

20/20 Vision

Լաւազոյն Տեսողութիւն

John 9

Last week I had my annual eye examination. It was time to check up my vision. Before you see the doctor, several people meet with you until you meet the doctor. They examine the pressure of the eyes and test your vision for each eye. Boy, when you arrive to those small letters, you start guessing blurry.....hahaha. Somehow my age is telling me something. Well once upon a time I had a 20/20 vision. That morning, I left the office with dilated pupils and had to wear dark shades to be able to walk or drive in the sun.

Today we find Jesus and the disciples meet a blind man from birth. Let me remind you about chapter 7 and 8. Jesus is in the **Feast of Tabernacles**, the feast of water and light. Jesus is the Light which gives life. Jesus is the Living Water which gives life. And now I see in this chapter Jesus continues to bring life, light, and sight to people.

Let us go to the passage:

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. ⁷ "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

⁸ His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." ¹⁰ "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked. ¹¹ He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." ¹² "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said. (John 9:1-12 NIV 11)

Let me give you an outline of this chapter:

- The story of healing (1-7)
- Interrogation of the blind man by his neighbors and Pharisees (8-30)
- The man expelled from the synagogue (31-34)
- Jesus comes back to the story with a statement: the sightless man gained vision while others are told they are blind (35-41)

We meet today a man born blind. As we will see, he is a beggar. He cannot support himself any other way. I think most likely **he is an outcast.** It was commonly thought that being “crippled” meant that person was a sinner. The question the disciples ask, “Whose fault it is, his parents or this man?”

Let me tell you a fact, we all are born spiritually blind, and we all need sight. Because of sin, we are separated from God and each other; because of sin we cannot see the spiritual realities.

So whose fault is, his parents or him?

Jesus answered: **“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,”**

In chapter 6, the disabled man sitting by the pool had some kind of past sin which made him disabled. If you remember, I mentioned let us be careful how we understand sin and suffering. There is no one formula to answer this question. We are all under the curse of sin. We live in an upside-down world. We live in **defective** word; we live in a world where humans are selfish from birth; we live in the curse of disease, earthquakes, and hurricanes; we also create our problems because of our sinful nature. When you drive under influence, you are responsible for the consequences of your actions. There is no one formula for this question. In fact, Jesus’ answer is very important.

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:3 NIV 11)

What does it mean **that the works of God might be displayed in him?**

NIV translation did not do a good job in interpreting this verse. God is sovereign and can do anything as He pleases. Yet here it sounds that God will inflict pain on people so that He will be glorified¹. I don’t think so. Let me use another translation:

“It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:3 ESV)

“The purpose clause now explains that Jesus must work so that God's work may be displayed in this man's life. God had not made the man blind in order to show his glory; rather, God has sent Jesus to do works of healing in order to show his glory.²

As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (4,5)

Furthermore.... “Jesus’ work must not be interrupted because he is the light that illuminates the day, and night is coming (9:4b-5) when he will be absent and such miracles at his hand will seize.”³

-Next Jesus heals the man

⁶ After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. ⁷ “Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. (John 9:6,7 NIV 11)

Jesus healed people in different ways. Sometimes he just spoke and they were healed; sometimes he touched them; other times they touched his garment. In those days, spit was thought to have medical power. So, what Jesus did was not unusual. Mark recorded two other instances where Jesus did the same thing (Mark 7:32-35; 8:22-25)

Now the next thing was not a coincidence when Jesus said to this blind man go and wash yourself in **Siloam pool**. Let me show you the photo of this pool where archeologist found. It was located south end of the city of Jerusalem. It had two significant reasons:

1. It is Feast of Tabernacles; they needed water to conduct their ceremonies. During the feast, water was drawn from this pool and taken to the Temple and poured out on the alter. Jesus redefined this ritual announcing that He is the new water of life. If Jesus is the source of the Feast of Tabernacles water, this blind man experienced this water in a profound way. (visit chapters 7,8)

2. The name of the pool has a symbolic meaning.

The word **Siloam** means: “one having been sent,” or “sent one.”

The pool of Siloam was sent from the spring of Gihon in the Kidron Valley.

In other words, the blind man is being told to go wash in the place called **sent**, by the One **who was sent by God**.

Jesus, then, is the source of his healing, not the pool.

The man was **sent** by **Jesus** to the pool to be healed. Jesus was sent by the Father to bring healing to the world. This is beautiful....

Don't you love Jesus?

-Confusion about who Jesus is

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. ¹⁴ Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵ Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided. ¹⁷ Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

The man replied, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸ They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. ¹⁹ "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

²⁰ "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. ²¹ But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴ A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" ²⁶ Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?" ²⁸ Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." ³⁰ The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. ³² Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ To this they

replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸ Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. (John 9:13-38 NIV 11)

I read the rest of the chapter so we can see how people can remain "blind" and refuse to see Jesus.

I want to end my sermon focusing the encounter of the "blind" man and Jesus. How this man saw who Jesus is:

<u>Verses</u>	<u>Comments⁴</u>
11	The man they call Jesus
17	a prophet
25	Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know
33	must be from God
38	"Lord, I Believe"

The entire chapter is full of humor.

"Is this the man?" "No, he looks like him."

Questioning the parents. "Is this your son? Is he blind?" "Yes, we know he is our son, go ask him, he is grown up man...."

They forced the blind man to say that Jesus is a sinner.

"I don't know if he is sinner or not. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

All this happening again on the Sabbath.... Don't you see Jesus is teaching them who he is?

The blind man faces Jesus again, and this time the "blind" sees Jesus. Yes, his answer to Jesus is: **"Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.** (9:38 NIV 11)

Come and see, John's theology. **To believe.**

How does the chapter end?

³⁹ Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." ⁴⁰ Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" ⁴¹ Jesus said, "If you

were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains. (john 9:39-41 NIV 11)

Two conclusions (application): ⁵

1. To give sight to the blind (both physically and spiritually) (this is for receptive hearts)

(illumination for reception)

2. To blind those who “can see” (for those who claim that they can see)

(judgment for rejection)

There is a saying: **“The same sun that melts ice hardens the clay.”**

The light of Jesus enlightens those who respond and blinds those who reject.

The light of Jesus either gives you sight or blinds your heart when you reject Him.

The cornerstone which is the foundation of the building can become a stumbling block for those who reject it. (1 Peter 2:6-8)

Going back to my eye examination, the same sun that I need every day became a blinding experience that morning.

How is your vision this morning?

Open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus,
to reach out and touch him,
and say that we love him.

Open our ears, Lord,
and help us to listen.

Open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus.

Let us approach the Lord’s Table.

1 Gary M. Bruce, *NIV Application Commentary* p272

2. *ibid* p 273

3. *ibid* p 273

4. Dr. Mark Bailey, Dallas Theological Seminary, on line course, Gospel of John

5. *ibid*