

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Reginald Heber, 1783-1826

John B. Dykes, 1861

1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
 2. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! All the saints a - dore thee,
 3. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though the dark - ness hide thee,
 4. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!

Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to thee.
 cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 though the eye of sin - ful man thy glo - ry may not see,
 All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore thee,
 on - ly thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side thee
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!

God in three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 who wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 per - fect in pow'r, in love, and pur - i - ty.
 God in three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty.

Holy, Holy, Holy! is one of the most well-known and beloved hymns of the Christian faith. It has been printed in nearly every English-language hymnal printed over the past 150 years; a timeless and beautiful declaration of the eternal Trinity that brought utterly no fame or recognition whatsoever during the writer's lifetime.

Reginald Heber had served faithfully over two decades both as a pastor and poet in England. He hoped to gain the approval of his overseeing bishop to use the hymns he had written in local churches for worship, but he was met with dismissive disapproval. Over half a century before Samuel Stone's ("The Church's One Foundation") and others' theologically rich hymns increased in common church use, the Church of England had become legalistically committed to only singing metrical psalms. Heber considered moving forward with publication anyways, but his heart was devoted to another calling.

Throughout his ministry, Heber continued to see the necessity of international missions in the Scriptures. His heart was drawn to see the nations come to faith in Christ, as evidenced in his hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains": *From Greenland's icy mountains / From India's coral strand / Where Afric's sunny fountains / Roll down their golden sand . . . Salvation! O salvation! / The joyful sound proclaim / Till earth's remotest nation / Has learned Messiah's Name.*

Heber packed up his hymns and dreams of publication in a trunk and went to bring the gospel to "India's coral strand." In two short years, he died of a stroke after delivering a sermon outdoors on a very hot day. His wife rediscovered and published his hymns after his death.

Heber's hymns went nowhere during his life; but in the years after his faithful death, these words of praise to our God have spread across the globe. How very much like the gospel! May our lives reflect the same until that day when we also gather around the throne to declare, *Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!*

Scripture to consider: Psalm 24

Ezekiel 1

Exodus 15:1-18

Isaiah 6

Colossians 1:15-23

Psalm 11

Isaiah 46:5-11

Revelation 4

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