

Apparently, donkeys in biblical times were different from the grey ones that we see today. They were beautiful, graceful and friendly animals with a reddish-brown coat. They carried heavy loads and were also used for ploughing and threshing. They were highly thought of and were a symbol of a person's wealth. At the time of Jesus in Bible lands horses were connected with war, so in peacetime kings rode on donkeys instead. The donkey represented humility and peace. A donkey that had not been used before was regarded as especially suitable for religious purposes.

This is a story told by a very special donkey.

*It was a hot day and I was tied up in the yard alongside my mother. Two men arrived and one of them began to untie me. I heard someone ask them what they were doing and they told him that their master needed me. Without any more argument I was led away. I was a bit afraid of being separated from my mother but they spoke kindly to me as we walked along.*

*They led me to a man who had a very kind face and was dressed all in white. He stroked me gently on my neck and his friends draped their cloaks on me and the man in white carefully climbed on to my back.*

*After travelling a short way, we came to the city gates. As we passed through, we were met by crowds of people shouting praises and singing. They sang 'Hosanna'. Some put their cloaks on the ground for me to walk on. Others cut branches from the palm trees and spread them in our path. It was wonderful. I knew I was carrying a very special man. I heard people calling out his name. We spent several hours walking through the streets. Everyone seemed so happy. They were praising him for healing the sick and for teaching them about God.*

*I did also notice several men in the crowd who did not seem so happy. I didn't like the way they were watching him. I'm sure they were planning to do something bad. I hoped they would not hurt him.*

*At the end of the procession the man in white slid gently from my back. He patted me kindly as if to thank me. In spite of the welcome the people had given him, he looked sad, as if he knew something bad was going to happen. The two men took me back home and tied me up again next to my mother. I could not wait to tell her all about it.*

*Days later I overheard some people in the yard talking. I could not believe what they were saying about the man I had carried. He had been captured and sent before the Roman Governor, who had ordered him to be crucified. I could not understand why this kind and gentle man had been put to death in such a way. I will never forget him and feel proud that I was able to carry him on his day of glory.*

The Donkey's Story, by Jan Edmunds