

# “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

December 3 & 4, 2016 | Gospel in the Carols #1

## INTRODUCTION

As we enter the holiday season, Christmas carols will fill the air. Many of the best-loved carols contain the Gospel message within their lyrics. Even those who have never picked up a Bible can probably recite “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.” Our Christmas series begins this week with a look at the Gospel contained in this classic carol, and the amazing message of hope that the world hears through it. (You can find the lyrics on the back of this study.)

**Ice Breaker (Optional):** What is your favorite Christmas carol?

## Study Questions (45 MIN)

### Jesus came to reconcile sinners to God

#### Q1. Read Colossians 1:19-22; Romans 5:10; Romans 6:23

In the very first verse of “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” we find a clear message of the purpose of Jesus’ birth. *“Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”* Where do you find peace, mercy and reconciliation in the first chapter of Colossians? What does Romans 5:10 tell us results from this reconciliation? What is the alternative to reconciliation for those who haven’t been saved “by his blood shed on the cross?” (Romans 6:23)

### Jesus came to make God known

#### Q2. Read Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:30-35; John 1:14, Mark 8:29

Another important truth of this carol is to identify who Jesus is. *“Late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb... Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the Incarnate Deity... Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel”* The name Emmanuel means God is with us. What did Isaiah prophesy about Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14) that would uniquely identify Jesus as fulfilling this promise (Luke 1:30-35)? Perhaps the most important question we can ask is “Who do you say that Jesus is?” How did Peter respond to this question in Mark 8:29? If you agree with Peter, what was it that convinced you of this truth?

### Jesus came to destroy death

#### Q3. Read 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 Corinthians 15:55-58

Ultimately Jesus came to give us eternal life, and that meant he had to save us from death. What does Timothy tell us was revealed through the

appearing of Jesus? This is the good news we should be shouting from the rooftops. We have victory over death through Jesus! (1 Corinthians 15:55- 57) What does Paul state that our response to this should be? (1 Corinthians 15:58) What changes in your life could this truth make?

### Jesus came to transform our lives

#### Q4 Read Malachi 4:2; John 1:4; John 10:10

Finally the joy of the Gospel message is contained in the final verse of our carol. *“Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings”* Reflecting both the Old Testament promise of Malachi and the encouragement of John’s Gospel, we find the power of Jesus to transform us. What kind of healing has Jesus brought into your life? John 10:10 tells us Jesus came to give us a full life<sup>1</sup> What would you say are some of the things that reflect a full life? Is there anyone in your life that needs to hear the good news of healing and abundant life?

<sup>1</sup>zōē- “of the absolute fullness of life”

## Wrap-Up

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” has become part of the institution of Christmas. It sounds out some wonderful theology, musically reminding us that Jesus came to reconcile us to God, make God known, destroy death and transform our lives. Perhaps best of all, He is “Emmanuel” — “God with us.” This carol endures as a reminder of the great gift that our Father God has given us in his Son Jesus Christ. Try singing this carol together and see if it has a deeper, richer meaning for you evoking a greater sense of praise.

## Memory Verse

*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”*

Luke 2:13-14 NIV ESV

## Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for your group members’ needs: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Challenge:** Share the Good News of Jesus with someone this Christmas season.

Hark the herald angels sing  
"Glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With the angelic host proclaim:  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings  
Ris'n with healing in His wings  
Mild He lays His glory by  
Born that man no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth  
Born to give them second birth  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ by highest heav'n adored  
Christ the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come  
Offspring of a Virgin's womb  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see  
Hail the incarnate Deity  
Pleased as man with man to dwell  
Jesus, our Emmanuel  
Hark! The herald angels sing  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

### Q1

Colossians 1:19-22 ESV - 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. 21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,

Romans 5:10 ESV - 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Romans 6:23 ESV - 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### Q2

Isaiah 7:14 ESV - 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Read Luke 1:30-35 in your Bible

John 1:14 ESV - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Mark 8:29 NIV - 29 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

### Q3

2 Timothy 1:10 NIV - 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

1 Corinthians 15:55-58 NIV - 55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

### Q4

Malachi 4:2 NIV - 2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.

John 1:4 NIV - 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

John 10:10 NIV - 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---