

THE BLIND SEE, THE DUMB SPEAK
Matthew 9:27-34

Intro: We have in this passage two miracles of one kind (the restoring of sight to two blind men, followed by the deliverance of a demon-possessed man who was not able to speak. They appear to be joined because it was the men who had been healed of their blindness who brought the demon-possessed dumb man to the Lord.

Matthew is the only one who recorded the story of the two blind men, but it is the first of several incidents in which blind people was given their sight. Then there are references to the Lord's miracles in which it is stated that the blind were given sight.

It appears that, as far as the restoration of speech to the demon-possessed men is concerned. Luke may have been referring to the same incident in Luke Luke 11:14, 15.

Such instances as these are important for two reasons:

- 1) They show the power that the Lord had to heal all kinds of diseases.
- 2) They have a parallel application to the preaching of the Gospel, and the spiritual transformation that takes place in the lives of those who come to Christ. This is the case with the two kinds of miracles before us in this passage.

Let us turn to the two blind men.

I. THE TWO BLIND MEN (Matt. 9:27-31).

It seems that the Lord was coming to the close of a busy day. Just whose house He was going to, we do not know--possibly one of the disciples home. The blind men knew that He was there, and so they began to follow Him, crying out, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us." By this they were confessing two things:

- 1) That they believed that our Lord was the Messiah: "Thou Son of David."
- 2) That they really had no claim upon Him. If He heard them and helped them, it would be because He was being merciful to them.

Both of these are very commendable, and it would be interesting to know how they came to these convictions, and whether they had related them to each other. Did they realize their unworthiness because He was the Son of David? Or was it something in their background that caused them to know that they did not really deserve His help.

We notice that the Lord seemed not to pay any attention to them.

And so they followed Him into the house. This showed how intent they were on getting His help.

Matthew did not say that they spoke further, but it is to be expected that they would continue their appeal to Him. At this point He said to them, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?"

When Spurgeon preached on this text back in 1866, April 12, a Thursday evening, he placed special emphasis upon the word "this" at the end of the Lord's question. Since they believed that He was the Messiah, they may have believed in His Deity, or this may have been something that they had not considered very much. Not all Jews believed in the Deity of the Messiah, but they did believe that a Messiah would come.

But it is one thing to believe that the Lord can do many great things, even when we believe in His Deity, but it is quite another thing to believe that He can do, and will do, something about the problem which we have.

We are not told anything about their blindness. It probably was not the case that they were born blind. Blindness was very common in that part of the world at that time, and so we can probably assume that they had known the blessing of sight, but had lost it. That is probably a lot worse than never having been able to see.

But the Lord wanted to know about their faith. Their actions certainly showed that they had some faith, but the Lord wanted to know if they had faith for the humanly impossible thing that they wanted Him to do.

Without any hesitation, and perhaps as a single voice, they both said, "Yea, Lord." And then He said, "According to your faith be it unto you." Before He said this, He placed His hands upon their eyes. Their eyes were opened immediately, and they were able to see.

All of the Lord's dealing with them showed that He was primarily interested in their faith, not in how long they had been blind, nor why they were blind, nor anything else. He seems to have ignored them, and even when they came to Him in the house, it was about their faith that He questioned them.

Cf. Heb. 11:6; Jas. 1:5-7 where James was speaking about asking the Lord for wisdom, and declared that such a request, as any other must be asked in faith.

It behooves us to examine our own prayers. What are we asking the Lord to do for us? Do we really ask in faith, that is, believing that He can do what we ask, and that, if it be His

will, He will do what we ask.. When our Lord was here on earth, and His apostles in their writings after the Lord had gone back to heaven, encouraged specific requests expecting answers to those requests. This always means that our requests must pass the test of being according to the will of God. These blind men believed that the Lord could; the only reservation in their mind was, would He? Faith does not presume to know the will of God, but we must come to God believing that He can, leaving the doing up to Him. This is faith. This is the way the Lord prayed about the cup that the Father had given Him to drink.

So the two men were healed. Then the Lord gave them a very specific command: "See that no man know it."

People who knew them would obviously learn that they had their sight, but they were not to tell anybody. The Lord's will in this was very clear. Even a little child understands what we mean when we say, "Now don't tell anybody!" They may not obey us, but at least they know what we mean.

What did these men do? They spread the news far and wide so that there wasn't anyone around who did not know what had happened to them, and Who had done it.

It is interesting to see how various commentators have explained their action, seeking to excuse them. Some say that we can't blame the men because they were so excited about receiving their sight that they could not keep quiet. And so we must excuse them. Others go so far as to say that the Lord really did not mean for them to be quiet about what had happened to them. They say that He was just being humble, and that He really didn't care who they told. Some said that these men should be congratulated for doing what they did because it brought greater glory to the Lord.

How would you explain it?

Well, there is really only one interpretation that we can put on what they did, and that is that they were being disobedient! The Lord told them not to do something, and they did it anyway.

We can rationalize all of the good that may have come about as a result, but the fact is that they disobeyed the Lord, and if they disobeyed the Lord, they displeased Him regardless of what the results may have been.

We are all inclined to find reasons why in our particular case we do not have to obey the Lord, aren't we? We can see things in our particular circumstances which dismiss us from living strictly by the Word of God. We all do it. We disobey thinking that we know better than the Lord what we ought to do.

But let me raise the question, Why was it that the Lord did not want them to tell?

I will give you the only honest answer that I think there is: "I don't know!" We can make suggestions, but there is no way of proving whether we are right or wrong. I am not sure that Matthew knew why the Lord had commanded them not to say anything about what the Lord had done for them. He obviously didn't even attempt to explain it.

And let me ask a further question: Does the Lord always explain His dealings to you? Do you always know why the Lord works in your life the way He does? We all are baffled at times by the ways of the Lord. We all question His wisdom in His dealing with us. We walk by faith, not by sight. But the person who explains away simple obedience to the Word of God has much to learn, and may get into a lot of trouble until he learns to obey the Lord. This is why the Lord has given us His Word. It is a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path. When we do not know what to do, we must always obey the Word of God. His ways will always be different from ours; that is when we must do what He says when we cannot understand why. The blind men could trust the Lord to heal them, but they refused to trust the Lord in what He told them what they were not to do. We may think that our way is better than the Lord's way, but it never is.

Now with that explanation given by Matthew, we move on to the next miracle.

It is interesting to see these two brought together when the accounts are so brief. The reason that they are brought together is because these men who were blind were involved in both miracles.

II. THE DUMB MAN WHO WAS DEMON-POSSESSED (Matt. 9:32-34).

He is not called "dumb" because he was stupid; he was called "dumb" because he couldn't talk. We know in his case that he had been able to talk before, but ever since he was demon-possessed, the demon had kept him from talking.

He could see, and he could hear, but he couldn't talk.

Could I make a suggestion about this man? And it is only a suggestion. I can't prove what I am about to say, but I make this as just a suggestion.

I wonder if this man was the first one these formerly blind men told about their own healing. And if the men who had received their sight had been asked why they did what the Lord told them

not to do, can't you hear them defending themselves by saying, "If we had kept quiet, this demon-possessed man would still be demon-possessed, and still would be unable to talk." That sounds like a good argument for disobedience, doesn't it? If something good comes out of something bad, then we are prone to feel that the bad we did was really good.

What nonsense this is! We could set aside all of Scripture with that kind of reasoning? And since the Lord healed the dumb man, who is to say that the Lord would not have healed him anyway--maybe at some other time, but if it were the will of God for him to be healed, he would have been delivered from that demon who had made him dumb.

What did the Lord do when the two men brought the demon-possessed man to Him? Did He rebuke them? Would you and I argue, therefore, that since the Lord did not say anything, it was really all right with Him that they had disobeyed Him. Just because the Lord does not judge us every time we sin, can we say that we have not sinned? Of course not!

But what did the Lord do?

He delivered the dumb man from the demon! And there were some good results, some bad. The multitudes said, "It was never so seen in Israel." It attracted their attention, and they realized that there was something special about the Lord. The bad part was that the opposition of the Pharisees was becoming more and more intense. Here they charged the Lord with being an agent of the Devil. And with this Matthew leaves the three men and moves on to tell what the Lord did in the days that followed.

Concl: What lessons are we to learn from these miracles?

The first is that the Lord is really the Son of God. He is able to do what no one else can do. His miracles proved His Deity.

The second is that He always deals with us in mercy. But we must never mistake His mercy for an excuse to sin. The fact that blessing follows disobedience and sin, does not mean that it is all right for us to sin. It means that God is merciful.

The third is that it is never right to disobey God. Blessings may follow, but all disobedience is sin. And we must learn to obey the Lord even when it seems better to us to do something besides what He has told us to do.

(Quote the hymn, Trust and Obey.)