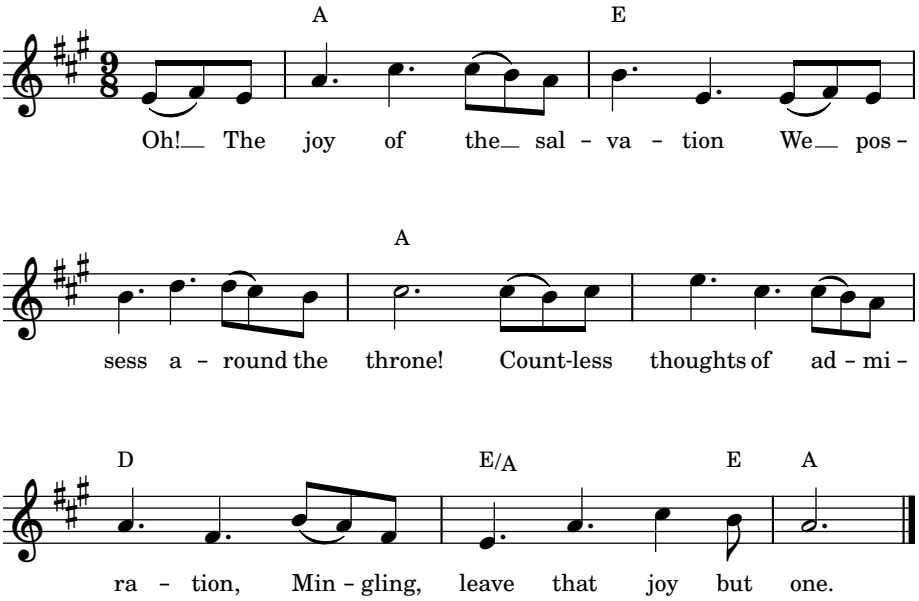
The Endless Song

PLACIDA 8.7.8.7.

John Nelson Darby

Ernest H Gebhardt



2. Hark! Ten thousand voices crying
"Lamb of God!" with one accord;
Thousand thousand saints
replying—
Bursts at once the echoing chord.

3. Long, with free and glad devotion,
Universal praise prevails;
Till, blest fruit of deep emotion,
Voice by voice in silence fails.

4. Now, in wondrous adoration
Dwelling on His matchless love,
Swayed with pow'r of that
salvation,
Silence fills the courts above.

5. Then, their richest thoughts
unfolding,
Each to each, with joy divine
Heavenly converse blissful holding,
Tells how bright His glories shine.

6. Some on God's high glories dwelling,
Brightly beaming in His face;
Some His first-born greatness
telling—
Ordering all things in their place:

7. These—of Godhead's counsels deep
Him th'Accomplisher proclaim;
These—how Jesus' self could weep,
Of Godhead's love the Witness came.

8. All on love surpassing rest,
That clothed in flesh the great
I AM;
Till, from one heart, divinely prest,
Bursts forth at length the loud
exclaim—

9. "Praise the Lamb!" At once awaking,
The gathered hosts their voices
throng;
Loud and wide—each tongue
partaking—
Rolls renewed the endless song.

10. Grateful incense this, ascending,
Rises to the Father's throne;
Every knee to Christ is bending;
All the mind in heaven is one.

11. All the Father's counsels claiming
Equal honors to the Son;
All the Son's effulgence beaming
Glory of His Father's throne.

12. By the Spirit all-prevading,
Radiant hosts unnumber'd round,
Breathing glory never-fading,
Echo back the blissful sound.

13. Joyful now the wide creation
Rests in undisturbed repose;
Blest in Jesus' full salvation,
Sorrow now nor thraldom knows.

14. Rich the streams of bounty
flowing—
Common blessings from above,
Life and holy joy, bestowing—
Tell of God's unwearied love.

15. Hark! The heavenly notes again!
Loudly swells the air-borne praise;
Throughout creation's vault,
"Amen!"
"Amen!" responsive joy doth raise.

J. N. Darby wrote this lengthy poem around 1835 while suffering a long and debilitating eye disease. He was bedridden in a dark room and wrote by dictating to a friend. Shortly before he passed away in 1881, he and a co-worker whittled it down to seven verses to be more appropriate for congregational singing. That version is the #81 "Hark! Ten Thousand Voices Crying."

It is grand, powerful and makes one want to cry out, "Praise the Lamb!" And the dynamic range is vast. It begins with ten thousand voices praising God. Then at the end of verse 3, voice by voice falls in silence, overwhelmed with emotion. These silent hearts think upon the glory of redemption until they cannot hold back "heavenly converse" one to another. This fellowshipping becomes too much to contain. A single voice bursts forth with a "Praise the Lamb!" ushering in another round of singing the endless song! And that's just half the poem!