“The Man Born Blind”

John 9:1-11
1-19-2025

Introduction: v.1

**** God has a reason for everything He does!***

The healing of the man born blind teaches us about God’s purposes

I. God’s purposes can be manifest even through sickness & suffering (v.2-3)

II. God’s purposes must be fulfilled with a sense of urgency (v.4-5)

III. God’s purposes involve Divine initiative and man’s trust & obedience (v.6-7)
(God’s purposes often combine both God’s sovereignty and human responsibility)

IV. God’s purposes result in Jesus Christ being testified of and glorified (v.8-12)

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“He saw . . . a man . . . blind” – Jesus saw a man who couldn’t see. It is comforting to know that Jesus sees all; even those who can’t see Him. And He cares. His heart is touched with the feelings of our infirmity.

This man never saw his mother’s face; never saw a sunrise or sunset; never set eyes on the wonders of God’s creation. He lived all of his life in a dark world, perhaps wondering about the mysteries of the appearances of the shape, size, colors of God’s beautifully-designed world.

The poor and needy often found it most advantageous to stand and wait near religious spots, because as people were done worshipping they would be more apt to give alms out of a heightened God-consciousness.

The restoration of the man born blind has affinity with John 8:12, for now Christ’s claim that he was “the light of the world” received a literal demonstration (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 1092). The One who gives spiritual life to a world that had none also restored physical light to a man who had none.

Jesus heals this blind man for 3 reasons:

1) To show compassion and help the man

2) To prove by this sign that He was the Messiah (Mt. 11:5)

3) And to set up an occasion for Him to give a short sermon on spiritual blindness (9:39-41)

“This chapter portrays what happens when the light shines: some are made to see, like this man born blind; while others, who think they see, turn away, blinded, as it were, by the light (9:39-41).” (Carson, p. 359)

ill. The Trials in Christian Life and Ministry

Purpose: To do or allow something intentionally, not by accident; to accomplish something and having a reason for it.

To do or allow something with
aim
design
end
intent
a plan
a target

Isaiah 14:24; 27
The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: … For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

2 Timothy 1:9 (KJV)
who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Ephesians 1:9 (KJV)
having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

Ephesians 1:11 (KJV)
in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Ephesians 3:11 (KJV)
according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

Romans 8:28 (KJV)
And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

**** God has a reason for everything He does!***

The healing of the man born blind teaches us about God's purposes

I. God's purposes can be manifest even through sickness & suffering (v.2-3)

v. 2
Jesus **"saw**" the man; then the disciples **"asked"** about him.

"The interest of Jesus quickened theirs, but from a different standpoint. To the disciples the blind man was the occasion for theological speculation; to Jesus, he was a human being to be pitied and helped" (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 1092).

The disciples ask this question because of a popular belief that sickness and suffering were the results of one's personal sin. IT is true that much of our sickness is due to our sin. The Bible clearly teaches a connection between sin and suffering. This connection is made in:

--James 5:14-15

--1 Cor. 11:30 – inappropriate partaking of the Lord's supper results in people becoming "weak and sickly" and even dying

--Psalm 32:3-4

When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. [4] For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

The disciples assumed that when bad things happened to someone it was always because of sin in his life and when good things happened it was always because of his doing well.

A study of the life of Job would prove this idea to be untrue.

That the sins of parents could be "visited" on children is contained in the Decalogue (Exod. 20:15; Dt. 5:9).

Some rabbis taught that a child could sin even in his mother's womb (cited by Word Biblical Commentary, George R. Beasley-Murray, p. 155).

Perhaps while the disciples knew that one's sin often leads to one's physical trouble, they now have a theological problem. What about someone who is born with an ailment (before they had ever had the opportunity to commit an act of personal sin). What led to their handicaps? Was it because of their parents' sin? Was it because of their own sin?

The answer Jesus gives is NO! God has a purpose in allowing all handicaps. He Himself told Moses that He sovereignly forms people a certain way.

Exodus 4:11

And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

God takes the credit for the formation of a child in his mother's womb (Ps. 139). Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5), John the Baptist (Lk. 1:15), and the Apostle Paul (Gal. 1:15) are a few examples of people whose lives were planned out for special purposes for God.

Jeremiah 1:5

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Luke 1:15

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

Galatians 1:15

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

While all physical problems are ultimately the result of sin (since if there was no sin in the beginning, there would be no curse and no death and no ailments of any kind), not all personal illness is due to personal sin.

v. 3
Jesus now uses their misunderstanding to reveal God's purposes. What is God's purpose for the trials and troubles we face in life? Let's take it a step further, what is the purpose of all things that happen in your life?

Jesus is not teaching that this man and his parents were sinless, but that their personal sin was not the cause for this man's blindness from birth.

What do you tell a parent whose child is born with a physical deformity? Down Syndrome? Missing limbs? Blind or deaf or crippled?

John 9:3 gives an answer: God may have allowed such so **"that the works of God should be made manifest in him."**

God's "works" might not be that the person be healed. God's "works" could be to work mightily through that individual by allowing him to perform great exploits despite the problem, and thereby reveal God's wisdom and power all the more!

EX: Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7-10) Verses 8 – 10 –

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. [9] And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

EX: God's choice of the weak and feeble among the Corinthians

1 Cor. 1:27-29
But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; [28] And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: [29] That no flesh should glory in his presence.

The Lord specializes in converting simple folk, common people, the under-privileged, the down-and-outers, the project kids, and other looked-down-upon groups.

God delights in taking a Sarah who could not bear children and making her the mother of one of the largest races on earth (Gen. 18:14, 32:12)

God delights in taking a humble slave like Joseph and elevating him second to Pharaoh over Egypt (Gen. 41:38-44).

God delights in enlisting 300 soldiers of Gideon to fight and conquer 120,000 Mideanites (Jud. 7:2, 7, 12; 8:10) (NOTE: 400 to 1 odds).

God delights in utilizing a Samson to destroy 1,000 wicked Philistines with a jawbone of a donkey (Jud. 15:16).

God delights in using a red-headed, freckle-faced, baby-faced (I Sam. 17:42) shepherd boy named David to wipe out a 9'9" fully armored Philistine named Goliath (I Sam. 17).

God delights in providing adequate food for a poor widow of Zarephath who only had a few drops of oil and a handful of grain (I Ki. 17:9ff).

God delights in using three Hebrew youths to show up King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Dan. 3).

God delights in using as His mouthpiece a John the Baptist, "who had no formal education, no training in a trade or profession, no money, no military rank, no political position, no social pedigree, no impressive appearance (or diet!)" (MacArthur, p. 51). Yet Jesus said, *"Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist"* (Mt. 11:11).

God delights in taking a boy's lunch consisting of two sardines and five bite-size biscuits to feed 5,000 men besides women and children (Mt. 14:17-19).

"Little is much when God is in it." -- Conversely, much is little, if God is not in it!

God delights in taking unlearned, ignorant, dumb fishermen from Galilee and turning them into the most bold and influential mortals ever to spread the Gospel message (Acts 4:13).

Like this even, the sickness and temporary death of Lazarus was for the purpose of displaying the “glory of God.”

John 11:4
When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

“Manifest” – displayed; opened up to plain view. God’s grand purpose for all that He does or allows to be done, is that His glory would be shown.

The existence of a need provides the occasion for God to glorify Himself. We often despise a need or question why God would allow us to suffer such a need. The existence of that need gives an opportunity for God to display His grace, power, and wisdom in recognition of that need.

Problems give God the chance to display His solutions; sufferings give God the chance to show His peace. We often find that times of a person's need are the times in which we have the opportunity to demonstrate God's love.

II. God's purposes must be fulfilled with a sense of urgency (v.4-5)

v. 4

The "works of God" mentioned in verse 3 would be the works of Jesus in verse 4.

"I must do my Father's works while there is an opportunity to do so."

"While it is day" - while there is light (cp. V. 5)

Christ was that light, and while He ministered here His light was here (interesting that the One who is light would give light tot his man who never saw the light of day).

"While it is day" – In the ancient Middle East, they got up early (at sunrise) and worked while they had daylight.

In our lives, we have a short window of opportunity that will not be open forever.

--You don't have forever to realize God's purposes in your life.
Romans 13:11
And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

--You don't have forever to realize God's purposes for salvation
2 Cor. 6:2 – "Now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation"

Come to Jesus while the Spirit is drawing you!

--The same is true of sanctification

--When it comes to rearing your children, you don't have forever!

"The night cometh, when no man can work" – A sense of <u>urgency</u> can be heard in these words.

The time to work for souls is now! The time to reach them is now!

After death night comes for the unbeliever, he enters a darkened state where he is eternally beyond reach. The time for us to reach lost souls is now. For many the night is approaching; sundown is quickly coming. Whatever you are going to do for the lost, do it now!

v. 5

The Light is . . .

1) <u>Personal</u> - **"I"** (Jesus not merely gives light; He is Light)
2) <u>Present</u> - **"am"** (The light literally visited this earth and still can be seen through believers)
3) <u>Exclusive</u> - **"the"** (there is no other)
4) <u>Expansive</u> - **"of the world"** (available to all)

As long as we are in this world, we, too, are light (Mt. 5:16). Not that our light originates with us, but we reflect the light of Christ. Is your light shining? Now is the time to let it shine!

III. God's purposes involve Divine initiative and man's trust & obedience (v.6-7)
(God's purposes often combine both God's sovereignty and human responsibility)

v. 6

The One who is the "Light of the world" is now about to turn on the physical and spiritual lights of a man who all his life wandered in darkness.

Jesus also touched and applied His saliva to the eyes of another blind man who would be healed (Mk. 8:22-25).

Just as Jesus employed some of His saliva in this miracle, so He "spit" and touched the tongue of a deaf mute so that he could speak. The point is not that if we produce a saliva solution we might do the same miracle; the point is that miracles originate from Jesus Himself (whether from His words, His hands, or His saliva – it is Jesus from which the power flows).
The One who made the first man Adam from the dust of the ground by speaking the word only, could easily use some soil from the ground and saliva from his mouth to make a clay to use toward the healing of a blind man.

In the Old Testament Law, saliva and other human excreta were normally viewed as pollutants and would render a person unclean if he came into contact with such (cp. Lev. 15:8; Num. 12:14). However, since Jesus is the holy, sinless Son of God, no defilement would issue forth from His saliva – only cleansing).

No only had Jesus performed this miracle on the Sabbath (9:16), but He had used a substance in the miracle which normally would bring uncleanness, but not in His case!

Another reason why Jesus used some dirt in this miracle could be to create an irritation that had to be washed out. "If you have ever had an irritation in your eyes, you know how quickly you seek irrigation to cleanse it out! You might compare this "irritation" to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit as He uses God's Law to bring the lost sinner under judgment" (Wiersbe, p. 325).

Why didn't Jesus just say the words and heal the man? Why the clay? Why the anointing and the washing first? Several reasons:

1) To make the miracle more vivid (it is obvious that dirt and saliva do not cure blindness; but the hand of Jesus does)

2) To give Jesus the opportunity to apply a personal touch

3) To incorporate the blind man's <u>faith</u> and <u>obedience</u> as prerequisites tot he healing. It would require belief in Christ's words (words that to most would be foolish – how could washing mud off of one's eyes produce a healing?)
EX: Note: Naaman the leper's cleansing

v. 7
While Jesus did not explicitly state that a healing would follow this man's obedience, the man obeyed anyway and the result was miraculous.

Jesus simply gave the command to **"go"** and **"wash"**. It would require faith and a specific submission on the part of this man for the healing to occur.

The same is true regarding salvation. Jesus says "Trust Me! Leap into My arms! Entrust your soul to Me!" And all who respond in faith are saved!

God's purpose in your life is activated by obedience. This man had to "go and wash."

Note: In most New Testament miracles, Christ demanded a step of faith (Note: Phil. 2:12-13 – the balance between God working and our working in the process of sanctification).

This man could not go to just any pool, but to the specific pool that Jesus sent him to. The pool's name **"Siloam"** means "sent." Jesus sent him to the pool named "sent" (a pool located at the southern end of Hezekiah's tunnel, just at the bottom of the Tyropean Valley). It would be here and here only that this man would be healed.

The same is true regarding salvation. You do not go to just any "pool" for salvation. You must go to the water of life – Jesus Christ – who also can be called "sent," since He was the One who came to do the works of Him that "sent Me" (v. 4).

He was the sent One. If you go tot he "sent one," you, too, will be saved!

"Siloam is the LXX translation of the Hebrew *Shiloah*" (Murray, p. 155).

The pool called "sent" is related to Jesus who was the "sent One." He is the Shiloah who was promised in Gen. 49:10.

Genesis 49:10
The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

It is interesting to note that just as the Jews of Isaiah's day rejected the soft, flowing waters of Shiloah (Is. 8:6), so the people of Jesus' day rejected Him (this rejection is evident in v. 13-41).

Just as this man was physically blind from birth, so all human beings are spiritually blind from birth.

He went to the pool in blindness; he returned from the pool **'seeing."** You who come as blind sinners to Jesus Christ will never leave Him still in your blindness! The Light goes on every time! Illumination can be yours!

IV. God's purposes result in Jesus Christ being testified of and glorified (v.8-12)

v. 8-9
The former blind man looked so different and no doubt acted so different (being excited about seeing for the first time) that the neighbors and passers-by had a problem identifying him. Who was he?

While some recognized him as the former blind man, others found it to unbelievable that he was the same person. Should it seem incredible to us that Jesus can do what seems humanly impossible?

They wondered, “Was this man really our neighbor? The pitiful, helpless, poor, blind beggar? What has happened?”

The world will look at a transformed, born-again, converted sinner with the same perplexity. “How could this be?” they will wonder. Jesus is the answer to their question.

This man was in no way ashamed to admit that he was the former blind man and that Jesus had healed him.

His new boldness is very evident throughout the context of John 9 (cp. V. 17, 25, 27, 31-33).

CONCLUSION:

Just as this man had to wash in the waters of Siloam, so you must wash in the fountain of cleansing waters at Calvary.