

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

WHAT THE BLIND MAN COULD SEE

By T. Sean Sullivan

Introduction

Are there things “clearly seen,” without actually seeing them at all? An odd question, but this lesson is about a “blind man” who was able to see much more than others around him. Others, who possessed the ability of sight.

As so many were refusing Jesus, Bartimaeus was able to see that Jesus was much more than a man from Nazareth of Galilee. Jesus was much more than a teacher, growing in fame for His miracles. There is much more to Jesus than just a historic figure. We need to open our hearts to see all that He has done, and can do, for our soul’s hope. If we are willing to open our hearts to see Jesus, we will gain a greater hope than any other pursuit or pathway. Let’s consider three things from Bartimaeus’ example; that we need to “see.”

Bartimaeus Saw the Value of God’s Promises

What value do God’s promises hold? This question is of absolute importance, if we are going to be people of faith. The Old Testament shows us that God always, without fail, keeps His promises. As an example of God’s promise-keeping, we can read of three great promises given to Abraham and his family. In Genesis 22, Abraham’s faith was being tested—with an incredibly difficult test. God requested Abraham to sacrifice Isaac his son. Abraham’s was a man, who through his life and this particular test, was proven to be of unquestioning-obedience. After the conclusion of proving-test, we see the Father makes three great promises to him. Genesis 22:16-18 reads, *“By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”*

God promised Abraham that his family would become a great nation, they would possess a great land, and they would bring a greater blessing than this world has ever known. Not one of God’s promises failed: They became a great nation (Deut. 1:8-11); they were given a great land (Josh. 1:1-6); and they most certainly became the lineage of a great blessing for all nations—Jesus, the Messiah (Acts 3:24-26).

The Jews in the first century should have been looking for the Messiah—“the promised blessing.” The Messiah could be identified by over 300 specific prophecies, which the people should have learned from their youth. Bartimaeus was looking for the Messiah, one who would rise-up to bring salvation to the people, and he had reasoned that Jesus of Nazareth was truly the One. His understanding of the prophets of Old, is clearly seen in the words that he chose to call out, as Jesus passed by.

In Mark 10:46, Jesus was about 15 miles from Jerusalem, just leaving the City of Jericho and He was approaching the place where Bartimaeus was sitting beside the road. In verse 47, the crowd indicated that *“Jesus of Nazareth”* was passing by and Bartimaeus wanted His attention. Mark records that the crowd called him *“Jesus of Nazareth,”* but Bartimaeus did not use that description, he was looking for the Messiah—he called out, *“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”* (Mk. 10:47). Bartimaeus was obviously referring to the promises of God concerning the Messiah who was to be born in the direct line of David (Psa. 132:11; Isa.9:6-7; Jer. 23:5). He believed the promises of God, and he was looking for their fulfillment, with absolute assurance.

We also have promises from God that we must faithfully trust; we need to see the value of God's promises. Do you see what Bartimaeus saw, in the promises of God?

Bartimaeus Saw the Moment of Opportunity

As the record continues, Bartimaeus was calling out to Jesus; the crowd was trying to quiet him, but he refused to let this opportunity pass, and called out all the more (Mk. 10:48). It was at this point that Jesus stopped and turned His attention to Bartimaeus. Jesus beckoned him to come to Him. Bartimaeus, through his insistence on seizing the moment, received the blessings of Jesus and was healed.

Life holds "moments of opportunity." Moments that form and prove our character: Like Joseph in Potiphar's house—Genesis 39:7-9; or, those spoken of in 1 Peter 1:6-9. Moments that develop our relationships: New people that enter our pathway (Prov. 12:26); visits with family (Eph. 6:1-4); and time with friends (Acts 2:46). There can also be moments that change our life's direction, like being confronted with the gospel message and realizing your need for only what Jesus can provide (Acts 2:36-42).

There are, however, only so many moments of opportunity, in this life. There are only so many moments wherein we are confronted with the reality of our soul's state before God. We must not play the game of "Someday, I will obey..." It is a dangerous game; and the opportunity may not come again. Be like Bartimaeus, when the opportunity to come to Jesus is right in front of you, do not rest until you do all that is necessary to be with Him. Do you see what Bartimaeus saw, when a moment of opportunity comes your way?

Bartimaeus Saw the Need to Walk with Jesus

Bartimaeus was eager to come to Jesus and find something more. Verse 51 reads, *"So Jesus answered and said to him, What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, 'Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.'*" Bartimaeus did not ask for alms, as he did daily of those who passed by. He knew that Jesus was much more than another "passerby." He knew that Jesus was the Messiah and He made available a much greater blessing than money.

There is an interesting point right here in the account that may be easily missed. Look at what is said in verse 52, *"When Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your faith has made you well.'*" Bartimaeus was now freed from the obstacle of his blindness; he was blessed with the ability to freely move from place to place without this hindrance anymore. In fact, Jesus said, *"Go your way."* So, which way did he go? As the verse continues we find out, *"...and immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road."*

As soon as the obstacle was removed, Bartimaeus followed Jesus. So, what obstacle is in your way today? What is preventing you from "walking with Jesus"? Earlier in Mark 10:50, it says, *"And throwing aside his garments, he rose up and came to Jesus."* Whatever is holding you back today, "throw it aside" and come to Jesus. Do you see what Bartimaeus saw, in the need to get rid of the barriers and to walk with Jesus?

Conclusion

Bartimaeus was a man of "clear vision" even before Jesus healed him of blindness. He saw the value of God's promises. He saw the moment of opportunity. He also saw the need to put away any obstacle between him and walking with Jesus.

Bartimaeus teaches us that we must trust, but also take action. It is not enough to know that Jesus saves, we must come to Him in obedience to receive the hope of our salvation (Matt. 11:28; Acts 4:12).

What obstacle is between you and walking with Jesus? Follow the example of Bartimaeus and "throw it off." The moment of opportunity is present, the hope of your salvation is in reach. Come to Jesus, in obedience to His instruction, and walk with Him from this day forward. Come to Him, right now. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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