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## EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD.

(By request.)

The faith of Christendom is found ultimately to rest upon a single miracle. Christians themselves are taught to stake all on this miracle: "If Christ be not risen; then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15, 14—18. Thus Paul. This is not hyperbole.

Facts of sacred history show that the supreme importance of the resurrection of the Lord was recognized not only in verbal statement, but in the entire activity of the early Church. In the same chapter from which we have just quoted Paul sketches in a few lines the essentials of apostolic preaching. He states, v. 1: "I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received," etc.; and then proceeds in vv. 3. 4 to say: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Peter's Pentecostal oration, the first public effort of an evangelical preacher in the New Testament, states, and proves by means of Old Testament

## JOHN WICLIF.

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### II. THE PATRIOT.

(Continued.)

On February 19, 1377, Wiclif came from Fleet Street by St. Paul's Cross to Ludgate Hill—but he did not come alone. With him came “old John of Gaunt, time-honored Lancaster,” as Shakespeare calls him, the fourth son of Edward III and father of Henry IV, the patron of Geoffrey Chaucer, for thirteen years the practical ruler of England; with him came Lord Henry Percy, later the first Earl of Northumberland and the hero of Chevy Chase, who was the Earl Marshall of England with the sword of state; with him came other powerful supporters, even four Doctors of Divinity, representing the four orders of monks, to help him. The crowd before St. Paul's Cathedral was so dense and excited that an entrance for Wiclif had to be forced. “Dread not the bishops, for they be all unlearned in respect of you,” they cheered Wiclif, as George Frundsberg cheered Luther at Worms. “A tall, thin figure, covered with a long light gown of black color, with a girdle about the body; the head, adorned with a full, flowing beard, exhibiting features keen and sharply cut; the eye clear and penetrating; the lips firmly closed in token of resolution—the whole man wearing an aspect of lofty earnestness, and replete with dignity and character,” such is Lechler's word painting of England's intellectual guide at this time.

William Courtenay, the Bishop of London, on his mother's side a great grandson of Edward I, protested against this assumption of authority within the walls of his own cathedral, and quarreled with the Marshall. When they at last got into Our Lady's Chapel and all were seated, Lord Percy invited Wiclif to sit down also; but the Bishop of London insisted on Wiclif's standing. “Hereupon very contumelious wordes did ryse betwene Syr Henrye Percye and the bishoppe, and the whoole multitude began to be troubled.” John of Gaunt threatened to drag the bishop out of the church by the hair of his

head, and the court broke up in confusion; no sentence was passed, and no official record of the proceedings was kept.

Foiled in this attempt, the help of the Pope was sought: fifty of Wiclif's opinions were sent to Avignon, and their condemnation was asked for.

On the advice of the holy nuns Catherine of Siena and the Swedish St. Bridget, but against the earnest wish of his cardinals, Gregory XI ended the seventy years' Babylonish captivity of the popes at Avignon in France, and sailed from Marseilles to Civita Vecchia, and on January 17, 1377, solemnly entered Rome amid great popular rejoicing, and on May 22, in the splendid Cathedral of San Maria Maggiore, issued five bulls, one to the King, one to the University of Oxford, and three to the Archbishop and Bishop of London, demanding the trial and imprisonment of Wiclif.

Edward III died on June 21, and the son of his gallant Black Prince became King Richard II—eleven years old.

Spite of the Pope's bulls, Parliament at Gloucester, in October, formally consulted Wiclif in the grave matter, whether it might lawfully keep English money from going out to absentee holders of English church offices. Wiclif in his "Responsio" boldly argued that Parliament had the legal right to do so; he even spoke of the "asinine folly" of paying Peter's pence. His friends protested against his imprisonment "at the command of the Pope, lest they should seem to give the Pope dominion and royal power in England," and the Vice-chancellor of Oxford had to content himself with requiring Wiclif to remain in the Black Hall. Even for this he was later driven from office by the King. Sturdy John of Northampton boasted that no bull of the Pope should harm John Wiclif in the limits of London. Sergeant holds him "the most important religious factor in England" at that time.

Even the theologians were in favor of Wiclif; the Chancellor and doctors all affirmed his conclusions to be true, "although they were ill-sounding propositions."

When, at last, Wiclif appeared before the two prelates in

the Archbishop's chapel at Lambeth, March, 1378, to answer to the nineteen condemned conclusions, Princess Joan, widow of the Black Prince and mother of the young King Richard II, sent Sir John Clifford, forbidding the prelates to interfere with Wiclif, and the citizens of London burst into the chapel and broke up the trial, so that it came to nothing, as the first had done. Wiclif was upheld by his prince and by his people, as was Luther later in Saxony.

It seems Wiclif's trial at Lambeth passed off without any formal sentence, though he was more or less formally requested not to teach these doctrines in the schools or the pulpit "on account of the scandals [against the clergy] which they excited among the laity." Apparently he paid not the slightest attention to these precepts of the prelates; on the contrary, he used his triumph to publish his great "Summa in Theologia" in thirty-three articles, in twelve books, both in Latin and in English. A part of this work is the "De Ecclesia," edited by Loserth, and Hus' "De Ecclesia" is but a meager abridgment of Wiclif's work. If the work of Hus produced such a powerful impression on the men of his day, what would the work of Wiclif have done?

In 1520 Luther at Wittenberg printed Hus' "De Ecclesia," and, in 1521, the Bohemian Utraquists presented Luther with a copy of Hus' "De Ecclesia." Buddensieg says that the ideas of Hus, and of course of Wiclif, can be traced through long portions of Luther's "Papsttum zu Rom;" the same holds good, though in less degree, of Luther's "An den christlichen Adel" and "Von der Babylonischen Gefangenschaft." He also says that the Wiclif Codex No. 1387 in Vienna bears the name Doctor Martinus Luter in a hand of the sixteenth century. Wiclif's "De Christo et Adversario suo" seems to have suggested Hus' "De Anatomia Christi," which again seems to have suggested Luther's and Cranach's "Passional Christi und Antichristi" of 1527.

There was very little in Wiclif's "conclusions" which could not boast a very respectable churchly authority: as yet

no point of doctrine was attacked; so far only principles of church property and practice were touched. What was new was that here for the first time a bold and revered university professor called on the State to reform a corrupt and unwilling Church.

In the Parliament of October, 1378, the bishops petitioned against Lancaster's killing of two squires and a cleric in violently resisting legal arrest, and Wiclif's tongue and pen were used to defend the layman against the clerics, and the reply of the Lords to the Bishops is most likely the language of Wiclif and really the sum of a part of his work on the Church, "De Ecclesia."

### III. THE THEOLOGIAN.

On March 27, 1378, fourteen months after his festive entry into Rome, Gregory XI died. Twelve days after Bartholomaeus of Prignano, Archbishop of Bari, became Pope Urban VI. In the middle of May the French cardinals withdrew to Anagni, and at the end of July sent a letter to the Pope asking him to resign, saying his election was illegal, owing to the violence of the Roman mobs. On September 20, at Fondi, in Neapolitan territory, they elected Cardinal Bishop Robert of Cambray, Count of Geneva, known as Clement VII, and the great scandalous schism of thirty years was begun. At first Wiclif thought well of Urban VI and trusted he would at last begin the sorely needed reform of the Church, but when the two rival popes hurled the most terrible curses at one another and drove the nations of Europe to take sides and embroiled them in bloody wars, they appeared to Wiclif as "false popes," "whose office was without warrant in the Bible," apostates, members of Antichrist and not of Christ, "the two halves of Antichrist," "praise God, who split the head of the serpent, let the two parts destroy each other." He renounces the pope and denounces him as Antichrist, "the head vicar of the fiend," "glowing with satanic pride and simoniacal greed," "a sinful idiot who might be a damned devil in hell."

In order to get the sinews of war for his crusade against

his French rival pope, Urban VI sold indulgences in England. One of the hucksters said at his command angels came from heaven to free souls in purgatory and lead them straight to heaven if the people paid well into the war chest of this holy crusade. Evidently Tetzels later took a leaf out of this man's book. Henry Spencer, the bloody bishop of Norwich, who had cruelly butchered peasants in 1381, in person led an army of ruffians to Flanders against "the Clementines," the followers of Clement VII. Here was a grand exhibition of every papal abuse Wiclif had complained of, and in 1382 he for the last time used his pen for political pamphlets. In the "Cruciata," his most powerful polemic, Wiclif denounces the crusade and calls the indulgences the "abomination of desolation in the holy place," and says "the pope has left the path of Christ and is walking in the path of Satan," and that this is the cause of the misery of the Church.

As Wiclif studied the Bible, he began to see that the corruption of the Roman church came from the false doctrine of the Roman church, and he began the great appeal to the Bible. His summons to the State to reform the Church gave the first distinct keynote which the great reforming Councils of Basle and Constance took up in the next century.

The more he studies the Bible, the clearer becomes his judgments, the firmer his language: "In a single word of the Bible there is more wholesome teaching than in all the decretals and bulls" of the pope; "if you do not know the Bible, you will become the slave of the Antichrist;" "not to know the Bible is not to know Christ, to be contrary to the Bible is to be a heretic;" "the Bible alone is infallible, true in all its parts, the only authority for the faith of the Church;" "a book for everybody;" "if we had a hundred popes and all the friars of the world were turned into cardinals, yet should we more trust the Gospel than all this multitude."—To tradition he gave a lower place, the consensus of Christendom deserved respect, but the decrees of councils were of no authority if against the Bible. He did not reject reason, but held that it

alone could not discover truth. The light of nature had its place, and he would accept its helpful offices, but the Bible is the last and infallible basis of belief and supreme judge of doctrine and practice. And this Bible every Christian must interpret for himself. "Christ hath made His servants free, but Antichrist hath made them bond again." "To say that laymen are not entitled to sit in judgment upon the life and official conduct of their spiritual superiors, is as much as to say that it is not competent for the laity to concern themselves about their own salvation." Everyone able to read has the right to get his religion direct from the Bible.

In addition to translating the Bible, Wiclif wrote his great Bible apology, "On the Truth of the Holy Scripture," to the editing of which Prof. Buddensieg gave twenty years of his life. In it he says: "No Christian dare admit the Bible teaches anything wrong. He that has a false understanding of the Bible dare not admit error to be in the Bible, for the error is not in the Bible, but in him that explains it erroneously. God's Word is the basis for every article of faith, the example and mirror in which the Christian may detect every error. The Holy Scripture is the faith of the Church, and the clearer we know its true meaning, the better. Spite all hindrances the French have translated the Bible from Latin into French, why not the English? And if English lords have French Bibles, it is not unreasonable to have them in English also." "Christen men and women, olde and young, shulden study fast in the New Testament, and no simple man of wit shulde be aferde unmeasurably to study in the text of Holy Writ. Pride and covetise of clerks is cause of their blyndnesse and heresie, and priveth them fro verie understanding of Holy Writ. The New Testament is of ful autoritic, and open to understanding of simple men, as to the poynts that ben most needful to salvation. The texte of Holy Writ ben wordes of everlasting life, and he that kepeth mekeness and charitie hath the trewe understandinge and perfection of all Holy Writ. It seemeth open heresy to say that the Gospel with his truth and freedom suf-

fiseth not to salvation of Christen men without kepyng of ceremonies and statutes of sinful men and unkynginge, that ben made in the tyme of Sathanas and Antichriste."

The Church is the communion of saints, the whole number of those that shall be saved, the mystical body of Christ; the Pope cannot be head of this Church, that is Christ only; it is impossible to excommunicate anyone from this church unless he have first done it himself.

By ordinance of Christ priests and bishops are all one, and all pastors are of equal grade, and all Christians are spiritual priests; Church and State are to be separate; the seat of all power and authority, in Church and State, is in the people.

The two sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not empty signs, but real means of grace, even if the priest is an unworthy man, though faith is needed to get the benefit; he hinted very strongly that the other five were no more sacraments than preaching.

Any slight good work done the living is far better than any amount of treasure for the soul of a dead man. The treasury of the merits of the saints in heaven from which the Pope sells indulgences is a swindle to cheat Christians and pick their pockets, and the people who let themselves be cheated are fools.

The worship of saints and images he rejected; saints he honored, and images he tolerated. For confirmation and extreme unction he finds no warrant in the Bible. Private confession is good in itself; public confession is better; enforced auricular confession is a "sacrament of the devil," an invention introduced after Satan had been loosed, and confessors are "idolatrous, leprous, and simoniacal heretics." Enforced celibacy is unscriptural and immoral. Indulgences are "blasphemy, lewdest heresy." He was earnestly opposed to all wars, and would have made a good member of a Peace Congress at The Hague. Relics, pilgrimages, purgatory, papal bulls, priestly absolution he rejected. The hierarchy of Rome are "the twelve daughters of the diabolical leech;" the cardinals are "incarnate devils;" the monks "gluttonous idolaters."



In earlier years Wiclif had thought well of the begging monks over against the wealthy secular clergy, but in time he saw their corruption, and about 1378 he began his vigorous assaults on them as the supports of the Pope. When it was said the Bible does not know monks, Wiclif with mild sarcasm answered: "But it does; in this text: 'I know you not.'" He bitterly assailed them for their share in carrying on this war, for their indulgences and sale of prayers, for their cupidity, luxury, extravagance, and fight against the English Bible. William of Wykeham, the political opponent of Wiclif, the founder of New College, declared with grief, that upon "a diligent examination of the various rules of the religious orders and comparison with the lives of their several professors, he could not anywhere find that the ordinances of their founders, according to their true design and intention, were at present observed by any of them."

Twenty years before Wiclif began his protest against the flagrant abuses in the Church, Bishop Fitz Ralph of Armagh laid his famous indictment of the four orders of the monks before the Pope at Avignon. He said, "I have in my diocese of Armagh two thousand persons a year (as I think) who are excommunicated for willful homicide, public robbery, arson, and similar acts; of whom scarcely forty in a year come to me or my parish priests for confession. For commonly, if there be any cursed swearer, extortioner, or adulterer, he will not be shriven at his own curate, but go to a flattering friar, that will assoil him falsely for a little money by year." The rich were forgiven for a window in the cloister, the poor for a pair of shoes or a dinner. Some of the monks even gave it out that any man or woman who put on a friar's dress at the hour of death could not be damned.

Owing to the scarcity of clergymen after the plague, Archbishop Islip ordained laymen, and he "did ordain that more should not be given to priests for their yearly stipend than three pounds six shillings and eight pence, which caused many of them to steal," Stow naively tells us.

In 1379 Wiclif was very ill, but when four monks came to convert him, he called his servant to prop him up in bed and said, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the friars."

As early as 1362 Wiclif had doubts about Transubstantiation, and in 1367 he taught the "sacramental presence" of Christ's body. In the spring of 1381 he put forth his powerful Twelve Theses on the Eucharist, in which he denies that the bread is destroyed after consecration; it does not cease to be bread, though Christ's body is present, really, not locally, but sacramentally, as really as the bread, in "a sacramental coexistence," "as Christ is at once God and man, so the Sacrament is at once Christ's body and bread, bread in a natural manner, Christ's body in a sacramental manner." He insists that Transubstantiation was neither taught in the Word of God nor supported by tradition in the first thousand years of the Church, and calls it the most dangerous heresy ever smuggled into the Church by cunning hypocrites; it denies the truth of Scripture, robs the people, is a cause of idolatry, the people making the wafer their God, the priest having "made the body of Christ." Lord Brougham, Dr. Storrs, and the *Encyclopedia Americana* say Wiclif taught practically and substantially the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and Lechler says he was nearer to Luther than to Zwingli and Calvin. "Wiclif's doctrine is an echo of the Apostles and a prelude to the Reformation." — "From the eleventh century the dogma of the Church has been perverted. The popes have been wrong, the councils have been wrong, the decretals are full of heresy. If Rome will not unsay her false doctrine, the national churches must repudiate her claim to lead them. She has built up a crazy superstructure on the true foundation; we must sweep it away, and get back to the life and words of Christ." "We have but to preach constantly the Law of Christ, even before the prelates of Caesar, and a blooming martyrdom will promptly come, if we abide in faith and patience." (*Dialogus* III, ch. 15.)

This attack on the very foundation of the papacy created a sensation and consternation, as did the famous theses of Luther in 1517. Lancaster and other powerful friends told him they could not follow him in his heresy. But Wiclif was nothing daunted. Sure of the truth of his position, he deliberately sacrificed the protection of the court. If need be, he could die for the truth, but he would not deny the truth.

Still more friends were estranged from Wiclif's cause by the rising of the peasants in this same year.

The awful plague of the "Black Death," in 1349, cut down the population of England one half, London alone losing 100,000. Many left their property to the Church, so that she owned one third of the soil of England, and her dues amounted to twice the royal revenue. The wars with France were a heavy drain on the country, and the burden of taxation fell heaviest on the peasants, the Church being untaxed.

In 1379 a poll tax was levied, unheard of till then; it was paid "with great grudging and many a bitter curse," Hollinshed chronicles. In 1381 it was ruthlessly collected, and under the "mad priest" John Ball, Jack Straw, and Wat Tyler the peasants revolted, as they had done in France in the Jacquerie for the same reason. They were willing to pay the fifteenth, as their fathers had done, but they could not possibly pay this tax.

The peasants rose against their oppressors in Essex, Kent, Suffolk, and elsewhere; they marched on London and sacked the city, they burned Gaunt's palace in the Savoy, on June 13, 1381, they in the Tower beheaded Archbishop Sudbury, the responsible Chancellor since July 4, 1379. The young King rode out and made them satisfactory promises. The promises were not kept. As in the Peasants' War in Luther's time, the peasants were forcibly put down and cruelly slaughtered, seven thousand were burned, beheaded, disemboweled. This went on till January, 1382, when the fifteen year old King Richard II married Anna of Luxemburg, sister of King Wenzel of Bohemia and daughter of the German Emperor Charles IV. It is worthy

of mention that she brought with her a Bible in Latin, German, and Bohemian.

Though Wiclif was not responsible for the rising of the peasants, still Wiclif's enemies heaped the blame on him and on his teaching, and with the timid and prudent Wiclif's cause was much damaged, as was Luther's cause in his day.

Milwaukee, Wis.

W. DALLMANN.

*(To be continued.)*

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