



WHEN THE HOLY ONE RETURNS HOME

a church in the World

ABSTRACT

I was born and raised in East Orange, NJ, and one of East Orange's favorite daughters is Whitney Houston, ...

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Passage

Mark 6:1 – 4; Matthew 13:53 – 57

- Only the minor difference in the GNT translation where it says “rejected”, instead of “offended” or “took offense”

Notes

Differences between Gospel Accounts

- a) Matthew → “after finishing the parables”
- b) Mark → “the disciples followed
- c) Mark → “on the Sabbath”
- d) Mark → “includes relatives as well”
- e) Matthew → “carpenter’s son”; Mark → “carpenter”

In Common in Gospel Accounts

- i. Jesus left where He was (Capernaum) and went to hometown (Nazareth)
- ii. Taught in synagogue
- iii. People were astonished (amazed)
- iv. People were saying where did He get this wisdom
- v. People were saying how is He able to do these mighty works
- vi. Mother is Mary. Four brothers are named. Sisters are mentioned.
- vii. They took offense or were offended
- viii. Hometown and household of the prophet does not honor him.

NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

People normally expected support from their relatives and from fellow citizens from one’s home area. Prophets, however, often faced rejection and persecution (e.g., [Jer 26:20](#)), even in their own communities (cf. [Jer 1:1](#); [11:21](#)).

What is the Author Saying to the Audience?

If God has given you a prophetic mantle, the people who know you the best will generally be your biggest detractors.

Scripture of the Day

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord: ²“Thus says the Lord: Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the Lord all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word. ³It may be they will listen, and every one turn from his evil way, that I may relent of the disaster that I intend to do to them because of their evil deeds. ⁴You shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, ⁵and to listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently, though you have not listened, ⁶then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.’”

⁷The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. ⁸And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, “You shall die! ⁹Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, ‘This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant?’” And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord. – Jeremiah 26:1 – 9

Introduction

I was born and raised in East Orange, NJ, and one of East Orange's favorite daughters is Whitney Houston. Whitney grew up on Dodd Street in East Orange, and as her star continued to rise over time, everyone in town celebrated her. One of our buddies we grew up with was her cousin. He was tremendously pleased when she started winning so many awards.

All of us were.

If we were thrilled for someone like Whitney, how about if you were from Jesus's hometown of Nazareth? Jesus is healing people, turning water into wine, and casting out thousands of demons. You know they would have a parade for Him when He returns home.

Today, we get to see what the hometown folks do when “The Holy One Comes Home.”

Let us Pray ...

Body

Mark 6:1 – 4

¹He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ²And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such

mighty works done by his hands? ³Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. ⁴And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household."

Why the Difference?

Now why in the world is Whitney celebrated and Jesus castigated? One of the translations specifically says He was rejected. He was doing all of these wonderful things for people all over Israel, even in Samaria, and in Decapolis, places not even in Israel and the people in His own hometown and even his family (none of his brothers believed in Jesus at this time) basically shunned Him.

I think part of the reason is they have known Jesus his entire life and they hadn't seen any of these miraculous occurrences. They are like how can this be?

We Saw the Talent from Young

With Whitney or I don't want to leave out my wife's hometown of Reston, Virginia with basketball star Grant Hill. People in their hometowns had seen their talent while they were growing up as little tikes and they just watched them get better and better. It wasn't a change, it was more of an evolution.

With Jesus, in their eyes this is coming out of nowhere.

For example, they mentioned, where did he get this wisdom from. He hadn't gone to rabbinical school. He is a carpenter. It is impossible for Him to get that sort of knowledge. He never showed it previously. Now we do have the story of Jesus in the temple when he was twelve, but how many of the townfolks or relatives were there to see that? As we know, everyone had left and they had to go back to get Jesus. So the answer is none. We don't know for sure, but it seems from there reaction that Jesus didn't a special wisdom or knowledge in His day-to-day living while He was in Nazareth.

You see from their statements, that they are saying that Jesus was just a regular guy. We know His mom, we know His brothers, we know His sisters, Jesus is nothing special. His family is nothing special. This is out of nowhere.

Jealousy

Related to these abilities coming out of nowhere from their perspective, is the envy and jealousy aspect. Why him and not me.

Don't Tell Me How to Live

Singers, sports stars, people worth billions of dollars, astronauts, you name the famous person. The hometowns, relatives, and nuclear family love talking about them. But there is a big

difference between a famous prophet of God and all of these other categories of people. The famous people who are loved are not telling the people in the hometown how they are to live, while the prophet of God, in speaking for God is calling out all that the people are doing wrong and telling them to change their ways.

People never like to have other people tell them what to do, even if that person is speaking God's words.

Take Aways

One of the major takeaways I want every Christian to see here, is that we now have the Spirit of God living in us:

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ..."

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. – John 14:12, 15 – 17"

We are God's mouthpiece to the world even if we do not speak. We desire to keep God's commandments and walk out a holy life:

¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." -- 1 Peter 1:14 – 16"

Do you understand, living a life based on God's character will be convicting to people. Now, convicting does not necessarily mean that people will change. Your presence around many people will make them angry or uneasy. Let me show you from Scripture:

¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? – 2 Corinthians 2:14 – 16"

Dear Christian, I know this sounds difficult and be it is, but I want to give you some good news. You are a new creation.

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.^[a] The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. – 2 Cor 5:16 – 17"

... and your King will never leave you:

¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." – John 14:18 – 21

Being a Holy One returning home may be difficult, but the Spirit of God now indwells you. The supernatural power of God will empower you. You will never be alone again, and the person who is in you can do all things:

¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me. – Philippians 4:13

So Holy One, walk home with your head held high, for you are royalty:

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. – 1 Peter 2:9 – 10

May your town, relatives, and family see the light of Christ shining through you. May they know that light and be drawn to the only one who can brighten their darkness. Holy Ones, we need you to go home, no matter how difficult it may be, so the ones who are the closest to you may become Holy Ones as well.