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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION AND THE
RESTORATIONIST CONTROVERSY IN EARLY
NINETEENTH CENTURY NEW ENGLAND

by

Kenneth M. Johnson

Thesis presented to the School of Graduate Studies
as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Ph.D. degree in Religious Studies

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this thesis is to trace the doctrinal development of the concept of universal salvation, and to place in perspective the theological issues and events which contributed to the Restorationist controversy. This controversy which affected New England Universalism during the early part of the nineteenth century was concerned with the question of future punishment. This theological area of concern was but an outgrowth of the concept of universal salvation. This latter concept, once assented to, generated further speculation among Universalists regarding the necessity and duration of divine punishment in relation to man's present and future existence.

Universalist thought took root within eighteenth century New England. The religious

climate of this period was characterized by intense theological disputes. These controversies focused on such questions as predestination, Christ's redemptive act of atonement for sin and the notion of endless punishment. The early period of the doctrinal development of Universalism then reflected its primary intent of refuting the orthodox claims of a rigid Calvinistic theology. Amidst all this turmoil emerged the theologies of both the Reverends John Murray and Elhanan Winchester.

Their theology was trinitarian in its concept of the Deity and of Christ's relationship to the Godhead. Both men held to the notion of sin as originating from Adam and the necessity of a substitutional atonement by Christ, thereby reflecting the influence of Calvinistic thought. Such a theology differed from Calvinism in that all men were to be saved because of man's mystical union with Christ. From this body of doctrine emerged two prevalent views within Universalism. Murray's teachings expressed a belief which adhered to a complete salvation of mankind from divine punishment. On the other hand, Winchester's theology acknowledged

the existence of penal suffering but only of a limited duration.

This doctrinal development was ultimately affected by the Deistic influence of the Enlightenment through the efforts of the Reverend Hosea Ballou. In 1805 he published his most celebrated work entitled A Treatise on Atonement which molded Universalist theology in a part Unitarian context. In his early editions of the Treatise, Ballou vacillated on the subject of future punishment. However, by 1817 during the course of a debate with the Reverend Edward Turner in The Gospel Visitant from April 1817 to April 1818, he became convinced of the doctrine of no future punishment.

While Ballou's religious opinions were seriously challenged and questioned, they nevertheless tended to dominate throughout this period. The dispute which would ensue over the issue of future punishment would force many a Universalist to re-study the thoughts and views of other previous exponents of the doctrine of universal election. This research will center on an examination of this controversy as it took shape within two Universalist publications founded by Hosea Ballou --

The Gospel Visitant and the Universalist Magazine from 1817 to 1830. It was through the medium of these two publications that the controversy unfolded, culminating in a denominational schism. This historiography will be restricted to the doctrinal development and related events resulting in this Restorationist schism of 1831.

Little has been published on this phase of Universalist history. There is, of course, Richard Eddy's two volume work on the history of Universalism in America which remains today a standard work of reference. Thomas Whittemore's four volume work on the life of Hosea Ballou published in the 1850's and Oscar Safford's biography of Ballou in 1889 should be mentioned. The Universalist Quarterly and General Review of the 1870's presented a series of articles authored by E. G. Brooks and A. St. John Chambré which shed additional light on the Restorationist period. These articles tend to overcome the limitations of the previously mentioned works. The late 1940's and early 1950's would again see aspects of this theological spectrum re-examined in a number of publications by the fellowship of the Humiliati at Tufts University.

Recent publications, most notably

Dr. Ernest Cassara's biography of Hosea Ballou and Dr. Russell Miller's soon to be published institutional history of American Universalism, also treat this subject matter. My research was conceived in order to provide insight into both the doctrine of universal salvation and its theological influence on nineteenth century Universalist thought.

CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN NEW ENGLAND

The Early Controversies

The beginnings of Universalist thought in America may be traced to eighteenth century New England. Universalism took root within a new world environment which could best be described as seething with religious controversy. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Massachusetts during this period. At the root of this unsettling theological climate was the questioning and ultimate rejection of the basic assumptions of the teachings of Calvinism.

In the forefront of such protestations were the doctrinal positions branded as Arminianism, supernatural rationalism, and anti-Trinitarianism. According to the New England historian Conrad Wright, before 1750, Arminianism was openly being espoused by

some of the more respected divines of New England. Anti-Trinitarian sentiment was also found to be prevalent during the post revolutionary period, with Deism making considerable inroads before the end of the century. 1

Arminianism doctrinally supplanted the vengeful Deity of the Calvinists with a God of benevolence and love. It also disavowed the Calvinist teaching of the total depravity of mankind, while admitting that man was quite capable of moral improvement. The Arminian concept of man embraced the view, that while man's nature was tainted by sin, he still remained free to choose either good or evil. His capacity for moral improvement was dependent upon his receptivity to the assistance and aid supplied by God. 2

Wright maintains that Arminianism, as it took shape in Massachusetts, was similar to the English theological development characteristic of the Age

1 Conrad Wright, The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America, Boston, Starr King Press and Beacon Press, 1955, pp. 3,9-10. A Comprehensive study on this subject is Conrad Wright's Arminianism in Massachusetts, 1735-1780, doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1943, published in 1955 under the title of the above cited work.

2 Ibid., p. 3.

of Reason. In fact, he sees its American exponents namely Charles Chauncy, Jonathan Mayhew and others owing much to the influence of such writers as John Tillotson, Samuel Clarke, Daniel Whitby and John Taylor of Norwich. While this may be true, he also finds its origins rooted in New England Puritanism. The advance toward such religious liberalism was in itself the product of such intellectual forces for at least a century. ³

The formation of the New England mind and conscience as early as the seventeenth century was largely influenced by New England Puritanism. Its theology embraced those doctrinal tenets of Calvinism which fostered concepts of an unfathomable Deity intervening into the affairs of men and nature. Mankind was viewed in this system of thought as totally evil, and that salvation was offered to those predestined souls by virtue of irresistible grace. ⁴ According to the church historian,

³ Ibid., p. 10; See also Clinton Rossiter, The First American Revolution: The American Colonies on the Eve of Independence, New York, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1956, p. 217.

⁴ Rossiter, p. 215.

Sydney Ahlstrom, these doctrinal tenets were "to a unique degree a pastoral theology, designed to console the fearful, convince the hesitant, set aright the erring, guide the unsure, and above all bring assurance of salvation to the Elect." 5

At the heart of such a theology was the need to define what constituted "the nature of true Christian experience" and the resultant ecclesial and societal duties required of man. Such emphasis upon an elective or regenerative process, along with the fulfillment of God's precepts, accounts for the covenant theology which developed in Puritan theological circles. 6

In this context many Puritans went to elaborate lengths to define regeneration in covenantal terms. Claiming an old strand in Reformed -- and pre-Reformation -- theology, they understood conversion as culminating in a personal or internal covenant with God that validated the external covenant made in Baptism. Reflecting the

5 Sydney E. Ahlstrom, Editor, Theology in America: The Major Protestant Voices from Puritanism to New-Orthodoxy, The American Heritage Series, New York, Bobbs - Merrill Company, 1967, p. 27.

6 Loc. cit.

importance attached to this experience, they often conceived true church fellowship as existing when 'visible saints' covenanted one with another.⁷

The Cambridge Platform of 1648 provided for American Congregationalism a form of church constitution. This Platform defined the ecclesiastical body as consisting of those proven saints who "walk in blameless obedience to the word" and "the children of such, who are also holy."⁸

The new world environment with its changed social conditions, coupled with a decline in religious fervor, precipitated a somewhat modified form of Congregationalism. This modification was realized with the adoption of the Half-Way Covenant in 1662. This Covenant had little impact on the general practice of religion. Another Synod was convened in 1679 with reformist motives, but was unable to affect the general religious decline.⁹

⁷ Ibid., p. 28.

⁸ William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949, pp. 103, 105.

⁹ Ola Elizabeth Winslow, Jonathan Edwards 1703-1758, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1940, p. 102; Sweet, op. cit., pp. 108-109.

Ahlstrom noted that the Covenant adopted by the Massachusetts Synod of 1662

answered the question by underlining the importance of the external covenant (against the Baptists) and came to terms with social reality by recommending that duly baptized adults be regarded as church members if they professed the faith and lived uprightly. They could, in turn, have their children baptized, but these Half-Way members were denied full privileges. They could not receive the Lord's Supper or participate in churchly decisions such as excommunications.¹⁰

What was lacking within the Cambridge Platform was a provision governing an association for those persons, part of the church by virtue of a baptismal covenant, but who were unable to confess to their conversion. The Half-Way Covenant, proclaimed by the Synod of 1662, sought to enlarge on this definition contained in the Cambridge Platform. This was accomplished by distinguishing between those converted members of the church, and those who were designated in a simple covenanted relationship. According to Perry Miller, this "membership was qualified and hedged about...but it remained essentially membership..."¹¹

¹⁰ Ahlstrom, op. cit., p. 34n.

¹¹ Sweet, op. cit., pp. 105-106; Perry Miller, "The Half-Way Covenant", in The New England Quarterly, Vol. 6, No. 4, issue of December, 1933, pp. 680-681.

In this way, the Half-Way Covenant admitted those unconverted souls, with the provision their baptismal covenant be renewed. This religious expression of belief, allowed such Christians to present their children for the reception of baptism. Such a revised plan envisioned the converting grace of God being more actively exerted on these former outcasts. Those who availed themselves of the Half-Way Covenant, however, could not claim conversion or full communion since they lacked voting privileges. In fact, they were denied true membership, other than that extended within what was known as the congregation. While a good number of the clergy recognized the Half-Way amendment, others publicly voiced their protest. Such anti-synodists were Charles Chauncy, John Davenport, Increase Mather and Nicholas Street.¹²

Solomon Stoddard would take the Half-Way Covenant one step further by admitting the unregenerate to full communion within the church. Such a position

¹² Sweet, op. cit., p. 106; Miller, op. cit., pp. 681, 697.



was justified, in that the Lord's Supper might be a "conversion experience" of grace, similar to that of praying and preaching. This being the case, the unregenerate should not be excluded from the reception of this means of grace, previously reserved for those already designated converted elect. 13

This ecclesiastical innovation, first introduced at Northampton by the Congregationalist minister, Solomon Stoddard, met with initial success and thus was designated as Stoddardeanism. By granting full membership in the church, Stoddardeanism was destined to disrupt what had become known as the "New England Way." Not only would the accepted institutional polity be questioned, but now the need for a redefinition of the doctrinal distinction which existed between visible and real saintship was apparent. 14.

Jonathan Edwards would later reject this

13 Sweet, op. cit., pp. 107-108; Perry Miller, "Solomon Stoddard, 1643-1729", in The Harvard Theological Review, Vol. 34, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1941, p. 305.

14 Sweet, op. cit., p. 107; Miller, "Solomon Stoddard, 1643-1729," pp. 298, 306.

type of conversion by embracing a revivalistic approach to insure a conscious belief in one's election. He resurrected the tenets of Calvinism, regenerate membership, and the ecclesiastical polity which accompanied it. Others, conversely, embraced the relaxed institutional modifications previously introduced, adjusting their theology along the way. This state of affairs would pave the way for the emergence of what was to be designated as Arminianism. 15

Although orthodoxy remained entrenched in New England, the doctrine of election was often de-emphasized. This question was expounded on at the Westminster Assembly of 1646 regarding the sovereign decree and will of God and the basic freedom of man. The Westminster Confession would attempt to balance these two divergent views. This doctrinal stance was to become prevalent within the Standing Order of the day. Conrad Wright, speaking of this period, states, "sooner or later, someone was bound to recognize that the doctrine

15 Wright, op. cit., p. 14.

of election was disappearing, would consciously reject it, and would start to revise the whole structure of his theology to fit." 16.

The Great Awakening And Its Aftermath

The year 1734 witnessed a rise of religious zeal within the colonies. Other religious revivals had preceded the events of 1734, but it was this religious movement at Northampton that paved the way for the events known as "The Great Awakening." This was testified to by Jonathan Edwards who described this state of affairs as characterized by an unusual interest and "Concern about the Great things of Religion." This, he stated, was true "among old and young, and from the highest to the Lowest; all seemed to be seized with a deep concern

16 Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 17; S. W. Carruthers, The Everyday Work of the Westminster Assembly, Philadelphia, The Presbyterian Historical Society (of America) and The Presbyterian Historical Society of England, 1943, pp. 112-113. Ahlstrom notes (p. 177) adherence to the Westminster Confession was confirmed at the Cambridge Synod of 1648, with the Massachusetts Reforming Synod of 1680 and the Connecticut Saybrook Synod of 1708 adopting that version expressed in 1658 by the English Independents and circulated as the Savoy Declaration. see Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, Vol. 1, New York, Image Books, 1975, p. 177.

about their Eternal salvation." 17

By 1735 this religious enthusiasm subsided, only to be renewed in 1740, with the arrival of George Whitefield, followed by Gilbert Tennent, James Davenport, and a host of other evangelical preachers. By 1745, the impact and force of the movement had been considerably diminished.¹⁸ Wright sees in the Great Awakening a response to the religious formalism of the prevailing orthodoxy. Also, he notes that this religious movement was similar to that turmoil which gave rise respectively to Pietism and Methodism in Germany and England. 19

The fervor of the Great Awakening incited by a host of itinerant preachers did much to undermine the established ecclesiastical structure. In this respect, opposition to such a movement was manifested in works authored by respected ministers as William Balch and Charles Chauncy. Their arguments against itinerant preaching focused upon the established parish structures with its

17 Jonathan Edwards, "Narrative of Surprising Conversions", in Clarence H. Faust and Thomas A. Johnson, editors, Jonathan Edwards, American Century Series, New York, Hill and Wang, 1935, pp. 74-75.

18 Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, Vol. 1, pp. 350-352.

19 Wright, op. cit., p. 30.

educated and settled clergy. 20

Chauncy's arguments stressed the disturbances caused by itinerant preaching to both town and church. Many an itinerant preacher, he maintained, publicly accused the local clergy of negligence and lack of faithfulness to their calling. They even referred to the settled clergy as "poor, carnal, unconverted Men." Chauncy feared that if this situation continued, such preaching "will disband all the Churches in the World; and make the Relation, between Pastors and People, a meer Nothing, a Sound without Meaning." 21

There were others, however, who occupied a middle of the road position. This was the case with such men as Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Colman and Thomas Foxcroft. They

20 Wright, op. cit., pp. 38-40; Charles Chauncy, Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England, Boston, Rogers and Fowle, 1743, p. 50.

21 Chauncy, ibid., pp. 50-51.

staunchly defended the existing church order, with Edwards stating that, "order in the visible church is not only necessary to the carrying on the designs of Christ's glory and the church's prosperity, but it is absolutely necessary to its defence; without it, it is like a city without walls, and can be in no capacity to defend itself from any kind of mischief." 22.

They differed doctrinally, however, from the Standing Order regarding the "process of conversion." This was evident at a Boston meeting of an Assembly of Pastors in 1743, where Foxcroft's name was signed to a statement of "Testimony and Advice" acknowledging the fruits of conversion resulting from such a revival. The remarks of sympathy were found in the following statement.

So that, as far as we are able to form a judgment, the face of religion is lately changed much for the better

22 Wright, op. cit., p.44; Jonathan Edwards, "Revival of Religion in New England", in The Works of President Edwards, Vol. 3, New York, Leavitt and Allen, 1808-1809, p. 379.

in many of our towns and congregations; and together with a reformation observable in divers instances, there appears to be more experimental godliness and lively Christianity, than the most of us can remember we have ever seen before.

Thus we have freely declared our thoughts as to the work of God, so remarkably revived in many parts of this land. And now, we desire to bow the knee in thanksgiving to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that our eyes have seen and our ears heard such things. And while these are our sentiments, we must necessarily be grieved at any accounts sent abroad, representing this work as all enthusiasm, delusion and disorder. 23

Thus it was against the backdrop of the extremism associated with the Revival that a debate would emerge centering on "the nature of conversion and the doctrine of assurance." 24

After 1743, Calvinism was under seige regarding the doctrines of grace, original sin, and the notion of total depravity. Wright notes that this was most apparent on the local level in Bradford and Braintree, Massachusetts and Ashford, Connecticut.

²³ Joseph Tracy, The Great Awakening, Boston, Tappen and Dennet, 1842, pp. 298-299.

²⁴ Wright, op. cit., pp. 45, 59.

Also, a pamphlet debate erupted from 1757 to 1760 between Samuel Niles and Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Webster, Peter Clark and Charles Chauncy. ²⁵

The debate which ensued revealed the opposers did not question Adam's state of sin or the condition inherited by his posterity. They did, however, outwardly reject the Calvinist concept of total depravity, as well as the notion of imputed guilt. Major objections to this doctrinal stance were found in Chauncy's writings which hold sin and guilt are of a personal nature and as such cannot be imputed to another. ²⁶ It was Chauncy who argued

We are, each one, conscious to ourselves that we exist personally distinct from Adam, as well as the other individuals of the same kind; that

²⁵ Wright, op. cit., pp. 59-60; see also Samuel Niles, The True Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin Stated and Defended, Boston, S. Kneeland, 1757; Jonathan Edwards, The Great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin Defended, Boston, S. Kneeland, 1758.

²⁶ Charles Chauncy, "A Supplemental Dissertation", in Five Dissertations on the Scriptural Account of the Fall; and its Consequences, London, C. Dilly, 1785, p. 267.

it was he, not we, that eat of the forbidden tree; and that it neither was, or possibly could be, an act of ours; in a moral sense, any more than in a natural one, so as that it could be chargeable on us as our fault. Who, among the sons of Adam, ever felt the reproaches of an accusing condemning conscience for the sin of their first father, ages before they were born? It may be preemptorily pronounced, no one of them ever did. 27

Chauncy further saw imputation by natural generation an unsatisfactory answer. This explanation would hold mankind responsible for all the sins of their first parents beyond the original fall. He stated, "In this view of the case, all the posterity of Adam, as truly as he himself, must sin by the same will, by the same act, and in the same person, against the same law. And certainly, if they sinned thus, they sinned 'after the similitude of Adam's transgression!'" 28

The notion of legal representation was also seriously questioned by Chauncy, since free

27 Chauncy, ibid., p. 267.

28 Ibid., p. 266.

men should not be bound by the folly of their representatives. So convinced was Chauncy that man was a free moral agent that he could state:

And we are as sure as we can be of any thing, that the volition and act of Adam, with reference to the forbidden tree, was not the volition and act of any of his posterity. No pretended law of union could make them so; and for this decisive reason, because Adam and his posterity are severally distinct moral agents, having a distinct power of willing, choosing, and acting. 29

Also, Edwards' concept of the identity of Adam and his posterity as "one complex person" was also refuted. Chauncy maintained that nowhere in the scriptures was this concept substantiated. It was admitted, however, in many respects that mankind was one, yet his individuality was not to be impugned. 30 Chauncy also argued that both the Old and New Testaments do not convey this concept. 31

29 Ibid., p. 271.

30 Ibid., p. 267.

31 Chauncy, 'Dissertation III.', "Of the Posterity of the one man Adam, as deriving existence from him, not in his INNOCENT, but LAPSED state", ibid., p. 150.

Chauncy argued that God's judgment altered not only Adam's physical constitution, but the condition of the earth as well. Man's earthly state was now to be characterized by both hardship and suffering. Death was viewed as a consequence of Adam's fall resulting in the separation of the soul from the body. This was described as a physical death and not to be confused with the concept of damnation nor the second death. For Chauncy, the sentence of death was not to be perceived as anything more "than the loss of that life, with the whole enjoyment dependent on it...." ³² Adam's descendants share in this sentence by reason of their physical inheritance, not by way of guilt. As a result, man's human nature is considerably weakened, but is not to be considered totally depraved. Despite this altered condition, man remains morally responsible for the execution of his own actions. ³³

³² Chauncy, Dissertation II., "On the one man Adam in His lapsed state, with the temptation that brought him into it", *ibid.*, pp. 116-117.

³³ Chauncy, Dissertation III., *op. cit.*, p. 161.

While Arminians admitted to man's inclination toward evil, this tendency was balanced by his intellectual reasoning and "moral sense" commonly referred to as conscience. Life was then a testing ground, whereby through constant discipline and the grace of God, the yoke of sin would eventually be overcome. This process was by no means to be minimized. Nevertheless, Arminians argued that man had the means and was capable of attaining control over his human frailties. According to Wright, this Arminian position was largely influenced by such intellectual currents of English thought derived from John Locke, Daniel Whitby and Samuel Clarke. ³⁴

Jonathan Edwards saw in this Arminian position the question of human volition, as the

³⁴ Wright, op. cit., pp. 89-90; see also John Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Collated and Annotated by Alexander Campbell Fraser, 2 Vols., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1894; Samuel Clarke, A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, London, 1719.

main divisive issue between Calvinism and Arminianism. By further substantiating the doctrine of God's "universal and absolute decree," the remaining Calvinist tenets of total depravity, irresistible grace, perseverance, and particular election would in turn be bolstered. To this end was his work Freedom of the Will conceived in 1754. ³⁵

The result was theological confusion and continued debate, in the wake of Edwards' attempt to refute the Arminian position regarding freedom of the will. The response to such a treatise was initially guarded, as was the case with such prominent Arminians as Ebenezer Gay, Jonathan Mayhew and Charles Chauncy. ³⁶ Chauncy maintained that man possessed that liberty to choose that which is good or evil without

³⁵ Wright, op. cit., p. 91; Jonathan Edwards, "Freedom of the Will", in The Works of President Edwards, Vol. 2, New York, Leavitt and Allen, 1808-1809, p. 178, see pp. 177-179.

³⁶ Wright, ibid., pp. 91, 104-105.

restraint. This he asserted in wonderment, seeing the existence of such human freedom incomprehensible to our finite minds.

It is readily allowed, liberty in man, in opposition to necessity, is one of the great wonders of God. The power in our nature that constitutes us free agents is an amazing contrivance of infinite wisdom. The modus of its existence and operation is too great a deep for us to fathom. It has tried, and puzzled the greatest geniuses in all ages, and in all parts of the world. And, perhaps, we shall never be able, at least on this side mortality, to take in a comprehensive idea of it. But is this a good reason why we should deny, or dispute, the real being of such a power in our constitution?

Lengthy replies did appear. One such publication was by the Reverend James Dana of Wallingford and New Haven, Connecticut in 1770 entitled An Examination of the Late President Edwards's "Enquiry on Freedom

37 Charles Chauncy, The Benevolence of the Deity Fairly and Impartially Considered, Boston, Powars and Willis, 1784, pp. 134-135; see also Ebenezer Gay, Natural Religion, as Distinguished from Revealed, Boston, John Draper, 1759; Jonathan Mayhew, Sermons, Boston, 1755.

of Will", and the first three Essays from Samuel West's Essays on Liberty and Necessity.

By 1765, however, the Arminian position had been formulated regarding justification and regeneration upholding their "concept of man as a moral agent free from the taint of Adam's sin."³⁸

There also developed at this time a theology which espoused a higher form of Calvinism. Under the leadership of Samuel Hopkins, this theological system was largely influenced by the thought of Jonathan Edwards. This Edwardsean influence was most apparent in Hopkin's System of Doctrines published in two volumes in 1793. Hopkintonianism, as it was branded, presented a theological system which stressed Hopkins' identification of sin and self-love, and his very forceful exposition of its Edwardsean corollary

³⁸ Wright, op. cit., pp. 106-107; 114-115; see also James Dana, An Examination of the Late President Edwards's "Enquiry on Freedom of Will," New Haven, Thomas and Samuel Green, 1773; Samuel West, Essays on Liberty and Necessity, New Bedford, John Spooner, 1795; Charles Chauncy, Twelve Sermons, Boston, D. and J. Kneeland, 1765.

that true virtue consists in 'disinterested benevolence,' even unto complete willingness to be damned if it be for the greater glory of God." Also, his reaffirmation of ecclesial membership in terms of a covenant, along with a theology of regeneration, led Ahlstrom to comment on Hopkins' reformist influence on the church.

Probably larger in its effect on future church practice was the way in which Hopkins made the doctrines of total depravity and absolute divine sovereignty consistent with his entire moral and evangelistic enterprise. To do this in the face of growing Arminian criticism, Hopkins called 'regeneration' an entirely imperceptible work of the Holy Spirit in which man is completely passive. 'Conversion' was then made to rest wholly upon the active exercise of the human will, which leads to growth in positive holiness. In this dualistic view, regeneration lays a foundation 'in the mind for holy exercises, for hungering and thirsting after righteousness'; while conversion consists in the volitional 'exercises of the regenerate, in which they turn from sin to God, or embrace the Gospel.'³⁹

³⁹ Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, op. cit., pp. 494-496; see also Samuel Hopkins, System of Doctrines, Contained in Divine Revelation, Explained and Defended, 2 vols., Boston, I. Thomas and E. T. Andrews, 1793..

The Age of Rationalism

The impact of the Age of Reason on colonial America occurred in the early seventeenth hundreds. According to Conrad Wright, a form of "supernatural rationalism" began to permeate the religious thought of New England.⁴⁰ Its origination may be traced in part to Puritan influence. Perry Miller maintains that the early Puritans did not rely solely on the scriptures, nor did they manifest totally a contempt for reason. They often spoke of man after the Fall as a rational being whose norms of conduct were guided by the directives of his conscience independent of revelation.⁴¹ Wright sees an additional influence exerted through

⁴⁰ Wright, op. cit., p. 135.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 136; see Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1939, pp. 183-187.

the writings of John Wise, John Locke, Samuel Clarke, Newton and John Tillotson.⁴²

This influence may be seen in the Arminian emphasis upon man's intellectual capacity to reason and discern the truth. Through the use of this faculty, man is able to establish the significant religious doctrinal distinctions. This type of natural religion, they maintained, "may have to be supplemented with a special revelation of God's will." Man's reasoning was, nevertheless, still capable of examining such Christian revelation which claimed the Deity as its source. This union of natural religion and Christian revelation was designated as "supernatural rationalism," and was differentiated from Deism,

⁴² See John Wise, A vindication of the Government of New England Churches, Gainesville, Florida, Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1958; John Locke, Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in Scripture, New York, Christian Library. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 2 vols., collated and annotated by Alexander Campbell Fraser, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1894; John Tillotson, The Works of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson...., 2 vols. London, Benjamin Tooke, 1722. (Contains 200 sermons and discourses on several occasions), Wright, op. cit., pp. 135-136.

which considered revelation a useless supplement to natural religion.⁴³

Rationalism, as it was embraced by the Arminians, saw Jonathan Mayhew expounding its distinguishing element as separating man from the lower part of creation, and likening him to the intelligent and angelic beings of the heavens. Although man's intellectual capacity is somewhat debilitated, it is not corrupted. Mayhew, then, was convinced that man may rely upon his ability to reason. Mayhew argued, "So that how weak soever our intellectual faculties are, yet to speak reproachfully of reason in general is nothing less than blasphemy against God."⁴⁴

Although mankind's intelligence varies in quality, Mayhew held that man's reason was still

⁴³ Wright, op. cit., p. 135.

⁴⁴ Jonathan Mayhew, Sermon II., "Men Endowed with Faculties proper for discerning the Differences Between Truth and Falsehood, &c.", in Seven Sermons, London, John Noon, 1750, pp. 39-40.

able to discern the fundamental religious tenets, even though its metaphysical aspects remained clouded. Mayhew thus stated, "Those of the lower class can go but a little way with their inquiries into the natural and moral constitution of the world. But even these may have the power of judging in some degree." ⁴⁵

Conrad Wright sees the influence of Lockian psychology in the Arminian assertion that all knowledge originates from man's senses and powers of reflection. This was attested to by Chauncy who stated, "I am not convinced, by any thing I have seen written upon the subject, that we have any ideas, but what take rise from sensation and reflection, or that we can have any, upon the present establishment of nature, any other way. They are all derived from this source, and may be traced up to it." ⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 30; see Wright, op. cit., p. 140.

⁴⁶ Wright, Ibid., pp. 138-139; Chauncy, The Benevolence of the Deity..., p. 99n.

Arminianism admitted to the legitimacy of the claims of natural religion, namely, its capacity for discerning the existence of a creator, the dutifulness of fidelity, devoutness and kindness, and the necessity of reward and punishment to be exacted in a future state. On this plane Arminians agreed, however, not at the expense of undermining the importance of "revealed religion and the Christian revelation." Differences then emerged over the question of unassisted reason versus revelation. This subject led to an examination of the scriptures as divinely revealed along with Christianity's claim to an authentic revelation. ⁴⁷

The Arminian examination of orthodoxy led to the denial of the Calvinist tenets of election

⁴⁷ Wright, op. cit., pp. 140, 147, 151, 152; see also Ebenezer Gay, Natural Religion, as Distinguished from Revealed, Boston, J. Draper, 1759; Simeon Howard, Christians No Cause to be Ashamed of Their Religion, Boston, J. Gill and T. and J. Fleet, 1799; Thomas Barnard, The Christian Salvation, Boston, 1757; Samuel Clarke, A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion, London, W. Botham for J. Knapton, 1719; John Barnard, A Proof of Jesus Christ His Being the Ancient Promised Messiah, Boston, J. Draper, 1756.

and original sin. In addition, their acceptance of the existence of free will and a developmental form of regeneration contributed to their emerging view of the Godhead conceived by Charles Chauncy as "benevolent and kind, rejoicing in the happiness of men." 48

The Benevolence and Providence of the Deity

The question regarding the benevolence of the Deity was theologically scrutinized in a dispute between Jonathan Mayhew and John Cleveland of Ipswich, and later dealt with by Charles Chauncy in his work, The Benevolence of the Deity Fairly and Impartially Considered, which first appeared in 1770. 49

48 Wright, p. 161; Max Savelle, A History of Colonial America; New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966, p. 304.

49 Wright, op. cit., pp. 161-163; see also Jonathan Mayhew, Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfections of the Divine Goodness, Boston, D. and J. Kneeland, 1763; Jonathan Mayhew, A Letter of Reproof to Mr. John Cleveland of Ipswich, Boston, 1765; Charles Chauncy, The Benevolence of the Deity...

The Arminian - Calvinist views of the Godhead were similar, in that both conceived of this Deity as Creator, upholding his omnipotence and sovereignty, stressing such attributes as his wisdom, power, and justice. This concept of the Deity was presented as follows:

God, whose almighty fiat first produced this amazing universe, had the whole plan in view from all eternity; intimately and perfectly knew the nature and all the properties of all these his creatures. He looked forward through all duration, and perfectly knew all the effects, all the events and revolutions that could possibly and would actually take place throughout eternity. ⁵⁰

This view inevitably led to an in depth discussion of the doctrine of divine providence, a doctrine which was elaborated on at length in New England as early as the 1680's and 1690's by both Increase and Cotton Mather. Increase Mather's publication of 1684 entitled An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences and The

⁵⁰ Charles Francis Adams, "Diary, with Passages from an Autobiography," in The Works of John Adams, Vol. 2, Boston, Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1850, p. 20; Wright, op. cit., pp. 163-164.

Doctrine of Divine Providence Opened and Applied

examined the doctrine at length. Additional works were devoted to the notion of divine providence in relation to a number of natural phenomena.

This was the case with the following works: The Voice of God in Stormy Winds and A Discourse Concerning Earthquakes. 51

Cotton Mather likewise explored the whole range of divine providence. Perry Miller states that

Throughout all these works, the position remains essentially the same; the phenomena might have come about by purely natural means, none of them are miracles; yet all illustrate the constant and unceasing government of God by showing Him, not rudely interrupting, but, as it were, insinuating Himself into nature -- working not in defiance of natural law, but through skillful manipulation of it. 52

In viewing the providential character of

51 Perry, Miller, The New England Mind..., op. cit., pp. 228, 230-231; Increase Mather's works to be found in Thomas James Holmes, Editor, Increase Mather; a Bibliography of his Works, 2 vols.; Cleveland, Ohio, 1931.

52 Ibid., p. 231.

the Deity, Arminians and Calvinists differed little. Distinctions were apparent, however, when both engaged in an attempt to discern the intent and final end of God's creation. The essential difference was whether the end of all creation rested in the sole glory of God or the happiness of mankind? The rigid Calvinist would hold that God "had respect to himself as his last and highest end in this work" of creation. 53

Calvinists refused to accept any explanation of God's design for creation which would "infer any indigence, insufficiency and mutability in God; or any dependence of the creator on the creature, for any part of his perfection or happiness." 54 Jonathan Edwards would argue

Because it is evident, by both Scripture and reason, that God is infinitely, eternally, unchangeably,

53 Wright, op. cit., p. 170; Jonathan Edwards, "Dissertation Concerning the End for which God created the World", op. cit., p. 200.

54 Jonathan Edwards, loc. cit.

and independently glorious and happy; that he stands in no need of, cannot be profited by, or receive any thing from the creature; or be truly hurt, or be the subject of any sufferings or impair of his glory and felicity from any other being. ...The notion of God's creating the world in order to receive any thing properly from the creature, is not only contrary to the nature of God, but inconsistent with the notion of creation; which implies a being's receiving its existence, and all that belongs to its being, out of nothing.

...That if God himself be in any respect properly capable of being his own end in the creation of the world, then it is reasonable to suppose that he had respect to himself as his last and highest end in this work; because he is worthy in himself to be so, being infinitely the greatest and best of beings. 55

Arminians stressed the benevolence and goodness of God in the hierarchy of attributes attested to by the Calvinists. Chauncy perceived "the general notion of goodness, as a moral attribute." He defined such goodness as "A principle

55 Loc. cit.

disposing and prompting to the communication of happiness...." When assigned to the Deity, the notion of goodness was to be devoid of all defects and thereby conceived as infinitely perfect." For Chauncy, the Godhead was viewed "from the effects of his goodness" extended to the "whole system" of creation. ⁵⁶ He states

How numberless are the creatures he has formed with capacities of enjoyment? How amazingly various are these capacities? What abundant provision has he made for filling them with the good that is suited to their respective natures? And how immense is the quantum of good enjoyed by them all, considered in one collective view? Every creature we cast our eyes upon, discovering pleasure in its existence, from the good it is made capable of enjoying, and actually does enjoy, is, at once, both an instance, and proof, of the Divine benevolence. ⁵⁷

The Arminians also attempted to come to terms with the question of moral and physical evil in relation to the benevolence of the Deity. Chauncy attempted to reconcile this divine

⁵⁶ Chauncy, The Benevolence of the Deity..., pp. 11, 14, 53, 57.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 53.

benevolence with the existence of "moral disorders," "natural evils," and those imperfections of creation which worked to undermine the happiness of man. 58

Accordingly, he had recourse to the following argument.

This matter has been set in a clear and strong point of light by Arch-Deacon Law, in his 32d. Note on Arch-Bishop King's 'origin of evil.' His words are these, 'God is the cause of perfection only, not of defect, which so far forth as it is natural to created beings hath no cause at all, but is merely a negation, or non-entity. For every created thing was a negation ~~or~~ non-entity, before it had a positive being, and it had only so much of its primitive negation taken away from it, as it had positive being conferred on it; and therefore, so far forth as it is, its being is to be attributed to the sovereign cause that produced it; But so far forth as it is not, its not being is to be attributed to the original non-entity out of which it was produced. For that which was once nothing would still have been nothing, had it not been for the cause that gave being to it; and therefore, that it is so far nothing still, that is, limited and defective, is only to be attributed to its own primitive nothingness. 59

58 Ibid., p. 183.

59 Ibid., pp. 184-185; see Jonathan Mayhew, Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfections of the Divine Goodness, Boston, D. and J. Kneeland, 1763.

In all the arguments put forth by the Arminians concerning the benevolence and goodness of God, the hidden conclusion which was to become apparent, was the notion of the salvation of all mankind. Arminians shunned this deduction stressing the disciplinary aspect of punishment with regard to the sinner. God's justice was not viewed as vengeful, but rather as representative of his benevolence. All this having evolved, Charles Chauncy's work The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations..., or the Salvation of All Men published in 1784 paved the way for his defense of the doctrine of universal salvation. ⁶⁰

The Concept of Universal Salvation

By his reliance upon the scriptures to come

⁶⁰ Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 185, 187; see, Jonathan Mayhew, Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfection of the Divine Goodness, Boston, D. and J. Kneeland, 1763; Charles Chauncy, The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations, Made Manifest by the Gospel Revelation; or the Salvation of All Men the Grand Thing Aimed at in the Scheme of God, London, Charles Dilly, 1784.

to the aid of reason, Charles Chauncy held that a benevolent Deity had destined his creation for happiness. Because of his infinite wisdom, the purpose of his handiwork could in no way be foiled. While Chauncy held to the freedom of the will, he assumed that God's ultimate plan of salvation would be attained by mankind voluntarily. This he asserted even though man remains tainted by the effects of sin. ⁶¹

Salvation, for Chauncy, was made possible through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Reconciliation was viewed by Chauncy as a salvation from both sin and guilt. This was to be accomplished not only in this world but also in the next, in order that mankind might be disposed as proper subjects for happiness and immortality. Chauncy saw Jesus Christ being "the person through whom, and upon whose account, happiness is attainable by any of the human race."

⁶¹ Chauncy, ibid., p. 2.

He also saw the next state "designed for the amendment of the sufferers themselves, as well as the good of others, and wisely adapted as a mean to this end, they may be recovered, and formed to a meetness for immortality and honor." 62

Many of orthodox persuasion replied but none as fluently as Jonathan Edwards, Jr. in 1790 with the publication of his Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined. Here, the orthodox view was seen in the acceptance of the infinite nature of sin. Such an infinite transgression necessitated an infinite retribution. This view was diametrically opposed to that of Chauncy, who conceived of sin as a finite evil, since it originated from finite creatures. Also questioned was Chauncy's claim that Christ as mediator merited the salvation of all men rather than that of just the elect. The concept of the finite nature of sin and the notion of the salvation of all men were the contributing factors in Chauncy's advocacy of a disciplinary form of punish-

62 Wright, op. cit., p. 195; Chauncy, ibid., pp. 17, 11.

ment as opposed to the orthodox scheme of eternal torment.⁶³

The appearance of Murrayism in New England around the 1770's paralleled such theological speculation. John Murray confidently spoke of redemption as universal in scope made possible by and through the merits of Jesus Christ. According to Conrad Wright, Murray was regarded by the orthodox clergy as but one of those many itinerant preachers during the Great Awakening whose presence did much to weaken the influence of the educated and settled clergy. His teachings were viewed by such New England divines as Jeremy Belknap as tainted by Antinomianism.⁶⁴

Although Calvinist in his background, Murray's thought showed the influence of the Englishman James Rely, whose concept of the union of Christ with all mankind paved the way for his early acceptance of the doctrine of universal

⁶³ Wright, op. cit., pp. 196-197; see Jonathan Edwards, The Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined..., New Haven, A. Morse, 1790, Chs. 1-16.

⁶⁴ Wright, op. cit., p. 190.

salvation. Murray's arrival in America provided that needed impetus for the rise and spread of Universalist thought in New England.

CHAPTER II

THE THEOLOGY OF THE REVERENDS JOHN MURRAY AND ELHANAN WINCHESTER

The Reverend John Murray

Organized Universalism in America owes its beginning in part to the ministry of the Reverend John Murray, born in the town of Alton in Hampshire, England in 1741.¹ According to the Universalist historians Clarence R. Skinner and Alfred S. Cole, Murray's early religious views reflect the parental influence of his Anglican father and Presbyterian mother. The research of these historians revealed that Murray's religious upbringing gave evidence of a genuine concern for his own spiritual welfare and the role he might play in the plan

1. John Murray, The Life of Rev. John Murray, Late Minister of the Reconciliation, and Senior Pastor of the Universalists, Congregated in Boston, Boston, A. Tompkins, 1849, pp. 9-10.

ordained for him by God. ²

For business reasons, the Murray family took up residence in Ireland. While residing there, Murray and son became interested in the Methodist cause. For the younger Murray, it was to provide new religious insights which would ultimately pave the way for acceptance of the Universalist notion of salvation. His personal acquaintance with John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, enabled him to engage for a time in Wesley's connection as an evangelist. ³

As a young man, he later traveled to London. It was during his stay in England, that he was to marry. While there, he would also come in contact with the teachings of the Reverend James Rely. ⁴ The teachings of Rely are contained

² Clarence R. Skinner and Alfred S. Cole, Hell's Rampart Fell, The Life of John Murray, Boston, The Universalist Publishing House, 1941, pp. 20, 22, 26-27.

³ Ibid., pp. 31, 35-37..

⁴ Ibid., pp. 52, 56-58.

In his work entitled "Union Or A Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity Between Christ and His Church" first published in 1759. This theological system developed by Relly maintained that

The whole human race had sinned through Adam, thereby justly incurring eternal damnation. Christ was the composite head of the race. He was truly guilty of the sins of all men, and could be, and actually was, punished for those sins. In his suffering all men paid the penalty due them for their transgressions and were thus delivered from the endless damnation they had incurred through Adam's sin. Through this "union" of Christ with the human race salvation was assured for all men.⁵


Throughout his Treatise Relly labors to substantiate his doctrine by its apparent truthfulness and dependence upon the justice, mercy, wisdom, holiness and love of God. Speaking of Christ, Relly states that "He is the foundation of our election, grace, and sonship" with God. Through mankind's union with Christ, Jesus became both the

⁵ Ibid., p. 62.

"author and finisher of our salvation...." Rely noted that the scriptures testify to such a union in numerous passages, but especially "under the similitude of a vine and its branches," as related in the Gospel of Saint John, Chapter fifteen, verse five. ⁶

In this chapter, Christ is referred to as the vine and mankind as the branches. Rely noted that in referring to himself as the vine, Christ "is to be understood as speaking of himself according to his human nature, hence, he is called the plant of renown, Ezech. xxxiv.29." This plant is the seed of the Father and Rely hastened to cite Matt. xv. 13. Here Matthew relates that when the stock is initially planted it bears no branches, however, the husbandman knows well in advance that eventually branches will appear and

⁶ James Rely, "Union: Or A Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity Between Christ and His Church," in Select Theological Library: Containing Valuable Publications Principally Treating of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, Philadelphia, Gihan, Fairchild and Co., 1844, pp. 11, 21, 17.



subsequently bear fruit. This figure of the vine and its branches was utilized to show that "As the stem and branches make one tree; so Jesus and the people make one body, one man, one Christ, one elect, one beloved of the Father, one crucified, raised, and everlasting, the stock and branches, making one tree, grow in one soil." ⁷

For Relly, Christ and all mankind are rooted in the love of God the Father. This union with Christ assures the salvation of all mankind, while revealing to men the infinite perfections of the Godhead. This type of theology contained a tremendous liberating force from Calvinism for Murray and eventually would lead to his embracing Universalism.

Murray's life was abruptly altered with the loss of his infant son and later the death of his wife. It was at this time that he severed his ties with both England and Ireland and looked to

⁷ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

America as an opportunity to begin a new life. John Murray arrived on the coast of New Jersey in 1770, and until 1773, the life of this itinerant minister was spent preaching in the numerous towns and cities of New York and Pennsylvania where he attracted much recognition. His preaching and theology were viewed by the orthodox ministers of his day with disdain, which later would openly manifest itself in Boston. ⁸

His second visit to Boston in September of 1774 witnessed his public condemnation in the Boston Post. His accuser, a Reverend Mr. Croswell, charged that he was "a preacher of Relly's doctrine." The nature of the charge brought against Murray in Boston captured the attention of a number of Gloucester residents, who immediately commissioned Winthrop Sargent with the task of extending the hospitality of the city to Murray. This gesture

⁸ Skinner and Cole, op. cit., pp. 66-68, 99; Alfred S. Cole, "Historical Background of the Universalist Movement", in The Christian Leader, Vol. 52, issue of September 25, 1937, p. 1224; see Elton P. Carpenter, John Murray, and the Rise of a Liberal Religion, New York, Columbia University, 1937, 60p. Thesis, M.A.

on the part of several Gloucester inhabitants was to provide Murray with a home for the next two decades. The city was unique in that Relly's religious tenets were previously introduced there by an Englishman named Gregory. The incident in Boston served as a catalyst to bring this small group of Rellyans forward. ⁹

During Murray's extended stay in Gloucester, the number of professed converts increased, so that weekly meetings were scheduled in many homes throughout the city. He served briefly as a chaplain during the Revolutionary War, returning to Gloucester because of ill health. From that time on, his efforts were directed toward the rehabilitation of the town, whose fishing industry was near collapse because of the severe economic conditions resulting from the war effort. Part of the relief

⁹ Levi M. Powers, "One Hundred and Fifty Years of Universalism", in The Universalist Leader, Vol. 23, issue of November 6, 1920, p. 1030; Richard Eddy, Universalism in Gloucester, Mass., Gloucester, Mass., Procter Brothers, 1892, pp. 11-12.

funds were secured by Murray from his many friends and associates in the United States Army. 10

The self-proclaimed Universalists of Gloucester can be classified as belonging to the theological school of John Murray. The theological system developed by Murray is presented below:

It was trinitarian in its idea of God, and of Christ's nature and relation to God. It was Calvinistic in its theory of the sin of Adam as putting all souls out of harmony with God; in its doctrine of vicarious atonement; in the justice of eternal suffering for all men, and that Christ had borne that suffering in the place of all who should ever be saved. It differed from Calvinism in its theory of the entire human race in its relations to Christ, predicating of all souls what Calvinism predicated of the elect only, their indissoluble union with Christ. 11

10 Richard Eddy, Universalism in Gloucester, Mass., *ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

11 Joseph Henry Allen and Richard Eddy, A History of the Unitarians and the Universalists in the United States, New York, The Christian Literature Co., 1894, p. 392; see John Murray, Thoughts on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation as Preached, Maintained, and Propagated by Mr. John Murray, and Others of the People Called Universal Baptists, Philadelphia, Prichard and Hall, 1970, 24p; Murray, Universalism Vindicated..., Charlestown, Mass., J. Lamson, 1797, 96p.

This theological system developed by Murray was supported by countless scriptural citations and interpretations substantiating his major premise that all mankind would eventually attain salvation.

This belief in the final restoration of all men was developed by Murray in a letter, in which he expressed his views concerning the final day of judgment. This event was described as a day when the entire human race would be assembled before God, the day when Christ would appear to establish his reign on earth. Many at that time, would express their ignorance of the designs of God and would

...call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb; so totally ignorant will they be of the character of their Creator, their Father, their elder brother, of Emmanuel, the God-man, all which characters are united in that righteous Being, who is appointed their Judge, their Saviour, that they will expect to find wrath in the Lamb! 12

12 John Murray, Letter IX., "To the same", [To a Friend], "Cursory view of a sermon upon Hebrews 11, 14, 15," Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. 1, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812, p. 280.-

At the same time, He will open "the book of life" in which all men are recorded. Here, Murray established "Christ as the head, and the people as the members, of his mystical body." Christ as head of this mystical body will encompass all mankind into this union. Then, according to Murray, "will the veil be taken from every heart, then will every knee bow, and every tongue confess to the glory of God, even the Father." Thus, the grand plan envisioned by God from all eternity will be accomplished as foretold in the scriptures. ¹³

Regarding those referred to as fallen angels. (devils), Murray offered some hope of salvation. Using the scriptures as his authority, Murray stated that when Jesus embarked on his salvific mission he did not take unto himself the nature of angels but rather a human nature. "It was the sins of the creatures, represented by the figure sheep, which were laid upon Jesus, and which

¹³ Ibid., p. 282.

he put away, and not the sins of the creatures, exhibited by the figure, goats." The fallen angels then, according to Murray, knew that Jesus' mission was for the salvation of mankind, while they themselves remained under the sentence of eternal damnation. ¹⁴

In a letter to a friend in 1791, Murray expressed concern for the future of fallen angels in God's plan of salvation. Lacking scriptural support, he attempted to resolve this question by conjecture. He professed that as mankind must suffer for their own transgressions before attaining salvation, so those fallen angels might also be saved in the same manner. He concluded this subject by stating that "What God will do with the fallen angels, after they are sent into the fire prepared for them, I know not, 'Men are the books we ought to read; the proper study of mankind is man.'" ¹⁵

¹⁴ John Murray, Letter LXI., "To an inquiring Friend," in Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. 2, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812, p. 348

¹⁵ John Murray, "Letter to a friend", Gloucester, July, 1791, in Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. 3, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1813, p. 358.

Murray's preceding remarks on this subject indicated that he held to the belief that

...Christ Jesus is the complete Saviour of all men; that by the grace of God, he tasted death for every man; that he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time; that it is the will of God that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. 16

Until man embraces the divine truth concerning his salvation, "he is, whether in this world or in another, under the condemnation of unbelief and darkness, the only condemnation now possible to the human race." 17

While Murray disavowed the existence of a "probationary state" beyond this present life, his thought did allow for some kind of vague intermediate state. However, he could not conceive of mankind making satisfaction for their sins in this world or the next. He maintained that "Jesus is a complete Saviour, or he is no Saviour at all." 18

The influence of James Relly was seen

16 Murray, Letter LXI., op. cit., p. 346.

17 Allen and Eddy, op. cit., p. 393.

18 Murray, Letter LXI., op. cit., pp. 347-348.

throughout all of Murray's writings, especially the manner in which he viewed Christ throughout the Bible as the embodiment of all men. In a letter, Murray stated that

...Christ is the head of every man, the individuals of the lost nature constitute the aggregate of our Lord's mystical body, the comprehensive term union is the key by which we unlock this mystery, the head and members are united, and the iniquity of the members, is visited upon the head. ...I repeat, our Almighty Saviour was the head of the lost nature, and he became accountable for the sins committed by the members of his body. 19

In another letter, Murray further elaborated on this subject by citing Psalm xlix, 5 "Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?" Murray stated that the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians, xi.3 is emphatic "that the head of every man is Christ,"

19 John Murray, Letter II., "To a Lady, suffering under a temporary derangement, originating in religious melancholy," in Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. 1, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812, p. 45.

and when Satan is referred to as the enemy of mankind, "he is said to bruise the heel of this head of every man." Murray concluded in this letter that the sins of all men were borne by Jesus whom he referred to as both the "Son of Man" and the "Son of God." As all men collectively fell with the first man, Adam, so all men are justified and restored to God through the merits of Jesus Christ. ²⁰

Murray's manner of interpreting the scriptures was again illustrated in the Book of Genesis Chapter viii, which recounted the events of the flood and how Noah sent forth a raven from the ark. For Murray, the raven symbolized the uncleanness while the ark represented Christ -- in whom ^s we are all saved. ²¹ Rely's influence was also noted in the manner in which Murray applied

²⁰ John Murray, Letter III., "To a friend, Narrating a public conference held with the Reverend Mr. L _____ of C _____", in Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. I, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812, p. 88.

²¹ Murray, Letter II., op. cit., p. 48.

to Christ those texts which speak of the goodness of men. The beatitudes spoken of in the Sermon on the Mount, for Murray, apply to Christ, for it is he alone that fulfills the description. Jesus was the "poor in spirit, the pure in heart." For Murray, Jesus is "all in all, as him in whom alone we can be perfect as our Father, who is in heaven is perfect." 22

The preceding interpretations gave evidence that Murray's Universalism was based upon Relly's notion of the "Union" of all men with Christ. For Murray, Christ "bore all the penal sufferings due to the entire race...." 23 Christ was viewed as "the head, and the people as the members, of his mystical body." 24 That main point he labored to support by numerous scriptural texts. The lengthy scriptural citations and interpretations devised

22 John Murray, Letter XI., "Sermons delivered upon Romans iv. 25", in Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. 1, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812, p. 368.

23 Eddy, Universalism in Gloucester, Mass., p. 72.

24 Murray, Letter IX., op. cit., p. 282.

by Murray were intended to substantiate the doctrinal tenet of universal salvation, that teaching which held all men to be reconciled to God, their creator, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

His preaching was so effective as to produce numerous conversions to the doctrinal tenets of Universalism. In so doing, he, along with a small group of fellow Christians of like persuasion, were publicly barred from the First Parish Church of Gloucester in 1778. As a result of their expulsion, Murray and some sixty-one fellow Christians paved the way for the signing of the "Articles of Association" on January 1, 1779 and the establishment of an "Independent Church of Christ."²⁵ The formation of this religious body and the struggle of its members to secure legal rights as a recognized church body marked a significant achievement in the quest for religious freedom in the United States.

In 1785, a conference was convened at

²⁵ Allen and Eddy, op. cit., pp. 399-403; Eddy, Universalism in Gloucester, Mass., p. 19.

Oxford, Massachusetts with the intent of examining the practicality of a church organization much wider in scope than was originally envisioned in 1779. At this time, the Reverend Mr. Murray presented a pattern of union employed by the Universalist denomination at Gloucester. The "Charter of Compact," as it was finally submitted, was approved by the conference and was to serve as a model of government for all existing societies. The now recognized church body also adopted the name "Independent Christian Society, commonly called Universalists." 26

New England provided an abundance of ministers who were of Universalist persuasion each contributing to the future development of Universalism in the United States. The vast majority of these early Universalists originated from the Baptist Church, perhaps due to the denomination's single-minded devotion to "complete religious liberty." 27

26 Allen and Eddy, op. cit., pp. 403-404.

27 Clinton Rossiter, The First American Revolution, New York, Harcourt, Brace and World, 1956, pp. 84-85.

Dedicated to the cause of upholding the teachings of universal salvation, they developed a system of theology which emphasized such attributes of the Deity as Justice, Mercy, and Love. These characteristics spoken of in reference to the Supreme Being were foreign to Calvinist thought of that day. Universalists reasoned that somehow in the divine plan of God, all men would be reconciled to their creator. To the orthodox Calvinist, this teaching and assumption was viewed as a serious deviation from traditional theology and as outright heresy. Salvation, spoken of in this light, tended to deemphasize the role of sin in the Christian life. Nevertheless, this Universalist reasoning held an attraction for all those who were in hope of redemption, even those of orthodox persuasion.²⁸

In comparison to the Reverend John Murray, few early Universalist preachers were of major prominence; however, a contemporary of Murray and equally prominent in the cause of Universalism in

²⁸ Henry Kalloch Rowe, The History of Religion in the United States, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1924, pp. 130-131.

America was Elhanan Winchester.

THE REVEREND ELHANAN WINCHESTER

Born in Brookline, Massachusetts in 1751, Winchester sought membership within the Baptist Church in 1769 and later as an ordained minister of that denomination ministered to the needs of the church in various parts of Massachusetts. In 1774, he terminated his service to the church in New England and moved to South Carolina where he assumed the responsibility of a pastorate. It was during this phase of his ministry that he was to acquaint himself with two noted Universalist treatises. These works were "The Everlasting Gospel" by Paul Seigvolk, published in this country at Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1753 and "Restitution of all Things" by Sir George Stonehouse, Oxford associate of John Wesley. Both of these works were to influence Winchester's thinking, as is seen in his condemnation of slavery in the 1770's, for he advocated that salvation was even

open to the Negro.

In 1780, this Baptist minister²⁹ was found preaching the doctrine of universal salvation in the city of Philadelphia. His teachings were challenged by the Baptist Society there as being "contrary to the Bible and the Confession of Faith...." The defection of one such as the Reverend Mr. Winchester was not considered an ordinary occurrence, and he soon became the object of much detraction because of his newly acquired religious convictions. The religious influence of the itinerant preacher is noted throughout the New England States between the years 1780 and 1790. 30

Little is known of Elhanan Winchester's

29 Edwin Martin Stone, Biography of Rev. Elhanan Winchester, Boston, Published by H. R. Brewster, 1836, p. 13, 29-30; Emerson Hugh Lalone, Editor, "Elhanan Winchester", in The Helper, Vol. 69, No. 2, issue of January 1938, pp. 12-13; see also Charles White McGehee, "Elhanan Winchester: A Decision for Universal Restoration", in The Annual Journal of the Universalist Society, Vol. 1, 1959, 43-58p. -- An abstract, thesis, Crane Theological School, 1959.

30 Stone, op. cit., pp. 52-54.

acquaintance with John Murray. However, limited contact was made between these two preachers. Several of Murray's letters allude to Winchester and are noteworthy because of the esteem they express toward this fellow itinerant preacher. An example of such esteem is found in a letter addressed to the Reverend Noah Parker, a Universalist minister of Portsmouth, New Hampshire in which Murray stated, "Since I last wrote to you, I have seen, and conversed with the Reverend Mr. [Winchester]. I admire him much; his conduct and expressions evince one of the best hearts I have known." 31 Again, in a sermon delivered by Murray at the Universalist General Convention held at Oxford, Massachusetts in 1785, he referred to Winchester as "Our beloved friend, and very dear brother...." 32

The preceding extracts indicate the regard

31 John Murray, Letter XX., "To the same" [To a Preacher of the gospel], in Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. 2, Boston, Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812, p. 112.

32 Murray, "Sermon", delivered at the Universalist General Convention, Oxford, Mass., September, 1825, in The Life of Rev. John Murray..., p. 292.

Murray had for Winchester. The theological systems of thought developed by the two differed in many respects. However, they held in common the "fundamental truths of the soul's immortality, ... a general judgment subsequent to the resurrection, and a final universal restoration." ³³ Theologically, Murray and Winchester held to the Universalist tenet that salvation was obtainable by all; however, their systems differed as to how this was to be achieved. "Murray stressed more salvation from the wrath of God, Winchester, salvation by the love of God." ³⁴ Nevertheless, both preachers were united in their efforts and labors to profess and defend the doctrine of universal salvation.

Elhanan Winchester's life span extended over a period of forty-six years during which he published some thirty works. His first significant

³³ Stone, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

³⁴ Lalone, "Elhanan Winchester", in The Helper, p. 14.

publication, popularly referred to as his Dialogues on Universal Restoration, appeared in 1788. This was followed by volume one of his Lectures on the Prophecies in 1790 and volume two in 1791. Edwin Martin Stone, in his biography of Winchester, noted that of all his works Winchester's Dialogues were "the most extensively read, and consequently, the most useful of all his productions." 35

His Dialogues furnish a comprehensive statement of his theology, a system of thought similar to that which was designated as orthodoxy. Winchester's theology differed, however, by its adherence to a limited view of divine punishment

35 Stone, Biography of Rev. Elhanan Winchester, pp. 126, 114; see also Elhanan Winchester's An Attempt to Collect the Scripture Passages in Favor of the Universal Restoration, as Connected With the Doctrine of Rewards and Punishment, Providence, B. Wheeler, 1786, 64p; Winchester, Good News; Or, The Final Restoration of All Men. Abridged from Lectures...delivered in 1789. Adelaide, Printed by D. Gall, 1866, 47p; and his The Gospel Preached by the Apostles, and Especially St. Paul...London, Printed for a Society of Gentlemen, 1788, 38p; Winchester's, Ten Sermons on Various Subjects [In Restitution Pamphlets, 1789-1799].

for purposes of reclamation, and by advocating the doctrine of universal election.

The overall intent of the Creator, for Winchester, was self-evident in the scriptures which he arduously labored to proclaim. His views of an intermediate state and of eschatology were based upon those scriptural texts found in I Peter, iii., iv. and Luke xxiii. 43. These citations testify to the fact that after Christ's death, his soul went to paradise to proclaim salvation through his blood to those saints awaiting his mission. He later announced what he had accomplished to the enslaved in the state of hell. 36

Winchester saw in Ephesians iv. 8 and

36 Allen and Eddy, *op. cit.*, p. 421.
see also Winchester's The Three Woe Trumpets; of Which the First and Second are Already Past; and the Third is Now Begun...Being the Substance of Two Discourses from Rev. xi. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, Delivered on... February 3 and 24, 1793, London, S. Reece, 78p.

Psalm lxviii. 18 references to Christ's ascension into heaven where he was joined by both saints and former sinners in his glory before the Father. Winchester's views on the resurrection of the body were clearly stated and he relied upon Rev. xx to substantiate the one thousand year terrestrial reign of Christ. 37

At the close of this millennium, the reign of Satan would begin. His ultimate defeat would occur before the second resurrection and general judgment. Winchester relied on Matt. xxv. 31-46 for a description of this final event. The just would be rescued by Christ and taken to the highest heavenly abode, while the unjust would remain on earth to endure the final conflagration. When the earth and its inhabitants, both human and angelic, had been purified by fire "the new heavens and new earth shall appear and universal blessedness be complete. The Son shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father,

37 Allen and Eddy, op. cit., pp. 421-422.

and 'God be all in all.'" 38

Winchester's theological system had little similarity with that doctrine formulated by Murray. Both systems of thought, however, were rooted in Christ and scriptural authority; nevertheless, they employed a different biblical exegesis. Winchester's theology emphasized the universal restoration of all creation by Christ through the love of God while advocating the necessity of divine punishment in a future state. For Winchester, such divine retribution was both punitive and cleansing for the soul and was of a limited duration. These doctrinal tenets were dealt with in detail throughout his four Dialogues and Lectures on the Prophecies."

38 Ibid., p. 422.

See Elhanan Winchester, A Course of Lectures on the Prophecies that Remain to be Fulfilled. Delivered in the Borough of Southwark in the year 1788. Printed for the Philadelphia Society, and included in a periodical work, begun in February 1788, called The Philadelphia Magazine, 72p, Norwich, printed by J. Trumbull and J. Sterry, 1794; Winchester's The Process and Empire of Christ. from His Birth to the End of the Mediatorial Kingdom, a poem of twelve books, Brattleboro, W. Fessenden, 1805, 352p.

Winchester's Dialogues concerned themselves with the defense of the doctrine of universal salvation. Throughout the first Dialogue, numerous scriptural texts were cited in answer to those objections raised by a friend regarding the word aiouion translated eternal or everlasting.³⁹ Such references to eternal misery and everlasting punishment in sacred scripture tended to discount the credibility of the doctrine of universal restoration. Against such an objection, Winchester labored to substantiate the doctrine of universalism in his first Dialogue by constant recourse to both testaments of the scriptures.

In commenting on the New Testament, Winchester noted that the usage of the word aiouion is not employed that frequently. In fact, "Saint Luke never used the term aiouion

³⁹ Elhanan Winchester, Dialogue I., "The Universal Restoration: Exhibited in Four Dialogues Between a Minister and his Friend", in Select Theological Library: Containing Valuable Publications Principally Treating of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, Philadelphia, Gihon, Fairchild and Co., 1844, p. 5.

or everlasting" in his gospel in reference to the punishment of the evil ones. This is also true of his numerous sermons "preserved in the book of the Acts." The term, in this context, is also noticeably absent from all the writings of St. John, his gospels and epistles. This can also be said of the Epistles of St. James and St. Peter. Winchester noted that there are but three references to the words everlasting destruction in the Gospel of St. Matthew. Also, its use appears but once in the Gospel of St. Mark, "and then in a particular case only." Finally, he saw the use of the word aiōnion twice in the Old Testament as sufficient proof that the term was not applicable to the defense of eternal reprobation and misery. 40

In justifying its use, Winchester noted a number of citations where the term aiōnion was applicable "to things and times, that have had, or must have, an end." This was most evident in the passage taken from Gen. xvii.7,8. "And I will

40 Ibid., pp. 6-7.

establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." In reference to this passage, Winchester maintained that "the land of Canaan is called an everlasting possession," even though the earth and all its parts is destined for the final conflagration. This is also true of a number of scriptural passages cited by Winchester where the term everlasting is employed. See Gen. xlviii. 3, 4, Numb. xxv. 11, 12, 13, 1 Sam. ii. 12-17, Chap. iii. 11-14.⁴¹ Thus, for Winchester, the term everlasting did not denote without end and was therefore an unfounded objection and disproof of the doctrine of universal salvation.

~~He contended that the New Testament~~

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 7.

employs the word aionion or forever when it denotes a limited duration. The following citations from the Pauline letters were noted by Winchester.

Heb. 1. 8. But unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne (in distinction from the throne of the Father) O God, is forever and ever;" yet we read, (I Cor. xv. 34, 38.) of the end, when he shall have "delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; and then shall the Son also himself, be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God be all in all." 42

The closing remarks of Winchester, as found in his first Dialogue, concerned themselves with the scriptural foundation of the doctrine of universal restoration. In this respect, Winchester asserted that the term aionion or forever was used more often to describe the felicitude of the upright than the sufferings of the condemned. This statement had added significance when one notes

42 Winchester, Dialogue I., p. 10.

Saint John's gospel, Chapters iii. 15, 16, 36, iv. 14, v. 24, vi. 27, 40, 47, 54, 68, x. 28, xii. 25, 50, xvii. 2, 3. Winchester cited these passages to show that the term aiouion was always used "to express the continuance of the well being of the righteous." 43

He also stressed that this term tended to have a much stronger connotation when applied to the happiness of these righteous in the Lord.

We read, in 1 Pet. 1. 4, of "an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled; and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven;" and in Chap. v. 4, of "a crown of glory, that fadeth not away;" and Heb. xii, 25, of a "kingdom, which cannot be moved;" and our blessed Saviour's words are remarkably strong upon this subject, in many places; as, in St. Luke's gospel, Chap. xx. 35, 36, where he says, "But they who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the (first) resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection;" and in St. John, x. 27,

43 Ibid., p. 13.

28, 29, we read thus: "my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." In Chap. xi. 25, 26, Christ says, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." 44

Winchester maintained that these texts implied a salvation universal in scope for those made righteous in the sight of God by virtue of their union with Christ, as redeemer and savior.

For Winchester, the assurance of unending heavenly bliss and a limited duration of divine punishment rested on the promise of Christ "because his life shall have no end, and he is their life." Because of this union with Christ, the happiness and joy of Christ's kingdom would be theirs for all eternity. What Winchester referred to as the "state of misery," however, was not everlasting but

44 Loc. cit.

would terminate since Christ had foretold the end of the kingdom of evil. Winchester stated that all mankind are the heirs and subjects of Christ -- "he is their rightful sovereign." Satan was regarded as an usurper enslaving his captives. According to Winchester, we should be comforted in the knowledge that ultimately "all that are in bondage to him belong to Christ, who will finally draw them all to himself." 45

His second Dialogue was similar to Dialogue I, inasmuch as, it dealt extensively with the general restoration of all men and innumerable scriptural arguments were cited to substantiate such a claim. 46 In his third Dialogue, however, Winchester examined the doctrine of universal restoration along with the first principles upon which it was based. The first fundamental truth or principle cited by Winchester to support the doctrine was that the universal Godhead is

45 Ibid., pp. 15-16.

46 Winchester, Dialogue II., p. 18; see pp. 18-31.

both Creator and Father. Being the first Cause of all creation, mankind especially was "made by his power, according to his will, and for his pleasure and that the chief end for which he made us, was, to glorify his name and enjoy him forever...."⁴⁷

Another first-principle cited by Winchester in defense of universal salvation was based upon the all-encompassing benevolence or love of the Deity.

This being a first principle, from which the Universal Restoration is concluded, we are happy to find, that "God is love;" and that he "so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life: For, God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." See 1 John iv. 16. St. John iii. 16, 17. ⁴⁸

Salvation then is open to all men through Christ and thus Winchester's next principle rested upon

47 Winchester, Dialogue III., p. 33.

48 Ibid., pp. 33.-34.

this very fact. Winchester was clear in this respect, since he maintained that innumerable passages could be cited to substantiate the claim that Jesus Christ died for all men. This claim that Jesus died once and atoned for all was of apostolic origin and cited by Winchester as a "first principle, universally acknowledged."⁴⁹ He also noted that even St. Paul's theological reasoning is based upon this generally accepted premise, as seen in the following references from second Corinthians.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all," (which is not disputed by any, and which we know to be a truth) "then were all dead: and that he died for all; that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. 50

The next principle affirmed by Winchester to support the doctrine of Universalism was the

49 Loc. cit.

50 Loc. cit.

unchangeable nature of God and "the immutability of God's counsels." In respect to God's unchangeable nature, Winchester maintained that God loved all of his creatures whether sinless or sinful. This in no way could be denied. God who is all perfect abhors sin in itself but not sinners. This unchangeable love of God for all of his creatures was for Winchester of primary importance. From this essential truth, he was able to plainly discern the doctrine of the general restoration.⁵¹

The immutable counsels of God, as previously noted, also underlie the doctrine of the final salvation of all things. This Winchester asserted by having recourse to Heb. vi. 17, 18. Here God is described as having :

"...abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together (or rehead) in one, all things in Christ, both

51 Winchester, Dialogue III., pp. 35-36.

which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him; in whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will." 52

Winchester supported the doctrine of universal salvation by citing the principle "that God hath given all things into the hand of Christ, who hath declared, that it is the Father's will, that of all that he gave him he should lose nothing...." For Winchester the word all implied "without exception." This he supported by maintaining that as God the Father had relegated all things under Christ with the purpose of restoring all things to him, this universal plan of salvation is rooted in the very will of God. Its approval is sanctioned by God the Father and executed and accomplished by Jesus Christ, the Son. 53

His thoughts on this subject were directed

52 Ibid., p. 36.

53 Ibid., p. 37.

to the task of demonstrating scripturally that the word all was used in a universal sense. In his first Dialogue, Winchester attempted to do this by citing the Epistle to the Hebrews. He said that while the apostle Paul was convinced that all things were subjected to Christ in one sense, he quickly added, "But now we see not yet all things put under him." This Paul clarified in Phil. iii. 21 when he "speaks of that effectual 'working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.'" When all this is accomplished, then shall Christ also be subjected to his Father in order that God might be "ALL in ALL." 1 Cor. xvi. 28. 54

Winchester pointed out the distinction made by Paul between "all things being put under him" and "all things being subdued unto him." The former has already been fully accomplished, while the latter remains to be brought to completion in the future. This Winchester taught as based upon

Rom. viii. 21, 22, "Because the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, until now." 55

If these citations seem to prove conclusively that the word all is used to denote without exception, Winchester offered the following passage from Col. 1. 15, 20 to resolve all doubts on the subject. St. Paul referring to Christ says

Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominations or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. -- For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his

55 Ibid., p. 17.

cross, by him, to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. 1. 15, 20.⁵⁶

Thus, in the words of Winchester, "all things are given to Christ without exception." ⁵⁷ This he again supported in his Lectures on the Prophecies where he maintained that the words of Christ recorded in St. John vi. 37, 40, clearly imply the intent of Christ's mission and the power given him by the Father to execute and accomplish this task. This undertaking which embraced a mission of redemption encompassed the deliverance of all mankind back to the Father. This Winchester saw properly revealed in the following texts previously cited in this chapter. (St. John iii. 35; xiii. 3; xvii. 2, compared with St. Matthew xi. 27, and St. Luke x. 2). ⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Loc. cit.

⁵⁷ Winchester, Dialogue IV., p. 51.

⁵⁸ Elhanan Winchester, "Lecture", (taken from a course of Lectures on the Prophecies), in Select Theological Library: Containing Valuable Publications Principally Treating of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, Philadelphia, Gihon, Fairchild and Co., 1884, p. 70.

For Winchester, even the Jewish people are included in the universal plan of salvation by God. It is only through the infinite wisdom of God that such a plan will be brought to fruition. His remarks on this subject were as follows.

Were there no other text to prove the restoration of the Jews who died in their sins, and indeed of the whole fallen race of Adam, I should judge this sufficient; -- "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and he that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day." St. John vi. 37-39. 59

The doctrine of universal restoration was thus supported by those first principles cited by Winchester in his third Dialogue. These principles maintained that the scriptures in all respects would be fulfilled. 60

The theology of both Murray and Winchester

59 Winchester, Dialogue IV., p. 50.

60 Winchester, Dialogue III., p. 37; see pp. 33-

adhered to the universal restoration of all things through the redemptive act of Jesus Christ, whom they regarded as both truly God and man. Their Christology embraced the orthodox trinitarian concept of God. Both were able to proclaim, then, the doctrine of substitutional atonement. Such atonement for sin on the part of Christ, as head of the human race, reconciled man to God and secured for all mankind divine salvation. ⁶¹

In reference to Murray's and Winchester's view of future punishment, Thomas Whittmore says

They both held to the existence of misery in a future state. Mr. Winchester looked upon it as a penal suffering, inflicted for the sins of this life, a doctrine which was totally inconsistent with Mr. Murray's whole theory. The latter held that man, from his union to Christ, suffered in the person of his Saviour, all that the divine law threatened; and that the suffering of man, either in this or the future life, is the necessary consequence of that blindness which prevents him from beholding the Lamb of God, who hath

⁶¹ George Huntston Williams, "American Universalism A Bicentennial Historical Essay", in The Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Vol. 9, Boston, Universalist Historical Society, 1971, p. 86.

taken away the sin of the world.
Those who fall asleep in unbelief
wake up in darkness, which must
remain till the veil is taken
away, and "all flesh shall see
the salvation of God." 62

These two views were skillfully blended within Article three of the creed drafted at the Universalist General Convention in Philadelphia in May of 1790. Known as the Philadelphia Platform of Faith, this credal statement contained five Articles which were formulated as being essential for church membership. Speaking of Christ's role as mediator, Article three states that the consequence of Christ's salvific act is the final restoration of "the whole human race to happiness." The other basic tenets contained in these Articles stressed the role of the scriptures, the triune nature of God, and the necessity of good works. This statement of faith served as the only official

62 Thomas Whittemore, The Modern History of Universalism from the Era of the Reformation to the Present Time, Boston, Published by the Author, 1830, p. 432.

creed for the next thirteen years. 63

This theological position was likewise retained in the Winchester Profession of Belief adopted at Winchester, New Hampshire in 1803. According to Richard Eddy, this Profession was "a general statement of faith, in which all could join without the compromise of individual convictions...." Article two of this Profession which upholds the final restoration of "the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness" appeared satisfactory to those factions influenced by both Murray and Winchester, as well as, to that minority who adhered to the view of no future punishment whatever. Eddy also stated that such a Profession "was sufficiently liberal in all its statements to be acceptable alike to Trinitarian and Unitarian..." 64

63 L. B. Fisher, A Brief History of the Universalist Church for Young People, (Publishing date and House not given), pp. 102-103; Allen and Eddy, op. cit., pp. 413-414. See Appendix 1 for complete text of the Philadelphia Platform of Faith.

64 Richard Eddy, Universalism in America, Vol. 2, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1894, p. 61. See Appendix 2 for complete text of the Winchester Profession of Faith.

In this context, the Christology of both Murray and Winchester was questioned by the Reverend Hosea Ballou as early as 1805. This prominent Universalist preacher would develop a system of thought which "expounded unitarianism in a programmatic repudiation of the Calvinist theory of the atonement. But in undoing Calvin and Anselm, Ballou also undid Murray and unwittingly obliged the followers of Murray and Winchester arduously to relocate the theological foundation of their Universalist hope in a regionally part-Unitarian context." 65

65 Williams, op. cit., p. 86.

CHAPTER III

HOSEA BALLOU AND HIS THEOLOGY

EARLY BACKGROUND

Hosea Ballou was born April 30, 1771 in Richmond, New Hampshire, the son of Maturin and Lydia Ballou.¹ His early years were formed within the Baptist denomination and thereby shaped by a Calvinistic religious tradition. As he matured, his inquisitive mind was adept at theological matters, especially concerning the doctrine of election and reprobation.² By 1789, he soon began to question this basic Calvinistic teaching on the grounds that God would not "eternally damn any of His weak finite

1 Maturin M. Ballou, Biography of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Boston, Abel Tompkins, 1852, pp. 14, 16, 18.

2 Thomas Whittemore, The Modern History of Universalism From the Era of the Reformation to the Present Time, Boston, Published by the Author, 1830, pp. 433-434, note.

creatures." ³

Lacking what might be termed a formal education in his younger years, he later would secure instruction at Chesterfield Academy in New Hampshire. There he received an educational certificate which enabled him to subsequently secure teaching positions in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. ⁴ While engaged as a teacher, his summer months were spent as an itinerant preacher. He labored for three years in this capacity, obtaining for himself a reputation as a preacher among his Universalist colleagues and friends. It was at the New England Universalist Convention at Oxford, Massachusetts in 1794 that Hosea Ballou was called and ordained to the ministry by the Reverend Elhanan Winchester. ⁵

The subsequent years of his ministry were spent preaching throughout Vermont, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. He accepted pastorates at Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1809 and Salem, Massa-

³ Emerson Hugh Lalone, Editor, "Hosea Ballou", in The Helper, Vol. 69, No. 2, issue of January 1938, p. 20.

⁴ Maturin M. Ballou, op. cit., pp. 30-32, 48-51, 58.

⁵ Joseph Henry Allen and Richard Eddy, A History of the Unitarians and the Universalists in the United States, American Church History Series, New York, The Christian Literature Co., 1894, p. 428.

chusetts in 1815. He moved to Boston in 1817 as pastor of the Second Society of Universalists on School Street. It was during his forty-year ministry in Boston that Hosea Ballou's reputation and prominence were established within American Universalism.⁶ His labors in Boston were ~~dedicated~~ ~~not~~ ~~only~~ to pastoral work and preaching but to writing and serving as an editor. On July 3, 1819, he founded the Universalist Magazine in conjunction with a Boston publisher, Henry Bowen.⁷

THEOLOGICAL FORMATION

The ministry of Hosea Ballou may be evaluated in light of his Treatise on Atonement³ first published in 1805, and a series of later sermons and lectures which concerned themselves with the doctrinal aspects of Universalism. The years that followed would see

⁶ Lalone, op. cit., pp. 21, 23; for a recent biography see Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou: The Challenge to Orthodoxy, Boston, Universalist Historical Society and Beacon Press, 1961.

⁷ Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou; With Accounts of His Writings, and Biographical Sketches of His Seniors and Contemporaries in the Universalist Ministry, Vol. 2, Boston, James M. Usher, 1854, pp. 68-69.

the development and refining of his theological views. This would become most apparent in the revised editions of his Treatise which would ultimately be recast to reflect the liberalism so characteristic of the latter part of the nineteenth century.⁸

Although Ballou had read the works of Chauncy and Winchester, his theology is seen to have been influenced by Ethan Allen's Reason, The Only Oracle of Man and the French Swiss minister Ferdinand Oliver Petit-pierre's Thoughts on the Divine Goodness. Allen's questioning of the doctrine of endless punishment and divine approbation, and his theological views of the Godhead, atonement and reconciliation are seen to have largely influenced Ballou on these subjects. However, it was Ballou's reliance upon reason to rid Christianity of its blindness and superstition which may largely be attributed to Allen. Through the use of reason, Ballou's theology was able to repudiate the traditionally held doctrines of the trinity, divinity of Christ, infinity of sin, and the orthodox theories of Christ's atonement and reconciliation. This

⁸ See, Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou and the Rise of American Religious Liberalism, Boston, Universalist Historical Society, 1958, 5-24p.

reliance upon reason is also true of Ballou's later sermons which present a view of God by means of His "moral perfections and natural attributes..." which were for Allen "indisputable reasons to evince the certainty of the being and providence of God..."⁹

This Deistic influence of the Enlightenment with its emphasis upon human reason did not for Ballou discredit the authority of the scriptures. His lecture sermons, for example, are largely based upon scriptural proofs which attempt to establish the infinite goodness and love of God. In this respect, his writings owe much to the influence of Petitpierre who likewise held to the view that God's infinite goodness was the governing principle over all creation. This attribute of God, Petitpierre argued, was readily bestowed upon all of His creation "sensient as well

⁹ Ethan Allen, Reason, The Only Oracle of Man: Or, A Compendious System of Natural Religion, New York, G. W. and A. J. Matsell, 1836, p. 1, 9; see Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou, Preacher of Universal Salvation, doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1957, published in 1961 under the title Hosea Ballou The Challenge to Orthodoxy. This work examines the influence of Ethan Allen, Charles Chauncy and Ferdinand Petitpierre on Ballou's theology. Dr. Cassara also compares Ballou's theology with that of William Ellery Channing, Unitarian spokesman on many views of importance. Also pertinent is Carol Morris', "A Comparison of Ethan Allen's 'Reason The Only Oracle of Man' and Hosea Ballou's 'A Treatise on Atonement', in The Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Vol. 2, 1960-1961, pp. 34-69.

as rational beings." From this reasoning, Ballou followed through Petitpierre's logical consequences of such a divine plan culminating in the divine glory of God. This glory was seen as "the resplendent and universal manifestation of all His (God) perfections."¹⁰

It was this type of determinism which would permeate Ballou's thought, even to the extent of denying man's free will if it would better uphold God's omnipotence in the salvation of all men. Ballou's position was found to be most upsetting to those liberals and Arminians of his day. They much preferred to adhere to the theological position of man resisting God's salvation in order to uphold man's freedom of will.¹¹

These liberals saw in Ballou's position the danger of imputing the authorship of sin to God. Ballou responded to this charge by admitting that the origin of sin rests with God who, in turn, uses sin to bring about a greater good. Rather than brand Ballou as a

¹⁰ Ferdinand Oliver Petitpierre, Thoughts on the Divine Goodness, Relative to the Government of Moral Agents, Particularly Displayed in Future Rewards and Punishments, Montpelier, George W. Hill - Patriot Office, 1828, pp. 14, 86-87.

¹¹ Ernest Cassara, Universalism in America: A Documentary History, Boston, Beacon Press, 1971, p. 22.

strict determinist, Ernest Cassara refers to him as a "necessitarian." Perhaps, Ballou's Calvinistic background accounted for his ability to accept this deterministic position, cognizant that in the end all things work to the greater glory of God. 12

It was in this theological context, that Ballou attempted to discern the divine plan of salvation for all men. He adhered to the belief that all mankind would be redeemed by a loving and merciful God. This was in direct contrast to what James Rely and John Murray had formerly taught. For them the redemptive act of Jesus was designed to appease an angry God. Ballou's system of thought was to supplant Murray's and his contemporaries' and add still another dimension to the concept of universal restoration of all mankind. 13

Alfred S. Cole, in reviewing the theological background of the belief in universal salvation, gave the following description of its development.

John Murray held that Jesus died for all men, and therefore all men were saved, redeemed, and restored, whether conscious of it or not. Elhanan Winchester, a brilliant intellect among that early group, held that punishment here and hereafter was needful to bring men to

12 Loc. cit.

13 Lalone, op. cit., p. 22.

repentance and so to a proper state to enjoy the bliss of heaven. Hosea Ballou formulated and systematized our theology. Many of Murray's ideas were rejected, and in their place Ballou based the whole of his theology upon the Divine Fatherhood and Human Brotherhood, affirming that love is the very heart of the divine purpose; that salvation is the rescue of the soul from sin and not from punishment; that punishment is the natural suffering of a soul deranged by sin; that atonement is the reconciling of man with God; and finally all souls will be brought into harmony with God. ¹⁴

Thus, Ballou cast off all the remnants of Calvinism and questioned in particular Murray's concept of Jesus Christ as mediator and redeemer.

For Ballou, the mediator was viewed as a "created dependent being" which he substantiated by citing various passages in the Bible. The terms Atonement and Reconciliation, for him, were identical. Reconciliation then was the restoration of love to its fulness, and "love is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, of which St. Paul speaks, in Romans viii.2, by which he was made free from the law of sin." ¹⁵ This he further clarified in his

¹⁴ Alfred S. Cole, "Historical Backgrounds of the Universalist Movement -- V", in The Christian Leader, Vol. 52, Issue of October 23, 1937, pp. 1354-1355.

¹⁵ Hosea Ballou, A Treatise On Atonement, In Which the Finite Nature of Sin Is Argued, Its Cause and Consequences As Such; The Necessity and Nature of Atonement; And Its Glorious Consequences, In The Final Reconciliation of All Men To Holiness and Happiness, Hallowell, C. Spaulding, 1858, pp. 113, 120.

Treatise when he said again

The soul, when governed by the law of sin which is in the members, of which St. Paul speaks, in Romans vii. 23, is in a state of unreconciliation to the law of the Spirit. And it is by the force and power of the law of love, in Christ, that the soul is delivered from the government of the law of sin; the process of this deliverance is the work of atonement or reconciliation. 16

The Universalist historian, Richard Eddy, commenting on Ballou's scholarship as contained in his Treatise, stated that "It is by far the ablest work he ever wrote, and as an argument against the dogmas of the Trinity and substitutional sacrifice, and in favor of universal salvation, is superior in its plainness and force to many of the arguments of confessedly better educated scholars." 17

The major importance, however, of the Treatise on Atonement was its emphasis on scriptural evidence to support that Christ's atonement was "a moral and not a legal work." It also showed that its ultimate aim was the reconciliation of all men to their Creator and not the Creator to his creation. This

16 Ibid., p. 120.

17 Allen and Eddy, op. cit., p. 434.

reconciliation in no way altered the law or the penalty imposed because of its transgression. The justice of God remained intact by adhering to a theology that sinful man must bear the consequence of his own disobedience. According to Ballou, the reconciliation is the "at-one-ing" mission of Christ resulting in the restoration of man to God. This he described as "a moral and spiritual result produced in the sinner who needs changing, not a scheme or effort for changing the unchangeable God, nor for turning aside any penalty of his perfect law." This is not brought about by God's vengeance and wrath but rather accomplished by and through His love. Man is reconciled to God by Christ "by his teachings, his example, his cross, all these being the full and perfect revelation of what God is, and of his unceasing love to all made in his image." 18

Thus, the Trinitarian concept regarding the Deity which had long influenced Universalist thought, was replaced by a Unitarian theology developed by Hosea Ballou. This Unitarian influence strongly permeated the system of Christian thought which emphasized the Fatherhood of God, whose very essence was constituted

18 Ibid., pp. 435-436.

by love, while Jesus Christ was viewed in this theological system as "the expression of the Divine life in a human soul, the image of the invisible God." Lastly, all of mankind was regarded as the fallen but redeemed progeny of God. 19

BALLOU'S UNITARIANISM

The Trinitarian Doctrine

In examining Ballou's thoughts regarding the Trinity, his Treatise and later sermons adhered to the Unitarian notion of the "strict unity of God" as opposed to the trinitarian doctrine which maintained that within the supreme Deity were "three distinct persons, who are co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal." 20 Ballou's reasoning attacked the trinitarian doctrine in the following manner.

19 Cole, op. cit., p. 1355.

20 Hosea Ballou, Sermon XXIV., "Commendation And Reproof of Unitarians", in Select Sermons, Delivered on Various Occasions from Important Passages of Scripture, Boston, A. Tompkins, 1848, p. 322; Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Ballou's Sermons are derived from the same above cited source.

The reader will observe our usual mode of reasoning, which is to admit, as truth, what we wish to oppose; and to oppose it, with the consequence which necessarily follows. For the sake of argument, then, we admit the foregoing statement concerning Christ to be just; and then we contend, that if he be the Son of God, he is the son of himself, and is his own father; that he is no more ^{the} Son of God, than God is his son! To say, of two persons, exactly of the same age, that one of them is a real son of the other, is to confound good sense. If Jesus Christ were really God, it must be argued, that God really died! Again, if the Godhead consists of three distinct persons, and each of these persons be infinite, the whole Godhead amounts to the amazing sum of infinity, multiplied by three! If it is said that neither of these three persons alone is infinite, we say, the three together, with the addition of a million more such, would not make an infinite being. 21

Having stated what he considered theological absurdities to many Christians, Ballou then focused on certain particulars. Throughout the course of his Treatise, Ballou regards Jesus Christ as both a created and dependent being. The fact that he is a created being is seen from Rev. iii.14 which states that Jesus is "the beginning of the creation of God." His dependence is established by his recognition of the superiority of God the Father. Ballou cited St. John v.19 where Christ said, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." Matthew xxiv.36 is also cited to show Christ's limited knowledge when he says "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only." St. Mark leaves no doubt in

this regard in Chapter xiii.32, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." 22

This superiority was retained even over the risen Christ as recorded in Rev. iii.12 "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name." Ballou noted that in the previously cited passage, "he acknowledges a being whom he worships." Psalm xlv.7 is also noted, "Thou loveth righteousness and hatest wickedness, because God, thy God hath anointed thee with oil of gladness above thy fellows." Ballou saw Christ in this passage as being dependent upon his heavenly Father. Thus, the Mediator, for Ballou, is not the "self existent Jehovah" of the Old Testament. The Psalmist speaks of Christ as being "anointed above his fellows." This passage was taken to mean equality with man. His exalted position was bestowed upon Him by God, His Father. Philipians ii.9 testifies to this fact in the words -- "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." 23

22 Ibid., p. 113.

23 Ibid., pp. 113-114.

Lastly, Ballou noted that some would offer a counter argument by stating that Christ taught that "he and his Father were one." See St. John xvii.11. This oneness with the Father, according to Ballou, was a union undertaken with the Father to bring about the salvific mission spoken of in verse 18. Ballou likened this mission of Christ to that of a representative of the President of the United States, commissioned to negotiate a peace treaty within a foreign court. This representative derived his power from the President and so it was with Christ.²⁴

According to Ballou, all power was given to Christ including dominion over the heavenly kingdom. This he substantiated by recourse to Dan. vii.14, "And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom." Again in Psalm 11.8 we see "Ask of me, and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Finally, Matthew xxviii.18 records that "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth." Ballou cited these scriptural passages as indicative of many others that could be used to uphold his argument that Christ as Mediator was a dependent and created being subject in power and glory to the one supreme God.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid., p. 115.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 115-116.

Similarly, his later sermons also concerned themselves with the question of the Trinity. Here, Ballou attempted to support his contention of the unity of the Godhead, by citing as his authority certain texts within the Old Testament. He noted that Moses was called by God to preach the doctrine of monotheism to the Israelites. This we are assured of in Deut. vi. 4,5, in the words "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." This passage for Ballou stood in opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity. The Godhead revealed to Moses was not trinitarian but monotheistic.²⁶

In answer to those who might question the authority of the Old Testament alone in this matter, Ballou later referred to the New Testament for additional supportive evidence. His reference to Christ's answer when asked which was the first and greatest of all the commandments of his Father was supportive evidence enough for Ballou's position. Here Christ responds by saying "The first of all the commandments is, hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy

26 Ballou, Sermon XXIV., p. 322.

strength. This is the first commandment." In this sense, Christ used the exact words of Moses and in no way introduced an enlargement of the doctrine. Even St. Paul in addressing Timothy on this subject does not depart from this norm when he says "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." This supportive evidence was cited by Ballou in the belief that Jesus Christ was a dependent and created being and that the doctrine of the Trinity was not essential to the teachings of Christianity.²⁷

Vicarious Atonement

The second stage of Ballou's theological development concerned itself with the doctrinal basis of vicarious suffering. Historically, this system of thought held "that it was not consistent with the divine perfections, for God to forgive the transgressions of mankind without first requiring and receiving a sacrifice of real sufferings, in room of inflicting the penalty of his broken law on the offenders." In his sermon entitled "Commendation and Reproof of Unitarians," Ballou emphasized that they acknowledged that reason and the scriptures support the contrary, namely,

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 322-323.

that God's love was not purchased through the sufferings of Christ but rather flows "from the nature of the divine Being, without being induced by any creature act or suffering." The life, death and resurrection of Christ are but the means utilized by God in his infinite wisdom to reveal his divine plan to all creation. Such a system of thought correctly viewed the Godhead as not only all loving and merciful but manifesting his infinite goodness, perfection and wisdom.²⁸ According to Ballou, these sentiments were worthy of assent because of their scriptural foundation.

...they are justified by the general theme of scripture testimony, and in a very clear and forcible manner by the following passages: John iii.16,17, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." 1 John iv. 9,10, "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." By such testimony, we are certified that whatever benefit Jesus is to mankind, that benefit is the effect and not the cause of our heavenly Father's love.²⁹

28 Ibid., pp. 323-324.

29 Ballou, Sermon XXIV., p. 324.

THE ISSUE OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT AND REWARD

Central to the theology of Hosea Ballou was his questioning of the doctrine of endless punishment or divine retribution. This theological area of concern would encourage Ballou to speculate further regarding not only the necessity of future retribution, but its duration in relation to man's present existence and future state.

On this subject, Ballou wavered in the early editions of his Treatise. Here, Allen's influence is again apparent, for it was he who earlier questioned the doctrine of endless punishment and divine approbation. The second publication of Ballou's Treatise in 1812 remained in essence the same as his 1805 edition. However, he became more certain of his position in his later sermons and lectures. His theological formulations were completed by 1832 with an updated edition of his Treatise and the publication of a detailed examination of the doctrine of future retribution in 1834.

For Ballou, the teaching of future retribution perpetuated the Old Testament notion of the Deity as a severe judge of vindictiveness and wrath shaping man's destiny according to his works. Such a system of thought maintained that man's ultimate destiny was fashioned by God in a future state, where after due

recompense, intolerable misery or blissful rewards of an endless duration awaited him.³⁰

In addressing himself to those advocates of a future judgment and retribution, Ballou found such a supposition beyond reason and lacking in scriptural evidence. He noted that its unreasonableness was apparent in that "it is not understood how it can be possible for such a division to be made of the human family, and for one part to be entirely happy, and the other entirely miserable; because our nature partakes of such powerful sympathies that if we see those whom we love in torment, we cannot avoid a participation of such misery."³¹

His reasoning on this subject was substantiated by Saint Paul's declaration in his letter to the Romans, Chapter vi. 7: "For he that is dead is freed from sin."³² Ballou maintained that "sin had its

³⁰ Hosea Ballou, Lecture XVI., "The Second Death," p. 216; Ballou, Lecture XVIII., "Explanation of Matt. XXIV. and XXV," p. 258.

³¹ Hosea Ballou, "Thoughts on the Doctrine of Future Punishment", in An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution on the Principles of Morals, Analogy and the Scriptures, Boston, Published at the Trumpet Office, 1834, p. 145.

³² Ballou, "Letter to A Friend", ibid., p. 123.

origin in flesh and blood, and is the natural offspring of these lusts, by which men are tempted." Furthermore, his argument rested on the fact that the scriptures do not testify "that sin ever was or ever will be committed out of flesh and blood; and as we have seen, that St. Paul's meaning in Rom. vi:7, is, that he that is dead literally is freed from sin...." It was Ballou's hope that sin would cease to exist at the end of man's earthly existence.⁵³

Saint Paul's text found in Rom. vi.7 provided for Ballou the necessary supportive evidence to uphold his teaching on divine retribution. It not only provided the necessary scriptural foundation, but after close examination, required man's intellectual assent. Ballou examined this passage to discern the true meaning of its content. The chapter begins with the following question. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead live any longer therein?" Ballou attempted to comprehend how St. Paul and this brethren envision themselves "dead to sin." This is understood in the words of the text "Know ye not, that

⁵³ Hosea Ballou, "On Romans VI. 7.", ibid., pp. 135-136.

so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" ²⁴

Ballou maintained that this death was a bodily death, as is seen in the passage "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." This resurrection of Christ is clearly a resurrection from bodily death and thereby explains just what was meant by the term "being dead to sin." Ballou viewed this to mean "being baptized, by faith, into the real death and resurrection of Jesus Christ." ³⁵

The next question Ballou raised was how did Christ "die unto sin?" For him, this was a valid question for he saw in Rom. vi. 10 the words "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." For Ballou, Christ's human nature was subjected to temptation, but in his death and resurrection he no longer had to endure the temptations of his previous earthly existence. Thus, the words of St. Paul were sufficient proof of

²⁴ Hosea Ballou, "Reply To Reason", ibid., p. 128.

³⁵ Loc. cit.

this held view, namely, "For he that is dead is freed from sin." ³⁶

Further scriptural evidence was compiled by Ballou from the New Testament on this subject. These passages indicate the theme of salvation in the gospel to be forgiveness and repentance. Nowhere was there reference to the concept of endless misery and punishment. To maintain the latter was considered by Ballou to be both unreasonable and unscriptural. This he contended because of the inconsistency with the New Testament view of God as being all loving and merciful to sinners. Ballou referred to Eph. ii. 4,5, "~~But God,~~ who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ." Again in 1st John iv. 10., "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Neither did the teaching of endless punishment emanate from the divine will of God, for we are assured in 1st Tim. ii.4 that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the

³⁶ Ibid., p. 129.

knowledge of the truth." ³⁷

Ballou also noted that the scriptures of the Old Testament specifically testify to the fact that retribution for sin and reward for meritorious actions do not extend beyond the present stage of life. To support this claim, while challenging those who adhered to a retribution and reward beyond this life, Ballou had recourse to a number of citations derived from Leviticus xxiv.15 &c. He noted specifically the punishment of death described in Leviticus for the sin of blasphemy against God, and the murder of one's fellow man. ³⁸ Other offenses were dealt with accordingly.

'And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it; and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger as for one of your own country; for I am the Lord your God.' ³⁹

Likewise, Leviticus recounts the favors bestowed by God for those who follow His directives. Ballou notes that Chapter xxvi. 3, &c. records these in terms of material prosperity -- bountiful harvests, and seasons of plenty. Here, scripture testifies, "For

³⁷ Hosea Ballou, Sermon III., "Rich Man and Lazarus," pp. 39-40.

³⁸ Hosea Ballou, Sermon V., "Men Rewarded According to Their Works in the Present Life," p. 68.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. -- And I will walk among you, and be your God, and ye shall be my people." 40

Ballou held that such laws as those previously cited from the Book of Leviticus were of divine origin, and that "there is not in all the writings of Moses and the prophets a single intimation of any reward for virtue or obedience which was yielded in this life, in a future state; nor is there any intimation of the punishing of the crimes committed here, in another world." In this respect, Ballou maintained that the New Testament had not reversed the ancient law nor altered the writings of the prophets. Furthermore, Ballou stressed the very words of Christ to substantiate the position -- "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." 41

Ballou noted that St. Paul was also clear on this subject in Chapter 13 in his letter to the Romans, where he declares that both good and evil will receive

40 Ibid., p. 69.

41 Ibid., p. 69-70.

their just recompense on this earth. He stated that

St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans has set the sense of the scriptures in a clear light, on our subject. See Chapter 13, 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.' This testimony, my friends, is the true sense of the whole scriptures on the subject, and is in direct opposition to the superstition which contends that sin is not punished in this world. It is really unaccountable, why our christian clergy should allow the truth of St. Paul's declaration here cited, and yet contend that God does not punish sin in this life! 42

It may be deduced from the writings of Ballou on this subject, that there is both a righteousness and wickedness on earth, as well as a due recompense for both. This recompense, however, is on this earth and not applied to a future state. 43

42 Ibid., p. 70.

43 Hosea Ballou, Lecture XIX., "Righteousness and Wickedness Recompensed on Earth," p. 262.

BALLOU'S UNIVERSALISM

Other cornerstones of doctrinal orthodoxy abandoned by Ballou were the tenets of conditional election and endless retribution. For Ballou, this type of theology lacked a scriptural foundation. Ballou maintained that even the Unitarians deny the theological premise "that the Father of our spirits, from all eternity elected some of the human family, and ordained them to a state of endless felicity; while he reprobated the rest to endless, unmerciful sufferings." Finally, the doctrine of the total depravity of man was discarded. This doctrine held that man's nature was totally depraved and incapable of producing any good, thereby standing in direct opposition to his Creator.⁴⁴

In sharp contrast to such a system of thought, Ballou concurred with that Unitarian sentiment

"...that sin has not changed our nature from an object of the divine love, to an object of divine wrath; but that we stand in relation to our Creator, as our children to us their parents; that God loves even the disobedient; and treats them with kindness and pity even when he

⁴⁴ Hosea Ballou, Sermon XXIV., pp. 324-325.

chastises them for transgressions." ⁴⁵ In this context, Ballou's lectures and sermons focused on such theological topics as the defense of the doctrine of universal grace as opposed to conditional or partial election, the mission of Christ and the meaning of the term reconciliation.

Partial vs. Universal Election

To support his theological views regarding the doctrine of universal salvation, Ballou's sermons and lectures were filled with constant references to the New Testament where he stated could be found "many arguments and declarations corresponding with the promises of God and the sayings of the prophets on this glorious subject of universal grace." ⁴⁶ In his refutation of the doctrine of conditional election, Ballou states

The doctrine of election according to the views we have taken of it, supposes that those who are elected,

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 325.

⁴⁶ Hosea Ballou, Lecture VI., "Salvation Impartial and Universal," in A Series of Lecture Sermons, Delivered at the Second Universalist Meeting, in Boston, Boston, A. Tompkins, 1848, p. 78; Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Ballou's Lectures are derived from the same above cited source.

are elected for the benefit of those who are not elected. The prophet Isaiah in the 42d chapter speaks of an elect of God as follows; 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. -- I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.' This elect of God is the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of the world, of whom the Apostle John says; "we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." This elect of God is the One Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time." Thus it is evident that this elect was designed for the benefit of the whole world. 47

He often cited Saint Paul to defend his position against a partial salvation and an endless retribution. Ballou found the teachings of Paul on this subject to embrace many texts; however, the following was stressed to substantiate his claim that even Paul adhered to

47 Hosea Ballou, Lecture X., "The Scripture Doctrine of Election," p. 142.

the teachings of universal salvation.

St. Paul bestows much argument to show that "where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded; and that as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." He exhorts Timothy to pray and give thanks for all men, because God will have all men to be saved, and as a reason for this he says, that the one Mediator gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. 48

This ultimate destiny of man, namely his salvation, was according to Ballou, clearly stated in the gospels which revealed both the divine will and character of the Deity. 49

In examining the Calvinist doctrine of Election, Ballou found such a teaching consonant with neither scripture nor reason. In presenting his arguments, he noted such a doctrine altered the "moral character of the divine Being." Furthermore, such a theology

48 Ballou, Lecture VI., pp. 78-79; see also Hosea Ballou, Sermon XIV., "St. Paul a Universalist", pp. 189-200.

49 See also Hosea Ballou, Lecture XXVI., "The Healing Efficacy of Christ's Doctrine," pp. 362-375; Hosea Ballou, Sermon II., "Christ Our Example," pp. 22-36.

attempted to explain this divine partiality by justifying it as a manifestation of the glory of God. This type of thought, Ballou argued was not only offensive to man's intellect, but to his own moral sense of right. For this reason, the glory of God did not have to imply a partial dispensation of grace and election.⁵⁰

In his defense of the doctrine of universal grace, Ballou noted that certain opponents maintained that Christian theology based upon centuries of tradition adhered to a "partial system of salvation." Ballou's response was "has God furnished those who limit his favor, with sufficient proof that they are right in so doing?" For Ballou the answer was an emphatic no! He pointed to the goodness of nature-- the earth and heavens all speak of the impartial goodness of God. These were created to be enjoyed by all men without exception.⁵¹

These same adversaries of the doctrine of Universalism also maintained that such a teaching encouraged both licentiousness and immorality. Ballou

⁵⁰ Ballou, Lecture X., op. cit., pp. 136-137.

⁵¹ Ballou, Lecture VI., ibid., pp. 79-80.

attempted to come to terms with such hostile opinions when he stated "But have they [opponents] ever attempted to show that the universal promise of grace in the seed of Abraham, ever tended to make that friend of God, who believed it licentious?" Those throughout the history of the world who had anchored their belief on the basic premise of God's impartial goodness had not condoned immorality but rather had fostered greater love of God because of His beneficence. ⁴ 52

Having recourse to nature again, Ballou asked "Can you, my friends, see anything licentious in the sunshine or in the rain, of which all are made to share in rich abundance? Is the vital air licentious because it is free grace to every living being? Are the cooling springs and limpid streams lascivious in their impartial favor? In all these things God preaches every day, and his auditors rejoice in his mercy." They rejoiced, according to Ballou, because God's mercy was not limited nor were His graces partially dispensed. Thus, it was only through the infinite wisdom, mercy and providence of God that such a provision as universal restoration was anchored. ⁵³

52 Ibid., p. 80.

53 Loc. cit.

Ballou concluded that, while enjoying this richly endowed provision of salvation, man, in return for God's goodness must manifest both "love and gratitude" toward his creator and benefactor. This most awesome truth necessitated that man fashion his intellect and actions in conformity with this most noble doctrine. Rather than contributing toward licentiousness, the doctrine was seen to provide a strong and formidable moral character. A character formed in the knowledge that God had seen fit to bring "salvation to all men... teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world." 54

The theological system developed by Hosea Ballou embraced the belief that neither sin nor any other form of deviation from God placed enmity between man and his creator. Ballou maintained, however, that God by his very nature is opposed to sin. The definition of sin presented by Ballou was "the transgression of the law," and the divine law is based upon the precept of love of God and neighbor. He asked then "do you not see that hatred is the transgression of, and the only

54 Ibid., pp. 86-87.

sin that can be committed against the law?" 55

Having established this premise, Ballou raised the following question. "If it be sin for man to hate God, is it holiness for God to hate man?" His conclusion on this subject was that "...there is no more holiness in God's hating man, than there is in man's hating God; there is no more righteousness in any supposed enmity in God toward man, than there is in man's enmity toward God." Christ's sacrificial death was a manifestation of God's love for sinful man and in this sense provided the necessary certitude "that sin, nor any thing else had caused any hatred or enmity in God toward man." 56

The Mission of Christ

The early lectures of Hosea Ballou concerned themselves with one objective, namely, the mission of Christ to save sinners. The salvation of all mankind was assured by Ballou in that all were sinners

55 Hosea Ballou, Lecture XII., "God's Unchangeable Love To Sinners the Cause of Christ's Mission," p. 310.

56 Ibid., pp. 310-311.

and none were found righteous in the sight of God. His thoughts on this subject contradicted the Calvinist opinion that Christ came to satisfy the demands of a vindictive justice which exacted of fallen man an endless punishment or divine retribution. Ballou noted that according to the doctrine of Calvinism, Christ's salvific mission was directed toward only a select number of souls, the elect. Their eternal punishment was set aside because of the suffering and meritorious acts of Christ who won their freedom from such a penalty. Such a divine scheme was held to be essential to upholding man's concept of God's justice. 57

The substance of this lecture entitled "The Objects of Salvation; And its Nature" was gleaned from some five objections Ballou listed in refuting the previously held divine plan of salvation. The first question raised by Ballou stemmed from the complete absence of divine testimony sanctioning such a harsh penalty. Nowhere in the account of the fall of man was there imposed the penalty of "eternal death"

57 Hosea Ballou, Lecture I., "The Objects of Salvation; And its Nature," pp. 8-11.

nor the "pains of hell forever." Neither is it imposed upon Cain for his sin against his brother. This penalty was also noticeably absent from the Mosaic Law authored by God Himself. 58

Ballou attacked this Calvinistic theology as being "entirely repugnant to the character of God as a Father of his creatures." Such a penalty "would inevitably prevent repentance and reformation forever." Ballou took consolation in the belief that God is love and truly a loving Father. To state that he is a God of wrath consumed by vindictiveness toward men is a most grievous error and serves only to dishonor the Creator. 59

Other objections cited by Ballou included how it was possible for Christ who was sinless to atone for those who had sinned? He stated that "To condemn the innocent and clear the guilty is strictly forbidden in the law." If Christ did make full reparation, Ballou hastened to add, how was it possible for him to suffer "eternal misery in a few days?" Also, if the elect were saved from the divine penalty which subjected

58 Ibid., pp. 11-12.

59 Ibid., p. 12.

all men to the "misereries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever," why were not the elect exempt in this life from the first two above mentioned penalties?⁶⁰

According to Ballou, the conclusions of his argument were self-evident, namely, "that no such penalty of endless misery was ever connected with the divine law of heaven; and equally evident, that Jesus did not come into the world to save sinners from any such penalty. No, nor did he come into the world to save the sinner from the punishment of his sins." Having questioned these basic Calvinistic assumptions, he then attempted to utilize the scriptures in order that he might authoritatively establish just what Christ came to save sinful man from.⁶¹

Christ's foremost mission was to save man from his sins. For Ballou, there was a distinction "between saving a sinner from his sins, and saving him from the punishment which his sins deserve...." To rescue a criminal from the penalty deserving his crime would be an unlawful violation, but to offer forgiveness and salvation from his offence would be to restore

⁶⁰ Loc. cit.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 13.

him again to righteousness. This type of thinking was rooted in the scriptures where we find the Angel addressing Joseph in these words, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." 62

Ballou also views the mission of Christ to save man from his ignorance, the very root and cause of sin. This salvation from ignorance is referred to in St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians where he speaks of this deliverance "from the power of darkness, and hath translated us unto the kingdom of his dear Son." Ballou saw in the word "darkness" deception and ignorance blotting out divine truth and knowledge. Ballou again refers to the scriptures, in the words of St. Peter, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." This is precisely the task of the Christian ministry, namely, to teach and instruct all peoples in "the knowledge of the truth." 63

Having discerned the divine plan of salvation through the study of the scriptures, Ballou then pro-

62. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

63 Ibid., pp. 14-15.

ceeded to devote his attention to the question why Christ was assigned his salvific mission. This he attempted to explore in a lecture entitled "Love The Centre of All the Divine Attributes." Here, he examined those attributes ascribed to the Godhead. These attributes which he listed as Wisdom, Knowledge, Power, Justice, Truth, Mercy, and Love were infinite attributes and because of this fact they neither contradicted nor frustrated each other but rather were all in harmony within the Supreme Godhead. ⁶⁴

Wisdom was defined by Ballou as "that attribute of mind by which designs are drawn and plans are laid." Knowledge, on the other hand, was viewed as that "principle of intellectual nature by which the simple facts relating to things are comprehended or understood." This attribute of God, according to Ballou, enabled the Deity to encompass all of His creation. Divine Power "is that ability by which all the purposes of his vast and infinite scheme are carried into execution." ⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Hosea Ballou, Lecture IV., "Love The Centre of All the Divine Attributes," p. 49.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 49-50.

The divine attributes of Justice, Truth and Mercy were described by Ballou as follows.

Justice is that attribute of God, by which a righteous and equitable administration is directed towards all moral accountable beings; and by which every such being receives just recompense of reward accordingly as moral powers are exercised. Divine justice likewise requires that all moral beings should act in such a manner as to discharge every duty and obligation which the connexions and relations in which they are placed render necessary. "Justice and judgment are the habitations of his throne."

Truth is whatever is opposed to falsehood, and is the reality of all things, circumstances and events, past, present and future. This is forever with him who varies not, for "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."

Mercy is that divine perfection of God which pities and relieves from sin and wretchedness, those who stand in need of such compassion, "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." "According to his mercy he saved us." 66

Lastly, Love was described as "a property which delights in an object, carefully avoids doing it any harm, and uses all its means to administer good." Thus, God was best described by his attributes, but most particularly

by the attributes of love, for "God is love." 67

Having viewed the Godhead in this light, Ballou then was able to reason Christ's salvific role in the divine plan of God. In attempting to penetrate this divine plan, he marveled at the unfathomable goodness of God revealed to man through Christ. Ballou noted that the following passage from scripture made known the divine purpose in sending Christ. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." 68

Again, Ballou had recourse to the scriptures to make known the object of God's love and the means offered to man. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Thus, the object of God's love is mankind and the means provided for his reconciliation is the Son, Jesus Christ. The divine wisdom of such a plan of salvation can in no way be

67 Ballou, Lecture IV., pp. 50-51.

68 Ibid., p. 51.

frustrated. Ballou was able to conclude that such divine attributes within an all loving and unchangeable God harmonized in love and that they all work in unison, aiming at the highest possible improvement and felicity of all moral beings. ⁶⁹

Ballou maintained that Christ as mediator unfolded the divine plan of salvation for man conceived in the infinite wisdom of God. In this respect, "the gospel of Jesus Christ flows naturally from God...and... all the causes which produce it, or cause it to flow forth to man, are in the nature of the divine Being. He is self-moved in all he does, and of course he is self-moved in the dispensation of his grace." This love of God, for Ballou, is an impartial love infinitely extensive. Such infinite perfection of the Godhead gloriously displays and manifests an unchangeable love and mercy toward all of mankind. ⁷⁰ This Ballou established when he stated

...that the grace by which man obtains salvation and eternal life, flows naturally and necessarily from the nature of God, and

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 51.

⁷⁰ Hosea Ballou, Lecture II., "The Divine Character the Source of all the Grace Manifested in the Gospel; And the Standard for Our Imitation," pp. 20, 21, 26-27.

is known by its peculiar characteristic of love to sinners, we infer that this salvation will eventually be as extensive as the love of God, from which it proceeds. If the love of the divine Being ensures salvation to any of the sinful race of Adam, it equally favors the salvation of all men, as all are equally the objects of divine love. This inference relies on the fact, that the same cause will always produce the same effects. ¶1

The mission and doctrine of Christ for Ballou, had their foundation also in the will of God. Ballou taught that the words of Christ were designed to proclaim his Father's will, for Christ said "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of him that sent me. -- God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. -- The Son of man came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. -- The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." This scriptural verse for Ballou provided the necessary certitude of the mercy and love of God both willing and securing the salvation of all men through his Son, Jesus Christ. ¶2

¶1 Ibid., p. 27.

¶2 Hosea Ballou, Lecture XIII., "Christ Sowing the Good Seed, in Tears," p. 179.

There was for Ballou then but one doctrine of Christ applied to all men, and that doctrine was recognizable by its universality and advocacy of love. In this sense Ballou noted, Jesus taught that his Father loves all men and sent his Son in order that all men might be saved. The theology of man would teach the opposite, maintaining that God withholds his forgiveness and salvation from those that oppose him and threatens them with eternal punishment. The teachings of Jesus are clear in their call to repentance, while the teachings of men hold that the impenitent will be subject to eternal reprobation. ⁷³

7 Ballou was emphatic that Jesus never spoke of the "finally impenitent," but emphasized the forgiveness of sin in order that all men might be drawn to him. The theology of men would "require a sacrifice to appease the divine wrath" of God, and in so doing, rescue but "a part to be drawn to Christ." Ballou closed his remarks on this subject by stressing "The doctrine of Jesus is precious wheat; but the doctrines of men are tares which are to be consumed by the fire of truth and love." ⁷⁴

⁷³ Ibid., p. 181.

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 181-182.

Ballou concluded that the common teaching that Christ's salvific act was designed to appease the divine wrath of God not only lacked scriptural support but was contrary to reason. According to Ballou, the message of salvation as contained in the gospel of Jesus Christ "is a salvation from our sins, from our wanderings, from the darkness of our deceived minds, from all uncleanness, to righteousness, to reconciliation to God, to the knowledge of the truth, and to holiness of life." Man's immortality and the eternal life to which he was destined was foreordained by God in his infinite wisdom and love.⁷⁵ This reconciliation to God was accomplished through Christ by not imputing our sins against us. Ballou notes that the scriptures speaking of Jesus state that the Father "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."⁷⁶

Reconciliation for Ballou then, was the

⁷⁵ Hosea Ballou, Lecture XVII., "Salvation, A Deliverance From Error and Sin, Through the Mercy of God," p. 244.

⁷⁶ Hosea Ballou, Sermon XXII., "Salvation of All A Doctrine of Reproach," p. 293.

conformity of man to both the divine attributes and will of God. Since Ballou viewed the Godhead in terms of divine Love, reconciliation was viewed in light of this divine principle. In other words, "God is known to be love to all his creatures, because he actually does good to all. If we love all God's rational offspring, as our brethren, we are therein reconciled to God. Ballou cites Saint Paul who states that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." For Ballou then, "If this will be in us, and if we can in sincerity pray for this will to be accomplished, we are therein reconciled." This was what Ballou defined as being in conformity with God. ⁶³

Ballou's theology stressed the reconciliation of man to God and emphasized the unchangeable nature of God which he declared to be love. Thus, the mission of Jesus Christ was described "...as an expression of the Father's love..." for all mankind. According to the Universalist historian, Ernest Cassara, Ballou's "...theory of atonement should be considered seriously by all who place Christ, as a revelation of God, at the center of their faith." ⁶⁴

⁶³ Hosea Ballou, Lecture XI., "God Reconciling the World Unto Himself, Through Christ," pp. 158-159.

⁶⁴ Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou: The Challenge to Orthodoxy, Boston Universalist Historical Society and Beacon Press, 1958, pp. 171-172.

The theological system, then, developed by Ballou concerned itself with the doctrine of the trinity and sought to renounce the teaching as unreasonable and lacking in scriptural foundation. The theological scheme which embraced the notions of vicarious suffering and reprobation as necessary to placate the displeasure of a vengeful Deity were also abandoned. Instead, the God-head was viewed as both creator and father of the universe who in his wisdom and goodness exercised mercy and loving compassion to all his creatures. The doctrine of partial election and eternal retribution were equally abandoned, as well as, the notion of the total depravity of man.

The system of thought formulated by Hosea Ballou, which would later be branded as Ultra-Universalism, stood in stark contrast to that body of theology developed by the Reverends John Murray and Elhanan Winchester. Ballou's theological development took shape from 1805 to 1834 in the midst of a divisive theological climate, coupled with the rise of anti-Trinitarian sentiment in New England. The fact that it emerged

during this period, has enabled the historian to see many and varied influences upon his thought.

CHAPTER IV

BALLOU'S THOUGHT IN ITS HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

In examining the development of Hosea Ballou's theological thought, it should be noted that early Universalists have viewed Ballou as being largely an independent thinker and only minimally vulnerable to outside influence.¹ Other contemporary scholars, however, most notably Ernest Cassara, have supported the view that Ballou's theology was largely drawn from the thoughts of prominent writers such as Ethan Allen, Charles Chauncy, and

¹ See Maturin M. Ballou, Biography of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Boston, Abel Tompkins, 1852; Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou; With Accounts of His Writings, and Biographical Sketches of His Sermons and Contemporaries in the Universalist Ministry, 4 vols. Boston, James M. Usher, 1854-1855; Oscar Safford, Hosea Ballou: A Marvellous Life Story Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1889; W. S. Balch, Article V., "Caleb Rich", in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. 9, (New Series), issue of January 1872.

Ferdinand Fetitpierre.²

In addition to this recent scholarship, the critic has the testimony of Ballou himself, who noted the influence of such individuals. He personally acknowledged an indebtedness to Ethan Allen's Reason the Only Oracle of Man,³ and admitted in correspondence with the Reverend Joel Foster, knowledge of Chauncy's doctrinal positions.⁴ Finally, Nathaniel Stacy in his Memoirs notes that while he was under the tutelage of Hosea Ballou, Ferdinand Fetitpierre's Thoughts on Divine Goodness

² See Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou The Challenge to Orthodoxy, Boston, Universalist Historical Society and Beacon Press, 1961; Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou and the Rise of American Religious Liberalism, Boston, Universalist Historical Society, 1958.

³ O. A. Brownson, The Convert, or Leaves from my Experience, New York, Edward E. Dunigan and Brother, 1857, p. 51; see Cassara, Hosea Ballou and the Rise of American Religious Liberalism, pp. 15-16; See Cassara, Hosea Ballou The Challenge to Orthodoxy, p.194, footnote 6.

⁴ William Butler, Editor, Letter X., "From F. to B.," in A Literary Correspondence, Between Joel Foster, A.M. Minister of the Congregational Society In New -Salem, and Hosea Ballou, An Itinerant Preacher of the Sect Called Universalist, Northampton, Massachusetts, William Butler, 1799, p. 62; see Cassara, Hosea Ballou and the Rise of American Religious Liberalism, p. 17.

was widely circulated and read.⁵

The weight of the Enlightenment and Deistic modes of thought are evident in Ballou's theology. For example, his acceptance of reason as a guide to human understanding may be attributed to Ethan Allen, and may be recognized in Ballou's application of it to the scriptures. Although influenced by the Deism of Allen, Ballou nevertheless continued to accept the authenticity of sacred scripture but now interpreted through the use of reason. For Ballou, this mode of understanding was not to be inconsistent with the scriptures.

This interpretive approach of the scriptures inevitably led to the evolution of Ballou's thought which spanned over a period of twenty-five years. His theology took written form in 1805 with the publication of his monumental work A Treatise on Atonement in which he developed his views regarding

⁵ Nathaniel Stacy, Memoirs of the Life of Nathaniel Stacy, Preacher of the Gospel of Universal Grace, Columbus, Pennsylvania, 1850, pp. 68-69; see Cassara, Hosea Ballou and the Rise of American Liberalism, p. 18.

the triune Deity, sin, and the atonement. This publication was followed by a number of subsequent editions with major revisions completed by 1832, which succinctly presents Ballou's theological development.

The Rise of Anti-Trinitarianism

Ballou's examination of the doctrine of the Trinity must be viewed in the context of the rise of anti-Trinitarian sentiment in eighteenth century America. Anti-Trinitarianism was closely related to what was branded as Arianism. The term Arianism was descriptive of that Christology which held to a unitary concept of the Godhead, with Christ viewed as an inferior being yet pre-existent before the creation of the world. Conrad Wright sees this doctrinal interest as influenced by such writers as Samuel Clarke, Thomas Emllyn, Richard Price, and a host of other doctrinal non-conformists. These individuals were described by Wright to be Arian in

their Christology or at least semi-Arian.⁶

Samuel Clarke, in his work The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, presented a commentary on numerous scriptural texts which dealt with the question of the Trinity. He was able to establish from such biblical exegesis, that there is "One Supreme Cause" and author of all things. He described this Cause as "One simple, uncompounded, undivided, intelligent Agent, or Person."⁷

With this Supreme Cause there existed from all eternity a second and third person which were respectively "his Word or Son" and "the Spirit of the Father and of the Son." He concluded that "What the proper Metaphysical Nature, Essence, or Substance of any of these divine Persons is, the Scripture has no where at all declared; but describes and distinguishes them always, by their

⁶ Conrad Wright, The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America, Boston, Starr King Press, 1955, p. 201.

⁷ Samuel Clarke, "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," in The Works of Samuel Clarke, Vol. 4, London, John and Paul Knapton, 1738, p. 122.

PERSONAL Characters, Offices, Powers, and Attributes."⁸

Similarly, Richard Price's Sermons on the Christian Doctrine dealt with those aspects of Christian belief espoused by Trinitarian, Calvinist, Unitarian and Socinian. In these Sermons, Price examined the various Christian views of the Godhead; however, in two sermons he addressed his remarks to Christ's pre-existence and the question of his salvific mission.⁹

This type of Arianism differed from what was designated as Socinianism. While Socinianism held "to the unpersonality of God and the subordinate rank of Christ," it "made of Christ a man, though one whom God created wholly perfect, and endowed with special authority and a faithful revelation of his will." Historically, such thought dates back to Poland, Transylvania, and England prior

⁸ Loc. cit.

⁹ Richard Price, Sermons on the Christian Doctrine, As Received by the Different Denominations of Christians, Boston, E. W. Weld and W. Greenough, 1794, p. 6, see Sermons vi-x.

to its expression in America. 10

The early seventeen hundreds in America saw little doctrinal questioning of the Trinity. Benjamin Kent, Robert Breck and John Rogers were the noticeable exceptions. However, by 1755, Jonathan Mayhew's Sermons appeared questioning the doctrinal tenet of the Athanasian Creed, as contradictory of those scriptural passages recorded in I Cor. 8, 4, 1 Tim. 2, 5, Heb. 1.9, John 17, and Exod. 22.20. 11 In 1756, Thomas Emlyn's An Humble Inquiry was published for a second time. Emlyn sought to refute Trinitarianism by having recourse to the scriptures, recognizing that "even

10 Earl Morse Wilbur, A History of Unitarianism Socinianism and its Antecedents, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1945, p. 4; Wright, op. cit., p. 202.

11 Wright, ibid., pp. 202-204; Jonathan Mayhew, Sermon IX., "Of the Nature and Principle of Evangelical Obedience", in Sermons, Boston, Richard Draper, 1755, p. 269 note; Sermon XII., "On the Shortness and Vanity of Human Life", ibid., p. 417 note; Sermon XI., "On the Deceitfulness of the Heart, and God's Perfect Knowledge Thereof", ibid., p. 403.

among professed Christians themselves, Christ crucified is to some a stumbling-block, and to others foolishness." 12

This public criticism was met head on by sermons and speeches in defense of Christ's divinity in relation to the Godhead. Drs. Sewall, Prince, and Foxcroft sponsored Ebenezer Pemberton's work All Power in Heaven, and in Earth Given unto Jesus Christ for publication and circulation. Pemberton attempted to establish "the true and proper divinity of Jesus Christ" as gleaned from the scriptures. Yet he himself admitted that "I am surrounded, with Mysteries in the World of Nature, and it is not at all surprising, I should meet with them in the System of Grace. The Man, who will not receive any Proposition, as true, which he doth not perfectly comprehend, must immediately

12 Thomas Emlyn, An Humble Inquiry into the Scripture Account of Jesus Christ: or, A Short Argument Concerning his Deity and Glory, According to the Gospel, Now republished, with a Dedication to the Reverend Ministers of all Denominations in New-England; By a Layman., Boston, Edes and Gill, 1756, pp. 13, 54.

commence Sceptic, and doubt of every Thing." 13

In addition to the previously mentioned clergymen, such prominent divines as Jonathan Edwards, Jonathan Parsons, Joseph Bellamy and Aaron Burr attempted to come to grips with this form of anti-Trinitarianism. Aaron Burr's publication Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ Maintained did just this. Burr perceived his purpose in undertaking this work as a search for truth. This he said could be presented "in a Manner plain and intelligible, even to the lowest and most vulgar Capacity; the Subject being such as equally concerns the High and Low, the Wise and Simple, the Learned and Illiterate, to understand." 14

Joseph Bellamy likewise upheld a traditional religious orthodoxy. He maintained the existence

13 Wright, op. cit., pp. 205-206; Ebenezer Pemberton, All Power in Heaven, and in Earth Given unto Jesus Christ, Boston, D. Fowle and Z. Fowle, 1756, pp. 29, 21, 30.

14 Wright, op. cit., pp. 206-208; Aaron Burr, Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ Maintained, Boston, J. Draper, 1757, p. 2.

of a triune Deity was abundantly clear in those scriptural texts derived from Mt. xxviii.19, 2 Cor. xiii.13 and 1 Jn. v. 7. He further stated, "this doctrine we must believe, or we cannot understand the gospel. How they are three, and how they are one, is not revealed, nor is it necessary for us to know; but that there are three persons in the God-head, and yet but one God, we must believe; and what characters they sustain, and what parts they act in the affair of our salvation, we must understand." 15

By the late seventeen hundreds, Socinianism would gain inroads in New England through the influence of both James Freeman and William Bentley. Together, they were largely responsible for disseminating a number of works and tracts of the English Unitarian, Joseph Priestley. 16 Such

15 Joseph Bellamy, Discourse II., "Showing the Nature of the Gospel, and of a Genuine Compliance With It", in The Works of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy, D.D., Vol. 1, New York, Stephen Dodge, 1811, pp. 294-295.

16 Wright, op. cit., pp. 216, 215; See Joseph Priestley, Discourse Relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion, Philadelphia, John Thompson, 1796; and A History of the Corruptions of Christianity, 2 vols., Boston, William Spotwood, 1797.

Christological issues raised during this period were the triune nature of God, the question of Christ's subordination to the Father, the related areas regarding his humanity and pre-existent being, and his mediatorial function between God and man. All of these were to force within theological circles a re-examination of the doctrine on atonement.

The position adopted by Mayhew was Grotian in that it adhered to a "governmental" form of atonement. For Mayhew, Christ's sacrificial act supports the excellence of the Deity's moral government without exacting punishment of each individual sinner. ¹⁷ Jonathan Mayhew states:

...infinite goodness itself, considered in connection with infinite wisdom, requires that order, and the highest veneration for the majesty of God, his laws and government, should be preserved amongst all his reasonable creatures. Their own good essentially depends upon it. And this important end is most effectually attained by the sacrifice

¹⁷ Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-219. *The term Grotian is derivative of the 16th century Dutch jurist and theologian, Hugo Grotius, who was deeply involved in a religious dispute over the question of predestination. ;

of Christ, 'by whom we have received the atonement.' 18

This theological view of the atonement stood in direct contrast to the Anselmic theory, which held God to be an infinite Being and any transgression against his law to be an infinite offense which demanded an exact atonement in kind. Christ paid this debt in full by offering himself as an expiation for mankind's transgression. In this sense, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the chosen among men in order that God's benevolence and merciful salvation might be extended to sinful man. 19

Charles Chauncy would likewise reject the Anselmic view of the atonement. He maintained that "Christ's work was finished on the cross, and needed neither faith, or any thing else that could be found in, or done by, us, to render it more

18 Jonathan Mayhew, Sermon II., "Some Objections against the Goodness of God Considered; and the Subject applied to the Occasion, with Practical Inferences and Reflections," in Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfections of the Divine Goodness, Boston, D. and J. Kneeland, 1763, p. 64.

19 Wright, op. cit., p. 218.

complete...." ²⁰ Others such as Joseph Bellamy, Samuel Hopkins, and Jonathan Edwards, Jr. would assent in various ways to the governmental theory which would become a distinguishing characteristic of the theology of New England. ²¹

It was within this historical and theological context that Hosea Ballou published his famous Treatise in 1805. Ballou clearly stated his intentions in the beginning of this work, namely, "to free the scripture doctrine of atonement from those incumbrances which have done it so much injury; and open a door at least, for the subject to be investigated on reasonable grounds, and by fair argument." Ballou maintained that because man was created rational by his Creator, God must have intended those religious beliefs as necessary, to be attained and comprehended through this mode of understanding. ²² Thus, his views throughout

²⁰ Charles Chauncy, Sermon VI., "The Place and Use of Faith, in the Affair of Justification," in Twelve Sermons, Boston, D. and J. Kneeland, 1765, p. 152.

²¹ Wright, op. cit., p. 220.

²² The Author, Hosea Ballou, "A Letter to the Reader", A Treatise on Atonement, Boston, A. Tompkins, 1858, p. 4.

his Treatise are reflective of eighteenth century Enlightenment thought with its reliance upon human reason as a guide to human understanding.

The Doctrine of the Trinity .

There is no doubt that Ballou was affected by the thought and period during which he lived. However, modern day scholarship has shown that of all the influences possibly exerted upon Ballou's thought, Ethan Allen's Reason the Only Oracle of Man stands forth as the single most important factor which shaped Ballou's ideas regarding the trinity.

Ballou examined the doctrine of the trinity within his Treatise as it related to his views regarding the atonement and Christ's mediatorial role in God's salvific plan. While the Treatise was not intended as a detailed refutation in this area, Ballou cast off the trinitarian doctrine as not only absurd but unreasonable. Speaking of Christ in relation to such a triune Deity,

considered as one and eternal, Ballou reasons in the following manner: ... "if he be the Son of God, he is the son of himself, and is his own father; that he is no more the Son of God, than God is his son! To say, of two persons, exactly of the same age, that one of them is a real son of the other, is to confound good sense." ²³ This reliance upon reason and a unitary conception of the Godhead may be attributed to the thought of Allen.

It was Allen who attacked the trinitarian doctrine as stated in the Athanasian Creed as erroneous. He sought to demonstrate the contradiction and unreasonableness of a triune Deity, with each person considered as distinct, co-existent, and co-eternal. This belief, for Allen, necessitated the acceptance of the existence of three Deities. Allen explains: .. "the three could not be one and the same God, any more than Diana, Dagon and Moloch, may be supposed to be the same; and if three Gods, their essences and

²³ Hosea Ballou, A Treatise on Atonement..., Boston, A. Tompkins, 1858, p. 96.

providences would interfere, and make universal confusion and disorder." ²⁴ Ballou would also assert that "if the Godhead consists of three distinct persons, and each of those persons be infinite, the whole Godhead amounts to the amazing sum of infinity, multiplied by three!" ²⁵

Allen's conception of the Godhead to have but one essence, whose identity is described as eternal and infinite, necessarily admitted to the exclusion of any other in the nature of that being. Ballou is indebted to Allen for this monist approach to the personhood of the Deity which preserved for him the singular view of the absolute glory and perfection of the divine nature of God. For Allen, "The essence of any beings is that by which they are distinguished from each other, and which constitutes and gives being to identity itself." ²⁶

²⁴ Ethan Allen, Reason the Only Oracle of Man, or A Compendious System of Natural Religion, Bennington, Vermont, Haswell and Russell, 1784, pp. 343, 346-347.

²⁵ Ballou, op. cit., p. 96.

²⁶ Allen, op. cit., pp. 348-349.

For this reason, Allen extends his argument:

Now, inasmuch as we know, from our own experience, that three persons cannot exist in one essence, how unreasonable is it to ascribe a trinity of persons to the divine nature; which, if admitted to be true, overturns all our notions of identity; for if three persons are one and the same, they can no more be three, than three units may be one, or one may be three, which is mathematically impossible. 27

Allen would conclude from such reasoning that Trinitarianism gave evidence not only of idolatrous but superstitious tendencies. 28

In abandoning the doctrine of the trinity, Allen is seen as a "strict Deist," viewing Jesus as merely a man, while Ballou espoused an Arian conception and later socinian view. Under Allen's influence, Ballou was able to put forth in his earlier editions of his Treatise an Arian view of Christ. 29

27 Ibid., p. 350.

28 Ibid., p. 352.

29 Carol Morris, "A Comparison of Ethan Allen's 'Reason the Only Oracle of Man' and Hosea Ballou's 'A Treatise on Atonement', in The Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Vol. 2, 1960-1961, pp. 38, 58.

In his 1805 edition,

Christ is said to be the "image of the invisible God, and the first born of every creature." His being the first born of every creature, agrees with his being the beginning of the creation of God. It is plain to me, from scripture, that the Mediator is the first human soul which was created, as Adam was the first man that was formed; and that he is, in spirit, the father of every human creature, as much as Adam is in the flesh. 30

This significant passage is omitted in Ballou's Treatise of 1832 and later editions which evince a socinian view. During the period of Ballou's theological development after 1832, Christ is depicted as "a created dependent being" inferior and dependent upon the Father. To support his contention that Christ was a created being, Ballou cited Rev. 111. 14 which records Christ to be "the beginning of the creation of God." His dependency was most noticeably substantiated in Mt. xxiv. 36,

30 Hosea Ballou, A Treatise on Atonement..., Randolph, Vermont, Sereno Wright, 1805, p. 111.

Mk. xiii. 32 and Jn. v. 19 where Jesus, speaking of himself states, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." 31

For Ballou, Christ's role as mediator is likened to that of a representative of the Deity. He thereby upheld the unity of the Godhead seeing Christ in relation to this Supreme Being as merely a man yet exalted by God among his fellow creatures. See Phillipians ii. 9. Emphasis here is placed upon his exaltation as dependent upon God, and in his assigned capacity as mediator. Christ is thus capable of fulfilling the task for which he was destined by God. Ballou states "If all power in heaven and earth be committed to Christ, no doubt can be entertained of its sufficiency." 32

Charles Chauncy is seen by this author to have largely shaped Ballou's conception of Christ's

31 Ballou, ibid., 1858 edition, p. 113;

32 Ibid., pp. 115, 114, 117.

role as mediator between God and man. It was Chauncy who utilized those scriptural texts found in I Jn iii.8, Jn. i. 29 and Matt. 1.21 to show Christ's role in the defeat of sin and the accomplishment of redemption. Chauncy perceived the purpose of Christ's mediatorial role to be conciliatory, that is, to rescue man's degeneracy through Christ. This Chauncy asserted through the authority of the scriptures "which speak of the destruction of sin, the saving men from their sins, the taking away their sins, as the great design of the mediatorial mission of Jesus Christ into our world." 33

Where Ballou regards Jesus as merely an exalted creature, Chauncy's high Arianism views Christ in relation to the Supreme Godhead whose work of salvation encompassed all men as free and moral beings. Chauncy describes the Kingdom

33 Charles Chauncy, The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations made Manifest by the Gospel Revelation: Or, The Salvation of All Men..., London, Charles Dilly, 1784, pp. 171-172.

established by God in which all would be subjected to Christ as "head of the government of God." This in turn, was to be accomplished by Jesus Christ in "THIS STATE OR ANOTHER." Subjection to Christ, therefore, is to be voluntarily accomplished in man through "freedom and love," rather than by force. Ballou's mediatorial scheme is suggestive of Chauncy's influence here yet devoid of man's free volition. Of course, unlike Ballou, Chauncy did not attempt a refutation of Trinitarianism.³⁴

Ballou borrowed many of the scriptural references employed by Allen to support that Christ himself relinquished all claims to divinity in the proclamation of his own limited knowledge and judgment. Both for Allen and Ballou, the scriptural account in Mt. xxiv. 36 and Mk. xiii. 32, concerning Christ's response on the last day of judgment, were sufficient evidence to disclaim the divinity of Christ. Allen sees Christ ranking "himself with finite beings, and with them acknowledges,

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 193, 170, 196.

that he did not know the day and hour of judgment." 35
 These passages, along with many others, Allen and
 Ballou employed to support their contention that
 Jesus Christ was a created finite being who always
 recognized his finiteness and submission to a
 higher Being -- to God the Father.

In the above manner did Ballou employ the
 argument of Allen to disprove the divinity of
 Christ. This questioning of the orthodox view
 of the "hypostatic union" led Allen to conclude
 that such a doctrinal position would only lead
 one to admit to a "mutability in the divine
 nature." This in effect would negate the eternal
 perfection and completeness attributed to the
 Deity. 36 The "oneness" then, spoken of by Christ
 which exists between the Father and Him, for Ballou,
 is none other than "their union and agreement in
 the great work which he has undertaken." 37

35 Allen op. cit., p. 353; Ballou, op. cit.,
 p. 113.

36 Allen, op. cit., p. 355.

37 Ballou, op. cit., p. 115; see Cassara,
Hosea Ballou The Challenge to Orthodoxy, p. 69.

Like Chauncy, Ballou's earlier editions of the Treatise exhibited a form of high Arianism. However, by 1832, Ballou's thought was seen to parallel that of Joseph Priestley concerning the denial of the Arian conception of a pre-existent Christ. This juncture in Ballou's theology is likened to Priestley's theological views expressed in his work A General View of the Arguments for the Unity of God. Ballou published this work in the November issues of the Universalist Magazine of 1819. In this work, Priestley presented arguments against the Arian and Trinitarian concept of the Deity. His doctrinal position discarded the view of the pre-existent Christ in relation to the Godhead, and adhered to the belief "of the simple humanity of Christ." 38

38 See Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou and the Rise of Religious Liberalism, op. cit., p. 23; also Joseph Priestley, "A General View of the Arguments for the Unity of God. From Reason, from the Scriptures, and from History", Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, Nos. 19-20, issues of November 6, 13, 20, 27, 1819, pp. 73-74, 77-78, 81-82, 85.

Ballou's Notion of Sin

Directly related to Ballou's conception of the Deity in relation to Jesus Christ was his view regarding the finite nature of sin. In the early part of his Treatise, Ballou attacked the concept that sin is infinite. Ballou maintained that man being a finite creature, his intellectual capacity is likewise limited. Ballou defined the very nature of sin as a "violation of a law which exists in the mind, which law is the imperfect knowledge men have of moral good." ³⁹

From this definition, Ballou envisioned man's sin as finite. He argued that since man's intellectual capacity is finite and limited, he cannot be held to an infinite law beyond his ability to fully comprehend. If the opposite were true, and sin were infinite, then man's flagrant defiance of an infinite law would negate the divine purpose determined by God for all mankind, namely, his salvation. ⁴⁰

³⁹ Ballou, op. cit., p. 15; see Morris, op. cit., p. 53.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 16; see Cassara, Hosea Ballou, The Challenge to Orthodoxy, pp. 54-55.

This argument was consistent for Ballou since his view of an infinite Deity was conceived through his infinite attributes. Since Ballou maintained that God has willed all men to be saved, Ballou's logic could not envision such a divine plan being altered. This in itself would not only contradict but frustrate the very justice, wisdom, prescience, and omnipotence of God. ⁴¹

Ballou's denial of the infinity of sin rested in the belief that "...if once we admit a principle of divine justice to have an existence, it is granted that sin is bounded by it, and therefore cannot be infinite; and it is a fact that sin can nowhere exist, only where it can be compared with justice." Furthermore, if the infinity of sin were upheld, Ballou argued, it could not be "superseded by any principle or being in the universe," and this in itself,

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 16-17; see Cassara, ibid., p. 55.

would lead to a denial of the existence of a Divine Being. ⁴² Ballou concludes

...that if God possesses infinite wisdom, he could never intend any thing to take place, or be, that will not take place, or be; nor that which is, or will be, not to be, at the time when it is. And it must be considered erroneous to suppose that the ALLwise ever desired any thing to take place, which by his prescience, he knew would not. ⁴³

Ballou is indebted to Ethan Allen, Charles Chauncy, and Ferdinand Petitpierre for much of his thought regarding sin. Ballou's conception of the nature of sin may be attributed in part to Allen. For it was he who denied that the apostasy of man was to be considered an infinite offense against God, inasmuch as, an infinite evil would be incompatible with the infinite attribute of divine goodness. Furthermore, an infinite offense would in turn demand a like retribution. As a finite created being,

⁴² Ibid., pp. 18-19; see Cassara, p. 55.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 16-17; see Cassara, p. 55.

man's actions must then be considered as finite and limited. ⁴⁴

Consequently, for Allen, an infinite atonement was unnecessary, since the infinity of sin was denied. Such an atonement, with its acceptance of the notion of imputation, was viewed by Allen as "incompatible with the moral perfections of God." Its incompatibility was most properly seen in relation to the unchangeable nature and justice of God. He maintained that "the eternal justice and reason of things can never be altered." Furthermore, an injustice of greater magnitude would result if the punishment due an entire race were laid upon an innocent party or being. This he saw as being the case in regard to Jesus Christ. ⁴⁵ Ballou similarly emphasized in his refutation of the infinity of sin, the unchangeable nature of God based upon the principles of divine justice. For Allen, the Godhead was viewed through the infinite attributes of this Divine Being.

⁴⁴ Allen, op. cit., pp. 110, 113.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 404-405.

Additional areas where Ballou's thought was largely affected by outside influence is seen in the many arguments presented concerning the infinity of sin, man's progressive awareness of moral evil through suffering, the concept of sin itself, and the question of eternal punishment. Ballou's thought, in these respects, parallels much that is found in the works of Ethan Allen, Charles Chauncy, and Ferdinand Petitpierre.

Allen would maintain that sin is finite as it originated from finite mortal creatures. He stressed that as a finite created being man's actions must also be considered as limited.⁴⁶ Similarly, Chauncy stated that the origin of sin rests with finite beings "...and the effect of finite principles, passions and appetites."⁴⁷ Ferdinand Petitpierre would also uphold the limitations of mortal man in reference to the claim that

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 113.

⁴⁷ Chauncy, The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations made Manifest by the Gospel Revelation: Or, The Salvation of All Men..., pp. 319-320.

sin is infinite. He states

Should we not, instead of refuting such an argument, perceive at the first glance, that it refutes itself, and proves nothing, because it proves infinitely too much? A being who merits infinite punishment, is a being infinitely culpable; a being infinitely culpable is a being infinitely wicked; and a being infinitely wicked, is a being infinite. Thus is the sinner, mortal man! a being so weak and finite, by the help of this argument, transformed into an infinite being? Thus we see the fallacy of an argument which leads to such absurd and irrational conclusions. 48

Ballou's scriptural base for refuting the infinity of sin rested on biblical testimony regarding the various degrees or levels of sin. Ample evidence to support this contention was found by Ballou in Matt. xii. 31 and the first Epistle of John v. 16. Therefore, Ballou's reasoning could not adhere to the infinite nature of sin, since if this were the case, all sin would

48 Ferdinand Olivier Petitpierre, "Thoughts on The Divine Goodness, Relative to the Government of Moral Agents, Particularly Displayed in Future Rewards and Punishments", in Select Theological Library: Containing Valuable Publications Principally Treating of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, Philadelphia, Gihon, Fairchild and Co., 1843, p. 33.

be equal in offense and in gravity.⁴⁹ Similarly, Allen would maintain, to adhere to the infinity of sin "would confound all our notions of the degrees or aggravations of sin; so that the sin would be the same to kill my neighbor as it would be to kill his horse...." 50

For Ballou, the infinite nature of sin was best seen in man's own limitations in that man cannot perceive the long range effects of his acts. This was most apparent in the scriptural account relating the sale of Joseph into slavery by his brothers. According to Ballou, this act in itself was sinful "but it was finite, considered as sin, for it was bounded by the narrowness of their understandings, limited by their ignorance...." 51

In another reference to the sale of Joseph, Ballou maintained that had this sinful act been infinite, the consequences of good which resulted

49 Ballou, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

50 Allen, op. cit., p. 111; see Carol Morris, p. 52.

51 Ballou, op. cit., pp. 20-21; see Cassara, p. 56.

could not have occurred. Out of such an act came good, only because God intended it to be so. Sin then resides in man's will prior to the execution of his acts. For Ballou, "no action unconnected with design ought to be considered sin; it is then an evil intention that constitutes an evil action." 52

Allen's ideas on this subject are seen to again permeate the thought of Ballou. It was Allen who saw moral evil or sin residing in man's individual "designs and intentions" which he says "crown all our actions, and denominate them to be either good or bad, virtuous or vicious." Allen maintained that sin or "moral evil must result from the agency of finite beings, consisting in their sinful deviation from the rules of eternal unerring order and reason, which is moral rectitude in the abstract." Moral rectitude is arrived at through intellectual reflection (Reason) and experiential knowledge (Sensation). 53

52 Ibid., pp. 21-22; see Cassara, p. 56; Morris, p. 55.

53 Allen, op. cit., pp. 334; 112, 142, 466; see Cassara, p. 25.

In his consideration of the immortality of the soul, Allen stressed the fact that "The senses are exquisitely well calculated to make discoveries of external objects to the mind, they are the medium through which the mind receives its first notices of things, or mere apprehension of them, without denying or affirming anything concerning them...." Human knowledge, Allen argued, comes by way of man's senses as discerned through his reason. Thus man is able to arrive at the knowledge of moral rectitude gradually through experience and by way of reason. 54

Ballou is dependent upon Allen for his views on the acquisition of knowledge in this Lockian sense. Allen adhered to the view "that the whole superstructure of our reasoning is demonstratively predicated on simple ideas, which result mediately from the instrumentality of the senses, through the medium whereof the mind is

54 Ibid., p. 142; see Cassara, p. 25.

enabled to display its rational nature." Ballou incorporated within his Treatise the concept of man's progressive awareness of the heinous aspect of sin in comparison to the happiness associated with the practice of virtue and moral righteousness. 55

Common to Allen, Petitpierre, and Chauncy was the Enlightenment concept of a Deity who seeks the happiness of all men. Ballou maintains that man was created by God for happiness and thus it is that man strives for in all his actions. His explanation of sin is based upon this premise. In the quest for this state of happiness, man is often mistaken as to what constitutes true happiness. Thus man is attracted to evil because such evil appears pleasureable and beneficial at the time. For this reason, according to Ballou, the most severe exhortations regarding eternal punishment will not serve as a deterrent for sin. Ballou's equation of sin with misery enabled him to envision

55 Ibid., p. 210; see Carol Morris, op. cit., pp. 38, 40; Ballou, op. cit., p. 45.

mankind gradually developing an awareness of this fact. 56

Allen also saw God directing mankind to a proper state of happiness and moral rectitude by "convincing them from experimental suffering, that sin and vanity are their greatest enemies," and that true happiness is achieved in leading a moral and Godlike existence. Much of Ballou's thought in this regard is attributed to Allen who saw the divine rationale behind punitive action as chastisement for the purpose of reclamation. He thus lashed out at the Calvinists who claimed such punishment was of an eternal nature, thereby upholding the glory of God and the happiness of the predestined. Allen seems confounded by this theological position when he writes "how narrow and contracted must such notions of infinite justice and goodness be?" 57

56 Ballou, op. cit., pp. 43-45, 57; see Cassara, pp. 58, 59, 64; Morris, p. 54.

57 Allen, op. cit., pp. 118-119; see Cassara, pp. 25-26.

Ballou is indebted to Chauncy who also equated the vanity of sin with misery. Chauncy saw the concept of vanity upheld in The Book of Ecclesiastes which characterizes man's earthly existence in like terminology. For Chauncy, such "vanity includes in it not only mortality, but all the unavoidable unhappiness and imperfection of this present weak, frail, mortal state." 58

Chauncy would argue that a finite offense is not deserving of an infinite retribution, as such a fate would contradict the infinite justice, wisdom, goodness, and benevolence of the Deity. These attributes of God in themselves suggest that if a punishment were to be rendered, it would be for the purpose of correction and discipline. This correction of mankind is administered by an all loving God "to humble, and prove, and do them good in their latter end." 59 Herein would lie another

58 Chauncy, op. cit., p. 104.

59 Ibid., pp. 320-322, 325.

source for Ballou's thought regarding the disciplinary aspect of divine punishment. For Ballou; such chastisement was not to be without end, but only designed to gradually impress upon those subjects the awareness that true happiness consists in moral and godlike righteousness.

Chauncy saw this disciplinary aspect of retribution substantiated throughout the scriptures, especially in psalm lxxxix. 31-33 where it is recorded "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. NEVERTHELESS, MY LOVING - KINDNESS WILL I NOT UTTERLY TAKE FROM THEM." 60

In these above cited verses, Chauncy sees the mercy, kindness, and goodness of God upheld in relation to the Fatherhood of God. He is able to conclude then "that the design of evil, punishment,

60 Ibid., p. 325.

or misery, in the FUTURE WORLD, as well as this, is to DISCIPLINE wicked men, and, in this way, to effect their OWN PERSONAL, as well as the general good." ⁶¹ Ballou was supported by Chauncy in his scriptural exegesis. Chauncy, however, was reliant upon the method employed in the writings of the Reverend John Taylor of Norwich. It was Taylor who attempted to discern the scriptures by utilizing a technique which "involved a careful comparison of all texts relevant to a particular doctrine, a determination of the meaning of obscure words by a linguistic analysis which called for thorough knowledge of the original tongues, and the elucidation of obscure passages by paraphrases." ⁶²

In yet another concept, Allen's and Ballou's thought are seen to parallel each other. Both reject the traditional explanation of the Fall of man and the origin of evil. It was Allen who dismissed the story in Genesis II.9 of man's temptation as a chimerical account insupportable by history. Nowhere in the annals of man, claimed Allen, was there recorded the existence of such a "tree of life."

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 325, 326, 328.

⁶² Ibid., pp. xi, xii; Wright, op. cit., p. 77. See John Taylor's, Scriptural Doctrine of Original Sin; Paraphrase and Notes upon the Epistle to the Romans; and Key to the Apostolic Writings.

Furthermore, the penalty of death imposed upon the first of these creatures of mankind was also insupportable from a scriptural point of view. Death was viewed by him as none other than the termination of all creation under the law of nature. For Allen "that death and dissolution was the inevitable and irreversible condition of the law of nature, which wholly precludes the curse, of which Moses informs us, from having any effect on mankind." 63

In reference to the transmission of what was termed "original sin," Allen denied both its existence and its transmission by natural generation as extremely doubtful. Allen argued that even mankind's physical generation supports this belief, since no proof can be afforded that man even lineally descended from the same original progenitors. 64

Ballou similarly discarded the origin of

63 Allen, op. cit., pp. 358, 363, 362.

64 Ibid., pp. 369, 376, 372-373.

sin as Miltonian in its explanation and interpretation. He approached the subject having recourse to the scriptures bolstered by the use of reason. In so doing, Ballou sought figuratively to explain the account in Genesis. In his early editions of the Treatise, Ballou placed the "Fall" "in the formation of carnal man after the creation of spiritual man...." He traced the account of creation culminating in the formation of man in the very image of God. For Ballou, the image or mirror of this exalted creation was creation's first begotten -- Christ.⁶⁵ He states

God created man, in Christ the Mediator; in which creation, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.... After the creation of man in this divine constitution, it pleased the All - mighty to reduce him to a state of formation in flesh and blood; in which constitution, the law of sin... became the governing principle of the whole man.⁶⁶

Ernest Cassara notes that Ballou may have

⁶⁵ Ballou, op. cit., pp. 24, 30; Morris, p. 39; Cassara, p. 57.

⁶⁶ Ballou, A Treatise on Atonement..., 1805, pp. 131-132; see Morris, pp. 59-60.

derived his notions of man's formation and creation from Ethan Allen. If so, Ballou employed such a distinction within a scriptural context.⁶⁷ Also, Caleb Rich provides another possible source, for it was he who stated that

God created all men in Christ, pure and holy in spirit; but when he formed them in Adam, out of the dust of the earth, man became subject to vanity, and so "sin, as we call it," originated in the flesh, and ended with the same. The spirit, being of heavenly origin, remained pure, though blended with our mortal bodies -- as pure metals are the same before being separated from the earth and dross, as afterwards; as wheat is the same before being separated from the chaff -- and hence the consequences of sin end with the flesh.⁶⁸

Ballou's early thought then envisioned man originally created in Christ and later formed from the earth. Sin, then, originated from man's earthly nature. His later editions of the Treatise from

⁶⁷ Ernest Cassara, op. cit., p. 199, footnote 23; Ethan Allen, Reason the Only Oracle of Man, pp. 70-71.

⁶⁸ Balch, "Caleb Rich", op. cit., p. 62.

1832 on stress the carnality of sin while abandoning the previously held theory of man's creation. Man, nevertheless, was still considered by Ballou to be of celestial origin because he is in possession of a "law of moral, or spiritual life." By having reference to both 1 Cor. xv. 45 and Heb. i. 3, Ballou is able after 1832 to state "'The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.' This we may say is that image of God in which man was created, as Christ is said to be the 'brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person.'" 69

As to Satanic influence under the guise of a serpent, Allen found such a figure difficult to reconcile with the providential character of God. For this reason, he regarded the devil or tempter as "chimerical and without foundation." 70

Allen maintained

For all possible moral evil that ever did or can take place in the

69 Ibid., 1858 edition, pp. 32-34; see Morris, pp. 59-60; Cassara, p. 134.

70 Allen, op. cit., p. 380-381.

infinitude of the creation of God, is neither more nor less than the deviation of moral agents from moral rectitude; and such deviations take place in consequence of a wrong and vicious use of liberty: This is the only possible origin of moral evil, and is equally possible to all probationary agents, as there always was, and ever will be the same liability to transgression or sin in all finite probationists, as to any promised devil. 71

A Satanic being and influence were also denied by Ballou as mythological and contrary to reason. The existence of such an ominous creature universally active, he argued, would have to share the omnipresence of the Deity. Accordingly then, sin stems from the concupiscent flesh and carnal mind of man. This Ballou remained assured for Rom. viii.20 records "Thus man, as a partaker of flesh and blood, 'was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope.'" In this manner did Ballou see the temptation of the first woman Eve and the classic account of the temptation of Jesus. 72

71 Ibid., p. 380.

72 Ballou, op. cit., pp. 47, 32, 48-49; see Cassara, p. 59.

Ballou's figurative interpretation laid open the charge that the authorship of sin rested with God, along with the denial of the notion of free will. With certain qualifications, Ballou concurred:

God may be the innocent and holy cause of that, which, in a limited sense, is sin; but as it respects the meaning of God, it is intended for good. It is not casting any disagreeable reflections on the Almighty, to say he determined all things for good; and to believe he superintends all the affairs of the universe, not excepting sin, is a million times more to the honor of God than to believe he cannot, -or that he does not when he can. 73

Ballou's denial of man's freedom of choice leads him to the conviction that God is the author and first cause of sin. This fact alone rests upon the infinite wisdom and foreknowledge of God who directs and controls all events of the universe. 74

73 Ibid., p. 36; see Cassara, pp. 57-58; Morris, p. 55.

74 Ibid., pp. 37, 41.

This type of determinism Ballou may have inherited from his Calvinistic background. However, Ferdinand Petitpierre's Thoughts on the Divine Goodness must be taken into consideration as a possible source. Petitpierre's influence is plausible since his work was published in this country during the late seventeen and early eighteen hundreds.

Petitpierre's thought is most apparent as Ballou embraces the concept of the infinite goodness of God as manifested through his benevolence and love. It was Petitpierre who examined the very nature, design, duration, consequences and effects of this divine attribute. He maintained "the impossibility of there being in God any thing in contradiction to his infinite goodness..." 75

Petitpierre's acceptance of the notion of God's guiding role in all the affairs of men provides the necessary basis for Ballou's determinism. It was Petitpierre who viewed this infinite liberty as consisting "in an absolute exemption from all

75 Petitpierre, op. cit., pp. 8, 16.

restraint, and a freedom to execute every design and purpose of his goodness, without impediment." Thus he envisioned all things as emanating from God who presides "over the universe, governing and directing every action in time and in space." God then is perceived to ultimately cause sin, but only to bring about a greater good. Ballou's utilization of those scriptural passages cited by Petitpierre, especially in reference to the sale of Joseph by his brothers, substantiates further Petitpierre's influence on Ballou. 76

For Ballou, man's carnal mind remains confused in its view of the Deity as witnessed in the scriptures. Here God is depicted as a changeable being "provoked to anger and jealousy." The concept of an unchangeable God, Ballou found supported by St. James, who spoke of God as one in whom "there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." Ballou sees this conception of God rooted in a mind quickened by the "spirit of life in Christ Jesus...." Christ

76 Ibid., pp. 37-39; see Morris, p. 55.

then becomes the focal point in which man's Adamic nature is able to meet the demands of God's law.⁷⁷ This was all made possible through a reconciliation or atonement.

Ballou's Views on the Atonement

Before presenting his views on the atonement, Ballou considered within his Treatise the prevailing theories on atonement and questioned their foundation. The first of these theories was the Anselmic view which was adhered to by the orthodox Calvinists. This theory upheld the infinite nature of sin, the notion of vicarious suffering through the mediation of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of election and endless punishment. While Ballou's position stressed the finite nature of sin, he questioned the effects of such a meritorious act resultant to the elect, at the expense of the condemned. For Ballou, such a theory did not come to terms

⁷⁷ Ballou, op. cit., pp. 67-68; see Cassara, p. 61.

with the fate of the condemned, who must suffer endless torments for an act committed by Adam prior to their existence. 78

Ballou also questioned this partiality attributed to God by referring to the scriptures to substantiate the impartiality of the Creator. Numerous texts were cited by Ballou from Is. liii. 5-6, 1 Tim. ii. 5-6, 1 Jn. ii. 1,2 and Heb. .ii.9 in which Christ is said to have reconciled all and every man to the Father. 79

The next theory on atonement examined by Ballou expresses the purpose of Christ's death as the glorification of the Supreme Deity "manifested in his holy and righteous law." In this sense, Christ paid in full the debt incurred by Adam's transgression, thereby satisfying divine justice while upholding the glory of God. 80

78 Ballou, op. cit., pp. 69-70; see Morris, p. 62; Cassara, p. 62.

79 Ibid., p. 78; see Cassara, pp. 63, 200, note 52.

80 Ibid., pp. 84-85; Morris, p. 63.

Ballou saw such a theory maintaining

...that by Christ's suffering the penalty of the law, justice is as fully satisfied, as if all mankind had been made miserable for an eternity. And this being the case, it is now just and right for God to acquit as many of the sinful race of Adam, as is consistent with his grand object, which is himself; yet by no means rendering it unjust for God to punish, to all eternity, as many as is necessary, in order for the satisfying of the same grand object. 81

This argument which rested upon the glorification of the Divine Being was, according to Ballou, suspect in that it contradicted the very nature of God. Ballou queried that if the attributes of God are infinite, why was it necessary for God to increase and augment his splendor and glory? Such a theory as that just considered only leads to a consideration of God's attributes as merely mortal and transitory and thereby finite. 82

81 Ibid., p. 85.

82 Ibid., pp. 85-86.

Lastly, Ballou directed his remarks against that theory of atonement espoused by the Arminians. He saw in this theory an absolute lack of certainty regarding salvation. The Arminians held to the view that Christ merited salvation for all men by assuming the debt incurred by Adam. In so doing, man is again re-instated in good measure before his Creator, but has been placed in a probationary state on earth. Mankind differs, however, from the state of Adam in that he is able to differentiate between what is right and wrong. While the inclination toward his lower nature persists, man remains wholly free to overcome the concupiscence which springs from his carnal appetites. 85

Ballou regarded this entire system of thought an inadequate explanation regarding Christ's atonement. In this theorized view, man has within himself the power to frustrate the divine plan of salvation offered by God. Atonement was designated by Ballou as a "reconciliation, or satisfaction."

85 Ibid., p. 95; see Morris, pp. 63-64; Cassara, p. 65.

His theological system rested upon the fact that it is man who needs to be reconciled to his Creator, and not the Creator to his creation. 84

Charles Chauncy also envisioned the mediatorial mission of Jesus Christ to be the reconciliation of mankind to their Creator. This reconciliation, Chauncy understood to include all of God's creation. ↻

By the things in earth, and the things in heaven, I understand this whole lower creation, both animate and inanimate, both men and things, whether in the earth or the aerial heaven that surrounds it. By God's reconciling these things to himself, I understand his changing them back again to their former or original state. And whereas he is said to reconcile or change the state of these things by Jesus Christ, having made peace by the blood of his cross. 85

This view of Christ reconciling man to God is seen

84 Ibid., pp. 100-101.; see Cassara, pp. 65-66; Morris, p. 64.

85 Chauncy, The Mystery Hid From Ages and Generations..., p. 127.

to be at the very heart of Ballou's system of atonement.

This view of man being reconciled to his Creator rather than the re-instatement of the Godhead to his creation, Ballou attempted to substantiate through scriptural evidence compiled from the Book of Genesis. There the account of mankind's fall revealed man's first parents' misconception of the Deity as a result of their transgression. The conception of the Supreme Being as a God of anger demanding retribution was the end result of this limited knowledge of the Deity. Ballou insists that while man's material condition may have changed, the unchangeable God remained unaltered in his "parental love and fatherly care...."⁸⁶

The unchangeable love of God, for Ballou, is at the heart of his theory of atonement. Prompted by love, God seeks to recover that which was lost. Christ's death then is "the effect, and not the

⁸⁶ Ballou, op. cit., p. 102; see Cassara, p. 66.

cause of God's love to man." Christ's sacrifice on the cross was the manifestation of God's love in the salvation of man and not for the purpose of appeasing a divine vengeance.⁸⁷

Ballou's distaste for the notion of imputation is attributed to Allen. It was Allen who questioned the orthodox doctrine which held that Christ assumed the burden of guilt on behalf of mankind to appease divine justice. He maintained that such a doctrinal position suggested

that there is no intrinsic or essential distinction between the personal merit or demerit of mankind; so that admitting the doctrine of imputation, the wicked might as likely share the joys and salvation of the righteous, as the righteous themselves; and the righteous be subjected to the miserable condition of the wicked, which is altogether preposterous.⁸⁸

This argument is found to be interwoven

p. 66. 87 Ibid., p. 103; see Morris, p. 64; Cassara,

88 Allen, op. cit., p. 399.

throughout Ballou's Treatise. It was Allen who initially argued that such imputation perplexes man's notion of "virtue and vice, and saps the very foundation of moral government, both divine and human." Allen maintained that even the judiciary system devised by man failed to recognize the imputation of one's crime to another. Furthermore, he found such a system of imputation inconsistent with the "moral perfections of God." Ballou also adopted this approach in his treatment concerning the unreasonableness of the doctrine of vicarious suffering. In this respect his thought also parallels that of Charles Chauncy.⁸⁹

For Ballou, the nature and purpose of Christ's atoning death was viewed in terms of Romans viii. 2 where St. Paul speaks of his being freed "from the law of sin," by the renewal of that love which is "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." This figurative approach disavowed any literal meaning ascribed to Christ's

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 400, 413, 404; Charles Chauncy, "A Supplemental Dissertation," in Five Dissertations on the Scriptural Account of the Fall: and its Consequences, London, C. Dilly, 1785, pp. 266-267.

atonement act. Rather, atonement, for Ballou, was a reconciliation, "a renewal of love." The human soul delivered from the bondage of the law of sin enters into the life of Christ Jesus guided by "the force and power of the law of love...." This force and power brings about in man an aversion to sin and a quest for holiness. -By these means are all things reconciled to the Creator. 90

Prior to 1832, Ballou stated in his Treatise that this power of love "is the word, or logos, which was, in the beginning, with God, and was God, which was hidden behind the letter of the law, and in the cabalistical allegories of the prophets, until it brake forth in the official character of Jesus and rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom" 91. After 1832, this passage is omitted from subsequent editions of the Treatise. Ballou's socinianism prevails and it becomes only "by the force and power of the law of love, in Christ, that the

90 Ibid., p. 120; see Cassara, p. 70.

91 Ibid., (1805), p. 115; see Cassara, p. 70; Morris, p. 64.

soul is delivered from the government of the law of sin." 92

This concept of love, resulting in a reconciliation of mankind, allowed Ballou to transcend Christ's salvific mission in its limited Christian context. In so doing, salvation and reconciliation were able to be extended to those peoples and nations ignorant of the saving grace of God through Christ. Herein lies the seed of Ballou's Universalism within his system of thought.⁹³

Ballou labored to uphold the doctrine of universal salvation by attempting to refute the use of the words "everlasting" or "forever" as applied in the scriptures to the punishment of God. For Ballou, these instances do not refer to events of an eternal nature. Ballou argued that the mere existence of eternal torments would render impossible the happiness of the elect. Such a

92 Ibid., (1858), p. 120.

93 Ibid., p. 124; see Cassara, p. 70.

doctrine of eternal misery thus contradicted the very justice and mercy of God. ⁹⁴

Chauncy's influence here is apparent in Ballou's consideration of eternal punishment. It was Chauncy who argued that endless misery in a future state cannot be upheld as a scripture doctrine. He maintained the word αιωνιον translated "eternity, eternal or everlasting" may not denote in the scriptures the idea of an eternal or everlasting punishment. Rather, Chauncy saw in its use the intent of likely implying the notion of a "limited duration." ⁹⁵

Ballou's early views regarding a probationary form of divine punishment is seen to have its roots in the scriptural base established by Chauncy. It was Chauncy who made reference to a number of passages within the New Testament, especially Matt. xxviii.20, Lk. xvi.8, Gal. i.4, Eph. ii.7 and Col. i.26. These passages, in his opinion,

94 Ibid., pp. 145, 171.

95 Chauncy, op. cit., p. 260. ff.

substantiated the looseness ascribed to the meaning of the words aios or aiōnion as compared to the manner in which these words were employed in their English translation. He also supported this position by recourse to the Old Testament where he questioned the use of the terms eternal or everlasting as signifying a "duration without bounds or limits." See Gen. vi.4, Exod. xxxi. 16; Dan. xii.3, Mic. iv.5. ⁹⁶

In reference to such an eternal or everlasting punishment, Chauncy concludes that "It is sufficiently evident, even from the very texts that are brought to prove the strict eternity of hell torments, that they contain no such doctrine; and much more is this evident from other texts which speak of the same torments." ⁹⁷ Chauncy, along with Ballou, also utilized these and other numerable texts to uphold the validity of the doctrine of universal salvation.

The consequences of God's efficacious grace

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 261-267.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 272.

which flows from the atonement are, for Ballou, true holiness and joy. The manner in which this grace is dispensed is left unanswered by Ballou. It appears that God exercises partiality since many individuals are the recipients of such grace immediately, while others struggle in their search for genuine holiness and joy. The answer to this question Ballou entrusts to the Deity who brings about all things in good season. 98

Directly related to Ballou's premise that God leads all men to salvation through his efficacious grace, is whether it is safe to assume all men undergo this radical transformation from carnality before death? Ballou notes that experience has shown this to be true. He argued that if a soul remained in an unsanctified state at death, God would provide the necessary spiritual insight to bring the soul to repentance and ultimate purification. According to Ballou, to state other-

98 Ballou, op. cit., p. 130; see Cassara, p. 72.

wise, would contribute to undermining the doctrine of the "final holiness and happiness of all men." ⁹⁹ Not all within the ranks of Universalism would accept without question Ballou's assertion on this point.

Ballou's views which questioned the doctrine of future punishment and reward would alone generate an intense interest among Universalists on this subject. Such interest would spark a major religious controversy which would cause division and eventual schism within a part of this denomination located exclusively in New England.

99 Ibid., p. 142.

CHAPTER V

THE BASIS FOR CONTROVERSY

1817 - 1821

DOCTRINAL VIEWS PRIOR TO 1817

The early years of Universalist theology were dedicated to the defense of the doctrine of universal salvation against the established orthodoxy of that day. Thus, the arguments formulated reflected a scriptural exegesis designed to refute the widely held belief of partial election and endless retribution so characteristic of Calvinistic theology. This pre-occupation with establishing the scriptural basis for universal election in itself postponed an in-depth examination of the question of divine punishment in a future or present state.

This is not to say that the subject did not manifest itself now and then. In fact, the Universalist historian Richard Eddy maintains that the first General Convention of Universalists at Philadelphia in 1790

addressed itself to the question of no future punishment and held the doctrine in dispute. Likewise, the Reverend John Murray viewed the teaching unfavorably. Also, Thomas Whittemore in his biography of Hosea Ballou maintains that attention began to refocus itself on this question around 1814 or 1815, but it was not until 1817 that an intensive correspondence on the subject was undertaken by the Reverends Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner.² This correspondence was published in The Gospel Visitant which was initially established in 1811 by the Gloucester Conference to deal with denominational issues. It ceased publication in that year but was revived in 1817 under the editorship of both Ballou and Turner.³

Both men were held in the highest esteem throughout the ranks of organized Universalism. Much has already been said of Ballou but-it was he who

¹ Richard Eddy, Universalism in America, Vol. 2, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1886, p. 264; see Allen and Eddy, op. cit., p. 446.

² Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou; With Accounts of His Writings, and Biographical Sketches of His Sermons and Contemporaries in the Universalist Ministry, Vol. 2, Boston, James M. Usher, 1854, p. 28.

³ Eddy, op. cit., pp. 261-262.

referred to the Reverend Edward Turner as "one of the most distinguished ornaments of our ministry." This indicated the close relationship which existed between the two men as associate ministers within the Universalist fellowship.⁴

On July 28, 1776, Edward Turner was born in Medfield, Massachusetts. Educated under what was described as "orthodox influence," he embraced the tenets of Universalism around 1795 and was found preaching in Bennington, Vermont in 1798, and licensed by the General Convention in 1800. His early years in the ministry were spent largely as an itinerant preacher, with accepted pastorates in Salem, Massachusetts in 1809 and Charlestown in 1814. It was during his Charlestown stay that his prominence within the controversy over future punishment was to be assured.⁵

One may be given an insight into the views of Ballou in this controversy by way of his correspondence

⁴ E. G. Brooks, Article VIII., "Biographical Sketches, II Edward Turner", in The Universalist Quarterly And General Review, Vol. 8, (New Series), issue of April 1871, p. 151.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 152, 153, 155-157; John G. Adams, Fifty Notable Years, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1882, pp. 97.

with a Congregational minister, the Reverend Joel Foster of New-Salem, Massachusetts. In a letter dated October 2, 1798, Ballou informed Foster of his acceptance of the idea of at least some form of future discipline of a limited duration. This he was able to accept, as it could easily be reconciled with the doctrine of universal salvation. Such a position he saw as quite different from the Calvinist held view of an unending state of misery.⁶

But of his views on future punishment, Eddy notes that prior to 1817 Ballou had not made an in-depth study of the subject. Just where he stood is best seen in the response given by Ballou when queried in this regard. He stated:

When I wrote my 'Notes on the Parables' and my 'Treatise on Atonement,' I had traveled, in my mind, away from penal sufferings so entirely, that I was

⁶ William Butler, Editor, Letter IX., "From B. to F.," in A Literary Correspondence, Between Joel Foster, A.M. Minister of the Congregational Society In New-Salem, and Hosea Ballou, An Itinerant Preacher of the Sect Called Universalist, Northampton, Massachusetts, William Butler, 1799, pp. 56-57.

satisfied that if any suffered in the future state, it would be because they would be sinful in that state. But I cannot say that I was fully satisfied that the Bible taught no punishment in the future world until I obtained this satisfaction by attending to the subject with Brother Edward Turner, then of Charlestown....⁷

Thus Eddy was able to state confidently that no major interest was manifest among Universalists nor was there any formal examination of the question prior to 1817.⁸

Such were Ballou's views which he continued to advocate during the early part of the 1800's. This was noticeably apparent in his remarks concerning a sermon entitled God a Rewarder based on Heb. xi. 6 delivered by Samuel Worcester in 1811. He questioned the arguments put forth by Worcester upholding the doctrine of eternal retribution as a fundamental teaching of Jesus Christ. Ballou found little scriptural proof to support such a view. To counter Worcester's claims, he cited numerous texts which emphasized the love of God toward all men especially sinners. (See Jn. iii. 16, 17, 1st Jn. iv. 10, Rm. v. 8, 18, viii. 32). Furthermore, Ballou saw in the

⁷ Allen and Eddy, op. cit., p. 447.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 447-448.

scriptural use of the word punishment the meaning of chastisement as defined in the 28th verse of Leviticus -- "Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will CHASTISE you seven times for your sins." Ballou saw in the Greek version of the New Testament in Matthew that the word kolasin designated punishment which he maintained was "of the same signification, the true meaning of which is to make better." ⁹ Ballou was thus able to conclude that

We have now carefully examined the scriptures which the preacher thought were sufficient to prove the proposition for which he labours so zealously, and which seems to lie so near his heart, but we find none of those scriptures at all to his purpose. It is evident beyond all power of refutation, that the Holy Ghost never intended those scriptures to support the preacher's opinion of endless unmerciful punishment. ¹⁰

Likewise, in 1811, in an address at the Gloucester Conference on an exposition of I Peter 3.18-20 regarding "Christ's Preaching to the Spirits in Prison," he was able to substantiate the doctrine of a ~~limited future punishment for sins and offenses~~ consigned to

⁹ Hosea Ballou, "Examination of Mr. Worcester's Discourse", in The Gospel Visitant, Vol. 1, No. 2, issue of September 1811, pp. 55, 70, 72, 88.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

this world. At this time, Ballou saw in this passage as "direct a contradiction of the commonly received opinion that there is no mercy to be communicated to those who die in unreconciliation to God, or in unbelief of the gospel, as can possibly be stated." 11

PUBLIC PRESENTATION INITIATED

Jacob Wood

The examination of the doctrine of future punishment was precipitated in 1817 at the request of the Reverend Jacob Wood. Wood received fellowship in the New England Universalist Convention at Whitingham, Vermont in 1815 and was ordained at the following session. His ministry is best described by his theological adherence to the doctrine of future retribution, which he discussed at length in a number of publications. He accepted a succession of pastorates, two of which were at Charlton and Shirley, Massachusetts, which would figure prominently in the restorationist controversy.¹²

His desire to explore the doctrinal and scriptural ramifications of the question of future punishment resulted in a public presentation of opposing views on the subject.

11 Allen and Eddy, op. cit., p. 446.

12 Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 189.

This was undertaken by the Reverends Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner whose views appeared in The Gospel Visitant from April 1817 to April 1818.

The correspondence between the Reverends Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner revealed the direction which the inquiry would take. Ballou acknowledged the invitation to discuss in an impartial manner the theological question of future punishment. He felt that it was imperative that opposing views should be presented and suggested that Turner choose the theological opinion he wished to uphold.¹³ Turner replied by admitting his inclination toward the doctrine of a future punishment. Therefore, he believed himself more competent to present the arguments and evidence to support such a belief.¹⁴ Ballou thus accepted the opposite position of the inquiry, namely, the absence of a future state of punishment, motivated only by the quest for truth on this subject through recourse to both reason and scriptural evidence.¹⁵

TURNER'S POSITION

Turner's correspondence supported the view that

¹³ Hosea Ballou, Letter I., in The Gospel Visitant, Vol. 2, No. 4, issue of July 1817, pp. 115-116.

¹⁴ Edward Turner, Letter II., ibid., p. 116.

¹⁵ Hosea Ballou, Letter III., ibid., p. 117.

a future punishment was necessary since at death many leave "the present world without a heart formed to virtue and holiness..." and in an unreconciled state. Based upon this assumption, Turner seriously questioned how death could immediately transform and properly dispose the mind of these impenitent. Furthermore, to adhere to the belief in a future state of misery, for Turner, did not necessarily imply as Ballou would contend the continuation of sin or a renewal of temptation in the next world. ¹⁶

To support his argument, Turner referred to the testimony of both the Old and New Testaments where references are made to a "DELIVERANCE FROM SIN AND MISERY." Turner remained convinced, however, that this term "deliverance" in no way implied an immediate deliverance. He admitted that while the scriptures lacked clarity regarding the doctrine of future punishment, he found it difficult not to assent to the belief in light of the texts found in 1st Peter 3; 19-20, 4; 5-6 in reference to "Christ's Preaching to the Spirits in Prison." ¹⁷

Turner argued that it was apparent from Peter's

¹⁶ Edward Turner, Letter IV., ibid., pp. 119-120; Letters I - VI., ibid., pp. 115-125.

¹⁷ Edward Turner, "Correspondence on the Subject of Future Punishment", in The Gospel Visitant, Vol. 2, No. 4, issue of January 1818, pp. 207-209.

testimony that he envisioned the second coming of Christ as an eschatological event which would include both a general judgment and the existence of suffering. Thus, Turner adhered to the firm belief in the necessity of future punishment of a penal nature in order that many might be brought to that ~~fullness~~ of "conformity to moral perfection." 18

BALLOU'S POSITION

The substance of Ballou's argument rested on the premise that "death necessarily produces such a moral change in the mind of the sinner, as to make him at once a willing, obedient and happy subject of the moral kingdom." He likened this change in man to the "primeval innocence" of our first parents whom he described as being in a state of "willing obedience, and its corresponding felicity." This initial condition of man Ballou saw as only transitory because of man's ultimate temptation and fall. However, his argument stressed the role of Christ, whose power over death, "at the dissolution of the natural, corruptible body..., " predisposes "...the subject of his grace...." 19

18 Ibid., p. 209.

19 Hosea Ballou, Letter III., op. cit., p. 118.

Ballou maintained that future suffering or a state of misery implied a condemnation which extended beyond the continuation of sin itself. The future state of misery upheld by Turner required a belief, as in the case of Adam, in "a prohibition, a tempter, and a liability to be led into sin." Evidence to support such a contention was seen by Ballou to be not only lacking from the natural order, but from divine revelation as well. Furthermore, he maintained that scripture testifies to the fact that Jesus, as the Lamb of God, is the means by which the sins of the world are removed.²⁰ Ballou also noted that had recourse been made to the "ten brethren" or to the apostle Paul, in reference to "a due consideration of a sinless state, from the time sins were committed, to any given time afterwards, it is believed that the impotence of the argument would have been sufficiently visible."²¹

Ballou's negative response to the existence of such a state rested upon the assumption that such a doctrine is in no way to be found in either the Old or New Testament. The teaching is noticeably absent

²⁰ Hosea Ballou, Letter V., op. cit., p. 121.

²¹ Hosea Ballou, "Correspondence on the Subject of Future Punishment", op. cit., Vol. 125, No. 3, issue of October, 1817, pp. 186-187.

in the "Abrahamic faith," and in the writings of the messianic prophets. Even the gospel faith of the New Testament fails to reveal in plain and definitive terms the existence of such a state. Also, Jesus in all of his sermons and parables failed to bring to light this doctrine. This is equally true of the testimony of the Apostles whose silence on this question is most evident. Lastly, Ballou had recourse to the Book of Genesis which in no way introduced the concept of a future punishment in its account of the fall of man, and the penalty imposed for such a transgression. In fact, the Creator only "mentioned particular circumstances relative to their (first parents) mortal existence in this world..." as a consequence of their sin. The same may be said of God's dealings with Cain and the limitations of his punishment to this world. ²²

Even in all of the Mosaic admonitions against the house of Israel and the "last plagues" recorded in the Book of Revelations is the wrath of God confined to man's earthly existence. Thus for Ballou, sin originated on earth and is thereby confined to this world. Only death severs its existence making the subject fit for the heavenly kingdom. ²³

²² Ibid., pp. 189-190.

²³ Ibid., pp. 191, 187.

Ballou was able to reconcile this view with 1st Peter iii. 18-20 where Christ is recorded to have preached to the spirits in prison in the following manner. Ballou noted that the early church Fathers, St. Augustine, the Papists and even Elhanan Winchester utilized this text to support the view of a future purgatorial state. Protestants, however, saw in the text Christ preaching "to those people in the days of Noah, whose spirits were in the prison of hell in the time of Peter." Both views he discarded as being scripturally inconsistent.²⁴

It was Ballou's opinion that

The particular subject to which the Apostle alluded when he spake of Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison, in consequence of being put to death in the flesh, and being quickened by the spirit, is thought to be this, viz. he went and preached to the Gentiles who were dead in trespasses and sins, and of a character similar to those abominable people who were destroyed by the flood.

...By the passage in Peter, it appears to have been necessary for Christ to be put to death in the flesh, and to be quickened by the spirit in order that he might go and preach to the spirits in prison; and in order for him to bring those to God who knew him not. So also, by the words of St. Paul, we see that it was by the cross, that the middle wall of partition between

²⁴ Hosea Ballou, "Correspondence on the Subject of Future Punishment", in The Gospel Visitant, Vol. 3, No. 1, Issue of April 1818, pp. 296-297.

the Jews and the Gentiles was removed, the enmity slain, and a way prepared for the Gentiles who were without God in the world, to be brought to God, and to be reconciled in one body with the Jews.²⁵

This interpretation Ballou was able to reconcile with the prophecy of Isaiah xlii. 6-8 "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am the Lord; that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another; neither my praise to graven images." The Gentiles were thus depicted by Ballou in this text as imprisoned but their ultimate deliverance was assured. Also, Chapter lxi. 1 "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" and those texts in Chapter xlix.9 and Zech. ix.10-12 are but for Ballou foreshadowing the advent and mission of Christ. In this sense, these passages from the prophets can easily be reconciled to the subject matter treated by both Saints Peter and Paul.²⁶

25 Ibid., pp. 300-301.

26 Ibid., p. 304.

His reliance upon Paul becomes most apparent in a number of lectures and sermons which were published in 1818-1819 at the conclusion of his discussions with Turner. It was at this time, that Ballou embraced the theological opinion which denied the existence of a future state of punishment. Thus his sermons elicited a certitude which in many instances was uncompromising.

Similarly, this question was examined in his Notes on the Parables which appeared as early as 1804 followed by a number of editions, the last revision being completed by 1832. Ballou's scriptural exegesis in his Notes was characterized by numerous allegorical and hidden interpretations which transcended the literal sense of the sacred texts examined.

Such was the case throughout his Notes on the Parables of 1822 where he attempted to come to terms with a number of sayings of Jesus which seemed to imply a future punishment and an everlasting damnation for a large segment of mankind. He approached the task in his usual allegorical manner, presenting Matthew's gospel text iii. 12, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with

unquenchable fire." He saw in this text the following inferences. The term "unquenchable fire" was seen as applying to the Divine Being, for Ballou noted that it is recorded in scripture that the Almighty is a "consuming fire." This meaning he substantiated by reference to Isaiah xxxiii. 14. He also viewed the consumed chaff and remaining wheat in light of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, xv. 45-49 where the Apostle refers to man's earthly creation in Adam and heavenly nature in Christ.²⁷ Ballou was thus able to offer the following interpretation.

As wheat is encompassed with chaff while growing in the field, so are mankind encompassed with the imperfections of the first man, Adam; and as the wheat is separated from the chaff, so the gospel dispensation is designed to separate mankind from all the imperfections of this natural state, and perfect the whole in Christ, the second man, who is the Lord from heaven.²⁸

This style and approach was likewise applied to a host of other parables found throughout the New Testament, especially Matthew's Gospel, Chapter

²⁷ Hosea Ballou, Notes on the Parables of the New Testament, Scripturally Illustrated and Argumentatively Defended, Hallowell, W. F. Laine, 1822, pp.13-16.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

iii. 10 concerning the tree which bore no fruit which was found destined for the fire; Chapter v. 29, 30 where it is related if one's body be the cause of sin, dismemberment is preferred to the fires of hell; and Chapter xiii. 47 which likens the kingdom to a fish net which holds both a good and bad catch, the latter to be cast off. 29

Those specific passages cited by Ballou found in Matt. xxv. 1-13, 31-46, which refer to the last days and the Second Coming of Christ, he designated as having been fulfilled during that earthly generation of hearers. This Ballou substantiated by recourse to Chapter xxiv. 34 of Matthew's Gospel which states, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." He thus interpreted the related events of the last days as a temporal punishment directed against the Jewish nation which he envisioned to have occurred with the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.. Furthermore, the Second Coming was described by Ballou as being realized on the day of Pentecost. He saw in Acts ii. 16 ff, Peter proclaiming the prophecy of Joel ii. 28-31 relating to the outpouring of the

29 Ibid., pp. 7, 31, 95.

Spirit in the last days as being fulfilled at Pentecost. ³⁰

This subject regarding future punishment would again be dealt with by Ballou in 1834 with the publication of his An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution. Throughout the course of this work, Ballou remained convinced that scriptural authority did not support the notion of a future punishment, but rather conclusively held to the view of its confinement to this present world.

This stance compelled Ballou vigorously to compile scriptural evidence to bolster his argument that punishment and misery exist as a state of hell on this earth. Man thus reaps in this world divine approval or approbation for his actions. Finally, Ballou's equation of sin with misery resolved for him the absurdity of the attraction of licentiousness as an inherent danger of adhering to the doctrine of no future punishment.

WOOD'S VIEWS

It would also appear that Jacob Wood's views

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 150, 155-57, 169, 172, 173; see also Hosea Ballou's, The Twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth Chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel. Illustrated with Notes, &c., Philadelphia, Fairchild and Co., 1843, 20p.

regarding future punishment had already been formed during the course of the Ballou - Turner exchanges. In September of 1817, Wood published a short work entitled A Brief Essay on the Doctrine of Future Retribution. His Essay relied heavily upon both James Rely and Charles Chauncy to support his main contention of the existence of a future retribution of a limited duration. To deny the existence of any future punishment, he maintained, would in effect undermine that most sublime of doctrines -- universal election. Furthermore, such a denial would only serve as an encouragement toward licentiousness among the faithful. This theological opinion was from this time branded as Restorationism. ³¹

In his advocacy of Restorationism, Wood attempted to present this view as the prevailing opinion among a vast number of New England Universalist divines. As an appendix to his work, Wood cited excerpts from letters on the subject authored by such prominent Universalists as Edward Turner, Thomas Jones, Sebastian Streeter, Paul Dean, Samuel C. Loveland, David Pickering, James Babbitt, Jonathan Wallace, Robert Bartlett,

³¹ Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 266-267.

Russell Streeter, and Hosea Ballou 2d. Ballou 2d, commenting on this compilation of Universalist names, noted that such correspondence was published without the consent of the authors in question, with the exception of the Reverends Edward Turner and Paul Dean.³²

Similarly in 1818 and 1819 Wood addressed himself to the defense of the belief in future punishment, considering the subject of "transcendant importance." His arguments were found to rely upon both the justice and mercy of God extended to mankind which he likened to a parent-child relationship. He also saw in the words "everlasting, eternal, forever and ever" found in Rev. xiv. 11, xx. 10; Mark iii. 29; Jude 7; 2 Thess. i. 9; and Matt. xxv. 46 no allusion to an endless punishment. In fact, he states "In the Greek Testament, the strongest terms which are applied to the punishment of the wicked are aion, and its derivative aionios, both which may signify an age, dispensation, the world, or any limited period, more properly than a proper

³² Ibid., pp. 267-268; Hosea Ballou, Hosea Ballou 2d., Thomas Whittemore, "Editorial", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 32, issue of February 1, 1823, p. 126.

eternity, or endless duration." 33 Thus it was the opinion of Wood that

The scriptures are plain on the subject, that all men are punished, more or less, for their sins, and also that they are saved by grace. The scheme appears to be this -- justice and mercy have a mutual object to accomplish, viz. the holiness of the creature. In the reformation of the sinner, both have obtained their object, both are satisfied. It is thus that the Almighty is styled a just God and a Saviour. 34

Wood continued his efforts on behalf of the Restorationist cause and his presence at the New England Universalist Convention of 1817 at Charlton was felt on this question. It was there that he attempted to manipulate events which he hoped would result in the establishment of an autonomous and distinct Association to be distinguished as Restorationists. Thus, he worked behind the scenes to bring the question of future punishment before the New England Convention as a test of

33 Jacob Wood, Universal Restoration Defended: Being an Examination of a Sermon, Entitled the Future Punishment of the Wicked Certain and Endless; Delivered in Westminster, March 16, 1817, By Cyrus Mann, A.M., Worcester, Printed by William Manning, April 1818, pp. 1, 5-7; see also Jacob Wood, Man's Dependence and God's Goodness, (In Sermons 1821 - 1829).

34 Jacob Wood, Remarks on a Pamphlet Entitled the Eternity of the Future Punishment of the Wicked Illustrated and Proved, in a Letter to a Friend. By a Clergyman of Massachusetts, Worcester, Printed by Manning and Trumbull, November 1819, p. 7.

faith among the delegates. At the conclusion of the proceedings, however, nothing appeared to have materialized. This may be attributed to the lack of any formed opinions regarding this question at that time. ³⁵

BALLOU AND THE UNIVERSALIST MAGAZINE

If Wood's views had solidified by 1817 - 1818, the same may be said of Ballou. He nevertheless refrained from capitalizing on the subject while serving as editor of the Universalist Magazine from 1819 to 1821. The Magazine began its first circulation just when its printer, Henry Bowen, had completed publishing Ballou's lecture sermons. The purpose of the Magazine was for the dissemination of Universalist truth in the areas of "doctrine, religion and morality." ³⁶ Though this be the reason for its inception, the pages of this publication would record the bitter controversy

³⁵ Ballou, Ballou 2d., Whittemore, "Editorial", op. cit., p. 126.

³⁶ Maturin M. Ballou, Biography of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Boston, Abel Tompkins, 1852, p. 120.

which had been laid during these formative years.

During this three year period, from 1819 - 1821, during which Ballou served as editor of the Universalist Magazine little was published on the subject of future punishment. Richard Eddy, citing Thomas Whittemore as his source, states that Ballou "was more reserved than some desired him to be" on this matter.³⁷ It might be said that Ballou at this time surely recognized the historical diversity of opinion which characterized Universalism on this subject. Thus, he refrained from utilizing such a national publication as a sounding board to air his own personal views.

It was only in response to the charges leveled against Universalism in July of 1819 by the Boston editor of The Kaleidoscope that Ballou would direct his editorial endeavors for a period of three months. The charges which emanated from this editor, who was a Unitarian, stemmed from four questions with a request for immediate clarification. In addition to the questions raised, The Kaleidoscope on July 17, 1819 in an editorial addressed "To the Public" announced^o that future issues would be dedicated to the exploration

³⁷ Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou..., Vol. 2, p. 72, quoted by Richard Eddy, Universalism in America, Vol. 2, pp. 268-269.

and defense of what was termed "rational and liberal Christianity, as distinguished from Roman Catholicism, Calvinism, Hopkinsianism, Universalism, and Deism." 38

The four questions posed were so stated as to bring into discussion not only the question of universal election but the subject of no future punishment. In the July 17th issue of the Universalist Magazine Ballou published the four charges in question. The following are as they appeared in that issue.

1. Is it asserted in scripture of Judas Iscariot, that it were good for that man if he had never been born. Now if he were to suffer extreme torment, till the whole earth were dissolved, allowing to take a thousand or million of years for the dissolution of one grain of sand, and then to be happy forever after, it appears to me, that it is good for him to have been born; much more if he was made immediately happy at death, or will be at the day of judgment. What will the Universalist say to this?

2. We read that our saviour was crucified between two thieves, one of whom was penitent, and is generally supposed to have been forgiven and admitted to happiness. The other appears to have been unbelieving and impenitent, even in his dying moments. If these were both to fare alike, does it not seem unaccountable that the Saviour did not tell them so at once, and thus prevent all doubts and fears, in after time, respecting the future destiny of the finally impenitent?

38 Ibid., p. 269; -----, "To the Public", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 4, issue of July 24, 1819, p. 14.

3. The Bible says, "ask and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Now supposing, I will neither ask, nor seek, nor knock -- what is to be my situation in that case?

4. If there be one chance in a million, or in many millions, that the doctrine of Universalism be false, and that the doctrine of future punishment in some shape or other, be true, are not those on safer ground, who believe in the latter doctrine than those who believe in the former? 39

As editor of the Universalist Magazine, Ballou inserted a number of articles in the Magazine in response to the question raised by the editor of The Kaleidoscope. These articles showed that Universalism was not only scriptural and reasonable, but noted as well for its liberalism.⁴⁰ More specifically, the charge which the editor of The Kaleidoscope made concerning the scriptural testimony regarding Judas Iscariot in that "it were good for that man if he had never been born" was answered in the following manner. This response stated that such scriptural testimony only implied what Jesus intended to convey, namely, the state of misery which Judas would have to endure while on earth. Accordingly, nothing then was related by Jesus concerning Judas' future existence. In fact, Judas' repentance in

39 -----, "Important Questions", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 3, issue of July 17, 1819, p. 11.

40 -----, "To the Public", op. cit., p. 14.

his declaration "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood," only indicated his genuine sorrow and acknowledgment of love. ⁴¹

Secondly, The Kaleidoscope addressed itself to the question as to whether the two thieves who were put to death with Christ were to share the same existence in a future state. If this was to be the case, why then was Jesus silent on this matter? In response, it was noted in the Magazine that Jesus' silence may also have indicated that no future endless misery was destined for this impenitent thief. From this article, it could be inferred that if Christ was "exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and the remission of sins," surely, it would be incorrect to envision a portion of mankind as "finally impenitent." ⁴²

In reference to the individual who "will neither ask, nor seek, nor knock," Ballou published the argument that it was not to be the judgment of man in these cases but that of God. The scriptures in referring to man, state "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." ⁴³

41 -----, "Important Questions", op. cit., p. 11.

42 -----, "Reply to 'Important Questions'", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 4, issue of July 24, 1819, p. 15.

43 Loc. cit.

Finally, in refutation of the charge that if by chance the doctrine of Universalism be false and that of future punishment be true, would not one be on safer ground by adhering to the latter doctrine, Ballou inserted the following argument. It stressed that the doctrine of Universalism rests within the very will of God and thereby involves no aspect of chance as was assumed by the editor in question. Thus it could confidently be stated in the Magazine that as Universalists, "We believe in no chance respecting the unchangeable goodness of the rock of our salvation." Furthermore, the truth of this doctrine is found rooted in the scriptures and not "in the declaration of some human creed about future damnation...." ⁴⁴

Thus the tone and quality of the responses, as they were published, were temperate and respectful. The manner of approach employed by Ballou, as editor, was designed only to correct what seemed to him to be erroneous opinions in regard to Universalist teaching. ⁴⁵ Eddy, however, relates that in August of 1819 the editor of The Kaleidoscope noted what appeared to him as an ambiguous position assumed by Ballou. The

⁴⁴ -----, "Reply to Important Question", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 5, issue of July 31, 1819, p. 19.

⁴⁵ -----, "Article", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 6, issue of August 7, 1819, p. 22.

editor maintained that he was unable to ascertain whether Ballou was an advocate of future punishment or no retribution whatever.⁴⁶ As editor of the Magazine, Ballou inserted the following response, "But after all, will it do to answer the question? There would be no danger, if we could say, we believe in a state of future punishment; that is, if no one would call on us to prove it from the scriptures. But there lies the difficulty. We are sensible we cannot prove that sin and misery will exist in a future state of being."⁴⁷

With this statement, Ballou published in the Magazine issues of January 8 and 15, 1820, a reprint of his exegesis on 1 Peter iii. 18-20 "Concerning St. Peter's Declaration of Christ's Preaching To The Spirits In Prison " which formerly had appeared in The Gospel Visitant of January 1818 during the course of his exchanges with Edward Turner.⁴⁸ Also in March of 1821, there appeared "A Compendium" of a

46 Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 270.

47 -----, "Religious Controversy", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 8, issue of August 24, 1819, p. 31.

48 -----, "Doctrine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 28, issue of January 8, 1820, pp. 109-110; -----, "Doctrine", ibid., Vol. 1, No. 29, issue of January 15, 1820, p. 113.

sermon delivered by Ballou in Boston on Gen. iii. 4 which dealt with the text, "And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die." In this sermon Ballou touched upon the question of no future punishment. The manner in which he did so, only was a reiteration of his view that sin and misery were synonymous and that man's punishment was limited to his mortal state where sin exists. 49

It may be deduced from these publications that it was Ballou's desire as editor of the Magazine to once again present his views in an attempt to ascertain the divine truth on this question. In addition to these works, a number of other articles and sermons against the doctrine of endless punishment were featured in the following issues that appeared from 1820 to 1821. These in themselves could not be considered fuel for the debate that would ensue in the years after 1821. With the termination of the second volume of this publication, Ballou submitted his resignation and stated on June 23, 1821 his reason as being the pressure of what he described as "other professional duties" as well as the condition of his

49 Hosea Ballou, "A Compendium", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 2, No. 39, issue of March 24, 1821, pp. 154-155.

health. 50

The editorship of the Magazine was then assumed by a Mr. Foster who together with Bowen noticeably altered the content and caliber of the publication. Foster's competency, as both a theologian and religious editor, were seriously questioned by Whittemore who described him as "utterly ignorant of Universalism, and every other kind of theology, and unfit, in every respect, for such a post." This may account for the course the Magazine was destined to take, for it was under Foster's direction that the debate was revived over the question of future punishment. 51

50 Editor, "The Editor's Valediction", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 2, No. 52, issue of June 23, 1821, p. 207.

51 Thomas Whittemore, The Early Days of Thomas Whittemore, Boston, James M. Usher, 1860, pp. 311-312.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONTROVERSY 1821 - 1825

THE CONTROVERSY RENEWED

The first issue, third volume, of the Universalist Magazine revived the controversy on the doctrine of future punishment in June of 1821. Featured on the first page of this edition was a brief statement of opinion which attacked this doctrine and was signed by the designation EAR. Eddy does not establish the identity of the signature EAR, but notes the author's name as being a reversal of this inscription, -- RAE.¹

The author of the article maintained that fear of a future retribution can in no way induce genuine love. EAR stated ... "thanks be to God for

¹ EAR, "A Question", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 1, issue of June 30, 1821, p. 1; Richard Eddy, Universalism in America, Vol. 2, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1886, p. 273.

giving me (through the light of his gospel of peace) that liberty of conscience, which is so congenial to the feelings of human nature, in knowing I am punished the moment I do wrong, and rewarded the moment I do right." ²

This opinion was responded to in the following issue of July 7th by one signed STATOR. Eddy identifies this signature as the Reverend Edward Turner. His reply challenged EAR'S position. Turner maintained that while the notion of future punishment may induce fear, it also might be said to induce virtue and a high state of Christian morality. Thus he stated, "Whether fear be 'necessary to gain true love,' or not, one thing is certain; if it was not a principle of action, necessary to the moral system, God would never have placed before men those objects which excite fearful apprehensions." ³

EAR'S response to this reply was denied publication in the July 14th issue on the grounds that further inquiry into the subject matter would

² EAR, "A Question", in the Universalist Magazine, loc. cit.

³ Eddy, loc. cit; STATOR, "Answer to 'A Question' in Our Last", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 2, issue of July 7, 1821, p. 6.

prove too controversial.⁴ EAR lost no time in voicing a formal complaint against such an editorial policy.⁵ The editor replied that EAR'S correspondence was denied publication because of the length of his reply to STATOR. Also the nature of the controversy would necessitate equal space in future issues for dissenting views. However, the editor stated future "Communications, written in a style less verbose, would be more acceptable."⁶

Hosea Ballou submitted to the Magazine a reply to STATOR which put forth the views he previously expressed on the subject in The Gospel Visitant.⁷ He attempted to question STATOR'S arguments but in so doing was charged by STATOR in a later issue of entering into a controversy which did not personally involve him, stating "we have already written on

4 -----, "To Correspondents, &C.", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 3, issue of July 14, 1821, p. 12.

5 EAR, "To the Editor of the Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 4, issue of July 21, 1821, p. 14.

6 Editor, "Remarks", loc. cit.

7 H. B., "Reply to STATOR", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 4, issue of July 21, 1821, pp. 14-15.

this subject even to verbosity." 8

A defending opinion on the absence of a future punishment, authored by R.C., identified by Eddy as a Dr. Robert Capen, of Middleboro, Massachusetts, and presented in a lengthy article in the August 25th issue of the Magazine. In it he took to task the views of both Calvinists and limitarians regarding future misery, confident in the view that "the sting of death is sin... and ...Death is swallowed up in victory." This victory he assured his readers is accomplished by and through Christ. 9

A period of four months would pass before the issue would once again surface. However, once initiated, the controversy would be impossible to contain. Beginning in December of 1821, a number of articles appeared by prominent Universalists under a variety of pen names. Eddy identifies these figures as the Reverends Edward Turner, Jacob Wood and Hosea Ballou. Added to this list were Dr. John Brooks, Enoch K. Kenrick, and the Reverend Paul Dean whose

8 STATOR, "For the Universalist Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 7, issue of August 11, 1821, p. 27.

9 R.C., **** "Universal Benevolence", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 2, issue of August 25, 1821, pp. 29-30.

names along with Wood and Turner would dominate throughout the controversy.¹⁰

John Brooks had previously been associated with the Presbyterian denomination of Vermont, but because of his advocacy of the doctrine of universal salvation his membership was terminated. Later, his prominence in Massachusetts was recorded because of his many years of service on the Massachusetts General Court from Bernardston. Whittemore described him as a highly respected individual and as "a writer of more than ordinary shrewdness, courage and force of character."¹¹

Paul Dean first entered the Universalist ministry as early as 1805 and subsequently labored and preached throughout Vermont, New Hampshire, and central and western New York. He came to Boston in 1813 serving as an associate pastor to John Murray. Here his reputation and eloquence as a preacher were firmly established among the Universalist community.¹²

It was Dr. John Brooks who reopened the issue

¹⁰ Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 273-274.

¹¹ Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Vol. 2, Boston, James M. Usher, 1854, p. 168.

¹² John G. Adams, Fifty Notable Years, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1882, p. 107.

in his letter of inquiry signed AESOP, in the Magazine on December 1, 1821. His questioning of the doctrine of future punishment precipitated a reply from one signed Christian Universalist (Reverend Paul Dean).¹³ At this time, the Magazine also published a letter from Hosea Ballou to a Mr. Enoch K. Kenrick of Newton, Massachusetts concerning his recent publication entitled Final Restoration demonstrated from the scriptures of truth: by three sufficient arguments etc. In refuting Kenrick's arguments regarding a state of future punishment, Ballou's position was reminiscent of his lectures and sermons of 1818-1819 in that he relied upon St. Paul especially Rm. vi.7. to deny the state of future misery. The Pauline text, "For he that is dead is freed from sin" is the summation of Ballou's views in this regard.¹⁴

This published correspondence was in turn challenged by Reverend Jacob Wood, writing under the

¹³ AESOP, "A Question", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 23, issue of December 1, 1821, p. 92; Eddy, op. cit., p. 274; Christian Universalist, "To the Editor of the Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 29, issue of January 12, 1822, p. 113. see also the issues of January and February of 1822 where reviews and rebuttals were published on this revived subject.

¹⁴ H.B., "A Letter from Hosea Ballou of Boston, etc.", in the Universalist Magazine. Vol. 3, No. 25, issue of December 15, 1821, p. 97.

name of REASON, who challenged Ballou's reference to Rom. vi. 7. He maintained that the death referred to by Paul is a baptism "in the death of Christ" and, in this sense we are able to "count ourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God." Thus, the passage can in no way be attributed to a denial of future punishment.¹⁵

If the doctrine of no future punishment was assailed by REASON it was further attacked by Foster, the editor of the Magazine writing under the signature of JUSTITIA. In a series of some six articles, Foster presented a number of scriptural texts he found to substantiate the doctrine of future punishment. He saw in the Sermon on the Mount the words "depart from me, ye who work iniquity," and a number of other passages in reference to the last days of final judgment, as warranting for him a belief in a day of future retribution.¹⁶ And so he submitted at length texts derived from Acts xxiv.25, Rom. xiv.10, 2 Cor.v.10,

¹⁵ REASON, "To the Rev. 'Hosea Ballou, of Boston'", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 32, issue of February 2, 1822, p. 125; Eddy, op. cit., p. 274.

¹⁶ JUSTITIA, "On Future Punishment", in the Universalist Magazine, ibid., p. 127; Eddy, loc. cit.

Heb. ix. 27, and Matt. x. 15 to substantiate this claim.¹⁷

He also questioned Ballou's interpretation of these texts as referring exclusively to the fall of Jerusalem. In reference to this question, he stated that "It is readily admitted, however, that the forms of expression, and the images made use of, are for the most part, applicable also to the day of judgment; and no doubt an allusion to that great event, as a kind of secondary object, runs through almost every part of the prophecy."¹⁸ Thus, Foster maintained that the doctrine of future punishment emanated from the teachings of Christ Himself and is denied by no reputable theologian and scholar knowledgeable of "the languages in which the scriptures were originally written...."¹⁹

Mr. Kenrick's reply to Ballou appeared in February of 1822 under the abbreviated signature P----B, or Philo Bereanus. In this rebuttal, Kenrick noted

¹⁷ JUSTITIA, "Future Punishment -- No. 2", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 33, issue of February 9, 1822, p. 132.

¹⁸ JUSTITIA, "Future Punishment -- No. 3," in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 35, issue of February 23, 1822, p. 138.

¹⁹ JUSTITIA, "Future Punishment -- No. 4," in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 36, issue of March 2, 1822, p. 143.

inconsistencies in Ballou's argument regarding the absence of future punishment. He posed the question, "Where, my friend, is the proof, that suffering can have no existence in the eternal world, unless crimes are committed there?" To prove this, Kenrick maintained, it was necessary to establish to what degree "our moral agency was lost." Also, he submitted a number of scriptural texts gleaned from Col. 1.20, Matt. 8.29, 2 Peter 11.4, Matt. x.15 all of which he maintained referred to a state of future suffering.²⁰

A number of other exchanges appeared in the later issues of the Magazine in 1822 between Kenrick and Ballou on this question.²¹ Thomas Whittemore in his biography of Hosea Ballou suggests that at this time a movement was in progress to require an acknowledgment of belief in the doctrine of a future punishment as a condition of fellowship within Universalism.²² To counter this move in certain

²⁰ P----B, "Reply to a Letter from the Rev. Mr. Ballou, of Boston, etc.", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 33, issue of February 9, 1822, pp. 129-132; Eddy, op. cit., p. 274.

²¹ H.B., "Reply to 'P----B.'", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 34, issue of February 16, 1822, pp. 133-134; P----B., "Reply of P----B To the Rev. Mr. Ballou, of Boston", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 39, issue of March 23, 1822, pp. 153-154.

²² Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Vol. 2, Boston, James M. Usher, 1854, p. 165.

Universalist circles, while recognizing Kenrick's desire to terminate such correspondence, Ballou concluded his remarks to Kenrick by stating:

So important do I view the subject of our discussion, that I am entirely opposed to having it rest on human conjecture or imagination; nor am I willing to call anything evidence in this case, but the plain word of God. If you, sir, or any one else, be disposed to believe in opinions, respecting a future state, which you acknowledge are not the subjects of scripture testimony, and, at the same time, do not make those opinions a matter on which you rest Christian fellowship and brotherly communion, I have no disposition to say aught against it. But, if you, or any other person, come forward with any sentiment, which is set up as a term of Christian fellowship, and contend that such a sentiment is an indispensable article of Christian faith, and that a denial of it is deism, and an inlet to every species of immorality, it is then time to call for the divine authority on which this doctrine is founded. I am satisfied, dear sir, that you do not consider the doctrine of future punishment as above described, and therefore I can very quietly acquiesce in your discontinuing this correspondence.²³

THE WOOD PROPOSALS

The controversy would assume a new dimension in March of 1822 when an article appeared under the

²³ H. Ballou, "Reply to 'B. B. B.'", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 41, issue of April 6, 1822, p. 162

the signature of "Restorationist" whom Eddy identifies as Jacob Wood. In this article, Wood acknowledged that the differences of opinion regarding future punishment only recently occupied the attention of Universalists. However, he maintained the doctrine of future retribution dates back to Christian antiquity. While this was so, Wood recognized the right of dissent, provided that scriptural proof be given precedence in any discussion of the issue. At present, Wood stated, "One party calls upon the other to bring forward his proof that all misery ceases at temporal death, while the other rejoins in the same manner, without exhibiting any proof on either hand." ²⁴

For this reason the following proposals were drafted in consultation with those whom Wood referred to as "my brethren."

1. That a brief statement of the evidence that all misery is confined to this life, be written by one who believes in that doctrine, and published in the Magazine, and that we will engage a similar communication in proof that misery will extend beyond death *

2. That both these communications shall be lodged in the hands of the

²⁴ RESTORATIONIST, "For the Universalist Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 38, issue of March 16, 1822, pp. 150-151.

Editor of the Magazine before either is published, so that no alterations may be made in them afterwards, by reference one to the other.

5. That both these communications shall be submitted to the public to draw their own conclusions, without any controversial replies on either side. 25

Under proposal number one, Wood noted that "It is understood that this evidence will be both positive and negative. That each party shall have the right to anticipate the contrary arguments, and refute them." He concluded his presentation by citing the fairness of such proposals and maintaining that the invitation extended could not but resolve the doubt engendered by past exchanges on the subject. Wood terminated his remarks by stating "If the invitation be accepted, the communication on our part shall be lodged in the Magazine Office within a month after the publication of such acceptance." 26

No doubt such proposals were the work of other well intentioned Universalists, referred to by Wood as "my brethren," to contain the dispute. If this be the case, their intention was aborted by the

25 Ibid., p. 151.

26 Loc. cit.

manner in which the proposals were interpreted by Ballou. In his published reply, he saw in them not only an attack on his honor but his reputation and character as well. Furthermore, he requested that the identity of those associated with such proposals be made public for he maintained such anonymity could only promote further division and mistrust.²⁷ Thus, the proposals, in themselves, sparked still further debate and division between Ballou, Wood and others over how the issue of future punishment was to be presented to the reading public at large.²⁸

MAGAZINE UNDER NEW EDITORSHIP

A number of letters were addressed to this controversy in the Magazine and resulted in a discussion of the proposals submitted by

²⁷ H. Ballou, "For the Universalist Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 39, issue of March 23, 1822, p. 154.

²⁸ J.B.***** "To the Editor of the Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 40, issue of March 30, 1822, p. 159; Restorationist, "For the Universalist Magazine", ibid., Vol. 3, No. 42, issue of April 13, 1822, p. 166; H. Ballou, "For the Universalist Magazine", ibid., Vol. 3, No. 43, issue of April 20, 1822, p. 170; J.B.***** "For the Universalist Magazine", ibid., Vol. 3, No. 44, issue of April 27, 1822, p. 175; H. Ballou, "For the Universalist Magazine", ibid., Vol. 3, No. 45, issue of May 4, 1822, p. 177; Restorationist, "For the Universalist Magazine", ibid., p. 179.

Wood. One such letter upheld the proposals as "sincere, and consistent with honor, and that they expressed the real design of the person who drafted, and of those who countenanced them." Also the letter of opinion defended the right of those involved in the submission of said proposals to retain their anonymity.²⁹ This was answered by Ballou in the next issue and so the debate continued.³⁰

Faced with this unanticipated direction of the controversy, publisher Henry Bowen requested of Ballou that he once again assume the editorship of the Magazine. Ballou acquiesced to this request, only with the able assistance of two associate editors, Hosea Ballou 2d. of Roxbury and Thomas Whittemore of Cambridgeport. This was publicly attested to by Bowen with satisfaction in the May 4th issue of 1822.³¹

Hosea Ballou 2d. was born in 1796 in Guilford,

²⁹ Friend to the Proposals, "To the Editor of the Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 44, issue of April 27, 1822, pp. 174-175.

³⁰ H. Ballou, "For the Universalist Magazine", ibid., Vol. 3, No. 45, issue of May 4, 1822, p. 177.

³¹ Henry Bowen, Publisher, "Universalist Magazine", ibid., p. 179; Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 193.

Vermont and reared in the Baptist faith. Just before his nineteenth year he embraced the teaching of Universalism. His impact upon Universalism in America would be felt in the years that followed. This initial appointment as associate editor of the Universalist Magazine would begin a long and distinguished career in the service of his church. He would later serve also as editor of The Universalist Expositor and of The Universalist Quarterly. But certainly his major literary accomplishment was the publication of his Ancient History of Universalism which sought to establish the early origins of this faith. For many years he would serve as an overseer of Harvard University, for which service he was awarded honorary masters and doctorate degrees. His efforts on behalf of the establishment of Tufts College were also recognized with his election as its first president. In describing this giant of Universalism, the Universalist historian, John G. Adams states, "We have no fear of using language too strong in our statement of his character, its pre-eminence and worth." ³²

Likewise, the same might be offered in describing the eminent figure of Thomas Whittemore. Born in 1800 and reared according to "moderate Calvinistic sentiments,"

³² Adams, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

his religious views were largely shaped by the influence of the Reverend Hosea Ballou. This influence would ultimately lead to the ministry and years of service throughout Massachusetts. His editorial talents continued with the founding of the Trumpet, successor to the Universalist Magazine in 1828. It has been said that the doctrine of Universalism, for Whittemore, was of paramount importance theologically which may be attested to by his numerous publications on the subject. These include his Modern History of Universalism, Commentary on the Apocalypse, and his four volume work on the life of Hosea Ballou. As a theologian, he was seen as militant against what he believed to be "religious error," and he gave it battle, "asking only that freedom of thought and expression which Christian faithfulness demands." 35

The Magazine under the direction of these associate editors, Hosea Ballou 2d. and Thomas Whittemore, publicly suspended the controversy over the Wood proposals on May 11, 1822. The editorial policy held that it was useless for "the public to witness a dispute merely about the METHOD which RESTORATIONIST proposed, of managing the subject of

35 Ibid., pp. 111-112, 113.

future punishment." It should also be noted from this editorial statement, those provisions which shaped the Magazine's future policy regarding the doctrinal issue of future vs. immediate retribution. Thus, this question, in itself, would continue to be explored by the Magazine, the editors stating, "our columns will remain open, as heretofore, for the admission of communications on the doctrine of future punishment." These two decisions which subsequently refocused the direction of the controversy may be attributed to the two associate editors, Ballou 2d. and Thomas Whittemore. It would appear from the statement offered that Hosea Ballou, because of his personal identity in the dispute, refrained from participating in this governing policy.³⁴

This editorial policy would be challenged by Jacob Wood, writing under the name of RESTORATIONIST. The substance of his views was published in the issue of May 25, 1822, the editors noting that RESTORATIONIST had threatened to seek publication elsewhere if the editorial staff of the Magazine saw fit to ignore his

³⁴ Hosea Ballou 2d, and Thomas Whittemore, "Restorationist", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 46, issue of May 11, 1822, p. 183.

communication. A condensed version of his text was inserted only because the editorial staff was of the opinion that its written form was "too near that of mockery, to be received from any correspondent who does not give us his real name." 35

Wood had previously availed himself of the Magazine to express his views as was apparent in the May 11th issue of 1822. A number of lengthy exchanges on the subject of Restorationism between him and Dr. John Brooks appeared in the succeeding issues. The discussion was initiated by Brooks who questioned the texts employed by Wood to support the belief in a future punishment. These views were contained in a written sermon which had been forwarded to Brooks. 36

The texts in question were "the case of the Sodomites, Ezechial xvi. from 53d to the end, and the case of the spirits in prison, 1. Peter iii." Through an elaborate scriptural exegesis, Brooks attempted to show that the destruction visited upon Sodom and its

35 Hosea Ballou 2d, and Thomas Whittmore, "editorial", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 48, issue of May 25, 1822, p. 191; Eddy, op. cit., p. 274.

36 J.B., "To the Rev. J.W.", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 46, issue of May 11, 1822, p. 183.

restoration "has respect to her departed inhabitants in no shape whatever, but only to her as a city in the present state of existence." His interpretation of 1 Peter iii was in reference to that of Pentecost recorded in Acts ii. "It was then that 'he went and preached to the spirits in prison, which once were disobedient, when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah;' viz. the Gentiles." He saw this as the fulfillment of the text in Isaiah 42. 6-7. Thus he maintained that "Christ went by the spirit, to the Gentiles, after He was put to death in the flesh, and not before" 37

Wood countered the charges of Brooks regarding the text in Ezechiel, and maintained that a city or country must include its inhabitants. He used as cross references the following scriptural citations from Lam. iv.6, Matt. xi. 20-24 and Jude 7. and concluded that nowhere are such references made to mere buildings or structures. Regarding Brook's interpretation ascribed to 1 Peter, Chapter iii in reference to Pentecost, Wood states "I think, sir, that either you or St. Peter must be mistaken about

37 Loc. cit.

the time when those characters lived, and were disobedient." Wood continues, regarding Brook's remarks concerning the Gentiles' disobedience "in the days of Noah, I must confess that I am totally ignorant of what you mean, for I know nothing of the antediluvians' being called Gentiles." ³⁸ In all, four letters between Brooks and Wood on this subject appeared in the issues of the Magazine. ³⁹

The Magazine also published a letter addressed by Ballou to Brooks concerning the passages cited by Brooks in his correspondence with Wood, namely, Ez. xxxvii, Rom. xi., Matt. xi.14. Ballou noted that such passages were well chosen in relation to 1st Peter iii. 19; however, he differed on the interpretation and words utilized in the exegesis of this text. ⁴⁰ Thus, Ballou initiated a series of four articles which

³⁸ J.W., "To J.B. *****" in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 3, No. 50, issue of June 8, 1822, p. 199.

³⁹ See, J.B. ***** "To the Rev. 'J.W.'", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 3, issue of July 13, 1822, p. 10; J.W., "To 'J.B. *****'", ibid., Vol. 4, No. 7, issue of August 10, 1822, pp. 26-27; J.B. ***** "To the Rev. J.W.", ibid., Vol. 4, No. 12, issue of September 14, 1822, p. 46; J.W., "To J.B.*****", ibid., Vol. 4, No. 14, issue of September 28, 1822, pp. 53-54; J.B.***** "To the Rev. J.W.", ibid., Vol. 4, No. 18, issue of October 26, 1822, p. 71; J.W., "To J.B.*****", ibid., Vol. 4, No. 23, issue of November 30, 1822, pp. 90-91.

⁴⁰ H.B., "To the Rev. J.B.*****", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 16, issue of October 12, 1822, p. 63.

dealt with the question of future punishment.⁴¹ He approached the subject having recourse to both human reason and the scriptures.⁴² He also came to terms with the Restorationist claim that to deny such a future state was but an invitation to licentiousness and immorality.⁴³ These arguments which he attempted to formulate would comprise the greater part of his work An Examination Of The Doctrine Of Future Retribution... published in 1834.

BALLOU'S DOCTRINAL EXAMINATION

This work concerned itself with an extensive investigation of the subject of future punishment based upon the arguments derived from morals, analogy and scripture. Some of the texts and interpretations incorporated within this publication were previously published in the Universalist Magazine. In this

41 Eddy, op. cit., p. 278.

42 H.B., "Thoughts On the Doctrine of Future Punishment", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 13, issue of September 21, 1822, p. 52.

43 H.B., "The Way of Transgressions is Hard", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 14, issue of September 28, 1822, p. 56.

respect, it represents a compilation and defense of his views which he formulated over a period of fifteen years. ⁴⁴

In examining the doctrine of future retribution, Ballou would argue that from the very sanctuaries of the Christian Church, ~~the notion has~~ been perpetuated "that man, in his natural state, is not the object of the divine love." ⁴⁵ He stated:

Consistently with this false sentiment, erroneous religion directs all its labors and devotions to reconcile a god of wrath and indignation; to humble itself in such a manner as to excite pity in the Deity, and move him to compassion. It gives its votary no rest, day or night, because he worships a fearful idol to whose vengeance he continually fears he shall suddenly fall prey. ⁴⁶

Thus, Ballou maintained that fear of a divine recompense has never served as an inducement for correct moral behavior. Rather, it has caused "a spirit of enmity" among mankind. ⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Hosea Ballou, An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution, on the Principles of Morals, Analogy and the Scriptures, Boston, Published at the Trumpet Office, 1834, p. 1.

⁴⁵ H.B., "Thoughts on the Love of God, and Man's Ingratitude", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 10, issue of August 31, 1822, p. 37.

⁴⁶ Loc. cit.

⁴⁷ Ballou, An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution, p. 35-36.

Ballou would also attack the orthodox stance "that the way of the transgressor is pleasant and easy." It was this equation of sin with happiness which necessitated the theological construction of a "vast furnace in the future world" designated as the fires of hell. ⁴⁸ In opposition to such claims of sinful enjoyment, Ballou would argue "that the happiness of man, in the present life, depends on his obedience to the requirements of virtue...." ⁴⁹ Thus, Ballou adhered to the belief that the virtue of the righteous and the vice of the wicked will receive its just recompense on this earth. This was possible through the happiness associated with the practice of good and the misery derived from evil. ⁵⁰

In addressing his remarks to those who adhered to a future punishment, Ballou pointed out that they maintained that both sin and misery of this world

⁴⁸ H.B., "The Way of Transgressors is Hard", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 14, issue of September 28, 1822, p. 56.

⁴⁹ H.B., "Some Observations on the Moral Tendency of Different Systems of Doctrine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 15, issue of October 5, 1822, p. 60.

⁵⁰ Ballou, An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution, p. 18.

are extended into a future state, where a divine recompense awaits all mankind. This theological opinion was presented by them in order that divine justice might be fully realized. ⁵¹ Ballou found such a doctrine irreconcilable "with reason and the law of our common nature." ⁵²

He approached the subject from the view of reason. Utilizing the principle of analogy, Ballou set out to prove the inconsistency of this argument when he said:

....as far as we have been informed, those who rely on what they call analogy to support the doctrine of future retribution, hold that in all respects, which are necessary to carry sin and its miseries into the future state, that state will be analogous to this mode of being. So that, reasoning from analogy, as moral agents sin, and thereby render themselves miserable in this world, the same moral agents may continue to do the same in the world to come. ⁵³

It follows then that the future state will by necessity be constituted by both good and evil, happiness and

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁵² H.B., "Thoughts on the Doctrine of Future Punishment", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 13, issue of September 21, 1822, p. 52.

⁵³ Ballou, An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution, p. 36-37.

misery. For Ballou herein lies the fallacy of the previously stated opinion according to analogous reasoning. 54

Ballou also saw the doctrine of future punishment contrary to the "common nature" of man. In this respect, he questioned how it was possible for those blessed souls to enjoy their eternal bliss in the knowledge that other members of the human family were enduring the afflictions of eternal suffering. He stated that "our nature partakes of such powerful sympathies that if we see those, whom we love in torment, we cannot avoid a participation of such misery." 55

In addition to the above noted arguments, Ballou found the Restorationist view no more than mere speculation and conjecture totally lacking in scriptural authority. Having recourse to the scriptures of the Old Testament, Ballou saw the divine testimony silent on this question regarding a future retribution. Instead, he cited at length numerous texts which conclusively proved that man's

54 Ibid., p. 39.

55 H.B., "Thoughts on the Doctrine of Future Punishment", op. cit., p. 52.

transgressions were duly punished in this world. This was especially true of those texts derived from the Book of Genesis in Chapter 11.16-17, concerning the account of the Fall of man, and Chapter 4.10-12 regarding the punishment of Cain. 56

Other texts cited by Ballou were the account of God's dealings with man in the days of Noah, Gen. vi. 5-7, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xix.17, the plagues of Egypt, Exodus ix.15-16 and finally the long list of grievous offenses against God recorded in Lev. xxvi. 14-39. Upon the examination of these texts, Ballou was unable to conclude that the iniquity described in these scriptural passages implied a punishment which would extend beyond this moral state. 57

Similarly in the New Testament, Ballou interpreted those passages derived from Matt. xxiii. 32-39, xxiv. 29-34, Mark viii.37; ix.1, and Luke ix. 26-27, xxi. 20-32 concerning the return of Christ in His glory as culminating in a judgment of Jerusalem confined to this earth. 58 Thus were the thoughts of Ballou on

56 Ballou, An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution, pp. 46-50.

57 Ibid., pp. 51, 54, 57, 63.

58 Ibid., pp. 78-79; see also 90-92.

this subject by 1834. Prior to this time, his views were to be found expressed in the Universalist Magazine which he utilized to combat what he considered to be the erroneous doctrine of future punishment.

CONTROVERSY PROLONGED

In addition to the four articles submitted by Ballou, the controversy would be prolonged within the Magazine with the insertion of two other publications authored by a Reverend Barzillai Streeter under signature of B. S***** presenting again the arguments for the belief in a future punishment.⁵⁹ These two articles were responded to by W.D***, identified by Eddy as possibly the Reverend William A. Drew, a prominent Universalist teacher, preacher, and publisher noted for his pioneering efforts on behalf of the denomination in Maine.⁶⁰

In response to Ballou's former questions regarding the happiness of the virtuous at the sight of the unending punishment of the wicked and the reward

⁵⁹ B.S*****, "For the Universalist Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 14, issue of September 28, 1822, p. 54; B.S*****, "To the Rev. H.B.", loc. cit., Eddy, op. cit., p. 278.

⁶⁰ Eddy, loc. cit.; Adams, op. cit., pp. 138-139; W.D***, "For the Universalist Magazine", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 19, issue of November 2, 1822, p. 74.

of good and evil in a future state, an article was submitted by one signed RATIONALIS. This author, unidentified by Eddy, noted that such was the case of the saints and even Jesus today, who view the sight of those suffering in the present world. Furthermore, he continued, "If men chose this life in a sinful and unreconciled character, there can be no injustice in their being received and treated according to their character beyond death." ⁶¹

According to Eddy, Thomas Whittemore also submitted to the Magazine under the name of RICHARDS, remarks which held that the position of no future punishment should not be equated with a denial of the "regeneration of all mankind." In fact, Whittemore maintained that all along scriptural proof was utilized to support this position. He noted that by adhering to the belief in the salvation of all men, implied in this doctrine is the belief in the rebirth of all of God's creation. ⁶²

Finally on December 21, 1822, the editors of

⁶¹ Eddy, op. cit., p. 278; RATIONALIS, "To H.B.", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 21, issue of November 16, 1822, pp. 83-84.

⁶² RICHARDS, "A few remarks relative to those who say, that we deny the doctrine of regeneration", in the Universalist Magazine, ibid., p. 84.

the Magazine announced that they were suspending the raging controversy between "J.B***** and J.W. and B.S***** and W.D***." ⁶³ Such a decision may be attributed to the fact that prominent Restorationists as the Reverend Messrs. Jacob Wood, Paul Dean, Barzillai Streeter, Levi Briggs, Edward Turner and Charles Hudson were preparing to attack the editorial policy of the Magazine as biased. Such an attack was to be authored by Jacob Wood. ⁶⁴

In a number of letters written by Edward Turner to his daughter, Mrs. Weld, on this subject, reference is made to a Restorationist meeting held at Shirley, Massachusetts in September of 1822 which was designed to address itself to this problem. The outcome of this informal assembly was the decision to publicly attack the editorial policy of the Universalist Magazine. The initial task of drafting such a statement was left to Wood who now formally charged in writing that the Magazine had adopted a policy of partiality toward the view of no future punishment. In so doing, the

⁶³ -----, "To Readers and Correspondents", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 26, issue of December 21, 1822, p. 102.

⁶⁴ E. G. Brooks, Article VIII., "Biographical Sketches. II Edward Turner", in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. 8, -- New Series, issue of April 1871, pp. 177, 179, note.

Magazine discreetly attempted to influence its reading public. Under the title of "Declaration and Appeal," the document was published in the Christian Repository of Woodstock, Vermont in December of 1822 and later republished in the Universalist Magazine of January 25, 1823. 65

The events that were to follow, brought to a head the simmering differences of opinion which would ultimately culminate in a secessionist movement on the part of a small segment of Universalists, to be distinguished as "Independent Restorationists."

65 Letters from Edward Turner to his daughter, Mrs. Weld, (1824), quoted by E. G. Brooks, Article XII., "Biographical Sketches. II Edward Turner (Concluded)", in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. 8, New Series, issue of July 1871, pp. 261-262; Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou, Vol. 2, p. 214.

CHAPTER VII

THE ROAD TO SECESSION

THE STATEMENT OF ATTACK

The January 1823 issue of the Universalist Magazine published the statement on the part of the Restorationists under the heading of "An Appeal to the Public." The document charged that the advocates of no future punishment (referred to as "party") availed themselves of every means at their disposal, whether it be the pulpit, convention or through publication to present their views on the subject. They did so, as if their belief were the prevailing opinion within organized Universalism. Such practices as these resulted only in a continuation of discord.¹

The Appeal went on to state that the controversy

¹ Restorationist, "An Appeal to the Public", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 31, issue of January 25, 1823, p. 122.

had been undermined by the editorial staff of the Universalist Magazine because of their biased opinions on the subject. The Appeal then traced the background and response to the Restorationist proposals submitted in 1822.² It would seem that such allegations of unfairness on the part of the Magazine are difficult to substantiate since the issues of this publication were equally filled with both articles and correspondence which presented both sides of the controversy.

It becomes apparent from the text of this statement that while reconciliation of views was desired, Wood was prepared to initiate a secessionist movement as early as 1822 as a final alternative. Edward Turner testified to this state of affairs in correspondence with the Reverend Russell Streeter dated January 21, 1823.³

In reference to Wood, Turner stated that he "is naturally impetuous, and less guarded by prudence than I could wish; and that he has been inclined to a separation is no news to me. I have always endeavored

² Loc. cit.

³ Letter from Edward Turner to Russell Streeter, January 21, 1823, quoted by E. G. Brooks, Article VIII., "Biographical Sketches. II Edward Turner", in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. 8.-- New Series, issue of April 1871, p. 180, (note).

to restrain his impetuosity, and have never countenanced the plan of a separation, though I have been convinced that the controversy, if it did not soon subside, would end in one." Thus, Turner recognized the danger of an impending schism, but chose to use his influence to bring about a conciliatory policy in the hope that the Magazine would cease to accentuate the major differences of the controversy.⁴

The latter part of the Statement was followed by a declaration "To The World" signed by Jacob Wood. This declaration asserted that modern error had at last tainted the doctrine of Universalism. For Wood, the belief in a final restoration, universal in scope, by the mediation of Jesus Christ, "through faith and repentance" is entirely different from the claim of universal salvation immediately as man passes into his future state of existence.⁵

This latter theological opinion, which Wood challenged, relegated all forms of divine punishment to man's present earthly state. For this reason, he saw it as a perversion of the originally intended doctrine of Universalism. Wood considered this opinion

⁴ Ibid., p. 180, note.

⁵ Jacob Wood, "To The World", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 31, issue of January 25, 1823, p. 123.

irreconcilable with the Restorationist view, for it undermines the very justice of God and discards the traditionally held concept and "proper distinction between virtue and vice, and consequently, lessens the motive to virtue, and gives force to the temptations of sin." In essence, Wood charged that those fellow Universalists of such opinion were guilty of undermining the sublime doctrine of universal election taught by Christ. ⁶

THE UNIVERSALIST MAGAZINE RESPONDS

A response on the part of the Universalist Magazine accompanied the reprint of the "Appeal and Declaration," with introductory remarks by Hosea Ballou on behalf of the editorial staff. This reply identified the ministerial "brethren" behind the drafted document as the Reverends Jacob Wood, Edward Turner, Paul Dean, Barzillai Streeter, Charles Hudson, and Levi Briggs. All of these, he noted, professed fellowship with the New England Universalist Convention.* In addition, he

⁶ Loc. cit.

* The New England Convention would dominate Universalist affairs until the establishment of the Universalist General Convention in 1833.

noted the unsubstantiated nature of the Restorationist's claim and maintained that such statements as those made could only be interpreted as an intended move at disfellowship. His remarks lamented the position assumed by the Restorationists and the possibility of an impending schism. This, in itself, he said, forces "our tears on the defection of those we love."⁷

This conciliatory statement was reversed in the following issue of the Magazine in a somewhat lengthy editorial signed by the editorial staff, but whose authorship, according to Eddy, was attributed to Hosea Ballou 2d. Overall, the editorial summarized the points of distinction of the controversy and seriously questioned the Restorationist's attempts at doctrinal reconciliation. It also disputed the intent behind the publication of the "Appeal and Declaration" noting such an act only served to weaken the fellowship of all Universalists. Such charges, according to the editorial, were beneficial to no one.⁸

The editorial also personally attacked Wood,

⁷ Editors, "Statement", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 31, issue of January 25, 1823, p. 122.

⁸ Hosea Ballou, Hosea Ballou 2d., Thomas Whittemore, "editorial", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 32, issue of February 1, 1823, p. 125; Eddy, op. cit., p. 293.

citing the position he assumed at the New England Universalist Convention in 1816 regarding the formation of an independent Restorationist association. Also, his involvement in the Ballou-Turner exchanges of 1817-1818 was noted, as well as the publications he authored which held in contempt the doctrine of no future punishment. All these designs were mentioned in the editorial by way of example to prove Wood's ultimate purpose to weaken the influence and reputation of Hosea Ballou. Finally, Wood was charged with attempting to maliciously slander Hosea Ballou. In answering a question regarding Ballou's School Street Society, Wood stated, "Nine tenths of Mr. Ballou's society are infidels, -- I am really sorry." ⁹

The editorial went on to identify the other Restorationists as Paul Dean and Edward Turner, who likewise manifested contempt for Ballou's position. It was Dean, the editorial charged, who secretly stated "that Mr. Ballou retained nothing of Christianity but the name; and [Dean] has talked against him in such a manner, to some of the brethren, that they

⁹ Ballou, Ballou 2d., Whittemore, "editorial", ibid., p. 126.

have told Mr. Ballou they never should repeat the conversation, nor tell him what it was, unless they saw him in real danger from it." Turner was cited for his "unwillingness to proceed on in harmony; for said he, 'then there would be nobody but Ballou.'" According to the Magazine, this hostility manifested toward Ballou, could be attributed only to personal envy which was at the very heart of the controversy.¹⁰

ATTEMPT AT RECONCILIATION

The harshness of this editorial response went unanswered. Publicly at least tempers subsided. Privately, however, Ballou 2d. and Whittemore were able to reach an accord with the Restorationists. The differences were resolved on February 18, 1823 and were to be published in the Magazine on February 22, 1823, accompanied by the signatures of both parties in question.¹¹

¹⁰ Loc. cit.

¹¹ Letter from Edward Turner to his daughter, Mrs. Weld, (1824), quoted by E. G. Brooks, Article XII., "Biographical Sketches. II Edward Turner (Concluded)" in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. 8 -- New Series, issue of July 1871, p. 263.

The text was prepared for publication under the heading "First Settlement with Editors" as follows.

The Authors of the 'Appeal and Declaration,' which were published in the Christian Repository of December, 1822, disavow any intention to injure the moral character of the editors of the Universalist Magazine, to wound their feelings, or those of any brethren who differ from the authors of these papers with respect to the doctrine of future punishment. They also disavow any intention to break the fellowship of the Convention, or to stigmatize the character of any of its members; and they deeply regret that such should, in any instance, have been thought to be the meaning of their language; and so far as this impression has been made, the language which conveys, or is thought to convey, such a meaning is hereby recalled.

And the editors of the Universalist Magazine, on their part, in consideration of the above statements, wish it to be understood that the allegations and remarks contained in their reply of February 1, published in the Magazine, so far as they regarded the authors of the 'Appeal and Declaration,' are hereby withdrawn, and that thus the union and harmony, which have been for a moment interrupted, are again restored and confirmed. 12

All of this was accomplished in 1823 when Hosea Ballou was absent from Boston. Upon his return, the planned

12 Brooks, Article XII., ibid., pp. 263-264, (note).

course of events was altered. 13

The settlement reached was never printed, giving the impression that Turner and his fellow Restorationists were "so overwhelmed and extinguished that they had not the courage to attempt a reply." Such silence on the part of the Restorationists may be attributed to the desire to avoid entanglement in another dispute and to the hope that the reasons for delay might still be resolved amicably. 14

These circumstances prompted Edward Turner to write to Ballou 2d on March 7, 1823 inquiring as to why the statement of settlement had not been inserted in the Magazine. In questioning the delay, Turner stated, "We know that, if you will neither come to an adjustment on the principles which governed us before, nor agree to choose a mutual Council, we are entitled to call a Council, ex-parte, and shall avail ourselves of the privilege." 15

This letter produced a response on the part

13 Ibid., p. 263.

14 Ibid., p. 263 note.

15 Letter from Edward Turner to Hosea Ballou, March 7, 1823, quoted by E. G. Brooks, Article XII., op. cit., p. 263, note.

of the Magazine on March 15, 1823 signed by both Ballou 2d. and Whittemore. In reference to the mutual agreement at reconciliation of February 18th, they maintained its publication was not warranted because of apparent discrepancy of facts, and "that the statements in the agreement were not true." Also, they were unable to publish such an agreement because of the absence of approval from the senior editor of the Magazine, Hosea Ballou. It seems that all three editors had agreed to a policy of complete unanimity on all matters pertaining to the Appeal and Declaration controversy before resorting to publication within the Magazine. ¹⁶

The Restorationists charged both Whittemore and Ballou 2d. with misrepresentation of the facts and Hosea Ballou of impeding what was hoped would be an imminent reconciliation. In fact, Turner's correspondence with his oldest daughter Mrs. Weld made reference to a number of overtures toward Hosea Ballou which were always rebuffed. ¹⁷ Ballou's

¹⁶ Hosea Ballou, 2d. and Thomas Whittemore, "Statement", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 38, issue of March 15, 1823, p. 152.

¹⁷ Letter from Edward Turner to his daughter, Mrs. Weld, (1824), quoted by E. G. Brooks, Article XII., op. cit., p. 265; Eddy, op. cit., pp. 309-310.

correspondence with Turner in May of 1827 denied any internal differences with his junior editors and related only that they, upon reflection and study of the statement of agreement, became convinced of its ambiguity and misrepresentation of the facts. ¹⁸

When Turner was forced from the pulpit of his Charlestown church during the controversy in 1823 he remained "convinced that he had been wickedly plotted away, against the decided preference of a majority of the people." This he attributed to the workings of the editors of the Universalist Magazine. This feeling was most apparent in the correspondence between Turner and Ballou from 1823 to 1827, in which he intimated that Ballou had influenced the events that occurred at Charlestown. ¹⁹

The controversy continued to simmer as Turner persisted in espousing his restorationist views to a

¹⁸ Letter from Hosea Ballou to Edward Turner, Boston, May 22, 1827, quoted by A. St. John Chambré, Article IV., "Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner. -- A Contribution to the 'Truth of History'", in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. 10. -- New Series, 1 issue of January 1873, p. 46.

¹⁹ Brooks, Article XII., op. cit., p. 271; Letters of Correspondence between Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner, 1823-1827, quoted by A. St. John Chambré, op. cit., pp. 41-49.

small faction who had severed their connection with his former Charlestown congregation. He was further ostracized in 1823 when Ballou's School Street Church (Second Universalist Society of Boston) by resolution demanded a retraction from Wood, Dean and Turner regarding the charge that their pastor, Hosea Ballou, had impaired the settlement of February 18, 1823. ²⁰ The resolution was prepared as follows.

Boston, March 9th, 1823

The Standing Committee of the Second Society of Universalists held a meeting in their Vestry, when the following was laid before them, viz. --

Whereas Rev. Jacob Wood, Rev. Edward Turner and Rev. Paul Dean have framed and published to the world certain complaints against the Pastor of the Second Society of Universalists in Boston and Against other ministering brethren of our faith, to which they appeal for a just cause of separation, and this without any previous attempt by private labor to obtain satisfaction; and whereas the above named brethren have accompanied their complaint with a 'declaration' concerning the doctrine which is held forth by our Pastor, representing the same to be contrary to the Christian system and pernicious to the morals of Society, -- whereupon it was voted unanimously that the Rev. Hosea Ballou, Pastor of this Society, be requested to exchange with the above named brethren or any others who shall countenance this violation of Christian fellowship,

20 A. St. John Chambré, Article IV., op. cit., pp. 40, 42, 43.

by exchanging with them until the above named complaint and declaration are publicly recalled by their authors.

Voted that the Clerk present a copy of the foregoing to their Pastor, the Rev. Hosea Ballou.

A True copy of record.

Attest, Samuel Smith, Clerk 21

REACTION WITHIN ORGANIZED UNIVERSALISM

Concurrently, the Southern Association of Universalists which had convened at Stafford, Connecticut on June 10, 1823 expressed its disapproval of the actions resultant to the publication of the document "Appeal and Declaration" of 1822. The Association regarded such communications to "indicate a breach of harmony which ought never to prevail among brethren engaged in one cause...." They thus referred the document "Appeal and Declaration" to a committee formed with the intent of examining said document. 22

21 Ibid., p. 43.

22 Hosea Ballou, Moderator, Richard Carrigue, Clerk, "Minutes of the Southern Association of Universalists", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 2, issue of July 5, 1823, p. 6.

The Committee was made up of Br. R. Carrique, J. Bisbe, and J. Frieze, who upon deliberation submitted the following recommendation in report which was unanimously adopted by the Association.²³

This Association considers it expedient to express this public disapprobation of a 'Declaration,' and an 'Appeal' which appeared in the Christian Repository for December, 1822, as they tend to dissolve the bonds of union, by manifesting a disposition in their authors to deprive us of the name and character of Christian ministers.

Voted, That Brs. Carrique, Bisbe and Frieze be a committee to write to the brethren who are the authors of the Appeal and Declaration, and make known to them the views entertained by this Association of such communications.²⁴

This action was severely criticized by the Christian Repository in an editorial submitted by the Reverend S. C. Loveland and likewise censured by the Reverend Edward Turner, now editor of The Evangelical Repertory. The issue was once again renewed in September of 1823 at the New England Convention of Universalists in Clinton, New York. Principals in the dispute were Ballou 2d., Dean and Charles Hudson. The differences and hostilities which surfaced at

23 Loc. cit.

24 Loc. cit.

the Clinton sessions were emotionally charged, with Ballou 2d. formally lodging a complaint against Dean's obstinency toward a reconciliation. Charles Hudson similarly offered a complaint against Ballou. Eddy notes that these accusations were not transcribed in the record. He states, however, that the Convention "attended to the examination of the complaints," and decided in each individual case "to exonerate from the several charges." At this point, Mr. Dean petitioned to sever his fellowship with the Convention. The Convention in turn attended to his request.²⁵

Three months later in Convention at Milford, Massachusetts in December of 1823, a committee of reconciliation chaired by Hosea Ballou formulated a statement of settlement.²⁶ The proposal as accepted by the Association was as follows.

Whereas certain publications, called an Appeal to the Public, and a Declaration to the World, have been construed to indicate a disfellowship, as expressed in a Resolve of the Southern Association, the undersigned, authors of the Declaration, being possessed of a fervent desire to restore the happy union and fellowship

25 Eddy, op. cit., pp. 313-14; Whittemore, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 235.

26 Whittemore, ibid., p. 232.

of our religious order, and to enjoy ourselves, and to assist our brethren to reciprocate with us the inestimable blessings of harmony and brotherly love, desire to remove all difficulties above noted, by certifying that we do most cordially acknowledge and accept as Christian ministers and brethren, such as differ from us on the subjects of doctrine maintained in the above-named publications. And we receive and consider the acceptance of this proposal by the Association, as an assurance on their part that they reciprocate the sentiments and feelings of Christian fellowship above mentioned.

Edward Turner,

Barzillai Streeter

Charles Hudson

Voted, that the same is fully satisfactory to this Association, in relation to the signers thereof, and that this body reciprocate the Christian feeling and fellowship therein expressed. 27

The settlement was readily endorsed by the Reverend Edward Turner. This was attested to by Turner in a letter to his daughter in which he stated "These terms were nothing more than that we acknowledged our fellowship with those who differed

27 Richard Carrique, Moderator, Jacob Frieze, Clerk., "Southern Association of Universalists", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 5, No. 26, issue of December 20, 1823, pp. 103-104.

from us on the article of future punishment. As this was what we had always asserted, and often told the editors, we were willing to sign the proposals, which we accordingly did." 28

In 1824, the Southern Association meeting at Attleboro, Massachusetts would again witness an assent to the terms of settlement by both Paul Dean and Jacob Wood. In essence, they had now agreed to the document signed by Turner, Streeter and Hudson at the Milford Convention proceedings. Also noteworthy at this Convention was the readmittance of Paul Dean once again into fellowship upon his request.²⁹

This request for readmission by Dean was met by open opposition from Thomas Whittemore who believed such a readmission would only provide an opportunity for future controversy within the denomination. It was only through the insistence of Hosea Ballou that Whittemore withdrew his opposition. Ballou was of the opinion that "if we err at all, let us err on the side of forgiveness." Thus, the long standing

28 Letter from Edward Turner to his daughter, Mrs. Weld, quoted by E. G. Brooks, Article XII., op. cit., p. 268.

29 Jacob Frieze, Clerk., "Minutes of the Southern Association", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 6, No. 1, issue of June 26, 1824, p. 1.

breach between these men was resolved. ³⁰

RENEWED CONTROVERSY

Charles Hudson

If the dispute among Universalist luminaries seemed to have subsided, the issue would again be revived by the Reverend Charles Frederick Hudson. Hudson was born in Wadsworth, Ohio on May 18, 1821. Educated at both Western Reserve College and Lane Theological Seminary, his aspirations to the ministry were realized within the Congregational Church. His attention was soon directed toward the doctrine of endless misery, which he attempted to refute in a number of works and tracts. He thus severed his association with the Congregationalists "stirred to fresh exertions in defence of his new and cherished views...." ³¹

Some ten years were spent by Hudson in an attempt to scripturally and historically support his

³⁰ Whittemore, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 258-259.

³¹ D. T. Taylor, "Hudson and his Works", in The Bible Banner, Vol. 4, No. 8, issue of August 1874, p. 1.

opinions against the doctrine of endless punishment.

The result was the production, ten years subsequent to leaving Lane, of his master-work, 'Debt and Grace, as related to the Doctrine of a Future Life,' which in due time was followed by 'Christ our Life: the Scripture argument for Immortality through Christ alone,' and 'Human Destiny: a Critique on Universalism;' also six valuable tracts, viz., 'The Silence of the Scriptures respecting the Immortality of the Soul, or of the Race, or of the Lost,' 'Immortality through Christ alone: the Doctrine Safe and Salutary,' 'The Parable of the Rich man and Lazarus: does it imply Eternal Future Suffering?' 'The Doctrine of Endless Misery an occasion for Skepticism,' (this being a reprint from Sir James Stephen,) 'The Rights of Wrong: Or, is Evil Eternal?' And 'Eternal Death in the literal sense is Eternal Punishment.' 32

Certainly, the most scholarly of his publications was his work entitled The Critical Greek Concordance completed just before his death in 1867. 33

In 1827, Charles Hudson published A Series of Letters Addressed to Rev. Hosea Ballou of Boston... Mr. Balfour and Others. In a series of nine letters, Hudson questioned Ballou's exegetical skill in his application of certain scriptural texts in reference to the doctrine of future punishment. He regarded Ballou's doctrinal position inherently dangerous, having considered its impact on the practice of religion

32 Loc. cit.

33 Loc. cit.

and Christian fellowship. ³⁴ Much of the text is repetitious of the scriptural and moral arguments previously defended and refuted by others. According to Eddy, this publication did not provoke a response from Ballou. In correspondence with the Reverend Abner Kneeland, Ballou made reference to Hudson's Letters by declaring that he failed to see the need of re-exploring those scriptural areas which he had already previously examined. ³⁵

Walter Balfour

Although Ballou failed to respond to the charges of Hudson, Walter Balfour did. Balfour was of Scotch Presbyterian background but most recently associated with the Baptist denomination of Charlestown, Massachusetts. His conversion to

³⁴ Charles Frederick Hudson, A Series of Letters Addressed to Rev. Hosea Ballou of Boston, Being a Vindication of the Doctrine of a Future Retribution, Against the Principal Arguments used by Him, Mr. Balfour, and Others, Woodstock, Vt., Printed by D. Watson, 1827; pp. 285-307; see also Hudson's A Reply to Mr. Balfour's Essays Touching the State of the Dead and a Future Retribution, Woodstock, Vt., Printed by D. Watson, 1829; and Hudson's The Doctrine of the Immediate Happiness of All Men at the Article Death, Examined; (In Sermons 1798-1826, 1811-1840; In Tracts 1821-1826).

³⁵ Letter from Hosea Ballou to Abner Kneeland, quoted by Richard Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 321.

Universalism was of noteworthy interest in theological circles. Of even more interest was the ardor in which he sought to prove that the authors of the scriptures in no way attempted to support the belief in hell.

Balfour was no stranger to the Universalist Magazine as he had availed himself of this publication in the past, submitting articles of opinion under the signature of "An Inquirer after Truth."³⁶ Thus it was through Balfour that the controversy was reopened with the Restorationists.³⁷ The Balfour-Hudson controversy would rage on in the press from 1827 to 1831.

³⁶ -----, "Another Conversion in the Ministry", in the Universalist Magazine, Vol. 4, No. 49, issue of May 31, 1825, p. 196.

³⁷ See, Walter Balfour, An Inquiry into the Scriptural import of the Words Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, and Gehenna: All Translated Hell, in the Common English Version, Charlestown, G. Davidson, 1824; and Balfour's, Letters on the Immortality of the Soul, the Intermediate State of the Dead, and a Future Retribution, in Reply to Mr. Charles Hudson, Charlestown, G. Davidson, 1829; Balfour's Three Essays. On the Intermediate State of the Dead. The Resurrection from the Dead. And on the Greek Terms Rendered, Judge, Judgment, Condemned, Condemnation, Damned, Damnation, Sc. in the New Testament. With Remarks on Mr. Hudson's Letters in Vindication of a Future Retribution, Addressed to Mr. Hosea Ballou, Charlestown, G. Davidson, 1828; Balfour's Tracts 1806-1827, 1807-1832; and his Three Inquiries...., Providence, Z. Baker, 1842; Balfour's, An Inquiry into the Scriptural Doctrine Concerning the Devil and Satan...., Charlestown, Mass., Davidson, printer, 1827.

ADIN BALLOU AND THE INDEPENDENT MESSENGER

In 1831, a Reverend Adin Ballou would found a Restorationist publication, the Independent Messenger, the issues of which were dedicated to upholding this doctrinal position. Adin Ballou was born in Cumberland, Rhode Island on April 23, 1803. In 1815, he was baptized into a branch of the Baptist denomination, and seven years later accepted the call to minister and preach the gospel within the "Christian Connexion." Although he lacked a college education and theological training, he was received into ministerial fellowship by the Connecticut Christian Conference whose jurisdiction extended over the State of Rhode Island. 39

It was but a year that Adin Ballou served in this ministerial office before embracing the teachings of Universalism. Ballou found no difficulty in assenting to the theological tenets of the "Christian Connexion," namely, the inspiration of the scriptures, the unity of the Godhead, the role of the Holy Spirit, the sonship of Jesus Christ, the fall of man, the consequence of sin, but not complete depravity of man, the retention of man's free will and the final resurrection and judgment of mankind. These points he readily accepted; however, it was

39 William S. Heywood, Editor, Autobiography of Adin Ballou, Lowell, Mass., The Vox Populi Press -- Thompson and Hill, 1896, pp. 1, 32, 64, 69-70.

precisely against the orthodox doctrine of endless punishment and the annihilation or destruction of impenitent souls that led Adin Ballou to the teaching of Universal salvation.⁴⁰

In adopting the teachings of Universalism, Adin Ballou adhered to the theology of both the Reverends John Murray and Elhanan Winchester, namely, the belief in the universal restoration of all things through the merits of Jesus Christ. He never accepted the Ultra-Universalism of Hosea Ballou and was largely influenced by the theological views of Elhanan Winchester, especially regarding the duration and design of future punishment. Adin Ballou's universal restorationism embodied the possibility of future punishment but not of an endless duration. His views on this subject were finalized in 1840 when he published a pamphlet entitled Endless Punishment Rejected and in 1860 this theme was reiterated in a similar work entitled Practical Christianity in Relation to the Dogma of Endless Punishment, Presenting Three Grand Reasons for Its Rejection. The defense of his theological opinion rested on the premise that such a doctrine was outright heresy, in that it was contrary to the glory, love and will of God. Thus was Adin Ballou

40 Ibid., pp. 45, 90-91.

theologically assured of the "all redeeming grace of God." ⁴¹

The early years of the Independent Messenger were filled with articles critically examining the scriptural interpretations of what was branded as Ultra-Universalism. ⁴² Adin Ballou while never accepting the Ultra-Universalism of Hosea Ballou, nevertheless revered this elder figure for his wisdom and age. ⁴³ The issues of this publication would see a reprint of Elhanan Winchester's "Dialogue on Universal Restoration" ⁴⁴ and Ferdinand Petitpierre's "Infinite Goodness of God." ⁴⁵ Also a number of essays appeared

⁴¹ Adin Ballou, Endless Punishment Rejected, Conversation Between Inquirer and Expositor; Hopedale, A. G. Spaulding, 1840, n.d., p. 1; Ballou, Practical Christianity in Relation to the Dogma of Endless Punishment, Presenting Three Grand Reasons for Its Rejection, Hopedale, Spiritual Reformer Office, 1860, pp. 3, 18.

⁴² -----, "Ultra Universalist Interpretation of John v. 28, 29. Critically Examined", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 2, issue of January 14, 1831, p. 5.

⁴³ Adin Ballou, "An Epistle General to Restorationists", ibid., Vol. 1, No. 1, issue of January 1, 1831, p. 1.

⁴⁴ Elhanan Winchester, "Dialogue on Universal Restoration", ibid., Vol. 1, No. 6, issue of February 11, 1831, p. 21.

⁴⁵ F. O. Petitpierre, "Infinite Goodness of God", ibid., Vol. 1, No. 15, issue of April 15, 1831, p. 57. (The work was continued in a series which extended from April 15 - June 3, 1831.)

in reference to the doctrine of future punishment which examined the meaning of the terms aiou and aiouios as used in the scriptures.⁴⁶ A number of exchanges were also published between Hosea Ballou 2d. and Charles Hudson on this subject.⁴⁷

Most apparent within the issues of this publication was the open discussion of secession from the Universalist denomination. Adin Ballou listed as true Restorationists such eminent historical figures as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa and Nazianzen, Tillotson, Newton, Ramsay, Petitpierre, Chauncy and Winchester.⁴⁸

In 1834, he traced the origin, past conditions and prospects for the formation of a separate and distinct sect known as Restorationists. In so doing, he made reference to some twenty preachers among

⁴⁶ See, Moses Stuart, "Essays on Several Words Relating to Future Punishment", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 7, issue of February 18, 1831, p. 25; also David Pickering, "Candid Review of Reverend Moses Stuart's 'Essays on Several Words Relating to Future Punishment'", loc. cit.

⁴⁷ Hosea Ballou 2d., "H. Ballou 2d. vs. C. Hudson", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 47, issue of November 25, 1831, p. 185; Charles Hudson, "Reply to the Rev. Hosea Ballou 2d.", ibid., Vol. 1, No 49, issue of December 9, 1831, p. 193.

⁴⁸ Adin Ballou, "An Epistle General to Restorationists", op. cit., p. 2.

the ranks of organized Universalists in America who at that time adhered to Restorationist views. He also noted that there were countless other Universalists of like sympathy but as of yet had not come forth. Finally, he observed that those within organized Universalism known as Restorationists should be aware of similar views prevalent among the Dunkers, Friends (Hicksites), Baptists and even Unitarians.⁴⁹

The discussion of a possible separatist movement in the early issues of the Independent Messenger resulted in another controversy between Adin Ballou's publication and Thomas Whittemore's Trumpet, the successor to the Universalist Magazine. Charges would again be hurled with Whittemore claiming that Adin Ballou was no "American Universalist and of perverting orthodoxy within Universalism." Adin Ballou would likewise attack Whittemore as being an ardent foe of Restorationism and of always adhering to the ground of no future punishment. His public rebuke directed at Whittemore's doctrinal position was "that the orthodoxy which makes so much business for the editor of the Trumpet is not what may be called

⁴⁹ Adin Ballou, "Denomination of Restorationists", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 4, No. 16, issue of April 26, 1834, p. 61. 6

orthodoxy proper, but orthodoxy in general." 50

THE PROVIDENCE ASSOCIATION

This tension, coupled with the formation of the Providence Association of Universalists on November 20, 1827, would ultimately spur on a secessionist move on the part of a small number of Universalists. By November 19, 1828, the Providence Association had drafted a Constitution which was ratified in Convention by May of 1829. Its membership was composed mostly of Universalist ministers of Restorationist sympathy from Rhode Island, and parts of Massachusetts and Connecticut. 51

Such action on their part was interpreted as an attempt at disfellowship with the New England Convention. This was in effect the stance assumed by the Southern Association of Universalists meeting at Berlin, Connecticut in 1830. Following is the statement of this body in resolution.

50 Adin Ballou, "The Trumpet Sounds an Alarm", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 5, issue of February 4, 1831, p. 19.

51 Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 326-327.

Whereas it is the desire of this Association, as a member and branch of the General Convention, to preserve entire the union of our religious body; and whereas it is understood that the Providence Association does not intend to be under the jurisdiction of the General Convention, and whereas persons not members of the Convention, but who are opposed to its regulations, are acting members of said Association, and whereas we believe such measures are calculated to introduce and promote division in our common body; therefore,

Resolved, 1st. That we recommend to Brethren in our fellowship to discountenance the formation of Associations which do not recognize the supervision of the General Convention.

2d. That all brethren who maintain membership with Associations not in fellowship with the General Convention, do thereby annul their fellowship and membership with the order. Provided, that any brethren who are now members of any such Association not in fellowship, may retain their membership by signifying their desire so to do, to the Standing Clerk of the General Convention, and by withdrawing from such Associations. ⁵²

According to Eddy, the Southern Association exceeded its authority on this question, for such jurisdiction regarding fellowship was reserved alone to the New England Convention. ~~This view was expressed~~ This view was expressed by both the Providence Association and those other Restorationists not connected with that body who

⁵² Ibid., pp. 327-328.

"denounced this action as an insolent assumption of unwarranted authority." 53 Thus, the New England Convention at its sessions held at Lebanon, New Hampshire was prompted to address itself in resolution to this state of affairs.

Resolved, as the opinion of this Convention, that it is inconsistent with ecclesiastical order, for a person to be, at the same time, an acting member of two ecclesiastical bodies claiming equal powers, and such independence of each other, as implies the right of either to pursue a course in opposition to the general rules and regulations of the other. 54

This view on the part of the New England Convention was again met head on with the Providence Association claiming such action was primarily directed at them. They maintained that such initiative on their part in no way violated their association with the General Convention regarding its rules and regulations. In fact, they argued that the Constitution of the Providence Association upheld its fellowship "on equal terms with all other Universalist Associations." They described their situation as similar to that of other

53 Ibid., p. 328.

54 Adin Ballou, "Reply", To Warren Skinner, in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 46, issue of November 18, 1831, p. 183.

State Conventions already established in Maine and New York. Since disciplinary action failed to materialize against these two similar bodies, they (Providence Association) interpreted the resolution adopted at Lebanon as intended solely for their benefit.⁵⁵ Thus, the Providence Association meeting at Mendon, Massachusetts in August of 1831 voted to sever its connection with the General Convention with the following statement.

Forasmuch as there has been of late years a great departure from the sentiments of the first Universalist Preachers in this country by a majority of the General Convention -- the leaders of which do now arrogate to themselves, exclusively, the name of Universalists; and Whereas we believe, with Murray, Winchester, Chauncy, and the ancient Authors who have written upon this subject, that Regeneration -- a General Judgment; Future Rewards and Punishments, to be followed by the Final Restoration of all mankind to holiness and happiness, are fundamental Articles of Christian Faith, and that the Modern sentiments of No-Future accountability, connected with Materialism, are unfriendly to pure religion, and subversive of the best interests of society; and Whereas our adherence to the doctrines on which the General Convention was first established, instead of producing fair, manly controversy, has procured for us contumely -- exclusion from Ecclesiastical Councils, and final expulsion, and this without proof of any offence on our part against

55 Eddy, op. cit., pp. 328.- 330.

the Rules of the order or the laws of Christ; It was therefore,

Resolved, That we hereby form ourselves into a religious Community for the Defense and Promulgation of the doctrines of Revelation in their original purity, and the promotion of our own improvement -- to be known by the name of the MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSAL RESTORATIONISTS.

Resolved, That the annual meeting of this body be holden in Boston, on the first Wednesday and following Thursday in January.

Chas. Hudson, President.

Nathl. Wright, Secretary. 56

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSAL RESTORATIONISTS

This newly formed Association of Restorationists convened in Boston for the first time in January of 1832 and would do so annually until 1841. Reverend Adin Ballou presided over the meeting and at its next session in 1833, a constitution and profession of faith were drafted and approved. This Profession was essentially the same as the "Winchester Profession

56 Chas. Hudson and Nathl. Wright, "Massachusetts Association", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 34, issue of August 26, 1831, p. 135.

of Faith" adopted by Universalists in 1803 with the exception of Article three.⁵⁷ This Article stated "We believe in a retribution beyond death, and in the necessity of faith and repentance; and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works, for those things are good and profitable unto men." This secessionist movement was by no means large and consisted originally of some eight ministers from the areas of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Included among the original eight were the Reverends Paul Dean, Charles Hudson and Adin Ballou. Its membership fluctuated periodically, however, there was recorded at one given time thirty-one Restorationist preachers.⁵⁸

On November 25, 1831 in the Independent Messenger, Ballou 2d. in correspondence with Charles Hudson called attention to the editor of this publication that the membership of the New England Convention of Universalists now numbers "more Restorationists than belong to that

⁵⁷ This Profession of Faith adopted at Winchester, New Hampshire in 1803 reaffirmed in three articles, the authority of the scriptures, the triune nature of God and the necessity of good works.

⁵⁸ Eddy, op. cit., pp. 33-334; Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou; With Accounts of His Writings, And Biographical Sketches of His Seniors and Early Contemporaries in the Universalist Ministry, Vol. 3, Boston, James M. Usher, 1855, p. 87.

party that seems to identify all its movements with that appellation." 59

By the 1840's, it can be said that the direction of Universalist thought had been diverted from the course of no future punishment, with Restorationist belief continuing to be acknowledged and expressed without restraint. With this realized, Adin Ballou could safely state in 1871 that "at length nine-tenths" of Universalists "are Restorationists." Thus, after ten years of existence, the Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists was dissolved, conceiving "Its mission was a moral necessity, and well fulfilled -- to the lasting good of all sects and parties affected by it." 60

Many factors contributed to its dissolution. Certainly by the 1840's, the prominence of Ultra-Universalism was on the decline, and that which was branded as Restorationism now prevailed doctrinally

59 Eddy, op. cit., pp. 334-335; Hosea Ballou, 2d., "H. Ballou 2d. vs. C. Hudson", in the Independent Messenger, Vol. 1, No. 47, issue of November 25, 1831, p. 185.

60 Eddy, op. cit., pp. 338-339; Adin Ballou, "The Restorationist Secession", in The Universalist Vol. 52, No. 43, issue of February 25, 1871, p. 1.

throughout organized Universalism. This changed state of affairs brought into question the very necessity of continuing the existence of such an independent Association. Also, because of their doctrinal stance regarding future punishment, the Restorationist Association was soon welcomed not only into the pulpits but parishes of the Unitarians. Many Unitarian clergy, at this time, were of like sentiment doctrinally.⁶¹

This close relationship may account for the fact that many Restorationists like Edward Turner embraced Unitarianism. At the Association's dissolution in 1841, many Restorationists sought reunion within organized Universalism, while those such as Paul Dean, Charles Hudson and Adin Ballou followed independent paths. Paul Dean moved from Boston to Framingham where he played a prominent role in the development of Freemasonry there. Hudson pursued a political career of noteworthy importance in Massachusetts, while Adin Ballou established at Hopedale, Massachusetts the first Christian socialistic community in America.⁶²

⁶¹ Adin Ballou, "The Restorationist Secession", in The Universalist, issue of February 25, 1871, quoted by Richard Eddy, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 336-337.

⁶² Ernest Cassara, Editor, Universalism in America: A Documentary History, Boston, Beacon Press, 1971, p. 27; John G. Adams, Fifty Notable Years, Boston, Universalist Publishing House, 1882, p. 107.

Finally, the most divisive issue which severed the Association was the moral and social reforms characteristic of the early part of the nineteenth century. These reforms sought to replace within many a denomination the theological interests of the past. The Association did not remain untouched by these powerful forces. This was the case regarding the questions of abolition, temperance, and moral reform as raised by the Reverend Adin Ballou at the Massachusetts Restorationist Association meeting at Milton in 1837. Thereafter, the membership of the Association would become increasingly polarized into conservative and liberal factions over these issues. ⁶³

When the dominant liberal faction openly endorsed the social aspects and implications of Christianity with the publication of Ballou's Standard of Practical Christianity in 1839, the conservative reaction was swift. Ballou and his associates were branded "as impractical fanatics, with whom they could go no further." ⁶⁴ In reference to this conservative reaction, Adin Ballou states in his autobiography:

⁶³ Heywood, op. cit., pp. 291-292.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 331-332.

The adoption and publication of the 'Standard' widened the breach already opened between the conservative and progressive wings of our Restorationist body and hastened its dissolution. The former retained their places in the old order of society while the latter were impelled forward, entering alliances and taking up activities looking to a more Christlike type of civilization....⁶⁵

The last meeting held by the Massachusetts Restorationist Association was at Westminster in October of 1840. Although the membership remained divided over the social and moral aspects of Christianity, Ballou described the proceedings as being "conducted in an amicable manner." Plans were made to meet again the following year at Milville, however, because of poor attendance nothing materialized. Thus, after ten years of existence, its light was at last forever extinguished!⁶⁶

65 Ibid., p. 314.

66 Ibid., p. 333.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The early period of the doctrinal development of Universalism reflected its primary intent of refuting the orthodox claims of a rigid Calvinistic theology. Such teachings adhered to the belief in a partial atonement and redemption by Christ and the notion of an endless punishment. These doctrinal claims were refuted in the theology of both the Reverends John Murray and Elhanan Winchester.

Their Christology embraced a trinitarian concept of God, as well as the doctrine of substitutional atonement. Both men were able to view Christ as the composite head of the human race and thereby capable of reconciling all men to their Creator. On this subject, the differences of opinion which emerged within organized Universalism produced two schools of thought. Murray's theology perpetuated a divine plan of reconciliation which was complete, thereby in effect, freeing all men from divine punishment. Winchester's thought, however, held to the view of a future retribution for sinners, but only for a limited

duration and for punitive reasons. Murray, on the other hand, acknowledged the existence of such a state, whether present or future, in consequence of man's inability to perceive the salvific mission of Christ.

Universalist theology was destined to be permeated by the Deistic influence of the Enlightenment. This was accomplished through the Reverend Hosea Ballou whose many publications radically transformed and reset Universalism in a part Unitarian context. Ballou undertook this task during his forty year ministry.

His theological thought would show evidence of the influence of Ethan Allen, Charles Chauncy and Ferdinand Petitpierre whose writings helped shape Ballou's opinions regarding the trinity, the divinity of Christ, and the concept of sin in relation to the doctrines of the atonement and reconciliation. All of these views would eventually take shape in the most famous of his works, A Treatise on Atonement first published in 1805.

In this work, Ballou is indebted to Ethan Allen for his ideas regarding the trinity. While the Treatise

was not intended as a refutation of trinitarianism, Ballou cast off the trinitarian doctrine as contrary to both reason and scripture. The many editions of Ballou's Treatise saw the refinement of his Christology. This was especially true of those editions prior to 1832 which put forth an Arian conception of Christ. After 1832, however, his Treatise is seen to present a Socinian view of Christ.

His rejection of the traditional explanation of the fall of man, the origin of evil and the existence of a Satanic Being are likewise attributed to the influence of Allen. In Ballou's Treatise prior to 1832, his thought envisioned man originally created in Christ and only later formed from the earth. Sin then was seen by Ballou as originating from man's earthly nature. His later editions of the Treatise, after 1832, stress the carnality of sin while abandoning the previously held theory of man's creation.

The influence of Ferdinand Petitpierre's notion of God's guiding role in all the affairs of men, provides the necessary basis for Ballou's determinism. This position led Ballou to a denial of man's free will and to the conviction that God is

the author and first cause of sin. In his denial of the infinity of sin, Ballou is indebted not only to Ethan Allen but to Charles Chauncy and Ferdinand Petippierre. All would question by various means this doctrinal tenet. Ballou's conception of Christ's mediatorial mission is suggestive of Chauncy's influence, yet devoid of Chauncy's high Arianism and advocacy of man's free volition.

Ballou's discarding of the notion of imputation is also attributed to Allen's influence. The nature and purpose of Christ's atoning death was seen by Ballou in terms of Romans viii.2. His disavowal of any literal meaning ascribed to Christ's atoning act enabled Ballou to envision the atonement as a reconciliation, "a renewal of love." His theological system rested on the fact that it is man who needs to be reconciled to his Creator, and not the Creator to His creation. This view of Christ reconciling man to God is seen to be at the very heart of Ballou's system of atonement.

On the subject of future punishment, Ballou wavered in his earlier editions of the Treatise. However, by 1817 during the Ballou-Turner exchanges published in The Gospel Visitant, Ballou became convinced of the theological certitude of the doctrine of no future

punishment. Here, he contended that sin and misery exist as a state of punishment on this earth. His equation of sin with misery allowed him to deny the existence of a future state of punishment.

Ballou's position was that sin originated on this earth and is thereby confined to this world. Only death severs its existence, making man fit for the kingdom of God. His position then would be distinguished theologically as a "Death and Glory" type of Universalism. This conviction Ballou also expressed in a number of Lecture Sermons which were published at this time. His views on this subject were finalized in 1834 and published under the title -- An Examination Of The Doctrine Of Future Retribution.

The controversy which developed over this question was aired publicly in the issues of the Universalist Magazine. At the center of the dispute was Hosea Ballou whose religious views were seriously challenged and questioned. This forced Ballou to vigorously compile scriptural evidence to support his contention that punishment and misery exist as a state of hell on this earth.

At times the controversy would become highly inflamed with charges and counter charges being hurled within the Magazine. Principals in the dispute were Jacob Wood, Paul Dean, Edward Turner and a number of

lesser figures. The position of attack held by those individuals in many instances gave evidence of personal resentment and hostility toward Ballou.

The result of what seemed to be an unending exchange of views would terminate in the denomination's first schism. Less than a dozen individual churches and clergymen made up this initial secessionist movement which resulted in the formation of the Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists with Adin Ballou its most articulate spokesman.

Such a move was by no means representative of the denomination at large. In fact, many Universalists in Massachusetts and elsewhere were also inclined toward the doctrine of future punishment. This was the case with such prominent Universalist figures as Hosea Ballou 2d, Russell and Sebastian Streeter and many others who saw no need to sever their connection with the denomination. Thus it may be said that they were able to see the positions of "Death and Glory" and the "Probationary" view as theologically coexistent.

Why such a doctrinal dispute ever occurred might be best described as one of those theological idiosyncrasies. There is, of course, the whole matter of the necessary understanding of "regeneration" as

"growth," which might have taken the steam out of the entire controversy. Possibly, Universalism in America by the 1800's felt doctrinally and organizationally secure to engage in an inward self examination and scrutiny. After all, the previous century had seen its theological arguments primarily directed against the austere Calvinism of that period. Also, it might be said that such theological development was certain to produce both internal dissension and competition. Thus, there were those who would challenge the exalted and revered position of the Reverend Hosea Ballou within Universalism. Whether this was initiated out of personal envy or hatred for what was branded as Ultra-Universalism remains but a matter of emphasis.

If the latter be the case, the prominence of Ultra-Universalism would gradually diminish by the 1850's. At that time, most Universalists adhered to a belief in a future punishment since there was little evidence that the wicked were receiving their just recompense on this earth. Also, Ballou's deterministic theology was abandoned and with it went the cinch pin of Universalism as a distinctive and potent religious system. Such determinism had little appeal to those imbued with the optimistic and rationalistic egalitarianism so characteristic of the late 1840's

and 1850's. Arminianism was thus destined to be the wave of the future. All these factors considered, Universalism would survive its first mini-schism, thereby able to enter the new century with a greater awareness of its mission, namely, to proclaim the message of God's beneficent plan to save all men!

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APPENDIX 1.

PHILADELPHIA PLATFORM OF FAITH

Sect. 1. Of the HOLY SCRIPTURES. -- We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God, and the rule of faith and practice.

Sect. 2. Of the SUPREME BEING. -- We believe in One God, infinite in all his perfections; and that these perfections are all modifications of infinite, adorable, incomprehensible and unchangeable Love.

Sect. 3. Of the MEDIATOR. -- We believe that there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; who, by giving himself a ransom for all, hath redeemed them to God by his blood; and who, by the merit of his death, and the efficacy of his Spirit, will finally restore the whole human race to happiness.

Sect. 4. Of the HOLY GHOST. -- We believe in the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to make known to sinners the truth of their salvation, through the medium of the Holy Scriptures, and to reconcile the hearts of the children of men to God, and thereby dispose them to genuine holiness.

Sect. 5. OF GOOD WORKS. -- We believe in the obligation of the moral law, as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God manifest to man in a Redeemer, is the best means of producing obedience to that law, and promoting a holy, active, and useful life.

L. B. Fisher, A Brief History Of The Universalist Church For Young People, (Publishing date and House not given), p.102.

APPENDIX 2

THE WINCHESTER PROFESSION

ARTICLE I. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

ARTICLE II. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

ARTICLE III. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practise good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men.

L. B. Fisher, A Brief History Of The Universalist Church For Young People, (Publishing date and House not given), p. 104.

APPENDIX 3

ABSTRACT OF

The Doctrine Of Universal Salvation And The
Restorationist Controversy In Early Nineteenth Century
New England¹

The purpose of this dissertation is to trace the doctrinal development of the concept of universal salvation and to place in perspective the theological issues and events which contributed to the Restorationist Controversy in early nineteenth century New England.

Initially, Universalism took root within an eighteenth century New England environment, best described as seething with religious controversy. At the heart of this unsettled theological climate was the questioning and ultimate rejection of the basic assumptions of Calvinism. Such orthodoxy embraced the teachings of predestination, a partial atonement and redemption by Christ, and the notion of endless punishment.

In contrast, the early theological development of Universalism produced two schools of thought

¹ Kenneth M. Johnson, doctoral thesis presented to the Department of Religious Studies of the University of Ottawa, Ontario, 1978, 11-324p.

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expounded by the Reverends John Murray and Elhanan Winchester. Both were trinitarian in their Christology and adhered to the view that all men were saved through the merits of Jesus Christ. However, while Murray maintained that Christ's salvific act was complete and total, Winchester advocated the necessity of divine punishment in a future state. Such divine retribution was for punitive reasons and only for a limited duration.

At the turn of the century, Hosea Ballou emerged to re-cast Universalist thought in a part Unitarian context with its theological foundation reshaped to reflect the influence of the Enlightenment and Deistic modes of thought. This task was accomplished by 1805 with the publication of his Treatise on Atonement followed by a number of subsequent editions.

On the subject of future punishment, Ballou wavered in the early editions of his Treatise. However, by 1817 during the course of a debate with the Reverend Edward Turner in The Gospel Visitant, he became convinced of the doctrine of no future punishment. This position he also developed in his later sermons and lectures. His theological system was completed by 1832 with an updated edition of his Treatise and the

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publication of a detailed examination of the doctrine of future retribution in 1834.

The examination of this question regarding future punishment during the early part of the nineteenth century gave rise to what was to become known as the Restorationist Controversy. This dispute was publicly aired in the issues of the Universalist Magazine from 1819 to 1830. Central figures in the dispute were Hosea Ballou, Jacob Wood, Paul Dean, Edward Turner and a number of lesser figures. Such theological friction resulted in a denominational schism with the formation of the Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists in 1831.

While less than a dozen individual churches and clergymen made up this initial secessionist movement, the controversy revealed the existence of both internal dissention and theological competition within organized Universalism. This theological question regarding future punishment was but an outgrowth of the concept of universal salvation. The accepted premise of universal election, only encouraged further theological speculation regarding not only the necessity of future retribution, but its duration in relation to man's present existence and future state.

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Because of Hosea Ballou's major influence on Universalist thought, his views, which were branded as Ultra-Universalism, would dominate until the 1850's. However, the Probationary position would ultimately prevail in the end. Thus, Universalism was able to survive its first denominational schism, ever confident in the doctrinal assertion of the all saving grace of God.