

The Gospel of John

Chapter 9, Verses 18-33

Review

- **General Introduction to the Gospel of John**
 - *one of the **four gospels**, each of which is a biography of Jesus and an historical narrative of his life*
 - one of the **five Johannine books**, all of which are among the last books in the Bible to have been written
 - written in Greek, primarily to those who already believed in Christ, including **both Jews and Gentiles**

Review

- Prolog: Jesus is the Word become flesh **(1:1-18)**
- John the Baptist introduced Jesus, Jesus performed many signs, and Jesus' ministry surpassed John's **(1:19-3:36)**.
- Retreating to Galilee, Jesus was recognized in Samaria as the Savior of the World and people believed in Capernaum after he healed the son of a local official **(Chapter 4)**.
- The Jews in Jerusalem hated Jesus because he healed on the Sabbath and called God his father **(Chapter 5)**

Review

- In Galilee, crowds followed Jesus because of the signs he performed, but because they sought earthy rewards and could not yet understand the eternal life which he offered, almost everyone rejected Jesus (**Chapter 6**).
- Although he knew the Jews were still plotting to kill him, Jesus came to Jerusalem for the feast of Tabernacles and taught openly in the Temple, where God protected him, because his time had not yet come. (**Chapter 7**)

Review

- At the beginning of Chapter 8, we have the much loved story of the woman caught in adultery, regarding whom Jesus said to her accusers, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." **(8:1-8:11)**
- John's narrative then returns to Jesus' teaching at the Feast of Tabernacles, a series of teachings which describes the uneasy relationship between Jesus and the Jews. At the end of Chapter 8, Jesus must hide himself from those who would throw stones at him **(8:12-59)**

Review (The Man Born Blind)

- **Chapter 9 all has to do with the time that Jesus gave sight to a man who had been blind from birth. (9:1)**
 - Jesus' disciples assumed that the man had been born blind because of sin, and they asked Jesus if it had been the sin of this man, or of his parents. **(9:2)**
 - Jesus answered: neither; the man had been born blind so that "...the works of God might be displayed in him." **(9:3)**
 - One of the works of God displayed in this particular man, was that Jesus gave him the ability to see.

Review (The Man Born Blind)

- Jesus had limited time to perform such works. His disciples, who would later perform such works in his name, would also have limited time, since each man lives briefly, dies, and then follows the judgment. Perhaps this is what Jesus had in mind when he said “the night is coming when no one can work.”
(9:4-5)

Review (The Man Born Blind)

- **The healing miracle itself is completely described in just two verses --- i.e. Verses 6 and 7**
 - Jesus spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva and put the mud on the man's eyes. **(9:6)**
 - He told the man to go wash his eyes in the pool of Siloam. **(9:7a)**
 - The man went and washed and came back seeing. **(9:7b)**
- Later the man to whom Jesus had given sight was asked to describe the miracle --- each time he did so simply and honestly. **(9:11, 15b)**

Review (The Man Born Blind)

- The man's neighbors at first had trouble believing what had happened because they had always known him as a blind beggar and the change in him was so dramatic. **(9:8-10)**
- They asked the man where Jesus was, but the man did not know (!). They then took the man to the Pharisees. **(9:12-13)**

Review (The Man Born Blind)

- It was on the Sabbath that Jesus opened the man's eyes. **(9:14)**
- This caused a division among the Pharisees, with some saying that Jesus was not from God because he did not keep the Sabbath and others saying that no man who was a sinner could do something like this. **(9:16)**
- As for the man to whom Jesus had given sight, he knew that Jesus was from God, a Prophet. **(9:17)**

Any comments or question before we read on...?

John 9:18-23

9:18ユダヤ人たちは、彼がもと盲人であったが見えるようになったことを、まだ信じなかった。ついに彼らは、目が見えるようになったこの人の両親を呼んで、

9:19尋ねて言った、「これが、生れつき盲人であったと、おまえたちの言っているむすこか。それではどうして、いま目が見えるのか」。

John 9:18-23

9:20両親は答えて言った、「これがわたしどものむすこであること、また生れつき盲人であったことは存じています。

9:21しかし、どうしていま見えるようになったのか、それは知りません。また、だれがその目をあけて下さったのかも知りません。あれに聞いて下さい。あれはもうおとなですから、自分のことは自分で話せるでしょう」。

John 9:18-23

9:22 両親はユダヤ人たちを恐れていたもので、こう答えたのである。それは、もしイエスをキリストと告白する者があれば、会堂から追い出すことに、ユダヤ人たちが既に決めていたからである。

9:23 彼の両親が「おとなですから、あれに聞いて下さい」と言ったのは、そのためであった。

John 9:18-23

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight

¹⁹ and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

John 9:18-23

²¹ But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

²² (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)

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- Most understand “the Jews” here to mean primarily the Jewish leaders, the Pharisees.
- What these men did not believe, was the testimony of this man to whom Jesus had given sight.

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- Of course, they could see, that this man now could see!

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The Jews ***did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents*** of the man who had received his sight

- Of course, they could see, that this man now could see!
- Whether they thought he was lying or merely mistaken regarding the nature of his former blindness, it is understandable that they would question his parents.

John 9:19

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- Again, this seems to be the Pharisee who are asking.

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- Again, this seems to be the Pharisee who are asking.
- Evidently this couple had a son who they said was born blind.

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and asked them, "***Is this your son, who you say was born blind?*** How then does he now see?"

- The Pharisees first sought to confirm that the man who had been brought before them was indeed the son of this man and woman, the son whom they say was born blind.

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and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? ***How then does he now see?***"

- The Pharisees first seek to confirm that the man who had been brought before them was indeed the son of this man and woman, the son whom they say was born blind.
- They then ask them to explain the fact that he can see.

John 9:20

両親は答えて言った、「これがわたしどものむすこであること、また生れつき盲人であったことは存じています。

His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

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- The parents simply confirmed that of which they and their neighbors were most certain.

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- It would be very difficult for them to get into trouble for saying that much --- things to which many could attest!
- And they could hardly have admitted less, without being accused of lying.

John 9:21

しかし、どうしていま見えるようになったのか、それは知りません。また、だれがその目をあけて下さったのかも知りません。あれに聞いて下さい。あれはもうおとなですから、自分のことは自分で話せるでしょう」。

But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

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- The parents have verified their son's former state and all can see his current state.

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- The parents have verified their son's former state and all can see his current state.
- But they say they don't know how this miracle happened.

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- And they say they don't know who performed the miracle.

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But how he now sees we do not know, ***nor do we know who opened his eyes.*** Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

- And they say they don't know who performed the miracle.
- Question: **Do you think the parents are telling the truth?**

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- And they say they don't know who performed the miracle.
- Question: Do you think the parents are telling the truth?
- Answer: Basically no, hence the parenthesis (Verse 22).

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- So the parents suggested that the Pharisees ask their son directly, something they had presumably already done.

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- So the parents suggest that the Pharisees ask their son directly, something they have presumably already done.
- That he is “of age” means that he is at least 13 years old.

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- One may reasonably wonder how much the parents knew and why they told the Pharisees to interrogate their child.

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- One may reasonably wonder how much the parents knew and why they told the Pharisees to interrogate their child.
- The following verse sheds light on this.

John 9:22

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(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)

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(His parents said these things because they **feared** the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)

- We know at least that the motive of the parents in sticking to the uncontroversial facts and directing the Pharisees to question their child was ... **fear**.

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(His parents said these things because ***they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.***)

- Specifically they feared being put out of the synagogue, which is what might have happened if what they said regarding the healing of their son had been understood by the Pharisees as a confession of Jesus as the Christ.

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(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)

- It follows, then, that the parents **did** know that **Jesus** was the one who had given sight to their son or, at least, that this was the conclusion that might be drawn from the simple facts which their son had already twice reported.

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- It also follows that the performance of a miracle such as this might be understood as proof Jesus was the Messiah.

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- It also follows that the performance of a miracle such as this might be understood as proof Jesus was the Messiah.
- So it was safer for the parents not to say that Jesus had done something to give sight to their son.

John 9:23

彼の両親が「おとなですから、あれに聞いて下さい」と言ったのは、そのためであった。

Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

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Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

- This is why, John tells us, the parents informed that Pharisees that their son was of age.

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- This is why, John tells us, the parents informed that Pharisees that their son was of age.
- Note this may be ironical (e.g. if the son was 40) or it may suggest that the son looked too young to be a teenager.

A Comment

- It seems to me that if the man born blind were fairly young and/or uneducated (as seems likely for a man born blind in those days) then his testimony to simple facts would have been very credible, except perhaps the conditions of his own birth which his parents verified, but his opinions regarding the manner of his healing or the identity of the one who healed him, might not have been taken seriously, one way or the other. In other words, his interpretation would not have been respected and so it would have been safe for him to offer one.

A Comment

- This put the Pharisees “on the spot” because they themselves would be forced to make some kind of sense out of the simple testimony now being offered by this “man” and his parents and their neighbors.

John 9:24-33

9:24そこで彼らは、盲人であった人をもう一度呼んで言った、「神に栄光を帰するがよい。あの人が罪人であることは、わたしたちにはわかっている」。

9:25すると彼は言った、「あのかたが罪人であるかどうか、わたしは知りません。ただ一つのことだけ知っています。わたしは盲であったが、今は見えるということです」。

9:26そこで彼らは言った、「その人はおまえに何をしたのか。どんなにしておまえの目をあけたのか」。

John 9:24-33

9:27彼は答えた、「そのことはもう話してあげたのに、聞いてくれませんでした。なぜまた聞こうとするのですか。あなたがたも、あの人の弟子になりたいのですか」。

9:28そこで彼らは彼をののしって言った、「おまえはあれの弟子だが、わたしたちはモーセの弟子だ。

9:29モーセに神が語られたということは知っている。だが、あの人がどこからきた者か、わたしたちは知らぬ」。

John 9:24-33

9:30そこで彼が答えて言った、「わたしの目をあけて下さったのに、そのかたがどこからきたか、ご存じないとは、不思議千万です。

9:31わたしたちはこのことを知っています。神は罪人の言うことはお聞きいれになりませんが、神を敬い、そのみこころを行う人の言うことは、聞きいれて下さいます。

John 9:24-33

9:32 生れつき盲であった者の目をあけた人があるという事は、世界が始まって以来、聞いたことはありません。

9:33 もしあのかたが神からきた人でなかったら、何一つできなかつたはずですよ」。

John 9:24-33

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

²⁵ He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

John 9:24-33

²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

²⁸ And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from."

John 9:24-33

³⁰ The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.

³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

John 9:24

そこで彼らは、盲人であった人をもう一度呼んで言った、「神に栄光を帰するがよい。あの人が罪人であることは、わたしたちにはわかっている」。

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

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So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

- This follows from what went before: the man's parents refused to go beyond the obvious and told the Pharisees to question their son directly.

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- This follows from what went before: the man's parents refused to go beyond the obvious and told the Pharisees to question their son directly.
- So they approach the son for a second time.

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そこで彼らは、盲人であった人をもう一度呼んで言った、「神に栄光を帰するがよい。あの人が罪人であることは、わたしたちにはわかっている」。

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "***Give glory to God***. We know that this man is a sinner."

- Almost all commentators agree that this is an idiomatic expression meaning "Tell the truth!"
- It may also have the nuance of "...don't steal God's glory by giving false testimony regarding God's mighty works ..."

John 9:24

そこで彼らは、盲人であった人をもう一度呼んで言った、「神に栄光を帰するがよい。あの人が罪人であることは、わたしたちにはわかっている」。

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "***Give glory to God.*** We know that this man is a sinner."

- By addressing him in this way, the Pharisees suppose that they are invoking the authority of God, although ironically they are doing just the opposite.

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So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. **We know that this man is a sinner.**"

- By addressing him in this way, the Pharisees suppose that they are invoking the authority of God, although ironically they are doing just the opposite.
- They think they know that Jesus is a sinner.

John 9:24

そこで彼らは、盲人であった人をもう一度呼んで言った、「神に栄光を帰するがよい。あの人が罪人であることは、わたしたちにはわかっている」。

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. **We know that this man is a sinner.**"

- This looks back to the first sentence of Verse 16, where the Pharisees reckoned Jesus to be a sinner because he violated the Sabbath.

John 9:25

すると彼は言った、「あのかたが罪人であるかどうか、わたしは知りません。ただ一つのことだけ知っています。わたしは盲であったが、今は見えるということです」。

He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

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- That it was the Sabbath Day on which Jesus gave this man sight, is not disputed by anyone.

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- That it was the Sabbath Day on which Jesus gave this man sight, is not disputed by anyone.
- Some, at least, of the Pharisees considered this proof that Jesus was a sinner.

John 9:25

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He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

- The man to whom Jesus gave sight, had already confessed Jesus to be a Prophet and, hence, not a sinner.

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He answered, "***Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.***"

- The man to whom Jesus gave sight, had already confessed Jesus to be a Prophet.
- Therefore his answer here to the Pharisees is generally read as ironical.

John 9:25

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He answered, "***Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.***"

- In other words, the man means to say, “you brand this mighty Prophet of God as a sinner, then how to you explain the fact that I, a man blind from birth, now see?”

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He answered, "***Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.***"

- The use of irony here calls into question the Pharisees definition of Jesus as a “sinner” and, therefore, of Jesus healing on the Sabbath as constituting “sin.”

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- The use of irony here calls into question the Pharisees definition of Jesus as a “sinner” and, therefore, of Jesus healing on the Sabbath as constituting “sin.”
- Irony is also safer than plain speech in this context.

John 9:26

そこで彼らは言った、「その人はおまえに何をしたのか。どんなにしておまえの目をあけたのか」。

They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

John 9:26

そこで彼らは言った、「その人はおまえに何をしたのか。どんなにしておまえの目をあけたのか」。

They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

- The man has refocused on the simple fact of the miracle.

John 9:26

そこで彼らは言った、「その人はおまえに何をしたのか。どんなにしておまえの目をあけたのか」。

They said to him, "**What** did he do to you? **How** did he open your eyes?"

- The man has refocused on the simple fact of the miracle.
- The Pharisees again ask about the details: what and how?

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- The man has refocused on the simple fact of the miracle.
- The Pharisees again ask about the details: what and how?
- Why do they reexamine such details?

John 9:27

彼は答えた、「そのことはもう話してあげたのに、聞いてくれませんでした。なぜまた聞こうとするのですか。あなたがたも、あの人の弟子になりたいのですか」。

He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

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- The man is responding to their repeated questions concerning the manner in which Jesus healed him.

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- The man is responding to their repeated questions concerning the manner in which Jesus healed him.
- He told them before and they didn't listen.

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- The man is responding to their repeated questions concerning the manner in which Jesus healed him.
- He told them before and they didn't listen.
- Why, he asks, do you want to hear the same things again?

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- Have they had a change of heart?

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He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? ***Do you also want to become his disciples?***"

- Have they had a change of heart?
- Do they understand that Jesus is of God?

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- Have they had a change of heart?
- Do they understand that Jesus is of God?
- Do they wish to hear the man's story again in light of their new understanding, and follow Jesus as disciples?

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- What do you think?

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He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? ***Do you also want to become his disciples?***"

- What do you think?
- We can see from what follows that they did **not** wish to be Jesus disciples, and the man probably already knew that.

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- What do you think?
- We can see from what follows that they did **not** wish to be Jesus disciples, and the man probably already knew that.
- If so' he is being intentionally ironical.

John 9:28

そこで彼らは彼をののしって言った、「おまえはあれの弟子だが、わたしたちはモーセの弟子だ。」

And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

John 9:28

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And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

- To the Pharisees, being a disciple of Jesus was a serious insult and charge of wrongdoing, which they throw right back at the man.

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- To the Pharisees, being a disciple of Jesus was a serious insult and charge of wrongdoing, which they throw right back at the man.
- They claim, conversely, to be “disciples of Moses.”

John 9:28

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- Claiming to be “disciples of Moses” was not a usual claim for the Jews, and certainly not before the time of Christ.

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- Claiming to be “disciples of Moses” was not a usual claim for the Jews, and certainly not before the time of Christ.
- With the coming of Christ this notion begins to develop among Jews: that to follow Christ was to abandon Moses.

John 9:29

モーセに神が語られたということは知っている。だが、あの人がどこからきた者か、わたしたちは知らぬ」。

We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from."

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- It is, of course, common sense among Christians, Jews, and Muslims, that God had spoken to Moses.

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- Part of what God had spoken to Moses was the Law that the Jews understood Jesus to be breaking.

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- Here they are speaking of Jesus.

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- Here they are speaking of Jesus.
- They cannot allow that Jesus has also spoken to God, much less come from God.

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- Here they are speaking of Jesus.
- They cannot allow that Jesus has also spoken to God, much less come from God.
- Certainly they cannot imagine that Jesus is God.

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We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, ***we do not know where he comes from.***"

- Ironically, the Pharisees had earlier denied Jesus because they thought they did know where he was from. (7:41)

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- Ironically, the Pharisees had earlier denied Jesus because they thought they did know where he was from. (7:41)
- Here, also ironically, the reason they cannot determine his origin, is because his origin is in heaven.

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We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, ***we do not know where he comes from.***"

- To not know Jesus is to not know God.

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- To not know Jesus is to not know God.
- This is a point that is being made in John (and the whole Bible) generally and in this chapter in particular.

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- To not know Jesus is to not know God.
- This is a point that is being made in John (and the whole Bible) generally and in this chapter in particular.
- Jesus infinitely transcends Moses, Law, and Sabbath.

John 9:30

そこで彼が答えて言った、「わたしの目をあけて下さったのに、そのかたがどこからきたか、ご存じないとは、不思議千万です。

The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

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- The man to whom Jesus gave sight is answering the Pharisees (the self-proclaimed “disciples of Moses”).

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- The man to whom Jesus gave sight is answering the Pharisees (the self-proclaimed “disciples of Moses”).
- In particular, he is answering their statement that they do not know where Jesus comes from.

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- He considers it amazing (!) they do not know where Jesus is from.

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- He considers it amazing (!) they do not know where Jesus is from, despite the fact that Jesus has opened his eyes.

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- He considers it amazing (!) they do not know where Jesus is from, despite the fact that Jesus has opened his eyes.
- This fact has already led the man to conclude that Jesus is from God, a Prophet.

John 9:31

わたしたちはこのことを知っています。神は罪人の言うことはお聞きいれになりませんが、神を敬い、そのみこころを行う人の言うことは、聞きいれて下さいます。

We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.

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- The man now begins to “teach” the Pharisees. (At least that is how the Pharisees come to perceive these words before they put him out of the synagogue, in Verse 34.)

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- The first point in this lesson, that God is faithful, is not controversial.

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- The first point in this lesson, that God is faithful, is not controversial.
 - I first think of Hebrews 11:6
 - But there are countless passages from the Books of Moses!

John 9:32

生れつき盲であった者の目をあけた人があるということは、世界が始まって以来、聞いたことはありません。

Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

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- There were indeed stories of blind men whose sight had been restored.

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Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

- There were indeed stories of blind men whose sight had been restored.
- There were few if any stories (none of which I am aware) in which such men had been born blind.

John 9:32

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Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

- In any case, so far as he knew, the blind man in this story had been the beneficiary of an unprecedented miracle.

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- It was enough to prove to him that God was behind it.

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- In any case, so far as he knew, the blind man in this story had been the beneficiary of an unprecedented miracle.
- It was enough to prove to him that God was behind it.
- I dare say God had made him certain of this.

John 9:33

もしあのかたが神からきた人でなかったら、何一つできなかつたはずですよ」。

³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

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- Here, then, is the point.

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- Jesus must have been “from God.”
- Hence he was not a sinner, as the Pharisees said.

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³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

- Here, then, is the point.
- Jesus must have been “from God.”
- Hence he was not a sinner, as the Pharisees said.
- Therefore Jesus was greater than the Law as they knew it.

John 9:33

もしあのかたが神からきた人でなかったら、何一つできなかつたはずですよ」。

³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

- This is a small step away from recognizing, not just that Jesus was from God, but that Jesus was the Messiah.
- Because Jesus really is setting himself (not against but) above the Law of Moses.