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## Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind: The Third Messianic Miracle John 9: 1-41

Jesus heals a man born blind, which was the third messianic miracle DIG: Jesus heals a man born blind, what assumptions did the apostles make about this man's blindness? What misconception did Jesus correct? How did Yeshua involve the blind man in the healing process? Why do you think the Lord sent the man to wash in the pool before healing him? How did his neighbors respond to the miracle? How can we see his progressive understanding of the significance of Messiah? Why were the Pharisees so desperate to interrogate his parents? What are the three degrees of excommunication in Judaism? How did the response of pharisaic Judaism to the three messianic miracles build?

**REFLECT:** What physical or emotional handicap (learning disability, failed relationship, chronic illness) has turned into an opportunity for ADONAI to demonstrate His power? Or do you tend to waste your sorrows? What fresh insight have you gained from this passage about the struggles of life? How do you need to change your attitude toward your personal weaknesses and strengths? Why does God choose to use our weaknesses and problems for His glory? Who has been the toughest person for you to explain your faith to? Why? What have you found most helpful in dealing with people who ridicule your trust in Christ? Has your belief in Jesus led to your exclusion from any group? How has this hurt or helped you?

The Gospel is not a sterile set of facts; it is the means by which ADONAI redeems sinners from the slavery of **sin (Romans 1:16)**. It doesn't merely call for intellectual assent, but for the full surrender of **the heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30)**. Its work is not to create theologians out of pagans, but to open the eyes of **the spiritually blind**. The story of **the man born blind** is a clear case in point.<sup>967</sup>

The conflict between **Jesus** and **the Pharisees** apparently continued into the early afternoon over the miraculous healing of **a man** who had been **blind from birth**. This continued **the eighth day** of **the festival of Booths (Leviticus 23:36, 39; Numbers**

**29:35).** It was actually considered to be a separate feast day. The feast is called *shemini 'atzeret* in Rabbinic Hebrew, which approximately means *festal assembly of the eighth (day)*. It was celebrated on the Temple Mount with a Sabbath rest with **no regular work**.

**Jesus** had just claimed to be deity, saying: **before Abraham was born, I AM! At this, the religious leaders** were incensed and **picked up stones to stone Him. But** in the confusion, **Christ slipped away** and passed into the midst of those who were **His** friends in the crowd and quietly, but boldly, walked out **from the Temple grounds (John 8:58-59)**. **As Jesus left He saw a man blind from birth (John 9:1)**. **His** blindness was a birth defect, not a temporary affliction from which **he** could hope to recover - just like the **sin** of the human race. There was no healing of **the blind** in the TaNaKh or in the book of **Acts**. This **man** stood as a testimony that **Yeshua** was indeed **the light of the world (Yochanan 8:12a)**. In ancient Judea, disabled people commonly claimed spots along a well-traveled street leading to **the Temple**. While **the man born blind** undoubtedly joined many others that day, **he** drew the attention of **the talmidim**, probably because **his** condition was probably congenital rather than a result of disease or injury. **His** blindness aroused **their** curiosity.

**His apostles asked Messiah** an interesting theological question, **“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind (John 9:2)?”** Who committed such a terrible **sin** that this **man** was **born blind**? The strangeness in the question was not if this **man’s parents sinned** and as a result **he** was **born blind**. There is a principle of the Torah in **Exodus 34:6-7** that **ADONAI** visits the **sins** of **the parents** upon **the children** and **the children’s children** unto **the third and fourth generation**. It is conceivable that **the parents** had committed a specific **sin** and **God** visited that **sin** upon **their son**; therefore, **the son** was **born blind**. But that was not the strange part of the question. **They** also asked: **Or was it this man that sinned and then he was born blind?** In light of the fact that Judaism did not believe in reincarnation, how could **he** have first **sinned** and *then* be **born blind**?

The question asked by **the talmidim** actually reflected the culture in which **they** had been raised. According to pharisaic Judaism, a birth defect, such as being **born blind**, was due to a specific **sin**, either committed by **the parents** or committed by the individual. But again, how could an individual have **sinned** first and *then* be **born blind**? **According to pharisaic Judaism, at the point of conception, the fetus has two inclinations. In Hebrew they are called yetzer hara and yetzer hatov, which means the evil inclination** (not to be confused with the **sin** nature) **and the good inclination. These two inclinations are already present within the new human being who has just been**

conceived in the womb. During that nine-month development within the womb of the mother, there is a struggle going on for control between the two inclinations. And the rabbis would say that it just might have occurred that at one point the evil inclination got the better of the fetus and in a state of animosity or anger towards his mother, he kicked her in the womb. For this act of sin he was born blind.<sup>968</sup>

Therefore, the question of **the Twelve** actually reflected the culture in which they had been raised. So **they** asked: **Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?**

**The apostles** were guilty of two fallacies. The first fallacy was to accept **the Pharisaic teaching that the child could have sinned in the mother's womb and still be born blind**. The second fallacy is that a birth defect, such as being **born blind**, is due to some specific, terrible **sin**. **Yeshua** dispelled that idea very quickly. **Neither this man nor his parents sinned, said Christ, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life**. In other words, **he** was **born blind** not because of any specific **sin** committed by **his parents** or by **himself**. All physical problems are due to Adam's fall and are a result of the general problem of **sin** and fallen humanity. People die because they are descendants of Adam. However, to say that a specific birth defect, sickness, illness, or injury is always due to some particular **sin** or demon is a false teaching. **Jesus** clearly dispelled this teaching by saying that this **man** did not **sin**, nor did **his parents**. Quite the contrary, **God** arranged for this **man** to be **born blind** so **He** could gain the greater glory by accomplishing a great work.

**The Savior of sinners**, avoiding a lengthy theological discussion on the relationship of **sin** and suffering, simply answered: **Neither this man nor his parents sinned, said Jesus, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of Him who sent Me. Night is coming, when no one can work (Yochanan 9:3-4). The suffering Servant** would be crucified in a matter of months. The time for heavy theological trivia was long past. Now actions spoke louder than words. This **blind man** was a miracle waiting to happen. **He** had been chosen from all eternity past just for this very moment so **the Son of God** could manifest **His** glory.



As soon as **Jesus** finished correcting the faulty theology of **His talmidim**, **He** declared: **While I AM in the world, I AM the light of the world**. Then **He** proceeded with the healing. **He** chose to heal **the man** in such a way that it was somewhat of a process and at this point, **the man** never got to see **the Master**. Without saying anything **Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes (John 9:5-6)**. In this one act, **Yeshua** asserted **His** authority over disabilities, **sin**, bad theology, religion, **the Temple**, the Sabbath, and even **the religious authorities** that opposed **Him**.

**Go, Jesus told him: wash the mud from your eyes in the Pool of Siloam** (this word means "Sent"). The ancient city of Jerusalem being on a mountain, is naturally defensible from almost all sides, but suffers from the drawback that its major source of fresh water, the Gihon spring, is on the side of the cliff overlooking the Kidron Valley. This presents a major military weakness as the city walls, if high enough to be defensible, must necessarily leave the Gihon spring outside, thus leaving the city without a fresh water supply in case of a siege. Around 700 BC **King Hezekiah (Second Kings 20:20; Second Chronicles 32:30)**, fearful that the Assyrians would lay siege to the city, blocked the spring's water outside the city and diverted it through a 1,700 foot tunnel into **the then Pool of Siloam**.

Something, possibly the authority in **Yeshua's** voice, compelled **him** to obey. A connection with **the festival of Booths** is clearly seen here. On each of the seven days of the festival there was a special ritual called *the pouring of the water*. In this ritual, the priests marched down the street from the Temple Mount to **the Pool of Siloam**, filled their jugs with the water and marched back up and poured the water out into the bronze basin within **the Temple grounds** (see my commentary on **Exodus, to see link click [Fh](#) - The Bronze Basin in the Tabernacle: Christ, Our Cleanser**). This was followed by great rejoicing. During **the festival of Booths, the Pool of Siloam** was the center of Jewish attention. It would have the greatest number of people present who would observe this **third messianic miracle**. It was exactly along this route that **the man** had to feel **his** way on **his** own in order to fulfill **the Lord's** command. **So the man went and washed, and came home**

seeing (John 9:7). This is the sixth of Jesus' seven miracles in John's book (Yochanan 2:1-11; 4:46-54; 5:1-15; 6:1-15; 6:16-21; 11:1-44). **Through this act of obedience, Jesus opened the man's physical eyes. So, he began a pattern of response to Messiah that would culminate in saving faith.**



**The man** went to **the pool of Siloam**, washed **his eyes**, and when **he** opened **his eyes**, for the first time in **his** entire life, **he** was able to **see**. Since everyone knew this **man** and knew **he** was **born blind**, this created quite a stir. **His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging** asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" **Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him."** Many **neighbors** were confused because **they** recognized **him** to be that same **man**, but others had a hard time believing that a **man** who was **born blind** had been healed. Finally ending the debate **he** said: **I am the man**. Then **they** asked the key question: **Then how were your eyes opened** (after all, this is a messianic miracle)? **He** responded: **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. They asked him, "Where is this man?" He said: I don't know (John 9:8-12).** But instead of being excited for **him**, **they** dragged **him** into an inquisition.

**Because this was a messianic miracle, the man was taken to the Pharisees and interrogated for the first time. The eighth day** of the festival of Booths was celebrated as a **Sabbath rest day**, consequently, the miracle created a stir on the part of the masses. **The neighbors brought the man who had been born blind to the Pharisees. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was Sabbath** (no article). This shows that it wasn't specifically on **the Sabbath day**, but **the eighth day** of the festival of Booths that was celebrated as a **Sabbath rest. So the Pharisees also asked the man how he had received his sight. He put mud on my**

eyes, he replied: **and I washed, and now I see.** Suddenly things turned nasty. **Some of the Pharisees** said: **This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath (Yochanan 9:13-16a).** Building is one of the thirty-nine kinds of work prohibited on Shabbat to Mishnah Shabbat 7:2. Also Mishnah Shabbat says that on Shabbat “it is permitted to put water into the bran” of animals, “but they must not knead it.” It requires kneading to make clay, and clay is a building material; so they claimed there were two violations of Shabbat, building and kneading.<sup>969</sup>

**But others** asked, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So they were divided. Then they turned again to the blind man, “What have you to say about him? It was **your eyes he opened.**” This was a challenge, not an honest question. Theologically uninformed as he was, this man was not about to be intimidated by members of the Great Sanhedrin. **The man born blind replied, “He is a prophet” (John 9:16-17).**

It is interesting to notice **the man’s** progressive understanding of the significance of **Jesus.** He passes from thinking of **Him** as a man (**John 9:11**) to seeing **Him** as a prophet (here). Then he advances to the thought of one to whom allegiance may rightly be given (**John 9:27**), then to one **from God (John 9:33)**, and finally he comes to **believe in the Son of Man** to whom **worship** should be given (**John 9:37-38**). By contrast **the Pharisees**, starting with the view that **the Nazarene** is not from **God (John 9:16)**, question the miracle (**John 9:18**), speak of **the Galilean Rabbi** as a sinner (**Yochanan 9:24**), are shown to be ignorant (**John 9:29**) and finally are pronounced to be **blind sinners (John 9:41).**<sup>970</sup>

Notice the emphasis, not just upon **signs** (because false prophets could also perform miracles), but also upon **such signs**, these particular **signs.** . . these special messianic miracles. When **the Pharisees** asked **the man** who was **born blind** and now healed of **his** blindness what his opinion was about **Jesus**, **the man** simply concluded that at the least **the Healer** was a prophet. However, **according to Pharisaic teaching, though a prophet might be able to do miracles (like Elijah and Elisha certainly did), to do a messianic miracle was not the prerogative of a prophet, but rather the prerogative of the Messiah alone. So the first interrogation of the man did not lead to any specific conclusions.**

The Great Sanhedrin (see **Lg - The Great Sanhedrin**) had already rejected **Yeshua** as **the Messiah** (see **Eh - Jesus is Officially Rejected by the Sanhedrin**), and all Isra’el knew that the healing of someone born blind was a messianic miracle. **The Pharisees** had taught that themselves. So **the Jewish religious leaders** were desperate, and I mean desperate,

to prove this “miracle” was a phony and hoped that the involvement of **the parents** would reveal that the healing was a deception. **Therefore, the parents were interrogated next.**



**The Pharisees still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight so they sent for the man’s parents. “Is this your son?” they asked. “Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?” They asked the same questions over and over again hoping for a different answer. The Pharisees** campaign of fear and intimidation was by this time well known, so **the parents** could offer nothing more than the barest facts. **“We know he is our son,” the parents answered, “and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know.** In avowing their ignorance of the identity of **the Healer** they used the emphatic pronoun. **Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself” (Yochanan 9:18-21).** It was plain that they discerned danger and had no intention of getting caught up in it with **their son.**

**The parents** confirmed two things. First, that this **man** was definitely **their son** and there was no doubt about it. The second thing they affirmed was that **he** was **born blind.** So there was no longer any possibility that there was any type of subversion going on, or that someone was trying to play a trick on **the Pharisees.** When **they** asked **the parents** during the interrogation that if **their son** was really **born blind** how was he now able to see, **they** decided to say nothing more. **His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue (John 9:22).** It had already been declared that if anyone believed in **Jesus** as **the Messiah,** he or she would be excommunicated, or **put out of the synagogue.** It was obvious that **the parents** wanted to believe in **Yeshua,** and perhaps at this point had become secret believers in **him,** because they saw that **He** not only performed a messianic miracle but also performed that miracle on **their own son.**

In the Greek it is a single word, *aposynagogos*, literally, *unsynagogued*. Judaism has **three degrees of excommunication**, though none is common today. The lightest, *n'zifah*, which is simply **a rebuke**, could be declared by one person and normally lasts seven days. An example of *heziphah* is found in **First Timothy 5:1**. The next, *niddui*, which means **to cast out**, usually requires three rabbis to declare and would last a minimum of thirty days and people were required to stay six feet from the rejected one. An example of this second type is found in **Second Thessalonians 3:14-15** and **Titus 3:10**. The most severe, *cherem*, means **to be devoted to destruction**. It was a ban of indefinite duration and meant the person would be **put out of the Temple**. The rest of the Jewish community considered someone under the *cherem* judgment to be dead and no communication, or any kind of relationship, could be carried on with that person whatsoever (**In the Talmud see Mo'ed Katan 16a-17a, N'darim 7b, Pesachim 52a**). For a family so poor as to allow **their son** to beg - begging charity was to be avoided as much as giving charity was to be practiced - being *unsynagogued* would have spelled utter disaster. This third type is found in **First Corinthians 5:1-7** and **Matthew 18:15-20**. For messianic Jews today social ostracism by family and the Jewish community - that is being treated as if under the *cherem* judgment - can be counted on when committing one's life to **Yeshua** (also see **Mattityahu 10:34-37** and **Luke 14:26**).<sup>971</sup> **That was why his parents said, "He is of age . . . ask him" (Yochanan 9:23).**

The fact that the expression **would be put out of the synagogue** is used, tells us which level of excommunication **the Pharisees** had chosen for one who would believe in **Jesus as the Messiah**. It was the third and most severe level, the *cherem* - to be **put out of the Temple** life, and to be considered as dead. So **the Pharisees** were now threatening Jewish believers in **Jesus** with not merely a rebuke, or merely being cast out temporarily, but being **put out** permanently. Because **the parents** knew what **the Pharisees** had decreed concerning belief in **Christ**, **they** chose not to make any further comments. **They** would only confirm two things: that **he** was **their son**, and that **he** was **born blind**. **Therefore, the interrogation of the parents, as with the first interrogation of the man, also ends inconclusively.**

**This led to a second interrogation of the man.** Realizing that further interrogation of **the parents** would be fruitless, **the Pharisees** switch **their** attention back to **the son**. Knowing the healing of **a man born blind** was a messianic miracle by **their** own standards, **they** continued to try to discredit **his** testimony in any way that they could. Therefore, **they** changed tactics and tried to persuade **the man** to agree with **their** conclusion that it was really **Jesus** behind this deception. **"Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner."** It is striking how during the entire interrogation the



once **blind man** expresses **himself** with such simplicity, objectivity and impressive consistency before **the great teachers of Isra'el**. **He** kept returning to the facts, and said: **Whether He is a sinner or not, I don't know. But one thing I do know. I was blind, but now I see (Yochanan 9:24-25)**. **His** statement was not just a statement of fact; it was a challenge to **the Pharisees**, one that **they** had to answer. What **he** was saying to **them** between the lines was, "I was a man who was *born* blind, not simply a man who went blind. You are the ones who taught me that only **the Messiah** would be able to heal someone like me. Well, a man named **Yeshua** healed me. So I would think you would want to proclaim **Him** to be Israel's **Meshiach**. Instead you call **Him** a **sinner**. Please explain this to me!"

**The Pharisees** took up the challenge and asked the questions: **What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes? The man** had already explained to **them** more than once, so **he** responded, saying: **I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become His disciples, too?** Now **they** were furious. But the more antagonistic **they** became, the more convinced **he** became that **Yeshua** was from **God**. **They** replied in kind and **hurled insults at him**. **They** began to mock him: **You are this fellow's disciple! But we are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where He comes from**. The implication was that **God** did not speak to **Jesus**, so to be a **disciple** of **Moses** was far superior to being a **disciple** of **Yeshua**. But **the man** would not keep silent. **He** went on to answer: **Now that is remarkable! You don't know where He came from, yet He opened my eyes. He** continued to remind **them** of **their own theology**. **We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does His will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind**. It was a phenomenon without parallel. Such a thing had never occurred in human history. **If this man were not from God, he could do nothing (John 9:28-33)**.

There are records of the healings of people who went **blind**, but not one record of someone who was **born blind**. This was a messianic miracle from **Isaiah 35:5**, and for the first time in all of human history it was performed. **The man** simply said to **the Pharisees** that **they** had no basis or grounds for rejecting the messiahship of **Jesus**. Having nothing to say, **the Jewish religious leaders** turned to mockery, saying: **You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us! And** carrying out **their threat**, **they threw him out (John 9:34)**. **He** became the first person in the Bible to be **thrown out of the Temple** for **Messiah's** sake. There **he** stood destitute in complete isolation.

**When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, the Great Shepherd went and found him (John 9:35a)**. **Messiah** sought after **him**, **he** did not ask to be healed or saved.

This illustrates divine sovereignty. Salvation occurs because **God** first pursues sinners, not that we seek **Him** out. We are spiritually dead at the bottom of the lake of sin. We have no spiritual pulse and are spiritually unresponsive. That would have been the end of it had **ADONAI** not sent **His Son**, but **the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10)**. The only thing we add to the salvation process is **faith**, and **God** even provides that: **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-9)**. If salvation is truly a **work of God**, it cannot be flawed. It cannot fail to change a person's behavior. It cannot result in a fruitless life. **He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6)**.

By that time, **his** heart had been prepared for **the Lord's** invitation. This is the climax for the man of a process that has been going on throughout the chapter. Though **he** did not yet know the fullness of who **Christ** was, **he** was totally committed to **Him**. **Messiah** asked **him: Do you believe in the Son of Man** (see [En - Four Drastic Changes in Chris's Ministry](#))? **The beggar** was willing and responsive. **"Who is He, Sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in Him."** Then **the Lord said: You have now seen Him; in fact, He is the One speaking with you. The man's** simple response of **faith** is enlightening. **Then the man said: Lord, I believe (Yochanan 9:35b-38)**. **He** did not hesitate. **He** did not ask for proof. **Messiah** had given sight to **his** spiritual **eyes** and the moment they were opened, **he** saw **Jesus** and responded in to **Him** in **faith**. The poor, blind beggar, who had never seen anything in his life, clearly recognized **the Son of God**. Meanwhile **the religious leaders** who thought **they** knew everything could not even recognize **their** own **Messiah**. Spiritual sight is **the gift of God** that enables one willing and able to believe.<sup>972</sup>

What did this **man** first **see** with **his** newly opened **eyes** of **faith**? **He** saw **Christ** as sovereign **Lord** and **he** worshiped **Him**. This is the only place in the Gospels where anyone is said to worship **Jesus**. **He said: For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind (Yochanan 9:38b-39)**. How do we reconcile this statement with **John 3:17**, where **Yeshua** said: **For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world?** Although these statements may appear contradictory, they refer to different things. The difference is between purpose and result. **Christ** did not come for the purpose of condemning the world (**John 3:17**), but **His** coming results in division according to their responses to **Him**. The inevitable result of **Christ's** coming is that people must make a decision for, or against, **Him** (see [Dw - The Narrow and Wide Gates](#)). And their decision determines their destiny.<sup>973</sup>



Those who believed in **Him** were seeing, and those who rejected **Him** sank into the divinely decreed blindness so that **they** could not see **the light of the world (John 9:5)**. A short while before, **the leaders of the nation** had performed religious ceremonies at the foot of the brightly shining lamps in the Court of the Women that pointed to **the Messiah**. **They** did this, however, without recognizing its spiritual significance. **The light** of the festival was symbolic of **the man born blind**, the darkness of the Sukkot nights, on the other hand, was a picture of **Messiah's** enemies.<sup>974</sup>

**Some Pharisees who were with Him heard Him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" They** expected a negative answer because **they** assumed that certainly **they**, of all men, possessed spiritual perception. The Adversary constantly deceives people so they live in falsehood. **Jesus replied: If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains (John 9:40-41; see Jeremiah 2:35, where ADONAI speaks almost identically to His people Isra'el).** **They** were responsible for **their sins** because **they** sinned willfully. Like Pharaoh, **they** chose **their** own fate by rejecting **ADONAI**. But make no mistake about it; **the father of lies (Yochanan 8:44)** contributes to the blinding (**2 Corinthians 4:4**).

**Isaiah had written that when the Messiah came, the eyes of the blind would be opened (Isaiah 35:5).** The third messianic miracle was the healing of anyone **born blind**. **The rabbis taught that anyone empowered by God could heal someone who simply had gone blind. But when the Messiah came, they said He would be able to heal someone born blind. The result of the first messianic miracle (see Cn - The Healing of a Jewish Leper) was the intensive investigation of Christ's messiahship. The result of the second messianic miracle (see Ek - Jesus Heals a Blind Mute) was the decree that Jesus was not the Messiah on the basis of demon possession. And the result of the third messianic miracle, here, was that anyone who believed in Jesus as their Messiah would be permanently put out of the Temple and unsynagogued.**

For many reasons, some people insulate themselves from the truth; and for the most part, they reap the consequences without affecting anyone else around them. When these people occupy positions of authority, however, truth tellers face an unpleasant dilemma: suppress the truth or be at odds with the powers that be. **The man born blind** encountered just such a dilemma after **the Lord** gave him sight. The members of **the Sanhedrin** could not deny the miracle, so **they** applied pressure in order to silence **the man's** testimony and thus discredit **Yeshua**. But, **the man** refused to wilt under the pressure and stood strong. **His** response is a worthy model to follow when pressured by authority through intimidation.

**1. The man appealed to undeniable facts (Yochanan 9:15, 25, 32).** People in power who intimidate through intimidation hope to make an enemy of the person proclaiming it and then seek vindication by destroying or silencing their target. Appealing to facts shifts the focus of the debate back to where it belongs: impersonal objectivity rather than personal opinion. It says, in effect, "The truth is your real threat, not me."

**2. The man answered directly, yet briefly (John 9:17).** Attempts to sidestep, minimize or soften the truth never accomplish anything. Nor do attempts to convert enemies of truth. In fact, more words simply provide greater opportunity to turn the discussion into personal conflict, which is their goal. Answering directly and briefly leaves enemies of the truth with less ammunition with which to destroy their target.

**3. The man refused to argue (Yochanan 9:26-27).** People in power who silence the truth through intimidation hope to find an inconsistency or some other means of creating doubt by having their target rehash facts or restate opinions. Refusing to argue denies enemies of truth any opportunity to turn a debate into a personal matter. It says, in effect, "You can't get me off track, or off my message."

**4. The man remained fearless and resolved (John 9:30-33).** As ancient theologians have taught us, "All truth is **God's** truth." To depart from truth is to be at odds with **God**. Yet authorities that silence the truth through intimidation try to convince their victims that *their* power is to be feared rather than **God's**. Resolving to hold tightly to the truth deprives the enemies of the truth the power to intimidate.

By the end of this encounter, **the Pharisees** made **themselves** look foolish when **their** tactics failed to accomplish anything. When the truth defeated **them**, **they** fell back on their social status as being members of the Sanhedrin and then abused **their** power (**John 9:34**). While **the man born blind** suffered some negative consequences, **he** gained much more than he lost. **His** separation from a corrupt religious institution allowed **him** to receive new life in **Yeshua Ha'Meshiach**.<sup>975</sup>



*We pray, O **Father**, that **You** would increase our faith. Forgive us for doubting **Your** ability to use us for **Your** glory. Forgive us for demanding proof instead of simply believing in **You**. Use all that we have to accomplish **Your** purposes.<sup>976</sup>*