

The prophets sons, in time of old
The Borrowed Axe
Melody - Seq. by
John Newton, 1779,
from Olney Hymns, vol. 1, hymn 39

The prophets sons, in time of old,
Though to appearance poor;
Were rich without possessing gold,
And honoured, though obscure.

2. In peace their daily bread they eat,
By honest labor earned;
While daily at Elisha's feet,
They grace and wisdom learned.

3. The prophet's presence cheered their toil,
They watched the words he spoke;
Whether they turned the furrowed soil,
Or felled the spreading oak.

4. Once as they listened to his theme,
Their conference was stopped;
For one beneath the yielding stream,
A borrowed axe had dropped.

5. Alas! it was not mine, he said,
How shall I make it good?
Elisha heard, and when he prayed,
The iron swam like wood.

6. If God, in such a small affair,
A miracle performs;
It shows his condescending care
Of poor unworthy worms.

7. Though kings and nations in his view
Are but as motes and dust;
His eye and ear are fixed on you,
Who in his mercy trust.

8. Not one concern of ours is small,
If we belong to him;
To teach us this, the Lord of all,
Once made the iron swim.