



Part 1. The Meeting
Part 2. The Miracle
Part 3. The Major Mess

I was blind but now I see!

John 9

John 8:58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" 59 At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

John 9:1 As he went 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 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." 4 "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

9:8 His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." 10 "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. 11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." 12 "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said.

9:13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. 14 Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. 15 Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. 17 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet."

9:18 The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. 19 "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" 20 "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. 21 But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't 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 already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. 23 That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

9:24 A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." 25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" 26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

9:28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! 29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he came from." 30 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." 34 To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

9:35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." 37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." 38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Part 3. The Major Mess

1. A remarkable miracle

▲ Jesus saw the blind man

John 9:1 As he went 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 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." 4 "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

▲ Jesus sighted the blind man

John 9:6 Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

▲ Jesus superstarred the blind man

John 9:8 His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." 10 "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. 11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." 12 "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said.

2. A religious mess

▲ The Pharisees examined him about the miracle

– They probed him for details – and he reported

John 9:13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. 14 Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. 15 Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

– They pressed him for a decision – and he responded

John 9:16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. 17 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet."

– They plied his parents for details – and they redirected

John 9:18 The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. 19 "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" 20 "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. 21 But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't 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 already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. 23 That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

▲ The Pharisees excommunicated him for his mouthiness

– They pelted him with scolding – and he reacted

John 9:24 A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." 25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" 26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27 He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

– They plastered him with slander – and he retorted

John 9:28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! 29 We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he came from." 30 The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

– They punted him out of the synagogue – and he retreated

John 9:34 To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

3. A refocused-refutured man

▲ Jesus invited him to believe

John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."

▲ Jesus invited him to belong

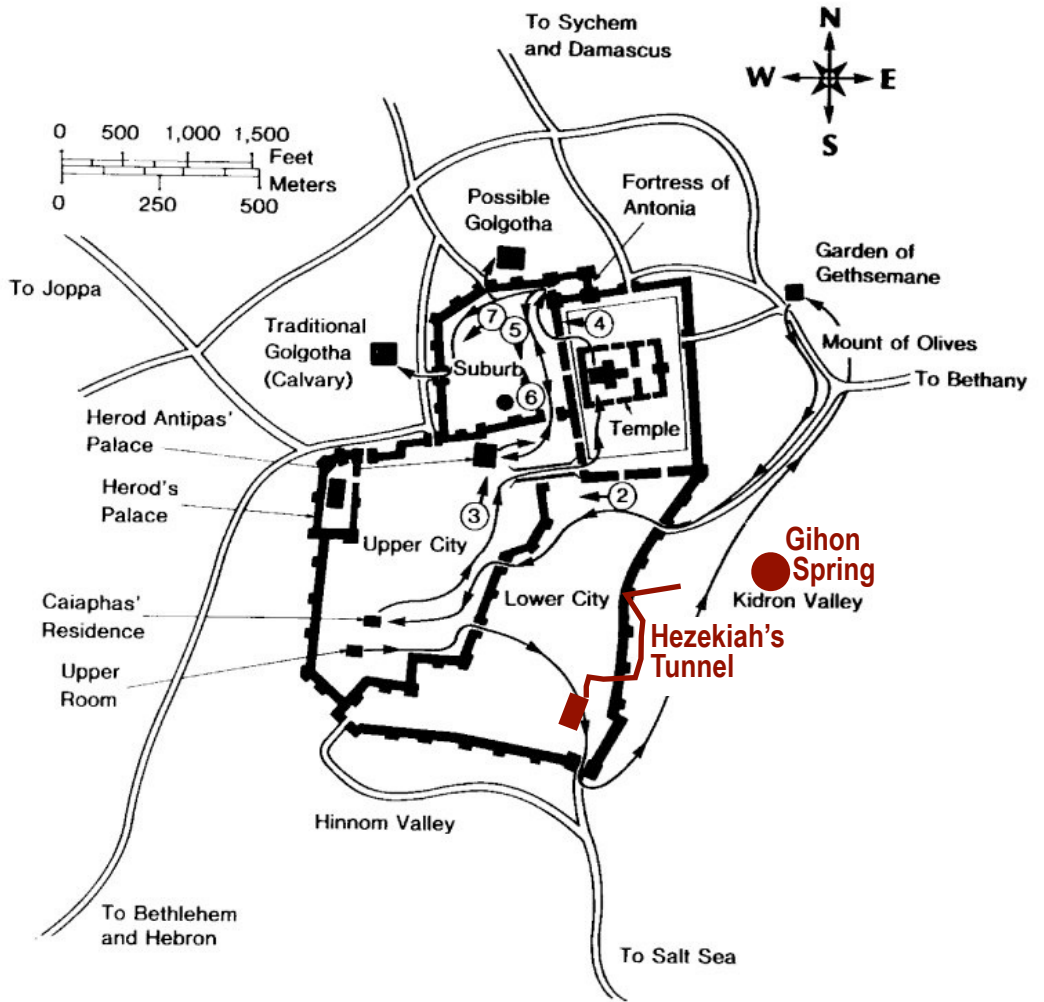
John 9:37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." 38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

1. When others throw you out, Jesus will take you in — so come on in and join the party!

2. When Jesus opens your eyes, a brand new future appears — so engage and enjoy the view!

A NOTE on JOHN 9:3

Verses 3 and 4, punctuated as they are in the NIV (and most other English versions and modern Greek texts), present an unattractive theodicy. They imply that God allowed the man to be born blind so that many years later God's power could be shown in the restoration of his sight. However, it is not necessary to read the text in this way. Two things need to be noted. First, the words 'this happened' have been added by the NIV translators and there are no corresponding words in the Greek text. Second, early Greek manuscripts of the NT were not punctuated; later editors added the punctuation. Rendered literally and without punctuation 3-4 would read, 'Jesus replied neither this man sinned nor his parents but so that the works of God may be revealed in him it is necessary for us to work the works of him who sent me while it is day night is coming when no-one is able to work.' It is possible to punctuate this so as to provide the following translation: 'Jesus replied, "Neither this man sinned nor his parents. But so that the works of God may be revealed in him it is necessary for us to work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no-one is able to work."' Punctuated in this way, the text implies not that the man was born blind so that the works of God may be revealed in him, but that Jesus had to carry out the work of God while it was day so that God's work might be revealed in the life of the man born blind. — R. V. G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. John*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1989.



The POOL of SILOAM at JERUSALEM

The Pool of Siloam was built during the reign of King Hezekiah (ca.700BC) to provide an inside-the-city fresh water reservoir. It was fed from the Gihon Spring east of Jerusalem through Hezekiah's Tunnel. The Pool was cut into the rock on the southern slope of the City of David, the original site of the city of Jerusalem. The Pool of Siloam is referred to as "the Lower Pool" in Isaiah 22:9 and "the King's Pool" in Nehemiah 2:14. The Pool of Siloam was repaired and reconstructed in the first century BC and existed as such at the time of Jesus. The Pool of Siloam, having been buried for centuries, was rediscovered in 2004 and continues to be excavated extensively. Excavations revealed the Pool to be 225 feet wide and surrounded on three sides by steps allowing access to the public. Reference to the Pool of Siloam in John 9:7 locates the healing of the man born blind in the city of Jerusalem. John 8:59-9:1 tracks Jesus' steps as follows: "At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth."

The SABBATH Law

Exodus 20:8-11 – "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Jewish scholars, in their attempts to ensure the sabbath law was not broken, defined thirty-nine types of work forbidden on the sabbath, which are recorded in the Mishnah: "The main classes of work are forty save one: sowing, ploughing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing, cleansing crops, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking, shearing wool, washing or beating or dyeing it, spinning, weaving, making two loops, weaving two threads, separating two threads, tying [a knot], loosening [a knot], sewing two stitches, tearing in order to sew two stitches, hunting a gazelle, slaughtering or flaying or salting it or curing its skin, scraping it or cutting it up, writing two letters, erasing in order to write two letters, building, pulling down, putting out a fire, lighting a fire, striking with a hammer and taking out aught from one domain to another. These are the main classes of work: forty save one." What the man was accused of (carrying his mat on the sabbath) comes under the general restriction of taking something 'from one domain to another'. Carrying one's mat through the streets of Jerusalem was certainly a culpable act according to rabbinic law. — R. V. G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. John*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1989.

The PHARISEES

- ▲ The Pharisees were one of the two primary religious/political parties (along with the Sadducees) mentioned in the New Testament who exerted sway during Jesus' day.
- ▲ The Pharisees believed in the scriptural authority of the Old Testament including the books of Moses, the books of history, the psalms, proverbs and prophets.
- ▲ The Pharisees believed in the future resurrection of the dead, both righteous and unrighteous, and believed in the existence and ministry of angels and spirits.
- ▲ Differentiated from Pharisees, Sadducees believed only the Law of Moses to be authoritative; they did not believe in resurrection, angels, or spirits (Mark 12:18; Acts 23:8).
- ▲ During the New Testament period, the Pharisees were the predominant party, though the Sadducees controlled the high priesthood (Acts 5:17).
- ▲ The Pharisees often served in religious leadership roles throughout the Jewish religion, as members of the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:6), and as teachers of the Law (John 3:10).
- ▲ Many believers in the early Church were Pharisees (Acts 15:5); the Apostle Paul was a Pharisee and continued to claim that affiliation (Acts 23:6; 26:5; Philippians 3:5).
- ▲ The Gospels and Acts paint the Pharisees as super-religious, exceedingly legalistic, unsympathetic toward the common people, and often hypocritical with impure motives.
- ▲ Though aligned with the Pharisees theologically, Jesus often rebuked both the Pharisees and Sadducees and warned his hearers about their spiritual influence.

Matthew 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 16:6 "Be careful," Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Matthew 23:13 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! (23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29).



Excavations of the Pool of Siloam at Jerusalem



Artist's Conception of the Pool of Siloam