

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Martin Luther (1483 – 1546), a German professor of theology, composer, priest, monk, and a seminal figure in the Protestant Reformation, composed a masterful piece entitled *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*, which has been a favorite of Christians down through succeeding generations.

It has been called the *Battle Hymn of the Reformation*. Author James Moffett described the song as “the greatest hymn of the greatest man of the greatest period of German history.”

This triumphant song, taken from Psalm 46, has inspired legions of Christians for nearly five centuries. Let it touch you today as you read the lyrics:



*A mighty Fortress is our God ... A Bulwark never failing ... Our Helper He amid the flood ...
Of mortal ills prevailing ... For still our ancient foe ... Doth seek to work us woe ...
His craft and power are great ... And, armed with cruel hate ... On earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide ... Our striving would be losing ... Were not the right
Man on our side ... The Man of God's own choosing ... Dost ask who that may be? ...
Christ Jesus, it is He ... Lord Sabaoth 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 hath 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 ...
One little word shall fell him.*

*That word above all earthly powers ... No thanks to them, abideth ... The Spirit and the
gifts are ours ... Through Him who with us sideth ... Let goods and kindred go ...
This mortal life also ... The body they may kill ... God's truth abideth still ...
His Kingdom is forever.*

A significant twist to this victorious hymn is that Luther wrote it during a season of great depression. In 1527, Luther experienced nearly a year of sickness and intense depression. It was a year of struggle, and one from which he wished he could have escaped.

(more)



But in the depths of that pain and sadness, God brought forth a majestic hymn that has fortified the faith of millions. Martin Luther, like all of us, hoped for escape from his discouraging experience, but God used that difficult time to shape a mighty message of hope.

Although none of us would run to discouragement, we might do well to spend less time trying to shake it and more time searching for the truths God wants to show us when discouragement comes our way.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High (Psalm 46:1-4 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter