

# Carols for the King: *What Child Is This?*

(Various Texts)

## The History of the Song

- Words written by William Dix in 1865 in Glasgow, Scotland
  - He used the melody to a traditional English folk song “Greensleeves”
- The purpose was to communicate the Christmas story to those who were not biblically literate

## The Nativity

- This song summarizes some of the key points of the Nativity
  - Including the announcements of the angels (Luke 2:9-14)
  - And the shepherds’ role (Luke 2:15-20)

## The Focus

- But it also focuses on Jesus’ incarnation (John 1:14)
- Including the humility of meeting humanity in its poverty and brokenness (Phil 2:6-8a)
- With the ultimate goal of redemption and salvation through the Cross (Phil 2:8)

## The Response

- The song ends with a call to respond to this Child
- To meet Him with praise and gifts like the Magi (Matt. 2:10-11)
- To enthrone Him as King of our hearts

## So What?

- Who is the Child to us?
  - God incarnate, Savior, King

**Meditation Verse:** *Luke 2:12*

## *What Child Is This?*

What child is this  
Who lay to rest  
On Mary's lap is sleeping  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping  
This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.  
  
Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you.  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.  
  
So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,  
Come peasant, king to own Him;  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise a song on high,  
The Virgin sings her lullaby.  
Joy, joy for Christ is born,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.