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## Research Notes

### The Hymns of David Henkel’s 1827 Small Catechism Translation

Hymns have been used to help teach the Small Catechism since the Reformation. Martin Luther’s catechism hymns are prominent among such aids. But Luther was not the only one to encourage hymns for catechesis. Such encouragement comes also from early nineteenth-century American Lutheranism, particularly from David Henkel (1795–1831), the gifted theologian from the early confessional, English-speaking Tennessee Synod.

In 1827 Henkel translated and published an edition of the Small Catechism that included an assortment of hymns.<sup>1</sup> While not dealing with the six Chief Parts themselves, the hymns in this catechism are intended for edification of faith and life. For all but one, no author is named.<sup>2</sup>

This essay, on the example of Henkel, serves as encouragement to pastors, catechists, teachers, and parents to use Lutheran hymns in their catechesis. The essay begins with a brief history of the 1827 Henkel catechism. A closer look at a few hymns and a general overview of the rest follow, along with an attempt to identify the hymns’ authors.

#### 1. A Brief History of the 1827 Henkel Catechism

Teaching the Lutheran faith in the early 1800s on the American frontier was an uphill battle. Confessional Lutheranism had few supporters in America, especially among Lutherans. Unionism, rationalism, Pietism, and an Americanizing elevation of the country’s founding fathers to the level of modern prophets ruled the day.<sup>3</sup> The birth of the Tennessee Synod on July 17, 1820, is thus a proud milestone for confessional Lutheran history in America. Intent on upholding the pure Lutheran teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Tennessee Synod was born in bold, vocal confession of the historical Lutheran faith.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David Henkel, trans., *Doctor Martin Luther’s Smaller Catechism [ . . . ] to Which Are Added Sundry Hymns and Prayers*, 3rd ed. (New Market, VA: Henkel, 1841), in David Henkel, *The Works of David Henkel*, ed. Mark M. Taylor (Fort Wayne, IN: Lutheran Legacy, 2006), 341–390.

<sup>2</sup> Ambrose Henkel wrote in an introduction to the catechism translation, “In the German American edition of this catechism, there are sundry prayers and verses, intended for the use of families. Those prayers belong to the original catechism of Luther. But as for the verses, I do not know their author.” Ambrose Henkel, advertisement, in Henkel, *Works*, 344.

<sup>3</sup> See Paul A. Baglyos, “American Lutherans at the Dawn of the Republic,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 51–74.

<sup>4</sup> According to J. L. Neve, the Tennessee Synod “distinguished itself by being the only synod at that time which stood squarely on the Augsburg Confession” (J. L. Neve, *A Brief History of the*

But resources were lacking. One writer later commented, “We had a weak, indecisive pulpit, feeble catechisms, vague hymns, constitutions which reduced the minister to the position of a hireling talker, and made Synods [i.e., synodical conventions] disorganizations for the purpose of preventing anything from being done.”<sup>5</sup> Lutherans in various places may have even been unfamiliar with Luther’s Small Catechism. On September 5, 1825, the Tennessee Synod in convention asked that the Small Catechism be introduced to all churches in its fellowship.<sup>6</sup> The following year, the synod’s convention requested that the Catechism be translated into English.<sup>7</sup> This was left to David Henkel. His translation was later included in the 1851 Henkel Book of Concord.<sup>8</sup>

In his preliminary comments to the catechism, David Henkel indicates that the German catechism he translated was from the “American German edition, printed in Pennsylvania,” that of the Pietistic and unionistic Pennsylvania Ministerium, printed by a variety of publishers since 1785.<sup>9</sup> The wording of the Small Catechism proper in those editions remained relatively consistent.<sup>10</sup> In addition to Luther’s

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*Lutheran Church in America*, 2nd rev. ed. [Burlington, IA: The German Literary Board, 1916], 79). See also Socrates Henkel, *History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod* (New Market, VA: Henkel, 1890), 1–31. For a detailed account of arguments and conversations that led up to the division between the Tennessee and North Carolina Synods, see also Robert C. Carpenter, “Augsburg Confession War: The Conflicts Concerning Lutheran Confessional Beliefs Arising from the North Carolina Lutheran Synod in the Early 1800’s,” *The Journal of Backcountry Studies* 5, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 1–26.

<sup>5</sup> Henkel, *History*, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Describing that convention, Socrates Henkel wrote, “All the congregations in connection with Synod were advised more generally to introduce Luther’s Catechism” (*History*, 67). That some churches in the synod likely knew about the Small Catechism is suggested by the fact that the Henkel-family-owned press in New Market, Virginia, had in the 1810s published several editions of Paul Henkel’s *Christian Catechism*, an edition of the Small Catechism. Not all North Carolina Synod Lutheran churches may have known of this edition or used it. At this time, Paul Henkel was not always in agreement with his son, David. See Carpenter, “Augsburg Confession War,” 9, 17–18.

<sup>7</sup> “At this [September 18, 1826] meeting, it was resolved that Luther’s *Small Catechism* be translated and printed in an English dress, and that Rev. Ambrose Henkel make arrangements to have the matter receive proper attention” (Henkel, *History*, 70). According to the minutes of the 1827 Tennessee Synod convention, “This was probably the first full, direct translation of said work ever published in this country in English” (Henkel, *History*, 73). However, this claim is inaccurate, since English-translations of the Small Catechism were published in Philadelphia at least as early as 1749. See Arthur C. Repp Sr., *Luther’s Catechism Comes to America: Theological Effects on the Issues of the Small Catechism Prepared in or for America Prior to 1850*, ATLA Monograph Series 18 (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1982), 94–95.

<sup>8</sup> *The Christian Book of Concord or Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (New Market, VA: Henkel, 1851), iv. It should also be noted that only the Small Catechism translation was used in the Henkel Book of Concord. David’s hymn translations were not used.

<sup>9</sup> Henkel, “Preliminary Observations,” in Henkel, *Works*, 345.

<sup>10</sup> The Pennsylvania Ministerium’s Small Catechism was printed for seventy-two years, without much revision: “During the long period in which it served as the official catechism, it was

words, many Pennsylvania editions included also the following: (1) “Analysis [*Zergliederung*] of the Catechism,” (2) the “Brief Children’s Examination of Württemberg,” (3) rites of confirmation and confession of sins, (4) Johann Freylinghausen’s “Order of Salvation,” (5) the “Golden ABC’s” for children, and (6) the seven Penitential Psalms. The differences among these catechism editions consist largely of the editors’ inclusion or exclusion of various prayers and hymns. Henkel’s English catechism includes a translation of the nineteen hymns contained in one of these editions of the Pennsylvania Ministerium along with an original hymn of Henkel’s own.

## 2. The Hymns of the Henkel Catechism

The twenty hymns in Henkel’s translation follow the Chief Parts of the Small Catechism and the Table of Duties, occurring in the Daily Prayers section and afterward. Interspersed with prayers on the same subjects, the twenty hymns are divided into the following topics:

1. Morning—3 hymns
2. Evening—5 hymns
3. Before meals—2 hymns
4. After meals—1 hymn
5. Before catechizing—3 hymns
6. After catechizing—3 hymns
7. At confirmation—1 hymn
8. After confirmation—1 hymn
9. Confession of sins—1 hymn

The hymns thus give poetic voice to the daily prayers and the believer’s daily life and address catechesis sessions and confirmation. The only hymn that relates to a Chief Part of the Small Catechism is the last, a hymn on confession of sins.

The morning and evening hymns are arranged uniquely. There are two sets of morning and evening hymns. The first set has two morning hymns and four evening hymns followed by a phrase that reads “END OF LUTHER’S CATECHISM.”<sup>11</sup> After this comes a second set: one morning hymn and one evening hymn (with prayers). This is then followed by the remaining hymns on the other topics, interspersed with

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printed by some 25 different printers in more than 70 editions. In the earlier period, from 1785 to 1826, Leibert and Billmeyer of Germantown and their successors apparently regarded themselves as the ‘official’ printers. With one minor exception, no changes were made in the text in the 16 printings of this firm, even though the printer numbered them as 11 different editions” (Repp, *Luther’s Catechism*, 73).

<sup>11</sup> Henkel, *Works*, 376.

corresponding prayers. One humorously observes that Henkel's catechism unintentionally follows the pattern of realized eschatology. The end is both now and not yet.

Why the morning and evening hymns were split can be surmised. The first nine hymns in the Henkel translation are found in the Pennsylvania Ministerium's 1826 catechism published by Michael Billmeyer of Germantown, Pennsylvania.<sup>12</sup> Arthur Repp states that "in the earlier period, from 1785 to 1826, Leibert and Billmeyer of Germantown and their successors apparently regarded themselves as the 'official' printers of the catechism."<sup>13</sup> These nine hymns may have been seen as more or less official and thus to be printed in all Pennsylvania Ministerium catechisms. The edition Henkel translated from, then, kept these hymns in their assigned places but also added extras.<sup>14</sup> The origin of the remaining hymns is challenging to trace. Henkel does not give authorship credit to any of the hymns except his own, "By Nature Man Is Dark and Blind."<sup>15</sup>

Two of the hymns deserve closer attention. The first is Henkel's original hymn, "By Nature Man Is Dark and Blind," placed at the head of the hymns to be used before catechizing. It is twelve stanzas long. The theme is the doctrine of God's word. For use in the church, it might be perhaps set to the tune DEO GRACIAS.

This hymn exalts the use and blessings of God's word. It weaves together various biblical teachings such as original sin, man's inherent doubt, the gospel, the inspiration of Scripture, justification, righteousness, the means of grace, the Holy Trinity, and eschatology. Some verses are quite good and are worth repeating.

Notably, this hymn does not mention Jesus by name. While the Father and the Holy Ghost are mentioned (both in stanza 6), the Son of God and his work are implied. Stanza 10 contains an oblique reference to the Son of God:

Sure Word of God, a light divine  
Which in our dark'ned souls does shine,  
'Til bright the day-dawn shall arise—  
The brilliant Morning-Star likewise.

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<sup>12</sup> *Der Kleine Catechismus des sel. D. Martin Luthers [ . . . ] Zum Gebrauch der Jungen und Alten*, 11th ed. (Germantown, PA: Billmeyer, 1826).

<sup>13</sup> Repp, *Luther's Catechism*, 73.

<sup>14</sup> Another edition of the Pennsylvania Ministerium's catechism shows these same nine hymns but includes others afterward that Henkel's translation does not. See *Der kleine Catechismus des seligen Dr. Martin [ . . . ] zum Gebrauch der Jungen und Alten* (Pittsburgh: Cremer, Spear and Eichbaum, 1810), 38–41.

<sup>15</sup> Those interested in the authorship and provenance of the remaining hymns may contact the author.

Pastors and seasoned believers can connect the dots and realize that the “Morning-Star” is a specific title for the Lord Jesus in Revelation 22:16. Catechumens may not pick up on this, though.

Despite that, several lines stand out as solid examples of the Lutheran teaching of God’s holy word. For example, stanza 3 poetically teaches Matthew 9:12 (“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick”): “The gospel only is designed / For fallen creatures, poor and blind.” Stanza 4 brilliantly captures the futility of finding salvation in the ways of this world:

Creation wide reveals no plan  
To save the fallen race of man,  
Which could procure a righteousness  
That would restore lost happiness.

Stanza 9 shows the inestimable value of God’s holy word:

O blessed Word, worth more than gold;  
For unto man it does unfold  
Life,—immortality,—and Love  
From God, and joys in worlds above.

One is reminded of Proverb 25:11.

In conclusion, there is much to commend about Henkel’s hymn.

The second hymn deserving of closer attention is the evening hymn, “Jesus, Our Heavenly Guide.” The text is present in the 1826 German Pennsylvania Ministerium Billmeyer edition as “Ach bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ,” the familiar Reformation-era hymn included as hymn 585 in *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)*, “Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide.” Authorship is commonly attributed to Philipp Melanchthon (stanza 1) and Nikolaus Selnecker (stanzas 2–6).<sup>16</sup> Henkel rendered the three stanzas of the hymn in six stanzas, two for each of the German stanzas.

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<sup>16</sup> The Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, ed., *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 585. See the discussion on this hymn’s authors in Joseph Herl et al., eds., *Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2019), 1:652–655. In an article on the hymn by Cameron A. MacKenzie, it seems doubtful that Melanchthon had anything to do with writing this hymn. There is also the possibility that stanza 2 was written by Nikolaus Herman. MacKenzie rightly says, “The textual background to this hymn is complicated” (Cameron A. MacKenzie, “LSB 585, Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide,” in *Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns*, 1:652).

## Henkel's translation

## Original

(attr. Melancthon and Selnecker)  
with literal translations interspersed

1. Jesus, our heav'nly guide,  
We pray thee with us stay:  
Do not thy sceptre from us hide,  
Lest we should go astray.

1. O, remain with us, Lord Jesus Christ,  
While it has now become evening.  
Let not your Godly Word, that bright light,  
Be extinguished for us.

2. Ev'ning of time is come;  
Direct us in the road  
That leads to our eternal home,  
Up to the throne of God.

1. Ach bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ,  
Weil es nun Abend worden ist.  
Dein göttlich' Wort, das helle Licht,  
Laß ja bei uns auslöschen nicht.

3. In these last evil days,  
Let not thy Word divine,  
Withdraw its holy lucid rays;  
But in us brilliant shine.

2. In this last afflicted time,  
Provide us steadfastness, O Lord,  
That we hold your Word and Sacrament  
Pure until our end.

4. Pure, to the end, O Lord,  
May we always preserve,  
Thy Holy Sacraments and Word;  
And them with care observe.

2. In dieser letzten betrübten Zeit  
Verleih uns, Herr, Beständigkeit,  
Daß wir dein Wort und Sacrament  
Rein behalten bis an unser End.

5. That we, in quiet rest,  
Our future days may spend;  
May we with godliness be blessed,  
Our lives in peace to end.

3. That we live in peace and good rest  
To bring forth the Christian life.  
And there afterward in eternity,  
We will praise and laud you at all times.

6. 'Til we thy throne surround  
In heav'n with shining throngs,  
Thy praise from golden harps shall  
    sound,  
In sweet harmonious songs.

3. Daß wir in Fried' und guter Ruh'  
Das Leben Christlich bringen zu.  
Und dort hernach in Ewigkeit  
Dich lob'n und preisen allezeit.

Henkel adds several poetic additions not found in the original (stanzas 1–2, 6). One senses that Henkel does this only to fill out a line so the stanza fits the meter. Ambrose Henkel's assessment is that David "only imitated" the hymn verses, "for it



is impracticable to make a literal translation of poetry, so as also to be poetry in the English language."<sup>17</sup>

## Henkel's translation

## LSB 585

1. Jesus, our heav'nly guide,  
We pray thee with us stay:  
Do not thy sceptre from us hide,  
Lest we should go astray.

2. Ev'ning of time is come;  
Direct us in the road  
That leads to our eternal home,  
Up to the throne of God.

3. In these last evil days,  
Let not thy Word divine,  
Withdraw its holy lucid rays,  
But in us brilliant shine.

4. Pure, to the end, O Lord,  
May we always preserve,  
Thy Holy Sacraments and Word;  
And them with care observe.

5. That we, in quiet rest,  
Our future days may spend;  
May we with godliness be blessed,  
Our lives in peace to end.

6. 'Til we thy throne surround  
In heav'n with shining throngs,  
Thy praise from golden harps shall  
    sound,  
In sweet harmonious songs.

1. Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,  
For round us falls the eventide.  
O let Your Word, that saving light,  
Shine forth undimmed into the night.

2. In these last days of great distress  
Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness  
That we keep pure till life is spent  
Your holy Word and Sacrament.

3. To hope grown dim, to hearts turned cold  
Speak tongues of fire and make us bold  
To shine Your Word of saving grace  
Into each dark and loveless place.

4. May glorious truths that we have heard,  
The bright sword of Your mighty Word,  
Spurn Satan that Your Church be strong,  
Bold, unified in act and song.

5. Restrain, O Lord, the human pride  
That seeks to thrust Your truth aside  
Or with some man-made thoughts or things  
Would dim the words Your Spirit sings.

6. Stay with us, Lord, and keep us true;  
Preserve our faith our whole life through—  
Your Word alone our heart's defense,  
The Church's glorious confidence.

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<sup>17</sup> Ambrose Henkel, advertisement, in Henkel, *Works*, 344.

The comparison demonstrates that the translator of stanzas 2–6 of the *LSB* version, F. Samuel Janzow, may have had a greater aptitude for translating since he did not take two stanzas to translate one. Both Henkel and Janzow, however, add to the original. Perhaps Henkel, though gifted as a theologian and a prolific writer, nonetheless was not as gifted in hymn translation.

### 3. The Theology of the Henkel Catechism Hymns

#### *Morning and Evening Hymns*

The Christian's day is to begin and end with God's word and prayer. For only by God's blessing can one's days and works prosper. "What I begin and do / Let it be right and prosper too."<sup>18</sup> Each day a believer should turn to God in prayer and meditation on God's word so he might receive God's daily gifts in the right heart. "For daily he bestows on me / His blessings from above."<sup>19</sup>

The believer is under daily assault by the devil, the world, and sinful nature. "From Satan's wiles our lives defend, / May us no harm molest."<sup>20</sup> Since these enemies want to deceive and mislead God's children into all kinds of harm, Christians need to seek God's help so they might not depart from their Lord or drive out the Holy Spirit. "Incline our hearts to thee, O Lord, / That we may love thy blessed Word / And do thy will."<sup>21</sup> The only way this is possible is by the power of the Holy Spirit.

At night, the believer is called again to prayer and meditation on God's word. While each day brings its own troubles, a believer can entrust all things into God's hands. "Lord, I lie down to take my rest, / Let troubles flee from me."<sup>22</sup> Under God's protection through his holy angels, a believer is invited to be at peace. This is made possible by God's holy word and the Spirit, who works through that word. "My dreams be sweet delights that flow / From thy blessed Word to saints below."<sup>23</sup>

#### *Hymns before and after Meals*

"God gives daily bread, indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked" (SC III 13, Fourth Petition). Not only that, but since God also cares for the animals of the field as lesser beings, so he provides even more for men who are of greater value than animals (Matt 6:26). "Lord! Thou dost give what creatures need, / Do also us,

<sup>18</sup> "O Lord, What I Begin and Do," st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 371.

<sup>19</sup> "Now I Awake to Praise My Lord," st. 3, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 377.

<sup>20</sup> "O Lord, Thy Holy Angels Send," st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 375.

<sup>21</sup> "The Sun Now Rises, Shining Bright," st. 3, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 371.

<sup>22</sup> "Lord, I Lie Down to Take My Rest," st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 375.

<sup>23</sup> "O Jesus, I Will Take Repose," st. 2, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 376.

thy children, feed.”<sup>24</sup> As Luther’s explanation of the Fourth Petition reminds us, we are also to give thanks and praise to God for what he gives his believers day by day. Henkel’s hymn for after meals helps us to do so in a devout frame of mind. “We praise and thank thee for thy care / That did for us these gifts prepare.”<sup>25</sup>

God’s blessing is likewise needed for the proper use of daily bread. Believers might recall Psalm 78:30–31, when God’s wrath came upon the self-righteous Israelites at mealtime while food was still in their mouths. They suffered because they did not have God’s blessing through faith in his word. Therefore, God’s blessing upon faithfulness is necessary. This blessing is received in the daily eating of normal food by Jesus’ visitation and sanctification of the food believers eat. “O blessed Jesus, condescend / To be our guest, thou holy friend! / And sanctify these gifts below.”<sup>26</sup> The hymns suggest that Jesus comes as a response to the believer’s prayer and invocation to the Lord.

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4). Therefore, it is not only daily bread that one needs from God’s hand. “The bread of life poor sinners give / On which their hungry souls may live.”<sup>27</sup> As the Israelites were fed with the supernatural manna God gave in their wilderness years, so God’s word is now sweet manna for believers. “Forever sanctify us, Lord, / With the sweet manna of thy word.”<sup>28</sup> (No connection is made between the Sacrament of the Altar and the manna.)

### *Hymns before and after Catechizing and Confirmation*

Catechesis is to teach God’s word in a basic yet systematic manner, especially to the unlearned. “Youth is the choicest time we know, / That God affords to men below.”<sup>29</sup> Originally this involved asking questions and giving answers. What is needed besides the teaching of the pure word is also zeal in the hearts of those who learn. “Lord, grant us knowledge, zeal and love, / Our little faith increase.”<sup>30</sup>

Young believers are taught the ways of faith and life, which they are wise to follow all their lives. A warning is given about those who fall away:

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<sup>24</sup> “Lord! Thou Dost Give What Creatures Need,” st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 373.

<sup>25</sup> “These Gifts Which From Thy Bounty Flow,” st. 2, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 374.

<sup>26</sup> “O Blessed Jesus, Condescend,” st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 373.

<sup>27</sup> “Lord! Thou Dost Give What Creatures Need,” st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 373.

<sup>28</sup> “These Gifts Which from Thy Bounty Flow,” st. 2, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 374.

<sup>29</sup> “Approach Dear Youth unto the Lord,” st. 4, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 381.

<sup>30</sup> “The Labors of Our Teachers Bless,” st. 2, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 384.

For sinful ways, they lead to hell,  
 The place of endless pain:  
 Where wicked men and devils dwell,  
 And ever shall remain.<sup>31</sup>

Only those who remain in saving faith in Christ and who, by the power of the Holy Spirit, subdue their sins will stand in God's glory at the end.

Like faithful soldiers, act your part,  
 And never yield to sin;  
 But seek the Lord with all your heart,  
 The precious prize to win.

Remember well the covenant,  
 Which you have here renew'd:  
 To bear the cross, be ye content,  
 Your sins must be subdu'd.<sup>32</sup>

God's mercy and blessing is prayed for and given, so the catechumen and confirm- and might continue in that way of eternal happiness.

When God's word is taught in catechesis, this does not happen merely in an earthly setting. Catechists and catechumens first enter into God's presence. The lectern or table where the catechesis takes place becomes the very throne of God, for God himself teaches his word to his people (Pss 25:5, 119:12).

Lord! in thy presence we appear;  
 Here at thy throne we stand,  
 Make us thy word of truth to hear,  
 And live to thy command.<sup>33</sup>

In the teaching of his word "worth more than gold,"<sup>34</sup> catechumens are taught to follow "the way unto the Lord, / the way of happiness"<sup>35</sup> that cannot be taught on earth. So, God overlaps heaven to earth, that he might communicate his word and teaching through the catechist's mouth.

<sup>31</sup> "We Praise Thee, Jesus, Gracious Lord," st. 13, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 384.

<sup>32</sup> "The Grace of God Be with You Hence," sts. 2-3, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 386.

<sup>33</sup> "How Precious Is God's Holy Word," st. 3, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 380-381.

<sup>34</sup> "By Nature Man Is Dark and Blind," st. 9, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 380.

<sup>35</sup> "How Precious Is God's Holy Word," st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 380.

*Hymn on Confession of Sins*

Sin is unavoidable. One cannot live in a perfect way in this life. The devil, the world, and man's nature easily see to that. "To Satan I have been a slave."<sup>36</sup> But the conscience assesses sin, sometimes either excusing the sinner though he has done wrong or greatly accusing the sinner.

My conscience testifies to me  
According to thy word,  
That in strict justice I should be  
Accursed from the Lord.<sup>37</sup>

When the conscience goes on self-attack mode, no earthly help avails.

Not man nor angel can relieve  
My mind with guilt oppress'd:  
Not heav'n itself such comforts give,  
To set my heart at rest.<sup>38</sup>

However, there is one person to whom the accused can flee to find relief for the conscience: Jesus, the crucified and risen Savior. "Thy blood which freely stream'd / For all my sin and guilt atones."<sup>39</sup> Jesus is the only refuge for sinners, and when the conscience accuses, Jesus remains the sinner's friend.

There is no mention of Absolution here. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that the catechism Henkel translated was Pietist-leaning.<sup>40</sup> Instead of teaching the accused to find comfort in the Absolution, the accused is simply directed to faith in Christ's atonement, without reference to any means by which Christ's atoning blood is applied to the sinner. Though Henkel is orthodox, these hymns he translated at times fell short of that bar.

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<sup>36</sup> "Woe unto Me! How Oft I Have," st. 1, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 386.

<sup>37</sup> "Woe unto Me! How Oft I Have," st. 3, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 387.

<sup>38</sup> "Woe unto Me! How Oft I Have," st. 5, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 387.

<sup>39</sup> "Woe unto Me! How Oft I Have," st. 7, in Henkel, *Catechism*, 387.

<sup>40</sup> A standard feature in the Pennsylvania Ministerium editions of the catechism was Freylinghausen's "Order of Salvation" (*Ordnung des Heils*). Freylinghausen, best known for publishing many Pietist hymnbooks, remained true to Pietist form in this inclusion. Repp notes that forty-six different prints of the Pennsylvania Ministerium's catechism that included Freylinghausen's "Order" also followed a certain pattern: a greater emphasis was placed on the subjective element of repentance—individual Christian needs to "feel" the power of atonement. See Repp, *Luther's Catechism*, 74.

#### 4. Conclusion

While David Henkel is remembered more as an outspoken defender of Lutheran confessional theology, his translated hymns show that he was also practical. In a place where Lutheran catechesis was lacking, Henkel stepped forward and helped fill the gap so God's word might be better taught. Henkel's hymn translations did not grace the pages of future Lutheran English hymnbooks except for those his family printed. But his efforts in making such translations and publishing them were notable. He helped pave the way for future hymn-translation efforts. Henkel took an edition of the Small Catechism that was available and did his best to bring this foundational confessional writing to people. Sometimes the best a catechist can do is just make that effort.

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### **Which Happened from the Foundation of the World According to the Book of Revelation: The Lamb Was Slain or Some Names Were Not Written in the Book of Life?**

The Greek text of Revelation 13:8 reads as follows: *καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, οὗ οὐ γέγραπται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ ἀρνίου τοῦ ἐσφαγμένου ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου.* Many Christians over the centuries and in various languages have become quite accustomed to hearing the phrase “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” because the Greek text of Revelation 13:8 has been translated that way by some, such as in the King James Version (1611): “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [i.e., the beast], whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”<sup>1</sup> This translation was long dominant in English largely because

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<sup>1</sup> This understanding of Rev 13:8 was present in the Vulgate translation for centuries: “quorum non sunt scripta nomina in libro vitae agni qui occisus est ab origine mundi.” Robert Weber, Roger Gryson, and Bonifatius Fischer, eds., *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem*, editionem quintam emendatam retractatam (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007), at Rev 13:8.

Jon Bruss, a colleague who is a Latinist, shared this observation with me: “The attachment of ‘ab origine mundi’ to ‘occisus est’ is clear since the phrase resides in the relative clause (starting with ‘qui’). Had Jerome wished to preserve a putative ambiguity regarding which verb the adverbial phrase modifies (‘sunt scripta’ or ‘occisus est’) he could have accomplished it like this: ‘quorum non sunt scripta nomina in libro vitae Agni occisi ab origine mundi.’”