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Luther: A Blessing to the English

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which he regarded as the same as coming to God through Christ, for those who "do the works of the Law written in their hearts come to God alone through Christ" (III:634). Of course, those who hear of Christ and His work must believe in Him and His work if they would come to God through Him. But according to Zwingli true piety and religion does not consist in trusting solely in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, but in knowing and trusting in God as the source of all good and in obeying His Law. Since divine election is the real basis and ground of salvation, and inasmuch as the whole Christian life is altogether dependent on election, therefore the work of Christ as well as faith in Christ is something secondary. To Zwingli everything was subordinate to the eternal and immutable predestination of God.

Morrison, III.

(To be concluded)

THEO. DIERKS

Luther: A Blessing to the English

VIII. Luther's New Testament in English

The Reformed Abraham Scultetus says in his *Annals*: "Students from all nations came to Wittenberg to hear Luther and Melancthon. As they came in sight of the town, they returned thanks to God with clasped hands, for from Wittenberg, as hitherto from Jerusalem, the light of evangelical truth had spread to the uttermost parts of the earth." And so the historian Green calls Wittenberg "the little town which had suddenly become the sacred city of the Reformation."

"Guilelmus Daltici ex Anglia 27 Maij 1524" — William Tyndale, likely the first Englishman to register at the University of Wittenberg.

"Guilhelmus Roy ex Londino" registered on June 10, 1525, — Tyndale's helper, one of the "German Lutherans" of Cambridge.

Tyndale translated the New Testament from the Greek but always had an eye on Luther's German Testament of September, 1522.

He took his work to Koeln to have it printed by Quentel. John Cochlaeus, whom the papists call "the scourge of Luther," heard some printers in their cups remark: "All England would soon be Lutheran, the King and the Cardinal of England willy nilly." He invited several of them to his lodgings, plied them with wine, and one of them in confidential talk revealed the secret. Two Englishmen, learned in languages, who sometime had been at Wittenberg, had translated the Lutheran New Testament into the English language. Three thousand copies were in press as far as the letter K

in the order of quires. Next day he went secretly to Hermann Rink, a patrician, known to the Kaiser and to the King of England, and a Councilor, who had the Senate stop the printing. The two English apostates snatched up the printed sheets and sailed up the Rhine to Worms, where the people "in full fury Lutherized."

Peter Schoeffer printed 3,000 copies of Tyndale's New Testament in octavo. It is often called "Luther's New Testament in English." Why? 1. Tyndale's Testament of 1525 is a miniature of Luther's Testament of September, 1522: the appearance of the page, the arrangement of the text, the inner margin for the references, and the outer margin for the explanations—all are the same. 2. Tyndale's marginal notes are literally taken from Luther or reproduced from Luther; some are Tyndale's own. 3. The translation is from the Greek, but Luther's German was always consulted, and Green speaks of "Tyndale's Lutheran translation." 4. In the Prolog many passages have been taken from the German; two pages are taken almost word for word from Luther, "as the reader speedily begins to suspect from the characteristic ring of the sentences," says Bishop Westcott; and the Athenaeum says a comparison of the two Testaments "fully justifies the assertion that he reproduced in English Luther's German Testament."

Cochlaeus at once by letters warned the King, the Cardinal, and the Bishop of Rochester most diligently to watch all the ports of England lest that most pernicious dung be imported.

Edward Lee, the King's chaplain and almoner, a bitter opponent of the Annotations in Erasmus' Greek Testament, on December 2, 1525, wrote the King from Bordeaux: "An Englishman, your subject, at the solicitation and instance of Luther, with whom he is, hath translated the New Testament into English; and within few days intendeth to return with the same imprinted into England. I need not advertise your Grace what infection and danger may ensue hereby if it be not withstanding. This is the next way to fulfill your Realm with Lutherians. For all Luther's perverse opinions be grounded upon bare words of Scripture, not well taken, ne understood, which your Grace hath opened in sundry places of your royal book. All our forefathers, governors of the Church of England, hath with all diligence forbid and eschewed publication of English Bibles, as appeareth in constitutions provincial of the Church of England. Nowe, sire, as God hath endued your Grace with Christian courage to set forth the standard against these Philistines and to vanquish them, so I doubt not that he will assist your Grace to prosecute and perform the same—that is, to undertread them that they shall not now lift up their heads; which they endeavor by means of English Bibles. They know what hurt such books hath done in your realm in times past.

"Hitherto, blessed be God, your Realme is safe from infection of Luther's sect, as for so much that although any peradventure be secretly blotted within, yet for fear of your royal majesty, which hath drawn his sword in God's cause, they dare not openly avow. Wherefore I can not doubt but that your noble Grace will valiantly maintain that you have so nobly begun."

To Wolsey the same day: "This realm of France hath been somewhat touched with this sect, in so much that it hath entered amongs the Doctors of Parisse, wherof some be in prison, some fled, some called in judgment. The bishop also of Meulx, called Melden Meaux, is summoned for that cause, for he suffered Luther's perverse opinions to be preached in his diocese. Faber also, a man hitherto noted of excellent good life and learning, is called among them, but some say here for displeasure, which I can well think. The Parliament of Paris had much business to repress this Sect. And yet, blessed be God, your noble Realme is yet unblotted. Wherefore lest any danger might ensue, if these Books secretly should be brought in, I thought to advertise your Grace thereof, considering that it toucheth your high honor, and the wealth and integrity of the Christian faith within your Realme; which can not long endure if these Books may come in." He hears it has touched a higher head than any of these—the sister of the king, Queen of Navarre.

In vain all warnings! In vain all watchings! Early in 1526 Tyndale's *Luther's New Testament in English*, made in Germany, came into England.

"It came as part of the Lutheran movement; it bore the Lutheran stamp in its version of ecclesiastical words," says Green. We can almost see the German Hanse merchants smuggling the precious wares into their Steelyard and then to the church of All-hallows in Honey Lane. The parson was Dr. Thomas Forman, a "German Lutheran" of Cambridge, and his curate was Thomas Garret, a fellow of Oxford, a "bookseller" to whom Erasmus sent greetings at Christmas 1525.

About this time the Association of Christian Brothers was formed to spread the English Testaments and Lutheran books. They were cobblers, weavers, carpenters, laborers, tradesmen, apprentices, and a few of the clergy. They paid dues, and the accounts were regularly audited. They and paid agents might be seen at night stealing along the lanes and alleys with their precious load of Testaments and Lutheran books and gathering new members. These missionaries worked at the risk of their lives: some lost their lives.

Green calls them the first Religious Tract Society. We like to think of them as the first English Lutheran Men's Club and Publicity Bureau.

On April 6, 1526, Adrian Dalewyn confessed to reading Luther's books "in the Dutch tongue" and to praising his opinions; he was forced to abjure. One Harmond [George Harman], an Englishman beyond sea, in 1526 sold New Testaments to Simon Fish, a lawyer, dwelling by the Whitefriars in London, who sold many of them at various times to Robert Necton, who was got to buy them by George Constantine, a vicar in London. He sold five or ten of them to Sir [Rev.] William Furboshore, singing man in Stowmarket, Suff., for seven or eight groats a-piece, and two in Bury St. Edmund's to Raynold Wodelesse and Thos. Horfan. At Christmas he sold one to a priest at Pycknam Wade, and two Latin books, *Oeconomica Christiana* and *Unio Dissidentium*; also a Testament to Will. Gibson, merchant, of St. Margaret Patens; also two Testaments unbound for 3 s. 4 d. to Sir Ric. Bayfield, and five or six to persons in London. He bought of Geoffrey Usher, a servant of Mr. Forman, the parson of Honey Lane, to whose sermons he much resorted, eighteen New Testaments of the small size, and twenty-six books, all of one sort, called *Oeconomica Christiana*; and two others, called *Unio Dissidentium*. Of the former, Vicar Constantine had thirteen copies at one time. Since Easter he carried several Testaments, &c., to Lynne and left them with a young man named William . . ., who refused to buy them, as they were forbidden. He also sold a small Testament to young Elderton, merchantman of St. Mary Hill parish. He did not know that any of these books were of Luther's sect. Twice or thrice he read the New Testament in English in Thos. Mathew's house, of Colchester. About Christmas last a Dutchman, now in the Fleet [prison], offered to sell him 200 or 300 English Testaments, at 9 d. each; but he did not buy, only sending him to Mr. Fish, and promising to do whatever Mr. Fish did. Since Easter, when at Norwich, he was complained of to my lord of Norwich [Bishop Nix] because he had a New Testament, which he kept for a year or more after he knew of its condemnation, which he read thoroughly many times, both to himself and to others.

At Michaelmas John Tyball and tailor John Hilles of Steeple Bumstead in Essex came to London to buy a New Testament of Friar Barnes at the Friars Augustines. They found him in his chamber, with a merchant and two or three others, and he gave them an English Testament, for which they paid 3 s. 2 d., and he desired them to keep it close. Half a year ago he gave the Testament to Frear Gardyner, the curate of the village, and never got it back.

Rodolph Bradford, one of the Cambridge "German Lutherans," came to London and by the help of Jeffrey Lome, servant of Dr. Forman (a learned man and favorer of religion at Cambridge),

met with New Testaments in English and went to Reading to disperse them. He fled to Ireland, preached the Gospel, and was in prison for two years.

Hasenberg of Leipzig had found in Luther's New Testament just 3,000 errors, and now Bishop Tunstal found in the English Testament just 3,000 errors. On October 23, 1526, Tunstal told his archdeacons: "Many children of iniquitie, maintayners of Luther's sect, blynded through extreme wickednes, wandryng from the way of truth and the Catholicke fayth, craftely haue translated the new Testament into our English tongue, enter-medlyng therewith many heretical Articles & erroneous opinions, pernicious and offensive, seducyng the simple people, attemptyng by their wicked and peruerse interpretations, to prophanate the maiestye of the Scripture, which hetherto hath remained undefiled, & craftely to abuse the most holy worde of God, and the true sense of the same. . . ." Therefore within thirty days all these books were to be given up.

Among the books condemned were Luther's *Revelation of the Antichrist*, *Introduction to Paul's Romans*, *Piae Praecationes*, *Babylonian Captivity*, *Galatians*, *Liberty of a Christian*, *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, and *Brenz' Administration of the Republic*. At Paul's Cross they all went up in smoke. On November 3 Archbishop Warham of Canterbury had a like bonfire.

In 1526 came Tyndale's famous *Prolog to the Epistle to the Romans*—a paraphrase of Luther's great work. More attacked it for "bringing its readers into a false understanding of St. Paul."

On November 17 Sir John Hacket gave to Margaret, the kaiser's aunt and regent of the Netherlands, a letter from the king asking for the suppression of English Lutherans at Antwerp, which, however, the city refused.

On January 27, 1527, Old Father Hacker, alias Ebb, said he received the Gospel of Matthew in English from Thomas Vincent. John Slacy, bricklayer, kept in his house a man named John to write the Apocalypse in English, the cost being borne by John Sercot, grocer. Hacker had many followers.

On February 24, 1527, Curate Sebastian Herris confessed he had the New Testament translated into English by William Hochyn [Tyndale] and Roy, and *Unio Dissidentium*, containing Luther's heresies.

On February 24, 1527 (?), Robert Ridley wrote Henry Gold, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "Maister gold I hartly commaunde me unto you as concernyng this common & vulgare translation of the new testament in to englishe doon by M. William hichens other wais called M. W. tyndale & frear William roy manifest Lutheranes heretikes & apostates as doth opynly apeir

not only by their daily & continuall company & familiarite with Luther & his disciples but mych mor by their commentares & annotations in Matthew and Marcum in the first print also by their preface in the 2d prent & by their introduccion in to the epistle of paule ad romanos al to gither most posoned & abhominable hereses that can be thowht he is not a son of the church of Christ."

In February Cromwell ordered Bishop Longland of Lincoln, the king's confessor, to have his clergy preach in person or provide sermons to be preached by others — four times a year.

In March the Hanse merchants issued a printed circular telling that Wolsey and More had forbidden the importation of Lutheran works into England, and Bishop Cuthbert Tunstal of London licensed Sir Thomas More, his Demosthenes, to read Lutheran books in order to make reply. The next year the Demosthenes finished his *Dialog against Tyndale and others*.

On March 7 Christopher Ravyn said his servant John Hills can read well and has a printed book of the New Testament in English, which he bought in London, and he is a great reader amongst the people.

John Pykas on March 7 confessed that about five years ago his mother gave him Paul's Epistles in English and bade him live according to the Epistles and Gospels. About two years ago he bought an English New Testament from a Lombard of London for 4s., which he kept for the space of four years. Hearing that these books were forbidden, he gave it and the Epistles to his mother. He taught in the houses of Thomas Mathew, John Thompson, and others. He had a book partly English, partly Latin, beginning "The most excellent and glorious Lord, &c.," and another called *Disputatio inter fratrem et clericum*, the *Pricke of Conscience*, and *The Seven Wise Masters of Rome*.

On the 23 he confessed talking with Robert Best, twice, in his own house, concerning the Epistle of James, which Best could say by heart. Best has been taken for a known man and a brother in Christ for a year. He borrowed an English New Testament from Pykas. He spoke with John Gyrling concerning Christ's words in the 25 chapter of Matthew, about the destruction of Jerusalem, also about a chapter in James. Gyrling has been reputed a known man and a brother in Christ for three years. Has talked with William Raylond about the Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed in English, about the Epistles of James and John, and about the eight Beatitudes. Marion Mathew, *alias* Westdon, has the Epistles and Gospels in her house, and knows them by heart, and has been a known woman and of the brotherhood for twelve years, as he has heard say. Has often communed with Dorothy

Long, who belongs to the same sect. Has known Alice Gardyner for twenty years, and has talked with her about the Lord's Prayer, the Salutation of the Angel, the Apostles' Creed, and certain Epistles in the vulgar tongue. Thomas Parker has often, in the presence of John Thompson, fletcher, his son-in-law, said that pilgrimages should not be used, and that men should worship God, and not Saints.

The king's agent, John Hackett, on May 13, wrote Wolsey: Some Antwerp printers have brought to the market divers English books, "intituled the Ny Testament." Has found twenty-four in one man's hand. Hears at the last Frankfurt fair there were more than 2,000 such English books; but there they favor Luther and leave all good old customs. Hears some English disciples of Luther are beginning to put the Bible into English. The king or Wolsey had better write about it to my lady [Regent Margaret]. . . . Two out of three keep Luther's opinions. Is told there are many in England, but they dare not declare themselves.

On the cardinal's order the police gathered in all they could and Archbishop of Warham had the brilliant idea of buying up all the English Testaments for 66 l. 9 s. 4 d. He lettered his bishops to help pay the cost.

Bishop Richard Nix of Norwich answered: "In right humble manner I commend me unto your good Lordship, doing the same to understand that I lately received your letters, dated at your manor of Lambeth, the 26th day of the month of May, by the which I do perceive that your grace hath lately gotten into your hands all the books of the New Testament, translated into English, and printed beyond the sea; as well those with the glosses joined unto them as those without the glosses. Surely in my opinion you have done therein a gracious and a blessed deed; and God, I doubt not, shall highly reward you therefore. And when, in your said letters, ye write that, insomuch as this matter and the danger therof, if remedy had not been provided, should not only have touched you, but all the bishops within your province; and that it is no reason that the holle charge and cost thereof should rest only in you; but that they and every of them, for their part, should advance and contribute certain sums of money towards the same: I for my part will be contented to advance in this behalf, and to make payment thereof unto your servant, Master William Potkyn. Pleaseth you to understand, I am well contented to give and advance in this behalf ten marks (6 l. 13 s. 4 d.) and shall cause the same to be delivered shortly the which sum I think sufficient for my part, if every bishop within your province make like contribution, after the rate and substance of their benefices. Nevertheless, if your grace think this

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sum not sufficient for my part in this matter, your further pleasure known, I shall be as glad to conform myself thereunto in this, or any other matter concerning the church as any your subject within your province; as knows Almighty God, who long preserve you. At Hoxne in Suffolk, the 14th day of June, 1527. Your humble obedience and bedeman, R. Norwicen."

On December 5, 1527, before Cuthbert, Bishop of London, Thomas, cardinal of York, Nicholas, Bishop of Ely, Henry, Bishop of St. Asse, John Bishop of Lincoln, and John, Bishop of Bath and Wells, commissaries, Richard Foster confessed he had accompanied with persons of the manner of living of Martin Luther and ate flesh on a Saturday and swore he will not return to these heresies.

John Hig, or Noke, or Jonson, confessed "That Martin Luther was more learned than all the doctors of England. . . . That he had "a boke of the Gospels in the Doche tonge," by the which he expounded in alehouses to people there the Sunday Gospels.

His penance—That on Palm Sunday he should head the procession to St. Paul's Cathedral, bare-headed, bare-legged, shoeless, and carrying a faggot on his left shoulder; that he should remain in the custody of the apparitor until Good Friday, and should then stand at Paul's cross bare-headed, with his faggot as before, all the time of the preaching of the sermon. The same on Easter Sunday 1528.

Oak Park, Ill.

WM. DALLMANN

**Outlines on Old Testament Texts
(Synodical Conference)**

Second Sunday after Easter

Psalm 23

Intentionally the names of the Sundays between Easter and Pentecost refer to characteristics of the Christian's life. *Misericordias Domini*—the Christian lives all his life in the shadow of the Lord's mercy. Very appropriately, the old Sunday Gospel speaks of Christ as the Good Shepherd. This text presents the same picture, but from another viewpoint; while the former shows why and how Jesus is the Good Shepherd, this leads us to consider when and how we are able to call Him our Good Shepherd.—Everybody knows the 23d Psalm; but only the Christian can understand it and pray it.

The Christian's Prayer "The Lord Is My Shepherd"

1. *A penitent confession*
2. *A grateful conviction*
3. *A confident hope*