

My victorious King receives his vestments from mocking
Men at arms, but he is dressed inwardly
In a red royal tunic—so as conqueror
Of evil, prince of right, he stands in glory.
May I cry for him, for the purple and red,
That they might flow from me as tears
Yielding meaning, distilled from my contemplation
So that my being becomes a spring of his mystery.
Our sins are his color, lamb's wool
Stained red by the Father,
And so as Christ takes him as prince, he takes us,
And suffers them. O Christ, Holy Lamb, please hide
My red sins, hell's faggots for fire.
In my King's redeeming royalty.

—Translated by Clinton F. Larson from
“Theoremes Spirituels” by Jean de la Ceppède

O Cross, the old horror and fear of you are gone;
Christ has redeemed you from the wrath of God.
His blood becomes your elixir at Golgotha,
Where it fell to the earth it redeemed,
And so you are changed where you grow
From wormwood to moly; you are polished
Smooth, the Church of the elect.
Fair tower of David, where the shields of God
Repose on your doubled ramparts,
All men, and I, come to you, refuge!
You hold the gates of hell ajar;
Your image across them crosses me.
May you keep me from their captivity!

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Great Sun, flame of Christ,
You have passed through four houses of the Zodiac:
Through Virgo, where Christ was born of flesh
From His soul, matched and matchless;
Through the Waterbearer, when He sorrowed
In tears, blameless; through the Bull,
When He offered His body on the gallows.
Now he enters the house of the Lion
With a mane of light whose beams
Enflame the hemispheres, and His voice
Is the shaking thunder, the roar from the grave
That brings the world of beasts to the yoke
Of His redemption.

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O Phoenix, cherished bird of Arabia,
You are the symbol of Christ the Hero.
He, like you, lies unenslaved among the dead.
You die on a scented pyre;
He dies on a tree that offers heaven its perfume.
Your ashes are his marrow;
You bear your ashes to an altar in the burning desert.
Christ, so resurrected, against the azure sky
And the vaults of stars You raise your tree of light.

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