

O Come, O Come Immanuel

Christmas Choir Program

Compiled and adapted by Betsy Bailey

- Choir ***“O Come, O Come Immanuel”*** – a cappella
- Narrator 1 *“O come, O come Immanuel, and ransom captive Israel.”* From the creation of Adam and Eve and throughout the ensuing generations of mankind, the prophets have foretold and the chosen people of God have awaited the birth of the promised Messiah, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the Son of God. Foremost among the prophecies of ancient Israel was Isaiah:
- Narrator 2 *“The Lord shall give you a sign. A Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, meaning ‘God with us.’ For unto you 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.”*
- Narrator 1 In the new world, Nephi, a prophet of the Book of Mormon, also foresaw the birth and ministry of the Savior.
- Narrator 2 *“And I beheld a virgin, most fair and beautiful above all other virgins...And I looked and beheld the virgin again bearing a child in her arms, And the angel said unto me, “Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!”*
- Choir ***“What Child Is This?”*** – a cappella (*arr. by Melodey Tunney, Published by Carl Fischer*)
- Narrator 1 Not only the prophets, but all Israel yearned for the Messiah to come as God had promised. Some, it is true, had become calloused by the long years of waiting and had begun to question the realities of the prophecies. But every Israelite who loved God and worshipped him with an honest and pure heart still looked to the promise with hope and joy.
- Narrator 2 Can you imagine the anticipation and wonder that must have attended that great hope? Do we really consider how miraculous, how poignant, how significant the event was and IS? Or has the very familiarity of the story caused us to lose sight of how wondrous it all was? Every detail of the story, every character and creature, has a special meaning that was symbolic of the Savior’s mission.
- Congregation ***“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”*** - *HYMNS* 209 with organ

- Narrator 1 *“There were shepherds abiding in the field...”* Of all the people Heavenly Father could have chosen to hear the announcement of the birth of his only Begotten Son, why did he choose a group of lowly SHEPHERDS? Undoubtedly, they were good men, humble and sincere in their longing for the promised Messiah. But was it not symbolic that Jesus was and is so often called the Good Shepherd? Christ came to earth to be the loving shepherd that would lead us, his sheep, through the perils of life and back to the heavenly fold.
- Children *“Stars Were Gleaming”* – (*Children’s Songbook p. 37*) - Children
- Narrator 2 And what of the KINGS or WISE MEN? That these wise men, who are so often referred to as kings, bowed down to the infant Jesus and worshipped him is certainly symbolic of Christ’s place as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But although men will someday bow the knee and acknowledge the Savior as their king, few understood Jesus’ place as well as did the wise men. Herod, in his jealousy and wickedness, tried to destroy the Child. The fact that the **kings** were also called **wise men** is significant. Then, as now, only those who are truly wise in both mind and spirit seek the Light and find the Savior.
- Choir *“Come Unto Him”* - (*by Betsy Lee Bailey*)
- Narrator 1 The presence of the ANGEL or HEAVENLY HOSTS at the birth of the Savior emphasizes that Christ’s mission encompasses not only the mortal sphere, but also the eternities. The heavenly hosts were not encumbered by the veil of forgetfulness which mortality brings to each of us. So their joy was reminiscent of our own song and shout for joy when we were told in the pre-existence of the Savior’s mission of redemption.
- Congregation *“Angels We Have Heard on High”* - *HYMNS 203* with organ
- Narrator 2 The shining STAR of Bethlehem was a spectacular sign to awe and inspire men in a manner fitting the Son of God. In fact, this sign was seen by the ancient Nephites in the new world, as well. By this sign, all men would know that the Savior of the world was born. That star is the fitting symbol of the fact that Christ is the brilliant light, the guiding light for all men to follow.
- Choir *“The Star Carol”* - (*by Alfred Burt*)
- Narrator 1 Consider the MANGER. Jesus was born not in a palace or mansion, but in a humble stall and placed on a feeding trough filled with hay. Who can claim that poor circumstances are responsible for failure in this life, when the only perfect BEING ever to live in this world had such humble beginnings? The wealth of the world, the acclaim of men, and the power of earthly leadership are not the source of real greatness.
- Choir *“Peaceful, Silent Night”* - (*arr. by Ruth Elaine Schram, BriLee Music Press*)

Narrator 2 In JOSEPH, the humble carpenter, we see the total submission to the will of God and the dedicated fulfillment of responsibility that so characterize one of the Lord's servants. We, too, are stewards of some of God's choicest spirit children. We can learn from Joseph in our role as parents.

Think for a moment of MARY. Her goodness, purity, and willing submissiveness to whatever God willed, characterize the righteousness that is needed to be in the presence of the Savior in the eternities, as she was with Him on earth.

And finally the BABY JESUS. Jesus was born as any other babe...pure...whole...innocent. But only He, of all of the Father's spirit children, was able to maintain total purity throughout his life.

Children ***"Mary Had a Pretty Little Baby"*** -(arr. by Betsy Bailey, Jackman Music 2011)

Narrator 1 What would it have been like to actually see the angel and the heavenly hosts filling the night skies above the fields near Bethlehem? Would we have been wise enough to see the sign of the Lord's coming and follow the light of the star to come to him? Do we find room for Him today in the crowded rooms of our hearts? If this Child were born today, would we be the ones to behold God's Son?

Choir ***"At Christmas Time All Christians Sing"*** (arr. by Patrick M. Liebergen, Alfred Publishing 1991)

Remarks (Short talk and testimony)

Choir ***"Joy to the World"*** - (Arr. by Betsy Lee Bailey) – Choir, Congregation and 2 Violins