

John 9:1-12- Jesus Gives Sight to the Blind.

Read John 9:1... It is possible that Jesus was leaving the temple area when He saw this man who was blind from birth. The temple was a prominent location for the poor and disabled, as those coming to worship and bring offerings would often give alms [food and money] to those in need.

Blindness was common in Jesus day, and those without family support would have to beg to obtain food. Jesus' first public appearance, was in Nazareth, recorded in **Luke 4:18-19**, "*The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor*" (cf. Isaiah 61:1-2).

Many accounts of Jesus healing the blind are recorded in the gospels (Matthew 9:27-28; 11:5; 12:22; 15:30-31; 20:30-24; 21:14; Mark 8:22-25).

Read John 9:2-5... We are not told how the disciples know this man was blind from birth, but this is the only recorded narrative of Jesus' healing a congenital illness. The disciples assume this man's sin, or his parent's, made him blind, even before birth.

It was common thinking in Israel that a person's illness or disability resulted from their own sins. It is easy to see why they thought this way, for it is true that all illness and sickness is a consequence of original sin and its curse, but also (**Exodus 20:5; 34:7**) says, "[God] punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."

But that passage must be interpreted in it's national/cultural sense, meaning that the corruption of a wicked generation (Israel) will flow into subsequent generations.

However, a son is not punished for his father's sins neither is a father punished for the sins of his son, but instead God commands (**Deuteronomy 24:16**), "*Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin,*" (**Ezekiel 18:20**), "The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him."

In **John 5:14**, Jesus heals a man who had been an invalid for 38 years, saying, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."

In **1Corinthians 11:26-29**, Paul exhorts the believers to not take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner (holding on to unconfessed sin), warning them (**verse 30**), "*That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep [died]*" (the word sleep is often used in place of death for those who belong to Christ, e.g., John 11:11-12; 1Corinthians 12:2; 15:51; 1Thessalonians 4:14; 5:10).

Jesus makes it clear in **John 9:3** that neither the man nor his parent's sinfulness is the cause of his blindness; but instead, *"that the work of God might be displayed in his life."* Jesus' imperative here is to do the work of the Father who sent Him.

Jesus uses "we" in **verse 4**, because the disciples (and subsequently all Christians) are empowered to do the work of God (cf. John 14:12-14; Ephesians 2:10). The disciples are to work *"as long as it is day,"* for Jesus is the Light of the world, but in a few months He will be crucified and put in the tomb, at which time it will be "night, when no one can work."

Jesus did not stop being the Light of the world when He returned to the Father in heaven, but He did give this ministry to those who believe and follow Him (**Matthew 5:14-16**), *"You are the light of the world." "...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."*

Read John 9:6-7... This blind man has lived his whole life in darkness, Jesus brings him into the light. Jesus uses His spit to heal on other occasions (a deaf and mute man in Mark 7:33; a blind man in Mark 8:23), but only here does He use spit and dirt to make mud [clay].

Jesus tells the man to go to the pool of Siloam to wash his face. This pool was in Jerusalem, near the SE corner of the wall surrounding the city; it was filled with water flowing from the spring of Gihon, which is located in the Kidron Valley. Gihon means *bursting forth*, i.e., instead of a steady flow it gushed water intermittently, sending fresh water to the pool of Siloam [*Sent*] in Jerusalem.

In **John 7** we studied about the great day [last day] of the Feast of Booths [shelters, tents]: the priest leaves the temple to get water from the Pool of Siloam in a gold container, then carry it back to the temple, while all the people are proclaiming (*Isaiah 12:3*), *"With joy you will draw water from the well of salvation,"* at this point Jesus stands up and cries out (**John 7:37-38**), *"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, streams of living water will flow from him."*

Just as fresh water came from the spring of Gihon in the Kidron Valley to the pool of Siloam in Jerusalem, God's Son came from heaven, to bring living water [eternal life] to those who are spiritually thirsty, that they might believe in and "drink" from Him.

The blind man believed and obeyed Jesus, going to the pool blind, he washed and returned seeing. The sign of genuine saving faith is to believe in and obey Jesus Christ.

Read John 9:8-12... Jesus seems to disappear from the narrative after **verse 7**, and He won't reappear in the story until we get to **verse 35**.

Jesus' healing the blind man creates quite a stir among the man's neighbors; this darkness to light transformation is so startling that some of the people who know this man are confused, "Isn't this him?" "Yes it is he." "No, he just looks like the man."

The man declares, "it is I, I was blind!" And the people then ask, "how has this happened, how is it possible for you to see?"

This poor man can only tell the limited truth of what happened to him, saying, "this man who is called Jesus made some mud, put it on my eyes and told me to go wash it off in the pool of Siloam; I obeyed, and now I can see!"

Some of those in the crowd desire to meet this Jesus, who can heal a man born blind, asking, "Where is He, where is the one who gave you sight?" But the man doesn't know, and the truth is, he never saw Jesus, so he wouldn't be able to pick Him out in the crowd.

This is a marvelous story that illustrates the problem with the unbelief of those who reject Christ, for it is sin that blinds us to Christ and makes us captives of the devil (**2Corinthians 4:4**), "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

The god of this age is the devil, Paul calls him (**Ephesians 2:2**), "the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient," (**1John 3:8**), "He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."

The blind man could not see Jesus, nor did he know who Jesus was; he just knew He was called by the name Jesus and He had healed him of blindness.

Think about it, lost sinners are like this blind man before he was healed, they have no natural ability to look for or to find Jesus on their own:

Romans 3:10-12, "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one," **23**, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"

Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:1-2, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."

Acts 2:21, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Acts 4:12, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" [only Jesus Christ the Lord].

Jesus provided healing for spiritual blindness once and for all, as God's Son, He grants eternal life to all who trust in Him, bringing them out of unbelief's death and darkness into salvation's Life and Light.

John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

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