

In many traditional cultures, there is a belief in the “evil eye” the idea that someone can cause harm, misfortune, or even curses simply by looking at another person with envy or ill intent. This belief has led some to use protective charms, rituals, or spiritual objects to shield themselves. But what does the Bible really say about the “evil eye”? Is this belief supported by Scripture?

Let’s explore this biblically and theologically.

1. Jesus and the Evil Eye - Mark 7:21-23

Mark 7:21-23 (NKJV):

“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

In this passage, Jesus confronts the Pharisees’ obsession with external rituals and shows that true defilement comes from the heart, not from external factors. Among the sins He lists is “an

evil eye.”

The Greek term used here for “evil eye” is “*ophthalmos ponēros*,” which refers not to mystical power, but to an attitude of envy, jealousy, greed, or stinginess. Jesus was exposing the inward corruption of a person who views others with resentment or selfish desire.

2. The Parable of the Workers - Matthew 20:15

Matthew 20:15 (NKJV):

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things?
Or is your eye evil because I am good?”

This is part of a parable where a landowner pays all his laborers the same wage, regardless of how long they worked. Some workers grumbled because they thought it was unfair.

Jesus uses the phrase “your eye evil” (Greek: *ophthalmos ponēros*) to reveal their jealousy and resentment at the generosity shown to others. The theological message here is

about God's grace He gives not based on our effort but on His mercy. To envy God's kindness to someone else is to have an "evil eye."

3. Old Testament Example Deuteronomy 15:9

Deuteronomy 15:9 (NKJV):

"Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the Lord against you, and it become sin among you."

Here, the Law warns against withholding generosity near the seventh year, when debts were canceled. If someone refused to help a needy person out of fear of financial loss, they were said to have an "evil eye" a selfish and ungodly attitude.

This reveals a consistent theme: an evil eye is a heart posture, not a magical curse. It means refusing kindness, harboring jealousy, and acting in selfishness.

4. Spiritual Health Matthew 6:22-23

Matthew 6:22-23 (NKJV):

“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.

But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”

This teaching is part of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. A “good eye” is generous, pure, and focused on the Kingdom of God (see Proverbs 22:9). A “bad” or “evil eye” is stingy, greedy, and full of envy. The condition of your inner perspective affects your entire spiritual life.

5. The Root: Envy and Selfishness

Theologically, the “evil eye” in Scripture is consistently tied to envy, jealousy, greed, and selfish motives. It stems from a heart not transformed by God’s love. Paul describes similar sinful attitudes in:

Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV):

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions... and the like; of which I tell you beforehand... that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

6. Practical Application

We are called to guard our hearts against envy and comparison. The cure for the “evil eye” is not a charm, ritual, or religious item it is a renewed heart through faith in Christ.

Titus 3:3-5 (NKJV):

“For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient... living in malice and envy...

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...”

Conclusion

The Bible does not support the superstitious idea of the evil eye as a mystical curse. Instead, it teaches that the true “evil eye” is a spirit of envy, jealousy, greed, and selfishness attitudes that defile the soul and grieve God.

Let us ask the Lord to purify our hearts so that we may rejoice in the blessings of others, give generously, and walk in love and light.

Psalm 51:10 (NKJV):

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Shalom.

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