

Luke 19:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

Analysis

Because the Lord hath need of him (ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχει, ho kyrios autou chreian echei)—this striking phrase reveals Jesus's divine prerogative. Lord (κύριος, kyrios) is the title used for both human masters and divine sovereignty. The phrase could mean 'its master needs it' or 'the Lord needs it,' creating deliberate ambiguity that Jesus's disciples would understand christologically.

The sovereign God who owns 'the cattle on a thousand hills' (Psalm 50:10) here asserts His right to requisition what is His. Yet He does so with courtesy through His messengers, modeling how divine authority respects human property even while superseding it. This anticipates how Christ later taught His disciples to give to Caesar what is Caesar's—while implicitly claiming all things as His own.

Historical Context

In the Roman Empire, military and governmental officials had the right of 'angaria'—requisitioning animals or supplies for official use. Jesus exercises a higher authority, claiming the colt not by Roman law but by messianic right. The phrase would simultaneously identify Jesus to the owner (who may have been a disciple or sympathizer) while asserting His lordship.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does Christ's 'need' of the colt teach about how divine sovereignty relates to ordinary human possessions?
2. How should Jesus's example here shape your attitude toward lending or giving your resources for Kingdom purposes?
3. In what sense does Jesus, who created all things, 'need' anything from His creatures?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐάν	τις	ὁμᾶς	ἐρωτᾷ	Διατί	λύετε	οὕτως
And	if	any man	you	ask	Why	do ye loose	him thus
G2532	G1437	G5100	G5209	G2065	G1302	G3089	G3779
ἐρεῖτε	αὐτοῦ	ὅτι	Ὁ	κύριος	αὐτοῦ	χρεῖαν	ἔχει
shall ye say	of him	Because	G3588	the Lord	of him	need	hath
G2046	G846	G3754		G2962	G846	G5532	G2192

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 24:1 (References Lord): The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.