OUR REFUGE



PHILIP MOORE

Music is very special to humans. We admire talented people who produce such special combination of words that touch our hearts. Between the years 1700 and 1900, many hymns were written that are appreciated throughout the world to this day. Dozens of writers, motivated by their knowledge of the Bible, wrote words that for centuries have resonated in churches around the world. Historians call that era "the golden age" of hymnology.

Isaac Watts was a prolific writer at that time. He wrote more than 750 hymns and is known to this day as the father of English hymnody. Isaac Watts was born in 1674. His father, who refused to conform to the norms of the official state church, was accused of being a dissenter and imprisoned several times. Always studious, Isaac dedicated himself to writing books on geography, astronomy, grammar, and philosophy. He loved music but found the hymns of the day monotonous and heartless. One day, frustrated, he expressed his discontentment to his father. The response was a challenge: "Well then, young man, why don't you give us something better to sing?"

To write good Christian hymns you not only need talent, but also a knowledge of God and his Word. Isaac Watts had believed in the Lord Jesus Christ at a young age and was devoted to reading the Bible. Psalm 90 touched his heart in a special way, and he wrote a beautiful hymn.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Isaac Watts' hymns not only highlighted the protection and greatness of God, but also expressed an intimate appreciation for the cross of Calvary and the sacrifice that the Lord Jesus Christ made to save humanity. Those words that we still sing to this day say:

When I survey the wondrous cross;
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss;
And pour contempt on all my pride

See from His head, His hands, His feet;
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet;
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Dear reader, how do you react when you read these words describing the sufferings of the Lord Jesus? The Bible says that **"the wages of sin is death"** (ROMANS 6:23). But the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus were not because of His own sin, for He had none, but because of your sin and mine. Isaac Watts had understood this and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why he was able to write these words with so much feeling and appreciation. Can you say the same? Have you appreciated what Jesus did on the cross for you? Have you repented and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour?

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