

Significant Castles in the Life and Ministry of Luther



1. Wittenberg Castle, 1517
Separation

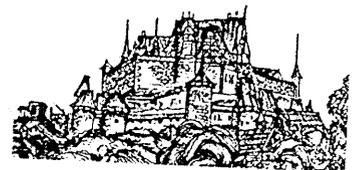
2. The Pleissenburg Castle, 1519
Salvation

3. The Ebernburg Castle, 1520-22
Security

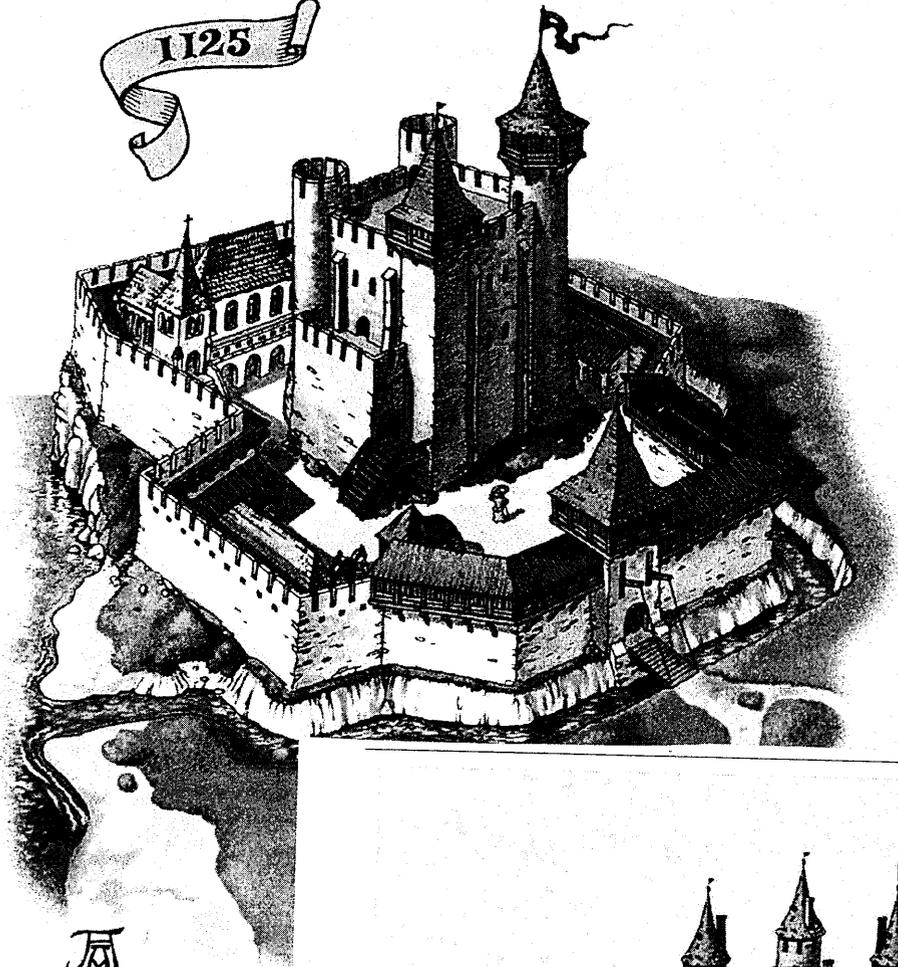
4. The Wartburg Castle, 1521-22
Scripture

5. The Marburg Castle, 1529
Sacraments

6. Veste Coburg, 1530
Spirituality

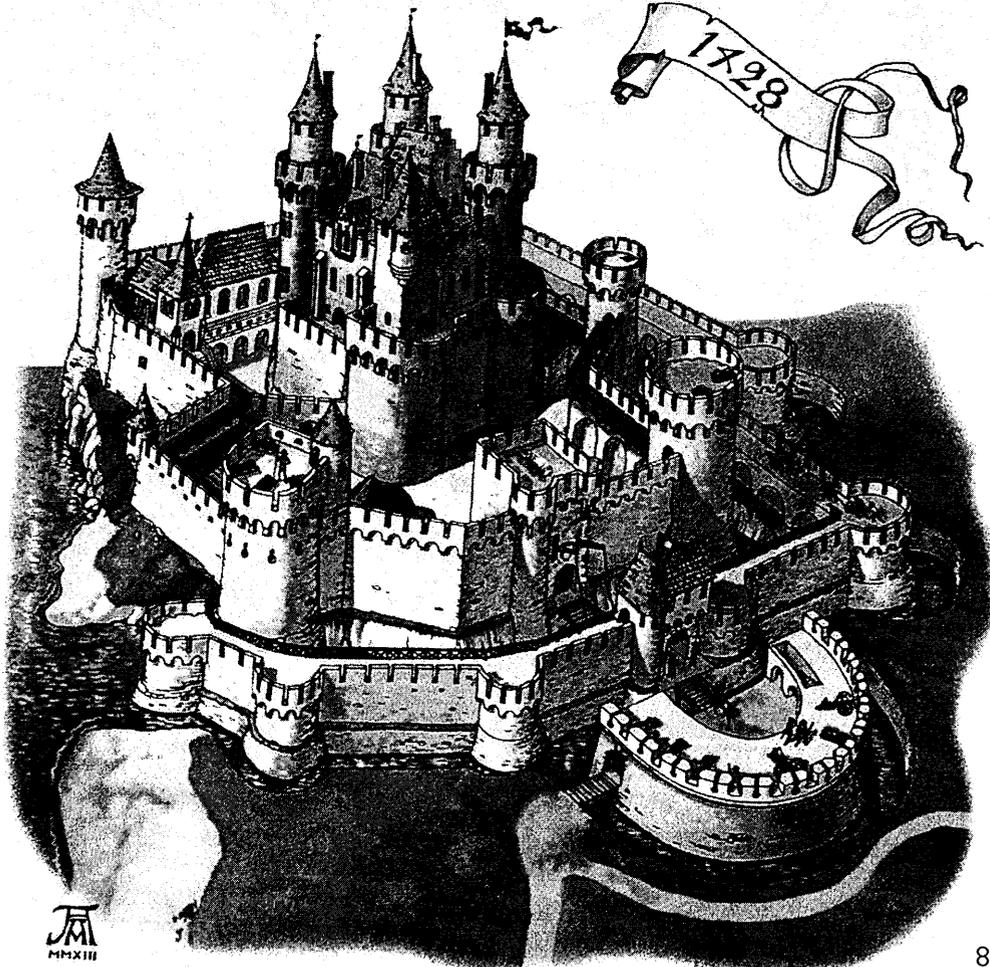


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The Wittenberg Castle, 1517 – **Separation**

The Pleissenburg Castle, 1519 – **Salvation**

The Wartburg Castle, 1521-22 – **Scripture**

The Marburg Castle, 1529 – **Sacraments**

The Coburg Castle, 1530 – **Spirituality**

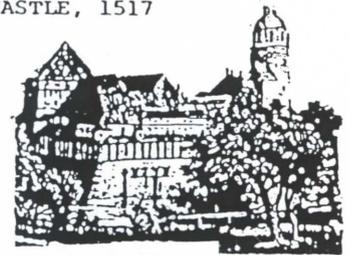
The Ebernburg Castle, 1520-22 – **Security**

1c. The posting of the ninety-five Theses on the church door of the Wittenberg Castle represents his separation from the un-scriptural doctrines and practices of Rome.



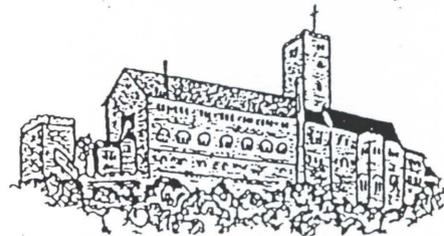
WITTENBERG CASTLE, 1517

2c. Luther's debate at the Pleissenburg with his former friend, Dr. Eck, revealed the chasm between the Roman and Reformation concept of sin and salvation.



Pleissenburg Castle, 1519

3c. Luther's stay in the Wartburg Castle resulted in the translation of the New Testament into the German language.



WARTBURG CASTLE, 1521-22

4c. Luther's dialogue with Zwingli of Switzerland at the Marburg Castle revealed some basic differences in the understanding of the Lord's Supper. Luther maintained a sacramental Eucharist. Zwingli correctly emphasized a memorial aspect.



MARBURG CASTLE, 1529

5c. Luther was prevented from attending the Diet of Augsburg where the Reformation hung in the balance. Luther, while safely sequestered in yet another castle, was prevented from participation. He found spiritual strength in his solitude at Coburg Castle through the Scriptures and meditation.

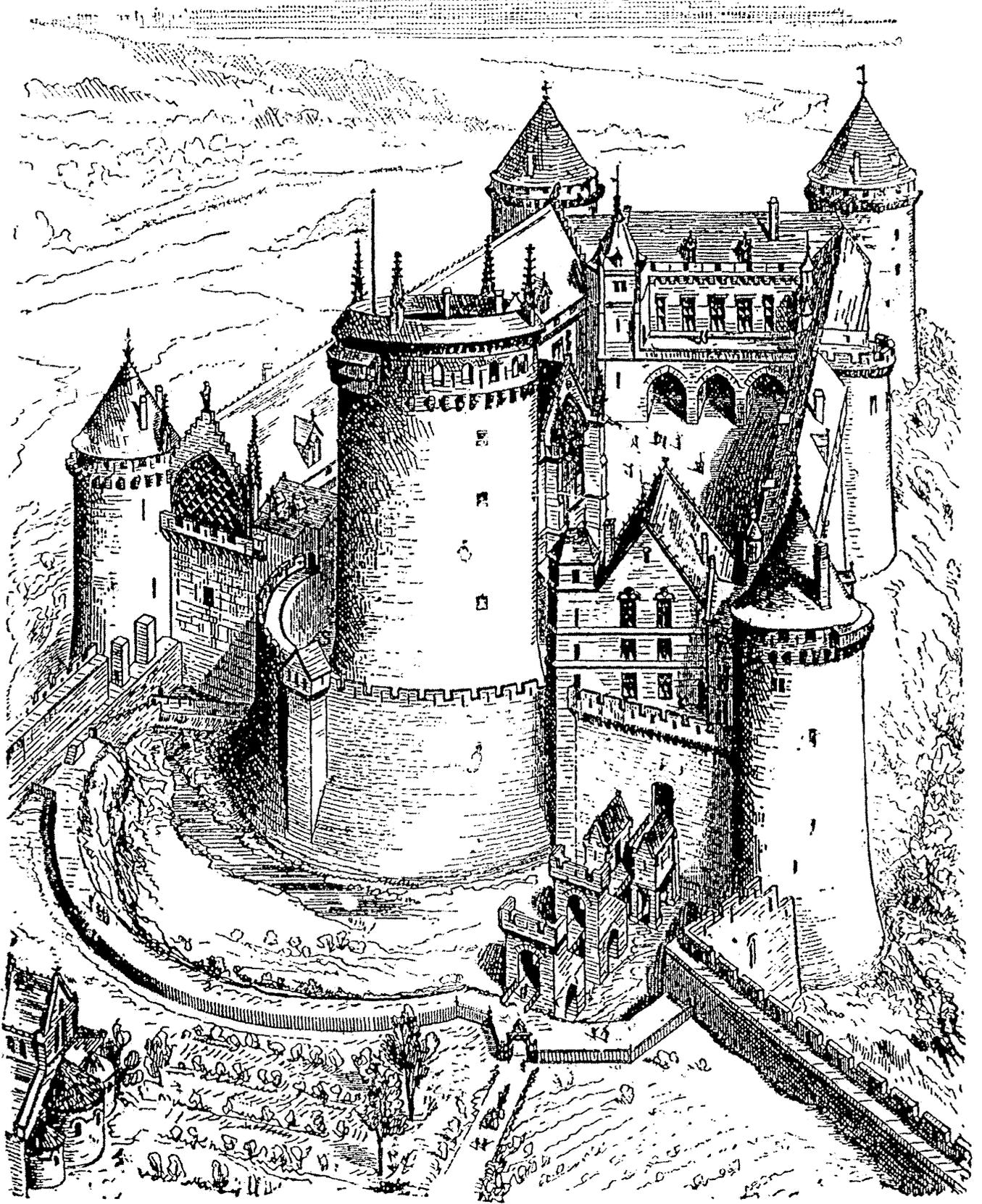


COBURG CASTLE, 1530

6c. The knight, Franz von Sickingen, made his castle, the Ebernburg, available as a refuge to hounded Protestant leaders. The castle was thus known as "the refuge of the righteous."



Ebernburg Castle, 1520-1522



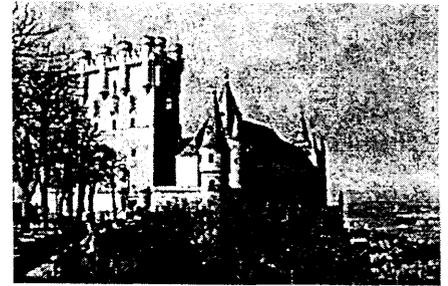
Castle

A **castle** (from Latin: *castellum*) is a type of fortified structure built in Europe and the Middle East during the Middle Ages by European or Muslim nobility or royalty and by military orders. Scholars debate the scope of the word *castle*, but usually consider it to be the private fortified residence of a lord or noble. This is distinct from a palace, which is not fortified; from a fortress, which was not always a residence for royalty or nobility; and from a fortified settlement, which was a public defence – though there are many similarities among these types of construction. Usage of the term has varied over time and has been applied to structures as diverse as hill forts and country houses. Over the approximately 900 years that castles were built, they took on a great many forms with many different features, although some, such as curtain walls and arrowslits, were commonplace.

A European innovation, castles originated in the 9th and 10th centuries, after the fall of the Carolingian Empire resulted in its territory being divided among individual lords and princes. These nobles built castles to control the area immediately surrounding them and the castles were both offensive and defensive structures; they provided a base from which raids could be launched as well as protection from enemies. Although their military origins are often emphasised in castle studies, the structures also served as centres of administration and symbols of power. Urban castles were used to control the local populace and important travel routes, and rural castles were often situated near features that were integral to life in the community, such as mills, fertile land, or a water source.

Many castles were originally built from earth and timber, but had their defences replaced later by stone. Early castles often exploited natural defences, lacking features such as towers and arrowslits and relying on a central keep. In the late 12th and early 13th centuries, a scientific approach to castle defence emerged. This led to the proliferation of towers, with an emphasis on flanking fire. Many new castles were polygonal or relied on concentric defence – several stages of defence within each other that could all function at the same time to maximise the castle's firepower. These changes in defence have been attributed to a mixture of castle technology from the Crusades, such as concentric fortification, and inspiration from earlier defences, such as Roman forts. Not all the elements of castle architecture were military in nature, so that devices such as moats evolved from their original purpose of defence into symbols of power. Some grand castles had long winding approaches intended to impress and dominate their landscape.

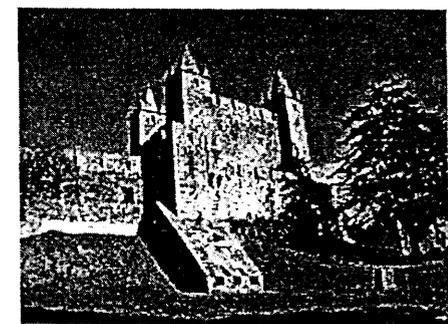
Although gunpowder was introduced to Europe in the 14th century, it did not significantly affect castle building until the 15th century, when artillery became powerful enough to break through stone walls. While castles continued to be built well into the 16th century, new techniques to deal with improved cannon fire made them uncomfortable and undesirable places to live. As a result, true castles went into decline and were replaced by artillery forts with no role in civil administration, and country houses that were indefensible. From the 18th century onwards, there was a renewed interest in castles with the construction of mock castles, part of a romantic revival of Gothic architecture, but they had no military purpose.



The Alcázar of Segovia in Spain overlooking the city



Built in 1385, Bodiam Castle in East Sussex, England, is surrounded by a water-filled moat.



Santa Maria da Feira Castle in Portugal, with its 15th-century pinnacles

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WITTENBERG CASTLE, 1517

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2. Luther's debate at the Pleissenburg with his former friend, Dr. Eck, revealed the chasm between the Roman and Reformation concept of sin and salvation.



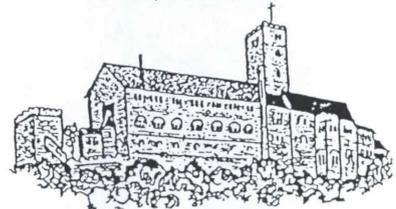
PLEISSENBURG CASTLE, 1519

The knight, Franz von Sickingen, made his castle, the Ebernburg, available as a refuge to hounded Protestant leaders. The castle was thus known as "the refuge of the righteous."



EBERNBURG CASTLE, 1520-22

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COBURG CASTLE, 1530 (VESTE COBURG)

Reformation Country Tour

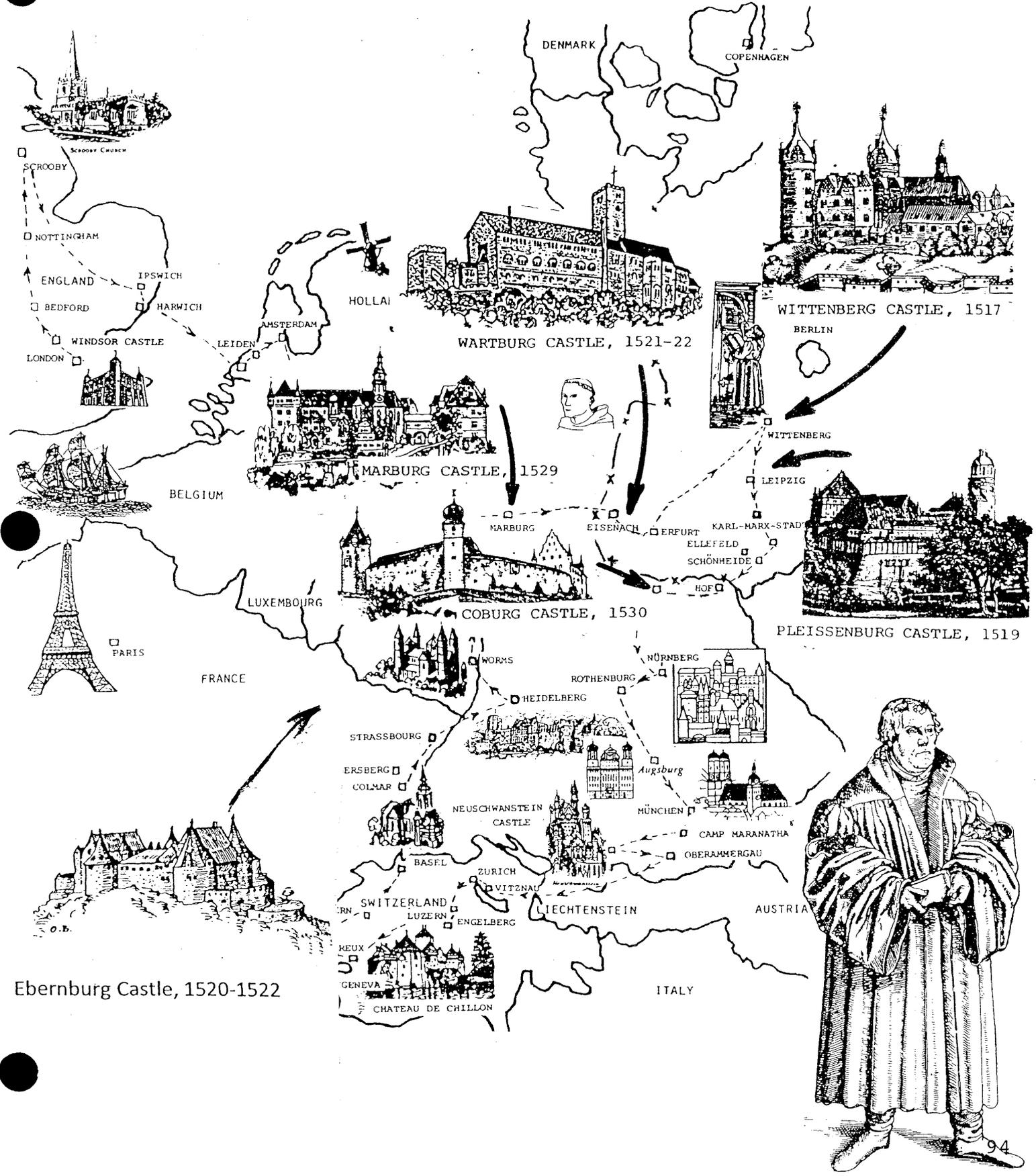
June 3 - 23, 2008



Our Roots In Reformation Europe

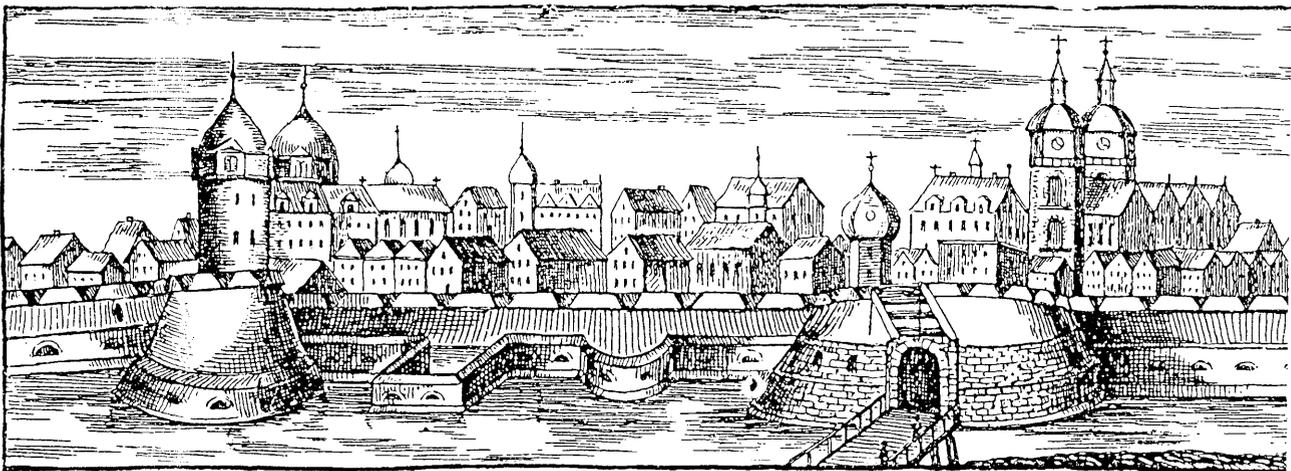
THE LUTHER CASTLES

OUR ROOTS IN REFORMATION EUROPE



1. Wittenberg Castle, 1517

Separation



Wittenberg im XVI Jahr

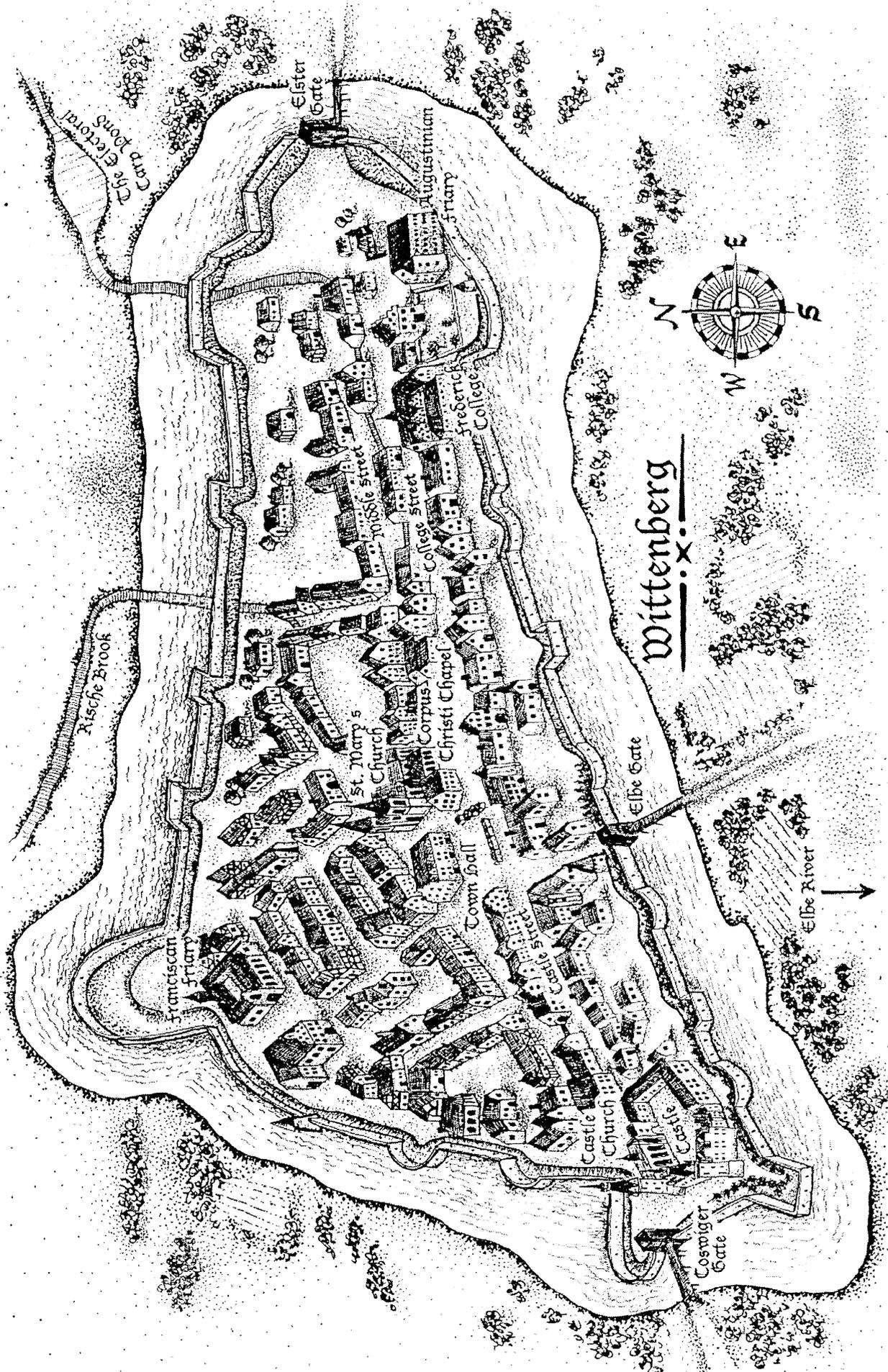
תהלים Chapter 144

א לְדוֹד: בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה, צוּרִי-- הַמְלַמֵּד יָדַי לְקָרֵב;
אֶצְבָּעוֹתַי, לְמַלְחָמָה.

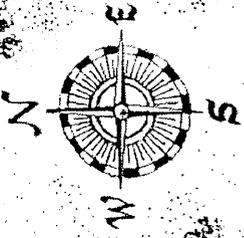
1 [A Psalm] of David. Blessed be the LORD my Rock,
who traineth my hands for war, {N}
and my fingers for battle;

ב חֲסָדֵי וּמְצוּדָתִי, מְשֹׁגְבֵי וּמְפַלְטֵי-לִי;
מִגְדֵי, וּבֹה חֲסִיתִי; הַרֹדֵד עִמִּי תַחְתָּי.

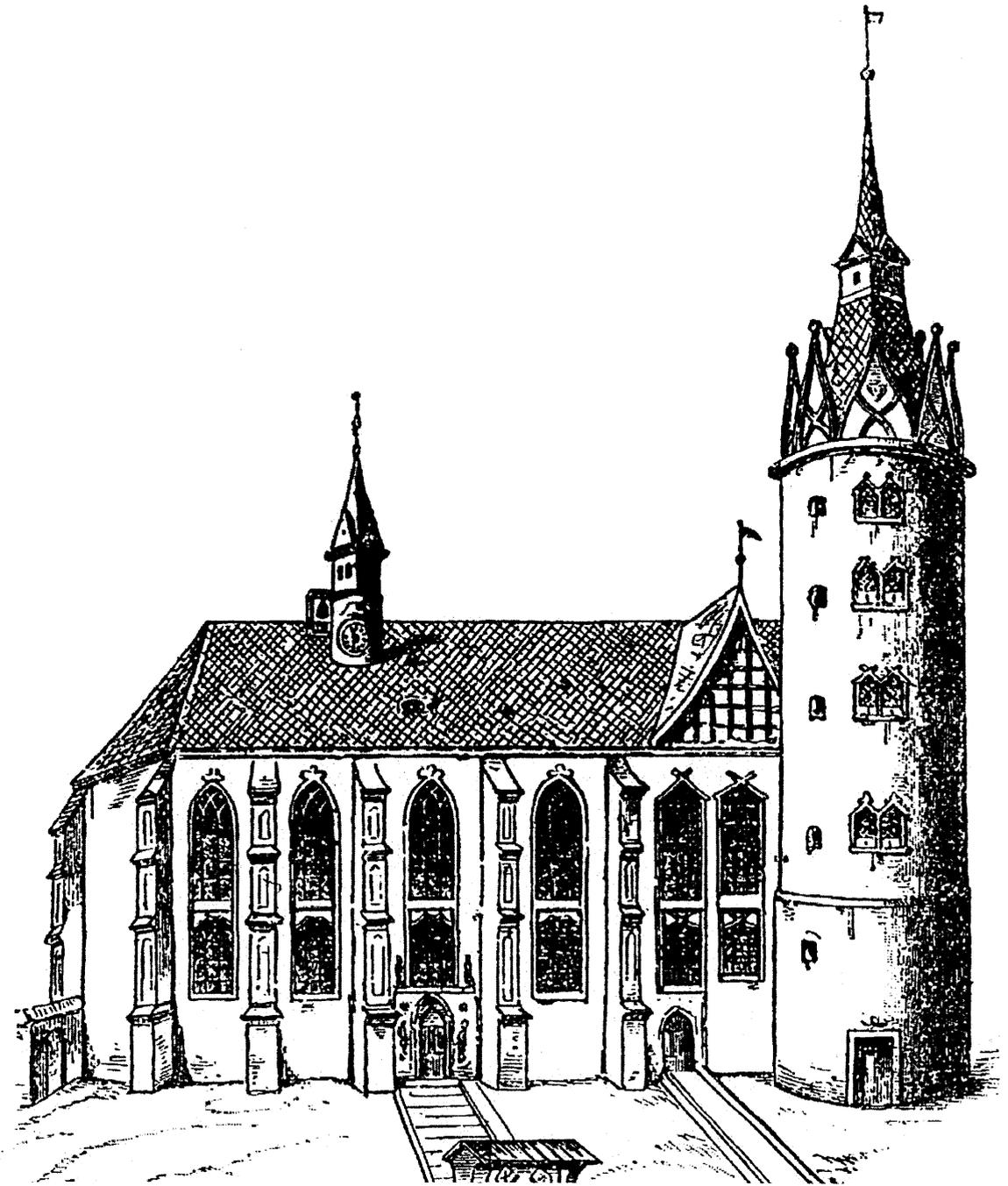
2 My lovingkindness, and my fortress, my high tower,
and my deliverer; {N}
my shield, and He in whom I take refuge; who subdueth
my people under me.



Wittenberg







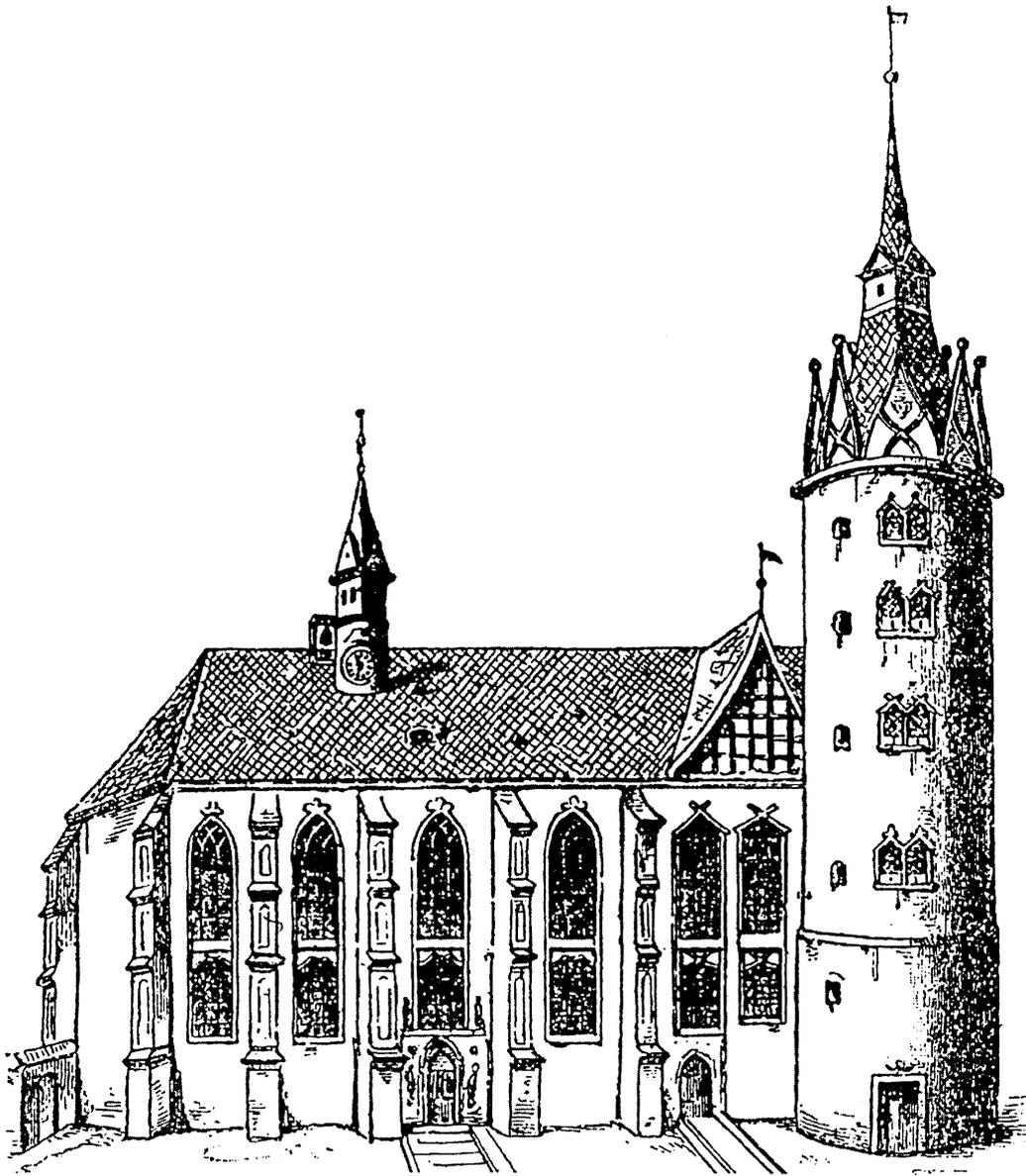
Wittenberg Castle Church, after a woodcut by Lucas Cranach the Elder (1509)

Lucas Cranach d.Ä. - Hanns Lilje: *Martin Luther. En bildmonografi*. Stockholm 1966.

500-Year Anniversary:
Remembering the Reformation



Luther schlägt die 95 Thesen an.



Wittenberg Castle Church, after a woodcut by [Lucas Cranach the Elder](#)

[More details](#)

Lucas Cranach d.Ä. - Hanns Lilje: *Martin Luther. En bildmonografi.* Stockholm 1966.

[Public Domain](#)

Wittenberg Schlosskirsche.

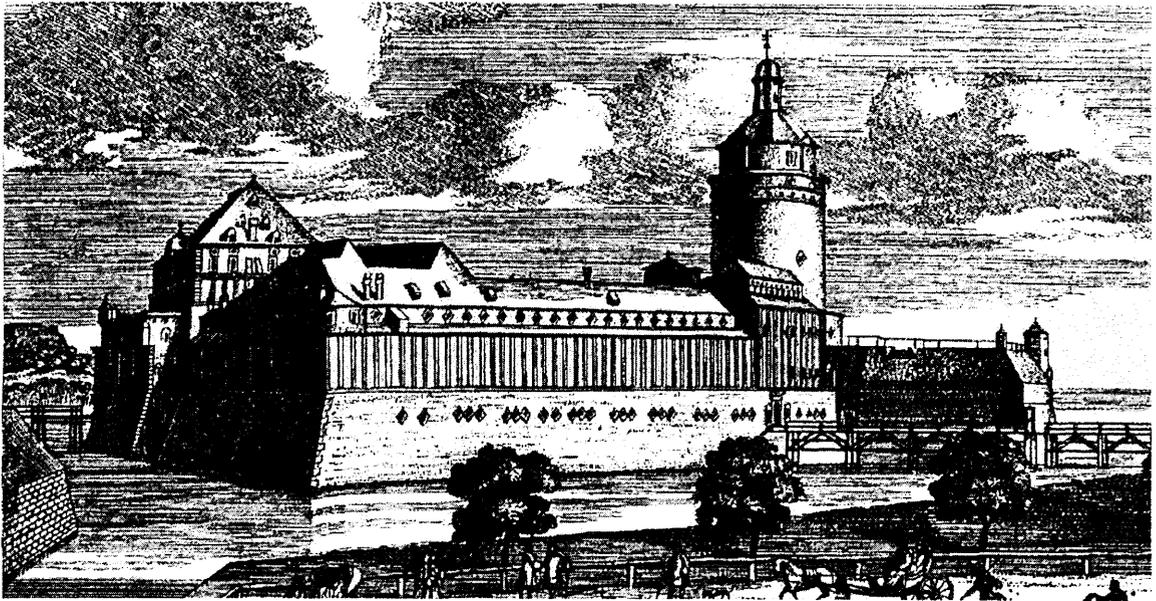
File: Schlosskirche
Wittenberg.jpg

Created: 16th century

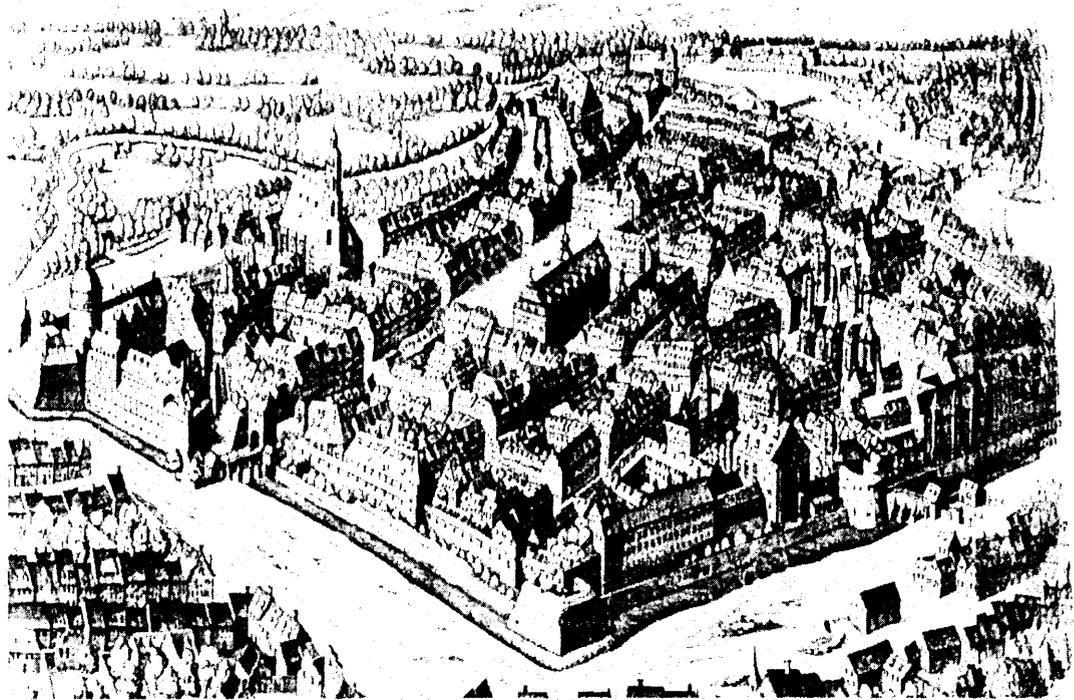
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2. The Pleissenburg Castle, 1519

Salvation



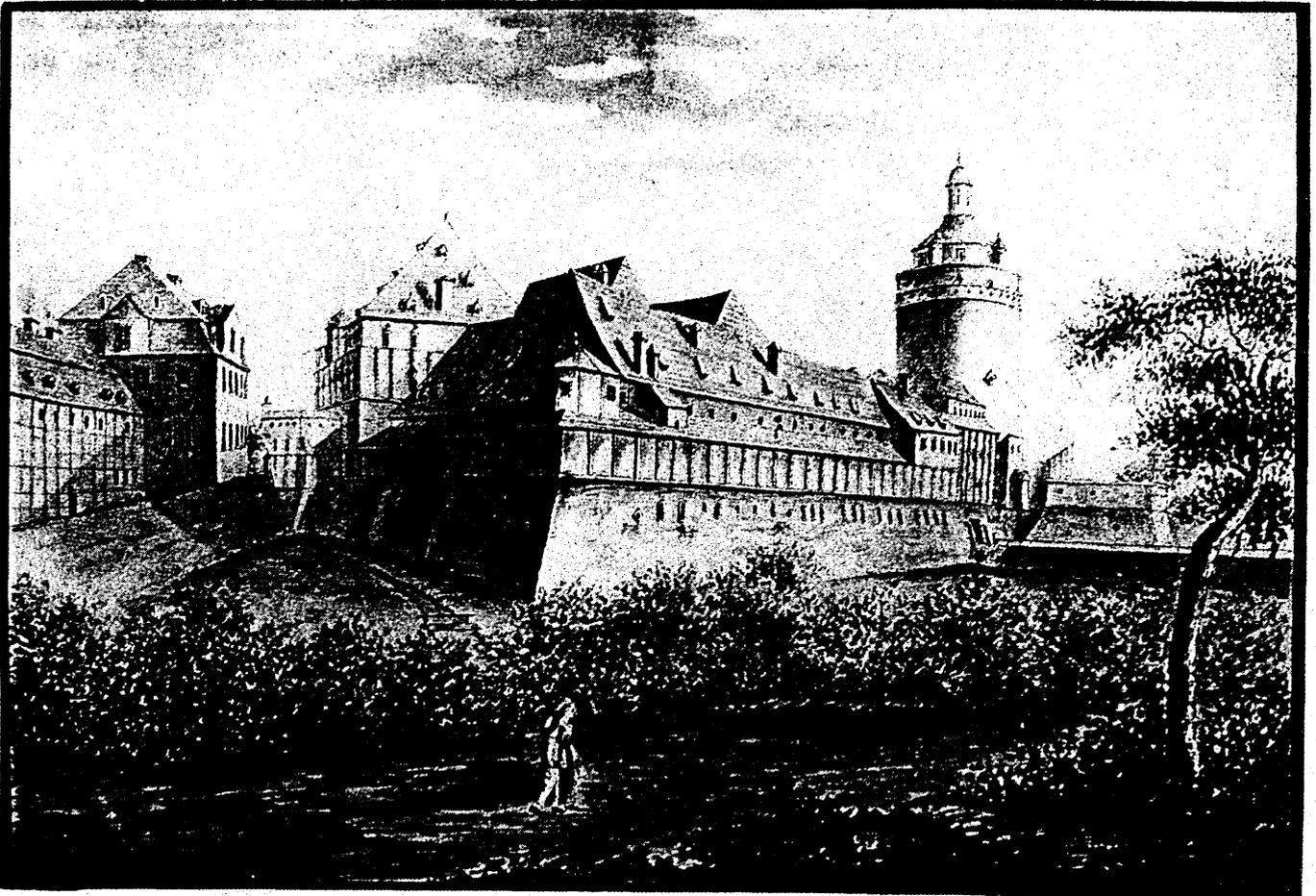
Pleissenburg, um 1700

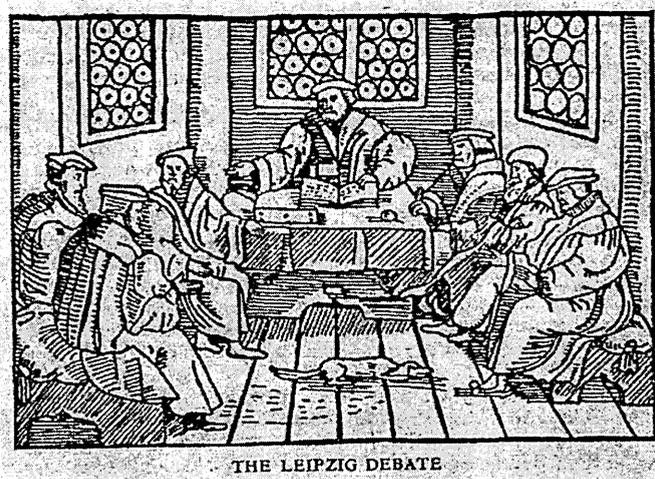


124 Leipzig. Die Pleissenburg.
Farbige Wasserzeichnung von
Gottfried Bachmann, 1782*

125 Leipzig. Thomaskirche

124





Meanwhile, between 4-14 July Luther engaged in the Leipzig debate with Eck. The Wittenbergers arrived a few days after Eck; Luther, Carlstadt and Melancthon with other doctors and two hundred students armed with battle-axes. Eck was provided with a bodyguard of seventy-six men by the town council, to protect him from the Wittenbergers and the Bohemians who were believed to be amongst them. The concourse was so great that Duke George placed the auditorium of the Castle at their disposal. After a week of theological debate between Eck and Carlstadt, Luther answered a rhetorical question from Duke George; *what does it all matter whether the pope is by divine right or by human right? He remains the pope just the same.* Luther used the intervention to insist that by denying the divine origin of the papacy he was not counselling a withdrawal of obedience from the Pontiff. For Eck, however, the claim of the Pope to unquestioning obedience rested on the belief that his office was divinely instituted. Eck then attacked Luther's teaching in its similarities with that of Wyclif and Hus, both of whom had been condemned as heretics in the early fifteenth century:

"I see" said Eck "that you are following the damned and pestiferous errors of John Wyclif, who said 'It is not necessary for salvation to believe that the Roman Church is above all others.' And you are espousing the pestilent errors of John Hus, who claimed that Peter neither was nor is the head of the Holy Catholic Church."

"I repulse the charge of Bohemianism," roared Luther. "I have never approved of their schism. Even though they had divine right on their side, they ought not to have withdrawn from the Church, because the highest divine right is unity and purity."

Eck was driving Luther onto dangerous territory, especially at Leipzig, because Bohemia was close by and, within living memory, the Hussites had invaded and ravaged the Saxon lands thereabouts. Luther used an interlude in proceedings to go to the university library and read the acts of the Council of Constance, at which Hus had been condemned to be burnt. To his amazement, he found among the reprov'd articles the following statements of Hus:

The one holy universal Church is the company of the predestined... The universal Holy Church is one, as the number of the elect is one.

He recognised the theology of these statements as deriving directly from St Augustine. When the assembly reconvened, Luther declared:

Among the articles of John Hus, I find many which are plainly Christian and evangelical, which the universal church cannot condemn... As for the article of Hus that 'it is not necessary for salvation to believe the Roman Church is superior to all others', I do not care whether this comes from Wyclif or Hus. I know that innumerable Greeks have been saved though they never heard this article. It is not in the power of the Roman pontiff or of the Inquisition to construct new articles of faith. No believing Christian can be coerced beyond holy writ. By divine law we are forbidden to believe anything which is not established by divine Scripture or manifest revelation. One of the canon lawyers has said that the opinion of a single private man has more weight than that of a Roman pontiff or an ecclesiastical council if grounded on a better authority or reason. I cannot believe that the Council of Constance would condemn these propositions of Hus... The Council did not say that all the articles of Hus were heretical. It said that 'some were heretical, some erroneous, some blasphemous, some presumptuous, some seditious and some offensive to pious respectably...'

Luther went on, now in German, to reiterate that a council *cannot make divine right out of that which by nature is not divine right* and make new articles of faith, and that a *simple layman armed with Scripture is... above a pope or a council without it.* Articles of faith must come from Scripture, for the sake of which *we should reject pope and councils.* Eck retorted, in a manner which conjured up memories of the Hussite hordes ravaging Saxon lands, that *this is the Bohemian virus, in that the Reverend Father, against the holy Council of the Constance and the consensus of all Christians does not fear to call certain articles of Wyclif and Hus most Christian and evangelical.*

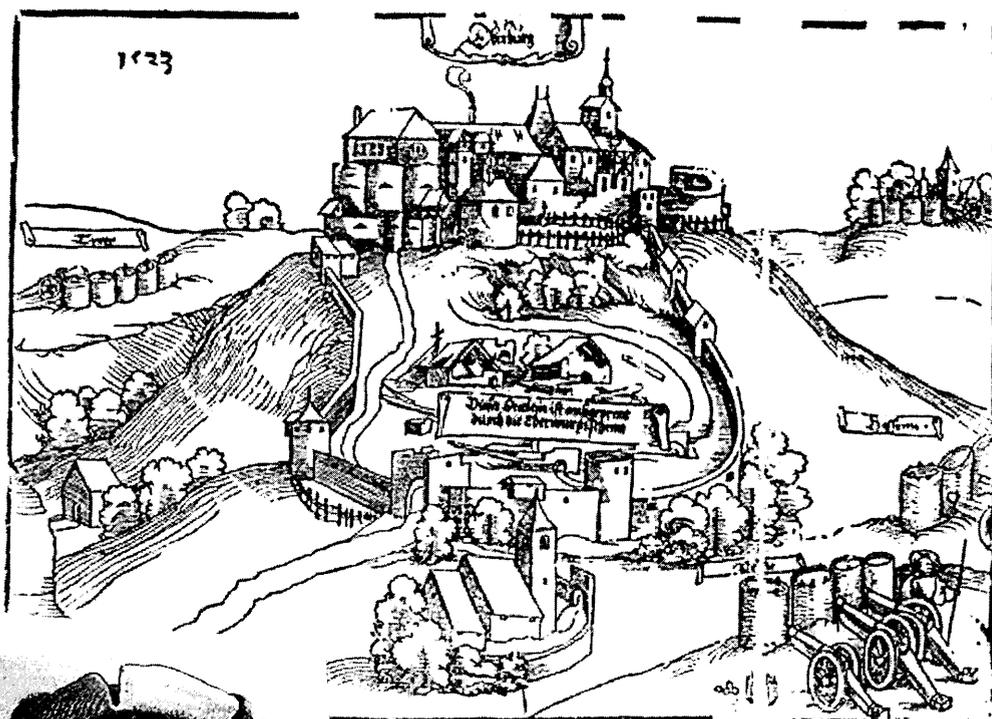
After the Leipzig debate, Eck came upon a new fagot for Luther's pyre. "At any rate," he crowed, "no one is hailing me as the Saxon Hus." Two letters to Luther had been intercepted, from Hussites of Prague, in which they said, "What Hus was once in Bohemia you, Martin, are in Saxony. Stand firm." When they did eventually reach Luther, they were accompanied by a copy of Hus's work *On the Church.* "I agree now with more articles of Hus than I did at Leipzig," Luther commented. In February of the following year, he had come to the conclusion that "we are all Hussites without knowing it." For Eck and the Roman Pontiff and curia, however, 'Hussite' remained a byword for 'heretic', and Luther was indeed known amongst them as 'the Saxon Hus'. Luther was still in mortal danger, and no doubt remembered how his predecessor had been given an imperial pass to Constance and never returned.

3. The Ebernburg Castle, 1520-22 Security



Gestalt vnd Form des geschloß Oberburg / weilend Franciscus von Sickingen
gewesen / vnd durch die baid Churfürsten Trier vnd Pfaltz / auch den Fürsten
von Hessen erobert Anno Fünffthundert vnd dreyßundzwainzigsten jar.
Jobst Denecker.

Beham, Hans Sebald: Belagerung von Ebernburg



4 Humanist, writer, and imperial knight Ulrich von Hutten
Franz von Sickingen

Ulrich von Hutten

German knight

born April 21, 1488, near Fulda, Abbey of Fulda
died Aug. 29th, 1523, near Zürich

Franconian knight and Humanist, famed as a German patriot, satirist, and supporter of Luther's cause. His restless, adventurous life, reflecting the turbulent Reformation period, was occupied with public and private quarrels, pursued with both pen and sword.

As a supporter of the ancient status of the knightly order (Ritterstand), Ulrich looked back to the Middle Ages; but as a writer he looked forward, employing the new literary forms of the Humanists in bit Latin dialogues, satirizing the pretensions of princes, the papacy, Scholasticism, and obscurantism. He was the main contributor to the second volume of the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* (1515-17; "Letters of Obscure Men"), a famous attack on monkish life and letters. As a patriot, he envisioned a united Germany and after 1520 wrote satires in German. His vigorous series of satiric pamphlets on Luther's behalf, which first were published in Latin, were subsequently translated into German in his *Gesprächbüchlein* (1522; "Little Conversation Book"). Ulrich joined the forces of Franz von Sickingen the knights' war (1522) against the German princes. On the defeat of their cause he fled to Switzerland, where he was refused help by his former friend Erasmus. Penniless and dying of syphilis, he was given refuge by Huldrych Zwingli. The legend of Ulrich as a warrior for freedom has been much romanticized in German literature, notably by C.F. Meyer in *Hutten's letzte Tage* (1871; "Hutten's Last Day").

Franz von Sickingen

German knight

born March 2, 1481, Ebernburg, Rhenish Palatinate [now in Germany]
died May 7, 1523, Landstuhl

Prominent figure of the early years of the Reformation in Germany.

A member of the *Reichsritterschaft*, or class of free imperial knights, Sickingen acquired considerable wealth and estates in the Rhineland as the result of campaigns against private individuals and again cities, including Worms (1513) and Metz (1518). In 1518 he led the army of the Swabian league against Ulrich I, duke of Württemberg. After the death of the Holy Roman emperor Maximilian I in 1519, Sickingen used his influence to support the election of Charles V as emperor.

Sickingen protected Martin Luther and harboured many Humanists and Reformers in his castles, which were, in the words of Humanist Ulrich von Hutten, "a refuge for righteousness." Sickingen placed himself at the head of the German knights when they rose in defense of their class interests in 1522, declaring war against his old enemy Richard of Greiffenklau, archbishop of Trier. He sadly underestimated the opposition. The city of Trier remained loyal to the archbishop, and princes such as the landgrave Philip of Hesse rallied to his support; Sickingen was repulsed, his support fell off, and was declared an outlaw. He was forced on the defensive; his castles fell one by one; and finally he capitulated in his last stronghold at Landstuhl. He died the next day and was buried there. On the one hand a champion of the poorer classes, a Lutheran sympathizer, and genuine patriot, Sickingen was on the other hand an opportunist whose objective probably was high office.

Encyclopaedia Britannica

Peasants rebelled against the aristocratic landowners in 1524-1525, plundering manors and monasteries in Franconia and Swabia.

Luther sided with the princes against the peasants, while the radical reformer 5 **Thomas Munzer** led the peasants in Thuringia.

In 1525 the peasant army was defeated at Frankenhausen by the princes, and Munzer was executed. In 1533-1534 the radical Anabaptists seized control of Munster.



Turgida qui tollis pomposo tumina fastu, Dic quondam quis Rex, sive colonus erat.

*Der du so hochstolziest herein,
mit übermüht und kleiderfchein,*

*Dag mir maß sey der Totenkopff,
Eins Königs oder armen tropff.*

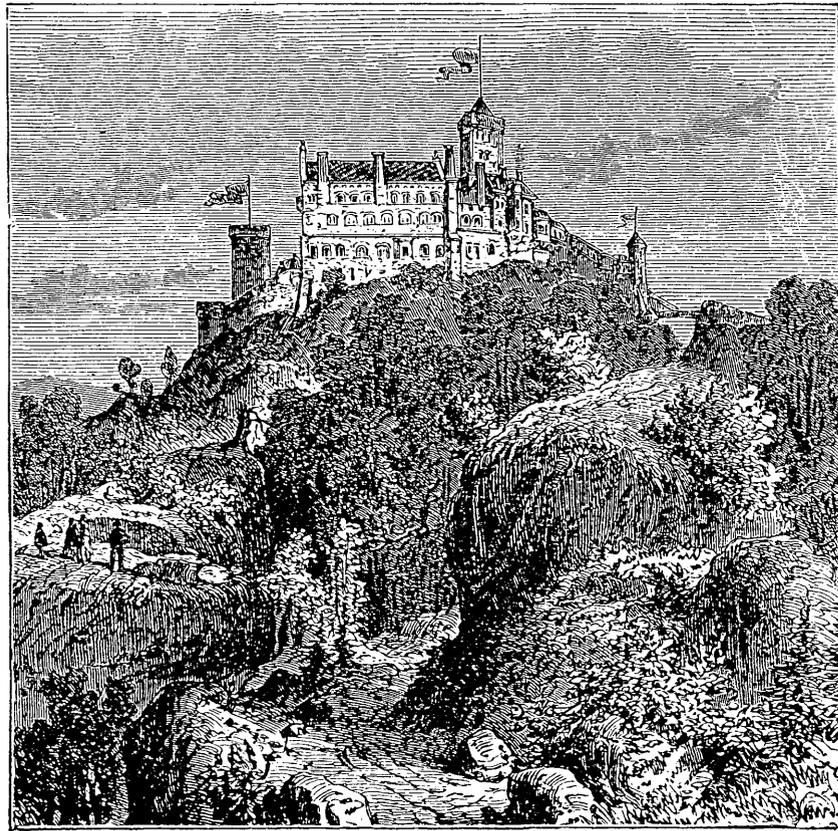


The castle was first mentioned in 1212.

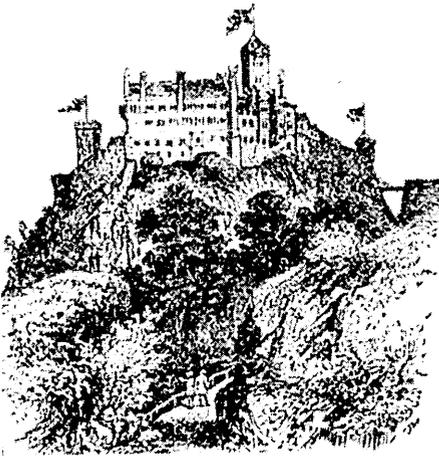
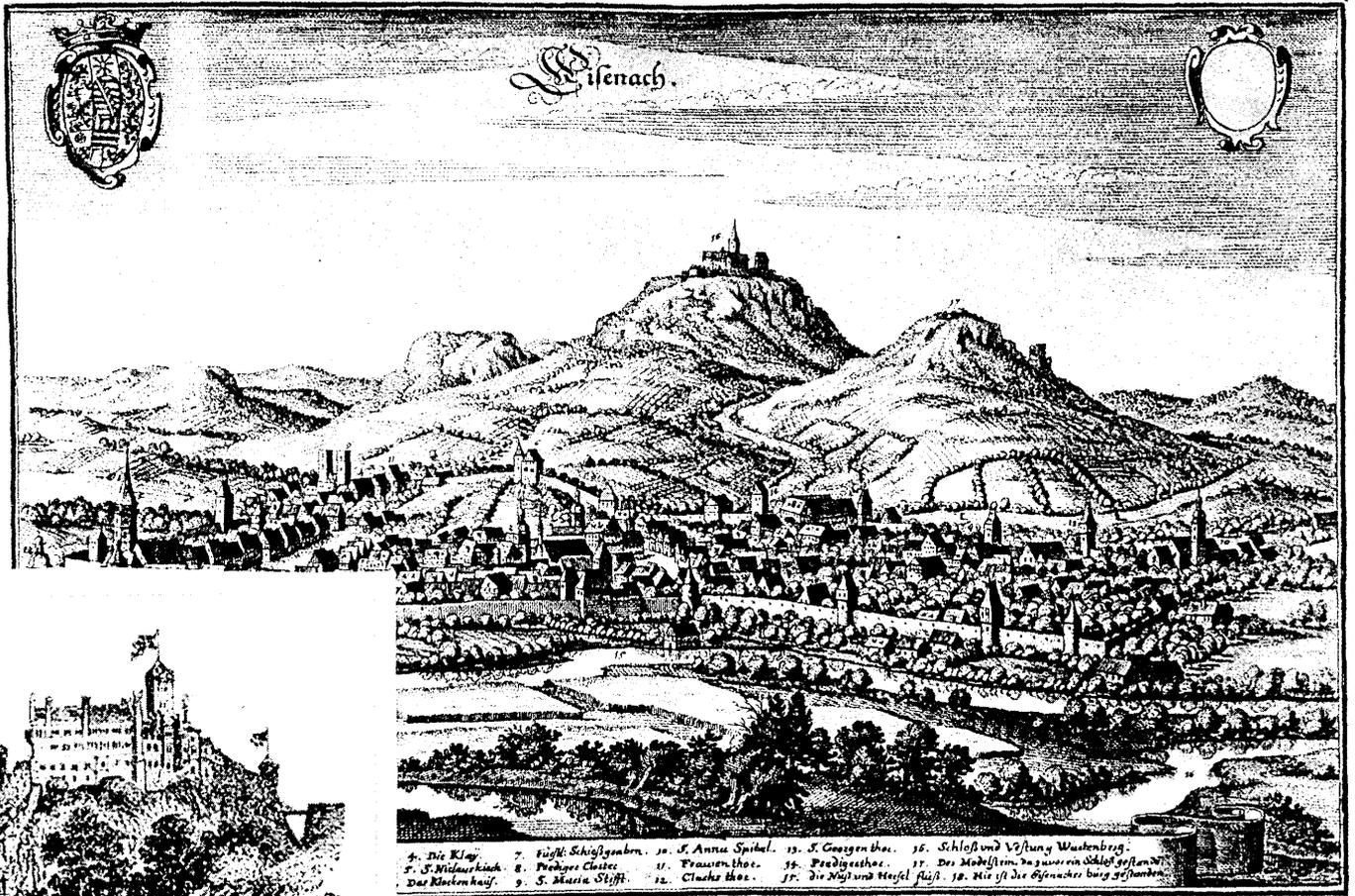
In the early 16th century it became well-known under the knight Franz von Sickingen as a focal point in the history of German Imperium and protestantism. At that time it received its name "refuge of rightness".

Today, the castle houses the "Protestant Family-Holidays and Education Centre (Evangelische Familienfreizeit- und Bildungsstätte)"

4. The Wartburg Castle, 1521 - 22 **Scripture**



THE WARTBURG, THE "PATMOS" OF LUTHER IN 1521.

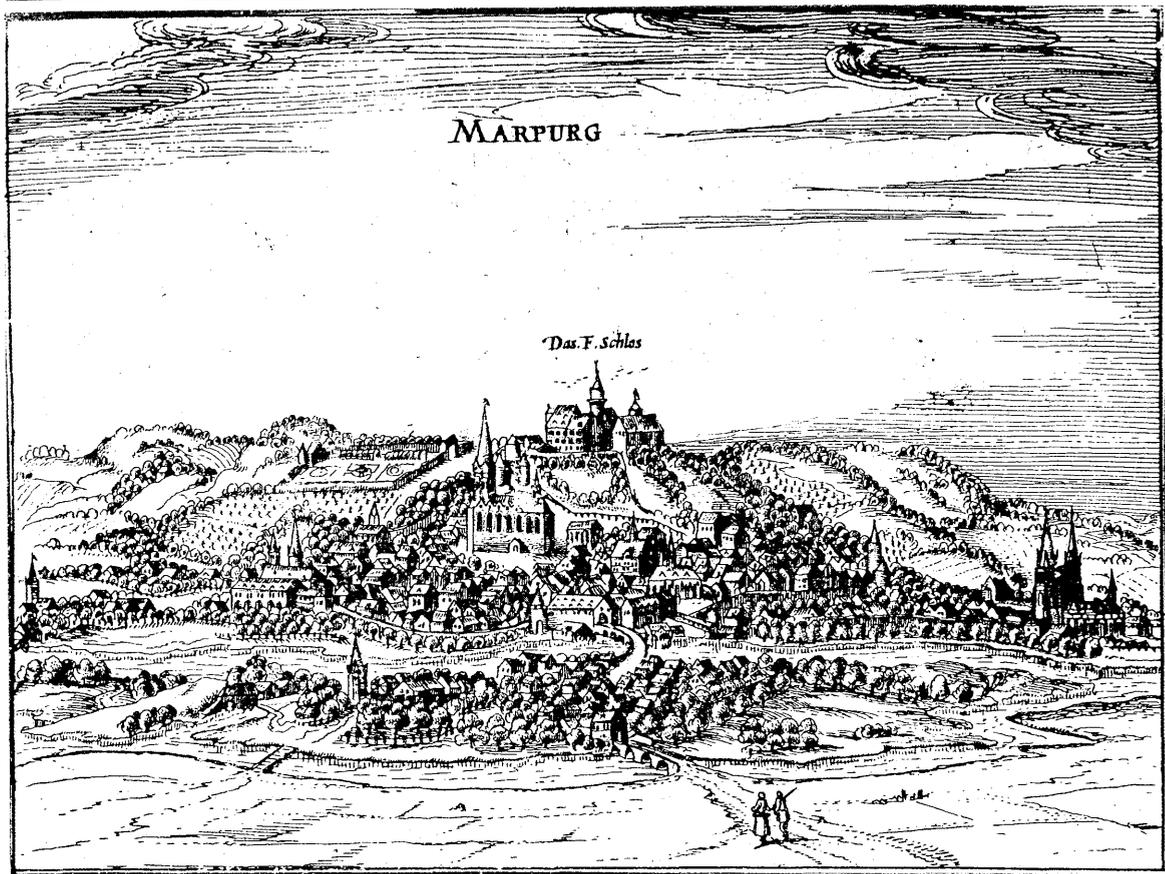


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310-320



5. The Marburg Castle, 1529 Sacraments



תהלים Chapter 59 Psalms

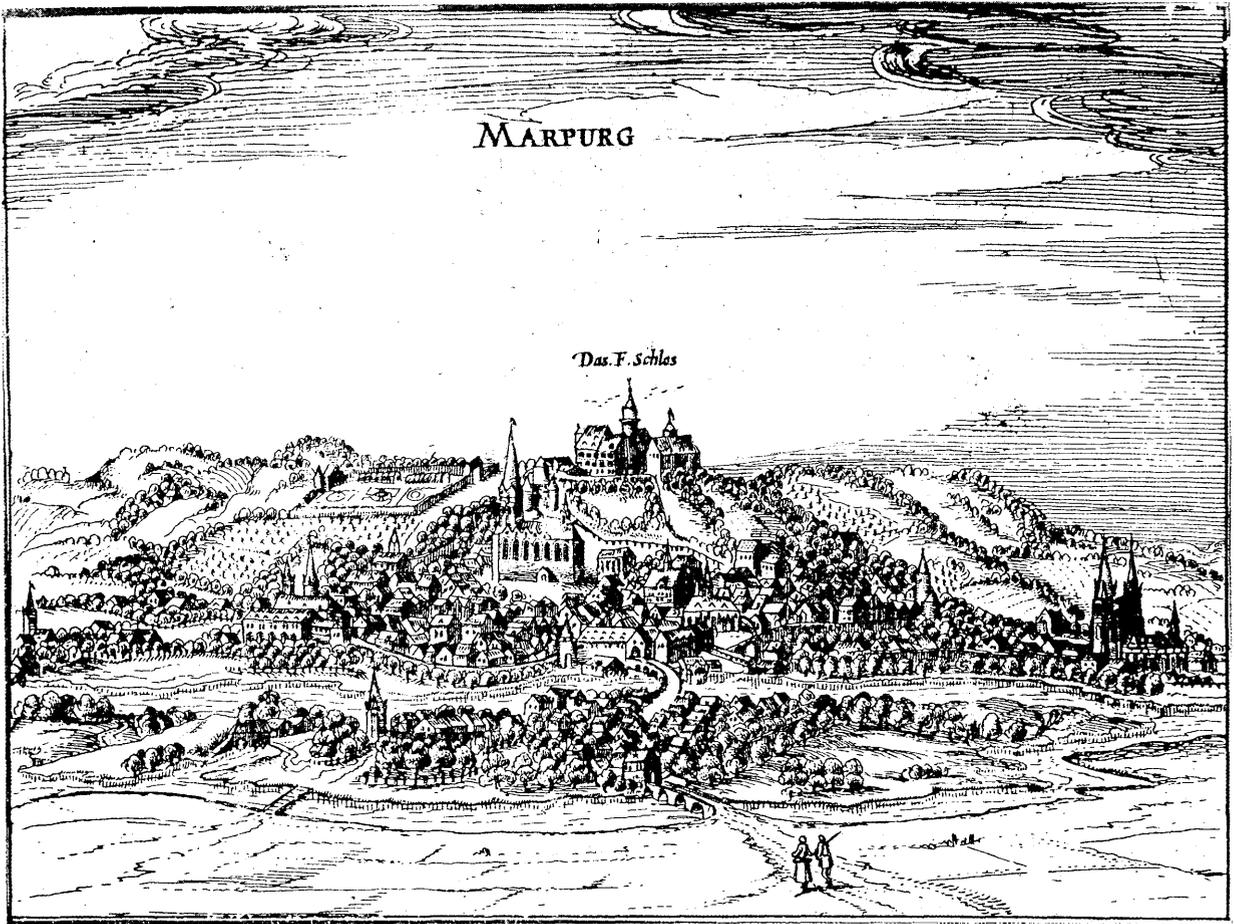
א למנצח אל-תשחת, לדוד מכתם: בשלח שאול;
 נישמרו את-הבית, להמיתו. 1 For the Leader; Al-tashheth. [A Psalm] of David;
 Michtam; when Saul sent, {N}
 and they watched the house to kill him.

י עזו, אליך אשמרה: כי-אלהים, משגבי. 10 Because of his strength, I will wait for Thee; for God
 is my high tower.

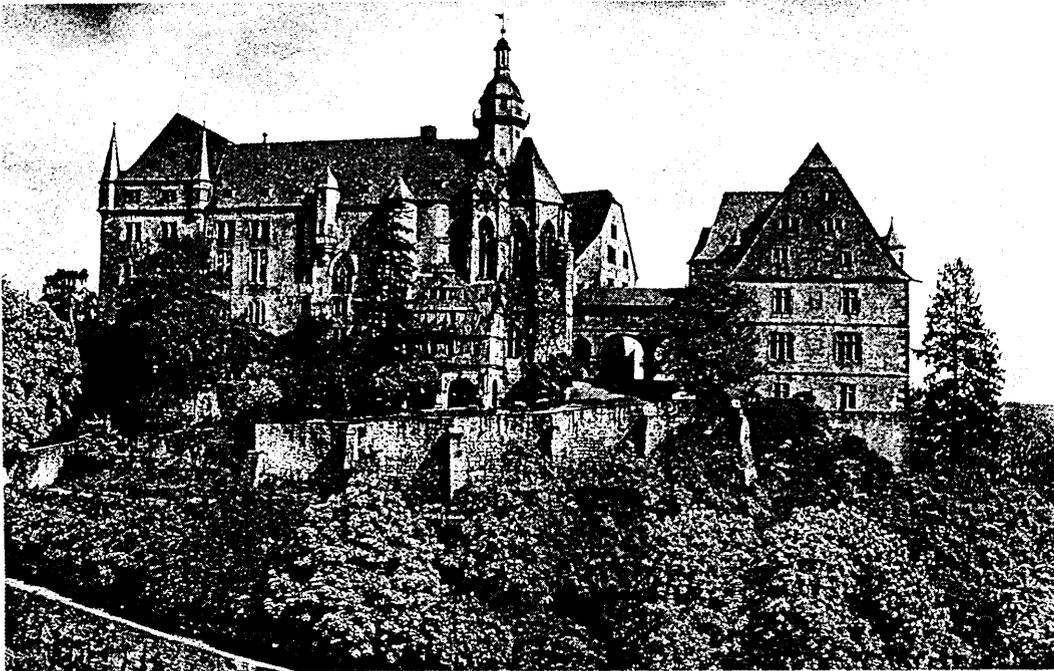
330 Marburg.
Kupferstich, vermutlich 16. Jh.

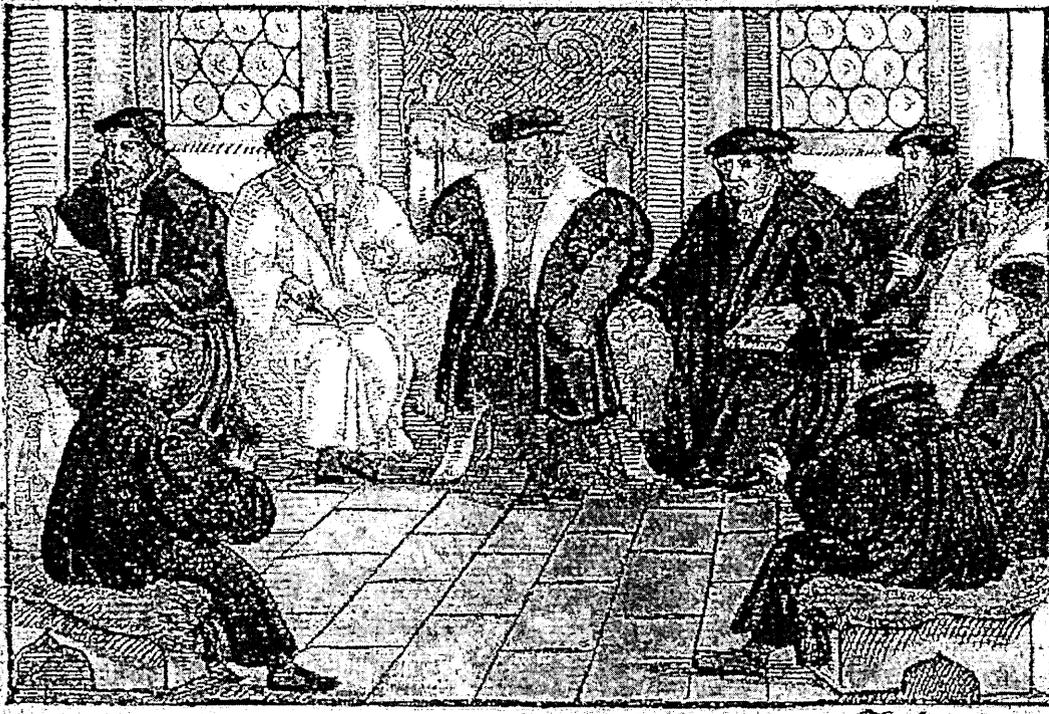
331 Marburg. Schloß*

330



331

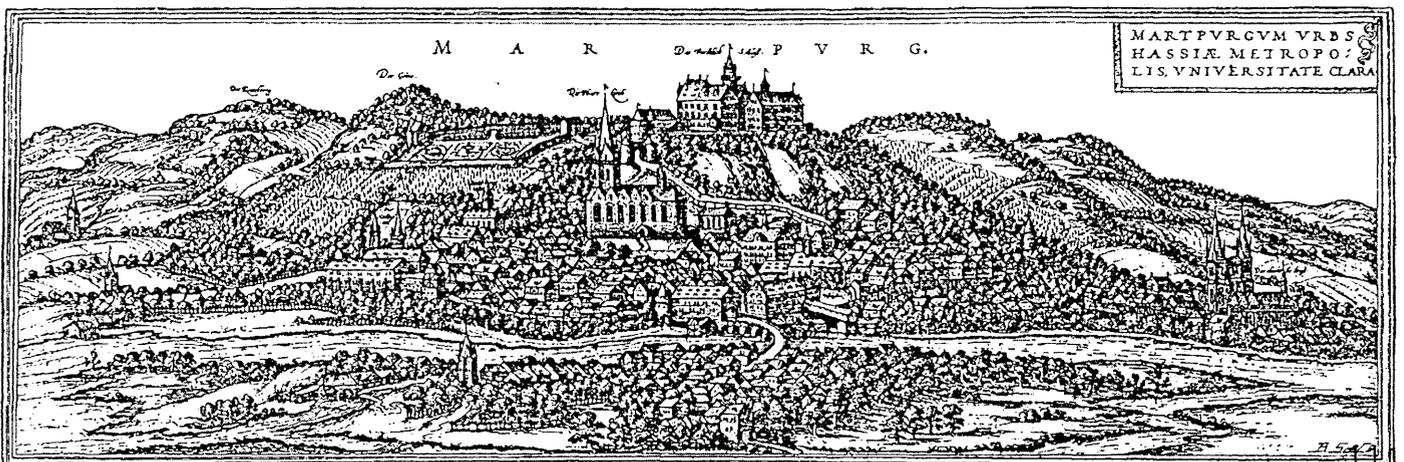




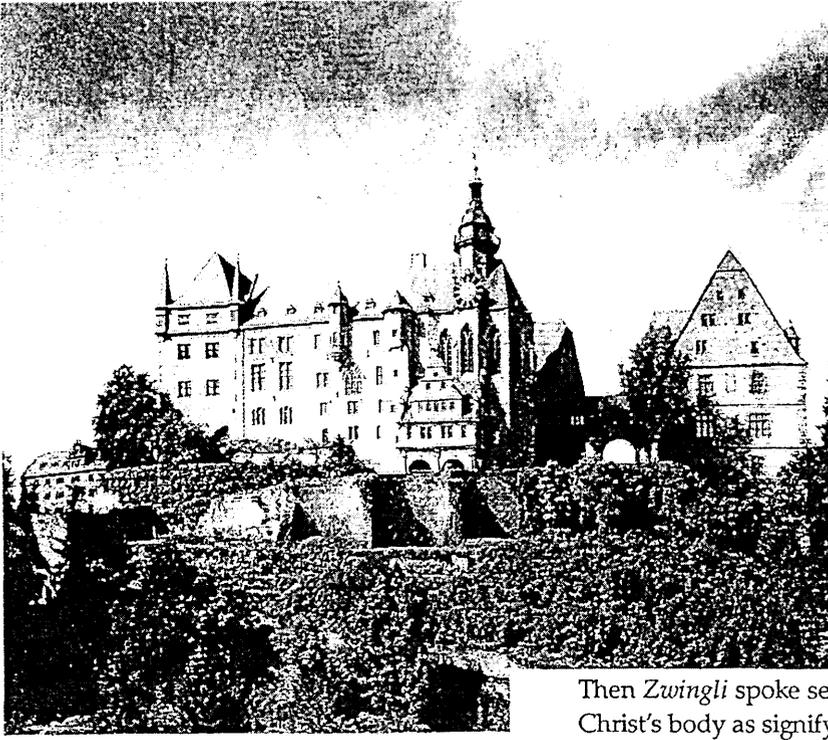
The Marburg Colloquy and the Marburg Articles (1529)

Image: An anonymous woodcut from 1557, depicting the Marburg Colloquy of 1529. Image source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

[Introductory note: On the first day of October, 1529, the most prominent theologians in the reform movement assembled at the invitation of Landgrave Philip of Hesse in the town of Marburg to resolve a dispute over the nature of the communion elements, a disagreement that threatened to tear the reform movement apart. Attending were a veritable Who's-Who of reform: Martin Luther and his disciples, Justus Jonas and Philip Melancthon; Andreas Osiander, a leader of the reform movement in Nuremberg; Johannes Brenz, reformer of the Duchy of Württemberg; Johannes Oecolampadius, who had initiated the colloquy; Huldrych Zwingli, the reformer of Zürich; and the reformers of Strasbourg, Martin Bucer and Caspar Hedio. The two principal figures, Luther and Zwingli, were able to agree on most points, but could not reach consensus on the Eucharist. Luther maintained that the communion bread and wine were united by sacramental union to the true body and blood of Jesus; for Zwingli, the bread and wine were only symbols of Christ's body and blood.]



Ansicht der Stadt Marburg aus dem 16. Jahrhundert.



Then *Zwingli* spoke several times about the sacramental presence of Christ's body as signifying that his body is in the Supper in a representative way.

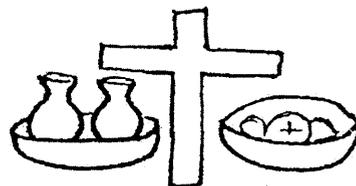
Luther replied to this: Those who make an effort to speak of the permanent presence of Christ's body in such a way take away the substance of the body from the bread, leaving us only crusts and empty chaff. However, the words of Christ sound altogether different. He then showed them the very words [of the Lord].

Several times *Zwingli* and *Oecolampadius* admitted that it was certainly possible for God to cause a body to be in different places; but they demanded genuine proof that this took place in the Supper.

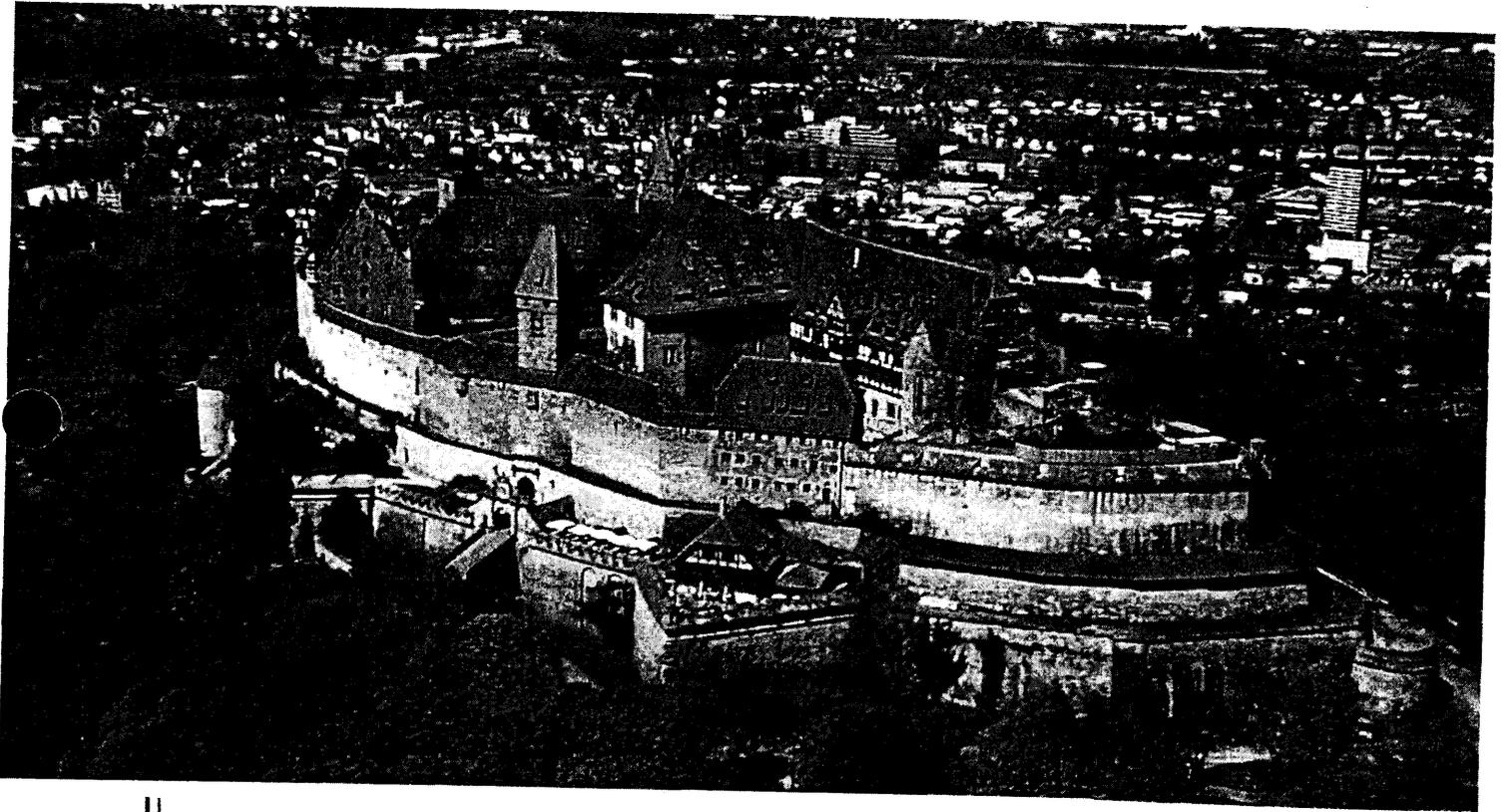
At this point *Luther* set forth the words of the Testament, *Hoc est corpus meum*, rendering them in German in this way: My dearest sirs, since the text of my Lord Jesus Christ reads *Hoc est corpus meum*, I cannot pass over it but must confess and believe that the body of Christ is there.

Then *Zwingli* jumped to his feet and said: Thus you also, Doctor, assume that the body of Christ is locally in the Supper, for you say: The body of Christ must be there. There, there—this is certainly an adverb of place.

Luther replied that he had simply quoted the words of Christ, and did not in any way expect false conclusions of this kind. But if they want to deal cunningly with one another, then he testifies here, as he has before, that he will have nothing whatever to do with mathematical reasons and that he completely rejects and repudiates the adverb of place in connection with the words of the Supper. The words are "This is," not "There is my body." Whether it is there locally or not locally, this he would rather not know, since God has not yet revealed anything about it and no mortal man can prove it one way or another.



6. Veste Coburg, 1530 Spirituality

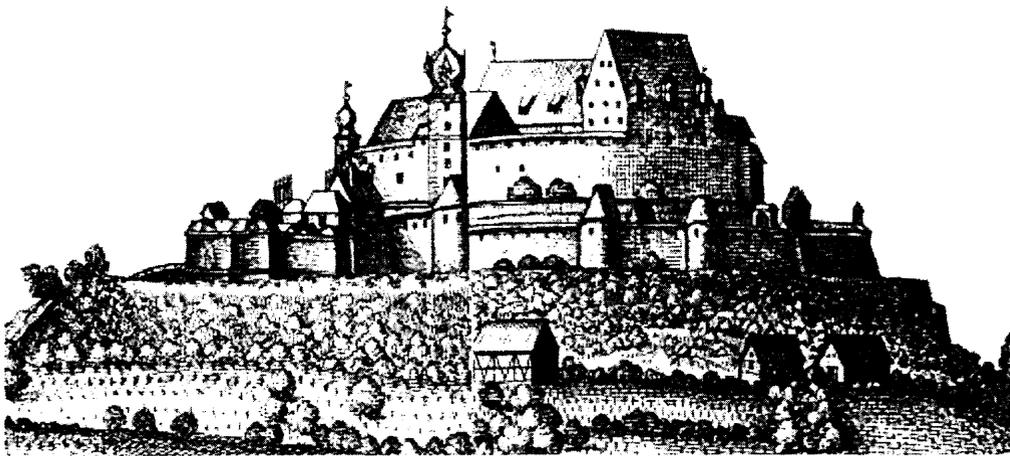


תהלים Psalms Chapter 31

א למנצח, מזמור לדוד. 1 For the Leader. A Psalm of David.

ב בך-יהנה חסיתי, אל-אבושה לעולם; בצדקתך פלטני. 2 In thee, O LORD, have I taken refuge; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Thy righteousness.

ג הטה אלי, אָזְנֶךָ-- מְהֵרָה הַצִּילֵנִי: 3 Incline Thine ear unto me, deliver me speedily; {N} הִיָּה לִי, לְצוּר-מְעוֹז--לְבַיִת מְצוּדוֹת; לְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי. be Thou to me a rock of refuge, even a fortress of defence, to save me.



Located on a hill 550 feet above the town of Coburg, Veste Coburg offers incredible views of the valleys below. The one-kilometer walk from the parking area gives a visitor the feeling of the monumental strength of the walls that are perched high above. The Imperial soldiers who unsuccessfully lay siege to the Veste during the Thirty Years War must have left with a feeling of invincibility emitted by the Veste. Be certain to climb the short stairway to the walls of the fortress, where you will be able to view the many towns that dot the valleys below.

