

A Bruised Reed and a Smoking Flax (Isaiah 42:1-4)

John Turner - Aug 10, 2004; May 21, 2006; May 20, 2012; Apr 23, 2017

A nebulous passage whose meaning seems obscured.

A vivid reflection of Christ's deep compassion for us.

Therein lies hope, consolation and encouragement.

Same passage speaks of Christ in Matt. 12:18-21

Other meanings of the word translated "bruised" here are: "oppressed," "crushed," "discouraged," and "struggling."

"Bruised reed" is same as one in II Kings 18:21.

Refers to a rod, or walking stick so badly damaged that anyone who leans uses it for support will not only fall down; he will also be stabbed or get splinters in his hand.

Allegorically refers to the soul, broken and contrite on account of sin, weeping and mourning for transgression.

Perhaps that soul has leaned on something or someone which has wounded their spirit gravely.

"Reed" also means refers to a lamp stand.

Contextually, Isaiah 42:3 seems to refer to a lamp stand as smoking flax refers to the wick of a lamp or candle.

The smoking flax wick here is no longer burning and lighting the house. Just issuing a noxious smoke.

"Smoking" here could also be translated as an extreme dullness, dimness or heaviness.

Thus, we are shown a picture of a lamp that once stood lighting the house; now knocked down, smashed and well nigh put out.

It is useless. An obstacle in the dark to trip over.

Here is a picture of the soul whom God has called to serve Him and to give forth a light in the darkness, who has literally had the fire knocked out of him or her.

Calamity has struck; and that soul is now found lying on the ground, bruised, broken, crushed, discouraged.

No one wants a light that doesn't light.

That struggling soul struggles to get back up again.

But passersby see it struggling and deliver scornful looks, hurtful words and kick it further into darkness.

MAMA AND THE OIL LAMP

Christ will not break the bruised soul that shows remorse.

He will pardon, tenderly heal & gently strengthen the broken spirit.

That lamp which men have declared to be "worse than useless" has been declared an object of great affection, value and potential by the One who authored its creation and paid a huge price for it.

Romans 5:6 ¶ For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (THE PRICE)

He knows fully how it feels to be broken and rejected.

Jesus is bound by His heart of compassion and by His Word of Promise bind up (BANDAGE) the bruised reed.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,

With the broken candlestick restored, he gently blows the wind of the Holy Spirit to rekindle the smoking flax into a brightly burning flame fed by the fresh oil of the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. (3 He restoreth my soul: