



1 I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works. 2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High. (Psalm 9:1-2)
4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:4-7)

When was the last time that you praised the Lord by “*showing forth all thy marvelous works*”? Showing forth the marvelous works of the Lord is far more than merely vocalizing them with hollow words – it means to establish those words of praise on the firm foundation of life and action! Empty praises are like empty threats – there is no force or action behind them.

This anthem elevates the appropriate praise of God to the ultimate and dignified level to which it belongs. Human expression could not exalt the language more highly, nor the nature of praise to which God is entitled by His Creation. The hymn was composed by a young man who had once, only ten years earlier, ridiculed and scoffed at worshippers in his hometown of Bremen. On one such occasion, the sermon of the Rev. Theodore Under-Eyck (whom he had come to demean) penetrated into the depths of the soul of Joachim Neander’s soul, and the Anchor of the Holy Spirit sunk into his heart and certified his security in Christ! The hymn was written during Joachim’s final year of life as he was suffering from the terminal effects of tuberculosis at age thirty in 1680. The tune is “*Lobe den Herren*” composed by the hymnal writers of Stralsung Gesangbuch in 1665, and defies the soul to remain seated at the singing of this anthem. The upward draw of the Holy Spirit, in both tune and meaning, draws one to stand as upright as possible in the defiance of the gravity of the world and its drab trinkets.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, The King of Creation

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear,
now to his temple draw near;
praise him in glad adoration.*

*Praise to the Lord, who over all things so wondrously reigneth,
shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen
how thy desires ever have been
granted in what he ordaineth?*

*Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew
what the Almighty can do,
if with his love he befriend thee.*

*Praise to the Lord, who, when tempests their warfare are waging,
who, when the elements madly around thee are raging,
biddeth them cease,
turneth their fury to peace,
Whirlwinds and waters assuaging.*

*Praise to the Lord, who, when darkness of sin is abounding,
who, when the godless do triumph, all virtue confounding,
sheddeth his light,
chaseth the horrors of night,
saints with his mercy surrounding.*

*Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the amen
sound from his people again,
gladly for all we adore him.*

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation! O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation! All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near; praise him in glad adoration. The dignity and reverence due the Lord is beyond our means to fully satisfy; however, we must acknowledge Him in all things and in all ways to the best of our ability and knowledge. He offers not only salvation to our souls, but the added imperative of health that allows the soul to grow in holiness. We should gladly “draw near by faith” to partake in the holy praise and worship due the Almighty God – not as a duty only, but as a blessed privilege.

Praise to the Lord, who over all things so wondrously reigneth, shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth! Hast thou not seen how thy desires ever

have been granted in what he ordaineth? God indeed reigns over all of His Creation in love. That love is violated only by the hate and sin of vile and fallen creatures. God takes notice of all of His creatures to include the innocent animals of His Creation. When He completed His primitive Creation, He saw the living creatures He had made and pronounced them very good. In His covenant with Noah, God said: *8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.* (Gen 9:8-10) He protects us under His wings as the mother hen her chicklets. He has granted us every needful and joyful resource. Only those filthy rags of the world's sin does He withhold for our good.

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee; surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee. Ponder anew what the Almighty can do, if with his love he befriend thee. Do you believe that mighty standing armies and fleets of great naval vessels are your defense and security? Will the shore batteries keep the evil demons from the hearts of our people? No! Our only defense is in God who provides our sufficient defense against every intruder of both soul and nation. Of what worth is the sail if the dirty waters of the world have seeped into the galley of our ship? Like blind Bartemaeus, we need only ask for the mercy of God, and His grace and protection will be forthcoming.

Praise to the Lord, who, when tempests their warfare are waging, who, when the elements madly around thee are raging, biddeth them cease, turneth their fury to peace, Whirlwinds and waters assuaging. Have you ever experienced a storm that did not pass, or a cloudy and dark day that was not followed by the sun? The One who rules in the affairs of men is at the helm of our vessel. He knows the ship; He knows the distance; He knows the weather; and He knows the Way. He will guide our vessel among the shoals and rocks of the unknown coast. And He will anchor our souls in the Haven of Rest at last.

Praise to the Lord, who, when darkness of sin is abounding, who, when the godless do triumph, all virtue confounding, sheddeth his light, chaseth the horrors of night, saints with his mercy surrounding. We view the growing decadence of sin and licentiousness about us and wonder, "When shall God bring an end?" Do you not know that evil must surely come to past ere He comes and sets the ship aright? But woe unto those by whom evil comes. We are bound to resist evil, and we may pay a price. The price grows daily with the enormity of evil. Look at the wickedness that envelopes those lands where the false god of allah has reigned for centuries. The people pay for their righteousness by the shedding of their life's blood. And, should our wickedness grow and burgeon up into the face of the Lord as it seems to be doing, how long to do you believe our sons and daughters will escape a like fate when God removes the blessing He gave us by the righteous deeds of our forefathers? The time to secure the sail is before the rent! Our nation is on the Broad Way that leads to the abyss. We all bear a part and a responsibility for that woeful course.

Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore him! All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him. Let the amen sound from his people again, gladly for all we adore him. God blesses not only individual believers, but nations as well that show forth the works of righteousness. Once, when I quoted 2 Chron 7:14, a reader (possibly an adherent of covenant theology) castigated me for saying God would not answer the prayers of any nation but His covenant people. Who are His covenant people? They are those who are scattered throughout the nations of the world. He has richly blessed America, and I will never doubt it. He has blessed England, France,

Germany, Korea, and many other nations based upon the prayers and righteousness of their people. We must turn our ship of state about with immediate dispatch, or face the ruin upon the shoals. Only prayer and a righteous regard for our Maker will accomplish that. If all that has life and breath praise and adore our Lord, standby to see the stormy seas calmed, and the clouds of doubt evaporate before our very eyes.