

THE MAN WHO SAW THE KING
Mark 10:46–52

INTRODUCTION

TEXT: Mark 10:46–52

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⁴⁷And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁸And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁹And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.”

⁵⁰And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.

⁵¹And Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And the blind man said to him, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight.”

⁵²And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

In one sense, this is a healing story like so many others about Jesus in the Gospels. A man is blind. He seeks Jesus. Jesus heals him. Not much new to see here, right?

Not so fast! The Bible is the word of God; No one, in this lifetime, will ever come to the end finding new treasure by looking closely and meditating on God’s Word! As David wrote:

...The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward. – Psalm 19:9-11

With that in mind, let’s look closer at this text and see what God will show us.

⁴⁶And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside.

Where is Jericho? It is about 18 miles from Jesus’ destination—18 difficult miles as the Jerusalem is about 3500 feet higher in elevation in sea level. The Jericho road was much traveled, though dangerous to travel alone. This is the last town where Jesus will do any important public ministry before He enters Jerusalem, and a week later, the cross. You would think that the time for concentrating on other people might be over, as Jesus has to concern Himself with the monumental task before Him.

But it was during this visit to Jericho that He met one of the most loveable figures in the Bible, Zaccheus, who climbed a tree only to be noticed by the Savior, and be saved! Jesus took

time to dine at his house in fact. Jesus had gained a new follower. It is also at Jericho where Jesus gained another follower, name Bar-timaeus. He is called the son of "Timaeus." In fact, that is the meaning of his name. Bartimaeus is blind and that means his vocation is beggar. How else can he make a living?

But do you know what is unique about Bartimaeus? In all the book of Mark, not a single person that Jesus heals is named. Check it for yourself. Why do you think that is? We will return that question in a few moments.

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Jesus was not an anonymous healer to Bart. He knew where He had come from. By this time, people all over Israel had heard of Jesus. He was locally very famous. Bart gives him a title: Son of David. In the gospels, very few people call Jesus by this title. In fact, in Mark, only Bart is quoted as calling Jesus the "Son of David." Jesus has several terms used of Him that point to His identity. He is called the Prophet. He is called the Son of God. He is called Messiah. He is called the anointed One (the Christ). He is called the Lamb of God. He calls Himself the Good Shepherd, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Bread that comes down from heaven, and the Son of Man. All the titles of Jesus in the gospel are important, each one giving more insight into this remarkable person known as Jesus of Nazareth. What is the importance of calling Him the Son of David?

In all four gospels, the phrase "Son of David" only appears a few times. Once from the mouth of Gabriel. Other than that, it is used by a few blind men, and the children and crowds on during what we call "Palm Sunday." Son of David refers not simply to Jesus' DNA heritage. It is a reference to Him being the King of the Israel (and the world), sitting on an eternal throne, promised to David. David, the one-time giant slayer and first great king of Israel, received a promise from God that said this:

"And your house and your kingdom shall be and sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." 2 Samuel 7:16

What this promise meant for David was that one of his sons would forever sit on the throne of Israel. Now, we do not know if David, at the time of hearing this prophesy, had a complete understanding of what was being promised to him. It would be natural for a king to think that his nation would carry one, without interruption, and his grandsons would always be the ones sitting on the throne. But that was not to be the case. In fact, within a few centuries of his death, Israel would be completely overthrown, and his sons would no longer sit on any throne of Israel at all. And so it is to this day.

But Jesus is the Son of David by His family ancestry. He is also the Messiah. He is also the King of Israel. More than 200 years after King David had died, Isaiah prophesied of a time when God would restore Israel. He says from Messiah will be a branch growing from David's family. And Isaiah says that in that day:

"They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day, the root of Jesse, who shall stand

as a signal for the peoples—of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious” –Isaiah 11:9-10

Israel would, eventually gain a King from the family of David that would bring world-wide peace and rule Israel. This would be a Son of David.

But Isaiah was not the only prophet to say this. 100 years after Isaiah died, a prophet named Ezekiel, who prophesied after the time of Israel’s capture by the Babylonians. He spoke of a time when God would restore Israel and take away the curse of Adam from the earth. And he tied those events to the family of David when he wrote:

“I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one Shepherd, my servant David, and He shall feed them: He shall feed them and be their Shepherd.” –Ezekiel 34:22-23.

David had been dead for 400 years when God sent this prophesy. This “servant David” is a Son of David. This is a reference to the Messiah who would come and restore Israel.

A contemporary of Ezekiel, the prophet called Jeremiah, also spoke of the end times, when God would bring together the sheep of Israel under one King. He prophesied the following:

“Behold the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as King and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which He will be called: “the Lord is our righteousness.” –Jeremiah 23:5-6

This term, Son of David, used by Bart, referred to Jesus as the King of Israel, because He was the heir of David. Yet this term is hardly used in the gospels. It is used by the blind, by the children and crowds a week later, and that’s about it. Well, there is one exception to the references to David’s line, and that exception is from heaven. If we look to Luke chapter one, we see the angel, Gabriel, visiting Mary for the only time. He delivers the startling message to her that she is with child by the Holy Spirit. And among the other things he says, he adds these words:

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” Luke 1:32-33

So when Bart cries out, “Son of David,” he somehow stumbled upon a title for Jesus that only the angel Gabriel seemed to use up till now. Here is a citizen of Israel, calling out to the King of Israel, and asking for mercy. How would the King respond to His own citizen?

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⁵²And Jesus said to him, *“Go your way; your faith has made you well.”*

Well, here we see the King showing His power and mercy to His citizen. He asks for His request, and then grants it. Is this what it will be like when Jesus the King reigns on the earth? Yes! He will grant goodness and health to all His subjects.

Note this: Jesus said, “Go your way.” That implies that the man is now free to go where ever he wishes. What is Bart’s response?

And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

He could go where ever he wanted. Where did he chose to go? He followed Jesus! He wanted to see. But he also wanted to follow. And where did he follow Jesus to? Well, up to Jerusalem, where Jesus would enter the city on a donkey, and be hailed, not by the Jewish leaders, but by the crowds and the children, as the King. Many would shout, Hosanna, and “Son of David!” The crowds had not used that term for Jesus for three years? And now they do? And Bart is there, among them, perhaps shouting the loudest, perhaps even starting chants among the children (we don’t know), Son of Davd!

Why is Bart’s name listed even those the rest of the people Jesus healed are not? Most likely because Bart, joining Jesus during the last week of His ministry, joined the band of disciples and never left. He was likely a member of the church right from the start. Peter and Mark and all the other guys knew his name. That is the most likely explanation.

Final Observations:

First, **Before His final week on earth, Jesus saves a rich man and a beggar. In a world that wants to pit one group against another, we are to love all based on their humanity, receive all based on their faith.**

Zaccheus was very wealthy, Bartimaeus, very poor. Both have their place with the Messiah. Jesus does not separate us into groups of Jew or Gentile, black or white, rich or poor, republican or democrat. He divides us another way: We are either for Him or against Him. We either follow Him or reject Him.

All who follow Him receive as equal members of the family of God. All who reject Him? We do not judge them –instead we seek to recruit them into the family also! We say come join us to all who do not know Him. Our King is a good King. He receives all who come to Him, and He heals them. He even forgives our sins, because He is a King so good that He died to pay for the sins of His own people. [Gospel invitation here]

Finally, **We must acquaint ourselves with a very un-American concept: We have a King.**

Americans don’t have kings. Our king is the law and God makes the law. That is the idea on which America is founded. Human kings are nothing but trouble. If one puts all his trust in a human king, disappointment naturally follows.

But, that does not mean that God does not like the idea of a King. In fact, there is good reason to believe, as the scriptures we saw today prove, that the final Kingdom for all mankind is a monarchy.

But as Americans, we have no real category for a king. So, let us meditate on the concept now, and throughout our lives.

Our King is good. We cannot get too excited about Him. We cannot say too many good things about Him. We can not be too proud of Him. We cannot over exalt Him. We cannot put Him on too high of a pedestal. The human heart wants to worship, and it worships many things and many people, but none of them are worthy. Jesus? He is worthy. He is a good King.

Our King is Royal. He is more dignified, more important, and higher than any human institution or person worthy of our honor or respect. He is good, He is Royal, He is holy.

Our King is all wise. His judgements are always perfect and always best. Therefore we should always find it our pleasure to obey our King, no matter what it costs us, for He knows what is good.

Christian, You have a King. Serve Him like knights of the round table served Arthur. Serve Him as one who worships Him. Serve Him as one who knows that He is good and above all things.