

Does Jesus Trip You Or Lift You?

Introduction: This week many people are thinking about the things that happened the first few weeks of Jesus' life. This morning I want you to consider some things we don't think much pertaining to Jesus' birth and a significant purpose of his fleshly existence in this world.

I. Simeon reveals God's purpose of the newly born Jesus (Luke 2:25-35)

- A. Simeon was a righteous man through whom the Holy Spirit spoke, and to whom God promised he would see the Christ.
- B. Simeon's message about Jesus astounds Mary and Joseph.
- C. Simeon's message seems strange considering the messages surrounding Jesus' birth. (Matt. 1:20, 21; Lk. 1:31-33; 2:14)

II. Now look at the last week of Jesus' life (Matthew 21:23-44)

- A. Jesus was teaching in the same place Simeon saw him when he was a baby.
- B. Jesus was being opposed.
- C. He teaches his opposers in a parable about how terrible it will be for those who reject and trip over the "Stone."
- D. Remember what Simeon said, "Many will fall in Israel because of Him."
 - 1. Paul referred to Jesus as the stone of stumbling. (Rom. 9:33)
 - 2. So did Peter. (1 Pet. 2:8)

III. How could Jesus be god's great gift to all people and at the same time be the cause of many to stumble and fall?

- A. Israel knew they were God's chosen people with a promise.
- B. They placed their faith in who they were and became selfish in their religious/spiritual desires and expectations of the Christ.
- C. Jesus had a stirring way of revealing hearts, some being blessed, some falling and breaking.
- D. Jesus can be our stepping stone or the rock in the path that causes us to fall and break.

Conclusion: He came to be our Savior and he can be our Savior. But it is our hearts, not him, that determines if he lifts us up or we fall over him.