

SONG SERVICE: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

3 And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

OPENING PRAYER: Father, we come before you to give you praise and thanksgiving. Thank you, dear Lord, for another day of life. Another day to be closer to you. Father we ask forgive for our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from all evil. In Jesus precious name we pray, Amen.

Time to Wake Up!

Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not. 1 Corinthians 15:33, 34. {UL 50.1}

Brethren and sisters, wake up, wake up! Proclaim the gospel in its simplicity. Listen as for your life to “what saith the Scriptures.” It is of supreme importance that you hear aright, that you purify your hearts from selfishness, for your eternal welfare is at stake. Are you seeking for the Pearl of Great Price? **Are you guarding yourselves against the deceptions of Satan, or do you stand ready to receive the suggestions of those who have departed from the faith, and given heed to seducing spirits?** **Your salvation depends on your hearing aright, and receiving with meekness the engrafted Word.** {UL 50.2}

Will you be reconciled to God, and obey His commandments, that you may be sanctified, body, soul, and spirit? **You have been bought with a price, by the death of the only begotten Son of God.** Your heart beats on. On that pulsation depends your life. **Its beating is independent of your will.** You eat and sleep in careless indifference. **But God’s guardian care over you is unceasing.** He controls the ebb and flow of the vital current. Where is the gratitude that should rise from human lips for His preserving care? Where is the recognition of His unceasing watchfulness? ... {UL 50.3}

Wake up, wake up! Put away your pride, and forsake your noncommittal position. **Your testing time has come, and you must take sides with Christ or against Him.** On which side are you standing? With the world, or with Christ? Are you receiving the truth and preparing to speak a word in season to arrest the attention of the careless and the indifferent? God demands decided changes in your attitude. **The truth you possess is the word of the living God.** What are you doing to meet the claims of the gospel? Is it your highest desire to learn the will of Him who gave Himself for you in self-denial and sacrifice, that you might become sons and daughters of God? Are you seeking to arouse souls to take an interest in eternal realities? {UL 50.4}

Now is your time to learn how to work earnestly and intelligently for the salvation of those ready to perish. **Make no compromise with the powers of darkness.** Learn the claims of the law of God, and obey them heartily. Then your life will shine forth brightly amidst the spiritual darkness of the world.—**Letter 32, February 5, 1907**, to the church members in and about Melbourne, Australia. {UL 50.5}

Winter is a fascinating time of year and we've got 8 interesting facts about the season.

1. Winter is coming

There are two different dates when winter could be said to begin, depending on whether we are referring to the Meteorological or Astronomical winter.

Winter defined by the Earth's orbit around the Sun, begins on the [equinox](#) which falls on 21 or 22 December.

However, when recording and comparing climate data, it is important to have set dates that can be compared and so for this reason a fixed date of 1 December is used to mark the start of the meteorological winter.

2. Earth is closest to the Sun in winter

You might be surprised to know that in the northern hemisphere the Earth is closest to the Sun during winter.

Around 3 January, the Earth reaches *perihelion* (*peri* meaning 'near' and *helion* meaning 'sun') and the Earth is 3.1 million miles closer to the Sun than at *aphelion* (around 5 July when the Earth is furthest from the Sun).

Earth's distance from the Sun is not what causes the seasons but it does affect the length of them. Around *perihelion*, the Earth is moving around 1 kilometre per second faster than at *aphelion* which results in winter being 5 days shorter than summer.

3. The coldest temperature recorded in winter

The coldest temperature ever recorded during a UK winter was -27.2 °C, which has been recorded 3 times. It was twice recorded in the village of Braemar, on 11 February 1895 and again on 10 January 1982, and once in Altnaharra on 30 December 1995. Both sites are in the Scottish Highlands.

4. The winter of 1963

The winter of 1963 is one of the coldest on record and the coldest since 1740. Temperatures consistently reached lower than - 20 °C with blizzards, snowdrifts and even the sea freezing around the coast.

The severe cold began just before Christmas in 1962 as a high pressure system sat to the northeast of the UK for much of the winter, dragging cold polar winds over the UK.

On 29 and 30 December, a [blizzard](#) struck the UK with snowdrifts up to 6 metres deep. Snow continued to fall frequently and until early March 1963, much of the UK remained covered in snow.

5. The roots of winter

The word winter comes from the Germanic *wintar* which in turn is derived from the root *wed* meaning 'wet' or 'water', and so signifies a wet season.

In Anglo-Saxon cultures, years were counted by the winters, so a person could be said to be '2 winters old.' The first day of winter was also of symbolic importance named *Vetrardag* and falling comparatively early in the year between 10 and 16 October.

6. Wet snow vs. dry snow

Ever wondered why sometimes snow sticks together and sometimes it's powdery and loose? The reason for this lies in the snowflake's journey as it falls through the atmosphere.

Snowflakes that fall through a dry, cool atmosphere will be small and powdery and won't stick together. We call this **dry snow** - it's ideal for skiing, but not for building a snowman.

The snowflakes that form **wet snow** will have fallen through temperatures slightly warmer than 0 °C. As they fall, the snowflakes melt slightly around the edges and stick together to form large, heavy flakes. These stick together easily and are the best for a snowball fight and making snowmen.

7. Reindeer vision

Some reindeer living above the Arctic Circle live in complete darkness for several weeks of the year.

To adapt to this, a small area of tissue behind the retina called the *tapetum lucidum* changes colour from a gold colour in summer months to blue in winter. This allows the reindeer's eyes to detect ultraviolet light and to see in the dark.

8. How much water is there in snow?

The exact amount of water contained in snow can vary quite significantly depending on how the snow formed, but as a general average, every 12 cm of snow would provide 1 cm of water

NATURAL COLD REMEDIES

1. Gargle with salt water

Do this as soon as you start feeling sick! Not only can it help relieve a sore, scratchy throat, but if you go back to your middle school science days, water follows salt (#osmosis) so the idea is that gargling salt water actually pulls viral fluids out from the throat area. 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon salt dissolved in an 8-ounce glass of warm water and gargle it all 1-2x a day.

2. Honey

Honey not only helps soothe a sore throat it also works as a cough suppressant. Honey can soothe irritated mucous membranes which helps remove the irritation that is fuelling the cough reflex. [CVS's Live Better Cough Syrup](#) is a great drug-free remedy, which uses a blend of dark honeys, vitamin C and zinc. Both vitamin c and zinc have been shown to help support your immune system so that's a triple whammy! There's also no artificial ingredients or added dyes or flavors so it's a great natural solution for your cold and cough symptoms. Don't forget to reach for the [Children's Cough Syrup](#) for children over 12 months.

3. Take a Ginger Shot

Ginger is anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial. It has been known to help with congestion, nausea, colds, and fevers. Either pick one up from a local juice store or juice a knob of ginger yourself. Eating ginger can also help but for the best bang for your buck, go for the juice shot.

4. Elderberry syrup

Elderberry is a fruit grown from the elder tree that has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties making it a powerhouse when it comes to fighting colds. Studies have shown taking elderberry syrup can shorten colds and flus and also relieve sinus infections. Triple threat.

5. Propolis

Did you know that bees produce more than just honey? Yep, they make propolis too. Propolis is the substance bees use to seal in their hives so it's super anti-viral and anti-bacterial. It's great at fighting the common cold or sore throats.

6. Essential oils

Power to the plants! There are many powerful essential oils for cold and flus but here are a few that are easily accessible: Eucalyptus oil has antiviral and antimicrobial properties which have historically been used to treat the common cold. Peppermint oil is used as a natural decongestant and fever-reducer. It's like a natural VapoRub. Just make sure when applying topically that you mix with a carrier oil!

7. Garlic

Garlic is a powerful antioxidant with antimicrobial, antiviral and antibiotic properties. Garlic is packed with minerals, enzymes, vitamin C, sulphur, and selenium which all help bust colds and flus. Enjoy garlic in your meals or eat a clove whole if you're seriously brave.

8. Probiotics

This one is a little tricky. If you read my [SIBO post](#), you might remember that when my gut wasn't healthy, probiotics did me no good (in fact, they made things worse) HOWEVER if you have a healthy gut, probiotics can help give your immune system a boost. Whether through a probiotic pill or probiotic rich foods like yogurt and sauerkraut, it all starts in your gut!

9. Bone Broth

Bone broth, or that chicken soup Jewish grandmothers have been making for centuries, actually isn't just a tall tale. A bowl of chicken soup, or homemade bone broth can be effective in helping to fight colds and flus. Bone broth contains anti-inflammatory amino acids and is packed full of immune supporting vitamins and minerals that are extra easy for your body to digest.. Don't reach for those bouillon cubes though – you gotta use the real stuff to get the benefits!

10. Epsom salt bath

Add epsom salt to a hot bath along with some essential oils if you'd like to have a relaxing, detoxifying evening. Again with the osmosis thing, the minerals in the bath cause the toxins in your body to be released in the bath so not only is it relaxing, but it's good for you too.

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

1) Are you guarding yourselves against the deceptions of Satan, or do you stand ready to receive the suggestions of those who have departed from the faith, and given heed to seducing spirits?

2) Your testing time has come, and you must take sides with Christ or against Him.

3) The truth you possess is the word of the living God.

4) Make no compromise with the powers of darkness.

CLOSING PRAYER: Heavenly Father, Give us this day you daily bread. And plant us your streams of living water. Without you Lord we can do nothing of ourselves. But with you in us, you can pour upon us your Holy Spirit which purifies and washes us clean. Father, help everyone of us to have that heartfelt burden for saving every lost and wayward souls. We love and adore you God. And we ask these prayers in Jesus precious name, Amen.