



## Amy Potter

États-Unis, South Shore

### Our Savior Is Born Christmas Cantata (and Bible Study) Various composers

#### A propos de l'artiste

Visit The Potter Pages at <https://woodyandamypotter.wordpress.com/> for more free sheet music. Born and raised in Portsmouth, Ohio, Amy studied piano from age 8 to age 13. After years of travel and travail, she returned to her hometown area and received Christ as her Savior. She is married, and her husband, Woody, helps record her piano instrumental mp3s in a small home studio. She has played accompaniment for choirs and for special music and is now one of the pianists at Victory Baptist Church in West Portsmouth, Ohio. Amy enjoys composing gospel songs and arranging piano accompaniments for vocalists. She also enjoys playing special arrangements of public domain hymns. Her style is a combination of Christian/Southern Gospel/Folk/Ragtime. She is a self-taught composer. Amy gives God the glory for all that she has accomplished.

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#### A propos de la pièce



**Titre :** Our Savior Is Born Christmas Cantata  
[and Bible Study]  
**Compositeur :** Various composers  
**Arrangeur :** Potter, Amy  
**Droit d'auteur :** Copyright © Amy Potter  
**Editeur :** Potter, Amy  
**Instrumentation :** Piano et Voix  
**Style :** Noel

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# "Our Savior Is Born"

## A Christmas Cantata and Bible Study

©2001, 2005, 2008 by Amy Potter

Prepared for December, 2001, by Amy Potter

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**can·ta·ta** (*kan-tä-ta*) *noun* *Music*.

A vocal and instrumental piece composed of choruses, solos, and recitatives.<sup>1</sup><sup>[1]</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION:

(Isaiah 7:14) Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

(Matthew 1:22-23) Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

## Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel.

Emmanuel is a Hebrew word that means "God Is With Us."

God was with His first people, Adam and Eve,

but they disobeyed God and fell into sin.

God promised a Savior to take away that sin.

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God repeated His promise over and over in the books of the Old Testament.

God took care of His people even when they continued to sin.

God would keep His promise to send a Savior in the birth of Jesus Christ.

God would give them His Son!

God's Son was to enter the world exactly as you and I.

Jesus would be born of a woman.

Jesus was born to be Emmanuel, "God With Us."

God always keeps His promises!

Come and listen as the prophets and people of the Old Testament cry out, "Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel!"

*O come, O Come, Emmanuel (Veni Emmanuel),*

*Words: 9<sup>th</sup> century Latin Hymn*

*Music: Ancient Plain Song, 15<sup>th</sup> century French*

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(Daniel 9:25) Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

(Luke 2:1-3) And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

## Oh come, let us adore Him!

Think of all the planning God did to have His only begotten Son born in Bethlehem:

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... a decree from Cæsar Augustus.

... a legal follow up from Cyrenius, the governor of Syria.

... a long journey by Joseph and Mary all the way from Nazareth.

It involved obedience to God on the part of both Joseph and Mary.

They both had to believe by faith that God's promise would be fulfilled.  
Faith means taking God at His word.

It had to be Bethlehem . . .

... because God said so.

It had to be during the reign of Cæsar Augustus and governor Cyrenius . . .

... because God said so.

Come and see to what great lengths God will go to in order to keep His promises.

Oh come, all ye faithful !

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*Words: John F. Wade, ca. 1743; trans. by Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others*

*Music: John F. Wade, ca. 1743; harm. From Collections of Motetts or Antiphons, 1792*

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(Exodus 32:33-34) And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. {34} Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.

(Luke 2:8-14) And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great

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joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men.

## Angels we have heard on high.

When God has something important to announce, He sends a special messenger -- an angel. The Greek word for "angel" means "messenger."

The shepherds were strong, able to defend their flocks against wolves or thieves.

But when the heavens opened up to reveal God's glory, they knelt in terror.

Then the angel said, "Fear not."

We tremble before the supreme glory of God because it reveals our weaknesses and failures.

God's glory reveals our sin, strips away our excuses, and shows how utterly dependant we are upon God.

Then God tells us, "Fear not," and we are safe in His care.

When the angels sang that night, it must have been the greatest music heard in a sheepfold since the days of the psalm-writer and shepherd, David.

Glory to God in the highest --

"Gloria, in excelsis Deo"

pronounced "*Glor-ē-ah, in egg-shell-cease Day-Oh*"

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

*Words: Traditional French carol; trans. Crown of Jesus, 1862*

*Music: French carol melody; arr. By Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937, harm. By Austin C. Lovelace, 1964*

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(Isaiah 11:1-2) And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

(Luke 2:4-5) And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

## Go, tell it on the mountain!

God promised Israel a Messiah from the line of David. David was Israel's greatest king, born 1,000 years before Jesus. Bethlehem was David's hometown, too.

David was the shepherd boy.

David was the giant killer.

David was the writer and singer of the psalms.

David was the man after God's heart.

The shepherds were sure to remember David, the hero. It was no coincidence that David was the ancestor of both Joseph and of Mary. Therefore, Jesus was the Son of David.

God is rich in love to those who least deserve it. His grace caused God – for no other reason than His love – to send Jesus for us.

To whom can we tell this great news?

Just as the angels told the shepherds,

just as the star told the wise men,

we are to . . .

. . . Go, tell it on the mountain!

*Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

*Words: Traditional Spiritual, adapted by John W. work, Jr., 1907*

*Music: Traditional Spiritual; adapted and arranged by William Farley Smith, 1986*

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(Micah 5:2) But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

(Matthew 2:3-6) When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

## Oh little town of Bethlehem.

The name “*Bethlehem*” means “a house of bread.” That’s where Jesus, called the Bread of Life, would be born.

The official Roman decree got Mary and Joseph moved to where God wanted them, to where the prophets of the Old Testament had said they should be when God’s holy Son was born.

God made sure His only begotten Son was born into a family,

. . . with a mother

. . . and an earthly father.

You might say that Joseph was the first step-father.

Jesus had a family.

He had ancestors.

Jesus grew up in a community that He cared about.

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Right from His birth, this King identified with the poor and homeless.

We live between the first coming of Christ and the final coming of Christ. But He doesn't come only twice. Jesus Christ comes again and again in our lives and in our hearts.

Are you aware of His presence, oh little town of Bethlehem?

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

*Words: Phillips Brooks, ca. 1868*

*Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1868*

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(Isaiah 19:20) And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

{Luke 2:6} And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

## Oh, holy night !

The Greek word translated “delivered” is also the word often translated as “saved.”

When the angel announced, “unto you is born a Savior,” he meant someone had come to deliver, not so much to deliver a gift but to deliver us – someone to “save” us.

Jesus Christ was the Messiah that God promised Israel, to redeem them.

When you give up trying to save yourself, then you are open to the saving power of Jesus Christ. Christ, the Messiah, was born to bring the Jews back to the God they had wandered away from. Jesus, the Resurrected, died, was buried, and on the third day arose to bring us, the Gentiles who were without God in the world, into reconciliation with God.



Come and hear about God's wonderful message and about the incredible events of that holy night! Don't you know that God has been involved since the very beginning?

Our great Deliverer is about to be delivered. God's great Christmas gift to us and to the world is Jesus Christ, Savior, Messiah.

It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.

### *O Holy Night*

*Words: by Adolphe Adam*

*Music: by Adolphe Adam; arranged by Alfred Judson; c. 1918*

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{Isaiah 9:6} For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

{Matthew 1:19-21} Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

## What child is this?

The angel Gabriel showed up in Nazareth and spoke with a young girl called Mary. The angel told Mary that the Holy Spirit would conceive her baby who would be the Savior of the whole world. Mary was willing to be obedient to the Lord God. She accepted God's invitation, and God had something great in store for her.

Likewise, Joseph was God's humble servant. There must have been some embarrassment. After all, Mary was pregnant even before she and Joseph were married.

But Joseph, too, received a message from God about the baby. He heard an angel's voice in a dream. God took care of Joseph when the angel told him it was okay to make Mary his wife. Mary's baby would be the promised Messiah.

Joseph could very well have asked Mary, "What child is this?"

. . . But Joseph did not put Mary aside as he could have legally done.

Joseph had made a promise to Mary, and he was faithful to God.

When you accept God's invitation to eternal salvation, God has something great in store for you, too!

Come and discover that . . .

. . . this, this is Christ the King!

*What Child Is This?*

*Words: William C. Dix, 1865*

*Music: 16<sup>th</sup> century English melody*

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(Jeremiah 32:17) Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, *and* there is nothing too hard for thee:

(Luke 1:30-38) And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. {31} And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. {32} He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: {33} And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. {34} Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? {35} And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. {36} And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. {37} For with God nothing shall be impossible. {38} And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

# Mary, did you know?

Mary – the woman God chose to be the human mother of His own Son!

Mary – the woman who spoke to an angel!

Mary – the woman highly favored in God’s sight.

Mary – the handmaid of the Lord.

Though we often focus on that sweet baby in the manger, we need to remember that Jesus became Savior of the World . . .

. . . by suffering and dying on a cross.

After three days in the grave, Jesus arose from the dead.

He is alive – today and eternally!

Mary, did you know?

*Mary, did you know?*

*Words and music by: Buddy Greene and Mark Lowry*

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(Isaiah 11:6) The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

{Luke 2:7} And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

## Mary had a little lamb.

The shepherds knew they should look for the newborn baby in a stable or cave where animals were kept, because that’s where they would find a manger.

In those olden times, the Jews sacrificed lambs for forgiveness of their sins.

But they had to sacrifice over and over again.

That's why God made His plan of salvation.

He sent His Son Jesus Christ to be the sacrifice once and for all.

Jesus lived and died for you!

Today, when you come to Christ with your burden of guilt over things you have done or things you should have done, Jesus will tell you, "You are forgiven."

With God's forgiveness comes a restored relationship with God.

Whether or not you see Jesus as God's promised Messiah comes down to one decision: faith. Faith plus nothing else!

It doesn't matter how old you are – Jesus will come into your heart when you ask Him! He'll wash you white as snow.

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## Mary Had a Little Lamb

*(to the children's tune of the same name)*

Mary had a little lamb, Little lamb, Little lamb.

Mary had a little lamb, Two thousand years ago.

Mary had a little lamb, Little lamb, Little lamb.

Mary had a little lamb, And Jesus was His name.

Mary had a little lamb, Little lamb, Little lamb.

Mary had a little lamb, He'll wash you white as snow.

# 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 sky looking 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 Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky  
And stay by my bedside till morning is nigh.

*Away In A Manger*

*Words: Anon.*

*Music: James R. Murray, 1887*

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(Zechariah 2:13) Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

(Matthew 1:24-25) Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: {25} And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

## Silent night, holy night.

Joseph might have been a quiet man – he never speaks a word in the Bible. But the first thing we learn about the man engaged to Mary, is that when someone gives an order, he obeys it.

Joseph had burdens and responsibilities thrust upon him –

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a pregnant wife,

an uprooted family,

a confrontation with Roman tax officers.

The crowds would have added to the confusion and difficulty.

But when the angel came to him, he did what he was told.

He also obeyed the government census-takers.

God can use unpleasant times to bring you closer to Him.

God wants you to be obedient.

But even when you disobey, God offers you forgiveness through Jesus.

Jesus will give you healing and a new relationship with God.

God wants you to come to Him through His Son.

Come to Jesus! Then you, too, can sleep in heavenly peace.

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

*Words: Joseph Mohr, 1818 (translated by John F. Young)*

*Music: Franz Gruber, 1818*

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(Numbers 24:17) I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

(Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11) Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. . . . When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding

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great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

## Beautiful, beautiful star of Bethlehem.

What a fantastic sight that star must have been to the wise men! The magi followed it from the East for a long time.

The Bible doesn't really tell us how many wise men there were, only that they brought three gifts:

gold,

frankincense,

and myrrh.

Jesus was born into a world that was not at peace. The wise men from the East risked their lives by traveling to Jerusalem to seek out the new ruler. They knew that bright, beautiful star in the heavens announced the birth of a greater King than the world had ever known before – an extraordinary king.

As we follow the Christmas star, the journey to the manger becomes our lifelong journey of faith.

Come and be guided to Jesus by that beautiful star of Bethlehem.

*Beautiful Star of Bethlehem*

*Words: Adger M. Pace (theme by R. Fisher Boyce)*

*Music: R. Fisher Boyce (Harmony by Adger M. Pace)*

(Isaiah 52:3-5) For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day *is* blasphemed.

(John 19:16-18) Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away. {17} And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: {18} Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

## From the manger to the cross.

God wanted His Son to begin His life among us as one of us, to be common, to share our poverty, inconveniences, and discomforts – and eventually even our death. God wanted His Son to be human yet divine. Human, yet sinless.

Jesus was not born to an earthly throne but in a lowly manger. In the end, He made a cross at Calvary His throne as He wore a crown made of thorns.

Each one of you is involved in God’s plan of salvation by grace through faith. Do you know how?

Because you can either accept or reject the sacrifice God has sent to pay for your sins.

You can know where you will go to live eternally after you die.

God made a plan for you to be saved.

Death no longer has the final say.

Jesus made a road to save the lost,

. . . and God sent His Son from the manger to the cross.

*The Manger to the Cross*

*Words and Music by Mark Collier, Angel Creek Music, VBS 2000*

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## The Manger to the Cross

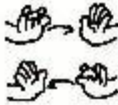
### Chorus

**From the manger**  
(Form arms into a cradle and rock baby.)



**to the cross.**  
(With right hand curved like a "C" draw a cross—first down, then the crossbeam.)

**From the manger to the cross.**  
(Repeat motions for "manger" and "cross.")



**Jesus**  
(Put the tip of the right middle finger into the palm of the left hand; then do the opposite.)

**made a road**  
(Hold flat hands several inches apart, palms facing each other, and move them forward, shaping a road.)



**to save**  
(Fists clenched, cross arms at wrists; then uncross and turn fists outward.)

**the lost.**  
(But fists together, bring hands down to sides, fluttering fingers as they move down.)



**From the manger to the cross.**  
(Repeat motions for "manger" and "cross.")

### Verse 1

**From a tiny**  
(Hold flat hands apart, palms facing each other, and bring them together, indicating small.)



**babe**  
(Form arms into a cradle.)

**in Bethlehem**  
(With hands together, fingers extended to form a roof shape several roots.)



**to a cross**  
(With right hand curved like a "C" draw a cross—first down, then the crossbeam.)

**on Calvary,**  
(Position right fist above left fist. With right hand atop left hand, palms down, fingers extended, move hands upward and to right, as if drawing the side of a mountain.)



**it was the Father's**  
(Hands in fists [fingers spread apart], begin with hands raised at right and move to left crossing in front of face.)

**perfect plan.**  
(Flat hands separated several inches, palms facing each other, mark off vertical sections right to left.)



(Psalms 100) A Psalm of praise. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. {2} Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. {3} Know ye that the LORD he is God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture. {4} Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name. {5} For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.

(Jesus said) (John 16:22) **And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.**

# Joy to the world!

Jesus came for all the world.

The salvation that God offers is not limited to shepherds . . .

or to wise men . . .

or to the people of Bethlehem . . .

or even to one little earthly kingdom.

God offers His salvation to anyone who will believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay his or her sin debt, was buried, and rose again the third day.

I Corinthians 15:1-4 says "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"

By the end of the book of Luke, Jesus will tell people to go into all the world and make disciples of every creature. All the world is to learn the story of God's great love.

Today, right now, you can recognize that, yes, you are sinful and ask God to forgive you by accepting the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Once you are saved, Jesus will be there to help you turn away from sin and begin a new life with God. You are born again.

Come and look forward to the time when Jesus will come again to take us to live with Him forever. Come and give thanks for God's greatest gift.

Everyone, please stand and join in singing,

"Joy to the world! The Lord is come!"

*Joy to the World*

*Words: Isaac Watts, 1719*

*Music: Arranged from G. F. Handel, 1741 by Lowell Mason, 1848*

# CONCLUSION

Through the years, many people have thought the story of the birth of Christ to be a great mystery. But there is no mystery about the greatest journey ever undertaken.

The mystery is not “**What?**”

God came to earth to take on human form and was born a human baby.

The mystery is not “**How?**”

The Virgin Mary conceived her baby by the Holy Spirit.

The mystery is not “**When?**”

Scripture is very clear that the birth took place while Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

The mystery is not “**Where?**”

Mary gave birth to her baby in a stable in the city of David called Bethlehem.

The mystery is not “**Who?**”

The angel Gabriel provided His name when he told Mary, “You will call Him Jesus.”

The only possible mystery is “**Why?**”

Why would God choose to come to earth to become one of us, knowing that it meant abandonment, betrayal, bitter suffering, and cruel death?

But the mystery is not “**Why?**”

Because . . . Jesus **tells** us why in John 3:16,

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God sent His Son so that we might belong to Him. Jesus bridges the gap that has separated us from fellowship with God ever since Adam and Eve disobeyed in the Garden of Eden.

The whole Bible is a love story from God to us. Scripture was written to bring us back to God.

(John 20:30-31) And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: {31} But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

May you and your family enjoy the blessings of  
the Christmas season and may you come to  
know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior!

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<sup>[1]</sup>Excerpted from *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* Copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company.