THESE ARE THE SAME NOTES I HAD INTENDED FOR THE 24TH. I’M SO GRATEFUL TO RON KOCHER FOR FILLING IN TO GIVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO PREACH. I HEARD GOOD THINGS AND REALLY APPRECIATE THE TEAMWORK.

Welcome to the month of May study of the Gospel of John (1 of 7 signs each Sunday)

May 31, 2020

# **John 9:1-41 – NOTE FROM TED**….We won’t do every verse because this story is the entire chapter. All 41 verses are about this healing and Pharisee interrogations. I’ll leave the verses in and you can discuss as you want, but I’m trying to select the verses that are significant to the signs and lead to Jesus’ death fulfilling of OT prophecy.

**1 – 5.** As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, *“Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but, that the works of God might be revealed in him.* I must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day. The night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am *the light of the world.”*

**“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth”**

This man had become part of the background, but Jesus sees him.

Being born blind makes this miracle extra special. Any thoughts before we learn why?

**“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”**

The disciples’ question assumes that suffering is caused by sin.

It could be the parents’ sin. Exodus 20:5: “I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate me”

Or it might be the blind man’s sin. If so, his sin had to take place in the womb.

**“Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but, that the works of God might be revealed in him”**

Jesus denies that the man’s suffering is caused by sin, and it provides an opportunity for Jesus to heal the man.
 Your thoughts?? Is there is a connection between sin and suffering.
 Do you think we are careful about judging other people’s sin?

**“I must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day. The night is coming, when no one can work”**

The singular “I” implies Jesus, but what is your opinion about Jesus implying a plural “we” to the disciples?

**“While I am in the world, I am the light of the world”**

Remember we have been inundated by night and darkness as symbols of good and evil in this Gospel.
 What is Jesus trying to get the disciples to understand?
 Are their parallels to this story and others we have studied in this Gospel?

### JOHN 9:6-7

When he had said this, he spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva, anointed the blind man’s eyes with the mud, and said to him, *“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam”* So he went away, washed, and came back seeing.

**“When he had said this, he spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva, anointed the blind man’s eyes with the mud”**

Note that the man has not expressed faith or asked for healing. His role is passive until he washes in the Pool of Siloam.
 Is there a parallel to the creation story in Genesis? Is there another similar story in John?

**“and said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam'”**

If you have time, read the story of Naaman and Elisha (2 Kings 5:9-14). A washing is required and in both cases the healer does not accompany the infirmed person to the water.

**“which means Sent”**

Siloam means “Sent”. In this Gospel, Jesus is the one who is sent, and Jesus mentions being sent in these three verses:

• “You both know me, and know where I am from. I have not come of myself, but he who sent me is true, whom you don’t know. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me” (7:28-29)
 • “Do you say of him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You blaspheme,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God?” (10:36)
 • “He who sees me sees him who sent me” (12:45)

**“So he went away, washed, and came back seeing”**

Neurologist, Oliver Sacks, says, “One must die as a blind person to be born again as a seeing person” (“A Neurologist’s Notebook: To See and Not See,” The New Yorker, May 10, 1993, pg. 70).
 Sacks’ opinion would probably be that when Jesus heals this man’s eyes, he also heals his mental ability to decipher what his eyes are seeing.
 Two miracles? Thoughts

### JOHN 9:8-12

The neighbors therefore, and those who saw that he was blind before, said, “Isn’t this he who sat and begged?” Others were saying, “It is he.” Still others were saying, “He looks like him.” He said, “I am he.” They therefore were asking him, “How were your eyes opened?” He answered, “A man called Jesus made mud, anointed my eyes, and said to me, *‘Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash.’* So I went away and washed, and I received sight.” Then they asked him, “Where is he?” He said, “I don’t know.”

**“Isn’t this the man who sat and begged?”**

Neighbors have passed him where he begs for many years. They probably are surprised to see him…especially seeing.
 What do you think your reaction would be? What questions would you want to ask him?

**“He looks like him”**

Try to imagine what he would have looked like as he begged? Share your thoughts.
 What do you think he would look and act like when they see him after the healing?

**“How were your eyes opened?”**

The questions from the man’s neighbors is the first of four interrogations that he will undergo. The other three will be conducted by the Pharisees.

**“A man called Jesus made mud, anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went away and washed, and I received my sight”**

It appears to me that the man actually serves as a witness for Jesus.
 What is difference in reactions between the blind man today and the lame man we discussed last week?

**“Then they asked him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I don’t know'”**

### JOHN 9:13-17

They brought him who had been blind to the Pharisees. It was a Sabbath when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Again therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and I see.” Some therefore of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he doesn’t keep the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” There was division among them. Therefore they asked the blind man again, “What do you say about him, because he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

**“They brought him who had been blind to the Pharisees”**

They turn to the Pharisees who are recognized religious authorities to make sense of this healing.

**“It was a Sabbath when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes”**

Jesus has already been involved in one sabbath controversy that was similar to this one.
 Compare the two events.

**“Again therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he received his sight”**

This is the second interrogation but first by the Pharisees.

**“He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and I see”** It isn’t what Jesus did but the fact that he did it on the sabbath that hacks off the Pharisees.

**“Some therefore of the Pharisees said, ‘This man is not from God, because he doesn’t keep the Sabbath'”**

Who is “This man” they speak of? This is an example of Johannine irony. The Pharisees know that the blindness is not life threatening and could have waited until the next day. What’s your opinion on this observation?

**“Others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ There was division among them”**

This verse softens the Pharisee image just a little.

**“Therefore they asked the blind man again, ‘What do you say about him, because he opened your eyes?'”**

The Pharisees continue to question the blind man. What is their intention in continuing the interrogation?

**“He said, ‘He is a prophet'”**

Notice the progression in this man’s witness about Jesus. First as “healer” and now as “Prophet.”

### JOHN 9:18-23

The Jews therefore did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight,and asked them, “Is this your son, whom you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered them, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees, we don’t know; or who opened his eyes, we don’t know. He is of age. Ask him. He will speak for himself.” His parents said these things because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if any man would confess him as Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age. Ask him.”

**“The Jews therefore did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the him who had received his sight”**

The phrase, “the Jews,” refers to Jewish leaders who are hostile to Jesus. Why do you think the Jews called in the parents?

**“Is this your son, whom you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”**
 This is the third interrogation—the second by the Pharisees.

**“His parents answered them, ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind, but how he now sees, we don’t know, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know'”** **“He is of age. Ask him. He will speak for himself”** **“His parents said these things because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if any man would confess him as Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, ‘He is of age; ask him'”**

I’m combining these verses about the Jews interrogation of the parents. Why do you think their answers are so evasive?

### JOHN 9:24-25.

So they called the man who was blind a second time, and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.” He therefore answered, “I don’t know if he is a sinner. One thing I do know: that though I was blind, now I see.”

**“So they called the man who was blind a second time, and said to him, ‘Give glory to God.’ We know that this man is a sinner”**

This is the fourth and last interrogation—the third by the Pharisees.
“Give glory to God!”—most commentaries confirm that this is a technical term calling for truthfulness, especially with regard to the confession of sins. The authorities ask the man to confirm their finding that Jesus is a sinner and even say “We know” he is.

What kind of pressure do you feel the blind man is experiencing as this group of religions leaders close in.?

**“I don’t know if he is a sinner”**

The man cannot confirm Jesus is a sinner because he has no personal knowledge to that effect. Gutsy move on his part…but he is honest. I’m not so sure about the interrogators. Your opinion?

**“One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see”**

Absolutes he is sure of. But the pressure goes on.

### JOHN 9:26-34. I REALLY LOVE THESE VERSES….NO COMMENTARY FROM ME…JUST READ IT AND EXPRESS YOUR OPINIONS. I GENERALLY LAUGH HYSTERICALLY AT VERSE 34…THEY COULDN’T GET WHAT THEY WANTED SO….”THEY THREW HIM OUT”. SOUND FAMILIAR?

They said to him again, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I told you already, and you didn’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don’t also want to become his disciples, do you?” They insulted him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses. But as for this man, we don’t know where he comes from.” The man answered them, “How amazing! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshipper of God, and does his will, he listens to him. Since the world began it has never been heard of that anyone opened the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us?” They threw him out.

**29 and 30: “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses. But as for this man, we don’t know where he comes from.”**
**“How amazing! You don’t know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes”**

I love these verses (29-30) because they are packed with irony:

• The blind man sees, but those who have eyes choose to close them to the truth.
• The authorities call the man to give glory to God by denouncing Jesus as a sinner, but the man gives glory to God by witnessing to Christ.
• The authorities continue questioning, trying to find a hole in the man’s testimony. He responds by asking if they want to become Jesus’ disciples.
• The authorities say that Moses’ authority comes from God, but they do not know where Jesus comes from—implying that he must not come from God. The man responds by pointing out the obvious truth, “If this man were not from God, he could do nothing!”
• The authorities imply that one cannot be a follower of Moses and Jesus, but must choose one or the other. The message of the Fourth Gospel is that one can be faithful to Moses only through faithfulness to Jesus.
• The authorities repeatedly use the phrase, “we know,” but repeatedly reveal their blindness (or ignorance).
• The authorities accuse the man of trying to teach them. The reader is aware that he is capable of doing just that, but they refuse to learn (or to see).

### JOHN 9:35-41

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and finding him, he said, *“Do you believe in the Son of God?”* He answered, “Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, *“You have both seen him, and it is he who speaks with you.”* He said, “Lord, I believe!” and he worshiped him. Jesus said, *“I came into this world for judgment, that those who don’t see may see; and that those who see may become blind.”* Those of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” Jesus said to them, *“If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.”*

**“Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and, finding him he said Do you believe in the Son of God?”**

Unlike modern TV evangelists, Jesus did not ask this question before healing. He healed then asks, “Do you trust me?” Pretty cool I think.

**“Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him”**

The man has experienced first-hand Jesus’ compassion and power. Now Jesus has only to fill in the blanks.

**“You have both seen him, and it is he who speaks with you”**

Until this day, this formerly blind man has never seen anything. Now he has seen the Son of Man.

**“He said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped** **him”**

When Jesus identifies himself as the Son of Man, the man confesses his belief and worships him—the final step in the opening of his spiritual eyes. **This is the final affirmation of Jesus: 1--Healer 2—Prophet 3—Lord.**

**“I came into this world for judgment, that those who don’t see may see, and those who see may become blind”**

Jesus does not force belief or unbelief on either the blind man or the authorities. The Jewish authorities, identified once again as Pharisees, protest, **“Are we also blind?”** I believe they are blind because they refuse to see. Jesus tells them that they would be better off blind, because they would then not be accountable for their sin. **“If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains”** They portrayed the blind man as a sinner, their evidence being his affliction. Now Jesus portrays them as sinners, the evidence being their refusal to see Jesus, the light of the world.

The Lord bless you and keep you; the lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26