

Why a Weary World Rejoices

This season always brings with it a message. Songs that remind our hearts to hope. A story that puts us in awe of what has been, and what is yet to be—*a story still unfolding.*

We remember the lowly birth of the highest King. We remember the night when choirs of angels sounded in the sky, but only shepherds witnessed the song. We remember a Babe whose cries revealed to the world what everlasting love sounds like.

The birth of this One urges a weary world, and weary hearts, to rejoice.

Here we are two thousand years after that miraculous night in Bethlehem ...

And a weary world and some throbbing hearts that feel a little (or a lot) removed from that Silent Night that unfolded millennia ago, groan for a King.

These days, we stare at the news, watching smoke rise, hearing death tolls calculated, looking in despair as another law is passed that defies our God, listening to national leaders thrust out their arguments, witnessing refugees fleeing for safety— ***but here and now, we must remember that Babe.***

This month, I'm going to sit around the Christmas tree with my family, pierced by the grieving absence of one we love, my first Christmas without my dad ... ***and in my grieving, I must remember that Babe.***

This coming year, I'm going to look into the faces of foster children down the road, who have lived through the throes of abuse and neglect, who are without a family on Christmas Day, and every other day of the year ... ***and I must tell them of that Babe.***

When the world is shaken, when our hearts are breaking, the

truth is—our hope is—we need to draw near to the manger again.

For that Baby is the Hope of the nations, the hope of every weary heart. He's the God who is faithful to fulfill every promise, the One who will return to us, the righteous Judge who will bring justice to the earth, the Bridegroom who will marry His church, the King who will rule the nations, the Lord before whom every knee will one day bow.

That Baby is the Resurrection and the Life. He lived, He died, *and He lived again*. And if He has been raised, all who die in Christ will be raised also.

That Baby is the living declaration of the Father's love, who came to bring orphans into a holy and eternal family, and to bind up our pained brokenness.

This Christmas, we remember our God who took on infant flesh, the Man who embraced the cross, the Savior who broke open the grave.

We set our hearts on the One, the only One, who can bring hope to a failing world and to a fainting heart.

The One who revealed to us what Everlasting Love sounds like ...

It sounds like a helpless, holy infant, crying in a manger.

It sounds like a voice, beckoning undignified fishermen (and others, like us) to be His best friends.

It sounds like a tear, dropping to the ground, grieving with a friend over the death of her brother. And it sounds like a loud cry, calling the dead man out of his tomb.

It sounds like a groan, a prayer, a final breath.

It sounds like an earthquake, breaking open the grave.

It sounds like a promise to come back again.

And a day will come when it will sound like a loud shout, like a trumpet, ringing through all of heaven and earth, announcing our King's coming.

He was, and He is, and He is to come.

And so we say, with longing hearts—Come, thou long expected Jesus. Weary hearts and a weary world are desperate for Your return.

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