

Matthew 21:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Analysis

The quotation 'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass' from Zechariah 9:9 presents the paradox of the king's arrival. 'Meek' (Greek: *praus*) means gentle, humble, not asserting rights—contrasting with expected military conqueror. The donkey symbolizes peace (horses signified war). Jesus deliberately fulfills prophecy, publicly claiming messianic identity while redefining messianic expectations—a suffering servant-king, not political liberator.

Historical Context

Zechariah 9:9 (c. 520 BC) prophesied Messiah's humble entry contrasting with verse 10's future conquering reign. Jesus' first coming fulfilled the humble entry; His second coming will fulfill the conquering king. The triumphal entry occurred Sunday before crucifixion (Passion Week), forcing Jerusalem's response to His messianic claim.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' meekness challenge worldly concepts of power and kingship?
2. What does riding a donkey teach about the nature of Christ's kingdom?

Interlinear Text

Εἶπατε	τῇ	θυγατρὶ	Σιών·	Ἰδοὺ,	ὁ	βασιλεύς	σου
Tell ye	G3588	the daughter	of Sion	Behold	G3588	King	thy
G2036		G2364	G4622	G2400		G935	G4675
ἔρχεται	σοι	πραῦς	καὶ	ἐπιβεβηκὼς	ἐπὶ	ὄνον	καὶ
cometh	unto thee	meek	and	sitting	upon	an ass	and
G2064	G4671	G4239	G2532	G1910	G1909	G3688	G2532
πῶλον	υἶον	ὑποζυγίου					
a colt	the foal	of an ass					
G4454	G5207	G5268					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 62:11 (Parallel theme): Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

Genesis 49:10 (Parallel theme): The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Isaiah 12:6 (Parallel theme): Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Isaiah 40:9 (Parallel theme): O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

Hosea 1:7 (Parallel theme): But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen.

Ezekiel 34:24 (Parallel theme): And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.

Ezekiel 37:24 (Kingdom): And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.

Matthew 11:29 (Parallel theme): Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 2:6 (Parallel theme): And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Matthew 2:2 (Kingdom): Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.