

THE EXEGETICAL METHODS OF SOME SIXTEENTH-CENTURY
ANGLICAN PREACHERS: LATIMER, JEWEL, HOOKER,
AND ANDREWES
PART I

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This article and a subsequent one will deal with the exegetical methods of four sixteenth-century Anglican preachers: Hugh Latimer (ca. 1485-1555), John Jewel (1522-1571), Richard Hooker (ca. 1554-1600), and Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626). Are these Anglican preachers to be regarded as medieval men, or is it possible to detect in their preaching new approaches to the biblical literature and new concepts of the cosmos which are more characteristic of the Renaissance? Would any such new approaches that we may discover be evidence for identifying these preachers with the humanist movement, or would it be more accurate to conclude that humanism was only one of the influences which modified their exegesis? If the latter, what were the other influences? It is to such questions that we will direct our attention in these two articles. But first it will be necessary to give a brief overview of the preaching careers and homiletical techniques of these four preachers.

1. *Overview of the Careers and Homiletical Techniques
of the Four Preachers*

*Hugh Latimer*¹

The record of Hugh Latimer's preaching career is almost the story of his life. As early as 1522 he was one of twelve preachers licensed by the University of Cambridge to preach in any part of England. In 1524 his public oration for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity was an attack on the theology of Philip Melanchthon; but Thomas Bilney subsequently,

¹For further detail regarding biographical information presented herein on Latimer, see especially *Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter cited as *DNB*); Harold S. Darby, *Hugh Latimer* (London, 1953); Allan G. Chester, *Hugh Latimer: Apostle to the English* (Philadelphia, 1954); and Robert Demaus, *Hugh Latimer: A Biography* (Nashville, 1869, 1903).

during the same year, convinced Latimer to accept the *sola fide* doctrine (which Bilney himself had accepted apparently without any Lutheran influence). It was not until 1547 that Latimer's eucharistic beliefs came into line with those of Thomas Cranmer. Finally, by 1552 he was willing to praise Luther as "that wonderful instrument of God, through whom God hath opened the light of his holy word unto the world."²

In spite of his only partial conversion to new ideas in 1524, Latimer's license to preach was revoked in 1525 by Nicholas West, Bishop of Ely, on suspicion that he adhered to Lutheran doctrines. A short time later, Latimer successfully defended himself before Cardinal Wolsey, and the license was restored. His real growth as a preacher and reformer is probably to be dated from the autumn of 1529, as Harold Darby suggests.³ On December 19 of that year Latimer preached at Cambridge his famous sermons "On the Cards," in which he compared the process by which a person can secure salvation to a successful game of cards.

The biographers record Latimer's preaching excursions of the next few years as involving sermons at Bristol in 1533, at court and in London in 1534, at Paul's Cross in 1536, and at the opening of Convocation on June 9, 1536.⁴ On August 12, 1535, the king gave his assent for Latimer's election as Bishop of Worcester. When the Act of the Six Articles was passed in 1539, however, Latimer resigned this position. He was taken into custody for a time and when released in 1540 was forbidden to preach. The next eight years were years of silence for him.

On January 1, 1548, after the accession of Edward VI, Latimer preached the first of four sermons at Paul's Cross. On Wednesday, January 18, he preached in "the shrouds" of St. Paul's his famous sermon "Of the Plough." In 1548, 1549, and 1550 he preached Lenten sermons in the presence of the king.

The particular edition of Latimer's extant sermons used in this article is that edited by John Watkins.⁵ This edition contains Latimer's "Two Sermons of the Cards" of 1529, his sermon against the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire rebels of 1536, the "Sermon of the Plough" of 1548, the

²See John Watkins, ed., *The Sermons and Life of the Right Reverend Father in God, and Constant Martyr of Jesus Christ, Hugh Latimer, Some Time Bishop of Worcester* (London, 1858), 2: 272; and C. W. Dugmore, *The Mass and the English Reformers* (London, 1958), p. 94.

³Darby, p. 44.

⁴Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 83, 98, 100, 116, 174; Chester, pp. 84-101.

⁵See n. 2, above.

“Seven Sermons Preached before King Edward the Sixth” in Lent of 1549, the “Last Sermons before King Edward the Sixth” of 1550, the “Sermons at Stamford” of the same year, and many of Latimer’s final sermons preached in the countryside in 1552 and 1553.

As we have seen, Latimer’s preaching career covered the period of 1522-1553. During the 1520’s and 1530’s his homiletical attacks were for the most part directed at abuses within the established church, rather than at what he thought to be erroneous doctrines. It is unfortunate that there are not extant more of his sermons preached in Henry’s reign. Since most of the extant sermons date from Edward VI’s reign, we are denied the privilege of tracing in greater detail the intellectual and theological development of Latimer the preacher. His sermons of the years 1549-1553 are those of a seasoned reformer who had rejected papal authority, theology, and religious practice.

*John Jewel*⁶

During his student days at Oxford, John Jewel had been introduced to the field of biblical criticism by John Parkhurst, when Parkhurst involved him in the task of comparing Tyndale’s translation of the NT with that of Coverdale. W. M. Southgate indicates that Parkhurst “had become thoroughly imbued with the humanistic approach to biblical criticism,” and that Parkhurst’s influence was exerted on Jewel from the latter’s thirteenth to seventeenth years.⁷

In 1545 Jewel was awarded the M.A. degree, and three years later was employed by his college, Corpus Christi, as a prelector in humanity and rhetoric. Peter Martyr Vermigli had arrived at Oxford as professor of divinity in 1547, an event that marked the beginning of a friendship between him and Jewel that was to prove to be a major influence in Jewel’s life. At the accession of Mary in 1553, Martyr and Parkhurst fled England, but Jewel remained temporarily to await the outcome of events. When it became apparent that Jewel would probably face trial as a suspected heretic, he too fled to the Continent, arriving in Frankfurt on March 13, 1555. There he soon identified himself with

⁶For further detail on biographical information presented herein on Jewel, see especially *DNB*; D. Featley, ed., *The Works of J. Jewel; And a briefe discourse on his life* (London, 1611; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, STC No. 14579); W. M. Southgate, *John Jewel and the Problem of Doctrinal Authority* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962); John E. Booty, *John Jewel as Apologist of the Church of England* (London, 1963).

⁷Southgate, pp. 4-5.

the Anglo-Catholic party of Richard Cox against the Calvinistic group led by John Knox.

Accepting an invitation by Martyr to join him in Strassburg, Jewel was again subject to the influence of Martyr's lectures and engaged in classical and biblical studies. In July, 1556, he followed Martyr to Zurich. It is assumed that for a short time he also studied in Padua. After Mary's death, Jewel returned to England, where he arrived in March, 1559. His subsequent letters to Martyr and other friends on the Continent have supplied historians with valuable information regarding the situation in England during the early reign of Elizabeth. He complained of the slow pace at which popery was being excluded from England, of the poor state of scholarship at the universities, and of the relative lack of capable men to occupy key positions in the church.⁸

Jewel was appointed one of the disputants at the Westminster Conference which began on March 31, 1559. On June 15 he preached at Paul's Cross, and on July 19 he was chosen as one of the commissioners for the visitation of the western counties. On January 21, 1560, he was consecrated as Bishop of Salisbury. His famous challenge sermon against papal religion at Paul's Cross on November 26, 1559, was repeated before the Court on March 17, 1560, and again at Paul's Cross on March 31, 1560. This sermon involved him in a controversy with Henry Cole and Thomas Harding and in an exchange of apologetic writings over the period of the next decade.⁹ In May, 1560, Jewel began work in his diocese and from this time forward engaged in frequent and exhausting preaching tours. Many of his sermons from this period have been preserved.

Southgate rejects the suggestion of Mandell Creighton that Jewel was at heart a Puritan who made a rather token acceptance of Anglicanism as a matter of political and ecclesiastical expediency. Southgate sees Jewel as widely separated from the Puritans on fundamental issues, and claims: "John Jewel was an Anglican, after Archbishop Parker the most important of the first generation of Elizabethan Churchmen, the heir of the Christian humanists and of Cranmer, and the progenitor of Richard Hooker."¹⁰ It must be pointed out that in the Vestiarian Controversy,

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 11, 49-50, and also Dugmore, p. 227.

¹⁰ Southgate, p. x.

although Jewel did not like the vestments he was as strict in the enforcement of their use as was Parker himself. The real issue with Jewel was the unity of the church. He was not prepared to create division and dissension over matters of indifference.¹¹

On the more fundamental question of ultimate authority in doctrinal matters, Jewel recognized the Scriptures as the primary revelation, but also utilized the consensus of the church Fathers of the first seven Christian centuries. Southgate has argued that Jewel replaced the Papal Church's authority in Scriptural interpretation by that of the early Christian church, but also claims that Jewel regarded the Scriptures as "the primary and sole revelation of God" which must be "self-authenticating."¹² Might it not rather be, as John E. Booty has suggested, that Jewel's position was indeed *sola scriptura*, and that he used the Fathers as helpful commentary and a means of demonstrating the inaccuracy of the Papal claim to perpetuation of the early church's consensus, rather than as an essential tool in the interpretation of the Bible?¹³ To this matter we will return when we examine Jewel's exegesis.

*Richard Hooker*¹⁴

Richard Hooker was educated under the auspices of John Jewel, who bestowed an annual pension on Hooker's parents, and who used his influence to have the young Hooker installed in Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1568. As a student, Hooker mastered Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. In addition to classical studies and theology, he also became quite well versed in music and poetry.

In July, 1579, Hooker's proficiency in Hebrew was rewarded by an appointment as deputy to Thomas Kingsmill, professor of Hebrew. And in 1581 Hooker took holy orders, the same year preaching at St. Paul's Cross in London. In 1584 he received the living of Drayton-Beauchamp, Buckinghamshire, and through the influence of Archbishop Sandys of York and Archbishop Whitgift of Canterbury, he was appointed Master

¹¹ See *ibid.*, p. 96, and Booty, pp. 94-98, 105, 107.

¹² Southgate, pp. 119-120, 147.

¹³ Booty, pp. 135-137.

¹⁴ For further detail regarding biographical information presented herein on Hooker, see especially *DNB*; John S. Marshall, *Hooker and the Anglican Tradition: An Historical and Theological Study of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity* (London, 1963); Izaak Walton, *The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert and Robert Sanderson* (London, 1670, 1927).

of the Temple on March 17. There followed a major controversy with Walter Travers, lecturer at the Temple.¹⁵

Travers was a leading Puritan, second in influence only to Thomas Cartwright. During his stay in Geneva, he had imbibed Calvinistic concepts, and on his return to England had given scholarly formulation to Puritan ideals in his *Ecclesiasticae Disciplinae et Anglicanae Ecclesiae . . . Explicatio* in 1573. In it he called for a presbyterial type of church order. In the debates at the Temple, Hooker in the mornings presented his understanding of the church, of justification, and of faith in relation to reason; and in the afternoons Travers contradicted him. Most the seven extant Hooker sermons that are examined herein date from this period. His "Sermon of the Certainty and Perpetuity of Faith in the Elect," the "Discourse of Justification," and "The Sermon of the Nature of Pride" were portions of a series on the prophecy of Habakkuk preached in the Temple church in 1585-1586.¹⁶ His "A Remedy Against Sorrow and Fear: Delivered in a Funeral Sermon" and the two sermons on portions of the epistle of Jude are undated. There is some question as to the authenticity of the two sermons on Jude, and the suggestion has been made that if they were preached by Hooker at all, they belong to a very early period of his preaching career.¹⁷

The fundamental issue to which Hooker's thought was directed in the sermons that we shall note was the question of authority in religious matters. This question, of course, is dealt with in detail in the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, the first five books of which were written soon after he left the Temple. The controversy with Travers was undoubtedly the stimulus for Hooker's later literary endeavors, and two main points of contention between Hooker and Travers bear notice here: First was the question of the role of reason in determining moral and political concepts. Travers favored a narrow biblicism, while Hooker saw a place for reason as a means of interpreting revelation and as an additional source of truth. The second point relates to the nature of the church. Travers denied that the church of Rome was a Christian church. On the other hand, Hooker, while recognizing the need of reform in the Papal

¹⁵ On this controversy, see S. J. Knox, *Walter Travers: Paragon of Elizabethan Puritanism* (London, 1962), pp. 70-88.

¹⁶ See John Keble, ed., *The Works of That Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker, With an Account of His Life and Death by Isaac Walton* (Oxford, 1874), 3: 469.

¹⁷ Cf. art. on "Hooker" in *DNB*.

church, still saw much within it that was a perpetuation of apostolic and early Christian principles. Travers regarded all members of the church of Rome as lost, but Hooker took the position that doctrinally deluded souls could be saved if fundamental Christian faith had been retained by them. The manner in which Hooker used the Bible to support these and other presuppositions will be considered in our study of his sermons in the sections to follow.

*Lancelot Andrewes*¹⁸

Lancelot Andrewes was without doubt the leading Anglican preacher of the latter years of Elizabeth and throughout the reign of James I. His scholarly career began early. At sixteen his ability in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew was recognized by his election to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, with a Watt's Greek scholarship. He was appointed catechist at Pembroke in 1578 and attracted considerable attention by his Saturday and Sunday lectures on the Ten Commandments. He was a brilliant teacher and an able administrator. In 1589 he became Master of Pembroke, a position which he held until 1605. He identified himself with the "Arminian" party within the Church of England, "a group engaged in modifying the rigidities of Calvinism by resting Anglicanism on the triple base of Scripture, the Fathers, and the Catholic Church of the first five centuries."¹⁹ For a time, in 1586, Andrewes became chaplain to the Earl of Huntingdon, president of the North, and is said to have won many recusants to the Protestant religion. Because of Walsingham's recommendations, Andrewes was given the living of St. Giles, Cripplegate, in 1589, and soon after he was appointed prebend and residentiary of St. Paul's and prebend of the collegiate church of Southwell. At this stage, his health was somewhat affected by his intense activity as preacher and lecturer at St. Giles and St. Paul's. He was further appointed to chaplaincies to Archbishop Whitgift and Queen Elizabeth.

In 1601 Andrewes became Dean of Westminster. He participated in the Hampton Court Conference, January 14-16, 1604; and in July

¹⁸For further detail regarding biographical information presented herein on Andrewes, see especially *DNB*; Paul A. Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes 1555-1626* (London, 1958); Florence Higham, *Lancelot Andrewes* (New York, 1952); Maurice Reidy, *Bishop Lancelot Andrewes, Jacobean Court Preacher: A Study in Early Seventeenth-Century Religious Thought* (Chicago, 1955); G. M. Story, ed., *Lancelot Andrewes: Sermons* (Oxford, 1967).

¹⁹Story, p. xiv.

of the same year he was appointed head of the committee which translated the OT books Genesis to 1 Chronicles. In 1605, when he became Bishop of Chichester and lord high almoner, Andrewes resigned the mastership of Pembroke, the vicarage of St. Giles, and the deanship of Westminster. In 1609 he was transferred to the bishopric of Ely, which he held until 1618, in which year he became Bishop of Winchester. In 1619 he was made dean of the Royal Chapel.

As a defender of the Church of England, Andrewes plotted a middle course between Puritanism and Roman Catholicism. His vast learning, including great competence in patristics and knowledge of fifteen languages, was occasionally employed in controversial writing, although his best contribution to the church and the history of literature was made in his sermons. One controversy in which Andrewes was involved was that concerning the Lambeth Articles which Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, sent to Cambridge in 1595 to provide the doctrinal standard for the university on the problem of predestination. Whitgift's articles were Calvinist in character and, therefore, unacceptable to a committed Anglican. In a sermon at Cambridge, William Barrett had denounced predestination. The Lambeth Articles were intended to correct Barrett's errors and to provide a correct statement of the church's faith. Andrewes revealed his distaste for Whitgift's view in his *Censura censurae D. Barreti de certitudine salutis* and in his *Judgment*. He argued for freedom of choice, despite depraved human will, in contradistinction to the doctrine of double predestination.

A second controversy in which Andrewes was involved was that between James I and Bellarmine over the Oath of Allegiance. Under the pseudonym Matthaeus Tortus, Bellarmine had answered the king's work *Triplici nodo, triplex cuneus*, which had been published in 1607, with no author mentioned. In 1609 Andrewes came to James's defense with his *Tortura Torti*. Bellarmine answered with an *Apologia*, and Andrewes replied in 1610 with *Responsio ad Bellarminum*. Bellarmine based the right of the secular ruler upon the will of the ruled. Andrewes answered that the claim of kings to rule is similar to the right of parents to control and guide their children, a right based on the law of nature. Andrewes's understanding of the relationship between church and state, as well as his specific doctrinal understandings, will unfold more specifically as we consider the biblical exegesis in his sermons. The particular edition of Andrewes's sermons we shall consider is the nineteenth-century edition of John Henry Parker, which follows the overall arrangement of the

1629 edition published by Laud and Bucheridge at the command of King Charles I.²⁰

Homiletical Techniques of the Four Preachers

As far as homiletical techniques are concerned, these four preachers were vastly different. Latimer never confined himself to a strict sermon outline. He wandered, in popular style, from one motif to another, using Bible passages as launching pads for discussion of those issues and for attacks upon those abuses which he felt were especially current. Jewel was less popular in style, more scholarly and more disciplined. He had a carefully worked out sermon outline and literally bombarded his audience with Bible texts and anecdotes, as well as citations from the early church Fathers, in an attempt to prove each point. His knowledge of the Fathers and of antiquity is very impressive. Hooker manifested a greater philosophical interest. He raised questions which are not necessarily germane to biblical literature, and then proceeded to use the biblical material in answering these questions. This does not render his exegesis necessarily untrue to the literature, for he very often accurately deduced principles from the Bible which could be applied to the questions he had raised. Andrewes was the strict, philologically oriented, exegete. He methodically dissected his texts, often discussing each word or thought in order until he had drained his source of virtually all its content.

2. Concept of the Bible

The exegesis of all four Anglican preachers is based on the presupposition that the Bible is the supreme and only ultimate authority in religious matters. Latimer concludes his 1536 sermon against the northern insurrection by presenting the devil as our most potent enemy who must be attacked with the "sword of the spirit, which is the word of God!" (Eph 6:17). Only the true and pure word of God, not any word of the bishop of Rome, "not his old learning, nor his new learning," can break the head of our adversary.²¹ In the first of his 1549 sermons before Edward VI, Latimer gives his text as Rom 15:4, "Whatsoever things are written aforetime, are written for our learning; that we

²⁰Reidy, pp. 20-26; Lancelot Andrewes, *Ninety-Six Sermons by the Right Honourable and Reverend Father in God, Lancelot Andrewes, Sometime Lord Bishop of Winchester* (Oxford, 1854-1871).

²¹Watkins, 1: 30.

through patience and comfort of scripture might have hope.”²² He points out that Paul is not speaking about all Scriptures, but only about those “which are of God written in God’s book.”²³

The excellency of this word is so great, and of so high dignity, that there is no earthly thing to be compared unto it. The author thereof is great, that is, God himself, eternal, almighty, everlasting. The scripture because of him is also great, eternal, most mighty and holy.²⁴

In the same sermon Latimer declares that preachers are only to be listened to when they teach truth. And what is truth? “All things written in God’s book, are most certain, true, and profitable for all men: for in it is contained matter meet for kings, princes, rulers, bishops, and for all states.”²⁵ The true ladder by which a man might climb to heaven is the knowledge and practice of the Bible.²⁶ The second 1549 sermon before Edward dwelt somewhat on a similar theme. When asked by a bishop why he did not accept certain ecclesiastical traditions, Latimer answered that he would be ruled by God’s book, and rather than diverge one jot from it, he would be torn with wild horses.²⁷

And how is Scripture to be interpreted? In the sixth 1549 sermon before Edward, Latimer answers, “St. Peter sheweth that one place of Scripture declareth another. It is the circumstance, and collation of places, that make Scripture plain.”²⁸ Here is a clear statement of his hermeneutic. The Bible is its own interpreter, not the church or the Fathers. He illustrates by showing how 1 Pet 1:23 explains Jesus’ statement regarding the new birth (John 3:3). Man is born again, Latimer stresses, by the word of God, because that is how Peter interprets the words of Jesus.²⁹ It is this word, Latimer said in 1552, interpreted by means of the comparison of one passage with another, that is to replace all witchcraft, magic, sorcery, necromancy, as well as all heresy, and “all popery.” This same word is to be the basis of a reformation of life for all men, including magistrates, who are to apply its

²² Ibid., p. 80.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 82.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 91, 154, 176.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 106.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 185.

²⁹ Ibid.

principles in their administrative responsibilities.³⁰

Preaching his famous 1560 challenge sermon, Jewel contrasted his arguments in regard to the sacrament of the altar with those of the papal party. He claimed:

We bring you nothing but God's holy word; which is a sure rock to build upon, and will never fleet or shrink. And therefore we are able truly to say with St. Paul: *Quod accepimus a Domino, hoc tradidimus vobis*: "We have delivered unto you the same things that we have received of the Lord."³¹

In the same sermon Jewel asserts that authority for a true concept of the sacraments comes only from God through the Scriptures.³² Man has no power to appoint sacraments, nor does he have power to change them. God will not accept worship based on our fantasies. "It is a dangerous thing for a mortal man to control or find fault with the wisdom of the immortal God."³³ Only in the Scriptures is the will of God found, only there can a man find everlasting life.³⁴ The argument sounds very much like *sola scriptura*. Jewel's challenge sermon first presents what he considers to be "the commandment and authority of St. Paul" on the subject of private masses. Then he adds:

Now will I, by God's grace, also declare and open the same by the examples and whole practice of the primitive church, and by the ancient doctors and other learned fathers that followed after the apostle's time, for the space of six hundred years or more; and I trust ye shall clearly see that for so long time there was no private mass in the catholic church of Christ in any country or coast throughout the world.³⁵

He then proceeds to quote Clement of Rome, Dionysius (whom he knows was not a disciple of Paul), Justin Martyr, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine.³⁶ Jewel's point is not that we should reject the validity of private masses because these early Fathers did not practice them, but that since the Scriptures know nothing of private masses, we should follow the scriptural order as the early Fathers did. The ultimate authority, which he first cites, is the Bible. The Fathers are believed only because of their conformity to the Bible.

³⁰ Ibid., 2: 26, 47.

³¹ John Ayre, ed., *The Works of John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury* (Cambridge, Eng., 1845-1850), 1: 16.

³² Ibid., p. 24.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

In quite a number of instances Jewel enunciated his position to be that the Bible, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit, is the sole criterion of truth. We are to become "temples of the Holy Ghost." He is to dwell in us and to be our teacher.³⁷ But it is the word of God which the Holy Spirit teaches us.³⁸ It is this word, so taught, which renders it possible for us "truly to know him the true and only God, and his Son Jesus Christ, whom he sent."³⁹ The Scriptures are the test of the validity or otherwise of a religious system. If we dislike our religion, we are to "read the scriptures, and know wherefore we mislike it."⁴⁰ This is why the people are to listen to sermons, so that the secrets of God's word can be revealed to them.

Jewel did not test the Scriptures by the early Christian church. Quite the contrary, he recognized the early church as a true Christian church because of its conformity to Scripture.⁴¹ He was not seeking a return to the church of the early Christian centuries for any other reason but that he felt that this church ordered its doctrine and practice according to the Bible. He reminded his hearers that the Scriptures were the standard by which Christ reproved the Sadducees (Matt 22:29). "This standard shall be able to warrant us, if we can say truly, *Scriptum est*."⁴² At this point, he cited Irenaeus, who wrote that the Scriptures are the foundation of our faith. Jewel added:

It is rashness to believe without the warrant or direction of the scriptures: it is not devotion, nor catholic faith, but foolish rashness. Now, how many ways and in how many points the church of late days hath dissented from the church of Christ and of the apostles (which no doubt was the catholic church), it were almost an infinite work to reckon up. For they disagree in so many things, that in manner they agree in nothing.⁴³

In the final analysis, Jewel's appeal was for a return to the Scriptures as the sole basis of church structure, belief, and practice. His understanding of the complete apostolicity of the church for the first six or seven centuries may be called in question by historians and theologians,

³⁷ Ibid., 2: 1005, 1018.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 1019.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 1005.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 1034.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 1058-1059.

⁴² Ibid., p. 988.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 988-989.

but his basic presupposition undoubtedly was that no church is a true Christian church which fails to order its belief and practice in strict accord with the Bible. The survival of the church is dependent on correct understanding and application of Bible teaching.⁴⁴ The medieval confusion in the church resulted, Jewel implied, from a failure to give due credence to the Bible.⁴⁵

Hooker emphasized that truth as contained in the Scriptures is apprehended only through the Holy Spirit. Matters of faith which are taught man by the Spirit are less certain and more subject to doubt than matters of sense which are naturally perceived:

Proofs are vain and frivolous except they be more certain than is the thing proved: and do we not see how the Spirit everywhere in the Scripture proveth matters of faith, laboureth to confirm us in the things which we believe, by things whereof we have sensible knowledge? I conclude therefore that we have less certainty of evidence concerning things believed, than concerning sensible or naturally perceived.⁴⁶

Hooker's sermons do not present natural reason as the source of truth in spiritual matters. Quite otherwise. The mind is naturally able to grasp those truths which are merely rational, but "saving truth, which is far above the reach of human reason, cannot otherwise, than by the Spirit of the Almighty, be conceived."⁴⁷ Christ is apprehended in the word "by the power of the Holy Ghost."⁴⁸ Whatever God speaks is "doctrine delivered, a depth of wisdom in the very choice and frame of words to deliver it in."⁴⁹ The reason behind God's words is not readily perceived because it is backed by a "greater intention of brain than our nice minds for the most part can well away with."⁵⁰ The prophecies of the Bible, Hooker said, are inspired of God.⁵¹ But prophecies which are outside of Scripture and opposed to Scripture are to be rejected.⁵² Hence Hooker instructed, "Take heed to prophecies, but to prophecies,

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 994.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Keble, 3: 470-471.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 516.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 597.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 597-598.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 660.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 660-661.

which are in Scripture; for both the manner and the matter of those prophecies do shew plainly that they are of God.”⁵³ Bible prophets did not receive their material from other men as ordinary people receive the mysteries of salvation. God himself was their direct instructor, by giving them dreams and visions, by special revelations:

Thus they became acquainted even with the secret and hidden counsels of God. They saw things which themselves were not able to utter, they beheld that whereat men and angels are astonished. They understood in the beginning, what should come to pass in the last days.⁵⁴

God lightened the eyes of the prophets’ understanding, giving them knowledge by supernatural means and he “did also miraculously himself frame and fashion their words and writings.”⁵⁵ This does not necessarily render Hooker an adherent of verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, but he does represent himself as a believer not only in the supernatural conveyance of the message to the Bible prophet himself, but also in the divine provision of assistance in the prophet’s writing of the message for the church. Ordinary men speak very imperfectly and haltingly of spiritual truths, Hooker says, but Bible prophets like Isaiah and Paul spoke “‘not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost doth teach’ ” (1 Cor 2:13):⁵⁶

This is that which the prophets mean by those books written full within and without; which books were so often delivered them to eat, not because God fed them with ink and paper, but to teach us, that so oft as he employed them in this heavenly work, they neither spake nor wrote any word of their own, but uttered syllable by syllable as the Spirit put it into their mouths, no otherwise than the harp or the lute doth give a sound according to the discretion of his hands that holdeth and striketh it with skill.⁵⁷

It would be possible to interpret this in a verbalist sense, as a reference to the actual words of the Bible prophet being dictated by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, it seems more likely that Hooker simply intended rather to emphasize the divine source and the extreme importance of the message.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 661.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 662.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

But although all the prophecies of the Bible, he pointed out, are profitable for our instruction, not all contain matters of equal importance. The most important matter of prophecy is the promise of righteousness and eternal salvation to the one who believes. Regarding this, Hooker quoted Rom 1:16.⁵⁸

Andrewes's attitude to the authority of the Bible is very amply illustrated by the close and detailed attention that he pays to it in all his sermons. Each word and phrase is dwelt upon as though it were a mine of truth. Judged only on the basis of his method, Andrewes can be viewed as a firm adherent of *sola Scriptura*. Despite his great classical and patristic learning, there is no other literature that begins to figure as importantly in his sermons as does the Bible. It is clear that Andrewes regarded Scripture as the only source of saving truth for each human being, afflicted as he is by occasional capitulation to the perpetual promptings of his carnal nature. "Our estate then as it is needeth some Scripture that 'offereth more grace'; and such there be, saith St. James, and this is such."⁵⁹ Those who have failed to respond to a Bible apostle may yet be moved by a prophet. Those who have not heard Isaiah may yet hear Jeremiah. There is a universal appeal contained in Scripture.⁶⁰

The right way for man is found in the Bible, Andrewes asserts, for "it is the word of God which is the load-star, when God is the Leads-man."⁶¹ The Bible is the voice of the true Shepherd, the pillar of cloud to guide through the wilderness.⁶² On the basis of 2 Tim 3:16, Andrewes argues that all Scripture is profitable, but suitable Bible passages must be selected for particular congregations:

The commendation of the word of God is, that "every Scripture is profitable for our instruction." "Every Scripture is profitable"; yet not "every Scripture," in every place alike. For the place and auditory have great interest in some Scripture, and a fit Scripture hath a greater and fuller force in his own auditory. And God in so excellent a manner hath sorted His Scriptures, as there be dispersed in them several texts seasonable for each time, and pertinent to each place and degree; for Prince, for people, for rich, for poor, for each his peculiar Scripture in due time and place to be reached them.⁶³

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 663.

⁵⁹Andrewes, 1: 342.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., 2: 23.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid., 5: 3-4.

Just as the Spirit is the author of life, so is he author of prophecy. Andrewes paraphrases Heb 1:1. God spoke by the prophets. "Prophecy can come from no nature but rational; the Spirit then is *natura rationalis*."⁶⁴ For this reason, Andrewes's exegesis is based on the order of the thoughts presented in the text, for the Holy Ghost is responsible for giving us this order. Preaching on Ps 77:20, he introduces his sermon outline with the remark, "As for order, I will seek no other than as the Holy Ghost hath marshalled the words in the text itself. Which of itself is right exact; every word in the body of it containing matter worth the pausing on."⁶⁵

There is no suggestion in the sermons of Latimer, Jewel, Hooker, and Andrewes that the preferred interpretation of the Bible is that of the contemporary church or the ancient Fathers of the church. The authoritative interpretation is that of the Holy Spirit, which can be grasped only by those individuals who have willingly submitted to his teaching. The Fathers are appealed to insofar as they agree with the scriptural interpretation which the preacher believes to be correct. If accused of subjectivism in exegesis, these preachers would answer that the Holy Spirit is willing to reveal the same spiritual truths to all men. Human reason is inadequate for the apprehension of such truths. It becomes efficient only when enlightened by the supernatural presence of the Spirit.

These presuppositions in regard to inspiration were bound to affect dramatically the methods of exegesis and the meanings found in the Bible. Even though the individual preacher's interpretations were influenced by the state and church systems to which his allegiance was given, his serious attempt was to draw meanings from the Bible on the basis of the "normal" or "literal" understanding of the text. By and large, the need for allegory, or strained applications of Bible passages, vanished when the interpreter was relieved of the compulsion to find within Scripture only those motifs and concepts which were acceptable to the established church.

In the next article I shall continue the analysis of the exegetical methods of the four preachers under the categories of "Allegory," "Typology," "Literal Exposition of Scripture," "Other Exegetical Practices," "Use of the Church Fathers," and "Attitudes to Antiquity."

(To be continued)

⁶⁴Ibid., 3: 308.

⁶⁵Ibid., 2: 17-18.