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Luther: A Blessing to the English

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Chiliasts, on the other hand, await the rapture, the rejuvenation of the human race, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the visible reign of Christ, the exclusion of all ungodly men and unrighteous deeds, the freedom from the effect of sin; in brief, they expect a heaven upon earth. To that goal their attention is directed. If finally chiliiasm mentions heaven, the teaching pertaining to it is a mere appendix, having only a remote connection with the chief body of doctrine.

Reeseville, Wis.

V. A. W. MENNICKE

Luther: A Blessing to the English

II. How Kaiser Karl V was Elected

"The Papacy excepted, the empire was the highest honor to which any potentate could aspire. Though little better than an empty title, though scarcely more than the shadow of a great name, destined speedily to become more visionary than ever, its ancient traditions made a deep impression on the romantic heart of the Middle Ages. Its half sacred, half secular dignity, shrouded by a mysterious and unsubstantial grandeur; its position as the military headship and supremacy of Christendom; its imperial bishops and regal princes; its sacred knights and Teutonic brotherhoods; its haunted forests and weird mountains; had all combined to captivate the imagination of men. Hoary with the frost of ages, it towered in gigantic proportions above all the monarchies of the world, and its head was lost among the clouds of heaven." So says J. S. Brewer.

Kaiser Maximilian I of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in September, 1513, at Tournay fought under Henry VIII as a private and proposed to make the Englishman the duke of Milan in place of the rightful claimant, Francis Sforza, to resign the imperial crown and press it on Henry at Rome, make him the champion of Christendom and as his lieutenant fight under his banner. So wrote Sir Robert Wingfield on May 17, 1516. On the 12th Richard Pace had already written Wolsey: "Whilst we look for the crown imperial, we might lose the crown of England, which is this day more esteemed than the emperor's crown and all his empire."

Cuthbert Tunstal scoffed at the offer as chimerical, and to William Knight these things were "mere jokes." "But to the king the project did not appear so wild or so undesirable as their cooler heads would have wished or imagined. Nor is it surprising that Henry, in the vigor of his youth and the pride of his power,

should have been fired with the ambition of attaining 'the monarchy of Christendom.' "

The German "father" promised his crown to his English "son," but a little thing like that did not stop Max from trying his best to get the crown for his grandson, Karl of Spain, son of Johanna the Monomaniac and grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella. He simply went to market and bought four out of the seven electors.

The king of Bohemia, a youngling of fifteen, cost nothing, having married Mary, a sister of Karl. The archbishop of Koeln cost 20,000 florins cash and a pension of 6,000 florins. The Markgraf of Brandenburg cost 30,000 florins and the hand of the infanta Katharine, whose "great beauty and virtue" were heightened by a dowry of 70,000 florins, payable on the day of election. His brother, the archbishop Albrecht of Mainz and Magdeburg, came cheaper, 52,000 florins, a handsome credence, a silver service selected by himself, the most exquisite tapestry from the looms of Flanders, and a pension of 8,000 florins to each of his two brothers. The Pfalzgraf cost 100,000 florins; he was brought over by his brother, Count Frederick, who was paid a pension of 20,000 florins for his services. The archbishop of Trier feared the growing power of the Habsburgers. Frederick of Saxony had reasons of his own for disliking Max. So it cost over 570,000 good gold gulden to buy these honest Germans to elect the stripling of eighteen.

Where did the ever penniless kaiser get the money? He pledged the credit of his grandson, Karl of Spain. The tight-fisted lad of eighteen grudgingly got the money from the bankers of Genoa and Augsburg. Now, Max died on January 12, 1519. The honest German electors would not stay bought, like later Senator John Sherman's "niggers."

Now, three young men scrambled for the German crown. The English Henry was twenty-seven, the Most Christian King Francis was twenty-four, and the Most Catholic King Karl was eighteen.

Francis told Sir Thomas Boleyn France was worth 6,000,000 yearly "and he would spend 3,000,000 of gold, but he would be kaiser."

The Elector Joachim I of Brandenburg was bought for an annuity of 12,000 florins and Princess Renée with a dowry of 200,000 crowns. Cardinal Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz cost 120,000 florins, a church at Halle, and other valuable considerations. The archbishop of Koeln would make no sure promises. The Pfalzgraf looked for the highest bidder. The English king promised to help his brother of France. Pope Leo favored France rather than Spain. Francis almost had the crown in his grasp.

Karl's agents got busy. De Berghes wrote Lady Margaret,

Karl's aunt: "If I and Renner had served God as we have served the king, we might have hoped for a good place in Paradise." "Money must be had from the Welsers [Augsburg bankers]; hard cash in gold at the Reichstag" [at Frankfurt]. "In this affair of the Reich we must not haggle at any fixed sums. Fresh spending of money will always be needed, as these devils of Frenchmen scatter gold in all directions."

"As if the salvation of his soul depended on it," says Armestorf, he worked on Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz to betray Francis and support Karl. The virtuous primate of Germany—and Luther's superior—coolly asked for a cool 152,000 gold florins. After a hot debate of three days he took about 70,000 florins *et cetera*.

Soon the primate of Germany again wobbled toward France, and Armestorf again had a tough job to pull the fickle German back to the German Karl.

Franz von Sickingen was at Hoechst, a few miles from Frankfurt, with 40,000 foot and 6,000 horse to keep the honest German electors in the strait and narrow path and force them to vote a straight ticket for the German Karl. The Count of Nassau said no Frenchman could enter the country "but upon spearis and swerdis poyntes."

The English king broke his promise to help Francis and sent Pace to throw Henry's hat into the ring and bid for the German crown because he was "of the Germany tongue," etc.

Fleuranges mocked: "The English angels could not work greater miracles than the crowns of the sun." "But the golden angels to which he refers never impeded their wings or displayed a feather of their lustrous plumage." And so the royal Henry was but a very poor "also ran."

As the campaign neared its end, Francis promised double as much as any other Christian prince would give. Karl upped his biddings; hundreds, thousands of florins yearly to each of the electors, added to the pensions already granted. Pace comments: "Here is the most dearest merchandise that ever was sold; and after mine opinion, it shall be the worst that ever was bought to him that shall obtain it."

In his papal heart Leo feared both Francis and Karl and favored a weak dark horse, Frederick of Saxony, who had a great reputation of "his virtuous and godly living, as of his singular wisdom," writes Pace. When the wily papal politician saw which way the cat would jump, he scrambled on the band wagon and hypocritically but lustily shouted for Karl.

The election was "pulled off" on the 18th of June. Every one of the electors repeated after Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz: "I swear on these Gospels here open before me that my voice, vote, and my

suffrage shall be given unbiased by any pact, price, pledge, or engagement under any pretence whatsoever. So help me God, and all His holy saints and angels."

Karl was eloquently nominated by Cardinal Albrecht, Francis by the archbishop of Trier. To split the ranks of Karl, Frederick the Wise of Saxony was put forward. Rudolf Thiel twice asserts he was elected and was the kaiser for hours till he resigned and cast his vote for Karl, and all was over but the shouting.

Though one of the great contracting powers whose consent was indispensable, Christ's Vicar on earth was treated with scant ceremony, and Leo made frequent complaints of this treatment, but who cared?

Francis never forgot his very costly defeat and spent the rest of his life in warring on his successful rival.

Erasmus was the paid press agent of Frederick the Wise and wrote the Saxon was the only one to come out with clean hands, but, as a matter of fact, he also got his cut.

Those ancients were much like the moderns. There is nothing new under the political sun.

III. "Luther's Festival and Celebration" in London on May 12, 1521

The Pope's order to Wolsey to burn Luther's books was handed to chief secretary Richard Pace. "The musician and wit delighted the king incredibly," reports Polydore Vergil. On April 16 Pace wrote Wolsey:

"Pleas itt your grace at myne arivall to the Kynge this mornynge, I founde hym lokinge uppon a boke of Luthers, and hys Grace shewde unto me that it was a newe werke off the sayde Luthers. I lokydde uppon the title thereof and peceived bi the same that itt was the same Boke put into prynte, whyche your Grace sende unto hym by me wretyn—Babylonian Captivity. And upon such disprayse as Hys Grace dydde yeve unto the sayde boke I delivrydde the Popes Bulle and hys Bryffe broght in my charge opportune, and with the whyche the Kynge was well contentidde ["Exsurge Domine" and Leo's letter to Wolsey to burn Luther's books] here at length shewynge unto me that it was verraye joyose to have thys tydyngis from the Popis Holynesse at such a tyme as he had takyn uppon hym the defynce off Christis Church wyth his penne, affore the recepte of the sayde tydyngis; and that wull make an ende oof hys boke wythin a fewe dayes . . . and desyrynge your Grace to provide that wythinne the same space all suche as he appoyntide to examine Luthers boks maye be congregated to gedre ffor hys Hynesse percevyng. . . .

"As touchinge the sayde Bryffe his Grace is singularely well contentidde therewyth, and rede itt every worde at hys secunde masse tyme, and aftre dyner shewede the same unto my Lordes of Canturburye and Duresme wyth greate prayse and laude thereoff. As to the sayde Bulle hys Grace shewede hym selfe verraye well contentidde wyth the cummynge off the same; howebeitt as touchynge the publication thereoff he sayde he wolde have itt well examinydde and diligently lokyd to a ffor itt were publyschydde."

How was the Pope's order to burn Luther's books carried out? Most dramatically, as we know from the report of Antonio Surian to Venice, from the report of his secretary, Lewis Spinelli, and from the report of an unknown writer, which we condense.

On Sunday morning, May 12, 1521, the ambassadors, papal, imperial, and Venetian, were taken to the royal palace. The French ambassador was not present on account of disputes about precedence. For two hours these great dignitaries waited for Cardinal Wolsey, the Pope's legate, who came on horseback with a great train of nobility and the most part of the bishops of the realm. Now they all with the king and many bishops in full canonicals went processionally to St. Paul's and dismounted and were received by Dean Pace and the canons in their copes and the dean censured the cardinal. After this ceremony four doctors bore a canopy of cloth of gold over him with the cross and censer, unusual, not as for a mere legate, but as if the Pope in person had arrived. They went to the high altar, the cardinal kissed the cross, made an oration and gave the blessing.

Now all went out of the church processionally, into the churchyard, where there was a lofty platform, which was ascended in great confusion. On this stage was a high chair with its canopy of cloth of gold, in which Cardinal Wolsey seated himself, with a cross on each side, having on his right hand the papal nuncio [Ghinucci] and part of the English bishops, and on his left the imperial and Venetian ambassadors, with the rest of the bishops. In the center were prelates and lay lords and plebeians. The Archbishop of Canterbury made a laudatory oration, praising the Cardinal vastly. Then the Bishop of Rochester made a speech, in which he commended the Cardinal for what he had done against Friar Martin Luther and said the King would act in like manner. He preached "Agayn ye pernicious doctryn of Martin luether" — for two hours! He preached by the consenting of the whole clergy of England by the commandment of the Pope and the king against one Martinus Eleutherius [Luther], and all his works. After the sermon he published the papal brief, saying King Henry had written a work against Luther which Cardinal Wolsey held in his hand, but it was not yet completed. After this the condemnation

was published, together with its approval by the King. The sermon was much commended by Cardinal Wolsey, who made a speech also in English, excommunicating and cursing Martin Luther and his followers. During the delivery of these speeches Luther's works were burnt.

"These ceremonies being concluded, the Cardinal gave the blessing to all present, and everybody returned home after 2 P. M. The ambassadors and prelates accompanied the Cardinal and dined with him.

"Thus Luther's festival terminated; upwards of 30,000 persons attended the celebration."

Did ever conquering hero have such a pompous and colorful reception?

The sermon was "Imprynted by Wynken de Worde," reprinted in 1556 and 1876. It was put into Latin and published by Dean Pace of St. Paul's, "one of the great lights of learning."

"The most learned prince of Europe" called Fisher "the most learned theologian of Europe," and the first English sermon against Luther should interest English Lutherans. From the fifty printed pages we give the following.

"The sermon of Johan the bysshop of Rochester made agayn ye pernicious doctryn of Martin luther within ye octaues of ye ascensyon by the assingnement of ye moost reuerend father in god ye lord Thomas Cardinall of Yorke & Legate ex latere from our holy father the pope.

[The text was for the Sunday after the Ascension, John 15: 26-16:4.]

"Full often whan the daye is clere & the sonne shyneth bryght ryseth in some quarter of the heuen a thyk blacke clowde, that darketh all the face of the heuen & shadoweth from vs the clere lyght of the sonne and stereth an hydeow tempest & maketh a grete lyghtnyng and thonderyth terryibly so that the weyke soules and feeble hertes be put in a grete fere & made almost desperate for lacke of comforte.

"In lyke maner is it in the chyrche of christ. . . ."

"Suche a clowde was" Arius and others. "And nowe suche another clowde is rayсед a lofte, oon Martyn luther a frere, the which hath stered a myghty storme and tempest in the chirche, and hath shadowed the clere lyght of many scryptures of god & he maketh yssue from hym a perylous lyghtnyng, that is to saye a false lyght of wrong vnderstandyng of scriptures which paseth not from the spiryte of trouth but from the spiryt of error and from the spyryte of this tempest of this moost perilous heresy. . . ."

"Luther wyll saye that he can not conceyue duos summos [two heads]. Of the whiche I meruayle gretly. . . . Saynt Paule

maketh many hedes sayenge the head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ, the head of Christ is God. Se here be thre heedes vnto a woman, god, chryst, & hyr husbände, & yet besyde al these she hath an heed of her owne. It were a monstrous syght to se a woman withouten an heed, what comforte sholde hyr housbände haue vpon hyr. . . . How moche rather our mother holy chyrche which is the spouse of christ hath an heed of her owne, that is to saye the pope and yet neuerthelesse chryst Jesu hyr housbände is her heed & almyghty god is her heed also."

[This is the argument of the most learned man in England. Doesn't it read like a joke?]

The summer sun revives the world. "This example yf ye perceyue it maye enduce vs to conceyue how wonderfully the spyrytuall sonne almyghty god worketh by his spyrytuall and inuysyple bemes of his lyght spred vpon the soule of man or vpon the chyrche, bothe whiche is called in scripture a spyrytuall erthe. . . . The bemes of almyghty god spred vpon our soules quyckeneth them & causeth this lyfe in vs and the fruyte of good workes."

[Perhaps he is nearer to Luther than he knows.]

"One grete grounde of Martyn luther is this that faythe alone withouten workes doth Justifye a synner. vpon the whiche ground he byldeth many other erroneus artycles & specyally that the sacramentes of Christes chirche dothe not Justyfye but onely faythe. A perylous artycle able to subuerte all the order of the chirche. but touchynge these sacramentes the kynges grace our souerayne lorde in his owne persone hath with his pen so substauncyally fогhten agaynst Martyn luther that I doute not but euery true christen man that shal rede his boke shall se those blessed sacramentes clered & delyuered from the sklanderous mouthe & cruel tethe that Martyn luther hath set vpon them, wherin al england maye take grete comforte and specyally al those that loue lernynge. . . .

"Martyn luther . . . hath excommunicate the pope. O wonderful presumption. O madnes intollerable.

"Who that thus often warned wyll yet gyue faythe to Martyn luther . . . gothe fer wyde from the streyght waye & is neuer lyke to entre in to the port of euerlastynge rest, whiche all we desyre & couet to come vnto, to the whiche he brynge vs who with the father and the holy spirit lives and reigns god to all eternity. Amen."

On May 14 the Cardinal did as bid by the Pope. He ordered all bishops to search for all books, pamphlets, and papers composed or edited by Martin Luther. In all churches the people were to be told: "For every book of Martin Luther's found in your pos-

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session within fifteen days after this injunction, you will incur the greater excommunication" — be burned alive.

He added a list of forty-two errors, taken from the Pope's bull of June 15, 1520, which was to be tacked to all church doors at the time of mass.

It seems Wolsey did not like to do this; he made it plain he did it by order of the Pope and the King and the advice of bishops.

Oak Park, Ill.

(To be continued)

WM. DALLMANN

Outlines on the Wuerttemberg Epistle Selections

Reminiscere

Jas. 1:2-12

St. James is addressing his letter principally to Christian Jews living outside Palestine. His letter is not a doctrinal epistle, it is rather a pastoral letter in which he directs his readers to prove themselves true Christians. In the text before us, he shows us how we are to conduct ourselves in times of temptation.

Ye Christians, Endure in the Time of Temptation

1. *Remember the blessing of such endurance already in this life*
2. *Pray for wisdom which is necessary for such endurance*
3. *Look forward to the crown of life that will be yours in the life to come*

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V. 2. Temptation not in the sense of allurements to sin but rather trials that take the form of suffering. These Christian Jews seem to have been in the midst of persecutions of various forms — divers temptations. — We are living in turbulent times. While we do not yet suffer persecutions for the sake of our faith, as many of our fellow-Christians do, there are other trials that are inseparably connected with times of war. Selectees must part from their loved ones, loss of life, lowering of the standards of living brought about by shortages, higher prices, higher taxes, etc. — "Count it all joy when. . ." That is hard, yet possible, Acts 5:41; 16:23, 25; Heb. 10:34, because there is a blessing in the suffering of God's children.

James mentions only one such blessing, v. 3. In tribulations our faith in the Savior of our souls is tested and exercised. If it is of the right kind, it will come out purified and refined, will result in patience, endurance, steadfastness. Rom. 5:3, 4; 1 Pet. 1:6b, 7; 4:12. Not that trials are a means of grace, but adversities cause us