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Outlines on Old Testament Texts (Synodical Conference)

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eruption to Luther when he comes to speak of the Roman hierarchy and its head, the Papacy. His treatise *Against the Papacy at Rome Founded by the Devil*, written in the feeling of approaching death . . . is calculated, mental-clear, and *raffiniert*. Language did not seem to him to suffice for the inner heat, and he thought up the notorious cartoons on the Papacy which he called his testament. . . . Even his friends were fearful over some of the 'figures'; but Luther claimed to be driven by the Spirit of God. Luther was without doubt a deep psychologist who knew his age."

* * *

"Luther's Sanctification is purely external," declares Denifle. Alfons Victor Mueller, a former Dominican, replies: "Denifle is in error. Luther teaches in baptism or justification the Christian receives a new, clean heart, from which good works come. God and Christ dwell in the soul whose sanctification has begun and must grow, as we read in the Smalcald Articles and elsewhere. These good works growing out of faith are indeed not perfect, but God in mercy so receives them. This is taught by Augustine, Pope Leo the Great, and Pseudo-Hugo of St. Victor."

* * *

"Luther, there is nothing divine in you" — is Denifle's dramatic dictum in summing up his work.

The Catholic Professor S. Merkle comments, "The Protestants could retort, this applies no less to Pope Alexander VI, whom the Catholics hold the vicar of Christ and 'holy Father,' also the Protestants hold Christ the founder of their religion and not Luther and revere Luther only as the proclaimer and explainer of the Gospel, and their faith does not depend on his person."

In April, 1942, in the Union Seminary Library in New York City a Catholic said, "Kiefl was my teacher. A wonderful article on Luther from his pen in *Hochland* 1917."

We found the *Hochland* in the University of Chicago library. It shows lies about Luther can be refuted by candid Catholics.
Oak Park, Ill. WM. DALLMANN



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

Third Sunday after Trinity

2 Chron. 33:9-16

Students of history follow a twofold purpose; they wish to know the events that have occurred in the world, and they seek to discover the forces that led to those events. Bible readers should

follow the same method; they should read Bible history, and they should strive to see the plan of God that led to the events. Our text relates events that occurred about 700 B. C., and names

Two Powerful Factors in the History of Mankind

1. *Man's sin*
2. *God's grace*

1

There was stupendous activity in the country. Manasseh was king. His father Hezekiah had accumulated immense riches, 32:27; Manasseh proceeded to spend them. Wherever there was a hilltop, there were building operations, v. 3. The roads were filled with wagons and carts hauling material. Everybody had work. People received good wages and had money in their pockets. Times were good. Great areas of ground were purchased and groves were planted, v. 3, where people could gather for recreation or worship. A carnival spirit was in the land. The arts flourished; there was opportunity for carvers of wood, v. 7, and for men who could draw pictures of the heavenly bodies to ornament the temples, v. 5. There was great activity, the times were prosperous.

Now, what caused these events? We may state it in one word. Sin. Manasseh came from a good home, 32:32; but he became a wicked man. He dissipated his fortune and his goodness. It is hard to say why he became wicked; the stern hand of his father was missing, v. 1; he had too much money; he may have chafed under his guardians: "Wait till I get to be king!"

He became a very wicked king, vv. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9. He spent his father's fortune. Sin costs money. Some people live in history because of something good they did: Tabitha, the Good Samaritan; some, because of the evil they did: Cain, Benedict Arnold, Jezebel, Judas — and Manasseh, v. 9.

Sin was the mainspring of all that activity. Can we not see a parallel to that in our own time? The world doesn't change much; customs and opinions change, but the motive power remains the same; like automobiles, whose body lines change, but the engine still runs on the same principle.

Today business is flourishing, but the motive is often greed. There has been wonderful progress in science, but the motive is the glorification of man. Many wonderful churches have been erected, but many of them only to teach man-made religion. Great schools and universities are maintained, but often for the teaching of anti-Christian philosophy. We have great prosperity and ceaseless activity, but the driving force is often sin. We are still building the Tower of Babel.

And what is the motive of our own life? Is it to serve God

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and our neighbor, or is it to serve ourselves? Are we seeking God's glory or our own? Why are we working so hard? How much has our activity to do with God? Have we forgotten: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God," etc.

2

But there was another force that influenced events in Israel. The Assyrians declared war and came down upon Jerusalem with terrific force. They took the city, and the king was captured and taken to Assyria in fetters. His riches and his throne were gone. Later he was permitted to return. That was the historical event. But what was its cause? V. 11 tells us it was God's grace. This war was sent by God to bring the king and his people to repentance. God had spoken a warning, v. 10, but it was not heeded. Now God had recourse to another method. Why did God warn the king and send this chastisement? They had sinned flagrantly, v. 7b. He might have sent fire and brimstone. But it was His grace, mercy, and love that prompted Him to bring Israel to repentance.

God still shows us His grace in many ways to move us to repentance and to save us from sin. He sent His Son into this sinful world to call men to repentance and to suffer and die to save them from their sin. He sends trial and trouble and uses the ravages of war to rouse mankind from their indifference to the word of His warning. Manasseh was brought to repentance and was converted and gave evidence of new obedience, vv. 14-16. God's grace is still operating to lead us to repentance, and He has pardon ready for us. Let us heed His warning and accept His grace. And then let us lead a new life and obey His will.

These are the two stupendous forces that stand ready to actuate your lives — man's sin and God's grace. Which one shall be the moving force in your life?

FREDERIC NIEDNER

Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Isaiah 12

When Israel had passed through the Red Sea, they felt the danger threatening them had been averted; they actually were safe; and under the leadership of Miriam the women sang praises to the Lord, Ex. 15. This action of Israel is a picture of the elect's rejoicing in heaven.

The Lord, Jehovah, Is My Salvation

1

"In that day," v. 1 — day of salvation, heaven. Is. 1-12 presents a complete picture: wickedness of people and leaders; rejection of prophets' warnings; punishment through foreign tribes; royal

family humbled; Savior's earthly life; Gospel offered to Jews and Gentiles; Christ's kingdom of peace and love continuing into eternity. There the elect will thank the Lord that He is the source of their salvation.

"His anger is turned away," objective justification. God is always angry over sin, Gal. 3:10; Eph. 2:3, also our sin. But Christ as our Substitute, in our stead, atoned for all our sins. He died for all. 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Pet. 3:18. Thereby God's anger over us (Rom. 5:10) was turned aside. 2 Cor. 5:19; Apology III:170.

Because of Christ's vicarious, redemptive work, God now feels pity for the sinners and comforts them. This comfort is there for all. Christians experience it in part upon earth, but in heaven the elect enjoy the full blessing of this comfort, Is. 66:13; Rev. 21:3,4. There the elect fully understand that the Lord is the source of their salvation.

2

The elect also praise God as the *strength* of their salvation.

Salvation is a personal matter. V. 2. "God is *my* salvation"—my deliverance, my Jesus, "*my* strength." "And He became for me for a salvation." Heb. 2:4; Mark 16:16. Throughout eternity the elect will marvel that the work of Christ was applied just to them, sinners. Through the Gospel the Holy Ghost brings us to a personal faith in Christ that we trust and rely in Him. When a ship is torpedoed on the high sea, it is not enough that it be equipped with sufficient life belts for all, but that the individual sailor himself have on a life belt.

In faith we trust and confide in our Lord. *Lutheran Hymnal* 262:3. The elect understand that this faith is not a meritorious work on our part but rather the gift of God Eph. 2:8,9. God has called, gathered, enlightened, sanctified, and kept His elect. Accordingly v. 2 calls Him "Lord Jehovah," the God of the Covenant, who has not merely provided salvation for all; He has made His elect actual partakers of this salvation. Heb. 3:1-6.

3

V. 3. God as the source and strength of salvation also becomes the *joy* of salvation. As the inhabitants of Jerusalem could day by day draw an ever new and fresh supply of water out of the pool of Siloam, so the elect enjoy a never waning supply of joy and happiness at the side of their glorified Savior. Rev. 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 2, 17.

V. 4. As the shepherds of old gathered at the wells and there sang their hymns, so the elect sing their "well song" in heaven. They praise the Lord. Is. 6:3; Rev. 4:8-14; 5:9 ff. This praise is not given halfheartedly. They call upon — shout. Cf. Is. 6:4. They

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cause it to be remembered what the Lord has done among His people day by day.

Vv. 5, 6. The heavenly glory is so great that it should be made known among all creatures. Phil. 2:10, 11. Indeed, the irrational creatures which now surround the fallen men are eagerly awaiting the revelation of the sons of God. Rom. 8:19. If even the lower creation is awaiting "that day," how much more should the elect sing unto the Lord for the excellent things which He has done for them. These inhabitants of Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. Heb. 12:22), once more praise the Holy One of Israel that He is not merely near them, but actually great in the midst of them.

While the text presents to us the Lord, our Salvation, from the viewpoint of the perfected saints, all Christians on earth should join them in praising the Lord. Even now the Lord is the source and strength of our salvation, and in Him we rejoice. Cf. Luke 1:47. May the Holy Spirit through the Gospel keep us in true faith in Jesus as our Savior, that we continue to trust and believe and rejoice in Him.

VICTOR MENNICKE

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Ex. 3:1-15

Days of trouble and struggle call forth this question in the hearts of Christians: Does God care? Is God mindful of the problems of His saints? And if He is, can He help? We do not doubt God's power to help; but we are sometimes unable to see the means by which He will make His help count in our own lives and in the Church of God. The story before us shows us God at work answering these questions. He uses men—His men! Their choice and call is significant; but it makes meaning only as we recognize God's high purposes behind them.

God Calls His Men to Help Solve His People's Needs

- 1. God desires to help His people in their needs*
- 2. God chooses His men to help solve these needs*
- 3. Their calling is therefore a holy and important thing*

1

A. Israel was in need. It was afflicted under the whips of the taskmasters; it was far from the ease and the peace of the Promised Land. And God was aware of this need; vv. 7, 9. He was touched by the troubles of His people and was moved by their cries for help, v. 9. Israel was God's chosen people; it was to be the bearer of the promises of the Messiah; it was important to Him that it should survive and fulfill its purpose. Deut. 7:7, 8.

B. Also today God's people have their needs and problems.

John 16:33. God also today is moved by their pleas for deliverance. **1 Pet. 3:12; John 16:20-24.** Their sufferings are genuine and burdensome; but they have their purpose, and God stands ready to deliver. **1 Pet. 5:6-10.** Man's greatest burden is sin and separation from God; that basic problem of man God wants to solve; He wants to extend His kingdom among men; and with that problem He is ready to meet all the rest.

2

A. God appointed a man to help solve the need of the children of Israel. He could have used angels — in fact He did, and the very Angel of the Lord went before Israel in the wilderness. But He determined to employ a man as the leader of Israel's deliverance. **V. 10.**

B. For the highest and all-inclusive need of mankind God sent His own Son to deliver. **1 John 4:9, 10.** That was a task which only the Son of God could do. **Heb. 7:26.** In Him and His redemption there is our source of help for all our needs. **Rom. 8:32-39.**

C. But God goes on in all the other issues of life to use men in answering His people's needs. The plan of salvation itself requires men as messengers. **Luke 24:45-48.** The parish ministry is a conspicuous part of this process, together with all its auxiliaries — teachers, Sunday school teachers, church officers, and workers. But God chooses His own to serve for many other needs, truly in a service to Him — in the family, labor, business, government (**Eph. 6:6** and related passages); and where that service is truly the result of life in God and Christ, it carries out His appointment. (**All of Matt. 25, particularly v. 40.**)

3

A. When God called Moses into the service of Himself and His people, it was a most awesome and holy occasion. The Angel of the Lord, **v. 2;** the burning bush, **v. 2 ff.;** the command to express reverence in oriental fashion and put off his shoes, **v. 5.**

So the Christian in every field of true service, from the most spiritual to the most "earthly," should be mindful of serving God conspicuously and directly. **Eph. 6:6** again. Luther's high estimate of the Christian's *Beruf*. God had great intentions for Moses and His service; and so the Christian's whole life is directed to the building of the Kingdom. **1 Pet. 2:12 ff. and parallels.**

B. When God called Moses into His service, Moses was in a most ordinary occupation, beyond the "prime" of life, not sure of his own abilities. **V. 11; Ex. 4:1.** But what counted was that God wanted him, that God would stand by him. **Vv. 6, 12, 14, 15.** I AM — Jehovah — to Moses that also meant I am with thee, forever!

So the Christian in his calling should recognize, and draw on, God's help and power. He should not be discouraged by the

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ordinary quality of his tasks, abilities, surroundings; but he should be encouraged by God's purpose, God's presence, God's power. On that power he can draw always through the Gospel and Sacrament. Deut. 8:3; Eph. 6:17.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Gen. 4:3-16

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." This truth has come home to the individual, to many families, to many congregations, whenever some great sin was committed by those who could be expected to know better.

A Christian is indeed secure, but he is not carnally secure. Gal. 5:17.

Sin Lieth at the Door

1. *Whenever we are satisfied with a faithless worship*
2. *Whenever we disregard those lesser sins that lead to greater sins*
3. *Whenever we think our sinning is no one else's business*
4. *Whenever we fear only the punishment for sin but not sin itself*

1

Two men were sacrificing; both brought of their possession. But there was a great difference in their sacrifices: Heb. 11:4. Cain's sacrifice was a mere outward performance of a sacred rite. Such a heart is "empty, swept and garnished" for Satan, Matt. 12:44. Some of the greatest evils in Israel were done while at the same time there was a "multitude of sacrifices," Is. 1:11; Micah 6:7.

Whenever worship, prayer, churchgoing is insincere and a mere outward performance, sin lieth at the door. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost in the act of giving. Hypocritical participation in worship is no defense against grievous sins. By such sham religion the heart is made callous, the voice of conscience is stifled.

2

Cain was very angry; that emotion could not be hid for long: "His countenance fell." But there still was a chance to stop the further progress of sin. The Lord tells him encouragingly: Vv. 6, 7.

Nevertheless Cain was reminded at this stage that the "desire" of sin was unto him. The original for "desire" is about what we today call an "urge" or a "drive" within us that musters the hidden forces and turns them irresistibly into one direction. That personified sin was not satisfied with that hidden anger nor with the long face nor with the ugly words; murder was the climax to which sin urged Cain onward.

So-called little sins are not to be disregarded; they lead to greater sins. "Unto thee is his desire" is true of every sin. The occasional despiser of God's Word is urged to become a blasphemer; the occasional pilferer becomes the hardened thief if the normal progression of sin is not checked. Let us not disregard these preliminaries to greater transgressions! "Sin lieth at the door!"

3

Cain was angry and impatient for being called to account for his deed. The murder was committed; why should anyone interfere? Am I my brother's keeper? You go your way, and I'll go mine, was the attitude of this sinner. He also complained that an avenger might slay him, v. 14, another unwarranted interference in his affairs. Cain felt that he had been wronged, had taken his revenge, and now no one else had the right to interfere. Had he considered that he was responsible to God and man for his deed, he might never have risen against Abel.

Sinners often like to take the attitude that their deeds are their own affairs and no one else's. Individualism is often the excuse offered for the love of sin. Children chafe under the correction of parents; church members sometimes defend their wrongdoing by claiming that the admonishing pastor should mind his own husiness. Many a brotherly admonition has thus been refused and made impossible. Cp. Gen. 19:9; Prov. 13:1. For such as think that sinning is only their own concern "sin lieth at the door."

4

Cain's attempt to dodge responsibility for his crime was not successful. He heard the shattering sentence: vv. 11, 12. The punishment looms up before him in its far-reaching implications: his pleasant home is gone, he will have to flee from men, there will be no rest for him, and, worst of all, someone may suddenly kill him without warning. These results he fears, but there is not a word of sorrow for the sin, not a word of regret for the injustice done to Abel, no "Father, I have sinned" addressed to God. He is like the prisoner whose only regret is that he was caught.

Such an attitude lets sin lie at the door. Fear of punishment does not drive out the love of sin. The sinner sins, but he hopes to escape the punishment. Some people abstain from a sin only lest they lose their reputation by discovery; a weak defense against sin. "My punishment is greater than I can bear" is not the word of repentance but only of rebellion or despair.

When sin lieth at the door, the Christian has a real and effective defense: Refuge to Jesus, his Savior, in whom he finds forgiveness and strength to overcome by the power of the Word.

H. O. A. KEINATH