

Yochanan ~ Part 19

Yeshua and Avraham

8 ⁴⁸ The Judeans answered Him, "Aren't we right in saying you are from Shomron and have a demon?"

You are from Shomron. Since the **Jews** could not attack **Yeshua's** personal life and conduct (v. 46), they tried an attack of personal abuse toward Him. The reference to **Yeshua** as a "**Shomron**" probably centers in the fact that the **Shomrons**, like **Yeshua**, questioned the **Jews'** exclusive right to be called **Avraham's** children (see vv. 33, 39).

⁴⁹ Yeshua replied, "Me? I have no demon. I am honoring my Father. But you dishonor Me. ⁵⁰ I am not seeking praise for Myself. There is One who is seeking it, and He is the Judge. ⁵¹ Yes, indeed! I tell you that whoever obeys My teaching will never see death." ⁵² The Judeans said to Him, "Now we know for sure that you have a demon! Avraham died, and so did the prophets; yet you say, 'Whoever obeys My teaching will never taste death.' ⁵³ Avraham avinu died; you aren't greater than he, are you? And the prophets also died. Who do you think you are?"

Yeshua countered the charge that He was demon-possessed by declaring that He honored His Father. Then He boldly said that keeping His word is the way to avoid death. This sounded insane to the **Jews** because all the great men of the faith had died. They responded, *Who do you think you are?*

⁵⁴ Yeshua answered, "If I praise Myself, My praise counts for nothing. The One who is praising Me is My Father, the very one about whom you keep saying, 'He is our God.' ⁵⁵ Now you have not known Him, but I do know Him; indeed, if I were to say that I don't know Him, I would be a liar like you! But I do know Him, and I obey His word. ⁵⁶ Avraham, your father, was glad that he would see My day; then he saw it and was overjoyed." ⁵⁷ "Why, you're not yet fifty years old," the Judeans replied, "and You have seen Avraham?" ⁵⁸ Yeshua said to them, "Yes, indeed! Before Avraham came into being, I AM!" ⁵⁹ At this, they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Yeshua was hidden and left the Temple grounds.

Before Avraham came into being, I AM. This and 10:30 are **Yeshua's** clearest self-pronouncements of His divinity. It was very clear to the **Judeans** exactly what **Yeshua's** claim was, because they immediately took up stones to put him to death (v. 59) for blasphemy. Claiming to be **God** and, specifically, pronouncing **God's** name (as **Yeshua** had just done) were punishable by death (Leviticus 24:15–16).

The Sixth Sign: Healing a Man Born Blind

Yeshua performed a miracle by recreating the eyes of a man who was born with congenital blindness (v. 1). Four features highlight this healing:

- (1) the problem that precipitated the healing (v. 1);
- (2) the purpose for the man's being born blind (vv. 2–5);
- (3) the power that healed him (vv. 6, 7);
- and (4) the perplexity of the people who saw the healing (vv. 8–13).

9 ¹ As Yeshua passed along, He saw a man blind from birth. ² His talmidim asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned - this man or his parents - to cause him to be born blind?"

Yeshua's talmidim were not the first to attribute all human misfortune and disability to immediately traceable sin: the entire book of **Job** is devoted to combatting this misunderstanding of how sin has come to affect the present world. Verses 1–5 of this chapter correspond to chapters 1–2 of Job; both set the scene for teaching about **sin**.

³Yeshua answered, "His blindness is due neither to his sin nor to that of his parents; it happened so that God's power might be seen at work in him."

Yeshua did not deny the general connection between sin and suffering but refuted the idea that personal acts of sin were the direct cause. **God's** sovereignty and purposes play a part in such matters, as is clear from **Job** above.

⁴ As long as it is day, we must keep doing the work of the One who sent Me; the night is coming, when no one can work.

As long as it is day. **Yeshua** meant as long as He was still on earth with His disciples. The phrase does not mean that **Yeshua** somehow stopped being the **light of the world** once He ascended, but that the light shone most brightly among men when He was on the earth doing the **Father's** will

⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Not only was **Yshua** spiritually *the light of the world*, but He would also provide the means of physical light for this blind man.

⁶ Having said this, He spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, put the mud on the man's eyes,

As He had done when He originally made human beings from the dust of the ground (Ge 2:7), **Yeshua** may have used clay to fashion a new pair of eyes.

⁷ and said to Him, "Go, wash off in the Pool of Shiloach!" (The name means "sent.") So he went and washed and came away seeing. ⁸ His neighbors and those who previously had seen him begging said, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some said, "Yes, he's the one"; while others said, "No, but he looks like him." However, he himself said, "I'm the one."

In ancient times, severe physical deformities such as congenital blindness condemned a person to begging as the only means of support (see Acts 3:1–7). The drastic change in the healed man caused many to falsely believe that he was not the person born blind.

¹⁰ "How were your eyes opened?" they asked him. ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Yeshua made mud, put it on my eyes, and told me, 'Go to Shiloach and wash!' So I went, and as soon as I had washed, I could see." ¹² They said to him, "Where is he?" and he replied, "I don't know." ¹³ They took the man who had been blind to the P'rushim. ¹

¹ Yochanan 8:48-9:13

You may encounter situations in public life where prejudice and judgment abound, similar to the **P'rushim** response to **Yeshua**. When you see someone being treated unfairly because of their background or appearance, remember to respond with **Yeshua**-like compassion. Speak out against injustice, offer kindness, or model acceptance by including others in conversations. Your stand could not only uplift the marginalized but also challenge the unloving attitudes around you, showcasing the unconditional love of **Yeshua** in a world that desperately needs it.

In our next post, we will continue to explore the **Gospel of Yochanan**.

