

# Concordia Theological Monthly

---

Volume 13

Article 44

---

7-1-1942

## Miscellanea

L. Fuerbringer

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Fuerbringer, L. (1942) "Miscellanea," *Concordia Theological Monthly*: Vol. 13 , Article 44.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol13/iss1/44>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

---

## Miscellanea

---

### Perils in Free Prayer

An article in the *Watchman-Examiner* having the title "Pulpit Prayer" has something to say on the subject placed at the head of these remarks. There is, in the first place, a word of commendation for fixed forms of prayer. The writer says: "Fixed forms of prayer will always be an attraction to multitudes of men and women of intelligence and taste. Principal John Caird was 'greatly interested in the effort after greater beauty of holiness, greater attention to fitness and perfection of form in the expression of religious feeling.'" The author then adds a word of caution, saying: "But prayers that are prescribed to be read will always present subtle dangers to the unwary, for by frequent repetition they are likely to lose their vigor. The monotonous soon becomes the unmeaning. Nor will they invariably meet all the needs of those who pray." One will have to admit that these are considerations which need being pointed out. Then the author discusses the point in which we are chiefly interested. His remarks are all the more valuable because they come from quarters where not fixed prayers, but free prayer has always been considered the normal thing. Concerning free prayer he says: "But free prayer is not without its perils. Many a man who protests vigorously against the imposition of a form is in bondage to forms of his own. The objection to read prayers, that they lose power by too frequent repetition, holds true against many prayers that are not read. Without proper preparation we shall miss the beauty, the orderliness, the dignity, and the comprehensiveness of the prayer book, while at the same time we shall lay ourselves open to the charge of vain and tedious repetitions, of poor taste and slovenliness, or of failure to voice the real needs of the congregation. Is Dr. John Watson unduly severe in his characterization of certain prayers as 'slovenly' and of his description of them after this fashion ["prayers are slovenly"] when a minister embarks on the great affairs of prayer without a chart or compass, knowing not whither he may be carried, but hoping to arrive somewhere; when the congregation are certain that he does not know what he will say next sentence; when he toils with a refractory sentence for a while and finally lets it go on in despair, hiding his defeat in an outburst of artificial fervor; and when he drops into painful colloquialisms that would not be tolerated in the humblest public address?" Both what is here said about fixed prayers and free prayer should be carefully heeded. A.

### A Great Revival

In the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* for April, 1942, some interesting remarks made in the *British Weekly*, which have to do with religious conditions around the year 1800 and the revival that followed, are reprinted. When one considers the dark clouds of unbelief and immorality which are threatening to envelop our nation, the happenings 140 years ago are



quite cheering. Describing the apparently hopeless religious situation at that time, the author of the article says:

"Many statesmen and scholars were infidels and atheists. Their avowed object was to destroy Christianity. General Dearborn, Secretary of War under Jefferson, said that so long as the churches stood the nation could not hope for order and good government.

"The moral life of the people, even in the older settlements, had suffered a great breakdown. Contempt for religion was increasing. Public morals were increasingly corrupt and profligate. Profanity, drunkenness, lewdness, and debauchery abounded. Marriage ties were weakening. Drunkenness had never been so prevalent. In eighteen years the population increased twofold, and distilleries increased sixfold.

"The national life was at its lowest ebb. America was morally bankrupt. In 1796 a man wrote to Washington: 'Our affairs seem to lead to some crisis, some revolution, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am more uneasy than during the War.' Washington replied: 'Your sentiment that we are rapidly drifting to a crisis accords with mine. What the event will be, is beyond my foresight.'

"The period of 1775—1800 was dark and trying. Political, moral, and spiritual desolation prevailed. The spiritual life of the Church had declined to the place where the churches were no longer aggressive. There were few conversions and few accessions, and very few men were going into the ministry. Dorchester calls it 'The Dark Age of American Christianity.' Leonard W. Bacon, in his history, states that 'the two decades from the close of the War of Independence include the period of the lowest ebb tide of vitality in the history of American Christianity.'"

After this description the author relates how conditions changed:

"Then came the Revival. The preparations were by a praying minority. The condition of the nation was so desperate that only God could save it. A few Christians believed He could, and they began to pray. In New England a group of twenty-three ministers issued a circulating letter calling on the people to pray. From this came little praying groups all over New England.

"The great revival did not originate in the West. The spirit of God was working all over the nation. In 1791 a revival began in North Yarmouth, Maine. Then came revivals in New Salem, Farmington, Middlebury, New Hartford, Shaftesbury, and Boston. It spread over all New England. It reached into the Eastern colleges.

"In many parts of the country days of fasting and prayer prepared for this revival. Christian people in many places began to observe days of fasting and prayer. At first it was done annually, then quarterly, then monthly, then weekly. It was the action of individual congregations in all the denominations. It spread from one congregation to another. There was little intense agitation. There were no famous revivalists. There were no great gatherings. The work of faithful pastors at last began to bear fruit. Large numbers of conversions took place, and the life of the Church was revived.

"One, James McGready, was born in Pennsylvania in 1760 of Scotch-Irish parentage. His parents moved to Guilford County, North Carolina.



He was licensed by Redstone Presbytery in 1788. He began to travel, and preached as he traveled. His preaching stirred people to the depths. In 1796, in Logan County, Kentucky, he began to preach, and with peculiar power. From this place the revival spread over the Western and Southern States. Some of the preachers were James Balch, William McGee, William Hodge, William Stone, John Rankin, and Robert Marshall, all Presbyterians; John McGee, William Burke, and William McKendree, Methodists, and two brothers, Louis and Elijah Craig, Baptists.

"Then, in 1799, two brothers, William and John McGee, one a Presbyterian preacher and the other a Methodist, went through the Cumberland section of Kentucky and Tennessee, preaching in great power.

"The revival spread over Kentucky, Tennessee, into North and South Carolina, into Western Virginia, and into regions north of the Ohio River.

"In the Southwest, on account of a lack of suitable buildings and because of the scattered population, protracted meetings were held in groves and in the open air. By the year 1800 the people were coming from far and near to Logan County, Kentucky, where James McGready had begun the revival. They would come and camp for days. This was the first American camp meeting, in 1800, in Logan County, Kentucky.

"In the year 1800, at a little place called Crossroads, in Western Pennsylvania, a revival began. The revival was brought on by Elisha Macurdy, the pastor, and his 'praying elder.' This elder, Philip Jackson, had a son who was wild and going to the bad. Mr. Macurdy and this father went aside one day in the woods to pray for this boy. Shortly after, he was converted. This led to a great friendship between Elisha Macurdy and Philip Jackson. Mr. Macurdy and his elder, who from that time on was known as the 'praying elder,' began to pray for a revival, and a revival came."

It is well for us to ponder these episodes taken from church history. They are evidence that God never forsakes His Church and that even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. A.

### Religion in the Public Schools

"Public-school education on the elementary and secondary levels remains almost completely irreligious. This is the only possible conclusion from a recent survey of the movement to release pupils during school-hours for religious instruction. The United States Office of Education, which conducted the survey in cooperation with the International Council of Religious Education, has announced that only 164,013 children in thirty-eight States are attending classes in religion under the leased-time plan. Of the 26,000,000 children in the elementary and secondary schools, this constitutes a pitiful minority.

"The survey also revealed that the legal basis for the movement lacks as yet a desirable stability and uniformity. During the past year attempts were made in seven States to clarify the legality of released time for religious instruction. In six States, California, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Colorado, the bills were either defeated or permitted to die in committee. Only in Massachusetts



was the effort successful, thus bringing to nine the number of States that have provided legislative authority for released time.

"In the other States where pupils are studying religion during school-hours, the only basis for the practice is the interpretation of existing State laws by courts and attorneys general.

"This review has never taken the position that the release of public-school children for a weekly instruction in religion represents an ideal situation. Over a system, however, in which children are 'educated' without any reference to Almighty God, it represents a minimum and critically necessary advance. In every way possible, religious-minded parents should support the movement for released time. Where State laws, in the minds of the courts and attorneys general, deny to parents the constitutional right of religious education for their children, an attempt should be made to secure fitting legislation. In this matter, Catholic parents who, for some adequate reason, are unable to send their children to a Catholic school, cannot be indifferent.

"Unfortunately, the survey seems to show that a great deal of indifference exists. In the thirty-eight States where the plan for religious education operates, only 357 school systems are giving their pupils a chance to enjoy religious instruction. Surely, in the thousands of other school systems where the provision for released time has not been used, not all the blame can be placed on backward or hostile school officials. Some of it must rest on the shoulders and the consciences of parents, teachers, and pastors.

"The plan is admittedly inadequate and involves serious inconveniences, but where the souls of our children are at stake, we cannot on such grounds justify our inactivity. Furthermore, the bitter opposition in some quarters to released time for religious instruction will grow stronger in direct proportion to the indifference of Catholics."

The above editorial appeared in *America* (Roman Catholic weekly). We reprint it on account of the information it contains and its just appraisal of religious instruction for public-school pupils under the so-called "released-time" plan.

A.

### A Revision of a Revision

From a lengthy article by Luther A. Weigle, dean of Yale Divinity School, on the subject "Revision of the English Bible," which appeared in the *Lutheran Companion* and in other papers, we cull a few significant paragraphs. Our journal has mentioned before that a committee is at work attempting a revision of the revision of 1881. Of the men constituting the committee, six were chosen for their reputation as Old Testament scholars, six for their reputation as New Testament scholars, and four "for experience in the conduct of public worship and religious education." The following paragraph mentions the names of the committee members and the schools with which they are connected.

"Two of its members were elected from the faculty of Harvard University (Cadbury, Sperry) and three from Yale University (Burrows, Dahl, Weigle); two from Union Theological Seminary (Bewer, Moffatt); two from the University of Chicago (Goodspeed, Irwin); and one each from the University of Michigan (Waterman), the University of Toronto



(Taylor), the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology (Craig), Seabury-Western Theological Seminary (Grant), the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville (Yates), and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (Wentz). One was elected as a parish minister (Bowie). Grant and Bowie have since joined the faculty of Union Theological Seminary and Goodspeed that of the University of California at Los Angeles."

On the character which the new version is to have Dean Weigle writes as follows:

"The new Revised Version is not to be a 'modernization' of the English Bible. We have modern versions enough—some of them excellent. The reader who wishes to get the meaning of the Scripture in a quite fresh translation from the original language or in diction purposely up-to-date, can get this in the translations by Moffatt, Weymouth, Goodspeed, J. M. P. Smith and his colleagues, Ballantine, the Twentieth Century New Testament group, and, most recently, Father Spencer. These versions vary greatly, of course, in excellence; and some are more deliberately 'modern' than others. But there they are—a sufficient variety, surely. There is no need for the American Standard Bible Committee to undertake to add another to the list of versions in modern language.

"But there is great need for a Revised Version fully abreast of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the Scriptures but cast in diction worthy of a place in the great tradition of the English Bible from Tyndale to King James. To this end the Committee is charged to take the present American Standard Version as its basal English text and to make such changes only as are approved by a two-thirds vote of the entire Committee. Broadly speaking, changes are to be made only where deemed necessary for the sake of correctness of meaning, clarity of expression, simplicity of style, or finally, adherence to the King James Version where subsequent changes now appear to be unnecessary or inadvisable."

"The Committee has decided to return to the usage of the King James Bible with respect to the divine name. The new Revised Version will retain the word 'Jehovah' where the King James Bible uses it and will elsewhere translate the divine name as 'GOD' or 'the LORD.' The opening sentence of the Twenty-third Psalm, for example, will read: 'The Lord is my shepherd.' This is the long established usage, not only of the English versions made by Christian scholars, but also of the Jewish English versions of the Scriptures. The Committee is simply abandoning an innovation that dates only from 1901."

We finally mention the principles which are to govern the translation. Dean Weigle says, "The three outstanding requirements that must be met by the new revised version are: 1) It must seek with fidelity and accuracy to convey the meaning of the Scriptures as found in the best available Hebrew and Greek texts; 2) it must convey this meaning in clear, idiomatic, concise English; 3) it must be euphonious, readable, and suited for use in public and private worship." The effort of these scholars engages the interest of all lovers of the Holy Scriptures. A.



### Luthers Schrift „Ob Kriegsleute auch in einem seligen Stande sein können“ und ein durch die Jahrhunderte sich ziehender Druckfehler

In einer Rezension der Schrift P. Steinfes „The Bible and War“ („Lutheraner“, 1941, S. 244) hatte ich gesagt, daß es nicht gegen Schrift und christlich-lutherisches Bekenntnis ist, an einem gerechten Krieg sich zu beteiligen und dann weiter bemerkt: „Nun aber kann der Fall entstehen, daß einer in seinem Gewissen überzeugt ist, daß ein Krieg ungerecht ist; dann darf er nicht daran teilnehmen und muß um des Gewissens willen leiden, was über ihn verhängt wird. Wenn er aber nicht imstande ist, ganz klar und fest zu entscheiden, ob ein Krieg gerecht oder ungerecht ist, weil er nicht alle Einzelheiten, die zur Beurteilung nötig sind, kennt, dann soll er seiner Obrigkeit, wie man sich im Englischen ausdrückt, 'the benefit of the doubt' geben und ihr gehorsam sein, ein Mat, den schon Luther gibt in seiner ganz trefflichen Schrift vom Jahre 1526 „Ob Kriegsleute auch in einem seligen Stande sein können“, die wir jetzt wieder einmal mit höchstem Interesse gelesen haben. Luther sagt da: „Wenn du aber nicht weißt oder kannst nicht erfahren, ob dein Herr ungerecht sei, sollst du den ungewissen Gehorsam um ungewissen Rechts willen nicht schwächen, sondern nach der Liebe Art dich des Besten zu deinem Herrn versehen.“ Als ich diese Worte Luthers wieder las, war mir allerdings der Wortlaut etwas eigentümlich, aber ich gab die Worte, wie sie in unserer Lutherausgabe enthalten sind und forschte nicht weiter nach. Bald darauf schrieb mir aber einer unserer Pastoren und sprach die Meinung aus, daß hier wohl ein Druckfehler vorliege, und daß Luther wohl nicht gesagt habe „sollst du den ungewissen Gehorsam um ungewissen Rechts willen nicht schwächen“, sondern vielmehr, „sollst du den gewissen Gehorsam“ (gegen die Obrigkeit) „um ungewissen Rechts willen nicht schwächen“. Er berief sich dafür auf eine Stelle in D. Piepers „Dogmatik“ (Band III, S. 82, Anm. 300). Er selbst hatte die ihm zugänglichen Lutherausgaben verglichen, aber überall fand er „unwissen Gehorsam“. Deshalb ersuchte er mich, weiter nachzuforschen, und ihm dann den Befund mitzuteilen. Er hatte außer der St. Louiser-Ausgabe (X, 525) und unserer „Luthers Volksbibliothek“ (5, 154) auch die Berliner Ausgabe nachgeschlagen, die ebenfalls „unwissen Gehorsam“ hat (7, 426) und die englische Übersetzung (Holman oder Philadelphia Edition, 5, 68), die den Satz so wiedergibt: „But if you do not know, or cannot find out whether your lord is wrong, you ought not to weaken an *uncertain* obedience with an uncertainty of right, but should think the best of your lord, as is the way of love.“

Nun forschte ich weiter nach, und ich fand dieselbe Lesart in der alten Walch'schen Ausgabe (10, 615), die ja unserer St. Louiser Ausgabe zugrunde gelegt ist, und in der sonst guten Erlanger Ausgabe (22, 283), ebenso in allen älteren Ausgaben: in der Wittenberger von 1559 (VI, 595), in der Jenaer von 1573 (III, 328), in der Altenburger von 1661 (III, 676) und in der Leipziger von 1734 (XXII, 328). Alle ohne Ausnahme haben „unwissen“ Gehorsam. Aber dann oder vielmehr gleich zu Anfang ging ich zu der Ausgabe, die für alle Lutherstudien die Hauptautorität ist, nämlich die Weimarer Ausgabe. Diese Ausgabe legt mit Recht den allerersten Druck der Schrift Luthers vom Jahre 1526 zugrunde und hat tatsächlich die Stelle anders, nicht „unwissen Gehorsam“, sondern „gewissen



Gehorsam". Wir lassen die Worte in der alten ursprünglichen Schreib- und Druckweise jener Zeit folgen:

"Wenn du aber nicht weißt obder laust nicht erfahren, ob dein herr ungerecht sey, Soltu den gewissen gehorsam umb ungewisses rechts willen nicht schwächen, sondern nach der liebe art dich des besten zu dehm herrn versehen." (19, 657.)

Und schließlich schlugen wir auch die neueste populäre Ausgabe der "Hauptschriften Luthers" von Campenhausen, die Luther im heutigen Deutsch reden läßt, nach und fanden da ebenfalls die Aussage richtig angegeben in folgenden Worten:

"Wenn du's aber nicht sicher weißt oder nicht erfahren kannst, ob dein Herr ungerecht vorgeht, sollst du die zweifellose Gehorsamspflicht nicht um eines zweifelhaften Rechts willen abschwächen, sondern wie's die Liebe fordert, das beste von deinem Herrn voraussetzen." (S. 305.)

Demzufolge muß unsere Ausgabe und alle, die denselben Fehler haben, korrigiert werden, und dann wird die Aussage Luthers ganz klar und verständlich. Wie und wann der Druckfehler entstanden ist, haben wir nicht feststellen können.

Die Weimarer-Ausgabe sagt in ihrer Einleitung zu der trefflichen Schrift Luthers:

"Die Aufnahme, welche dieses Buch fand, war eine verschiedene. Cyr. Spangenberg erzählt: Als man dieses Büchlein das erste Mal zu Wittenberg einzeln gedruckt, ist bestellt worden, daß man in etlichen Exemplaren D. Luthers und auch der Stadt Wittenberg Namen samt der Vorrede und etlichen wenigen Worten ausgelassen, darnach derselben Exemplare eines Herrn Jörgen (Herzog Georg) von Sachsen beigebracht, als von andern fernen Orten herkommen. Als er nun das Büchlein gelesen, hat es ihm trefflich wohl gefallen, und es hoch gerühmt, besonders gegen Lucas Maler den Älteren (Lucas Cranach), welcher damals zu Dresden gearbeitet, zu dem er gesagt: Siehe, Lucas, du rühmst immer deinen Mönch zu Wittenberg, den Luther, wie er allein so gelehrt sei und allein gut deutsch reden und gute Bücher schreiben könne. Aber du irrst hierin sowohl als auch in anderen Stücken mehr. Siehe, da hab ich auch ein Büchlein, das ist ja so gut und besser, denn es der Luder nimmermehr machen könnte. Hat es damit aus dem Busen gezogen und dem Maler zugetworfen, welcher es besahen und gesagt: Gnädiger Fürst und Herr, dieses Büchlein hat Luther gemacht, allein daß sein Name nicht darauf steht. Ich habe hier auch eines bei mir, welches er mir selbst gegeben, darauf sein Name gedruckt. Da solches der Herzog besichtigt und anders nicht befunden, denn daß es Luthers Arbeit gewesen, ist er ganz zornig darüber in ihm selbst worden und heftlich herausgehoben, geknickt und gesagt: Ist's doch Schade, daß ein solcher heillosen Mönch so ein gutes Buch hat machen sollen."

Ebenso haben wir noch nicht feststellen können, wie D. Pieper dazu gekommen ist, daß er in seiner "Dogmatik" den Druckfehler einfach korrigiert hat. Er folgt sonst hier und anderwärts immer unserer St. Louiser Ausgabe, und früher, ehe diese vollendet war, benutzte er die Erlanger Ausgabe. Aber er gibt keinen Aufschluß über die Sache. Doch ist seine Anmerkung so wertvoll und richtig, daß wir sie hier ebenfalls abdrucken.

Hiernach muß der einzelne auch genau prüfen, ob z. B. ein Krieg gerecht sei oder nicht. (Vgl. Luther, St. L. X., 413 ff.) Ob ein Krieg gerecht oder ungerecht sei, kann weder der Staat (weltliche Obrigkeit) noch die Kirche (Pastor, Synode) noch irgendein Mensch für das Gewissen des einzelnen entscheiden. Deshalb schärft Luther ein, nicht bloß so oberhin, sondern "durch möglichen Fleiß" die Sachlage zu erforschen. Das ist natürlich auch der Sinn des 16. Artikels der Augustana, wo unter den Funktionen der Obrigkeit das "Rechte-Kriege-Führen" genannt ist. Die Limitation gilt nicht bloß für das Gebot der Obrigkeit, sondern auch für den Gehorsam der Untertanen, wie am Schluß des Artikels ausdrücklich bemerkt wird. Ebenso lehrt Luther an den oben angeführten Stellen. Nur wo nach an-



geklärter fleißiger Prüfung das eigene Urteil unmöglich ist, also als Resultat der Prüfung Ungeivieheit übrigbleibt, soll nach Luthers Meinung der Christ, falls er zum Kriegsdienst gezwungen wird, „den gewissen Gehorsam (gegen die Obrigkeit) um ungewissen Rechts willen nicht schwächen“.

Offenbar hat auch unser Lutherredakteur Prof. A. F. Hoppe den Fehler nicht bemerkt, sonst hätte er vielleicht weiter nachgeforscht, da er viel die Weimarer Ausgabe benutzt hat. Allerdings ist der betreffende Band unserer Lutherausgabe schon 12 Jahre früher gedruckt worden (1885), auch nicht von Hoppe für den Druck vorbereitet worden; der obengenannte Band der Weimarer Ausgabe erschien erst im Jahre 1897. Aber die ganze Sache zeigt wieder, wie sorgfältig D. Pieper seinen Luther gelesen und studiert hat.

Und noch eine Freude habe ich bei dieser Sache erlebt. Der noch jüngere Pastor unserer Synode, der uns zuerst darauf aufmerksam machte, stammt ursprünglich nicht aus unsern Kreisen. Seine Eltern waren, so weit wir wissen, nicht einmal Glieder der lutherischen Kirche. Er hat seine Hauptausbildung nicht auf unsern, sondern auf andern Anstalten erhalten, und hat nur ein Jahr hier in St. Louis studiert. Seine Muttersprache ist nicht das Deutsche, sondern das Englische. Aber er hat ein solches Interesse an der Sache und an Luther, daß er die Schriften des Reformators nicht nur besigt, sondern auch fleißig liest und studiert.

L. F.

### The Eschatological Functions of the Holy Spirit

This short item is occasioned by the fact that a large number of students of Luther's Small Catechism have been puzzled by the conclusion of the exposition of the Third Article, which reads: "And will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life." The translation of the *Concordia Triglotta* reads: "And at the last day will raise up me and all the dead and will give to me and to all believers in Christ everlasting life." (P. 545.) The question arises: Why did Luther, and apparently with such definiteness, ascribe the raising of the dead and the giving of eternal life to the Holy Ghost, whereas in the eschatological sayings of Jesus the Savior speaks of Himself as being engaged in calling the dead out of their graves and in calling the elect to enjoy the inheritance of the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world? Matt. 24 and 25.

If we consult the classical expositions of Luther's Small Catechism, we find that men like Walther (Lueneburg), Spener, Crueger, von Zezschwitz, Nebe, and others have struggled with this and other difficulties in the Third Article. Nebe (*Der kleine Katechismus Luthers, ausgelegt aus Luthers Werken*, 241 ff.) writes: "As innocuous and innocent, as smooth and simple as the exposition of Luther seems to be, it nevertheless offers the very greatest of difficulties; the explanations of the other articles are, in comparison with this one, in the highest degree clear and perspicuous. I know that this my opinion will seem strange to many; yet this fact cannot cause me to change my opinion. There is many a person who does not see the difficulties which are lying before his very feet. . . . It is clearly Luther's thought that the Holy Ghost assists me in obtaining the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. . . . Nowhere does the Re-



former designate the Church as the agency of salvation; he designates it in the sentence beginning with 'even as' as a work of the Holy Ghost, just as the individual believer is His work, and in the following sentence, beginning with 'in which Christian Church He daily and richly,' it is again not the Christian Church which is named as the institution or instrument by which forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting are brought to us, but it is the Holy Ghost who effects all this. . . . Luther speaks exclusively of the work of the Holy Ghost, of sanctification, as he has briefly and correctly called it. This work of sanctification, according to my opinion, is treated in such a manner, that Luther discusses first the *way of salvation*, on which the Holy Ghost leads the individual as well as the totality, the entire people, the Christian Church, as also of the *blessing of salvation*, to which He leads us on the designated way of salvation. The way of salvation has its definite steps, as the order of salvation sets them forth. The blessing of salvation is a threefold one, now in time, day by day, the forgiveness of sins, but finally, at the end of time, on the Last Day, the resurrection of the body, and after that, beyond time, in eternity, life everlasting." Cf. here *Trigl.*, 688, 41; likewise 692, 59.

Are we to assume, then, that Luther, by *appropriation*, ascribes the work of the resurrection of the flesh and the blessing of eternal life to the Holy Ghost? The Scriptural background for such a procedure would, indeed, seem quite tenuous. We have the passage Rom. 8:23: "Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." No matter which exposition of this verse we follow, it is clear that the apostle accords to the Holy Ghost a specific function with regard to the consummation of the Christian hope, the final redemption, without indicating in any manner that He might be exclusively involved in this bestowal of God's final blessing. Another passage which is adduced in order to shed light on Luther's exposition of the Third Article is Heb. 9:14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" However, it seems clear that this verse speaks only of the Spirit's relation to the work of Christ's redemption as a whole and has no bearing on any eschatological function of the Spirit. Rom. 8:11 seems even stronger. However, see the divergent reading, followed by Luther in his translation, also Stoeckhardt's Commentary.

We might, in this connection, quote other passages which speak of the participation of the Holy Ghost in the entire work of redemption, as it culminates in the final deliverance from all evil. But when all is said and done, the explanation seems to be contained in two facts, both of which are hinted at in Nebe's exposition of Luther's text. In the first place, since the *way of salvation* is described, the appropriation of the two last works to the Holy Ghost does not exclude the fact, with which Luther was also familiar, that the outward operations of the three persons of the Trinity (*opera ad extra*) are performed by them in common, or together. If Luther here ascribes the resurrection of the body and the giving of eternal life to the Holy Ghost, he does not intend



to exclude the divine operation of the other Persons, for it would be absurd even to suggest that the Father and the Son did not concur in works which are directly associated with them in Scripture.

And, by the same token, and in the same connection, it is evident that Luther intended the last words of the Third Article to be the climax of the entire Creed. Although the Holy Ghost is the subject of the sentence, the scope of the thought includes the entire work of the Godhead in the interest of men, specifically the believers, culminating in the glory of the final redemption from all evil. Most obviously the assurance constantly being given by the Holy Ghost through the Word is included in the scope of the Third Article, but the entire Trinity cooperates in bringing about the glorious purpose of God, as pictured in Eph. 1:3-14.

P. E. K.

### An Honest Appraisal

Prof. L. W. Spitz of St. Paul's College, Concordia, Mo., submits an interesting section of an article in the *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature* which appeared in the issue of April, 1938, and was written by W. A. Irwin, with the caption, "The Study of the Old Testament—an Introspective Interval." We know our readers will be grateful for this excerpt. The corrections which are required every Lutheran theologian can at once supply.

"However, as important as these various aspects of Old Testament study may severally be, there is a question that transcends all in significance because it subsumes all. We are coming with increasing clarity to a realization of the basic issue: What meaning and significance has the Old Testament at all for our day, and what social and religious value, then, has any of our work? Criticism was born in the atmosphere of a dominant dogmatism, and step by step it was compelled to make its way in the face of bitter denunciation, of keenest opposition, and of cynical abuse. The story of the struggles of those early workers into whose heritage we have entered, and the too often tragic tale of the price which they paid for their intellectual honesty, is not our present issue. It has become a part of that richest treasure of our spiritual heritage—the freedom of the human soul. But we must be concerned that the movement which they inaugurated and which in course of time has come into the keeping of our weaker hands has gone far beyond anything they could have anticipated. The Biblical critic finds himself now in much the position of the medieval magician who raised the devil and then was quite unable to lay him again. We have taught people to ask incisive and penetrating questions about the Bible; we have given them our well-considered conclusions which were all too correctly dubbed destructive; and now we find that our ideas have penetrated to the common public in the garbled form inevitable in that transition, with the result that the prevalent notion today is that the Bible is nothing more than an interesting collection of ancient fables with little validity and certainly no significance for this modern world. While the educated person, more particularly the one whose education lies close to Biblical matters, would repudiate this crass extreme, still the fact is that our work has been destructive of that very



basis upon which it originally rested and upon which we may say it must ultimately rest. Cultured or crude, people of today are more than uneasy about the old doctrine of divine inspiration and, having abandoned this, are then hard put to it to find any rational explanation or defense of meaning and worth in the Bible at all.

We have but ourselves to blame for our predicament. We have too long vociferously proclaimed, by our conduct if not by our words, that the Old Testament is primarily a source of jigsaw puzzles; that it is a literature where the expert can amuse himself by chopping up half-verses and piecing together stray words to produce most astonishing results. Our incessant haggle over the pettifoggery of criticism has served to obscure completely the realities of the literature which it is our responsibility to expound. Just now we need little so much as a vital sense of humor that can laugh at absurdity even when it is our own and can then beget a sane balance and wholesome outlook. We must see criticism in its proper perspective. Important as its contributions have been, far-reaching as is its significance, it is nothing more than the gate through which we enter in; it is only an approach to the Bible, an extremely valuable approach it is true, but still only an approach. And after we have done our work, after criticism has said its last word, the Bible still remains just what it has been for two thousand years and more. We have found nothing to invalidate its place through these many centuries and in our own day in the loving devotion of religious people. Our keenest investigations have failed to shake the basic conviction; on the contrary, they have but enhanced the mystery that here we deal with the oracles of God. Our supreme problem at this moment is the restatement of this ancient faith not by abandonment of our criticism but in the light of all that criticism has done for us. And I affirm my conviction that it is no hopeless task; the realities lie in full view for those who would see them. After the age of Biblical criticism it is now high time that we revive the era of Bible teaching." Pp. 180—182.

### A New Approach to the Chronology of Jesus' Life

In the *Anglican Theological Review* for January, 1942, Prof. A. T. Olmstead of the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, publishes an article having the title "The Chronology of Jesus' Life," to which the attention of our readers should be drawn. He and his colleague, Dr. Waldo H. Dubberstein, have drawn up a table with the help of which the exact dates, including the precise day of the week, can be established for many events. The period covered extends from 625 B.C. to 46 A.D. To be more precise, it is always the first day of each month which is fixed through this table. How this achievement may have a bearing on the chronology of the life of Jesus is evident. Professor Olmstead assumes that the crucifixion of Jesus occurred the 14th of Nisan. In common with the great multitude of scholars he holds that the day of the week was a Friday. Consulting his table, he finds that in 29 A.D. this date was a Monday, in 30 A.D. it was a Friday, in 31 A.D. a Wednesday, etc. His conclusion is, "By elimination the year of the crucifixion can be



only 30 A.D., when the Passover fell on Friday, April 7." He furthermore states that according to the old "Easter Canon," if one calculates back to the period of Christ, Easter in 30 A.D. fell on April 9, which would mean that Good Friday was April 7. This is indeed a remarkable confirmation. Professor Olmstead says, "No longer is doubt permissible as to the date of the crucifixion. Friday, April 7, 30 A.D., is established as firmly as is any date in ancient history; in fact, few dates in Greek and Roman history before the adoption of the Julian calendar are as sure."

We regret to see that as a result of what he considers a definite and incontrovertible conclusion he holds that Matthew, Mark, and Luke are in error when they give us the impression that the date of the crucifixion was the 15th of Nisan. We wonder whether he has not heard of the latest solution offered to harmonize the synoptic writers with John in this point. It is dwelt on at length in the book of Prof. Paul Feine having the title "Jesus" (published by C. Bertelsmann, Guetersloh, 1930), pp. 115—124. Professor Feine and other scholars hold that among the Jews there was disagreement off and on as to the precise day when the new year began. In his view the high priests and their adherents followed one way, the Pharisees another in this particular year, and thus it came about that what the high priests called the 14th of Nisan, many of their countrymen called the 15th. For details I have to refer the reader to Feine's work.

As to the general reliability of Luke, I should like to quote this paragraph from Professor Olmstead's article:

"All this agrees with Luke, but two objections have been raised. One is not serious, the dating by the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas. We know much about the upstart high priest Annas or Ananus, how five of his sons followed him in his exalted office, while John adds the further information that Caiaphas was his son-in-law. Through sons and son-in-law he remained the power behind the throne long after his title of high priest had become merely honorary. Josephus gives us examples of ex-high priests who continued to be called by that title, but in none was it so appropriate as with Annas. This is the reason why Annas is bracketed with Caiaphas in the present instance, why John recognizes him as the actual assassin of Jesus, why later Luke again makes him the leader of the Jewish people in the opposition to the early Church. As to the inclusion of the tetrach Lysanias of Abilene, this is not 'a gross chronological error'; it is the modern critic who has confused the Lysanias who lived in the days of Augustus with the successor whose tetrarchy was added to that of Philip to form a kingdom for Agrippa and whose inscription at Abila, modern Suq Wadi Barada, I 'squeezed' *in situ* in 1904."

With respect to John's Gospel I, of course, find myself in full agreement with Professor Olmstead when he emphasizes the reliability of the chronological statements in this book of the Bible. But what of his contention that the ministry of Jesus began in 29 A.D., hence lasting merely a little more than a year? This view necessarily contradicts the chronology of this evangelist, because according to his Gospel there were (at least) two Passovers during the ministry of Jesus before the



final one on which His crucifixion occurred. Cf. John 2:13 and 6:4. Professor Olmstead gets rid of the difficulty by holding that John 6:4 is not authentic but an interpolation. He says, "By the elimination of the interpolated Passover in 6:4, John has been brought into agreement with the other Lives [Gospels] who all have a one-year ministry." This I have to consider an unwarranted procedure, because the textual evidence for the existence of an interpolation at this place is altogether insufficient. Perhaps the most startling assumption in this article is the resurrection of the old view (of Irenaeus) that Jesus was about fifty years old when He was accomplishing His ministry. Professor Olmstead relies on John 8:57 for that view. He says: "We must therefore accept it and date the birth of Jesus about 20 B.C. Such a date is perfectly consistent with the fundamental tradition given to both Matthew and Luke, that Jesus was born in the reign of Herod, for Herod ruled from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. If Jesus was not far from fifty when He began His preaching, the whole story of that ministry gains in plausibility; for the first time we can understand how He came to be accepted as an authoritative 'Rabbi.'" But, surely, the words of the Jews, John 8:47, do not compel us to hold that Jesus was close to fifty when the episode occurred. Besides, there is the definite statement of Luke that Jesus was about thirty years when He began His ministry, Luke 3:23. That Jesus would not have been accorded recognition as a rabbi if He had been merely thirty years old, is a mere assumption. The only argument that Professor Olmstead can advance is contained in this sentence, "Those who know their Near East will be difficult to convince that so young a man could have been accepted as a teacher of authority." My intention, however, was not to argue about the various points raised in the article of Professor Olmstead, but merely to draw attention to it as an important study bearing on a topic in which every Christian theologian is intensely interested.

A.

