

Prayer, Fasting, Generosity, and Resurrection?

In my previous email, [Do You Have a Good Eye or Evil Eye?](#), I showed you that “**good eye**” and “**evil eye**” are Hebrew idioms. **Good eye** means a person is **generous**, while **evil eye** means a person is **stingy**. I left you with this question:

*What do “**lamp of the body**,” “**body full of light**,”
and “**body full of darkness**” mean?*

I also reminded you that we need to find the Hebrew Scripture Jesus was interpreting that **link the things in the question to being generous and being stingy.**

Context, context, and context. Always identify the context in which the teachings of Jesus are found. Matthew 6 provides us with the clue we need to discover the Hebrew Scripture Jesus was interpreting.

- Matthew 6:8-15 is about prayer.
- Matthew 6:16-21 is about fasting.
- Matthew 6:22-23 is about good eye, evil eye, the lamp of the body, body full of light, and body full of darkness.

Jesus couldn't have painted a sign on a wall for his Jewish audience that would have alerted them to that Hebrew Scripture better than those clues. Jesus could only be interpreting Isaiah 58.

- Isaiah 58:2 is about prayer.
- Isaiah 58:3-6 is about fasting.
- Isaiah 58:7 is about being generous.

This brings us to Isaiah 58:8-10.

- Isaiah 58:8: **THEN your light shall break forth as the dawn**, and your healing shall quickly spring up; and **your acts of loyalty and faithfulness** (acts of generosity) **shall go before you**. The glory of **Yahweh shall gather you**.
- Isaiah 58:9: **THEN** you shall call (**pray**) and **Yahweh shall answer**, you shall cry (**fast**), and He shall say, “**Here I am.**” **IF you turn away the yoke** from your midst, **accusing each other** and **speaking of wickedness**.

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- Isaiah 58:10: **And IF you let out your soul to the hungry** (be **generous** and give food to the poor), and satisfy **the afflicted soul** (**forgive each other**), **THEN your light shall rise in the darkness** and **your darkness shall be like noon**.

Always remember that there are multiple layers of meanings in the Hebrew Scriptures. Everyone listening to Jesus knew that “**light**” and “**life**” as well as their opposites “**darkness**” and “**death**” were **used synonymously in the Hebrew Scriptures**. This is what English readers cannot see in their translations:

- ***THEN your LIFE shall break forth as the dawn.***
- ***THEN your LIFE shall rise in DEATH and your DEATH shall be like noon.***

What is required of the people?

- *Do acts of loyalty and faithfulness to Yahweh.*
- *Stop accusing each other and speaking wickedly about each other.*
- *Do acts of generosity for those in need.*
- *Forgive each other.*

If you compare the things above to **The Lord’s Prayer** (Matthew 6:9-13), you find that they are almost identical!

The questions I will leave you with this time are relevant to the world we live in today.

- *Should people that believe in Jesus do the things that Jesus taught?*
- *What would change in your city if a majority of the people that “believe in Jesus” did the things Jesus taught above?*

Shalom,
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