



*“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe”*  
(I Corinthians 1:21).

October 2003

## THE EVOLVING HUMANIST MANIFESTOS

by Henry M. Morris\*

Despite the growth of many mega churches and the seemingly endless proliferation of parachurch organizations (including numerous new ministries promoting the creationist revival), there also has been significant growth in humanist and other anti-Christian activities. There has also been a great upsurge of Islam and other religions in countries all over the globe, not to mention the growth of cultic and occultic pseudo-Christian organizations in great variety everywhere.

The world religious situation is in sad confusion, despite revivals of sorts in Africa, South America, and elsewhere. From the Biblical perspective, too frequently, *“the god of this world [that is, Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not”* (II Corinthians 4:4), and *“the whole world lieth in wickedness”* (I John 5:19).

As far as organized humanism is concerned, it is worth noting that the American Humanist Association (AHA) has led in the development and publication of a new Humanist Manifesto. The AHA has become quite experienced in writing manifestos by now. Humanist Manifesto I was first published in 1933, at the time John Dewey and others organized the AHA.

Then, forty years later (1973), Humanist Manifesto II was published under the

leadership of Paul Kurtz and Edwin H. Wilson. Now, thirty more years later (2003) comes Humanist Manifesto III, as just announced and published in *The Humanist* (volume 63, May/June 2003). In between Manifestos II and III, Paul Kurtz and several other leading humanists published what they called a Secular Humanist Declaration (*Free Inquiry*, October 1980) which they considered as a tentative third manifesto.

Humanism, therefore, is not exactly a static religion, fixed for all time by some primeval revelation. Christianity, on the other hand, is based on historical facts which do *not* change, and Christians are exhorted to *“earnestly contend for the faith which was [once for all] delivered unto the saints”* (Jude 3).

The tenets of humanism evidently are presumed to evolve with the culture. Humanist Manifesto I had fifteen tenets which focused especially on promoting “social well-being” (Tenet Nine), “joy in living” (Tenet Twelve), and “the enhancement of human life” (Tenet Thirteen) in general. Such delightful results were to be achieved by replacing our present “acquisitive and profit-motivated society” by a “socialized and cooperative economic order” characterized by the “equitable distribution of the means

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of life” (Tenet Fourteen). In short, capitalism should be replaced by socialism, although the manifesto avoided using the actual word.

No proposals dealing with racism, sexism, minority rights, globalism, environmentalism, or other such modern concerns were mentioned at all, nor anything about sin and righteousness, or war and peace.

In the meantime, Nazism and the brutalities of totalitarianism came on the scene with the Jewish holocaust. Then World War II and its aftermath Communism seemed to conquer half the world; slaughtering and enslaving millions, all supposedly in the cause of the “equitable distribution of the means of life.”

So humanism had to evolve to survive. Humanist Manifesto II was then developed by the American Humanist Association and soon signed by 282 leaders in education, science, and government—including such luminaries as Isaac Asimov, Julian Huxley, Francis Crick, Paul Kurtz, Corliss Lamont, Chauncey Leake, Kai Nielsen, Andre Sakharov, B. F. Skinner, Joseph Fletcher, Betty Friedan, Jacques Monod, Herbert Muller, Gunnar Myrdal, and many others of great eminence. Thousands more eventually signed it.

This manifesto had seventeen major tenets, many dealing with topics not mentioned at all in Manifesto I. A salutary allegiance to democracy, civil liberties, and human freedoms in general was first expressed. The separation of church and state was viewed as an imperative, and all discriminations based on race, religion, sex, age, or national origin were to be eliminated.

But sexuality was emphasized, with full right to divorce and abortion. No forms of sexual behavior between consenting adults should be prohibited, short

of resulting in harm to others, according to the tenet on sex.

The manifesto deplored “the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds,” looking forward to “a world order based upon transnational federal government.” It expressed the wishful hope and belief that “war is obsolete,” as should be “the use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.”

Ecology also came in for consideration. The manifesto declared that “ecological damage, resource depletion, and excessive population growth must be checked by international concord.” “World poverty must cease,” it also declared, and all “travel restrictions must cease.” It all sounds very much like an envisioned government of the world by the United Nations Organization.

No doubt many of the emphases in Humanist Manifesto II were worthwhile, and it is true that many of the topics discussed therein are being more widely discussed by many people, many organizations, and many governments than ever before, but there are serious arguments against most of them, and if anything there is therefore more controversy than ever—not to mention little wars everywhere (Rwanda, Bosnia, Colombia, Panama, Afghanistan, Iraq, etc.).

In the meantime, interest in humanism has proliferated, and the AHA eventually decided that a new manifesto was needed, emphasizing basic values and ideals rather than all these details of social policy. So now we have Humanist Manifesto III, the drafting of which involved numerous people and organizations over a three-year period, under a committee chaired by Fred Edwards, and signed by a growing list of endorsers. These include, so far, such prominent humanists as Richard Dawkins, Ilya Prigogine, James Randi, Eugenie Scott, Oliver Stone, Gerald Larue, and other

notables, as well as all living past presidents of AHA. Lester Mondale, a retired Unitarian minister and brother of former Vice President Walter Mondale, has the distinction of having been a signer of all three Humanist Manifestos!

Humanist Manifesto III is not organized into a list of distinct tenets, as were the first two. Instead it consists of six or seven brief paragraphs of generalities. Many fine phrases are turned, such as the following, with most of which everyone would agree.

“We welcome the challenges of the future, and are . . . undaunted by the yet to be known.” “We are committed to . . . freedom consonant with responsibility.” “. . . finding wonder and awe in the joys and beauties of human existence, . . .” “Humanists long for . . . a world of mutual care and concern, . . .” “We seek to minimize the inequities of circumstance and ability, . . . so that as many as possible can enjoy a good life.”

These and similar nice sentiments abound in Manifesto III. We Christian creationists also endorse freedom, equality, kindness, peace, and everything good and beautiful, and would certainly agree that most humanists are nice people with noble ideals and goals. We approve the evolution of Manifestos I and II into Manifesto III.

But there is still a problem. Although the three Manifestos differ greatly from each other, in details, they all still try to retain their basic foundation and rationale in an evolutionary atheistic worldview. And this error assures their ultimate failure.

For example the first two tenets of Humanist Manifesto I said that “humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created” and that “man is a part of nature and . . . has emerged as the result of a continuous process.” Another tenet (five) claimed that “modern science

makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values.” Its final paragraph insists that man alone “is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams.”

The 1973 Manifesto, forty years later, was even more blatant in its denial of God and Creation. Its first tenet includes the following blasphemy: “As nontheists, we begin with humans, not God, nature not deity.” This first 1973 tenet ended with an assertion that will make any Christian cringe: “But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. . . . humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.”

The second tenet began as follows: “Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful.” So they said!

The new Humanist Manifesto III, thankfully, is at least gentler in its rejection of God and Creation. But the first sentence of its introduction still starts off with: “Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernaturalism, . . .” Then, later appears the key affirmation: “Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change. Humanists recognize nature as self-existing.”

So the nature of humanism has not really changed after all. It is a philosophy of life based on the false premise that there is no God, and therefore it is bound to fail. Speaking of the ancient humanists, Paul said: “*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, . . . and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. . . .*” (Romans 1:22,25).

Then, speaking of the humanists of the last days, Paul said they would be “*lovers of their own selves, . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; . . . from such turn away*” (II Timothy 3:2,4–5). ☘

# WHAT HAPPENED AT THE TOWER OF BABEL?

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.

Biblical history takes us through several world-changing, but non-repeatable episodes; including Creation, the Curse, and the global Flood of Noah's day. By basing our historical thinking on these true events, we have a much better chance of properly reconstructing the past than if we adopt the untrue view of evolution and uniformity. When it comes to human history and national origins, a similarly all-inclusive event happened in the past, which must be in our thinking if we are to get it right. This was the break-up of the languages and the dispersion of families into all parts of the world.

When Noah and his family left the Ark, God instructed them to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 9:1). Unfortunately, soon they gathered at Babel, and under the leadership of rebellious Nimrod they built a tower "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:4). The tower became an astrological worship center to exalt the creation rather than the Creator. But God wanted them to disperse throughout the earth. He separated their languages into many, for as long as they all spoke the same language no endeavor was beyond their reach (Genesis 11:6).

Genesis 10 has come to be known as the Table of Nations, for it documents 70 nations/language groups migrating to fill the earth, prodded on by their lack of ability to communicate with the others. Archeology has confirmed these basic details, identifying major locations and people groups, although some have been obscured or lost in time. Similarly, linguists have discovered that the number of separate language groups is of the


same order of magnitude as the 70 listed in the Bible. Again, some have combined with others or faded into extinction, but the story has the ring of truth about it.

Ever since then, human history has been marked by the conquest of uninhabited lands and by the wars between tribes who spoke different tongues.

Some of the language groups included individuals with special skills in mining, metallurgy, music, agriculture, and animal husbandry, and thus some groups quickly rose to prominence over the rest. Others lived in caves with the meagerest of technology. Each group carried with it memories of their common history—Creation, Fall and Flood, and Babel—which eventually deteriorated into vague legends. They also carried Nimrod's great error of astrology and the misuse of the signs of the Zodiac, explaining why nearly all cultures have essentially the same baseless system.

With the one language, all genetic traits were originally shared among humankind, but once the break-up occurred, ethnic traits began to be expressed, quickly leading to today's "races." Natural selection would match traits to an environment.

The Ice Age was occurring during the centuries following Babel, resulting in harsh climates in Europe, a well-watered Egypt, and a lower sea-level allowing global migration across land bridges such as between Siberia and Alaska.

Without Babel and the dispersion, in our thinking, we would be hard pressed to devise a coherent view of human history. With it the facts fall into place and our appreciation for Scripture increases. 



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