

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO VOLUME 24

In 1984, with the appearance of our large special issue on Martin Luther (in honor of the Luther quincentennial the year before), *AUSS* inaugurated a plan to supplement its regular contents from time to time with certain “extras.” In 1985 we took a further step in this direction by including several articles on Huldrych Zwingli (in honor of the Zwingli quincentennial the year before); a preliminary report on the first season of archaeological excavation at Tell el-‘Umeiri, including a topographical map and seventeen photographs; and a description of the Wurker Bible Collection, plus facsimile reproductions of ten pages from several significant editions of the Luther Bible.

Another “special item” has been included in the present issue of *AUSS*: a catalog of forty-seven Reformation-era tracts in the Heritage Room (an Archive and Research Center) of the James White Library at Andrews University. Further information concerning these tracts and the catalog is given in the introductory materials preceding the list of bibliographical entries. Following that listing, a concluding section of the catalog shows in facsimile reproduction twelve title-pages and two remarkable woodcuts from tracts in the collection.

Some of the tracts in this collection are curious indeed—such as the very first one, which purports to be a letter from Lucifer, Prince of Hell, to Martin Luther. “Letters from hell” were a counterpart to the so-called “letters from heaven,” which also circulated during the Reformation era and earlier. Although in this issue of *AUSS* it has not been possible to include a discussion of this particular tract or of any others, it is our hope to be able to share with our readers in some of our future issues brief information on the contents, historical setting, etc., of at least a few of the more intriguing (and/or less well-known) tracts in this collection. Also, we look forward to the possibility of making information available on other valuable resources of the Heritage Room. We will, too, of course, continue our practice of publishing our usual complement of articles, book reviews, book notices, and dissertation abstracts, covering in each volume a variety of disciplines and fields of theological interest.

As always, we are grateful both to our authors and our readers, as well as to the numerous “behind-the-scenes” persons who make each issue of *AUSS* possible. To all such, I extend herewith my deepest appreciation and thanks. And we of the *AUSS* staff trust that the contents of this present Volume 24 will be enjoyable, helpful, and profitable to you, our cherished readers.

Kenneth A. Strand
Editor