint venture, and over the next thirty years Boulton & Watt Soho Works, in Birmingham, produced hundreds of the new engines.   Many of the engines were used to pump water out of mines, but even more were put to work in textile mills, to run the machinery.   Steamboats and steam locomotives followed early in the nineteenth century.

The textile industry had received a sudden impetus when the weaver's loom was improved by the "flying shuttle."   In 1733 John Kay, from a village in Lancashire, patented his "New Engine or Machine for Opening and Dressing Wool."   Kay's new machine featured a "flying shuttle," which made it possible for a weaver to produce cloth far more quickly than had earlier been possible.   As weaving became more efficient, the weavers' demand for yarn increased, and in 1764 James Hargreaves, again in

Lancashire, patented his "spinning jenny."   Until then the spinning of yarn had been a cottage industry, but the spinning jenny - a large and relatively expensive machine - encouraged its use in factories.   In one day a spinning jenny could produce as much yarn as a hand spinner produced in a week.

Metallurgy was also made far more efficient in the Industrial Revolution.   In 1708 Abraham Darby, in Staffordshire, introduced coke as fuel for smelting iron.   Coke - made from coal - was considerably cheaper than charcoal, and was superior to it.   Producing large quantities of pig iron, Darby was able to supply it to foundries and occasionally to forges.   Darby himself operated a foundry, and in 1709 he patented a new method of casting metals.   More improvements in casting were made in the 1740s by Benjamin Huntsman, at Sheffield.   Henry Cort in 1783 patented a new process for refining iron.

The quickening pace of economic and social change in Britain, and soon thereafter in western Europe, was in stark contrast to the relatively static character of the economy and society in eastern Europe, the Ottoman empire, and the rest of the Dar al-Islam.   Here, change came mostly in religious initiatives.   As recounted in Chapter 32, it was in the middle of the eighteenth century that Hasidic Judaism began and spread in eastern Europe, and that Saudi rulers were establishing Wahhabi Islam in much of Arabia. From a variety of standpoints - intellectual, economic, political, military - what had recently been western Christendom was by the late eighteenth century far in advance of both eastern Europe and the Middle East.   The reverse side of the coin, of course, was that while religion was vigorous as ever in the east, western Christendom was beginning to fade, giving way to modern civilization.

Religious reaction and revival: Pietism

While the intellectual advances made by philosophers, men of science, and Biblical critics were pushing some of the more privileged people in Britain and Europe toward secularism, many of their Protestant countrymen were being pushed in the opposite direction: toward an intense religiosity beyond the established church.   This was also the case in the English colonies in North America.   The dividing factor in this widening gulf was the Bible.   While skeptics were finding less and less that was credible in the

Bible, some Protestant believers began to limit their focus to the Bible, and purposefully to subordinate science and philosophy to faith.

Religious fervor of an extra-ecclesiastical kind was not new in Christianity. In the twelfth century the Albigensian and Waldensian movements had appealed to the laity in Catholic Europe, as did the mendicant monastic orders. Even the Paulicians, in the seventh century, wanted more religion than the Orthodox church provided. Protestantism, however, was especially well suited to a heightened religious life not dependent upon the clergy, or upon an organized church. Finding salvation in the Bible rather than in the Church, Martin Luther had preached "the priesthood of all believers" and that egalitarian ideal was embraced by Zwingli and Calvin. The revival of religious life among Protestants was much indebted to Calvinism, which insisted that believers complement their formal worship with private Bible reading and with sanctified lives. An early example of the religious life was Puritanism in late sixteenth-century England. The Puritans believed that the formal worship and the sacraments of the Anglican church were not nearly enough, and they pursued a strenuous religiosity in their everyday life.

In the late seventeenth century something similar - the Pietist movement - appealed to many Lutherans in German-speaking lands.[41] Sometimes referred to as "the Second Reformation," Pietism and its call for religious renewal attracted several million Protestants. The movement began at Frankfurt am Main in 1670. Philipp Jakob Spener, the pastor of a large evangelical (Lutheran) church in the city, deplored the lack of intensity among his parishioners, or their tendency to regard salvation as assured by merely attending church once a week, partaking of the eucharist once a month, and assenting to a complex list of Lutheran doctrines that the clergy had hammered out. Although a Lutheran pastor typically expounded the doctrines from the pulpit, the average lay person neither understood them nor found them of much interest. As an antidote to so arid a religious life Spener launched a Collegium Pietatis ("fellowship for piety"), in which laymen would gather in order to deepen their spirituality. The Collegium encouraged a religion of the emotions and the heart rather than of the mind: a rigorous and austere morality, sanctification of daily life, frequent and extensive Bible reading, spiritual devotion, and a personal engagement with

God.   In 1675 Spener published his *Pia desideria* ("pious goals").   In the book he minimized sacraments and the fine points of doctrine, emphasized the reading of the Bible, and urged the laity to draw close to God without depending on the clergy.

In the wake of Spener's work Collegia Pietatis were organized in other cities in German-speaking lands, and the Pietist movement grew dramatically.   It also proved quite durable, continuing to thrive through most of the eighteenth century.   Not surprisingly, it was opposed by many Lutheran pastors.   Like the Quakers in England, the Pietists believed that from time to time they received from God - and more specifically from the Holy Spirit - private revelations that supplemented what was revealed in the Bible.   In addition to this "heretical" notion of divine revelation, the Pietists typically were less interested than was the clergy in hewing to denominational lines, and they were especially irritated by the doctrinal disputes that kept the Lutheran and Reformed communions at loggerheads.

Pietism was not meant for academics, and can be described as an early form of fundamentalism.[42]   Because of its emphasis on Bible reading, however, it did encourage literacy among those who had either a meager education or no education at all.   Peasants who had hitherto felt no need to read were helped to achieve basic literacy, and hundreds of thousands of inexpensive Bibles were published.   Late in the eighteenth century, when Frederick III of Brandenburg-Prussia put the state's machinery behind Pietism, literacy among the peasants rose from about ten per cent to about forty per cent.[43]

Alongside those Pietists who remained in their traditional - usually Lutheran - denomination were a smaller number of more radical Pietists, who preferred to abandon their traditional churches and to establish a new community.   Many of these communitarian and radical Pietists espoused "universalism," the belief that ultimately all people will be saved, although some will need to undergo temporary punishment in Hell.   Two of the most effective proponents of universalism among the radical Pietists ca. 1700 were husband and wife Johann and Johanna Petersen, who lived much of their later lives in Brandenburg-Prussia.   Affluent and of noble birth, Johanna von

Merlau Petersen devoted her energies and much of her wealth to promulgating her mystic dreams and divine revelations to the world. It was in one of her dreams that she learned of the eventual salvation of all people.[44]

The Pietist movement renewed the Moravian church.   Graf (Count) Nicholaos von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) was Spener's godson, and was much influenced by his godfather.   Zinzendorf was a German nobleman with a vast estate near Dresden, and near the border of what is now the Czech Republic.   Before his twentieth birthday, Zinzendorf had what he considered a religious experience, and devoted himself and his resources to nurturing and spreading Pietist religiosity.   Although Spener had remained in the Lutheran church, Zinzendorf concluded that true spirituality could not flourish within the staid confines of the established church.   In the 1720s he gave shelter to a large group of fugitives from their native Moravia and Bohemia, members of the once-flourishing but then-persecuted movement begun by Jan Hus.   Planting the fugitives - whose vernacular was Czech - in a village at the corner of his extensive lands, Zinzendorf reconfigured the Moravians' community along German Pietist lines.   Under his guidance, the Moravian Pietists embarked on far-flung missionary activities, all supported by the young count's ample purse.   When John Wesley traveled in the English colonies in America in 1735, he was introduced to a small Moravian community and was greatly impressed by its religious zeal.

The Great Awakening and Methodism

The spread of Pietism in Germany was followed by the Great Awakening in English-speaking lands, beginning in the late 1720s and lasting to the early 1750s.   Here too was a rejection of erudition in favor of emotion.   The movement toward fundamentalism in Christianity occurred at about the same time as the rise of Hasidic Judaism and Wahhabi Islam, and reflected the anxiety caused by the quickening pace of science and the growth of religious skepticism.   It was also in sharp contrast to the "moderation" of the Anglican and Presbyterian establishment after the Acts of Union in 1707, to the secularism of the Freemasons, and to the intellectual vitality of the Scottish Enlightenment.

The great preachers of the Awakening introduced a new kind of

sermon.   With stirring oratory, vivid imagery, and appeals to the emotions the preachers engaged their audience to a degree that earlier Protestant clergymen - whose sermons often resembled classroom lectures - had not. In America, the Great Awakening was led by Jonathan Edwards, who was both an accomplished Calvinist theologian and a gifted orator.   The movement began at Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1733, when Edwards was only thirty years old and a minister of the local Congregational church, which was rooted in Puritanism (Edwards was at various times a Congregationalist and a Presbyterian).   Many of Edwards' sermons were published and read widely not only in New England and the other colonies but also in Britain.

Although both Pietism and the Great Awakening appealed to the heart rather than to the mind, an important difference was the centrality of Satan and Hell in the Awakening.   For many academics in the early eighteenth century Satan had become a personification of evil, or even a mythical figure, but for Edwards he was a real demon.   While some Pietists were relaxing their views of Hell, suggesting that the damned would there be quickly annihilated and therefore spared an eternity of torment, and while several of the radical Pietists were teaching that in the end all souls will be saved, Jonathan Edwards became famous by preaching the traditional Christian doctrine of Hell: most of the human race will burn in Hell forever, while a small minority will enjoy the bliss of Heaven.   Edwards' most famous sermon was "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."   Because only those people whom God had chosen would escape this unimaginable punishment, many in Northampton and surrounding towns did their best to convince themselves and others that they were indeed among the saved.   And many supposed that the moment of their salvation had arrived while they were listening to one of Edwards' powerful sermons.

Equally instrumental in the Great Awakening was George Whitefield. Whitefield had in England attracted thousands of people to great revivals in the open fields.   He came to America in 1738, and then again in 1740, and his travels through the colonies launched a second phase of   the Awakening. Like Edwards, Whitefield held fast to the doctrine that the damned would suffer unspeakable pain forever.   His sermon, "The Eternity of

Hell-Torments," delivered in Savannah and many other American cities in 1738, warned his hearers not to be seduced by the "heretical principles and anti-Christian tenets" of those who denied or softened Matthew 25:46.

Whitefield, along with the Wesley brothers, was the founder of Methodism, although - like the Wesleys - he remained in the Anglican church.   Methodism can be said to have begun in England in 1727, when John and Charles Wesley - sons of an Anglican clergyman - were students at Oxford.   They were derided as "the Oxford methodists," but accepted the name with pride.   They did not abandon the eucharist and liturgical worship, but added much private prayer, Bible reading, and ministry to the poor. Charles wrote several thousand hymns, some of which became popular not only in Anglican churches but also in other Christian denominations.

The Wesleys spent most of 1736 and 1737 spreading their gospel in North America, concentrating their efforts at Savannah, Georgia.   They mostly drew the poor, preaching to them in rural fields and along urban wharves.   Their "Methodism" was well suited to the North American colonies, and especially to the rural colonists.   This was a religion that needed no church building: an impressive building, a local pastor, a liturgical worship service, and distribution of the eucharist, were fine for those who had access to such things, but most colonists on the American frontier lived many days away from a church.   For these people the Methodist "circuit rider" was a godsend.   The circuit-rider would preach to a small group of families in a clearing, and often to a single family in its cabin, assuring the listeners that even though they belonged to no congregation and had not set foot in a church for many years they were indeed among the saved.   In the middle of the eighteenth century Methodism was still a fledgling movement in the American colonies, but it had a robust future.

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1.   Anne had dozens of closer relatives, but they were Catholic and the Act of Settlement, passed by the English parliament in 1701, barred a Catholic from ascending the throne.   Sophia

was nominally a Protestant but was at heart a religious eclectic, a friend of Leibniz, and familiar with the writings of Spinoza.   In the event, Sophia died before assuming the throne of Great Britain, which therefore passed to her son, George I.   Like his mother, George (ruled 1714-1727) was a nominal Protestant.

2. On which see Emerson 1968.

3. The papal bull was Clement's *In Eminenti Apostolatus Specula.*   See Charles Lyttle, "Historical Bases of Rome's Conflict with Freemasonry," *Church History* 9 (1940), pp. 3-23.

4. An excellent book on the "prehistory" of Freemasonry is David Stevenson's *The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century 1590-1710* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

5. According to Stevenson 1988, p. 11, the word "freemason" was originally used "to indicate a fully qualified mason, as opposed to roughmasons or roughlayers who could not undertake skilled work."

6. Stevenson 1988, p. 19.   The Kilwinning Manuscript dates ca. 1650, but its text is far older.

7. On the influence of Neoplatonism see Stevenson 1988, pp. 77 ff.; on the importance of the Hermetica see Stevenson 1988, pp. 22, 44, and especially 82-87 ("Hermeticism and the cult of Egypt").

8. Stevenson 1988, found (p. 1) that "from the start social and ritual functions lay at the heart of the lodges," and (p. 8) that at least 25 lodges are attested in Scotland in the 1640s and 1650s.

9. The booklet is available on-line, thanks to Paul Royster of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, at http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1028&context=libraryscience

10. *Constitutions*, p. 48.

11. *Constitutions*, p. 59.

12. In the nineteenth century Jewish businessmen in New York founded the B'nai B'rith as a specifically Jewish fraternal organization.   Early in the pontificate of Leo XIII, who was outspokenly opposed to Freemasonry (his bull *Humanum genus*, in 1884, centered on the evils of the lodges), a group of Catholic laymen and clergy in Connecticut founded the Knights of Columbus.

13. Fix 1999, p. 4.

14. See Russell 1986, p. 128: In western Europe the "reaction to the witch craze made the Devil of all Christian doctrines the least attractive to the educated."

15. On Bekker see Andrew Fix, *Fallen Angels: Balthasar Bekker, Spirit Belief, and Confessionalism in the Seventeenth Century Dutch Republic* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999).

16. See Prieur 2003.

17. On which see Walker 1964, pp. 59-60.

18. On Swinden see Walker 1964, pp. 39-40.

19. Walker 1964, p. 30.

20. The phrase was evidently coined by Frederic Farrar (1831-1903), a scholar of early Christianity and eventually Dean of the Canterbury cathedral.   See Walker 1964, p. 31.

21. Tertullian *De spectaculis* 30 (Glover trans.).

22. *Civ*. 20.22 (Bettenson trans.).

23. *Summa theologica* 3rd part, Supplement, question 94, article 1 (translation from Aquinas 1947).

24. Augustine, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et baptismo parvulorum ad Marcellinum* 1.21.   Augustine wrote this tract in 412, as part of his attack on the "heresy" of Pelagius, who believed that in deciding whether to send a person to Heaven or Hell on Judgement Day, God would take into consideration the person's actions during life.   Augustine was certain that a person's sins or good works were of no account, and that belief and baptism were all that mattered.

25. On the Anabaptist and Socinian positions on Hell and physical resurrection, and on the Jewish contribution to these movements, see Walker 1964, pp. 73 ff.

26. On the growth in Britain of skepticism about Hell see Philip C. Almond, *Heaven and Hell in Enlightenment England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).   On the repression of debate during the religious turmoil in the Commonwealth and the Restoration see Almond 1994, pp. 144-45.

27. "Mon ami, je ne crois pas plus à l'enfer éternel que vous; mais sachez qu'il est bon que votre servante, que votre tailleur, et surtout votre procureur, y croient."   For the anecdote see Voltaire's chapter on *Enfer* in his *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764).   The entire chapter is devoted to the idea of Hell, which Voltaire regarded as one of the worst contributions that Christianity had made to the world.

28. Walker 1964, p. 5.

29. Almond 1994, p. 160.

30. Almond 1994, p. 88.

31.   The French original was published in London in 1756.   An English translation, *Letters concerning the Religion essential to Man: as it is distinct from what is merely an Accession to it,*

was published in 1761.

32. Almond 1994, p. 151.

33.   See T. Brian Mooney and Anthony Imbrosciano, "The Curious Case of Mr. Locke's Miracles," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 57 (2005), pp. 147-168.   At p. 147 the authors emphasize that religious faith was an important factor in Locke's philosophy: "It is also generally well recognized that Locke's empiricist and scientific leanings are motivated by the concern to see God's handiwork in the natural world....   It appears that Locke's faith, and the importance he awards to both revelation and miracles, seem to run counter to the fundamentals of his carefully articulated accounts of the limits of knowledge."

34. On the durability of traditional beliefs during the decades after Spinoza's publication of the *Tractatus* see Popkin, 2003, p. 245: "Spinoza's scepticism about the values of the biblical world, and his view of how it would be replaced by the rational man, was far beyond what most mid-seventeenth-century thinkers could accept.   For years after Spinoza, it was a pejorative insult to call anyone a Spinozist.   It took about a century before someone could safely say that he was a follower of Spinoza, and some of the German Enlightenment figures who made this statement still got in trouble."   A contrary thesis is advocated by Jonathan Israel: for arguments that Spinoza's influence was immediate and widespread see Israel 2002 and Israel 2006.

35. On Woolston see "The Rhetorical Career of Thomas Woolston," Chapter 4 (pp. 77-102) in James Herrick, *The Radical Rhetoric of the English Deists: The Discourse of Skepticism, 1680-1750* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1997).

36. Herrick 1997, p. 77.

37. Herrick 1997, p. 80.

38. According to Campbell 1986, p. 41, "Middleton was careful to state that he did not intend to refute scriptural accounts of miracles and miraculous powers; he would refute only those accounts of miracles from the middle of the second century and later."

39. On the linkage between the Scientific Revolution and the Industrial Revolution see Margaret Jacob, *Scientific Culture and the Making of the Industrial West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

40. Patents (*literae patentes*, or "open letters," which is to say royal letters addressed to the general public and stating that this or that shop had an exclusive right to make and sell a particular item) had been issued by the kings and republics of Christendom for centuries, but in the reign of Queen Anne an office in the United Kingdom took charge of these things, and required a detailed written description of the device being "patented."

41. A series of publications by F. Ernest Stoeffler provides a detailed study of Pietism in Germany and in colonial America.   Stoeffler's books are *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: Brill, 1965);   *German Pietism during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1973); and

Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976).

42. Although Walker 1954 presents Pietism in a generally favorable light he notes (p. 501) "its neglect of the intellectual elements in religion.   It produced very few intellectual leaders."   For a pairing of Pietism and fundamentalism see Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 84.   The term, "fundamentalism," did not come into use until early in the twentieth century.

43. See Richard Gawthrop and Gerald Strauss, "Protestantism and Literacy in Early Modern Germany," *Past and Present* 104 (1984), pp. 31-55.   At pp. 43 ff. the authors argue that only with Pietism - "the Second Reformation" - did literacy become the norm in Lutheran homes.   In Brandenburg-Prussia under the Calvinist Frederick III (1788-1813) Bible reading was required in the schools.   No Lutheran child was to begin taking communion until he or she had achieved the required competence in reading, usually at age 14.   If the child had not gone to school, the pastor (who also supervised the schoolmaster) was to teach the child himself.

44. The autobiography of Johanna Petersen is of considerable interest.   See *The Life of Lady Johanna Eleonora Petersen, Written by Herself* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. Edited and translated by Barbara Becker-Cantarino).