



Romans 1:18-28

(18) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; (19) Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. (20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (21) Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (23) And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. (24) Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: (25) Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. (26) For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: (27) And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. (28) And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

King James Version

Verse 18 gives us the context, the proclivity of mankind to suppress the truth. Some translations say they suppress the truth “by” (rather than “in”) their unrighteousness, reinforcing the link between disobedience and blindness ([Deuteronomy 28:28-29](#); [Psalm 111:10](#)). [God](#) has given all

humanity a measure of understanding, at least about His existence, but most turn away in favor of something false that seems more reasonable to them. Even though [Satan](#) and his demons whisper their deceptions in the background, *the people blind themselves* through their choices. Satan forces no one; as with Eve, he adds fuel to an already-kindled fire of carnality and resistance to the truth.

People choose to close their eyes, and as the apostle Paul writes in verse 24, God responds by giving them over to that choice. He does not approve of or accept what they do but allows it to play out. At some point, they will understand the futility of rejecting God's way.

Paul states this principle again in verse 26: God gives them up to what is in their hearts, not realizing that they have *cursed themselves* by their choices. Ironically, they probably feel relief and liberation, having cut themselves off from bearing any accountability to uphold God's standards.

What begins with suppressing the truth in verse 18 ends with a debased mind in verse 28. As part of His judgment, God gives people over to the dominion of their choices' consequences. These verses depict God essentially taking His hands away to allow people to mess up their lives still further. However, other scriptures show God actively amplifying sin's effects; sometimes, God makes the spiritual plight of those rebelling against Him even worse.

In [Amos 8:11](#), God calls for a famine of hearing His Word. It is a different metaphor but still analogous to blinding in that He diminishes the understanding of the people. The famine of hearing is a devastating curse because God takes away the very thing that could help the nation: The ability to hear His truth. His action may seem cruel, but the fault does not lie with Him but with the peoples' previous choices. We have a saying today, "Be careful what you wish for." Israel yearned after her neighbors' paganism and so did not heed the revelation He had given to her, thus He began to take away her understanding.

— David C. Grabbe

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