

**THE WAY TO CHRIST, DESCRIBED IN THE
FOLLOWING TREATISES: OF TRUE
REPENTANCE, OF
TRUE RESIGNATION, OF REGENERATION,
OF THE SUPER-SENSUAL LIFE, WRITTEN
IN THE YEAR 1622**

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The Way to Christ, Described in the Following Treatises: Of True Repentance, of True Resignation, of Regeneration, of the Super-Sensual Life, Written in the Year 1622 by Jakob Boehme

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JAKOB BOEHME

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WAY to CHRIST,
Described

In the following TREATISES:

Of <i>True Repentance.</i>		Of <i>Regeneration.</i>
Of <i>True Resignation.</i>		Of <i>the Super-Sensual Life.</i>

Written in the Year 1622,

BY JACOB BOEHME,
of *Goerlitz* in Northern *Germany.*

'Be Earnest—Be Earnest.'

CANTERBURY:

Republished, with an *Illustrated Memoir*,
by G. MORETON, 42, *Burgate Street*, 1894.

(Price Seven Shillings.) *Nett*
E. E. P.

PREFATORY MEMOIR.

THE materials available for describing the Life of JACOB BOEHME are but scanty, consisting for the most part of a few surprising incidents, some of which, were they not so well authenticated and narrated by himself, would be deemed to be fabulous and incredible—and these incidents, more or less paraphrased, have had to serve for the purpose of a Biography by successive Editors of his Works.

JACOB BOEHME, though by trade a Shoemaker, was a very remarkable man, and became the greatest Theosopher that has ever lived. His writings are not to be understood without considerable effort working in spiritual sympathy with his ideas, consequently, they have proved to be foolishness to multitudes, and but few have discovered, what has been called, the Pearl hidden within them.

Of JACOB BOEHME'S birth and parentage, it is known that he was born in the year 1575 at Alt or Old, *Seidenberg*, a small market-town in Northern *Germany*, now situated at the confines of the *Prussian* frontier; and within two miles of the principal town of *Goerlitz*, which at that time was a place of much importance, and still forms a considerable business centre. He was named after his father, and his Mother's name was *Ursula*; of whom he was not their only child, although neither the names of the other children nor any allusion to them beyond a "dead brother," appears to be recorded. As a boy he was employed with other lads to tend the cattle and such similar occupation, as could be found for him near home. Even at that age he appears to have been of a pensive and dreamy disposition and much inclined to reverie; nor was he of a robust form of constitution: to which even in manhood, he did not attain.

One of the earliest recorded incidents of *Jacob's* life is that which occurred to him while herding the cattle. It is narrated that one day at noon, having left his companions to look after the herd, he went to a hill close by called the Land's Crown, where a formation of the rock bore some resemblance to a cave, where, finding an opening through the brushwood, he entered, and saw a large wooden vessel filled with money: the sight of which so alarmed him that he ran back to his companions and told them of the occurrence; but although they at once returned with him, both the entrance and the fairy-like money had disappeared. Some years afterwards, as JACOB BOEHME him-

self narrates, a "foreign artist" found and appropriated the hidden treasure; and, in consequence, came to an untimely end.

The place of this strange occurrence is still known, and is one of the excursions from *Goerlitz*. It is called the "Landskrone," and is in reality a basaltic hill, on the summit of which an ancient Robbers' Stronghold formerly stood—which may to some extent account for the hidden treasure—and is now occupied by a castellated form of building, used as an Inn and a "Belvedere," from which an expansive view of the surrounding country is obtained.

As *Jacob* grew up and completed his elementary schooling, his father, not finding him sufficiently strong for agricultural work, apprenticed him to a Shoemaker at *Goerlitz*, where after he had worked for some time another singular incident occurred to him. We are told that his Master having temporarily left him in charge of the shop, a man, who was a stranger to *Jacob*, entered, and desired to purchase a pair of shoes. *Jacob*, not venturing to sell anything in his Master's absence, declined to serve him; but the Stranger becoming importunate about it, *Jacob* offered them to him at such a price as would certainly save him harmless from his Master's blame, and would probably deter the Stranger from purchasing. The Stranger, however, paid the price demanded and took the shoes; and having left the shop, he called to the lad, "*Jacob*, come outside," or, as some of his Biographers more dramatically render it, "*Jacob*, *Jacob*, come forth!" which the lad did, so soon as he had recovered from his astonishment, when the Stranger thus addressed him: "*Jacob*, thou art as yet but little, but the time will come when thou shalt be great and become another man, and the world shall marvel at thee. Therefore, be pious, fear God, and reverence His Word; especially read the Bible diligently where thou hast 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 unto thee." The Stranger then pressed his hand, gave him a kind look, and departed—with the shoes.

It is questionable whether these incidents were not visionary with, rather than of actual occurrence to, JACOB BOEHME; but the result of them was that his thoughts assumed a deeply religious form—far deeper than that of the mere "Lutheran Faith" in which he had been brought up—which so operated upon him in the years to come that his Spirit was able to penetrate into the innermost mysteries of Nature: to foresee and foretell what is now known as Electricity, with its immense possibilities; and also to divine the three great Principles or first Laws of Nature—attraction, equal resistance producing orbicular

movement, resulting in gravitation : which Principles, Sir ISAAC NEWTON, who was a diligent though unavowed Student of *Boehme's* works, by reducing to a Mathematical Form, established that grand Theory of the Universe—the Solar System : which THOMAS CARLYLE described as the most perfect approach to a Theory that has ever been propounded.*

Meanwhile, however, *Jacob* continued his shoemaking occupation, although we are told that at times he worked almost unconsciously for days together, when his thoughts were in devout contemplation. At other times he did not hesitate to rebuke any loose conversation to which the other workmen might yield indulgence, which so irritated his Master that he discharged him from his service, and *Jacob* was obliged to set out as a travelling journeyman. In the year 1594 he returned to *Goerlitz*, where he became a Master shoemaker, and married *Catherine*, daughter of JOHN HUNSHMAN, a Butcher of *Goerlitz*.

About six years after marriage, *Jacob's* first Illumination occurred—the result, as he says, of strenuously clinging by Faith to the Promise of the Spirit to those who seek it—in the following manner :

We are told that while one day sitting in his room he noticed a burnished pewter dish, which reflected the sunlight with such a degree of brilliancy that he was overcome with an inward ecstasy, and it seemed to him as if he could now look into the principles and deepest foundations of things. He believed that it was only fancy, and in order to banish it from his mind he went out into the fields about the Town. But here he remarked that he gazed into the very heart of things, the very grass and herbs ; that actual Nature harmonized with what he had seen ; and that he could distinguish the essences, uses, and properties in a manner that was to him a most wonderful insight or Revelation. He is said to have kept his knowledge of the occurrence very much to himself, and returning home continued to take care of his family and worked on in silence until the year 1610, when a further Illumination occurred to him, and of which he wrote a Memorial.

Of his insight into these Mysteries he says : “ I never desired to know anything of the Divine Mystery, much less understood I the way to seek and find it. I knew nothing of it, as 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

* HAHNMANN also derived his principles of Homœopathy from JACOB BOEHME, as described in the “*Signatura Rerum*.”

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.

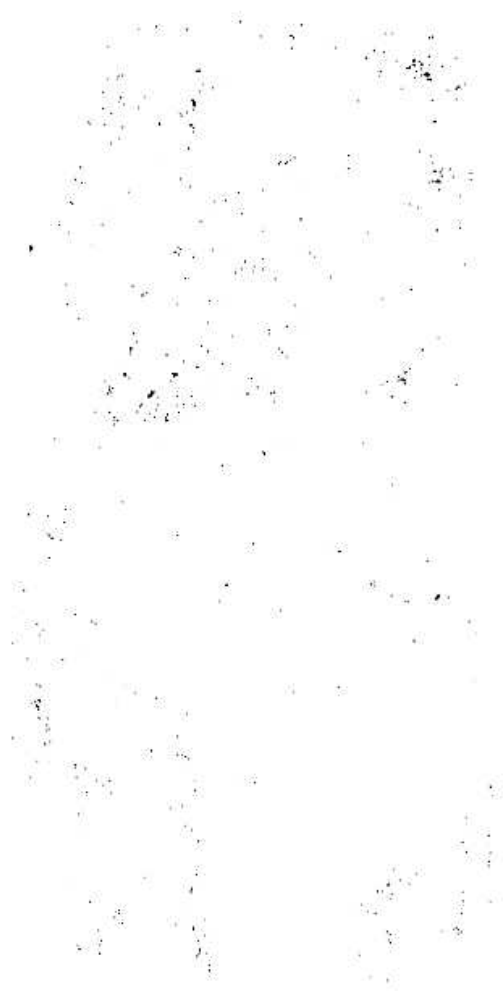
“In this my earnest and Christian seeking and Desire (wherein I suffered many a shrewd repulse, but at last resolved rather to put myself in Hazard than give over and leave off) the Gate was opened to me, and in one quarter of an hour I saw and knew more than if I had been many years together at an University, 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 the Creatures through the Divine Wisdom. I knew and saw in myself all the three Worlds, namely, the Divine, Angelical, and Paraisaical; 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 scarcely apprehend the same, in my external man, and express it with the Pen.”

The Memorial which JACOB BOEHME wrote of his first Illumination is entitled “Aurora, or the Morning Redness;” but before the Manuscript was completed it was seen by CARL VON ENDERN, a Nobleman of philosophical tastes, who, being very much interested in it, prevailed upon *Boehme* to lend it to him, and, having obtained the loan of it, he had several copies of it made, which thus got into general circulation. A copy also came into the possession of one who became a bitter Persecutor of JACOB BOEHME; and who in that relation will ever be associated with him—GREGORY RICHTER, the Primate or Chief Clergyman of *Goerlitz*, whose life-long resentment against *Boehme* appears to have already originated in an incident, ludicrous as it was trivial, which is related as follows:

It appears that a Baker in *Goerlitz*, desiring to make some cakes for sale at Eastertide, and not having any money with



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