

## **Opening Hymn: Praise Him! Praise Him!**

**SDAH 249, CH 645**

The words for this favorite hymn come from Francis Jane (“Fanny”) Crosby (1820-1915), the well-known author of the words for many enduring songs. It echoes the joyful words of the psalmist, “While I live I will praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being” (Psalm 146:2). She was born in New York State, and at the age of only six weeks was left blind by a country doctor’s application of a mustard poultice to her eyes. Her father died soon afterward, but life’s misfortunes did not rob her of her happy disposition. She was a student at the New York Institute for the Blind in the mid-1830s, and later she taught there from 1847 to 1858. She married a blind musician in 1858, but their only child died in infancy, and her husband died in 1883. The years that followed became the most productive of her life. In all she wrote at least 9000 hymns, some 1000 of which still are used. She lived most of her life in New York and was a member of St. John’s Episcopal Methodist Church. She died just short of her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday. Eighteen of her hymns are included in the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*.

The tune for “Praise Him! Praise Him!” was composed by Chester G. Allen (1838-1877) especially for these words. Allen was a teacher of singing in New York and a conductor of singing at conventions. He also contributed to several compilations of Sunday school songs.

## **Closing Hymn: O Shepherd Divine**

**SDAH 192**

Both the words and the music for this hymn were written by Herbert Work, a teacher and a concert artist on the saxophone. The words for the hymn are based on John 10:1-30. Verse 16 is echoed in the final stanza: “One staff and one rod, one fold and one God.” The hymn also makes an explicit reference to “the Spirit of prophecy,” making it especially suitable for use with the sermon for today.

Born in California in 1904, Herbert Work had established himself as a successful performer and arranger before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist in 1933. He devoted the rest of his life to teaching and to conducting band and choral music at various of the church’s academies and colleges and at self-supporting institutions. In 1954 he published a booklet, *Sanctuary Songs*, containing 16 items. His largest work was a cantata, *Abel*, for which the eldest granddaughter of Ellen G. White, Ella Robinson, wrote the lyrics, based on Scripture. He died in 1982.

## **Alternate Closing Hymn: He Leadeth Me**

**SDAH 537, CH 393**

The words for this song are by Joseph Henry Gilmore (1834-1918), a Baptist minister in the northeastern part of America. In 1862, the year he was ordained, he was visiting Philadelphia where he was invited to address the midweek prayer meeting of the First Baptist Church. He spoke on God's leadership, using part of Psalm 23, the Shepherd Psalm, as the basis for his talk. He was so impressed with the psalm's simple words, "He leadeth me," that shortly afterward he quickly wrote the four stanzas of this song and gave them to his wife without comment. She sent them to a religious periodical, *The Watchman and Reflector*, in Boston, and did not tell him that she had done so. They published it later that year, still without his knowledge. Three years later Gilmore was to preach in the Baptist church in Rochester, New York. Opening a hymnbook at random, he was astonished to find his own poem there, set to music. The words are a free paraphrase of part of the Shepherd Psalm: "He leadeth me beside the still waters. . . . Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me" (Ps. 23:2, 4). In 1868 Gilmore was appointed professor of logic and English literature at the University of Rochester, a position he held until his retirement in 1911.

The music for this song was composed by William Batchelder Bradbury (1816-1868) and published in his *The Golden Censer* in 1864. He had noticed Gilmore's hymn in *The Watchman and Reflector*, enlarged the original two-line refrain, and wrote his tune to fit the words.

Adapted from Wayne Hooper and Edward E. White, *Companion to the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1988).

**SDAH = *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal***  
**CH = *Church Hymnal***