



AP 224 - The Nativity Hymn in the original language. [Thesbohtha lalaha.](#)

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Call Number	AP 224
Part Number	Part I – Syro Malabar Church
Title	The Nativity Hymn in the original language. Thesbohtha lalaha.
Duration	5:46
Place of Recording	Track from the Music CD - Solemn Qurbana by Fr. George Nellikkatt
Date of Recording	
Youtube URL	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3AuLq5X0Xwl
Video Segment(s)	

Notes

The Nativity Hymn in the original language. [Thesbohtha lalaha.](#)

Angels' song at the birth of Christ in its original language. '[Thesbohtha lalaha bamraume](#)'. Glory to God in the highest. [Fr. George Nellikkatt](#). Courtesy: Babu Puthumana.

Note. The [Aramaic project](#)- team would like to wish our subscribers around the world a Merry Christmas with the song that the angels sang to the shepherds, in its original language. Because Aramaic was the native language of the area at that time and the only language the illiterate shepherds would understand. From the early Christian era, important liturgical celebrations in the Syriac tradition, especially Qurbana and the Hours, started with this hymn. In Qurbana, the hymn sets the tone of the particular chronology of the salvation history. The version we hear in this video is from the [Solemn Qurbana](#) by a celebrated singer, [Fr. George Nellikkatt](#). Fr. Nellikkatt was blessed with an unusual tone and a high range of voice that would remind us of the vocal quality of famous opera singers in the West. Babu Puthumana, a friend and admirer of Fr. Nellikkatt, made an audio recording of the Qurbana. But for the initiative of Babu Puthumana, the outside world would not have known that such a great talent existed in Kerala. [Fr. Nellikkatt's](#) vocal style is reminiscent of the pre-amplification era when singers had to reach out to a large number of people who occupied a wide space. In order to accomplish that they had to employ a high vocal register. Fr. Nellikkatt's vocal style is an excellent example. The text is sung three times in ascending pitch registers. Reiterating certain texts three times used to be a characteristic of Syriac liturgy. The singing brings out the solemnity and the grandeur of the text and the joyful occasion. Sadly, the vernacular versions of this song have not captured those elements. We hope the Syriac version will become part of the liturgical experience of the Syro Malabar Catholics in the near future. Christian Musicological Society of India is grateful to Babu Puthumana for granting permission to post this on our channel. We are also grateful to Ken Rudzwick and the Maspeth Federal Savings Bank in Maspeth, New York, and Nuala Joyce of Middle Village in New York for appreciating the value of the Aramaic Project. Slamma. Merry Christmas.

[Joseph J. Palackal, CMI](#)
New York Christmas, 2020.



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- [AP 70c](#) - [Thešbōhthā](#). Solemn Qurbana. Fr. George Plathottam
- [AP 80c](#) - "[Thesbohtha l'alāhā](#)" (Glory to God) Excerpt from Solemn Qurbana in Syriac

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