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## The Enduring Word of God

During my first year of post-graduate study in Germany I spent the Christmas vacation visiting the various places that were important in the life of Martin Luther. Outstanding among these were Wittenburg where he posted his 95 theses on the church door, and Eisenach where as a boy he had sung in the street to raise money to attend school, and where, in later life, he began his epoch-making translation of the Bible. There I saw, in the public square, a large statue of Martin Luther. On its base in German I read the words: Das Wort Gottes bleibt in die Ewigkeit, "The Word of God remains forever." On the same trip I visited Fulda, the home of Boniface the great English missionary who nearly a thousand years earlier had so great a part in the conversion of the Germans from paganism. Boniface often risked his life and finally became a martyr for his faith. In front of the great cathedral there was a statue of Boniface with a motto in Latin: Verbum Domini Manet in Eternum", The Word of <sup>the Lord</sup> God Remains Forever.

This declaration was not invented by Boniface or Luther. It had been written long before by the Apostle Peter, <sup>I Peter 1:22-23 says:</sup> ~~in the last three verses of the first chapter of his first epistle.~~ "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God. For all men are like grass and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of the Lord stands forever."

Thus Peter declared the indestructibility of the Word of God. But Peter did not originate these verses. He quoted them from Isaiah 40:6-8, "All men are like grass and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of the Lord endures forever."

The great French writer Francois Marie Arouet, who assumed the name Voltaire, assailed the Word of God with clever satire, using ~~blows~~ <sup>bludgeon</sup> blows