

Appendix

Transcription of a Hearing of Hans Müller, February 17, 1646*

(trans. James M. Stayer)

Proceeding with Hans Müller, Anabaptist from Edikon, who was visited there on February 17, 1646, by the people's pastor [Johann Rudolf] Leeman¹ and me, H. J. W.²

Herr Leeman stated that we are sorry that our gracious lords were, once again, compelled to proceed against him and put him in prison, but they really had no choice but to do so. (1) It is well known how matters would have turned out if the Anabaptists had been able to achieve their aims and put them into practice; we have the example of the Münster Anabaptists, for instance. (2) It is established that he was the first to have propagated in our lands the sharp, poisonous, bitter writings indicated by our gracious rulers' manifesto [302r] – taking the same to the Wülflingen³ area, showing them and giving them to Squire Hartman Escher.⁴

Herr Müller says that he is sorry that he has to be here (in prison) again. As to the concerns that people have raised against the Anabaptists, they have no substance, since they do not want to cause trouble for anyone, and they never had intentions of the sort of which they were accused. This would be contrary to their teaching and belief. The charges stem from the many accusations made against them by bad people. The Münsterites⁵ were not people of their faith, and all who say otherwise are rogues and thieves.

*This text is based on an eighteenth-century copy. – ZBZ Ms B 163, f. 301v-320.

1. Johann Rudolf Leemann, professor of catechism at the *Hohe Schule*.

2. Johann Heinrich Wirz (1579–1652), treasurer and member of the Anabaptist Commission.

3. A village close to Winterthur.

4. Hans Hartmann Escher vom Luchs was a magistrate in Wülflingen. The fact that Hans Müller showed the "Anti-Manifest" to a member of the Zurich elite, asking him to make corrections, shows that there were Anabaptist sympathizers even among the most influential families of the time.

5. A group of Anabaptist social revolutionaries attempted to create a holy city in the city of Münster, which ended in 1535 in a bloodbath. Those responsible for the uprising were sentenced to death.

Herr Leeman: It is well known how the St. Gall Anabaptists have behaved.

There were two brothers, one of whom killed the other and declared that it was the will of the Heavenly Father⁶ [302v]. Herr Müller asked with what was he killed. The answer was: "With the sword."

Herr Müller: In that case the man is not our relative but yours. He is no Anabaptist if he used a sword, for among our people no one carries a sword—the sword and its use are forbidden among us. And, if such people were among us, that would not make us bad, and we and our teaching could not be judged by that, for among you, too, there are thieves and rogues, harlots and adulterers. The Lord set forth a rule and pronounced an ordinance on how one should relate to such people: "If your brother sins against you. . . ." [Mt. 15]; that is our practice. A pious person does not have to atone for the sins of someone else, for it says: the soul that sins has to bear the burden of its misdeed [303r]. He [i.e., Müller] did indeed carry the book to Wülflingen; he was traveling in that direction anyhow. He encountered the squire on the field and showed him the book, saying that he thought some things it says are rather biting and sharp. He asked the squire to mark with a little cross the passages he thinks are too sharp, but he did not mark anything.

[Herr Leeman]: The manifesto contains many incidents that did not occur in the manner it describes them.

[Herr Müller]: The manifesto is a short historical narrative about how the Anabaptists were treated over a period of several years. Everything in it is thoroughly and truthfully written, describing how they were dealt with, from week to week, from month to month, and from one period to the next. It contains not a single untruthful [303v] element.

[Herr Leeman]: It contains the statement that they prayed that God should send war, pestilence, and hunger to the land.

[Herr Müller]: That is a lie circulated about the Anabaptists (however, the Lord said: "Blessed are you when men...utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.")⁷ Many bad people say all kinds of things about them; and this may well have been said about them to our gracious rulers. But it is untrue.

6. The reference here is to a fratricide with the Anabaptist Schugger family that was triggered by a mental illness.—Cf. Heinold Fast, "Die Sonderstellung der Täufer in St. Gallen und Appenzell," *Zwingliana* 11 (1960), 223-240, esp. 233f. See also an artistic rendition of the incident in Heinrich Bullinger, *Refomationsgeschichte, Abschrift und Bilder von Heinrich Thomann* (Zürich 1605/06).—ZBZ, Ms B 316, f. 244v.

7. Mt. 5:11. The text in the Froschauer Bible reads: "Saelig sind jr / wenn üch die menschen schmaehen und verfolgend / und redend allerley args wider euch / so sy daran liegend umb meinewillen"

[Herr Leeman]: The statement of the manifesto must be correctly understood. It does not mean that the Anabaptists actually prayed or wrote to this effect. But they frequently prayed and wished that God would change their circumstances—that he would send war, pestilence, scarcity, etc., so that people would have to contend with them and leave the Anabaptists alone. They have said this now and again [304r], as honest, respectable people can testify.

Herr Müller: If, indeed, they uttered such prayers, that would be wrong. For Christ said “Pray for your enemies and persecutors.” Everyone must pray for everyone else’s welfare. He [i.e., Müller] does not believe one of them uttered such prayers. You should give the names of the persons who did this.

Herr Leeman: He never liked the manifesto.

Herr Müller: Many Council members have said that they did not know about it. Who these were, who had written this text, or how it had been made, he did not know. You might think that we were involved, but that is not the case and we do not know anything about its composition. It was produced in the north⁸ and brought here, to the south.

[Herr Leeman]: But it originated through your initiative, for in the introduction the imprisoned brothers in the Zurich region were named, and it was issued in their [304v] names. They must have been present and helped with the composition.

Herr Müller: No, I don’t know anything about it. At the time when we were in prison and treated most severely, there was a foreigner, a journeyman weaver, in Landikon.⁹ He was not of our religious persuasion. He had heard now and again about how we were treated; and he asked how things were going with us. He was arrested because of this and eventually exiled from the land. [Herr Müller] believes this man went to Holland and told about how we have been treated. Afterwards the manifesto circulated here and there in the land. One of them might have gotten into our hands. Just at this time, as we were imprisoned and treated most severely, a foreign shoemaker appeared in our land in addition to the foreign weaver. They were afterwards expelled; and they told about everything that went on with the brothers. The book originated outside our land [305r] and came upriver. We have nothing to do with it.

8. *im land unden* = the Netherlands.

9. Müller’s wife stayed at least once with Felix Rosenberger of Landikon.

Herr Leeman: It contains disgraceful, nasty things about the government, showing no respect. They just called them “the Zurichers.”¹⁰

I [the writer of the protocol of the hearing] added: And that some of the country’s fathers [i.e., leaders] had become cruel tyrants and persecutors.¹¹

Herr Leeman: Previously, when the Anabaptists wrote something, they didn’t behave in this way. They addressed the government as their lords, their gracious lords, their rulers, etc. They addressed them with great respect, and did not scold them as occurs in this writing.

Herr Müller: I have not approved of it. I have always said that they [the government] should receive proper deference as rulers and should not be scolded in the writing. I have written further that a sharp tone should not be taken. [305v] I asked the squire of Wülfinden to improve it. If it is raging and sharp, he should change it—he should insert a sign where it is too fierce. But he left it untouched. Moreover, I wrote that a high regional authority should be exempted from criticism.

Myself [the protocol writer]: Clearly, it is evident that the writing was not produced by people in the north without your participation and help.

1. The language is not Dutch or another strange dialect, but a perfectly natural Swiss German. 2. Without your participation the course of events with all its details could not have been incorporated in the manifesto, etc. 3. That it did not originate from the previously mentioned foreign weaver or shoemaker, but from you people, can be inferred from the well-known fact [306r] that you and the Netherlands Anabaptists are in correspondence and exchange letters with each other. Otherwise, how did it come about that the Netherlands Anabaptists presented a supplication to the Amsterdam Council in which they requested that the Council write to the rulers of Zurich and request that the Anabaptists should not be treated so unmercifully and unbearably—that they should not be so nasty, not let them lie in stinking prisons, where they are fed with platters containing dead mice and rat dung. In my opinion, these things were written here before the manifesto appeared. And it is well known that from that time on letters went back and forth repeatedly between here and the Netherlands. [306v]

Herr Müller: We didn’t write it, none of us, and none of us was there when it was written. None of us understands foreign languages. It’s possible

10. When people spoke of a government in the early modern period, they often supplemented it with polite phrases such as honorable, brave, noble, etc. In the “Manifesto,” however, all expressions of honor and respect for the Zurich government are omitted.

11. This was also a negative statement about the authorities, which was not proper.

that someone up north produced it, and afterward someone translated it into our language.

Myself [the protocol writer]: That's impossible. Or that someone else did it, since you don't understand the language—none of you at all; and hence none of you could have translated the writing from Dutch.

Herr Müller: None of us wrote it. God knows who else did it. During our imprisonment three foreigners were here in the land; and they must have described everything. I myself thought it was too sharp; and I also indicated some parts of which I disapproved.

Myself [the protocol writer]: Hans, you first said that you had written that some passages in it [307r] seemed too sharp. If you wrote that, you must have known where it came from and you must have written to a particular person who was in a position to change the substance. Furthermore, you said that the government should be treated respectfully; hence you must have been on the scene and said that.

H[ans] Müller: I wrote to the brothers telling them my opinion that, since this [manifesto] is written, one should, or should have, spared the high authorities of the land, and not have attacked them in it. None of us could have produced it. Whoever produced it must have been a gifted, well-read man of the sort that we don't have here in this land. The work itself exculpates us. Moreover, it has not appeared in print but only in manuscript.

Myself [the protocol writer] responding: It would have been more suitable and better if the work had appeared in public print rather than only as a manuscript [307v], for, had it been printed, it would have stayed that way just as it was stated, without the possibility of changing it, adding this and taking away that, etc.—which is exactly what has happened now with your suggestions to the squire of Wülfigen. And it is very plausible that if there were an interrogation and it became serious, that one would then presume to change and deny one thing or another.

Hans Müller: I have always said that the government should be deferred to, and that care should be taken that the work not appear in print. I don't know who produced it, even if I had to testify to it in my conscience.

Herr [Leeman]: How did you get it?

Hans Müller: I can't remember. I don't know who gave it to me. I don't know how it got into my house. Whoever produced it got such things not [308r] from us but from the foreigners. You promulgated a mandate that no one should house or shelter us, nor give us any assistance, etc. Afterward we were all scattered—one person went to one place, another somewhere else. We had to seek shelter wherever we could find it, for we were not created as creatures of the air or water

but as land animals just like you. As a result, some went here, some there; some into Berner lands, some into Basler or Schaffhausen territories, etc. That's what happened. When we came together again we told each other how it had gone.

Herr Leeman: When a father has a child in his house who doesn't want to obey him, is he supposed to just put up with it?

Herr Müller: It happens often enough that someone tolerates a disobedient child [308v], because he cannot reject it.

Herr Leeman: But does he allow the child to do whatever it wishes? When the blacksmith from Bäretswil¹² was imprisoned in the Wellenberg,¹³ the currently-serving pastor Irminger¹⁴ went with me to visit him, and he was unable to respond on a matter that I still remember. We said to him, if you consider the matter we will be more disposed to see you. Then he responded that he did not wish to receive further instruction but will maintain his standpoint. To which I replied that in that case he was not worth receiving further instruction since one must not cast pearls before swine.¹⁵ Another time someone lay in prison who knew less than a table what it was that he believed.

Herr Müller: You also have far too many ignorant people in your number [309r], as I learned in my imprisonment when such people surrounded me. One must console oneself there also about the simple-minded ones; of the person who knows much, much is demanded, and of those who know little, little is demanded [Lk. 12.48].

Herr Leeman: This [biblical] word does not have to be understood in that way. God foreordained for us what we should know. For this purpose, he gave us his Word, and it is his will that we think and know accordingly. Otherwise, everyone could want to use this to excuse his ignorance and indifference, etc. It will not be declared on that [final] day for a great number, "[They] didn't know," but rather, "You didn't want to know, although it was taught to you. You were instructed, but you didn't want to accept what you were taught, etc." To be sure, you read the Bible, but with the greatest misunderstanding. You avoid what is against you [309v], passing over it. Listen, Hans, where is a congregation without "spot and wrinkle" to be found?

12. Hans Jaggli (=Jakob) Hess, a blacksmith in Bäretswil, was incarcerated together with Müller in the Oetenbach prison.

13. The Wellenberg was a dungeon prison tower along the Limmat—a kind of Zurich Alcatraz.

14. Johan Jakob Irminger, pastor of the St. Peter's Church in Zurich and member of the Anabaptist Commission.

15. Cf. Mt. 7:6.

Hans Müller: We all have our insufficiencies, but where there is a highly visible insufficiency Christ gave us a rule that we should follow, so as to help with our insufficiencies, as when he said, "Drive out the wicked person from among you."¹⁶ He wished, as did St. Paul, that we expel the wicked persons.

Herr Leeman: How many did he [Müller] expel?

Hans Müller: The person who committed incest.

Herr Leeman: And who else? Did he also expel those who treat each other badly before the governmental authorities? Did he also expel those who were present at heathen sacrifices to idols?¹⁷ Or others? He expelled the incestuous, but if they had handed him over to the Christian rulers, he would have been punished with the death penalty.

Hans Müller: No. When the disciples asked the Lord what should be done with the weeds, etc.¹⁸ [310r], the Lord answered, "Let both [the weeds and the grain] grow together until the harvest," so as to avoid the grain being pulled out with the weeds. If we had subjected the one who had committed incest to capital punishment, we would have done wrong. It would have been a case of punishing someone too early who then later converted. He repented his sin. The Lord gave his people a rule and wanted it applied to those who had gone astray. What he prescribed should be observed.

Herr Leeman: In Romans 13¹⁹ it says that the government received the sword from God, and that the ruler "does not bear the sword in vain." And everyone knows, as it says in Proverbs 17²⁰: "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord."

Hans Müller: The Lord forbade pulling out the weeds because the good and the bad seeds should be allowed to stand beside each other until harvest time. The reason is to avoid hurting the good seeds. If the incestuous man had been beheaded, it would have been a matter of pulling out a weed before harvest time.

Herr Leeman: Should we allow the weeds to proliferate and crowd out the good seeds?

Herr Müller: One should follow the ordinance of the Lord and expel the disobedient, so as to punish them and warn others. God gave us his

16. These words actually come from the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 5:13.

17. Likely a reference to the Anabaptists who returned to Catholicism and the Mass.

18. In the parable of the weeds and the grain the workers ask their master in Mt. 13:28 if they should tear out the weeds.

19. Rom. 13:4.

20. Prov. 17:15.

Word and not a jot of it will pass away—if there is a better way to interpret it, I am open to instruction.

Herr Leeman: The Lord gave his Word through his Spirit, and what the apostle [Paul] said was spoken through the same Spirit. Now the apostle said that the ruler did not receive the sword from God in vain. And in 1 Timothy 2 he says that we should pray for all human beings, naming the rulers specifically, etc. Peter wrote: “Fear God. Honor the king.”²¹

Herr Müller: Were Peter and Paul good subjects of their rulers?

I [the protocol writer] responding: Yes, they were obedient.

[311r]

Hans Müller: Why were they killed, if that was so?

Herr Leeman: They were killed on account of the Gospel truth. The governmental estate is ordained by God and whoever resists it opposes God’s ordinance. As far as the apostles were concerned, they were dealt with in this manner, since they were called before the council at Jerusalem and forbidden to preach the Gospel, to which they responded “We must obey God rather than men.”²² But you disobey the government wantonly and intentionally.

Herr Müller: I will gladly obey the government, pay taxes, fulfill obligations, and do everything that does not violate my conscience.

Herr Leeman: You would have been tolerated had you not congregated, held secret meetings, assembled and led others astray. If an honest man had a herd of sheep and someone came and removed [311v] from his sheep stall first one, then another the next day, and so on, would he have been able to put up with such behavior? You were ordered to leave the land. Why didn’t you do so?

Hans Müller: It was never approved to us. We were never ordered to leave.

Herr Leeman: Then why did you hide?

Hans Müller: It’s no wonder, as badly as we have been treated. When we were brought into the children’s catechism here in Oetenbach, on one occasion several lords were present: lord governor Heidegger, etc.²³ and also the current governor (*Landvogt*) of Grüningen, Hans Jacob von Schonauw. Someone said that we should be permitted to emigrate, etc. But we didn’t get this permission. When we were confined in the council chamber, at the very beginning, we requested permission to

21. 1 Pet. 2:17.

22. Rev. 5:29.

23. Johann Heinrich Heidegger (1591–1668), guildmaster and member of the Anabaptist Commission.

emigrate, but they insisted on the sworn letter. We made a formal request, but we were not permitted to do it. [312r] If I were released and given such permission, I would accept it, if I could find a government that promised me legal protection. If I couldn't find such a government, I would throw myself upon your mercy.

Myself [the protocol writer]: You were permitted, indeed commanded through a public mandate, either to be obedient or to leave the land. The mandate has been promulgated. The ordinance prescribed that, if wives or children are obedient, the families should not be separated, but they may maintain their property in the land.

Hans Müller: I have never heard about this; nobody ever told me about it.

Myself [the protocol writer]: The mandate and the accompanying regulations can be shown to you. The manifesto shows what was said, etc. It is not insignificant that, since you wanted neither to be obedient nor to emigrate, and since the chief authorities of the land were compelled to conduct such an extensive [312v] action against you, afterward they did not want to permit you to emigrate, but concluded that it would be better and safer to keep you under control.

Hans Müller: Several years ago, when I was jailed in the town hall for about twenty-one weeks, lord councillor [Matthias] Landolt²⁴ approached me, and, as always, spoke with me politely – on one occasion he patted me on the shoulder and said: “Hans, I like you very much.” I responded: “You know how to deal with lazy people and thieves, it would be better, if you knew how to handle our matter properly as well. And if it cannot be settled in any other way and you will no longer tolerate our presence in the land, then let us emigrate.” Councillor Landolt replied: “We would rather buy people like you for our country than allow you to leave.”

Myself [the protocol writer]: That may well be the case, for, as I said previously, when you [313v] didn't want to accept the mercy extended by your gracious rulers, and neither emigrated nor were obedient, it was decided to no longer permit you to emigrate with your property, but that it would be more feasible and just to keep you under control here.

Hans Müller: I can't think of any mercy extended to us – or is it a mercy to chase us from house and home, or imprison us in house and home. First, I was imprisoned for twenty weeks in the town hall. Afterward, I was imprisoned again, and, now recently, yet again. The people who

24. Matthias Landolt (1591-1671), councilman and member of the Anabaptist Commission to whom Hans Müller addressed his letter of March 13, 1661, asking him to intervene on his behalf in the matter of compensation for his property in Zurich that had been confiscated. Cf. above, p. 198.

were sent to incarcerate us behaved insanelly, as though they were not dealing with human beings but with animals. On one occasion some of them entered my house to arrest me when I was not at home. [313v] They found no one there but four small children. They yelled and waved swords around, threatening to stab them or kill them if they didn't reveal where their father was. One said that he would hang them from a stove pipe if they didn't flush out their father. Paul said that he became a Jew when he was around Jews, and a Greek when around Greeks.²⁵ With such wild behavior they didn't win me over; instead, because they acted like wild animals, they made me wilder. They were like crazy people. It didn't appeal to me to have anything to do with such people. I'm certainly not aware of any great mercy that has been extended to me.

Herr Leeman: It's no wonder that you people were dealt with severely. I myself was present in Oetenbach when some of you were released on the basis of a promise that they would [314r] attend church. I spoke to them: Don't make promises unless you intend to keep them, for God is not mocked.²⁶ No oath is required of you people, for your "yes" is supposed to be yes. Accordingly, your "yes" is treated as an oath, and its violation is considered the same as violation of an oath. You not only promised that you would attend church with us but also that you would take holy communion. To confirm this the people knelt down, showed great humility, and promised with hand and mouth. But as soon as they got free this didn't amount to anything.

Hans Müller: I don't praise them in this case. We are all sinful people. Would that we were all better.

Herr Leeman: Almost no honorable citizen could talk to you anymore. When a preacher comes to you and tries to conduct a discussion, you immediately spread it about that you refuted him, distorting what [314v] he said. You called them Pharisees, etc.

Herr Müller: I never caused anyone any trouble.

Herr Leeman: No trouble will ensue for you and yours as a result of what you spoke about with us. For we visited you this time only because we have other business in the house, and because the supervision of the house is entrusted to us, etc. At a future time we can converse further with each other. As to the writing that we've been discussing, however, you certainly know who gave it to you, and it would be a good thing if you revealed it.

25. 1 Cor. 9:20.

26. Gal. 6:7.

Hans Müller: I don't know a thing about it. I don't know who brought it to me in the house. I do know that it came up to us from below.²⁷

Herr Leeman: At a future time we will discuss controversial articles in an amicable manner.

Hans Müller: Eleven years ago we discussed the points of disagreement extensively with each other [315r] in castles, in the town hall, in prisons, in the chambers of the canon lords. You know all of our opinions and we yours. You will not want to alter your positions and we, too, have a sufficiently ample basis for our point of view. I have often thought that I would rather not dispute much more, because I have always been of the view that it does more harm than good.

Herr Leeman: The contentious articles are church discipline, self defense, government, infant baptism, and oath swearing.

Hans Müller: Yes, as far as the holy communion is concerned, there is no difference, except that we do not permit everyone to partake, as you do, but when someone is caught in a public sin we forbid him access.

Herr Leeman: You don't always forbid access. Did you do that in the case of Landis? [315v]

Hans Müller: Caspar Landis is not one of our number. He did many bad things and undertook various things that his father didn't know about, took money without his father's knowledge. He is the son of the Landis who was imprisoned here. He caused his father great sorrow.

Herr Leeman: I'm talking about Rudolph Landis.²⁸ It would have been much better had he been punished for his disgraceful deed.

Hans Müller: There are similar people in your group. We're not able to prevent that we have some bad people. The Lord gave his people a rule on how they should deal with such individuals: "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone," etc.²⁹ How did it hurt the apostles that they had a Judas among them, or the Corinthians that they had the incestuous person among them?³⁰ Our Saviour prescribed a rule for his church [316r] on how they should relate to such people, namely that they should expel them.

Herr Leeman: The Lord had indeed prescribed a rule for his church, but he did not forbid the government to punish them with death penalty. Rather he commanded the government what they should do, namely that they should punish such people.

27. I.e., up the Rhine, which implies that it came from northern Germany or the Netherlands.

28. See above, p. 154.

29. Cf. Mt. 18.

30. Cf. 1 Cor. 5.

Myself [the protocol writer]: Rudolph Landis raped an underaged girl, who had been given and entrusted to him as a daughter.

Hans Müller: The rule was applied in the case of Rudolph Landis. Since he did this, he is no longer our brother. He was expelled since he did not act and conduct himself as a Christian should do. At that point he was already attending [your] church. [316v]

Myself [the protocol writer]: No, he only first promised to attend church while in prison in the Wellenberg.

Herr Leeman: We want to put such matters aside, and in the future to have a friendly discussion with each other about the disputed articles.

Hans Müller: Before this there have been writings and verbal confessions of faith; but as a result, conditions have not improved, but they deteriorated. I do not want to get into trouble with the government again. I desire salvation on the basis of what I believe; you would desire the same for yourselves. You, too, do not wish to change your opinions after we have had extensive discussions with each other. I feel secure in my conscience about what I believe. A good conscience is better than a comfortable day-to-day life. I believe that there is no greater trouble than a restless conscience. I know what my previous situation was. Why should I abandon [317] a calm state of mind and return to a troubled one. If I am permitted, I wish to emigrate, provided that I can find a government that promises me legal protection. If I can't find such a government, I will throw myself upon your mercy or judgment.

Herr Leeman: As it was decided in the beginning how to manage things with you people, I contributed advice. I wanted to permit you free exercise of religion, but with the condition that there be a carefully drawn up list of all the persons who wanted to go to you, so that not everyone could go there or thereabouts. And since you do not permit your children to be baptized with us, nor your marriages to be consecrated with us, your children will be regarded as illegitimate bastards, and at your deaths your property will be confiscated and your children educated [317v] in the honor of God. And since you do not want to have fellowship with us in spiritual matters, you will also not have fellowship with us in temporal, political matters.

Hans Müller: When someone has his marriage consecrated in the papal religion, it is recognized as a legitimate marriage and not dissolved.

Herr Leeman: It is formally consecrated.

Hans Müller: Of how many marriages in the Holy Bible does one read that they were formally consecrated?

Herr Leeman: It is a political ordinance to avoid all kinds of abuse, all kinds of secret intimacy, all kinds of secret cohabitation.

Hans Müller: It is true that everything that God has joined together should not be separated by men. When someone among us wishes to marry, he attends to the matter in the name of the Lord. When a young man wishes to enter the married state, he speaks first of all to the elders and requests their help and [318r] advice, at which they implore him to fast and pray, so that he could discern God's will. Thereafter he informs them about the insights that came to him in prayer. Based on this, he says which woman he would like to marry and asks them, if they agree, to address the woman in question on his behalf. Then the woman is asked whether she desires to have a husband. When she says "yes," she is not yet presented with the man but urged to pray about it. When she has prayed, the name of the man is revealed to her and she is asked whether she would like to have him. When two persons have come together in this manner, it is indeed a marriage in the sight of God, providing that they have entered into it in the fear of God. What God has joined together let no man put asunder.

Herr Leeman: But you don't have power and authority to conduct and consecrate marriages, for it is the regulation of the government that people are brought together [318v] before a public community, so that it can be known who belongs together, in contrast to scoundrels and whores.

Hans Müller: No one objects to the [governmental] regulation. But because we have another congregation than yours, we have a special regulation concerning marriage. We know each other well and very well know who among us are married people and who are not.

Herr Leeman: You know each other because you are in each other's company. But how do you know [who is married and who is not] when you're not in each other's company?

Hans Müller: We know that very well. Marriage is an honorable estate for everyone. Papists perform marriages themselves, so why are our marriages not supposed to be valid?

Herr Leeman: Because public marriage is a governmental regulation, and not authorized for you people.

Hans Müller: You have your opinion and I have mine.

[319r]

Herr Leeman: Right, but everyone has to know whether or not his opinion is grounded upon the Word of God. For this reason in the future we want to have a friendly conversation based upon the Word of God, so as to see what grounds each side has.

Hans Müller: When we say that the apostles baptized no one except those who repented and believed, you respond that those were different times than now, etc.

Herr Leeman: The times do not determine the validity or invalidity of such ordinances. As far as holy baptism is concerned, we live in the same age, but we must observe that there were other circumstances in one period than in another. The holy apostles preached to the Jews and the heathen and didn't baptize them until they confessed the Christian faith, truly repented and were converted. Also in the present day and age, Jews, Turks, and other unbelievers should not be baptized before they confess the faith with [319v] words and works, etc. In Acts 17: 29-31³¹ we read that, as Paul and Silas lay in prison and prayed in Philippi, there was suddenly a great earthquake around midnight which opened the doors of the prison and broke the bonds of the imprisoned. The tower guard said: "My lords, what must I do to be saved?" To which they answered: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household (verse 20)." That took place immediately; he and all of his (verse 33)—he and his household, which doubtless included children. And that did not take a long time but it all occurred in the course of two or three hours (*ut patet ex collatione*) (verses 25 and 35). And since the father [the guard] was received into God's covenant, consequently [320v] all of others, including the children, were received into the covenant, for this all happened in a very short time.

Hans Müller: I can't believe that there were little children in the group, for it reads that they rejoiced that they were saved. Infants cannot rejoice [about their salvation].

Herr Leeman: The text doesn't concern all, only the head of the household—the tower guard (verse 34). And he brought them up into his house, sat them at a table and rejoiced, and he and his whole household believed in God.

Hans Müller: "And they spoke the Word of the Lord to all those that were in his house (verse 32)."

Herr Leeman: To all that could hear and understand it.

Herr Leeman: Next, concerning self defense, it was my opinion that, since you don't want to use weapons, soldiers should be quartered in your houses.

Hans Müller: We are gladly willing to make our contribution [320v] by standing watch, serving as messengers, transporting, and what we can do otherwise without violation of our consciences.

Myself [the protocol writer]: If someone wanted to attack your wife and child, and desired to harm, or even to kill them, what would you do?

31. Rev. 17:29-31.

Hans Müller: I know how to conduct myself in a Gospel manner.

Myself [the protocol writer]: What does that mean?

Hans Müller: As Christ commanded in the Gospel (Mt. 5:39): “Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

Myself [the protocol writer]: The words should not be understood merely in a dry, literal, external sense.

Herr Leeman: Or did Christ himself behave in that way? When he was struck by the priest’s servant on one cheek, did he turn the other to him? Or did he not resist, surely not with fists and blows, but with words and serious reproof?³² If those words were understood according to the external letter, Christ himself would have acted against them. The meaning of the Lord in this passage is that before revenging oneself it is better to submit oneself to doubled injustice.

32. Cf. Jn. 18:23.

