

Bible Society is on a global mission to offer the Bible to every man, woman and child, and help you make sense of it. This is because we believe that when people engage with the Bible, lives can change - for good. Read the quotes we've inserted in this booklet to get a flavour for what the Bible says about Christmas. We hope singing these carols helps you experience the nativity story for yourself.

## HOPE

*in our villages, towns & cities*

HOPE ([hopetogether.org.uk](http://hopetogether.org.uk)) supports churches as they work together, sharing God's love in their communities with words and practical action. We encourage Christians to be ready to explain why they follow Jesus. Ask a Christian to tell you more about the person we are singing about today.

# 1 O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

1. O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye,  
to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him,  
born the King of angels;

**Chorus:**

O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.

2. God of God,  
Light of Light,  
lo, he abhors not the  
Virgin's womb;  
Very God,  
begotten not created;

(Chorus)

3. Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation;  
Sing, all ye citizens of  
heaven above!  
Glory to God,  
glory in the highest;

(Chorus)

**Words**

John F Wade 1711-1786

trans. by Frederick Oakeley and others

Come, let us  
praise the LORD!  
Let us sing for  
joy to God, who  
protects us!

Psalms 95.1

'begotten'  
from

'exultation'  
jump for joy

# 2 ANGELS FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

1. Angels from the realms of glory  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
ye who sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth

**Chorus:**

Come and worship,  
Christ, the newborn King,  
come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn King!

2. Shepherds, in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night;  
God with man is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant Light

(Chorus)

3. Sages, leave your contemplations,  
brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations,  
ye have seen his natal star

(Chorus)

4. Saints, before the altar bending,  
watching long in hope and fear,  
suddenly the Lord descending,  
in his temple shall appear

(Chorus)

**Words**

James Montgomery 1771-1854

A child is born to us!  
A son is given to us!  
And he will be our  
ruler. He will be called,  
"Wonderful Counsellor",  
"Mighty God", "Eternal  
Father", "Prince of Peace".

Isaiah 9.6

'yonder'  
in the distance

'sages'  
wise men/people

'natal'  
relating to birth

### 3 SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT

1. Silent night, holy night,  
all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother  
and child.  
Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night,  
shepherds quake at the sight;  
glories stream from  
heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour is born!
3. Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light;  
radiant beams from thy holy face  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

**Words**  
Joseph Mohr 1792–1848  
trans. by John F Young 1820–1885

And God showed  
his love for us by  
sending his only Son  
into the world, so  
that we might have  
life through him.

1 John 4.9

### 4 JOY TO THE WORLD

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is  
come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him  
room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and  
nature sing.
2. Joy to the world, the Saviour  
reigns!  
Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods,  
rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
3. He rules the world with truth  
and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his  
righteousness,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his  
love.

**Words**  
Isaac Watts 1674–1748

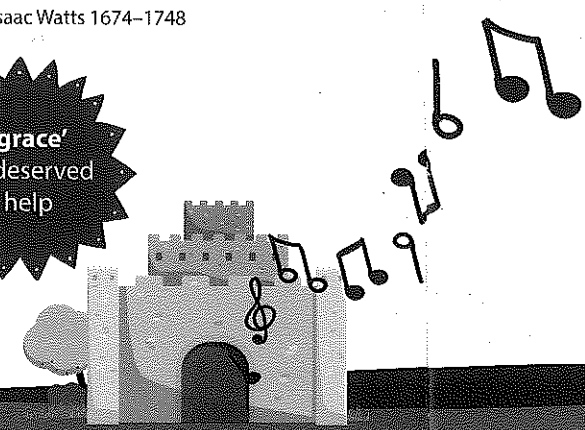
**'grace'**  
undeserved  
help

### 5 IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

1. In the bleak midwinter,  
frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron,  
water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter,  
long ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold  
him, nor earth sustain;  
heaven and earth shall flee  
away  
when he comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter a stable  
place sufficed  
the Lord God  
Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.
3. Angels and archangels may  
have gathered there,  
cherubim and seraphim  
thronged the air;  
but his mother only,  
in her maiden bliss,  
worshipped the beloved  
with a kiss.
4. What can I give him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd,  
I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise Man,  
I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him;  
give my heart.

**'cherubim  
& seraphim'**  
angelic  
beings

**Words**  
Christina G Rossetti 1830–1894



6

# HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

1. Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th' angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King!"
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord;  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th' incarnate Deity,  
pleased as man with man to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"
3. Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that man no more may die,  
born to raise the sons of earth,  
born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King!"

## Words

Charles Wesley 1707-1788; alt.  
by George Whitefield and others

Suddenly a great army of  
heaven's angels appeared  
with the angel, singing  
praises to God:

*"Glory to God in the  
highest heaven,  
and peace on earth  
to those with whom  
he is pleased!"*

When the angels went  
away from them back into  
heaven, the shepherds  
said to one another, "Let's  
go to Bethlehem and  
see this thing that has  
happened, which the  
Lord has told us."

Luke 2.13-15

**'reconciled'**  
made friends again

**'incarnate Deity'**  
God became human

**'Emmanuel'**  
God with us

7

# AWAY IN A MANGER

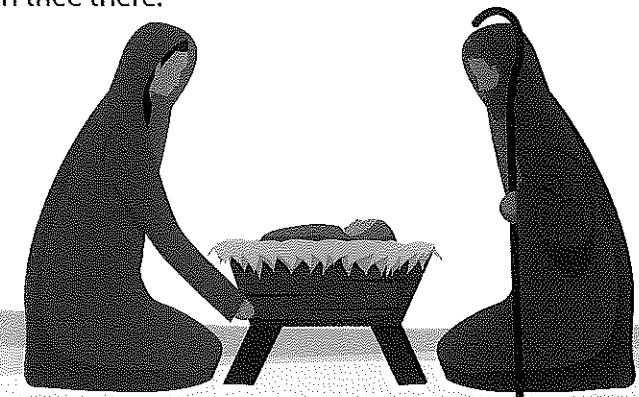
1. Away in a manger,  
no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid  
down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky  
looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus,  
asleep on the hay.
2. The cattle are lowing,  
the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus,  
no crying he makes;  
I love thee, Lord Jesus,  
look down from the sky  
and stay by my side  
until morning is nigh.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus.  
I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever,  
and love me, I pray;  
bless all the dear children  
in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven  
to live with thee there.

## Words

Anonymous

She gave birth to her  
first son, wrapped  
him in strips of cloth  
and laid him in a  
manger – there was  
no room for them to  
stay in the inn.

Luke 2.7





## 8 WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground; the angel of the Lord came down, and glory shone around.
2. "Fear not!" said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled minds. "Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind!"
3. "To you, in David's town, this day is born of David's line a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign:
4. The heavenly babe you there shall find to human view displayed, all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands, and in a manger laid."



## 9 O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie; above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love. O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the king, and peace to men on earth!
3. How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given; so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven. No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Words  
Phillips Brooks 1835-1893

'meek'  
quiet and gentle

'tidings'  
news

## THEIR FLOCKS

5. Thus spake the seraph and forthwith appeared a shining throng of angels praising God, who thus addressed their joyful song:
6. "All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace; goodwill henceforth from heaven to earth begin and never cease!"

Words  
Nahum Tate 1652-1715

'swaddling  
bands'  
bandage-like  
wrapping around  
a new baby



## 10 ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

1. Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed; Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.
2. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall. With the poor, and mean and lowly lived on earth our Saviour holy.
3. For he is our childhood's pattern; day by day, like us he grew; he was little, weak, and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew; and he feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.
4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love; for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above; and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.
5. Not in that poor, lowly stable, with the oxen standing by, we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high; when like stars his children crowned, all in white shall wait around.

Words  
Cecil Frances Alexander  
1818-1895

'royal  
David's city'  
another name for  
Bethlehem

'redeeming love'  
love that pays  
what's due





# 11 WE THREE KINGS

1. We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.

**Chorus:**

O star of wonder, star of light,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.

2. Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never  
over us all to reign.

(Chorus)

3. Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising,  
worship him God most high.

(Chorus)

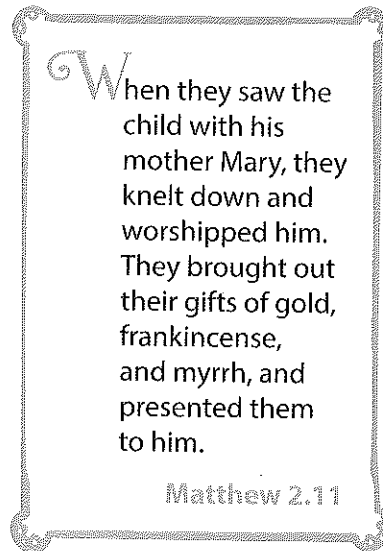
4. Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

(Chorus)

5. Glorious now behold him arise;  
King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
sounds through the earth and skies.

(Chorus)

Words  
John H Hopkins Jr 1820-1891



Matthew 2.11



# 12 THE FIRST NOEL

1. The first Noel the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds  
in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping  
their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that  
was so deep.

**Chorus:**

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
born is the King of Israel.

2. They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond  
them far,  
and to the earth it gave great  
light,  
and so it continued both day  
and night.

(Chorus)

3. And by the light of that same  
star  
three wise men came from  
country far;  
to seek for a king was their  
intent,  
and to follow the star wherever  
it went.

(Chorus)

4. This star drew nigh to the  
northwest,  
o'er Bethlehem it took it's rest,  
and there it did both stop  
and stay  
right over the place where  
Jesus lay.

(Chorus)

5. Then entered in those wise  
men three  
full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold, and myrrh, and  
frankincense.

(Chorus)

6. Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly  
Lord;  
that hath made heaven and  
earth of naught,  
and with his blood mankind  
hath bought.

(Chorus)

Words  
Trad. carol 18c

