

06.13.2010 (Sun)

Even the Ox and the Donkey Knows (Isa 1:3)

In today's scripture, it tells us that the ox knows his master, and the donkey knows his manger, or in other words, his place. The ox symbolizes faithfulness. The book of Ezekiel reveals to us that the image of this faithfulness is shown as a cherub. Eze 1:10 tells us that there was a creature with 4 faces, one of them being an ox, and this ox is later revealed to us as a cherub in Eze 10:14. These cherubim are what stood before the Garden of Eden, guarding the way to the tree of life (Gen 3:24).

God is enthroned between the cherubim (1 Sam 4:4). The Bible also tells us that God mounted the cherubim and flew, and He soared on the wings of the wind (1 Sam 4:4, Ps 18:10). The word "wind" in this verse in Hebrew is *ruah* meaning wind, spirit, breath. We must not forget that by receiving God's Spirit can we begin to do the ministry of life. And that is why those who have been given a trust must prove faithful and loyal (1 Cor 4:2).

What does Neh 9:8 tell us that God saw in Abraham to make a covenant with him? It says that God found his heart to be faithful to him! What kind of person does God seek? Ps 101:6 tells us: "*My eyes will be on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he whose walk is blameless will minister to me.*" He looks for one who, even with very little, is faithful (Lk 16:10-12). Serve God with all of your heart!

Mt 21:5 shows us that the donkey symbolizes humility. Those who can understand their surroundings are not arrogant. That is why when Jesus came to fulfill God's plan, he rode in on the foal of a donkey when he headed to the temple in Jerusalem. Because Jesus was humble he remained in his position of serving (Mt 11:29). In 1 Sam 10:2, it says that when Saul was looking for his father's lost donkeys, he found them near Rachel's tomb in a place called *Zelzah*.

*Zelzah* means *noon, or midday*. This illustrates to us that we must rid ourselves of darkness (like noon time) to become humble. The hour when there is no shadow, when there is only light, is *Jesus*. One of Jesus' disciples said, "But Rabbi, a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?" How did Jesus respond to this? He said, "*Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light* (Jn 11:8-10)."

It is the light of Jesus that completely rids man of ignorance and darkness (Jn 8:12, 1:1-4). Jesus was able to raise Lazarus, who had been dead for 3 days, because there was absolutely no darkness within the Lord. He who has any darkness within himself cannot save others who are confronted with darkness. Darkness with darkness is but one picture, one pattern, and one color. However, within that darkness, God said "*Let there be light!*" and so there came to be light of faithfulness and light of humility, and God saw that it was good (Gen 1:3-5).

Whether we're talking about the past or the present, why is it that our world is so chaotic? It is because we have forgotten humility. Within each country and within each neighborhood, it has become exceedingly difficult to find humble people. However, if we practice our faith properly, we become humble. Beloved friends, God saves and dwells within those who are humble (Isa 57:15), He sustains them (Ps 147:6), He gives them grace (Pr 3:34), He listens to their cry (Ps 10:17), and He gives them wisdom (Pr 11:2).

*The ox and donkey signify faithfulness and humility.* We must be faithful to the Word and stand humbly by it to prove that we know God. That is how we understand God. We understand by putting our faith into action. Unfortunately, before receiving the Holy Spirit, man needs to see to believe. Without seeing, they cannot believe. Jn 2:11 shows that even Jesus' disciples had to see the water turn into wine to put their faith in Jesus. Even the tree of knowledge of good and evil was first seen before it was eaten from (Gen 3:6). It is only the knowledge of good and evil when we act without faith.

Only by faith we see the tree of life. Thus, whatever you see, whatever you hear, do it by faith! The pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire were both one pillar (Ex 40:38). In Isa 61:3, who is called the oaks of righteousness? In Ps 92:12-15, who are the righteous that will flourish like a palm tree, grow like a cedar of Lebanon, planted to flourish in the house of the Lord, who will still bear fruit in old age and proclaim the Lord as upright? In Isa 5:7, who is called the garden of his delight?

Man is an understanding being. To be man is to have wisdom. It is only the knowledge of good and evil when we do not give our whole heart. This is because in true faith, there is action. Gen 2:17 tells us that God commanded man not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and because man did not live by this word, he ended up only in knowledge. 1 Cor 8:1 teaches us that knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. So, anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins (Jas 4:17).

Whether we live or die, we must do it for the Lord (Rom 14:8). Beloved friends, when we genuinely love God, He will give us wisdom. Understanding in the Lord will give us the Spirit of our Father, the life-giving to transform us. So, with the renewed strength that the Father gives us, continue to live faithfully and humbly by the Word and become victors in whatever task He has given to you!