

Daily Reflections

ADVENT

The Divine Intervention

December 2, 2016

Scripture

Matthew 9:27-31

As Jesus passed by, two blind men followed him, crying out,
"Son of David, have pity on us!"

When he entered the house,
the blind men approached him and Jesus said to them,
"Do you believe that I can do this?"

"Yes, Lord," they said to him.

Then he touched their eyes and said,
"Let it be done for you according to your faith."

And their eyes were opened.

Jesus warned them sternly,

"See that no one knows about this."

But they went out and spread word of him through all that land.

Our Scripture Reflection

What a truly pitiful shape the two blind men were in! There was no "Society for the Blind" back then. They were left to begging, helpless and hopeless, that is, until Jesus came along. And although they lacked physical sight, they had plenty of spiritual sight which they placed in Jesus. That day, the two men walked away able to see. On this Advent day, perhaps we, too, can ask

the Lord to heal our sight, our faith, and enable us to believe in Him like never before. He is the Light that dispels all darkness.

Food for your Journey

Blind Willie Johnson, a gospel singer, preacher and pioneer of the blues, understood the power of the honest question, and he perceived its flame in the Bible. Johnson was born in poverty in 1897 and blinded at age 7, when his stepmother, in a fight with his father, threw lye in his face. He died in poverty in 1945, sleeping on a wet bed in the ruins of his house, which had burned down two weeks before. Thankfully, between 1927 and 1930, he recorded a number of his biblically based blues songs with Columbia Records. These have inspired countless rockers, from Led Zeppelin to Beck. ...

Johnson recalls his lifelong soul search. He's traveled far and wide, through cities and wildernesses. He's heard answers from lawyers, doctors and theologians. None have satisfied. In response to each of the answers he's been given, he repeats his question with more forceful, gravelly urgency.

In his quest, he turns to the Bible: "I read the Bible often, I tries to read it right / And far as I could understand, nothing but a burning light." Called to preach since age 5, steeped in the African-American Baptist tradition, this blind sage of spiritual blues knew the Bible inside and out from memory. Yet it gave him no answer, only a more profound mystery: nothing but a burning light.

--Timothy Beal, "The Bible is dead; Long live the Bible," The Chronicle Review, <http://chronicle.com>.

Prayer from the Heart

Precious Lord, So many times this past year when push came to shove, I doubted Your Presence in my life and felt the loneliness that comes from a lack of faith. Lord, be my Light. Strengthen my faith so that I can learn to trust You in all things. Amen.

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