

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind (NIV) John 9:1–12

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 works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ As long as it is day, we must do the works 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 After saying 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. 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 asked. 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.

ヨハネの福音書 9章1～12節 (新改訳2017)

“さて、イエスは通りすがりに、生まれたときから目の見えない人をご覧になった。

弟子たちはイエスに尋ねた。「先生。この人が盲目で生まれたのは、だれが罪を犯したからですか。この人ですか。両親ですか。」

イエスは答えられた。「この人が罪を犯したのでもなく、両親でもありません。この人に神のわざが現れるためです。わたしたちは、わたしを遣わされた方のわざを、昼のうちにやらなければなりません。だれも働くことができない夜が来ます。

わたしが世にいる間は、わたしが世の光です。」

イエスはこう言ってから、地面に唾をして、その唾で泥を作られた。そして、その泥を彼の目に塗って、「行って、シロアム(訳すと、遣わされた者)の池で洗いなさい」と言われた。そこで、彼は行って洗った。すると、見えるようになり、帰って行った。

近所の人たちや、彼が物乞いであったのを前に見ていた人たちが言った。「これは座って物乞いをしていた人ではないか。」

ある者たちは、「そうだ」と言い、ほかの者たちは「違う。似ているだけだ」と言った。当人は、「私がその人です」と言った。

そこで、彼らは言った。「では、おまえの目はどのようにして開いたのか。」

彼は答えた。「イエスという方が泥を作って、私の目に塗り、『シロアムの池に行って洗いなさい』と言われました。それで、行って洗うと、見えるようになりました。」

彼らが「その人はどこにいるのか」と言うと、彼は「知りません」と答えた。”

Since today is the first Sunday for the “**Jesus in John**” series, I would like to share a verse regarding this book from NIV (New International Version) Bible.

John closes his book by revealing the purpose of writing his book. **(Slide 1)** You can find the following at the end of chapter 20: **These are written that you may believe that Jesus is Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (20: 31)**

In this series here are the speakers: **(Slide 2)**

8/4: Ryuichi Okayasu (John 9)

8/11: Lee Taylor (John 6)

8/18: Bob Kombe (John 21)

8/25: Lorne Anderson

All of us may cover the topics of discipleship and service as the Ministry Fair in September is approaching.

Let us pray---

Introduction: (Slide 3)

Jl Packer is a famous theologian and Christian writer who has published over 300 books, journal articles, book reviews, and dictionary entries. I have read at least one of his books. He was recently diagnosed with Macular degeneration and can no longer read or write as before, or travel or do any regular preaching. Macular degeneration is an eye disease which is not easily treated and those who have this condition eventually lose their eyesight if not treated appropriately. In Jl Packer's case it seems this disease is advanced; one article describes that he still retains peripheral vision, but it is doubtful that he will ever regain the ability to read. It is a sad situation for this great Christian writer and many of us who benefited from his work. However, the devout Christian says "God knows what He is doing." He also cited the book of Ecclesiastes from the Bible to help people better understand his current situation. He says "The author of Ecclesiastes has taught me that it is folly to suppose that you can plan life and master it, and you will get hurt if you try," He goes on "You must acknowledge the sovereignty of God and leave the wisdom to Him" What a wise comment from this great man of God!

What is our reaction when we face physical challenges? Could you respond like Jl Packer? In today's Bible story we also come across a man with an eye problem---but this person was blind from birth. Here we learn how our Lord Jesus dealt with this condition.

Let us look at today's section.

Brief summary of John 9:1-12

What is happening here? Jesus found this man born blind and healed him by putting the mixture of mud and saliva on his eyes and asking him to wash in the Pool of Siloam. His disciples wanted to find out who is responsible for his blindness, but Jesus

told them “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him”. People who knew had many questions about this incident, but this man replied with exactly what Jesus did.

This man’s blindness is not a consequence of his sin nor his parents’ sin(Slide4)

Just before this part at the end of John Ch 8, we are told that Jesus was stoned because of what He said. Despite this antagonistic atmosphere, Jesus does not tire of loving people as in this story. Do you notice the contrast between Jesus and his disciples? While His disciples were hung up on a rhetorical question, “Who sinned, this man or his parents?” (vs 2), Jesus’ attitude is very different. Jesus wanted to help him. Some supporting rationale to the disciple’s question about suffering can be found in Exodus 20:5, for example, “You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the Children for the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.” So their question regarding his parents may have a reason, however, what about this man’s sin as his condition was from birth? I found out that some Jews of that time believed that a baby might sin in the womb?? Or they believed in the pre-existence of souls and the possibility of that those pre-existent souls could sin?? As I mentioned before in my previous message, in our Japanese culture we have a well-known word called (Slide 5) “因果応報 (Inga-ouhou)” which means “you are responsible for what you get” or “what goes around, comes back around”. This is a very similar concept to the disciple’s question regarding suffering. In the book of Job in OT, Job’s three friends were telling him that all suffering is a consequence of sin. All similar concepts! Although these ideas might be true to some extent in certain cases, they really discourage us. In contrast, I really like Jesus’ response to the disciple’s question in vs 3, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but the works of God might be displayed in him”. What a relief and comfort, especially for those who may have inherited physical conditions, mental conditions, long-lasting chronic diseases, or even those who have human relationship problems or others who are suffering for various reasons! Some of us may have been concerned with our condition from birth for years and years? Jesus rejected the idea of Inga-ouhou! Instead, he told us that the works of God might be displayed”

Ayako Miura, a well-known Japanese Christian writer, who had various physical ailments all of her life, read this verse in her sick bed of 13 years and she said “I was immensely comforted and given the power to live”. She herself also received questions such as “You have a strong faith in God, then why does God allow you to be sick? I

cannot believe in God.” This kind of question is based on Inga-ouhou or suffering as a consequence of sin. Many of us also tend to look at our past, but we cannot do anything to change the past. We need to look at our future. God may change our negative past experiences to positive in the future. We need to know that God’s plan is to do something positive through apparently negative conditions such as blindness. When I came across one of my favorite verses Romans 8:28 soon after I became a Christian about 40 years ago, I was so impressed and relieved. **(Slide 6)** The verse says “**And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to His purpose**”. All things mean all things including negative things and God has a purpose in everything he does! This is a very powerful promise of God!! Although we should not deny or avoid our sufferings, we are to ask God to use it to further His purposes in us and through us. Ayako Miura also said “Jesus healed this blind man, but what about those who are not healed?” She continues “It does not matter if the person is healed or not. **God is always standing by for those who are suffering!**” **(Slide 7)** This is very important for all of us!

When I was young, I was not a healthy child. I often got sick and had to see doctors many times. In fact my 2nd grade teacher said to me once “Are you going to die soon?” as I looked very pale, thin and did not look good at all in school. This kind of condition continued almost up to my high school age. It affects your mental condition as well, so I had some limitations in what I did. In fact I got sick when I took entrance exams for college in Japan—one of the most important life events for many Japanese people. However, years later this childhood experience eventually led me to study biomedical science which became my life work and I really love what I have been doing. So, Romans 8:28 turned out to be true in my life.

We must do the works of Him who sent us (Slide 8)

Now what did Jesus want to teach in verse 4 and 5 “**As long as it is a day, we must do the works of him who sent me. ----**” Since Jesus knew that his time on the earth was limited, He wanted to make sure that He does all of His father’s work. Thus, He healed this blind man despite the unfriendly atmosphere; His father’s work was done. “**Once the night is here**” may refer to when Jesus would be killed and not be able to shine His light. This could be the time between His death and resurrection. Then the Holy Spirit will be present to continue Jesus’ work through His disciples (John 20: 22). Matthew 5:14 says “**You are the light of the world ----**”, so we are the ones who continue to shine His light in darkness.” As a Christian, we need to use our given time wisely to do the

work of God as Jesus did, since none of us knows how much time we have! This reminds me of interesting statistics regarding the age of conversion to Christianity. Conversion occurs most frequently between ages 4 to 14 years old (The 4/14 window) and the next most frequent age is between 15 and 29. After age 30, significantly fewer converts can be observed. Although this is an American statistic and may not be directly applied to the situation in Japan as I have seen many adults here become Christians, it shows the importance of sharing Christ and His love when we are young. Therefore, it is crucial to put our effort into serving in youth ministry such as nursery or Sunday school here at KBF.

Jesus heals the man's blindness when he obeys Jesus' command (Slide 9)

Verses 6-7 describe the unique way that Jesus healed this man. He mixed his saliva with mud on the ground and put it on the man's eyes and told him to wash in the Pool of Siloam. Then the man obeyed what Jesus told him and was healed. This procedure does not sound clean and may be unscientific? Maybe harmful? Since Jesus is God, he could have easily healed this man by just touching his eyes or commanding him to see without doing this special procedure using spit and mud. On another occasion, Jesus also used saliva to heal a man, described in Mark 7:33-35, where Jesus healed a deaf man by touching his tongue with saliva. In ancient days, it seems that saliva was commonly used for medicinal purposes to cure ailments. Jesus used their methods and customs of the day to heal people. As the effectiveness of treatment may depend on the patient's faith, Jesus' use of a commonly known method of the day might have benefited the patient. For example, if Jesus is here today facing some sick person, he may not use saliva, but perhaps use the most advanced medical treatment regimen available today with his power—this is my speculation? Now there is also some argument regarding mud or clay as curative agents, and clay also relates to God's creation account, but here we will go on to the next step of obeying Jesus' command to go to the Pool of Siloam. This pool was located at the southern extremity of the Tyropean Valley, at the southern end of the Hezekiah tunnel, a remarkable engineering feat of OT times; water came through this tunnel to the pool. As it was explained in the NIV version, "Siloam" means "Sent (or having been sent)" because the water in it had been sent through the conduit into the city. As Jesus was also sent by the father, it is meaningful that the blindness was healed by Siloam, or "**sent**" pool. I also found out that the opening of the eyes of the blind by God was prophesied in Isaiah 35:5, "**Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and---**" This again shows that Jesus is God. The important thing here is this person obeyed exactly what Jesus asked him to do and he

was healed. First of all, you would not be happy or even angry if somebody put mud on your eyes? However, this man endured and obeyed what He said. He washed his eyes in the pool and was cured. Although it may not be reasonable, logical or scientific and beyond our common sense, healing can happen if we obey Him.

A good example like this can be found in 2 Kings 5, which relates the story of Naaman, **(Slide 10)** commander of the army of the king of Aram, being healed from his leprosy (skin disease). In vs 10, Prophet “Elisha sent a messenger to say to him ‘Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed’”. In vs 11 “But Naaman went away angry and said, ‘I thought he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. (vs 12) Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn’t I wash in them and be cleansed?’ So he turned away and went off in a rage.” Vs 13 “Naaman’s servants went to him and said ‘My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great things, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he tells you “Wash and be cleansed!” Vs 14 “So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.” The situation of the blind man in John 9 is rather similar to Naaman’s case. You may think that putting saliva and mud and then washing in the pool may not make much sense, but healing came when the man obeyed what Jesus told him. This is a case of physical healing, i.e, blind man’s eye sight was restored. How about spiritual blindness? The same thing could be said. If we can only believe what is reasonable, common sense, or scientifically proven things, it might be difficult to believe in spiritual things. Spiritual eyes cannot be opened if we do not obey God. We may only experience opening of our spiritual eyes after we obey our Lord.

When this man’s neighbors and those who knew him before asked about this event and how his eyes were opened, he told them exactly what happened (vs 11). He not only described his own experience, but he explained how **Jesus did heal his blindness**. This is a great testimony to the power of Jesus.

A good testimony contains how Jesus did his work in your body and your life! How does your life testify to the power of Jesus?

Conclusions: (Slide 11)

In concluding, we want to highlight the main teachings from this passage:

-Suffering is not necessarily a consequence of sin, but rather that God's power might be displayed in our suffering ([Psalm 119:71](#) "It was good to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees")

-As our time on this earth is limited, we need to use our time wisely to do the work of God. In the interview with JI Packer, he was asked "What would be your final words to the church?" He responded in 4 words "**Glorify Christ every way**"

-Obeying God may lead to a miracle we did not expect.

Now today's message seems to be geared toward Christians, however as Ayako Miura said, God is standing by you when you are suffering whether you are Christian or not, whether your condition has changed or not. Please think about Jesus as your close friend, but keeps on loving you. If you are Japanese or can read Japanese, please find a small essay by Ayako Miura titled "Meaning of suffering (苦難の意味するもの)" by internet search and read it. I am sure her voice of experience will give you more comfort than I shared here today. Thank you.

Benediction:

[Matthew 11:5](#)

[The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.](#)