



**F**OR thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. Isaiah 54:5 (KJV)  
*Isa<sup>2</sup> And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. <sup>3</sup>Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. <sup>4</sup>Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. (Isaiah 62:2-4)*

This is another old and beautiful Gospel song whose lyrics, apparently, did not rise to the sophistication required by the 1940 Hymnal editors but whose beauty exceeds most hymns that are, indeed, included. The hymn was published in 1876, the composition of Edgar P. Stites, and to the tune, *BEULAH LAND*, by John R. Sweeney. Stites, a native of Cape May, New Jersey, had a varied background of experiences including that of Civil War soldier, Riverboat pilot, a lay missionary, and a local business man of Cape May. His testimony of his experience in writing this hymn (explained in the devotion) adds meaning and beauty to the lyrics.

### **Beulah Land**

I've reached the land of corn and wine,  
And all its riches freely mine;  
Here shines undimmed one blissful day,  
For all my night has passed away.

Refrain:

O Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land,  
As on thy highest mount I stand,

I look away across the sea,  
Where mansions are prepared for me,  
And view the shining glory shore,  
My heav'n, my home forevermore!

My Savior comes and walks with me,  
And sweet communion here have we;  
He gently leads me by His hand,  
For this is Heaven's borderland.

A sweet perfume upon the breeze,  
Is borne from ever vernal trees,  
And flow'rs that never fading grow  
Where streams of life forever flow.

The zephyrs seem to float to me,  
Sweet sounds of Heaven's melody,  
As angels with the white-robed throng  
Join in the sweet redemption song.

*I've reached the land of corn and wine, And all its riches freely mine; Here shines undimmed one blissful day, For all my night has passed away.* The beauty of this song is made more profound by the deeper spiritual meaning which the author incorporates – completely consistent with the biblical meaning related. The word used for corn does not refer to the American grain originating in southern Mexico, but to any grain such as wheat, barley, or rice. The meaning at the time of the English translation of the KJV was, and still is, “. . . .the grain of a cereal grass that is the primary crop of a region (such as wheat in Britain and oats in Scotland and Ireland).” In the above stanza, it probably relates to wheat from which bread is made, and to wine, both of which are an indispensable part of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. After Mr. Stites wrote the first two verses of this hymn, he simply was forced to stop writing being overcome with a strong spiritual emotion. Here is his report of that event:

*"It was in 1876 that I wrote 'Beulah Land.' I could write only two verses and the chorus, when I was overcome and fell on my face. That was one Sunday. On the following Sunday I wrote the third and fourth verses, and again I was so influenced by emotion that I could only pray and weep. The first time it was sung was at the regular Monday morning meeting of Methodists in Philadelphia. Bishop McCabe sang it to the assembled ministers. Since then it is known wherever religious people congregate. I have never received a cent for my songs. Perhaps that is why they have had such a wide popularity. I could not do work for the Master and receive pay for it."*

The mid part of the stanza is filled with an awe-inspiring truth: at the marriage of the Bridegroom to His Bride, the possessions of the Bridegroom becomes a common possession of the Bride; and the latter portion, too, is a reflection of a prophecy made – in that wonderful land of Beulah, there will be no night: <sup>“Rev 5</sup> **And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.**” (Revelation 22:5)

It seems appropriate, before proceeding, to point out two important meanings. *Hephzibah* is a Hebrew word meaning “*possession of my delight*,” and the second, *Beulah*, is a word for marriage as between the Lord, and the Bride of His delight in New Jerusalem. In the end of days, our Lord will bring forth that land as a Bride adorned for her Husband. “*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*” (Revelation 21:2) This is not the war-torn old Jerusalem, full of wars and strifes, but a new and Holy Jerusalem, as the abode for His Bride. She shall no longer be called ‘Forsaken’ but blessed and prized as the Bride of our Lord.

*My Savior comes and walks with me, And sweet communion here have we; He gently leads me by His hand, For this is Heaven's borderland.* Yes, if we “*come to*

*the Garden alone while the dew is still on the Roses”* (as Mary Magdalene at the Garden Tomb), our Lord will hold private Communion with our souls. Jordan Banks represent a borderland for the crossing over to the Promise Land of the beleaguered Christian. If the Lord does not take our hand in that crossing, who else is has the authority or inclination?

*A sweet perfume upon the breeze, Is borne from ever vernal trees, And flow'rs that never fading grow Where streams of life forever flow.* The beauty of expression in this hymn reminds me of another beautiful old, and seldom heard, hymn entitled *Is Not This the Land of Beulah*.

I am dwelling on a mountain,  
Where the Golden Sunlight gleams  
O'er a land whose wondrous beauty  
Far exceeds my fondest dreams;  
Where the air is pure, ethereal,  
Laden with the breath of flowers,  
That are blooming by the Fountain,  
'Neath the amaranthine bowers.

The River of Life is in the City of our God whose flowing waters are eternal and effulgent with joy and Light. The Lord will bring His Bride out from among the vulgar commons, and take her unto Himself: *“I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.”* (Ezekiel 20:41) These are all Israel, whether Jew or Gentile, who belong as a Bride to the Lord Jesus Christ.

*The zephyrs seem to float to me, Sweet sounds of Heaven's melody, As angels with the white-robed throng Join in the sweet redemption song.* The Bride shall be borne forth with the soft, gentle breeze (zephyr) of the Holy Ghost. So will the grandest angelic chorus ever heard in Heaven or earth be sounded at thy welcome.

### **Refrain**

*O Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land, As on thy highest mount I stand, I look away across the sea, Where mansions are prepared for me, And view the shining glory shore, My heav'n, my home forevermore!* There is no mountain that towers higher than the Mountain of the Lord. When we stand with Him, we shall share the vantage point of that High Fortress. Looking with a more perfect vision as our eyes grow dim with age, we look across those turbid waters of Jordan to that Land of Promise to which Moses ascended once he was forbidden to cross over into that less glorious land of Promise. Our Bridegroom, as was the custom for those in days of old, gone to prepare a place for His Bride; and He shall return when the Father deems the moment appropriate. <sup>1</sup> *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.* <sup>2</sup> *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.* <sup>3</sup> *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”* (John 14:1-3) Once Heaven's shores are viewed, even from our distant vantage point, there can be no other place to satisfy the heart of the weary pilgrim. We shall stake our claim to that beautiful shore according to the calling and grace of our Lord and Savior, High Priest and King.