

THE BREAKING CRUCIBLE: AND OTHER TRANSLATIONS OF GERMAN HYMNS

by James Waddell Alexander

A collection of spiritually rich verses and hymns for worship and reflection.

8 Chapters

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The Breaking Crucible: and Other Translations of German Hymns

THE — James W. Alexander

Breaking Crucible;

AND OTHER

TRANSLATIONS OF GERMAN HYMNS.

BY

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The Breaking Crucible;

AND OTHER

TRANSLATIONS OF GERMAN HYMNS.

"Endlich bricht der heisse Tiegel."

BY F. HARTMANN.

F. Hartmann

James W. Alexander

1 Now the crucible is breaking;

Now my faith its seal is taking;

Molten gold, unhurt by fire,

Only thus, 'tis ever given,

Up to joys of highest heaven,

For God's children to aspire.

2 Thus by griefs the Lord is moulding

Mind and spirit, here unfolding

His own image, to endure.

Now he shapes our dust, but later

Is the inner man's creator;

Thus he works by trial sure.

3 Sorrows quell our insurrection,

Bring our members to subjection,

Under Christ's prevailing will;

While the broken powers he raises

To the work of holy praises

Quietly and softly still.

4 Sorrows gather home the senses,

Lest, seduced by earth's pretenses,

They should after idols stroll,

Like an angel-guard, repelling

Evil from the inmost dwelling,

Bringing order to the soul.

5 Sorrow now the harp is stringing

For the everlasting singing,

Teaching us to soar above;

Where the blessed choir, palm-bearing,

Harps are playing, crowns are wearing,

Round the throne with songs of love.

6 Sorrow makes alert and daring;

Sorrow is our clay preparing

For the cold rest of the grave;

Sorrow is a herald, hasting,

Of that springtide whose unwasting

Health the dying soul shall save.

7 Sorrow makes our faith abiding,

Lowly, childlike, and confiding;

Sorrow! who can speak thy grace?

Earth may name the tribulation,

Heaven has nobler appellation;

Not thus honored all our race.

8 Brethren these our perturbations,

Step by step, through many stations,

Lead disciples to their sun.

Soon, though many a pang has wasted,

Soon, though many a death been tasted,

Sorrow's watch of sighs is done.

9 Though the healthful powers were willing,

All the Master's will fulfilling

By obedience to be tried,

Oh! 'tis still no less a blessing,

Such a Master's care possessing,
In his furnace to abide.
10 In the depth of keenest anguish,
More and more the heart shall languish
After Jesus' loving heart,
For one blessing only crying:
"Make me like thee in thy dying,
Then thy endless life impart."
11 Till at length, with sighs all breaking,
Through each bond its passage taking,
Lo! the vail is rent in twain!
Who remembers now earth's treasure?
What a sea of godlike pleasure
High in heaven swells amain!
12 Now, with Jesus ever reigning,
Where the ransomed home are gaining,
Bathing in the endless light.
All the heavenly ones are meeting!
Brothers, sisters--let us, greeting,
Claim them ours, by kindred right.
13 Jesus! toward that height of heaven
May a prospect clear be given,
Till the parting hour shall come.
Then, from pangs emerging brightly,
May we all be wafted lightly
By angelic convoy home!

"O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden."

A Passion Hymn by Paul Gerhardt.

Paul Gerhardt

James W. Alexander

1 O sacred head! now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, thy only crown;
O sacred Head! what glory,
What bliss, till now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call thee mine.

2 O noblest brow, and dearest!
In other days the world
All feared, when thou appeared'st,
What shame on thee is hurled!
How art thou pale with anguish,
With sore abuse and scorn;
How does that visage languish,
Which once was bright as morn.

3 The blushes late residing
Upon that holy cheek,
The roses once abiding
Upon those lips so meek,
Alas! they have departed;
Wan Death has rifled all!
For weak and broken-hearted,

I see thy body fall.

4 What thou, my Lord, hast suffered,

Was all for sinners' gain:

Mine, mine was the transgression,

But thine the deadly pain.

Lo! here I fall, my Saviour,

'Tis I deserve thy place;

Look on me with thy favor,

Vouchsafe to me thy grace.

5 Receive me, my Redeemer,

My Shepherd, make me thine;

Of every good the fountain,

Thou art the spring of mine.

Thy lips with love distilling,

And milk of truth sincere,

With heaven's bliss are filling

The soul that trembles here.

6 Beside thee, Lord, I've taken

My place--forbid me not!

Hence will I ne'er be shaken,

Though thou to death be brought.

If pain's last paleness hold thee,

In agony opprest,

Then, then will I enfold thee

Within this arm and breast!

7 The joy can ne'er be spoken,

Above all joys beside.

When in thy body broken

I thus with safety hide.

My Lord of life, desiring

Thy glory now to see.

Beside the cross expiring,

I'd breathe my soul to thee.

8 What language shall I borrow

To thank thee, dearest Friend,

For this, thy dying sorrow,

Thy pity without end?

Oh! make me thine forever,

And should I fainting be,

Lord let me never, never

Outlive my love to thee.

9 And when I am departing,

Oh! part not thou from me;

When mortal pangs are darting,

Come, Lord, and set me free;

And when my heart must languish

Amidst the final throe,

Release me from mine anguish

By thine own pain and wo!

10 Be near me when I am dying,

Oh! show thy cross to me;

And for my succor flying,

Come, Lord, and set me free!

These eyes new faith receiving.

From Jesus shall not move,

For he who dies believing,

Dies safely through thy love.

"Wie soll ich Dich empfangen."

An Advent Hymn by Paul Gerhardt.

Paul Gerhardt

James W. Alexander

1 Lord, how shall I be meeting,

And how shall I embrace

Thee, earth's desire, when greeting

My soul's adorning grace!

O Jesus, Jesus holding

Thyself the flame in sight,

Show how, thy beam beholding,

I may, my Lord, delight.

2 Fresh palms thy Zion streweth,

And branches ever green,

And psalms my voice reneweth,

To raise my joy serene.

Such budding tribute paying,

My heart shall hymn thy praise,

Thy holy name obeying

With chiefest of my lays.

3 What hast thou left ungranted,

To give me glad relief?

When soul and body panted

In utmost depth of grief,

In hour of degradation,

Thy peace and pity smiled,

Then thou, my soul's salvation,

Didst happy make thy child.

4 I lay in slavish mourning,

Thou cam'st to set me free;

I sank in shame and scorning,

Thou cam'st to comfort me.

Thou raised'st me to glory,

Bestowing highest good,

Not frail and transitory,

Like wealth on earth pursued.

5 Naught, naught did send thee speeding

From mansions of the skies,

But love all love exceeding,

Love able to comprise

A world in pangs despairing,

Weighed down with thousand woes

That tongue would fail declaring,

But love doth last inclose.

6 Grave on your heart this writing,

O band of mourners poor!

With pains and sorrows fighting,

That throng you more and more;

Dismiss the fear that sickens,

For lo! beside you see

Him who your heart now quickens

And comforts; here is he.

7 Why should you be detained

In trouble day and night,

As though he must be gained

By arm of human might?

He comes, he comes all willing,
All full of grace and love.
Those woes and troubles stilling,
Well known to him above.
8 Nor need ye tremble over
The guilt that gives distress.
No! Jesus all will cover
With grace and righteousness:
He comes, he comes, procuring
The peace of sin forgiven,
To all God's sons securing
Their part and lot in heaven.
9 Why heed ye then the crying
Of crafty foemen nigh?
Your Lord shall send them flying
In twinkling of an eye.
He comes, he comes, forever
A King, and earth's fell band
Shall prove in the endeavor
Too feeble to withstand.
10 He comes to judge the nations,
"Wroth if they wrathful prove,
With sweet illuminations
To those who seek and love.
Come, come, O Sun eternal,
And all our souls convey
To endless bliss supernal,
In yonder court of day.

"Geh aus, mein Herz, und suche Freud."

A Summer Hymn by Paul Gerhardt.

Paul Gerhardt

James W. Alexander

1 Go forth, my heart, and seek for praise

On these delightful summer days,

In what thy God bestows.

How rich the garden's beauties be,

How lavishly for me and thee

It doth its charms disclose.

2 The forest stands in leafy pride,

The earth is veiled on every side

With garb of freshest green!

The tulip and narcissus here

More wondrous in their pomp appear

Than Solomon was seen.

3 The lark floats high before the breeze,

The dove toward the forest-trees

From covert speeds along;

The song-enriched nightingale,

In ecstasy, fills hill and dale

And mount and plain with song.

4 The hen her tiny flock enfolds;

The stork his dwelling builds and holds;

The swallow feeds her brood;

The lightsome stag, the bounding roe,

Skiping from upland refuge go

To depths of grassy food.

5 The brawling brook adown the plain

Lines its fair margin fresh again

With myrtle-shadows deep.

The meadows green relieve the eye

And echo with the gladsome cry

Of shepherds and their sheep.

6 The never-weary tribe of bees,

Now here, now there in blossoming trees,

Find booty far and near;

The sturdy juices of the vine,

For sweetness and for strength combine,

The pilgrim's toil to cheer.

7 The wheat lifts rank its ears of gold

To fill with joy both young and old,

Who learn the name to praise

Of Him who doth incessant pour

From heavenly love a matchless store

Upon our sinful race.

8 And shall I, can I dumb remain?

No, every power shall sing again

To God, who loves us best.

Come, let me sing; all nature sings,

And all within me tribute brings,

Streaming from out my breast.

9 Methinks, if here thou art so fair,

And sufferest a love so rare

To poor earth's sons be given,

What gladness shall hereafter rise

In rich pavilion of the skies,
And golden tower of heaven!
10 What lofty pleasure, glory bright,
In Jesus' garden shall delight!
How shall the chorus ring,
When thousand thousand seraphim
With one consenting voice and hymn
Their Alleluia sing!
11 Oh! were I there. Oh! that, thine own,
I stood, dear God, before thy throne,
Bearing the victor's palm!
There would I, like the angel-choir,
Still sound thy worthy praises higher,
With many a glorious psalm.
12 But while I bear life's burdens still,
With cheerful mind and voice I will
No longer hide thy grace:
My heart shall ever more and more
Thy goodness and thy love adore,
Here and in every place.
13 Help now, and on my spirit pour
Thy heavenly blessing evermore,
That, like a flower, to thee
I may, through summer of thy grace,
In my soul's garden all my days
The holy fruitage bear.
14 Choose me to bloom in Paradise,
And, till in death I close my eyes,
Let soul and body thrive;

Being to thee and to thy praise,
To thee alone, my lifelong days,
In earth and heaven, alive.

"Ich lass Dich nicht, Du muszt mein Jesus bleiben."

A Jesus Hymn by W. C. Dessler.

W. C. Dessler

James W. Alexander

1 I leave thee not, thou art my Jesus ever,

Though earth rebel,

And death and hell

Would, from its steadfast hold, my faith dissever;

Ah! no. I ever will

Cling to my Helper still,

Hear what my love is taught,

Thou art my Jesus ever,

I leave thee not, I leave thee not!

2 I leave thee not, O Love, of love the highest,

Though doubt display

Its battle-day;

I own the power which thou my Lord appliest,

Thou didst bear guilt and woe;

Shall I to torment go

When into judgment brought?

O Love, of love the highest,

I leave thee not, I leave thee not.

3 I leave thee not, O thou who sweetly cheerest,

Whose fresh supplies

Cause strength to rise,

Just in the hour when faith's decay is nearest.

If sickness chill the soul,

And nights of languor roll,
My heart one hope hath caught,
O thou who sweetly cheerest,
I leave thee not, I leave thee not.
4 I leave thee not, thou help in tribulation;
By stroke on stroke,
Though almost broke,
I hope, when all seems near to desolation.
Do what thou wilt with me,
I still must cling to thee;
Thy grace I have besought,
Thou help in tribulation,
I leave thee not, I leave thee not.
5 I leave thee not, shall I forsake salvation?
No, Jesus, no!
Thou shalt not go;
Mine still thou art, to free from condemnation.
After this fleeting night,
Thy presence brings me light,
"Whose ray my soul hath sought;
Shall I forsake salvation?
I leave thee not, I leave thee not.
6 I leave thee not, thy word my way shall brighten.
With thee I go
Through weal and woe,
Thy precept wise shall every burden lighten.
My Lord, on thee, I hang,
Nor heed the journey's pang,
Though thorny be my lot.

Let but thy word enlighten,
I leave thee not, I leave thee not.
7 I leave thee not, even in the lap of pleasure,
For when I stray
Without thy ray,
My richest joy must cease to be a treasure.
I shudder at the glee,
When no delight from thee
Has heartfelt peace begot;
Even in the lap of pleasure,
I leave thee not, I leave thee not.
8 I leave thee not, my God, my Lord, my Heaven,
Nor death shall rend
From thee, my Friend,
Who for my soul thyself to death hast given.
For thou didst die for me,
And love goes back to thee:
My God, my Life, my Heaven,
I leave thee not, I leave thee not.

A Christian Sonnet — Transcriber's Notes

From the French of Des Barreaux.

Des Barreaux

James W. Alexander

Great God! Thy judgments endless right disclose,

Grace for the sinner thou dost still devise;

But I have sinned so much, that goodness knows

No way to pardon, unless justice dies.

Yes, O my God! sins that so vastly rise,

Leave to thy greatness but the choice of woes,

Thy throne's high interest my bliss denies,

And mercy's self stands watching for my throes.

Sate thy revenge, for this thy glory cries,

Scorn thou the tears which overflow mine eyes,

Launch lightnings, 'tis high time, I war invoke,

And, doomed, I worship, sinking in the flood;

Yet on what spot shall fall thy thunderstroke,

Not wholly covered with my Saviour's blood?

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