



Candy Cane

By Lucy Wall

It was as my mother-in-law and I were taking down the decorations after Christmas 2013 when we came across a couple of candy canes. She started to tell me about the Christian symbolism behind this popular confectionary and I was completely intrigued as I had never heard of this before. I had seen candy canes every year during the Christmas season but had never realised that they were in any way linked to Christianity. I decided to read up about it online and discovered that there are some mixed reviews as to the history and roots of the candy cane.

Some articles were telling me that this stripy stick of rock was indeed created specifically with an appearance to represent different Biblical truths or reflect facts about Jesus whilst others denied these claims. They instead declared that it was just a normal sweet and the Christian symbolism was added at a later date.

After reading many different articles and opinions on the history of the candy cane, I decided that whether this Christmas treat truly has its beginnings linked to Christianity or not, I don't think it's hugely important. After all, it is only a sweetie! The real meaning of Christmas will always be about the birth of Jesus Christ and the origins of the candy cane won't change that fact! I felt that even if the Christian symbolism was added in later years, it really didn't matter and it was still a great opportunity to write a poem and share the true message of Christmas.

One thing is for sure though, from now on whenever Christmas comes around and I see those red stripes wrapping around the white candy cane, it'll always turn my thoughts towards Jesus Christ and the blood my Saviour shed for me.

I see you little candy cane, a cheery Christmas sight.
A gentle curve of peppermint with stripes of red and white.
A simple little festive treat, I've seen you times before.
I hear you have a secret though; your presence means much more.

Your core is made of vibrant white, a symbol there to show
That Christ was born of virgin birth, His life was pure as snow.
You speak of how His back was flogged with three slim stripes of red.
A thicker stripe that spirals down says Jesus' blood was shed.

A challenge for the dentures, you're a hard and chewy treat!
The goodness of the Gospel found within your taste so sweet.
Your firm and solid density may give the jaw a shock!
But this reflects God's promise; He's our Refuge and our Rock.

I find your shape intriguing as a slender pole and hook.
Your form can tell a story just as well as any book.
For if I turn you upside down what message do you say?
You mark the name of Jesus as I see the letter "J."



But when you stand with head held high and hanging from your hook,
I see a reassuring shape just like a Shepherd's crook.
For we like sheep had wandered far and all had gone astray.
So Jesus the Good Shepherd came to save and show the Way.

I thought you'd kept your meaning to yourself quite sneakily,
But you wear your every symbol like a coat for all to see!
I realise with every twist you glorify God's name.
A peppermint delight, what a clever candy cane!

Although there are the sceptics who say you are a fake,
You wouldn't be the first to be denied for *Jesus'* sake!
Take comfort little candy cane, it isn't you they mock;
It's the One you represent and He's the *Everlasting* Rock.

Though some deny your origins, they have not eyes to see.
But now I know your tale it's what you'll always mean to me.
So thank you little candy cane for all the truth you bring.
Proclaim your Christmas message; Jesus Christ the Risen King!

Luke 2:6-20

"So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

*"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marvelled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."