

OF THE DEVIL AND HIS WORKS

DLXX.

The greatest punishment God can afflict on the wicked, is when the church, to chastise them, delivers them over to Satan, who, with God's permission, kills them, or makes them undergo great calamities. Many devils are in woods, in waters, in wildernesses, and in dark poorly places, ready to hurt and prejudice people; some are also in the thick black clouds, which cause hail, lightnings, and thunderings, and poison the air, the pastures and grounds. When these things happen, then the philosophers and physicians say, it is natural, ascribing it to the planets, and showing I know not what reasons for such misfortunes and plagues as ensue.

DLXXI.

Whoso would see the true picture, shape, or image of the devil, and know how he is qualified and disposed, let him mark well all the commandments of God, one after another, and then let him place before his eyes an offensive, shameless, lying, despairing, ungodly, insolent, and blasphemous man or woman, whose mind and conceptions are directed in every way against God, and who takes delight in doing people hurt and mischief; there thou seest the right devil, carnal and corporal. First, in such a person there is no fear, no love, no faith or confidence in God, but altogether contempt, hatred, unbelief, despair, and blaspheming of God. There thou seest the devil's head, directly opposing the first commandment. Secondly, a believing Christian takes God's name not in vain, but spreads abroad God's Word, calls upon him from his heart, thanks Him for his benefits, confesses Him. But this picture and child of the devil does quite the contrary; he holds God's Word for a fable, fearfully abuses God's name, blasphemes God, and withal swears and rages abominably, calls upon the evil one and yields unto him. There thou seest the mouth and the tongue of the devil, directed against the second commandment. Thirdly, a true Christian esteems worthily of the office of preaching; he hears and learns God's Word with true earnestness and diligence, according to Christ's institution and command, not only to the amendment and comfort of himself, but also for good example to others; he honours and defends good and godly servants of the Word, permits them not to suffer want, etc. But this image and child of the devil regards no preaching, hears not God's Word, or very negligently, speaks evil thereof, perverts it, and makes scoff thereat; yea, hates the servants thereof, who, for ought he cares, may famish for want of food. There thou seest the ears of the devil, his throat and neck of steel, directly against the third commandment. Further,

desirest thou to know how the body of the devil is shaped and fashioned, then hearken to the following commandments of the second table, and take good heed thereunto. For first, a good Christian honours his parents, and hearkens unto them, to the magistrates, and to the shepherds of souls, according as God has commanded. But this child of the devil hearkens not to his parents, serves and helps them not; nay, dishonours, condemns, and vexes them, forsakes them in their need, is ashamed of them when they are poor, and scorns them in their old age; he is disobedient to magistrates, and shows unto them no reverence, but speaks evil of them; he regards no admonition, reproof, civility, or honesty. There thou seest the breast of the devil. Secondly, an upright and true Christian envies not his neighbour, he bears no ill-will towards him, he desires not to be revenged of him, though he have cause, yea, he condoles with his neighbour, when hurt and grief assault him, helps, and to his power defends him against those who seek his life. But this child of the devil, although he cannot hurt his neighbour in body and life, or murder him with his fist, yet he hates and envies him, he is angry with him, and is his enemy in his heart, wishes his death, and when it goes evil with him, is glad and laughs in his sleeve, etc. There thou seest the devil's wrathful and murdering heart. Thirdly, a God-fearing Christian lives modestly and honestly, shuns all manner of wrongful dealing, stands in fear of God's wrath and everlasting punishment. But the child of the devil does quite the contrary, is void of all shame and chastity, in words, behaviour, and act. There thou seest the belly of the devil. Fourthly, a godly Christian lives by his labour, by his trade, with a good conscience; he deceives no man of that which is his; nay, lends, helps, and gives to the needy according to his ability. But this devilish child helps none, no, not in the least, but he trades in usury, covets, robs, and steals as he may, by power and deceit; he takes all manner of advantage to cheat and cozen his neighbour, by false wares, measures, weights, etc. There thou seest the hands, and sharp-pointed claws of the devil. Fifthly, a godly creature speaks evil of no man, belies not his neighbour, nor bears false witness against him; yea, though he knows his neighbour faulty, yet out of love he covers his infirmities and sins, except by the magistrate he be called to confess this truth. But this child of the devil does quite the contrary; he slanders and backbites, betrays, and falsely accuses his neighbour, and perverts that which he has rightly spoken. There thou seest the devil's evil and wicked will. Sixth, and lastly, a true Christian covets not his neighbour's house, inheritance, or wealth, misleads not his wife or his daughter, entices not away his servants, covets nothing that is his; yea, according to his power, he helps to keep and preserve that which belongs to him. But this child of the devil imagines, endeavours, and, day and night, seeks opportunity to defraud his neighbour of his house, his grounds, lands, and people, to draw and entice his wife away unto himself, to flatter away his servants, to instigate his neighbour's tenants against him, to get his cattle from him, etc. There thou seest the devil's lust. Through lies, under the color of the truth, he seduces and deceives godly people, like as he did Adam and Eve in Paradise; therefore the more holy the people be, the greater is the danger they stand in. For this cause, we ought to beware of the devil, and to take our refuge in Christ, who crushed his head, and delivered us from his lies.

DLXXII.

Dr. Luther was asked, whether the Samuel who appeared to king Saul, upon the invocation of the pythoness, as is related in the first Book of Kings, was really the prophet Samuel. The doctor answered: "No, it was a spectre, an evil spirit, assuming his form. What proves this is, that God, by the laws of Moses, had forbidden man to question the dead; consequently, it must have been a demon which presented itself under the form of the man of God. In like manner, abbot of Spanheim, a sorcerer, exhibited to the emperor Maximilian all the emperors his predecessors, and all the most celebrated heroes of past times, who defiled before him each in the costume of his time. Among them were Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar. There was also the emperor's betrothed, whom Charles of France stole from him. But these apparitions were all the work of the demon."

DLXXIII.

No malady comes upon us from God, who is good, and wishes us well; they all emanate from the devil, who is the cause and author of plagues, fevers, etc. When he is at work with juris-consults, he engenders all sorts of dissensions and machinations, turning justice into-injustice. Approaches he great lords, princes, kings; he gives birth to wars and massacres. Gains he access to divines, which seduce and ruin men's souls. God alone can check so many calamities.

DLXXIV.

The devil vexes and harasses the workmen in the mines. He makes them think they have found fine new veins of silver, which, when they have laboured and laboured, turn out to be more illusions. Even in open day, on the surface of the earth, he causes people to think they see a treasure before them, which vanishes when they would pick it up. At times, treasure is really found, but this is by the special grace of God. I never had any success in the mines, but such was God's will, and I am content.

DLXXV.

The emperor Frederick, father of Maximilian, invited a necromancer to dine with him, and, by his knowledge of magic, turned his guest's hands into griffins claws. He then wanted him to eat, but the man, ashamed, hid his claws under the table.

He took his revenge, however, for the jest played upon him. He caused it to seem that a loud altercation was going on in the court yard, and when the emperor put his head out of a window to see what was the matter, he, by his art, clapped on him a pair of huge stag's horns, so that the emperor could not get his head into the room again until he had cured the necromancer of his disfigurement. I am delighted, said Luther, when one devil plagues another. They are not all, however, of equal power.

DLXXVI.

There was at Nieuburg a magician named Wildferer, who, one day, swallowed a countryman, with his horse and cart. A few hours afterwards, man, horse, and cart, were all found in a slough, some miles off. I have heard, too, of a seeming monk, who asked a wagoner, that was taking some hay to market, how much he would charge to let him eat his fill of hay? The man said, a kreutzer, whereupon the monk set to work, and had nearly devoured the whole load, when the Wagoner drove him off.

DLXXVII.

August 25, 1538, the conversation fell upon witches who spoil milk, eggs, and butter in farm yards. Dr. Luther said: "I should have no compassion on these witches; I would burn all of them. We read in the old law, that the priests threw the first stone at such malefactors, Its said this stolen butter turns rancid, and falls to the ground when any one goes to eat it. He who attempts to counteract and chastise these witches, is himself corporally plagued and tormented by their master, the devil. Sundry schoolmasters and ministers have often experienced this. Our ordinary sins offend and anger God. What, then, must be his wrath against witchcraft, which we may justly designate high treason against divine majesty, a revolt against the infinite power of God. The juris-consults who have so learnedly and pertinently treated of rebellion, affirm that the subject who rebels against his sovereign, is worthy of death. Does not witchcraft, then, merit death, which is a revolt of the creature against the Creator, a denial to God of the authority it accords to the demon?"

DLXXVIII.

Dr. Luther discoursed at length concerning witchcraft and charms. He said, that his mother had had to undergo infinite annoyance from one of her neighbours, who was a witch, and whom she was fain to conciliate with all sorts of attentions; for this witch could throw a charm upon children, which made them cry themselves to death. A pastor having punished her for some knavery, she cast a spell upon him by means of some earth upon which he had walked, and which she bewitched. The poor man hereupon fell sick of a malady which no remedy could remove, and shortly after died.

DLXXIX.

It was asked: Can good Christians and God fearing people also undergo witchcraft? Luther replied: Yes; for our bodies are always exposed to the attacks of Satan. The maladies I suffer are not natural, but devil's spells.

DLXXX.

When I was young, some one told me this story: Satan had, in vain, set all his craft and subtlety at work to separate a married pair that lived together in perfect harmony and love. At last, having concealed a razor under each of their pillows, he visited the husband, disguised as an old woman, and told him that his wife had formed the project of killing him; he next told the same thing to the wife. The husband, finding the razor under his wife's

pillow, became furious with anger at her supposed wickedness, and cut her throat. So powerful is Satan in his malice.

DLXXXI.

Luther, taking up a caterpillar, said: `Tis an emblem of the devil in its crawling walk, and bears his colors in its changing hue.

DLXXXII.

Dr. Luther said he had heard from the elector of Saxony, John Frederick, that a powerful family in Germany was descended from the devil, the founder having been born of a succubus. He added this story: A gentleman had a young and beautiful wife, who, dying, was buried. Shortly afterwards, this gentleman and one of his servants sleeping in the same chamber, the wife, who was dead, came at night, bent over the bed of the gentleman, as though she were conversing with him, and, after a while, went away again. The servant, having twice observed this circumstance, asked his master whether he knew that, every night, a woman, clothed in white, stood by his bedside. The master replied, that he had slept soundly, and had observed nothing of the sort. The next night, he took care to remain awake. The woman came, and he asked her who she was, and what she wanted. She answered, that she was his wife. He returned: my wife is dead and buried. She answered, she had died by reason of his sins, but that if he would receive her again, she would return to him in life. He said, if it were possible, he should be well content. She told him he must undertake not to swear, as he was wont to do; for that if he ever did so, she should once more die, and permanently quit him. He promised this, and the dead woman, returning to seeming life, dwelt with him, ate, drank, and slept with him, and had children by him. One day that he had guests, his wife went to fetch some cakes from an adjoining apartment, and remained a long time absent. The gentleman grew impatient, and broke out into his old oaths. The wife not returning, the gentleman, with his friends, went to seek her, but she had disappeared; only the clothes she had worn lay on the floor. She was never again seen.

DLXXXIII.

The devil seduces us at first by all the allurements of sin, in order thereafter to plunge us into despair; he pampers up the flesh, that he may, by and bye, prostrate the spirit. We feel no pain in the act of sin, but the soul after it is sad, and the conscience disturbed.

DLXXXIV.

He who will have, for his master and king, Jesus Christ, the son of the Virgin, who took upon himself our flesh and our blood, will have the devil for his enemy.

DLXXXV.

It is very certain that, as to all persons who have hanged themselves, or killed themselves in any other way, 'tis the devil who has put the cord round their necks, or the knife to their throats.

DLXXXVI.

A man had a habit, whenever he fell, of saying: "Devil take me." He was advised to discontinue this evil custom, lest some day the devil should take him at his word. He promised to vent his impatience by some other phrase; but, one day, having stumbled, he called upon the devil, in the way I have mentioned, and was killed upon the spot, falling on a sharp pointed piece of wood.

DLXXXVII.

A pastor, near Torgau, came to Luther, and complained that the devil tormented him without intermission. The Doctor replied: He plagues and harasses me too, but I resist him with the arms of faith. I know of one person at Magdeburg, who put Satan to the rout, by spitting at him; but this example is not to be lightly followed; for the devil is a presumptuous spirit, and not disposed to yield. We run great risk when, with him, we attempt more than we can do. One man, who relied implicitly on his baptism, when the devil presented himself to him, his head furnished with horns, tore off one of the horns; but another man, of less faith, who attempted the same thing, was killed by the devil.

DLXXXVIII.

Henning, the Bohemian, asked Dr. Luther, why the devil bore so furious a hatred to the human race? The Doctor replied: "That ought not to surprise you; see what a hate prince George bears me, so that, day and night, he is ever meditating how he shall injure me. Nothing would delight him more, than to see me undergo a thousand tortures. If such be the hatred of man, what must the hatred of the devil be?"

DLXXXIX.

The devil cannot but be our enemy, since we are against him with God's Word, wherewith we destroy his kingdom. He is a prince and god of the world, and has a greater power than all the kings, potentates, and princes upon earth; wherefore he would be revenged of us, and assaults us without ceasing, as we both see and feel. We have against the devil, a great advantage; powerful, wicked, and cunning as he is, he cannot hurt us, since its not against him we have sinned, but against God. Therefore we have nothing to do with that arch-enemy; but we confess, and say: "Against thee, Lord, have we sinned," etc. We know, through God's grace, that we have a gracious God, and a merciful Father in heaven, whose wrath against us, Christ Jesus, our only Lord and Saviour, has appeased with his precious blood. Now, forasmuch as through Christ we have remission of sins and peace with God, so must the envious devil be content to let us alone, in peace, so that henceforward he can neither upbraid nor hit us in the teeth concerning our sins against God's laws, for Christ has

cancelled and torn in pieces the handwriting of our consciences, which was a witness against us, and nailed the same to his cross; to God be everlasting honour, praise, and glory in Christ Jesus, for the same. Amen.

DXC.

The devil knows the thoughts of the ungodly, for he inspires them therewith. He sees and rules the hearts of all such people as are not kept safe and preserved by God's Word; yea, holds them captive in his snares, so that they must think, do, and speak according to his will. And St Paul says: "The god of this world blindeth the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," etc. And Christ gives a reason how it comes to pass, that many hear the Word, yet neither understand nor keep the same, where he says: "The devil cometh, and taketh the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe, and be saved." Therefore it is no marvel that the devil, through his prophets, declares what shall happen and come to pass.

DXCI.

The Scripture clearly shows that the devil gives unto mankind evil thoughts, and suggests evil projects to the ungodly; as of Judas is written that the devil put it into his heart to betray Christ. And he not only instigated Cain to hate his brother Abel, but, moreover, to murder him. But the devil knows not the thoughts of the righteous, until they utter them. He knew not the thoughts of Christ's heart, nor knows he the thoughts of the godly, in whose heart Christ dwells. Its a powerful, crafty, and subtle spirit. Christ names him the Prince of the World; he goes about shooting all thoughts, his fiery darts, into the hearts even of the godly, as discord, hatred to God, despair, blaspheming, etc. St Paul well understood all these assaults, and bitterly complains of them.

DXCII.

The apostle gives this title to the devil: "That he hath the power of death." And Christ calls him a murderer. He is so skilled, that he is able to cause death even with the leaf of a tree; he has more boxes and pots full of poisons, wherewith he destroys men, than all the apothecaries in the world have of healing medicine; if one poison will not dispatch, another will. In a word, the power of the devil is greater than we can imagine; `tis only God's finger can resist him.

DXCIII.

I maintain that Satan produces all the maladies which afflict mankind, for he is the prince of death. St Peter speaks of Christ as healing all that are oppressed of the devil. He not only cured those who were possessed, but he restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, strength to the paralytic; therefore I think all grave infirmities are blows and strokes of the devil, which he employs as an assassin uses the sword or other weapon.

So God employs natural means to maintain the health and life of man, such as sleep, meat, drink, etc. The devil has other means of injury; he poisons the air, etc.

A physician repairs the work of God when damaged corporally; we, divines, spiritually; we mend the soul that the devil has spoiled. The devil gives poison to kill men; a physician gives theriacum, or some other drug, to save them; so the creature, through creatures, helping creatures. Physic has not its descent and origin out of books; God revealed it; or, as Syrach says: "It cometh from the Most Highest; the Lord hath created medicines out of the earth." Therefore we may justly use corporal physic, as God's creature. Our burgomaster here at Wittenberg lately asked me, if it were against God's will to use physic? for, said he, Doctor Carlstad has preached, that whoso falls sick, shall use no physic, but commit his case to God, praying that His will be done. I asked him: Did he eat when he was hungry? He answered, yes. Then, said I, even so you may use physic, which is God's creature, as well as meat and drink, or whatever else we use for the preservation of life.

DXCIV.

Satan plagues and torments people all manner of ways. Some he affrights in their sleep, with heavy dreams and visions, so that the whole body sweats in anguish of heart. Some he leads, sleeping, out of their beds and chambers, up into high dangerous places, so that if, by the loving angels who are about them, they were not preserved, he would throw them down and cause their death. The superstitious papists say, that these sleep-walkers are persons who have never been baptized; or if they have been, that the priest was drunk when he administered the sacrament.

DXCV.

No creature can prevail against the devil, but only Christ, and he made trial of his art even upon him, as when he said unto him; "If thou wilt fall down and worship me, I will give thee all the kingdoms of the whole world."

No man can rightly comprehend this temptation; I would willingly die, on condition I could fundamentally preach thereof. Doubtless, the devil moved Christ much when he said: "All this is mine, and I give it to whom I will;" for they are words of Divine Majesty, and belong only to God. True, the devil gives, but let us make a strong distinction between the real giver, who gives all that we have and are, and the dissembling murderer, who gives to those that serve and worship him for a short time, yet so that they must everlastingly perish. Christ contradicts him not, that he is a lord and a prince of the world; but he will not therefore worship him, but says: Avoid Satan. Even so ought we to do. He must be, indeed, a most wicked, poisoned, and thirsty spirit, that he durst presume to tempt the Son of God to fall down and worship him. The arch villain, doubtless, in the twinkling of an eye, laid before the Lord a delusion of all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, as Luke writes, thereby to move and allure him to the end he should think: such honor might one receive, and yet nevertheless be the child of God.

DXCVI.

When that envious, poisoned spirit, the devil, plagues and torments us, as is his custom, by reason of our sins, intending thereby to lead us into despair, we must meet him in this manner: "thou deceitful and wicked spirit! how darest thou presume to persuade me to such things? Knowest thou not that Christ Jesus, my Lord and Saviour, who crushed thy head, has forbidden me to believe thee, yea, even when thou speakest the truth, in that he names thee a murderer, a liar, and the father, of lies? I do not admit to thee, that I, as thy captive shall be condemned to everlasting death and hellish torments, by reason of my sins, as thou falsely suggestest; but thou, thyself, on the contrary, long since, by Christ my Lord and Saviour, wert stripped, judged, and with everlasting bonds and chains of darkness, art bound, cast down, and delivered to hell, reserved to the judgment of the great day, and finally, with all the ungodly, shalt be thrown into the bottomless pit of hell. Further, I demand of thee, by what authority thou presumest to exercise such power and right against me? whereas thou hast given me neither life, wife, nor child; no, not the least thing that I have; neither art thou my lord, much less the creator of my body and soul; neither hast thou made the members wherewith I have sinned. How, then, thou wicked and false spirit, art thou so insolent as to domineer over that which is mine, as if thou wert God himself?"

DXCVII.

The people who in popedom are possessed of the devil, get not rid of him by such arts, words, or gestures as their charmers use; the devil suffers not himself to be driven out with mere phrases, as: "Come out, thou unclean spirit," for these charmers mean it not earnestly. The power of God must effect it.

The devil may be driven out, either by the prayers of the whole church, when all Christians join their supplications together in a prayer so powerful, that it pierces the clouds, - or the person that would drive out the wicked enemy by himself, must be of highly enlightened mind, and of strong and steadfast courage, certain of his cause; as Elijah, Elisha, Peter, Paul, etc.

DXCVIII.

The cause that so many poor people in the time of Christ were possessed, was, that the true doctrine was almost sunk and quenched by the people of Israel, a few excepted, - as Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna, etc. And I believe if the Pharisees had continued to rule, and that Christ had not come, Judaism would have been turned into Paganism, - as, before the shining of the gospel, was seen in popedom, where the people understood as little of Christ and his Word, as the Turks and heathens.

DXCIX.

The devil well knew the Scripture, where it is said: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a child." Also: "Unto us a child is born." But because Christ has carried himself humbly and

lowly, went about with public sinners, and by reason thereof was held in no esteem, - therefore the devil looked another way over Christ, and knew him not; for the devil looks a-squint upwards, after that which is high and pompous, not downwards, nor on that which is humble and lowly. But the everlasting merciful God does quite the contrary; he beholds that which is lowly, as the 113th Psalm shows: "Our God hath his dwelling on high, and yet humbleth to behold what is in heaven and on earth." And Isaiah: "I will look to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." God cares not for that which is high; yea, it is an abomination before him. St Luke says: "That which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." Therefore he that intends to climb high, let him beware of the devil, lest he throw him down; for the nature and manner of the devil is, first to hoist up into heaven, and afterwards to cast down into hell.

DC.

In cases of melancholy and sickness, I conclude it is merely the work of the devil. For God makes us not melancholy, nor affrights nor kills us, for he is a God of the living. Hence the Scripture: "Rejoice, and be of good comfort." God's Word and prayer is physic against spiritual tribulations.

DCI.

I would rather die through the devil than through the emperor or pope; for then I should die through a great and mighty prince of the world. But if he eat a bit of me `twill be his bane; he shall spew me out again; and, at the day of judgment, I in requital will devour him.

DCII.

The devil needs not to tell me I am not good or upright; neither would I wish to be so, that is, to be without feeling of my sins, or to think I need no remission of them; for, if that were the case, all the treasure of Christ were lost on me, seeing he says himself: "He came not for the sake of the just, but to call sinners to repentance."

DCIII.

I hold that a devil, once overcome with God's Word and Spirit, must be gone, and dare not return again with the same temptation; Christ says: "Avoid Satan." And in another place: "Come out, thou unclean spirit." Then say the devils: "Suffer us to enter into the herd of swine." Origen says: "I believe that the saints strangle and slay many devils in combating" - that is, break their power.

DCIV.

Witchcraft is the devil's own proper work, wherewith, when God permits, he not only hurts people, but often makes away with them; for in this world we are as guests and strangers, body and soul cast under the devil; he is god of this world, and all things are under his power, whereby we are preserved in temporal life, - as meat, drink, air, etc.

The devil is so crafty a spirit, that he can ape and deceive our senses. He can cause one to think he sees something, which he sees not, that he hears thunder, or a trumpet, which he hears not. Like as the soldiers of Julius Caesar thought they heard the sound of a trumpet, as Suetonius writes, and yet there was no such thing. Oh, Satan is a master in aping and deceiving people, and every human sense.

And especially, is he artful when he deceives people spiritually, bewitching and deceiving the hearts and consciences, in such sort that they hold and receive erroneous and ungodly doctrine and opinion, for the upright and divine truth.

We see at this day how easy a matter it is for him so to do, by the sectaries and seducers; for he has so bewitched and deceived their hearts, that they hold that for the clear truth, which is altogether lies, errors, and abominable darkness. They hold themselves wise and learned in divine matters; other people they regard as geese, which neither see nor understand anything.

The poisonous serpent takes such delight in doing mischief, that he not only deceives secure and proud spirits with his delusions, but also undertakes, through his deceptions, to bring into error those who are well instructed and grounded in God's Word. He vexes me often so powerfully, and assaults me so fiercely with heavy and melancholy thoughts, that I forget my loving Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, or at least behold him far otherwise than he is to be beheld. There is none of us so free, but that often he is thus deceived and bewitched with false opinions. Therefore we should learn how to know this conjuror, to the end he may not come behind us, being sleepy and secure, and so delude us with his witchcraft. And truly, if he find us not sober and watching, and not armed with spiritual weapons, that is, with God's Word and with faith, then most surely he will overcome us.

DCVI.

When I could not be rid of the devil with sentences out of the Holy Scripture, I made him often fly with jerring words; sometimes I said unto him: Saint Satan! if Christ's blood, which was shed for my sins, be not sufficient, then I desire that thou wouldest pray to God for me. When he finds me idle, with nothing in hand, he is very busy, and before I am aware, he wrings from me a bitter sweat; but when I offer him the pointed spear, God's Word, he flies; yet, before he goes, makes a grievous hurricane. When I began to write against the pope, and the Gospel was going on, the devil set himself strongly to work, rumbling and raging about, for he would willingly have preserved purgatory at Magdeburg. There was a citizen, whose child died, for whom he refused to have vigils and masses sung. The devil played his freaks, came every night, about twelve o'clock, into the chamber where the boy died, and made a whining like a young child. The good citizen being therewith full of sorrow, knew not what course to take. The popish priests said: O, now you see how it goes when vigils are not solemnized. Whereupon the citizen sent to me, desiring my advice, (for the sermon I had lately preached on this text: "They have Moses and the prophets," had been printed, and been read by him); and I wrote to him from Wittenberg, and advised him not to suffer any vigils at all to be held, for he might be fully assured that these were merely pranks of the devil; whereupon, the children and servants in the house jeered the devil, and said: What doest

thou, Satan? Avoid, thou cursed spirit, get thee gone to the place, where thou oughtest to be, to the pit of hell. When the devil marked their contempt, he left off his game, and came there no more. He is a proud spirit, and cannot endure scorn.

DCVII.

Though Satan ceases not to plague the Christians, and to shoot at us his fiery darts, its very good and profitable for us, for thereby he makes us the more sure of the word and doctrine, so that faith increases, and is stronger in us. We are often shaken, and, indeed, now and then the devil drives out of us a sour and bitter sweat, but he cannot bring us to despair; for Christ always has kept the field, and through us will keep it still. Through hope, in all manner of trials and temptations, we hold ourselves on Christ.

DCVIII.

Its a fearful thing when Satan torments the sorrowful conscience with melancholy; then the wicked villain, masterlike, disguises himself in the person of Christ, so that it is impossible for a poor creature, whose conscience is troubled, to discover the knavery. Hence many of those, that neither know nor understand the same, run headlong into despair, and make away with themselves; for they are blinded and deceived so powerfully by him, that they are fully persuaded it is not the devil, but Christ himself, that thus vexes and torments them.

I am a doctor of Holy Scripture, and for many years have preached Christ; yet, to this day, I am not able to put Satan off, or to drive him away from me, as I would; neither am I able so to comprehend Christ and to take hold on him, as in Holy Scripture he is placed before me; but the devil continually seeks how to put another Christ into my mind. Yet, nevertheless, we ought to render humble thanks to Almighty God, who has hitherto preserved us by his holy Word, through faith and by prayer, so that we know how to walk before him in humility and fear, and not to depend or presume on our own wisdom, righteousness, strength, and power, but to cheer and comfort ourselves in Christ, who is always more than sufficiently strong and powerful; and, although we be weak and faint, yet we continually vanquish and overcome through his power and strength in us poor, weak, and feeble creatures. For this may his holy name be blessed and magnified for evermore. Amen.

DCIX.

The devil has two occupations, to which he applies himself incessantly, and which are the foundation stones of his kingdom - lying and murder. God says: "Thou shalt do no murder." "Thou shalt have none other gods but me." Against these two commandments, the devil, with all his force, fights without intermission.

He now plays no more with people, as heretofore, by means of rumbling spirits, for he sees that the condition of the time is far otherwise than what it was twenty years past. He now begins at the right end, and uses great diligence. The rumbling spirits are mute among us; but the spirits of sedition increase above measure, and get the upper hand. God resist them.

DCX.

The power the devil exercises is not by God commanded, but God resists him not, suffering him to make tumults, yet no longer or further than he wills, for God has set him a mark, beyond which he neither can nor dare step.

When God said, concerning Job, to Satan: "Behold, he is in thy hands, yet spare his life," this power was by God permitted, as if God should say: I will so far permit and give you leave, but touch not his life.

DCXI.

It is almost incredible how God enables us, weak flesh and blood, to enter combat with the devil, and to beat and overcome so powerful a spirit as he, and with no other weapon only his Word, which by faith we take hold on. This must needs grieve and vex that great and powerful enemy.

DCXII.

The devil is like a fowler; of the birds he catches, he wrings most of their necks, but keeps a few alive, to allure other birds to his snare, by singing the song he will have in a cage. I hope he will not get me into his cage.

DCXIII.

Let not man flatter himself that the devil is in hell, far from the ungodly, as the archbishop of Mayence thinks; the devil dwells in his hard heart, and impels him according to his will and pleasure. For if the devil had no power but to plague us in body and goods, and vexed and tormented us only with the cares and troubles of this life, he were no devil to make account of. But he has learned a higher art; he takes away and falsifies the article of justification *privitive et positive*, and either tears the same quite out of our hearts, as in popedom, or defiles it through sects and heresies, which hang thereon a gloss about works, or what not, leaving the husks of the nuts to the hearers, but the kernels are gone.

DCXIV.

The devil has two manner of shapes or forms, wherein he disguises himself; he either appears in the shape of a serpent, to affright and kill, or else in the form of a silly sheep, to lie and deceive; these are his two court colors. The devil is a foolish spirit, for he gives means and occasions for Christ to defend himself, in that he plagues the poor and weak Christians; for thereby he confirms the authority of Christ and his apostles; as when they make the sick whole and sound, the devil had rather he had left them at peace and quiet, but his wicked desire to do mischief drives him forward, to the end he may be brought to confusion.

DCXV.

Our songs and Psalms sorely vex and grieve the devil, whereas our passions and impatiences, our complainings and cryings, our "alas!" or "woe is me!" please him well, so that he laughs in his fist. He takes delight in tormenting us, especially when we confess, praise, preach, and laud Christ. For seeing the devil is a prince of this world, and our utter enemy, we must be content to let him pass through his country he will needs have imposts and customs of us, and strike our bodies with manifold plagues.

DCXVI.

God gives to the devil and to witches power over human creatures in two ways; first, over the ungodly, when he will punish them by reason of their sins; secondly, over the just and godly, when he intends to try whether they will be constant in the faith, and remain in his obedience. Without God's will and our own consent, the devil cannot hurt us; for God says: "Whoso touches you, touched the apple of mine eye." And Christ: "There cannot fall an hair from your head, without your heavenly Father's notice."

DCXVII.

The devil's power is not so well seen in the fall of carnal people, and of the wise of this world, who live like senseless creatures and heathen, as in the fall of the saints who were endued with the Holy Ghost; as Adam, David, Solomon, Peter, etc., who committed great sins, and fell by God's will, to the end they should not proudly exalt themselves by reason of God's gifts.

DCXVIII.

By good experience, I know the devil's craft and subtlety, that he not only blows the law into us, to terrify and affright us, and out of mole-hills to make mountains, - that is, to make a very hell of what is but a small and little sin, which as a wondrous juggler he can perform artfully; but also, can sometimes make such to be great and heavy sins which are no sins; for he brings one threatening sentence or other out of the Holy Scriptures, and before we are aware, gives so hard a blow to our hearts, in a moment, that we lose all light and sight, and take him to be the true Christ, whereas it is only the envious devil.

DCXIX.

When tribulations approach, excommunicate them in the name of Christ Jesus, and say: God has forbidden me to receive that coin, because it is minted by the devil; we reject it as prohibited.

When heavy temptations come upon thee, expel them by what means thou best mayest; talk with good friends, of such things as thou takest delight in.

DCXX.

When I write against the pope, I am not melancholy, for then I labour with the brains and understanding, then I write with joy of heart; so that not long since Dr. Reisenpusch said to me: I much marvel you can be so merry; if the case were mine, it would go near to kill me. Whereupon I answered: Not the pope or all his shaven retinue can make me sad; for I know that they are Christ's enemies; therefore I fight against him with joyful courage.

DCXXI.

The devil gives heaven to people before they sin, but after they sin, brings their consciences into despair. Christ deals quite contrary, for he gives heaven after sins committed, and makes consciences joyful.

Last night as I waked out of my sleep, the devil came and said: God is far from thee, and hears not thy prayers. Whereupon I said: Very well, I will call and cry the louder. I will place before my sight the world's unthankfulness, and the ungodly doings of kings, potentates and princes; I will also think upon the raging heretics; all these will inflame my praying.

DCXXII.

The hound of hell, in Greek, is called Cerberus; in Hebrew, Scorphur: he has three throats - sin, the law, and death.

DCXXIII.

In Job are two chapters (xl. and xli.) concerning Behemoth the whale, before whom no man is in safety. "Wilt thou (saith the text) draw leviathan out with a hook? Will he make many supplications unto thee? Will he speak soft words unto thee?" These are images and figures whereby the devil is signified.

DCXXIV.

At Mohlburg, in Thuringia, not far from Erfurt, there was a musician, who gained his living by playing at merry makings. This man came to the minister of his parish, and complained that he was every day assailed by the devil, who threatened to carry him off, because he had played at an unlawful marriage. The minister consoled him, prayed for him, recited to him numerous passages of Scripture, directed against the devil; and, with some other pious men, watched over the unfortunate man, day and night, fastening the doors and windows, so that he might not be carried off. At length the musician said: "I feel that Satan cannot harm my soul, but he will assuredly remove my body;" and that very night, at eight o'clock, though the watch was doubled, the devil came in the shape of a furious wind, broke the windows, and carried off the musician, whose body was found next morning, stiff and black, stuck on a nut tree. Its a most sure and certain story, added Luther.

DCXXV.

We cannot expel demons with certain ceremonies and words, as Jesus Christ, the prophets, and the apostles did. All we can do is, in the name of Jesus Christ, to pray the Lord God, of his infinite mercy, to deliver the possessed persons. And if our prayer is offered up in full faith, we are assured by Christ himself (St John xvi.23) that it will be efficacious, and overcome all the devil's resistance. I might mention many instances of this. But we cannot of ourselves expel the evil spirits, nor must we even attempt it.

DCXXXVI.

Men are possessed by the devil in two ways; corporally and spiritually. Those whom he possesses corporally, as mad people, he has permission from God to vex and agitate, but he has no power over their souls. The impious, who persecute the divine doctrine, and treat the truth as a lie, and who, unhappily, are very numerous in our time, these the devil possesses spiritually. They cannot be delivered, but remain, horrible to relate, his prisoners, as in the time of Jesus Christ were Annas, Caiaphas, and all the other impious Jews whom Jesus himself could not deliver, and as nowadays, are the pope, his cardinals, bishops, tyrants, and partisans.

DCXXVII.

When Satan says in thy heart: "God will not pardon thy sins, nor be gracious unto thee," I pray, how wilt thou then, as a poor sinner, raise up and comfort thyself, especially when other signs of God's wrath beat upon thee, as sickness, poverty, etc. And when thy heart begins to preach and say: behold, here thou liest in sickness; thou art poor and forsaken of every one; why, thou must turn thyself to the other side, and say: Well, let it outwardly seem as it will, yea, though mine own heart felt infinitely more sorrow, yet I know for certain, that I am united and made one with my Lord and Saviour Christ; I have his word to assure me of the same, which can neither fail nor deceive me, for God is true, and performs what he promises.

DCXXVIII.

The devil often casts this into my breast: How if thy doctrine be false and erroneous, wherewith the pope, the mass, friars and nuns are thus dejected and startled? at which the sweat has drizzled from me. But at last, when I saw he would not leave, I gave him this answer: Avoid, Satan; address thyself to my God, and talk with him about it, for the doctrine is not mine, but his; he has commanded me to hearken unto this Christ.

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