HOW I LEARNED TO SING: A STORY

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Category: Minority Language Translation

I smiled nervously as the angel shook my by the hand and said "welcome to heaven. Let me show you around". That first brief tour passed in a bit of a blur, there was far too much to take in, but the angel told me not to worry as I'd have plenty of time to look around. But there was one thing I do remember, the music room.

The angel opened a door and I found myself standing in a huge room; I really do mean huge, far bigger than any stadium I'd ever seen. The room was circular, with marble and frescoed walls, with a huge dome and although I couldn't see any windows, the room was flooded with sunlight. I found myself standing on a balcony which ran round the room, just below the dome and below me there were hundreds and thousands of musicians all playing. No matter how hard I try, I'll never describe the sound of that music; it was beautiful and eloquent all at the same time. There were all sorts of different musical styles which combined into an amazing harmony and all of which spoke of the Triune God.

Just below me, I picked out a Welsh male voice choir. I could distinctly hear the bass notes sounding out pointing me to the majestic God who created the world by the power of his voice. A bit further over, there was a group of African drummers painting a picture of the Spirit who moves like the wind and brings joy and peace. And so it went on. There was a group of monks singing plainsong, what looked like an English cathedral choir and hundreds of groups of people from all around the world, playing instruments I didn't recognise and creating music which was entirely new to me. Even though there were hundreds of groups, playing an amazing diversity of music, I could still pick out each song from among the others and every song told me something about God; Father, Son and Spirit. Each song captured something that the other groups missed.

The whole lot should have sounded horrible, but far from it. Each song and musical style combined with all of the others to tell a story, to help me understand, to point me to God. The harmony created by all of these musical styles was stunning. Each one brought something new, but the whole was far more than the sum of the parts. Each choir, each group, needed the others and together they worshipped God.

As I listened, I noticed someone at the far end of the room stand up and walk out. I was surprised, why would any musician leave a group like that? But I was too taken up in the music to think too much about one musician. Then as I stood there, I felt someone standing behind me and a hand was laid on my shoulder. I turned, and recognised the musician from the far end of the room; he looked at me, half smiling, his eyes brimming with tears.

"Thank-you", he said.

"Why, what have I done?"

"You prayed for the people who translated the Bible into my language. It was that Bible which led me to Christ. God answered your prayers and now I'm here, playing in this orchestra."

I looked at him and my eyes filled with tears, too. It was then I started to sing. I'd never been much of a singer before, but now my voice soared and fitted perfectly with the music from across the globe, in praise of the Lamb who died.