

Steeple News

April 2025

We are as Fickle as the Crowd

The city of Jerusalem stirred with passion that Sunday before the Passover. The city was filled with travelers bringing sacrificial lambs. Coins were thrown into coffers where pigeons were sold. In the temple yard merchants were busy earning silver from the celebration. But above the hubbub hung a question, “Would the prophet from Galilee come?”

Even as they wondered, the apostles of Jesus had secured a young donkey for his entry into the city. It was to be his last, and so paused by the Mount of Olives, as he looked across the golden city, He wept, not for Himself, though His death was imminent, but for Jerusalem, a city whose walls and children would be ground into the earth. Then He proceeded on His journey.

Word spread that He was coming, and as He rode toward the city, the babble of the voices united into an uproar of adulation. “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they cried. “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” Even before He reached the gates of the city, the crowds were spreading the way with palm branches, placing their garments in His path. They were giving Him a messianic welcome. For the moment, at best, they were His people, and He was their king. He came not with armies but riding a gentle animal, and they believed and adored Him.

Where was the crowd five days later when Jesus stumbled on the road to Golgotha, bent under a cross? Their shouts had been carried on the wind, their palm branches withered, and Jesus went alone to be crucified.

As we think about a lonely Savior on a hillside cross, we may feel critical of that crowd whose love was brief, but it should teach us something deeper. It is a human tendency for even the most righteous enthusiasm to wane. We are inspired, see with clarity, and then the fog rushes in. We seek to proclaim our love or the Lord and then circumstances help us forget. We mean to change our character, and then the urgency leaves. We shout for Jesus one day and turn our backs the next. When we hope that we would have rushed out to carry His cross, we need to examine whether even now our shouts swell and ebb on a fickle wind?

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