



**A**ND he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, <sup>42</sup> Saying, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.* <sup>43</sup> And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. <sup>44</sup> And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Luke 22:41-44)

Rather than a classical hymn, today's presentation is a Gospel Song by the noted gospel song writer of a century ago – Charles H. Gabriel. Instead of focusing on deep, doctrinal issues of Scripture, the gospel song focuses on simple emotion and the celebration of life in Christ. The song was written in 1905 to the tune, *Praises*, by Edwin O. Excell. Gabriel was the foremost gospel song writer of the late 19<sup>th</sup>, and early 20<sup>th</sup>, century and also authored the missionary call *Send the Light*.

### **I Stand Amazed in the Presence**

I stand amazed in the presence  
Of Jesus the Nazarene,  
And wonder how He could love me,  
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

*Refrain*

O how marvelous! O how wonderful!  
And my song shall ever be:  
O how marvelous! O how wonderful!  
Is my Savior's love for me!

For me it was in the garden  
He prayed: Not My will, but Thine.  
He had no tears for His own griefs,  
But sweat drops of blood for mine.

*Refrain*

In pity angels beheld Him,  
And came from the world of light  
To comfort Him in the sorrows  
He bore for my soul that night.  
*Refrain*

He took my sins and my sorrows,  
He made them His very own;  
He bore the burden to Calvary,  
And suffered and died alone.  
*Refrain*

When with the ransomed in glory  
His face I at last shall see,  
'Twill be my joy through the ages  
To sing of His love for me.  
*Refrain*

*I stand amazed in the presence Of Jesus the Nazarene, And wonder how He could love me, A sinner, condemned, unclean.* At the sound or prospect of amazing news, most men and women will abruptly stand. Amazement evokes an attitude of Stand at the Ready! I feel certain that at the return of Christ, none will remain lounging in their easy chairs. They will stand and then immediately kneel. *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* (Romans 14:11-12) In Anglican worship we sit during preaching or the reading of the Epistle, but we stand when the Gospel is read. Why? *9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* (Phil 2:9-11) So, likewise, at every worship hour, we say the General Confession. The great wonder of grace is not that our Lord loves us after we have been drawn to His saving grace, but rather long before – even before we were conceived in our mother’s wombs. His love drew us to Him – our love did not draw Him to us. *We love him, because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19) While were yet dead in trespasses and sin – unable to see, hear, feel, or think – He loved us and made us alive through the agency of His Holy Ghost. (Eph 2)

### **The Refrain**

*O how marvelous! O how wonderful! And my song shall ever be: O how marvelous! O how wonderful! Is my Savior’s love for me!* Moses was amazed at the sight of the Burning Bush on Mt. Horeb; the same Moses was amazed in the presence of a Holy God on the heights of Sinai; Mary was amazed at the sight of Gabriel, the Archangel, at the Annunciation; Peter, James, and John were amazed at the appearance of the Lord with Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration – the Presence of the Divine is always amazing! Once we have heard the Lord call our name, out of the billions of names on this earth, we must be amazed that He would elect our sorry souls from among that multitude. The Love of God surpasses every other force or power known in the physical world. It is far stronger than death and darkness. In fact, it is the one thing that survives death. *38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 8:38-39)

*For me it was in the garden He prayed: Not My will, but Thine. He had no tears for His own griefs, But sweat drops of blood for mine.* The Garden is a place of life and fruit. Our Lord prayed that we would become ONE with Him as He was ONE with the Father. That means ONE in every sense of the Word – one in purpose, one in intent, one in desire, and one in action. When churches divide over the color of the carpet, it may be that those of that church who profess Christ are not genuine professors. His whole purpose in coming from the Realms of Glory to the Ruins of this World was to save us from ourselves. It is our own so-called free wills (in servitude to Satan) that has caused every misery known to mankind; but Christ came to wash us clean of those miseries and to die in our stead in remission of our sins.

*In pity angels beheld Him, And came from the world of light To comfort Him in the sorrows He bore for my soul that night.* What a contrast were the creatures of God (Angels) who came from the Kingdom of Light to comfort our Lord, the rightful Heir of that Kingdom, who dwelt in the darkest domain of earth on our behalf. With what wrenching sorrow did He pray – not for relief of His own miseries – but for the love and forgiveness of the Father upon ours.

*He took my sins and my sorrows, He made them His very own; He bore the burden to Calvary, And suffered and died alone.* Yes, He took our sins upon Himself at Calvary; and what did He do with them? *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* (Micah 7:19) *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.* (Psalm 103:12) As they say in the Tennessee mountains, “That is a right smart distance!” One cannot get any further away from the East by traveling West. He was the only One who was worthy to die for our sins since the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) Therefore, we all are subject, under the law, to die for our own sins. If any would die in our place, that One must be guiltless of any shadow of sin – that One is Jesus Christ!

*When with the ransomed in glory His face I at last shall see, 'Twill be my joy through the ages To sing of His love for me.* John Jasper was a remarkable negro preacher whose service to God predated the Civil War and extended to the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1901) and who could neither read or write, yet he had a profound understanding of Holy Scripture. He had the largest church in Richmond following the Civil War. His final sermon related to a question of one of his parishioners who wondered what would John want first when he got to heaven – those golden slippers, his crown of righteousness, or his clean white robe? Without hesitation, Jasper said, “When I gets to them Pearly Gates, I wants my golden slippers, I wants my crown of righteousness, and I wants that clean white robe – but not Fust – Fust I wants to see the face of my glorious Savior who bled and died for me.” Jasper fell asleep in death in that very pulpit at age 89 years. We shall see the smiling face of our Lord, and even the blind shall see Him such as Fanny Crosby. We will then receive a better rest than we have ever known – a rest from sinful desires, from pain and suffering, from all manner of hurt – because Jesus is our Sabbath Rest forever!