

# Sermon Outlines

## The Bruised Reed

### Reading

Matthew 12:14-21

### Introduction

One of the easiest things to do is to have certain expectations so imbedded in our minds that it is almost impossible to change them.

- a) This is the way Israel was with Messiah, for Isaiah 53:2 prophetically records their attitude in saying, "There is no beauty that we should desire Him". They had visualised a warrior King like David, but instead of conflict as they saw it, He walked away and refused to be a leader for a political or religious party of the Jewish rebellion.
  - i) They visualised a child born who would grow to be a mighty leader and set up the promised kingdom.
  - ii) They visualised a kingdom without moral conditions and claimed the promise without the moral requirements.
  - iii) Christ was not the sort of Messiah they looked for, therefore, between disappointment and intensifying hatred for Him as He ministered the truth and showed his credentials, they sought to destroy Him, and kill Him.
  - iv) What was His attitude toward those who were disappointed and filled with hatred?

### The Attitude Of The Lord

- 1) It is evident that the populous was divided into various groups.
  - a) The religious hierarchy, Pharisees, scribes, High priest, etc. (Matt. 26:3)
  - b) The common people who were of a divided opinion if He was the Christ or not (Jn. 7:40-43)
  - c) The outright scoffers (Lk. 8:53; 22:63; 23:11)
  - d) Those who genuinely wanted to know the truth (Mk. 12:37)
    - i) To help and manifest the heart of God to all humanity there is recorded his words, works, and attitudes.
- 2) His willing acceptance of a perfect mans's place in the economy of God.
  - a) This is fundamental. He became a "servant" in attitude before He left Heaven (Note the order in Phil. 2:7) and that was His attitude throughout His earthly duration.
    - i) He came and succeeded in:
      1. Declaring (manifesting) God (Jn. 1:18)
      2. Manifesting the Father (Jn. 14:9)
      3. Destroying the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8)
      4. Defeating death (Heb. 2:14)
      5. Glorifying God (Jn. 17:4)
    - ii) He could not be swayed by public opinion in support of a cause.
      1. Being God's perfect Servant He fully displayed God (Jn. 1:18; 14:9)
- 3) What was His attitude of spirit?
  - a) He saw the people as sheep not having a shepherd and had compassion (Mk. 6:34)
  - b) Isaiah wrote, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." (Isa. 42:3). What is meant by this imagery?
    - i) The reed is an emblem of weakness (Isa. 36:6) and unsteadiness, fluctuating in the wind (Matt. 11:7).
      1. That is what many of the people that heard Him were, being swayed by the religious leaders, and in the opposite direction, by His words and works (Matt. 27:20).
      2. The disciples were swayed by fear when they all forsook him, and fled (Matt 26:56).
      3. Peter was swayed by circumstantial pressure (Matt. 26:73) and legalistic brethren

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- (Gal. 2:12).
4. We all can be swayed, as Demas was, by the world (2 Tim. 4:10), or by erroneous doctrines (Gal. 1:7).
- ii) To these and ourselves the Lord comes declaring, “A bruised reed will He not break” (Matt. 12:20; Isa. 42:3).
1. At times He will permit a bruising to prune us, but he will never break us. He desires us to have a contrite spirit. He knows that we have at times broken hearts, but he will not despise us.
  2. The little reed was used to play a tune on, but when it was bent it could no longer be used to make a tune. How many of us have felt like that? There are dark days in life when we honestly think, “we will never sing again”. This is how Mary and Martha felt (Jn. 11:3); the widow of Nain (Lk. 7:11-13); and Jairus (Mk. 5:23). He healed the broken hearted and we can be sure, they sang again.
- iii) The smoking flax. What a sad picture this is, the oil is expended, and all there is is a smoking flax. The natural reaction is, “it is useless, snuff it out”, but not the Lord. With the tenderness of love He will blow fresh breath on it and fan it into life.
1. No doubt many have been like the smoking flax. Something may have come into the life which has resulted in a deep spiritual depression and all the work for God has been long given up, possibly decided not to read the scriptures or pray ever again, and have genuine doubts about God’s love. No longer a flame of fire, just a smoking flax.
  2. Thank God He will strive with us to blow the refreshing life back into us again. No matter how reluctant we are to be restored, He patiently and ever so gently works on us to bring us back to being a bright shining light.
- 4) What was His attitude in works?
- a) Despite being constantly “used”, only on one occasion did anyone return to say thanks or show a thankful spirit? Yet, in their sorrows and afflictions, He healed the broken hearted, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and made the dumb to speak (Matt. 11:5).
- 5) What was His attitude in speech?
- a) When on the cross, his prayer was, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Lk. 23:34), and to the dying thief, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Lk. 23:43).

### Conclusion

When we consider the Lord as such, we must bow and thank Him for His infinite compassion, understanding, and patience with each of us.

In time we shall say like David, “He restoreth my soul” (Psa. 23:3)

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

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