All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Gloria, laus, et honor is a well-known hymn written by St. Theodulph of Orleans (c. 760–821). It has been used as a processional hymn on Palm Sunday since its writing, though it was not paired with its current tune, Melchior Teschner’s VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, for almost 1,000 years. The translation in wide use today is by John Mason Neale (1818-1866), the giant of Latin hymn translations.

St. Theodulph was born in Italy or Spain. In 781 he was discovered by Charlemagne at a Florentine monastery and brought to France as abbot of Fleury, and by 800 was archbishop of Orléans. Unfortunately, Charlemagne’s successor—Louis the Pious—suspected Theodulph of complicity in Bernard of Italy’s rebellion, and had him imprisoned at Angers. Neale writes of a popular legend about the writing of this hymn:

This processional Hymn for Palm Sunday is said to have been composed by S. Theodulph at Metz, or as others will have it, at Angers, while imprisoned on a false accusation: and to have been sung by him from his dungeon window, or by choristers instructed by him, as the Emperor Louis and his Court were on their way to the Cathedral. The good Bishop was immediately liberated.

Modern scholarship, however, has asserted that Louis never visited Angers after 818 (when Theodulph was imprisoned).

John Mason Neale is well-known for his many translations of Greek and Latin hymns. American hymnologist Erik Routley wasn’t fond of Neale’s translations when they keep the original meter (which isn’t the case for All Glory, Laud, and Honor), but Neale and all his work are held in the highest regard by many. He was influenced by the Oxford

---

1 John Julian, A Dictionary of Hymnology (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1892), 426.
4 Ibid.
6 Watson, 37.
7 Erik Routley, A Panorama of Christian Hymnody, ed. & expanded Paul A. Richardson (Chicago: GIA, 2005), 123.
Movement, which sought to reintroduce the ancient traditions of the Church into Anglicanism. Neale was fascinated by the people and writings of the early church; indeed he was fascinated by quite a lot:

He had a child’s unquestioning love of the marvellous, united to the indomitable untiring zeal of the discoverer. He unearthed the jewel not so much to appraise its value as to rejoice in the amazing brilliance of its beauty... The world was to him a garden of delight, in which he was well content to wander... It is for this reason that his descriptions of scenery are at once so simple and so lifelike.⁸

Neale had this same fascination for early Christians and their writings,⁹ which naturally drove his translating, as he sought to share what he loved with the world.

Theodulph’s original poem was 78 lines long, written in elegiac couplets—perhaps the only instance of this meter in a Christian hymn.¹⁰ Today only the first six couplets remain in use;¹² no one has translated the entire poem into English (Neale was only aware of the existence of ten stanzas in addition to the refrain).¹³ The use of refrain plus five stanzas goes back at least to the ninth century, and that was almost always the form given in Graduals and Missals.¹⁴ Neale translated, in addition to the well-used portion, the sixth and tenth stanzas, but considered the other three to be “unworthy of the general beauty of the hymn.”¹⁵

Two important considerations come into play when translating Latin elegiac couplets into English for use in congregational singing. First, the meter itself—well-suited to the peculiarities of Latin and Greek—is not particularly well-suited to English.¹⁶ Second, in a meter where the number of syllables is variable, setting the poem in strophic

---

⁹ Ibid., 31.
¹⁰ See appendix for explanation of elegiacs.
¹² Usually referenced here as refrain and stanzas one through five.
¹³ Neale, 23.
¹⁴ Julian, 426.
¹⁵ Neale, 23. The ten sts. Neale knew were not the first ten of the 38. The first six agree; his tenth was the 13th. Neale knew the orig. tenth (see appendix – the ‘ass’ verse). Of orig. 7,8,9,11,12, he knew three of them.
¹⁶ Ibid., 5-6.
form for use as a hymn is problematic. Hence, Neale’s later translation in 7.6.7.6 with rhyme scheme x.A.x.A has eclipsed his translation in elegiacs (see appendix).

Neale employs anaphora, “Thou art the King of Israel, // Thou David’s royal Son,” in the first stanza, and retains Theodulph’s unusual chiasmus in stanzas two through five. He sets the eternal praise of angels and the past praise of the Hebrews (in italics below) against the present praise of the hymn singers (in bold below); however, the point is not the contrast, but the unity of praise, and the consistency of God’s acceptance of it. In this Theodulph is making the theological point that God has always been and continues to be praised (and that when we sing praise, we join together with those Hebrews and the angels). The point is driven home not with explanation but through form.

The company of angels are praising Thee on High,
And mortal men and all things created make reply.
The people of the Hebrews with palms before Thee went;
Our prayer and praise and anthems before Thee we present.
To Thee, before Thy passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
To Thee, now high exalted, our melody we raise.
Thou didst accept their praises;
Accept the prayers we bring,
Who in all good delightest, Thou good and gracious King.

Concurrent to the chiasmus in stanzas two through five is the tautology in stanzas three and four, and to a lesser extent, stanza five. The subject matter is constant, explored from different angles. Theodulph moves from an objective representation of events in stanza three to a description with theological ramifications in stanza four; the climactic fifth stanza is about God’s reaction to the events.

The intent of St. Theodulph—and of Neale—was for “Gloria, laus et honor...” to be repeated after each stanza as a refrain. This refrain, which is direct praise, is thus

---

17 In the concluding line, Neale gets closest to directly stating the unity of God’s praise old and new, but does so in a subtle way.
18 Though the subject matter is the same in all three stanzas, the fifth stanza develops the idea in a more linear fashion than that of the more parallel third and fourth stanzas.
20 Some hymns of praise (or parts of them) either state that God should be praised or state that we are praising, in contrast with this refrain which is verbal praise without comment or discussion. This is not to
interpolated with the retelling of Triumphal Entry events. The refrain allows us to respond to each stanza with praise, but its function is more glorious than that. Stanzas two through five ‘break the fourth wall.’ On the one hand the refrain can be the icon for past praise, but brilliantly, on the other hand, it is the current praise being discussed in stanzas two through five: the hymn talks about itself. This is unusual; to sing this hymn, knowing that the singer is not merely part of the story told in the hymn but is actually carrying out his part in the story by singing the hymn, is an intense experience which draws the whole congregation into the glory of Christ’s triumphal entry.

The tune which has been used for Neale’s translation since the 1861 publication of *Hymns Ancient & Modern* began its life with a different text. Melchior Teschner (1584–1635), who was a church musician and, later, a pastor, composed the tune. He wrote it for the hymn *Valet Will Ich Der Geben* by Valerius Herberger, penned in 1613 in response to an outbreak of bubonic plague. According to Paul Westermeyer, the tune as we use it today has been “deformed” to make it fit Neale’s text. He claims that originally, the last phrase of the tune was repeated – as shown in fig. 1. However, the text of *Valet Will Ich Der Geben* is 7.6.7.6D, the same meter as *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*, so Herberger’s text (for which the tune was written) would not accommodate Westermeyer’s ‘original’ tune any better than Neale’s does.

![fig. 1](image)

In any case, the tune is universally used and well-loved across many denominations.

---

21 On the one hand the refrain can be the icon for past praise, but brilliantly, on the other hand, it is the current praise being discussed in stanzas two through five: the hymn talks about itself. This is unusual; to sing this hymn, knowing that the singer is not merely part of the story told in the hymn but is actually carrying out his part in the story by singing the hymn, is an intense experience which draws the whole congregation into the glory of Christ’s triumphal entry.

22 According to Paul Westermeyer, the tune as we use it today has been “deformed” to make it fit Neale’s text. He claims that originally, the last phrase of the tune was repeated – as shown in fig. 1. However, the text of *Valet Will Ich Der Geben* is 7.6.7.6D, the same meter as *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*, so Herberger’s text (for which the tune was written) would not accommodate Westermeyer’s ‘original’ tune any better than Neale’s does.

23 Melody of St. THEODULPH as arr. by J. S. Bach in *St. John Passion*, BWV 245, with Westermeyer repeat.
The tune St. Theodulph is broad and rousing, but stately; these qualities are mirrored in the text. The tune’s range, an octave and a third, is somewhat troublesome. The low note is a long important one, not a short incidental tone, and the tessitura is mostly high, with the highest note occurring in each of the 4 lines. Most hymnals choose either C or B-flat for the key, both of which are reasonable choices after weighing the extremes. B major might be even better, but very few hymnal editors would set a tune in five sharps. This discussion will assume C major. The tune’s form is A.A.B.C. A’s melody starts on low C and immediately jumps up a fifth to G, then continues to work its way up, ending on the upper C (by way of a high E). B starts with a leap up to the high E, gradually falling down to G, and C starts on that G and ends back down at low C – where the tune began. This cyclical structure of “UP-UP-Dooooown,” ending where it starts, helps us to accept the last two lines of the tune as wrapping back immediately to the first two, like a song that never ends; this is especially important after the last stanza because the hymn ends halfway through the tune. 26

Two harmonizations, with slightly different melodies during line three and four, dominate modern hymnals. The most common is by William Henry Monk, who also harmonized Ellacombe (in many denominations, another Palm Sunday standard). He was the editor of Hymns Ancient & Modern in 1861, so his harmonization was the one that first appeared with Neale’s text. His harmonies are diatonic except for a modulation into the dominant in B. The other well-used harmonization is that of J. S. Bach; his harmonization makes use of many more secondary-dominant harmonies and nonharmonic tones, as was his custom. The second half of the tune falls squarely in the tradition of Bach chorale harmonizations, especially with its generous sprinkling of passing tones, but the first half of the tune is a little out of the ordinary: no nonharmonic tones, and a secondary dominant harmony \( \left( \frac{V_6}{V_I} \right) \) on the fifth syllable of each A that borders on the romantic or even sentimental. But Bach’s original intent for his

---

26 Some hymnals set the whole text over 3 playings of St. Theodulph, arranged without any repeat of the refrain, and setting two stanzas of Neale’s text per run through the tune. We do not approve.
harmonizations was for one stanza only. The ‘stanza’ part of his harmonization is sturdy and direct and can bear continual use if desired, but the ‘refrain’ part is dramatic enough that it might overstay its welcome after six repetitions. However, because embellishments are to the harmonies only, it can be immensely satisfying as an alternate harmonization during the last refrain.

The text of Psalm 8: 2 (“Out of the mouth of babes...”) is printed above the first publication of Neale’s translation; this verse is quoted by Jesus, referring to the children in the temple crying out “Hosanna...” Where Neale translates, “…the lips of children...,” Theodulph’s Latin word means ‘childish,’ perhaps synthesizing the obvious reference to the children’s Hosannas with Jesus’ command that we must all be like children (Matthew 18:3). John Julian gives scripture references as Psalm 24: 7–10, Psalm 118: 25, 26, Matthew 21: 1–17, and Luke 19: 37, 38. The references to Jesus as Son of David, coming in the name of the Lord, palms, singing, and the ass (see appendix) are all from the gospel accounts. Psalm 24’s King of Glory making a grand entrance is analogous in Christian thought to Jesus entering Jerusalem. Psalm 118 is the original source for the Benedictus (Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord) later quoted in Matthew.

There is a great performance tradition associated with All Glory, Laud, and Honor, going back a millenium. Processions in and out of the church, gates being closed and thrown open, antiphonal singing, singing the hymn outside, and more have all been used. It is remarkable that what many Protestants know simply as a very good hymn for an occasion has been permanently prescribed, with specific ceremonial, as a part of the Palm Sunday service in various official Roman and Anglican publications. It is a testament to the power of Theodulph and Neale’s words that the hymn has been such an integral part of Christian worship for over a thousand years.

---

27 Westermeyer, 63.
28 Hymnal Noted, 148.
29 Julian, 426.
30 Ibid.
**APPENDIX: TEXTS**

**ORIGINAL LATIN TEXT**

by Theodulph of Orleans

1. *Gloria, laus et honor tibi sit, Rex Christe, Redemptor: Cui puerile decus promptit Hosanna pium.*
2. Israel es tu Rex, Davidis et inclyta prosel: Nomine qui in Domino, Rex beneficic, venis.
3. Coets in excelsis te laudat caelicus omnis, Et mortalisi homo, et cuncta creatu simul.
5. Hi tibi passuro sovelant munia laudis: Nos tibi regnanti pangimus ecce melos
6. Hi placuere tibi, placet devotio nostra: Rex bone, Rex clemens, cui bona cuncta placent.
7. Fecerat Hebraeos hos gloria sanguinis alti: Nos facit Hebraeos transitus ecce pius
8. Inclita terrenis transitor ad aethera victis, Virtus et a vitii nos capit alma tetris.
10. Degeneresque patrum ne simus ab arte piorum, Nequitia simus pueri, virtute vieti,
11. Qua rate cum levi Sarta decora iuvat Cum voto et ramis carmina digna ferens.
12. Vestis apostolicae rutilo fulgore tegamur, Vestis apostolicae rutilo fulgore tegamur,
13. Arbore de legis cedamus dogmata quaedam, Arbore de legis cedamus dogmata quaedam,
14. Fruge, ope, nundinis, pulchris et rebus abundans, Fruge, ope, nundinis, pulchris et rebus abundans,
15. Castaque pro ramis salicis praecordia sunto, Castaque pro ramis salicis praecordia sunto,
17. Fecerat Hebraeos hos gloria sanguinis alti:
18. Qua rate cum levi Sarta decora iuvat
19. Nos facit Hebraeos transitus ecce pius
20. Illic et titulis non mater colligat una
21. His tua, Maurili, conjungitur, alme, caterva
22. Illic et titulis non mater colligat una
23. Quae caput et specimen istius urbis habet.
24. Illic et titulis non mater colligat una
25. Quo sua pontifici iunguntur turba benigno:
26. Illic et titulis non mater colligat una
27. Christe, tuus dulcis nos ubi iungit amor
28. Illic et titulis non mater colligat una
29. Hinc pia Mauritii veniamus ad atria sancti
30. Illic et titulis non mater colligat una
31. Hinc pia Mauritii veniamus ad atria sancti
32. Tardior Aniani non currit turba beati,
33. Tardior Aniani non currit turba beati,
34. Istas ut laudes, rex, tibi, Christe, canat.
35. Tardior Aniani non currit turba beati,
36. Praesulis eximii pontificisque sui.
37. Praesulis eximii pontificisque sui.
38. Quo qua pontifici iunguntur turba benigno:
39. Quo qua pontifici iunguntur turba benigno:
40. Cum laude ac mittat ad sua quemque loca.
41. Cum laude ac mittat ad sua quemque loca.

The elegiac couplet consists of unequal lines; the first line has six feet, and the second, five. The standard foot for elegiacs is the dactyl, which consists of one long syllable followed by two short. Also used were the spondee (two long syllables) and, occasionally (less-then-ideally) a trochee (long-short). In the hexameter line, the first four feet may be either dactyl or spondee, the fifth a dactyl only, and the sixth a spondee or trochee. The pentameter consists, of not of five whole feet, but of two equal halves comprising two-and-one-half feet each. The first half has two complete feet of either available variety, but the second half’s two complete feet must be dactyls. Appended to the first half of the line is one long syllable, and appended to the second half is any syllable—long is best. It seems the Greeks and Romans figured it thus:

\[(2 \text{ feet} + 1 \text{ syllable}) \times 2 = 5 \text{ feet} = \text{pentameter.}\]

---

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS by John Mason Neale

I. 1851

Mostly literal translation in elegiac meter; in Neale's original, he prints “Glory, and honor, &c.” after each stanza

Glory, and, honor, and laud be to Thee, King CHRIST the Redeemer!

Children before Whose steps raised their Hosannas of praise.

1. Israel's Monarch art Thou, and the glorious Offspring of David,
   Thou that approachest a King, blessed in the Name of the LORD.

2. Glory to Thee in the highest the heavenly armies are singing:
   Glory to Thee upon earth man and creation reply.

3. Met Thee with Palms in their hands that day the folk of the Hebrews:
   We with our prayers and our hymns now to Thy presence approach.

4. They to Thee proffered their praise for to herald Thy dolorous Passion;
   We to the King on His throne utter the jubilant hymn.

5. They were then pleasing to Thee, unto Thee our devotion be pleasing;
   Merciful King, kind King, who in all goodness art pleas'd.

6. They in their pride of descent were rightly the children of Hebrews:
   Hebrews are we, whom the Lord's Passover maketh the same.

10. Victory won o'er the world be to us for our branches of Palm tree:
    So in the Conqueror's joy this to Thee still be our song:

II. 1854

Freer translation in 7.6.7.6, with annotated alterations.

Written for and published in Hymnal Noted, Part 2, 1854.

Glory and laud and honor [All Glory, Laud, and Honor]
to thee, Redeemer, King!

Written for and published in Hymnal Noted, Part 2, 1854.

Glory and laud and honor [All Glory, Laud, and Honor]
to thee, Redeemer, King!

to whom the lips of children
made sweet hosannas ring!

1. Thou art the King of Israel;
   thou David's royal Son;
   who in the Lord's name comest,
   the King and Blessed One.

2. The company of angels 36 are praising thee on high:
   and mortal men and all things
   created make reply.

3. The people of the Hebrews
   with psalms before thee went;
   our prayer and praise and anthems
   before thee we present.

4. In hast'ning to Thy Passion,
   They rais'd their hymns of praise:
   In reigning midst Thy glory
   our melody we raise.

5. Thou didst accept their praises;
   accept the prayers we bring,
   who in all good delightest,
   thou good and gracious King!

Hymnal Noted has a version of Neale's st. 10 in 7.6.7.6D, but he did not later seem to consider it part of the hymn, not even including it in his own book, Mediæval Hymns and Sequences. 36

Receive, instead of Palm-boughs,
   Our vict'ry o'er the foe,
That to God's Holy City
   Together we may pass

To thee, before thy passion
   [they sang their hymns of praise;]
   [to thee, now high exalted.]  39

Origin of these alts. unknown; they occurred sometime after A&M 1861. 38

Neale's version in Hymnal Noted read "Thou wast hast'ning to Thy Passion, when they rais'd their hymns of praise: Thou art reigning in Thy glory, When our melody we raise." 39

“Another verse was usually sung, till the 17th century; at the pious quaintness of which we can scarcely avoid a smile:

Be Thou, O Lord, the Rider,
   And we the little ass;
That to God's Holy City
   Together we may pass.”  40

33 Neale, 24-25.
34 Watson, 36-37.
35 Neale, 26
36 Ibid.
37 Hymnal Noted: Parts I. & II., (London: Novello, 1851), 149.
38 Neale, 26
39 Set to plainsong; each st. had its own notation, as if through-composed, but the music basically repeated. Hymnal Noted, 148.
40 Neale, 26.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Westermeyer, Paul. Let the People Sing: Hymn Tunes in Perspective. Chicago: GIA, 2005