

*Nativity Hymns (1745)*¹

[Baker list, #112]

Editorial Introduction:

Charles Wesley deeply appreciated the value of celebrating the major Christian festivals connected to the life of Christ. This is evident from the first volume containing his poetry, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), which included (on pp. 206–15) a series of hymns on Christmas Day, Epiphany, Easter Day, Ascension Day and Whitsunday (Pentecost)—all clearly traced to Charles.

Of all these festivals, regular celebration of Christmas held Charles's deepest interest. He apparently arranged for reprinting the Christmas hymn in *HSP* (1739) as a broadsheet for use on Christmas 1743—see *Hymn for Christmas Day* (1743). The following year he issued a collection of 3–4 hymns for this purpose—see *Hymns for Christmas Day* (1744). Then, in preparation for Christmas 1745, he issued a collection of 18 new *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord*.

This collection contains some of Wesley's most creative work. There are 14 different metrical patterns represented, nearly a unique pattern for each hymn. Likewise, they contain some of his most compelling images about the paradoxical affirmation of the Divine becoming human.

While it is little known among Methodists today, this collection was also a favorite of early Methodists. As the list of editions on the next page shows, it went through at least 25 printings in Britain before Charles's death.

The textual history of this collection is more complex than most of Charles's pamphlets. The first edition was printed in London on December 17, 1745. An edition followed briefly after in Bristol which made a few small corrections and one large omission: the final hymn was not included. It is unclear if this was intentional, as Charles was in London at the time and would not have been supervising the process in Bristol. This defective Bristol copy served as the source for the reprint editions in Dublin in 1747, 1751 & 1760, as well as the 5th edn. (1756) and 6th edn. (1761) in Bristol. By contrast, the 4th edn. (1750) in Bristol restored the last hymn, perhaps at Charles's direction.

John Wesley's input provoked some of the other textual changes in later editions of *Nativity Hymns*. In his personal copy of the 4th edn. (1750)² John noted in manuscript some suggested corrections and Charles adopted a few (the most significant, which Charles did not adopt, are noted below in footnotes). Likewise, when John came across the 6th edn. (1761) still lacking the final hymn, he wrote to Charles protesting and saying that this hymn was his favorite in the collection. The hymn was restored in the next edition and appears in all from that point.

For more details on the textual history and the contents of this collection see the excellent article by Frank Baker, "The Metamorphoses of Charles Wesley's Christmas Hymns, 1739–88," *Proceedings of the Charles Wesley Society* 7 (2001): 43–59.

Charles followed this collection on Christ's birth with three further pamphlets for key festivals: *Resurrection Hymns* (1746), *Ascension Hymns* (1746), and *Whitsunday Hymns* (1746).

¹This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: December 5, 2009.

²This survives in the remnants of his personal library at Wesley's House, London.

Editions:

- [Charles Wesley.] *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord*. London: [Strahan,] 1745.
- 2nd Bristol: Farley, 1745. [lacking hymn #18]
Newcastle: Gooding, 1746. [no copy extant]
 - 3rd Dublin: Powell, 1747. [lacking hymn #18]
[Cork: Harrison, 1748?]
 - 3rd Bristol: Farley, 1749. [no copy extant]
 - 4th Bristol: Farley, 1750.
 - 10th London: Cock, 1750. [it is unclear why Cock thought this was the 10th edn.]
 - 4th Dublin: Powell, 1751. [lacking hymn #18]
 - 11th London: Foundery, 1755.
 - 5th Bristol: Farley, 1756. [lacking hymn #18]
 - 6th Dublin: Powell, 1760. [lacking hymn #18]
 - 6th Bristol: Pine, 1761. [lacking hymn #18]
Bristol: Pine, 1762.
Bristol: Pine, 1764.
Bristol: Pine, 1766.
Bristol: Pine, 1768.
Bristol: Pine, 1770.
Bristol: Pine, 1772.
London: Hawes, [c. 1774].
London: Hawes, 1777.
London: Hawes, 1778.
London: Paramore, 1782.
London: Paramore, 1784.
London: Paramore, 1787.
London: New Chapel, 1788.
London: Paramore, 1791.

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**HYMNS
FOR THE
NATIVITY [OF OUR LORD].**

Hymn I.

- 1 Ye simple men of heart sincere,
Shepherds who watch your flocks by night,
Start not to see an angel near,
Nor tremble at this³ glorious light.

- 2 An herald from the heavenly King
I come, your every fear to chase;
Good tidings of great joy I bring,
Great joy to all the fallen race!

³“This” changed to “his” in 1782 edn. and following.

- 3 To you is born on this glad day,
A Saviour by our host ador'd,
Our God in Bethlehem survey,
Make haste to worship Christ the Lord.
- 4 By this the⁴ Saviour of mankind,
Th' incarnate God shall be display'd,
The babe ye wrapp'd in swaths⁵ shall find,
And humbly in a manger laid.

Hymn II.

- 1 Ye heavenly choir,
Assist me to sing,
And strike the soft lyre,
And honour our King:
His mighty salvation
Demands all our praise,
Our best adoration,
And loftiest lays.
- 2 All glory to God,
Who ruleth on high,
And now hath bestow'd,
And sent from the sky
Christ Jesus, the Saviour,
Poor mortals to bless;
The pledge of his favour,
The seal of their⁶ peace.

⁴“The” omitted in London 1750 and 1755 edns. only.

⁵“Swaths” changed to “swathes” in 1772 edn. and following.

⁶“Their” changed to “his” in 1762 edn. and following.

Hymn III.

- 1 Angels speak, let man⁷ give ear,
Sent from high,
They are nigh,
And forbid our fear.
- 2 News they bring us of salvation,
Sounds of joy
To employ
Every tongue and nation.
- 3 Welcome tidings! To retrieve us
From our fall,
Born for all,
Christ is born to save us.
- 4 Born his creatures to restore,
Abject earth
Sees his birth,
Whom the heavens adore.⁸
- 5 Wrapt in swaths⁹ th' immortal stranger
Man with men
We have seen,
Lying in a manger.

⁷“Man” changed to “men” in 1768 edn. and following; adopting change in *Festival Hymns* (1746).

⁸Reads “heavens do adore” in 1755 edn. only.

⁹“Swaths” changed to “swathes” in 1772 edn. and following; adopting change in *Festival Hymns* (1746).

- 6 All to God's free grace is owing;
We are his
Witnesses,
Poor, and nothing knowing.
- 7 Simple shepherds us he raises,
Bids us sing
Christ the King,
And shew forth his praises.
- 8 We have seen the King of Glory,
We proclaim
Christ his name,
And record his story.
- 9 Sing we with the host of heaven,
Reconcil'd
By a child
Who to us is given.
- 10 Glory be to God the giver,
Peace and love
From above
Reign on earth for ever.

Hymn IV.

- 1 Glory be to God on high,
And peace on earth descend;
God comes¹⁰ down: he bows the sky:
And shews himself our friend!

¹⁰“Comes” changed to “came” in London 1750 and 1755 edns. only.

God th' invisible *appears*,
God the blest, the great I AM
Sojourns in this vale of tears,
And Jesus is his name.

- 2 Him the angels all ador'd
Their Maker and their King:
Tidings of their humbled Lord
They now to mortals bring:
Emptied of his majesty,
Of his dazzling glories shorn,
Being's source *begins* to be,¹¹
And God himself is BORN!
- 3 See th' eternal Son of God
A mortal Son of man,
Dwelling in an earthy¹² clod
Whom heaven cannot contain!
Stand amaz'd ye heavens at this!
See the Lord of earth and skies!
Humbled to the dust he is,
And in a manger lies!
- 4 We the sons of men rejoice,
The Prince of Peace proclaim,
With heaven's host¹³ lift up our¹⁴ voice,
And shout Immanuel's name;
Knees and hearts to him we bow;
Of our flesh, and of our bone
Jesus is our brother now,
And God is all our own!

¹¹“To be” also italicized in 1756 edn. and following.

¹²“Earthy” changed to “earthly” in most edns. after 1755.

¹³“Host” changed to “hosts” in 1761 edn. only.

¹⁴“Our” changed to “your” in 1755 and 1768 edns. only.

Hymn V.

- 1 Let earth and heaven combine,
Angels and men agree
To praise in songs divine
Th' incarnate deity,
Our God contracted to a span,
Incomprehensibly made man.
- 2 He laid his glory by,
He wrap'd him in our clay,
Unmark'd by human eye
The latent Godhead lay;
Infant of days he here became,
And bore the lov'd¹⁵ Immanuel's name.
- 3 See in that infant's face
The depths of deity,
And labour while ye gaze
To sound the mystery:
In vain; ye angels gaze no more,
But fall, and silently adore.
- 4 Unsearchable the love
That hath the Saviour brought,
The grace is far above
Or men¹⁶ or angel's thought;
Suffice for us, that God, we know,
Our God is manifest below.

¹⁵“Lov' d” changed to “mild” in 2nd edn. (1745) and following.

¹⁶“Men” changed to “man” in 1778 edn. and following.

- 5 He deigns in flesh t' appear,
Widest extremes to join,
To bring our vileness near,
And make us all divine;
And we the life of God shall know,
For God is manifest below.
- 6 Made perfect first in love,
And sanctified by grace,
We shall from earth remove,
And see his glorious face;
His love shall then be fully shew'd,
And man shall all be lost in God.

Hymn VI.¹⁷

- 1 Join all ye joyful nations
Th' acclaiming hosts¹⁸ of heaven!
This happy morn
A child is¹⁹ born,
To us a Son is given:
- The messenger and token
Of God's eternal favour,
God hath sent down
To us his Son,
An universal Saviour!
- 2 The wonderful Messias,
The joy of every nation,
Jesus his name,
With God the same,
The Lord of all creation:

¹⁷In John's letter to Charles (26 Dec. 1761) he says of the *Nativity Hymns*: "Omit one or two of them, and I will thank you. They are namby-pambical." In his personal copy of the 1750 edn., John marks for such omission stanzas 3, 4 and 5 of this hymn.

¹⁸"Hosts" changed to "host" in 1766 edn. and following.

¹⁹"Is" changed to "was" in 1774–78 edns. only.

The Counsellor of sinners,
Almighty to deliver,
The Prince of Peace,
Whose love's increase
Shall reign in man for ever.

- 3 Go see the King of Glory,
Discern the heavenly stranger,
So poor and mean,
His court an inn,
His cradle is a manger:

Who from his Father's bosom
But now for us descended,
Who built the skies,
On earth he lies,
With only beasts attended.

- 4 Whom all the angels worship,
Lies hid in human nature;
Incarnate see
The deity,
The infinite Creator!

See the stupendous blessing
Which God to us hath²⁰ given!
A child of man,
In length a span,
Who fills both earth and heaven.

- 5 Gaze on that²¹ helpless object
Of endless adoration!
Those infant-hands
Shall burst our bands,
And work out our salvation;

²⁰“Hath” changed to “has” in 1784 edn. and following.

²¹“That” changed to “the” in 1766–68 edns. only.

Strangle the crooked serpent,
Destroy his works for ever,
 And open set
 The heavenly gate
To every true believer.

- 6 Till then, thou holy Jesus,
We humbly bow before thee,
 Our treasures bring
 To serve our King,
And joyfully adore thee:

To thee we gladly render
Whate'er thy grace hath given,
 Till thou appear
 In glory here,
And take us up to heaven.

Hymn VII.

- 1 All glory to God, and peace upon earth
Be publish'd abroad at Jesus's birth;
The forfeited favour of heaven we find
Restor'd in the Saviour and friend of mankind.
- 2 Then let us behold Messiah the Lord,
By prophets foretold, by angels ador'd,
Our God's incarnation with angels proclaim,
And publish salvation in Jesus's name.
- 3 Our newly-born King by faith we have seen,
And joyfully sing his goodness to men,
That all men may wonder at what we impart,
And thankfully ponder his love in their heart.

- 4 What mov'd the Most High so greatly to stoop,
 He comes from the sky our souls to lift up;
 That sinners forgiven, might sinless return
 To God and to heaven; their Maker is born.
- 5 Immanuel's love let sinners confess,
 Who comes from above, to bring us his peace;
 Let every believer his mercy adore,
 And praise him for ever, when time is no more.

Hymn VIII.

- 1 Away with our fears!
 The Godhead appears
 In Christ reconcil'd,
 The Father of mercies in Jesus the child.
- 2 He comes from above,
 In manifest love,
 The desire of our²² eyes,
 The meek Lamb of God, in a manger he lies.
- 3 At Immanuel's birth
 What a triumph on earth!
 Yet could it afford
 No better a place for its heavenly Lord.
- 4 The Antient of Days
 To redeem a lost race,
 From his glory comes down,
 Self-humbled to carry us up to a crown.

²²“Our” changed to “your” in 1761 edn. only.

- 5 Made flesh for our sake,
 That we might partake
 The nature divine,
And again in his image, his holiness shine;
- 6 An heavenly birth
 Experience on earth,
 And rise on²³ his throne,
And live with our Jesus eternally one.
- 7 Then let us believe,
 And gladly receive
 The tidings they bring,
Who publish to sinners their Saviour and King.
- 8 And while we are here,
 Our King shall appear,
 His Spirit impart,
And form his full image of love in our heart.

Hymn IX.

- 1 Father, our hearts we lift
 Up to thy gracious throne,
And bless thee for the precious gift
 Of thine incarnate Son;
 The gift unspeakable
 We thankfully receive,
And to the world thy goodness tell,
 And to thy glory live.

²³“On” changed to “to” in 1774–78 edns. only; adopting change in *Festival Hymns* (1746).

- 2 Jesus, the holy child,
 Doth by his birth declare,
That God and man are reconcil'd,
 And one in him we are.
 Salvation thro' his name
 To all mankind is given,
And loud his infant-cries proclaim
 A peace 'twixt earth and heaven.
- 3 A peace on earth he brings,
 Which never more shall end:
The Lord of hosts, the King of kings,
 Declares himself our friend,
 Assumes our flesh and blood,
 That we his Sp'rit may gain,
The everlasting Son of God,
 The mortal Son of man.
- 4 His kingdom from above
 He doth to us impart,
And pure benevolence and love
 O'erflow the faithful heart:
 Chang'd in a moment we
 The sweet attraction find,
With open arms of charity
 Embracing all mankind.
- 5 O might they all receive
 The new-born Prince of Peace,
And meekly in his Spirit live,
 And in his love increase!
 Till he convey us home,
 Cry every soul aloud,
Come, thou desire of nations come,
 And take us all²⁴ to God!

²⁴“All” changed to “up” in 1762 edn. and following.

Hymn X.

- 1 Come thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free,
From our fears and sins relieve²⁵ us,
Let us find our rest in thee:
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

- 2 Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring;
By thine²⁶ own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone,
By thine²⁷ all-sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

Hymn XI.

- 1 Light of those whose dreary dwelling
Borders on the shades of death,
Come, and by thy love's revealing
Dissipate the clouds beneath:
The new heaven and earth's Creator,
In our deepest darkness rise,
Scattering all the night of nature,
Pouring eye-sight on our eyes.

²⁵“Relieve” changed to “release” in 1777 edn. and following.

²⁶“Thine” changed to “thy” in 1762 edn. and following.

²⁷“Thine” changed to “thy” in 1762 edn. and following.

- 2 Still we wait for thy appearing,
Life and joy thy beams impart,
Chasing all our fears, and chearing
Every poor benighted heart.
Come, and manifest the favour
God hath for our ransom'd race;
Come, thou universal Saviour,
Come, and bring the gospel-grace.
- 3 Save us in thy great compassion,
O thou mild pacific Prince,
Give the knowledge of salvation,
Give the pardon of our sins;
By thine²⁸ all-redeeming²⁹ merit
Every burden'd³⁰ soul release,
Every weary wandring spirit
Guide into thy perfect peace.

Hymn XII.

- 1 Sing, ye ransom'd nations, sing
Praises to our new-born King,
Son of man our Maker is,
Lord of hosts and Prince of Peace.
- 2 Lo! He lays his glory by,
Emptied of his majesty!
See the God who all things made,
Humbly in a manger laid.
- 3 Cast we off our needless fear,
Boldly to his cratch³¹ draw near,
Jesus is our flesh and bone,
God-with-us³² is all our own.

²⁸“Thine” changed to “thy” in 1777 edn. and following.

²⁹“All-redeeming” changed to “all-restoring” in 2nd edn. (1745) and following.

³⁰“Burden'd” changed to “burthen'd” in 1770 edn. and following.

³¹“Cratch” (archaic for manger) changed to “church” in 1761 edn. and following.

³²Changed to “*God with us*” in 2nd edn. (1745) and following.

- 4 Let us then with angels gaze
On our new-born monarch's face,
With the quire³³ celestial join'd,
Shout the Saviour of mankind.
- 5 Son of man, will he despise
Man's well-meaning sacrifice?
No; with condescending grace
He accepts his creature's praise.
- 6 Will his majesty disdain
The poor shepherd's simple strain?
No; for Israel's shepherd he
Loves their artless melody.
- 7 He will not refuse the song
Of the stammering infant's tongue,
Babes he hears humanely mild,
Once himself a little child.
- 8 Let us then our Prince proclaim,
Humbly chant³⁴ Immanuel's name,
Publish at his wondrous birth
Praise in heaven and peace on earth:
- 9 Triumph in our Saviour's love,
Till he takes us up above,
All his majesty displays,
Shews us all his glorious face.

³³“Quire” changed to “choir” in 4th edn. (1750) and following.

³⁴“Chant” changed to “chaunt” in London 1750 and 1755 edns., and in 1768 edn. and following.

Hymn XIII.

- 1 Let angels and archangels sing
The wonderful Immanuel's name,
Adore with us our new-born King,
And still the joyful news proclaim,
All earth and heaven be ever join'd
To praise the Saviour of mankind.
- 2 The everlasting God comes down
To sojourn with the sons of men;
Without his majesty or crown,
The great INVISIBLE³⁵ is seen:³⁶
Of all his dazling glories shorn
The everlasting God is born!
- 3 Angels, behold that infant's face,
With rapt'rous awe the Godhead own:
'Tis all your heaven on him to gaze,
And cast your crowns before his throne;
Tho' now he on his footstool lies,
Ye know he built both earth and skies.
- 4 By him into existence brought,
Ye sang the all-creating word;
Ye heard him call our world from nought:
Again, in honour of your Lord,
Ye morning-stars your hymns employ,
And shout, ye sons of God, for joy.

³⁵“Invisible” taken out of small caps in 1768 edn. and following.

³⁶“Seen” in italics in most edns. between 2nd (1745) and 1774.

Hymn XIV.

- 1 O astonishing grace,
That the reprobate race
Should be so³⁷ reconcil'd!
What a wonder of wonders that God is a child!
- 2 The Creator of all,
To repair our sad fall,
From his³⁸ heav'n stoops down,
Lays hold of our nature, and joins to his own.
- 3 Our Immanuel came,³⁹
The whole world to redeem,
And incarnated shew'd
That man may again be united to God!
- 4 And shall we not hope,
After God to wake up,
His nature to know?
His nature is sinless perfection below.
- 5 To this heavenly prize,
By faith let us rise
To his image ascend,
Apprehended of God let us God apprehend.

³⁷“So” is omitted in 1784 edn. and following; likely a misprint.

³⁸“His” omitted from 1768 edn. and following.

³⁹“Came” changed to “come” in 1774–84 edns.; likely a misprint.

Hymn XV.⁴⁰

- 1 All-wise, all-good, Almighty Lord,
Jesus, by highest heaven⁴¹ ador'd,
Ere⁴² time its course began,
How did thy glorious mercy stoop
To take the fallen nature up,
When thou thyself wert man?
- 2 Th' eternal God from heav'n came down,
The King of Glory dropp'd his crown,
And veil'd his majesty,
Empty'd of all but love he came;
Jesus, I call thee by the⁴³ name
Thy⁴⁴ pity bore for me.
- 3 O holy child, still let thy birth
Bring peace to us poor worms on⁴⁵ earth,
And praise to God on high!
Come, thou who didst my⁴⁶ flesh assume,
Now to the abject sinner come,
And in a manger lie.
- 4 Didst thou not in thy person join
The natures human and divine,
That God and man might be
Henceforth inseparably one?
Haste then, and make thy nature known
Incarnated in me.
- 5 In my weak sinful flesh appear,
O God, be manifested here,
Peace, righteousness, and joy,
Thy kingdom, Lord, set up within
My faithful heart, and all my sin,
The devil's works⁴⁷ destroy.

⁴⁰Manuscript precursors of this hymn appear in MS Shent, 107a–107b; and MS Thirty, 42–43.

⁴¹“Heaven” changed to “heavens” in 1768–74 edns. only.

⁴²Ori., “E'er.” While this occurs in all editions, Wesley surely meant “ere” as in “before.”

⁴³“The” changed to “thy” in 1762–68 edns.; likely a misprint.

⁴⁴“Thy” changed to “The” in 1782 edn. and following; likely a misprint.

⁴⁵“Of” changed to “on” in 1762 edn. and following.

⁴⁶“My” changed to “thy” in 1777–78 edns; a misprint.

⁴⁷“Works” changed to “work” in 1774 edn. and following.

- 6 I long thy coming to confess
The mystic power of godliness,
The life divine to prove,
The fulness of thy life to know,
Redeem'd from all my sins⁴⁸ below,
And perfected in love.
- 7 O Christ, my hope, make known in⁴⁹ me
The great, the glorious mystery,
The hidden life impart:
Come, thou desire of nations, come,
Form'd in a spotless virgin's womb,
A pure believing heart.
- 8 Come quickly, dearest Lord, that I
May own, tho' antichrist deny,
Thy incarnation's power,
May cry, a witness to my Lord,
"Come in my flesh is Christ, the Word,
And I can sin no more!"

Hymn XVI.⁵⁰

- 1 O mercy divine
How couldst thou incline
My God to become such an infant as *mine*!
- 2 What a wonder of grace!
The Antient of Days
Is found in the likeness of Adam's frail race.

⁴⁸"Sins" changed to "sin" in 2nd edn. (1745) through 6th edn. (1761); then back to "sins."

⁴⁹"In" changed to "to" in 1774 edn. and following.

⁵⁰In John's letter to Charles (26 Dec. 1761) he says of the *Nativity Hymns*: "Omit one or two of them, and I will thank you. They are namby-pambical." In his personal copy of the 1750 edn. John marks for such omission stanzas 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 14 of this hymn.

- 3 He comes from on high,
 Who fashion'd the sky,
 And meekly vouchsafes in a manger to lie.
- 4 Our God ever blest
 With oxen doth rest,
 Is nursed by his creature and hangs at the breast.
- 5 So heavenly-mild
 His innocence smil'd,
 No wonder the mother should worship the child.
- 6 The angels she knew
 Had worshipp'd him too,
 And still they confess adoration his⁵¹ due.
- 7 On Jesus's face,
 With eager amaze,
 And pleasure⁵² extatic the cherubim⁵³ gaze.
- [8]⁵⁴ Their newly-born King,
 Transported they sing,
 And heav'n and earth with the triumph doth ring.
- [9] The shepherds behold
 Him promis'd of old,
 By angels attended, by prophets foretold.
- [10] The wise men adore,
 And bring him their store,
 The rich are permitted to follow the poor.
- [11] To the inn they repair,
 To see the young heir:
 The inn is a palace; for Jesus is there!
- [12] Who now would be great,
 And not rather wait
 On Jesus their Lord in his humble estate?

⁵¹“His” changed to “is” in most editions after London 1750.

⁵²“Pleasure” changed to “pleasures” in 1764 edn. and following.

⁵³“Cheribim” changed to “cheribims” in 1762 edn. and following.

⁵⁴Original jumps in numbering from stanza 7 to stanza 9; renumbered above as in later edns.

- [13] Like him would I be,
My Master I see
In a stable; a stable shall satisfy me.
- 14 With him I reside:
The manger shall hide
Mine honour; the manger shall bury my pride.
- 15 And here will I lie,
Till rais'd up on high
With him on the cross I recover the sky.

Hymn XVII.

- 1 Where is the holy heav'n-born child,
Heir of the everlasting throne,
Who heav'n and earth hath reconcil'd,
And God and man rejoin'd in one?
- 2 Shall we of earthly kings enquire,
To courts or palaces repair?
The nation's hope, the world's desire,
Alas! We cannot find him there.
- 3 Shall learning shew the sinner's friend,
Or scribes a sight of Christ afford?
Us to his natal place they send,
But never go to see⁵⁵ their⁵⁶ Lord.
- 4 We search the outward church in vain,
They cannot him we seek declare,
They have not found the Son of man,
Or known the sacred⁵⁷ name they bear.
- 5 Then let us turn no more aside,
But use the light himself imparts,
His Spirit is our surest guide,
His Spirit glimmering in our hearts.

⁵⁵“See” changed to “seek” in 1777 edn. and following.

⁵⁶“Their” changed to “the” in 5th edn. (1756) and following.

⁵⁷“Sacred” changed to “secret” in 1770–72 edns.; a misprint.

- 6 Drawn by his grace we come from far,
And fix on heaven our wishful eyes,
That ray divine, that orient star
Directs us where the infant lies.
- 7 See there! The new born Saviour see,
By faith discern the great I AM;
'Tis he! The eternal God! 'Tis he
That bears the mild Immanuel's name.
- 8 The Prince of Peace on earth is found,
The child is born, the Son is given;
Tell it to all the nations round,
Jehovah is come down from heaven!
- 9 Jehovah is come down to raise
His dying creatures from their fall,
And all may now receive the grace
Which brings eternal life to all.
- 10 Lord, *we* receive the grace and thee,⁵⁸
With joy unspeakable receive,
And rise thine open face to see,
And one with God for ever live.

Hymn XVIII.⁵⁹

- 1 All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restor'd!
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord:
Who meanly in Bethlehem born,
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race,
Once more to thy creature⁶⁰ return,
And reign in thy kingdom of grace.
- 2 When thou in our flesh didst appear,
All nature acknowledg'd thy birth;
Arose the acceptable year,
And heaven was open'd on earth:

⁵⁸Changed to "thy grace, and thee," in 1772 edn. and following.

⁵⁹This hymn was omitted, perhaps by accident, from 2nd edn (1745), 3rd edn. (1747), 4th edn (1751), 5th edn. (1756), and 6th edn. (1760–61). John protested in a letter to Charles (26 Dec. 1761), calling it "the very best hymn of the collection." It was restored to the 1762 edn. and following.

⁶⁰"Creature" changed to "creatures" in 1764 edn. and following.

Receiving its Lord from above,
The world was *united* to bless
The giver of concord and love,
The Prince and the author of peace.

3 O wouldst thou again be made known,
Again in thy Spirit descend,
And set up in each of thine own,
A kingdom that never shall end!
Thou only art able to bless,
And make the glad nations⁶¹ obey,
And bid the dire enmity cease,
And bow the whole world to thy sway.

4 Come then to thy servants again,
Who long thy appearing to know,
Thy quiet and peaceable reign
In mercy establish below:
All sorrow before thee shall fly,
And anger and hatred be o'er,
And envy and malice shall die,
And discord afflict us no more.

5 No horrid alarm⁶² of war⁶³
Shall break our eternal repose;
No sound of the trumpet is there,
Where Jesus's Spirit o'erflows:
Appeas'd by the charms of thy grace
We all shall in amity join,
And kindly each other embrace,
And love with a passion like thine.

⁶¹“Nations” changed to “nation” in 1784 edn. and following.

⁶²“Alarm” changed to “alarum,” to provide correct metre, in 1762 edn. and following.

⁶³Line changed to “No alarm of dread war” in 4th edn. (1750) only.