

BEING AFRAID IN THE GARDEN



There are times when it is prudent to be afraid in the garden. My worst experience was in our large shadehouse with a venomous snake between myself and the only exit. I knew an unmolested brown snake would go quietly but a provoked snake could strike and was never so silent or still. After some time the snake slithered off and I was able to leave. Another creature that initially made me afraid is the local species of 'Dragon' (above). However, we have only seen Dragons eating grasshoppers (below) so feel safe near them and welcome them for their pest controlling contribution to our garden.

We are reminded in the Old Testament that the Lord our God is with us, wherever we go. The New Testament reminds us the Lord God can do 'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think'. I find it comforting to know that in frightening situations, the Lord is with us.

Joshua 1:9 King James Version Public Domain

⁹Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Ephesians 3:20-21 King James Version Public Domain

²⁰Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD, Martin Luther, 1529
PUBLIC DOMAIN at time of recording. To hear this hymn, copy and paste the following
<http://www.webhymns.net/viewsong.php?id=45>
and then click on [AMightyFortress.mp3](#)

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.



BIRDS OF THE AIR – NESTS



There are many mentions of birds in the Bible. Jesus mentions in both Matthew 8 and Luke 9 that the **birds of the air have nests**.

A **nest** is shown (above), ready for Mother Pigeon to rear her young (below). As well as a place for rearing young, the **nest** acts as a place of safety. Recent events, such as floods, have made us realise that our '**nest**' or place of safety can be threatened by circumstances. However, it is comforting to know that as far back as Deuteronomy we have the following **promise** which is repeated over and over.

Deuteronomy 33:27 King James Version Public Domain
The eternal **God is thy refuge**, and **underneath are the everlasting arms**.

Psalms 91:2 King James Version Public Domain
I will say of the LORD, He is my **refuge** and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

Psalms 46:1 King James Version Public Domain
God is our **refuge** and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Isaiah 25:4 King James Version Public Domain
For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a **refuge** from the storm.

O GOD OUR HELP IN AGES PAST Isaac Watts, 1719

PUBLIC DOMAIN at time of recording
To hear this hymn, copy and paste the following
<http://www.webhymns.net/viewsonline.php?id=16>
and then click on [O God Our Help.mp3](#)

1. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.
2. Under the shadow of thy throne, Thy saints have dwelt secure; sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.
3. Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame, from everlasting, thou art God, to endless years the same.

4. A thousand ages, in thy sight, are like an evening gone; short as the watch that ends the night, before the rising sun.
5. Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all its sons away; they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.
6. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come; be thou our guide while troubles last, and our eternal home.



BIRDS – THE TIME OF SINGING



Seasons represent the cycle of creation. This cycle is sustained by God and shows his provision and mercy. The time described in Song of Solomon, when flowers appear and the singing of the birds is come, is a reminder that the seasons were created by God and they are maintained by God.

Time spent enjoying seasonal blessings can connect us with the cycle of creation and with the Creator. We find that time spent in our garden puts us in tune with the cycle of creation as well as with the Creator.

Song of Solomon 2:12 King James Version Public Domain
The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of **birds** is come.

Psalms 74:16-17 King James Version Public Domain
¹⁶The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun. ¹⁷Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.

Acts 14:15-17 King James Version Public Domain
¹⁵turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein ... ¹⁷and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

JESUS SHALL REIGN Isaac Watts, 1719

PUBLIC DOMAIN at time of recording
To hear this hymn, copy and paste the following
<http://www.webhymns.net/viewsonc.php?id=13>
and then click on [Jesus Shall Reign.mp3](#)

1. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore, Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
2. To Him shall endless prayer be made, And praises throng to crown His head;
His Name like sweet perfume shall rise With every morning sacrifice.
3. People and realms of every tongue Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim Their early blessings on His Name.
4. Blessings abound where'er He reigns; The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest, And all the sons of want are blessed.
5. Where He displays His healing power, Death and the curse are known no more:
In Him the tribes of Adam boast More blessings than their father lost.
6. Let every creature rise and bring Peculiar honours to our King;
Angels descend with songs again, And earth repeat the loud amen!



GOD THE GARDENER



Gardens in the Bible have been the locations for powerful acts of salvation. The Old Testament begins with the Garden of Eden. The Bible ends with the Final Garden, the new creation. In between are the Garden of Gethsemane and the Garden with the new tomb.

It is not surprising then that the Bible makes many references to plants. Some are ones we eat, e.g. cucumbers, olives and wheat. Others we know well as ornamental plants, e.g. roses (above), lilies and Mallows (below). Jesus even used seed to represent the word of God in the Parable of the Sower. In John 15, we also have God the Gardener pruning our lives to make them more productive.

The Message gives a beautiful rendition of James 1: 21:
“let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life.”

This is our prayer: that God may make a salvation-garden of your life.

Luke 8:11 King James Version Public Domain
Now the **parable** is this: The **seed** is the word of God.

John 15: 1,2 King James Version Public Domain

¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

²Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

AMAZING GRACE John Newton, 1779

PUBLIC DOMAIN at time of recording

To hear this hymn, copy and paste the following

<http://www.webhymns.net/viewsonline.php?id=21>

and then click on [Amazing Grace - How Sweet The Sound.mp3](#)

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.
2. As grace first taught my heart to fear, so grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.
3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
God's grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
4. The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be, as long as life endures.
5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil, A life of joy and peace.
6. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below, Will be forever mine.
7. When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as
the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

