Exploring the Bible—Gospel of John (10)

The Need of The Blind

**Scripture Reading:**

1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind? 3 Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned nor his parents, but he was born so, that the works of God might be manifested in him. 4 We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. 6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed his eyes with the clay, 7 And He said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is interpreted, Sent). He went therefore and washed and came away seeing. 8 The neighbors then and those who previously saw him as a beggar said, Is not this the one who used to sit and beg? 9 Some said, This is he. Others said, No, but he is like him. He said, I am the one. 10 They said then to him, How then were your eyes opened? 11 He answered, The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and said to me, Go to the pool of Siloam and wash. I went therefore and washed, and I received my sight. (John 9:1-11)

**Ministry Reading:**

HOW THE LORD JESUS GIVES MAN SIGHT

After saying that He would work the works of God, which is to open man’s eyes, and that He was the light of the world, the Lord Jesus spat on the ground, made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay (John 9:6). He did this to open the eyes of the blind man and to give him sight. Then He told the blind man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam (v. 7). Although this seems insignificant, it is very significant. If we consider the context of what the Lord Jesus said in these verses, we will understand their spiritual meaning. There are four crucial steps in this portion.

The first crucial step is related to the spittle, which was something out of the Lord Jesus. In this portion spittle signifies something that comes out of the Lord Jesus, or we may say that it proceeds out of His mouth. Therefore, spittle signifies the words that proceed out of the Lord Jesus’ mouth (Matt. 4:4). John 6:63 says that the Lord’s words are spirit and are life. Hence, spittle also signifies the Lord’s words of life.

The second crucial step is related to the clay, which signifies man. The Bible says that man was made of clay (Job 33:6; Isa. 45:9; cf. Rom. 9:21). Therefore, the Lord’s making clay of the spittle signifies that His word enters into and is mingled with men of clay.

The third crucial step is related to anointing the eyes of the blind. In the original text the word anointed in John 9:6 is related to the anointing of an ointment. This refers to the Holy Spirit as an ointment coming to anoint man. When the word of the Lord Jesus enters into man and is mingled with man, the Holy Spirit must come and anoint man. Man must let the Holy Spirit move in him in order to anoint his blindness.

Hence, if we want our inner eyes to be opened, we must take these three steps. The first step is for the word of the Lord Jesus to enter into us. The second step is to let the word of the Lord Jesus mingle with us. The third step is to let the Holy Spirit anoint us. After we read the Bible and spiritual publications or after we listen to a message, we should spend some time to ponder over what we have read or heard. Then the Lord’s word will mingle with us, and the Holy Spirit will simultaneously anoint us through His moving and anointing. In John 8:12 the Lord Jesus said, “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” It is possible to read this verse several times but not have the reality of this verse, because we have not allowed this word to enter into us and be mingled with us. However, if we read this verse and spend a few minutes to meditate on it, this word will mingle with us, and the Holy Spirit will anoint us. As a result, we will be enlightened to realize that we were previously in darkness but have now been enlightened by the life of the Lord Jesus. These three steps, however, are not sufficient. There is a fourth step.

The fourth crucial step is related to going and washing in the pool of Siloam. The word Siloam means “sent,” and it also means “obedient.” Obedience involves believing. Hence, going and washing indicate believing and obeying. If the blind man had not gone to the pool of Siloam to wash off the clay after being anointed, the clay would have blinded him even more. Likewise, if we do not believe and obey after hearing the Lord’s word and being anointed by the Holy Spirit, we will become blinder. Let us consider John 8:12 again. Here the Lord Jesus said, “He who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness.” Suppose someone has heard and understood this word but has neither believed nor obeyed it. He may say that this is merely the Lord’s reasoning and may question how people living in the world today can be delivered from darkness. Such a thought indicates that he is not willing to “go, wash in the pool of Siloam.” As a result, he will become blinder.

Some people seem to be clear when they do not read the Bible, but they become confused when they read the Bible. This is the result of not believing or receiving what they have read in the Bible and of not obeying the work of the Holy Spirit in them. These people allow the Lord to anoint their eyes with the clay mingled with spittle, but they do not “go, wash in the pool of Siloam”; that is, they are unwilling to be sent and to obey. In the end they become blinder.

The Lord ordered the blind man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. There were many places with water in the land of Judah, so why did the blind man have to go and wash in the pool of Siloam? This was to test whether he would obey. When the blind man obeyed, his eyes were opened. When the Lord gives us a command, He is also testing us. We may consider the Lord’s command to be irrelevant, but our eyes will be opened if we obey.

It was not sufficient for the blind man to go to the pool of Siloam; he still had to wash away the clay, that is, to bury the clay in the water of the pool. Clay represents the self. The spiritual significance of going to the pool of Siloam and washing away the clay is to put the self to death by believing and obeying. This will open our inner eyes so that we will be able to see spiritual things.

Many people read the Bible, but they do not let the words of the Bible enter into them to mingle with them. Some people let the words of the Bible mingle with them, but they do not let the Holy Spirit operate and anoint them. A few may let the Holy Spirit operate and anoint them, but instead of believing and obeying, they preserve the self, the clay, and are unwilling to wash away the self. Therefore, their inner eyes are still blind, unopened. The self becomes a veil on their inner eyes. The self, the person of clay, is a veil that covers their eyes and takes away their sight.

Going and washing in the pool of Siloam signify believing and obeying. This is baptism. Baptism is included with believing and obeying. If you have believed in the Lord and received Him, the Lord says, “Good. Go and be baptized.” You should answer, “I will go.” This is to believe and obey. The Bible says that to be baptized is to bury our old man (Rom. 6:4, 6). Therefore, baptism puts the self to death; it does not preserve the self. This will open your inner eyes and enable you to see spiritual things.

Question for Discussion: What is the spiritual blindness in our experience? How to experience the Lord’s healing?

Reference: Changing Death into Life, Ch. 8