

A SERIES OF CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS BASED UPON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

A PLACE FIT FOR A KING?

Luke 2:6-7 “And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”

When a wife and husband learn they are pregnant with their first child they go into “baby mode.” A room in their home needs to be converted into a nursery which means much redecorating has to occur. Colors of walls, curtains, wall hangings and a host of other associated stuff must all be coordinated. A basinet, crib, changing table are basic furniture to acquire.

There was no special room for Jesus. The motel was full. No one in Bethlehem was willing to open their home to Mary and Joseph. Finally, probably in desperation, the inn keeper offered his barn and the furnishings (manger) that came with it.

Can you imagine completing the 80-mile, arduous trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem, labor pains starting, a baby soon to arrive and no place for Mary and Joseph to go? Philippians 2:5 says that Jesus “humbled Himself. . .” Indeed, He did. Instead of a pristine birthing room in a sterile hospital, Jesus was born among animals, the stench of manure, cob webs, and dirt. His first crib was a cow’s manger. These were not fitting accommodations fit for the King of Kings.

God was not interested in what we human seem so important. The accommodations for His Son were of no importance at all. He was sending His Son into the world on a sacred mission that required Jesus to suffer many indignities, receive complete rejection that went far beyond no motel room for His birth and do so with complete love and mercy in His heart for the people He was sent to save.

As you celebrate the birth of Jesus tonight and into tomorrow, take deep breaths to capture the odor of the barn in which He was born. Try to imagine what it felt like to Him, a new born, having a cattle manger for His basinet. Try to forget all of

the “Christmas trappings” that are part of your home, church and community and visualize the stark, cold night that Mary, Joseph and Jesus experienced. God and His Son Jesus did all of this for you and your salvation. Praise be to Him who loves you this much.

Prayer: In the midst of tonight’s celebration of Your birth, dear Jesus, send Your Spirit into my heart to capture the real message of Your coming into the world to save me and all people from their sins. Amen.

Once in royal David’s city Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly Lived on earth our Savior holy.

For He is our childhood’s pattern, Day by day like us He grows;
He was little, weak, and helpless, Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness, And He shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle Is our Lord in heav’n above;
And He leads His children on To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor, lowly stable With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven, Set at God’s right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!
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