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ATHEISTIC DYNAMISM

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We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling
To be living is sublime.¹

In June, 1963, Lyndon Baines Johnson, then Vice President of the United States, in a speech at Chicago, Illinois, declared,

90 per cent of all scientists who ever lived are living today. More mathematics has been created since the beginning of the 20th century than in all the remainder of history combined. 90 per cent of all the drugs being prescribed by physicians today were not even known 10 years ago. 3/4 of all the people who will work in industry in 1975 will be producing products that have not yet been invented or discovered.²

We look under water and we see an atomic submarine threading its torturous way under the polar icecap. We look on the surface of the water and we see an aircraft carrier knifing its way through the ocean waves by means of atomic power. We look above the earth and we see space ships orbiting the earth at a speed of 18,000 miles per hour, propelled into space from their launching pads by millions of pounds of power thrust. We look farther out and we see other satellites orbiting the moon as man probes for a favorable landing site. We look at the communication media and we see pictures and hear messages transmitted from far away places through a Telstar placed in the heavens by means of rocket propellant. We look at the transportation media and we see jet planes flying at twice the speed of sound, with government and industry planning even greater developments as scientists expand the principle of force. We peer into an operating room in a modern hospital and we see delicate retinal detachment surgery without anesthesia by means of a laser beam. That same beam, under different circumstances may become the medium for the simultaneous transmission of a billion telephone conversations on a single thread of light. We glance heavenward again and we behold a "ship" sailing along in space propelled by power from the sun!

Fanciful! No! Imaginative! Yes, but only in the development of these 20th century "brain children" of human knowledge and ingenuity!

In presenting this lecture on "Atheistic Dynamism," our plan is to take a look at the phenomenal developments in man's working with force: raw, impersonal force; then to evaluate these developments through the revelation of God's Word.

In the first division of this study, we are greatly indebted to two of our associates on the LeTourneau College faculty, with whom we have collaborated in the preparation of material dealing with matters relating to physics and engineering. They are: 1) Philip Beatty, acting chairman of the division of natural science. Mr. Beatty is a graduate of Wheaton College and of the University of Illinois. He is a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Physics at Texas A. and M. University. 2) John Linebarger, Assistant Professor in Aeronautical Engineering. Mr. Linebarger is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Prior to his retirement from the United States Airforce in 1965, while still a relatively young man, Captain Linebarger was stationed at Houston, Texas, where he was working with NASA. Both men are devout Christian scholars, and graciously provided invaluable aid to us in preparing the first part of this lecture.

THE PHENOMENAL DEVELOPMENTS WITH IMPERSONAL PHYSICAL FORCE

As Arthur Coxe so effectively pointed out in his poem, "The Present Age," we are indeed living in a grand and awful time: one in which to be living is sublime. It is a period in which it takes a great deal of living just to stay in the race from here to there. Our youth speak a language that is foreign to us older folk. They live in a world of scientific development from which we oldsters are shut out. They appear to be our children, but there is something about them that shuts them out of our range of experience and knowledge. They desperately want us to understand them, but we lack the experiential knowledge that will enable us to do so.

Come with us as we take a conducted tour through an imaginary laboratory and listen to our guide describe some of the work that is going on in man's experiments and developments arising out of his working with the impersonal force resident in the natural world.

Developments with Missile and Space Phenomena

Here we are right out in the front line in the power struggle in which the United States and Russia are striving for first place in international competition. The problems are almost superhuman in magnitude.

Booster Power Problems in Space Projection

Mr. Linebarger states that one of the primary deterrents to a more vigorous space program is the lack of booster power, despite the fact that the first stage alone of the Apollo launch vehicle (Man-on-the-moon project) will have seven and one half million (7,500,000) pounds of thrust. To illustrate how vital this raw power is to the space effort, when he was in Houston at the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center, he said, that the lack of booster power in the Apollo launch vehicle forced:

- 1) The complete redesign of one entire stage of the vehicle to accommodate a new rocket engine fuel.
- 2) The deletion of couches in which the astronauts would sit during their voyage. They now sit in a nylon mesh web-type seat.
- 3) The consideration of deleting one of the astronauts from the crew of three, which option was not adopted.

In the military space effort we have been in a race with Russia to develop the capability of delivering larger destructive pay-loads with greater accuracy for a number of years. Russia has maintained a consistent lead in the race for more booster power.

Booster Power Experiment Benefits in Consumer Goods

Our NASA authority informs us that there have been phenomenal by-products to the civilian community from their work. To illustrate the effect of this lack of booster power on the consumer products industry, he reports the following bit of information. One of the primary reasons that we have more compact, inexpensive radios, tape recorders, bugging devices, TV sets, etc. on the market today can be traced to this lack of booster power. In order to meet the limited space and weight requirements for highly sophisticated navigation, guidance, and communications equipment for space vehicles, the electronics industry was forced to develop small, lightweight, reliable electronics hardware. Items such as printed circuit boards, transistors, solid state devices, and more recently, microminiaturized circuits and circuit components have been developed and mass produced. These developments have found their way to the consumer, as previously mentioned.

Because of this electronic development our space effort is not nearly so far behind that of Russia as the world thinks. However, in the eyes of the world, this sophistication is overlooked in the light of the fact that the Russians have more booster power than we do. Therefore this power has gained them prestige in world opinion.

The Russians have the booster power and the atomic power to orbit an atomic weapon close to the earth, which would have a tremendous psychological influence on world opinion. It would have limited military significance.

The Anti-missile Missile Power Problem

The balance of power in missiles and atomic weaponry has been a constant battle since the end of World War II, we are told. Our economy has been dominated by this quest for power. The most recent development is the anti-missile missile program. Should we get involved in the development and deployment of such a weapon, just to hold the psychological edge in this power struggle, it could well cost us forty billions of dollars (\$40,000,000,000) in the next few years. This issue alone--the struggle to maintain the upper hand in so-called "deterrent power"--would produce volumes from an historical point of view.

Developments With Military Phenomenon

The philosophy of warfare in Viet Nam is to match their guerrilla tactics with the sheer might of our fire power. The refusal to engage in an all-out bombing in North Viet Nam is related to this philosophy, which is to match and surpass the Viet Cong destructibility with our military might in the South.

Developments With Solar Phenomenon

There is currently an effort to harness the raw power of the sun. In the space effort, solar radiation is the main source of power for our unmanned space vehicles. This solar power is converted into electrical energy via devices such as solar paddles or panels which look like large flat honeycomb ears when extended from the vehicle in space. Mr. Linebarger also points out that solar energy is used to maintain the proper thermal environment within both manned and unmanned space vehicles.

The pressure of light has even been studied as a source of power for space propulsion. A vehicle so powered would literally sail the ocean of space with the use of a device called a "solar sail." The quest for natural sources of power for operating equipment and propulsion is a consuming enterprise in the scientific world today.

Developments With Meteorological Phenomena

It will be of significant interest to know that there is a parallel effort to predict and control the energy, or power exhibited in weather phenomena. We have actually produced a laboratory hurricane--a "hurricane in a test tube!" This is to facilitate the study of this natural phenomenon in an effort to control its force and path of progress. A phenomenon known as atmospheric turbulence which has caused a number of aircraft crashes is also being studied in an effort to determine just when and where such will occur.

Developments With Laser Phenomena

Since I am neither a scientist nor an engineer, I am dependent upon information given me by those who are. I have already expressed my gratitude to two men who have assisted me in the preparation of this material. Now, in connection with laser phenomena, I want to identify and express my appreciation to another who has allowed me to use information he gathered for a research paper in the classroom at LeTourneau College. He is Elton Archer, Jr. who was a student in Mrs. Gingrich's English Composition class, and, being technologically oriented at home and at school, he chose to prepare his term paper on Lasers. He kindly consented for me to make use of his work as I saw fit.

Laser

. . . is synthetic-scientific shorthand for Light Amplification by the Stimulated Emission of Radiation, and is somewhat like atomic fission. It gets its phenomenal energies from individual atoms and makes use of a kind of chain reaction. Unlike fission, the laser does not split and destroy atoms; it uses them over and over again to create the photons of light which makes a laser beam "lase."³

My interest in this phenomenon is not to discuss the technicalities of laser but to point out, as a layman, its tremendous possibilities for the good or ill of mankind, depending upon who may be using it, for its potentialities are practically unlimited.

Ballistic Missile Potentiality

According to Dr. Arthur Schawlow, one of the scientists who worked out the laser theory, practically the entire nation's power supply would be needed to destroy a single ballistic missile of laser beams.

Surgery Potentiality

One of the most beneficial laser applications has been in the field of eye surgery, especially in correcting detached retinal cases. German doctors have developed a technique for using scar tissue from burns to weld the detached retina in place. According to Mr. Archer who cites his authority, the laser is superior for this type of surgery because, among other reasons, its light is far more powerful than conventional light used to create the tiny burn necessary for providing the scar tissue, and its thousandth of a second bursts are so much faster than any eye movement, so that it is unnecessary to immobilize the eye for the operation. Furthermore, it creates no heat, eliminating the necessity for the use of anesthesia, and making the operation an office treatment rather than a hospital experience.

It was pointed out that other medical techniques are under study such as microsurgery and laser microscopy in chemical analysis research. In microsurgery, tiny structures can be knocked out without harming the rest of the cell. Cells can then be studied to see if and how they grow. In chemical analysis research tiny post mortem samples of brain and pancreas are burned to a vapor. This vapor is then passed through electrodes and the spark is analyzed by a spectroscope.

Miscellaneous Probabilities

The laser is being applied, or probably will be applied to an unlimited complex of uses. A few of the miscellaneous uses of the laser are: 1) to transmit a billion simultaneous telephone conversations on a single thread of light one millimeter in diameter, without interference;

2) perform microsurgery, precise enough to allow the cutting of a human cell; 3) reach billions of miles into space with a beam powerful enough to guide a spaceship, or communicate with other planets or solar systems, if such have intelligent creatures living there; 4) build nuclear battlefield weapons, including an anti-missile device and a form of "death-ray." These are but a few examples. The field is almost unlimited in its potentialities, possibilities, and probabilities.

Developments with Atomic and Nuclear Power

In 1905 Einstein came out with his famous formula for the equivalence of matter and energy, the formula being $E = mc^2$. At the start most people felt this was an interesting idle curiosity, reports Professor Beatty. It turns out, however, that today's science confirms this equivalence. The atom bomb is a good example. It is interesting, and perhaps significant, that in the atom bomb only a small fraction of the theoretically available power is used. If one ounce of matter (just one-sixteenth of a pound) were completely converted to energy this energy would be equal to that of an entire month's output of the Hoover Dam power plant. As most informed persons know, atomic energy is the result of nuclear fission, the uranium atom splitting into two approximately equal fragments, with the mass of the fragments being less than that of the original material. The "lost" mass goes into energy--atomic energy!

Present hydrogen bombs are the result of a different process which resembles what takes place in the sun. This process is known as fusion, and involves a combining of four hydrogen atoms into a helium atom. In this case the mass of the four hydrogen atoms is greater than that of the helium atom and this excess mass is converted into energy according to the Einstein formula. To initiate this reaction requires a tremendous pressure and temperature. Actually, a device somewhat similar to a regular atom bomb is being experimented with to trigger a hydrogen bomb. Presently, by means of a special magnetic field technique, it is possible to provide a 100-million-degree temperature for a few seconds in a magnetic "bottle" in which scientists seek to squeeze atoms together, releasing energy in the fusion process. If a means can be devised to contain this energy for considerably more prolonged periods, this would lead to controlled thermonuclear power sources which could replace sources using the dwindling supply of oil, gas and more conventional atomic fuels of present day reactors.

At present there are plans to build a 200-billion-volt atom smasher at Weston, Illinois. It will produce what are called 200-billion-electron-volt protons which will be used in nuclear research to try to find out the exact nature of the nuclear force. Scientists still do not know the exact nature of this force--they know it is much stronger than electric forces or gravitational forces but they do not know the cause of the force, or the precise equation that describes it. The atom smasher at Weston, when built, will be a machine with a large ring of a diameter of 1.6 kilometers (approximately one mile). It is estimated it will take eight years to build.

Some of these details on atomic and nuclear power were taken from Public Relations Staff of General Motors under the caption, The Story of Power, Detroit, Michigan, Sixth Printing, 1956, and from Science News, Vol. 91 No. 1, January 7, 1967 under the caption "Science Forecast for 1967."

Can anyone fail to be overwhelmed by the attention being given to the development of force or power by means of understanding and control of natural phenomena? More has been done in this complex within the nineteenth and twentieth centuries than during all of the remainder of human history combined. Whither away!

THE PROPHETICAL REVELATION CONCERNING IMPERSONAL PHYSICAL FORCE

As a complement to the political alignments of the time of the end, about which we gave attention in our previous lecture, we shall intensify our attention to the head of the western alliance (the revived Roman Empire). He has been previously identified as the Wilful King of Daniel 11:36; as the Beast of Revelation 13:1; and as the Antichrist of I John 2:18. In Daniel's account, given in chapter eleven, wherein this Wilful King competes with the Kings of the East, the King of the North, and the King of the South for world control, two significant characteristics are presented. We center our attention upon these characteristics in relation to what we have already presented in the first part of this paper under "The Phenomenal Developments with Impersonal Physical Force."

The Atheism of the Wilful King

This head of the Revived Roman State is described as a very ungodly, blasphemous, egotistical man who has no regard for any traditional deity. Rather, he takes a stand against any deity or religion. Daniel states, "he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods. . .neither shall he regard the God of his fathers. . .nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all" (Dan. 11:36-37). This Wilful King possesses no feeling of regard for any religious adherence to prevailing heathen deities with which natural religions abound, for he magnifies himself above every god; he speaks against the God of gods, which we understand to refer to Jehovah God of the Hebrews; nor does he regard any god, that is, any god known to man heretofore. He therefore is atheistic in his personal inclination toward the principle of religion in general.

The Dynamism of the Wilful King

Dynamism is a philosophical theory that holds to the view that force or energy, rather than mass or motion, is the basic principle of phenomena.⁴ Impersonal force, therefore, is the dynamic which is responsible for the existence of natural phenomena, according to this philosophy.

In Daniel's description of the Wilful King he wrote,

But in his estate shall he honor the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most stronghold with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory. . .(Dan. 11:38-39).

The principle of force is not new to the student of military tactics. The application of military force in the world's power struggle is thoroughly woven into the pattern of this kosmos. This ideology of control by force was intensified when we entered the Atomic Age, and electrified when we entered the Space Age. But up to now the emphasis was primarily placed upon the principle of force as a means to an end, and had little semblance to the element of religion attached to it.

The time will come, however, when a force cultus will arise, headed up by the Wilful King, with a religious emphasis hitherto non-existent except as a philosophical theory. Military force will be the hard core interest of this new religion. The Wilful King will worship the "god of fortresses" (v. 38, A.S.V.). Force will be the dominant center of interest of this atheistic cult. This is apparent both from the text itself, and from its context, for the same word is used in verses 7, 10, and 19, where it is apparent that military force is involved.

The tremendous developments of power or force by men working with the basic raw material in the natural world are the necessary preparation for the development of a worship of impersonal force under the dynamic leadership of the Wilful King.

Dr. Alva J. McClain, in his interesting booklet on The Four Great Powers of the End-time and Their Final Conflict, written nearly thirty years ago is apropos in its statement concerning this force cult type of religion. He wrote,

Thus it would seem that the Wilful King, while denying all known gods including the true God, will nevertheless himself worship at the shrine of impersonal physical "force," preeminently those of a military nature, which he can control and direct in the interest of his own evil and limitless ambitions. In the Wilful King there will appear at last a dreadful figure who will actually enthrone and worship the principle of physical force as embodied in himself and the forces he is able to control. Thus he will exalt himself above all known gods, yielding allegiance to none, but at the same time will worship the abstraction of Force as incarnated in himself. It is the philosophy of Satan.⁵

The potential ingredients are being provided through current scientific developments in connection with natural laws and the raw material of the natural world for just such a dynamistic worship as the Word of God relates to the time of the end. It will be atheistic so far as traditional or known religions are concerned. It will be dynamistic so far as its religious interest is concerned, with its devotees worshipping at the shrine of impersonal force, with the Wilful King looked upon as its incarnate Christ. This is the religion that will prevail for a brief moment ere the Gentile image shall be smitten with the Stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and Satan's Christ shall go to his appointed place in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20). At long last the Son of God shall reign triumphantly over His creatures who are His by right of creation, and by right of purchase.

So, in spite of the fact that there seems to be a world conspiracy to corrupt God's people spiritually through the ecumenical movement; and to corrupt society through the spirit

of lawlessness on a global dimension; and the nations are choosing up sides in a political conspiracy to keep our blessed Lord from His rightful throne; and the world of science is being used to prepare the minds of men for the deification of the strange god of force--He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at such designs and have them in derision, as He makes His final plans for placing the scepter of power in the hands of His Son, His rightful Heir. Praise God, we who love His blessed Son shall share that reign and be clothed with His glory. Hence, let us be of the mind of Paul who wrote, "In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoes to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own" (Rom. 8:18-19b, Phillips Tr.).

We know that men will idly sneer
 At truth their ears refuse to hear.
 Against the light they take their stand;
 Despise these blessed words so grand--
 "Behold He cometh!"

No one may know the day or hour,
 Our Lord will come in matchless power.
 Creation groans in bondage cruel,
 Awaiting His triumphant rule--
 "Behold He cometh!"

What seems delay is naught but grace
 The Lord in mercy grants our race.
 But grace rejected yields to dread,
 As judgment stalks with measured tread--
 "Behold He cometh!"

The Saints await in breathless stance
 The Lord's return with upward glance.
 When He appears with trumpet sound,
 Their joy in Him will then abound--
 "Behold He cometh!"

The Earth shall yield her vast increase
 When Christ from sin gives her release.
 His saints have longed to share His reign,
 And by this hope their faith sustain--
 "Behold He cometh!"

DOCUMENTATION

1. Arthur Cleveland Coxe, The Present Age.
2. Lyndon Baines Johnson, The National Concern. Speech delivered in Chicago, 1963.
3. Theodore Berland, "Here's Why Those Do-Everything Lasers Don't--Yet." Popular Mechanics, CXXXI, Mar. 1964, pp. 102-106.
4. Webster's New World Dictionary. College Edition, p. 452.
5. Alva J. McClain, The Four Great Powers of the End-Time and Their Final Conflict. The King's Business, February and March, 1938.