



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

CHRISTMAS EVE READINGS & CAROLS FOR HOME GATHERINGS

Formatting optimized for **smartphone** viewing. To print PDF, select “**Fit**” in Paper Sizing. Assign **readings** to individuals. Sing **carols** together. Lasts approximately **30 minutes**. **Shorten** as needed by singing only one stanza of each carol or skipping unfamiliar carols.

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him,
born the King of angels!

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

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

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 all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

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

ISAIAH 60:2; 9:2

A SINFUL WORLD IN DARKNESS

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

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

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

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

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

(...)

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And show the path that brings us nigh.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

ISAIAH 9:6-7; 60:1-3

THE LIGHT OF MESSIAH PROMISED

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. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Arise, shine! For thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee! For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising.

COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our sins and fears release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's Strength and Consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Come, Incarnate King, in meekness
Meet us in our low estate.
Sympathize with human weakness;
Come in love, though met with hate.
Thou for us in full submission
Must fulfill the law's demands;
Must for sinners win remission,
Shed Thy blood at sinners' hands.

(...)

Born a people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy glorious kingdom bring.
By Thine own Eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

JOHN 1:1-14 (EXCERPT)

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD APPEARS

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness [overcame] it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us—and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King:
Let ev'ry 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.

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

LUKE 2:1-7

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD BORN

And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar 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. 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. And so it was that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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.

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

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.

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
Looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus,
Asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus,
I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever,
And love me, I pray;
Bless all the dear children
In Thy tender care,
And fit us for Heaven,
To live with Thee there.

LUKE 2:8-14

A GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN'S LIGHT

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 joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, 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."

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

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 a virgin’s womb.
Veiled 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 Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n 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!"

LUKE 2:25-32

A LIGHT TO LIGHTEN THE GENTILES

And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him after the custom of the Law, then took he him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-6

THE LIGHT OF SALVATION

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus'sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

WHAT CHILD IS THIS

What Child is this Who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap, is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary. (End)