

Ingratitude Brings Spiritual Blindness

But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. **—2 Peter 1:9**

The failure of the nation of Israel to be grateful is the underlying explanation for their missing the promised Messiah when He came. You could never have convinced the ancient scholars in Israel that Messiah—a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15)—could turn up and not be recognized by them. The problem with both the Pharisees and Sadducees in Jesus' day was that they were arrogantly confident each would be the first to know it when that promised anointed One came.

But when He came—right under their noses—they missed Him entirely. They thought their judgment against Jesus was due to their brilliant minds, but that wasn't it. It was because they were blinded by the God to whom they had not given thanks.

Sadly, Israel had a long history of being ungrateful. And that ingratitude ultimately resulted in their being struck blind. Saul of Tarsus, a remarkable exception, said so:

God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day. **—Romans 11:8**

The judgment of blindness upon Israel can be traced to their failure to be thankful.

If it is said that the people in ancient Israel dutifully maintained the sacrificial system, it has to be said also that they missed the point. In much the same way people can go to church in a self-righteous and dutiful manner and suppose they are worshiping God.

The final consequence of Israel's failure to remember was that they missed the greatest promise ever given. The penalty for ingratitude is incalculable. This is true for an individual, the church, and any nation.

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