

Mary's Donkey

My name is Steve. I am a young donkey with a story to tell. That in one way is the most ordinary of stories in all the world. Yet a story that opens into the most profound experience.

Joseph brought me out from my dry warm stable. He told me he had chosen me because of my stoical behaviour. The reason was that Mary was heavily pregnant. She was carrying a special baby.

I thought all babies are special: aren't they?

What followed was ten days and 90 miles over harsh terrain. South along the flatlands by the River Jordan. Over the hills that surround Jerusalem. Onto Bethlehem.

Every hoof step made as firmly and smoothly as possible. Joseph walked by my side whispering words of confidence in my ear. He too was ensuring my hooves did not slip.



There were times I thought my legs would buckle under the weight of such a precious cargo.

No way was I going to allow Mary to feel she was burden to me.

I refused to give up. I would not let Mary know I was so very tired. For I am sure Mary was also very tired with the long dangerous and uncomfortable journey.

As we entered Bethlehem, I found strength that soon I would finally rest. Still holding my head high that I had almost completed my task, Joseph came back with the news, "No room."

We were running out of options when an Innkeeper offered his stable.

I started this journey coming out of one stable. And finished this journey entering another. Unlike my stable back home, this stable had no doors. Never mind I thought. The straw was a welcome luxury after the hard solid rocks. Now I could close my eyes and rest.

I was awoken. Not by any sound. But by the most beautiful sight. There was Mary's baby lying in His own bed of straw. The atmosphere so calm and full of warmth, even though we were chilled by being outside.

Who is this child? Whose coming into the world have I shared?

Searching for answers I only had to look at Mary and Joseph. My eyes saw their love as devoted parents. They sat in the silence watching the horizon. I turned my head to see what had transfixed them.

Together we watched the dawning of a new day.

Slowly the darkness was pushed away by a bright light. The such I have never seen.

Before us was a beautiful vision radiating sparks of pure, uncompromised joy.

Though I am no match for a stallion I began to understand. I, Steve, a mere donkey had been chosen to carry God's gift into the world.

God had shown me that in His eyes we are all equal, valued and loved by Him. That God comes to everyone. Even the small and vulnerable, even those who are regarded beasts of burden. Everyone can take part in Jesus' life.

Little did I know what was to come. I, the donkey who carried Mary who was carrying Jesus, into this suffering world would one day carry Jesus.

Imagine that. Little me being a part of both journeys that speak of Jesus, a King, entering humanity to show us what it means to live the right way up.



May we set our hearts on watching and waiting.

Like the sun in the morning sky,

The saviour of the world will dawn;

Like rain upon the meadows.

The Christ will come down upon us.

Facing disappointments, opposition, exhaustion, temptation, all the aspects that cause us to stumble, may we remember:

Emmanuel shall come to us all. Bringing gifts of love, hope and peace.

Our gift to God is carrying Christ's light all the way to the cross.

Rejoice. Rejoice.



Amen