
Chad Hutson / General Adult / Sunday School

Fall at the Fount / John 9:1-7

A. Jesus' Activity

1. A remarkable and unique miracle (one of seven in John's gospel).
2. Man blind from birth; Jesus spit in dirt and rubbed on eyes; instructed to wash in Pool of Siloam.

B. Context

1. Jesus departed the gathering at the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) after causing a stir ([Jn 7:40-51](#)).
2. "If anyone thirsts..." drawing distinction between Himself and the empty rituals.
3. In [John 8:12](#) (first eleven verses are disputed) Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness."

Begin to see merging themes of John's gospel: the necessity of the new birth (3:3) as evidenced by Nicodemus' presence in 7:50; thirst-quenching, Spirit-given living waters (chs. 4 & 7); light into the world (ch. 8; c.f. [Jn. 1:4-5](#), [7-9](#)); now 9:5 light of world brings sight to the blind in mysterious way ([Jn 9:5](#); c.f. [Jn 1:11-13](#)).

As a result of the controversy at end of chapter 8, Jews sought to kill Him. Jesus departed the crowds but performs a miracle as a parting shot: healed the blind man.

C. Blindness serves as metaphor for spiritual helplessness, man's lost condition:

1. Outside the temple; disqualified from entering; remained alienated.
2. Blind man lacked ability to see Jesus; needed divine intervention.
3. Beyond the help of others; rituals did him no good; no one offers.
4. Resigned to life in darkness.

D. Why the Pool of Siloam?

****Original purpose for pool was to bring water inside the city and deny it to invaders. Flows from the Spring Gihon, the only natural water source in Jerusalem. The spring flowed through the temple mount to the inner city where it was accessible to the residents.¹

1. Siloam means “sent;” named so because water conducted (sent) through a channel cut in rock of Temple Mount during Hezekiah’s reign ([2 Kgs 20:20](#); [2 Chron 32:30](#)) when the Assyrians besieged Jerusalem. An engineering marvel of ancient world.
2. Symbolizes the insufficiency of OT vs. NT: although once providing for the salvation of the Jews, now the water did nothing for the people apart from the command of Jesus.
3. Significance of the name: Jesus insisted that He is the One sent by God to bring light into the world ([Jn 8:16](#), [18](#), [26](#), [28](#), [42](#)). Calvin: “the fountain daily reminded the Jews of the Christ who was to come, yet whom they despised when He was exhibited to them.”
4. The water drawn from Siloam for water-pouring ritual; just as the pool called “Sent” provided life-giving water to the city, so Jesus was sent to bring soul-saving light into the world.

E. Why does Jesus send him to the pool?

1. Forces blind man into the crowd of people who were disputing over Him.
2. Requires an act of obedient faith; we must believe and act upon it ([Jn 3:16](#), [36](#)).
3. Symbolizes our salvation: saved by grace alone, but through faith. Jesus sends us first to the place of cleansing (cross) and then to a life freed from darkness of sin.
4. Some think that Jesus draws attention to man’s eyes by smearing mud on them.

The man doesn’t focus on the “how” but on the “who.” When questioned, the man simply answered what Jesus commanded him to do ([Jn 9:11](#); [15](#); [25](#); [33](#)), “The man called Jesus” (v. 10-11). He became willing to believe ([Jn 9:38](#)), while the Pharisees refused ([Jn 9:39-41](#)). There are none so blind as those who refuse to see. Judgment likened to self-imposed blindness (9:39), confirming Jesus’ teaching in [John 3:19-20](#).

¹ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Siloam, Pool Of,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1964.