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Foreword

In recent years we have had the privilege in life to become parents. And, though we have not worked as extensively as many in children's music, lately we have spent more time writing and reflecting on the subject since we now have four children of our own.

It is particularly unusual, given the fact that much children's literature today is story-driven, highly involved, complex, mystical, and requiring such intellectual commitment, that in comparison, much current children's theological teaching, songs and even worship to almighty God can be so simplistic and shallow rather than telling the ascendant and beautiful story of Christ. It is refreshing to see a book of hymns selected for children to sing that tell the gospel and teach complex biblical truths in a timeless way.

Our fellow countryman C.S. Lewis said, "No book is really worth reading at the age of ten which is not equally (and often far more) worth reading at the age of fifty." We believe the same is true of songs and singing.

We are so excited about the publication of this hymnbook for children. Our prayer is that our children will be singing theologically rich hymns such as the ones found here long after we are gone and will continue to pass them on from generation to generation.

Keith and Kristyn Getty

Preface

Our *Hymns, Our Heritage: A Student Guide to Songs of the Church* is written to acquaint students of all ages with a generous collection of our greatest hymns, both ancient and modern. We believe these are among the hymns every child—indeed, every Christian—should know. The target age is students ages nine to twelve; however, we know both younger and older students who use this book—even some senior adults! You should never stop being a student, especially about the truths and glory of God.

In Matthew 19:14 are the unique and powerful words of Jesus, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.” Shortly after He said this, the children followed Him into the temple and cried out, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” The chief priests were indignant, telling Jesus to silence them. But He responded: “Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise?’” (Matt. 21:16). Jeannette Threlfall retells this story in her hymn “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna,” No. 28. *Our Hymns, Our Heritage* is a collection of “hosannas” for students of every age to learn. This book was first published in 2014 under the title *Hosanna, Loud Hosannas*.

What is a hymn? We think it is a beautiful word, and you might think of it simply as a song about Him—our great God. We attempted to choose hymns that are some of the best expressions of worship that have ever been written. Since many Christian men and women wrote them over many centuries, this book is like a family picture album with great-great-great-grandparents you have never met, as well as gifted relatives who are still alive. If you never learn or sing these hymns, it is like never seeing these older relatives’ pictures. They are the treasured writings of saints through the ages and represent our Christian heritage. Our Christian family. The psalmist said, “Your testimonies are my *heritage* forever, for they are the joy of my heart” (Ps. 119:111, emphasis added). These hymns are the testimonies of people who knew (or know) the Word of God and put them in poetry to be sung.

The word *our* in the title communicates that these belong to the past *and* the present. Not all of them are old. Of 120 songs, twenty-five percent are new enough to still be under copyright laws, meaning they are less than ninety years old.

This is not a typical hymnal you would see at church. It includes biographical stories of each text author and tune composer. Each hymn's story page contains three parts: *Text*, *Tune*, and *As You Sing This Hymn*.

The *Text* portion describes the author of the words. Many things influence a hymn text, such as when and where the person lived, what school they attended, or life experiences with their family. In many of the stories, God used difficult circumstances to teach people about Himself. Pay attention to the dates as you may discover someone who wrote a hymn who was born on your birthday!

Tune is another word for melody. Often the melody has a history separate from the text. Different tunes can be used for the same text. An example is "Away in a Manger," for which two tunes are commonly sung, and in this book, you will find them both. Tunes are named for a variety of reasons: often for where the composer lived or for an emotion the tune evokes, such as ODE TO JOY. The tune names are always typed in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS to set them apart from the text or hymn name.

Hymns declare what we believe about God, so it is very important when singing to think about what the words mean for your life. That is why each hymn story includes a section called *As you sing this hymn*. Perhaps a hymn will help you to pray and trust God more. Or maybe you will discover things for which to thank Him. Never sing thoughtlessly, but look for ways to apply each hymn text to your life in God.

As you turn your eyes to the right-hand side and look at the music, pay attention to two things. First, notice the Scripture verse under the title. It describes what Scripture truth the hymn may be based on. It's like a rope between the hymn text and your Bible. Second, notice that the melody line is on top, but sometimes there is a harmony line underneath. If you are singing with others, we encourage you to learn and sing the harmony as well as the melody, because it adds much beauty to the sound, and you will enjoy the hymn even more.

Although sometimes known as verses, we call the multiple paragraphs of the poem stanzas. To make it easier to follow the line of each stanza, every other one is in *italic* font.

Many people love hymns because they can sing them by memory at any time in any place. You don't have to be at church or in a school chapel. You can sing them with your family in the car. You can sing with friends any time. You can sing to your parents and grandparents. You can sing when you are happy or when you are sad. Hymns are friends to take with you anywhere because hymns are to and for God, and He is always everywhere. God bless you as you bring these 120 hymns into your heart and life. Sing them often and sing them as “loud Hosannas”!

To Parents and Grandparents

We love God. We love children and youth. We love hymns. We desire to bring the first two closer together with the help of the third.

Why is it essential that children sing hymns? Is anything wrong with the simple choruses often taught to children at church? We believe it is unfortunate if that is all they sing!

All children love what they know. If we teach our children mediocrity, they will love what is mediocre. If we teach them what is excellent, even if difficult, they will love what is excellent. The goal of this hymnal is to provide children with the best music that has been composed for them to sing praise to God. Zoltán Kodály, the Hungarian composer whose musical educational philosophy transformed music education in the twentieth century, said that “only art of intrinsic value is suitable for children.”¹ He adds, “Let us take our children seriously! Everything else follows from this . . . only the best is good enough for a child.”²

How do you choose essential hymns every child should sing? This may have been the most difficult part of putting this book together. We began with hymns that are common to hymnals of every denomination and age. Hymns like “Holy, Holy, Holy” are sung in churches worldwide. They have stood the test of time. We looked for texts that are particularly appealing to children, such as those with descriptive word pictures. But we did not shy away from hymns that are rich in theology and language. Finally, we looked for hymns that highlight and teach the gospel.

There are many popular hymns from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that are known as *gospel hymns* that were not chosen. This is not because they are not wonderful expressions of faith, but because the less formal style of the music does not always support the dignity of the text. Usually, these songs are not universally sung in all denominations or churches. However, we did include a brief collection of the uniquely African American gospel songs because of their important heritage. We also wanted the book to have broad appeal. We also chose about twenty-five written by women authors or composers.

Perhaps the most difficult choices concerned modern hymns since they have not yet stood the test of time and proven essential. We only chose modern hymns that are similar in style to the historical hymns, using multiple stanzas with congregationally singable melodies and rhythms.

With children in mind, we have arranged this hymnal differently than most hymnals. There are four main sections: *The Church Year*, beginning with Advent and Christmas hymns. Children relate to the baby Jesus, a child like them, and the wonderful Christmas story. The second section is simply *God Is*, with hymns that teach who God is—His attributes and the broad categories of what He does for us. *We Respond* offers hymns with which we may respond in praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition, testimony, commitment, and prayer. If you are choosing a hymn for your children, remember to point out the purpose of the hymn as listed at the top of the story page. This will assist them in singing with purpose, rather than simply because they like the song! Of course, the texts often overlap in content and theme, and many hymns could be included in all three sections. This edition from Moody Publishers adds a small selection of *Spirituals* and black gospel songs. They are all first-person expressions of prayer or petition to God and offer songs of lament for times of trouble.

We have taught hymns to children for over forty years and have countless stories to tell of them singing hymns at birthday parties, in the bathtub, in grocery store aisles and church aisles. Those children, in turn, have taught them to their three-year-old siblings and ninety-three-year-old grandparents. In fact, they have sometimes taught their parents to love hymns, too.

Why teach hymns to children? In studying hymns, children glean from a wide spectrum of knowledge. They learn Bible content and doctrine. They observe the hearts of godly men and women. They encounter a little world

history. And they imbibe the beauty of melody and harmony, poetry, and literature. A hymn is a treasure chest of learning. Some words, thoughts, and experiences they have not yet encountered, but their truths will serve them throughout life.

These songs will help students memorize the words of Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Francis of Assisi, Martin Luther, St. Augustine, Isaac Watts, the Wesleys, Fanny Crosby, Thomas Ken, and others. In so doing, they create a reference point in the pathways of their minds, construct a framework in the core of their spirits, lay a foundation in the soils of their souls. What is more, they will join their hearts and tongues to the centuries of saints worshipping Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Martin Luther said that “next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. It controls our thoughts, minds, hearts, and spirits.”³ It is wonderful that you are giving your child the gift of owning his or her own hymnal. Join your child in learning and singing these hymns, and so give your child the gift of placing these truths deep in their hearts. If they love these hymns, hopefully like you, they will pass them on to the next generation.

Barbara and David Leeman

Suggestions for Teaching Hymns

Parents or school leaders will have their own methods for using this book and teaching these hymns. But we have some suggestions to share:

- **Make singing a regular part of family devotions.** Most devotions include a Bible reading, perhaps a thought from a devotional book, and some prayer. But including a song or hymn is a wonderfully unifying participation for the entire family. Dr. Donald Whitney in his most helpful book, *Family Worship*, suggests that there are three elements to family worship: read the Bible, pray, and sing. “Only three syllables to remember—read, pray, sing. . . . You don’t need to prepare anything beforehand. Just read, pray, and sing.”⁴ Obviously, it would be helpful if each family member had access to their own copy of this book. So, quantity discounts are available at www.HosannaHymnals.com.
- **Sing without accompaniment (*a cappella*)** if the hymn is familiar. But if you would feel more comfortable with a piano accompaniment, you may order our recording of all the hymns in this book on a USB stick from www.HosannaHymnals.com. These are played as piano accompaniments to all the stanzas.
- **Play the piano accompaniment** if someone in the family or the Christian school plays piano. A book of the accompaniments heard on the USB recording is also available at www.HosannaHymnals.com.
- **Choose a “hymn of the month.”** Although you may want to sing a different hymn at each devotional time, in order to truly learn a hymn—perhaps by memory—we suggest using one that is repeated throughout the month. This is also a very important method in a Christian school or

homeschool curriculum. The hymn of the month should be sung each week if there is a Chapel gathering or sung daily in the classroom where devotions are practiced. Repetition is often the best teacher.

- **Review the hymns at the end of the school year** by singing nine hymns learned from September through May. On HosannaHymnals.com you will find a growing collection of hymn medleys of nine hymns arranged to be sung in succession with appropriate key changes in the accompaniment. The printed music for these is available at a nominal cost at www.HosannaHymnals.com. It would be important to pick your hymn medley before the beginning of the school year to know which hymns to use in your hymn of the month. Of course, you might arrange your own hymn medley as well.
- **Subscribe online to the *Hosanna Hymnals* blog**, where we provide occasional articles, updates, and content of hymn quizzes that can be used in teaching or reviewing hymn stories.



THE church year

ADVENT
CHRISTMAS
EPIPHANY
LENT
EASTER
PENTECOST

Lent What Wondrous Love Is This

TEXT AND TUNE: American folk hymn

From the rural folk of the southern Appalachian Mountains comes what some consider the finest and most beautiful of American folk hymns. Life was difficult for people in the mountains, but they came together to sing, dance, and worship. Their music was passed on from generation to generation orally, never being written down. This anonymous text first appeared in print in 1811, in *A General Selection of the Newest and Most Admired Hymns and Spiritual Songs Now in Use* (edited by Stith Mead, Lynchburg, Virginia: Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1811). The first person to write down the tune that is now called WONDROUS LOVE was James Christopher, a man from South Carolina.

William Walker (1809–1875) was a musically gifted young man also from South Carolina who collected and arranged folk songs from Appalachia and camp meetings. People called him “Singing Billy.” Walker participated in the singing schools, which began in the early days of America by those who immigrated here for religious freedom. It was essential for them to train every churchgoer how to sing because of their strong convictions on congregational singing in Christian worship. In 1835, Walker published a collection called *Southern Harmony*, which contained the text and tune we now use. Walker’s brother-in-law, Benjamin White (who started his musical career playing the fife in the War of 1812), also published this hymn in a hymnal called *The Sacred Harp* (1844).

As you sing this hymn . . . you are preaching to yourself! You are directing your own soul to heed the declarations and assurances of this song. Perhaps that is why the first five words of each stanza are repeated three times and the last phrase is repeated twice. Often, we have the hardest time convincing ourselves of something. We have to tell ourselves over and over.

The second stanza uses an unusual expression for guilt: “When I was sinking down beneath God’s righteous frown.” When we understand our sin, and what the righteous Judge demands, we want to hide, to sink down. We rightly feel guilty. But here’s the good news: Christ stepped in, laid aside His crown as King, and died for everyone who repents and believes. What wondrous love!


Bert Polman, a hymnologist and author, notes that the hymn begins with a personal reflection by addressing your own soul. But as you sing, you realize that “millions join the theme,” and when all sing together, it is “a great corporate sermon”! We will sing its theme throughout eternity!

What Wondrous Love Is This

22

*See what kind of love the Father has given to us,
that we should be called children of God; and so we are.*

I JOHN 3:1



1. What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
2. *When* I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing down,
3. To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
4. *And* when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,




what won-drous love is this, O my soul! _____
when I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down; _____
to God and to the Lamb, I will sing! _____
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; _____



What won-drous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
When I was sink - ing down be - neath God's right - eous frown,
To God and to the Lamb, Who is the great I AM,
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy - ful be,



to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid a - side His crown for my soul, for my soul,
while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on, I'll sing on,



to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul! _____
Christ laid a - side His crown for my soul! _____
while mil - lions join the theme I will sing! _____
and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on! _____

TEXT AND TUNE: American folk hymn

WONDROUS LOVE

Lent O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

TEXT: Bernard of Clairvaux

b. 1090, Fontaine-lès-Dijon, France
d. August 20, 1153, Clairvaux Abbey, France

Bernard was the son of a knight. He lost his mother at the age of nineteen, and his life was so filled with temptations that he decided to enter a monastery. He also convinced twelve friends, an uncle, and four brothers to join him. At the age of twenty-four, he founded his own monastery in a valley in France that he renamed *Clara Vallis* (“Beautiful Valley”) from which comes his title, Bernard of Clairvaux. This monastery became famous, numbering among its students a pope, six cardinals, and thirty bishops. Although influential in his lifetime, Bernard is most remembered for the kind of devotion and love for his Savior that is expressed in this poem. Martin Luther said of him, “If there has ever been a pious monk who feared God, it was St. Bernard, whom alone I hold in much higher esteem than all other monks and priests throughout the world.”¹³

Bernard originally wrote this poem in seven sections, each focusing on a different part of the Savior’s suffering body. He wrote it in Latin, then the language of the church. Five hundred years later, Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676), whom some regard as the greatest of Lutheran hymnists, translated it into German. Almost 200 years after that, James Waddell Alexander (1804–1859) translated it into English. In short, this beautiful expression of God’s love as shown in our suffering Savior has come to us through 700 years, three languages, and three traditions—Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed. It is truly a masterpiece worth being memorized by every Christian.

TUNE: Hans Leo Hassler

b. October 25, 1564, Nuremberg, Germany
d. June 8, 1612, Frankfurt, Germany

The tune also has a diverse history. It began as a German folk song, which Hans Leo Hassler employed for this hymn text. J. S. Bach wrote the current harmonization, which is now considered one of the world’s masterpieces of sacred music. It was under Bach’s hand that it came to its current name, *PASSION CHORALE*.

As you sing this hymn . . . you behold Jesus on the cross covered in grief and shame. Bernard does not try to gloss over our Savior’s agony. Yet the question is, Why would Jesus be weighed down with shame if He never sinned? Answer: because He took the blame for our sins upon Himself. So sing with stanza 2, “Mine, mine was the transgression, but Thine the deadly pain.” There is little to say in response to such self-giving love. Stanza 3 gets it right: “What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest Friend?” All of the words in every language could never be enough to say thank you to Jesus Christ for receiving the punishment that we deserve, that we might be reconciled to God.

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

23

He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities.

ISAIAH 53:5



1. O sa - cred Head, now wound - ed, with grief and shame weighed down,
2. *What Thou, my Lord, hast suf - fered was all for sin - ners' gain:*
3. What lan - guage shall I bor - row to thank Thee, dear - est Friend,



now scorn - ful - ly sur - round - ed with thorns, Thine on - ly crown,
mine, mine was the trans - gres - sion, but Thine the dead - ly pain.
 for this, Thy dy - ing sor - row, Thy pit - y with - out end?



O sa - cred Head, what glo - ry, what bliss till now was Thine!
Lo, here— I fall, my Sav - ior! 'Tis I de - serve Thy place;
 O make me Thine for ev - er; and should I faint - ing be,



Yet, though de - spised and gor - y, I joy to call Thee mine.
look on— me with Thy fa - vor, vouch - safe to me Thy grace.
 Lord, let— me nev - er, nev - er out - live my love to Thee.

TEXT: Bernard of Clairvaux, trans. James W. Alexander

PASSION CHORALE

TUNE: Hans Leo Hassler, arr. Johann Sebastian Bach

Lent When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

TEXT: Isaac Watts

b. July 17, 1674, Southampton, England
d. November 25, 1748, London, England
(for more on Watts, see No. 19, 46, 52, and 71)

Isaac's father, a schoolmaster, was a leader in the Nonconformist State Church movement and was imprisoned repeatedly for his views. His son, too, did not follow traditions. It was clear that Isaac was very bright, learning Latin by age four, Greek at nine, French at eleven (so that he could talk to refugee neighbors), and Hebrew at thirteen. Friends offered to pay for his university education at Oxford or Cambridge, but Isaac refused, and at sixteen he went to London to study at a leading Nonconformist academy. In 1702, he became pastor of London's Mark Lane Independent Chapel, then one of the city's most influential independent churches.

This hymn is considered by many to be Isaac Watts' finest hymn, and some say it is the greatest hymn ever written because it so eloquently combines revelation and response. Watts wrote the hymn to be sung while taking communion.

TUNE: Lowell Mason

b. January 8, 1792, Medfield, Massachusetts
d. August 11, 1872, Orange, New Jersey
(for more on Mason, see No. 19)

Lowell Mason wrote HAMBURG in 1824. Its source was a Gregorian chant, a melody style that developed in the Middle Ages, named after Pope Gregory the Great. Chants are sung without a meter or rhythm and usually without interval skips. So the melody of this hymn, like a chant, moves up or down only one step at a time, and the range of the melody is only five notes!

As you sing this hymn . . . you are asked to approach the cross of Jesus in your mind's eye. You look and see the Prince of Glory dying. You survey the scene. You measure it. Just like you might survey a piece of land or measure a road, so now you survey and measure this gruesome scene.

What is it? And what is it worth? It is nothing other than the grandest demonstration of God's love in history, and it is more valuable than all the world. Boasting should stop here. Worldly desire should stop here. Christ's love is worth more than all that. It covers your sin and mine. It covers the past, the present, and the future. Most of all, it brings us to God. The cross changes everything in our lives; it makes us new.

What is your decision about the cross? Have you carefully measured how long, wide, high, and deep is the love of the suffering Savior as shown on the cross? Has looking to His sacrifice changed you? Does your heart respond, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all"? If not, look again.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross 24

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

GALATIANS 6:14



1. When I sur - vey the won - drous cross
 2. For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast,
 3. See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
 4. Were the whole realm of na - ture mine,



on which the Prince of glo - ry died,
save in the death of Christ my God:
 sor - row and love flow min - gled down:
that were a pres - ent far too small;



my rich - est gain I count but loss,
all the vain things that charm me most,
 did e'er such love and sor - row meet,
love so amaz - ing, so di - vine,



and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
I sac - ri - fice them to His blood.
 or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

TEXT: Isaac Watts
 TUNE: Lowell Mason

HAMBURG

Lent Hallelujah! What a Savior

TEXT AND TUNE: Philip Bliss

b. July 9, 1838, Clearfield County, Pennsylvania
d. December 29, 1876, Ashtabula, Ohio

Philip Bliss was born to a father who loved both God and music. His father encouraged his son to develop a love for singing. At age ten Philip first heard a piano, which captured his own love for music. At the age of twenty-two, Bliss became an itinerant music teacher and travelled from community to community on horseback carrying a melodeon (a small accordion). His wife's grandmother lent him \$30 to attend the Normal Academy of Music of New York, where he developed his love for composing. At age twenty-six, he moved to Chicago, where he met the famed evangelist D. L. Moody, who encouraged him to give up teaching and become a music evangelist. Bliss wrote dozens of hymns, including the tune for "It Is Well with My Soul." He was one of the nineteenth century's most prominent American hymn writers. Bliss and his wife tragically perished when their train was crossing a bridge, the bridge collapsed, and the train plunged into a river.

Ira Sankey, soloist for the Moody Crusades, relates this about the hymn:

This was the last hymn I heard Mr. Bliss sing. It was at a meeting in Chicago. . . . A few weeks before his death Mr. Bliss visited the State prison at Jackson, Michigan, where, after a very touching address on "The Man of Sorrows," he sang this hymn. Many of the prisoners dated their conversion from that day. When Mr. Moody and I were in Paris, holding meetings in the old church which Napoleon had granted to the Evangelicals, I frequently sang this hymn as a solo, asking the congregation to join in the single phrase, "Hallelujah, what a Savior," which they did with splendid effect as the word "Hallelujah" is the same in all languages.¹⁴

As you sing this hymn . . . consider the "man of sorrows" in Isaiah 53. Read the chapter as you prepare to sing this hymn. It points to Christ's sufferings. "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (v. 3). Isaiah observes that He suffered in our place: "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (v. 4).

The hymn makes this remarkable chapter our testimony through personal pronouns, for those who are Christians. Isaiah writes, "He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities" (v. 5). The hymn puts it like this: "In my place condemned He stood," and He "sealed my pardon."

As in Isaiah 53, the hymn concludes on a note of triumph. The suffering servant becomes the glorious King, and He returns to bring His ransomed ones—us!—home with Him. Our faces should break into a smile as we sing, "Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Hallelujah! What a Savior

25

*He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows
and acquainted with grief.*

ISAIAH 53:3



1. "Man of sor - rows!" what a name for the Son of
2. *Bear ing shame and scof - fing rude, in my place con -*
3. Guil ty, vile, and help - less, we; spot - less Lamb of
4. *Lift ed up was He to die, "It is fin - ished,"*
5. When He comes our glo - rious King, all His ran - somed



God, Who came ru - ined sin - ners to re - claim!
denmed He stood, sealed my par - don with His blood:
God was He; full a - tone - ment, can it be?
was His cry; now in heaven ex - alt - ed high:
home to bring, then a - new this song we'll sing:



Hal - le - lu - jah! what a Sav - ior!

TEXT AND TUNE: Philip P. Bliss

HALLELUJAH! WHAT A SAVIOR

Lent How Deep the Father's Love for Us

TEXT AND TUNE: Stuart Townend

b. June 1, 1963, West Yorkshire, England
(for more on Townend, see No. 12, 34, 62, 65, and 99)

Stuart Townend has written about Christian music:

There are probably more hymns and worship songs being written today than in any period of church history. But relatively few will stand the test of time. And that has always been the case: for every “Amazing Grace” or “And Can It Be,” you can bet there are several hundred trite, interminably dull ditties that did the rounds at the time, but have now thankfully faded into blissful obscurity.¹⁵

He then offers six guidelines for writing an excellent Christian song: 1) Study the Scriptures; 2) Be poetic, not pompous; 3) Combine objective truth and subjective response; 4) Look for musical dynamics; 5) Make every line count; and 6) Prune it mercilessly.¹⁶

Townend gives insight into his writing of “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”:

I’d been meditating on the cross, and in particular what it cost the Father to give up His beloved Son to a torturous death on a cross. And what was my part in it? Not only was it my sin that put him there, but if I’d lived at that time, it would probably have been me in that crowd, shouting with everyone else “crucify him.” It just makes his sacrifice all the more personal, all the more amazing, and all the more humbling.

As I was thinking through this, I . . . began to sing the melody, and it flowed in the sort of way that makes you think you’ve pinched it from somewhere! So the melody was pretty instant, but the words took quite a bit of time, reworking things, trying to make every line as strong as I could.¹⁷

The meter, or time signature, is in 5/4 time—the only such one in all 120 hymns in this book. We are used to hearing 1–2–3–4, 1–2–3–4; or 1–2–3, 1–2–3; not 1–2–3–4–5! The extra beat in each measure takes us away from “feeling a beat” and into a free flowing movement. This assists in the narrative, meditative quality of the words.

As you sing this hymn . . . notice the series of powerful and passionate words like *vast*, *wretch*, *treasure*, *searing loss*, *ashamed*, *scoffers*, and *accomplished*, words not often found in hymns. These tell the story of deep love. They help us consider the awfulness of the cross and the extent of both the Father’s and the Son’s sacrifice.

How does this impact you? How do you respond? The third stanza is an expression of Galatians 6:14: “But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Such amazing, sacrificial love is humbling. We don’t deserve it. Why did He die? There is no answer. We can only respond with our love in return.

How Deep the Father's Love for Us 26

That you . . . may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ . . . that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

EPHESIANS 3:17-19



1. How deep the Fa-ther's love for us, how vast be-yond all meas - ure,
 2. *Be - hold the Man up - on the cross, my sin up - on His shoul - ders.*
 3. I will not boast in an - y thing: no gifts, no pow'r, no wis - dom.



that He should give His on - ly Son to make a wretch His treas - ure.
A - shamed, I hear my mock - ing voice call out a - mong the scof - fers.
 But I will boast in Je - sus Christ; His death and res - ur - rec - tion.



How great the pain of sear - ing loss. The Fa - ther turns His face a - way
It was my sin that held Him there un - til it was ac - com - plished;
 Why should I gain from His re - ward? I can - not give an an - swer.



as wounds which mar the Cho - sen One bring man - y sons to glo - ry.
His dy - ing breath has brought me life. I know that it is fin - ished.
 But this I know with all my heart: His wounds have paid my ran - som.

TEXT AND TUNE: Stuart Townend

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Lent Lift High the Cross

TEXT: George W. Kitchin

b. December 7, 1827, Naughton, Suffolk, England
d. October 13, 1912, Durham, England

George Kitchin, the son of a minister, was educated at King's College and Oxford University. He served as Dean of Winchester, Dean of Durham Cathedral, and then as Chancellor of Durham University. He is best remembered as the author of "Lift High the Cross."

His hymn focuses on a primary symbol of Christianity, the cross. It is the symbol of gruesome death as well as the greatest victory. On this "tree of pain," Jesus Christ triumphed over mankind's two worst enemies, sin and death. The hymn describes it as "victorious," "healing," "glorious," "triumphant," and "conquering." The one lifted up on the cross is not just a dying Savior, but a triumphant King who draws the world to Himself in total victory. It reminds us of the bronze serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, to which all Israelites bitten by poisonous snakes could look and live (Num. 21:4–9). Jesus then compared His own crucifixion to the lifting up of this bronze snake (John 3:14–15). Whoever looked to Him would not die but have eternal life.

TUNE: Sydney H. Nicholson

b. May 30, 1947, Kent, England
d. February 9, 1975, London, England

Some churches begin their service by having a person carry a cross atop a long staff down the center aisle—a processional. At the end of the service, the cross is carried out during the recessional. The person carrying the cross is called a *crucifer*. This word comes from two Latin words, *crux*, which means "cross," and *ferre*, which is "to carry." *Crucifer* means "cross-bearer." Sydney Nicholson, who wrote this tune, named it CRUCIFER, since the text instructs all Christians to be cross-bearers.

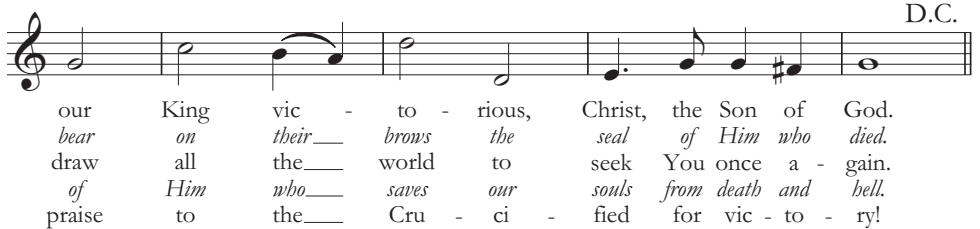
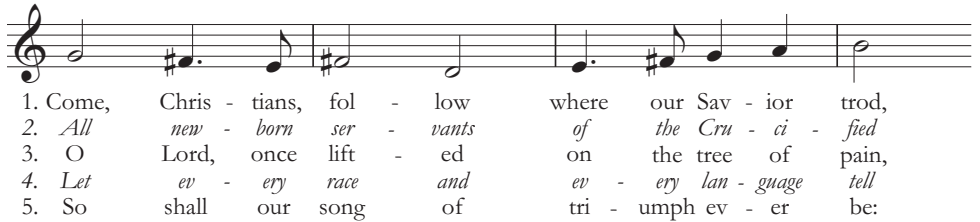
Nicholson was the church organist in several prestigious churches, including Eton College, Manchester Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey, where he is buried. His tune begins with the chorus and returns to it following each verse, giving the sense of perpetual motion. The melody and harmonies are high and majestic, as befits a grand processional. Notice the melody matches the words on "lift high" by going up.

As you sing this hymn . . . consider how people at athletic events or political rallies lift up signs and banners to tell everyone what is important to them. Here, we are not being asked to lift up literal crosses but to "proclaim" Jesus Christ with our mouths and lives. When we do, people will be drawn to Him in adoration. Like the Israelites, they will be saved from the snake bites of sin and death.

Lift High the Cross

*And I, when I am lifted up from the earth,
will draw all people to Myself.*

JOHN 12:32



TEXT: George W. Kitchin, rev. Michael R. Newbolt

CRUCIFER

TUNE: Sydney H. Nicholson

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Lent—Palm Sunday Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

TEXT: Jeannette Threlfall ||| b. March 24, 1821, Blackburn, Lancs, England
d. November 30, 1880, Westminster, England

Jeannette Threlfall was called a “sweet singer of hymns and other sacred poems.”¹⁸ Her parents died when she was quite young, and she lived out her childhood with relatives who referred to her as their “beloved inmate.” Later in life she endured two bad accidents. The first left her lame, the second a total invalid. Yet it was said that “she bore her long slow sufferings brightly, and to the end retained a gentle, loving, sympathetic heart, and always a pleasant word and smile, forgetful of herself.”¹⁹ Threlfall was an avid reader, which led her to write many poems and hymns of her own. She published a collection of them that she titled *Sunshine and Shadow* (1873).

The word *hosanna* as used in the Old Testament means “save us” or “help us!” But in the story of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the story that is told by this hymn, the word *hosanna* is spoken in jubilation and praise. The first two stanzas focus specifically on the children singing, following, and waiting upon Jesus. Evidently, they followed Him into the temple and continued to sing “Hosanna to the Son of David” (Matt. 21:15). This angered the priests, prompting Jesus to remind them of Psalm 8:2: “They said to Him, ‘Do you hear what these are saying?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Yes; have you never read, “Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise?”’” (Matt. 21:16). This biblical episode defines the purpose of the hymnal you are holding in your hands: that children may praise God by singing hymns to Him.

TUNE: *Gesangbuch der Herzogl, Hofkapelle* |||
Württemberg, Germany, 1784

ELLCOMBE, named for a village in Devonshire, England, was first written for the Duke of Württemberg and published in a chapel hymnal in 1784. It was edited in 1868 by Henry Monk for inclusion in the historically significant English hymnal, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Still available today, the hymnal has sold over 150 million copies worldwide.

As you sing this hymn . . . never forget Jesus’ tender love for children. One day He said to His disciples, “Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.’ And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands on them” (Mark 10:14–16). Jesus points to the example of little children because of their open and trusting hearts. Anyone who would follow Jesus, whether old or young, must have such a heart. Does your heart trust Him? If so, then you will want to sing with stanza 3, “Hosanna in the highest!” Christ is our Redeemer and King.

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

28

*The children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" . . .
 "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never
 read, 'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise?'"*

MATTHEW 21:15-16



1. Ho - san - na, loud ho - san - na, the lit - tle child - ren sang;
 2. *From Ol - i - vet they fol - lowed 'mid an ex - ult - ant crowd,*
 3. "Ho - san - na in the high - est!" That an - cient song we sing,



through pil - lared court and tem - ple, the love - ly an - them rang;
the vic - tor palm branch wav - ing, and chant - ing clear and loud;
 for Christ is our Re - deem - er, the Lord of heav'n our King!



to Je - sus, Who had blessed them, close fold - ed to His breast,
the Lord of earth and heav - en, rode on in low - ly state,
 O may we ev - er praise Him with heart and life and voice,



the child - ren sang their prais - es, the sim - plest and the best.
nor scorned that lit - tle child - ren shoud on His bid - ding wait.
 and in His bliss - ful pres - ence e - ter - nal - ly re - joice!

TEXT: Jeannette Threlfall

ELLACOMBE

TUNE: *Gesangbuch der H.W.K. Hofkapelle, 1784*

Lent—Palm Sunday All Glory, Laud, and Honor

TEXT: Theodulph of Orleans ||| b. 760, Italy
d. 821, Angiers, France

Theodulph knew kings! The first king he knew was Charlemagne, who brought him from Spain to help him build schools and reform the clergy. While serving this earthly king, Theodulph began writing hymns for his heavenly King. Theodulph also knew Charlemagne's son and successor, King Louis. But when Louis tried to divide the kingdom among his sons, Theodulph got caught in the family dispute and was falsely accused of conspiring with Louis's nephew, King Bernard of Italy. Theodulph was placed in prison, where he wrote the seventy-eight verses of "All Glory, Laud, and Honor . . . to Thee, Redeemer *King*." It is said that King Louis freed Theodulph upon hearing him sing this hymn from outside the prison window.

We would not know this hymn were it not for John Mason Neale (1818–1856), who lived a thousand years after Theodulph and translated the text from Latin to English. Neale lost his father at the age of five and was schooled at home by his mother. A student of classic Greek and Roman culture and language, he became part of a movement that researched Roman liturgy and hymnody for English use. This revolutionized English church music and ultimately American as well. Other hymns translated by Neale include "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," "Good Christian Men, Rejoice," and "Of the Father's Love Begotten."

TUNE: Melchior Teschner ||| b. April 29, 1584, Prussia
d. December 1, 1635, Prussia

The tune is called ST. THEODULPH, the author of the text. But it was written by Melchior Teschner, a German hymn writer born in 1584, 700 years after Theodulph.

As you sing this hymn . . . if you are at your church, it will most likely be the Sunday before Easter, or Palm Sunday, since it recalls Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The week before He was crucified, Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. People laid palm branches before Him and shouted, "Hosanna!" which means, "please, save us!"

Have you noticed how people in a parade always smile and wave at the crowds? Do you think Jesus did that as He entered Jerusalem? He was not on an elegant float or a decorated horse. Instead He sat humbly on a donkey, aware that people who shouted "Hosanna!" five days later would shout, "Crucify Him!" Yet, Theodulph's hymn offers no hint of irony. It simply asks us to smile and sing with joy because we know the end of the story. Jesus triumphed over death! He is our reigning King. "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes."

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

29

The next day the large crowd . . . heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"

JOHN 12:12-13



2. *The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore Thee went;*
 3. To Thee, be - fore Thy pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise;
 4. *Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es, ac - cept the prayers we bring,*



our praise and prayer and an - thems be - fore Thee we pre - sent:
 to Thee, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise:
Who in all good de - light - est, Thou good and gra - cious King!

D.C.

TEXT: Theodulph of Orleans, trans. John Mason Neale
 TUNE: Melchior Teschner

ST. THEODULPH

Lent—Palm Sunday The King of Glory Comes

TEXT: Willard F. Jabusch, 1966 || b. 1930, Chicago, Illinois
d. December 12, 2018

When Willard Jabusch was in the seventh grade, he watched while a priest visited his dying grandmother. The gravity of the occasion, combined with the man's work of pointing to spiritual realities, prompted Willard to think, "This is something very important, and I want to do this, too."²⁰ He then studied ministry and music, and was ordained for ministry in 1956. He served in several Midwestern churches and taught in several seminaries. He wrote four books, several articles, and many hymns that are in use today. This hymn, based on Psalm 24, is probably his best known.

TUNE: Israeli folk song,
arr. John Ferguson, 1973 ||

The appeal of this hymn lies in its joyous, minor, syncopated tune, which is similar to the Jewish *hora* dance. It is an Israeli folk tune, probably of Hasidic origin, associated with the folk song *Gilu Hagalilim*, which was brought by Zionist settlers to Israel after World War I.

John Ferguson adapted the folk tune to Jabusch's text and named it PROMISED ONE for the promised Messiah. Ferguson is a well-known organist and composer. He was a professor of music at St. Olaf College from 1983 to 2012.

As you sing this hymn . . . you tell the world to receive the coming Savior, Jesus Christ. The refrain, unusually placed at the hymn's beginning and adapted from Psalm 24:7–10, declares as much: "The King of glory comes . . . Open the gates before Him." The first stanza then asks the important question, "Who is this King of glory?" The following stanzas give answers from the New Testament.

This hymn has been placed in the Lenten section of the hymnal—even though it has an upbeat tune—because it is appropriate for Palm Sunday worship. You can imagine the children standing on the roadside, like children at a parade, on that day when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. And can you hear them shouting? "Look, here He comes! Who is He? He is the King of glory!"

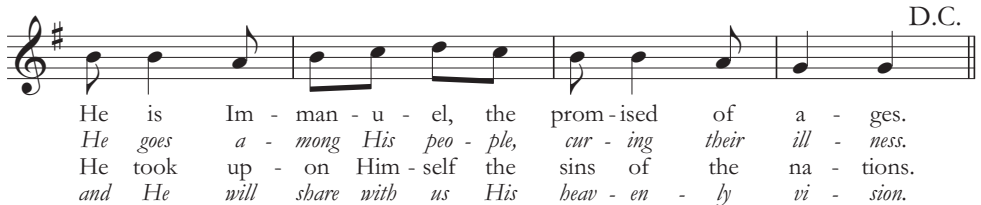
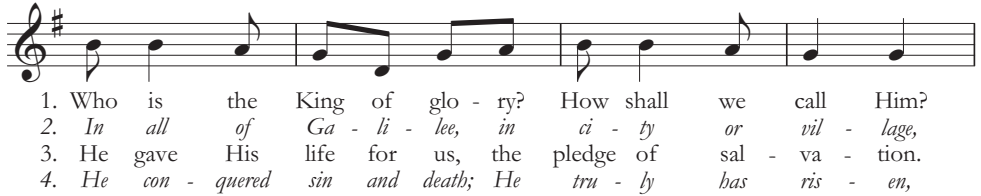
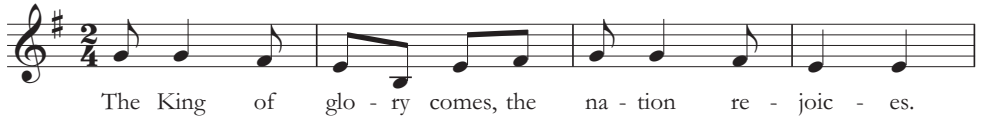
The syncopated rhythm (the reason you like this song) makes you want to clap and dance. Go ahead! In fact, as in the typical Israeli *hora* dance, you may want to start the tempo more slowly and gradually increase the speed to the end. This is a song of celebration and joy for the triumphant King.

The King of Glory Comes

30

*Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

PSALM 24:7



TEXT: Based on Psalm 24, Willard F. Jabusch

PROMISED ONE

TUNE: Israeli folk song

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