


ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION LESSONS 41-50

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Lesson 41 Matthew 21 1-5 (1) Jesus teaches the importance of being ready for His coming

Jesus pledged bridegroom

You must note the phrase, "**When He drew near**" (Greek *εγγυαω*) the significance of the term should not be lost. It also means "to pledge" and is a term used for the bridegrooms pledge to his bride. Hence the felicitous phrase "daughter of Zion" with the meaning "marriageable young woman". Jesus was coming with a perfect willingness and indeed desire to be generally accepted as Israel's Saviour but aware that disappointment awaited had been advising that to the contrary He would be rejected and handed over by His own to the Romans and would be crucified.

Jesus presents as king of Jerusalem

At Bethphage (house of figs) Jesus and the disciples were on the brow of the Mount of Olives. The "fig tree" was to become the outstanding symbol of Jerusalem the "unready" (cf 24.32) Expansive views to the west and a glorious panorama of the city itself opens to view from this location 500 or 600 hundred feet above Jerusalem.

The words of the prophet Zechariah fulfilled

Not far along the descent to your left today the tomb of Zechariah can be seen. His famous phrase "Tell the daughter of Zion, "Behold your king is coming to you, lowly and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zech 9.9) was fulfilled that day when Jesus reached Bethphage. The LORD sent two disciples to the village and there on time after the passage of 500 years the little donkey and her colt were standing poised to carry the king of kings on their little backs each marked by a cross. Matthew uses a little phrase in v.5 "This all" which in the Greek (*ολον γεγονεν*) means "this whole event". What he is saying is that it turned out to be like a jig-saw puzzle. When you put all the *prophetic pieces* together you get the full glory and significance of it.

The LORD has need of them

Why them? Well a horse or camel or even a chariot would not have sufficed. The donkey was vital to prophecy in this instance. Jesus could not have entered the city as predicted without mounting a humble donkey. The LORD had elected long ago to demonstrate His servant intent by coming into the city on a donkey. It will be just the same when Jesus returns-nature and history will be exactly ready and configured as He prophesied but people will be totally unprepared. "They will be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" as if nothing out of the ordinary was to be expected.

Areas of further study: Matthew 22.8ff; Matthew 24.44; 2 Timothy 4.8; Rev 16.5

From paper to practice



- 1 What is Jesus purpose in "coming near" the daughter of Jerusalem on this occasion?
- 2 Why bother with prophecy-why not just get on with it-after all He was the true Messiah! Is prophecy of any real importance today-had we not just better get on with Christianity?
- 3 Are we as Christians ready for the return of Jesus unlike His people 2000 years ago when He first came? What signs should be show if we are ready?