

Luke 8:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.

Analysis

And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him. Luke's transitional phrase marks Jesus' return from Gentile territory (the Gerasenes, v. 26-39) to Jewish Galilee. The Greek verb *apodechomai* (ἀποδέχομαι, "gladly received") indicates enthusiastic welcome, warm acceptance, and eager anticipation. The imperfect tense *ēsan prosdokōntes* (ἦσαν προσδοκῶντες, "were waiting") conveys continuous expectation—the crowd had been persistently looking for Jesus' return.

This reception contrasts sharply with the Gerasenes who begged Jesus to depart after He cast Legion into swine (v. 37). Jewish Galilee welcomed Him; pagan Gentiles rejected Him. Yet this enthusiastic crowd's reception was mixed—many sought healing, miracles, and teaching, but few understood Jesus' true mission. Their gladness was genuine but often superficial, focused on temporal benefits rather than spiritual salvation.

The phrase "they were all waiting" emphasizes universal anticipation. Jesus had become the focal point of regional attention. This sets the stage for two intertwined miracles—Jairus' dying daughter and the hemorrhaging woman—both demonstrating faith that moves beyond crowd enthusiasm to desperate, personal trust in Christ's power over disease and death.

Historical Context

Jesus had crossed the Sea of Galilee to Gentile territory (Gadara/Gerasa) where He delivered the demoniac called Legion. The Gerasenes, disturbed by the loss of their swine herd and frightened by Jesus' supernatural power, requested His departure. Upon returning to Capernaum's region, Jesus found a dramatically different reception. The Jewish crowds in Galilee had witnessed His teaching authority, healing miracles, and exorcisms, creating intense popular interest.

This welcome, however, remained ambivalent. While multitudes sought Jesus for miracles and teaching, most failed to recognize Him as Messiah requiring repentance and faith. The same crowds who enthusiastically received Him in Luke 8:40 would later turn hostile, with religious leaders ultimately demanding His crucifixion. This pattern illustrates the danger of superficial religious enthusiasm disconnected from genuine conversion.

The waiting crowd included Jairus, a synagogue ruler whose desperation would drive him to publicly plead for Jesus' help—an act requiring profound humility given his religious status and Jesus' controversial reputation among Jewish leadership.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the contrast between Gentile rejection and Jewish reception of Jesus illustrate different responses to divine truth?
2. What dangers exist in enthusiastic religious crowds that 'gladly receive' Jesus for benefits rather than bowing to His lordship?
3. How can we examine whether our faith moves beyond superficial enthusiasm to genuine trust in Christ's authority over every area of life?

Interlinear Text

Ἐγένετο	δὲ	Ἐν	τῷ	ὑποστρέψαι	τὸν	Ἰησοῦν
it came to pass	And	that when	G3588	was returned	G3588	Jesus
G1096	G1161	G1722		G5290		G2424
ἀπεδέξατο	αὐτόν	ὁ	ὄχλος	ἦσαν	γὰρ	πάντες
gladly received	him	G3588	the people	they were	for	all
G588	G846		G3793	G2258	G1063	G3956
προσδοκῶντες	αὐτόν					
waiting for	him					
G4328	G846					

Additional Cross-References

Mark 5:21 (References Jesus): And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

Matthew 9:1 (Parallel theme): And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

Mark 6:20 (Parallel theme): For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.