O Come, O Come Emmanuel



"Lord, this evening, we pause to prepare our hearts for a most beautiful celebration: Your birth and coming to earth as our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Clear our minds so we can focus on You and the joy You bring to us through Your gift of salvation. May the same thrill and anticipation that filled Mary, the chosen mother of Jesus, consume us and draw us close to You. May our spirits cry out, "Alleluia," with the host of angels who first delivered the good news of great joy to humble, awe-struck shepherds that night so long ago—the news that would literally one day be heard around the world. Help us remember and reflect on the awesome prophecies foretelling Your birth since the beginning of time. Give us eyes of faith to see on this side of the Cross what prophets chose to believe through promises and visions. Immanuel, God with Us, Prince of Peace, the Son of God, Messiah may all that You are saturate our senses and fill our hearts with both gratitude and worship as we bow this evening before You and offer our prayer to You. Empty us of sin—and anything that could inhibit our understanding or block the beautiful celebration of Your birth. We surrender all, that we may receive Your all this Christmas Eve night. Whether it's one of us or an entire family, we want to prepare our hearts for You even as You are preparing a place for us to join You one day. May every thought, every desire, every word, and every giftgiving action this special night usher us into that place where You will meet us as we are. May the meditation of our hearts be acceptable to You and bring You the glory and honor You so deserve. Just as the three Magi brought their offerings in celebration of Your birth, we bring You gifts, too: the declaration of our obedience and devotion to You, the quieting of our hearts and spirits, and the joyful overflow of worship and adoration. May this preparation night be a holy night as we once again receive and celebrate Your great gift to us this Christmas. In Your precious name, Amen."

He Shall Reign Forevermore

Words and Music by CHRIS TOMLIN and MATT MAHER Arranged by Randy Gill







He Shall Reign Forevermore - 4



The First Noel



WORDS: Gilbert's Some Ancient Christmas Carols, 1823

MUSIC: W. Sandys' Christmas Carols Ancient and & Modern, 1883

Har. Bramley's & Stainer's Christmas Carols Old & New, Arr. John Stainer, 1871



Noel

Words and Music by CHRIS TOMLIN, ED CASH and MATT REDMAN Arranged by Chad Higgins





The Lord says, "Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are one of the smallest towns in Judah, but out of you I will bring a ruler for Israel, whose family line goes back to ancient times." So the Lord will abandon his people to their enemies until the woman who is to give birth has her son. Then those Israelites who are in exile will be reunited with their own people. When he comes, he will rule his people with the strength that comes from the Lord and with the majesty of the Lord God himself. His people will live in safety because people all over the earth will acknowledge his greatness, and he will bring peace.

- Micah 5:2-5a

"O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put this peace into all of our hears, for which we sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give to us. Help us to know one another better, and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. Reveal to us your beauty, holiness, and purity. Awaken in our hearts, love and gratitude for your infinite goodness. Join us all together in your love, and give us your heavenly peace."

- Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli

What Child Is This?



The Lord says, "Here is my servant, whom I strengthen—the one I have chosen, with whom I am pleased. I have filled him with my Spirit, and he will bring justice to every nation. He will not shout or raise his voice or make loud speeches in the streets. He will not break off a bent reed nor put out a flickering lamp. He will bring lasting justice to all. He will not lose hope or courage; he will establish justice on the earth. Distant lands eagerly wait for his teaching." God created the heavens and stretched them out; he fashioned the earth and all that lives there; he gave life and breath to all its people. And now the Lord God says to his servant, "I, the Lord, have called you and given you the power to see that justice is done on earth. Through you, I will make a covenant with all peoples; through you, I will bring light to the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind and set free those who sit in dark prisons. "I alone am the Lord your God. No other god may share my glory; I will not let idols share my praise. The things I predicted have now come true. Now I will tell you of new things even before they begin to happen."

- Isaiah 42:1-9

"Dear God, help us experience the wonder of Christ on this blessed evening. May we feel awe for the ultimate gift you've given humanity. Reach out to us so we can perceive your wonderful presence. Help us to see the everyday miracles of your work all around us during this most wonderful time of the year. May the light of hope you offer help us transcend our worries and inspire us to trust you. Light broke through the darkness of night as angels announced Jesus Christ's birth. As we look at Christmas lights tonight, may we be reminded of the wonder of the Christ when shepherds received the good news from your messengers. Let every burning candle and twinkling light bulb in this place remind us that you are the Light of the World. When we're outside this evening, remind us to look up at the sky. Let the stars we see help me ponder the wondrous Star of Bethlehem that guided people to you. May we see you in a new light because of the wonder of Christ."

Away in a Manger



WORDS: Anonymous, 1885; St. 3 John Thomas McFarland, 1892

MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

MUELLER 11.11.11.11. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them. You have given them great joy, Lord; you have made them happy. They rejoice in what you have done, as people rejoice when they harvest grain or when they divide captured wealth. For you have broken the yoke that burdened them and the rod that beat their shoulders. You have defeated the nation that oppressed and exploited your people, just as you defeated the army of Midian long ago. The boots of the invading army and all their bloodstained clothing will be destroyed by fire. A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And he will be our ruler. He will be called, "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Eternal Father," "Prince of Peace." His royal power will continue to grow; his kingdom will always be at peace. He will rule as King David's successor, basing his power on right and justice, from now until the end of time. The Lord Almighty is determined to do all this."

- Isaiah 9:2-7

"Your name is still called 'Wonderful,' 'Counselor,' 'The Mighty God,' 'The Everlasting Father,' and 'The Prince of Peace.' As Your children, we cry out for a fresh filling and a new awareness of who You are. We choose by faith to make the "good news of great joy" a reality in our own lives so that others can see us as lighted trees of life pointing to You. We know one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that You are Lord. And we also know that peace on earth can only come when hearts find peace with You. You are still our Joy. You are still our Peace. You are no longer the babe in the manger. You are Lord of lords and King of kings. And we still celebrate You as Lord and King—this Christmas and always."

– excerpt from "A Christmas Prayer for Peace" by Rebecca Barlow Jordan

Mary, Did You Know?



WORDS: Mark Lowry, 1991 MUSIC: Buddy Greene, 1991

Silent Night, Holy Night



A Christmas Alleluia





"Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Almighty God, who has poured upon us the new light of your Incarnate Word, Grant that the same light enkindled in our hearts may shine forth in our lives through Jesus Christ our Lord, and we each say, Amen."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

"May God grant you the light of Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ. Go in peace."

- Wilda English