

COME, YE FAITHFUL, RAISE THE STRAIN

*St. John of Damascus, Lyrics; Trans. John M Neale, 1859
Tune: ST. KEVIN, Arthur Sullivan, Music, 1872*

This is an arrangement of the traditional Easter hymn "*Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain*". The lyrics for this hymn were written in the 8th Century by a Greek theologian known as St. John of Damascus. John M. Neale translated the words from Greek into English in 1859. It was paired with a number of common hymn tunes until 1872, when Arthur S. Sullivan composed the tune: ST. KEVIN, which is the tune we most commonly associate with this hymn today. It has been published in more than 320 hymnals, in many denominations

St. John of Damascus, (675-780), was a Syrian born theologian. He was educated by the elder Cosmos, held an office under the Caliph, and later retired to the Laura of St. Sabas, near Jerusalem. There he wrote his theological works and hymns, and was ordained a priest of the church of Jerusalem late in life. His three orations in favor of icons earned him the sobriquets Chrysorrhous and The Doctor of Christian Art. He lived to extreme old age; his death is commemorated in the Greek calendar.

John Mason Neale (1818-1866) was a hymnographer, the translator and adapter of ancient and medieval hymns, and was a founding member of *the "Cambridge Camden Society of Antiquarians"*. Neale's health prevented his remaining a parish priest (for which he was ordained in 1842), but, in his semi-invalidism it is estimated Neale produced over 400 hymns, sequences and carols. He was never adequately appreciated in his own church, but at Neale's funeral the highest ranking clergymen were Orthodox.

Sullivan (1842-1900) composed the music for many well-known hymns, including "*Onward Christian Soldiers*", "*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*", and "*Rock of Ages*". In later years, he teamed up with lyricist William Gilbert to create a series of 14 comic operas which have enjoyed broad and enduring international success. He is buried in the Chapel of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

~Tull