

## **'GOD'S KING REVEALED'**

We have several pictures on our refrigerator. One of them is of young girl called Resmin, who lives in Bangladesh. Kath and I sponsor her through Compassion.

She's 16, lives with her father and mother, and there are no other children in their household. Resmin cares for their animals, carries water and makes the beds. She likes art, drawing, group games, skipping rope and Bible class. She is in our equivalent of year 9 and her favourite subject is languages.

Kath and I haven't seriously considered visiting Resmin.

But I wonder with these details from Compassion and the letters she's written to us over the years: would we recognise her?

Would she recognise us?

What pictures and expectations have we allowed to fill our minds, as we consider the community where she lives, her parents and her home?

Would the reality of that first meeting be exciting, or would there be disappointment?

Expectations. We all have them. For Israel they expected a King. The question is would they recognise him?

This morning's passage is fascinating:

Two blind men seemingly come from nowhere and even though they can't see, they follow Jesus.

The two blind men ask Jesus a very significant question and call him a very significant name. "Son of David".

Jesus then goes indoors, no one else can see them and then Jesus asks the blind men a very significant question and the blind men answer in a very significant way using another very significant name. "Yes Lord".

Jesus then instructs them: "Don't tell anyone."

But then in front of a crowd, who can see Jesus, Jesus heals a man who can't hear or talk. When the man can talk, he tells whoever he likes.

But then just to add a closing touch of irony.

The Pharisees, who know all the promises of God, who presumably, have good eyesight, can hear and can speak. Metaphorically are blind, they don't have ears to hear the truth and mouths, to speak the truth.

They see the miracle but are incapable of even stumbling over the stunning mounting evidence, that clearly identifies the one performing the miracle.

The two blind men and the Pharisees obviously had very different expectations.

The question is who is right?

And part of the answer to the question is the way Matthew keeps pointing us towards the evidence.

- a man with leprosy - healed
- an unseen paralysed man - healed
- sick and demon possessed people - healed
- a storm calmed
- a woman who'd been bleeding for 12 years – healed
- a girl who'd died – now alive

And now we read in Matthew 9:27

***Read Matthew 9:27***

“Have mercy on us Son of David”

It's a name that might not mean much, and we might not remember

But at the very beginning of Matthews gospel, Matthew writes:

***Read Matthew 1:1***

Israel had been waiting for the “son of David” 1000 years.

God had promised King David, an offspring, who God would crown as his King, A King, who would establish God's kingdom, forever.

We read:

In 2 Samuel though the prophet Nathan

**Read 2 Samuel 7:11b-13**

And then through the Prophet Isaiah

**Isaiah 9** – He will reign on David’s throne... establishing and upholding it ... forever

**Isaiah 35:4-5** – Then the eyes of the blind will be opened...the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer and the mute tongue shout for joy.

**Isaiah 61** – recognises among other things: he will be anointed to bring good news

When I was a kid, my dad used to say: “I see said the blind man, but he couldn’t see at all”

How ironical, it’s the two blind men, that see it first.

But then, even the crowd are amazed - verse 33: **“Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel”**. And nothing, like this, would ever be seen, again

And the reason nothing like this had ever been seen, is because no one had seen the “Son of David” before. But now he’s there in front of them fulfilling all the promises made through the prophets so long ago.

It’s as if, the last couple of months, spending time in Matthew 8 & 9, has been like one of those painting with numbers kits. With each week, a different number, and a different colour. Now a face has appeared - no more numbers, no empty spaces, all the colours are on the canvas – the picture is complete.

So, the question is: Have we seen him? Do we recognise him?

Do we recognise he’s a King like no other? A King who can undo all that’s wrong in the world. He can bring sight to the blind, bring hearing to the deaf, cure every disability, give life to the dead and remedy every injustice.

And if we’ve seen him, how do we respond to him? How do we respond to this King?

Well, the passage, provides us with 3 options, to consider.

**1. To: Believe Jesus**

In verse 28, Jesus asks the two blind men:

**Read Matthew 9:28-29**

And, a word of caution as we read these verses.

It would be incorrect to conclude, Jesus, is in some way, responding to the proportion or amount of faith, these men demonstrated.

It's not the amount, of faith, these blind men demonstrate. Rather It's because these men, have placed their faith, as large or small as it might be,

in the right place.

They believe in Jesus, trusting the one who is able.

As one preacher so wonderfully puts it: The point is not: great faith in a saviour, rather it's faith, in a great saviour.

These men have nothing to offer Jesus. None of us do.

Do you remember the man with leprosy, back at the beginning of chapter 8?

He simply says:

**"Lord, if you are willing"**

And the blind men here in chapter 9, simply say: **"Have mercy"**

They're genuine in what they say - They don't even try to prove their worthiness. They know, what they need: undeserved kindness

**"Jesus, you can do it ... will you do it? And he does.**

It's how we all need to come to the "Son of David", our King. Trusting who he is and owning up to what we need.

And that's the faith of these blind men and they're a wonderful model for us. They know their need, know that they're powerless, and recognise Jesus for who he is. But that's not the only response:

**2. The Pharisees: Object to and Reject Jesus**

Jesus has only shown, compassion, love and good works for all, and then we read verse 34:

**Read Mathew 9:34**

The Pharisees would have known all the ancient promises of God and known them better than most. So how could they deny, the significance of all, they'd already seen and then say, what Jesus is doing, is evil, accusing him of being at work with the power of Satan?

We live in a different time, different context, with different leaders but even now, most don't deny the overwhelming historical evidence for of Jesus life, his compassion and his power for good. But how often do we hear: Christians are fools, and their beliefs make no sense? Or that Christianity is oppressive, it will mess up your life and disrupt the harmony of our communities. So often people who talk about Jesus are even thought to be evil, they're sneered at, avoided and told to be quiet.

It's so sad, but King Jesus, in the flesh, endured the same nonsensical and unreasonable reaction.

**3. There is also a third response from the passage: To Tell and share about Jesus**

Anyone who knows me well, knows I'm a complete and utter dinosaur when it comes to social media and all things technology. But even I post selfies - beautiful sunsets or having dinner or going for walk with Kath.

I want to share a dinner date on FB. Can, we imagine how much we'd want to share, if we'd been blind, and could now, see?

These men might have disobeyed Jesus, but I suspect we might want to show some compassion for these guys.

Why would Jesus in verse 30: "**Warn...**"

**Read Matthew 9:30**

**Maybe** Jesus was concerned, the men might just focus in on the spectacular healing? And, if that was all they wanted to talk about, Jesus would prefer they said nothing at all.

It's so often what our hurting world is looking for. But Jesus didn't come just to fulfill an expectation or an offer of, "your best and most comfortable life now".

**Maybe** Jesus was concerned they would share that he was the "Son of David"?

And again, if that's all they had to say, Jesus would most likely prefer they said nothing at all.

There were a variety of expectations of the promised King, at that time in Israel. Many were politically motivated and focused, with an agenda to depose the Romans and regain Israel's power and influence.

And still today many, when they hear about Jesus, have their own agendas, focused only, on what they want, from Jesus.

**Most likely** however, Jesus is warning these men to stay quiet so that they might trust Jesus, on his terms and not theirs.

Yes, Jesus performs miracles, yes Jesus is the promised King, but he's also expected to walk a path, a path that was also promised through the prophet Isaiah, a path of suffering. Suffering, before he receives his crown and his glory.

***Read Isaiah 53:4-6***

The very heart of our faith, our hope, our recognition and expectation of King is Jesus, is his sacrifice on the cross.

When the blind men, cried out to Jesus, for **mercy**, that's exactly what they needed, the problem was, their sin.

It's only because of King Jesus' self-sacrificing death on a cross, that we can expect, God's mercy.

Jesus is a King who meets our most desperate and urgent need. A King who takes on our guilt, endures our shame and suffers our pain. And this is the King, the good news, to proclaim, to tell and share with all the world.

***Read Matthew 9:27-30a***