

Vision - Seeing Things Through God's Eyes

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We have officially sounded the starting gun for the autumn holy days. The Feast of Trumpets is the official beginning, and the Feast of Tabernacles is just around the corner!

We understand that God's annual Holy Days are dual in purpose, depicting God's plan of creation over the seven thousand year span of time of man's existence on the earth, as well as, depicting God's plan of salvation for each person individually, with our calling, baptism, conversion, redemption, and salvation into the family of God.

As we walk along this path that God has set us on there is a vitally essential ingredient, which we should never be without. This very essential ingredient of our spiritual lives is vital to navigating our way through life in every way.

And, that essential ingredient is vision!

Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

Proverbs 29:18 (NKJV) Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint;

Proverbs 29:18 (TEV) A nation without God's guidance is a nation without order.

The original Hebrew word for vision, or revelation is, according to Strong's Concordance, number 2377 chazown (khaw-zone'); from 2372; a sight (mentally), i.e. a dream, revelation, or oracle. This word appears thirty five times in the Old Testament. There are over one hundred listings of several other Hebrew words in the Old Testament referencing vision, or revelation. Therefore, in general vision in the Old Testament refers to a direct revelation from God, either in person or in a dream.

For another aspect of this in our next passage we will find some very interesting spiritual overtones.

Genesis 1:1-5 In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Those two words, 'darkness,' and 'light,' are connected to the subject of vision.

Darkness (Strong's number 2822) can mean literally darkness; figuratively it can mean misery, destruction, death, ignorance, sorrow, or wickedness, and of course, night and obscurity.

Light (Old Testament Strong's 216) means illumination; luminary in every sense, including lightning, happiness, etc., bright, clear, day, light, lightning, morning, and sun.

In the other "in the beginning" account,

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There are some spiritual allusions there that the light and the darkness is more than God just providing the light for something to see with. But vision in the everyday physical sense is the ability to see, and that of course requires light. If we do not have the light of day, then we need some other kind of light to see with.

The first thing that God made right in the creation was to provide light. Putting that together with the account in John 1:1, God alludes to a spiritual meaning which the physical is pointing us to. In order to see and comprehend things that are spiritual, we must have the light of God's truth.

Psalms 43:3 (NKJV) Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle.

Psalms 119:105 (NKJV) Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

The Merriam Webster dictionary definition of vision is,

1a: something seen in a dream, trance, or ecstasy; especially: a supernatural appearance that conveys a revelation. b: a thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination. c: a manifestation to the senses of something immaterial.

2a: the act or power of imagination. b(1): mode of seeing or conceiving; (2): unusual discernment or foresight, such as "a person of vision." c: direct mystical awareness of the supernatural usually in visible form.

3a: the act or power of seeing: the most common, normal eyesight

Another interesting part of vision is that it is directly related to the Old English word "wit." We think of wit as dry humor, which is one of the definitions. However, it mostly means mind, memory, reasoning power, intelligence, mental soundness, sanity, mental capability, resourcefulness, ingenuity, and astuteness of perception or judgment. Most of us have likely heard the phrase, "getting your wits about you."

We easily recognize one of these definitions as the concept of a person with the ability to visualize solutions, or innovations. An artist conceives a work of art in his mind, and then assembles the materials, and makes his idea into something so that we can all see it such as a painting or a sculpture.

History is replete with visionaries of all kinds—scientists, and inventors—who have come up with

things others have never even imagined.

While I was driving recently, I heard a program on 'Business Talk Radio.' They were talking about how the Bic Pen Company hired a consultant many years ago to advise their company as to how they could improve their business.

After looking at their business, he told them that they needed to start making disposable razors. They looked at him, and replied, "Well, that has nothing to do with our business, we make writing implements." But, the consultant replied, "No, but your business really is lightweight, disposable, plastic items." They thought about it, and took him up on it, and added a very successful product line. And then, they took that another step further and got into disposable lighters.

To me this is most interesting because it pointed out to me just how easy it is to miss something so simple and so obvious. So I thought, "Is there something that we can learn from that in terms of vision?" These concepts do tie in with my message. I do want to present a definition of vision for our purposes today.

It seems to me that the majority of the time we think of the Old Testament and New Testament as physical and spiritual. In the Old Testament God seemed to more reveal Himself in direct obvious visions to human eyes.

But now, I believe that vision in its spiritual sense is what we need to be doing. I have defined it as, "The enhancing of our human senses, abilities, and understanding to discern spiritual things for the purpose of making decisions, and acting on faith and belief.

Another aspect of vision comes from the physical analogy of blindness, and that is not being able to see or understand God's truth. Christ healed many times, which included giving sight to the blind. In addition to that, He had strong words for the Scribes and Pharisees.

Matthew 15:14 (NKJV) Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

In another exchange with the Scribes and Pharisees,

Matthew 23:16, 17, 19 (NKJV) "Woe to you, blind guides....Fools and blind!...For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?

Also there is the calling and the conversion of the apostle Paul:

Acts 9:5-9 (NKJV) And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

(In terms of numerology the number three is finality—putting the final stop in his life as a Pharisee.)

Our spiritual vision is a precious gift, part of having God's Holy Spirit, faith and belief. We are reminded to stir up the gift of God:

II Timothy 1:6 (NKJV) Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

What we have has only been given to a few.

Matthew 13:16-17 (NKJV) But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Spiritual or Godly vision is inseparable from faith and belief, direct attributes of the Holy Spirit and love, faith being one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (you will find in Galatians 5: 22.)

I Corinthians 13:7 (NKJV) Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

We believe in something that God has revealed to us as real, yet we cannot actually see it with our eyes.

Hebrews 11:1-3, 7-8 (NKJV) Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible....By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Abraham acted on faith to go in a direction, which he had no physical evidence of.

Let us look at some examples of Godly vision:

II Kings 6:8-18 (NKJV) Now the king of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place." And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there." Then the king of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?" And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells

the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan." Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "BRD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike this people, I pray, with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

Elisha had the vision to know that there was available to him a heavenly host, ready and waiting.

The Apostle Paul knew for a certainty that he had qualified for salvation, and that he had finished his race.

II Timothy 4:6-8 (NKJV) For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

What about us? How is our vision? I am going to paraphrase Proverbs 29:18, into three points for us to think about.

1) Without vision we limit God in our lives.

When Christ had to cast out the demon the disciples could not. Here we see Christ's reply to the disciples.

Matthew 17:19-21 (NKJV) Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

This is indicating to us that God has an unlimited bank account. There is nothing that He cannot do for us. However, there is something to what He will, in fact do for us, because that has to do with other factors.

2) Without vision, we limit our ability to discern the world around us. The world is blind to the truth of God.

There was a short story by a British author named H.G. Wells, *The Country of the Blind*. H.G.

Wells was an author and historian, and some of his writings were intended as a social commentary.

So the story goes, a traveler going through a remote region finds a village in which all of its inhabitants were born blind generation after generation. They knew nothing about eyesight. He decides he will teach them and become ruler over them. He has another thing coming, though. Apparently at one point in the story, they determined that this stranger, who wants to rule them, his eyes were poisoning his brain, and they were going to try to perform an operation to remove his eyes. Well, he decided to find a way out of there.

This story serves as an allegory of society's treatment of those with ability or intellect beyond their own understanding.

I remember the phrase, as all of us have opportunities to talk to others about the truth. The world is blind to God's truth and we need to be careful not to be deceived.

There are several warnings in scripture about us not being deceived,

Galatians 6:7 (NKJV) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

I Corinthians 15:33 (NKJV) Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits.

James 1:16 (NKJV) Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

If there is a repeated warning, there is probably a reason for it.

3) Without vision we limit our focus on the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

How well do we do that? How well do we keep it in our focus all of the time? You know, whenever I see images of the earth such as those from the Hubble Telescope, I begin to think in terms of our inheritance. If you have seen any of them, you can see the beauty that has survived all of these years of mankind and Satan. I believe there is going to be an incredible amount of work to do for all eternity.

We are being conditioned by God in this life to look beyond the physical world around us, to be aware of it, yet not to fall into the deception that blinds the world—to see the real significance of the course of this world, to develop a sense of spiritual discernment, having God's will revealed to us, and seeing the direction that He is leading us, so that we will not be overwhelmed by the end time events, and not lose the hope that lies within us. Yet in all of our human ability to conceive in our mind's eye our best understanding of God's truth, we are in actuality at best only seeing brief glimpses of the awesome glory that God wants to share with us.

All of this is pointing us towards the goal, which God has set before us, being born of the spirit into the family of God. At that time we will take on the kind of vision God has, and we will truly be able to see Him as He is!

Revelation 22: 4-5 (NKJV) They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

We are told that the sufferings of this age are not worthy to be compared to what God has prepared for us.

Romans 8:18 (NKJV) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

With all of this in mind, perhaps this next scripture will have more meaning.

I Corinthians 2: 6-9 (NKJV) However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

Brethren, let us all ask God to give us more of His Spirit, and to increase our faith, so that we can preserve, protect and maintain, and make the best possible use of the gift of Godly vision.