

The Life of Martin Luther

The Book of Martyrs

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By John Foxe

MARTIN LUTHER, after he was grown in years, being born at Eisleben in Saxony, A.D. 1483, was sent to the University, first of Magdeburg, then of Erfurt. In this University of Erfurt, there was a certain aged man in the convent of the Augustines with whom Luther, being then of the same order, a friar Augustine, had conference upon divers things, especially touching remission of sins; which article the said aged Father opened unto Luther; declaring, that God's express commandment is, that every man should particularly believe his sins to be forgiven him in Christ: and further said, that this interpretation was confirmed by St. Bernard: 'This is the testimony that the Holy Ghost giveth thee in thy heart, saying, Thy sins are forgiven thee. For this is the opinion of the apostle, that man is freely justified by faith.'

By these words Luther was not only strengthened, but was also instructed of the full meaning of St. Paul, who repeateth so many times this sentence, 'We are justified by faith.' And having read the expositions of many upon this place, he then perceived, as well by the discourse of the old man, as by the comfort he received in his spirit, the vanity of those interpretations, which he had read before, of the schoolmen. And so, by little and little, reading and comparing the sayings and examples of the prophets and apostles, with continual invocation of God, and excitation of faith by force of prayer, he perceived that doctrine most evidently. Thus continued he his study at Erfurt the space of four years in the convent of the Augustines.

About this time one Staupitius, a famous man, who had ministered his help to further the erection of a University in Wittenberg, being anxious to promote the study of divinity in this new University, Luther, called him from Erfurt, to place him in Wittenberg, A.D. 1508 and of his age the twenty-sixth. In the meanwhile Luther intermitted no whit his study in theology. Three years after, he went to Rome, and returning the same year, he was graded doctor at the expense of the Elector Frederic, Duke of Saxony: for he had heard him preach; well understood the quickness of his spirit; diligently considered the vehemency of his words; and had in singular admiration those profound matters which in his sermons he ripely and exactly explained. This degree Staupitius, against his will, enforced upon him; saying merrily unto him, that God had many things to bring to pass in his Church by him. And though these words were spoken merrily, yet it came so to pass anon after.

After this, Luther began to expound the Epistle to the Romans, and the Psalms: where he showed the difference betwixt the Law and the Gospel; and confounded the error that reigned then in the schools and sermons, viz, that men may merit remission of sins by their own works, and that they be just before God by outward discipline; as the Pharisees taught. Luther diligently reduced the minds of men to the Son of God: as John Baptist demonstrated the Lamb of God that took away the sins of the world, even so Luther, shining in the Church as the bright daylight after a long and dark night, expressly showed, that sins are freely remitted for the love of the Son of God, and that we ought faithfully to embrace this bountiful gift.

His life was correspondent to his profession; and it plainly appeared that his words were no lip-labour, but proceeded from the very heart. This admiration of his holy life much allured the hearts of his auditors.

All this while Luther altered nothing in the ceremonies, but precisely observed his rule among his fellows. He meddled in no doubtful opinions, but taught this only doctrine, as most principal of all other, to all men, opening and declaring the doctrine of repentance, of remission of sins, of faith, of true comfort to be sought in the cross of Christ. Every man received good taste of this sweet doctrine, and the learned conceived high pleasure to behold Jesus Christ, the prophets and apostles, to come forth into light out of darkness.

It happened, moreover, about this time, that many were provoked by Erasmus's learned works to study the Greek and Latin tongues; who, having thus opened to them a more pleasant sort of learning than before, began to have in contempt the monks' barbarous and sophistical learning. Luther began to study the Greek and Hebrew tongues to this end, that having drawn the doctrine of the very fountains, he might form a more sound judgment.

As Luther was thus occupied in Germany, which was A.D. 1516, Leo X., who had succeeded after Julius II., was Pope of Rome, who, under pretence of war against the Turk, sent his pardons abroad through all Christian dominions, whereby he gathered together innumerable riches and treasure; the gatherers and collectors whereof persuaded the people, that whosoever would give ten shillings, should at his pleasure deliver one soul from the pains of purgatory; but if it were but one jot less than ten shillings, it would profit them nothing.

This Pope's merchandise came also to Germany, through the means of a certain Dominic friar named Tetzel, who most impudently caused the Pope's indulgences to be sold about the country. Whereupon Luther, such moved with the blasphemous sermons of this shameless friar, and having his heart earnestly bent with ardent desire to maintain true religion, published certain propositions concerning indulgences, and set them openly on the temple that joineth to the castle of Wittenberg, the morrow after the feast of All Saints, A.D. 1517.

This beggarly friar, hoping to obtain the Pope's blessing, assembled certain monks and sophistical divines of his convent, and forthwith commanded them to write something against Luther. And while he would not himself be dumb, he began to thunder against Luther; crying, 'Luther is a heretic, and worthy to be persecuted with fire.' He burned openly Luther's propositions, and the sermon which he wrote of indulgences. This rage and furious fury of this friar enforced Luther to treat more amply of the cause, and to maintain the truth. And thus rose the beginnings of this controversy.

The good Duke Frederic was one, of all the princes of our time, that loved best quietness and common tranquility; so he neither encouraged nor supported Luther, but often discovered outwardly the heaviness and sorrow which he bare in his heart, fearing greater dissensions. But being a wise prince, and following the counsel of God's rule, and well deliberating thereupon, he thought with himself, that the glory of God was to be preferred above all things: neither was he ignorant what blasphemy it was, horribly condemned of God, obstinately to repugn the truth. Wherefore he did as a godly prince should do, he obeyed God, committing himself to His holy grace and omnipotent protection. And although Maximilian the Emperor, Charles King of Spain, and Pope Julius, had given commandment to the said Duke Frederic, that he should inhibit Luther from all place and liberty of preaching; yet the duke, considering with himself the preaching and writing of Luther, and weighing diligently the testimonies and places of the Scripture by him alleged, would not withstand the thing which he judged sincere. And yet neither did he this, trusting to his own judgment, but was very anxious to hear the judgment of others, who were both aged and learned; in the number of whom was Erasmus, whom the duke desired to declare to him his opinion touching the matter of Martin Luther; protesting, that he

would rather the ground should open and swallow him, than he would bear with any opinions which he knew to be contrary to manifest truth.

Erasmus began jestingly and merrily to answer the duke's request, saying, that in Luther were two great faults; first, that he would touch the bellies of monks; the second, that he would touch the Pope's crown! Then, opening his mind plainly to the duke, he said, that Luther did well in detecting errors, that reformation was very necessary in the Church: adding moreover, that the effect of his doctrine was true.

Furthermore, the same Erasmus, in the following year, wrote to the Archbishop of Mentz a certain epistle touching the cause of Luther: 'The world is burdened with men's institutions, and with the tyranny of begging friars. Once it was counted a heresy when a man repugned against the Gospels. Now he that dissenteth from Thomas Aquinas is a heretic: whatsoever doth not like them, whatsoever they understand not, that is heresy. To know Greek is heresy; or to speak more finely than they do, that is heresy.'

The godly and faithful Christians, closed in monasteries, understanding images ought to be eschewed, began to abandon that wretched thralldom in which they were detained.

Luther held especially in contempt these horned bishops of Rome, who arrogantly and impudently affirmed, that St. Peter had not the charge alone to teach the Gospel, but also to govern commonweals, and exercise civil jurisdiction. He exhorted every man to render unto God that appertained unto God, and to Caesar that belonged unto Caesar; and said, that all should serve God. After that Tetzels, the aforesaid friar, with his fellow-monks and friarly fellows, had cried out with open mouth against Luther, in maintaining the Pope's indulgences; and that Luther again, in defence of his cause, had set up propositions against the open abuses of the same, marvel it was to see how soon these propositions were sparkled abroad in sundry and are places, and how greedily they were caught up in the hands of divers both far and near.

Not long after steppeth up one Silvester de Priero, a Dominic friar, who first began to publish abroad a certain impudent and railing dialogue against Luther. Unto whom he answered out of the Scriptures.

Then was Martin Luther cited, and seventh of August, by one Hierome, Bishop of Ascoli, to appear at Rome. About which time Thomas Cajetan, Cardinal, the Pope's legate, was then lieger at the city of Augsburg, who before had been sent down in commission, with certain mandates from Pope Leo, unto that city. The University of Wittenberg, understanding of Luther's citation, soon after directed letters to the Pope, in Luther's behalf. Also another letter they sent to Carolus Miltitius, the Pope's chamberlain, being a German born. Furthermore, good Frederic ceased not to solicit, that the cause of Luther might be freed from Rome, and removed to Augsburg, in the hearing of the Cardinal. Cajetan, at the suit of the duke, wrote unto the Pope; from whom he received this answer: -

That he had cited Luther to appear personally before him at Rome, by Hierome, Bishop of Ascoli, auditor of the chamber; which bishop diligently had done what was commanded him: but Luther, abusing and contemning the gentleness offered, did not only refuse to come, but also became more bold and stubborn, continuing or rather increasing in his former heresy, as by his writings did appear. Wherefore he would that the Cardinal should cite and call up the said Luther to appear at the city of Augsburg before him; adjoining withal, the aid of the princes of Germany, and of the emperor, if need required; so that when the said Luther should appear, he should lay hand upon him, and commit him to safe custody: and after, he should be brought up to Rome. And if he perceived him to come to any knowledge or amendment of his fault, he should release him and restore him to the Church again; or else he should be interdicted, with all other

his adherents, abettors, and maintainers, of whatsoever state or condition they were, whether they were dukes, marquises, earls or barons. Against all which persons and degrees, he willed him to extend the same curse and malediction (only the person of the emperor excepted); interdicting, by the censure of the Church, all such lands, lordships, towns, tenements, and villages, as should minister any harbor to the said Luther, and were not obedient unto the see of Rome. Contrariwise, to all such as showed themselves obedient, he would promise full remission of all their sins.

Likewise the Pope directed other letters also at the same time to Duke Frederic, with many grievous words, complaining against Luther.

The Cardinal, thus being charged with injunctions from Rome, according to his commission, sendeth with all speed for Luther to appear at Augsburg before him.

About the beginning of October, Martin Luther, yielding his obedience to the Church of Rome, came to Augsburg at the cardinal's sending (at the charges of the noble prince elector, and also with his letters of commendation), where he remained three days before he came to his speech; for so it was provided by his friends, that he should not enter talk with the cardinal, before a sufficient warrant or safe-conduct was obtained of the Emperor Maximilian. This being obtained, soon after he entered, offering himself to the speech of the cardinal, and was there received of the cardinal very gently; who, according to the Pope's commandment, propounded unto Martin Luther three things, to wit,

- I. That he should repent and revoke his errors.
- II. That he should promise, from that time forward, to refrain from the same.
- III. That he should refrain from all things that might by any means trouble the Church.

When Martin Luther required to be informed wherein he had erred, the legate answered that he had held and taught that the merits of Christ are not the treasure of indulgences or pardons, and that faith is necessary to him that receiveth the sacrament. Furthermore Luther protested that the merits of Christ are not committed unto men: that the Pope's voice is to be heard when he speaketh agreeable to the Scriptures: that the Pope may err: and that he ought to be reprehended. Moreover he showed, that in the matter of faith, not only the General Council, but also every faithful Christian is above the Pope, if he lean to better authority and reason.

But the cardinal would hear no Scriptures; he disputed without Scriptures; he devised glosses and expositions of his own head. Luther, being rejected from the speech and sight of the cardinal, after six days' waiting, departed by the advice of his friends, and returned unto Wittenberg; leaving an appellation to the Bishop of Rome from the cardinal, which he caused openly to be affixed before his departure. Cajetan writeth to Duke Frederic a sharp and a biting letter, in which he exhorteth the duke, that as he tendereth his own honour and safety, and regardeth the favour of the high bishop, he will send Luther up to Rome, or expel him out of his dominions.

To this letter of the cardinal the duke answereth, purging both Luther and himself; Luther, in that he, following his conscience, grounded upon the Word of God, would not revoke that for an error which could be proved no error. And himself he excuseth thus: that whereas it is required of him to banish him his country, or to send him up to Rome, it would be little honesty for him so to do, and less conscience, unless he knew just cause why he should so do; which if the cardinal would or could declare unto him, there should lack nothing in him which were the part

of a Christian prince to do. And therefore he desired him to be a mean unto the Bishop of Rome, that innocency and truth be not oppressed before the crime or error be lawfully convicted.

This done, the duke sendeth the letter of the cardinal unto Martin Luther, who answered to the prince: 'I am not so much grieved for mine own cause, as that you should sustain for my matter any danger or peril. And therefore, seeing there is no place nor country which can keep me from the malice of mine adversaries, I am willing to depart hence, and to forsake my country, withersoever it shall please the Lord to lead me.'

Here, no doubt, was the cause of Luther in great danger, being now brought to this strait, that both Luther was ready to fly the country, and the duke again was as much afraid to keep him, had not the marvelous providence of god, Who had this matter in guiding, provided a remedy where the power of man did fail, by stirring up the whole University of Wittenberg; who, seeing the cause of truth thus to decline, with a full and general consent addressed their letters unto the prince, in defence of Luther and of his cause; making their humble suit unto him, that he, of his princely honour, would not suffer innocency, and the simplicity of truth so clear as is the Scripture, to be foiled and oppressed by mere violence of certain malignant flatterers about the Pope.

By the occasion of these letters, the duke began more seriously to consider the cause of Luther, to read his works, and hearken to his sermons: whereby, through God's holy working, he grew to knowledge and strength; perceiving in Luther's quarrel more than he did before. This was about the beginning of December A.D. 1518.

Pope Leo, in the meantime, had sent forth new indulgences, with a new edict, wherein he declared this to be the catholic doctrine of the holy mother-church of Rome, prince of all other churches, that Bishops of Rome, who are successors of Peter and vicars of Christ, have this power and authority given to release and dispense, also to grant indulgences, available both for the living and for the dead lying in the pains of purgatory: and this doctrine he charged to be received of all faithful Christian men, under pain of the great curse, and utter separation from all holy Church. This popish decree and indulgence, as a new merchandise or ale-stake to get money, being set up in all quarters of Christendom for the holy father's advantage, came also to be received in Germany about the month of December. Luther, hearing how they went about in Rome to pronounce against him, provided a certain appellation conceived in due form of law, wherein he appealeth from the Pope to the General Council.

When Pope Leo perceived, that neither his pardons would prosper to his mind, nor that Luther could be brought to Rome; to essay how to come to his purpose by crafty allurements, he sent his chamberlain, Carolus Militius (who was a German), into Saxony, to Duke Frederic, with a golden rose, after the usual ceremony accustomed every year, to be presented to him; with secret letters also to certain noblemen of the duke's council, to solicit the Pope's cause, and to remove the duke's mind, if it might be, from Luther. But before Militius approached into Germany, Maximilian the Emperor deceased in the month of January, A.D. 1519. At that time two there were who stood for the election; to wit, Francis the French King, and Charles, King of Spain, who was also Duke of Austria, and Duke of Burgundy. Through the means of Frederic prince-elect (who, having the offer of the preferment, refused the same), the election fell to Charles, called Charles V., surnamed Prudence: which was about the end of August.

In the month of June before, there was a public disputation ordained at Leipsic, which is a city under the dominion of George Duke of Saxony, uncle to Duke Frederic. This disputation began through the occasion of John Eckius, a friar, and Andreas Carolstadt, doctor of Wittenberg. This Eckius had impugned certain propositions of Martin Luther, which he had written the year

before touching the Pope's pardons. Against him Carolostadt wrote in defence of Luther. Eckius again, to answer Carolostadt confuted by writing. Upon this began the disputation, with safe-conduct granted by Duke George to all and singular persons that would resort to the same. To this disputation came Martin Luther, not thinking to dispute in any matter, but only to hear what there was said and done.

But, having free liberty granted by the duke, Luther was provoked, and forced against his will, to dispute with Eckius. The matter of their controversy was about the authority of the Bishop of Rome. Luther before had set forth in writing this doctrine: that they that do attribute the pre-eminency to the Church of Rome, have no foundation but out of the Pope's decrees, which decrees he affirmed to be contrary to the Holy Scriptures.

Against this assertion Eckius set up a contrary conclusion; saying, that they that succeeded in the see and faith of Peter, were always received for the successors of Peter, and vicars of Christ on earth. He contended that the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome was founded and grounded upon God's law.

Upon this question the disputation did continue the space of five days; during all which season, Eckius very dishonestly and uncourteously demeaned himself, studying by all means how to bring his adversary into the hatred of the auditors, and into danger of the Pope. The reasons of Eckius were these: 'Forasmuch as the Church, being a civil body, cannot be without a head, therefore, as it standeth with God's law that other civil regiments should not be destitute of their head, so is it by God's law requisite, that the Pope should be the head of the universal Church of Christ.'

To this Martin Luther answered, that he confesseth and granteth the Church not to be headless, so long as Christ is alive, Who is the only head of the Church; neither doth the Church require any other head beside Him, forasmuch as it is a spiritual kingdom, not earthly.

Then came Eckius to the place of St. Matthew, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build My Church.' To this was answered, that this was a confession of faith, and that Peter there representeth the person of the whole universal Church. Also that Christ in that place meaneth Himself to be the Rock. Likewise they came to the place of St. John, 'Feed My sheep;' which words Eckius alleged to be spoken, properly and peculiarly, to Peter alone. Martin answered, that after these words spoken, equal authority was given to all the apostles, where Christ saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted.'

After this, Eckius came to the authority of the Council of Constance, alleging this amongst other articles: 'that it standeth upon necessity of our salvation, to believe the Bishop of Rome to be supreme head of the Church;' alleging moreover, that in the same Council it was debated and discussed, that the General Council could not err. Whereunto Martin Luther again did answer discreetly, saying, that of what authority that Council of Constance is to be esteemed, he left to other men's judgments. 'This is most certain,' said he, 'that no Council hath authority to make new articles of faith.'

The next year, which was 1520, the friars and doctors of Louvain, and also of Cologne, condemned the books of Luther as heretical; against whom Luther again effectually defended himself, and charged them with obstinate violence and malicious impiety. After this within few days flashed out from Rome the thunderbolt of Pope Leo against the said Luther.

Another book also Luther wrote, addressed to the nobility of Germany, in which he impugneth and shaketh the three principal walls of the papists: I. No temporal or profane magistrate hath any power upon the spirituality, but these have power over the other. II. Where any place of Scripture, being in controversy, is to be decided, no man may expound the

Scripture, or be judge thereof, but only the Pope. III. When any Council is brought against them, they say, that no man hath authority to call a Council, but only the Pope. Moreover, in the aforesaid book divers other matters he handleth and discourseth: that the pride of the Pope is not to be suffered; what money goeth out of Germany yearly to the Pope, amounting to the sum of three millions of florins; that the emperor is not under the Pope; that priests may have wives; that liberty ought not to be restrained in meats: that willful poverty and begging ought to be abolished: what misfortunes Sigismund the Emperor sustained, for not keeping faith and promise with John Huss and Jerome: that heretics should be convinced not be fire and faggot, but by evidence of Scripture, and God's Word: and that the first teaching of children ought to begin with the Gospel.

In this year moreover followed, not long after, the coronation of the new Emperor Charles V., which was in the month of October, at Aix-la-Chapelle. After which coronation, Pope Leo sent again to Duke Frederic two cardinals his legates, of whom one was Hierome Aleander, who, after a few words of high commendation first premised to the duke touching his noble progeny, and other his famous virtues, made two requests unto him in the Pope's name: first, that he would cause all books of Luther to be burned; secondly, that he would either see the said Luther there to be executed, or else would make him sure, and send him up to Rome, unto the Pope's presence.

These two requests seemed very strange unto the duke; who, answering the cardinals, said, that he, being long absent from thence about other public affairs, could not tell what there was done, neither did he communicate with the doings of Luther. As for himself, he was always ready to do his duty; first, in sanding Luther to Cajetan the cardinal at the city of Augsburg; and afterwards, at the Pope's commandment, would have sent him away out of his dominion, had not Miltitius, the Pope's own chamberlain, given contrary counsel to retain him still in his own country, fearing lest he might do more harm in other countries, where he was less known. Forasmuch as the cause of Luther was not yet heard before the emperor, he desired the said legates to be a mean to the Pope's holiness, that certain learned persons of gravity and upright judgment might be assigned to have the hearing and determination of this matter, and that his error might first be known, before he were made a heretic, or his books burned: which being done, when he should see his error by manifest and sound testimonies of scripture, Luther should find no favour at his hands.

Then the cardinals took the books of Luther, and openly burnt them. Luther, hearing this, in like manner called all the multitude of students and learned men in Wittenberg, and there, taking the Pope's decrees, and the bull lately sent down against him, openly and solemnly, accompanied with a great number of people following him, set them likewise on fire; which was the 10th of December A.D. 1520.

A little before these things thus passed between the Pope and Martin Luther, the emperor had commanded an assembly of States of all the Empire to be holden at the city of Worms, the 6th day of January next ensuing; in which assembly, through the means of Duke Frederic, the emperor gave forth, that he would have the cause of Luther brought before him. Upon the 6th of March, the emperor, through the instigation of Duke Frederic, directed his letters unto Luther; signifying, that forasmuch as he had set abroad certain books, he, therefore, by the advice of his peers and princes about him, had ordained to have the cause brought before him in his own hearing; and therefore he granted him license to come, and return home again. And that he might safely and quietly so do, he promised unto him, by public faith and credit, in the name of

the whole Empire, his passport and safe conduct. Wherefore, he willed him soon after to make his repair unto him, and to be there present on the twenty-first day after the receipt thereof.

Martin Luther, after he had been first accused at Rome upon Maunday Thursday by the Pope's censure, shortly after Easter speedeth his journey toward Worms, where the said Luther, appearing before the emperor and all the States of Germany, constantly stuck to the truth, defended himself, and answered his adversaries.

Luther was lodged, well entertained, and visited by many earls, barons, knights of the order, gentlemen, priests, and the commonalty, who frequented his lodging until night.

He came, contrary to the expectation of many, as well adversaries as others. His friends deliberated together, and many persuaded him not to adventure himself to such a present danger, considering how these beginnings answered not the faith of promise made. Who, when he had heard their whole persuasion and advice, answered in this wise: 'As touching me, since I am sent for, I am resolved and certainly determined to enter Worms, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; yea, although I knew there were as many devils to resist me, as there are tiles to cover the houses in Worms.

The next day after his repair, a gentleman named Ulrick, of Pappenheim, lieutenant-general of the men-at-arms of the Empire, was commanded by the emperor before dinner to repair to Luther, and to enjoin him at four o'clock in the afternoon to appear before the Imperial Majesty, the princes electors, dukes, and other estates of the Empire, to understand the cause of his sending for: whereunto he willingly agreed, as his duty was. And after four o'clock, Ulrick of Pappenheim, and Caspar Sturm, the emperor's herald (who conducted Martin Luther from Wittenberg to Worms), came for Luther, and accompanied him through the garden of the knights-of-the-Rhodes' place, to the Earl Palatine's palace; and, lest the people that thronged in should molest him, he was led by secret stairs to the place where he was appointed to have audience. Yet many, who perceived the pretence, violently rushed in, and were resisted, albeit in vain: many ascended the galleries, because they desired to behold Luther.

Thus standing before the emperor, the electors, dukes, earls, and all the estates of the empire assembled there, he was first advertised by Ulrick of Pappenheim to keep silence, until such time as he was required to speak. Then John Eckius above mentioned, who then was the Bishop of Treves' general official, with a loud voice, said:

'Martin Luther! the sacred and invincible Imperial Majesty hath enjoined, by the consent of all the estates of the holy empire, that thou shouldest be appealed before the throne of his majesty, to the end I might demand of thee these two points.

'First, whether thou confessest these books here (for he showed a heap of Luther's books written in the Latin and German tongues), and which are in all place dispersed, entitled with thy name, be thine, and thou dost affirm them to be thine, or not?

'Secondly, whether thou wilt recant and revoke them, and all that is contained in them, or rather meanest to stand to what thou hast written?'

Luther answered: 'I humbly beseech the Imperial Majesty to grant me liberty and leisure to deliberate; so that I may satisfy the interrogation made unto me, without prejudice of the Word of God, and peril of mine own soul.'

Whereupon the princes began to deliberate. This done, Eckius, the prolocutor, pronounced what was their resolution, saying, 'The Emperor's majesty, of his mere clemency, granteth thee one day to meditate for thine answer, so that tomorrow, at this instant hour, thou shalt repair to exhibit thine opinion, not in writing, but to pronounce the same with lively voice.'

This done, Luther was led to his lodging by the herald.

The next day, the herald brought him from his lodging to the emperor's court, where he abode till six o'clock, for that the princes were occupied in grave consultations; abiding there, and being environed with great number of people, and almost smothered for the press that was there. Then after, when the princes were set, and Luther entered, Eckius, the official, spake in this manner: 'Answer now to the Emperor's demand. Wilt thou maintain all they books which thou hast acknowledged, or revoke any part of them, and submit thyself?'

Martin Luther answered modestly and lowly, and yet not without some stoutness of stomach, and Christian constancy. 'Considering your sovereign majesty, and your honours, require a plain answer; this I say and profess as resolutely as I may, without doubting or sophistication, that if I be not convinced by testimonies of the Scriptures (for I believe not the Pope, neither his General Councils, which have erred many times, and have been contrary to themselves), my conscience is so bound and captive in these Scriptures and the Word of God, and I will not, nor may not revoke any manner of thing; considering it is not godly or lawful to do anything against conscience. Hereupon I stand and rest: I have not what else to say. God have mercy upon me!'

The princes consulted together upon this answer given by Luther; and when they had diligently examined the same, the prolocutor began to repel him thus: 'The Emperor's majesty requireth of thee a simple answer, either negative or affirmative, whether thou mindest to defend all thy works as Christian, or no?'

Then Luther, turning to the emperor and the nobles, besought them not to force or compel him to yield against his conscience, confirmed with the Holy Scriptures, without manifest arguments alleged to the contrary by his adversaries. 'I am tied by the Scriptures.'

Night now approaching, the lords arose and departed. And after Luther had taken his leave of the emperor, divers Spaniards scorned and scoffed the good man in the way going toward his lodging, hallooing and whooping after him a long while.

Upon the Friday following, when the princes, electors, dukes, and other estates were assembled, the emperor sent to the whole body of the Council a certain letter, as followeth: 'Our predecessors, who truly were Christian princes, were obedient to the Romish Church, which Martin Luther impugne. And therefore, inasmuch as he is not determined to call back his errors in any one point, we cannot, without great infamy and stain of honour, degenerate from the examples of our elders, but will maintain the ancient faith, and give aid to the see of Rome. And further, we be resolved to pursue Martin Luther and his adherents by excommunication, and by other means that may be devised, to extinguish his doctrine. Nevertheless we will not violate our faith, which we have promised him, but mean to give order for his safe return to the place whence he came.'

During this time, divers princes, earls, barons, knights of the order, gentlemen, priests, monks, with others of the laity and common sort, visited him, All these were present at all hours in the emperor's court, and could not be satisfied with the sight of him. Also there were bills set up, some against Luther, and some, as it seemed, with him. Notwithstanding many supposed, and especially such as well conceived the matter, that this was subtilly done by his enemies, that thereby occasion might be offered to infringe the safe-conduct given him; which the Roman ambassadors with all diligence endeavoured to bring to pass.

John Eckius, the archbishop's official, in the presence of the emperor's secretary, said unto Luther in his lodging, by the commandment of the emperor, that since he had been admonished by the Imperial Majesty, the electors, princes, and estates of the empire, and that notwithstanding, he would not return to unity and concord, it remained that the emperor, as advocate of the catholic faith, should proceed further: and it was the emperor's ordinance, that he

should within twenty-one days return boldly under safe-conduct, and be safely guarded to the place whence he came; so that in the meanwhile he stirred no commotion among the people in his journey, either in conference, or by preaching.

Luther, hearing this, answered very modestly and Christianly, 'Even as it hath pleased God, so is it come to pass; the name of the Lord by blessed!' He thanked most humbly the emperor's majesty, and all the princes and estates of the empire, that they had given to him benign and gracious audience, and granted him safe-conduct to come and return. Finally he desired none other of them, than a reformation according to the sacred Word of God and consonancy of Holy Scriptures, which effectually in his heart he desired: otherwise he was prest to suffer all chances for the Imperial Majesty, as life, land death, goods, fame, and reproach: reserving nothing to himself, but only the Word of God, which he would constantly confess to the latter end.

The morrow after, which was April the 26th, after he had taken his leave of such as supported him, and of the benevolent friends that oftentimes visited him, and had broken his fast, at ten o'clock he departed from Worms, accompanied with such as repaired thither with him.

It was not long after this, but the emperor to purchase favour with the Pope (because he was not yet confirmed in his Empire), directeth out a solemn writ of outlawry against Luther, and all them that took his part; commanding the said Luther, wheresoever he might be gotten, to be apprehended, and his books burned. In the meantime, Duke Frederick conveyed Luther a little out of sight secretly, by the help of certain noblemen whom he well knew to be faithful and trusty unto him in that behalf. There Luther, being close and out of company, wrote divers epistles, and certain books; among which he dedicated one to his company of Augustine friars, entitled, *De abroganda Missa*: which friars the same time being encouraged by him, began to lay down their private masses. Duke Frederic, fearing lest that would breed some great stir or tumult, caused the judgment of the University of Wittenberg to be asked in the matter.

It was showed to the duke, that he should do well to command the use of the mass to be abrogated through his dominion: and though it could not be done without tumult, yet that was no let why the course of true doctrine should be stayed, neither ought such disturbance to be imputed to the doctrine taught but to the adversaries, who willingly and wickedly kick against the truth, whereof Christ also giveth us forewarning before. For fear of such tumults therefore, we ought not to surcease from that which we know is to be done, but constantly must go forward in defence of God's truth, howsoever the world doth esteem us, or rage against it.

It happened about the same time that King Henry VIII. wrote against Luther. In which book, first, he reproveth Luther's opinion about the Pope's pardons; secondly, he defendeth the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome; thirdly, he laboureth to refell all his doctrine of the sacraments of the Church.

This book, albeit it carried the King's name in the title, yet it was another that ministered the motion, another that framed the style. But whosoever had the labour of this book, the King had the thanks and the reward; for the Bishop of Rome gave to the said King Henry, and to his successors forever, the style and title of *Defender of the Faith*.

Shortly after this, Pope Leo was stricken with sudden fever, and died shortly, being of the age of forty-seven years: albeit some suspect that he died of poison. Successor to him was Pope Adrian VI., schoolmaster some time to Charles the Emperor. This Adrian was a German born, brought up at Louvain, and as in learning he exceeded the common sort of Popes, so in moderation of life and manners he seemed not altogether so intemperate as some other Popes have been: and yet, like a right Pope, nothing degenerating from his see, he was a mortal enemy against Martin Luther and his partakers. In his time, shortly after the council of Worms was

broken up, another assembly of the princes, nobles, and states of Germany was appointed by the emperor at Nuremberg, A.D. 1522.

Unto this assembly the said Adrian sent his letters, with an instruction unto his legate Cheragatus, to inform him what causes to allege against Luther.

Pope Adrian the Sixth, to the Renowned Princes of Germany, and to the Peers of the Roman Empire.

We hear that Martin Luther, a new raiser-up of old and damnable heresies, first after the fatherly advertisements of the see apostolic; then after the sentence also of condemnation awarded against him, and lastly, after the imperial decree of our well-beloved son Charles, elect Emperor of the Romans, and catholic King of Spain, being divulged through the whole nation of Germany; yet hath neither been by order restrained, nor of himself hath refrained from his madness begun, but daily more and more, ceaseth not to disturb and replenish the world with new books, fraught full of errors, heresies, contumelies and sedition, and to infect the country of Germany, and other regions about, with this pestilence; and endeavoureth still to corrupt simple souls and manners of men, with the poison of his pestiferous tongue. And (which is worst of all) hath for his fautors and supporters, not of the vulgar sort only, but also divers personages of the nobility; insomuch that they have begun also to invade the goods of priests contrary to the obedience which they owe to ecclesiastical and temporal persons, and now also at last have grown unto civil war and dissension among themselves.

Do you not consider, O princes and people of Germany! That these be but prefaces and preambles to those evils and mischiefs which Luther, with the sect of his Lutherans, do intend and purpose hereafter? Do you not see plainly, and perceive with your eyes, that this defending of the verity of the Gospel, first begun by the Lutherans to be pretended, is now manifest to be but an invention to spoil your goods, which they have long intended? Or do you think that these sons of iniquity do tend to any other thing, than under the name of liberty to supplant obedience, and so to open a general license to every man to do what him listeth? They who refuse to render due obedience to priests, to bishops, yea, to the high bishop all, and who daily before your own faces make their booties of church-goods, and of things consecrated to God; think ye that they will refrain their sacrilegious hands from the spoil of laymen's goods? Yea, that they will not pluck from you whatsoever they can rap or reave? Nay, think you not contrary, but this miserable calamity will at length redound upon you, your goods, your houses, wives, children, dominions, possessions, and these your temples which you hallow and reverence; except you provide some speedy remedy against the same.

Wherefore we require you, in virtue of that obedience which all Christians owe to God, and blessed St. Peter, and to his vicar here on earth, that you confer your helping hands every man to quench this public fire, and endeavor and study, the best way ye can, how to reduce the said Martin Luther, and all other fautors of these tumults and errors, to better conformity and trade both of life and faith. And if they who be infected shall refuse to hear your admonitions, yet provide that the other part, which yet remaineth sound, by the same contagion by not corrupted. When this pestiferous canker cannot with supple and gentle medicines by cured, more sharp salves must be proved, and fiery searings. The putrefied members must be cut off from the body, lest the sound parts also be infected. So God did cast down into hell the schismatical brethren Dathan and Abiram; and him that would not obey the authority of the priest, God commanded to be punished with death. So Peter, prince of the apostles, denounced sudden death to Ananias and

Sapphira, who lied unto God. So the old and godly emperors commanded Jovinian and Priscillian, as heretics, to be beheaded. So St. Jerome wished Vigilant, as a heretic, to be given to the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord. So also did our predecessors in the Council of Constance condemn to death John Huss and his fellow Jerome, who now appeareth to revive again in Luther. The worth acts and examples of which forefathers, if you shall imitate, ewe do not doubt but God's merciful clemency shall soon after relieve his Church.

These instructions of the Pope himself against Luther, I thought, Christian reader! To set before thine eyes. They cry, 'Heresy, heresy!' but they prove no heresy. They inflame kings and princes against Luther, and yet they have no just cause wherefore. They charge Luther with disobedience, and none are so disobedient to magistrates and civil laws, as they. They lay to his charge oppression and spoiling of laymen's goods; and who spoileth the laymen's livings so much as the Pope?

Now let us see what the princes answer to these aforesaid suggestions and instructions of Pope Adrian.

The Answer of the Noble and Reverend Princes, and of the States of the sacred Roman Empire, exhibited to the Pope's Ambassador.

They understand that his holiness is afflicted with great sorrow for the prospering of Luther's sect, whereby innumerable souls committed to his charge are in danger of perdition. The lord lieutenant, and other princes and states do answer, that it is to them no less grief and sorrow than to his holiness. But why the sentence of the apostolic see, and the emperor's edict against Luther, hath not been put in execution hitherto, there hath been causes great and urgent; as first, that great evils and inconveniences would thereupon ensue. For the greatest part of the people of Germany have always had persuasion, and now, by reading Luther's books, are more therein confirmed, that great grievances and inconveniences have come to this nation of Germany by the Court of Rome: and therefore, if they should have proceeded with any rigour in executing the Pope's sentence, and the emperor's edict, the multitude would conceive and suspect in their minds this to be done for subverting the verity of the Gospel, and for supporting and confirming the former abuses and grievances, whereupon great wars and tumults, no doubt, would have ensued. Unless such abuses and grievances shall be faithfully reformed, there is no true peace and concord between the ecclesiastical and secular estates, nor any true extirpation of this tumult and errors in Germany, that can be hoped.

Whereas the Pope's holiness desireth to be informed, what way were best to take in resisting these errors of the Lutherans, what more present or effectual remedy can be had than this, that the Pope's holiness, by the consent of the Emperor's majesty, do summon a free Christian Council in some convenient place of Germany, as at Strasburg, or at Mentz, or at Cologne, or a Metz? And that with as much speed as conveniently may be; in which Council it may be lawful for every person that there shall have interest, either temporal or ecclesiastical, freely to speak and consult, to the glory of God, and health of souls, and the public wealth of Christendom, without impeachment or restraint; whatsoever oath or other bond to the contrary notwithstanding: yea, and it shall be every good man's part there to speak, not only freely, but to speak that which is true, to the purpose, and to edifying, and not to pleasing or flattering, but simply and uprightly to declare his judgment, without all fraud or guile.

And as touching by what ways these errors and tumults of German people may best be stayed and pacified in the meantime, the aforesaid lord lieutenant, with the other princes, thereupon

have consulted and deliberated; that forasmuch as Luther, and certain of his fellows, be within the territory and dominion of the noble Duke Frederic, and said lord Lieutenant and other states of the empire shall so labour the matter with the aforesaid prince, Duke of Saxony, that Luther and his followers, shall not write, set forth, or print anything during the said mean space.

That the said lord lieutenant and princes shall labour so with the preachers of Germany, that they shall not in their sermons teach or blow into the people's ears such matters, whereby the multitude may be moved to rebellion or uproar, or be induced into error. Also, that they shall move no contention or disputation among the vulgar sort; but whatsoever hangeth in controversy, the same they shall reserve to the determination of the Council to come.

The archbishops, bishops, and other prelates within their dioceses shall assign godly and learned men, having good judgment in the Scripture, who shall diligently and faithfully attend upon such preachers: and if they shall perceive the said preachers either to have erred, or to have uttered anything inconveniently, they shall godly, mildly, and modestly advertise and inform them thereof, in such sort that no man shall justly complain the truth of the Gospel to be impeached. But if the preachers, continuing still in their stubbornness, shall refuse to be admonished, and will not desist from their lewdness, then shall they be restrained and punished by the ordinaries of the place, with punishment for the same convenient.

Furthermore, the said princes and nobles shall provide and undertake, so much as shall be possible, that, from henceforth, no new book shall be printed, neither shall they privily or apertly be sold. Also order shall be taken amongst all potentates, that if any shall set out, sell, or print any new work, it shall first be seen and perused of certain godly, learned, and discreet men appointed for the same; so that if it be not admitted and approved by them, it shall not be permitted to be published.

Finally, as concerning priests who contract matrimony, and religious men leaving their cloisters, the aforesaid princes do consider, that forasmuch as in the civil law there is no penalty for them ordained, they shall be referred to the canonical constitutions, to be punished thereafter accordingly; that is, by the loss of their benefices and privileges, or other condign censures.

Let us return to the story of Luther, of whom ye heard before, how he was kept secret and solitary for a time, by the advice and conveyance of certain nobles in Saxony, because of the emperor's edict. In the meantime, while Luther had thus absented himself out of Wittenberg, Andreas Carolostadt, proceeding more roughly and eagerly in causes of religion, had stirred up the people to throw down images in the temples. Luther reproved the rashness of Carolostadt, declaring that their proceedings herein were not orderly, but that pictures and images ought first to be thrown out of the hearts and consciences of men; and that the people ought first to be taught that we are saved before God, and please him only by faith; and that images serve to no purpose: this done, and the people well instructed, there was no danger in images, but they would fall of their own accord. Not that he would maintain images to stand or to be suffered, but that this ought to be done by the magistrate; and not by force, upon every private man's head, without order and authority.

Albeit the Church of Christ (praised be the Lord) is not unprovided of sufficient plenty of worthy and learned writers, able to instruct in matters of doctrine; yet in the chief point of our consolation, where the glory of Christ, and the power of His passion, and strength of faith are to be opened to our conscience; and where the soul, wrestling for death and life, standeth in need of serious consolation, the same may be said of Martin Luther, among all this other variety of writers, what St. Cyprian was wont to say of Tertullian, 'Da magistrum'; 'Give me my master.'

Those who write the lives of saints use to describe and extol their holy life and godly virtues, and also to set forth such miracles as be wrought in them by God; whereof there lacketh no plenty in Martin Luther. What a miracle might this deem to be for one man, and a poor friar, creeping out of a blind cloister, to be set up against the Pope, the universal bishop, and God's mighty vicar on earth; to withstand all his cardinals, yea, and to sustain the malice and hatred of almost the whole world being set against him; and to work that against the said Pope, cardinals, and Church of Rome, which no king nor emperor could ever do, year, durst ever attempt, nor all the learned men before him could ever compass: which miraculous work of God, I account nothing inferior to the miracle of David overthrowing the great Goliath.

Wherefore if miracles do make a saint (after the Pope's definition), what lacketh in Martin Luther, to make him a saint? Who, standing openly against the Pope, cardinals, and prelates of the church, in number so many, in power so terrible, in practice so crafty, having emperors and all the kings of the earth against him; who, teaching and preaching Christ the space of nine and twenty years, could, without touch of all his enemies, so quietly in his own country where he was born, die and sleep in peace. In which Martin Luther, first to stand against the Pope, was a great miracle; to prevail against the Pope, a greater; so to die untouched, may seem greatest of all, especially having so many enemies as he had.

As he was mighty in his prayers, so in his sermons God gave him such a grace, that when he preached, they who heard him thought everyone his own temptation severally to be noted and touched. Whereof, when his friends demanded how that could be; 'Mine own manifold temptations,' said he. 'and experiences are the cause thereof.' For this thou must understand, good reader! That Luther from his tender years was much beaten and exercised with spiritual conflicts. Hieronymus Wellerus, scholar and disciple of the said Martin Luther, recordeth, that he oftentimes heard Luther his master thus report of himself, that he had been assaulted and vexed with all kinds of temptations, saving only one, which was with covetousness; with this vice he was never, said he, in all his life troubled, nor once tempted.

Martin Luther, living to the year of his age sixty-three, continued writing and preaching about twenty-nine years. As touching the order of his death, the words of Melancthon be these, given to his auditory at Wittenberg, A.D. 1546: -

Wednesday last past, and the 17th of February, Dr. Martin Luther sickened of his accustomed malady, to wit, of the oppression of humours in the orifice or opening of the stomach. This sickness took him after supper, with which he vehemently contending, required secess into a by-chamber, and there he rested on his bed two hours, all which time his pains increased; and as Dr. Jonas was lying in his chamber, Luther awaked, and prayed him to rise, and to call up Ambrose his children's schoolmaster, to make a fire in another chamber; into which when he was newly entered, Albert, Earl of Mansfield, with his wife, and divers others at that instant came into his chamber. Finally, feeling his fatal hour to approach, before nine of the clock in the morning, on the 18th of February, he commended himself to God with this devout prayer: 'My heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God! Thou hast manifested unto me Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I have taught Him, I have known Him; I love Him as my life, my health, and my redemption; Whom the wicked have persecuted, maligned, and with injury afflicted. Draw my soul to Thee.'

After this he said as ensueth, thrice: "I commend my spirit into Thy hands, Thou hast redeemed me, O God of Truth!" 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that all those that believe in Him should have life everlasting.' Having repeated oftentimes his prayers,

he was called to God. So praying, his innocent ghost peaceably was separated from the earthly corpse.
