

BETWEEN THE LINES

A Deeper Look...

#958- BLINDNESS: How Well Do You See?

In the word there are many stories related to issues of blindness. These, of course, fall into two categories- those that tell of literal loss of sight and those the symbolic blindness and issues of ignorance. Let's find a sampling of each of those two categories.

Those who suffer from physical blindness...

Genesis 19- The covering of protection for angels at Lot's home.

Judges 16- He could only hear the taunts of his enemies.

II Samuel 5- They were not valued in society.

II Kings 6- One man's eyes are opened and a whole army is smitten with blindness.

Jeremiah 39- A punishment for the defeated.

Matthew 9- Two men come groping after the Healer of Nazareth.

Matthew 12- Blindness was only part of his problem.

Matthew 20- Another two call out to Him from their darkness.

Mark 10- You remember him. You know, Timeaus' son.

John 9- He got sight- and an opportunity to witness for Jesus.

Acts 9- It certainly gave Saul time to think, didn't it?

Acts 13- I wonder if Elymas used the time to think too!

Unseeing eyes and a closed mind...

Isaiah 9- Some get the results of their chosen disbelief.

Isaiah 42- You might as well be blind.

Romans 11- Israel was very, very shortsighted.

Revelation 3- Laodicea must be living in a dream world!

Zephaniah 1- Calamity will disorient them.

Matthew 15- It is futile to follow one whose eyes are closed.

Matthew 23- Teachers who are not receptive to light are cursed.

II Corinthians 3- Even reflected glory is lost on some.

II Corinthians 4- The glare of the world can do it to you.

I John 2- Resentment will do it to you.

In Conclusion: There are over 500 passages in the Scripture related to the eyes and what they may or may not see. Many, many of them are not speaking of physical sight at all... they are challenges as to the receptivity that we have to being led, to being taught, to being deluded, and to willingness to walk in faith that confirms reality just beyond our sight.

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**Blindness and Temple Service:** There are two ways to look at the passages regarding the restrictions of all who lived with a physical detriment of some form and their duties and privileges related to temple sacrifice. One of them only requires a simple surface reading, whereas the other is a more challenging concept but presents a picture of God that is (to me at least) much more satisfying and in line with the overall picture of a compassionate Father.

Very clearly there are expectations with regard to the blind (and others) in the realm of religious duty...

- **Leviticus 21**- Such a one could not serve in officiate priesthood.

- **Leviticus 22/Deuteronomy 15**- Be "scrupulous" to avoid blemished offerings.  
(blind, injured, scarred, diseased, crippled, mutilated)
- **Malachi 1**- Some sought to defraud God by giving their least valuable offerings.
- **Leviticus 19**- Compassion should be shown to those who face handicaps.
- **Deuteronomy 27**- Curses on those who make life more difficult for the disadvantaged.

But, do these expectations and restrictions imply that the Lord somehow holds these in lesser value? Is it possible that the Lord actually has found a way to be compassionate toward those who face difficult challenges in life and that they are not held to such a demanding standard as those who have life a little easier?

**In Conclusion:** Brennan Manning tells the story of a man with many children. One day he was asked which he loved the most. The person who made the inquiry was initially shocked as the father replied, "Oh, that's easy... it's Robert!"

But the father didn't end there. "Yes, Robert, for he is now facing his diagnosis of terminal cancer. No, wait a minute, it's Katherine... Her husband just left her with her four children alone, you know. No, not Katherine, it's little Evelyn... She just lost her youngest child in an accident. No, it's Richard..."

### Do you get the point?

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The Contradiction of Blindness: In the Scripture there seem to be so many more references to blindness than we consider in contemporary society. It is easy to understand why there may have been a greater percentage of those in ancient society who suffered from this affliction than we have today. Consider the potential causes of blindness...

- **Injury**- Today we have regulations and protective eyewear.
- **Birth Defect**- We are more able to provide adequate pre-natal care.
- **Infection**- We have more sanitary lives and antibiotics.
- **Venereal Diseases**- Again, we often have some solution for most.
- **Dietary Deficiencies**- We have access to a broader spectrum of nutrients.
- **War Injuries**- This is still potential but we tend to kill more efficiently.

The dilemma that creates the contradiction is that even though that society was disadvantaged in the realm of literal, physical blindness it may be true that modern man is much more susceptible to the tragedy of spiritual blindness.

Many thinking commentators have wondered if modern man's accomplishments and technology haven't set us up for a "new dark age".

We called them the old "dark ages" because people did not have access to light but the concern for Christianity is that modern many may have entered a new dark age in that we believe that our knowledge may now "eclipse" the light.

In arrogance we may think we have outgrown "the light".

Wouldn't that fulfill the admonition of Revelation 3?

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