

Lord, How Shall I Be Meeting
Paul Gerhardt, 1653.
Melchior Teschner, 1613.

Lord, how shall I be meeting
And how shall I embrace
Thee, earth's desire, when greeting
My soul's adorning grace!
O Jesus, Jesus, holding
Thyself the flame in sight,
Show how, Thy beam beholding,
I may, my Lord, delight.

Fresh palms Thy Zion streweth
And branches ever green,
And psalms my voice reneweth,
To raise my joy serene.
Such budding tribute paying,
My heart shall hymn Thy praise,
Thy holy name obeying
With chiefest of my lays.

What hast Thou left ungranted
To give me glad relief?
When soul and body panted
In utmost depth of grief,
In hour of degradation,
Thy peace and pity smiled,
Then Thou, my soul's salvation,
Didst happy make Thy child.

I lay in slavish mourning,
Thou cam'st to set me free;
I sank in shame and scorning,
Thou cam'st to comfort me.
Thou raised'st me to glory,
Bestowing highest good,
Not frail and transitory,
Like wealth on earth pursued.

Naught, naught did send Thee speeding
From mansions of the skies,
But ,
Love able to comprise
A world in pangs despairing,
Weighed down with thousand woes
That tongue would fail declaring,
But love doth fast inclose.

Grave on your heart this writing,
O band of mourners poor!
With pains and sorrows fighting,
That throng you more and more;
Dismiss the fear that sickens,
For lo! beside you see
Him who your heart now quickens
And comforts; here is He.

Why should you be detain'd
In trouble day and night,
As though He must be gain'd,
By arm of human might?

He comes, He comes all willing,
All full of grace and love,
Those woes and trouble stilling,
Well known to Him above.

Nor need ye tremble over
The guilt that gives distress.
No! Jesus all will cover
With grace and righteousness:
He comes, He comes, procuring
The peace of sin forgiven,
To all God's sons securing
Their part and lot in Heaven.

Why heed ye then the crying
Of crafty foemen nigh?
Your Lord shall send them flying
In twinkling of an eye.
He comes, He comes, forever
A king, and earth's fell band
Shall prove in their endeavor
Too feeble to withstand.

He comes to judge the nations,
Wroth if they wrathful prove,
With sweet illuminations
To those who seek and love.
Come, come, O Sun eternal,
And all our souls convey
To endless bliss supernal,
In yonder court of day.