

CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING?

Jeremiah 31:15-22; Mark 8:22-28 / Isaiah 44:1-8

I. Jesus Heals the Blind

A. Inability to see and failure to see are both massive problems; each is a metaphor illustrating the other. “And he cometh to Bethsaida; and *they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.*” (MARK 8:22) “*Having eyes, see ye not?* and having ears, hear ye not? and *do ye not remember?*” (MARK 8:18)

B. Healing the blind man is one of many miracles which the people of the region saw and ignored; all reality glorifies God except for those too blind in heart and mind to see what God is doing. “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! *woe unto thee, Bethsaida!* for *if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented* long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (MATTHEW 11:21)

C. This hurting person was only one of many people whom Jesus blessed; where Jesus is lifted up, life becomes better for those who turn to Him. “And ran through *that whole region* round about, and *began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.*” (MARK 6:55)

D. Healing the blind is one of the prophesied marks of the Messiah; changed lives have a persuasive power no *jihad* can match. “Then *the eyes of the blind shall be opened*, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and *streams in the desert.*” (ISAIAH 35:5-6)

E. God’s grace is focused but not stingy; the Savior is the help of the helpless and the consolation of the disconsolate. “*The blind receive their sight*, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and *the poor have the gospel preached to them.*” (MATTHEW 11:5)

II. Grace Acts in God’s Time

A. Jesus acted for the benefit of this sufferer, not to bring attention to Himself or to promote His own cultural campaign. “And *he took the blind man* by the hand, *and led him out of the town*; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.” (MARK 8:23)

B. Saul, the persecutor of believers, had to be stricken blind and led away by hand before he also could be healed and transformed into Paul the evangelist of the Gentiles. “And *Saul arose* from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, *he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.*” (ACTS 9:8)

C. People do not see until God opens eyes. “*I counsel thee to buy of me* gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and *anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.*” (REVELATION 3:18)

D. Healing began partially; growing in grace over time is normal for believers. “And he looked up, and said, *I see men as trees, walking.*” (MARK 8:24) “*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold* wondrous things out of thy law.” (PSALM 119:18)

E. God will not stop till He finishes what He starts; healing the blind man is evidence for the perseverance for the saints. “*And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim*, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.” (ISAIAH 32:3) “*That* the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation* in the knowledge of him: *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,*” (EPHESIANS 1:17-18)

III. God Finishes What He Starts

A. Jesus kept working on the sufferer until the man saw clearly. “After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and *he was restored, and saw every man clearly.*” (MARK 8:25)

B. Just as revelation is progressive, so is grace. “*But the path of the just is as the shining light*, that shineth *more and more unto the perfect day.*” (PROVERBS 4:18)

C. The good gifts of God are specific, not general; Universalism has a certain charm for the fallen mind, but it does not have Biblical support. “For *whosoever hath, to him shall be given*, and he shall have more abundance: *but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*” (MATTHEW 13:12)

D. Confidence in God is fundamental to progress in the gospel and the full Christian life; the man trusted Jesus enough to follow him out of town in hope Jesus would finish what He had begun. “Being *confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it* until the day of Jesus Christ:” (PHILIPPIANS 1:6) “But *without faith it is impossible* to please *him*: for *he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*” (HEBREWS 11:6)

E. Can you see anything? Eyes healed by Jesus see eternity in the marvelous light of grace. “And *he sent him away* to his house, saying, *Neither* go into the town, nor *tell it to any in the town.*” (MARK 8:26) “But ye *are a chosen generation*, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; *that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*” (1 PETER 2:9)

+ Dr. Edwin P. Elliott