

## The Faith That Rescues

[Many years ago] ‘Someone once asked Jay Kesler, former president of Youth for Christ International, if he believed that God could make a fish big enough to swallow a man. As a college president and above average in intelligence, in a world in which we have learned to split the atom and go to the moon and send spaceships to Neptune, did Kesler really think that God can make a fish big enough to swallow a man? I mean *really*? Dr. Kesler’s reply is one of simple trust in a great God. He answered, “Let me tell you, I not only believe that He can make such a fish, but the God Who made the sun and the moon and the stars, if He wanted to, could air-condition and carpet the fish!”

This query posed to Dr. Kesler obviously was trying to poke holes in the Bible’s veracity since everyone knew that there was simply no fish in the sea big enough to swallow a man. I wonder what such people thought of whales. While we now may not find it so hard to believe, nevertheless, just as Kesler asserted, God could just as easily have made a modern nuclear-powered submarine to have suddenly materialized in front of the drowning Jonah and taken him to safety. And once he was safe, transport the whole submarine back to the future in our time again. The simple fact is that nothing is impossible with God. But He does

act in accordance with His Own rules in which He prefers to partner with humans to accomplish His blessed will on this earth.

Today, we celebrate the Protestant Reformation. For it was on October 31st, 1517, that a German Augustinian monk by the name of Martin Luther nailed a notice on the door of his church, All Saints' Church, also called the Wittenberg Castle Church, outlining 95 theses describing the errors of the then current complex system of Roman Catholic indulgences, good works, the merits of the saints, etc. Because of the recent invention of the printing press, Luther's document was almost immediately translated from Latin into German, and copies printed, spreading into all parts of Germany in two weeks, and reaching the whole of Europe in just two months. And so was the Protestant Reformation born.

Well, not exactly. While it is the usual practice to associate or assign the start of a movement to a particular person or persons, it's never really just one person who initiates something so earthshaking. We tend to minimize, if not outright forget, God's hand in all the affairs of mankind. For so Daniel 4:17 says. While Luther gets top billing as the instigator of the Protestant Reformation, he was certainly not the first nor the last of great men and women who contributed to this massive course correction in the Church of the Messiah. For in the Christendom of western Europe, the institutional church, namely Rome, had become so worldly that, for most all intents and purposes, to the people, it was the world! And boy, was the world, ahem, the church corrupt!

Not only did it not live up to its avowed principals and moral standards, many of its leaders were so sinful as to make lustful sailors jealous. To say there was an enormous disconnect between what the church preached and the way too many of its leaders acted would be a gross understatement. It had become practically an open secret. Many knew, and the people were getting tired of it. Unrest was percolating in societies throughout Christian Europe for decades. Many were questioning the whole setup. More and more were vocalizing their discontent, as hypocrisy after hypocrisy was exposed. Yet the “whistleblowers” were suppressed by the “religious” authorities, the Roman church, and when necessary, were sentenced to death, often by burning at the stake, all to strike fear into others who might be inclined to challenge the status quo. Martin Luther was not the first, nor the last. But he was the first to broadly and systematically address the most grievous heresies and apostasies in the church.

Luther was a towering figure in no small part due to his sometimes bombastic personality. He could be quietly humble but turn around and loudly protest against lies and deceit of the leaders of the day. Was he used by God to help bring about a much needed reformation of the church? I think history has already decided on that. Our church and denomination carry on his legacy! More than 500 years later the effects of the Protestant Reformation continue. But was the Reformation ever completed?

The mere fact that nearly 500 years later, another reformer

of the church and society changed his name and his son's name from Michael King to Martin Luther King, testifies to the enduring influence of Luther's restatements of Biblical truths, and the movement that God wrought through the rediscovery of His Word. Yet, Luther himself was far from a perfect man. Not all of his ideas and writings were good. Some were downright evil, stemming from his inability to understand why most Jews of his day refused to accept Christ as their messiah. Shortly before he died in 1543, Luther fumed, "We are at fault for not slaying them [the Jews]". Though, thankfully, he was not the originator of the devilish replacement theology which alleges that the Christians have "replaced" the Jews as God's Chosen People, Luther's later writings castigated the Jews and urged authorities to, "Set fire to their synagogues or schools", that "safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews", that "all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them". What Jews could do was to have "a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade" put into their hands so "young, strong Jews and Jewesses" could "earn their bread in the sweat of their brow". Indeed, Adolph Hitler would use Luther's writings to justify the Holocaust. A grave indictment if there ever was one. And one for which Luther I'm sure has repented of in the presence of the Savior ever since.

For the devil has resurrected the evil of "replacement theology" in our modern day in new guise. The college students, "useful idiots", who praise Hamas and claim that the Jews are responsi-

ble for their own suffering this month epitomize the insane construct of lies and deception as the devil tries yet again to exterminate the very people whom God chose to bear both His written word, the Bible, and His living Word, Yeshua the Christ.

And the number one proponent and protector of the Jews in our day we all know. The 45th president of the United States, Donald Joseph Trump, Christian brother, who pioneered the Abraham accords, who recognized Jerusalem as Israel's eternal capital, who recognized Jewish sovereignty over the Golan Heights, and moved our embassy to Jerusalem, is the King Cyrus of this century, and been under relentless assault by satan through the people infected with or been influenced by "Trump derangement syndrome". Can we not see that God has His hand on Trump? For what other figure in our world today could suffer such relentless attacks and remain standing? How is it that he, and family members, hasn't been assassinated by now? Is this not proof that God is protecting him and has a special purpose and destiny for his life? That he will serve as president again in order to protect our religious liberties, thus facilitating the soon-coming great revival that God has promised will break forth all over America? Should we, God's people, not be praying fervently for him every day? But do we seek God's will? Or do we decide things on what we think is best? Are we listening to God's prophets? Do we know where they are? Or are we perfectly content to listen to every news cycle and ingest the lies of media pundits and net-

work announcers, and take their words as truth? “Is there faith on the earth?” Why did Lord Jesus ask this very question? Why?

Who would have thought James Michael Johnson, a congressman from northwest Louisiana, would be elected Speaker of the House? When he was elected, I, like many others, asked, “Who?” He wasn’t even running. But he became the consensus candidate, elected unanimously by the Republicans, who hold a slim majority in the chamber. All Democrats voted for their leader. Turns out that former speaker Kevin McCarthy, who’d been ousted in a vacate the chair maneuver orchestrated by Florida Republican Matt Gaetz leading a handful of Republicans joined by nearly all Democrats, and who had pledged not to seek the speakership again, was actually moving behind the scenes to sabotage all the candidates and by default, regain the speakership. This is the height of sly, slimy snake swampiness, or what, in disdain, most people think of politics these days. And it’s what has to be rooted out of our government and nation. And, in response to our fervent prayers, God ruled in these affairs of men, and in His great mercy, brought in Mike Johnson, a solid conservative, Trump ally, and Southern Baptist brother in Christ, before Kevin McCarthy could stab him in the back as he had the others! God has given us a reprieve as the new speaker will hold the line on all the issues of righteousness and justice that will determine America’s future. Thank God for His mercy! So keep the faith! For this is the faith that will rescue us, America and the world!

