

Psalm 32:8-9, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."

To remember the reference, think about how we need to look to God for guidance and direction. Do you remember how we used the number '8' to refer to the fat Christian who has become lazy in the ways of God and the number '9' representing the lean Christian who is spiritually healthy?

If we look to God (The Trinity '3') before allowing our two ('2') feet to walk, then we will transform from the fat Christian '8' to the lean Christian '9'. That's the entire reference! 32:8-9

This verse tells us that God desires to instruct and teach us in our walk with Him, giving us specific directions. He instructs and teaches us with his eye, not a finger pointing in the right direction. To be guided by His eye, requires that we must be looking towards Him.

Verse 9 states that we have a choice, we can look to him for guidance or if we refuse to look in His direction, He will put a bit and bridle on us forcing us to look His way.

In researching scripture which refers to the eye or eyes of God, I found several interesting points.

God is looking at us, waiting to see if we will look at Him:

2 Chronicles 7:14-16, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."

2 Chronicles 16:9a, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."

Proverbs 5:21, "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings."

Psalm 34:15, "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."

1 Peter 3:12a, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers"

Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Job 34:21, "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings."

Job 36:7a, "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous..."

Psalm 101:6, "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me."

Psalm 11:4, "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men."

Psalm 33:18, "Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;"

Jeremiah 16:17, "For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes."

God is not only watching, but keeping a record:

Jeremiah 32:19, "Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:"

2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Looking up allows us to see wondrous things:

1 Samuel 12:16, "Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes."

Joshua 5:13-15, before victory at Jericho, Joshua looked up and beheld the captain of the LORD's host.

2 Kings 6:16-17, Elisha prayed for his servant's eyes to be opened and when he looked up he saw the mighty army of God!

John 1:51, God gave Nathaniel the ability to look up and see the angels ascending and descending.

Daniel 4:34, when Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes, his mind was restored from the clutches of madness.

Genesis 18:2, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw three angels, one being Jesus incarnate.

Genesis 22:4, Abraham lifted up his eyes and beheld the mountain he was commanded to sacrifice his son upon. Verse 13, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the ram, the substitute. What relief his eyes and heart must have felt when he beheld the sight of the ram!

Genesis 21:19, Hagar looked up and saw a well. Not a mud hole, but a well of water!

Numbers 22:31, Balaam looked up and saw an angel with a sword drawn.

I Chronicles 21:15-16, David looked up and saw the angel of death.

Daniel 10:5-6, Daniel looked up and beheld an archangel, possibly Gabriel.

Genesis 24:63-64, Isaac and Rebekah looked up to see their gift from God, each other.

Genesis 31:10-12, Jacob looked up and saw through a dream, direction and encouragement from God.

Genesis 33:1, Jacob looked up and watched how God took away his worries over his brother Esau.

Matthew 14:25-31, Peter found that as long as his eyes were on the Master, he could walk on water.

John 11:41; 17:1, Jesus our example, lifted up his eyes unto the Lord.

We have to be committed to controlling our eyes and where they look:

Psalm 101:3, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me."

Job 31:1, "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"

We need to pray for God to help us control our eyes and open them to understanding.

Psalm 119:37, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way."

Psalm 119:18, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Matthew 20:32-33, "And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened."

Ephesians 1:18-19, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,"

The benefits of looking up:

God guides you past the hidden snares set by Satan to destroy or cripple you.

Psalm 25:15, "Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net."

God's lovingkindness is before us and his truth guides our steps.

Psalm 26:3, "For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth."

God reveals the need for Christian labor and gives us a desire to serve.

John 4:35, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

God gives us a burden for backslidden Christians and lost souls.

Psalm 119:136, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law."

God gives us help in time of need.

Psalm 121:1, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

God gives hope in the midst of despair.

Ezra 9:8, "And now for a little space have we been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage."

God sets His eyes upon me for good!

Jeremiah 24:6-7, "For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart."

God hides my sins from His eyes; His glorious sea of forgetfulness! Micah 7:19

Isaiah 65:16, "That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes."

We can't see His eye if we are looking down. The devil works at keeping our eyes looking anywhere but up:

Pride keeps me from looking up.

Isaiah 5:21, "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"
(Proverbs 3:7; 12:15; 16:2; 21:2; 30:12-13, Judges 17:6, Judges 21:25, Deut. 12:8)

Foolishness keeps me from looking up.

Proverbs 17:24, "Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth."

Lust/Covetousness keeps me from looking up.

Proverbs 27:20, "Hell and destruction are never full; so they eyes of man are never satisfied."

2 Peter 2:14a, "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin..."

1 John 2:16, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Hatred keeps me from looking up.

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."

Gifts/Bribery, Greed and Blessings can keep me from looking up.

Deuteronomy 16:19, "...neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." (Proverbs 28:22,23:5, Ecc. 1:8, 4:8, I Sam. 12:3, Ps. 73:7)

Pity can keep me from looking up.

Deuteronomy 7:16, "And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee. (Deut. 13:8, 19:13&21, 25:12, Ez. 9:5, 16:5)

Evil thoughts against others can keep me from looking up.

Deuteronomy 15:9, "Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee." (Deut. 28:54&56)

Small things (a 'mote') hinder my vision.

Matthew 7:3-5, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Double vision hinders my eyesight. Seek to have single or tunnel vision in the light of God's goodness.

Matthew 6:22-23, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

A cloudy vision or apathy hinders my eyesight.

Mark 8:22-26, (v.24), "...I see men as trees, walking."

Looking requires patience as well as an understanding of the desires of the Master.

Psalm 123:1-2, "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us."

This verse reminds me of a butler serving a meal to a royal family. The butler is constantly watching the eyes and body language of the master, anticipating his every need for him and the other guests. A well trained butler is never told what to do. A simple look from the master in the direction of a guest will prompt the butler to discover the need of that guest and meet that need immediately. Because the butler has spent his entire life getting to know the desires of his master, he can easily discern his master's needs with just a simple eye gesture.

As we spend more time each day in God's Word getting to know His heart towards us and towards others He loves, we can become a butler to our Master who knows and obeys the commands of our Lord by the simple gesture of His eye upon us.

How do we look up and what exactly should we be looking at?

1) His Word

Psalm 19:8, "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."

Proverbs 3:21, "My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:"

Proverbs 4:21, "Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart."

Proverbs 4:25, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee."

Proverbs 29:13, "The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes."

Proverbs 15:30, "The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat."

Psalm 119:18, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

2) Reminders of God's Word

Numbers 15:38-40, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God."

Things that remind us of God's Word are godly songs, especially scripture songs, church attendance, Christian fellowship, scripture on your walls, etc. The main goal is to help us remember God's commandments so we may follow them.

3) Listen to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit

Deuteronomy 13:18, "When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD thy God."

Listening to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit must be done with caution. You never want to mistake the voice of your flesh or the voice of the devil speaking in your ear as the voice of the Holy Spirit. So how do you know the difference? The main way to know is given in this verse. God will never tell you to do something that is against His Word. This is why it is vitally important that we study God's Word so we will not be children tossed about with every wind of doctrine. Ephesians 4:14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"

4) Look for God's hand moving

Just as a lord of a manor might tap his finger when getting impatient and thus signaling to the butler that something is not right, God can use little things in life to signal us. God can orchestrate events in our lives and if we are watching we can 'see' His will or command. Many times I have been amazed at how God places just the right person at just the right time in my path to 'tap' His finger.

It is a marvelous experience when you are praying about a particular decision or step and while reading your Bible a verse comes alive giving you a clear answer from the Lord. What a blessing to walk in the boldness of knowing beyond a shadow of a doubt that you are doing God's will for your life.

To learn more about the significance of the references to a horse and mule along with a bit and bridle, I spent some time interviewing a Christian woman who has spent her life raising and training both animals.

In our conversations, she explained to me that the horse and the mule are very intelligent animals. She has found the mule to be more intelligent than the horse. I have always associated stubbornness with a mule, but never intelligence. I found it interesting that God deliberately chose intelligent animals to compare intelligent man. Though in our intelligence, we can be stubborn as a mule.

Both the horse and mule are trained using a bit and bridle for the sole purpose of guidance and teaching the will of the trainer. The bridle is placed over the head and represents the control of the mind. For man, that would be controlling our thoughts. We want God to control our thoughts.

There are several bits that can be used. There is a broken bit, curved bit and a straight bit. Each bit controls the freedom of the tongue. The broken bit allows more freedom of the tongue and is easier on the mouth. The curved bit restricts the tongue but allows some freedom of movement. The straight bit restricts the movement of the tongue holding it down.

The Bible warns about our tongue and controlling our mouths. As my dear friend described each bit, I wondered, "Which bit does God use on me?"

I then asked her the following question, "Which bit would a trainer use on a wild horse when they are trying to break the horse?" I was confident that she would say the straight bit, but to my surprise she said you always start out with the broken bit because it is easier on the mouth. The trainer slowly introduces bit and bridle.

As I contemplated her response, I realized how gentle God has been in 'breaking' me, slowly introducing His bit and bridle.

Eventually both a horse and mule can be trained without a bit and bridle. They become so acquainted with the desires and commands of their master, that bit and bridle are no longer needed. They respond to a variety of commands such as whistles, words, hand gestures, body movements, etc. When they sense the master is near, they watch intently to receive his guidance.

God wants us to be watching and waiting for His guidance.

Isaiah 58:11, "And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

I love the story in 2 Chronicles 20:12-30. The people had no clue how to solve their problem, so they looked to God for guidance.

Verse 12, "O our God, wilt thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee."

In Luke 24:13-45 tells us the story of the two men on the road to Emmaus who meet up with Jesus, take him home for supper and watch Him bless their meal and vanish before their eyes. While telling their experience to the disciples, Jesus suddenly appears!

Verse 31, "And their eyes were opened, and they knew him..."

Verse 45, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures"

Notice that their eyes had to be opened first before their understanding was opened.

Due to this study, my prayer has changed. I ask God to help me keep my eyes from distraction and on Him, ready and waiting for His command.

Other verses concerning guidance: Psalm 25:9, 31:3, 48:14, 73:24, 112:5, Proverbs 2:17, 11:3, 23:19, Isaiah 49:10, Jeremiah 3:4, Luke 1:79, John 16:13, God guiding the Israelites: Exodus 15:13, Psalm 78:52 & 72