

LUTHER'S WORKS

VOLUME 25

LECTURES ON ROMANS

Glosses and Scholia

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Editor

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General Introduction

THE first editions of Luther's collected works appeared in the sixteenth century, and so did the first efforts to make him "speak English." In America serious attempts in these directions were made for the first time in the nineteenth century. The Saint Louis edition of Luther was the first endeavor on American soil to publish a collected edition of his works, and the Henkel Press in Newmarket, Virginia, was the first to publish some of Luther's writings in an English translation. During the first decade of the twentieth century, J. N. Lenker produced translations of Luther's sermons and commentaries in thirteen volumes. A few years later the first of the six volumes in the Philadelphia (or Holman) edition of the *Works of Martin Luther* appeared. Miscellaneous other works were published at one time or another. But a growing recognition of the need for more of Luther's works in English has resulted in this American edition of Luther's works.

The edition is intended primarily for the reader whose knowledge of late medieval Latin and sixteenth-century German is too small to permit him to work with Luther in the original languages. Those who can, will continue to read Luther in his original words as these have been assembled in the monumental Weimar edition (*D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*; Weimar, 1883 ff.). Its texts and helps have formed a basis for this edition, though in certain places we have felt constrained to depart from its readings and findings. We have tried throughout to translate Luther as he thought translating should be done. That is, we have striven for faithfulness on the basis of the best lexicographical materials available. But where literal accuracy and clarity have conflicted, it is clarity that we have preferred, so that sometimes paraphrase seemed more faithful than literal fidelity. We have proceeded in a similar way in the matter of Bible versions, translating Luther's translations. Where this could be done by the use of an existing English version—King James, Douay, or Revised Standard—we have done so. Where it could not, we have supplied our own. To indicate this in each specific instance would have been pedantic;

to adopt a uniform procedure would have been artificial — especially in view of Luther's own inconsistency in this regard. In each volume the translator will be responsible primarily for matters of text and language, while the responsibility of the editor will extend principally to the historical and theological matters reflected in the introductions and notes.

Although the edition as planned will include fifty-five volumes, Luther's writings are not being translated in their entirety. Nor should they be. As he was the first to insist, much of what he wrote and said was not that important. Thus the edition is a selection of works that have proved their importance for the faith, life, and history of the Christian Church. The first thirty volumes contain Luther's expositions of various Biblical books, while the remaining volumes include what are usually called his "Reformation writings" and other occasional pieces. The final volume of the set will be an index volume; in addition to an index of quotations, proper names, and topics, and a list of corrections and changes, it will contain a glossary of many of the technical terms that recur in Luther's works and that cannot be defined each time they appear. Obviously Luther cannot be forced into any neat set of rubrics. He can provide his reader with bits of autobiography or with political observations as he expounds a psalm, and he can speak tenderly about the meaning of the faith in the midst of polemics against his opponents. It is the hope of publishers, editors, and translators that through this edition the message of Luther's faith will speak more clearly to the modern church.

JAROSLAV PELIKAN
HELMUT LEHMANN

Introduction to Volume 25

MARTIN LUTHER had done some teaching either at Wittenberg or at Erfurt ever since he had earned his master's degree in 1505. But his teaching career came into full bloom especially after he turned specifically to theology. By 1508 he was lecturing on Aristotle in Wittenberg, and in the following year at Erfurt on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Upon receiving the doctor's degree in theology in 1512, he became lecturer on the Bible at the University of Wittenberg and in that capacity succeeded Johann Staupitz, the vicar general of the German Augustinian Order, his superior but also his close friend. Luther continued in this position the rest of his life.

Luther began his lectures on the Bible with the Psalms, perhaps because this was the book he knew best and the one from which he himself had been led into all the rest of the Scriptures, for he had taken seriously the prescription of his monastic order to read in the Psalter daily. His lectures on the Psalms kept him occupied from 1513 to 1515.

After the Psalms Luther chose to lecture on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. He followed the procedure already adopted in the Psalms. He asked Johann Grunenberg, who had a print shop in the Augustinian monastery in Wittenberg, to provide him and his students with identical copies of the Vulgate text of Romans, probably according to the Basel edition of 1509. As in the Psalms, Grunenberg provided the Vulgate text in an edition with generous space between the lines and wide margins on both sides of the text. In these spaces Luther carefully entered the clean copy of his interlinear and marginal glosses in Latin, copied carefully from previously assembled slips of paper. According to the custom of that day, these notes were intended to be dictated almost verbatim in the classroom and entered by the student in his own copy of the Latin text of the Scripture. This procedure also offered a convenient way for Luther to correct the printed version of the text now and then according to the latest version of Faber Stapulensis (1512, 1515) and Erasmus' edition (1516) of the text of Laurentius Valla

(1505). In addition to these glosses, Luther also prepared an extended commentary on various selected passages, written out in detail as a separate preparation for the lectures. This type of added commentary was known as scholia, a plural for which one rarely sees the singular scholion or scholium.

Equipped with this preparation—28 sheets of glosses and 123 sheets of scholia—Luther entered the lecture hall each Monday and Friday morning at six o'clock for three semesters, from spring 1515 until fall 1516, to dictate and lecture on Paul's Epistle to the Romans in the manner of his time. From a diligent analysis of certain marks in Luther's manuscript Johannes Ficker, the editor of the lectures in the Weimar Edition, concludes that Luther's lectures were distributed as follows: Rom. 1:1–3:4: summer 1515; Rom. 3:5–8:39: winter 1515–1516; Rom. 9:1–16:27: summer 1516.

In addition to Luther's own handwritten copy of both the glosses and scholia, there are extant a number of student notebooks of these lectures. They are not everywhere complete nor all original, that is, as actually taken down in the lecture hall. Some are admittedly copies of originals. But from the composite of these notebooks we get a very fair picture of what Luther actually said in the lectures, and it is interesting to compare the students' record with what the lecturer's own manuscript tells us he had planned to say. What the students heard occasionally helps to explain what we see in Luther's manuscript. It is obvious that Luther dictated his glosses to his students with scrupulous faithfulness to his manuscript, but in the case of the scholia he apparently abbreviated and omitted with complete freedom and occasionally substituted new materials or exposition previously given in his lectures on the Psalms.

From these two sources, Luther's own manuscript of the glosses and scholia (Weimar Edition, Vol. LVI) and the composite student notes of the lectures (Weimar Edition, Vol. LVII), we get a very interesting and reliable account of the lectures. In the manner of the day, Luther read the Latin text of the Scriptures and interspersed it with short explanatory paraphrases of individual words and expressions (interlinear glosses), here and there stopping to dictate somewhat longer interpretations to be written into the margin (marginal glosses). Then again he might announce and launch a still longer discussion of an individual phrase or section of the text (scholia). Here he would adduce standard *auctoritates*, that is, authoritative statements, primarily from the Scriptures

but also from the fathers and the more recent teachers of the church. To the latter two he might attach a refutation of the statements adduced, a new interpretation, or praise or criticism of the way Scripture was currently being understood and applied to life.

In using all of these standard devices, Luther was of course in part a traditionalist who quoted again what had been everybody's sources—the *Glossa ordinaria*, assembled from various church fathers by Walafrid Strabo (d. 849), and the *Glossa interlinearis*, a kind of spiritual interpretation assembled by Anselm of Laon (d. 1117). But in the lectures on Romans Luther also frees himself of mere repetition of these sources. He may quote them without acknowledgment when they are useful, he may refute them with or without acknowledgment, or he may elucidate them with references to authority of his own choosing, especially the Scriptures but also Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Bernard, Lombard, Scotus, Lyra, Occam, Biel, Faber, Reuchlin, Erasmus. In any case, the utterances of men he may at any time take as materials to be criticized and refuted on the way to articulating his own Biblical stance. And on the basis of this stance he may find it worthwhile to make an application to contemporary faith and morals. More often than not, however, such applications, though written out at length and with obvious care in the scholia, were not used in the lecture hall, as the student notes seem to show.

Avoiding both the rigid partition of the fourfold interpretation of Scripture practiced by the scholastics (historical, allegorical, tropological, anagogical) and the literal historical interpretation of Nicholas of Lyra, Luther worked his way toward a historical-Christological interpretation that was to be the core and center not only of his teaching but also of his preaching and living. A prophetic preview as it were of the whole series of lectures on Romans is sounded in the marginal gloss to *de filio suo* in Rom. 1:3: "Here the door is thrown open wide for the understanding of Holy Scripture, that is, that everything must be understood in relation to Christ." In the scholia the same thought is introduced at the very beginning of chapter one with the words: "The chief purpose of this letter is to break down, to pluck up, and to destroy all wisdom and righteousness of the flesh." The one chief topic of Romans for Luther is "the righteousness of God," that is, the righteousness by which God makes sinners righteous through faith in Jesus Christ. We recall Luther's own confession late in life (1545) concerning his struggles with Rom. 1:17 and the consolation afforded

him when the context "he who through faith is righteous shall live" permitted him to conclude that he was "altogether born again and had entered Paradise itself through open gates." In that report he also states, "I was more skillful after I had lectured in the university on St. Paul's epistles to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the one to the Hebrews" (*Luther's Works*, 34, pp. 336–337). The whole series of lectures on Romans shows Luther already "skillful" in his understanding of the righteousness of God, even though he still moves about in much of the vocabulary and the teaching forms of his predecessors distant and near.

The story of the transmission of the text of Luther's *Lectures on Romans* is indeed an interesting one. Apparently Luther never intended to publish these notes. They were written for his own use in the lecture hall. Nevertheless, he seems to have preserved them carefully, intending perhaps to use them again for a repetition of the lectures in future years. This purpose never materialized, perhaps because Melancthon took over the Romans lectures when he arrived at the university in 1518. There is even the surmise that Melancthon, who is known to have lectured on Romans five times, may have used Luther's notes for his work.

After Luther's death the Romans manuscript was preserved by his son Paul, but his sons in turn sold it among other Martin Luther manuscripts to the margrave of Brandenburg, Joachim Frederick, in 1594. In the meantime the manuscript was generally considered to be lost, expressly so by the Reformation scholar and historian Veit von Seckendorf. For a time it must have been in the possession of that indefatigable scholar and scribe, Johann Aurifaber, who together with other scholars made a copy of the manuscript at the request of Ulrich Fugger (d. 1584), the scion of the famous financier family and a Protestant collector of rare books and manuscripts of the Reformation. Strangely enough, it was through this copy, which in the Thirty Years' War found its way to the Vatican Library, that the search for Luther's original manuscript was resumed at the beginning of our century and through the painstaking efforts of Johannes Ficker carried to a successful conclusion.

The manuscript had for several centuries been in such safe hands that its existence was not even suspected. But in 1846 the Royal Library in Berlin exhibited the manuscript in a special display in connection with the tercentenary of Luther's death under the program title *Lateinischer Kommentar zum Briefe Pauli an*

die Römer von Luthers eigener Hand; davor der Druck dieses Briefes lateinisch, Wittenberg, 1515. Then another period of oblivion followed while the manuscript continued its obscure existence in a public display case in the library. But the discovery of the copy in the Vatican Library spurred Johannes Ficker on to search far and wide for the original until he found it. His preliminary edition was published in 1908. The definitive edition prepared by Ficker did not appear until 1938, and then as Vol. LVI of the Weimar Edition of Luther's works.

In Vol. LVII of the Weimar Edition (1939) Ficker also published the extant student notebook manuscripts (*Vorlesungshefte/Nachschriften*) of the lectures on Romans. The importance of these is outlined by the editor in the statement: "More frequently than is commonly known, student notebooks are extant from the time of the transition from the Middle Ages to the Reformation. Sometimes they are the witness of the lectures held by Luther, at other times, as in the case of the lectures on Romans, they are the indispensable complement to the Reformer's own elaboration and the concrete echo in which the university professor's work for the interpretation of Holy Scriptures and for the instruction of his students can be perceived in its immediate effect."

The present translation reproduces for the first time in English both the complete interlinear and marginal glosses and the scholia (for chapter 16 Luther did not provide scholia). The first section contains the glosses, the second the scholia. The interlinear glosses have been inserted between portions of the Biblical text in order to place them as close as possible to the text they strive to elucidate and in order to approximate the order in which Luther may have read them in the lecture hall. The marginal glosses appear as footnotes with demibold superior numerals. To this we have added, largely from the prodigious apparatus of the Weimar editor, such identifications and references as the reader may wish to have easily at hand. These footnotes appear with superior numbers in regular type below the marginal notes. Scripture references have usually been identified in full, whether Luther identified them or not. The *Nachschriften* of Weimar Vol. LVII were at various times helpful in the editorial process, but their help is not always acknowledged specifically.

The English translation was begun by Walter G. Tillmanns, formerly professor of German at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa.

A sudden severe illness leading to an untimely death, however, prevented him from carrying beyond the second chapter a project he dearly loved. The bulk of the translation, chapters 3–16, was supplied by Jacob A. O. Preus, formerly president of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Ill., and at the time of the conclusion of the project president of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Two volumes that have been of inestimable value in the preparation of our edition are the German translation of the scholia and most of the marginal glosses by Eduard Ellwein, published as a supplementary volume to *Martin Luther, Ausgewählte Werke*, ed. H. H. Borchardt and Georg Merz, 5th ed. (Munich, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1965), and the English translation of all the scholia and of the glosses to which Luther himself refers in the scholia by Wilhelm Pauck, published as Vol. 15 in *The Library of Christian Classics* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961). Particularly informative concerning Luther's exegetical task and procedure is the 60-page "General Introduction" of the latter volume.

In the present volume the modern reader has before him the full picture of Luther's personal notes for his lectures on Romans, a picture more complete than even those who heard the lectures in Luther's own time could have had. This is a truly remarkable link in the chain of lectures that led to 1517: Psalms, Romans, Galatians, Hebrews.

H. O.

LECTURES ON ROMANS

GLOSSES

Chapters 1–2

Translated by
WALTER G. TILLMANN

Chapters 3–16

Translated by
JACOB A. O. PREUS

CHAPTER ONE ¹

*Summary*¹: *The apostle shows that he loves the Romans and then reproveth the faults of those who follow their own lusts.*

1. *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ.* Because of such a great Lord he is to be received with the same reverence as if he were Christ Himself,² Christ who says (Luke 10:16): "He who hears you."

¹ The whole purpose and intention of the apostle in this epistle is to break down all righteousness and wisdom of our own, to point out again those sins and foolish practices which did not exist (that is, those whose existence we did not recognize on account of that kind of righteousness), to blow them up and to magnify² them (that is, to cause them to be recognized as still in existence and as numerous and serious), and thus to show that for breaking them down Christ and His righteousness are needed for us. This he does up to chapter 12.³ From there to the end he teaches in what kind of works we should be involved, once that righteousness of Christ has been received. For in the presence of God this is not the way, that a person becomes righteous by doing works of righteousness (as the foolish Jews, Gentiles, and all other self-righteous people⁴ proudly think), but he who has been made righteous does works of righteousness, as it is written: "And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering" (Gen. 4:4), not in the first place "for his offering."

² The apostle extols his ministry not for the purpose of lording it over them, but that they may receive him in humility as a minister of God and be fearful of belittling him. Although no person should ever think too highly of himself, he should nevertheless, to the best of his ability, think highly of his ministry to the glory of God. At the same time it should not be necessary for him to prove everything he says. They should listen to him as if they were listening to God Himself.

¹ The summaries at the heads of chapters were a part of Luther's printed Scripture text and are derived almost verbatim from the glosses of Nicholas of Lyra (d. 1340).

² Consistent with the language of the church in all ages, Luther uses *magnificare* (sometimes *magnum esse agnoscere*) with such diverse objects as "God," "sins," and "grace of God."

³ For the division of the epistle into two sections (chs. 1—11; 12—16), see *Luther's Works*, 27, p. 381, and also W, IV, 339 f.

⁴ Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 1: "We become just by doing just acts." This and similar sentences in Aristotle, together with their influence on

*Called*⁵ to be an apostle,³ not an intruder or interloper, driven by ambition, like a false apostle, who “does not enter . . . by the door but climbs in by another way.” These false apostles come by their own temerity, therefore they are thieves and not shepherds, as John 10 tells us. Heb. 5:4: “One does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, as Aaron was.” *Set apart*. Acts 13:2: “The Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me . . . Paul.’” *For the Gospel of God*, for the Gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter was set apart for the Gospel of the circumcision. 2. *Which He had promised before*, in the Old Covenant, because Amos 3:7 reads: “The Lord God does nothing without revealing beforehand, etc.,” so that our glorying may cease. *Through His prophets*, not through the prophets of Baal, as we see in Jer. 31:31 and Ps. 109:2 ff. and as it is implied in Hebrews, *passim*. *In the Holy Scriptures*, from which it follows that while the prophets gave their message in spoken words, yet they wanted to indicate the spirit in the written Word. 3. *Concerning His Son*,⁴ not in the general sense, but concerning His incarnate Son, as the following words indicate. *Who was made*, in the Virgin Mary, (*for Him*)⁷ *of the seed of David according to the flesh*, as had been promised in Ps. 132:11: “Of the sons of your body.” 4. *And predestined*,⁵ that is, appointed, or-

³ Not because “apostle” is to be the name by which he is to be addressed but because he has been called to this great office by God.

⁴ Here the door is thrown open wide⁶ for the understanding of Holy Scriptures, that is, that everything must be understood in relation to Christ, especially in the case of prophecy. But Scripture is completely prophetic, although not according to the superficial sense of the letter.

⁵ *Predestinatus* is a poor translation, because the apostle does not speak here of Christ as predestined for a future kingdom, but as the One who has even now achieved the Kingdom, as if he were saying: “God promised the Gospel of Christ, who has now become incarnate and has been enthroned as King and Lord of the

scholasticism, are frequently attacked by Luther. See W, IV, 3, 32; *Luther's Works*, 31, p. 12, Theses 40—42; 48, p. 25. For a discussion of Luther's polemic against Aristotle, see Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought*, trans. R. A. Wilson (London: Collins, 1970), pp. 150—158.

⁶ After the word *vocatus* in the printed Scripture text Luther made a mark to call attention to a comment to be made at this point and to be found, in his own hand, in the marginal space nearby. Such marks served in place of our footnote numbering system.

⁷ This metaphor was common in the church's literature, but Luther was fond of using it at especially critical points in his own experience. See *Luther's Works*, 54, p. 49, No. 347; 34, p. 337.

⁸ Luther bracketed the word *ei* in the Latin text.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Summary: The apostle establishes the cessation of the old law, which is the law of death; and¹ he is dealing here with the law of the tinder.¹

1. *Do you not know, brethren.* It is as if he were saying: "You surely are not unaware, even though you do not understand the mystery," *for I am speaking to those who know the Law*, therefore you cannot be ignorant of the fact that it follows, *that the Law*, whatever kind it may be, even the human and civil law, *is binding on a person*, and he himself is subject to it right up to the time of his death, *as long as he lives?* The reference here is not to the Law, as some people mistakenly think, but to man, because the apostle wants to say that the Law exercises its dominion and makes its demands over the living and not over the dead. 2. *Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband*, under his power and rule, *as long as he lives*. And to say the opposite, the law of the man has dominion over her and subjects her,² *but if her husband dies*, and also if the woman dies, *she is discharged from the law concerning the husband.*³ And in this sense she is dead to the law, for

¹ He corroborates and proves more fully what he has said in the preceding chapter concerning the death of the old man and the justification of the new by using the simile of the human temporal law, and (it seems to me) his intent is to explain that remarkable proposition which he has stated in chapter 4:15: "The Law brings wrath, but where there is no law, there is no transgression."²

² He wants to say: Neither party is freed from the law before death. In the same way no one is freed from the law of the letter unless he dies with Christ through Baptism, as he has said in the preceding chapter (v. 4).

³ Thus also a citizen, if he dies, even though the laws of the state remain in force, yet they no longer have any control over him. Indeed even if he "dies" only as a citizen, the situation is the same, so that a man who moves to another city is "dead" and free from the law of the first city. But the example used by the

¹ The summary up to this point is crossed out in Luther's manuscript.

² This marginal note is a substitute for the section crossed out in the original summary above the text.

the law has lost its hold on her just as she is lost who dies, and as she herself has become dead to the law, so also she is not held by it. 3. *Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law of her husband.* In this example there is no recommendation that a woman enter into marriage a second time, but the freedom to marry is recommended, and to be sure also the freedom to decline the burdens of married life, *so that if she marries another man, she is not an adulteress.* He adds this statement in order to show what kind of "law of her husband" he is speaking about, namely, not a law which her husband has laid down, for a transgression of such a law does not make her an adulteress, but he is speaking about the marriage law which states that she shall not be the wife of a second man while her husband is alive. 4. *Likewise,⁴ my brethren, you who are a spiritual wife long ago subjected to the old man through the Law, you have died,* as he said above: "Our old man was crucified with Christ" (Rom. 6:6) and "you are not under the Law" (Rom. 6:14), *to the Law, that is to the dominion of the Law,⁵ through the body of Christ, that is through His true and mystical body which was also put to death, so that you may belong to another, and not to the Law, which lords it over its bond servants by fear, but to Him who has been raised from the dead, who rules His children in love, in order that you may bear fruit for God,⁶ that is, that you may produce good* apostle is the best of all for the purpose because the application of it correctly follows it, both because of the person, since the church is a woman, and because of the putting to death, since the woman dies to the law, but yet she lives, so that she can be made subject to another.

⁴ Here he applies the simile, for the old law made us subject to the old man and to sin, namely, while the Law aroused our old man, as he says below (v. 9), since without the Law there would be no sin or old man, but through the Law he is aroused.

⁵ Is. 9:4: "The staff of his shoulder, the yoke of his burden and the rod of his oppressor Thou hast broken."

⁶ A wonderful and profound summary of this chapter of the apostle, which Nicholas of Lyra and the others have explained not only foolishly but even falsely. The only exception which I have encountered is Augustine.³ For the apostle wishes to conclude with this point, that there are two men, the old and the new, the one Adam, the other Christ. But the old man was not known before the Law was known and established, but when it was established, then he arose, as it were; and thus through the Law we have been made subject to the old man and to sin (that is, we recognize that we have been made subject). And thus sin ruled

³ Augustine's interpretation is from *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistula ad Romanos*, 36, *Patrologia, Series Latina*, XXXV, 2069.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Summary: The apostle encourages the strong to uphold the weak and promote their good; and he excuses himself for not visiting the Romans in person.¹

1. *We who are strong, powerful, ought, by right and by the law of love, to bear with the failings, the weaknesses, the defects, of the weak, the powerless, not only in faith, as mentioned above, but also in other virtues; because according to 1 Cor. 13:7, "Love bears all things," and not to please ourselves,² for to please ourselves is to give cause for dissension, which is opposed to love, but this is a love not of oneself, but of another.* 2. *Let each of you, in Greek it reads "of us," please his¹ neighbor, not himself, for his good, because evil men please themselves for evil, to edify him, not to vain ostentation or carnal comfort.* 3. *For Christ, the example and image of us all, did not please Himself, and thereby He also taught that we ought not please ourselves, but, as it is written, Ps. 69:9: The insults, the sins, of those who insult Thee, who sin against Thee, have fallen on Me,³ that is, "I have borne them for them."* If He had pleased Himself, He would rather have cast them off Himself. 4. *For whatever, also concerning Christ and concerning anyone else, was written, in Greek it reads "was written in former days,"⁴ that is, as if it were placed before our eyes, was written*

¹ This chapter is appended to what precedes. For he concludes with the example of Christ, which he had taught in the preceding chapter; he repeats the exhortation that they are to support one another and not despise each other.

² On the basis of a particular example he sets up a general teaching. It is as if he were saying: "As I have taught concerning food and the weakness of faith, so in all other forms of weakness and defects we ought to uphold the weak and not despise them, just as Christ has done for us, as shown below.

³ For just as righteous works honor God, so also evil works dishonor God, as we read above in Rom. 2:23 f.: "You dishonor God by breaking the Law. As it is written: 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.'"

⁴ He is contending against the hidden objection of his readers, namely: "What business is this of ours? This is spoken literally of Christ." The answer

¹ Following Erasmus, Luther deleted *suo* from his text.

for our instruction, that is, for our moral upbuilding, to be understood as an example, *that by steadfastness*, in actions, *and by encouragement of the Scriptures*, in words, *we might have hope*, in God. For our encouragement is only in words, but in actions there is distress; therefore steadfastness is necessary here. 5. *May the God of steadfastness and encouragement*, consolation, that is, as if to say: "You do not possess these two qualities of yourselves, but God is the one who gives them," *grant you to live in such harmony*, that is, to be of the same mind in feeling and thought, *with one another*, by turns, so that there be no divisions or schisms among you, *in accord with Jesus Christ*, and not according to the flesh or the world, in those things which belong to Christ or are according to the example of Christ, who did this for you to the honor of God. 6. *That together*, with one heart, *with one voice*, in harmony, *you may glorify the God*, that is, that you may in a harmonious spirit do all things to the praise and glory of the God, *and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.⁵ 7. *Therefore*, insofar as you can, *welcome one another*, as he said above, the strong welcoming the weak, the powerful the impotent, *as Christ*, the strong Giant, *has welcomed you*, who are weak, even dead, *for the honor of God*, that is, for the glory of God, or that He might glorify God thereby, not seeking His own glory but His Father's. 8. *For I tell*⁶ *you that Christ Jesus*, Heb. 3:1: "Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession," *became a servant*, an apostle, a messenger sent to them by God, *of the circumcised*, that is, of the Jews, who are of the circumcision, *to show God's truthfulness*, that is, that the promise of is that what is said regarding Christ is also "written for our instruction," that we should imitate Him. And thus we must understand this not only as something said in a contemplative way concerning Christ but also as an example for ourselves. Hence we derive significant instruction from this passage, for every act of Christ is instruction for us, because here Paul says: "whatever was written."

⁵ The apostle prays for those people whom he has established in the faith, for it is the duty of a good teacher not only to water but also to seek increase, he who first works, then instructs, and finally prays for them. For thus blessed Bernard explains in *Ad Eugenium*² that threefold "Feed" spoken by our Lord to Peter (John 21:15 ff.).

⁶ He gives the reason why he has admonished them to honor God, namely, that Christ welcomes them purely by grace, not like the Jews, to whom He had been promised, who welcomed Christ as the one who had been promised to them. Thus as soon as he has said: "As Christ has welcomed you" (an expression in which grace freely given is indicated) there immediately follows the reason why it is grace that has been freely given.

² Bernard, *De consideratione ad Eugenium*, III, *Patrologia, Series Latina*, CLXXXII, 776.

LECTURES ON ROMANS

SCHOLIA

Chapters 1–2

Translated by
WALTER G. TILLMANN

Chapters 3–15

Translated by
JACOB A. O. PREUS

CHAPTER ONE

1. *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ.*

THE chief purpose of this letter is to break down, to pluck up, and to destroy all wisdom and righteousness of the flesh. This includes all the works which in the eyes of people or even in our own eyes may be great works. No matter whether these works are done with a sincere heart and mind, this letter is to affirm and state and magnify¹ sin, no matter how much someone insists that it does not exist, or that it was believed not to exist. Therefore blessed Augustine, *On the Spirit and the Letter*, ch. 7, says: The apostle Paul “fights hard against the proud² and the conceited and against those who are arrogant on the basis of their works, etc. . . . In the Letter to the Romans this question is treated so persistently and almost to the exclusion of all others that it may really weary the attention of the reader. But it is a profitable and salutary wearying.”³ For there are, and have been, among the Gentiles and the Jews many who believed that it was sufficient if they possessed virtue and knowledge not in order to make a good impression on people or to please them but to possess these qualities in their innermost hearts. This has been the case with many philosophers. But even though they did not parade their righteousness before men and did not boast of it but followed it from a real love of virtue and wisdom, as happened among those who were the purest and the best among them (of whom we know

¹ See p. 3, n. 2.

² *Superbia*, one of the seven deadly sins in the medieval catalog, is a frequent subject with Luther. See especially his sermon for St. Stephen's Day, 1514 (W, I, 30 f.), with such trenchant statements as “All rebellion arises from the wisdom of the flesh, which cannot subordinate itself to God” and “The proud always fight against the righteousness of God.” In his early lectures on the Psalms Luther says, “Pride, the mother of error, is the chief of all heresies” (W, IV, 437, 28).

³ Augustine, *De spiritu et littera*, ch. 7, 12—13, *Patrologia, Series Latina*, XLIV, 207.

only a few beside Socrates), they could not refrain from being pleased with themselves in their innermost hearts and from glorying only in themselves—at least in their hearts—as righteous and good men. Of these people the apostle here says (Rom. 1:22): “Claiming to be wise, they became fools, etc.”

But here the opposite is to be taught. For in the church we should not merely teach that our righteousness and wisdom are nothing and that therefore we should not exalt them in our boasting or celebrate them in a false imagination, even though the Gospel teaches (Matt. 5:15): “Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house,” and (Matt. 5:14): “A city set on a hill cannot be hid”; I say, we should not teach this but rather that our righteousness and wisdom be broken down and plucked up in our hearts and in our inner self-satisfaction before our very eyes. For when we consider them base in our own eyes, it will be easy for us not to worry about the criticism and praise of others, as God tells us through Jeremiah (Jer. 1:10): “To pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow,” namely, everything that is within us (that is, everything that pleases us because it comes from ourselves and lies within us), “to build and to plant,” namely, everything that is outside of us and is in Christ. This is also the vision of Daniel concerning the stone that shattered the statue.⁴ God does not want to redeem us through our own, but through external, righteousness and wisdom; not through one that comes from us and grows in us, but through one that comes to us from the outside; not through one that originates here on earth, but through one that comes from heaven. Therefore, we must be taught a righteousness that comes completely from the outside and is foreign. And therefore our own righteousness that is born in us must first be plucked up. Thus we read in Ps. 45:10: “Forget your people and your father’s house, etc.” Abraham, too, was ordered to leave his father’s house in this way (Gen. 12:1). Thus we read also in the Song of Solomon (Song of Sol. 4:8): “Come from Lebanon, my spouse, and you shall be crowned.” Also, the whole exodus of the people of Israel formerly symbolized that exodus which they interpret as one from faults to virtues. But it would be better to understand it as an exodus from virtues to the grace of Christ, because virtues of that kind are often

⁴ The reference is to Dan. 2:34: “But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” Nicholas of Lyra interpreted the passage as speaking of Christ, the Cornerstone.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. *We have peace.*

THIS is the spiritual peace of which all the prophets sing. And because this is the case, he adds the words *with God*. And this peace is prefigured in every peace which the children of Israel enjoyed in days of old.

And this is the real peace of conscience and trust in God. Just as on the contrary a spiritual disturbance is the lack of a quiet conscience and a mistrust of God. Thus Hosea says (Hos. 8:7): "For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind." For the penalty of a bad conscience is stated in Ps. 1:4: to be "like the chaff which the wind drives away."

Thus Christ is also called the Prince of Peace and a Solomon (cf. Is. 9:6; 1 Chron. 22:9). Eph. 2:14, 17 reads: "He is our peace, who has made us both one. . . . And He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near." The same idea is expressed in Is. 57:19, and in John 16:33: "That in Me you may have peace; in the world you have tribulation." The other kind of peace is carnal, of which He says in Matt. 10:34: "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword." By contrast there is the carnal disturbance and temporal quietness. Hence also Ps. 72:7, "In His days shall righteousness flourish, and peace abound," must not be understood in the sense of the temporal peace which existed under Augustus, as many think, but of this spiritual peace "with God."

But note how the apostle places this spiritual peace only after righteousness has preceded it. For first he says, "since we are justified (*iustificati*) by faith," and then, "we have peace." Thus also in Ps. 85:10, "Righteousness and peace have kissed," the term "righteousness" precedes the word "peace." And again, "In His days shall righteousness flourish, and peace abound" (Ps. 72:7). And here the perversity of men seeks peace before righteousness,

and for this reason they do not find peace. Thus the apostle creates a very fine antithesis in these words, namely,

The righteous man has peace with God but affliction in the world, because he lives in the Spirit.

The unrighteous man has peace with the world but affliction and tribulation with God, because he lives in the flesh.

But as the Spirit is eternal, so also will be the peace of the righteous man and the tribulation of the unrighteous.

And as the flesh is temporal, so will be the tribulation of the righteous and the peace of the unrighteous.

Hence we read in Is. 57:21 and 48:22: "There is no peace for the wicked, says the Lord," that is, spiritually, for there surely is a peace for the wicked; in Ps. 73:3: "For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked"; and in Ps. 28:3: "Who speak peace with their neighbor while mischief (that is, not peace, but disturbance and restlessness toward God) is in their hearts."

2. *Through whom we have obtained access by faith.* In a most useful manner the apostle joins together these two expressions, "through Christ" and "by faith," as he did also above in the expression "since we are justified by faith . . . through our Lord, etc." In the first place, the statement is directed against those who are so presumptuous as to believe that they can approach God without Christ, as if it were sufficient for them to have believed, as if thus by faith alone, but not through Christ, but beside Christ, as if beyond Christ they no longer needed Him after accepting the grace of justification. And now there are many people who from the works of faith make for themselves works of the Law and of the letter, when having received faith by Baptism and penitence, they now think that they are personally pleasing to God even without Christ, when actually both are necessary, namely, to have faith and also always to possess Christ as our Mediator in this faith. Hence we read in Ps. 91:1: "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High shall abide in the shadow of God in heaven." Faith makes the dwelling place, but Christ the protection and the aid. And later we read (Ps. 91:4): "He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you will trust"; and in Mal. 4:2, "But for you who fear My name the Sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in His wings"; and in Ps. 31:2: "Be Thou unto me a God, a protector and a house of refuge" (that is a dwelling place); and again in Ps. 90:1: "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place." Thus the apostle is

CHAPTER NINE

2. *I have great sorrow.*

FROM this text it is very clear that love is found not only in sweetness and delight, but also in the greatest sorrow and bitterness. Indeed it rejoices and delights in bitterness and sorrow, because it regards the misery and sufferings of others as if they were its own. Thus Christ even in the final and worst hour of His suffering was aglow with His deepest love, indeed according to blessed Hilary¹ it filled Him with the greatest joy to suffer the greatest pain. For thus it is that "God is wonderful in His saints" (Ps. 68:35), so that He causes them, at the very time they are suffering the greatest pains, also to experience the greatest joys.

3. *For I could wish that I myself were accursed.* I do not know what they are afraid of, but many want this passage to be understood with reference to the apostle before his conversion, when he was outside of Christ and even opposed to Him. But this interpretation has no value for many reasons. In the first place, he says, "I could wish." Now, that he wishes for something a person says when he is not yet what he hopes for. But at that time he was already accursed. In the second place, because he hopes to be accursed from Christ, therefore he is understood to be with Christ when he says this. In the third place, the term "accursed" means the same thing as, for example, excommunication, execration, rejection; therefore he is at this time in communion, consecrated, and taken up in Christ, when he says: "I could wish that I were accursed." In the fourth place, he uses the expression "for the sake of my brethren." But at this time he was accursed and made detestible not for them but with them; at this time he did not wish to be there for their salvation, but he wanted to be associated with their damnation.

But why stop there? In the fifth place, the whole order of the text indicates that he is speaking with most fervent zeal about their salvation. For he wants to bring Christ to them, which he certainly

¹ Cf. Hilary, *De Trinitate*, X, 45, *Patrologia, Series Latina*, X, 379.

was not doing then. For that reason he swore a most sacred oath, because it seems incredible that a man would desire to be damned, in order that the damned might be saved.

And in the sixth place, he alone wishes to be accursed by Christ, which is something less. But before his conversion he hoped that Christ and all His followers might be anathema from the whole world and not that he be alienated from Christ, but Christ from him and from all men. And he wanted to be against Christ in agreement with the Jews, who made Christ anathema to themselves and cast Him out of the city and out of their communion and killed Him and declared themselves chosen and established themselves. For this reason Christ is called "Hermon"² in Ps. 133:3: "It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion!" And the church is called "Hermonim" together with Him in Ps. 42:6: "Therefore I remember Thee from the land of Jordan and Hermonim." In Greek the word "Hermon" means anathema and "Hermonim" anathemas. And the word "anathema" means an excommunication or a separation, as lepers are separated as unclean people. Thus Christ predicted to His disciples: "They will put you out of the synagogs" (John 16:2). It is as if he were saying: "You will be Hermonim and anathemas, that is, the rejected and the excommunicated of the people."

Thus the words "I could wish, etc." are a most excellent and entirely apostolic way of speaking here of love both toward Christ as well as toward the Jews. For from the great love for Christ he hopes for great glory from the Jews for Christ. And in order that He might have this, he himself is glad and willing to be separated from Him, but without hating Him. For this love based on its opposite is the strongest and highest love, where the highest sign of hatred for oneself shows the great love for someone else.

Thus he wishes the greatest salvation also for the Jews, and in order that they might have this, he freely is willing to lose his own salvation. He does this also in another place, in 2 Cor. 12:15, where he says: "I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls."

But we must note that these words seem strange and foolish to those who think that they are righteous and love God with a covetous love, that is, because of their salvation and eternal rest or because of their escape from hell, and not for the sake of God

² In his comment on Ps. 42:6 Luther compares Hermon to Christ in much the same way. Cf. W, III, 236, 32 ff.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. *As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him.*

THE word “weak” must not be understood in this passage in the sense of “impotent,” as in the following chapter, where he speaks of the “failings of the weak” (Rom. 15:1), that is, of people who are impotent, but rather in the sense of “debility,” which is contrasted with strength, or good health. For example, a boy to be sure is impotent in comparison with a man, but he is not weak. Therefore the first term must be understood in a relative and transitive sense, but the second in an absolute sense. For thus the apostle in his letters speaks of some people as weak and others as sound in faith, understanding the term “weak” as referring to people who are overly careful or still superstitious in some respect, who think they ought to do what they really do not need to do. But not that he compliments those who are superstitious and of their own will remain such but rather those who of necessity are still weak in faith, who because of this are not yet in a state of salvation yet are on the way and thus should be cherished and cultivated, so that they might reach the goal. Hence he warns Titus (Titus 2:1): “As for you, teach what befits sound doctrine,” and again (2:8): “Show sound speech that cannot be censured,” and in the same place (2:2): “Bid the older men be sound in faith,” and again (1:9): “So that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine.” He says all of these things in opposition to Jewish superstition, which certain false apostles were teaching relative to the differences of meats and of days, of whom he says in the same epistle (Titus 1:10, 13): “For there are many insubordinate men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially the circumcision party. . . . Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in faith.” And in 1 Tim. 1:3 ff. he says: “That you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor occupy themselves with Jewish fables. . . . For the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith. Certain

persons by swerving from these have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the Law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make assertions." Likewise in Gal. 4:9 ff. he says: "How can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits, whose slaves you want to be once more? You observe days and months and seasons and years! I am afraid I have labored over you in vain." And he is even more explicit in Col. 2:16 ff.: "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one seduce you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, taking his stand on visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments grows with a growth that is from God. If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations, 'Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch' (referring to things which all perish as they are used), according to human precepts and doctrines? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh." And Heb. 13:9: "Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited their adherents." And in 1 Cor. 8:1 ff. and 10:16 ff. he speaks extensively on the point mentioned in this chapter.

Thus the meaning of the apostle is that in the new law all things are free and nothing is necessary for those who believe in Christ, but love is sufficient for them, as he says (1 Tim. 1:5): "from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith," and in Gal. 6:15: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation and the observance of God's commands."¹ And our Lord in the Gospel says (Luke 17:21-22): "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, 'Lo, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." Likewise in Matt. 24:11, 26 He says: "And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. . . . So if they say to you, 'Lo, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out;

¹ This quotation adds an element from 1 Cor. 7:19.

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