



"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands"

Psalm 100 - An exhortation to praise God cheerfully

A Psalm of Praise.

¹ Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. ² Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. ³ Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. ⁴ Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. ⁵ For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. (Psalms 100:1-5)

Today's hymn is full of reverential praise and joy. It would not be possible to compose a more Godly hymn than those that has God composed; and that precisely defines a 'Metrical' hymn. The old reformers paid much diligence to the arrangement of words and phrases (paraphrase) that would reflect the precise meaning of the Psalms, but also fit into a metrical order suitable for congregational and choral singing. Of the metrical hymns this hymn, and its tune, is one of my favorites. Another would be "*The King of Love my Savior Is*" (23rd Psalm). "*All People*" is a nearly exact rendition of the 100th Psalm. The tune, *Old One Hundreth*, by Louise Bourgeois, *Ge-ne-van Psalt-er*, 1551, is the same to which we sing the Doxology (Psalm 150:6). Alternate tunes for this hymn are: "*All People that On Earth Do Dwell*" by Dwight Armstrong,; and " *Cannon Tallis* " Thomas Tallis c. 1567

Metrical hymns were the only sung in the ancient church since they were taken directly from the Biblical text. That brings to light one of the over-riding strengths of the King James Bible (in addition to its majestic reverence and accuracy): the metrical rhythm in which the KJV is written facilitates both memorization and understanding. Why should we settle for less?

The paraphrasing of the 100th Psalm was done by William Kethe in 1561.

All People that on Earth do Dwell

*All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice.*

*Know that the Lord is God indeed;
Without our aid He did us make;
We are His flock, He doth us feed,
And for His sheep He doth us take.*

*O enter then His gates with praise;
Approach with joy His courts unto;
Praise, laud, and bless His Name always,
For it is seemly so to do.*

*For why! the Lord our God is good;
His mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.*

From the dawn of the first day in long-ago Eden, the presence of God among His people has been a matter of great joy and comfort. However, sin, for a time, separated us from God - and that joy that our first parents felt before they turned from the Tree of Life to embrace the discordant voice emanating from that other Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In His Providence, and according to His perfect timing, the Lord has placed His presence once more among His people by way of His only Begotten Son (Emmanuel) and the sending of the Holy Ghost to be our comfort and our Light.

"All people that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell; Come ye before Him and rejoice." The Light of God and His Word is shed abroad to "ALL PEOPLE" who dwell upon the earth; but not all people are the chosen and elect according to the promises of God. Even if the joy of the world is silent concerning those benefits and promises of God, nevertheless, those who call upon His Name and keep His Commandments will sing songs of praise and cheer and will *"be not discouraged whate'er betides"* because *"God will take care of you."* We do not sing to mammon, or to Babylon as the children of bondage did in the captivity. ¹*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.* ²*We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.* ³*For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion."* (Psalms 137:1-3) The songs of the world are funeral dirges compared to those songs of praise and worship with which we honor our God.

"Know that the Lord is God indeed; Without our aid He did us make; We are His flock, He doth us feed, And for His sheep He doth us take." It is likely that every reader of this devotion will remember these famous words from the Psalm (100:3) that we learned in elementary school back in the days when God was welcomed there: *"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."* Not all who come into His pasture are lambs. There are an increasing number of goats, and even wolves, who have come into the Church who pretend to be sheep. It is likely that the latter far outnumber the former in our time. But the Shepherd knows His sheep, and He is known of them. He will call forth His sheep and they will follow. Goats will not do so. His Word is our Manna, and He has provided our sustenance and daily bread therewith.

"O enter then His gates with praise; Approach with joy His courts unto; Praise, laud, and bless His Name always, For it is seemly so to do." I do not believe the truly elect of God can enter into His gates with any other sentiments than those of praise! Forget not that we are the Temple of the Living God! *"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early."* (Psalm 46:4-5)

Surely, if we are the Temple of God, He is in the midst of our hearts to order them according to His will and not ours. Praising, lauding, and blessing Name is not only seemly, proper and decorous; it can only emerge from a heart given over to God - *"lock, stock, and barrel."* Only those who APPROACH His courts can experience joy. All those who have DEPARTED there from have experienced ruination. The Prodigal Son is an example of that truth. The world will feed us pig slop; but God will feed us on the manna that comes down from heaven. The Rev. Thomas Brooks of St. Matthew's once remarked: "Jesus told Peter to *'feed my sheep'* - not *'slop my hogs.'*"

"For why! the Lord our God is good; His mercy is forever sure; His truth at all times firmly stood, And shall from age to age endure." Yes, God is good, and what shall we do about THAT! There is an overly simplistic mantra (a 1914 kindergarten song for children) entitled "God is so Good." Wow! does it take 28 verses repeated over and over again by a hands-waving congregation for us to grasp that single truth. The reason that song is entitled 'God is so Good' is because it is for children, and our faith must begin with the knowledge that God is indeed GOOD. But once we grasp that truth, we go on to learn of the many other attributes of God in His Judgment, Patience, Grace, Mercy, Love, and Long Suffering. The little kindergarten song is popular in charismatic churches since the goodness of God must mean that "we can do as we please and He will not mind." The Truth of God is not a flat faced stone, but a multi-faceted diamond whose emanating hues of gold, green, blue, and white are viewed from different angles of perspective. The Truth of God cannot be condensed to a single majestic hymn, much less the line, "God is so good." So why not put as much of the nature and qualities of God as the vessel of a hymn can hold instead of condensing our focus to a single attribute to be sung repetitively as a Hindu mantra?

God's mercy truly does endure forever since it extends beyond the grave. In spite of modern attempts to re-write the Holy Bible and preach that *"good has become evil"* and *"evil has become good;"* Truth is immutable and unchanging. Perhaps there is a single verse that best describes many of our modern pulpits, and it is a dire warning to those who preach for filthy lucre: *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"* (Isaiah 5:20-21) **WOE!** This is not the same term used in bringing a horse-drawn carriage to a standstill - it is a sober and grave warning to the teachers of error in pulpits today who are scrambling to decide that God does not condemn homosexual marriage and abortion after all. How do you read that subject, friend?