

# The Lord Hath Need of Them

## Clairemont SDA Church

### Sermon by: Pastor John Anderson

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Here's a question to consider. Think about it for a minute. What do a colt, Moses, Samuel and you have in common? The answer is in the title of the sermon, "The Lord hath need of them." Can we repeat that phrase together? "The Lord hath need of them."

For some period of time an unnamed man nourished a donkey, using it as a helper in his work, treating it as his own. That donkey eventually gave birth to a foal, a colt which probably was looked upon as a family pet. No doubt the children of this anonymous man loved to go out and stroke the forehead of this young colt and hand-feed it straw, watching it grow stronger and stronger.

But then a spring day came, a certain Sunday, when two men came to the house where this man lived and made a request. It wasn't lengthy or complicated. It wasn't really a request; they acted and then explained when asked why they were releasing the donkey and her foal and taking them away. It was the Sunday before Crucifixion Friday, and Christ was about to ride into Jerusalem the way that kings had entered the capital in ancient times. We refer to it as the "triumphal entry," or as "palm Sunday," because people cut palm fronds down and waved them as a sign of victory.

"And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, 'Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, "The Lord hath need of them."'" Matthew 21:1-3, KJV

I suppose that we should give a moment's reflection to the phrase, "The Lord hath *need* of them." The Lord, the Creator God, has a "need"? Is that true? How could that be? He's omnipotent! He speaks and galaxies appear! In Psalm 50 God says, "Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof." Psalm 50:10, 12. So how could it be true that God had *need* of this colt? But

it is true, at least in the sense that God invites us to be a part of His kingdom and share in its activity. On occasion, the things He gives to us He asks us to let Him use. Yes, He could have ridden a chariot of fire. He could have been borne by a palanquin lifted by mighty angels. But He rode a colt. A borrowed colt. A colt which He “needed” for that time and place.

It was similar to the borrowed crib in which He was born and the borrowed grave in which He was buried. “The Lord hath need of them” could as rightly been applied to these and many other things, such as the boat which became the floating rostrum from which He preached to those on the shore of Galilee; the loaves and fishes that fed the multitude.

How long that colt lived we’re not told, nor are we told anything more about its owner. But we can rest assured that the thought of his animal being the one to carry the blessed Messiah that Sunday was a blessing to that man forever after. “He used my colt!” I’m sure he told his friends. What a blessing would have been lost if he had resisted the opportunity to lend to the Lord what belonged to him. “Who wants my animals? I don’t know the Lord. Get someone else’s animals.” How tragic that would have been! It was a great privilege to allow the Lord to use what was his for His purpose!

“The Lord hath need of them” applies not just to things, but to people as well. While Israel sojourned in Egypt a young boy was born. Because the children of Israel had multiplied so greatly and posed a threat, the king had commanded that all male babies be thrown into the River Nile, with the intent that they would be destroyed. This edict Jochabed dutifully obeyed. She put little Moses into the Nile; in a specially prepared water-proofed basket that she had made.

Older sister Miriam was commissioned to guard the spot, and when the queen came to the river and found the baby, Miriam was quick to offer the services of a Hebrew nurse—Moses’ mother, of course! So for about 12 years Jochabed received wages as she did her best to instill in her boy the principles of righteousness, knowing that the day would come when he would be removed from her home. “The Lord hath need of him.” Moses served God in the lavish court of Pharaoh early in his life as well as in the blasted wilderness of Sinai toward the end of his life.

A few centuries later He needed Samuel to be a priest, judge and a prophet to Israel, just before Saul became Israel’s first king.

Hannah had not been blessed with children and it tortured her soul. One day while praying in the tabernacle, it was told to her that God had heard her prayer and that she would bear a son. She raised her son with the prospect that he was to be dedicated to God's service. After a few short years under his mother's wing, the day came when she knew it was time. "The Lord hath need of him." The Holy Spirit spoke to her heart. As much as she might have enjoyed watching young Samuel grow up by her side, she knew that he had been on loan to her, and a higher calling awaited. She willingly complied.

"The Lord hath need of them." Whether it was a colt, a boat, some bread, some fish, a crib or a grave, or whether it was people like Moses and Samuel, the Lord has given us the privilege to share with Him for the purpose of building up His kingdom. What if Jesus came to you personally with a request to use something you have to build His kingdom? I can't tell you precisely what His request to you might be. "The Lord hath need of them" might apply to your dollars or your hours. It might apply to any or all of your possessions. It might apply to your talents or your influence. But one thing I can tell you for sure, and that is when He calls, you and I will be blessed beyond measure to let Him have whatever it is that He needs to build up His kingdom on earth.