

The Songs of Christmas

ADVENT: Day 17

"THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY"

*Come they told me
Pa rum pum pum pum
A new born king to see
Pa rum pum pum pum
Our finest gifts we bring
Pa rum pum pum pum
To lay before the king
Pa rum pum pum pum,
Rum pum pum pum,
Rum pum pum pum*

Do you know how "The Little Drummer Boy" first rose to popularity?

Because of "a doe, a deer, a female deer."

Seriously.

The story behind the song

"The Little Drummer Boy" was originally written in the Czech-Slavic language as a lullaby. In 1928, it was translated into English in the *Oxford Book of Carols*.

But it was a woman from Missouri named Katherine Davis who composed the version we are familiar with today. She called it "The Carol of the Drum." Her version of the song has been included on more than one hundred popular Christmas albums.

This perennial favorite achieved popular acclaim when the Trapp Family Singers recorded the carol in 1955. If you're unfamiliar with that singing family, then you haven't seen *The Sound of Music* (and you should rectify that immediately).

The Sound of Music follows the Von Trapp family's escape from Austria during World War II. The movie was filmed as a musical because the family had become famous as a singing group—including singing "The Little Drummer Boy."

The gift we all can bring

The song tells the story of a young boy who wants to honor Jesus for his birthday, but the boy doesn't have a present for him. So, he decides to give him the best gift he does have: he plays a song for him on his drum.

One of the stanzas talks about the little boy approaching the manger and saying that he played his best for Jesus. For that performance, the little boy gets Mary's appreciation and gratitude.

"The Little Drummer Boy" offers a great Christmas message.

We can often think a gift is more valuable simply because it costs a lot. This song has a different message.

The little boy didn't have money to offer Jesus, but he gave him something even better: his best. The boy honored Jesus with his song.

All of us can honor the Lord by giving our money to help people, churches, and ministries. But all of us have more to give than money.

The Bible says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

We can all honor the Lord with the example of "The Little Drummer Boy."

We can give him our best by using our gifts and talents for God's good purposes.

What is the finest gift you can bring to Jesus today?

"The Songs Tell the Story"
An Advent Devotional By: Janet Denison