

Early ADVENT SINGING

James R. Nix

A collection of 52
early Adventist hymns
with illustrating stories

A revision and enlargement of
Advent Singing



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LORD, IN THE MORNING

The first home actually owned by James and Ellen White still stands on Wood Street in Battle Creek, Michigan. It is currently owned by Adventist Heritage Ministry, and is available for tours by visitors who wish to see it.

In 1855 the Whites moved from Rochester, New York, to Battle Creek. Upon their arrival, they rented a house for \$1.50 per week. James White was making about \$4 per week at the time, at the Review office. Later, Cyrenius Smith, one of five Adventists who originally invited the Whites to move to Battle Creek, sold two village lots totaling nearly an acre and a half to James White on August 4, 1856, for \$230.* Friends of the Whites assisted with the purchase.

The lots were covered with trees and are described as being “situated in the extreme western part of Battle Creek.” Again, with the assistance of friends—a few contributing money, but most giving labor—the Whites soon erected a moderate-sized cottage house at a cost of about \$500.

The same kindhearted friends also helped clear the land, except for a little grove of second-growth oak in the northeast corner. At James White’s request, this was left as a place for retreat and prayer. Some of the land was also converted into a flower garden. The Whites lived here until April 15, 1863, when the house was sold for \$1,480, and they moved elsewhere in Battle Creek.

Nearly 75 years later, William C. White, third son of James and Ellen White, recalled what the daily schedule was like while growing up in the White family:

“With but little variation, the daily program of the White family was something like this: At six o’clock all were up. Often Mother had been writing for two or three hours, and the cook had been busy in the kitchen since five o’clock. By six-thirty breakfast was ready. . . . At the breakfast table [Mother] . . . sometimes . . . would relate to the family some interesting portions of what she had written. Father would sometimes tell us of the work in which he was engaged, or relate interesting incidents regarding the progress of the cause, east and west.

“At seven o’clock all assembled in the parlor for morning worship. Father would read an appropriate scripture, with comments,

and then lead in the morning song of praise or supplication, in which all joined. The most frequent was:

“ ‘Lord, in the morning Thou shalt hear
My voice ascending high;
To Thee will I direct my prayer,
To Thee lift up mine eye.’

“This or some other song of a somewhat similar character was sung with hearty vigor, and then Father prayed. He did not ‘offer a prayer’; he *prayed* with earnestness and with solemn reverence. He pleaded for those blessings most needed by himself and his family, and for the prosperity of the cause of God. . . .

“When father was away from home, Mother conducted the family worship. If both were gone, the one in charge of the home led out. The worship hour was as regularly observed as the hours for breakfast and dinner.

“After breakfast, Father left promptly for his work in the Review office, except when detained by Mother, with a request that he listen to what she had been writing.

“After Father had left the house, Mother enjoyed spending half an hour in her flower garden during those portions of the year when flowers could be cultivated. In this her children were encouraged to work with her. Then she would devote three or four hours to her writing. Her afternoons were usually occupied with a variety of activities—sewing, mending, knitting, darning, and working in her flower garden, with occasional shopping trips to town or visits to the sick.

“If there was no evening meeting, between seven and eight o’clock or later, the whole family would assemble again for worship. If the day’s work permitted us to be called to prayers early, we listened to Mother as she read some instructive article from religious papers or books. Then Father, if present, read a chapter from the Bible and prayed, thanking God for the blessings of the day, and committing the family to God’s care for the night” (*Review and Herald*, Feb. 13, 1936, pp. 6, 7).

The hymn “Lord, in the Morning” continued to be a favorite as Ellen White’s grandchildren were growing up. Granddaughter Ella (White) Robinson recalled “. . . waking up with, ‘Lord, in the morning Thou shalt hear my voice ascending high,’ and going to

sleep with, 'Sweet hour of prayer.' " "No wonder," she commented, "that both these hymns were among Grandma's favorites."

"Lord, in the Morning" was also sung at the start of an historic day in Adventist history. Meeting at sunrise in our second little church in Battle Creek, Michigan, on October 1, 1860, the order of business was to adopt a constitution for the publishing association. Once accomplished, the meeting was adjourned, only to reconvene later that same day to decide upon a name for the new organization. After considerable discussion "Seventh-day Adventist" was chosen. It was then overwhelmingly voted to recommend that the name also be used by our churches. At the time, we had no conference organizations, but at least we now had a name.

"Lord, in the Morning" was introduced into Seventh-day Adventist hymnody in James White's second hymnal, *Hymns for Second Advent Believers*, published in 1852.

* Arthur L. White seems to be incorrect when he states that the two lots cost \$25 each (*Ellen G. White, The Early Years*, p. 334). The deed (Calhoun Co., Mich., Deeds Lib. 40, p. 434) states that lots 64 and 65 of Manchesters Addition to Battle Creek cost \$230.

Lord, in the Morning

Isaac Watts, 1719 (1674-1748)

MEAR
Aaron Williams (1731-1776)

1. Lord, in the morn-ing Thou shalt hear My voice as - cend - ing high;
2. Up to the hills where Christ is gone To plead for all His saints,
3. O may Thy Spir - it guide my feet In ways of righ-teous - ness;
4. The men that love and fear Thy name. Shall see their hopes ful - filled;

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The treble staff contains the vocal melody, and the bass staff contains the accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

To Thee will I di - rect my prayer, To Thee lift up mine eye--
Pre - sent - ing at his Fa - ther's throne Our songs and our com-plaints.
Make ev - ery path of du - ty straight And plain be - fore my face.
The might - y God will com- pass them With fa - vor as a shield.

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It concludes with a double bar line. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.