



Old Time Gospel Hymns Bible Study

Gethsemane Lutheran
Church
2/8/2021

Welcome

Trivia: A Biblical “Who Said It?”

“It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick.”

Jesus, responding to the religious leaders who grumbled about Him dining with “the tax collectors and sinners”; Luke 5:31

Trivia: A Biblical “Who Said It?”

“Please Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in times past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”

Moses, attempting to talk God out of sending him to stand before Pharaoh and to bring God’s people out of bondage in Egypt; Exodus 4:10

Trivia: A Biblical “Who Said It?”

“Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

Peter, speaking to the lame man at the temple, who was begging for charity; Acts 3:6

Trivia: A Biblical “Who Said It?”

“If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you refuse to do what is right, sin is crouching at your door. It desires to have you, but you must master it.”

God, speaking to Cain before he slew his brother Abel; Genesis 4:7

Trivia: A Biblical “Who Said It?”

“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

Paul, in a letter to Timothy, his “true child in the faith”; 1 Timothy 4:16



MIGHTY FORTRESS
is Our God

**Spotlight Hymn: A Mighty Fortress
Is Our God**

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The History

- Original Language: German
- Original Title: Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott
- Author: Martin Luther
- Composed: Between 1527-1529



A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The History

- Penned by Martin Luther
- Lived 1483-1546
- German priest who in 1517, published his “95 Theses”, setting forth objections against various practices of the church, particularly the sale of indulgences (i.e. that through the purchases of indulgences, buyers could secure forgiveness and salvation)
- While Luther’s intent was to help steer the church toward teachings and practices consistent with the Scriptures, the power structure of the church was unreceptive to Luther’s arguments. Luther refused formal demands to recant his writings, and by January 3, 1521, Luther had been excommunicated from the Catholic church.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The History

- In addition to Luther's ex-communication, Luther was ordered to appear before the Diet of Worms (a secular general assembly of the Roman Empire) in April 1521 relating to the secular enforcement of the church's actions against him.
- Again Luther refused to recant his writings and teachings, and after considering the case, on May 25, 1521, Luther was formally declared an outlaw with a warrant issued for his arrest.
 - "We want him to be apprehended and punished as a notorious heretic."
 - The ruling also made it a crime for anyone in Germany to provide Luther food or shelter, and permitted anyone to kill Luther without legal consequence.
- To provide for his safety, an ally of Luther's arranged to have him abducted and taken to Wartburg Castle at Eisenach, Germany, where he worked to translate the New Testament into German and poured himself into doctrinal writings.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The History

- While Luther did not set out to break away from the Catholic church, his writings, teachings, and fidelity to the Holy Scripture were instrumental in triggering a movement which would come to be known as the Reformation.
- In addition to his doctrinal writings and sermons, Martin Luther penned at least 36 hymns during his lifetime, including our spotlight hymn: A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Text

A Mighty Fortress is Our God
MARTIN LUTHER, 1529

1. A mighty fortress is our God, A bulwark here we stand;
2. Did we in our own strength confide, Our trusting would be vain;
3. And should this world with devils filled, Should threaten to annoy,
4. That word alone will earth's powers, No thanks to them, ally;

Our help is in the Lord, and the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;
We will not fear, for God hath willed, His truth to triumph through us;
The Lord is with us and the gifts are ours, That help us through our doubts;

For still our enemies are, Both seek to work us woe; His craft and power are
Doubt not who that may be! Christ Jesus, He is He, Lord Sabaoth his
The prince of this world is, We scorn him not for him; His rage we can endure,
Let goods and kindred go, This mortal life also; The body they may

grieve, And armed with steel of hate, Our earth is not his equal;
since, From age to age he reigns, And he must win the battle;
since, For 'tis his doom to raze, One lit-tle word shall fill his
hill, God's truth shall always triumph, His kingdom shall be everlast-

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
A Sword And Shield Victorious.
He Breaks The Cruel Oppressor's Rod
And Wins Salvation Glorious.
The Old Satanic Foe
Has Sworn To Work Us Woe.
With Craft And Dreadful Might
He Arms Himself To Fight.
On Earth He Has No Equal.

No Strength Of Ours Can Match His Might.
We Would Be Lost, Rejected.
But Now A Champion Comes To Fight,
Whom God Himself Elected.
You Ask Who This May Be:
The Lord Of Hosts Is He.
Christ Jesus Mighty Lord,
God's Only Son Adored.
He Holds The Field Victorious.

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2. Did we in our own strength confide, Our trusting would be vain;
3. And should this world with devils filled, Should threaten to annoy,
4. That word alone will earth's powers, No thanks to them, ally;

Our help is in the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel;
Were not the right man on our side, The man of God's own choise;
We will not fear, for God hath willed, His truth to triumph through us;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours, Thro' him who with us staid;

For still our enemies are, Both seek to work us woe; His craft and power are
Dont ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he, Lord Sabaoth his
The prince of this world's grim, We scorn-his out for him; His rage we can no
Let goods and kindred go, This mortal life be, The body they may

grain, And armed with eyes of hate, On earth is, not his equal
mine, From age to age the same, And he must win the battle;
show, For 'tis his doom to raign, One lit-tle word shall fill his
hill, God's truth a-lyd-eth still, His king-dom is for-ev-er. Amen.

Though Hordes Of Devils Fill The Land,
All Threat'ning To Devour Us.
We Tremble Not, Unmoved We Stand.
They Cannot Overpow'r Us.
Let This World's Tyrant Rage.
In Battle We'll Engage.
His Might Is Doomed To Fail.
God's Judgment Must Prevail.
One Little Word Subdues Him.

God's Word Forever Shall Abide.
No Thanks To Foes Who Fear It.
For God Himself Fights By Our Side,
With Weapons Of The Spirit.
Were They To Take Our House,
Goods, Honor, Child, Or Spouse,
Though Life Be Wrenched Away,
They Cannot Win The Day.
The Kingdom's Ours Forever!

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Scripture

- Often referred to as the Battle Hymn of the Reformation, *A Mighty Fortress* draws its inspiration from Psalm 46.
- When Luther needed encouragement, comfort, and strength during the many trials he faced, he would often turn to Psalm 46 for courage.

A Mighty Fortress



A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Scripture

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.

The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
He utters His voice, the earth melts.

The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come, behold the works of the LORD,
how He has brought desolations on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;

he burns the chariots with fire.
"Be still, and know that I am God.

I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!"

The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Theology

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
A Sword And Shield Victorious.
He Breaks The Cruel Oppressor's Rod
And Wins Salvation Glorious.
The Old Satanic Foe
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With Craft And Dreadful Might
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God's Only Son Adored.
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In Battle We'll Engage.
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A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Theology

- What strikes you as you read through this hymn? What themes do we see?
- He is our Mighty Fortress, our refuge and strength.
 - Psalm 46:1,7,11
- We do have an enemy.
 - “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8
 - “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with Truth, and having put on the Breastplate of Righteousness, and having shod your feet with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace; in addition to all, taking up the Shield of Faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” Ephesians 6:11-17
 - What two weapons did Luther mention in the hymn?

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Theology

- Though we may suffer, we have reason for hope, and confidence.
 - “The Lord of hosts is with us.” (Psalm 46:7,11)
 - “Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me, His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the Gospel, according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel...” 2 Timothy 1:8-11
 - “I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33
 - Our enemy the devil will meet his ultimate destruction: “And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Rev. 20:10



A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God: The Theology

- God's Word shall stand forever.
 - “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.” (Isaiah 40:8)
 - “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” (Jesus, Matthew 24-35)
- Reflection: Why do you believe this hymn has lasted for nearly 500 years?

*The Lord is my rock, my
fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom
I take refuge. Psalm 18:2*



MIGHTY FORTRESS
is Our God

Final Thoughts/Comments

