

Hymn of the Vaudois Mountaineers in Times of Persecution

(For the Strength of the Hills)

Felicia D. Hemans (1793-1835);

adapted into a hymn by Edward L. Sloan (LDS; 1830-1874)

Original Poem:

For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our father's God;
Thou hast made thy children mighty
By the touch of the mountain sod.
Thou hast fixed our ark of refuge
Where the spoilers ne'er trod.

We are watchers of a beacon
Whose light must never die;
We are guardians of an altar
'Midst the silence of the sky.
Here the rocks yield founts of courage
Struck forth as by thy rod.

For the dark, resounding caverns,
Where thy still, small voice is heard;
For the strong pines of the forests,
That by thy breath are stirred;
For the storms, on whose free pinions
Thy spirit walks abroad.

Here the wild bird swiftly darts on
His quarry from the heights,
And the stage that knows no masters
Seeks there his rude delights;
But the Saints for thy communion
Have sought the mountain sod

adapted by Edward L. Sloan:

For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our father's God;
Thou hast made thy children mighty
By the touch of the mountain sod.
Thou hast led thy chosen Israel
To freedom's last abode;

Chorus:

*For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our father's God.*

At the hand of foul oppressors,
We've born and suffered long;
Thou hast been our help in weakness,
And thy pow'r hath made us strong.
Amid ruthless foes outnumbered,
In weariness we trod;

chorus

Thou hast led us here in safety
Where the mountain bulwark stands
As the guardian of the loved ones
Thou hast brought from many lands.
For the rock and for the river,
The valley's fertile sod,

chorus

Here the wild bird swiftly darts on
His quarry from the heights,
And the red untutored Indian

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Seeketh here his rude delights;
But the Saints for thy communion
Have sought the mountain sod.

chorus

We are watchers of a beacon
Whose light must never die;
We are guardians of an altar
'Midst the silence of the sky.
Here the rocks yield founts of courage,
Struck forth as by thy rod.

chorus

For the shadow of thy presence,
Our camp of rocks o'erspread;
For the canyons' rugged defiles
And the beetling crags o'erhead;
For the snows and for the torrents,
And for our burial sod,

chorus