

## 61. Jesus Restored the Sight of a Blind Man

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the much greater value of spiritual riches than earthly riches. The riches of this world keep many people from following Jesus because such people have the same focus in their lives that the rich young ruler had in his life. Such people have to make the choice whether to follow Jesus or to follow their riches. They also need to understand that the choice they make will have eternal consequences. In our topic today, we are going to see that Jesus restored the sight of a blind man.

Jesus and His disciples were getting very close to the city of Jerusalem. As a result, Jesus took the twelve aside and told them what would happen to Him when they went to Jerusalem. Luke 18:31-34 says, “Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, ‘Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.’ But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.” Here, we see that Jesus explained to His disciples again what was going to happen to Him at Jerusalem. Again, we will see that they did not understand. However, it was important for Jesus to tell them because He knew that they would understand after the resurrection.

Jesus explained to the disciples that they would soon be in Jerusalem. There, Jesus said that He would fulfill the things that had been written by the prophets about what would happen to the Son of Man. The word translated “shall be accomplished” means *to bring to a close, to finish or to end*. Jesus would say just a short time later in John 19:30 as He hung on the cross, “It is finished”. When Jesus spoke those words, He had accomplished the payment for our sin so that we could receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Jesus said that first the Son of Man must be delivered to the Gentiles who would mock Him, insult Him and spit upon Him. Mark 15:16-19 describes how these statements were fulfilled. Those verses say, “Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His *head*, and began to salute Him, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him.”

Jesus said that the Gentiles would scourge Him and kill Him. The scourging is recorded in John 19:1 where we read, “So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged *Him*.” Then, Luke 23:32-33 says, “There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.” However, Jesus also promised that He would fulfill the Word of God by rising again on the third day. In Luke 24:6-8, we read, “‘He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’” And they remembered His words.” The disciples did not come to an understanding of what the Scriptures had said until the evening of the day Jesus rose from the dead. Luke 24:45 says, “And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.” It was only after Jesus explained what

the Scriptures taught that the disciples understood.

As Jesus and His disciples were walking along the road on their way to Jerusalem, they were getting close to the city of Jericho. There, a blind man cried to Jesus for mercy. Luke 18:35-39 says, “Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’ Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’” In the time of Jesus, those who were blind or crippled had no way to support themselves except by begging. Such individuals would often sit alongside a road that had many people pass by and beg.

A blind man was sitting close to the road that Jesus was taking. The blind man was near the city of Jericho. Mark 10:46 says, “Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging.” Here, we see that the name of this man was Bartimaeus. He was begging in order to survive. He heard a large crowd passing by the place where he was sitting. Bartimaeus asked someone why there were so many people all traveling together. He was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by that place and a large crowd was with Him. Bartimaeus immediately began to cry out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Here, we see that Bartimaeus had been hearing many things about Jesus over the previous three years so he knew about Jesus.

Bartimaeus recognized that Jesus was the Son of David. Psalm 132:11-12 says, “The Lord has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it: ‘I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body. If your sons will keep My covenant and My testimony which I shall teach them, their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.’” The Jews recognized that One from the family of David would sit on the throne forever. As a result, each of those who called Jesus “son of David” recognized that Jesus was the promised Messiah who would sit on that throne. Bartimaeus recognized that Jesus could help him and show mercy to him because Bartimaeus he Jesus as the Messiah.

The people who were walking in front of Jesus immediately told Bartimaeus to keep quiet. We see that these people had no concern for the physical or spiritual need of Bartimaeus. They just did not want to be bothered as they walked along the road. Here, we see a common attitude when people lack compassion. In contrast, Jesus was moved with compassion because He saw both the physical and spiritual needs of people. Matthew 9:36 says, “But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.” Instead of causing him to become quiet, that only caused Bartimaeus to cry out even louder. He recognized that Jesus was the Messiah.

We go on to read what Jesus did to help Bartimaeus because of His compassion. Luke 18:40-43 says, “So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’ He said, ‘Lord, that I may receive my sight.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.’ And

immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.” Jesus immediately stood still and asked the people there to bring Bartimaeus to Him. Jesus knew that Bartimaeus recognized Him as the Messiah and He wanted others to recognize that Bartimaeus was showing true faith.

Jesus began His discussion with Bartimaeus by asking him the question, “What do you want Me to do for you?” Jesus knew that his answer would reveal his faith to the crowd traveling with Jesus. Bartimaeus answered, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” The word translated “Lord” means *the one to whom a person or thing belongs*. It was a title that the Jews commonly used to refer to God or to the Messiah. In fact, in the New Testament, this title is used to refer to Jesus or to the Father a total of 667 times. The fact that Bartimaeus used this title spoke of His faith and showed that He recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah.

After recognizing Jesus as Lord, Bartimaeus went on to tell Jesus his request: that he might receive his sight. Jesus wanted all of the people who heard him that day to recognize the faith of Bartimaeus. That is why Jesus said, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.” Jesus wanted the people to recognize that Jesus was giving both physical and spiritual sight that day. The word translated “made you well” is the word that is normally translated “to save”. That is the way the word is translated in many passages including Luke 19:10 where Jesus said, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

In addition to receiving spiritual sight that day, Bartimaeus also received physical sight. We see that he received physical sight immediately. Bartimaeus was a changed man. We read that he followed Jesus, glorifying God. The word translated “followed” means *to accompany a person or to join with a person as a disciple*. It is the same word that Jesus used in Matthew 4:19-20 when He said, “Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him.” The same word is used in Matthew 9:9 where we read, “As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ So he arose and followed Him.” Bartimaeus had his life changed and transformed.

Since there was a large group of people with Jesus, they also saw what Jesus had done and heard the words of Bartimaeus. That also caused the people with Jesus to give praise to God for what Jesus had done that day by giving both physical and spiritual sight. We also want to show our physical and spiritual children the same attitude as we give glory to God for what He has done in our lives. They will learn to give glory to God as they see our example by our words and actions. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children the importance of giving glory to God for the salvation that He gives.