

# We Sing, Immanuel, Thy Praise

*Wir singen dir, Immanuel*

8.8. 8.8. and alleluia

**Erschienen ist**

Paul Gerhardt, 1653

Nikolaus Herman, 1560

Tr. composite

Setting: Composite

1 We sing, Im - man - u - el, Thy praise,  
 2 With all Thy saints to Thee we sing,  
 3 For Thee, since first the world was made,  
 4 A - bove all oth - ers longed for Thee

Thou Prince of life and Fount of grace,  
 Praise, hon - or, thanks to Thee we bring,  
 So man - y hearts have watched and prayed;  
 Thy peop - le's king and shep - herd, he

Thou Flow'r of heav'n and Star of morn,  
 That Thou, O long - ex - pect - ed Guest,  
 The pa - tri - archs' and proph - ets' throng  
 With whom Thou, Lord, wert so well pleased

Thou Lord of lords, Thou Vir - gin - born. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 Hast come at last to make us blest! Al - le - lu - ia!  
 For Thee have hoped and wait - ed long. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 When with his harp Thy name he praised. Al - le - lu - ia!

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|---|---|
| 5 Oh, that the Savior soon would come<br>To break our bonds and lead us home!<br>Oh, that He might salvation bring!<br>Then Jacob would rejoice and sing.<br>Alleluia!          | 13 Thou to be weak dost not disdain,<br>Dost choose the things the world deems vain,<br>Art poor and needy and content<br>To suffer poverty and want.<br>Alleluia!          |
| 6 Now art Thou here, Thou Ever-blest!<br>In lowly manger dost Thou rest.<br>Thou, making all things great, art small;<br>So poor art Thou, yet clothest all.<br>Alleluia!       | 14 Thou sleepest on the lap of earth;<br>The manger where Thou at Thy birth<br>Wast laid to rest, the hay, the stall,<br>Were truly mean and lowly all.<br>Alleluia!        |
| 7 All heav'ns are Thine, yet Thou dost come<br>To sojourn in a stranger's home;<br>A mother's milk dost not despise,<br>Who art the Joy of angels' eyes.<br>Alleluia!           | 15 And therefore doth my courage rise,<br>Me also Thou wilt not despise;<br>O dearest Lord, Thy tender grace<br>Fill me with hope and happiness.<br>Alleluia!               |
| 8 Thou hast set bounds to earth and sea,<br>Yet swaddling-bands encircle Thee;<br>Though God, a bed of straw Thou hast;<br>Though man, yet art the First and Last.<br>Alleluia! | 16 Although I've passed in sin my days<br>And wandered far from wisdom's ways,<br>Yet Thou for this to earth hast come,<br>To bring the wand'ring sinner home.<br>Alleluia! |
| 9 From Thee above all gladness flows,<br>Yet Thou must bear such bitter woes;<br>The Gentiles' Light and Hope Thou art,<br>Yet findest none to soothe Thine heart.<br>Alleluia! | 17 Had I no load of sin to bear,<br>Thy grace, O Lord, I could not share;<br>In vain hadst Thou been born for me<br>If from God's wrath I had been free.<br>Alleluia!       |
| 10 The sweetest Friend of man Thou art,<br>Yet many hate Thee in their heart;<br>By Herod's heart Thou art abhorred,<br>Yet Thou art our Salvation, Lord.<br>Alleluia!          | 18 Now fearlessly I come to Thee,<br>From ev'ry grief Thou mak'st me free;<br>Thou bear'st the wrath, dost death destroy,<br>And turnest sorrow into joy.<br>Alleluia!      |
| 11 But I, Thy servant, Lord, today<br>Confess my love and freely say,<br>I love Thee truly, but I would<br>That I might love Thee as I should.<br>Alleluia!                     | 19 Thou art my Head, my Lord divine;<br>I am Thy member, wholly Thine,<br>And by Thy Spirit's gracious pow'r<br>Will seek to serve Thee evermore.<br>Alleluia!              |
| 12 I have the will, the pow'r is weak;<br>Yet, Lord, my humble off'ring take<br>And graciously the love receive<br>Which my poor heart to Thee can give.<br>Alleluia!           | 20 I'll sing Thine alleluias here<br>With joyful spirit year by year;<br>And in Thy courts of joy above<br>Forever I will sing Thy love.<br>Alleluia!                       |

## We Sing, Immanuel, Thy Praise

PAUL GERHARDT'S Christmas hymn "We Sing, Immanuel, Thy Praise" (*Wir singen dir, Immanuel*) first appeared in Johann Crüger's *Praxis pietatis melica*, Berlin, 1653. Though Crüger composed new tunes for many of Gerhardt's hymns when he published them, "We Sing, Immanuel, Thy Praise" was set to a tune that was at that time already nearly a century old: Nikolaus Herman's *Erschienen ist*, originally associated with the composer's own Easter text.

Gerhardt's hymn follows a distinct progression through three thematic units. After an introductory stanza of praise, stanzas 2–5 give expression to the longing of Israel for the promised Redeemer. Stanzas 6–10 marvel at the juxtaposition between, on the one hand, the glory and might of Jesus according to His divine nature, and, on the other hand, the lowly circumstances to which He was subjected according to His human nature. With stanza 11 the focus shifts from the objective contemplation of Christ to the subjective self-examination of the penitent sinner. This section includes as a subsection a further set of stanzas that return to the juxtaposition of the second section, but with direct reference to Christ's humiliation for the sake of the sinner: if Jesus could thus lower Himself in His birth, then even a lowly sinner may be confident that Jesus will deign to dwell with him.

Eight stanzas of this hymn appear in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, No. 108, in a composite translation. They had appeared earlier, together with the remaining twelve stanzas, in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book*, 1927, No. 161. This translation has been used with only minimal alteration for the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book. The musical setting is a composite of seventeenth-century sources, relying mostly on Michael Praetorius, *Musae Sioniae*, Part V, 1607, where the tune is used for an Ascension hymn written possibly by Praetorius himself. Both text and music may be freely used and reproduced for any purpose whatever, and 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*

## We Sing, Immanuel, Thy Praise

*by*

Paul Gerhardt

*to be sung to the tune "Erschienen ist" by*

Nikolaus Herman

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