



God's heart
through
the ancient Carols

The treasures found
in the carols
compiled into a
devotional

Cindy & Alex Nelemans

Every year, as Christmas and New Year come along, countless people sing the traditional carols without much understanding of the wonderful treasure contained in them. At this time we are reminded that God gave the greatest gift of His son Jesus Christ for our redemption. Surely, greater love hath no man than to lay down His life for a friend. After giving my heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ, I now sing the same songs with so much more meaning and heartfelt gratitude for my Saviour. I know that there is many a lonely or troubled soul whom God is wanting to touch with His infinite love, as He seeks to draw them into a living relationship with Him....so that they too may experience the true and lasting joy of why He came into the world, why He died for mankind, and best of all, why He rose again !

With the purpose of bringing understanding of the heart of God as the Holy Spirit imparted the lyrics to the composers of the carols which follow, I took time to meditate on the Treasure of the message contained in each carol. We sincerely seek to encourage and enrich those who would sing these carols and read the devotionals which accompany each one.

We pray that as you, too, meditate upon the devotionals as well as the songs, you will enter into a deeper, joyful and purposeful walk with our living Creator, who in Genesis 1:31 "...saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was VERY GOOD!" - blessings in His service, Alex and Cindy

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world ! the Lord has 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!



Joy to the earth ! the Saviour reigns;
Your sweetest songs employ.
While fields and streams and
hills and plains

Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy !

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
The wonders of His love,
The wonders of His love,
The wonders, and wonders of His love.



Lord be enthroned within our hearts,
And take Your rightful place.
For You are worthy,
Of all the glory,
And You alone are Lord,
Yes You alone are Lord.
King Jesus, King Jesus Christ is Lord !!

Composed by Isaac Watts in 1719

Page 3 **Joy to the world : the Lord has come, and He is coming again. . . . soon !**

Matthew 3:2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness : Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight". (Mark 1 : 3) This verse is very, very relevant today. We can really identify with the words of the ancient song as the writer exhorts "**Let every heart prepare Him room**". However the need is not just for a little portion of our hearts, but for the entire fullness of Jesus Christ to be enthroned, and for His rule to be established in our lives. His ways are perfect and His love is pure. His will should never be a threat to us.

The second verse presents a picture of ALL creation resounding in joyful exuberance of the coming of the Creator, who has chosen to reveal Himself in human likeness!

Yes! He does rule in truth and grace, in everyone who has opened their heart to the Saviour. He comes full of grace and truth, just as the Bible says in John 1:14 : "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Grace is always there, and it is an amazing grace that would come and enable the sinner to live a life in communion with a Holy God. He makes this possible by the light of His truth, and so the two go together. Help us, Lord Jesus Christ, to receive and understand this.

Prayer : *O Lord Jesus, when I look at the state of the world You came for, I see anything but joy. . . . yet the song-writer says 'Joy to the world, the Lord has come!' It can only be that we have somehow lost the joy of our salvation. Lasting joy can only be found when You, O Lord are in full control of our lives. Dear Lord, as I open my heart to receive Your grace and Your truth, help me to prepare for You a dwelling place. Let others be drawn to the light and the joy You bring, as we truly experience the wonders of Your unfailing love and faithfulness. Psalm 16: 11 Says "You will show me the path of life, in your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Amen.*

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

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 the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'
Hark! the herald angels sing:
'Glory to the new-born King!'

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 the incarnate Deity!

Pleased as man with man to dwell,

Jesus, our Immanuel.

Hark! the herald angels sing:

'Glory to the new-born King.'

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail, the Sun of righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings,

Risen with healing in His wings,

Mild, He lays His glory by;

Born that men 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.'



How awesome that the Creator of heaven and earth, the Creator of mankind, would want to be reconciled to mortal, sinful man!! What could sinful man and a holy God, who is enthroned in a holy heaven full of light and glory, have in common? Simply NOTHING; in our sinful state we have nothing in common with God. That is why Jesus Christ came, to bring reconciliation between His heavenly Father and mankind. God could not lower the standards of a holy heaven, and if we are ever to see the Father one day, we need to be cleansed of all our sin by receiving His justification in Jesus Christ. It is wonderful to be reconciled to God, it is glorious to have the peace that passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7). It is amazing to walk in close communion with my Creator, for His ways are perfect, loving and faithful.

What does the last verse mean by second birth? Well, after we were born by natural means, we are born a second time when we are born of the Spirit of God. When we receive the Spirit of Jesus Christ into our spirits, we repent of our sins and ask Him to be Lord of our lives. By faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Father forgives us and reconciles (justifies) us to Himself!

Prayer: *O Lord Jesus Christ, how wonderful to know that Your word says in 1 John 1 : 9 , "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Help us to obey Your word by doing what You ask us to do, so that as You cleanse us, we may walk in communion with You, Father, who are righteous. Thank you, thank you Lord, that all that I need to live for you, is in Your word, the Bible. Teach me O Lord, in the days to come, that living for You can be full of joy, every day, even when we go through hard times. We can know that You are with us, because we have chosen to live for You, and we can sing with heartfelt gratitude: " God and sinners reconciled; joyful, all ye nations, rise to love Him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength." Hallelujah, what a Saviour. AMEN.*

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

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)



Chorus: O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God
In the highest!" (chorus)



Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing; (chorus)

English translation by Frederick Oakeley in 1853

Do all of us live in the firm assurance that we are citizens of the Kingdom of heaven? We know that earthly nations are ruled by governments, just as kingdoms have kings. One cannot just go into a country without a passport acceptable to the government of that country. To enter the kingdom of heaven, we need to have received the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour who, by the power of His Holy Spirit brings us into fellowship with the Father. It is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who in a sense, make up the government of heaven and help and equip us to live a life which glorifies God.

The Father enabled us to be citizens of heaven when He sent His Son Jesus Christ to come to earth to die for us on the cross, so that all who believed in Him would not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16), living eternally with the Lord Jesus Christ in His kingdom. So let the faithful sing : "O come! All ye faithful!" Come, you who would faithfully seek His face! Come, you who are weary and heavy laden, and the Lord will give You rest (Mat. 11:28). Each song we sing at Christmas time is bursting with the love and compassion of a Holy God who longs to have a people who love Him with all their heart, mind and strength. People who will take the new commandment which Jesus Christ gave. . . ."A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another AS I HAVE LOVED YOU!" (John 13:34) How did He love us? He laid down His life for us, as the greatest gift of all time. Let us truly be counted amongst the faithful.

Prayer : *O Lord Jesus, let every word that we sing through the carols have depth and meaning !Thank You for revealing Your heart of love to me, Lord Jesus Christ, in that You came to earth for sinners. Thank You Lord that You have forgiven and cleansed me from my sin. Let me respond to you with my worship, my praise and my life. O Lord, there is no life outside of You. Your word says in 1 John 5:12, 'He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.' Heavenly Father, give us the grace to receive the life You have given us through Your Son. AMEN.*

SILENT NIGHT

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



Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake, at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah
Christ the Saviour is born
Christ the Saviour is born



Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, loves pure light,
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Silent night, Holy night,
Darkness fell, on the site,
Crucified for the sins of mankind,
Willingly He gave His life,
So that we might be saved,
So that we might be saved.



Then the night, broke forth into day,
Jesus Christ, rose again,
Now the way is open wide,
To receive His eternal life,
Lord I give You my heart,
Lord I give You my heart.

Originally composed in German by Franz Gruber in 1818. (Public domain) Fourth and fifth verse composed by Cindy Nelemans

Page 9 There was more than one holy night in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Gethsemane was a holy night in which our Saviour spent the night praying to His Father. A night in which He asked that the cup of suffering be taken from Him. Then as He submitted Himself to the will of His Father, once again, as on the night He was born, angels came. This time not in jubilant, glorious proclamation, but to minister to our Lord as He prepared for the agony and pain of the cross. Darkness covered the land for three hours (Mark 15:33) before the Lord Jesus Christ cried out to His Father. Three days later...the glorious dawn of the resurrection!! He had risen! Once again angels were there at the tomb rolling away the stone!! The proclamation this time? He is risen!!! The way to our Holy Father God was open to all those who would come. Sin no longer has dominion over all who receive Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we so often cry out during the different trials that we face. Lord help us to come to the place where we entrust our lives fully to You. Knowing that You are all-knowing, all-powerful and all-loving, and that Your thoughts towards us are always for our highest good. Help us to give You a sacrifice of praise as we express complete faith in Your ability to work all things out for our good. As we live for you completely surrendered to you, we seek Your face for the purpose of Your glory being revealed here on this earth. May we be salt and light to those around us. We humbly ask this in the Name of Your Son Jesus Christ.

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plain;
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strain:



*Chorus: Glo—ria in Excelsis Deo
Glo—ria in Excelsis Deo*

Shepherds, why this jubilee,
Why your joyous strains prolong,
What the gladsome tidings be,
Which inspire Your heavenly song? (chorus)

Come to Bethlehem and see,
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord the newborn King. (chorus)



Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord descending
In His temple shall appear. (chorus)

Composer - unknown (Public domain)

Page 11 God's angels have a purpose! They were there at the time of the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24); on the night Jesus Christ was born (Luke 2:9-15) and proclaimed God the Father's good will toward all of mankind (v. 14); they were with Him in the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43); and again at the tomb when He rose from the dead (Mat. 28:1-7)! A way had come for a sinner to gain access to a holy God, a holy Saviour and a holy heaven!! Jesus Christ had come down to earth to dwell among men - how awesome!!

No wonder there were angels singing and a bright, shining star, and in the midst of all that, the greatest light of all had come, the Light (John 8:12) of the world !! Do you know that for those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High (Psalm 91:1), He gives His angels charge,; to keep us in all our ways? Be encouraged you to receive Psalm 91 by faith, it's very reassuring! What a wonderful God!

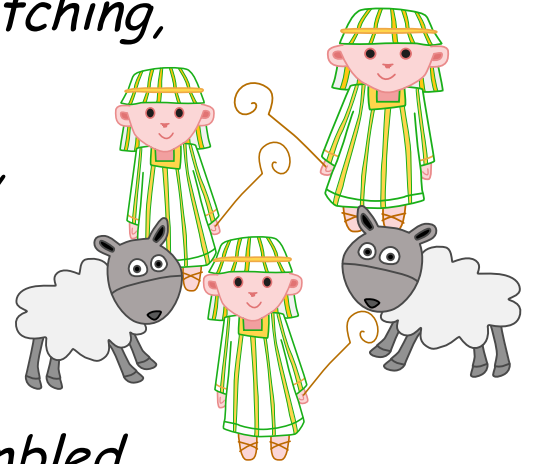
Prayer : *O Lord , Your word is true! You cannot lie, for Your word says in 1 Peter 1:25: "But the word of the Lord endures for ever." And this is the word which through the gospels, is preached unto you. Thank You, Lord, for all the wonderful truth Your Word contains! Father, in Jesus' mighty name help us, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, to take that truth and apply it to our lives, so that we may not remain strangers to that heavenly realm of glory. Help us to walk in the light of Your grace, love and truth, so that we may abide with You forever. And, that others, by our example, may learn to love and trust Your glorious plan of salvation. AMEN!*

*Chorus : Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and
everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain,
That Jesus Christ is born.*



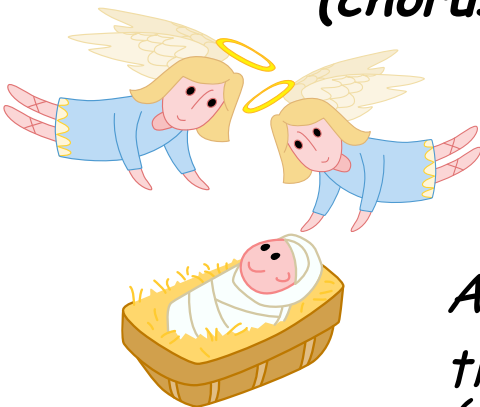
*While Shepherds kept their watching,
o'er silent flocks by night;
Behold throughout the heavens,
there shone a Holy Light.*

(chorus)



*The shepherds feared and trembled,
when lo! above the earth;
Rang out the angel chorus,
that hailed our Saviours birth.*

(chorus)



*Down in a lowly manger,
our humble Christ was born;
And brought us God's salvation,
that blessed Christmas morn!
(Chorus)*

John Wesley Jr. (Public Domain)

Page 13 Luke 2:11-14

(11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

(12) And this *shall be* a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

(13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

(14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Sometimes the greatest moments of our lives come in a way that they pass us by unnoticed! Here was our Creator, God Himself as the Word become flesh, who in His great love had come to dwell among sinful man. He didn't arrive with a trumpet blast, but He is coming back with one; He wasn't born in a palace, but He is coming again crowned with honour and glory, when He will be worshipped by thousands of redeemed saints. He has changed the lives of countless people. He has restored, healed and set free the humble, who come to Him with a penitent heart. He has quenched the thirsty with living waters (John 7:37-38); He has loved the broken, the poor, the contrite and the fatherless. And yes, He loves the rich who acknowledge Him and worship Him with a humble heart.

Prayer: *Lord help us by the power of Your Spirit to love You with all our heart, soul and mind (Matt. 22:37), and let our lives proclaim the good news of the gospel.*

John 1:10-14

(10) He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not.

(11) He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

(12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

(13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

(14) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

AWAY IN A MANGER

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.

The cattle are lowing,
the Baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus,
no crying He makes.
I love You, Lord Jesus!



Look down from the sky
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.



Come to me Lord Jesus,
I give You my heart;
Remove all my sin,
And Your true love impart.
I need You my Saviour, to be my Lord;
So I can be with You, forevermore.

Be near me, Lord Jesus! I ask You to stay;
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Your tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with You there.

Verses 1 & 2: author unknown.

Verse 3: Cindy Nelemans. Verse 4: J. T. McFarland.

Page 15 'Stay by my side until morning is nigh.'

These two lines spoke greatly to my heart, and I will share a little of what they mean to me. I believe that there is many a soul that experiences sorrow, hurt, sickness, tragedy or one trial or another to be endured. I have been 'there' myself. It is like the 'dark night of the soul'. I am reminded of the night Jesus Christ prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. . . .His soul was in anguish as the indescribable weight of the sins of the world pressed down on Him. Yet as He yielded to the will of His Father. . . .JOY came anew when, only days later, He gloriously rose from the dead !! That joy can be ours, that forgiveness can be ours, that healing can be ours, and more than all those things we can have the Lord Jesus Christ living in our hearts by His Spirit, who is all in all. Remember that Jesus Christ was sinless. What we endure, is not because we are sinless, quite the contrary !

(Romans 5:12) But we can rise to utter newness of life as we accept the salvation He came to provide by means of His sacrifice.

2 Peter 1:19

(19) We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Prayer : *Thank you Lord, for all You endured to give me eternal life ! I trust you to cleanse me from my sins, and to help me truly rejoice as I receive by faith all that You purposed me to have ! I know that really knowing You as my Saviour will bring contentment, peace and the full assurance that my sins are forgiven; and that I may then faithfully sing the words in this carol in trusting you to "fit us for heaven to live with You there,*

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth!
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary soul rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

*Chorus: Fall on your knees,
O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ
was born!
O night, O holy night, O night
divine!*



Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts, in His presence we stand.
So led by light, of a star sweetly gleaming;
Here came the wise men from Orient land.
The King of kings, lay thus in lowly manger;
In all our trials, born to be our friend!

Truly He taught us, to love one another;
His law is love, and His Gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother;
And in His Name, all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy, in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy Name!

Composed by Adolphe Adam in 1847

Page 17 A holy night, a glorious night, a night ordained by a loving, heavenly Creator, God the Father. The world had been in sin ever since the fall of mankind in the garden of Eden — separated from the presence of our Creator !

Visualise yourself in the position of what it would be like to be separated from someone whom You have created in Your own image, someone you've enjoyed fellowship with. . . . And then it all fell away because of disobedience and rebellion on the part of your very own creation ! How devastating Surely the Father's heart must have been deeply grieved.

(Genesis 6:6)

Yet we thank God that He had a plan of redemption. . . .

"Will You go, Son, I love them so much, but I cannot lower my standards of holiness and perfection ? I cannot change who 'I AM'. . . will You go, Son, and be a perfect, Spotless and holy sacrifice. . . One I can accept?"

The Son's answer?. . . " Yes Father, You love them so much, as I love them too, for We are in agreement. I will go!" The song says, 'A thrill of hope, the weary soul rejoices.' Many, indeed countless times have we found the Lord to be a refuge in times where our soul almost collapses under the weight of the burden of sin, concerns, worries or sickness. In this we rejoice. . . . in **Who He is!** Change us, Lord, to be more like You!

Prayer : *Jesus, Light of the world, lead me by faith in You. Thank You that You are my friend in all my trials . Thank You for Your love, peace and the joy of knowing You. Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus we raise. Let all within us praise His holy Name. AMEN !*

As with gladness men of old,
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious God, may we
Evermore be led by Thee.



As with joyful steps they sped,
Saviour, to Thy lowly bed.
There to bend the knee before,
Thee whom heaven and earth adore.
So may we with willing feet,
Ever seek Thy mercy-seat.

As they offered gifts most rare,
At Thy cradle rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy,
Pure, and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring;
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day;
Keep us in the narrow way.
And, when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last;
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright,
Need they no created light;
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,
Thou its sun, which goes not down.
There for ever may we sing
'Hallelujahs' to our King!

Page 19 This song is a prayer, put to music, which portrays a message of gladness and joy at being led to the Saviour's side. It brings out a picture of willingness, meekness and obedience, as God's faithful ones bowed the knee in adoration and worship of their Redeemer.

All over the world today, countless numbers are bowing the knee as they joyfully surrender to the Saviour of the world. As and invite Him to be Lord of their lives, they are transformed, healed and set free to live in glorious communion with our Heavenly Father, through His Son Jesus Christ. Let us, too, take heed of the example laid out for us by this wonderful song. Let us continually bring Him our lives as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, pleasing in His sight (Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 13:21). This is a costly and valuable gift to Him. The Lord desires that we live wholeheartedly for Him, because He gave His life wholeheartedly for us! He held nothing back, for He loves us with a deep love and He wants us to live lives free from sin, so that our fellowship with Him will be uninterrupted. If we do sin, we need to confess our sins to our wonderful merciful Father, so that we will find immediate forgiveness and cleansing. The words of this song speak of the progressive walk of faith which is the experience of each true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ....from the time of salvation to the day when we go to be with Him in heaven.

Prayer : *O dearest Lord, let us be numbered amongst the redeemed. Each day that You give is a day closer to the time when we will be with You forever. At this time when people remember Your birth, let us make a sincere commitment to serve You all of our days and with all of our hearts. Amen.*

Page 20 O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

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

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

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

O holy Child of Bethlehem descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us our Lord Emmanuel
O come to us, abide with us our Lord Emmanuel

Phillips Brooks



Page 21 Whilst meditating on the words of 'O little town of Bethlehem', a stillness came over me, almost a silent reverence, of how awesome, yet loving our Lord is. A strong thread of the depth of His love weaves itself through these age-old songs.

Little Bethlehem was asleep in the silence of night when Jesus Christ was born. Yet within the stillness, there were those who were yearning, praying and waiting for the coming of the promised Messiah! There it was, the nation of Israel, apparently oblivious that, in the silence of night and the darkness of sin, her Messiah and Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, had been born. God had come clothed in human flesh as Light of the world (John 12:46). That light had broken through the darkness of sin's affliction, oppression and tyranny. Century upon century of longing and despair were at last answered by the coming of a Redeemer. God, through Jesus Christ, desires to impart to every human heart the blessings of His heaven. What are these blessings? To begin with, knowing our sins have been forgiven!! The blessing of right relationship between God and mankind; the blessing of God's peace, joy, healing and companionship. Being forgiven so that we can forgive -- oh, what an awesome gift! Surely there is no greater love on the face of the earth?!

Prayer: *O dearest Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for setting us free from the law of sin and death. [Romans 8 vs 2-3]. So we cry, enter in, Lord, be born in us today! Come to us, abide in and with us, our Lord Immanuel! No more a baby, but the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world! The risen Lord! Remove all doubt and unbelief as to who You are, Lord; let us live close to Your heart, that we may truly know You. Let us walk with You in close companionship so that things like loneliness and despair will no longer have any place in our lives. Thank You Lord, for Your love. AMEN.*

Page 22 ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

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.

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 meek and lowly,
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.



And through all His wondrous childhood,
He would honour and obey;
Love and watch the lowly mother,
In whose gentle arms He lay.
Christian children all should be
Mild, obedient, good as He.

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.

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.

Composer: Cecil F. Alexander in 1848

Page 23 Most of the ancient carols have a thread of God's holiness, grace, mercy and redemption in the lyrics. The treasures in these lyrics can encourage us and build us up. They ought to be part of the very foundation upon which we base our walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. He came, He was crucified, He is risen!! We can sing them any time of the year with as much heartfelt meaning as we do at Christmas-time.

Once in Royal David's City introduces the story of the Son of David, Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:1, Mark 10:47) When singing this song, we are taken on a journey. Beginning at His birth, we find Jesus in a 'lowly stable'. On we go to the Christ-child living among the meek and lowly, showing obedience and honour to His parents. We may identify with His smiles, tears, gladness and sadness. Yet His nature was without sin, which is why He is eternally our Redeemer and 'set at God's right hand on high. 'But even as 'our Lord in heaven above', He leads us on, living within us by the Spirit of God and walking with us daily. . . until 'we shall see Him. . .as His children crowned.'

Prayer : *Lord Jesus, help me to willingly walk with You every day in total surrender and obedience. Thank you that it is Your desire to one day present me, spotless and blameless, to my heavenly Father. . .cleansed by the blood You shed because of Your redeeming love for all mankind. Help me to understand that it is to Your purposes and plans that I do surrender. Help me to know that it is Your perfect love that desires the best for me. AMEN*

(To the tune of 'We wish you a merry Christmas')

I know He is coming,
King Jesus is coming,
I know He is coming,
He's coming again!

So let us be ready,
Yes always be ready;
So let us be ready,
To meet our King !

*Refrain: Preparing the way,
For Him every day;
Because He is coming,
He's coming again !*

Revised by Cindy Nelemans

'History of 'We wish you a merry Christmas'.

Arthur Warrell, composer, conductor and organist in Bristol in the U.K., is responsible for the popularity of the carol. Warrell arranged the tune for his own University of Bristol's Madrigal Singers, and performed it with them in concert on December 6, 1935.

Page 25 After understanding God's rich love brought to us by every composer, I thought I would end off by changing the words of a little song that is often sung at Christmas time. The tune is the well-known 'We wish You a Merry Christmas', which has now become 'I know He is coming'.

I have done this with the help of the Holy Spirit, and with the purpose of stirring everyone who would sing these songs at Christmas time, and who would truly open their hearts to the Saviour. The message of each carol is so profound. My prayer is that these lyrics would become truth and light in our daily lives throughout the year !

I believe that every traditional carol in this book was penned by a person who truly loved the Lord. Through every song, understanding is brought as the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God are woven into them.

Take them to heart in the days to come. Do not leave them for next Christmas, as they can truly be sung all year round with just as much meaning and revelation.

Prayer : *Father, it may be a time when people eagerly look for gifts to buy for dear ones and friends. In the words of today's society, it is a 'season of goodwill and giving'. However rather let us open our hearts to the unspeakable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15) of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, the Messiah to all mankind. Help us to open our hearts to Your gift of true life. . . .the gift of God's Son, Jesus Christ, a gift for all eternity.*

Lord, fill our hearts in the coming year with an expectation of Your imminent return. Let the words that You spoke so long ago, and the words that You speak now, burn in our hearts and fill us with a desire to serve You wholeheartedly all the days of our lives. Thank you for the freedom to sing these songs all year round, to sing them with the heartfelt truth that You desire to see bear much fruit for Your honour and Your glory. AMEN



Noël

God came to earth

Emmanuel

God is with us

Maranatha

He's coming again!