

THE SIXTH SIGN: THE MAN BORN BLIND (*John 9:1-41*)

I am the light of the world. (John 9:5)

Historical/Cultural:

Many of the healings of Jesus were healings of blindness. Blindness was a scourge in the middle east. Many pretended to be blind since begging was the lucrative occupation of the blind. There was a belief that blindness and all sickness was caused by sin, but since the man in the story was born blind, there is a hint of reincarnation. However, they also believed that curses placed on parents affected the children and that children paid for the sins of their parents (Ex. 20:5).

In kneading the clay into mud and anointing the eyes of the blind man, Jesus committed sins, since both kneading and anointing were 2 of the 39 acts forbidden on the Sabbath. Washing in the pool of Siloam is reminiscent of Elisha's command to Naaman the leper who is spiritually blind to wash in the Jordan (II Kings:5)

The Aramaic word for sin is satah which means to slip, slide or deviate (ice skate in modern Aramaic.) So we are skating on thin ice when we sin. Spiritually, sin is falling short of the Christ standard.

Words/Phrases:

blind--

sin--

day--

night--

I am the light of the world--

anoint with spittle and clay--

wash in the pool of Siloam--

Study Questions:

1. How would your life change if you saw with "the single eye?"
2. Where is the starting point for change?
3. What illusion do we share with the disciples who ask "who sinned..."
4. Is it necessary to know the reason for undesirable conditions? If not, what is the right question to ask?

