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## WHY DID LUTHER REFUSE ZWINGLI'S HAND OF BROTHERHOOD AT MARBURG?

The first four days of October mark the anniversary of the memorable meeting between Luther and Zwingli at Marburg. At this celebrated conference Zwingli offered the hand of Christian brotherhood and fellowship to Luther; but Luther refused it. Why did he do this? Before we proceed to answer this question, we shall do well to review the events that led up to this colloquy.

Charles V had concluded a treaty with Pope Clement VII and had solemnly pledged himself to suppress Protestantism. The German Protestants formed a defensive alliance in which the Landgrave of Hesse, Philip the Magnanimous, was anxious to have the Swiss included. Zwingli was equally anxious for this. But an obstacle was in the way—the controversy between the Lutherans and Zwinglians on the Lord's Supper. Who had begun this controversial conflict? That is a question which Reformed writers usually pass over in silence, for they know that Zwingli was the author of this heated and unhappy controversy.<sup>1)</sup> It is an undeniable fact that prior to the year 1524 Zwingli and his friends were at one with Luther in teaching the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper. In 1521 Oecolampadius, Zwingli's friend, called it

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1) See Luther's Works, St. Louis Edition, vol. XX, col. 772; XVII, 1534, Luther's Letters, De Wette, vol. III, 43.

# WARTBURG LETTERS OF LUTHER.

(Continued.)

Two days later Luther addressed a letter

TO SPALATIN.<sup>1)</sup>

To the gentleman of eminent learning and godliness, Mr. George Spalatin, court-preacher to the Saxon prince, my most dearly beloved in Christ.

Jesus.

Grace! I have previously received, my dear Spalatin, both your last letter and the pamphlet of Oecolampad,<sup>2)</sup> together with all the other matter, and I am now sending through you (for it is thought that this may be done most conveniently by your hand) the finished Magnificat, as you will note, and the treatise which has grown out of the Sermon on Confession. I have dedicated the latter to Francis von Sickingen. With your pleasure these things may be printed as soon as possible. I have previously sent to the printer the 22d Psalm.

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1) The original of this letter forms part of the collection in the General Archives of Anhalt. It has been printed in Aurifaber I, 333 b, De Wette II, 16, Erlang. Corresp. III, 171, St. Louis Ed. XV, 2526 ff. — Spalatin had left Worms, together with the Elector, May 23. The latter wrote from Gerolzhofen, under date of May 31, to his brother, advising him that he hoped to be with him at Coburg the coming Sunday, June 2. (See Foerstemann, *Neues Urkundenb.*, p. 19 b.) On June 10th Melancthon received a letter from Spalatin, then at Coburg. (See *Corp. Ref. I*, 396.) Aurifaber and Walch, who has adopted his view, have represented Spalatin as being still at Worms at this time.

2) The treatise on auricular confession. (See THEOL. QUART. X, 101, note 50.)

Accordingly, you will also have this matter forwarded to the same place, unless you think that some changes ought to be made. As regards the 119th Psalm, I have reached no conclusion yet whether I shall prefer to have it bound together with the treatise on Confession or apart, as a separate book. I shall forward the remainder as soon as I shall have learned what you folks advise. For I have the elaboration of it in hand now, but have not yet completed it. For this reason the messenger was compelled to start without it.

I have not yet received the Postils. The party to whom I gave my order has miscarried them.<sup>3)</sup> Meanwhile I have written that, if they cannot be found, you will see that I receive a copy of the Shorter Postil, if you have one, together with the Index of the Epistles and Gospels. I have, in the meantime, written an exceedingly lavish commentary in German on my Epistle for the Sunday after Christmas. I must also reply to Latomus, who is glorying in his lord, the pope. I am surprised at the spirit of Oecolampad; not so much because he has hit upon the same subject as I, as, rather, because he writes in such a frank, confident, and Christian manner. May the Lord keep him and give him increase; Amen.

I am very idle and very busy: I am learning Hebrew and Greek and am incessantly writing. My host<sup>4)</sup> treats me far better than I deserve. The affliction from which I suffered at Worms has not yet left me; it has rather become aggravated: I am suffering from such excessive costiveness, as I have never before in my life. I almost despair of ever being cured. The Lord is thus visiting me in order that I should not be without some remnants of the cross. His name be praised! Amen.

I wonder what is delaying the imperial Edict. I have read the letter in print which I addressed to the Estates of the Empire on my return from Worms; but it is full of mistakes. There is a report that Mr. Schifer is dead and has left the

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3) hat einen Irrtum begangen.

4) von Berlepsch, warden of Castle Wartburg.

Emperor Charles a million guilders in gold. What a bold Christ ours is, because He is not afraid of these mountains of gold! Would to God, however, that they might know at last that He, the Lord, is our God.

I have not answered the last letter of the junior prince, because I did not know the place of his sojourn, nor do I consider an answer necessary. By sending too many letters the secret of my abode might through some accident be betrayed. Do pray for me; that is the one thing I am in need of; I have everything else in abundance. I am unconcerned regarding what is done abroad with regard to my person. I have found rest here at last. Godspeed to you in the Lord! Extend my greetings wherever you have opportunity.

From the Isle of Patmos, June 10, 1521,  
Henricus Nesicus.<sup>5)</sup>

Luther's refutation of Latomus was not forwarded to Jonas until June 22. The concluding remarks are addressed personally

TO JUSTUS JONAS.<sup>6)</sup>

However, I revert to you, my dear Jonas, and dismiss this Latomus so as to be rid of annoyance, because I have now begun my German exposition of the Epistles and Gospels. That is the reason why reading and replying to his filth has proven annoying to me. Some other time when it seems good to me I shall reply to all his writing. My only want in this exile is books; I am suffering the sentence by which the inquisitors<sup>7)</sup>

5) Aurifaber and De Wette suggest nescius, in the sense of the unknown, hidden one, the recluse, who also cares to know nobody. But that would change the plain reading of the original. Lindner, in *Stud. u. Krit.* 1835, p. 82, suggests that *νησιώδης*, a dweller in an island, is a word coined by Luther. In his *Book of Names* Luther interprets Hinric "the father of many;" hence, Henricus Nesicus = the insular author (father) of many writings.

6) St. Louis Ed. XVIII, 1199 ff.

7) *Ketzer-Magister*; "inquisitors" will correctly render this term, but will not reproduce the paronomasia which Luther intends at this place. His *Ketzer-Magister* is not only a person who coerces heretics, but

forced the Jews to have no book but the Bible; for I have in my possession the Bible only. Not as though it were a great matter with me whether I have books, but they would serve my end so far as I must examine whether sayings of the fathers have been honestly cited by my opponent. For he quotes Dionysius to prove that we must "pray" to God in behalf of the departed, while Dionysius speaks of "praising" God, as I remember very well. And why does not one of you—either you or Andreas Carlstadt—reply to his other blunders?<sup>8)</sup> Why does not Amsdorf come forward? Is it not your duty, as well as mine, to defend the Gospel? I have bruised the serpent's head, why cannot you bruise its body?

For instance, when he interprets the words of Job, chap. 9, 28: "I am afraid of all my sorrows," thus: "I am afraid," that is, "I observe;" and when, in Ps. 143, 2: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant," etc., where the prophet deprecates God's judgment, he expounds that saying thus: The entire life of God is without sin, while no man's entire life is without sin; hence, he wishes not to be judged by the life of God. Thus, he puts the life of God for the judgment of God, or the countenance of God before which we must appear. But where in Scripture is the expression understood in that sense? If, then, any part of our life could demand: "Enter into judgment with me," that part, forsooth, would have to be numbered in a different class from that which embraces all the living. However, is he not adducing the fathers? Aye, but were not the fathers men like we? Now, could not one of you refute these and similar antics quite easily? The judgment of God is that act of God by which He tests our life, not compares His life with ours. For, what an absurdity would it be to compare the life eternal with that which lasts but a moment! There are many things in his writing, yea, nearly all, of this

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who is himself a great heretic, not only a heretic-master, but a master heretic.—Perhaps some one of our readers can suggest the proper equivalent.

8) das Uebrige.

sort. Now, I should be greatly pleased if you also would do something for the Word, and I might thus obtain leisure for once to render some service to our poor people. You tyros must be exercised, and this were best done while I am living and may still be of some help to you. But, here is the treatise; pray, take it. How glad I am not to have to keep it with me any longer! Godspeed to you!

Given at my Patmos, June 22, 1521.

*(To be continued.)*