

Having a Vision (part 1)
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Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish...

Vision—1. The act or power of sensing with the eyes; sight. 2. The act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be: *prophetic vision; the vision of an entrepreneur*. 3. An experience in which a personage, thing, or event appears credibly to the mind, although not actually present, often under the influence of a divine or other agency. (That's what the dictionary says.)

The Strong's Concordance says:

Vision: [H2377] a *sight* (mentally), that is, a *dream*.

Perish: [H6544] to loosen; dismiss; avoid, go back, set at naught, perish, refuse

Judges 6:12-16 ...if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us?...

Now, to get a little background, if we were to look at the book of Judges up until now, we would see Israel, over several generations, spent time serving God for a while, then they would leave Him and serve other gods, back and forth, back and forth. In this instance, Israel had been serving Baalim (Judges 3:7), but now they were trying to get back.

Gideon saw all of this bad stuff going on, and he found it hard to believe that God wanted to use him. You ever find yourself fighting something and God pricks your heart and say he wants to use you, and you're just not feeling it? That's what Gideon was facing, saints. Sometimes God is bringing us through something and if we look at what we're going through, we would get discouraged, but God is going to bring the victory anyway. On top of that, his family was poor, and he was the poorest of them. He couldn't see how it could happen because he didn't have any of the resources. How many people God must have looked over who had plenty, but just couldn't be used.

So, the first two things Gideon mentioned were things that he saw with his eyes.

Judges 6:33 ...all the Midianites and Amalekites and the children of the east...

So there are three different enemies. The Midianites were nomadic; they travelled a lot and they were bandits. The Amalekites were people of the hills; also they were descendants of Esau. I don't want to get into too much right now, because I'm under a time limitation, but the descendants of Esau really had it in for Israel.

Judges 6:34-35 ...he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh...

So Gideon sent messengers out, and these people were mostly his cousins, and said that he needed help.

Judges 7:2-3 ...The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into...

God said you have too many. Saints, imagine that you're about to go into battle, and two thirds of who you were counting on just disappears on you. Anybody ever tell you that they're going to help out with something and then put out on you? Don't you just hate that? Obviously, these people didn't have the same vision that Gideon had.

Judges 7:4-6 ...The people are yet too many...I will try them for thee...

Too many, Lord? Do you know how many people we have to fight? Over a hundred and forty thousand. That's fourteen of them for every one of us. It wasn't like it is today, you could over a hill or around the corner and you could SEE the enemy. Plus, Lord, they didn't know that this was a test; couldn't we just tell them that it was a test? So often saints, the things that we go through are a test, and God is the proctor, and God grades the test. It is incumbent on us to do it right the first time.

And why water, anyway? Why not something else? But, when God brings a deliverance, who are we to question God? So, at the water test, God said whoever laps like a dog, him you will take. We have a water test in the Bible, too. I want to bring out the point that there were three different visions going on here: One vision was those who were afraid; they did not have the same vision as Gideon. Another was for those that did not have the same strength of Gideon's vision. And, lastly, those who could have the same heart as Gideon.

Hebrews 12:1-2 ...Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith

If we think that Jesus wanted to go through everything that He went through—well, of course not. To be God in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16) and not be recognized; spat on, beat, lied on, cursed... So why did He? “Who for the joy that as set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” He did all that for us; for everyone who's ever been lied to or lied on, beat, cursed, dealt the short hand, put in a hopeless situation... for all of us who ever had to endure, He's got you covered. Sick in body? He's got you covered. Sick in mind? Got that one, too. Money troubles? Misunderstood? Frustrated? How about just tired? He's got you covered by His blood. He said, “**Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.**” (Matthew 11:28-29)

But the first part of that verse is all about what we look at: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...”

When I was in driving school my instructor kept telling to look at where I wanted to go not at where I was or at what was around me. In class I was fine, but on the road things were a little different. There was this big truck turning in front of me and I was looking at it, and it kept getting closer and closer until the instructor pulled the emergency brake. “Didn't I tell you to look at where you wanted to go?” “Well, yeah, but didn't you see that big truck? It kept getting closer and closer to us.” “No, you kept getting closer and closer to it, because you were looking at it, instead of looking at where you were trying to go.”

Have you ever heard of “lazy eye?” It's actually called amblyopia. It's where the muscles of one eye are weak so they put a patch on the dominant eye, to try to force the person to exercise the muscles in the weak eye. Many Christians are like that, only in both eyes. They are

not able to see the tremendous things that God has for those that trust Him; not being able to taste His glory and His love. But there's a remedy for that.

2 Kings 6:15-17 ...LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see...

The remedy is prayer. Now, we've heard people say, "I wish I had more faith," when the truth is, they don't use the faith they have. Some people might be saying, "God, if you don't move, well, that's okay," when what they should be saying is "God, if you don't move, I want to know why. If I've got sin in my life, if I don't come to You holy enough, if I've taken you too lightly, God, whatever the reason, let me know, and I will be accepting and change, if that's what I need to do, or move something out of the way, it's done. Whatever the reason, Lord, show me." The Bible says that without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Some people haven't used their faith—why would God give us more if we haven't used what he gave us in the first place? Faith to be able to bless a brother or a sister, faith to be able to stand in a situation and know that God is going to be lifted up. If I'm the only that lifts Him up, He will be lifted up. We're talking about faith that in your family when one or the other might be down to say, "Lord, I need your intervention to help and to heal, and I will stand and stay at your altar until you bless."

Psalms 121:1-8 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help...