

*“Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things. And revive me in your ways...(Psalm 119:37).*

If God is to teach us the way of His statutes as the psalmist prays in verse 33 He must alter our gaze. It is instructive to note the usage of man’s organs of sight in the scripture in both the literal and metaphorical sense. We do not have to explore the word of God very far before we find it powerfully illustrated.

In its very first mention in Genesis 3:5-7 the eyes are used as that faculty which imparts understanding and awareness. Their *eyes were opened* and they understood and were aware of sin and righteousness. But the cost has been too high. The price of this understanding to our first parents came with the awareness that they were now sinners, and hopelessly alienated from God.

The second usage appears in Genesis 3:6. *“the woman saw...that it was pleasant to the eyes”*. The eyes are organs of pleasure invoking *“the lust of the eyes”*. This is graphically illustrated in Gen. 39:7; (Potiphar’s wife) *“cast her eyes on Joseph”*. We use them too, not only for the pleasure of looking upon something, but in order to enflame the lust of the whole body.

The third usage is demonstrated in Gen. 6:8. *“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord”*. The phrase *“in one’s eyes”* is embodied the person’s regard or attitude toward an object. How he *“sees”* it reflects his opinion, his view, and whether that object has his favor or disfavor. This usage is prominent throughout the scriptures when one *“lifts up his eyes”* to, or is enjoined to *“lift up his eyes”*. Lot lifted up his eyes toward Sodom. Abraham is told to lift up his eyes and behold the multitude of stars. When one so *“lifts up his eyes”* he is beholding and considering with a judgmental conclusion in view.

Now what is it that we are asking the Lord to turn our eyes from beholding?

Worthless things! Amazing! Here we are with our gazes fixed on vanities, emptiness, nothingness, and powerless to tear our eyes away from them! And how is this gaze upon worthless things affecting our lives? These vanities capture our attention. We are aware of nothing else. They monopolize our minds. Our thoughts are cluttered with them. They fill our horizon and crowd God and eternal spiritual realities out of our consciousness. We lust and long for them, take pleasure and delight in vapors, illusions, fantasies devoid of substance, nothingness, that which will soon evaporate before our eyes leaving us with nothing but the realization of our incredible foolishness. We bestow upon them our favor. That which is worthless and vile, finds high esteem in our eyes. Our gaze transforms the profane into the precious, but it is only a cruel mirage.

How shall we escape such a hoax? Turn our eyes from worthless things? Shall we pick and choose among those things which capture our gaze and say,

*“Lord take away this, but leave that”?* No, because if we were qualified to judge what was precious and what was worthless, we would not be gazing on the worthless. We would be sparing our *“right eye”* or *“right arm”* when they may be those very worthless things that keep us from life (Matt. 18:8-9). So we are shut up to the grace, wisdom and power of God. If we would be *“revived”*, quickened, made alive in God’s way of righteousness (literally, enter into life),

we must commit our gaze to Him for His radical renovation. He alone has the wisdom, power and will to do what is necessary to turn our gaze from perishing things that are seen to the Invisible realities of the Eternal Almighty God.

*-C. M.*