

Goslar. The elector lent Bugenhagen to assist the first two of these named cities, while Luther was seeing to the entire parish office in the Wittenberg city church.

However, the leaders who were hostile to the gospel also continued to attack that gospel even after the Diet of Speier. In Bavaria confessors of the gospel were martyred by fire and water. Among them was the preacher, Leonhard Kaeser, who was burned at the stake on August 16, 1527. Luther published a report of this martyr's death which had been sent him by one of his friends. He published it with a prologue and epilogue from his own hand.

Luther also sent a message of comfort to the Christians in Halle after the death of their pastor, Winkler, who had been treacherously murdered. In 1528 he wrote them another letter, this one to encourage them to remain faithful to the truth. In its context he pointed them to the terrible death of a Doctor Krause, who had slashed his throat on All Saints' Day in 1527, out of despair because he had denied Christ, his Lord.

The Elector Joachim of Brandenburg also raged against the confessors of the pure teaching, even against his own wife Elisabeth. She was a niece of the Elector of Saxony and had been imprisoned by her husband because she had received Holy Communion in accord with the words of institution of Christ. She remained there until she fled to Saxony disguised as the wife of a farmer. She did so with the help of her brother, the exiled King of Denmark and her uncle. She then lived at the Castle Lichtenberg near Wittenberg, where she was befriended by Luther. Her physician, Ratzeberger, also came to Wittenberg. He became one of Luther's trusted friends and later the Saxon elector's personal physician.

Duke George remained the same old hostile papist. He continued his oppression of his evangelical subjects and let it be known that he intended to take up arms against his nephew, the elector, as soon as Caesar would command him to do so. He would never be reconciled with him as long as the elector remained Lutheran. "Dear God," Luther prayed, "will that mad ruler not quit? If he is to be converted, my Lord Jesus Christ, then

convert him. If not, then come soon to our defense against him." Matters had once again become personal between Luther and George. For Duke George had illegally obtained a letter from Luther to Link which contained remarks about the duke. He demanded an accounting from the author of the letter. When Luther refused, George attacked him harshly with a public writing. In response Luther issued a brief work, "About Secretly Stolen Letters Together with a Psalm Interpreted against Duke George of Saxony." George responded with a printed, "Short Report in Regard to Several Insane Lies, Which Martin Luther Had Issued." In addition he complained so loudly to the elector that Luther was forbidden henceforth to allow anything to be printed against George or any other ruler without special permission, since peace with him had been restored again. Caesar Charles, however, remained the most dangerous political enemy of the gospel truth. He had made his peace with the pope again and immediately set sights toward the "extermination of the Lutheran sect."

These and other signs of the times produced sinister thoughts especially for the politician among the evangelical leaders named Philip of Hessen. Otto von Pack, (*a scam artist*) a dismissed chancellor and adviser to Count Herzog, one day found him in such depression. As the Landgrave began to share his concerns, he responded with considerable groaning. After some hesitation, he blurted out a tale of some communication that spoke of an alliance which was determined to wage war against the evangelical leaders. He personally offered to obtain and bring the proof documents for this plan in return for sums of wealth and security. In February of 1528, he actually presented the landgrave with a copy of a contract sealed with the duke's ring. From it emerged the fact that the electors of Mainz and Brandenburg, the counts of Saxony and Bavaria, and a number of bishops, had allied themselves together to attack the Elector of Saxony. If he chose to resist handing over Luther and his followers they intended to divide his territory among themselves. Then they would drive out the landgrave and transfer his land to Duke George. There were also accurate details as to how this plan was to be carried out.

Philip took immediate steps to counter this plot. He hurried to Weimar to inform the elector of the danger, since he was the first target of this threat. Neither doubted the accuracy of the information. They immediately formed a military alliance and offered forces to head off the planned attack against their persons. The Saxon troops were already stationed in the Thuringian forest and the Hessians deployed their officers and their troops, ready to do battle. It seemed as though the bloody conflict was going to begin. All of Germany was on the move.

It was Luther who stood firm against the avalanche of war. Though he did not doubt the accuracy of the information, he refused to permit the elector to fire away. Instead he gave his "Gutachten" for the attack to be waited out and to call upon Caesar for protection, but not to go beyond forming the alliance. The other Wittenberg theologians agreed, and the leaders yielded, the landgrave reluctantly of course. He only gave in when he was convinced he could not rely on John's cooperation.

But when Philip, acting on Luther's advice, published the document agreement, which Pack had provided, the German counts were amazed. Duke George responded quickly in writing, claiming the document to be a gross forgery. Other counts submitted similar excuses. The landgrave was forced to arrest and condemn Pack, clearly in order to clear himself of any suspicion. He would later admit that he had allowed that traitor to lead him astray, who had shown himself on previous occasions to have been guilty of other such activities. The evangelicals, especially Melancthon, loudly lamented that their good work had been stained through excessive haste.

The damage, however, was not curtailed. The bitterness of the Roman counts had increased. That bitterness was being fostered by Caesar's Vice-Chancellor, Waldkirchen, who in the spring traveled from city to city and from court to court in an effort to promote the pope's agenda. Rome also reminded Caesar that he should not permit it that future generations would have to read that swarms of heretics had infested Germany under the greatest Caesar.

¶ Von Gottes gnaden Philips Landgraffe zu Hessen Graue zu Catzenelbogen
Diets Siegenhorn vnd Ryddax.



Das Bildnis Landgraffen zu Hessen.

Woodcut of Philip of Hesse by Brosamer

Chapter 37

The "Protestants"

Two imperial diets had been scheduled to take place at Regensburg. Nothing happened. One of them had too few people in attendance. The other one was cancelled by Caesar. But a new imperial diet was arranged for February 21, 1529 at Speier. The mere announcement of this diet spurred a higher level of interest. Those involved were warned that the absence of delegates would not matter. Some of the main issues that were to be on the agenda included the renewal of the churches, the call to arms against the Turk, and the disruption of the peace.

As early as the beginning of 1528 Luther had made his thoughts known about the war against the Turk. He had addressed the entire German nations with his work "Concerning the War against the Turk." He sincerely urged all of his people to faithfully and unanimously rally under the banner of God and Caesar and to advance into battle against the terrible enemy of Christendom, as this was proper for pious counts and their subjects. In it he sharply scolded those counts who had no respect for Caesar's banner and begrudged Caesar his honor, wanting to be the heroes themselves. He had bitterly mourned the fact that neither Caesar nor the counts were paying attention to their duty to protect their subjects. But for them it was Luther and the gospel who were the Turk.

Those last words were actually being endorsed by the diet which was assembled at Speier. The imperial delegates arrived at the appointed time. The clerical counts or their authorized representatives appeared in very large numbers. The diet was opened punctually. Immediately the delegates commissioned by Caesar issued the suggestion that the adopted motion of the diet in 1526, by which the enforcement of the Edict of Worms had been left up to the judgment of the individual authorities, was to be legally retracted and actual contrary measures be adopted. The members of this committee, to which these suggestions of Caesar were assigned,

were by majority of Caesar's opinion. Thus a recommendation was made which agreed with the imperial directive as follows: Those who had enforced the Edict of Worms should continue to do so. In those territories where the Edict was not honored there would be no more renewals and no one should be hindered from reading or hearing the Mass. Rights and income were not to be taken away from the ecclesiastical orders through the ban or a counter ban. Those sects who were opposed to the Sacrament of the true body and blood were in no way to be tolerated any more than the Anabaptists.

It was not difficult to guess how the vote of the diet would go, for the evangelicals were very much in the minority. In those days the report from Speier was "Christ is again in the hands of Caiaphas and Pilate." Thus it was no surprise that the original position (of Worms) was adopted without change.

It was a foregone conclusion that the evangelical proponents would not submit to this resolution. Even papal cities raised their objections against rescinding of the resolution of the diet of 1526, for they had also benefited from the peace it had brought them. If they would support the new resolution, the hands of the evangelical proponents would be tied and the Roman bishops would be free to begin to recapture what they had lost.

Still, in spite of all proposals to the contrary and in spite of the passionate statement from the Saxon delegate Minkwitz that the evangelicals would never agree to this resolution, the Catholic majority remained immovable. On April 19th King Ferdinand appeared at the diet and declared that the resolution had been adopted as proposed. After further explaining that he was carrying out Caesar's order, Ferdinand and the imperially commissioned delegates left the assembly hall.

After hearing that announcement, the evangelical estate lords immediately withdrew to a nearby room and held a short meeting there. They then returned to the assembly hall where the other estate lords were still gathered and read a protest against the majority resolution. They

argued that an attempt to overturn a unanimously adopted resolution of an official diet through a majority resolution is invalid and has no validity.

They added that they would continue to adhere to the previous resolution and conduct themselves accordingly. They stated that especially in matters that pertain to the honor of God and the salvation of souls each man would have to give an account before God for himself. Finally, they requested that if the resolution to which they objected was entered into the official minutes of the diet, their protest should also be entered. The protesters were John of Saxony, Philip of Hessen, George of Brandenburg, Ernst of Braunschweig-Lueneburg, and Wolfgang of Anhalt. They were joined by fourteen imperial cities.

But King Ferdinand decisively rejected also this petition. Hence the "Protestants" took it one step farther. On the following Sunday, April 25, with all solemnity they presented a "Document of Appeal" in which they, dissenting from the majority, appealed to Caesar for the next free council or a congress of the German nation, as the previous diet had stated.

The total hostility of the Catholic majority moved the establishment of an evangelical defense alliance ever nearer. As a result Saxony, Hessen, and the cities of Nuernberg, Ulm, and Strassburg drew up a contract already at Speier. The delegates were to discuss its implementation further when they would meet in Rotach in June.

Luther took little note of the terrible resolution of the imperial diet. When he was informed of the alliance, he disapproved of it for two reasons. First, he believed that a military alliance against Caesar was one against the higher authority, which had been established by God. It was therefore not permissible, even though that authority was as tyrannical now as it had been years before. In addition, he regarded the alliance to have grown out of human fear and trust in man's ability, rather than out of trust in God.

How different his confidence was! He expressed it in the words of his heroic hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," which he had written at this very time when the most horrible rumors had progressed all the way to

Wittenberg. Luther also wrote the hymn's melody. But he had still one more objection to the alliance, namely, the participation of a city like Strassburg. In order to understand his objection we need to turn our attention to something else of great importance that happened during that decade.

Chapter 38

The Swarming Sacramentarians

We had previously learned how Carlstadt had falsified the real presence of Christ's body and blood as early as 1524 and how the teaching about the Sacrament had become a bone of contention between him and Luther. Luther had issued a detailed refutation of Carlstadt's error in the second part of his work, "Against the Heavenly Prophets." The false teaching had appeared publicly at the beginning of 1525. From the onset Luther had described it as a piece of the swarmer's spirituality, for which "Mrs. Hulda," the human intellect, played its role. It was that very thing, that Carlstadt abandoned the Word of God and placed reason over it as its "madam" master, which was the most dangerous of what Carlstadt was teaching concerning the Sacrament. "Dr. Carlstadt," he wrote, "had now become more insane than the papists ever were. The papists have always been diligent in taking passages out of Scripture, even though they used them incorrectly. And so the papists still confess that in the Sacrament it is not reason which is to be followed, but God's Word. But Dr. Carlstadt prattles on and gathers together everything that reason can reveal, teach, or judge on the subject." Where that reasonable approach must lead Luther explained, "Because they are going down the path, on which they have no desire to honor God's Word with their faith or what they read by the simple structure of the language, but with sophistic reason, measuring and mastering it with pointed subtlety, you shall see that they shall actually come to the point where they shall deny that Christ is God. For according to human reason it sounds just as foolish to say that man is God as to say that bread is body. Since they deny the one, they will very soon also deny the other. This is exactly what the devil is looking for. He has led them away from Scripture and into their reason in order to restore all heresy."

Earlier he had written, "Let's say that a person wishes to deal with faith by first carrying our thinking into Scriptures, and then to direct Scripture according to our thoughts, only looking for that which the

majority holds in its common mind. Then no article of faith will remain. There is no one in Holy Scripture who has not been placed above reason by God. (In German: "denn es ist keiner, der nicht ueber Vernunft sei von Gott gestellet in der Schrift." *Cancelling the two negatives in this statement, it would read, " ... For everyone has been placed above reason by God in Scripture.)*

This is a basic element which reveals Dr. Carlstadt's error. He talks about faith and the Word of God in a way which reason happily and willingly accepts. Yet it sets itself against the whole of God's Word and the articles of faith." What was especially reprehensible to Luther was the way in which Carlstadt was using Holy Scripture. He did not let Scripture stand as it is, but took from it or added to it as it pleased him.

Thus Luther turned Carlstadt's use of "The flesh counts for nothing," (John 6:63) against him in this writing, "Against the Heavenly Prophets." He states that Christ does not say, "My flesh is of no use," but, "The flesh is of no use." With this statement Jesus is not openly referring to his flesh, of which he says so much more, "My flesh is real food." (John 6:55).

In contrast Luther puts forth a simple statement. He wrote, "Where Holy Scripture sets forth something to be believed, a person is not to stray from the words as they are stated. He is not to turn from the context in which they occur, unless an expressed article of faith forces a different interpretation or different setting for the Word. Otherwise what would the Bible become?" Carlstadt would make an application of a spiritual union with a reference which, in context, talks about a physical union. He did so to make it fit his own reason, or to not have to submit himself to such a passage of Scripture. Luther then sent him packing with the statement, "It would be good and pleasant for me to also do this, which I could well do when a passage proves too difficult for me, a passage which speaks of physical actions and beats me over the head to make my brain reel, that I could add to it and say, it does not apply to me; he is speaking of spiritual things. Then I would be free and would not need to give any explanation as proof. It would be easy to be a heavenly prophet. Then, if I would be forced to provide proof, I would stand there like butter in the sun. I would

sweat a few drops on this account and reply that it seemed correct to me. Thus this passage of Paul stands as solid as rock (I assume Luther is here referring to 1. Cor. 2:12ff.) ... Now, let him who is a devourer of iron rip out a notch with his bare teeth; I shall watch."

Everything which Luther had applied to Carlstadt in his writing, "Against the Heavenly Prophets," also put Luther in contention with another opponent. This opponent was Zwingli.

Ulrich Zwingli had been the preacher in the huge cathedral of Zurich, Switzerland, since January 1, 1519. Previously he had been a pastor in Glarus, then a military chaplain in two Italian campaigns, and then the assistant pastor in Einsiedeln. He, too, had delivered powerful testimony against the wrongs of indulgences, which the indulgence peddler, Samson, was selling in Switzerland. From the very first day of his service in Zurich he had explained how he wanted to make Scripture the foundation of his preaching. He immediately began to interpret the Gospel of Matthew from his pulpit. He had won the Council of Zurich to his side by way of public debates, and with their support the public divine services were restructured according to Zwingli's understanding. They had done away with processions and Corpus Christi Day. Communion was set free to be celebrated in both kinds. Monks and nuns were allowed to leave their cloisters. Priests had gotten married, as had Zwingli himself. There had also been some stormy confrontations, and only through the intervention of the government had the destruction of images been avoided. But Zwingli himself, and then with the approval of the council, had proposed the removal of the images and crucifixes from the churches. Mass was completely discontinued on Maundy Thursday, 1525. In its place there was the distribution of the host and the wine to the members of the congregation. They knelt in their places in the pews, and the preacher and the church council members carried around the wafers on their plates and the wine in wooden chalices.

But this particular type and sort of distribution is not the only peculiarity we find in the Zwinglian type of Holy Communion.

When Carlstadt had emerged with his new doctrine of the Lord's Supper, he had found acceptance here and there. In this context Luther had been informed that Carlstadt's behavior had had an impact in Strassburg. In Reutlingen, Pastor Hermann had taken Carlstadt's side, while his colleague, Alber, stood with Luther. Alber was exchanging letters with Zwingli, and Zwingli responded to his friend in Reutlingen on November 16th. What he had taught earlier in vague terms, he presented here in clear form. He stated that the breaking and eating of the bread in the Lord's Supper is purely symbolic, as Christ was to have indicated in the words of institution: "This is my body." The sense of the little word "is" was to be understood as "signifies."

Just like Carlstadt, Zwingli also supported his doctrine with the passage of John 6:63, which has nothing at all to do with Holy Communion. Through the urging of the author, copies of this letter were sent to more than 500 people. One of those copies came into Luther's hands. An open confrontation between Luther and Zwingli took place when Luther issued his work, "Against the Heavenly Prophets", for Zwingli also took a hit in that work. And when he wrote his book, "About the True and False Religion," in March 1525, what he had written to Alber could be found in that work, almost word for word.

When a controversy arose between Zwingli and a papist, who was the city secretary at Gruet, about this teaching presented in his book, Zwingli asserted that he had recent special enlightenment from God in a dream. It took place on April 13 while he was sleeping in the morning. It seemed to him as though a person had stood next to him and asked why he was not using the words of Exodus 12:11 against his opponent. Those words state, "For it is the Lord's Passover." He then woke up and remembered this direction with thanks to God. It was clear to him that he had received this reference in a miraculous way. It showed how the Holy Scripture used the little word "is" for "signifies," in that the Passover Lamb was not truly the passing over of the Lord, but it only "signified" this.

That this "enlightenment" could not have come from God we can easily see. In that passage Scripture does not use the word "passah" in

regard to the passing over of the Lord, but Scripture uses it in regard to the Passover Lamb itself. Thus in this passage not only is "is" used for "signify" as little as in any other usage, but this passage contains no figurative language at all. But Zwingli remained adamant that a divine revelation had been given to him in this dream. He tells the story himself in a "Postscript" for that particular book. From that time on he personally availed himself of that passage, loving to cite it and its false application in defense of his error.

That Latin, "Postscript about Holy Communion," Zwingli issued in German at the beginning of 1526, after a "Clear Instruction about the Evening Meal of Christ." In these writings he sought, in part, to prove through the premise produced by human reason that the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion is impossible. He did so by adding other passages of Scripture to support the idea that Christ's words of institution were to be taken figuratively. He said that since Christ's body had left earth and ascended into heaven it could not be on earth. He claimed that it was impossible for a real body, as Christ had, to be in various places at the same time. What's more, if Christ's flesh and blood were present in Holy Communion, you would be able to see and to taste his flesh. For these and other reasons he posited that in the words of institution it is clear that a person must take the word "is" as "signifies", just as in other passages of Scripture. He cites as an example where Christ says, "I am the vine" and "I am the door for the sheep," where the true meaning of the word is, "I signify the vine," etc.

Thus we essentially see the same attitudes, which we found in Carlstadt. However, since Zwingli contended his mastery over Scripture through his reason, it stands out even more. Now what Luther had declared in opposition to Carlstadt concerning the danger of the theology of human reason found its confirmation in Zwingli. He applied the same method of dealing with the doctrine of Holy Communion to other matters of faith. Both in the book, "About the True and False Religion," and in another writing issued the same year, "About Baptism," he would not allow the efficacy of baptism for the one being baptized stand as valid. Baptism was to be merely a sign of belonging to the people of God. He also claimed

to bring amazing insights to light regarding the person of Christ and his work of redemption. And he described inherited sin as a frailty of human nature.

Luther also recognized the "other spirit" with which Zwingli would speak and warned his listeners about it in his sermons. Bugenhagen was the next one to write against Zwingli. But it soon became apparent that some more powerful intervention was needed. Zwingli was rapidly gaining followers in southern Germany. Capito and Butzer were doing the same in Strassburg, while in Basel Oecolampad published a work in the spirit of Zwingli. He likewise denied the real presence of the body and blood in Holy Communion. Carlstadt had erred through a false reference to the word "this" (as in "This is my body") and Zwingli had distorted the words of institution by misreading the little word "is." However this new contesteer directed his thoughts to the word "body" and explained that this word stands for "picture or sign of the body." "Mrs. Hulda, mistress reason" stood by his side, not satisfied with the fact that the body of Christ can be present in many places at the same time.

In addition to these three false teachings concerning the words of Holy Communion a fourth was added around the same time. This came from Caspar Schwenkfeld of Schlesien and his partner, Valentin Krautwald. They simply turned the words of institution around and alleged that Christ had meant to say, "My body is this," that is, bread or food, and "My blood is this," that is, wine or a drink, as Christ had spoken elsewhere, "My body is the true food and my blood is the true drink." And in the days that followed two more false teachings were added.

We shall soon see that Luther was not merely an observer who didn't involve himself with these sacramentarians of many colors. It was immediately apparent to him that he would have nothing to do with their doctrine. He quickly understood that these men of reason were evil enemies of the truth just as much as the papists. There were two reasons why he had not already produced a detailed refutation of Zwingli and his allies. First, he didn't have the time to spare. Second, he had already left no doubt as to what he taught and believed about the Sacrament in his

writing against the Bohemian brothers, "About the Worshipping of the Holy Body of Christ," as well as in his writing against the "Heavenly Prophets."



Picture according to an old copper plate

M. Huldricus Zwinglius, Reformatur et Pastor Ecclesia. Tigurina

At the same time he was certain that he could not remain silent in regard to the teachings of Zwingli and Oecolampad. And he also wrote to the Strassburg preachers, Capito and Bucer, who had tried to keep Luther out of the public fray against them in a friendly face-to-face conversation. He had replied to their messenger, "I ask my dear gentlemen of Strassburg to diligently continue to talk so that they won't mistake the light of reason for the light of the Holy Ghost. A person can easily make a mistake in this and, when that happens, it is of the devil. My conscience is quiet and safe by remaining with the Word. If we were permitted to thus make a martyr of Scripture, nothing sure would be left for us. I will always look at those who maintain that the body is not present as being outside of the faith. I take note of the fact that they believe that I will not yield out of shame and pride. They are certainly mistaken. They say that I am also a human being. This I admit and, even though I stand all alone as I am, I will still not be easily moved away from Scripture." So Luther recognized Zwingli and his followers as enemies. As long as they held to their position, peace with them was impossible.

Oecolampad had sent his writing to a number of his friends among the brothers in Swabia. But instead of being won over to his side, they, 14 in all with John Brenz as their leader, responded with a refutation under the title, "Swabian Syngamma." Luther wrote a foreword for its German edition which was obtained by Agricola. "Well," he wrote, "since I still don't have the time to give special consideration to refute this spirit, I shall confess my faith with this introduction. Those who are willing to take this warning to heart I counsel in truth that they be on their guard against these false prophets, who call our God a baked God, a God made out of bread. ... Still, they are a patient, pliant people. First of all, this sect is so fruitful that within one year they have acquired five or six heads. First there was Carlstadt with his tuto ("this"); the next was Huldrich Zwingli with his significat ("signifies"); the third was John Oecolampadius with his figure corporis (picture of the body); the fourth inverts the text; the fifth proceeds to replace the words; the sixth has not yet been born and tosses dice with the words; the seventh may also yet appear and shuffle the cards. Each one wants to become the master in this field."

"Therefore I shall render my judgment. I know that it is true, though it will cause them great grief. For in this case I understand the faith and the devil very well. There are two reasons for their error: one, this doctrine is a very clumsy thing in the light of reason; two, they believe it is unnecessary for Christ's body and blood to be in the bread and the wine. Since they have tinted glasses over their eyes, they come trudging up to Scripture to see how they can add their reason to it and to pull the Scriptures in line with their opinion. There it stands revealed. There the words cannot be understood as they are simply stated. One must stretch them and bend them." Finally he declared, "If God grants me the time I shall write about this myself."

In accordance with this announcement, later that year there appeared from Luther's pen a "Sermon about the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ against the Swarmer Spirits" in which he further distinguished between the "two reasons for the error." (LV vol. 5, p. 5 ff.) Zwingli responded with a sermon, "Friendly Harshness and Rejection" ("Fruendliche Verglimpfung und Ableinung", "Ablehnung" could also be "Deflection", if that is the word which was meant, like deflecting and returning a ping pong ball with the paddle.) But Luther was already prepared with a longer work which he issued in the spring of 1527 under the title, "That These Words of Christ: 'This is my body,' Still Stand Firm against the Swarmers' Spirits." (LV Vol. 17,18 p. 7 ff)

"The common proverb is so true: 'The devil is a skilled, thousand-fold expert.'" So Luther began that book. He first states that Satan has ripped Scripture apart and twisted it through various kinds of false teachers, until "no one allows himself to be satisfied with it, but everyone digs himself a hole in whatever direction his snout points." So it was claimed that Scripture is not enough, but "the councils and orders of the fathers and commentary have to be added to it." Then the devil did away with Scripture completely. Now that Scripture has again been brought to light, the devil has sown his seed in secret, "so that while we battle against human vanity at the front, they fall upon our army from behind. They raise

rebellion and rage against us, so that we might all the more easily fall between two enemies."

"But he will not leave it at this. He begins with the least, with the Sacraments, even though he has already ripped up Scripture into ten pits and misleadings in regard to the same issue. But he will continue to attack more articles, as his eyes are already glistening with the idea that baptism, inherited sin, and Christ are nothing. There will once again be such a trashing of Scripture, with so much discord and so many hordes, that we might also say with St. Paul that the secret of evil is already at work. It is truly the same devil who is now attacking us through the swarmers with their blasphemy against the holy, highly honored Sacraments of our Lord Jesus Christ. They want to turn it into a mere eating of bread and drinking of wine for a 'meal-sign' or a memorial for Christians. So they dream it up, or find it pleasing to them, that the Lord's body and blood should not be present, even though the bare and clear words stand there and say: Eat, this is my body; which words still stand there, firm and unbitten by them."

I have, truly and with all diligence, opposed Carlstadt in regard to these issues. Thus, whoever does not want to err should help himself from that work against such a demonic spirit. But my dear swarmers despise me so gloriously that they do not regard me as worthy enough to give a diligent response. Thus I shall now once again take a stand against the devil and his swarmers, not for their sake but for the sake of the weak and the simple. For I have no hope that these teachers of heresy or swarming shall be converted. If that were possible, surely, enough has already been written for them to be converted. It has never been heard that a person who invented a heresy was ever converted."

"Even though I shall convert no master swarmer, yet if it is God's will for me to set forth the truth clearly and dry enough before their eyes that there will be no lack of their students being turned away, or the simple and the weak to be strengthened, preserving them from the poison. If I do not succeed in this as God wills, then I will at least with this have given witness and have confessed before God and the entire world that I am not in favor of these blasphemers of the Sacrament, these swarmers. I have never been

for them, nor will I ever be for them, if it is the will of God ("ob Gott will,"). I will have washed my hands of the blood of those souls they have stolen from Christ by misleading and murdering them with such poison. I am innocent of this and have done my job."

"Thus to despise the devil, I shall once again assert no more than the one passage, 'This is my body,' in regard to the Meal. I shall see what the swarmers have taken away from these words. The main reason for doing this is that they are slippery and inconsistent, turning themselves around and over into a thousand corners every time I ask them in God's name to stick to this passage and answer correctly. The other passages I shall leave for another time."

He then took this passage and his opponents' assertions before himself. He shone the spotlight so thoroughly on the entire matter that he could truthfully conclude with the words: "I will leave it at this for now, until they come again. For the passage, "This is my body," still stands firm against all of their swarming. Praise to God, this is what I have upheld with this current writing. God grant that they will be converted to the truth. If not, then they will have to write useless ropes with which they will tie themselves up and deliver themselves into my hands. Amen."

While Luther was writing his book, Zwingli was also busy with a paper in Latin. He directed it straight at "Martin Luther" under the title, "An Amicable Commentary about Dealing with the Evening Supper." When Luther's work, "That These Words, etc." had reached Zwingli's hands, he responded immediately in German under the title, "That These Words of Christ: 'This is my corpse' etc. Will Have Their Own Old Meaning Eternally and What M. Luther with His Last Book and the Pope's Understanding Did not at All Teach nor Prove." Oecolampad also came out with a counter argument, from which it became apparent that he had not allowed himself at all to be convinced through Luther's work, just like Zwingli.

After receiving these writings Luther knew immediately what he would do. One more time he would highlight, in detail and thoroughly, his own teaching and the objections of his opponents, and then let them rest

under the judgment of God. And so, in March 1528 appeared his large "Confession About the Supper of Christ." He explained its contents himself with the words:

"I want to take up three points in this pamphlet.

"First, we have given a warning from our side with proof that this swarming spirit did not respond to my basic statements at all.

"Second, to deal with the passages which teach about the holy Sacrament.

"Third, all of my articles of faith testify against these and all other heresies. This is so that they may not one day or after my death boast that Luther held to the same teaching as they, since they have already made that claim in a number of articles."

This confession about the holy Lord's Supper was Luther's most detailed, most thorough, and most careful of all of his works. He wrote like a person who was speaking his last words. He began by placing his pen to paper in the spirit of Psalm 25:21, "May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you ... O God." He concluded with the words, "What I have spoken here is not enough. My books will give sufficient witness, especially those which have been issued during the last four or five years. And so I ask all upright hearts to be my witnesses. May they pray for me that I might remain firm in the faith to the end of my life. If I say anything other than what God wants, I declare that it is nothing. I confess openly that it is untrue and inspired by the devil. To such an end please help me, my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, blessed eternally. Amen."

His chief enemies would not allow themselves to be converted even through this writing. Zwingli and Oecolampad at once issued responses. They even dedicated them to the Landgrave Philip of Hessen and to the Elector John of Saxony. They hoped to win both leaders over to their side. Truly Zwingli expected that in a little while all of Germany, France, Spain, and Italy would come over to his cause. In this hope, of course, he had miscalculated. Nevertheless many took his side, especially in the southern

German cities. Strassburg, Ulm, Constance, and Lindau embraced the doctrine of the Swiss theologians. The division which Satan had brought into existence was never healed. This applied especially to the leaders. And that is what Luther had foretold with saddened heart.

Finally Carlstadt also fled to be sheltered under the wings of the Swiss. With the permission of the elector he had moved to Kemberg and was working as a grocer. However, the condition under which he would be allowed to return to Saxony, namely, that he would remain silent, was unbearable for him. Since he was no longer allowed to speak publicly in Saxony, he slipped out of the territory, leaving his family behind. He did so after beginning to fight against Luther's doctrine and to deride it. He had already rescinded his retraction. Now he traveled around Holstein and Friesland, preached against the pastors of Wittenberg, and led many astray. He especially raged against his benefactor Luther, and he did so with venomous hostility. When he was no longer safe in Friesland he moved to Strassburg. We later find him in Basel and Zurich. Zwingli and Oecolampad were full of admiration for him and testified that he was far from being a sectarian. But even in Switzerland it took a long time before he found rest. He found rest at last as a preacher and professor of theology in Basel, where the former destroyer of images, but now lay member, lived out the rest of his days as a Zwinglian.

Chapter 39

The Marburg Colloquy

Since the Swiss cities of Strassburg and Ulm were included among the cities which, together with the Lutheran counts, had protested against the imperial conclusion at Speier, we now understand the second concern that Luther had with the alliance. This is the alliance to which the Protestants had agreed and concerning which there was to be more discussion at Rotach. He informed his elector that if a person were to ally himself with those people, he would also be allied with their false teaching and would become party to their strange sins. Melancthon, who at Speier had agreed to allow the Zwinglians to be included, realized his error and now stood with the rest of the Wittenberg theologians on Luther's side. The Nuernberg theologians and the city's magistrates also recognized that a person could not join with the Zwinglians without sinning.

As a result the Elector John was convinced of the rightness of his theologians' position and acted accordingly. He did, of course, send his representatives to Rotach, but with strict instruction to only listen and then to report back to him. The result was that nothing was accomplished at Rotach. A second meeting, which was to be held at Schwabach, did not materialize, and the delegates from Strassburg and Ulm who did appear had made their journey for nothing. When the landgrave attempted to negotiate with the elector via letter he also failed to get the elector to agree.

Philip, who had anticipated this resistance, had already taken steps in the meantime to achieve his goal of bringing the geographically higher cities into the alliance. Already at Speier, when the arguments against joining with the Swiss were being offered, he had thought about a reconciliation between the two sides. He had written to Zwingli about it and spoken to Melancthon face to face. When Melancthon heard of how the landgrave suggested the meeting with Zwingli should take place, he

immediately objected. When Philip also found Luther to be completely opposed to the idea, he shared his plans with the elector in a letter.

The Swiss and their allies had a different reaction to this plan. They were already halfway counting Phillip as their own and hoped to win him over completely to their side through a discussion in his presence. Indeed, their hopes went even farther. Their overestimation of Philip's intent for the council of the evangelical counts let them nourish their hope that winning the Hessian would also draw in the Elector of Saxony and the Markgrave of Brandenburg. Zwingli's eager willingness to participate in the landgrave's plans was especially based on the fact that those two were very similar in two respects. Both were politicians. Luther had always been afraid of Philip's political acumen, and Zwingli's politics would cost him his life. In addition both of them lacked a tender conscience when it came to differences in doctrine and matters of faith. That description also applied to those from Strassburg, who had earlier appealed to Luther by subtly covering up their differences in doctrine and who would now have been willing to enter into an alliance with the Lutherans without establishing doctrinal unity.

The theologians from Wittenberg understood Philip of Hessen sufficiently to know that their convictions were not in line with his understanding. They would have loved to have their elector refuse their participation in the colloquy. But, even though he strongly shared the conviction of his theologians, this count could not respond to the landgrave's pressure with a resounding, "No!" With the elector's consent Philip thus extended a formal invitation to a "friendly non-debatable discussion," which was to take place at the castle in Marburg on St. Michael's Day. Luther still held no hope that such a discussion would bear fruit. Already ten years earlier he had learned in Leipzig that such negotiations between avowed opponents would bring little gain and all sorts of regret. Still, he did not want to appear as the one who was unwilling to pursue peace, so with a resistant attitude he yielded to the ongoing pressure of the landgrave. He would, as he wrote to him, render the service he had sought. He must know very well that Luther would not

yield to Zwingli; and if they would not yield, they would part without producing any fruit.

Zwingli was afraid that the Council of Zurich would hold him back from the dangerous journey through hostile Catholic territory. And so he departed as the night shadows began to fall without taking leave of anyone, not even saying anything about it to his wife. He traveled through Basel, where he took along Oecolampad, and through Strassburg, where he took along Bucer, Hedia, and Counselor Sturm. They arrived in Marburg on September 29th. The next day the Wittenberg men arrived. This group was made up of Luther, Melanchthon, Cruciger, and Mykonius of Gotha. Luther had left the wagon at the Inn of the Bear but like the rest accepted the invitation of the landgrave, who was hosting all those invited with a brilliant reception in his castle. As Luther was walking up the steps to the castle he is supposed to have spoken Latin words on every step, "This is! This is!", as though he had wanted to keep those words firmly fixed before him. Two days after the arrival of the men from Wittenberg came Osiander of Nuernberg, Brenz from Hall in Swabia, and Stephan Agricola from Augsburg. Numerous other guests arrived who had wanted to attend the discussion. Carlstadt had also sought to be admitted. But the landgrave made his admission dependent upon the agreement of the men from Wittenberg, and they denied it.

The day after the arrival of the men from Wittenberg the landgrave had arranged a preliminary meeting with the leaders of the two sides. This included Luther and Oecolampad, and Melanchthon and Zwingli. The actual colloquy took place on the 2nd and 3rd of October. Zwingli had asked that anyone who wanted to listen should be allowed to attend. But Luther properly objected. He knew that the ability to properly evaluate both sides of this discussion would require educated minds. This was especially true because, as in this case, the arguments on the side of reason would easily win victory for themselves. It almost sounds like a joke in regard to Luther when it was alleged, as often was the case, that he had no confidence in his own position. The fact that he was more concerned that the listeners would properly understand the situation is shown as follows. Zwingli

wanted the Latin language to be used for the discussion. But some of the lords, who had to be in attendance, had little if any acquaintance with that language. Luther wanted the discussion to take place in German, which everyone could understand. So the landgrave decided that the number of listeners would be limited and that German would be used.

At 6 o'clock on the morning of October 2nd the actual discussion began. It opened in one of the finest rooms of the castle when Chancellor Feige addressed the participants of the discussion with a speech. Then Luther, who was seated with Melanchthon, Zwingli, and Oecolampad at the same table, spoke first. He wanted not only the doctrine of Holy Communion but the entire sum of Christian doctrine to be thoroughly pursued. He wanted the assurance that it was clearly understood that he was concerned not only with the main issue of the dispute, but, as he had explained in his writings, that he had found other issues among his opponents which were not completely pure. But Zwingli made the appeal that he had already discussed those things with Melanchthon and that this meeting had been called for a debate about Holy Communion. Oecolampad explained that he knew of a difference between himself and the men of Wittenberg only in regard to the teaching of the Lord's Supper. And so the discussion proceeded directly to that topic. Luther was the spokesman for the Wittenberg men. Melanchthon would only jump in here and there with brief remarks. On the other side Zwingli and Oecolampad spoke interchangeably. As this discussion of the doctrine of Holy Communion began and Luther was preparing to speak, he took a piece of chalk out of his pocket. He lifted up the velvet table cloth and wrote on the table with plain letters the words, "This is my body." Those words stood fast for him and would continue to stand fast. He did not want to allow himself to be separated from these words by anything.

On the other hand Zwingli and Oecolampad continued to refer to the words of Jesus in John 6, which they applied in an entirely false manner. They always offered their proofs by way of reason; namely that if the body of Jesus were a true body, it could not be in many places at the same time and that the physical presence of the body and blood of Christ was

unnecessary. Therefore the words, "This is my body," are to be understood figuratively. They supported this idea with other passages in which Scripture does speak figuratively. They referred to this as the testing of Luther's explanation of Holy Scripture.

Luther, however, held fast to the point that the words of the Sacrament did not need any explanation but were to be taken as they are stated. He added that a person may not pursue what they were discussing; it had to be left up to Christ how he could be present with his body and blood in the Supper, and to trust in his omnipotence that he would also verify what he had promised in his words of institution. The "bronze wall" which Zwingli always wanted to build out of John 6, "the flesh counts for nothing," Luther demolished using one little word, "my." He stated that Christ did not say, "My flesh counts for nothing," and that it would be a terrible thing to say that Christ's flesh counts for nothing. Luther also did not allow himself to be handcuffed by quotations from the church fathers. A man dare not let go of God's Word for the sake of the fathers.

So the debate proceeded, back and forth, all day Saturday and all day Sunday. The only break was observed during the morning hours of Sunday, during which the divine service was conducted. Luther preached clearly and powerfully about righteousness through faith in introducing the gospel, without reference to the doctrinal dispute. That dispute continued during the rest of the morning, and when evening began to approach it was obvious that no agreement would be reached. So the debate was brought to an end. Throughout the discussions the speakers on both sides had made strong efforts to remain polite. "Dearest lord," "Doctor," "Sir," "You Loved Ones" were forms with which they addressed each other. Only once did Luther become forceful. For when Zwingli again injected the passage of John 6 and Luther had again explained that it didn't belong in this discussion, Zwingli had countered, "No, dear doctor, this place is breaking your neck." That hit Luther like a blow to the head. He became rude and sharply replied, "You are not in Switzerland now but in Hessen. Here necks are not broken that way." But Zwingli offered that he had used the

expression as a figure of speech which was common in his homeland, and the landgrave also added calming words to this encounter.

Now that the discussion was to end Luther declared once more that he would remain in his faith. He asked Zwingli's pardon, if he had been too harsh. He too was made of flesh and blood. Zwingli also asked Luther's forgiveness for the harshness that had escaped him, asserting that he had always been minded toward peace and concord. At that moment tears came to his eyes. That was the outward conclusion. But the gap between them had not been filled, and they also expressed that fact to each other. In gratitude for his opponent's civility Luther spoke the following farewell, "We shall let you go and commend you to the righteous judgment of God. He will decide who is right. Pray God to convert you." Oecolampad replied, "May you also so pray, for you are in need of the same."

Then Counselor Sturm of Strassburg stood and addressed the landgrave who had attended the entire colloquy with great interest. "highborn count, gracious lord," he said, "Luther raised some issues at the beginning of the discussion which might be understood by some as rude or accusatory for an honorable city like Strassburg. He implied that we were not teaching correctly about the Trinity, original sin, justification by faith, and others. If I were to remain silent, then we, who were appointed by our city council to be present here, would return home and be considered to be guilty of and burdened by not only one but two or more false teachings. I therefore ask of you, gracious count, to grant Martin Butzer the chance to respond to this accusation." That took place. After Butzer had explained what was being taught in Strassburg about such things, Luther was to testify as to whether he was correct. But Luther opined that he did not wish to be the preceptor (professor) of Strassburg and could not give such testimony since he did not know how it might be misused. When Butzer then made a plea for Luther to accept them as brothers, Luther replied that he could not. He said that they had a different spirit than he. He stated that if a person simply believed the Word in one place only to criticize it and abuse it in another, then they could not be one and the same spirit.

The landgrave would have liked to have the discussion go on, even though what he had desired to be accomplished was not accomplished. But he had to admit that little more could be expected. What is more, it was reported that a dangerous illness, called the English Sweat, was approaching. As a result he decided to continue negotiations in private and allowed the colloquy to end.

But before the theologians journeyed home from Marburg, the landgrave succeeded in entering their names under a mutual confession. On the 4th of October Luther wrote to his wife,

"Dear Sir Kate, know that our friendly discussion at Marburg has come to an end. We are united on most issues except that the contrarians wanted to retain mere bread in the Supper and to confess Christ spiritually in it. Today the landgrave was asking whether we could be united or, even if we cannot be united, nevertheless, be brothers and regard each other as members of Christ. The landgrave is working mightily in that direction. But we do not wish to be called brothers or members. To be peaceful and kind, this we do want."

That is how it was. After Philip had talked with them individually he brought the parties together once more on Monday. Luther made himself available to draw up a number of articles, in regard to which they could allow themselves to be considered united. That is how the 15 Marburg Articles came to be. They dealt with the Trinity, the Person of Christ, Original Sin, Faith and Righteousness, the Word of God, Baptism, Good Works, Confession, the Higher Authorities, Ceremonies, Infant Baptism, and Holy Communion. Luther had chosen clear and plain words without rudeness. The last article reads as follows: "For the 15th point we all believe and hold regarding the Supper of our dear Lord Jesus Christ that both kinds be used in accordance with the institution. In addition we hold that the mass is not a work with which one can derive grace for another, dead or alive; that the Sacrament of the Altar is a Sacrament of the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, and that above all the spiritual participation of the same body and blood is needed by each Christian, as the Word of the

Almighty God was given and set in order that weak consciences be moved to faith and love through the Holy Spirit."

These, then, were the Articles, concerning which unity was declared, and the landgrave was of the opinion that he had finally achieved his goal. Yet he still believed that what was missing was for the parties to recognize each other as brothers, and he continued to strive toward that end, as was stated in the letter. Zwingli and his allies also pleaded for such recognition, with Zwingli tearfully extending his brotherly hand. But Luther could not do the same because of the chasm that remained. If he had he would have done that for which he admonished the Swiss, to regard those as brothers whose doctrine they had rejected. He declared that they must not have much regard for the teaching which they themselves were holding.

For Luther his doctrine was divine truth. He could not call someone a brother who, when faced with the clear words of Scripture, was persisting in rejecting the truth. He stood by his statement, "You have a different spirit than we," and rejected the brotherly hand. May God reward him as a faithful witness of the truth (see Matthew 5:12), who without regret for the friendship of man or the favor of princes paid honor to the divine Word. If Luther had softened at Marburg and yielded, he would have driven a blade through his life's work and would have allowed himself to be driven from the fortress from which he had defied the papacy. He would have agreed to give the lordship of God's Word over to human reason, the lordship he had victoriously taken away from the pope and councils. The words of his heroic song, "The Word they still shall let remain," would now have been sung with bitter disdain.

His steadfastness was not hampered by his brothers. They were completely of the same mind. The following words were added to the fifteen articles as a conclusion:

"In so far as we have not, at this time, reconciled with each other on the issue as to whether the true body and blood of Christ are physically present in the bread and wine, nevertheless each side should show Christian love to the other. They should do so as much as each conscience

can endure. Both sides should diligently beseech the Almighty God so that he, through his Spirit, will confirm in us true understanding. Amen." The Lutherans had insisted on the inclusion of the words, "as much as each conscience can endure," and Luther wished to acknowledge the love shown as merely the love which a Christian even owes to his enemies. The landgrave also achieved the agreement that the heavy war of pens would not be renewed, and Luther personally saw this as an asset. The Marburg Articles went to print immediately after the signatures had been added at the bottom on October 4th.

Luther reported on the proceedings and their conclusion to his congregation in Wittenberg from the pulpit. He praised the friendliness of his opponents and declared that it had gone much better than they had expected. "But," he said, "the fact that Christ's real body and blood are there in truth, they still cannot believe. They wish to be our brothers. We had to reject them in this at this time and could not consent. If we were to receive them as brothers and sisters, we would have to consent to their teaching. As much as we did not like to deny them, we showed that we would show love to them until God would bring them closer to us, for we should even love our enemies. Whoever wants to report this in an evil way let him do so. They remain in their belief. May God enlighten them. They patch together, adorn, and soft-pedal the idea that they are not denying the presence of the true body and blood of Christ. Thus they sound like they are of the same mind with us. They confess that those who go to the Lord's Supper truly partake in the body and blood of Christ, but spiritually in that they have Christ in the heart. They do not want to allow the participation in the physical elements. We have put upon their conscience the fact that we have God's Word and his text in our favor, which they do not. Therefore the issue stands as hopeful. I do not say that brotherly unity exists, but a charitable, friendly unity. This is what they lack and seek from us in a friendly manner and we will serve them. And may you now diligently pray that it will also become brotherly."

The report of his opponents sounded different. They boasted, as Luther had cautioned, that they had overpowered the Wittenberg men at

Marburg. This did not agree with the fact that their own followers had vilified them because of the concessions which they had granted to the Wittenberg men in the Marburg Articles.

Großer Gemeindegottesdienst
halten für die Gemeindegottesdienst
zu Marburg am Freitag
3^o Octobris 1527

Martinus Luthers
Johannes Jonas
Philippus Melancthon
Andreas Osiander
Stephanus Agricola
Joannes Brennius
Johannes Oecolampadius
Huldrychus Zwinglius
Martinus Bucerus
Casspar Hechio

Facsimile of the title and the signatures of the Marburg Articles

Chapter 40

Coburg and Augsburg

Philip of Hessen had failed to achieve his goal. Yes, a meeting of the evangelicals did take place once again in October at Schwabach. But only representatives from the Elector of Saxony and the Markgrave of Brandenburg appeared there with a confession. According to the requests of the counts, membership in the alliance was contingent on signing this confession. These articles, 17 in number, have been known since that time as the "Schwabach Articles." (LV vol. 17,18, p. 266ff) Luther had drawn them together for the counts from the Marburg statements while at Schleiss on his journey home from Marburg. They had requested his presence at Schleiss.

Since the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion had been clearly and specifically confessed in the 10th Article of this confession, the cities of Strassburg and Ulm withdrew. At yet another meeting held in Schmalkalden in November, the landgrave had to recognize the failure of his attempt, drop his plan, and be satisfied to join the Lutherans.

Evenso this alliance had also lost its value for Philip because of the position which the elector had taken by following Luther's advice. That was in regard to the question of whether it was permissible to mount armed opposition against Caesar. Luther had answered that question with a resounding "No!" in a number of Gutachten. His reason for this was that the elector would have seen himself bound by his conscience. As long as Caesar was the Caesar, you had to respect his authority. He would have lost his authority only if he had been deposed from his office. The principle that power could be removed with power was not valid, for no one may be his own judge. If Caesar should become a persecutor we have no right to oppose him, no more than a count in turn may assist him in persecuting his subjects. We are to be strong by doing nothing and hoping. These were the

ideas which Luther further outlined in his Gutachten and which the elector considered to be correct. The Markgrave of Brandenburg and the city of Nuernberg, along with their theologians, took the same position. Thus the armored alliance was disavowed. Instead, they commended themselves to trust in God regarding their concern for what Caesar might do, from whom they could expect the worst.

Had Luther regarded it proper to encourage war against Caesar he would have been very effective. This was shown when, immediately after the time at Marburg, news of the terrible siege of Vienna by the Turks reached the German people. In response Luther preached a powerful warlike sermon against the Turks, in which he urged all Germans, young and old, man and wife, servant and maid, to defend themselves and to risk their money and property, body and life against the enemy in the name of God. He urged all of them, without exception, to aid Caesar. He did so even though he was aware that the hand which would remain free through the loss of the Turks may well then be turned against the evangelicals. In fact, even as Philip of Hessen wanted to take advantage of the situation caused by the Turkish threat by denying any kind of help for Caesar until he agreed to peace with the evangelicals, Luther would not yield. He patiently went about sowing his seed. He continued his visitations and in so doing kept up his spiritual care which he had begun for the field. He left it to God what kind of weather he would provide.

#

On February 24, 1530 Carl V was ceremonially crowned as the Roman Caesar in Bologna. In accord with this event he swore his oath to serve as the defender of the papal throne. Nevertheless, he announced on January 21 from the same city where he was crowned that a diet was to be

held in Augsburg on April 8. That sounded very conciliatory. "Caesar Carl will personally appear in Augsburg in order to settle all issues," Luther wrote to a friend. In the statement he had released, Caesar had recommended to "allay repugnance, commend past wrongs to our Sanctifier, and that all of us be diligent in that each one be open minded, and have the intent and aim to hear, understand, and to live in reconciliatory manner." Caesar's brother had also begun to correspond with Elector John, and he was aiming toward an amicable agreement. How serious he was we can derive from Ferdinand's own letters. For example he had written to Caesar, "I shall negotiate as long as possible and not decide anything. But even if I should have reached a decision there would still remain enough pretexts for its correction."

However, even though the evangelicals could expect little in the way of goodness and love, the upright elector felt it was his duty not to let the opportunity for a public confession before Caesar and empire go to waste. And so he issued a written request on March 12th, the first day after he had received the invitation to the diet. In it he asked that those counts who were his spiritual brothers personally attend the Augsburg diet with him. The next day, "since it is very likely that such a diet was desired rather than a council," he directed his Wittenberg theologians, Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, and Bugenhagen, to set up the articles "about issues in which our divisions ... show themselves clearly" in accordance with the instructions from the royal invitation. They were to be prepared to personally hand over their work to the elector by Oculi Sunday (the 3rd Sunday in Lent). He commanded such so that he and his brothers in the faith would know what they would be able to concede in good conscience at the imperial diet. He also requested that the theologians Agricola and Spalatin, along with the men of Wittenberg except for Bugenhagen who as pastor had to remain at home, join the elector when he set out for Augsburg. If it happened that the preachers were not allowed to appear at the diet then they, especially Doctor Martinus, should stay at the Coburg. This was so that the count could get their advice and opinion "as quickly as possible as the situations would be developing."

Jonas, who was away doing visitations, was recalled immediately, and the Wittenberg men went to work. They handed the results of their labors over to the count at Torgau a few days after the determined date. Their work was in the form of individual essays along with a copy of the Marburg-Schwabach Articles.

The elector and his company began their journey on April 3rd. They arrived at the Coburg on the 15th. Easter was being celebrated there, and Luther preached twice on the first day of the festival and once on the second. Melanchthon immediately made use of the time at the Coburg to lay out the confession, using the Torgau Articles as its base. Melanchthon, Jonas, Spalatin, and Agricola joined the count on April 23rd, when he resumed his journey to Augsburg, where he was expected to arrive before the end of the month as Caesar had directed in his letter. The count would have especially liked to have had Luther with him, but he did not dare to risk it. That the appearance of the "outlaw" would have caused him great difficulty is shown from the fact that the city excluded Luther in the letter accompanying the elector and his company. This was the wording: "Yet, we herewith exclude anyone, whom your electoral grace may have in his company and would bring to this location, who has either transgressed against the peace of the land that was established by the imperial majesty and/or the holy empire, and has fallen under a penalty or penitential correction, which we are not authorized to reconcile." However, in order to have him near by and to be able to receive his advice, the elector arranged for Luther to remain at the Coburg. As the rest journeyed on, Doctor Martinus was brought to the fortress above the city during the early morning darkness. While he was in quiet hiding he was again to grow a beard, as he had done at the Wartburg.

The largest residence in this castle had been prepared for this valuable guest and he had a key for every room. To this day the room which he used as his living room is on display. The count, who was concerned for this doctor's health, had arranged the best of care for him.

Luther's table partner from Wittenberg, the 24-year-old Magister Veit Dietrich, was provided as a companion. What's more, Cyriacus

Kaufmann, a Wittenberg student who was a son of Luther's sister, was with them. Besides these quiet guests there was also a small force of soldiers occupying the castle. They were often known to make so much noise that Luther had to insist that they would provide the quiet that his work required.

In regard to that work for which he would be spending his time, Luther wrote on the very first day of his stay at the Coburg, "We have arrived at our Sinai. But we wish to make a Zion out of it and build three shrines at this place: one for the Psalms, one for the Prophets, and one for Aesop."

Since the chest with his books had not yet arrived, he could not begin the construction of those shrines on that day. He therefore took a tour of his new surroundings, which he called "the wilderness," "the desert," or "Gruboc" (Coburg written backwards). He also referred to his location in his writings as "out of the kingdom of the birds," or "out of the imperial diet of the Malt-Turks," since an army of jackdaws, crows, and other birds had roused his attention by playing their games before his eyes. "They are great and mighty lords," he wrote, "but what they desire I do not know as yet. But this much I have gathered from one of their preachers. They intend to carry out a powerful campaign and battle against wheat, barley, oats, malt, and all kinds of rye. Many of them will become knights and do mighty deeds."

"And so we sit here at the imperial diet. We listen and watch with much pleasure and love how the counts and lords, along with other elements of the empire, sing and revel so cheerfully. But it really makes us happy to note how knightly they wag their tails, wipe their beaks, and overrun the defenses as they conquer and apply their honor against the rye and the malt. We wish them luck and health, that in the end they may be impaled on the lath of a fence. But I believe that this is no different from what the sophists and papists do with their writing and preaching. I must have all of them before me in one group so that I might hear their lovely voices and sermons in order to recognize them as a useful nation which consumes everything on earth, and how they cluck to pass the time."

As soon as his books arrived he started on his planned work. By the end of May he could report that he had almost finished the translation of the prophet Jeremiah. He wanted to have the rest of them translated by Pentecost. So we find him occupied at the Coburg in the same way as at the Wartburg, translating the Bible for the German people. When he got to Ezekiel he began with a special edition of chapters 38 and 39, the prophecy of Gog and Magog. He did this with side notes. This is how he explained the actions of the Turk, that furious enemy whose wrath visited upon the German people went straight to his heart. So he wrote to Jonas on the 20th of June, "I can scarcely be more amazed at how Ferdinand, who is able to forget about the Turk, can even forget about the misery of his own subjects. If so many people were killed or enslaved because of me I would perish in one hour, especially as my own conscience would accuse me of my neglect." With the exception of Ezekiel which remained unfinished, all of the prophets had been translated by the time he left the Coburg.

The second shrine was being built for the Psalms in that Luther had the 118th and the 117th printed with commentary. (See LV vol. 11,12 p. 141 ff. And vol. 3 p. 1 ff.) He claimed the first of these as his own in his dedication to the Abbot Frederick in Nuernberg. "As much as," he wrote, "the entire book of Psalms and the Holy Scriptures are also very dear to me, as they are my only comfort and life, nevertheless, I come to this psalm and state that it must be mine by name. Its words have proven their worth to me very often. It has helped me from many a great need, from which neither Caesar, kings, wise men, or saints, could have helped me. It is more precious to me than the honor, possessions, and power of the pope, the Turk, Caesar and the whole world. I would never have the desire to trade this Psalm for all of them together."

Luther also occupied himself with the Psalms as he presented an interpretation of the first 25 Psalms to Veit Dietrich, which Dietrich wrote down and which his sons later had printed.

The third shrine Luther erected was for the old writer of Greek fables, Aesop. He translated a number of Aesop's tales into German, because he believed that a person could find in them the best teaching,

warnings, and instruction in very simple words, for anyone who knows how to use them.

But that was far from all produced by Luther's pen at the Coburg. Soon after his arrival we found him occupied with an "Admonition to the Spiritual Leaders Gathered at Augsburg for the Imperial Diet." Copies of this work reached Augsburg as early as June. So Luther, who had to keep his person at a distance, sent his powerful spirit forth among the people, with whom he once again desired to have a very serious discussion. In it he admonished the bishops to not allow this opportunity, which God was giving them through this imperial diet, to blow away in the wind.

He addressed them as follows: "We do not need an imperial diet, advice, or a master. We know that you cannot do better; indeed, you do not understand how to do it as well. It is not that we are perfect ... but we have the correct rules ... for ourselves." He showed them that they blasphemed by looking at his teachings from the wrong perspective and that they ought to be more grateful for them than they would admit. "In summary, we know and you know that you are living without the Word of God, but we have the Word of God. Therefore it is our highest desire and most humble plea that you would give honor to God, and that you would become aware, repent, and improve your ways. If not, then take me to yourselves. If I live, I will be a plague to you; if I die, I will be your death. For God has appointed me against you. I must, as Hosea says, be a bear and a lion for you on your way to Assur. You will have no rest under my name until you either improve or fall." He also prayed to God that he would help them find the knowledge of the truth through his spirit. But if they remained stiff-necked and went to ruin on account of this, he did not want to be guilty of their blood.

Luther issued some additional short writings from the Coburg. First among them was his letter, "About the Interpretation and the Intercession of the Saints." (LV vol. 17, 18 p. 273 ff.) In it he defends the small word "alone" in his translation of Romans 3:28. In this regard he explained the basic principles which he followed in his translation of the Bible. At the same time he showed how little reason the papists had to criticize his

interpretation. "I know well," he wrote, "and they know less than the miller's donkey what sort of skill, diligence, reason, and understanding is involved in good interpretation, for they have not tried it. If I were to ask them how the first two words of Matthew 1, "liber generationis," should be translated, none of them would have been able to respond with a single cackle. Yet those great colleagues now stand in judgment over my entire work." He then told how his New Testament had been copied nearly word for word and distributed under someone else's name in the land of Duke George, while his translation had been strictly forbidden. But their bombastic style and the brazen manner in which those people wanted to be his master, he turns against them by demonstrating that he doesn't need to be mastered by the papists. He wrote, "As Paul boasts against his so-called super apostles, so I will boast of myself over and against these asses. They are doctors? So am I. They are preachers? So am I. They are theologians? So am I. They are debaters? Me too. They are legates? I also. They write books? I also.

"And I shall go on with my boasting. I am able to translate the Psalms and the Prophets. Not they. I can interpret. They can't do that. I can read Holy Scripture. They can't do that. I can plead. They can't. And I shall now digress. I can handle their own dialects and philosophy better than all of them put together. I know for certain that none of them understand their Aristotle. If there is one in their number who correctly grasps a preface or chapter in Aristotle, I would have to be convinced. I am not exaggerating. For from very early on I was raised and experienced every bit of their ability and know full well how deep and wide it is. Hence, they know very well what I know and that I am adept in everything that they can do. Still these unsavory people deal with me as though I were a stranger to their abilities, as if I just arrived this morning." Therefore he would not be mastered by them. "If there is any mastering to be done I shall do it myself. If I don't do this, let them leave my interpretations alone. May each man do whatever he wants for himself, and may he have a good year."

Another precious little treatise from the Coburg is the pamphlet, "That Children Should Be Kept in School." (LV vol. 4. p. 107 ff) Here Luther appeals to the heart of Christians by pointing out how necessary Christian schools are and how important it is for children to learn. "Truly, the Gospel and Christendom," he wrote, "must remain until the Day of Judgment, as Christ says at the end of Matthew, 'Behold I will be with you till the end of the world.' But through whom is the gospel to be preserved? Neither oxen, nor horses, dogs, nor swine shall do it. Nor will wood or stones. We humans will have to do it. For this office has not been assigned to oxen and horses, but to us humans. But from what source shall such humans be taken except from those who have children? If you don't want to raise your child to do this, nor another and so on, if no father or mother will give his child for this purpose, what will happen to the spiritual office and profession?"

But if the children were to learn something there had to be schools. "I would like to see," Luther wrote, "from what source will pastors, teachers, and sextons come after three years. Are not we the ones who need to take action? Do not especially the counts have to apply themselves so that both elementary schools and schools of higher learning should be properly established? If they do not, there will be such a shortage that three or four cities will have to be assigned to one pastor and ten villages to one chaplain." Then he shows that there should also be decently educated people for other offices and occupations. At the same time he complained bitterly how earlier, when the pope was ruling, all money chests were open. But now, when it is made clear that schools needed to be maintained for the sake of Christ, all money chests are locked with iron chains. In this context he prayed for a short period of blessing lest he would have to endure punishment for such ingratitude. He closed, "Come now, my dear Germans, I have told you often enough. You have heard your prophet. God grant that we follow his Word to the praise and thanks of our dear Lord for his precious blood, which he so lovingly offered for us. May God protect us from the terrible vice of ingratitude and of forgetting his kindness. Amen."

All these and other writings Luther was producing at a time when he was enduring weeks of physical and spiritual suffering that made all labor nearly impossible for him. (In the "Luther Public Library" ["Luthers Volksbibliothek"] we also find the following treatises from this period: "A Retraction about Purgatory," vol. 25,26 p. 167ff.--"About the Keys," vo.l. 3, p. 62ff.--"Admonition in Regard to the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ," vol. 1, p. 65ff.) He was suffering from the pressure of his blood to his head and roaring in his ears. He nearly fell into unconsciousness a number of times. As a result he had to lay Ezekiel aside for a time and apply himself to easier tasks. Once he wrote, "It is now already the third day that I have no desire, nor can I look at a single letter. It doesn't work any longer. Getting older is adding to this." He had already chosen a spot under the cross in the chapel where he should be buried, if the end of his life were to come while he was at the Coburg. He often asked the pastor for help, to absolve him from his sins and serve him with the Sacrament.

In addition to this he derived strength daily from pondering God's Word and diligent prayer. Veit Dietrich reported how he daily dedicated at least three hours to prayer, during times which were appointed to focus on studying. "Good God," he said, "what a faith bespoke his words! He pleads before God with such reverence and faith and hope that it seems as though he is talking with a father and a friend."

Luther experienced deep grief when he heard the sad news that his aged father had passed away on May 29th. He had sent him a letter of comfort when he had heard that his father had become seriously ill; and he heard the news of his passing away on June 5th. (LV vol. 7, p. 158ff) "Yes, my father is now dead," he said to Veit Dietrich when he had scanned the letter. He then retreated to his chamber with his book of Psalms to seek comfort from God's Word and in prayer plus release through his many tears. "It is right and proper," he wrote to Melanchthon that same day, "that I, his son, weep for such a father, through whom the Father of mercy created me and by whose sweat he fed me and developed me into the person which I happen to be. Yet I am happy for this, that he has lived at this time and has seen the light of the truth. God be praised in all his works

and counsel eternally. Amen." Now Luther also shows himself to be a man of strong faith even in his pain. He did not permit his sorrow to show from the next day on, and Veit Dietrich wrote to Luther's wife, "He forgot about his father during the first two days, even though it caused him great sorrow."

Luther was also distracted from his work through many visits while he was at the Coburg. He was actually considering having his residence changed so that the "pilgrimage" would stop.

One of his visitors at the Coburg was the renowned theologian Urbanus Regius, who met him for the first time at the end of August while traveling through the area. He called that day which he spent in Luther's presence "the most precious day of his life." We will later refer to a visit by Martin Bucer shortly before his stay at the Coburg came to an end.

In the midst of this busy time, in addition to the previously mentioned publications, Luther found time to carry on extended correspondence (for a selection of these Coburg letters see LV vol. 8, p. 7-44). It was simplest for him to send letters to those at his home. Two of his students, Hieronymus and Peter Weller had been living at his home during his absence. Luther wrote friendly letters to both of them. In one of those on June 19th, he included the well-known letter to his little Hans, who was a student of Hieronymus Weller. It follows here:

"Grace and peace, my dear little son!

I love it when you like to learn and are diligent in prayer. Keep doing so, my little son. When I come home I will bring along a nice circus.

"I know of a pretty, happy garden, to which many children go with golden coats. They pick up many apples under the trees, pears, cherries, yellow and purple plums. They sing, skip around, and have fun. They have ponies with golden bridles and silver saddles. So I asked the man who owned the garden whose children they were. He said that these are the children who love to pray, study, and are good. I then said, 'Dear sir, I too have a son. His name is little Hans Luther. May he also come into this

garden so that he could eat those nice apples and pears and ride such nice ponies and play with these children?' The man then said, 'If he likes to pray, study, and be good, then he can along with Lippus and Jost (Philippus and Jodocus, sons of Melanchthon and Jonas). Then when they all get together they may make music with pipes, drums, and lutes, and may also dance and shoot with little crossbows.'

"Then he showed me a well maintained meadow in the garden which had been manicured for dancing. Pure gold pipes, drums, and neat silver crossbows hung there. But it was early and the children had not eaten yet. I could not wait for the dancing, so I said to the man, 'I want to go quickly, dear sir, and write about all of this to my son, little Hans, that he will diligently pray, study hard, and be good, so that he will also be able to come into your garden. But he also has an aunt Lene. He has to bring her along too.' Then the man replied, 'So shall it be. Go and write to him.'

"Therefore, dear little Hans, learn and pray bravely and tell Lippus and Jost that they should also learn and pray. Then you will also come into the garden. Hereby may you be commended to the almighty God. Greet aunt Lene and give her a kiss for me. The year 1530. Your dear father, Martinus Luther."

His dear wife was also regularly writing to her Sir "Doctor." She sent him a picture of his little daughter, Magdalena. He pasted it across the table at the other wall of the dining room so that he might be cheered up by looking at it.

But Luther directed most of his thoughts from the Coburg to Augsburg. He would have very much liked to have gone there with the rest. "But there was that one who had told me," he said, "be quiet, for you have a bad voice." Yet that one, the elector, had also clearly stated that if his presence would be necessary he would be asked to come. At least we often read in Luther's earlier letters how his suspicions regarding his summons were growing. This is how he wrote on the 19th of June, "I am sitting here in this wilderness and there is little hope that I shall be called to the imperial diet." The next day he wrote to Jonas, "If I am called I shall go without any

doubt. Yet I am considering whether or not I should go without being summoned." A little more than a week later he expressed the same idea to Melancthon, "If I should hear that your situation is turning bad and even becoming dangerous, it would be difficult for me to restrain myself from flying to you to take note as to how terribly the devil's teeth are surrounding you."

Though Luther was not permitted to travel to Augsburg to defend the truth, he approached God all the more diligently with his fervent prayers for the sake of the victory of the Gospel. "He was holding the rod and the staff of God in his hand. He stood face to face with God and lifted his holy and heavy hands in supplication to the Lord Jesus Christ that he would move strongly to weaken the papacy. He cried to God day and night that he would preserve and strengthen those true descendants of Joshua, those German knights, with his Spirit; that he would comfort them and surround them with his angels to keep watch over those men, who together with the angels were arrayed on the battle field at Augsburg against the antichrist for the honor of his name, the holy gospel, and his Kingdom..." wrote old Mathesius. Veit Dietrich once heard him pray, "I know that you are our God and Father. Therefore I am certain that you will defeat the persecutors of your children. If you do not do so, then the danger is looming for you as much as it is for us. The entire matter is yours, for we have just been compelled to attack. May you then preserve us."

But Luther continued to stand faithfully alongside his brothers in faith at Augsburg as he encouraged them. This he did even as the issue continued to unfold. When the elector and his theologians had arrived on May 2nd, they learned that Dr. Eck had shown his hostility against the evangelicals by drawing 402 statements from their writings and forwarding them to Caesar. He had also seen to it that they were widely disseminated in the German language.

According to these statements he accused the Lutherans of falling away from the faith in nearly all of their teachings. The plan of Melancthon, which he had largely developed already at the Coburg, did not well lend itself to refute these accusations. What was now important

was to demonstrate from the basic teachings of Christianity that what they were teaching was the same as Christians of bygone ages had taught and confessed, and then to also show clearly which were the chief teachings of the Roman church from which it was necessary to turn away.

Therefore Melanchthon, with the help of the other Saxon theologians, Jonas, Spalatin and Agricola, took great care to provide much greater detail for the apology than had been planned. It was to serve as the confession of the evangelicals before Caesar and the empire. The elector sent this plan to Luther at the Coburg on May 11th along with a letter which read, "Since you and our other scholars at Wittenberg had drawn up your articles in line with our gracious thought and desire, articles which are controversial in their religious nature, we want you to be aware that Magister Philip Melanchthon has now revised them further and has put them into the form which we have now sent to you. It is our gracious wish that you will not consider it burdensome to review and ponder them. Where you find it acceptable, deal with these by adding or subtracting according to your thoughts and make your notes in the margins. Luther responded on May 15th: "I have reviewed Magister Phillipen's apology. It pleases me completely and I do not know how to improve or change it. It would also not be proper, for I cannot proceed so gently and quietly. May Christ, our Lord, aid us so that it will yield much and great fruit as we hope and pray. Amen."

The elector had yet another question for Luther to answer. Caesar still had not appeared in Augsburg but was continuing to conduct the empire's business at Innsbruck. Yet it had already been reported that he would confront the evangelical officials with a request that they do no preaching at Augsburg. How should they respond to such a request? The old electoral Chancellor Brueck decisively advised them not to agree with it. It was different with Luther. He wrote to the elector that they should humbly make another request to Caesar in regard to preaching without a prior hearing. "If this does not help, then the authority has the right to be obeyed. We have done what we should do and are therefore excused." This "Gutachten" was not in keeping with the elector's thinking. "I don't

know," he is to have said, "whether my scholars are fools or I am." So when Caesar actually did make his demand from Innsbruck he sent it back.

But that did not settle the issue. Caesar finally left Innsbruck on June 6th and was ceremoniously led into Augsburg on the 15th, following the various guilds in glorious procession. He ordered the four counts of Saxony, Brandenburg, Lueneburg, and Hessen to appear before him that same evening and repeated his request concerning the preachers. When the landgrave explained the counts' refusal to comply, he became angry and remained determined for his will to be done. At that point the landgrave George stepped forward, he explained that before he would abandon this teaching and the Word of God, Caesar would have to sever his head from his body. Caesar responded in an appeasing manner, "O Lion of a count, not your head, not your head," and finally dismissed them. They then allowed their preachers to calmly carry on with their preaching during the next four days. They only yielded when the Catholic preachers were also commanded to cease preaching and Caesar established that there would only be Scripture readings. But even before this they had let the procession of the elevated host pass by without participating, in spite of Caesar's repeated requests.

Luther knew nothing about what had transpired. Since receiving the elector's letter he had received no others from Augsburg, and he complained bitterly about it. "I don't know if I should think that you are indifferent or disrespectful, since you know how I thirst for letters from you while in this desert," he wrote to Melanchthon on the 5th of June. On the 7th he continued, "I see that you all decided to make me a martyr by way of your silence. So be it. Thus I inform you that I shall compete with you from now on by remaining silent." He called his friends in Augsburg "Squire Silencers." Yet messengers repeatedly arrived from Augsburg on their way through the Coburg. Each time his conversation with them went as follows, and as he later complained, "Are you bringing a letter?" The answer, "No." "How are the Lords faring?" The answer, "Well."

The first letters to arrive from Augsburg after several long weeks of silence made no mention of things going well. Melanchthon was full of

heavy concerns. He expected dangers from the papists, from Caesar, from the Swiss, from the landgrave, who he still feared would assert himself on behalf of the Zwinglians. He begged Luther to write an urgent letter to the landgrave, and Luther did so. He affectionately urged the landgrave not to share in the sins of those people. Since Melanchthon also understood how angry Luther was about his silence and the silence of the others as well and would be sending his messenger back empty, he found even more to grieve about.

But now the letters were coming from Augsburg quickly, one after another. So Luther could no longer sustain his silence with which he had wanted to punish his friends. He discounted any justification for Melanchthon's concerns. On June 20th he wrote to Jonah, "Philip allows himself to be burdened by his philosophy and nothing else. For this matter is in the hand of Him, who so plainly assures us that no one shall take them out of my hand." Eight days later he wrote to his depressed friends personally. "From the depth of my heart I despise your sky-high worries which are consuming you, as you have put it. It is not the enormous size of the danger but the enormous amount of unbelief that rules in your heart which is to blame. If our stance is wrong we shall recant. But if our stance is true, why should we recant, in contradiction to his promise and make a liar of the One who bids us to be as calm as we are when we sleep?" He wrote, "Cast all your worries on the Lord." "The Lord is near to all broken hearts that call upon him." "Is he saying these things into the wind? ... It is your philosophy that is torturing you, not your theology."

During the time which passed between those two letters, the hands of the clock were moving on and were being watched with trepidation. Caesar had opened the Imperial Diet on June 20th. In the presentation which was offered by the Palatinate count, it was pointed out that if there had been obedient submission to the Edict of Worms the error would not have been that damaging. But all kinds of ungodliness had come forth because of the disobedience. That type of blame did not sound very encouraging to the evangelicals. But the opening speech also offered the encouragement, "That everyone, in connection with the declaration of the

imperial diet, take responsibility to kindly offer his thoughts, opinion, and understanding of the declared error and schism and to also avoid any possible abuse when writing in German or in Latin. On Wednesday, the 22nd, it was declared that Caesar would consider the entire issue on Friday. Therefore putting everything in its proper order was very important.

As he was preparing the confession, which was being written in Latin and German, Melanchthon had been making improvements all along. This was his practice in everything that he wrote.

On Thursday all of the evangelical counts, heralds, counselors, and theologians met. The "apology" was read in Latin and German and both copies were signed. On Friday the time of the imperial meeting was spent on other business. The papal side would have much preferred that the public reading of the confession would have been denied. This mirrored the desire they had had years earlier already, when they tried to undermine Luther's taking the witness stand at Worms. But the evangelical representatives insisted that the public reading be allowed on Saturday afternoon.

In order to limit the number of listeners Caesar insisted that the reading be held in a hall within his own living quarters at the bishop's palace, instead of in the large hall of the imperial diet building. And so it was. The Saxon Vice-Chancellor, Christian Beier, read the German copy of the confession from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Caesar's presence. He did this with such a loud voice that all of the 200 people who were in the hall and the numerous listeners who had assembled in the courtyard outside the hall could understand everything.

Luther was overjoyed when he received the news of this huge event. "Jonas wrote to me," he said to a friend, "that our confession which Philip had prepared was read in Caesar's own living quarters ... and those in Caesar's party are already talking about their answering. Many are inclined toward peace, and are standing against the sophists, Faber and Eck. A bishop, in the presence of two witnesses, is said to have made the comment, 'That is the pure truth. We cannot deny it.'" And to another he

wrote, "I am filled with grateful joy to have experienced this hour, in which Christ has been publicly proclaimed in such a large assembly with the most beautiful confession through so many joyful confessors. Now that Word is fulfilled, 'I will speak of your statutes before kings.' It will also be fulfilled, 'and I will not be put to shame.'" (Psalm 119:46)

And to the elector Luther wrote, "Our opponents are of the opinion that they have done very well in having the royal command of his majesty forbid preaching. But those miserable people do not realize that through the reading of the written confession more preaching has been done than might have been accomplished by ten preachers. Isn't this a beautifully fine jewel of wisdom that M. Eisleben (Luther) and others have to remain silent; but the elector, together with the other counts and lords, stand up with their written confession and freely preach before the royal majesty of Caesar and the entire empire as well. This is happening right under their noses and they have to listen to it and not speak against it. I might say that truly the rule against preaching was broken as a result ... for Christ will not be silent at the imperial diet, and though they may be wacky, yet they had to learn more from hearing this confession than they could have heard from ten preachers for a whole year."

The impressions which the confession made in Augsburg were varied. Some, who had been led to believe terrible things about Lutheran doctrine, had been brought to a better understanding. Others were embittered, especially because of how things had worked out. It would have been fine for them if Caesar had immediately reached for his sword. "If we were Caesar," a furious papist was heard to have said, "we would turn this black ink into bloody red rubrics." To which another responded, "as long as the red would not squirt under your eyes." The Archbishop of Mainz counseled peace. In their letters Luther's friends had described him to be doing so. This resulted in Luther writing him in a printed letter to give such advice as that of Gamaliel (Acts 5:34ff) to his friends in faith. "But if neither peace nor unity results," he wrote, "and if they reject the advice of Gamaliel and of the Apostles, and the example of the Jews, then let go whoever does not wish to remain, and whoever rejects the confession let

him be angry. Such a one will find plenty of the anger and discord for which he contends."

Caesar also wished to avoid the type of violence against which Luther warned, even though the papal delegates would have liked to drive him in that direction. He recommended instead that a refutation of the confession be prepared in his name. After that would be read, he would make his final decision on this entire matter. A commission of Roman theologians was appointed, which included Eck and Wimpina, Tetzels old friends. They went to work immediately. It took them a long time to produce anything. When they finally handed in their refutation, Caesar found it so abominable that he shredded and rolled the 280 pages to such an extent that only twelve pages remained. Those lords had to revise their work five times. When, on the 3rd of August, their "confutation" was finally read in the same hall in which the "confession" had been read, it was still so excessively deplorable that Caesar was ashamed to give a copy to the evangelicals. Nevertheless he required them to submit to this refutation of their teaching; if not, he would have to move against them as is expected of a Roman Caesar, the protector and administrator of the church.

The result of this requirement was becoming apparent almost immediately with a small example. When Philip of Hessen learned about this he requested that Caesar release him from the Imperial Diet. When his request was denied he rode off without permission on the 6th of August. Soon it was reported that he was gathering troops.

Caesar was not ready to use force at this time, nor were a number of the Catholic leaders. Since the Turk was still at the border new negotiations were introduced. Seven men were chosen from each side, who "were to take up the entire matter and have friendly discussions among themselves." When Luther heard that news he first was amazed, but then he expressed his disapproval. He couldn't imagine anything that could still be conceded from the confession, that "soft-treading document," nor did he consider any negotiations from the papal side as honest. "I know indeed," he wrote to Augsburg, "that through these negotiations you will always eliminate the gospel. But I am afraid that if we do not do what they want they will later

blame us for having broken our word. In summary I have complete dislike for this negotiating, because unless the pope wants to give up his papacy it is totally impossible. It was enough for us to have given an account of our faith and have searched for peace."

In another letter he wrote, "I hear that you, sure of being disappointed, have undertaken a noble task to try to unify the pope and Luther. But the pope does not wish it and Luther begs to decline. Therefore take care lest you spend your efforts in vain. If you are able to accomplish your goal contrary to the will of both, then I will soon follow your example and reconcile Christ with Belial."

When this great commission could not find unity and when any possibility for success was frustrated by Duke George adding himself to that commission, it was reduced to three members from each side to exclude that enemy of peace by this well-mannered deportment. The evangelicals had, with some disapproval, allowed themselves to be ready to negotiate. So Luther also warned his friends to be on full alert. "Should it happen," he wrote, "that you would concede anything against the gospel, you will not do it by the grace of Christ. Have no doubt that they will lock the eagle (the gospel) in some kind of a sack, and don't doubt for a minute that Luther will come to set this eagle gloriously free. As surely as Christ lives that is what will happen."

What Luther had indicated gently, namely that his friends might be brought to the point of taking something away from the truth, others were saying more openly. They spoke of how they had strong fears of this happening, and the evil suspicion was voiced most loudly against Melanchthon. So complaints from the direction of Nuernberg were brought to Luther's attention. Landgrave Philip had also expressed such a fear in a letter to Luther. Here Luther again had to intercede. He wrote to the people of Nuernberg, "I have committed this matter to God. As such I regard it as having kept this issue under my own control. Thus no human being will take anything away from me, nor could anyone ruin this, as long as Christ and I remain as one." He also comforted Melanchthon in regard to

the evil slander which Melanchthon had received, though he was not without fault.

In the meantime the futility of any continued negotiations was becoming more and more clear. The elector also wanted to take his leave. He was staying only to answer the decisive opposition of Caesar. When the information arrived from Caesar that the pope was willing to grant the demand for a council under the condition that until it convened everything would go back to the former manner of doing things, the confessors rejected that condition without hesitation. Caesar held this against them and declared that he wanted to take up arms. Just a little earlier he had written to the pope, "It would now be the use of force that would produce the most fruit."

The negotiations were again renewed, and once again reports of a lack of trust were being circulated against Melanchthon and his partners at Augsburg. Luther realized that he would need to have a very serious word with them. "Many important men on our side are bringing me some very frightening news," he wrote to Jonas by way of Nuernberg, "as though you have betrayed everything and would concede too much for the sake of peace. Therefore, Jonas, let me know very soon if something has happened in the meantime, something I don't want. I am almost bursting with wrath and indignation. I plead with you to break off the negotiations and come home. They have the confession. They have the gospel. They may allow it if they so desire. If they do not, then they may go to their own home."

Although in a loving way, Luther wrote similar sentiments to Melanchthon, who had been the reason for the aforementioned apprehension. Melanchthon had openly expressed his concern that the Catholic bishops would be given certain allowances over the evangelicals. He had already here shown that he was striving to find doctrinal formulas which both parties could accept without damage to their conscience, that both would apply common sense through those statements. In light of this Luther had written to him as early as August 26th, "You write that you had forced Eck to confess that we are justified through faith. O, if only you had not forced him to lie." Such an example of bungling was sharply

condemned by the determined men. Baumgaertner, the delegate from Nuernberg, reported to his home city, "At this imperial diet no one has up to this point done more damage to the gospel than Philip."

But before the two letters which Luther had sent through Nuernberg had been forwarded, they had become unnecessary, and the people of Nuernberg sent them back to Luther. For on the 22nd of September Caesar announced a temporary closure of the diet. He explained that the "confession" of the group, which had departed from the pope had been refuted. They would be given time to reconsider their return to the unity of the church until the 15th of April the following year. Truly false practices were to be inspected until a council would be held within a year. In the meantime nothing new was to be printed in regard to matters of faith, hearing of confession in cloisters was to be allowed, and the opposite side should draw no one into its sect.

The evangelicals did not accept this closing statement. They rejected having been declared a sect. For proof that their "confession" had not yet been refuted they referred to the apology of their "confession," which Melanchthon had produced in response to the written "confutation". Chancellor Brueck was delivering it to the Palatinate Count Frederick, in order to deliver it to Caesar. In response to a wink of an eye from King Ferdinand, who had spoken to Caesar in secret, that writing was returned to Brueck. Caesar wanted to hear nothing about a justification. When on the next day the evangelicals held fast to their rejection, they were told that nothing would be changed. If they wished to accept the statement of closure it was there to be had. If not, then Caesar and his followers would undertake the destruction of their sect without delay.

Even then the evangelicals held fast to their position. They welcomed the time permitted to think about terms. In any event they would have an opportunity to consider what else could yet be done. They were finished at Augsburg. The elector immediately took his leave from Caesar. He accepted his farewell with tears in his eyes. "Cousin, cousin, I would not have foreseen your fall into your dear prince's displeasure." ("Ohm, Ohm, das haette ich mich zu euer Liebden nicht versehen.")



Picture of Elector John (Johann der Beständige 'The Constant')

according to a painting by Cranach

Immediately after that the elector left Augsburg, a city which he had honored with his presence. He had spent every moment as the model of a loyal count, who gave to Caesar what belonged to Caesar, and every moment as a steadfast Christian, who gave to God what belonged to God. Counts Ernst and Franz of Lueneburg and Wolfgang of Anhalt also began their homeward journey that same day. So what Luther had already requested in his letter of July 15th finally happened. He had written, "Always back home, always home!" Two months later the returning traveler, Elector Prince John Frederick, visited him at the Coburg and Luther greeted him in the way one welcomes the first swallows.

The count then offered to take Luther along home with him, but Luther graciously declined. His reason was that he would rather stay to receive the others and to wipe the sweat off their brows after their hot bath.

Exhilarated, Luther now informed his Kate that he hoped to be with her again within 14 days. The news of how the imperial diet concluded for the Protestants did not depress him. "He shall speak with them in his wrath," he wrote. "They want to have it this way that things happen to them according to their will. We are excused and have done enough. Their blood comes upon themselves." To his elector, however, he sent a letter of comfort on October 3rd. "I rejoice in my heart," the letter read, "that your electoral grace has come out of the hell at Augsburg by the grace of God. And though human disgrace is seen as extremely sour along with their god, the devil, we do hope that God's beginning grace will also henceforth prove all the stronger and in greater measure for us. Truly they also are in the hand of God, just as much as we are. Make no mistake about this. They accomplish nothing nor do anything unless God wants it that way; they also shall not kink one hair on our heads or on anyone's head, unless God himself does so by his power. I have committed the matter to my Lord God. He has begun this, this I know. He will also complete this, this I believe."



Luther's Letter Seal



Luther's Coat of Arms

(¹At this visit John Frederick brought along a precious ring for Dr. Luther for sealing letters. He had the ring made for him. The coat of arms, which Luther had chosen for himself on an earlier occasion, had been engraved in stone on this ring. Luther had personally explained his seal in a letter to his friend, Spengler, in Nuernberg: "The first shall be a cross, black, within a heart, which was to have its natural color. It was such, so that I would be reminded that it is faith in the crucified one which saves us. If a person believes from his heart he is justified. Though it is a black cross, it mortifies and should also hurt. Nevertheless, it will allow the heart to retain its color; it does not spoil its nature, that is, it does not kill but keeps alive, for the righteous will live by faith, but it is by faith in the crucified. Such a heart should be centered in a white rose. This indicates that faith gives joy, comfort, peace, and, in short, is set in a white, happy rose, for the peace and joy is not as the world gives. Therefore this rose should be white and not red, for the color white is the color of spirits and all angels. Such a rose is set into a sky blue field, so that such joy in spirit and faith is a beginning of our future joy in heaven. It is already now comprehended therein and grasped through hope, but not yet revealed. And around such a field is a golden ring. It shows that such salvation in heaven lasts forever and has no end. It is also precious above all joy and possessions, just as gold is the grandest, most precious metal." Luther's two rings are still included in this footnote.)

The elector and his company arrived at the Coburg on the day after the date of this letter, and Luther traveled with them on the 5th of October. He took along with him the beard which he had allowed to grow on his face while he was in his "wilderness." They rested in Altenburg until the

afternoon, and Luther preached. But Melanchthon was already once again hard at work. He wanted to reverse that well-calculated lie in the closure of the diet, the lie that the evangelical confession of Scripture had been refuted. He wanted to do a thorough job of it in his apology of the confession, which was intended for later publication. As he was still writing while at table that Sunday, Luther took the quill out of his hand and reminded him that God can also be served by celebrating and resting. The following Sunday Luther preached once more in the elector's residence at Torgau. From there he returned home to Wittenberg, safe and sound.

Chapter 41

The Turk, God's Peace Corps for the Reformation

While the Saxon contingent was traveling home Caesar continued the Imperial Diet at Augsburg with a Catholic majority. It was finally declared to be over on November 19th. Caesar did not mitigate a single issue of his earlier decision. However, setting April 15, 1531 as an end to the period of thinking things over had also not changed. He would have liked to use force immediately, but even among the Catholic representatives there was no agreement on this point. Still, the imperial chamber court established the decision to attack the evangelical counts immediately if they were to violate the terms of the closure. The procedures for administration of that closure had already been decreed, namely that the evangelicals were to relinquish the church properties of which they had assumed ownership. In order to secure even stronger support for Caesar's commands, his brother Ferdinand was to be chosen as the King of Rome. The Catholic electors were persuaded to be won over to this plan with necessary well-sounding arguments. The election was finalized on January 5th despite the documented protest by the Saxon elector.

In order for them to give further consideration about their stand toward Caesar and empire, the representatives of the evangelicals had been allotted time to "think it over." However the instructions that had been given to their imperial chamber court made it necessary that they come to a common understanding among themselves immediately. Hence the following met on December 22, 1530 at Smalcald: The elector of Saxony, Duke Ernst of Lueneburg, Philip of Hessen, Wolfgang of Anhalt, counts Gebhard, Albrecht of Mansfeld, and delegates of George of Brandenburg along with a number of other cities. The first decision in respect to the forthcoming procedures was that those bonded would be "allies to one

another with counsel and aid." On the other hand, it was not fully clear what would be done, if Caesar would carry out his threats and take up his sword. The lawyers asserted that their understanding was that Caesar, per se, did not possess unlimited power. Thus, if he should overstep his authority, the individual leaders were allowed to enforce the law with their own military defense to confront Caesar's attempt, in accord with Caesar's own recognition of their rights.

But before they made any further decisions they wanted to hear the "Gutachten" of their theologians. Those individuals had not been confronted with the matter in this light before. As a result when Luther, Melancthon, and Jonas submitted their "Gutachten," it was structured so as to declare that as theologians they were unable to render a verdict. It was a question for them whether Caesar's authority was such as was claimed by the lawyers and then whether the current situation could be judged under Caesar's claim. Thus they would have to leave any decision up to those who practiced law. For according to Scripture they would be unable to prevent the counts from proceeding under such a decision.

To those of Nuernburg, who were rather shocked by this "Gutachten" Luther wrote: "I have said my piece. I give advice as a theologian. If the lawyers can show that this is permissible under their laws I leave it up to them. Let them proceed according to the law. The lawyers and the experts must take this responsibility upon themselves." This was not what Duke George and the leaders of Nuernburg wanted. Nevertheless, all the rest met again in March 1531 at Smalcald and formed a military alliance for the purpose of jointly defending themselves, should one of them be attacked on account of the Word of God. For those in attendance who were not able to join this alliance immediately it was expected that they would do so soon thereafter. Since those who were living in the higher regions (that is in southern Germany) had provided a somewhat satisfactory confession regarding the Sacrament, their cities were allowed to join. More meetings were held during that year. Soon this newly established alliance existed as a power that demanded respect. Their fame as a new alliance spread so wide that even Catholic imperial counts and foreign governments

sought some sort of association with this alliance. However, this new alliance did not provide the connection they sought mainly for political reasons.

Luther now allowed the lay people and the rulers to function. He did not write against them. But he did make sure that his German Christians clearly understood how they were to regard the issues of the situation at that time. He did this with two editorials issued at the beginning of 1531. The first he titled "Regarding the Presumed Edict of Caesar, Issued after the Imperial Diet of 1530, Comments by Dr. Martin Luther." The "Presumed" referred to the assessment of the closure of Caesar's edict. In his introduction Luther stated that he did not wish to hold the "upright Caesar" responsible for it. His loyal and submissive German heart caused him to express himself in that manner. During all those years he put only the best construction on the actions of the head of the highest form of government, and he did so with affectionate intent. "Pray especially for Caesar, this admirable youth," he had written to one of his friends from his residence at the Coburg. From that same location he had written to the electoral prince, "Yes, Caesar is an upright heart, worthy of all honor and virtues. One cannot assign him too much honor in regard to his person. But, dear God, what can any person do against so many devils, unless God assists with his power."

Luther wanted to aim his blows against the powerful lords, the real "crooks and criminals," the pope and his legate, not against Caesar whom he pictured as the pious Carolus, as a sheep among wolves. He described the edict as a work full of lies and malice. "First of all," he wrote, "they boast that our confession stands refuted by the holy gospels. This is such an obvious lie that they themselves know it is a disgraceful falsehood." In regard to the producers of the edict he said, "God blinds them to such an extent that they cannot put down a single word without slapping themselves in the face and exposing themselves. Truly, I could not rebuke or disgrace them as strongly as they disgrace themselves with this deplorable lying edict."

In regard to himself, he would not allow himself to be forbidden to bear witness. In the aforementioned introduction he referred to his doctorate. He stated that in his pursuit of that degree he had to take an oath to teach Holy Scripture faithfully. "In my pursuit of such teaching," he went on, "the papacy fell on my path and wanted to keep me from witnessing. As a result it was obvious that what was happening to the papacy would get even worse. They shall not be able to defend themselves against me. In God's name and through my call I shall tread upon the lion and the cobra and trample the great lion and the serpent (Ps. 91). This was ordained to begin during my lifetime and will be completed after my death. St. John Huss prophesied about me as he wrote from his imprisonment in Bohemia: 'They shall now roast a goose (Huss = goose); but in a hundred years from now they will hear a swan sing, whom they will have to endure.' And so it will be, God willing."

"This is my comment regarding the edict. If I live and someone inflicts me with a somewhat deeper scratch, I can gently finger-nail the itch and rub it (German: "... krauet mich jemand, so kann ich es noch bas jucken und kitzeln."). In the meantime let no one be frightened because of this edict. May our God put an end to such blasphemy and sanctify his name again so that his kingdom may come and his will be done. Amen. Amen. May the blasphemous papacy and everything connected with it fall into the abyss of hell, as John proclaimed in Revelation. Amen. Whoever would be a Christian, let him say so. Amen."

The other treatise which Luther produced in response to the imperial diet he entitled, "A Warning from Martin Luther to His Dear Germans." He stated that he had encouraged the church leaders to peace at the imperial diet. He had also asked God to help them in that regard. But they were like Pharaoh and kept at it until there was no hope for them any longer. They just kept escalating their quarrels with threats and defiance. Oh well, perhaps it will come to war or rebellion. "In regard to this I am bearing witness before God and the entire world that we, who are being despised as Lutherans, did not counsel or encourage to such an end, nor did we give any cause for this. But through it all and without ceasing we

prayed to God and called for peace. ... We have taught and lived quietly until now. We did not draw a sword, burn anyone, murder or rob as they have been doing all along and still are doing. Since we have a clear conscience in regard to such conflict, and the conscience of the papists is guilty ... hence let things happen and proceed in the worst way, be that war or rebellion as God's wrath shall decree it. If it should result in rebellion, my God and the Lord Jesus Christ can rescue both me and those with me. Should he not rescue us, thanks and praise to him.

"I have lived long enough, have well deserved death, and have begun to verbally avenge Christ my Lord against the papacy. They shall properly feel Luther after my death. As to what is happening now ... should I be murdered by such papal and church rebellion, I shall take with me a whole heap of bishops, priests, and monks. So it shall be said that Dr. Martinus was taken to his grave with a great procession. He is a doctor above all bishops, priests, and monks. Therefore they shall also go with him on his back to the grave. That is how the event will be told and sung. For it is safe to calculate that whoever kills Luther in the rebellion will not spare many of the priests. And so we shall pass away together. They, in the name of all devils, will be heading to hell. I, in God's name, will go to heaven.

"Secondly, we know that they will not start such a war in God's name. ... We shall speak a blessing over them, a blessing such as follows. As holy as you are on God's behalf and as great a reason as you have to go to war, so great may be the fortune and the victory which God gives you. Amen.

"Thirdly, since it did not seem proper for me to go to war or to counsel or to incite for war as a spiritual preacher, I have most diligently up to this point been counseling much more for peace instead of war. The whole world has to testify such about me. Since our enemies do not want peace, but war, it comes to this that a war does take place. Hence, I shall now also lay down my pen and be silent. I will no longer throw myself into the work, as I would do in the coming rebellion. ...



Picture of Caesar Carl V according to a copper plate by Behams in 1531

"Furthermore, if it has come to war according to God's plan, I do not want to have scolded, nor let them be scolded for being rebels, those who decide to defend themselves against the murdering and blood thirsty papists. Instead I shall let it go on and let it happen. When they shall call it a defensive emergency, I shall direct them to take action justifiably and so

point them out to the judges. ... It is not that I desire to incite or arouse anyone to such defensive opposition, nor justify them. That is not my office, even less is my judging or rendering a verdict. A Christian knows well what he is to do. He is to give to God what belongs to God and to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. But he is not to give to the blood hounds what does not belong to them.

"O that disgraceful imperial diet, the likes of which had never been carried out or heard of. ... What will the Turk and his entire realm say about this, when they hear of such incredible events in our kingdom?" Luther went on to shed light on all of the procedures during the imperial diet and the bloody recommendations, with which Caesar was intended to be won over. "But," he said, "what a huge result would have taken place if Caesar had started the whole affair with murder as the Satanic papal advice had urged. That would have produced an imperial diet where not a single fingernail would have remained of either bishops or counts, especially in such dangerous times."

However, if Caesar were to start a war against the evangelicals, how should the subjects of the papal counts react if they were drafted to carry out that war? In this regard Luther replied, "This is my true advice. If Caesar should call for some to serve and to wage war against us on behalf of the pope's purpose or against our teaching, as the papists are currently maliciously boasting and defying, I do not agree with Caesar in regard to this. In such a situation no person should permit himself to be drafted for war or be obedient to Caesar. Instead such a person can be certain that God clearly forbids him to obey Caesar in such a situation. The first reason for not obeying Caesar in going to war in such a case is this: you as well as Caesar took an oath in baptism to uphold the gospel and not to fight against it. ... The second reason is that you in such a war are taking it upon yourself, making yourself a participant and are indebted before God for all of the abominations which have been committed by the papacy and are still being committed." He then followed through further on this topic and concludes, "If you are to be advised about this, you have enough of a warning herewith that in such circumstance you should not be obedient to Caesar or to your

count. If you follow this advice, good; if not, then let it be and proceed boldly to the fight. Christ will not be afraid of you and shall, God willing, remain in your sight. Should he remain he will give you plenty of fighting. In the meantime we shall see who will overpower the other and hold the field!

"This I want to tell my dear Germans as a warning, and, as I said earlier, I also testify that I do not want to incite anyone to war, rebellion, or self-defense but I advise only peace. But wherever our devils, those papists, do not wish to keep the peace, but with hardened, abominable impenitence rage against the Holy Spirit, still want to go to war, and as a result get bloody heads or even fall, I want to have given witness publicly that I did not do this nor did I cause this. They want it that way. Their blood will be on their heads. I am innocent and have done my work faithfully. Henceforth I shall let him be judge who will judge, should judge, and can judge. He will not hesitate nor fail. To him belongs the glory and honor, thanks and praise, eternally. Amen."

That was a valiant word from a faithful German to his dear countrymen during those dangerous times. It surely made a strong contribution for clear understanding for both friend and enemy. Caesar did not deserve the great confidence which Luther expressed in him in this treatise. A German count, (Moritz of Saxony, who in the Smalcald War repaid that spiteful Caesar with his own coin when he, in service to Caesar, dealt treacherously with his own blood relatives and brothers in the faith) whose thinking was less upright and noble than Luther's, did know Caesar better. The fact that Caesar and his brother did not succeed in pleasing the pope, as they had desired, by delivering Germany shrouded in a stream of gunpowder, had its reason. The reason was the Turk.

The authorities in Constantinople were well informed about the disunity in the nation of Germany. The question of whether Caesar had reached terms of peace with Luther had been put before the ambassadors of Ferdinand, and the appropriate language which the Sultan offered against the king obviously had to be uncomplimentary. The king also knew what the Turk knew, namely, that a strong defense was impossible without

a united nation. For that reason it was Ferdinand himself, who urged his brother, Caesar, to bring about a better agreement with the evangelicals. The time limit which had been given to the evangelicals had passed quietly. Now Caesar began to take steps toward a closer relationship. When the evangelicals explained that they would agree to nothing until the procedures, which had been attached against them, had been knocked down, they were dealt with as they demanded. At that time Suleiman Pascha moved toward the boundary with 250,000 men. He inquired about the way to Regensburg, where the German leaders had once again assembled since the 17th of April.

The king was still carrying on correspondence with the empire's enemy. Even though there was some possibility of reaching a favorable conclusion, there was no improvement in the unification of his people within the empire. The Protestants were also not in agreement in regard to several points, namely whether they should insist: first, that everyone who might join with them in the future be included in the overall peace; second, that in the article about the (proposed free) council they should insist on including the words, "according to the pure Word of God." Luther advised them to ease up on both points, lest the hoped for peace be jeopardized. It was his opinion that the added stipulations would not change anything in later discussions, and that gracious peace should not be rejected because of some sharply and accurately sought details.

Peace was finally achieved at Nuernberg on June 23, 1532 according to which, "No one was to insult the other pertaining to his faith, nor insult him for any other reason, or assist someone else in using force against him; but everyone was to treat the other (the opponent) in true friendship and Christian love until the time of the joint, free Christian council." Both of the previous stipulations were omitted in accordance with Luther's advice. At the imperial diet this peace was confirmed by Caesar on the 2nd of August, in spite of the strong opposition of some counts, especially Duke George. In return for this peace the evangelicals had promised to provide Caesar with strong assistance against the Turks.

It was high time. The Turk had already marched through Hungary as though it belonged to him. While the heroic Nicolas Jurischitz was holding the enemy from advancing further, a German army of 80,000 gathered near Vienna. The evangelicals especially had provided more for the prepared defense than they had promised. How amazing the sight of such an army was to Suleimann, who had set his hopes on the disunity of the Germans! He declined to engage in battle and gave the order to signal retreat.

Luther greatly rejoiced over this new development regarding the Turk. He especially wished every success to "dear, upright Caesar."

Soon after the confirmation of the peace of Nuernberg the gallant Elector John entered his eternal peace. On the 15th of August he had a stroke while he was participating in a hunt at Schweinitz. Luther was quickly sent for. On the 16th he found him still alive but unconscious and saw him depart before the day had ended. The following Sunday the body of the count was interred next to the body of his brother. Luther preached the funeral sermon on 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Let us pay attention to some of his simple, heartfelt words, spoken at the graveside of his dear "Duke Johannsen." "We should diligently give thanks to God for the grace that he took hold of our dear elector through the death of Christ and embraced him with his resurrection. You know what kind of death he experienced at the imperial diet at Augsburg. I do not wish to praise him for his highly virtuous character, but let him remain as a sinner, as are all of us. We are also reminded to go along the same path and desire to hand over to our Lord many large sins that we might remain under the forgiveness of sins. Therefore I do not wish to make our dear, territorial lord so very pure, even though he has been a very upright, friendly man without falsity. In him I have never, throughout my life, sensed a degree of pride, wrath, or jealousy. He could forgive and bear everything easily and was gentle beyond measure.

"I shall proceed past this his virtuousness. If at times he failed as a commander why should we wish to hold that against him? A count is also a human being and is surrounded by ten devils all the time, whereas an ordinary man is plagued by only one devil. All of this we shall now leave

alone. Let us remain in this that we praise him like St. Paul praised his Christians, namely, that God led him to be with Christ. We do not want to view him in regard to his temporal death, but in connection with Christ's death and the count's spiritual death, with which he imitated Christ. For all of you know how he died like Christ two years ago at Augsburg. He suffered the real death not only for himself, but for all of us, when he had to swallow all of the evil soup and poison which the devil had served him; that is a truly horrible death, with which the devil grinds a man. There our dear elector confessed Christ's death and resurrection publicly before the whole world, and he remained true to that confession. He risked his land and his people. Indeed, he put his own body and life on the line. So should we now seek comfort for ourselves that Christ died and our dear count was captured and fell asleep in the death of Christ."

Following the peace agreement at Nuernberg the outward work of the reformation took a new powerful upswing. It proceeded under the new Elector John Frederick of Saxony, as it had begun under his predecessors. Provisions for preachers were being tended to as proper arrangements were made. The monastic properties were assigned in part to the church and in part for the common good. Efforts toward more strict discipline were being pursued in congregations. There was still cause for complaint regarding the populace due to their intemperance and gluttony. Thus even Luther himself felt compelled to direct his public preaching at those, who during the time of church service gave offense with their loud carousing in the bars. Luther also knew how to speak of the "amassers of goods on their farms," the "Squires in the villages," and the "city bullies," who only wanted to hear what their ears were itching for. Among those who loved to hear the Word he also recognized many despisers of that Word. When in 1535 his old friend Link expressed the desire to return to Saxony, he answered him, "How would it be if I myself would wander in your direction or go into exile?" His advice regarding difficult questions continued to be in demand. But now he, as well as Melanchthon, was being spared from directly participating in visitations.

The work of the church in Hessen was conducted in a similar fashion. Urban Regius served as the watchman for the same work in Lueneburg. The directive to the church from the duke usually began, "We, by the grace of God, Ernst, Duke of Braunschweig and Lueneburg, and Urbanus Regius, the doctor of Holy Scripture, bid...etc." Diligent work also continued in the territory of Mark Brandenburg. Since 1532 the territory of Anhalt had been won for the reformation through the joining of the three brothers, Georg, Johann, and Joachim. Luther's friend Hausmann became the court preacher there, and Luther himself carried on regular correspondence with those three "righteous counts of princely and Christian character."

Wuerttemberg was likewise incorporated into the religious peace in 1534. With the help of Philip von Hessen, Duke Ulrich had regained ownership of his territory, of which Austria had previously deprived him, through a "coup de main." Luther had protested this action of Hessen, but Philip would not take back his actions. When Ferdinand acknowledged what had happened in the form of a peace agreement, Luther recognized it as a gracious unfolding of God's providence. The reformation was formally installed there under the leadership of the active theologian Schnepf. The University of Tuebingen became a center of Lutheran theology.

Reformation was also being carried out in Pomerania at this time. Duke Barnim had already been a friend of Luther for quite a long time. We saw him earlier near Luther at the Leipzig Debate. Now in conjunction with Duke Phillip, his nephew, he borrowed Bugenhagen from Wittenberg, who was talented and experienced in such matters. In spite of opposition from some nobles and distinguished spiritual leaders, an evangelical church system was put in motion throughout the territory. Duke Philip then married the sister of the Saxon elector. Luther officiated, using a form which had been introduced by him.

Chapter 42

A Free Christian Council

The same time that the papal trash was being swept out in Pomerania, Pope Clemens VII died in Italy without having held the proposed council. He had announced its convening already in 1532, but he had postponed it on the day of his death. His successor was Paul III, who assumed the papal throne in October and appeared to be eager to take the issue of the council more seriously. During that same year he sent his delegate, Cardinal Vergerius, to Germany in order to make arrangements with the German counts as to the location where the council should be held. The papal ambassador also arrived at Wittenberg on November 6th. He, together with his 21 horses and one donkey, was honorably welcomed into the elector's castle by the castle's commander. That very evening he invited Luther for a meal, and when he declined, he extended an invitation to Luther and Bugenhagen for breakfast the next day.

Early in the morning, as he was about to meet the papal legate for the first time since 1518, Luther asked for his barber. It was the Sunday after "All Saints." The barber came. When asked why he had requested a shave so early Luther replied, "I am to come to the holy father, to the pope's messenger. Therefore I have to adorn myself so that I might appear young. Then the legate will think: 'Oh, Luther has caused so much misfortune and is still so young, what will he do in the future?'" When he had been shaved he put on his best clothing and put his golden chain around his neck. When the barber commented, "Dear Doctor, that will anger them," Luther opined, "That is why I am doing it. They have angered us more than enough." As he was seated on the wagon with Bugenhagen on the way to the castle he joked, "Behold, here come the German pope and Cardinal Pommeranus. They are God's tool and work."

While in the Cardinal's company during their conversation at table he played, as he himself reports, "the annoyed Luther, blaming him because

they were not at all serious about holding a council; and," he continued, "if you do indeed hold a council you will not deal with sound doctrine but with useless things: caps and bald heads, eating and drinking." "He has hit the main issue," the legate said to the man next to him. But Luther went on and reminded them that the papists truly needed a council. "We," he said, "do not need a council. Through the Holy Spirit we know what we believe. But if you desire it then hold a council. I will come, God willing, even if I were to learn that you were to burn me." "Where should the council be held?" the legate asked. "It makes no difference to me," Luther fired back, "in Mantua or Padua or Florence." "Would you come to Bologna?" Vergerius asked further. Luther responded, "To whom does Bologna belong?" The legate answered, "The pope." Luther replied, "Great God, did the pope steal this city as well? Very well, I will even come to you there." Vergerius then said, "The pope would not refuse to come to you in Wittenberg." To which Luther answered, "Very well then, he shall be welcomed by us." The legate continued, "How would you like to see him, with an army or unarmed?" Luther responded, "However he wishes, we shall receive him in whatever manner he arrives." When asked whether priests were also ordained here, Luther replied, "Of course! The pope does not ordain any for us." Then, pointing to Bugenhagen, he said, "There sits a bishop whom we have ordained."

After the meal the legate rose from the table. As he was mounting his horse he called to Luther once more: "See to it that you keep yourselves prepared for the council." "Yes, my lord," Luther countered, "with this, my neck and my head."

So Luther parted from the legate, who himself converted to the Lutheran doctrine ten years later. However, that discussion at the table lets us plainly see how the situation had changed dramatically since 1518.

Conditions improved even more for the Protestants during the following years. The Smalcald League was gaining more and more members. Both Pomeranian counts, Ulrich von Wuertemberg, and a number of cities joined. The League which originally was to last for six years

was renewed to last ten. Two foreign kings now also seriously considered a political leaning toward the League.

One of these was King Franz of France, Caesar's old enemy. All of a sudden he was acting very Lutheran. He talked about reformation and wanted Luther and Melanchthon to come to France. Melanchthon wanted to go. When the elector refused to allow the visit and reproached him for having entered so deeply into negotiations, he was very upset. But the elector was surely correct. He wanted to avoid disrupting the peaceful unity that existed in the empire by bonding with Caesar's enemy. The count without any reservation expressed why he did not want to have Melanchthon entrusted with such an assignment, "It is no small concern that should Philip go to France he would leave so much unfinished business behind him that Dr. Martinus and the other theologians could not take care of it."

The other royal foreigner, who was leaning toward the League, was King Henry VIII of England. He had planned to divorce his wife Catherine in order to marry a lady of the court (Anne Boleyn). Catherine was an aunt of Charles V. The reason he gave for his action was that his conscience would not allow him to justify his marriage since the queen had been the wife of his late brother. Hence his marriage was not permitted according to Scripture. Since the pope, not wanting to make an enemy of Charles V, would not honor the divorce, Henry renounced the pope. He then sent negotiators to the universities throughout Europe in order to win a "Gutachten" in his favor.

The theologians of Wittenberg were also approached for that purpose. However, they responded that the king would have to keep his spouse. In 1535 the king's ambassadors arrived at the Saxon court and they also approached the Smalcald League. Negotiations were conducted into the following year. They revealed the fact that the king was united with the Lutherans only in that he also was an enemy of the pope. Nothing became of this union, and the negotiations had already gone on far too long for Luther. At the beginning Luther had supported the king's entreaty, in which he expressed his desire to deal personally with Melanchthon in England

about doctrine. But later he became convinced that the king was a Lutheran just as little as the pope. Luther regretted the expenses which the elector had to bear as a result of these negotiations.

In place of these negotiations another movement for peace came into existence in 1536.