

Beware of Spiritual Blindness

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If you are like me, all too often we take our blessings for granted, don't we? How many times, for example, when we open our eyes in the morning, do we stop to thank God that we have sight. This morning I opened my eyes and I've got sight—what a blessing that is. We just take it for granted; we just assume every day when we open our eyes, we are going to see. In the U.S. for example, there are 12 million people that are totally blind or so partially sighted, that it's a severe handicap—12 million. In Canada it's about 500,000. In Australia, it's about 385,000—people who have severe visual impairment or no vision at all.

Let's ponder this for just a second. A blind person knows they are blind and they are aware of it every waking minute that they have. That blindness is impressed upon them every day, every waking moment. The problem is, mental blindness and spiritual blindness are an entirely different matter.

Three of Satan's most effective tools in getting at God's people and getting at the world are these:

1. Satan is very adept at convincing mankind that he doesn't exist, so they don't worry about him.
2. Look at the world's situation today and he has been very successful in convincing, probably the majority of the world's population, that God does not exist. There is no spirit world and that humans were not created, they evolved. When you think about that concept of evolution, it didn't exist prior to the 1800's and if you look at the United States and Canada, the vast majority of the people in those countries and around the world, believe that we were not created—we evolved. Satan has been very successful at that.
3. The third tool he uses which is pertinent to us today, is the fact that he has been very successful at blinding humans to their own sins and their own faults. Blinding humans to their own sins and their own faults.

We see this all too often. We see narcissistic personalities, we see people blaming others, we see people not accepting responsibility for the things they have done wrong, people not willing to admit their sins and their shortcomings and their faults. Let me read from a column—Dear Abby—which is in most papers today. This is from in our local paper going back to August of 2015.

Dear Abby: I have been married to "Ken" [Ken is in quotes, so that's obviously not her husband's real name] for ten years. He is a successful business owner. It's been a struggle to stay married to him because he has control issues and

when he doesn't get his way, he begins a verbal assault on his victim; usually me. He has no friends because he runs them off, claiming they did him wrong. ["Not true", she says.] And his employees don't like him and talk badly about him behind his back. They stay because he pays well. He uses his money to control people. I love Ken and life can be normal at times but once he thinks I'm getting out from under his thumb, his destructive behavior begins. He treats me like his worst enemy. The pain is becoming unbearable. One minute he tells me he loves me and the next he is punishing me for not coming home from the store on time. [Wonderful existence; she goes on.] I have researched online and learned he has many of the traits of a narcissist. It scares me because he doesn't know he has a problem.

He's going through life, no friends, employees don't like him, not a good marriage and yet he has no problems. Going on:

He thinks the rest of the world is messed up instead of him. How can I approach him in a way that won't send him "over the edge"? When I say anything to him, he thinks it is an attack and comes back at me viciously. I don't know whether to stay, hoping he will see the light one day, or get out because I'm emotionally damaged beyond repair.

Here's an example of a husband—a man who is totally blind to his behavior and totally blind to his surroundings and how he comes across to various people. All of us have been in a position of frustration when we see blindness in others. Whether it's politicians, world leaders, friends or even family members. We get frustrated and ask,

“Why can't they see that? They are so blind.”

As with the Dear Abby husband, it's difficult for us as human beings to see ourselves as we really are—very difficult. Satan is really good at blinding us so that we don't.

A special target of Satan's effort to blind humans, are obviously, those God has called. The firstfruits, the ecclesia. You remember the parable in John 10, the parable of the sheepfold. Remember Christ said

“The thief comes not but to steal and to kill and to destroy”.

That is what Satan is attempting to do to each one of us by blinding us to certain things.

The Apostle John warns about this potential blindness in 1 John 1:8; a very familiar scripture. When I came into the church it was on the memorization list—little cards that were passed out which we dutifully memorized. It is worthy of memorization.

1 John 1:8 *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves [self-deception], and the truth is not in us. (KJV)*

Satan has a hand in that as we're going to see. In other words, if we say we have no sin, John is saying that we are spiritually blind; we are blind to our own sins. We are blind to how we measure up to the image of Jesus Christ. Therefore, because of this we need to be consistently on guard against this third tool of Satan of becoming spiritually blind. That is the subject of today. The title is:

Beware of Spiritual Blindness

We're going to have five points today. The first one is obvious one:

1. God Almighty has allowed Satan to blind the entire world.

The whole world. In 2 Corinthians 4:4 we see that our Father has allowed "blindness" to occur. That is part of his plan. I'm sure Satan thinks that he is getting away with something, but the Father is in complete control and is allowing this for His purposes. Notice what Paul says.

2 Corinthians 4:4 *In whom the god of this world ... (KJV)*

He's not talking about his Father; he's talking about the god of this world—that is Satan. (As a reference, John 14:30), Christ called Satan the prince of this world. You look at the word *prince* and it means "the chief ruler of this world".

4 continued) ... 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. (KJV)

We were part of that "blindness" before our conversion, weren't we? I was just going right along with the world, influenced by what was going on around me, just carried like a cork on the wave of the sea—just went along with what the prevailing winds were. All of us were there until our Father called us. In Ephesians 4:17 Paul is talking about the blindness in the world today and how that works. Everything is out of the King James Version unless otherwise noted.

Ephesians 4:17 *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, [he's talking to the Gentiles and he says "Don't do like the other Gentiles"] in the vanity of their mind, 18) Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance [that's going to play a part] that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19) Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. (KJV)*

Paul is introducing this concept of being blind in the heart. The Greek word for *blindness* is very interesting. It is Strong's #4457 and it's the Greek word *prosis*. In English it actually has two meanings that come into play in everything we are going to discuss

today. Take note of these two meanings. Number one, it means *ignorance*. We read that in verse 18—*through the ignorance that is in them*. This word can mean “untaught or uninformed”. We would say today, “clueless”; they just haven’t been taught, they don’t understand.

Let me give you an example—a humorous example—it appeared in our paper not too long ago. This woman was writing in—it was actually an article about a Honda dealership in Mississippi—and this woman said, *“When my husband and I arrived at an automobile dealership to pick up our car, we were told that the keys had been locked in it. We went to the service department and found the mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver’s side door. As I watched the passenger side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered it was unlocked. She said, “Hey”—I announced to the technician—“it’s open!” His reply was, “I know, I already got that side.” We’ve all been there, haven’t we? We are just ignorant—kind of befuddled. So, the first meaning of *prosis* is “clueless, uninformed, untaught, not all there as we would say”.*

The second is more sinister. The second definition is “callousness”; meaning “hardness” or we would say “willfully blind”. Help’s Word Study says this of the second meaning of *prosis*: “callousness” or “hardness”, “petrification”. We don’t hear the word “petrification” much, but you would have heard the term “petrified wood”. What happens with petrified wood. It is it’s porous, it’s light weight and over time, if it’s lying on the ground, water infiltrates and the mineral in the water actually becomes as hard as stone. We have an example of petrified wood here—you can see the bark there and of course this is the inner part—and normally this would be very light, but believe me, this is heavy. You could drive nails with this stone. What we are being told is that one of the characteristics is “hardness of the heart”—like the hardness of this piece of petrified wood. And that is something that is very sinister and something we need to pay attention to. “Callousness”, “hardness”, you could say “petrified”.

In Mark 3:1 we can see how this word is used. It is very instructive for us, in looking at this subject of “spiritual blindness”, to see what could happen over time to our hearts. Just like what happened to this piece of wood, probably over thousands of years.

Mark 3:1 *And he [referring to Christ] entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.*

2) *And they [the Jewish leaders] watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; [why are they watching Him?] that they might accuse him.*

3) *And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.*

4) *And he saith unto them, is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. (KJV)*

Because they had an agenda.

5) *And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness 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. (KJV)*

We see that these religious leaders had allowed their hearts to become “hardened”, “calloused”, “petrified”. We know in going back into human existence that blindness began when Adam and Eve made their choice. The Father allowed Satan to do the blinding and that has continued to this very day. We see governments, governmental leaders, educators, influential people, are all “blind”. Especially to the reality of the spirit world and the battle that is going on in this world today.

Let’s establish the fact—and just for review—we know Ancient Israel was blind. Romans 11:25 says ancient Israel was “blind”; being part of the entire world. The Father had allowed ancient Israel to be “blinded”. Paul is speaking.

Romans 11:25 *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. (KJV)*

With that thought in mind we will go back to John 12:37. As we go through this, remember the two definitions of *prosis* that we talked about a minute ago; “ignorance” and “cluelessness” or “callousness” and “hardness”.

John 12:37 *But though he [referring to Christ] had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:*

38) *That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, [now John is quoting Isaiah 53:1] Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?*

39) *Therefore, they could not believe, because that Esaias said again ... (KJV)*

Now he’s quoting Isaiah 6:1.

40) *He hath [number one] blinded their eyes, and [number two] hardened their heart; [the word here for “hardened” is a derivative form of *prosis*] that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. (KJV)*

Remember the two definitions of *prosis*, they are both listed here; “ignorant” and “callous”. Remember—we won’t go there as we all know the scripture—Deuteronomy 5:29, where Yehovah, the Father was lamenting that,

“Oh, that there was such a heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always.”

They didn’t have the heart. It was not Israel’s time.

In the days of Christ, Jewish leaders were leading the “blindness”. In Matthew 15:9. We see that Christ took on the Pharisees at every turn. Here He is addressing the

Pharisees and the Scribes and quoting Isaiah 29:13, as we break into what Christ actually said.

Matthew 15:9 *But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (KJV)*

Then Christ goes on to say:

10) And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11) Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12) Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? (KJV)

Of course, He did.

13) But he answered and said, every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

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

It was true in Christ's day and is it ever true today. "Blind" leaders leading a "blind" nation or nations, world leaders—United Nations included—leading a "blind" world and everybody is going to fall into the ditch sooner or later.

John 9:40 *And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, are we blind also? (KJV)*

Are you referring to us?

41) Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, we see; therefore, your sin remaineth. (KJV)

The fact is, some of the Pharisees undoubtedly knew Who Christ was. They knew He was the anointed One; they knew He was the Messiah and they willfully ignored the truth. They buried that knowledge by their "callousness"; that is their "hardness", which is the second definition of *prosis*.

There were obviously some who were ignorant but there were others who knew the truth and due to the hardness of their heart, they buried the truth. Most were "spiritually blinded" by Satan. They were ignorant—the first definition of *prosis*, but there were many top leaders who knew the truth and the second definition applies to them. They "petrified" their hearts.

So, as we close this first point, the world has been “blinded” by Satan, Ancient Israel was “blinded”, the Jewish leaders were “blinded” by Satan and the entire world has been “blinded” by Satan.

That leads us to point 2.

2. When called, the Father began (emphasis on the word “began”) to remove our blindness.

He didn’t snap His fingers and have our brain cleared out. It just doesn’t work that way. The Father began to remove our “spiritual blindness”. This is hinted at in the Old Testament in Psalm 146:8. This was hinted at in the Old Testament.

Psalm 146:8 The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: (KJV)

Who are those who are bowed down? Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:26 that those who the Father has called are the weak of the world. Not mighty, not the high and lofty. It’s an obvious reference to those whom God will call. It is in a way, looking forward to our day; those who are bowed down. I remember the first time my wife and I went to visit the Sooke brethren. We had had a mutual acquaintance with one of the Sooke members and so we traveled up there and met this lady in her beautiful home and came to know her quite well over the years. This was our first visit and we sat and discussed this issue she wanted to counsel about. We talked for a couple hours at least. We were getting ready to go and we found out that, over the years, this congregation had been used and abused and taken advantage of. They had had some ministers who were very heavy handed over them. As we were standing up and getting ready to leave, she said, “You’re just a regular guy.” I started laughing and said “You’re right—I’m just a regular guy; nothing special, nothing great. All my wife and I want to do is obey God; that’s all we want to do.”

They had never experienced that before. She didn’t know quite how to take this. The fact is, as we see here—the Father opens our eyes and He called the weak of the world, those that are bowed down. He then begins to open our eyes. It is a process that sometimes takes—frankly with me—decades. Sad to say, but it has.

It’s stated directly in the New Testament in Matthew 13:10. The subject is, why Christ spoke in parables. Why did he couch things in parables rather than come out and say things plainly? He could have said them much more directly, but He chose not to.

Matthew 13:10 *And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?*

11) 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. (KJV)

They are blinded.

12) *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.*

13) *Therefore, speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. (KJV)*

Then recalling the first definition of *prosis*;" ignorance".

14) *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, [now Christ quotes Isaiah 6:9] By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:*

15) *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, [notice this next phrase] and their eyes they have closed; (KJV)*

This is not just ignorance. They have been willingly closed—that is the second definition of *prosis*. Through "callousness" and "hardness" they are just closing their eyes. They will not believe.

15 continued) *... 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.*

16) *But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. (KJV)*

It's obvious that Christ is not talking about physical sight or hearing.

17) *For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. (KJV)*

Look at us today. The fact is, we are so blessed to be able to see and to hear spiritually and to perceive spiritually. Our Father continues to open up our minds to see Him and His Son in ways that we had never perceived before. Having been in the church for—in my case—well over fifty years and all of a sudden, forty-five years down the road, a lightbulb comes on. It takes time, but what a blessing it is. In Romans 11:7, we are again talking about our Father removing the "spiritual blindness" we had when we were called.

Romans 11:7 *What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it [those called by the Father], and the rest [of Israel] were blinded. (KJV)*

The Father allows those He is not calling to be "blinded" and Satan of course is the prime mover in that.

8) *(According as it is written [Paul is quoting Isaiah 29:10], God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (KJV)*

We might as well add “and unto this day also”. In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul is addressing the subject but is using the analogy of “a veil over one’s eyes” in explaining the Father spiritually opening our eyes.

2 Corinthians 3:12 *Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:*

13) And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: (KJV)

Notice verse 14.

14) But their minds [Israel’s minds] were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.

15) But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. (KJV)

Not their eyes—we’re not talking about physical sight—but it is upon their heart; their perception, their being.

16) Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord [Israel will do that in the future], the veil shall be taken away. (KJV)

That’s a prophecy.

17) Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (KJV)

Freedom from this “blindness”.

18) But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, [and here’s the key] are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (NKJV)

When we were called, the “spiritual blindness”—the veil that we had over our hearts—began to slowly be removed at our conversion and progressing on beyond that. Remember it is a process that takes decades. With me, I think it has taken longer because of “blindness” and stubbornness—we all have things we have to overcome. Sometimes we’re not as teachable or as readable as the Father would like.

That leads us to the next point—point three. We are getting down to our day now. The veil begins to be removed, it takes time, but we are a factor of our environment, we are a product of our environment.

3. Spiritual blindness is a key characteristic of Laodicea.

Look at a very familiar scripture, Revelation 3:17. We know that Laodicea has many problems. We live in the Laodicean era; we don't have to be Laodicean, but that is the characteristic of our era.

Revelation 3:17 *Because thou sayest [Laodicea], I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: (KJV)*

The Greek word for *blind* here is not *prosis*. It is a different Greek word. It's Strong's #5185 and it's the Greek word *tuphlos* and it means "opaque". We've all looked through a frosted glass or tried to see through a frosted glass. That's "opaque"; you can't really see through it. Maybe you can see some light on the other side or a shadow on the other side but you can't see through it clearly. That's the sense of this word. It means *opaque* as if "smokey" and by analogy, "blind mentally". Mentally blind—it could also mean physically blind.

We are talking about Laodicea, but let's go back and look first at the religious leaders of Christ's day once more. This time we will go back to the familiar chapter—Matthew 23. In the whole chapter Christ is getting onto the Pharisees, the Scribes and the Sadducees for their behavior. Mathew 23:13, sets the stage. We're going backwards in time just to set the stage about Laodicea today. The religious leaders of Christ's day.

Matthew 23:13 *But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees ... (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 16.

16) *Woe unto you, ye blind guides [tuphlos], which say, [He says you are here to guide the people but you yourselves are blind] Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!*

17) *Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? (KJV)*

In addition to using *tuphlos* here, he calls them *fools*. We're familiar with that Greek word, it's *moros* from which we get our English word "moron". It means—it's hilarious really—in Strong's it says "dull", "stupid" or "blockhead". Christ is saying, "You bunch of blockheads". He said,

"You are blockheads as well as being "blind". You have an opaque glass in front of your eyes that you can't see clearly."

Going on in verse 19.

19) Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? (KJV)

Verse 24.

24) Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. (KJV)

Verse 26.

26) Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. (KJV)

So, we see, looking back in time, that the religious leaders of Christ's day were indeed "blind". What about today? What about Laodicean today? If you want to see blindness, turn on your TV on a Sunday morning and cycle through all the religious programming on a Sunday morning. You want to see graphic demonstrations of being blind, you don't have to go any further than that. The sad thing to say is, too often the blindness has been among the Churches of God. Who would Satan want to attack more? Somebody that is in a false religion or somebody who is in a true religion. Who would he want to deceive more?

In the first nine verses of Isaiah 56:10, Christ is saying very kind things—very encouraging things—to the outcasts. We were outcasts before God called us. So, in the first nine verses he is saying some very kind things to the outcasts. Then in verse 10 He turns His attention to the religious leaders; this is a prophecy.

Isaiah 56:10 *His [Yehovah's] watchmen [these are Yehovah's watchmen] are blind: they are all ignorant [first definition of the Greek definition of *tuphos*; I understand this is Hebrew], they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.*

11) Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand [they have been blinded]: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. (KJV)

In other words—selfishness; what's in it for me?

12) Come ye, say they [these shepherds], I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant. (KJV)

Nothing is going to change; today was the same as yesterday, tomorrow will be the same as today. Peter has something to say about that—we don't have time to go there—but it's called uniformitarianism; it means everything is going to be the same. We

are all going to find out one day that it is not going to be the same. We are actually finding that out already, aren't we? You look at what's going on in the world today and it's pretty scary.

12 continued) ... we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant. (KJV)

Meaning, if tomorrow is like yesterday and we were filled yesterday and it's going to be even more abundant tomorrow, then I don't need anything. I have need of nothing; everything's cool, I have all my needs met. Let's see where this "blindness" leads to. What is down the road from this "blindness"? Look at 1John 2 and remember when this was written. John was the only apostle left alive and he was looking back on a very meaningful history, having rested his head on the bosom of Christ. He was all the way down now to being ninety, 100 years old and looking backwards and all that had happened. This man is wise and has learned a lot.

1 John 2:11 *But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes. (KJV)*

So, we see that if we walk away from the Father, which is light and we turn away from the light and go into darkness, we are going to become "spiritually blind". Today in the greater church, we see that hatred—he who hates his brother—we see that hatred between individuals, between groups. My wife and I have had experiences where people have left and they will not talk to you. There is hatred there because Satan has gotten to people. Darkness has blinded their eyes. It results in "spiritual blindness".

The point is, we live in a time of Laodicea; this is the environment around us, it's the environment of the world—certainly the wealthy, developed world—and we see that "spiritual blindness" prevails in the church and in the world. It's something we need to avoid at all costs because it is so prevalent. We need to be aware of it.

That leads us to the fourth point.

4. Spiritual blindness will keep us from God's Kingdom.

Now we get to where the rubber meets the road. "Spiritual blindness" will keep us from our Father's Kingdom. All of us, whether we like it or not, are susceptible to "spiritual blindness". Brothers, sisters, the ministry, the deacons—all susceptible. None of us is immune. I'm embarrassed to say that I have been so blind to my own conduct in the past. I've said things, done things that I thought were correct, but at the time I was blind to the fact that they were not correct. Years and months later, you look back and say,

"I was so off track, why didn't I see it?"

Do you think you might have been blind for a little bit, or blind in this one area?"

Remember we talked about Satan seeking to “steal and kill and destroy and to blind”? Now we see how he works in Isaiah 59:1. He wants us to not make God Almighty’s Kingdom.

Isaiah 59:1 *Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: (KJV)*

God’s will, will be done, He’s not limited.

2) But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (KJV)

If our sins hide God’s face from us, then we will be “blind” to who our Father is. Think about that. If our sin separates us from God and there is a growing distance between us and our Father, then over time we will come to the point where we can’t recognize the Father. We don’t know who He is. We read the scriptures, we read the words, but we don’t understand Who the Father really is. We are “blind” to that.

The message here is that sin leads to separation from God Almighty. Separation from God Almighty inevitably leads to darkness and blindness.

3) For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

4) None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

8) The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. (KJV)

Think about that; peace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, is it not? We are being told that there are those that just don’t know peace. Peace is a foreign concept to them. It’s not something to be desired or pursued.

8) The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. (KJV)

If we allow Satan to provoke us to sin, knowing that sin separates us from our Father and once you are separated from the light of the Father, there’s only one place to go. That is darkness and the farther away you go, the greater the separation, the more darkness comes. We are told here, there is no peace. You can’t have peace. It’s not going to happen.

9) Therefore, is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; [we want the light but we don’t want to stop sinning

and change who we are and what our behavior is] *for brightness, but we walk in darkness.*

10) We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men.
(KJV)

Because of “spiritual blindness”. It’s Satan’s goal to provoke us to sin in order to separate us from our Father. If we are separated from our Father, we are in dire straits and will not be in His Kingdom. If we are blind to our sins, how can we repent? If we do not allow ourselves to acknowledge our sins and we blame it on other people or circumstances and diminish our sins, then how can you repent of those sins?

We will look at Galatians 5:19, just as a reminder. This out of the New King James since the King James is a little cumbersome here with some of the words that we no longer use in modern society.

Galatians 5:19 *Now the works of the flesh are evident, [I know we’ve read this before but just focus on these; do we want to go here?] which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,
20) idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions [fighting back and forth, bickering back and forth], jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,
21) envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (NKJV)*

We can go over these individually and say, I would never do that or I’ve never done that. But the fact is, all of the above can be practiced in our minds; every one of those we can practice in our minds, which is just the same as physically doing them.

Peter gives us an antidote for this in 2 Peter 1:9 so that we can overcome this blindness.

2 Peter 1:9 *But he that lacketh these things is blind [tuphlos, opaque, not clear, can’t see], and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. (KJV)*

He says, he who lacks these things.... lacks what things? Go to verse 5 in the New King James.

*5) But also, for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,
6) to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness ... (NKJV)*

Which is what we all want.

7) *to godliness brotherly kindness* [just the opposite of hatred and gossip and all of that], *and to brotherly kindness love.*

8) *For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (NKJV)

What he is saying is, if we lack these things then we are indeed blind and will not be in the Kingdom of God. The ones that he described are in what we read in Galatians 5. If we make these things part of us, from verse 5 on—faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love—if we make that part of us then we will indeed have an antidote for “blindness” because we are seeking our Father’s nature and character and that of His Son. The point is, growing in the fruits of the Holy Spirit, purges “blindness”. It purges us of “spiritual blindness”. But if we don’t overcome our “spiritual blindness”, we will not be in our Father’s Kingdom.

Let’s look at the fifth point and this is looking forward in joy and in positiveness.

5. One day—hopefully not long from now—all mankind will have their spiritual blindness removed.

What a day that will be. In Isaiah 20:18 there is a prophecy about this coming time when this blind world will have the veil removed, the scales will fall from eyes and people will see the truth and see it clearly.

Isaiah 29:18 *And in that day* [that day meaning yet future, has not arrived yet] *shall the deaf hear the words of the book,* [it doesn’t mean they couldn’t physically hear, but they will hear what the words mean] *and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.* (KJV)

It won’t be opaque anymore; it won’t be fuzzy anymore. He’s referring primarily to “spiritual blindness”. Again, the definition of *tuphos*, being “opaque”. In Luke 4:16 in the New Testament we are again marching toward a time when this blind world is no longer going to be blind.

Luke 4:16 *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*

17) *And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written ...* (KJV)

And now he is reading from Isaiah 61:1.

18) *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* [from Babylon, from Satan], *and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised ...* (KJV)

He's telling us that one of the reasons that He is going to come again is to heal the world's "spiritual blindness". He came the first time to heal the firstfruits' "spiritual blindness". He will come the second time to heal the world's "spiritual blindness". The joy that we can have is if we are there, we are going to be part of that; we are going to be involved in that. We won't be physical, we won't get tired, we won't have trouble understanding, we won't be foggy in the head, we will be spirit beings. We will have a part in this healing.

Isaiah 42:5 *Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens [the world denies that but it's true], 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: (KJV)*

Verse 6 out of the NIV.

6) I, the Lord, have called you [Notice who is He talking to?] in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people [Israel] and a light for the Gentiles ... (NIV)

He has to be talking about the firstfruits. He has to be talking about those who have preceded Israel at that moment in time.

Verse 7 back to the King James.

7) To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison [Satan's prison], and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. (KJV)

No more "spiritual blindness" and we are helping with that process. Verse 14.

14) I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once. (KJV)

Those who oppose Him.

15) I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

16) And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known [they are coming out of spiritual Babylon, out of this deceived world]: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. (KJV)

What a tremendous process that is going on and we will be right there as helpers and servants, to make this happen. What a time this is going to be when people will at last see clearly. They will see there is the Father, there is the Son and they won't be blinded at all. They will see His law very clearly.

Let's conclude now. We've seen five points.

In the first point we have seen that God has allowed Satan to "blind" the entire world, including Israel.

The second point that we have seen was that when He called us God began to remove our "blindness".

The third point we have seen is that "spiritual blindness" is a key characteristic of Laodicea

The fourth is that we have seen that "spiritual blindness" will keep us from the spiritual Kingdom.

Then this last point which we just covered is, that there is a coming a day when that veil will be removed and we will have a part to play in this momentous event.

"Spiritual blindness" is one of the greatest problems facing God's people today. Why is that? When we become spiritually blind, we don't realize we are blind because we are blind. A deceived person doesn't know they are deceived because they are deceived. A spiritually blind person doesn't know they are blind, because they are blind. It's a form of deception and none of us is immune. Ask yourself, looking at the entirety of the Bible, what is the greatest example of spiritual blindness? Think about that. To me there's one that jumps out and it is in 2 Samuel 12. I think we all know this by heart. It's nine to twelve months after David's sin with Bathsheba and all that happened.

2 Samuel 12:1 *And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, there were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.*

2) The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3) But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4) And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5) And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

6) And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. (KJV)

At this point David obviously didn't have a clue of what was going on. He didn't have a clue that Nathan was talking about him. At this moment in time he was so blind to his sins, he didn't understand it.

7) And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus, saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8) And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9) Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? [He was blind and did not see] 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.

*10) 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.
(KJV)*

Think about this: David, despite his love and dedication to Yehovah which we read through the scriptures. He loved God with all his heart, he was dedicated to God Almighty but he came to the point of despising Him. If David can do that, what about us? He despised Him because he was "spiritually blind", "blind" to the fact that the commandments also applied to the king. Not to everyone else but the king. That is why David said later, in Psalm 19:12 where he made these points, because he now understood clearly.

Psalm 19:12 *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. (KJV)*

He had a big one and now sees that.

13) Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; (KJV)

The Hebrew word for *presumptuous* means "arrogant" or "proud" sins. Proud because he was king; this applies to everybody else but me—it doesn't apply to me because of who I am.

13 continued) ... let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. (KJV)

What was that? Despising Yehovah was the great transgression.

14) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. (KJV)

They previously were not acceptable and he is trying to get to a place where they are acceptable. This same “blindness” that David had continues through to the end time. I’ve mentioned before that back in the Worldwide days, there was a high-ranking Evangelist, a Vice President who said, “God winks at my sins because of what I do for the work”. Same thing, same “blindness” that David had. Both men saw other people’s sins but not their own.

There are those today who deny the Father’s rightful supremacy. There are those who deny the Father’s true name—Yehovah. There are those who deny Christ’s sacrifice as the Passover. “Spiritual blindness” continues, but in David’s case, the spiritual lightbulb went on. Go to Psalm 51— our final scripture—you know where we are going, verse 3. The lightbulb went on and David said:

Psalm 51:3 *For I acknowledge my transgressions [in other words he saw his sins and he saw himself]: and my sin is ever before me.* (KJV)

He carried that to his grave.

4) Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, [not other people but I have sinned] and done this evil in thy sight: (KJV)

He came to himself and repented of getting to the point where he despised God Almighty. Think about that. What did it take to get from where David came as the young shepherd boy to despising God Almighty? If David can get to that place, so can we and that’s why we have to be on guard. One of my greatest fears is what do I not see in myself right now? What is there hidden that I don’t even see and what am I spiritually blind to this very day? As we move forward from Passover, we need to rid ourselves of any spiritual blindness we have. We have to ask our Father,

“Please show me, let me see myself as You see me, not as how I want to be seen; but as You Father see me—let me in on that. Let me see myself as You see me.”

If we do that, then we can go forward to transform ourselves through the power of the Holy Spirit into the image of His Son and if we are in the image of His Son, we will enter into the Kingdom of God.