> *Matthew 12:20*
> *“A bruised reed He will not break,*
> *And a smoldering wick He will not snuff out,*
> *Till He has brought justice through to victory.*
> *21 In His name the nations will put their hope.”*

As I reflect on this verse, I am reminded of an experience I had some time ago. It was a lesson on resilience and God’s faithfulness. I remember when we planted banana trees. Every morning and evening, I would water them, and over time, they grew strong enough to bear fruit. But one night, an unusually strong wind blew, and when we woke up the next morning, we found that many of the trees had fallen. The ones that had started to bear fruit were the hardest hit. The weight of the bananas was too much for them to bear, and the wind caused them to collapse. Only the trees that hadn’t borne fruit yet stood tall. This wasn’t just our trees—our neighbors’ trees had fallen too.

In desperation, we tried to lift the fallen trees and support them with wooden stakes. But many of them had been damaged so

badly that even with support, they couldn’t stand. No matter how many stakes we used, some trees still wouldn’t stand firm. We couldn’t cut them down because the bananas were still young and precious to us. So we worked tirelessly to prop them up, trying different methods to keep them from wilting before the fruit ripened.

We encountered many difficulties. One day, we’d set them up a certain way, and the next, we’d find them fallen again. But, despite their fragile state, we still managed to harvest some fully ripened bananas without significant issues.

Now, as I think about this experience, I ask myself: If we didn’t give up on the banana trees, even when they seemed hopeless, how much more will God not give up on us?

The words spoken about Jesus in Matthew 12:20 have profound theological significance:

> *“A bruised reed He will not break,*
> *And a smoldering wick He will not snuff out.”*

Theological Reflection on the Bruised Reed and Smoldering Wick:

## The Bruised Reed:

A bruised reed represents something that has been damaged, broken, or weakened, perhaps to the point where it seems beyond repair. In the context of Jesus' ministry, the "bruised reed" can symbolize those who are spiritually broken, wounded, or suffering. The reed, which is fragile by nature, doesn't have the strength to stand upright without help. Similarly, people who are bruised in spirit—those who feel weak and defeated—are not abandoned by God. Rather than being discarded or destroyed, they are cared for and restored by Jesus.

> *Isaiah 42:3 also references this concept:*
> "A bruised reed He will not break, and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice."
> *This verse is a prophecy about the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. The reference to the bruised reed underscores God's mercy, compassion, and gentleness toward those who are struggling. Even when we feel our faith is weak or our lives are in ruins, God does not reject us. Instead, He nurtures and strengthens us, offering us hope and healing.*

The Smoldering Wick:
The smoldering wick, which is about to go out, is another image of something that seems to have lost its light or purpose. It represents individuals who are spiritually exhausted, burned out, or about to give up on life. Jesus, however, doesn't extinguish this dying light; instead, He tends to it with patience, gently reviving the flame.

> *Isaiah 61:1 further illuminates this idea:*
> "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

Jesus, through His ministry, fulfills this prophecy by offering healing, freedom, and renewal to those who feel defeated or lost. Just like a smoldering wick, we are not beyond hope—Jesus can reignite our faith and restore us to wholeness.

God's Unfailing Care:

Theologically, the message of Matthew 12:20 emphasizes the unbreakable compassion of Jesus. In contrast to human tendencies to discard things that seem useless or beyond repair, Jesus sees potential in the broken and hurting. No matter how much we may feel like failures or how far we've strayed, God's grace and mercy are always available. Romans 5:8 reminds us of God's great love:

> "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
> *Even when we were far from Him, lost in our sin and despair, Jesus did not give up on us.*

Application to Our Lives:

It's easy to feel like we are like the bruised reed or the smoldering wick—broken, worn out, and on the verge of giving up. Many people, perhaps even you, may feel like there is no hope left. Whether you've strayed from God, struggled with addictions, or been trapped in despair, there is still hope. Jesus doesn't give up on you, and He will not cast you aside.

Consider Isaiah 61:1, which prophesies the Messiah’s mission to heal and restore the broken. Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophecy. He came to bind up the brokenhearted and offer freedom to those in bondage, no matter what that bondage might look like.

If you feel spiritually weary, physically burdened, or emotionally spent, know that Jesus is there to lift you up, to heal you, and to restore your joy. Matthew 11:28-30 speaks of this invitation:

> “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

Even when the world tries to discourage you, and you feel as though you’ve fallen too far to be restored, remember that Jesus is always there to help you get back up, to strengthen you, and to bring you hope once again. He is the one who will never give up on you. His mercy endures forever.

Conclusion:

If we didn’t give up on those banana trees, how much more will God not give up on us? Whether you feel like a bruised reed or a smoldering wick, Jesus will not break you or snuff out your hope. His love and grace are steadfast, and He will bring justice and healing to your life. Come to Him, and He will restore you.

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