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Meet Martin Luther

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MEET MARTIN LUTHER: AN INTRODUCTORY BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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Introductory Note: The following biographical sketch is very brief, given primarily to provide the nonspecialist in Luther studies with an introductory outline of the Reformer's career. Inasmuch as the details presented are generally well-known and are readily accessible in various sources, documentation has been eliminated in this presentation. Numerous Luther biographies are available. Two of the more readable and authoritative ones in the English language which may be mentioned here are Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), and Ernest G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1950). These or any number of good Luther biographies may be consulted for a detailed treatment of Luther's career. Following the sketch below, a chronological listing is provided of important dates and events in Luther's life and in the contemporary world from the year of his birth to the year of his death.

Just over 500 years ago, on November 10, 1483, Martin Luther was born in the town of Eisleben, in central Germany (now within the German Democratic Republic or "East Germany"). He was the oldest son of Hans and Margarethe (nee Ziegler) Luther, who had recently moved to Eisleben from Thuringian agricultural lands to the west. It appears that before Martin's first birthday, the family moved again—this time a few miles northward to the town of Mansfeld, which was more centrally located for the mining activity which Hans Luther had taken up. In the course of time, Hans became one of the civic leaders in Mansfeld and eventually achieved a considerable degree of affluence as a mining and smelting entrepreneur.

In Mansfeld, the young Martin also had his introduction to schooling, during the years of about 1488 or 1489 to 1497. This was

in a "Latin school" using the standard resources and procedures of the times. Then he spent a memorable year in Magdeburg under the tutelage of a Catholic-Reform group known as the Brethren of the Common Life. This group, which had originated a century earlier in the Netherlands, was well known for its high spiritual ideals, its practical Christianity, and its concern for quality education. It was also in Magdeburg that Luther was much impressed with a monk whom he had seen begging in the streets. This was Prince William of Anhalt, who had given up his earthly possessions to take up the monastic life; and now as a monk, he mortified his body to the degree that Luther, in later recollection, described him as looking "like a corpse of mere skin and bones." "Whoever saw him," Luther reminisced, "was deeply moved and felt ashamed of his own secular way of life."

The three-year period from 1498 to 1501 found Martin in the Thuringian city of Eisenach, near his ancestral homeland. There he studied under an excellent schoolmaster named Trebonius, who gave Luther advanced training in Latin that could hardly have been surpassed. As he attended school in Eisenach for these three years, Martin probably resided at the home of Kunz and Ursula Kotta, at least for a time; and he boarded at the home of the Schalbes, whose son Henry he tutored. At the Schalbe table there was also another frequent dinner guest, John Braun, vicar of St. Marien Church and head of the nearby Franciscan monastery. With this monk Luther established a close and enduring friendship.

Next came Martin's liberal arts training at the University of Erfurt. The city of Erfurt was one that bustled with economic activity. And in religious establishments (churches, cloisters, chapels, etc.) it was so abundantly supplied (some 100 of them!) that the city was nicknamed "Little Rome." Its university was one of the oldest in the German lands, having been founded in 1392, with a reputation in those lands second only to that of the University of Cologne. To be a student at the University of Erfurt was a privilege indeed.

Here Martin Luther completed both the Bachelor's and Master's degrees in liberal arts in the minimum time (the former by the Autumn of 1502, and the latter early in 1505). Upon completion of the Master's degree, Luther entered the law school of Erfurt in May, after a vacation period. This curriculum choice was in harmony with his father's wishes. But his career as a law student was short-lived. On the return from a trip home to Mansfeld in June, as he was

approaching Erfurt on July 2, Luther was nearly struck by a bolt of lightning near the village of Stotternheim. In desperation he cried out, "Dear Saint Anne, please save me and I will become a monk!"

There is no reason to believe that Luther's sudden vow to become a monk was a superstitious or unpremeditated decision. He was a sensitive soul eager to do God's will. Moreover, he had had certain experiences earlier—such as the death of a close friend, and also the fear of his own bleeding to death once when he had accidentally slashed his leg—which had turned his mind toward taking up the monastic vocation. After all, that vocation was considered in those days to be the way *par excellence* to eternal salvation. In addition, Luther's vivid impression of William of Anhalt and his high esteem for Vicar John Braun certainly contributed to his decision, as well. Faithful to his vow, he entered the monastery of the Augustinian Hermits in Erfurt on July 17. His father was at first greatly distressed over Martin's decision, but later took a more positive attitude toward the matter.

In fact, there were certain advantages in being a monk in a *university* city; for it must be remembered that even though numerous monks in many places were very ignorant, the monastic orders also had provided some of the most outstanding scholars of the late Middle Ages. Educated monks in university cities frequently served as theology professors, and this seems to have been the case in Erfurt.

After his traditional year of Novitiate, Luther first prepared for the priesthood, and was ordained in the Spring of 1507, saying his first mass on May 2 of that year. Thereafter he pursued studies that would lead to the basic theological degree of *baccalaureus biblicus*. During his work toward this theological degree, he moved to Wittenberg, where he lectured on moral philosophy (Aristotle's *Ethics*) during the academic year of 1508-09; and while engaged in these lectures, he also completed his *baccalaureus-biblicus* requirements by March 9, 1509. Returning to Erfurt in the Fall, he completed there the *Sententiarium*, qualifying him now to become a lecturer in systematic theology. From 1509 to 1511 he gave lectures at Erfurt in this field (the basic textbook for which was Peter Lombard's four volumes of *Sentences*)—a lecture series interrupted by a trip to Rome in 1510-11. Soon after his return from Rome, he was sent from Erfurt to Wittenberg, where the final steps in his theological education were taken. At the University of Wittenberg, he was

awarded both the licentiate and doctorate in theology in October 1512 (on the 4th and 19th, respectively).

At some time during his early monastic career, Luther underwent a crisis frequently referred to as his "monastic struggle." He seemed to be so unsuccessful in achieving the salvation for which he longed—in spite of an abundance of works and of severe bodily mortifications. In later years, he recalled that "soon after my entrance into the monastery, I was always sad and could not set myself free from this sadness," and that "my whole life was little more than fasting, watching, prayers, sighs, etc., but beneath this covering of sanctity and confidence in my own justification, I had a feeling of continued doubt, fear, and a desire to hate and blaspheme God." Also, he remembered that the doctrine of predestination seemed so enigmatical.

Among sources of help to him in his crisis was Johann Staupitz, the head of the Augustinian Order in the German lands, who indicated to him that "true repentance begins with the love of justice and of God," a remark that led him to further study of Scripture and to a focus on the "sweet wounds of the Savior." Whether or not Staupitz was also the person who called his attention to a certain sermon of Bernard of Clairvaux, that sermon became very meaningful to him—particularly the statement in it "that man, without merit, is justified through faith." Undoubtedly, various other factors contributed to Luther's resolution of his early "monastic crisis," as well; but in any event, he could refer to this crisis as a thing of the past by 1513. Further theological and experiential development continued to take place for Luther thereafter, of course, and thus he had additional "breakthroughs"—the most notable of which is, perhaps, his so-called "Tower Discovery" concerning God's righteousness (a "discovery" usually thought to have occurred either between 1512 and 1515 or in 1518/19).

After Luther's promotion to the doctorate in theology in late 1512, his long and distinguished career as a theology professor at the University of Wittenberg was begun. In 1512–13 he probably lectured on Genesis. Then came his first series of lectures on the Psalms (1513–15), on Romans (1515–16), and on Galatians (1516–17), which have been highlighted by scholars in their efforts to trace Luther's theological development during a critical stage of his emerging new theology. It was during this period also that the sale of indulgences began to receive his severe criticism. In addition to

his professorial role, Luther was pastor of the city church, as well as district vicar for some ten (and later eleven) monasteries in his order; and it was especially because of pastoral concern that he became acutely involved in the crisis over indulgence sales.

The indulgence under Luther's special attack was one that had been proclaimed for the building of St. Peter's basilica in Rome (and to repay the Fugger Banking House for the loan granted Albert of Hohenzollern in order for Albert to secure the important archbishopric of Mainz, after already holding the offices of bishop at Halberstadt and archbishop of Magdeburg). Although the sale of this indulgence was not allowed within Saxony itself, some of Luther's parishioners crossed the nearby border into Brandenburg to make purchase; and at least some folk returned feeling that they had obtained pardon both present and future for sins committed. This obviously was not the intent of indulgences (which were to remit satisfactions, or works necessary, after absolution for sin by a priest); but indulgence salesmen such as Johann Tetzel, a Dominican monk who had sold indulgences for the Fugger Banking House since at least 1504 or 1505, undoubtedly used unscrupulous means to enhance their sales. In any event, there were aspects of the indulgence hawking and even of the indulgence "theology" that Luther felt it imperative to challenge. Hence, on October 31, 1517, he set forth his famous "95 Theses," proposed for academic debate.

Much to his surprise, these theses were soon heralded widely throughout the German lands, having without his knowledge or permission been translated from Latin to German, published, and circulated. It was this particular event, more than anything else, that catapulted Luther into the limelight of the history of that time. From being a Wittenberg-University professor who was relatively unknown to the general public, he suddenly became the most-talked-about figure in the German lands!

It was inevitable that Luther's stand against the indulgences would involve him in conflict with Tetzel and with the Dominican order. It was also inevitable that Archbishop Albert and the Fuggers would be unhappy. As far as Pope Leo X was concerned, he at first simply assessed the situation as another squabble among the monastic orders (of which there had been many in the past). However, as indulgence sales dropped significantly, he became aware of the gravity of the situation for the Papal See. He lent his influence to the Dominican side and sought means to suppress Luther, the recalcitrant Augustinian.

The controversy that ensued from the distribution of the "95 Theses" led Luther into an ever-deeper study of Scripture and church history. He eventually concluded that the Papacy was a late development in the course of Christian history, that it was unbiblical, and that the Pope was even the antichrist referred to in Scripture. Aspects of his thought in this direction were already evident in his Leipzig Debate with John Eck in the summer of 1519; but by 1520, when he penned, among other writings, his famous "Three Reformation Treatises," the case was quite clear. These treatises were, namely, (1) *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (an appeal to the rulers of the German states to bring reform to the church, calling for radical attention to church-organizational and disciplinary matters from the Papal See to the ground-roots level, and also dealing with such other matters as economic and educational reforms); (2) *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (a document in which he attacked the sacramental system of Roman Catholicism in entirety, rejecting five sacraments and retaining with a different theological perspective only baptism and the Eucharist [some small token of favor was shown toward Penance, too, though not in the sense of a Roman Catholic sacrament]); and (3) *The Liberty of the Christian* (a conciliatory document that outlined clearly and forcefully Luther's understanding of what genuine personal Christianity was all about [see the brief excerpt quoted in "A Tribute to Martin Luther" in *AUSS* 21 (1983): 297-298]).

The year 1520 was significant, too, for the appearance of the Pope's "warning" bull, *Exsurge, Domine*. This bull gave Luther sixty days in which to recant, or he would be excommunicated. It was delivered to Luther on October 10, and on December 10 he responded with a bonfire at the Elster Gate of Wittenberg, into which he threw Pope Leo's bull, together with a copy of the Canon Law and some other Catholic documents.

A few weeks later, on January 3, 1521, the Pope responded with the drafting of the actual excommunication bull, *Decet Pontificem Romanum*, but its publication and promulgation was delayed until October, several months after Luther's condemnation by the Diet which had met in Worms. Luther's appearance before this Diet on April 17 and 18 was, of course, one of the highlights of his career, celebrated and publicized ever since. Arriving with the thought that he would be able to present and debate his position, he found that at his very first audience with the Diet, on the afternoon

of April 17, he was immediately confronted with Emperor Charles's demand to recant. He was asked a double question: With his attention called to a table or bench holding an array of his books, he was asked (1) whether these were his writings, and (2) whether he would recant the heresies in them. After having some two dozen of the titles read, he promptly admitted them as his writings, but felt he needed more time to consider the second part of the abrupt question that had been put to him. A one-day continuance was granted.

The next day, as Luther again entered the presence of the Emperor and the assembled Diet, the demand that he recant was once more placed before him. He responded by pointing out that his works consisted of three basic kinds: (1) those treating practical Christian morality, with which no one could take issue; (2) those against the Papacy and its abuses (books with which his German countrymen would certainly agree); and (3) those against persons defending the Roman tyranny, wherein at times he had admittedly been overly harsh, but whose retraction would only allow abuses to increase. How, then, could he give a simple answer that he would recant, repudiating these works?

But "recant" was the precise sum and substance of what the Emperor, supported by his advisors and encouraged by the Papal party, required; nothing less would be acceptable. Finally, seeing the futility of the situation, Luther made his well-known and often-quoted concluding statement: "My conscience has been taken captive by God's Word, and I am not able nor willing to recant, inasmuch as it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. God help me. . . ."

Luther and his company departed from Worms on April 26, prior to the Diet's actual decision of his case the next month (the decree condemning him as an outlaw was drafted on May 8 and issued on May 26). On his homeward journey from Worms, he was "kidnapped" and whisked away on May 4 to the Wartburg Castle overlooking Eisenach. Here he was secluded as a measure of safety. And here he continued his work for some ten months, writing a number of instructional works, and most importantly of all, doing the basic draft of his translation of the NT. The "final touches" on this NT translation were then completed after his return to Wittenberg in March of 1522, and the first edition of this new German version appeared in September (known as the "September Bible" or "September Testament"). On his return to Wittenberg, he also had

to quell riots and insurrection that had occurred through over-eagerness to hasten reform on the part of his zealous colleagues, especially Andreas Bodenstein von Carlstadt and Gabriel Zwilling.

The years 1523 and 1524 were active ones, as well, and two of his famous treatises on politics and education appeared during those years—his *On Secular Authority* and his *Address to Councilmen of the German Cities*. But the year 1525 was a particularly notable one in Luther's career for several reasons. First of all, he became entangled with the Peasants' Revolt in such a way that he alienated the peasants and brought much criticism to himself from the Catholic party as well. His first treatise in relationship to the plight of the peasants, who were often exploited by their overlords, was an *Admonition to Peace* concerning "Twelve Articles" they had proposed. This was actually a very balanced appeal both to the peasants and to their overlords for fairness. But his second booklet, written after personal observation of devastation and havoc created by the peasants as they revolted, was quite the opposite in its tone. This work, entitled *Against the Tempestuous Peasants and . . . Thieving and Murdering Bands of . . . Peasants*, even encouraged outright slaughter of the peasants on the grounds that they had revolted against established authority and had even blasphemed God by revolting in his name. A third treatise, entitled *A Letter on the Harsh Booklet Against the Peasants*, was basically a reaffirmation of his position regarding the peasants, not a retraction or apology.

A more pleasant episode in the year 1525 was Luther's wedding to Katherine von Bora on June 13. This noble woman, an ex-nun, gave the Reformer support at many critical points in his later career, and to them were born six children who brought to them all the joys of family life. These children were Hans (b. June 7, 1526), Elizabeth (b. Dec. 10, 1527), Magdalena (b. May 4, 1529), Martin (b. Nov. 9, 1531), Paul (b. Jan. 29, 1533), and Margarethe (b. Dec. 17, 1534). Unfortunately, two of these children died prematurely: Elizabeth before she was eight months old, and Magdalena at age 13 after a desperate illness during the summer of 1542. (The Luther family experienced other suffering and sorrow, as well. Luther himself had bouts of rather severe illness, especially in 1527 and again in 1537. Moreover, he lost his father in death on May 29, 1530, and his mother on June 30 of the following year.)

Always a keen observer of his surroundings and of people in general, Martin Luther was also an intent and sympathetic observer

of children and their antics. He entered heartily into their dreams and their frolics. On his many trips away from home, not only would he write to his beloved Katie, but also to his children. In one of the interesting pieces of correspondence to his son Hans, he mentioned that he had met the owner of a lovely place where boys and girls were having much fun picking fruit and riding beautiful ponies. He asked the man if sometime his own Hans could come there. Yes, said the man, if he "likes to pray, studies hard, and is good." And, of course, Luther used the anecdote to emphasize in a kind way the importance for his little son to behave well and to pray.

The third truly significant event in Luther's career in the year 1525 was his final break with Erasmus by issuing his *On the Bondage of the Will*, an answer to Erasmus's treatise of the preceding year, entitled *On the Freedom of the Will*. A very basic and deep-seated theological breach had, of course, been widening between the two men over a considerable length of time, even though there is still much truth to the saying that "Erasmus laid the egg of the Reformation, and Luther hatched it."

In the years immediately following 1525, Luther became involved with various projects of educational significance for the emerging Lutheran church. One of the most important arose from a visitation program to the parishes in five districts of the Saxon lands. The First Diet of Speyer in 1526 had ordered temporary territorial settlement (*cuius regio, eius religio*, "as the ruler, so the religion") of the religious situation in the Holy Roman Empire, pending a hoped-for general church council to consider the issues at some time in the future. This decision of the Imperial Diet thrust upon the Protestant territories a new type of responsibility in spiritual care and supervision for the clergy and laity in the parishes. It was in this context that Luther in 1527 gave input for, and then prepared the introduction to, the instructions for the visiting teams that went out in 1528. The deplorable ignorance of both clergy and laity that was consequently reported by the visitors led Luther to prepare some instructional tools, the most famous of which were his Large and Small Catechisms of 1529.

The year 1529 also witnessed a further important step in Luther's ongoing controversy over the Eucharist with the Swiss Reformers—Zwingli of Zurich and Oecolampadius of Basel. That year the literary feud between the Wittenberg and Swiss Reformers

culminated in a meeting, the Marburg Colloquy, which had been arranged by a Protestant prince, Landgrave Philip of Hesse. The end result of the meeting was that on all basic articles except the Eucharist, the two groups of Reformers were in essential agreement. However, Luther rigidly maintained his position on the "real presence" of Christ in the elements of bread and wine, whereas Zwingli and Oecolampadius just as vigorously rejected this concept.

The year 1530 was especially significant in Lutheran-Reformation history, because of the "Augsburg Confession" presented to the Diet of Augsburg. This was not voted by that Diet, but was adopted by the Lutheran princes and theologians and has become one of the main confessional standards of subsequent Lutheranism. The document was drafted by Philip Melanchthon, but with input from Luther (who was in seclusion in the Coburg Castle, since he was still an outlaw of the Empire and, lacking safe-conduct to the Diet, could have been apprehended and even killed on sight).

In the years subsequent to 1530, Luther has generally receded from the high visibility given to him by his biographers for his earlier career. This is a situation which is now, however, beginning to be remedied (dealt with in an article later in this journal, "Recent Issues and Trends in Luther Studies"). Although Luther's colleagues, such as Philip Melanchthon and Johann Bugenhagen, were taking prominent places (and in church-organizational matters, the Elector of Saxony was doing likewise), Luther was nonetheless very active and influential indeed. During these "later years," he continued his professorial role at the University of Wittenberg, preached frequently, gave input to the upgrading of the ministry, fostered education at all levels, produced a number of treatises, worked on his German Bible translation (ever seeking revisions that would make the biblical meaning more clear), and wrote numerous letters. It must not be forgotten that during these later years, his counsel was constantly sought by theologians, by political leaders (including his own prince), and by others. His input to them may not always have carried his name very visibly to the public of that time, nor to biographers of later times; but its influence was nonetheless there in manifold and significant ways.

Luther's life came to an end in early 1546. His decease occurred while he was on a trip back to his birthplace Eisleben, there to settle a dispute between the two dukes of Mansfeld. As the long and tangled negotiations were about to find solution, Luther wrote to Katie

on February 14 (the last letter he ever penned), expressing his hope to return home that week. On February 17 he affixed his signature to the documents of agreement between the dukes, and that evening fell quite ill with congestion and chest pain. In the early hours of the next morning, February 18, he had two further attacks of severe chest pain. With some of his closest friends at his bedside (together with a physician who had been quickly summoned that morning), he died in a state of peace of heart and mind. The last words he was heard to have uttered were a repetition of John 3:16 three times: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF LUTHER'S CAREER

(WITH NOTICE OF CERTAIN SIGNIFICANT CONTEMPORARY EVENTS)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Luther</i>	<i>Other Events</i>
1483	Born in Eisleben, Nov. 10	Raphael born (lived 1483–1520)
1484	Family moves to Mansfeld	Huldreich Zwingli born Jan. 1 (lived 1484–1531) Innocent III becomes pope (1484–92)
ca. 1488–97	Martin attends Latin school in Mansfeld	Columbus lands in West Indies, 1492 Alexander VI becomes pope, 1492 (1492–1503) Maximilian becomes emperor of Holy Roman Empire, 1493 (ruled 1493–1519)
1497–98	At school of Brethren of the Common Life in Magdeburg	Philip Melanchthon born, 1497 (lived 1497–1560) Vasco da Gama reaches India by sea route, 1498
1498–1501	Attends St. George's School in Eisenach	

Date	Luther	Other Events
1501	Matriculates at University of Erfurt, in Spring	
1502	Awarded Bachelor's degree in Arts on Sept. 29	University of Wittenberg founded, 1502
1503		Pius III pope for less than a month; Julius II becomes pope (1503-13)
1505	Awarded Master's degree in Arts in January (or February?); begins law study in May; caught in thunderstorm on July 2; enters monastery of Augustinian Hermits on July 17	
1505-07	Novitiate year (1505-06), followed by preparation for priesthood; celebrates first mass (in Erfurt) on May 2, 1507	
1508	To Wittenberg, to lecture on Aristotle's <i>Ethics</i>	
1509	Earns <i>baccalaureus biblicus</i> in March; returns to Erfurt in Autumn; becomes <i>Sententiarius</i>	John Calvin born, July 10 (lived 1509-64) Henry VIII accedes to English throne (ruled 1509-47) Erasmus writes <i>Praise of Folly</i>
1510-11	Journeys to Rome, Nov.-April (Erfurt to Rome and return to Erfurt); then moves to Wittenberg (and matriculates at U. of Wittenberg in Aug., 1511)	
1512	Appointed subprior of Wittenberg Augustinian cloister in May; granted licentiate in theology on Oct. 4 and doctorate in theology on Oct. 19; begins exegetical lectures at U. of Wittenberg (probably Genesis)	Roman Catholic Fifth Lateran Council begins (1512-17)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Luther</i>	<i>Other Events</i>
1513-15	Lectures on Psalms, 1513-15	Leo X becomes pope, 1513 (1513-21) Albert of Hohenzollern becomes Archbishop of Magdeburg, Bishop of Halberstadt, and Archbishop of Mainz, 1513-14
1515-16	Lectures on Romans, 1515-16 Becomes district vicar for Augustinians, 1515	Francis I accedes to throne of France, 1515 (ruled 1515-47) First volume of humanist production <i>Letters of the Obscure Men</i> , 1515 (second volume in 1517) Erasmus's <i>Novum Instrumentum</i> , 1516
1516-17	Lectures on Galatians, 1516-17 Sermon against Indulgences, Oct. 31, 1516 (had referred to Indulgences earlier too) The seven "Penitential Psalms" trans. into German, 1517 Famous "95 Theses" on Indulgences, Oct. 31, 1517	
1518	Attends Heidelberg meeting, pens <i>Resolutions Concerning the Virtue of Indulgences</i> , and preaches "Sermon on the Ban" in Spring; appears before Cardinal Cajetan in Augsburg on Oct. 12-14	Melanchthon joins Wittenberg faculty; inaugural address, Aug. 29 Frederick the Wise refuses to surrender Luther to Rome, Dec. 18
1519	Meeting with Miltitz in January; Galatians commentary publ. in May; Leipzig Debate with Eck in July	Maximilian dies, and Hapsburg grandson—already Charles I of Spain—becomes Emperor Charles V of Holy Roman Empire (ruled 1519-56, d. 1558)

Date	Luther	Other Events
1520	<p>Luther's "three Reformation treatises": <i>To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation</i>; <i>The Babylonian Captivity of the Church</i>; and <i>Freedom of the Christian</i></p> <p>Burns copy of canon law, pope's bull <i>Exsurge Domine</i>, and some other documents, on Dec. 10</p>	<p>Pope Leo's bull <i>Exsurge Domine</i> signed on June 15, reaches Luther on Oct. 10, burned by Luther on Dec. 10</p> <p>Suleiman I begins rule of Turkish Empire (ruled 1520-66)</p>
1521	<p>Excommunicated by bull <i>Decet Pontificem Romanum</i> (drafted Jan. 3, and issued in Oct.); appears before Diet of Wörms on April 17-18 (condemned by decree issued on May 26); "kidnapped" on May 4 for seclusion at Wartburg Castle; secret trip to Wittenberg in early Dec.; begins translating NT in Dec.</p>	<p>Wittenberg disturbances begin under Carlstadt and Zwingli, while Luther is at the Wartburg Castle</p> <p>1st Hapsburg-Valois War (1521-26, concl. with Treaty of Madrid)</p> <p>King Henry VIII of England writes treatise against Luther's <i>Babylonian Captivity</i>, and is awarded title "Defender of the Faith" by the Pope</p>
1522	<p>Returns from the Wartburg to Wittenberg on March 6; 1st and 2d eds. of NT published (Sept. and Dec.)</p>	<p>Adrian VI becomes pope (1522-23)</p> <p>"Knights' War" of 1522-23</p> <p>Magellan's party returns to Europe after circumnavigating the globe, 1519-22 (Magellan himself d. in 1521 in the Philippines)</p>
1523	<p>Writes <i>On Secular Authority</i> . . .</p>	<p>Clement VII becomes pope (1523-34)</p> <p>1st ed. of Jerome Emser's critique of Luther's NT</p>
1524	<p>Writes <i>To Councilmen of All German Cities</i> . . . (an educational treatise); lays aside monk's garb in Oct.</p>	<p>Thomas Müntzer writes against Luther; Peasants' War begins</p> <p>Erasmus writes <i>Freedom of the Will</i></p>

<i>Date</i>	<i>Luther</i>	<i>Other Events</i>
1525	Writes three treatises relating to peasants and Peasants' War; is married to Katharine von Bora on June 13; answers Erasmus's <i>Freedom of the Will with Bondage of the Will</i>	Peasants' War is terminated in severe slaughter; death of Müntzer Death of Elector Frederick the Wise; accession of John the Constant (ruled 1525-32)
1526	Publication of <i>The German Mass</i> ; controversy with Swiss Reformers over Eucharist	1st Diet of Speyer and decision of <i>cuius regio, eius religio</i> Suleiman victorious at Mohács, Hungary 2d Hapsburg-Valois War (1526-29, concl. with Treaty of Cambrai)
1527-28	Provides input and writes introduction for the "Instructions to Visitors" for visitations carried out in 1528 (and subsequently)	Pope Clement VII put at mercy of Charles V by Charles's attack on Rome, 1527 Appearance of 1st ed. of Jerome Emser's Catholic German NT, 1527
1529	Luther's Large and Small Catechisms in April and May; Marburg Colloquy on Oct. 1-3	2d Diet of Speyer, and protest of Evangelical estates against Diet's revocation of <i>cuius regio, eius religio</i> of earlier Diet (led to term "Protestantism") Suleiman's siege of Vienna
1530	At Coburg Castle during Augsburg Diet Treatise, <i>Open Letter on Translating</i>	Augsburg Diet; "Augsburg Confession" drafted by Melancthon (rejected by Diet, but accepted by Lutheran rulers and theologians)
1531	Writes <i>Warning to the Dear German People</i> (on question of legitimacy of resistance to the Emperor)	Formation of Protestant "Schmalkaldic League" Suleiman victorious in battle at Güns, Hungary
1532-33	Engaged in polemics with Duke George (and Johann Cochlaeus)	Suleiman threatens Austria, 1532

Date	Luther	Other Events
1532-33		<p>Peace of Nuremberg ("Nuremberg Recess") to Protestants because of Turkish threat (reinstates <i>cuius regio, eius religio</i>), 1532</p> <p>John the Constant dies in 1532, and John Frederick becomes Elector of Saxony (ruled 1532-54)</p>
1534	1st ed. of Luther's complete German Bible	<p>Paul III becomes pope (1534-49)</p> <p>Anabaptists take control of Münster (defeated and driven out in 1535)</p> <p>1st ed. of Johannes Dietsberger's Catholic complete German Bible</p>
1535	Luther begins last lecture series on Genesis (1535-45)	3d Hapsburg-Valois War (1535-38, concl. with Treaty of Nice)
1536	Draws up "Schmalkald Articles" in December (accepted by Lutheran theologians at Schmalkald in 1537)	<p>Formal alliance between Francis I and Suleiman</p> <p>1st ed. of John Calvin's <i>Institutes</i> (final ed., 1559)</p> <p>Calvin begins first period of work in Geneva</p>
1537		1st ed. of John Eck's Catholic complete German Bible
1539	Writes <i>Against the Antinomians</i>	Death of Duke George of Albertine Saxony; succeeded by Henry (ruled 1539-41)
1540		<p>Society of Jesus (Jesuit order) approved by Pope Paul III in Sept. (had originated in a meeting of Ignatius Loyola and six companions on Aug. 15, 1534)</p> <p>Bigamy of Philip of Hesse</p>

<i>Date</i>	<i>Luther</i>	<i>Other Events</i>
1541		Duke Henry of Saxony succeeded by son Maurice (ruled 1541-53) Calvin begins second period of work in Geneva
1542		4th Hapsburg-Valois War (1542-44, concl. with Peace of Crépy)
1543	Writes <i>On the Jews and Their Lies</i>	
1545	Writes <i>Against the Roman Papacy, an Institution of the Devil</i> Famous "Preface" to complete ed. of Latin writings Last ed. of Luther's German Bible prior to his death	Council of Trent convenes (1545-63)
1546	Death in Eisleben on Feb. 18, and burial in Wittenberg on Feb. 22	Schmalkaldic War begins

Note: In the foregoing chronological listing events *within* specific years are not necessarily in chronological order—especially in the "Other Events" column. Also, certain facets of Luther's career have been touched upon only lightly in this chronology, lest the listing become overburdened with detail. Among such items are Luther's exegetical-lecture series after 1517 and the development of his Bible translation part-by-part and in its significantly revised editions.

In brief, Luther's lectures from 1517 onward were as follows: Hebrews, 1517-18; Psalms, 1518-21; Minor Prophets (and some attention to the Pentateuch), 1524-26; Ecclesiastes, 1526; 1 John, Titus, Philemon (and also some attention to Isaiah), 1527; 1 Timothy, 1528; Isaiah, 1528-30; Canticles, 1530-31; Galatians, 1531; Psalms, 1532-35; Genesis, 1535-45.

The major steps in bringing out Luther's complete German Bible of 1534 included the appearance of the OT in several sections and a continuing process of revision. Subsequent to the publication of the NT in 1522, the OT appeared as follows: Pentateuch, 1523; Joshua to Esther, 1524; Job to Ecclesiastes, 1524; the Prophets, 1532; and the completed OT (including the Apocrypha), 1534. Various books of the Prophets had appeared separately between 1526 and 1530—Habakkuk, 1526; Isaiah and Zechariah,

1528; and Daniel (and also Ezek 38–39), 1530. A translation of the Wisdom of Solomon had been issued in 1529. When the section from Job to Ecclesiastes was published in 1524, a separate edition of the Psalms was issued as well. The Psalter underwent significant revisions discernible in the editions of 1528, 1531, and 1534.

Subsequent to 1534, the Psalter saw further revisions in 1535, 1538, 1542, and 1544; and other parts of Scripture, too, were revised by scholars under Luther's supervision or working in conjunction with him. The last Bible edition to have received direct input from him was published after his death in 1546, though he had apparently himself begun to see it through the press. The most significantly revised material in this edition is in the section from Romans through 2 Cor 3. Previous to this, the edition of September 1541 appears to have been the *main* edition (since 1534) of the complete Bible that reveals extensive revision. This 1541 Bible contains, incidentally, the last major revision of the OT that reflects Luther's own continuing work on that part of the Bible.