

How Great Thou Art

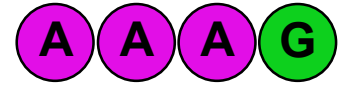
START



O Lord my God!



When I in awesome wonder



Consider all



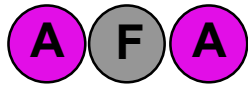
the works Thy hand hath made.



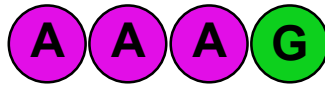
I see the stars,



I hear the roll-



ing thunder,



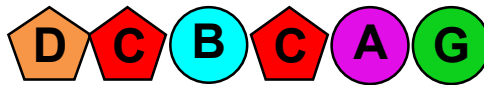
Thy power throughout



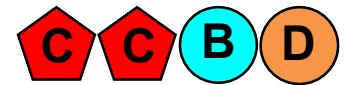
the universe displayed.



Then sings my soul,



my Saviour God, to Thee:



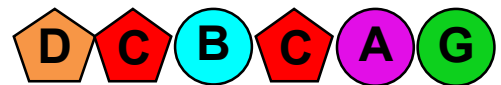
How great Thou art,



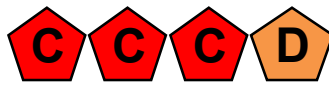
how great Thou art!



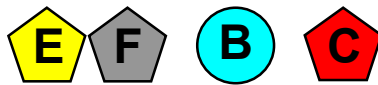
Then sings my soul,



my Saviour God, to Thee:



How great Thou art,



how great Thou art!

END

Lyrics

(Commonly used English lyrics)

Verse 1:

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made.
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Refrain:

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

Verse 2:

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

Refrain.

Verse 3:

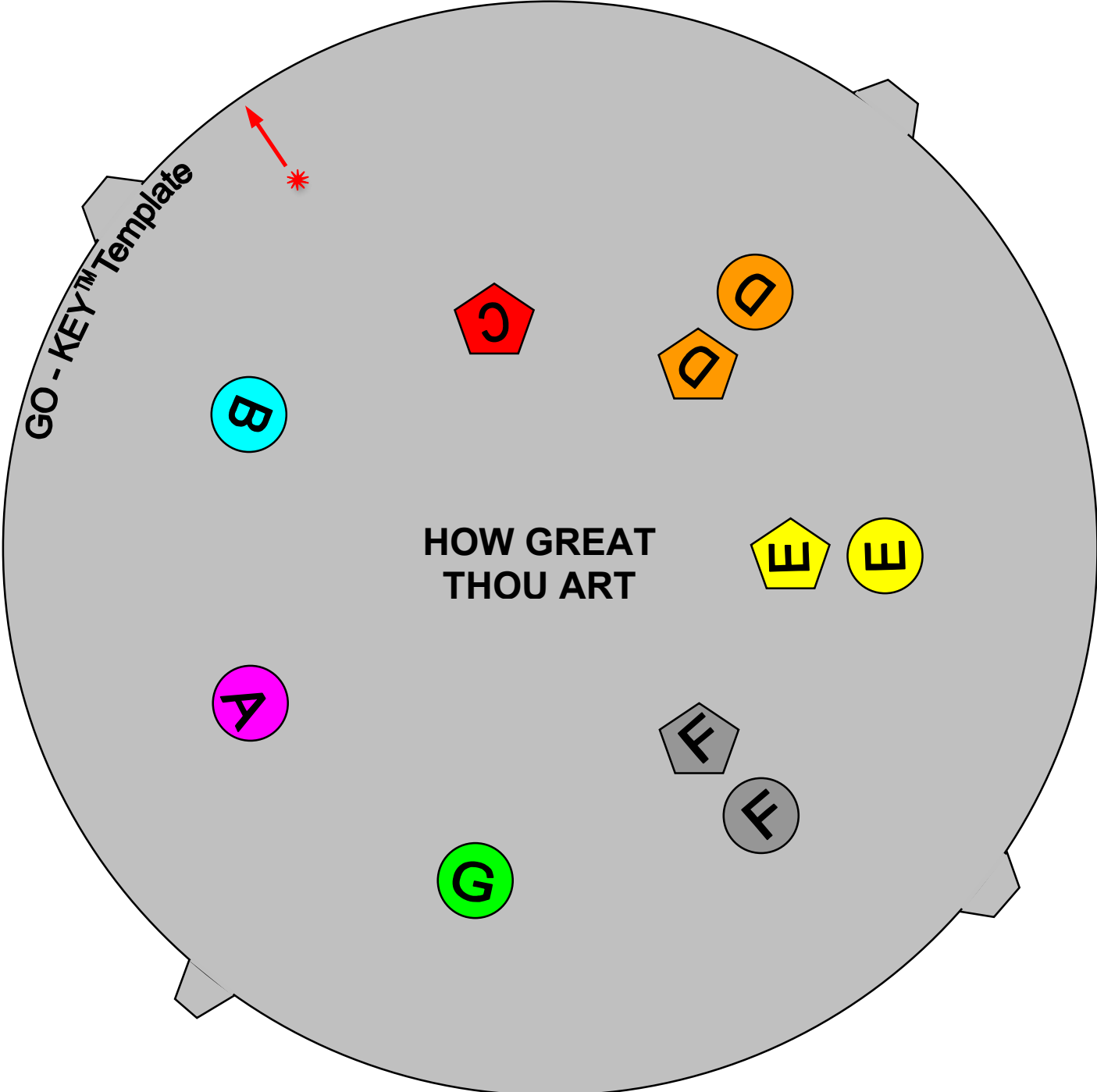
And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin:

Refrain.

Verse 4:

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

Refrain.



History and Origin

"How Great Thou Art" is a Christian hymn based on a Swedish traditional melody and a poem written by Carl Boberg (1859–1940) in Mönsterås, Sweden in 1885. It was translated into German and then into Russian. It was translated into English from the Russian by English missionary Stuart K. Hine, who also added two original verses of his own. It was popularised by George Beverly Shea and Cliff Barrows during the Billy Graham crusades. It was voted the United Kingdom's favourite hymn by BBC's Songs of Praise. "How Great Thou Art" was ranked second (after "Amazing Grace") on a list of the favourite hymns of all time in a survey by Christianity Today magazine in 2001. Boberg wrote the poem "O Store Gud" (O Great God) in 1885 with nine verses. Carl Boberg himself gave the following information about the inspiration behind his poem:

It was that time of year when everything seemed to be in its richest colouring; the birds were singing in trees and everywhere. It was very warm; a thunderstorm appeared on the horizon and soon there was thunder and lightning. We had to hurry to shelter. But the storm was soon over and the clear sky appeared. When I came home I opened my window toward the sea. There evidently had been a funeral and the bells were playing the tune of "When eternity's clock calls my saved soul to its Sabbath rest". That evening, I wrote the song, "O Store Gud".

Boberg first published "O Store Gud" in the Mönsterås Tidningen (Mönsterås News) on 13 March 1886 . The poem became matched to an old Swedish folk tune and sung in public for the first-known occasion in a church in the Swedish province of Värmland in 1888. Eight verses appeared with the music in the 1890 Sions Harpan. In 1890 Boberg became the editor of Sanningsvittnet (The Witness for the Truth). The words and music were published for the first time in the 16 April 1891 edition of Sanningsvittnet. Instrumentation for both piano and guitar was provided by Adolph Edgren, a music teacher and organist, who later migrated to the United States.

The first literal English translation of O store Gud was by E. Gustav Johnson (1893–1974), then a professor of North Park College, Illinois. His translation of verses 1, 2, and 7-9 was published in the United States in the Covenant Hymnal as "O Mighty God" in 1925.

Notable Uses:

- 1961, Mahalia Jackson performed "How Great Thou Art" in Hamburg.
- 1962, Roy Rogers, in album The Bible Tells Me So.
- 1967, Elvis Presley's recorded in his second gospel LP How Great Thou Art.
- 1969, Tammy Wynette on album "Inspiration".
- 1969, Connie Smith released in album Back in Baby's Arms.
- 1974, The song won Elvis Presley a Grammy Award for "Best Inspirational Performance (Non-Classical)".
- 1976, Statler Brothers recorded in their album Holy Bible New Testament.
- 1981, New Zealand entertainer Sir Howard Morrison released it as a single sung in both English and Maori.
- 1991, Tennessee Ernie Ford (backed by the Jordanaires) in Country Gospel Classics, Vol. 2 .
- 1998, Recorded by the Blackwood Brothers Quartet Gospel Classics Series.
- 2002, Amy Grant recorded in "What a Friend We Have in Jesus/Old Rugged Cross/How Great Thou Art".
- 2009, A tribute tour under the title "Sir Howard Morrison: How Great Thou Art" travelled New Zealand.
- 2011, Carrie Underwood with Vince Gill performed on Girls Night Out show.
- 2014, Carrie Underwood with Vince Gill is on her compilation album, Greatest Hits: Decade No. 1.
- 2015, Amy Grant included in her album Be Still and Know... Hymns & Faith.
- 2016, Isley Brother Chris Jasper included version on his album "Share With Me".
- 2016, Acapella group Home Free released on their holiday album, "Full of (Even More) Cheer."
- 2017, Pentatonix and Jennifer Hudson covered the song in the holiday album A Pentatonix Christmas.
- 2017, Award winning group OneVoice released a video on YouTube that reached over a million views.
- 2019, John Mayer debuted his world tour by performing a rendition of the hymn in New Zealand.

There have been over seventeen hundred documented recordings of "How Great Thou Art". It has been used on major television programs, in major motion pictures, and has been named as the favorite Gospel song of at least three United States' presidents.