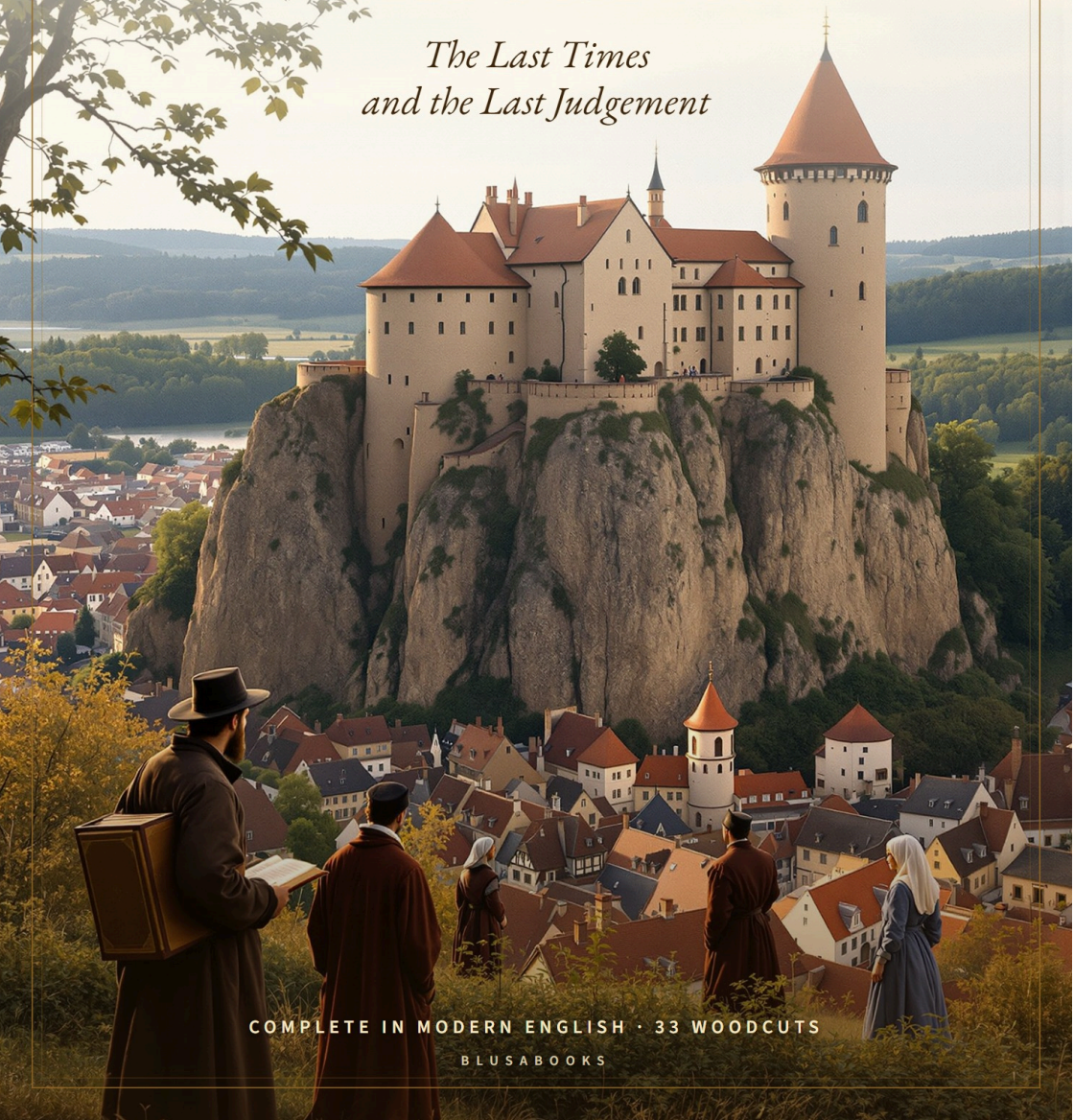


BOOK V · NUREMBERG 1493

The Nuremberg Chronicle

*The Last Times
and the Last Judgement*



COMPLETE IN MODERN ENGLISH · 33 WOODCUTS

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BOOKS OF WISDOM · OLD CHRONICLES



The Nuremberg Chronicle

Book V. The Last Times and the Last Judgement

Hartmann Schedel's history of the world, from the
Nuremberg edition of 1493, in modern English

BlusaBooks · MMXXVI



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Source: Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum* (the Nuremberg Chronicle),
printed by Anton Koberger, Nuremberg, 12 July 1493. Translated from the
Latin from images of a hand-coloured copy. Woodcuts from the same copy
(workshop of Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff).

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FOREWORD

The history of the world in one book. In the summer of 1493 a book appeared in Nuremberg that set out to tell everything — from the creation of the world to the year of its own printing, and beyond that to the end of the world. In Latin it was called *Liber Chronicarum*, "the Book of Chronicles", but the world came to know it as the Nuremberg Chronicle. It was one of the largest and most splendid books of the early age of printing: a great folio volume of more than six hundred pages in which text and pictures are woven into a single whole.

Who made it. The Chronicle was written by Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514), a Nuremberg physician, humanist and one of the great book collectors of his time. Schedel gathered and reworked everything his age knew about the course of the world — the Bible, the Church Fathers, the ancient authors and the newest Italian chronicles, above all the *Supplement to the Chronicles* of Jacopo Filippo Foresti of Bergamo and the writings of the humanist Enea Silvio Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II. The book was printed by Anton Koberger, perhaps the greatest publisher in Europe at the time, and paid for by two wealthy citizens of Nuremberg, Sebald Schreyer and Sebastian Kammermeister. The Latin edition was completed on 12 July 1493, and on 23 December of the same year a German translation by Georg Alt followed.

A book of pictures. The Nuremberg Chronicle is remembered first of all for its pictures. The woodcuts were made in the workshop of Michael Wolgemut and his stepson Wilhelm Pleydenwurff. In those very years the young Albrecht Dürer was an apprentice in Wolgemut's workshop, and it is often thought that his hand may have taken part as well. The book contains 1,809 pictures, yet they were printed from only 645 woodblocks: one portrait of a king or a prophet serves for many different people, and one view of a city sometimes stands for several cities.

Still, many of the great city panoramas — Nuremberg, Vienna, Cologne, Regensburg — are the first views of these cities in print on such a scale and with such life. Some copies were coloured by hand in the fifteenth century at the buyer's wish.

The seven ages of the world. Following medieval tradition, Schedel divided history into seven ages: from the Creation to the Flood; from the Flood to Abraham; from Abraham to David; from David to the Babylonian Captivity; from the Captivity to the birth of Christ; from Christ to the author's own day; and the seventh — the time of Antichrist and the Last Judgement. A description of the lands of Europe was added at the end.

What is in this book. This is the fifth book of the series of six. It closes the sixth age of the world — from about 1300 to the spring of 1493, when the Chronicle was already in the press — and then leads on to the seventh age and the end of the world. It opens with the rise of the Ottoman Turkish state and the popes at Avignon. Then come the Black Death, the Emperor Charles IV and his Prague, the Great Western Schism, when two and even three popes reigned at once, the Councils of Pisa, Constance, Basel and Florence, Jan Hus and the Hussite wars, Tamerlane, the Emperor Sigismund and Frederick III, who reigned for more than fifty years and was still alive when the Chronicle was written. Here are the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the battle of Belgrade, the humanist popes Pius II and Sixtus IV, Matthias Corvinus, Duke Charles of Burgundy, the siege of Rhodes and the capture of Otranto, comets, the Ensisheim meteorite and the fall of Granada in 1492. Here Schedel writes about his own time: he tells us that he saw the preacher John of Capistrano in Nuremberg with his own eyes and heard his teacher lecture at Padua, and he praises the art of printing with pride. Among the stories stand great views of cities — Prague, Breslau, Constance, Basel and Constantinople. The sixth age ends with King Maximilian and the author's closing words. Then follows the seventh age: Antichrist, the Dance of Death and the Last Judgement, and the book ends with the Chronicle's first colophon. For convenience we have divided it into eight parts; the seventh age is the last of them.

Our translation. We translated from the Latin edition, working from images of the pages of a hand-coloured copy. The translation is complete — sentence by sentence, with nothing left out and nothing retold. Here and there we divided Schedel's long sentences, but we did not change their content. Where a word had faded in the print or an abbreviation was unclear, we restored the sense from the context and from the sources Schedel himself drew on. Where the Chronicle gives a year in the margin, it is kept at the head of the entry. Notes written by hand in the margins by later readers are not translated. The book also exists in a Latvian edition.

How to read it. Place names, peoples, lesser-known persons and things no longer familiar today are explained in footnotes on the same page, where they first appear. Schedel writes as a man of the fifteenth century: his numbers and dates often disagree with what we know today, he confuses rulers of similar names, and he tells legends as seriously as history. Much of this book he copied from the writings of Pius II, so it also carries that author's sympathies and dislikes. We have left Schedel's mistakes in the text untouched and explained them briefly in the notes. At the end of the book each part has a commentary, *In plain words* and *What history tells us*.

The pictures. The woodcuts in this book are the originals — cut from the pages of the same hand-coloured copy and placed where they stand in the Chronicle. There are 33 of them: councils, monasteries, comets, the falling stone of Ensisheim, great city panoramas and three of the Chronicle's most famous full-page pictures — the preaching and fall of Antichrist, the Dance of Death and the Last Judgement. Several of the large pictures fill two facing pages in the Chronicle, so here they are given in two parts. Three woodcuts illustrate the false medieval accusations against the Jews — a burning of Jews, the so-called "ritual murder" of Simon of Trent and the "host desecration" at Sternberg. We have kept them because they are part of the source and a record of how such lies spread, but in the footnotes and the commentary we say plainly that these accusations were invented, that the "confessions" were extracted by torture, and that innocent people were killed. At the start of each part there is a colour illustration in the

manner of late fifteenth-century book miniatures — it is a modern work, not part of the Chronicle.

The Nuremberg Chronicle series.

- I. The Creation and the First Ages of the World
- II. From the Babylonian Captivity to Constantine
- III. From Constantine to the Year One Thousand
- IV. Emperors, Popes and Crusades
- V. The Last Times and the Last Judgement
- VI. The Description of Europe

This is the publication of a historical source. Schedel writes with the faith, knowledge and prejudices of his time. We leave his words untouched; our explanations are only in the footnotes and the commentary.

PART I

THE RISE OF THE OTTOMANS, CHARLES IV AND PRAGUE



Illustration in the manner of 15th-century manuscript miniatures

The Beginning of the Ottoman Turkish Realm

The Turks are called Ottomans after Osman¹, their first prince; in our own times they have subdued almost all of Asia Minor and Greece, partly by arms and partly by surrender. In this period, while the aforesaid Pope John² was still reigning, they took their beginning from a certain Osman, a Turk of slender means and obscure

1. Osman I (c. 1258–1324) — leader of a Turkish tribe in north-western Anatolia, after whom the Ottoman dynasty and state are named.

2. John XXII — pope 1316–1334, residing at Avignon.

origin, and for that reason were afterwards called the Ottoman Turks. He was the first king of the Turks. When discord arose among the Turkish princes, he quickly gained power and renown, and partly by force, partly by surrender, brought not a few cities and towns under his authority. When he died, his son Orhan succeeded him and extended far and wide the realm his father had begun. After him came his son Amurath³. When two Greeks were quarrelling over the rule of Greece, the one who feared that the other would prevail called him to his aid; Amurath deliberately drew out the war, and when he saw that both had exhausted their strength and were broken, he turned his arms against them and subjected a great part of Greece to himself.

At his death he left two sons, Soliman and Pazaites⁴. When Soliman died, all power passed to Pazaites. Before he was captured by Tamerlane⁵, he did great things in Greece; but once released he accomplished nothing worthy and died inglorious in Asia. He had several sons; the eldest of them, Calopinus⁶, obtained the kingdom after his father as the fifth king. When he died, leaving a son Orhan still a tender youth, the boy came to the throne with the help of certain princes, but soon afterwards was killed by his uncle Moses; and not long after, the uncle himself died, leaving no surviving son.

He was succeeded by Mehmed⁷, the third son of Pazaites, the sixth king, who on obtaining the kingdom did great things in Europe: he crushed the petty Turkish princes by force of arms and stripped them of their lands. At his death he left as heir his son Amurath, who defeated and killed his uncle Mustafa and as

3. Amurath — Murad I (1362–1389), who conquered much of the Balkans; he fell on the field of Kosovo.

4. Pazaites — Bayezid I (1389–1402), called «the Thunderbolt»; in fact he was the son of Murad I, while Süleyman was Bayezid's son — the chronicle confuses the generations here.

5. Tamerlane — Timur (1336–1405), the Central Asian conqueror; in 1402 he defeated and captured Bayezid I at the battle of Ankara.

6. Calopinus — Süleyman Çelebi (d. 1411), son of Bayezid I; «çelebi» is a Turkish title meaning «lord, prince».

7. Mehmed I (1413–1421) — sultan who reunited the Ottoman state after the war among Bayezid's sons.

victor obtained the whole kingdom. He had a son Mehmed⁸, a most renowned man, who added to his dominion two empires and twelve conquered kingdoms; of him we shall speak below. Dying, he left his first-born son Pazaites as emperor, who still reigns today⁹. Such is the race and origin of the Ottomans. And the name of the Turks has grown so great that the land once called Asia is now called Turkey, for the Turks hold all of it.

Odoric of the Friars Minor

Odoric¹⁰, a holy man of the Order of Friars Minor, travelled through Asia and India preaching the Gospel and became famous for miracles. He carried the bodies of four holy martyrs by sea from the city of Hormuz to Upper India, to the city of Carra, not without miracles; and he wrote an account of his pilgrimage.

Bartholomew of Pisa

Bartholomew of Pisa¹¹, a theologian of the Order of Preachers and a distinguished doctor of the Decretals, flourished at Pisa at this very time and composed many praiseworthy works. Among others he published an excellent and almost divine work for the instruction of confessors, which he called the *Summa Pisana* or *Magistrutia*. He completed it, as he himself relates, in the year of the Lord 1338.

They say that at the same time Albert of Brescia, a man of the same order, lesser in learning but greater in holiness, was famous alongside him and flourished with miracles. Besides his great holiness, he too composed a celebrated summa on cases of conscience. It is said that St Augustine once appeared to him together with St

8. Mehmed II the Conqueror (1451–1481); he took Constantinople in 1453 and Trebizond in 1461 — these are the «two empires».

9. Pazaites — Bayezid II, sultan 1481–1512; he was reigning when the chronicle appeared in 1493.

10. Odoric of Pordenone (c. 1286–1331) — Franciscan missionary who travelled through Persia and India as far as China and wrote an account of his journey.

11. Bartholomew of San Concordio (1262–1347) — Dominican canonist at Pisa; his *Summa* for confessors was very widely used.

Thomas Aquinas and said to him: «Thomas is my equal in glory, but in virginal purity of heart he surpasses me.»

Ludolf the Carthusian

Ludolf¹², a German, prior of the Carthusians at Strasbourg, a man conspicuous for learning and holiness of life, at this very time described the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in an outstanding volume, which he composed as if by heavenly art — nay, rather by divine revelation than by his own effort. In it he truly shows himself a venerable man who possessed, as far as is possible for a human being, the fullest knowledge of all things both divine and human, and above all of the life of Jesus Christ himself. This devout and venerable father also published other praiseworthy works.

Thomas of Strasbourg

They say that at that time Thomas of Strasbourg, general of the Order of Hermits, flourished. He too published most worthy commentaries on the four books of the *Sentences*¹³, which the schoolmen, especially in Germany, use very widely, since they are held to surpass the writings of many others. He also put the constitutions of his order into proper form.

Ubertino da Carrara

Ubertino da Carrara¹⁴, cousin of Marsilio, in this year took over the rule of Padua by the law of nations and by Marsilio's own will, and reigned six years. When Mastino, prince of Verona, had inflicted heavy losses on him, he at last, worn out by war, handed the city over to him, for through the efforts of the Venetians and of Luchino Visconti peace was made and the city restored to Ubertino. Pope

12. Ludolf of Saxony (c. 1300–1378) — Carthusian monk at Strasbourg; his *Life of Christ* was one of the most widely read devotional books of the Middle Ages.

13. *Sentences* — the theology textbook of Peter Lombard (12th c.), which every master of theology at the universities had to comment on.

14. Ubertino da Carrara — lord of Padua 1338–1345, of the Carrara family.

Benedict at once confirmed him in it by apostolic and imperial authority, and thereafter he held it in peace as long as he lived. When he died and Marsilio had succeeded him, in the same year Giacomo, Ubertino's cousin, formed a conspiracy and killed him, and himself took over the lordship of the city.

Astesanus

They say that in those same times Astesanus of Asti, a city of Cisalpine Gaul, a friar of the Order of Minors and most excellent in every branch of learning, published a celebrated and most illustrious summa on both theology and law.

YEAR OF THE WORLD 6542 · 1343 AFTER CHRIST

Clement VI

Clement VI, a native of Limoges, formerly called Peter, was first a monk, then archbishop of Rouen; finally, in the year of the Lord 1342, on the nones of May, he was elected pope at Avignon. He was a man of great learning and polished eloquence, generous to all and very kind. In the first year of his pontificate he created eight priests and two deacons cardinals, among them his brother, a monk professed at Tulle, and William, his sister's son. Understanding that all Italy was in turmoil, he confirmed only Luchino and Giovanni Visconti as vicars of Lombardy, making no mention at all of the other princes of Italy; for he judged that the Visconti alone could resist Louis the Bavarian¹⁵, who, as he proclaimed, was about to descend into Italy and had already reached Trent. Louis in turn, to pay the pope back in the same coin, confirmed many vicars by imperial authority in the lands of the Church. This cunning, they say, brought harm to both, and, passing to their successors, has troubled them down to this day with many and almost endless misfortunes and storms.

For John of Vico, prefect of the city of Rome, who held his father's inheritance in the territory of Viterbo, was made imperial vicar in Viterbo. With the same title

15. Louis IV the Bavarian — German king and emperor (1314–1347), long at enmity with the Avignon popes, who excommunicated him.

Galeotto Malatesta and his brothers were confirmed in Rimini in Romagna, and in Pesaro and Fano in the March of Ancona; Antonio of Montefeltro in Urbino, the Ordelaffi, and likewise local lords in many other places. Pope Clement sent certain cardinals from Avignon to Rome, who, settling the city, at once declared Pietro Sarra Colonna and Giovanni, son of Orsini, senators. But Nicholas Rienzi¹⁶, the public scribe who had brought the government of the city under his own power, in the seventh month, in disguise, went to Charles in Bohemia. Charles — whom Pope Clement, on account of his skill in many languages, had caused the electors to designate as emperor, to humiliate Louis — sent Nicholas to Avignon and handed him over to the pope as a gift. At last Clement, having discharged in all things the office of a good shepherd, died in the year of the Lord 1352, in the tenth year of his pontificate, in the seventh month, on the twenty-eighth day, and was buried at Avignon with honourable funeral pomp.

The Jubilee Year

When the Romans asked that, just as Boniface VIII had once granted to those visiting the thresholds of the apostles Peter and Paul a full remission of all sins every hundredth year (which they called a *saeculum*, whence the secular games took their name), he would do the same every fiftieth year — since, they said, the life of man could not reach that jubilee of a hundred years — he gladly consented. So Clement VI brought the jubilee¹⁷ down to the number fifty, which is properly the jubilee number. When the jubilee year came, such a throng of peoples was in Rome that, as Petrarch, who was there himself, relates, the plague seemed to have been no hindrance at all; for from all Europe that professes the name of Christ that multitude flowed in day after day.

In the same year, Petrarch asserts, the plague at Milan continued more severely than usual. For in three years the plague so overran all Italy that out of every

16. Nicholas Rienzi — Cola di Rienzo (1313–1354), Roman notary who in 1347 proclaimed himself tribune and tried to revive the ancient Roman republic.

17. jubilee year — a holy year with a special indulgence; the first was proclaimed by Boniface VIII in 1300, the second by Clement VI in 1350.

thousand people scarcely one in ten survived. Nor is this any wonder, since because of the jubilee people flocked to Rome from every side and, through contact and sheer numbers, squalor and stench, infected everything.

Innocent VI

Pope Innocent VI, a native of Limoges, formerly called Stephen, was a man most learned in both canon and civil law; first a procurator, soon bishop of Clermont, then cardinal, and at last pope in the year of salvation 1352. He was a man of most upright life, of great restraint and severity, who gave church benefices only to priests most thoroughly proven both in life and in learning. Immediately after his coronation he decreed that all prelates and all who held benefices should go to their churches on pain of excommunication; for he said that sheep at pasture must be guarded by their own shepherd, not by a hireling. He cut down his household expenses, which were great, reducing his household to a fixed and honourable number of the most proven men; and by a very strict edict he ordered the cardinals to do the same. Moreover, he established salaries for the auditors of the sacred palace, so that they could not be corrupted by gifts out of want when deciding lawsuits. In his diet he was held to be frugal, but in military expenses most generous, as he recovered by war what tyrants had seized in former times. Having purged the curia of the prelates lingering idle in it and ordered each to go to his own church, he considered nothing more important than to send a legate to Italy, so that, the tyrants being driven out by force, the cities and provinces belonging to the Church might be recovered.

The legate was Giles of the house of Carrillo¹⁸, a Spanish noble, bishop of Sabina and cardinal, a man who, as far as power and strength allowed, might be compared in virtue with Trajan, Hadrian and Theodosius — princes whom Spain had long ago given to the Roman state as its mightiest and most beneficent. He indeed soon recovered all the towns the tyrants had seized. At this pope's urging

18. Giles Alborno (c. 1310–1367) — Spanish cardinal and general who in 1353–1367 won back the Papal States in Italy by arms and by law.

an alliance was at last made between the Genoese and the Venetians; and he also made peace between the Pisans and the Florentines. When the city of Rome was in great turmoil over the appointment of senators, he settled the discord admirably by sending a foreign senator to the city. Above all he was intent on ending the war being waged between the English and the French, and on fitting out a fleet against the enemies of the Christian name. Worn down by these troubles of mind, Innocent died in the ninth year of his pontificate, in the eighth month, on the sixth day, and was buried in the Carthusian monastery of St Andrew, which he had built and endowed at his own expense outside Avignon¹⁹.

Charles IV

Charles²⁰, the fourth of that name, son of King John of Bohemia and grandson of the Emperor Henry, in the year of salvation 1347, at the bidding of Pope Clement VI, who had caused him to be proclaimed emperor to the disgrace and humiliation of Louis, was elected emperor by the electors and reigned thirty-two years. He was very skilled in many languages and letters, just and upright, God-fearing, loving the good and hating the wicked and criminal. For the sake of justice he made several laws that are still in force and are called the Caroline laws²¹. While his father was still living he fought successfully against the Tartars. The cities of Lombardy he had received from his father he defended by arms. As a young man he fought the Veronese and routed them in battle; in that fight, twice thrown from his horse, he did not hesitate to mount a third time and performed the deeds of a most valiant soldier. At baptism this Charles was named Wenceslas, a name changed at his confirmation by Charles, king of the French, at whose court he spent the years of his boyhood schooling.

19. the Carthusian house at Villeneuve-lès-Avignon; Innocent VI actually died in September 1362.

20. Charles IV (1316–1378) — king of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor of the Luxembourg house; he made Prague the capital of the Empire.

21. Caroline laws — Charles IV's legislation, chiefly the Golden Bull of 1356, which fixed the election of the emperor by seven electors.