

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Blind Bartimaeus

Last time...Jesus turned to go to Jerusalem for the final time

He told His disciples how His ministry was going to end,
they were amazed and afraid and did not understand
James and John make a power play for positions of power and influence in Jesus'
kingdom, much to the indignation of the other 10 disciples
Jesus contrasts "great" in the kingdoms of man vs the kingdom of God

This time...Jesus heals a blind man named Bartimaeus outside of Jericho

We will be in Matt 20, Mark 10, and Luke 18

We will notice differences in the 3 Gospels but

- one Author
- three independent records of eyewitnesses or based on the testimony of eyewitnesses
- natural when it comes to independent narratives
- no contradictions

Matt 20:29-34

v29 they departed from Jericho:

Jesus, the 12 disciples, and others with them are going from Perea
(east side of Jordan River) to Jerusalem
Now they are on the west side of the Jordan River, in Judea

Jericho was a hub of multiple roads, east/west and north/south

Jesus and His followers are going west from Jericho toward Jerusalem...
and are joined/accompanied by a multitude

What's with this multitude?

They are pilgrims coming from east, north, and south to Jericho to go up
to Jerusalem for the Passover

v30-31 two blind men...Have mercy on us...rebuked...cried the more:
Sitting on the side of the road to Jerusalem outside of Jericho are two blind men.

When they heard that Jesus was in this crowd of people, they cried out

- Have mercy on us
- Lord...Master
- Son of David...Messianic title
(2 Sam 7, Messiah promised thru AIJ&D)

This is a proclamation of faith from soft hearts

The two blind men believe Jesus

- is the promised Messiah
- has the power of God to heal their blindness (as we shall see)

But the multitude have different heart...hard hearts that harassed the blind men

Hush up!

Be quiet

Be dumb as well as blind!

The harshness of the multitude only stirred the blind men to cry out all the louder,
not with proud defiance but with a genuine, persistent, and insistent cry for
help to the One who can help them

v32-34 Jesus stood still...Jesus had compassion...they followed Him:
Jesus heard, cared, and acted

The two blind men who called Him by one of His Messianic titles

have His attention

Jesus asks them what they want Him to do for them

“Open our eyes, give us sight.”

The Lord who delights in mercy responded to their “simple”

(but humanly impossible) request with compassion

He touched their eyes...and healed those eyes, such that they now work as He
had designed them to work

And now seeing, the two men followed Jesus

Mark 10:46-52

v46 came to Jericho...went out of Jericho...blind Bartimaeus:

As in Matthew's account, we see that Jesus and His 12 disciples,
along with a great number of other people,
have passed thru Jericho and heading west toward Jerusalem

Matthew's account records that there were 2 blind men,
Mark records only one of them and names him

Mark also records what he/they were doing on the side of the road –
begging for alms

This is "prime alms season" with all the pilgrims headed up to Jerusalem
for Passover

v47-48 Jesus...Son of David:

Blind Bart can hear a great crowd on the road, listens to conversations, and
learns that Jesus is in the crowd passing by him
So, he begins to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

To the multitude who had no faith that He was the Messiah, Jesus was called
"Jesus of Nazareth", a prophet mighty in word and deeds

But Jesus is more than just a prophet to Bartimaeus

Jesus...His name, a call from one person to another

Son of David...Messianic title

have mercy on me...help me

The blind beggar did not beg for money or worldly things from the
Messiah, he begged for mercy, a spiritual blessing

Hosea 6:6 I desired mercy and not sacrifice and the knowledge
of God more than burnt offerings

Matt 9:1-13 (parallel account of Mark 2:1-17)

- Man with physical affliction
- "Your sins are forgiven."
- Jesus knew their thoughts (Amos 4:13)
- Man physically and also spiritually healed
- "Learn this, I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

But...many in the crowd got on his case
Be quiet, for heaven's sake!

As if they were annoyed with blind Bart...
rather than having compassion for him
They see Bart as an unwelcomed interruption, disturbance, inconvenience,
and distraction

But...blind Bart will not be stilled, not be discouraged, by hard hearted people
His cry unto Jesus is one great faith
a. the cry for mercy of God
b. the name and title used
c. his persistence in the face of resistance

v49 commanded him to be called...Be of good comfort:
The hearts and attitudes of the many in v48 are NOT the heart and the attitude of
Jesus

“Bring that man to Me.”

And “they” said to Bartimaeus

- Be of good comfort...be encouraged
- rise...get up and come with us
- He calls you...Jesus wants to see you

This is a radically different tune than that of v48a
Either those of v48a had a change of heart and attitude when Jesus
showed His concern for the blind man
Or these folks are different folks than they of v48a

v50 casting away his garment:
Bartimaeus did not waste any time in accepting Jesus' invitation for an audience

In fact, he cast aside his garment/cloak...his most valuable earthly possession

- protection from the weather – wind and rain (this is springtime)
- covering while he slept

v51 Lord, that I might receive my sight:
Jesus knows why Bartimaeus was calling for mercy
So, in asking the question, Jesus is
either testing Bartimaeus' faith
or putting Bartimaeus' faith on display for His disciples and the
multitude

Bartimaeus responds simply, directly, specifically
Lord...Rabboni, my Master (tender and more personal form of "Rabbi")
that I might...You can, it is my desire, yet Your will
my sight...is seeing believing? One who does not see believes

v52 Go thy way, thy faith has made thee whole:
In Matthew's account, Jesus touched the blind men's eyes
In Mark's account, He speaks

Go your way...the way of your choosing

Your faith has made you whole: Jesus vouches for Bartimaeus' faith, in v47, v48,
v50 (leaving earthy treasure), and v51

What is the meaning of "made whole"?
Hold that thought

And Jesus having so spoken, Bartimaeus

- received the gift of healing (of sight)
- followed Jesus

What was the man's first sight?
The face of Jesus!
What was the man's subsequent action/choice:
To follow Jesus

1 John 3:1-3

Luke 18:35-43

v35a as He was come nigh to Jericho:

Both Matthew's and Mark's account put Jesus etc west of Jericho

Yet Luke's account places Him and them east of Jericho

Which is it, east or west?

Wrong question

The right question is, Which Jericho?

“old” Jericho: in ruins from the days of Joshua's conquest

In the Gospel written to the Jews (Matt), Jesus et al are west of old Jericho

“new” Jericho: a city built by Herod the Great, given its strategic location

In the Gospel written to the Romans (Luke), Jesus et al are east of,
approaching, new Jericho

Both accounts are true

v35b-38 asked what it meant...Jesus of Nazareth...Son of David:

In Mark's account, we have the name of this “certain blind man” begging on the
side of the road

Notice again the two very different “names” of Jesus

By the multitude: Jesus of Nazareth (a prophet)

By the blind man: Son of David (The Prophet, the Messiah)

Where is faith in this scene?

In the blind man's (Bartimaeus) heart

The physically blind could see the spiritual truth (Matt 16:16).

v39-42 before rebuked...faith has saved you:

The hard-hearted ones who are inconvenienced by the blind man and want him to
be dumb as well are out in front, “paving the way”

Any and every obstruction must be pushed aside to clear the way for Jesus...
including a blind man who is crying for mercy

But Jesus does not see the blind man as an obstruction or a distraction or an
interruption or an annoyance or an inconvenience

He sees him as God does...one of the lost sheep of Israel

So Jesus

- extended the gift of sight
- rewards his spiritual sightedness (faith in Him alone) with salvation
(made whole = saved)

v43a received...followed...glorifying:

After Jesus spoke (gifts of sight and salvation), the blind man received his sight
And he followed Jesus

In Mark's account, Jesus said, "Go your way"...the way of your choosing
What way did Bartimaeus choose?

To follow Jesus, glorifying God as he went

- a. to Jerusalem for the Passover...and see the Temple
- b. as a disciple of Jesus
- c. both

Jesus' way is now Bartimaeus' way

But in Luke's account we learn something not recorded in Matt or Mark

v43b glorifying...gave praise:

Bartimaeus followed Jesus...glorifying God as he went

Jesus' power to heal blindness and to "make whole"/saved is the power of
God in Man...the Word of God become flesh

When the people saw Jesus heal a blind man, they burst into "PTL"s
This multitude of pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover is
ignited/energized by the work of the Lord

Micah 7:18-20 Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity, and
passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?
he retains not his anger for ever, because he delights *in*
mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon
us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their
sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth
to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast
sworn unto our fathers from the days of old

Perhaps the multitude had been excited about the possibility of Jesus confronting
His enemies (the Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees, and Romans)
But now, that confrontation in Jerusalem is going to be amazing!!!!

Yet they had been foretold, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He
opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter."
The showdown they anticipate is not going to happen...and they will turn on the
One they are praising right now

The two blind men on the road to Jerusalem

The whole of the miracle

- Jesus touched
- Jesus spoke
- Jesus saved/made whole

- Jesus had compassion
- Jesus was meek and humble and approachable
- Jesus was available and willing
- Jesus worked, to the glory of His Father

This is amazing

Jesus' heart is no doubt heavy as He makes His way to Jerusalem and the Cross that awaits Him there, where He who knew no sin will be made sin.

Yet He has the time, interest, and power to be interrupted

He has compassion on the one who interrupted Him...a lost sheep of Israel

Jesus is never inconvenienced or annoyed, never so busy that He will not stop and minister to an individual in need crying out to Him

Can that be said of His ministers?

When a ministry gets so big and prominent that the minister is unwilling and too proud to stop and minister to the need of an individual, the ministry has become greater than the Lord and has replaced the Lord as the object of worship... fruitless no matter what the worldly numbers may be

And the minister becomes un-Christ-like

- hire bodyguards to keep the people away from him, citing "protection" and "security"
- buy expensive corporate jets with money fleeced from God's flock so they do not have to deal with the riff-raff on commercial flights
- so busy with his own brand that he has no time for the people, hiring Assoc Pastors for that task
- unavailable, unapproachable
- un-Christ-like

Christian leadership characteristics

- Humility
- Meekness
- Gentleness
- Compassion
- Submission
- Approachable
- Available

In this passage of the Word of God, we see the heart, identity, and power of Jesus.
Do we see ourselves?

- One of those accompanying Jesus?
 - No compassion for the needs of others
 - Not wanting to be bothered or interrupted when someone else needs help
 - Hypocrites
- A blind person healed by faith?
 - heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - by faith, cried out for mercy because made aware of one's blind, sinful condition and aware of the uselessness of worldly things
 - heard the call of Jesus to be encouraged and to come to Him
 - responded by faith...
 - immediately if not sooner, leaving worldly things behind
 - persistent and insistent in the face of resistance...family and friends telling you to keep quiet
 - begged to receive sight, to be cleansed of the stain of sin
 - immediately born again, made a new creature in Christ
 - follow Him, secure in the presence of the Good Shepherd
 - undoubtedly singing His praises and glorifying God as you go

Perhaps today you will surrender to such love and power, and
stop accompanying Jesus (playing Church) and start following Jesus (a true disciple)
Perhaps today you will truly believe and be made whole

Lam 3:40-41 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.
Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.