

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

When peace like a river, attendeth my way;
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.
It is well...with my soul... It is well, it is well, with my soul...

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
It is well...with my soul... It is well, it is well, with my soul...

He lives--oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Oh my soul.
It is well...with my soul... It is well, it is well, with my soul...

And, Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight

The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trumpet shall sound, and the Lord shall descend;

Even so, it is well with my soul...
It is well...with my soul... It is well, it is well, with my soul...

In 1871, tragedy struck Chicago as fire ravaged the city. When it was all over, 300 people were dead and 100,000 were homeless. Horatio

Gates Spafford was one of those who tried to help the people of the city get back on their feet. A lawyer who had invested much of his money into the downtown Chicago real estate, he'd lost a great deal to the fire. A year later, his one son (he had four daughters) died. Nevertheless, Spafford, who was a friend of evangelist DL Moody, ministered to the homeless, impoverished, and grief-stricken who had been likewise ruined by the fire.

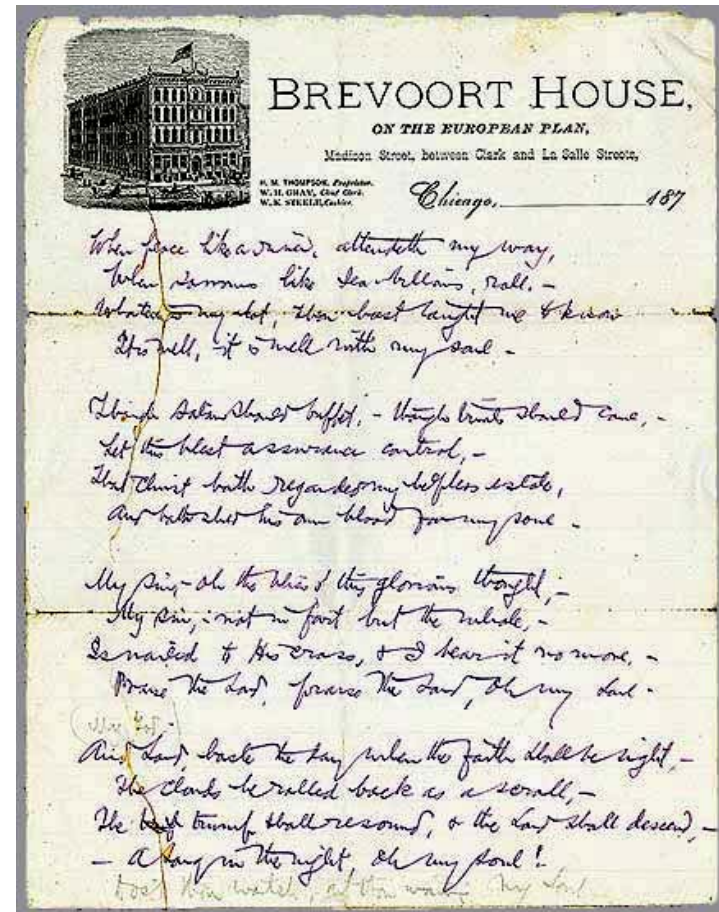
After about two years of such work, Spafford and his family decided to take a vacation. They were to go to England to join Moody and Ira Sankey on one of their evangelistic crusades, then travel in Europe. Horatio was delayed by business, but sent his family on ahead. He would catch up to them on the other side of the Atlantic.

Their ship, the Ville de Havre, never made it. Off Newfoundland, it collided with an English sailing ship, the Loch Earn, and sank within 20 minutes.

Though Horatio's wife, Anna, was able to cling to a piece of floating wreckage (one of only 47 survivors among hundreds), their four daughters--Maggie, Tanetta, Annie, and Bessie--were killed. Horatio received a telegram from his wife, with only two words: "saved alone."

Spafford boarded the next available ship to be near his grieving wife, and the two finally met up with Moody. "It is well," Spafford told him quietly. "The will of God be done."

Though reports vary as to when he did so, Spafford was led during those days of overwhelming grief to pen the words to one of the most beautiful hymns we know, beloved by Christians lowly and great.



When tragedies assault our lives, they are usually accompanied by a numbing detachment, a targeting anger and a cruel sense of insecurity concerning God or our relationship with Him.

It is in these circumstances that if we cry out to the Lord and surrender our crushed, wandering hearts, that we actually meet Him. It is only in these circumstances that we realize that He is greater than them - it's no longer theory.

And so, broken people who love God look to heaven. Heavenly Minded people are enraptured with their Maker. They are ever conscious of His presence. They are motivated to do His pleasure with hearts unfettered by mixed motives.

It is well with our souls as we look to our salvation - all will be made right, all you may think you've lost will be found in Him. He's the Good Shepherd and He loves you more than you can imagine.