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Stubborn as a Mule

By Teresa Hampton

Mules are interesting creatures. They can bear the pressure of heavy weight more easily than other animals. They have patience and endurance. But then again, they also have a stubborn streak, hence the expression, “stubborn as a mule.”

Throughout God’s dealings with the Israelites He used the word “stubborn” to describe their actions and the condition of their hearts. Stubbornness is another word for rebellion. Moses reminded the people of their rebelliousness, “Know, therefore, that the Lord your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people” (Deut. 9:6). They constantly tested the Lord (Numbers 14:22). Their stubborn hearts, incessant complaints, and constant bickering impeded the progress God had planned for His people. “A kicking mule doesn’t pull, and a pulling mule doesn’t kick.”

On the other hand, remarkable things can take place when mules work together as a team. In the late 1800’s twenty mule teams hauled more than 20 million pounds of borax out of Death Valley. It was intense labor that required teamwork.

The same is true with the church. With strength as children of God, we are better able to bear the pressures of life. Steady spiritual growth produces patience and endurance. Then again, we may occasionally become “stubborn as a mule.” If so, let us resolve to humble our hearts, put aside grumbling, cease bickering and work as a team with unity and likemindedness, focusing on God’s will. Remarkable things will take place. Unimaginable things can be accomplished to the glory of Christ!

Today’s Verse: *“Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”* Philippians 1:27

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