



## GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Have you ever had a special piece of news that was so exciting that you felt like you wanted to go up on the roof of your home and shout it all over the neighborhood? It would be a thrilling experience, wouldn't it?

Now, imagine someone who had just learned about how Jesus was born in Bethlehem, that He was the Son of God, had lived and worked among men showing them the real meaning of Love, and then offered Himself as a sacrifice to die on a Cross for all of mankind. This would be great *news* that would need a mountain from which to shout it, wouldn't it?

This is very much the way some of the black people felt many, many years ago who had been brought from Africa as slaves. The whole story of Jesus was told them over and over in the local churches as part of their way of living. All of them, just like you and me, loved the Christmas story.

Those natives of Africa who had been so drastically uprooted and transplanted here in America had a wonderful, natural way of making music. They loved to sing. Most of them seemed to be able to make up simple, beautiful, haunting melodies that were most expressive of their deepest feelings. Many of these melodies still exist and are well known to us, both black and white persons. They are called *Negro Spirituals*.

Our spiritual, "Go, tell it on the mountain" expresses very well the feeling of shouting or singing wonderful news to the whole world about the birth of that wonderful Baby. It tells of His birth in a manger and of the shepherds and the angels singing. It tells all of us to go out everywhere and spread the wonderful news "that Jesus Christ is born!"

No one actually knows how this music was originated. It is similar to some other melodies from about the period of our Civil War. One of them is called "Tramp, tramp, tramp the boys are marching." Can you hear how "Go, tell it on the mountain" sounds like that old song when your choir director plays it on the piano?

This melody is called a *pentatonic* tune. Do you know why it has been given this musical name? What is the *pentatonic* scale? How many notes does it have? \_\_\_\_\_

How many notes does our major scale have? \_\_\_\_\_

Ask your director to explain such a scale to you and the differences between pentatonic and our major scale, then write here which notes of our *major* scale are usually omitted to form the *pentatonic* scale. \_\_\_\_\_

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