

# Once in Royal David's City

Cecil F. Alexander

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  
he would honour and obey,  
love and watch the lowly maiden  
in whose gentle arms he lay;  
Christian children all should be  
mild, obedient, good as he.
4. For he is our childhood's pattern,  
day by day like us he grew;  
he was little, weak, and helpless,  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feeleth for our sadness,  
and he shareth in our gladness.
5. 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.
6. 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.