

Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain



Written by eighth-century Greek poet, John of Damascus, “Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain” was intended for use the first Sunday after Easter. The text is written in the format of a Greek canon, which uses various scripture passages to demonstrate how Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled in Christ’s Resurrection.

The first stanza references Exodus 15, when God parted the Red Sea and delivered the Israelites from Egypt. The second stanza uses the seasons as metaphors to describe the new life given to all by Jesus’ death and resurrection. The final stanza ends in praise as an Easter Doxology.

This hymn is a wonderful resource for remembering the power and strength of God, not only in the miracle of the resurrection, but also in his mighty works from the very beginning. We are reminded that God will always triumph. There may be a severe trial, but God will most definitely lead us through that trial if we will allow it. After all, if Jesus can triumph over his own death, can he not triumph over our own hardships?

We should never limit what we *believe* God can do—it will only hurt us. With the free will that God has given us, we may severely limit God’s blessings by simply not believing in them. God never forces anything upon us, and this can include blessings. Our hearts must open to them first. The sad truth is, then, that God may not perform the miracle he so strongly desires to if we do not open our hearts and minds to the endless possibilities of His power. Why should we question whether God could or could not do something? God designed all of this, after all! He designed the universe and everything in it. God may choose not to do something, but this certainly does not mean that God cannot do it. God has ways far beyond our vision, knowledge, and understanding.

Based on what we see in the past—especially the grand stories of the Old Testament, how could we not believe in God’s vast power? God parted the Red Sea, calmed the storms, and even provided food right out of the sky. And, as we remember in Eastertide, God brought it full circle in the miracle of Jesus. Let us not be frightened by the strangeness of things we do not understand, but empowered by their possibilities. Let us remember this season of the great and wonderful miracles God has, and will still perform in our lives.

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