

= Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) =

" Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " is a song by English musician George Harrison , released as the opening track of his 1973 album *Living in the Material World* . It was also issued as the album 's lead single , in May that year , and became Harrison 's second US number 1 , after " My Sweet Lord " . In doing so , the song demoted Paul McCartney and Wings ' " My Love " from the top of the Billboard Hot 100 , marking the only occasion that two former Beatles have held the top two chart positions in America . The single also reached the top ten in Britain , Canada , Australia and other countries around the world .

" Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " is one of its author 's most popular songs , among fans and music critics , and features a series of much @-@ praised slide @-@ guitar solos from Harrison . The recording signalled a deliberate departure from his earlier post @-@ Beatles work , in the scaling down of the big sound synonymous with *All Things Must Pass* and his other co @-@ productions with Phil Spector over 1970 ? 71 . Aside from Harrison , the musicians on the track are Nicky Hopkins , Jim Keltner , Klaus Voormann and Gary Wright . In his lyrics , Harrison sings of his desire to be free of karma and the constant cycle of rebirth ; he later described the song as " a prayer and personal statement between me , the Lord , and whoever likes it " .

Harrison performed " Give Me Love " at every concert during his rare tours as a solo artist , and a live version was included on his 1992 album *Live in Japan* . The original studio recording appears on the compilation albums *The Best of George Harrison* (1976) and *Let It Roll : Songs by George Harrison* (2009) . At the Concert for George tribute to Harrison , in November 2002 , Jeff Lynne performed " Give Me Love " with Andy Fairweather @-@ Low and Marc Mann playing the twin slide @-@ guitar parts . Marisa Monte , Dave Davies , Elliott Smith , Ron Sexsmith , Sting , James Taylor and Elton John are among the other artists who have covered the song .

= = Background and inspiration = =

As with most of the songs on his *Living in the Material World* album , George Harrison wrote " Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " over 1971 ? 72 . During this period , he dedicated himself to assisting refugees of the Bangladesh Liberation War , by staging two all @-@ star benefit concerts in New York and preparing a live album and concert film for release . In addition , much of his time was spent occupied with the business and legal problems afflicting the humanitarian aid project . Author Andrew Grant Jackson writes that Harrison 's frustration with this last issue resulted in a sombre quality pervading much of *Material World* , yet he " pushed his disillusionment aside for the lead single [' Give Me Love '] " .

The same period coincided with the height of Harrison 's devotion to Hindu spirituality . As with his religious @-@ themed 1970 ? 71 hit , " My Sweet Lord " , and his subsequent singles " What Is Life " and " Bangla Desh " , Harrison wrote " Give Me Love " very quickly . Author Alan Clayson describes it as having " flowed from George with an ease as devoid of ante @-@ start agonies as a Yoko Ono ' think piece ' " . In his autobiography , *I , Me , Mine* , Harrison recalls of the writing process :

Sometimes you open your mouth and you don 't know what you are going to say , and whatever comes out is the starting point . If that happens and you are lucky , it can usually be turned into a song . This song is a prayer and personal statement between me , the Lord , and whoever likes it .

= = Composition = =

" Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " continues the precedent that Harrison set on " My Sweet Lord " , through its fusion of the Hindu bhajan (or devotional song) with Western gospel tradition . Author Simon Leng comments that the song repeats another of its composer 's hit formulas , by using a three @-@ syllable lyrical hook as its title , like " My Sweet Lord " , " What Is Life " and " Bangla Desh " .

The song 's time signature is 4 / 4 throughout , and the musical key is F major . As on Harrison 's

recording , this requires the placing of a capo on the guitar 's third fret , to transpose the chords from D up to the correct key . The intro features strummed acoustic guitar , similar in style to the opening of Bob Dylan 's " Mr. Tambourine Man " . The song builds gradually from its understated introduction , with the rhythm section only fully arriving after the first bridge segment . Harrison biographer Gary Tillery describes the musical mood as " bouncy yet soothing " .

In his lyrics , Harrison expresses his vision for life in the physical world . Following the opening instrumental passage , the song begins with a chorus in which he first pleads for a life devoid of the karmic burden of rebirth , or reincarnation : " Give me love , give me love , give me peace on earth / Give me light , give me life , keep me free from birth . " These lyrics bear a simple , universal message , one that , in the context of the time , related as much to the communal " peace and love " idealism of the 1960s as it did Harrison 's personal spiritual quest .

Harrison also asks for divine assistance to " cope with this heavy load " , while his stated attempt to " touch and reach you with heart and soul " recalls the same plea for a direct relationship with his deity that he expresses in " My Sweet Lord " . These two lines , which complete the chorus , imply a deficiency or unfulfilment on the singer 's part . According to author Ian Inglis , they serve as " an acknowledgment of the trials and tribulations he was facing in a more earthly setting " in the aftermath to the Concert for Bangladesh .

During the two bridge sections , Harrison incorporates the sacred term " Om " within his extended phrase " Oh ... my Lord " . Author Joshua Greene describes this as an example of a theme found in several songs on Material World , whereby Harrison " distilled " spiritual concepts into phrases " so elegant they resembled Vedic sutras : short codes that contain volumes of meaning " . The use of the word " Om " was a further comment from Harrison on the universality of faith , after his switching in " My Sweet Lord " from " hallelujah " refrains to the Hare Krishna mantra . Referring to the second half of the bridges in " Give Me Love " , Inglis views the drawn @-@ out " Please ? " as " highly symbolic " , given the " unresolved conflict " that appears to be at the heart of the composition .

= = Recording = =

Harrison 's commitment to overseeing the release of the Concert for Bangladesh documentary film prevented him from being able to start on the follow @-@ up to his All Things Must Pass triple album until midway through 1972 . Another delay was caused by producer Phil Spector 's unreliability , as Harrison waited for him to turn up for the start of the sessions . Author Bruce Spizer writes that " the eccentric producer 's erratic attendance caused George to realize the project would never get done if he kept waiting for Spector " , and by October that year , Harrison had decided to produce the album alone .

As for the majority of Living in the Material World , Harrison recorded the basic track for " Give Me Love " in the autumn of 1972 with the assistance of former Beatles engineer Phil McDonald . The recording location was either FPSHOT , Harrison 's new home studio at Friar Park in Henley @-@ on @-@ Thames , or Apple Studio in London . In a departure from Harrison 's co @-@ productions with Spector , where a large line @-@ up of musicians had been standard , " Give Me Love " featured a pared @-@ down arrangement and more subtle instrumentation . Another contrast was Harrison 's adoption of a production style that partly recalls George Martin 's work with the Beatles . On " Give Me Love " , Inglis notes the same " supple and clear [acoustic] guitar @-@ playing that distinguished ' Here Comes the Sun ' " in 1969 , while the less grand production , relative to All Things Must Pass , allowed greater expression for Harrison as a slide guitarist .

Harrison carried out overdubs on the backing track , including twin slide @-@ guitar parts , during the first two months of 1973 . Aside from Harrison 's guitar work , the most prominent instrument on the recording is Nicky Hopkins ' piano , double @-@ tracked and played in his usual melodic style . The rhythm section consisted of bassist Klaus Voormann and drummer Jim Keltner . The organ player on the song was American musician Gary Wright , whose 1971 album Footprint was one of many musical projects in which Harrison was involved between All Things Must Pass and Material World . Peter Lavezzoli , author of The Dawn of Indian Music in the West , comments on how quickly Harrison 's " unique approach " to slide @-@ guitar playing had matured since 1970 , to

incorporate sitar , veena and other Hindustani musical stylings , and rates the mid @-@ song solo on " Give Me Love " as " one of his most intricate and melodic " .

= = Release = =

" Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " was Harrison 's first single in close to two years , after " Bangla Desh " in July 1971 . As with Living in the Material World , however , its release was delayed to allow for other items on Apple Records ' release schedule during the first half of 1973 : the Beatles ' compilations 1962 ? 1966 and 1967 ? 1970 , and Paul McCartney and Wings ' second album , Red Rose Speedway . In the years since All Things Must Pass , according to author Robert Rodriguez , the public bickering between John Lennon and McCartney and their " subpar " music had done much to diminish the " cachet of being an ex @-@ Beatle " . In his 1977 book The Beatles Forever , Nicholas Schaffner wrote that , because of the altruism inherent in the Bangladesh project compared to the twin " fiascos " of McCartney 's Wild Life album and the Lennon ? Ono collaboration Some Time in New York City , " [a] receptive audience was guaranteed " for Harrison 's new songs .

Backed by " Miss O 'Dell " , " Give Me Love " was issued on 7 May 1973 in America (as Apple R 5988) and 25 May in Britain (Apple 1862) . Three weeks later , the song appeared as the opening track on Living in the Material World . As with all the songs on the album bar the 1971 @-@ copyright " Sue Me , Sue You Blues " and " Try Some , Buy Some " , Harrison assigned his publishing royalties for " Give Me Love " to his newly launched Material World Charitable Foundation .

Apple 's US distributor , Capitol Records , mastered the single to run at a faster speed than the album track , in order to make the song sound brighter on the radio . Unusually for an Apple release by a former Beatle , the single was packaged in a plain sleeve in the main markets of Britain and the United States . A variety of picture sleeves were available in European countries , including a design incorporating Harrison 's signature and a red Om symbol , both of which were aspects of Tom Wilkes 's artwork for the Material World album .

= = = US chart feat = = =

The single topped the Billboard Hot 100 at the end of June , for one week , and peaked at number 8 on the UK Singles Chart . Repeating the feat of January 1971 , when " My Sweet Lord " and All Things Must Pass sat atop the Billboard charts simultaneously , " Give Me Love " hit number 1 part @-@ way through Material World 's five @-@ week stay at the top of the albums listings .

" Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " replaced Wings ' " My Love " at number 1 on the Hot 100 singles chart , and in turn was replaced by " Will It Go Round in Circles " , by Harrison 's former Apple Records protégé Billy Preston . For the week ending 30 June that year , the Harrison , McCartney and Preston songs were ranked numbers 1 , 2 and 3 , respectively , on the Billboard Hot 100 , marking the first time since 25 April 1964 that the Beatles occupied the top two positions on that chart . Schaffner described this period as " reminiscent of the golden age of Beatlemania " , due to the amount of Beatles @-@ related product dominating the charts in America . As of October 2013 , the week of 30 June 1973 remained the only time that two former members of the Beatles held the first and second positions on a US singles chart .

= = = Reissue = = =

" Give Me Love " later appeared on the 1976 compilation The Best of George Harrison , as one of just six selections from the artist 's solo career . The song was also included on 2009 's Let It Roll : Songs by George Harrison .

In Martin Scorsese 's 2011 documentary George Harrison : Living in the Material World , released ten years after Harrison 's death , the song plays over footage of the Friar Park grounds and of Harrison making music in the house with Keltner and Voormann . During the segment , Voormann

discusses Harrison 's practice of preparing the studio with incense to create a suitable environment , adding : " He really made it into a real tranquil , nice surrounding ? everybody felt just great . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Contemporary reviews = = =

" Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " became one of Harrison 's most popular songs , both from his years with the Beatles and from his subsequent solo career . On release , McCartney described it as " very nice " , adding : " The guitar solo is ace and I like the time changes . " Billboard magazine 's reviewer wrote : " Harrison 's voice and sweet , country tinged guitar work within a rippling but controlled rhythm base , lends itself to this plea for human understanding . His sincere sound engulfs the listener and brings [them] into the story . " In Rolling Stone , Stephen Holden lauded the song for its " strong , short @-@ phrased melody whose lyrics are sheer exhortation " , and said that the single was " every bit as good as ' My Sweet Lord ' " .

In Britain , where the national economy was heading into recession after the boom years of the 1960s , lines such as " help me cope with this heavy load " " touched a raw nerve or two " , according to Alan Clayson . In the NME , Tony Tyler derided Harrison for " lay [ing] the entire Krishna @-@ the @-@ Goat trip on us " , while Michael Watts of Melody Maker suggested that " Living in the Material World " might have been a better choice for the album 's lead single . Writing in their 1975 book The Beatles : An Illustrated Record , Tyler and Roy Carr said that " Give Me Love " bore " more than a distant resemblance " to Dylan 's " I Want You " , but praised the track for its " excellent and highly idiosyncratic slide @-@ guitar playing " .

= = = Retrospective reviews and legacy = = =

Reviewing the song for AllMusic , Lindsay Planer highlights Harrison 's guitar contribution to this " serene rocker " and likewise acknowledges Hopkins ' " warm and soulful keyboard runs and fills " . Zeth Lundy of PopMatters describes " Give Me Love " as " effervescent " and " a # 1 single that remains one of Harrison 's most iconic and well @-@ loved " . In his liner notes to the Let It Roll compilation , music historian Warren Zanes views " Give Me Love " as " perhaps the best example " of how Harrison 's " post @-@ Beatles songwriting blurs the line between music and prayer without ever sacrificing the pure melodic force for which he was known " .

Mojo contributor John Harris cites " Give Me Love " as evidence of Material World 's standing as " something of a Hindu concept album ? a pleasing fusion of Eastern religion , gospel , and the ghost of ' For You Blue ' " . Hugh Fielder of Classic Rock admires Harrison 's " painstaking craftsmanship " and " sublime playing " on this and other Material World tracks and describes it as " one of Harrison 's finest songs " . Writing for Uncut , David Cavanagh considers the album to be a " utopian follow @-@ up " to All Things Must Pass , on which " Give Me Love " " encapsulates the deal : simple message of hope , with gorgeous slide guitar ? and fantastic rhythm section " .

Among Harrison and Beatles biographers , Robert Rodriguez recognises Harrison 's achievement in " cloak [ing] philosophical concerns in a thoroughly commercial package " , which included his " impossibly compelling slide work " . Simon Leng finds more superlatives for the song 's guitar lines , describing them as " almost too euphonious to be true " . Leng continues : " Living in the Material World could hardly have reveled in a stronger opening song ... A gorgeous ballad , awash with marvelously expressive guitar statements , ' Give Me Love ' retains the emotional power of All Things Must Pass in a compelling three minutes . "

Writing in Still the Greatest : The Essential Solo Beatles Songs , Andrew Grant Jackson considers that with " Give Me Love " , Harrison " captured the essence of what he had set out to do with the [Bangladesh] concerts ? and what the Beatles had tried to do in their more idealistic moments " . Describing it as Harrison 's " finest plea to God " , with a vocal that " perfectly suits the yearning " implicit in the lyrics , Jackson adds : " ' Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) ' stands alongside

' All You Need Is Love , ' ' Let It Be , ' and ' Imagine ' as the purest expression of the Aquarian Age dream . " In his Harrison obituary for The Guardian in December 2001 , former Melody Maker critic Chris Welch concluded with a reference to the track , saying that the ex @-@ Beatle 's " feelings and needs were best expressed in one of his simplest songs ? ' Give Me Love (Give Me Peace On Earth) ' " .

In the Concert for George documentary film (2003) , Eric Clapton names " Give Me Love " as one of his favourite Harrison compositions , along with " Isn 't It a Pity " . AOL Radio listeners voted the track fifth in a 2010 poll to find Harrison 's best post @-@ Beatles songs , while Michael Gallucci of Ultimate Classic Rock placed it fourth on a similar list that he compiled . Guitar World editor Damian Fanelli includes the track among his choice of Harrison 's ten best post @-@ Beatles " Guitar Moments " , praising the mid @-@ song solo as " simply one of the most intricate and melodic things the former Beatle ever played on slide " . David Fricke includes " Give Me Love " in his list of " 25 essential Harrison performances " for Rolling Stone magazine , and describes it as " a soft , intimate hymn , a small @-@ combo reaction to the Wagnerian spectacle of All Things Must Pass " .

= = Performance = =

Harrison performed " Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " throughout both his 1974 North American tour with Ravi Shankar and his 1991 Japanese tour with Eric Clapton , and during his 1992 benefit show for the Natural Law Party . The latter took place at London 's Royal Albert Hall on 6 April that year and was Harrison 's only full concert as a solo artist in Britain .

In the 1974 shows , the song usually appeared midway through the set and featured Billy Preston 's synthesizer and a flute solo from Tom Scott instead of the familiar slide @-@ guitar breaks . Although widely bootlegged , no version of the song from this tour has been released officially .

= = = Live in Japan version = = =

The Japanese tour in December 1991 was Harrison 's only other tour as a solo artist . His 1992 album Live in Japan contains a version of " Give Me Love " from this tour , recorded at Tokyo Dome on 15 December 1991 . Harrison again delegated the solos to a fellow musician : in this case Andy Fairweather @-@ Low reproduced the slide @-@ guitar parts from the original studio recording . Ian Inglis notes the " impressive interplay " , particularly towards the end of the song , between Harrison and his backup singers , Tessa Niles and Katie Kissoon .

This live version of " Give Me Love " , along with the accompanying concert footage , was subsequently included in the Living in the Material World reissue in September 2006 , as part of a deluxe CD / DVD package . The performance also appears on the DVD included in the eight @-@ disc Apple Years 1968 ? 75 box set , released in September 2014 .

= = Cover versions = =

Lindsay Planer writes that two covers of the song " worth noting " are a version by Bob Koenig , issued on his Prose & Icons album in 1996 , and one by Brazilian singer Marisa Monte from the same year . Monte 's version appeared on her album Barulhinho Bom , later released in English @-@ speaking countries as A Great Noise . In 1998 , " Give Me Love (Give Me Peace on Earth) " was one of five Harrison songs that composers Steve Wood and Daniel May adapted for their soundtrack to the documentary film Everest ; part of the piece " The Journey Begins " incorporates " Give Me Love " .

Artists other than Harrison who have performed the song live include Elliott Smith and , in April 2002 , Sting , James Taylor and Elton John . These three musicians played " Give Me Love " as part of a tribute to Harrison during the Rock for the Rainforest benefit concert at Carnegie Hall in New York City . In what Planer describes as a " stirring reading " , Jeff Lynne performed the song at the Concert for George on 29 November 2002 , held at the Royal Albert Hall exactly a year after

Harrison 's death . Lynne was supported by a band comprising Harrison 's friends and musical associates , including Clapton , Fairweather @-@ Low , Marc Mann , Keltner , Dhani Harrison , Niles and Kissoon .

Dave Davies of the Kinks contributed a version of " Give Me Love " to the multi @-@ artist compilation Songs from the Material World : A Tribute to George Harrison in 2003 . In a statement released in advance of the compilation , Davies explained that he was normally reluctant to perform other artists ' songs yet had made " an exception " with " Give Me Love " , in order to honour Harrison " as a great musical talent but primarily as an advanced soul who was unafraid to share his spiritual vision and journey with us " . Davies subsequently issued the recording on his 2006 album Kinked .

In 2010 , Broadway actress Sherie Rene Scott featured " Give Me Love " in her autobiographical musical Everyday Rapture as the show 's final number . Canadian singer Ron Sexsmith has included the song in his live performances ; a version by him appeared on Harrison Covered , a tribute CD accompanying the November 2011 issue of Mojo magazine .

= = Personnel = =

According to Simon Leng :

George Harrison ? vocals , acoustic guitars , slide guitars , backing vocals

Nicky Hopkins ? pianos

Gary Wright ? organ

Klaus Voormann ? bass

Jim Keltner ? drums

= = Chart performance = =