



HYMNS

FOR THE HOME

VOL. 1



Steven Houser & Tyler Hill

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by Steve Houser & Tyler Hill

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A Mighty Fortress is our God

Martin Luther, ca.1529
tr. by Frederick H. Hedge, 1853

Devotional

A Mighty Fortress is our God is a Christian anthem of faith. In this hymn, Martin Luther reminds the singer of our utter dependence on the God of our salvation.

Remember the Battle

Martin Luther understood the spiritual battle better than most. He constantly wrote of his battle with the enemy and understood their attacks to be real and tangible. This hymn reminds us of the truth that our struggle is "not against flesh and blood." (Ephesians 6:12)

Remember Your Weakness

In the battle with the enemy, our weaknesses are quickly exposed. Our power is not enough on our own, and Luther reminds us that, "Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing."

Remember God's Strength

Even though our strength should wain before a strong enemy, we should not tremble, for from the mouth of God "one little word shall fell him." He is no match for the God of our salvation. Sing this song with confidence that God will win the day and we will celebrate with Him.

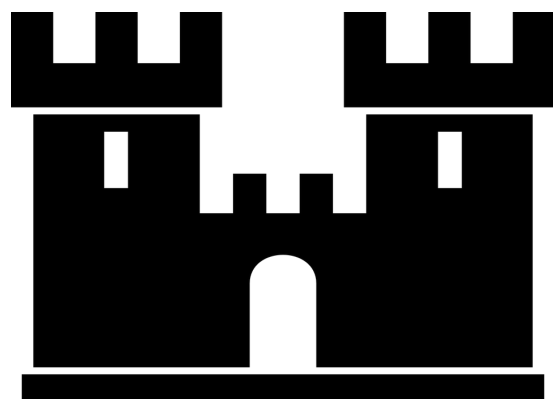
Lyrics

A mighty fortress is our God
A stronghold never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing
For still our ancient foe
Conspires to work us woe;
His craft and power are great
And armed with bitter hate
On earth is not his equal

If we in our own strength confide
Our striving would be losing
Unless God's man is on our side
The man of God's own choosing
You ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
The Lord of Hosts, His name
From age to age the same
And He must win the battle

And though this world, with devils filled
Should threaten to undo us
We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us
The Prince of Darkness grim
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure
For lo, his doom is sure;
God's word shall overthrow him

That word above all earthly powers
Is evermore abiding;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Jesus with us siding
Let goods and kindred go
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill;
God's truth is with us still;
His kingdom is forever



On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenburg. A few years later, Luther officially broke with Rome at the Diet of Worms and thus became known as the leader of the German Reformation. Throughout his lifetime and ministry, Luther spent numerous hours on theological writings and, most famously, his translation of the Bible from Latin to German. However, another passion and skill of Luther was his work as a hymnodist (Latin for Hymn writer and compiler). Luther published thirty-seven hymns alongside all his other influential works. Among these thirty-seven hymns was one that would become one of the most famous hymns in Protestant history: "Ein Feste Burg is Unser Gott".

"Ein Feste Burg is Unser Gott" (English: "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God") first appeared in *Form und Ordnung Gaystlicher Gesang und Psalmen* (Augsburg, 1529). There is some uncertainty about the date of Luther's authorship. Some believe it was written as a tribute to Luther's friend Leonhard Kaiser, who was martyred just a couple years before the hymn's first publishing. Other historians think it may have been authored in 1529, as that was also the year of the second Diet of Speyer, when the German princes made their formal "protest" against Rome, acquiring the moniker of "Protestants." Regardless, the hymn began to spread rapidly after its publication and many began to see it as the national anthem of the Reformation. It was even sung on the battlefield of Leipzig in 1631 during the Thirty Years' War.

It's not difficult to understand that the popularity of this hymn, let alone its Lutheran authorship, would lead to its translation into English. The first of which appeared in 1535 in Miles Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes and Spiritual Songes*. Today, there are over 100 English translations of this beautiful hymn. However, it was in 1853 when a Unitarian minister, Frederic Henry Hedge, provided what is the most common translation that appears today. Frederic was more than qualified to attempt a translation of this classic, German hymn. Frederic, born in 1805, was the son of a Harvard college professor and moved to Germany when he was 12 to study music and complete his primary schooling. In 1828, Hedge completed his graduate studies at Harvard Divinity School and began his ministry. After roughly thirty years of ministry work, Frederic was then appointed Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge in 1857, and then Professor of German Literature at Harvard in 1872 where he taught until his retirement in 1881. It is Frederic's respectable and supremely-competent translation that is being used in this Hymn for the Home series. It is because of Frederic's efforts that numerous churches and Christians throughout the world are able to join with Luther in echoing Psalm 46's proclamation of the sovereignty of God and that He is our "mighty fortress."



All Glory be to Christ

from Joy Has Dawned, released 27 November 2012

Words by Dustin Kensrue, arrangement by Kings Kaleidoscope / © Dead Bird

Theology (ASCAP), It's All About Jesus Music (ASCAP)

Devotional

All Glory be to Christ is one of the most clearly written odes to Jesus that we might ever encounter. The song is laced with Humility, Submission and Anticipation.

Worship in Humility

This song, updated by Dustin Kensrue, takes a humble and submissive tone. It is a great reminder of our fleeting life and the honor merited by Christ. He truly deserves all glory.

Worship in Submission

When our total dependence on the will of God informs our worship, we seek his will to be done and bow in submission as we sing praises to our provider.

Worship in Anticipation

The day will come when we will sing our songs in the presence of Christ, we will be His people and all of our desire will be conformed to His, and we will bask in the glory that he has earned, forever standing before Him as new creations. Anticipate that day as you sing this song to your King.

Lyrics

Should nothing of our efforts stand
No legacy survive
Unless the Lord does raise the house
In vain its builders strive

To you who boast tomorrow's gain
Tell me what is your life
A mist that vanishes at dawn
All glory be to Christ!

Chorus:

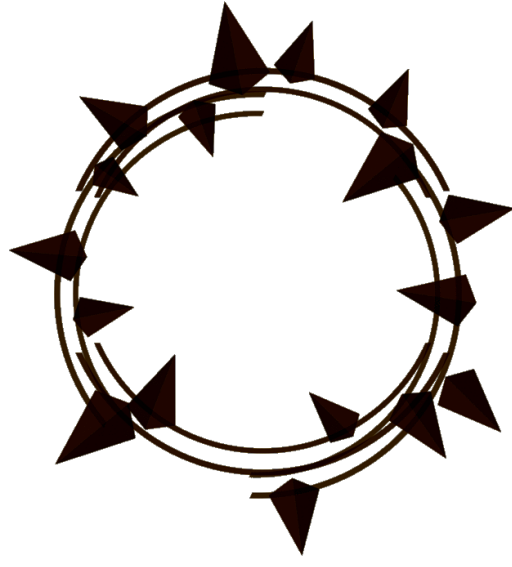
All glory be to Christ our king!
All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign we'll ever sing,
All glory be to Christ!

His will be done
His kingdom come
On earth as is above
Who is Himself our daily bread
Praise Him the Lord of love

Let living water satisfy
The thirsty without price
We'll take a cup of kindness yet
All glory be to Christ!

When on the day the great I Am
The faithful and the true
The Lamb who was for sinners slain
Is making all things new.

Behold our God shall live with us
And be our steadfast light
And we shall ere his people be
All glory be to Christ!



In 1788 Robert Burns, a Scottish poet, sent his version of an old Scots poem, titled "Auld Lang Syne," to the Scots Musical Museum. A few years later, Burns sent the poem to James Johnson, who was compiling a book of old Scottish songs. In the letter attached to the poem, Burns described it as "an old song, of the olden times, and which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript until I took it down from an old man." By the time the book was published in 1796, Burns had already died, not knowing the cultural and global impact of the words he wrote down just a decade prior.

Fast forward to today, and this has become one of the most recognizable songs in the world. It has been used in modern media, New Years Eve celebrations, and was even the original tune for South Korea's national anthem. So, how did this old Scots poem about not forgetting the old times make its way from the Scottish highlands to the church worship time as "All Glory Be To Christ"?

On January 1st, 2012, Dustin Kensrue led worship for Mars Hill Church. One of the songs in which he led the congregation was one that he had been working on for roughly two years. This new hymn of his involved rewriting the lyrics to that old Scots song "Auld Lang Syne." Dustin said that "the song is generally understood to be something of a reminder for us to foster old and dear friendships. While this is a noble thought, I always had the feeling that there was a possibly better use of the most popular melody in the world."

So, with his belief that the melody could be used for much more, he began making a new hymn from that classic melody. The result was "All Glory Be To Christ." In regards to his new hymn, Dustin said, "the idea is that--especially at the beginning of the new year--we would dedicate all our efforts to bringing glory to Jesus Christ, to acknowledge that anything else would be of no value, and to celebrate our redemption in him." Almost a year later, King's Kaleidoscope recorded the song and released it on their 2012 Christmas EP "Joy Has Dawned." Today, Dustin's hymn is not as popular as the tune that inspired it, but its meaningfulness and encouragement for the unhindered praise of the Lord is certain.



All Hail the Power of Jesus Name

Edward Perronet, pub.1780

alt. by John Rippon

Devotional

All Hail the Power of Jesus name is an cheer for Christians as we lift up and praise Jesus our King. In a faithful home this hymn can be a rallying cry for the entire family.

Crown Him King

At the power of Jesus name, even angels bow. We too should feel the presence of the almighty when we speak the name of Christ. Let us crown Him the Lord and master of our lives, and our homes.

Hail the Savior

We are products of a sinful people. In our natural state we rebel and find ourselves facing the wrath of God head on. Joyously we have a savior, who by His grace has saved us and forgiven us. Hail him who has saved you.

Joining the Everlasting Song

When we find ourselves at the end of our days, we will join a choir of people; a magnificent gathering from every tribe and every tongue and every nation, singing together the everlasting song of God's glory and grace.

Lyrics

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' Name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him Who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all!



All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name is often called the "National Anthem of Christendom." Regardless of its ascribed status, the history of this hymn is rather complicated. In doing my research, I found various accounts of its creation that contradict each other in different ways. Therefore, I chose to make use of only the most necessary information so as to provide a seamless, yet truthful, account of how this great hymn came to be what it is today.

The first verse of this magnificent hymn appeared in the November 1779 Gospel Magazine. In the April 1780 edition of the same magazine, the complete hymn was printed except with a different title, "On the Resurrection, the Lord is King." Most historians and experts are confident that the author of these two texts was Edward Perronet. A few years after the Gospel Magazine printings, another hymn writer, J. Rippon, adapted the hymn and altered the text in his 1787 Selection of Hymns. Today, most hymnals include four stanzas: 1-3 authored by Perronet and altered by Rippon, and stanza 4 by Rippon.

Because the original author is widely accepted to be Edward Perronet, a brief summary of his life will be provided. Edward Perronet was born to French Huguenot emigrants in Sundridge, Kent, England in 1726. His grandparents had fled France in the late 1600s to avoid religious persecution. His early education was conducted at home under the instruction of a tutor, but it is uncertain whether or not he attended university.

Being born, baptized, and raised in the Church of England, he originally thought he would become part of the clergy. However, regardless of his clerical aspirations, he was constantly discouraged by some of the legalistic attitudes within the Church of England. So much so that he published *The Mitre* (a satirical charge against those attitudes) in 1756, in which he says, "I was born, and am likely to die, in the tottering communion of the Church of England; but I despise her nonsense, and thank God that I have once read a book that no fool can answer, and that no honest man will." Edward spent the last few decades of his life ministering the Gospel around England. His final pastorate was located in a small church in Canterbury, where he stayed until his death on January 2, 1792.



All I Have is Christ

Music and words by Jordan Kauflin. © 2008 Sovereign Grace Praise (BMI).
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Devotional

This song, which many people consider a contemporary hymn is full of rich theology and true submission to Jesus, reminding the singer that their true need is Christ.

Faith Begins with Humility

Before being led to the Gospel we have an utter inability to lead ourselves. We are lost and unable to find the way. Yet in our rebellion it is the love of Christ that draws us home.

Faith find Home at the Cross

Though our "hell-bound race" deserves nothing but the wrath of God, because of the Jesus love and his work at the cross, we receive nothing but "grace". Ponder for a moment the contrast in these rhyming lyrics... Our faith finds home in the change from hell to grace purchased at the Cross.

The Strength of Faith is Christ

Since we have no ability on our own to find faith, then we certainly have no ability on our own to keep it. In the final verse of this song, we are reminded that the strength of our faith is found in Christ and Christ alone. Truly, All we have is Christ.

Lyrics

I once was lost in darkest night
Yet thought I knew the way
The sin that promised joy and life
Had led me to the grave
I had no hope that You would own
A rebel to Your will
And if You had not loved me first
I would refuse You still

But as I ran my hell-bound race
Indifferent to the cost
You looked upon my helpless state
And led me to the cross
And I beheld God's love displayed
You suffered in my place
You bore the wrath reserved for me
Now all I know is grace

Chorus

Hallelujah! All I have is Christ
Hallelujah! Jesus is my life

Now, Lord, I would be Yours alone
And live so all might see
The strength to follow Your commands
Could never come from me
Oh Father, use my ransomed life
In any way You choose
And let my song forever be
My only boast is You



Jordan Kauflin is the Staff Pastor at Redeemer Church of Arlington, Virginia. About 10 years ago, Jordan and his brother Devon were working on songs for an upcoming album. Jordan said that "during the writing process for that upcoming album, [he] was inspired to write a song that talked about the joy we have in Jesus that is greater than any joy in this world. That led him to try and describe the futility of our life without Jesus: 'I once was lost in darkest night.'"

He was also inspired by the last two verses in John Newton's hymn, "Old Things Are Passed away," specifically "the thought that if God had not loved us first, we would still be refusing his mercy." Jordan's vision for the song was to "tell the story of redemption and our response to it."

Jordan wrote the song alongside his father Bob Kauflin, who serves as a pastor and director of music at Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville in Kentucky. They worked hard to craft the song in such a way to convey a biblical truth without being too complex. Bob said, "looking back over the original lines Jordan had been considering for the chorus, I'm so grateful he worked hard to trim it down. It was worth the investment to be able to joyfully sing out, 'Hallelujah! All I have is Christ! Hallelujah! Jesus is my life!' and know that's all we need to say."

They finally finished the song and in 2008 they debuted the song, outside of their home church, at the New Attitude conference in Louisville, Kentucky. Shortly after its public release, the song began to spread from church to church and has become one of the most well-known songs that Sovereign Grace Music has produced.



His Mercy is More

Matt Papa and Matt Boswell © 2016 Messenger Hymns (BMI) (admin. by Music Services, www.musicservices.org) / Love Your Enemies Publishing (ASCAP). All rights reserved.

Devotional

Living in a depraved and sinful world as depraved and sinful people, the mercy of God becomes our only lifeline. Thanks be to God that His mercy is greater than the sum of all our sin.

He Counts not the Sum

Sin is a pervasive problem for the relationship that God has with His people. His deep knowledge of our sin causes separation, yet in the Gospel, He refuses keep a record.

Patience of a Tender Father

In spite of the glorious love of God, we constantly roam. Yet the tender mercy of our God, stands patient as we pursue so many things in His place. We are welcomed home no matter how deep we dive into sin, because of the Gospel.

Blood Bought Mercy

The Gospel which purchased infinite and beautiful mercy, was bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. He paid the debt that we could never pay with a single innocent sacrifice. It is through this Gospel we can say, though our sins our many, His mercy is more.

Lyrics

What love could remember no wrongs we have done
Omniscient, all knowing, He counts not their sum
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

What patience would wait as we constantly roam
What Father, so tender, is calling us home
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

What riches of kindness he lavished on us
His blood was the payment, His life was the cost
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

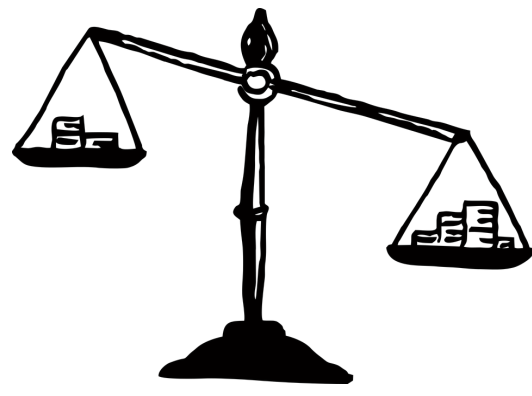
CHORUS

Praise the Lord

His mercy is more

Stronger than darkness, new every morn

Our sins they are many, His mercy is more



His Mercy is More was released on Matt Papa's "Church Songs" EP in October of 2016. This album of Matt's was the result of his desire to renew the passion that the church once had for liturgy and hymns. He worked with Matt Boswell (worship pastor and elder at Providence Church in Frisco, TX) on this particular hymn to capture the truth found in Zechariah 5: that our sin is no match for the wickedness-cleansing power of God's mercy.

And, although it is not stated by either of the Matt's, it seems that the title of this hymn is taken from a letter that the Anglican clergyman, John Newton sent on March 18, 1767. In the letter, John says, "For if our Physician is almighty, our disease cannot be desperate and if He casts none out that come to Him, why should you fear? Our sins are many, but His mercies are more: our sins are great, but His righteousness is greater: we are weak, but He is power." Regardless of the source for Papa's writing of this hymn, his doing so has been a blessing to many followers of Christ.

There is little public history regarding Papa's life outside of music. However, for almost 20 years, Matt has been producing Spirit-led, Christ-centered, God-glorifying music for any who desire to sing out the truths of Scripture. He has even published a book, "Look and Live," to show that our lives follow what our hearts focus on, whether that be ourselves or the glory of God. For Matt, the focusing of his heart on the glory of God has coincided with his relationship to music.

Music has always been a deeply important part of Matt's life and relationship with the Lord. Specifically, he has a deep love for hymns. "Hymns have an aesthetic density that isn't present in all of the church's songs," says Papa. "They represent transcendence both as art for our culture and as a part of our sung worship of Jesus. My own focus on the Psalms as laments and the beauty of their emotional honesty brought these songs to life. When we sing a lyric like 'Our sins they are many, His mercy is more' that is a truth for all time, all places and for all generations and it is worth the effort to sing that truth."



Holy, Holy, Holy

Written by: Reginald Heber

Author: John B. Dykes Tune: Nicaea

1st Published in: 1826

Devotional

Our God is wholly different than His creation. Holiness means “set apart”. The song Holy, Holy, Holy, is an anthem of praise, singling out the true perfection of God.

Three Times Holy

The Godhead, consisting of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, stands in complete contrast to His creation. He is Holy three times over, His creation has been subjected to the fall and sin.

Every Knee will Bow

Nothing in all of creation can stand before the holiness of God. If left in our sin, we would never see the glory of our creator. Even as those who are justified by the blood of Christ and clothed in His righteousness, we will bow in the presence of the holiness of God. Every knee in all creation will bow to our God.

Praise from All Creation

Reading Psalm 148 gives a grand perspective on the totality of the praise rendered to the all-mighty God. “All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea.” Everything in all of creation ought to sing in praise to our Holy God.

Lyrics

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning
our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns
around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man
Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in pow’r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name,
in earth, and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!



Holding the lordship of the manor of Marton, and being granted a coat of arms during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, the Heber family was relatively significant in the district of Yorkshire, England. In 1752 Richard Heber received the manor and estate of Hodnet Hall in Shropshire as a bequest. In 1766, after the death of Richard, his brother Reginald Heber (Sr.) inherited the Shropshire estate and became rector of Hodnet. Seventeen years later Reginald Sr. and his wife Mary produced two sons, the elder, born at Malpas on 21 April 1783, being named Reginald (Jr.) after his father.

Young Reginald spent his grammar school years at Whitchurch and Naesden. In October 1800 Reginald entered Brasenose College, Oxford. In his first year, he won the University Prize for Latin Verse, and began to develop a local reputation as a poet. In February of 1804 Reginald Sr. passed away and that summer, Reginald Jr. completed his bachelor's degree and was elected to a fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford. He also won the University's Bachelor's Prize for an English prose essay.

After spending some time traveling through Europe and Russia, Heber returned to England where he was eventually ordained as a deacon at the end of February 1807. A few months later, he received full priest's orders from the Bishop of Oxford on 24 May 1807 and became rector of Hodnet. Although he was fulfilling his duties at All Souls and at his parish, Heber was still uncertain about his own doctrinal position. He wrote to his friend, John Thornton, saying, "Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may have my eyes open to the truth...and if it please God that I persevere in his ministry I may undertake the charge with a quiet mind and a good conscience."

On 9 April 1809 Heber married Amelia Shipley. They had three children in all, one dying as an infant on 24 December 1818, the other two being born in 1821 and 1824. In September 2013 Heer preached a sermon in Shrewsbury to the British and Foreign Bible Society, a missionary organization of which he had been a member since his undergraduate days, declaring his support of overseas missions. Heber was one of the first High Church Anglicans to write his own hymns. In all, Heber wrote 57, mainly between the years of 1811 and 1821.

On 1 June 1823 Heber was formally consecrated as Bishop of Calcutta at Lambeth Palace, by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Two weeks later he departed for India with his family to become the Bishop of Calcutta. In June 1824, Heber ordained, as a deacon, the first native Indian to receive Holy Orders. During his time as Bishop of Calcutta, Heber spent much time traveling through India preaching and teaching. It was during this time in India that Heber wrote "Holy Holy Holy". Shortly after writing this beloved hymn, Heber passed away on 3 April 1826. He is buried at the same church where he preached his last sermon, St. John's church in Tiruchirappalli, India.

O Worship the King



Original words by Samuel Rodigast (1676). Translated by Catherine Winkworth (1863). Music and alt. Jeff Bourque
© 2011 Manicotti Music.

Devotional

Worship is an admiring response to something you deem glorious. This song is a pouring out devotion and admiration. Our place in the Kingdom of God was purchased by it's King. We in turn, as subject in the Kingdom of Christ, we ought to worship and sing of our glorious savior King.

He Conquers & Defends

Gratefulness flows for our faithful and protective King. We are safe and secure in the love and grace of our all-glorious, all-powerful sovereign Lord.

He Cares & Provides

Our King meets His people's needs from His own bountiful supply. We have no reason to be anxious when we live under the rule of the one who will "satisfy the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 145:16)

He is Everlasting & Glorious

The worth of our King knows no bounds. The grateful songs of His creation will resound in glory forever, and it will not be enough. He is worthy of complete and total adoration as we express our praise.

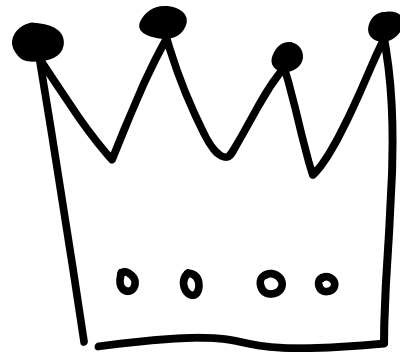
Lyrics

O worship the King All glorious above; O gratefully sing His power and his love: Our Shield and Defender, The Ancient of days, Pavilioned in splendour, And girded with praise.	Frail children of dust, And feeble as frail, In thee do we trust, Nor find thee to fail; Thy mercies how tender! How firm to the end! Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend
--	--

O tell of his might,
O sing of his grace,
Whose robe is the light,
Whose canopy space.
His chariots of wrath
The deep thunder-clouds form,
And dark is his path
On the wings of the storm.

This earth, with its store
Of wonders untold,
Almighty, thy power
Hath founded of old:
Hath stablished it fast
By a changeless decree,
And round it hath cast,
Like a mantle, the sea.

Thy bountiful care
What tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air,
It shines in the light;
It streams from the hills,
It descends to the plain,
And sweetly distils
In the dew and the rain.



Robert Grant was born in India in 1779 to Charles Grant, the chairman of the Directors of the East India Company. In 1790, Charles took Robert, and his elder brother Charles Jr., and returned to England. Robert began his studies at the Magdalen College, Cambridge, in 1795.

He was admitted to the bar on 30 January 1807, and with his newfound ability to practice law, immediately began serving the people. As well, he became the King's Sergeant in the Court of the Duchy of Lancaster and eventually a member of parliament. Like his father, Robert was deeply concerned with local issues, most notably, laboring tirelessly to get a bill passed that eventually emancipated England's Jews.

And as passionate as he was for social reform and working for the people in a political sense, he saw just as much need and had just as much fervor for the spiritual reformation. Grant was a strong supporter of world missions and was relatively influential among evangelicals in the Church of England. Most of his encouragement to the church coming from the beautiful poems and hymns he authored.

It is Roberts most famous hymn that is the subject of this article. After reading William Kethe's translation of Psalm 104 in a 1561 psalm book, Robert was prompted to write his own version of the psalm. The result is what numerous churches now sing out today, "O Worship the King".

As time went on Robert continued to work in the public sector and eventually accepted the position as Governor of Mumbai in 1835. This position gave him an opportunity to address the social and spiritual needs of the community. Among his accomplishments was the opening of several new roads, which opened the door for the local Indians to trade more. Grant held this position until his death just four years later on 9 July 1838.

He was so well-loved by the people that six years after his death, his name was bestowed upon one of the oldest institutions in Asia still teaching Western medicine today, Grant Government Medical College, Mumbai. The year after Robert's death, in 1839, his brother Charles Jr. printed Robert's twelve hymns and titled it Sacred Poems. It is within this tiny volume of hymns that we find the beloved reminder that in light of all that God has done, is doing, and will do, the only thing one can say is, "O Worship the King."



Rock of Ages

Augustus M. Toplady, 1776, copyright status is Public Domain

Thomas Hastings, 1830, copyright status is Public Domain

Devotional

This song has one simple aim; lead the singer to see their need for Jesus. Found in lines is the contrast between the sufficient sacrifice of Christ, and humanity's inability to save themselves.

Saved from Wrath

The wrath of God takes aim at all forms of sin and ungodliness, and since "All have sinned," than all have need of a savior. Our business for righteous works cannot stop the wrath of God; only the blood that was spilled at the cross of Christ, rescues us and cleanses us from the guilt of sin.

Clinging to the Cross

Clinging to the magnificent cross, we find that cross sufficient to care for all our needs: helpless to save ourselves the cross provides salvation, exposed before God the cross provides our righteousness, downcast of soul the cross provides hope. Paradoxical that our busy work provides nothing of eternal significance, yet we find all that we need as we "simply cling."

The Glory of the Rock

Our final days are approaching. For some this is a haunting thought, however, to the one who clings to Christ, hope of eternity with our beloved is what we live for. To behold our savior on His throne will be the fuel for our worship from everlasting to everlasting.

Lyrics

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.



Augustus Toplady was born in Farnham, Surrey, England on November 4, 1740. Not even a year after his birth, his father, a major in the Royal Marines, died during the War of Jenkins' ear (1739-42). This left Augustus' mother, Catherine, to raise him alone. For his grammar school, Augustus attended Westminster School from 1750-1755.

For the rest of his primary education, Catherine and Augustus moved to Ireland so Augustus could enroll at Trinity College in Dublin. When he was 15, Toplady attended a sermon preached by James Morris in a barn in Wexford. This is where Augustus remembers receiving his effectual calling from God. Because Toplady converted under the preaching of a Methodist, he initially followed John Wesley in supporting Arminianism. However, just a few years later, Toplady read Thomas Manton's sermon on John 17 and Jerome Zanchius's Confession of the Christian Religion and was convinced that Calvinism, not Arminianism, was correct. The following year, Toplady published his first book, *Poems on Sacred Subjects* (1759).

After graduating from Trinity College in 1760, Augustus and his mother returned to Westminster. It was there that Toplady began being influenced by prominent Calvinist ministers like George Whitfield and John Gill. The latter who in 1760 encouraged Toplady to publish his translation of Zanchius's work on predestination.

In 1762, Toplady was ordained as an Anglican deacon and became curate of Blagdon, located in the Mendip Hills of Somerset, England. The following year, in 1763, is when Toplady wrote the hymn which we are studying now, *Rock of Ages*. There direct reason or inspiration for Toplady penning this beautiful hymn is uncertain. There is a local tale about how the hymn came about, but due to its wholly, unsubstantiated character, we will not discuss it. Louis Benson, in his book *Study of Familiar Hymns*, argues that Toplady was most likely inspired to write the hymn after reading the preface of John and Charles Wesley's *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745) which contains a prayer voicing many of the themes and words that are also found in the hymn.

Regardless of Toplady's inspiration, *Rock of Ages* is one of the most famous hymns among Christians and has also made its way into popular culture. Although Toplady penned the hymn in 1763, its first stanza didn't appear publically until 1775 in an issue of *The Gospel Magazine*. The full version of the hymn was printed the following year in Toplady's book *Psalms and Hymns for Public and Private Worship*.

After being ordained as a priest in 1764, Toplady served as curate of Farleigh Hungerford for a just over a year. Then, he moved back to London to stay with some friends for another year. After a few years of serving as an incumbent in Devon, Toplady moved to the post of vicar of Broadhembury in 1768. He would serve this post until his death in 1778, however, the last three years of his post were spent on leave due to his sickness. He used this time of leave to preach regularly in a French Calvinist chapel in London. One of his last sermons at the chapel included a rebuttal to Wesley's followers that Toplady had renounced Calvinism on his deathbed. He hadn't. Toplady died of tuberculosis on August 11, 1778. He was buried at Whitefield's Tabernacle, Tottenham Court Road.



There is a Fountain

William Cowper, pub.1772 copyright status is Public Domain
American melody arr., pub.1874 copyright status is Public Domain

Devotional

The imagery in this hymn is beautiful and unforgettable. The blood of Christ that was spilled for the salvation of sinners, is depicted as a fountain that flows abundantly and cleanses thoroughly.

The Guilty Stains

Sin has embedded itself deep inside the human heart, causing pain and staining the soul with guilt. When the blood of Christ meets guilty stains, they are washed clean and the soul comes out pure; sin and guilt wash away forever.

Sin No More

The endless power in the blood of Christ gives strength to His church. Standing strong, having been cleansed, the Church can safely walk in this fallen world.

Redeeming Love

With eyes open, the believer can truly see beauty in the blood of Christ. His redeeming was displayed in every drop of blood. It was love that came out His pores when he prayed. It was love that trickled down His face, hands, and feet, and poured from His side. It was love that took the punishment of death that we all deserved. Sing of His love and make your theme.

Lyrics

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains: (x3)
**And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.**

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in His day;
And there have I, though vile as he,
Washed all my sins away: (x3)
**And there have I, though vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.**

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its pow'r,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are safe, to sin no more: (x3)
**Till all the ransomed church of God
Are safe, to sin no more.**

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die: (x3)
**Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.**

When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy pow'r to save: (x3)
**Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy pow'r to save.**



One of the most popular poets of the 18th century and a forerunner of Romantic poetry, William Cowper (pronounced "Cooper") was born on November 26, 1731, in Berkhamsted, England. His father John was the rector of the Church of St. Peter. John and his wife, Ann, had seven children. William and his brother John were the only two that lived past infancy. Ann died giving birth to John on November 7, 1734. The death of Williams mother just before his sixth birthday caused him much pain and was the subject of his poem, "On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture," which he wrote almost fifty years later.

During his primary education, Cowper was bullied quite a lot and moved from school to school, frequently, until 1742 when he enrolled in Westminster School. Cowper made lifelong friends at Westminster and, through his reading of the Iliad and the Odyssey, developed a love for Homer's epics. As well, during his early years, he found a deep interest in Latin. As he got older, he grew skilled at the interpretation and translation of Latin and even wrote many of his own Latin verses.

After Westminster, Cowper began training for a career in law. This kept him somewhat busy, but if he ever had leisure time, he would spend it in the home of his uncle Robert Cowper. This is where he fell in love with his cousin Theodora, whom he sincerely wanted to marry. However, his uncle, would not allow it and William was left rather distraught.

In 1763 William had a panic attack, due to the stress of the examination process, while interviewing for a Clerkship of Journals position in the House of Lords. As a result, he experienced a period of depression and insanity. He tried and failed to commit suicide three times during this period and was sent to an asylum to recover. Cowper is the only hymn writer in this series that was formally treated for insanity. His poem beginning "Hatred and vengeance, my eternal portions" was written in the aftermath of his suicide attempt.

After recovering, he moved in with a retired clergyman named Morely Uwin and his wife Mary. Cowper even went with them when they moved to Olney. It was in Olney where Cowper met John Newton, a former captain of slave ships who had devoted his life to the Gospel. After Morely Unwin's untimely death, Cowper continued to live in the Unwin home and became greatly attached to the widow Mary.

At Olney, Newton asked Cowper to contribute some hymns for a compilation that would later be published in Newton's 1779 Onley Hymns. It is within this hymnbook that our Hymn find its source.

The following years of Cowper's life are marked by a continual battle with depression. In 1773, Cowper experienced an attack of insanity, imagining not only that he was eternally condemned to hell, but that God was commanding him to make a sacrifice of his own life. Through all of his struggles and successes, Mary Unwin always took care of him and stayed by his side. Mary was a constant source of friendship, comfort, and encouragement for Cowper. So, when she died in 1796, Cowper fell into a dark gloom from which he never fully recovered. In 1800 Cowper was overcome with edema and died that April 25th.

Although his life was full of ups and downs, Cowper never doubted God's favor. And, as is evident in this hymn, Cowper knew that he would soon be singing of God's "power to save."



There is a Redeemer

Written by MELODY GREEN.

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Devotional

All of God's creation has been affected by sin. Set to futility and decay because of the rebellious actions of humanity. Creation needs someone to redeem it.

His Name is Jesus

There a redeemer, his name is Jesus. He came to earth to set in motion a plan to purchase and redeem all of creation.

Spotless Lamb of God

Jesus remained sinless before God as he walked among fallen creatures. His spotless life is the basis of His redeeming sacrifice.

The Promise of Glory

The promise of redemption is that the precious Lamb of God, who was "for sinners slain", will one day receive us into His holy presence with joy.

Lyrics

There is a redeemer
Jesus, God's own Son
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Holy One

Jesus my redeemer
Name above all names
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah
Oh, for sinners slain

Chorus

Thank you, oh my father
For giving us Your Son
And leaving Your Spirit
'Til the work on Earth is done

When I stand in Glory
I will see His face
And there I'll serve my King forever
In that Holy Place



"There Is A Redeemer" is found in church hymnals around the world. Although Melody Green is an internationally-published author, it is her songs for which she is most well-known. As well-known as she is, her story might be surprising to those who hear it for the first time.

Melody was born 25 August 1946 in Hollywood, her father a Navy veteran of WWII and her mother a CPA. Melody's mother was raised in an Orthodox Jewish family of Russian refugees. Melody's Grandparents had fled czarist Russia in the early 20th century. Melody said of this, "It's a miracle I'm even alive! My family barely escaped death in Odessa (Ukraine), then on the train ride to the port, they were ducking bullets shot at them through the windows. My precious grandparents put the kids on the floor and laid on top of them, covered with pillows for protection. They made it to the port and actually escaped on the very last ship that would allow fleeing refugees on board! My mom was their sixth child, but the very first child to be born in America."

Growing up Jewish, Melody acquired a knowledge of God at an early age. She already knew there was a God...she just didn't know how to be close to Him. Due to her desire to know God personally, but without any proper direction, Melody tried various methods of finding a personal relationship with God. She was involved in the hippy, drug culture. She'd gone to Sabbath School as a child, but as she grew older she began studying eastern philosophies, astrology, mysticism, and Buddhism. However, none of these paths ever led her to anything ultimately true or revealing about how to know God intimately.

After her collegiate studies, Melody began working at a production company, which is where she met her husband Keith. He was an aspiring musician who was on a very similar, spiritual journey. Keith was born October 21, 1953, in Brooklyn, NY. He was very gifted with music growing up and, after publishing his first song at 12 years old, became the youngest member of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. During the 1960s Keith ran away from home, at 15, and began experimenting with drugs and searching for meaning in various Eastern religions. However, at 19 years old his life began to turn around when he met Melody.

As their relationship was beginning, Melody and Keith both began to explore Christianity. About a year after meeting each other, they were married and still seeking for the true path to a personal relationship with God. In 1975, Keith and Melody were invited to a small bible study in Bel Air and their lives were changed forever. They finally found the truth that they had been searching for and they found in the person and work of Jesus.

With their new faith, the Green's began doing whatever they could to walk like Jesus. They opened up their home and took in kids with drug problems. They supported and helped young girls who were in the midst of unplanned pregnancies, usually leading them to the Lord. They were constantly doing outreach within their neighborhood and taking advantage of their sphere's of influence.

It was during this time that Melody penned the words for "There Is A Redeemer" along with some help from Keith for the third verse. For Keith and Melody, meeting Jesus was one thing, but the life-changing response to meeting Jesus was of much more importance. Keith once said at a concert, "If you praise and worship Jesus with your mouth and your life does not praise and worship him, there's something wrong!"

What'er my God Ordains is Right



Original words by Samuel Rodigast (1676). Translated by Catherine Winkworth (1863). Music and alt. Jeff Bourque
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Devotional

The sovereignty of God can be the most comforting truth. When understood correctly it helps us comprehend all that we experience in life. Every pain and pleasure is from the hands of a righteous and merciful God.

He is My God

God is God, we are not. This holds true regardless of the world swirling around us. When we experience joy, He is our God. He is also our God when we experience pain. He is and forever will be our God.

Take it without Shrinking

Because our God is both Holy and Good, we can have confidence that all that our God ordains is right, and trustworthy. Therefore come pain and suffering or tears of joy, we can “take it all unshrinking.”

He Holds Me

He Holds me that I Shall Not Fall
There is one line that is repeated in this song, “He holds me that I shall not fall, and so to Him I leave it all.” Experiencing the grace and love of God unfolding as we walk with Christ day after day, is one of the greatest joys of the Christian life.

Lyrics

Whate'er my God ordains is right:
His holy will abideth;
I will be still whate'er He doth;
And follow where He guideth;
He is my God; though dark my road,
He holds me that I shall not fall:
Wherefore to Him I leave it all.
He holds me that I shall not fall.

Whate'er my God ordains is right:
He never will deceive me;
He leads me by the proper path:
I know He will not leave me.
I take, content, what He hath sent;
His hand can turn my griefs away,
And patiently I wait His day.
His hands can turn my griefs away.

Whate'er my God ordains is right:
Though now this cup, in drinking,
May bitter seem to my faint heart,
I take it, all unshrinking.
My God is true; each morn anew
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart,
And pain and sorrow shall depart.
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart.

Whate'er my God ordains is right:
Here shall my stand be taken;
Though sorrow, need, or death be mine,
Yet I am not forsaken.
My Father's care is round me there;
He holds me that I shall not fall:
And so to Him I leave it all.
He holds me that I shall not fall.



Seeing a dear friend and brother in Christ depart from this life unto everlasting life can be sorrowful yet also joyful because while the pain of loss is real, we can know that "whatever God ordains is right." In 1675, Samuel Rodigast was by the side of his very sick friend, Severus Gastorius. Samuel was born October 16, 1649, in a small German village, near Leipzig, called Gröben. After attending the most advanced type of secondary schooling in Germany, Rodigast went on to study at the University of Jena, where he was later given an adjunct position in the philosophy faculty in 1676.

The year prior to Rodigast beginning his teaching career, his friend Severus became very ill and was bed-ridden for quite some time. Therefore, Rodigast began spending as much time as he could comforting and fellowshiping with his brother in Christ. It was during that first year (1675) of Gastorius' bed-ridden sickness that Rodigast decided to cheer his friend up. And, the only proper way Rodigast could fathom to do this was to write a hymn, reminding Gastorius of the truth found in Deuteronomy 32:4. So, inspired by a Lutheran hymn with the same biblical foundation, Rodigast wrote: "Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan".

A deeply personal song for Rodigast and Gastorius, the text of the hymn was first published in 1676 in the Hanoverian hymnbook. In just a few years the hymn was being used by ministers as well as for organ partitas during the 1680s. The text and melody (composed by Gastorius) of Rodigast's hymn were published together for the first time in 1690 in the Nuremberg hymnal. In his 1721 book on the lives of famous lyric poets, Johann Caspar Wetzel said that by 1708 Rodigast's hymn was known as one of the most beautiful and widely known church hymns.

As the hymn continued to grow in its popularity it was eventually found by one of the greatest translators to labor over German hymns. Born September 13, 1827, Catherine Winkworth was an English-language translator from London. She spent the majority of her life bringing some of the greatest German hymns to the English-speaking churches throughout the world. In 1863, she published *The Chorale Book for England*, in which Winkworth provided her translation of Rodigast's famous hymn, titled in English: "Whate'er my God ordains is right".



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