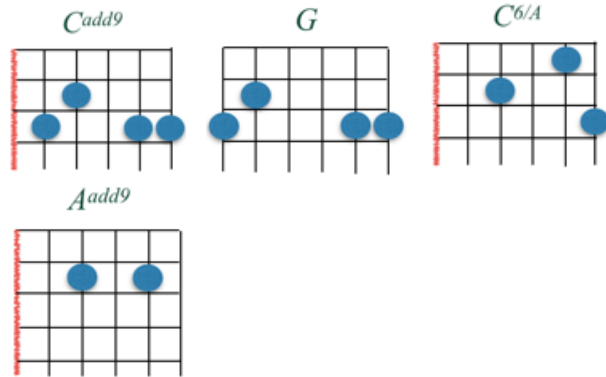


# How Great Thou Art

Words by Carl Gustav Boberg, 1885 the tune is a traditional Russian folk melody

Intro *G Cadd9*

*Cadd9 G C Am7 C6/A*  
 O Lord my God, when I in awesome won-der,  
*C Aadd9 G D D7 G*  
 Con-sider all the worlds Thy hand hath made.  
*Cadd9 G C Am7 C6/A*  
 I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
*C Aadd9 G D D7 G*  
 Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed.



## CHORUS

*Cadd9 G C G*  
 Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee.  
*G Am D7 G*  
 How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
*Cadd9 G C G*  
 Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee.  
*G Cadd9 D Am D7 G*  
 How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

*Cadd9 G C Am7 C6/A*  
 And when I think that God, His Son not spa - ring,  
*C Aadd9 G D D7 G*  
 Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in.  
*Cadd9 G C Am7 C6/A*  
 That on the cross, my burden gladly bear-ing,  
*C Aadd9 G D D7 G*  
 He bled and died to take away my sin.

*Cadd9 G C Am7 C6/A*  
 When Christ shall come, with shouts of acclama - tion,  
*C Aadd9 G D D7 G*  
 And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.  
*Cadd9 G C Am7 C6/A*  
 Then I shall bow in humble adora - tion,  
*C Aadd9 G D D7 G*  
 And there pro - claim, My God, how great Thou art!

## CHORUS

## CHORUS x2

## History

"How Great Thou Art" is based on a Swedish traditional melody and a poem written by Carl Gustav Boberg (1859–1940) in Mönsterås, Sweden. Boberg wrote the poem "O Store Gud" (O Great God) in 1885 with nine verses. It was translated into German and then into Russian.



It was translated into English from Russian by English missionary Stuart K. Hine and became a hymn. Hine added two original verses of his own. The composition was set to a Russian melody.

"How Great Thou Art" was ranked second after "Amazing Grace" on a list of the favorite hymns of all time in a survey by *Today's Christian* magazine in 2001. Notably, all English versions (a Johnny Cash live performance excluded) are in a slow, almost reciting manner, totally different from the uptempo style of the Swedish original.

According to Boberg's great-nephew, Bud Boberg, "My dad's story of its origin was that it was a **paraphrase of Psalm 8** and was used in the 'underground church' in Sweden in the late 1800s when the Baptists and Mission Friends were persecuted." 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 coloring; 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 was a carpenter's son, worked briefly as a sailor, and served as a lay minister in the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. He was the editor of a weekly Christian newspaper, *Sanningsvittnet* (Witness of the Truth), from 1890 until 1916. He served in the Swedish Parliament for 20 years from 1912 to 1931. He published more than 60 poems, hymns and gospel songs, including a collaboration with Swedish hymnodist Lina Sandell.

### **Manna Music version (1955)**

A program note from a Gustavus Adolphus College, Minnesota, concert tells listeners that Dr. J. Edwin Orr (15 January 1912 - April 1987) of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California discovered the song being sung in a small village near Deolali, India by a choir of the Naga tribe from Assam near Burma. The tribesmen had arranged the harmony, and a Mennonite missionary had transcribed it.

Orr was so impressed with the song that he introduced it at the Forest Home Christian Conference Center in the San Bernardino Mountains of southern California in the summer of 1954. Mears' publishing company, Gospel Light Press, published Hine's version of the song in 1954. However, according to Manna Music's website,

Vernon 'Tim' Spencer (born 13 July 1908; died 26 April 1974), was given a copy of the song by his son Hal and daughter Loretta who had attended the conference led by Orr. Vernon was a converted cowboy, and former member of The Sons of the Pioneers, and had founded Manna Music of Burbank, California in 1955. Spencer negotiated with Hine for the purchase of the song. The Manna Music editors changed "works" and "mighty" in Hine's original translation to "worlds" and "rolling" respectively. According to Manna Music, "Presently it is considered, and has been for several years, to be the most popular Gospel song in the world."

It was popularized by George Beverly Shea and Cliff Barrows during the Billy Graham crusades.

*Wikipedia*