

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

Paul Gerhardt, 1653.

Melchior Teschner, 1613.

O Lord, how shall I meet You, how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet You, my hope, my heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,
To do in spirit lowly all that may please You best.

Love caused Your incarnation, love brought You down to me;
Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace
In love all loves excelling our lost and fallen race.

A glorious crown You gave me, a treasure safe on high,
That will not fail nor leave me as earthly riches fly.
My heart shall bloom forever for You with praises new,
And from Your name shall never withhold the honor due.

Alternate Translation, by A. T. Russell 1851:

O how shall I receive Thee,
How meet Thee on Thy way;
Blest hope of every nation,
My soul's delight and stay?
O Jesus, Jesus, give me,
By Thine illuming light,
To know whate'er is pleasing
And welcome in Thy sight.

Thy Zion palms is strewing
With branches fresh and fair;
And every soul awaking,
Her anthem shall prepare;
Perpetual thanks and praises
Forth from our hearts shall spring;
And to Thy name the service
Of all our powers we bring.

O ye who sorrow, sinking
Beneath your grief and pain,
Rejoice in His appearing,
Who shall your souls sustain;
He comes, He comes with gladness!
How great is His good-will!
He comes, all grief and anguish
Shall at His Word be still.

Ye who with guilty terror
Are trembling, fear no more;
With love and grace the Savior
Shall you to hope restore:
He comes, who contrite sinners
Will with the children place,
The children of His Father,
The heirs of life and grace.

He comes, the Lord, to judgment;
Woe, woe to them who hate!
To those who love and seek Him
He opes the heavenly gate.
Come quickly, gracious Savior,

And gather us to Thee,
That in the light eternal
Our joyous home may be.

Alternate Translation

O how shall I receive Thee,
How greet Thee, Lord, aright?
All nations long to see Thee,
My hope, my heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord, most holy,
Thy lamp within my breast,
To do in spirit lowly
All that may please Thee best.

Thy Zion palms is strewing,
And branches fresh and fair;
My heart, its powers renewing,
An anthem shall prepare.
My soul puts off her sadness
Thy glories to proclaim;
With all her strength and gladness
She fain would serve Thy name.

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 nor leave me
As earthly riches fly.

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!

Rejoice, then, ye sad-hearted,
Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed,
And tremble at your doom:
He who alone can cheer you,
Is standing at the door;
He brings His pity near you,
And bids you weep no more.