

OH BE CAREFUL LITTLE EYES! : PART 1

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Oh Be Careful Little Eyes What You See, Scriptural Basis For The Song, Our Eyes Are A Window To Temptation, Adam And Eve, John's Warning, Worldly Enticements, Moses' Example, Keep The Heavenly Vision, Resist Satan's Tactics, Paul's Battles With The Flesh, Flesh Versus The Spirit, Mental Battle And Controlling Our Thoughts, Fall Of The Sons Of God, Judah And Tamar, Samson And Delilah, David And Bathsheba, 51st Psalm, God's Mercy And Forgiveness Is Our One And Only Hope

Many of my Christian readers will undoubtedly be familiar with the following traditional song entitled "Oh Be Careful Little Eyes", as it has been a Sunday School favorite for many decades. While there are a number of variations to this song, this is the one with which I am familiar:

Oh be careful little eyes, what you see
Oh be careful little eyes, what you see
For the Father up above is looking down in tender love
So be careful little eyes, what you see.

Oh be careful little ears, what you hear
Oh be careful little ears, what you hear
For the Father up above is looking down in tender love
So be careful little ears, what you hear.

Oh be careful little tongue, what you say
Oh be careful little tongue, what you say
For the Father up above is looking down in tender love
So be careful little tongue, what you say.

Oh be careful little hands, what you do
Oh be careful little hands, what you do
For the Father up above is looking down in tender love
So be careful little hands, what you do.

Oh be careful little feet, where you go

Oh be careful little feet, where you go
For the Father up above is looking down in tender love
So be careful little feet, where you go.

While I was unable to trace the origin of this song via the Internet, I would venture to say that its author was more than likely inspired to write it after reading such verses as the following:

"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil."

Proverbs 4:25-27, KJV

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Proverbs 15:3, KJV

"Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh."

James 3:5-12, KJV

While the words to "Oh Be Careful Little Eyes" are rather simple in nature, in light of the previous verses, it is easy to see that this song contains some rather profound truths, which we would all be wise to live by. Sadly, some things are more easily said than done; even such simple things as watching what we look at, being careful where we go, and guarding our tongues against speaking evil. These problems with our sinful human nature are by no means new. They have been around for millennia. In fact, they've been around since God first placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of

Eden. It is there where we shall begin the main discourse of this series.

The eyes. Oh the eyes! How often we let them get us into trouble, and cause us to sin! Adam and Eve certainly found this out the hard way, and we have been paying for their mistakes ever since. Of course, we can't blame it all on them, because we have each done our part to further lay sin upon sin; and quite often, it begins with just a simple look, or a quick glance. Satan was obviously aware of this human weakness, and that is why in Genesis chapter three we find the following sad scene:

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

Genesis 3:6, KJV

Oh yes; Satan knew how to trap the First Pair. He knew how to get to their pride and vanity; right through their eyes! That is why the Apostle John so clearly warns us to beware of the subtle tactics used by that demon of darkness when he writes the following. Please notice that one of the three big tactics that Satan uses, includes the lust of the eyes:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:15-16, KJV

Who can possibly deny that in our modern society, the world is indeed ruled by crafty big businessmen who have relied upon Satan's "Big Three" -- that is, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- in order to entice and enslave humanity in their plastic, hedonistic, temporal, materialistic world of the flesh? From sunrise to sunset, we are all constantly being bombarded with Satan's enticements via the radio, via the television set, via books and magazines, via movies and videos, via billboards, via the Internet, and by any other means possible.

Just think about it. We are constantly being told that we can drive the best car, we can have the best-paying job, we

can live in the biggest house, we can attract the prettiest girl, we can have the best looks, we can be all that we can be, if we will simply bow down, and allow ourselves to be enslaved by Satan's worldly, materialistic system.

Sadly, many people, including many Christians, have fallen for these satanic lies, and they have bitten the bullet so-to-speak. Modern Christianity has in large part become a farce, in which status quo is deemed more important than true Godly worship and living. Many Christians, beginning with their worldly leaders and shepherds, have compromised their faith, in order to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; but it was not so with Moses, as we see here:

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward."
Hebrews 11:24-26, KJV

In fact, as I point out in other articles, such as in "The Heavenly Vision: Have You Got It?", all of the Patriarchs of old maintained their eyes and vision on the Heavenly Goal, and they did not allow themselves to become bogged down by the things of this current world. Again, consider this set of verses:

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."
Hebrews 11:13-16, KJV

In reading the Epistles, we discover that the Apostle Paul was by no means ignorant of Satan's subtle tactics. In his Epistle to the Corinthian brethren, and then also to the brethren at Ephesus, Paul writes as follows:

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not

ignorant of his devices."

2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

"Neither give place to the devil."

Ephesians 4:27, KJV

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

The Apostle James likewise offers us a sound admonition regarding our spiritual warfare when he writes thusly:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

James 4:7, KJV

So it isn't that we don't know any better, it is just that we are so weak when it comes to resisting the temptations of the flesh; and we are not alone. The Bible is filled with examples of men of God who yielded to their fleshly desires. Even the Apostle Paul admits that fighting the old man of the flesh was not always an easy task for him. On at least one particular occasion, he was frustrated with his losing battle against sin and the weaknesses of his flesh; and thus he was prompted to write the following lines:

"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Romans 7:15-25, KJV

Returning to Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthian brethren, he also wrote the following lines:

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
1 Corinthians 9:26-27, KJV

In writing to the brethren at Galatia, Paul again brought up this very same point, and described the continual battle which we must all fight, as our flesh wages unending warfare against the Spirit, and the Spirit wars against our flesh:

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Galatians 5:16-25, KJV

As I noted a moment ago, quite often these temptations of the flesh begin with a simple look, or a quick glance. That is all it takes for Satan to plant the seed of temptation in our hearts and minds; and as I have mentioned before, it is in our minds where the real battle is being waged. Thus, Paul was also inspired to write the following:

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"
2 Corinthians 10:5, KJV

When we fail to control our thoughts, and allow our eyes to wander, sooner or later we will fall to temptation if we are not careful. While we have already briefly examined the Fall of Adam and Eve, let us now take a look at some of the other stories which are found in the Old Testament. While Adam and Eve lusted after knowledge and power, these are not the only things which can lead us to sin. In Genesis chapter six, we discover that a desire for sex lead to a great rebellion in Heaven, and ultimately resulted in the condemnation of the Angelic Sons of God. Consider the following scene:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

Genesis 6:1-4, KJV

Did you notice what caused the downfall of the Sons of God? Moses tells us that they "saw the daughters of men that they were fair". So again, those Angelic Beings sinned with their eyes. They lusted with their eyes; which the Apostle John said we are simply not to do. That is what eventually led to their rebellion against God. If you would like to read more about this particular topic, please refer to articles such as "The Book of Enoch: Truth or Heresy?", "Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis", "The Judgment of Angels, Demons and Men" and "Sex, a Bowl of Soup, and the Nature of Angels". You will find all them listed at the end of this same series.

Ironically, in His Wisdom, God even knows how to use our human weaknesses of the flesh for His Glory. I have shared before the story concerning Judah and Tamar. As I point out in the series "My God Is a Shocker", the Bible tells us that Judah's son, Onan, selfishly ejaculated on the ground. That is to say, he spilled his semen on the ground, because he did not want to impregnate Tamar, who was the widowed wife of his deceased brother. According to the Levitical Law, Onan was obligated to marry Tamar, in order that the family line might continue. Consider the following group of verses:

"And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also."

Genesis 38:8-10, KJV

We are next told that Judah had one more younger son named Shelah; who by law, should have become Tamar's next husband. However, out of fear that he too might die, Judah refused to give him to Tamar when he was grown, even though Judah had given Tamar his word that she would have Shelah for her new husband. So what did persistent Tamar do? She pretended to be a prostitute in order to entice Judah -- who was her own father-in-law -- into having sex with her. Judah fell for her charm, and this resulted in the birth of Pharez and Zarah, one of whom was an ancestor of Jesus Christ, as well as an ancestor of all of the Judean kings. Following are some of the key verses from the story:

"And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep. And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a vail, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife. When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face. And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it? And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him."

Genesis 38:13-18, KJV

So do you see how God went about fulfilling His purpose? He actually used Judah's own sexual urge against him. He used Judah's lust of the eyes in order to trick him into doing His Will, so that the Judean line would continue, and Jesus Christ would ultimately be born in the distant future.

Of course, we know that Judah was not the only womanizer we

find in the pages of the Old Testament. It also seems that Israel's famous strongman, Samson, likewise could not keep his eyes off of those pretty women. The only problem was that those women were not Israelites. They were in fact of the camp of the enemy -- that is, the Philistines -- and Samson's lust for foreign feminine flesh caused no small consternation for his parents. Consider part of the story concerning Samson's wife who was from Timnath:

"And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel."

Judges 14:1-4, KJV

Several chapters later, following the "jawbone of an ass" episode, we again find Samson's wandering eyes getting him into trouble with his enemies. This time, the object of his passion is a harlot who lives amongst the Gazites, as we see by the following group of verses:

"Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron."

Judges 16:1-3, KJV

In spite of the serious trouble which his lust of the eyes had already caused him, Samson just kept on yielding to the desires of his flesh. Ultimately, it led to not only his own downfall, but to the literal downfall of the Philistine's temple dedicated to their false Dagon as well, in which over

three thousand Philistines were celebrating at the time. As many of you will already know, these events transpired as a result of Samson's infatuation with a beautiful woman of the Philistines by the name of Delilah, who was secretly bribed by the lords of the Philistines, as we see by these verses:

"And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver."

Judges 16:4-5, KJV

After much pleading, Samson eventually revealed the secret of his seven locks of hair to Delilah; and once his strength had departed from him, he was overcome by the Philistines, his eyes were plucked out, and he was taken as a prisoner to Gaza, where he worked as a slave in the prison house, as we see by the following verse:

"But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

Judges 16:21, KJV

While the writer of the Book of Judges tells us that all of these things occurred according to the Will of God, in order to punish the Philistines, I can't help but wonder if there might not be some deeper lesson to be learned here. I find it rather significant that Samson's greatest weakness was his lust of the eyes, and in the end, he lost both of them. While I believe that Jesus was speaking in a symbolic sense in the following verse, and was referring to the individual members of the Body of Christ, we can draw an interesting parallel between what Jesus states, and what occurred with Samson:

"And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."

Matthew 18:9, KJV

As we have seen, the Bible is filled with stories of men who were both great leaders, as well as great sinners. Perhaps the one with whom most people are probably familiar, is King

David. We find the king's tragic story of his illicit affair with the beautiful Bathsheba, and his murderous attempt to conceal his crime, in the eleventh chapter of the Second Book of Samuel:

"And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house. And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child. And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered. And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king. But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house. And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house? And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow. And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house. And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also."

2 Samuel 11:2-17, KJV

As I point out in other articles, David's sins did not remain hidden, and the Lord eventually used the Prophet Nathan to expose David's folly, and to bring him to a point of repentance. Sadly, David and Bathsheba did have to pay a great price for their lustful desires. Not only did they lose the child, but as a result of David's sins, the Lord cursed David's family with war and treason until the very end. Consider the following group of verses:

". . . But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD . . . Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."

2 Samuel 11:27, 12:9-14, KJV

Exactly which commandments was the Lord referring to in the previous verses? Undoubtedly, it was probably these ones:

"Thou shalt not kill . . . Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

Exodus 20:13, 17, KJV

Ironically, while David and his family suffered because of his sins, many Believers have been blessed since that time, because David's great repentance resulted in one of the most heart-felt Psalms that David ever wrote. That is, his Psalm of repentance -- Psalm 51 -- which I share with you below:

"[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.]

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

Psalm 51:1-19, KJV

How many of us can identify with such a beautiful Psalm, written at a time when David had been greatly humbled, and his sins had been utterly exposed before the Lord. But, where there is great repentance, there is also great Mercy and great Forgiveness from the Lord. For as it is written:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed,
because his compassions fail not. They are new every
morning: great is thy faithfulness."

Lamentations 3:22-23, KJV

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth
them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth
that we are dust."

Psalms 103:13-14, KJV

In spite of his serious sins, to this day, King David is
recognized as one of the greatest kings of ancient Israel.
Not only that, but God found him worthy to be an ancestor of
Jesus Christ. What an honor indeed! Moreover, this example
of God's Mercy and Forgiveness towards David gives us all
hope, that no matter how bad we have been, no matter how
many sins we have committed, we can still find forgiveness,
if we will only return to the Lord with a truly repentant
heart.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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OH BE CAREFUL LITTLE EYES! : PART 2

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King Herod's Birthday Party Dance And John The Baptist, Job
King David And King Solomon's Pledge, Guard Your Eyes From
Evil And Avoid Temptations, We Are All Sinners Before God,
We Have No Righteousness Of Our Own, Our Loss Of Spiritual
Vision, Breaking Our Spiritual Communion With God, Light Of
The Body, Diseased Vision, Spiritual Blindness Of The Jews,
Jesus Christ Is The Great Light And Light Of The Gentiles,
Most Jews Rejected Christ And Chose To Remain In Darkness

Continuing our discussion from part one, while we have now discussed some of the great men of the Old Testament who yielded to the sin of the lust of the eyes, they were not the only ones. Turning to the New Testament, we discover that it was as a result of evil King Herod's lust for his very own daughter-in-law, which climaxed at a birthday party where the lovely lady performed a very sexy dance, that John the Baptist lost his head -- at evil Herodias' insistence -- after John had called out King Herod's sin of adultery with Herodias. Consider what we are told concerning this event in the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew:

"But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus."
Matthew 14:6-12, KJV

As you can see, King Herod allowed his eyes to wander from his wife, to his beautiful daughter-in-law. It was his eyes which first got him into trouble. He yielded to the lust of his eyes, which is exactly what the Apostle John advised us not to do. So pleased by his daughter-in-law's dance, Herod made a proud boast. This was exactly the opening Herodias was waiting for. Thus, she used the incident to rid herself of John the Baptist once and for all. I am also reminded of something rather interesting which was stated by both the Patriarch Job and by King David. Likewise, Solomon offers us a word of wisdom regarding watching where we place our eyes. Consider the following set of verses:

"I MADE A COVENANT WITH MINE EYES; why then should I think upon a maid? . . . If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her. For this is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges."
Job 31:1, 9-11, KJV

"I WILL SET NO WICKED THING BEFORE MINE EYES: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me . . . Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me."

Psalms 101:3, 6, KJV

"LET THINE EYES LOOK RIGHT ON, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil."

Proverbs 4:25-27, KJV

In part one I mentioned how we must each control our very thoughts and not let them wander. In the previous verses we see how both Job and King David made the very same decision regarding their eyes. They each chose to guard their eyes from evil, and we must all likewise do the very same thing. We must not only control our thoughts, but we must control our eyes as well, and make the decision to not yield to any temptation in any way. Allow me to remind you of a verse I shared with you in part one of this series:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

Based on the original Hebrew word that is used in the verse from the Book of Job, when Job says that he made a covenant with his eyes, it means that he made an agreement or pledge with his eyes that he would not think upon a maid. By itself, this verse seems a little cryptic. However, by reading verses nine and ten, we see exactly what Job is referring to. Being as he is a married man, Job is saying that he will guard his eyes so that he does not fall to temptation -- by looking at another woman -- and thus sin by committing adultery. Job's wife should have been thankful. After all, she did tell Job to curse God and die.

So whether they be good or evil, we have seen that a number of Biblical personalities yielded to the lust of their eyes. And, each time that they made that mistake, they fell into some form of serious trouble as well. From Adam and Eve, to the Fallen Angels, to Samson, to King David, to King Solomon,

to King Herod, and others whom I have not even mentioned in this series, they all placed their eyes on the wrong thing, and it bore bad fruit in the end. Now lest we begin to think in our pride that perhaps we are not quite as bad as they were, or maybe not quite as guilty as they were, let us not forget the words of our Lord who said the following in the Gospels:

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, THAT WHOSOEVER LOOKETH ON A WOMAN to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."
Matthew 5:27-28, KJV

". . . He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."
John 8:7, KJV

So as you can plainly see, all it takes is just one lustful look, and whether we have realized it or not, we have in fact already sinned, as far as God is concerned. Truly then, as the Scriptures make so very clear, we are all sinners who are saved only by the Grace and Mercy of God, through faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We cannot possibly boast of possessing any righteousness of our own; because to do so is in direct contradiction to the Scriptures. Consider the following group of verses which confirm this very point:

". . . They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good . . . They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."
Psalm 14:1, 3, KJV

"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"
Psalm 130:3, KJV

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:"
Malachi 3:2, KJV

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

Isaiah 64:6, KJV

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 5:20, KJV

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Luke 18:9-14, KJV

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Romans 3:10, 23, KJV

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

While we have thus far discussed the sin of lusting with our eyes, and the serious consequences which can result from it, the Bible speaks of another sin which we can commit with our eyes. I am not referring to our physical eyes, but rather to our spiritual eyes. I am referring to the loss of spiritual vision. In the Book of Proverbs we find the following very interesting verse:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Proverbs 29:18, KJV

Obviously, the writer is not simply speaking of physical vision, being as losing one's physical vision does not necessarily result in death. It is for this reason that he clarifies his statement by adding "he that keepeth the law, happy is he". In the original Hebrew, the word that we see translated in the previous verse as "vision" is "chazown". Pronounced khaw-zone', one of the meanings of this word is divine communication.

In other words, when we take our eyes off of the Lord; when we withdraw ourselves from spiritual communion with Him; when we neglect God's Word and fail to live by it; then we truly do become spiritually blind -- we lose the vision -- and we are headed for serious trouble if we do not straighten out quickly. Isn't this exactly what happened to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? They broke their spiritual communion with the Lord when they chose to listen to Satan's lies instead. They took their eyes off of the Lord, and they lusted after the fruit which Satan had promised them would make them as wise as gods. They broke God's Laws, and they soon suffered for it, and we have also been suffering for it ever since.

Some four thousand years later, Jesus would explain to His listeners the importance of maintaining our spiritual vision, and keeping our eyes on Heaven. In one of His sermons which we find in the Gospel of Luke, the Lord said the following:

"The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness."

Luke 11:34, KJV

It is interesting to note that in the previous verse, in the original Koine Greek language, the word "single" is derived from the word "haplous". Pronounced hap-looce', this word likewise means whole or sound. In similar fashion, the word "evil" is derived from the Greek word "poneros". Pronounced pon-ay-ros', this word means to be diseased or blind. In other words, Jesus appears to be telling His listeners that when our spiritual eyes are no longer sound; when they are in fact diseased and our vision has become impaired; we can become spiritually blind, so that we will end up walking in darkness. Having now better understood what Jesus meant by the above verse, it is also much easier to understand some of the other things He said throughout the four Gospels in regards to the spiritual deafness and blindness of the Jews.

Even Jesus' own followers were very slow at understanding. Consider the following sample verses:

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

Matthew 13:10-16, KJV

"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Matthew 15:14, KJV

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."

Matthew 23:16, 24, KJV

"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness [blindness] of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."

Mark 3:5, KJV

"And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread. And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and

do ye not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?"

Mark 8:15-21, KJV

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

John 9:39-41, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

John 12:37-40, KJV

As you can see from the previous set of verses, the Prophet Isaiah was fully aware of the spiritual darkness, deafness and blindness which would envelop the ancient people of Israel. Jesus even quoted from Isaiah's prophetic book. Yet, at the same time, Isaiah likewise saw the day when a "Great Light" would suddenly appear in the land of Israel; and as one of the Lord's seers, he wrote about both of these events quite plainly in verses such as the following:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."

Isaiah 6:8-10, KJV

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Isaiah 8:19-20, KJV

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God."

Isaiah 50:10, KJV

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."

Isaiah 60:2, KJV

"Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

Isaiah 42:5-7, KJV

"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

Isaiah 49:6, KJV

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

Isaiah 9:2, KJV

"And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day;"

Isaiah 10:17, KJV

As we all know, Jesus was, and is, that Great Light, of whom the Prophet Isaiah wrote, and of whom John also spoke at the very beginning of his Gospel. Jesus was, and is, the Light of the world, who not only restored sight to the physically blind, but who also restores sight to the spiritually blind as well. He is the Light of the Gentiles, and the Light of all people everywhere, if they'll simply humble themselves, renounce all their false beliefs, and embrace Him. The Lord, and other people in the Scriptures, made this truth quite plain in verses such as the following:

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness . . . That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

John 1:4-5, 9, KJV

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light . . . I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

John 12:35-36, 46, KJV

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

Acts 13:46-47, KJV

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

Acts 26:22-23, KJV

"Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:"

Psalms 104:2, KJV

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for

brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

Isaiah 60:19-20, KJV

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."

Revelation 21:23-25, KJV

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

Revelation 22:16, KJV

So Jesus was in fact the Great Light who shone in the midst of darkness; that is, in the midst of the spiritual darkness of His very own Jewish brethren who refused to receive Him as their Messiah. Even though Jesus came not just to restore physical blindness, but more importantly to heal the people of their spiritual blindness and give them spiritual sight, as well as an opportunity to gain true Salvation, sadly, as we have already seen, many of His listeners not only did not understand Him, but they in fact stubbornly rejected Him as their promised Messiah as well. Furthermore, they knowingly chose to remain in spiritual darkness. This becomes evident by verses such as the following:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"

Luke 4:18, KJV

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Isaiah 53:3, KJV

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head

stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

Psalms 118:22-23, KJV

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Matthew 21:42, KJV

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Mark 8:31, KJV

"And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Mark 12:10-11, KJV

"Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

Luke 9:22, KJV

"But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation."

Luke 17:25, KJV

"And the light shineth in darkness; and THE DARKNESS COMPREHENDED IT NOT . . . He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and THE WORLD KNEW HIM NOT. HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN, AND HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT."

John 1:5, 10-11, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, YET THEY BELIEVED NOT ON HIM:"

John 12:37, KJV

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

John 3:19-20, KJV

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

Acts 4:11, KJV

"And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Acts 28:25-27, KJV

"(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day . . . For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Romans 11:8, 25, KJV

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."

2 Corinthians 3:14-15, KJV

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:3-4, KJV

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Ephesians 4:18, KJV

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed [that is disapproved, rejected, repudiated] indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

1 Peter 2:4-8, KJV

Please go to part three for the conclusion of this series.

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OH BE CAREFUL LITTLE EYES! : PART 3

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Jesus' Secret Disciples: Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimaethea, Gamaliel Urges Caution, Many Priests Embrace The New Faith, Saul Of Tarsus Persecutes The Christian Church, The Apostle Paul's Dramatic Conversion, The Lord's Loving Chastisements, Scales Fall From Paul's Eyes: Leviathan And Scales Of Pride, Self-Righteousness Versus God's True Righteousness By Christ, God Sent Paul To Open The Eyes Of Spiritually Blind People, Paul's Concern For The Spiritual Blindness Of Israel, Promise And Anointing Of Holy Spirit, We Are Temples Of Holy Spirit, People Are Spiritually Blind To God's Truth Without The Holy Spirit, Keep Your Eyes Steadfast On Jesus, Your Invitation To Salvation, Some Closing Remarks, BBB Suggested Reading List

Continuing our discussion from part two, while the Bible is clear in emphasizing the point that many of the religious elders remained spiritually blind until the very afternoon that Jesus was crucified at the place known as Golgotha, it also indicates that a few Jews who belonged to the religious hierarchy -- such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimaethea for example -- were secret Disciples who accepted that Jesus was in fact the promised Messiah. And yet others, while they may not have been outright Disciples, they still maintained a guarded position insofar as persecuting the young, new Church was concerned. For example, in the Book of Acts, we find the Pharisee Gamaliel. Not only did he urge caution, but we find out later that he was also the Apostle Paul's mentor, as we can determine by the following group of verses:

"Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Acts 5:34-39, KJV

"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day."

Acts 22:3, KJV

Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimaethea and Gamaliel were not the only people amongst the upper echelons of Israel's religious hierarchy who were sympathetic to the Gospel message. Upon reading Acts chapter six, we discover that as a direct result of the powerful preaching that was performed by Peter and the

other Apostles, even many of the priests who fulfilled their courses in the temple embraced the nascent Christian faith. This becomes evident by the following verse:

"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

Acts 6:7, KJV

But if there is one religious Jew whose conversion to the Christian faith was quite dramatic, it was most certainly Saul of Tarsus, who later became known as the Apostle Paul. As I explain in the article entitled "A Biblical Cafeteria, or the Whole Course?", the Book of Acts informs us that Paul went from being a zealous, enraged, blind persecutor of the Christian faith, to becoming one of the most celebrated Christian evangelists of the First Century. In fact, he was directly responsible for reaching much of the Mediterranean region with the Gospel. Ultimately, Paul gave his very life for the cause of Jesus Christ, with church tradition stating that he was beheaded in Rome, not long before Emperor Nero's suicide.

Paul, as many of you will know, was blinded by his own pride. He was your typical, self-righteous, supposedly law-abiding Pharisee. He was also young, and probably wanted to impress his elders with his dedication to the Jewish faith. His zeal and deep hatred towards the young Christian Church prevented him from even beginning to see the error of his ways. He in fact thought that he was doing the will of God by hauling Christians off to jail. As you may recall, this is precisely what Jesus said would happen, as we can see by the following set of verses:

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that WHOSOEVER KILLETH YOU WILL THINK THAT HE DOETH GOD SERVICE. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me."

John 16:1-3, KJV

Thus it was that the Lord chose to teach Paul a lesson which he would never forget. He decided to give Paul a very graphic example to demonstrate how spiritually blind he really was. Thus Paul was smitten physically blind for a period of three days, as we can determine by the following group of verses:

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

Acts 9:1-9, KJV

But, as we already learned in part one, despite our sins and imperfections, our God also happens to be a very merciful God. While sometimes He may be forced to chastise us for our sins, precisely because He loves us, there does come a point when He lets up on us, lest we become too discouraged and perish altogether. Thus, after He was certain that Paul had learned his lesson, He sent dear brother Ananias to restore Paul's sight. Consider the following group of verses:

"Open rebuke is better than secret love."

Proverbs 27:5, KJV

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

Hebrews 12:5-8, 11-13, KJV

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Hebrews 10:31, KJV

"For our God is a consuming fire."

Hebrews 12:29, KJV

"And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."

Acts 9:10-18, KJV

As I have pointed out before, I find it rather interesting, that in describing Paul's miraculous healing, Luke uses the phrase "there fell from his eyes as it had been scales". Why is this point significant? Because in describing the ancient sea serpent, Leviathan, who I personally believe is symbolic of Satan -- please refer to my article "Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?" -- we are told the following in the Book of Job:

"His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal."

Job 41:15, KJV

I have long believed that God is very specific in regards to

how He chooses to chastise us. In other words, the punishment seems to depend to some degree on the type of sin which has been committed. In this case, Paul's sin was his own pride, which blinded him to the truth. Thus, God chose to physically blind him as well. Who can possibly doubt that Paul lost a great deal of his pride and vanity following such a direct encounter with the Lord? So, the scales falling from Paul's eyes not only represented his physical and spiritual vision being restored so that he could finally see the truth, but but perhaps it also represented that he had forsaken some of pride and self-righteousness as well, and was now a humbler man.

If we stop to consider how much the Apostle Paul writes about self-righteousness versus God's true righteousness which can only be obtained through faith in Christ in his Epistles, it makes perfect sense, in my view. As we learned in part two, we simply have no righteousness of our own; and to believe otherwise is really to deceive ourselves. It is much better to be honest with ourselves, to humble ourselves and depend on God's Mercy for our Salvation.

Later on in the Book of Acts, when Paul is given a chance to share his personal testimony with King Agrippa regarding how he had been called to serve the Lord, and thus to preach the Gospel of Salvation, Paul stated the following. Please notice how the Lord emphasizes -- just as He did in Luke chapter four when He quoted from the Prophet Isaiah -- that He was sending Paul to restore sight to the spiritually blind, just as Paul himself had been healed of the same affliction years earlier on the road to Damascus:

"And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, TO OPEN THEIR EYES, AND TO TURN THEM FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Acts 26:15-18, KJV

Thus we see that Saul of Tarsus was miraculously transformed from being a blind leader of the blind -- as Jesus had said

years earlier in Matthew 15:14 -- to becoming a bearer of the Light of God's Word. Later, when writing to the brethren in Rome, Paul again brought up the issue of how his own brethren -- meaning the Jews -- had indeed become spiritually blind in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, as we see here:

"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway . . . For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Romans 11:7-10, 25, KJV

Paul was so burdened by the spiritual blindness of his own people, that we find him mentioning it in a few more of his Epistles. For example, in communicating with the Church at Corinth, he wrote the following lines:

"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ . . . But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 3:12-14, 4:3-4, KJV

In writing to the brethren at Ephesus, Paul again expressed his desire that their spiritual eyes would be opened, that they would understand the message of the Gospel, and that they would not walk blindly as other Gentiles walk, as we can determine by the following group of verses:

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being

enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all . . . This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Ephesians 1:17-23, 4:17-18, KJV

If there is one thing which the Bible makes really clear, it is that the only way that anyone can truly understand the things of God, the only way in which our spiritual eyes can be opened so that we see the truth, and are not blinded by the lies of this present world, is through the anointing of His Holy Spirit. This is a Gift which dwells in each of us when we receive Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches us that His Spirit takes up residence in us, and we in fact become His living temples. Furthermore, God freely offers the Gift of His Spirit to all people, if they will simply ask for it. All of these truths becomes evident by verses such as the following:

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Luke 11:13, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:26, KJV

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

John 16:13, KJV

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, IF SO BE THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELL IN YOU. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead DWELL IN YOU, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by HIS SPIRIT THAT DWELLETH IN YOU."

Romans 8:9-11, KJV

"KNOW YE NOT THAT YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD, AND THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLETH IN YOU? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, WHICH TEMPLE YE ARE."

1 Corinthians 3:16-17, KJV

"What? know ye not that YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST WHICH IS IN YOU, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? FOR YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD; as God hath said, I WILL DWELL IN THEM, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

2 Corinthians 6:16-18, KJV

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD: In whom YE ALSO ARE BUILDED TOGETHER FOR AN HABITATION OF GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT."

Ephesians 2:19-22, KJV

"YE ALSO, AS LIVELY STONES, ARE BUILT UP A SPIRITUAL HOUSE, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 2:5, KJV

Without the Spirit of God working in our lives, and without receptive hearts to receive the things which God wishes to reveal to us, we would all be as spiritually blind as the examples we have seen in this series. In fact, as Paul also tells us, we might even consider the truths of the Bible to be utter foolishness, as so many people do today. Consider the following verses. They sound just like so many people in our own time who view Christians as being crazy people, and the Bible as just being some useless, silly, old book which is filled with myths. They just don't understand us or it:

"And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."
Acts 26:24-25, KJV

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

So what about you? How is your vision? Are you still walking in spiritual darkness? Are your eyes only on the temporary things of the flesh of this current wayward world? Has the lust of the eyes deceived you? Are you still blinded to the truth of God's Holy Word? Or have you received the Light of Jesus Christ? It is my hope that your eyes have indeed been opened, and that you are keeping them steadfast on Jesus and His Eternal Promises. As it is written:

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
Hebrews 12:2, KJV

As we are told in the Book of Revelation, God wishes to anoint our eyes with the eyesalve of His Spirit, in order that we might truly see, and truly understand, the great things which are revealed in His Word, beginning with His wonderful Plan of Salvation:

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;

and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."
Revelation 3:18, KJV

If you have not yet received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, and if you are still walking in spiritual darkness, then my prayer for you, in the wise words of King David, is that your eyes will finally be opened to the truth, and that you will recognize Jesus Christ as the only Truth, and the only Way to Eternal Life. Consider these two verses:

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."
Psalm 119:18, KJV

"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way."
Psalm 119:37, KJV

On the other hand, if you have already accepted Jesus Christ, or if this series leads you in that direction so that you'll soon seriously consider doing so, then please also consider this wonderful promise which is found in God's Word:

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."
1 Corinthians 2:9, KJV

As you can see, while we began this series by discussing the importance of being careful where we focus with our eyes so that we don't fall into temptation and sin, we have now gone even deeper with this subject, and explored how important it is to keep our spiritual eyes open so that we know the truth. With these thoughts I will now bring this series to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which contain topics which are related to this series. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

A Biblical Cafeteria, or the Whole Course?
Are You Clean Every Whit?
Going Down the Highway of Life
Have You Sold Your Soul for a Pound of Flesh?
Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?
My God Is a Shocker
Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
Pornography: Flee Youthful Lusts!
Sex, a Bowl of Soup, and the Nature of Angels
Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?
The Book Of Enoch: Truth or Heresy?
The Children of Light: Are You One of Us?
The Heavenly Vision: Have You Got It?
The Judgment of Angels, Demons and Men
This Little Light, Glory of the Lord and Our Bright Future

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