SOFTWARE & TECH

Morning Has Broken Lyrics Hymn

PUBLISHED
November 25, 2026

REFERENCE
#1795581712134526

Introduction: The Enduring Power of a Beloved Hymn

There are few hymns that have crossed generational, cultural, and even religious boundaries quite like **Morning Has Broken**. From its humble beginnings as a poem celebrating the simple beauty of a new day, to its iconic 1971 recording by Cat Stevens (now known as Yusuf Islam), this piece of music has become a staple of morning worship, school assemblies, and even pop culture. For many, the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** evoke a sense of peace, gratitude, and spiritual renewal. But what is the story behind these famous words? Why does this particular hymn resonate so deeply with millions of people around the world? In this article, we will explore the complete history, the theological significance, the lyrical structure, and the lasting legacy of this cherished piece of music. Whether you are a long-time admirer or a newcomer looking to understand its magic, this deep dive into the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** will provide a thorough and engaging overview.

The Historical Origins of the Hymn

From Gaelic Roots to a Modern Classic

Contrary to popular belief, the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** did not originate with Cat Stevens. The words were written by Eleanor Farjeon, a prolific British author and poet, in 1931. Farjeon was asked to contribute a poem for a new hymnal being published by Oxford University Press, which was seeking fresh texts set to traditional tunes. She chose to write a poem of thanksgiving for a new day, drawing inspiration from the Scottish Gaelic melody "Bunessan." This tune was already known in hymnody, having been used for the Christmas carol "Child in the Manger." Farjeon's poem, originally titled "A Morning Song (For the First Day of Spring)," was specifically written as a hymn of praise. It was first published in the 1931 edition of *Songs of Praise*. The very first line, "Morning has broken like the first morning," sets a tone of primordial innocence and daily renewal, making it an instant hit for congregations seeking a hymn that celebrated nature and creation.

The Gaelic Melody: "Bunessan"

The tune "Bunessan" is named after a village on the Isle of Mull in Scotland. It is a lilting, 5/4 or 3/4 time folk melody that perfectly captures the gentle rhythm of a morning awakening. The melody is remarkably simple, yet profoundly moving. It was first transcribed and published in the *Lute Book of Straloch* in the 17th century, though its oral tradition likely stretches back much further. The name "Bunessan" was attached to it by Lachlan MacLean, who collected the tune and set it to a Christmas text. The marriage of this ancient Scottish melody with Eleanor Farjeon's modern, lyrical text is a perfect example of how traditional music can be repurposed to create something timeless. The **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**would be nothing without the gentle, rolling cadence of the Bunessan tune, which gives the words a sense of natural flow and gentle majesty.

Lyrical Analysis: A Deeper Look at the Text

Verse 1: The Creation of a New Day

Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn is perhaps the most famous: "Morning has broken like the first morning / Blackbird has spoken like the first bird." Farjeon masterfully uses the concept of "the first" to connect the listener to the dawn of creation itself. The "first morning" is a direct reference to the Genesis account of creation, where God said, "Let there be light." The "first bird" evokes the idea of the first living creature to greet the sun. This is not just any morning; it is a holy, archetypal morning. The verse continues, "Praise for the singing, praise for the morning / Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word." The "Word" here is a theological term, referencing the Logos in the Gospel of John—the creative principle of God. By praising the morning as springing "fresh from the Word," Farjeon grounds the natural world in divine action. Every single morning becomes a miniature recreation, a fresh gift from God.

Verse 2: The Beauty of the Natural World

The second verse of the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** shifts focus from the auditory (the blackbird) to the visual and tactile: "Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven / Like the first dewfall, on the first grass." Farjeon was a master of capturing sensory details. The phrase "sweet the rain's new fall" is a beautiful paradox; rain is typically associated with gloom, but here it is sweet, fresh, and sunlit. The image of "first dewfall" reinforces the theme of newness and pristine beauty. The verse concludes with, "Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden / Sprung in completeness where his feet pass." This is a deeply Eucharistic and incarnational image. The "wet garden" is reminiscent of the Garden of Eden, and the "feet" of Christ walking through it. God's presence is seen not just in the abstract sky, but in the very dampness of the grass and the smell of the earth. It is a profoundly intimate vision of a world sustained by the divine presence.

Verse 3: A Call to Praise and Gratitude

The final verse is a direct address of praise: "Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning / Born of the one light, Eden saw play." This is a powerful statement of personal ownership and connection. The worshiper claims the sunlight and the morning as their own, not in a possessive sense, but in a sacramental one. The "one light" connects the worshiper back to Eden, to the original state of grace. The phrase "Eden saw play" is particularly charming, suggesting that creation itself engages in joyful play before God. The verse ends with the triumphant line, "Praise with elation, praise every morning / God's recreation of the new day." This is the theological climax of the hymn. Every new day is not just a repetition of the previous one; it is a new act of creation, a "recreation." The word "recreation" is a pun, meaning both "to create again" and "to refresh or play." This encapsulates the entire theme of the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**: life is a constant, joyful, and fresh start.

Cat Stevens and the Secular Renaissance

The 1971 Recording

While the hymn had been a mainstay in British churches for decades, it was catapulted to global fame in 1971 by Cat Stevens. He included it as the opening track on his landmark album *Teaser and the Firecat*. This version, featuring a distinctive piano part played by Rick Wakeman (of the band Yes), transformed the hymn into a folk-rock anthem. The arrangement was simple, with Stevens's warm, earnest voice carrying the melody. The piano sparkled like morning light on water, and the song became an immediate hit, reaching number 6 on the Billboard Hot 100 in the United States. For many listeners in the 1970s, Cat Stevens was their introduction to the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**. They didn't know it was a hymn; they simply heard a beautiful, spiritual song about nature and gratitude.

A Bridge Between Sacred and Secular

One of the most remarkable aspects of the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** is its ability to function in both sacred and secular settings. In churches, it is sung as a hymn of praise for the Sabbath or for a new week. In schools, it is often sung as a song of welcome to the day. In yoga studios and wellness centers, it is used as a meditation on gratitude. This versatility is a testament to Eleanor Farjeon's skill as a poet. She used language that was deeply Christian ("the Word," "Eden," "his feet") but also universally accessible ("sunlight," "rain," "blackbird"). The hymn speaks to a deep human need to take a moment, pause, and appreciate the simple

Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn appeal is what makes the key of audiences, from religious believers to seekers of mindfulness.

Theological and Spiritual Themes

Creation and New Beginnings

At its core, the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** is a song about **creatio continua**—the continuous act of creation. It rejects the idea that God created the world once and then left it to its own devices. Instead, it affirms that God is actively creating the world anew every moment. Each sunrise is a new act of grace, a fresh start. This is a deeply hopeful theology. It implies that no matter what happened yesterday, today is a clean slate, a "recreation." This theme resonates powerfully with anyone who has ever needed a second chance, a new beginning. The hymn invites us to see the world through the eyes of the first morning, fresh and full of potential.

Gratitude as a Spiritual Discipline

The hymn is structured almost entirely as a litany of praise. The word "praise" appears in every verse. This is not accidental. The hymn is a deliberate act of thanksgiving. It trains the worshiper to begin the day not with complaint or anxiety, but with gratitude. The act of singing "Mine is the sunlight" is a form of positive affirmation. It is a choice to see the good, to count blessings, and to acknowledge the source of those blessings. In a world that often encourages cynicism and fear, the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**stands as a counter-cultural act of joy. It is a reminder that the first act of the day should be one of thankfulness.

Musical Structure and Composition

Time Signature and Melodic Flow

The tune "Bunessan" is typically written in 5/4 or 3/4 time, giving it a gently asymmetric, rocking feel. This irregular meter is part of its charm. It doesn't march; it sways. The melody consists of a simple, repeating phrase with a rising and falling contour that mimics the rhythm of breathing or the ebb and flow of waves. This natural, organic quality is why the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**fits so well with the theme of nature. The music itself feels organic, as if it grew out of the earth. For singers, the tune is easy to learn but difficult to forget, which is a hallmark of great hymnody. Its simplicity allows the listener to focus on the words, while its beauty elevates the spirit.

Harmonic Structure in Popular Renditions

Most arrangements of the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**are harmonically straightforward, using primary chords (I, IV, V) in the key of C major or D major. This gives the song a bright, open, and optimistic sound. Cat Stevens's version famously used a piano with a bell-like tone, with rolling arpeggios that suggest the gentle dripping of dew. Rick Wakeman's piano part is almost a concerto in miniature, adding a layer of classical sophistication to the folk tune. The simplicity of the harmony is deliberate. It allows the lyrical content about light, newness, and praise to shine through without distraction. The music serves the text, a principle that is central to good hymnody.

Cultural Legacy and Modern Usage

In Popular Culture

The **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn**has appeared in countless films, television shows, and commercials. It is often used to signify a new beginning, a peaceful morning, or a moment of spiritual awakening. It has been covered by artists ranging from Neil Diamond to the Gaither Vocal Band. It is a favorite at weddings, funerals, and baptisms. Its presence in popular culture is so pervasive that even people who have never set foot in a church know the melody and the first line. It has become a shorthand for "morning" and "gratitude" in the collective consciousness. The hymn has even been used as a wake-up call for astronauts in space, a testament

to its universal appeal.

In Church and School Settings

In many Christian denominations, particularly in the United Kingdom, the hymn is a standard feature of Harvest Festival services and morning worship. It is also widely used in schools for morning assembly, where its themes of gratitude for the natural world fit well with values education. The hymn is often introduced to children at a young age, ensuring its continued popularity for generations to come. The lyrics are simple enough for a child to understand, yet profound enough for an adult to ponder. This multi-generational appeal guarantees that the **Morning Has Broken lyrics hymn** will remain a fixture of communal singing for decades to come.

Why It Continues to Resonate

A Remedy for Modern Anxiety

In our fast-paced, digitally saturated world, the

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