

Chapter 4: Why Schleiermacher was not an Option

Chapter Overview

Strauß devoted more attention to Schleiermacher's work than any other theologian/philosopher with the exception of Hegel. This chapter examines Strauß' evaluation of Schleiermacher's methodology; Strauß' attempt at reconciliation with the Schleiermachians in the third edition of the *Life of Jesus Critically Examined*; 7 problematic elements to Schleiermacher's 'feeling of absolute dependence'; a criticism of Schleiermacher's attempt at reconciling science and faith; Schleiermacher's 'subjectivity' in contrast to Hegel's 'objectivity'; Schleiermacher's Sabellian, Modalistic Monarchian Christology; Strauß' embracing of Schleiermacher's notion of immortality as the 'eternal' in the 'present' from Schleiermacher's early work, *Speeches on Religion*; Schleiermacher's rejection of any grounding role for philosophy in theology; Strauß' identification of 8 themes in Schleiermacher that one finds already and 'more adequately articulated' in Spinoza; and the problems that confront Schleiermacher's insistence that the Gospel of John is from a single author who was the only eyewitness gospel writer; as well as the contradictions between Schleiermacher's and John's theologies.

Already in his earliest student days, there were two powerful intellectual currents that shaped Strauß. One was Hegel whom he encountered in his Gymnasium classes in Blaubeuren with Ferdinand Christian Baur. The other was 'spiritualism,' reflected, particularly, in the 'animal magnetism' of Justinus Kerner, as well as in the mysticism of Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher. However, that Kant had already anticipated and rejected the core ingredients of both Hegel's meta-narrative logic¹ and Schleiermacher's mysticism and Christology of Perfect God-consciousness² is indicative of Strauß' limited study of Kant and his blind acceptance of Hegel's and Schleiermacher's (as well as F.C. Baur's) reading of Kant.

Strauß visited Kerner in Weinsberg just outside of Heilbronn with his friend, Gustav (von) Binder during school vacations.³ Strauß and his bride, Agnes Scherbest, moved to Heilbronn at the end of 1843, and the Kerners were close friends. With Strauß and Agnes separating in 1844 and court proceedings of 1846 bringing an end (but not a divorce) to their relationship, Strauß moved to Bonn and then Köln. When

1. Kant dismissed the metaphysical fantasies of rapture (*Schwärmerei*) that recognizes no limits to reason as the dream of a dove that it could fly more easily in a vacuum (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 8–9. See as well, Kant's *Groundwork* AA IV: 462.) as well as underscored that logic is an empty canon without an organon in contrast to mathematics that is a canon with an organon (Kant, *Logik Logic* AA IX: 12–14).

2. Kant clearly articulated indicated the profound problems with mysticism. (*Conflict of the Faculties* AA VII: 54–58, *End of All Things* AA VIII: 335–336, *Metaphysik Mrongovius* AA XXIX: 950) and pointed out that a Christology such as Schleiermacher's requires a new act of supernatural creation (Kant, *Der Streit der Fakultäten* AA VII: 92), a key observation made by Strauß in his *LJ* (771) and in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* (4–5; 168–169) but without reference to Kant.

3. See Ziegler, I: 43–44.

Kerner refused to cut off the relationship with Agnes as Strauß demanded, the cordial relationship between Strauß and the Kerners ended until 1860 when Strauß moved back to Heilbronn whereupon Strauß' friendship with the Kerners was re-animated. Kerner died in 1862. Strauß wrote an obituary essay in which he fondly remembered and portrayed his admiration as friend.⁴

Schleiermacher, however, meant more to Strauß, intellectually, than Kerner. Strauß devoted two texts to him: "Schleiermacher und Daub, in ihrer Bedeutung für die Theologie unserer Zeit" (1839) and *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History: A Critique of Schleiermacher's "Life of Jesus"* (1865). Hegel, who played by far a larger role in Strauß' work, was a key element in Strauß' *Polemical Writings (Streitschriften)*, but he was not the focus of book-length manuscript by Strauß, as the case with Schleiermacher.

In his essay "Über Justinus Kerner" from 1839, Strauß had resolved his Kerner fascination by embracing the need for, and confidence in, 'further research' as the only appropriate response to understanding the 'wonders' of 'animal magnetism.'⁵ On the surface, one might have expected the same kind of hesitation when it came to Schleiermacher. After all, stated crudely, Hegel is the 'Philosopher,' whose system is constructed on the basis of Absolute Knowledge. Schleiermacher is the 'Mystic,' who banned philosophy from theology and anchored religion in the 'feeling of absolute dependence.'

One might expect that Strauß would have abruptly dismissed Schleiermacher as a 'dreamer' whose reflections were 'empty abstractions' even more so than Kant, in Strauß' judgment. However, unlike Kant, whom Strauß encountered for all intents and purposes through the filters of others,⁶ Strauß engaged Schleiermacher ever again already in the *LJ* in 1835 and, especially, in Strauß' two volume *Glaubenslehre* of 1841 as well as authored two books devoted, either exclusively or primarily, to Schleiermacher that span Strauß' entire career. Furthermore, Strauß says that he went to Berlin in November of 1831 for two reasons: G.W.F. Hegel and F.D.E. Schleiermacher.

In short, Strauß was no more a superficial critic of Schleiermacher than he was a blind Hegelian.

4. On Strauß' relationship with Justinus Kerner, see Herman Niethammer's "Erläuterungen und Nachwort" to the posthumously published two essays on Kerner from Strauß, *Justinus Kerner. Zwei Lebensbilder aus den Jahren 1839 und 1862* (Marbach: Schiller-Nationalmuseum, 1953): 89–93. The first of the two essays in this Pamphlet labeled '1839' Strauß published in his lifetime as "Über Justinus Kerner" in *Zwei friedliche Blätter* (Altona; Verlag von J.F. Hammerich, 1839): 1–57. The second essay in *Justinus Kerner. Zwei Lebensbilder aus den Jahren 1839 und 1862* is labeled '1862' and is Strauß' Kerner obituary.

5. Strauß warned against turning the *mirabile* ('wonderful') into a *miraculum* ('miracle') in the second essay in *Zwei friedliche Blätter*, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes:" 91, with a specific mention of 'animal-magnetic powers'.

6. Negatively, in Baur, Hegel, and the Hegelian, Carl Daub, and, as well, Schleiermacher. Positively, only through his circle of friends, who included Zeller, in Heidelberg in the early 1860s.

Strauß' Opponents: Traditional Christian Theists, Hegelians, and Schleiermacher

It, of course, is no surprise that, on the basis of their heteronomous dogmatics and elevation of humanity to the throne of God by their literal, anthropomorphic analogies, Traditional Christian Theists responded in horror to Strauß. Especially, in Chapter 3 ("Strauß' Ambivalent Relationship to the Hegelians"), I present Strauß' conflict with the Hegelians, who had their own literal, anthropomorphic analogy that drives their meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit and which takes as its Christology the 'point of indifference' of the negation of multiplicity to 'return' to Absolute Unity/Knowledge/Freedom. Furthermore, already in his 1838 "Ueber Vergängliches und Bleibendes im Christenthum" and in his 1839 "Schleiermacher und Daub," Strauß was no longer using Hegel's meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit, and, in his 1872 *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß had rejected Hegelian Idealism to embrace a problematic form of Feuerbachian, materialistic Nominalism.

It was not only Schleiermacher's writings that retained Strauß' attention. The Schleiermachians were a thorn – especially, when it came to his appointment to the faculty of the University of Zurich. The *intellectual opposition* that resulted in his withdrawal of his name in 1837 and the intellectual opposition in 1839 came from the Schleiermachian camp. In 1837, the Schleiermachian on the faculty, Alexander Schweizer, opposed the appointment,⁷ and in 1839, the academic letter of opposition in the "Historical Reader" of this present work came from Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette, the 'Mediating Theologian,' especially influenced by Schleiermacher's *Speeches on Religion*,⁸ whom Strauß cited favorably, frequently, in the *LJ*.

Schleiermacher mattered for Strauß

Upon completion of his studies in Tübingen in 1830, Strauß spent his internship year of pastoral training (*Vikariat*) in the community of Klein-Ingelsheim.⁹ After fulfilling the requirements of the *Vikariat* in 1831, he taught for a half year at the Protestant school in Maulbronn¹⁰ before going to Berlin at the beginning of November 1831¹¹ to

7. See Anton Largiadèr, *Geschichte von Stadt und Landschaft Zürich* (Erlenbach-Zürich: Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1945): 146.

8. See Ernst Jenny, "Wie de Wette nach Basel kam" in *Basler Jahrbuch* (1941): 76–77. Ironically, although Strauß cited de Wette positively throughout the *LJ* in dramatic contrast to his derisive dismissal of Paulus, Paulus supported Strauß' appointment in Zurich whereas de Wette did not.

9. Theobald Ziegler, *David Friedrich Strauß*, Vol. I (Straßburg: Verlag von Karl J. Trübner, 1908): 58.

10. Ziegler, I: 83–84.

11. Ziegler, I: 92.

study with both Hegel and Schleiermacher. He completed and received his Doctorate for Tübingen in this same period. The diploma was actually sent to him in Berlin.¹²

Theobald Ziegler reports that in his very first days in Berlin, Strauß visited Hegel.¹³ "A few days later," he visited Schleiermacher¹⁴ who asked him if he was concerned about the cholera epidemic in Berlin. Strauß is said to have answered, "No, the epidemic is so good as over!" Upon which, Schleiermacher told him that the epidemic, nonetheless, had just claimed "another major victim. Professor Hegel died last evening."¹⁵

Ziegler is not convinced that Strauß actually exclaimed "It was for his sake that I came here!"¹⁶ Ziegler speculates that the legend arose because, later, Schleiermacher gave a cold reception to young, student Hegelians from Tübingen so that the first Tübingen Hegelian to visit him 'must' have received the same unwelcome reception.¹⁷ Whether legend or fact, Strauß went to Berlin not only because of his interest in Hegel but also because of Schleiermacher.

Strauß attended Hegel's funeral where the university Rector and Hegelian, Philipp Konrad Marheineke eulogized Hegel "not only as king in the Kingdom of Thought but also as the premier disciple of Christ in life."¹⁸ Within a year, Marheineke published posthumously Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. Strauß visited Marheineke's lectures but found them impenetrable for the hearer.¹⁹ Most important, though, was Strauß' friendship with the Hegelian and private lecturer (*Privatdozent*), Wilhelm Vatke, whose lectures Strauß avidly attended.²⁰ However, Strauß also heard Schleiermacher's lectures.

Although Schleiermacher's extemporaneous lecture style was at first an obstacle for Strauß, he quickly learned to appreciate it and, in contrast to his dismissal of Marheineke's lecture style,²¹ recorded in his diary:

12. Ziegler, I: 92–93.

13. Ziegler, I: 93.

14. Ziegler, I: 94.

15. Ziegler, I: 94.

16. See Ziegler, I: 94. Karl Barth reports the incident as historical. See *Die protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert. Ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Geschichte* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1981): 379–380.

17. See Ziegler, I: 95.

18. Ziegler, I: 95.

19. Ziegler, I: 100. Marheineke was among the 'northern Germans' who criticized Strauß' Christology in the *LJ*. See *ibid.*, 209. Ziegler classifies Marheineke as a 'Hegelian Centrist' (*ibid.*, 210), but Strauß placed only Rosenkranz under this rubric. See Strauß, "The Different Schools of Thought on Christology among the Hegelians" ["Verschiedene Richtungen innerhalb der Hegel'schen Schule in Betreff der Christologie"] in Strauß' *Streitschriften* III: 120.

20. See Ziegler, I: 97–99.

21. See Ziegler, I: 100.

It soon became clear to me that Schleiermacher, with great deliberateness for students, distinguished between a written presentation and an oral one and that he gave the latter in well-rounded, complete objectivity (as far as possible from his point of view), but, as well, in a completely subjective attitude in such a way that one clearly can follow the development of his thought and can imitate it in oneself. Thus, his lectures have not only become attractive to me, but I have also learned something essential from him concerning lecture pedagogy.²²

However, Hegel's and Schleiermacher's influence on Strauß goes far deeper than this short period in Berlin. Four works from the beginning of the 1800s, especially, had a profound influence on Strauß: Schleiermacher's *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* was published in 1799, Hegel's self-published papers (along with Schelling) in the *Kritisches Journal der Philosophie*: "Glauben und Wissen" (1802) and "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" (1803), as well as Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit [Phänomenologie des Geistes]* (1806). Along with the profound influence of his professor, Ferdinand Christian Baur, these writings shaped Strauß' understanding of 'scientific knowledge,' and that influence resulted in the decade from 1831 to 1841 of tremendous intellectual fecundity and ferment for Strauß.

Further, crucial works for Strauß's intellectual development appeared at the beginning of the 1830s: Schleiermacher's 2nd edition of his *Glaubenslehre [Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange dargestellt (The Christian Faith)]* in 1830/31; Marheineke published posthumously Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion [Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion]* in 1832; and F.C. Baur's *Die christliche Gnosis oder die christliche Religionsphilosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung (Gnosis) [Christian Gnosticism or the Christian Philosophy of Religion in its Historical Development]*, which included a detailed study of Schleiermacher and of Hegel, in early 1835.

Strauß' own two volume (1,500 pages) *Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet [the LJ]* appeared at the end of 1835 (Vol. I: June and Vol. II: by the end of the year). In this work, in addition to references to Schleiermacher throughout (especially important is § 13), Strauß devotes a section of the "Concluding Dissertation" to an initial criticism of Schleiermacher's Christology from the perspective of a dyed-in-the-wool Hegelian. Over the following two years, Strauß responded to his critics with three pamphlets that he published in a collection as *Polemical Writings in Defense of my Life of Jesus and on Characteristics in Contemporary Theology (Streitschriften zur Verteidigung meiner Schrift über das Leben Jesu und zur Charakteristik der gegenwärtigen Theologie)* in 1837.

Although Strauß already in 1837 was under consideration for appointment to the Chair for Biblical Theology, Church History, and Dogmatics at the university in Zurich, he withdrew his name because no one in the theological faculty supported

22. Ziegler, I: 101.

him, not even the Schleiermachian, Alexander Schweizer. A Schleiermachian, Eduard Elwert (from Tübingen), was appointed to the Chair.

However, in 1838 Elwert resigned for health reasons. In anticipation of his consideration for appointment to the Chair, Strauß wrote "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum. Selbstgespräche" ("Transient and Permanent in Christianity: A Soliloquy") in which the reconciling tone of the third edition of the *LJ* is still present²³ and, especially, Schleiermachian language is invoked with respect to what is enduring in Christianity. The government of the Zurich Canton appointed Strauß to the Chair in January of 1839. Precisely at the point in time Strauß was publishing in daily serial format "Schleiermacher und Daub, in ihrer Bedeutung für die Theologie unserer Zeit" ("Schleiermacher and Daub: Their Significance for Theology in our Age"), which was published as a complete manuscript in *Charakteristiken und Kritiken. Eine Sammlung zerstreuter Aufsätze aus den Gebieten der Theologie, Anthropologie und Aesthetik* (Leipzig: Verlag von Otto Wigand, 1839). This text clearly marks the termination of Strauß' attempts to be a 'Mediating Theologian.'

Strauß capped the decade with the publication of his two volume (1,500 pages) *Die christliche Glaubenslehre in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und im Kampfe mit der modernen Wissenschaft* [*Christian Doctrine in its Historical Development and in Conflict with Modern Science*], which examines, compares, and contrasts in remarkable detail the theological trajectory of Christian theology from the early Church down to his day with each major section concluding with a commentary from the perspective of the theology of his day, particularly Schleiermacher and Hegel.

Nevertheless, in 1865 Strauß published a book exclusively focused on Schleiermacher, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*. No other theologian is the sole subject of a book by Strauß. Even without examining the content of all these texts, it is clear that Schleiermacher had a significant influence (for good or ill) on Strauß. He devoted more ink to Schleiermacher than any other author.

One might be tempted to summarize Strauß' engagement of Schleiermacher and Hegel in the last half of the 1830s in terms of a gradual decline in influence of Hegel and, if one measures by the concluding sentence (and final two footnotes) of the penultimate paragraph of Strauß' *Glaubenslehre* in 1841, the rise in influence of Schleiermacher. This is precisely what the Hegelians accused Strauß of doing.²⁴ However, Strauß responded to the accusation by saying that having obtained and read already in 1831 a copy of lecture notes of Schleiermacher's course on 'The Life of Jesus':

23. For example, Strauß writes in the "Introduction:" "I wanted to point out how, despite all the quarrels between me and my opponents, there are still points where we meet in harmony." *Zwei friedliche Blätter* (Altona: Verlag von J.F. Hammerich, 1839): vii.

24. See Strauß, "Allgemeines Verhältniß der Hegel'schen Philosophie zur theologischen Kritik." In Strauß, *Streitschriften* III: 66.

The truth is that *I found myself repulsed by [... Schleiermacher] almost on all points*, and owe to this repulsion, however, the closer fixation of my view on some parts of the life of Jesus in contrast to that of Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher started from a construction of the person of Christ out of the Christian consciousness, which could only give me the impression of an uncritical presupposition. In the course of the investigation he consistently preferred the fourth gospel, which at first had to appear to me as an impermissible partiality.²⁵ (emphasis added)

In contrast to Schleiermacher's grounding of religion in 'feeling' and the rejection of philosophy in theology, Hegel was, primarily, attractive to Strauß because of the 'necessities' of 'scientific' knowledge. What Schleiermacher and Hegel shared was their emphasis of their respective theologies on the 'Other' to the world of 'sensuousness' and the theme of ethical failure, which was not defined in terms of 'sin.' However, what separated them was their *disparate Christologies* (one can see them as Hegel's 'Athanasianism' for whom 'God became man that man might become God' and Schleiermacher's 'Arianianism' for whom 'there was a time with the Son was not'), and Schleiermacher's 'Arianianism'), with Strauß increasingly finding both indefensible.

The more Strauß came to understand their *shared theology* driven by a 'logic' of ultimate causality as a form of historical Indifferentism (Hegel) and the 'empty abstraction' of Perfect God-consciousness (Schleiermacher), the more he found their *Christological differences* to be illusions (Docetism and/or Sabellianism). However, it appears clear from the ending of the *Glaubenslehre* and Strauß' subsequent two decades of theological silence before publishing *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* in 1864, wherein Hegel's influence on Strauß has evaporated and Immanuel Kant, who had up till then only been dismissively sidelined by Strauß, is dominant, that Strauß in 1841 had entered a stage of theological crisis.

Next to G.W.F. Hegel, then, no one was the focus of David Friedrich Strauß' intellectual production like Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher. It is not inappropriate, then, to ask: Why was Schleiermacher not an option for him?

Methodology

A crucial element with which Strauß resonated with Schleiermacher was with respect to Schleiermacher's method. In his article comparing Schleiermacher with the Right-Wing Hegelian, Carl Daub, Strauß writes, granted with damning praise but indicative of how even what he rejects from Schleiermacher stimulates his own reflection:

25. Strauß, "Allgemeines Verhältniß der Hegel'schen Philosophie zur theologischen Kritik, *Streit-schriften* III:" 60.

Schleiermacher's method has the most important advantage over Daub's, in that it exercises a dialectical critique and polemic against the dogmatic determinations that have been maintained all the way back to the symbols [ancient Church creeds], even to the Bible itself. *This dialectic has the purpose of eliminating everything that is contrary to the regularity of thought.* However, this criticism in the doctrine of faith proceeds as little genetically as with Schleiermacher's criticism of morality, and would likewise have only a negative result, if feeling did not step in and provide a positive content [...], *which now dialectic, with respect to the usable elements of the ecclesiastically traditional formulas, has to work on and to smooth out in such a way that it offers no more impulses to think.* However, if criticism were to follow its own course [...], it would obtain a substantive [internal] result from this process, and dialectic would have a result that is just as positive as it is negative, which cannot be achieved from outside, from direct feeling and experience.²⁶

Dialectic, of course, is the methodological logic that drives Hegelianism because dialectic is powered by negation/distinctions between 'this' and 'not-this' devoted to an ultimately positive, Absolute synthesis. Strauß praises Schleiermacher to the extent that he seeks to identify and negate all that is 'contrary to the regularity of thought' in Church creeds and the bible. Yet, Strauß faults Schleiermacher for not following through with the method of dialectic because Schleiermacher does not grasp the

26. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 173–174. Strauß applauds Schleiermacher's biblical exegesis for a "[...] 'more comprehensive use of the text by which one doesn't treat passages independently of their context but only takes into consideration larger, especially fruitful material in order to demonstrate the coherence of the biblical authors upon which doctrinal conclusions are grounded' (*Glaubenslehre*, I: 163)." (Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 181) Were that actually to occur, which it doesn't in Schleiermacher to the extent that he remains a Rationalist, "[...] the coherence [of the biblical authors] could be distinguished from the scientific point of view of our age as having a completely different spiritual ground. This would allow the *rescuing both points of view* [early Church and Rationalism] *from their restraints and untruthfulness.*" (emphasis added) (Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 181). Strauß points out: "The educated Christians and theologians in the ancient church occupied the same ground and basis with the biblical authors. In the meantime, with the rise of science there arose gradually an ever more general difference between educated Christians and the biblical authors, which went unrecognized with the consequence that, rather than the natural identity between them in the past, a contrived and violent disparity arose. This occurred in two ways: Among Supernaturalists, today's ways of thinking were taken hostage by the earlier ways of thinking. However, at many points behind their backs, this imprisonment was modified or curtailed as a consequence of often unconscious influence of modern thinking. *Among Rationalists*, in contrast, [...] *biblical thinking was reformulated according to contemporary intellectual standards.* Nonetheless, even this strategy was undermined by the enduring influence of the early church's worldview." (emphasis added) (Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 181–182) In contrast, *Strauß proposes that 'proper' exegesis identifies the 'idea' (content/Inhalt) at the core of the biblical narratives (representations): "[... only], by recognition of the different mental foundations of the two sides [the side of the early Church and our scientific age] and, simultaneously, [by recognition of] their representing two realms [Reiche] in which the laws of neither could be employed in the realm of the other can the bondage and disingenuousness [Unfreiheit und Unlauterkeit] on the part of both the early Church and our age be eliminated.* For example, when the bible speaks of angels and the devil, today's theologian – to the extent that [s/]he wants to be in accord with the bible – is not required to accept the reality of such beings but only to recognize those religious ideas which are the foundation of such representations." (emphasis added) (Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 182).

contribution of dialectic to fuel development in understanding, which requires ideas (ultimately, the Absolute Concept), and to fuel development of morality.

Strauß points out that Schleiermacher's creative conclusion (the 'feeling of absolute dependence') is nothing that arises 'internally' out of the logic of dialectic. Yes, Schleiermacher creatively introduces the notion of subjective 'feeling' independent of knowing and doing as his strategy for making Church creeds and the bible more intellectually palatable. However, the consequence is that, *with the introduction of this new, additional element of feeling, dialectic's reflective thinking ceases*. The 'No!' to Church creeds and the bible is only responded to with the 'Yes!' of the *feeling* of absolute dependence. The synthesis is not thought but felt.

When it comes to Church creeds and morality, Strauß calls for 'more' than simply a final, positive content to a 'No!' He calls for the recognition of dialectic as an internal, on-going, creative logic by which *every* 'Yes!' is followed by a 'No!' For example, in his *LJ*, Strauß employs the '*genetic mythical principle*' for understanding why and how the gospels were written. The '*genetic mythical principle*' is the dialectical principle that drove the early Church *con-figure* its *pre-figured* inherited scriptures to articulate the 'Yes!' that is their understanding of Jesus' 'No!' to the religious consciousness of his day.

Nonetheless, in the *Glaubenslehre*, Strauß does not embrace the early church's elevation of an historical narrative to an eternal truth ('knowledge'!) because it shuts down further development of new understanding. Furthermore, 'moral standards' are not established by the scriptures, according to Strauß' growing conviction. When it comes to agency, Strauß takes ever-changing social contexts to confront humanity with the need for a 'religious genius' to identify the new ethical rules ('proper doing'!) appropriate to the new context. In other words, according to Strauß, the 'motor' of understanding that drives 'knowing' and 'doing' is a ceaseless dialectic with every new 'Yes!' establishing the context for a *necessary* 'No!' that leads to new understanding and new norms of action.

Most importantly, for Strauß, is that the 'logic' of a material dialectic generates the 'new' (understanding and social norms) out of the historical process itself. Not only does it not need any 'external' criticism (for example, from Hegelian philosophy or from 'revelation'), its true criticism is 'internal' to the dialectical, material process. This is precisely the meaning of Strauß' claim that 'the history of Church teaching is its own criticism.'

The crucible or boiling flask in which dogma has been smelted and distilled, all reagents by which it is decomposed, all vessels in which it must be fermented and skimmed off are not made by us and put into operation. Rather, we are able only to take them as they have been given to us in church factions and conflicts, as heresies and synods, as Rationalism, and philosophy etc. *The true criticism of dogma is its history*. In its impartial and vague form, this dogma is present in the scriptures; with analysis and closer examination of it, the church falls apart in antitheses, which, doubtless, led also to heretical extremes.

Immediately followed the fixation of church teaching in a creed, and the creeds were processed as Church Doctrine. However, shortly but gradually criticism was awakened. Spirit differentiated itself from reality as it was presented in church teaching. The subject extracted itself from the substance of its faith in church teaching up to that point [from mere belief in objective accounts of things and agents] and negated that substance as its truth. This it was able to do because another truth arose – if at first only in itself and undeveloped. *Everything hinges now on the question whether this new, speculative truth [of the Hegelian meta-narrative concerned with the ‘kernel’ of the gospels’ narrative ‘husks’] is itself the same as ancient church truth or foreign and opposed to it – or whether there is a middle pathway [materialism] between the two?*²⁷ (emphasis added)

Strauß’ conclusion on Schleiermacher’s methodology:

Schleiermacher is the [popular] Kant of Protestant theology. Not that he was a Kantian; rather, criticism²⁸ forms a relatively receding component in his [Schleiermacher’s] philosophical way of thinking, but the same critical, old-form-breaking, reformational position that Kant occupies in the history of philosophy, Schleiermacher asserts in the history of modern theology. Like the former [Kant] shattered [what Mendelssohn called Kant’s *alles zermalmenden metaphysics*²⁹] the edifice of the old metaphysics, the latter [Schleiermacher] shattered theological scholasticism; and like the former [Kant] shattered the dogmatism of empiricism and skepticism, the latter [Schleiermacher], brought down Rationalism and Supernaturalism. Finally, just as Kant gained a positive ground against this negative business in the moral consciousness of practical reason, so for Schleiermacher religious consciousness or pious feeling [subjectivity] was the firm anchor from which he postulated his Christ just as from his anchor in practical reason [subjectivity] Kant postulated his God.³⁰

However, far from having "brought down Rationalism," Schleiermacher in many respects remained a Rationalist, as Strauß himself says in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*:

Schleiermacher, we can say, is a Supernaturalist in Christology but in criticism and exegesis a Rationalist. His Christ, however many of the miraculous attributes of the old confession may have been removed, still remains essentially a superhuman, supernatural being. In contrast, his exegesis, as far as it pertains to the miraculous in the Scripture, is distinguished from that of Paulus only by somewhat more spirit and subtlety [...] The one [only] appears to contradict the other; rather, however, the one is the basis for the other. Because Schleiermacher wants to remain a supernaturalist in Christology, he must be a rationalist

27. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 71–72. Already in "Schleiermacher und Daub," Strauß pointed out that "[...] the true criticism of a thing [can] only lie in its history." Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 30. (emphasis added)

28. Note: As I stressed in Chapter 2, what Strauß means by ‘criticism’ is not what Kant means by ‘critique’. Note, as well, that Schleiermacher was at least as much, if not more, a Rationalist as he was a critic of Rationalism.

29. See Moses Mendelssohn’s "Preface" in *the Morgenstunden oder Vorlesungen über das Daseyn Gottes* (Berlin: Christian Friedrich Boß und Sohn, 2014): 3–4.

30. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 203.

in criticism and exegesis. In order not to lose the supernatural Christ as a historical personality, he cannot surrender the Gospels as historical sources. But [*sic.*] in order to avoid a supernatural Christ in the sense in which the supernatural is unacceptable to him, he must remove exegetically from the Gospels the supernatural which offends him. Indeed, he retreats to one Gospel, the Johannine, and appears to let the other three go.³¹ (emphasis added)

An Olive Branch to the Schleiermachians and a Broken Lance

In *Pamphlet* III of his *Streitschriften* in 1838, Strauß wrote of his position in the *LJ* of 1835 that Schleiermacher was a Rationalist:

Schleiermacher proceeded from a construction of the person of Christ from Christian consciousness: which *could only give me the impression of an uncritical presupposition* [...] In the view of the most prominent events in the life of Jesus, such as the transfiguration, resurrection, and death, he coincided more openly or more covertly with Dr. Paulus [the Rationalist, whom Strauß roundly criticized in the *LJ*]: a standpoint which I believed I could prove to be untenable.³²

Strauß' third edition (1838/1839)³³ of the *LJ* was published as Strauß was under consideration for the appointment to the chair of Biblical Theology, Church History, and Dogmatics at the University of Zurich (a process that began in 1837). Clearly, Strauß' aim in the third edition was to offer an olive branch at least to his Rationalist critics by embracing key themes from Schleiermacher, but the revisions also indicate his increasing dissatisfaction with the Hegelian meta-narrative. With the third edition, he had a dialectical "No!" to literal, Church Doctrine with an antithetical "Yes!" of Hegelian science, but he no longer had the ultimate synthesis of Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Freedom, Absolute Spirit.

31. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 160. I will demonstrate, as well, that, when it comes even to the Gospel of John, Schleiermacher is selective in what he accepts as history and what is unacceptably supernatural.

32. Strauß, *Streitschriften* III: 60.

33. The second edition added 36 pages to the "Introduction" and clarified the notion of "myth." See Werner Zager's "Einleitung" to *Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet* [*The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*] (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2012): 28–29. The third edition (1838/1839) is acknowledged by most to have been a 'moment of madness' when he briefly took the Gospel of John to be historically accurate and in the "Concluding Dissertation" presented a Christology in which "Jesus was presented as 'the goal of all religious development' and 'in so far as the unity of God and man was present in him, it will not be exceeded at any other point in time' (Zager: 29–30). In the 1840, fourth edition, he returned to the formulation of his original text (Zager: 30). The observant reader will have noted that I formulate the three themes a bit differently from Peter Hodgson in his "Editor's Introduction" to the *LJ*: xxxviii.

The three core themes revised or added in the third edition are all related to Schleiermacher: 1) the status of the Gospel of John as an eyewitness, 2) the status of Jesus as unsurpassable founder of a religion, and 3) the taking of an 'intermediary position' on the miracles based on 'animal magnetism' that had Strauß endorsing at least some conclusions of Rationalism:

Re. 1) No one defended the eyewitness status of John's gospel more rigorously than Schleiermacher. Nonetheless, in § 12 of the "Introduction" to the first edition of *LJ* (§13 of Eliot's trans.), Strauß discusses and dismisses the arguments for taking John's gospel to be from an eyewitness.³⁴

However, in his 'Preface' to the third edition, Strauß attributes his re-thinking with respect to the Gospel of John to recent work by Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette and August Neander, both Schleiermachian, 'Mediating Theologians:' "[...] a renewed study of the Fourth Gospel on the basis of de Wette's commentary and Neander's *Leben Jesu Christ*, has made me again skeptical of my earlier doubt concerning the authenticity and credibility of this Gospel. *It is not that I have become convinced of its authenticity, merely that I am no longer certain of its inauthenticity.*"³⁵ (emphasis added). I will return to the issue of the Gospel of John for Schleiermacher below when I examine the other problems the gospel of John present for Schleiermacher's theology.

Re. 2) The second theme of revision was Strauß' take on Jesus as a 'genius' religious founder at least consistent with Schleiermacher's claim for Jesus' role as an irreplaceable and unsurpassable founder of a 'new' religion.

In "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum. Selbstgespräche" ("On What is Passing and Enduring in Christianity: Soliloquies") published at the time of the third edition of the *LJ*, Strauß employs the notion of 'genius' to speak of Jesus of Nazareth.³⁶ However in contrast to Schleiermacher, Strauß stresses that Jesus as a 'genius' who founded the new religion, that is Christianity, "has to step down from the divine throne."³⁷ because *he is only different in degree from others rather than an exclusive God/Man who appeared at a particular point in space and time.*³⁸

What distinguishes a religious/philosophical 'genius' from other 'geniuses,' according to Strauß, is that the former develops an 'inner harmony' whereas the genius of the non-religious is defined by external agency.³⁹ Strauß takes Jesus here to be "unsurpassable"⁴⁰ and "omniscient" with respect to his 'inner harmony.'⁴¹

34. See Strauß, *LJ*: 62 ff.; Eliot trans.: 72 ff.

35. Strauß, *LJ*: lvii.

36. See especially "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum. Selbstgespräche" in *Zwei friedliche Blätter* (Altona: Verlag von J.F. Hammerich, 1839): §§ 29 and 30.

37. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 104.

38. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 109.

39. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 112–113.

40. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 129–130.

41. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 130–131.

Strauß portrays the religion founded by Jesus as itself in need of improvement. His use of 'God-consciousness' to describe Jesus sounds remarkably similar to Schleiermacher's notion of 'perfect God-consciousness' (*granted formulated by a conditional 'if'*):

[...] the highest unity of human self-consciousness with God-consciousness results, by virtue of which the former, in all its movements, in determining itself purely from the latter, and knows and feels this determination by the divine at the same time as its own self-determination. *If* this unity really existed in Jesus; if he not only expressed it in words, but actually demonstrated it in all situations of his life, then in him, within the religious field, the highest has been reached, beyond which no future individual can go [...]⁴² (emphasis added)

Strauß employs the conditional form ('if') in "On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity."⁴³ However, he does not speak of 'perfect God-consciousness' as does Schleiermacher! 'Perfection' would eliminate the historical included in Strauß' notion of the religious 'genius':

[... The] historical element relates to the personal element as the material does to the animating and ordering spirit: so even an equally excellent spirit will not be able to form the same stately and beautiful body from a poorer and coarser material than another [is able to form, though,] not better in itself, but out of a richer and more pre-processed material.⁴⁴

Yet, following the conditional 'if this unity really existed in Jesus,' Strauß immediately stresses that, with the understanding of the natural sciences, there has been significant improvement since the time of Jesus, which in turn influences the religion that he founded.⁴⁵ Furthermore, within Christianity itself there has been a '*purification*' (not perfection) in the conceptualization of understanding the relationship by God to the world so that rather than conceive of God possessing the ability to violate the laws of nature, God is viewed as working through the laws of nature. Strauß asks, when belief in angels serving as divine mediators and intercessors as well as the notion of

42. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 127.

43. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes im Christenthum:" (1838): 126. In *The Old and the New Faith* of 1872, Strauß does employ Schleiermacher's 'feeling of absolute dependence,' but not with respect to 'Spirit above sensuousness' but with respect to our dependence upon the material universe: "Religion is no longer in us what it was in our fathers, but it does not follow that it is extinct in us.

What has remained in us in any case is the basic component of all religion, the feeling of absolute dependence [*das Gefühl der unbedingten Abhängigkeit*]. Whether we say God or universe: we feel absolutely dependent on the one as on the other. Also towards the latter [the universe] we know ourselves as "part of the part," our power as nothing in relation to the omnipotence of nature, our thinking only able to grasp slowly and laboriously the smallest part of what the world offers us as an object of cognition." Strauß, *Der alte und der neue Glaube. Ein Bekenntnis* (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1872): 138–139.

44. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 124–125.

45. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 127–128.

the devil able to contradict God's purposes, which are contaminations of Christianity from other religions, "[...] when these and similar prejudices gradually fall away: will not the essence of Christianity itself thereby be brought out even more purely than it could have been at the time of Jesus?"⁴⁶ (emphasis added)

Even when one turns inwardly to the purely religious domain, for example, the nature of morality, where no one can understand or act for someone else, Strauß emphasizes that *no moral success is inferior to the first moral agent*.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, clearly echoing Schleiermacher as much as Hegel, the gospels present Jesus as the first to introduce to humanity "[...] the consciousness of the essential unity of the truly human with the divine, [who] showed such omnipotence that his whole life was uniformly permeated and transfigured by it until any noticeable dullness vanished."⁴⁸ Again with the 'conditional if,' Strauß concludes: "[...] [I]f Christ remains for us, and if he remains for us as the highest thing that we know and are able to think of in religious terms, as the one without whose presence in the mind no perfect piety is possible, then in him the essence of Christianity remains for us."⁴⁹ (emphasis added)

In 1864, though, Strauß returns to the theme of Jesus' place in history in his *The Life of Jesus Examined for the German People* as well as in his final book in 1872, *The Old and the New Faith: A Confession*. At this point some twenty years later, the notions of religious 'genius,' unsurpassable founder, much less absolute God-consciousness and omniscience have all disappeared. What remains, if at all, from Schleiermacher is the notion of religion as the 'eternal' in the 'present,' which is the concluding line from the 'Second Speech' of Schleiermacher's *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*.⁵⁰ I return to Strauß' citation of this passage below.

Re. 3) The third theme threatened the consistency of Strauß' thesis with respect to the 'miracle' narratives in the gospels as the product of the 'genetic mythical principle,'⁵¹ which views the miracle stories as constructions of the early church and gospel writers as they articulated their understanding of who Jesus of Nazareth was based on the accounts of God's chosen, charismatic leaders, prophets, and prophecies from the 'First' Testament. Here, Strauß comes as close as he ever does to adopting the Rationalist account of, at least some, miracles.

For the Rationalists miracles are a matter of misperception by their audience. What was a natural event was taken to be a supernatural event. In short, one acknowledged only the alternative: supernatural and natural. In the third edition of the *LJ*,

46. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 128.

47. See Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 129–130.

48. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 130–131.

49. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 132.

50. See Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 101.

51. Strauß was very conscious of this inconsistency between the first two editions and the third that arises from his accepting Rationalistic explanations in the third edition for certain miracles. In his "Preface" to the fourth edition, he describes the work of the third edition as having "[...] lost in unity but hopefully [...] gained in truth over both [earlier editions]." *LJ*: lvii

Strauß suggests an intermediate option: *some (particularly healing) stories are 'wonders' but not 'miracles.'* What today would be called unusual, psychosomatic events have a 'natural' explanation but were taken by Jesus' audience to be miracles.

Peter Hodgson refers to Strauß' "[...] allowance of an intermediary category of miracles (cures based on unusual powers of nature, *analogous to animal magnetism*)." (LJ: xxxviii) (emphasis added) However, Hodgson's formulation should not be taken to mean that Strauß' acknowledgement of animal magnetism is as a champion of it in contrast to natural science.⁵² In "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum," Strauß addressed this intermediary position of miracles: Strauß asks: "[...] [I]s it correct with respect to the miracles of Jesus, if they are admitted to have happened at all, that they can only be effected either by ordinary natural, or by divine powers? Is there no middle between the two? Already the formulation of the question suggests that *between the ordinary and natural* on the one side, *and the unusual and supernatural* on the other side, *the natural but unusual* stands in the middle. The only question is: Is this something? – Certainly!"⁵³

Strauß then stresses the difference between mechanical magnetism (requiring technical equipment) and animal magnetism (e.g., psychosomatic cures). Obviously, the former couldn't apply to Jesus. He acknowledges, though, that 'animal magnetism' occurs by means of an unusual power but adds:

[...] when madness and epilepsy are gradually eradicated by means of medicines and rubbing, this, rare as it is, is still considered part of the usual natural course. On the other hand, if one succeeds in breaking such an evil suddenly and forever by a word spoken strongly and in tune with the patient's fixed ideas, this is regarded as something unusual. However, this unusual thing is therefore not yet an extra-natural thing. Animal-magnetic power, [...] even the power of imagination and will, in so far as it acts on the bodily organism, are just as much natural potencies as the mechanical ones.⁵⁴

Strauß emphasizes "[s]uch [... things] could be believed without orthodox belief in miracles; in that here *the miraculum* [miracle] *has descended to the mirabile* [wonder-

52. Whereas Strauß was 'convinced that there were spirits' in 1827, he had his doubts by 1830, and, in the summer of 1832, he had definitely rejected the claims. See Ziegler, I: 114. Frequent visits with Kerner resulted in Strauß publishing several essays on 'demon possession,' the 'dark side' of nature, magnetism, and apparitions as part of his collection of essays from 1839, *Charakteristiken und Kritiken*: 301–404. Strauß approaches this phenomena with extreme skepticism and conviction that, although a natural explanation for the phenomena has not yet been achieved, in time it will be discovered. His wonder for Kerner was the patience and seriousness with which he acknowledged the dignity of his 'patients'.

53. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 85–86.

54. Strauß, "Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum:" 88. A year earlier, Strauß wrote: "Whoever has not perceived any sensory metastasis, remote sensation, etc. in the field of healthy life and common diseases, would be completely wrong if he would deny the reality of these phenomena [that is, healthy life and common diseases] also for magnetic states.," Strauß, "Die Evangelische Kirchenzeitung" in his *Streitschriften* III: 37.

ful], to an indeed striking and unusual, but therefore not supernatural appearance.”⁵⁵ (emphasis added)

It is important to stress, though, that this identification of a ‘middle’ position more in tune with psychosomatic healing in the explanation of miracles is NOT Schleiermacher’s ‘middle’ position related to a ‘Platonic Nobler Lie’ that Strauß rejects 26 years later in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*. Schleiermacher defended a ‘middle’ position between ‘objectively false’ and ‘subjectively true,’ not a ‘middle position’ of ‘wonder’ in the ‘middle’ between ‘natural’ and ‘supernatural’ causality. Schleiermacher defends the morally questionable conclusion that Jesus’s was unobligated to tell the disciples that they misunderstood (for example, concerning what happened in the tomb) so long as they didn’t ask him⁵⁶ in order to achieve his ‘higher’ spiritual goal of perfect God-consciousness for humanity. I return to this theme below.

If the third edition of the *LJ* was embracing a middle path between ‘faith’ and ‘history’ in order to placate Alexander Schweizer, the Schleiermachian, ‘Mediating Theologian’ who would have been Strauß’ colleague in Zurich but who opposed Strauß’ appointment already in 1837, Strauß’ 1839 “Schleiermacher and Daub: Their Significance for Theology in our Age” published in daily segments over the two months of January and February of 1839 – precisely the time frame in which the appointment of Strauß to the Zurich faculty was made – slammed shut the door of reconciliation.⁵⁷ Shortly after its appearance, Strauß expressed his regrets for the revisions of the *LJ*’s third edition, and the fourth edition, for the most part, returned to the original edition.

Schleiermacher’s Feeling, Hegel’s Absolute Knowledge, and Kant’s Morality

In the “Second Speech” of *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (1799), Schleiermacher claims that religion is neither a matter of ‘science’ (physical or metaphysical knowledge) nor of ‘morality’ (practical philosophy).⁵⁸ Speaking of religion as ‘piety,’ Schleiermacher says:

Only by keeping quite outside the range both of science and of practice can it [religion] maintain its proper sphere and character. *Only when piety takes its place alongside of science and practice, as a necessary, an indispensable third,* as their natural counterpart, not

55. Strauß, “Vergängliches und Bleibendes:” 91. See as well, Strauß’ “Part II: On the Science of the Dark Side of Nature” in *Charakteristiken und Kritiken*: 301–404.

56. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 148, 67.

57. See Strauß, “Schleiermacher und Daub:” 146.

58. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 30. Schleiermacher claims: “In order to make quite clear to you what is the original and characteristic possession of religion, it resigns at once, all claims on anything that belongs either to science or morality.” *Ibid.*: 35.

less in worth and splendour than either, *will the common field be altogether occupied and human nature on this side complete.*⁵⁹ (emphasis added)

Science and true practice (as culture and art self-produced) are possible only because there is religion in the form of the "sense and taste for the Infinite."⁶⁰ Science and culture "[...] can both come to life in you [... only] insofar as there lives immediately in you the eternal unity of Reason and Nature, the universal existence of all finite things in the Infinite [...]"⁶¹ "If man [*sic.*] is not one with the Eternal in the unity of intuition and feeling which is immediate, he remains, in the unity of consciousness which is derived, forever apart."⁶²

Thinking can only occur where there is separation, a sundering of unity: between the subject and the object:

Consider how you delineate an object. Is there not both a stimulation and a determination by the object, at one and the same time, which for one particular moment forms your existence? The more definite your image, the more, in this way, you become the object, and the more you lose yourselves. But [*sic.*] just because you can trace the growing preponderance of one side over the other, both must have been one and equal in the first, the original moment that has escaped you.⁶³

Sense and object mingle and unite, then each returns to its place, and the object rent from sense is a perception, and you rent from the object are for yourselves, a feeling. *It is this earlier moment [of feeling] I mean, which you always experience and yet never experience. The phenomenon of your life is just the result of its constant departure and return.*⁶⁴

What Schleiermacher calls in *On Religion* the feeling "that our being and living is a being and living in and through God,"⁶⁵ he calls in his own *Glaubenslehre* (*The Christian Faith*) the 'feeling of absolute dependence.'⁶⁶

Schleiermacher emphasizes that awareness of the 'feeling of absolute dependence' is possible for humanity along a scale of none, whatsoever, to various degrees of cognizance, that culminates in 'perfect God-consciousness' in which all of one's being is shaped first by the feeling of one's dependence upon God.⁶⁷ The spectrum

59. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 37–38.

60. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 39.

61. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 39. NOTE: This is thoroughly anthropomorphic. Only a finite consciousness, so far as we have ever experienced, experiences anything remotely like the self-unity of apperception and the limitlessness and power of the sublime. See the presentation of Kant on beauty and the sublime in "Chapter 9: Missing Aesthetic Judgment:" 885 ff.

62. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 40.

63. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 42.

64. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 43.

65. Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 50.

66. See Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* § 9.

67. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 202. See as well, Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 63–64

represents a tension in humanity between the 'feeling of absolute dependence' and sensuousness with the greater degree of God-consciousness elevating humanity to that degree 'above sensuousness.'⁶⁸ NOTE: For Schleiermacher, this spectrum of degree of God-consciousness replaces the traditional, Christian notion of 'sin' as the violation of divine law.

If not knowledge or action, just what does Feeling Accomplish?

I address these seven themes individually below:

1. Finite anchoring of religion in human experience: Acknowledging humanity's limits, it provides a 'finite ground' for religion in human experience (feeling) that reins in metaphysical conceptions about 'God,' yet preserves the notion of God even though 'unknowable'.
2. Absolute Feeling as ground of religion: It gives us a subjective 'sense' or subjective 'intuition' of a unity, identity, and divinity at the core of life. In short, it grounds in 'appearances' (not metaphysical substance) both a 'cosmological argument' (first cause) and an 'ontological argument' (Absolute Being) for God.
3. Elitism avoided: It eliminates religious 'elitism' because of its 'universality' (that is, it is quintessentially 'Protestant' as the ground for the 'community of all believers' without need of an intercessory 'Church' hierarchy).
4. Perfect God-consciousness and 'natural' Developmental Growth: Religion is anchored in the 'developmental process' of human growth, physically and intellectually. Schleiermacher's 'theology from below' insists, then, that even the Christ must be understood as nothing that couldn't arise out of natural, human development.
5. Sin and Sinlessness defined with respect to the feeling of absolute dependence: As 'absolute' this feeling establishes a value hierarchy that explains the source of 'sin' and calls for the enhancement of God-consciousness within and 'above' 'sensualism.' Jesus' 'perfect God-consciousness,' by which all his life was in conformity with the feeling of absolute dependence, is 'sinless.'
6. Goal: enhanced God-consciousness, not overcoming sin as 'violation of divine law.' The emphasis on feeling allows emphasizing humanity's 'goodness' irrespective of the divine law by making the goal the 'achievement' of enhanced God-consciousness, not the 'overcoming' of sin.
7. Ultimate, Eminent Causality:⁶⁹ The feeling of absolute dependence 'explains' why there is a 'need' for a 'savior' because no finite cause can achieve an infinite,

68. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 154; *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30 See F.C. Baur's, "Die Schleiermacher'sche Glaubenslehre:" 662; "self-consciousness must be liberated from sensuousness" (*Ibid.*, 663)

69. On the difference between eminent and efficient causality, see the "Introduction:" 84, n. 23.

perfect end (without contradicting the Principle of Sufficient Reason or *Satz vom zureichenden Grund*).

A Fragile Edifice Built on the Sand of Feeling

Constantly looking over his shoulder at the developments in the natural sciences that contradict the miraculous and convinced that the historical foundation of the gospels crumble if they are myths, yet, fully aware that the claim to ‘know’ God reduces God to a ‘finite thing’ among other ‘things’ confined to a subject-object structure of experience and, with respect to human lives, driven by the conviction that humanity is capable of perfection if not ethical than ontological even if it does not possess it ‘naturally’ by birth, Schleiermacher’s ‘feeling of absolute’ dependence appears to be the ultimate solution to humanity’s religious conundrums. Religion defined on the basis of the ‘feeling of absolute dependence’ avoids, most dramatically, the problems that accompany the claims for a Personal God, and it avoids the crushing debilitations of humanity that come with the narrative of ‘original sin.’ In fact, though, the ‘feeling of absolute dependence’ is itself grounded in ‘knowledge’ and is as much a condemnation of ‘sensualism’ with debilitating consequences for humanity’s responsible creativity as is Augustine of Hippo’s mistranslation of Romans 5:12 that gave us ‘original sin’ at the end of the 4th C. Furthermore, trapped in a circular, anthropomorphic argument, Schleiermacher’s ‘religion’ is sustained only by dictum (*Machtspruch*).

Despite overlap, I address the seven themes in order listed.

Re. 1) Finite anchoring of religion in human experience in the feeling of absolute dependence ignores the limits to feeling:

Strauß points out in "Schleiermacher und Daub" (1839) that, in order to avoid grounding religion in ‚knowledge‘ or ‘ethics,’ "[...] Schleiermacher devotes all his acumen to get along without such help, and to spin all [religious] propositions out of the sense of dependence."⁷⁰

Before turning to the theme of ‘feeling’ directly, it is helpful to examine what Strauß points out concerning the claim for the concept of ‘totality’ included in the notion of ‘absolute dependence.’ Schleiermacher defined Christianity in *On Religion* as consisting of the finite striving toward unity with the whole:

The basic view of Christianity [...] is no other than that of *the general striving of everything finite towards the unity of the whole*, and the way the Deity treats this striving towards Himself, how it mediates the enmity against Himself and sets limits to the ever increasing

70. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 163.

distance on the part of the particular points scattered everywhere, which are at the same time finite and infinite, human and divine [...].⁷¹

Schleiermacher, Strauß observes, is well aware that the individual's sense experience is limited by the particulars of its perceptions. In other words, it is clear that individual consciousness is 'dependent' on the collection of things that make up its immediate world. However, when it comes to a claim about a unity that is an identity to all experience in the sense of an absolute totality, Schleiermacher overlooks that "[...] the individual never experiences this totality directly."⁷²

Schleiermacher attempts to solve this aspect of human limitation by making a claim about the limitlessness of consciousness:

Our body, he says, 'is present in self-consciousness and always occurs as affixed to some other being in a natural coherence. However, there are no limits given here [in self-consciousness]. Hence, undeveloped, all finite being occurs as a whole [...] In this fashion, the entire natural order occurs in our self-consciousness,' and, to the extent that we feel ourselves with this consciousness of the world as inclusively sensuous always absolutely dependent, the entire world occurs as absolutely dependent on God (*Glaubenslehre* I: 193 f. [actually, § 34: 194]).⁷³

Strauß comments with skepticism:

[... Schleiermacher] admits that this occurrence of the world as a totality is only undeveloped in immediate self-consciousness. In fact, more exactly, *that which is direct in our self-consciousness as feeling is only always some particular worldly element* (and actually, even this is mediated by means of feeling [*Empfindung*], perception, etc.). However, *as a totality, the world occurs in our self-consciousness only mediated by thought [...]*⁷⁴ (emphasis added)

In short, Schleiermacher makes a claim for an 'absolute dependence' upon a totality that depends upon our experience *within the limits of consciousness* of a 'limitless whole' of nature that we possess only in a finite world of extension. The step from finite consciousness to an absolute, 'comprehensive totality' is a conclusion drawn by finite consciousness in thought and nothing that the individual can experience directly

71. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 18–19. Oman's English translation of this passage from *On Religion* is: "The original intuition of Christianity [...] is just the intuition of the Universal resistance of finite things to the unity of the Whole, and of the way the Deity treats this resistance. Christianity sees how He reconciles the hostility to Himself, and sets bounds to the ever-increasing alienation by scattering points here and there over the whole that are at once finite and infinite, human and divine." *On Religion*: 241.

72. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 163.

73. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 163–164.

74. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 164.

– even in feeling.⁷⁵ Schleiermacher wrote in his *Monologues*, which appeared shortly after *On Religion*:

The inner determination of [... the microcosmos world] by the universe, by virtue of which it is just that which it is, is conceived here [in the *Monologues*], by virtue of the original unity of the I with the universe, as a *pretemporal intelligent act* of free self-determination of the I, and in this it boldly opposes all influences from outside, *refusing any dependence. The material world must serve the 'I'* and, as a system of organisms as well as an extended body, must assist the 'I' in achieving its goals. Infinitely more, the 'I' experiences its spirit to be challenged by its association with other minds/spirits. However, if the resistance of nature or the unfavorable clash with other minds prevents success, the 'I' is still not dependent upon the accidental coincidence of its external circumstances. *'External circumstances do not prohibit internal agency* [because the individual is liberated by the feeling of absolute dependence above the sensuous].⁷⁶ What denies the individual from external success, contacts, and relationships is actually modelled internally, but no less real, by *fantasy*, 'this divine power that, alone *establishes the mind's/spirit's freedom above all forces and every limitation – without this divine power [of the imagination] the human sphere is apprehensively closed in on itself'* (*Monologues*, 4th ed.: 79 f.).⁷⁷ (emphasis added)

In the *Monologues*, Schleiermacher attributes *humanity's freedom* to the 'divinely given' power of imagination that soars beyond all limitation.⁷⁸ Although he emphasizes that we should never forget that we can only think and speak of God out of the limits of our humanity and that "all of our knowledge of God is very limited, concealed, and in every respect imperfect,"⁷⁹ he appears to overlook that the same warning not to forget our limits applies to 'imagination' and 'feeling' of the natural world as much as to 'God.'

Re. 2) Absolute Feeling as ground of religion, is a symptom, not a ground:

75. It is not insignificant with respect to the acknowledgement that Strauß has a limited understanding of Kant that, thanks to Hegel, he ignores Kant's notions of 'apperception' and the 'sublime' here. See Volume II of the present project Chapter 9: "Missing Aesthetic Judgment."

76. Schleiermacher writes: "No evil that changes its action can occur to spirit" ("*Dem Geiste kann kein Übel sein, was sein Handeln nur ändert*"). "Schleiermacher und Daub" 27. Strauß cites the *Monologues*: 93 f.

77. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 26.

78. In response to criticism of the 'arrogance' of this limitless feeling on the part of the self, Schleiermacher presented a distinction between 'idea' and 'appearance' ('archetype' and 'caricature') in the Preface to later editions of the *Monologues*, and he insisted that his concern was with 'ideas' and 'archetypes,' not with 'appearances' and 'caricatures' in experience. Strauß compares this attempt at revision to the 'Explanations' that Schleiermacher later added to *On Religion* and comments: "This [...] is a perverse reinterpretation, by which the *Monologues* would become the most meaningless machinations, and which is most definitely excluded by the fact that the contemplation in the *Monologues* not infrequently admits to present deficiencies of the ego contemplating itself, as clear proof that it by no means departs from its appearing side; For such deficiencies [of the ego] cannot lie in the ideal because they are rather only the places where the appearing I has lagged behind its ideal." Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 27–28.

79. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 32–33.

Schleiermacher takes the grounding of a reality claim to consist in the substantial condition required for the experience of a set of phenomena, or a cause. It is obvious that a *'feeling' is not a substance*. Hegel and Strauß establish that a *'feeling'* is, also, not a cause but an effect so that, precisely as an effect, *feeling cannot be a 'necessary' assumption* as a condition required for the experience of a set of phenomena – in Schleiermacher's case: the required condition for the experience of *'religion'/God*. I examine here Strauß' issue with feeling as a *cause*.

Schleiermacher claims that the *feeling of absolute dependence that is the presupposition and shaper of agency* is called *'piety'*. Consequently, religion is *'subjective'* feeling for Schleiermacher, not a case of *'objective'* knowledge or agency.

Furthermore, piety is both *'quantitative'* (that is, a degree of strength) and *'qualitative'* (that is, a difference in value despite a sameness in degree).⁸⁰ Both the quantity and the quality of piety arise out of feeling to the extent that it is stronger or weaker, purer or less pure; that is, *to the degree that its 'higher consciousness' is more or less attached to sensuousness*.⁸¹

As long as both [the higher self-consciousness and the sensual] are still mixed, when sensual consciousness is significantly touched by an object, which is still limited to a narrow circle, the higher self-consciousness, that is, the absolute feeling of dependence, will be reflected as being determined by the same object.⁸²

On this basis, Schleiermacher distinguishes among religions: *'Fetish'* religion arises where *'lower,' sensuous consciousness* dominates. *'Polytheism'* arises when *'lower,' sensuous consciousness* dominates a larger collection of objects and regions but is also fused with the *'higher' consciousness* in which the variety of sensuous affections shatter the feeling of absolute dependence into a multiplicity of relationships, which are not yet taken to be united in a highest origin. *'Monotheism'* occurs where *'lower' self-consciousness* takes up the whole sensuous world in itself, but higher consciousness, left completely free, is able to unite this sensuous multiplicity into a feeling of dependence that is absolutely identical with itself.⁸³

However, Hegel points out that "[...] that *feeling is an empty form*, which takes up various things into itself, a mental form, which can be given to any content. Everything, namely, that wants to fit together with the I as its actual, living determinateness, can only do this under the form of feeling [...]."⁸⁴

80. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 153–154.

81. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 154.

82. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 154. Are they ever consciously experienced as anything but mixed?

83. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 154. Strauß cites to Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* § 8.

84. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 152. Strauß cites to Hegel's *Werke*, Vol. 17, 296 f.

Furthermore, *because there is no beginning or end to individual feelings, even to the 'highest' feeling of absolute dependence, piety is reduced to a vague differentiation.*

Strauß comments: "Admittedly, there is always an undeveloped form of feeling in play, but in a scientific presentation, who is satisfied with feeling rather than carefully developed thinking?"⁸⁵

Strauß asks: "*Is it [...] feeling that causes this progress across religions or not far more 'thought' that works its way from the individual to plurality, from plurality to totality, and in totality arrives at unity?*"⁸⁶ Strauß points out that these different 'levels' of religion are accompanied by feeling but they are not caused by feeling – "*feeling is not religion any more than a barometer is the weather.*"⁸⁷ (emphasis added)

Re. 3) Elitism is not avoided :

Schleiermacher's defining of piety as the 'feeling of absolute dependence' above sensuousness was intended to eliminate elitism (*gnosis*) in religion – as if only those who possessed 'proper' theological knowledge or those who were morally pure were to be acknowledged as 'religious.' However, *his placing the 'feeling of absolute dependence' at the core of piety remains just as foreign to the laity as elitist philosophy and moral purity.*

Schleiermacher wrote in "Two Epistles to Dr. Lücke on my *Glaubenslehre*:" "I do not want to be a privileged one in the church, who alone among thousands knows the [true] foundation of faith."⁸⁸ Strauß comments:

This is an ambiguous formulation. It suggests that the faith of the congregation would then be a groundless one, which completely confuses the proper point. Namely, even if the congregation is not aware of its ground, the faith of the congregation in itself can be a well-founded one. The congregation has a foundation for its faith, whereas the theologian knowingly grasps it. This is the whole difference, and this difference is so far from annulling the Christian communion and essential equality between the two parts (theology and philosophy) that without the difference the concept of a theologian cannot even arise."⁸⁹

However, Schleiermacher's grounding of faith in the feeling of absolute dependence (which is supposedly not philosophy – see below) leaves him, nonetheless, alone with his 'feeling:'

The common man will always stick to believing the Christian doctrines to be true on the ground that they are written in the Bible. If, however, according to Schleiermacher, this biblical conviction is not right, but rather the foundation of the truth of Christianity lies

85. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 164–165.

86. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 154–155.

87. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 155.

88. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 174.

89. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 174–175.

in the own inner experience of each individual, then here, too, it is the theologian alone, or among the common believers only the most educated, who have the true foundation of faith.⁹⁰

Re. 4) Perfect God-consciousness and ‘natural’ Developmental Growth (a backdoor Logos Theology) :

Strauß points out that Schleiermacher cannot sustain the claim that the Christ’s development both physically and intellectually was ‘natural’ like all other human beings while, simultaneously, claiming that Jesus’ moral and intellectual development was quite different from all human beings.

In natural, human development "[...] knowing proceeds, as Schleiermacher very nicely explains, from ignorance through undecidedness to certainty [...]; error arises through the fact that something strange intrudes and provokes a conclusion before truth is reached [...]"⁹¹

Schleiermacher wants this notion of natural development to be applied to Jesus. For example, he writes: "[...] Jesus’ gradual, natural development appears to require a gradual transition. ‘It lies in the nature of the case,’ it is judged, ‘that a rising development of a self-consciousness must proceed to its being shared, and an end of the one [self-conscious development] and a beginning of the other [public sharing] is not to be posited’ [...] That has [...] a measure of truth in it; to that extent one could distinguish the still less definite activity of Jesus, which was provoked from time to time by individual occasions, from the definite and coherent activity as it was evidently characterized by the gathering of a special circle of disciples."⁹²

Nonetheless, "[a]ccording to Schleiermacher, we must think of Jesus’ own God-consciousness quite differently: ‘not only his moral development [= Perfect God-consciousness] was progress without struggle, but also his intellectual development was a progress without error,’"⁹³ that is, as ‘sinless.’

I will examine below the logic of this ‘sinless’ savior claim. However, Schleiermacher already has a problem with his claim that Jesus is the archetype of ‘perfect’ God-consciousness when it comes to reconciling a ‘bottom up,’ naturally human development with the notion of a ‘sinless’ Christ in possession of ‘perfect’ God-consciousness.

90. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 175.

91. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 66. In his *Meditations*, Descartes defined error as the application of the will without sufficient understanding. Hence, error is not a ‘fault’ of either understanding and willing in themselves but of application of the will where there is limited understanding. See Descartes’ "Fourth Meditation" in *Meditations*: 37–38 (Page # from Latin text in the Adam and Tannery edition: 58).

92. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 72.

93. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 66.

First, Schleiermacher acknowledges that "[...] an absolute control by God-consciousness over the sensual can no more be shown in Christianity than anywhere else." However, when it comes to comparing Christianity to 'the old religions' "progress is not to be denied."⁹⁴

Second, Christianity's progress over against other religions is explained "by the collaboration of completely natural causes:"

While the question of how an archetypal man [the Christ] could ever have become actual is to remain unanswered *to the same extent as the question about every actual beginning of life generally* [McG: not to speak of any other 'essence' that 'remains the same throughout all its variations in development (see footnote 97 below), which presupposes a 'Logos'], according to Schleiermacher's assurance it is enough to say that 'it would perfectly meet the requirement of a perfect historicity of this perfect archetypal reality if from that time forward [from the historical point in time of Jesus' presence] he had developed in the same way as all others.'⁹⁵

Nonetheless,

[...] Christ is described as that man who 'as a historical, individual being was at the same time archetypal' (§. 93); or who 'was *equal to all men by virtue of the uniqueness of human nature but distinguished from all by the constant strength of his God-consciousness*.'⁹⁶ (emphasis added)

Strauß correctly asks:

What then happens to the archetype? [...] [I]f the archetype really develops the way everyone else does, then the archetype is doomed; but if in the course of development this should remain constant, it could not develop as in all others.⁹⁷ (emphasis added)

94. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30.

95. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 31. Strauß cites to Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*: § 93, sec. 3.

96. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 201.

97. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 31. In footnote 37 of his translation, Laender Keck seeks to defend Schleiermacher by claiming: "Actually, an archetype which did not develop would cease to be archetypically human." Keck is contradicting Schleiermacher's own definition of an essence as what is present throughout the rise and fall of its perfection. Speaking explicitly of the 'feeling of absolute dependence,' whose arche is 'perfect God-consciousness, Schleiermacher writes: "[...] what is not the measure of the perfection of an object in its rise and fall cannot be its essence." (*Glaubenslehre*, Bd 1, §. 3, S. 12). Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 153. Keck is equating an 'archetype' with development, which is a contradiction of the definition of an archetype. Strauß writes: "'As true Idealist, Schleiermacher deuced his Christ from his subjectivity, but, although he started from the same point [as the Idealists], he derived all absolute content [*Inhalt*] encountered in the subject from the message of the existence of the external God/Man, he relapsed into ancient Church Doctrine.'" Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 176.

Strauß refers to Schleiermacher's 'logic' of dependence on an Idealistic archetype In § 65 of his, Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II. It sounds like a paraphrasing of the logic of Anselm's *Cur deus homo* for the perfect God/Man and Descartes' 'ontological proof'" of the existence of God in the Third Meditation of his *Meditations*:

I find in myself as member of the Christian community the harmonic unity of the lower self-consciousness with the higher, including my remission of sin and religious perfection in a peculiar manner at ease and commencement of a constant progress in this relief. If I search for the cause of this relief, I don't find it in myself because from myself, as far as I can tell, this harmony is only ever made more difficult; even less [do I find the cause] in someone else who is a member of the Christian community because I recognize in this other the same sense of relief; nor do I find it in the totality of the Christian community because one does not get a perfect effect from many imperfect causes: this harmony has its cause even less from outside the Christian community where it is not even encountered. *It can come only from the founder of this community, who precisely by this influence remains its constant master.*⁹⁸ (emphasis added)

Schleiermacher cannot have his cake and eat it, too. Either he can maintain a Christ who is subject to 'natural development' (from below) as is the case with all 'natural' human beings, or he has a ideal archetype that initiates (from above) a radically new beginning of spiritual development of the human species that the human species could not generate on its own any more than it can generate the physical world or its ideas out of itself.⁹⁹ If there is any teaching that is a (poisonous) fly in Schleiermacher's soup, it is the teaching of a pre-existent Christ (the Logos). In clearly a moment of cognitive dissonance, the only gospel that claims the pre-existence of Christ is Schleiermacher's favorite gospel, the Gospel of John, However, Schleiermacher rejects the teaching of a pre-existent Christ, as I point out below (see below page 216 ff).

Re. 5) Sin and Sinlessness are defined with respect to the feeling of absolute dependence :

With the 'natural' individual, one can only speak of a relative, 'more or less' of God-consciousness in the individual "[...] because in actual life both sides [God-consciousness and sensuousness] are mixed together [...]"¹⁰⁰ Therefore,

In the actual religious life of the Christian, there is either the consciousness of the inability to impose the feeling of dependence on all moments of life, i.e. to raise it to the level of the determining power of the whole human being and life; whereby the Christian experiences her-/himself as a sinner and subject to punishment and the world is experienced as filled with evil, although God is recognized as holy and just. Or consciousness prevails of

98. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 177–178.

99. Schleiermacher is no Nominalist! Were he one, though, he would again be trapped in a circular argument because the *a posteriori* 'abstraction' of a 'concept' out of a finite set of phenomena requires that the set of phenomena already be 'structured' by the 'concept' abstracted out of it.

100. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 162.

having been freed by Christ from that incapacity, as being enabled to assert the feeling of absolute dependence as a life-determining power. In this, the Christian becomes aware of himself [*sic.*] as the one redeemed, justified and *in the process of healing* by Christ, of the world as the place for the church's institution of grace, but of God as love and wisdom. However, whether the human being is more inhibited or more encouraged by this intervention (for there can only be talk of a greater or lesser degree, because in the real life of the Christian both sides are always in each other), the feeling of absolute dependence is nevertheless present in him, and he must therefore have a side which mocks indifferently this opposition of inhibition and encouragement.¹⁰¹ (emphasis added)

Schleiermacher's logic of redemption is that an imperfect effect *requires* a perfect cause, requiring a savior who possesses 'perfect God-consciousness.' Here the point is that *Schleiermacher's notion of piety results in a 'vicarious (or substitution) atonement' theory no different from Traditional Personal Theism [Anselm's Cur deus homo].*

Redemption, says Schleiermacher, consists in the fact that sin [imperfect God-consciousness] is expunged from our consciousness. Therefore, sinlessness must become visible to us in the person of Christ. Only when we appropriate his sinlessness in the most intimate fellowship with him, 'the way everything is common to friends,' will we become participants in redemption and in its fruits. This is, as Schleiermacher furthermore expresses it also as God's seeing the redeemed in Christ, only the old doctrine of the vicarious atonement, even if weakened to a mere manner of speaking.¹⁰² (emphasis added)

Re. 6) Goal: enhanced God-consciousness is not overcoming sin as 'violation of divine law'

Schleiermacher rejects 'knowledge' of divine predicates because, according to him, recognition of the feeling of absolute dependence (that is, God-consciousness as an essential and general life-element of human nature) is the fundamental assumption of piety, not knowledge of God Himself.¹⁰³

Yet, for 'natural' humanity, one can only speak of a 'more or less' of God-consciousness in the individual because in actual life both sides (God-consciousness and sensuousness) are mixed together.

In his *Glaubenslehre* § 66, Schleiermacher defines 'sin' as "all [...] that obstructs the development of God-consciousness."¹⁰⁴

"If, [...] in the soul of the Christian, consciousness of sin is never set without the consciousness of the power of redemption, then that consciousness is also never really without its complementary half [of sin] [...], which for itself represents only the state of a hopeless incapacity of the spirit prevailing outside the sphere of redemption. *This explanation of sin as an inhibition of the determining power of the spirit caused by the independence of*

101. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 161–162.

102. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 168–169. See Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* II: 407.

103. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub." 177–178.

104. Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* II: 406.

the sensual functions is well-suited for those who describe sin itself as a turning away from the Creator, but less so for those who explain sin as a transgression of the divine law."¹⁰⁵ (emphasis added)

In § 67 of his *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher adds: "We are conscious of sin as the power and work of a time in which the direction toward God-consciousness had not yet emerged in us."¹⁰⁶

Strauß observes in *Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* that for Schleiermacher:

"[... *Christ*] did not want to destroy the law, so he did not want to destroy the temple worship either. Consequently, he would have also allowed his followers to attend the temple service just as he himself participated in it." His followers would have had to be satisfied first of all with following the synagogue regulations, as they subsequently actually did; and if Christianity had made progress without the rupture with Judaism which lay in the execution of Jesus, then the temple proper in Jerusalem would also have been partly Christianized. *'The peculiar spirit of this community must have consisted in seeing the ritual, the legal, and the ceremonial as a purely national thing and in basing religion on the foundation which lay in Jesus' person.'*¹⁰⁷ (emphasis added)

Clearly, Schleiermacher's theory of atonement avoids an atoning sacrifice for violation of divine law that views salvation according to the logic of an economic exchange for God, but he's caught in a contradiction. *If salvation means the ever onward improvement of God-consciousness' dominance over sensualism*, which becomes the function of immortality in the afterlife as Schleiermacher claims, then *he is contradicting that immortality is something that one experiences in this world as the eternal in every moment* in *On Religion* as Strauß points out in "Schleiermacher und Daub."¹⁰⁸

"[...] the true nature of religion is [...] *immediate consciousness* of the Deity as He is found in ourselves and in the world. Similarly, the goal and the character of the religious life is not the immortality desired and believed in by many [...] *It is not the immortality that is outside of time, behind it, or rather after it*, and which still is in time [...] [T]he immortality which

105. Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* II: 407–408.

106. Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* II: 409.

107. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 109–110. Whereas Leander Keck cites to "p. 362," the German edition of Strauß' *Der Christus des Glaubens und der Jesus der Geschichte* cites these quotes as 385–387. Schleiermacher is even more emphatic in his text that Jesus had no intention of abrogating the Jewish law.

108. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub" where Strauß discusses Schleiermacher's notion of ,universal salvation:' 203–204. Although in his *Glaubenslehre* II, Strauß echoes Baur's notion of the church as the body of Christ in the sense of the real, historical God/Man, not the individual, historical person, Jesus (see Baur's "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie" in *Gnosis*. 721, 734–735?!): "[...] he would have to have been an unlearned student of Schleiermacher's doctrine of faith who would not have learned from it to be content with the continued work of Christ as spirit in his congregation; indeed, who would even find conceivable the continued existence of an individual who has been detached from his historical conditions and has been uprooted par excellence." Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 736.

we can now have in this temporal life; is [...] in the midst of finitude to be one with the Infinite and in every moment to be eternal [...] ¹⁰⁹ (emphasis added)

As I examine in greater detail below, Strauß concludes the second volume of his own *Glaubenslehre* with Schleiermacher's formulation of immortality as the experience of *the eternal in every moment in this world* from Schleiermacher's *On Religion*, not (!) *the open-ended, 'natural' development of the increasing dominance of the feeling of absolute dependence over sensuousness*.

Of course, Hegel and Strauß share with Schleiermacher a *profound focus on egocentrism* – at least the Strauß before *The Old and the New Faith* – because they all make the Christ event an event of *divinization of the individual*. In the case of Hegel and Strauß, this divinization is a form of Athanasian divinization¹¹⁰ as the achievement of Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Freedom through the negation of multiplicity and return to Absolute Unity. In the case of Schleiermacher, this divinization is a form of Arian divinization as the achievement of the same 'perfect God-consciousness' that is the Christ. Here they stand in profound contrast with Kant for whom, wherever exclusive self-interest governs one's understanding and agency, there's an undermining of the very character of moral agency, which (although one never knows) is, at least, to be consciousness of, and rein-in, one's self-interest as the sole motivation for one's agency.¹¹¹

Re. 7) An Imperfect effect does not require a Perfect cause (but this does not mean for the early Strauß rejection of all eminent causality infinite and/or finite):

In his *LJ* of 1835, Strauß agrees with Christlieb Julius Braniss' observation:

[...] that it would be contrary to the laws of all development to regard the initial member of a series as the greatest—to suppose that in Christ, the founder of [... the Christian] community, the object of which is the strengthening of the consciousness of God, the strength of this consciousness was absolute, a perfection which is rather the infinitely distant goal of the progressive development of the community founded by him.¹¹²

109. See Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 101.

110. The first so-called first 'ecumenical council' of the Christian Church called and paid for by the Emperor Constantine, who addressed the opening session by calling himself a Bishop of the Church although he was not yet baptized, had as its core conflict the difference between Athanasian divinization (the Christian's identity with 'God the Father') or Athanasian divinization (the Christian's identity with divinity at the 'level' of the created Christ).

111. See, for example, Section Two of Kant's *Groundwork* AA IV: 407, 410–411.

112. Strauß, *LJ*: 771. Strauß does not provide a citation for Braniss' observation. Perhaps this is because Braniss proposes what Strauß thought was the crowning thesis of the *LJ*: his universal, *inclusive* Christology?!

Braniss' thesis in *Über Schleiermachers Glaubenslehre; ein kritischer Versuch* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1824) is a criticism of Schleiermacher's 'perfect God-consciousness' Christology that claims that humanity requires an archetype of 'perfect God-consciousness' (*an absolute historical starting point*) as a new creation that makes possible humanity's gaining spiritual sovereignty over sensuousness

Edgar Quinet falsely accuses Strauß of having denied eminent causality (that is, the notion that an idea can have more 'reality' than its effect).¹¹³ However, at stake with an 'absolute' or a 'relative' savior is not whether there is eminent causality but, rather, 'what is the very meaning of necessary.'

Hegel defined 'science' (*Wissenschaft*) as 'what is necessary' as opposed to what is merely empirically 'capricious, arbitrary, and chaotic.'¹¹⁴ In his *Phenomenology*, Hegel asserts: "Let the other sciences try as much as they like to get along by ratiocination or

through the feeling of absolute dependence. In contrast, knowledge and ethics are always hemmed in by nature and the material.

Braniss' Hegelian element comes from the 'Preface' of *Phänomenologie*: GW III: 24 (Baillie trans.: 80–81) where Hegel claims that Absolute Spirit is only an 'empty abstraction' without 'the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labor of the negative' so that the 'truth is the whole' of history, not its merely abstract Absolute beginning and/or end (see Braniss, *op. cit.*: 172–173). Braniss adds, though, that salvation is complete only with universal salvation, but, again, given that the salvific spirit is absolutely infinite, salvation can never come to completion (see Braniss, *ibid.*: 178); order, is never achieved absolutely (*ibid.*, 186) and efforts at its realization constitute an infinite process (*ibid.*, 179).

Furthermore, Braniss agrees with Schleiermacher, that humanity's freedom is manifest only through knowledge and morality in the world, which is always relative, whereas the feeling of absolute dependence in itself is absolute and involves no development (see Braniss, *ibid.*: 188). It is always and eternally the same although it is expressed in many ways because it is inseparable from the world, according to Schleiermacher (see Braniss, *ibid.*: 188–189). Although the 'relative,' historical starting point of salvation is found in other religions, Christianity 'contains the ground for all piety,' and, as the feeling of absolute dependence that comes from God, it is the highest expression of piety (see Braniss, *ibid.*: 190).

Consequently, given that spirit is always related to the world, salvation is not independent of the world, and it, too, is subject to 'the law of development' in which nature dominates originally only to be slowly 'liberated' by freedom/Spirit. Even the 'savior' is subject to 'the law of development' (*ibid.*: 195), which governs the struggle between the limiting principle (nature) and Absolute Spirit (the feeling of absolute dependence) (*Ibid.*: 173–174). *This means for Braniss that the historical 'starting point' of salvation is (and must be) relative, not absolute (Ibid. 196).*

Braniss responds to the claim that God could initiate a historical starting point as absolute cause by saying that, if God establishes an absolute, historical starting point: "[...] a causality must be thought, to which no natural one corresponds, yes, which even runs directly contrary to the one contained in the natural context; *for an absolutely sinless development, as it is brought about in Christ, there is not only no natural causality, but all natural causality is even absolutely opposed to such. If one now accepts such a causality in God, then the extra-worldly revelation of God is admitted, whereby our whole view of a merely immanent God, completely revealing himself in the world, is completely overthrown.*" (emphasis added) Braniss, *ibid.*: 197. This is exactly Strauß' claim in the LJ that "[...] *it would be contrary to the laws of all development to regard the initial member of a series as the greatest—to suppose that in Christ [...] this consciousness was absolute, a perfection which is rather the infinitely distant goal of the progressive development of the community founded by him.*" (emphasis added) Strauß, LJ: 771.

113. See Edgar Quinet, "Review of Strauss's 'Life of Jesus,' from the French" in *Voices of the Church in Reply to Dr. D.F. Strauss, Comprising Essays in Defence [sic.] of Christianity* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Col, 1845): 18.25 and Chapter 3: "Academic Controversy:" the section "A Voice out of France: Edgar Quinet's Criticism of Strauß:" 235 ff.

114. See Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten: GW II: 443.

raisonnement without philosophy, they are unable to keep alive without it, or to have any spiritual significance and truth in them.”¹¹⁵ What is meant here by ‘necessary’?

With the scientific Copernican Revolution, there is common agreement that ‘science’ involves more than merely opening one’s eyes and engaging solely in empirical analysis of data. Rather, ‘science’ requires ‘necessary,’ *a priori* elements. However, beyond a common agreement that the ‘necessary’ is *a priori*, opinions were divided already in the 19th C over what these ‘necessary’ *a priori* elements are.

In Strauß’ world, two options were available: Hegel and Kant. For Hegel, ‘necessity’ is an objective, causal category that is governed by the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*), which states: ‘everything has a cause’ or ‘something cannot come from nothing.’ However, for Kant, ‘necessity’ is a category of understanding that is concerned with the required, subjective conditions of possibility for finite, transcendental consciousness (the individual and community) to be able to experience, understand, and exercise responsible agency in the world. In other words, Kant is not using ‘necessity’ as a metaphor for causal explanation of objective phenomena, as is the case with Hegel, but for those elements that are not given in objective phenomena but must be possessed by the subject for her/him to experience a world, whatsoever.

Hegel is offering a causal explanation for both empirical and metaphysical ‘reality’ metaphysical whereas Kant is offering an accounting of non-empirical elements that make possible any and all experience of empirical phenomena. In short, according to Kant, it would never occur to finite, transcendental consciousness to seek out the subjective elements of consciousness that make possible experience of a finite world were consciousness not confronted with phenomena, not of its ‘creation.’¹¹⁶ ‘Necessity’ for Kant, then, begins with the conundrum that is our very experience of phenomena, and he seeks to identify how is it that phenomena can be experienced by finite consciousness in order to properly understand and engage phenomena; whereas, for Hegel, ‘necessity’ is concerned with the causal explanation not only for finite conscious experience but for ‘all that is, will, and can be’ – regardless of whatever particular phenomena might occur.

When Hegel speaks of the *a priori* that is ‘science’ (knowledge), he is speaking about cause and, above all, the ultimate cause of Absolute Unity, Absolute Identity, Absolute Knowledge, and Absolute Freedom that explains from where multiplicity, fragmented subjectivity, relative knowledge, and comparative freedom come.¹¹⁷ The

115. Hegel, *Phänomenologie* GW III: 63 (Baillie trans.: 125).

116. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 863. See as well, *ibid.* B xxxix* and *Prolegomena* (AA IV: 293).

117. Hegel claims that “[...] the Concept [...], without the variety of perception, is empty and without content, although it is *a priori a synthesis*. Because it is this, it has determination and difference in itself. As the determinateness of the Concept, absolute determinateness, the uniqueness, the Concept is the basis and source of all finite determinateness and multiplicity” (*Wissenschaft der Logik* II [1832])

finite originates in the infinite by an initial negation of unity, and the finite returns to the infinite by a second negation of multiplicity in finite consciousness.

Schleiermacher and Strauß, the latter at least until 1841, share with Hegel the teaching as old as Aristotle that wisdom consists of knowing the cause.¹¹⁸ All three take the notion of ‘necessity’ to be a causal category. Hegel takes God to be the ultimate, necessary causal explanation of multiplicity, fragmented subjectivity, relative knowledge, and comparative freedom, generally. Because these finite elements cannot create themselves, their cause must be an Absolute Oneness compatible with a reality that is a unified totality. Just as finite spirit, as a cause that is ‘greater’ than the efficient causality of nature itself, is able to create things that nature on its own cannot, so, too, God as the ‘eminent’ causality of infinite Spirit ‘necessarily’ creates not only finite spirit but all of finite reality. Otherwise, ‘something would come from ‘nothing,’ which is *logically* impossible, according to the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*).

Schleiermacher, in contrast, insists that finite consciousness is incapable of knowing what God is and does. All that finite consciousness can experience and know about anything ultimate is confined to what finite consciousness experiences. What consciousness experiences of the infinite and eternal is a ‘feeling of absolute dependence’ that is more or less capable of gaining sovereignty over sensuousness. Necessary causality comes into play for Schleiermacher, then, only with respect to finite God-consciousness. In order for finite God-consciousness to be capable of ‘perfect’ God-consciousness, which is Schleiermacher’s definition of salvation, it requires a cause that is ‘greater’ than finite God-consciousness. Schleiermacher identifies this infinite ‘eminent’ cause in the particular, historical Christ who establishes a ‘new

GW VI: 261); and Hegel claims that the I and the Concept (One) are an *a priori* unity: "That I am the One and that I am active as thinking, setting unity, is, however, not so precisely stated in Kant. That which thinking produces is unity; thus, it produces itself, for it is the One [the Concept]. (The unity can also be called relation; insofar as a manifold is presupposed and this remains on one side as manifold, it is called related). This is transcendental apperception; *the pure apperception of self-consciousness is the synthesizing function.*" *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* GW XX: 344 This is not Kant's *apperception* of finite consciousness. See, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 132, which requires empirical consciousness: *ibid.*: B 133. Rather, Hegel's ‚I‘ here is Absolute Spirit. Absolute Spirit is the Absolute Unity of the ‘*divisible I*’ that is mental ideality (*Idee*) over against perceptible phenomena’. Perceptible phenomena are the ‘unreasonable many’ of the ‘*divisible non-I*’ that is empirical actuality (*Realität*). See Hegel, "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten:" GW II: 455–456.

118. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* begins: "All men (*sic.*) by nature want to know." (980a 21) He adds: "[...] [M]en (*sic.*) of experience know that the thing is so, but do not know why, while the others know the ‘why’ and the cause." (981a 29–31) Aristotle concludes that wisdom has to do with first causes and the first principles of explanation: "[...] so that [...] the man (*sic.*) of experience is deemed to be wiser than those who merely sense things, the artist more than men (*sic.*) of experience, and the master worker more than the manual workers. Thus, *wisdom is thought to consist in theoretical rather than in productive kinds of knowledge.* Clearly, then, wisdom is rational knowledge concerning certain basic factors and causes. (emphasis added) (981b 27 – 128a 1)

ontological condition,¹¹⁹ that is, ‘perfect’ God-consciousness as the ground for the liberation of finite God-consciousness from sensuousness:

‘If science must admit the possibility that even today matter could conglomerate and begin to rotate in limitless space, then it must also concede that there is an appearance in the realm of spiritual life which likewise *we can only explain as a new creation, as the pure beginning of a higher spiritual life-development.*¹²⁰ (emphasis added)

Strauß points out: "In [Schleiermacher’s] *The Christian Faith [Glaubenslehre]* this view is traced back to the statement that in general ‘the beginning of life is never to be understood.’¹²¹

*Strauß acknowledges*¹²² *that the logic of ‘ultimate,’ eminent causality applies to ‘the origin of the heavenly spheres, the emergence of the organic from the inorganic, and the beginning of the human race.*¹²³ However, *once the human race has been created,, Strauß adds, “[...] whatever emerged further within the human race was a development either more sudden or gradual, and in any case natural;* and this development did not involve the appearance somewhere of an absolutely new thing any more than it did the appearance of an absolutely higher or perfect one.”¹²⁴ (emphasis added) *Progress in the spiritual development of humanity “[...] is explained by the collaboration of completely natural causes [that is, ‘formal,’ efficient causality]:*¹²⁵ (emphasis added) *What Strauß*

119. In Christ perfect God-consciousness was achieved. See Strauß, *LJ*: 770. Rather, Strauß observes in agreement with Braniss that "perfection [...] is [...] the infinitely distant goal of the progressive development of the community founded by him [the Christ]." Strauß, *LJ*: 771 See as well, Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30–31.

120. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 29. Strauß is citing Schleiermacher’s "Dr. Schleiermacher über seine Glaubenslehre an Herrn Dr. Lücke, Zwei Sendschreiben," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, III (1829): 495.

121. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30. Strauß footnotes here (note 34) to Schleiermacher’s *Glaubenslehre*, par. 93 sec. 3 and Schleiermacher’s sermon "Dass der Erlöser als Sohn Gottes geboren ist," *Schleiermachers Predigten*, Sammlung 5, *Festpredigten* 1 (1826): 92.

122. However, he doesn’t acknowledge that it rests upon an anthropomorphic analogy to human creativity and the ‘logic’ of the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz zum zureichenden Grund*).

123. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30.

124. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30. Kant had stressed this distinction between a cause at the beginning of a sequence and a cause that arises within a sequence. See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 446*, B 447, B 580, B 584. Of the two kinds of freedom (at the beginning of a sequence and emerging within a sequence of events), autonomous freedom arises within the sequence of events. See B 589.

125. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30. It cannot be overlooked at this point, though, that Strauß ignores the *finite*, eminent causality of *autonomous freedom* at the core of Kant’s understanding of reason.

It should not be overlooked, either, that in his *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß himself, while acknowledging the ambiguities involved, insists that material nature ‘*must*’ be able to generate organic and sentient beings. Strauß, too, is arguing from ‘effects insufficient to be explained by themselves’ by insisting that ‘an ultimate finite cause *within* nature’ *must be capable* of generating them. See Strauß, § 52 *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 169–171. Furthermore, here with respect to an absence of explanation

unequivocally rejects is the need for a 'new beginning' within the natural order that would be caused by a 'new act of creation' by an ultimate, eminent causality:

[...] *we need not assume the presence of an absolute in a [religious] initiator of a community in which [her/his] effects are only relative.* Since [sic.] it is widely recognized that Schleiermacher constructs his concept of Christ only by means of a conclusion traced back from the effect to the cause, he has no right to posit more in the latter than he can demonstrate in the former.¹²⁶ (emphasis added) [McG modified translation]

Note, though, that Strauß is not denying the reality of an 'ultimate,' eminent causality, whatsoever! Until 1841, he shares the logic of 'ultimate,' eminent causality with Hegel when it comes to ultimate origins (that is, creation). What Strauß denies with respect to an 'ultimate,' eminent causality is that it is required to introduce a new causal sequence not already present in the *imperfect* natural order to achieve 'its' *perfect* purposes. Strauß' point here is one that he shares with Braniss:¹²⁷ Progress in

for the organic/sentient, Strauß implicitly is employing Schleiermacher's strategy of simply ignoring a conundrum (e.g., John's pre-existent Christ or Jesus' failure to correct misunderstandings of the disciples). Strauß had already earlier insisted that 'the laws of nature are sufficient to produce all things' (see "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 169). However, the inconvenient truth of this dictum (*Machtspruch*) is that it commits Strauß to material determinism over which he remains silent, whereas Schleiermacher commits himself to a deceiving Christ by the Christ's remaining silent over things not asked of him. To be sure, Strauß is arguing by the logic of 'Intellectualism' (the laws of nature cannot be violated), whereas Schleiermacher is employing 'Voluntarism'/'Occasionalism' (God's will precedes 'His' eternal thoughts) to ignore the laws of nature for the sake of defense of a perfect God-consciousness. However, they both are overlooking a 'gap' in their respective, causal explanations. What both Schleiermacher and Strauß fail to grasp is that theoretical reason requires *a priori* synthetic judgment, which must *add* to perceived phenomena elements that cannot be given in the phenomena *if there is to be understanding*. In other words, in this case Schleiermacher and Strauß offer *inadequate causal explanations* of effects by appealing to the 'logic' of causal explanation rather than to the 'necessary conditions of possibility' required as *a set of assumptions for understanding*.

126. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 30. See as well, Strauß' *Glaubenslehre* where Strauß writes: "I [referring to the 'believer'] experience Christ as the promoter of the unity of my lower with my higher self-consciousness or promoter of my piety. – *Tant mieux pour vous* [That's nice for you!] – This cannot come from me myself. – Why not? – Because only restraints in my religious life come from me. How do you know that, you modern 'I'? The old faith, of course, knew how it knew because it can know nothing true and nothing good can come from the 'I,' which it knows out of the fundamental presupposition of the alienation and externalization of its spirit. However, with your self-certain and powerful modern 'I,' who gives it the means to make such a separation on the basis of pure psychology?" *Glaubenslehre* II: 181 Strauß then adds that Schleiermacher's Christology is 'built on sand': "[...][T]his is no more than saying that: [the possibility of a sinless human development] must be possible because [in Jesus] it really occurred [McG: an example of the Ought/Is Fallacy]. Acceptance of this actuality, though, depends according to Schleiermacher on the supposed necessity for the explanation of the internal experience of the Christian[...], which as we saw above is the sole basis for the sinlessness of Jesus. This is indefensible. Furthermore, because Schleiermacher's entire Christology depends upon this necessity [for explaining the internal experience of the Christian], it is built on sand [...]." *Glaubenslehre* II: 193.

127. See above: 277, n. 112.

the development of God-consciousness or the dominance of the 'feeling of absolute dependence' in the life of the individual is sufficiently 'explained' by 'formal,' efficient causality: the capacity of the feeling of absolute dependence already exists and only needs encouragement for its development. This encouragement, according to even Schleiermacher, comes from the Christian community as the location for the cultivation of the feeling of absolute dependence.¹²⁸

For his part, Kant places judgments of causal explanation within the limits of transcendental consciousness under the categories of the understanding, and he rejects the logic of 'ultimate,' eminent causality on the basis of the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*) as "a merely random groping, and, what is worst of all, a groping among mere concepts."¹²⁹ In the "First Preface" to *Critique of Pure Reason*, he says:

[...] the chief question is always simply this: – what and how much can the understanding and reason know apart from all experience? Not: – how is the ultimate cause of the faculty of thought itself possible? The latter is [...] the search for the cause of a given effect, and to that extent is [...] hypothetical in character [...]¹³⁰

He famously adds in the "Second Preface:" "[...] I have [...] found it necessary to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith."¹³¹ As if presciently anticipating Hegel, Kant writes in the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* of the deception of the dove that thinks that it can fly in a vacuum:

[...] once we are outside the circle of experience, we can be sure of not being contradicted by experience [...] Misled by [...] proof of the power of reason, the demand for the extension of knowledge recognizes no limits. *The light dove, clearing the air in her free flight, and feeling its resistance, might imagine that its flight would be still easier in empty space.* It was thus that Plato left the world of the senses, as setting too narrow limits to the understanding, and ventured out beyond it on the wings of the ideas, in the empty space of the pure understanding. He did not observe that with all his efforts he made no advance—meeting no resistance that might, as it were, serve as a support upon which he could take a stand, to which he could apply his powers, and so set his understanding in motion. It is, indeed, the common fate of human reason to complete its speculative structures as speedily as may be, and only afterwards to enquire whether the foundations are reliable. All sorts of excuses will then be appealed to, in order to reassure us of their solidity [...].¹³² (emphasis added)

128. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 168.

129. Kant, "Second Preface" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* B xv.

130. Kant, "First Preface" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* A xvii.

131. Kant, "Second Preface" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* B xxx.

132. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* B 8–9. See as well, Kant's *Groundwork* AA IV: 462.

Kant is underscoring here the danger of ‘empty abstractions’ that come with fanciful *a priori*, metaphysical fancies. Ironically, Hegel and Strauß, misunderstanding Kant, accuse him of such ‘empty abstractions.’

Defense of both Faith and Science: (‘Mediating’ Theology)

Ferdinand Christian Baur’s *Die christliche Gnosis* appeared in 1835, in the same year as Strauß’ *Life of Jesus Critically Examined (LJ)*. In his *Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, Strauß cites Baur’s text in his first edition of the *LJ* (1835) along with other reviewers who point out Schleiermacher’s ‘self-deception’ with his claim that he defended Church teaching ‘from mutilation’ and left science ‘unoffended.’¹³³ The examination of the grounds for Schleiermacher’s self-deception is the core thesis of Strauß’ *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* published 30 years later in which Strauß, presupposing the issues already raised in “Schleiermacher und Daub” in 1839, engages Schleiermacher systematically, once again. However, in the *LJ*, Strauß had already written of Schleiermacher’s *The Christian Faith [Glaubenslehre]*:

This [Schleiermacher’s] Christology is undeniably a beautiful effort of thought, and as we shall presently see, does the utmost towards rendering the union of the divine and the human in Christ conceivable; but if its author supposed that he kept the faith un mutilated and science unoffended,¹³⁴ we are compelled to pronounce that he was in both points deceived.¹³⁵

133. Strauß wrote: “This opinion has been already put forth in the most noted reviews of Schleiermacher’s system; comp. [Christlieb Julius] Braniss, *über Schleiermacher’s Glaubenslehre*; [Johann Heinrich Theodor] Schmid, *Über Schl. Glaubensl.* S. 263 ff.; [F.C.] Baur, *die christl. Gnosis*, s. 626 ff., and the Review of [Johann Karl Friedrich] Rosenkranz, *Jahrb. Für wiss. Kritik*, 1831.” Strauß, *LJ*, first edition: 714, n. 4; Elliott trans.: 770, n. 3.

134. In *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, Strauß refers to faith and science as Schleiermacher’s “two foci of his [...] ellipse” and observes: “[...] [T]he most ardent devout feeling must be harmonizable with the most analytic mind; the only question is that of how the balance is to be achieved.

Here [...] commences that reciprocal ‘tuning,’ in which everything depends on the middle line which defines the limits of one force against the other [faith and science]. We have seen already what we will see again at all points of our examination, that with Schleiermacher this line gives piety the advantage and science the disadvantage.” (emphasis added) (*The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 34.

135. Strauß, *LJ*: 770. See the footnote to Braniss, Schmid, Baur, and Rosenkranz in *ibid.*: 770, n. 3. In *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, Strauß observes of Schleiermacher: The contradiction between Schleiermacher’s faith in Jesus’ absolute God-consciousness and his desire to prove exegetically the scientific basis of his faith “[...] lay so deep [...] that [...] it never entered his consciousness.”(33) I will point out that the same can be said of Hegel and the Strauß of the *LJ*.

Strauß states in the "Foreword" to *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* that his task now is to "[...] deliver the proof in detail."¹³⁶

Schleiermacher's Christ is as little a real man as is the Christ of the church. By means of a truly critical treatment of the Gospels one reaches Schleiermacher's Christ as little as he does the church's Christ. The illusion, which is supported primarily by Schleiermacher's explanations, that Jesus could have been a man in the full sense and still as a single person stand above the whole of humanity, is the chain which still blocks the harbor of Christian theology against the open sea of rational science. *To break this chain is the purpose of the present work, as it has always been of all my theological writings.*¹³⁷ (emphasis added)

Strauß quotes from a letter that Schleiermacher wrote to Jacobi in 1819: "My philosophy [...] and my dogmatics are firmly committed not to contradict each other; but for just this reason *neither will ever be complete*, and as long as I can recall, they have mutually affected one another and gradually approached each other."¹³⁸ (emphasis added) There are two aspects to Schleiermacher's claim: 1) Schleiermacher's insistence that science does not contradict faith; and 2) Schleiermacher's claim that neither science nor faith 'will ever be complete,' which he offers as the explanation for why both are mutually compatible.

Strauß flags the dogmatic character of Schleiermacher's assumption that "[...] science and Christian faith cannot and may not contradict each other"¹³⁹, but even Strauß fails to question Schleiermacher's faulty logic, which claims that, because humanity's theoretical and practical reason are limited (and will always be limited), science and faith do not, ultimately, contradict one another or, at least, are not incompatible with one another. However, *the contradiction/incompatibility between science and faith does not depend upon empirical evidence alone but, precisely, upon their respective, ultimate presuppositions.*

Supernaturalism's Personal God, who is able to intervene in the lawful order of physical events, and science's materialism are contradictory/incompatible because, when it comes to ultimate causality, their presuppositions are mutually exclusive. *The limits to theoretical and practical reason do not justify a reconciliation of Supernaturalism and materialism simply by means of acknowledging humanity's inability to prove absolute causal explanations to events.* Merely because causal explanations (NOT the creation of causes) are constructions based on the effects of causality, with the actual cause always remaining inaccessible to direct perception, is *no justification for throwing the barn doors wide open for any and all causal explanations.* Rather, religion (Supernaturalism) and science (Reductionist Materialism) are mutually exclusive because the first assumes a form of causality (miracles) that the second cannot allow, and

136. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 5.

137. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 5.

138. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 21.

139. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 21.

the second assumes a form of causality (Reductionist Materialism) that is as much a blind determinism as Supernaturalism's double predestination.

Strauß is correct to point out Schleiermacher's 'self-deception' with respect to his claim that religion and science don't contradict one another. However, remarkably, in *Der alte und der neue Glaube* of 1872, Strauß employs the logic of 'incomplete understanding' to justify, his own, personal conviction that the 'organic' unequivocally 'must' arise naturally out of the 'inorganic.'¹⁴⁰ Schleiermacher and Strauß both would have been on more 'solid ground' had they recognized that the limits to reason, to be sure, raise *doubts about any ultimate causal claims* that drive Absolute Idealism, Schleiermacher's 'Feeling of Absolute Dependence,' or Reductionist Materialism. Nonetheless, paradoxically, *the very limits to finite reason illuminate a necessity* (but no causal necessity) *that provides a foundation to finite reason that is unshakeable although unprovable.*

Imperceptible, finite, transcendental reason (not limited to instrumental reason) 'must' possess a set of finite, necessary capacities that make it possible for it to experience phenomena as it does. This is not the causal necessity of the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*: everything must have a cause or else 'something can come from nothing'), which can only lead one to a dictum (*Machtspruch*) with respect to some ultimate cause. Rather, it is a necessity required by finite experience itself. If humanity did not possess certain rational (transcendental) conditions of possibility, there can be no experience, understanding, or responsible agency, whatsoever – even though those rational conditions of possibility are incapable of establishing their absolute certainty by means of an ultimate, *causal* proof/disproof. Here *the limits to reason 'ground' convictions with respect to finite capacities whereas for Schleiermacher and the later Strauß the limits to reason are invoked to justify belief in (granted, contradictory) ultimate, causal explanations*: Schleiermacher's Feeling of Absolute Dependence and Perfect God-consciousness stands in contrast to Strauß' 'materialism' in *Der alte und der neue Glaube*, when it comes to content, but they are equivalent when it comes to a dictum (*Machtspruch*).

On Schleiermacher's 'Subjectivity' and Hegel's 'Objectivity': A shared Theology of 'Empty Abstractions' with Differences in Christology

Strauß viewed Schleiermacher and Hegel, in a core respect, to have ended up trapped in 'empty abstractions,' the very charge that Hegel, Strauß, and F.C. Baur had leveled

140. See Strauß, § 52 *Der alte und der neue Glaube*: 169–171. As I point out in Chapter 8: "Strauß' Reading of Kant Over His Career:" 845, n. 153, though, Strauß is following Feuerbach here. From the Kantian perspective, though, Traditional Personal Theism, the 'new speculative philosophy,' and Strauß'/Feuerbach's materialism all succumb to a logical, *μετάβασις εις άλλο γένος* (a substitution of one genus for another) that takes a description to be a causal explanation.

against Kant. Whereas the sequence to this conclusion is traceable in Strauß' work, I claim that the charge that it is a distortion to maintain that Kant's transcendental reason is only a system of 'empty abstractions'. This reinforces the general thesis of this two volume project. As important as Strauß' Gospel Criticism and internal criticism of Church History was, the significance of his position in the mid-19th C neck of the hour glass is that he allows a sorting out of the gnarled metaphysical threads, which continue to shape 21st C understanding of metaphysics. Specifically, Strauß' understanding of Kant was, unfortunately, profoundly warped by the interpretations of others who were part of the anti-Kantian and anti-Enlightenment movement at the beginning of the 19th C. Because Strauß never engaged in anything like a serious study of Kant equivalent, for example, to his reading of Baur, Schleiermacher, and Hegel, Strauß had no genuine alternative to his Hegelianism other than dogmatic embracing of an 'ought'/'is' dictum (*Machtspruch*) with respect to ultimate causality ('Materialism') as he rejected Hegel's (Absolute Knowledge of Spirit and Schleiermacher's Perfect God-Consciousness (immortality as infinite perfection in the midst of the finite imperfection).

Strauß claims that Schleiermacher's *Christology* is 'subjectively' grounded in 'empty abstractions'.¹⁴¹ Until 1841, Strauß agrees¹⁴² with F.C. Baur that Hegel's Philosophy of Religion presents a *Christology* that is 'objectively' grounded in 'concrete representations'.¹⁴³

Strauß' 1865 *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* emphasizes the 'empty abstraction' of Schleiermacher's grounding his *theological system with his 'top-down,' Christology* of Perfect God-consciousness.¹⁴⁴ With respect to Hegel, Strauß wrote of Hegel's Trinity as superstitious, 'Gnostic' speculation already in 1841:

Three persons, expressly determined as 'I's' standing opposite each other, as different centers of consciousness, shall nevertheless be absolute. Two such persons shall unite in a third, likewise person, to form a unity, which is more than mere unity. One person, an absolute one at that, shall for a time lose Itself, become impersonal, divide into an

141. See for example, Strauß' *LJ*, where he speaks of Schleiermacher: "We should thus have fallen back again to Kant's point of view, which we have[...] found unsatisfactory: for *if the idea have no corresponding reality, it is an empty obligation and ideal.*" *LJ*: 779 (emphasis added) and Strauß' *Streitschriften* III: 100.

142. See for example, Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 523 where Strauß writes: "[...] the speculation of our day [Hegelianism] is not that God is merely general substance [...] but He is the eternal movement of the constant making of subjectivity by the universal, which only occurs in the subject as objectivity and true actuality, and, thereby, nullifies the subject in its abstract for-itself." However, Strauß is careful to emphasize that, for Hegel, the 'objective' moment of a God/Man is *a matter of belief*, neither the self-knowledge of an individual that s/he is the God/Man (*Glaubenslehre* II: 218–219) or that the God/Man has objectively appeared in history as a particular individual at a specific location and time. See Strauß' *Streitschriften* III: 91–92.

143. On Baur's conclusions regarding Schleiermacher's 'subjectivity' and Hegel's 'objectivity,' see *Gnosis*: 668.

144. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 27, 32. See as well, *ibid.*, 169.

endless multitude of endless personalities, like a potato stick into tubers, but after a certain period of time shall regain its personality. Whereby then, without ceasing to be many, and each for itself, the creaturely personalities that have arisen in the interim shall merge into the One Personality of the divine spirit. – Where is the *Symbolum Quicumque* [the ‘Athanasian Creed’: “God became man that man might become God”]? Give it to me! I want to swear it twice, before I call the sentences of our philosopher only once differently than superstitions.”¹⁴⁵

In *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* twenty-plus years later, Strauß makes the same kind of dismissive comment with respect to Schleiermacher’s Christ as ‘sinless archetype.’

A sinless, archetypal Christ is not one whit less unthinkable than a supernaturally begotten Christ with a divine and a human nature. On the contrary, since [*sic.*] he appears on the basis of a world view [science] which otherwise excludes miracles or uncaused effects, a further contradiction clings to him from which the church’s Christology, which presupposes belief in miracles, is free.¹⁴⁶

Schleiermacher’s Christology insists that Christ’s humanity was the ‘maximum,’ perfect and sinless, God-consciousness as the necessary condition [according to the Principle of Sufficient Reason!] for stimulating an infinite progress towards God-consciousness by even the most ‘minimum’ God-consciousness of humanity.¹⁴⁷ In other words, Schleiermacher formulates this Christ as ‘sinless archetype’ “[...] as the pure beginning of a higher spiritual life-development.”¹⁴⁸

In contrast to Schleiermacher’s Christology, Hegel’s locates the ‘Christ event’ beyond history in *the belief of the community* (experienced by faith in the resurrection, not in experience of an historical individual¹⁴⁹) that, as the God/Man, Christ was the Second Negation of return to Absolute Spirit. To be sure, the Hegelians developed Hegel’s formulation in the form of a spectrum from a Right-Wing exclusive Christology limited to the historical individual, Jesus, over a ‘Centrist’ position by which

145. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 501. On the grounds for Strauß’ exasperation, see Theodore Parker’s presentation of the Right-wing Hegelian, Bruno Bauer’s melancholic meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit from his review of Strauß’ *LJ*: 70, n. 1.

146. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 29.

147. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 25–26, 63–64. According to Schleiermacher, Christ’s moral and intellectual life, nonetheless, involves a ‘progress’ that is ‘without struggle’ and ‘error’ (*ibid.*, 66) although Schleiermacher writes: “I can conceive of no moment when the relation between God and Christ would be changed; it must always be the same, and the unity with the Father can never have been destroyed [...]” (*ibid.*, 124) Surely, this is a curious ‘progress’ that is always the same and occurs without struggle and error!

148. Strauß quotes from “Aus Schleiermachers Leben in Briefen 2:343 in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 29. See Schleiermacher’s *Glaubenslehre* §§ 98 and 109.

149. See Strauß, *Streitschriften* III: 80, 92–94.

Christ frees humanity from its evil will by restoring humanity's true essence,¹⁵⁰ to the Left-Wing, inclusive Christology that viewed those (few) philosophers having received the outpouring of Spirit,¹⁵¹ among the God/*men*. F.C. Baur maintained that the Hegelians only went half-way with their various Christologies. Baur asks:

What interest could [...] the Hegelian philosophy of religion have, to equate a form [a representation, not an 'idea'] (which it can consider from its point of view only as one offered by the need of sensual certainty¹⁵²) with the truth itself? If for [...Hegelian philosophy], with good reason, faith is already a transformation of the sensually given into the spiritual, *why should it stop halfway*, and not continue this process of transformation until everything that can be distinguished as mere form [*Form*/representations] from content [*Inhalt*/Idea] is eliminated from the pure content of the Idea, and form and content finally merge into one another?¹⁵³ (emphasis added)

Baur's response to his rhetorical question is that Hegel and the Hegelians have incorrectly understood the meaning of the God/Man. According to Baur, the Incarnation is not limited to the options of a particular individual located at a specific point in time in Galilee (Supernaturalism), a post-resurrection *belief* in the Christ as 'the' God/Man (Hegel), or even to an inclusive group of philosophers (Left-Wing Hegelians), who, unlike the Supernaturalists, have grasped the notion of the Second Negation. Rather, Baur takes Paul's claim that the church is the 'body' of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12 ff., Ephesians 3: 3–6, and Colossians 3:24–28) to mean that the 'historical' God/Man refers not to a single individual or limited set of individuals but to that growing number of those who grasp the significance of Absolute Spirit in finite spirit over the entire course of history that is the Christian Church (*Gemeinde*).¹⁵⁴

To be sure, Schleiermacher and the Hegelians are different with respect to their Christologies.¹⁵⁵ However, they are united in their ultimate conception of the 'divinization' of humanity. The difference in conception of this divinization is as follows: For Schleiermacher, the achievement of God-consciousness is *analogous to Arius'*

150. On 'Right-Wing' Hegelianism, see Strauß, "Verschiedene Richtungen innerhalb der Hegel'schen Schule in Betreff der Christologie" in *Streitschriften* III: 105–106, 116.118 and on 'Centrist' Hegelianism, occupied in Strauß' judgment only by Karl Rosenkranz, see *ibid.*: 120.

151. On the 'outpouring' (*Ausgießung*) of the Spirit in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion, see Baur, "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie" ["Hegel's Philosophy of Religion"] in *Gnosis*: 696, 712, 714.

152. Baur here is referring to the Hegelian insistence that 'form' (representations) is what confirm that one's ideas (content) are not merely empty abstractions.

153. Baur, "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie" in *Gnosis*: 719.

154. See Baur, *Gnosis*: especially, 721 but also 685, 696, and 734–736. To the 'left' of Baur, though, is Strauß with his universally, inclusive Christology that is not limited to the Christian *Gemeinde*. In his *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*, Baur indicates his commonality with Schleiermacher when it comes to emphasizing the centrality of the Christian community (*Gemeinde*) for understanding the 'body of Christ'. See Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung*: 618 and, especially, 625.

155. Baur observes the same in "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie:" "Hegel's ideal Christ is no longer the archetype of Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith* but has as its truth the pure Idea ['reine Idee'], the unification of finite and finite and absolute Spirit." *Gnosis*: 720–721.

conception of the Christian as united with the Christ, not directly with the God-head. Schleiermacher rejected the notion of the pre-existent Logos for conceiving the Christ,¹⁵⁶ but the principle of unification is the same: creatureliness is preserved, and it is shared creatureliness with the Christ that the Christian can experience, not a direct union with God that characterizes Arianism ("There was a time when the Son was not."). For Hegel, the achievement of God-consciousness is *analogous to Athanasius'*. Finite spirit is re-united with Absolute Spirit: creatureliness with all of its attachments to sensuousness is snuffed out ("God became man that man might become God.").

The conclusion that Schleiermacher and Hegel share a rootedness in 'empty abstractions' just might have its origin for Strauß in Baur, as well,¹⁵⁷ for Baur in *Gnosticism* had not only distinguished between the Christologies but also identified a core agreement between Schleiermacher and Hegel.¹⁵⁸ Eduard Zeller, Baur's son-in-law, claims, as well, that Baur viewed Schleiermacher's notion of the "Feeling of Absolute Dependence" to be nothing essentially different from Hegel's Absolute Spirit.¹⁵⁹ I will address below Hegel's criticism of Schleiermacher's grounding of religion in 'feeling.'

Theobald Ziegler, Strauß' biographer, wrote:

By translating the concept of the universe into religious experience by means of the feeling of absolute dependence, [... Strauß] connects Schleiermacher with Hegel and thereby gains a concept of religion [...]
 [...] [F]or Schleiermacher as well as for Hegel, it is indeed correct [for both] that Spirit belongs to the universe and that the universe [...] in the end and foremost refers to the spirit realm, out of whose chalice Absolute Spirit infinitely foams, [...]¹⁶⁰

156. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 60–61, 62–63, 75. In his *Glaubenslehre* § 14, Schleiermacher refers to John 1:12–14, but there is no mention of John 1:1–5 in his *Glaubenslehre* § 14 in *Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange dargestellt*. Zweite Auflage (1830/31), Rolf Schäfer ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008): 116, n. 3.

157. On Baur's conclusions regarding Schleiermacher's 'subjectivity' and Hegel's 'objectivity,' see *Gnosis*: 668. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub.:" 22 and 207–208.

158. In his *Gnosis* Baur personally argues for equating Hegel and Schleiermacher. "Belief in the immutability of the union of the divine essence with human nature in the person of Christ [Hegel] is, therefore, itself nothing else than the belief that the consciousness through which Christ has become God in human nature [Schleiermacher] will always remain the consciousness of humanity [Baur's Christology], which is *quite the same as the Hegelian claim* that the consciousness of God is always a God-human one, and therefore also the congregation of subjects being in the spirit of God is an eternally progressing one." (emphasis added) 706, n. 30 (actually 709–710) Baur emphasizes that in Hegel one has the same transition from the sensuous to the spiritual that is found in ancient Gnosticism and in Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith*. See *Gnosis*: 713. What distinguishes Hegel from ancient Christian Gnosticism and Schleiermacher, according to Baur, is that Hegel locates this transition only within the emergence of faith generated by the death of the Christ whereas ancient Gnosticism and Schleiermacher claim, in harmony with populous Church teaching, that the God/Man as a combination of pure spirit and historical person has already occurred in the historical life of Jesus. See *Gnosis*: 713–714.

159. See Eduard Zeller, "Ferdinand Christian Baur" in *Vorträge und Abhandlungen*, Erste Sammlung und Zweite Auflage (Leipzig: Fues's Verlag [R. Reisland], 1875): 398, 431.

160. Ziegler, II: 690–691.

Furthermore, Strauß' criticism of Schleiermacher's invoking of a perfect/absolute, ultimate, efficient causality as the ultimate religious moment of his Christology is implicitly a criticism of Hegel's Absolute Spirit. Both Schleiermacher and Hegel employ the fallacious logic that an imperfect effect requires a perfect cause. Strauß writes of Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* that it has really but a single dogma, that concerning the person of Christ. However, this single dogma of faith turns out to be indefensible exegetically and scientifically.

"[...] the positive element [...] lies only in what it [Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*] advances about the person of Christ [...] That *Christ was a man in the full sense* of the word, as today's mentality desires, and at the same time, as traditional piety wishes, can be a *divine redeemer, the object of our faith and of our cultus for all times [...]*"¹⁶¹ (emphasis added)

The tip that Strauß also has Hegel in mind here is that, in *Pamphlet III* of the *Streitschriften* of 1837, Strauß quotes Hegel to be concerned, ultimately as well, with the single doctrine of the person of Christ. The center point of "the gospel story" (and all of history) is the incarnation of the God/Man. Strauß quotes Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*:

"This incarnation of the Divine Being, its having essentially and directly the shape of *self-consciousness, is the simple content [Inhalt] of [Hegel's] Absolute Religion*.¹⁶² That Absolute Spirit has taken on the shape of self-consciousness inherently, and therefore also consciously for Itself—this appears (historically) [Strauß inserted 'historically'] now as the *belief of the world, the belief that spirit exists in fact as a definite self-consciousness [...]*, i.e. as an actual human being; that spirit is an object for immediate experience; that *the believing mind sees, feels, and hears this divinity. Taken thus, it is not imagination, not a fancy; it is actual [wirklich] in the believer*.¹⁶³ (emphasis added)

Strauß proposes in the *LJ* of 1835 and in his *Streitschriften* of 1837 that Hegel's speculative metaphysics provides the 'true' content [*Inhalt*] of Church Doctrine and that this 'true' content as Absolute Spirit is capable of experiencing Itself in finite, human spirit. As I've stressed, this claim for the God/Man based on the difference between 'true'

161. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 4–5.

162. Strauß cites this as a single passage when, in fact, it is two passages. This opening sentence comes from Hegel's *Phänomenologie*: GW III: 552 (Baillie trans.: 758) whereas the remainder of this quote comes a page earlier: GW III: 551 (Baillie trans.: 757). Strauß has not distorted the meaning of the passages, though.

163. Strauß, "Hegel's Perspective on the Historical Value of Gospel History" ["Hegel's Ansicht über den historischen Werth der evangelischen Geschichte"] in *Pamphlet III* of the *Streitschriften*: 76. Strauß is quoting Hegel's, *Phänomenologie*: GW III: 551 (Baillie trans.: 757). NOTE: The reader unfamiliar with Hegel may overlook that Hegel is making a distinction here between true content (*Inhalt*) and form (*Formen*; representations; actuality/*Wirklichkeit*). Conceptual content is 'true' whereas the representations of perception/sensuousness are only 'actual'. The 'true' requires the 'actual' in order not to be a 'mere abstraction'. However, the actual without the true is only imaginative construction."

content and ‘actual’ representations is the key to Strauß’ belief in the *LJ* that he can ‘restore dogmatically’ what his criticism of the gospels as literal history had destroyed.¹⁶⁴ For Strauß, when it comes to this key point of the centrality of God-consciousness to Christianity, Schleiermacher and Hegel are in essence saying the same thing when it comes to the centrality of God-consciousness for defining Christianity as a *causal system*.

However, in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History* of 1865, Strauß now sees that Schleiermacher (and we can add, Hegel) are only moving chairs on the deck of traditional Church Doctrine. Just as in the case of traditional Church teaching, their theologies are constructed on *convictions about the absolute cause of what they can only experience as effects*. In the case of Schleiermacher, the effect is individual, finite God-consciousness, whose supposed cause is taken to be Absolute God-consciousness. In the case of Hegel, the ‘effect’ is individual, finite spirit, whose supposed cause taken to be Absolute Spirit.

In short, each has his own, absolute metaphysical, ultimate, *causal* explanation for finite effects. In Schleiermacher’s case, Absolute God-consciousness is achievable by finite consciousness only if it has an absolute or perfect cause confirmed by an historical individual.¹⁶⁵ That is, according to Schleiermacher, the perfect archetype of God-consciousness, the Christ, had to occur historically at a particular time and place, otherwise, humanity could not achieve perfect God-consciousness because, if humanity could, it would be a violation of the causal Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*).

In Hegel’s case, there can be Absolute Knowledge (finite spirit grasping Absolute Spirit) only if there is an Absolute Spirit, who by means of a First Negation of its absoluteness is the ultimate cause of finite spirit and only if this finite spirit is annulled by

164. See Strauß presentation of what he originally intended as the outline of the *LJ* in his *Streitschriften* III: 59 where he says that he third section of the original plan for the *LJ* was reduced to the “Concluding Dissertation” because of the length of the work.

165. Strauß makes this observation of Schleiermacher’s Christology already in the *LJ*: 771. Strauß acknowledges that this claim of ‘complete realization’ of the archetype is limited to God-consciousness by Schleiermacher. Nevertheless, already in the *LJ* Strauß emphasizes that it is ‘contrary to natural causality’ for the “initial member of a series [...] to be the greatest.” (*LJ*: 771) He attributes this point to Christlieb Julius Braniss’ *Über Schleiermachers Glaubenslehre; ein kritischer Versuch* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1824: 196–197. Strauß doesn’t give the actual page number, but it is concluding theme of Braniss’ text. See *LJ*: 771; the footnote identifying Braniss’ *Über Schleiermachers Glaubenslehre* as the source is on 770, n. 3. Rather, “perfection [...] is [...] the infinitely distant goal of the progressive development of the community founded by him [the Christ],” *LJ*: 771 Furthermore, Schleiermacher’s logic is found in Anselm’s *Cur deus homo* that defends a perfect Christ to achieve what humanity on its own cannot and Descartes’ “Third Meditation:” A perfect idea cannot arise in an imperfect being by itself, and “the objective being of an idea cannot be produced by a merely potential being (which, properly speaking, is nothing), but only by an actual or formal being.” René Descartes, *Meditations on First*: 30–31 (Page # from Latin text in the Adam and Tannery edition: 46–47). This is the logic of the ‘Principle of Sufficient Reason’ (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*) as old as Aristotle. See *Metaphysics* VIII 1032a 23–25 and 1032b 30.

the Second Negation and ‘returns’ to Absolute Spirit. However, for Hegel this Second Negation is not an historical event in reference to a particular individual at a particular point in time but is grasped in faith following the death of Jesus,¹⁶⁶ not confirmed by the historical data of Jesus’ life and teaching.¹⁶⁷ *Although their respective claims with respect to the significance of factual history for faith are different, Schleiermacher and Hegel share the same conviction that they have grasped the ‘absolute’ and ultimate cause of all ‘that is’ and the core doctrine of Christianity (Christology).*

By the end of his *Glaubenslehre* of 1841, though, as I have demonstrated, Strauß had rejected Hegel’s logical, immanent Gnosticism and historical ‘Indifferentism,’ to be sure, without fanfare or fireworks (for fear of losing valuable friends?) but clearly formulated in the course of the two volume work. Not only is Strauß theologically ‘silent’ for the next twenty years, but also in his theological writings as of 1862 all mention of Hegel’s meta-narrative of Absolute Spirit as well as of Strauß’ own *inclusive* Christology based on Hegel’s immanent, Gnostic metaphysics has disappeared.¹⁶⁸

Strauß’ Theological Position at the Conclusion of the *Glaubenslehre*: Schleiermacher’s Significance Overshadowed by Docetism and Sabellianism

Strauß’ disenchantment with Hegel and twenty year theological ‘silence’ raises the question: Where was Strauß theologically in 1841 when he had finished his *Glaubenslehre*? A hint, though only a hint, comes at the very end of the *Glaubenslehre*. He concludes the second volume with an *embracing of a theme from Schleiermacher* with his concluding comment – Humanity’s experience of immortality in history is the experience of the ‘eternal’ in the ‘moment.’¹⁶⁹ Strauß wrote:

166. Strauß,, "Hegel’s Perspective" in *Streitschriften* III: 92–94. Strauß footnotes here to Hegel’s *Phänomenologie*: 573, 574 f., 583 f., 589, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, III: III, and *Religionsphilosophie* (Marheineke version 1832), II: 240.

167. What Strauß doesn’t stress, though, is that both Hegel and Schleiermacher depend upon literal, anthropomorphic analogies for their explanations. In the case of Hegel, his claim for a ‘perfect’ Absolute Spirit is grounded in an analogy to the ‘finite’ Spirit. We only know of the former only because we experience the latter. This was explicitly articulated by Feuerbach in his *Wesen der Religion* (1848–1849) (Berlin: Deutsche Bibliothek, 1913): Lecture 14: 134–135. In the case of Schleiermacher, his claim for ‘perfect’ God-consciousness is grounded in an analogy to the ‘finite’ experience of individual human consciousness. We only know of the former only because we experience the latter.

168. Strauß holds onto the Hegelian epistemology of content (*Inhalt*) and representations (*Form*) until *The Old and New Faith* of 1872 in which, again silently, but unequivocally he shifts to a form of Nominalism. Hegel’s ‘cunning of reason’ is never an option for Strauß.

169. It appears that Strauß is confirming here a theme crucial to him in his *LJ* here (see *LJ*: 777–778), but Ziegler reports that when speaking of immortality in a letter to von Binder at the beginning of Strauß’s tutorial work at the Protestant Seminary in Tübingen, he wrote: In life itself, the individual is driven “[...] to rise out of this mere individuality and finiteness into the unity of the Spirit Itself, thus to take away the power of death and to view earthly life as permeated with eternal life.” Ziegler, I: 113.

Schleiermacher's aphorism: 'Middle in the finite to be one with the infinite, and to be eternal in every moment'¹⁷⁰ is everything that modern science¹⁷¹ knows to say of immortality. This concludes our task for now. The hereafter consists in 'all is the One,' but the last enemy is the shape it will have as future, which speculative criticism has to fight and to overcome where possible.¹⁷² (emphasis added)

In the letter to (von) Binder, Strauß refers to Hegel's *Phenomenology*, not Schleiermacher's *On Religion*, but the conclusion of his *Glaubenslehre* quotes Schleiermacher of *On Religion*, not Hegel. I don't believe that he is equating Hegel's Absolute Spirit and Schleiermacher's 'eternal in the moment'. I believe that it is a continuation of the notion of 'reason' from *On the Transient and the Permanent in Christianity*, that is, a classic, Intellectualist understanding of reality as conforming to divine ideas. Having become disenchanted with Hegel, Strauß substitutes Schleiermacher with respect to understanding the relationship between the infinite and the finite. In his *Glaubenslehre*, Strauß refers to the theme of the eternal in the moment in [Bernhard Heinrich] Blasche, *Die philosophische Unsterblichkeitlehre. Oder: Wie offenbart sich das ewige Leben?* (Erfurt und Gotha: Flinzer'sche Buchhandlung, 1831): 175 f., who was influenced by Schelling and in Feuerbach's *Gedanken über Tod und Unsterblichkeit* (Nürnberg: Johann Adam Stein, 1830): 95 f, 105 [McG: more directly expressed at 129, 244–246; published anonymously by 'a friend']. See Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 663. Neither Blasche nor Feuerbach are Hegelians.

170. That immortality is experienced as the infinite in the finite moment is expressed, as well, in Goethe's poem "Vermächtnis" ('Legacy') – independent of, influenced by Schleiermacher, or Goethe's influence on Schleiermacher?

Genieße mäßig Füll' und Segen,
Vernunft sei überall zugegen,
Wo Leben sich des Lebens freut,
Dann wird Vergangenheit beständig,
Zukünftiges voraus lebendig,
Der Augenblick wird Ewigkeit.

Savor temperate fullness and blessing,
Reason is present everywhere,
Where life enjoys life,
For there, past is present,
Future already alive,
The Present Moment is Eternity.

See Moritz Kronenberg, *Geschichte des deutschen Idealismus*, Vol. I (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1909): 141.

171. This is a reference to Hegel's notion of 'science'. See in Chapter 1: "Methodology:" the section "Myth ('Faith') and 'Science':" 143 ff. See as well, Hegel's account of 'science' as consisting not merely of direct, empirical perception but also as 'necessarily' 'elevating perception' into the intellectual (that is, the conceptual order and totality) in "Wissenschaftliche Behandlungsarten" 161.

172. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 738–739. Strauß cites Schleiermacher's *Reden über die Religion* [*On Religion*: 175] (738, n. 36). See Schleiermacher, *On Religion*: 101. Schleiermacher himself placed the sentence in context that perhaps helps illuminate Strauß' attraction to it: "[...] the goal and the character of the religious life is not the immortality desired and believed in by many [...] It is not the immortality that is outside of time, behind it, or rather after it, and which still is in time. It is the immortality which we can now have in tis temporal life; it is the problem in the solution of which we are forever to be engaged. In the midst of finitude to be one with the Infinite and in every moment to be eternal is the immortality of religion." (*Ibid.*, 101)

In the footnote to this citation to Schleiermacher, Strauß quotes a poem from the mystic, Angelus Silesius:

I, 12. Man, where you sway your spirit over place and time,
So can you be every moment in eternity.

13. I myself am eternity, when I leave time,
And I in God and God in me combine.

[Strauß immediately adds in the footnote:]

However, especially, recommended to those minds who find our eschatology like our God to be a Moloch to whom they ought to bring a sacrifice as is the new fashion in Berlin is [Friedrich] Rückert's poem: "Die sterbende Blume" ("The Dying Flower") in which they will find the same [... sentiment] depicted in more graceful forms:

I believe Strauß is referring to the following poem:

Withered flower
Human child,
One lowers gently
You down into the earth,
Then above you
The lawn will be green
And flowers bloom
And you bloom in the midst of it.

Nonetheless, although the citation to Schleiermacher is unequivocal, Strauß has chosen to conclude his *Glaubenslehre* with a truly enigmatic formulation. 'Speculative criticism' is given the task of 'fighting' eschatology's future 'shape' and 'to overcome it where possible.'

This concludes our task for now. The [content/*Inhalt* of] the hereafter is that in all is the One, but the last enemy is its shape as future [its representation/*Form*], which speculative criticism has to fight and *to overcome where possible*.¹⁷³

There are at least three ways of interpreting this ambiguous statement:

1. Although the statement suggests that 'speculative metaphysics' is taken to be the adjudicator of eschatological claims, the formulation 'where possible' concluding his *Glaubenslehre* could imply that Strauß *no longer thought it possible* for 'speculative criticism' (speculative metaphysics) to defend any credible notion of the afterlife – even as the 'point of indifference' that 'returns' to Absolute Spirit.
2. Alternatively, were 'speculative criticism' with its distinction between 'true' content (Idealism) and 'actual' representations (sense perception) to fight any and all

173. Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* II: 739.

'future shapes' of immortality successfully, and its 'true' content [*Inhalt*] were to 'overcome' any and all finite representations of an eternity 'yet to come,' then that would turn eternity into an 'empty abstraction' because it would be 'true' without 'actual' representations. If this was his point, Strauß would not only be rejecting the Hegelian epistemological structure that abstract content [*Inhalt*] constitutes 'truth' and perceptible representations constitute 'actuality,' but he also would be asserting that, whatever the abstract content [*Inhalt*] was, it would be overcoming, hence, annihilating, all actual perceptible representations of it. The consequence remains that 'eternal life' is merely an 'empty abstraction.'¹⁷⁴ This theme of 'empty abstractions' requires unpacking:

Already in the *LJ*,¹⁷⁵ Strauß points out that Schleiermacher made the same error of depending upon 'empty abstractions,' but Strauß does so even more emphatically in *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*. Schleiermacher's Christ is not only an 'unreal mental construct' [i.e., an empty abstraction], but it also is only 'the old doctrine of vicarious atonement.'

[...] we know that not a single person this way developed [as the complete realization of the archetype], that vacillation and struggle, errors and mistakes, are spared no one, and that therefore his Christ, if his development is to have been free of all of this, did not at all develop as other men do. Hence, he remains in his development as in his being an unreal mental construct, a lifeless ideal drawn according to a stencil.¹⁷⁶

Strauß returns to the analogy of a stencil drawing at the very end of *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*. Schleiermacher's entire theory of redemption is "[...] only the old doctrine of the vicarious atonement [...] [His] theory of redemption can be conceptualized to a certain extent only if one surreptitiously substitutes [...] the dissolved church dogma for it. It is like a sheet of transparent paper which, when laid on an old picture, shows the outlines of a figure, but which appears blank when

174. As I have pointed out, in the *LJ*, Strauß' central ground for dismissing Kant is that Kant privileges 'empty abstractions' as the grounding 'truth' of his 'dualism' between reason and sensuousness. See for example, Strauß, *LJ*: 776 and *Streitschriften* III: 69. Strauß charges Kant of maintaining a moral theory that consists only of 'empty abstraction' because it involves what Strauß viewed to be Kant's dualism that separates reason from the sensual and views 'reason' to be limited to finite understanding of the world – both criticisms of Kant in Hegel's/Strauß' judgment fail to grasp the 'truth' of Absolute Spirit. In fact, Strauß' criticism of Schleiermacher here applies just as much to Hegel's Absolute Spirit as it does to Schleiermacher's Absolute God-consciousness – although they are not equivalent notions. Hegel's historical 'Indifferentism' only gives a faint impression that the actual (representations) matter.

Strauß agrees with Baur view that Schleiermacher and Kant are governed by a dualistic (perfect versus sensuousness) morality (See *Gnosis*: 660–661) but also as concerned only with 'mere abstraction'. See *Gnosis*: 665–666.

175. Schleiermacher's Christ is not a historical but an ideal Christ. See *LJ*: 773.

176. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 32.

removed from it.”¹⁷⁷ In fact, Strauß specifies which ‘old picture’ of vicarious atonement: Docetism.

Schleiermacher identified four ‘natural’ heresies in Christianity: Ebionism, Docetism, Pelagianism, and Manichaeism.¹⁷⁸ Ebionism is the belief that Jesus was merely human; Docetism that Jesus was completely divine and only ‘appeared in the flesh;’ Pelagianism that salvation is earned by ‘good works;’ and Manichaeism that good and evil constitute two domains in incessant conflict with one another.

In his “Die Schleiermacher’sche Glaubenslehre” in *Gnosis*, F.C. Baur attributes to Johann Karl Friedrich Rosenkranz that Schleiermacher’s Christ as ‘sinless archetype’ is, in fact, itself Docetic. Granted, Baur formulates his personal judgment conditionally: If the Christ is a ‘purely historical’ event, then Christ is Ebionitic. However, if Christ’s inner archetype of Perfect God-consciousness needs no history, then we have a Docetic Christ.¹⁷⁹

Strauß doesn’t hesitate with his answer:

[...] from the physical, as [...] from the moral side, [...] we conclude that Schleiermacher’s conception of Christ as well as the church’s, rather than finding the right middle ground between the ebionitic and the docetic, as he endeavors, is subject to the latter folly. This is also completely natural since [*sic.*] there is no such middle ground, nor can there be any. The ebionitic conception of Christ is of course precisely that which perceives him as a true and real man. Hence every conception of him which goes beyond this must necessarily land in what is still merely apparently human, or the docetic.¹⁸⁰

Strauß, in fact, points out that Schleiermacher’s Docetism is, even further, a version of ‘Sabellian’ or Modalistic Monarchianism, a Christian theological position in the Third C that held that God appears sequentially as the Father, followed by the Son and the Holy Spirit.¹⁸¹ Strauß views Schleiermacher’s theology as ‘Sabellian’ because, given that we have no access to God’s essence, Schleiermacher speaks of how God *appears* to

177. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 169.

178. See Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* §25.

179. See F.C. Baur, *Gnosis*: 656, n. 23.

180. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 148.

181. Tertullian ridiculed Sabellianism as ‘Patripassianism’ for its maintaining, then, that not merely the Son but also the Father died on the cross. In the opening paragraph of “*Against Praxeas*,” Tertullian wrote in opposition to a follower of Sabellius: “[...] he [Praxeas] drove out prophecy [a reference to Tertullian’s “New Prophecy” commitments] and brought in heresy, he put the Paraclete to flight and crucified the Father.”

humanity.¹⁸² The God/Man is the way that God *appeared* (the etymological root for docetic)) in the world at the time of Jesus.¹⁸³ Strauß writes that

According to Schleiermacher, [...] [i]n Christian self-consciousness only the binary that God is united with mankind both personally, in Christ, and under the form of the common spirit, in the church is directly stated [...] In these unions [of God with the Christ and/or the church] nothing less is maintained than the divine essence in itself or that in each element nothing less is present in one as well as the other. Thus, *according to Schleiermacher, this whole distinction [of the Trinity] refers only to different spheres of activity and modes of action of the Godhead outwardly*, and to that extent can be unabashedly pronounced as a Trinity – not in the divine essence itself, but in its manner of revelation. The ecclesiastical expression, Trinity, seeks to preserve the unity of the divine essence against internal differences within the divine essence itself. However, such a unity cannot be included in any pious enthusiasm because in these distinctions God never appears in Himself but only in His relation to the world and to man. For this reason, all propositions referring to a distinction in the divine essence as such are to be rejected and relegated to speculation. Consequently, Schleiermacher, in a treatise in the theological journal which he edited with de Wette and Lücke (in the third issue¹⁸⁴), draws attention to the Unitarian doctrine of Praxeas and Noetus,¹⁸⁵ and still more to the more definite one of Beryllus of Bostra,¹⁸⁶ according to whom the Son of God did not exist before the Incarnation *κατ' ἰδίαν οὐσίαις περιγραφὴν* [defined exactly as specific entities], but especially the developed theory of Sabellius, according to which the divine Monas manifested itself in a triad of *προσώποις* [of masks] or *σχηματισμοῖς* [of appearances] – [appearing] as Father (according to Schleiermacher's interpretation of the incomplete texts) in the creation of the world, as Son in Christ, and as Holy Spirit in the Church. Because of its more subjective and modalistic character, Schleiermacher prefers this teaching [of Modalistic Monarchianism from Sabellius], rather than the ecclesiastical Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity.¹⁸⁷

Schleiermacher wants to claim that there are 'two starting points' for humanity: material and spiritual, and in his *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher, therefore, speaks of

182. F.C. Baur makes this observation in his "Die Schleiermacher'sche Glaubenslehre" in *Gnosis* 628–629: "Divine predicates are only the different sides and relationships of the feeling of absolute dependence [*des absoluten Abhängigkeitsgefühls*], or, as Schleiermacher himself says (*Glaubenslehre* §. 50: 280.), none of the divine predicates that we attribute to God refer to something specific in God but only to something specific in the way absolute feeling of dependence stands in relationship to God. As finite life must be conceived in a multiplicity of functions, and because these, if they are to be particular, have to be opposed to each other, respectively, and partially exclude each other, attributing particular predicates to would result in God's placement in the realm of [finite] opposites." Baur adds that Schleiermacher's perspective "eliminates every form of objective distinction in God's Being." *Ibid.*: 631.

183. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 180.

184. Schleiermacher, "Ueber den Gegensatz zwischen der Sabellianischen und der Athanasianischen Vorstellung von der Trinität" in Drittes Heft of the *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Schleiermacher, de Wette, Lücke hrsg. (Berlin; Georg Reimer, 1822): 295–408.

185. Noetus was also a Modalistic Monarchian adherent of Sabellianism.

186. Beryllus of Bostra was also a Modalistic Monarchian who denied the pre-existence of the Christ, a teaching Schleiermacher also denied.

187. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 179–180.

‘two Adams.’¹⁸⁸ In addition, in the second of his "Two Epistles to Dr. Lücke on my *Glaubenslehre*," Schleiermacher writes:

If science must admit the possibility that even today matter could conglomerate and begin to rotate in limitless space, then it must also concede that there is an appearance in the realm of spiritual life which likewise we can only explain as a new creation, as the pure beginning of a higher spiritual life-development.¹⁸⁹

However, the notion of ‘two starting points’ and ‘two pure beginnings’ makes indefensible the claim that the Christ, as sinless, Perfect God-consciousness, is a truly human being¹⁹⁰ who develops naturally as an emergence of the organic out the inorganic although Schleiermacher’s claim is that, when it comes to the spiritual development of humanity, there is a spectrum of infinite variation.¹⁹¹

Schleiermacher claims that a ‘new beginning’ can occur in the spiritual domain¹⁹² if the physical universe begins ‘naturally’ out of an infinite aggregation of elements in space.¹⁹³ Yet, even if Schleiermacher wants to claim that there is an ultimate, eminent causality behind the origin of the physical, infinite aggregation of elements, the assertion that a ‘new’ spiritual creation occurs through the agency of a Perfect God-consciousness is pure speculation/fantasy. The physical universe is, obviously, directly given in sense perception. However, we do not encounter Perfect God-consciousness anywhere directly in sense perception. As with all causal explanations, the claim may be correct, but it is impossible of proof/disproof given that proofs are based on effects and causes are not, by definition, effects. As was stated above and in light

188. See Schleiermacher, *Glaubenslehre* II: § 94: "The appearance of the first man constituted [...] the physical life of the human race; the appearance of the Second Adam [the Christ] constituted for this same nature a new spiritual life, which communicates and develops itself by spiritual impregnation [*Befruchtung*]."

189. From Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 29. "Über meine Glaubenslehre, an Herrn Dr. Lücke. Zwei Sendschreiben" in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* (1829): II: 255–284, III: 481–532.

190. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 4–5.

191. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 169 where Strauß quotes from Schleiermacher’s *Glaubenslehre*: "[...] ‘just as we find in the world in general the most manifold gradation of life, and may not doubt that this very variety, as the rightful fulfillment of space and time, is the object of divine pleasure, and just as such gradations also arise within the domain of human nature, so we will reasonably expect also in the spiritual sphere of life created by redemption all that lies between the smallest and the greatest, and will regard this whole fullness, united in living communion, as the object of divine good pleasure, and base it therein’ (*Glaubenslehre*. II. S. 301 f)."

192. It should be noted that Schleiermacher is employing the notion of ‘domain’ to talk about the ‘spiritual’ over against the ‘physical’ is entirely different from Kant’s two domains of ‘freedom’ and ‘nature’ in the *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment*. In Kant’s threefold distinction between ‘field,’ ‘territory,’ and the two ‘domains’ of freedom and nature, what distinguishes the latter from ‘field’ and ‘territory’ is ‘lawfulness,’ not merely spontaneous or merely ‘Occasionalist’/‘Voluntarist’ causality. See Kant, *Critique of the Capacity of Judgment* AA V: 174 ff.

193. Ironically, Strauß analogously claims in 1872 that the ‘organic’ arising out of the ‘inorganic’.

of the effects constituting a spectrum of imperfect realization in individuals, a perfect cause (sinless God-consciousness) is not required to account for imperfect effects of both the material and spiritual development of humans.

1. However, were Strauß to mean with his concluding sentence of his *Glaubenslehre* that speculative criticism is incapable of 'overcoming finite representations' in its valuing of the 'eternal' in the 'moment,' then the 'actual' is a weakening of the 'true,' ideal content of immortality because finite actuality in itself is not eternal and, thereby, the ideal content is by definition, then, not 'true.' The 'true' for speculative metaphysics is the absolute, infinite, imperceptible truth. In other words, if speculative criticism is incapable of 'overcoming' in the sense of elevating consciousness above finite representations, both Hegel's Absolute Knowledge as well as Schleiermacher's perfect God-consciousness, which are supposedly 'naturally' human, are 'merely abstractions' and neither 'true' nor anything 'actually' human. In short, both Hegel and Schleiermacher are docetic.¹⁹⁴

All of these options for reading Strauß' final sentence in the *Glaubenslehre* perhaps provide an indication, at least in part, for why Strauß remained theologically silent for the next twenty years. For my purpose here, though, it is not insignificant that Strauß ends the *Glaubenslehre* with a quote from Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher was the focus of continued and deep reflection across Strauß' entire career.

On the Role of Philosophy in Theology: Schleiermacher's Shell Game

In "Schleiermacher und Daub," Strauß wrote of Schleiermacher's understanding of the relationship between philosophy and theology:

In his [... Schleiermacher's] *Glaubenslehre* [...] no reasoning, deduction, or proof is to be given, but only that which is internally present in pious self-consciousness, and that only in a way which, partly in its systematic arrangement, bears the guarantee of completeness, and partly, through the dialectical formation of the expression, seeks to cover itself against the objection of science. Only in this formal respect may philosophy exert influence on the doctrine of faith; *any material influence, especially that which would consist in substantiating the dogma by means of speculative proofs, is to be rejected* as an after effect of the scholastic mixture of theology and philosophy. However, because [...] a contradiction between [... piety and philosophy] is certainly possible in itself, and a balancing of the same is necessary, this balancing is not a matter of the doctrine of faith, but the business of apologetics: the former [contradiction], like the faith of which it is the scientific expres-

194. Despite a dramatic shift in what 'subjective' and 'objective' mean by the writing of *The Old and the New Faith*, Strauß' understanding of the universe as always 'perfect' in any moment reduces the significance of the particularities of history (pain and suffering) to indifferent meaninglessness just as in the case of Hegel.

sion, remains a λόγος ἀναπόδεικτος [an indemonstrable teaching] ([Schleiermacher's] *Glaubenslehre* I: 171 f.) [...] ¹⁹⁵ (emphasis added)

Philosophy's contribution to religion is not to *ground* religious doctrines but to *establish that there is internal coherence to those doctrines*, which religious doctrines do not contradict.¹⁹⁶ Strauß points out:

However, through internal consistency, a thing proves itself only as a possible truth, not yet as a real truth. From where, then, does dogmatics get the proof that it is real truth? It does not need such a proof at all, Schleiermacher replies; it is real as feeling and faith in the community, and therefore has enough proof of its possibility on the part of science.¹⁹⁷

Philosophy's role, according to Schleiermacher, is to serve as a 'means' for theology. It doesn't establish or ground the 'end(s)' that theology seeks to claim. Yet, Strauß points out, neither in science nor in nature is there an actual organism where one or more parts are merely means and not, simultaneously, also ends towards which the other parts are related as means.¹⁹⁸

In terms of preserving the internal coherence of its theology, philosophy serves church leadership and piety as a *means*; however, that is only one side of the relationship. "On the other side, [Strauß maintains in contrast to Schleiermacher], scientific theology [philosophical theology] as the self-consciousness of Spirit in its religious actuality is *the highest end* for which piety constitutes the material to be addressed, but church leadership is a facilitating experiment of service."¹⁹⁹ In short, whereas, properly understood according to Strauß in "Schleiermacher und Daub," philosophy is a 'means,' it is also an 'end,' and piety and actual leadership-experience serve, in turn, as 'means' for scientific theology, whose 'end' is Spirit's becoming aware of Itself. His judgment with respect to the adequacy of this conclusion, Strauß suggests, must be postponed until he had finished his examination of Carl Daub, the Right-wing Hegelian.²⁰⁰ Strauß eventual conclusion is brutal:

One finds in both Schleiermacher and Daub the 'scientific principle of their age,' the Absolute Concept, but diametrically in a one-sidedness. Both know that substance is subject. However, one in the lopsidedness of substance, the other in the lopsidedness of subjectivity. The unity of divinity with humanity was achieved by Schleiermacher only in the subjective form of feeling and reflection concerning this subjective form. Daub claimed

195. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 159–160. Strauß is citing § 28 3. of Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*. Strauß also refers the reader to Schleiermacher's 'First Epistle' "in the middle" of his "Über meine Glaubenslehre, an Herrn Dr. Lücke. Zwei Sendschreiben." I believe that Strauß is referring to Schleiermacher's response to Bretschneider on the role of Philosophy in piety: *ibid.*, 262 ff.

196. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub," 51.

197. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 51–52.

198. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 52.

199. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 52.

200. See, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 52–53.

that one has not attained a complete unity of divinity with humanity when the believer has not selflessly sunk into the substance of Church faith. If Daub's thinking is submerged in the substance of belief, Schleiermacher's substance is absorbed in the feeling of the subject. Schleiermacher, as a dogmatist, does not seek the idea at all, because he is assured of its absolute content in inner experience. Daub has found the Idea, but in and with it he also believes to have assured himself of the experiential truth of sacred history. *Both lack the true mediation of dogma with the concept, of the historical with the ideal.*²⁰¹ (emphasis added)

Whatever Strauß means here by "the true mediation of dogma with the concept, of the historical with the ideal" (and he, of course, might mean Hegel's formulation), *according to Strauß, dogmatic theology needs more than logical possibility for it to be true but requires historical explanation – or what Strauß calls 'philosophy' to establish not merely the 'possibility' but also the 'necessity' of its truth claims.* To the extent that Schleiermacher and Hegel/Daub are trapped in 'empty abstractions,' they fail when it comes to the 'true mediation of the historical with the ideal.'

Especially when it comes to feeling, as I pointed out above, Strauß agrees with Hegel that "feeling can no longer be characteristic for religion if everything possible is feeling or if feeling is the general form under which any determinations become subjective determinations of the ego."²⁰²

The inescapable role of philosophy in religion is apparent when one employs the analogy of a shell game for Schleiermacher's religion of pious feeling. In a shell game, an object is placed under one of three cups. The goal is to determine which cup contains the object. The game presumes that one knows that the hidden object itself doesn't change, only the position of the cups changes. Analogously, for Schleiermacher the 'enduring object,' piety, is the feeling of absolute dependence, which is the 'measure of perfection' for piety. All experience, even if unrecognized, 'contains' the essence of piety. If everything is the 'same,' piety, then the particularities (the cups) are meaningless. All that matters is the 'essence,' piety. The claim that one 'cup,' Christ's perfect God-consciousness is necessary for other cups to achieve piety is illusion.

In fact, Schleiermacher defines the essence of something as that which is present throughout the rise and fall of its perfection:

[...] what is not the measure of the perfection of an object in its rise and fall cannot be its essence (*Glaubenslehre*, Bd 1, §. 3 [...]). The degree of an individual's piety is determined by the rise and fall of her/his religious feeling. In other words, [s/]he is more or less pious, depending on whether this feeling in [her/]him is more or less strong and steady. In this respect feeling proves itself as the essence of piety."²⁰³

201. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 208.

202. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 152–153.

203. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 153.

Christlieb Julius Braniss emphasizes that for Schleiermacher the feeling of absolute dependence itself is absolutely unchanging.²⁰⁴ Only because it is 'absolutely unchanging' in itself can the feeling of absolute dependence be the 'measure of perfection' when it comes to discernment of piety. According to Schleiermacher, then, the feeling of absolute dependence is an 'essence.'

However, this 'essence,' which allows a measurement of degree in the set of phenomena that is 'piety,' is one among all those 'essences' that constitute the measurement of degree of all other sets of phenomena. In short, logically, Schleiermacher is acknowledging the necessity of essences or *logoi* (λόγοι) for understanding that, in turn, constitutes the rational system of essences called the *Logos* (Λόγος) throughout Platonic Christianity.

In order to discern 'rise and fall' or the 'degree of clarity' of a set of phenomena, *one must already grasp its 'essence.'* *Schleiermacher, the translator of Plato's dialogues into German, is a Platonic Idealist*, and he is deceiving himself when he claims that piety is 'prior' to 'knowing' and 'doing.' Piety has merely a different 'essence' than what allows for the determination of the 'degree of clarity' in the phenomena of understanding and agency. Strauß adds:

[...] separation of the different spiritual areas [knowledge and doing] is no more natural than if it would occur to a naturalist to say that ice is something for itself, water something for itself, and steam something for itself, that none of them comes from the other, but has its own principle in itself; because they are all only different metamorphoses of one and the same substance, just as thinking, feeling and willing are different phases of the One spiritual life.²⁰⁵

Not only is an 'essence' an idea, not a feeling, but also Schleiermacher is shuffling an 'idea' in an illusory, shell game labelled as a 'feeling' in an attempt to avoid philosophy as essential for religion. In a very real sense, then, he engages in a philosophical slight-of-hand when he rejects the notion of a 'pre-existing Christ' and ignores the *Logos* Theology of his favorite Gospel of John.

Kant or Spinoza?

There are two points with respect to which Strauß disagreed clearly with his professor, F.C. Baur. The first was with respect to the role of history in Baur's Christian understanding of the historical incarnation of the God/Man as limited to the 'body

204. It is always and eternally the same although it is expressed in many ways because it is inseparable from the world, according to Schleiermacher. The feeling of absolute dependence "[...] is the expression of a unified relationship that is absolutely constant. (See Braniss, *ibid.*: 188).

205. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 156.

of Christ' that is the Christian community (*Gemeinde*). The second is over which philosopher was standing in the shadows behind Schleiermacher's theological ruminations.

When it comes to their relative differences over the degree of Christological inclusiveness, see my presentation of Baur's criticism of Strauß' having destroyed 'history' in Christianity by ignoring the Christian *Gemeinde* as the exclusive location for the Incarnation of the God/Man, see "Ferdinand Christian Baur's Criticism of Strauß" in "Chapter 3: Academic Controversy and Reaction to Strauß' Life of Jesus."²⁰⁶

When it comes to who stood in the shadows behind Schleiermacher, the question is: Was it Kant or Spinoza?:

According to Baur, the philosopher to whom Schleiermacher is most indebted is Kant.²⁰⁷ Baur takes Kant and Schleiermacher to be 'subjectivists' in contrast to

206. See above Ferdinand Christian Baur's Criticism of Strauß:" 222 ff.

207. Baur writes of Schleiermacher; "What Kant does not leave us in doubt about, that the Redeemer as the God-pleasing Man, the ideal of God-pleasing humanity, is only a personification of the good principle in its absolute victory over evil, emerges [...] as the actual meaning of Schleiermacher's archetypal Christ. The archetypal Christ, the God/Man, that is, the absolutely sinless and perfect man, is nothing other than the personally conceived idea of redemption, but redemption itself, insofar as it is conceived in an individual, is God-consciousness in its absolute steadiness and strength, to which the God-consciousness of the individuals forming the Christian life as a whole always stands only in an approximate relationship. It follows from this that *there can be no essential difference between Kant and Schleiermacher concerning the relationship of the Redeemer to the individual*, insofar as he is the object of redemptive activity. According to Kant, the individual is one with the Redeemer, or Son of God, insofar as the human being is a new human being according to his disposition, and is set as a unity in his disposition, which in fact can only develop successively. The Son of God as Redeemer, or that which is set in the individual through his redeeming activity, the community of the Redeemer and the redeemed, is, according to Kant, nothing other than the absorption of the good principle into the mind. *In his good disposition, the improved man has the redeemer in himself*; what is said of the redeemer is actually true of the new man, *which is why, according to Kant, the vicarious suffering of the redeemer is virtually the suffering of the new man* in the place of the old. *Schleiermacher's doctrine of the activity of the Redeemer* comes to the same thing, insofar as it is *the absorption of the faithful into the power of his God-consciousness*. The Redeemer produces his deed in us, his deed becomes our deed, when the God-consciousness, which cannot be thought of as a more or less effective one without also presupposing an absolute effectiveness of it, is *preponderant over sensual consciousness, so that God-consciousness and sensual consciousness relate to each other like positives and negatives*, and to every plus of the God-consciousness corresponds a minus of the sensual consciousness. *All that is different between Kant and Schleiermacher is only the difference between morality and religion*. What for Kant is *moral consciousness* that comes from the victory of the good principle over the evil principle as the moral capacity of humanity, is for Schleiermacher *God-consciousness*, the religious capacity. *The common perspective, however, from which both proceed, is the absolute dependence that is located in consciousness, which is traced by Kant to the absolute causality (!) of the unconditionally enjoining moral law, by Schleiermacher to the absolute causality (!) of God*. However, *the Schleiermachian concept of God leads just as little as the absolute of Kant's moral law, to an objective reality independent of consciousness*, because Schleiermacher completely excludes all objective determinations about the essence of God and equates the concept of God only with the indeterminate abstract concept of an absolute causality without which the dependence of which man is conscious would lack the final point of reference to which it is to be attached, which is nothing other than the Kantian concept of the Noumenon. *The*

Hegel who is a purely 'objectivist'.²⁰⁸ Nonetheless, Baur attributes two key elements of Schleiermacher's theology to Spinoza: 1) the denial of finite reality's freedom as spontaneous indeterminism, including humanity; and 2) the claim that God and the world are two essentially dualistic concepts with God as 'absolute, undivided unity' and the world as 'divided and split unity'.²⁰⁹

An absolute divine causality, which is opposed only by an absolute sense of dependence, does not permit freedom in the sense of Indeterminism, and if God and the world are in the last analysis only so different that, as Schleiermacher says (Th. I: 185), God is absolute undivided unity, but the world, even if set as a unity, is only the divided and split unity, which is at the same time the dividedness of all opposites and differences and everything determined by them, so God and the world always remain two essentially different concepts,

concept God is a completely lifeless, mere abstraction and, therefore, God's existence in Christ can be no truly lively and personal being. Far more, Schleiermacher's idea of the Christ is only the perfect parallel to Kant's idea of God, and the moral lawgiver derived from the absolute moral law, as the bearer of it, coincides with the idea of the *moral world order, just as the archetypal Christ is only the concrete expression for absolute God-consciousness [...] Schleiermacher's Glaubenslehre is nothing other than the perfect implementation of the opposition between the two principles that Kant calls radical evil and the individual's being well-pleasing to God.* Their difference consists only in the substitution of God-consciousness by Schleiermacher for Kant's moral consciousness and Schleiermacher's artificial, as it is indefensible, connection that is supposed to unify the archetypal Christ with the historical." Baur, "Die Schleiermacher'sche Glaubenslehre" in *Gnosis*: 664–666. Whereas Baur provides a legitimate criticism of Schleiermacher here, his portrayal of Kant is either an unreflective or an unconscionable distortion.

208. The key to this classification is their understanding of the Incarnation. Speaking first of Kant and Schleiermacher, Baur contrasts their 'subjective' understanding of religion with Hegel's 'objective' understanding: With Hegel, "[...] we do not speak merely of an ideal of humanity pleasing to God, floating in the dubious distance [Baur's erroneous reading of Kant's 'Incarnation' as the subjective 'moral ideal' that drives humanity's goal of a Pelagian earning of God's favor]. We do not merely speak of an archetype that only raises the human to the divine, or of a God-consciousness that has become God's being [Baur's take on Schleiermacher's 'Incarnation' of perfect God-consciousness as a new spiritual creation of humanity that seeks to achieve perfect God-consciousness as a future goal of individuals]. Rather, *Christ is [objectively] the God/Man*, God became man, appeared in the flesh, that the unity of divine and human nature, which is in itself, has been revealed to man in a more concrete way in a certain individual subject, is asserted here with the full weight of the ecclesiastical expressions, and *the more true and objective the idea of God is to this (Hegelian) philosophy of religion, the less also the full reality of its God/Man seems to be allowed to be doubted.* However, it all depends, as is self-evident, on the sense in which their Christ is the God/Man." (emphasis added) Baur, "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie" in *Gnosis*: 711.

What Baur, Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Strauß overlook is Kant's explicit rejection of either 'sensuousness' or 'reason' as the sole ground of 'evil.' See Kant, *Religion* AA VI: 34–35, especially: "Sensuous nature [...] contains too little to provide a ground of moral evil in the human being, for, to the extent that it eliminates the incentives originating in freedom, it makes of the human a purely animal being: a reason exonerated from the moral law, an evil reason as it were (an absolutely evil will), would on the contrary contain too much, because resistance to the law would itself be thereby elevated to incentive [...] and so the subject would be made a diabolical being."

209. In contrast to Baur's reading of Spinoza and Schleiermacher, Hegel takes God (Absolute Spirit) to be a 'divisible I' and the material order to be a 'divisible non-I'. See: 160.

*but they are only as different as Spinozism must always make them undivided.*²¹⁰ (emphasis added)

Strauß agrees with Baur's emphasis on these two points of similarity. Strauß begins precisely with these same two themes, though in reverse order, in his list of eight elements in Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* that he claims can be traced to Spinoza.²¹¹ However, Strauß' thesis is that Schleiermacher becomes "understandable not from his dependence on Kant but [only] when he is translated back into Spinoza's system from which [... his reflections] arose."²¹²

1. "Schleiermacher's understanding of the relationship of God to the world is explained [...] from the relationship [of a logic of 'necessity'] between the *natura naturans* to the *natura naturata*,²¹³ on which all other things is based, according to which both, considered as magnitudes, coincide; only that the former unity is absolute and undivided, the latter unity divided and splintered ([Schleiermacher's] *Glaubenslehre* I, " 32: 185), according to Spinoza."²¹⁴

That God's creating (willing) the world is not separate from His will and that the latter is already included in the former, is what Spinoza says with: *Deum eadem necessitate agere, qua se ipsum intelligit* [God acts by means of the same necessity²¹⁵ by which he understands himself].²¹⁶ *Hoc est, sicuti ex necessitate divinae naturae sequitur, ut Deus se ipsum intelligat, eadem etiam necessitate sequitur, ut Deus infinita infinitis modis agat* [That is, just as it follows from the necessity of the divine nature, that God understands himself, it also follows from the same necessity that God acts in an infinite number of ways.] (*Ethic.* P.2, Prop. 3, Schol.)²¹⁷

210. Baur, "Die Hegel'sche Religions-Philosophie" in *Gnosis*: 632.

211. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 167–171. Strauß acknowledged the difficulties of identifying Schleiermacher's integration of Spinoza into his theology: "Not everyone has the apparatus and the endurance with which Schleiermacher pulverized Christianity and Spinozism for the purpose of mixing [Christianity and philosophy] so finely that a sharp eye is needed to distinguish the mixed components [...]" Strauß, "Introduction" to *Glaubenslehre* I: 70.

212. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 167.

213. Strauß follows Schelling's definitions for *natura naturata* and *natura naturans*: "The divine universe is not alone the spoken word [λόγος προφορικὸς] (*natura naturata*) but itself the one that speaks [λόγος ἐνδιάθετος] (*natura naturans*), not the created [*natura naturata*] but creating itself and self-revealing in an eternal manner [*natura naturans*]." (Strauß footnotes to Schelling's *Jahrbücher der Medicin*, I, 1, S. 33. I, 2, S. 14 f.; see *Philosophie und Religion* S. 43.) Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 658 Referring to Spinoza, Strauß writes: "[A]ccording to Spinoza, [...] substance is never without its attributes and *modi*; *natura naturans* (nature as created) never without *natura naturata* (nature as divine creative power) [...]" Strauß, *Glaubenslehre* I: 655.

214. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 167.

215. NOTE the theme of necessity here is used in the sense of the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*). On 'necessity,' see the "Preface:" 42, n. 22.

216. In short, what God 'thinks' necessarily 'is' because the cause of God's thinking is God Himself.

217. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 167–168.

For Spinoza, God and the world "[...] can only be explained by the relation of *natura naturans* (nature as eternal, divine, creative power or λόγος ἐνδιάθετος) to *natura naturata* (nature as created by God or λόγος προφορικὸς).²¹⁸

We cannot think of anything in God that is free without simultaneously thinking it as necessary, and vice versa.:” *solum Deum esse causam liberam* [only God is a free cause]; *Deus enim solus ex sola naturae necessitate existit et agit*; [For God alone exists and acts only from the necessity of his own nature] (*Ethices* P. 1, Propos. 17, Coroll. 2)²¹⁹

2. Schleiermacher’s difference between thinking and willing, the real and the possible, knowing and doing, ‘have their roots’ in Spinoza, according to Strauß: For God “[v]ery obviously, [...] the differences between thinking and willing, the real and the possible, etc., have their roots in the famous Scholion to the 17th proposition of the first book of the Spinozian Ethics.”²²⁰

Intellectum Dei, quo res creatas intelligit, et ejus voluntatem et potentiam, qua ipsas determinavit, unum et idem esse [The intellect of God,²²¹ by which He understands created things, and His will and power, by which He determined them, is one and the same] (see as well the *Cogitata metaphysica*, P. 2, cap. 7)

Schleiermacher would also not find a God who ‘exercises self-restraint,’ as unthinkable (as he declares to be the case in the first *Sendschreiben*), if he were not in agreement with Spinoza that *omnis determinatio negation* [every determination is negation].²²²

3. The Feeling of Absolute Dependence on God is equivalent to Spinoza’s Divine Determinism:

The assertion that in the absolute dependence on God the so-called free causes are included in the same way as those belonging to the mechanism of nature (Glaubensl. 1. §. 49), is the Spinozian: *Omnia ex necessitate divinae naturae determinate sunt, non tantum ad*

218. Considered as Idealism rather than as mathematical magnitudes, Spinoza’s distinction would be *natura naturans* = λόγος ἐνδιάθετος; *natura naturata* = λόγος προφορικὸς.

219. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 167. [McG: The question that this raises is what kind of necessity? According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*), ‘necessity’ means an effect is determined by a prior (formal or eminent) cause because ‘something cannot come from nothing’. However, ‘necessity’ according to Critical Idealism means something not given in the phenomena is required in order for there to be an experience of the phenomena. The Principle of Sufficient Reason (*Satz vom zureichenden Grund*) is a claim with respect to what causes something to happen; Critical Idealism’s ‘necessary’ (required) conditions of possibility is a claim with respect merely to what conditions have to be met for finite experience of phenomena, not for causing phenomena.]

220. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 168.

221. "Occasionalism" or "Voluntarism" formulated in Islamic theology in the Mu'tazila school of Islamic theology in the 3rd to 9th Centuries. See Dominik Perler and Ulrich Rudolph, *Occasionalismus. Theorien der Kausalität im arabisch-islamischen und im europäischen Denken* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

222. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 168.

existendum, sed etiam ad certo modo existendum et operandum [All things are determined by the necessity of the divine nature, not only for existing, but also for existing and operating in their particular way] (*Eth.* P. 1, Prop. 29, Demonstr.)²²³

Consequently, Schleiermacher's embracing of the Augustinian-Calvinist teaching of Predestination is entirely consistent although Schleiermacher does not entirely embrace Spinoza's denial of human freedom:

However, in "[...] that he [Schleiermacher] did not claim Predestination to step on the moral freedom of man, he remained behind Spinoza's consistency or openness, who for his part declares the human will to be a *causa non libera sed coacta* [not a free cause but compulsory]."²²⁴

According to Schleiermacher: "The basic idea of the *Monologues* applies only to free will with respect to the constraint of external causes, but not from constraints on the internal determination of the individual." In the *Monologues*, Schleiermacher, contrary to Spinoza, defends human 'freedom' in spirit/mind above all external forces and every external limitation:

The material world must serve the 'I' and, as a system of organisms as well as an extended body, must assist the 'I' in achieving its goals. Infinitely more, the 'I' experiences its spirit to be challenged by its association with other minds/spirits. However, if the resistance of nature or the unfavorable clash with other minds prevents success, the 'I' is still not dependent upon the accidental coincidence of its external circumstances. 'External circumstances do not prevent internal agency [because the individual is liberated by the feeling of absolute dependence above the sensuous].' What denies the individual from external success, contacts, and relationships actually, is modelled internally, but is no less real, by fantasy, 'this divine power that, alone establishes the mind's/spirit's freedom above all forces and every limitation – without this divine power [of the imagination] the human sphere is apprehensively closed in on itself.' (*Monologues*, vierte Ausg., S. 79 f.)²²⁵

4. God is not the cause of evil. Evil is not real and occurs through humanity. God fills the spectrum of reality (material and spiritual) with a fullness that requires that we view it as the object of divine good pleasure:

The Schleiermachian formula that evil is something for us and happens through us, but for God it is nothing and not caused by Him, because that which is really from God, the free-acting sensual power on the one hand and the consciousness of God on the other, is not yet evil. However, that for which God cannot be the author, namely the opposite of good, is not real at all (*Über die Erwählungslehre, gegen den Schluß, und Glaubenslehre* 1. §. 81).²²⁶

223. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 168.

224. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 168. See the discussion of 'Predestination' below.

225. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 26.

226. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 169.

Strauß points out that this view of evil is reminiscent of Spinoza's well-known 36th Letter in which he defines perfection as not leaving nothing out anything that could be conceived by an infinite intellect. 169

Furthermore, whoever reads in Schleiermacher: 'just as we find in the world in general the most manifold gradation of life, and may not doubt that this very variety, as the rightful fulfillment of space and time, is the object of divine pleasure, and just as such gradations also arise within the domain of human nature, so we will reasonably expect also in the spiritual sphere of life created by redemption all that lies between the smallest and the greatest, and will regard this whole fullness, united in living communion, as the object of divine good pleasure, and base it therein' (*Glaubensl.* 2. S. 301 f).²²⁷

S/]he who reads this and the like, if [s/]he is differently versed in Spinoza, will not find his worldview in it, and [s/]he be reminded especially of the sentence at the end of the first book of the *Ethics*, where he says?: *Iis autem, qui quaerunt: cur Deus omnes homines non ita creavit, ut solo rationis ductu gubernarentur? Nihil aliud respondeo, quam quia ei non defuit materia ad omnia, ex summo nimirum ad infimum perfectionis gradum, creanda; vel magis proprie loquendo, quia ipsius naturae leges adeo amplae fuerunt, ut sufficerent ad omnia, quae ab aliquo infinito intellectu concipi possunt, producenda* –? [to those who ask: why did God not create all men so that they were governed only by the guidance of reason? I reply that [...] there was not wanting matter to him in all things, namely, to create from the highest to the lowest degree of perfection; or more properly speaking, because the laws of nature itself were so extensive that they were sufficient to produce all the things which can be conceived by some infinite intellect].²²⁸

5. Schleiermacher's Feeling of Absolute Dependence is nothing other than Spinoza's *concomitans idea Dei* (that which accompanies the idea of God) as what 'liberates humanity from sensuousness.'

Yes, even Schleiermacher's feeling of absolute dependence or God-consciousness, which is supposed to determine man's entire being and life, and thereby to sanctify and enliven him, is nothing other than *concomitans idea Dei* [that which accompanies the idea of God] for Spinoza, which, inasmuch as we recognize all things, especially our affections, as founded in God, results in our liberation from them, intellectual love for God, and the highest peace of mind and bliss (*Ethics* P. 5, Prop. 14 sqq. 25 sqq. 32 sqq).²²⁹

6. Both Spinoza and Schleiermacher find salvation and science to involve a separation of theology from philosophy. For Schleiermacher religion is concerned with the feeling of absolute dependence and reflection upon it; whereas for Spinoza religion is concerned with piety and obedience along with the simplest doctrines of God and His relationship to humanity:

227. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 169

228. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 169.

229. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 169–170.

[...] all that Schleiermacher says concerning the relationship between religion and theology with philosophy has a confluence with the basic idea of Spinoza's *tractatus theologico-politicus*. Both find the salvation of the Church and [the wisdom] of science only in the separation of theology from philosophy; neither the latter should be subject to the former, nor the former to the latter, but each should remain within its own proper domain. The difference here is only that Schleiermacher assigns to religion and theology the feeling of absolute dependence and the reflection on it, Spinoza [assigns to religion and theology] *pietas* and *obediential* [piety and obedience] and the simplest doctrines of God and his relationship to humanity, which are inevitably necessary for the justification of these.²³⁰ (emphasis added)

7. Even though Schleiermacher rejects any indebtedness to Spinoza in his *Über die Glaubenslehre. Zwei Sendschreiben an Lücke*,

Schleiermacher raises the question [...]: how would he have been able to derive from the Spinozian idea of God [...] the divine qualities of wisdom and love [... as he does] in Part Two of his *Glaubenslehre*?

[...] Spinoza justifies his famous word, *Qui Deum amat, conari non potest, ut Deus ipsa contra amet* (He, who loves God, cannot endeavour that God should love him in return) (5, Prop. 19) only by the impossibility of an affect in God, and his explanation proposes the Christian idea of God's love as the point of contact between God and humanity: *quod Deus, quatenus seipsum amat, homines amat, et consequenter quod amor Dei erge homines et mentis erga Deum amor intellectualis unum et idem sit* [it follows that God, in so far as he loves himself, loves man, and, consequently, that the love of God towards men, and the intellectual love of the mind towards God are identical]. (Prop. 36. Coroll.)²³¹

8. Strauß maintains that there's also a similarity between Spinoza's and Schleiermacher's conception of divine wisdom – both embrace Platonic (divine) teleology:

Although Schleiermacher admonishes in his *Abhandlung über die Erwählungslehre* that reason should investigate the effected final causes in the world instead of the individual final causes, in [...] Schleiermacher's] *Glaubenslehre*, he abolishes the difference between end and means with regard to divine wisdom. Thus, the main impulses for Spinoza are embraced – the anthropomorphizing of God and the pettiness of a finite teleology [humanity's first conceiving its goals mentally before acting externally]. If, of course, the determination of the world ordered by God according to his wisdom as the absolute work of art sounds more like Plato than Spinoza – who, by the way, says that everything in the world *summa perfectione procedere* [proceeds to the highest perfection] –, then Schleiermacher, who so often and so gladly calls himself a mere dilettante in philosophy, may be taken at his word for once, and a fusion of different philosophical principles may be presupposed in him, by which we do not have to defend their conflating into contradiction.²³²

230. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 170.

231. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 170.

232. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 171.

Strauß responds: "However, these philosophical propositions [from Spinoza] did not have to appear explicitly in Schleiermacher's theology, yet still be Schleiermacher's; but that they really form the foundations of his worldview, not in this crass form, but in the form in which natural philosophy has appropriated them, is sufficiently evident from what has been said so far."²³³

Schleiermacher and the Gospel of John

The Gospels – True or False? The Wrong Question

When the theme of 'myth' in the scriptures arose at the end of the 18th C, a good generation before Strauß, for many, and, particularly for Friedrich Schleiermacher, the alternative was: The bible is either 'true' or 'false,' and, if the bible is a collection of myths, then it is 'false.'

Rather than question his assumptions about philosophy and science, Schleiermacher seeks to anchor Christianity's historical, factual truth by dismissing the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) as merely a capricious collection of stories compiled by their authors long after the events. In Schleiermacher's judgment, the differences among them are the consequence of their not being from eyewitness. However, John's Gospel, Schleiermacher insists, is from an eyewitness who is the guarantor that Christianity is anchored in 'truth,' not 'myth.'

Nonetheless, the Gospel of John is a conundrum for those who seek 'historical facts' with respect to Jesus' biography or to ground theological convictions in the teaching of Jesus. In contrast to John, the three Synoptic Gospels all share the same basic outline of a one year ministry of Jesus that occurred primarily in Galilee and ended with his going to Jerusalem, the 'Last Supper,' arrest, trial, conviction, execution, and experienced resurrection. They conclude with the centerpiece of resurrection as the confirmation of Jesus as 'the Christ' (the Messiah) although they don't agree on the details. Furthermore, Matthew adds a birth story and an escape to Egypt, whereas Luke has a very different birth story, no account of an escape to Egypt, and adds anecdotes from Jesus' childhood that include a visit to the temple in Jerusalem where Jesus' 'wisdom' astounded the priests. The three Synoptic gospels are distinguished, particularly, by their respective theologies.²³⁴ Matthew takes Jesus' aim to be the presentation of a 'New Torah' on the hearts of his followers. Mark takes up his pen to correct the misunderstandings of the apostles, especially Peter, and to reformulate the apocalyptic vision of the Church as a consequence of the Jewish War with Rome and destruction of the temple in 70 CE. Mark substitutes individual martyrdom in

233. Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 171.

234. This is Norman Perrin's core thesis in *The New Testament: An Introduction*.

solidarity with the Christ for a general apocalyptic retribution and establishment of the people of God to their 'rightful' status of a new worldly or cosmic order. Luke responds to the delayed apocalyptic expectations by portraying the goal of Christianity to be the 'conversion of the world' with his first book, the Gospel of Luke, an account of the central status of Jerusalem for Jesus, personally, and with the second book, the Book of Acts of the Apostles, an account of the shift of the focal point of the Christian church from Jerusalem to Rome as the symbolic center of the world from which the conversion of the world will follow.

John's gospel is profoundly different. Its emphasis is on a 'spiritual' Christ and the Christian's participation in that spirit. It's Logos Christology is at the core of both Athanasian and Arian conceptions of Christianity that struggled for dominance in the Greek Christian world. It, like Mark, has no birth story or accounts from Jesus' youth, it opens with a proclamation that Jesus is 'the Christ' (the Messiah) not by 'resurrection' but by his 'metaphysical status' as the very thoughts of God, the eternal Logos, that (had to have occurred) prior to God's creation but was 'incarnated' in Jesus as the Logos (not the words of any text). John's gospel has a three year ministry that began with the 'cleaning of the temple' in Jerusalem (whereas the other gospels have the account at the end of the ministry), and Jesus's actual ministry occurs in and around Jerusalem with only infrequent visits to Galilee as his way of acknowledging Jesus' origin out of Galilee. In addition, John's gospel has as its core aim of the final supper the introducing of a new ritual for Christians, but it is the ritual of feet washing, not the Eucharist as in the other gospels. Numerous details in the account of Jesus' ministry are different from the Synoptics that include the replacement of enigmatic parables with long discourses by Jesus.

Strauß documents Schleiermacher's contorted efforts not only to justify his claim that John's Gospel is from an eyewitness but also, ironically, Schleiermacher's efforts to avoid John's Logos theology because it contradicts Schleiermacher's own theology. According to Schleiermacher, Christianity arose not because the Logos was incarnated in the Christ but because in the Christ a new act of creation occurred of 'perfect' God-consciousness,²³⁵ not seduced by sensuousness/sin, that established the absolute conditions necessary for the historical, developmental process of humanity to ever more perfect God-consciousness/sinlessness. In short, whereas according to the Gospel of John, the Christ has been present since the original creation itself, according to Schleiermacher the Christ is a new act of creation whose completion requires the infinite open-endedness of history for individual consciousness to run the race to 'perfect' God-consciousness.

Even more importantly, though, Strauß saw that the alternatives 'true' or 'false,' 'fact' and 'myth' were the wrong concern when it came to the gospels. Where Schleier-

235. On Schleiermacher's insistence on the need for a new act of eminent causality to accomplish Christian salvation, see above: 277 ff.

macher sees falsehood in the concept myth, Strauß in 1835 sees (Hegelian) ‘science’ in the biblical ‘myths’!

Schleiermacher on the Gospel of John as Eyewitness

Two passages from Strauß emphasize that for Schleiermacher, the Gospel of John is the only source from an eyewitness:

It is well known that from ancient times onward the church regarded the Synoptic Gospels to have been written first, whether in the sequence in which they stand in the canon, or even in the order of Matthew, Luke, Mark; only after these three, for spiritual as well as for material supplementation, was the Johannine Gospel written. *For Schleiermacher, the first three Gospels were not written by the apostles or disciples of apostles but were secondary compilations, but he accepted the fourth as the work of an apostle.*²³⁶ (emphasis added)

Strauß cites Schleiermacher himself:

‘The Gospel of John [Schleiermacher says] presents itself everywhere as one which originates from an immediate eyewitness, in contrast with which the others’ compilation from single elements is subject to comparable doubt, and all three without exception are to be seen as coming to us secondhand.²³⁷ This is not the case with the Johannine Gospel; it clearly has the character of originating from a single person who narrates what he himself experienced.²³⁸

This concern to ground his theology in the reports of a historical observer of events illuminates an aspect that is crucial for Schleiermacher. Having swept aside the Synoptic Gospels as untrustworthy, Schleiermacher clings to the Gospel of John because “[...] if also in the case of the Gospel of John we found it necessary to see the narrative as derived second- or third-hand and to have been modified in manifold ways, *nothing reliable would be left for us.*”²³⁹ (emphasis added) In other words, it is Schleiermacher who approaches the gospels with an ‘either’/‘or,’ not Strauß as so many of Strauß’ interpreters erroneously concluded. It is Schleiermacher who concludes: *Either there are historical reports from eyewitnesses in the gospels, or the Christian faith is built on shifting sand.*

It is not simply Strauß’ judgment but the conclusion of biblical scholarship generally that John’s Gospel could not possibly be from an eyewitness in light of the historical issues of duration, location, and sequence of its narrative. The content of

236. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 46.

237. Strauß has combined two quotes from Schleiermacher. This first sentence comes from Schleiermacher’s *Das Leben Jesu*, 181 (although Keck gives the citation as 171). The second sentence is found on 168 (although Keck gives the citation as 159).

238. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 41.

239. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 43.

John's theology drips with Greek metaphysics and it is written far more in the spirit of 'Mystery Religions' of the Greek world (Isis and Mythraism) that eclipse history with the call to a spiritual realm beyond the physical world. John's theology, of course, is as Christian as any of the other theological options that one finds in Christianity. However, according to Schleiermacher's own criteria, John's theology has little to do with the factual, historical narrative that is the 'husk' for its theological 'kernel.'

What Schleiermacher doesn't Share with The Gospel of John:

Far more crucial to Strauß' dismissal of Schleiermacher's gospel exegesis is that there are points of disagreement between the theologies of John's Gospel and Schleiermacher.

John's Pre-Existent Logos and Schleiermacher's New Creation:

I have already referred to this discrepancy. For Schleiermacher the Christ is a new moment of creation that establishes the ontological conditions for the enabling of perfect God-consciousness in Christ's followers. The Christ was not present from the beginning of all creation. The incarnation of perfect God-consciousness at a particular point in time is what establishes Christianity as the 'highest' form of religion or 'pure' God-consciousness.²⁴⁰

It is not simply that Schleiermacher's theology is a contradiction of John's gospel that disturbs Strauß. Rather, it is that it, along with the other themes of disagreement, is simply ignored by Schleiermacher with no acknowledgement of the centrality of the themes to John's gospel.²⁴¹

An example comes from Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* §14. Schleiermacher speaks of the Christ as savior. Belief in God is "[...] nothing other than the certainty of the feeling of absolute dependence as such."

[This certain faith] [...] cannot be in an individual until, through an impression that he receives from Christ, a beginning, even if only an infinitely smaller one that is a real realization in him of the annulment of the state of need for redemption. The expression 'faith in Christ' is here as well as [the expression] 'faith in God' consist in the relation of an effect with Christ as cause. This is also how John describes it.²⁴²

240. See Strauß, "Schleiermacher und Daub:" 154 and Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* §8 [4.].

241. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 60–61; 102.

242. Schleiermacher, *Der christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange dargestellt*. Zweite Auflage (1830/31), Rolf Schäfer ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008): 116.

Schleiermacher footnotes to John 1:12–14; ignoring entirely John’s account of the pre-existent Logos present at the beginning of creation and incarnated in Jesus of John 1:1–11. Here John emphasizes not only Jesus as the incarnation of the eternal, divine Logos, but he stresses that the incarnated Lord ‘was not recognized’ and ‘was not accepted’ even when he came to his own people (1:11), a cornerstone to the author of John’s thesis of the importance of miracles for evoking faith. The Logos alone was insufficient to evoke faith. It needed ‘historical’ manifestation of its power in order to be recognized. John’s faith is ‘objective’ whereas faith for Schleiermacher is entirely ‘subjective.’

Schleiermacher Emphasizes Theological Tendency in the Synoptics but Ignores the Theological Tendency of the Gospel of John:

Strauß indicates that Schleiermacher is quick to dismiss an account in the Synoptic Gospels as the product of the author’s ‘theological tendency,’ but Strauß illustrates Schleiermacher’s blindness with respect to John’s ‘theological tendency.’ For example, Schleiermacher insists that John received his account of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist from John himself.²⁴³ Luke reports that there was a family relationship between the Baptist and Jesus. However, John 1:31 denies that the Baptist had any prior relationship, much less a familial relationship, with Jesus.²⁴⁴ For Schleiermacher all this means is that Luke’s account is non-historical. Luke’s account is “a manifestly poetically inclined presentation²⁴⁵” However, Strauß points out that Schleiermacher doesn’t ask if John’s denials of a prior relationship with John [the Baptist] is driven by John’s theology, that is, that the Messiah was unrecognized among his ‘people.’²⁴⁶

Furthermore, Strauß points out “[t]hat Jesus submits to John’s repentance-baptism creates a contradiction with the presupposition of his sinlessness [...],” which Schleiermacher defends and whose contradiction Schleiermacher seeks to avoid.²⁴⁷

Schleiermacher’s take on John’s theological tendency stresses the *nature of Christ’s activity* (as Perfect God-consciousness), not the *nature of Christ’s being* (as incarnated Logos, which Schleiermacher ignores).

For example, John’s theological tendency “[...] is ‘to make understandable simultaneously the catastrophe in Christ’s fate [what is it called a catastrophe when it is what is required for the salvation of humanity?²⁴⁸] and the proper nature of his activity,’ or

243. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 74.

244. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 73.

245. See, Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 73. Such ‘poetically inclined presentation’ would mean that it is ‘mythic’ (non-historical) in Schleiermacher’s judgment.

246. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 73.

247. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 73–74.

248. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 79, 98–99, 110.

to solve the contradictions of how, this nature of his activity not being perceived, he nevertheless could be rejected by the Jews.²⁴⁹

Strauß asks: "[...] [W]hy then does Schleiermacher speak only of the activity of Jesus and not of his nature or of his being itself, as the content of the Fourth Gospel's presentation?"²⁵⁰ It is clear why: Schleiermacher does not want to admit that the Fourth Gospel speaks of a peculiar nature of Jesus, that is, of him as a superior, superhuman being.²⁵¹ Strauß points out that, according to John: "Had he [Jesus] been only the human Jewish Messiah, then the Jews would scarcely have refused him; but he was really the enfleshed Logos, the divine light-principle; hence it is no wonder that the children of darkness did not accept him."²⁵² It is unthinkable for Schleiermacher that an eyewitness disciple could have taken Jesus to be the incarnated Logos. Consequently, because Schleiermacher claims the author of the Gospel was the disciple John, he refuses to find that claim, as obvious as it is, in the gospel.

This strategy by Schleiermacher with respect to a pre-existent Christ is analogous to his simply ignoring difficult issues with respect to Jesus and miracles. Schleiermacher's Christ doesn't need to 'correct' misconceptions of geocentrism or accounts of what happened in the tomb because 'they don't belong to the domain of Jesus' calling.'²⁵³

Christ as miracle worker:

For Schleiermacher, miracles are unacceptable because they violate the laws of science. The Christ neither is independent of physical laws nor does he establish his claims to Messiahship on the basis of the violation of physical laws. He is 'naturally human' (not omniscient), has no need to mention the Copernican heliocentric solar system, and is not a nationalistic, theocratic Messiah. Schleiermacher ends up defending what Strauß calls a 'middle ground' that constitutes a 'Platonic Noble Lie'²⁵⁴ (*Republic* III 414b-c) between objectively false and subjectively true: Jesus didn't have to address physical laws, the Copernican Revolution, and nationalistic, theocratic Messiahship because

249. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 79.

250. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 79.

251. The Gospel of John does not portray Jesus as subject to gradual human development. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 63 and 103.

252. Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 80. See as well, *ibid.*: 60.-61 and 102.

253. On Schleiermacher's attempt to take a 'middle' position on the miracles between 'objectively untrue and subjectively true,' see *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 67; 148. Schleiermacher's efforts reach the point of ridiculousness with respect to Jesus' not being obliged to correct the (possible) misunderstanding of the disciples because, as long as they didn't ask, Jesus wasn't obligated to provide information (see *ibid.*: 138-139; 149) beyond the 'domain' of his calling (see *ibid.*: 67; 138; 148).

254. Schleiermacher's translation of 414b-c is '*untadeligen und heilsamen Täuschungen*' ('blameless and wholesome deceptions'), by means of which '*es sei löblich, durch Täuschung zu überreden*' ('it is praiseworthy to persuade by deception').

they were not essential to faith. Because the disciples didn't directly ask about these themes, there was no reason for Jesus to address them.²⁵⁵

The accounts of miracles are the consequence of the limitation of human reason, precisely as a good Rationalist would propose.²⁵⁶ The Copernican Revolution was not part of the common understanding of his day so that he didn't need to refer to it.²⁵⁷ In other words, Schleiermacher does not invoke 'accommodation' to excuse the miracles but 'service to a higher truth.' The 'miracles' are unimportant for Schleiermacher because they 'don't affect the domain of his calling,'²⁵⁸ which is the 'higher truth' of his spiritual vocation for humanity.

John speaks of resurrection and judgment – Schleiermacher did not:

John claims physical resurrection and judgment whereas Schleiermacher speaks of spiritual resurrection and ongoing' personal self-judgment by the believer.²⁵⁹

Rather than it being Strauß who takes 'history' in the gospels to be threatened if their stories are 'mythic,' Schleiermacher has to insist on the eyewitness status of the most questionable historical source for Jesus of Nazareth as the bulwark against the threat of science.

Conclusion

The years of engagement of Schleiermacher resulted in a breadth and depth of analytical criticism of Schleiermacher that is astonishing. With the exceptions of Schleiermacher's definition of immortality as the experience of the eternal in the present moment (although Strauß takes its meaning in a different sense) and his at least partial rejection of miracles, Strauß challenged all of the key ingredients (and many more minor details) of Schleiermacher's work: 1) His rejection of philosophy and ethics as the basis of religion and, in their place, emphasized 'the *feeling* of absolute dependence' on God as the heart of religion. 2) Consequently, his grounding his theology in 'human experience,' not thought or action. 3) His bracketing out all 'predicate' language for God. All God-language that wasn't concerned with what humanity's experiences was excluded (for example, what God 'is' and 'His' characteristics). 4) His emphasis on the

255. For example, the gospels provide no explanation for what happened in the tomb because the disciples didn't ask. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 148, see as well, 67, 138–139, 141–142.

256. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 86–87, 92, 147.

257. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 67.

258. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 67.

259. See Strauß, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*: 105–106.

key divine element as the God/Man, not God ‘Himself.’ The God/Man (the Christ), Schleiermacher claimed, had ‘perfect God-consciousness’ (that is, everything that he was, said, and did arose out of the steadfast orientation grounded in his ‘feeling of absolute dependence’ on God) but was not the incarnated divine ‘Logos.’ 5) His understanding of ‘sinlessness’ as the achievement of ‘perfect God-consciousness, which, did not (!) mean ‘always acting according to God’s law’ (as if we could know that God is a lawgiver) but the highest degree of living, thinking, and acting out of the ‘feeling of absolute dependence.’ 6) His insistence that the God/Man was a historical individual, Jesus of Nazareth, who constituted a ‘new moment of divine creation’ with his model of ‘perfect God-consciousness’ for humanity. 7) Jesus was not a miracle worker. The claim that he performed miracles was the consequence of the limited reason of his age. Yet, Schleiermacher acknowledged that there are moments in ‘the’ gospel, John, where Jesus could have denied his possession of miraculous power, but he didn’t because those moments/elements were not ‘essential’ to his ministry. 8) His understanding of the ‘Christian’ Church as that community devoted to encouraging one another to realize the potential of the God/Man model (a so-called *inclusive* Christology, possible for everyone; not an *exclusive* Christology, accomplished only by one individual, Jesus). In other words, the individual Christian is to seek to live out of her/his sense of the ‘feeling of absolute dependence’ as an on-going developmental process that ‘overcomes mere sensuousness.’ 9) Because Schleiermacher insisted that the God/Man was an historical individual, he claimed that the Christian gospels *had to provide factual, historical information* that ‘proves’ the truth of the God/Man. 10) Although he briefly modified his reservations over the priority of the Gospel of John in the third edition of the *LJ*, Strauß quickly returned to his rejection of Schleiermacher’s solution to the contradictions and inconsistencies among the four Christian gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) by dismissing the first three so-called Synoptic Gospels as unhistorical accounts that consist of stories collected long after their occurrence, NOT from authors who were eyewitnesses. According to Schleiermacher, only the Gospel of John comes from an eyewitness!

Strauß reflections leave the reader with little ground for taking Schleiermacher’s work seriously. One can summarize the results by two questions: 1) How does one distinguish between an absolute and a relative feeling when/if one always has a feeling?; and 2) Why is a feeling of unity more ‘valuable’ than a sensuous feeling? The answers require more than merely the claim that feeling is more universal than knowledge or morality. It presupposes an understanding that claims that the human condition is corrupted by sensuousness and incapable of escaping its imperfections. A way beyond these unresolvable conundrums is to give up the conviction that Christianity (or religion generally) has to do with perfection of any kind to concentrate attention on the necessary conditions of possibility for a transcendental consciousness to be able to experience, understand, and the exercise responsible agency in a community – and across the globe.

Volume I

