

EASTER IN PHILIPPI



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Once a long time ago, nearly two thousand years ago, in a town named Thyatira, near the coastline of the Aegean Sea, there lived a small Greek girl named Philippa. Philippa's father was dead, but her mother you may have heard of. Her name was Lydia, and she sold purple dye to people who wished to make beautiful things out of purple: bright curtains for hanging, fine linens for wearing, and even rich robes for foreign kings.

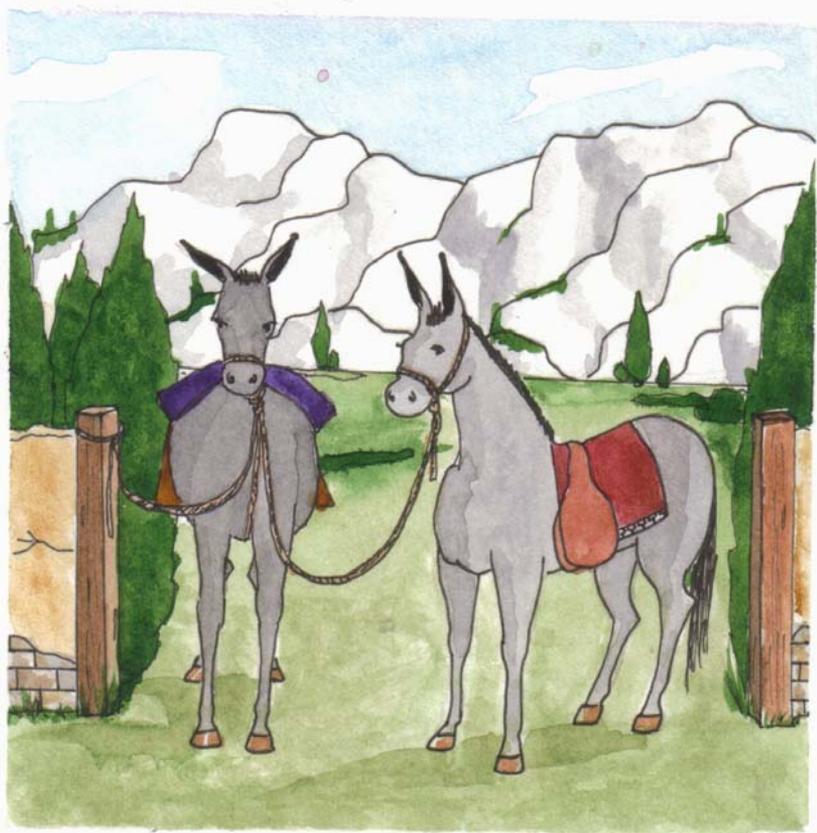


Philippa was only seven years old, but she knew how to mix the purple dye, and she knew how to dip cloths into it, once, twice, and three times, and how to spread them on a low rack for drying. There are three other important things you must know about Philippa: The first two things are that she liked to think and she liked the sea. The third is that she was a Christian, which means “follower of Christ,” and had been ever since she was baptized by the Apostle Paul at the age of three.

Now, as I already mentioned, Philippa liked the sea, which is why, when her mother told her they were to go on a sea voyage to Philippi, she was so pleased that she went outside by herself, and sat down under an olive tree, and thought for a whole hour. Early the next morning they set out, taking only three skeins of fine purple silk for gifts, for this was not to be a selling or a buying trip, but a holiday. The skeins they roped on the back of their old donkey, Alexander, and Philippa sat in the front of them. Lydia rode on the back of Alexander's brother, Demetrius. I have said that Thyatira was not far from the sea,



so now I must explain that back in Philippa's day it could take a long time to travel what you would think was a very short distance. Besides, although ships can be fast, donkeys can be quite slow. For this reason they needed to allow many days for traveling to Philippi, because they wanted to arrive in time to celebrate Easter with their friends. Now, I should also tell you that Easter used to be the most wonderful holiday of all the year. The whole church—I mean, of course, all those people who like philippa had been baptized as followers of Christ—celebrated it together, and they loved it so much that they looked forward to it all year long, like you do to Christmas. Their Easter was different from your Christmas, though.



We believe in one holy, catholic, and Apostolic church....

Do your children imagine what it might have been like to be a Christian in past ages. Do they wonder what it was like to worship with the saints at the time of the crusades? This story is the first in a planned series of stories about the catholic and apostolic church which we are part of. We hope this is the message we get across, but mostly we hope you and your children enjoy these books.

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