IMMANUEL, TO THEE WE SING

Hymn Devotion – November 26

Scripture – Matthew 1:22-23

Isaiah 7:14

Immanuel, to Thee we sing,

Thou Prince of life, almighty King;

That Thou, expected ages past,

Didst come to visit us at last.

For Thee, since first the world was made,

Men’s hearts have waited, watched and prayed;

Prophets and patriarchs, year by year;

Have longed to see Thy light appear.

All glory, worship, thanks and praise,

That Thou art come in these our days!

Thou heavenly Guest, expected long,

We hail Thee with a joyful song.

Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676)

Translated by:  
Ludolph Ernest Schlicht (1714-1769)

Immanuel – Prophesied name of the baby born to Mary in Matthew – Why was Jesus named Jesus instead of Immanuel? According to the Bible Dictionary – Immanuel (God with us) – a symbolic name from the prophesy of Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14) applied in later years to Jesus the Messiah – Jesus was and is God with us whether His physical name was Immanuel or Jesus.

Jesus was long expected, from the beginning of the world – the hearts of humankind have waited, watched and prayed – Prophets and patriarchs longed to see Thy light appear – the star in the east? Perhaps but more likely the fact that Jesus is referred to as the light of the world – the light shining in the darkness – the Messiah, Immanuel was that light.

1. Who are we singing to?
2. How is He described?
3. When was He expected?
4. When has He arrived?
5. Verse 2: When did the watch for His arrival start?
6. What have men’s hearts done?
7. Who have longed to see His light appear?
8. Verse 3: What all are His?
9. When did He come?
10. How is Jesus referred to here?
11. How do we hail Him?

COMFORT, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE

Hymn Devotion - November 27

Scripture – Isaiah 40:1-8

Comfort, comfort ye My people,  
Speak ye peace, thus saith our God;  
Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Mourning ’neath their sorrow’s load;  
Speak ye to Jerusalem  
Of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell her that her sins I cover,  
And her warfare now is over.

For the herald’s voice is crying  
In the desert far and near,  
Bidding all men to repentance,  
Since the kingdom now is here.  
O that warning cry obey!  
Now prepare for God a way!  
Let the valleys rise to meet Him,  
And the hills bow down to greet Him.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon,  
Blotting out each dark misdeed;  
All that well deserved His anger  
He will no more see nor heed.  
She has suffered many a day,  
Now her griefs have passed away,  
God will change her pining sadness  
Into ever springing gladness.

Make ye straight what long was crooked,  
Make the rougher places plain:  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits His holy reign,  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o’er the earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That His Word is never broken.

Johannes Olearius (1611-1684)

Translated by:

Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)

Note the similarities between the hymn and the passage of scripture from Isaiah:

Isaiah 40:1-8:  
1. Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

2. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.

3. A voice of one calling:

“In the desert prepare the way for the Lord”; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God.

4. Every Valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

5. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

6. A voice says, “Cry out.”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

“All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.

7. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass.

8. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.” NIV

LO! HOW A ROSE E’ER BLOOMING

Hymn Devotion - November 28

Scripture – Isaiah 11:1-4, 10

Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming, as men of old have sung.  
It came, a Flower bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah ’twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.  
To show God’s love aright, she bore to men a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.

This Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;  
True Man, yet very God, from sin and death He saves us,  
And lightens every load.

German Carol (sixteenth century)

Stanzas 1&2 translated by:

Theodore Baker (1851-1934)

Stanza 3 translated by:

Harriet Krauth Spaeth (1845-1925)

What a wonderful image of Christ as a Rose – that came in the darkness of a winter night to a virgin, showing God’s love aright to have born a Savior.

This Rose dispelled the darkness of sin, a man, yet God, Jesus saves us from sin and death – lightening our load.

If you have not had your load lightened by the Rose of Sharon (Song of Solomon 2:1) don’t put it off, come to Jesus today for salvation that lasts for all eternity!

1. What has sprung from a tender stem?
2. What have men of sang of?
3. Who came amid the cold of winter?
4. When did it come?
5. Verse 2: Who foretold the Rose?
6. With whom do we behold it?
7. How is Mary described?
8. What caused her to bear man a Savior?
9. Verse 3: What is this Flower like?
10. What is dispelled?
11. What is He?
12. Yet He is?
13. What does He do?
14. What is the repeated line?

THE PEOPLE THAT IN DARKNESS SAT

Hymn Devotion - November 29

Scripture – Isaiah 9:1-7

The people that in darkness sat

A glorious light have see;

The light has shined on them who long

In shades of death have been.

For unto us a child is born,

To us a son is given,

And on His shoulder ever rests

All power on earth and heaven.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace

Forevermore adored,

The Wonderful, the Counselor,

The great and mighty Lord.

His righteous government and power

Shall over all extend;

On judgment and on justice based,

His reign shall have no end.

John Morison (1750-1798)

Scottish paraphrases, 1781

This is based on the prophesy of Isaiah – The kingdom of Israel at that time was divided – the northern kingdom was the people of darkness – the prophesy is for the region of Galilee to receive the light – the northern kingdom!

We today are the people living in darkness the darkness of sin – We as gentiles have also been given this light, people at the time of the prophesy were not the chosen people but because of Jesus we have been adopted as heirs.

1. What are the people sitting in?
2. What has been seen?
3. What has shined on them?
4. Where have they been?
5. Verse 2: Who to us has been born?
6. Who is given to us?
7. What forever rests on His shoulders?
8. Verse 3: What shall His name be?
9. How shall He be forevermore?
10. List the rest of the names and descriptions of Him:
11. Verse 4: What kind of government and power?
12. What is this kingdom based on?
13. How long will His reign be?

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, YE MIGHTY GATES

Hymn Devotion – November 30

Scripture – Psalm 24:7-8, 10

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates,  
Behold the King of glory waits;  
The King of kings is drawing near,  
The Savior of the world is here;

Oh blest the land, the city blest,  
Where Christ the Ruler is confessed!  
Oh happy hearts and happy homes  
To whom this King in triumph comes!

Fling wide the portals of your heart,  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for Heaven’s employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy;

Redeemer, come! I open wide  
My heart to Thee—here, Lord, abide!  
Let me Thy inner presence feel,  
Thy grace and love in me reveal.

So shall your Sovereign enter in,  
And new and nobler life begin:  
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on  
Until our glorious goal is won!

Georg Weissel (1590-1635)

Translated by:

Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)

This is a hymn of joy of the birth of Jesus. We must fling wide the portal – the gate of our heart, inviting the Savior to come in making our heart and home happy when the Savior enters in.

We are opening up our heart for the Savior, Redeemer to abide, revealing His grace and love to us.

We will have a new and nobler life with the Holy Spirit to guide us until we enter heaven and receive our glorious crown!

1. Who is to lift up their heads?
2. Who waits?
3. Who draws near?
4. Who is here?
5. Verse 2: Who all are blest?
6. What needs to be confessed?
7. What are happy?
8. Why are they happy?
9. Verse 3: What are to be flung wide?
10. What is it to become?
11. What is it to be set apart from?
12. What is it to be adorned with?
13. Verse 4: Who are we asking to come?
14. What are we opening wide and what do we want God to do?
15. What is “Thy inner presence”?
16. What is revealed in us?
17. Verse 5: Who do we want to enter in?
18. What kind of life to begin?
19. Who is to guide us?
20. Until when?

How lovely shines the Morning Star!  
The nations see and hail afar  
The light in Judah shining.  
Thou David’s Son of Jacob’s race,  
My Bridegroom and my King of Grace,  
For Thee my heart is pining.  
Lowly, holy, great and glorious,  
Thou victorious Prince of graces,  
Filling all the heav’nly places.

O highest joy by mortals won,  
True Son of God and Mary’s Son,  
Thou highborn King of ages!  
Thou art my heart’s most beauteous Flower,  
And Thy blest Gospel’s saving power  
My raptured soul engages.  
Thou mine, I Thine; sing hosanna!  
Heav’nly manna tasting, eating,  
Whilst Thy love in songs repeating.

Now richly to my waiting heart,  
O Thou, my God, deign to impart  
The grace of love undying.  
In Thy blest body let me be,  
E’en as the branch is in the tree,  
Thy life my life supplying.  
Sighing, crying, for the savor  
Of Thy favor; resting never  
Till I rest in Thee forever.

A pledge of peace from God I see  
When Thy pure eyes are turned to me  
To show me Thy good pleasure.  
Jesus, Thy Spirit and Thy Word,  
Thy body and Thy blood afford  
My soul its dearest treasure.  
Keep me kindly in Thy favor,  
O my Savior! Thou wilt cheer me;  
Thy Word calls me to draw near Thee.

Thou, mighty Father, in Thy Son  
Didst love me ere Thou hadst begun  
This ancient world’s foundation.  
Thy Son hath made a friend of me,  
And when in spirit Him I see,  
I joy in tribulation!  
What bliss is this! He that liveth  
To me giveth life forever;  
Nothing me from Him can sever.

Lift up the voice and strike the string,  
Let all glad sounds of music ring  
In God’s high praises blended.  
Christ will be with me all the way,  
Today, tomorrow, every day,  
Till traveling days be ended.  
Sing out, ring out, triumph glorious,  
O victorious, chosen nation;  
Praise the God of your salvation.

Oh, joy to know that Thou, my Friend,  
Art Lord, Beginning without end,  
The First and Last, eternal!  
And Thou at length—O glorious grace!—  
Wilt take me to that holy place,  
The home of joys supernal.  
Amen, Amen! Come and meet me!  
Quickly greet me! With deep yearning  
Lord, I look for Thy returning.

In Christ there is no East or West,  
In Him no South or North;  
But one great fellowship of love  
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In Him shall true hearts everywhere  
Their high communion find;  
His service is the golden cord,  
Close binding humankind.

Join hands, then, members of the faith,  
Whatever your race may be!  
Who serves my Father as His child  
Is surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both East and West,  
In Him meet North and South;  
All Christly souls are one in Him  
Throughout the whole wide earth.

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Brethren, we have met to worship and adore the Lord our God;  
Will you pray with all your power, while we try to preach the Word?  
All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down;  
Brethren, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around.

Brethren, see poor sinners round you slumbering on the brink of woe;  
Death is coming, hell is moving, can you bear to let them go?  
See our fathers and our mothers, and our children sinking down;  
Brethren, pray and holy manna will be showered all around.

Sisters, will you join and help us? Moses’ sister aided him;  
Will you help the trembling mourners who are struggling hard with sin?  
Tell them all about the Savior, tell them that He will be found;  
Sisters, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around.

Is there here a trembling jailer, seeking grace, and filled with tears?  
Is there here a weeping Mary, pouring forth a flood of tears?  
Brethren, join your cries to help them; sisters, let your prayers abound;  
Pray, Oh pray that holy manna may be scattered all around.

Let us love our God supremely, let us love each other, too;  
Let us love and pray for sinners, till our God makes all things new.  
Then He’ll call us home to Heaven, at His table we’ll sit down;  
Christ will gird Himself and serve us with sweet manna all around.

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