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THE BIBLE VIEW

In This Issue:

[God Gives Understanding](#)

[Trust Him, and He Will Show You](#)

[Opened Eyes](#)

[Why They Do Not Understand](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

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Theme: Understanding Spiritual Things

God Gives Understanding

Bill Brinkworth

When a Christian lives a life pleasing to God, he will have guidance, security, and assurance when he needs it. This assurance from God was realized by Paul several times during his ministry. In Acts 27, one such event was recorded (Acts 27:22-24).

An angel appeared to Paul. He told Paul that although the storm would destroy the boat he was on, he and the other passengers would survive (Acts 27:22). The prophecy came true.

Many times, throughout the Bible, others that were close to God also had God’s guidance and assurance of future events. There were many prophetic assurances given to God’s people throughout the Bible. These include:

- God showed Abraham that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:19).

- God told Moses he would not see the Promised Land because of his sin.
- God showed Rebekah she would have twins (Gen. 25).
- God showed Peter how he was to die (II Peter 1:14).

Today, God also can give one walking close to Him assurance about upcoming situations. It will most likely not be through angels as was done for Paul, or via dreams as done with others.

Since today we are to live by faith and the instructions from God's Word, sometimes a person today is encouraged by Scripture reading. Often it is just an unexplainable peace of mind that encourages a person that God will work out a problem in a positive way. Other times, it is circumstances leading one to know that God is overseeing the situation and that everything will be okay. No matter how God does it, He still looks over, and frequently encourages, His own.

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law.” *Psalm 119:18*

Trust Him, and He Will Show You

Adam Clark's Commentary

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” Proverb 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart! This is a most important precept:

1. God is the Fountain of all good.
2. He has made his intelligent creatures dependent upon Himself.
3. He requires them to be conscious of that dependence.
4. He has promised to communicate what they need.
5. He commands them to believe His promise and look for its fulfillment.
6. And to do this without doubt, fear, or distrust; “with their whole heart.”

Opened Eyes

Bill Brinkworth

I have been asked several times, “How do you know there is a God?” Even recently, I was questioned about this by an atheist.

Although some claim to have seen God, their testimonies often do not align with the Bible. Often their story changes when questioned. From what the Bible says, no one will see the Father, but by faith, many of us are assured that He is as real as if we have seen Him personally.

There are many answers to how so many billions are assured there is one God. Just looking around and seeing His creation can only point to a Creator. There is no scientific proof that we evolved from a bunch of randomly arranged chemicals. It takes a lot of imagination and an unproven faith to believe a living organism, with its thousands of functions and abilities, could happen by chance or by natural selection.

Many happenings in this world and our lives also point to a heavenly Father who orchestrates us and society. One soon sees divine intervention, which quickly rules out that they are just a coincidence.

Although these ways and others show a living, loving God intervening in our lives and protecting us, there is one primary reason one can know that there is a God. When one first takes a step of faith and believes what God's divinely preserved Holy Word says, God then opens spiritual eyes so that one may see that He is real, alive, loves us still, and is working all about us.

We learn from the Bible:

- That, although we may have good vision, we often do not see the obvious around us until God opens our eyes to see what He wants us to see. Hagar fled into the wilderness and was prepared to die of thirst until God opened her eyes to see a solution to her dilemma.

“And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.” Gen. 21:19

- At times, especially when we are out of fellowship with God, we do not see His intervention in our lives until God opens our eyes to see what He is doing. The prophet Balaam did not realize it was God's intervention that was keeping the prophet from further disobeying the Lord.

“Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and

his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.” Num. 22:31

- God opened Elisha’s servant’s eyes to see that God’s invisible protection surrounded the servant.

“And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” II Kings 6:16-17 Also: II King 6:16-20.

- Blind eyes were miraculously physically opened, and the blind saw. God got the glory for doing the miracle and allowed blind people to see.

“And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.” Mat. 9:30

“And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.” John 9:14

“And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus ... 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.” Acts 9:8-18 Also: Mat. 20:34.

- God opened eyes to see and recognize the resurrected Christ.

“And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.” Luke 24:31

- God can open the eyes for people to understand His Word and other spiritual things.

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Ps. 119:18

“To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.” Isa. 42:7

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Acts 26:18

“Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.” I Peter 1:12

As I told the atheist we were talking to, God can open seeing and recognizing eyes to see what He has done and is doing. Once one steps out by faith and trusts Him for salvation many of His wonders and workings will be revealed for the believer to see and understand. This is why it is hard for a child of God to comprehend why many in the world do not even know there is a God when He is so real and working in everyday lives. God has opened many eyes to see His wonderful, daily workings.

“Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, seek not to understand that thou mayest believe, but believe that thou mayest understand.” — *Author Unknown*

Why They Do Not Understand

Bill Brinkworth

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” I Corinthians 2:14

Many people try to understand the things of God, but they never grasp His truths, nor do they seem real to them. They may have studied the Scriptures, memorized them, and appeared very knowledgeable about biblical facts, but there seems to be a veil that does not allow them to grasp the truths from the Word of God. Preaching also may be entertaining and even interesting to them, but the truths spoken to them from the pulpit never get into their heart and change their lives. Many even feel church attendance is meaningless, and that is why they seldom attend.

It is often not the preacher’s fault that they “get nothing from the service” or that they “do not feel convicted.” I Corinthians 2:14 puts the finger on who some of them are and why there is a spiritual connection missing in their lives. The reason that they are not grasping biblical truths or are not Spirit-led is that they are “natural” men and women. They are either not born-again and cannot have a relationship with the Lord until they are saved, or they may be saved and are so worldly-minded that they could not hear the convicting Spirit of God if He blew an air-horn in their left ear. A “natural” man is one that is just the way they were born, without any spiritual alterations, illuminations, and connections.

No one can understand the things of God unless the Holy Spirit shows them to him (I Cor. 2:11). A person can have head-knowledge of biblical and spiritual things, but unless the Holy Spirit is involved, there will never be a connection to what the brain knows, and the spiritual “heart” of a person believes. Many degreed preachers have been in left field regarding understanding the things of God because they were under their power of understanding and not the Holy Spirit’s revelation. Education alone does not make the “connection.”

Preaching and the things of God are not appreciated and meaningless to a “natural” man. However, the preaching of the Word of God is essential to a saved man. The exhortation of God’s Word and its teaching are spiritual food to a spiritual person. It encourages, guides, and strengthens a child of God. To him, it is foolish to not be at church where God’s Word is taught and not wise to not read and obey God’s Word.