



"Cross Connection"

Radio Ministry of Hope Wesleyan Church and Wells of Salvation Ministries
Ultimate Oldies Radio – FM 97.7 and 101.5, Huber Heights, Ohio



Series: Christian Messages In Secular Music

03/18/08

Program 30 – “Morning Has Broken” © 1931 Lyrics by Eleanor Farjeon

No problem finding the “Cross Connection” in this hit, as Cat Stevens recorded a well-known Christian hymn in 1972 – again, during the timeframe of the Jesus Movement. The lyrics speak of God’s creation, comparing the freshness of a new morning to the pristine features of Eden’s first day. In a day and age where evolution is taught as fact, it is refreshing to hear praises to our God as Creator sung over the radio airwaves!

The Author, Eleanor Farjeon (1881 – 1965)¹:

- English author of children's stories, plays, poetry, biography, history and satire
- Literary family – father a novelist; 2 brothers were writers; 3rd was a composer
- "Nellie" was a small timid child -- often sick, and had poor eyesight
- Educated at home, spent much time in the attic, surrounded by books
- Father encouraged her writing from age 5
- Also wrote advent hymn, “People, Look East!”, sung to an old French melody

The Artist, Cat Stevens – a.k.a., Yusuf Islam; Steven Demetre Georgiou (1948 -)²:

- English musician, singer-songwriter, educator, philanthropist
- Father – Greek Orthodox; mother – Swedish Baptist; attended Catholic school
- Overcame tuberculosis in late 1960s; nearly drowned in 1975
- Looked into Zen Buddhism, I Ching, numerology, tarot cards and astrology
- Converted to Islam at the height of his fame in 1977; quit performing
- Sold over 60 million albums around the world since the late 1960s
- Received 2 ASCAP songwriting awards for "The First Cut Is the Deepest"
- Other hit songs include “Peace Train”, “Moonshadow”, and “Wild World”
- Received several awards for promoting world peace
- Released 1st album of new pop songs in 28 years, “An Other Cup”

The Song, “Morning Has Broken”³:

- Well-known Christian hymn
- As a poem, the original title was “A Morning Song (For the First Day of Spring)”
- Sung to a tune based upon a Scottish Gaelic traditional melody
- Reached #9 on the charts in 1972
- Also recorded by Judy Collins, Floyd Cramer, Neil Diamond, Art Garfunkel, Aaron Neville, Kenny Rogers and the First Edition, Roger Whittaker

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good...”
– Genesis 1:31a

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleanor_Farjeon

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cat_Stevens

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morning_Has_Broken

Morning has broken, like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for the springing fresh from the word

- What do you experience at break of a spring morning?
- In what ways do you see God's hand in creation?
- What does creation tell us about God?
- How do you respond to such revelation?

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven
Like the first dewfall, on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass

"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse" – Romans 1:20, NASV

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the one light, Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's recreation of the new day

- Hebrew word for Eden means "delight"⁴
- Ezekiel called Eden "the garden of God" – Eze. 28:13

Final Thoughts --

Have you ever laid down in the grass on a summer day and watched the clouds roll by? Or perhaps took a minute in the stillness of a clear night to look up and consider the moon and stars? Or stood on an ocean shoreline to pan the horizon. Sometimes I wonder if we don't sense the awesome majesty of our Creator because we are so consumed with life schedules. Let's face it, unlike people in Bible times, we typically don't live very close to nature – we live in an artificial world. Our feet walk man-made pavements, concrete and carpets; we work in man-made offices with artificial lighting; we eat processed foods with a zillion chemicals; televisions and computers provide us a virtual reality; while sunrises and sunsets are less appreciated for their beauty and more reviled for causing sun glare as we rush to and from work.

Reverend Robert Burns explains how God's creation speaks to His glory and majesty⁵ --

The Psalmist tells us that the heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). It has been said that an in-depth study of ANY area of nature provides insights into the glory and majesty of God.

- Scientist-inventor Michael Faraday gave public lectures, displaying discoveries about electricity, and using this as a means of speaking about God's creative power and glory
- George Washington Carver told of God helping him to discover how the component parts of peanuts could be used to make hundreds of different products, from food to face powder, dyes, stains, soap, etc.
- Dr. Paul Brand, hand surgery specialist, pioneer of reconstructive surgery for leprosy victims, used fascinating descriptions of the wonderful workings of the human body to provide pictorial analogies about the relationship between Christ and Christians

"If the universe is not God's, then He has no claim upon us, and He has no right to expect us to obey His laws. As a result, there is no sin, no need for redemption, and no Christian hope. Without the doctrine of creation, the rest of Christian theology falls to the ground."

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⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garden_of_Eden

⁵ <http://revivals.arkangles.com/theheavensdeclare.php>