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## Miscellanea

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### Miscellanea.

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#### The Substitution of the Levites for the First-Born.

When the Lord led the children of Israel out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, He commanded that all the first-born should be sanctified unto Him, Ex. 13, 2. This was done in commemoration of the fact that the Lord had saved alive all the first-born of the Israelites, while He destroyed all the first-born among the Egyptians, Ex. 13, 15. Among the beasts the firstling of the flock was to be the Lord's, the firstling of an ass being redeemable with a lamb, and all the first-born of man among the children of Israel were to be redeemed, Ex. 13, 13, 15. It is clear that the first-born son was himself to be consecrated to the Lord, to belong to Him in a peculiar sense. The burnt offerings and the sin-offerings which were brought at the time of purification were not the price of redemption, but offerings of atonement, so that the mother might be cleansed from the issue of her blood, Lev. 12, 7. When the children of Israel, under the leadership of Aaron, sinned in the trespass of the golden calf, the children of Levi who, like the tribe of Simeon, were in disgrace on account of the slaughter of the Shechemites, Gen. 49, 5—7, rallied on the Lord's side, Ex. 32, 26—29. By this act the Levites, in a measure, had evened out the score of their ancestor, Levi, and while they were not accorded a separate inheritance as a tribe among the twelve, they were given cities in which to sojourn. The Lord then expressly substituted the children of Levi for the first-born of the whole people: "I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the first-born that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel; therefore the Levites shall be Mine, because all the first-born are Mine," Num. 3, 12, 13. Yet the rule of the Lord continued: "All the first-born of thy sons shalt thou redeem," Ex. 34, 20. Since, therefore, the Lord had taken the Levites for all the first-born of the children of Israel, Num. 8, 13—22, an exchange was effected, the number of first-born in all Israel being compared with the number of Levites from a month old. The number of the former was found to be 22,273, while the latter numbered 22,000. Hence 273 of the first-born of the children of Israel had to be redeemed, the price of redemption being five shekels, so that the sum of 1,365 shekels was paid to Aaron and his sons as a compensation for the persons who properly belonged to Jehovah, Num. 3, 40 ff.; 18, 15, 16. As for the age when the Levites were on duty, it was fixed at twenty-five to fifty for the waiting upon the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation, Num. 8, 24. But the actual work of lifting the holy things and having the responsibility for them during the wilderness journey was entrusted only to those who were between thirty and fifty years old, Num. 4, 3, 23, 35. This was clearly true of the children of Kohath, Gershon, and Merari in their care of the Sanctuary and its appointments. When David made the last arrangements concerning the form of worship, the old rule was still in force, with the actual age of service given as between thirty and fifty, 1 Chron. 23, 3; but he then made the change to twenty years for the beginning of their service, evidently because the heavy work and the great responsibility of carrying the sacred appointments were no longer theirs, 1 Chron. 23, 24, 27 ff.

P. E. K.



**Martin Luther and the English Parliament in 1646.**

I have an English translation of Luther's *Tischreden*, made by the English author Wm. Hazlitt, a grandson of the famous essayist, a translation republished in Philadelphia in 1868. On page IX of the Introduction we read:—

**"A Copy of the Order of the House of Commons.**

**"24th February, 1646.**

"Whereas Captain Henry Bell has strangely discovered and found a book of Martin Luther's, called his *Divine Discourses*, which was for a long time very marvelously preserved in Germany; the which book the said Henry Bell, at his great costs and pains, hath translated into the English out of the German tongue, which translation and substance thereof is approved by the Reverend Divines of the Assembly, as appears by a certificate under their hands,

"It is ordered by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament that the said Henry Bell shall have the sole disposal and benefit of printing the said book, translated into English as aforesaid, for the space of fourteen years, to commence from the date thereof. And that none do print or reprint the same but such as shall be licensed by the said captain by the authority under his hand."

HENRY EASYNG.

(*vera copia*)

E. G. SHULER, Mount Vernon, N. Y.

**Three Letters of Prof. B. B. Warfield Addressed to Prof. F. Pieper.**

Undoubtedly it will interest our readers to read the following letters of the distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology in the Princeton Theological Seminary Dr. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. The articles which appeared from his pen in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, the *Princeton Theological Review*, and other reviews are now being published in ten volumes by the Oxford University Press. Prof. L. Blankenhuebler of St. Paul, Minnesota, has kindly placed these letters at our disposal.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Princeton, N. J., January 28, 1890.

Professor Weidner of the Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Illinois, has directed me to you in order to learn where the works and life of the late *Rev. Dr. Walther* can be had and at what prices. I should like very much to make the opinions and life-work of Dr. Walther a study for my theological classes. I am also editor of the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* and should like to have the publications of the St. Louis Lutheran Publishing House sent to our journal for notice. Especially should I wish to have their new and splendid edition of Luther's Works for review in our magazine. Presbyterians and the Reformed Church in general should know more of the good work done by this house. Will you kindly inform me to whom I should have our business house apply in order to obtain these books for review?

I am

Sincerely yours

B. B. WARFIELD.



MY DEAR SIR: —

Princeton, N. J., February 24, 1890.

Thank you very much for sending the books, which have just reached me. I shall at once set about making the near acquaintance of Dr. Walther, and I perceive that your distinguished kindness has quite bountifully supplied me with materials for understanding him.

The volume of Luther's Works will be at once reviewed for our *Review*, — probably for the July number, as the April number is already in press. I hope our *Review* will reach you regularly. If not, please inform me that I may have it sent.

It will be my study to discover some way in which I may partly meet your kindness.

I am

Sincerely yours

B. B. WARFIELD.

MY DEAR SIR: —

Princeton, N. J., May 13, 1892.

I thank you very much for undertaking so readily the paper we ask of you on Luther's *Inspirationslehre*. I wish we had space to ask of you three papers covering, respectively, the ground you outline. But we are so crowded that that is for the present impossible. We shall have to beg you therefore to compress the matter which would fall under all three heads, — Luther's direct statements, Luther's dealing with apparent inconsistencies, and historico-critical examination of Luther's statements often misinterpreted as favoring a free attitude over against the Scriptures, — into one paper of say 10,000 words *maximum*. This is the limit we set to our longest articles; and it covers twenty pages of our *Review*. The MS. will not be needed until the late autumn.

I cannot tell you how grateful we are for this paper. Every man who desires to attack the strict doctrine of inspiration falls back on the collection of passages former writers have made from the writings of the Reformers and pleads *their* example for loose views. It has become necessary in our Church to present the doctrines of the Reformers over, from the sources, in order to guard the Church from deception.

It is a great blessing to the German element of our people that your Church has occupied so firm a position on inspiration and against all synergism in salvation. Since Schleiermacher the whole world has been soiled with the synergistic leaven; and we have watched the efforts of your Church to retain the ancient truth as to *sola Scriptura* and *sola gratia* with the intensest sympathy. May God give you ever-increased success!

I am

Yours most truly

B. B. WARFIELD.

Dr. Pieper had devoted much time and study to the subject, and his article on "Luther's Doctrine of Inspiration" was published in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, Vol. 4, p. 249. Some time later it was translated and published in Germany by Dr. Adolf Zahn in *Ernstes Blicke in den Wahn der modernen Kritik. Neue Folge*, p. 127. L. F.