

Lesson III.

BLIND BARTIMÆUS

July 19, 1914

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Jesus had left Perea, and, crossing the Jordan, had come to Jericho about 5 miles from the river and 17 from Jerusalem.

GOLDEN TEXT—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 shall sing.—Isaiah 35 : 5, 6 (Rev. Ver.).

Memorize vs. 51, 52. THE LESSON PASSAGE—Mark 10: 46-52. Read Matthew 20 : 29-34.

46 And they ¹ came to Jericho : and as he went out ² of Jericho with his disciples and a great ³ number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side ⁴ begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Je'sus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Je'sus, thou Son of Da'vid, have mercy on me.

48 And many ⁵ charged him that he should hold his peace : but he cried ⁶ the more a great deal, Thou Son of Da'vid, have mercy on me.

49 And Je'sus stood still, and ⁷ commanded him to

Revised Version—¹ come ; ² from ; ³ multitude, the son of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the way side ; ⁴ Omit begging ; ⁵ rebuked him ; ⁶ out ; ⁷ said, Call ye him ; ⁸ cheer ; ⁹ sprang up ; ¹⁰ him, and said, What ; ¹¹ And the ; ¹² Rabboni ; ¹³ may ; ¹⁴ straightway ; ¹⁵ him.

Daily Readings—(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)—M.—Blind Bartimæus, Mark 10 : 46-52. T.—Blind Bartimæus, Isa. 42 : 1-7 W "According to your faith," Matt. 9 : 27-35. Th.—A message to John, Matt. 11 : 1-6. F.—The blessings of the gospel, Isa., ch. 35. S.—The man born blind, John 9 : 1-7. S.—The blind beggar of Jericho, Luke 18 : 35-43.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. HOPE.—46, 47. They came. Jesus and His followers, leaving the upland pastures of Perea, traveled down the road leading to the sunken channel of the Jordan, crossed that river, and passed through the fertile region on the western side. To Jericho ; known as "the city of palms" from the abundance of these trees growing about it. Jericho was a place of

commercial importance, owing to its trade in tropical fruits and especially balsams, and to its being on the caravan route from Damascus to Egypt. Besides, it was near the mountain passes leading up to Jerusalem and Beth-el and commanded the lower fords of the Jordan, and hence was of much consequence in a military point of view. In our Lord's day, the Romans had a



A BLIND BEGGAR

garrison here. It was also the last stopping place of pilgrims going from Galilee to Jerusalem by way of Perea. A great multitude (Rev. Ver.) ; made up of pilgrims from Galilee and Perea going to Jerusalem for the Passover. Bartimæus ; a name meaning the son of Timæus. He probably became a well known man amongst the early Christians. A blind beggar (Rev. Ver.). Blindness is very common in the East, being caused chiefly by sun glare and lack of cleanliness. Begging was the only way in which a

friendless blind man could gain a living. By the way side (Rev. Ver.) ; where travelers would constantly be passing to and fro. Heard. First the blind man heard the trampling feet of the crowds and their voices and inquired what it all meant (see Luke 18 : 36).

Jesus of Nazareth ; the name of the common people for the Saviour (see Matt. 21 : 11), used contemptuously by Pilate (John 19 : 19) and proudly accepted by the early Christians, Acts 2 : 22 ; 3 : 6, etc. Son of David ; a title of the Messiah. Have mercy on me. Everything hung upon the pity of Jesus.

II. HINDRANCES.—48, 49. Many rebuked him (Rev. Ver.) ; angry, perhaps, at Bartimæus blurring out the title of the Messiah which they were holding back till they reached Jerusalem, or, it may be, simply because they did not want their progress hindered. Jesus stood still ; stopped by His pity for the poor blind man. Call ye him (Rev. Ver.) No one ever seeks Jesus as earnestly as Jesus seeks him. They call the blind man. In this call the Greek has three short, pithy words signifying : "Courage ; " "Rise ; " "He calls you." Mark tells us just how the crowds would speak.

III. HEALING.—50. Casting away his garment ; the "abla" or heavy blanket-like upper garment worn over the tunic, used as a robe by day and a covering at night. It was this robe which might not be retained as a pledge after sunset (see Ex. 22 : 26). Sprang up (Rev. Ver.) ; full of eagerness to reach Jesus. Came to Jesus ; needing no guide (but see Luke 18 : 40) on his way to the helper whom he could not see. So must we come by faith for salvation to the Saviour who is unseen.

51, 52. What wilt thou. Jesus knew what the blind man desired, but He wished to draw out the confidence of the suppliant in His power to heal. Rabboni (Rev. Ver.) ; "my master," the highest title he could use. (Compare John 20 : 16.) My sight. This was his one great bodily need, as the need of our souls is God's salvation. Thy faith hath made thee whole. Faith for us, as for the blind man, is just