

8 Bible Interpretation: Looking Without a Veil

I went to the eye doctor recently. Of course I have to go to a specialist. When I had gone to a regular eye doctor they didn't have equipment that could measure the required diopter for my left eye. The left eye has a cornea that is very badly out of shape. I wear contact lenses but I still need a pair of reading glasses over the top of them.

At the eye doctor they usually begin their exam by putting a fluid in the eyes that causes the pupil to dilate. Then the doctor checks the overall health of the eye somehow.

But when I leave the doctor's office I can't go out into the sunlight without sunglasses. It is just too bright. I mean it really hurts unless you wear something. Sometimes they give you a plastic flexible sunglasses to wear for a few hours.

In the Bible the ancient Israelites had need of those plastic sunglasses.

Exodus 34:27 - 35 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." ²⁸ So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. ²⁹ Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony *were* in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. ³⁰ So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. ³² Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. ³³ And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. ³⁴ But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. ³⁵ And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

As the moon is a reflected glory of the sun, perhaps the glory of the Lord was reflecting in Moses' face. The Israelites couldn't look at his face. It was too bright. They could not endure it. They needed sunglasses. But instead, Moses put a veil on his face.

The apostle Paul refers to this event in the New Testament. And he applies a spiritual meaning to the event. Let's read about it in 2 Corinthians 3. Paul is writing to the Corinthians because some people in the church did not recognize Paul's authority. How could Paul defend himself? How could he demonstrate that he was sent by God?

2 Corinthians 3:1-6 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you? ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly *you are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart. ⁴ And we have such trust through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, ⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Paul said, “I don’t need a recommendation letter from someone. When the Spirit of the living God is living in the hearts of the believers it makes them so different that other people can see the change in them. They are a living letter. This proved that Paul was sent from God.

You are a letter written by God. People are watching you. Do they see that you have been changed by the Holy Spirit living in you? Or is your life just like everyone else’s life? Can someone say about you, “They are different. They live for Christ. They believe in righteousness and live it. They are not of this world”?

What did Paul mean when he said, “the letter kills but the Spirit gives life”? If you are trying to keep God’s law without the Holy Spirit living in you, you may have a form of religion but your law-keeping is just a show. Your motivations for law-keeping are mixed with selfishness. You do not have the unselfish love of God living in you, motivating your actions. God will not accept this. You cannot go to heaven that way. You will die in your sins. You must be transformed from within.

The Israelites who heard the Ten Commandments swore to God that they would keep the law. But in a few days they were worshipping a golden calf. There was no real power over sin in their lives. They thought that they were righteous enough to keep the law without the transforming power of God’s grace. We call this a legal religion or legalism. God gave the Ten Commandments to Israel on tables of stone to show them the permanent nature of God’s law. But without the transforming power of the Holy Spirit living in them, their religion could not save them. They were not overcoming sin in their lives. They would die in their sins.

2 Corinthians 3:7-18 ⁷But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, ⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? ⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. ¹⁰ For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. ¹¹ For if what is passing away *was* glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious. ¹² ¶ Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech -- ¹³ unlike Moses, *who* put a veil

over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴ But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. ¹⁵ But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. ¹⁶ Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

When Jews today read the Old Testament they do not see that the Old Testament is all about Christ. They cannot see that the glory of the Old Testament scriptures is Jesus Christ. Today, if you read the Old Testament, if you do not see that it is talking about, pointing people to Christ, the Savior of the world, then you have a veil written on your heart and you cannot understand the scriptures. You are wearing sunglasses and you do not see the glory of the Bible. But when you open your heart up to God and receive the Holy Spirit then you will begin to see Christ in all of the Bible.

Jesus said,

John 5:39-40 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Jesus said that the scriptures were talking about Himself. Are you like the Jews of old? Are you rejecting eternal life because you are unwilling to humble yourself and accept Christ? If so you are still wearing sunglasses. You have a veil on your heart and you do not understand the Bible.

After Jesus rose from the dead He was walking and talking with two disciples.

Luke 24:25-27 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

The scriptures point to Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. He said that Moses and all the prophets wrote about Him.

You can read the Old Testament in the original Hebrew as the Jews do, but if you do have a resistance in your heart to see Jesus as the Savior of the world, all your reading of the Old Testament is in vain. If you have a resistance in your heart to see Jesus as the Savior of the world, all your reading of the New Testament is in vain. Your sins are not forgiven, you cannot go to heaven.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

If you want to understand the Bible, you must look without a veil. What is keeping you from seeing Jesus as the Savior of the world? Is it your family? Are you ashamed to believe? Is it your pride? Are you unwilling to humble yourself and admit that your own righteousness is not sufficient to take you to heaven? Are you afraid of the mocking you will receive from society?

Matthew 10:32-39 " Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. ³⁴ " Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ "For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; ³⁶ "and 'a man's enemies will be those of his *own* household.' ³⁷ "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.