

Matthew 9 vv.27-31.

Jesus has left the house of Jairus. Look there He walks with His disciples through the streets of Capernaum.

Suddenly He is shouted at. Who is doing that? ... How rude. To shout at anyone is not the thing to do. Do you ever do such a thing? ... Surely not? ...

The Lord Jesus is shouted at here, but this time it is not rude. Why not then? ... Just read on.

Two men follow after Jesus and call out as hard as they possibly can. Listen! ...

"Thou Son of David, have mercy on us!" they repeat incessantly.

What do these men want? ... Just take a look. They are two blind men. They are following Jesus crying for mercy.

Doubtless they have heard from the mouth of the crowd what a great wonder has just taken place in the house of Jairus. After all that they have already heard about Him, the faith has been wrought in their hearts that this Prophet of Nazareth is the Messiah. Oh, if He will, He can save them. He can help them.

Do you hear what they cry?

"Thou Son of David!" By those words they confess that Jesus is the Messiah for the Messiah would come forth from the house of David.

But however loudly these two blind men cry, the Lord Jesus lets them continue, and acts just as though He hears nothing. It really seems as though the Lord will not help them. What a disappointment. Yet they do not go away, but continue calling upon Him - though apparently in vain.

At last Jesus enters a house, probably that of Peter. He has hardly gone inside when both these blind men, who have even followed Him there, stand in front of Him. They plead for recovery of their sight.

Jesus asks them: "Believe ye that I am able to do this?"

At once their answer comes: "Yea, Lord."

And they not only say so, but they mean it too. They believe it also. Those words come from their hearts.

Jesus knows that they believe in truth, that He has the power to heal them, for He Himself has put that faith in their hearts.

He touches their eyes and at that very moment they are opened. They can see. They are two more unfortunates who have been helped by the Saviour.

Before they leave the house though the Lord commands them strictly: "See that no man know it" - or in other words: "Keep quiet about it and tell nobody."

The two men leave, but they do not carry out Jesus' request. They cannot keep quiet about it. To all who will listen they tell what Jesus has done for them. They spread abroad His fame in all that country.

Matthew 9 vv.32-34.

Look, yet another sufferer is brought to the Lord Jesus. He is a man possessed of a devil who is furthermore stricken with dumbness. He too is healed by Jesus.

The crowds are astounded. They cry out: "~~It~~^{It} was never so seen in Israel. Never have so many wonders taken place in Israel.

The Pharisees, who are also standing there, see the reverential awe of the people. They hear these words. That annoys them; it embitters them. They cannot bear it, that Jesus should be honoured. The people must turn away from Jesus.

And then? ... Again they blaspheme the work of God. Again they have the effrontery to say scornfully: "He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils."

That is to say then that Jesus is in the employ of the prince of darkness. All these wonders are works of the devil. They stop at nothing in their blind hatred. The Pharisees dare to say anything.

Repentance? ... No, these elders of the Jews know no repentance. The time of repentance is passed for them. How terrible the thought!

Mark 6 vv.1-6.
Matthew 13 vv.53-58.

Come! In our thoughts we go yet again to Nazareth. Once more the peace and quiet of a Sabbath reigns. The Nazarites are getting ready as usual to go to the synagogue. Very soon the building is quite full. No wonder, for Jesus will be in their midst that morning.

This is the second time that He is to preach in the synagogue of His former home town. The first time it had ended up so sadly. They had wanted to cast

Jesus down from a hilltop. They had then wanted to murder Him in blind, brutal fury. You can still remember that, can't you?

Now, some months later, He is again among them. He has left Capernaum and travels from city to city and from town to town. So it is that He has come once more to Nazareth, and now, on this Sabbath day, He is to preach.

Calmly His words resound through God's house. What sort of impression do His words make upon His fellow citizens? ... Just read what it says in Mark, chapter 6. "Many, hearing Him, were astonished." Oh yes, they are certainly astonished, but they do not believe on Him. They ought to have asked Him for forgiveness for their evil treatment of Him some months ago. They do not do so though. Oh not, on the contrary. They are offended at Him.

Just listen to what they say: "From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?"

Here they say "the son of Mary"! Before, they had said "the son of Joseph"! Why the difference? Evidently Joseph was then dead, for we hear no more of Joseph. That is why Jesus is now called "the son of Mary".

The Nazarites know Him through and through. His family also lives in Nazareth. In Mark we read that He was the brother of James and Joses, of Judas and Simon. No, they cannot understand how Jesus comes to possess that wisdom. They are offended at him. There is not the least respect in their hearts.

Do you know how that comes about? ... They do not want to believe in Jesus. What? ... He, the Son of God? ... He, the long expected Messiah? That cannot be, they think - that is nonsense. Who does ^{He}/imagine He is?

They know Him far too well for that from earlier on. They do not indeed now thrust Him out of the synagogue, they do not now try to cast Him down from the hilltop, but their behaviour and their very looks betray RESISTANCE.

The unbelief which dwells in the hearts of His fellow citizens is so great, that the Lord Jesus can do no wonders there. Why is that? ...

Well, they did not bring to Him the sick and afflicted who were in Nazareth. They did not want Jesus to heal their sufferers. Most of them stay at home. Through enmity they refuse to ask for help from Jesus. They are not going. They cannot give Jesus the honour of their healing.

It is so bad, that the Lord Jesus marvelled because of their unbelief.

Only a few come for help, and they indeed return to their homes completely restored.

Yet though the others see and hear from those few that Jesus has the power to save them also, yet still they refuse to come. They stay away on purpose. They themselves are to blame that Jesus can help hardly anyone.

This is the second time that Jesus is rejected by those who dwelt at Nazareth.
