

385.

**Dein Erbe, Herr**

**Gottfried Arnold (1666–1714)**

1. Dein Erbe, Herr, liegt vor dir hier,  
und will im Blut des Lammes werden  
ein Opfer, das geheiligt dir,  
erkauft sey von der Last der Erden:  
hast du uns nicht von Feindes Hand erlöst?  
wie kommst, daß uns nicht diese Hülffe tröst?

2. Wir waren wie verirrte Schaf,  
die Tod und Höll in sich verschlungen,  
des Feindes Pfeil die Hertzen traf,  
der Schlangen=Gifft hat uns durch drungen:  
der Drache tobt und herrschte in dem Sinn,  
durch Lucifer in Stoltz zu reissen hin.

3. Mit diesen Feinden hatte sich  
das Thier in uns zum Sieg vereinet,  
die Hölle hat uns durstiglich  
zu halten immerdar vermeynet,  
da lagen wir, erkanten uns selbst nicht  
noch die Gefahr, verdüstert ohne Licht.

4. Nun offenbar dich, Jesu, bald,  
in uns des Vatters Werck zu enden,  
daß du in armer Knechts=Gestalt  
des Feindes Kercker mögest wenden,  
bestraf, zertritt, zerknirsch und treib ihn aus,  
befreye gantz von ihm dein Tempel=Haus.

5. Ach! Herr des Lebens, äussre dich  
mit voller Stärke in den Deinen,  
die Tag und Nacht schreyen ängstiglich,  
bis du, als Retter, wirst erscheinen;  
wir halten an, bis daß dein Ja=Wort kommt,  
den gantzen Sieg und Durchbruch uns bestimmt.

6. Schau, wie so viel die Schlang anläuft  
mit ihren trüglich=glaten Worten,  
wie oft sie die Bestürmung häufft,  
und manches schon ist mächtig worden;  
laß dein Gericht nun über sie fort gehn,  
daß sie sich gantz muß ausgestossen sehn.

7. O daß wir unser Leben nicht

**Translation by Jeff Bach**

**Your Heir, Lord**

1. Your heir, Lord, lies here before you, and in the  
blood of the Lamb<sup>1</sup> wants to become a sacrifice  
that hallows you, and to be purchased from the  
burden of the world. Have you not redeemed us  
from the hand of the enemy? How is it that this  
help does not comfort us?

2. We were like straying sheep that death and hell  
had consumed; the enemy's arrow struck the  
hearts, the poison of the serpent permeated us. The  
dragon raged and reigned with a mind to snatch us  
away through Lucifer in pride.

3. The beast within us had united with these  
enemies for victory. Thirstily, hell intended to  
hold us forever. There we lay, not recognizing  
ourselves, nor the danger, darkened without light.

4. Now reveal yourself soon, Jesus, to complete  
the Father's work in us, so that in the form of a  
poor servant you may turn against the dungeon of  
the enemy. Punish, trample, crush, and drive him  
out; free your Temple completely from him.

5. Ah! Lord of life, manifest yourself with full  
strength in your people, who cry out anxiously  
day and night, until you will appear as a rescuer.  
We hold on, until your word of "Yes" comes to  
settle the complete victory and breakthrough for  
us.

6. Look! How so many people run to the serpent  
with its deceivingly smooth words, and how often  
it increases the assaults, some of which have  
already become powerful. Let your judgment now  
go forth over it [the serpent], so that it must see  
itself as completely cast out.

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<sup>1</sup> Lamb, meaning Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, according to John 1:29.

lieb hätten, auch bis in das Sterben!  
O daß der Kampf bald wär verricht  
im Blut des Lamms von seinen Erben!  
Du Herzog, führ doch aus den schweren Krieg,  
wir glauben, daß in dir nichts ist als Sieg.

8. Nun müsse Heil und Macht  
und Kraft dir, Gott, und deinem Christus werden,  
der den aus deinen Himmeln schafft,  
so uns, und deiner Weide Heerden,  
verklagt vor dir; Herr, räche deine Freund,  
die dir den Ruhm zu geben sind gemeynt.

9. Halt uns in Enge, bis uns mag  
die Tauff im Geist und Feur durchziehen:  
der blutge Kampf das Leben wag,  
gantz aus der Eigenheit zu fliehen,  
zu stehn vor dir entblößt, rein, arm und frey,  
daß nichts dem Feind da zu betasten sey.

10. So gehn wir durch die enge Thür,  
die du vor uns wollst offen geben,  
zu dringen mit Gewalt zu dir,  
geniessend das Erlösungs-Leben,  
so uns bey Gott ins Heilighumes Stadt  
Melchisedech im Blut erfunden hat.

11. Ja! Amen! Jesu, treuer Zeug,  
wer dürst, der glaubt, wer glaubt, der nimmet,

7. Oh, if only we did not love our own lives, even  
unto death! Oh, that the battle might be  
accomplished in the blood of the Lamb by His  
heirs! Oh, Ruler,<sup>2</sup> lead us out of the heavy  
warfare, for we believe that in you is nothing but  
victory.

8. Now must salvation, power and strength be  
unto you, God, and to your Christ, He who from  
your heavens makes us and the flocks of your  
pasture, [who are] pleading to you: Lord, avenge  
your friends,<sup>3</sup> who are intended to give you  
acclaim.

9. Hold us in the narrow way, until the baptism in  
Spirit and fire permeates through us: a bloody  
struggle that risks life in order to flee completely  
out of self,<sup>4</sup> so that we may stand before you  
naked, poor, and free, so that there is nothing for  
the enemy to touch.

10. So we enter through the narrow gate,<sup>5</sup> which  
you want to open before us. We press on to you  
with force, enjoying the life of redemption, so that  
we may be with God in the holy place in the city  
of Melchizedek, which God established in blood.<sup>6</sup>

11. Yes! Amen! Jesus, faithful witness, whoever  
thirsts, let that one believe; whoever believes, let

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<sup>2</sup> Literally, “You, duke” (*Du Herzog*). The word “you” is the singular, familiar / informal “you,” used to address God and Jesus Christ in prayer. The term “duke” is used as a noble title addressed to Jesus, somewhat analogous to “Lord” or “King.”

<sup>3</sup> “Freund” would seem to be singular here, but the possessive adjective preceding it (“deine”) is plural, making clear that “Freund” is here a truncated form of “Freunde” (the plural of “Freund”). The final “e” from “Freunde” was dropped to sustain the poetic meter of the stanza. A plural relative pronoun and verb are used in the following clause, reinforcing the reality that the plural “Freunde” is intended.

<sup>4</sup> The petition of this stanza is for Christ to complete the baptism in the Spirit and in fire so that believers will risk the struggle to disengage completely from self. Those who renounce self exist in the spiritual presence of Christ as if they are naked, poor and free. They possess nothing that the devil (the enemy) might try to take from them and thus weaken their faith.

<sup>5</sup> *Thür*, literally a door. The phrase alludes to Jesus’ directive to his disciples to “enter by the narrow gate” in Matthew 7:13.

<sup>6</sup> Arnold alludes to the concept of a spiritual priesthood of Melchizedek, a common concept among Radical Pietists at the end of the seventeenth century and in the early eighteenth century. The concept derived from the writings of Jacob Böhme as a kind of alternative spiritual priesthood to the clergy of the established churches, whom Böhme considered corrupt. Pietists such as Arnold employed this same concept. The believers in the priesthood of Melchizedek offered prayers for others as a spiritual sacrifice, much like the ancient Hebrew priests offered intercessory prayer in the temple in Jerusalem.

wer nimmt, der hat das Freuden=Reich,  
weil die geschmückte Lampe glimmt:  
so gehn wir ein ins Bräutigams Hochzeit=Haus,  
da ist die Lieb, die theilt nur Liebe aus.

12. Noch eins, Herr, bitten wir von dir,  
daß wenn der Sieg ist aus gebohren,  
der Arg uns nicht mehr berühr,  
und ewig hab sein recht verlohren:  
nach solchem Sieg soll dein Volck williglich  
im heiligen Schmuck dir opffern ewiglich.

that one take,<sup>7</sup> and the one who takes has the  
kingdom of joy, because the trimmed lamp  
glimmers.<sup>8</sup> So we enter into the bridegroom's  
wedding-house, for there is the love which alone  
distributes love.

12. One more thing, Lord, we ask of you, that  
when the victory is born, evil will no more move  
us and will have lost its authority eternally. After  
such a victory your people shall willingly offer  
sacrifices in holy adornment to you eternally.

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<sup>7</sup> The preceding phrases allude to Revelation 22:17, which is an invitation for the thirsty to take the water of life.

<sup>8</sup> The references to trimmed lamps and entering the wedding house are allusions to the parable of ten bridesmaids in Matthew 25. Five of the bridesmaids had no extra oil for their lamps, which went out because the bridegroom was delayed in arriving for his wedding. The other five bridesmaids brought extra oil so that their lamps were burning when the groom arrived. They entered the wedding hall while the others went to buy oil. Radical Pietists and the Ephrata community interpreted the parable as an exhortation to prepare for Christ's return.