

## Doctrine of Visions

1. A vision refers to a divine revelation that reveals the will of God. Visions generally occurred while the prophet of God was awake or was in a semi state of consciousness.
2. At least twenty-two people in the Bible are said to have received a vision. Sixteen visions were given to the Old Testament saints while seven were given to New Testament believers.

### Visions from God

- Abraham                      Genesis 15:1
- Jacob                         Genesis 46:2
- Balaam                       Numbers 24:4
- Samuel                      1 Samuel 3:15
- Nathan                      2 Samuel 7:17; 1 Chronicles 17:15
- Isaiah                        2 Chronicles 32:32; Isaiah 1:1; 21:2; 22:1,5
- The Messiah                Psalm 89:19
- Ezekiel                      Ezekiel 1:1; 7:13; 8:3-4; 11: 24 13:16; 40:2; 43:3
- Daniel                        Daniel 2:19; 7:2; 8:1-2
- Eliphaz                      Job 4:13 cf. 7:14
- Obadiah                     Obadiah 1:1
- Nahum                        Nahum 1:1
- Habakkuk                    Habakkuk 2:2
- Zechariah                  Zechariah 13:4 cf. 2 Chronicles 26:5
- Iddo                          2 Chronicles 9:29
- Hosea                        Hosea 12:10
- Peter                         Matthew 17:1,10; Acts 10:17; 11:5
- James                        Matthew 17:1,10
- John                         Matthew 17:1,10; Revelation 9:17
- Ananias                     Acts 9:10
- Paul                         Acts 9:12; 16:9,10; 26:19; 2 Corinthians 12:11
- Cornelius                  Acts 10:3

3. God promised to speak to His prophets in visions.
  - *Numbers 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.*
4. Long periods of time went by when there was not a vision from God.
  - *1 Samuel 3:1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.*
  - *Lamentations 2:9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord.*

5. Where there is no vision the people perish.
  - *Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*
  
6. It was possible for men to err in their visions.
  - *Isaiah 28:7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.*
  - *Jeremiah 14:14 Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.*
  
7. God's people were called upon to seek visions from the prophets.
  - *Ezekiel 7:26 Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.*
  
8. Angels were sometimes used to help explain a vision.
  - *Daniel 8:16 And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. 17 So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.*
  - *Daniel 9:21 Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. 23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

*27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

9. Visions can produce great emotional distress.

- *Daniel 8:27 And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.*
- *Daniel 10:16 And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.*

10. It is possible for one person only to have a vision even in the presence of others.

- *Daniel 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.*
- *Daniel 10:7 And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. 8 Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.*

11. The absence of visions was considered to be a form of divine judgment.

- *Micah 3:6 Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.*

12. The prophet Joel predicted that visions were to be found during the New Testament era.

- *Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*
- *Acts 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*

13. The appearance of the angels to the women on the morning of Christ's resurrection was considered by them to have been a vision (Luke 24:23 cf. Acts 12:9) so that it is sometimes hard to separate a vision from "reality".

- *Luke 24:23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.*
- *Acts 12:9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.*

14. A vision can come during the act of prayer.

- *Acts 10:17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,*
- *Acts 11:5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:*