

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 137 – May 17th – John 9:1-41

Works frequently referenced in these notes on John

Barrett, CK	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , London, SPCK, 1967
Beasley-Murray, GR	<i>John, Word Bible Commentary</i> , vol 36, Word Books, 1987
Carson, DA	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , Leicester, IVP (Apollos), 1991

John 9

Barrett says "This short chapter expresses perhaps more vividly and completely than any other John's conception of the work of Christ. On the one hand, he is the giver of benefits to a humanity which apart from him is in a state of complete hopelessness: it was never heard that one should open the eyes of one born blind (v.32). The illumination is not presented as primarily intellectual (as in some of the Hermetic tractates) but as the direct bestowal of life or salvation (and thus it is comparable with the gift of living water (4:10; 7:37f.) and of the bread of life (6:27)). On the other hand, Jesus did not come into a world full of men aware of their own need. Many have their own inadequate lights (e.g. the Old Testament, 5:39f.) which they are too proud to relinquish for the true light which now shines. The effect of the true light is to blind them, since they wilfully close their eyes to it. Their sin abides precisely because they are so confident of their righteousness."

Of the links between chapters 8, 19 and 10 Carson comments, "Thematically, this chapter is tied to the Feast of Tabernacles (ch 8) through the explicit reference to Jesus as the light of the world (9:5; cf. 8:12). This chapter portrays what happens when the light shines: some are made to see, like this man born blind, while others, who think they see, turn away, blinded, as it were, by the light (9:39-41). At the same time, this chapter prepares the way for ch. 10, where a sharp contrast is drawn between the good shepherd, who gives his life for his sheep, and other religious leaders, like those in ch 9, who are nothing but thieves and hirelings. The shepherd/sheep theme runs beyond the first part (10:1-21) to the second part of the chapter (10:22ff.), which is unambiguously tied to the feast of Dedication (10:22), about three months later than the Feast of Tabernacles. This has the effect of making it unclear just when the miracle of ch. 9 took place, though apparently at some point between the two feasts."

Beasley-Murray suggests that, "the occasion is shortly after the feast of Tabernacles, in the vicinity of the temple, prior to Jesus' return to Galilee."

Verse 1

Καὶ παράγων εἶδεν ἄνθρωπον τυφλὸν ἐκ γενετῆς.

παράγω pass by, pass on

The man may well have been in the Temple precincts, a common place for beggars.

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄρω see
τυφλός, η, ον blind
γενετῆ, ης f birth

"Granted the symbolism of the chapter, it is likely that this detail, in addition to heightening the effect of the miracle, signals that human beings are spiritually blind from birth. Cf. notes on 12:37ff." Carson.

Verse 2

καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες· Ῥαββί, τίς ἡμαρτεν, οὗτος ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῆ;

ἠρωτάω ask, request, beg, urge
μαθητής, ους m disciple, pupil, follower
ἡμαρτεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἁμαρτανώω
sin, commit sin

ἢ οἱ
γονεὺς, εως m parent

Cf. Ex 20:5 // Deut 5:9.

γεννηθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s γεννάω see 8:41

It was a common belief in Judaism that an affliction such as this was divine punishment for some sin. The rabbinic literature backed this view with particular Scriptures. Such thinking was flawed because it was not sufficiently radical. It failed to do justice to the enormity and indiscriminate consequences of Adam's sin. It was because of *Adam's* sin that this man was born blind and all are born spiritually blind.

Carson comments, "On this point, the disciples have not progressed beyond Job's miserable comforters'."

Verse 3

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· Οὐτε οὗτος ἥμαρτεν οὐτε οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' ἵνα φανερωθῇ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

οὐτε not, nor (οὐτε ... οὐτε neither ... nor)
φανερωθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s φανερω
make known, reveal, make evident

Cf. 11:4. Jesus turns the focus from originating cause to final cause.

Beasley-Murray comments, "Grammatically ἵνα φανερωθῇ could be construed as an imperative: 'Let the works of God be displayed in him!' For such a construction cf. Mark 5:23; Eph 5:33; 2 Cor 2:7: possible Johannine instances are 14:31; 15:25... The chief reason for hesitating to adopt this rendering is the comparable thought in 11:4."

Verse 4

ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ἕως ἡμέρας ἐστίν· ἔρχεται νῦν ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι.

The more difficult reading, ἡμᾶς δεῖ ... πέμψαντός με would seem original. The several variants are attempts to smooth the expression either by making the pronoun singular throughout or plural throughout. The ἡμᾶς indicates that the disciples are called to follow Christ in devoting themselves to the unceasing work of God.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must
ἐργάζομαι work, do, perform
πέμψαντός Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s πεμπω
send
ἕως conj until, while

Barrett considers that "the day" refers to the length of a man's life, but also has reference to the 'day of salvation' which has arrived with Christ, see v.5.

νῦν, νυκτός f night
ὅτε conj when, at which time
δυναμῶν can, be able to

Verse 5

ὅταν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ᾧ, φῶς εἴμι τοῦ κόσμου.
ὅταν when, whenever, as often as

Here equivalent to ἕως

ὧ Verb, 1s subj εἴμι
φως, φωτός n light

Cf. 8:12 "In him only the world has its day in which men may walk safely (12:35); in his absence is darkness." Barrett.

Carson comments, "The focus here ... [is on] the darkness of the period when Jesus is first taken from his disciples. The association of the disciples with Jesus' work ('we must do ...') refers to the period before Jesus is taken away by the cross, not to the period when, empowered by the Spirit, they will work until he returns."

Verse 6

ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἔπτυσεν χαμαὶ καὶ ἐποίησεν πηλὸν ἐκ τοῦ πτύσματος, καὶ ἐπέχρισεν αὐτοῦ τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς,

πτύω spit

Spittle is used also in two Marcan miracles (Mk 7:33; 8:23).

χαμαὶ Adverb χαμαὶ on the ground
πηλός, οὐ m mud, clay
πτύσμα, τός n spittle, saliva
ἐπέχρισω smear or spread on

ἐπέχρισεν is replaced by ἐπέθηκεν in B, Diatessaron, perhaps because the former term has associations too sacred for use with mud! Ephraem's Commentary on the Diatessaron has an extraordinary reading: 'He made eyes from his clay,' reflecting a thought, frequent among Patristic commentators, that a creative act was here involved, as in Gen 2:7.

Verse 7

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ὑπάγε νίψαι εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ (ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται Ἀπεσταλμένος). ἀπῆλθεν οὖν καὶ ἐνίψατο, καὶ ἦλθεν βλέπων.

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart
νίψαι Verb, aor midd imperat, 2 s νιπτο
wash; midd wash oneself
κολυμβήθρα, ας f pool

Beasley-Murray comments, "Jesus sends the blind man to wash in the pool of Siloam, as Elisha sent Naaman to wash in the Jordan for the healing of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:10-14)." "The pool of Siloam (Isa 8:6 cf. Neh 3:15) was situated within the city walls, at the southern extremity of the Tyropoean valley." Barrett. Sanders suggests that the pool of Siloam symbolises the water of baptism.

ἐπρηνεω interpret, explain; pass mean,
be translated

ἀπεσταλμένος Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom s
ἀποστελλω send

Beasley-Murray comments that the name, derived from the Hebrew participle of the verb *to send, Shiloh*, "so denotes in this context a discharge of waters. The Evangelist, as Chrysostom observed, sees Jesus the Sent One as 'the spiritual Siloam' (*Hom. in Ioan.* 9.6.7); the blind man gains his sight as he washes in the pool of Siloam, but he actually received it through the power of the Sent One. This identification of Jesus with Siloam, i.e., Shiloh, may well have been suggested through the messianic interpretation of Gen 49:10, 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes.'" See also Isaiah 8:6 where the Jews reject the water of Shiloh. Carson adds, "Further, the water for the water-pouring rites at the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. notes on 7:37-39) was drawn from the pool of Siloam. All of these associations prompt Grigsby to see in the washing in the pool a symbol of the believer's salvific 'bath', an implicit and 'universal command to all unbelievers to wash in the fountain of cleansing waters at Calvary.'" Carson tentatively agrees with Grigsby but says that attempts to see this washing as an elaboration of baptism "are far less convincing." In this regard he agrees with Beasley-Murray who writes, "The Evangelist's profound use of symbolism in his delineation of the word and works of Jesus should not be extended to an allegorising of details of which the Evangelist himself provides no hint."

ἐνίψατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s νιπτω
βλεπω see, look, be able to see

"The man's obedience was complete and so was his cure." Barrett.

Verse 8

οἱ οὖν γείτονες καὶ οἱ θεωροῦντες αὐτὸν τὸ πρότερον ὅτι προσαίτης ἦν ἔλεγον· Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καθήμενος καὶ προσαιτῶν;

γείτων, ονος m & f neighbour
θεωρεω see, observe, notice
πρότερον and τo π. adv before, previously,
formerly
προσαιτης, ου m beggar
καθημαι sit, sit down
προσαιτεω beg

Verse 9

ἄλλοι ἔλεγον ὅτι Οὗτός ἐστιν· ἄλλοι ἔλεγον· Οὐχί, ἀλλὰ ὅμοιος αὐτῷ ἐστιν. ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν ὅτι Ἐγώ εἰμι.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
οὐχι (emphatic form of οὐ) not, no
ὅμοιος, α, ον like

This simple use of ἐγώ εἰμι as an affirmation warns the reader against assuming that it was necessarily a religious formula for John.

Verse 10

ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ· Πῶς ἠνεώχθησάν σου οἱ ὀφθαλμοί;

ἠνεώχθησάν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl
ἀνοίγω open

Verse 11

ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος· Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰησοῦς πηλὸν ἐποίησεν καὶ ἐπέχρισέν μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ εἶπέν μοι ὅτι Ὑπαγε εἰς τὸν Σιλωάμ καὶ νίψαι· ἀπελθὼν οὖν καὶ νιψάμενος ἀνέβλεψα.

πηλος, ου m see v.6
ἐπιχρῖω see v.6
ὕπαγω go, go one's way, depart
νίψαι see v.7
νιψάμενος Verb, aor midd ptc, m nom s
νιπτω
ἀναβλεπω regain one's sight, be able to
see

Properly implies a *restoration* of sight, but was commonly in connection with the cure of blindness and hence its use here.

Verse 12

καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Ποῦ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος; λέγει· Οὐκ οἶδα.

ποῦ interrogative adverb where
οἶδα know, understand

Carson comments, "That the friends ask, *Where is this man?*, does not betray a desire to check their neighbour's story, but a natural desire to meet the man who had performed such an astonishing miracle. But not even the healed man could answer the question."

Verse 13

Ἄγουσιν αὐτὸν πρὸς τοὺς Φαρισαίους τὸν ποτε τυφλόν.

ποτέ enclitic particle once, formerly
τυφλος, η, ον blind

Beasley-Murray comments, "The neighbours bring the formerly blind man to the Pharisees. Why? Presumably because the Pharisees were their religious leaders, and should know about this extraordinary event; as religious experts they would doubtless understand what had taken place. There is no need to assume hostility on the neighbours' part. They were not to know that bringing the healed man to the Pharisees would result in his undergoing a trial and expulsion as a sinful man."

Verse 14

ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τὸν πηλὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνέφωξεν αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς.

Cf. 5:9.

πηλος, ου m mud, clay
ἀνέφωξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀνοιγῶ
open

Medical treatment on the Sabbath was forbidden unless life was in danger, also kneading was forbidden and the making of clay would have fallen under this prohibition. The fact that it was on the Sabbath that Jesus performed this act made what was a source of amazement into a source of offence.

Verse 15

πάλιν οὖν ἠρώτων αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι πῶς ἀνέβλεψεν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Πηλὸν ἐπέθηκέν μου ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, καὶ ἐνιψάμην, καὶ βλέπω.

παλιν again, once more

I.e. the man is again asked. John gives a brief account of what must have been a serious enquiry eliciting a detailed report.

ἔρωταω ask, request
ἀναβλεπω regain one's sight, be able to see
ἐπέθηκέν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐπιτιθημι
place on, place, put
ἐνιψάμην Verb, aor midd indic, 1 s νιπτῶ
wash; midd wash oneself
βλεπω see, be able to see

Verse 16

ἔλεγον οὖν ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων τινές· Οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ. ἄλλοι ἔλεγον· Πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος ἀμαρτωλὸς τοιαῦτα σημεῖα ποιεῖν; καὶ σχίσμα ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς.

τηρεω keep, observe

Cf. Deut 13:2-6.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
δυναμαι can, be able to
ἀμαρτωλος, ον sinful, sinner
τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind
σημειον, ου n miraculous sign

Beasley-Murray comments, "The Pharisees were faced with a dilemma: on the one hand the miracle shows Jesus as a man accredited by God, but on the other the breach of the Sabbath shows him to be a sinner."

σχισμα, τος n division, split

Cf. 7:43; 10:19.

Verse 17

λέγουσιν οὖν τῷ τυφλῷ πάλιν, Τί σὺ λέγεις περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἠνέφωξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν ὅτι Προφήτης ἐστίν.

Barrett suggests that ὅτι here has the force, 'with regard to the fact that'.

ἠνέφωξέν cf. v.14

Cf. the assertion of the Samaritan woman in 4:19. This is no ordinary man. Beasley-Murray says of the man born blind, "His eyes were opening wider!"

Verse 18

Οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἦν τυφλὸς καὶ ἀνέβλεψεν, ἕως ὅτου ἐφώνησαν τοὺς γονεῖς αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀναβλέψαντος

πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)
ἀναβλεπω see v.15

"The dilemma of v.16 was real. A man who was good enough to perform the miracle would not have performed it on the Sabbath. There was a mistake somewhere, probably in the man's story." Barrett

ἕως conj (and ἕως ὅτου) until, while
φωνεω call
γονευσ, εως m parent
ἀναβλέψαντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s
ἀναβλεπω

Verse 19

καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτοὺς λέγοντες· Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμῶν, ὃν ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη; πῶς οὖν βλέπει ἄρτι;

ἔρωταω see v.15
ἐγεννήθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s γενναω be
father of, give birth to; pass be born
βλεπω see v.15
ἄρτι now, at the present

This one question contains several: 'Is this your son?'; 'Was he really born blind and was never able to see?'; 'If these things are so, how is it that he is now able to see?'

Verse 20

ἀπεκρίθησαν οὖν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπαν· Οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ἡμῶν καὶ ὅτι τυφλὸς ἐγεννήθη·

γονευσ, εως m see v.17

οἶδα know

ἐγεννήθη see v.19

Verse 21

πῶς δὲ νῦν βλέπει οὐκ οἶδαμεν, ἢ τίς ἤνοιξεν
αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἡμεῖς οὐκ οἶδαμεν·
αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσατε, ἡλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸς περὶ
ἑαυτοῦ λαλήσει.

πῶς how(?)

βλεπω see v.15

ἢ or

ἄνοιγω see v.14

ἐρωτήσατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl

ἐρωταω ask

ἡλικια, ας f age, span of life, years

"ἡλικίαν ἔχει is often followed by an infinitive expressing what the person in question is of fit age to do. Here the infinitive is to be supplied: either 'to respond rationally to inquiry' or 'to make legal response'. If the latter is meant, the age in Jewish law is at least thirteen." Barrett.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

Verse 22

ταῦτα εἶπαν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἐφοβοῦντο
τοὺς Ἰουδαίους, ἥδη γὰρ συνετέθειντο οἱ
Ἰουδαῖοι ἵνα ἐάν τις αὐτὸν ὁμολογήσῃ χριστόν,
ἄποσυνάγωγος γένηται.

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

τοὺς Ἰουδαίους here means the Jewish
authorities – the parents were themselves Jews.

ἥδη adv now, already

συνετέθειντο Verb, pluperf midd indic, 3 pl

συντιθεμαι agree, arrange

ὁμολογεω confess, declare

ἄποσυνάγωγος, ον excommunicated or

banished from the synagogue

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

Barrett says that this is an anachronism: "That the synagogue had already at that time applied a test of Christian heresy is unthinkable." Beasley-Murray comments, "J. L. Martyn has urged that the expression, 'The Jews had already agreed...' shows that the expulsion from the synagogues was the result of a formal decision of an authoritative Jewish body; that is likely to have been the one taken by the Pharisees at Jamnia, during their reformulation of Judaism under the leadership of Rabban Gamaliel. According to *Ber.* 28b it was in response to an appeal by Gamaliel that Samuel the Small composed the twelfth benediction; Martyn sets that somewhere in the period A.D. 80–115, 'with an inclination toward the earlier part of that period.'" But Sanders says that this does not here mean formal excommunication but merely the determination to silence Jesus' supporters. And Beasley-Murray responds to Barrett and Martyn writing, "That the narrative has been composed with the contemporary church in mind is not to be doubted, but the interpretation sketched in the foregoing lines does not sufficiently take into account the complexity of the circumstances. On the one hand, we must remember that the followers of Jesus suffered much in the manner of the blind man from the time of Jesus on. And, contrary to Barrett, we must not forget that Jesus himself enunciated the crucial test of discipleship as confession of him before men as Son of Man (Luke 12:8–9 = Matt 10:32–33; cf. John 9:35); the emphasis in Mark 8:37 on not being ashamed to confess Jesus doubtless expresses the concern in Mark's church of the danger of denial in face of external pressures. Equally significant is the last beatitude in Matt 5:11–12, coming from the later period of Jesus' ministry, the parallel to which in Luke 6:22–23 is remarkably close to John 9: 'Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and insult you and cast out your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.' Paul knew what it was to be thrown out of synagogues on mission (Acts 13:50), and he was not alone in that experience... Nor can we be *certain* that the benediction in question had been formulated in Jamnia and made known through the Jewish dispersion by the time the Gospel was written. The decision of the Pharisees in 9:22 should be viewed as typical of what took place in varied localities prior to Jamnia's promulgation of the twelfth benediction."

Carson similarly comments on the word 'already': "Both John and his readers know of drastic expulsions that forced many Christians out of the synagogues at various points after the resurrection, but his point is that *already*, during the life of Jesus, the first threats of expulsion, at local levels, were taking place. That is not unlikely, granted the degree of hostility that Jesus evoked during the later stages of his public ministry (he was, after all, crucified!)."

Nevertheless, both Carson and Beasley-Murray recognise that John writes with a view to the situation facing those for whom the Gospel is written. Carson writes, "If the setting of this book is as proposed in this commentary – written toward the end of the first century with the primary aim of evangelising Jews and Jewish proselytes – then John's readers, if they are becoming sympathetic to Jesus at all, must now identify themselves either with the parents, whose faith was not strong enough to act with courage, or with the healed man, who comes to a growing understanding of who Jesus is. His eyes were opened, physically and spiritually, and the frank confession of his new faith, even in the face of distinguished opposition, provides a model for a new generation of Jews and Jewish proselytes who are coming to faith." And Beasley-Murray comments, "The Evangelist wishes to inspire the readers of the Gospel to a courageous confession like that of the healed blind man."

Verse 23

διὰ τοῦτο οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ εἶπαν ὅτι Ἡλικίαν ἔχει, αὐτὸν ἐπερωτήσατε.

Verse 24

Ἐφώνησαν οὖν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκ δευτέρου ὃς ἦν τυφλὸς καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ· ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν.

φωνεω call

δευτερος, α, ον second; ἐκ δ. a second time

δὸς Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s διδωμι

δοξα, ης f glory; praise, honour

δὸς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ = 'Admit the truth', or even 'confess the sin you have committed' cf. Josh 7:19; Acts 12:13.

ἁμαρτωλός, ον sinful, sinner

οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος 'this man' is a contemptuous reference to Jesus.

Verse 25

ἀπεκρίθη οὖν ἐκεῖνος· Εἰ ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν οὐκ οἶδα· ἐν οἶδα ὅτι τυφλὸς ὦν ἄρτι βλέπω.

"The formerly blind man obliges: he gives glory to God – not by denial, but by fearlessly reiterating the truth that he knows and has experienced." Beasley-Murray.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἀποκρinoμαι

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that (one)

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἐνος, μιας, ἐνος one

ἄρτι now, at the present

Verse 26

εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· Τί ἐποίησέν σοι; πῶς ἤνοιξέν σου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς;

εἶπον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl λεγω

ἤνοιξέν Verb, aor act indic (variant form), 3 s

ἀνοιγω open

Perhaps hoping the man would contradict himself and so discredit his testimony.

Verse 27

ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς· Εἶπον ὑμῖν ἤδη καὶ οὐκ ἠκούσατε· τί πάλιν θέλετε ἀκούειν; μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς θέλετε αὐτοῦ μαθηταὶ γενέσθαι;

ἀπεκρίθη see v.25

ἤδη adv now, already

παλιν again, once more

θελω wish, will

μαθητής, ου m disciple, follower

μη here introducing an ironical question: 'What? Don't tell me that you also wish ...' The man born blind "begins to deploy a quite marvellous gift for sardonic repartee." Carson.

Verse 28

ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπον· Σὺ μαθητῆς εἶ ἐκείνου, ἡμεῖς δὲ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐσμὲν μαθηταί·

λοιδορεω curse, speak evil of, insult

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that (one)

Barrett says, "John uses the term to bring out the opposition, already revealed in the Sabbath healing, between Jesus and the Law. Men must now ally themselves with either the new Moses or the old." But we need to be careful to observe that the opposition is not between Moses and Jesus but between Jesus and the Jews' understanding of Moses. Jesus seems often to have healed on the Sabbath, and this, far from breaking the Sabbath, fits perfectly with its true purpose as an anticipatory entrance into God's rest, cf. Beasley-Murray below.

Verse 29

ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεῖ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός, τοῦτον δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν.

οἶδα know

πόθεν interrog adv. from where

Beasley-Murray, "Here we have the heart of the opposition of Judaism to Christianity: Moses and the Law are set over against Jesus and his teaching; the authority of Moses is indisputable, the authority of Jesus is spurious... But the reader of this Gospel knows the flaw in this argument: Moses is not an opponent of Jesus but a witness to him, and therefore a witness against the Jews who reject Moses' testimony to Jesus in the Law (cf. 5:45–46). Ignorance as to the origin of Jesus is the fount of their misguided opposition to Jesus; he comes from God with a revelation from God, and so with God-given authority (cf. 7:14–16; 8:23–29 and 3:31–34)." And Carson comments, "What is at stake, then, is a profoundly hermeneutical question: how is the antecedent revelation to be understood with reference to the new revelation in the person and teaching of Jesus the Messiah? The same question permeates all the Gospels (e.g. Mt. 5:17ff.). John himself happily concedes that 'the law was given through Moses' (1:17), but he insists that the fullness of divine revelation came exclusively through Jesus Christ (cf. notes on 1:17-18)."

Verse 30

ἀπεκρίθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ θαυμαστόν ἐστιν ὅτι ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἴδατε πόθεν ἐστίν, καὶ ἤνοιξέν μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς.

θαυμαστος, η, ον marvellous; astonishing
ἤνοιξέν see v.26

He ridicules the ignorance of the 'experts'. The 'amazing thing' here is not faith but unbelief!

Verse 31

οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἀκούει, ἀλλ' ἐάν τις θεοσεβῆς ἢ καὶ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ τούτου ἀκούει.

ἁμαρτωλος, ον sinful, sinner

Cf. 16:23-7; 1 Jn 3:21f.; Is. 1:15; Ps 66:18; 109:7; Prov 15:29; Job 27:9; 35:13.

ἐάν if

θεοσεβης, ες devout, pious, God-fearing

"Occurs nowhere else in the New Testament (θεοσεβια at 1 Tim 2:10). It is common (with the meaning 'pious') in Hellenistic religious literature ... and perhaps was especially applied to Jews... The juxtaposition in John of the two phrases, the Hellenistic θεοσεβης and the Jewish το θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ, is striking ... and very characteristic of John's theological and linguistic workmanship." Barrett.

ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι

θέλημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

Verse 32

ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἠκούσθη ὅτι ἠνέφξεν τις ὀφθαλμούς τυφλοῦ γεγεννημένου·

αἰων, αἰωνος m age, eternity

Cf. Is 64:4.

ἠνέφξεν see v.14

γεγεννημένου Verb, perf pass ptc, m & n gen
s γενναω see v.19

Verse 33

εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ, οὐκ ἠδύνατο ποιεῖν οὐδέν.

εἰ μὴ unless, except

ἠδύνατο Verb, imperf midd/pass indic, 3 s

δυναμαι can, be able to

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing

Cf. 3:2. Beasley-Murray sums up the man's argument writing, "This unprecedented act therefore shows that God is with Jesus in an unprecedented way." He quotes Hoskyns, "If once it be assumed that a miracle proclaims the presence of a prophet, a miracle without parallel since the world began proclaims the presence of the Christ."

Verse 34

ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Ἐν ἁμαρτίαις σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὅλος, καὶ σὺ διδάσκεις ἡμᾶς; καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω.

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

ἐγεννήθης Verb, aor pass indic, 2 s γενναω

όλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

Used here adverbially to mean 'altogether', 'wholly'

διδασκω teach

ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out

ἐξω adv. out, outside, away

A fulfilment of the action threatened in v.22. Beasley-Murray comments, "The outraged Pharisees refuse the instruction of the healed man in words which, without realizing it, condemn their stratagem to deny the miracle: 'You were born in utter sin!' Then the man *was* born blind! And Jesus *did* open his eyes! But they reject the man, and the miracle, and the One through whom God wrought it. In so doing they reject the shining of the Light upon them, and plunge further into their darkness. They illustrate the perpetual truth of 1:3-4 and the contemporary truth of 3:19-21." Carson adds, "So convinced are they that Jesus is at best a charlatan, at worst a dangerous sinner, that they do not remember the ancient promises that one of the signs of the dawning of the messianic age is the restoration of sight to the blind (Is 29:18; 35:5; 42:7)."

Verse 35

Ἦκουσεν Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω, καὶ εὐρὼν αὐτὸν εἶπεν· Σὺ πιστεύεις εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;

εὐρισκω find

πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

Note the emphatic use of the pronoun *συ*. The implicit contrast is with the Jewish authorities who, in rejecting this man and his testimony, have rejected Jesus.

Carson adds that "The Evangelist is driving home some important lessons for readers who are on the verge of conversion: opposition from the Jewish authorities is to be expected – it has always been that way; such opposition is best met with courage, and with transparent openness to the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"τον υἱον του ανθρωπου (x B D sin) is to be preferred to τον υἱον του θεου (Θ Ω it vg); it is most improbable that the latter should have been changed into the former. Nowhere else in John is πιστευειν used with 'Son of man'." Barrett.

Carson suggests that the term 'Son of Man' is connected with the theme of judgment in John (cf. 5:27). "It is no accident, then, that the present paragraph culminates in vv. 39-41: 'For judgment I have come into the world...' Because John 9 also deals with the importance of public confession of Jesus, one is also tempted to think of Luke 12:8: 'I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God.'"

Verse 36

ἀπεκρίθη ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἶπεν· Καὶ τίς ἐστίν, κύριε, ἵνα πιστεύσω εἰς αὐτόν;

ἀπεκρίθη see v.25

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο see v.28

"The words [καὶ τίς ἐστίν] may be taken in two ways. (i) I do not know what Son of man means. Who is this person? What are his functions, etc.? (ii) I know sufficiently what Son of man means. But who among men is the Son of man? How can he be identified? The reply suggests (ii); but cf. 12:34." Barrett.

Κυριε here has the force of 'Sir.'

Verse 37

εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Καὶ εἴωρακας αὐτόν καὶ ὁ λαλῶν μετὰ σοῦ ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν.

εἴωρακας Verb, perf act indic, 2 s ὄραω see

Cf. 4:26.

Verse 38

ὁ δὲ ἔφη· Πιστεύω, κύριε· καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ.

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

προσκυνεω fall down and worship, fall at another's feet

"Cf. the reaction of men to the theophanies in the Old Testament; e.g. Ex 3:6." Barrett. Carson comments, "It is likely that the healed man is offering obeisance to Jesus as the redeemer from God, the revealer of God. That is already a great step forward from his earlier references to Jesus (vv. 11, 17, 33). But the Evangelist, who knows that the Christological confessions in his Gospel will climax with 20:28 (cf. 1:1, 18), doubtless understands that the healed man is 'worshipping' better than he knew."

Some early MSS (p⁷⁵ x W it^b cop^{ach}) omit v 38 and the opening clause of v 39 (καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς). The omission is "likely due to a textual accident" Beasley-Murray.

Verse 39

καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Εἰς κρίμα ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον ἦλθον, ἵνα οἱ μὴ βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ οἱ βλέποντες τυφλοὶ γένωνται.

κρῖμα, τος n judgement, verdict

"κρῖμα occurs here only in John, though the verb κρινειν and the noun κρισις are common (see 3:17)." Barrett.

ἦλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3 pl ἐρχομαι

"The assertion 'I came ...' reminds of related statements in the synoptic Gospels that speak of the purpose of Jesus' mission (e.g., Mark 2:17; Matt 5:17; Luke 12:49), and links up with sayings which speak of Jesus as Son of Man (cf. Mark 10:45; Luke 19:10...)." Beasley-Murray.

βλεπω see, be able to see

τυφλος, η, ον blind

γένονται Verb, aor pass dep subj, 3 pl
γίνομαι

"To receive Jesus is to receive the light of the world; to reject him is to reject the light, to close one's eyes, and to become blind. Cf. Mark 4:11f., where also reference is made to Isa. 6:10; and John 12:40, where the Isaiah passage is quoted." Barrett.
Beasley-Murray comments, "The two features of revelation and judgment develop side by side, and so compel recognition that the event does not simply set forth Jesus as the Light of the world, but rather exemplifies what happens when the Light shines in the world: the saving power of the divine sovereignty becomes active through its representative and agent, bringing the light of life to any responsive to him. At the same time it exposes and judges the sin of those who reject the revelation and the redemption brought by the Redeemer. The Light by its shining accordingly creates judgment; in the very act of bringing salvation into the world, it divides the world."

Verse 40

ἤκουσαν ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων ταῦτα οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ ὄντες, καὶ εἶπον αὐτῷ· Μὴ καὶ ἡμεῖς τυφλοὶ ἐσμεν;

Verse 41

εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε, οὐκ ἂν εἶχετε ἁμαρτίαν· νῦν δὲ λέγετε ὅτι Βλέπομεν· ἡ ἁμαρτία ὑμῶν μένει.

ἂν particle indicating contingency

εἶχετε Verb, imperf act indic, 2 pl ἔχω

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

μενω remain, stay, abide

"Those who are blind may be willing to obey the directions of Jesus (vv. 6f.) and so receive sight. Those however who enjoy the light of the Law are unwilling to leave it for more perfect illumination, and so become blind, losing the light they have. Cf. 15:22." Barrett.