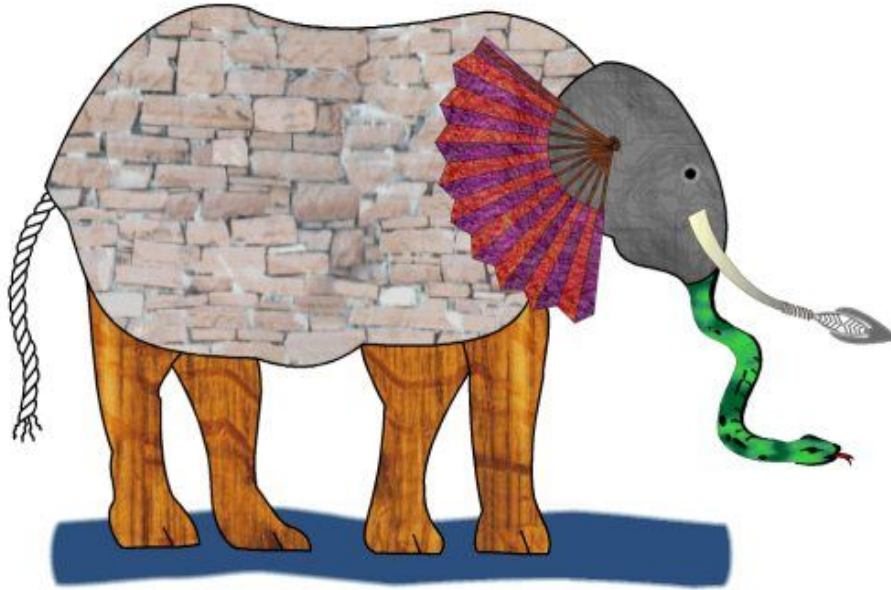


## The Blind Men and the Elephant

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There is an old poem that speaks of six blind men who had never "seen" an elephant. Perhaps, when young, they had been able to see trees and flowers, houses, and people. But, they had never seen an elephant! And so we will take six blind men to the place where the elephant is kept, so that they can "see" the elephant.

When we arrive, we lead the first blind man to the side of the elephant. With his hands, he feels the broad side of the elephant and returns to his friends, announcing that an elephant is like the wall of a house! What is his problem? He "saw" only **PART** of the elephant.

Then, we lead the second blind man to the right front leg of the elephant. He feels the thick leg for a moment and returns to his friends, announcing that the first man is wrong! An elephant is not like a wall at all, but rather, an elephant is like a tree! What is his problem? This man also "saw" only **PART** of the elephant.

Then we lead the third man to the tail of the large elephant. He holds the long tail for a few moments and returns to his friends, announcing that both of his friends are wrong! An elephant, according to him, is not like a wall, and an elephant is not like a tree, but rather an elephant is like a rope! What is his problem? This third blind man also "saw" only **PART** of the elephant.

And so the same thing happened to the remaining three blind men who claimed that everybody else was wrong and that the elephant was like a fan, a spear, or a snake!

Each blind man received only a partial view of the entire elephant and based their conclusions on that limited view!

When many people study the Bible, they are very similar to the blind men in this story. They may read a verse of the Bible and place a particular meaning on that verse without examining the many other verses that also discuss the subject being considered. For example, one may read John 3:16, a beautiful verse, that tells what the Father and Jesus have done for us! Then, this person may say, "God only wants me to have a belief in my heart concerning Jesus (a mental acceptance) and I will be saved!" But, if that person examines other verses in the Bible, as well as John 3:16, he will learn much more about the subject of biblical faith, and that biblical faith is **ALWAYS** a responsive, active faith. For example, he will read further in John 3, and learn that the Lord defines **TRUE FAITH** as an acceptance; an **OBEDIENCE** to the Son of God (John 3:36; See also Romans 1:5; 16:25). ***THIS APPROACH MUST BE USED FOR EVERY BIBLICAL TOPIC.***

Therefore, let us be very careful to see the "whole elephant." Let us find out **ALL** that God has said on a certain subject, and NEVER be satisfied with the error of the partial view of God's word.