

MCD Just Checking In 10/30/2007 **Dumb Donkeys or Divine Direction? (Pilgrims still in paradox)**

Psalm 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord... for I am a stranger (pilgrim) with You..."

John 13:7 "I What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this"

It was about three thousand years ago. The last judge, Samuel, was nearing the end of his journey. These were days of immense importance. God was about to transform twelve tribes into a kingdom. Meanwhile, miles away, a farmer's son was informed that his dad's donkeys had wandered off. (Probably not the first time! dumb donkeys! (bahar chamowirimí for you Hebrew scholars!))

Think about it Just what Saul needed.. a long, hard day ending with some stupid, wandering donkeys. He didn't lose them. It wasn't his fault. He had better things to do than to go wandering around the mountains looking for Rufus and Ramses. (OK, I know. I made that up.) But think about it. What could be more mundane, more frustrating, or more ordinary than donkey chasing?

God's ways are so cool. He delights to take "frustrating" and turn it into "fantastic". He uses "pointless" circumstances to make "His point". He shows the "accidental" to be the "providential". And He rarely gives any indication in the midst of the journey to tip us off about what He's really up to. As Vance Havner so aptly stated: *God labels most of life: "To be explained later."*

Jesus frequently alluded to the fact that He didn't expect His followers to understand the present.

Val and I just read this verse this morning: John 13:7 "I What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

Back to the wandering donkeys and the wandering donkey chasers. I absolutely love this story.

Act 1: "Hey Saul, your Dad's dumb donkeys wandered off. He wants you to go find them."

Acts 2: Mr. Big, tall and handsome who is clueless to impending kingship takes Mr. Sidekick and starts donkey chasing.

Acts 3: Donkeys are better at wandering than Saul and Sidekick are at finding. Saul figures after several days that the Old Man may be more concerned for his lost son than his lost donkeys. (One can only hope!)

Act 4: Mr. Sidekick knows about local prophet and thinks Mr. Prophet just may have insider info from God about lost donkeys.

(I'm serious! Mr. Sidekick actually thinks God's prophet sits around with prophetic visions about lost donkeys.

Did anybody see Saul's eyes roll? But hey, it's worth a try, eh?)

Problem: Mr. Big, tall and handsome is penniless. But no worries, cause Mr. Sidekick has a few coins left. Just enough to pay a prophet to find said lost beasts.

Acts 5: Locals just happen to know where Mr. Prophet just happens to be at that moment. And it just happens to be really close.

God just happened to have it all orchestrated so the lost donkeys (who were already back home in the barn!) would be the means to bring the king-to-be face to face with his God-appointed destiny. **Dumb donkeys? No! Divine Direction!**

Been chasing any dumb donkeys lately? like frustrating, seemingly useless distractions beyond your control? Are you tempted to trade your confidence in God's sovereignty for worry, fear or frustration? Be patient. Be obedient. Stay the course. God knows all about your situation and designed it for purposes that will bring Him great glory and you great good.

"Most of God's will is just doing the next thing that needs to be done with the right heart attitude." Elizabeth Elliot

For further study:

Acts 16:6-7 Trying to discover God's direction; nothing clear for weeks at a time! But God's timing and plan was perfect

Luke 2 God announces heaven's greatest news to a handful of insignificant shepherds while He bypasses every earthly king

Jonah Whales, winds, weeds and worms! . All a part of God's purpose to heal His wandering prophet of bitterness and resentment.

Ruth 2:3 Ruth just "happened" to walk into the field of Boaz

Esther 6:1 The king just happened to have insomnia! and the scribe just happened to read about the assassination plot! etc, etc

Phil 1:12-13 Paul Open doors behind closed doors... what seemed to be an obstacle was in reality an opportunity

"Lord, help me to see Your hand in the ordinary. Give me the grace to believe in Your sovereignty personally, not just teach it theoretically. So many times I toss my theology out the broken window of difficult circumstances. It is a lot easier to preach your Sovereign wisdom and grace to others than to embrace it in my own rebel heart. I look back and see your fingerprints on every page of my history. Give me a trusting heart that believes every page ahead of me bears the same fingerprints of Sovereign wisdom, love and grace. I am your servant. Lead me, lost donkeys and all, down the path You have chosen for me. In the Name of my Sovereign Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Remember, we love you and are praying for you continually. Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Adios, Ron & Val

We see The Invisible, embrace The Unapproachable, declare The Unexplainable, are changed by The Immutable, run after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts. This is the Pilgrim in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.