

# PEACE HAS COME

A MUSICAL FOR CHRISTMAS

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

by Nan Allen

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## **“Peace Has Come” with “O Come, All Ye Faithful”**

Read Isaiah 26:1-4. This Scripture is actually a song that the people of Israel will sing when their salvation is revealed. What does this passage say about those who remain faithful to Him? What will God grant to all who are dependent on Him?

Now read John 1:1-5,14. How did God keep the promises He made in Isaiah’s prophecy (Chapter 26)?

As you sing this new song and a portion of the old carol, ask for God’s perfect peace. Let Him reign over your life in every circumstance.

## **“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” with “You Have Come”**

Read the familiar prophetic passage in Isaiah 7:10-14. What was the sign God would send?

Read Luke 2:8-12. What sign did the angel say the shepherds would see? Compare the two passages. How are they related?

Finally, read Matthew 1:23. How does this fulfill the prophecies of Isaiah? What was the sign mentioned in Luke 2?

Jesus was “God with us” (Immanuel) when He was born into the world. Is He still with us? If your answer is “yes,” ask Him to make His presence and His peace real to you now.

## **“Breath of Heaven (Mary’s Song)”**

In order to get the full beauty of the story of Mary, read Matthew 1:18-23 and Luke 1:26-38. Often we focus on Mary’s statement of faith and obedience: “‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ said Mary. ‘May it be done to me according to your word’” (Luke 1:38, CSB). Imagine, however, the fear that Mary must have experienced when the angel first approached her with the idea that she would give birth even though she was a virgin.

God often asks us to do things that seem impossible to us. In those times, remember Luke 1:37: “Nothing will be impossible with God” (CSB).

## **“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, famous American poet of the nineteenth century, wrote the lyric to this Christmas carol. Verse 3 says:

“And in despair I bowed my head:  
‘There is no peace on earth,’ I said,  
‘For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.’”

In Verse 4, the mood changes:

“Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
‘God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men.’”

How could the poet go from despair to hope? His story includes the loss of his wife in a fire and the near-fatal injuries endured by his son in the Civil War. Longfellow’s personal journal entry for July 1862 reads, “I can make no record of these days. Better leave them wrapped in silence. Perhaps someday God will give me peace.”

God *did* give him peace. Do the words of this song mean more now that you know the author’s story? (Read the full account in my book *Yuletide Blessings: Christmas Stories that Warm the Heart*.)

Read Philippians 4:4-7. First, rejoice! Next, ask God to give you peace, even when the circumstances do not seem to be peaceful.

## **“Heavenly Peace” (Carol Medley)**

Isaiah 9 is a familiar passage that is a prophecy of the coming Messiah. Read verses 1-7. We now know that this is about Jesus, although He is given other names. What are they? Why is He called the Prince of peace?

Now read Jesus’ own words about peace in John 14:27. Read the angels’ words found in Luke 2:13-14. Is the use of the word peace different in these three passages? How can they all be true? Write your own definition of peace after reading these words. How has that kind of peace been revealed in your life?

## **“Peace in the Midst of the Storm”**

Read the story of one of Jesus’ miracles in Mark 4:35-41. What was the miracle? What was the response of those who witnessed it? When God does miraculous things in your life, do you question them? Do you wonder if this could be God at work in your life?

Go back to the prophecies of Isaiah in Isaiah 43:1-2. Claim this promise and His power to overcome the daily storms in your life.

## **“What a Beautiful Name”**

Scholars believe that Philippians 2:5-11 is an early Christian hymn that Paul wrote down. This is encouragement to have a Christlike attitude. By giving examples of how Jesus behaved and reacted to the threat of death, we can understand how we should think and act during times of adversity.

The end of this lyric, however, speaks of the power of Jesus’ name. Does this give you hope and peace? Speak the powerful name of Jesus during peaceful times and in stormy times. Bow down and worship Him.