

Christmas Carols - Part 3

Do You Hear What I Hear?

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Part of Christmas at Gateway 2022 Christmas Carols

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The number one highlighted passage in all Amazon e-books:

do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

—Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV)

The number one highlighted passage in all Amazon e-books invites us to seek “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.”

Noël Regney wrote the words to this carol, and his wife Gloria Shayne wrote the tune during the heart of the Cuban

Missile Crisis, in which the threat of nuclear war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union seemed imminent.

Regney had often prayed that World War II would be the war that ended all wars, and yet, the Korean War and then the Vietnam War came along, and Regney wondered if the world would ever find real peace.

As Regney walked down the street in New York and watched mothers pushing babies in strollers, he thought back to the one moment in time when he felt the Lord had offered people a chance to live without fear, hatred or conflict, and he wrote a poem about the first Christmas.

At the height of the Cold War, millions like Regney had this deep desire for peace, and this song's words and unique melody gave voice to this desire.

And as the song makes very clear, though it's based on Matthew 2 and Luke 2, it takes a lot of poetic license, based on characters both mentioned and not mentioned in the Bible.

Verse 1

***Said the night wind to the little lamb,
Do you see what I see? (Do you see what I see?)
Way up in the sky, little lamb
Do you see what I see? (Do you see what I see?)
A star, a star, dancing in the night
With a tail as big as a kite
With a tail as big as a kite***

...And behold, the star that [the wise men] had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.

—Matthew 2:9 (ESV)

It's helpful to think of not just the shepherds but the lamb of verse 1, the sheep, and *all of Creation* responding to the message of the birth of the Christ child.

Verse 2

**Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy
Do you hear what I hear? (Do you hear what I hear?)
Ringing through the sky, shepherd boy
Do you hear what I hear? (Do you hear what I hear?)
A song, a song high above the trees
With a voice as big as the sea
With a voice as big as the sea**

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

—Luke 2:8-14 (ESV)

Our carol takes us to hearing the glorious sound of this angelic chorus singing across the heavens, "With a voice as big as the sea."

Verse 3

**Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king
Do you know what I know? (Do you know what I know?)
In your palace warm, mighty king
Do you know what I know? (Do you know what I know?)
A Child, a Child shivers in the cold
Let us bring him silver and gold
Let us bring him silver and gold**

The king is probably one of the three wise men, with Regney getting caught up in the misunderstanding about

the wise men and, instead using the designation of “king” from pop culture.

Verse 4

***Said the king to the people everywhere
Listen to what I say! (Listen to what I say!)
Pray for peace, people, everywhere
Listen to what I say! (Listen to what I say!)
The Child, the Child sleeping in the night
He will bring us goodness and light
He will bring us goodness and light***

This prayer for peace is something that we *wish* human beings *could accomplish*, but history clearly shows that it is beyond our ability, and so we need God to bring *His peace*.

Regney’s carol gave the people a hope that this “Child,” now “sleeping in the night,” would bring to America *and the world* “goodness and light.”

Heavenly host: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

—Luke 2:14 (ESV)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

—Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV)

Eventually, at Jesus’ second coming, there will be outward world peace, but until then, the promise of peace still stands, yet it’s a peace within us.

Jesus: “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give.

So don't be troubled or afraid."

—John 14:27 (NLT)

The world can't give this kind of peace because it can't destroy the inner root of what harms peace, our broken relationship with God, our sin, which manifests itself over and over outwardly in our damaged and disrupted relationships with others.

Jesus came to take upon himself our sin, that we might be forgiven and given the gift of right standing, or righteousness, with God.

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.

—Romans 5:1 (NLT)

Romans speaks of the ultimate peace, a peace that doesn't wait until Jesus' coming again but can be with us now, a peace the world can neither give nor take!

do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

—Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV)

"No God - No Peace; Know God - Know Peace!"

Next Week - *O Little Town of Bethlehem*