



In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul. (Psalm 94:19)

One hundred and seventy-eight years ago today, an eighteen-year-old young lady by the name of Alexandrina Victoria, daughter of King William IV, was crowned Queen Victoria over the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Her reign was one of the most enlightened, enduring, and prosperous of all English nobility. So, it seems only natural to comment on a hymn written by another English lady by the name of Anne Steele.

Anne was born in 1699, a time when Isaac Watts was nearby Hampshire writing his Psalmody. She experienced some tragedy in her life that seems to have inspired her writing. Hymn, devotions, and psalmody seem to have been driven by those comforts imparted by her Lord through all of her life's experience.

Her engagement to a gentleman named Robert Elscourt is legendary in Hampshire where she was born, raised, and attended her uncle's Baptist church. Just as the fiancée of Joseph Scriven (*What a Friend we Have in Jesus*) had drowned the day before their planned wedding, so did Mr. Elscourt the day before the planned wedding to Anne. She was heartbroken, but driven to write devotions and hymns. She was the first woman hymn-writer of England. The present hymn was published in 1760 and the music (*Martydom*) composed in 1800 by Hugh Wilson. Anne died at the age of 61 on November 11th 1778. Her last words were "*I know my Redeemer liveth*". She is buried at St. Mary's, Broughton, Hampshire. These words are inscribed on her tomb:

*Silent the lyre and dumb the tuneful tongue
That sung on earth her great Redeemer's praise
But now in heaven she joins the angelic song,
In more harmonious, more exalted lays*

Thou Lovely Source of True Delight

Thou lovely Source of true delight,
Whom I unseen adore;
Unveil Thy beauties to my sight,
That I may love Thee more.

Thy glory o'er creation shines;
But in Thy sacred Word,
I read in fairer, brighter lines,
My bleeding, dying Lord.

'Tis here, whene'er my comforts droop,
And sins and sorrows rise,
Thy love with cheerful beams of hope,
My fainting heart supplies.

Jesus, my Lord, my Life, my Light,
O come with blissful ray;
Break radiant through the shades of night,
And chase my fears away.

Then shall my soul with rapture trace
The wonders of Thy love;
But the full glories of Thy face
Are only known above.

Thou lovely Source of true delight, Whom I unseen adore; Unveil Thy beauties to my sight, That I may love Thee more. The Source of all things made in Creation is invested in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Source of all blessing and comfort to the believer; and He is certainly a delight to all who call upon His glorious Name. Though we may not see His image in perfect relief, we do see His whole Person in the Holy Word of God – which WORD He is: *7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.* (Heb 10:7) The unveiling of the beauty of Christ to us comes through the diligent study of His Word and the prayerful implementation of that Word in our daily lives. The more we know of Christ, the more we are compelled by that knowledge to LOVE Him!

Thy glory o'er creation shines; But in Thy sacred Word, I read in fairer, brighter lines, My bleeding, dying Lord. Sometimes, I believe the ruin of Eden is suspended in the good hearts of wild beast that we read about, and witness firsthand, doing acts of love and mercy out of character. Certainly, there is a higher love demonstrated often in the hearts of dear pets. The testimony of God's Creation is voiced in the Rivers of Water, in the constantly ebbing of the Seas, and in the hearts of the beasts whom God also loves: *7 But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: 8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. 9 Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? 10 In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.* The little child is His crown of favor, but also the beasts that we often abuse with cruelty and neglect. God gave us dominion over beasts, the mountains, and the ocean sea. That means we must CARE for these. Do we not often treat these as our own personal junkyards? *10 A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* (Prov 12:10) In all of the lines of God's Word, but also in His Creation, do we read in ***fairer, brighter lines, My bleeding, dying LORD!***

'Tis here, whene'er my comforts droop, And sins and sorrows rise, Thy love with cheerful beams of hope, My fainting heart supplies. It is sometimes the case that our spiritual comforts are multiplied with the onset of sorrow and pain. This was the case with young Anne Steele, and it is repeated daily in the lives of many God-fearing saints of the Church. Is it not a blessed feeling to have fallen short in our sins, but returned to the Throne of Grace to be forgiven fully? In our moments of sorrow, perhaps the most effective eraser of that sorrow would be to sing a hymn such as the one under study. I have done so hundreds of times by beginning to sing all alone in great sorrow, and end with the company of angels on my shoulder and the bright beams of God's love cascading into my heart. There is no way to learn this principle but by experience. Try it!

Jesus, my Lord, my Life, my Light, O come with blissful ray; Break radiant through the shades of night, And chase my fears away. The first requirement for us to receive the Light Beams of God's Love, and His nourishing fare of Life, is to know Him as your Lord and Savior. This is the first principle of Godly joy. The Love of God knows no limits – neither distance, darkness, nor even death. In fact, Love is the one thing that is not subject to death. Death cannot separate the believer from the Love of God. *36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 8:36-39). It is that abiding Love of God that dispels fears and replaces them with Love and Hope.

Then shall my soul with rapture trace The wonders of Thy love; But the full glories of Thy face Are only known above. Our finite minds cannot comprehend fully the riches of God in Christ made available to us in our eternal home. The circumstance would be likened to a flea trying to comprehend the aerodynamics of a Boeing 747; however, the same aerodynamics laws apply to the flea's flight (though he cannot understand them). The rapture described is defined as "*a mystical experience in which the spirit is exalted to a knowledge of divine things.*" We may not comprehend the calculus of God, but we can know the simple arithmetic. 1+1+1, in God's equation, always equals ONE!

And do you know another little mystery? 1 (God) + 1 (Jesus Christ) + 1 (Holy Ghost) +1 (You) still equals ONE! This math will never make sense to the calculating unbeliever. But if you believe in the Triune God, you will understand the math. ***Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . . And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*** (John 17:11-16, 22-23)