

THE LIFE OF *JACOB BEHMEN*,  
The Teutonic Theosopher.  
By George Ward and Thomas Langcake, Editors,  
*The Works of Jacob Behmen 1764*, volume 1  
Transcribed by Wayne Kraus for  
[Jacob Boehme Online](#)

WHOEVER have made their Appearance in the World in a truly godlike Form, and only in a pure spiritual Ministration, it has had the greatest Antipathy and Aversion to them that can possibly be conceived. And in the whole Creation, there are not two Forms of Beings more intirely contrary to each other.

It is very true, that *Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David*, and Others, came forth in this Life in much Applause, but had withal a Delegation to the temporal Magistracy, wherein by God's good Power they led the People through many Difficulties, made them victorious, and gave them Possessions, and Reputation among the Nations round them; all which allayed and lessened the Hatred, which the divine Form in which they lived necessarily produces.

And yet, notwithstanding, some of them had died under the People's Hands, had not God entrusted with them, upon desperate Mutinies, miraculous Operations, beyond the Power of ordinary Men, to put a stop to the heady Rage of the Multitude.

But as for those, whom in these last Ages he has sent with this plain uncouth Message to Mankind, to injoin them to strive with Earnestness, telling them they shall have Heaven, a Joy, a Paradise, a Territory, a Dominion; but that all this is in themselves, the Territory is themselves, that it is in the Devil's Possession, there he rules, and lives; that with him they must encounter, and cast him forth, else their expected Heaven will turn into a Hell; these are dismal Messengers of odious Things, especially

to those, that in their several Forms of Religion have been promised eternal Happiness at a far cheaper Rate.

We may appeal to the World, whether these Messengers of evil Tidings do not well deserve to be crucified, and the Doctrines of INDULGENCE and IMPUTATION restored to their ancient Dignity.

There is a small Market-Town in the *Upper Lusatia*, called *Old Seidenberg*, distant from *Görlitz* about a Mile and half, in which lived a Man whose Name was *Jacob*, and his Wife's Name was *Ursula*. People they were of the poorest Sort, yet of sober and honest Behaviour. In the Year 1575 they had a Son, whom they named *Jacob*. This was the divinely-illuminated *Jacob Behmen*, the Teutonic Theosopher, whom God raised up, in the most proper Period, both as to the Chiliad and Century, to show the Ground of the Mystery of Nature and Grace, and open the Wonders of his Wisdom. His Education was suitable to their Wealth, his first Employment being the Care of the common Cattle among the rest of the Youths of the Town. But when grown older, he was placed at School, where he learnt to read and write, and was from thence put Apprentice to a Shoemaker in *Görlitz*. Having served his Time, in the Year 1594 he took to Wife *Catharine*, the Daughter of John Hunshman, a Citizen of *Görlitz*, and had by her four Sons, living in the State of Matrimony thirty Years: His Sons he placed in his Life-time to several honest Trades. He fell sick in *Silesia* of a hot burning Ague, contracted by too much drinking of Water, and was at his Desire brought to *Görlitz*, and died there in 1624, being near fifty years of Age, and was buried in the Churchyard.

As in Men that have appeared to the World with great and superior Accomplishments, to promote some great Design beyond the Powers of Nature, it has pleased God to usher them in with some signal Dispensations, to direct the Eye of the World to observe his Work; so in this Instance of *Jacob Behmen*, not only a new Star mystically appeared some Time before his Birth, but when he was a Herd's Boy he had a most remarkable Trial, and providential Preservation and Prevention. For in the Heat of Mid-Day, retiring from his Playfellows to a little stony Crag just by, called the *Land's Crown*, where the natural Situation of the Rock had made a seeming Inclosure of some Part of the Mountain, finding an Entrance, he

went in, and saw there a large wooden Vessel full of Money, at which Sight, being in a sudden Astonishment, he in Haste retired, not moving his Hand to it, and came and related his Fortune to the rest of the Boys, who coming with him, sought often and with much Diligence an Entrance, but could not find any. But some Years after, a foreign Artist, as *Jacob Behmen* himself related, skilled in finding out magical Treasures, took it away, and thereby much enriched himself, yet perished by an infamous Death, that Treasure being lodged there, and covered with a Curse to him that should find and take it away.

Truly, this appears to have been a Seduction of this tender Youth into this Cave of *Pluto*, and to have had a destructive Design in it. Our Saviour had the World and the Glory of it offered to Himself, but the Condition was intolerable.

When he had been for a Time an Apprentice, his Master and his Mistress being abroad, there came a Stranger to the Shop, of a reverend and grave Countenance, yet in mean Apparel, and taking up a Pair of Shoes, desired to buy them. The Boy, being scarce got higher than sweeping the Shop, would not presume to set a Price on them, but told him his Master and Mistress were not at Home, and himself durst not venture the Sale of any Thing without their Order.

But the Stranger being very importunate, he offered them at a Price, which if he got, he was certain would save him harmless in parting from them, supposing also thereby to be rid of the importunate Chapman. But the old Man paid down the Money, took the Shoes, and departed from the Shop a little Way, where standing still, with a loud and an earnest Voice, he called, *Jacob, Jacob, come forth*. The Boy, within hearing of the Voice, came out in a great Fright, at first amazed at the Stranger's familiar calling him by his Christian Name, but recollecting himself, he went to him. The Man with a severe, but friendly Countenance, fixing his Eyes upon him (which were bright and sparkling) took him by his right Hand, and said to him: *Jacob, thou art little, but shalt be great, and become another Man, such a one as at whom the World shall wonder. Therefore be pious, fear God, and reverence his Word. Read diligently the Holy Scriptures, wherein you have Comfort and Instruction. For thou must endure much Misery and Poverty, and suffer Persecution, but be*

*courageous and persevere, for God loves, and is gracious to thee.* And therewith pressing his Hand, he looked with a bright sparkling Eye fixed on his Face, and departed.

This Prediction took deep Impression on Jacob's Mind, and made him bethink himself, and grow serious in his Actions, keeping his Thoughts stirring in Consideration of the Caution he had received from that Man.

So that from thenceforward he much more frequented the public Worship, and profited well therein in the outward Reformation of his Life; seriously considering with himself that Speech of our Saviour, *Luke 11: 13, My Father which is in Heaven will give the Spirit to him that asks him,* he was thereby thoroughly awakened in himself, and set forward to desire that promised Comforter; and continuing in that Earnestness, he was at last, in his own Expression, *surrounded with a divine Light for seven Days, and stood in the highest Contemplation and Kingdom of Joys.* And this happened to him, whilst he was with his Master in the Country about the Affairs of his Vocation.

When the Vision and Revelation were passed by him, he grew more and more accurately attentive to his Duty to God and his Neighbour, diligently frequented the Church, read the Scriptures, and lived in all Observance of outward Ministrations. Scurrilous and blasphemous Words he would rebuke, even in his own Master, who was somewhat intemperate in his Tongue; and from Day to Day continuing upon his Watch, he endeavoured after the Christian Growth, becoming, by his Contrariety of Manners, a Scorn and Derision to the World. And at last his own Master, being not able to bear a Reprover so near Home in that Relation, set him at Liberty, with full Permission to seek his Livelihood as he liked best.

After this, about the Year 1600, in the twenty-fifth Year of his Age, he was again surrounded by the divine Light, and replenished with the heavenly Knowledge; insomuch, as going abroad into the Fields, to a Green before *Neys-Gate* at Görlitz, he there sat down, and viewing the Herbs and Grass of the Field, in his inward Light he saw into their Essences, Use and Properties, which were discovered to him by their Lineaments, Figures, and Signatures.

In like Manner he beheld the whole Creation, and from that Fountain of Revelation he afterwards wrote his Book, *De Signatura Rerum*. In the unfolding of those Mysteries before his Understanding, he had a great Measure of Joy, yet returned Home and took Care of his Family, and lived in great Peace and Silence, scarce intimating to any these wonderful Things that had befallen him, till in the Year 1610, being again taken into this Light, left the Mysteries revealed to him should pass through him as a Stream, and rather for a Memorial, than intending any Publication, he wrote his first Book, called *Aurora*, or *The Morning-Redness*.

The Book being found about him by a Man of great Quality, with whom he conversed, was received with that Desire, that he immediately disjoined it, and caused it to be copied out in a few Hours.

Thus, contrary to the Author's Intention, it became public, and after a while, fell into the Hands of *Gregory Richter*, the Superintendent of *Görlitz*, who making Use of his Pulpit, and the Liberty he had of speaking without an Opposer, to revile what and whom he pleased, he endeavoured to stir up the Magistracy, to exercise their Jurisdiction in rooting out this supposed Church-Weed.

And this he did with so much Vehemence, and Pretence of godly Zeal, that the Senate took some Notice of it, and convened *Jacob Behmen* before them, seizing his Book, and admonishing him to employ his Mind in the Affairs of his Trade, and for the Future leave off writing any more Books, which he saw gave so much Offence.

This Occasion brought this Man first into public Notice, for at the Hearing of the Business, such was the unchristian Heat and Violence of the Minister, and so much the Meekness of *Jacob Behmen*, that it gave great Advantage to his Reputation, and Credit to that inward School, from whence he came out so well taught.

This very Book, which the Senate had seized on, was by themselves afterwards presented to the Prince Elector of *Saxony's* Marshal of his House, *George Phlugen*, in 1641, when he came to *Görlitz*, being brought to Light by

*D. P. S.* a Burgomaster of *Görlitz*; and it was sent by the Marshal to *Amsterdam*, where it was printed.

Upon the Command of the Senate, he refrained from writing seven Years, at the End of which, a new Motion from on high seizing on him, and taking captive these rational human Prohibitions, he wrote again; out of what Principle, and how moved, his own Words can best express.

"Art," says he, "has not wrote here, neither was there any Time to consider how to set it punctually down, according to the right Understanding of the Letters, but all was ordered according to the Direction of the Spirit, which often went in Haste; so that in many Words, Letters may be wanting, and in some Places a Capital Letter for a Word; so that the Penman's Hand, by reason he was not accustomed to it, did often shake. And though I could have wrote in a more accurate, fair, and plain Manner, yet the Reason was this, that the burning Fire often forced forward with Speed, and the Hand and Pen must hasten directly after it; for it comes and goes as a sudden Shower." And further he says, "I can write nothing of myself, but as a Child which neither knows nor understands any Thing, which neither has never been learnt, but only that which the Lord vouchsafes to know in me, according to the Measure as himself manifests in me.

"For I never desired to know any Thing of the Divine Mystery, much less understood I the Way to seek and find it. I knew nothing of it, as it is the Condition of poor Laymen in their Simplicity.

"I sought only after the Heart of Jesus Christ, that I might hide myself therein from the wrathful Anger of God, and the violent Assaults of the Devil. And I besought the Lord earnestly for his Holy Spirit and his Grace, that he would please to bless and guide me in him, and take that away from me which turned me from him; and I resigned myself wholly to him, that I might not live to my own Will, but his; and that he only might lead and direct me, to the End I might be his Child in his Son Jesus.

"In this my earnest and Christian Seeking and Desire (wherein I suffered

many a shrewd Repulse, but at last resolved rather to put myself in Hazard, than give over and leave off) the Gate was opened to me, that in one Quarter of an Hour I saw and knew more, than if I had been many Years together at an University, at which I exceedingly admired, and thereupon turned my Praise to God for it.

"For I saw and knew the Being of all Beings, the Byss and the Abyss, and the eternal Generation of the Holy Trinity, the Descent and Original of the World, and of all Creatures through the Divine Wisdom: I knew and saw in myself all the three Worlds, namely, *The Divine*, angelical, and paradisaical; and *The dark World*, the Original of the Nature to the Fire; and then, thirdly, the *external* and *visible* World, being a Procreation or external Birth from both the internal and spiritual Worlds. And I saw and knew the whole working Essence, in the Evil and the Good, and the Original and Existence of each of them; and likewise how the fruitful-bearing Womb of Eternity brought forth.

"So that I did not only greatly wonder at it, but did also exceedingly rejoice, and presently it came powerfully into my Mind to set the same down in Writing, for a Memorial for myself, though I could very hardly apprehend the same, in my external Man, and express it with the Pen.

"Yet however I must begin to labour in these great Mysteries, as a Child that goes to School. I saw it as in a great Deep in the Internal.

"For I had a thorough View of the Universe, as in a Chaos, wherein all Things are couched and wrapped up, but it was Impossible for me to explain the same.

"Yet it opened itself in me, from Time to Time, as in a young Plant; though the same was with me for the Space of twelve Years, and it was as it were breeding, and I sound a powerful Instigation within me, before I could bring it forth into external Form of Writing; and whatever I could apprehend with the external Principle of my Mind, that I wrote down.

"But however afterwards the Sun shone upon me a good While, but not constantly, for the Sun hid itself, and then I knew not, nor well understood

my own Labour. So that Man must acknowledge, that his Knowledge is not his own, but from God, who manifests the Ideas of Wisdom to the Soul of Man, in what Measure he pleases." See further relating to this Point, what is contained in this Volume, *Aurora*, Chap. 19. ver. 4 – 16. Chap. 25, ver. 4 – 10. Chap. 11. ver. 135, 136. Chap. 12. ver. 146 – 151. Chap. 14. ver. 55 – 58. Chap. 18. ver. 93. Chap. 21, ver. 69 – 71. Chap. 22. ver. 38; *The Three Principles*, Chap. 10. ver. 1. Chap. 24. ver. 16. Chap. 2. ver. 4 – 6. Chap. 22. ver. 50. Many other Places might be referred to in his Writings, but these are sufficient.

In this Light, and from this Principle, he wrote his Books, a Catalogue of which is at the End of the Life.

His Persecution, which was begun by the Primate of *Görlitz*, his principal Persecutor, is thus related.

This Minister had lent a young Baker a Dollar, to buy a little Meal, to make Cakes against the Holidays, out of which he brought him a pretty large one for a Thank-offering. And having within a Fortnight sold off his Batch, he restores him presently his Money with Thanks, not imagining an Expectation of any further Interest for so short a Loan. But this it seems Satisfied him not, the Minister in high Rage curses the Man, with little less than Damnation to his Soul; upon which he, despairing of his Salvation, falls into a deep Melancholy, and being almost distracted, his Wife gets her Kinsman, *Jacob Behmen*, to come and confer with him; who having heard the Cause of his Distemper, and comforted him, repairs to the angry Clergyman, expresses with all Submission the young Man's Error, if he had through Ignorance of his Pleasure committed any, offers him, if he desired it, the utmost Satisfaction, and upon these Terms intreats his Favour to the perplexed Soul.

But the Minister turning his Choler upon the Intercessor, demands angrily, What had he to do to trouble him? And bids him get him gone about his own Business, or he would send him away with a Vengeance. So seeing no Hopes of appealing him, he prays to God to keep his Worship, and was going to depart; but before he was got out of the Door, the furious Prelate enraged yet more at his mild Salutation, throws his Slipper at him, calling



him wicked Rascal, disdainning a good Night from his Mouth. The humble Man, nothing moved at it, takes up the Slipper, and lays it at his Feet, intreats him not to be angry, says that he knew not how he had wronged him, prays God to have him in his keeping, and so departs.

The Superintendent's Choler does not yet cease boiling; the next Sunday he rails bitterly in the Pulpit against *Jacob Behmen*, even by Name, thunders against the Senate for tolerating such a pernicious Heretic, and sworn Enemy of the ministerial Function, who not content to write blasphemous Books, and pervert Souls, durst presume to come and disturb the Minister in his own House; and tells them, that if they longer suffered, and did not expel him [from] their Territories, they would move God in his Wrath to sink their City, as he did those Withstanders of *Moses* and *Aaron*, the rebellious *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, with their Accomplices.

The innocent Man, all the While he was thus bitterly railed against, sat just at a Pillar directly over-against the Pulpit, heard all with Patience, and staid in the Church till all were gone out, and the Superintendent among the last; he followed him into the Church-yard, and there told him he was grieved to hear himself so publickly, and as he thought without Cause, defamed, yet requested that rather than proceed in that Way of public Reproach, he would there before his reverend Chaplain, that accompanied him, let him privately know his Offence and it should be amended. The Minister at first would give no Answer to his Suit; at length, upon much Importunity, turning to him with a fell and stern Visage he cries. Get thee behind me, Satan! Avant, thou turbulent unquiet Spirit, to thy Abyss of Hell! Dost thou still persist, without all Respect to my Function, to molest and disgrace me? To which surly Repulse, the true-spirited Christian gave this incomparable modest Reply.

Yea, Reverend Sir, I know well, and much honour your Function. I desire not to fix any Aspersion upon it, or yourself, only intreat you, for your own and your Function's Honour, which engages you not to trample upon a submissive Offender, much less one that is innocent, to tell me candidly where my Fault lies. And further turning to the Chaplain, said, Reverend and courteous Sir, I pray be pleased to intercede for me with our Minister, that he would, laying aside his violent Passion, tell me ingenuously wherein I

have offended him that I may by the best Satisfaction lean, appease his Wrath, and he may cease incensing the Magistrate against me. But no Submission would allay his Rage, but in Heat he sends his Servant for the Town-Serjeant to lay hold of him, and carry him away to Prison: But his Chaplain, modestly excusing the poor Man, dissuaded him from the Execution of this Part of his Fury.

The next Morning, the Senators meeting in the Council-house, cited *Jacob Behmen* to appear before them, and examined him of his Life, and the Scandal he had given the Minister, that made him with such Vehemence exclaim against him. But he constantly affirming he was entirely ignorant of any just Cause of Offence he had given him, and humbly praying he might be sent for, to declare the Grounds of his Accusation, they esteeming this a just Motion, sent two Men of Quality of the Town to him, to desire him either to come and personally make known his Grievances to the Court, or at least inform them of the Matter by those they had sent to him for that Purpose. But he again falling into a Passion at this Demand, said, he had nothing to do with the Council-house; what he had to say he would speak in his Council-throne, the Pulpit; what he dictated there they must obey without Contradiction, and without more ado disable this wicked Heretic from further opposing the ministerial Function, by banishing him [from] their City, else the Curse of *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*, would light upon them all.

Upon this the poor Senate, a little terrified, fearing the Preacher's Spleen, and his Power in the Duke of *Saxony's* Court, fell to fresh Consultation; and some of the more upright and moderate Men (seeing neither their Reasons nor Votes able to countervail the Fears or worse Passions of the major Part) departing the Court, the rest, upon this mere groundless Clamour of their Caiaphas, hastily passed a Sentence of Banishment against their innocent Fellow-Citizen, and prosecuted it with all Vehemence. He hearing it, said only, Gentlemen, with all willing Submission I obey your Decree, only desire I may go Home to my House to settle my small Affairs there, and take my Family along with me, or at least take Leave of them; but neither would this small Piece of Humanity be allowed him, but he must, according to the Court's unalterable Decree, forthwith depart. His Answer was, That seeing it would be no better, he was content, and thereupon

presently went out of Town, spending the Remainder of the Day in a melancholy Walk about the Town-fields, and the Night in what Harbour we know not.

But the Senate, meeting again next Morning, upon more sober Thoughts repealed their Sentence, and sent to seek out their innocent Exile, and brought him back with Honour: Yet still tired with the Prelate's incessant Clamour, they at length sent for him again, and intreated him, that in Love to the City's Quiet, he would seek himself a Habitation elsewhere; which if he would please to do, they should hold themselves obliged to him for it, as an acceptable Service. In Compliance with this friendly Request of theirs, he removed from thence.

After this, upon a Citation, *Jacob Behmen* came to *Dresden*, before his Highness the Prince Elector of *Saxony*, where were assembled six Doctors of Divinity, *Dr. Hoe*, *Dr. Meisner*, *Dr. Baldwin*, *Dr. Gerhard*, *Dr. Leysern*, and another Doctor, and two Professors of the Mathematics. And these, in the Presence of his Highness the Prince Elector, begun to examine him concerning his Writings, and the high Mysteries therein; and many profound Queries in Divinity, Philosophy, and the Mathematics, they proposed to him. To all which he replied with such Meekness of Spirit, such Depth of Knowledge, and Fulness of Matter, that none of those Doctors and Professors returned one Word of Dislike or Contradiction.

The Prince his Highness much admired him, and required to know the Result of their Judgments, in what they had heard. But the Doctors and Examiners desired to be excused, and intreated his Highness that he would have Patience, till the Spirit of the Man had more plainly declared itself, for in many Particulars they could not understand him. Nevertheless they hoped, that hereafter he would make it more clear to them, and then they would offer their Judgments, but for the present they could not.

Then *Jacob Behmen* proposed some Questions to them, to which they returned Answers with much Modesty, and as it were amazed that they should (so much beyond their Expectation) hear from a Man of that mean Quality and Education, such mysterious Depths as were beyond the Reach of their Comprehension.

Then he conferred with them touching most of the Errors of those Times-pointing as it were with the Finger at the Original of them severally, declaring to them the naked Truth, and the great Difference betwixt that and some erroneous Suppositions.

To the *Astrologers* also, having discoursed something of their Science, he said, *Behold, thus far is the Knowledge of your Art right and good, grounded in the Mystery of Nature; but what is over and above (instancing in several Particulars) are mere heathenish Addictions, the Folly and Blindness of Heathens, which we Christians ought not to follow or imitate.*

Then his Highness the Prince Elector, being very much satisfied with his Answers, took him apart from the Company, and discoursed with him a good Space concerning several Points of Difficulty, wherein being well satisfied, courteously dismissed him.

After this Examination Dr. *Meisner* and Dr. *Gerhard*, meeting at *Wittenberg*, begun to discourse *Jacob Behmen*, expressing how greatly they admired the continued Harmony of Scriptures produced by him at his Examination, and that they would not, for all the World, have served his Enemies Malice in censuring him: *For, says Dr. Meisner, who knows but God may have designed him for some extraordinary Work, and how can we with Justice pass Judgment against what we understand not? For surely he seems to be a Man of wonderful high Gifts of the Sprit, though we cannot at present, from any Ground of Certainty approve or disapprove of many Things he holds!*

How much more ingenuous is this, than the Character given him by *Jo. Laur. Moshemius*, Chancellor of the University of *Gottingen*, an ecclesiastic Historian, quoted by the Bishop of *Gloucester*, Dr. *Warburton*? "JAC. BOEHMIUS, sutor Gorlicensus, Vir innumeris & Amicis & Inimicis inclytus, quem Theosophum Germaniucum Patroni salutant. Hic cum Natura ipsa proclivus esset ad Res abditas pervestigandas, & Rob. Fluddii ac Rosecrucianorum Scita cognovisset, Theologiam, Igne Duce, Imaginatione Comite invenit, ipsis Pythagoricis Numeris & Heracliti Notis obscuriorem, -- ita enim Chymicis Imaginationibus & tanta Verborum Confusione & Caligine omnia miscet, ut ipse sibi obsirepere videatur." By this he would insinuate, directly contrary to

what has been shown, that he derived his Knowledge from Chemistry, and chemical Writers, as he says in another Place, that he owed his whole Wisdom to one of them he there specifies. What Credence can be given to an Historian in Matters more remote, when he has given so unfair an account in what is so well known? A fit Historian for such a Divine, as is capable of characterizing that great Light of the Age, Mr. *Law*, as the Bishop has done. "*When I reflect on his wonderful Infatuation, who has spent a long Life hunting after, and with an incredible Appetite devouring the Trash dropt from every Species of Mysticism, it puts me in mind of what Travellers tell us of a horrid Fanaticism in the East, where the Devotee makes a solemn Vow never to taste of other Food than what has passed through the Entrails of some impure or savage Animal. Hence their whole Lives are passed (like Mr. Law's among his Ascetics) in Woods and Forests, far removed from the Converse of Mankind*" This Passage fully shows the State of Mind of the Writer of it, and no Censure passed upon it can add to it. See, in this Volume, *The Three Principles*, Chap. 3. ver. 6 — 8. Chap. 25. ver. 29, 30. Chap. 8. ver. 15. How different from these was the Son of the Primate of Görlitz? His Father, who had been so violent a Persecutor of *Jacob Behmen*, had in the most ignominious Manner wrote against him; to which the blessed Man so well replied, that he totally silenced him. After the Decease of both, willing to consult the Honour of his Father, he determined to write an Answer, that he might remove the Odium from him. But behold a most unexpected Event! Reading *Jacob Behmen's* Writings, to finish the Design he had in View, his Mind is convinced, and affected in such a Manner, that instead of proceeding in his former Purpose, he was rather disposed to take up his Pen in Defence of our Author, crying out, with Astonishment, in this mournful Exclamation, "*Oh! my Father, what hast thou done?*" So great was the Power of Truth on his Mind.

It was the Pharisee's Judgment of our Saviour, *Say we not well thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil? And in another Place, This Man casts out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils.* So unwilling is human Reason to submit, or conceive a Possibility of that perfect Wisdom and Power, that in Death and Self-denial is brought forth to the Glory of him, that is the Father of it.

The same Measure *Jacob Behmen* received in his Generation. For the

Appearance of that unusual Knowledge and deep Revelation of Mysteries, in a Vessel so contemptible to the magnificent Mind of Man, brought such hard Censures as these from the stupid World, which appeared one Time more especially. The Manner was thus.

Sitting by himself in his House, a Man knocked at his Door, to which repairing, a Person of a mean Stature, of a sharp and stern Look, saluted him courteously, congratulating him on that great and wonderful Knowledge he had received, and humbly let him know, that he heard that he was blest with a singular Spirit, the like to which had not lately appeared among the Children of Men; that it was a humane and friendly Duty, incumbent upon every Man, to impart the good Things vouchsafed him to his needy Neighbour, and himself was now a needy Petitioner, that he would yield some of that Spirit to him. In which Request if he pleased to gratify him, he would, in such Things wherein he abounded, give a suitable Recompence, making a covert Offer of some Monies, to satisfy *Jacob Behmen's* Necessities. To whom he replied, with Thanks, *That he accounted himself unworthy of the Esteem of having these greater Gifts and Arts, as was by him imagined, and found only in himself an intire Love to his Neighbour, and simple Perseverance in the upright Belief and Faith in God; and for any other Endowments beyond these he neither had them, nor esteemed them; much less (as his Words seemed to intimate) enjoyed the Society of any familiar Spirit.*

*But, says he, if there be in you that Desire of obtaining the Spirit of God, you must, as I have done, enter into earnest Repentance, and pray the Father, from whom all good Gifts proceed, and he will give it, and it will lead you into all Truth.*

This foolish Man, contemning this plain Instruction, became uncivilly importunate, and begun with Words of Magic Conjunction, to force the supposed familiar Spirit from *Jacob Behmen*.

At which Boldness and Folly, *Jacob Behmen*, being not a little moved in Spirit, took him by the Right-hand, and looked him sternly in the Face, intending an Imprecation to his perverse Soul. At which this Exorcist, trembling and amazed, asked Forgiveness; whereupon *Jacob Behmen* remitted his Zeal, dehorting him earnestly from that simonian and

diabolical Practice, and permit him, in Hopes of future Amendment, to depart in Peace.

The Publication of his first Book, the *Aurora*, or *Morning-Redness*, brought from all Parts great Resort to him of learned Men, and more especially of Chemists; with whom conversing much, he got the Use of those Latin and Greek Words that are frequent in his Works, as being significant Expressions of those Notions that were in his Mind, and of great Use and Convenience, for the Illustration of what he had to propose.

Of those learned Men, that conversed with him in the greatest Familiarity, was one *Balthazar Walter*; this Gentleman was a *Silesian* by Birth, by Profession a Physician, and had, in the Search of the ancient Magic Learning, travelled through Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, and found there such small Remains of it, that he returned unsuccessful and unsatisfied into his own Country; where hearing of this Man, he repaired to him, and did, as the Queen of *Sheba* with King *Solomon*, try him with those hard Questions concerning the Soul, which, with the Answers to them, are now public in many Languages. From whence, and from frequent Discourses with him, he was so satisfied, that he stayed there three Months, and professed, that from his Conversation he had received more solid Answers to his curious Scruples, than he had found among the best Wits of those more promising Climates: And for the Future, he desisted from following Rivulets, since God had opened a Fountain at his own Door.

After his Examination at *Dresden*, and the Publication of his Book, it pleased God to turn the Hearts of many learned Men and Preachers, to the studying themselves, and teaching others those Doctrines of the Regeneration, and the Means of attaining it, they had formerly in a blind Zeal exclaimed against as Heretical; whereupon they ceased from preaching up Disputes and Controversies in Religion, as prejudicial to divine Charity, and the common Peace of Mankind; but for the Solution of all Doubts, they referred Men to an earnest Endeavour after the Recovery of the Life of Christ, the only Fountain of all true Light, and right Understanding in divine Things.

Thus was that excellent Light, shining in this heavenly Man's Soul, by the

cross Design of a malicious Adversary, set in its Candlestick, and brought to open View, to give Light to the World. So that his Writings came to be read in *Russia, Sweden, Poland, Denmark, the Netherlands, England, Germany, France, Spain, Italy*, and even in the City of *Rome*. For by these Examinations, the Man's Worth came to be taken Notice of, and his Writings sought for and studied not only by mean People, but by many great Rabbis of the Church, and Great Men of the World. Nay, Many in their Hearts Infidels to all Religion, in catching only at the Bait of his mysterious Philosophy were drawn to the true Faith and Church of God.

Let us with Oil in our Lamps, and the Wedding Garment of a renewed Spirit, prepare to meet the Lord at his Coming.

His Superscription, and Motto in all his Letters, were these Words; *Our Salvation is the Life of Jesus Christ in us.*

In his Seal-ring he had engraven a Hand stretched out from Heaven, with a Twig of three blown Lilies.

It has been a Custom with many in Germany, to carry a little Paper Book in Their Pockets, into which their Friends write some remarkable Sentence, and subscribe their Names, and this Book is called *Album Amicorum*, [The Book of Friendship.] Into such as these our Author wrote these Verses:

*To whom Time and Eternity  
Harmoniously as One agree;  
His Soul is safe, his Life's amended,  
His Battles o'er, his Strife is ended.*

Or thus,

*Whose Time and Ever are all one.  
His Soul's at rest, his Warfare's done.*

When the Hour of his Departure was at Hand, he called his Son *Tobias* and asked him. Whether he heard that sweet harmonious Musick? He replied, No. Open, says he, the Door that you may the better hear it. And



asking what o'Clock it was, he told him it was Two: My Time, says he, is not yet, three Hours hence is my Time: In the mean While he spoke these Words, *O thou strong God of Zebaoth, deliver me according to thy Will. Thou crucified Lord Jesus, have Mercy on me, and take me into thy Kingdom.*

When Six in the Morning came, he took Leave of his Wife and Son, blessed them, and said, *Now I go hence into Paradise.* And bidding his Son turn him, he fetched a deep Sigh and departed.

Thus have you seen the Journey of this blessed Man on Earth, with his last Farewell. Over his Grave was erected the following Device as sent from a Friend of his out of *Silesia*: A black wooden Cross, with the *Hebrew* Name *JHSVH* and twelve golden Beams encompassing it, under which rested a Child on a Death's Head, with the Arms placed on its Sides, with these eight Letters, *V. H. I. L. J. C. I. V.* underwritten. On a broad oval Circle, or Field, were written these following Words, *Born of God, died in JHSVH, sealed with the Holy Ghost, does rest here Jacob Behmen of Old Seidenburg, who the seventeenth of November, about Six o'Clock in the Forenoon, in the fiftieth Year of his age, blessedly departed.*

In the Midst under the oval Field, upon the Tree of the Cross, stood a Lamb with a Bishop's Mitre, under a Palm-tree, by a Water-spring in a green Pasture, feeding among the Flowers; there stood the Word *VENI.*

On the South Side was painted a black Eagle on a high Rock, which trod with his Left-foot on the Head of a great Serpent folded together; in the Right-foot he held a Branch of Palm, and in his Beak the Branch of a Lily, which was reached to him out of the Sun; by that was written the Word *VIDI.*

On the North Side stood a Lion, having on his Head a Cross and a Crown, placed with his right Hinder-foot on a Cube, with the left on a Globe; in his right Fore-paw he held a flaming Sword, in his Left a burning Heart; by him was written the Word *VICI.*

Upon the Tree of the Cross stood his last Words, *Now I go hence into Paradise.*

This hieroglyphical Monument would not have remained long, but have been razed and imbezzled by the rude Hands of the Envious, had they not been prevented by the Magistracy; for they would willingly have lavished their impotent Wrath against him, on this wooden Cross, and discovered their Hatred to the Memory of his Goodness, whom they would long before have crucified.

