

**When Joseph went to Bethlehem,
I think he took great care to
place his tools and close his
shop and leave no shavings
there. He urged the donkey
forward then, with Mary on its
back, and carried bread and
goat cheese in a little linen sack.**

**I think there at the busy inn that
he was meek and mild and
awed to be the guardian of
Mary's sacred child. Perhaps all
through the chilly hours he
smoothed the swaddling bands,
and Jesus felt the quiet strength
of Joseph's gentle hands.**

**And close beside the
manger bed, he dimmed
the lantern's light and
held the little Jesus close
upon that holy night.**