



*11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Rev 19:11-16)*

This is a beautiful old hymn which did not make it into the 1940 Hymnal of the Episcopal Church. Many great hymns of Fanny Crosby, the author, are omitted in that hymnal for reasons that escape my understanding. Perhaps American hymns do not rise to the level of 'sophistication' in the minds of English-oriented hymnists. This hymn was written by Fanny Crosby in 1890. I feel it necessary to always remark about this wonderful hymn writer with each mention of her name. Blind from infancy, Fanny lived a somewhat sordid life until she came to know Christ as her personal Lord and Savior in middle age. She wrote no hymns until age forty-seven, but thereafter wrote prolifically until her death at age 95. She, in fact, wrote more hymns (all beautiful) than any other hymnist of whom I am aware - more than 9,000. So age is not a detriment to the service of God. Many of her hymns relate to a vision which sometimes escapes those with physical vision. The vision of her spiritual eyes were enhanced by the absence of physical vision, and she seemed to look behind the veil that separates heaven and earth. In her nineties, a friend remarked, "Fanny, you have written more hymns than anyone else on earth as a blind person. Imagine what a blessing to have done so with perfect vision." Fanny answered, "No, no. I am glad that I have been blind. Now the first vision I shall see will be the smiling face of my Lord and Savior."

The music for this hymn was composed by John R. Sweney.

## Conquering Now and Still To Conquer

Conquering now and still to conquer, rideth a King in His might;  
Leading the host of all the faithful into the midst of the fight;  
See them with courage advancing, clad in their brilliant array,  
Shouting the Name of their Leader, hear them exultingly say:

*Refrain*

Not to the strong is the battle,  
Not to the swift is the race,  
Yet to the true and the faithful  
Vict'ry is promised through grace.

Conquering now and still to conquer, who is this wonderful King?  
Whence are the armies which He leadeth, while of His glory they sing?  
He is our Lord and Redeemer, Savior and Monarch divine;  
They are the stars that forever bright in His kingdom shall shine.

*Refrain*

Conquering now and still to conquer, Jesus, Thou Ruler of all,  
Thrones and their scepters all shall perish, crowns and their splendor shall fall,  
Yet shall the armies Thou leadest, faithful and true to the last,  
Find in Thy mansions eternal rest, when their warfare is past.

*Refrain*

*Conquering now and still to conquer, rideth a King in His might; Leading the host of all the faithful into the midst of the fight; See them with courage advancing, clad in their brilliant array, Shouting the Name of their Leader, hear them exultingly say.* The 'GREAT I AM' (the Lord Jesus Christ) is never past tense in His actions, but eternally working in the eternal present tense. Yes, He conquered death and hell on Resurrection Morning, but that victory is not limited in time and space. He is still conquering and the victory is infinite in all directions of time. Many suppose the gentle heart of Christ to be too loving and kind to send any into the fires of Hell; however, Christ does not do so. He came not to Judge, but allows His Holy Word - the expression of His Person - to judge. Those who find themselves in the stony banks of Hell will have maneuvered their way there by their own rejection of that Word. Though He rode as Savior into Jerusalem on a lowly donkey, He will ride at His glorious return on a white charger leading the gleaming array of the armies of Heaven. Indeed, the fickle men, women and children of Jerusalem turned out at the Eastern Gate to welcome our Lord for the final time into the City of Jerusalem shouting Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest. But on His return, it will not be the fickle voices of hypocrites that shout the praises, but the Invincible Armies of Heaven in trail.

*Conquering now and still to conquer, who is this wonderful King? Whence are the armies which He leadeth, while of His glory they sing? He is our Lord and Redeemer, Savior and Monarch divine; They are the stars that forever bright in His kingdom shall shine.* There will be no question regarding "Who this Wonderful King" is at His coming for '*As I live*', saith the Lord, '*every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.*' (Romans 14:11, Isa 45:23, & Philippians 2:10) The Lord will return in final Victory at His coming, not with some imagined intermediate rapture. The rapture theory is merely a pipe dream which offers opiate to the church and which shall prove a grave disillusionment when it is discovered that they shall not be raptured out of the mess they have allowed to generate upon the earth. Truth in Christ is not a matter of consensus - the Kingdom of Heaven is a Monarchy, not a democracy!

*Conquering now and still to conquer, Jesus, Thou Ruler of all, Thrones and their scepters all shall perish, crowns and their splendor shall fall, Yet shall the armies Thou ledest, faithful and true to the last, Find in Thy mansions eternal rest, when their warfare is past.* All kingdoms of this world shall share the fate of the proud and crumbling ruins of Shelley's *Ozymandias*! You will note that the Lord of Fanny Crosby, and our Lord as well, is continually conquering and never suffering a single loss in the field. He conquers for His Elect, and as a sad testimony to those who have rejected His Lordship. Why would provision be made in His Kingdom for those who reject the King? They will be relegated to that dark Prince of the Air whom they have served and chosen. Those mansions referred to remind me of that great military hymn, *Mansions of the Lord*:

*To fallen soldiers let us sing  
Where no rockets fly nor bullets wing  
Our broken brothers let us bring  
To the Mansions of the Lord*

*No more bleeding, no more fight  
No prayers pleading through the night  
Just divine embrace, eternal light  
To the Mansions of the Lord.*

*Where no mothers cry and no children weep  
We will stand and guard though the angels sleep  
Through the ages safely keep  
The Mansions of the Lord.*

### **Refrain**

*Not to the strong is the battle, Not to the swift is the race, Yet to the true and the faithful Vict'ry is promised through grace.* The powerless innocents of this world shall reign in royal pleasure in the Lord's Kingdom. I prefer God's 911 to that of the World Trade Center - that is, Eccl 9:11 - *the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.* (Eccl 9:11) The key word in all of the Gospel proclamation is GRACE. Salvation is never deserved by the forgiven. It is an act of unmerited GRACE by God through the atonement of Jesus Christ! **ATONEMENT**: "At-One-Ment" with God.

*Today's devotion written at suggestion of a friend and brother in Christ in Missouri*