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## In Memory of Prof. A. L. Graebner, D. D.

The readers of the QUARTERLY are acquainted with the sad fact that it has pleased Almighty God to remove from a wide sphere of activity our well-beloved and highly esteemed colleague, Dr. A. L. Graebner, professor in Concordia Seminary and editor of the THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY. Dr. Graebner was born at Frankentrost, Mich., July 10, 1849, and died at St. Louis, Mo., December 7 last. Funeral services were held December 11 in Concordia Seminary Hall and in Holy Cross Church, the speakers being Dr. F. Pieper of St. Louis, Mo., Prof. A. Pieper of Wauwatosa, Wis., Prof. J. Schaller of New Ulm, Minn., Rev. C. C. Schmidt of St. Louis, Mo., and Dr. H. G. Stub of Hamline, Minn. Dr. A. L. Graebner was a man of rare parts, a character of great firmness, a scholar of universal learning, a church historian of original research, a master of a fluent, dignified, and lucid English, a laborer of indefatigable energy, a Christian humble and grateful, and ever ready to serve his brethren, a valiant defender of the Christian faith, a champion especially of the *sola gratia* and the *sola Scriptura*,—a TRUE LUTHERAN THEOLOGIAN, whose death, in more than one sense, means a great loss to the Lutheran church of America.

F. BENTE.

## WHAT IS LUTHERAN AND WHAT CALVINISTIC DOCTRINE IN THE ARTICLE OF ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION?

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### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

In the *Epitome* the authors of the *Formula of Concord* assign their reasons for inserting an article on "God's foreknowledge and election" in these words:

"No public controversy has arisen among the theologians of the *Augsburg Confession* concerning this article. But since it is a consolatory article, when rightly handled, and also in order that no offensive disputation may arise in the course of time, it is also explained in this writing." (See Preface to Art. XI.)

What the authors of the *Form of Concord* aimed to prevent nevertheless came to pass three hundred years later. The Book of Concord was published in 1580, and in 1880 the great controversy on election began in the American Lutheran church, and it was the writer's lot to take a modest part in this controversy, not by choice, but only of necessity.

After the heat of the controversy had blown over, the following articles were written with much care and study, the whole subject yet being fresh in our mind. They were published in the *Lutheran Witness* (vols. II and III).

After a rest of two decades the same old controversy has been revived by Free Conferences which had been arranged for the purpose of coming to an understanding. Thus far these conferences have failed of their object, but they have by no means been unfruitful. They have brought to the forefront what from the very outset was the root of the whole controversy: the difference in the principles of Scripture interpretation. In 1884 we wrote with reference to "Unlutheran and false principles": "That it is the office of a theologian, when doctrines of the Scriptures seem to

contradict one another, to harmonize them with each other by drawing inferences, and that such inferences are 'just as well and as much divine truth' as the written Word. This we hold to be the most dangerous and destructive principle which has been advanced in all this controversy, because thereby human inferences are placed on an equality with the inspired Word, and the theologian is made master over the Scriptures." (*Luth. Wit.*, vol. II, p. 122.)

It seems strange that this point was at that time not given the prominence in the discussion which it deserved, and was left to crop up at this late day. But the governing hand of God has been manifest in all this controversy. We cannot but count it a veritable godsend that at this present time, when Rationalism and Higher Criticism are making themselves so rampant, the sound and solid principles of Scripture interpretation must come into public discussion within our beloved Evangelical-Lutheran church. It may be of service to save our church from the invasion of those baneful tendencies. If this be the object of God, it is certainly a thankworthy fruit of the otherwise fruitless Free Conferences. As to which is the Lutheran and which the Calvinistic principle of Scripture interpretation we cheerfully allow the reader of the following articles to judge for himself.

In the prefatory remarks to the following dissertation we also wrote: "We have long since desired to see the difference between the Lutheran and the Calvinistic doctrine set forth. In the following articles we expect to present an essay on this subject, hoping that it will induce abler pens to show that Missouri's doctrine is by no means akin to Calvinism, but is the very opposite of it." In the meantime no pen, neither an abler nor an unabler, has been put to this task, and as these articles were buried in those old volumes of the *Lutheran Witness* we thought it well to have them republished for more general perusal. They are reproduced unchanged, excepting that some reflections on the pending controversy are stricken out as not properly belong-

ing into the scopus of this attempt. If they should contribute a mite towards a better understanding between the contending parties, no man would rejoice more than their author; for he has belonged both to the Missouri and the Ohio synods, and he loves them both.

#### I. EXTENT OF ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

John Calvin, a Frenchman, was born July 10, 1509, at Noyon, France. According to the will of his father he was to enter the priesthood, but later he studied law. In 1532, two years after the Diet at Augsburg, he publicly embraced Protestantism, and in 1534 he was obliged to flee from France. In 1536 he settled at Geneva, in Switzerland, but because of his rigorous strictness in applying church discipline he was banished from the city and went to Strassburg. During his stay at Strassburg he subscribed the Augsburg Confession and entered into correspondence with Melanchthon. In 1541 he was recalled to Geneva, where he labored until his death, the 27th day of May, 1564. At Geneva, Calvin was not only professor, he also, though not nominally yet *de facto*, made himself ruler of the republic, blending together state and church. He was a highly gifted and thoroughly educated man, but of a hard, harsh, and intolerant character. Not only do his writings breathe a proud and sarcastic spirit, but in the year 1553, under his direction, Michael Servetus was burned alive at Geneva for denying the trinity of the Godhead. The iron church discipline which Calvin enforced by worldly means is instanced by the beheading of Jacob Gruet for writing immoral poems and opposing Calvin's church ordinances. This and the burning of Servetus are dark spots in the career of Calvin.

Though the adherents of Calvin take pride in representing him not only as one of the principal reformers, but as the chief reformer, the dates given above show that the main work of the Reformation was already done before Calvin ever appeared on the field. What Calvin did do was this:

he systematized the doctrine of the Swiss theologians and led many away from the truth of the Scriptures.

As was the character of Calvin, so is his doctrine, hard and harsh. In his writings he treats his opponents with sarcasm and contempt. The spirit of fervent love for the erring, the afflicted, and the weak in faith, so predominant in Luther's writings, is lacking in the writings of Calvin. But our object is not to write a biography of John Calvin, or to sit in judgment over him as a man, but to set forth the difference between the predestinarianism which he taught and the election of grace which our Evangelical-Lutheran church teaches.

The principal work which Calvin wrote are his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. We are not in possession of the original, but our quotations are from the sixth American edition of John Allen's translation, which is sanctioned by the Presbyterian Board of Publication. We shall, however, not trouble the reader with more citations than appears absolutely necessary.

To understand what is Lutheran and what Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, it will be necessary, first of all, to consider the boundaries of predestination, how far, or over whom, the predestination of God extends, whether it comprises *all men* without any exception, or whether it comprises only *some men* and not all. In other words: The Scriptures tell us that some men are eternally saved, some eternally lost. Therefore the question arises: Were both those who are saved and those who are lost predestinated by God to the end which they respectively reach; or does the predestination of God extend only over those who are saved, and not over those who are lost? Calvin teaches the former, with the addition that the predestination of God extends also over the angels, both good and evil; the latter is the doctrine of our Lutheran church, to-wit, that the predestination of God extends only over those who are saved, and not over those who are lost.

Calvin defines the extent of predestination thus: "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which He has determined in Himself what He would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say, he is predestinated either to life or to death." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 145.) Those are plain words which most decidedly say that predestination extends over all men, fixing each individual person's eternal destiny, be it salvation or damnation. Concerning the creation of individual persons Calvin says: "All things being at God's disposal, and the decision of salvation or death belonging to Him, He orders all things by His counsel and decree in such a manner, that some men are born devoted from the womb to certain death, that His name may be glorified in their destruction." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 169.) That is plainly saying, whom God predestinated unto death, He also creates unto death. Consistently, therefore, Calvin also teaches that God wanted Adam to fall. Arguing against his opponents Calvin writes: "I inquire again how it came to pass that the fall of Adam, independent of any remedy, should involve so many nations with their infant children in eternal death, but because such was the will of God. Their tongues, so loquacious on every other point, must here be struck dumb. It is an awful decree, I confess; but no one can deny that God foreknew the future final fate of man before He created him, and that He did foreknow it because it was appointed by His own decree."<sup>1)</sup> (p. 170.) Those are plain words, saying that God willed the fall of man, in order that His decree of reprobation might be accomplished. In regard to the angels

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1) The assumption that God foreknew the fall of Adam, because He had decreed it, is fallacious. It was one thing to foreknow the fall of Adam, and another thing to decree it. God certainly foreknew the fall, but He did not decree it.

Calvin writes: "The angels who stood in their integrity Paul calls 'elect;' if their constancy rested on the Divine pleasure, the defection of the others argues their being forsaken—a fact for which no other cause can be assigned than the reprobation hidden in the secret counsel of God." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 167.) So Calvin teaches that God had predestinated the fall of Satan and the other evil angels.

These quotations will suffice to show that Calvin most decidedly teaches predestination to extend over all men, fixing his destiny for each individual born on earth. To say that Calvin teaches an *election* and predestination is, consequently, not quite accurate; for in fact he teaches a *division* and predestination, a division of the whole human family into two parties and a predestination of each to its eternal end.

What, on the other hand, does our Evangelical-Lutheran church teach on this point? The position of our church is pretty fairly indicated by John Calvin himself when he writes: "Many, indeed, as if they wished to avert odium from God, admit election in such a way as to deny that any one is reprobated." These "many" of whom Calvin here speaks are we Lutherans. Then he continues: "But this is puerile and absurd, because election itself could not exist without being opposed to reprobation. God is said to separate those whom He adopts to salvation. To say that others obtain by chance, or acquire by their own efforts, that which election alone confers on a few, will be worse than absurd. Whom God passes by, therefore, He reprobates, and from no other cause than His determination to exclude them from the inheritance which He predestinates for His children." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 163.) These words show what Calvin thought of our Lutheran doctrine; for what he here pronounces "puerile and absurd" is the position of our church. To use his own words: We "admit election in such a way as to deny that any one is reprobated." We admit election, but not rejection; we admit predestination

to eternal life, but no predestination to eternal death, and this position, by the grace of God, we expect to hold, though Calvinists and Synergists conjointly pronounce it absurd.

What our church teaches concerning the extent of election and predestination is expressed very plainly in the *Confessions* (N. M., 2d ed., p. 711): "The eternal election or predestination of God, that is, the ordination of God unto salvation, does not pertain both to" (does not extend both over) "the good and to the bad, but only to the children of God, who were elected and ordained to eternal life, before the foundation of the world was laid, as Paul, Eph. 1, 4. 5, declares: 'He hath chosen us in Christ Jesus, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children.'" Here our church emphatically declares that predestination does not extend over all, also over the wicked who will be lost, but only over the children of God who will be saved. Our doctrine is, that God elected His children unto Himself out of the world, and *these*, His children, He predestinated unto eternal life; but God's predestination does not extend also over the lost, as though He had predestinated them to destruction.

For the sake of clearness we here subjoin the difference of Calvin's doctrine from that of the Lutheran church on this point in short sentences:

1. Calvin teaches, that God predestinated and created Lucifer and his angels unto apostasy and eternal torment.—We Lutherans teach, that God did not predestinate the now evil angels unto destruction, but created them that they should remain in "their own habitation," Jude 6.

2. Calvin teaches, that God does not will the salvation of all men.—We teach, that God does will the salvation of all men.

3. Calvin teaches, that the predestination of God extends over all men, both good and bad.—We teach, that the predestination of God does not extend over all men, but only over the elect children of God.



4. Calvin teaches, that God divided the whole human family into two parts, and predestinated both parts, the one to life, the other to death.—We teach, that God elected His children from the world, and these He predestinated, and no others.

5. Calvin teaches, that God passed by and doomed to death the greater part of mankind.—We teach, that God passed no one by and doomed no one to death.

6. Calvin teaches, it was the will of God that the first man, Adam, should fall.—We teach, it was the will of God that the first man, Adam, should not fall.

7. Calvin teaches, that God created some men to eternal death.—We teach, that God creates all men to eternal life.

8. Calvin pronounces it “puerile and absurd” to teach an election unto life, but no predestination unto death.—We glory in that which is foolishness to men.

This last item demonstrates that our Lutheran church and John Calvin stand on radically different principles. Calvin wants a system of doctrines in which the various parts so harmonize that reason can see the connection and relation in which they stand, and, therefore, he permits his reason to tamper with the words of the Scriptures and to force them into his system of doctrine by drawing inferences. But we Lutherans rest content in, and will not proceed beyond, what the plain words of the Scriptures say. When, therefore, Calvin pronounces our doctrine puerile and absurd, because election itself could not exist without being opposed to reprobation, we simply answer: So, indeed, “wise Lady Reason” says, but we do not go by reason, we go by the WRITTEN WORD, and we reject and condemn the inferences and conclusions of depraved human reason in divine matters. Hence we will not enter on the reasonable argumentation of Calvin in favor of his doctrine. We very readily concede that he was a deep thinker, but, though he had been ten times wiser, we want nothing of his reasonable inferences, and are not willing to rest our

faith on systematic thinking. For everything which we are to receive as divine truth we want a plain word of our God. But what that Word does say we adopt, whether, according to reason, philosophy, or whatever is human, it be reasonable or unreasonable, consistent or inconsistent. "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. 10, 3. 5.

Yet, as Calvin claims that his doctrine is the doctrine of the Scriptures, it is necessary to show how he treats the Scriptures. The main point here concerned is, that God, according to Calvin, predestinated and, hence, also creates some men to destruction. How does Calvin obtain, or rather infer this doctrine from the Scriptures? A few samples will serve to illustrate his method.

Calvin quotes Deut. 32, 8. 9: "When the Most High divided the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, the Lord's portion was His people; Jacob was the lot of His inheritance." On this passage Calvin says: "The separation is before the eyes of all: in the person of Abraham, as in the dry trunk of a tree, one people is peculiarly chosen to the rejection of others, *i. e.*, to their damnation. (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 145.) The text says that Israel was the Lord's inheritance, and not with one syllable does it say that God, choosing Israel, passed by and doomed to damnation the other nations. That is only an inference of John Calvin. The fact is (as the clause, "He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel," omitted by Calvin, shows), that God, in dividing the nations, appointed the portion of His people in a country situated in the very heart of the Old World, on the highway of the intercourse of nations, so that the knowledge of the true God was accessible to the Gentiles. Only if God had appointed the portion of His chosen people in some remote and in-

accessible corner of the earth would there be a show for Calvin's inference that God had predestinated the other nations to ignorance and destruction. To the same purpose Calvin cites Ps. 147, 20: "He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them." The text says that God did not deal with other nations as He did with Jacob, but that this was because God had foreordained the other nations to eternal death is only an inference of Calvin. From Rom. 9, 13: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," Calvin "asserts the one to have been elected and the other rejected." (p. 162.) The text has the word "hated," but instead of searching in the Scriptures for the meaning of this word Calvin forthwith concludes, it meant that Esau had been foreordained to destruction by an eternal decree of God. If, what Calvin says, were the meaning of the word "hated," then Paul would be found striving against the eternal will and ordination of God, when, in v. 3 of the same chapter, he wishes himself to be accursed from Christ for his kinsmen according to the flesh, who were hardened against God as well as Esau, and upon whom the judgments of God were denounced even plainer than on Esau.—One more example may suffice. Rom. 9, 22, 23: "What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory?" Commenting on this passage Calvin inveighs against those holding the Lutheran doctrine, introducing them thus: "They observe, also, that it is not said without meaning, that the vessels of wrath are fitted for destruction, but that God prepared the vessels of mercy; since by this mode of expression he ascribes and challenges to God the praise of salvation, and throws the blame of perdition upon those who by their choice procure it to themselves." To this true meaning of the passage Calvin re-

plies: "But though I concede to them that Paul softens the asperity of the former clause by the difference of phraseology, yet it is not at all consistent to transfer the preparation for destruction to any other than the secret counsel of God; which is also asserted just before in the context, that 'God raised up Pharaoh, and whom He will He hardeneth.'<sup>1)</sup> Whence it follows, that the cause of hardening is the secret counsel of God." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 164.) Calvin concedes that the phraseology is on our side against his doctrine, but, he says, it would not at all be consistent to teach thus, and his doctrine is what according to his reason *follows* from the text. How plain and simple, on the other hand, is the explanation of our church: "Here the apostle clearly asserts that God endured the vessels of wrath with much long-suffering, but he does not say that God made them vessels of wrath. For if this had been the will of God, there would have been no need for long-suffering. But the devil and those individuals themselves—not God—are in fault of their being fitted to destruction. For every preparation or fitting to destruction is by the devil and by men through sin, and by no means of God. For God desires not that any man should be damned; how, then, should He Himself fit or prepare any person for damnation." (B. C., N. M., 2d ed., p. 724.)

These examples are sufficient to show how Calvin treats the text in order to get his doctrine into the Scriptures.

That Calvin's doctrine is *against*, and our Lutheran doctrine *in* the Scriptures can be shown by unmistakable words of Scripture. That God wills the salvation of all men He testifies, saying: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," Is. 45, 22. That God does not desire the damnation of any one He swears: "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live," Ezek. 33, 11. That

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1) Of the cause of hardening we expect to treat later.

there is an election of grace Paul confirms: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace," Rom. 11, 5. But as to an election of wrath, though Calvin adduces scores of passages in attempting to establish his imaginary decree of reprobation, he fails to produce a single one which would support it. There is no election of wrath. Neither is it at all necessary that men should be destined to death by a divine decree; for of themselves men rush on to destruction. But the election of grace is indeed necessary; for if God did not preserve a remnant unto Himself all the world would be as Sodom and like as Gomorrah; but the election of grace assures us that the Church is preserved alway and shall not perish.

## II. BASIS OF ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

There have been those who, though well aware that the Lutheran and Calvinistic doctrine of election differs totally in regard to the negative side, *i. e.*, rejection, yet believe that on the affirmative side, *i. e.*, election unto life, these doctrines are more nearly allied. But this is a great mistake resulting from ignorance either of the Lutheran or of the Calvinistic doctrine. It is indeed true: just as decidedly as Calvin, so also our Lutheran church teaches an election and predestination unto eternal life, a real election which works and effects something. It is also true that to some extent we use, and *must* use, the same or similar expressions as Calvin does. When Calvin uses the words "foreordain," "mercy," "free" or "mere grace," and the like, we must use the same words; for the doctrine cannot be presented without using these words; but it is an altogether different question whether we use them in the same sense as Calvin, which we do not. It is, finally, true that in some points Calvin teaches correctly; for he was a sectarian, not a heathen that had lost *all* Christian truth. When Calvin *e. g.* teaches that the number of the elect can neither be increased, nor diminished, that is correct.

But notwithstanding Calvin teaches correctly in some few points concerned in this article, yet his doctrine also of election unto life is fundamentally, radically different from our Lutheran doctrine, so that the few points of agreement are merely accidental. This becomes apparent as soon as we consider the basis on which election rests, or the source from which it flows. According to our doctrine, election rests on the redemption in Christ Jesus; according to Calvin's doctrine, election rests on the essential attributes of God independent of Christ. We teach an election of grace, Calvin teaches an election of sovereignty. These very terms show that the whole doctrine from the very foundation is altogether different.

That Calvin bases his doctrine of election on an altogether different foundation, or deducts election from an altogether different source, than we Lutherans, is already evident from the fact, that Calvin teaches a twofold election, one unto life, the other unto death, whilst we Lutherans teach only an election unto life, and most strenuously deny a predestination unto death. Calvin *must* teach a double election, because he sets out from the attributes of God as they are found in His essence, and this is Calvin's first and fundamental error in this article; but we Lutherans *cannot* teach also a predestination unto death, because we set out from the grace of God as merited by Jesus Christ, and He was not sent to destroy men's souls, but to save them.

There are two ways to consider God. In the first place, we may think of God as He is known by nature, as the Supreme Being, who is omnipotent, omnipresent, etc., and is bound by no laws save His own being. That is considering God in Himself, in His sovereignty, as the heathen philosophers contemplated Him, without the Bible. In the second place, we can think of God as He has revealed Himself through His Son and reconciled the human race unto Himself. It is in the first-named manner that Calvin considers God, and accordingly he teaches, or rather philos-

ophizes, that God in His sovereignty resolved, or, in Calvin's language, decreed to glorify His two attributes, mercy and justice, and to do this by creating and ordaining so many angels and men unto the glory of His mercy, *i. e.*, to everlasting happiness, and so many angels and men unto the glory of His justice, *i. e.*, to eternal misery. Only thereafter—Calvin philosophizes—when taking counsel how to lead those whom He had destined unto the glory of His mercy out of sin unto salvation, God arbitrarily decreed to do this through the mediation of Christ. Therefore, when Calvin, in treating of predestination, uses the word *grace*, he means by it not the grace of God as merited by Jesus Christ; to him the word *grace* rather stands for the absolute will of God by which He decreed that some men should live notwithstanding they were sinners.—In other words: Calvin considers God outside of the Mediator as a merciful and a just God, and without reconciling mercy and justice lets God glorify both separately by foreordaining some to life, some to death. Calvin *places predestination before redemption*.

That this is Calvin's doctrine will be sufficiently apparent from a few quotations. He says: "God's sovereign election of some and preterition of others, they" (Calvin's opponents) "make the subject of formal accusation against Him." (Vol. II, p. 150.) What Calvin means by a "sovereign election" he himself explains in these words: "The conclusion is, that God creates whom He chooses to be His children by gratuitous adoption; that the cause of this is wholly in Himself; because He exclusively regards His own secret determination." (p. 158.) By "sovereign election" Calvin, therefore, means that God had regard neither of sin, nor of Christ, nor of redemption, but "exclusively" of "His own secret determination," *i. e.*, His absolute will. Treating of the Church Calvin says: "Because a small and contemptible number is concealed among a vast multitude, and a few grains of wheat are covered with a heap of chaff,

we must leave to God alone the knowledge of His Church whose foundation is His secret election." (Vol. II, p. 222.) To Calvin the foundation of the Church is not Christ, but the "secret election" of God. Calvin's doctrine that the salvation of the elect was decided upon before, and independently of, redemption is very patent in his treatise on Christ as our Mediator. There he says: "It was of great importance to our interests that He, who was to be our Mediator, should be both true God and true man. If an inquiry be made concerning the necessity of this, it was not, indeed, a simple, or, as we commonly say, an absolute necessity, but such as arose from the heavenly decree, on which the salvation of men depended. But our most merciful Father has appointed that which was best for us." (*Inst.*, vol. I, p. 419.) In Calvin's doctrine the salvation of the elect was decided by God's secret decree of election, and therefore the incarnation of the Son of God was not indispensably necessary; only because God thought it best so, Christ, as Calvin says, "was destined by the eternal decree of God to purify the pollution of men; because the effusion of blood is an emblem of expiation." (p. 422.) According to Calvin, salvation was procured not by the blood of Christ, but by the decree of election. Therefore he can write against Oslander: "He is always deceived, or rather bewilders himself in this false principle, that the Church would have been destitute of a head if Christ would not have been manifested in the flesh; as if, while He was head over angels, He could not likewise, by His divine power, preside over men, and by the secret energy of His Spirit animate and support them, like His own body, till they should be exalted to heaven, and enjoy the life of angels." (p. 427.) So Calvin teaches, the elect could and would have been saved also without the incarnation of the Son of God.

What we stated of Calvin's doctrine, that God doomed the whole race of men, with the exception of a few, to eternal misery, is certainly repulsive to a pious mind; but



what we here state is even worse; for Calvin makes an imaginary decree of God, fixing the fate of every individual of mankind, the foundation of the whole plan of salvation, and Christ is rendered only a subordinate, yea, an unnecessary factor.

What, on the other hand, does our Lutheran church teach concerning the basis on which election unto eternal life is founded, or concerning the source from which it flows? To show that our doctrine in this point has nothing in common with that of Calvin, we would present it in the following manner: God is the highest and most perfect Being. He is therefore both perfectly merciful and perfectly just. Now beholding the fallen human race God, according to His mercy, desired the salvation of man, but according to His justice sin must be punished. How, then, is sinful man to be united with God? Should God in His sovereign power say: So many shall live notwithstanding their sinfulness, where, then, would justice remain? Therefore if God, independently of expiation for sin, were to elect a single sinner to salvation, His justice must raise objection, saying: He is a sinner, and the wages of sin is death. Before, and independently of, atonement for sin there could, therefore, be no election unto eternal life. The inexorable demand of divine justice was, that the Law must be fulfilled and the punishment for sin must be inflicted before there could be salvation for sinners; for of the Law the Lord says: "Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled," Matt. 5, 18.

But God in His infinite wisdom found a way how to restore fallen man without a violation of divine justice. In order that the demands of justice be fulfilled and yet help be extended to fallen man, the Triune God resolved that the second person of the Godhead should assume human nature and in the likeness of sinful flesh should make atonement for the sins of Adam and his children. So the Son

of God assumed human nature, and entering on the public exercising of His office, He said: "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," and when about to die on the cross He exclaimed: "It is finished," *i. e.*, righteousness is fulfilled, sin is atoned for, all the demands of divine justice are complied with, and God the Father ratified this by raising Him up from the dead. In Christ mercy and justice are united; justice can now no more oppose mercy, but justice must say: I have received what was due me; mercy can now freely be extended to man. *By His work upon earth Jesus Christ has won grace for sinners from divine justice.*

Here is the foundation of the election of grace. In view of the atonement in Christ, God, without a violation of justice, can and does elect sinners unto salvation. That this is the doctrine of our church is evident from all those passages in which our Confessions say that we are chosen in Christ. For example: "Accordingly, this eternal election of God must be considered *in Christ*, and not apart from, or *out of Christ*. For in Christ, the holy Apostle Paul testifies, *we were chosen before the foundation of the world*, Eph. 1, 4; as it is written: 'He hath made us accepted in the Beloved,' Eph. 1, 6." (N. M., 2d ed., p. 722.) Again: "And since our election to eternal life is not based upon our piety or virtue, but upon the merits of Christ and the gracious will of His Father," etc. (p. 723.)

To comprise the difference of doctrine in short sentences, it is this:—

1. Calvin teaches that the mere absolute will of God, independently of Christ, is the foundation of election.—We teach that the grace of God as merited by Jesus Christ is the foundation of election.

2. Calvin separates mercy and justice, and teaches that God resolved to glorify each separately.—We teach that God harmonized and glorified both His mercy and His justice in the sending of His Son.

3. Calvin teaches that God elected unredeemed sinners to salvation.—We teach that God elected from the human race as redeemed in Christ.

4. Calvin teaches that the elect could and would have been saved without the incarnation, suffering, and death of Christ.—We teach that without the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ no man could have been elected and saved.

5. Calvin teaches that the secret absolute decree of God is the foundation of the plan of salvation.—We teach that Christ is the foundation of the whole plan of salvation.

It is evident at a glance that Calvin's doctrine of predestination is a kind of philosophy in a theological garb, and taxed as such it is found to be false philosophy, because Calvin's doctrine would make the justice of God far greater and more glorious than His mercy, whereas the attributes of God must be equally great and equally glorious. But we will here not follow up Calvin in his reasonings from reason. As regards the Scriptures, Calvin attempts to prove his sovereign predestination especially from Rom. 9, 18: "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." On these words Calvin remarks: "You see how he attributes both to the mere will of God. If, therefore, we can assign no reason why He grants mercy to His people but because such is His pleasure, neither shall we find any other cause but His will for the reprobation of others." (*Inst.*, vol. I, p. 163.) Calvin means to say that Paul attributes both salvation and damnation to the mere, sovereign, absolute will and decree of God. The text says: "Whom He will He *hardeneth*;" Calvin concludes: Whom He will He *predestinates unto damnation*.

As this passage frequently perplexes people, let us see what the words in their connection do say, and what they do not say. In the first place, these words do say that God has *power* to do with fallen man what He pleases; for v. 21

Paul says: "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" The answer implied is, that the potter has this power; hence that God has the power to appoint sinful man to honor or to dishonor as He pleases. If God did not have this power, He would not be omnipotent. But it does not follow that God wills to do all that He has power to do. It does not follow, because God had power to predestinate fallen man to damnation that He also did do it.—In the second place, those words do say that showing mercy, conversion, salvation, is all God's work; for v. 16 it is said: "So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Salvation is not of the will of man, neither by the will of man, nor even according to the will of carnal man; but it is the gratuitous gift of God, which gift Christ has earned for us, as Paul declares v. 8: "The children of the promise are counted for the seed." The preparation of vessels of honor out of the evil lump is of God's good pleasure.—In the third place, those words do say that God sometimes uses wicked men to show His power and to glorify His name upon earth; for v. 17 reads: "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." The text does not say that God *created and doomed Pharaoh to damnation by an eternal decree of predestination*, but it does say that God raised up Pharaoh "for this same purpose," that His power and glory be declared throughout all the earth.—Finally, those words do *not* say that God wills to make and fore-ordain any man to eternal death; for v. 22 reads: "What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" Carefully does Paul preclude the inference that God fitted men to destruction or willed their destruction. So Calvin's theory of an absolute sover-

eign predestination is not founded in this text. His doctrine rests only on his own delusive inferences, and not on the text.

But powerfully does this whole passage prove our Lutheran doctrine of an election of grace. For the whole human family, from the first to the last man, is one evil lump. Neither was there any need that God should have appointed this evil lump unto damnation by an eternal decree; for because it is evil the whole lump belongs to damnation, and, being evil, can do nothing but help itself into damnation. And that out of this evil lump vessels of honor are made is the work of God by His mercy in Christ Jesus. He saves them like a firebrand out of the common destruction. *That is the election of grace.*

That Calvin's doctrine, basing predestination on the essential attributes and the absolute will of God and placing it before redemption, is against not only a few passages, but the tenor of the whole Scripture is evident from the Lord's words: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," John 5, 39. Christ is the Center and Foundation of the whole plan of salvation, and not Calvin's decrees.

That our doctrine, building election on the grace of God in Christ Jesus, is the Scripture doctrine, a single passage will suffice to show: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ," Gal. 3, 13. 14. If there could have been an election unto eternal life without the suffering and death of the Son of God, His becoming a curse would have been an unnecessary and a useless thing.

For the sake of clearness we will here subjoin the three different doctrines of predestination with their respective basis or foundation:

1. The absolute will, or the essential attributes of God.
2. The grace of God as merited by Jesus Christ.
3. The foreknowledge of God.

The first is Calvin's doctrine, who, in agreement with the point from which he sets out, the absolute will of God, teaches an absolute and double election unto life and unto death.

The second is Lutheran doctrine, which, in agreement with the point from which it sets out, the grace of God in Christ, teaches a single election and predestination, *i. e.*, *only* an election of grace unto eternal life.

The third is the doctrine of all those who teach a free agency of man, which, in agreement with the point from which it sets out, namely, the foreknowledge of God, teaches a double predestination, *i. e.*, that God predestinated those in whom He foresaw a prerogative unto eternal life, but those whom He foresaw as being without this prerogative He predestinated to eternal death. F. KUEGELE.

*(To be continued.)*

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