

The Blind See

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Just before Atonement we heard on the news that Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple (the computer company)—the genius behind the Macintosh computer, the iPod, the iPhone, the iPad—had died of pancreatic cancer at the fairly young age of 56. Fifty-six seems awfully young these days!

Millions around the globe were saddened by his death. And, he was eulogized, and praised for his accomplishments in the business world, particularly with all the gadgets he made available for the common man, but also in making Apple Computer America's number one corporation. I think it is at least on a par with Exxon-Mobile now, as far as worth goes.

Steve Jobs was touted as an icon, a visionary, and a role-model for a new generation of business leaders. He sounds like an absolutely wonderful person. According to the media, he was just The Guy!

Yet, Steve Jobs had what we would consider a darker side. For us, especially, in the churches of God, we would think of these as darker qualities. He died a Buddhist. In fact, a Buddhist monk officiated at his wedding several years ago. And, he attributed much of his visionary insight to the concepts he learned while studying Buddhism. He was a Zen Buddhist. And though he had a lot of success (I cannot deny he had a lot of physical success, making a lot of money) in business, he was at least partially responsible for an extremely high divorce rate at Apple Computer, because he drove his employees very hard. He worked them far beyond the usual 8 hours a day. And if they did not do what he wanted them to do, if they did not catch his vision, if they did not figure out something in the time that he allotted for it, then he berated them, and belittled them in front of their fellow employees. And I have heard whispers of suicides and other things that have happened because of this sort of thing.

In addition, some of his foreign factories are known to employ underage workers, and pay them a pittance, and work them about 15 hours a day, in which they were usually on their feet in an atmosphere without air conditioning in the humid and hot areas of the world.

He also had several amorous liaisons before he got married. He had a daughter out of wedlock when he was younger. He was a user and an advocate of the psychedelic drug

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LSD. He once said of Microsoft founder, Bill Gates, “I wish him the best. I really do. I just think he and Microsoft are a bit narrow. He’d be a broader guy if he would just drop “acid” once, or gone off to an “ashram” when he was younger.” Jobs called his experience with the drug, “One of the two or three most important things I have done in my life.” Jobs himself suggested that LSD may have contributed to the “think different” approach that puts Apple designs ahead of others.

And there is more!

Did you know that he was essentially a miser? At his death, his estate was estimated at 8.3 billion dollars, making him the world’s 110th richest person. But, he gave almost none of it to charity. What would you do with 8.3 billion dollars? Do you think you would be able to drop a little of it off at the Salvation Army bucket? But no, there are no public records of him making *any* charitable contributions. None! In fact, Apple Corporation as a company does not have a charitable contribution-matching program for its employees. He did not even want to give away some of the company’s money to charity.

To give you an idea of the way he operated, financially, way back in 1975 before Apple Computer was founded, he stiffed his friend and future co-founder Steve Wozniak out of a \$5000 bonus that they had received due to *Wozniak’s* work on an Atari program. And Steve never told him until years later that he had pocketed that money. He had only given Wozniak \$350 of it for his work on that program.

Now, I have mentioned these things, not to condemn Steve Jobs, but to bring some balance to our understanding of the man, because he was, like all of us, a mixed bag. He had some good qualities in his life, but he also some bad ones. And if I had chosen anybody else, I could have come up with similar things. Maybe not drugs, or miserliness, but I would have probably found something in there that would cause us to reappraise how good this person was.

Steve Jobs might have been a hero and a success in business, but he was no paragon of virtue. He certainly was not a converted Christian, in fact, as we saw, he rejected Christianity for an eastern religion that totally denies the true God and Christ. So, spiritually, he was just an ordinary man, though a successful one in the business world.

He was a sinner, unredeemed, and without hope in the world. And, that is what Paul says in Ephesians 2. Please turn there, and we will begin the real meat of this sermon here.

Paul, here, sets out the state of all of us before we are called—before Christ comes into

our lives by the calling of the Father. Here, Paul is speaking specifically to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:11-13 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Steve Jobs is only one among billions of people in this same predicament. Just as these Ephesians were in this predicament before God called them, just as we were in this predicament before God called us. Steven Jobs and these billions of others never had God reach down and call them. They were never given the ability to believe the gospel, even though they may have heard bits and pieces of it. They were blinded by the god of this world—Satan the Devil—so that they could not see the truth. It says that in II Corinthians 4:4.

But this holy day, this eighth day of the Feast, this last Sabbath of the cycle of holy days we go through every year, commemorates the time when the blind will see, and be converted.

The Old Testament does not give much ink to this holy day. It merely tells us in Leviticus 23, toward the end of the chapter to keep it as a Sabbath, with a holy convocation on this eighth day of the feast. And, throughout the Old Testament when it is mentioned, it is called The Eighth Day. It is called a Sabbath. It is called a holy convocation.

In Numbers 29 where the sacrifices for each of the holy days are listed, it just says there in verses 35-38 that we are to have a sacred assembly and do no customary work. And, then it adds that we are to give an offering on it. However, there is no elaboration in this passage, or in any other passage in the Old Testament about what this day means, other than what is said about the Feast of Tabernacles as a whole. It always seems like it is always tacked on to the end of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Even in Nehemiah 8 where they were keeping the Feast of Tabernacles, with a joyous celebration because they were learning God's way all over again, making a covenant to do all these things, it only mentions that on the eighth day they had a holy convocation.

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So, we are not given a great deal of information about this day, beyond the fact that it is a part of the Feast of Tabernacles.

So, in general, then, we have to believe that this eighth day continues the theme of the fall harvest; that there is something about this fall harvest that continues on into this time. This fall harvest is called altogether, “The Feast of Ingathering.” I think that is found in Exodus 23:16. We saw today in Ecclesiastes 3, there is time to plant, a time to pluck up, a time to sow, and a time to reap. This is picturing a time of God gathering in His “sheaves” as it were, reaping what He has sown.

Whereas Pentecost, which is called the Feast of Harvest, speaks of a smaller, more intimate harvest in the springtime. We understand it as the spiritual harvest of God’s Firstfruits. We go to certain places like Revelation 14:1-5, and Revelation 20:4-6 which talk about this as God’s Firstfruits—those who take part in the first resurrection.

So, Tabernacles as another harvest season at the end of the year pictures a similar spiritual harvest of gathering in—but this one is much bigger, because at this time of the year, they are bringing in *all* that they have planted throughout the year. It is not just a little bit of grain, but all the other things—the fruits and vegetables and whatnot gathered in and finished at the end of the season. It is the large harvest. We understand it to be harvest of the greater part of mankind. All of mankind that was not in the first resurrection gets an opportunity, here, in the fall harvest.

Please turn to Revelation 20, and see this time as it is prophesied in Revelation to touch base with the New Testament understanding of this day as we have learned it. I will not go into this into any depth, but rather I want to just show it to you and remind you so that we can all be on the same page about what this day means.

Revelation 20:11-13 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

So, we can see a few points here: First of all, I think that the point that comes out most strongly in this is that it is a time of judgment. We have a throne and a Judge here,

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waiting to judge. And then we see that the books were opened, and not only of the record of the people, but also the books by which they will be judged—the criteria by which they should live their lives. And so, they are all here in a time of judgment.

The second thing we notice is that the dead are rising in a resurrection. And, it is not just some of them, but the impression is *all* the rest of the dead. There is another merism in verse 12 where it says, “small and great.” The idea we are supposed to get from that is that not only are the lowest person on earth, but also the greatest, including everyone in between. They all rise from the dead. And of course, it says that as we go on into verse 13 that no part of the earth is left out either. So, it is not just who, but where they happen to be. If they died at sea, they will be raised. And, although it does not specifically say, if they died by being incinerated or if they died from a broken neck falling down a cliff, it does not matter. God will raise them up in this time of resurrection.

So, He will gather these people to a time of judgment at the end. These were people who did not have the opportunity, or who rejected their calling but did not possess the Holy Spirit during this life now. So, this is all those who were unredeemed from this 6000 year period of life on planet Earth.

That, I think, gives you the general understanding of this time There will be a time of judgment in which all people who have not have the opportunity to taste of the good things of God will be given an opportunity to live a life under judgment, and then have the opportunity, of course, for eternal life.

Now, last year, during this holy day, my dad went through the timing of that final Feast of Tabernacles in Jesus Christ’s life. We saw there in John 7:37 that He called the day that He was in at the time, “The last day, that great day of the Feast.” And, He did the living water analogy while the water ceremony was going on.

Well, he showed in his sermons, which I highly recommend if you have any questions regarding how this timing works, he showed that the only way the timing works under any form of calendar, is that the last day, that great day of the Feast, is actually the seventh day of the Feast, not what we have traditionally called the Last Great Day, which is the eighth day of the Feast.

So, this means, then, if you understand what is going on in those chapters, you have chapter 7 being that last day of the Feast, the *seventh* day. Then, the material from John 8 through chapter 9, and on through most of chapter 10, you have today, the *eighth* day. In those chapters, we have what Jesus said, and did on this day. And, what He said and did on this day gives us tremendous clarification about this particular holy day, and this

particular time—the White Throne Judgment. Because what Jesus speaks about on this day in His Word is the gold standard for what this day means in God’s plan.

So, for those of you who have never given a sermon on the Last Great Day, you might not realize what a boon this is to those of us who do, because with just a few things that we have gone through here, is about all that we have ever had to go on, and we have had to move out cautiously from there. But now, we have John 8, 9, and 10 to expound upon, which really opens things up, and helps to clarify things tremendously because of what I just said. What Jesus said and preached about on this day is the gold standard for what this day is all about.

So, please flip back to John 8, and we will be, throughout the rest of this sermon, mostly in John 8 and 9. What I would like to do is give you a survey of chapter 8, and then we will go into specifics on chapter 9. So, whoever gives holy day sermons in the future will not be able to say that I covered everything in this one sermon today. We are actually going to only be concentrating on 9 verses. So, I have left all those other verses—something like 90 other verses that you can look at and pull things from. (Although, it seems like I am always the one giving this sermon!)

What I find here, in chapter 8, is that there is a really neat interesting progression of ideas as you go through this chapter, culminating at the end of chapter 8. I am going to read the verses to you so that we are all on the same page. I want you to see the progression of ideas, because He is setting things up for our understanding of this day.

We still start in verse 10 to save some time because you all know the story of the woman caught in adultery. They bring her there, and they accuse her before Him, and say to Him, “What are you going to do, Jesus, this woman was caught in the very act of adultery?” And, all He says is, “He who is without sin, cast the first stone.” And then, He stoops back down, and writes on the ground. We know that as time progressed, they began to leave, starting with the oldest one, on down to the youngest.

John 8:10-12 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

I read the most significant verses for our purposes today, because the ones before it

just set up the situation. Mostly, we are trying to get to verse 12, because that is the key to almost the whole thing. He is the light of the world, and he who follows Jesus will not walk in darkness but have the light of life.

Notice, then, that Jesus does not condemn her. He just tells her to go live her life, and do not sin. "Sin no more." He does not try to call her, He does not try to convert her; perhaps later on she was converted. I do not know. That would have made an astounding impression on any woman I imagine. It made one on me. But, notice that there is no attempt on His part to call her. He just basically says, "Okay, you can go now. Just be a good person."

And then He says, "I am the light of the world." He is bringing attention on Himself, saying in effect, "I am the way, the truth, and the light." It is all through Him, and, if you want to have eternal life, you have to go through Him. You have to understand the truth that He gives, and you have to follow that truth, and you have to follow Him to eternal life.

So, what I want to show you, what I want you to see in this passage is that this is a scenario that kind of encapsulates life as it is now in this age, that they are religious, and they are going about doing all their things. There is the sinners who are doing their thing. And Jesus comes as the light of the world into the middle of that, and even though He is there, you can see that things just keep on going as they are. He says, "Hey! Here I am! I'm the light of the world! I have come to preach the gospel! I've come to free those who are in bondage! I've come to give sight to the blind," and all those things that He said He had come to do, but life just goes on. There is no calling for these people. She just goes away and leaves the story. Even though her Savior was standing right in front of her, there is no response. Does that not sound typical of this world? And that is the way that it is now.

So, the world is full of sinners, but they are not yet under eternal judgment. That is what Jesus just said. "I'm not going to condemn you." So, this woman was not one of the called, not one of the chosen. And so, she just returned to her life.

But, there is a way to turn and live forever, and that is through Christ. But, these people did not recognize it. They just went on with their lives.

Continuing on: The Pharisees were watching all this, and said,

John 8:13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."

Meaning, "How could you say these things and make all this testimony about who You are, without something to verify it? Nobody's there as your 'second' saying, 'Yes this is true, and I saw Him do this and this, and this is where He came from'", and all that sort of thing because by the mouth of two or three witnesses a thing is established. So, there was only one. He was just saying all these things about Himself, and there was no one to verify His facts.

John 8:14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

He said, "You don't really realize who I am, and what I'm saying. You just have no way of judging this. You don't know that I came from God, and am going to God. This has not penetrated your minds."

John 8:15 You judge according to the flesh; [and this next bit is very important] I judge no one.

Again, He repeats this idea that He is not judging them now.

John 8:16a And yet if I do judge, [if He should decide to go ahead and make judgments] My judgment is true.

He always told the truth. He had the mind of God—He was God! He could make perfectly true judgments!

John 8:16b-18 For I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."

He (the Father) is number 2, the second Witness. So, we get the truth verified, here.

John 8:19a Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?"

“We don’t see Him. Could you please show Him to us? We need to see this other witness.”

John 8:19b Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father.

So He said, “If I brought My Father here, it wouldn’t do any good, because you don’t know Me, and I’m standing here in front of you. So, what good would it do to bring the Father down?”

John 8:19c-20 “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.” These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

So, basically we can boil this section down to two things: (1) People in the world cannot understand without God’s Spirit. They have to have things revealed to them; they have to have a relationship with God, and there was no relationship here. They did not know Christ, they did not know His Father, so they cannot understand the things of God. And, (2) that His Father had His back. That is plenty!

So, He was revealing the Father to them, but they could not understand. But, to Him, that was the greatest thing ever, that He had His Father standing behind Him at all times, helping Him, guiding Him, and giving Him the words to say, and the things to do.

But, mankind in general is cutoff from God, and they do not know the true God, even though He has in some cases revealed Himself through the Bible. They have it at hand, but they still do not know Him.

Now, the next section in verses 21 through 23 speaks about the next step in God’s plan at this point in history.

John 8:21a Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin.

That is a very important concept that we need to understand. It is the key to where we are in prophecy at this point in terms of this holy day, because He is telling them that they will die in their sins—they will die as men, as sinners, as uncalled, and seemingly

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without any hope. And then He says,

John 8:21b "Where I go you cannot come."

Not at this point. They are going to die before it is revealed to them.

John 8:22-23a So the Jews said, "Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come'?" [They totally misunderstood Him.] And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above."

He is showing the difference, here. It is just a radical, total difference between them.

John 8:23b You are of this world; I am not of this world.

We have heard this year that they were under the sun, and they were going to remain under the sun, and they were going to die under the sun. They could not understand anything that was from above the sun. They could not understand anything from heaven. It just was not given to them.

John 8:24 "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

This has been ongoing for the past 2000 years. Anybody who does not believe that Jesus Christ is who He said He was, they died in their sins. A lot of people who have said that they believed, but did not really have the truth, they also died in their sins.

John 8:25-26 Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you [notice that He puts this into the future, down the road], but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."

So, you get the sense from this that He is speaking only the things that He was told to speak at that time. And, it was not for these people. He would deal with them later.

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John 8:27-29 They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."

So, here we have this next step that He had to die as the Messiah, as the Savior and Redeemer of mankind. That was the next step in the plan. He would go away, and they could not follow, because they had not been called. So, they would now have to watch Him die, they would lift Him up. It says, "When you lift Me up," then they would know. It would only be after the time of His death and resurrection that any of them could understand, and some of them were probably called, because some Pharisees were called. But for the most part, mankind does not understand.

So, He tells them, here, that this is what God had planned—the way that God had planned things out That He would come at this time, that He would call very few who would understand, (and they would only understand after He had been dead, and raised again), and they would then understand that He did everything that God told Him to do, that this was the way that it was supposed to work out.

We may not understand it, but this is the way that things would have to go.

Then, we have this section, here, about the truth and freedom. This is important as well.

John 8:30-36 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?" Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Here He says that if you know the truth, the truth shall make you free. And their response is that they had never been in bondage, which is crazy! At that time, they were under bondage to the Romans. They had been in bondage to the Egyptians, to the Philistines, to other Canaanites, to the various other smaller kingdoms around them, to

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the Assyrians, to the Babylonians, to the Persians, and who knows who else. But Jesus kind of skips over all of that, and He says, “You guys have been in bondage to sin since day 1.” That is why He went on, and said, “I say to you, whoever commits sin, is a slave of sin.” He is reiterating, here, that they were a sinful people, and though He does not say it right out, but it is there in the background, “You will die in your sins.”

The only way you cannot die in your sins is if you come to the truth through Jesus Christ, and then, the truth of Jesus Christ, and what He has done for us, and accepting Him as our Savior, will set us free from those sins. And then, we can truly live, truly make choices whether to sin or not to sin. But right now, we are under bondage to sin, and if the choice comes to do good, or to sin, well, 99 percent of the time, we are going to choose to sin, because we really do not know the other way. We really are not free to make that choice, because we need the Holy Spirit, which Christ gives us to truly make those wise and good and free decisions.

So, what He is telling them, here, is that same theme that keeps popping up—you are sinners, and you are going to remain sinners, and the only way that you can come out of that is through Himself. But that has not been given to them at this time.

And then we go to verses 37 through 47. I think we know this section pretty well, so I will not read it.

This section brings in that they are not free, because Satan is their father. They still give their allegiance to Satan. Even though they claim to be Abraham's descendants, really they are following Satan all the time, and not Abraham. If they had been following Abraham, well they would have welcomed Jesus with open arms, because that is what Abraham would have done. Abraham had a relationship with Him. They ate together. They talked together. And so, they were showing by their rejection of Jesus that Abraham was not their father. They were following their father, Satan the Devil, because they were doing his works and children do the works of their father.

So, He was telling them then, here, that Satan's influence is a huge factor in why this world cannot be saved right now. He is still around, and has millions of children that are following him slavishly. And, right now is not the time, because it will be so much better if we can get him out of the way, and then God can work on these people without Satan's influence. And that is what it is going to take. The huge bulk of humanity will only find salvation when Satan is out of the way.

Now the climax:

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John 8:48-51 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges. Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

Now He gives them, very clearly, the way out. He gives them how things can turn around for them. They just have to believe in the Son of God, hear His Word, and keep it (obviously), and "You will not have to die." Not that second death. Because His power is greater than death.

John 8:52a Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead.

You know how they held Abraham up. They put him way up on a pedestal. As a human being, maybe rightly so. He was a great man. He was faithful and righteous. But, he was dead. Do you understand how this angered them? Because Jesus is basically saying that if they keep His Word, they will not die. But, Abraham is dead. So, obviously Abraham missed the boat! And, he will remain dead. They did not understand. They did not understand the power of Jesus Christ over death. So, they took what He said as meaning Abraham is forever lost.

John 8:52b-53 Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?"

Now, if they had been smart, had they even an inkling of God's Spirit, they should have been able to figure this out, because He was telling them plainly who He was, and who He was making Himself out to be.

John 8:54-55a Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him.

He is telling them that their religion is all wet. If religion is a way to God, and a way to

understand God, then He is telling them, "You don't know squat, because your religion didn't teach you about the Father!" And then He said that they did not even know Him, the God who had been working with their people through thousands of years. They did not know Him, they did not know the Father, they did not know anything! They were making wrong judgments, coming to wrong conclusions; they had everything upside down and twisted around. And here they were trying to kill Him for telling them the truth. But, they were deceived by Satan the Devil; it just was not their time.

John 8:55-57 "Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." [He is telling them the truth, straightening them out.] Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

They kept thinking of Him as a physical man. And He had been telling them, and telling them, and telling them, that He was more than that. "I am from above," He said. "I am not of this world." He said He was of the Father. And, they should have been understanding that He was God's Son. He was a direct representative from heaven—from God's throne. They kept missing the point.

Jesus said, "Let me set this up for you"—here they had not gotten it, even though He had said it fairly plainly, He said, "I'm just going to go straight to the truth."

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you [with all the righteous verity He could bring to the situation], before Abraham was, I AM."

"You thick-headed people!" He said to them, "I am your God." "I knew Abraham. I created this earth and everything in it."

John 8:59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

I think that it is interesting, there, that He immediately showed His power by being able to disappear from their sight. We do not know how He did it. It just says, that He was suddenly not there—right in the middle of them. Did they need more proof of who He was, and what the plan was, and how to have eternal life? He laid it all out for them, but

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they were blind to it all. They did not see anything that He said! They did not grasp it. They did not understand it. He tried to tell them this, and then He came at it from this other way, and then from another way, and then from underneath, and then upside down, and around; they still could not get it—because they did not have what it takes to understand. They were blind, like everyone in this world who has not been called, who has not been given the power to understand.

So if John 8 is the doctrinal portion of Jesus' teaching on this day, it is John 9 where it is played out practically. We will not go through all of John 9, because that is quite long. We would be here until sunset. But, I think that John 9:1-9 is a nice illustration of what we have just gone through in chapter 8.

The healing of the man born blind, leading to his conversion, and also the reaction of the Pharisees and the parents (which we will not get into, all illustrates these points that we have just gone through.

Humanity is blind from birth. And following Jesus' instruction is the only way to come to understanding, belief, and conversion to eternal life. That is what is brought out here.

We would also see if we were to go through all of chapter 9 that even the most religious, even the Israelites do not believe, and their sins remain. If we were to go to Ezekiel 37, and the Valley of Dry Bones, we would see that most of Israel is going to come up in that resurrection and be made physical again, given a chance by having God's Spirit given to them to understand and have eternal life. But, the vast majority of humanity does not believe, and their sin remains. All of this suggests a future judgment of the dead, just as we have understood this day to mean.

Let us read John 9. I chose this particular section because I thought it was really interesting, and I think it makes the point. Notice as we start verse 1 that it begins as chapter 8 ended—"Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." Immediately in chapter 9, Now as Jesus passed by. .

John purposely put these two chapters together so that we know that the events of chapter 8 lead directly into the events of chapter 9. They are linked, they on the same day, and the same subject.

John 9:1-9 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor

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his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he."

Okay, that is all we need to understand what is going on here. There are several details that I want to point out that supports our understanding of this eighth day of the Feast. It is amazing to me how these things keep popping up through this section. Here we see it in illustration.

John 9:1 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.

I have already told you about the definite link between chapter 8 and chapter 9. So, this is a clue from John that we are to keep thinking along the same lines we were thinking about in chapter 8, such as Jesus saying, "I am the light of the world," "You are going to die in your sins," "Your father the Devil has blinded you, blindly following him now," and such things as that. Also, the fact that there would be a future time when they would understand.

We also have the man blind from birth introduced to us. Jesus, over these past—however long it took; maybe an hour or two for this whole of chapter 8 to take place—He had been arguing with a whole crowd of people who had been blind from birth. They were blind to their bondage, blind to Him, blind to the truth, blind to the Father, and blind to all the ways that the Father works. And, as much as He tried to explain things to them, they could not get it. They remained blind. In fact, that is how chapter 9 ends with Him saying that they are still in their sins; they remain blind, because they asked Him, "Are we blind too," and He said, "Yup."

So, what we have in the man blind from birth," is what we could call a representative from the crowd, because he was not too far away. Jesus had slipped out of the sight of those in the crowd, and in slipping out, he stumbles across this blind man, because it says, "As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth."

Blind people tend to have very good hearing. How much was this blind beggar man listening to Jesus and His dispute with these people? I do not know. It could have been. He was around. But, like I said, we need to take him as a representative of that crowd of people, because he is as blind physically as they are blind spiritually.

John 9:2-3 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.

It is very interesting how Jesus answers this question. As a bit of background, the Jews thought that all these forms of sickness and disease occurred because of sin. So, the disciples' question was a natural one. "Whose sin resulted in this blindness? Was it the parent's sin? What did they do wrong to make this man born blind? Or was it something the blind man did?" That is kind of funny because it says that he was born blind. That would have meant that he would have sinned before he was even born.

I have read somewhere that they said that the Jews had this belief of a transmigration of the soul by this point, and that it was like he had sinned while he was in another body before he was born into this body. (This is really weird.) But, the Jews by this time had come up with some really strange concepts because of the influence of Greek thought. It could be that this was one of those things popping up in this question.

But, Jesus' answer is that this incident was planned by God a long time ago. "Neither this man, nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in Him." He is saying, here, much like what my dad was saying in his sermon earlier, that God has things timed out, planned out, from a long time before, and He is working these things out in order to bring forth the revelation personally, and in this case universally to all of us. He had put this man in that circumstance in this place at this time, so that God could reveal His works to the world. This is how He is going to help the world see.

So, this was no "blind" chance (pardon the pun) that this man happened to be there at this time when Jesus was passing by. This was planned from a long time ago.

John 9:4-5 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

This is the second time that He has said in these two chapters that He is the light of the world. He is pressing this point home. It is only through Him that one could have light and see; one can understand and see. It was Jesus' task to do what God had commanded Him to do, and this was one of them, and, He was going to do it. He would reveal, by this miracle, by this healing, a necessary truth no matter what it cost Him with the authorities. Remember, this was a Sabbath day. And the Pharisees were watching. In later sections they say, "This man healed on the Sabbath. How could He be a righteous man? Only a sinner would try to heal on the Sabbath!"

So, He said, "I must do these works while I have the opportunity, because the night is coming." He was going to be crucified soon. He had said that in the previous chapter, and these things had to be done in order to reveal the truth to His people. He was going to get to it no matter what it cost Him.

We should also notice, here, and just think of this, that He does not say, "I am the light of the church," or "I am the light of the Firstfruits," or "I am the light of those specially called out ones," but He says, "I am the light of the world." He is speaking universally, not just to those specific ones that He is working with. He has expanded it out to the whole world. Is that not what this day is all about, giving salvation to the whole world?

Now, verse 6 is where it really gets interesting.

John 9:6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

Why did He use His own spit and make clay? There was plenty of water in the temple area. Could He not have just cupped His hands at one of the fountains, and brought it over there, and made some clay from the ground? But no, He used His own spit—his own saliva. This has puzzled commentators for ages. If you go into the commentaries you will find them arguing about this all the time about what it means. But, I think we, knowing the truth of this day, can come up with a better idea.

The juxtaposition of God kneeling down, and making clay tells me one thing—He wanted us to think about creation. What did He do in creation? It does not say that He used His own saliva, but it does say that He took of the dust of the ground, like this, and He made a man. And of course, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he lived.

But, notice that He does not use breath, here. He uses His own saliva. It is a water of

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the body, as it were. It came from Him into this clay, which He molded and placed upon the eyes of the blind man so that He could see.

To me this relates perfectly to what is happening here. What we see is God taking some of the dust of the ground, and making a healed body. I think this is an allusion to the resurrection; that He is making a new body for this person. He infuses it with His own saliva, a liquid from His own body, which I think is not only supposed to be life, but it is supposed to give us ideas of His Spirit—that He is putting something of Himself, now, into this new creation. The old has passed away. Now, He is making something new. He wants us to put these two things together, that the creation and making a new man, and this opening up of the eyes, are going to be brought together in a time in the future so that men can see.

So, I think what this is, is an allusion to the general resurrection, giving these people a new body and a new spirit. When that occurs, conditions will be right for blind humanity to see and be converted. But, it will take a new creation—a new body, a new mind.

This is what Martin read earlier, I believe; found in Revelation 21:5, “Behold, I make all things new.” That is what He is going to have to do with all humanity.

Now, Jesus did not do just that, he required something of the man, too.

John 9:7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

What He did was He required the man to do something. It was not all Jesus' putting the mud on his eyes, and saying, “Voila, here you are, you have your sight.” He made the man go through the paces, literally, walk to the Pool of Siloam, which was a fair distance away. It was close by, but the man still had to walk a ways. And, being a blind man, that was asking much of him, if you ask me. But, He required him to obey His command, and then He required him to cleanse Himself—to wash the mud off. And that he did, and this implies conversion. Now, the interesting part to me in all of this is that He sent him to the Pool of Siloam.

Do you remember my sermons on the Garden of Eden? Siloam appears there, in a way. So, I believe this is another allusion to the Garden of Eden, and a new creation. You see, the Pool of Siloam is where the waters of Gihon Spring collected in Jesus' time.

If you know the story, that spring was outside the walls of Jerusalem, and it made

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Jerusalem vulnerable under siege. So King Hezekiah dug a tunnel to bring that spring inside the city walls. And when he did that, he made a pool for the water to collect in. That pool in Jesus' time was named the Pool of Siloam.

So here, you have the waters of Eden—Gihon Spring, it is called the Gihon river in Genesis 2—which, by the way, means “bursting,” or “gushing,” or something like that. It means that there is a lot of water there. It is just bursting forth, giving you an idea of the Holy Spirit and how that water is going to come out, as it says in John 7:38, “He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of His heart will flow rivers of living water.’” That is the idea that we get, here, from the Gihon Spring, and the Pool of Siloam—this water is rushing, bubbling, it is surging.

And, He made him wash in that water and be cleansed.

So, I think these references allude to a time of healing and conversion in an atmosphere like it was in the Eden before Adam sinned. It is interesting that He sent him to Siloam, and the name Siloam is translated as “sent.” This is what Jesus was sent to do. And, He sends others to do this. What it shows is that it all goes through Jesus Christ.

John 9:8-9 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he."

What this does after all this has taken place—the man has been anointed with the clay; he has been told to go; he has gone; he has cleansed himself; he has come back. And his neighbors and those who had known him previously see him and say, “This is a changed man! He who was once blind can now see.”

He was so different. His demeanor was so different. The way that he walked was so different. The way he looked was so different, that some of them did not even recognize him. He was such a changed man.

Is that not what conversion does? It changes, not the way we look necessarily, but it does change the way we act, and should change the way we think, and that is what these people saw. They saw that this man was new. He was different. He was better. And this is how it is going to be in the lives of billions of people in the time that He is speaking about here, or alluding to.

This is the wonderful change that we are looking forward to in all of humanity in the

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Great White Throne Judgment, when even their friends and neighbors, and their own family will not be able to recognize these people because they are now converted. They think more like God does.

And we see, here—drop down to verse 35:

John 9:35-39 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" [He had never seen Him before.] And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." [And notice this wonderful response:] Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.

He got it! He was converted. He recognized the Son. And he accepted Him as his Savior and God.

This is what we are looking forward to when this day is fulfilled.

Let us finish in John 10.

John 10:14-16 "I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep [He is giving us these themes once again]. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

We have always read this in the past to say that the other sheep were the Gentiles, and this fold were the Israelites, because He was speaking to the Jews, here.

But I do not think that is what it really means. I think what He is saying, here, looking at it a couple of different ways, but in terms of the Last Great Day, I think He is saying, "Look! I've got a whole world of sheep that I need to bring into one fold, and they will all be under Me, the One Shepherd." But that is not for a long, long time in the future. He had another flock that He had to work with first, and then He would have the flock in the Millennium, and then He will have the worldwide flock when all of humanity will be brought into His fold forever.