



*Sunday School Lesson*  
**John 9:1-41**  
 by Lorin L. Cranford  
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## Passing the Buck



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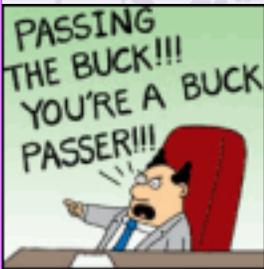
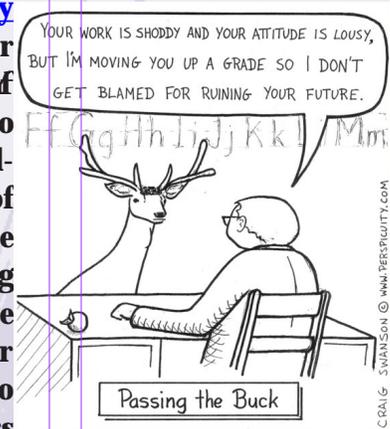
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**“Passing the buck”** -- this is a phrase that comes out of the [history of poker playing](#) and originally meant the shifting of responsibility for  time it has come to signify the shifting of responsibility, or blame, to another person, usually in order to avoid taking personal responsibility. Our passage in John 9 gets close to that principle with the story of the healing of the blind man. It begins with the disciples making a false assumption about his blindness as a consequence of either his sinning or that of his parents. Later when his parents are squeezed by the religious authorities about how their son had been cured of his blindness, they refuse to take a stand. Instead, they tell the religious leaders to ask their son; they take no responsibility for his actions. When confronting Jesus the religious authorities themselves refuse to take responsibility for their actions. With our American culture so inclined to “pass the buck” we need to hear this story in the ministry of Jesus about personal responsibility.



#### I. Context

Because of having done previous studies in the Gospel of John, we will utilize that research and attempt to summarize the greater details that are found in several other studies in the fourth gospel. Check the Gospel of John page under [Bible Studies](#) at Cranfordville for more details. Particularly important is “Coming to Jesus” from [John 1:35-51](#). New material will be added to supplement the earlier study.



#### a. Historical

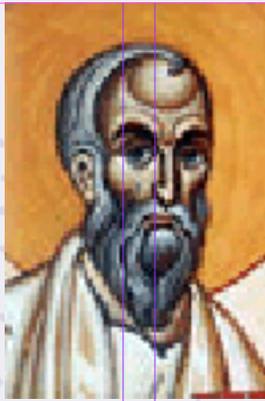
**External History.** The reporter questions of Who, Where, When, Why, To Whom that comprise the study of the origin of the fourth gospel in [Historical Criticism](#) have received different answers over the past several centuries. Traditional understandings have traced the origin of this gospel back to the Apostle John, one of the original Twelve Apostles of Jesus. With the beginning of more technical biblical studies coming out of the Enlightenment, scholars

became less certain of that tradition of early Christianity. The document itself makes no indication about its composition. The title, “The Gospel according to John” is a second century addition to the document for labeling purposes and reflects a dominant viewpoint of late second century Christianity about its origin. This tradition sought to link a “disciple whom Jesus loved” (cf. 19:26, 35; 21:20-24) back to John, one of the sons of [Zebedee](#). Scholarly analysis of its

contents has convinced most that the book reflects a composite origin with signals of major sources having played an important role in its composition. Additionally, indications strongly suggest that chapter twenty one was added after the original composition of the document, and very possibly chapters fifteen through seventeen as well. Two major sources of materials have been traced as previous writings that the writer depended upon in the composition of the gospel. First, a Book of Signs provided the foundation for the material for the first seventeen chapters, while the Passion narrative in chapters eighteen through twenty bear clear signs of pre-existing sources being heavily used in the composition of the gospel. It is this Passion Narrative material that comes the closest to telling the story of Jesus in a manner similar to that found in the Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

The writer of this gospel effectively wove together his sources and created a highly coherent gospel account, although one very different from that of the Synoptic Gospels. A part of this difference traces back to the significant role of the Prologue in 1:1-18 that sets the “theological” tone for the gospel and provides the conceptual glasses through which to see the life of Jesus. As early as the late second century the Church Father, [Clement of Alexandria](#), recognized this trait and labeled the gospel a “spiritual gospel.”

On the assumption that the Apostle

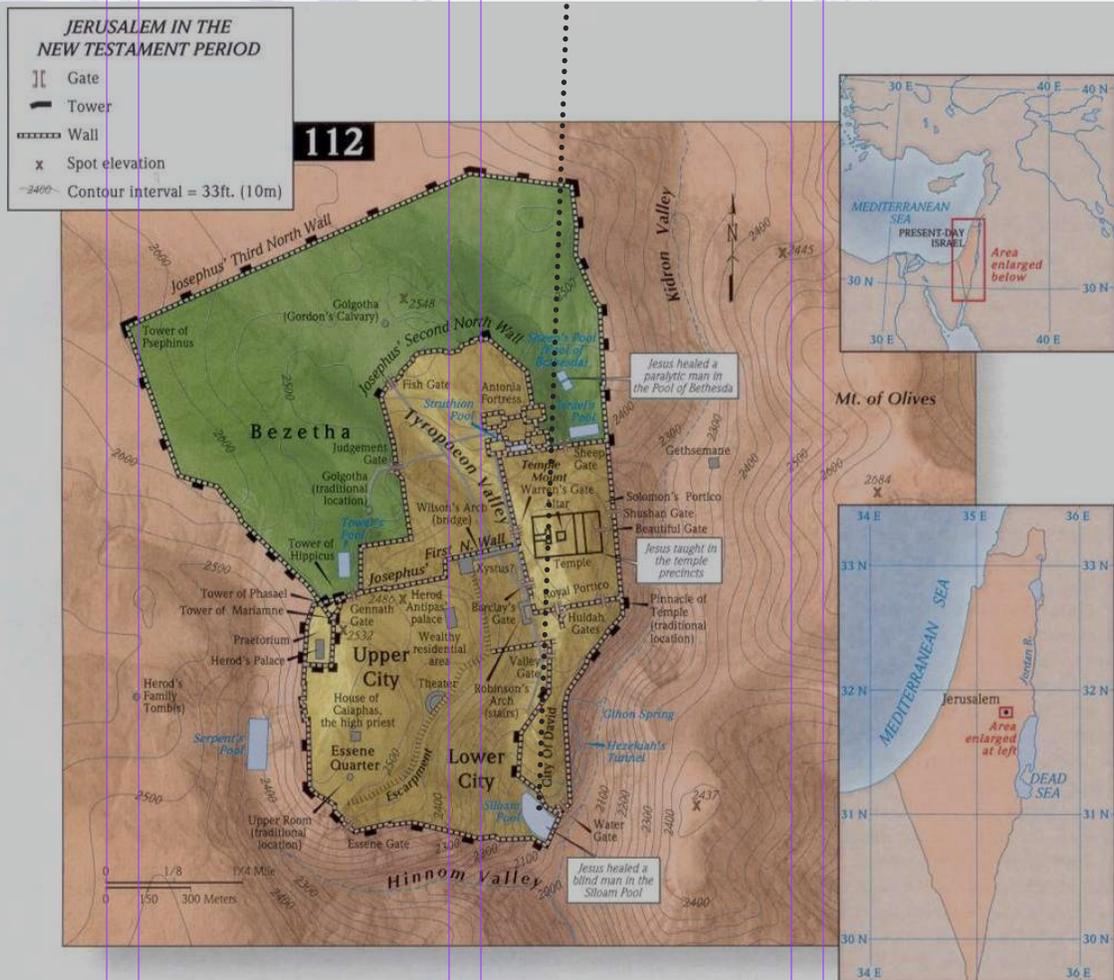


John played a significant role in at least the early stages of the gospel’s composition, the when, where and why questions would find answer in the region of Ephesus in the late 80s to mid 90s of the first century. The why question is answered directly by the gospel account itself in 20:30-31:

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through

believing you may have life in his name.

**Internal History.** The story of the blind man in chapter four took place in Jerusalem. This was the principle city of the Jews in all of Palestine because of the temple which served as the central worship center for Judaism. The time and place markers inside the text are rather vague. The only specific spot mentioned is the [Pool of Siloam](#) (vv. 7, 11). This was located in the southeast corner of the old city, as is indicated on the map below. G.A. Barrios (“Si-



Pool of Siloam today



loam,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, iPreach) provides this description:

A pool in Jerusalem, mentioned in connection with the healing by Jesus of a man born blind (John 9:7). The author of the Fourth Gospel interprets Siloam symbolically as “(the One who was) sent.” The spellings Σειλωαμ, Σιλωα, are found in the LXX, the latter being a mere transcription of SHILOAH, which is the proper name of an aqueduct, meaning “the sender” of water (Isa. 8:6). It is rendered in the Latin versions by *Siloë* and in Arabic by *Selwan*, which is the name of the village opposite the SE hill of ancient Jerusalem. The complex relations between the aqueduct and the pool are considered here in their historical development and from the point of view of toponymy. For a detailed analysis of archaeological remains, see WATER WORKS. Fig. SIL 59.

1. Early aqueducts. Both the aqueduct and the pool belong to a system of canals and reservoirs in communication with the spring of GIHON, a system which was radically altered in the course of history. During the early phase of the monarchy, at the latest before the reign of Ahaz, the water was collected at the outlet of the spring in a reservoir originally dug out of the rock. This reservoir, scanty remains of which have been discovered beneath the modern steps leading to the spring, most likely represents the “Upper Pool” II Kings 18:17; Isa. 7:3; 36:2), possibly also the “Old Pool” (Isa. 22:11), and the “artificial pool” (Neh. 3:16; KJV “pool that was made”). Some scholars, however, distinguish the Upper Pool from the Old Pool, and tentatively locate the latter, or both, in

the Tyropoeon.

The pool served as a reservoir for the water passing through Hezekiah’s tunnel southward to the pool. It was a major source of water for those inside the city of Jerusalem, especially in times of military siege when access outside the city walls was virtually impossible. Here the blind man washed the mud from his eyes and had his sight restored. Jesus first came across him somewhere elsewhere in Jerusalem as verse one indicates. That spot had accessible dirt so that Jesus made the mud pack that he put on the man’s eyes. The other spatial location is the undefined place where the Pharisees were (cf. 13, 24). Although not clearly specified, the likelihood is that they were conducting their interrogations of the man and his parents from the Court of the Gentiles located in the outer parameters of the temple.

The central time marker that is critical to the story is that the healing etc. took place on a sabbath day (cf. v. 14). Thus the criticism leveled against Jesus for healing this man was that such activity constituted a violation of the Sabbath Law regulations that had accumulated over the centuries of scribal interpretive expansion of the Decalogue commandment about the Sabbath in

**Exodus 20:8-11**. 8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

And **Deuteronomy 5:12-15**. 12 Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. 13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 14 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you. 15 Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

In Judaism “sabbath” meant from sundown Friday evening until sundown Saturday evening. So most likely these events occurred on a Saturday during the day.

Thus the internal history revolves around encounters of Jesus with a blind man, the Pharisees’

interrogation of him and his parents, and the confrontation of Jesus with the Pharisees at the end. Everything took place in Jerusalem and on a sabbath day.

## b. Literary

**Genre.** The broad literary pattern for our passage is that it is a part of a gospel. This carries several important implications, which are discussed in greater detail in the [earlier study](#) from John 1:35-51. In quick summation, one can say that gospel was an insider narration of the life and ministry of Jesus. It presents Jesus as God's Son with the intent to advocate faith commitment to him (cf. 20:30-31). Such literary patterns set this document apart from a modern biography which attempts -- on the surface at least -- to present an objective assessment of the life of an individual. The modern autobiography steps away from this objectivity stance somewhat with a more biased depiction of one's own life. Just as is true for a modern autobiography, an ancient gospel didn't ignore historical reality and will attempt to describe actual history. It just adopts a very interpretive slant on understanding the historical significance of the events that make up the complete story. Consequently, one should not be surprised by different interpretive slants on various episodes in Jesus' life where the various gospel writers describe the same event. This will occasionally extend to different understandings of the historical details of an event. Modern biblical scholarship is slowly growing out of the very immature era in its ability to not take such differences as a basis for questioning the historicity of Jesus himself. The inadequacies of such early tendencies were long observed by scholars outside the biblical studies field, and now are increasingly recognized by Bible scholars themselves. Only in ultra-conservative and ultra-liberal circles do Bible scholars tend to be trapped in the time-warp of the nineteenth century thinking.

The small genre issues present in the passage revolve around the depiction of the miracle itself in vv. 1-12 (sometimes viewed as vv. 1-7), and the controversy over a sabbath violation because of the miracle in vv. 13 (8) - 41. Thus John has brought together the miraculous healing ministry of Jesus with the sabbath controversies much in the same way that the synoptic gospel writers did in the early days of Jesus' Galilean ministry.<sup>1</sup>

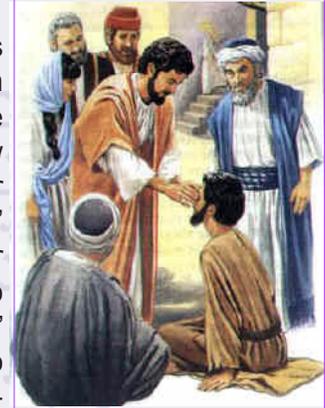
<sup>1</sup>See section III. A. of my [Detailed Outline of the Life of Christ](#) discussion for details. For a projection of all the miracles of Jesus in the four gospels within the framework of this outline, see my [Chronological Listing of the Miracles of Jesus](#), also at Cranfordville.

Jesus did several types of miracles.<sup>2</sup> Most of them impacted positively the lives of sick people; a few demonstrated his superior power over the "natural" world such as wind, water etc. For a clear backdrop to the depiction of Jesus' miracles, one needs to study the numerous accounts of the miraculous in ancient Greco-Roman and Jewish literature, as well as the NT Apocrypha depiction of Jesus' miracles. Against the mainly sensationalist, shyster tone of most of these accounts, Jesus as a miracle worker in the four gospels is a compassionate person using God's power both to benefit the lives of people in need and to validate his teaching claims to be setting forth God's truth. In no instance does he personally benefit materially from any of his miracles. One distinctive of the Johannine miracle narratives is the label used to describe them. John uses the Greek word σημεῖον for "sign" as his label for the miracles. But the synoptic gospels prefer either δύναμις and/or τέρας. [John's label](#) stresses the nature of the miracles pointing to the authentic presence of God's power in Jesus' ministry, while the synoptic writers' terms underscore the manifestation of divine power in the action of Jesus. Although 9:1-41 doesn't use the label directly, the pointing nature of Jesus miracle with the blind beggar is quite obvious, especially in the subsequent controversy over the miracle.

**Literary Context.** The literary setting for 9:1-41 can be seen from the listing of pericopes in my [Gospel of John: List of Pericopes](#) at Cranfordville. These verses constitute pericopes #39-41 in the fourth gospel. They provide the opening shot of criticism of Jesus after his teaching about being the Light of the world, as the [outline of the fourth gospel](#) at Cranfordville stresses:

- 8 Light of the world discourse (8:12-59)
  - a) Conflict with Pharisees (vv. 12-20)
  - b) Claim to authority (vv. 21-30)
  - c) Instructions to professed believers (vv. 31-47)
  - d) Claim to deity (vv. 48-59)

<sup>2</sup>For a detailed discussion see "Gospel Miracles" under [New Testament Genre](#) at Cranfordville.



9. Open conflict intensified (9:1-11:54)
- a) *Blind man healed* (9:1-12)
  - b) *Negative reaction* (9:13-34)
  - c) *Spiritual blindness* (9:35-41)
  - d) Good Shepherd discourse (10:1-21)
  - e) Debate in Solomon's Colonnade (10:22-42)
  - f) Lazarus raised in Bethany (11:1-54)
    - (1) Delayed visit (vv. 1-16)
    - (2) Conversation with sisters (vv. 17-37)
    - (3) Lazarus raised (vv. 38-44)
    - (4) Plot to kill Jesus (vv. 45-54)

The passage comes as the first part of section 9 under the sub-topic "B. Jesus encounters controversy" (5:1-11:57). In John's narrative, these events lead up to the Passion Week (13:1-20:1) where the hostility to Jesus will result in his execution. So thematically, the backdrop of Jesus' declaration to be the Light of the World plays an important role in the tension with the religious authorities that saturates our passage.

## II. Message

**Literary Structure.** The passage structurally revolves around the miracle that Jesus did and the controversy that develops as a consequence. George R. Beasley-Murray (*Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 36, revised ed., Logos System) provides a helpful analysis of the structure:

The structure of the chapter is clear. After the sign in vv 1–7 the controversy occasioned by the healing is described, at the center of which stands the blind man. He is subjected to a series of interrogations:

- vv 8–12      Questioning by his neighbors.
- vv 13–17    Interrogation by the Pharisees.
- vv 18–23    Interrogation of the man's parents by the Pharisees.
- vv 24–34    Further interrogation of the man by the Pharisees.
- vv 35–38    Jesus seeks him and leads him to full confession of faith.
- vv 39–41    Aftermath of the sign: Jesus declares the purpose of his coming in making the "blind" to see and the "seeing" blind.

It will be observed that the chapter thus divides itself into seven sections. This gratified J. L. Martyn, who treats the chapter as a drama, wherein the rule is largely followed of two active characters only on the stage at one time, and arrives at the same analysis (*History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 26–27).

A better understanding, implicit in the above analysis, that gives more consideration to the pattern of ancient miracle narratives is to see vv. 1-12 as the miracle, and the sabbath controversy emerging from it beginning with verse 13. We will follow this structure in our exegesis of the passage.

### a. A Healing Miracle, vv. 1-12

#### Greek NT

1 Καὶ παράγων εἶδεν ἄνθρωπον τυφλὸν ἐκ γενετῆς. 2 καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες ῥαββί, τίς ἥμαρτεν, οὗτος ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῆ; 3 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς οὕτε οὗτος ἥμαρτεν οὕτε οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῇ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. 4 ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ἕως ἡμέρας ἐστίν· ἔρχεται νύξ ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι. 5 ὅταν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ᾧ,

#### NASB

1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 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

#### NRSV

1 As he walked 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 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

#### NLT

1 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. 2 "Rabbi," his disciples asked him, "why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents' sins?" 3 "It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins," Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. 4 We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us.

φῶς εἰμι τοῦ κόσμου. 6 ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἔπτυσεν χαμαὶ καὶ ἐποίησεν πηλὸν ἐκ τοῦ πτύσματος καὶ ἐπέχρισεν αὐτοῦ τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς 7 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὕπαγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ (ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται ἀπεσταλμένος). ἀπῆλθεν οὖν καὶ ἐνίψατο καὶ ἦλθεν βλέπων. 8 Οἱ οὖν γείτονες καὶ οἱ θεωροῦντες αὐτὸν τὸ πρότερον ὅτι προσαίτης ἦν ἔλεγον· οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καθήμενος καὶ προσαιτῶν; 9 ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν, ἄλλοι ἔλεγον· οὐχί, ἀλλὰ ὅμοιος αὐτῷ ἐστιν. ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. 10 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ πῶς [οὖν] ἠνεώχθησάν σου οἱ ὀφθαλμοί; 11 ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος· ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰησοῦς πηλὸν ἐποίησεν καὶ ἐπέχρισέν μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ εἶπέν μοι ὅτι ὕπαγε εἰς τὸν Σιλωάμ καὶ νίψαι· ἀπελθὼν οὖν καὶ νιψάμενος ἀνέβλεψα. 12 καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ποῦ ἐστιν ἐκεῖνος; λέγει οὐκ οἶδα.

#### Notes:

Ancient miracle narratives commonly contained three emphases: 1) the circumstance creating the need for miraculous action; 2) a depiction of the miraculous action itself; and 3) the impact of the miraculous action. This third segment focused on the individual who was the target of the miracle, and often also stressed the miracle's impact on the bystanders who witnessed the miracle. It is this segment in vv. 8-12 that warrants these verses being included in the miracle itself. To be sure, they provide a transition into the sabbath controversy that

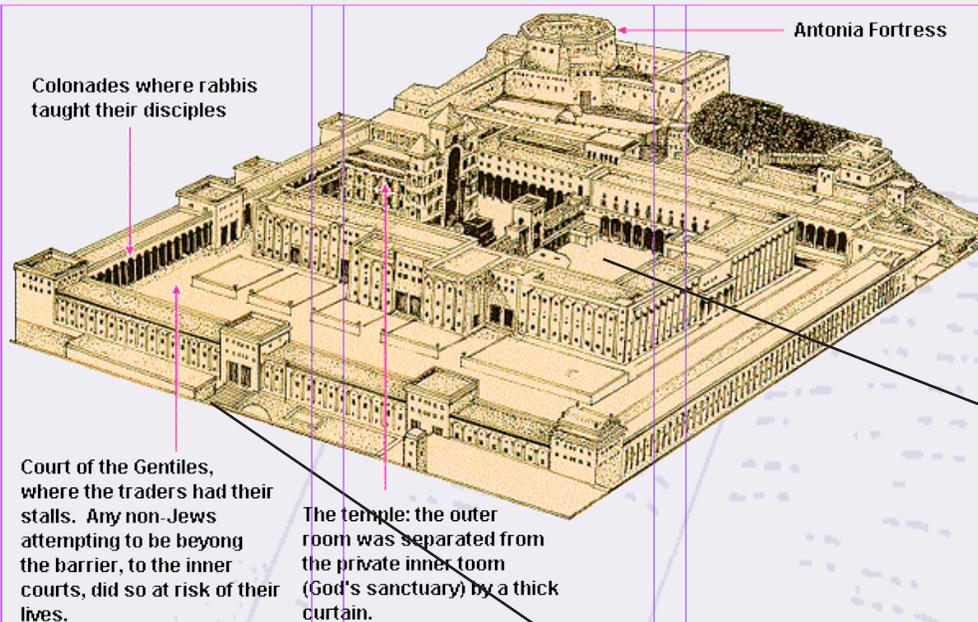
when no one can work. 5 "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." 6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, 7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came back seeing. 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?" 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."

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7 saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10 But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

The night is coming, and then no one can work. 5 But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. 7 He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! 8 His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!" But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!" 10 They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?" 11 He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!" 12 "Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he replied.

develops in vv. 13-41, but they are not a part of the controversy narrative itself.

**1) Occasion for the miracle**, vv. 1-5. The circumstance prompting the miracle was not a request for healing by the blind beggar, like often is the case in the synoptic narratives. In the narrative the beggar doesn't say anything to Jesus, even to beg for money. Rather, the narrative simply indicates as Jesus and his disciples walked past the man the disciples raised the typical ancient Jewish theologi-



people, would heal the man as a sign of God's presence in his ministry, and his claim to be Light. The opportunity to confirm his claim as the Light of the world presented itself to Jesus and he was going to take advantage of it while he had the chance.

One must give some attention to the backdrop to this answer that John has narrated. In 8:12-59, while teaching in the "treasury of the temple"<sup>3</sup> (ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδασκῶν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ; cf. 8:20; see diagram on the left for approximate

cal question about the cause of the man's blindness. Often the assumption was made that all sinful action results in observable physical punishment by God. One "steeped" in the Law of God could accurately diagnose the sin by "insightfully analyzing the nature of the punishment." Certain sins led to specific punishments. Thus as one reverses this line of thinking you could figure out what sin the individual had committed that brought on the physical punishment.

The disciples pose the question in broader categories, giving Jesus some "wiggle" room in his answer: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (ῥαββί, τίς ἤμαρτεν, οὗτος ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῆ;). Perhaps, once this basic question was answered, they intended to press the issue to specific sins by whomever Jesus indicated was at fault.

Jesus' answer, however, was shocking. He refused to pin guilt on either the man or his parents (vv. 3-5): "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (οὔτε οὗτος ἤμαρτεν οὔτε οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῆ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. 4 ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ἕως ἡμέρας ἔστιν ἔρχεται νύξ ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι. 5 ὅταν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ᾶ, φῶς εἰμι τοῦ κόσμου.). The man's blindness presented the opportunity for something more important than assessing blame: the manifestation of God's miraculous power in the man's healing. Jesus, as the Light of the world revealing God to

location), Jesus had declared, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (8:12). A series of confrontations follows, first with the Pharisees (8:13-30). Then Jesus engages a broader crowd of Jews in a reaffirmation of his claim to be the Light and its implications (vv. 31-58). The tension reaches a feverish pitch so that they are ready to kill him on the spot, but "Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple" (v. 59). As Jesus and the disciples are perhaps leaving the temple, they spot the beggar at one of the entrance gates where beggars often gathered to request alms from those entering the temple to worship. But this intense confrontation with the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders over his claim to be the Light looms heavy in the background here.

A huge caution needs to be exercised in interpreting the implications of Jesus' answer to the disciples' question. When Jesus says that neither the man's nor his parents' sin caused the blindness, these words cannot be legitimately taken as a timeless principle in which Jesus totally disconnects this world punishments from human sinfulness. To the contrary, Jesus was declaring that, in this man's

<sup>3</sup>γαζοφυλάκιον can mean a receptacle in which 'treasure can be placed, i.e., a collecting box (as in Mark 12:41), or a place where treasure is kept. Jos. speaks of several rooms in the temple where valuables were kept, but it is likely that the hall in which the thirteen trumpet shaped collection boxes stood was so named; it was evidently in the court of the women, since they had access to it, and is here mentioned to identify the scene for the utterance of v 12 (G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 36, 2nd edition, Logos Systems).

individual situation, tracing sin from his blindness was irrelevant. That wasn't the point. To be sure, the very detailed system of analysis that had been developed to diagnose specific sins is very well called into question. But the general principle that God does on occasion physically punish our sins is not challenged here.

## 2) Depiction of the miraculous action itself

vv. 6-7a: “When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent)“ (ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἔπτυσεν χαμαὶ καὶ ἐποίησεν πηλὸν ἐκ τοῦ πτύσματος καὶ ἐπέχρισεν αὐτοῦ τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοῦς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὕπαγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ (ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται ἀπεσταλμένος)). The method of effecting healing in this instance is rather curious. A wide variety of healing methods can be seen in a study of the various [miracles of Jesus](#) in the gospels. Some involve physical contact with the individual; others do not. At no time does Jesus ever utter “magical, secretive” words over the individual in order to effect healing, as was often the case in the surrounding literature for miracle workers.

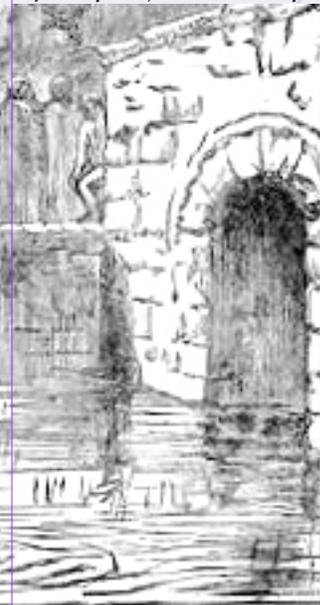
Jesus made some mud from soil that he had spit into and then pasted it on the eyes of the blind man. Then he told him to go wash off the mud in the pool of Siloam quite a ways distant from where they were at the time. In Mark 8:23, Jesus used his spit to heal another blind man, and in Mark 7:33, Jesus’ spit was the agent for restoring hearing to a deaf man. But in neither was the spit mixed with dirt. Saliva was often used in medical practice in the ancient world.<sup>4</sup> Following these instructions

<sup>4</sup>Saliva was regarded as having healing properties—under certain circumstances (cf. B. Bat. 126b: “The saliva of the firstborn of a father heals [diseases of the eye], but the saliva of the firstborn of the mother does not heal”). But the frequent connection of saliva with magical practices caused its use to be forbidden by later rabbis (so explicitly Akiba, *Tos Sanh.* 12:10, Str-B 2:15). The making of “clay” from the earth was frequently compared by early Church Fathers with the creation of man from the earth in Gen 2:7; this prompted Irenaeus to comment, “That which the artificer—the Word—had omit-

tested the faith of the blind beggar in Jesus’ power to heal.

## 3) Impact of the miraculous action, vv. 7b-12:

“Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some were saying, ‘It is he.’ Others were saying, ‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ But they kept asking him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’ He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.’ They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’” (ἀπῆλθεν οὖν καὶ ἐνίψατο καὶ ἦλθεν βλέπων. Οἱ οὖν γείτονες καὶ οἱ θεωροῦντες αὐτὸν τὸ πρότερον ὅτι προσαίτης ἦν ἔλεγον· οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καθήμενος καὶ προσαιτῶν; ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν, ἄλλοι ἔλεγον· οὐχί, ἀλλὰ ὅμοιος αὐτῷ ἐστιν. ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ πῶς [οὖν] ἠνεύχθησάν σου οἱ ὀφθαλμοί; ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος· ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰησοῦς πηλὸν ἐποίησεν καὶ ἐπέχρισέν μου τοῦς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ εἶπέν μοι ὅτι ὕπαγε εἰς τὸν Σιλωάμ



καὶ νίψαι· ἀπελθὼν οὖν καὶ νιψάμενος ἀνέβλεψα. καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ ποῦ ἐστιν ἐκεῖνος; λέγει· οὐκ οἶδα.). The impact is twofold: 1) the man follows Jesus’ instructions and is healed exactly as Jesus had said; and 2) his neighbors and acquaintances can’t believe that he has been healed. It takes him a while to convince them that he has really been healed. They want to know where this healer Jesus can be found, but the man has no

idea. One can somewhat understand their difficulty. Here was a blind neighbor who lived in dirt poor poverty begging for a living. All of a sudden his blindness is gone after at least 30 years. Nothing could have prepared them for this.

What does this have to do with us today? Several insights can be gleaned from this episode. We can easily make the mistake of the disciples in let-

ted to form in the womb he supplied in public, that the works of God might be manifested in him” (*Adv. Haer.* 15.2). (G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 36, 2nd edition, Logos Systems).

ting popular theology of our day frame our spiritual questions. And in so doing, we miss the point of the scripture text. Nothing is so typical as the historical discussion of the miracles of Jesus over the past 150 years. Most of the debate has centered around whether or not Jesus actually did miracles, or whether these are fairy tale kind of stories in the gospels. The debate has been framed around a modern definition of “miracle” coming out of the Enlightenment. God stands outside His creation and “intervenes” in it by setting aside temporarily the forces of nature in order to do something “supra-natural.” Such reasoning has no connection to the thought world of Jesus or the first century. God is always present in His creation; He is actively working inside that creation constantly in myriads of ways that go unnoticed by us humans. On occasion He chooses to work in ways that catch our attention. Miracles in Jesus’ ministry always tell us something about God: that He cares and this or that particular miracle is but a reflection of

His constant caring for us. They point us to Jesus as the channel through whom God works in this world, and as the key to access to God and his caring. But the modern framing of the issue distances miracle from God’s compassion and objectifies it as even detached from God himself. Satisfactory answers to such a wrong headed question will never come!

The blind beggar provided the moment for Jesus to validate the truthfulness of his claim, “I am the Light of the world.” That point we must not overlook, for Jesus remains that Light to our very day. This miracle helped validate that claim, both to the folks at that time and to us as well.

Also, we need to be prepared for surprises. The beggar’s neighbors couldn’t believe what they were seeing when he came back home able to see. Sometimes we have difficulty sensing what God is up to in our world. We should always stand ready to grasp that God occasionally does the unpredictable and the unexpected.

**b. Subsequent Sabbath controversy, vv. 13-41**

**Greek NT**

13 Ἄγουσιν αὐτὸν πρὸς τοὺς Φαρισαίους τὸν ποτε τυφλόν. 14 ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἧ ἡμέρᾳ τὸν πηλὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνέωξεν αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. 15 πάλιν οὖν ἠρώτων αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι πῶς ἀνέβλεψεν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς πηλὸν ἐπέθηκέν μου ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς καὶ ἐνιψάμην καὶ βλέπω. 16 ἔλεγον οὖν ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων τινὲς οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ. ἄλλοι [δὲ] ἔλεγον· πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος ἀμαρτωλὸς τοιαῦτα σημεῖα ποιεῖν; καὶ σχίσμα ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς. 17 λέγουσιν οὖν τῷ τυφλῷ πάλιν· τί σὺ λέγεις περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἠνέωξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν ὅτι προφήτης

**NASB**

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. 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.” 16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.” But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And there was a division among them. 17 So they said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him, since He opened your

**NRSV**

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” 16 Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. 17 So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he

**NLT**

13 Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, 14 because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. 15 The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, “He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!” 16 Some of the Pharisees said, “This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.” Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?” So there was a deep division of opinion among them. 17 Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, “What’s your opinion about this

ἐστίν.

18 Οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἦν τυφλὸς καὶ ἀνέβλεψεν ἕως ὅτου ἐφώνησαν τοὺς γονεῖς αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀναβλέψαντος  
19 καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτοὺς λέγοντες· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμῶν, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη; πῶς οὖν βλέπει ἄρτι;  
20 ἀπεκρίθησαν οὖν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπαν· οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ἡμῶν καὶ ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη.  
21 πῶς δὲ νῦν βλέπει οὐκ οἶδαμεν, ἢ τίς ἤνοιξεν αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἡμεῖς οὐκ οἶδαμεν αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσατε, ἡλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸς περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λαλήσει.  
22 ταῦτα εἶπαν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἐφοβοῦντο τοὺς Ἰουδαίους· ἤδη γὰρ συνετέθειντο οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἵνα ἐάν τις αὐτὸν ὁμολογήσῃ χριστόν, ἀποσυνάγωγος γένηται.  
23 διὰ τοῦτο οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ εἶπαν ὅτι ἡλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸν ἐπερωτήσατε.

24 Ἐφώνησαν οὖν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκ δευτέρου ὃς ἦν τυφλὸς καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ· ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀμαρτωλός ἐστιν.  
25 ἀπεκρίθη οὖν ἐκεῖνος εἰ ἀμαρτωλός ἐστιν οὐκ οἶδα· ἐν οἶδα ὅτι τυφλὸς ὦν ἄρτι βλέπω.  
26 εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· τί ἐποίησέν σοι; πῶς ἤνοιξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς;  
27 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς εἶπον ὑμῖν ἤδη καὶ

eyes?” And he said, “He is a prophet.”

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,  
19 and questioned them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?”  
20 His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 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.”  
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.  
23 For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

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.”  
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.”  
26 So they said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”  
27 He answered them, “I told you already and

opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight  
19 and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”  
20 His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”  
22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.  
23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”  
24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.”

25 He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”  
26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”  
27 He answered them, “I have told you

man who healed you?” The man replied, “I think he must be a prophet.”

18 The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents.  
19 They asked them, “Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?”  
20 His parents replied, “We know this is our son and that he was born blind, but we don’t know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself.”  
22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue.  
23 That’s why they said, “He is old enough. Ask him.”  
24 So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.”

25 “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!”  
26 “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?”  
27 “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen?”

οὐκ ἠκούσατε· τί πάλιν θέλετε ἀκούειν; μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς θέλετε αὐτοῦ μαθηταὶ γενέσθαι; 28 καὶ ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπον· σὺ μαθητῆς εἶ ἐκείνου, ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐσμὲν μαθηταί· 29 ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν. 30 ἀπεκρίθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ θαυμαστόν ἐστιν, ὅτι ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἐστίν, καὶ ἠνοιξέν μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. 31 οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεός οὐκ ἀκούει, ἀλλ' ἐάν τις θεοσεβῆς ἢ καὶ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ τούτου ἀκούει. 32 ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἠκούσθη ὅτι ἠνέωξέν τις ὀφθαλμούς τυφλοῦ γεγεννημένου. 33 εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ, οὐκ ἠδύνατο ποιεῖν οὐδέν. 34 ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ἐν ἁμαρτίαις σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὄλος καὶ σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς; καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω. 35 Ἦκουσεν Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω καὶ εὐρών αὐτὸν εἶπεν· σὺ πιστεύεις εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; 36 ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἶπεν· καὶ τίς ἐστίν, κύριε, ἵνα πιστεύσω εἰς αὐτόν; 37 εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἑώρακας αὐτόν καὶ ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ σοῦ ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν. 38 ὁ δὲ ἔφη· πιστεύω, κύριε· καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ. 39 Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς

you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?" 28 They reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29 "We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from." 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. 31 "We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him. 32 "Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." 34 They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" So they put him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" 37 Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." 38 And he said, "Lord, I believe." And

already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" 28 Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." 30 The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." 34 They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." 37 Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." 38 He said, "Lord, I believe." And

Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" 28 Then they cursed him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! 29 We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't even know where this man comes from." 30 "Why, that's very strange!" the man replied. "He healed my eyes, and yet you don't know where he comes from?" 31 We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. 32 Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it." 34 "You were born a total sinner!" they answered. "Are you trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue. 35 When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 The man answered, "Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him." 37 "You have seen him," Jesus said, "and he is speaking to you!" 38 "Yes, Lord, I believe!" the man said. And he worshiped Jesus. 39 Then Jesus told him, "I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind

κρίμα ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν κόσμον  
τοῦτον ἦλθον, ἵνα οἱ  
μὴ βλέποντες βλέπωσιν  
καὶ οἱ βλέποντες τυφλοὶ  
γένωνται.

40 ἤκουσαν ἐκ τῶν  
Φαρισαίων ταῦτα οἱ  
μετ' αὐτοῦ ὄντες καὶ  
εἶπον αὐτῷ· μὴ καὶ  
ἡμεῖς τυφλοὶ ἐσμεν;  
41 εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς·  
εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἄν  
εἴχετε ἁμαρτίαν· νῦν δὲ  
λέγετε ὅτι βλέπομεν, ἡ  
ἁμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει.

#### Notes:

The sub-units of material in these verses is rather clear, and has been accurately pointed out by Beasley-Murray in the quote at the beginning of [section two](#).

- vv 13–17 [Interrogation by the Pharisees.](#)
- vv 18–23 [Interrogation of the man's parents by the Pharisees.](#)
- vv 24–34 [Further interrogation of the man by the Pharisees.](#)
- vv 35–38 [Jesus seeks him and leads him to full confession of faith.](#)
- vv 39–41 [Aftermath of the sign: Jesus declares the purpose of his coming in making the "blind" to see and the "seeing" blind.](#)

We will analyze these pericopes on this basis.

#### 1) Interrogation by the Pharisees, vv. 13-17.

The neighbors brought the healed man to the Pharisees. Why? Beasley-Murray (*WBC*, Logos Systems) provides a good explanation for the likely reason:

[Presumably because the Pharisees were their religious leaders, and should know about this extraordinary event; as religious experts they would doubtless understand what had taken place. There is no need to assume hostility on the neighbors' part. They were not to know that bringing the healed man to the Pharisees would result in his undergoing a trial and expulsion as a sinful man.](#)

This action proved to be disastrous for the healed man. Instead of latching on to the marvelous restoration of sight to the blind man, they focused on what Jesus did to restore his sight and how it was a violation of their sabbath laws. They could not get passed their biases in order to see God at work, although some of them evidently were trying to. Scribal Judaism by this time had developed almost

he worshiped Him.  
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."

40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?"  
41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

he worshiped him.  
39 Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."  
40 Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?"  
41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

and to show those who think they see that they are blind."

40 Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, "Are you saying we're blind?"  
41 "If you were blind, you wouldn't be guilty," Jesus replied. "But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.



600 regulations defining how a person was to keep the Decalogue commandment on the sabbath. The fourth commandment was understood to contain two foundational elements: 1) avoid forbidden activity, and 2) remember certain things. By the beginning of the second century AD, rabbinic Judaism had grouped into 39 categories a long list of forbidden activities on the Sabbath.<sup>5</sup> Jesus' making of the mud paste to put on the man's eyes constituted a forbidden action in the Pharisee's minds. This raised serious questions about whether Jesus could have God's power to perform miracles, since sinners were cut off from God. But the reality of a man born blind now seeing could not be denied successfully. So they

<sup>5</sup>For a very helpful and interesting discussion of both the history and contemporary Jewish teachings about the Sabbath, see "Shabbat," [Wikipedia](#).

faced a dilemma. Their solution was to focus on the man rather than on Jesus. He was then confronted with the question, “[What do you say about him?](#)” The man’s answer was clear and to the point, “[He is a prophet.](#)” Clearly the man understood Jesus to be anointed from God, although his perception hadn’t yet reached that of Jesus being the Messiah. But just like the Samaritan woman who first declared Jesus as a prophet (Jhn. 4:19), his vision was growing.

## **2) Interrogation of the man’s parents by the Pharisees, vv. 18-23.**

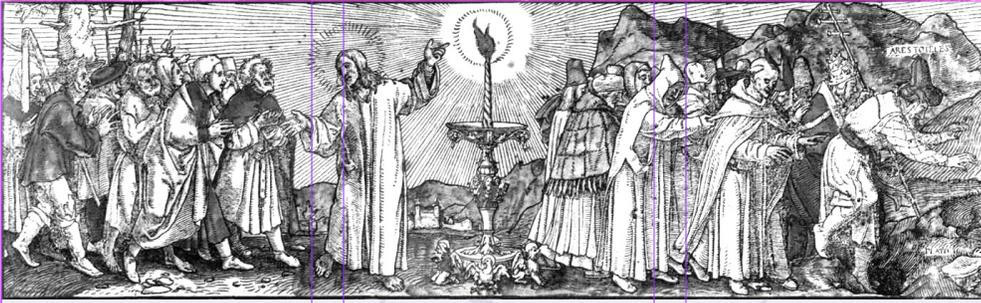
Not getting acceptable answers from the man, the Pharisees call in the man’s parents for questioning. Now John calls the Pharisees “the Jews” with the negative meaning this term carries throughout his gospel. They couldn’t accept that the man had been blind, not having known him personally. So they want his parents to verify that he wasn’t blind to start with. The parents scared by the threat of excommunication from synagogue life by the Pharisees would only verify that their son had been blind from birth. They refused to explain how or why he had been healed. Instead, they told the Pharisees to ask the son; he was to stand on his own feet. They indicate that “[he is of age, he will speak for himself](#)” (ήλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸς περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λαλήσει), which means that he had reached the required age of 30 years to be considered an adult with legal responsibility.

## **3) Further interrogation of the man by the Pharisees, vv. 24-34.**

Not having satisfied themselves by the parents’ answers, they call the healed man back in for a second round of questions. This time they admonish the man to recant his earlier



confession and declare Jesus to be a sinner. He refuses with a slick answer, “[I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.](#)” He doesn’t want to argue theology with these religious leaders, but he is certain of what he had personally experienced. That he reaffirms. They want him to go back over the details again. But instead, he puts them on the defensive with a question, “[I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?](#)” This punched their button big time and prompts the response, “[You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.](#)” They are on the defensive now, and are forced to deny Jesus. The man senses



this and pushes the issue even further, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” With them on the defensive, he takes them on theologically -- and wins the argument! Trapped without a come back argument, the Pharisees pull their trump card, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.” Out argued, and knowing it, they resort to power politics and forcibly banish him.

#### 4) Jesus seeks him and leads him to full confession of faith, vv. 35-38.

When heard what had happened to the man, he sought him out and probed him further about his religious faith, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” The man’s answer indicated a willingness to believe the Messiah once he know who he was, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Here the question is asked in sincerity, later on (cf. 12:34b) the same question will be asked with sarcasm and Jesus will give a different answer then. Jesus now acknowledges to the man, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” Not since the Samaritan woman (cf. 4:26) has Jesus so clearly identified himself to an individual. But remember, this is the first time that the man has physically seen Jesus. Now his sight is riveted up to the spiritual plane. The man’s response is quick and clear: “He said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped him” (ὁ δὲ ἔφη πιστεύω, κύριε· καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ.). The man moves from Jesus as prophet to Jesus as Messiah in faith commitment. What a splendid picture of spiritual expansion from a small beginning to full blossom.



pericope of vv. 35-38, or whether it introduces the final scene in the narrative of vv. 39-41. Given the tendency of the sabbath controversy narratives in the synoptic gospels to move toward Pronouncement Story literary form, it may be better to see verse 39 as a part of the final pericope. Jesus’ declaration in v. 39 does possess the tone of a declaration of timeless spiritual principle in the pattern of the Pronouncement Stories in the Synoptic Gospels: “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not

see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Clearly, in the immediate context it stands as a condemnation of the Pharisees inability to see spiritually, while this formerly blind beggar from peasant ranks is able to see clearly both physically and spiritually. Encounter with Jesus will expose both conditions, that of the Pharisees and that of the peasant beggar. Some of the Pharisees, overhearing what Jesus said, were offended. They quizzed Jesus with the assertion, literally in the Greek, “You’re not saying that we are blind, are you?” (μη̄ καὶ ἡμεῖς τυφλοὶ ἐσμεν; ). Jesus, in his

response, says in effect, “Yes, that’s what I’m saying” (εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἂν εἶχετε ἁμαρτίαν· νῦν δὲ λέγετε ὅτι βλέπομεν, ἡ ἁμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει.). Their blindness means they continue to stand condemned by God.

Wow! What a confrontation with enemies! Jesus can teach us a lot about how to stand up for Him in the midst of confrontation. May we ever be willing to do so!

#### 5) Aftermath of the sign: Jesus declares the purpose of his coming in making the “blind” to see and the “seeing” blind, vv. 39-41.

Somewhat debatable is whether verse 39 stands as the climax to the preceding



**Greek NT**

1 Καὶ παράγων εἶδεν ἄνθρωπον τυφλὸν ἐκ γενετῆς. 2 καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες ῥαββί, τίς ἥμαρτεν, οὗτος ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῆ; 3 ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· οὔτε οὗτος ἥμαρτεν οὔτε οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῆ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. 4 ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ἕως ἡμέρας· ἐστὶν ἔρχεται νύξ ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι. 5 ὅταν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ᾶ, φῶς εἰμι τοῦ κόσμου. 6 ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἔπτυσεν χαμαὶ καὶ ἐποίησεν πηλὸν ἐκ τοῦ πτύσματος καὶ ἐπέχρισεν αὐτοῦ τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς. 7 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὕπαγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ (ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται ἀπεσταλμένος). ἀπῆλθεν οὖν καὶ ἐνίψατο καὶ ἤλθεν βλέπων. 8 οἱ οὖν γείτονες καὶ οἱ θεωροῦντες αὐτὸν τὸ πρότερον ὅτι προσαίτης ἦν ἔλεγον· οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καθήμενος καὶ προσαιτῶν; 9 ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν, ἄλλοι ἔλεγον· οὐχί, ἀλλὰ ὅμοιος αὐτῷ ἐστιν. ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι. 10 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· πῶς [οὖν] ἠνεώχθησάν σου οἱ ὀφθαλμοί; 11 ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος· ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰησοῦς πηλὸν ἐποίησεν καὶ ἐπέχρισέν μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ εἶπέν μοι ὅτι ὕπαγε

**NASB**

1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 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." 6 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. 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?" 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,

**NRSV**

1 As he walked 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 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7 saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10 But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.'

**NLT**

1 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. 2 "Rabbi," his disciples asked him, "why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents' sins?" 3 "It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins," Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. 4 We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. 5 But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. 7 He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! 8 His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some said he was, and others said, "No, he just looks like him!" But the beggar kept saying, "Yes, I am the same one!" 10 They asked, "Who healed you? What happened?" 11 He told them, "The man they call Jesus made mud and spread

εἰς τὸν Σιλωὰμ καὶ νίψαι ἀπελθὼν οὖν καὶ νιψάμενος ἀνέβλεψα. 12 καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ποῦ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος; λέγει· οὐκ οἶδα.

13 Ἄγουσιν αὐτὸν πρὸς τοὺς Φαρισαίους τὸν ποτε τυφλόν. 14 ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἧ ἡμέρᾳ τὸν πηλὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνέωξεν αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς. 15 πάλιν οὖν ἠρώτων αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι πῶς ἀνέβλεψεν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πηλὸν ἐπέθηκέν μου ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς καὶ ἐνιψάμην καὶ βλέπω. 16 ἔλεγον οὖν ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων τινές· οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ. ἄλλοι [δὲ] ἔλεγον· πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος ἀμαρτωλὸς τοιαῦτα σημεῖα ποιεῖν; καὶ σχίσμα ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς. 17 λέγουσιν οὖν τῷ τυφλῷ πάλιν· τί σὺ λέγεις περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἠνέωξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν ὅτι προφήτης ἐστίν.

18 Οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἦν τυφλὸς καὶ ἀνέβλεψεν ἕως ὅτου ἐφώνησαν τοὺς γονεῖς αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀναβλέψαντος. 19 καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτούς λέγοντες· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμῶν, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη; πῶς οὖν βλέπει ἄρτι; 20 ἀπεκρίθησαν οὖν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπαν· οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ἡμῶν καὶ ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη.

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."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

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."

16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 So they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet."

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, 19 and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?" 20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and

Then I went and washed and received my sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

14 Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

15 Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see."

16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

20 His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21 but we do not know how it is that now he

it over my eyes and told me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.' So I went and washed, and now I can see!" 12 "Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he replied.

13 Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, 14 because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him.

15 The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, "He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!"

16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath." Others said, "But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?" So there was a deep division of opinion among them. 17 Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, "What's your opinion about this man who healed you?" The man replied, "I think he must be a prophet."

18 The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents.

19 They asked them, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?" 20 His parents replied, "We know this is

21 πὼς δὲ νῦν βλέπει οὐκ οἶδαμεν, ἢ τίς ἤνοιξεν αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς; ἡμεῖς οὐκ οἶδαμεν αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσατε, ἡλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸς περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λαλήσει.  
22 ταῦτα εἶπαν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἐφοβοῦντο τοὺς Ἰουδαίους· ἤδη γὰρ συνετέθειντο οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἵνα ἐάν τις αὐτὸν ὁμολογήσῃ χριστόν, ἀποσυνάγωγος γένηται.  
23 διὰ τοῦτο οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ εἶπαν ὅτι ἡλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸν ἐπερωτήσατε.  
24 Ἐφώνησεν οὖν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκ δευτέρου ὃς ἦν τυφλὸς καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ· ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν.  
25 ἀπεκρίθη οὖν ἐκεῖνος εἰ ἀμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν οὐκ οἶδα· ἐν οἶδα ὅτι τυφλὸς ὢν ἄρτι βλέπω.  
26 εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· τί ἐποίησέν σοι; πὼς ἤνοιξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς;  
27 ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς· εἶπον ὑμῖν ἤδη καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσατε· τί πάλιν θέλετε ἀκούειν; μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς θέλετε αὐτοῦ μαθηταὶ γενέσθαι;  
28 καὶ ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπον· σὺ μαθητὴς εἶ ἐκείνου, ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐσμὲν μαθηταί·  
29 ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν.  
30 ἀπεκρίθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ θαυμαστόν ἐστιν, ὅτι ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἐστίν, καὶ ἤνοιξεν

that he was born blind;  
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.”  
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.  
23 For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”  
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.”  
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.”  
26 So they said to him, “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? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?”  
28 They reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.  
29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from.”  
30 The man answered and said to them, “Well, here is an amazing thing,

sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”  
22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.  
23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”  
24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.”  
25 He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”  
26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”  
27 He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?”  
28 Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.  
29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”  
30 The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet

our son and that he was born blind,  
21 but we don't know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself.”  
22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue.  
23 That's why they said, “He is old enough. Ask him.”  
24 So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.”  
25 “I don't know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!”  
26 “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?”  
27 “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn't you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?”  
28 Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses!  
29 We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't even know where this man comes from.”  
30 “Why, that's very strange!” the man replied. “He healed my eyes,

μου τὸς ὀφθαλμούς.  
31 οἶδαμεν ὅτι  
ἀμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεὸς οὐκ  
ἀκούει, ἀλλ' ἐάν τις  
θεοσεβῆς ἦ καὶ τὸ θέλημα  
αὐτοῦ ποιῆ τοῦτου ἀκούει.  
32 ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ  
ἠκούσθη ὅτι ἠνέωξέν  
τις ὀφθαλμούς  
τυφλοῦ γεγεννημένου.  
33 εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος  
παρὰ θεοῦ, οὐκ  
ἠδύνατο ποιεῖν οὐδέν.  
34 ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ  
εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ἐν ἀμαρτίαις  
σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὅλος καὶ  
σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς; καὶ  
ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω.  
35 Ἦκουσεν Ἰησοῦς  
ὅτι ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν  
ἔξω καὶ εὐρῶν αὐτὸν  
εἶπεν· σὺ πιστεύεις εἰς  
τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;  
36 ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος καὶ  
εἶπεν· καὶ τίς ἐστίν, κύριε,  
ἵνα πιστεύσω εἰς αὐτόν;  
37 εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς  
καὶ ἑώρακας αὐτόν  
καὶ ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ  
σοῦ ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν.  
38 ὁ δὲ ἔφη· πιστεύω, κύριε  
καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ.  
39 Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς  
κρίμα ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν κόσμον  
τοῦτον ἦλθον, ἵνα οἱ  
μὴ βλέποντες βλέπωσιν  
καὶ οἱ βλέποντες τυφλοὶ  
γένωνται.

40 ἤκουσαν ἐκ τῶν  
Φαρισαίων ταῦτα οἱ  
μετ' αὐτοῦ ὄντες καὶ  
εἶπον αὐτῷ· μὴ καὶ  
ἡμεῖς τυφλοὶ ἐσμεν;  
41 εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς·  
εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἂν  
εἶχετε ἀμαρτίαν· νῦν δὲ  
λέγετε ὅτι βλέπομεν, ἡ  
ἀμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει.

that you do not know  
where He is from, and  
yet He opened my eyes.  
31 “We know that God  
does not hear sinners;  
but if anyone is God-  
fearing and does His  
will, He hears him.  
32 “Since the beginning  
of time it has never  
been heard that anyone  
opened the eyes of  
a person born blind.  
33 “If this man were  
not from God, He  
could do nothing.”  
34 They answered him,  
“You were born entirely  
in sins, and are you  
teaching us?” So they  
put him out.

35 Jesus heard that  
they had put him out,  
and finding him, He  
said, “Do you believe  
in the Son of Man?”  
36 He answered,  
“Who is He, Lord, that  
I may believe in Him?”  
37 Jesus said to him,  
“You have both seen  
Him, and He is the  
one who is talking with  
you.” 38 And he said,  
“Lord, I believe.” And  
he worshiped Him.  
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.”

40 Those of the  
Pharisees who were with  
Him heard these things  
and said to Him, “We are  
not blind too, are we?”  
41 Jesus said to them,  
“If you were blind, you  
would have no sin; but  
since you say, ‘We see,’  
your sin remains.

he opened my eyes.  
31 We know that God  
does not listen to sinners,  
but he does listen to  
one who worships him  
and obeys his will.  
32 Never since the  
world began has it  
been heard that anyone  
opened the eyes of  
a person born blind.  
33 If this man were  
not from God, he  
could do nothing.”  
34 They answered him,  
“You were born entirely  
in sins, and are you  
trying to teach us?”  
And they drove him out.  
35 Jesus heard that  
they had driven him out,  
and when he found him,  
he said, “Do you believe  
in the Son of Man?”  
36 He answered, “And  
who is he, sir? Tell me, so  
that I may believe in him.”  
37 Jesus said to him,  
“You have seen him,  
and the one speaking  
with you is he.” 38 He  
said, “Lord, I believe.”  
And he worshiped him.  
39 Jesus said, “I came  
into this world for  
judgment so that those  
who do not see may  
see, and those who do  
see may become blind.”  
40 Some of the Pharisees  
near him heard this and  
said to him, “Surely we  
are not blind, are we?”  
41 Jesus said to them,  
“If you were blind, you  
would not have sin. But  
now that you say, ‘We  
see,’ your sin remains.

and yet you don't know  
where he comes from?  
31 We know that God  
doesn't listen to sinners,  
but he is ready to hear  
those who worship  
him and do his will.  
32 Ever since the world  
began, no one has been  
able to open the eyes  
of someone born blind.  
33 If this man were  
not from God, he  
couldn't have done it.”  
34 “You were born a total  
sinner!” they answered.  
“Are you trying to teach  
us?” And they threw him  
out of the synagogue.

35 When Jesus heard  
what had happened,  
he found the man and  
asked, “Do you believe  
in the Son of Man?”  
36 The man answered,  
“Who is he, sir? I want  
to believe in him.”  
37 “You have seen him,”  
Jesus said, “and he is  
speaking to you!” 38  
“Yes, Lord, I believe!”  
the man said. And  
he worshiped Jesus.  
39 Then Jesus told him,  
“I entered this world to  
render judgment—to  
give sight to the blind  
and to show those who  
think they see that they  
are blind.”

40 Some Pharisees  
who were standing  
nearby heard him  
and asked, “Are you  
saying we're blind?”  
41 “If you were blind,  
you wouldn't be guilty,”  
Jesus replied. “But you  
remain guilty because  
you claim you can see.