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W H A T H I S E A R N E S T C O N S I D E R A T I O N A N D P U R P O S E S H O U L D B E .

**by Jacob Behmen (Jakob Boehme) 1575-1624,
The Teutonic Theosopher**

John iii. 3,4,5,6,7,8.

Jesus said unto Nicodemus, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second Time into his Mother's Womb and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

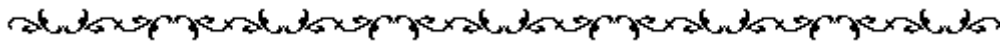
That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

The Wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Matt. xvi. 26.

What is a Man profited if he should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or What shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?

Brought forth in the 1600's by a humble German shoemaker; translated into English over 100 years later; suppressed and hidden away until recently in theological archives around the world... a worthy personal study not just for academics but for all those who are spiritually grounded in the WORD, who are learning to hear the Lord, and who hunger for more.

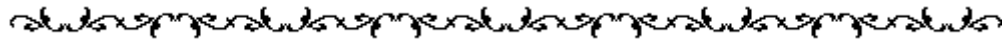


**THE
AUTHOR'S PREFACE
TO THE
READER.**

DEAR Reader,

If thou wilt use these Words aright, and art in good Earnest, thou shalt certainly find the Benefit thereof. But I desire thou mayest be warned, if thou art not in Earnest, not to meddle with the dear Names of God, in and by which the most High Holiness is invoked, moved, and powerfully desired, lest they kindle the Anger of God in thy Soul. For we must not abuse the Holy Names of God. This little Book is only for those that would fain repent, and are in a Desire to begin. Such will find what Manner of Words therein, and whence they are born. Be you herewith commended to the Eternal Goodness and Mercy of God.

OF
TRUE REPENTENCE.



How Man must stir himself in Mind and Will; and what his Consideration and earnest Purpose must be, when he will perform powerful and effectual Repentance: And with what Mind he must appear before God, when he would ask, so as to obtain, Remission of his Sins.

1. **WHEN** Man will enter upon Repentance, and with his Prayers turn to God, he should, before he beginneth to pray, seriously consider the State of his own Soul. How it is wholly and altogether turned away from God, become faithless to him, and only bent upon this temporary, frail, and earthly Life; bearing no sincere Love towards God and its Neighbour, but wholly lusting and walking contrary to the Commandments of God, and seeking itself only, in the temporal and transitory Lusts of the Flesh.

2. In the next Place, he should consider that all this is an utter Enmity against God, which Satan hath raised and wrought in him, by his Deceit in our first Parents; for which Abomination's Sake we must suffer Death, and undergo Corruption with our Bodies.

3. He should consider the three horrible Chains wherewith our Souls are fast bound during the Time of this earthly Life. — The first is the severe Anger of God, the Abyss, and dark World, which is the Centre, Root, or constituent Principle of the Soul's Life. The second is the Desire of the Devil against the Soul, whereby he continually sifteth and tempteth it, and without Intermission striveth to throw it from the Truth of God into his own evil Nature and Element, viz. into Pride, Covetousness, Envy, and Anger; and with his Desire, bloweth up and kindleth those evil Properties in the Soul, whereby its Will turneth away from God, and entereth into Self. The third and most hurtful Chain of all, wherewith the poor Soul is tyed, is the corrupt and altogether vain, earthly, and mortal Flesh and Blood, full of evil Desires and Inclinations.

Here he must consider that he lyes close Prisoner with Soul and Body in the Mire of Sins, in the Anger of God, in the Jaws of Hell; that the Anger of God burneth in him in Soul and Body, and that he is that very loathsome Keeper of Swine, who hath spent and consumed his Father's Inheritance, namely, the precious Love and Mercy of God, with the fatted Swine of the Devil in earthly Pleasures, and hath not kept the dear Covenant and Atonement of the innocent Death and Passion of Jesus Christ; which Covenant God of mere Grace hath given or put into our Humanity, and reconciled us in him. He must also consider that he hath totally forgotten the Covenant of holy Baptism, in which he had promised to be faithful and true to his Saviour, and so wholly defiled and obscured his Righteousness with Sin, (which Righteousness, God had freely bestowed upon him in Christ), that he now stands before the Face of God, with the fair Garment of Christ's Innocency which he hath defiled, as a dirty, ragged, and patched Keeper of Swine, that hath continually eaten the Husks of Vanity with the Devil's Swine, and is not worthy to be called a Son of the Father, and Member of Christ.

4. He should earnestly consider that wrathful Death awaiteth him every Hour and Moment, and will lay hold on him in his Sins, in his Garment of a Swine-herd, and throw him into the Pit of Hell as a forsworn Person and breaker of Faith, who ought to be reserved in the dark Dungeon of Death to the Judgement of God.

5. He should consider the earnest and severe Day of God's final Judgement, when he shall be presented living with his Abominations before God's Tribunal. That all those whom he hath here offended or injured by Words and Works, and caused to do Evil, (so that by his Instigation or Compulsion they also have committed Evil), shall come in against him, cursing him before the Eyes of Christ and of all Holy Angels and Men. That there he shall stand in great Shame and Ignominy, and also in great Terror and Desperation, and that it shall forever grieve him to reflect that he hath fooled away so glorious and eternal a State of Salvation and Happiness, for the Pleasure of so short a Time; and that he had not taken Care in that short Time to secure to himself a Share in the Communion of the Saints, and so to have enjoyed with them Eternal Light, and Divine Glory.

6. He must consider that the ungodly Man loseth his noble Image. God having created him in and for His Image or creaturely Representation, and gets instead thereof a deformed or monstrous Shape, like a hellish Worm or ugly Beast. Wherein he is an Enemy to God, Heaven, and all holy Angels and Men, and that his Communion is, and will be forever, with the Devils and hellish Worms in horrible Darkness.

7. He must earnestly consider the eternal Punishment and Torture of the damned; how that in eternal Horror they shall suffer Torments in their Abominations which they had committed here, and may never see the Land of the Saints to all Eternity, nor get any Ease or Refreshment, as appears by the Example of Dives the rich Man.

All this a Man must earnestly and seriously consider, and remember also that God had originally created him in such a fair and glorious Image, even in his own Likeness, in which he, himself, would dwell. That he created him out of his Goodness, for Man's own eternal Bliss and Glory, to the End that he might dwell with the Holy Angels and Children of God in great Happiness, Power, and Glory; in the Eternal Light; in the praiseful and melodious Harmony of the Angelical and Divine Kingdom of Joy. Where he should rejoice continually with the Children of God, without Fear of any End. Where no evil Thoughts could touch him, neither Care nor Trouble, neither Heat nor Cold. Where no Night is known; where there is no Day or limited Time any more, but an everlasting Blessedness, wherein Soul and Body tremble for Joy. And where he, himself, should rejoice at the infinite Wonders and Virtues appearing in the Brightness of Colors, and the Variety of Splendor opened and displayed by the Omnipotent Powers and Glories of God, upon the new chrystalline Earth, which shall be as transparent Glass. And that he doth so willfully lose all this Eternal Glory and Happiness for the Sake of so short and poor a Time, which even in this State of Vanity and Corruption, in the evil Life of the voluptuous Flesh, is full of Misery, Fear, and utter Vexation; and wherein it goeth with the Wicked as with the Righteous, as the one must die, so must the other; only the Death of the Saints is an Entrance into the Eternal Rest, while the Death of the Wicked is an Introduction into the eternal Anguish.

8. He must consider the Course of this World, that all Things in it are but a Play, wherewith he spends his Time in such Unquietness; and that it goes with the Rich and Mighty as with the Poor and the Beggar. That all of us equally live and move in the four Elements; and that the hard-earned Morsel of the Poor is as relishing and savoury to him in his Labour, as the Dainties of the Rich are to him in his Cares. Also, that all of us subsist by one Breath, and that the rich Man hath nothing but the Pleasures of the Palate and the Lust of the Eye, for a little while more than his poor Neighbour, for the End of both is the Same. Yet for this short-lived Lust's Sake, many foolishly forego so inconceivable a Happiness, and bring themselves into such extreme and eternal Misery.

In the deep Consideration of these weighty Truths, Man shall come to feel in his Heart and Mind, especially if he at the same Time represent and set before his own Eyes his own End, a hearty sighing and longing after the Mercy of God, and will begin to bewail his committed Sins; and to be sorry he has spent his Days so ill, and not observed or considered that he stands in this World as in a Field, in the growing to be a Fruit either in the Love or in the Anger of God. He will then first begin to find in himself that he has not yet laboured at all in the Vineyard of Christ, but that he is a dry fruitless Branch of the Vine. And thus in many a one, whom the Spirit of Christ touches in such a Consideration, there arises abundant Sorrow, Grief of Heart, and inward Lamentation over the Days of his Wickedness which he hath spent in Vanity, without any Working in the Vineyard of Christ.

Such a Man, whom the Spirit of Christ thus brings into Sorrow and Repentance, so that his Heart is opened both to know and bewail his Sins, is very easily to be helped. He needs but to draw to himself the Promise of Christ, viz. That God willeth not the Death of a Sinner but that he wisheth them all to come unto him, and he will refresh them; and, that there is great joy in Heaven for one Sinner that repenteth. Let such a one but lay hold on the Words of Christ and wrap himself up into his meritorious Passion and Death.

But I will now speak to those who feel indeed in themselves a Desire to repent, and yet cannot come to acknowledge and bewail their committed Sins. The Flesh saying continually to the Soul, Stay a while, it is well enough; or it is Time enough To-morrow; and when To-morrow is come, then the Flesh says again, To-morrow; the Soul in the mean while, sighing and fainting, conceiveth neither any true Sorrow for the Sins it hath committed nor any Comfort. Unto such a one, I say, I will write a Process or Way, which I myself have gone, that he may know what he must do, and how it went with me, if peradventure he be inclined to enter into and pursue the same; and then he will come to understand what he shall find here afterwards written.

A Process of Repentance; or Way to Conversion.

WHEN any Man findeth in himself by the former or any other Considerations, pressed home upon his Mind and Conscience, a Hunger or Desire to repent, and yet feeleth no true Sorrow in himself for his Sins which he hath committed, but only a Hunger or Desire of such Sorrow, so that the poor captive Soul continually sighs, fears, and must needs acknowledge itself guilty of Sins before the Judgement of God. Such a one, I say, can take no better Course than this, namely, to wrap up his Senses, Mind, and Reason together, and make to himself instantly, as soon as ever he perceiveth in himself the Desire to repent, a mighty strong Purpose and Resolution that he will that very Hour, nay, that very Minute, immediately enter into Repentance, and go forth from his wicked Way, and not at all regard the Power and Respect of the World. Yea, and if it should be required, would forsake and disesteem all Things for true Repentance Sake; and never depart from that Resolution again, though he should be made the Fool and Scorn of all the World for it.

But that with the full Bent and Strength of his Mind, he will go forth from the Beauty and Pleasure of the World, and patiently enter into the Passion and Death of Christ in and under the Cross, and set all his Hope and Confidence upon the Life to come. That even now in Righteousness and Truth he will enter into the Vineyard of Christ, and do the Will of God.

That in the Spirit and Will of Christ he will begin and finish all his Actions in this World, and for the Sake of Christ's Word and Promise, which holds forth to us a Heavenly Reward, willingly take up and bear every Adversity and Cross so that he may be but admitted into the Communion or Fellowship of the Children of Christ and in the Blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, be incorporated and united unto his Humanity.

He must firmly imagine to himself, and wholly wrap up his Soul in this Persuasion, that in such his Purpose he shall obtain the Love of God in Christ Jesus, and that God will give unto him according to his faithful Promise, that noble Pledge, the Holy Ghost, for an Earnest; that, in the Humanity of Christ, as to the heavenly Substance, he shall be born again in himself, and that the Spirit of Christ will renew his Mind with his Love and Power, and strengthen his weak Faith. Also that in his divine Hunger he shall get the Flesh and Blood of Christ for Food and Drink, in the Desire of his Soul, which hungereth and thirsteth after it as its proper Nutriment; and with the Thirst of the Soul drink the Water of Eternal Life out of the Sweet Fountain of Jesus Christ, as Christ's most true and steadfast Promise is.

He must also wholly and firmly imagine to himself, and set before him, the great Love of God. That God willeth not the Death of a Sinner, but that he repent and believe; that Christ calleth poor Sinners very kindly and graciously to himself, and will refresh them; that God hath sent his Son into the World, to seek and save that which is lost, viz. the poor repentant and returning Sinner; and that for the poor Sinner's Sake he hath given his Life unto Death, and died for him in our Humanity which he took upon him.

Furthermore, he must firmly persuade himself that God in Christ Jesus will much more readily hear him and receive him to Grace, than he come; and that God in the Love of Christ, in the most dear and precious Name JESUS, cannot will any Evil. That there is no angry Countenance at all in this Name, but that it is the highest and deepest Love and Faithfulness, the greatest Sweetness of the Deity, in the great Name JEHOVAH, which he has manifested in our Humanity, corrupted as it is, and perished as to the heavenly Part, which in Paradise disappeared through Sin. And he was therefore moved in his Heart to flow into us with his Sweet Love, that the Anger of his Father, which was kindled in us, might be quenched and turned into Love by it. All which was done for the poor Sinner's Sake, that he might obtain an open Gate of Grace again.

In this Consideration he must firmly imagine to himself that this very Hour and Instant he standeth before the Face of the holy Trinity, and that God is really present within and without him, as the holy Scripture witnesseth, saying, Am not I he that filleth all Things? And in another Place, The Word is near thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart. — Also, We will come unto you and make our abode with you. And, Behold, I am with you always, even to the End of the World. And again, The Kingdom of God is within you.

Thus he must firmly know and believe, that with, and in his Interiour he standeth really before the Face of Jesus Christ, even before the holy Deity, on whom his Soul hath turned its Back; and must resolve that he will this very Hour turn the Eyes and Desire of his Soul towards God again, and with the poor, lost, and returning Son, come to the Father. He must, with the Eyes of his Mind cast down in Fear and deepest Humility, begin to confess his Sins and Unworthiness before the Face of God in Manner following:

A short Form of Confession before the Face of GOD.

Every one, as his Case and Necessity requires, may order and enlarge this Confession as the Holy Ghost shall teach him. I will only set down a short Direction.

O THOU great unsearchable GOD, LORD of all Things; thou, who in Christ Jesus, of great Love towards us, hath manifested thyself with thy holy Substance in our Humanity: I, poor unworthy sinful Wretch, come before thy Presence, which thou hast manifested in the Humanity of Jesus Christ, though I am not worthy to lift up mine Eyes to thee, acknowledging and confessing before thee, that I am guilty of Unfaithfulness, and breaking off from thy great Love and Grace, which thou hast freely bestowed upon us. I have left the Covenant, which of mere Grace thou hast made with me in Baptism, in which thou didst receive me to be a Child and Heir of Eternal Life, and I have brought my Desire into the Vanity of this World, and defiled by Soul therewith, and made it altogether bestial and earthly. So that my Soul knoweth not itself, because of the Mire of Sin; but accounteth itself a strange Child before thy Face, not worthy to desire thy Grace. I lye in the Guilt and Filth of Sin, and the Vanity of my corrupt Flesh, up to the very Lips of my Soul, and have but a small Spark of the living Breath left in me, which desireth thy Grace. I am dead in Sin and Corruption, so that in this woeful Condition I dare not lift up mine Eyes to thee.

O God in Christ Jesus, thou who for poor Sinners' Sakes didst become Man to help them, to thee I complain; to thee I have yet a Spark of Refuge in my Soul. I have not regarded thy purchased Inheritance, which thou hast purchased for us poor Men, by thy bitter Death, but have made myself a Partaker of the Heritage of Vanity, in the Anger of my Father in the Curse of the Earth, and am ensnared in Sin, and half dead as to thy Kingdom. I lye in Feebleness as to thy Strength, and the wrathful Death waiteth for me. The Devil hath poisoned me, so that I know not my Saviour: I am become a wild Branch on thy Tree, and have consumed mine Inheritance which is in thee, with the Devil's Swine. What shall I say before thee, who am not worthy of thy Grace? I lye in the Sleep of Death which hath captivated me, and am fast bound with three strong Chains. O thou Breaker-through-Death, assist me, I beseech thee; I cannot, I am able to do nothing! I am dead in myself, and have no Strength before thee, neither dare I, for great Shame, lift up mine Eyes unto thee. For I am the defiled Keeper of Swine, and have spent mine Inheritance with the false adulterous Whore of Vanity in the Lusts of the Flesh; I have sought myself in my own Lust, and not thee. Now in myself I am become a Fool; I am naked and bare; my Shame stands before mine Eyes; I cannot hide it; thy Judgement waiteth for me. What shall I say before thee, who art the Judge of all the World? I have nothing to bring before thee. — Here I stand naked and bare in thy Presence, and fall down before thy Face bewailing my Misery, and fly to thy great Mercy, though I am not worthy of it; yet receive me but in thy Death, and let me but die from my Death in thine. Cast me down, I pray thee, to the Ground in my innate Self, and kill this Self of mine through thy Death, that I may live no more to myself, seeing I in myself work nothing but Sin. Therefore, I pray thee, cast down to the Ground this wicked Beast, which is full of false Deceit and Self-Desire, and deliver this poor Soul of mine from its heavy Bonds.

O merciful God, it is owing to thy Love and Long-Suffering that I lye not already in Hell. I yield myself, with my whole Will, Senses and Mind, unto thy Grace, and fly to thy Mercy. I call upon thee through thy Death, from that small Spark of Life in me encompassed with Death and Hell, which open their Throat against me, and would wholly swallow me up in Death; upon thee I call, who hast promised that thou wilt not quench the smoking Flax. I have no other Way to thee but by thy own bitter Death and Passion, because thou hast made our Death Life by thy Humanity, and broken the Chains of Death, and therefore I sink the

Desire of my Soul down into thy Death, into the Gate of thy Death, which thou hast broke open.

O thou great Fountain of the Love of God, I beseech thee, help me, that I may die from my Vanity and Sin in the Death of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

O thou Breath of the great Love of God, quicken, I beseech thee, my weak Breath in me, that it may begin to hunger and thirst after thee. O Lord Jesus, thou sweet Strength, I beseech thee give my Soul to drink of thy Fountain of Grace, thy sweet Water of Eternal Life, that it may awake from Death and thirst after thee. O how extreme fainting I am for Want of thy Strength! O merciful God, do thou turn me, I beseech thee; I cannot turn myself. O thou Vanquisher of Death, help me, I pray thee, to wrestle. How fast doth the Enemy hold me with his three Chains, and will not suffer the Desire of my Soul to come before thee! I beseech thee, come and take the Desire of my Soul into thyself. Be thou my Drawing to the Father, and deliver me from the Devil's Bonds! Look not upon my Deformity in standing naked before thee, having lost thy Garment! I pray thee, do but thou clothe that Breath which yet liveth in me and panteth after thy Grace; and so shall I yet see thy Salvation.

O thou deep Love, I pray thee take the Desire of my Soul into thee; bring it forth out of the Bonds of Death through thy Death, in thy Resurrection, in thee. O quicken me in thy Strength, that my Desire and Will may begin to spring up and flourish anew. O thou Vanquisher of Death and of the Wrath of God, do thou overcome in me Self; break its Will and bruise my Soul, that it may fear before thee, and be ashamed of its own Will before thy Judgement, and that it may be ever obedient to thee as an Instrument of thine. Subdue it in the Bonds of Death; take away its Power, that it may will nothing without thee.

O God the Holy Ghost in Christ my Saviour, teach me, I pray thee, what I shall do, that I may turn to thee. O draw me in Christ to the Father, and help me, that now and from henceforward I may go forth from Sin and Vanity, and never any more enter into them again. Stir up in me a true Sorrow for the Sins I have committed. O keep me in thy Bonds; and let me not loose from thee, lest the Devil sift me in my wicked Flesh and Blood, and bring me again into the Death of Death. O enlighten thou my Spirit, that I may see the divine Path, and walk in it continually. O take that away from me, which always turneth me away from thee; and give me that which always turneth me to thee; take me wholly from myself and give me wholly to thyself. O let me begin nothing, let me will, think, and do nothing without thee. O Lord, how long! Indeed I am not worthy of that which I desire of thee, I pray thee let the Desire of my Soul dwell but in the Gates of thy Courts; make it but a Servant of thy Servants. O preserve it from that horrible Pit, wherein there is no Comfort or Refreshment.

O God in Christ Jesus! I am blind in myself, and know not myself because of Vanity. Thou art hidden from me in my Blindness, and yet thou art near unto me; but thy Wrath which my Desire hath awakened in me, hath made me dark. O take but the Desire of my Soul to thee; prove it, O Lord, and bruise it, that my Soul may obtain a Ray of thy Sweet Grace.

I lye before thee as a dying Man, whose Life is passing from his Lips, as a small Spark going out; kindle it, O Lord, and raise up the Breath of my Soul before thee. Lord, I wait for thy Promise, which thou hast made, saying, As I live, I will not the Death of a Sinner, but that he shall turn and live. I sink myself down into the Death of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and wait for thee, whose Word is Truth and Life. Amen.

In this, or the like Manner, every one may confess his Sins, as he himself findeth on examining his Conscience, what Sins he hath brought his Soul into. Yet if his Purpose be truly earnest, to use a Form is needless, for the Spirit of God, which at that Instant is in the Will of the Mind, will itself make the Prayer for him, in his Interiour. For it is the Spirit of God, which in a true earnest Desire worketh Repentance, and intercedeth for the Soul before God, through the Death of Christ.

But I will not hide from the beloved Reader, who hath a Christian Intent, how it commonly useeth to go with those who are in such a firm Purpose and Resolution; though, indeed, it goeth otherwise with one than with another, according as his Purpose is more or less earnest and strong. For the Spirit of God is not bound, but useth diverse Ways or Processes accordingly as he knoweth to be fittest for every one. Yet a Soldier who hath been in the Wars can tell how to fight and instruct another that may happen to be in the like Condition.

Now when such a Heart with strong Resolution and Purpose doth thus come before God, and enter into Repentance, it happeneth to it as to the Canaanitish Woman; that is, it seems as if God would not hear. The Heart remaineth without Comfort as its Sins, Follies, and Neglects also present themselves before it, and make it feel itself unworthy of any. The Mind is as it were speechless; the Soul groaneth in the Deep; the Heart receiveth nothing, nor can it so much as pour forth its Confession before God; but it is as if the Heart and Soul were quite shut up. The Soul would fain go towards God, but the Flesh keepeth it captive: The Devil too shutteth it up strongly, and representeth to it the Way of Vanity again, and tickleth it with the Lust of the Flesh, and saith inwardly to it, Stay a while, do this or that first; get a Sufficiency of Money or Goods beforehand, that thou mayest not stand in Need of the World, and afterwards enter into Repentance and a holy Life; it will be Time enough then.

O how many Hundreds perish in such a Beginning, if they go back again into Vanity; and become as young Grafts broken off by the Wind, or withered by the Heat!

Beloved Soul, mark: If thou wilt be a Champion in thy Saviour Christ against Death and Hell, and wouldst have thy young Graft grow, and become a Tree in the Kingdom of Christ, thou must go on, and stand fast in thy first earnest Purpose. It is as much as thy paternal Inheritance is worth, and thy Body and Soul too, whether thou, becomest an Angel in God, or a Devil in Hell. If thou wilt be crowned, thou must fight; thou must overcome in Christ, and not yield to the Devil. Thy Purpose must stand firm, thou must not prefer temporal Honour and Goods before it. When the Spirit of the Flesh says, Stay a while, it is not convenient yet; then the Soul must say, Now is the Time for me to go back again into my native Country, out of which my Father, Adam, hath brought me. No Creature shall keep me back, and though thou earthly Body shouldest thereby decay and perish, yet I will now enter with my Will and whole Desire, into the Rose-Garden of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ; through his Suffering and Death into him, and in the Death of Christ subdue thee, thou earthly Body, that hast swallowed up my Pearl from me, which God gave to my Father, Adam in Paradise. I will break the Will of thy Voluptuousness, which is in Vanity, and bind thee as a mad Dog with the Chain of my earnest Purpose; and though hereby thou shouldest become a Fool in the Account of all Men, yet thou must and shalt obey the firm Resolve of my Soul. Nothing shall unloose thee from this Chain, but the temporal Death. Whereunto God and his Strength help me.

A short Direction how the poor Soul must come before God again, and how it must fight for the noble Garland; what Kind of Weapons it must use, if it will go to War against God's

Anger, against the Devil, the World and Sin, against Flesh and Blood, against the Influence of the Stars and Elements, and all its other Enemies.

BELOVED Soul, there is Earnestness required to do this, and not a bare Recital of Words only! No, the earnest resolved Will must drive on this Work, else nothing will be effected. For if the Soul will obtain the triumphant Garland of Christ from the noble Sophia or Divine Wisdom, it must wooe her for it in great Desire of Love. It must entreat her in her most holy Name for it, and come before her in most modest Humility, and not like a lustful Bull or a wanton Venus. For so long as any are such, they must not seek these Things; for they shall not obtain them, and though something should be obtained by those who are in such an impure State, it would be no more than a Glimpse of the true Glory. But a chaste and modest Mind may prevail so far as to have the Soul in its noble Image, which died in Adam, quickened in the heavenly Corporality as to the inward Ground, and the precious Garland set upon it. Yet if this should come to pass, it is taken off again from the Soul, and laid by, as a Crown useth to be, after a King is once crowned with it; it is then laid by and kept. So it cometh to pass also with the heavenly Garland or Gift. It is taken from the Soul again, because the Soul is yet encompassed with the House of Sin; so that if it should unhappily fall again, its Crown might not be defiled. This is spoken plainly enough for the Children that know and have tried these Things: None of the Wicked are worthy to know more about them.

The Process, or Way.

A MAN must bring a serious Mind to this Work. He must come before God with sincere Earnestness, deep Humility, and hearty Sorrow for his Sins, and with a deliberate and firm Resolution, not to enter any more into the old broad Way of Vanity. And though the whole World should account him a Fool, and he should lose both Honour and Goods, nay, and the temporal Life also, for the Sake of his new Choice, yet he must resolve firmly to abide by it.

If ever he will obtain the Love and Marriage of the noble Sophia, he must make such a Vow as this in his Purpose and Mind. For Christ himself saith, He that forsaketh not Wife and Children, Brethren and Sisters, Money and Goods, and all that he hath, and even his earthly Life also, to follow me, is not worthy of me. Here Christ meaneth the Mind of the Soul, so that if there were any Thing that would keep the Mind back from it, though it should have never so fair and glorious a Pretence or Shew in this World, the Mind must not regard it at all, but rather part with it than with the Love of the noble Virgin Sophia, in the Bud and Blossom of Christ, in his tender Humanity in us as to the heavenly Corporality. For this is the Flower in Sharon, the Rose in the Valley of Jericho, wherewith Solomon delighted himself, and termed it his dear Love, his chaste Virgin which he loved; as indeed all other Saints before and after him did; whosoever obtained her, called her his Pearl.

After what Manner to pray for it, you may see by this short Direction following. The Work itself must be committed to the Holy Ghost; he formeth and frameth the Prayer for the Soul, in every Heart wherein he is sought.

The P R A Y E R.

I, a poor unworthy Creature, come before thee, O great and holy God and lift up mine Eyes to thee. Though I am not worthy, yet thy great Mercy, and thy faithful Promise in the Word, have now encouraged me to lift the Eyes of the Desire of my Soul up to thee. For my Soul hath now laid hold on the Word of thy Promise, and received it into itself, and therewith cometh to thee. And though it is but a strange Child which was disobedient unto thee, yet now it desireth to be obedient; and doth now infold itself with its Desire into that Word which became Man, which became Flesh and Blood, and hath broken Sin and Death in my Humanity. Which hath changed the Anger of God into Love unto the Soul, hath deprived Death of his Power, and Hell of its Victory over Soul and Body; and hath opened a Gate for my Soul to the clear Face of thy Strength and Power.

O great and most holy God, I have brought the Hunger and Desire of my Soul into this most holy Word, and now I come before thee, and in my Hunger call unto thee, thou living Fountain, through thy Word which became Flesh and Blood. Thy Word being made the Life in our Flesh, I receive it firmly into the Desire of my Soul as my own Life; and I pierce into thee with the Desire of my Soul through the Word in the Flesh of Christ; through his holy Conception in the Virgin Mary, his Incarnation, his holy Nativity, his Baptism in Jordan, his Temptation in the Wilderness, where he overcame the Kingdom of the Devil and this World in the Humanity. Through all his Miracles, which he did on Earth; through his Reproach and Ignominy, his innocent Death and Passion, the shedding of his Blood, wherein God's Anger in Soul and Flesh was drowned. Through his Rest in the Sepulchre, when he awaked our Father Adam out of his Sleep, who was fallen into a dead Sleep as to the Kingdom of Heaven. Through his Love, which pierced through the Anger and destroyed Hell in the Soul. Through his Resurrection from the Dead, his Ascension, the sending of the Holy Spirit into our Soul and Spirit, and through all his Promises; one of which is, that thou, O God the Father, wilt give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it, in the Name and through the Word which became Man.

O thou Life of my Flesh and of my Soul in Christ my Brother, I beseech thee in the Hunger of my Soul, and intreat thee with all my Powers, though they be weak, to give me what thou hast promised me, and freely bestow upon me in my Saviour Jesus Christ, his Flesh for Food, and his Blood for Drink, to refresh my poor hungry Soul, that it may be quickened and strengthened in the Word which became Man, by which it may long and hunger after thee aright.

O thou deepest Love in the most Sweet Name JESUS, give thyself into the Desire of my Soul. For therefore thou hast moved thyself, and according to thy great Sweetness manifested thyself in the Human Nature, and called us to thee, us that hunger and thirst after thee, and hast promised us that thou wilt refresh us. I now open the Lips of my Soul to thee, O thou sweet Truth; and though I am not worthy to desire it of thy Holiness, yet I come to thee through thy bitter Passion and Death; thou having sprinkled my Uncleaness with thy Blood, and sanctified me in thy Humanity, and made an open Gate for me through thy Death, to thy sweet Love in thy Blood. Through thy five holy Wounds, from which thou didst shed thy Blood, I bring the Desire of my Soul into thy Love.

O Jesus Christ, thou Son of God and Man, I pray thee receive into thyself thy purchased Inheritance, which thy Father hath given thee. I cry within me, that I may enter through thy holy Blood and Death into thee. Open thyself in me, that the Spirit of my Soul may reach thee, and receive thee into it. Lay hold on my Thirst in me with thy Thirst; bring thy Thirst

after us Men, which thou hadst upon the Cross, into my Thirst, and give me thy Blood to drink in my Thirst. That my Death in me which holdeth me captive, may be drowned in the Blood of thy Love, and that my extinguished or suppressed Image, which as to the Kingdom of Heaven disappeared in my Father Adam through Sin, may be made alive through thy powerful Blood, and my Soul clothed with it again as with the new Body which dwelleth in Heaven. In which Image thy holy Power and Word that became Man dwelleth, which is the Temple of the holy Spirit, who dwelleth in us according to thy Promise, saying we will come to you and make our Abode with you.

O thou great Love of Jesus Christ, I can do no more than sink my Desire into thee; thy Word which became Man, is Truth; since thou hast bidden me come, now I come. Be it unto me according to thy Word and Will. Amen.

A Warning to the Reader.

BELOVED Reader, out of Love to thee, I will not conceal from thee what is here earnestly signified to me. If thou lovest the Vanity of the Flesh still, and art not in an earnest Purpose on the Way to the new Birth or Regeneration, intending to become a new Man, then leave the above-written Words un-named; else they will turn to a Judgement of God in thee. Thou must not take the holy Names in vain, thou art faithfully warned: They belong to the thirsty Soul. But if thy Soul be in earnest, it shall find by Experience what Words they are.

A Direction how the Soul must meet its Beloved, when she knocketh in its Center, or Shut-
Inner-Chamber.

BELOVED Soul, if thou wilt be earnest without Intermission, thou shalt certainly obtain the Favor of a Kiss from the noble Sophia (or Divine Wisdom) in the holy Name JESUS; for she standeth ever before the Door of the Soul, knocking, and warning the Sinner of his wicked Way. Now if he once thus desireth her Love, she is ready for him and kisseth him with the Beams of her sweet Love, from whence the Heart receiveth Joy. But she doth not presently lay herself in the Marriage-Bed with the Soul, that is, she doth not presently awaken the extinguished heavenly Image in herself, which disappeared in Adam in Paradise. No, there might be Danger to Man in that; for if Adam and Lucifer fell, having it manifested in them, the same may easily happen to Man, who is still so strongly enthralled in Vanity.

The Bond of thy Promise must be firm and stedfast. Before she will crown thee, thou must be tempted and tried: She taketh the Beams of her Love from thee again, to see whether thou wilt prove faithful; also she letteth thee stand as it were aloof, and answereth thee not so much as with one Look of her Love. For before she will crown thee, thou must be judged, that thou mayest taste the bitter Potion of Dregs, which thou hast filled for thyself in thine Abominations. Thou must come before the Gates of Hell first, and there shew forth thy Victory for her in her Love, in that Strength wherewith she upheld thee in Opposition to the Devil's malign Influence.

Christ was tempted in the Wilderness; and if thou wilt put on him, thou must go through his whole Progress or Journey, even from his Incarnation to his Ascension. And though thou art not able, nor required to do that which he hath done; yet thou must enter wholly into his Process, and therein die continually from the Corruption of the Soul. For the Virgin Sophia espouseth not herself to the Soul, except in this Property, which springeth up in the Soul through the Death of Christ, as a new Plant standing in Heaven. The earthly Body cannot

comprehend her in this Life-time, for it must first die from the corruptible Vanity; but the heavenly Image which disappeared in Adam, viz. the true Seed of the Woman, wherein God became Man, and into which he brought his living Seed, the heavenly Substantiality, is capable of the Pearl, after the Manner wherein it came to pass in Mary, in the End or Fulfilling of the Covenant.

Therefore take heed what thou doest. When thou hast made thy Promise, keep it, and then she will crown thee more readily than thou wouldst be crowned. But thou must be sure when the Tempter cometh to thee with the Pleasure, Beauty, and Glory of the World, that thy Mind reject it, and say, I must be a Servant and not a Master in the Vineyard of Christ; I am but a Steward of God in and over all that I have, and I must do with it as his Word teacheth me; my Heart must sit down with the simple and lowly, in the Dust, and be always humble. Whatsoever State and Condition thou art in, Humility must be in the Front, or else thou wilt not obtain the noble Virgin in Marriage. The Free Will of thy Soul must stand the Brunt as a Champion; for if the Devil cannot prevail against the Soul with Vanity, nor catch it with that Bait, then he cometh with its Unworthiness and Catalogue of Sins. And there thou must fight hard, and the Merits of Christ must be set in the Front, or else the Creature cannot prevail against the Devil. For in this Conflict it goeth so terribly with many a poor Sinner, that outward Reason thinketh him to be distracted, or possessed by an evil Spirit. The Devil defendeth himself so horribly in some, especially if he hath had a great Fort of Prey in them, that he must be stoutly assaulted before he will depart and leave his Castle. In this kind of Combat, Heaven and Hell are fighting one against the other.

Now if the Soul continue constant, and getteth the Victory over the Devil in all his Assaults, disesteeming all temporal Things for the Love of its noble Sophia, then the precious Garland will be set upon it for a Token or Ensign of Victory.

Here the Virgin, (which manifesteth herself in the dear Name of JESUS CHRIST, the Treader upon the Serpent, God's Anointed) cometh to the Soul, and kisseth it with her sweetest Love in the Essence most inwardly, and impresseth her Love into its Desire for a Token of Victory. And here Adam in his heavenly Part riseth again from Death in Christ. Of which I cannot write; for there is no Pen in this World that can express it: It is the Wedding of the Lamb where the noble Pearl is sown with very great Triumph; though in the Beginning it be small as a Grain of Mustard-Seed, as Christ saith.

Now when the Wedding is over, the Soul must take heed that this Pearl-Tree, or Tree of Faith spring and grow, as it hath promised the Virgin; for then the Devil will presently come with his furious Storm, the ungodly People, who will scoff at, contemn, and cry down this Way for Madness; and then a Man must enter into the Process of Christ, under his Cross. Here it will appear in deed and in Truth, what Sort of a Christian he is. For he must suffer himself to be proclaimed a Fool and ungodly Wretch; nay, his greatest Friends, who favoured him, or flattered him in the Lusts of the Flesh, will now be his Enemies, and though they know not why, will hate him. Thus it is that Christ hideth his Bride wholly under the Cross, that she may not be known in this World: The Devil also striveth that these Children may be hidden from the World, lest haply many such Branches should grow in the Garden which he supposeth to be his.

This I have set down for the Information of the Christian-minded Reader, that he may know what to do, if the same should befall him.

A very earnest Prayer in Temptation.

Against God's Anger in the Conscience; and also against Flesh and Blood, when the Temptation cometh to the Soul, and wrestleth with it.

MOST Deep Love of God in Christ Jesus, leave me not in this Distress. I confess I am guilty of the Sins which now rise up in my Mind and Conscience; and if thou forsake me, I must perish. But hast thou not promised me in thy Word, saying, If a Mother could forget her Child, which can hardly be, yet thou wilt not forget me? Thou hast set me as a Sign in thine Hands, which were pierced through with sharp Nails, and in thy open Side whence Blood and Water gushed out. Poor Wretch that I am! I am caught in thy Anger, and can in my Ability do nothing before thee; I sink myself down into thy Wounds and Death.

O Great Mercy of God, I beseech thee, deliver me from the Bonds of Satan. I have no Refuge in any Thing, but only in thy Holy Wounds and Death! Into thee I sink down in the Anguish of my Conscience; do with me what thou wilt. In thee I will now live or die, as pleaseth thee; let me but die and perish in thy Death; do but bury me into thy Death, that the Anguish of Hell may not touch me. How can I excuse myself before thee, that knoweth my Heart and Reins, and settest my Sins before mine Eyes? I am guilty of them, and yield myself unto thy Judgement; accomplish thy Judgement upon me, through the Death of my Redeemer Jesus Christ.

I fly unto thee, thou Righteous Judge, through the Anguish of my redeemer Jesus Christ, when he did sweat the bloody Sweat on the Mount of Olives for my Sake, and was scourged by Pontius Pilate for me, and suffered a Crown of Thorns to be pressed upon his Head, so that his Blood came forth.

O righteous God, hast thou not set him in my Stead? He was innocent, but I guilty, for whom he suffered, wherefore should I despair under thy Wrath? O blot out thy Anger in me through his Anguish, Passion and Death; I give myself wholly into his Anguish, Passion and Death; I will stand still in his Anguish and Passion before thee; do with me what thou pleasest, only let me not depart from his Anguish. Thou hast freely given me his Anguish, and drowned thy Wrath in him: And though I have not accepted it, but am departed from him and become faithless, yet thou hast given me this precious Pledge in my Flesh and Blood. For he hath taken my Flesh and Soul upon his heavenly Flesh and Blood, and hath satisfied the Anger in my Flesh and Soul in him, with his heavenly Blood. Therefore receive me now in his Satisfaction, and put his Anguish, Passion and Death in thy Wrath, which is kindled in me, and break thy Judgement in me in the Blood of his Love.

O Great Love! in the Blood and Death of Jesus Christ, I beseech thee, break the strong Fort of Prey which the Devil hath made and built up in me, where he resisteth me in the Way of thy Grace. Drive him out of me, that he may not overcome me; for no one living can stand in thy Sight, if thou withdraw thy Hand from him.

O come, thou Breaker-through the Anger of God, destroy its Power, and help my poor Soul to fight and overcome it. O bring me into Victory, and uphold me in thee; break in Pieces its Seat in my Vanity, that is kindled in my Soul and Flesh. O mortify the Desire of my Vanity in Flesh and Blood, which the Devil hath now kindled by his false Desire, by hellish Anguish

and Desperation. O quench it with thy Water of Eternal Life, and bring my Anguish forth through thy Death; I wholly sink myself down into thee; and though Soul and Body should this Hour faint and perish in thy Wrath, yet I will not let thee go. Though my Heart saith utterly, No, no, yet the Desire of my Soul shall hold fast on thy Truth, which neither Death nor the Devil shall take away from me; for the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all our Sins. This I lay hold on, and let the Anger of God do what it will with my Sin, and let the Devil roar over my Soul in his Fort of Prey which he hath made, as much as he will: Neither the Devil, Death, nor Hell shall pull me out of my Saviour's Wounds.

Thou must at length be confounded in me, thou malicious Devil, and thy Fort of Prey must be forsaken, for I will drown it in the Love of Jesus Christ, and then dwell in it if thou canst. Amen.

An Information in Temptation.

BELOVED Reader, this is no jesting Matter; he that accounteth it so, hath not tried it, neither hath he yet passed the Judgement; but his Conscience is still asleep; and though it should be deferred to his latter Days, which is very dangerous, yet he must pass through this Judgement or fiery Tryal. Happy is he that passeth through it in the Time of his Youth, before the Devil buildeth his Fort of Prey strong; he may afterwards prove a Labourer in the heavenly Vineyard, and sow his Seed in the Garden of Christ; where he shall reap the Fruit in due Time. This Judgement continueth a long while upon many a poor Soul; several Years, if he doth not earnestly and early put on the Armour of Christ, but stayeth till the Judgement of Tribulation first drive him to Repentance. But to him that cometh by himself, of his own earnest Purpose, and endeavoureth to depart from his evil Ways, the Temptation or Tryal will not be so hard, neither will it continue so long. Yet he must stand out valiantly, till Victory be gotten over the Devil; for he shall be mightily assisted, and all shall end in the best for him; so that afterwards when the Day breaketh in his Soul, he turneth it to the great Praise and Glory of God, that his grand Enemy and Persecutor was overcome in the Conflict.

SHORT PRAYERS.

When the Noble Sophia (or Eternal Wisdom) kisseth the Soul with her Love, and offereth her Love to it.

O MOST gracious and deep Love of God in Christ Jesus! I beseech thee grant me thy Pearl, impress it into my Soul, and take my Soul into thy Arms.

O thou Sweet Love! I confess I am unclean before thee. Take away my Uncleaness through thy Death, and carry the Hunger and Thirst of my Soul through thy Death in thy Resurrection, in thy Triumph! Cast my whole Self-hood down to the Ground in thy Death; take it captive, and carry my Hunger through in thy Hunger.

O highest Love! Hast thou not appeared in me? Stay in me, and inclose me in thee. Keep me in thee, so that I may not be able to depart from thee. Fill my Hunger with thy Love; feed my Soul with thy heavenly Substance; give it thy Blood to drink, and water it with thy Fountain.

O great Love! Awaken my disappeared Image in me, which, as to the Kingdom of Heaven disappeared in my Father Adam. By that Word, which awakened the same Image in the Seed of the Woman in Mary; quicken it, I beseech thee.

O thou Life and Power of the Deity, who hast promised us, saying, We will come to you, and make our Abode in you. O sweet Love! I bring my Desire into this Word of thy Promise. Thou hast promised also, that thy Father will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him for it; therefore I now bring the Desire of my Soul into that thy Promise, and I receive thy Word into my Hunger. Increase thou in me my Hunger after thee. Strengthen me, O sweet Love, in thy Strength: Quicken me in thee, that my Spirit may taste thy Sweetness. O do thou believe by thy Power in me, for without thee I can do nothing.

O sweet Love! I beseech thee through that Love wherewith thou didst overcome the Anger of God, and didst change it into Love and Divine Joy; I pray thee also change the Anger in my Soul by that same great Love, that I may become obedient unto thee, and that my Soul may love thee therein forever. O change my Will into thy Will; bring thy Obedience into my Disobedience, that I may become obedient unto thee.

O great Love of Jesus Christ, I humbly fly to thee; bring the Hunger of my Soul into thy Wounds, from whence thou didst shed thy Holy Blood, and didst quench the Anger with Love. I bring my Hunger into thy open Side, from whence came forth Water and Blood, and throw myself wholly into it; be thou mine, and quicken me in thy Life, and let me not depart from thee.

O my Noble Vine, I beseech thee give Sap to me thy Branch; that I may bud and grow in thy Strength and Sap, in thy Essence; beget in me true Strength by thy Strength.

O sweet Love, art thou not my Light? Enlighten thou my poor Soul in its close Prison in Flesh and Blood. Bring it into the right Way. Destroy the Will of the Devil, and bring my Body through the whole Course of this World, through the Chamber of Death into thy Death and Rest; that at the last Day it may arise in thee from thy Death, and live in thee forever. O teach me what I must do in thee; I beseech thee, be thou my willing, knowing, and doing; and let me go no whither without thee. I yield myself wholly up to thee. Amen.

A P R A Y E R.

For obtaining the Divine Working, Protection, and Government; shewing also how the Mind should work with and in God, in Christ the Tree of Life.

O THOU living Fountain, in thee I lift up the Desire of my Soul, and cry with my Desire to enter through the Life of my Saviour Jesus Christ into thee.

O thou Life and Power of God, awaken thyself in the Hunger of my Soul with thy Desire of Love, through the Thirst which Jesus Christ had upon the Cross after us Men, and carry my weak Strength through by thy mighty Hand in thy Spirit; be thou the Working and Will in me with thine own Strength. Blossom in the Strength of Jesus Christ in me, that I may bring forth Praise unto thee, the true Fruit of thy Kingdom. O let my Heart and Desire never depart from thee more.

But I swim in Vanity in this Valley of Misery, in this outward earthly Flesh and Blood; and my Soul and noble Image, which is according to thy Similitude, is encompassed with Enemies on every Side; with the Desire of the Devil against me, with the Desire of Vanity in Flesh and Blood; also with all the Opposition of wicked Men who know not thy Name. And I swim with my outward Life in the Properties of the Stars and Elements, having my Enemies lying in

wait for me everywhere, inwardly and outwardly, together with Death the Destroyer of this vain Life. I fly therefore to thee, O holy Strength of God, seeing thou hast manifested thyself with thy loving Mercy in our Humanity, through thy Holy Name JESUS, and hast also given it to be a Companion and Guide in us. I beseech thee let his Angels that minister to him, attend upon the Souls of me and mine, and encamp themselves about us, and defend us from the fiery Darts of the Desire of that wicked One, which he shooteth into us daily by the Curse of the Anger of God which is awakened in our earthly Flesh. Keep back by thy Divine Strength the malignant Influence of the Stars in their Opposition, wherein the wicked Enemy of Mankind mingleth himself with his Desire and Imagination, in order to poison us in Soul and Flesh, and to bring us into false and evil Desires, as also into Infirmity and Misery. Turn away these evil Influences by thy Holy Power Jesus, from our Souls and Spirits, that they may not touch us; and let thy good and holy Angel stand by us to turn away their noxious Effects from our Bodies.

O great Love and sweet Strength JESU, thou Fountain of divine Sweetness, flowing out of the great Eternal Name JEHOVAH, I cry with the Desire of my Soul to come into thee. My Soul cryeth to come into that Spirit, from Which it was breathed into the Body, and which hath formed it in the Likeness of God. It desireth in its Thirst to get the sweet Fountain which springeth from JEHOVAH into itself, to refresh God's Breath of Fire, which itself is, that so the sweet Love of JESUS may rise in its Breath of Fire, through the Fountain JESUS springing out of JEHOVAH; that CHRIST the Holy One may be manifested, and become Man in my disappeared Image of heavenly spiritual Corporality, and that my poor Soul may receive its beloved Bride again into its Arms, with whom it may rejoice forever.

O IMMANUEL! thou Wedding-Chamber, God and Man, I yield myself up into the Arms of thy Desire towards us, in us; it is thyself whom I desire. O blot out the Anger of thy Father with thy Love in me, and manifest thy Strength in my Weakness, that I may overcome and tame the Evil of Flesh and Blood, and serve thee in Holiness and Righteousness.

O thou great and most holy Name and Majesty of God, JEHOVAH, which hast stirred thyself with thy most sweet Power JESUS, in the Limit of the covenanted Promise to our Father Adam, in the Woman's Seed; in the Virgin Mary, in our disappeared heavenly Humanity, and brought the living Essentiality of thy Holy Power in the Virgin Wisdom of God into our Humanity, which was extinguished as to thee; and hast given it to us, to be our Life, Regeneration, and Victory; I entreat thee with all my Strength, beget a new holy Life in me, by thy sweet Power JESUS, that I may be in thee and thou in me; that so thy Kingdom may be made manifest in me, and the Will and Conversation of my Soul may be in Heaven.

O great and incomprehensible God, thou who fillest all Things, be thou my Heaven in which my new Birth of CHRIST JESUS may dwell: Let my Spirit be the stringed Instrument, Harmony, Sound and Joy of thy Holy Spirit. Strike the Strings in me in thy regenerate Image, and carry through my Harmony into thy Divine Kingdom of Joy, in the great Love of God, in the Wonders of thy Glory and Majesty, in the Communion of the Holy Angelical Harmony. Build up the Holy City Zion in me, in which as Children of Christ we all live together in one City, which is Christ in us. Into thee I wholly plunge myself; do with me what thou pleasest. Amen.

A P R A Y E R.

To be used by a Soul in Tribulation under the Cross of Christ, when it is assaulted by its outward Enemies, who persecute and hate it for being in the Spirit of Christ, and slander and reproach it as an Evil-Doer.

POOR MAN that I am! I walk full of Anguish and Trouble in my Return towards my native Country, from whence I wandered in Adam, and am going back again through the Thistles and Thorns of this troublesome World. O God my Father, the Briars tear me on every Side, and I am afflicted and despised by my Enemies. They scorn my Soul, and revile it as an Evil-Doer, who hath broken Faith with them; they deride my walking towards thee, and account it foolish. They think I am senseless, because I walk in this straight and thorny Path, and go not along with them in their hypocritical broad Way.

O Lord JESUS CHRIST, I fly to thee under the Cross; O dear Immanuel receive me, and carry me into thyself through the Path of thy Pilgrimage, in which thou didst walk in this World, namely through thy Incarnation, Poverty, Reproach, and Scorn; also through thy Anguish, Passion, and Death. Make me conformable unto thy Example; send thy good Angel along with me, to shew me the Way through the horrible thorny Wilderness of this World. Assist me in my Misery; comfort me with that Comfort wherewith the Angel comforted thee in the Garden, when thou didst pray to thy Father, and didst sweat great Drops of Blood. Support me in my Anguish and Persecution, under the Reproach of the Devils, and all wicked Men, who know not thee, and refuse to walk in thy Paths. O great Love of God, they know not thy Way, and do this in Blindness, through the Deceit of the Devil. Have Pity on them, and bring them out of their Darkness into thy Light, that they may learn to know themselves, and how they lye Captive in the Filth and Mire of the Devil, in a dark Dungeon fast bound with three Chains. O Great God have Mercy upon Adam and his Children, redeem them in Christ, the new Adam.

I fly to thee, O Christ, God and Man, in this Pilgrimage and Journey which I must take through this dark Valley, despised and troubled on all Sides, and accounted an ungodly wicked Man. O Lord, it is thy Judgement upon me, that my Sins and inbred Corruption may be judged in this earthly Pilgrimage before thee; and I, as a Curse, be made an open Spectacle on which thy Anger may satiate itself, and thereby may take the eternal Reproach away from me. It is the Token of thy Love, by which thou bringest me into the Reproach, Anguish, Suffering, and Death of my Saviour Jesus Christ, that so I may die from Vanity and spring up in his Spirit with a new Life, through his Reproach, Ignominy, and Death.

I beseech thee, O Christ, thou patient Lamb of God, grant me Patience in this my Way of the Cross, through all thy Anguish and Reproach, thy Death and Passion, thy Scorn and Contempt upon the Cross, where thou was despised in my Stead; and bring me therein as a patient Lamb to thee, into thy Victory. Let me live with thee in thee; and do thou convert my Persecutors, who (unknown to themselves) by their reproaching, sacrifice my Vanity and inbred Sins before thy Anger. They know not what they do; they think they do me Harm, but they do me Good! They do that for me which I should do myself before thee; for I should daily lay open and acknowledge my Shame and Vileness before thee; and thereby sink myself down into the Death of thy beloved Son, that my Shame might die in his Death; but I being too negligent, weary, faint, and feeble, therefore thou usest these mine Enemies in thine Anger, to open and discover my Vileness before thee, which thy Wrath taketh hold of, and sinketh it down into the Death of my Saviour.

O merciful God, my vain Flesh cannot know how well thou intendest towards me, when thou sufferest mine Enemies to take my Vileness from me, and sacrifice it before thee. My earthly Mind supposeth that thou afflictest me for my Sins, and I am extremely perplexed at it; but thy Spirit, in my inward new Man, telleth me that it is of thy Love towards me, and that thou intendest Good to me by it. When thou sufferest my Enemies to persecute me, it is best for me that they perform the Work in my Stead, and unfold my Sins before thee in thy Anger, that it may swallow up the Guilt of them, so that they may not follow me into my native Country; for mine Enemies are strong and mighty still in thy Anger, and therefore can do it better than I that am feeble and fainting already in the Will of Vanity. This thou knowest full well, O thou righteous God.

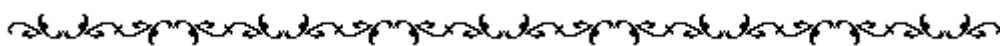
I beseech thee therefore, O righteous God, since thou usest them as Friends to me, to do so good an Office for me, though my earthly Reason knoweth it not, that thou wouldst make them also to understand and follow my Course, and send them such Friends in turn; but first bring them to the Light, that they may know thee, and give thee Thanks.

O merciful God in Christ Jesus, I beseech thee out of thy deep Love towards us poor Men, which thou hast manifested in me in the hidden Man, call us all in thee, to thee. O stir thyself in us yet once again in this last Trouble; thy Anger being kindled in us, do thou resist it, lest it swallow us up wholly both Soul and Body.

O thou Dawning of the Day-Spring of God, break forth to the Full! Art thou not already risen? Manifest thy holy City Zion, thy holy Jerusalem, in us.

O great God! I see thee in the Depth of thy Power and Strength. Awaken me wholly in thee, that I may be quickened in thee. Break off the Tree of thy Anger in us, and let thy Love spring forth and bud in us.

O Lord, I lie down in thy Sight, and beseech thee not to rebuke us in thine Anger. Are we not thy Possession which thou hast purchased? Forgive all of us our Sins, and deliver us from the Evil of thy Wrath, and from the Malice and Envy of the Devil; and bring us under thy Cross in Patience into Paradise again. Amen.



Here followeth a Prayer or Dialogue between the poor Soul and the noble Virgin Sophia, in the inward Ground of Man, viz. between the Spirit of Christ in the New Birth, out of his Humanity in us, and the Soul; shewing how great a Joy there is in the Heaven of the New regenerate Man; and how lovingly and graciously the noble Sophia presenteth herself to her Bridegroom the Soul, when it entereth into Repentance, and how the Soul behaveth itself towards her, when she appeareth to it.

The Gates of the Paradisical Garden of Roses.

This is understood by none but the Children of Christ, who have known it by Experience.

WHEN Christ the Corner-stone stirreth himself in the extinguished Image of Man, in his hearty Conversion and Repentance, then Virgin Sophia appeareth in the Stirring of the Spirit of Christ in the extinguished Image, in her Virgin's Attire before the Soul; at which the Soul is

so amazed and astonished in its Uncleaness, that all its Sins immediately awake in it, and it trembleth before her; for then the Judgement passeth upon the Sins of the Soul, so that it even goeth back in its Unworthiness, being ashamed in the Presence of its fair Love, and entereth into itself, feeling and acknowledging itself utterly unworthy to receive such a Jewel. This is understood by those who are of our Tribe, and have tasted of this Heavenly Gift, and by none else. But the noble Sophia draweth near in the Essence of the Soul, and kisseth it in friendly Manner, and tinctureth its dark Fire with her Rays of Love, and shineth through it with her bright and powerful Influence. Penetrated with the strong Sense and Feeling of which, the Soul skippeth in its Body for great Joy, and in the Strength of this Virgin Love exulteth, and praiseth the great God for his blessed Gift of Grace.

I will set down here a short Description how it is when the Bride thus embraceth the Bridegroom, for the Consideration of the Reader, who perhaps hath not yet been in this Wedding-Chamber. It may be that he will be desirous to follow us, and to enter into the Inner Choir, where the Soul joineth Hands and danceth with Sophia, or the Divine Wisdom.

I.

When that which is mentioned above cometh to pass, the Soul rejoiceth in its Body, and saith,

PRAISE, Thanksgiving, Strength, Honour, and Glory, be to thee, O great God, in thy Power and Sweetness, for that thou hast redeemed me from the Anguish of the fiery Driver. O thou fair Love! My Heart embraceth thee; where hast thou been so long? I thought I was in Hell in the Anger of God. O Gracious Love! Abide with me, I beseech thee, and be my Joy and Comfort. Lead me in the right Way. I give myself up into thy Love. I am dark before thee, do thou enlighten me. O noble Love, give me thy sweet Pearl; put it I pray thee into me.

O great God in Christ Jesus, I praise and magnify thee now in thy Truth, in thy great Power and Glory, for that thou hast forgiven me my Sins, and filled me with thy Strength. I shout for Joy before thee in my new Life, and extol thee in thy Firmament of Heaven, which none can open but thy Spirit in thy Mercy. My Bones rejoice in thy Strength, and my Heart delighteth itself in thy Love. Thanks be to thee forever, for that thou has delivered me out of Hell, and turned Death into Life in me. O sweet Love! Let me not depart from thee again. Grant me thy Garland of Pearl, and abide in me. O be my own proper Possession, that I may rejoice in thee forever.

Upon this, the Virgin Sophia saith to the Soul,

MY noble Bridegroom, my Strength and Power, thou art a thousand Times welcome. Why hast thou forgotten me so long, that I have been constrained in great Grief to stand without the Door and knock? Have I not always called thee and entreated thee? But thou hast turned away thy Countenance from Me, and thine Ears have declined my Intreaties. Thou couldst not see my Light, for thou didst walk in the Valley of Darkness. I was very near thee, and intreated thee continually, but thy Sinfulness held thee Captive in Death, so that thou knewest me not. I came to thee in great Humility, and called thee, but thou wert rich in the Power of the Anger of God, and didst not regard my Humility and Lowliness. Thou hast taken the Devil to be thy Paramour, who hath defiled thee thus, and built up his Fort of Prey in thee, and turned thee quite away from my Love and Faith into his hypocritical Kingdom of Falsehood; wherein thou hast committed much Sin and Wickedness, and torn thy Will off from my Love. Thou hast broken the Bond of Wedlock, and set thy Love and Affection upon

a Stranger, and suffered me thy Bride, whom God did give thee, to stand alone in the extinguished Substance, without the Power of thy fiery Strength. I could not be joyful without thy fiery Strength, for thou art my Husband; my shining Brightness is made manifest by thee. Thou canst manifest my hidden Wonders in thy fiery Life, and bring them into Majesty; and yet without me thou art but a dark House, wherein is nothing but Anguish, Misery, and horrible Torment.

O noble Bridegroom, stand still with thy Countenance towards Me, and give me thy Rays of Fire. Bring thy Desire into me, and enkindle me thereby, and then I will bring the Rays of my Love, from my Meekness into thy fiery Essence, and be united with thee forever.

O my Bridegroom, how well am I, now that I am in Union with thee! O kiss me with thy Desire in thy Strength and Power, and then I will shew thee all my Beauty, and will rejoice and solace Myself with thy sweet Love and shining Brightness in thy fiery Life. All the holy Angels rejoice with us, to see us united again. My dear Love, I now entreat thee to abide in my Faith, and do not turn thy Face away from me any more. Work thou thy Wonders in my Love, for which Purpose God hath created thee and brought thee into Being.

II.

The Soul saith again to its noble Sophia, its Love, that is born again in it,

O my noble Pearl, and opened Flame of Light in my anxious fiery Life, how thou changest me into thy Joy! O beautiful Love, I have broken my Faith with thee in my Father Adam, and with my fiery Strength have turned myself to the Pleasure and Vanity of the outward World. I have fallen in Love with a Stranger, and would have been constrained to walk in the Valley of Darkness in this strange Love, if thou hadst not come into the House of my Misery, in thy great Faithfulness, by thy piercing through and destroying God's Anger, Hell, and dark Death, and restoring thy Meekness and Love to my fiery Life.

O sweet Love! Thou hast brought the Water of Eternal Life out of the Fountain of God, with thee into me, and refreshed me in my great Thirst. I behold in thee the Mercy of God, which was hidden from me before by the strange Love. In thee I can rejoice; Thou changest my Anguish of Fire into great Joy in me. O amiable Love, give me thy Pearl, that I may continue in this Joy forever.

Upon this then noble Sophia answereth the Soul again, and saith,

MY dear Love and faithful Treasure, thou highly rejoicest me in thy Beginning. I have indeed broken into thee through the deep Gates of God, through God's Anger, through Hell and Death, into the House of thy Misery, and have graciously bestowed my Love upon thee, and delivered thee from the Chains and Bonds wherewith thou wert fast bound. I have kept my Faith with thee, though thou hast not kept thine with me; but thou desireth now an exceeding great Thing of me, which I cannot willingly trust in thy Hands. Thou wouldest have my Pearl as thy proper own. Remember, I pray, O my beloved Bridegroom, that thou didst carelessly lose it before in Adam; and thou thyself standest yet in great Danger, and walkest in two dangerous Kingdoms; for in thy original Fire thou walkest in that Country wherein God calleth himself a strong jealous God, and a consuming Fire. The other Kingdom which thou walkest in, is the outward World, wherein thou dwellest in the vain corrupt Flesh and Blood, and where the Pleasures of the World and Assaults of the Devil beset thee every

Hour. Thou mayest perhaps in thy great Joy bring Earthliness again into my Beauty, and thereby darken my Pearl; or thou mayest possibly grow proud, as Lucifer did, when he had the Pearl in his Possession, and so turn thyself away from the Harmony of God, as he did, and then I must be deprived of my Love forever afterwards.

No. I will keep my Pearl in Myself, and dwell in the Heaven in thee, in thy extinguished, but now in me, revived, Humanity, and reserve my Pearl for Paradise, until thou puttest away this Earthliness from thee, and then I will give it to thee to possess. But I will readily present to thee my pleasant Countenance, and the sweet Rays of the Pearl, during the Time of this Earthly Life. I will dwell with the Pearl itself in the inner Choir, and be thy faithful loving Bride. I cannot espouse myself with thy earthly Flesh, for I am a heavenly Queen, and my Kingdom is not of this World. Yet I will not cast thy outward Life away, but refresh it often with my Rays of Love; for thy outward Humanity shall return again. But I cannot admit to my Embraces the Beast of Vanity, neither did God create it in Adam with a Purpose to have it so gross and earthly. But in Adam thy Desire, through the Power of its strong Lust, formed this bestial Grossness, from and with all the Essences of the awakened Vanity of the earthly Property, wherein Heat and Cold, Pain and Enmity, Division and Corruption subsist.

Now, my dear Love and Bridegroom, do but yield thyself up into my Will; I will not forsake thee in this earthly Life in thy Danger. Though the Anger of God should pass upon thee, so that thou shouldst grow affrighted and disheartened, or shouldst think that I had deserted thee, yet I will be with thee and preserve thee, for thou thyself knowest not what thine Office is. Thou must in this Life's Time work and bear Fruit. Thou art the Root of this Pearl-Tree; Branches must be produced out of thee, which must all be brought forth in Anguish. But I come forth together with thy Branches in their Sap, and produce Fruit upon thy Boughs, and thou knowest it not; for the Most High hath so ordered, that I should dwell with and in thee.

Wrap thyself up therefore in Patience, and take Heed of the Pleasure of the Flesh. Break the Will and Desire thereof; bridle it as an unruly Horse; and then I will often visit thee in the fiery Essence, and give thee my Kiss of Love. I will bring a Garland for thee out of Paradise with me, as a Token of my Affection, and put it upon thee, and thou shalt rejoice in it. But I give thee not my Pearl for a Possession during this Life's Time. Thou must continue in Resignation, and hearken what the Lord playeth on his Instrument in thy Harmony in thee. Moreover, thou must give Sound and Essence to thy Tune, out of my Strength and Virtue, for thou art now a Messenger of his Word, and must set forth his Praise and Glory. For this Cause it is that I have contracted myself a-new with thee, and set my triumphal Garland upon thee; which I have gotten in the Battle against the Devil and Death. But the Crown of Pearl wherewith I crowned thee, I have laid aside for thee. Thou must wear that no more till thou art become pure in my Sight.

III.

The Soul saith further to the noble Sophia,

O thou fair and sweet Consort, what shall I say before thee? Let me be wholly committed unto thee; I cannot preserve myself. If thou wilt not give me thy Pearl, I submit to thy Will; but give me thy Rays of Love, and carry me safely through my Pilgrimage. Do thou awaken and bring forth what thou wilt in me; I will from henceforth be thy own. I will or desire nothing for myself, but what thou thyself wilt through me. I had fooled away thy sweet Love, and broken my Faith with thee, whereby I was fallen into the Anger of God. But seeing that

of Love thou didst come to me into the Anguish of Hell, and hast delivered me from Torment, and received me again for thy Consort, I will now therefore break my Will for thy Love's Sake, and be obedient unto thee, and wait for thy Love. I am satisfied now that I know thou art with me in all my Troubles, and wilt not forsake me.

O Gracious Love, I turn my fiery Countenance to thee. O fair Crown, take me quickly into thee, and bring me forth from Unquietness. I will be thine forever, and never depart from thee more.

The noble Sophia answereth the Soul very comfortably, and saith,

MY noble Bridegroom, be of good Comfort. I have betrothed thee to me in my highest Love, and contracted myself with thee in my Faithfulness. I will be with thee and in thee always to the End of the World. I will come to thee and make my Abode with thee, in thy inner Chamber. Thou shalt drink of my Fountain; for now I am thine, and thou art Mine; the Enemy shall not separate us. Work thou in thy fiery Property, and I will put my Rays of Love into thy Working. And so we will plant and manure the Vineyard of Jesus Christ. Afford thou the Essence of Fire, and I will afford the Essence of Light, and the Increase. Be thou the Fire, and I will be the Water, and thus we will perform that in this World for which God hath appointed us, and serve him in his Temple, which we ourselves are. Amen.

To the R E A D E R.

BELOVED Reader, count not this an uncertain Fiction; it is the true Ground, Sum and Substance of all the Holy Scriptures. For the Book of the Life of Jesus Christ is plainly set forth therein, as the Author of a Certainty knoweth; it being the Way that he himself hath gone. He giveth thee the best Jewel that he hath. God grant his Blessing with it. A heavy Sentence and Judgement are gone forth against the Mocker of this. Be thou therefore warned, that thou mayest avoid the Danger, and obtain the Benefit.

A M O R N I N G P R A Y E R.

Commending ourselves to God when we rise, before we suffer any other Thing to enter into us.

BLESS me, O God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, thou only True God. I thank thee through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, for the Preservation of me, and for all other Benefits. I now commend myself, both Soul and Body, and all that thou hast set me to do in my Employment and Calling, into thy Protection. Be thou the Beginning of my Conceptions, my Undertakings, and all my Doings. Work thou so in me, that I may begin all Things to the Glory of thy Name, and accomplish them in thy Love for the Good and Service of my Neighbour. Send thy holy Angel along with me, to turn the Temptations of the Devil and corrupt Nature away from me. Preserve me from the Malice of evil Men; make all my Enemies reconcilable to me, and bring my Mind into thy Vineyard, that I may labour in my Office and Employment, and behave as thy obedient Servant therein. Bless me, and all that I am to go about and do this Day, with the Blessing of thy Love and Mercy. Continue thy

Grace and Love in Jesus Christ upon me, and give me a Mind cheerfully to follow thy Leading and execute thine Appointment. Let thy holy Spirit guide me in my Beginning, and my Progress, on to my last End, and be the willing, working, and accomplishing of all in me. Amen.

An EVENING PRAYER.

When we have finished our daily Employment, and are going to Rest.

I LIFT my Heart to thee, O God, thou Fountain of Eternal Life, and give thee Thanks through Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour, for having protected and preserved me this Day from all Mischief that might have befallen me. I commend to thy Disposal my Condition and Employment, together with the Work of my Hands, and humbly repose them on thee. So fill my Soul with thy Spirit, that neither the grand Enemy, the Devil, nor any other evil Influence or Desire, may find Harbour therein. Let my Mind only delight in thee in thy Temple, and let thy good Angel stay with me, that I may rest safely in thy Power, and under thy Protection. Amen.

Rev. 21, 6-7: I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give unto him that is a-thirst of the Fountain of the Water of Life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all Things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son.

End of: Jacob Boehme's "Of True Repentance"

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