

## God in the Jukebox

### “American Pie” by Don McLean

Long long time ago, I can still remember  
How that music used to make me smile  
And I knew if I had my chance  
That I could make those people dance  
And maybe they'd be happy for a while

But February made me shiver  
With every paper I'd deliver  
Bad news on the doorstep  
I couldn't take one more step

I can't remember if I cried  
When I read about his widowed bride  
But something touched me deep inside  
The day the music died

So bye-bye, Miss American Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee  
But the levee was dry  
Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and  
rye  
Singing, "This'll be the day that I die"  
This will be the day that I die

Did you write the Book of Love?  
And do you have faith in God above?  
If the Bible tells you so  
Do you believe in rock 'n' roll?  
Can music save your mortal soul?  
And can you teach me how to dance real slow?

Well I know that you're in love with him  
'Cause I saw you dancing in the gym  
You both kicked off your shoes  
Then I dig those rhythm and blues

I was a lonely teenage broncin' buck  
With a pink carnation and a pickup truck  
But I knew I was out of luck  
The day the music died

I started singing bye-bye, Miss American Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee  
But the levee was dry  
Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and  
rye  
Singing, "This'll be the day that I die"  
This will be the day that I die

Now for ten years we've been on our own  
And moss grows fat on a rolling stone  
But that's not how it used to be  
When the jester sang for the King and Queen  
In a coat he borrowed from James Dean  
And a voice that came from you and me

Oh and while the King was looking down  
The jester stole his thorny crown  
The courtroom was adjourned  
No verdict was returned

And while Lenin read a book of Marx  
The Quartet practiced in the park  
And we sang dirges in the dark  
The day the music died

We were singing, bye-bye Miss American Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee  
But the levee was dry  
Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and  
rye  
Singing, "This'll be the day that I die"  
This will be the day that I die

Helter skelter in the summer swelter  
The birds flew off with a fallout shelter  
Eight miles high and falling fast  
It landed foul on the grass, the players tried for  
a forward pass  
With the jester on the sidelines in a cast

Now the halftime air was sweet perfume  
While the sergeants played a marching tune  
We all got up to dance  
Oh, but we never got the chance

'Cause the players tried to take the field  
The marching band refused to yield  
Do you recall what was revealed  
The day the music died?

We started singing bye-bye, Miss American Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was  
dry  
Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and  
rye  
And singing, "This'll be the day that I die"  
This will be the day that I die

Oh, and there we were all in one place  
A generation lost in space  
With no time left to start again  
So come on, Jack be nimble, Jack be quick  
Jack Flash sat on a candlestick  
'Cause fire is the devil's only friend

Oh, and as I watched him on the stage  
My hands were clenched in fists of rage  
No angel born in Hell  
Could break that Satan's spell

And as the flames climbed high into the night  
To light the sacrificial rite  
I saw Satan laughing with delight  
The day the music died

He was singing bye-bye, Miss American Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was

dry  
Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and  
rye  
And singing, "This'll be the day that I die"  
This will be the day that I die

I met a girl who sang the blues  
And I asked her for some happy news  
But she just smiled and turned away  
I went down to the sacred store  
Where I'd heard the music years before  
But the man there said the music wouldn't play

And in the streets, the children screamed  
The lovers cried and the poets dreamed  
But not a word was spoken  
The church bells all were broken

And the three men I admire most  
The Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost  
They caught the last train for the coast  
The day the music died

And they were singing bye-bye, Miss American  
Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was  
dry  
And them good old boys were drinking whiskey  
and rye  
Singing, "This'll be the day that I die"  
This will be the day that I die

They were singing bye-bye, Miss American Pie  
Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was  
dry  
Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and  
rye  
Singing, "This'll be the day that I die"

# God in the Jukebox

## "American Pie" by Don McLean

### Charts

Billboard: #1 (1971)

### Background

The repeatedly mentioned phrase "the day the music died" refers to the plane crash in 1959 which killed early rock and roll performers Buddy Holly, The Big Bopper, and Ritchie Valens. (The crash was not known by that name until after McLean's song became a hit.)

In February 2015, McLean announced he would reveal the meaning of the lyrics to the song when the original manuscript went for auction in New York City, in April 2015. The lyrics and notes were auctioned on April 7, and sold for \$1.2 million. In the sale catalogue notes, McLean revealed the meaning in the song's lyrics: "Basically in American Pie things are heading in the wrong direction. ... It [life] is becoming less idyllic. I don't know whether you consider that wrong or right but it is a morality song in a sense."

### Theology

Did you write the book of love,  
And do you have faith in God above,  
If the Bible tells you so?  
Do you believe in rock 'n roll,  
Can music save your mortal soul,  
And can you teach me how to dance real slow?  
**Reverences to songs from the 1950s.**

Oh, and while the king was looking down,  
The jester stole his thorny crown.

**While Elvis was in the army, Bob Dylan took his spotlight and changed the whole music business. The thorny crown is the price of fame, and is referenced with Jesus's thorny crown before he was murdered.**

And while Lennon read a book of Marx,

**This is about the Beatles music becoming political. Songs like "Revolution" (1968) (which actually mentions Chairman Mao) were much different than "Love Me Do" (1963). Many American adults thought the Beatles were bad for the American youth, especially after Lennon's remark in 1966 about Christianity. He said "Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue with that; I'm right and I will be proved right. We're more popular than Jesus now; I don't know which will go first: rock 'n' roll or Christianity." This started anti-Beatles burnings and such.**

So come on: jack be nimble, jack be quick!  
Jack flash sat on a candlestick  
Cause fire is the devil's only friend.

**"Jumpin' Jack Flash" was a hit for the Rolling Stones. In this song, McJagger compares himself with Jesus. This line comes from the nursery rhyme that has the line "Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack jumps over a candlestick."**

The church bells all were broken.

**The church bells all were broken shows that people have forgotten God. All things are so sacred are gone, love, faith, happiness, peace. In Dylan's "It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)," one verse goes: Disillusioned words like bullets bark . As human gods aim for their mark . Made everything from toy guns that spark . To flesh-colored Christs that glow in the dark . It's easy to see without looking too far. That not much is really sacred. McLean isn't the only one that feels this way. He was obviously a religious man, and is very disappointed that they have abandoned God.**

The Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost,  
**The trinity of God, McLean was Catholic.**

They caught the last train for the coast

**God has left. Time magazine even featured a cover story "Is God Dead?" The generation has failed, and "with no time left to start again." It was now up to the next generation to put things right (and they did a terrible job might I add).**

## ***The Holy Trinity***

Question: "What does the Bible teach about the Trinity?"

Answer: The most difficult thing about the Christian concept of the Trinity is that there is no way to perfectly and completely understand it. The Trinity is a concept that is impossible for any human being to fully understand, let alone explain. God is infinitely greater than we are; therefore, we should not expect to be able to fully understand Him. The Bible teaches that the Father is God, that Jesus is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. The Bible also teaches that there is only one God. Though we can understand some facts about the relationship of the different Persons of the Trinity to one another, ultimately, it is incomprehensible to the human mind. However, this does not mean the Trinity is not true or that it is not based on the teachings of the Bible.

The Trinity is one God existing in three Persons. Understand that this is not in any way suggesting three Gods. Keep in mind when studying this subject that the word "Trinity" is not found in Scripture. This is a term that is used to attempt to describe the triune God—three coexistent, co-eternal Persons who make up God. Of real importance is that the concept represented by the word "Trinity" does exist in Scripture. The following is what God's Word says about the Trinity:

- 1) There is one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5).
- 2) The Trinity consists of three Persons (Genesis 1:1, 26; 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8, 48:16, 61:1; Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). In Genesis 1:1, the Hebrew plural noun "Elohim" is used. In Genesis 1:26, 3:22, 11:7 and Isaiah 6:8, the plural pronoun for "us" is used. The word "Elohim" and the pronoun "us" are plural forms, definitely referring in the Hebrew language to more than two. While this is not an explicit argument for the Trinity, it does denote the aspect of plurality in God. The Hebrew word for "God," "Elohim," definitely allows for the Trinity.

In Isaiah 48:16 and 61:1, the Son is speaking while making reference to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Compare Isaiah 61:1 to Luke 4:14-19 to see that it is the Son speaking. Matthew 3:16-17 describes the event of Jesus' baptism. Seen in this passage is God the Holy Spirit descending on God the Son while God the Father proclaims His pleasure in the Son. Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 are examples of three distinct Persons in the Trinity.

- 3) The members of the Trinity are distinguished one from another in various passages. In the Old Testament, "LORD" is distinguished from "Lord" (Genesis 19:24; Hosea 1:4). The LORD has a Son (Psalm 2:7, 12; Proverbs 30:2-4). The Spirit is distinguished from the "LORD" (Numbers

27:18) and from “God” (Psalm 51:10-12). God the Son is distinguished from God the Father (Psalm 45:6-7; Hebrews 1:8-9). In the New Testament, Jesus speaks to the Father about sending a Helper, the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17). This shows that Jesus did not consider Himself to be the Father or the Holy Spirit. Consider also all the other times in the Gospels where Jesus speaks to the Father. Was He speaking to Himself? No. He spoke to another Person in the Trinity—the Father.

4) Each member of the Trinity is God. The Father is God (John 6:27; Romans 1:7; 1 Peter 1:2). The Son is God (John 1:1, 14; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:8; 1 John 5:20). The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16).

5) There is subordination within the Trinity. Scripture shows that the Holy Spirit is subordinate to the Father and the Son, and the Son is subordinate to the Father. This is an internal relationship and does not deny the deity of any Person of the Trinity. This is simply an area which our finite minds cannot understand concerning the infinite God. Concerning the Son see Luke 22:42, John 5:36, John 20:21, and 1 John 4:14. Concerning the Holy Spirit see John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, and especially John 16:13-14.

6) The individual members of the Trinity have different tasks. The Father is the ultimate source or cause of the universe (1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11); divine revelation (Revelation 1:1); salvation (John 3:16-17); and Jesus' human works (John 5:17; 14:10). The Father initiates all of these things.

The Son is the agent through whom the Father does the following works: the creation and maintenance of the universe (1 Corinthians 8:6; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17); divine revelation (John 1:1, 16:12-15; Matthew 11:27; Revelation 1:1); and salvation (2 Corinthians 5:19; Matthew 1:21; John 4:42). The Father does all these things through the Son, who functions as His agent.

The Holy Spirit is the means by whom the Father does the following works: creation and maintenance of the universe (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30); divine revelation (John 16:12-15; Ephesians 3:5; 2 Peter 1:21); salvation (John 3:6; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:2); and Jesus' works (Isaiah 61:1; Acts 10:38). Thus, the Father does all these things by the power of the Holy Spirit.

There have been many attempts to develop illustrations of the Trinity. However, none of the popular illustrations are completely accurate. The egg (or apple) fails in that the shell, white, and yolk are parts of the egg, not the egg in themselves, just as the skin, flesh, and seeds of the apple are parts of it, not the apple itself. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not parts of God; each of them is God. The water illustration is somewhat better, but it still fails to adequately

describe the Trinity. Liquid, vapor, and ice are forms of water. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not forms of God, each of them is God. So, while these illustrations may give us a picture of the Trinity, the picture is not entirely accurate. An infinite God cannot be fully described by a finite illustration.

The doctrine of the Trinity has been a divisive issue throughout the entire history of the Christian church. While the core aspects of the Trinity are clearly presented in God's Word, some of the side issues are not as explicitly clear. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God—but there is only one God. That is the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. Beyond that, the issues are, to a certain extent, debatable and non-essential. Rather than attempting to fully define the Trinity with our finite human minds, we would be better served by focusing on the fact of God's greatness and His infinitely higher nature. "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" (Romans 11:33-34).