

## Trumpets

*Psalm 98, John 1:1-14*

For some people, not everyone I know, but for some people, Christmas is one of those foretastes of heaven. Yes there are struggles and challenges, and big questions all over our world and our society, and we must never forget them. But at its best Christmas can be like heaven. Something *happens* to most of us. Is it the light? Is it the tradition of food and of sharing together. Is it the presents? Is it the familiar carols? Is it Bing Crosby and his eternal dreaming of a White Christmas? Is it Bach's magnificent Christmas Cantata, with its magnificent opening with drums, flutes, and then the exuberance of three trumpets? I play it every year and its positive uplift, in the key of D Major, lifts my heart and soul every time.

Is that what heaven will sound like?

The 19th Anglican priest and wit, Sydney Smith, said, "My idea of heaven is eating pâté de foie gras to the sound of trumpets."

Our Old Testament reading from the book of Psalms has this overflowing exuberance that chimes in so brilliantly with the celebration of Christmas. The psalm celebrates the coming of God's presence into the world. It bursts into song and into music. In a rising climax of beautiful sounds of the cosmic orchestra plays, and joins in with voices lifted in song.

Perhaps it is a song and music of defiance, against the unfairness and cruelty of our world.

Perhaps it is a song and music of longing, as we pray and work for better times and better things for all people.

Perhaps it is a song and music of hope, as we see beyond the despair and the bleakness of these times to another reality of what the world should and must become.

But the sound rises. And in the singing and in the music we are given strength to lift ourselves up and make the kind of joyful noise that our reading from the Psalms calls us toward.

In the midst of a world ravaged by tragedy, infected by disease, plagued by war, anxious about energy and food costs, creation breaks forth in impatient celebration of the fact that God in Jesus, comes once more into the world to boost us and buoy us up.

*All nature sings, and round me rings*

*The music of the spheres...*

*This is my Father's world; O let me ne'er forget*

*That though the wrong seems oft so strong,*

*God is the ruler yet.*

*This is my Father's world; the battle is not done,*

*Jesus, Who died, shall be satisfied,*

*And earth and heaven be one.<sup>i</sup>*

I don't know how it is going to be for you the Christmas Day. With loved ones, or on your own. With the joy of children, or the challenge of relatives you rarely see. With too much to eat, or not enough. With a bright future ahead, or the memories of the past all around. But now, right now, right this very moment on this Christmas morning, let there be trumpets. Sounding for you, just of you.

That the joy of the birth of Jesus, however life finds you today, sounds joy and peace and mercy and love, just for you.

Psalm 98 with its trumpets chimes in with the song of the Angels in heaven over Bethlehem, celebrating and praising and rejoicing in the birth of the Christ Child, this Jesus, come to bring you hope and to walk with you every day of your life, through the ups and downs.

Right here, right now, this Christmas morning, let there be trumpets!

**In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**

**Amen**

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<sup>i</sup> Maltbie B Babcock, quoted in Feasting on the Word, Year A, Vol 1, p133