

## On the way to Calvary- Hilary McDowell

### Week 4

#### Monday - First Things First

##### ***Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King***

*After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"*

*Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"*

*They replied, "The Lord needs it."*

*They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.*

*Luke 19:28-35 (NIV)*

The donkey had to go. Believe me, far as she was concerned, *the donkey had to go!* She determined that this would be the first things she would try to use to change the situation for the Master - if only to get it out of her bedroom.

Dream or no dream, it really had no business being there, she reckoned.

It was a real struggle for Tracy to haul the donkey out of her house. It had never been ridden and had a mind of its own. In her dream the scenery changed and she and the donkey were making slow progress along an ancient street in glorious non-cooperation. Out of frustration she began muttering angrily to the animal as they went. 'Stubborn? That's not the word for you! Do you have to be such a typical ass? Why did he have to choose an unbroken colt, anyway? Surely a well-ridden camel would be easier to borrow, or a horse. Yes, it should have been a horse.'

Before she realised it, the Master was standing before her, a wry smile on his face, his hand outstretched to take the chain of belts she was using to pull the animal along. In her dream she couldn't even focus upon Jesus but only struggled with the donkey. 'Here you are,' she grumbled. 'This is a big mistake, Lord, really it is. A camel would be trained; a horse would at least have a saddle. Then, as if inspired, she broke into a eulogy about horses. How comfortable they were to ride, how obedient (in comparison to a donkey), how much more dignified, with so much more status afforded to them, faster too and more graceful - in fact )she reckoned) fir for a king.

The look on his face made her stop talking. It was one of wisdom and sadness, of gentleness and humour, and she even thought she saw a twinkle in his eye at her protestations.

In an instant a book lay open in the palms of her hands and the dream had taken him from her view. She stared down at the Bible in her hands, opened at Zechariah 9:9, and read, 'Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass.'

So nothing else would have done, Lord, she thought to herself - not if it was to fulfil the prophecy. Besides, a horse is associated with war and you are a prince of peace. For a few seconds she felt ashamed at her own stupidity, but not for long, because just behind her right ear a donkey was braying loudly. 'Oh no, not you again!' she muttered under her breath swinging round to see DC grinning broadly as he led the donkey towards her.

'No, Tracy,' he replied, 'it's not the same one, but would you ride it? At home, at work, at leisure, could you take the way of humility, walking paths of peace when all around are in conflict? Choose now, Trav. Is it to be a pattern of TV soap operas you choose to follow, or the example of your Lord and Saviour? It's a pride thing, Trav. Can you take control of yours?'

She wasn't sure whom she was happiest to be rid of at that point, DC or the stubborn ass, but finding herself back in her bedroom again she knelt in prayer to her Master.

*Dear Lord,*

*How many faces does pride wear? How many does it manufacture for its existence? And the wounds hurt so badly when it is attacked. It weaves a cloak of assumed righteousness about itself when anger summons it to the fray, and hides in caverns of isolation when failure tarnishes its metal. The monster of fear will enlist its patronage rather than submit to love. It straddles the twin hills of prejudice and intolerance, and it makes itself taller than those who might dare to challenge its position, and it makes such children of us when our adult toys are taken by another.*

*Pride is the fruit that Eve just had to eat, rather than trusting her loving creator that all would be well and believing that he would not have placed her in a garden that was second best to anything in al creation.*

*Please train me in the art, the grace and the growing steps of obedience that will one day make you proud of me. Amen.*