Sing to the LORD a new song

October 16, 2005 (Proper 24, Year A)

Isaiah 45:1-7 Psalm 96 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Matthew 22:15-22

*Sing to the LORD a new song; **
sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.

Unexpected, unfamiliar music,
a song that rises, unbidden, from the heart.
A *new* song, rising up from all of creation.
A new song. A new song.

We open to God the packed lacquer music boxes
of our hearts' desires, and God
answers those prayers with new and unexpected song.

It is not the song we expected. It is not
sometimes even the song we want,
or the song we think we have asked for.

It is a new song.

Sing to the LORD a new song.
Sing to the LORD and bless God's Name;
proclaim the good news of God's salvation
from day to day.

There are woodwinds in this song,
raising up in music a cloud of incense, of blessing.

There are trumpets in this song,
bright cymbals and clarion trumpets,
calling out, calling out good news,
piercing notes breaking chains and dullness,
proclaiming liberation,
with sharp notes reminding: liberation may call
for walking decades in the desert.

There are strings, constant strings, in this song,
at times pizzicato, at times legato,
lending length and constancy and rhythm
because it is a song that runs from day to day,
the strong song of the ordinary made new
at each sunrise, at each moonrise, in each star and leaf.

Sing to the LORD a new song;
Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.

And there are voices in this song, so many voices, in
so very many languages.
voices of every language, every nation, every people,
bringing forth the wonder and glory of God.

A polyphonic choir -- dissonant voices
resolve into harmony in God's ear:

Isaiah has declared Cyrus, Emperor Cyrus,
pagan emperor Cyrus,
as God's anointed, *mashiah*, Messiah,
the longed-for one
who freed Israel from her captivity,
who restored her people to Jerusalem.

God sings answers to our prayer
in unexpected ways,
unexpected people, instrumentation
that we did not anticipate.

Sing to the LORD a new song;
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before God.

And there is silence in this song,
long measurers of trembling rest,
Sabbath between each note,
the silent *aleph* at the start of each page,
the silence that spreads her wings at night in our
sanctuary.

The silence which is worshiping God
in the beauty of holiness,

Sing to the LORD a new song;
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
*let the sea thunder and all that is in it; **
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

Oh yes, there are angels in this song, heavenly host
powers and principalities, thrones and dominions
with their bronze voices,
seraphim singing in silver and cherubim in gold.

And there are earthen voices, creatures here below,
claw and caw, roaring and prusten and whistling,
God's plan is not our plan,
and we are not the only creatures in this choir!

Watery voices, leviathan whales
singing perpetually across the deep,
under deep bass, breaking waves.

This is a song of *ekos*, of the household of creation,
rightly ordered, unpolluted,
growing and giving forth.

Seek God in field and tree and sea and star.

Sing to the LORD a new song;
Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the LORD when he comes,
when God comes to judge the earth.

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a song that rises, unbidden, from the heart.
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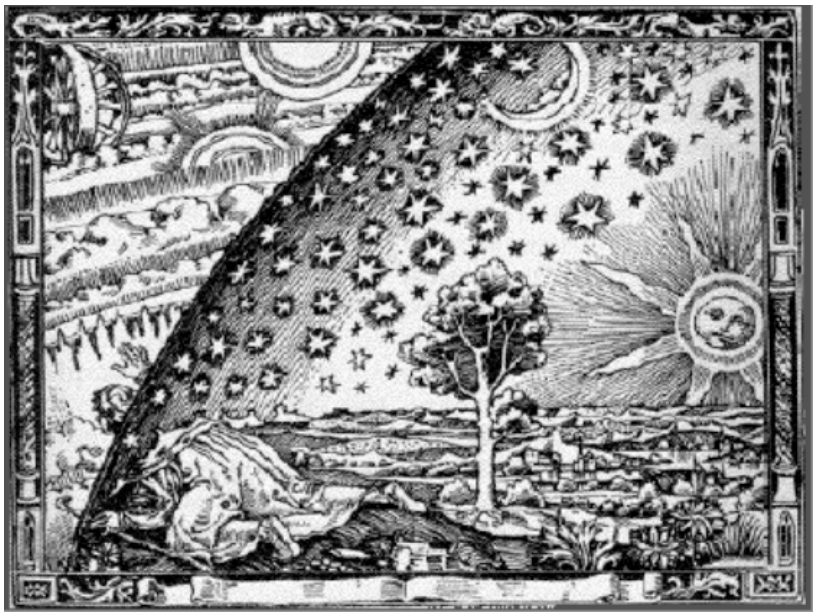

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