

Manuscript Evidence – Week 8

Westcott and Hort

(Notes taken from: *Understandable History of the Bible*, Chapter 8 – Westcott and Hort, Dr. Sam Gipp, Fourth Edition, 2019)

- 1) Introduction
 - a) The Men
 - i) Fenton John Anthony Hort (1828-1892)
 - ii) Brooke Foss Westcott (1825-1903)
 - iii) The theories of these two men were pivotal in history of swaying away scholarship from the Universal Text to the Antiochian Text
 - iv) Today we will cover their lives and their influence on the Revision Committee of 1870 that swayed England away for the AV1611
 - v) The information for today is taken primarily from two resources about their lives written by their own sons
 - (1) *The Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott* by Arthur Wescott
 - (2) *The Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort* by Arthur Fenton Hort
 - b) The Movement
 - i) The Oxford Movement had been successful in damaging the integrity of the Church of England
 - ii) The Roman Catholic Church had infiltrated the Universities and Churches
 - iii) A Convocation was called in 1870 and the revisors began their work in 1871
 - iv) They had completed the New Testament by 1881 and the Old Testament by 1884 to produce what was called the Revised Version
 - v) These Man, Westcott and Hort, would secretly inject their unpublished Greek Text into a revision of the AV1611
 - vi) The RV was not supposed to change the underlying Greek Text
 - vii) They would do this without authority and against the Convocation wishes
 - viii) Neither Westcott nor Hort were Bible believers and they both resented the Authorized Version
 - c) Their Life
 - i) Neither of these men were saved or gave a testimony of salvation by grace
 - ii) They are both upheld by Fundamental Christianity as great Greek scholars
 - iii) They were Romanists and could have easily been secret Jesuits based on their patterns in life
 - iv) We will now look at these men and how they influenced liberal and fundamental Christianity for almost 150 years.
- 2) The Bible Evidence
 - a) Westcott and Hort manufactured their Greek Text based on a handful of uncial manuscripts
 - b) They did not care anything about textual purity or purity of the Word of God
 - c) They knew that the Egyptian manuscripts they used did not even agree among themselves
 - d) In the end, the whole premise upon which they would base their Bible evidence is now a disproven theory

- e) Their theory was that the Universal Text was a corruption of the Local Text that was agreed upon to be promulgated throughout the church and the corruption became prominent after it went from Egypt up to Anitoch
- 3) Fenton John Anthony Hort – Doctrinal Beliefs
- a) Creation
 - i) Hort wrote to Westcott once about Charles Darwin’s book saying that “In spite of difficulties, I am inclined to think it unanswerable. In any case it is a treat to read such a book.”
 - ii) Hort shows that he has no regard for creation
 - b) Transcendentalism
 - i) Dr. Hort was an adherent of the teachings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 - ii) Coleridge’s famous work “Aids to Reflection” tries to harmonize formal Christianity with transcendental philosophy
 - c) Greek Philosophy
 - i) He was more of an admirer of Greek philosophy than scripture
 - ii) He would describe as “full of precious truths”
 - iii) He would often follow poets
 - d) Satan
 - i) He questioned whether there was a devil and how God could have allowed the devil to exist
 - ii) He even questioned if the devil existed at all
 - e) Hell
 - i) He shrunk from a belief in a literal, eternal hell
 - ii) He stated “we have no sure knowledge respecting the duration of future punishment, and that the “eternal” has a far higher meaning than the merely material one of excessively long duration; extinction always grates against my mind as something impossible.”
 - f) Purgatory
 - i) He believed in Purgatory though he did not believe in hell
 - ii) He stated “I agree with you in thinking it a pity that Maurice verbally repudiates purgatory, but I fully and unwaveringly agree with him in three cardinal points of the controversy. (1) that eternity is independent of duration; (2) that the power of repentance is not limited to this life; (3) that it is not revealed whether or not all will ultimately repent.”
 - iii) F. D. Maurice was part of the Roman Catholic Tractarians
 - g) Blood Atonement
 - i) He stated - “The fact is, I do not see how God’s justice can be satisfied without every man’s suffering in his own person the full penalty for his sins.”
 - ii) He considered the blood atonement “an almost universal heresy”
 - iii) He even believed that Satan was more worthy of accepting Christ’s payment for sins than God and the notion of God the Father accepting a ransom is not at all tenable
 - h) Baptism
 - i) He believed strongly in “Baptismal Regeneration”
 - ii) To him baptism assures us that we are the children of God
 - iii) He is obviously very Romanish in his beliefs about this.
 - i) Democracy
 - i) He had a hatred for democracy

- ii) He stated on April 28, 1865 "...I dare not prophesy about America, but I cannot say I see much as yet to soften my deep hatred of democracy in all its forms."
- iii) He hoped that the South would win the Civil War
- iv) He hated Abraham Lincoln
- v) He once went and saw D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey. He did not have good things to say about them and would not want to go back again to see them
- j) Communism
 - i) He strongly supported communism
 - ii) He was a half century before Lenin, Trotsky.
 - iii) He could have been called the first Bolshevik
- k) Occult
 - i) He believed in the occult.
 - ii) He formed a group called the "Ghostly Guild"
 - iii) They would investigate ghosts and supernatural appearances and effects as a group
- 4) Brooke Foss Westcott – Doctrinal Beliefs
 - a) Creation
 - i) He did not believe Genesis 1-3 should be taken literally and was just an allegory
 - ii) This mentality is prevalent in the church today as many believe the same thing
 - b) Historical Persons
 - i) He did not believe that Moses and David were historical persons from the Bible but were rather poetic characters
 - ii) He believed that David is not chronological but a spiritual person
 - c) Miracles
 - i) He stated, "I never read an account of a miracle but I seem instinctively to feel its improbability, and discover somewhat of evidence in the account of it."
 - d) Second Coming
 - i) He believed that the coming of Christ was not a physical coming but rather a spiritual coming
 - e) Heaven
 - i) He believed Heaven to be a state of mind and not a literal place
 - ii) He believed heaven was found in the glory of earthly life
 - f) Newmanism
 - i) He believed in the Jesuit John Henry Newman and his Roman Catholic Doctrines
 - ii) He stated "Today I have again taken up 'Tracts for the Times' by Dr. Newman. Don't tell me that he will do me harm."
 - iii) "Newman contended that God never intended the Bible to teach doctrines." Wilkenson, Benjamin, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated*, (Takoma Park, 1930), p. 104.
 - g) Socialism
 - i) He was a devout socialist and post-millennialist, both of which go hand in hand
 - ii) The United Nations seeks to establish a millennium without Christ
 - iii) Dr. Westcott was a devout pacifist
 - iv) He had the temperament that would have fit right in with today's liberal fighting for disarmament, animal rights, etc.
 - h) Poetry

- i) He was a lover of poetry and deeply influenced by it
- ii) He stated "Poetry is, I think, a thousand times more true than history."
- iii) As a result, Wescott was susceptible to Keble's poetry from the Oxford Movement
- i) Romanism
 - i) Keble moved Westcott toward Romanism through his poetry
 - ii) Maurice was another Roman Catholic who had an influence on Westcott
 - iii) He accepted many Roman Catholic practices with regard to inspiration of the Bible and apostolical succession
- j) Iconism
 - i) Westcott had an affinity for statues
 - ii) He would often go into Cathedrals and comment about the statues there
 - iii) He was also open to the monastic life
- k) Purgatory
 - i) He believed in prayers for the dead
 - ii) He would say that you should not pray in public for the dead but praying in private was okay
 - iii) This kind of contradicts his beliefs on Heaven and Hell since in order to pray for the dead, they would have to have some place to go
 - iv) This is why the RV translates John 14:2 "in my Father's house are many abiding places." In the margin.
- l) Oxford Movement
 - i) Wescott called the Oxford Movement "the Oxford Revival"
 - ii) He stated "The Oxford Revival in the middle of the century, quickened anew that sense of corporate life. But the evangelical movement touched only a part of human interest."
- m) Jesuits
 - i) Though it is not proven that Westcott was a Jesuit, he certainly had all of the earmarks of one
 - ii) He operated secretly and quietly among the English clergy and feigned he was a protestant
- n) Mariolatry
 - i) He had an adoration for Mary
 - ii) He convinced his fiancée to add Mary to her name and called her Mary afterwards
- o) Communal Living
 - i) He was an advocate for communal living
 - ii) He believed fully in a 'Coenobium' or community life
 - iii) This is socialism and very close to communism
 - iv) He would often talk of the coming 'Coenobium' with his children and they would think of it as coming in the future
 - v) He would even publish articles in a periodical entitled Contemporary that explained his beliefs on the 'Coenobium'.
- p) World Peace
 - i) He believed in World peace and disarmament
 - ii) He believed man was basically good and that all men must be brothers
 - iii) He believed that meditation, arbitration, and disarmament would work toward world peace
- q) Faith
 - i) He doubted the miracles of the Bible

- ii) He did not doubt that a Roman Catholic priest could perform miracles however where he saw a miracle performed by a priest at the 'Our Lady of La Salette' shrine in France.
- r) Trepidation
 - i) Wescott was afraid to confront anyone who argued with him due to his pacifist tendencies
 - ii) He refused to answer John Burgon's arguments concerning the Local Text
 - iii) About Mr. Burgon he stated "I cannot read Mr. Burgon yet. A glance at one or two sentences leads me to think that his violence answer himself."
- s) Salvation
 - i) He never gave a testimony of having accepted Christ as his personal Saviour
 - ii) He did believe strongly in Baptismal Regeneration and brought it up in discussion in a letter to his fiancée, Mary, in a letter
- 5) The Theory
 - a) Hort developed a theory that the "originals" agreed with the Local Text and that the Local Text was "edited" by the Syrian church at Antioch in the 4th Century to produce the Universal Text
 - b) This Universal Text was then forced upon the church
 - c) Though this theory, much like Darwin's Theory of Evolution, has been disproven it is still accepted by educated men because these men were looking for a way to overthrow God's authority
 - d) They are willing to accept a lie as long as they are not accountable to a final authority
 - e) This approach applies to pretty much any liberal cause today as well
 - f) They were not interested in the correct conclusion, they were interested in abolishing the old one, the KJB
- 6) Convocation of the Church of England
 - a) A commission was made to revise the Authorized Version was formed in 1870
 - b) A Revision Committee was formed to work on this undertaking
 - c) Westcott and Hort were placed on that committee, along with others
 - d) The seed had been planted in the seminaries and universities by the Jesuits for decades now and there was a gleam of hope for the Roman Catholic Church to final get their Bible into England
 - e) The Instructions
 - i) "To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the King James Bible, and
 - ii) to limit...the expression of any alternations to the language of the Authorized Version."
 - f) Secret Plans
 - i) Westcott and Hort had other plans
 - ii) They had made a Greek Text of the New Testament over the last twenty years, but had never published it so that none of their contemporaries, such as Dean John Burgon, could investigate
 - iii) They were going to carefully inject this text, little by little, into the Convocation
 - iv) In order to achieve this goal, they met together with Bishop Lightfoot to develop a strategy
 - v) The new Greek Text was committed, portion by portion into the hands of the Revision Committee
 - g) Defending the Infidel
 - i) Dr. Vance Smith was seated on the Revision Committee
 - ii) Dr. Smith was a Unitarian and obviously did not believe in the Trinity
 - iii) Protests were made to have him removed from the Committee

- iv) Westcott and Hort both resisted these efforts to remove Dr. Smith
- v) Westcott threatened to quit if Dr. Smith was removed
- vi) Westcott and Hort were adamant about having another unbeliever on the Committee with them
- h) Mission Accomplished
 - i) Westcott and Hort were so successful in their secret mission that many of the Committee members did not suspect their desire to give the world a Catholic Bible
 - ii) In reality, the Revision Committee was led to the exact opposite direction they intended to go
 - iii) If Westcott and Hort were not Jesuits acting under orders from the Vatican, then any two men could not have done a better job of overthrowing the Word of God