



It was a long, arduous 70-80 mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. It would be hard even if one wasn't 9 months pregnant!

Imagine trying to get comfortable on the hard ground at night, your back aching from being jolted by a donkey all day. Days traveling in the hot sun with all those garment wraps yet trying to keep warm as the temperatures plummeted in the cold desert night!

She had no choice, die in the desert or take the next dirty, dusty breath and painful step. Sound familiar grieving mom?

I bet the dream of a full nights sleep in soft warm bed at an Inn someday kept her moving forward only to have her hopes dashed upon arrival. Doors slammed in her face. Rejection, continued hurt, dashed expectations!

So many dreams and expectations along our painful grief journeys! Hoping to find some comfort and end to the pain only to be disappointed!

Like Christmas there were parties going on in Jerusalem that night, joyous reunions with relatives not seen in a long time, drinking, noise and laughter. Happy sounds from the warm interior of the buildings.

That's not where God led her. He knew Mary would find her peace in a quiet, hay strewn manger surrounded by simple, curious animals.

The birth of the baby, the Prince of Peace, changed everything for Mary!

May God lead you, grieving mother, to the simple this season to the manger where the Prince of Peace lies.