

## **SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS**

### **BROTHER BAKHT SINGH**

Reading: 2 Kings 6: 1-18; Luke 24: 13-48 The king of Syria sent a very large army, with horses and chariots to capture Elisha, because he revealed his secret plans to the king of Israel. In the morning, Elisha's servant went outside and saw the great army and cried out to his master saying, "Alas, my master! How shall we do?" He was full of fear. Elisha told him that he had no need to be afraid because they had a greater and mightier army than the enemy. The servant thought, "Is my master trying to fool me? Where is this army he is talking about?" Elisha had told the truth but the servant was blind and that is why he could not see the heavenly army. When Elisha prayed, God opened the eyes of the young man. Then he saw the whole mountain full of horses and chariots of fire.

This young man had been serving Elisha, the man of God, and had seen many miracles. Yet he was blind. He had seen Naaman being cured of leprosy. Also, in 2 Kings 4:38-44, when Elisha came to Gilgal, there were a hundred sons of the prophets waiting to see him. One man went out to gather some leaves for cooking and unknowingly gathered wild poisonous herbs. When they sat for food they discovered that there was poison in the food. They cried out to Elisha. He asked them to cast some meal in the food. Then they were able to eat it without danger. Again, in vs.42-44, he had seen Elisha performing another miracle of multiplying food. The servant of Elisha had seen all these miracles. But his eyes were not yet opened to see heavenly things. He was spiritually blind.

After Naaman was healed of his leprosy, he brought some gifts for Elisha, because his heart was full of gratitude. But Elisha refused to receive this gift. Gehazi thought to himself that Elisha had made a very big mistake. So he ran behind the chariot, told a lie to Naaman and got for himself some silver and two changes of garments. He came back home, hid the things cleverly and with pretended innocence came and stood before Elisha. For this reason he became leprous. Even though he had been with the man of God for such a long time and had the privilege of learning many things and seeing the great power of God through Elisha, his heart was still full of love and greed for money, gold and silver. His lie and greed for money made him spiritually blind, and he could not see the horses of fire, which the Lord had kept for Elisha. Many people, including servants of God, become blind spiritually because of their love for earthly things, like money and fame; and they increase their sins by telling many lies. Thus their faith becomes weak and they lose spiritual sight.

There are different kinds of physical blindness. Spiritually also there are different kinds of blindness. First of all, according to 2 Cor.4: 4 the god of this world blinds the minds of people that they may not believe, and the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ cannot shine upon them. They cannot understand God's love for them. They will hear man-made stories and believe them; but they will rebel against the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They cannot understand how Christ died and rose again for their sakes. Only the power of God can remove this blindness. Elisha prayed for his servant, and God heard him. He forgave the servant and opened his eyes. So we also must pray for people and God will open their eyes to receive the Gospel of Christ.

We read about the Lord Jesus Christ healing a blind man in Mark 8:22-26. The Lord took that man aside, spat on his eyes, put his hands upon him and asked

him if he saw anything. The blind man looked up and said. "I see men as trees, walking". He did see something, but his vision was not clear. That is partial blindness. The Lord gave him another touch and then he got clear vision. There are people who know something about the Lord Jesus that He died on the cross for their sins. But they have little understanding about truths like the cleansing power of the precious blood, or God's eternal purpose for their lives. They do not have clear understanding of God's forgiveness. As a result they live a life of defeat and failure. Such partially blind people need a second or even a third touch from the Lord. Clear understanding does not come through human wisdom; it comes only through the touch of the Lord.

The believers at Corinth remained spiritual! Babes for a long time in spite of hearing the preaching of Paul, which was "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor.2: 4). They had heard the Gospel, believed on it and had repented of their sins; but they had failed to grow on to maturity. That is why they had strife and contention in their midst (1 Cor, 3:3). The reason for this was their partial spiritual blindness. If we have such blindness in us, we must confess it before the Lord, " and ask Him to touch us and give us clear vision.

Then we find another kind of spiritual blindness among believers, which causes difficulty in understanding the Word of God. They are good and sincere people, but they suffer from such blindness that even though they read the Bible, they do not understand anything and soon feel very sleepy.

The Bible is the Word of God, not the word of man. That is why every time we read the Bible we must pray like the Psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Psalm 119:18). When I started to read my Bible for the first time in 1929, I could not understand it, Over and over again I came across phrases like "And God said", "and God saw", "and God appeared". (Such phrases appear about 558 times in the first five books of the Bible). I said to myself, "This is not an ordinary book, it is the Word of God. I must be very humble and reverent when I read it". So I prayed, "Lord, I believe this is Your Word. I cannot understand it by myself. You please open my eyes and give me understanding". After that the Book became very real to me, and I began to enjoy reading it. You also must confess before Him your spiritual blindness and foolishness, and request Him to enlighten you. Then take your time and read the Bible from Genesis to Malachi, and Matthew to Revelation. Read it upon your knees. Read it slowly. Ask the Lord to speak to you through the portion you have read. Then He will help you to understand. Otherwise you will remain blind spiritually.

No one can be a better teacher of the Word than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We read in Luke 24: 13-35 how on the day of resurrection, two disciples were going from Jerusalem to Emmaus. As they were returning home, the Lord Himself walked with them, and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. But neither could they recognize Him nor could they believe what He said. They remained blind. This was because they had no faith. You too may hear a great and well-known preacher, but if you do not have faith, you will not be able to understand his message, and you will remain blind. According to Heb.4: 2, the Word of God must be accepted with faith. By faith say in your heart, "Lord, I believe this is Your Word. I believe you will speak to me". Then you will be able to understand what He wants to tell you.

As those two disciples and the Lord Jesus sat for food, the Lord took bread, blessed it, and gave them. In that breaking of bread, their eyes were opened; they recognized the Lord and He vanished out of their sight (Luke 24:30-31). They remembered how recently on the Passover night, the Lord had done the same thing and had said that His body would be broken for them. Here we find a very deep and important principle. Sunday-by-Sunday, as we remember the Lord's death in the Breaking of Bread, we get more clearly heavenly VISION.

The more we worship the Lord and the more we thank Him for dying on our behalf and shedding His blood for the remission of our sins, the more clearly shall we see Him. This heavenly vision does not come by hearing messages. The true understanding came to them only with the breaking of bread. Our loving and mighty Creator gave Himself for us. He allowed wicked people to beat Him, scourge Him, spit upon Him and pierce Him. He died for our sake. He took our place. He rose again for our justification. As we take part in the Lord's Table worthily and gratefully, in appreciation of such wonderful love and sacrifice, we will be given more clear understanding of His Word.

These days, we have many means where by vision can be improved. But for spiritual eyesight, we have to go only to the Lord. In Rev .3: 18 (b), the Lord says, "anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see". The Lord Himself will give us this eye salve to take away our blindness, and then He will reveal Himself to us. May the Lord grant us all His clear heavenly vision.