

## AS SHEPHERDS WATCHED

"Me-eh-eh, JIsaiahh! Look up at that there light in the sky. What is it, do we think?"

"Ba-a-ah! Probably some kind of bright star. That's what we think."

"Me-eh, that's what we think. We think it's some kind of bright star."

Chomp chomp, munch munch.

"Oh look out, Rehoboam, we think there might be a wolf prowling about out there. Quick over this way, come on all of us! All of us, Joseph, we said!"

"Aa-ah, much safer over here. No, it wasn't a wolf, was it, just the shadow of the clouds? Well, never mind, can't be too careful, e-eh?"

"Ba-a-ah, quite right, Neh-aam-ah, quite right. Come on, there's some good grass over here, let's all give it a try."

Munch munch, chomp.

"Me-eh, Nehemiah, that bright star's getting a bit brighter, don't we think? And it seems to be moving a bit. Stars don't supposed to do that, do they? What we think, boys?"

"Ba-a-ah! Tricky one, there, JIsaiahh. Seems to be moving all right, looks like it's right above us. Shepherds are scared, too. We don't like that, do we, when the shepherds get scared? They get scared when there's wolves about or soldiers."

"Wolves? Wolf! wolf! Quick, run everyone, over this way!"

"No, not this way, that way!"

"No, not that way, over there where the stream is. Oh! oh! oh!"

Stampede, chomp, munch munch.

"Funny things stars, don't we think, Judith? Floating about up there, all by themselves. I heard someone say there was a Milky Way up there, too."

"Me-eh, well, that's just plain daft talk, Nehemiah. Milk, that comes from cows and cows can't fly. Have we seen cows fly?"

"No, we haven't. No, by no means, not at all, cows don't fly, daft talk. Not woolly enough."

"Ba-a-ah-aa, look, Rehoboam, there something else in the sky now, oh what is it, it's moving! Looks like a big shiny woman, what do we think it is, oh I feel all squishy inside!"

"Mee-eh, watch where you're peeing, Isaiah, just watch out, meh?"

"Ba-a-ah! But look, there's a shiny person just landed next to the shepherds, oh what is happening, oh should we go and see? Come on, everyone, over this way, towards the shepherds, quietly now in case they see us creeping up on them. Oh, would we just look at that, there's that Dolly-sheep been with them all the time, getting warm by the fire. Just who does she think she is; not a proper sheep, that's all we can say."

"Me-eh, but we know she's not feeling well and the shepherds always like to keep us near them if we're sick. Oh look, the shepherds have fallen down on the ground. Wonder if they're eating grass like us?"

"Quiet, Obadiah, listen – that shiny person's saying something to the shepherds. Do not be afraid, she's saying, great joy, she's saying. Must mean lots of grass for us, what do we think then?"

"Lots of grass? We like lots of grass, green, juicy, oh just the thing!"

"I've found some over here. And Isaiah hasn't peed on it yet, so it's still nice and sweet."

Chomp chomp, munch munch.

"Ba-a-ah-Ba-a-ah! Listen, the shiny person said something about a Messiah. What's that, a messy-ah? – must have meant Isaiah, what do we think?"

"Oh yes, Messiah, messy Isaiah, always pees and poops where he's not wanted. That's what we think, all of us. Messy Isaiah, messy Isaiah!"

"Me-eh, look there's a whole flock of them up in the sky now, all singing. Wonder what they want? See, up there among the stars, lots of them. Peace on Earth, they're singing."

"Ba-a-ah! Peace on Earth means lots of grass. Good thing too, that's what we think. Just as long as Isaiah doesn't get in the middle of it. Pees on Earth, more likely, me-eh-eh-eh!"

"Leave it out, you lot. Anyway, look, the shepherds are off somewhere. He-y-eh! You can't just leave us here! Come back! What happens if a wolf comes along?!"

"Wolf? Wolf! Oh no, the wolf's back, quick over here; no, over here..."