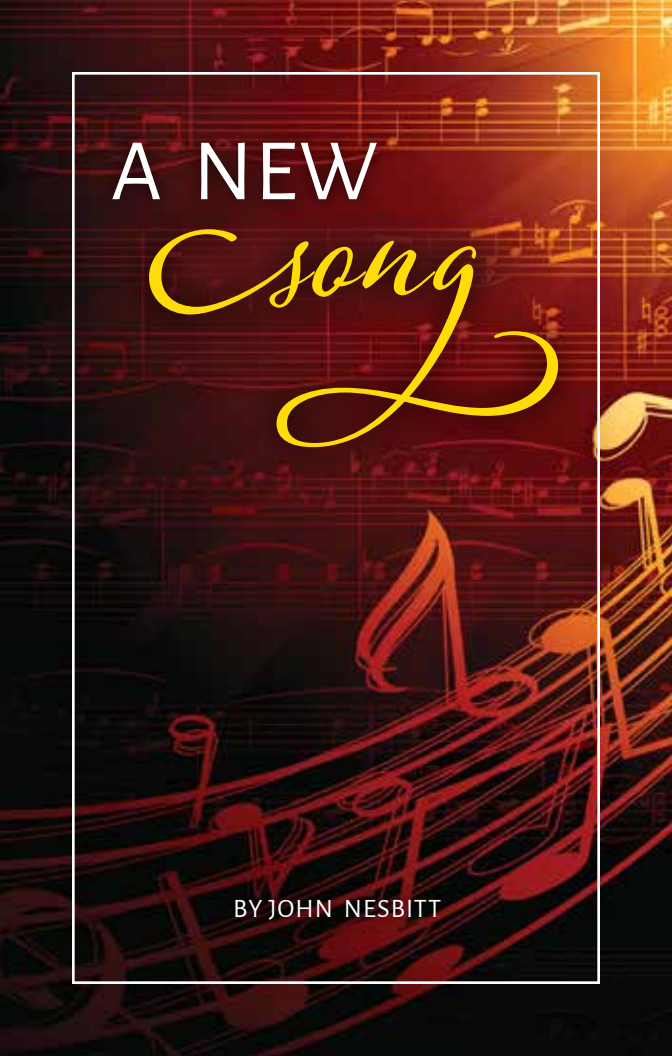
A NEW *song*



BY JOHN NESBITT

John and Charles Wesley were the two youngest sons in the large family of Samuel and Susanna Wesley during the 18th century. The brothers grew up in a household of few resources, but rich in the influence of the Bible. Their parents were shining examples to them of faith and of high moral standards.

Charles was a brilliant student; obtaining a master's degree at just 22 years of age. Sometime later, ill and feeling disappointed with his life circumstances, Charles received a visit from an influential Christian man. To his visitor's question, "Do you expect to be saved?" Charles answered that he did. "On what basis?" asked the gentleman. Charles then explained, "because I have worked hard to serve God." Without a word, the Christian man simply shook his head—that it wasn't so. From then on, both concern and doubt about his soul's destiny in eternity lingered in Charles' mind. Sometime later, a lady Charles met again shared the biblical truth of salvation by grace with him, and on May 21, 1738, Charles simply believed the message and was saved. Later that same day, Charles read this

verse in his Bible: **"He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God"** (PSALM 40:3 NKJV) and from that moment on, he dedicated himself to writing hymns for the glory of his Saviour.

Grateful for the forgiveness of his sin and to commemorate the first anniversary of his salvation, Charles wrote these words:

> *O for a thousand tongues to sing*
> *my great Redeemer's praise,*
> *the glories of my God and King,*
> *the triumphs of His grace.*

Working alongside his brother John, Charles published a total of 39 books of hymns and poems in his lifetime. With the theme of God's grace ever present, he wrote some 6,500 hymns in 50 years – an average of one hymn every 3 days!

To this day, many of Charles Wesley's hymns are both sung and heard ringing from bells around the world. His beautiful and well-known Christmas carol, *"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"*, tells of his Saviour and of the salvation Charles had received:

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild;
God and sinners reconciled."

The impact of salvation was evident in the life and the hymns of Charles Wesley. Do you know Charles Wesley's Saviour? If you were asked the question he was, "Do you expect to be saved?", how would you answer?

The Bible makes it clear that it is **"by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast"** (EPHESIANS 2:8-9 NKJV). Jesus Christ died on the cross so that, receiving Him, you can be saved – God and sinner reconciled! **"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."** (1 TIMOTHY 1:15 NKJV)

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