

The History of “Blessed Be Your Name”

by Amy Smith

Over the past several months, I have enjoyed researching and learning about some of our most famous and beloved hymns. This morning I had quite an experience, searching for the best hymn for this month, and I came across “Blessed Be Your Name,” by Matt and Beth Redman. First let me just say, as a church musician, I believe that our contemporary songs are just as important, just as meaningful as our standard hymns. Both genres are about worship, and praising our Lord, and this tune happens to have quite a message.

The song, released in 2002 on the album *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, was born in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks. While visiting churches in California shortly after the tragedy, Matt and Beth observed a troubling gap: congregations had rich preaching, but few worship songs equipped to address grief, lament and suffering. This inspired them to write a hymn that could be sung in both joy and sorrow.

The lyrics are based on Job 1:21, “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” The song’s structure balances blessing God in abundance (vs 1-2) with blessing Him in hardship (vs 3-4), calling the worshipper to praise God in all seasons of life. The bridge of the song reinforces the call to bless God’s name even when He “Gives and takes away.” Job lost his children, possessions, and livestock, but he still affirmed God’s sovereignty and continued to bless His name.

“Blessed Be Your Name” remains a versatile worship anthem, equally used at home in joyful praise and in moments of deep grief. This year will mark 25 years since the attacks, and these lyrics are just as powerful today as when they were written:

*Blessed Be Your Name
In the land that is plentiful
Where Your streams of abundance flow
Blessed be Your name.*

*Blessed Be Your name
When I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk through the wilderness
Blessed Be Your name.*

*Every blessing You pour out, I'll
Turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say,*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your glorious name!*

*Blessed be Your name
When the sun's shining down on me
When the world's 'all as it should be'
Blessed be Your name.*

*Blessed be Your name
On the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering
Blessed be Your name.*

*Every blessing You pour out I'll
Turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say,*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your glorious name!*

*You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say
Lord, blessed be Your name!*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your glorious name!*

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