



## Carols: A Christmas Devotional

### It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

"When the new heaven and earth shall own the Prince of Peace, their King,  
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing."

When the angels first sang about peace on earth and goodwill to all men, the shepherds must have wondered what was going on. They certainly didn't hear angelic choirs everyday, and first century Palestine was hardly a peaceful place. The streets buzzed with rumors of revolution and the tension often boiled over into violence. Society was split along lines of gender, race, wealth, and religion. The shepherds themselves were only a few rungs above beggars on the social ladder. For some of us, Christmas itself is a time to be with friends and family, but for others it reminds us that we are alone or separated from loved ones. Two thousand years later, we seem to be as far as ever from "heaven on earth."

Many people in the first century were expecting a quick fix for the world's problems, and of course that didn't happen. It still hasn't happened. But Christmas reminds us of God's promise to bring in a kingdom where wars, injustice, and even death will be a thing of the past, and where we will live together with God. That's our hope. God does have a plan. The best really is to come.

In the meantime, God continues to show His love to us in so many ways. He provides for our needs. He answers our prayers. He invites us to start living today like citizens of the kingdom that has not yet been fully revealed. We can love one another as Christ loved us here and now. We can show His compassion and His unconditional love to others today. We can experience a foretaste of the new Heaven and earth right now. We can share that experience with others. And we can do all this in the knowledge that God's Kingdom will prevail and that the whole of creation will one day see the truth that those shepherds heard on a remote, Palestinian hillside.

**Question:**

What one thing could you change to give those around you a foretaste of God's Kingdom of peace?

**Revelation 21:3-4 NLT**

3 I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.

4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

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