

**“THE BLIND RECEIVE THEIR SIGHT”**

Mark 10:46-52

**Intro:** Of the eighteen specific miracles performed by our Lord during His earthly ministry, the miracle we come to today at the end of Mark 10 is #17. It is also referred to in Matthew and Mark’s Gospels, with two differences. Neither Matthew, nor Luke mentioned Bartimaeus by name, and, in addition, Matthew says that there were two blind men who received their sight at this time. Luke also records the response of the crowd, as well as of Bartimaeus, after he was healed. Luke recorded that Bartimaeus followed the Lord “glorifying Him, and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.” So we have the record of Matthew (20:29-34) and of Luke (18:35-43) and the testimony of the people, as well as this account of Mark, that this miracle really took place. Of course, if people don’t want to believe this, nothing will convince them that the Lord performed this or any other miracle. But it is important for us to see that the evidence is overwhelming that the Lord was the greatest miracle worker who ever lived upon the earth.

When the then Pharisee, Nicodemus, came to the Lord, he told the Lord that it was the miracles that caused him to come to the Lord. His actual words which he spoke to the Lord were, “ Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2).

Even when Pilate sent our Lord to Herod after the Lord had been arrested, Luke tells us this:

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him (Luke 23:8).

Believing that the Lord performed miracles has never been a problem to me, but many people are skeptical about what is said about His miracles in the Gospels. I point out these few details to show that not only among our Lord’s disciples, but also among those who hated Him, there was no question but that He was continuously performing miracles, not only of healings, but also of stilling storms and feeding multitudes of people when He only had a few loaves and a few fish to begin with. I believe the Lord could have fed those huge crowds of men, women, and children, if He had nothing to begin with. He created the whole universe out of

nothing to work with, and so it would have been nothing for our Lord to provide food for thousands of people even without, as it was in one case, a little boy's lunch.

But now let us get to what Mark recorded about this miracle.

The first point that should be of interest to us, is:

## **I. WHERE IT WAS PERFORMED (Mark 10:46).**

It was on the outskirts of Jericho. You probably will remember that Jericho was the first city that the Israelites conquered and destroyed after they had entered the promised land. We are told about this in the book of Joshua, the sixth book of the OT, chapter 6. But you will find if you read the whole sixth chapter of Joshua, that Joshua warned the people at that time, that the one who would rebuild that city would be under the judgment of God. He would be under the curse of God. However, we are given this information in 1 Kings 16:34, which in round figures was probably six or seven hundred years after the Israelites destroyed Jericho:

34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun (1 Kings 16:34).

This was in the days of Elijah the prophet when Ahab was the king of Israel. The Scriptures do not follow through to deal with Jericho, but we know that it was a city built under the curse of God. And I believe that this fact is significant as Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell us about a blind man who was apparently living in Jericho, but he had positioned himself on the road which led from Jericho to Jerusalem. It would have been a heavily traveled road where Bartimaeus would have been able to appeal for help from those who passed by, either going to Jerusalem, or coming from Jerusalem.

We know that the Lord Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. We have to say that it was providential that the Lord and Bartimaeus were on that road on that day at that time. But let us think for just a moment about Bartimaeus.

## **II. BARTIMAEUS.**

We are told that his name meant, *son of Timaeus*. *Bar* is Aramaic for *son*,

and *timaeus* appears to have been Greek for *honorable one*. There have been many attempts to make something out of his name, some explaining that Bartimaeus' father may have been a believer. Others say some prominent person. But these are mere guesses, and it is apparent from the text that our attention needs to be focused upon Bartimaeus, and not upon his father.

It appears from Mark's account of this miracle that while Bartimaeus parents had named him, Bartimaeus, at the time that he met the Lord he had become well known as "blind Bartimaeus." So if strangers saw him begging, and would ask residents of that area who that man was, they probably would have responded by saying, "Oh, that is blind Bartimaeus!" It would seem to indicate that he had been in that part of the country a long time, and the people when referring to him would call him, not just "Bartimaeus," but "blind Bartimaeus."

We don't know if he was born blind, or if he had been afflicted with blindness sometime after birth. The Bible does not say. But his name, "blind Bartimaeus," would seem to indicate that he had been blind for quite some time.

Blindness is a terrible affliction. It was very common when the Lord was on the earth. In fact, sicknesses prevailed. People did not live as long as we live now, but blindness is still a major problem in our country today. But it was even worse in those days. It does not seem that Bartimaeus was blind as a result of his own personal sin, because the Lord did not mention his sin when He healed him. But there is much about his case that we just do not know because the Scriptures simply tell us that he was blind, "blind Bartimaeus." We are not told how long he had been blind. We don't know even how old he was. He was just blind. He could not have been a man of means because he was out there on the road begging. Possibly he was old enough so that his parents were no longer living. He had no relatives who were taking care of him. He was a totally hopeless case as far as his physical condition was concerned. Whether Matthew and Luke even knew his name, we can't say. At least, if they did, they did not mention it.

But somehow, even though there were many people following the Lord, and there must have been many people on the road who were not traveling with the Lord, somehow blind Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And so immediately Mark tells us that he began to cry

out and say, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.” Mark tells us that “many charged him that he should hold his peace.” This is a polite way of saying that they told him to be quiet. Who did he think that he was to call upon Jesus to have mercy upon him? But the more they told him to be quiet, the louder and more, can I say, “frantic,” he cried out until everybody was hearing what he was saying: “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Mark just said twice what Bartimaeus was saying, but we can be sure that he was saying this over and over again.

Now this is where we need to stop to think about what Bartimaeus was saying.

Do you understand what Bartimaeus was saying when he called the Lord, “Son of David”?

Please turn with me in Mark’s Gospel to chapter 12, and look with me at verses 35 through 37. The scribes and the Pharisees were always asking the Lord questions, trying to get Him to say something that they might use against Him. But here the Lord was speaking to the people, and He asked them a question about what the scribes had been teaching them. (Read Mark 12:35-37.) The question came down to this: How could the Messiah be David’s Lord and yet be David’s son? How could He be both? The Lord was quoting David’s words in Psalm 110.

The NT begins in a very boring way to most Gentiles, but it was extremely important to the Jews. Notice how Matthew started in verse 1. He called Jesus Christ “the son of David.” This title became one of the titles of our Lord as the Messiah.

The book of Romans in the NT begins this way:

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

2(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:1-4).

Now from all of this I hope you will get the point of what “blind” Barti-

maeus was say when he cried out again and again, and louder and louder, “Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me.” He may have been blind physically, but he was not spiritually blind. He may not have been able to see the Lord as He walked by, but he knew in his heart Who Jesus was. He knew that He was the Messiah. He knew that Jesus could make him see because he knew that Jesus, the Son of David, was the Messiah, the Son of God.

This is what the Apostle John said was the main purpose of the miracles. Obviously “blind Bartimaeus” had heard of the miracles that the Lord had performed, and he was convinced that the Lord could open his physical eyes so that he would be able to see the Lord in the flesh. Here are the Apostle Paul’s words:

30 And many other signs (miracles) truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these (miracles) are written, that ye might believe that Jesus (the Man) is the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (John 20:30-31).

What did Jesus do? He “stood still, and commanded him to be called.” There were very, very few apart from the disciples, who really recognized the Lord Jesus to be the Person that He was. It must have sounded like music in the ears of the Lord.

The people who probably had been the very ones who had tried to keep “blind Bartimaeus” be quiet, now said to him, “Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee.” “Blind Bartimaeus” was evidently sitting down, probably weary from being out in the hot sun. But now his strength was restored. He cast off his outer garment, rose, and came to Jesus. Can you visualize what was happening? It was another of those amazing scenes that are described for us in the Word of God. The Lord called; “blind Bartimaeus” came. But that is not all.

The Lord said to him, “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?” Now you or I could probably have told that “blind Bartimaeus” could not see, that he really was blind. So why would the Lord ask him that question? Surely the Lord knew his need, and why in deep humility he would cry out over and over again, “have mercy on me.” He knew that He did not deserve any blessing from the Lord. But he knew that our Lord’s mercy was the answer to his misery.

But can I inject a thought here that is not stated in Scripture, and I want you to know that this is just my idea. But I think it is right. At this point “blind Bartimaeus” had another very important reason for wanting to be able to see. And it was this: *He wanted to see the Lord!*

Several years ago I read of a blind Christian who said, and I think it was one of our lady hymn writers, that she was thankful that she was blind because she knew that when she went to be with the Lord *He would be the first Person that she would see.*

*But why would the Lord ask “blind Bartimaeus” what He could do for him? Here is a lesson for your prayers. He knows what our needs are, but He loves for us to tell our needs to Him. “Lord, that I might receive my sight.”*

What did the Lord do? He didn’t do anything. He just spoke. “Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.”

Where does our faith come? Our Bibles tell us that Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith. It also tells us that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. That helpless, blind beggar sitting by the side of the road, was one of God’s elect. He received his sight immediately, but instead of going his way, he “followed Jesus in the way.” That is how you can tell a person has really come to the Lord. He, or she, wants to go with the Lord, and to be with Him forever.

**Concl:** We have a most amazing story here today. And it is a true story.

All of this really happened. It is about a man who was physically blind, but his spiritual sight was 20/20. As far as I can tell, we all are able to see each other this morning. And we can thank God for that. But how is your spiritual vision? Do you know Who Jesus is? Do you know why He came into this world, why He died, why He was raised from the dead, and why He went back to heaven? Do you know how extremely important it is that you be able to “see” this? Or are you going to be content to go on in your spiritual blindness, and suffer the torments of hell eternally. Paul told the Corinthian believers that “the god of this world, who is the Devil, has blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine on them. You will find these words in 2 Corinthians 4:4. How wonderful it would be if those of you who are spiritually blind, who are not interested in Christ and the Gospel, would turn to the Lord this morning, right where you are seated,

and say, “Lord, that I might receive my sight.”

If what I have been talking about this morning is truth you know. You have cried out to the Lord, and He has saved you. But are you walking in His way, delighting to be with Him, and looking forward to that day when you are going to see Him, and thankful that you will be with Him forever. If not, then trust Him to renew your love for Him so that you will delight in Him in much the same way that He delights in you. Be like Bartimaeus who was no longer blind, but having received his sight, “followed Jesus in the way.