

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE

English titles to Luther's works are given as they appear in Martin Luther, *Works*, 55 vols., ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehman (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, and Philadelphia: Fortress Press [formerly Muhlenberg Press], 1955–86). The *Small Catechism*, *Large Catechism*, and *Schmalkaldic Articles* are not included in this edition but are available in any of the editions of the Book of Concord (the Lutheran confessional writings).

Events in the Age of the Reformation

Events in the Life of Martin Luther

1453–56 Johannes Gutenberg: printing
of the Vulgate

1466 or 1469 *Desiderius Erasmus of
Rotterdam (†1536)

ca. 1480 *Andreas Bodenstein von
Carlstadt (†1541)

1484 *Huldreich Zwingli (†1531)

1485 Division of Saxony into electorate
and duchy

1485 *Johannes Bugenhagen (†1558)

1486 *Johannes Eck (†1543)

1492 Discovery of America by
Christopher Columbus

1493 *Justus Jonas (†1555)

1493–1519 Emperor Maximilian I

1496 Marital alliance between the
house of Hapsburg and the royal
house of Spain

1497 *Philipp Melanchthon (†1560)

1483 November 10: Born in Eisleben
November 11: Baptism

1484–96/97 Youth and early schooling
in Mansfeld

1497 Attends school in Magdeburg

*Asterisk indicates a birth date.

†Dagger precedes a death date.

- 1500 *King and Emperor Charles (IV) (†1558)
- 1502 Foundation of the University of Wittenberg
- 1503 Johannes von Staupitz (†1524) becomes vicar general of the Augustinian Observant congregation
- 1507 Pope Julius II offers an indulgence for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome
- 1509 *John Calvin (†1564)
- 1509–47 *King Henry VIII of England
- 1512–17 Fifth Lateran Council
- 1513–21 Pope Leo X
- 1513–45 Albrecht of Brandenburg, archbishop of Magdeburg and (from 1514) of Mainz, administrator of Halberstadt; deeply in debt as a result of cumulation of offices
- 1515–47 King Francis I of France
- 1516 Erasmus of Rotterdam: *Novum instrumentum*, the first Greek edition of the New Testament
- 1517 January: Johannes von Staupitz, *Büchlein über die Prädestination* (Little book concerning predestination)
- 1498–1501 Attends Latin School in Eisenach
- 1501 Matriculates at the University of Erfurt; studies at the arts faculty
- 1505 Master of arts examination; begins studying law in Erfurt
July 2: Surprised by a thunderstorm near Stotternheim, Luther vows to become a monk.
July 17: Enters the monastery of the Augustinian Eremites in Erfurt
- 1507 April 3: Ordained at the Cathedral Church of St. Mary in Erfurt
- 1510/11 Luther sent to Rome because of the Observant controversy
- 1511 late summer: final transferral to Wittenberg
- 1512 October 18/19: Receives the degree of doctor of theology; becomes professor of biblical theology
- 1513–15 First course of lectures on the Psalms (*Dictata super Psalterium*)
- 1515/16 Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans
- 1517 September: Luther's disputation against scholastic theology—fundamental repudiation of

- Johann Tetzel promotes indulgences in Brandenburg and Magdeburg regions; half of the proceeds going toward the debts of Albrecht of Mainz
- 1518 *Dialogue Concerning the Authority of the Pope*, treatise by the Dominican Silvester Prierias, court theologian of Roman curia
Imperial diet in Augsburg
- 1519 January 3: Death of Emperor Maximilian
June 28: Election of Charles V as king of Germany
- 1519–21 Hernán Cortés conquers and destroys the Aztec empire in Mexico. Ferdinand Magellan and his men make the first voyage around the world
- 1520 Johannes von Staupitz gives up his post as vicar general of the Augustinian congregation
October 23: Coronation of Charles V in Aachen as “elected Roman Emperor”
- Aristotelianism
October 31: Posting of the ninety-five theses at the Castle Church of Wittenberg and demand that Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz put an end to the abuse of indulgences
Luther is denounced in Rome by Albrecht; the curia takes the theses as an attack on the authority of the pope.
- 1518 April: disputation in Heidelberg in the milieu of the chapter of the German Augustinian congregation
- October 12–14: Questioning by Cardinal Cajetan after the Diet of Augsburg; Luther refuses to recant
December 8(?): Elector Frederick rejects Cajetan’s petition to extradite Luther or banish him
- 1519–21 Second course of lectures on the Psalms (*Operationes in Psalmos*)
June 27–July 16: Disputation in Leipzig, with Luther and Carlstadt against Eck
Condemnation of Luther’s theology by the Universities of Cologne and Louvain
- 1520 Hutten and Sickingen offer Luther their help
June 15: Papal bull threatening excommunication, *Exsurge Domine*
August: *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*
October 6: *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*
October 10: Luther receives the bull threatening excommunication
November: *The Freedom of a Christian*
December 10: Burning of the bull *Exsurge Domine* and canon law before the Elster Gate in Wittenberg

- 1521 January 27: Opening of the imperial diet in Worms
 April 17/18: Wounding and conversion of Ignatius of Loyola (†1556)
 December: Philipp Melanchthon's *Loci communes*, the first systematic survey of Reformational theology
- 1521/22 "Wittenberg troubles"
- 1522–23 Pope Hadrian VI
 Beginning of the Reformation in Zurich
- 1523 March 6: Edict of the Diet of Nuremberg: enforcement of the Edict of Worms postponed; Hadrian VI presents to the Diet of Nuremberg a renewal program (papacy's admission of guilt)
 July 1: The first martyrs of the Reformation, Augustinians Johann von Essen and Heinrich Voss from Antwerp, burned at the stake in Brussels
- 1523–34 Pope Clement VII
- 1524 Landgrave Philip of Hesse joins the Reformation
 August: Beginning of the peasants' revolts in southwestern Germany
- 1521 January 3: Excommunicated by Pope Leo X
 March 6: Summons to the Diet of Worms
 April 17/18: Questioning at the Diet of Worms before the emperor and empire; Luther refuses to recant
 May 4: Taken into protective custody by his sovereign near Eisenach on his way home from the diet
 May 4–March 1, 1522: at Wartburg Castle as Junker Jörg
 May 8: Edict of Worms, signed by the emperor on May 26; imperial ban imposed on Luther and his followers
 December–end of February 1522: Translation of the New Testament in eleven weeks
- 1522 March: Luther's return from Wartburg; Eight sermons (*Invokavit sermons*) against the reform measures introduced in Wittenberg (*The Eight Wittenberg Sermons*)
 September: The New Testament appears in print ("September Testament")
- 1523 Luther resumes his lectures
 December: Working out of an Evangelical liturgy (*Formula missae*)
 Major writings: *Dass Jesus ein geborner Jude sei* (*That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew*); *Von weltlicher Obrigkeit* (*Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed*)
- 1524 October 9: Luther abandons his religious habit
 Major writings: *Brief an die Fürsten zu Sachsen von dem aufrührerischen Geist*

- Erasmus of Rotterdam: *De libero arbitrio* (Concerning Free Will)
 Thomas Münzer's diatribe against Luther: *Hoch verursachte Schutzrede wider das geistlose sanft lebende Fleisch zu Wittenberg* (Speech against the Mindless Soft-living Flesh in Wittenberg)
- 1525 Charles V defeated at Pavia
 Francis I of France taken prisoner
 Peasants' War in Thuringia
 March: Twelve Articles of Memmingen
 May 5: Death of Frederick the Wise
 May 15: Annihilation of the Thuringian peasant army at Mühlhausen
- 1525–32 Elector John the Steadfast
- 1526 June 25–August 27: First Diet of Speyer: crushing of the Reformation put off
 August 29: Battle of Mohacz: Ludwig II of Hungary defeated by the Turks
- 1526–30 Visitations of churches and schools in Electoral Saxony
- 1527 May 6: "Sacco di Roma": imperial army's sack of Rome
- (Letter to the Princes of Saxony Concerning the Rebellious Spirit), against Thomas Münzer; *An die Ratsherren aller Städte deutsches Landes, dass sie christliche Schulen aufrichten . . . sollen* (To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools)
- 1525 April: *Ermahnung zum Frieden auf die zwölf Artikel der Bauernschaft* (An Admonition to Peace: A Reply to the Twelve Articles of the Peasants in Swabia); to which is added at the beginning of May: *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*
 June 13: Marriage to Katharina von Bora
 ca. July: *Ein Sendbrief von dem harten Büchlein wider die Bauern* (An Open Letter against the Hard Book against the Peasants)
 November/December: *De servo arbitrio* (Bondage of the Will); against Erasmus
 From 1525 on: Eucharistic controversy
- 1526 June 7: Birth of his first son
 June: Signs of serious illness
 Writings: *Ob Kriegsleute auch in seligem Stande sein können* (Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved)
- 1527 March/April: Eucharistic treatise: *Das diese Worte Christi, "Das ist mein Leib," etc. . . . noch feststehen* (That These Words of Christ, "This Is My Body," etc., Still Stand Firm against the Fanatics)
 Summer: Illness, severe depressions
 November: *Ob man vor dem Sterben*

- 1528–42 Bugenhagen reforms conditions in churches and schools in the sphere of influence of the Saxon Reformation
- 1529 February 26–April 12: Second Diet of Speyer
April 19: Protest of the Evangelical estates
September/October: Vienna besieged by Sultan Suleiman
- 1530 June 20–November 19: Diet of Augsburg
June 25: Presentation of the *Confessio Augustana*; Huldreich Zwingli and four cities (Strasbourg, Constance, Lindau, Memmingen) each have their own confessions delivered
August 3: *Refutatio* by Roman Catholic theologians; Charles V declares the Protestants to be defeated.
- 1531 Foundation of the Schmalkaldic League: protective alliance of the Protestant estates under the leadership of Electoral Saxony and Hesse
October 11: Zwingli killed at Kappel
- 1532 Religious Peace of Nuremberg: Protestants granted free exercise of religion until a general council is convoked
- fliehen möge (Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague)*
December 10: Birth of daughter Elisabeth
- 1528 March: *Vom Abendmahl Christi, Bekenntnis (Confession Concerning Christ's Supper)*
August 3: Death of daughter Elisabeth
- 1529 *Vom Kriege wider die Türken (On War against the Turk)*
March: *Kleiner Katechismus (Small Catechism)*
May 4: *Grosser Katechismus (Large Catechism)*
Birth of daughter Magdalena ("Lenchen")
October 1–4: Religious colloquy of Marburg: No agreement in the eucharistic controversy
- 1530 April–October: Luther at Coburg Castle during the Diet of Augsburg.
May: Death of father, Hans Luther
Important tract: *Vermahnung an die Geistlichen versammelt auf dem Reichstag zu Augsburg (Exhortation to All Clergy Assembled at Augsburg)*
- 1531 Death of mother Margaret
Warnung an seine lieben Deutschen (Warning addressed to his beloved Germans)

- 1532–47 Elector John Frederick I, the Magnanimous, of Saxony (†1554)
- 1533 *Von der Winkelmesse und Pfaffenweihe* (About private Mass and ordination)
- 1534 February 24–June 25, 1535: the Anabaptists’ “Kingdom of Christ” in Münster
Introduction of the Reformation in Württemberg
Separation of the English church from Rome: Act of Supremacy of the Church of England under King Henry VIII
Foundation of the Jesuit order by Ignatius of Loyola
- 1534–49 Pope Paul III
- 1535 May 12: Protestant ordination established
- 1535 November 7: Negotiations with nuncio Pietro Paolo Vergerio at Wittenberg Castle about Protestant participation in the papal council
- 1535–45 *Lectures on Genesis*
- 1535–46 Dean of the theological faculty
- 1536 Wittenberg Concord: agreement between the Wittenberg Reformation and the southern German Reformation on the Eucharist
Introduction of the Reformation in Denmark by King Christian III
- 1536 January 14: Disputation *Über den Menschen* (*The Disputation Concerning Man*)
Disputation *Über die Rechtfertigung* (*The Disputation Concerning Justification*)
December: the *Schmalkaldic Articles*
- 1537 February 9–20: Bundestag at Schmalkalden; negotiations about attendance at the papal council in Mantua; Schmalkaldic League extended for ten years;
Melancthon’s treatise *Über die Gewalt des Papstes* accepted
- 1537 Serious illness during the Bundestag in Schmalkalden
- 1537–40 Dispute over the meaning of biblical law

- 1538 Nuremberg League of the Catholic estates against the Protestants
- 1539 Religious Truce of Frankfurt; limited toleration of the Reformation
Introduction of the Reformation in Ducal Saxony and Brandenburg
- 1540/41 March 4: Bigamous marriage of Landgrave Phillip of Hesse
Religious colloquies in Hagenau, Worms, and Regensburg
- 1540 September 27: Jesuit order approved by Pope Paul III
- 1541 Nikolaus von Amsdorf: first Evangelical bishop (in Naumburg)
Introduction of the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of Geneva
- 1541–53 Duke (from 1547: Elector) Moritz of Saxony
- 1542 War between the Schmalkaldic League and Duke Henry of Wolfenbüttel
Introduction of the Reformation in Braunschweig (Brunswick)
- 1543–46 Archbishop Hermann von Wied's attempt to establish the Reformation in Cologne fails
- 1543 Nicolaus Copernicus (†1543), *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium*
- 1544 *Die Hauspostille* (a book of sermons)
September: *Kurzes Bekenntnis vom heiligen Sakrament* (Short confession of the Holy Sacrament)
- 1545 March 5: Preface to the first volume of the complete Wittenberg edition of the Latin writings
Wider das Papsttum zu Rom, vom Teufel gestiftet (*Against the Roman Papacy, an Institution of the Devil*)
- 1546 February 14: Last sermon in Eisleben—against the Jews
February 18: Death in Eisleben
- 1539 *Von den Counciliis und Kirchen* (*On the Councils and Churches*)
- 1539–41 A further revision of the Bible translation
- 1541 March: *Wider Hans Worst* (*Against Hans Worst*)
- 1542 January 6: Luther's will
September 20: Death of daughter Magdalena
- 1543 January: *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (*Of the Jews and Their Lies*)

February 22: Funeral at the Castle Church of Wittenberg; funeral sermon held by Melanchthon

1546/47 Schmalkaldic War

April 24, 1547: Protestants defeated by the imperial troops at Mühlberg
May 19: Capitulation of Wittenberg: Elector John Frederick forced to cede electoral dignity and electoral lands to Duke Moritz

1555 Diet of Augsburg: imperial estates agree on a religious compromise