

II Cor. 3:17 -- "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is..."



LIBERTY

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Merry Christmas



In Days Gone By

On Dec. 21, 1620, the Pilgrims landed.

On Dec. 21, winter begins!

On Dec. 23, 1948, Japan's Tojo was hanged.

On Dec. 26, 1776, General Washington crossed the Delaware.

No need to travel far
To find His star,
Nor search to find the inn
He lay within,
In every humble heart
Will He abide
That, opening wide its door
Asks Him inside.

Ring the Bells

Ring the bells; ring the bells;
let the whole world know,
Christ was born in Bethlehem
many years ago—

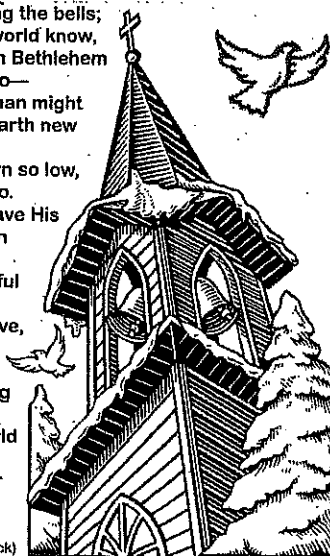
Born to die that man might
live, came to earth new
life to give,

Born of Mary, born so low,
many years ago.

God the Father gave His
Son, gave His own
beloved One,
To the wicked sinful
earth, to bring
mankind His love,
new birth.

Chorus

Ring the bells; ring
the bells;
Let the whole world
know,
Christ the Saviour
lives today
As He did so long
ago! (Harry Boltback)



Rejoice AT THE Birth OF THE King

The Night Before Christmas (Christian Rendition)

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the earth
 God's people were awaiting the time of Christ's birth.
 The various prophecies, God-given with care
 Came to pass on one night in Judea there.
 The people were scattered through Israel's land.
 Paying their taxes at Caesar's command.
 Young Mary, with Joseph, espoused to be wed,
 Descendants of David, to Bethlehem sped.
 'Twas late in the evening they arrived there that day
 They found at the inn there was no place to stay.
 Away in a stable, no place for a guest,
 They settled, that couple, to find them some rest.
 When there, on the hay, her time now full come
 The virgin, dear Mary, gave birth to God's Son.
 With no crib to lie in, a stable for sheep
 Became for our Saviour a place for His sleep.
 Moreover, that night in a field calm and still
 Rough shepherds were resting serenely until
 Through the dark of the sky God's glory shone round,
 All quaking and frightened, they fell to the ground.
 To these as they trembled God's messenger came
 Good tidings of great joy to all to proclaim.
 "For you on this day in the city close by
 A baby, your Saviour, in a manger does lie.
 So go to the stable, the baby you'll find
 In swaddling clothes, he lies there entwined."

And then in a twinkling 'twas heard through the air
 The praise of the angels assembled up there.
 "To God in the highest, all glory and praise,
 Good will amongst men and peace through their days."
 When the angels returned then to heaven above,
 There stood the shepherds amazed by God's love.
 A moment they wondered, then hastily ran,
 Found Mary and Joseph and God's gift to man.
 The baby, named Jesus, man's Saviour from sin,
 Had come as was promised, His work to begin.
 His eyes not quite opened, how much they would see
 Of hatred and failures, of man's misery.
 The shepherds, the wonder, made known as they went
 Told all of the Gift that to mankind was sent.
 The star, that same star that proclaimed His birth,
 Was shining for people all over this earth.
 The wisemen, they saw it and knew what it meant,
 The Saviour God promised this world had been sent.
 They left all to find Him, a baby, 'tis true;
 He came as their Saviour; He came for us, too.
 Once more it is Christmas, the time of Christ's birth,
 A holiday season; is that all it's worth?
 No, there's hope in this message, forgiveness from sin
 For those who receive Him, who let Him come in.
 Let's remember HIS birthday, let's celebrate right
 Merry Christmas to all, to all a good night!

Bethlehem's Kingly Babe

The shepherds rest beside the sheep
 Upon Judean hill;
 An angel choir disturbs their sleep
 With songs that echo still.
 To Bethlehem in early morn
 The shepherds wend their way;
 Their hearts rejoice—the babe is born!
 And sleeps upon the hay.

The Wise Men plod the deserts wild
 Their treasures rare to bring;
 Beneath the star they find the child,
 A babe and yet a King!
 To worship Him and minister
 As to a king of old,
 They offer frankincense and myrrh
 And treasures made of gold.

Rejoice! for Christmas comes again
 Around the whole wide earth,
 To spread abroad God's love to men
 As seen in Jesus' birth.
 While Christmas bells in gladness ring,
 Ring out o'er land and sea,
 Let earth enthrone her matchless King
 And may He reign in me.

—By Eugene M. Harrison



God Sent Us A Saviour

If our greatest need had been information:
 God would have sent us an **EDUCATOR**.

If our greatest need had been technology,
 God would have sent us a **SCIENTIST**.

If our greatest need had been money,
 God would have sent us an **ECONOMIST**.

If our greatest need had been pleasure,
 God would have sent us an **ENTERTAINER**.

But our greatest need was forgiveness,
SO GOD SENT US A SAVIOUR.

THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE

BY DAVID G. STRATMAN



It was December 25, 1914, only 5 months into World War I. German, British, and French soldiers, already sick and tired of the senseless killing, disobeyed their superiors and fraternized with "the enemy" along two-thirds of the Western Front (a crime punishable by death in times of war). German troops held Christmas trees up out of the trenches with signs, "Merry Christmas."

"You no shoot, we no shoot." Thousands of troops streamed across a no-man's land strewn with rotting corpses. They sang Christmas carols, exchanged photographs of loved ones back home, shared rations, played football, even roasted some pigs.

Soldiers embraced men they had been trying to kill a few short hours before. They agreed to warn each other if the top brass forced them to fire their weapons, and to aim high. A shudder ran through the high command on either side. Here was disaster in the making: soldiers declaring their brotherhood with each other and refusing to fight. Generals on both sides declared this spontaneous peacemaking to be treasonous and subject to court martial. By March 1915 the fraternization movement had been eradicated and the killing machine put back in full operation. By the time of the armistice in 1918, fifteen million would be slaughtered. Not many people have heard the story of the Christmas Truce.

The Christmas Truce story goes against most of what we have been taught about people. It gives us a glimpse of the world as we wish it could be and says, "This really happened once." It reminds us of those thoughts we keep hidden away, out of range of the TV and newspaper stories that tell us how trivial and mean human life is. It is like hearing that our deepest wishes really are true: the world really could be different.