

MINISTERS FORUM NEWSLETTER

INFORMATION MINISTERS CAN USE SEASON OF HIS TRIUMPHANT ENTRY

Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19
Zechariah 9:9, Genesis 22:3;



(Genesis 22:3
Abraham got up early in the morning to saddle his donkey, a small act, yet one of obedience to the Lord in order to offer Isaac up to God).

Jacob sent twenty female donkeys and ten donkey foals as a portion of his large and costly gift to appease his brother Esau (Genesis 32:5).

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Greetings
pg.1
Season of His
Triumphant
Entry

**"Where there
is no VISION,
the people
perish"**



Greetings Ministers, I know by now you are either laughing or upset. Nevertheless I do hope that after you have read this month's newsletter you will be inspired. As you know this is the time of year that we celebrate Easter and a noted element of Easter is 'Palms'- the waving of palms. At this time of year I always think about this animal who is mostly used for carrying load and who has come to be commonly called 'the beast of burden'.

Interestingly of all the elegant and beautiful animals the Lord Jesus Christ chose the donkey to transport him on an important journey and we are yet to know why. Some of you may ask the question why of all the other animals our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ chose the back of this 'lack luster' animal to **sit on** to make His triumphant entry into Jerusalem. I know that over the years you have come to realize that Jesus will chose what and whomever He will to do whatever he wants done whenever and wherever. He has made a choice that we maybe would not have made but He can install capacity and capability in anyone to accomplish whatever is His purpose – simply, He does what is NECESSARY. The same is true of whatever you will allow Him to take you through to your destiny (painful or not); look at what He took Joseph through to get to his Divine Destiny.

The Transporter of the King in His Triumphant Entry

According to Animal expert Amber Barnes Jesus' Transporter – the Donkey is smart, funny, sociable, protective and makes great companion animals. They are well known as the original beasts of burden in many countries of the world, and in



many situations they are used as the preferred mode of transport and are more known as all terrain animals than horses and are in fact highly intelligent animals. Despite popular misconception a donkey is stronger than a horse of the same size and has an incredible memory – They can also live beyond fifty (50) years old and remain very strong.

According to this Animal expert (Amber Barnes):

- *Donkeys are not easily startled (unlike horses) and have a keen sense of curiosity.*
 - *They have a reputation for stubbornness but this is due to their highly developed sense of self preservation.*
 - *It is difficult to force or frighten a donkey into doing something it sees as contrary to its own best interest or safety.*
 - *Donkeys are more independent in their thinking than horses and will reason; and then make decisions based on their safety.*
 - *Training a donkey relies upon showing him or her, by words and action, that they can trust you to protect them from harm.*
 - *They learn what it is we want them to do if we take time to show them.*
 - *Donkeys originate from desert areas of the earth and is able to hear the call of another donkey 60 miles away,*
 - *They have far larger ears than horses which help keep them cool.*
 - *Donkeys utilize 95% of what they eat (which means their manure is not a very good fertilizer for land). Their digestive system can break down inedible vegetation and extract moisture from food more efficiently.*
 - *In the wild the lead donkey would stay to ward off an attack by a wolf or other predators in order to allow the rest of the herd to escape to safety.*
 - *Donkeys are often a lifeline to families in many regions of the world helping with water, wood fuel collection, land cultivation and transportation of produce to market.*
 - *Donkeys are used as guard animals for cattle, sheep and goats since they have a natural aversion to canines and will keep them away from a flock.*
 - *Donkeys are often fielded with horses due to the perceived calming effect they have on nervous horses; the foal will often turn to the donkey for support after it has left its mother.*
- <http://www.habitatforhorses.org/interesting-donkey-facts/>

The Triumphal Entry

There is no wonder therefore why Jesus chose this animal for His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what we know as Palm Sunday, the Sunday before the crucifixion (John 12:1, 12). On that day, Jesus rode on the back of a borrowed donkey's colt, one that had never been ridden before. *The disciples spread their cloaks on the donkey for Jesus to sit on, and the multitudes came out to welcome Him, laying before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees.* The people hailed and praised Him as the "King who comes in the name of the Lord" as He rode to the temple, where He taught the people, healed them, and drove out the money-changers and merchants who had made His Father's house a "den of robbers" (Mark 11:17).



The story of the triumphal entry is one of the few incidents in the life of Jesus which appears in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19). Putting the four (4) accounts together, it becomes clear that the Triumphal entry was a significant event, not only to the people of Jesus' day, but to Christians throughout history. We celebrate Palm Sunday to remember that momentous occasion.

Jesus' purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Matthew says that the *King coming on the foal of a donkey was an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*

The spreading of cloaks was an act of homage for royalty (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus was openly declaring to the people that He was their King and the Messiah they had been waiting for.

What should believers learn about Jesus and the characteristics of the donkey?

The story of the triumphal entry is one of contrasts, and those contrasts contain applications to believers. It is the story of the *King who came as a lowly servant on a donkey, not a prancing steed* (large hooped domestic animal) *not in royal robes, but on the clothes of the poor and humble.*

Jesus Christ comes not to conquer by force as earthly kings but by love, grace, mercy, and His own sacrifice for His people. *His is not a kingdom of armies and splendor but of lowliness and servant-hood.*

Throughout the Bible... *we find donkeys serving behind the scenes and helping where needed. Even to this day, donkeys are considered reliable helpers, surefooted on mountain terrain, physically able to live in harsh environments and very strong burden carriers. In Bible times, donkeys were also a symbol of hard work, peace and at times, wealth, while, horses were the sign of wealth, war, power and the strength of a military force.*

It is interesting to read that God commanded the Israelites not to gather horses unto their nation or to go to Egypt for them (**Deuteronomy 17:16**—for their good. Israel was unique among the nations as they had the great Lord Jehovah to fight their battles. The Lord did not desire His nation Israel to trust in horses and chariots, as did Egypt, nor to turn to worshipping them, as did happen with the wicked kings of Judah in **2 Kings 23:11**. However, we find that the Lord provided His people with the donkey who was the real "work horse" and better suited to represent and assist in the life the Lord desired the Israelites to live.



In the book of Numbers 22 and 23 we read where Balaam was hired by the enemies of Israel to pronounce a curse upon the entire nation against the Lord's commandment.. Balaam accepted the job and travelled by donkey to the place the Israelites were camped.

Balaam's disobedience angered God and He sent his angel to stand in the path that Balaam was travelling as '*adversary against him*' The Bible tells us in Numbers 22:23 that the ass/donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his sword drawn in his hand and the ass turned aside out of the way and went into the field, in anger Balaam smote the ass to get it back on track. Balaam's donkey is the second and last in scripture (or otherwise) to speak audibly to a human enabled by the Lord.

Donkeys in the Bible and today—have served us well although many still treat this animal with scant regard. Many persons have a tendency to see Christians as just a donkey out there with not much to offer; similarly many ministers do not see some members as having the potential to do great things.

Come with me for a moment to the where Jesus saw the donkey - at the entrance of the city where two roads meet (a vantage point). The donkey had a reason for being at the corner of the road, in the same way God has a reason for you and every member being where you are. The donkey was chosen because a) it is a beast of burden; b.) it's created for service; c) it was ready and available to be used; d) it had capacity and capability.

Although the donkey was not then and now seen in a positive light it was strategically placed and available - as Jesus rode on the back of the donkey - Guess what! the donkey enjoyed everything that Jesus did: it walked on the clothes laid out for Jesus to walk on, it felt the breeze from the waving palms and it was in a pride of place and honour because the King of Kings used it - Jesus sat upon it! May we be like Christ's donkey, willing and set aside, patiently waiting for our Master's touch that we may fulfill the tasks ordained to be accomplished. May you as leaders and managers of God's business take time to understand the capacity and capabilities of each member of your church and strategically guide them in the work of the King.

Have a blessed Easter Season!

ANNOUNCEMENT

DOMESTIC & INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (FAMILY VIOLENCE)

SPECIAL INVITATION

to your church to attend the above-captioned workshop to be held at the *Jamaica Conference Centre* on **April 29, 2017* starting at 10 am. This workshop is being sponsored by FiWi Jamaica Project, UTech, funded by the USAID in collaboration with state and statutory entities.

As you are aware the above subject matters have been on the rise in Jamaica in recent years. You may also be aware that when incidents of Family violence occur one of the first places that hurting people go for help are churches; preliminary research has suggested that enough is not known or effort made by churches (in particular) and other Faith-based organizations to effectively assist those who seek help in Family Violence hence the need to have Faith based Organization equipped and informed to do so.

Workshop will provide information (handouts etc), lunch and assistance with transportation from strategic locations for those who might have difficulty getting to the Workshop.

Two other Workshops will be held in Central & Western Jamaica and you will be informed of the dates as soon as arrangements are completed.

***Note: NEW DATE**

For more information email:
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