

THE GREATEST GIFT

'Every good and perfect gift comes from above' (James 1:17)

Lord and Giver of all good things, the Magi travelled for miles to bring the Christ child the first Christmas presents. So may we too remember with thankful hearts the love that comes with all the good things that we receive. We also thank you for the love you have for each one of us, and we thank you for the many gifts that you give us, especially the gift of life itself. Amen.

'For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given'. (Isaiah 9:6)

Dear Lord, in a world where worry not peace prevails, stir up that good news again. This Christmas, make it real in our hearts. We need your joy and your peace during this difficult time. Thank you for the gift of Jesus, our Immanuel, the Word made flesh. Forgive us for forgetting that your love never changes, never fades and that you never abandon the purpose for which you came, to save us from our sins, and to give us life eternal and the joy of an everlasting relationship with you. Your birth and your death sealed your promise to us forever.

Amen.

The angel said to Mary - 'The Holy Spirit will come to you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy child developing inside you will be called the Son of God'. (Luke 1:35)

A CHRISTMAS CAROL TO PRAY

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king.
Born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne. Amen.

by Charles Wesley

The angels told the shepherds - 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord'. (Luke 2:10-11)

The shepherds visit the baby Jesus - 'And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger'. (Luke 2:16)

*'Away in a manger, no crib for His bed
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky look down where he
lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay'.*

*The Magi bring their gifts to Jesus - 'On coming to the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. They opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.'
(Matthew 2:11)*

REFLECTION

I wonder what you would say was the best present you ever received? A lovely bottle of perfume? A book you were longing to read? Or perhaps a pair of cosy slippers, just when you needed them? I expect we can all think of something that made us especially grateful. But the Bible tells us that the greatest gift we have all received is the gift of Christmas, the coming of Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. As John 3:16 tells us - 'For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life'. So this Christmas season let us all be ready with open hearts to receive the greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus.

**'Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King.'**

A FINAL BLESSING

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the Magi and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you and all whom you love, now and forevermore. Amen.

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child,
Holy infant do 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 Alleluia,
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born

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.

By Joseph Mohr & Franz Xaver Gruber



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