

atonement, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ; the founding of the church; and then ultimately the promised *denouement* of the Second Coming with earth renewed and righteousness globally established; the awesome execution of judgment followed by the eternal bifurcation of humanity, the lost forever excluded from light and joy, the redeemed forever in beatific fellowship with God, glorifying him for what he has done and is as self-giving love.

In addition, the Bible claims that, as the record and interpretation of God's nature, purpose, and action, it is God's Word -- God's Word in the words of men who, as they wrote, were directed and controlled by God the Holy Spirit. Thus the Bible also claims that, apart from the sin-obscured disclosure of deity in nature, it is the sole and sufficient revelation of God, characterized by supernatural authority and infallibility. In brief, the thoroughgoing supernaturalism of the Christian Faith is likewise a thoroughgoing Biblicism which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments regarded as informationally foundational, theologically normative, and experientially indispensable.

Before the rise of modern science the biblical worldview, if one overlooks the occasional skeptic, dominated the thinking of the Christianized nations. Hence commerce with the invisible dimensions of reality was taken for granted. Though the universe was regarded as static, neat, and tidy, an ordered structure that could be precisely diagrammed, it was the scene of momentous and dynamic drama. In the words of John Herman Randall, Jr. whose book, *The Making of the Modern Mind*, was long a standard text for collegians:

To the man of six hundred years ago, anything might happen in this world. Nothing was too strange or too contrary to nature for him to credit on respected authority. Why should he reject such strange narrations when he was prepared for almost any miraculous event to occur in his daily life? Above and beneath him swarmed a myriad of intelligences, demons or angels, strange descendants of ancient gods, ever ready at the behest of God or Satan - - it was always difficult to tell which, as witness the voices of Joan of Arc -- work wonders for the edification or damnation of men. Holy men were daily the vehicles of God's power in the performance of miracles to strengthen the piety of the faithful; the Devil and his cohorts waged a never-ending war of temptation upon the purest of heart.^2

But the medieval worldview, rooted in biblical soil and hosting some unbiblical and parasitic accretions, has become literally incredible for any well-informed person in the twentieth century. Why? The climate of opinion has changed. That, at least, is the verdict of Carl Becker, which, however judicious it aspires to be, smacks of supercilious skepticism.

The modern mind, which curiously notes and carefully describes everything, can indeed describe this climate of opinion although it cannot live in it. In this climate of opinion it was an unquestioned fact that the world and man in it had been created in six days by God the Father, an omniscient and benevolent intelligence, for an ultimate if inscrutable purpose. Although created perfect, man had through disobedience fallen from grace into sin and error, thereby incurring the penalty of eternal damnation. Yet happily a way of atonement and salvation had been provided through the propitiatory sacrifice of God's only begotten Son. Helpless in themselves to avert the just wrath of God, men were yet to be permitted, through his mercy, and by humility and obedience to his will, to obtain pardon for sin and error. Life on earth was but a means to this desired end, a temporary probation for