

MARTIN LUTHUR AND THE JEWS.

October 23, '53
Omaha, Nebr.

The motion picture MARTIN LUTHUR



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Sponsored by the church
Better than the Hollywood Bible movies.

Luthur the moving figure of the reformation
Champion of revolt against the authority
of the Catholic Church.
And its abuses.

Movie portrays him as a sensitive religious
spirit with a stubborn will that does not
allow his own conscience to be moved from
its honest course. / It is hard for moderns
to appreciate the courage & strength of
spirit which must have been required for
a man such as Luthur to strike out against
the injustices and established traditions of
the church. For the mood of the medieval ages
was far different from ours:

1. Church was supreme
2. Church controlled political forces.
3. Era of mysticism, fear & superstition.

The penalties for opposing forces like this
were severe and final.

—It was into such an atmosphere that Luthur moved.
Luthur was a deeply religious man, a scholar,
a philosopher, an extraordinary orator with
a flair for reasoning and logic. / Having
revolted from the study of Law, he became first
a monk and ultimately an ordained Roman Catholic
priest. / But even the vows of the priesthood did
not fetter the freedom of his mind.

The story of the Reformation which resulted from
his unorthodox convictions and the attacks he
leveled against the corruption of his church,
is well known.

*Not so well known are the limits to which
his conscience & liberalism were subject
so far as Jews concerned.*

But there are important sidelights -- for us-- on the life of Luthur not so well known and not presented in the motion picture or in most popular biographies of the reformer. Even some scholarly articles omit any reference to the direct impact ~~with~~ which Luthur and his movement had upon the Jews.

Two factors brought the Reformation to ~~the~~ ^{direct} ~~an~~ bearing ~~off~~ upon the Jews of the time.

(1) Very nature of medieval persecution of ^{consequently} ~~the~~ Jews ^{but into focus} ~~by~~ ^{Toussaint Pfefferkorn - stimulated attacks on} ~~by Dominicans~~ ^{Talmud.}

* ~~Re~~ Renewed interest in Hebrew and the Bible because of Pfefferkorn attacks on Jews and Talmud and the Reuchlin defence John Reuchlin --- recommended professors of Hebrew in the German universities.

(2) This plus Reformation emphasis on Bible made interest in Hebrew and in Jews great.

After the terrible abuse they had suffered in the Pfefferkorn -Reuchlin controversy, Jews were instilled with new hope when the leader of the Reformation declared himself unequivocally opposed to the church practice of Jewish persecution.

And in one of his works entitled Jesus Was Born a Jew he wrote this:

QUOTE Graetz p 470
Jews refused to hear such words of friendship.
 This apparent liberalism ~~with~~ was not entirely without ~~the~~ motive. More likely Jews would convert thru kindness than thru force. Luthur also believed that once the church was rid of its faults--all non-Xtians would flock to convert. This a typical medieval concept of rel.

His object: to convert NOT to give freedom of conscience to Jews.

selfish
Whatever the motivations Luthur was at this time favorably disposed toward the Jews.

- And his own emphasis on ~~the~~ Bible plus the adjurations of Reuchlin --made ~~the~~ the study of Hebrew popular. X Young and old, says the historian, did not hesitate to seek Jews from whom to learn Hebrew. Luthur himself learnt Hebrew in order to penetrate more deeply into the meaning of Scripture.

So popular that there were not enuf Hebrew bibles: Bomberg : rabbinic bibles.

Such then was the attitude of Luthur in his early years at the height of his controversy with the Catholic church.

- // Almost like the biography of another man, was his attitude in later life. X Embittered with advancing age, disappointed with the failure of the Jewish community to convert en masse to a liberalized form of Xtianity and perhaps worn out with his own disputations, Luthur joined even with ~~the~~ his own mortal enemy Dr. John Eck to belabor and attack the Jews. X In 1542 he wrote: Concerning the Jews and their ~~xxxxxxx~~ Lies". Reverting to all of the defamations against which he had preached in earlier life, he became a prototype of frenzied hatred when he wrote ~~xxx~~ words of indescribable hatred and incentive to attack upon the Jews. X With ever increasing virulence his sermons heaped extreme upon extreme until but a few days before his death he ~~xxxxx~~ pled with his listeners to drive the Jews from the land.

Thus is shown to us ~~the~~ the curious duality of Luthur's nature. X ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ In one and the same life: fearless liberal and unequalled bigot; champion of truth and purveyor of falsehood. The same lips ~~the~~ that said:

"Christinas have treated the Jews as if they were dogs not men." Also said:
"If the Jews refuse to be converted, we ought not to suffer them or bear with them any longer."

Such is the mystery of one of the greatest minds in religious history. A man who

by sheer force of ~~xxxx~~ spirit and courage could overstep -- for a time -- ~~the~~ part of the falsehoods of his time. ~~But the~~

^{↳ + separation}
~~mood of the time was too great and he was~~

despite himself, pulled back into the mire of medieval hatred and oppression of the Jewish people.

Regent's!!
It is a tribute to the generations of the movement that Luthur founded, that the

brilliance of the man became the foundation of the church and the bigotry of his time even from his own lips was all but forgotten.

Luthur the savage is dead.
Luthur the philosopher, the student, the priest of God, deserves to live in the minds and hearts of men. ~~Luthur the savage is dead.~~

↳ for vibrant liberalism we can derive from his life