

Christmas and Songs of the Visible God

I. Music & the Heart

A. The Power of a New Song

Isa 42:10 **Sing** to the Lord a **new song**,
his **praise** from the end of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it,
the coastlands and their inhabitants.

11 Let the desert and its cities **lift up their voice**,
the villages that Kedar inhabits;
let the habitants of Sela **sing for joy**,
let them **shout** from the top of the mountains.

12 Let them **give glory** to the LORD,
and **declare his praise** in the coastlands.

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth **receive** her King;
Let ev'ry heart **prepare** him room,
And heav'n and nature **sing**,

The new song is a refusal to accept the present world as it is. We, the ekklesia, are most daring and dangerous and free when we sing a new song.

The new song is a protest, boldly and innocently proclaiming that the God of the gospel has plans and purposes and a will to re-order the world, to bring wholeness and health to the blind, to the poor, to the nations, and to the entire creation. The song proclaims God's future against our present tense.

Heaven and nature sing and earth repeats the joyful amen.

When we sing the song, even in exile, then we taste and live the new reality. The Babylonians cannot stop us, because the song is true and more powerful than the pain and fear of the world. The exiles are indeed on their way—rejoicing.

B. Music and Christmas are woven together. Music invites us into wonder, it goes in the ears and straight to the heart.

- 1.** O **come**, all ye faithful, **joyful** and **triumphant**,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and **behold** him,
Born the King of angels!
O come, let us **adore** him,... Christ the Lord!

Music can draw us into **beholding** with wonder. Like the Magi, we may see God in the face of a baby.

Music serves no biological purpose. YET WE SING, and our hearts are formed by truth that is deeper than our minds.

Those who think that the universe is only material substance ... find it hard to explain music. They have to assume that music evolved but none of our alleged evolutionary cousins make music. Ever heard a chimpanzee sing?

Music seems a natural, perhaps even essential, part of life to the Western mind because it has been an integral part of traditional worship and education...¹

Music is spiritual & physical, It's mathematical – made by the right length and weight of a string at the right tension, or the right length and diameter of a tube and vibrating at the right frequency repeating in a tempo of sound and silence.

C. Music – Expresses Indescribable Unspeakable Joy!

- 3.** Yea, Lord, we greet thee, **born** this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
Now **in flesh** appearing!
O come, let us adore him,... Christ the Lord!

[2 Cor 9.15](#) Thanks be to God for his **inexpressible** gift!

¹ Vishal Mangalwadi. "The Book that Made Your World."

II. The Word Became Flesh

1 John 4.9 NIV **This is how** God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

A. God Rescues Us – Humanity welcomes Trinity

The ENTRANCE

Luke 1:26 NIV In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, (NKJ **REJOICE**) you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Did Gabriel **wonder** whether her frail womb could bear God's weight and contain infinity within its walls?

Rejoice! — Shout for Joy! Grace, Highly Favored

Why? New Heavens and Earth (New Creation)

Job 38 ... when I laid the foundation of the earth? ... morning stars sang, sons of God shouted for joy.

29 NIV Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

30 But the angel said to her, "**Do not be afraid**, Mary, you have found favor with God. 31 You will **be with child** and **give birth to a son**, and you are to give him the name **Jesus**. 32 He will be **great** and will be called the **Son of the Most High**. The Lord God will give him the **throne** of his father David, 33 and he will **reign** over the house of Jacob **forever**; his **kingdom** will **never end**."

Did Gabriel **tremble** waiting for her response, anxious that she not refuse?

- 34 **“How will this be,”** Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”
- 35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will **overshadow** you. So the **holy one** to be born will be called the **Son of God.** 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month.
- 37 For **nothing is impossible with God.**”
- 38 “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. **“May it be to me as you have said.”** Then the angel left her.

In that Moment, **Logos** became **Rhema**
The **Great** became **Small**
The **Strong** became **Weak**
From being **His Own** he made Himself **Ours**

And — The **Insignificant** became **Significant!**

Tiny... the womb of an teenaged virgin becomes the Temple of the Great One who cannot be contained.

God borrows Mary’s flesh for His work to Save mankind from their sin & recreate the World

The Solution is conceived inside the Problem

Timelessness enters Time
The Uncreated becomes part of Creation
Eve believed a fallen angel,

Mary b becomes the Ark, the Tabernacle, the Temple

B. Mary the 1st Missionary Pregnant with Joy!

- 39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she **entered** Zechariah’s

home and **greeted** Elizabeth. [41](#) When Elizabeth **heard** Mary's greeting, **the baby leaped in her womb**, and Elizabeth was **filled** with the **Holy Spirit**. [42](#) In a loud voice she exclaimed: "**Blessed** are you among women, and **blessed** is the [fruit of your womb]! ... [45](#) Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

THE NEW SONG!

[46](#) And Mary said: "My **soul [magnifies]** the Lord [47](#) and my **spirit rejoices** in God my Savior, ...

III. And We Beheld His Glory

The INVISIBLE God **shows us His face**:

In obscurity, in frailty and vulnerability.

He comes as a baby, helpless, needing to be held and nursed and cleaned and kept warm by conscious attention.

He comes without the capacity to speak. **The Word becomes inarticulate**, with no expressed correction or judgment, but **simply needing to be with us**, to be received, to share our life.

#1 Joseph & Mary were the first to behold Him, born the King of angels, the first humans to behold the Face of God.

A **willing virgin** mother and a **loving dreamer** father who found no lodging, whose **difficult journey** was spurred by the insatiable **pride of Augustus**, yet brought them to the **City of David, Bethlehem**, the **House of Bread**.

[Luke 2.6 NKJ](#) So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. [7](#) And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid

Him in a manger, because **there was no room** for them in the inn. (Welcomed the miracle within the ordinary)

In the stable the invisible God, made His Face visible to all creatures; the Creator had firmly entered creation.

#2 The **shepherds**.

Luke 2.8 NKJ Now there were in the same country **shepherds** living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And behold, **an angel of the Lord** stood before them, ... and they were **greatly afraid**. **10** Then the angel said to them, "**Do not be afraid**, for behold, I bring you **good tidings of great joy** which will be **to all people**. **11** For **there is born to you this day** in the city of David a **Savior**, who is **Christ the Lord**. **12** And this *will* be the **sign** to you: You will find a **Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths**, lying in a **manger**."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel **a multitude of the heavenly host praising God ...**

Sing, choirs of angels, **sing** in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
O come, let us adore him,... Christ the Lord!

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "**Let us now go** to Bethlehem and **see this thing** that has come to pass, which the Lord has **made known** to us." **16** And they came with haste and **found** Mary and Joseph, and the **Babe** lying in a manger. **17** Now when they had **seen Him**, **they made widely known** the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

RESPONSE: Let's GO see! (Raw energy)

#3 The **rabbi** who circumcised him.

Luke 2.21 NKJV And when **eight days were completed for the circumcision** of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

RESPONSE: Not noted... perhaps he thought he knew too much

#4 Simeon & Anna and those in the temple:

Luke 2.25 NKJ And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. **26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death **before he had seen** the Lord's Christ. **27** So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, **28** he **took Him up in his arms and blessed God** and said:

29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;

30 For **my eyes have seen Your salvation** "

RESPONSE: Recognition and Peace (Never too old)

#5 The Magi... *the nations!*

Matt 2.10 ESV When they saw the star, they **rejoiced exceedingly** with **great joy**. **11** And going into the house they **saw** the child with Mary his mother, and they **fell down and worshiped him**. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

In his FACE, we see God and we see ourselves. The heart is free, expressed in opening our treasures, emptying ourselves to the One Who empties Himself.

RESPONSE: Recognition & Worship

Challenge of Christmas – to **see the face of God** in a human being?
No matter how distressing the disguise?

John 14.9 *Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.*

The ***Christmas Cycle*** is the **annual reminder** that the World is not lost in Darkness, but has seen a great light.

It is not politics or religion, but redemption that has the final word.

It's all GIFT. It's all FAVOR – His Gift to us!

That's why we give GIFTS (we are Children of God)

That's why we SING!

1 Joy to the World, the Lord is Come!

Let earth receive her King!

Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,

And heav'n and nature sing,....

2 Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns!

Sing to the Lord a **new song**,
his **praise** from the end of the earth,

IN ALL THE ACTIVITY, SEE HIS FACE

AND SING A NEW SONG!