

27. May 2021

“Heal my blindness”

Mk 10:46-52

They reached Jericho; and as he left Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus - that is, the son of Timaeus - a blind beggar, was sitting at the side of the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout and cry out, 'Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me.' And many of them scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me.' Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him here.' So they called the blind man over. 'Courage,' they said, 'get up; he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'Rabbuni, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has saved you.' And at once his sight returned and he followed him along the road.

We understand this testimony in faith.

The blind man puts all his hope in Jesus, does not let people stop him and the Lord hears him. Jesus even points out Bartimaeus' faith in particular: “Go; your faith has saved you.”

It is a concrete miracle that the Lord performs and no one should want to reinterpret it as if it had not so happened. Such miracles do not fit the image of a modernist theology because they testify too strongly to a divine intervention, but they did happen for real. Many miracles are attested in the Gospels, they are part of the proclamation of the Gospel. To relativise and reinterpret them would not only be an act of spiritual violence, but also a failure to strengthen the faith of those who hear.

Bartimaeus teaches us to cry out to God, to implore his help. We can plead and insist to the Lord as the widow urges the unjust judge. (*cf. Lk 18:1-8*). If Bartimaeus had given up at the first resistance, he would not have been healed.

The blind Bartimaeus not only experiences the grace of being able to see again, but also followed Jesus on his way. Such a healing can lead to direct following of Jesus and would also be the right response to the proof of God's love. Even today we experience this when people experience healing through the Lord.

A bodily blindness is perceived in a concrete way. But what about spiritual blindness? We often do not notice it and that is why we do not call for healing as urgently as Bartimaeus. But this blindness is much more tragic.

This blindness does not allow us to see the works of God nor to recognise the Lord properly. It also prevents us from perceiving the other person in the light of God. It clouds us and we do not perceive properly the dangers that surround us. It makes us spiritually sleepy and sluggish. We can even live a lifetime in deception!

One might say: how can we call upon the Lord if we do not realise our own blindness?

Here an important step of faith, trust and humility is required.

Let us also assume in our personal lives that many things are still closed to us and ask the Holy Spirit to open our eyes where we are still blind. Let us seriously ask Him for His light, for by His *"light we see the light"* (Ps 36:9b).

We can simply say: God heal my blindness, so that I may know you better, so that my heart may be more inflamed with love. Give me eyes to see. Take away my blindness, take it away entirely!

There is so much that we are not yet able to recognise properly, where our gaze is not yet free and is still taken over by this world and also by our desires. Fears can block the light, disordered wishes and cravings can cloud it. We should not primarily look for the knowledge of this world, but for instruction by the Holy Spirit, for wisdom.

*"Come, Holy Spirit, come!
And from your celestial home
Shed a ray of light divine!"*
(Sequence of Pentecost- *Veni Sancte Spiritus*)

Let us not let go of the Lord until He heals our spiritual blindness completely, as it is possible on earth where we still *"see only reflections in a mirror"* (1 Cor 13:12a). Let us cry aloud like Bartimaeus to the Lord and not be deterred.

"Lord I want to see, I want to recognise You and Your miracles better and walk with seeing eyes on the path You have prepared for me."