

“Fear Not, O Little Flock the Foe”

The hymn historian, William Hunton writes, “Out of the heroic struggles of the Thirty Years War, which saved from the world the fruit of the sixteenth century Reformation, there stands forth one gigantic son of the Vikings, the noble Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden. His name is inseparably linked with one of the really great hymns of the Church—a hymn which was born in the midst of the conflict and is especially expressive of the faith and heroism which characterized true believers in the midst of trials and danger.” “Favorite Hymns, by William Hunton. P. 193.

The historian tells us that before the battle of Lutzen, during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), King Gustavus of Sweden, in the thick fog of an autumn morning, with the Catholic Bohemian and Austrian armies of Emperor Ferdinand in front of him, knelt before his troops, and his whole army knelt with him in prayer. Then ten thousand voices and the whole concert of regimental bands burst forth in this brave song...The army of Gustavus moved forward to victory as the fog lifted; but at the moment of triumph a riderless horse came galloping back to the camp. It was the horse of the martyred king.

*Fear not, O little flock, the foe
Who madly seeks your overthrow;
Dread not his rage and power;
What though your courage sometimes faints,
His seeming triumph o'er God's saints
Lasts but a little hour.*

*Be of good cheer; your cause belongs
To Him who can avenge your wrongs;
Leave it to Him our Lord.
Though hidden yet from all our eyes,
He sees the Gideon who shall rise;
To save us, and His word.*

*As true as God's own word is true,
Not earth nor hell with all their crew
Against us shall prevail.
A jest and by-word are they grown;
God is with us, we are His own,
Our victory cannot fail.*

*Amen, Lord Jesus, grant our prayer!
Great Captain, now Thine arm make bare;
Fight for us once again!
So shall thy saints and martyrs raise
A mighty chorus to Thy praise,
World without end.*