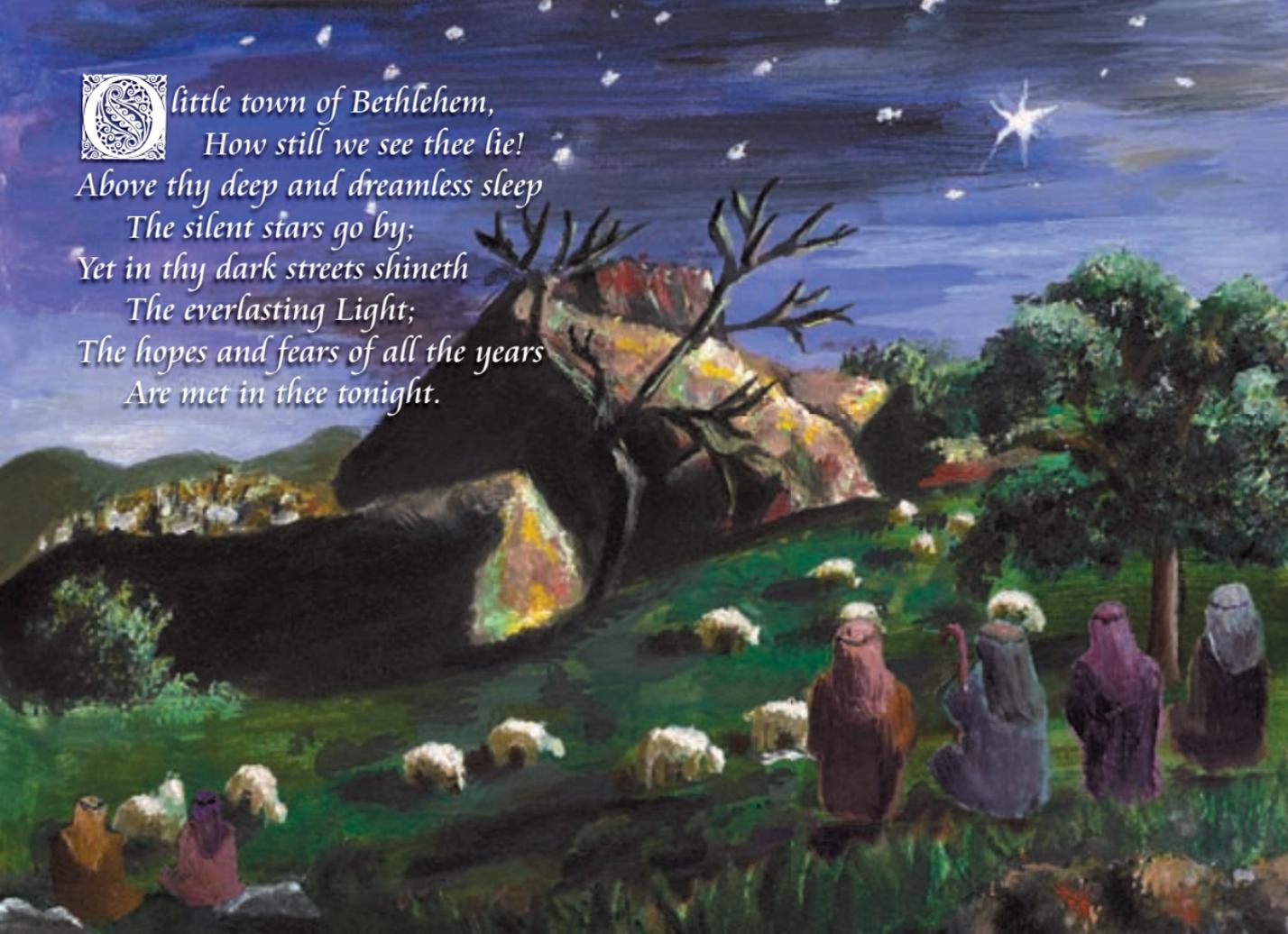




*Little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.*



For this Cause...

**“For this cause was I born...
For this cause I came into the world...”**

*The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.
Matthew 20:28*

You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice. John 18:37

*I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.
Luke 4:43*

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Luke 19:10

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it abundantly. John 10:10

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John 3:17

I came to send fire on the earth and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is

accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to bring peace on the earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Luke 12:49-53

For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be blind. John 9:39

Do not think I that I came to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household.

Matthew 10:34-38

And if anyone hears my words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. John 12:47

Therefore, when He came into the world He said, “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, But a body you have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, You had no pleasure. Then I said ‘Behold, I have come – In the volume of the book it is written of Me – To do your will, O God.’”

Hebrews 10:5

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. (Matt. 20:28)

Ever since those shepherds beheld that glorious night in the field, the story of our beloved baby Savior has been told.

For centuries, down through the ages, every nation, tribe, and tongue has been made aware of His great entry into the world. He was born as “the babe in Bethlehem.” Yes great it was, but it is the reason this child was born which is the most important thing. For He was born for a cause. And the cause for which He was born is the greatest cause a man could live for. He was not to remain the blessed baby forever, For the task ahead would take a mature man able to carry out His Father’s will.

As we rush about in preparation to celebrate the birth of this most honored baby, Let us consider that He would become the greatest **Man** that ever lived!

I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)

The gentle lowing of the nearby cow aroused the small infant. A warm caress from a pleased mother, a deep sigh of thankfulness from an honored father. They gazed down at this precious new life. There He lay in a manger filled with golden straw, wrapped tightly in swaddling cloths. Yes, this babe had an awesome calling to fulfill.

It was for this cause that the Savior was born so many centuries ago. He came to give life, eternal life. No more ugly death, sorrow or pain. What would one give to escape the fatal talons of death? There is a price to pay. The babe in Bethlehem ultimately paid the highest price one can pay to fulfill the cause for which he was born. Let us consider in this festive season the great investment He made to gain for

us this indestructible life. Then, like Him, one must invest all in the giver of this life. It is only in Him that eternal life; true love, peace and happiness can be found.

Do not think I came to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. (Matthew 5:17)

As we trudge across the cold white blanket of freshly fallen snow,

Do we ever wonder?

As we drag the fir tree we have just cut down into our home,

Do we ever consider?

As we open present after embellished present in the den on Christmas morning

Do we ever stop and think?

What is the reason for all this yearly ceremony?

Do we think of that starry evening in Bethlehem

When that very special baby was born?

This one whom we celebrate each year, was born for a great cause! When this very special baby grew to be a man, He said, “For this cause I came into the world, to fulfill the law, not to do away with it.” The hailed Savior we worship desired that people would obey His laws, everyday of their lives, not to remember Him in ritual ceremony once a year.

There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. Having a form of Godliness, but denying its power. (2 Tim. 3:1-5)

A wise man wrote long ago of how the earth would see such bad days when even children would no longer listen to their parents and people would love pleasure more than God. So let us remember Him by our actions.❖



The Babe in Bethlehem

A BABY WITH A CAUSE...

Nany years later, this same holy child would pour out His heart to His dear friends in these words, which capture what burned deep in His heart. For He was a man with a cause...

“For This cause was I born...
For this cause I came into the world...”

The hopes and fears of all the years, are met in thee tonight

The shepherds on the hillside saw a great light... and angels singing... a huge celebration in the sky... Why? They could not restrain their great excitement... it ripped open the heaven for a brief moment... the story goes like this:

There were shepherds in the nearby countryside staying in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. Behold, an angel from God stood before them, and the glory of God shone around them, and they were terrified.

The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be to all the people. For there is born to you, this day, in Bethlehem, a Savior, who is Messiah, the Lord.

This is the sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloth, lying in a feeding trough.”

Suddenly, there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

*“Glory to God in the highest,
On earth peace,
to men of good will.”*

It happened, when the angels went

away from them into the sky, that the shepherds said one to another, “Let’s go down into Bethlehem, now, and see this thing that has happened, which God has made known to us.” They came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby was lying in the feeding trough.

When they saw it, they publicized widely the saying which was spoken to them about this child. All who heard it wondered at the things which were spoken to them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, just as it was told them.

Luke 2:8-20

The picture painted for us by these beautiful words is very clear. There was an earthshaking announcement to the most



humble of men, shepherds. The announcement was of the birth of the most important figure that would ever walk this planet, but he was born not

in a palace but found his first little bed among the animals in a feed trough.

The announcement: this baby would be the long awaited Messiah, who would bring peace, not to all men, but to those of “good will.”

And now the interruption: At this celestial announcement, heaven could not maintain it’s ever present silent shroud... for only a brief moment those humble shepherds got to

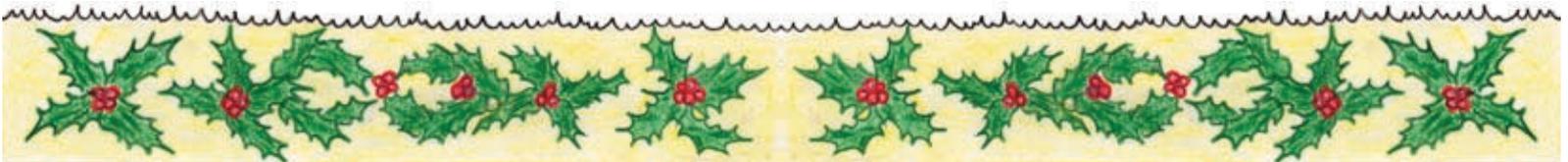
see something hidden to all others... The sky broke open with joy!

Yes, upon the announcement the angels could not contain themselves... for this announcement would mean a total change for the hopeless existence that “men of good will” had eternally found themselves trapped in.

Yes, Yes... today was the day... the hopes and fears of all the years had met in the tiny stable under the bright star... the babe in Bethlehem. ❖



*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.*





*O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.*

Words of this 1868 hymn written by
Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)