

Luke 18:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Analysis

They told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by (ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος παρέρχεται, apēngeilan de autō hoti Iēsous ho Nazōraios parerchetai)—The crowd's answer is factual but minimal. Apangellō (to announce, report) conveys information without interpretation. They identify Jesus geographically—**of Nazareth** (ὁ Ναζωραῖος)—a designation often used dismissively (John 1:46: 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?').

Passeth by (παρέρχεται, parerchetai)—the present tense emphasizes the fleeting moment. Jesus is passing, not stopping. This creates urgency: the beggar must act now or miss his opportunity. The verb parerchomai can mean 'to pass away, disappear'—without intervention, Jesus will be gone, perhaps forever. This spatial passing becomes metaphor for spiritual opportunity: Christ comes near, but doesn't force engagement. The beggar must respond.

Historical Context

Nazareth was an insignificant village of perhaps 400 people, unmentioned in Old Testament, Josephus, or Talmud until the Christian era. Identifying Jesus this way likely conveyed low social status rather than honor. Yet this 'Nazarene' was attracting massive crowds, creating the cognitive dissonance that defined Jesus's ministry—nobody from nowhere doing works of God.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do human labels and geographic prejudices obscure recognition of God's work in unexpected people or places?
2. What does Jesus 'passing by' teach about the urgency of responding to spiritual opportunity?
3. When has God's presence felt near but fleeting, requiring immediate response from you?

Interlinear Text

ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ αὐτῷ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος
they told **And** **him** **that** **Jesus** ^{G3588} **of Nazareth**
G518 G1161 G846 G3754 G2424 G3480

παρέρχεται
passeth by
G3928

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 2:23 (Parallel theme): And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.