

**Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)**

**Luke 18:35-43**

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. We'll continue to read Luke chapter 18. Today we're reading verses 35 to 43.

At this time Jesus had crossed the Jordan River and was going toward the city of Jericho. Jericho was located about 15 miles northeast of Jerusalem. In the record of Luke's Gospel, this section happened before Jesus entered the city of Jericho, while the first section of chapter 19 is after He entered Jericho and met the chief tax collector Zacchaeus.

Similar events are also recorded in Matthew 20:29-34, but there it says Jesus was going out of Jericho, and there were two blind men without names. A similar record is also found in Mark 10:46-52, where it also says Jesus was going out of Jericho, and there was a blind beggar with a name, Bartimaeus. Luke's Gospel records it as follows:

**Verse 35: "Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging."**

When we read the Bible we need to be detailed minded. When we read the Bible carefully, we will find that some records are not completely the same, and then we must consider carefully why this is so. Different expositors may have different views, and there are even many whom you respect very much, like Campbell Morgan's exposition which I like very much. According to his view, he felt that because one was entering Jericho and one was leaving Jericho, they may be records of different people. This is one view.

On the other hand, some brothers closer to our time, like Brother Christian Chen, after consulting many archaeological documents, have different opinions. For these explanations of the differences, basically I prefer them. We know that the city of Jericho first appears in the book of Joshua. After Joshua led the congregation of Israel from the wilderness across the Jordan River into the good land, the first battle they fought was at Jericho. After they won that victory, Joshua made the people swear, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho." This is in Joshua 6:26.

During the time of King Ahab of Israel, a man from Bethel arose and rebuilt the city of Jericho. When he laid its foundation, his firstborn Abiram died, and when he set up its gates, his youngest son Segub died, according to the word of the Lord which He had spoken through Joshua. This is recorded in 1 Kings 16:34. So the old city of Jericho remained in ruins. By the time of Jesus, King Herod the Great carried out large-scale construction and built Herod's palace in Jericho, thus building a new city of Jericho.

Therefore what Matthew, Mark, and Luke recorded should be the same event. However, Matthew and Mark took the old city of Jericho as their reference, so they said going out of the old Jericho; while Luke took the new Jericho as his basis, so it is equivalent to before entering the new Jericho, he met this blind man.

Perhaps these historical and archaeological matters are not so important, but I only want to remind the saints that when reading the Bible we need to be more careful. When we find some inconsistencies in our Bible reading, we should consider how different expositors view it, and ultimately, according to your own understanding, make a suitable judgment. But there is one thing we must hold on to tightly: the Bible is never wrong.

Our knowledge of the Bible and our interpretation of the Bible can become clearer and clearer over time. On one hand we can form our own judgment, and on the other hand, toward saints who have different understandings and different knowledge, we should also have a tolerant heart attitude.

We continue to return to this passage. There was a blind man sitting by the road begging. Hearing many people passing by, he asked what it was. The blind man could not see with his eyes, but his ears could still hear. Hearing a lot of noisy sounds, he knew something or someone might be passing by, so he asked;

**Verse 37: “So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.”**

This blind man should also have heard about Jesus’ deeds. Therefore, when people told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by—Nazareth was a small city looked down upon by people, and using this term to describe Jesus carried more or less a sense of despising Him. But how did this blind man react?

**Verse 38: “And he cried out, saying, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’”**

People told him it was Jesus of Nazareth; his understanding was: this Jesus of Nazareth, He is the Son of David. To the Israelites, David was their greatest king, and the descendant of David was the descendant of the king, the one who was to be king. Especially after the time of the prophets, they gradually recognized that the term “Son of David” was prepared for the Messiah. In other words, when he loudly cried “Jesus, Son of David,” he was saying “Messiah Jesus.”

Although his outward eyes were blind, his inward eyes were not blind. Although he could not see the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, in his heart he recognized that this Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of David and the Messiah. What did he come before the Messiah to ask for? Grace and mercy. He said, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

**Verse 39: “Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’”**

Originally it was a quiet and orderly procession continuing forward, but because this blind man shouted loudly, it seemed to disturb the order at that time. Therefore those who went before rebuked him and told him to be quiet. Doesn't this often happen in your church life too? When various ministries and various meetings are all in good order, suddenly one person is touched by the Holy Spirit and begins to praise loudly and shout loudly. If you are an elder, a co-worker, or a responsible brother, would you stop him? But this blind man had a clear recognition of Jesus in his heart. Although people forbade him to shout loudly, he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

**Verse 40a: "So Jesus stood still,"**

This begging blind man, people all looked down on him; when he made a sound and shouted, people all wanted to stop him. But his voice reached Jesus; not only reached Jesus—Jesus stood still for him. We must know that every one of us who has need from the bottom of our heart and cries out to Jesus—Jesus will stand still for us.

**Verses 40b-41: "and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, that I may receive my sight.'"**

He cried out to the Lord from his heart; he knew what he wanted: he wanted to receive his sight. Actually this is also what every one of us saints today needs to come before God and ask God for grace to give us: that we may truly see—truly see the beauty of Jesus, truly see the hope of salvation, truly see how great the work Jesus has done in us.

**Verse 42: "Then Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.'"**

This blind man first saw inwardly; through the inward seeing, there was an outward action of crying out. And Jesus stood still for him; not only stood still for him, but also healed his blindness.

**Verse 43: “And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.”**

This blind man knew his true condition and asked Jesus for grace. He said to Jesus that he wanted to receive his sight; Jesus indeed let him see. As soon as he saw, he rose up rejoicing and followed Jesus. Luke recorded this section here to make a very strong contrast with the young ruler earlier. That young ruler had everything and was very good; he always hoped to do something to obtain eternal life, but Jesus told him to do what he could not do, and as a result he went away sorrowful. But this blind man asked to be able to see, and as a result he followed Jesus rejoicing.

Let us think back: if that young ruler had recognized his true condition, come before Jesus not wanting to do something, but asking Jesus to let him see—so that he could truly see his own condition and truly see the hope of following Jesus—his outcome would have been completely different. In contrast to Peter and those disciples, when they felt they had left everything to follow Jesus, Jesus told them what would happen when He went to Jerusalem and what it really means to leave everything. But they did not understand what Jesus said. Why? Because they had not truly seen.

So Luke here seems to tell us that a person who can truly follow Jesus is a person who has true seeing. And this true seeing does not come from our natural self, does not come from our cleverness; it does not come from what we ourselves have, but in the grace of Jesus it is given to us to see. When we can truly see how great Jesus’ salvation is, only then is it possible for us to truly follow Jesus.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! Through this event of the blind man, we truly ask You to give us a true seeing. Let our eyes be taken away from ourselves, from our circumstances, from all kinds of things we handle every day, so that we may look to You alone. Also grant us grace so that we may know ourselves, so that we may know salvation; and give us a heart attitude that is willing to follow You with rejoicing. Thank You. Bless my life today. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ!