

Hymn Lyrics

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Bethlehem, of noblest cities

Bethlehem, of noblest cities
none can once with thee compare;
thou alone, the Lord from heaven
didst for us incarnate bear.

Fairer than the sun at morning
was the star that told his birth;
to the lands their God announcing,
seen in fleshly form on earth.

By its lambent beauty guided
see the eastern kings appear;
see them bend, their gifts to offer,
gifts of incense, gold and myrrh.

Solemn things of mystic meaning:
incense doth the God disclose,
gold a royal child proclaimeth,
myrrh a future tomb foreshows.

Holy Jesus, in thy brightness
to the Gentile world displayed,
with the Father and the Spirit
endless praise to thee be paid.

(348-410), trans. (1814-1878)