

A humble king and fickle praise

How often do we see boastful people being humbled, humble people exalted, and critics wavering from side to side depending on the standing of those they are criticising. If this happened to Jesus we can be sure that it will happen to us as well.

Matthew 21: 1 – 11

1) The humility of Jesus

- When we think of a king riding into a city in triumph we think of him riding ahead of his army on a well-groomed horse of magnificent size and stature.
- This isn't the way Jesus entered Jerusalem. He entered on a donkey – a beast of burden.
 - This was to fulfil the prophecy through Zechariah about 500 years before it happened.
- So not only the time – just at the right time – and place – Jerusalem – were prophesied but now the humble manner in which Jesus arrived in Jerusalem to submit himself as the Passover Lamb.
- Everything about Jesus showed humility.
 - His humble birth.
 - He worked as a carpenter (Mark 6: 3)
 - He spent most of His time with his ragtag group of disciples who were fishermen, tax collectors, zealots and even a thief – all undesirables of society.
 - He touched a leper who approached Him.
 - He allowed a prostitute to wash His feet with her hair to the scorn of the religious people.
 - He said that that He didn't come to be served but to serve.
 - He taught His disciples that the greatest among them must be the servant of all. He taught it because He lived it.
 - His non-retaliation to those who opposed Him was a sign of humility.
 - Then He comes riding into Jerusalem on a donkey.
- Paul encapsulates Jesus' humility in the following verses:
 - Philippians 2: 5 – 8 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death —even death on a cross!
- The ultimate sign of His humility was to submit Himself to humiliation, scorn, torture, shame, and death on a cross as a common criminal though He was innocent and He had the means of escape from it all, but didn't use them to fulfil the purposes of God for His life.
- Paul tells us, in Philippians 2: 5, to have the same mindset as Christ Jesus – to have the same humility.
 - Are we following in His footsteps in humility?

2) Jesus the Messiah

- The crowd were shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David”.
- This wasn’t merely acknowledging His descent from David – it was an acknowledgment that He was the promised Messiah who would come in the line of David. The Messiah that Israel had been waiting for for so long.
 - Jeremiah 33: 15 ‘In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land.
- The Jews had been waiting for their Messiah for generations and now here He is. They recognise and praise Him as such – Hosanna to the Son of David.
- They had seen His miracles, His healing of the blind, the lame, the lepers.
- They had been fascinated by His teachings saying that He teaches as one with authority and not as the teachers of the law.
- Many had questioned His authority saying that they know that His mother and father were Mary and Joseph. However knowing that would also have meant that they would have known that He was a descendent of David through His earthly stepfather, Joseph as Mary and Joseph had had to make a journey to Bethlehem to register for the Roman census when Mary was pregnant with Jesus because he was a descendent of David.
 - Luke 2: 4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.
- This then highlights another fulfilled prophecy of the Messiah that was to come – that He was to be born in Bethlehem.
 - Micah 5: 2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.
- All the evidence was there that surely this was the awaited Messiah. Surely He was worthy of all the praise and honour due to Him as He entered Jerusalem.
- The crowds referred to Him as Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee but them calling Him the Son of David elevated Him to a higher position in their minds.
- Are we convinced in our hearts and minds who He is? That He is the Messiah, our Lord and Saviour and do we worship and honour Him as such?

3) A fickle crowd

- The problem with crowd mentality is that crowds often follow the crowd and are easily swayed by the majority.
- We see this often in protests when many protesters aren’t even sure what the protest is about but they join the protest anyway.
- Crowds often run on emotion rather than true belief and conviction.
 - Matthew 21: 10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was **stirred** and asked, “Who is this?”
 - This word stirred means to agitate, shake, quake.
 - It’s the same word that’s used when the earth shook at the crucifixion of Jesus.
- Hence there was a stirring up of the crowd to do what everyone else was doing.
- The crowd was fickle – a frequent changing of loyalties – because the same crowd was at His trial calling for His crucifixion.
 - Luke 23: 18 – 21 But the whole crowd shouted, “Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!” (Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.) Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. But they kept shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”
- How loyal are you to Jesus? Are you remaining steadfast in your loyalty to Him or do you deny him in the midst of trials?