

EASTER ASSEMBLY 4a:

The Donkey's Story (Story Version)

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- THEMES: Palm Sunday / Bravery
- AIM: To learn about Palm Sunday and to learn about overcoming our fears when trying something new
- STRUCTURE: This assembly is designed to be delivered by one adult. It consists of a discussion introduction, a story, summary and prayer. A scripted version of the same assembly, which can be performed by a class of children, is also included below.
- TEXT KEY: Normal text = notes and ideas. *Italic text = text that can be read straight out.*
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SONG 1: Take Jesus To Jerusalem

INTRO: *The Sunday before Easter is known as Palm Sunday. This is the day when Christians remember how Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. As he rode, a large crowd of people welcomed him by waving palm branches in the air and shouting 'hosanna', which means 'save us'. Here's the story of how Jesus rode into Jerusalem from a different viewpoint... this is 'The Donkey's Story'!*

STORY: The Donkey's Story

It was a hot day in Bethany, which was a small village on the way to Jerusalem. On the road next to the market stood a mother donkey and next to her was her young son who was simply called Little Donkey.

Little Donkey was a colt who was close to his first birthday. He liked to play with his older brothers and sisters, he liked to trot around the market, and he loved it when passers-by ruffled his head, patted him and gave him nice things to eat, saying things like, 'what a cute donkey'. He'd smile back and give them a loud 'EE-AW', which always seemed to make people chuckle.

But now that Little Donkey was nearly one, he was starting to feel very nervous. The problem was that very soon Little Donkey would have to let a person ride him for the very first time.

"Mummy?" asked Little Donkey.

"Yes?" his mum replied.

"You know how very soon I'm going to have to try to carry someone on my back for the first time? Well, what if I'm not strong enough?" Little Donkey asked nervously.

"Don't worry, dear," she replied comfortingly, "you're already strong enough to carry someone."

"But what if I don't like it? What if I get scared or sore?" Little Donkey asked with a small tear in his eye.

"There, there little one," his mum said gently, "the first time you let someone ride you, I'll be there with you all the way. That's the donkey way. That's how it's been done for centuries."

Little Donkey still felt unsure, but he was starting to feel a little better. "Mummy, can you remember the first time you were ridden?"

"I can indeed, and I can remember being scared and talking to my mum about it just like we're talking now. Your grandmother told me how when she was young, she'd taken a young lady called Mary all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. That's around eighty miles!"

"WOW! Eighty miles?" said Little Donkey in amazement.

"Then," Little Donkey's mother continued, "she took Mary and her husband, Joseph and their new baby Jesus, all the way to Egypt and then all the way back to Nazareth again."

"EGYPT? WOOOAAAH! That must be a thousand, million miles away?" said Little Donkey sounding really impressed. "I bet she was very sore after that?"

"Well, that's the important thing," said his mother as she edged closer to Little Donkey, "your grandmother said she didn't feel sore or tired at all. In fact, she said she loved it. You see God made creatures like donkeys, horses and camels to be able to carry people without feeling sore. Anyway, then it was my turn to let someone ride me."

"Who was it mummy? Who rode you?" asked Little Donkey excitedly.

"It was Jesus," she answered, "he was about eleven years old and I was about your age. I let him ride me all the way from Nazareth to Jerusalem. That's the big city along the road."

"And did you like it?" asked Little Donkey curiously.

"Absolutely!" she said with a big smile, "it didn't hurt at all and Jesus was very kind to me. After we got back to Nazareth, I helped Jesus and his dad all the time. They were carpenters and they always had new heavy pieces of furniture that they'd made. I had to carry the furniture for them when they delivered it to their customers. Then after many years, Jesus stopped being a carpenter and started teaching everyone about God. He gave me to our new master, but said that one day, when I had a child of my own, he'd need me again."

WHAT'S IN THE REST OF THIS ASSEMBLY?

1. The remainder of this story (around another two pages in length)
2. It suggests then singing a further song: 'Ho-San-Ho'
3. It then concludes with a summary and a prayer.