

Deane Church + Lostock Church
w/b Sunday 10th February 2019

John 9:1-41

INTRODUCTION

John's Gospel is sometimes known as *The book of signs*, and in chapter 9, we find the 6th sign, or miracle, that John records for us. Why does John record these signs? Take a look at John **20:30-31** to remind yourself.

In chapters 5-8 we discovered that Jesus is from God, is equal to God, and is the Messiah and Saviour sent from God. But we also discovered that he is not the kind of Messiah that the Jews were expecting, and that he is largely rejected by them, his historic people. Their spiritual Father is not God but the Devil. People will 'see' Jesus for who he really is if they listen to Moses (5:46), listen to the Father (6:45), chose to do God's will (7:17) and hold on to Jesus' words (8:31,32). But if God's historic people (the Jews) have failed to do these things, how then will anyone be able to see? Chapters 9 and 10 answer this question.

OLD TESTAMENT IDEAS

Blindness in the OT is more than just a physical thing. It is used as a metaphor to illustrate total spiritual failure. This is a major theme in the book of Isaiah. Blindness is a sign of refusing to see and believe God (Isaiah 29:9; 42:18-25). In fact God, in judgement, spiritually blinded those who rebelled (Isaiah 6:9,10). This blindness will be remedied for God's people when the Messiah comes to rescue them (Isaiah 29:18, 32:3; 35:5; 42:6-7).

THIS WEEK'S PASSAGE

Pray for God to open the eyes of your heart (Ephesians 1:18) to his word then read John chapter 9.

A NOTE ABOUT VERSE 2

For the Jews of Jesus' day (including, it seems, the disciples, v.2) a person's suffering was closely connected with that person's (or a parent's) sin. The Bible does allow for a **general** relationship between suffering and sin (e.g. Genesis 3; Romans 5:12) but it does not teach that an individual's personal suffering is necessarily attributable to his or her personal sin. This was an important lesson of the book of Job, where God dismisses that simplistic theology of suffering. However, God may on occasions allow suffering/testing for specific reasons, e.g. to correct or to build faith in his children.

1. The chapter can be divided into a series of interviews. What are they?
2. What is the point of the interview with the neighbours (vv 8-12)?

3. Jesus has just proclaimed "***I am the light of the world***" (Jn 8:12).
How does he now illustrate the significance of this statement?
What greater spiritual lesson is he teaching?
How do Jesus' words in Jn 3:19-21 illustrate his comments?
4. Jesus can heal just by speaking. He can heal from a distance. Why do you think he chose to heal the *blind* man as he did?
5. What is revealed about the blind man in this chapter?
6. How does his understanding develop (vv.11,17,30,33,38)?
7. What does the simplicity of the healed man's testimony teach us about our witness to Jesus?
8. If you had to describe ***the work of God*** (v.3), what would you say it is?
9. What one verse in chapter 9 particularly helps/encourages you and why?