

**CHRISTMAS
2022**

'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

AN ADAPTATION OF CLEMENT CLARKE MOORE'S 1823 POEM

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all round the town, God's creatures were stirring, even the mouse. The inns were all full, for a census had been called. All hoped they could soon go back home.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds, while visions of salvation danced in their heads; and mama her p.j.'s, and I in my briefs, had just settled down for a long winter's nap.

When out in a stable there rose such a clatter, I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter. Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

A star, far above the new-fallen snow, gave the lustre of mid-day to the world near and far. When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, shepherds and sheep going down the street.

The cattle were lowing, and I heard a newborn's loud cry, I knew in a moment our lives had been changed. Donkeys, and owls, and camels they came. And angels appeared, filling the sky, singing in choir voice,

"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth among men with whom he is pleased! For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting God, Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, Jesus, Christ the Lord."

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly, the angels danced and twirled, all through the sky. Up to the house-tops the Seraphim they flew, with the news of the Gift that God had sent new.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard everywhere, the prancing and pawing of animals, themselves overjoyed. As I drew in my hand, and was turning around, I had a strange feeling, that someone was there.

I am a good man, though far from holy, I work with my hands and pray as I should. Our synagogue is quite nice though our rabbi's a bore. I give what I can, and hope for the best.

But something had changed. The time fulfilled. My breath came fast and my heart expanded. Love lodged in my soul where once had been woe. I lifted my head and knew once again I had been made good.

This baby I heard, the cry had been sweet, not bitter or fearful, only eager and hungry. Why was the mother and a father huddled among beasts instead of an inn? No doubt they are poor and their child will himself be emptier than anyone ever.

If a boy, he's likely chubby and plumb, a right happy baby. And I laughed at the thought, in spite of myself. He cannot yet wink his eye or twist his head, but I was given to know I had nothing to dread.

In years to come, he would go straight to his mission. And fill all the prisoners and poor with good news of better days ahead. And laying his arms affix the cross, he would bow his head, and give up his spirit.

Then he would rise from the grave, and speak to his friends. Then away he will Ascend to his Father, rise out of sight, and say as he goes, "Amen. Amen. I will come to you again."