



## SESSION 39 | JOHN 8:54-9:4

### JOHN 8:21-59 | DEBATES WITH THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES

- Verses 21-33 – see session 37
- Verses 34-53 – see session 38
- Verses 54-57 - Topic #10
  - Jesus makes the daring claim that He is honored by the Father and that they **have not known him** (v. 54). Further, He says that if He claimed *not* to know the Father, that He would **be a liar like unto you** (v. 55). Then he gave what would perhaps have been considered the most daring claim: **Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it** (v. 56).
    - Here the Greek wording is important.
      - The word **see** in verse 56 is εἶδον [eidon], and it is a *perception* word, not a *physical* word (see Jn. 1:39, 9:1 plus 135 others).
      - The physical word would be βλέπω [blepo] (see Jn. 1:29, 9:7 plus 689 others).
      - Thus verse 56 says that Abraham *rejoiced to perceive and understand my day, and when he did, he was glad*.
    - To understand the sight Abraham had, consider Hebrews 11:13.
      - Also study Luke 10:23-24, where Jesus says **blessed are the eyes which blepo-see physically**. Then He says the **prophets and kings have desired to eidon-perceive those things which ye blepo-see physically**.
  - How did Abraham come to this “sight?”
    - If **faith cometh by hearing** then Abraham must have heard of the promised coming (via Adam & descendants) and probably also heard from God Himself either in Gen. 12:1-3, Gen 22:18, and possibly in reference to the Melchizedek incident of Hebrews 7:2-4.
  - The response to Jesus was to ask Him if, at His young age, He had **seen Abraham**? Here the Jews use the word ὁράω [horaō], which is a word used of physical sight along with the perceptions that come from that sight. Thus the leaders misrepresented Jesus, no doubt willfully.
- Verses 58-59 - Topic #11
  - Jesus says that which will infuriate His enemies: **Before Abraham was, I am** (v. 58).
    - Clearly and undeniably Jesus was saying that He was pre-existent (and, by implication, the eternal son of God).
    - The religious leaders were so angry that responded by taking up stones whereby to kill Him, **but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple** (v. 59).
  - The word **hid** is κρύπτω [krupto], from which we get the English word *crypt*, and does not indicate whether it is supernatural or natural. The next verse indicates that it was natural.

### JOHN 9:1-38 | THE SIXTH SIGN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

- Verse 1 –
  - Jesus physically **passed by** (see note on Jn. 8:59) when he saw the blind man, whose name is never given, but his condition is **from his birth**.

- In my worldview, blindness from birth is a *general* result of the curse. However, many (if not most) in our day do not hold this worldview. Nor did they in Jesus' day, as verse two reveals.
- Verse 2 –
  - The worldview of **his disciples** (followers in general, beyond the twelve) was that the blindness must have been a direct result of sin. Such was a flawed view from the beginning (as verse 3 clarifies).
  - Perhaps there is a deeper meaning embedded in the question.
    - If Jesus is Messiah, as He has claimed in chapter 8:58, then the **my day** of John 8:56 is the *Messianic day*.
    - So, if this is **my day**, then the “rules of the Kingdom” must be in order.
    - Those rules include the fact that the sins of the parents *cannot be passed on to the children* (Ezek. 18:2-4).
    - If they are living in the Messianic age, then **this man** is the one that sinned, then there must be possibility for pre-natal sin.
    - If this is a result of the sins of the parents, then this must not be the Messianic age.
  - Notice that the wrong assumption has led the disciples on a *theological wild-goose chase*.
- Verse 3 –
  - Jesus gives a clear answer: *option C*. The answer to their question is **that the works of God should be made manifest in him**. That is, God has prepared this man's blindness for a purpose (the sixth sign of John's Gospel).
  - Two important matters:
    - We must take care not to become victims of “dichotomy” kinds of thinking. Our minds are conditioned to find quick solutions and thus do not always think through the entire issue.
    - We must take care not to make a doctrine out of an historical incident. If we say that *all things* happen to manifest the works of God, we are no more correct than if we say that the man's blindness was a result of his sin or that of his parents.
- Verse 4 –
  - Jesus says **I must work the works of him that sent me**. Notice that the modern translations say *We must work....* While it makes no strong doctrinal difference, the context does support the first person singular over the plural.
  - The meaning of the **day** and the **night** is not clear, though it is clearly figurative. We do not live in an age in which **no man can work**, unless the works are considered “signs and wonders,” but that is doubtful. A more obvious interpretation would be that **the night** is a reference to the “great and terrible day of the Lord,” which was prophetically expected before the establishment of the Messianic age.