

Once in Royal David's City

Cecil F. Alexander / IRBY



1. Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed.
Mary was that mother mild;
Jesus Christ her little child.
2. He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly
lived on earth our Saviour holy.
3. And through all his wondrous childhood
day by day like us he grew;
he was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feels for all our sadness,
and he shares in all our gladness.
4. And our eyes at last shall see him
through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heav'n above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.
5. Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high,
where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

Inspiration: Luke 2: 7.

Lyrics: 87.87.77; Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818-1895, in "Hymns for Little Children", 1848.

Music: IRBY; Henry John Gauntlett, 1805-1876, in 1850; harmonized by Arthur Henry Mann, 1850-1929, for "A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols", King's College, 1918.