

## DIALOGUE CONCERNING TYNDALE: BK. 4. CH. 1-9

### THE FOURTH BOOK

#### THE FIRST CHAPTER

*The author sheweth wherefore it were not well done to suffer Luther's books, or any other heretic's, to go abroad and be read among the people, though there were some good things in them among the bad.*

When we had after dinner a little paused, your friend and I drew ourself aside into the garden. And there, sitting down in an arbour, he began to enter forth into the matter, saying that he had well perceived that not in his country only, but also in the university where he had been, there were [those] that had none evil opinion of Luther, but thought that his books were by the clergy forbidden of malice and evil will, to the end that folk should not surely see and perfectly perceive what he saith: or, at the least, what thing he meaneth by his words, which will not appear, they think, by a line taken out in the midst of a leaf, but by the diligent consideration of the whole matter. Without which, men might impute a wrong blame, they say, to the best writers that ever wrote in this world. But they think that the clergy will not have his books read, because that in them laymen may read the priests' faults, which was, they say, the very cause of that condemnation. For else, whether he had written well or evil, yet, they say, his books had been kept in men's hands and read. For there is, they think, therein, though some part were naught, many things yet well said, whereof there was no reason that men should lose the profit for the bad. And also reason, men think it were, that all were heard that can be said touching the truth to be knowen concerning the matters of our salvation; to the entent that, all heard and perceived, men may for their own surety the better choose and hold the right way.

Forsooth, quod I, if it were now doubtful and ambiguous whether the church of Christ were in the right rule of doctrine or not, then were it very necessary to give them all good audience that could and would anything dispute on either part for it or against it, to the end that, if we were now in a wrong way, we might leave it and walk in some better. But now on the other side, if it so be (as indeed it is) that Christ's church hath the true doctrine already, and the selfsame that St. Paul would not give an angel of heaven audience to the contrary, what wisdom were it now therein to shew ourself so mistrustful and wavering, that for to search, whether our faith were false or true, we should give hearing, not

#### **LUTHER IS PAINTED ACCORDINGLY**

to an angel of heaven, but to a fond frere, to an apostate, to an open incestuous lecher, a plain limb of the devil, and a manifest messenger of hell? In which words, if ye would haply think that I use myself too sore to call him by such odious names, ye must consider that he spareth not both untruly and without necessity in his railing books to call by as evil [names] them whom his duty

were highly to reverence; whereas I do between us twain call him but as himself hath shewed him in his writing, in his living, and in his mad marriage. And yet I neither do it, nor would, were it not that the matter self of reason doth require it. For my part is it of necessity to tell how nought he is, because that the worse the man is, the more madness were it for wise men to give his false fables harkening against God's undoubted truth, by his holy spirit taught unto his church, and by such multitude of miracles, by so much blood of holy martyrs, by the virtuous living of so many blessed confessors, by the purity and cleanness of so many chaste widows and undefiled virgins, by the wholesome doctrine of so many holy doctors, and, finally, by the whole consent and agreement of all Christian people this fifteen hundred year confirmed. And therefore not any respect unto his railing against the clergy, is, as some would have it seem, the cause of his condemnation and suppression of his books. For the good men of the clergy be not so sore grieved with them that touch the faults of the bad, nor the bad themselves be not so tender eared, that for the only talking of their faults they would banish the books that were good in other things beside. For else could not the books of many old holy fathers have endured so long, wherein the vices of them that in the clergy

### **THE CAUSE WHY LUTHER'S BOOKS BE NOT SUFFERED TO BE READ**

be naught be very vehemently rebuked. But the very cause why his books be not suffered to be read is because his heresies be so many, and so abominable, and the proofs wherewith he pretendeth to make them probable be so far from reason and truth, and so far against the right understanding of holy scripture, whereof, under colour of great zeal and affection, he laboureth to destroy the credence and good use, and, finally, so far stretcheth all thing against good manner and virtue, provoking the world to wrong opinions of God, and boldness in sin and wretchedness, that there can no good, but much harm, grow by the reading. For if there were the substance good, and of error or oversight some cockle among the corn, which might be sifted out, and the remnant stand instead, men would have been content therewith as they be with such other. But now is his not besprent with a few spots, but with more than half venom [hath] poisoned the whole wine, and that right rotten of itself. And this done of purpose and malice, not without an evil spirit, in such wise walking with his words, that the contagion thereof were likely to infect a feeble soul, as the savour of a sickness sore infecteth an whole body. Nor the truth is not to be learned of every man's mouth. For as Christ was not content that the devil should call him God's son, though it were true; so is he not content that a devil's limb, as Luther is or Tyndale, should teach his flock the truth, for infecting them with their false devilish heresies besides. For likewise as the holy scripture of God, because of the good spirit that made it, is of his own nature apt to purge and amend the reader, though some that read it of their invincible malice turn it to their harm, so do such writings as Luther's

### **THE DEVIL IN MAKING OF LUTHER'S WORKS WAS OF COUNSEL**

is in the making whereof the devil is of counsel and giveth therewith a breath of his assistance-- though the goodness of some men master the malice thereof, walking harmless with God's help, as the Prophet saith,

upon the serpent and the cockatrice, and treading upon the lion and the dragon --yet be such works of themselves, always right unwholesome to meddle with, meet and apt to corrupt and infect the reader. For the proof whereof, we need none other example than this that we be in hand withal, if we consider what good the reading of his books hath done in Saxony. And this find we more than too much proved here among us,

### **WHAT FRUIT DOTHTH GROW OF READING LUTHER'S WORKS**

that of ten that used to read his books, ye shall scanty find twain but that they not only cast off

prayer and fasting, and all such goodly virtues as holy scripture commendeth and the church commandeth and virtuous people have ever had in great price, but also fall in plain contempt and hatred thereof. So that what fruit should grow of the reading ye may soon guess.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

*The author sheweth many of Luther's heresies to be so abominable, and some part also so peevish, that the very bare rehearsal is enough, without any further despicion thereupon, to cause any good man [to] abhor them, and to be ashamed also to seem so foolish as to hold them. And for a sample, the author rehearseth divers, whereof some he new set forth by Tyndale in his English books, worse yet in some parts than his master Luther is himself.*

And in good faith, I would wene that any good man, except some reasonable necessity should compel him thereto, else would (if he heard but his opinions once rehearsed) be very loth to lose his time in the reading either of his fond proof<sup>r</sup> or of the very titles and names thereof again.

If they be such indeed, quod your friend, and that they be not mistaken or misreported.

Methinketh, quod I, that the fruit which ye see spring of them should suffice to make you perceive them for nought. And ywis a frere's living that weddeth a nun, when his living is such, should make it easy to wit that his teaching is not very good.

Surely, quod he, I cannot say nay but that these be shrewd tokens.

I shall, quod I, do more for you. For I shall find the means that ye shall see his own books; and then perceive yourself that men belie him not.

I pray you, quod he, let me hear some of his opinions by mouth the while, and for the seeing of them in his own books, I shall bethink me after.

First, he began, quod I, with pardons and with the Pope's power, denying, finally, any of both to be of any effect at all. And soon after to shew what good spirit moved him, he denied all the seven sacraments, except baptism, penance, and the sacrament of the altar, saying plainly that all the remnant be but fained things and of none effect. Now these that he leaveth for good it is good to see how he handleth them. For in *penance*, he saith, that there neither needeth contrition nor satisfaction. Also, he saith, that there needeth no priest for the hearing of confession; but that every man, and every woman too, is as sufficient to hear confession and assoil, and do all that longeth to the confessor, as is a priest.

Mary, Sir, quod your friend, this were an easy way for one thing. For the sorest thing that I find in confession, is that when I see many confessors at a pardon, yet can I scant like one of them so well, upon the sight, that I would tell any such tales to once in seven year, and I might choose. But now if I might, after Luther's way, be confessed to a fair woman, I would not let to be

confessed weekly.

Ye would, quod I, peradventure tell her a tale that ye would not tell every man. But yet, if some men told some tales to a fair woman that they tell in confession to a fowl frere, they would wish, I wene, among that they had kept their counsel in their own breast.

Mary, quod he, that may happen also in the confession that is made unto a priest.

Possible it were indeed, quod I. And Tyndale in his book of obedience,

### **O WHAT A FALSE LIE IS THIS**

or rather disobedience, saith, that the curates do go and shew the bishops the confessions of such as be rich in their parishes; and that the bishops, thereupon, do cite them and lay their secret sins to their charge, and either put them to open shameful penance, or compel them to pay at the bishop's pleasure. Now dare I be bold to say, and I suppose all the honest men in this realm will say and swear the same, that this is a very foolish falsehood, imagined of his own mind, whereof he never saw the sample in his life. We see in some rather the contrary fault; that not only the rich, but the poor also, keep open queans and live in open adultery, without payment or penance or anything almost once said unto them. But, therewith, findeth Tyndale no fault in the bishops. For he saith plainly that the Bishop hath none authority to punish any such thing at all. But he letteth not on the tother side to belie the bishops, and the curates too, faining that the one \* doth utter folks confessions to the tother. And when he hath so belied them, then forthwith, as though he had proved his tale true, he taketh the same false fained lie for a ground thereupon to build \* the destruction of that holy sacrament of penance. For upon that lie, and such other like, he saith plainly that confession to the priest is the worst thing that ever was found. Now if that were true, as it is as false as he that said it, how happed it then (which question Luther and he be asked often, and alway make as they heard it not) how happed it, I say, that of so many virtuous, wise, and cunning fathers as have been in Christ's church in so many hundred years, never none had the wit nor the grace to spy this great thing, but all teach confession till now that Tyndale came-- which yet in this point passeth his master Luther? For, he saith, he would in any wise have confession stand; but he would have it made at liberty as well to women as men. But Tyndale will have none at all, because he listeth to belie both the bishops and the curates, faining that they should between them disclose our confessions.

In faith, quod your friend, that is a thing I never heard to have happened.

Nor he neither, quod I, that dare I boldly say. And yet I wot well, as ye said right now, that priests should utter folks' confession were well possible, and in many of them nothing in this world more likely neither, if God and His Holy Spirit were not, as it is, assistant and working with his holy sacrament. But surely, whereas there be many things that well and clearly prove the sacrament of confession to be a thing

### **CONFESSION WAS DEvised BY GOD**

institute and devised by God, yet, if all the remnant lacked, this one thing were unto me a plain persuasion and a full proof, which thing I find in the noble book that the king's highness made against Luther, that is, to wit, that in so common a custom of confession, ofter than once in the year, where no man letteth boldly to tell such his secrets, as upon the discovering or close keeping thereof his honesty commonly and often time his life also dependeth, so many simple as

be of that sort that hear them, and in all other thing so light and loose " of their tongue, and some therewith so lewd in all their living that for money they force little " to steal, to rob, and murder too, and might many times with the disclosing of some such things get so much as some of them would kill a man for a less: yet find we never any man take harm by his confession, or cause given of complaint through any such secrets uttered and shewed by the confessor.

In good faith, quod he, this is very truth and a great thing in mine opinion. But undoubtedly, if confession came once to women's ears, there would be a sore change. For it would be hard for God, and the devil too, to keep their tongues.

Yes, yes, quod I, a woman can keep a counsel well enough. For though she tell a gossip, she telleth it but in counsel yet, nor that gossip

**ALL IS IN COUNSEL THAT WOMEN TELL**

to her gossip neither, and so when all the gossips in the town know it, yet it is but counsel still. And therefore I say it, not for any harm that would come by them, but for the novelty thereof.

Now in earnest, quod your friend, this was a much merry mad inven-tion of Luther, and Luther is in a manner as mad as Tyndale. For it were as good almost to have no confession at all as to set women to hear it.

Forsooth, quod I, if it had been wisdom and not against God's will, it would of likelihood have been founden by some good men before these days, in this long time of so many hundred years. Howbeit he goeth near enough to take it all away. And divers of his scholars, beside Tyndale, do now deny it utterly. And himself leaveth little substance and little fruit therein. For he would that we should not care much for any full confession of all deadly sins nor be very studious in the gathering of our fautes " to mind, nor pondering the circumstances, nor the weight and gravity thereof, nor taking any sorrow therefore. Now these things taken away, and the sacrament of penance left such as he would have it, consider in yourself what fruit were a man likely to find in it, he that taketh a confessor, he forceth " not whom, and then confesseth, he forceth not what, disposing him to repentance, he forceth not how, good works in satisfaction accepteth for nought, what manner of amendment shall this man come to? And specially if beside all this he may take to his confessor a fair woman, such as a young man would have a lust to break his mind unto--doth it not plainly appear that this fond fellow so playeth with this holy sacrament of penance that he goeth about utterly to destroy it? And yet is this one of the three that he leaveth, taking four away expressly.

Surely, quod your friend, so doth he this too, as thinketh me.

Forsooth, quod I, and he handleth *the sacrament of baptism* not much better. For he magnifieth baptism but to the suppression of penance and of all good living. For therein he teacheth that the sacrament itself hath no virtue at all; but the faith only. Item, he teacheth that

**LUTHER'S CONCLUSIONS AND MOST SHAMEFUL OPINIONS**

only faith sufficeth to our salvation with our baptism, without good works. He saith also that it is sacrilege to go about to please God with any works and not with faith only. Item, that no man can do any good work. Item, that the good and righteous man alway sinneth in doing well. Item, that no sin can damn any Christian man; but only lack of belief. For he saith that our faith supbeth up all our sins how great soever they be.

Item, *he teacheth that no man hath no free will*, nor can anything do therewith, not though the help of grace be joined thereunto; but that everything that we do, good and bad, we do nothing at all there in our self, but only suffer God to do all thing in us, good and bad, as wax is wrought into an image or a candle by the man's hand without anything doing thereto itself. Item, he saith that God is as verily the author and cause of the evil will of Judas, in betraying of Christ, as of the good will of Christ, in suffering of his passion. *In matrimony*, he saith plainly that it is no sacrament; and so saith Tyndale too. Item, if a man be not able to do his duty to his wife, he is bounden secretly without slander to provide another to do it for him.

Forsooth, quod your friend, this was courteously considered of him, he is a very gentleman, I warrant you. It is no marvel though his wife be well teeming if he make her such provision.

Surely, quod I, this wise device hath he, and much other beastliness he saith in such things, and his disciple after him, of such sort as honest ears could scant abide the hearing. *In the sacrament of order*, he saith that priesthood and all holy orders be but a fayned (feigned) invention. Item, that every Christian man and Christian woman is a priest. Item, that every man may consecrate the body of Christ.

This is a shameful saying, in good faith, quod your friend.

Abide ye, quod I, and ye shall hear worse yet. For he saith further that every woman and child may consecrate the body of our Lord.

Surely, quod he, then is the man mad outright.

He saith, quod I, further yet, that the canon of the mass is false. Item, that the host in the mass is none oblation nor sacrifice. Item, that the mass with his canon, after the form that is and ever hath been used in Christ's church, is sacrilege and abomination. And though much of this concerneth his damnable heresies touching the blessed sacrament of the altar, yet saith he thereof many lewd doctrines more. And among other he teacheth that it is heresy to believe that there is not very bread and very wine in the sacrament of the altar joined with the body and blood of our Lord. Item, Zwinglius and Ecolampadius, scholars of Luther, have builded further upon this ungracious ground of their master, and teach that the sacrament of the altar is not the very body nor blood of our Lord at all. And Luther himself, albeit he now writeth against them therein, yet (as it by many things appeareth) minded and intended to put forth by leisure " the same heresy himself, till he changed his mind for envy that he bare toward them, when he saw that they would be heads of a sect themselves (for that could he suffer no man to be but him-self). But before, as I say, he did intend it himself. And therefore he made a way toward it by these other heresies that I have rehearsed you, and by divers other more. For he teacheth also that the mass availeth no men quick nor dead; but only to the priest himself. Item, he teacheth that man should go to mass as well after supper as before breakfast, and in his common clothes, as he goeth all day, without light or any honourable rite used therein. Item, he saith it were best that men should never be houseled but once in their life. And that never till they lie a dying, as they be but once christened and that at their beginning. Item, he teacheth that every man and woman should take the holy sacrament and spare not to touch it and handle it as much as them list. Item, he saith that

the blessed sacrament of the altar is ordained of God to be received but not to be worshipped.

In faith, quod your friend, these things be far out of course.

Ye see, quod I, now how he handleth all the blessed sacraments. But now hath he other wild heresies at large. For he teacheth against scripture and all reason, that no Christian man is or can be bounden by any law made among men, nor is not bounden to observe or keep any. Item, he teacheth that there is no purgatory. Item, that all men's souls lie still and sleep till the day of doom. Item, that no man should pray to saints nor set by any holy relics nor pilgrimages, nor do any reverence to any images.

By my troth, quod your friend, I had forgotten that when I was now in the university, in the communication that I had with my friends there in that matter, one of them objected against me that the worship of images hath been ere this condemned by a great council in Greece.

There was indeed, quod I, a council once in Greece gathered by an emperor, <sup>15</sup> that then was an heretic there, which was, after in the eightieth Synod by the general Council <sup>16</sup> damned and annulled. But this no more doth to the matter than if there would now in Saxony and Switzerland and such other places, such people as swerved from the faith gather themselves together and keep, as they would call it, a general council, wherein they might determine what they would. And yet were all that

### **THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

no prejudice to the right belief of the Catholic church, which is alway that knowen people that still persevere as one body with our Saviour Christ in their former fast confirmed faith from which faithful body these other withering branches be blown away by the devil. And therefore, as a council of Lutherans assembling themselves in Saxony could make none authority against the true faith of the Church, so could that council in Greece nothing prove their purpose, which made none interruption of the right belief and godly custom of worship done to saints and images that yet did, for all that, continue still in all the Catholic Church of Christ and ever since hath done.

Forsooth, quod he, that is truth. But yet, quod he, was there one at our communication learned in the law, and in his chamber were we, which said, that if he list, he could shew a fair law incorporate in the decrees of the church, which law, if it were laid in their light that would take upon them the defence of any worship to be done to images, would make all their eyes daze. Then longed, not only I, but all the remnant also, very sore to see that law. In bringing forth whereof he made a while somewhat strange, as of a thing kept for a secret mystery. But in conclusion he set forth a book of the decrees, and therein he read us in good faith a plain text, as methought and all that were present, by which Saint Gregory writeth unto a certain bishop that had broken down the images in his church. And there Saint Gregory, albeit that he blameth him for breaking them, yet for all that he commendeth him for that he would not suffer them to be worshipped.

Did you, quod I, read that law yourself?

In good faith, quod he, I stood by and looked on the book while he read it.

Did he, quod I, or you either, read the next law following in that book?

Nay, verily, quod he, for methought this was enough.

So was it verily, quod I, and too much too, without more. But and if ye had either read the next law following or the gloss upon the self same law that ye read, ye should then have seen that the law which he shewed you made little for his purpose.

By my troth, as for the gloss; quod he, neither I nor any man else that there was had list once to look on, considering that the text was plain and easy to understand. And as for the law next following, we looked not after, for we thought not to find it contrary. And if we should, then should we not yet have wist which we should believe.

Yes, yes, quod I, ye would not much have doubted if ye had read the law that followeth, for it is a law synodal, made in the sixth Synod,

#### **HOW IMAGES SHOULD BE WORSHIPPED**

in which there is well and plainly shewed that images be to be worshipped among Christian men, and well declareth in what wise we worship them and owe to do, that is to wit none image to be worshipped as God; nor the hope of our health to be set upon the image; nor to look that the image shall be he which shall judge our souls in time to come. But we worship the image, and reverence, and well owe to do, for the remembrance of the thing that the image representeth. And yet though we do the image honour and reverence, yet for divine honour and service only done to God, that kind of worship called *latría*, we neither do nor may do, neither to image nor any creature in all the whole world either in heaven or earth. And this should ye have seen if ye had either read, as I say, the law next following or the gloss of that law that ye read.

Mary, quod he, but in the law self that we read, good Saint Gregory saith plain the contrary. For he commendeth the bishop there because he would not suffer the images to be worshipped at all.

That word "at all," quod I, ye set to yourself more than ye find in the book. For indeed the book saith no more but that they should not be worshipped by this latin word *adorare*. By which word be understood that divine worship called *latría*.

Whereby know we, quod he, he understood it so? For I believe not much the gloss.

Ye may, quod I, perceive it by the law that followeth. Wherein albeit that thereby the same word *adorare* [is used], yet is it there shewed how we may *adorare*, that is, to wit, how we may worship images.

Why, quod he, if that law say, *quod possumus adorare*, and Saint Gregory saith, *quod non licet adorare*, be not they twain plain repugnant?

Yes, quod I, if they both took that word *adorare* in one sense. But when the Synod used that word for such worship as we may do to a creature, and Saint Gregory used it for such worship only as may not be

#### **THE TAKING OF THIS WORD ADORARE**

done but only to the Creator, then they be nothing repugnant at all.

But yet, quod he, whereby shall I be sure that Saint Gregory took it so? For it appeareth by the law, as yourself saith, that the word may be taken otherwise. For the same law itself taketh it otherwise; and then peradventure so did he, and thereby forbode all manner worship to be done unto images.

That were very unlikely, quod I, that Saint Gregory were of one mind and the whole Synod of the contrary. But now, since ye make the matter so clear upon the words of Saint Gregory incorporate in the decrees, and will not believe the gloss, which appeareth plainly that he meant only to forbid us to do such worship to images as is only due to God, will ye be content therein to believe Saint Gregory himself if he tell you himself that he meant none other?

Yea, 'fore God, quod he, that will I well.

Then, quod I, we shall agree well enough. And, therewith, I took down off a shelf among my books the register of Saint Gregory's Epistles, and therein turned to the very words which are by Graciane (Gratian) taken out of his second epistle *ad Serenum episcopum Massilie[nsis]*, and incorporate in the decrees. <sup>7</sup> And then caused I him to read the formal words as they be couched in the decree. And, by the collation of the one with the tother, I caused him to see that Gracian had taken but a part of the epistle, and that by other words of the epistle itself it appeareth evidently that Saint Gregory spake of none other worship to be withdrawn from images but only divine worship and observance due to God, as by divers other things in the epistle appeareth plain, as in that he saith, that it is not lawful to worship anything wrought by hand, because it is written, *Dominum Deum tuum adorabis et illi soli servies*, Thou shalt worship thy Lord God and only Him shalt thou serve. <sup>8</sup> Now is it in this place of scripture meant none other worship nor service than divine honour, and service called *latria*, as is to learned men well known. And he that will affirm the contrary and say that in scripture is forbidden from images all manner of worship, he must affirm also that all manner worship, and all manner service, is forbidden by scripture from all manner creatures. For the scripture saith there, Thou shalt worship and serve only God; and so should we, by that construction, neither worship nor serve father, nor mother, master, nor prince nor king. And in the same place Saint Gregory saith that we do worship only the holy trinity,

#### **THE WORSHIP CALLED LATRIA**

which sheweth that he speaketh only of divine worship called *latria*, which is done with a mind that reputeth the thing worshipped to be very God. For else, by those words, if he forbode any manner worship for to be done to any thing saving the trinity, then did he forbid any worship to be done to any saint, or to our blessed Lady either. And every man well woteth how reverently himself worshipped both our Lady and all saints as well, by many books and epistles of his, as by the litany, which as his epistles well sheweth, he ordained to be with great devotion used in honour of God, our Lady, and all holy saints. <sup>9</sup> And over that by the great honour that he did to saints in churches specially dedicate unto them; and also great honour and reverence used unto their holy relics, as in his own books and epistles appeareth. And finally, if his epistles had been lost, out of which the decree is taken; yet the words of that decree itself would well enough suffice. For therein is it specified that

#### **IMAGES BE THE BOOKS OF LAY PEOPLE**

images be the books of lay people, wherein they read the life of Christ. And then if it be, as it is, indeed well and virtuously done devoutly to kiss a book in which Christ's life and his death is expressed by writing, why should it be evil done reverently to kiss the images by which Christ's **THE KISSING OF IMAGES** life and his passion be represented by scripture or painting?

In good faith, quod he, I am well satisfied in this matter, and so would they that then were with me if they had seen all that I see now.

They may, quod I, soon see as much wheresoever they list to look there-fore. But now to turn again to the matter, neither the Bishop of Massile, that brake the images that they speak of, nor the council of Greece neither, schismatical as it was, went never yet so far as Luther and Tyndale and their company do, which not only set at nought images, but also

#### **LUTHER'S OTHER HERESIES MOST ABOMINABLE**

leave no saint unblasphemed, nor Christ's own mother neither. For Luther cannot abide the common anthem of our Lady and the most devout *Salve Regina*, because we therein call that blessed virgin our advocate. Item, he saith that every other woman now living, if she have the same faith may be prayed unto as our Lady, and with her prayer as much profit us.

Item, he teacheth that men should do no worship to the holy cross that Christ died on, saying, that if he had it whole or all the pieces thereof, he would cast it in such a place as no sun should shine thereon, to the end it should never be founden to be worshipped more. Item, of all feasts he saith that he hateth the feast of the holy cross, and the feast of *Corpus Christi*. He teacheth also that no man or woman is bounden to keep and observe any vow that he hath made to God of virginity, or widowhood, or other chastity of marriage; but that they may marry at their liberty, their vow notwithstanding.

And how proveth he that, quod your friend?

Mary, quod I, by the breaking of his own, when he married the nun. And now he railleth against all chastity; and saith that if a priest live chaste, he is like to the priests of the idol Cybele. <sup>20</sup> Long would it be to write you all the abominable heresies of this new sect. But some of them have I rehearsed, that ye may thereby consider whether he that teacheth such things go not about utterly to destroy the whole faith, religion, and virtue of Christendom. And that he is not in any of these points belied, I shall find the mean[s] that ye shall see it in his own books. And there shall ye see how madly he laboureth to prove them.

Prove them, quod your friend? The substance of these matters be too abominable to be reasoned. And to make him hated of all good folk is enough to hear them rehearsed. But I marvel me much how he fell into such an heap of heresies.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

*The author sheweth by what occasion that Luther first fell to the devising of these heresies. And*

*that the occasion was such as well declareth, that he was pricked thereto by malice, and ever proceedeth from evil to worse, not witting where to hold him, and that he refuseth to stand to the judgment of any folk earthly, concerning the truth or falsehood of his opinions, save only himself.*

Now that is, quoth I, somewhat worthy to consider, how this lewd frere began to fall in the mischievous matters. Ye shall understand that there was a pardon obtained in Saxony; for which pardon, as the manner is there, Luther was the preacher and preached to the people, exhorting them thereto, and announcing the authority thereof all that he possible might, not without his great advantage therefore. So happed it then, soon after, that the setting forth of the pardon, with the advantage thereof, was taken from him and set to another. <sup>21</sup> For anger whereof he fell into such a fury, that forthwith

### **THE OCCASION WHY LUTHER FELL INTO HERESY**

he began to write against all pardons. Howbeit because the matter was new and strange, he began first by way of doubts and questions only, submitting himself and his writing to the judgment of the pope, and desiring to be informed of the truth. Whereupon when he was by writing answered by the master of the pope's palace, then waxed he more woode <sup>22</sup> and fell to railing against him, and made also another book against the power of the pope, affirming that his power upon the church was never institute of God, but ordained only by the common consent of christian people for avoiding of schisms. But yet he said that all Christian men were bounden to stand and obey thereunto, and that the Bohemians were damnable heretics for doing the contrary. But soon after, when he was in such wise answered by good and cunning men that he perceived himself unable to defend that he had affirmed, then fell he from reasoning to railing, and utterly denied that he had before affirmed; and then began to write that the pope had no power at all, neither by God nor man, and that the Bohemians, whom he had in his writings before called damnable heretics, were good Christian men, and all their opinions good and catholic. Then, when he was cited by the pope's holiness to appear, he appealed to the next general council which should be gathered in the holy ghost; so that whatsoever general council were after assembled, he might jest and rail thereon and say it was not it that he appealed unto, for it was not assembled in the holy ghost.

He took, quod your friend, a good wily way.

As wily as it was, quod I, yet would he not stand thereby; but fled from that to another. Now shall ye understand that yet soon after this, in the book by which he, not answereth, but raileth against that book wherein our sovereign lord the king, like a most faithful, virtuous and most erudite prince, evidently and effectually revinced and confuted that most venomous and pestilent book of Luther, entitled the captivity of Babylon, <sup>23</sup> in which he laboureth to destroy the holy sacraments of Christ's Church. In that book, I say, Luther, which had before appealed to the next general council, utterly denieth the authority of all general councils and setteth them all at nought.

By my troth, quod your friend, either was the man very negligent before, or very naught after, when he changeth so often, and writeth ever the longer the more contrary, not to his adversary only, but also to himself. But I pray you how excuseth he his inconstancy?

Mary, quod I, he saith that he seeth further than he saw before. Whereunto the king's grace

sheweth him that it were unlikely that he should see better through a pair of evil spectacles of ire and envy.

Very true, quod your friend, by my truth. But yet I hear say that he hath offered to stand at the judgment of learned men in all his matters, if his offer had been taken in time.

Indeed, quod I, once he promised to stand to that judgment of the university of Paris, and thereupon was there open discussions <sup>24</sup> kept, and the very words written by notaries sworn for both the parties. But when his opinions were after at Paris by the university condemned, then he refused to stand to their judgment, and fell again to his old craft of railing. He appeared also at Wormys <sup>25</sup> before the emperor and the princes of the empire by a safe conduct and there recognised, and knowledged as well, the said pestilent book written against the sacraments, as many other of like sort, to be his own, and offered to abide by them. Which he might boldly do, being by that safe conduct in good surety of himself that he could take none harm. Then was he moved to discussion upon the articles, so that he should agree upon some persons, virtuous and well learned, that should be judges of that discussion, and that he should be content to stand to their judgment upon the same. Whereupon he agreed to come to discussions; but he would in no wise agree to make any men living judges upon it; nor stand to no man's judgment earthly.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER

*The author sheweth how that Luther in the book that himself made of his own acts at the city of Wormes in Almaine, doth so madly oversee himself, that he discloseth unware certain follies of himself, which a man will well laugh at, and marvel much to see it.*

And that these things be true, it well appeareth to all the world in the book that he made himself of his demeanour and his acts at the city called Wormes in Almaine. Which book, whoso readeth, shall have a great pleasure to see therein both the frantic vainglory of that fond frere, and yet, therewithal, to see him carried out with folly so far from himself, that in a line or twain he discovereth all that he went about to hide in all the book beside. For ye shall understand that, albeit he made the book himself, yet he made it so that he would it should seem to have been of some other man's making and not of his own, to the intent that such worshipful words as he speaketh of himself might make him, in the ears of the reader, seem some honourable person. Which words else he wist well, spoken of his own mouth, all the world would wonder on. Now in this book, beside that he leaveth out some things there said and spoken where the words written in could do him no worship, and some things reciteth with advantage for his part, rehearsing the tother side nakedly and barely, and some part pared off too, to make it seem the more slender, one thing he observeth diligently, that whereas, speaking of the emperor, he calleth him never but simply and singly Charles, he never speaketh of himself but he setteth forth his name in great capital letters and solemn titles, 'The man of God, Luther.' And whereas they that spake against his errors, he writeth that they burst out in virulent and venemous words, when he cometh to his own answer, then he writeth in this wise, 'but then D. Martyn for his incredible humanity and bounty, answered in this wise benignly.' And sometime with these words, 'the most benign father most mildly made answer.' And finally he finished and endeth his book as it were with a *Gloria patri* to the whole Psalm in this wise: 'This holy devout man, therefore, even

born to teach and preserve the gospel of God, our lord long preserve for his church with his holy word also, Amen.' Now who was there ever born so suspicious that ever would have suspected that he which wrote such glorious words of Luther should be Luther himself? For where should a man find so very a vainglorious fool that would not in himself be ashamed of himself to think such things? But now ye that read this, I pray you for God's sake see how utterly this itch and tickling of vanity and vainglory had cast him clean beside his mind and memory. For whereas all the book beside was so devised and handled that it should seem some other to have made it, and not himself, suddenly the fond fellow betrayed himself unaware. For in one place, forgetting himself, he speaketh in this wise, "When this was spoken, then the orator of the empire in a chiding manner said that I had not answered to the purpose, and that

### **THINGS DETERMINED IN GENERAL COUNCIL SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT IN QUESTION**

those things, which had been damned and determined in general councils of old, ought not now of new to be brought again in question by me, and therefore I should give a plain answer whether I would revoke mine errors or not. Then unto this I answered in this wise, 'Since that it is so,' etc. Lo, here may ye see that incredible humility and lowly mind of this most benign father which, under the visor of a strange herald, bloweth out himself his own boast. Then may ye see therewith his marvellous profound prudence that had not the wit to beware that himself betrayed not his own so foolish a device, in the vain avaunting of his own false boast and praise, that though the words had been true, yet would almost a very natural fool have been ashamed of himself to write them.

By my trouth, quod your friend, this device was madly minded of Luther, and madly handled, and madly overseen, to shew himself so fond, but if <sup>∞</sup> pride, as the proverb is, must needs have a shame.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

*The author sheweth the perpetual inconstancy of Luther, and his contrariety and repugnance against himself.*

Now as for his constancy appeareth, quod I, by that I have before rehearsed of his continual change in his heresies, from day to day, from worse to worse, which course he kept not only in the matters above rehearsed, but almost in all the remnant. For as concerning purgatory, he wrote, first, that although it could not be proved by evident scripture, as he affirmed, yet was there no doubt but that there is purgatory; and that thing he said was of all Christian men firmly to be believed. And then he wrote that he wondered of the madness of such false and foolish heretics as were born within one hundred year past, and are not ashamed

### **THE CHURCH BELIEVETH THAT THERE IS A PURGATORY**

to deny purgatory, which the whole church of Christ hath believed this fifteen hundred year. Now what constancy is there in this frere that wrote this of heretics that deny purgatory, and, within a while after, denieth it himself, saying, in the sermon that he wrote of the rich man and Lazare, that all men's souls lie still and sleep till doomsday?

Mary, quod your friend, then hath some men had a sleep of a fair length. They will, I ween, when they wake forget some of their dreams.

By my faith, quod I, he that believeth Luther that his soul shall sleep so long, shall, when he dieth, sleep in shrewd rest.

I much marvel, quod your friend, what evil ailed him to find out this fond folly.

To this opinion, quod I, or rather to the feigning of this opinion (for I verily think that himself thinketh not as he writeth) he fell for envy and hatred that he bare to priesthood, by the malice of which [in] his ungracious mind he rather were content that all the world lay in the fire of purgatory till doomsday than that there were one penny given to a priest to pray for any soul.

This is, quod your friend, very likely.

Like constancy, quod I, hath he used in the matter of holy vows. For in his book of the captivity of Babylon he writeth that neither man nor angel is able to dispense with the vow made by man to God. And soon after he wrote that no vow could bind any man but that every man may boldly break them of his own head. But it well appeareth that he wrote the first of anger and malice toward the pope, and then changed to the second of a lecherous lust to the nun that he minded to marry.

## SIXTH CHAPTER

*The author sheweth how that Luther hath been fain, for the defence of his undefensible errors, to go back and forsake all that manner of proof and trial which he first promised to stand to. And now, like a man shameful and shameless, hath no proof in the world but his own word, and calleth that the word of God.*

His inconstant wit and very devilish intent specially shewed itself by this also which I shall now rehearse you. In the beginning the man had the mind that commonly such fools have [in that] he reckoned all the world wild geese save himself, and all the wit and learning to stand in his own head. And then weening that he should find no match but that he should, as he list, be able to prove the moon made of green cheese, he professed in his books that he would for the proof or reproof of his opinions stand to natural reason, to the authority of the old holy fathers, the laws and canons of Christ's church, and to the holy scripture of God with the interpretations of the old holy doctors. But soon after, when he perceived himself in his opinion deceived, and that he saw himself confuted and concluded evidently both by scripture, natural reason, the laws and determinations of the church, and the whole consent of the holy fathers, interpreters of holy scripture, then began he to sing another song. For then, as for reason, he refused to stand to, saying that

### **REASON HINDERETH US IN OUR FAITH**

the matters of our faith be things above reason and that reason hindereth us in our faith, and is

unto faith an enemy. And as for the laws of the church, he with other blasphemous heretics burned up openly at Wittenberg, singing in derision a *Dirige* about the fire for the law's soul. And then would he stand to nothing but only scripture, not to that neither but if it were very plain and evident. But now if it were in question whether the scripture were evident for him or against him, therein would he stand to no man's judgment but his own. For as for the whole faith of Christ's Church continued by so many hundred years he set utterly at naught, calling it men's devices. And in scripture the interpretation of saint Hierome, saynt Austine, saint Ambrose, and all the old holy fathers of so many years past, he nothing would esteem, but with blasphemous words letted not to write, "I care not for Austine, I care not for a hundred Ciprians, I care not for a thousand Hieremies, I care not but for scripture alone, and that is plain on my part"--as though none of these old holy cunning men had understand any scripture till he came. Now was he by this unreasonable manner driven to another devilish device against saints. For to the intent that their authority should not, by the devotion and reverence that all good men bear them, minish his credence, he was forced to labour to bring men in that heresy that they should pray to no saints, but would have their images drawn down all, their pilgrimages left up, all their relics cast out, all their honour, and men's devotion toward them withdrawen, so far forth that he could neither abide the honour of our blessed Lady, nor the holy cross, nor Christ's blessed body, as plainly declareth his abominable books.

## SEVENTH CHAPTER

*The author sheweth what things caused the people to fall in to Luther's fond and furious sect. And he sheweth also what mischief the followers of that sect have done in Almayne, Lombardy, and Rome.*

It is, quod your friend, a wonder to me that the people, being before brought up in the right belief, could find in their hearts to give him audience in some such heresies as these be.

Ye must understand and may perceive, quod I, that he did not set forth all at once. But as Tyndale hath begun here in England with the thing that had a good visage, though he had corrupted it and meant nought indeed, putting forth first the new testament, in such wise handled, that unlearned folk were likely to take harm and conceive divers heresies in their hearts ere they could perceive his falsehood, and then hath since by two other books openly shewed himself to lack nothing of Luther but that he hath not yet married a nun: so did Luther also put forth in the beginning no more but the matter of pardons, as I told you, and therein nothing affirmed neither against the determination of the church but submitted himself thereto. Now with this demeanour was there no man offended. But yet did he that time intend a further mischief which he little and little pursued and brought to pass. *And one special thing with which he spiced all the poison was the liberty that he so highly commended unto the people, bringing them in belief that, having faith, they needed nothing else.* For as for fasting, prayer, and such other things, he taught them to neglect and set at nought as vain and unfruitful ceremonies, teaching them also that, being faithful Christians, they were so near cousins to Christ that they be in a full freedom and liberty discharged of all governours and all manner laws spiritual or temporal except the gospel only.

And albeit he said that of a special perfection it should be well done to suffer and bear the rule and authority of popes, princes, and other governors, which rule and authority he calleth but only **LUTHER DOTH CALL THE RULE OF LORDS TYRANNY** tyranny, yet he saith that the people be so free by faith that they be no more bounden thereto than they be bounden to suffer wrong. And this doctrine also teacheth Tyndale as the special matter of his holy book of disobedience.

Now was this doctrine in Almayne of the common uplandish people so pleasantly heard that it blinded them in the looking upon the remnant, and could not suffer them to consider and see what end that same would in conclusion come to. *The temporal lords were glad also to hear this gear against the clergy, and the people as glad to hear it against the clergy and against the lords too, and against all their governors of every good town and city. And finally so far went it forward that at the last it began to burst out and fall to open force and violence.* For intending to begin at the feeblest, there gathered them together, for the setting forth of these ungracious heresies, a boisterous company of that unhappy sect, and first rebelled against an abbot, and after against a bishop, wherewith the temporal lords had good game and sport and dissembled the matter, gaping after the lands of the spirituality, till they had almost played, as Aesop telleth of the dog, which, to snatch at the shadow of the cheese in the water, let fall and lost the cheese that he bare in his mouth. For so was it, shortly after, that those uplandish Lutherans took so great boldness, and so began to grow strong, that they set also upon the temporal lords. Which had they not set hand thereto the sooner, while they looked for other men's lands, had been like shortly to lose their own. But so quit[ted] they themselves, that they slew upon the point of seventy thousand Lutherans in one summer, and subdued the remnant in that part of Almain to a right miserable servitude. Howbeit, in the meanwhile many mischievous deeds they did. And yet in diverse other parts of Almain and Swicherland this ungracious sect, by the negligence of the governors in great cities, is so far forth grown that finally the common people have compelled the rulers to follow them, whom, if they had taken heed in time, they might have ruled and led.

And now is it too piteous a sight to see the despituous despites done there in many places to God and all good men, with the marvellous change from all face and fashion of Christendom into a very tyrannous persecution, not only of all good Christian people, quick and dead, but also of Christ himself. For there shall ye see now the goodly monasteries destroyed, the places burned up, the religious people put out and sent to seek their living, or in many cities the places yet standing with more despite to God than if they were burned up to ashes. For the religious people, monks, friars, and nuns, be clean drawn and driven out, except such as would agree to forsake their vows of chastity and be wedded. And the places, dedicate to cleanness and chastity, left only to these apostates and brothels to live there in lechery. Now the parish churches in many places not only defaced, all ornaments withdrawen, the holy images pulled down and either broken or burned, but also the holy sacrament cast out, and the abominable beasts (which abhorreth me

### **O WHAT ABOMINATION WAS THIS!**

to think on) not abhorred in despite to fyle in the pyxes, and use in many places continually the churches for a common siege. And that is so despitiful wise, that when a stranger of other places where Christ is worshipped resorteth to these cities, some of those unhappy wretched citizens fail not, as it were for courtesy and kindness, to accompany them in walking abroad to shew them the pleasures and commodities of the town, and then bring them to no place lightly, but only the

churches, to shew them in derision what uses the churches serve for.

Of this sect was the great part of those ungracious people also, which late entered into Rome with the Duke of Bourbon, \* not only robbing and spoiling the city, as well their own friends as the contrary part, but like very beasts did also violate the wives in the sight of their husbands, slew the children in the sight of the fathers, and, to extort the discovering of more money, when men had brought out all that ever they had to save themselves from death or further pain, and were at pacts and promises of rest without further business, then the wretched tyrants and cruel tormentors, as though all that stood for nothing, ceased not to put them eftsoons to intolerable torments. And old, ancient, honourable, men, those fierce heretics letted not to hang up by the privy members, and from many they pulled them off, and cast them in the street. And

### **O WHAT CRUELTY!**

some brought out naked with his hands bound behind him, and a cord tied fast unto his privy members. Then would they set before him in his way other of those tyrants with their Moorish pikes, the points toward the breasts of these poor naked men. And then one or two of those wretches would stand behind those Moorish pikes and draw the poor souls by the members towards them. Now then was all their cruel sport and laughter either to see the sely \* naked men in shrinking from the pikes to tear off their members, or for pain of that pulling to run their naked bodies in deep upon the pikes. Too piteous and too abominable were it to rehearse the villainous pain and torments that they devised on the sely women, to whom after they had beastly abused them, wives in the sight of their husbands, and the maidens in the sight of their fathers, they were reckoned for piteous that did not more but cut their throats. And very certain is it, that not in Rome only but also in the country of Millein (Milan) that they kept and oppressed, after torments used and money set out that way, that some calling himself a gentleman in Almaine or Spayne would feign himself fallen in love of his host's daughter, and that he would marry her in any wise, and then make much earnest business for to have some money with her. And whether he gat ought or gat nought by that device, he letted not soon after to put the father, the mother, the fair daughter, and all the whole house to new torments, to make them tell where any more money were, were there any or none. And some failed not to take the child and bind it to a broch \* and lay it to the fire to roast, the father and mother looking on. And then begin to comen \* of a price for the sparing of the child, after first an hundred ducats, then fifty, then forty, then twenty, then ten, then five, then twain, when the sely father had not one left but these tyrants had all before. Then would they let the child roast to death. And yet in derision, as though they pitied the child, they would say to the father and the mother, 'Ah, fie, fie for shame, what a marvel is it though God send a vengeance among you. What unnatural people be you that can find in your hearts to see your own child roasted afore your face, rather than ye would out with one ducat to deliver it from death.' Thus devised these cursed wretches so many divers fashions of exquisite cruelties, that, I ween, they have taught the devil new torments in hell that he never knew before and will not fail to prove himself a good scholar, and surely render them his lesson when they come there where it is to be feared that many of them be by this. For soon after that they had in Rome exercised a while this fierce and cruel tyranny, and entered into the holy churches, spoiled the holy relics, cast out the blessed sacrament, pulled the chalice from the altar at mass, slain priests in the church, left no kind of cruelty or spite undone, but from house to house embruing their hands in blood, and that in such wise as any Turk or Saracen would have pitied or abhorred, our Lord sent soon after such a pestilence among them that he left not of them the third part alive. For this purpose I rehearse you this their heavy mischievous dealing that ye may perceive by

their deeds what good cometh of their sect. For as our Saviour saith, ye shall know the tree by the fruit. <sup>32</sup>

## EIGHTH CHAPTER

*The Messenger saith that the malice of the men is not to be imputed to the sect, since that of every sect some be nought. And the author sheweth that in the Lutherans, the sect self is the cause of the malice that the men fall to.*

Sir, quod your friend, in good faith I neither can nor will defend that sect. But yet reason it is to take everything as it is. And if it be nought, it hath the less need to be made worse. But as for the malicious cruel dealing of men of war is not, in my mind, to be imputed to the sect of Luther; for there is no sect so saintly but they fall in cruelty when they fall to war, and of every sect also be some bad; and therefore the malice of the men is not, as meseemeth, to be imputed unto the sect.

It is not, quod I, all one to be some nought and all nought. But they that fall in this sect wax nought all the whole mayny. For, forthwith upon this sect once begun, the whole flocks, of such as were infect therewith, fell unto those mischievous deeds that I before rehearsed you. And, also, though men in war wax furious and cruel, yet was there never none that went therein so far, and specially in such kind of cruelty as hath been among Christian men in their war alway forborne, as is the despites done to the blessed sacrament, wherein the beasts were more hot and more busy than would the great Turk, and that because their sect is yet in manner worse than his. Moreover, the unhappy deeds of that sect must needs be imputed to the sect itself while the doctrine thereof teacheth and giveth occasion to their evil deeds. A Christian man's evil living cannot be imputed to his christendom. For his living is contrary to the doctrine and living of Christ. But as for the doctrine of this unhappy sect, and the living also of the beginners of the same, is such, as every wise man well perceiveth, doth teach, and give occasion of their evil deeds. *For what good deed shall he study or labour to do that believeth Luther that he hath no free will of his own by which he can, with help of grace, either work or pray?* Shall he not say to himself that he may sit still and let God alone? What harm shall they care to forbear, that believe Luther, that God alone without their will worketh all the mischief that they do themselves? What shall he care how long he live in sin, that believeth Luther, that he shall after this life neither feel well or ill in body nor soul till the day of doom? Will not he, trowe you, say as the Welshman said? If thou give her that day, by God, Davy will have thy cote too. And this thing I say but for a sample. For look his opinion through and ye shall find that they plainly set forth all the world to wretched living. If they would say that we misconstrue their words, their books be open, and the words plain, and inculked [inculcated] again and again, so often and so openly, that men cannot err therein, nor they by any cloak or colour defend them.

And besides that not only the commonalty of their sect shew the effect and fruit of their doctrine by their abominable dealing, as I have rehearsed you, but also the doctors, and the archheretics themselves, well declare the holiness of their doctrine by their own living. For as they live they teach, and as they teach they live.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER

*The author sheweth that it is a great token that the world is near at an end, while we see people so far fallen from God that they can abide it to be content with this pestilent frantic sect which no people Christian or heathen could have suffered afore our days.*

If the world were not near at an end, and the fervour of devotion so sore cooled that it were almost quenched among Christian people, it could never have comen to pass that so many people should fall to the following of such a beastly sect. For albeit that the Mahometans, being a sensual and filthy sect, did in few years draw the great part of the

### **WEREWITH THE LUTHERANS DRAW MEN TO THEIR SECT**

world unto it by the self-same ways which now the Lutherans use, that is, to wit, voluptuous living and violence, offering delight unto the receivers, and death to the refusers; yet was there before this abominable sect never any sect so shameless, that would still avow themselves for Christian folk, granting the scripture to be true, and therewithal so enemyously blaspheme and oppugne the Church of Christ, the sacraments of Christ, the saints of Christ, the cross of Christ, the mother of Christ, and the holy body of Christ, so shamefully living and openly professing a bestial manner of living clean contrary to the doctrine and life of Christ. The Arians, the Pelagians, the Manichees, and so forth every sort of heretics, began of such as though they wickedly erred in substantial articles of the faith, yet was their outward fashion of living so honest and spiritual in appearance that men thought themselves bounden the better to believe their doctrine as Christian for some spiritual form and fashion of their Christian living. But now the chieftains of these execrable heresies both teach and use more sensual and licentious living than ever did Mahomet, which, though he license men to many wives, yet he never taught nor suffered his folk to break their chastity promised once and solemnly dedicate to God. Whereas Luther not only teacheth monks, freres, and nuns to marriage but also, being a frere, hath married a nun himself, and with her liveth under the name of wedlock in open incestuous lechery without care or shame, because he hath procured and gotten so many shameful and shameless companions. Who could have bidden to look any man in the face that should have done thus in St. Hierom's and St. Austin's days? What speak we of St. Jerome and St. Austen? Who durst have done it for shame any time since Christ's birth until our wretched days? Or who since Adam's time among the chosen people of God? What speak we of the chosen people of God? The very Paynims and Pagans, idolators, kept their chastity vowed once to their false gods, and rather chose to cut off the members with which they might break it than to stand in the jeopardy to break it. And in Rome of old time when they were pagans, if any vestal virgin

### **A VESTAL VIRGIN**

(for so called they their nuns) were violated, they not only beat the man to death with rods in the market place, and buried the woman quick, but also reckoned it for a wonderful monster, and a token of wrath and indignation of their gods toward their city and empire, putting thereupon themselves in devour [devoir] with open processions and prayers and sacrifice, to procure the recovery of their gods' favour. Is it not, then, now a wondrous case to see, since that the chastity promised once to God, and also to the false idols under the name of god, hath always been

## PROMISED CHASTITY HATH ALWAY BEEN HIGHLY ESTEEMED

since the world began among Christian and heathen so highly esteemed, that the breakers thereof have alway been, by the common consent of the whole world, as a thing taught by God unto good men, and by nature to all men, taken, reputed and punished as abominable wicked wretches--is it not, I say, now a wondrous thing to see that in the flock of Christian people and which by Christ Himself, by all his apostles, by all his holy martyrs, confessors and doctors, by all his whole church, all the whole time of these fifteen hundred years passed, chastity hath been more highly praised and esteemed than ever it was of any other sect since the world began, we should see now a lewd frere so bold and so shameless to marry a nun and bide thereby, and be taken still for a Christian man and, over that, for a man meet to be the beginner of a sect whom any honest man should vouchsafe to follow? If our Lord God, whose wisdom is infinite, should have syt and studied to devise a way whereby he might cast in our face the confusion of our folly, how might he have founden a more effectual [way] openly to shew us the shame of our sin than to suffer us, that call ourself Christian folk, to see such a rabble spring up among us, as professing the faith and religion of Christ, let not to set at nought all the doctors of Christ's church, and lean to the only authority of friar Tuck and Maid Marion?

<sup>1</sup> *Gal. I. 8.*

<sup>2</sup> besprinkled.

<sup>3</sup> *Mark I. 25.*

<sup>4</sup> in order to.

<sup>5</sup> *Ps. 90. 13.*

<sup>6</sup> discussion.

<sup>7</sup> profe.

<sup>8</sup> tone.

<sup>9</sup> byeld.

<sup>10</sup> laues.

<sup>11</sup> think it a small thing.

<sup>12</sup> faults.

<sup>13</sup> careth.

<sup>14</sup> laysour.

<sup>15</sup> Leo the Isaurian (717-714).

<sup>16</sup> Summoned in Rome by Gregory III (731).

<sup>17</sup> *S. Greg. Regist . lib. xi. ep. xiii.*

<sup>18</sup> *Luke 4. 8.*

<sup>19</sup> The Litany of the Saints is the model of all other litanies and is of great antiquity. It was used in the *Litania Septiformies* of St. Gregory the Great.

<sup>20</sup> Sibeles.

<sup>21</sup> For More's word *pardon* the word *indulgence* is now used. The Church teaches that an indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment due to individual sin in the past, a remission which holds good before the judgment seat of God.

<sup>21</sup> More's assertion that Luther himself was a preacher of the pardon, and an approving one too, before he preached against it, may be compared with Father Hartmann Grisar's note on the

same topic. "Assertions in this sense (namely, that it was rivalry between the Augustinians and the Dominicans which provoked Luther to oppose indulgences) lightly made by Cochlaeus and Emser were accepted as true by later writers. . . Emser only said, 'he was now beginning to suspect' that Luther had come forward because there was 'nothing to be made out of the indulgence business for you (Luther) or your party (the Augustinians), and because Tetzl and his followers, instead of your party, were entrusted with the indulgence business.' ( *A venatione Luteriana Aegocerotis assertio*, fol. c., November 1519.) Cochlaeus meant his accusation rather more seriously, but brings forward no proofs." (*Luther*, Hartmann Grisar, S. J. Trans. vol. i, p. 105 n.)

<sup>21</sup> More made the acquaintance of Cochlaeus c. 1527; and Cochlaeus subsequently dedicated books to him in 1528 and 1531, so that the story may have come to More from Cochlaeus. It may be that More's repetition of the story here rested on his own judgment of its truth after hearing what Cochlaeus had to say about it. (See Erasmus's letter to Cochlaeus. P. S. Allen, *Erasmi Epistolae*, tom. vii. ep. 1863.)

<sup>22</sup> mad.

<sup>23</sup> Published 1520.

<sup>24</sup> dispicions.

<sup>25</sup> Worms.

<sup>26</sup> were it not that.

<sup>27</sup> gegon, misprint in the text.

<sup>28</sup> Sack of Rome, 1527.

<sup>29</sup> pitiable.

<sup>30</sup> spit.

<sup>31</sup> bargain, talk.

<sup>32</sup> *Matt.* 7. 20.