

John 12:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

Analysis

John quotes Isaiah 6:10, describing divine blinding and hardening that prevents conversion and healing. God actively blinds eyes and hardens hearts as judgment on persistent rebellion. The 'lest' clauses show God prevents their conversion, raising the mystery of divine election. This isn't arbitrary cruelty but righteous judgment: they wouldn't see, so God ensures they can't see. The hardening makes permanent their chosen rebellion. This demonstrates that salvation requires divine initiative; human will alone cannot produce faith. Only those whom God heals can be converted.

Historical Context

Isaiah 6 records the prophet's commission to preach to those whom God had already judicially hardened. This same pattern applies to Jesus' ministry—many heard but few believed.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does divine hardening demonstrate God's righteous judgment on persistent unbelief?
2. What does this teach about the necessity of divine grace for salvation?
3. In what ways does this text challenge Arminian free will theology?

Interlinear Text

Τετύφλωκεν αὐτούς τοὺς ὄφθαλμοῖς καὶ πεπώρωκεν
He hath blinded their eyes and hardened
G5186 G846 G3588 G3788 G2532 G4456

αὐτούς τὴν καρδία ἵνα μὴ ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὄφθαλμοῖς καὶ
their heart see eyes and
G846 G3588 G2443 G3361 G1492 G3588 G3788 G2532

νοήσωσιν τῇ καρδίᾳ καὶ ἐπιστραφῶσιν καὶ ιάσωμαι
understand heart be converted and I should heal
G3539 G2588 G2532 G1994 G2532 G2390

αὐτούς
their
G846

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 6:10 (Parallel theme): Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Luke 8:10 (Parallel theme): And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Mark 4:12 (Parallel theme): That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

Isaiah 29:10 (Parallel theme): For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

Psalms 41:4 (Parallel theme): I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

Psalms 6:2 (Parallel theme): Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

Psalms 147:3 (Parallel theme): He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

Hosea 14:4 (Parallel theme): I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

Hosea 6:1 (Parallel theme): Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.

Acts 3:19 (Parallel theme): Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;