

John 9:1-12

Previously, on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus had said He is the light of the world, forgave the adulterous woman, and told the crowd He is the I Am before Abraham. Our passage ends as Jesus is escaping an attempt to stone Him in the temple. I would think He would be in a hurry to get alone with His disciples, but He stops to teach His disciples, probably on the southern steps of the temple.

¹ As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.

1 On the way out of the temple, Jesus passed a blind beggar. It was the practice of the disabled to sit on the southern steps of the temple and beg. The closer you could get to the Huldah Gates the more traffic would go by your beggar's bowl and thus the greater the chances of getting enough alms for survival. Begging was a disabled person's only means of support. Jews held alms giving in as high regard as obeying the Laws of Moses. Still, most of those beggars barely survived on the charity given them.

² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

2 The prevailing thought at the time was that afflictions were the result of sin. Jesus never denied that that may be the case. In fact, He told the invalid that was healed at the pool of Bethesda to go and sin no more lest a worse thing happen to him (John 5:14). But as to suffering for your parents' sins, the Old Testament prophets clearly declared that was not the case. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel said that each generation would suffer or be blessed because of their own life and not that of their parents (Jeremiah 31:29-30; Ezekiel 18:20). Jesus taught that all people are sinners. When asked if the Jews that were killed and whose blood Pilate mingled with a sacrifice were worse sinners than others, Jesus said that unless they repented the same could happen to them (Luke 13:2-3).

³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

3 In this case, Jesus said it was not the result of some sin. You might question how they would even ask if it was the man who sinned since he was born blind, but Jews believed you could sin in the womb. (Consider Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25:22.) If it was not the result of sin, why would sovereign God allow him to be born blind?

God does not override the results of the curse upon the earth from the original sin. We are winding down, devolving, not evolving. The mutation rate of each generation is so high that biologists see a future point where man will no longer be able to survive. The result is increased rates of diabetes, cancer, allergies, and other physical problems (Romans 8:20-21). Who sinned? Adam and Eve and everyone since did! But Jesus pointed the disciples to what God was doing presently. He was going to display His glory by giving sight to this man who was born blind. Even today, ophthalmologists cannot

help someone born blind. If for genetic reasons the optical nerve did not develop, there is no cure short of a miracle.

It does not matter what we are going through in life, God can use it for His glory (Romans 5:3). In fact, it is usually in the most difficult times that we grow the most spiritually. If this man was born blind for whatever physical reason, God was going to use it in his life to bring him into a relationship with the One who can save not only his physical body but his eternal soul as well (John 9:38).

4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.

4 Jesus had just three years of ministry. That was day. Night was the coming betrayal and crucifixion. All of us have a day to work in. For all of us night is coming, the time when we are no longer able to work (1 Thessalonians 5:5). The earlier manuscripts have “we” as the subject. Later manuscripts changed it to “I”, which was probably a copy error. I like the fact that Jesus includes us in working while it is day. Let us see what the Holy Spirit has for us each day. We should always be ready for more. We do not need a vacation from Spirit directed ministry. We have eternity for that. When you go on a vacation, you can still be ministering.

When we pass from this life, one thing you will not regret is working while it was day. It will lay up for you treasure in heaven for which you will be forever grateful (Matthew 6:21). What we will regret is not doing what the Spirit was urging us to do. We will see what could have been if we had obeyed. Let us work while it is day! The night is coming when we can no longer lay up our treasure in heaven.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

5 He had to shine for us during His three years of ministry. What stories would we be missing in the gospels if He did not give it His all? What examples would we not have if He slacked off? Everything He did and said was a light to us who were in darkness (John 8:29). It reminds me of one of those light flares that illumines the battlefield. It is shot into the air and ignites slowly falling to the ground. As long as it is descending you can see the enemy and the whole battlefield, but it will go out and darkness will descend again.

Jesus tells us that we are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). That is because His Spirit is within us. That big flare went out (Jesus earthly presence) and million little flares lit up (followers of Jesus). We have the privilege of shining while it is day, but our time is limited too. We need to ignite other little flares before our time is up. People need to be able to see the enemy of their soul. They need this battlefield illuminated. Shine!

6 Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud

6 This was the work of the Holy Spirit. This was light to a world in darkness. The crowd had been blind to who He really is, and He was about to illustrate their need. In addition to that, He would fulfill three Isaiah prophecies of the Messiah giving sight to

the blind (Isaiah 29:18; 35:5). One of those prophecies related to the Great Light that was just lit when Jesus declared Himself to be the light of the world. In that prophecy, the One who gives sight to the blind is the One who is a light to the world. The miracle of sight verified His declaration of being the light of the world (Isaiah 42:6,7).

7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

7 The actual Pool of Siloam was found four years ago. And just a couple of years ago the steps to it from the temple were discovered. Jesus and the blind man were at the highest point in Jerusalem and Jesus sent him to the lowest. There were ritual baths right below the steps. The pool of Bethesda was just around the corner. Why did He send the blind man all that way? Someone had to help him get there.

It was called "Sent" because the water was "sent" from the Gihon Spring through the tunnel of Hezekiah to the pool. It was just that morning that the High Priest had drawn water out of that pool for the Water Ceremony. As he did so, he quoted Isaiah 12:3. *With joy you will draw water out of the wells of salvation.* The people thought the expression was related to a time when the Holy Spirit would be poured out. Jesus sent the man there to show that He is the true dispenser of the Holy Spirit. The whole ceremony pointed to Him and He proved it in an undeniable way. The mud over the man's eyes may have been meant to send a message to the unbelieving ones that argued with Jesus earlier. Jesus may have had in mind Isaiah 44:18. *¹⁸They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand.*

⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."

8,9 What a transformation! He had to testify that he was the man who used to sit and beg.

¹⁰ So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight."

10, 11 Why are they demanding to know how it happened? Because this is a Messianic sign! Jews believed that only the Messiah could open the eyes of one borne blind. Notice in the man's testimony. Jesus never asked if he believed, or if he had the faith to be healed. Jesus just does it with a command. This is a verification miracle. This is declaring to all who heard Jesus that day that He truly is the source of living water, He truly does give the light of life. It confirms His words of being from above. It confirms that they would die in their sins if they refused to believe. It challenges them and us to wash the mud from our eyes and see. Can you see it?

12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

12 The crowd wanted to see the One who did the miracle, to see if He is the Messiah, but Jesus did not follow the man to the pool. Jesus will find the man later and lead him all the way to full spiritual sight (John 9:38).

Where is this man who gives sight? He is right here. His presence fills the sanctuary. He fills the heart of every believer. He still invites you to follow and still promises that if you do, you will have the light of life. You do not have to wander in darkness, unaware of the enemy around you, unable to see his traps and pitfalls. You do not have to wonder if Jesus is truly God and Savior.

You are invited to go and wash the blindness from your eyes, only you must go down to lowest, humblest place. That place is recognizing you are blind and helpless, a sinner in need of a Savior.

Questions

What had taken place that day?

Who sinned?

Why are their deformities and illness in our world?

Why does "work while it is day" mean?

Why did Jesus send the man to the pool of Siloam?

What was Jesus declaring by the miracle?

Where is the man who gives spiritual sight right now?