



And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7)

Thou didst Leave thy Throne and thy Kingly Crown

Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown,
when thou camest to earth for me;
but in Bethlehem's home was there found no room
for thy holy nativity.

Refrain:

*O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
there is room in my heart for thee.*

Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang,
proclaiming thy royal degree;
but of lowly birth didst thou come to earth,
and in great humility. *Refrain*

The foxes found rest, and the birds their nest
in the shade of the forest tree;
but thy couch was the sod, O thou Son of God,
in the deserts of Galilee. *Refrain*

Thou camest, O Lord, with the living word
that should set thy children free;
but with mocking scorn and with crown of thorn,
they bore thee to Calvary. *Refrain*

When the heavens shall ring, and the angels sing,
at thy coming to victory,
let thy voice call me home, saying "Yet there is room,
there is room at my side for thee." *Refrain*

I owe the impetus to explore and write about this hymn to the urgings of the accomplished organist at the Church of the Faithful Centurion, Miss Marianne Lane, in Descanso, California. It is good she brought it to my attention for this Christmas hymn is too often neglected and forgotten for reasons unknown to me. Perhaps the reason is that this hymn is not included in the recommended Hymns and Carols of the hymnal to

be sung in accordance with the lectionary; however, this hymn expresses the perfect sentiments with which I will conclude my Christmas hymn devotions. The hymn may not seem traditional for the season, but it fits perfectly the purpose of Christmas - "*Christ came down at Christmas*" and, for most of the world, there was **no room for Him**.

This hymn was composed by Elizabeth Steele Elliott in 1864 - sister of Charlotte Elliott, author of "Just as I Am.". It is most commonly sung to the tune, '*Margaret*.' It was the first sung at her father's church, St. Mark's Church, Brighton, England.

"*Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne*" has a depth of meaning that transcends the Church Season of Christmas and is intended to range the full life of Christ from birth to Calvary. Instead of teaching her Sunday School children the fables of Christmas, Miss Elliott desired that they learn the true meaning of the Season - that it was all about Christ and the wonderful benefits His Coming made available to us all. She desired that the youth know the entire life and mission of Christ. As she studied Luke 2:7, the content of the hymn began to form in her heart, first, and then her mind. The first and second stanzas relate to the beauty and circumstances of Christ's birth, and the third relates to His role as itinerant preacher of Truth. The fourth stanza describes the rejection and humiliation Christ bore for us all the way to Calvary. The fifth, of course, points to that day, known only to God the Father, when Christ shall return with power and majesty to claim the final victory for His people.

"Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown, when thou camest to earth for me; but in Bethlehem's home was there found no room for thy holy nativity." It amazes me that in olden days, hymns written for little children contained strong doctrine and truth. Today, most of our shameless ministers consider even those children's hymns written decades ago to be 'above the heads' of adults! If such hymns are above our heads, we should grow taller! Christ left a glorious home to come, in an immeasurable love, to where we are (on earth) to save us from Satan's power. He came as a little baby, and was born to poor and common circumstances. There was no presumption to being born in a stable and being laid in a manger - nothing of which to boast. That is the way He intended it. He came to His own people, but His own people had no room for Him in suitable lodgings. As an outcast, His mother, Mary, was referred to the stable yard - the same that had given birth to lambs and goats, and cattle of all sorts. There was no room in the Inn for Jesus and, sadly, no room in many hearts for those to whom He came bearing riches in love and sacrifice.

"Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang, proclaiming thy royal degree; but of lowly birth didst thou come to earth, and in great humility." In every stage of His life and ministry, Jesus set the perfect example for us. The Angels of Heaven filled the arches of Heaven in singing in chorus and glad joy at His birth; yet, no one of royal family (except the Child) saw. No one of wealth and opulence was on the hillsides overlooking Bethlehem to witness this wonderful event - it was only poor shepherds of the lowest estate who were privileged to be in the divine audience. His birth was humble, His parents were humble, the shepherds were humble, and even the cattle were reverent in their lowing. Nothing such as this had ever occurred, or will ever again occur, in the annals of the world.

Not only was our Lord humble in His birth, but in His life as well. "The foxes found rest, and the birds their nest in the shade of the forest tree; but thy couch was the sod, O thou Son of God, in the deserts of Galilee." What amazing love constrains the Mighty God and Everlasting Father to reduce Himself to the poorest straits of humanity! He was often known to retire to the open elements of the mountain to pray

while men slept comfortably in their beds at night . "53 *And every man went unto his own house.*" (John 7:53) "1 *Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.* 2 *And early in the morning he came again into the temple.*" (John 8:1-2) He forsook the ivory and alabaster halls of Heaven to walk the dusty roads of Galilee and Judah. He barely owned the simple garments that He wore. He had neither home, nor beast of burden, nor sea vessel, nor script. Jesus was precisely ALL that He seemed to be, and that was greater in wealth than the cattle on a thousand hills.

Christ was humble, as a Lamb led to the slaughter (which Lamb He was), in death. "*Thou camest, O Lord, with the living word that should set thy children free; but with mocking scorn and with crown of thorn, they bore thee to Calvary.*" Not only did Christ come with the Living Word to set us free; Christ WAS, Himself, that Living WORD! "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God.*" (John 1:1-2) He is that WORD upon which we feed as the Bread of Life, as well as the Water of Life: "*I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*" (John 6:35) Jesus was perfectly righteous and modest in His dress. Please imagine the humiliation of such a lovely gentleman being stripped naked in public and nailed to a cross. He could have refused such humiliation at any point, yet He endured for the sake of an unfathomable love for you and me.

Jesus was humble in birth, in life, and in death: however, the day is destined to come when He shall return - not as a humble Child lying in a manger- but as Captain of the Hosts of Heaven riding a white charger with all the Armies of Heaven in trail. That will be a most wonderful day for the saved of God, but one of horror and ruin for those who have rejected the Lord of Glory. "*When the heavens shall ring, and the angels sing, at thy coming to victory, let thy voice call me home, saying "Yet there is room, there is room at my side for thee."* Those same mighty Angels whose voices thundered over the hills and pastures of Bethlehem 2,013 years ago shall again ring out in wondrous chorus over the heavens. Not only will poor shepherds witness this event, but every human being that has ever lived - rich, poor, righteous, or wicked. Only those who have heard, and heeded, the Voice of the Lord in life will hear the voice of the Lord at His return when He invites them to come into His Kingdom. You will recall the words of James Black in his wonderful hymn: "*When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, and time shall be no more, And the morning breaks, eternal, bright and fair; When the saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore, And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.*" That will be the glorious day for which all of Scripture has prepared the people of God.

I have omitted to remark on the refrain to this wonderful Christmas hymn until the last since its application is eternal. "*O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for thee.*" Have you made this profession, and not in vain. Have you welcomed Christ into your heart even while the world around ridicules and rejects Him? We do not prepare a place in our hearts for Christ, for He will enter in there and vanquish every devil and evil spirit from those chambers of love. He will make the heart NEW and able to abide His presence. Does Christ, who is at the right hand of the Father, have a forwarding address to the very rooms of your own heart? If not, better make your salvation sure today at Christmastide.