**The Gospel of John:**

**Open the Eyes of the Blind**

*John 9:1-12*

**Context**

One of the universal effects of living in a fallen world is sickness and death. The consequence of sin has had a devastating effect on all things—especially the human soul as well as the human body. Jesus steps into the reality of that condition and gives hope, healing, and good news. His compassion and care extends to many who are sick—even congenital illnesses.

There is no human explanation for any of the miracles Jesus performed. The only explanation was He had divine power. God alone is the only One that could do the miracles He performed. Thus the intention of these acts was to demonstrate and prove that He was in fact God. He does it through the will of the Father (Matthew 12:28; Luke 5:17) and by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:22-32, Luke 4:14).

The entirety of John 9 is devoted to this incredible miracle of healing a man born blind and the investigation on how it happened. The pattern in this chapter is not unlike chapters 2 and 6: miracle, discussion and dialog, and their disbelief. The irony of Jewish lack of sight is evidenced even as this man sees. The focus does shift a bit to the disciples vs. unbelievers.

4 components of the miracle

1. **Dark from blindness, v1**

**John 9:1**—As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

1. *As He passed by*
   1. The timing may have been after Jesus left the Temple from John 8:59
   2. The Temple would have been a prime location for beggars

**Matthew 21:14**—*And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.*

**Acts 3:1-2**—Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer. **2**And a man who had been lame from his mother’s womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple(….v10)

* 1. The pool of Siloam (v. 7) was in Jerusalem

1. Blindness was a common condition then

**Leviticus 19:14**—*You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall revere your God; I am the Lord.*

**2 Samuel 5:6**—*Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, “You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away”; thinking, “David cannot enter here.”*

* 1. Many were uncared for and reduced to begging

**Mark 10:46**—*Then they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road.* 

* 1. He was blind from birth

1. Messiah would heal the blind

**Isaiah 42:7**—*To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.*

**Matthew 9:27-28**—As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!” **28**When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”

**Matthew 11:5**—*the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

**Matthew 12:22**—*Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw.*

1. **Light from Christ, vv2-5**

**John 9:2-5**—*And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?”****3****Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.****4****We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.****5****While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”*

1. Who sinned?
   1. Jewish doctrine taught that suffering is the result of personal sin—either their own or from their parents
      1. How could a man born blind have sinned?
      2. Could children in the womb sin?
   2. It is true that suffering in general is the result of sin in general
   3. There are cases where specific illness can sometimes be the direct consequences of specific sin(s) (Numbers 12:10; John 5:14; 1 Corinthians 11:30; Acts 5:1-11)
   4. There are times when the children suffer for the sins of their parents  
        
      i.e. Many children became blind because of gonorrhea as the child passed through the birthing canal; children are effected by the mother’s smoking, excess drinking, substance abuse, etc.
2. “Iniquities of the fathers on the children” meaning

**Exodus 20:5**—*You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me*

**Exodus 34:7**—*who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.*

*(Cf.* ***Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:9)***

* + - 1. Such passages must be understood in a national or societal sense. The point is that the corruption effect of a wicked generation seeps into subsequent generations.[[1]](#footnote-1)
      2. Later generations have suffered the consequences of earlier ones

i.e The Hebrew children of the Exodus suffered 40 years; the generations following the destruction and exile of the Northern and Southern kingdom.

**Jeremiah 31:29-30**—“*In those days they will not say again, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are [*[*n*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jer+31&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-19721n)*]set on edge.’* ***30****But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.*

**Ezekiel 18:20**—*The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father’s iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son’s iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.*

* + - 1. Job’s friends made the same mistake (Job 13:1-13; 16:1-4)

**Job 42:7**—*It came about after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, that the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, “My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has.*

1. *The works of God might be displayed*  
     
   **2 Corinthians 4:6**—*For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*
2. *We must work the works of Him who sent Me* (v 4)  
   * + 1. The focus is not back, but forward
       2. The son MUST be about the work of His Father
       3. *As long as it is day*—urgency (7:33; 11:9-10)
       4. *Night is coming when no one can work—*reference to Him leaving
       5. The Holy Spirit will come and empower them (Acts 2)
3. *I AM the light of the world* (v 5)  
   * + 1. The light shone most brightly during Jesus’ ministry
       2. He is making the most of His time

**Ephesians 5:16**—…*making the most of your time, because the days are evil.* 

“I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying me.” – Richard Baxter

1. **Sight from the miracle, vv6-7**

**John 9:6-7**—When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, **7**and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came back seeing.

1. He uses His saliva to make clay

**Mark 7:33**—*Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva*

**Mark 8:23**—*Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, “Do you see anything?”*

1. Pool of Siloam  
   1. Siloam (Sent)—King Hezekiah built a tunnel from the Gihon spring to the pool
   2. Symbolism—The Messiah is sent from God as this pool was sent from God
2. The blind man went away and washed and comes back seeing (obedience always marks genuine saving faith)
3. **Darkness from unbelief, vv8-12**

**John 9:8-12**—Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, “Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?” **9**Others were saying, “This is he,” *still* others were saying, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the one.” **10**So they were saying to him, “How then were your eyes opened?” **11**He answered, “The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash’; so I went away and washed, and I received sight.” **12**They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.”

1. Confusion from the people
2. Somehow it was easier to believe in “mistaken identity” vs healing
3. He’s saying, “*I am the one”*
4. The man identifies the One who did it and what he knows
5. Jesus disappears (v 7) and doesn’t reappear until v 35

**Summary**: Darkness is the natural human condition. It falls over everybody. And there is only one way to dispel the darkness. This account beautifully illustrates the salvation process. We sit in blindness by sin, begging. We cannot see God. We have no capacity to do so. But God in His mercy and grace reaches into our darkness and opens our eyes. He gives us sight. What He requires of us is an act of a simple faith, which He empowers. And the result is not only the ability to see, but life itself. We are washed, cleansed, and healed for all of eternity.

1. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, John 1-11, John MacArthur, p. 392. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)