

## **MS Hymn for the King 1784<sup>1</sup>**

This manuscript hymn was written by Charles Wesley in 1784, in the context of the dissolving of Parliament and challenge of Charles James Fox (1749–1806) to the monarchy after the end of the war with the American colonies. See the related verse in MS Charles James Fox 1784, and in the letter that Wesley sent to John Langshaw in March 1784.

The original manuscript, on two sides of a single page of paper, was part of the Special Collections of Wesley College, Bristol, England (now MARC, WCB, D6/1/166b). Another copy, without title, is present in the Methodist Archive and Research Centre: acquisition number MA 1977/583/30a.

The transcript here is of the original manuscript, provided with permission of Wesley College. The variants in the copy at MARC are noted.

---

<sup>1</sup>This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: August 1, 2010.

**For the King  
Jan. 1784<sup>2</sup>**

- [1.] Why do the lawless Great conspire  
    To turn a kingdom upside down,  
To set the multitude on fire,  
    And spoil their<sup>3</sup> monarch of his crown,  
To seize with sacrilegious hands  
    His rights, prerogatives, and power,  
Subject him to their vile commands,  
    And all his Royalties devour?
2. Can they succeed, unblest by Thee,  
    Great King, who order'st all below,  
Whose will controuls the raging Sea,  
    And saith — Thou shalt no farther go!  
The mighty floods their voices raise,  
    And loud with horrid Discord roar:  
Thee mightier on thy seat<sup>4</sup> we praise,  
    Thee Master of the storm adore.
3. The Lord of hosts is on our side,  
    Jehovah takes our Sovereign's part,  
And doth their vain attempts deride,  
    Their blasted strength and baffled art:  
Wisdom Divine, Essential Power,  
    Jesus, we on thine Arm rely

---

<sup>2</sup>Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:130–31.

<sup>3</sup>Ori., “a.”

<sup>4</sup>Ori., “~~throne~~.” MA 1977/583/30a reads: “throne.”

To bring him through the fiery hour  
Stamp't with the Name of God most high.

4. Preserve, and still<sup>5</sup> detain him here,  
To bless us by his mild command,  
Justice and peace to minister,  
And virtue spread throughout the Land:  
Thou only canst great wonders do:  
Speak, and his rebels shall submit,  
Ahitophel for mercy sue,  
And Absolom embrace his feet.
5. Thy grace be in his sufferings show'd,  
His consecrated grief and pain;  
Evil ore' rul'd be turn'd to good,  
And loss to his eternal gain:  
Pluck'd from his earthly Diadem  
Riches let every jewel prove,  
Brighten'd into a starry Gem,  
And added to his crown above.
- 6.<sup>6</sup> Late let him find his destined place,  
And nearer view the King of kings  
(Where Angels and Archangels gaze,  
And wrap their faces in their wings).  
Ineffably, supremely blest,  
Exalted to a loftier throne  
With martyr'd Charles in glory rest,<sup>7</sup>  
One with his God, for ever One!<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Ori., "keep."

<sup>6</sup>There is a single vertical line drawn through this stanza in the copy at Wesley College Bristol.

<sup>7</sup>Ori., "blest."

<sup>8</sup>MA 1977/583/30a reads: "And reign with Christ for ever One!"