

SON OF MAN, SON OF DAVID

Luke 18:31-43

Key Verse: 18:31

“Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, ‘We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled.’”

In today’s passage, we find two kinds of blind people. One is a blind beggar. The other is the disciples, who were spiritually blind. When Jesus talked about his suffering, death and resurrection, they did not understand, even though he was telling them for the third time. They failed to see how he would fulfill Scripture as the promised Messiah through his suffering, death and resurrection. Yet this is the essence of the gospel: **“that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”** (1Co 15:3-4). Believing this gospel gives us eternal salvation. But the disciples just did not get it. We can understand them. Though we seem to have many problems, spiritual blindness is most serious. Fortunately, today’s passage does not end with the disciples. Right after that, Jesus opens the eyes of a blind beggar. This gives us hope. If we just see Jesus, we can find eternal salvation. In this passage, Luke uses two titles for the Messiah: Son of Man, and Son of David. These titles are too vast to cover exhaustively today. Yet they each reveal saving truth about Jesus. Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of our hearts to see Jesus: Son of Man and Son of David.

First, Son of Man (31-34). As we have seen throughout Luke’s gospel, Jesus taught the word of God diligently from early morning to late night. His main theme was the kingdom of God, which he would establish through his suffering, death, and resurrection. This is the core truth that Jesus wanted to plant in his disciples’ hearts. Jesus did this progressively. First, he revealed his love and power through his words, deeds and miracles. Then Jesus asked them, **“Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “God’s Messiah.”** It was precisely what Jesus wanted him to grasp. It means that Jesus is the unique Savior King sent by God, the only way of salvation God provided. After Peter’s confession, Jesus explained what he would do as the Messiah. Jesus said in 9:22: **“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”** Jesus just stated the facts that

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the Messiah would suffer, be rejected, die and rise again. Jesus used the word “**must**” to emphasize that it was inevitable for the Messiah. The disciples had a hard time accepting Jesus’ teaching because it was so different than their expectation. They wanted a conquering king who would defeat their enemies, provide national security and universal health care, and grow the economy. A short while later, Jesus said to them in 9:44, “**Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.**” Jesus again taught that the Son of Man’s work would not be what they expected. He would be betrayed according to God’s will. The disciples did not understand what this meant, and were afraid to ask him about it. Their only concern was “**which of them would be the greatest.**” Right after that, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem (9:51). For the last nine chapters of Luke’s gospel, Jesus has been on the way to Jerusalem, teaching the word of God to many people. But always on his mind were his disciples. Now they were near Jericho, about 15 miles from Jerusalem.

At this moment, what did Jesus do? Let’s read verses 31-33. “**Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, ‘We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.’**” This prediction is the most clear and definite of all. It introduces new revelations and includes more detail: Jerusalem, fulfillment of Scripture, delivered to the Gentiles, and specific contents of his suffering. Jerusalem was a chosen city in God’s salvation plan. Isaiah and Micah both prophesied that people from many nations would go to Jerusalem to hear the word of God (Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2). After rising again, Jesus declared that repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Lk 24:47). Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection were not random events orchestrated by wicked people. This was precisely God’s will and the fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus’ suffering and death looked like a failure. But he rose again. This was God’s wisdom to save man from sin and death. Here we can learn that there is a grand narrative to human history. It is not the speculation of philosophers. It is the salvation of mankind by a loving God who sent Jesus as our Savior King. As he saves individual people, he weaves us into his salvation history. We are here, not because we chose God, but because God chose us (Jn 15:16). God who began this good work in us will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ

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Jesus (Php 1:6). This gives us assurance of salvation. It gives meaning, purpose and clear direction. Though we go through many hardships, our God never fails to fulfill his good will. We are on the way to his glorious kingdom.

Jesus' death was not brought about by the Jews alone, but also by the Gentiles. This means that Jews and Gentiles alike are all sinners, and that Jesus died for all. Jesus revealed that he would be mocked, insulted, spit on and flogged. Jesus was not executed humanely. He suffered in a most cruel way. He experienced rejection, shame and great pain. Why did Jesus, who was sinless, have to suffer in this way? It is because Jesus took on himself the punishment that we deserve for our sins. As we know, being mocked is very painful. Each human being is very valuable and precious for we are made in the image of God (Ps 139:13-14). We want to be treated with respect and dignity. If someone appreciates our unique beauty or greatness we are so happy. But if someone mocks us and insults us, we are offended and very upset. There is a lot of mocking and insulting in our nation these days. There is great unrest due to injustice based on skin color, gender, income, social status, education, or the like. In such an atmosphere, defamation of character and personality is routine. Many have been mocked and insulted through cyber-bullying. It wounds our souls. We fall into fatalistic thinking. Then the devil condemns and torments us. When we are wounded, we wound others. When we are mocked, we mock others. When we are insulted, we insult others. It is a vicious cycle. It is hard to get out of it. Only Jesus can stop this vicious cycle by healing us and setting us free. At the tender age of three, Rod Byron was randomly beaten by his father. He vowed to be different as a father, no matter what it took. But when his oldest son was four, Rod struck him so hard that it left a permanent scar on his face. He found that he was just like his father. By God's grace he accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. Rod found forgiveness, new life and peace. He said, "Christ broke the cycle of violence. Christ set me free."¹

In truth, we deserve to be mocked, insulted and flogged because of our sins. But Jesus took this upon himself on our behalf. Even though Jesus is the Son of God, perfect and holy, he was blindfolded, struck and demanded, "**Prophecy! Who hit you?**" (Lk 22:64-65) A crown of thorns was pressed into his brow until blood flowed down his face. They struck him with a staff

¹ <http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/rod-bayron/>

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on his head and spit on him, saying, “**Hail, king of the Jews!**” (Mk 15:17-19). Before crucifixion Jesus was flogged. He was whipped with iron-studded leather cords, which ripped his flesh, causing great pain and severe bleeding. When he was on the cross, passersby hurled insults at him, “**He saved others but he cannot save himself. Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe**” (Mk 15:31-32). Jesus was treated in this way, so that we can be healed. Thank you, Jesus! Our dignity and honor as human beings can be restored and we can treat others with respect. Do you have an inner wound from being mocked and insulted? Come to Jesus who heals us and restores our souls.

The core of the gospel was revealed to Jesus’ disciples. But they did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about (34). Why could they not understand? The short answer is that they did not have the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts (Mk 8:33; 1Co 2:14). Instead, they were occupied with human thoughts. Among them were Judaism and fear of suffering.

Judaism was a form of nationalism, deeply rooted in the psyche of Israel as the chosen people of God. God had promised Abraham that all nations would be blessed through them. God redeemed them from slavery in Egypt, raised them as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, and promised to send the Messiah through them. They should have humbly served the nations with the word of God. They should have become a light for the Gentiles, and a shepherd nation for the world. But they became proud and self-righteous because they were chosen. They took all their privileges for granted, ignored God’s purpose and looked down on people of other nations. Peter still had this deep-rooted Judaism, even after conversion. God showed him a vision of world mission represented by all kinds of unclean animals. But Peter rejected them. Then God said, “**Do not call anything impure that God has made clean**” (Ac 10:15). God changed Peter’s heart so that he could accept the Gentiles and share the gospel with them. When we survey the political climate of America today, it is easy to be discouraged. What is going on? Perhaps it mirrors what happened to Israel. When they turned their backs on God, he exposed their sins to the world. It seems that our shameful sins are being exposed to the world. Yet, there is a remnant of God’s people who continue to call on his name. They recognize that it is God who has blessed America in every way. By God’s blessing we have freedom of speech,

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religion and travel. We have abundant resources and national security. We have so much food. Spiritually blind people do not recognize God and his blessing. They promote self-serving nationalism. However, God gave us food to feed the hungry, power to defend the weak, and freedom to spread the gospel to the whole world. It is time for God's remnant people to have a God-centered mindset and become a blessing to the world. Let's pray for this.

Another hindrance that caused misunderstanding was fear of suffering. Israel's people had suffered a lot throughout history. They longed for a Messiah who would deliver them from their oppressors, one who would end all their suffering. For this reason, they ignored the prophecies of a suffering Messiah. They developed their own view of the Messiah who would bring glory and victory without suffering. When Jesus talked about his suffering, death and resurrection, they countered, **"We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up?' Who is this 'Son of Man'?"** (Jn 12:34). Of course, they had Biblical support for their idea (Ps 89:35; Isa 9:6-7; Eze 37:25; Da 7:13-14). But in reality, they refused to accept a Messiah who would suffer and die. They heard what they wanted to hear, and rejected what they did not want to hear. They were very poor Bible students.

Yet we have the same tendency today. Some people go from church to church to find what they like to hear. They love to hear messages of blessing and prosperity, but hate to hear about repentance, suffering, the cross, and judgment—which are all core to the gospel message. They hear only God's words which appeal to them, and ignore others. For example, Thomas Jefferson removed from the gospel all the miracles of Jesus to formulate a rational Jesus he was comfortable with. Some people accept Jesus' love, but refuse his judgment. Others see Jesus as a champion of social justice, but ignore his teaching about sexual immorality. Still others emphasize individual freedom even to the point of infringing on God's sovereignty. St. Paul foretold these times, saying, **"For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers who say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths"** (2Ti 4:3-4). We need to examine ourselves. Do we really accept the gospel truth that Jesus, the Son of Man, suffered, died and rose for me? Do we accept that he calls me to deny myself, take up my cross

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and follow him? Actually, no one likes to hear about suffering, rejection and death. We understand Jesus' disciples. Nevertheless, we need to accept the Son of Man who suffered, died and rose again. This is the gospel truth that saves us. This gospel alone gives us true glory and victory.

Second, the Son of David (35-43). After giving his disciples a very challenging teaching, Jesus revealed a glimpse of his glory as the Messiah by healing a blind beggar. As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging (35). He must have been a miserable person. He seemed to have no hope and no future. He just existed by the charity of others. Probably he cursed God and others, and even himself. One day he heard a crowd going by and asked what was happening (36). He was told, **"Jesus of Nazareth is passing by"** (37). When he heard about Jesus, a ray of light shone into his heart. He found hope in Jesus. It was the chance of a lifetime. Not wanting to miss it, he called out, **"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"** (38) In calling Jesus **"Son of David,"** he recognized him as the Messiah who could heal him. But it was not easy for him to come to Jesus. He needed to overcome hindrances both within and without. People who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet. Anyone who is rebuked like this would be discouraged. It would be natural for him to withdraw, fall into self-pity, and become fatalistic. He could blame others, his parents, himself, even God. He could doubt Jesus' love and give up on getting an answer. But he did not. In fact, he shouted all the more, **"Son of David, have mercy on me!"** (39) He had a never give up spirit. He was practicing to always pray and not give up. He did not care what people thought. He fixed his thoughts on Jesus with the conviction that Jesus would hear his cry and answer. He didn't depend on his worthiness, just Jesus' mercy.

Verse 40 says, **"Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him."** At that time, Jesus' heart must have been heavy with his impending suffering and death. It seemed that he had no room to listen to someone's cry. But he stopped. Jesus was ready to help one desperate person, ready to answer the cry for mercy. Many of us struggle to help our children spiritually. All we need to do is to cry out to Jesus for his mercy. He is ready to listen to our cry because he is merciful. When the man came near, Jesus asked him, **"What do you want me to do for you?"** (41a) This is a servant's question. Even though Jesus is the Son of David, he wants to serve. What an opportunity! The man could have asked for anything: a good job, enough money to live on for the

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rest of his life, or a woman willing to marry him. But he said, **“Lord, I want to see”** (41b). This is what he truly needed, and something that only the Messiah could give him (Isa 35:5). He wanted to see the beautiful world God made. He wanted to see the Messiah. He wanted to see his family members and friends. His request pleased Jesus. Jesus said to him, **“Receive your sight; your faith has healed you”** (42). Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God (43a). He was not like the nine lepers who disappeared after getting what they wanted. He was thankful to Jesus, followed Jesus and praised God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God (43b). The man rendered glory to God through his faith and became a source of blessing to others.

Jesus is the Son of Man. He suffered, died and rose again according to the Scriptures to fulfill God’s will and give us eternal salvation. He heals the wounds of sin and gives us victory over the power of death. He is our glorious Savior King sent by God. Jesus is the Son of David. He hears our cry for mercy and heals our spiritual blindness. He reigns over us with mercy and love. Praise Jesus: Son of Man, Son of David!