

THE SON OF DAVID

Luke 18:31-43

Key Verse: 18:42

"Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.'"

Last week we studied about a ruler who came to Jesus to inherit eternal life. Jesus taught him the way to inherit eternal life. To inherit eternal life, the ruler had to learn the spirit of the law of God. Today, Jesus again predicts his death. We have to think about the meaning of Jesus' prediction of his death prayerfully. Jesus also gives sight to the blind beggar on the way to Jerusalem. We learn how Jesus saw this blind beggar. May God bless us to know the heavenly secret and divine compassion from Jesus.

First, the meaning of Jesus' suffering and death (31-34).

Look at 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 handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.'" These verses show us that the Son of Man is going up to Jerusalem, in order to fulfill what was foretold by the prophets. The Son of Man will be handed over to the Gentile rulers. They will mock him and insult him and spit on him and flog him and kill him. When we read only verses 31-32, it doesn't make sense why the Son of God has to suffer so much. How can it be that those who received marvelous grace from him mock him and spit

on him and turn their backs and shout, "Crucify him"? Look at verse 33.

"On the third day he will rise again." Through his death, he conquers all the evils and injustice and lawlessness and mercilessness and inhumanness through his humble suffering. But his humble suffering is not everything. On the third day, he will rise again as the climax of God's will for world salvation purpose. "He will rise again" indicates his resurrection. Resurrection is ultimate victory over the power of death and sin. They killed Jesus. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death (Ac 2:23,24). The power of sin and death died through Jesus' resurrection. But its tail is flailing as the vestige of death.

Jesus told his disciples about his suffering, death and resurrection so many times. So whenever Jesus opened his mouth, they expected that again Jesus would talk about his suffering, death and resurrection. But they did not understand, because they did not want to hear about that story. When we feed sheep, we should not be discouraged after teaching them the Bible one or two times. We must teach them the meaning of Jesus' suffering and death until they grasp the secret of new life. Everybody must know this truth. So after Jesus went to raise dead Lazarus, Jesus told this new life principle to the sorrowful sisters. John 11:23-25 says, "Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha answered, 'I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies....'" As the summary of this thought, Jesus said in John 12:24, "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." One honest

young man has been to a church for 17 years. When he had to teach a secular humanist, he did not teach the principle of Jesus' death and resurrection well, because he did not know the meaning of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. As a result, he was brainwashed by his sheep with secular humanism. Therefore, if we do not know the meaning of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, we can tell our sheep, "No cross, no crown," or "No practice, no concert." We must know that if we do not teach the way of the cross to God's flock, we are not good Bible teachers in the sight of God. We must learn what Jesus' crucifixion means. In short, it is to save men from their sins (Mt 1:21). When we meditate on his suffering, we can learn several things. The concept of the Messiah was not clearly defined before Isaiah. But through Isaiah, Jesus' Messiahship was consolidated.

When we read Isaiah as a whole, we learn several things about our Lord's crucifixion. First, the crucifixion of Jesus implies saving grace to all mankind. We cannot explain all the thought of Isaiah. But when we refer to the book of Hosea, Isaiah's saving grace of the Messiah is easy to understand. God commanded Hosea to marry a notorious and wild town prostitute. As God commanded, the prophet Hosea married Gomer, the town's prostitute (Hos 1:2). But this sinful woman was burdened to live with a holy man of God. So she went back to the prostitutes' quarters. Then God commanded Hosea to go and buy her back for fifteen shekels of silver (Hos 3:2). Hosea obeyed God's command. This short story summarizes the entire saving grace of the book of Isaiah. God's chosen people were corrupt. But God wanted to save them from their corruption again and again. Second, the crucifixion of Jesus urges us to repent. Provided there is a change of heart, God is always

forgiving. "Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa 1:18). What God wants from man is recognition and reciprocation of his holiness. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa 6:3) Isaiah 1:4 says, "Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the Lord; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him." Men are so corrupt and they are physically alive but they are spiritually dead. But God wants to talk with them so that they can turn their hearts to God. Third, the crucifixion of Jesus brings the peace of God. In the past, what man did was to make swords to assault other nations. For this, they killed precious men's lives mercilessly and thoughtlessly. The world history is no more than the continuation of war. In the ancient time, the nations were not formed, but groups of people lived together and the strong one became their king. In the course of developing the human civilization, in order to form a nation, there were endless wars. In other words, because of wars, people had no peace in their minds. But in God there is peace. Isaiah 2:4 says, "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore." The crucifixion of Jesus teaches us that his suffering and death and resurrection is the sign of the King of Peace. This is the prediction of Jesus' death to his disciples. Did the disciples understand any of this? Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about (34), because their hearts were somewhere else.

Second, the blind beggar (35-43).

As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging (35). This verse describes the blind beggar's situation very well. First, he was a blind man. There are many sorrowful people in the world. But who could be the most sorrowful person in the world, except a blind man? God gave us two eyes to see the things of the world. How beautiful it is to see melting ice in a brook, making silver sound when the water streams down. And green buds on the trees all sprouting, looking lively. Soon summer comes. How wonderful it is to see all the trees and leaves vigorously grow until foliage is abundant. But this blind man could not see all these beautiful things. What is worse, he could not see his mother's face. His two eyes were nothing but two holes seemed to be made for shedding many tears. Most of all, if someone is a human being, he wants to see his mother's face. But he could not see his mother's face.

A blind man cannot see even himself. He depends on his stick. Because he cannot see, he imagines everything. When some people are talking about something, he misunderstands, thinking that they are criticizing him. His inferiority complex leads him to complicated self-pity. But he had to maintain his physical life. So he begged, saying, "Alms for the blind! Alms for the blind!" But his income was always not enough.

His name is not mentioned here. But in Mark's gospel, his name was mentioned as Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46). There is no one who doesn't have his own name. There was one family which had six daughters. The father of the family wanted to have a son. But the seventh daughter was born.

He was greatly discouraged and named her, "No More." So she became an object of ridicule when she went to school, because of her name, "No More." But this blind beggar had no name. Usually, a name is the meaning of one's existence and his character. But he was completely despised by people. People called him "a son of Timaeus." "Bar" means, in Greek, "son." So people called him a "son of Timaeus." What a sorrowful human being he was. Above all, the fact that he had no name of his own shows us that he was the most sorrowful person in the world.

One day, as usual, he was sitting on a mat and crying and begging, saying, "Alms for the blind! Alms for the blind!" But no one put coins into his beggar's bag. He could not make any money by begging. So he cried very sorrowfully. At the moment, he heard the crowd going by. He stopped crying and asked, "What's going on?" They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." Unusually, his cold heart warmed up and his hoarse voice restored and his heart was burning. So he called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (38) This one saying was from his heart and soul.

Then what happened? Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet. To them, it may be proper to treat him like that because Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem. Jesus did not have time to take care of this blind beggar. More than that, out of their contempt, they rebuked him, "You blind beggar! Be quiet! Shut up! Don't bother the Teacher." But he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me! Son of David, have mercy on me!" (39).

God's mercy was on him. Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" (40,41) "Lord, I want to see," he replied (41b). As a blind beggar his immediate need was some money or a piece of clothes. As a blind beggar, he could not wish that he would see the things of the world with his blind eyes. But what did he say? "Lord, I want to see," he replied. Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When the people saw it, they also praised God (42,43). Jesus did not see his outward appearance as a blind beggar. Jesus saw his faith and gave him his sight. Jesus also complimented him, "Your faith has healed you." He had remarkable faith. He was a blind beggar. People hindered him when he wanted to go to Jesus. In the past, there was no precedent that a blind beggar's eyes were opened. So people thought blind men were cursed by God. But he believed the Son of David, Jesus, can give him sight. It is common sense that a fatalistic person resign to his fate. They never try to have faith in the Messiah. But this blind beggar overcame his fate as a blind beggar and cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

From this blind beggar we learn a beautiful spiritual lesson. Not only did he overcome his fatalism, but also he knew what he wanted. When Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" he answered, "Lord, I want to see!" He was a blind beggar. But he knew what was most important for him. One is the starting point of totality. There are so many things men want to have. But there are not many people who want to have one thing. God loved David so much that he was willing to bless his son

Solomon. At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."

Solomon answered, "A wise and discerning heart to govern your people" (1Ki 3:1-15).

The Bible tells us that two become one (Gen 2:24). It means that a man and wife become one in spirit, though they have two separate bodies. They are no more two, but one. God also gave us one life. If we know that we have one life, we are indeed wise people. Most of all, God gave us his one and only Son to save us from our sins. When the blind beggar asked for what was most important in his life, Jesus admired him, saying, "Your faith has healed you." In the past, the blind beggar could not see. But now he could see. "Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus..." (43). Though he was a blind beggar, he had all the desires a human being could have had. But he was not directed by sinful human feeling. As soon as he received sight, he followed Jesus, making friends with the other disciples.

May God give us wisdom to know the meaning of Jesus' suffering and death. May God grant us wisdom so that we can ask for what is most important in our lives.