

Earth Has Many a Noble City

Caswall

1. Earth has many a noble city;
Bethlehem alone excels:
from it came the Lord from heaven,
came to rule his Israel.
2. Fairer than the sun at morning
was the star that told his birth,
to the world its God announcing,
seen in human form on earth.
3. Eastern sages at his cradle
make their off'rings rich and rare;
see them give in deep devotion
gold and frankincense and myrrh.
4. Sacred gifts of mystic meaning:
frankincense does God disclose,
gold the King of kings proclaiming,
myrrh his sepulchre foreshows.
5. Jesus, whom the Gentiles worshipped
at your glad Epiphany,
now to you with God the Father
and the Spirit glory be.

Inspiration: "O sola magnarum urbium"; Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348 - ca. 413.
Lyrics: 87.87; Edward Caswall, 1814-1878, in "Lyra Catholica", 1849; rev. in "Hymns Ancient and Modern", 1861.