

Translation from the German [O Haupt vol Blut] from *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. 2: German Texts*, edited by Ron Jeffers. (©2000 Earthsongs)

1. O head full of blood and wounds,
Full of pain and full of scorn,
O head mockingly bound
With a crown of thorns,
O head, at other time beautifully adorned
With highest honor and adornment,
But now, however, highly reviled:
I greet you!
2. You, noble countenance,
Before which the endless universe
Otherwise shrinks in fear,
How you are spat upon;
How pale you have become!
How has the light of your eyes,
Which is like no other light,
Been battered so shamefully?
3. The color of your cheeks,
The magnificence of your red lips
Is gone and has utterly disappeared;
Death's pale power
Has taken all away,
Has stolen everything:
And thus have you lost
The strength of your mortal flesh.
4. What you have suffered, Lord,
Is all my burden.
I myself have caused
What you have borne!
Behold!—here I stand, a poor sinner
Who has deserved anger.
Grant me, merciful one,
The sight of your grace!
5. Recognize me, my guardian;
My shepherd, accept me.
From you, source of all good things,
Much good is done for me:
Your mouth has refreshed me
With milk and sweet food;
Your spirit has bestowed on me
Many a heavenly joy.
6. I want to stand here with you;
Despise me not!
I do not want to part from you
When your heart breaks.
When your face becomes pale
At the last death blow,
Then I want to hold you
In my arms and bosom.
7. It brings me such joy
And does my heart good
When I, in your suffering,
Shall find my salvation.
O my life and my Lord,
I desire to offer up my life
Here, on your cross;
How good it would be for me!
8. I thank you from my heart,
O Jesus, dearest friend,
For your death's pains,
Since you meant so well.
Alas, grant that I might hold on
To you and your faithfulness,
And when I become cold,
May my end be in you.
9. When I depart one day,
Depart not from me.
When I suffer death,
Then come forth.
When the most horrible fears
Fill my anguished heart,
Release me from my fears
By the strength of your anguish and pain.
10. Appear as my shield,
As consolation in my death,
And let me see the image of
Your distress on the cross.
Then will I want to gaze upon you,
And, filled with faith, will I want
To press you firmly to my heart!!
Who so dies, dies well.

James Waddell Alexander, 1830

1

O sacred head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine 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 anguish,
When 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 Savior!
'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 oppressed,
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 woe!

10

Be near 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.