

O Lord, How Shall I Meet Thee

Wie soll ich dich empfangen
Paul Gerhardt, 1653
Tr. composite

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Wie soll ich dich empfangen
Johann Crüger, 1653
Arr. composite

O Lord, how shall I meet Thee,
Thy peo - ple long to greet Thee,

How wel - come Thee a - right?
My Hope, my heart's De - light!

Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly,

Thy lamp with - in my breast To do in spi - rit

low - ly All that may please Thee best.

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| <p>2 Thy Zion strews before Thee Green boughs and fairest palms, And I, too, will adore Thee With joyous songs and psalms. My heart shall bloom forever For Thee with praises new And from Thy name shall never Withhold the honor due.</p> <p>3 What hast Thou left ungranted To give me glad relief? When soul and body panted In utmost depth of grief, In deepest degradation, Devoid of joy and peace, Then Thou, my soul's Salvation, Didst come to bring release.</p> <p>4 I lay in fetters, groaning, Thou com'st to set me free; I stood, my shame bemoaning, Thou com'st to honor me; A glory Thou dost give me, A treasure safe on high, That will not fail or leave me As earthly riches fly.</p> <p>5 Love caused Thine incarnation, Love brought Thee down to me; Thy thirst for my salvation Procured my liberty. O Love beyond all telling, That led Thee to embrace, In love all love excelling, Our lost and fallen race!</p> | <p>6 Rejoice, then, ye sad-hearted, Who sit in deepest gloom, Who mourn o'er joys departed And tremble at your doom. Despair not, He is near you, Yea, standing at the door, Who best can help and cheer you And bids you weep no more.</p> <p>7 Ye need not toil nor languish Nor ponder day and night How in the midst of anguish Ye draw Him by your might. He comes, He comes all willing, Moved by His love alone, Your woes and troubles stilling; For all to Him are known.</p> <p>8 Sin's debt, that fearful burden, Let not your souls distress; Your guilt the Lord will pardon And cover by His grace. He comes, for men procuring The peace of sin forgiv'n, For all God's sons securing Their heritage in heav'n.</p> <p>9 What though the foes be raging, Heed not their craft and spite; Your Lord, the battle waging, Will scatter all their might. He comes, a King most glorious, And all His earthly foes In vain His course victorious Endeavor to oppose.</p> <p>10 He comes to judge the nations, A terror to His foes, A Light of consolations And blessed hope to those Who love the Lord's appearing. O glorious Sun, now come, Send forth Thy beams most cheering, And guide us safely home.</p> |
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Paul Gerhardt wrote the hymn “O Lord, How Shall I Meet Thee” (“*Wie soll ich dich empfangen*”) to correspond to the Gospel Lesson for the First Sunday in Advent, Matthew 21:1-9, the Triumphal Entry of our Lord Jesus Christ into the city of Jerusalem. Gerhardt’s text balances subjective and objective emphases. On the one hand, it is what Christ has done in history, and continues to do through the means of grace, that expresses His divine love for the unlovable human race. On the other hand, the believer’s heart is transformed by Christ’s forgiveness and is thus prepared to receive Christ at His final coming at the Last Day.

The melody was written by Johann Crüger to accompany Gerhardt’s text in its first printing, *Praxis Pietatis Melica*, 1653. Historically, the text has been sung to Melchior Vulpius’s melody, “*Valet will ich dir geben*,” familiar through its association with the Palm Sunday hymn “All Glory, Laud, and Honor.” Crüger’s melody, however, has enjoyed a resurgence among English speakers. The arrangement for the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book combines portions of the version found in *The Lutheran Hymnal* with Crüger’s original arrangement.

The translation is drawn from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, No. 58. Because the version in *The Lutheran Hymnal* omits the third stanza, the missing portion has been supplied from the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book*, 1930, No. 136. Both text and music are in the public domain and may be freely used and reproduced for any purpose whatever. They are offered with the prayer that they may serve for the edification of Christian people everywhere. For more information, visit the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book at:

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The Free Lutheran Chorale-Book

presents

O Lord, How Shall I Meet Thee

by

Paul Gerhardt

with a Melody by

Johann Crüger

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