

NO ROOM IN THE INN

by Rev. Karl R. Alden

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

Have you ever gone to sit down in a row of seats, and when you got to them found they were already filled with other children? Have you ever had anyone say to you, "I am sorry, but there is no room for you"? You know how unhappy it can make you feel to be forgotten on a day when other children are remembered, to be the one who comes running, only to hear there is no room for you. This is very hard.

Yet it might bring you some comfort to remember that on the night the Lord was born, He was treated just this way by the innkeeper of Bethlehem. When Joseph and Mary arrived in that little village after a long, hard journey, they went to the inn, which is a place where travelers may go to rest and eat. Joseph asked for a place to sleep. But the innkeeper told him that there was no room. They would have to go somewhere else. And there was no place else for them to go except a stable.

If the innkeeper had known who it was that sought shelter, or that the Lord was to be born that night, he would probably have found a place for them, but as it was Mary and Joseph were turned away. There was no room for them in the inn.

So it came to pass that Mary and Joseph found shelter in a lowly stable surrounded by innocent animals. Among these humble surroundings Mary "brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

And so Christ our Lord was born upon the earth in a very simple place. He was born in a stable, and placed in a manger. But this simplicity did not stop the angels from rejoicing and bringing the glad message to the shepherds. And it did not stop the shepherds from coming to see the Lord and believing in the wonderful miracle. Even though there was no room in the inn, there was still room in some people's hearts for the Lord to be born. The shepherds praised God for what they had seen, and the heavenly host of angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" (Luke 2:14).

Amen.