

EXPOSING THE ROOTS FREUDIAN FRAUDS

***"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God."***

1 Corinthians 1:18

Sigmund Freud, founder of psychoanalysis, has had a major impact, not only on counseling theories and methodologies, but throughout our culture. Who hasn't encountered the "Freudian" slip or routinely heard such terms as "projection," "denial," "transference," "repression," and the like? Even the teachings of current *Christian* psychologists are heavily laden with Freudian theory, though few specifically credit him.

This intrusion into Christian counseling must be critically examined. Many Christians are perhaps unaware of Freud's blatant hostility to their faith. This man was not a neutral observer of human nature, scientifically noting and correlating the data he observed. To the contrary, Freud *hated* Christianity and made every effort to launch attacks on its central teachings and practices, supposing that he could "explain" religion by means of his psychoanalytic theory. The results are both ludicrous and blasphemous. Hardly founded on any sort of scientific method, Freud's theories are pure *speculations* arising out of the depths of his ungodly heart, rooted and grounded in atheism. His godless presuppositions need to be exposed, so that believers will not be deceived and taken captive.

To accomplish the purpose of this paper, three major Freudian works will be explored. The earliest, *Totem and Taboo* (TT), attempts to explain the origins of religion in terms of the supposed practices of savages. Closer to the end of his career, *The Future of an Illusion* (FI) builds Freud's case for removing religious beliefs from society. Finally, *Moses and Monotheism* (MM), the last book before his death, makes a more specific application of the blasphemous theories first formulated in *Totem and Taboo*.

Freud's Assumption of Atheism

Freud is described as a "convinced, consistent, aggressive atheist" who considered himself as "godless Jew" (FI, p. xxiii). His atheist presumptions permeate his writings. Freud clearly *presupposes* that God does not exist. He makes no attempt to prove his atheism, but simply *assumes* it. For example:

"For neither fear nor demons can be accepted in psychology as finalities defying any further deduction. It would be

different if demons really existed; but we know that, like gods, they are only the product of the psychic powers of man; they have been created from and out of something."
(TT, p. 35)

Additional speculation leads him to conclude that demons are "mere projections of hostile feelings which the survivor entertains toward the dead" because the survivor has ambivalent feelings toward the deceased (TT, p. 83). Concerning God he says:

"Psychoanalytic investigation of the individual teaches with special emphasis that god is in every case modeled after the father and that our personal relation to god is dependent upon our relation to our physical father, fluctuating and changing with him, and that *god at bottom is nothing but an exalted father.*" (TT, p. 190, emphasis added)

Having rejected God, as well as belief in any other spiritual entities, Freud engages in extensive speculation to "explain" why religious beliefs nevertheless persist:

"If we have the courage to follow our *assumptions* further, we may ask what essential part of our psychological structure is reflected and reviewed in the projection formation of souls and spirits." (TT, p. 121)

Notice, again, the unproven *assumption* of atheism, on which Freud's entire psychoanalytic system is founded. He *assumes* that God must be a "projection" of some "essential part of our psychological structure."

Why is this point so critical? Why, some may ask, could not Freud have discovered some important truth about the nature of man in spite of his atheism? The reason is not difficult to assess. Man was created in the *image of God* to be a reflection of His glory and to live in a covenantal relationship with Him. When Freud and others attempt to study the nature of man apart from the Creator, Whose image he bears, and from Whom he is separated by his sin, they *must* fall into serious error. It cannot be otherwise.

Just as certainly as Freud presupposes atheism, the Christian, if he wishes to accurately study the nature of man, must presuppose the self-existent, eternal triune God who created all things.

Freud's View of Scripture

It is revealing to note the self-serving manner in which Freud utilized and viewed God's Word:

"When I use biblical tradition here in such an autocratic and arbitrary way, draw on it for confirmation whenever it is convenient, and dismiss its evidence without scruple when it contradicts my conclusions, I know full well that I am exposing myself to severe criticism concerning my method and that I weaken the force of my proofs. But this is the only way in which to treat material whose trustworthiness--as we know for certain--was seriously damaged by the influence of distorting tendencies. Some justification will be forthcoming later, it is hoped, when we have unearthed secret motives. Certainty is not to be gained in any case, and, moreover, we may say that all other authors have acted likewise."
(MM, p. 30)

Note the contradiction here concerning certainty; certainty is "not to be gained in any case," yet Freud claims that "we know for certain" that Scripture is not trustworthy! It is necessary for him to engage in extremely far-fetched speculation concerning the "secret motives" of ancient people he has never met, in order to justify his ludicrous conclusions and force the "facts," as he sees them, to fit his preconceived bias against religion, particularly Christianity.

Notice, again, the *presupposition* that Scripture is not to be trusted. Freud does not prove it to be so, nor even attempt such a proof. He *assumes*. Just as certainly, the Christian must assume that God's Word *is* trustworthy!

Freud vs. the Internal Testimony of the Holy Spirit

God is clearly revealed in the things He has created, such that man is wholly without excuse for his unbelief. Even the most aggressive atheist, such as Freud, knows deep in his heart that the God of Scripture exists and that ultimately he cannot escape from facing Him. However, because sin has corrupted every aspect of man, the unbeliever cannot correctly read this general revelation of God until two conditions are met. First, he must have special revelation, the Scriptures, as his "eyeglasses." Second, the Holy Spirit must open his eyes so that he is no longer spiritually blind. The Spirit bears witness to the spirit of the regenerated man of the truth of Scripture.

Freud, spiritually dead and spiritually blind, mocks this internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, claiming that the church "maintains that religious doctrines are outside the jurisdiction of reason--are above reason. Their truth must be felt inwardly, and they need not be comprehended" (FI, p. 35). Holding up autonomous human reason above God, Freud objects that:

"There is no appeal to a court above that of reason. If the truth of religious doctrines is dependent on an inner experience which bears witness to that truth, what is one to do about the many people who do not have this rare experience?" (FI, p. 35)

What, indeed? Yet God speaks the truth and Freud is wrong:

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14

Human reason is not autonomous, but dependent on the working of the Holy Spirit in the human heart. Belief in God and His Word is not *unreasonable*, but in fact is the *only* explanation of life. It is Freud's position that is unreasonable. However, lacking the Spirit, his mind is darkened and he holds down the truth in unrighteousness.

Dare we trust such a man with the deepest problems of the human heart?

Other Fundamental Assumptions

There are massive unproven assumptions underlying Freud's speculations. Atheism is clearly prominent. Besides this, he assumes the ability of man to probe the depths of the human heart:

"Psychoanalysis has taught us that in his unconscious psychic activity every person possesses an apparatus which enables him to interpret the reactions of others." (TT, p. 204)

Scripture, to the contrary, asserts that man *cannot* make such interpretations. Only God, using His Word, is able to do so (Jeremiah 17:9-10; Hebrews 4:12).

Additionally, Freud's elaborate speculations about the origins of religion presuppose a "mass psychology" analogous to individual psychology. Near the conclusion of *Totem and Taboo*, he admits this:

"It can hardly have escaped any one that we base everything upon the assumption of a psyche of the mass in which psychic processes occur as in the psychic life of the individual." (TT, p. 203)

Evidence for such mass "psychic processes" is nonexistent in Scripture (or elsewhere). And underlying *this* presumption is the

assumption that Freud is accurate about the internal workings of the individual human heart. However, he *cannot* be correct, having rejected the Creator of man.

Another pillar of Freudian theory is the assumption that evolution, rather than creation, is *fact* rather than unproven theory. Freud claims that "it can no longer be doubted after the discovery of evolution that mankind had a prehistory" (p. 101). Much of his speculation on the origin and development of religion is grounded in evolution and would be quickly dismantled by the recognition that evolution does *not* account for the origin of the human race, but on the contrary, *God* created man out of the dust of the earth and breathed life into his nostrils.

All of this introductory material concerning Freud's fundamental assumptions is important. His methods are not objective, scientific inquiry, despite his praise of science. His assumptions are in no way neutral, but highly biased against the truth of God's Word. This ungodly foundation leads to ungodly conclusions which we dare not trust!

Freud's General Evaluation of Religion

Freud's evaluation of religious beliefs, and his recommendations for the future, are best summarized by examining *Future of an Illusion*, considered "the culmination of a lifelong pattern of thinking" (FI, p. xxiii). Although he admits to uncertainties, difficulties, subjectivity, and the influence of personal experience on his "prophecy" (FI, p. 5-6), he goes on to make sweeping speculations about the origins of religion and drastic recommendations for its abolition. It is evident throughout that Freud *presupposes* atheism as the foundation for all that he has to say.

It is important to note at the outset that Freud considers religious ideas "the most important item in the psychical inventory of a civilization," yet "illusions" (FI, p. 17). Note carefully his definition of "illusion:"

"An illusion is not the same thing as an error; nor is it necessarily an error...what is characteristic of illusions is that they are derived from human wishes. In this respect they come near to psychiatric delusions." (FI, p. 39)

"Illusions need not necessarily be false--that is to say, unrealizable or in contradiction to reality." (FI, p. 39)

"We call a belief an illusion when a wish-fulfillment is a prominent factor in its motivation, and in doing so we disregard its relations to reality." (FI, p. 40)

Religious doctrines, claims Freud, are illusions which are incapable of proof:

"Of the reality value of most of them we cannot judge; just as they cannot be proved, so they cannot be refuted. We still know too little to make a critical approach to them."
(FI, p. 40)

"To assess the truth-value of religious doctrines does not lie within the scope of the present inquiry. It is enough for us that we have recognized them as being, in their psychological nature, illusions." (p. 42)

This is highly misleading and confusing! The thrust of Freud's writings, as multiplied quotations demonstrate, is anti-theistic, anti-religion, and specifically anti-Christian. Freud *presupposes* atheism, as was shown earlier. He makes countless attempts to "assess the truth-value of religious doctrines." His apparent neutrality in these remarks is a serious deception. In fact, crediting the "scientific spirits" of the age for the decreasing influence of religion, Freud makes the following negative assessment of the "truth-value of religious doctrines:"

"Criticism has whittled away the evidential value of religious documents, natural science has shown up the errors in them, and comparative research has been struck by the fatal resemblance between the religious ideas which we revere and the mental products of primitive peoples and things."
(FI, p. 49)

Such extreme contradiction within the covers of one slim volume *must* be noted. Note carefully, as well, his equation of religious ideas with "psychiatric delusions." Christians...beware!

Freud implies extreme subjectivity and unreliability concerning religious beliefs when he says:

"It is once again merely an illusion to expect anything from intuition and introspection; they can give us nothing but particulars about our own mental life, which are hard to interpret, never any information about the questions which religious doctrine finds it so easy to answer." (FI, p. 40)

Christian doctrine, however, does not arise from within the mind of man. Here we must distinguish between the *general or natural revelation* of the created world, and the *special revelation* of God's Word. The heavens declare the glory of God; all creation clearly declares the existence of the eternal, self-existent God, so as to leave man without excuse. Yet, because of the impact of sin on the mind of man, the *special* revelation of Scripture is

necessary in order for man to truly know God, to come to saving faith. Freud is without excuse for his unbelief. Interestingly, we might turn his own statement back on himself. His speculations about religious ideas certainly give us no information on the questions which God answers in His Word, but only information about the manner in which this particular unbeliever holds down the truth in unrighteousness!

Origins of Religion

Freud devised a number of theories concerning the origin of religious beliefs and practices.

Frustration of Instincts. One explanation he offers is the frustration of certain basic instinctual wishes, specifically, "incest, cannibalism, and lust for killing" (p. 13). Here, he must *assume* that this trio of "instincts" is common to human nature. Such a massive assumption cannot be supported.

The Helplessness of a Child. Early in his career, Freud announced to Jung his belief that religion had originated in the child's sense of helplessness (FI, p. xxiii). This is how, he claims, a religion develops:

"The defense against childish helplessness is what lends its characteristic features to the adult's reaction to the helplessness which he has to acknowledge--a reaction which is precisely the formation of religion." (FI, p. 30)

"And thus a store of ideas is created, born of man's need to make his helplessness tolerable and built up from the material of memories of the helplessness of his own childhood and the childhood of the human race." (FI, p. 23)

Similarly, Freud relates monotheism to the child's relation to his father:

"Now that God was a single person, man's relations to him could recover the intimacy and intensity of the child's relation to his father." (FI, p. 24)

Furthermore, assuming as he does that "the child's attitude to its father is colored by a peculiar ambivalence," Freud claims that "the indications of this ambivalence...are deeply imprinted in every religion" (FI, p. 30). This sweeping generalization is unsupported, and certainly has no place in orthodox Christian doctrine.

Power over Natural Forces. Nature, declares Freud, reminds man of his childish helplessness, such that he gives to natural

forces "the character of a father...he turns them into gods" (FI, p. 21). The result, he claims, is that:

"If the elements have passions that rage as they do in our own souls, if death itself is not something spontaneous but the violent act of an evil Will, if everywhere in nature there are Beings around us of a kind that we know in our own society, then we can breathe freely" and "we can apply the same methods against these violent supermen outside that we employ in our own society." (FI, p. 20-21)

The purpose of the "gods" thus created is expressed as follows:

"The gods retain their threefold task: they must exorcise the terrors of nature, they must reconcile men to the cruelty of Fate, particularly as it is shown in death, and they must compensate them for the sufferings and privations which a civilized life in common has imposed on them." (FI, p. 22)

In time, Freud speculates, nature became increasingly autonomous, the "gods" withdrew from it and morality became their function (FI, p. 22).

Basis for Holding Religious Ideas

Freud proposes three answers to the question of why religious ideas continue to be held. First is belief by ancestors, and secondly the proofs handed down by such ancestors--proofs that Freud considers wholly unsatisfactory:

"The proofs they have left us are set down in writings which themselves bear every mark of untrustworthiness. They are full of contradictions, revisions and falsifications, and where they speak of factual confirmations they are themselves unconfirmed." (FI, p. 33)

"It is precisely the elements which might be of the greatest importance to us and which have the task of solving the riddles of the universe and of reconciling us to the sufferings of life--it is precisely those elements that are the least well authenticated of any." (FI, p. 34)

Notice once again how Freud is assessing the truth-value of religious ideas, something he claimed *not* to be doing in this essay! His contempt for Scripture is clearly evident, and ought to send out a piercing alarm to Christians.

The third reason Freud claims for the preservation of religious ideas is that "it is forbidden to raise the question of their authentication at all" (FI, p. 33). He concludes from this

observation that:

"After all, a prohibition like this can only be for one reason--that society is very well aware of the insecurity of the claim it makes on behalf of its religious doctrines."
(FI, p. 33)

First of all, *many* unbelievers throughout the ages have questioned and mocked the claims of the Christian faith. The type of largescale prohibition he envisions does not exist, although there may be perhaps particular groups that forbid inquiry. The Bible instructs believers to test what they hear against God's Word as did the Bereans (Acts 17), not to mindlessly accept whatever they hear. The Protestant Reformation in itself is an answer to Freud's reasoning here. Some courageous men did in fact raise serious questions about the doctrines they had been taught, and Protestantism resulted from their efforts.

Furthermore, Freud's logic here is not without question. *Only one reason?* His conclusion cannot be supported. The reverential fear of the living God might also be a valid reason for the *limitation* of questioning. But Freud, as we know, shakes his fist in the face of his Creator.

Freud's Evaluation of the Results of Religion

Here we encounter an interesting contradiction in Freud's writings. At one point, he is adamant in stating that religion hasn't succeeded in making mankind any happier, but that most people continue to be dissatisfied (FI, p. 47). Yet elsewhere, having declared religion the "universal obsessional neurosis of humanity," (FI, p. 55) he states something of a "useful" purpose for religion:

"Devout believers are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of certain neurotic illnesses; their acceptance of the universal neurosis spares them the task of constructing a personal one." (FI, p. 56)

Also significant is Freud's total misunderstanding of Christian sanctification, evident in his claim that religion has not led to increased morality:

"One sinned, and then one was free to sin once more...sin is indispensable for the enjoyment of all the blessings of divine grace, so that, at bottom, sin is pleasing to God."
(FI, p. 48)

Freud is clearly uninformed of the Apostle Paul's answer to this dangerous distortion in Romans 6! To say that "sin is pleasing to

God" could not be further from the truth!

The Future of Religion

Freud has rather drastic recommendations to make concerning the future of religious beliefs. While he expresses some initial fear that the "cause" of psychoanalysis might be hindered by the publication of his anti-religious ideas (FI, p. 46), he moves right on to advocate the destruction of religion. (Hindsight shows his fears unfounded here, as even the leading "Christian" psychologists have embraced his theories rather uncritically!)

First, Freud anticipates the concern that:

"If men are taught that there is no almighty and all-just God, no divine world order and no future life, they will feel exempt from all obligation to obey the precepts of civilization." (FI, p. 44)0

He answers the objection, *assuming* the truth of his atheism, by claiming that "civilization runs a greater risk if we maintain our present attitude to religion than if we give it up" (FI, p. 45). Explaining his radical proposal, he claims, concerning a prohibition such as outlawing murder, that "we risk making its observance dependent on belief in God" (FI, p. 52). He proposes instead that:

"It would be an undoubted advantage if we were to leave God out altogether and honestly admit the purely human origin of all the regulations and precepts of civilization. Along with their pretended sanctity, these commandments and laws would lose their rigidity and unchangeableness as well. People could understand that they are made, not so much to rule them as, on the contrary, to serve their interest; and they would adopt a more friendly attitude to them, and instead of aiming at their abolition, would aim only at their improvement." (FI, p. 53)

Note that the logic of such statements depends entirely on the truth of Freud's *presupposition* of atheism, as well as a view of the inherent goodness of man that clashes not only with biblical truth, but with Freud's pessimistic anthropology as well.

In addition, Freud has equated religious belief with his definition of neurosis. Thus he claims that turning away from religious teachings, "neurotic relics" in his estimation, is "the fatal inevitability of a process of growth" (FI, p. 55). He states that:

"The time has come, as it does in an analytic treatment, for

replacing the effects of repression by the results of the rational operation of the intellect." (FI, p. 56)

Be aware here that the "rational intellect" of man is radically damaged by sin. The regenerated, transformed intellect of the believer is able to recognize that without presupposing the existence of the true God revealed in Scripture, man is condemned to an utterly *irrational* existence.

But Freud persists, hoping for a liberating experience leading to a utopian conclusion:

"By withdrawing their expectations from the other world and concentrating all their liberated energies into their life on earth, they will probably succeed in achieving a state of things in which life will become tolerable for everyone and civilization no longer oppressive to anyone." (FI, 63)

Like some previous quotes, this one is again based on the presupposition of atheism and an unrealistic, unbiblical optimism about the nature of man.

Freud admits, interestingly, that he could be "chasing an illusion" and that perhaps religious beliefs are not quite so bad as he supposes (FI, p. 61). He even claims an openness to abandon his ideas if they prove unsatisfactory (p. 67), yet he presses on to say that:

"Perhaps there is a treasure to be dug up capable of enriching civilization and that it is worth making the experiment of an irreligious education." (FI, p. 61)

He totally fails here to consider the drastic and eternal consequences that would result from *error* on his part. He can only do so by hardening his heart and *assuming* that God does not exist. This requires incredible arrogance and foolishness on his part.

Totem and Taboo Theories

In a relatively early writing, *Totem and Taboo*, Freud devises a complex theory concerning the origins of religion in general, and Christianity in particular, based on what he presupposes to be the practices of ancient savage tribes. It is hard to imagine any more blasphemous attack on the faith than what is presented here.

We should note at the outset the admittedly tentative nature of his conclusions:

"Although this *hypothesis* leads to somewhat *improbable*

conclusions, there is no reason for rejecting the possibility that it comes more or less near to the reality which is so hard to construct." (TT, p. xi, emphasis added)

Freud acknowledges here that his conclusions are *improbable*, yet urges the reader to accept them. For the Christian, however, there is every good reason for rejecting the possibility of these blasphemous conclusions. Freud's "facts" are of dubious origin, and his presuppositions are grounded in atheism so that even if his "facts" about ancient peoples had some merit, he is unable to interpret those "facts" in accordance with God's revelation.

It is noteworthy also to observe that Freud attempts to downplay his "explanation" of religion:

"The reader need not fear that psychoanalysis, which first revealed the regular over-determination of psychic acts and formations, will be tempted to derive anything so complicated as religion from a single source." (TT, p. 130)

To the contrary, Freud does indeed attempt to derive the origins of religious faith from one specific source, his evaluation of the totem/taboo practices of ancient tribes. A full reading of *Totem and Taboo* renders that evident to the reader.

Before examining Freud's "explanation" of Christianity in particular, it is necessary to review his thoughts and theories about savages. Concerning these he states that:

"We can recognize in their psychic life a well-preserved, early stage of our own development." (TT, p. 3)

As we move on, bear in mind Freud's assumption of mass psychic processes which parallel individual processes, as well as his presupposition of evolution. The acceptance of his theories hinges on accepting these underlying assumptions.

Totem

The term "totem" is used to describe an animal who is a "tribal ancestor of the clan, as well as its tutelary spirit and protector" (TT, p. 5). Thus:

"Members of a totem are therefore under a sacred obligation not to kill (destroy) their totem, to abstain from eating its meat or from any other enjoyment of it." (TT, p. 5)

Members of a particular totem (tribe) are prohibited from entering into sexual relations with one another (TT, p. 7). Freud considers the "totem system" to be "the basis of all other social

obligations and moral restrictions of the tribe" (TT, p. 13).

Taboo

Freud provides the following definition of "taboo:"

"Taboo is a very primitive prohibition imposed from without (by an authority) and directed against the strongest desires of man. The desire to violate it continues in the unconscious; persons who obey the taboo have an ambivalent feeling toward what is affected by the taboo." (TT, p. 48)

The taboo is both "sacred, consecrated" and "uncanny, dangerous, forbidden, and unclean" (TT, p. 26). Such restrictions are "different from religious or moral prohibitions" in that they are "not traced to the commandment of a god but really they themselves impose their own prohibitions" (p. 27). Furthermore, they "lack all justification and are of unknown origin" (p. 27). Freud claims that they go back to a "pre-religious" age (p. 27).

Purposes of taboos include the protection of weak as well as important persons, avoidance of the wrath of gods/spirits, and the guarding of acts such as birth, sex, and marriage (TT, p. 28).

Automatic punishment from the "gods" is expected for any taboo violation (TT, p. 29), and taboos are rooted in "fear of the effect of demonic powers" (TT, p. 34). Thus Freud compares taboos with the "compulsion prohibitions of neurotics," claiming that:

"An external threat of punishment is superfluous, because an inner certainty (a conscience) exists that violation will be followed by unbearable disaster." (TT, p. 37)

He further defines "conscience" as "the inner perception of objections to definite wish impulses that exist in us" (TT, p. 90). The two most basic taboos, which are also the two basic laws of totemism, concern murder and incest. Freud draws the conclusion from these restrictions that murderous and incestuous impulses must therefore be the two "oldest and strongest desires of mankind" (TT, p. 44). In fact, he says that:

"The basis of taboo is a forbidden action for which there exists a strong inclination in the unconscious." (TT, p. 44)

"The law only forbids men to do what their instincts incline them to do; what nature itself prohibits and punishes it would be superfluous for the law to prohibit and punish." (TT, p. 160)

Note carefully Freud's repeated insistence on the role of

unconscious impulses in human behavior, both in individuals and in groups. Because of the proclaimed *unconscious* nature of these impulses, Freud is able to give himself license to explain just about anything in any way he chooses. It is through his appeal to *unconscious impulses* that he "holds down the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1), attempting to "explain" religious beliefs and practices in a manner that is highly offensive to Christians. To further seal his closed system, Freud assumes the "indestructibility of unconscious processes and their inaccessibility to correction" (TT, p. 93).

Building on this unconscious foundation, Freud claims the presence of *ambivalent emotions*, and presumes this a key factor in the development of taboos, even including murder:

"We can then assume that this desire to murder actually exists and that the taboo as well as the moral prohibition are psychologically by no means superfluous but are, on the contrary, explained and justified through our ambivalent attitude toward the impulse to slay." (TT, p. 92)

"When wish feelings undergo repression their libido becomes transformed into anxiety." (TT, p. 91)

So, from the fact that society prohibits murder, Freud concludes that there must be an unconscious yet ambivalent impulse to murder present in the individual. When this and/or other basic impulses must be "repressed," anxiety results.

Ambivalence is specifically related by Freud to the father/child relationship:

"Distrust of the father has been shown to be intimately connected with the highest esteem for him." (TT, p. 68)

The analogy between savage and neurotic "may allow us to surmise how much in the relation of the savage to his ruler arises from the infantile attitude of the child to its father." (TT, p. 68)

Freud's famous "Oedipus complex" theory revolves around this ambivalence toward the father combined with a rivalry with the mother. We will see a little later how this theory is intertwined with Freud's "explanation" of Christianity. For now, recall that Freud has assumed the idea of "god" to be the "projection" of a father figure.

The second quote above shows us how Freud moves from the father/child relationship to the king/subject. He moves on to explain "god" in a similar manner. He states:

"The first kings were strangers who, after a short reign, were destined to be sacrificed at solemn festivals as representatives of the deity." (TT, p. 69)

"Christian myths are said to have been still influenced by the after-effects of this evolution of kings." (TT, p. 69)

Considering both gods and kings substitutes for the father, Freud says that the first phases of this substitution "plainly show the most energetic expression of that ambivalence which is characteristic of religion." (TT, p. 194)

Note here the progression, from father to king to god. Freud not only attacks God the Father, but also God as King of Kings. He spares no effort in his attempt to "explain," step by step, the existence of religious faith.

Incest is a special area of concern to Freud, and one that is intimately connected to his claimed origins of religion. Quoting another author (Frazer) concerning the incest taboo, he says:

"We do not know the origin of incest dread and do not even know how to guess at it. None of the solutions of the riddle thus far advanced seems satisfactory to us." (TT, p. 162)

Leaving no room for God's commandments as an explanation, Freud boldly proclaims that "into this darkness psychoanalytic experience throws one single ray of light" (p. 164). Actually, it is a ray of the deepest darkness...but note how he draws conclusions similar to what was quoted earlier concerning unconscious murderous impulses:

"Instead of assuming there, from the legal prohibition or incest, that there is a natural aversion to incest we ought rather to assume that there is a natural instinct in favor of it." (TT, p. 160)

"The experiences of psychoanalysis make the assumption of such an innate aversion to incestuous relations altogether impossible. They have taught, on the contrary, that the first sexual impulses of the young are regularly of an incestuous nature and that such repressed impulses play a role which can hardly be overestimated as the motive power of later neuroses." (TT, p. 160)

This is a *major unproven assumption*. It is a rather imaginative and distorted attempt to explain away the sinfulness of man, which is too obvious to flatly deny (although some do). Freud's extreme pessimism about man (for which he has no answers), even leads him

to "explain" what appears on the surface to be unselfishness:

"Psychoanalysis here confirms what the pious were wont to say, that we are all miserable sinners. How then shall we explain the expected nobility of the neurosis which fears nothing for itself and everything for the beloved person?" (TT, p. 94)

"The tender altruistic trait of the neurosis therefore merely *compensates* for the opposite attitude of brutal egotism which is at the basis of it." (TT, p. 95)

Freud apparently wishes to explain all human behavior, even when by God's grace it is good, by means of negative unconscious impulses. He twists biblical truth here, and nowhere does he offer anything approaching genuine hope for change.

All of the preceding background concerning murder and incest is important to our understanding of Freud's attempt to account for the existence of religion. It is an *incredible* attempt to suppress the truth of the living God.

Application to Religion

Freud proposes an "evolution of man's conceptions of the universe," and an analogous process in the individual, as follows:

Animism: Man sees himself as omnipotent (TT, p. 114-5). "Animism in the narrower sense is the theory of psychic concepts, and in the wider sense, of spiritual beings in general." (TT, p. 98)

On the individual level, Freud calls this stage "narcissism." (TT, p. 117)

Religious: Man sees "gods" as omnipotent, but reserves to himself the right to control (TT, p. 114-5).

Freud claims that this stage corresponds to the years when a child is dependent on his parents. (TT, p. 117)

Scientific: Man acknowledges his smallness and submits to death, but "there still lives on a fragment of this primitive belief in the omnipotence of thought" (TT, p. 114-5). Also, at this point man has "greatly limited the existence of spirits" and can "explain the processes of nature by the assumption of impersonal physical forces" (TT, p. 99).

Freud relates these stages to the individual's maturity, when he renounces the pleasure principle and accepts reality. (TT, p. 117)

Freud is hopeful that the human race is on the verge of this final stage of "maturity." Meanwhile, all of his speculation about totem, taboo, murder, and incest, is used to weave a theory about the origins of religion.

Near the beginning of the human race, Freud speculates, all of the sons of the first human father joined forces and murdered him. Following this dreadful deed, they then "accomplished their identification with him by devouring him and each acquired a part of his strength" (TT, p. 183). They renounced the women of the tribe (TT, p. 186), and out of their guilt created the two fundamental taboos prohibiting murder and incest (TT, p. 185). Later, the equality of the sons could not be maintained:

"...in consequence of which there arose a tendency to revive the old father ideal in the creation of gods through the veneration of those individuals who had distinguished themselves above the rest." (TT, p. 192)

Thus, "the totem religion had issued from the sense of guilt of the sons" (TT, p. 187). Note how this is a diabolical restatement of the Christian truth of *original sin*.

Freud moves from these initial speculations to later religious developments:

"All later religions prove to be attempts to solve the same problem, varying only in accordance with the stage of culture in which they are attempted and according to the paths which they take; they are all, however, reactions aiming at the same great event with which culture began and which ever since has not let mankind come to rest." (TT, p. 187, emphasis added)

This is certainly a sweeping generalization, made on the basis of "facts" for which Freud has no solid proof. Rather, the "facts" are mere speculations grounded in Freud's shaky reasoning based in atheist presuppositions. It is important here for the Christian to remember that sin impacts the *entire* person, including his ability to reason. The mind of the unbeliever is darkened, futile, and foolish, though he professes to be wise (Romans 1:21-22).

Freud further applies his theories concerning *ambivalence*, and the *defiance of the sons*, to religious beliefs and practices:

"It is certainly noticeable that ambivalence attached to the

father complex also continues in totemism and in religions in general." (TT, p. 187)

"The son's defiance also reappears, often in the most remarkable disguises and inversions, in the formation of later religions." (TT, p. 188)

Weaving it all together, Freud makes the astonishing claim that "the beginnings of religion, ethics, society, and art meet in the Oedipus complex" (TT, p. 202). This is a rather arrogant claim to make for a theory rooted in unconscious processes, one for which he has no reliable proof. Far too much *faith* is placed in the imaginative speculation of one man.

It will be shocking to see how Freud unites all of his theoretical ammunition to launch specific attacks on both Christianity and Judaism. First, however, we must consider his comments about sacrifice and the totem meal.

The Role of Sacrifice in Religion

Observing the sacrificial practices of religion, Freud surmises a sacrifice to be "the offering to the deity in order to reconcile him or to incline him to be favorable" (TT, p. 172). At first, "the sacrifice destined for the god was looked upon as his real food" (TT, p. 173). The form of the sacrifice was an animal, "whose flesh and blood the god and his worshippers ate together" (TT, p. 173). Animal sacrifice was a practice engaged in strictly by the clan as a whole, and forbidden to the individual:

"The sacrificing community, its god, and the sacrificial animal were of the same blood, and the members of a clan."
(TT, p. 176)

"These animals were originally identified with the gods themselves and...at the sacrifice the worshippers in some way emphasized their blood relationship to the god and to the animal." (TT, p. 176)

However, the practice of providing food for the god "became offensive with the progressive dematerialization of the deity" (TT, p. 173).

Freud believes that over a period of time, the animal lost its sacredness and "the rite became a simple offering to the deity, a self-deprivation" (TT, p. 193). Coinciding with this development, the god could "be communicated with only through a priest as intermediary" (TT, p. 193).

Speculating further, Freud sees the practice of sacrifice as

an attempt to cover the "original sin" of the race:

"Myths in which the god himself kills the animal that is sacred to him, which he himself really is, belong to this phase. This is the greatest possible denial of the great misdeed with which society and the sense of guilt began."
(TT, p. 194)

Finally, Freud theorizes about the practice of *human* sacrifice:

"The yearly sacrifice (self-sacrifice is a variant) of a god seems to have been an important feature of Semitic religions. The ceremony of human sacrifice in various parts of the inhabited world makes it certain that these human beings ended their lives as representatives of the deity." (TT, p. 195)

Perhaps you can begin to guess where all this is headed in terms of an "explanation" of Christianity!

The Totem Meal

In connection with animal sacrifices, Freud discusses the "totem meal" following the clan's murder of the totem animal. That meal supposedly included a "death lamentation" with the specific purpose "to exculpate oneself from responsibility for the slaying" (TT, p. 181). Exalting his own theories to the level of "revelation," Freud explains that:

"Psychoanalysis has revealed to us that the totem animal is really a substitute for the father." (TT, p. 182)

Freud's theories concerning the father, the totem animal, emotional ambivalence, sacrifice, and the totem meal are all being woven together to "explain" and attack religious faith. Freud specifically attacks both Judaism, in Old Testament times, and Christianity.

Specific Applications to Old Testament Faith

Written near the end of his life, *Moses and Monotheism* is Freud's attempt to discredit the biblical account of Moses:

"No historian can regard the biblical account of Moses and the Exodus as other than a *pious myth*." (MM, p. 38, emphasis added)

Note carefully, however, how he acknowledges his ignorance of the true facts, yet defends himself on the same page:

"What the distorting tendencies (of the traditional account) were we should like to guess, but we are kept in the dark by our ignorance of the historical events." (MM, p. 38)

"But we cannot remain indifferent on finding ourselves in opposition to the sober historical researches of our time." (MM, p. 38)

The "historical researches" to which he refers so confidently include the ludicrous "documentary hypothesis" of modern times which attempts to attribute the books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy) to an editorial compilation of four different source documents (MM, pp. 47, 50). Extremely unreliable criteria are used to tear apart the biblical texts into these "sources," and the Scripture is mutilated. This is purely a theory, not proven historical fact as Freud might wish. For further reading on this issue, I recommend *The Five Books of Moses*, by Oswald T. Allis (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co.).

Basically, Freud proposes that Moses was really an Egyptian of royal origin who imposed his monotheistic beliefs on the Jewish people and led them out of Egypt, taking with him a few Egyptians who later comprised the Levites. He claims that "with the help of certain assumptions the motives guiding Moses in his unusual undertaking can be made intelligible" (MM, p. 14). Furthermore, he presumes that his theory "stimulates ideas of some moment concerning the origin of monotheistic religion in general" (MM, p. 15). Amazingly, he claims to be writing "with the audacity of one who has little or nothing to lose" (MM, p. 66). (He fails to acknowledge that he has *eternal life* to lose!)

The "motives guiding Moses" include speculation that when Egypt turned from monotheism back to polytheism, Moses decided to impose monotheism on the Jews and assume the role of their leader:

"He added the something new that turned into monotheism the doctrine of a universal god: the quality of exclusiveness." (MM, p. 24)

Freud compares the concept of one great God to a "psychiatric delusion" with an "obsessive quality" (MM, p. 167). He boldly proclaims his unbelief:

"I do not believe that one supreme great God 'exists' today, but I believe that in primeval times there was one person who must needs appear gigantic and who, raised to the status of a deity, returned to the memory of man." (MM, p. 166)

Freud considers such an influential man to be one who "is allotted the role of Super-ego in mass psychology" (MM, p. 150).

Failing to have any understanding of the biblical concept of election, Freud considers astonishing:

"...the conception of a god suddenly 'choosing' a people, making it 'his' people and himself its own god...sometimes, it is true, we hear of a people adopting another god; but never of a god choosing a new people." (MM, p. 54)

What is missing here is the fact that Israel's God is the *true living God*, the one who created the heavens and the earth, whereas the gods of pagan nations were idols formed by the minds and hands of men.

Circumcision

Biblically dated to the time of God's covenant with Abraham, circumcision was practiced in ancient Israel as a sign of admission into the covenant community. Freud notes that circumcision was also practiced in Egypt, ignores the biblical account, and claims that Moses introduced it to the Jews. He concludes:

"To admit that circumcision was an Egyptian custom introduced by Moses would be almost to recognize that the religion handed down to them from Moses was also Egyptian. But the Jews had good reasons to deny the fact; therefore the truth about circumcision had also to be contradicted." (MM, p. 34)

These conclusions do not logically follow from the practice of circumcision in Egypt. Freud glosses over the biblical account and dismisses it without offering any proof that it is inaccurate. He repeatedly twists the "facts" as he sees them to fit his preconceived psychoanalytic notions, so that he can deny God.

Ignoring the biblical purpose of circumcision, Freud introduces one of his own:

"When we hear that Moses 'sanctified' his people by introducing the custom of circumcision, we now understand the deep-lying meaning of this pretension. Circumcision is the symbolic substitute of castration, a punishment which the primeval father dealt his sons long ago out of the fullness of his power." (MM, p. 156)

There is no proof whatsoever for this fabricated explanation, which defies biblical truth.

Another "God"

Freud weaves an even more diabolical web in his attempt to

destroy the truth of God's Word. From the similarity of consonants in the biblical name Jehovah, to the consonants in a volcano-god Jahve (MM, p. 39), Freud assumes that they are one and the same. He thus accuses the ancient Jews of adopting a second god, and he proposes a second "Moses" in connection with that god:

"The Egyptian Moses never was in Qades and had never heard the name of Jahve, whereas the Midianite Moses never set foot in Egypt and knew nothing of Aton." (MM, p. 49)

The god "Aton" referenced here is another local deity. Freud connects him to the Jews by a similar trick, this time posing the similarity between "Aton" and the Hebrew "Adonai" (my Lord) as a reason for presuming the equality.

Freud believes he is able to reconstruct "the original character" of this god, Jahve:

"He is an uncanny, bloodthirsty demon who walks by night and shuns the light of day." (MM, p. 39)

It is shocking to see here Freud's equation of God *with a demon!* To top off his blasphemy, he claims support from the biblical text:

"It is truly astonishing that in spite of all the revisions in the biblical text so much was allowed to stand whereby we may recognize his original nature. It is not even sure that his religion was a true monotheism, that it denied the character of God to other divinities." (MM, p. 61)

Moving further in his speculations about the presence of polytheism, he says:

"We may assume that a Jahve-worshipper of that time would never have dreamt of doubting the existence of the gods of Canaan, Moab, Amalek." (MM, p. 77)

Perhaps not, but Freud erroneously equates the true God of the Bible with a pagan deity!

Freud claims that in time the worship of Aton and Jahve fused into one religion:

"The religion of Jahve had followed a retrograde development that had culminated in a fusion (perhaps to the point of actual identity) with the original religion of Moses" (at the time of Ezra/Nehemiah). (MM, p. 57)

"In the course of time Jahve lost his own character and became more and more like the old God of Moses, Aton." (MM, p. 78)

Remarkably, Freud extends this proposal of two "gods" to a duality that encompasses all of Jewish history:

"To the well-known duality of that (Jewish) history--two peoples who fuse together to form one nation, two kingdoms into which this nation divides, two names for the Deity in the source of the Bible--we add two new ones: the founding of two new religions, the first one ousted by the second and yet reappearing victorious, two founders of religion, who are both called by the same name, Moses, and whose personalities we have to separate from each other. And all these dualities are necessary consequences of the first: one section of the people passed through what may properly be termed traumatic experience which the other was spared." (MM, p. 64)

These fabricated "dualities" are only "necessary consequences" of Freud's imaginations combined with his atheistic presuppositions. He must deny the biblical account at all costs, regardless of the absurdities that emerge in the process.

The Murder of Moses

It should not be surprising, at this point, to learn that Freud proposes the theory of the Jews having murdered Moses:

"The murder of the father, was brought home to the Jews, for fate decreed that they should repeat it on the person of Moses, an eminent father substitute." (MM, p. 113)

He claims that another researcher, Ernst Sellin:

"...found in the book of the Prophet Hosea unmistakable traces of a tradition to the effect that the founder of their religion, Moses, met a violent end in a rebellion of his stubborn and refractory people" (MM, p. 42)... "the suppression of which was called for by the most obvious and best of human motives. It was the murder of the great leader and liberator Moses, which Sellin divined from clues furnished by the Prophets" (MM, p. 57).

The *best* of human motives? Honestly, the concealing of a murder can hardly be recognized as the *best* of human motives. Furthermore, Freud fails to cite specific references in Hosea or any other Old Testament prophet for his theories. From the context, however, it is highly probable that Freud grossly misunderstands the Messianic prophecies about the coming of Christ, who was indeed murdered by His people and subsequently rose from the dead.

Freud states that the murder of Moses has become an "indispensable part of our reasoning" and "the stimulus for the wish-fantasy of the Messiah" (MM, p. 114). He builds "fact" upon "fact" in his writings, yet such "facts" are hardly established, and with the failure of any key "fact," the structure crumbles.

Mass Psychology and Repression

As noted earlier, Freud presupposes the workings of a "mass psychology" process analogous to what he assumes to take place in the individual psyche. This assumption is nowhere more critical than in his theories about Moses and ancient Israel.

Freud makes the assumption that monotheism, and the ethical demands of God, developed over a long period of time in Jewish history (MM, p. 82). During a significant portion of this period, he claims, there was no monotheism among the Jews (MM, p. 84). He explains this assumed development as "a manifestation of mass psychology" (MM, p. 83), and he looks to psychoanalytic concepts for a complete explanation:

"That a dormant tradition should exert such a powerful influence on the spiritual life of a people is not a familiar conception. There we find ourselves in a domain of mass psychology where we do not feel at home. We must look around for analogies, for facts of a similar nature even if in other field. We shall find them I am sure." (MM, p. 87)

Note carefully the building of one assumption upon another, a sort of "block building" procedure. Acceptance of the theory depends on the acceptance of each basic assumption. If any one of these assumptions is rejected (as they must be, by the Christian), the entire structure topples over.

Meanwhile, Freud locates his "analogy" in individual psychopathology, in the concept of childhood "latency" (MM, p. 90ff). He assumes the following "facts:"

- (1) Neurosis is always rooted in early childhood impressions of a sexual, aggressive nature (MM, p. 90).
- (2) There is an early blossoming of sexuality, prior to age 5, followed by a latent period that lasts until puberty. (On this basis, Freud concludes that "man is derived from a species of animal that was sexually mature at five years.") (MM, p. 94)
- (3) Neurotics attempt to relive early trauma, developing various "defensive reactions." This reenactment is termed "repetition compulsion" or "fixation to the trauma."

(MM, p. 95)

Bear in mind that these "facts" are not scientifically established, and they are incompatible with biblical teachings about the nature of man. Freud's application of these assumptions rests on their acceptance, not only in terms of individual psychology, but also for mankind as a whole.

Freud goes on to invite his readers to "assume that in the history of the human species something happened similar to the events in the life of the individual" (MM, p. 101). Making the assumption, he draws the conclusion that:

"Mankind as a whole also passed through conflicts of a sexual-aggressive nature...later, after a long period of latency, they came to life again and created phenomena similar in structure and tendency to neurotic symptoms." (MM, p. 101)

Thus Freud equates religious phenomena to "neurotic symptoms."

Carrying his analogy to even more bizarre lengths, he says:

"I hold that the concordance between the individual and the mass is in this point almost complete. The masses, too, retain an impression of the past in unconscious memory traces." (MM, p. 120)

This mass repression, he claims, occurs "when the experience is important enough, or is repeated often enough, or in both cases" (MM, p. 129). These "repressed" memories, he speculates, penetrate consciousness later when "instincts attached to the repressed material become strengthened" or when "recent events produce impressions or experiences which are so much like the repressed material that they have the power to awaken it" (MM, p. 121). However, the repressed material "must always undergo distortion" (MM, p. 121).

Such "distortion" is believed to occur in the development of religious beliefs and practices:

"A tradition based only on oral communication could not produce the obsessive character which appertains to religious phenomena." (MM, p. 130)

Note the conclusion that religious phenomena are "obsessive." Freud makes the following specific application:

"The murder of Moses was such a repetition and, later on, the supposed judicial murder of Christ, so that these events move into the foreground as causative agents." (MM, p. 129-30)

Thus, Freud believes that the Jewish people "repressed" their murder of Moses and altered their history to conceal their guilt!

This is a horrendous distortion, based on a series of biblically unacceptable assumptions about human nature, history, and the Bible. What we must do at this point is understand Freud's distortion of the truth in biblical terms. Returning again to Romans 1, we are reminded that God's general, natural revelation leaves man *without excuse*, because His power and deity are *clearly perceived* from the things He has made. That general revelation does not provide saving faith, for which special revelation (the Bible) is needed, but it is adequate so that distortions like Freud's are inexcusable. The unbeliever does not want to submit to God, so he suppresses the truth in unrighteousness. This particular unbeliever has gone to elaborate lengths to "explain" what he cannot deny. Freud is reminded at every turn of the reality of the eternal, sovereign God of the Bible, but he shakes his fist in the face of God and runs away. As believers, we must not be deceived by his fabrications.

It is interesting to note Freud's repeated self-defense in *Moses and Monotheism*. For example, he admits that he has "built up this edifice of conjectures with too great a certainty, for which no adequate grounds are to be found in the material itself" (MM, p. 35). But despite his seeming recognition of the doubt inherent in that "edifice," he clings to his ludicrous conclusions. He also notes his initial hesitation to publish *Moses and Monotheism*, because he feared being censored by the Catholic Church if...

"...research leads us to a result that reduces religion to the status of a neurosis of mankind and explains its grandiose powers in the same way as we should a neurotic obsession in our individual patients." (MM, p. 68-69).

He also regrets his inability to apply his theories to more than one religion, because "I have not the expert knowledge necessary to complete the investigation" (MM, p. 117-8). However, such application is unnecessary to his real purpose, which is to suppress the *truth*. He has successfully (in his mind) held down the facts of the *one true religion, Christianity*. It would be superfluous to expand his speculations further, although he notes that Mohammedism would probably be a repetition of his theories.

Clearly, we must recognize all of this as the *lie* that it is, rooted and grounded in atheism.

Application to Christianity

The worst in all of this analysis is Freud's blasphemous "explanation" of the Christian faith. It is perhaps not surprising at this point to learn that Freud sees Christianity as being founded on another murder by several sons of a father:

"In reality this crime, deserving of death, had been the murder of the Father who later was deified. The murderous deed itself, however, was not remembered; in its place stood the fantasy of expiation, and that is why this fantasy could be welcomed in the form of a gospel of salvation (evangel). A Son of God, innocent himself, had sacrificed himself, and had thereby taken over the guilt of the world. It had to be a Son, for the sin had been murder of the Father."
(MM, p. 109-110)

"Thus in Christian doctrine mankind most unreservedly acknowledges the guilty deed of primordial times because it now has found the most complete expiation for this deed in the sacrificial death of the son. The reconciliation with the father is the more thorough because simultaneously with this sacrifice there follows the complete renunciation of women, for whose sake mankind rebelled against the father. But the psychological fatality of ambivalence demands its rights. In the same deed which offers the greatest possible expiation to the father, the son also attains the goal of his wishes against the father. He becomes a god himself beside or rather in place of his father. The religion of the son succeeds the religion of the father." (TT, p. 199)

But lest one conclude that Freud actually views our Savior as innocent, note the following blasphemy:

"The 'redeemer' could be no one else but he who was *most guilty*, the leader of the brother horde who had overpowered the Father." (MM, p. 110, emphasis added)

"If there was no such leader, then Christ was the heir of an unfulfilled wish-fantasy; if there was such a leader, then Christ was his successor and his reincarnation."
(MM, p. 110-1)

Thus Freud "explains" the development of the Christian faith in terms of his theory that at the beginning of the human race, the sons of the first human father conspired to murder him, later "repressing" the memory of their grievous deed. The results here mutilate Christianity and are horrendously offensive to any genuine believer!

However, there is more. In comparing Christianity with Judaism, Freud sees the former as embracing both polytheism and goddess worship. He calls Christianity a "cultural regression as compared with the older Jewish religion," which is "no longer strictly monotheistic" but "re-established the great mother goddess and found room for many deities of polytheism in an easily recognizable disguise" (MM, p. 112). It is inconceivable that he should draw these conclusions from *anything* contained in the New Testament.

A few brief comments are made concerning the apostle Paul and his role in "creating" the Christian faith:

"It can scarcely be chance that the violent death of another great man should become the starting point for the creation of a new religion by Paul." (MM, p. 113)

"Paul, a Roman Jew from Tarsus, seized upon this feeling of guilt and correctly traced it back to its primeval source. This he called original sin." (MM, p. 109)

Note here how arbitrarily Freud imposes his own theory of "original sin" onto the words of Paul. Absolutely *nothing* in all of the Pauline epistles points to Freud's theory of patricide as the "original sin" of mankind. Rather, Paul points to Adam's disobedience, as accurately narrated in the book of Genesis, as the basis of the Fall, the sin which was imputed to the entire human race (Romans 5:11-21).

Communion. We can hardly complete our discussion without mention of the distorted, cannibalistic "explanation" that Freud attempts for the Lord's Supper:

"As a sign of this substitution (the religion of the son replacing the religion of the father) the old totem feast is revived again in the form of communion in which the band of brothers now eats the flesh and blood of the son and no longer that of the father, the sons thereby identifying themselves with him and becoming holy themselves. Thus through the ages we see the identity of the totem feast with the animal sacrifice, the theanthropic human sacrifice, and the Christian eucharist, and in all these solemn occasions we recognize the after-effects of that crime which so oppressed men but of which they must have been so proud. At bottom, however, the Christian communion is a new setting aside of the father, a repetition of the crime that must be expiated." (TT, p. 199)

As if somehow to excuse himself for this blasphemy, Freud offers us this footnote:

"Nobody familiar with the literature on this subject will assume that the tracing back of the Christian communion to the totem feast is an idea of the author of this book."
(TT, p. 200)

The practice of communion, far from a "totem feast" or any form of cannibalism, is a *reminder* of the sacrifice that our Lord made on behalf of our sins, the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood. Freud's twisted version is a mockery of this sacred remembrance.

Concluding Comments

There is a great deal of uncertainty evident in Freud's writings. Aggressive atheist though he was, he makes some important admissions concerning the lack of certainty for his speculations:

"Although I do not wish to retract anything I have said before, I cannot help feeling that it is somehow not altogether satisfactory. The cause does not, so to speak, accord with the result." (MM, p. 158)

Freud acknowledges also the fact that his sources are considered unreliable, yet he refuses to yield, clinging desperately to the conclusions founded on these shaky grounds:

"I still adhere to this sequence of thought (concerning Christian communion corresponding to the totem feast). I have often been vehemently reproached for not changing my opinions in later editions of my book (TT), since more recent ethnologists have without exception discarded Robertson Smith's theories and have in part replaced them by others which differ extensively.... Above all, however, I am not an ethnologist, but a psychoanalyst. It was my good right to select from ethnological data what would serve me for my analytic work." (MM, p. 169)

Freud refuses to yield his beliefs, regardless of new evidence presented. His presuppositions are unshakable. He refuses to submit to God. Clearly, he "holds down the truth in unrighteousness," as Romans 1 explains so well.

Some of Freud's final written words are a fascinating confirmation of the teachings of Romans 1:

"How we who have little belief envy those who are convinced of the existence of a Supreme Power, for whom the world holds no problems because he himself has created all its

institutions!" (MM, p. 157)

"The Divine Spirit, which in itself is the ideal of ethical perfection, has planted within the soul of men the knowledge of this ideal and at the same time the urge to strive towards it." (MM, p. 157)

"We can only regret it if certain experiences of life and observations of nature have made it impossible to accept the hypothesis of such a Supreme Being. As if the world had not enough problems, we are confronted with the task of finding out how those who have faith in a Divine Being could have acquired it, and whence this belief derives the enormous power that enables it to overwhelm Reason and Science."
(MM, p. 157)

The middle quote, in particular, is one where Freud cannot wholly suppress the truth of the eternal God. He admits, at least momentarily, that the God he denies does in fact exist. God has implanted in the human being, and in His general revelation, enough knowledge of Himself so that no man may stand before Him and claim that the evidence for His existence was inadequate. Man's unbelief is not due to a lack of evidence; it is ethical in nature. Man refuses to acknowledge what he knows deep down to be the truth, because he lives in rebellion against the living God. Freud briefly acknowledges the truth he cannot totally deny, and then reverts to his hostile unbelief. He is *wrong* to say that God's existence is a "hypothesis." He knows in his heart that he is wrong. There is no reason, and there is no science, unless one presupposes the self-existent, eternal, sovereign God who has revealed Himself in Scripture. It isn't a matter of "proving" that God exists. God *must* exist or no one is able to prove anything. Freud has surely not proven his case against the God of Christian theism. He has only proven, once again, that the unregenerate man holds down the truth in unrighteousness. The Christian dare not embrace his conclusions, either about God or about man.

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EXPOSING THE ROOTS FREUDIAN FRAUDS

Introduction.....	1
Freud's Assumption of Atheism.....	1
Freud's View of Scripture.....	2
Freud vs. the Internal Testimony of the Holy Spirit.....	3
Other Fundamental Assumptions.....	4
Freud's General Evaluation of Religion.....	5
Origins of Religion.....	6
Basis for Holding Religious Ideas.....	8
Freud's Evaluation of the Results of Religion.....	9
The Future of Religion.....	9
Totem and Taboo Theories.....	11
Totem.....	12
Taboo.....	12
Application to Religion.....	15
The Role of Sacrifice in Religion.....	17
The Totem Meal.....	18
Specific Applications to Old Testament Faith.....	18
Circumcision.....	19
Another "God".....	20
The Murder of Moses.....	21
Mass Psychology and Repression.....	22

Application to Christianity.....	25
Concluding Comments.....	27