

Viva la Revolución

(Luke 1:47-55, Isaiah 32:1-4, 16-20)

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Blue: Isaiah

Red: Mary

Black: The People

Isaiah:

I see you.

I hear you.

I am Isaiah, the prophet, and these are my words:

I see a king who will reign in righteousness

I see rulers who will rule with justice.

Each will be like a shelter from the wind,

like a refuge from the storm,

like streams of water in the desert,

like the shade of a great rock in a hot and weary land.

Then the eyes of those who see will no longer be closed.

Then the ears of those who hear will listen.

The mind of the thoughtless will know and understand.

The stammering tongue will be fluent and clear.

No longer will the fool be called wise.

No longer will the corrupt be highly respected.

They leave the hungry empty,

They withhold water from the thirsty.

You who are so complacent,

rise up and listen to me!

You who feel so secure,

hear what I have to say!

Mary: Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.

The People: Speak, LORD, for your servants are listening.

Isaiah:

Mourn for the land of my people,
a land overgrown with thorns and briars.

Yes, cry tears, real tears,
for the happy homes no longer happy,
for the joyful city no longer joyful.

Mourn until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,
and the desert becomes a fertile field,
and the fertile field grows to a forest.

The People: Isaiah 32:16-20.

Isaiah:

*Justice will dwell in the desert
and righteousness will live in the fertile field.*

*The fruit of righteousness will be peace;
the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.*

*My people will live in peaceful dwelling places,
in secure homes,
in undisturbed places of rest.*

*Though hail flattens the forest
and the city is leveled completely,
how blessed you will be,
sowing your seed by every stream,
and letting your cattle and donkeys range free. (Isaiah 32:16-20, NIV)*

I am Isaiah, the prophet.
Make way for the word of the LORD.

Mary:

I see you.
I hear you.
I am Mary, the mother, and this is my song.

The People: Luke 1:46-55.

Mary:

*My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for [God] has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.*

*Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is [the name of the Lord].*

*[The Lord's] mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.*

*[God] has shown strength with his arm;
[God] has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.*

*[God] has brought down the powerful from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly;
[God] has filled the hungry with good things and has sent the rich away empty.
[God] has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy,
according to the promise [] made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever. (Luke 1:46-55, NRSV)*

I am Mary, the mother.
Listen, you prophet,
you speak of a king who reigns in righteousness and justice.
I sing of the Christ who comes.
I sing the freedom song of slaves.

The People:

I see you.
I hear you.
May I presume to speak for the ones who are gathered here?

Prophet, I hear your ancient words.
They are sung by trained voices
accompanied by skilled orchestras
heard by adoring audiences
from the greatest concert halls to our living rooms,
music that will play on
forever and ever,
hallelujah! hallelujah!

And, mother, I see you at the manger:
beautiful Mary in blue with baby,
still, sincere, pure and peace.
I sing your freedom song.
Each Christmas Eve, I light my candle for peace on earth,
and then I sleep in heavenly peace.

Isaiah:

Listen, you who are so complacent!

Rise up and listen to me!

You who feel so secure,

hear what I have to say!

Where is your mourning?

Where is your longing?

Where is your waiting?

Where is your watching?

Who are you to speak of world peace while your hearts are at war?

Who are you to speak of justice while bearing the fruits of oppression?

Do you want peace, people of God? [*Repeat until people answer*]

The fruit of righteousness *is* peace!

I see a king who reigns in righteousness, I see a prince of peace.

I see the Spirit being poured from above upon those he reigns.

Listen, my people:

Make way for the word of the LORD!

Mary:

I am not the woman you think I am.

You want to keep me perpetually pretty and pure, silent and still,
a file photo for your Christmas letters.

I am not the woman you think I am.

My feet are calloused,
my hands are hard,
my garment is rough.

I am poor.

I am peasant.

I am pregnant.

I am Spirit-strong.

I sing the freedom song that is growing inside of me.

I give birth to a new song,
chanted by slaves working the cotton fields,
hummed by refugees in foreign lands,
sung by captive peoples peering through iron bars and barbed-wire.

Listen. Can year hear it? [*Pause*]

It's in the barrios,
it's in the projects,
it's in the prisons,
the courtrooms,
the cardboard boxes where homeless play house.

Can you sing it?
Careful -- it's *not* a carol just for Christmas.
It's a call to revolution.
It's an anthem of resistance.

In the 1980's, the government of Guatemala banned the public recitation of my song,
fearing insurrection and rebellion.
At least *they* heard it correctly.

If you want peace, work for justice.
If you want peace, seek righteousness.
No matter what words you use,
a song which supports the business of "as-is-ness" is no music of mine.

The People:

I hear you, prophet.
I hear you, mother Mary.
I am with you.

But our country has lost its way.
"Happy Holidays," they say, as they hand me my change.
"Season's Greetings," they say, as I walk out their doors.
They talk about a war on Christmas --
well, that's one thing on which we *can* agree.
The rich are getting richer,
the poor are getting poorer.
Corporations have become people,
people have become machines.
There's no money to be found for schools, for health care, for homeless
but there's 778 billion dollars to defend the American dream.
The land of the free
has the highest incarceration rate in the world.
The home of the brave,
has 5% of the world's population, 42% of the world's guns.
I too will not stay silent.
I too will not stand still.
We will gather the votes.
We will get the power.

Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas.
This is our song.

Isaiah: What is the power of which you speak?

Mary: What is the life that you will live?

Isaiah: Who is Wal-Mart to say my words?

Mary: Who is Congress to sing my song?

Isaiah:

What do they have to say about the birth of the prince of peace?
What can retailers know about the reign of righteousness?
I prefer they say "Happy Holiday" or "Seasons Greetings"
than pretending that they are the bearers of promise.

The fruit of righteousness will be peace.
And, through the Spirit, it is God's people who are made righteous.
They are the ones whose lips and lives must proclaim the reign of the prince of peace.
They are the ones who bear God's promise.
They are the ones who announce the birth of a whole new world.

Mary:

"Merry Christmas," you say?
"Merry Christmas," you desire?
I never understood the greeting.
What does it mean to be merry?
Jolly, content, thrilled, satisfied?
Is it a feeling to be felt after eating and drinking?

Isaiah:

I asked Israel to *mourn* for the state of their union.
to cry for the happy homes no longer happy,
to weep for the joyful city no longer joyful.

That's because I prophesy of the right-side up kingdom,
when justice and righteousness dwell together,
when the worldly wise are revealed as fools.
when the highly-respected are exposed as completely corrupt.
when judgment comes for the powerful
who leave the hungry to their hunger
who abandon the thirsty to their thirst
who exploit the pleas of the poor with platitudes.

Mary:

And I sing of God's fulfilled promises in my womb, of God's strong right arm
that has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts,
that has brought down the powerful and has lifted up the lowly,
that has filled the hungry and has sent the rich away empty.

My son, God's son, did not live, did not die, and did not rise
to make your Christmas "merry."

My son, God's son, did not live, did not die, and did not rise,
for you to give your power to politicians by proxy.

Yes, gather the votes,
make your laws, your economy, your country less inhumane,
but I am beginning to understand why it is so hard for you to sing,
to sing my song
to sing it loud,
to sing it strong.

You say "Merry Christmas."

I say "Viva la revolución!"

Isaiah: Long live the revolution!

Mary:

Maybe you should write *those* words in your Christmas cards.

Maybe you should whisper *that* conspiracy to the checkout cashier.

The so-called "war on Christmas" is nothing new,
but have you forgotten how it is waged?

The first attack was not by bomb on a place of power.

It was a king's bounty on newborn babies,
a grenade of greed lobbed at the defenseless.

The most powerful threat to Christmas
is not corrupt politicians beholden to their corporate masters.

It's the jingle bell sound of thirty pieces of silver luring Christians from Christ.

You want to protect Christmas? You want peace?

You do so by protecting the most vulnerable of all.

A child growing in his mother's womb.

A nursing infant with no crib for a bed.

A girl and a boy, a man and a woman, starving for love they never receive.

A woman, pregnant, alone, and in dire need of a companion but finding only a judge.

A man, shivering in his sleep underneath a bridge.

A prisoner waiting to be killed for his crime.

While you fight for department store souls,
while your pleas for justice wait for the ballot box,
while you pass on your Christmas wishes,
the real places of revolution take root.

The People: Long live the revolution!

Isaiah:

You say you want a revolution?
Well, you know, we all want to change the world.
But it is God who promises.
It is God who acts.

I see a king who reigns in righteousness.
I see a prince who rules with justice.

You want to change the world?
Acknowledge and live under the reign of the one with the power to change it.

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned.

Mary and Isaiah:

**For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

The People (reading from Bible)

Of the increase of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:1-7)

Mary:

This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.
Can you sing my freedom song?

The People:

Mary, to be honest, I don't know.
I don't know where to begin.
It might cost too much.

Mary:

/ know the cost of salvation.

/ know the cost of peace.

/ know loss.

/ know suffering.

/ know what it's like for a child to die before his mother.

The People: Then I need your help.

Mary: I sing with the Spirit.

The People: Then I need the Spirit's help.

Mary: Yes, God's mercy is for you, and the Spirit helps is in our weakness.

Isaiah:

The prophecy has been fulfilled,
the righteousness of God has been disclosed.

It is attested by the law and the prophets.

The fruit of righteousness will be peace;

the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.

God's people will live in peaceful dwelling places,

in secure homes,

in undisturbed places of rest.

Mary:

This advent, wait for Jesus.

But never forget, Jesus waits for you.

The People:

I see you, prophet. I hear you.

I see you, mother. I hear you.

With a trembling voice, I will sing.

I will sing your freedom song.

Viva la revolución!

ALL: LONG LIVE THE RESOLUTION!