

I. John 9:1-41 – Healing on the Sabbath

A. John 9:1-12 – The sixth sign miracle: Jesus healed a man born blind

1. John 9:1a – *As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.* In John 8:1-10:21, John **presented** Jesus shining in His glory, as the light of the world. John 1:11-13
 - a. In John 8, Jesus, the light of the world, was tragically rejected **inside** the temple by the spiritually blind religious leaders.
 - b. In John 9, Jesus, the light of the world, was gladly received by a physically blind man **outside** the temple.
2. John 9:1b – *As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.* Jesus specifically noticed this blind man. This man did not become blind at a point in time; he was **born** that way. He had never been able to see. His eyes had never functioned.
3. John 9:2 – *And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?”* How could the man have sinned **before** he was born?
 - a. Purportedly, the Pharisaic **absurd** notion was that a baby who kicked its mother while in the womb violated the command to honor his or her parents.
 - b. The Pharisees taught that grave personal suffering was the **result** of grave personal sins. As quick study of the book of Job disproves this view.
4. John 9:3 – *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.* Jesus said it was not the fault of the parents or the man. This man’s blindness was so God’s **power** would be displayed in his healing. Sickness is not always the result of sin. Only God knows the true source of illnesses.
5. John 9:4 – *“We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.”* Jesus included His disciples in His **mission**. Matthew 28:16-20
 - a. The coming **night** Jesus referred to here may be the Tribulation period which will occur after the church is raptured. That is a time when survival, not work will be central. As those days grow darker and darker it will be better to die than to live. Revelation 14:13
 - b. Jesus encouraged His followers to **work** in God’s program while they were still able to do so. John 4:25-28, Ephesians 5:15-17, Colossians 4:5-6
6. John 9:5 – *“While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”* By bringing tangible light to a man born in darkness, Jesus was about to demonstrate in a profound way that He is the true light of the world. No one could give **sight** to someone who had never seen before, and Jesus was not only about to do so but would do so in a very unorthodox way. Isaiah 35:5
7. John 9:6 – *When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes ...* The making of clay is a reminder that God made man of the **dust** of the ground. Jesus, the creator, was able to use dirt to give sight. He would give life to eyes that had never before functioned.
8. John 9:7 – *...and said to him, “Go, **wash** in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent).* Without a show, the man went and did as Jesus directed and was healed completely.
9. John 9:8 – *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?”* When they saw him walking about and able to see, the people were perplexed. He certainly looked like the blind **beggar**, but how could he possibly be the same person?
10. John 9:9 – *Others were saying, “This is he,” still others were saying, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the one.”* There was a lot of speculation going around, but the healed man **assured** everyone that he was in fact the beggar who was born blind.
11. John 9:10 – *So they were saying to him, “How then were your eyes opened?”* The people started questioning him about how he was healed. The fact that this same question appears again in verses 15, 19, and 26 shows the scope of the **dilemma** the Jews were having.
 - a. The Old Testament scriptures prophesied that the Messiah would give sight to the blind. No one besides Jesus had ever made a blind person **see**, much less one blind from birth. So, if this man was telling the truth, the Messiah had to be among them! Psalm 146:8; Isaiah 35:5, 29:18; Matthew 11:4-6; Luke 4:18-19
 - b. The problem for the Pharisees was that the miracle was done on the sabbath. They were about to be forced to decide between their oral traditions and the word of God. It should have been an easy decision, but not so for religious fanatics. In religious circles manmade commandments often **eclipse** God’s law and kindness in general.

The Gospel of John

12. John 9:11-12 – The last time the Lord healed on the sabbath in John’s Gospel the man did not know who healed him. This time it was different. This man **knew** it was Jesus who healed him.
- John 9:11 – *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.”* Instead of rejoicing with the man about his newfound eyesight, they wanted to know who had **worked** on the sabbath.
 - John 9:12 – *They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.”* You can be sure the Pharisees were not looking for Jesus to thank Him. They had other, less noble motivation for wanting to **find** Jesus.

B. John 9:13-34 – Reactions to the healing of the man born blind

- John 9:13-14 – Jesus deliberately caused a dilemma. Would the Pharisees be consumed with following their legalistic manmade traditions or would they accept the clear **evidence** that Jesus was the Messiah?
 - John 9:13 – *They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind.* The people took and presented the **healed** man to the Pharisees. They were likely enthralled to see how the Pharisees would react to this once in a lifetime miracle.
 - John 9:14 – *Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes .* John now points out that Jesus **purposely** healed on the sabbath and that He crafted a clay poultice as a part of the process.
 - In an attempt to protect the Mosaic Law, the Pharisees had added many of their own stipulations. Keeping their **rules** often became more important to them than the intent of the Law, which was to love God and love others. Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 2:27, 7:1-13; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14
 - The Mosaic Law set the sabbath apart as a day of **rest** for honoring God as creator of the world, but the Pharisees had added many ridiculous and picky restrictions of their own to God’s laws. Exodus 20:8-11
- John 9:15-17 – The Pharisees faced a predicament: The fact that Jesus healed a man who had been blind from birth was clear evidence that He was the Messiah. But by healing on the sabbath Jesus had **violated** their precious tradition. They were in a vexing dilemma.
 - John 9:15 – *Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, “He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see.”* In **simple**, straight-forward terms the man recounted once again how Jesus healed him: “He smeared mud on my eyes. Then I washed them. Now I can see.”
 - John 9:16a – *Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath ...”* So, the **debate** began. There were some Pharisees who said Jesus could not possibly be from God because He did not observe their sabbath day rules. There were other Pharisees who had a different opinion.
 - John 9:16b – *...But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And there was a division among them .* Some of the Pharisees argued that if Jesus was able to do such amazing sign miracles there was no way He could be a law breaker. They were in a quandary. What was the **truth**?
 - First, Jesus did what no mere **human** could ever do. As they had observed, Jesus performed a wonderful sign miracle of healing a man who had been born blind.
 - Second, Jesus was not a sinner. While soundly rejecting all forms of legalism, Jesus never once broke one of God’s laws, yet He had no patience with their meaningless and oppressive **religious** obligations. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 7:26, 1 Peter 2:22
 - John 9:17a – *So they said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?”* Surely these religious extremists were not hoping to hear some sort of criticism. How could anyone ever **criticize** the person who had healed them?
 - John 9:17b – *And he said, “He is a prophet.”* This was a brilliant answer. Since Jesus had obviously worked a miracle, the Pharisees were **powerless** to refute his claim.
- John 9:18-20 – In an attempt to deny that Jesus had done a miraculous sign, one they believed only the Christ could do, they sought to **disprove** the miracle. By their own standards, if they could not discredit the man’s statements or the miracle, they’d have to accept that Jesus was Messiah. That was an admission they were quite unwilling to make.
 - John 9:18 – *The Jews then did not believe it of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the **parents** of the very one who had received his sight .* Not willing to accept that a man born blind could have been healed, they dug into his past. The man’s parents were summonsed and grilled.
 - John 9:19 – *... and questioned them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind?”* They asked his parents if he had indeed been **born** blind. To heal a person who had become blind during their lifetime

The Gospel of John

- would have been a great miracle, but to heal someone who was born blind was even more astounding and beyond human possibility.
- c. John 9:19 – “...*Then how does he now see?*” The Pharisees demanded an explanation from the parents concerning how their son had received his sight. This was a sticky issue. The parents knew if they did not give a satisfactory **answer** to the Pharisees, they would be in trouble.
 - d. John 9:20 – *His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind.”* The parents **verified** that he was indeed their son and that he was indeed born blind. They did not try to convince the Pharisees of Jesus’ credentials or His abilities. About that issue they remained silent.
4. John 9:21-23 – However, out of **fear** of being excommunicated from the synagogue, they avoided the last question.
 - a. John 9:21 – “... *but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age; he will speak for himself.*” The man’s parents **evaded** the question about Jesus and His works by telling the Pharisees to ask their son for that information. They avoided having to defend or deny Jesus.
 - b. John 9:22 – *His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.* They may have wondered if Jesus was the Messiah, but they did not dare **admit** it. Isaiah 29:18, 35:5
 - c. John 9:23 – *For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”* Since their son was an **adult**, the parents told the Pharisees to take up the issue with Him.
 5. John 9:24-25 – Only by God’s **power** could a man born blind receive sight. The Pharisees’ stubborn refusal to believe the obvious irritated the man who had been healed.
 - a. John 9:24 – *So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner.”* Wow! What audacity. In the same breath these religious leaders asked the healed man to both glorify God and **deny** Jesus. They were convinced that Jesus was a sinner, not a savior.
 - b. John 9:25 – *He then answered, “Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”* The **fact** remained: the man had been miraculously healed. He was born blind, but now could see.
 - 1) The Pharisees should have taken their own advice and given glory to God for giving sight to a blind man, a truly marvelous miracle. Instead they called the Son of God a sinner. Their pride and jealousy made them **irrational**. Proverbs 27:4, Matthew 27:18
 - 2) Although Jesus gave this man physical sight, the primary reason He came into the world was to give light to those in **spiritual** darkness. John 1:4, 9; 12:46
 6. John 9:26-27 – The problem with the Pharisees was simply that they did not **believe**. Like Nicodemus, they thought they were right with God because of their heritage and because they were good people. Instead of admitting they were helpless sinners who needed the Savior, they audaciously thought they were acceptable to God. Romans 2:17, 10:3
 - a. John 9:26 – *So they said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”* This was a redundant question. The man had already plainly stated how Jesus had healed his blind eyes. The Pharisees were likely hoping to find some **detail** which they could critique and use to condemn Jesus for this act of mercy.
 - b. John 9:27 – *He answered them, “I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?”* This sarcastic statement communicated that the man was intellectually allied with Jesus. Very soon he would indeed become a believer and a true **disciple**.
 7. John 9:28 – *They reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses .* The Greek word for *reviled* LOIDOREO means to speak abusively to someone. Their disrespectful response exposed their **hatred** for Jesus and His followers. These Pharisees claimed to follow Moses, not Jesus. John 5:45-47, Romans 2:17
 8. John 9:29 – “*We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from.*” This reply revealed their sad **condition**. Jesus had taught repeatedly that He came forth from the Father in heaven. Jesus was the promised one God said was coming to bring salvation to the world.
 - a. These religious leaders accepted Moses, acknowledging that God had **spoken** to him. Earlier in Jesus teaching He had said, “*For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me (Jn 5:46).*”
 - b. Jesus is the exact **person** Moses wrote about in their beloved book, the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament). If they truly accepted Moses and his words, they should have equally accepted Jesus and His

The Gospel of John

teaching. Genesis 3:15, 12:3, 49:10; Deuteronomy 18:15; Luke 24:27

- c. Not only did Moses prophesy concerning the coming Messiah, the purpose of the Mosaic Law (which comprised a large segment of the Torah) was to point the Jews, and all people, to their **need** of the promised Messiah. Clearly, the Pharisees had not understood the true meaning of Moses' writings. Romans 3:19-26, 10:3-4
9. John 9:30-33 – The man who was born blind gave these religious leaders a theology **lesson**. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, admitted that no mere human could do the miracles Jesus was doing unless God was with him. To believe otherwise was to deny the obvious. John 3:2
 - a. John 9:30 – The man answered and said to them, “ *Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes.*” Jesus had given this man sight, but because of their unbelief, the Pharisees remained **blind**.
 - b. John 9:31 – “ *We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him .*” Using simple **logic**, the man argued that since God only hears the prayers of the righteous, Jesus must be righteous. Otherwise God would not have given Him the power to heal. They could not disagree with that!
 - c. John 9:32 – “ *Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind .*” In all of human history, this was the first time that anyone born blind had ever received their eyesight. This **sign** was of unprecedented uniqueness. This was a powerful miracle.
 - d. John 9:33 – “*If this man were not from God, He could do nothing .*” The man rightfully concluded that apart from God's power, it would be impossible for Jesus to heal him. This miracle was a clear signpost, a screaming **message**, that Jesus was indeed sent from God and that He was the Christ, the promised deliverer.
10. John 9:34 – *They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” So they put him out .* Realizing they had no case, the religious leaders verbally **attacked** the man and expelled him. Religious people love to maintain control through fear, threats and cruelty. Having lived his life as a beggar, this kind of rejection was not likely new to him.

C. John 9:35-41 – Jesus, the Light of the world, is God

1. John 9:35 – *Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”* Jesus took the initiative to seek out the man He had healed. He was interested in more than just his physical well-being; He wanted to give this man **eternal** life. Daniel 7:13, Revelation 1:13
2. John 9:36 –*He answered, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”* Jesus **desired** for this man to be saved. That's why He went and sought him out. Luke 19:10, John 14:6
 - a. The gospel centers on the **person** of Jesus Christ, but regretfully this man did not know who Jesus Christ was or about the work He came to accomplish to save people from sin and death. 1 Corinthians 15:1-5
 - b. Clearly this man had never personally glimpsed Jesus. When he returned from washing in the pool of Siloam, there is no mention of him seeing Jesus. So obviously, when Jesus found him and posed this question, the man did not recognize Jesus. He did not **know** that the man who healed him, was standing right in front of him, talking to him.
3. John 9:37 – *Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.”* Similar to the way Jesus revealed Himself to the woman at the well, He now revealed Himself to the man who had been born blind. Jesus was the Son of Man, the Messiah, Immanuel, God **among** men, and the Savior of the world. John 4:26
4. John 9:38 – *And he said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped Him.* This must have been a touching moment. In complete simplicity and sincerity, this man put his faith in Jesus Christ and was **saved**. Although in verse 27 this man “claimed” to be Jesus' disciple, he had not yet realized Jesus was the Messiah and had not yet believed in Him for salvation.
5. John 9:39 – *And Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.”* Jesus came to differentiate between two **classes** of people: those who are saved and those who are not saved.
 - a. Jesus came so that the spiritually blind might be able to see and so that those who think they see would become blind. Why? Because God **resists** the proud but gives grace to the humble. Those who recognize their spiritual blindness receive grace and come to see. Those who are proud and think they see are blinded by their own arrogance.
 - b. There is no contradiction here to what Jesus said in John 3:17. When Jesus came to earth the first time, He did not come to **condemn** people but to bring salvation to all mankind through His death for sins and resurrection. However, when He comes to earth the second time, He will come to judge.



The Gospel of John

6. John 9:40 – *Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, “We are not blind too, are we?”* The Pharisees were blinded by self-righteousness. If they had said, “We are blind. Please give us sight,” the Lord would have had **pity** on them and would have given them spiritual eyesight. Luke 13:34-35
7. John 9:41 – *Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin...”* If they had recognized their spiritual blindness, they would have sought the light of the world, Jesus Christ, and He would have **healed** their sin-sick blindness and forgiven their sins.
8. John 9:41 – “*...but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.*” Instead, Jesus assured them that because of the spiritual blindness of their arrogance, they were still lost in the **darkness** of their sins.

The Gospel of John © Copyright 2020, DM2 International