

“Hymn for the People of Custrin” (1759)¹

[cf. Baker list, #235]

Editorial Introduction:

The Seven Year’s War (1756–63) engulfed most of Europe, with Prussia joining Britain as allies against France, Russia, and much of the rest of the continent. In 1758 a Russian army roved through Brandenburg sacking several cities. On August 15 they laid siege to the town of Custrin (modern Kostrzyn) in Poland. The siege lasted for ten days, being lifted only when a Prussian army led by Frederick the Great engaged the Russians and defeated them in a very costly battle. Shortly after, in an effort to raise relief funds for the people of Custrin, a pamphlet describing their suffering was published in Britain, titled *The Case of the Unhappy People of Custrin* (London: H. Miller, 1759).

Charles Wesley was moved by the case of the people of Custrin and sought to offer support in raising relief funds. In this effort he cooperated with his regular London publisher, William Strahan, in publishing an abridgement of *The Case of the Unhappy People of Custrin*. The abridgement shortens the original pamphlet by omitting opening and closing sections. The only thing added in the Strahan version is a hymn by Charles Wesley on behalf of the people of Custrin.

Edition:

[Charles Wesley.] *The Case of the Unhappy People of Custrin*. [London: Strahan, 1759.]

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An Hymn

1. God of boundless pity spare
Those that now thine anger bear;
Far from them the scourge remove,
Whom we in thy bowels love.
2. Why should they be stricken more?
Give thy controversy o'er;
Do not let their foes come nigher,
Cease to plead with sword and fire.
3. Listening to thy people's cries,
Rescue them from Rome's allies;
Stop the ministers of death,
Save the children from their teeth.
4. Comforter of all that mourn,
Heal whom human fiends have torn,
Sanctify their loss and pain,
Take them to thine arms again.
5. Jesus, is there not in thee
Balm for every misery?
Let thy love their anguish ease,
Bless them with thy perfect peace.
6. Now the gospel-grace impart,
Enter every broken heart,
Seal the mourners' sins forgiven,
Lift them on thy cross to heaven.