

## Who is Blind?

*R. Stanley*

India has the largest blind population in the world. Of the nearly 4 crores (40 millions) of visually impaired people across the globe, over 1 crore (10 millions) are in our country. This means 25% of the blind people of the world are Indians. Praise God for all the Governmental and non-Governmental organisations which run Blind Schools, and Hospitals, and provide various rehabilitational measures for those who cannot see. They are doing an yeomen service. Whenever we see blind people, we feel sorry for them. We say within ourselves how unfortunate they are. No doubt blindness is cruel. But the Bible looks at blindness differently.

The very first thing God created was “**light**” (Gen 1:3). Though this refers to “physical” light, the New Testament gives it a different application: 2 Cor 4:6, “God who commanded light to shine out of darkness has shone in our **hearts** to give the **light** of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

To begin His public ministry, Jesus came from Nazareth to Naphtali. This was a prophetic fulfilment about “spiritual” light; Mt 4:13-16, “The people who sat in darkness saw a great **light**!”

A full chapter of 41 verses is allotted to explain the story of the blind man whom Jesus healed (Jn 9). The very first question of the disciples was, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (v2). Jesus corrected them, saying, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him” (v3). We commit the same mistake today. Everytime we see a blind person, we quickly conclude that this must be a generational curse. Beloved, there’s no such thing. Each person is responsible for his own sins and not for those of his ancestors (Ezek 18:1-3,19,20).

Besides blessing people, through His miracles Jesus taught morals. The long story in John 9 gives us an outstanding truth: v5, “I am the **Light** of the World!” Everyone is blind until he comes to Jesus. Spiritual blindness, and not physical blindness, is the real blindness (vv38-41).

Again, it was following the forgiveness of a woman caught in adultery, Jesus said, “I am the **Light** of the World. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the **light of life**” (Jn 8:11,12). No more red light, but real light!

That’s why Simeon, even with perhaps a dim vision due to old age, holding the Baby Jesus in his hands, said, “My **eyes** have **seen** Your salvation” (Lk 2:30). He calls Jesus as “a **Light** to bring salvation” to all peoples (vv31,32). He was so overwhelmed that he told God that he was ready to depart from this world then (v29). Yes, the ultimate blessing in life is when God “**shows**” us His salvation (Psa 91:16).

However, Jesus had a special concern for the physically blind. When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Jesus to verify whether He was the One to come or they were to wait for another, look at the reply of Jesus: “Go and tell John the things you hear and see: The **blind** receive their sight and the lame walk ... lepers ... deaf ... dead” (Mt 11:2-5). See, Jesus mentions the “blind” first!” The last healing miracle of Jesus before Crucifixion was on two blind men on the way to Jerusalem where He was to suffer (Mt 20:17,18,29-34). The multitude despised the cry of these blind men and rebuked them. Yes, the world despises the blind people. Religion also does the same. In which Healing Crusade do you see blind people seated in the front row? But Jesus had “compassion” on them (v34).

God’s concern for the blind is seen in the Old Testament itself. Lev 19:14, “You shall not put a stumblingblock before the **blind**, but shall fear your God: I am the Lord.” Dt 27:18, “Cursed is the man who makes the **blind** to wander off the road. And all the people shall say, Amen!” There are 12 “Amens” in this chapter! For what do we shout “Amen” these days? Let’s get back the compassionate heart of the Jehovah God!

Dear sightless friends, don’t envy those who can “see” and are not physically blind. Here’s why. When God created the trees, He had two considerations: The first one was that they must be “pleasant to the **sight!**” (Gen 2:9). What a good God we have! Artistic! But Satan tempted mankind exactly at this point. He promised the woman, “Your **eyes** will be opened!” (Gen 3:5). She fell in that temptation (v6). This is the root cause of the all-inclusive triple sin of the world: “Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life” (1 Jn 2:16). The “lust of the **eyes**” is central!

Therefore we conclude that spiritual blindness is worse than physical blindness. And spiritual wellbeing is more important than physical wholeness. A blind man, if he is saved, will go to Heaven; but a man with no handicap whatever, if he is not saved, cannot enter Heaven! (Mk 9:47,48).

Here are some examples of spiritual blindness. (a) If you are not delivered from the love of money and lust for material things, you are spiritually blind. If you are a slave to materialism, you are in darkness (Mt 6:22-24). (b) If you hate your brother, your are in darkness and walking in darkness, not knowing where you are going. This is blindness (1 Jn 2:11). (c) If you ignore your own faults but magnify those of others, you are blind. What you have in your eye is a “beam,” whereas there’s only a “speck” in your brother’s eye (Lk 6:41,42). (d) If you love traditions and rituals more than the truth, if you are legalistic without any mercy, and if you are more concerned about the externals than the inner beauty, you are blind (Mt 23:16-27). If you are in leadership with such qualities, you are a blind leader. Both you and your followers will fall into a ditch! (Mt 15:14).

How to get your spiritual eyes opened? It’s through Rebirth. Only when you are born again, you can “**see**” the Kingdom of God (Jn 3:3). Rebirth is by repenting of our sins, and receiving Christ as our Sin-bearer Saviour. Like blind Bartimaeus throw away your rags of self-righteousness and come to Jesus. He will clothe you with His robe of righteousness

and heal you of your spiritual blindness (Mk 10:50; Isa 64:6; 61:10). This is the experience Apostle Paul went through during his three days of physical blindness (Acts 9:8,9; 22:11-14; Phil 3:4-9). No wonder he prayed for the spiritual eye-opening of the people to whom he ministered (Eph 1:18).

You may read so many books on knowledge and wisdom. But you will not get spiritual enlightenment until you read the BIBLE and meditate on it. It is the Word of God. About this the Psalmist wrote, "The entrance of Your Words gives **light**" (Psa 119:130). A prophet of old testified that his **eyes** got opened when he fell prostrate before the words of God (Num 24:4). The Word of God is the **light** in this dark world (2 Pet 1:19). It is "**light** to our path and a **lamp** to our feet" (Psa 119:105).

May be you are already born again. Are you diligently growing in the grace of God by adding *virtue* to your *faith*, *knowledge* to *virtue*, *self-control* to *knowledge*, *patience* to *self-control*, *godliness* to *patience*, *brotherly kindness* to *godliness*, and *love* to *brotherly kindness*? If not, you will start backsliding. You will become "shortsighted" and even "**blind**" (2 Pet 1:5-9). Come back! When you awake to realize your condition, throw away the works of darkness, and arise from the dust, "Christ shall give you **light!**" (Eph 5:11-14).

Dear visually challenged friend, I have a good news for you. Christ is coming again soon! When He returns, He will give you a glorified body, free from blindness or any handicap or sickness (1 Cor 15:42-44). You won't even have a pimple or a wrinkle! You will be like the 33-year old Carpenter of Nazareth! (1 Jn 3:2). Perfection of beauty! Here's a prophetic promise about His Return: Isa 35:4,5, "Say to those who are fearful-hearted, Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come ... He will come to save you. Then the **eyes** of the **blind** will be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing." See who comes first in this list! The blind! Another promise: Isa 42:16, "I will bring the **blind** by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them!"

May be you were born blind. You have not seen anything or anyone. Don't worry, the first person you will see when your eyes would be opened is **JESUS!** (Job 19:25-27; Rev 22:4). Hallelujah!

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