

The Remarkable Influence of a Woman's Hymn

Genesis 28:10-19

The well-known hymn, *Nearer, My God, to Thee*, was based on the account of Jacob's dream. Some consider it to be the best composition by any woman hymn writer. (Though who can forget the gems written by Havergal and Crosby?) The words were penned by Sarah Flower Adams (1805-1848) who died when she was only 43. This song is found in every standard hymnal and its impact has been very influential upon those who desire to know God and have a closer relationship with Him (*James 4:8; Psalm 34:18; 145:18*).



In 1871 three theologians were traveling in Palestine, when they heard this hymn being sung by fifty young Syrian students in the Arabic language. Professor Hitchcock testified that he was moved to tears and deeply affected by their singing.

During the Johnstown flood (1889), a railroad train rushed into swirling waters. Those trapped could not be rescued and this included one woman on her way to be a missionary in the far East. She began singing this hymn, and others joined her, prior to her being ushered into glory.

It was also President William McKinley's favorite hymn. After he was assassinated, he was heard whispering its words as he took his last breath. At his memorial services it was sung throughout America.

Many (though not all) believe this hymn was played by the band as the Titanic sank. More certain is the sinking of the SS Valencia (a Canadian maritime disaster) in which the passengers spent their last minutes singing Sarah Adam's hymn.

Interestingly, Sarah attended the Unitarian Church where the true gospel was not taught, and foundational Biblical doctrines were denied. Yet, there is evidence, from some of Sarah's last writings, that she came to know Christ as her Saviour before the close of her life, was made *nigh* by the blood of Christ (*Eph. 2:13*), and became associated with Baptist believers in London.

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org

The Remarkable Influence of a Woman's Hymn

Genesis 28:10-19

The well-known hymn, *Nearer, My God, to Thee*, was based on the account of Jacob's dream. Some consider it to be the best composition by any woman hymn writer. (Though who can forget the gems written by Havergal and Crosby?) The words were penned by Sarah Flower Adams (1805-1848) who died when she was only 43. This song is found in every standard hymnal and its impact has been very influential upon those who desire to know God and have a closer relationship with Him (*James 4:8; Psalm 34:18; 145:18*).



In 1871 three theologians were traveling in Palestine, when they heard this hymn being sung by fifty young Syrian students in the Arabic language. Professor Hitchcock testified that he was moved to tears and deeply affected by their singing.

During the Johnstown flood (1889), a railroad train rushed into swirling waters. Those trapped could not be rescued and this included one woman on her way to be a missionary in the far East. She began singing this hymn, and others joined her, prior to her being ushered into glory.

It was also President William McKinley's favorite hymn. After he was assassinated, he was heard whispering its words as he took his last breath. At his memorial services it was sung throughout America.

Many (though not all) believe this hymn was played by the band as the Titanic sank. More certain is the sinking of the SS Valencia (a Canadian maritime disaster) in which the passengers spent their last minutes singing Sarah Adam's hymn.

Interestingly, Sarah attended the Unitarian Church where the true gospel was not taught, and foundational Biblical doctrines were denied. Yet, there is evidence, from some of Sarah's last writings, that she came to know Christ as her Saviour before the close of her life, was made *nigh* by the blood of Christ (*Eph. 2:13*), and became associated with Baptist believers in London.

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org