

December 29, 2024

“David’s Son”
Lesson 4

Luke 18:35-43

Intro

Today’s study passage takes place on Jesus’ final journey to Jerusalem. This is the fourth and final miracle in Luke’s “journey” section, from chapters 13-18. Just before today’s text, Jesus had warned His disciples (again) that He, the Son of Man, was going to die and rise again on the third day. This reference to His divinity connects to what is about to happen. A blind man will ask for his sight from Jesus. As we know from our scientific vantage point, there is no cure for blindness now; in Jesus’ day, there was also no cure, but also little understanding even of its varied causes. Unfortunately, one belief was that blindness was the result of a curse from God for some type of sinful behavior. The sins of the parents were thought to affect their children, possibly causing them to be born blind. Blindness was debilitating both economically and socially. The blind had little if any opportunity for employment. They were left to beg or depend on family support to survive. As a result, they were frequently looked down on by those who could see in their society.

Read Luke 18:35-43

1. vs. 35: The Jericho Jesus is coming to is essentially the same city that was destroyed in Joshua 6
Herod rebuilt the city about a mile away from the first
The current city of Jericho includes both sites

The blind man here is named Bartimaeus in Mark’s account
As with other blind men, he sits by the side of the road begging from those who pass by

2. vs. 36: Luke’s account mentions a crowd, but not its size
In Luke 12:1, a crowd is mentioned as being “many thousands”
It was typical to have large crowds traveling together over long distances
It protected all from bandits
The Good Samaritan story is of a man traveling along attacked by robbers
He was traveling the same road that Jesus now walks on
The blind man hears the crowd noise and asks what was occurring

3. vs. 37: He is told that “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by”
This description distinguished Jesus from others who had a similar name
The name “Jesus” is a variation of “Joshua”, a common name at the time
Calling him by this title tells the blind man exactly who this person is
He is the one who has done many miracles which are well known

4. vs. 38: When the blind man hears the info from vs. 37, he calls out “Jesus, Son of David”
He “sees” what the Pharisees do not—Jesus is from the line of David
This is the line that at least 5 OT references tell about the Messiah—He’s of David’s line
The blind man recognizes Jesus as the Messiah of Israel

5. vs. 39: The blind man is told to be quiet

This may have come from the crowd, or possibly from the disciples themselves
Doing this was likely an attempt at showing respect to Jesus
Individuals who are famous and stand out are seen as more important than commoners

But the blind man, among the lowest, doesn't pay attention to these people
He "shouted all the more" to Jesus, again called Him "Son of David"
He also speaks his request and need—"Be merciful to me"
He persists in asking Jesus for help

6. vs. 40: Jesus is well-known, and has a position (Teacher/Rabbi) of respect

The blind man has low status due to being a beggar
Yet Jesus counters the social expectation of how a "higher" should treat a "lower"
He orders that the man be brought to Him
This is not at all what the crowd would have expected

7. vs. 41: Jesus doesn't ask the man what he needs because Jesus doesn't know

There are two possible reasons for doing this, both of which make sense
First, Jesus wanted all present to hear the man's request
 Regaining sight is so unusual that they would see the miraculous in it
Second, Jesus may have wanted the blind man to demonstrate faith
 The request to regain his sight would call for boldness and faith in public
The man responds simply—"I want to regain my sight"

8. vs. 42: Jesus here says to the man "Receive your sight"

He doesn't call on God to do it; He doesn't touch the man, only speaks the words
Jesus shows here that He has the power to do this miracle, showing his divinity
Only the Creator of our bodies could have such power and influence over them

Jesus then reveals something about the man—he is a man of faith
He correctly believed that Jesus was the expected Savior—the Son of David
More importantly, he persisted in his request when others were telling him to be quiet
 He rejected the pressure of the crowd and instead focused on Jesus
 He believed in who Jesus was and what He was able to do
His persistence showed his faith in Jesus, his trust in Him

9. vs. 43: As with all of Jesus' miracles, there is a seen result *immediately*

The man gets his sight back right after Jesus spoke to him
As a result, he being following Jesus, following Him to Jerusalem
All the people praise God for this miracle
 This means that people who tried to silence the man now praise God for his sight
Jesus' works / impact on people can cause changes in views and behaviors!

Application: Jesus has been speaking about persistence throughout Luke 18, beginning with the persistent widow in verses 1-8. The formula is faith + persistence. Both are necessary elements in the practice of our faith. We see / meet Jesus through the Scriptures and in prayer. Our consistency in both reading and praying are examples of our persistence and our faith in the one who cares so much for us.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the examples we have in the Scriptures. Help us to show the same faithful persistence as the blind man did, in believing all things Scripture tells us about Jesus. Help our faith to grow to serve You better each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.