

Crown College

Navajo Christian Worship and Music:  
The Struggle for Cultural Relevance

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by

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To Daniel Smiley:  
Navajo Pastor, Evangelist, and Musician  
Gifted by God

“Surely, the time has come for the native peoples of America  
to have a new life in Jesus Christ –  
the new life of adopted children of God,  
with all its consequences:  
– A life in justice and full human dignity!  
– A life of pride in their own good traditions,  
and of fraternal solidarity among themselves  
and with all their brothers and sisters in America!  
– A deeper life in charity and grace, leading  
to the fullness of eternal life in Heaven!”

Pope John Paul II

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Navajo Christian Worship and Music:

The Struggle for Cultural Relevance

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**Abstract**

Missionary efforts among the Navajo have largely been synonymous with efforts to civilize these people perceived as heathen. In the process they have been taught to live, act, and worship like Anglos. The purpose of this study is to see if the Navajo have simply copied the worship and music styles of the Anglos or if they have been able to develop an indigenous form of Christianity which expresses who they are as Navajo.

A brief history of Navajo interaction with outside groups is presented to gain a more accurate understanding and perspective of the present-day situation on the Reservation. Navajo culture and the gospel message are also examined for core elements which might be antagonistic or compatible.

Style characteristics of Navajo traditional chant as well as the country music and southern gospel music heard on the Reservation today are examined to gain an understanding of the musical preferences of the people. The Navajo language, a tonal language, requires special considerations when set to music. This aspect is investigated to determine the appropriateness of certain musical styles for use with the language.

Navajo Christian services and music are studied to see what changes have taken place and to observe which elements reflect their culture. Navajo Christianity appears to be on the verge of revival which will assist the people in re-claiming their culture for use in worship.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

It was the beginning of the 1992-1993 academic year when a young Navajo man enrolled at the institution where I teach—MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas. Throughout that year I continued to hear about this student and the fact that he composed music. I expressed my desire to meet him, and during the spring semester I was finally introduced to Daniel Smiley. In that first encounter, I told Daniel of my interest in indigenous church music. He then sang for me an indigenous-style Christian chant which he had composed. Thus began my interest in Navajo culture and music—a study which has resulted in this thesis.

Fieldwork for this study was conducted on two separate occasions: a brief visit to the Reservation during June 1999 and a more extended stay during June-July 2000. My research focused on the T'o'k'e'hasbi Holiness Mennonite Church (formerly known as the Black Mountain Mennonite Church) pastored by Daniel Smiley and located approximately five miles north of Cottonwood, Arizona. The Black Mountain area is considered by the Navajo to be the heart of their Reservation. My study also included travel to other parts of the Reservation to attend services and interview individuals. While I do not contend that this study is comprehensive or exhaustive, I feel it does present a sampling which is typical of Navajo Christian worship and music on the Reservation.

Missionary efforts among the Navajo have largely been synonymous with efforts to civilize these people perceived as heathen. In the process they have been taught to live, act, and worship like Anglos. The purpose of this study is to see if the Navajo

have simply copied the worship and music styles of the Anglos or if they have been able to develop an indigenous form of Christianity which expresses who they are as Navajo. The study will approach the topic through several avenues and attempt to answer a variety of questions.

To adequately assess the present-day situation on the Reservation it is necessary to possess a foundational understanding of Navajo history. Chapter Two, "The Navajo: Origination, Subjugation, and Declination of a Culture," provides a brief coverage of this history and attempts to answer several questions. How have their contacts with outside groups, including other tribes, church, and state, impacted Navajo life today? Has Navajo culture changed as a result of these interactions? In the face of adversity, how have the Navajo continued to remain one of the largest tribes in America?

Chapter Three, "Evangelization of the Navajo," takes a more specific look at missionary efforts among the Navajo, and examines the core elements of Navajo culture and the gospel message in order to discover possible areas of compatibility or contention. A number of questions arise in consideration of this topic. What impact have these efforts had on Navajo Christian worship today? Has indigenization been hindered or encouraged by past evangelistic endeavors? Are there aspects of traditional Navajo culture that will be antagonistic to the Gospel message? Are there other elements which may be compatible and serve as common ground between the Gospel and Navajo culture?

Music is very important in traditional Navajo culture. More recently country music has become very popular on the Reservation, and its sacred counterpart, southern gospel music, is sung almost exclusively in the churches. Chapter Four, "Navajo Music:

From Traditional Chant to Country,” examines this music and seeks to answer several questions. What is traditional Navajo chant like and is there any potential for its use in Christian worship? Why has country music become so popular among the Navajo? Is it a viable cultural expression? Why has southern gospel music become the musical style used in worship?

The Navajo language is a tonal language, and setting a tonal language to music requires special considerations. Chapter Five, “Navajo Language and Music,” examines the phonology of the Navajo language and the implications for setting it to music, and addresses some important questions. Does the Navajo language really require special musical treatment? How does traditional Navajo music treat the language? Do translations of hymns and gospel songs communicate the message clearly?

Chapter Six, “The Struggle for Cultural Identity in Navajo Christian Worship and Music,” describes the present state of worship and music among Navajo Christians as observed during my time on the Reservation. Several questions are addressed in this section. What are worship services like? Are they simply patterned after Anglo models or have the Navajo been able to develop a form of worship which reflects who they are as Navajo Christians? What styles of music do the Navajo seem to prefer for worship? What are the reasons behind these preferences? Has southern gospel music become a viable cultural expression for the Navajo? What attempts have been made at developing an indigenous musical expression for worship? What has been the response to this music?

A summary of the research findings and the resultant conclusions is presented in Chapter Seven. Suggestions are also made for Navajo Christians to consider as they struggle to find cultural relevance and fulfillment through their worship. Potential areas for future research consideration conclude the study.

## Chapter 2

### The Navajo:

#### Origination, Subjugation, and Declination of a Culture

Navajo Indians, numbering more than 250,000, form one of the largest American Indian tribes in the United States today. Some scholars speculate that these Paleo-Indians were living on the continent as early as 25,000 B.C. (Nettl and Heth 460).

Most historians believe that these people migrated from Asia to North America via the Bering Strait. This may have occurred during the Ice Age or at a time when the water level was lower and there was a strip of land connecting the two continents. This explanation seems logical since American Indians and Asians both belong to the Mongoloid race. The Christian Navajo tend to agree with this origination theory and even go so far as to point out similarities between themselves and Asians. Those members of the tribe who hold to the traditional creation myth, however, believe that their people originated where they are today. The Navajo creation story presents four worlds, stacked upon each other, through which the people evolved. Anthropologists, however, place these four worlds in linear sequence to represent China, Alaska, Canada, and the United States.

The languages of Native Americans have been classified by linguists as Nadene. "At one time, Nadene peoples occupied much of Alaska and wide expanses of northwestern Canada; eventually, they reached into northern Mexico" (Dutton 73). The largest subfamily of the Nadene group is the Athabascan language. Linguists have concluded that the Athabascan groups, relatively late arrivals on the continent, began migrating to North America around one thousand years ago and that this movement

continued over a period of four hundred years, placing their arrival in the Southwest in the mid-fourteenth century (Dutton 74). The Athabascan-speaking peoples extend from Alaska diagonally down into the southwestern United States, the same path their migration would have followed (Underhill, *The Navajos* 5). This includes the Navajo who refer to themselves as Diné—the people. These people lived as hunters and gatherers, and so migrated as their subsistence needs dictated.

### **Early History in America**

The territory settled by the Navajo has become known as the Four Corners region, an area radiating from the common boundary point shared by Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. It is defined by the four sacred mountains: Sierra Blanca Peak in Colorado to the east; Mount Taylor in New Mexico to the south; San Francisco Peaks in Arizona to the west; and Mount Hesperus in the La Plata Mountains of Colorado to the north (Butler 379). The Navajo tribe is one of the few Native American groups to be resettled in its original territory following conflicts with Anglo-Americans in the 1860s.

Upon arrival in the Southwest, the Athabascans first came in contact with groups of people who had settled in this area much earlier—the Plains Indians and, more significantly, the Pueblo. In contrast to the Pueblo, who placed primary emphasis on the group as a whole with little concern for the individual, the Navajo and Apache, the two main tribes to develop from the Athabascans who migrated to the Southwest, were more concerned with the individual within the group. These Athabascan groups received their names from the Spaniards who began entering the Southwest in the sixteenth century. The term “Apache” meant “stranger” or “enemy,” and the Spaniards noted particular



characteristics of the various groups they met. Those who cultivated crops became “Apache de Návaju” or Navajo (Underhill, *The Navajos* 4).

The Navajo have usually been quick to assimilate elements of other cultures which appear advantageous. From the Pueblo they learned horticulture and weaving, and from the Spanish they acquired horses and sheep. Their early looms and blankets are exact replicas of those of the Pueblo (Underhill, *Red Man's America* 227). After being introduced to sheep, the Navajo discovered that the land was more suitable for grazing than for raising crops, and so livestock became their primary focus. They had long possessed silver ornaments obtained from the Spanish, but it was not until the late nineteenth century that Navajo men were introduced to the art of silversmithing by Mexicans (Underhill, *Red Man's America* 231).

The Navajo have no word in their language which can be translated as “religion” (Kluckhohn and Leighton, *The Navajo* 179). To them, worship is a way of life; there is no compartmentalization of elements into sacred and secular—all of life is sacred. Navajo legend states that the people were born out of the earth, and so the earth is their mother. The sun which causes things to grow from the earth, therefore, is their father. They talk of the Great Spirit who cannot be seen, but it is the elements of nature which represent the Great Spirit and are visible, such as the sun, the earth, the sacred mountains, and certain animals, that are the focus of their worship. They say they believe in one god, but they continually seek that god through everything around them because their god is far away. The strong spiritist nature of their beliefs governs many of their ceremonies and traditions.

Compared to smaller tribes who had chiefs as tribal leaders, the Navajo had a rather loose organizational structure. Since they had primarily been hunters and gatherers, they moved around in small groups and saw no need for the development of organized villages as other tribes such as the Pueblo had done. It must also be remembered that the Navajo focused more on individual importance within the group than on the group as a whole. This lack of centralized organization made it difficult for outside groups to make treaties with the Navajo. Many treaties were signed during the period 1795-1846 but few of them were long-lasting (Reeve). The Mexicans and Americans failed to understand that it was not possible for a few leaders to speak for the entire tribe.

#### **Outside Relations: Church and State**

As the Spaniards moved into the Southwest, Franciscan missionaries came with them. The chronicles of the Coronado expedition (1540-1542) made slight mention of Indians belonging perhaps to the Athabascan group. The Espejo expedition of 1582 encountered a band in New Mexico which was probably ancestral to the present-day Navajo (Dutton 77). The first known specific reference to the Navajo in a European document is the report of a Franciscan missionary in 1626 (Kluckhohn and Leighton, *The Navajo* 35). Evangelization of these "savages" was the primary directive of the early explorers. They were claiming land and souls for their God and their King. The enormous amount of financial resources required for these expeditions was often justified in spiritual terms. Christianization and civilization of the Indians, often considered synonymous, was a regular part of governmental colonization schemes (Mooney 874). The first Franciscan mission to the Navajo was established in 1627 at

Santa Clara, New Mexico (Spicer 211). Compatible elements between the Catholic religion and ceremonial styles of Native Americans, such as a divinely ordered world view and recognition of a higher holy power, encouraged Franciscan missionaries to appreciate fundamental aspects of native life (Bowden 46). Through their documentation of native life, religious practices, and language, the Franciscans produced many important studies in anthropology and linguistics. Because of this genuine interest in their culture, the Navajos respected these men in long robes. Escalation of military conflicts between the Spanish soldiers and the Navajo, however, hindered the element of trust developed between the missionaries and the natives. This, along with fact that the Navajos were a fragmented people and possessed only a loose organizational structure at best, yielded little spiritual advancement through the efforts of the Franciscans.

The Pueblo rebellion against the Spanish in 1680 had a big impact upon the Navajo. The Navajo had not joined the rebellion, but as the Pueblo people left their villages they went to the canyons where the Navajo lived seeking safety. For almost forty years these two tribes lived peacefully side by side (Spicer 211-212). This intermingling affected Navajo culture in many ways, including the development of crafts such as weaving and pottery, and the assimilation of social and religious practices. The Navajo language remained dominant as the Pueblo people along with many aspects of their culture were absorbed into Navajo life (Spicer 212). This also resulted in the growth of hostilities between the Navajo and the Spanish. Until this time, the Pueblo stood between these two groups which had not had all that much contact with each other. At the same time, however, some Navajo developed friendly relations with the Spanish which caused tension within the tribe itself. Those Indians friendly with the enemy came to be called "Enemy People" by other Navajo (Spicer 216).

During this period of interaction with the Pueblo and the Spanish, the Navajo were in transition from their nomadic hunting and gathering way of life to a more stationary lifestyle as farmers and ranchers, and were greatly influenced by these outside groups. Aspects of their former way of life continued, however, in the form of raids on neighbors whether Indian or Spanish. Livestock possessions had become a status symbol among the Navajo, and after 1800 they began to rely more and more on raiding for their supply of sheep, horses, and slaves (Spicer 213). Mexican and Pueblo clans developed as a result of women captives who had become part of the tribe. Retaliatory raids from all groups involved continued through the early years of the nineteenth century. “Through the 1820s, especially after Mexican independence in 1824, the Navajos ran wild in northwestern New Mexico” (Spicer 213). Throughout this period, Franciscan missions had no impact upon the Navajo; they remained free from all military, political, and ecclesiastical control (Spicer 214). As raiding became more successful, young men among the tribe began to gain fame as fighting men, and warfare began to occupy a place of great importance in Navajo culture (Spicer 215).

When the United States took over New Mexico in 1846, the Navajo were independent in every sense of the word. Military expeditions, guided by “enemy” Navajo, were launched in an effort to control these marauders, but to no avail. Fort Defiance, a military post with seven companies of soldiers, was established in the heart of Navajo country. The Navajo regarded this as an invasion of their territory because the soldiers had taken some of their prime grazing land. The soldiers enlisted the aid of those Indians who were upset with the Navajo because of their raiding—enemy Navajos, Utes, Zunis, Hopis, and Pueblos (Spicer 217). In April 1860, the Navajo attacked Fort

Defiance with some two thousand warriors. They failed to drive the soldiers out, but their raids continued. In 1861, as the Civil War began to draw the attention of the government, the Fort was abandoned (Spicer 218).

As Union troops gained control of New Mexico, however, the order was given to control the Navajo at all costs. Colonel Kit Carson was assigned to carry out the order and instructed to kill all Navajo men who offered resistance and to take the women and children prisoner (Spicer 218; Bailey 153). Carson enlisted the help of all the tribes who considered the Navajo as their enemy. Carson did not plan to kill the people outright; he destroyed their crops and slaughtered their sheep until they were starved into submission. Many women and children, however, did die as a direct result of the decimation of their food sources. Carson's commanding officer, General James Carleton, was not as inclined to treat the Navajo favorably and he ordered Carson to speed up the removal process and shoot any who refused to surrender (Brown 20-25). In September 1863, the first Navajo began coming to Fort Defiance to give up. All who were captured or surrendered were treated kindly and given plenty of food. Carson's action so impressed the people that more began to come to the Fort for food and security (Spicer 219). Eventually eight thousand Navajo were taken on the three-hundred-mile walk from Fort Defiance to Fort Sumner. It is estimated that at least two thousand remained in hiding in the mountains (Spicer 219).

The Long Walk, as it has been called, to and from Bosque Redondo where Fort Sumner was located, had such a significant impact upon the people that it remains in their memory much like the Civil War does for Anglo-Americans. Carleton and his soldiers did not respect the Navajo as Carson had (Brown 23-36). Many died in

captivity, both before and after the Long Walk, as well as on the Long Walk itself.

Navajo culture, and therefore identity, was never the same after this event.

At Fort Sumner the Navajo were confined with Indians of other tribes, often their enemies, who had already been rounded up. Fighting between the tribes took place within the compound. The Indians were given farm implements as well as flour and other foods but were not told what to do with them. Hunger and illness affected most of the people; a smallpox epidemic in 1865 killed 2,321 (Spicer 220). Crops planted by the Navajo failed, and it became apparent to the government that the plan for relocating this tribe was not working (Spicer 220).

After four long years, it was finally decided in 1868 that the Navajo should be allowed to return to their homeland. A treaty was drawn up, and the tribal leaders agreed to remain within a reservation which was only about one-fourth the size of their original territory (Spicer 220). In small groups the Navajo returned from exile a drastically changed people. They relied on government rations as they established themselves once again. Almost as soon as they were given sheep and livestock by the government, they began to expand beyond the boundaries of the Reservation in search of good pasture. When crops failed and rations were irregular, some young men began raiding again (Spicer 221). As land was taken from the Reservation for the railroad, the boundaries were expanded several times. Government schools, often run by mission organizations, both Catholic and Protestant, were established—civilization and Christianization were still viewed by many as being synonymous. At the encouragement of the government, many families devoted themselves to raising sheep, and so the nomadic character of life for many Navajos increased as they sought good pasture.

Even after the treaty of 1868 and the Long Walk home, life for the Navajo was still difficult. Bad winters and several seasons of crop failure made it difficult for the people to re-establish themselves in their homeland (Spicer 220). The treaty made provisions for government assistance for a few years, but more was needed. By the time the treaty expired in 1878, however, the situation had improved. The population of the people and their livestock had greatly increased. It was necessary for the government to expand the size of the Reservation on several occasions. The Navajo were eager to remain at peace, and even when young Indians would raid, the leaders would return the animals, often before the loss was noticed. Efforts to develop long-term programs for the improvement of the Navajo were hampered by frequent changes in Indian Agents for the tribe. The average term of a commissioner was only two years throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. Even the Navajo recognized the negative impact this was having, and so they offered to contribute to increase the salary of this position (Dale 124).

Until recent times, efforts to provide education for the Navajo have been conducted jointly by the church and the government. The goal of the government was civilization, and the goal of the church, both Catholic and Protestant, was evangelization. The product of evangelization was believed to be civilization, the Gospel bringing a desire for Anglo-American culture which was erroneously considered to be the root of the Gospel (Beaver 156). Some even suggested that to be truly civilized, the Indians needed to be able to speak English. It was assumed that converts needed to be able to read the Bible to maintain their new-found spiritual life. This, first of all, necessitated that a written form of the Navajo language be developed by the

missionaries, and the desire for literacy dictated that schools be established to accomplish the goal (Berkhofer 4). The government used the church to staff and run the Indian agencies. "When a mission board accepted assignment of an agency it was expected to carry on mission work as well as to nominate the agent" (Beaver 157). This was done in part to rid the agency of the corruption which had so long been associated with it, but that goal was not always realized. Although active involvement by mission boards in the administration of Indian agencies ended in 1882, their participation in the educational programs continued through most of the next century.

The boarding-school experience has had a lasting effect on the people. In the first half of the twentieth century children were often kidnapped from their families and shipped off to schools hundreds of miles away from their homeland. Children were stripped of everything that represented their traditional culture. Navajo pastor Daniel Smiley said that this humiliation left such emotional scars on one Navajo woman that she was unable to continue viewing the movie "Schindler's List" because of the memories it brought to mind. During the second half of the century children were usually not kidnapped, but such pressure was applied to parents that they felt they had no choice but to allow the Anglos to take their children away to school. Reports of cruel treatment, meaningless work assignments, and guards with trained attack dogs are common. The children were made to feel worthless as Navajo in hopes that they would not return to their traditional way of life.

### **Twentieth-Century Changes**

Although conditions for the Navajo slowly began to improve during the twentieth century, many of the same struggles with the Government continued. The



issue of land is still of primary concern. As early as 1894, there was evidence that the Reservation was being overgrazed (Butler 380). Traditionally, the Navajo have been loosely governed by an informal system of headmen and clan leaders with decision making based on persuasion and consensus, rather than coercion and majority rule. In 1917, however, the Navajo were encouraged to organize community councils, called chapters, for the discussion of problems with superintendents of the Indian Bureau (Spicer 224). Resolutions passed by these councils have often not been easily accepted by those who would prefer the traditional mode of operation. "Modern Navajo tribal government has its roots in the 1922 Business Council" (Butler 380). This Council passed a resolution in 1926 to seek a voluntary reduction of livestock to deal with the problem of overgrazing. It must be remembered that to the Navajo, livestock represents status and wealth, and not many were willing to reduce their herds. Since voluntary stock reduction was not working, the practice of forced stock reduction was eventually put in place (Butler 380). The government could not afford to ship the animals to market, and so many were slaughtered and left to rot. This did not help Navajo-Government relations at all. Eventually, in 1952, the Navajo Tribal Council wrote and put into effect its own grazing regulations based on technical knowledge supplied by the Indian Bureau (Spicer 226).

World War II and the years following brought rapid changes to the Navajo people. Navajo soldiers played a vital role in America's victory in the Pacific. Communication leaks were hampering American efforts to defeat the Japanese. Encrypted messages were deciphered almost as soon as they were sent. Philip Johnston, an engineer in Los Angeles who had been raised on the Navajo Reservation where his

father had been a missionary, suggested to the Marines that they use the Navajo language as the basis of their code (Hirschfelder 384). Skillful as they were, the Japanese were never able to figure out the code. These Navajo war heroes caused public attention to be focused on their tribe. As the soldiers returned home, they brought with them a new awareness of the outside world because of their experiences. They now realized the value of education and, consequently, encouraged their younger siblings to take advantage of the opportunities available to them. In 1947 the Navajo Tribal Council passed a compulsory school law (Spicer 226). Navajo identity, as a cultural group distinct from Anglos, became an increasing source of pride for the people (Spicer 225). They were now doing for themselves that which the Anglos had failed to impose upon them earlier.

Now at the beginning of the twentieth-first century, the Navajo still have their struggles. As their Reservation boundaries have expanded, they have gradually enveloped the Hopi Reservation which occupies land once a part of the original Navajo territory. In search of pasture for their flocks, the Navajo have gradually encroached upon Hopi territory. The battle for land between these two tribes, though apparently resolved in the courts, is still a point of contention. Navajo families, forcefully removed from Hopi territory, are still seeking compensation for lost possessions and promises not kept (Shebala).

Government housing programs have impacted the traditional culture greatly. In an effort to provide modern conveniences and utilities, small subdivisions of homes have been created. These have removed the Navajo from their camps based upon the nuclear family and forced several family units to live together in one small

neighborhood. This has caused tension and the youth are struggling for their identity—they have no sense of direction or purpose. The typical activities and responsibilities of the family camp no longer occupy their lives. With nothing to do, loosely structured gangs have been formed in some cases, and the results are not positive.

## Chapter 3

### Evangelization of the Navajo

Missionary activities among the Navajo prior to the Long Walk were limited to the Franciscans. In 1868, the Presbyterians established a mission at Fort Defiance marking the beginning of Protestant activity among this tribe (Butler 383). It was not until the end of the century that Christianity gained much of a foothold among the Navajo. Initial Protestant involvement among many tribes was an effort to counteract the teaching of the Catholics. The Franciscans began a mission at St. Michael's near Ganado and four years later, in 1898, began a school (Spicer 224). This became their strongest Navajo mission with more than two hundred students attending the school. A recent publication for the centennial celebration of the founding of St. Michael's included the following statement by Pope John Paul II.

I encourage you, as native people belonging to the different tribes and nations in the East, South, West, and North, to preserve and keep alive your cultures, your languages, the values, and customs which have served you well in the past and which provide a solid foundation for the future. Your customs that mark the various stages of life, your love for the extended family, your respect for the dignity and worth of every human being, from the unborn to the aged, and your stewardship and care of the earth: these things benefit not only yourselves but the entire human family.

Your gifts can also be expressed even more fully in the Christian way of life. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is at home in every people. It enriches,

uplifts, and purifies every culture. All of us together make up the People of God, the Body of Christ, the Church. We should all be grateful for the growing unity, presence, voice, and leadership of Catholic Native Americans in the Church today. (Franciscan Friars 3)

The booklet from which this quote is taken recounts Franciscan work among the Navajo and includes numerous references to elements of Navajo culture with Christian symbolism applied. Although Protestant critics view this as encouraging syncretism, it has been the prayer of Franciscans that their openness to the indigenous culture would encourage the people themselves, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to decide what is and is not appropriate for the Christian life (Antram, Personal Interview).

In 1904, the Presbyterians started a school in the same area (Spicer 224). Various religious groups entered the Reservation during the early twentieth century to set up missions, hospitals, and schools. As government support for church-related schools was gradually withdrawn, however, several denominational missions closed (Morris 114). The years immediately following World War II once again saw an increase in evangelistic efforts among the Navajo (Spicer 224). Protestant missionary activity was at first conducted by the foreign missionary boards of the respective denominations. Missionary activities among the Indians eventually changed from foreign missionary boards to home mission boards (Beaver 208). Not only did the previous cooperation between denominations disappear, but sectarian activities often led to active proselytization (Beaver 208).

In the 1970s, churches began to realize the need for increased indigenous leadership (Morris 115). As the end of the century approached, churches recognized

that their educational and evangelistic programs must be culturally relevant (Morris 116). Once again, an ecumenical movement was replacing the sectarian approach followed for much of the twentieth century (Morris 116).

While Franciscan missionaries had shown respect for Navajo culture, their Protestant counterparts generally viewed it as anti-Christian (Berkhofer 68, 122). Converts were expected to denounce their traditional ceremonies and religious practices. Most missionaries did not understand that since all of life was viewed as sacred and intertwined with these practices and beliefs, they were asking the converts to reject their culture as they had known it. Everything associated with the former way of life was considered evil; they were expected to reject one cultural system and embrace another, totally foreign, in its place (Morris 114). Social practices, male and female roles, and even the concept of time were just a few of the elements which were completely different. After all, if the convert was expected to set aside one day for worship and keep the Sabbath holy, he had to develop a sense of time and keep track of the days in the week (Berkhofer 60). For the Indian to become truly Christian was to become anti-Indian. No matter how exemplary the Indian Christian was, he was still considered a savage and inferior by the Anglos (Berkhofer 11, 123). At the other extreme, the pagans in his tribe despised him for rejecting the traditions of his forefathers (Berkhofer 123). True conversion and transformation meant that the Christian Indian would also seek to impose the same ideals and standards on his neighbors, which inevitably led to intratribal conflict (Berkhofer 68, 125).

Navajo conflicts, both within and without the tribe, are still prevalent today. The more remote the group of people, the more these conflicts tend to be manifested. It was

only during the last few years of the twentieth century that some areas of the Reservation received electricity; many still lack indoor plumbing. These groups tend to be more closely connected to the traditional ways because of their limited contact with the outside world. Christian and pagan factions are very pronounced, and there are often attempts to punish or drive out the Christians. Daniel Smiley, a Navajo pastor, and his family were forced to move their dwelling outside the camp when his mother became a Christian. Other camp settings have a road separating Christians and the remainder of the group. In mission churches where Navajo Christians have been established for some time, there is often rejection of any attempt to incorporate indigenous elements into the worship services. They have been so indoctrinated by missionaries to believe that all of their traditional culture is bad that they cannot accept attempts to make any of it a part of their Christianity. At the same time, the pagans have come to believe that their traditional culture and Christianity are incompatible, and so they also react negatively to any attempts to develop an indigenous Christian worship (Smiley). Berkhofer (125-131) suggests basic sequences of events which develop as the result of Protestant missionary activity among Indians depending on the amount of prior contact the group had with Anglos. The more prior contact the group has had with Anglo culture, the greater the probability that the group will emerge with greater factions, often tribalwide.

A recent source of conflict within the Navajo tribe has been the development of the peyote religion also known as the Native American Church. Peyote, a hallucinogenic non-addictive cactus, has been used among Mexican Indians in religious rites for hundreds of years (Dutton 106). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Indians in Oklahoma incorporated use of the drug into a religious movement

which became known as the Native American Church (Bowden 209-211). In the late 1930s, Navajo Indians, who learned the ceremony from the Ute Indians in Colorado, began to practice the peyote cult (Butler 383). Tribal leaders were against this new cult, not only because of its use of a drug but also because it sought to combine Christian and pagan elements which had been considered incompatible by proponents on both sides. Before this, nothing had really bridged the gap between the old ceremonial ways and the new cultural patterns forced on them by the Anglos. Some feel that the increase of the peyote cult is due largely to the introduction of varied doctrines by missionaries of differing Christian denominations (Dutton 107). The result has often been a partial Christianization which has left the Indians with a sense of insecurity regarding their traditional religion (Dutton 107). Most Christian mission work has failed to realize that religion is involved in the total life of anyone who has come out of animism (Dutton 107).

If one is planning to enter another culture for any reason, it will be advantageous to become familiar with the cultural beliefs and practices of the host people. This is especially true for the person attempting to evangelize another people group. Worldview, or culture, “is the conceptual design, the definitions by which people order their lives, interpret their experience, and evaluate the behavior of others” (Lingenfelter and Mayers 18). The Gospel message transcends culture, and yet it must be communicated by words, symbols, and concepts derived from culture. To a great extent, the response of any host culture to the Gospel, whether positive or negative, will depend upon their interpretation of this message from their own cultural context. When Christ lived on earth this message was lived out and communicated through the context of His



host culture—that of the Jews living in a Roman-dominated world. This paradoxical relationship of Christ and culture is described by Richard Niebuhr:

In his single-minded direction toward God, Christ leads men away from the temporality and pluralism of culture. In its concern for the conservation of the many values of the past, culture rejects the Christ who bids men rely on grace. Yet the Son of God is himself child of a religious culture, and sends his disciples to tend his lambs and sheep, who cannot be guarded without cultural work. (53)

Developing an understanding of Navajo culture to determine which aspects might be compatible or antagonistic to the Gospel, will greatly assist the missionary ministering to this tribe. Much of the missionary effort among the Navajo has failed to recognize fundamental differences between Western and Navajo cultures. It is natural for missionaries to present the Gospel as they understand it within their own cultural context, but introducing Christianity as a Western religion is wrong.

For the most part, Westerners have been able to develop an indigenous form of Christian theology even though it was originally communicated to them from a Middle-Eastern cultural context. Most Western Christians are so far removed from Christianity's original cultural context that their understanding of this culture is inadequate. In most instances, however, Westerners have not been able to lift the core elements of the Gospel out of their own culture, convey these elements to another culture, and allow these people to embrace it as their own. It is imperative that the primary elements, the core of the message, be all that is communicated so that which develops is a result of God's Spirit working out the Gospel in its new context.

Following a discussion of Navajo worldview, Scripture will be examined in an effort to determine the core elements of the Gospel—those aspects which transcend culture. These will then be compared to the main elements of Navajo culture to determine which principles will be easily received and those which may be in conflict with their belief system. Since this is written from an Anglo-American perspective—my personal cultural context—aspects of this culture will occasionally be included for basis of comparison. A comparative list of elements of both Anglo-American and Navajo cultures is included in Appendix A.

### **Navajo Worldview**

Gary Witherspoon, Mormon missionary to the Navajo and a foremost authority on Navajo language and culture, defines culture as

. . . a symbolic code through which messages are transmitted and interpreted. But, more than a code, culture is a set of conceptions of and orientations to the world, embodied in symbols and symbolic forms. Through the adoption of and adherence to particular concepts of and orientations to reality, human beings actually create the worlds within which they live, think, speak, and act. (3)

In his study of the interconnectedness of Navajo language and culture, he also describes language as a symbolic code which enables messages to be transmitted and understood. Understanding the symbolic codes of language and culture is the key to understanding the people themselves. Witherspoon believes that all cultures are based on a single metaphysical premise which is axiomatic, unexplainable, and unprovable (5). Each culture may have its own premise, and a single premise can be the basis for more than one ideological system which results in cultures seemingly different from each other.

Western metaphysical thought has been dominated by the complete separation of mind and matter. Navajo philosophy, however, “assumes that mental and physical phenomena are inseparable, and that thought and speech can have a powerful impact on the world of matter and energy” (Witherspoon 9). Witherspoon has attempted to understand this through a philological approach. As he and other scholars have suggested, the first and best way to enter another culture is through the language.

According to the Navajo creation myth, the Navajo supernatural beings thought, spoke, and sang the world into existence; attributing this kind of power to thought and word is foreign to Western concepts. A primary figure in this myth is Changing Woman. The names of her parents—*Sa'ah Naagháii*, identified with thought, and *Bik'eh Hózhó*, identified with speech—constitute the central focus of Navajo life and ritual. “Nearly every song and prayer in the elaborate Navajo ceremonial system uses *sá'ah naagháii bik'eh hózhó* in its benediction” (Witherspoon 19). Witherspoon’s thorough word-by-word analysis of this phrase (19-27) yields the following interpretation:

*sá'ah*.....a derivative of the past tense form of the verb stem “to grow, to mature.”

*naagháii*....a conjugation of the verb “to go” and implies a continuous cyclical event.

*bik'eh*.....means “according to it” or “by its decree” and refers to what came before.

*hózhó*.....most often translated as “beauty—the positive or ideal environment.”

“The goal of Navajo life in this world is to live to maturity in the condition described as *hózhó*, and to die of old age, the end result of which incorporates one into the universal beauty, harmony, and happiness described as *sá'ah naagháii bik'eh hózhó*” (Witherspoon 25). The purpose of every Navajo ritual is the maintenance or restoration of *hózhó*.

Scholars who have studied the Navajo agree that this concept of *hózhó* seems to be the core of Navajo culture. When this ideal state is disturbed, the result is *hóchxó'*—an ugly, unhappy, and disharmonious environment. The Navajo do not believe that it is a part of the natural cycle of the universe, but is caused by improper, inadvertent, or evil acts or contact with things defined as dangerous. When this happens, *hózhó* can be restored through ritual ceremonies. These rites reenact the creation myth and help the people identify, through this recreation, with the good and power of the supernatural beings. This ritual identification neutralizes the contaminating effect of evil and restores the harmony of *hózhó*.

The Navajo believe strongly in the power of thought since the world was created by it. They emphasize that if one's thoughts are good, good things will happen. To them, speech is the outer form or manifestation of thought, and as such an extension of it; thought is the inner form of speech (Witherspoon 28-35). In their creation myth, the world was thought into existence, but this was not consummated until the thoughts were externalized in speech—in prayer or sung in song. Just as thought precedes speech, knowledge precedes thought and is an inner form of it. Thought then is the realization of knowledge. In the same way knowledge precedes thought, language precedes speech. This process and sequence of events may seem backwards to the Western mind which separates mind and matter, idea and entity, and subject and object. To the Navajo, creation is then the external manifestation of knowledge. Since the original creation of *hózhó* by the supernaturals was an expression of knowledge, the restoration of *hózhó* is accomplished through ritual knowledge (Witherspoon 44).

Another important aspect of the Navajo worldview is the concept of wind or air. In their mythology wind is the primary mentor imparting information to guide the actions of the various beings. "The body has no inherent capacity for thought, speech, or movement; it acquires these capacities from air" (Witherspoon 54). Just as man could not exist without air, the Navajo recognize that plants, animals, water, and fire need air to survive. They also believe that knowledge represents an inherent possession of air; it is associated with one's breath since speech is a manifestation and extension of knowledge. Sound is air in motion and speech is highly refined sound; in order to put this specialized sound in patterned motion, one must control air. In controlling air, the Navajo participate in the omnipotence and omniscience of air as they perceive it. Speech then represents the ultimate act of knowledge and therefore power. After hózhó is projected into the air through ritual speech and song, it is breathed back into the body which then allows the individual to fully participate in the cycle (Witherspoon 61).

The foundational concepts of Navajo culture discussed in the preceding section are manifested in the various ways in which the people order their lives. The concept of hózhó, and the orderly sequence of elements involved in its creation, is reflected in practically everything they do. A worldview consists of many inter-related elements which determine the way members of a culture view themselves, others, and the world around them. The following discussion of these elements is an augmentation of the model of basic values developed by Marvin Mayers (Lingenfelter and Mayers 9).

### **Time**

Navajo time is definitely event-orientated and focuses on the present (Scates 1981, 2). Very little consideration is given to planning for the future. Jokes are often

made about “Indian time.” Time, and life in general, is so connected to nature that specific times are often not used. Events may begin at sunrise, sunset, morning, or afternoon, which in themselves can be rather ambiguous. Even when specific times are set, the event begins when everyone is ready.

At public events such as powwows, where Anglo attendance is encouraged for financial and cultural reasons, the Native Americans themselves will continually remind each other to keep the activities moving quickly and on schedule. In spite of this, however, the structure is still quite loose. If problems arise with logistics or equipment, everything comes to a halt and the problem may eventually be dealt with. If, after considerable time has elapsed, there is no apparent solution, the problem will just be ignored and the event will continue. The most important aspect is that they have gathered for the event; the schedule and what happens are not all that significant.

### **Relationships**

The concept of relationships is perhaps the key to understanding the Navajo worldview. For them, all of life is interrelated; humans, animals, elements of nature, spirits—all interact to form their concept of life. The universe is orderly and lawful (Kluckhohn 361).

Nature is one with man, and the two are interrelated. “To despoil nature is to bring harm on oneself and one’s society” (Scates 2). The spirit of a deceased family member has the power to contact the holy ones and manifest itself in nature if it so chooses. Since nature is seen as a manifestation of spirits, the Navajo try to influence it with their various chants, prayers, and ceremonies (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 40). They do not believe that nature can be controlled or mastered for it

is more powerful than man; they only hope to influence it. There is “very little differentiation between natural and supernatural and many phenomena are perceived to be caused by the supernatural” (Scates 1).

Navajo social structure places great emphasis on family relationships—the nuclear family, the extended family, the kinship group, and finally the clan (Scates 10). Clans are matrilineal; when a couple gets married they go to live with the girl’s family (Kluckhohn 381). If a Navajo has any need, he can go to anyone in his clan, even though he may never have met them before, and expect to be cared for. There is communal cooperative kinship assistance from birth to death, resulting in a strong group identity (Dolaghan and Scates 4). The obverse of this is that they are very wary of non-relatives (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 38).

### **Spiritual**

Navajo relationship concepts evolve out of their concept of the spiritual; all of life is sacred. This holistic approach to life governs their worldview. Since everything is inter-related and sacred, the Navajo goal is harmony—*hózhó*; the “price of disorder in human terms is illness” (Scates 3). Both good and evil exist in a delicate balance which causes the Navajo to view life as being very dangerous (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 37-38). Any mistakes may disrupt this balance and bring harm. The principal function of traditional ceremonies is that of curing and the re-establishment of harmony (Rapoport 52). “The whole Navajo system of curing clearly takes it for granted that you cannot treat a man’s ‘body’ without treating his ‘mind,’ and vice versa” (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 41).

“Very few activities are wrong in and of themselves, but excess in the practice of any is dangerous” (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 39). “Morality is conceived in traditionalistic and situational terms rather than in terms of abstract absolutes” (Kluckhohn 366). Morality is contextual, and what is wrong in one situation may be acceptable in another. Human nature is neither good nor evil—both elements are blended in all persons from birth (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 43). The task then becomes to keep both in balance.

### **Judgement**

As discussed in the previous two sections, the Navajo thinking pattern is holistically orientated. Life is not broken down into specific categories, rather judgments are open-ended and take into account multiple circumstances and interactions. To the outsider, Navajo life appears to be unorganized, unstructured, and perhaps irrational; there seem to be no absolutes.

Decision making is done by consensus (Scates 11). They do not make decisions for others—even one’s spouse or children. The Navajo have never had a chief; leadership is by consensus.

### **Crises**

In the matter of handling crises, Navajo culture seems to contain a mixture of elements from both crisis and noncrisis orientations as described by Mayers (Lingenfelter and Mayers 75). They do not emphasize planning as a way of addressing crisis; they also avoid taking action and delay making decisions as if the problem may eventually take care of itself. If the crisis is not addressed by certain rituals, it is considered best to remain inactive. The alternative response is to flee and escape the situation (Kluckhohn and Leighton, “The Navaho View” 39).



When it is perceived that the crisis is due to an imbalance in their spiritual world, however, they do have certain ceremonies which follow prescribed patterns of action to restore the balance in life. The individuals involved must influence the spirits by following the ceremonial instructions as given to the Navajo by the holy ones.

### **Goals**

Due to the importance of relationships, Navajo cultural orientation focuses on persons rather than tasks. They are group-oriented and find great satisfaction in the ceremonies and social activities which bring them together. The present time and this life are all important; there is no sense that this life is a preparation for an afterlife (Kluckhohn and Leighton, "The Navaho View" 44). Therefore their goal orientation is driven by the face-to-face contacts they have with persons in their family group.

### **Self-Worth**

Navajo self-worth is derived from a strong ethnic and familial identity. Wealth is first of all measured by their children. Following this, they value the home, sheep and livestock, transportation and jewelry (Scates 2). "Power and health are closely interrelated in conventional Navajo thought concerning the nature of the universe and man's place in it" (Rapoport 44). If a Navajo is able to feed and provide for all his relatives, he is considered wealthy (Scates 3).

"By Navajo standards one is industrious in order to accumulate possessions—within certain limits—and to care for the possessions he obtains" (Kluckhohn 374). The purpose of possessions is to provide for the extended family, to share with others, and to be able to host large gatherings at ceremonies and social events. "Navajo ideas of accumulation are different from those of whites. Riches are not ordinarily identified so much with a single individual as with the whole extended family" (Kluckhohn 375-376).

Knowledge is power. In the traditional culture this refers to knowledge of chants and ceremonies. Prestige is ascribed to such individuals and they are assigned a particular role in the society. "Personal excellence is thus a value, but personal 'success' in the white American sense is not" (Kluckhohn 375). As Navajo culture continues to change, more emphasis is being placed on knowledge gained from schooling. It has often been assumed that Anglos are powerful and wealthy because of their education.

### **Self-Expression**

"One of the most characteristic features in Navajo behavior is a guarded quietness and reticence, one might say a lack of boisterous self-expression" (McAllester, "Enemy Way Music" 77). That has led to a descriptive label of "Navajo quiet" being applied to the culture in general. "The atmosphere at Navajo public gatherings and in Navajo private life is one of restraint, caution, and reserve. Self-expression and self-display are played down" (McAllester, "Enemy Way Music" 86). Looking someone in the eyes is taboo and considered very impolite, especially for children (Dolaghan and Scates 22).

There is a lack of emphasis on individualism in Navajo culture. The individual is important, however, but only as it is expressed through group relationships (Dolaghan and Scates 3). Self-expression in Navajo culture is not for the purpose of distinguishing oneself from the group (Rapoport 47); the goal is to preserve harmony and perpetuate life. A person can do what he wants as long as he takes the group into consideration (McAllester, "Enemy Way Music" 87).

"Public roles are dominated by men" (Scates 12). The husband is the family spokesman, and men are the primary holders of political office. Since the culture is

matrilineal, however, women are also very important. They often own the family possessions, and may also participate in a variety of leadership roles throughout the clan.

### **Communication**

As described above, expression and communication are indirect. The Navajo language reflects duality; everything exists in pairs (Scates 2). All aspects of life, including humans and nature, have male and female counterparts. This causes the language to be less aggressive than a language that reflects male dominance.

Navajo communication is also non-confrontational. They may make suggestions which hint at how they feel or avoid an issue altogether, but they would rarely speak out in a direct manner. Their communication is highly contextual and involves considerable use of non-verbal elements. When they do speak, what is said is to be taken literally (Kluckhohn and Leighton, "The Navaho View" 43).

### **Vulnerability**

Since the group is more important than the individual in Navajo culture, failure is downplayed to protect the integrity of the larger body. They try to conceal vulnerability so there is no risk of failure. Navajo life is full of vagueness which lessens the chance of failure. Even Navajo humor, which is often simple and childlike, will focus on oneself rather than taking the risk of offending others (McAllester, "Enemy Way Music" 87). Their society is basically non-competitive. "It is wrong to put oneself ahead of others, especially one's elders. Maintaining the traditional (rather than setting new goals) is a social value" (Scates 2). When competition is expressed, it is between groups and involves cultural expression (McAllester, "Enemy Way Music" 76).

## Changing Navajo Culture

Navajo culture changed considerably during the last half of the twentieth century. The forced reduction of sheep and livestock took away an essential element necessary to maintain their social system; no longer are they able to provide for the perceived needs of the extended family. During World War II Navajo young people were exposed to outside cultures in a way that the tribe had never before experienced. Increased contact with Western culture caused many not to return to live in the traditional system. Semi-urban communities have developed on the Reservation. In this setting the Navajo can have the modern conveniences of the city, and at the same time be near the traditional culture (Dolaghan and Scates 7).

Most Navajo children are now enrolled in schools with teaching primarily in English using Anglo-oriented textbooks. This is creating a generation gap between the unschooled older people and the younger generation (Dolaghan and Scates 22). One grandmother wept as she described the difficulty she has trying to communicate with her grandchildren; she speaks only Navajo and her grandchildren speak only English. Children are expected to act one way at home and another way at school; they are forced to live in two worlds. Young people are less tied to the traditional culture than before. There is “a strong dissatisfaction with the status quo and the desire to have what the white people have” (Dolaghan and Scates 22).

The Navajo have experienced change over centuries as they have encountered outside cultures, and they have been quick to assimilate if they perceived it as advantageous. A gradual shift is taking place as the Navajo once again focus on their cultural core of perceived felt needs (Dolaghan and Scates 15). The Navajo, and Native Americans in general, believe that language is the key to their culture; if they can keep

their language alive they feel their culture will remain alive also. There is a new emphasis on teaching the Navajo language in the schools and colleges.

Felt needs are psychological in nature and may be on a conscious or a sub-conscious level (Dolaghan and Scates 61). Due to their strong relationship orientation, the Navajo have strong social needs. The sense of joy and celebration associated with their social gatherings has been lost as these gatherings have declined. They also need relief from fear; since all of life is spiritual and dangerous, they live with a constant fear that they will disrupt harmony. From many years of defeat and subjection, the Navajo have also developed a poor self-image. They need to find worth and value in their new way of living.

Classification of acculturation levels among the Navajo has been adapted by Scates from the mission model developed by Wagner (Scates 131-133). On a scale of from one to five, Navajos are classified; those who most conform to Anglo culture are C-5 and those who consciously strive to preserve the traditional culture are C-1. The greatest percentage of the population is C-1 and the smallest percentage is C-5.

C-5 Navajo: More at home in Anglo culture—they may even disdain Navajo culture.

Speak only English in the home.

View the traditional culture as the primitive past.

C-4 Navajo: Strongly nativistic and pan-Indian—some are well educated.

Emphasize what all Indians have in common.

Prefer Indian values to Western values.

Usually militant and anti-Christian.

C-3 Navajo: Operate effectively in two cultures.

Hold many tribal and government jobs.

Live in modern housing and are Western in appearance.

Speak both Navajo and English fluently.

C-2 Navajo: More at home in Navajo culture but are rapidly becoming acculturated.

Have an average Navajo education—fourth to eighth grade.

Many are unemployed but desire to improve.

Speak Navajo primarily but have a desire to learn English.

Housing and dress reflect the traditional culture.

C-1 Navajo: Older and make most of their living from traditional methods.

Mildly anti-white.

Know the traditional culture well.

It is important for the missionary to be aware of all these characteristics of Navajo culture if entry into their world is to be successful. The Navajo worldview is practically the antithesis of Anglo-American culture; the interconnectedness of all aspects of life—the orderly and sequential cycle of events which maintains their universe and their concept of *hózhó*—stands in marked contrast to the compartmentalization of Anglo-Americans. Effective communication of the Gospel will occur only when missionaries are able to lay aside their own culture, relate to Navajo culture, and communicate the core of the message—those elements which transcend culture.

### **The Core of the Gospel**

An examination of the message of the Gospel must fundamentally focus on who God is and who man is in relationship to Him. Some core aspects of this message are: (1) God alone is eternal, sovereign, and worthy to be praised; (2) God spoke everything into existence out of nothing; (3) God created man in His image and so man has a special place in creation and a special relationship with God; (4) through man's disobedience sin and death entered the world and this special relationship was destroyed; (5) God provided a way for this relationship to be restored; and (6) if man so chooses, he can be reconciled with God and live with Him eternally.

God alone is eternal and sovereign.

- God is eternal and existed before time.

(Genesis 1:1, 21:33; Psalm 90:2)

- God is the only God and He rules the universe.

(Psalm 11:4, 83:18; Isaiah 43:10, 44:6, 45:5, 66:1)

- God is spirit (John 4:24)

- God is omnipotent—all-powerful.

(Genesis 1:1; Job 36:22; Psalm 63:2, 66:7, 147:5; Jeremiah 10:12, 32:17; Matthew 28:18; Philippians 3:10; Revelation 5:13, 19:6)

- God is omniscient—all-knowing.

(I Samuel 2:3; Proverbs 2:5-6, 3:20)

- God is omnipresent—present everywhere at the same time.

(Jeremiah 23:23-24)

God spoke everything into existence.

- God created the heavens and the earth.

(Genesis 1:1-10; Acts 17:24)

- God created all plants, animals, and stars in the universe.

(Genesis 1:11-25)

- God created the wind and controls it to accomplish His purposes.

(Genesis 8:1; Exodus 10:13, 14:21, 15:10; Numbers 11:31; Psalm 78:26, 135:7, 147:18, 148:8; Isaiah 11:15, 27:8; Ezekiel 37:9; Hosea 13:15; Amos 4:13; Jonah 1:4, 4:8; Matthew 14:32; Mark 4:39, 6:51; Luke 8:24; Acts 2:1-4).

- God created the first man and woman.

(Genesis 1:26-27)

God created man in His image.

- Man has an eternal spirit and a mind with which to think and reason.

(Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:5; I Chronicles 28:9; Matthew 22:37)

- Man is to rule over the earth.

(Genesis 1:26-29)

Sin and death entered the world.

- Man disobeyed God.

(Genesis 3:3-6; Romans 1:21-25, 5:12-19; James 4:4)

- Man was separated from God.

(Genesis 3:22-24; Isaiah 59:2; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 1:21; Revelation 20:11-15)

- All of creation was cursed.

(Genesis 3:14-19)



- Man is born in sin as a result.

(Psalm 51:5)

God provided a savior.

- God is love.

(Deuteronomy 7:9; Proverbs 8:17; Jeremiah 31:3; Romans 5:8, 8:39;

II Corinthians 13:11; John 3:16; I John 4:16)

- Blood sacrifice was required.

(Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22)

- God provided the sacrifice.

(Genesis 22:1-18; Hebrews 7:27, 10:5-7, 10:12)

- God's Word became flesh.

(John 1:14-18; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-22)

- Christ died and rose again conquering death and hell.

(Luke 24:6-7; Romans 4:24, 5:10, 5:12-19, 14:9; I Corinthians 15:3-4)

God and man can be reconciled.

- God initiates reconciliation.

(Genesis 3:8-9; Exodus 3:1-4; John 6:44; Acts 9:1-6; I John 4:10)

- God commands man to worship Him.

(Deuteronomy 11:1, 13:3)

- God gives man a choice and a free will.

(Joshua 24:15; Jeremiah 8:9; John 3:16-21; I John 1:9)

- God wants us to live with Him eternally.

(Matthew 25:31-46; John 14:2-3; Hebrews 11:16; Revelation 2:7, 21:3, 21:6-7)

## Navajo Culture and the Gospel

Some of the core elements of the Gospel may seem contrary to Navajo culture while others might appear markedly similar. The Navajo will likely have some trouble with the concept of only one God who demands total allegiance. In their worldview there are multiple supernaturals, and their deceased even become part of the holy ones. They will likely be interested in a God who claims to be omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, but they will not want to replace what they already know with something new, especially if it is presented in an Anglo-American context. The Navajo have always been quick to assimilate elements which they viewed as advantageous, but this has generally resulted in the inclusion of just one more element in an already pluralistic way of life. Accepting God into their lives and abandoning their old forms of worship will be difficult.

The biblical account of creation, which has been typically difficult for Westerners to fathom, is in alignment with Navajo thinking. They will have little trouble identifying with a God who claims to have all knowledge revealed through spoken word which creates. Christ is described as God's Word become flesh (John 1:1-14). Because of their belief in the power of air and wind, the Navajo should also relate easily to God's control of wind in accomplishing His purposes.

Although the Navajo might be able to agree with the concept of man as the highest form of creation, they would have more difficulty believing that man is to have dominion over the earth and subdue it. An animistic culture, like the Navajo who tend to worship the creation rather than the creator, feels the need to remain in harmony with nature.

The concept of being born in sin because of something someone else did is not comprehensible to the Navajo. They believe “that reproduction is the ultimate human and supernatural purpose—a man cannot therefore be conceived in sin” (Reichard, “The Navaho and Christianity” 67). The concept of sin and death as a result of improper personal behavior will likely remind the Navajo of their own concept of hóchxq' which is caused by improper or evil acts. Unlike hóchxq', however, which can be neutralized by the people through ritual ceremonies, man can do nothing to restore a right relationship with his Creator. God has done everything, man has only to accept or reject God's plan of reconciliation through Christ.

Sadly, Anglo missionaries have often been guilty of perpetuating the sense of fear the Navajo have from their traditional beliefs. The gospel message has been presented as denominational doctrine—a list of rules which must be followed to avoid the wrath of God. This approach to Christianity is still being perpetuated by the Navajo themselves. The Navajo life is spent seeking the Great Spirit. Once the Great Spirit has been found, individuals are expected to continue living their lives exactly as they did when they found the Great Spirit. So the Navajo who became Christians under the strict preaching of doctrine and rules perpetuate that teaching and insist that others live that way as well. Traditional elders who see changes taking place in the Navajo church are skeptical because to them it appears that the Christian God changes His mind, and this it totally against everything they believe about their god.

For the Navajo, whose entire lives are ordered by the goal of maintaining or restoring hózhó, accepting God's plan of salvation would bring about a total revolution in their worldview.

He believes that the present good universe was transformed from an evil one so that men could properly fit into it and enjoy it—man is therefore the greatest thing in the universal scheme; he has no reason to abase himself because even the gods exist for his benefit. Instead of humiliating himself, the Navajo seeks through ceremonial to identify himself with deity. He cannot understand the ideals sought through mortification, penance or sacrifice.

(Reichard, "The Navaho and Christianity" 67-68)

The Navajo believe that nothing can be gained without reciprocity; there is no such thing as a gift like the free gift of salvation. An exchange must be made, even if one side is human and the other divine. Although salvation is a gift that God gives us, man cannot partake of the gift without accepting it. If presented in this way, perhaps the Navajo would see it as being reciprocal and accept the concept. The fact still remains, however, that God's gift in no way depends upon our acceptance or rejection of it.

Reichard also believes that the Navajo will have great difficulty in accepting the concept of the Resurrection. One of their greatest fears and taboos is the "belief that contact with the dead, however remote, is the worst possible thing that can happen to a person" (Reichard, "The Navaho and Christianity" 67). The Navajo will desert and/or burn the residence in which a family member has died. They will ask white men to bury their dead so they can avoid contact. The idea of Christ appearing to people after He was dead and buried is something they don't even want to consider.

"Navajo and Christian tenets on the afterlife are antithetical" (Reichard, "The Navaho and Christianity" 68). The Navajo do not consider this life a preparation for an

afterlife. They live for today and believe that the cosmos can be controlled through ritual. At death, a person immediately becomes one with their concept of universal harmony–hózhó. Man’s only claim to immortality is in what he leaves behind and in the remembrance of his good character and deeds.

Craig Smith, himself a Native American, believes that “the main thing keeping Native North Americans away from the reality of the gospel is knowledge” (5). He is referring to a knowledge of the core of the Gospel message. Native Americans view Christianity as a white man’s religion because in most instances that is the way it has been presented. Smith continues by enumerating aspects of the coming of Christ with which Native Americans can identify (12-29).

- Christ was born into a minority group–the smallest of the small.
- He was born into a tribal group.
- His people had suffered immensely.
- He was born in the ancestral homeland of His people which was under the rule of a foreign dominant society.
- His family was forced to flee to another land–the “Flight into Egypt” was their own “Trail of Tears” or “Long Walk.”
- Just as the Israelites fell away from God by worshipping creation rather than the Creator, Native Americans have done the same.
- God has always chosen to work through the underdogs of society.

Smith believes that Native Americans need to see Christianity for what it is–not a white man’s religion but something which transcends culture. The Gospel message is for them just as much as anyone else in the world. Christ’s host culture has much in

common with Native American culture, and Smith believes that a new receptiveness to the Gospel would be found if missionaries from the non-Western world were to come. Just as Joshua gave the Israelites three choices when they renewed their covenant with God at Shechem, so Native Americans have the same choices facing them (Smith 1997, 133-148).

Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. (NIV, Joshua 24:14-15)

- Serve the gods of our ancestors.

Does traditional worship bring peace or is it motivated by fear?

- Serve the gods in the land where you are now living.

Are the false gods of self-gratification the answer?

- Serve the Lord.

In reality this is the only choice which offers a relationship.

This comparison of Navajo culture and the Gospel, as God's Word has been revealed to man through a Middle-Eastern worldview message, has shown that the two have philosophical elements which are compatible and others which are antagonistic. Identifying with another culture's expression of the Gospel is not enough, however; one

must be willing to obey the first and greatest commandment of having no other gods before God. This is the fundamental struggle any culture has in embracing Christianity. Once God is established as sovereign, everything else falls into place.

Most Navajo would probably agree that there is a Supreme Being, but this being is either too far removed or too abstract to be known and must be approached through intermediaries. Their supernatural beings along with the spirits of nature are those intermediate spirits (Halverson 37-53). The personal spirit-beings of animism are limited to one geographic location whereas God is the creator and ruler of all the earth and the universe and is not limited geographically. These beings have power over various aspects of nature but God has power over all things. The spirit-beings of animism depend upon man's ritual sacrifices to influence them; God provided the sacrifice for man once and for all. These animistic spiritual forces can be used for either good or evil; God is holy and hates evil. The Navajo often view formal religions as only being concerned with the afterlife and the ultimate issues of sin and salvation. Animism, however, seems to offer them the power to cope with their immediate everyday needs. They desperately need to discover the God of all power who is concerned with their daily as well as eternal needs.

Halverson offers the following suggestions for evangelism within an animistic culture such as the Navajo (Halverson 43-52).

- Be sensitive to the animist's perspective.
- Be aware of the influence of secularistic thinking in our lives.
- Find common ground.
- Highlight the differences.

- Model trust in God alone.
- Be ready for God to work in mighty ways.
- Turn their hearts toward desiring a relationship with God.
- Address their fears.
- Be clear about who Christ is and who we are in Him.
- Point out the deceptive nature of the spirits.

Many of these issues have been addressed. Knowing how best to communicate the message of salvation is perhaps the most difficult part of the task.

The gospel message must be communicated through the host cultural context and so it cannot afford to be perceived as being anti-culture. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church from Vatican Council II describes the effect of the church's "work is that whatever good is found sown in the minds and hearts of men or in the rites and customs of peoples, these not only are preserved from destruction, but are purified, raised up, and perfected for the glory of God, the confusion of the devil, and the happiness of man" (Franciscan Friars 9). Pope John Paul II also speaks of the gospel enriching culture:

Your encounter with the Gospel has not only enriched you; it has enriched the Church. We are well aware that this has not taken place without its difficulties and, occasionally, its blunders. However, and you are experiencing this today, the Gospel does not destroy what is best in you. On the contrary, it enriches, as it were from within, the spiritual qualities and gifts that are distinctive of your cultures. (Franciscan Friars 56)



## Chapter 4

### Navajo Music: From Traditional Chant to Country

Just as the Navajo have no word which translates “religion,” they also have no word which means “music.” Chants are an integral part of all their ceremonies; since all of life is sacred, there are no songs which are not connected in some way with their religious beliefs. Even corn grinding songs, intended to accompany actual work, have several connections to fertility and puberty rites (Johnson 108). In the Navajo language, chant is synonymous with ceremony. Singing, in Navajo culture, is not often heard outside its intended context. It is not used for purely entertainment purposes as in the Anglo culture; it retains its sacredness—to sing is to pray. The general characteristics of Navajo music are similar to other Native American tribes: primarily vocal and sung in a high register with a somewhat nasal quality and wide vibrato with ornamental use of falsetto; monophonic chant with drums and rattles used for accompaniment; repetition of text and melodic patterns; extensive use of vocable texts, and melodic lines that possess a strong downward movement with a marked attraction to tonic (McAllester, “Enemy Way Music” 74).

Although no one really knows what they mean, vocable texts are certainly not haphazard collections of meaningless syllables (McAllester, “Enemy Way Music” 55). They are used in very precise ways and patterns, and some seem to be restricted to certain song types. There is some belief among the people that vocables are remnants of an earlier archaic language. It has even been suggested that these nonlexical syllables, or the absence of definable words, fulfills the role of instrumental music in a system which is otherwise entirely vocal (Nettl and Heth 461).

Navajo songs possess several characteristics which make them distinctive. Compared to the piercing style of other tribes, Navajo singing is lighter and less intense. Falsetto tones are used in an ornamental fashion, but most of the melody is sung as high as possible within the normal voice range. Most melodies lie within the range of an octave, and some are limited to a fifth (Nettl, *North American Indian* 22; Nettl and Heth 467). Melodies possessing a wider range will often leap between the high and low extremes. Navajo songs utilize triadic movement; tonic and dominant pitches, along with the third and fourth scale degrees are most emphasized (Nettl, *Music in Primitive Culture* 113-114). The second and seventh scale degrees, so often used in the music of other tribes, are not as prevalent in Navajo songs (Kluckhohn and Leighton, *The Navajo* 216). Despite this triadic movement and emphasis on tonic and dominant pitches Navajo chant is devoid of any harmonic implications; the music is totally melodic. Ceremonial songs are often built on a chorus-verse-chorus structure with the chorus being highly melodic in triadic movement and the verse in somewhat of a chanted style on a figure of three or four notes (McAllester, "Navaho" 328). Although Navajo singing does include pulsations, this technique is not used as extensively as in music of the Plains Indians. Downward melodic motion predominates, including downward retarded slides on finals except in corn grinding songs (Johnson 104). Rhythms usually only utilize two different adjacent note values (i.e., quarter- and eighth-note), but metrical patterns frequently shift between a duple and triple feel.

The description of Navajo chant in the preceding paragraphs is presented from the perspective of Anglo scholars approaching the music from outside the culture. The Navajo themselves take some exceptions to this depiction of their music. When

attempting to gain an understanding of the Navajo vocal style from Navajo pastor Daniel Smiley, he disagreed with my use of the word “vibrato” to describe their performance. Rather than vibrato, he describes it as a continuous pulsation created by the slight movement of the back of the tongue. This pulsation, normally on eighth-note beats, is sometimes so strong that it sounds like individual notes are being sung when, in reality, a longer rhythm exists. This pulsation also contributes to an apparent fluidity of individual pitches. Notes are approached with a scoop from below, and the pulsation created by the movement of the tongue provides a continual variation in pitch. This vocal style is still typical of chant performance today. Elders who have become Christians often sing the songs from the Navajo hymnal in the same style.

Andrew Begaye, founder and President of Calvary Love Ministries in Gallup, New Mexico, does not like the label “chant” used to describe their traditional music. He prefers to describe it as progressive–progressive in the sense it is not an Anglo verse-chorus-verse pattern with each section a fixed length, but rather the verses change in length and structure. Each chant phrase concludes with a short closing pattern which might be considered a burden or refrain. What takes place before this, however, is fluid and flexible depending upon the words sung. This is somewhat analogous to the psalm tone of the Catholic liturgy. The reciting tone carries most of the text and is repeated until the end of the phrase when the closing formula enters. This style of music, along with Navajo traditional music, is unmetrical–there is no need for grouping of beats into measures and phrases. Both are also monophonic and the use of harmonic accompaniment is unnecessary.

Navajo chants are grouped into six main categories according to their mythological associations: Blessingway, War, Gameway, Holyway, Evilway, and Lifeway (Dutton 99). Of these, only the Blessingway chants are not associated with some sort of exorcism. All ceremonies are accompanied by social functions, and the Enemyway chant, originally associated with war, is one of the most popular because of the social aspects. The songs connected with these social activities are considered “public” by the Navajo, and outsiders are allowed to observe and at times even participate. The most popular songs of the Enemyway ceremony are the dance songs, sometimes referred to as “squaw dance” or “girls’ dance.” During these songs, eligible young women of marriageable age select young men in whom they are interested to dance with them. The man must give the woman a gift, usually money, before he can be released from dancing. Many people gather to watch these proceedings.

Navajo ceremonies generally include two types of singing—chanted songs and recited prayers. Stylistically these could be considered roughly analogous to the chanted and recited portions of the Catholic mass. The recited prayers are said only by the person performing the ceremony whereas the chanted songs allow for participation by others. Chanted songs possess texts consisting primarily of vocables with short phrases of translatable words while the texts of recited prayers contain a larger percentage of actual words. In both, the melodic activity is greatly restricted when actual words are being sung.

Songs for various parts of the ceremonies are repeated several times with the text of the introductory chorus being changed slightly with each repetition. “The change in text usually expresses a progression or development of ideas” (McAllester, “Enemy Way

Music” 16). The chorus, in whole or part, is often repeated at phrase endings giving it the function of a type of burden. Interlocking melodic formulas, consisting primarily of downward leaps, are repeated several times within a song with most phrases reaching the low tonic. Melodic passages beginning on the upper octave usually move to the fourth or fifth scale degree, and the subsequent passages then progress to the low tonic.

The only two musical instruments used by the Navajo are the drum and rattle. The rattle, often made from a gourd, accompanies most songs. The drum, however, is more limited in its use by the Navajo than other tribes. The Navajo drum, an important part of the Enemyway ceremony, consists of a skin stretched over a specially prepared pottery bowl. The preparation of the drum, an integral part of the ceremony, is accompanied by certain chants. After the ceremony is concluded, the drum is destroyed. In a culture which now uses Anglo cooking utensils for the most part, this ceremonial practice has caused the people to retain their art of pottery making. In corn grinding songs, the drum takes the form of an inverted basket, an item of equipment functional to the task of grinding corn.

The use of music in Navajo culture has been almost exclusively interconnected with their ceremonies; through this use it has functioned as a cohesive mechanism for the culture at large. Alan Merriam, anthropologist and ethnomusicologist, differentiates between use and function. “*Use* then, refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action; *function* concerns the reasons for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves” (Merriam 210). Merriam delineates ten comprehensive functions of music (219-227).

1. Emotional expression
2. Aesthetic enjoyment
3. Entertainment
4. Communication
5. Symbolic representation
6. Physical response
7. Enforcing conformity to social norms
8. Validation of social institutions and religious rituals
9. Contribution to the continuity and stability of culture
10. Contribution to the integration of society

Directly or indirectly, the traditional chants, and the ceremonies with which they are synonymous, fulfill all ten of these functions—many of which are interrelated. Though typically quiet and reserved, the Navajo have their greatest opportunity for *emotional expression*, both individually and as a group, through their ceremonies. The extent of this expression, however, is often prescribed by social norms. Although the Navajo would likely not admit to *aesthetic enjoyment* associated with ceremonies due to their highly religious nature and purpose, there is a certain amount of aesthetic fulfillment related to the extent to which the ceremony is conducted with accuracy according to traditional beliefs. *Entertainment*, although present and evident to outsiders, would not be considered such to the Navajo since the ceremonies are for religious purposes. The primary focus of Navajo ceremonies is *communication* with spirit beings; the goal is to restore harmony in their world order by appeasing the supernatural. Music is not used as a direct means of communication with each other

although this is facilitated to a certain degree through the observance of ceremonies. *Symbolic representation* is both explicit and implicit in Navajo music. Since all of life is sacred, every aspect of life becomes a symbolic representation of this belief, of which the ceremonies are the culmination. *Physical response*, both involving the person who is the focus of the ceremony and those observing the ceremony, is a significant aspect of the observance. Dancing would be one example of group response to the music of the ceremony. The Navajo ceremonies are of primary importance in *enforcing conformity to social norms*. To a great extent, the culture is maintained through these rituals; they *validate social institutions and religious rituals* by emphasizing cosmic order and a holistic approach to life. Through the functions already mentioned, Navajo ceremonies and chants also contribute to the *continuity and stability of culture* as well as the *integration of society*. The maintenance of Navajo culture and its social norms is totally dependent upon the proper observance of ritual.

As acculturation has been forced upon the Navajo by the Anglos, it has become increasingly difficult to continue ceremonial observances. Two major events in the mid-twentieth century contributed greatly to the decline of traditional Navajo culture—the forced sheep reduction during the second quarter of the twentieth century, and the compulsory school law of 1947. Both have disrupted the nuclear Navajo family and its traditional way of life. During the last half of the twentieth century, Navajo world order was slowly being destroyed and the culture began to disintegrate. The traditional culture, as it had existed for centuries, was now forced to seek other sources for fulfillment and cohesiveness.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, the Navajo, and Native Americans in general, turned increasingly to country music as an avenue for cultural expression. This appears to be paradoxical since this musical genre has been almost exclusively associated with white Americans since its rise in popularity. There are several aspects of the music, however, which may provide insight as to the reason Native Americans have also identified with it.

“Country music originated with poor people who sang about their troubled lives” (Krishef 9). This simple music gives a voice to the poor, whether rural or urban; it is this simplicity which is both heralded by proponents and scoffed by critics. Country music, first known as hillbilly music, has its roots in the folk music of the rural South and is a commercial extension of it.

In an age of disposable culture, the folk roots of country run very deep. For centuries, the common culture of the poor was folk music. It was not a genre or a style, it was simply the music of the common people. In a world that has always despised the weak and listened only to the powerful, folk songs acted as a great equalizer. The folk song took the side of the underdog, giving voice to the voiceless. (Angus 15)

This music, however, has gradually moved away from its southern rural identification to become both an industry and an eclectic genre with international appeal (Malone).

“Country music is a reflection, in good times and bad, of society and of the lives people live. It evolves as society changes” (Krishef 11). It is due to this flexibility that the music has survived, and even thrived, when other folk traditions have been destroyed by the rise of mass culture.



One factor heralded as contributing to the success of country music is its authenticity. It has been viewed as music for the people and by the people—it reflects the social and economic patterns of the people who create, disseminate, and digest it. Authenticity has distinguished country music from other kinds of popular music. It provides an identity—both what it is and what it is not (Jensen 7).

Country music celebrates the vitality and importance of values that are seen as being lost in the outside world. Yet another way that country music defines itself as “real” is in relation to class issues and to a critique of emerging American culture. Country music imagines itself as music about “real life,” about the experience of the common man. (Jensen 14)

Fans respond to the genuineness of the music and its performers with an unsurpassed loyalty. The appeal of country music extends across social and political boundaries. As culture changes, the music evolves and so does the definition of authenticity.

Authenticity in a living art form can have a number of meanings, but as we have seen, in popular culture, where experts and authorities do not control the particulars of the word’s meaning, the definition centers on being *believable* relative to a more or less explicit model, and at the same time being *original*, that is not being an imitation of the model. Thus what is taken to be authentic does not remain static but is continually renewed over the years. The changing meaning of authenticity is not random, but is renegotiated in a continual political struggle in

which the goal of each contending interest is to naturalize a particular construction of authenticity. (Peterson 220)

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, however, country music became more commercialized and further removed from its roots of authenticity. Many now question the authenticity of the music; instead of music for and by the people, it now appears to be for and by big business. Something once done for other reasons is now being done for money, and Jensen suggests that this commercialization is the antithesis of authenticity. "To say something has become commercialized is to describe a process by which authentic material becomes inauthentic—commercialization turns the natural into the artificial, the organic into the fabricated" (Jensen 7).

Through this music, the Navajo have found a vehicle for expression which provides them with a sense of identity. In his study of the aesthetics of popular music, Simon Frith provides four social functions of this genre which are applicable to the Navajo (140-144).

1. Popular music answers questions of identity: we use pop songs to create for ourselves a particular sort of self-definition, a particular place in society.
2. Popular music gives us a way of managing the relationship between our public and private emotional lives.
3. Popular music shapes popular memory and organizes our sense of time.
4. Popular music is something possessed. In possessing music, we make it part of our own identity and build it into our sense of ourselves.

Following the demise of their traditional ceremonial system and the sense of cultural identity so intrinsically a part of it, the Navajo have begun once again to find a sense of self-definition and a place in society through country music. As they establish their identity they also secure their non-identity. So even though country music has been typically associated with white Americans, it is possible for Native Americans, through the same style of music, to establish lines of demarcation—a process of inclusion and exclusion.

In a culture where individual expression has typically been downplayed, country music has provided a much-needed vehicle for personal as well as group identification. Social issues are addressed through a medium acceptable to most of society. This genre intensifies the present, and at the same time is a key to the remembrance of things past. With the traditional Navajo mode of cultural expression gone, a mechanism for managing time in the past, present, and future was greatly needed. Much country music is nostalgic, and it is important for the Navajo to be able to remember the past in order to maintain a sense of identity in the future.

KTNN, the radio voice of the Navajo Nation, considers itself to be primarily a country music station. Although it does broadcast the top country hits heard on many other country stations, other genres of music are played as well. Tazbah McCullah, General Manager of KTNN, estimates that approximately ninety-five percent of the music played is country with the remaining five percent being traditional Navajo chant (McCullah). At least once each hour traditional chant can be heard sung in unison with only drum accompaniment. These chants are social chants from the Squaw Dance ceremony. Other genres heard on the station include southern gospel as well as Native

American artists performing music that borders on a rock style. Radio communication is very important on the Reservation. For many Navajo the radio is their only contact with the outside world. Many are still without electricity or modern conveniences, but they do spend a great amount of time travelling in vehicles, and all of these vehicles will have a radio. KTNN also broadcasts primarily in Navajo, which is very important to the many elders who still do not speak English. This has also served to unify the language. Persons scattered throughout the Reservation who may speak in various dialects and accents have been exposed to a standard form of the language through KTNN.

Tonya Smallcanyon hosts and produces a daily radio program of gospel music for radio station KPJC in Farmington, New Mexico. She began working as a substitute host for the program in 1981, and in 1992 became full time (Smallcanyon).

Smallcanyon tries to play a variety of music, but much of the program consists of southern gospel music. She also tries to balance her selections between English and Navajo; some programs will be devoted to one language or the other while others will mix the two. Smallcanyon seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit as she makes decisions on what should be broadcast, but she also admits that she is conservative and traditional. She is very reluctant to play any type of Christian chant. She received a tape of Mohawk Christian chants using vocables for the refrain. After reading the words and praying, she decided to play one selection. A listener, who was quite upset about the two elements being mixed, called immediately to complain. Smallcanyon now stays away from any music that reminds her of the music of medicine men.

When asked why the Navajo like country music, most individuals responded by saying they identify with the lifestyle represented by and communicated through the

music. The association with rural and western life along with a focus on relationship struggles and social issues such as drinking are all elements with which the Navajo can relate. One Navajo also suggested that the people identify with the twang in the vocal style associated with country music.

The Navajo identification with country music seems to be through the texts more than the music. Although they find enjoyment in listening to the music, they do not perform the music themselves. None of the country performances broadcast on KTNN are by Navajo artists (McCullah). Since the Navajo have typically not used music outside its intended context, they really have no opportunity or need to perform country music. It is heard throughout the Reservation, however, and in their churches the sacred counterpart, southern gospel music, has now become the predominant musical style.

Southern gospel hymns are practically all that is heard in churches, campmeetings, and revivals. The Navajo hymnal, "Jesus Woodlájí Sin," was first published in 1979. This hymnal, used by almost all churches on the Reservation, both Protestant and Catholic, is the primary source of sacred music sung by the Navajo. Further examination of this music in Chapter Six will seek to determine if there is a particular type of gospel song the Navajo seem to enjoy and attempt to identify possible reasons for such preferences.

## Chapter 5

### Navajo Language and Music

When Franciscan missionaries began working with the Navajo, a primary focus of their efforts was the understanding of this tribe's culture and language. Discovering that the people had no written form of their language, these priests set about to develop one; many of the symbols used in writing Navajo were borrowed from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

A comparative analysis of the phonologies of Navajo and English will reveal implications for setting the Navajo language to music. The phonology of a language is its sound system and consists of phonemes, pitch (tone), stress, and juncture. The Navajo sound system contains differences which require specific considerations in a musical setting.

#### **Language\***

Phonemes are the smallest particles of speech which can be combined to create words; the symbols representing the sound particles of a language form its alphabet. In this examination of the phonemes of the two languages, vowel sounds will be considered first. The English language contains five basic vowels whereas Navajo contains only four. Each of the Navajo vowels (za'áán) has only one sound which never changes. The only exception to this is the double "i" [ii] which is pronounced like the English "e" in eat. English vowels have several sounds as evidenced below (Figure 1).

\*Information for this section has been gleaned from several sources (Franciscan Fathers; Goossen; "Guide to Pronunciation"; Orion; Platera, Legah, and Platero; J. Wall; L. Wall and Morgan; Witherspoon, Slate, Becenti, and Hamilton; Young and Morgan).

Figure 1. English and Navajo Vowel Sounds.

<u>English Vowels</u>	<u>IPA Symbols</u>	<u>Navajo Vowels</u>
<b>a</b> (as in father)	a	<b>a</b> (as in shá) [sun]
<b>a</b> (as in law)	ɔ	
<b>a</b> (as in map)	æ	
<b>a</b> (as in made)	e	
<b>a</b> (as in above)	ə	
<b>e</b> (as in let)	ɛ	<b>e</b> (as dibé) [sheep]
<b>e</b> (as in eat)	i	
<b>i</b> (as in sit)	ɪ	<b>i</b> (as in ní) [you]
<b>i</b> (as in kite)	aɪ	
<b>o</b> (as in hope)	o	<b>o</b> (as in hó) [he]
<b>o</b> (as in spoon)	u	
<b>o</b> (as in foot)	ʊ	
<b>u</b> (as in up)	ʌ	
<b>u</b> (as in cute)	ju	

This chart causes Navajo vowels to appear rather simple when compared to their English counterpart. Even though there are only four vowels and the basic sound of each never changes, there are additional factors which serve to complicate the Navajo vowel system. Navajo vowels can be short or long in duration, oral or nasal in quality, and high, low, rising or falling in tone. All of these—length, contrasting oral/nasal quality, and tone—are distinctive features of the language and serve to distinguish meaning. Even though the English vowel sounds are complex, the Navajo vowel system is just as complicated in other ways.

In written form, short vowels are represented by single letters, long vowels by double letters, nasal vowels with a subscript nasal hook, high tones with an acute accent mark above the letter, and low tones by no marks. Low- and high-tone indicators are applied to both short and long vowels—both nasal and oral (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Variations of Navajo Vowels.

<u>Low Tone</u>				<u>High Tone</u>			
Short	Nasal	Long	Nasal	Short	Nasal	Long	Nasal
a	ą	aa	ąą	á	á	á	áą
e	ẹ	ee	ẹẹ	é	é	éé	éé
i	í	ii	íí	í	í	íí	íí
o	ọ	oo	ọọ	ó	ó	óó	óó

Vowel sounds are combined in both languages to form diphthongs; the resulting combinations and sounds are basically the same except that Navajo contains diphthongs and vowel clusters of both short and long vowels. Navajo diphthongs, when short, are pronounced without off-glide; the Navajo hai [winter] sounds like the English high. The long Navajo diphthongs have more of the quality of English diphthongs accompanied by an off-glide; the diphthong in the Navajo figaii [white one] sounds like the diphthong in the English buy (Figure 3).

Figure 3. English and Navajo Diphthongs.

<u>English Diphthongs</u>	<u>IPA Symbols</u>	<u>Navajo Diphthongs</u>
<b>ie</b> (as in <b>tie</b> )	aɪ	<b>ai</b> (as in <b>figai</b> ) [white] <b>aaí</b> (as in <b>shínaaí</b> ) [my elder brother]
<b>oy</b> (as in <b>boy</b> )	ɔɪ	<b>oi</b> (as in <b>deesdoi</b> ) [it is hot] <b>ooi</b> (as in <b>Tséhootsooí</b> ) [Ft. Defiance, AZ]
<b>ou</b> (as in <b>out</b> )	aʊ	<b>ao</b> (as in <b>daolyé</b> ) [they are called] <b>aoo</b> (as in ' <b>aoo</b> ') [yes]
<b>a</b> (as in <b>day</b> )	e (ei)	<b>ei</b> (as in <b>éi</b> ) [that one] <b>eii</b> (as in ' <b>ádaat'éii</b> ) [that which are]
<b>oa</b> (as in <b>boat</b> )	oʊ	
<b>u</b> (as in <b>cute</b> )	ju	



Falling and rising tones result when high and low tones are applied to the above vowel combinations. Falling tone occurs when a high-tone vowel is followed by a low-tone vowel, and in vowel clusters when the first component is high in tone and the second low. When this high-low sequence is reversed, the result is rising tone—the first element is low in tone and the second is high (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Examples of Falling and Rising Tone in Navajo.

<u>Falling</u>	<u>Rising</u>
yá'át'éhgo [well]	shínaaí [my older brother]
nǐl'íí' [we looked at it]	deí'á [they extend]
'át'éii [those that are]	hágoónee' [good-bye]
náodziih [that it might heal]	haánee' [we'll wait and see how]
díníchéét [we'll flee]	yah 'oóya' [that you might enter]

In Navajo no words or syllables begin with a vowel. Even when it appears that there is a vowel at the beginning, a glottal stop is placed before it. The glottal stop, signified in written form by an apostrophe, is the most common consonant sound in the Navajo language. It sounds like the hiatus in the middle of the English expression “oh! oh!” The difference between the phrases “Johnnie yearns” and “Johnnie earns” is that the second has a glottal stop between the two words. It might be difficult for Navajo speakers to pronounce English words beginning with vowels without adding the glottal stop in their enunciation.

Although Navajo consonants do not possess the many variant forms of the vowels, there are differences between the English and Navajo alphabets. The English language includes twenty-four consonant sounds while Navajo has over thirty. Consonants are sometimes paired to form digraphs. Several of these consonant and digraph sounds and symbols are the same in both languages (Figure 5).

Figure 5. English and Navajo Consonant and Digraph Sounds and Symbols Which Are the Same.

<u>English Consonants</u>	<u>IPA Symbols</u>	<u>Navajo Consonants</u>
<b>h</b> (as in <b>hit</b> )	h	<b>h</b> (as in <b>hai</b> ) [winter]
<b>j</b> (as in <b>judge</b> )	dʒ	<b>j</b> (as in <b>ji</b> ) [day]
<b>k</b> (as in <b>cook</b> )	k	<b>k</b> (as in <b>kq'</b> ) [fire]
<b>l</b> (as in <b>let</b> )	l	<b>l</b> (as in <b>biil</b> ) [squaw dress]
<b>m</b> (as in <b>man</b> )	m	<b>m</b> (as in <b>mą'ii</b> ) [coyote]
<b>n</b> (as in <b>no</b> )	n	<b>n</b> (as in <b>noo'</b> ) [storage pit]
<b>s</b> (as in <b>soap</b> )	s	<b>s</b> (as in <b>sin</b> ) [song]
<b>sh</b> (as in <b>ship</b> )	ʃ	<b>sh</b> (as in <b>shash</b> ) [bear]
<b>w</b> (as in <b>water</b> )	w	<b>w</b> (as in <b>waa'</b> ) [beeweed]
<b>y</b> (as in <b>yes</b> )	j	<b>y</b> (as in <b>yaa'</b> ) [louse]
<b>z</b> (as in <b>zoo</b> )	z	<b>z</b> (as in <b>biziiz</b> ) [his belt]
<b>ch</b> (as in <b>church</b> )	tʃ	<b>ch</b> (as in <b>chaa'</b> ) [beaver]
<b>dl</b> (as in <b>paddling</b> )	dl	<b>dl</b> (as in <b>dlóq'</b> ) [prairie dog]
<b>ts</b> (as in <b>hats</b> )	ts	<b>ts</b> (as in <b>tsah</b> ) [needle]

Since many of the symbols of the English alphabet can have varying sounds, there are some letters in Navajo and English which look different yet they can represent the same sound.

Figure 6. English and Navajo Consonant and Digraph Sounds Which are the Same but Their Symbols are Different.

<u>English Consonants</u>	<u>IPA Symbols</u>	<u>Navajo Consonants</u>
<b>c</b> (as in <b>cent</b> )	s	<b>s</b> (as in <b>sin</b> ) [song]
<b>c</b> (as in <b>cook</b> )	k	<b>k</b> (as in <b>kq'</b> ) [fire]
<b>s</b> (as in <b>pleasure</b> )	ʒ	<b>zh</b> (as in <b>'ázhi'</b> ) [name]
<b>ds</b> (as in <b>kids</b> )	dʒ	<b>dz</b> (as in <b>dzit</b> ) [mountain]
<b>q</b> (as in <b>quit</b> )	kw	<b>kw</b> (as in <b>kwii</b> ) [here]
<b>q</b> (as in <b>antique</b> )	k	<b>k</b> (as in <b>kq'</b> ) [fire]
<b>wh</b> (as in <b>what</b> )	ʍ	<b>hw</b> (as in <b>hwiih</b> ) [into him]
<b>x</b> (as <b>xenia</b> )	z	<b>z</b> (as in <b>biziiz</b> ) [his belt]

If the Navajo “h” is preceded by an “s” or another “h,” it is written as an “x” to avoid the confusion of having two “h’s” together or thinking that it is actually an “sh” digraph. Some additional Navajo consonants are similar in sound to their counterpart in English, but are pronounced in between the voiced and unvoiced consonant pairs of English (Figure 7).

Figure 7. English and Navajo Consonant Sounds Which Are Similar.

<u>English Consonants</u>	<u>IPA Symbols</u>	<u>Navajo Consonants</u>
<b>b</b> (as in <b>boy</b> )	b	<b>b</b> (more like “p” in <b>spot</b> )
<b>d</b> (as in <b>do</b> )	d	<b>d</b> (more like “t” in <b>stop</b> )
<b>g</b> (as in <b>go</b> )	g	<b>g</b> (more like “k” in <b>sky</b> )
<b>t</b> (as in <b>tie</b> )	t	<b>t</b> (greater aspiration)

There are consonants and/or consonant sounds in English and Navajo which are not included in both languages. Since written Navajo is based on IPA symbols, there are some letters of the English alphabet not used; Navajo also contains consonant sounds for which there is no equivalent in English (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Disparate Consonants and Sounds in English and Navajo.

<u>English</u>	<u>IPA Symbol</u>	<u>Navajo</u>	<u>IPA Symbol</u>
<b>f</b> (as in <b>fine</b> )	f	<b>gh</b> (as in 'aghaa') [wool]	gh
<b>ng</b> (as in <b>sing</b> )	ŋ	<b>gw</b> (as in lágo) [would that not]	gw
<b>p</b> (as in <b>put</b> )	p	<b>ghw</b> (as in 'awée') [baby]	gwh (w)
<b>r</b> (as in <b>robe</b> )	r	<b>ɬ</b> (as in <b>ɬid</b> ) [smoke]	ɬ
<b>th</b> (as in <b>thin</b> )	θ	<b>ɬʰ</b> (as in <b>ɬʰah</b> ) [ointment]	ɬʰ
<b>th</b> (as in <b>then</b> )	ð	' (glottal stop)	'
<b>v</b> (as in <b>very</b> )	v	<b>ch'</b> (as in <b>ch'ah</b> ) [hat]	ch'
<b>x</b> (as in <b>exit</b> )	ks	<b>k'</b> (as in <b>k'ad</b> ) [now]	k'
		<b>t'</b> (as in <b>t'ah</b> ) [still, yet]	t'
		<b>ɬ'</b> (as in <b>ɬ'ízi</b> ) [goat]	ɬ'
		<b>ts'</b> (as in <b>ts'ah</b> ) [sagebrush]	ts'

One of the most unusual consonant sounds in Navajo is “ł,” the voiceless counterpart of “l.” This sound is produced by placing the tongue as pronouncing a regular “l” and then blowing through the sides of the tongue. The Navajo glottalized consonants and digraphs are pronounced as the regular sound followed almost immediately with a glottal stop. The sound uses more mouth air than lung air and almost approaches the sound of a click. Only eleven of all the Navajo consonants may occur in word or syllable final position (d, g, ' , s, sh, z, zh, n, l, ł, h). Navajo consonants are also sometimes doubled as they are in English.







In the preceding discussion of phonemes, pitch (tone) was applied to Navajo vowels. The two tones (high and low) of Navajo actually determine the meaning of a word. In English, however, tone is more connected to stress which impacts both words and sentences; although it does not generally change the meaning of words, it can alter the emphasis of a sentence. Word stress is often referred to as accent; multi-syllabic English words have a combination of accented and unaccented syllables. English metrical poetry includes regular patterns of these combinations spoken in a steady rhythm. This concept is not a part of the Navajo language.

The remaining aspect of phonology in this comparison of English and Navajo is juncture. In both English and Navajo, internal juncture is an important feature which makes a difference in meaning. Juncture in Navajo is represented by the glottal stop and is quite common. It does not, however, affect musical setting. In the phonology of the Navajo language, it is only the phonemes, and then only the vowels, which require special musical treatment.

## Setting the Language to Music

A tonal language such as Navajo requires special consideration when set to music because the pitch of the note can affect the tone of the vowel and subsequently the meaning of the word to which it is connected; consonant sounds possess no tone and, therefore, need no special treatment. Navajo vowel variations include two tones (low/high), two lengths (short/long), two qualities (oral/nasal), falling tone (high-low succession), and rising tone (low/high succession). All of these, except for quality, have musical implications. Neglect of this will distort the meaning of the text. Clint Ungashick, missionary with Ameritribes in Arizona, was told by Herman Williams, an older Navajo pastor, that disregard for Navajo tone has caused the people to sing nonsense, or in a few cases, bad words (Ungashick). The musical suggestions presented here are not intended to be specific guidelines, rather they are relative in pitch and/or rhythm to the notes and syllables which surround them (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Implications for Musical Setting.

<u>Vowel Variation</u>	<u>Musical Implication</u>	<u>Musical Notation</u>
low tone	lower pitch	
high tone	higher pitch	
short vowel	shorter duration	
long vowel	longer duration	
falling tone	descending pitches	
rising tone	ascending pitches	

Application of these guidelines to a phrase of scripture (Psalm 103:1a) in Navajo yields the following implications for musical setting.

Shii'-	si-	zii-nii	ní-líi-nii,	Bó-hól-níi-hii	baa	hó-niih
long duration	shorter duration	descending pitches	longer duration	higher pitch shorter duration	descending pitches	longer duration
			longer duration	higher pitch shorter duration	repeat of previous	descending pitches
			longer duration	higher pitch shorter duration	repeat of previous	longer duration
				repeat of previous	descending pitches	longer duration
				repeat of previous	longer duration	repeat of previous
					shorter duration higher pitch	shorter duration higher pitch
					lower pitch longer duration	lower pitch longer duration

In an effort to encourage the Navajo to develop indigenous hymnody, Ben Stoner, veteran missionary of thirty years with the Brethren in Christ Mission in Bloomfield, New Mexico, follows a similar procedure in helping the people set scripture to music.

To present to Native Americans how to write such songs, this is what I try. I ask the class to choose any verse in Navajo to put to music. I use a quarter note for every long syllable, and eighth note for every short syllable. I put all the high tones on a “g” and all the low syllables on an “e.” (Navajo is a tonal language.) The class tells me high-long, low-long, high-short, low-short and I write the notes—this is purely mechanical. For a falling tone, I use two eighths and a slur, first note on “g,” second on “e.” Then I sing it to them. I use a rest, if needed, between phrases. Almost always, there are gasps from someone when I do this—I think it astonishes them how much like traditional chant it sounds. (Stoner)

As stated, this approach is purely mechanical and is used by Stoner for didactic purposes to encourage the Navajo to create their own indigenous Christian music. When applied to the scripture passage used earlier (Psalm 103:1a), Stoner's method results in the following musical setting which is logogenic (Example 1).

Example 1. Musical Setting Following Stoner's Guidelines.



Examination of the actual music sung by the Navajo, however, yields some interesting findings. The following categories of music were studied to see which possessed the greatest percentage of correct settings of vowel variations.

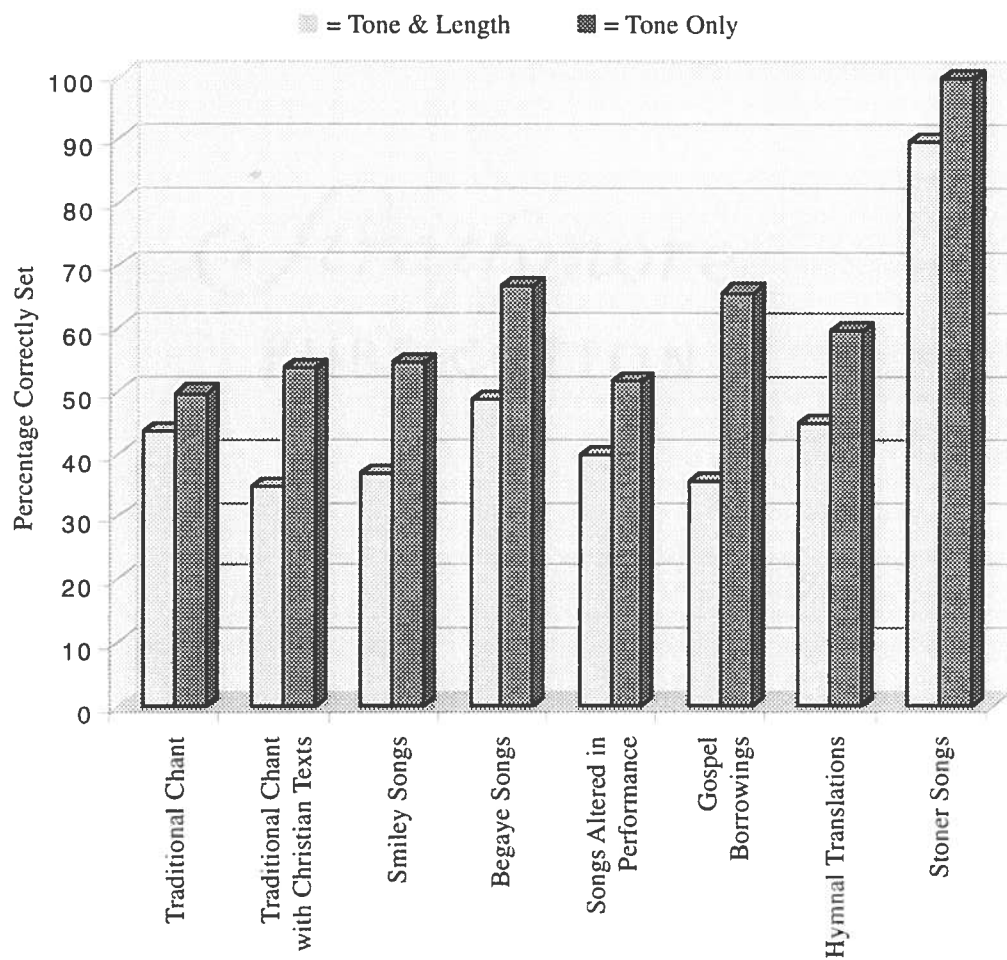
- 1) Traditional secular chants.
- 2) Traditional chants with Christian texts added.
- 3) Songs by Navajo pastor Daniel Smiley.
- 4) Songs by Navajo State Representative Ray E. Begaye.
- 5) Songs from the hymnal altered in performance.
- 6) Gospel melodies of unknown origin to which new Navajo texts have been added.
- 7) Songs translated in the Navajo hymnal.
- 8) Songs by Anglo missionary Ben Stoner.

Each song was compared to the guidelines presented earlier (Figure 9) to see if variations in vowel tone and length were treated correctly when set to music. One would assume that translated hymns would contain the lowest percentage of correct

settings and that indigenous Navajo music would demonstrate correct settings.

Examination of the chart below (Figure 10), however, shows that indigenous music is not any better than the hymn translations in following the guidelines suggested earlier (Figure 9). Even melodic alterations made in performance seem to have little to do with the language. With the notable exception of Ben Stoner's songs, the remaining categories fall into the same basic range. The chart does seem to indicate that in all categories vowel tone is more important than length when set to music.

Figure 10. Musical Treatment of Navajo Vowels.





When the results of this study were mentioned to Navajo pastor Daniel Smiley he looked puzzled and did not seem to understand the concept. As the discussion continued it became apparent that the thought of setting different vowel tones and lengths to corresponding musical pitches and rhythms had never occurred to the Navajo. The reason became apparent upon closer examination of traditional Navajo chant.

As described earlier (Chapter 3) Navajo ceremonies include two types of singing—chanted songs and recited prayers. The recited prayers are sung by the person conducting the ceremony while the chanted songs allow for others to participate. The chanted songs consist primarily of vocables with only short phrases of text. The recited prayers, on the other hand, contain a great amount of text with a relatively small percentage of vocables. In both types the greatest melodic range and movement occurs when vocables are being sung. When actual text enters the melodic movement is restricted and repeated pitches dominate (Example 2).

Example 2. Chant Excerpt from “Our Father” by Lorenzo Yazzie.

Ni-zhi' da-zdǫ́-sin laa-na Ni-na-ha-wa-t'a' wa bee ya ła-'í da-nii-dlǫ́ ya doo a-na

Comparison of this example to the setting of scripture following Ben Stoner's guidelines (Example 1) shows the two to be markedly similar. To the Navajo, these sections closely resemble speech and it is therefore much easier to communicate the meaning of the text with its variations in vowel tone, length, and quality. This seems to be the reason why it has never occurred to the Navajo that tone, length, and quality

might require special musical treatment. Since, in their thinking, the traditional chants approximate speech, the relationship of text and music has never been a consideration. With such music, the musical guidelines suggested earlier (Figure 9) are not applicable or even necessary.

The Navajo have realized, all too often, that meaning is obscured when their language has been set to Anglo melodies, but the reason has not been apparent or even been an issue. This was just another element of their lives which suffered and lost much of its cultural meaning under Anglo domination. Christian Navajo are keenly aware of the communication problem of their church music, and so they often tell people to listen carefully to the words, or they may even read the words before the song is sung. Even if a syllable is correctly set melodically and rhythmically, the pitch may also impact the quality of the vowel. Translations, although accurate when read, may change in meaning when sung to Anglo melodies. Sometimes the Navajo have no choice but to retranslate the song if possible to avoid negative communication.

Although there appears to be no obvious discontent with the joining of Navajo texts and Anglo music, definite communication problems are created. This tension, though often subconscious, seems to draw the people to certain types of Anglo melodies. An attempt to determine these musical preferences and their motivations follows in the next chapter.

**Chapter 6**  
**The Struggle for Cultural Relevance**  
**in Navajo Christian Worship and Music**

Indigenization of the church should be the goal of every missionary and mission organization. The indigenization process is often gradual and slow, and to a great extent will progress in proportion to the degree the people feel their perceived felt needs are being met by this new religion. The missionary will need to allow the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of new believers as they develop an indigenous expression of their new-found faith.

This working of the Holy Spirit actually antedates the coming of the message. In each diffused and confused sense of need we must be alert for the work of the Spirit which is preparing readiness or receptivity for the good news. Once the relevant message has been delivered, the Spirit of God germinates the latent faith and faith leads to new life.

In connection with this new life the Holy Spirit often will occasion the reintegration around a new core or main spring for the life of the indigenous church. This will provide direction and thrust that will result in church growth. The deeply felt spiritual need met by the message of God can provide both impetus and direction for church growth and that without much foreign scaffolding. (Loewen 245)

The philosophy and approach of early missionaries has had a direct impact on the indigenization process among the Navajo. In their eagerness to accept the

indigenous culture and encourage the application of religious significance and symbolism, Catholic missionaries, either directly or indirectly, fostered syncretism at times. At the opposite extreme, Protestant missionaries denied any inherent good in Navajo culture and suppressed any indigenous expression. The Navajo believe that once the Great Spirit is found, persons must continue to live their lives in the same manner in which they found the Great Spirit. So converts continue to promote the two extremes represented by the Catholics and Protestants. The Catholics seem to have few followers who are deeply committed Christians (Antram, Personal Interview) and the Protestant members, according to Daniel Smiley, deny their culture and are more committed to denominational rules than they are to theology. A balance between these two extremes is perhaps the best approach for the missionary to follow.

Some view the Native American Church as an attempt by Native Americans to develop an indigenous expression of Christianity. Attempts to develop an indigenous Christian worship have been hampered, however, by the development of the Native American Church. Mixing of traditional religion and Christianity, so long considered taboo, is now associated with the peyote drug—an important element of their worship. Several elements of Navajo traditional culture have been incorporated into the worship of this religion. Because of this, traditional elements, which might normally have been acceptable for use in Christian worship, are now viewed with apprehension because they are associated with the syncretism of the Native American Church. Even small changes in Christian worship, such as arranging the physical seating in a circle instead of the Anglo way of having the preacher in front, are often approached with skepticism.

## **Worship**

Perhaps one of the most indigenous expressions of Navajo Christianity is the development of camp churches. A Navajo camp is a group of dwellings (hogans, trailers, small houses)—typically three to six—where extended family members live in close proximity. The family camp is the modern-day equivalent of the traditional village. The camp church is a family church which meets in one of the homes in the camp.

The camp church is started by a Navajo in his own or a relative's home. It may go through a series of building programs. It has Navajo leadership from its inception and is usually composed of relatives. It has self-determination, Indian identity, self-pride and is self-supporting. Cultural patterns of sharing and assisting, curing and healing, decision making and more satisfying expressions of worship are in evidence. (Scates 90)

Services are typically quite informal and followed by a communal meal—traits of the traditional ceremony. According to Scates, the prototype of the camp church is found in the Native American Church and the Navajo traditional religion which are both strongly family or clan oriented.

Services observed during my time on the Reservation fall into three broad categories: Sunday services, week-day prayer meetings, and campmeetings. Further distinction is made between services run by Anglos with a small percentage of Navajo in attendance, and services run by Navajo with a few Anglos present. The Anglo services are entirely in English unless the Navajo participate and speak some of their language.

Navajo services will include include very little English unless Anglos are present. In that situation almost everything will be translated and presented in both languages.

The Sunday service is considered the most important gathering of the church. The week-day prayer meetings are generally held in homes and are structured much like the Sunday services only on a smaller scale. Campmeetings also follow a similar pattern but of much larger proportion. Service lengths may range from a prayer meeting one hour long to a campmeeting service of more than eight hours.

One notable element of all services observed is participation, no doubt influenced by the traditional way of life which emphasizes individual participation in the group activities and ceremonies. Not only is opportunity for participation by the regular members expected, but any guest individuals or groups are given a special invitation to sing, testify, and preach. With these times of sharing lasting as long as thirty minutes per individual or group, it is easy to see how services can become quite lengthy. This is an accepted part of their culture, and those in attendance are quite attentive to what is happening. Those Navajo who have had greater contact with the outside world, however, tend to get impatient with the looseness of these events.

In addition to the participatory element of these services, the social interaction which occurs is extremely important. It is considered impolite to leave a service without greeting everyone present. Services are almost always followed by a communal meal—anything from sandwiches to a full feast featuring freshly-cooked mutton. For Navajo Christians, these services have assumed the function of the traditional ceremonies.

Summer revivals and campmeetings are abundant on the Reservation. Tents can be seen everywhere, sometimes with concurrent services taking place less than a mile apart. The label “revival” generally indicates that it is being sponsored by pentecostals or charismatics, whereas the term “campmeeting” is used by other Protestant groups. Such meetings generally last three to seven days and may be sponsored by churches or individual families. Even non-Christian families will sponsor these events in hopes that their homes will be blessed as a result.

The services run by Anglos are the most structured and so generally are shorter than their Navajo counterpart. Because of the liturgy of the service, the Catholic Mass allows for the least amount of participation and therefore tends to be the shortest in length. For the most part, leadership of Catholic parishes on the Reservation still remains in the hands of Anglos, but Protestant congregations are run, almost exclusively, by indigenous pastors. Another contrast between Catholic and Protestant services is evident in the Navajo symbolism incorporated into Catholic churches and the decoration of those buildings. The Catholic tradition around the world has always been rich in visual symbolism, and the Navajo churches are no exception. Some of their churches are built in the shape of an eight-sided hogan. Interior decoration may include furniture made of cedar, Navajo blankets, rugs, baskets, and even feathers. Protestant churches, on the other hand, are quite plain. These buildings have often been constructed by Anglos, and the general Protestant denial of traditional culture places taboos, either spoken or unspoken, on Navajo symbolism.

And so the two extremes continue and are perpetuated—the people worship as they have been taught. Not until the Protestants are able to break out of their legalistic

adherence to rules and focus on the culturally transcendent message of the gospel will Navajo Christians be able to reclaim their culture for Christ. Catholics will need to develop a single-minded devotion to God while retaining what is good from their culture. Both extremes possess some good, but a balance needs to be found; a bridge needs to be built.

### **Music**

Missionaries, for the most part, have realized that in order for them to be able to communicate the gospel message to those of other cultures, it is necessary to speak the language of the people whom they are trying to evangelize. In contrast, the language of music, until recently, has generally been approached in an ethnocentric manner. “We must accept that the Holy Spirit can inspire and speak through vernacular music expression just as through vernacular prayer and Bible translation, or else deny the universality of God” (Chenoweth, “Spare Them Western Music!” 30).

Missionaries in the past have sometimes assumed that since there was no Christian musical idiom in a culture, their own Western hymns would work if only the texts were translated. They failed to recognize, perhaps due to lack of training, that communicating the gospel message through a foreign musical style can sound just as alien as another spoken language. A hymn includes music and text, and both must communicate. If only one is understood, then only half the message is received (Goudeau).

It is the indigenous or heart music of a culture which will speak most profoundly to the emotions of the people in that culture (Avery). “The most effective musical language will always be the first language of the local group, even though they may be



familiar with other styles” (Hunt 17). It also reinforces the indigenous culture, gives the Biblical message an authority it would not otherwise have, and shows that the missionary places value upon the people and their culture. “There is nothing in the New Testament to suggest that the evangelized need adopt the cultural ways of the evangelist” (Chenoweth, “Spare Them Western Music!” 31). Music is more easily supplanted than speech, and so the results of replacing indigenous music with Western hymns is more rapidly realized. In a culture with an oral musical tradition, one generation of suppressed indigenous musical expression can cause that tradition to be lost (Chenoweth and Bee).

Rejection of indigenous music may also cause some rituals to be secretly retained as well as alienating composers and musicians from the church (Chenoweth, “Spare Them Western Music!”). In some cases negative acculturation has occurred when missionaries have denounced the native culture as evil and suppressed indigenous elements. This negative indoctrination is difficult to overcome. It causes tension between the Christians and non-Christians within the culture, and also alienates the non-Christians from anything associated with the church. Sometimes it is not until the first or second generation of Christians is gone that indigenous elements can be incorporated into worship.

In cultures where Western influence has been strong, it is often difficult to define the indigenous culture because outside influences have been assimilated. In an area where Western hymnody has already been introduced, such as the Navajo, it is not the missionary’s responsibility to remove this element from the host culture. The missionary should allow the Holy Spirit to work among the people as an indigenous

Christian culture is developed. Sometimes a blending takes place and a new musical expression emerges. Western elements may be changed and adapted to fit better with the indigenous culture.

Every culture has its folkways or norms of expressions. When these become universally accepted in a culture, everything is judged by these norms and evaluated either good, or bad, or in poor taste. Deviant behavior may even be dubbed as immoral. Judging everything else according to our own norms, or folkways, or mores, is ethnocentric. These judgements are not necessarily Christian.

(Key 257)

Study of missionary efforts around the world has shown that the introduction of foreign hymnody has left a legacy which is often quite difficult to overcome (Goudeau 53-86).

1. Foreign hymns can hinder musical communication.
2. Foreign hymns can distort linguistic communication.
3. Foreign hymns are easily susceptible to pagan reinterpretation.
4. Foreign hymns encourage the identification of Christian worship with foreign forms.
5. Foreign hymns can encourage a denial of indigenous culture.
6. Foreign hymns can damage indigenous cultures.
7. Foreign hymns can encourage nationalistic reactions.
8. Foreign hymns can stifle spontaneous musical expression.
9. Foreign hymns are usually more difficult to sing.
10. Foreign hymns can hinder evangelism.

Goudeau also discusses the three-fold appeal of indigenous hymnody. Indigenous hymns effectively communicate through music and words, they reinforce cultural integrity, and are culturally satisfying (87-102). According to scripture (Ephesians 5:18-19) this also serves to affirm the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the people.

Several different approaches have been taken by missionaries when working with music on the mission field (Hunt 112). The least acceptable and the most ethnocentric approach is to assume that Western hymns are the only good church music. Only slightly better is the approach of adapting Western melodies to sound more like indigenous music. Using existing indigenous melodies with Christian texts can sometimes be acceptable if former associations with other texts and performance situations do not hinder the communication of the Christian message. New songs written by the missionary in the indigenous style can serve to encourage the people themselves to compose songs. The missionary should not, however, reserve this responsibility for himself. As they are prompted by the Holy Spirit, the people should be encouraged to assume the responsibility of music leadership and composition as soon as possible if the church is truly going to become indigenous. This will also provide feedback and allow the missionary to see if the people have actually learned what has been taught.

In discussing the communication process of music evangelism, Hunt (45-59) refers to the missionary-musician as the initiator and the person being evangelized as the receptor. The text of the music transmits the message, but it is the music itself which becomes the frame which carries the message to the receptor. If the frame cannot be understood by the receptor, then it becomes a barrier to the receptor's ability to

understand the message. Changing the frame into an indigenous form of music invites reception and renders retransmission possible. It is this retransmission which becomes the key to evangelism in any culture.

Hunt stresses that the missionary should encourage indigenous leadership in the church and in the music of the church. The people need to believe that “their music is acceptable, their spiritual gifts valid, and their talents valuable to God and to the church” (Hunt 125). Sometimes it is possible to use even a non-Christian composer within the culture to assist in the creation of new melodies specifically for use by Christians. This would also draw that person into the church and provide a form of evangelistic outreach. “When a people develops its own hymns with both vernacular words and music, it is good evidence that Christianity has truly taken root” (Chenoweth and Bee 210). The process of determining which elements of a culture can be used with the Christian message is not an easy task. There are some general guidelines, however, which can be followed (Hunt 121-121).

1. Everything good in a culture should be retained.
2. Everything obviously and inherently evil should be discarded.
3. One may trust the Holy Spirit in the gray areas, especially as He guides a new believer if that believer is being carefully disciplined.
4. Missionaries should carefully and prayerfully evaluate how much of their message and how many of their standards are biblical and universal and which are conditioned by their own cultural background.
5. The missionary should regard the tools of culture as an important means of communication, second only to language.

There is some concern among Navajo Christians that their people do not seem to embrace the Christian faith and fully express themselves through their worship. Their singing seems to lack emotion and enthusiasm. Elderly Navajo Christians find it difficult to sing the Anglo hymntunes, however, and often resort to singing in a chant-like style. This is met with scorn from those who adhere strictly to the teachings of the missionaries. Edison Woods, a Navajo employed in the Division of Natural Resources of the Navajo Nation, feels that the Holy Spirit showed him through Scripture that the Navajo need to learn how to really praise God through their singing (Woods).

Music in the Native American Church reflects the indigenous culture in several ways. The use of rattle and drum, as well as the style of chanting, exhibit Navajo influence. The rattle is made of a small round gourd, and the drum is made from a small iron kettle, similar to the Navajo instrument made of pottery, and partially filled with water (McAllester, "Peyote Music" 26). The style of singing, while possessing some traits of Navajo music, is strongly influenced by the Anglo culture. The voice quality remains consistent in a low register unlike the high intense singing with falsetto ornamentation normally associated with the Navajo. Another distinction is that all singing within the peyote cult has, until recently, been by soloists.

To avoid association with the peyote cult, reformers should probably avoid use of a water drum, and should try to develop a style of chant distinctive from that of the Native American Church. Group singing, in contrast to the solo singing of the peyote cult, should also be encouraged. A possible musical style to emulate would be the chants of the Blessingway since these chants were never associated with exorcism.

There have been and continue to be efforts to encourage the Navajo to develop a truly indigenous form of Christian worship and music. Perhaps the earliest attempts to encourage the development of indigenous Navajo music for Christian worship were by the Catholics. Father Berard Heile was sent as a missionary to the Navajo in 1900 and remained there until his death in 1961 (Antram, Laborers of the Harvest 57-59). His scholarly writings on Navajo ceremonies have caused his name to be known throughout academia. Father Berard took some of the texts of Navajo traditional chants from the Enemyway and Blessingway ceremonies and Christianized them. "Diyin Sodizin," one of the best known of Father Berard's adaptations, is from the Blessingway and is still sung today as set to music by H. B. Liebler, an Anglo Episcopal Bishop.

Father Cormac Antram was ordained a priest in 1954. His first assignment was as a missionary to the Navajo and he is still serving in that capacity today. He became friends with the young Navajo couple Lorenzo and Helen Yazzie. Sometime during the late 1950s, Father Cormac approached Lorenzo about the possibility of setting Catholic prayers to Navajo chants. Lorenzo consulted with medicine men regarding the idea and, with their approval, proceeded to set the "Our Father," (see transcription in Appendix B), "Hail Mary," and "Glory to God" to traditional chants from the Blessingway Ceremony (Cormac, Personal Interview). Father Cormac recalls general acceptance of the mixing of two elements previously considered incompatible. The melody of "Our Father" is pentatonic and uses the first, second, third, fifth, and sixth scale steps of the major scale while "Glory to God" incorporates the first, third, fourth, and fifth degrees of the minor scale. The "Hail Mary" melody contains only the first, second, third, and fifth scales steps of the major mode. There are no half steps in any of the three

chants—all are anhemitonic. In May of 1958, Father Cormac began “The Padre’s Hour,” a weekly thirty-minute Navajo-language radio program. The Yazzies were his assistants in this program and spent many hours in recording sessions. The program, still hosted by Father Cormac, begins each Sunday with a recording of “Glory to God” performed by Lorenzo. Father Cormac says that this chant is the most popular of the three and is requested often.

A later attempt at developing Christian chant for use in the Catholic mass was made by Sister Maria Sarto Moreau. She adapted the “Gloria” text and set it to traditional chant (see transcription in Appendix B). “She always insisted that some of the hymns at Mass be sung in Navajo each Sunday” (Franciscan Friars 61). Sister Maria Sarto served as a missionary to the Navajo from 1973 until her death in 1997. This chant melody includes only four notes of the minor scale—the first, third, fourth, and fifth—and is anhemitonic. The parish at Klagetoh, where Sister Maria Sarto served for years, still uses the “Gloria” chant in its services (Hotstream).

On the Protestant side, Ben Stoner is the only Anglo missionary to openly encourage and teach the development of Navajo Christian chant. He has composed around a dozen scripture chants for the purpose of encouraging the Navajo to do the same. The three chants by Stoner included in this study (see transcriptions in Appendix B) are built on either four- or five-note scales containing no half steps. In an effort to bridge the gap and perhaps make his chants more palatable to critics, Stoner accompanies his songs with guitar. This is not to imply that his chants are harmonic, however, for he uses only two chords—tonic and subdominant. The guitar is there to serve as a cultural bridge. On his setting of I Corinthians 13:4-8, Stoner holds the guitar

but plays no chords. He simply taps the beat on the instrument. The guitar, an acceptable instrument to Christians, has now become the drum of the traditional culture. Stoner also prints his chants with key signatures, meter signatures, barlines, and chord symbols. In appearance his chants resemble Anglo music—another attempt to bridge the gap separating the two cultures.

Not all attempts to develop indigenous Navajo Christian music are being initiated by Anglos. A few Navajo have sensed the need and are beginning to assume responsibility for the indigenization of Christian worship and music among their people. One attempt to develop an indigenous Christian worship is currently going on in the T'o'k'e'hasbi Holiness Mennonite Church near Cottonwood, Arizona. Pastor Daniel Smiley is a second-generation Christian. Smiley's mother was the first person in their family to become a Christian, and as a result, the family has often been harassed and even physically abused by other members of the clan. His grandfather was the medicine man of their clan, and he groomed Daniel to be his successor. On his death bed, however, the old shaman acknowledged the good in his grandson's religion, and he embraced Christianity. The clan then asked Daniel to serve as the medicine man, but he declined because of his Christian faith. And so the persecution, although perhaps not as overt or abusive as before, continues.

In his own private devotions, Smiley scatters corn meal in the four sacred directions as he prays. In the services of the mission church he sometimes has his congregation sit in a circle and encourages everyone to participate in the discussion of their Bible study. This relates directly to their cultural preference for group participation in the activities of life.



Smiley has also written songs in an effort to incorporate indigenous music into the worship services. One of his first songs, “Diyin A yoo'ateíí,” possesses many characteristics of traditional Navajo music (see transcription in Appendix B). The melody of this chant is built on a five-tone minor mode containing scale degrees one, three, four, five, and natural seven—no half steps are present. The text also exhibits characteristics of traditional Navajo music: short phrases are repeated and tend to build upon each other in an elaboration of the basic meaning. Smiley’s song is typical of traditional Navajo chant and yet remains distinctively different from peyote music. It is not easy for the older Christians to accept this music because of the many years of conditioning which has taught them that their indigenous culture is evil. The older traditional people also have trouble accepting the music because of the same conditioning teaching them that there is no compatibility between Christianity and the traditional ways. Another chant by Smiley is a setting of Psalm 131:1. This melody has a low tessitura and contains only four pitches—first, second, third, and fifth scale steps. Again, there are no half steps.

Smiley would like to see more Navajo symbolism incorporated into Christian worship. One of his dreams is to have a baptismal ceremony adapted from portions of the Blessingway. In one part of the Four Night Chant, a basket is ceremonially washed inside and outside, and then set apart for holy use. Following this, three chants are sung (see transcriptions in Appendix B.) which are about the person who is sitting in the middle and is the focus of the ceremony. The first chant makes the statement that the person is living in beauty, and the second chant questions why that person walks in beauty. The third chant of the set then gives the reason why that person walks in beauty.

Smiley adapted the text of this last chant to say it is because of Jesus that this person walks in beauty. In the Christian rite of baptism, the Christian is washed as an outward sign of the cleansing which has already taken place on the inside—that person is then set apart for holy use. The cultural symbolism becomes obvious. All three chants are based on gapped scales—the first and third chants on scale steps one, three, and five. The middle chant uses the same scale with the addition of the sixth scale degree.

Smiley would also like to Christianize the traditional Navajo puberty rite. Instead of the four-day secular ceremony, he would like to see a four-day revival or campmeeting. The young person who is the focus of the event would choose the preacher for the services. An uncle or aunt would be chosen by the young boy or girl to be a mentor during these four days. The mentor would lead the young person in Bible studies, teach traditional ways, and answer any questions the youth might have. The people would pray for the youth; everything done during this event would be for the honor of the young person. Such a significant event in the life of a young person would serve to tie them to the church and its people.

Since his first chant was not accepted by those in the church or those in the traditional culture, Smiley has since experimented with several musical styles to see what will and will not be received. Most of these songs could be classified as southern gospel in style. Some have been embraced while others have received little interest from the people. Smiley's most popular song with the people has been "Dóólá'do shí Diyin dá!" (see transcription in Appendix B). This melody is pentatonic (scale steps one, two, three, five, and six) and contains no half steps.

Smiley's ideas have met with considerable opposition, and so he is reluctant to try out some of his concepts for fear of retaliation. His attempt to focus on theology rather than denominational rules which have become as doctrine has also elicited a great deal of controversy even from his immediate family. Other area pastors tell the people not to attend his church—he is considered extreme and radical.

Another indigenous effort, though perhaps done unconsciously, happens when the people make melodic alterations of the music as they sing. These changes sometimes reduce the number of scale steps used in the melody. One example is the singing of Mary Tsosie, a Navajo elder in the T'o'k'e'hasbi Holiness Mennonite Church. Her favorite song is “Jesus Bił Hashne” (“I Must Tell Jesus”). She is the only one in her family who is a Christian and so she often feels alone in her faith. The text of this song comforts and encourages her. Mary's rendition of the song (see transcription in Appendix B) drastically alters the melody making it practically a new setting. When compared to the original melody, however, some basic similarities can be noticed (Example 3).

Example 3. Performance Alteration of “I Must Tell Jesus” (Refrain).

The image displays two staves of musical notation for the refrain of the song "I Must Tell Jesus". The top staff is labeled "Performance" and the bottom staff is labeled "Original Melody". Both staves are in a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a 3/8 time signature. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks. The performance version shows a more complex and varied melodic line compared to the original melody, which is simpler and more repetitive. The performance version includes a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the first line. The original melody version includes a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the second line. The performance version is marked with numbers 1 through 5, and the original melody version is marked with numbers 6 through 9.

The descending fourth characteristic of the opening of the refrain (m. 1-2) is still present as well as the triplet figure in the penultimate measure (m. 8). Also, in the second line both versions include a similar phrase ending descending to tonic (m. 7, 9). Beyond that, it is difficult to find similarities. An obvious change in the performance version is the omission of the fourth scale step and the implied subdominant harmony in the middle of the first line (m. 3). Instead of ending the first line with the dominant harmony implied in the original, the performance version remains on tonic (m. 3). One might find two beats on which a dominant chord could be used to accompany the performance version (m. 4, 8), but it could just as easily be accompanied entirely with a tonic chord. In this case the accompaniment becomes insignificant and unneeded—much like traditional Navajo chant.

Tsosie's performance of "Jesus Azee' ííí' íní íl[í]" ("The Great Physician") (see transcription in Appendix B) more closely follows the melodic contour of the original melody. The first, second, and fourth lines of the original melody, which are all the same, begin with a descending arpeggiation of the tonic triad. Tsosie's version retains this in the first stanza, inverts the motion in stanzas two and four: stanza three begins with repeated pitches. The ascending scalewise motion which follows in the original, as well as a similar motive at the beginning of the phrases of the refrain, is replaced with melodic skips. One might expect that the performance version would reduce the number of different pitches used but, just as in the original, all seven scale steps are present.

Performance alterations made during corporate congregational singing are not nearly as drastic as the solo version described above. The subtle changes which do

occur seem to have little to do with either the language or an effort to alter the scale. Even when certain pitches are omitted in one phrase, the same scale steps may be included in a later passage. There seems to be no apparent reason for the melodic changes.

There are some traits of Navajo singing, both solo and corporate, which cause it to have a distinctive sound. Fluidity of pitch characteristic of the traditional vocal style used with Navajo chant seems to have an impact on the way the people sing their southern gospel songs. A great amount of sliding between notes, especially descending pitches, can be heard. Descending skips are often filled in with an intermediate note, and even descending scale steps will be embellished (Example 4).

Example 4. Filling In Typical of Navajo Singing.



Although this technique is not as common with ascending pitches, there is still the sliding and scooping typical of traditional chant performance. The more exposure singers have had to Anglo culture the less evident is this traditional performance style. Even Mary Tsosie, who sang “I Must Tell Jesus” and “The Great Physician” in a very traditional style, sang “Amazing Grace” with a very different vocal quality—straight tone with no pulsation, and minimal scooping or sliding around. Her pastor Daniel Smiley said that their congregation sings “Amazing Grace” quite frequently. For this song she has become accustomed to the Anglo way and has adapted her singing style—the fluidity of traditional chant is not present.

Another unique trait of Navajo singing of gospel music is their seeming inability to keep a steady metrical rhythm. The concept of regular metrical patterns grouped into measures and phrases seems foreign to them. And it probably is since this is not a part of traditional Navajo chant. They appear to have the greatest difficulty with longer note values which are quite rare in traditional chant. On such rhythms they seem to lose all concept of the beat and often omit or add beats or even partial beats. This problem seems to be compounded when they attempt to sing with accompaniment. It is as though they are attempting to sing in a foreign musical language and just cannot grasp the basic structure. Perhaps this relates to the basic difference between Anglo and Navajo music described earlier (Chapter 3) when Andrew Begaye depicted Navajo music as progressive in contrast to the fixed pattern of Anglo music.

Navajo Christians seem drawn to certain gospel songs more than others. If they really like a song they will begin singing along with the person(s) singing the special or sing out more if it is corporate singing. They seem to prefer songs with continuous eighth-note rhythms and repeated notes, and songs which have a strong pulse to them. Perhaps they are unconsciously identifying with characteristics of traditional chant. Many of these songs are pentatonic and contain no half steps. Three very popular songs are included as an example—"Ayóó'óní shíí n'íleh," "Jesus éí shínaalníí," and "God naasgo shá'áadiiniidiin" (see transcriptions in Appendix B). None of these are in the Navajo hymnal and the people do not know the source of the words or music. It is thought that the melodies were borrowed from Anglo gospel songs and that new Navajo texts have been added. All contain repeated notes, have a strong pulse, and are based on anhemitonic pentatonic scales. These songs, as well as "Dóólá'dó shí Diyin dá!" by

Daniel Smiley, represent the style of music with which the Navajo Christians really identify.

The anhemitonic pentatonic scale is the basis of indigenous music in many cultures around the world. The absence of half steps gives a feeling of harmonic ambiguity. For this reason, many Western classical composers have employed the scale to get away from the strong resolution tendencies of scales containing half steps. Perhaps this is the reason the Navajo are drawn to this type of music; traditional chant is melodic and suggests no sense of harmonic derivation. Pentatonic melodies also seem to have more freedom of movement—they are not as restricted to following the underlying harmonic rhythm as melodies containing half steps. Individual notes and motives can be more freely repeated. Even when pentatonic melodies do seem to imply harmonies, the harmonic rhythm is generally slower and the number of chords used greatly limited—often tonic and dominant, sometimes subdominant also.

Andrew F. Begaye is a leader in the effort to encourage the development of indigenous worship and music. Andrew, his brother Ray, State Representative for New Mexico, and sister Julia Redhouse are working together to promote worship that is relevant for Navajo Christians (Begaye). These three were raised in the traditional culture. Their grandfather was a very powerful medicine man, and their father was instrumental in adapting the Peyote religion for Navajo use. From this religious background, Andrew experienced a spiritual change in his life when he became a Christian in 1968. He has now spent almost thirty years in ministry, over twenty of those years within the Southern Baptist denomination. He recently felt God directing him to leave this denomination and form Calvary Love Ministries, an independent

organization which will have a broader ministry to the entire Navajo Nation. Andrew has also begun inter-tribal ministries as well as an international movement known as Many Languages/One Voice.

The Begaye siblings are considered rebels in the Christian movement on the Reservation. Since they began creating indigenous music in 1971, their greatest critics have been other Navajo Christians. One of the first songs they recorded was “Jesus Bił Deiyíniibááh” (see transcription in Appendix B). This proved to be too extreme and they were kicked out of several churches as a result. Andrew recorded the scripture chants of Anglo missionary Ben Stoner and had them broadcast on a radio station. They received several negative calls, however, and were forced to cease playing the selections. The Begayes who are Navajo and Stoner who is Anglo are all considered extremists. As a result, Andrew, Ray, and Julia have had to back away and attempt to bridge the gap in hopes that someday that which is considered extreme today will become accepted.

Andrew Begaye believes that music is the Navajo life. The people were forced to give up their music which is their cultural strength. To become civilized the Navajo had to live like the Anglos and sing their music. As a result, Begaye says that a true Navajo church does not exist; imitations of Anglo worship, however, abound.

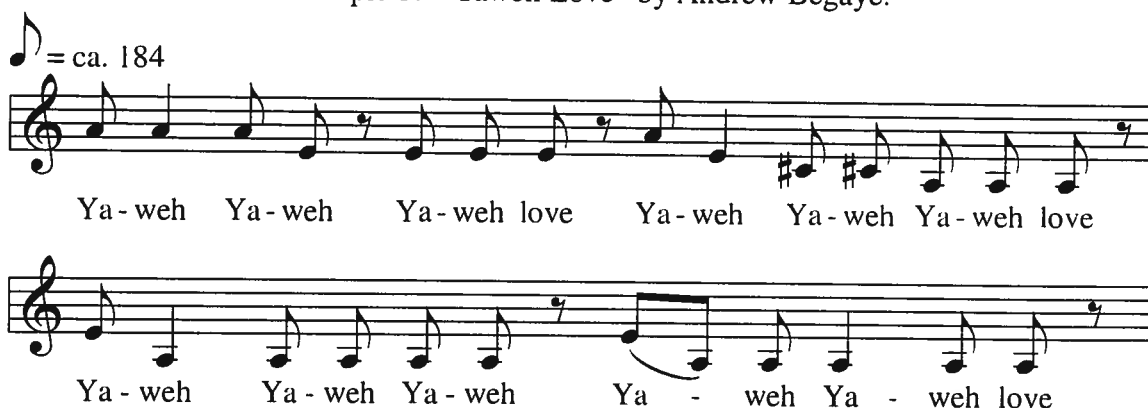
The three songs by Ray Begaye included in this study come from the recording “Out of Bondage.” The melodies are actually adapted from other tribes for Navajo use. All three are pentatonic using scale steps one, two, three, five, and six. Andrew considers Ray’s song “Jesus Bił Deiyíniibááh” to be progressive—the phrases are unmetrical and vary with each verse. There is a strong pulse, but the music seems to defy grouping into regular measures. Of the three songs, this one has received the most



negative reception. The remaining two songs, “Háálá Ayóó Diyin” and “Dooládó' Ataa' Nilíí Dad” (see transcription in Appendix B), represent a more conservative approach. These melodies do allow for regular metrical groupings in measures and also possess stronger harmonic implications. They do, however, possess a different sound than the southern gospel song typical of the Navajo hymnal. The text of “Dooládó' Ataa' Nilíí Dad” is a paraphrased translation of “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” and borrowed from the Navajo hymnal. In the hymnal it is set to the tune “Converse” which is the melody most often sung with English text. “Converse” contains four phrases the first of which is pentatonic. The second and last phrases would also be pentatonic except for the inclusion of the leading tone as the penultimate note. The third phrase, however, contains chromaticism and incorporates the fourth scale degree as well. Begaye’s setting is based on the anhemitonic pentatonic scale throughout and possesses a strong pulse. Tonya Smallcanyon will not play this song on her program because it reminds her too much of the music of the medicine man.

Andrew’s goal is to someday see Navajo Christians singing Christian progressive music. He considers the scripture chants of Ben Stoner to be typical of what he desires, but he feels that target is at the top of the ladder while most of the people are still on the ground. There are many steps in between, and he estimates it may take fifteen years to realize his dream. Andrew feels that “Dooládó' Ataa' Nilíí Dad” is on the first step of the ladder and “Háálá Ayóó Diyin” is on the second. Much further up the ladder is a progressive song he wrote for the grand entry of an inter-tribal gathering in South Dakota. It contains only two words—Yaweh love. The melody incorporates many repeated notes and utilizes only the first, third, and fifth scale steps (Example 5).

Example 5. "Yaweh Love" by Andrew Begaye.



♩ = ca. 184

Ya - weh Ya - weh Ya - weh love Ya - weh Ya - weh Ya - weh love

Ya - weh Ya - weh Ya - weh Ya - weh Ya - weh love

The text of this song consists entirely of the repetition of two words—one Hebrew and the other English. Yet the word “Yaweh” has the same sound as two vocables common to traditional chant—“ya” and “we.” The use of vocables seems to be a red flag to many Christians. Many consider vocables to be sacred words, unknown in meaning, for use in communicating with the spirit world. For those persons, vocables would not be appropriate for Christian use. For others who do not hold this view, the syllables are simply meaningless filler. Regardless of the position held, it might be best to avoid the use of vocables in Christian music. If they are sacred words for spirit communication, then they probably are inappropriate; if they are meaningless, then why should they be used in a setting where communication of a message is of utmost importance? If vocables are going to be used, perhaps it would be best to use words which contain the same sounds as vocables but still convey meaning—as in “Yaweh Love.”

On the surface the Navajo Christians seem to be content singing southern gospel music. One cannot help but wonder if there might be a subconscious, or even unconscious, longing for something more relevant—music which reflects who they are as Navajo. Andrew Begaye would like to see the texts of the Navajo hymnal set to

progressive music and accompanied with drum and dancing. He recognizes that the theology of the songs is good; they just need to be expressed through a musical language which comes from the heart of the people. In spite of a seeming contentment, or even complacency, there are efforts to reclaim Navajo culture for Christian worship. The process may need to be slow and gradual, but as the people seek to worship God in ways that are culturally relevant, the Holy Spirit will guide them and God will bless their endeavors.

## Chapter 7

### Summary and Conclusions

Until recently the Anglo-American approach to Native Americans by both the government and the church has been dictated by a desire to make the Indians like Anglos. The Anglo encounter with the Indian was the colonists' first real cultural experience with another ethnic group. In the typical Anglo ego-centric way of approaching life, anything different was considered inferior. Only as they have become aware of the many ethnic groups which make up the world and have begun to appreciate the differences, have Anglos changed their approach to groups different than themselves. Early experiences with the Anglos, however, have greatly impacted the Navajo and tend to overshadow any recent progress in the relationship between the two groups. The Navajo still have difficulty fully trusting Anglos, and they often feel they are being taken advantage of.

The Navajo are survivors. Whenever the Navajo have encountered outside groups they have assimilated anything they felt was beneficial. When acculturation is forced, however, they rebel and fight if their existence is threatened. If fighting appears futile, then they will adapt. It has been suggested that one reason the Navajo tribe is so strong today is that their culture is matrilineal (Begaye). Men are generally eager to fight and, if necessary, die for a cause whereas women are more interested in staying alive and keeping the family together. Contacts with other tribes, although not always peaceful, have principally had a positive influence on the Navajo. Today, the Navajo seem to feel a stronger identification with other Native Americans than ever before.

Evangelistic efforts have usually had a negative impact upon Navajo Christian worship. The Navajo realize that if the Anglos had not come they would not be Christians today. Many of them, however, seem to believe that accepting the Anglo religion also means rejecting Navajo traditional culture. This has severely hindered the development of indigenous Christian worship.

As a new century has begun, the state of Christianity among the Navajo may be viewed as precarious. Are they destined to continue patterning their worship after the Anglos, or is the present situation ripe for God's Spirit to bring about a spiritual and cultural revival among the people? The answer to this question may be determined to a great extent by one's theology. To say there is no hope for change is to limit God. God has often been referred to as the God of new beginnings.

Navajo culture is not anti-Christian. There are some elements of their worldview which will be antagonistic to the Gospel, but others can be identified as common ground. The pluralistic beliefs of the Navajo will struggle with only one supreme God. While they do believe in only one Great Spirit, he is approached through many intermediaries. This will also make it difficult for them to believe that there is only one way for man and God to be reconciled. The Navajo spend their entire lives seeking the Great Spirit; the Great Spirit never seeks them. Comprehending a God who loves them and initiates as well as seeks reconciliation will be difficult.

The Navajo concept of creative power will enable them to relate to a God who has the ability to speak things into existence. While they generally view man as the highest element of creation, they will struggle with the biblical admonition to subdue and rule over the rest of creation. They will probably identify sin as the disruption of

hózhó. Their concept of hózhó as a perfect balance of good and evil, however, must not be equated with a proper relationship with God where good conquers evil.

Any attempt to share the gospel message with the Navajo must be centered on God's Word. Too often the message has been veiled in denominational and cultural wrappings which are not theologically sound. The advancement of the Kingdom has been hindered by the very ones who desired to promote it. Evangelistic efforts among the Navajo will likely continue to be slow and difficult. More than four hundred years of negative acculturation and enculturation will not change quickly.

In presenting the Gospel to the Navajo, Anglo-American missionaries will need to be careful to remove any of their own cultural residue from the message. One would not want to communicate any extraneous elements that might hinder the development of Christianity in their lives. It is man's responsibility to communicate the message, but it is the ministry of God's Spirit to work it out in the host culture. God accomplished His plan of salvation within a cultural context quite unlike that of heaven. All He asks is that man be available as a means of communicating His love to others—He will complete the task.

The Navajo need to be encouraged to appreciate and accept the elements of their culture which are good and build upon them as the church attempts to continue its evangelistic efforts. Eugene Joe, Navajo artist and musician, believes that his people have not been able to separate culture, tradition, and religion (Joe). He has long hair and wears earrings, necklaces, and moccasins. Other Christians criticize him for this, but he boldly tells them that there is a difference between culture and religion. Joe feels his music relates to the younger people, and he considers himself a bridge between the

old and the young. He believes he stands in the gap between culture and religion. Separating these elements will not be simple in an animistic society where all of life is intertwined and sacred. The Holy Spirit will need to be allowed to guide the people into the Truth.

After almost a half century of ministry among the Navajo, Father Cormac Antram believes that the Catholics should take a stricter approach in the separation of culture and religion. He feels that closing one eye to some of the traditional practices has hurt them. He does, however, think that religion needs to be culturally relevant. If he were to begin all over again, he says he would make a greater effort to incorporate more culturally symbolic elements into the liturgy (Antram, Personal Interview).

Brother John Hotstream at the Catholic mission in Klagetoh, Arizona, explains “what we are doing now [is] we are taking hymns and translating them into Navajo. What we really need to do is to have Navajo write hymns to drums. Then you have the real thing. But it’s a little late for that because they already equate the Mass with this [Anglo music and words]. It’s too bad” (Hotstream).

While it may seem too late to some for an indigenous Christian worship to develop among the Navajo, there are those such as Andrew Begaye who believe God is still working among the people. He and his brother Ray meet with Kelsey Begaye, President of the Navajo Nation and also a Christian, once a month for a prayer meeting. Andrew believes that the Navajo will be used by God to turn other Native Americans to Christ. He feels the Navajo have been wandering in the wilderness for forty years and that it will not be until the first generation of Christians has passed that a truly Navajo Christian church will develop—a process which he estimates may take another fifteen

years. He is focusing much of his ministry on the young people and has begun training centers where new Christians are taught ways to incorporate their traditional performing arts, such as dance and progressive singing, into Christian worship. He believes that if the Navajo Christians sing again it will revive the culture. Begaye says that they need to see themselves as the light of the world so they will boldly witness to those who practice the traditional and peyote religions. They must love these people instead of shunning them (Begaye).

Traditional Navajo music is viewed by the people as prayer. Perhaps it is this association with spirit worship which has made it difficult for the people to accept the same style of music in Christian worship. As Eugene Joe stated, his people need to separate culture and religion in their thinking. There is nothing about the musical style which makes it inappropriate for Christian worship, but Navajo Christians have been conditioned to believe otherwise.

Country music is very popular on the Reservation, but it is the message of the words and not the music with which the Navajo identify—they do not perform the music themselves. Although the themes of country music express aspects of life with which the Navajo struggle, the music is not really a viable cultural expression. Gospel music, the sacred counterpart of country music, is performed extensively by Navajo Christians. This was the music introduced to them by Anglo missionaries. Since they continue to worship the way they were taught, they continue to use the same music. This music does allow them to express who they are as Christians, but it does not necessarily allow expression of who they are as Navajo Christians.



Although some may feel that southern gospel music has become an acceptable cultural expression for Navajo Christians, others would disagree and stress the need for an indigenous style of worship. The conflict between the Navajo language and Anglo musical styles, and the resultant communication problems, alone would seem to suggest the need for a change if the Navajo are going to be able to evangelize their own people. Others would suggest that this is not necessary since it is estimated that only ten percent of the people speak Navajo fluently. Recent efforts in Navajo schools, however, to reintroduce the language and culture would cause one to feel that the people are not willing to let their language disappear.

If the Navajo are going to sing in their own language, then it is important that the text have an appropriate musical setting—one which does not obscure the meaning of the words. This is practically impossible with Anglo musical styles, especially when English texts have simply been translated into Navajo. A tonal language such as Navajo does require special musical treatment, either in a melody generated from the words or in a musical style greatly restricted in movement such as traditional Navajo chant.

The present state of worship and music among Navajo Christians as observed on the Reservation reflects the struggle of a people attempting to worship in forms and styles with which they are not comfortable. The services are patterned after Anglo models both in structure and music. The greatest reflection of Navajo culture in Christian worship is the emphasis on participation. Anyone in attendance is given a chance to sing, testify, or even preach. Groups from other churches come expecting to have as much time as they want. Each person or group may take as long as thirty minutes.

Music in the services consists almost entirely of southern gospel music. The Navajo do seem to show a preference for songs which are rhythmically active and contain many repeated notes. They are also drawn to anhemitonic pentatonic melodies. Whether consciously or unconsciously, they prefer music which shares characteristics with traditional Navajo chant. Traditional chant contains a large percentage of repeated notes, and melodies are often limited to three or four different pitches. Traditional hymns are rarely sung even though they are included in the Navajo hymnal. They represent a musical style different from southern gospel music, and possess no characteristics common to traditional chant.

There have been some attempts at developing an indigenous musical expression for worship. Because of associations with spirit worship, however, acceptance of this music by Navajo Christians has been difficult. Interest in such music does appear to be on the increase as is the case with Native American tribes throughout the country.

By embracing Anglo doctrines and worship styles have Navajo Christians allowed the Message of God's Word to be made ineffective? Perhaps it is time to focus on the core of the gospel and allow the Holy Spirit to do His work, in His way, so that the inside of the person is transformed, not because of man's efforts, but because of the convicting power of God's grace. As suggested by Begaye, the Navajo must be encouraged to assume responsibility for the evangelization of their own people. A spiritual renewal needs to come from within. They have had enough experiences with Anglos trying to tell them what to do. If worship is going to become culturally relevant, the impetus must come from the Navajo themselves.

This study has given me a greater understanding of and appreciation for the process involved in the establishment of an indigenous Christian church. The scope of the task is much too great for any mortal to accomplish. God must be the One to establish and build His Church. Although I would not begin to contend that I have all the answers, there are some general suggestions I would make for those interested in the development of a Navajo Christian church. These recommendations relate to three broad categories—theology, liturgy, and music.

In the area of theology, study God's Word to understand the core of the gospel message and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you into this truth. One must be careful that focus on denominational distinctives does not come at the expense of freedom from a legalistic value system. Recognize that one's relationship with God is personal and that the Holy Spirit works in many different ways to accomplish His purposes. Liturgy is the work of the people in worship. It is important that you gather corporately to celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of His Church—there is great diversity in God's family. Worship in a way that is theologically acceptable and culturally relevant. Don't copy others—make worship your own. Seek to encourage one another in the church through love and in faith. Don't be a watchdog to see that everyone keeps all of the rules. Share the truth of the gospel message, and only this truth, with others and trust the Holy Spirit to do the rest. In music, encourage the people to develop their own musical expression for worshipping God. Be certain the message of the text is not compromised by the musical setting.

If changes do take place among Navajo Christians, such changes will need to be gradual and, no doubt, will take some time. As described by Andrew Begaye, there are many steps leading to the goal at the top of the ladder.

More specific suggestions regarding Navajo church music are now provided for those Navajo interested in developing their own indigenous worship music. These three suggestions are somewhat sequential, and time may need to be allowed for each step to become accepted before moving to the next.

1. Use pentatonic melodies.

The first step in the transition to an indigenous musical expression should center around the use of anhemitonic pentatonic melodies—a musical style simplified melodically and harmonically. This type of music is already popular with Navajo Christians and more emphasis should be given to it. Once pentatonic melodies are standard, then melodies with fewer notes (four or three) could be introduced. The resultant style would sound much more like traditional Navajo music.

2. Sing unaccompanied.

Omitting any harmonic accompaniment should alleviate the problem of rhythmic instability. The eventual goal would be to reintroduce the drum as a pulse keeper.

3. Compose progressive music.

Traditional music is free of any metrical groupings such as measures and phrases. Once the harmonic accompaniment has been removed, creating progressive music which is free and unmetrical would be a relatively simple task. Setting scripture, which is unmetrical, to music could be one way to advance this

process. One might also encourage individuals to sing their testimonies in a progressive style. One should be cautious about using vocables. They seem to be an even greater barrier than the simplified musical style of traditional chant.

The struggle for cultural relevance in Navajo Christian worship and music is not something new. It appears that more Christians than ever are interested in reclaiming their culture for Christian worship. The Navajo are highly emotional when it comes to spirituality, but that has been taken away by the fundamentalist conservative approach (Begaye). Andrew Begaye says his people are ready to explode on the inside. They are religiously addicted; they need the freedom of a relationship (Begaye). The core of the gospel is all about restoration—restoration of a relationship with God.

Any study such as this also tends to uncover other areas for further research to consider. Future observations may be able to ascertain if Navajo Christians have been able to make any progress in allowing their worship and music to become culturally relevant. Will they be able to reclaim their culture for Christ? Will they learn to distinguish between culture and religion? Will their worship forms become their own? Will they be able to retain their language and set it to music in such a way that the Gospel message is clearly communicated? Will they get beyond the trappings of denominationalism and focus on pure theology? Similar research could also be conducted with other Native American tribes.

Only time will reveal the answers to the questions. As the gospel message is proclaimed God's Holy Spirit will move among the people and, if given the freedom, will develop an indigenous expression of all God intends the Navajo to be in Christ.

## **Appendix A**

### **Comparative Chart of Anglo and Navajo Worldviews\***

\*While the information in this appendix is drawn from several sources, much of it comes directly from information provided by Kluckhohn (“The Philosophy” 381) and Scates (1-3). These statements often represent generalizations, and exceptions can be found on either side. During the late twentieth century some of the differences between the two cultures became blurred, but this chart does provide a foundational understanding of the two worldviews.

## Anglo Worldview

- Scientific explanation of all natural phenomena.
- Basic quest is for happiness (often perceived to accompany wealth). Illness has natural causes.
- Competitive society: Competition in sports, contests at church and climbing the social ladder.
- Individualism: There are few fears as great as those of dependence on others and running out of money.
- Crisis orientation; planning ahead is the key to handling crises.
- Goals are task orientated.
- Self-worth relates to the individual and is achieved.
- Individual success is very important.
- Individual expression is a right.
- Communication is direct.
- Culture is low context.
- Willing to risk failure and be vulnerable.
- Majority rules.
- There are absolutes.
- No strong ethnic identity.

## Navajo Worldview

- Very little differentiation between natural and supernatural and many phenomena are perceived to be caused by the supernatural.
- Basic quest is for harmony. The price of disorder in human terms is illness.
- Non-competitive society: It is wrong to put oneself ahead of others, especially one's elders. Maintaining the traditional (rather than setting new goals) is a social value.
- Communal cooperative kinship assistance from birth to death, with strong group identity.
- Noncrisis orientation; little planning ahead for crises.
- Goals are relationship orientated.
- Self-worth relates to the group and is ascribed.
- Individual excellence is important.
- Individual expression is important only as it relates to the group.
- Communication is indirect.
- Culture is high context.
- Unwilling to risk failure—save face.
- Decision by consensus.
- There are no absolutes.
- Strong ethnic identity exists.

## Anglo Worldview

- Land is a commodity to be bought and sold.
- The individual is always responsible for his/her deviant actions, especially in our legal system.
- Language reflects male dominance. Masculine pronoun is used in most writing.
- Mastery over nature: nature is to be conquered; to be harnessed like a domestic animal.
- Future time orientation: Savings accounts, social security, life insurance, pension funds are all American institutions to provide for a better future.
- Human relations in the city are premised on simplex roles.
- Children have different rights than adults. The Bill of Rights, eg; the freedom of speech, does not always apply in the parent-child relationship.
- Divine guidance: the non-Christian believes in coincidence or fate; the Christian, in the hand of God guiding in circumstances.
- Marriage is an arrangement, economic and otherwise, between two individuals. The two spouses and the children, if any, are the ones primarily involved in any question of inheritance.

## Navaho Worldview

- Land is sacred. You cannot own it. You did not make it.
- The individual is seldom responsible for deviant actions. Witchcraft or drinking are accepted causes.
- Language reflects duality: Everything exists in two parts, the male and the female; the rivers, the mountains and plants have male and female counterparts.
- Harmony with nature: nature is one with man; the two are interrelated. To despoil nature is to bring harm on oneself and one's society. Nature is powerful.
- Present time orientation: What we have is to be shared. A Navaho is never poor if he has livestock and can feed all his relatives.
- Human relations are premised on multiplex roles; upon familistic ties.
- The inviolability of the individual extends to the children. Parents do not make decisions for them in their absence.
- Supernatural guidance is seen through divination, dreams, prophecy, and animals speaking, also rocks speaking to a person.
- Marriage is an arrangement between two families much more than it is between two individuals.



## Anglo Worldview

- A man's recognized children, legitimate or illegitimate, have a claim upon his property.
- Inheritance is normally from the father or from both sides of the family.
- As long as a wife or children survive, no other relatives are concerned in the inheritance unless there was a will to that effect.
- All types of property are inherited in roughly the same way.
- Life is not dangerous, we are masters of our own destiny.
- Almost anyone can be trusted until they have proven otherwise.
- There is nothing wrong with excesses in the good activities of life.
- Life is compartmentalized and few things in life are sacred.
- Human nature is either good or evil, but not both at the same time.

## Navaho Worldview

- Sexual rights are property rights; therefore if a man has children from a woman without undertaking during his lifetime the economic responsibilities which are normally a part of Navaho marriage, the children—however much he admitted to biological fatherhood—were not really his: He just stole them.
- Inheritance is normally from the mother, the mother's brother, or other relatives of the mother; from the father's side of the family little or nothing has traditionally been expected. Most of the father's property goes back to his relatives.
- While children today, in most areas, expect to inherit something from their father, they do not expect to receive his whole estate or to divide it with their mother only.
- Different inheritance rules apply to different types of property.
- Life is very dangerous; a delicate balance exists. You must maintain orderliness in those areas of life which are little subject to human control.
- Be wary of non-relatives (those outside your clan).
- Avoid excesses. Very few activities are wrong in and of themselves, but excess in the practice of any is dangerous.
- Life is holistic and all of life is sacred.
- Human nature consists of a delicate balance of good and evil.

## **Appendix B**

### **Musical Sampling\***

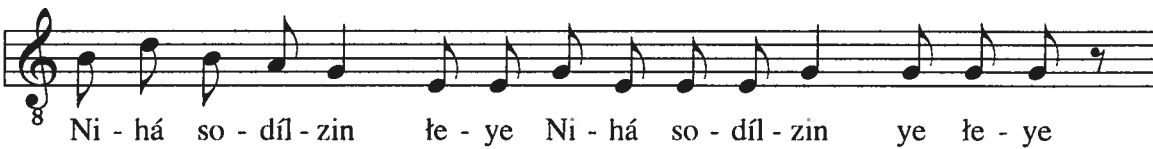
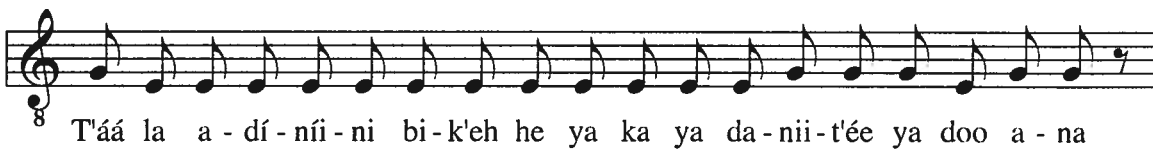
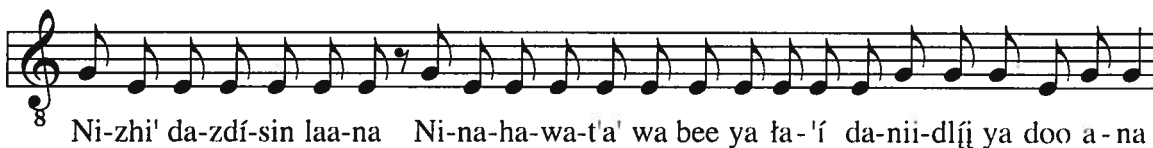
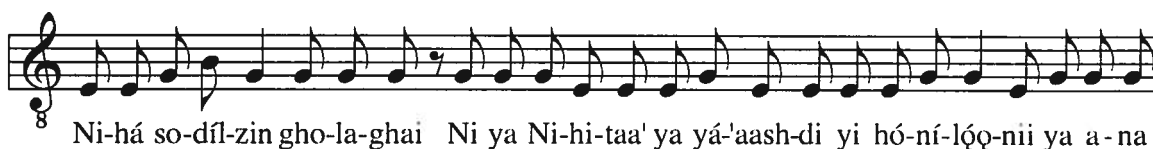
\*The musical selections included in this appendix have been transcribed at the pitch at which they were sung. For those songs which do not fall into regular metrical patterns, meter signatures and barlines are omitted; rather the music is grouped into phrases. Key signatures generally are not used unless the piece implies a strong tonic with some harmonic feeling. Exceptions will be noted when the selection was performed in a key with several flats or sharps; instead of including many accidentals throughout the transcription, a key signature is used. The songs by Ben Stoner are printed as notated by him with key signatures and barlines. Whenever possible, translations are provided for texts which are not readily available in English sources.

# Our Father

Text: Lord's Prayer  
Adapted by Lorenzo Yazzie

Music: Traditional Chant  
Adapted by Lorenzo Yazzie

♩ = ca. 120

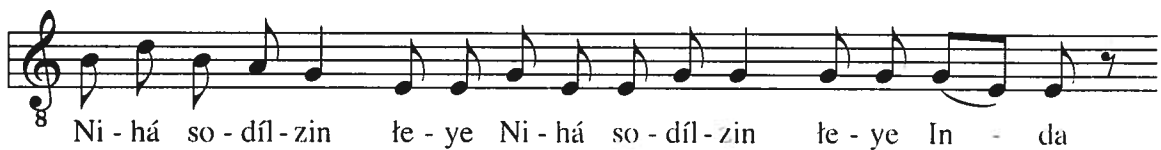




Díísh - jí bááh bee da - hii' - ná doo - lee - ti



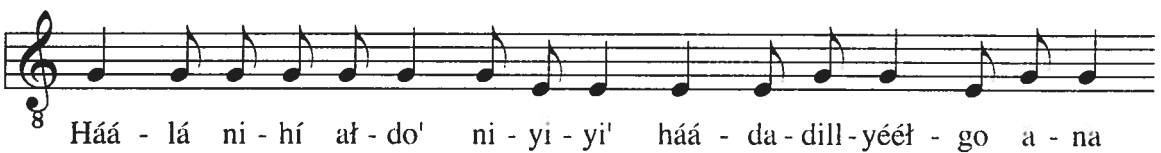
ni - há dít - léét - go a - na



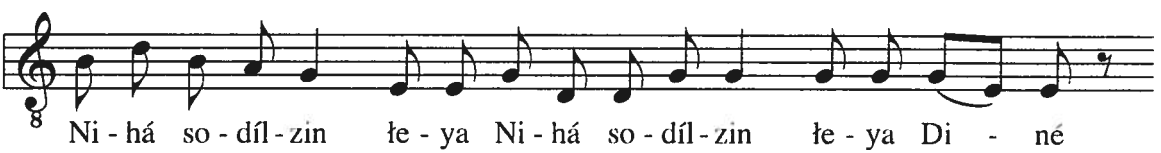
Ni - há so - díl - zin te - ye Ni - há so - díl - zin te - ye In - da



ní - ni' deil - 'a' yáa - ni' ni - hi - yi' háá - dít - dléet - go a - na



Háá - lá ni - hí ał - do' ni - yi - yi' háá - da - dill - yéet - go a - na



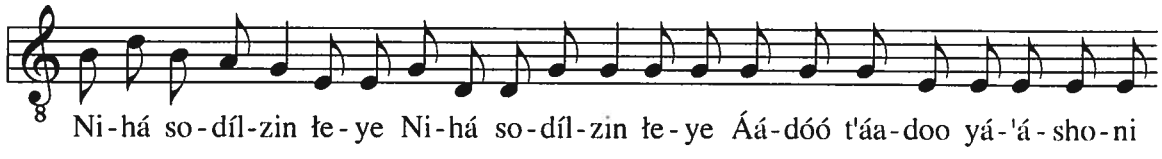
Ni - há so - díl - zin te - ya Ni - há so - díl - zin te - ya Di - né




ni - hí - ni' da - yíit - 'a' - go, Áá - dóó ba - 'á - t'e nts - 'íit -



8 kee - sii bi - ts'áá - jì' ni - hííl - náa na doo a - na



8 Ni-há so-díl-zin te-ye Ni-há so-díl-zin te-ye Áá-dóó t'áa-doo yá-'á-sho-ni



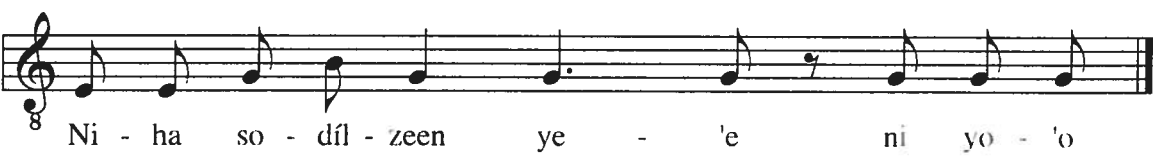
8 doo baa hi-hi-di-dí-'áat da a - na T'áá á - kó - t'ée-go á - hoo - l'áa doo a - na



8 Ni-há so-díl-zin te-ya Ni-há so-díl-zin te-ya E ya he ya E ye ye lo



8 Ni - ha so - díl - zin te - ya E ya he ya E ye ye la



8 Ni - ha so - díl - zeen ye - 'e ni yo - 'o

# Gloria

Gloria Text Translated  
by Sister Maria Sarto Moreau

Music: Traditional Chant Adapted  
by Sister Maria Sarto Moreau

♩ = ca. 100



E ne ya De-yin la De-yin la De-yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



A-ghá-hóó' áa-di Di-yin A-yóí-t'éii hó - lóq-go baa ni-hiř da hó-zhò go ná



T'áá éi bi-k'eh-go ni-hoo-kái' di-néé bee bi-k'eh da hó-zhòq doo ná.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



Di-yin A-yó-i - t'éí Di-yin-go Bó-hól-ní-hii yá-'áásh-di hó-ní-lóq-go ná



T'áá - ař - tso yi-k'eh dii-dlí - nii Ni - hi - taa' éi go na.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhóq-go De-yin e ye ye



Ho-zhóq-go ni-dááh-déé' ni-tsí-da-déel-go'-go ni-ch'i' so-da-diil-zin go ná



Dan - dí - níil - in go na.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhóq-go De-yin e ye ye



Baa a - héé' da-niid-zin go ná Ho-zhóq-go naa da-hwii'-niih go ná



Di - yin - go Bó - hol - ní - hii go ná.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhóq-go De-yin e ye ye

Di - yin A - yó - i - t'éii bi - ye' T'áá ła dil - t'é - hí - gíí ni - líi go ná.

De - yin la De - yin la De - yin la Hó - zhóq - go De - yin e ye ye

Di - yin - go Bó - hol - níi - hii go ná Di - yin A - yó - í - t'éii

bi - ch'i; a - yeel ál - ya go ná Ni - hi - taa' bei - ye' go ná.

De - yin la De - yin la De - yin la Hó - zhóq - go De - yin e ye ye

Ni ni - hoo - káá' di - né ba - 'áá - t'e' bi - yi' háá - hí - dléi go ná

Ni - haa jii - ní - baah go na.





De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



Ni ni - hi - taa' bi - n'ish-náá - jí dah sí - ní - dáii go ná



Ni - hi - so - di - zin ni - háá ñ - dii - léh go ná.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



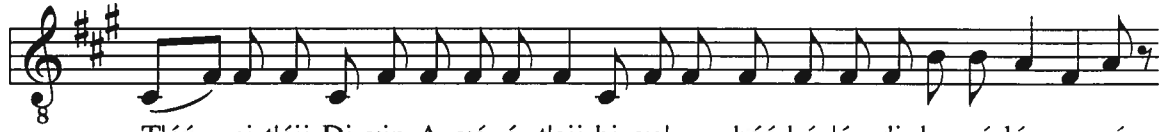
Háá - lá t'áá ni t'éí di - yin ní - lí go ná



T'áá ni t'éii Di-yin-go Bo-hól-níi - hii ni - léi go ná.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



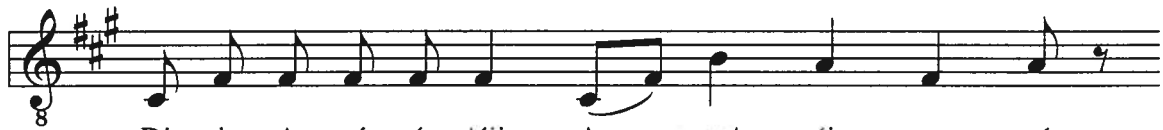
T'áá\_ ni t'éii Di-yin A-yó-í-t'èii bi-ye' a-gháá hó-'áa-di ho-ní-lòq go ná



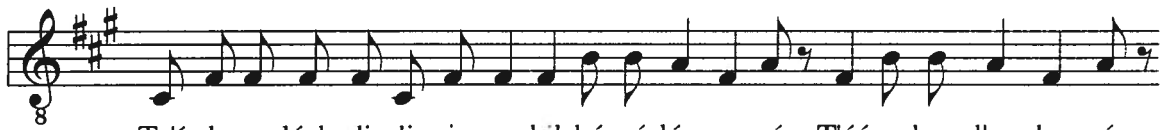
Áá-dóó Nít-dh'i di - yi - nii a - lááhk-di bił go ná.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la H)-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



Di - yin A - yó - í - t'éii A - taa' éi go ná



Ts'í-da a-láah-di di-yin-go bił hó-ní-lòq go ná T'áá a-hoo-l'aa doo ná.



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye



De-yin la De-yin la De - yin la Hó-zhòq-go De-yin e ye ye

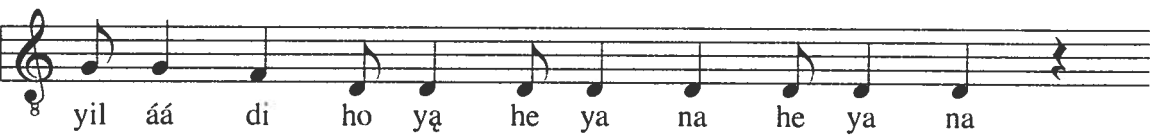
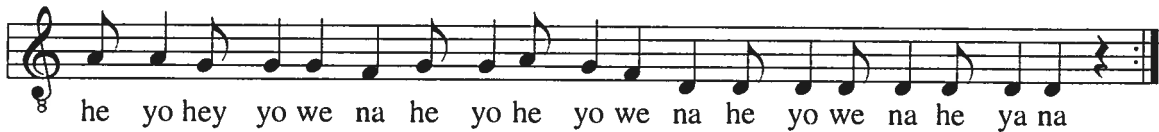
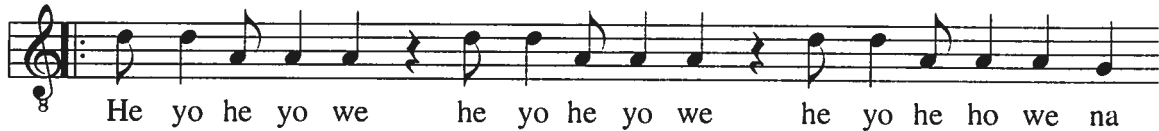
# Diyin A yoo'ateíí

(To the Great Spirit)

Text by Daniel Smiley

Music by Daniel Smiley

♩ = ca. 144





Shí Taa ya' ásh dí hoon í lq̄ ní Shi Taa ya' ásh dí hoo ní lq̄ ní



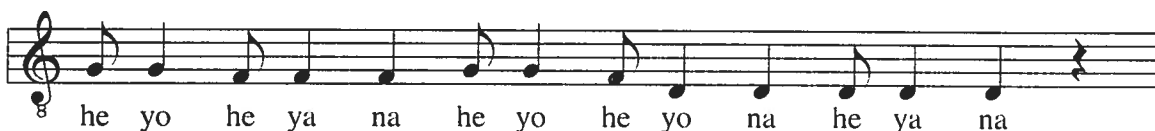
he yo he ya na he yo he ya na



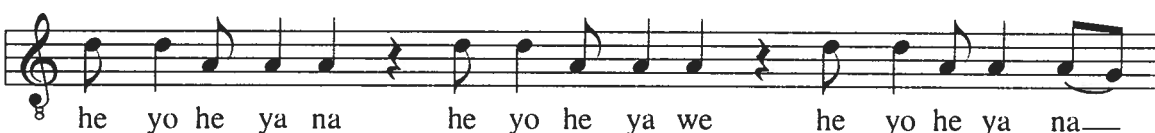
áá doo Di - yin God dóó bí dzil da il - úú - ní' - dí'



dá doo Di - yin God dóó bí dzil da il - úú - ní' - dí'



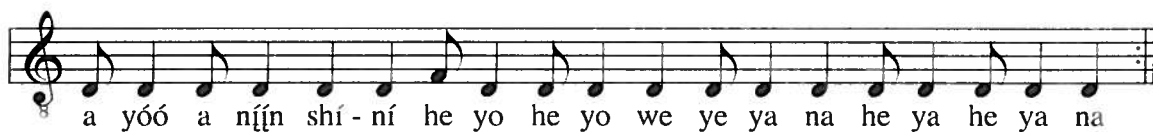
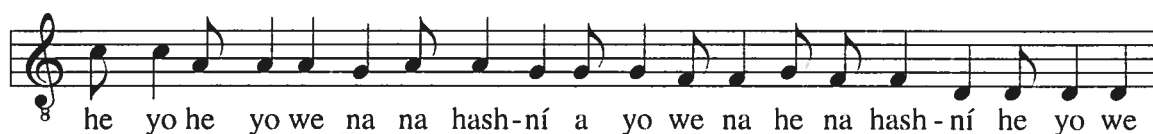
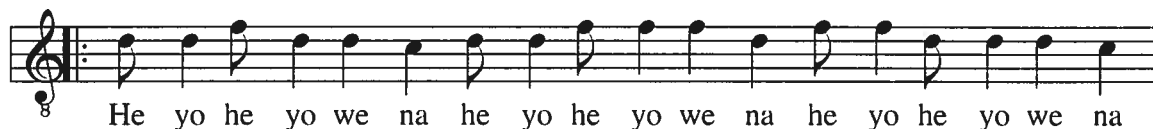
he yo he ya na he yo he yo na he ya na



he yo he ya na he yo he ya we he yo he ya na—



he yo he ya na he yo he ya— na he yo he ya na he ya na



## To the Great Spirit

My father in heaven,  
My father in heaven.

For the people of the earth think  
God does not know anything.

His wisdom goes beyond any human.

My father in heaven,  
My father in heaven.

For the people of the earth say  
God has no power.

He is more powerful than any human.

# Psalm 131:1

Text: Psalm 131:1

Music by Daniel Smiley

♩ = ca. 106



He ya ne ya la ho o e a ne ya la he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la



ho o e a e a ne ya la he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la



o ho o o ho o o e a ne he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la



o ho o ya ne ya ne he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la



o ho e o e ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la



o ho o o ho o o e ya ne he ya ne ya la



Bó-hól-ní-hii hi ní-lí-nii, yi shii— bó-hól-ni-hii yi ní-lí-nii, yi

shi - jéi bee doo á-daa hash'-niih da, ye ín-da á-doo á-daa jí-nish-dlí-go da.

shi - jéi bee doo á-daa hash'-niih da, ye ín-da doo á-daa jí-nish-dlí da he ya he

Bó - hól-níi-hii yi ní-líi-nii, yi Bó - hól-níi-hii yi ní-líi-nii, yi i hi ye i hi ye

he ya he ne ne le o ho o o e ya e ya na he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la

ho o e a e a ne ya la he ya ne ya la he ya ne ya la

ho o o ho o o ho o o e ya ne he ya ne ya la

A - yóo - 'á - daa - t'éii doo ía' - dee-shlíi - hii ye doo

bei - nish - t'íi di he i hi ye i hi ye

ni ya na haash-ni hi go na sha ni ya na hash-ni hi go na sha i hi ye i hi ye

Bó - hól - níi yi ní-líi-nii, yi Shii\_ bó - hól - níi-hii yi ní-líi-nii, yi

shi - jéi bee doo á-daa hash'-niih da na ye ín-da 'a doo á-daa jíi-nish-dlíi-go da.

shi - jéi bee doo á - daa hash' -niih da na ye

ín - da doo á - daa jíi - nish - dlíi - go he e ya he

Bó - hól-níi-hii hi ní-líi-nii, yi Bó - hól-níi-hii yi ní-líi-nii, ye i hi ye i hi ye





he ya ne ha le o ho o o e ya ne ya le he ya ne ya le he ya ne ya le



o ho o ya e ya ne ya le e ya ne ya le he ya ne ya le



o ho o o ho o o e ya ne he ya ne ya le



A - yóó - 'á - daa - t'éii\_\_\_ doo\_\_\_ ła' - dee-shłíi - fii ye



doo\_\_\_ da bei-nísh-t'íi da he ni hi ye ni hi ye



ni\_\_\_ na hash-ni hi go na sha ni\_\_\_ na hash-ni hi go na sha i hi ye i hi ye



Ból-hól-níi - hii ní - líi - nii ye Shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ní - líi - nii ye

shi - jéi bee doo á-daa jí-nísh-dlíi da he ín-da doo á-daa jí-nísh-dlíi-go da

shi - jéi bee doo á-daa-jíi-nísh-dlíi da he ín-da doo á-daa jí-nísh-dlíi da he ya he

o ho ne he ne le ne ye o ho ne le ne ne le ne ye i hi ye i hi ye

Shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ye shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ye

shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ye shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ye

ni\_\_\_ na hash-ni hi go na sha ni\_\_\_ na hash-ni hi go na sha

Shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ye shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - níi - hii ye

shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - ní - hii ye shii\_\_\_ bó - hól - ní - hii ye

ni\_\_\_ na hash-ni hi go na sha ni\_\_\_ na hash-ni hi go na sha

he ya ne ya ne ho o ho o e ya ne he ya ne ya le he ya ne ya le

o ho o o e ya ne ya le ne ya ne ya le he ya ne ya le

o ho o o ho o o e ya ne he ya ne ya le

# Four Night Chant (a)

Text: Traditional

Music: Traditional Chant

♩ = ca. 120



He ne ya e la yo e la yan -



ga a e la ya a we a he ne na



e la yo e la yan - ga a



e la ye a we a he ne na



Éí la - ya Di - né' ni - zho - ní' go naa - ghá a



Éí la - ya Di - né' ni - zho - ní' go naa - ghá a



e le yo a e le ya a

e le ya a we a he ne ya

Éí la - ya, Di - né' ni - zho - ní go naa - ghá a

Éí la - ya Di - né' ni - zho - ni go naa - ghá

e le yo o e le ya a

e le yo a we a he ne ya

e le yo a e le ya e le yo ho e le ya

e le yo o e le yan - ga a



e le yo a we a he ne ya



he ne ya e la na ha e le yan - ga



e le yo o e le ya a we a he ne ya



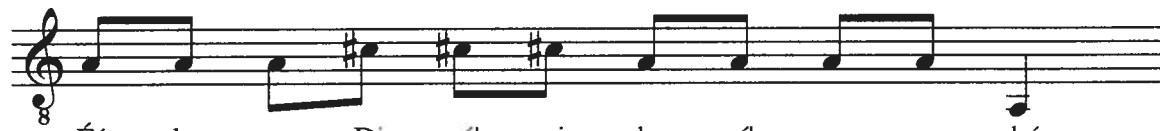
e la yo o e le yang e le yo o e le ya



e le yo o e le ya a



e le yan - ga we a he ne ya



Éí la - ya, Di - né' ni - zho - ní' go naa - ghá

Éí la - ya, Di - né' ni - zho - ní' go naa - ghá a  
 e le yo e le ya a  
 e le yo a we a he ne ya  
 e le yo ho e le yang e le yo ho e le ya  
 e le yo ho we la he na he ne ya  
 e le yo o e le ya e le yo o e le ya  
 e le yo o we a he ne ya

# Four Night Chant (b)

Text: Traditional

Music: Traditional Chant

♩ = ca. 118



He ne ya e la ya a e la han -



ga a e la ya e la yan - ga a



e la yo a we a he ne ya



e la ya a e la ya a



e la ya a e la ya



e la yo e la ya a



e la ya a we a he ne ya



e la yo o e la yan - - ga a

e la yo o e la yan - - ga

e la yo o e la ya a e le yan -

ga a e le ya a we a he ne ya

Ha - tíí - shá'? Ni - níí - náá a dí -

né' níí - zho - níí - go na na - - -

ghá? Ha - tíí - shá'? Bì - níí - náá - - -



a di - né' ni - zho - ní - go na na -



ghá? a we a we a we a he ne



a we a we a we a he



ne a we ya he a he ne ya



e la yo o e le yan - - ga



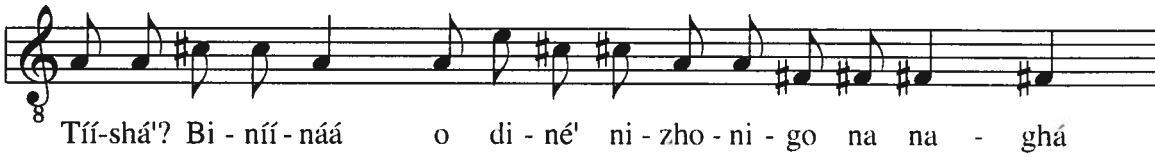
e la yo o e la yan - - ga



e la yo o e la yan - ga a e le



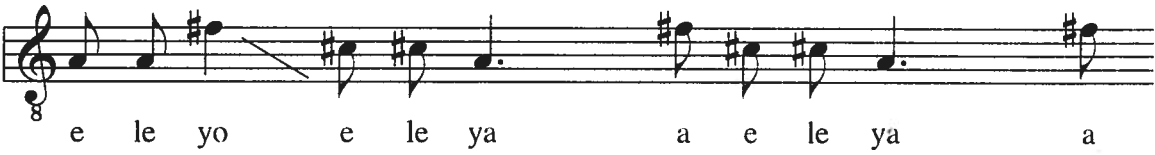
yo a e le ya a we a he ne ya -



Tíi-shá'? Bi - ní - náá o di - né' ni - zho - ni - go na na - ghá



Tíi-shá'? Bi - ní - náá o di - né' ni - zho - ni - go na na - ghá



e le yo e le ya a e le ya a




e le ya a we a he ne ya

# Four Night Chant (c)

Text Adapted  
by Daniel Smiley

Music: Traditional Chant


♩ = ca. 100



He\_ ne ya we la we e yo o we la na e ya a



we a na he ya a we a he ne ya



he\_ ne ya we a na e yo o we a na e ya a



we a na e ya a we a he ne ya



we\_ ne ya we a na e yan - ga



we\_ ne ya we a na e yan - ga a



we a na e ya na we a he ne ya

we ne ya we a na he yo a we a na e yan - ga a

we a na e ya a we a he ne ya

Je - sus bi - ni - náá di - né' ni - zho - ní - go na - ghá?

Je - sus bi - ni - náá di - né' ni - zho - ní - go na - ghá?

ni - zho - ní - go na - ghá? a we a he le

we a na he yo a we a na e ya

we a na he ya a we a he na ya

Je - sus bi - ni - náá di - né' ni - zho-ní-go na - ghá?

Je-sus bi - ni-náá di - né' ni-zho-ni-go na-ghá? a we a he a he ne ya

### Four Night Chant (a)

Look, that man is living in beauty.

### Four Night Chant (b)

Why does that man walk in beauty?

### Four Night Chant (c)

It is because of Jesus he walks in beauty.

# Jesus Bił Hashne'

Text by Elisha A. Hoffman  
Translated by Albert Tsosie

(I Must Tell Jesus)

Music as Sung by Mary Tsosie

♩ = ca. 92



Yis - dá - 'ii - níi - fii éi bí - din nish - í,



Yí - níft\_\_ ni - daa - zii shá k'éé-yooł - doł;



Jesus bił hash - ne', Jesus bił hash - ne',



Yí - níft\_\_ ni - daa - zii shá ta' - yoo - líft.



Jesus bił hash - ne', Jesus bił hash - ne',



T'áá sá - hí 'éi doo bí - neesh - 'áa da.



Jesus bił hash - ne', Jesus bił hash - ne',




Jesus t'éi - yá 'éi 'éi shaa 'á - hál - yá.

# Jesus Azee' íí' íní Nilí

Text by William Hunter  
Translated by Albert Tsosie

(The Great Physician)

Music as Sung by Mary Tsosie

 = ca. 144



1. Jesus a-zee - 'íí' - íní ní - lí, Éí bee ha-daał - t'é néi - dleeł, Bi -



ch'í' ni - da - hwii' - náa - nii éí T'áá bí yił ná - hoo-shoq - hii.

## Chorus



A-yóó - 'á - nool - nin - go díí sin, Bí-zhi' éí a-yóó - 'á - nool - nin, A -



yóó - 'á - nool - nin - go dii-ts'a', Éí Je - sus baa hó-zhóo - nii.



2. Ni-baa - há - gi - 'á - t'éii ał - dó' Ná yóó - 'a - doo - t'á, nił - ni,



Ash - t'e - ho - dí - t'é bee íí - diił, Naat - 'ách - 'ah éí ni doo - leeł.

(chorus)





3. Éí t'áá-'á-t'é bee baa hó-niih, Je - sus a - yóó-'óósh - ní - fii, Bí -



zhi' - bee a - k'i - ho - ji - dlí, Jesus - a - yóó-'óósh' ní - nii.

(chorus)



4. Yá' ąash-góó ni-kéehi - dii - kah, Á - kóó Je - sus bił dii - dleet,



Díí sin bee ił hó-zhóo-nii t'éí, Éí bee da-hwii - taat doo - leet.

(chorus)

# Dóólá'dó shí Diyin dá!

(What a Wonderful God)

Text by Daniel Smiley

Music by Daniel Smiley


♩ = ca. 96



1. "Hó - di - yin-go ha-za - gi hí - ní - ná doo" shí - do-nííd, "háá-lá



náá - 'á-hóó-t'i - go áál - yáá." Níř - ch'i Di - yi - nii — shi -

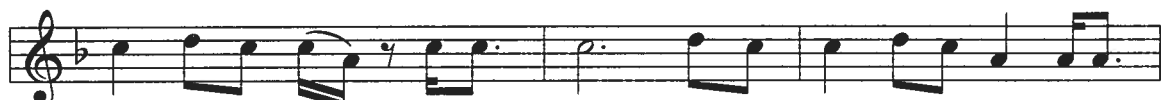


k'í hóó-lé-go, shíř ho - zhq - go ho-ghan-gó dá-'dii - yáa.


## Chorus



Dóó-lá - dó' shí Di - yin — dá a - yóó -



á - t'éí éí yéé — á-kás - zaaz. T'áá-dóó báá-nish-líí-níí éí-dí




shaa - yíí - le, — a - yóó - 'á - sho - níí-go éí á - díí shóól-t'aa!



2. Há - di - shíí Di - yin bi-ts'aa - dí náá-shá' nit-'éé, ts'í-da




yéé - go a - déé - shchx'ó ní - t'éé. Je - sus éí shíí - dáá-doo yíí-




zì-'go hásh-íí-dzííz, Shił ho - zhóo-go ho-ghan-gó dá-díí - yáá. (Chorus)



3. Há - dí - shíí ho-ghan-dí ná-nís - dzáá - go shi - 'éí, Je - sus



shi zéé - dóó-chił goo. "Shé' a - wéé Shaa - na - éí - dzáá -



lá'" di-doo - nił, Shił hó - zhóo-go — yá'áá-déé - shaat! (Chorus)

## What a Wonderful God

“There is a holiness highway,” I was told,  
“For this way was made for you.”  
The Holy Spirit came upon me,  
And with joy I start towards home.

### Chorus

What an awesome God,  
With greatness He is belted.  
I am not worthy to be given so much,  
With His love He holds me.

I was so lost from God, wandering.  
I had ruined my life.  
Jesus came to me and pulled me from my state;  
And with joy I started home.

One day I will come home  
And Jesus will put his arms around me and say  
“You have come home to me my child.”  
With joy I will enter.

# Háálá Ayóó Diyin

Text by Ray E. Begaye

(For He Is Holy)

Music by Ray E. Begaye

♩ = ca. 100



Háá - lá a - yóó Di - yin, doo - la - do' ni -  
 Je - sus yis - dá - shíft - t́, doo - la - do' ni -  
 Je - sus a - yóó shi - k'is, t'áá á - yi - sí



zhó - ní - da Háá - lá, háá - lá a -  
 zhó - ní - da Háá - lá, háá - lá a -  
 éí shi - k'is Háá - lá, háá - lá a -



yóó Di - yin \_\_\_\_\_  
 yóó Di - yin \_\_\_\_\_  
 yóó Di - yin \_\_\_\_\_



Je - sus a - yóó di - yin, doo - la - do' ni -  
 Je - sus ná - shíft - dzíí', doo - la - do' ni -  
 Je - sus baa hash - niih, t'áá éí t'éí



zhó - ní - da Háá - lá, háá - lá a -  
 zhó - ní - da Háá - lá, háá - lá a -  
 baa hash - niih Háá - lá, háá - lá a -



yóó Di - yin. \_\_\_\_\_  
yóó Di - yin. \_\_\_\_\_  
yóó Di - yin. \_\_\_\_\_

Ending



Hi - ní - náá, \_\_\_\_\_ Hi - ní -



náá Doo - leet hi - ní - náá \_\_\_\_\_ hi - ní -



náá Doo - leet laa. \_\_\_\_\_

## For He Is Holy

For He is holy, wonderful beauty.

For, for He is Holy.

Jesus is holy, wonderful beauty.

For, for He is holy.

Jesus saved me, wonderful beauty.

For, for He is holy.

Jesus healed me, wonderful beauty.

For, for He is holy.

Jesus is my friend, He is my friend.

For, for He is holy.

I praise Jesus, I praise Him.

For, for He is Holy.

Live, live, you will live,  
Live, you will live for the first time.


# Jesus Bił Deiyíniibááh

Text by Ray E. Begaye


(Jesus Is Our Chief)

Music by Ray E. Begaye

♩ = ca. 84



Je - sus bi - bee al-t'íí bee      dei-yí-nii - bááh



Je - sus bi - yíín dii ts'a' - go,      dei-yí-nii - bááh



Háá - lá Je - sus éí ná-t'áa - nii, —      á - yi - sí ni - lí



Bi - zhi' éí bee bi-nah - jí      dei-yí-níi - bááh



A - yoo - 'ó - 'ó - i - ní bee      dei-yí-níi - bááh



Nił - ch'i Di - yi-nii ni - híi - 'ge,      dei-yí-níi - bááh

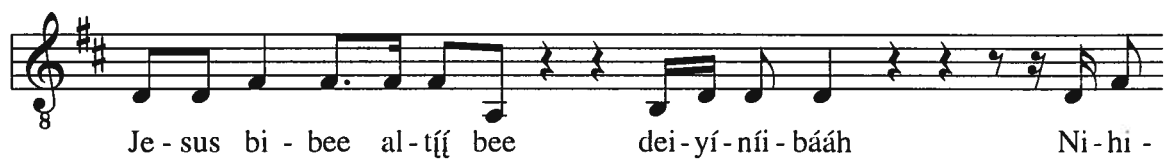


Háá - lá Je - sus éí ná-t'áa - nii, —      á - yi - sí ni - lí



Bi - zhi' éí bee bi nah - jí'      dei-yí-níi - bááh





Je - sus bi - bee al-tíí bee dei-yí-níi - bááh Ni - hi -



ts'íís - dáá - zhood-go, dei-yí-níi - bááh



Háá - lá Je - sus éi ná-t'áa - nii á - yi - sí ni - lí



Bi - zhi' éi bee bi-nah - jí' dei-yí-níi - bááh



Je - sus Bi - zaad bi-nah - jí' dei-yí-níi - bááh



Nił - ch'i Di - yi-nii ni - híí - ge, dei-yí-níi - bááh



Háá - lá Je - sus éi ná-t'áa - nii, á - yi - sí ni - lí



Bi - zhi' éi bee bi-nah - jí' dei-yí-níi - bááh.

# Dooládó' Ataa' Nilj̄ Da

Text by Alice P. Gorman

(What a Friend)

Music by Ray E. Begaye

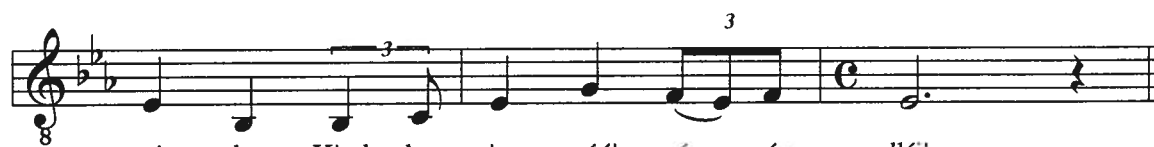
♩ = ca. 94



Doo - lá - dó', a - taa' ni - l̄j̄ da, Éí díísh  
 Di - yin bi - ye' t'áá - tá - 'íí - gíí Éí shá  
 Doo - lá - dó' yis dá - 'ii - níí da, Éí díísh  
 Bi - ts'íís yee shi - ch'ááh. íí - yáa - go Éí baa  
 Doo - lá - dó' a - k'is ni - l̄j̄ da, Éí díísh  
 Je - sus Christ bi - ne' yis - dzíí - go Shí doo



jí bi - k'í néis - dzá, Doo - lá - dó' baa ho - nee -  
 ni - néi - di - ní - 'á, Doo - lá - ló' baa ho - nee -  
 jí bi - k'í néis - dzá, Doo - lá - dó' baa ho - nee -  
 a - yóó - 'íí - nísh' - ní, Doo - lá - dó' baa ho - nee -  
 jí bi - k'í néis - dzá, Doo - lá - dó' bee ho - nee -  
 yéé - gi ti' - hooz - nii', Doo - lá - dó' baa ho - nee -



ni da, K'ad be - 'a - wéé' ná - sís - dl̄íí',  
 ni da, Díísh jí bee yis - dá - náás - dzá.  
 ni da, K'ad díísh jí shá - ná - hoos - dzin,  
 ni da, Díísh jí bee his - dá - náás - dzá.  
 ni da, Hool - 'áá - góó bee hi - nish - ná,  
 ni da, Díísh jí bee yis - dá - náás - dzá.

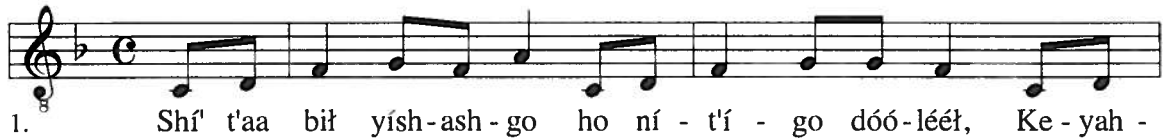
# Ayóó'ó'ní shíí níleh

(Fill My Way with Love)

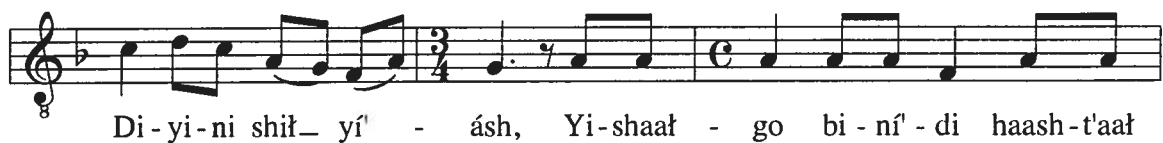
Text: Anonymous

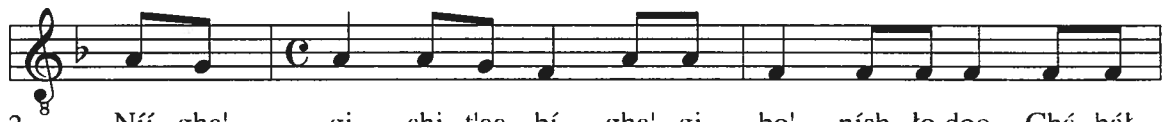
Music: Anonymous

♩ = ca. 102



## Chorus

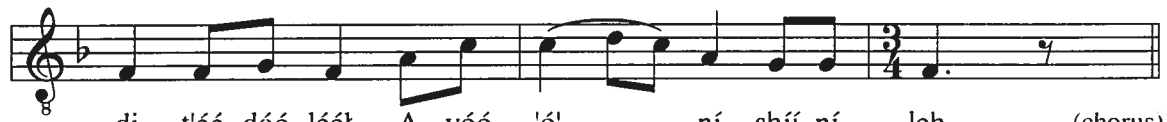




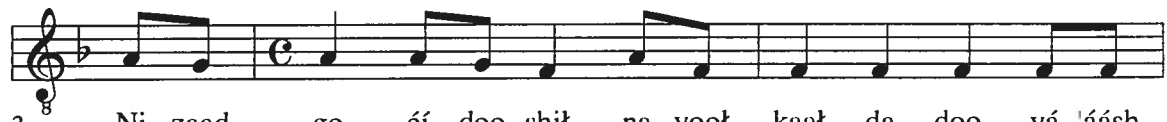
2. Níi-gha' - gi shi t'aa bí - gha'-gi bo' - nish-to doo, Chá-hát -



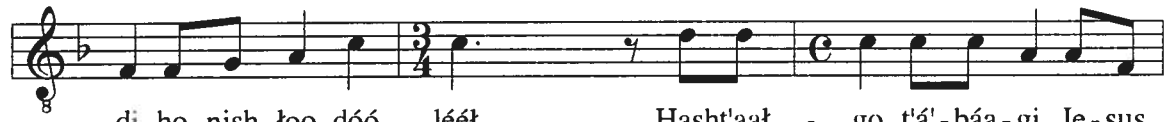
heeł éi be-yi dóó - dá. Shi sí - zii - nii bił hásh - t'é' ho -



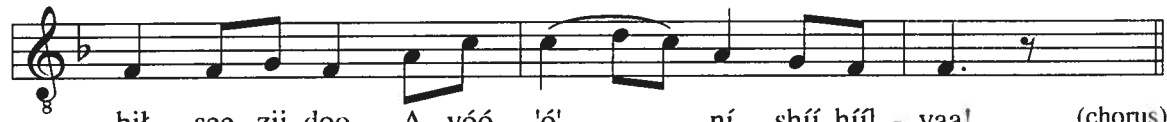
di - t'éé dóó-lééł, A-yóó - 'ó' - ní shíi ní - leh. (chorus)



3. Ni - zaad - go éi doo shił na - yooł - kaal da doo, yá-'áash



di ho-nish-too dóó - lééł. Hasht'aal - go t'a'-baq-gi Je-sus



bił see - zij doo. A-yóó - 'ó' - ní shíi híł - yaa! (chorus)

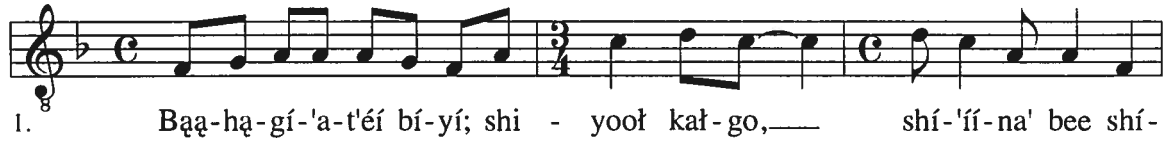
# Jesus éí shínaalníí

(Jesus Remembered Me)

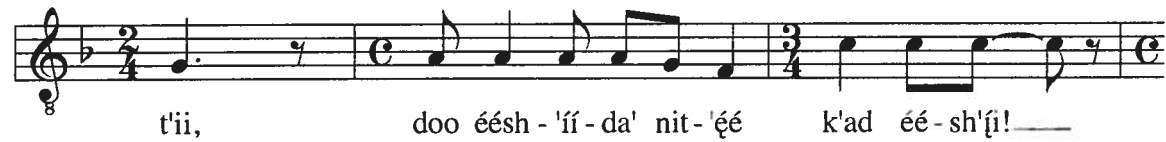
Text: Anonymous


Music: Anonymous

♩ = ca. 104




## Chorus



2.  God Bi-zaad bí-yí' doo shí - ch'í háá-dzii, — "Ts'í-da — aft-so

 shí' - ni - lí' shí' nii, — A - ko bi - ch'í — so -


 di-zíín — go Je-sus éi shí - diiz - ts'aa! (chorus)

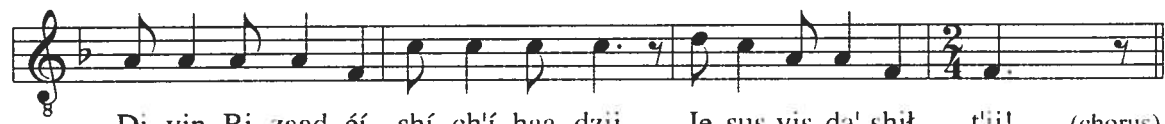
3.  Kad éi shí' hó-zhó doo shéé-dóók-chid, — á-ch'í na-hwii' - na

 doo yí - ní' ás - díí. — K'ád éi yá - 'aash - goo

 ni - kée nís-dzaa. Je-sus éi shí - naal - ní. (chorus)

4.  A - yé' yoo - íí - yá' - hii ná - há - lín - go ní - ya,

 Ná' - has - dzaan bi - yí' shí - ch'í na - hwíís-náá. —

 Di-yin Bi-zaad éi shí-ch'í haa-dzii, Je-sus yis-da' shí' - t'íí! (chorus)

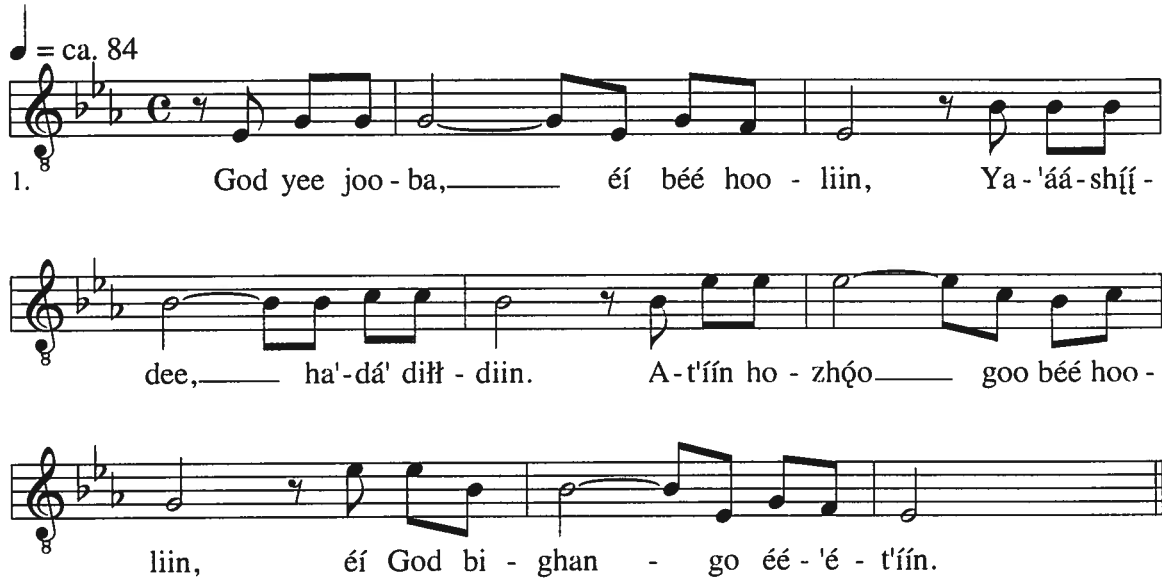
# God naasgo shá'áadiiniidiin

(Blessed Lord Shine On)

Text: Anonymous

Music: Anonymous

♩ = ca. 84



1. God yee joo - ba, \_\_\_\_\_ éi béé hoo - liin, Ya - 'áá - shíí -  
dee, \_\_\_\_\_ ha' - dá' diít - diin. A - t'íin ho - zhóo \_\_\_\_\_ goo béé hoo -  
liin, éi God bi - ghan - go éé - 'é - t'íin.


## Chorus




God náás - go shá - 'aa - díí - níí - díin, yíí - shaat - go  
béé \_\_\_\_\_ ho - t'íí dóó - léét. Shiít ho - níí - lo - go néé hoo -  
liin. God náás - go sha - 'a - díí - níí - diin!

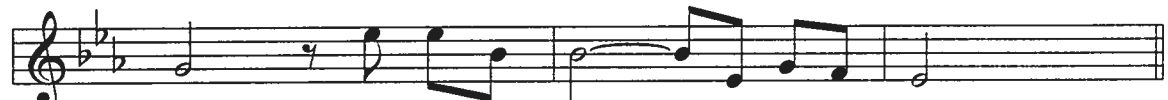
2.  DÍ-ni - ho - káá\_\_\_\_\_ t'áá - 'aʔ - tso goo, shi Di - yin

 God\_\_\_\_\_ á - díí-diil - dláád. Aʔ-k'é' - dí - ní\_\_\_\_\_ éí a-dííʔ-

 diíʔ, God néé hoo - liin\_\_\_\_\_ éí da ni - dzin. (chorus)

3.  Ni - kéé íl - déé\_\_\_\_\_ béi - niʔ - káh - go, ní - néé - ho -

 líin\_\_\_\_\_ go néí kah doo. Ni - ch'í go t'éí\_\_\_\_\_ ni - tsí - dei -

 kees, Hóó - láá - go ní\_\_\_\_\_ a - díí - nil - din. (chorus)



# Psalm 96:1-6

Text: Psalm 96:1-6

Music by Ben Stoner

♩ = ca. 108

Háhaazt'i'ígíí

Em Am Em

Hal-le-lu - jah Hal-le-lu - jah Hal-le-lu-jah Di-yin God baa da-hwii' - niih.

Em Am

1. Sin á-nii-díí— bee Bó-hól-níi - hii bi-ch'i' da-hoh-taa - léii.— Na-has -

Em Am

dzáán n - da - ho-nees - 'áá - déé' di - né da-noh - hii - nii,

Em Am

t'áá-'á-nół-tso Bó-hól-níi - hii bi-ch'i' da-hoh-taał. Hal-le-lu - jah.

(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)

Em Am

2. Ból-hól-níi - hii bi-ch'i' da-hoh-taał. Bí-zhi' baa da-hoh-niih. Bi -

Em Am

bee-yis-dá-'iil-dée - hii t'áá-'á-kwíí-jí baa ch'i-da-ho-yih'aah. Hal-le-lu - jah.

(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)


3.  Yee a-yóó-'á-t'èii— al - 'aą di-ne-'é bi-tah-góó baa da-hoř - ne'.

 di - né t'áá - 'ař-tso bi-tah - góó t'óó bi-k'e-da - 'a - yóí - go

 áá - níi - hii bee biř da-hoř-ne'. Hal - le - lu - jah.  
(Háhaazt'i'igíí)

4.  Háá - lá Bó-hól-níi - hii a-yóó - 'á-t'é áá - dóó t'áá - 'íi - yi -

 sí baa— ha-niih - go áá - dóó di-yin da - bi-di'-níi - nii

 t'áá-'ař-tso bi-láah - go dól - zin-go yááh ni - lí.— Hal-le - lu - jah.  
(Háhaat'i'igíí)


5.  Háá - lá ał - 'aa di - ne - 'é yi - ch'í' n - da-ha-łáii — t'áá ał-tso

 t'óó e-'el-yaii á - daa-t'éé - go doo da di-yin da, n - di Bó-hól-níi -

 hii éi yót-'ááh hi - ní - láii — á-yii - laa Hal-le - lu - jah.

(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)

6.  If í - dlí áá - dóó a - yóó 'é - 'é - t'é bi - ná-haaz - lá

 Bi - kin bií' so - ho - di - zin gó-ne' dziil ín - da a -

 yóó - 'á - nóol - ni - nii — hó - ló. Hal - le - lu - jah.

(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)

# Isaiah 40:31

Text: Isaiah 40:31

Music by Ben Stoner

♩ = ca. 104

Háhaazt'i'ígíí

Dm Gm



Hal-le-lu - jah. Hal-le-lu - jah. Hal-le-lu - jah. Hal-le-lu - jah.

Dm



Hal-le-lu - jah. Hal-le-lu - jah. Di-yin God bi-ba' á - da-noh-t'é.

Gm



Di-yin God bi-ba' á - da-noh-t'é. Di-yin God bi-ba' á - da-noh-t'é.

Dm Gm



1. N - di Di-yin God yi-ba' á-daa-t'éii, — Di-yin God yi-ba' á-daa-t'éii —

Dm Gm Dm



éí bii-néí n-daa - dleet-go da-bi-dziil doo, éí bii-néí n-daa -

Gm Dm



dleet-go da-bi-dzill doo; Di-yin God yi-ba' á-daa-t'éii, —

Gm Dm



Di-yin God yi-ba' á-daa-t'éii — a - tsá na-ha-lin-go wót-ááh

Gm

ń-da-ho-di-dleeh doo, a - tsá na-ha-lin-go wót-'ááh ń-da-ho-di-dleeh doo.

Dm Gm

Di - yin God yi - ba' á - daa - t'éii. Di - yin God yi - ba' á -

daa - t'éii a - haa yi-kah-go doo ch'ééh da - di-káah

Dm

da doo, a - haa yi-kah-go doo ch'ááh da-di-káah da doo

Gm

Di - yin God yi - ba' á - daa - t'éii, Di - yin God yi - ba' á -

Dm

daa-t'éii ín-da def - jeeh-go doo ch'ééh da-di-káah da doo. ín -

da def - jeeh - go doo ch'ééh da - di-káah da doo.

(Háhaazt'ígíí)

Dm Gm

2. N - di Di-yin God yi-ba' á-daa-t'éii ———— éí bii - néí n-daa - dleet-go da-bi-dziil

Dm Gm

doo; ——— a - tsá na-ha-lin-go wó-t'ááh n - da - ho - di-dleeh doo; a -

Dm

haa yi-kah-go doo ch'ééh da - di-káah ——— da doo; ——— ín -

Gm Dm

da deí - jeeh - go doo ch'ééh da - di-káah ——— da doo. ———

(Háhaazt'í'ígíí)

# I Corinthians 13:4-8

Text: I Corinthians 13:4-8

Music by Ben Stoner

♩ = ca. 94

Háhaazt'i'ígíí

(D)

A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó - ní - nii éí doo ni-neet - néeh— da.

1. A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó - ní - nii éí ní-zaad-góó ha-'ól - ní áá-dóó joo - ba',

áá-dóó joo - ba'. Éí ní-zaad - góó ha-'ól - ní áá-dóó joo - ba',

áá-dóó joo - ba'. A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó - ní - nii éí doo oot-ch'ííd— da,

éí doo oot-ch'ííd— da, doo n-di á-daa ha'-niih da, doo á-dei-dzó-dlíí— da,

doo bee á-dí - láah— da, doo bee á-dí - láah— da.

(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)

2. Doo t'áá shí t'éí ní - zin da, doo t'áá shí t'éí ní - zin da,

doo n-di bá-há-chijih da, doo n-di n-chó-'í-gíí a-k'i-jj'-yis-'áa da;  
(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)

3. Doo a-daa - ní - nii doo yaa bił hó-zhóq da. n-di t'áá-'aa-ní - nii

t'éí yaa bił hó-zhó, t'áá-'aa-ní - nii t'éí yaa bił hó-zhó.\_\_\_\_  
(Háhaazt'i'ígíí)

4. A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó - ní - nii éí t'áá - 'ał - tso - ní

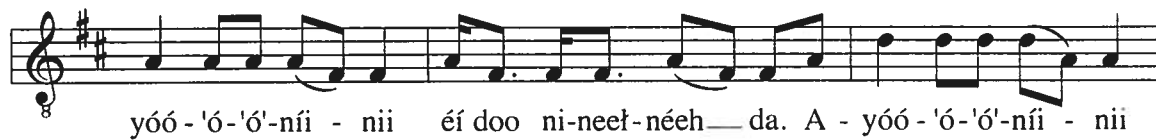
yéé - 'oo' - níih - go t'óó yił á - t'é, T'áá - 'ał - tso - jji' oo - dlá,

t'áá - 'ał - tso - jji' bił cho-hoo - 'í, T'áá - 'ał - tso - ní yi-ch'i' ha-'ól-ní.\_\_\_\_





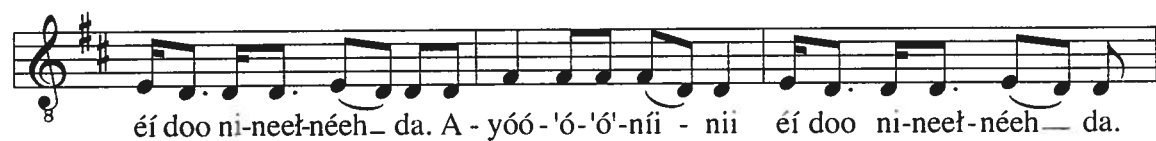
A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó' - ní - nii éi doo ni-neet - néeh — da. A -



yóó - 'ó - 'ó' - ní - nii éi doo ni-neet - néeh — da. A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó' - ní - nii



éi doo ni-neet - néeh — da. A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó' - ní - nii



éi doo ni-neet - néeh — da. A - yóó - 'ó - 'ó' - ní - nii éi doo ni-neet - néeh — da.

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