

Blind Bartimaeus

It's very sad that so many people in the world are sick. If you visit your local hospital, you will find it to be a very busy place with doctors and nurses attending to many, many sick people. Every bed in every ward of the hospital will be filled with people who suffer from so many different diseases and medical problems. Then there are day-clinics and special homes for the disabled and the blind. Many blind people live alone. There are about one and a half million people in Canada who are legally blind.

In Bible times there were no hospitals, or places to help the disabled. A person who was blind had to beg for help every day. In villages and along roadways beggars cried out for a little food, or for a little money.

Blind Bartimaeus begged along the roadside close to the city of Jericho. Even though he was the son of the well-known Timaeus, his needs were so constant and so many that he needed to beg for help just like many other beggars.

While blind Bartimaeus was blind, thankfully, he had ability to hear. He would sit along the roadway and listen to cart-wheels creaking under their heavy loads and he would listen for the peoples' feet treading the dusty roads. He would also listen to the people as they talked about the news of the day, or news of important people, or news of tragedies far and wide. Blind Bartimaeus' ears were his lifeline to the outer world.

Somehow, he heard quite a lot about a man called Jesus and how He did miracles of healing throughout the land of Galilee and Judea. He must have thought a lot about the Lord Jesus and of his power to heal people from leprosy, the palsy and so many other diseases. But what must have thrilled his heart most of all were reports of the Lord Jesus healing blind people. Wow! That would be life-changing. Blind Bartimaeus must have pondered the possibility that some day he could be cured from his blindness and given his eyesight to see again. Wouldn't that be wonderful! But who ever visits Jericho, that hot, low-lying, cursed city?

Well, what do you know, the day came when Blind Bartimaeus was sitting along the roadside begging and, of course, listening to the chit chat of the people. Then he heard that name – the name of the Lord Jesus the Son of God. He heard that the Lord was coming through that way, that very day. Blind Bartimaeus could not afford to miss his opportunity to be healed. He got so excited and so full of hope that he just burst out with the words, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." The Bible says that he repeated this cry over, and over, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." He cried out so much that the people got annoyed at him. They said, "Hush man, keep quiet." But Blind Bartimaeus couldn't be silenced. He kept on and on crying out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

As Blind Bartimaeus' cried out, Jesus stopped and stood still. There, from the road-way He asked, "Who called my name, bring him to me?"

People relayed the message, and Bartimaeus was told to get up from his begging position on the ground, for the Lord had called him. He was to get up and go quickly. Bartimaeus

didn't waste a minute. He threw off his begging blanket and made his way to where Jesus stood on the road-way. Soon they were face to face. Even though Bartimaeus couldn't see Jesus' face, thankfully he could hear his voice.

The Lord Jesus said unto him, **“What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?”** It seems that the Lord wanted to hear from the lips of Bartimaeus his request to be healed from his blindness, and that was exactly what he wanted. Bartimaeus said, **“Lord, that I might receive my sight.”**

The Bible says, **“And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.”**

Bartimaeus had his eyes opened. He could see colours and shapes and he could see things and people. The most important thing was that he could then see the Lord Jesus, Himself. Before he must have imagined who Jesus was and imagined what he looked like, but then he saw the Lord with his very own eyes, and he was not disappointed for Bartimaeus followed the Lord in the way.

The Lord worked through Bartimaeus faith to heal him, for he believed in the Lord. He believed the reports that Jesus had healed others. He believed that Jesus was the Son of David, which meant that He recognized the Lord as the Saviour of the world, or the Messiah.

The Lord always recognizes faith in people. The Lord knows whether we be doubters or believers. Not everybody accepts Jesus to be the Son of God. Some consider Him to be a troubler, or a deceiver. They are doubters and guilty of blasphemy, but not Bartimaeus. He was totally sure in his mind that Jesus was the Saviour He needed.

Faith is the opposite to doubt. A person who believes on the Lord will trust Him and depend on Him for help and hope. And the Lord sees that faith in hearts. We can only see the things that people do, but the Lord knows what you are thinking in your mind and heart. Therefore, He knows what you think of Him.

To believe in Jesus, then, becomes all-important. If Bartimaeus had been filled with doubts. If he had questioned and scoffed at the reports of Jesus' miracles, he would never have cried out to the Lord to have mercy on him, and consequently, he would never have been healed and, so, would have continued as a blind beggar sitting along the roadside begging all his life.

Likewise, you need to believe that the Lord is the true and only Saviour of the world. You need to think right thoughts about him, thoughts that agree with the Bible and with Jesus' own claims. Jesus stated, and it's recorded in the Bible, “I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me (John 14:6).

Faith hears those words from the Bible, faith accepts them as true and rejoices that Jesus will have mercy to deliver us from the blindness of sin. That is why it was good that Bartimaeus had the gift of hearing. He heard the truth about the Lord, and, accepting it, cried out for mercy. That was the power of faith at work in his heart.

You have also heard that Jesus is the Saviour of the world. You also know that He will have mercy on all that call on Him to be saved from sin. You are called upon to believe on the Lord Jesus. That means you too should cry out to the Lord asking Him for mercy. When you do, your faith will be rewarded with the gift of salvation, so that you will be saved.

But if you doubt you cannot be saved. The Lord could never say to a doubter, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." But the other hand, He will see your faith, and the moment you call on Him to have mercy on you He will save your soul.

To be saved you must, therefore, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.. You must rise up and call on the Lord to work His grace in your life. Call on Him. Pray believingly. Ask for mercy and it will be given. Seek and ye shall find, ask and it shall be given unto you.

Do you know you need the Lord's mercy to save your soul? Then have faith in the Lord Jesus. Show your faith today by calling on the Lord to save you. That's why Christians are called believers. They have believed the good news that Jesus saves and have called on Him with all their hearts. That is their act of faith – seeking, calling knocking. That's what we find in Matthew chapter 7 verse 7, the Lord Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:"

As for Bartimaeus, His eyes were opened. The Lord had mercy on Him. If you have faith in the Lord, He will also have mercy upon you.