

Episode #8-44 Matthew 20 Part 4-The Blind Men of Jericho

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord had been approached by James and John with their mother, seeking to elbow out Peter and the rest of the twelve and get the top position in the kingdom. The Lord very graciously told them that this position was not for them, but had already been given to others. The other ten were angry about it, though, and the Lord taught them that it is better to serve in God’s economy than to be served.

III. Two Blind Men of Jericho. Matthew 20:29-34.

- A. Verse 29. “Went out” marks this out from the incident in Luke 18:35, as He was approaching Jericho, and from Mark 10:46, where there was only a single blind man.
 1. That the Lord would have encountered four blind men, just while passing through Jericho, is not at all unusual, as this was a common affliction then.
 2. There is no reason to formulate ingenious explanations about an old city of Jericho and a new city of Jericho.
 3. That all the blind men would have shouted, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me,” is explained by the story in Matthew 9:27-31. They were commanded to tell no one what had happened, but instead they disobeyed and blazed the story abroad. Every blind person in Israel had probably heard it, and resolved that, if the Lord ever passed by them, they would say the same thing.
 4. Bullinger says the population was about 100,000, and points out that the blind would tend to congregate around the gates.
 5. We have, in these three gospels, three different stories, as is shown by the difference in the details. Differences in details indicate a different story, not a contradiction. These gospels were intelligently designed by the same Author.
 6. “Followed” could be “accompanied,” with some in front.
- B. Verse 30. They would have asked about the commotion, and received this answer. “Son of David” was a reference to His right to the throne. It was a title of the Messiah, Psalm 110:1. They were indicating their faith in Who He was.
- C. Verse 31. They probably warned them because they were shouting so loudly. They feared, no doubt, that He had already passed by, and so wanted Him to hear them. They were not about to be discouraged in their urgent request. It is good when we want something from the Lord and do not allow others to discourage us. Of course, we ought to be sure that what we want is in line with His present work.
- D. Verse 32. “Want” is *thelo*, what do you will in the sense of desire or wish? We might say, wasn’t the restoration of their sight an obvious answer? But they had an even more urgent need: the forgiveness of their sins. They were far more likely to worry about the eyesight, which they did.
- E. Verse 33. Of course, this refers to their vision being restored.
- F. Verse 34. “Had compassion” is *splagchnizomai*, “was moved in His bowels,” meaning filled with compassion. He understood like no one else who had never been blind could just what they had had to go through. This is the One Who created that marvelous organ the eye in the first place. These are the miracles of the Bible, miracles that are worthy of God. Not the nonsense that passes for healing today.

“Received sight” is literally “looked up.” Of course, they had not formerly been able to look at anything, whatever their eyes were pointed at. These now become part of the multitude following Him or accompanying Him. There is no word that they became disciples at this point; just that they followed Him for a time.

IV. Conclusion: The Lord healed four blind men of Jericho, and the different gospels give different stories of different ones of them. The earlier story of blind men convinced them all they should call on Him as Son of David and ask for mercy. The Lord gave them the healing they desired. Do we know what we would ask the Lord if He came to us? Do we ask with courage, and not give up? Let us look to our mighty Lord and ask!