

Celebrate Christmas The Light Has Come!



25 Reflections on the Coming of the Light

by Jon Byler

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Introduction

For many years our family has enjoyed a Christmas tradition of lighting candles on a yule log for the 25 days in December leading up to Christmas. We turn all the lights in the house off and then on December 1st we light one candle, on the 2nd we light two, etc. until all 25 are lit on Christmas day. We enjoy the candle light as we sing Christmas songs and the visual reminder that the Light of the world is coming!

The increasing light each day reflects God's continued unfolding of His promise. Beginning with the first promise in the garden God continued to reveal more and more about the Light that would be fully revealed at the birth of Christ.

For each day and each additional candle, we read the scripture that provides glimpses of the way God would bring Light into the world. This devotional also includes a short meditation, a prayer and a song for each day. Two 'bonus' days are also included after Christmas day to complete the Christmas story.

Alternate song lyrics are provided at the end unless they are used in another devotional. Then the day is indicated in (). All song lyrics were found on the internet and credit is provided where known.

Instructions for creating the physical yule log are available upon request from the author or at his website, www.LeadersServe.com.

Enjoy this celebration of Jesus, the Light of the World!

Jon Byler, November 2019

(Thanks to Linda Boll for her excellent editing skills.)

Day 1, From the Seed of the Woman

Genesis 3:13-15 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." ¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

At the darkest moment in human history, God revealed the first glimmer of light. There was hope, God had a plan and it was about one who would come from a woman. The one who would come would crush the head of the serpent who deceived Adam and Eve. The light will come!

Prayer: Thank you Father that in the darkest time in history, you began to reveal the Light that would come into the world. Fill our hearts with the light of His presence as we begin to celebrate His coming to earth as a baby.

Sing: *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* (Charles Wesley) (Selected verses)

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!
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.

Come, Desire of nations, come,
Fix in us Thy humble home;
Rise, the woman's conqu'ring Seed,

Bruise in us the serpent's head.
Now display Thy saving pow'r,
Ruined nature now restore;
Now in mystic union join
Thine to ours, and ours to Thine.

Adam's likeness, Lord, efface,
Stamp Thine image in its place:
Second Adam from above,
Reinstate us in Thy love.
Let us Thee, though lost, regain,
Thee, the Life, the inner man:
Oh, to all Thyself impart,
Formed in each believing heart.

Alternates:

This Little Light of Mine, (Day 19)
Here I am to Worship
Joy to the World (Day 5)

Day 2, Through Abraham

Genesis 12:1-3 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you." 2 "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

As people continued to increase in the world, God chooses Abram (later renamed Abraham) as the one through whom the Light would come. God's promise of Light was beginning to focus on the family line of Abraham. He would become the father of a nation, God's people. The Light to come would be a blessing to all nations including ours!

Prayer: Thank you Lord that you blessed Abraham and made him the father of a great nation. We are grateful that the blessing of Light was also extended to our nation and our people. We pray for those who have not yet received the news of the Light that came through Abraham, bring that Light to them quickly!

Sing: *Father Abraham, Had Many Sons*

Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord.
Right arm!

(on successive verses add left arm, right foot, left foot, chin up, turn around, sit down)

Alternate:

Go Tell It On The Mountain

Day 3, Isaac: God Will Provide The Lamb

Genesis 22:1-8 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied. ² Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.” ³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.” ⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, ⁷ Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?” “Yes, my son?” Abraham replied. “The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

God called Abraham to sacrifice the son of the promise, a test of his faith. In obedience, Abraham was ready to offer up his own son to God, but God provided a lamb. Isaac, the son of promise was loved by his father and was willing to be sacrificed. He became a picture of Jesus who would come as the Light many years later. At this same location centuries later, God would offer up His own Son, Jesus, the Lamb of God to be the savior of the world.

Prayer: We acknowledge our need for forgiveness from our sin and the need of a sacrifice. Thank you that you provided a lamb for us, your precious son, who would offer forgiveness to us. Help us to walk in obedience as Abraham did, even when you call us to sacrifice what we love.

Sing: *Agnus Dei* (Michael W. Smith)

Alleluia Alleluia
For our Lord God Almighty reigns
Alleluia Alleluia
For our Lord God Almighty reigns

Alleluia
Holy Holy
Are You Lord God Almighty
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb

You are Holy
Holy
Are You Lord God Almighty
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb
Amen

Alternate: Mary Had a Little Lamb.

Day 4, Joseph: A Picture of Christ

Genesis 37:3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. ⁴ When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him. *Genesis 37:3-4*

The story of Joseph is one of the most dramatic stories in scripture. At first glance it may only seem to be an isolated story. But in the life of Joseph, God reveals more about how the Light would come into the world. Reflect on the story of Joseph and see how many similarities you can find between Joseph and Jesus.

Here are a few:

- Both were loved by their fathers
- Both were falsely accused
- Both were taken to Egypt
- Both were blessed with God's presence in their lives
- Both were severely tempted
- Both extended forgiveness to those who wronged them
- Both became the savior of their people

The story of Joseph is especially a story of grace and forgiveness. He forgave his brothers who had done great wrong to him. Jesus also came and taught us to forgive others. He showed the way by offering forgiveness even to those who killed Him. He came full of "Grace and Truth" (John 1:14).

Prayer: Father, we come to you as persons needing your grace and forgiveness. And we ask you, in this Christmas season, to help us forgive those who wrong us. We release them to you and ask that your light shine through our lives as we forgive like Joseph and Jesus.

Sing: *Grace, Grace, God's Grace* (Julia H. Johnston)

Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,
Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!
Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured,
There where the blood of the Lamb was spilled.

Refrain:

Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that will pardon and cleanse within;
Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that is greater than all our sin!

Sin and despair, like the sea waves cold,
Threaten the soul with infinite loss;
Grace that is greater, yes, grace untold,
Points to the refuge, the mighty cross.

Dark is the stain that we cannot hide;
What can we do to wash it away?
Look! There is flowing a crimson tide,
Brighter than snow you may be today.

Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace,
Freely bestowed on all who believe!
You that are longing to see His face,
Will you this moment His grace receive?

Alternates: ... At the Cross... Amazing Grace

Day 5, From the Line of Judah

Genesis 49:10 The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his

Israel prophesied that the Light would come through his son Judah. The “scepter” and “ruler’s staff” were symbols of the authority of a king. God reveals that the ruler of the nations will come from the line or family of Judah. The whole line of Kings from the tribe of Judah sat on their thrones until the real King would come! The right to rule belongs to Jesus. The “lion of the tribe of Judah” (Rev. 5:5) will rule and reign forevermore! Let’s rejoice that He “Rules the world with truth and grace” and that His blessings will flow “far as the curse is found.”

Prayer: Jesus, we thank you for coming as the King of Kings and ruler of the world. We acknowledge your right to rule over our hearts this Christmas season. Forgive us when we disobey Your instructions as the King. We prepare our hearts to welcome you as the King and ruler of our lives.

Sing: *Joy to the World* (Isaac Watts)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

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.

Day 6, Birth Announced by a Star

Numbers 24:17 “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the people of Sheth.

A pagan prophet, Balaam, made this startling prediction. A star would come from Jacob and rise from Israel. This clearly refers to the coming of Christ and is also believed by many to be a reference to the star that would guide the wise men to come and worship the King (Matthew 2:1-12). They brought gifts and came to worship Him. The star gives light and is used for guidance, showing men and women the way to follow. Jesus still shines and points people in the right direction! He is still the star that guides wise men and women and is worthy of our worship.

Prayer: Father, guide our hearts to seek you this season. We need your light in our lives, giving us direction for our daily lives. We welcome you as King and worship you the Light of the world.

Sing: *Beautiful Star of Bethlehem* (R. Fisher Boyce)

Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem
Shinning afar through shadows dimmed
Giving the light to those who long have gone
Guiding the wise men on their way
Unto the place where Jesus lay
Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on

Oh beautiful star the hope of light
Guiding the pilgrims through the night
Over the mountains 'till the break of dawn
Into the land of perfect day
It will give out a lovely ray
Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on

Oh beautiful star (Beautiful, Beautiful Star)
Of Bethlehem (Star of Bethlehem)
Shine upon us until the glory dawns
Give us the light to light the way
Unto the land of perfect day
Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on

Oh beautiful star the hope, the grace
For the redeemed of good and blessed
Yonder in glory when the crown is won
Jesus is now the star divine
Brighter and brighter he will shine
Oh beautiful star of Bethlehem shine on

Day 7, The Passover Lamb

Exodus 12:1-3, 22-23 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. ³ Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. ²² Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning. ²³ When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

Hundreds of years before Jesus came, God gave this beautiful picture to Moses of the One that would come to save us. The blood of the Passover lamb saved every family member inside the house from the angel of death. This story reveals the way Jesus would come as the Passover Lamb to save us from our sins when His blood is applied to our lives. What a privilege that this blood has been applied to our doorposts and we are saved from death. Jesus came as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). He would be the Savior bringing tidings of “comfort and joy!” The light continues growing brighter and brighter.

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for coming to earth as our Savior. We acknowledge our need of you to save us from sin and death. We welcome your presence in our home to bring salvation. Forgive us when we trust in our own deeds instead of the blood of Jesus for salvation. Bring the light of the Savior to us as we worship Jesus.

Sing: *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*

Chorus:

God rest ye merry gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
When we were gone astray
Oh tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
Oh tidings of comfort and joy

In Bethlehem, in Israel
This blessed Babe was born
And laid within a manger
Upon this blessed morn
The which His Mother Mary
Did nothing take in scorn
Oh tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
Oh tidings of comfort and joy

Fear not then, said the Angel
Let nothing you affright
This day is born a Savior
Of a pure Virgin bright
To free all those who trust in Him
From Satan's pow'r and might
Oh tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
Oh tidings of comfort and joy

Day 8, Resurrection Prophesied

Psalm 16:8 10 I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, 10 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay.

When David wrote these words, he did not know of anyone that had not seen decay. But as he wrote these words he looked ahead to the “Holy One” whose birth we celebrate at Christmas. It was another glimmer of light looking forward to the birth of Jesus. This newborn King was the “Holy One” and would rise from the dead to live forevermore!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we thank you that you came at Christmas, fully God but clothed with flesh. You lived and died, but the grave could not hold the Light of the World! So as we celebrate your birth, we also celebrate your resurrection.

Sing: *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing!*
(Charles Wesley) (Selected verses)

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn 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 newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored:
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come,

Offspring of the favored one.
Veil'd in flesh, the Godhead see;
Hail, th'incarnate Deity:
Pleased, as man, with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail! the heav'n 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 newborn King!"

Day 9, Kings will Worship

Psalm 72:10-11 *May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. ¹¹ May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him.*

This prophecy shows that the child to be born at Christmas was indeed a king and worthy of worship. Royalty will bow before Him and all nations, not only the Jews, will serve Him! We join the wise men from the East who came to bow in adoration of the child, the Light of the world.

Prayer: We bow our hearts before the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who came to us as a baby on Christmas day. We repent of anything we have placed above You in our hearts and acknowledge that You alone are worthy of worship. As we think of gifts this Christmas season, let each gift remind us of the great gift You gave to us by coming to our dark world.

Sing: *We three Kings (John Henry Hopkins, Jr.)*

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 night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy Perfect Light

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain
Gold I bring to crown Him again
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign

Frankincense to offer have I
Incense owns a Deity nigh
Prayer and praising, all men raising
Worship Him, God most high

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes of life of gathering gloom
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb

Glorious now behold Him arise
King and God and Sacrifice
Alleluia, Alleluia
Earth to heav'n replies

Day 10, Born of a Virgin

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

How can it be possible for a virgin to have a child? It was unthinkable, but Isaiah saw it coming. Through Isaiah, God made another promise about the Light that would come many years later, a baby born to the virgin Mary. This is another sign of the Light that would come!

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for choosing to come to earth through the virgin Mary and for the name “Immanuel” to indicate that you would be God coming to be with us. Give us faith to believe you for the impossible situations we face in our own lives.

Sing: *Emmanuel (Craig Smith)*

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Wonderful, counselor
Lord of life, lord of all
He's the prince of peace, mighty god, holy one
Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Wonderful, counselor
Lord of life, Lord of all
He's the prince of peace, mighty god, holy one
Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Wonderful, counselor
Lord of life, lord of all
He's the Prince of Peace, mighty God, holy One
Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Emmanuel, (Emmanuel, Emmanuel), Emmanuel
Emmanuel, (Emmanuel, Emmanuel), Emmanuel
Wonderful, counselor!
Lord of life, lord of all;
He's the prince of peace, mighty god, holy one!
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Alternative:

Jesus, Name Above All Names (Day 21)

Day 11, A Light in Galilee

Isaiah 9:1² Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

God provided another sign to Isaiah, the location of where the Messiah would do much of His ministry, in Galilee. The people there were in darkness but would see a “great light.” Light and darkness gives a powerful picture of the difference that Christ makes in our lives. Like the people of Galilee, we were in darkness, but we have seen a “great light” in Jesus. In Him, the Light has come. That’s why we light candles and that’s why this yule log is growing brighter and brighter each evening. He comes with light!

Prayer: Oh Lord, we acknowledge that we were a people walking in great darkness, living in the shadow of death. But we give thanks that Jesus came as the “great light” and He has transformed our lives. We pray for those who are still living in the darkness that they may also come to know Jesus as the Light of the world.

Sing: *Do you hear what I hear? (Noël Regney)*

Said the night wind to the little lamb,
do you see what I see
Way up in the sky, little lamb,
do you see what I see
A star, a star, dancing in the night
With a tail as big as a kite
With a tail as big as a kite

Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy,
do you hear what I hear
Ringing through the sky, shepherd boy,
do you hear what I hear
A song, a song, high above the trees
With a voice as big as the sea
With a voice as big as the sea

Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king,
do you know what I know
In your palace warm, mighty king,
do you know what I know
A Child, a Child shivers in the cold
Let us bring Him silver and gold
Let us bring Him silver and gold

Said the king to the people everywhere,
listen to what I say
Pray for peace, people everywhere!
listen to what I say.
The Child, the Child, sleeping in the night
He will bring us goodness and light
He will bring us goodness and light

Day 12, Divine Titles

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The names of the Messiah revealed to Isaiah provide so much insight into who God is and what Jesus did for us. We need guidance, He is a Wonderful Counselor. We need power, He is a Mighty God. We long for a father who loves us, He is an Everlasting Father. We long for peace, He is the Prince of Peace. God continues to reveal more about the precious Light that was coming.

Prayer: We give thanks for the Son born at Christmas, the Son that we call “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Jesus, you meet all our needs and today we look to you again for guidance, for power to live in your way, for the love we desperately crave and for the peace that we can find nowhere else.

Sing: *The Hallelujah Chorus (George Handel)*

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, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Alternates:

Jesus, Name Above All Names. (Day 21)

Jesus, There's Just Something About That Name.

Emmanuel

Day 13, From the Line of David

Isaiah 9:7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

The Light came as a baby but also a king! Isaiah sees that this king will be one of David's descendants and rule forever. His will be a government of peace filled with justice and righteousness. And his kingdom will continue forever and ever.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, as we prepare our hearts to welcome you this Christmas season, we acknowledge that you came as a King to establish your rule and reign in our lives and throughout the world. Your kingdom will have no end! May your justice and righteousness rule now in our hearts, in our community, our nation and to every people group in the world, forever and ever! We bow before you as the King of Kings.

Sing: *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night* (Nahum Tate)

While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around
And glory shone around

To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
The Savior who is Christ the Lord
And this shall be the sign
And this shall be the sign

All glory be to God on high
And to the earth be peace
Good will henceforth from Heaven to man
Begin and never cease
Begin and never cease

Day 14, The Substitutionary Lamb

Isaiah 53:1-6 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. ⁴ Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah reveals another glimmer of the Light that would come to our world. In this passage God reveals to Isaiah that the coming Messiah would not only be the King but would also suffer in our place. The Light that would come would take “our infirmities,” be “pierced for our transgressions,” and be “crushed for our iniquities.” This was a radical new glimpse of what the true Light would accomplish.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we cannot fathom the depth of the love you have for us, to come and suffer when we deserved the punishment that would be upon you. Indeed, we are like sheep that have gone astray; we have tried to live in our own way. But we bow before you as our Redeemer and Lord. We give thanks for the forgiveness of sins that you give to us. We give thanks that you brought peace to us through what you suffered. You knew this before you came as the Light of the world, and still you came! You were born to give us a new birth. We are forever grateful.

Sing: *Just As I Am* (Charlotte Elliott)
Just as I am without one plea but that
Thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee
Oh Lamb of God I come I come

Just as I am and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot
To Thee who's blood can cleanse each spot
Oh Lamb of God I come I come

Just as I am though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt
Fightings and fears within without
Oh Lamb of God I come, I come

Just as I am Thou wilt receive
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve
Because Thy promise I believe
Oh Lamb of God I come, I come

Alternatives:

Hark the Herald Angels Sing (*Day 1*)
You Are My All In All

Day 15, Born in Bethlehem

Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

Hundreds of years before Jesus came, Micah foretold the exact town where he would be born. Micah could not know the decrees of the Roman Emperor which would take Joseph to his hometown many years later. But God revealed the exact location where the Light would come to us. This place would not be a palace or a large city but a small, insignificant town, Bethlehem. God can bring great things out of little places!

Prayer: Almighty God, you knew the exact location of where Jesus would be born, and you planned centuries in advance for the decree that would be issued which would call Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem. We give you thanks that you also have our lives in your hands. You knew us before we were born, and you planned the place and nationality of our lives. We trust you as the Light of the world who knows all the details of our lives.

Sing: *Oh Little Town Of Bethlehem (Phillips Brooks)*

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 wond’ring 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 giv’n;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His Heav’n.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to Thee, Son of the mother mild;
Where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes once more.

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;
Oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Day 16, Son of Man

Daniel 7:13 "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

Daniel sees a vision of the coming Messiah. He sees the humanity of Jesus combined with the glory of God. He was a "son of man" but coming on the clouds of Heaven in the presence of the "Ancient of Days." The Light that was coming to our world would be fully man and fully God. We can still scarcely understand how it is possible. But the baby born to Mary was fully man and fully God. Jesus used "Son of Man" as one of His many titles.

Prayer: We marvel at the way the Light of the world became human and entered our world. We worship you Jesus as the Son of Man who rides on the clouds of Heaven. We thank you for becoming a man to show us the way to God.

Sing: *These Are The Days Of Elijah* (Robin Mark)

(this song also refers to His second coming.)

These are the days of Elijah,
Declaring the word of the Lord
And these are the days of Your servant
Moses,
Righteousness being restored.
And though these are days of great trial,
Of famine and darkness and sword,
Still, we are the voice in the desert crying
"Prepare ye the way of the Lord!"

Behold He comes riding on the clouds,
Shining like the sun at the trumpet call,
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee,
And out of Zion's hill salvation comes.

These are the days of Ezekiel,
The dry bones becoming as flesh,
And these are the days of Your servant
David,
Rebuilding a temple of praise.
These are the days of the harvest,
The fields are as white in Your world,
And we are the labourers in Your vineyard,
Declaring the word of the Lord!

*Alternative: Hark the Herald Angels
Sing, (Day 1) especially this verse:
Christ, by highest Heav'n 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 with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel*

Day 17, Time of Birth Announced

Daniel 9:25 “Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

Daniel correctly prophesied the timing of Jesus birth long before it happened. God knew the decrees of a pagan king and the exact time of Jesus’ birth. He well knew exactly how long the world would wait in expectation for Jesus to come on that “Holy Night” as the world lay “in sin and error pining” (pining means to long for). As God knows the exact day and time for Jesus’ birth, we can trust that He also knows every detail of our lives.

Prayer: Father, we rejoice that you knew far in advance, the exact timing of Jesus’ birth. And we are filled with hope to know that you also know every detail of our lives and will also accomplish all that you have prepared for us.

Sing: *Oh Holy Night* (Mariah Carey)

O Holy Night
The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error-pining
Till he appeared and the soul felt it's worth
The thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn

Fall on your knees
O hear the angel voices
O night divine
O night when Christ was born
O night divine
O night, O night divine

Day 18, The Coming of Elijah

Malachi 4:5-6 “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

In this final Old Testament ray of light, the prophet Malachi predicts the coming of Elijah before the day of the Lord. This prophecy would be fulfilled in John the Baptist. But before that time, there was 400 years of silence, when generations waited for another sign that God would bring the Light into the world. When would it happen? Could God be trusted during this time of darkness to bring the Light? These years were a time of longing, of waiting and hoping.

Prayer: God, you gave many promises in the Old Testament that you would bring the Light into the world. Yet there were many years that passed with no sign of the coming Messiah. Your people longed for the Light but waited in the darkness. Help us to trust you with the dark moments in our lives when there seems to be no hope and no way out. Fill us with the assurance that you will come as you have promised. We cry out, “Come, Oh come, Emmanuel.”

Sing: *Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel* (John Mason Neale)

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

[Refrain]
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, O come, Thou Lord of might
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law
In cloud, and majesty and awe

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of hell Thy people save

And give them victory o'er the grave

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight

O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly home
Make safe the way that leads on high
And close the path to misery

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high
And order all things, far and nigh
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go

O come, desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease
And be Thyself our King of peace

Day 19, Announcement to Zechariah

Luke 1:8-13 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.¹⁰ And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.¹³ But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

400 years after Malachi's prophecy, God chose Zechariah to be the father of John the Baptist, the one who would prepare the way for Jesus. The time for the Light to come is getting closer! Zechariah was a priest faithfully serving God as he burned incense in the temple. He had no way of knowing that God would use him in this special way, he was simply continuing to honor God with his life. He allowed his own light to keep shining as he waited for the Light of the World to come.

Prayer: God, give us grace to keep serving you even when we don't understand how you may choose to use us in your great plan for our world. Help us to let our light shine to our family, neighbors and friends and trust you with the timing and purposes you have for each of us.

Sing: *This Little Light of Mine* (Harry Dixon Loes)

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Won't let Satan blow it out.
I'm gonna let it shine.
Won't let Satan blow it out.
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Let it shine til Jesus comes.
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine til Jesus comes.
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel - NO!
I'm gonna let it shine.
Hide it under a bushel - NO!
I'm gonna let it shine, Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Let it shine over the whole wide world,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine over the whole wide world,
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Alternatives:

Song of Zechariah (Blessed Be the Lord)

Light of the World

Additional reading: Luke 1:14-25

Day 20, Announcement to Mary

Luke 1:26 -33 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Mary was chosen by God to be the one who would bring the Light into the world. But this birth, as Isaiah had foretold, would not be an ordinary birth, He would be born of a virgin and as the time drew near, Mary was the one God would use to be the mother of Jesus. She likely saw herself as just an ordinary person, but God would use her in an extraordinary way to accomplish His purposes.

Prayer: Thank you God for choosing an ordinary woman for an extraordinary role. Help us to believe that you also have a plan to use us as a significant part of your plan. We rejoice in the Light that came through Mary as we prepare to celebrate His birth. Use us, as ordinary people, to reveal the Light to others.

Sing: *Come On Ring Those Bells* (Andrew Culverwell)

Everybody likes to take a holiday
Everybody likes to take a rest
Spending time together with the family
Sharing lots of love and happiness.

Come on, ring those bells,
Light the Christmas tree,
Jesus is the king
Born for you and me.
Come on, ring those bells,
Every-body say,
Jesus, we remember
This your birthday.

Celebrations come because of something good.

Celebrations we love to recall
Mary had a baby boy in Bethlehem
The greatest celebration of all.

Come on, ring those bells,
Light the Christmas tree,
Jesus is the King
Born for you and me.
Come on, ring those bells,
Every-body say,
Jesus, we remember
This your birthday

Alternative, Mary Did You Know
Additional reading: Luke 1:34-56

Day 21, Dream of Joseph

Matthew 1:18-25 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”). ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Joseph, though silent, plays a key role in the birth of Jesus. He believed the angel and was willing to be known as the father of an illegitimate child. The angel gave Joseph two names for the child to be born, “Immanuel” and “Jesus”. Both names are significant indicators of the Light that was coming very soon. Jesus would be a savior and would be Immanuel, God with us. These names for the Light show that Jesus would meet our deep needs for salvation and a relationship with God.

Prayer: Father we thank you for bringing the Light into our world. We needed salvation and you called Him Jesus. We longed to know you as our God and Father, so you sent Immanuel to be God with us. We worship Jesus, the name above all names.

Sing: *Jesus, Name Above All Names* (Naida Hearn)

Jesus, Name above all names
Beautiful Savior
Glorious Lord
Immanuel
God is with us
Blessed Redeemer
Living Word

Jesus, Name above all names
Beautiful Savior
Glorious Lord
Immanuel
God is with us
Blessed Redeemer
Healing Lord

Day 22, Birth of John the Baptist

Luke 1:57-64 When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son.
⁵⁸ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy. ⁵⁹ On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, ⁶⁰ but his mother spoke up and said, "No! He is to be called John." ⁶¹ They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who has that name." ⁶² Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. ⁶³ He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." ⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God.

John the Baptist, a cousin of Jesus, was to be the one to prepare the way for the Light that was coming into the world. Jesus says of John that there was no one greater than him before that time. John opened the way for the life and ministry of Jesus. Like, John, God can use us to point others to Jesus.

Prayer: God we thank you for Zechariah and Elizabeth whom you used to bring John the Baptist before the Light of the World. As you used John to point others to Jesus, we ask that you also use us to share with our family, neighbors and friends about the Light of Jesus and to declare with Elijah, Moses, and Ezekiel that you are coming!

Sing: *Days of Elijah (Robin Mark)*

These are the days of Elijah
Declaring the word of the Lord,
And these are the days of Your servant,
Moses
Righteousness being restored
These are the days of great trials
Of famine and darkness and sword
Still we are the voice in the desert crying
Prepare ye the way of the Lord!

Chorus:
Behold He comes, riding on the clouds
Shining like the sun, at the trumpet's call
Lift your voice, it's the year of Jubilee
Out of Zion's hill, salvation comes

And these are the days of Ezekiel
The dry bones becoming as flesh
And these are the days of Your servant,
David
Rebuilding the temple of praise
And these are the days of the harvest
The fields are as white in the world
And we are the laborers in Your vineyard
Declaring the Word of the Lord

There's no God like Jehovah!
There's no God like Jehovah!
There's no God like Jehovah!
There's no God like Jehovah!
(x6)

Additional reading: Luke 1:65-80

Day 23, Mary Visits Elizabeth

Luke 1:39-56 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea,⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"⁴⁶

And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Mary's visit to Elizabeth brought together two women whom God used in special ways to bring the Light. The unborn baby John recognized the presence of Jesus and leapt in Elizabeth's womb. Mary burst into song as she recognized what God was doing. She acknowledged that all that was happening to her was a gift from God to bring Light to the world.

Prayer: Thank you Father for the gift of life you gave to Elizabeth and Mary. Like Mary, we acknowledge that you are worthy of praise for all you have done. You have come to our darkness and brought Light. And so we also glorify your name!

Sing: *The Song of Mary* (Magnificat)

My soul doth magnify the Lord
My soul doth magnify the Lord
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour
For He who is mighty has done great things
And holy is His name.

Alternative: Mary Did You Know?

Day 24, Journey to Bethlehem

Luke 2:1 ⁵ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register. ⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

The journey to Bethlehem brings Joseph and the expectant Mary to the place where Micah had long ago prophesied the Light would come into the world. The journey was certainly not easy for them but they obeyed the decree of the earthly king to prepare the way for a heavenly one. Again, God's hand was at work in the timing and He used the decree of Caesar Augustus to bring Joseph and Mary to the right place. The mundane and distasteful process of paying taxes was a part of God's plan to bring the Light into our world. The Light is coming!

Prayer: Thank you Father for the way you orchestrated the events of Joseph and Mary's life to accomplish your purposes. We also trust that you know what you are doing in the mundane and sometimes unpleasant parts of our lives. May the Light of the world shine upon us as we obey your leading.

Sing: *Oh Come, All Ye Faithful* (John Francis Wade)

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!

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

Sing, alleluia, All ye choirs of angels;
O sing, all ye blissful ones of heav'n above.
Glory to God In the highest glory!

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

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be the glory giv'n; Word of the Father,
Now in the flesh appearing, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Alternative:

Oh Little Town of Bethlehem (Day 15)

Day 25, Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:6-7 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Mary gave birth to Jesus, her firstborn child, in a lowly stable because there was no room in the inn. Finally, after many prophecies and years of preparation, **the Light has come!** What a gift we celebrate today, greater than any gift we may give to each other.

Prayer: We rejoice this Christmas day in the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World! We open our hearts afresh to make room for Him. We give thanks that the Light has come to transform our lives. May His Light shine brightly through each of us as we celebrate His birth.

Sing: *Silent Night, Holy Night* (Joseph Mohr)

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
Glory streams from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing hallelujah
Christ the Savior is born
Christ the Savior is born

Alternatives:

*Oh Come, All Ye Faithful (Day 24),
Come On Ring Those Bells (Day 20),
Oh, Little Town Of Bethlehem, (Day 15)
Go, Tell It On The Mountain,
Mary's Boy Child
Jesus Our Brother (Animal Song)*

Bonus days. Two additional days are provided. These two stories are an integral part of the Christmas story and provide a reason to keep lighting the candles a bit longer!

Day 26, Light to the Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone 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 about." ¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

The Light had come and it was time to let others know! The angel shared the news first with shepherds and proclaimed that the Messiah had come. They hurried to see for themselves the Light of the World. They saw Jesus and then they shared the good news with others.

Prayer: Thank you God for revealing to all of us the good news of our Savior's birth. Use us to experience the reality of Jesus' life and then share that with those around us. We ask for those still living in darkness to have the opportunity to hear this good news.

Sing: *The First Noel* (Davies Gilbert)

The First Noel, the Angels 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
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel!

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
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel!

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

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel!

This star drew nigh to the northwest
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest
And there it did both stop and stay
Right o'er the place where Jesus lay
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel!

Then entered in those Wise men three
Fell reverently upon their knee
And offered there in His presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the kind of Israel!

Alternatives:

While Shepherds Watched (Day 13)

Oh Come All Ye Faithful (Day 24)

Angels We Have Heard On High.

Hark The Herald Angels Sing (Day 1)

Day 27, Worship by Kings

Matthew 2:1-11 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:⁶ " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The wise men came to offer gifts to the child, now in a house. They had traveled a long distance to see the newborn King. They followed a light to find the Light. They came to offer precious gifts and to worship the Light of the World.

Prayer: We also come to worship the King of Kings today. We end our journey in your presence. We offer all that we have to Jesus, our lives and our possessions. No sacrifice is too great to worship the one who came to us as the Light of the world.

Sing: *Little Drummer Boy* (Katherine Kennicott Davis)

Come they told me, pa rum pum pum pum
A new born King to see, pa rum pum pum pum
Our finest gifts we bring, pa rum pum pum pum
To lay before the King, pa rum pum pum pum
pum, rum pum pum pum , rum pum pum pum,
So, to honor Him, pa rum pum pum pum,
When we come.

Little Baby, pa rum pum pum pum
I am a poor boy too, pa rum pum pum pum
I have no gift to bring, pu rum pum pum pum

That's fit to give our King, pa rum pum pum pum
pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum
pum
Shall I play for you, pa rum pum pum pum,
On my drum?

Mary nodded, pa rum pum pum pum
The ox and lamb kept time, pa rum pum pum pum
pum pum
I played my drum for Him, pa rum pum pum pum
pum
I played my best for Him, pa rum pum pum pum
pum, rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum
pum
Then He smiled at me, pa rum pum pum pum
pum, me and my drum

Alternative:

We Three Kings Of Orient Are... (Day 9)

Alternative Song Lyrics (in alphabetical order)

Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) *(John Newton, Chris Tomlin)*

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

My chains are gone, I've been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love,
Amazing grace

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures
My chains are gone, I've been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy reigns
Unending love,
Amazing grace

Angels we have heard on High *(James Chadwick)*

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly, sweetly through the night
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their brief delight
Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Gloria, in excelsis Deo

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Gloria, in excelsis Deo

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing,
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo
Gloria, in excelsis Deo

At the Cross *(Isaac Watts)*

Alas! and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

At the cross, at the cross where I first saw
the light
And the burden of my heart rolled away
It was there by faith I received my sight
And now I am happy all the day

Thy body slain, sweet Jesus, Thine
And bathed in its own blood
While the firm mark of wrath divine
His soul in anguish stood

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in
When Christ, the mighty Maker died
For man the creature's sin

Thus might I hide my blushing face
While His dear cross appears
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness
And melt my eyes to tears

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe
Here, Lord, I give myself away
'Tis all that I can do

Go Tell It On The Mountain (*John Wesley
Work Jr*)

When I was a seeker
I sought both night and day,
I asked the Lord to help me,
And he showed me the way.

Chorus
Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain,
Our Jesus Christ is born.

He made me a watchman
Upon a city wall,
And if I am a Christian,
I am the least of all.

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain,
Our Jesus Christ is born.

Here I Am To Worship (Tim Hughes)

Light of the world, You stepped down into
darkness, opened my eyes, let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore You,
hope of a life spent with You.

Chorus:
Here I am to worship, here I am to bow
down,
Here I am to say that You're my God.
You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy,
altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days, oh, so highly exalted,
glorious in heaven above;
Humbly You came to the earth You created,
all for love's sake become poor. Chorus

Bridge:
I'll never know how much it cost
to see my sin upon that cross.

Jesus Our Brother, (Animal Song)

Jesus our brother kind and good
Was humbly born in a stable rude.
And the friendly beasts around him stood
Jesus our brother, kind and good.

"I," said the donkey, all shaggy and brown,
"I carried his mother up hill and down
I carried his mother to Bethlehem town. "
"I," said the donkey, all shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow, all white and red
"I gave him my manger for his bed
I gave him my hay to pillow his head. "
"I," said the cow, all white and red

"I," said the sheep, with curly horn,
"I gave him my wool for a blanket warm
He wore my coat on Christmas morn. "
"I," said the sheep, with curly horn.

"I," said the dove, from the rafters high
"I cooed him to sleep so he would not cry
We cooed him to sleep, my love and I
"I," said the dove, from the rafters high.

Thus every beast, by some good spell
In the stable rude was glad to tell
Of the gift he gave Emmanuel
The gift he gave Emmanuel
The gift he gave Emmanuel

Jesus, There's Just Something about That Name (*Gloria Gaither*)

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus; there's just something about that name.
Master, Savior, Jesus, like the fragrance after the rain;
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, let all Heaven and earth proclaim
Kings and kingdoms will all pass away,
But there's something about that name.
Kings and kingdoms will all pass away,
But there's something about that name.

Mary's Boy Child (*Jester Hairston*)

Mary's boy child Jesus Christ, was born on Christmas Day
And man will live for evermore, because of Christmas Day
Long time ago in Bethlehem, so the Holy Bible said
Mary's boy child Jesus Christ, was born on Christmas Day
Hark, now hear the angels sing, a king was born today
And man will live for evermore, because of Christmas Day

Mary's boy child Jesus Christ, was born on Christmas Day
While shepherds watch their flocks by night
They see a bright new shining star
They hear a choir sing a song, the music seemed to come from afar
Hark, now hear the angels sing, a king was born today
And man will live for evermore, because of Christmas Day

Mary Did You Know (*Mark Lowry*)

Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?
This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you

Mary did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?
When you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God

Mary did you know? Mary did you know?
Mary did you know?
Mary did you know? Mary did you know?
Mary did you know?

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the lamb

Mary did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?
Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect lamb?
That sleeping child you're holding is the great I am

Mary did you know? Mary did you know?
Mary did you know?
Mary did you know? Mary did you know?
Mary did you know? Oh
Mary did you know?

Mary Had a Little Lamb (*Sarah Josepha Hale*)

Mary had a little lamb,
a Little Lamb
a Little Lamb
Mary Had a Little Lamb.
And Jesus was his name.
They wrapped him up in swaddling clothes
in swaddling clothes
in swaddling clothes
They wrapped him up in swaddling clothes
On that Christmas morn

Song of Zechariah/Blessed be the God of Israel (*Carl P. Daw, Jr*)

Blessed be the God of Israel
Who comes to set us free
And raises up new hope for us
A Branch from David's tree
So have the prophets long declared
That with a mighty arm
God would turn back our enemies
And all who wish us harm
With promised mercy will God still
The covenant recall
The oath once sworn to Abraham
From foes to save us all
That we might worship without fear
And offer lives of praise
In holiness and righteousness
To serve God all our days
My child as prophet of the Lord
You will prepare the way
To tell God's people they are saved
From sin's eternal sway
Then shall God's mercy from on high
Shine forth and never cease
To drive away the gloom of death
And lead us into peace

You Are My All In All (*Dennis L. Jernigan*)

You are my strength when I am weak
You are the treasure that I seek
You are my all in all

Seeking You as a precious jewel
Lord to give up I'd be a fool
You are my all in all

Jesus Lamb of God worthy is your name
Jesus Lamb of God worthy is your name

Taking my sin my cross my shame
Rising again I bless your name
You are my all in all

When I fall down you pick me up
When I am dry You fill my cup
You are my all in all

Jesus Lamb of God worthy is your name
Jesus Lamb of God worthy is your name

Jesus Lamb of God worthy is your name
Jesus Lamb of God worthy is your name

About the author

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jon Byler has a passion to see church leaders grow and develop into mature, Christ-like leaders. He is committed to developing servant leaders with a heart for the Great Commission through his role as the Global Leadership Developer in Global Disciples. He has experience as a pastor, has authored several books and writes a bi-weekly eZine, “Reflections for Servant Leaders.” (Subscribe on his website, www.LeadersServe.com) He lived in Thika, Kenya for 13 years and currently resides in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA. He and his wife Loice are the parents of three children who loved lighting the candles on the Yule Log!

Books by Jon Byler

Signposts for the Journey, Volumes One, Two, and Three

The Heart of Christian Leadership

The Art of Christian Leadership

7 Keys to Financial Freedom

Booklets:

Preaching to Change Lives, a homiletics textbook

Use that Gift, a study of spiritual gifts

Pits, Prisons and Palaces, a study of the life of Joseph

Steps to Maturity, a 10-lesson discipleship course

Free at Last, a study of deliverance

The Christian and Authority

A Church With a Purpose, A Bible Study Guide Series based on Rick Warren’s *The Purpose Driven Church*.

