

The Blind Fellows at Jericho

Matthew 20	Mark 10	Luke 18
	46 _{a} They came to Jericho. [...]	
29 _{a} As they went out from Jericho, [...] ¹	46 _{b} [...] As he went out from Jericho, [...]	35 _{a} As he came near Jericho, [...]
29 _{b} [...] a great multitude followed him.	46 _{c} [...] with his disciples and a great multitude, [...]	
30 _{a} Behold, two blind men sitting by the road, [...] ²	46 _{d} [...] the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the road.	35 _{b} [...] a certain blind man sat by the road, begging.
		36 Hearing a multitude going by, he asked what this meant.
30 _{b} [...] when they heard that Jesus was passing by, [...]	47 _{a} When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, [...]	37 They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.
30 _{c} [...] cried out, “Lord, have mercy on us, you son of David!”	47 _{b} [...] he began to cry out, and say, “Jesus, you son of David, have mercy on me!”	38 He cried out, “Jesus, you son of David, have mercy on me!”
31 The multitude rebuked them, ³ telling them that they should be quiet, but they cried out even more, “Lord, have mercy on us, you son of David!”	48 Many rebuked him, that he should be quiet, but he cried out much more, “You son of David, have mercy on me!”	39 Those who led the way rebuked him, that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “You son of David, have mercy on me!”
32 _{a} Jesus stood still, [...]	49 _{a} Jesus stood still, [...]	40 _{a} Standing still, [...]
32 _{b} [...] and called them, [...]	49 _{b} [...] and said, “ Call him. ” [...]	40 _{b} [...] Jesus commanded him to be brought to him. [...]
	49 _{c} [...] They called the blind man, saying to him, “Cheer up! Get up. He is calling you!”	

¹ Jericho is believed to be the world’s oldest continually inhabited city, one that has been destroyed and rebuilt numerous times in the same general vicinity. This helps explain why Mt 20:29a and Mk 10:46b say that this incident occurred when Jesus was leaving Jericho, while Lk 18:35a says it happened while He was approaching Jericho. As Jesus traveled from the Jordan (Mk 10:1) to Jerusalem (Mk 11:1), He passed through the Jericho area, which was composed of several individual sites. In all likelihood, He encountered these men along the road between the ruins of the older, pre-exile Jericho (Matthew & Mark) and the newer, Roman settlement (Luke). See A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1933), Matthew 20:29.

² Mt 20:30a says that two men sat by the road. In contrast, Mk 10:46d identifies Bartimaeus, while Lk 18:35b calls him a certain blind man. This is not a contradiction. Matthew says there were two men, but Mark and Luke do not say there was *only* one. Instead, while Matthew mentions both, Mark and Luke simply *emphasize* the role of one: Bartimaeus. Some Bible scholars believe the reason that Matthew mentions both men is that he wrote primarily to a Jewish audience, for whom the testimony of two witnesses was required to prove a matter. See Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, Holman New Testament Commentary, Vol. 1 (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), Matthew 20:31.

³ These men, by virtue of being beggars, were outcasts, and the crowds would have considered it beneath the dignity of a teacher like Jesus to deal with them. Therefore, they criticized them and tried to make them stop (Mt 20:31; Mk 10:48; Lk 18:39).

Matthew 20	Mark 10	Luke 18
	50 He, casting away his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. ⁴	
32 _{c} [...] and asked, [...]	51 _{a} Jesus asked him, [...]	40 _{c} [...] When he had come near, he asked him,
32 _{d} [...] “What do you want me to do for you?”	51 _{b} [...] “What do you want me to do for you?” [...]	41 _{a} “What do you want me to do?” [...]
33 They told him, “Lord, that our eyes may be opened.”	51 _{c} [...] The blind man said to him, “Rabboni, that I may see again.”	41 _{b} [...] He said, “Lord, that I may see again.”
34 _{a} Jesus, being moved with compassion, touched their eyes; [...]		
	52 _{a} Jesus said to him, [...]	42 _{a} Jesus said to him, [...]
	52 _{b} [...] “Go your way.” [...]	
		42 _{b} [...] “Receive your sight.” [...]
	52 _{c} [...] “Your faith has made you well.” [...] ⁵	42 _{c} [...] “Your faith has healed you.”
34 _{b} [...] and immediately their eyes received their sight, and they followed him.	52 _{d} [...] Immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus on the way.	43 _{a} Immediately he received his sight, and followed him, [...]
		43 _{b} [...] glorifying God. All the people, when they saw it, praised God.

⁴ In contrast to the rich, young ruler (Mk 10:17-27), Bartimaeus threw away everything he had—little as it was—to go to Jesus.

⁵ The Greek word σωξω (*sōzō*) used in Mk 10:52c and Lk 18:42c has a double meaning; it can apply to physical healing or spiritual salvation/healing. The fact that Bartimaeus and his companion received their sight *and* followed Jesus (Mt 20:34b; Mk 10:52d; Lk 18:43a) suggests that both apply in this case.