



This hymn is the product of Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), author of *'Uncle Tom's Cabin.'* Mrs. Stowe was raised in a fervently religious family, her father being a minister of the Calvinist persuasion. But Harriet later became a high-church Episcopalian. She was raised in Connecticut and was next-door neighbor to Mark Twain. At the age of twenty-two (1833), she attended a slave auction in Kentucky which made a profound and painful impression upon her young soul. Her novel contributed to the growing conviction in America that slavery was evil. Later in life, she dabbled in spiritualism but, ironically, still clung to her long held religious beliefs in Christ – a seeming conflict to say the least. The tune is 'CONSOLATION' by Felix Mendelsohn composed in 1842.

Still, Still with Thee

Still, still with Thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee.

Alone with Thee, amid the mystic shadows,
The solemn hush of nature newly born;
Alone with Thee in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.

Still, still with Thee! As to each newborn morning
A fresh and solemn splendor still is giv'n,
So does this blessed consciousness, awaking,
Breathe each day nearness unto Thee and heav'n.

So shall it be at last, in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh and life's shadows flee;
O in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with Thee. *Amen.*

1 Still, still with Thee, when purple morning breaketh, When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee; Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight, Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee. There can be a stillness in the soul that is not subject to any outside influences of the screams and profanity of the world. That stillness is the benefit of the indwelling Christ of the Temple of the Heart. I love the pastel images this verse evokes of the purple morning breaking – a word picture to which we can all relate. What a wonderful benefit to know that during every adventure and rest of life, our Lord is right beside. We feel His presence most vividly during those early morning hours of silence as the night surrenders to the splendor of a beautiful sunrise. No sunrise, no twilight pleasure however, can equal the beauty and certainty of His presence with us. That presence is not only a beauty of the imagination, but a comfort of the heart – sealed by strong faith.

2 Alone with Thee, amid the mystic shadows, The solemn hush of nature newly born; Alone with Thee in breathless adoration, In the calm dew and freshness of the morn. "I COME TO THE GARDEN ALONE," my mother's favorite hymn, was so representative of the gardener who rises early to witness the creation of new life in the dews and damps of the dawning hours. That is where we will certainly find our Lord just as Mary Magdalene at the Garden Tomb. He is to be found among the vital witnesses of life – the rose, the wheat, the kitten, and the child. He is the Giver of Life and its very Sustainer. He speaks to us there in the intimacy of our aloneness. We are rapt in adoration and love for this One whose nail-scarred hands and pierced side bear witness of His undying love for us – "*none other has ever known.*"

3 Still, still with Thee! As to each newborn morning A fresh and solemn splendor still is giv'n, So does this blessed consciousness, awaking, Breathe each day nearness unto Thee and heav'n. Every new day with the Lord is the first day in our remaining eternity of days. It is a pure-white unblemished scroll given to us to begin our day of toil and service. Though we smudge the paper with our clumsiness throughout the day, a clean new scroll awaits us in the morning next. Each dawning day literally brings us ever nearer to a real and existential forever presence with our Lord beyond Jordan Banks. It is one less day in the number of our allotted days on God's green earth that we abide in this mortal body awaiting its redemption and union with our souls already so redeemed. Truly each morning is, as the author avers, a newborn morning. Our Lord is the Day Star made reference to by Peter, and He is the creator of Light and the beauty of the Day. God asked my old friend Job, "*Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place?*" and the Psalmist asks: "*If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*" (Psalm 139:9-10)

4 So shall it be at last, in that bright morning, When the soul waketh and life's shadows flee; O in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning, Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with Thee. Amen. The beautiful expression of King David, and its sure promise, enforces this verse: "*. . . . in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*" (Psalm 30:5) There is an earthly joy the morning sunrise brings – its glorious colors, its growing beams of light, its quiet promise of a future sunrise that shall be eternal! In this life, we each are as pilgrims who seeketh after a city not made with hands like unto that which Abraham sought. God has given us a chart and compass with the path laid out – the end of which is that Celestial City. "*And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no*

need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.” Revelation 21:22-25 (KJV) We shall meet together there in that Glorious Temple which is the Lord. On earth, He has been our Ark of Salvation; and there, He shall be our Holy Temple constructed of each of His precious gems He has gathered from among the saints. We are His gems! “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. “ (Malachi 3:17)

Man began his earthly journey of life in that Garden of Paradise eastward in Eden, and those of His chosen among men and women shall end that journey in that same Paradise of God beyond the gates of the gleaming city.