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## “Away in a Manger”



CAROLE SYDNOR



NEPAL

*“Away in a manger no crib for a bed...*

As I sing or hear this Christmas carol, I realize these words have taken on a different meaning for me. I am reminded of a landless, homeless couple in Nepal whose story I heard during my last trip there in October.

The Multipurpose Community Development Service, the social outreach arm of the Nepal Baptist Church Council, presented for approval a community development reconstruction

budget for this project to give help to a village on the outside ridge of the Kathmandu Valley. Included in the project is a home for this couple.

This is the story I heard:

*"This landless, homeless man is 80 years old and his wife is 76. They were living with another villager's family before the earthquake in April, 2015. That family's house was completely destroyed. Some relatives then took this couple to their home. But, when the couple's little amount of money and goods were completely finished, they were chased away, out of the relative's house. Now they live near the village river under one bundle of four corrugated galvanized iron sheets, given by MCDS, as their temporary shelter. The leaders of MDCS requested the local government to provide some public land. The government official agreed to give a small amount of land on which this project would be able to build this elderly couple a simple house."*

When this project, supported by IM's Nepal Earthquake Relief Fund, is completed this couple will have a place to live: the land – given by the local government and a simple house – 19 feet by 14 feet – made by MCDS.

And so I continue singing these words with a new understanding in my heart.

*... the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.*

*The stars in the sky looked down from the sky,*

*the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay."*

May this story of hope bring you a new hope as we celebrate our Lord's birth.

*Singing with hope, Carole*