

Why Should I Fear in Evil Days

John Adams(1767-1848)

Robert Lowry, 1875.

Why should I fear in evil days,
With snares encompassed all around?
What trust can transient treasures raise
For them in riches who abound?
His brother who from death can save?
What wealth can ransom him from God?
What mine of gold defraud the grave?
What hoards but vanish at His nod?

To live forever is their dream;
Their houses by their name they call;
While, borne by time's relentless stream,
Around them wise and foolish fall;
Their riches others must divide;
They plant, but others reap the fruit;
In honor man cannot abide,
To death devoted, like the brute.

This is their folly, this their way;
And yet in this their sons delight;
Like sheep, of death the destined prey,
The future scorn of the upright;
The grave their beauty shall consume,
Their dwellings never see them more;
But God shall raise me from the tomb,
And life for endless time restore.

What though thy foe in wealth increase,
And fame and glory crown his head?
Fear not, for all at death shall cease,
Nor fame, nor glory, crown the dead:
While prospering all around thee smiled,
Yet to the grave shalt thou descend;
The senseless pride of fortune's child
Shall share the brute creation's end.