

The Gospel of John

Chapter 9:1-41

June 15, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
- Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
- Chapter 3 Spiritual Birth, Belief and Salvation vs. Unbelief and Condemnation
- Chapter 4 The Ministry in Samaria, The Harvest, The Faith of the Nobleman
- Chapter 5 Paralytic man healed on the Sabbath, Unity of The Father and Son
- Chapter 6 The Bread of Life
- Chapter 7 The public debates about Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles
- Chapter 8 Public debates: Woman caught in adultery; The Son makes you free; Abraham's true children
- Chapter 9 Jesus heals a man born blind.

- **Review and Introduction**

Having alluded the stones of His adversaries in the treasury of the synagogue, Jesus and His disciples walk through the town and come upon a man with congenital blindness. This will be the basis for dialogue for both this chapter and the next.

- **Exposition of John 9:1-41**

Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him."⁴ "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."⁵ "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

- The disciples seize the opportunity of the encounter with the blind man for receiving theological training. Although in a way, death, decay, disease and infirmities came in to the world through the sin of Adam, Jesus makes plain here that this blindness was not of such an origin. The man had been born blind so that this very occasion would come about. The disciples revealed that some of them had believed a popular teaching that birth defects were caused by sins of the baby in utero or by the Lord visiting the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations as He promised.
- Clearly, there are times in the Scriptures where suffering is a result of sin. In other cases, sin is not punished fully in this world until the end and sometimes great calamity befalls the Elect. God deals differently in various situations but in all cases He ensures that He will be glorified. For the Elect, God supplies the grace and mercy to hold up under the suffering even when He has not clearly revealed His purposes.
- Jesus acknowledges that His earthly ministry will end in the future and until then He must perform that which had been enjoined on him by the Father. This declaration of being the light of the world ties in with 8:12 and is demonstrated by the works He is about to perform. Clearly Jesus is still the light of the world but He is so now in a different way than when He walked on the earth.

6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.⁷ And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.⁸ Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?"⁹ Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he."¹⁰ Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"¹¹ He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight."¹² Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

- Much ado about the manner that our Lord chose to provide the healing has been written and most of it fancy speculation. The command to wash reminds us of Naaman who had been cured of leprosy at the command of Elisha. The neighbors who had walked by and supported him for years were confused about his identity after such a grand miracle. The man gives a clear testimony to his neighbors and they seek out how such a thing could happen.

13 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees.¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."¹⁶ Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.¹⁷ They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

- The neighbors seek out the counsel of the religious leaders and the Pharisees manifest the hardness of their hearts once again. The Pharisees, because of their desire to implicate Jesus, ignore the glory of the miracle and instead turn their hearts toward the apparent Sabbath violation.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.¹⁹ And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"²⁰ His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;²¹ "but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself."²² His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."²⁴ So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner."

- Despite the faithful declaration of the healed man who had no motive in lying, the Jews still refuse to believe and seek out the testimony of the man's parents. However, the Jews had hardened themselves against the clear miracle just as they had done centuries earlier as they wandered in the wilderness and ever since then.
- In effect, the Jews are declaring that God violated His own Sabbath because Jesus had stated numerous times that the works He does are only those which the Father gives Him to do. The Jews do find a half truth when they proclaim that glory be to God but they miss the glory of the Son.

25 He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."²⁶ Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"²⁷ He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"²⁸ Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.²⁹ "We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from."³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!³¹ "Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him."³² "Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind."³³ "If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."³⁴ They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.

- Even in the face of clear, simple, sincere testimony and instruction, the Jews thought themselves too learned to be instructed by the man. We can see how remarkable the miracle was in that they declared that no one had been cured of blindness from birth. This flies in the face of the caliber of healings that we see prevalent in the "healing" ministries today. If the "miraculous healings" of today were truly from God, they would compare to the types of healings performed by those who also had been given authority over infirmity.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"³⁶ He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"³⁷ And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you."³⁸ Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."⁴⁰ Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?"⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains. NKJV

- Having been cast out, as his parents feared, the man is found by Jesus. We see that the man had genuine faith but incomplete knowledge. Jesus teaches him more fully and clearly declares His deity and receives worship from the man.
- Although previously Jesus had declared that He did not come into the world to condemn the world, clearly He did come to divide the people along the lines of faith. The effect of this miracle was to soften the hearts of many and to further harden the hearts of the Jews which will also further secure their condemnation. Therefore, in a sense, the advent of Jesus was a form of judgement.
- If the Pharisees would have confessed that they did not understand (blindness), mercy could have been granted to them but their hardness prevented it and God used the situation to ensure that His Son would be executed.