

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

AND it shall be said in that day ; Lo ! this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us ; this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, and we will rejoice in His salvation.—*From the Lesson.*



HOW shall I meet Thee ? How my heart  
 Receive her Lord aright ?  
 Desire of all the earth Thou art !  
 My hope, my sole delight !  
 Kindle the lamp, Thou Lord, alone,  
 Half dying in my breast,  
 And make thy gracious pleasure known  
 How I may greet Thee best.

Her budding boughs and fairest palms  
 Thy Zion strews around ;  
 And songs of praise and sweetest psalms  
 From my glad heart shall sound.  
 My desert soul breaks forth in flowers,  
 Rejoicing in Thy fame ;  
 And puts forth all her sleeping powers  
 To honour Jesus' name.

In heavy bonds I languish'd long,  
 Thou com'st to set me free ;  
 The scorn of every mocking tongue—  
 Thou com'st to honour me.

A heavenly crown Thou dost bestow,  
And gifts of priceless worth,  
That vanish not as here below  
The riches of the earth.

Nought, nought, dear Lord! had power to move  
Thee from Thy rightful place,  
Save that almighty wondrous Love  
Wherewith Thou dost embrace  
This weary world and all her woe,  
Her load of grief and ill  
And sorrow, more than man can know;  
Thy love is deeper still.

Oh write this promise in your heart,  
Ye sad at heart, with whom  
Sorrows fall thick, and joys depart,  
And darker grows your gloom.  
Despair not, for your help is near,  
He standeth at the door  
Who best can comfort you and cheer,  
He comes, nor stayeth more.

Vex not your souls with care, nor grieve  
And labour longer thus,  
As though your arm could ought achieve,  
And bring Him down to us!  
He comes, He comes with ready will,  
By pity moved alone,  
All pain to soothe, all tears to fill,  
To Him they all are known.

Ye shall not shrink nor turn aside,  
Fearing to see His face  
So deep your sins, for He will hide  
The darkest with His grace.  
He comes, He comes, to save from sin,  
All sinners to release,  
For all the sons of God to win  
The heritage of peace.

Why ask ye what the wicked saith,  
Why heed his craft and spite?  
The Lord destroys him with a breath,  
He stands not in His fight.  
Christ comes, He comes, as King to reign!  
Then gather ye His foes,  
From earth's far corners; yet in vain  
Would ye His rule oppose.

He comes to judge the earth, and ye  
Who mock'd Him, feel His wrath;  
But they who loved and fought Him see  
His light o'er all their path.  
O Sun of Righteousness! arise,  
And guide us on our way,  
To yon fair mansion in the skies  
Of joyous, cloudless day.

PAUL GERHARDT. 1653.