



THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD: THE MESSIAH OPENS BLIND EYES

Jesus Opens the Eyes of a Man Blind Since Birth: John 9

ABSTRACT

Lightness that the dark cannot comprehend; The 'Light of the World' and the blindness of one man, and all Israel: Read how the Light of the World opens blind eyes, and proves He is the Messiah of Israel...

Elizabeth Kirkley-Best

Judah's Glory Bible Studies: Series: Jesus Heals the Blind

John 9: The Light of the World

The Messiah of Israel Heals a Man Born Blind



The Healing that Declared Messiah

The Beauty of the Word and the Healing of a Man Born Blind.

B

By the time one of the Gospels concludes it is noted that the things that Jesus did, healings, miracles, and such, if they had all been recorded could have filled volumes.

john 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

That mention in Scripture, referred to only the things he did in the last three years of his life, his 'earthly' ministry as many call it, and doesn't even include every healing, anointing, work or miracle which has happened since by his power in those who believe. Among all the miracles and healings though, while others were more eminent and astounding such as walking on water, of all the healings in the Bible save for the raising of Lazarus, the healing of the Man born blind since birth carries an eternal significance, for in addition to the act of healing, it heralded the declaration that Jesus, Yshua Ha Meschiach, was the Messiah of Israel, the Holy One of Israel, expected for centuries.

After Jesus heals the man at the Pool of Bethesda, and after he teaches about tolerance and forgiveness for the woman caught in adultery, following the feast of Tabernacles, in Chapter 8 of John, he pronounces that he is the "Light of the World". (See Promise of Messiah: Light of the World) This also is no small pronouncement, for he explains what that means to the darkness that holds this world so tightly, John 1:5,9 expounds

Jhn 1:4 -5 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. and...
John 1:9 That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

So soon after celebrating the feast of Tabernacles, the Light of the World which lasts beyond one feast, explicates his role as the Light of the Whole world, forever. Now the Light of the World can do many things excellently, but a magnificent feature of Yshua was that he could make darkness flee. Spiritual darkness, Social darkness, the darkness of sin, and the darkness

of the physical body in blindness. The declaration of his being the "Light of the World" precipitates, the healing of the man born blind since birth.

The True Test of the Messiah

Why is the healing of a man born blind since birth so significant? Because, as shall be seen, even the common people counted this as the sure sign that the Messiah had come. Why this sign and not another?

- 1. The sign had been prophesied, notably in Isaiah, and
- 2. It was the one 'impossible' task, that even the great prophets of God, since Abraham, Moses, Elijah and Elisha had not performed.

It was not to be merely the opening of blind eyes: Jesus opened many blind eyes. In his role as liberator, much of his ministry was spent delivering people from the bondage of deafness, blindness, lameness, mental and spiritual afflictions and most critically the bondage of sin and unbelief. This prophecy that Messiah would heal one with a seeming impossible healing, not correction of an injury or the loss of eyesight with aging or disease, was the hallmark of the proof of Messiah as seen in Isaiah 42. The healing of a man born blind would be the mark of the Messiah to come, because it would show the '*imprimatur*' or handprint of God: one who healed native blindness would have to have the sovereign healing power of God, thereby indicating the Messiah of Israel, who alone has the ability to 'open and shut'. (Isaiah 22:22; Revelation 3:8)

Isaiah and the Messiah Who Heals the Blind

The verses and promises Israel clung to in Isaiah as a litmus test of Messiah were:

Isaiah 29:18 "the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity"

Isaiah 35:5 "the eyes of the blind shall be opened..."

Isaiah 42:7 ...to open blind eyes

Isaiah 42:16: I will bring the blind by a way they knew not...

Isaiah 42:18- "look ye blind that you may see"

Isaiah 42:19 "Who is blind but my servant or deaf...."

Isaiah 43:8 "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes"

Isaiah 56:10 His watchmen are blind..."

Isaiah 59:10 "We grope for the wall like the blind..."

and in other passages:

Lamentations 4:14 They [referring to Israel] have wandered as blind men..."

Malachi 1:8 blind not allowed for sacrifice.

Two important issues arise here: one is the test of Messiahship in the healing of one born blind since birth, and one is that the blindness that Yshua meant to heal was more than mere physical blindness, but the spiritual blindness that had beset Israel since her birth: their eyes had been darkened at many times in history to who they were, to what they were, to who and how great their God was, and to the Salvation and Deliverance of God which came to be repeated over and over in the course of God's wilderness people. Note a few lines above where he compares Israel to the blind:

Lamentations 4:14 "They have wandered as blind men..." or in Is 56:10 where even the watchmen are blind.

The porch of Solomon was not the only place God had declared that He was the Light of Israel. Remember the burning bush of Moshe or the pillar of fire in the Wilderness of Zin: there were other times the Light of Israel and the world appeared. Between the theophanies though, there were great periods of darkness in Israel, when eyes were darkened. It was that Spiritual darkness that Messiah came to deliver out of, and He did it first, by performing the long awaited miracle of the opening of blind eyes, or a man who had never seen a thing, who was born blind.

The Blind Guides of Israel

As soon as the eyes of the man are opened, without even completely knowing who Jesus was or where he was from, he began to expound his way and light to the Pharisees, who at another time Jesus called

"Mat 15:14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"

In Matthew 23:16 he refers to:

Mat 23:16 Woe unto you, [ye] blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! [Ye] fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. [Ye] fools and blind: for whether [is] greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

Before any confrontation with the Pharisees and other leaders of the Temple, Jesus, Yshua, rebukes them for being blind themselves, and for leading Israel into Spiritual and moral blindness. It is no small wonder that the Great Love of God incarnate would do that, as he had seen firsthand what those men had done to Israel: selling the holy things of God as merchandise, merchandising their positions, buddying up to Rome while young zealots gave their lives for Israel, and breaking every law of man and God. They were merciless, though keeping Shabbat by refusing to lift even a finger lest it be declared work. They made sure the Temple's coffers were filled with the paltry riches of widows they had swindled with 'corban' laws. The high priest Caiaphas and his cohort Annas were not even from Levitical lines: they had bartered their positions from Rome, and yet these were the men, who by the end of the healing on Solomon's Porch, were declaring that no true prophet came out of Galilee!---showing they did not even know the Word of God very well, for several had

including Jonah, Elijah, Elisha and others of the 'minor' prophets. Yet these men, who had taken the Spiritual leadership of Israel by force and merchandising, patronizing Roman authorities, were sitting in judgment, of one who had just healed the eyes of a man born blind. While this is getting ahead of the study, the blind man, who can now see, retorts against the Pharisees:

Jhn 9:30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and [yet] he hath opened mine eyes.

So the Scriptures to this point, have noted that Israel was too wont to walk in darkness herself, and that by this time in History, even the leadership was blind to God's true ways, or to a real, living, breathing, powerful Messiah. Luke 4:18, further notes that a part of Messiah's "inaugural address" is the 'recovering of sight to the blind:', a reflection of the passage in Isaiah 61.

Blindness and Sin

Messiah came to deliver from sin. There is no question even in unbelievers' minds that this is the essential task of God's Christ, or Messiah. [Meschiach in hebrew]. Nor should there be doubt that sin is equated with darkness and blindness. Even in descriptions in Zechariah of the Anti-Christ, it speaks of him having one eye darkened:

Zec 11:17 Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword [shall be] upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

The Hebrew word '*kahal*' for darkened refers to a dimming, or darkening, in which the light is decreased, and while that seems very straightforward and it indicates that sin, which is often defined as 'missing the mark', is a dimming of the glory which we were meant to have, and the more one sins, the more darkness prevails. Darkness leads to confusion, chaos, the

dissension of the Spirit and an inability to hear from God in prayer not to mention trouble in the world: it is often the case that before a number of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit work in power, sins may need to be repented of. Darkness also, is found at the edge of Glory, including God's abode we call 'Heaven'. (see Genesis 15: The Horror of Great Darkness)

Sin and Punishment: Who Did Sin?

As Jesus encounters the man born blind, the people who gather want to know the following:

9:2 ...Master, Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind."

In Ancient Israel as today, we often assume that when we see trial or trouble the person must have deserved it somehow, and while that can occasionally be true, it can also be from happenstance, providence or even as a test of faith. Note that

- 1. Blindness since birth was equated with sin*
- 2. A Generational Effect is noted-that the sin of a parent could cause a consequence in the child's life.*

The second point is indicative of a lack of teaching about sin, for in Jeremiah, God does a new thing:

Jer 31:29-30 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Basically, the sins of a father were to be no longer visited upon the son, although initially this was the case:

The Light of the World Heals the Blind-Belief and Unbelief

Of all the healing Jesus, or Yeshua did, the one most tied to his Messiahship was that of opening the eyes of the blind. Even more than that, the one true mark of Messiah would be that he could heal one born blind since birth. Blindness caused at a later age, while robbing the person of sight, was often from disease or accident, and even the healing of that though miraculous could always have been assigned to some unknown process correcting itself. IN all of Israel however, no one had been healed of blindness since birth, and the equation of physical and spiritual blindness is readily apparent: The Light of the World, came to open eyes, hearts, ears and minds in more ways than one.

There are many instances mentioned of Jesus healing the blind in the Holy Scriptures, and they are far fewer than the number he actually healed: it is mentioned that if all the works he did were reported, there would not be enough room in all the books in the world: God is a rather prolific author of healing and other works of grace. Further, the people of Israel recognized that the true "Son of David", another name for Messiah, would heal one blind since birth in addition to others, for in one instance (Mt 12:22) after healing one possessed, blind and dumb, the people responded,

"And all of the people were amazed and said "is this not the Son of David."

Jesus and the Man Born Blind Since Birth

While other healings of the blind will be attended to later, the study here will focus on the healing in the Temple of the man born blind since birth in John 9. This healing of blindness above others is unique and intricate: there is far more than merely correcting or restoring vision, but instead a discourse between the Light of the World and the Blindness of the World, between Religion and Relationship with God, between Unbelief and belief.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Jesus begins, by attributing to himself yet one more name, 'the Light of the World' which is also an 'office' of Messiah. He has not just come to BRING light into the world, he has come AS Light in the World. There is a metaphorical allusion to day and night as well:

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is DAY; the NIGHT cometh, when no man can work. 9:4

Night and Day

Blindness is equated then with night and sight with day. Jesus dies as evening approaches, and rises with the break of the third day. Psalms reports darkness at the outer reach of glory

He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him [were] dark waters [and] thick clouds of the skies. Psalm 18:11

and sinners, in the end, in unbelief and non-acceptance of God's 'way out', are cast to outer darkness.

Mat 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

While there are many references to day and night in the Bible, these are eminent, along with the plague of darkness which fell on Egypt, a type of the world, when Pharaoh refused to let the Children of Israel go free.

And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. Exodus 10:22-23.

The darkness and light of the Bible, the day and night, and vision and blindness, are all mentioned similarly with differing emphasis. While the literal darkness, night, and blindness have literal meanings, they point likewise to unbelief, not just cognitive unbelief or conversely for day and

light, belief, but the unbelief of the soul. That is the point of the divine battle always, and is the pivotal choice of eternal life.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD HEALS DARKNESS

All of this is essential to understand in the healing of the man born blind since birth, for Jesus had come not only to do the one healing, but to make a major point to Israel and her leaders regarding belief, and light and day, and an Israel which would live in full worship of God in the Light of the Day. Following the discourse on night, Jesus says

As long as I am in the world, I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.[my emphasis] 9:5

We will see three principles emerge in the healing:

- 1. The man was blind from birth, and it was a DIVINE APPOINTMENT-for the purpose of showing the glory of God.**
- 2. The Blind condition was equated with sin, at least sometimes.**
- 3. The Blind condition and sin were seen as ancestral.**

The equation of blindness with sin , perhaps committed by his parents or himself showed the view of blindness as punishment. Jesus corrects that view at least in this case:

"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. 9:3.

The work was an APPOINTMENT, an ANOINTING, waiting for the time of Christ, set apart since the beginning: it was a healing ensign, of God opening the eyes of Israel, blind since birth, to the degree of his love and salvation.

The HEALING

Right after making it clear, that he, the Messiah was the light of the World, the healing takes place:

9:6 When he had thus spoken he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

It is announced right on the doorstep of the great healing which will confirm him as messiah. The Light of the World opens the eyes of the blind. In the performing of the miracle, first the LORD speaks: as noted in another healing, a healing requires nothing more than the LORD speaking as when the centurion intercedes for his servant, 'only speak the word'. Jesus next mixes spittle and clay. Here is the potter and the vessel, and he has a little repair work to do. Adam was drawn from the clay, and Jesus, the Creator is using clay to restore this created vessel at a point in time. Lastly he 'anoints' the eyes of the blind man: the sight which will be given all Israel is tied up in the healing of this man. This blindness had a purpose during all the years when its anointing could not be seen.

Jesus Speaks

"and he said unto him, Go and wash in the pool of Siloam which is by interpretation 'sent'.

The command of the LORD is the only effort required, although there is a physical means, and the obedience to the command results in the healing. The passage continues

He went his way, therefore and washed and came seeing.

The outcome of obedience is sight on two levels, for the man will now see much. The healing of the blind since birth was a first in Israel and heralded the presence of the Messiah (in part II we will see, that Jesus definitively declares, he is indeed the Messiah.) IN 9:8-9, immediately after this hitherto unseen miracle, the first reaction of onlookers is to question the miracle, remarkable since the immediate difference was seen:

Some said, This is he: others said He is like him; but he said, I am he.

The observers weren't even sure it was the same man: they had nothing to compare the opening of always dead eyes to. Therefore they said unto him

How were thine eyes opened? The response of the healed man, speaks for centuries for all Israel, for all believers:

He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed mine eyes and said unto me 'Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash' and I went and washed and I received sight.

Amazing Grace how sweet the sound...was blind, but now I see.

Here is the response of all believers to the cynical:

I don't know how he has opened my eyes, I don't know how he has saved me, I don't know how his power and love abides in me know through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, I don't know HOW one man dying on a Cross can be born of a virgin and carry all sin to the cross and put it to death once and for all, I don't know, but I have seen it, and it was Jesus.

The crowd immediately seeks to find Jesus at the wonder, but the healed does not know for the moment where he has gone. 9:12. Following the prescription set forth in Leviticus, the healed man was brought to the priests, in this case the Pharisees (13)

Darkness Creeps in

Immediately following the great light of the healing and belief, the divine battle steps up to plate again, and Unbelief makes it's attempt on dismissing the Messiah and the Miracle. Their first strategy is the strategy of all religionists: fault-finding and nitpicking. The target is Shabbat: the Sabbath day, in which there is to be no servile work.

9:14 And it was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

Shabbat is a day of rest, worship and light: a perfect day for the blind to be healed for both Old and New Testament teach that it is not wrong to do good on the Sabbath. But the Pharisees needed Jesus to be a sinner to make

their argument: in their eyes, bending down obtaining clay and mixing it with spittle was work. Back in those days, some argued that even eating the egg of a chicken which was laid on Shabbat, should be forbidden as it caused the chicken work. While there was an intense effort to obey God's commands concerning the day of rest, [I observe the Sabbath rest failing only a little once in a long while], the rules and nitpicking can rob the day of joy, which was supposed to be an integral effect of the day. The Pharisees did not perfectly obey either: Jesus at another passage refers to an ox being pulled out of ditch so that even a Pharisee would not lose the animal or cause suffering or monetary loss as being o.k. on the Sabbath, but here they did not want a man to receive sight from God on the Shabbat due to a technicality! Not even a sin, but an interpretation of what work was. They exhibit another characteristic of religious unbelief: Condemnation, an overly critical nature of everyone and everything, and even a murderous spirit. In the face of a miracle they see only minute details to condemn and do not attend to the wonder. We have all met these folks in Christian circles: we have even tended to it ourselves at certain times: we have both an obligation to keep doctrine accurate and excellent without dissension, but to also be filled with grace, peace and love. It is the extremes though that kill faith: not of the person trying hard to obey for themselves, but in the people who will not let others live and breathe without an analysis.

The man born blind explains the course of his healing by Jesus to the Pharisees, and true to form, their response is Condemnation.

Therefore, said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God because he keepeth not the Sabbath Day[he was the Sabbath] Others said, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was division among them.

- 1.1.The Pharisees immediately without much investigation condemn
- 2.2.Pharisees cause strife and division where there is none

3.3. Pharisees commit condemnation on the Shabbat or Sabbath, a serious sin, accompanied by slander, and yet worry about mixing clay and spittle for a once in a lifetime healing.

The nature and course of the healing has been described in this short study. We notice

- **I. that it occurs on Shabbat,**
 - **II. that it is a first,**
 - **III. that it is a sign of Messiah, and**
 - **IV. that it is a physical portrayal of the Light of the World granting light and vision where none was before.**
-

In the next study, we examine the divine importance of this great healing of the blind, and then will continue later with other healings of other blindmen in Israel.

Blessings from Elizabeth K. Best
Director, *Judah's Glory*

"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 14:6

See Judahsglory.com/biblestudies.html and other Bible studies at warsofisrael.com and propheteuo.blogspot.com and housethatwillnotdie.blogspot.com.

Praise the Lord.
till next time, ekbest

KEY TERMS

Light of the World

Solomon's Porch

Messiah & healing of blind since birth

Healing on Shabbat (the Sabbath)

Sin and blindness

The blindness of Israel

Isaiah 42, blind

Isaiah 22:22

Darkness

Spiritual blindness vs. natural blindness

Isaiah 61: ministry of Messiah to open blind eyes

'taking away sight from those who say they can see'

This Bible Study is brought to you by:

Judah's Glory

Bible Studies Ministry



All Gospel related materials are offered as a free offering, though we maintain the copyright for the sake of the integrity of the work. Free distribution is allowed, as much and as often as needed, for teaching purposes: please do not change any portion of the study without written permission.

Distributed by:

Your Ministry's Name

