

Children's Song of the Nativity

Alternate Title: How Far Is It To Bethlehem

Words by Frances Alice Chesterton (1875-1938)

Tune based on the Old English hymn "Stowey," adapted by Ralph Vaughan Williams

How far is it to Bethlehem?
Not very far.
Shall we find the stable room
Lit by a star?

Can we see the little child,
Is he within?
If we lift the wooden latch
May we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there,
Ox, ass, or sheep?
May we peep like them and see
Jesus asleep?

If we touch his tiny hand
Will he awake?
Will he know we've come so far
Just for his sake?

Great kings have precious gifts,
And we have naught,
Little smiles and little tears
Are all we brought.

For all weary children
Mary must weep.
Here, on his bed of straw
Sleep, children, sleep.

God in his mother's arms,
Babes in the byre,
Sleep, as they sleep who find
Their heart's desire.

