

SERENADE OF THE BELLS

*For you shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace:
The mountains and the hills shall break forth
Before you into singing,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.*

Isaiah 55:12

There is an old Mexican legend that tells of a young *senor* and *senorita* who lived long ago in a small Mexican village. According to the story, they fell in love. As was the custom, they went to the mission church to make arrangements for a marriage. There they learned that the mission bells would need to ring in order for them to officially wed.

The young couple looked at one another in dismay. "It cannot be," the *senor* protested. "The bells have been broken for a very long time. What shall we do?"

"We must have faith," his *senorita* told him. "If our love is of Dios (God), He will send a miracle." She looked deep into her loved one's eyes. "I just hope it is soon."

During the days that followed, the *senor* became more and more discouraged. Why did a miracle not come when they wanted it so badly? Surely the great love he felt for his *senorita* was pleasing to God.

"I will remain faithful all the days of my life," he vowed to the one he had chosen for his bride. "Should the marriage bells never ring, still I will love you."

"And I, you," she promised, her eyes wet with emotion.

That night, the village awakened in the dark hours. Great, rolling peals of music filled the air. Hastily donning clothing, the inhabitants raced outside. The mission bells sang their song, mighty and compelling. People for miles around hurried to the courtyard. No one was more joyful than the faithful *senor* and his *senorita*. The obstacle to their marriage had been overcome.

The next day, the young *senor* climbed up the bell tower to see how the bells that had been broken for years had rung out in the night. He looked, rubbed his eyes, and looked again. *The bells were still broken.*

He climbed down and, in hushed tones, told the villagers what he had discovered.

"We do not understand," the astonished people cried. "We heard the bells with our own ears. How can they still be broken?"

The oldest, wisest senora in the village hobbled over to the young couple. “Have you not heard that with love, nothing is impossible? Because of the love in these two hearts, even silent bells found their tongues and clamored for joy.”

Jesus said unto him,
If you can believe, all things are possible. Mark 9:23

May the deep, abiding love that allows miracles to happen live in your heart, and may the miracle bells ring out rolling peals of music and fill the air as you too, receive miracles of love in your life. And may you also learn to recognize and cherish the precious gifts your heavenly Father bestows on you this Christmas and throughout the coming year. Look for the miracle bells of heaven to ring.

Reading through my Christmas song book, I came upon this old favorite of mine. At the end it gave the author’s name and the date. I was surprised, as I had either down through the years forgotten who wrote it, or I really never knew. I was blessed though to read that it was written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) As you read it, or should I say sing it, for I could not just read it, may your heart be in agreement with the last line of each stanza; *Of peace on earth, good will to men!*

*I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the worlds repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good will to men!*

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. ~John 13:35

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ~John 15:12