

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.**

