

Hymn Study: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

The beautiful hymn, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is one of the most enduring sacred songs of the Christian faith, particularly associated with the Advent season. With origins dating back to the early medieval church, its lyrics are derived from the ancient "O Antiphons," a series of prayers sung in monastic communities during the final days of Advent, each invoking a different title for Christ from Old Testament prophecy.

The hymn's Latin text, *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*, is believed to have been composed between the 8th and 12th centuries, while its solemn yet stirring melody first appeared in 15th-century France.

Rich with biblical imagery, O Come, O Come, Emmanuel expresses the longing and hope of God's people as they await the coming of the Messiah. The verses call upon Emmanuel, meaning "God with us," to rescue Israel from exile, dispel darkness, and bring peace and salvation. Its chant-like melody creates an atmosphere of reflection and anticipation, mirroring the sacred journey of Advent itself.

Over the centuries, this hymn has transcended time and culture, with numerous translations and adaptations making it a cherished part of Christmas traditions worldwide, and continues to capture the profound mystery and expectation of Christ's coming, uniting worshippers across generations in a song of faith, hope, and longing for divine light in the world.

Lyrics

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.
O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.
O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.
O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Veni, veni Emmanuel

Veni, veni Emmanuel!
Captivum solve Israel!
Qui gemit in exilio,
Privatus Dei Filio.

Gaude, gaude, Emmanuel
nascetur pro te, Israel.

Veni o Jesse virgula!
Ex hostis tuos ungula,
De specu tuos tartari
Educ, et antro barathri.

Veni, veni o Oriens!
Solare nos adveniens,
Noctis depelle nebulas,
Dirasque noctis tenebras.

Veni clavis Davidica!
Regna reclude coelica,
Fac iter Tutum superum,
Et claude vias Inferum.

Veni, veni Adonai!
Qui populo in Sinai
Legem dedisti vertice,
In maiestate gloriae.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Em Am D G D

O come, O come Em - man - u - el, And
 O come, Thou Rod of Jes - se, free, Thine
 O come, Thou Day-Spring, come _____ and cheer, Our

4 G C D⁷ Bm Em

ran - som cap - tive Is - - ra - el, That
 own from Sa - tan's ty - - ran - ny, From
 spi - rits by Thine a - - dvent here, Dis -

7 Am Em A⁷ D Em

mourns in lone - ly ex - - ile here, Un -
 depths of Hell Thy peo - - ple save, And
 spere the gloo - my clouds _____ of night, And

10 D Bm Am D G

til the Son of God _____ ap - pear. Re -
 give them vic - t'ry o - - 'er the grace.
 death's dark sha - dows put _____ to flight.

13 D Em Bm G Am D Em D

joice, re - joice! Em - man - u - el, shall

17 G C Am Bm Em

come to Thee, O Is - - ra - el!