

He will ride again



By Peter McArthur

According to Scripture Jesus rides on a similar animal twice. The first recorded occasion was on a donkey (colt) as He entered Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-44). The second occasion will be on a white horse at the End of the Age (Rev 19:11-16). * —————>

No one had ever sat on that donkey/colt (Mark 11:2-7 and Luke 19:30) and it's quite likely that on His return the King of kings will also ride on an equine that's never yet been ridden. It's just speculation of course that I say this, but it would seem so appropriate that there's a white horse in the celestials that is solely reserved for one rider and one only, the King of kings and Lord of lords. A lovely and inspiring thought!

* Note that the rider on another white horse in Rev 6: 2 is NOT Jesus! The context of that passage makes it quite clear. That rider is a false messiah, in the spirit of antichrist. Some believers might also say Jesus "rode" (in Mary's womb) on another donkey heading for His birthplace at Bethlehem. The trouble with that is Scripture nowhere tells us how Joseph and Mary travelled; it may have been by donkey but we're not actually certain. It's more a tradition, a bit like there being three wise men when we're not actually told how many were present.

The first occasion we're looking at here is the so-called "Triumphal Entry" into Jerusalem when the crowd of His disciples, not just the general by-standers (Luke 19:37 & 39) accompanied Him with cries of "Hosanna". The second will be His next triumphant ride accompanied by the celestial armies, also on white horses (Rev 19:14). In both events He rides to His appointed place with His companions (disciples and armies) attending Him.

Much has been said of the donkey being an animal signifying that the rider came in peace, an ancient Middle East practice when a dignitary or leader entered a city with no hostile intent. However Jesus' main purpose was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy 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."**

If however the dignitary rode on a horse (particularly a white one) he was indicating he was coming as a victorious warrior to claim possession of the city. This of course neatly fits in with Jesus' second ride yet to occur.

As an interesting side note, when the victorious British General Edmund Allenby entered Jerusalem on 11 December 1917 after conquering the Turkish forces there, he deliberately dismounted his horse at the Jaffa Gate and chose to walk into the city. This sensitive symbolic gesture was in direct contrast to German Kaiser Wilhelm II, who when visiting the Holy Land in 1898, insisted on entering the Old City seated on his horse.



This December is the centenary of Allenby's victory. And quite amazingly that day in 1917 happened to be the eve of the Festival of Lights, **Hanukkah** (Hebrew for "dedication") which is the celebration of the liberation of Jerusalem by the Maccabees way back in 163 BC. Quite amazing how often prophetic connections fit so neatly together like a heavenly jigsaw!

There is evidence to suggest that Allenby was a Bible-believing Christian who understood prophetic scriptures. In June 1917 he was summoned to a meeting with the First Sea Lord, Admiral Fisher. Fisher's secretary records that Allenby was told he would be God's instrument for the deliverance of Jerusalem. Taken aback by Lord Fisher's words, he asked him to explain. Fisher then spent several hours discussing the Bible with Allenby, showing him prophecies concerning the rise of Great Britain, plus prophecies relating to the deliverance of Jerusalem in 1917. Fortified by this prophetic insight Allenby sailed for the Middle East, but exactly how much of it he believed at that moment is debatable.

However it seems Allenby often consulted the Bible for geographical military guidance for an army fighting in the Holy Land environment, and would frequently ask his staff officers to bow their heads and join him in praying for success in battle, with as few casualties as possible.

It also seems that Allenby came across the work of Bible scholar Dr. H. Aldersmith, who had been studying prophecies regarding Israel for many years. Aldersmith explained in his 1898 book "The Fullness of the Nations," that he believed Jerusalem would be liberated by Great Britain and its allies in the year 1917. Aldersmith had become convinced from reading Isaiah 31:4-5 that Britain would have a major part to play in the eventual restoration of Jerusalem. And so it seems, it was.

Now let's dig a little deeper and have a look at some interesting parallels between the First ride on the donkey, and the Second ride, on that White Horse.

Both rides feature a future event as part of the scenario. On the donkey the Messiah was riding to a sacrifice that awaited Him on the cross. On the white horse He will ride to execute judgment and to wage war – but righteously, not in an outburst of anger. Often in Scripture we find the two-fold sequence of sentencing and execution going together (Rev 19:11). The rides on both animals represent a future event of monumental significance in both the natural and spiritual realms, for both are connected to the shedding of blood. For that reason it can be very helpful to look closer at some background.

According to the ancient Babylonian Jewish Talmud (compiled about the year 500 AD) the subject of the Messiah coming on a donkey was connected to Daniel 7:13 (**"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him"**). The commentary says "If Israel behaved worthily, Messiah would come in the clouds of heaven; if otherwise, he would come humbly riding on a donkey."

This commentary was obviously a link to Zechariah 9:9 (**"Rejoice greatly Oh daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, Oh daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."**)

Another Talmudic commentary (Bereshith 56b) says, "If one sees a donkey in a dream, he may hope for salvation, as it says **'Behold your King comes to you; he is triumphant and victorious, lowly and riding upon a donkey.'**"

Jesus knew He would ride twice. He also knew there was a royal association to do with riding on a donkey because He wasn't the first king-in-waiting to ride on one. Long before Him Solomon had done the very same thing (David said... **"Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel."** 1 Kings 1:33-34)

Solomon's triumphal entry on the mule takes place as he goes to his enthronement. For Solomon this was not just a triumphal ride, but more a ride towards royal enthronement. Perhaps we have indulged church tradition far too much in calling Jesus' ride into Jerusalem "the Triumphant Entry". Scripture doesn't refer to it that way, but church tradition does. Maybe, just maybe, in the Messiah's mind He was thinking of it as a precursor to His royal enthronement! The Lord always sees things from the bigger, more panoramic viewpoint.

Also of interest is the possibility that the highly regarded she-donkeys of Old Testament days were white (or at least white/grey) and not reddish-brown as we tend to think of them today. In ancient times white donkeys were often associated with persons of high rank and great dignity. **"You who ride on white donkeys, who sit on rich carpets, and walk by the way"** (Judges 5:10).

We've also been inclined to think of donkeys as dumb animals, beasts of burden, stubborn and rebellious. However this wasn't how people of the Middle East necessarily thought. Reddish coloured donkeys were certainly used for domestic and business chores, but the more favoured white breed was used for ceremonial purposes. Being symbols of peace they were used by rulers when treaties were signed between warring factions.

"White she-donkeys as mentioned in Judges 5:10 are a highly significant as a symbol because it relates to the prophecy that Messiah will enter Jerusalem on a donkey. In this sense the word denoting the colour of the donkey is significant.

White donkeys are related to the meanings 'light', 'noon-light as something positive', 'ritual purity', following the derivation of their semantics from the root word, as well as from the biblical context. That is why they are the prototype of Messiah's donkey."

Click [here](#) for reference.

However in Biblical Typology the donkey is often a symbol for wisdom, service, consecration and discernment, hence the imagery of a donkey for the tribe of Issachar **"who understood the times"** (1 Chron 12:32). Sometimes we need to re-examine some of our modern ideas about what we think Scripture is actually representing.

In Jewish tradition the crushing of Balaam's foot against a wall (Numbers 22:22-35) is a metaphor indicating that the donkey on which he rode was YHWH's attempt to get Balaam to pay attention to His laws. The reason? So that Balaam might become aware of the presence of an angel and so heed God's word (verse 35). In this way Jewish thinking has the intriguing suggestion that a donkey can represent a medium by which messages from God will arrive. Note that Jesus the "Word of God" arrives at Jerusalem on a (white?) donkey!

Also in Jewish metaphysics a donkey is associated with seeking knowledge from Heaven, while a ox/heifer is associated with seeking knowledge solely from the earth realm; hence the prohibition of ploughing (meaning "to seek") with a mixture of an ox and donkey – Deut. 22:10. In this way donkeys stand for divine revelation, or at least carriers of God's messengers. All this suggests a connection between donkeys (or at least some chosen ones) and the voice of YHWH. However let's not make too much of this, because here we're bordering on the edge of abstruse (even kabalistic) insight – which needs very careful discernment indeed!

In the Old Testament we find that famous Biblical characters like Abraham and Moses used donkeys. **“So Moses took his wife and sons and mounted them on the donkey, and returned to the land of Egypt.”** (Exodus 4:20).

In Hebrew the definite article **ha** (*the*) in the above text supposedly infers there’s something exceptional about this particular donkey. According to some Jewish teaching, the donkey that Moses used was the very same one that Abraham saddled as he set off to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:3). It’s also believed the actual same donkey would be the one which the Messiah was to use to reveal himself according to Zechariah 9:9. Some have even stretched this to say that this identical animal was used by Mary to ride on her way to give birth to the Messiah. Further to all this speculation is the suggestion that this “reincarnated” donkey belonged to Jesus Himself and was kept aside especially for Him to ride into Jerusalem! How the mind of man can run wild with imaginative thinking.

So all this is a rather mystical way of looking at things, and it would require that THE same donkey be reincarnated as it were, four or five times! I’m no Hebrew scholar but I think the point to be made is that it’s not the actual same donkey born over and over (rather ridiculous), but that the breed of donkey is a collective symbol standing for consecration to a divine task. In that way the symbolism makes perfect sense Scripturally.

Now while it’s true we should seek out the treasures that are hidden as enigmas in Scripture (Prov 2:4), the balance to this is that the very essence of our God rests on the premise that there must always be something beyond man’s understanding, that “something” to which we can never quite attain by knowledge. Mysteries are important, and sometimes we just have to bend to them, and allow them their part in God’s overarching panorama. After all, this is what makes mysteries attractive and enthralling.

Now back to the White Horse and its Rider!

There are plenty of articles on the internet and many You-Tube videos all about this great event; but here I want to simply take a slightly different overview of it all – a kind of parallelism.

- ❖ We could say that this Second Coming on the white horse is really the true “Triumphal Entry”. Note that on Messiah’s first ride the crowds shouted “Hosanna” and on the second ride a great multitude will shout “Hallelujah” (Rev. 19:1 - the very first recorded time in the whole New Testament!).
- ❖ On His first mission to earth Jesus usually walked. On His second mission He will ride.
- ❖ Walking is a slow thing; but riding is a very swift thing indeed.
- ❖ Crucified in weakness He will return in glory.
- ❖ Eyes that once shed tears will then glow with fire.
- ❖ He once was a lamb led to the slaughter; He will then come as a Lion initiating a slaughter.
- ❖ His first ride was a plod; His second ride will be speedy.
- ❖ A relatively few followed Him on that first ride; a great host will follow Him on the second.
- ❖ He first rode on earth to go to heaven; He will ride again, but from heaven to the earth.
- ❖ His was uncrowned on the first ride; but next there shall be many diadems adorning His head.

Some more things to ponder over.

His accompanying riders will carry no weapon to wage war, for from His mouth comes the only needed weapon, a sharp sword to strike at the nations. His robe is coloured by blood, yet the saints who ride with Him have “clean” robes (Rev 19:14). There is no need for them to wear blood-dipped robes or carry weapons. He and only He is marked by that blood, and only He needs the one vital weapon!

During His first ride He was called the “**king who came in the NAME of the Lord**” (Luke 19:38). On His second there is a NAME known only to Him (Rev 19:13). Interestingly enough, John says he “saw” a name written when heaven opened up, but yet could neither decipher nor understand it! I love how Scripture interplays with Scripture like this.

If you think about it, the “name” is perhaps not a name as such, but rather a set of divine attributes mentioned three times - “**Faithful and True**” (19:11), then “**The Word of God**” (verse 13), and “**King of kings and Lord of lords**” (verse 16). Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if His Name was somehow a spiritual combination of these three divine attributes?

Whatever it is, this unknown name seems to suggest there are some things that are so profound about the Rider, it's quite unfathomable to us – or at least until the event itself transpires.

So to conclude. When things will have seemed to reach their very lowest point, the Lord Jesus shall appear visibly from heaven to put an end to the whole course of the world and to Satan's scheming. Powerful natural phenomena shall accompany all this, both to testify to God's dominance, and also to capture mankind's attention. It will be a time of massive natural and spiritual upheaval. But amongst all this the glorious One will then establish His kingdom – and He shall reign!

It's been said that “***each of us must walk in the light we already have***”. So brothers and sisters let us be alert, watching over our souls, and make ourselves ready for His ride! Indeed, the Day hastens.

Blessings in the Messiah,

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