

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Dostoyevsky Smith Willis
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Henry Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Vinci
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Gogol Busch
Darwin Thoreau Twain Plato Scott
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Dickens Plato Scott
Andersen Andersen Cervantes Burton Hesse Harte
London Descartes Wells Voltaire Cooke
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Cooke
Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Chamberlain Irving
Bunner Shakespeare Chamberlain Irving
Richter Chekhov da Shakespeare Chamberlain Irving
Doré Dante Shaw Wodehouse
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Newton



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Commentary on Genesis, Vol. II
Luther on Sin and the Flood

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LUTHER ON SIN AND THE FLOOD

COMMENTARY ON GENESIS

BY

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DEDICATION.

*To all interested in studying the Christian
Missionary problems of "the last
times" of the modern world, this
volume is dedicated.*

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FOREWORD.

The first volumes of the "American Luther" we selected for publication were his best commentaries, then eight volumes of his Gospel and Epistle sermons and one volume of his best catechetical writings. These rich evangelical works introduced us to the real Luther, not the polemical, but the Gospel Luther. They contain the leaven of the faith, life and spirit of Protestantism. We now return to his spiritual commentaries on the Bible which are the foundation of all his writings. The more one reads Luther the greater he becomes as a student of the One Book.

Contents of This Volume.

This, the second volume of Luther's great commentary on Genesis, appears now in English for the first time.

It covers chapters four to nine inclusive of Genesis. The subjects discussed are: Cain's murder, his punishment, Cain's sons, Seth and his sons, the wickedness of the old world, the ark, Noah's obedience, the universal destruction, the salvation of Noah's family, his sacrifice, his blessing, the rainbow covenant, Noah's fall, Ham cursed and Shem and Japheth blessed. These great themes are discussed by Moses and Luther. They have vital relations to problems pertaining to the end of the modern world. Our hope and prayer are that God may use this volume to make the book of Genesis and the whole Old Testament a greater spiritual blessing to the Church and that it may serve the servants of God in these latter days in calling people to repentance, faith and prayer like Noah and Luther did.

In his "Dear Genesis" Luther proved that the free Evangelical religion he taught was not new, but as old as the first book of the Bible, and that it does not consist in outward forms, organizations and pomp, but in true faith in Christ in our hearts and lives. Genesis contains the only historic records accessible of the first 2364 years of the 4004 years before Christ. It is worthy of study in our day as it was in the days of the Reformation.

Acknowledgments.

Luther advised no one should translate alone and he practiced what he taught. We have followed his rule and example. Pastor C. B. Gohdes of Baltimore translated chapter six and President Schaller of Milwaukee Theological Seminary, chapters five, seven, eight and nine.

Inaccuracies may be due to the revision and editing, and not to the translators, for every good translation must be fluent and idiomatic, to secure which is the most difficult task. Pastor Gohdes also rendered valuable help in the final revision of parts. The translation of the analyses is by the undersigned.

The few last pages of the first edition of volume one we revised and reprint in this volume in order to make the pages of each volume of our edition to correspond with the German and Latin volumes of the Erlangen edition. The paragraphs are numbered and the analyses given according to the old Walch edition.

Luther and World-Evangelization.

In translating Luther into practical English in practical America, and in this age that is growing more and more practical, we need to be reminded that this work is for practical use and purposes. Luther was radical along Bible lines in applying the truth personally and to the world.

It is a year since the last volume of the "American Luther" appeared. The delay was caused by an effort to raise the work to a higher standard and by the publication of a book on "The True Place of Germans and Scandinavians in the Evangelization of the World", not a revision of, but a new companion volume to "Lutherans In All Lands" that appeared seventeen years ago. By comparing these two books one has the best evidence of the marvelous progress of God's Kingdom in recent years, and the growing world-significance of Luther's evangelistic writings. Evangelization at home and abroad is the popular religious theme today in the German fatherland and in the whole Protestant world. The word "world" is becoming so common its full meaning is not appreciated. When world-evangelization is discussed, it is too often from the standpoint of the nation discussing it. Each nation is so active in its own work that it fails to appreciate what others are doing. For example how little the world missionary conferences in English lands have to say of the German and Scandinavian missions and the Reformed Churches of the Lutheran work. Hence the fruits of Luther's evangelical writings are underestimated by the English people. It is opportune to translate not only Luther but also the best fruits of those writings in various languages during the past 400 years, especially since the memorable date of 1917 is soon to be celebrated by universal Protestantism. Luther in all languages and Lutherans in all lands go together. We ought to consider most carefully the great Reformer in his relation to the modern world and modern world-evangelization. The known world in his day was not so large. He had, however, a clear view of it all in his writings, which is due to his faithful study of the Scriptures. The Bible gave him a knowledge of the world, including all lands and all times. His commentary of eleven volumes on Genesis illustrates this. The first volume on Genesis treats of the first part of the ancient world; the second volume, the one before us, treats of

the second part and end of the old world. This Luther would have us apply to the last times of the modern world.

Luther Educational and Devotional.

Here, as everywhere in his catechisms, sermons and commentaries, Luther is unique among religious authors in that he is both educational and devotional, appealing equally to head and heart. He is "religiously helpful and intellectually profitable," covering every phase of religious, moral and social conditions, and touching every interest of humanity. "His words went to the mark like bullets and left marks like bullets." Being beyond criticism they have a unique place to fill in the literature and libraries of the world.

Although the cry, "Read Luther!" has been raised here in the new world the multitudes of the English people are not rushing for his writings, as the Germans did when they first appeared in the old world, under conditions similar to what they are in America at present. If asked what made the German people what they are, the answer is, these writings, so universally circulated and read. If the Anglo-Saxons appreciated their educational and devotional value the 35,000 copies circulated the last seven years would easily, as a professor suggested, be increased to a hundred thousand copies.

Nations Helping Nations.

The world-consciousness is growing, so is the national consciousness. Both are characteristic of our times. Perhaps never did the national spirit develop as in recent years. The great powers, instead of dividing China, witness the national spirit growing everywhere—in Japan, China, India, Africa, South America, Norway, Sweden, as well as in Germany, England, Russia and the United States. This is a good sign, for the world-family is composed of nations, and each nation has at least one talent not to be crushed, but with which to serve all the others. One serves the world when he serves his nation. Luther's words, "I live for my countrymen", illustrates this. It is not the nations that have the largest armies and navies that are the greatest blessing to the world, but the nations that work out the best Christian civilization for the world to imitate and send over the earth the best farmers to show other nations and tribes how to cultivate the earth, the best teachers, preachers and authors to train the people, the best medical skill to relieve human suffering, the best mechanics and servants, the greatest philanthropists, the best Christians. In educational, industrial, medical and charitable mission work the nations dominated by Luther's writings stand high. Nations, like individuals, are the greatest which serve others best; not the nations which have the most territory, but nations which do the greatest service for the whole human family. The students missionary movement develops men, and the laymen's missionary movement raises money. Both are needed, but men must be trained to do their work in the best way and the money be used to bring the best results. Hence nations should help and study one another most carefully with this in view. Luther and his writings in the evangelization of Europe ought not to be overlooked in the evangelization of other continents. By helping abroad the home does not suffer. Among American Lutherans the Norwegians prove this, for they have done the most for the heathen and have the best home mission work.

Transition and Translation or Transition and Revolution.

While we are translating Luther for all Anglo-Saxons, we do not overlook the fact that Luther's disciples, Germans and Scandinavians, are themselves being translated, or are in a state of transition. The translation of a people and of their literature or spirit clearly presents a double problem, both sides of which demand at once the most careful work. The translation of both the people and their literature should run parallel and in the same, and not in an opposite, direction. Germans and Scandinavians have always, and do still, make the fatal blunder of translating from English into their own languages, instead of from their languages into English. They thus cross one another's path never to meet again. Their children and grandchildren, however, find it easier to translate into English, their mother tongue; but, alas, they have little interest in doing it. They make the mistake in thinking their old thoughts and classics are not needed in the new language. Their motto seems to be, "new literature for the new language", when to the English public, if not to themselves, the old writings would be the newest. It is marvelous how wide-awake preachers are misled.

Best Literature is Translations.

People who are prejudiced against translations, forget that the Bible and our best literature are translations of the classics of the world's leading languages. Translations should be welcomed by a people who themselves are in a state of translation, especially if the translations are from their mother tongue into the language they are learning. What endless friction and confusion would be avoided, if people and their life and literature were translated at the same time. As we have said, a transition of a people without a translation of their literature is no transition, but a revolution. To this various church bodies witness. During the transition of language the best literature for the children to read is the translations of the classics of the language of the parents. There may be better literature, but not for these particular children, if the unity of the family life is to be perpetuated. Hence it becomes a vital concern that both children and parents understand that the best literature for them is such translations. But where are the German or Scandinavian teachers and preachers who are enthusing over putting this thought deep into the family life of their congregations.

A Lesson from Luther and Wesley in America.

What unwisdom even to attempt to build up the Lutheran Christian life in free, aggressive Protestant Anglo-Saxon civilization without Luther's writings in good Anglo-Saxon! Muhlenberg (b. 1711; d. 1787) and Wesley (b. 1703; d. 1791) came to America about the same time. Wesley returned home in 1738 after a stay of two years in the south. Muhlenberg spent his ministerial life of 45 years (1742-1787) in America, in the Keystone state, in and near Philadelphia, the metropolis of the new world. When the two Palatinate Germans from Limerick County, Ireland, Philip Embury and Barbara Heck, a lay-preacher and a godly woman, held the first Methodist service in America, in 1766, in New York City, the Lutheran faith had been planted here by the Dutch since 1657 in the same city, by the Swedes on the Delaware since 1639, (Torkillus), by the Germans since 1708 (Kocherthal); Muhlenberg had arrived in Philadelphia in 1742, built churches the following year in Philadelphia and "The Trappe", and organized the Synod of Pennsylvania among its 60,000 Lutherans in 1748. All these Lutherans to some extent learned, preached and confirmed in English. Muhlenberg was naturalized in 1754 as a subject of Great Britain. This and his stay in England gave an Anglican turn to his German pietism. When we became a free people in 1776, the Methodists had only 20 preachers and 3418 members in America and less than 76,000 followers in Europe from which to receive immigrant members, while the Lutherans were strong here and in Europe. Today American Methodists report 60,737 churches, and the Lutherans 13,533. Why did Wesley's followers become the dominating religious force in America? Not because Wesley and his writings were greater than Luther and his writings. Methodists did not bear Wesley's name, but they did have his spirit and writings. Even to the present day every Methodist preacher must pass an examination in Wesley's writings before ordination. Where were Luther's spirit and writings among his early American followers?

Language is no more a barrier to Luther's spirit than to Wesley's. Methodism forged its way from English into German, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish and among Indians, Mexicans and Negros. People, regardless of language, color or condition, could not help

but learn what real spiritual Methodism is. It was preached and sung in such simple, plain Anglo-Saxon, and in good translations, that it could not be misunderstood nor misrepresented. Wesley's simple evangelical message was abroad in the land in the hearts of the people. But the evangelical voice of Luther, the prince of translators, was hardly heard and even today the English world has no clear popular view of what spiritual Evangelical Lutheranism is. Often when they speak of it, they seem to think it is the opposite of what it is. Germans, Scandinavians and all know the spiritual side of Methodism, but the English world does not know the spiritual side of Lutheranism, and it never will until Luther's spiritual writings are translated into readable English and circulated broadcast over the land, and the hearts of the people come into direct and close touch with the heart of the great Reformer himself.

The English world knows the statistics, the numerical strength of Lutherans. That needs no apology. But what does need a defense among Americans is the spirituality of the Lutherans. That is developed by the translations into the plainest vernacular of God's Word and Luther's evangelical sermons and commentaries. These are the best literature for young Germans and Scandinavians. Although translations, and not perfect, they are the best for them. The Bible first; Luther's spiritual writings second, not first nor third. Have not Lutherans in America been following the disciples of Luther instead of Luther; while Methodists have followed Wesley and not Wesley's disciples. The Dutch, Swedish and German Lutherans in the east, all learned English. We say it was a transition, but was it not a revolution? Their history stands forth as beacon lights of warning to the polyglot Lutherans migrating to the ends of earth and learning all languages. They will no more keep up their faith with one language than the English nation will keep up their trade by refusing to learn other languages. Strange it is that nations can learn and use other languages in one line and not in another—the English in church work and not in trade; the Germans in trade, but not in church work.

It is said there are 30 million people in the United States with some German blood in their veins. Two thirds of these, or 20 millions, may be said to have some Lutheran mixture in their makeup, but only one and a half million of these 20 millions are communi-