

LUTHER, MARTIN, 1483-1546.

Martin Luther manuscript, 1541

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Luther, Martin, 1483-1546.
Title: Martin Luther manuscript, 1541
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 090
Extent: 0.01 cubic ft. (1 item)
Abstract: Consists of one manuscript in Martin Luther's own hand, "Notes on Two Chronological Difficulties in the Old Testament" as well as a translation and transcription of the manuscript.
Language: Materials in Latin and Italian.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

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Additional Physical Form

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Related Materials

Part of the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection of Pitts Theology Library.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Martin Luther Manuscript, Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing

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Collection Description

Biographical Note

Martin Luther was born in Eisleben, Germany, on November 10, 1483. In 1501 Luther entered the University of Erfurt. He completed his A.B. and M.A. degrees four years later. He unexpectedly entered the local Augustinian monastery on July 27, 1505. On April 3, 1507, Luther was ordained as a priest. At the urging of his superiors Luther decided to continue his education and was awarded a doctorate on October 18-19, 1512.

From 1512-1518 Luther was appointed to a chair for Biblical Study at the University of Wittenberg. In 1514, while lecturing on Psalm 71, he discovered his principal of "justification by faith." This new key to the entire Bible became the centerpiece of his new theology. Luther's theology developed quickly, and soon the entire faculty of the university accepted his ideas. By 1517 Wittenberg had become a center of Biblical humanism.

Luther's new Christocentric theology soon came into conflict with traditional Roman Catholic theology over the sale of indulgences. On October 31, 1517, Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Castle Church. His intent was to stir academic debate on the subject of indulgences and the position the university should adopt on the matter. The Theses spread rapidly throughout Germany and great numbers of people came to agreed with Luther's views. Indulgence sales dropped severely as a result.

The Fiscal Procurator of Rome opened a formal case against Luther, charging him with "suspicion of heresy" in 1518. On January 3, 1521, Rome issued the Bull of excommunication Decet. Considerable pressure was brought on Charles V to condemn Luther by civil authority as well. Charles summoned Luther to the meeting of the Imperial Diet at Worms in 1521. The Emperor was unable to secure support from the gathered German princes for Luther's condemnation so the Diet was dismissed. Then, in a rump session called by the stragglers, Luther was declared a heretic and an outlaw to be killed on sight.

Biographical Source: *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church* edited by Julius Bodensieck; and *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, edited by Edwin L. Lueker.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of one manuscript in Martin Luther's own hand, "Notes on Two Chronological Difficulties in the Old Testament" (see Weimar Edition of *The Works of Martin Luther*, Volume 60, page 163). The document is a seven line author's note written in 1541, in which Luther discussed the accuracy of the computations in his 1541 work, *Computation of the Years of the World*. (Weimar Edition of *The Works of Martin Luther*, Volume 53, pages 177-182).

The verso contains several inscriptions external to the document. In the upper left corner is the inscription in ink: "Frammento autografo di / M. Lutero." In the upper right corner are the initials "EF[G]". At the bottom in pencil is the inscription: "Question de Chronologie biblique" with the initials "L.[g]"

The note is written on paper 11.5 x 19.5 cm. The lower right corner shows evidence of repair to a hole in the paper. The paper is moderately stained, but otherwise in good condition. The document has been encapsulated in Mylar for protection.

A complete translation and transcription of the manuscript is included.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Martin Luther, <i>Notes on Two Chronological Difficulties in the Old Testament</i> manuscript (2 pages; 1 leaf), 1541.
