

Introduction

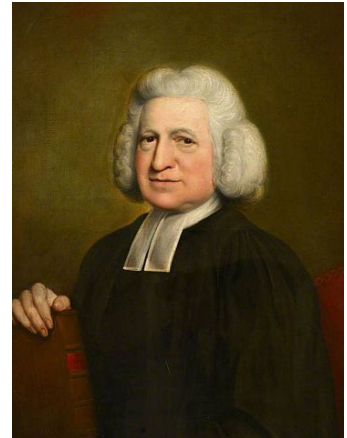
1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

2. Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

3. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

4. By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

(words by Charles Wesley, 1707-1788)



'Come, thou long expected Jesus,' is one of many hymns written by Charles Wesley, and influenced by the class divide in 18th Century Britain and the orphans he saw in the streets, along with a particular Bible verse which states, "'I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the LORD Almighty' (Haggai 2:7).

Charles Wesley wrote this in 1744 and published it in his 'Hymns for the Nativity of Our Lord', hoping those singing it would remember the Nativity but think also about the Second Coming, both familiar themes today in our annual journey through the season of Advent.

The preacher Charles Spurgeon thought highly enough of this hymn to use it as an illustration in a sermon for Christmas in 1855, and through Spurgeon and others the hymn became well known and published in several hymnbooks, paired with popular tunes such as 'Stuttgart' and 'Hyfrydol'.

Charles Wesley was born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, the son of Anglican cleric and poet Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna. He was a younger brother of Methodist founder John Wesley and Anglican cleric Samuel Wesley the Younger, and he became the father of musician Samuel Wesley and grandfather of musician Samuel Sebastian Wesley.