

If We Could Talk With the Animals

A Christmas Musical

by Sherry Crann CR 2010

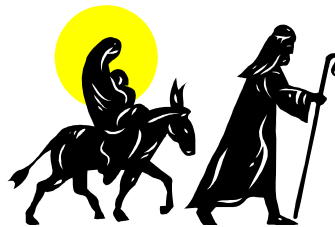
Well, it's the Christmas season once again, and the lights are all hung downtown, Christmas songs have been playing in the stores since before Thanksgiving, and there are even a few nativity scenes scattered about the landscape.

Most of us have probably heard the story of that first Christmas, perhaps even many times. Today we want to show you a different side of that story, a different point of view. We know that a lot of animals were present during the key events of this story - Mary's donkey, the camels and other animals that travelled with the magi, the sheep on the hills with the shepherds during that wondrous announcement, and the animals that were in the stable when Jesus was born. What if they could talk, and tell us what it was like to be right there? What if the donkey that Mary rode on to Bethlehem could tell you his version of that trip?

Donkey's Song

Sherry Crann

I'm not fast, but I'm sure footed
Racing's fun, but I'm no good at
things like that.
But I'm carrying a special lady,
she is going to soon have a baby.
Clip clop clip clop



Joseph goes in front
he hurries never stopping;
Mary rides.
He wants to get there so Mary can rest.
She smiles, trusting that he knows what is best.
Clip clop clip clop

I am tired - we're in the city.
There was no room - it's such a pity
Poor humans!
But the stable's warm, the hay looks tasty!
Joseph is still fretting - he's so hasty.
Chomp, chomp, chomp, chomp - Yum!

We know that Mary's little donkey wasn't the only travelling animal in this story. In the book of Matthew we learn about the Magi coming from the east in search of the new born king. Many nativity scenes show *three* wise men with *three* camels. That's because there are *three* gifts listed in the Biblical account.

But Matthew does not tell us the exact number of magi, nor what exactly they rode. Most such caravans would have had many animals, with camels to bear the main burdens and horses for speed riding and comfort. What if we listened in on their conversation during their journey to find the newborn king?

Wise Camels and Horses

Music: John H. Hopkins Jr.

Arrangement and lyrics: Sherry Crann



Camels: We are royalty

Horses: But you have fleas!

Camels: They're royal too.

Horses: Don't make us laugh, please!

All: We're on a trip to make you flip -

We'll make it there soon with ease!

Oh star of wonder, star of night.
Star with royal beauty bright.
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to your perfect light!

Horses: What is this of following a star?

Camels: It's for a king, a new one afar.

Horses: How do you know how far we'll go?

Camels: We don't - we just follow the star!

All:

Oh star of wonder, star of night.
Star with royal beauty bright.
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to your perfect light!

Horses: What if we do not find this king?

Camels: Oh, we will - God promised this thing.

From long ago, the Wise Men know, the promise in scripture rings.

All:

Oh star of wonder, star of night.
Star with royal beauty bright.
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to your perfect light!

The magi rode quite a long way following the star. They went to the place any sane person would expect a new king to be born - they went to the capital city, Jerusalem and to Herod in his resplendent palace. But they didn't find a new baby there. While the magi were busy chatting with wily King Herod, the animals were probably holding their own conversations with the four-legged residents of the palace. For a guy like Herod, a smart-alecky cat seems a very likely palace pet...

Herod's Cat

Music: Michael Dodson

Arrangement and lyrics: Sherry Crann



I'm Herod's cat, and you should respect that
you old stinky camels and horses!
What is all this fuss? Find some new king you must?
Herod won't like that a bit!
We've no use for new kings nor smelly galoots,
now just go back outside and wipe off your hooves!
Herod will not like the news of this tyke!
So you'd better just scat! Take it straight from this cat
he will not be happy at all!

Why are you still here? I thought it was so clear
that you should pick up and go?
Herod's just lying because he is trying
to find just what you know!
He doesn't want to go and worship this king!
He really just wants to make your masters sing
So he can find where to do his next killing!
Though he feeds me so well, to you I will tell
his secret, he lies through his teeth!

Well the magi didn't find the new baby king at Herod's palace. They had to follow the star again - to Bethlehem. But there were some others who found out where this newborn King was at before the Magi. There was a group of shepherds - lowly shepherds - out in the fields the night this baby was born. And what do shepherds do? They tend sheep, of course.

Sheep aren't exactly the smartest animals. Just imagine if you were a sheep in the Judean hills, just minding your own business out in the pasture one night, maybe tucking into those last few nibbles before calling it a night and snuggling down to sleep. Even counting all their sheep brothers and sisters was not going to help them sleep this night...

Sheep in the Night

*music: Piotr Illytch Tchaikovsky, The Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy
Arrangement and lyrics: Sherry Crann*



Timid: Did you see that?

Clueless: See what?

Timid: Little light, shining bright - what a fright!

Clueless: Now it's getting big!

Timid: I don't like this!

Clueless: Like what?

Timid: All this light in the night isn't right. Now I'm getting scared!

Clueless: I hear something, sounds like singing

Timid: or bells ringing

Clueless: What a sound!

Timid: Oh I'm scared! Don't like this light, don't like this sound! I do not!

Clueless: Open your eyes! Oh see the skies! Angels around!

Timid: I won't!

Timid: Close my eyes!

Clueless: See the skies!

Timid: I don't want to!

Clueless: Amazing!

(angels appear, speaking to the shepherds)

Timid: Did you hear him?

Clueless: What did he say?

Timid: He said that a baby savior was born!

Clueless: Where is this baby supposed to be?

Timid: Didn't he say that we'd find him in a manger?

Clueless: Isn't that strange?

Timid: Yes, but that's just what the angel said just before he poofed!

Clueless: See the shepherds leaving to go find the baby!

ALL: Let's go too!

So a few brave sheep bustled off after their shepherds, looking for the Savior of the world. The shepherds followed the directions that came straight from the angels - they went to find a "baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

Where do you find a manger? Since mangers are what cows and other livestock eat from, well, you'd find a manger in a barn or stable somewhere. And since a manger is where the animals find their food, they weren't quite sure what to make of the tiny bundle they found there when they went looking for supper that night...

Sleepy Little Stranger

Sherry Crann

Calf: What's that lying in the manger?

Cow: It's a sleepy little stranger!

Goat: What's he doing lying here though?

Donkey: He had nowhere else to go.

Calf: He's so small - poor thing - he has no fur!

Cat: Makes me cold to see him Brrrrr- rrrrrr!

Horse: Hush! You'll wake him up with all your noise!

Cow: All you rowdy little boys.

Goat: I hear someone coming - what is this?

Calf: Did you see his Mom give him a kiss?

Donkey: Look! It's shepherds coming - see them kneel?

Cat: Wonder what it is they feel.

Cow: What's all this? Angels were singing?

Sheep: What was that? My ears are ringing!

Horse: We knew something here was very odd -

All: This Baby is the Son of God.

This Baby is the Son of God.





This baby.

This tiny, frail little baby.

The baby that Magi travelled many leagues to see and worship.

This tiny infant that the host of heaven proclaimed to shepherds.

Emmanuel - God with us.

The Promise that had echoed through the scriptures from the time the first man and woman sinned. This paradox of God's love for us - the One who was to save us from our sins and would conquer death and the grave, came as a tiny, fragile baby in a smelly stable.

He would grow up in order to die for us, so that we can be the perfected children of God, while He forever retains the scars of that purchase.

Sometimes we understand God's ways no better than the animals understand the ways of humans. But just because we may not understand fully doesn't make God's love for us any less. The Bible tells us that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Even though we may not comprehend the vastness of God's love for us, He still loves us.

He loves us enough that He came as the baby we celebrate at Christmas.

He loves us enough that He died for us as the Passover fulfillment.

And He loves us enough to have risen again at Easter to conquer death, so that we can live forever with Him.

This is the meaning of Christmas. May you know the joy and peace of knowing Jesus this season, too.