

Overcoming discouragement brings great blessing

Have you experienced the peace of God during times of trouble? The Psalmist said:

"Be silent, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world." Psalm 46:6 NLT

The following excerpt from a hymn by Katharina von Schlegel (b. 1697) expresses the same point.

Be Still My Soul

Be still, my soul! Thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He has the past,
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul! The waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.

In the midst of the psalmist's troubles, the Lord said, "Be still, and know that I am God." It was these same words that spoke to Katharina von Schlegel. A century after Luther's reforms, Central Europe was racked by the Thirty Years' War, which pitted Catholics against Protestants. The Pietist movement, which stressed personal holiness, charity, mission, and music, began during that time.

The songs of the Pietists were largely unknown outside of Germany until three British women—Jane and Sarah Borthwick and Catherine Winkworth—began to translate them into English a hundred years later. This hymn, penned by the leading woman of the Pietist movement, a canoness of a women's seminary, was among those forgotten songs.

When is it appropriate to claim these promises of God? Any time you feel stressed, forgotten, frightened, confused, sorrowful, for any reason. You may ask for God's help at any time. There are no issues too great or too trivial.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, help me to call on you in times when I need comfort, and to offer encouragement to others who may need it. Amen
Blessings and Peace to you all!
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