

Great Songs From Revelation

Joe Slater

The book of Revelation is more understandable than most brethren suppose. It provides a rich study for several reasons, not the least of which is the abundant material it has furnished for songs. Numerous songs we use in worship regularly, or with which we are otherwise familiar, have their origin in the book of Revelation.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, is a direct quote from Revelation 4:8. The saints “casting down their golden crowns around the crystal sea” in that song’s second verse comes from 4:10 and 15:2-4. As the Israelites stood by the Red Sea praising God for their deliverance from oppression and His victory over the Egyptians, so Revelation portrays the redeemed praising God by the glassy sea for His victory in which He delivered them from persecution by Rome.

A number of songs have sprung from the praise given to God and to the Lamb in Revelation chapters four and five. *Worthy is the Lamb that was Slain* comes straight from Revelation 5:12, while brother Tillit S. Teddlie’s matchless *Worthy Art Thou* is taken from the entire section 5:9-13.

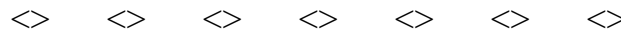
At one time or another, most of us have thrilled to the majestic Hallelujah Chorus of Handel’s *Messiah*. “Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!” Where do you suppose he got those words? Take a look at Revelation 19:6.

How many times have you sung, “On Zion’s glorious summit stood a numerous host redeemed by blood”? In Revelation 14:1, John saw “a lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand having His Father’s name written on their foreheads.” The song says “they hymned their King in strains divine,” which is evident from 14:2, 3. The

second verse speaks of those who “suffered sword or flame for truth or Jesus’ lovely name.” Indeed, this multitude from Revelation consists of those who remained faithful to Christ even if it meant martyrdom.

We take comfort in songs such as *In The Land Of Fadeless Day*. We long for that “city foursquare” where there are no tears, no death, pain, or fears, and where time is not counted by years “for there is no night there.” Is our hope realistic? Indeed! See Revelation 21:10-27.

These are just a few of the songs that the wonderful book of Revelation has spawned. I hope these songs will mean more to us as we understand their background, and that we may approach the book of Revelation with a greater appreciation of its relevance to us.



Cannot Be Bought With Money

. . . (A) memorable conversation with my Dad took place . . . just a week before he passed from this life at age 61. Confident that he wouldn’t live much longer, he wanted to talk with me about some paper work that would need attention. He closed by saying, “And I’ve spared you three boys a lot of headaches; there isn’t any money for you to fuss over.”

I responded, “I don’t think we’d fuss over it anyway, but praise God what you’re leaving us cannot be bought with money.” The memory and example of a Christian man who determined to be faithful no matter what life dealt him, to provide the best he could for his three sons, and to be totally committed to Christ and His church, are worth far more than all this world’s goods combined”

--John Dale (in *Before I Go*, pp. 33, 34)

Good Fruit Or Bad?

Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit (Matthew 12:33).

Many years ago, I went to a company Christmas party. The attendees were drinking and singing carols. They conversed with one another between songs, and their every other word was taking our God's name in vain. In their next breath, they were again singing and praising God for Christ's birth.

It is easy to see the bad in such a scene when we look at others. Surely our God condemns such behavior. A Christian would not do such a thing.

But then I think of my own heart. I do not curse or take God's name in vain. I try to guard my lips. That is good, but do I watch my thoughts? If someone disagrees with me, do I look at their side, or do I let my ego rule and argue? When someone says or does something that hurts my feelings, do I seek revenge? Am I the one who goes to my brother when he sins against me, or do I vow to never forgive him?

Some have said that it is only human to look out for ourselves. The problem with that belief is that we are not to act human, like others act. We are to model our minds after the mind of God. God's wisdom, James reminds us, is “*first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace*” (James 3:17, 18).

May we always train our hearts in the ways of God, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34).

--Donna Richmond Wittlif (Denver, CO)